

# VIEWPOINT

## MAGAZINE

— COTTEY COLLEGE —

LOOKING BACK AT THE LAST  
30 YEARS



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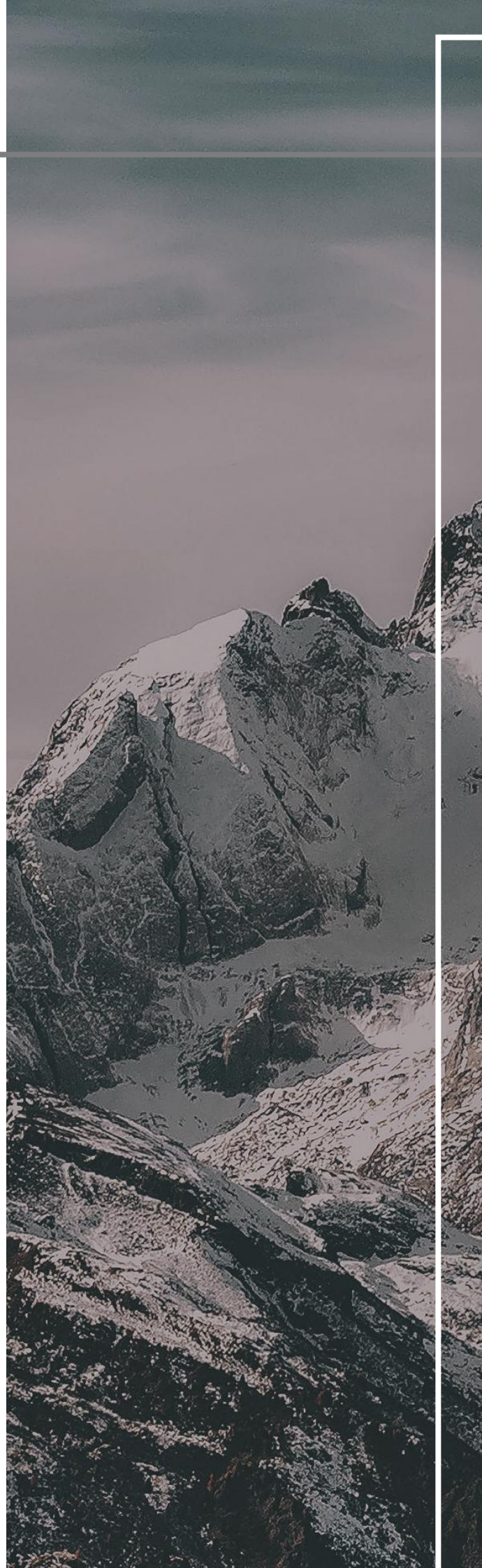
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SPRING / SUMMER VIEWPOINT

## EDITOR'S MESSAGE

By the time you read these words, I will be retired after a beautiful 30-year career at Cottey College. One of the benefits of an extended career somewhere is you get the "long view" of the institution and how the vision or mission of that institution has been carried out. (Or not in the case of some failed businesses.)

Longtime readers know that one of my hobbies is backpacking with friends in the mountains of Colorado every summer. A special shout-out to Michele Strawn Hart '98 and her husband Jeremy for starting this tradition with me. (And also to other members of the Class of 1998 who have occasionally joined us.) Over the course of the last 13 summers, I have summited 38 14ers – mountains over 14,000' tall – with the Harts. (My next mountain awaits in August.)

For a guy who lives in Missouri at an elevation of approximately 800' over sea level, it's challenging to climb that high no matter how much cardio I do here. I'm pretty comfortable on these treks until we get above timberline. Somewhere around 12,500' it becomes a real struggle for me and I need to take frequent "breath breaks" to push to the top of the mountain.

When I look up at the summit and see it is another 1,500' above me, it can be a little discouraging, but then I turn around and look at where I started that morning. Sometimes, I can't even see the trailhead from that point. That's when I realize how incredibly far I have come and how little left I have to climb by comparison.

Over the years, you've seen and participated in a number of initiatives that have moved Cottey forward. The College has expanded the offerings for students from international travel to intercollegiate athletics to four-year degree programs. Cottey has expanded its physical plant through campaigns to add and renovate buildings to the addition of new technology in the residence halls and classrooms.

This edition of the *Viewpoint* is a metaphorical pause on the way to the summit, a look back to see how far we have come. Many of you have followed and participated in this 30-year journey and will recognize many of these milestones on the trail behind us. I hope you'll also be inspired as we look at all you have accomplished.

From the macro to the micro level, my wish for you individually is that you will also take a break, turn around, and see how far you have come personally. So many of you have impressed me with your accomplishments, your tenacity, your kindness, your wisdom and your knowledge. As I said in the fall/winter issue, YOU are the fearless women in our changing world.

There is one place this metaphorical comparison breaks down. Unlike my summertime hikes, there is no summit. The job is never finished; we can never sit down and say "We made it!" But when we can no longer keep climbing, others - inspired by our journey - will follow in our footsteps and keep moving upward.

I hope those of you still climbing will take a short break with me, turn around, and see how far we've come. The view from here is breathtaking!

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

## ○ *Mr. Steve Reed, editor,*

My *Viewpoint* arrived yesterday, very interesting articles. But why, or why, did you choose the cover photo? My husband took one look and announced he'd never let a daughter of his go to a school that had students look like they were escaping a cult and were terrified to smile, show emotion, much less speak. Were you going for artsy? I think it failed. Inside cover was a nice picture, Old Main, a smiling person. Why not choose the volleyball team photo? Show some life, show some pleasure. Please, do not show a detention camp photo in the future.

-- Renee Cunningham, Class of 1960

## ● *Dear Renee Cunningham,*

I can see where you might think the photo looks a little "grim." With the theme of "Fearless Women for a Changing World", however, a laughing group of students just didn't seem to fit the idea we were trying to convey. When I think of determined, I typically don't imagine smiling, happy faces. Perhaps we missed the mark on this one; thanks for your comments. We're always looking to create the best magazine possible for our readers.

-- Steve

## ○ *Good morning Mr. Reed,*

The winter *Viewpoint* is AWESOME! OUTSTANDING! ... and the best advertisement for Cottey EVER! That being said may I ask if it would be possible to identify those in photos? Who ARE those fearless girls on the cover? Who is the gal on page 5 and the Cross Country team? Yes, you named a few but I have no idea which girl goes with which name. ....not that I know them but it's a fetish of mine to match names to photos---like who is the man on page 25?? I assume Dr. Adams? The quality of VIEWPOINT is A Plus and I applaud you. My 24-year-old granddaughter is a brand new P.E.O. getting her M.A. at UVA. I can't wait to discuss Dr. Cook's article with her. Merry on today,

-- Suzie Curtis, Chapter EA, Colorado

## ● *Thanks for the compliments, Suzie.*

The students on the cover are (left to right) Caroline Little, Zadi Lively, Laureen Dulo, and Erika Roberts. The student on page five is volleyball player Abby Jarvis. The cross country team members are Lauren Wilson, Marinna Mentzel, Ella Page, Mikaela Fabey, Kiana Garcia, and Taylor Rechenmacher. The faculty member on page 25 is Dr. Kanji Watanabe. I will pass along your comments to Dr. Bethany Cook. I know she would be pleased to hear that you and your granddaughter are discussing her article!

-- Steve

## ○ *To Egg or Not to Egg*

I enjoyed reading the latest *Viewpoint* as soon as it was delivered to my door. I particularly got a kick out of the discussion about the onion soufflé....to egg or not to egg! Let me clarify. The cookbook recipe is correct in that no egg is required. It sets up a little after 10 minutes out of the oven, but it was intended to be a soft casserole in texture. It is surprising, I know, and indeed the word soufflé is perhaps misleading. I served this recipe to the Board of Trustees at President's House to begin with. The board members always poured over the menu before entering the dining room, so I tried to name the dishes with a formal flair to match the ambiance. I thought Onion Soufflé was more enticing than Creamy Onion Casserole. So I took artistic license. Now, to explain why the Cottey recipes have egg in the onion soufflé. When transitioning from an 8-serving recipe to say a 64-serving one, there is the greater volume of mass which changes the cooking dynamics. I added eggs to the larger volume dish to compensate and assure that it would set up and be more presentable. Any cook who decides to cook the onion soufflé can do so with or without egg and all will be well...it will still maintain that wonderful creamy flavor. Please pass this along to Gerry (who was always a favorite guest of the College) as well as anyone else you think would be interested. By the way, I served this dish recently just as written in the cookbook since it is one of my wife Linda's favorites. I get asked all the time if I am cooking....and yes....simple foods...lots of homemade soups now. I am also mentoring the Nevada High School culinary team as they prepare for a state-wide culinary competition. It is fun to see their enthusiasm as well as the competence of younger culinarians developing. Please give my warm regards to the Cottey community as Cottey will always hold a special place in my career memories.

-- Michael Richardson





### ● *The Return of Duck Jackets*

I was happy to read the letter to the editor from Mary Kay Engler Ray (CC '67) about when Duck Jackets (DJs) returned to campus. I lived in Reeves Hall with Mary Kay's sister Billie, and we remain good friends today. Billie and I graduated from Cottey in 1971.

Here's the true account.

When we returned to Cottey in the fall of 1970, the Reeves Rec Rats were eager to see the Duck Jacket returned to campus. The Reeves Rec Rats of 1970-1971 were a great group of close friends. There was no hazing, no bullying, and we did not generate fear. We were good students who respected traditions and who embraced the changes seen throughout American society, especially those resulting from the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, and the changing role of women.

We bought the long, denim farmer jackets at the local Sears store on Nevada's town square. The clerks were clearly puzzled when so many jackets were being purchased by young women. We met to discuss the design of the jacket. One of our members, Margaret [Mogi] Jones in Ohio Suite, was an art student and designed the artwork for the back of the jacket. It was perfect. At the top was "Reeves Rec Rats," a single duck with a quizzical look on its face was in the center, with the question "Who Me?" below. (I know there should have had a comma between Who and Me, but it seemed extraneous at the time.)

We decided that the new jackets would be revealed to the Reeves residents at the 1970 Halloween party in the rec room. In order to meet that deadline, we spent many hours working together painting the jackets. We

frequently discussed the possible reactions of administration to our jackets, wondering if there would be an official push back or if all would be OK. We decided that if we set the proper tone by just going about our school lives as before, things should be fine. The jackets were not worn to class. And as hoped, there were no demands made by the administration to cease and desist.

The jackets were indeed worn in a special "runway" reveal at the Halloween party, and they were well received. By the end of the academic year, many more denim jackets were bought from the downtown Sears, designed, and painted, with some specifically made for the official class leaders--president, song leader, etc. Just take a gander through the 1971 yearbook and you'll see the duck jackets. The jackets were passed down from year to year, and we'd frequently see the originals during Founder's Day celebrations.

In the near future, I'll work to relocate the photo albums and send images to you. I also want to make a special acknowledgment to my roommate and very best friend, Lynne Hopkins. Lynne was a talented vocalist and musician and a dedicated student. She was chair of the Reeves Rec Rats during our senior year. She was a ball of energy that wouldn't or couldn't slow down. She completed her music education studies at Chadron State University and taught her entire career in Longmont, Colorado. Lynne died well before her time in 2004 at the age of 53 from diabetes type-2 complications. A brick dedicated to her memory is in front of the library.

Here's wishing you a wonderful remainder of the academic year!

Sincerely, Jerilyn (Jar) McCarty, Class of 1971

# To my treasured ALUM

*A*s I begin to compose my final *Viewpoint* article as President of Cottey College, a catchy little tune keeps floating through my mind...

If we share this walk together, nothing can stand in our way....

I am filled with pride as I review the amazing journey we've taken together over the past seven years. The Cottey community, along with our amazing alumnae, P.E.O.s, friends and donors, came together to accomplish so much! I am confident that you recognize the impact these changes have made for the students of today and tomorrow.

We've witnessed growth in our baccalaureate programs, adding seven new majors, growing the total to 15! These academic programs, along with our associate programs, make possible in-class and out-of-class activities, internships, conference attendance, and participation in excursions. Our athletic programs, each of which offer scholarship opportunities, have expanded, bringing the total athletic teams to eight. Cottey was accepted into the NAIA enabling our student-athletes to continue with the sport they love for a full four years and will, in the fall, become members of the AMC (American Midwest Conference).

Recruiting has been reimagined. We now offer students a personalized visit and encourage them to visit campus, attend a class, meet with an advisor, and interact with current students. Scholars Day and Cottey's Emerging

Leaders Symposium add to options for interested students and have resulted in two years of increased enrollment!

Our beautiful facilities have been updated and expanded. When you visit P.E.O. Hall, you will be greeted by a beautifully refurbished parlor, and Reeves Hall is now an even "cooler" place to be due to the installation of air-conditioning. The main floor of the library was remodeled and now offers students group study spaces and a coffee bar. We have added a psychology lab, a cadaver lab, a MAC computer lab, and a stock trading lab/esports arena, and we are working now on the addition of an education lab. In Hinkhouse, athletic offices, training room, and the conference room were refurbished for the first time since it was built in 1971. Raney Dining Room and the first floor of Main Hall have received new flooring, indoor training facilities were developed and improvements have been made to the softball field. This summer, the gymnasium bleachers and the President's House will add accessibility options, and technology across campus continues to be upgraded and expanded.

As a result of wonderful gifts to the College, Cottey created the Clark Institute for Women in Business and the Stem Research and Scholarship program, and an agreement with the Maurer School of Law at Indiana University enables qualified students to enter law school at a lowered cost of attendance. Cottey has added to the number of articulation agreements with other institutions, thereby encouraging students to transfer to Cottey. Commuter, transfer, and non-traditionally aged students add to our numbers.

Just last year, we refurbished our campus chapel, added a side chapel, a meditation room, and meeting spaces, and we created a campus center in the lower level that includes the spirit shop and the Chellie Club,



which serves as an entrepreneurial lab for students interested in business.

We added townhomes for our older students and created a new Wellness Center that houses both medical and counseling services on property adjacent to the campus. A new strategic planning process led to an updated master plan, and a rebranding process resulting in new campus logos and our tagline, Creators of Incredible Futures.

Our website has been updated, we have created a virtual tour of campus, and we have added many YouTube videos about campus. Social media has expanded to include

Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram, and our new virtual spirit shop is available from anywhere! Our outreach to donors and friends has expanded through various forms of media, use of Zoom, and personal visits, resulting in new records in fundraising and a new set of annual comprehensive reports that allow donors to learn more about the students they support. Cottey is ranked by both the *U.S. News & World Report* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education* for all that we offer to our students.

I have shared with our employees that it takes the entire campus to educate a Cottey student, and each of the above accomplishments involved both on- and off-campus constituents and a lot of hard work! I have been asked about my favorite memories of my time at Cottey...the list is long. I've loved every opportunity to interact with our students—to watch our newest students nervously cross the stage and sign the Cottey Book and then to witness their pride and confidence four short years later as they are capped on the steps of Main Hall! How wonderful it

has been to travel with students to France, Italy, and Hawaii and to celebrate their accomplishments in the arts and athletics. A special memory is when I was given my PJ (professional jacket), emblazoned with both a duck and an owl, and the students took turns adding new pins and patches.

I say to you, "Thank you." Thank you for loving Cottey College, for supporting OUR College, our students, and our programs through your gifts, engaging on social media, sending student referrals, purchasing and wearing Cottey gear and telling the story of OUR College. Thank you for continuing to learn about Cottey by reading the *Viewpoint* and by returning to campus for

*None of these accomplishments would have happened without a great team of staff and faculty at Cottey College and the support of friends like you!*

Founder's, for a visit and tour, to bring potential students to learn about Cottey, or when you return to your own college days for Vacation College. Thank you for supporting me as President and for believing in and continuing to

support women's education.

I am confident that you will welcome the lucky 13th President of Cottey as warmly as you welcomed me. With a new president will come new ideas and I am so anxious to watch Cottey continue to grow and prosper under new leadership. I ask that you continue to support the college administration as you continue to engage with Cottey and support her programs.

What's next? My husband and I and Trudi the cat [yes, named for Hermatruide] will be moving to the Lake St Louis, Missouri, area. I look forward to spending time with our daughters and their families and maybe even taking a nap.

You will forever be in my heart, dear alums. I consider each and every one you a friend... and thus, friends we are and friends we'll always be... until the end of time.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFTS

When Cottey looks back at the changes to its physical plant, its academic programs, and athletic teams, none of those would have been possible without gifts from friends near and far. Designated gifts from individual donors have, of course, been instrumental in creating programs or constructing facilities, but gifts that have come through campaigns have significantly and positively changed Cottey College. There were three specifically that had a huge impact on shaping the future of the College.

## *Building for the Future*



*Ribbon cutting participants included Cottey trustees, administration, alumnae and faculty; and representatives of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, City of Nevada, and members of the Nelle Horner Grantham family. Shown are (left to right): Dr. Cathy Campbell, professor of French; Mary Ireland, Mayor of Nevada; Phyllis Nicholson, Ph.D., Cottey College Board of Trustees; Wilma Leonard Turner, President of International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood; Julie Wilson, Cottey College Alumna Association president; Vicki Champagne Heigel, and Gladys Grantham Thompson.*

Delegates to the 1995 Biennial Convention of International Chapter of the P.E.O.

Sisterhood gave overwhelming support to a Cottey proposal

to construct a new Academic Center. As with all Cottey building projects, the money needed to be committed before construction could begin. In the case of the academic facility, that meant the College needed to raise \$8.9 million, the largest campaign amount ever in Cottey history. The Academic Center: Building for the Future campaign, sometimes referred to as the "Bricks and Mortarboards campaign," went public in early 1996.

Cottey alumnae were the first to step up to the challenge when the Cottey College Alumnae Association pledged \$500,000 for the project. The renovated original academic building is named Alumnae Hall in their honor. Other parts of the campaign included a Chapter Challenge among P.E.O. Chapters, named gift opportunities, such as computer labs and lecture halls, and the sale of personalized bricks at \$100 each.

Every phase of this campaign was successful. A large display in the student lounge of the Rubie Burton Academic Center (RBAC) lists the hundreds of P.E.O. Chapters that contributed to the project, and an entire patio and sidewalk

– including the sidewalk in front of the Blanche Skiff Ross Memorial Library – is testament to the success of the brick project. The monies for this project were in hand to allow the groundbreaking to take place in August 1997. The success of this campaign led the way for an even more ambitious fund-raising opportunity.

## *A Defining Moment: The Campaign for Cottey College*



*Left: Campaign Chair and Past President of International Chapter Barbara Andes, Right: Cottey President Dr. Judy Rogers.*

This was the first-ever comprehensive campaign for Cottey. It was an ambitious – almost audacious some might say - \$35 million, five-year campaign to raise money for five different priorities: a new fine arts instructional building, endowed faculty chairs, scholarships, library enhancements, and unrestricted funding that would allow Cottey to respond to future opportunities. If Cottey personnel thought the



\$8.9 million campaign for the RBAC was a huge undertaking, this one was going to require a little extra help. A campaign of this magnitude was not only unusual for a college the size of Cottey, but it began immediately following the economic downturn of 2008.

Barbara Andes was just completing her term as President of International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, which included serving as an ex-officio member of the Cottey College Board of Trustees. She was familiar with the needs and goals of the College and was part of the discussions about creating the fundraising campaign.

Ms. Andes brought years of volunteer service as part of her background, which would serve her well as nearly her entire team was made up of volunteers. By the end of the campaign, over 5,800 volunteers had become involved.

A key addition to this campaign was the use of awareness events. Ninety-six awareness events were held across the United States and Canada. The Individual Gifts Committee recruited and trained over 130 volunteers to make each event a success.



*Left: Maria Bassegio, President of International Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, Right: Janet Brown, J.D., Chair of the Cottey College Board of Trustees.*

Alumnae once again were leaders in the campaign, surpassing their original goal of \$2 million with a final total of \$4.5 million in alumnae contributions. In a nod to tradition, alumnae used the naming honor to maintain the name Neale Hall, which is part of the Judy and Glenn Rogers Fine Arts Building (RFAB). The faculty and staff of the College wholeheartedly embraced this campaign as well, passing their stretch goal of \$100,000 with a final total of \$207,175.66.

In all the campaign raised over \$40 million. Of the 20,000+ donors, 9,000 were first-time donors to the College.

### **CONNECT Initiative**

The CONNECT Initiative was a bit different from other campaigns as much of the leadership came from BILs, the spouses of P.E.O.s. The BIL legacy with Cottey College began in 1949 when BILs purchased the land that is now known as BIL Hill and the home of BIL Lodge. The Cottey Chapel became the second

BIL project when BILs joined forces once again in 1956 and raised the funds to build a chapel at the heart of Cottey's campus. The goal of CONNECT was to raise \$3 million to fund a Student Center in the lower level of the Cottey Chapel with important improvements to the upper level and chapel sanctuary.

The BIL leadership was helmed by the Honorable Judge James Bickel, a member of the Cottey College Board of Trustees, and Chuck Baker, the BIL of Sue Baker, past president of International Chapter.

There never is a perfect time to begin a campaign. Just as *A Defining Moment* followed an economic downturn, CONNECT preceded a global pandemic, which limited face-to-face outreach and fundraising. In the end, however, less than two years after the campaign began, the new Center for Campus Life was dedicated.

These three campaigns impacted the physical plant of the College and the programs it offers. Your gifts in the future will do the same.

**[cottey.edu/give](https://cottey.edu/give)**

# Bachelor DEGREES

Virginia Alice Cottey believed in change and growth. Vernon Seminary – as she first named the college – was originally a boarding school from kindergarten through the first two years of college. In time she realized she could best serve the needs of educating women by concentrating on the collegiate program and letting the elementary and secondary grades go.

When Cottey celebrated its quasiquicentennial (125th anniversary) in 2009, it was still a two-year college, but big plans had been in the works for five years to transform Cottey into a four-year, baccalaureate-degree granting institution. That year the Cottey College Board of Trustees authorized the College to develop baccalaureate degrees and initiate the change process with the Higher Learning Commission (HLC), Cottey's accrediting agency.

"When Dr. Judy Rogers was inaugurated, she said 'Cottey must grow.'" said former Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty Dr. Cathryn Pridal. "Part of that growth plan was adding four-year degree programs to the College and she hired me as Vice President for Academic Affairs to shepherd the process of adding baccalaureate degrees."

"It was very exciting to be part of the planning process for this," added Dr. Pridal. "There were some stressful moments wondering if we'd done everything needed to get approval from our accrediting agency [The Higher Learning Commission], if we

selected the right majors to appeal to our students, and if our marketing plan would attract the attention of those students."

In August 2010, the College offered its first upper-division courses. In May 2011, the HLC accredited Cottey to offer three Bachelor of Arts degrees: English, environmental studies, and international relations and business. Just over a year later, the HLC accredited Cottey to offer a B.A. degree in psychology, bringing the total number of programs to four. In May 2013, the first baccalaureate graduates of Cottey College received their degrees. Lacey Carpenter was the first Cottey student to walk across the stage and accept her four-year degree (in English).

From the summer 2013 Viewpoint: "Expanding the degree offerings at Cottey to four-year programs demonstrates, of course, Cottey's continued commitment to educating women....Virginia Alice Cottey dedicated her life to providing educational opportunities for women. Those who have followed her have worked as diligently to not just provide the same education, but to expand the offerings so that today's women get an academic advantage just as they did in 1884."

When Cottey began offering four-year degrees in 2011 the marketing department set out to have Cottey listed on external websites as a four-year institution. Many of these websites, however, use data from the National Center for Education Statistics, which sends a survey to higher education institutions each year titled Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). Cottey was told by these sites that it would continue to be listed as a two-year college until the number of baccalaureate degrees granted were greater than the associate degrees granted in its IPEDS survey. That happened for the first time in 2019.

Today, Cottey offers 15 degree programs with the addition of two new Bachelor of Arts programs: History and Theatre. Those baccalaureate programs will be offered beginning with the fall 2022 semester.





***"We are so pleased to expand our baccalaureate offerings for our students," said Cottey President Dr. Jann Weitzel. "Both history and theatre have been available as minors in our four-year studies, but the interest in those programs by our current and prospective students encouraged us to elevate those to full baccalaureate status."***

The theatre degree program will offer two tracks, theatre generalist and theatre as an agent of social change. "The Bachelor of Arts in Theatre seeks to provide students with the foundation needed to pursue careers in acting, design, stage management, directing, the entertainment industry and graduate study," said Laura Chaney, associate professor of theatre. "A bachelor's level program in Theatre as an Agent of Social Change will prepare students to take leadership roles in community theatre, community awareness programs, not-for-profit agencies, information/awareness/and outreach programs, children's theatre, and small theatre ventures."

"The Bachelor of Arts in History opens up a variety of careers to majors," explained Dr. Sandra Chaney, professor of history. "It will lead some graduates down history-specific professional paths as museum curators, archivists, librarians, and educators at the secondary and post-secondary levels. Other students will find jobs that require instead the application of

highly marketable skills that they will have refined while completing history courses: taking detailed notes; conducting research; analyzing data; managing information; vetting sources; developing evidence-based conclusions; and communicating research findings publicly, among others. Wherever they land, history majors will appreciate the value of connecting the present to the past, applying historical knowledge and thinking to current events to better understand how we got here from there."

"Cottey regularly evaluates its majors to make sure we're meeting the needs of our students and the demands of the marketplace," said Dr. Joann Bangs, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the faculty. "Just last year we began offering a major in elementary education. These two additional majors in history and theatre bring us to a total of 15 baccalaureate programs from which students can choose."

***"We prepared for and expected expansion in the baccalaureate programs offered, and I am thrilled that only ten years after gaining accreditation to offer three programs, there are already 15 in place for Cottey students," said Dr. Pridal. "The horizon is bright for the future of academic programs at Cottey."***

● '94 ————— ● '98 ————— ● '99 ————— ● '00 ————— ● '02

Associate in Science degree added

Purchase of the Center for Women's Leadership; opened in 2000; renamed the Helen and George Washburn Center for Women's Leadership in 2004

Completion and dedication of the Rubie Burton Academic Center. Basketball added as first intercollegiate sport.

Suite Life sculpture installed and dedicated; gift of Lois Lee '44. The Comets volleyball team takes the court for the first time.

Robertson Hall is air conditioned



## CREATING ATHLETICS AT COTTEY —●

The cover story for the Winter 1999 *Viewpoint* was on the Cottey Comets basketball team and the beginning of their first season. The opening paragraph of that article read: "Dr. Sinan Ozkal's [professor of physics and astronomy] astronomy labs spend the evenings searching the heavens for planets and stars. The rest of the student body has been waiting for the first Saturday in November to spot Comets. No, it isn't some sort of celestial phenomenon in the Nevada skies, a meteor shower, or even an appearance by the famous group from the '50s. 'It' is Cottey's first intercollegiate basketball team: The Cottey Comets."

In the 1997-98 academic year, an ad hoc athletic task force met and recommended the College reinstitute intercollegiate athletics. Brenda Rose Pearson was hired as the first athletic director and head basketball coach in January 1999. Her job: recruit players for the first team and create a schedule.



The Comets opened that first season on the road November 2 against Labette County Community College and had their first home game on Saturday, November 6, against North Central Missouri College.

Without an extensive history of intercollegiate athletics (although the College in previous years had club sports in basketball, volleyball and swimming –remember The Swimmin' Women?), the facilities were not fully furnished for competitive sports teams. In particular, the gym did not have a scoreboard prior to that first season. Many colleges and universities have their scoreboards sponsored by soft drink or athletic companies. Cottey may have been the only college to have its scoreboard sponsored by an investment firm. Solomon Smith Barney, the College's investment firm at the time, funded the first scoreboards in Hinkhouse.

Volleyball became the Comets second team the following season, and Marla Kannady Foreman was hired as the volleyball head coach, a position she still holds today, making her the longest tenured coach at Cottey. She is also the first Comets coach to win a conference championship.

***"This was truly my dream job," said Pearson. "It was such a privilege to be given the opportunity to serve as Cottey's first athletic director and basketball head coach and to start the athletic program from scratch. I was so nervous and excited."***



It would be another nine years before the next sport was added to the roster with softball in 2009. Cross country was added in 2014; indoor and outdoor track followed in 2016, and golf joined the athletic offerings in 2017.

One of the limiting factors with adding sports was having teams to compete against within the region and, of course, facilities in which to host home games. For the first years of Comets softball, the team played its home games at Lyons Stadium on the north side of Nevada. That field is the home to the summer collegiate league team, the Nevada Griffons, and also serves as the home field for the high school boys' baseball and girls' softball teams. That changed in 2013 when, through a generous gift from Dorothy Vanek, the Comets finally got their field of dreams, a place at home to play home games.

Softball was the first sport to achieve a championship, although not as a member of a conference. As a member of the National Junior College Athletic Association (NJCAA), the Comets competed with other teams in Region XVI, which was the state of Missouri. In 2017, the underdog Comets captured the Region XVI crown and advanced to district play. In 2018, no longer the underdog, the Comets did it again, becoming a two-time champion.

Cottey would not have the opportunity to three-peat as Region XVI softball champions, however, as the Comets became members of the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA), a national organization for four-year athletics. It was a big commitment to becoming a full four-year institution as athletics was now on par with the academic program.



## ● '09 — ● '11 — ● '13 — ● '14 — ● '15

Softball added as the Comets third sport

Addition of Associate in Arts-Music and Associate in Fine Arts degrees. Announcement of first BA programs: English, Environmental Studies, International Relations and Business

First BA Graduates, Added Business Administration-Management, Liberal Arts (Discontinued after 2021-2022 academic year), Psychology

Cross country added

Dedication of the Judy and Glenn Rogers Fine Arts Building. International Relations and Business split into two separate baccalaureate programs





● '16

Health Sciences (changed to Health and Biomedical Sciences in 2019). Indoor and outdoor track added

● '17

Golf, Criminology, Organizational Leadership, Secondary Education, Women, Gender and Sexuality Studies added. Softball earns first NJCAA Region XVI Championship

● '18

Dedication of the renovated P.E.O. parlor. Biology added. Softball earns second NJCAA Region XVI Championship. Member of NAIA.

● '20

Addition of the Stock Trading Lab, Cadaver Lab, and Library renovations. Purchase of townhouses. Elementary Education added. Esports added.



Then athletic director and head basketball coach Stephanie Beason said, "The student athletes we recruit tell us they want to compete for the Comets for a full four years. Now our athletes can stay at Cottey to complete their bachelor's degree and play their sport for all four years as well. This can only make Cottey more attractive to potential student athletes."

In 2018, basketball player Kelsey Acton said of the move to the NAIA, "I am so excited we are going NAIA because that means I get to play again here at Cottey for my third and fourth years. I could not be happier!"

In 2020, Cottey added esports and in 2021, Cottey became one of 15 colleges in the NAIA to add women's flag football as an intercollegiate sport. All this time, as a member of the NAIA, the Comets were competing as an independent college while looking for a conference home. As a member of the Association of Independent Institutions (A.I.I.), now known as the Continental Athletic Conference (CAC), the Comets earned their first ever conference championship in spring 2021 in volleyball. Not to be outdone, the cross-country team won the CAC championship in fall 2021.

This past year, however, the Comets finally found a conference home when they were admitted as members of the American Midwest Conference. They will begin AMC competition this fall.

No one knows what the next sport, if any, may be in the works for Cottey, but the programs are growing. Basketball has 23 students recruited for the 2022-23 year and looks to add a varsity reserve team according to athletic director and head basketball coach Dr. Maryann Mitts. Softball is in a similar position for next season as well. Obviously the addition of athletics to Cottey College has been a welcome change.

To think it all started 23 years ago with adding one sport, hiring one coach, and recruiting the first 10 Comet athletes.

*It was the dream job, a career I will never forget*

said Pearson. "It's so exciting to see how far athletics has come now with offering eight sports for student athletes. It's a great feeling to know that I had a small part in giving the opportunity to play at the collegiate level to so many young women."



'21

Flag football added. First NAIA conference championship: volleyball. Second NAIA conference championship: cross country. Softball qualifies for the NAIA College World Series. Cottey becomes a member of the American Midwest Conference (AMC) and will begin conference play in August of 2022. Dedication of the Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Campus Life. Reeves Hall is air-conditioned. New Wellness Center is opened.

'22

Added History and Theatre.

# AN *Even Changing* CAMPUS



## *March 27 is a date well-known by alumnae;*

it is, of course, the birthday of Virginia Alice Cottey, the founder of our institution. It is also the day that two facilities were dedicated on campus. The Ruby Burton Academic Center (RBAC) was dedicated on March 27, 1999, and the Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Campus Life was dedicated on March 27, 2021. (Close by was the dedication of Vanek Family Memorial Field on March 29, 2013.)

A common refrain from first-time visitors to the College is "It's so much bigger than I thought it would be." When some people hear that Cottey's residential student capacity is 350, they must have some misconceived notion of an oversized one-room school house. Granted, when Virginia Alice Cottey began her school, everything from bedrooms to dining facilities, from library to classrooms, were all contained in Main Hall. Even then the

needs of the physical plant were struggling to keep up with the needs of the institution as Old Main was expanded several times before Rosemary Hall was constructed in 1903.

## *Today's campus has grown and changed considerably in its history*

but change to the physical plant has been especially noticeable the last 25 years. Two major additions happened about the same time. On August 26, 1997, ground was broken for the new two-story addition to the academic building (later dedicated as Nelle Horner Grantham Hall). In 1998, what was known as the Norman House, at 400 S. College, went up for sale. The full city block with its majestic home was contiguous to the campus, sitting directly behind Hinkhouse Center, and was an opportunity too good for the College to pass up as it was expanding. Cottey purchased the house and began renovations of the grounds and

facility as RBAC was nearing completion. The house is now known as the Helen and George Washburn Center for Women's Leadership and houses the Serenbetz Institute for Women's Leadership, Social Responsibility and Global Awareness. Founder's Day 1999 saw the ribbon cutting and dedication of the Ruby Burton Academic Center and even featured the governor of Missouri, Mel Carnahan, as a guest speaker. In 2000, a week-long celebration occurred in October as the Center for Women's Leadership opened its doors.

About the same time the Center for Women's Leadership was opening, the Suite Life sculpture was being installed in front of Hinkhouse. The statuary was a gift of Lois Watson Lee '44 and was created by Sandra West Van Zandt '68.

The physical plant didn't add new facilities for a few years, but a major change to an established building occurred in 2002 with the air-conditioning of Robertson Hall. Residents of Robbie no longer had to



sweat out the first few weeks on campus and were the envy of the student body. This was a major renovation project as none of the residence halls had duct work. The buildings were warmed by steam heat and radiators, so installing ducts through three floors of Robertson was a major undertaking. (Reeves Hall was air-conditioned in 2021.)



***In 2010, the College began its first comprehensive campaign with the goal to raise \$35 million.***

One of the five goals of the campaign was to generate \$10 million for the construction of a new fine arts instructional facility. Groundbreaking occurred on April 18, 2014, and the building was officially dedicated on September 26, 2015, with classes being held in the building beginning with the spring 2016 semester. Shortly after the dedication of the Fine Arts Building, P.E.O. parlor was renovated through a generous gift of Sophia Zetmeier. Spaces were reconfigured, new furnishings brightened up the parlor, and air-conditioning was added to the shared area.

In fall 2020, the College opened two new labs: the Stock Trading Lab and Esports arena and the Cadaver Lab. Cottey became the first women's college in the country to feature a stock trading lab. The room houses 16 state-of-the-art computer stations, an LED stock ticker tape, and large monitors for use by students and faculty.

Although cadaver labs are not unique, most of them tend to be attached to universities with medical schools or large biology departments, generally not to small baccalaureate institutions. Cottey students who are able to learn in the cadaver lab have a definite advantage should they pursue a health care career.

A recent major renovation was the renovation of the lower level of the Chapel, now known as the Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Campus Life (CCL). The CCI features the beautiful new Chellie Club along with the Spirit Shop (formerly the Bookstore). In addition, there are student gathering and meeting spaces along with a bank of lockers for commuter students. The main floor of the Chapel was also renovated and air-conditioned. The Chapel also features terraced areas to the west and east sides of the building as well.

Last summer the College announced the purchase of property to the west of Robertson Hall that contained townhouses and an office building. In August 2021, that building opened as the Wellness Center housing health services, counseling, spiritual life and diversity, the Cottey cupboard, and the diversity closet.



***This summer, Cottey began construction on the Jann Rudd Weitzel Education Laboratory***

in the lower level of the library. Education students will use the facilities for practice teaching and classroom observation.

Virginia Alice Cottey would be amazed by the look of her campus today. At her death in 1941, the campus consisted of Main Hall, Rosemary Hall (no longer standing), Neale Hall and the newly-constructed P.E.O. Hall. Today's campus has 15 buildings on an 11-block tract along with a 33-acre wooded area, BIL Hill and Lodge. The facility needs are always driven by the needs of the students and the programs offered. Who can tell what the campus will look like in 2050?

## Amping Up THE SATURDAY SING

Traditions come and go, but singing is forever. The Founder's musical show-and-tell, once called "Sup-n-Sing" (short for Supper and Sing) has evolved. This year, the iconic event found a new home. In decades past, students would don their baby-blues and duck jackets and surround the satiated alumnae sitting at Raney's round tables. While staring at the pile of crumbs, each reunion class would glance between tables to see who would be the first to join the CSC in the serenade. The dining room was electric with anticipation and digestion. But 400 people singing, dancing, and shaking their tail feathers creates a lot of heat...Sup-n-Sing had to move to a place where we could breathe!

Held in spacious Hinkhouse Gym without food, the tradition was renamed "Saturday Sing." The space gave everyone ample room to dance, seating was plentiful, and lighting allowed people to find the CSC wearing their beloved DJ. But when was the last time you attended a concert in a gym and thought 'Man, those acoustics blew me away!'...the answer is NEVER. With a basketball court separating classes, this space did not create deep and meaningful connections, shared memories, and



alumnae harmony desired from everyone on campus. After two years of virtual Founder's Day, the alumnae craved intimacy and togetherness. Unsurprisingly, the magic of Founder's Day Weekend would be found in the new amphitheater, the new home of Saturday Sing.

It wasn't just the amphitheater that created the ambiance; students and alumnae together created an unprecedented synergy. The current CSC officers decided to create a "DJ Closet" for the event. The squeals and laughter could be heard across campus as alumnae tried on their DJs. The Class of 1972 came prepared with a guitar and three-part harmony. Seniors now and from years past linked arms, sang, swayed and came together as one. No one wanted to leave, even if the sunset dropped the temperatures low enough to see your breath. The inaugural "Saturday Sing" in the amphitheater was epic. Don't be sad if you missed this tear-jerker; we will be repeating it next year.

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# CAESG!

## *Cotley We Will Give* FRIENDSHIP, LOVE AND LOYALTY



We are lucky people  
because we got to experience  
life at Cotley.  
In a world where people  
toss the words  
Love and Friendships  
around as if they were casting lots.  
We can say  
we know better at Cotley.  
Because we are friends  
who expect no more from one another  
than we ourselves are  
willing to give.

- *LaPara Washington '96*

## *Homecoming* IS WHERE THE HEART IS

Homecoming this year was more than a scheduled event during Founder's Weekend when each reunion class shares a skit. It was returning to a place so many have called home. More than 150 alumnae gathered as one and heard the story of how one Cotley Family began. In 1950, Jackie Greig Kahler '52 visited the Methodist church down the street from campus. It was there that she met and fell in love with a tall Nevada boy named Bill. This family, sometimes called the "First family of Founder's Day," has returned to homecoming 22 times.

This year, Jackie celebrated her 70th reunion and was joined by her senior Emma "Sandy" Willis '51. Though walking around campus was a little different, the sparkle in these two Cotley alumnae's eyes were the same. They love coming home.



## *Zooming In & Out*

### DURING FOUNDER'S

In the first true 'hybrid' Founder's Day weekend, events across campus were taking place in classrooms and online. The online participants in the Class of 1997 reunion kept the reminiscing going even after their on-campus classmates said goodnight. In a creative twist, Class of 2002 brought Zoom to life during their Homecoming skit. The best part of that Zoom performance was they could actually all sing together. And, back by popular demand, Cottey Trivia was enjoyed again using Zoom. This year the class collaborations allowed for the perfect blend of generations and geography; alumnae across decades and places joined together to test their Cottey competency. Will we be returning to a hybrid format in the future? If alumnae are willing to zoom by plane, train, automobile, PC or cell phone, we will continue zooming to Cottey for Founder's Day.

## *Celebrating*

### OUR FOUNDER

It's been more than two years since the alumnae choir could sing during Founder's Chapel Service. It's been decades since the organ has been played during the service. Though we have celebrated our Founder Virginia Alice Cottey (VAC) through a Chapel Service for more than half a century, this year was a fresh new take on celebrating our founder and sowing her seeds towards the future. Second-year student Chloe Bollin joined CCAA President Mallori DeSalle '99 in a poem for two voices to honor the vision of our beloved VAC. The collaboration highlighted the voice of both the student and teacher and was reminiscent of the relationship we all value at Cottey. Our founder was an innovative collaborator and cultivator. Her seeds of hope will bloom for centuries to come.

## *Founder's:*

### IT'S A FAMILY THING!

We consider our Cottey friends like family. For a few women, Founder's was a true family reunion. The Spinden women made their mark on Founder's Weekend by celebrating a first and a fortieth reunion. Holly '21, Amy '17, and Gail Spinden '82 have the fortune of sharing a reunion cycle for 2022. Though they won't all be on the same five-year rotation, they made the most of this family reunion by connecting with their classmates and one another.

What could be better than a mother and daughter Founder's? A reunion that included your cousins and sisters too! Sophie Goltl '20, Marty Golden '82, Chris Baird '73 and Katherine Hayden '72 made creating a Cottey legacy look easy.

Perhaps the most exciting families were those that had future Cottey alumnae. Katie Green '98 brought her daughter Abbie to see the Cottey family fun. Visiting Cottey for the first time, Abbie joined her mom and Louisiana suitemates (1997, 1998 and 1999) in a suite-family reunion. There is no better way to introduce your family to Cottey. After all, Founder's is a family thing!

## *Pack Your Bags*

### SHE IS HEADED TO COTTEY!





## Waddle WITH US

Hermatrude has long been a recognized CSC mascot, but some of you may also recall that Hermatrude has a male counterpart: Mergatroyd. Cottey alumnae who joined the on-campus celebrations enjoyed meeting the current CSC's latest homage to the duck's history. Hermatrude got a face lift (new paint) and Mergatroyd was brought back larger than life! The CSC officers let Hermatrude and Mergatroyd come out and play throughout the weekend. The dynamic duo visited registration, auctioned off a DJ to raise funds for CSC, and posed for pictures during Saturday Sing. The alumnae were excited to see that current students are making the duck story their own. The next time you waddle to campus, make sure you say hello to both of your fine feathered friends.

## The Golden DUCK GOES TO...

This year the winner of the referral challenge was Class of 1990 with the most referrals. But don't stop referring future students to Cottey just because the challenge is over! YOU (alumnae) know how to talk about Cottey better than anyone else. Referrals from alumnae lead to future alumnae. Keep those connections coming and watch for announcements about next year's referral challenge.

## Finding YOUR COTTEY CLUB!

You don't have to wait until a Founder's Day reunion year to get together with amazing Cottey women. Lori Royal, Cottey College Alumnae Association Cottey Club Chair, invites YOU to find your Cottey Club today! If you don't think there is a Cottey club in your area, just find a Cottey friend and start your own. Email Lori at [lroyalama@gmail.com](mailto:lroyalama@gmail.com) for details.

86% of current Cottey students visited before attending. More prospective students are visiting campus alone (compared to group visits that were common in the past). The CCAA wants our family to grow by supporting campus visits for any prospective student who wants to see Cottey for herself. In 2021, the CCAA established the

Cottey Campus Visit Fund endowment and raised \$12,000 as the initial investment, but this isn't enough. The goal of CCAA is to raise this endowment to \$86,000 by the end of 2022 so the endowment matches the percentage of women who visited before enrolling. You can help by making a gift to the College and selecting "Campus Visit

Fund." Whether a monthly gift or a one-time donation, each time you support the Campus Visit Fund, your generosity helps our Cottey Community grow. Someday, we hope to say that EVERYONE who wants to see Cottey before enrolling will be able to pack her bags and visit campus.

# FOUNDER'S DAY 20



## **Alumna Service Award** **Rebecca Zeltinger '94**

Rebecca Zeltinger graduated from Cottey College in 1994. She grew up in Minot, North Dakota, but has lived in the Washington, D.C. area since graduate school. At Cottey she was vice president of Phi Theta Kappa, president of Rotaract, a Golden Key, and played club volleyball. After Cottey, she completed an internship in the Archives of the National Gallery of Art and the following fall she returned to school at Cornell College in Mt. Vernon, Iowa, to pursue a bachelor's degree in philosophy. After Cornell, she earned her master's in Library Science with an emphasis in Archives Administration from the University of Maryland at College Park. She has had a 22-year career in the field of knowledge management focusing on a wide variety of subjects, ranging from emergency medical services for children, traumatic brain injury supports and services, patentable technology, to systems engineering. For the last six years Rebecca has been a knowledge and talent manager for a Washington, D.C. intelligence & security company.



## **Outstanding Young Alumna Award** **Christi-Anne Beatty '19**

Currently in her third year of law school at the University of Cincinnati, Christi-Anne will graduate with her law degree at 22 years-old. She is from Lakeside Park, Kentucky, and started at Cottey when she was 15 years old. In 2019, she graduated with a bachelor's degree in Business Administration-Management. She is working part time as a real estate agent for Keller Williams and part time at a firm that does comprehensive counsel for five real estate developers doing title, zoning, and litigation work. She is co-owner of an Airbnb business and after she graduates and takes the bar exam, she will start full time at the law firm.

She is an active member of University of Cincinnati's running club and spends time doing volunteer tax preparation at United Way, coaching Mock Trial at Archbishop McNicholas High School, and getting to know her Airbnb guests.

For the last 15 years Rebecca has spent much of her free time on Cottey-related activities. She served as the 1994 Class Agent for over 15 years, was a member of the Alumnae Campaign Steering Committee for the Defining Moment Campaign for Cottey College, and served six years on the Cottey College Alumnae Association as Head Class Agent, Vice President, and President. She presently serves as a co-lead for the Cottey College Alumnae Club of the D.C. Area. Presently she also spends some of her free time with Rotary. She enjoys hiking and camping and is happiest if able to go hiking at least once per week at Great Falls. Pre-pandemic she played weekly pick-up soccer and is eager to get back on the field. Above all else, she loves spending time with her guy of nearly a quarter of a century, Jason Taylor.



## **Honorary Alumna** **Steve Reed**

Steve was born and raised in Springfield, Missouri, and moved to Nevada in 1988 to accept a marketing position with Farm & Home Savings. Shortly after his arrival, the Savings and Loan industry went through a tumultuous time and Steve was looking for a more stable work environment. Little did he know that his forever job was a mile away at Cottey College.

Back in the day, Steve wrote press releases, campus-related stories, and prepared print pieces using paper layouts, and he rolled, shot, and developed black and white film to produce photos. Later, Steve learned to navigate the world of digital photography, email, and social media. He created the College's very first website and served as the webmaster off-and-on for several years. Today Steve is responsible for local advertising and public relations, on-campus photography of events, social media, website updates, and—his favorite project—creating the *Viewpoint* magazine. An invaluable member of the community, Steve has served on numerous committees and teams throughout his tenure at Cottey and has been the yearbook advisor for 28 of his 30 years of service.

Although Cottey keeps him busy, Steve is also involved in numerous other communities. He served as a Scoutmaster for a local Troop



# 22 AWARD WINNERS

for almost 15 years and then spent another seven years as a B.S.A. District Chair. He taught an adult Sunday School class at the local United Methodist church for 15 years. He was a runner until injuries caught up with him and for the last few years has been an avid cyclist. He has been a member of the local Rotary club for 28 years and has been very involved over his career with his professional organization CASE (Council for the Advancement and Support of Education), serving four times on the district board and one term on the national commission for marketing and communications.

Steve is married to his amazing and charming wife Angie Casavecchia. Between them they have two sons and two daughters of whom they are exceptionally proud. Steve earned a B.A. in English and religion from Drury College (now University) in 1980.



## **Friends of the College Award** **Dr. Jann and Jack Weitzel**

Jann has been the president of Cottey College for seven years. She has been an educator for 49 years and has taught kindergarten-doctoral level courses. With degrees from the University of Northern Iowa, Lindenwood University, and University of Iowa, Jann brought to Cottey the skills she developed as a teacher, a college professor, a department chair, a dean, and chief academic officer and provost. During her years at Cottey, academic and athletic programs have expanded.

Jann led the campus in identifying goals and creating a strategic plan; developing an updated campus brand and logos; addressing risk; and updating the campus master plan. She has spoken before thousands of P.E.O.s and alumnae and continues to take seriously her commitment to spread the great word about Cottey College. Even throughout the global pandemic, she has led the College to fresh and innovative heights with the creation of the Center for Campus Life; three new academic labs – psychology, cadaver, and stock trading; a new Wellness Center; and updates to the current facilities. She is an ardent fan of the Cottey College Comets and loves the opportunities all students have here to grow and develop into globally aware and socially responsible leaders in their careers and in their lives. Jann is a member of the Council of Independent Colleges, the national Women's College Coalition, the National Association Intercollegiate Athletics Council of Presidents, and Rotary International, and she serves as a peer reviewer for the Higher Learning Commission. A 31-year member of the P.E.O. Sisterhood, Jann is a member of P.E.O. Chapter ND, Nevada, Missouri.

Jack is a retired electrician, having owned an electrical contracting business in Iowa and then moving into sales. He is a Navy veteran who served during the Vietnam Conflict. Throughout the last seven years, he has remained a tireless supporter of Jann and the entire Cottey community. Jann adores participating in any water-related activity and enjoys both biking and hiking. She also loves baking, reading cookbooks, and gardening. Jack loves to fish and fish and fish! Together, they enjoy time with family, playing Word Chums, watching movies, and traveling. They have two amazing daughters and four remarkable grandchildren. Upon retirement, they will move back to the St. Charles, Missouri, area and plan to spend time with family.



## **Distinguished Alumna Award** **Kandis Green Barker '77**

Kandis came to Cottey College from Topeka, Kansas, in 1975. For two years, she lived with some of the most remarkable women she has ever known and she graduated Cottey in 1977. After Cottey, she worked as an activity therapy assistant at the Kansas Neurological Institute where she realized the importance of the visual arts in learning. That awareness set the tone for her life's work. She finished college as a nontraditional art student while she raised a family, provided child care, worked part-time, and volunteered in the schools and at church. She graduated from Washburn University in 1996 with a BFA in painting and a BA in art history, and she studied abroad in Côte d'Ivoire, West Africa. In 2005, she earned her MA in Liberal Studies at Washburn emphasizing the educational value of art museum education across disciplines. She began working at the Mulvane in 1996. Although she taught as an adjunct instructor in Washburn's Education and Art History Departments from 2006-2009, the Mulvane was the very heart and soul of her 25-year career.

Kandis is a member of P.E.O. Chapter FJ, Topeka, Kansas, and the Topeka Chapter of Delta Kappa Gamma, an international society of key women educators. Now that she is retired, she looks forward to devoting time and energy to support the projects offered by these two remarkable organizations.

# IN MEMORIAM: PROFESSOR MICHEL ASHMORE



*Music was his life*

Michel Ashmore, professor emeritus of music, passed away on April 29, 2022, in Termini Imerese, in the province of Palermo on the northern coast of Italy. Mr. Ashmore taught piano at Cottey as an associate professor of music from 1972-2015 and held the title of Gene Wild-Missouri Professor of Fine Arts from 1979-1990.

Michel began his musical studies with his father, and at the age of 17, made his orchestral debut with the Oklahoma City Symphony. He went on to receive a Bachelor of Music degree from Eastman School of Music in Rochester, New York, and a Master of Music degree from the University of Oklahoma in Norman, Oklahoma. During his career, Mr. Ashmore performed as a recitalist and chamber

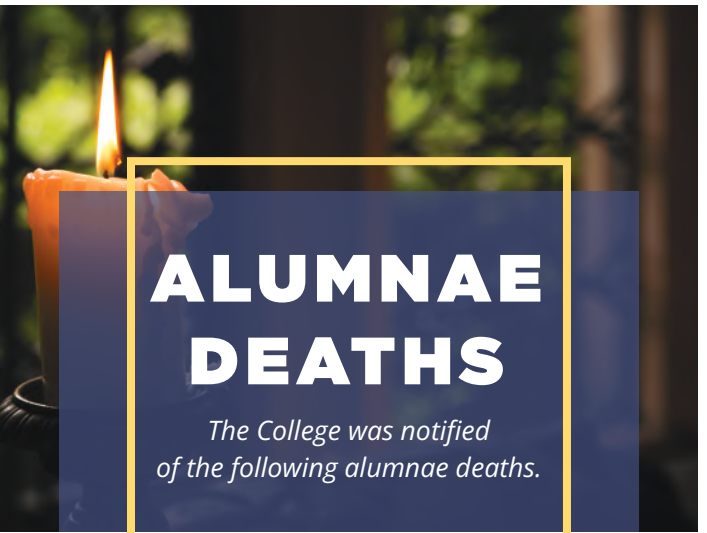
musician in New York and throughout the Midwest, including appearances with the orchestras of Oklahoma City; Cherokee, Iowa; Sherman, Texas; the University of Oklahoma; and the Northland Symphony of Kansas City. In addition to his many Cottey recitals, he performed on “ceremonial” occasions for Presidents’ retirements and inaugurations, Vacation College, P.E.O. Seminar, and at the Convention of International Chapter P.E.O. Sisterhood in Phoenix, Arizona, in 1989.

He also performed in the International Congress of Spanish Music in Santiago de Compostella, Spain, and in May of 1993, he was one of a distinguished few selected from the United States and Europe for the Brendel on Beethoven workshop at Carnegie Hall. His

professional development also included attendance at invitational workshops with some of the world’s most renowned pianists, including Alfred Brendel, Daniel Barenboim, Leon Fleisher, and Richard Goode.

In addition to his teaching duties, Mr. Ashmore served as College Marshal, coordinator of the music department, Fine Arts division chair, and he was a representative on the Faculty Senate, Assessment Committee, Academic Advising Committee, and a number of other committees.





## ALUMNAE DEATHS

*The College was notified  
of the following alumnae deaths.*

**Deidre Larsen McCormick**, Class of '87, passed away on Thursday, October 21, 2021, in her home in Forsyth, Missouri, from complications of metastatic breast cancer and secondary pancreatic cancer.

The second child of Patricia (Jones) Larsen and the late Kurt Larsen, she graduated from Forsyth High School in 1985 and received her associate degree from Cottey College and her B.F.A. from Central Missouri State University. She was later the manager of the university theater at University of Arkansas in Fayetteville. She was married to Robert McCormick on July 28, 1996, in Hollister, Missouri, and they recently celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary. To this union was born one daughter, Riley Valentine McCormick, who is now a senior at Missouri State University. Deidre was preceded in death by her father Kurt Larsen, and her grandparents Johnie and Valentine Jones and Clifford and Helen Larsen.

Deidre was a well-known businesswoman, volunteer and advocate in the Branson and Forsyth communities. She worked for many years with the Branson Lakes Area Chamber of Commerce, Branson Airport and at Tanger Outlets. She served on many committees and boards in the Branson Chamber, most recently as a member of the Executive Board. She was well-known for creatively and successfully coordinating the Black Tie Gala for many years, as well as Tanger Outlet's Fit For Life 5K for nearly 10 years. She served two terms on the Forsyth School Board. She was also at various times associated with Walton Arts Center, Rogers Little Theater, Branson Arts Council, Branson Tri-Lakes Kiwanis and P.E.O.

**1941**

KATHLEEN SHERMAN LAUGHLIN

**1946**

IDA CLAIBORNE DRIVER

**1948**

BETTY PRITCHARD HALEY

**1948**

SUZANNE RICHARDSON HINES

**1950**

BARBARA CALVIN NICHOLS

**1952**

CHARLOTTE KOST ENGEL

**1954**

DOROTHY BARKER MCLAUGHLIN

**1956**

SALLY HANNAH BOHAC

**1956**

JUDITH HORN HARP

**1957**

CAROL GOOLD BLACKSTONE

**1958**

SUZANNE BERNARD WILBUR

**1958**

MARGARET PILCHER CRIPPEN

**1960**

CARLOTTA ROMERO KOLHOF

**1962**

MARY NIERENZ WALDO

**1979**

SUSAN WINDHAM PEACOCK

**1983**

LINDA TURNER SKINNER



On April 6, **DR. CARMEN BOURBON**, professor of Spanish, participated in a virtual seminar on "Teachers Attitudes, Experience, and Strategies towards Gender-Inclusive Language Across Languages" sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

# CAMPUS



**DR. CAROL CLYDE GALLAGHER**, associate professor of organizational leadership, is a contributing author to a forthcoming book on "Navigating Complexities in Leadership: Moving Towards Critical Hope." The text is a volume in the "Contemporary Perspectives on Leadership Learning" series and emerged in response to the confluence of complexities experienced by leadership educators and practitioners amidst global pandemics.



**DR. MARY MBA**, associate professor of French and Francophone, had her peer-reviewed article, "Teaching French And Francophone Cultures Through Students' Culture Involvement," published in volume 2 of Docens Series in Education (pp 1-17).



**DR. JACKIE LORDO**, associate professor of music, has been appointed to the Editorial Committee for the Missouri Journal of Research in Music Education. She will serve as a peer reviewer for this research publication.

# NEWS



**DR. OINDRILA ROY**, associate professor of international relations, virtually presented her original research titled "The Christian Right and the Trump Administration's 'Zero Tolerance' Policy on Child Separation: Are Evangelicals Unanimous in Their Support?" at the Midwest Political Science Association's (MPSA) 79th Annual Conference during April 8-10, 2022. She also chaired and served as discussant for the panel on "Race, Identity, and Perception."

**DR. SELENA KOHEL**, professor of psychology, took part in an interview as a participant-author for a research project titled "Listening to our Colleagues: Toward an Intersectional Introduction to Psychology." The project aims to explore steps that are being taken, and still need to be taken, to create inclusive, equitable and intersectional Introduction to Psychology courses at colleges and universities. Dr. Kohel also served as one of four panelists on Fordham University's Women in Academia! Cultural Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Graduate Student Panel on March 31. The panel was titled, "Navigating the Job Market and Tenure Process as a Woman of Color."







Dr. Jackie Lordo, **PROFESSOR GARY JOHNSON** and two students attended the Missouri Music Educators Conference from January 27-29 in Osage Beach, Missouri. A Cottey exhibit was in place along with 30 plus other colleges and universities.

**DR. ELIZABETH VERKLAN**, assistant professor of women, gender, and sexuality studies, presented research at the Cultural Studies Association (CSA) Conference, in Chicago, Illinois. Her presentation, "Seeing Sweatshops," explores representations of sweated labor and the anti-sweatshop movement within the United States. Dr. Verklan was re-elected to serve on the Governing Board of the CSA, an academic association that extends beyond US borders and encompasses a range of academic disciplines. Dr. Verklan also chaired and moderated panels, ran professional mentorship sessions, provided technical support for hybrid sessions, and attended the annual Governing Board meeting.

## AND

On March 10, **DR. SARAH POLO**, assistant professor of English, presented at the virtual 2022 Conference on College Composition and Communication as part of a panel on "Questioning as Antiracist Praxis for WPAs." Dr. Polo's specific portion addressed the question: "How can we effectively develop and revise first-year writing curriculum to more fully embrace antiracism and promote global awareness?"



**PROFESSOR DR. MANJIRA KUMAR** associate professor of biology and chemistry, presented in the 59th Annual Meeting of Missouri Academy of Science held at Central Methodist University on April 22-23. Dr. Kumar's virtual presentation in science education was on biochemistry lab project, "QUALITATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF CHICKEN LACTATE DEHYDROGENASE." In addition, she served as a judge at the combined middle school session of Microbiology/Cell/Molecular Biology, Medicine and Human Health, Behavioral & Social Science in Missouri Junior Academy of Science Competition.



**DR. JULIE TIETZ**, professor of psychology, attended the annual conference of the Midwestern Psychological Association in Chicago, Illinois, April 21-23. While there, she enjoyed several teaching-oriented sessions, such as Navigating Difficult Moments in Teaching Social Justice and Revising Syllabi & Policies with Belonging & Growth in Mind.



## NOTES

In January 2022, the first Open-Access Educational Resource (OER) textbook focusing on gender from an anthropological perspective was published and made available online. A short profile by **DR. SARAH QUICK**, associate professor of anthropology, "Indian Rights for Indian Women: Kathleen Steinhauer, an Indigenous Activist in Canada" is included.





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## WELCOME DR. NILES

Being a college president wasn't always the dream career for Dr. Stefanie D. Niles. "My first exploratory career path was actually musical theatre," said Dr. Niles. "However, while I was a very good singer and strong actress, I was much more of a 'mover' than a 'dancer.' I am also very practical. I quickly realized that a lifetime of auditions and competing for the next big role was not best suited for my personality."

During her time as a student at the University of Virginia, Dr. Niles got a glimpse into the world of higher education while she interned in the admissions office. "I found the work extremely fulfilling and impactful," said Dr. Niles. "When I graduated college, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in higher education." Fast forward to 2022, and Dr. Niles has spent decades working alongside thousands of students and parents to make this critical decision that shapes students' lives.

On April 25, the Cottey College Board of Trustees announced that Dr. Niles would serve as the thirteenth president of the College. "I find Cottey's mission distinctive and compelling," said Dr. Niles. "Growing up, I attended a single-gender high school. I have seen first-hand how the women's



*When I graduated college, I knew I wanted to pursue a career in higher education.*

college educational experience can be transformative and tremendously affirming. It enables those who partake to find their voices and develop as leaders to assume critical roles in an increasingly global society."

Dr. Niles comes to Cottey from Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, where she served as the Vice President for Enrollment and Communications, a position she held since 2018. Prior to that, she worked at Dickinson

College, Hollins University, Bryn Athyn College, DePauw University, and the University of Tennessee.

Dr. Niles also brings leadership experience from serving on many boards and associations across higher education throughout her career; most notably serving as the president of the National Association for College Admission Counseling (NACAC) in 2018-2019 and her selection into the Fulbright International Education Administrators Program in 2017.

Dr. Niles begins her duties as Cottey's President on July 1. Her first few months will be focused on spending lots of time with the Cottey community. "I want to learn as much as I can about Cottey and its students, faculty, staff, alumnae, and the vibrant P.E.O. community," said Dr. Niles. "I am excited to have conversations with individuals and groups that inspire thoughtful dialogue and proactive consideration of how we can position Cottey to continue to serve and educate women."