

Fall 2021

Landscape

For Alumni and Friends of Landmark College



LC Celebrates 'Great and Quiet Achievements' of Retirees, pages 3–17

Emeritus Professor Jim Baucom Named Honorary 'Dr.', page 18



An autumn night sky over the Landmark College campus.

Photo by Todd Miller

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From the President's Desk



Dr. Peter Eden (far left) and Dr. Gail Gibson Sheffield, vice president for academic affairs (far right), with Fall 2021 Phi Theta Kappa inductees.

Landmark College has always moved forward when responding to the evolving needs of the students and families it serves. From its early years as a transitional college for students with dyslexia; to the addition of a range of baccalaureate and associate degree program; and, most recently, to on-campus and outward-facing offerings of online programming under LC Online, the College—while still intentionally small—is now a more comprehensive institution for neurodiverse students with LD.

This issue of *Landscape* focuses on our foundational faculty and staff who retired in 2021. Many of these individuals provided the bedrock upon which LC has built its deserved reputation as a one-of-a-kind college with highly intentional learning-living supports.

As alumni and friends of Landmark College, your lives have likely been significantly affected by the time you spent at LC in the presence of many beloved faculty and staff. Simply put, the College would not be what it is without their considerable efforts and input as we matured over the decades.

While these and other LC retirees (and the roles they played) will never be forgotten, the College continues to move forward to best support neurodivergent learners. You'll read in this issue how LC has adopted a new, comprehensive advising model that maximizes

the supports and scaffolding available to all students (page 19). Moreover, the growth of our LC Online programs and an expanded presence on the West Coast through our Bay Area Success Center are further signs of the College's willingness to grow in response to student and market needs (page 21).

As with other colleges (indeed, all industries globally), we continue to deal with the restrictions and changes imposed by COVID-19. With confidence and the spirit of tenacity befitting LC Sharks, we look toward a renewed sense of normalcy on campus and in our operations as the pandemic becomes increasingly recognized as an endemic, like the flu, and measures to protect us all become fully established.

In this issue we recognize the important educators and professionals who have moved on recently from LC. And, simultaneously, we accept new individuals, programs, and approaches that are needed for student success. The history and future of Landmark College can be considered simultaneously different and identical. And that is a good thing.

With regards,

Dr. Peter Eden
President, Landmark College



Attendees at the May 2021 ceremony for 2020 and 2021 retirees included (clockwise from top left): Carolyn Olivier, Kathy D'Alessio, and Jim Olivier; Tom Hinckley; Geoff Burgess and Ned Olmsted; Patrice Nolan, Chris Arieta, Debbie Gassaway-Hayward, and Lena Jahn; Denise Manning Higgins; Ann McCloskey; Steve Carmichael and his wife, Dede Cummings; and Kathryn Karmen.

Photos by Valerie Cox and Todd Miller

Great and Quiet Achievements

The Landmark College community paid homage on May 22, 2021, to nearly two dozen faculty and staff who retired in 2020 and 2021.

The ceremony took place the morning of LC's Spring 2021 Commencement and drew colleagues from near and far to offer individual tributes to each retiree. President Peter Eden called the event "a small gesture of appreciation from the College, from your colleagues. It in no way can match the effect you've had on so many lives. There are countless people out in the world whose lives have been changed because of you."

Professor Kathy D'Alessio, a founding faculty member who retired after 36 years at LC, offered a few words of appreciation in summary:

Thirty-six years ago, Landmark College opened its doors to 55 employees and 77 students. Here today are colleagues with whom I have had the honor of working within some configuration of these 36 years. We are not only colleagues, but lifelong friends, as in many ways we have grown up together. This is the gift that Landmark has given us. The longevity of our career in one place is extraordinary—really—by today's standards. We stayed because it was here where we found a home and a purpose.

So, to my friends/colleagues: Each one of you has made a significant difference in the lives of hundreds of students who you have taught, advised, and coached. Our success as a college would not have been the same without your dedication, your compassion, your innovative thinking, your resilience, and your flexibility to create and to make change happen.

However, more than all this has been your humility to learn from each student in your charge and to genuinely love what you do. We were lucky to find a job we love so that we never felt like we worked a day in our life!

I will read the first stanza of a poem by John O'Donohue aptly entitled, *For Retirement*:

"This is where your life has arrived,
After all the years of effort and toil;
Look back with graciousness and thanks
On all your great and quiet achievements."

The imprint of our work will remain our legacy, and we leave knowing we did a good job. Congratulations, retirees and friends!

2020 Retirees*

Jim Baucom
35 years

Steve Carmichael
26 years

Ann Wheeler
34 years

Cindy Tolman
24 years

Chris Arieta
28 years

Liz Cooper
20 years

Lena Jahn
28 years

Ann McCloskey
14 years

*Profiles of the 2020 retirees can be found in the Winter/Spring 2021 issue of [Landscape](https://landmark.edu/alumni) at landmark.edu/alumni.

2021 Retirees

Kathy D'Alessio
36 years

Debra Berigow
32 years

Kathryn Karmen
25 years

Tom Hinckley
35 years

Ned Olmsted
31 years

Susan Frishberg
22 years

Geoff Burgess
33 years

Patrice Nolan
28 years

Debbie Gassaway-Hayward 21 years

Denise Manning Higgins 33 years

Joyce Rodgers
26 years

Mark Higgins
16 years

Jean Fulton also retired in 2021 after 20 years of service.

Kathy D'Alessio

36 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Kathy D'Alessio leaves an impression. "I continue to hear her voice in my head to this day, 22 years later," says Kerri Bennett Silva '97. "Kathy is the reason I succeeded at Landmark College."

A more recent alumnus, **Alex Evans '19**, calls D'Alessio "a second mom to me. She was my advisor for two and a half years, but even after I switched advisors, I'd still go see Kathy fairly regularly just to talk, catch up, and get advice."

The effect of this lady is tangible, as one might expect from a founding faculty member of LC. Along with other legends of the College's nascent years, like Professor Emeritus Jim Baucom (now an honorary doctor of humanities) and Jim and Carolyn Olivier (LC's first president and admissions director, respectively), D'Alessio's stature at Landmark is towering.

"The attribute that rises to the top when describing Kathy is professionalism," Professor Dotti Osterholt said in her tribute to D'Alessio last May. "Her deep respect for her students and her colleagues was ever present in the work she did."

D'Alessio had been teaching K-12 in public schools in the mid-1980s when she heard from a friend about a new college for dyslexic students opening on the former campus of Windham College. She packed up her young son and moved from Burlington, Vermont, to Putney and, along with those other LC pioneers, began renovating the dilapidated buildings at the shuttered former home of Windham.

"That summer before we opened, we were hanging doors, cleaning radiators—you know, doing all sorts of cleanup here as we prepared to onboard 77 students,"

D'Alessio said in a recent interview. Despite the uncertainty of launching a unique college for dyslexic students, D'Alessio's boundless energy buoyed her and her colleagues. "There was such excitement about this venture and about being together with such amazing young professionals."



Kathy D'Alessio with Professor Dotti Osterholt

Once LC was established, D'Alessio negotiated between a myriad of roles, as did many early faculty and staff. And as the College's student population expanded to include those with other learning and attention challenges, D'Alessio kept up with the research in emerging fields of LD. "I had been a resource room teacher in public education for five

years before Landmark, so I had run the gamut of dyslexia, ADHD, and other learning differences before we really identified them. The literature and research exploded at that time."

Throughout the decades, D'Alessio collaborated on many research projects and presentations with colleagues at LC, including Dr. Manju Banerjee, vice president for educational research and innovation, and faculty members Dr. Lucy Stamp, Dotti Osterholt, and Denise Higgins (herself a 2021 retiree), among many others. She held various positions over her 36 years here, including tutor, advisor, and faculty member. Always, her heart and mind come back to the students she guided throughout those decades.

"The highlights have always been the students: working with such wonderful students, challenging students, sometimes difficult students. I remain in

contact with many of them. Some are married with families and yet we still talk every few months.”

Kerri is one of them, although she lives across the country in Southern California. “Kathy not only gave me guidance; she opened her heart and her home to me like I was family, and she continues to be a close friend today,” she says. Bennett recalls how D’Alessio helped her through the difficult emotional transition of understanding her own learning style and her subsequent success at LC. “When you finally experience something like doing well in school—something that comes so easily to so many people, and finally you are one of them—you don’t know how to feel or act around your peers,” she says. “You don’t want to brag, and in some ways you don’t want to be noticed, but it also feels really good and you want to keep climbing. Kathy helped me navigate all those emotions, seeking only one outcome: to showcase and be proud of my potential and to have a clear path toward a positive future.”

Alex says D’Alessio’s influence on his life was so far-reaching, he has trouble nailing down the most enduring. “She helped me get all my ducks in a row as far as managing my ADHD and finding more efficient ways of doing things. She also encouraged me to use all the resources at Landmark, and even offered advice on nonacademic challenges. She’s something special.”

In her tribute last May, Osterholt called D’Alessio’s dedication to students and her colleagues an ingredient in the “secret sauce” that helped LC become the unique college it is. D’Alessio reflects on



D'Alessio shares a laugh with Bob Lewis, former chair of LC's Board of Trustees.

that and sums up her momentous career by bringing it back to her students.

“I never gave up on students even when they gave up on themselves. I held my expectations high and I’d like to think they felt it; sometimes it might have come across as tough, but it was always meant with care, respect, and love.

“I tried to hold my students accountable and to help them to see themselves in the future. This didn’t always work, but the seeds were planted as evidenced to me now years, decades later, as many of my students keep in touch with me and express their gratitude. Each student made me a better human being. What a way to end a career I never imagined would be so gratifying.” 🌱

Tom Hinckley

35 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Tom Hinckley faced a choice in 1986: take a job teaching at an established private school in New Hampshire, or take a chance on a fledgling college in Putney, Vermont, serving students with dyslexia. (Spoiler alert: he chose the latter.)

Fast forward 35 years, and Professor Hinckley is remembered in his retirement as a faculty member who exemplified Landmark College’s reputation for helping students find their educational footing. “There was a lot of uncertainty about the College in those early days, but we were all teaching and learning

from each other,” Hinckley says. “Carolyn Olivier (LC’s admissions director at the time) was the guru of working with students with LD; she had admitted every one of them, and she had insights about each student. The learning curve was steep, but everyone was on the same page about the College’s mission.”

Hinckley began his career in the Peace Corps, teaching math and science at a rural village school in Nepal. When he returned home, he earned a graduate degree from Antioch New England University, taught junior high and high school, and married wife Jill in 1985. (She is now LC's assistant vice president for academic affairs and dean of the School of Education.) A year later, Hinckley came to LC where he began teaching math. Within a few years, he was teaching science, and eventually he would witness its evolution into an important educational growth area for LC. (The College's newest baccalaureate degree is the B.S. in Life Sciences, added in 2020.)

Along the way, Hinckley twice served as chair of the Natural Sciences Department and taught many science courses through the years, including

Introductory Biology, Evolution, Aquatic Ecology, Introductory Physical Science, Introductory Geology, and Introductory Geography. He also mentored numerous student-scholars, including **Anaïs Sidonia '19**. On her initial visit to LC, Anaïs sat in on one of Hinckley's classes.

"After years of struggling through school, I was miraculously following what was going on in class," says Anaïs, recalling that Hinckley used tactile and visual methods to teach about genetic drift and the bottleneck effect. "That was the foundation of my trust in Landmark and its Life Sciences program."

Hinckley fondly recalls his own mentors in the early years of LC, including founding faculty Kathy



Jill and Tom Hinckley at May's retirement ceremony

D'Alessio, Jim Baucom, and Linda Hecker; and Ray LaBonte, who still works with students as a Drake Center advisor. Some of Hinckley's fondest words are for late staff members Jerroo Eduljee and Dianne Wood, who Hinckley says "were right there in the nitty gritty, really teaching us how to do our jobs and do them effectively."

Hinckley also credits LC's first president, Jim Olivier, with a management style that encouraged discussion and respectful disagreement. "Even when things got heated, Jim would listen, and listen, and listen. It was so important to the growth of Landmark College that Jim didn't wield his power like a stick; he wielded it like a violin."

Anaïs, now a biochemistry student at Northeastern University, pays Hinckley a similar compliment.



Professors Tom Hinckley and Kim Coleman present Anaïs Sidonia '19 (center) with the Natural Science Department Award in 2018.

"His office door is always open, and Tom's down-to-earth personality helped me to manage my last year at Landmark and make choices to continue my journey as a transfer student at Northeastern. He meets life with openness, the same way he met students where they were on their academic journeys."

At May's ceremony for retirees, Hinckley made an impromptu appearance on stage and quoted Lou Gehrig: "I consider myself to be the luckiest man on the face of the earth. To stay for 35 years at LC, I really have a love for the mission. But it's the people that really matter. It's the students. And the people you work with. I really do feel lucky to have had that experience." 🌱

Geoff Burgess

33 Years

By Chris Lenois

A stack of folders equivalent to the height of several phone books sits atop Geoff Burgess's desk.

They contain the planners for students he advised and the courses he taught over 33 years at Landmark College. He had been reviewing them in preparation for this article about a career arc that started as a tutor and culminated in his role as dean of the School of Professional Studies & Science.

One common denominator that stands out at every stage of Burgess's career has been his approach to teaching communication in a way that simultaneously serves the individual and the collective. He notes, however, that the discipline was not at all his specialty when he first arrived at Landmark College in 1988 with a background in elementary school education.

"Teaching first and second grade is the best training you could ever have to learn how to manage a classroom," Burgess chuckles. He then goes on to acknowledge how much working with mentors like founding faculty Jim Baucom (now emeritus professor) and the late Dianne Wood and Jerroo Eduljee helped shape his instincts and values. "Landmark just seemed to have put together a way of approaching people and education in a way that was critical, but also thoughtful and respectful."

Burgess had applied for the tutoring job to better balance work and family responsibilities, serving as the primary caregiver for their young child while his wife pursued an advanced degree. A hallway conversation with Wood—the College's first communication department chair—two years into his time at Landmark "changed my life," as he put it. He remained an advisor but also began devising creative ways to help students with language-based disabilities become better communicators.

One approach was to emphasize oral communication skills in a way that would help students access language for writing. Burgess cites it as an early example of the College's philosophy to help students focus on their strengths. Alumna **Nicole Goodner**



MacFarlane '98 said she would not have succeeded in those classes without his guidance.

"Even though the class was small and I knew everyone, I was terrified," Nicole recalled in an email. Fortunately for her, Burgess was also her advisor at the time. "I can't pinpoint what exactly Geoff did regarding his teaching method that gave me the ease and confidence to speak in front of the class, but I believe he's the reason I was able to deliver speeches in the manner required," she said.

Burgess sees three themes emerging during his tenure: community, experiential learning, and technology.

"I always felt having a public profile is part of the mission of the communication department; not merely bringing people to campus, but bringing them together, and not simply people on campus," he says.

Poster fairs and the Academic Speakers Series are two enduring examples of his efforts to connect communities on and off campus with the work and interests of the student body. He also had the idea to make LC a host site for naturalization ceremonies for new citizens of the United States.

Burgess recognized that partnering with local organizations to promote or present campus events often forged further collaborations related to the second theme—experiential education opportunities. Advertising in *The Commons*, for example, began a

relationship with the weekly local newspaper that eventually created journalism internships and helped establish the College's own news and arts publication, *Voices*. He also set up a program for LC students to mentor local elementary school students.

In the classroom, Burgess used role-playing exercises that enabled students to practice real-life scenarios like job interviews and conflict resolution. And when the College began exploring study abroad opportunities, he developed an intercultural communication class and pioneered trips to England, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, and Ghana.

"There's a saying in the field of communication that you cannot *not* communicate," Burgess explains. "Getting people to think about themselves as communicators is the experiential part. In the real world, how does this connect to my life? I love that stuff. That's why you work at Landmark. It's showing people what they can do."

Technology, the third theme, is integral to communication in today's world. In the early 2000s, Burgess took courses in website design and learned how to navigate education platforms like Canvas, Moodle™, and Blackboard™.

"I felt it was useful for my students to have an online presence that they could visit outside of class," says Burgess, who wrote a paper and did presentations about how this "middle ground" would aid students' working memory. "When students entered that space, it would reacquaint them with what we were doing in class. It would help those who needed more time to process information."

He also anticipated early on that technology would affect social constructs and incorporated that into an Internet Culture and Communication class. One assignment was to have students go an entire day without using any digital or electronic media and then write about the experience. He remembers student reaction to that exercise as being positive, despite their initial reservations about unplugging.



Professor Geoff Burgess

Photo by Valerie Cox

On the other hand, students did not find his "go to class in your pajamas day" as appealing as it initially sounded. "They all realized how distracting it was to try and work while being at home."

Beyond the communication program, the College has tapped into Burgess's understanding of technology to launch

the online post-baccalaureate certificate and train faculty in conducting classes online when the campus went remote due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These helped formulate the College's new LC Online brand of educational offerings.

With such a breadth of contributions, it was only fitting that the College honored Burgess by attaching his name to the Academic Award for Communication, Entrepreneurship and Leadership. He found the gesture especially touching since it put him in the company of some of his early mentors.

"When I would give the Dianne Wood Award, I would tell students that it meant a lot to me. She was a friend and a mentor. And what you demonstrate, what you've shown to this community here at Landmark is what she valued," Geoff says. "So, if whoever gives the Geoff Burgess Award in the future, if they say to that student that their efforts are a reflection of what I valued, that would be really great." 🌱

Watch the full retirement ceremony at landmark.edu/retirees20-21

Denise Higgins

33 years

By Chris Lenois

Denise Manning Higgins had a corkboard on the wall of her office where she tacked photos of the students she taught or advised during her career at LC.

Several photos are set in her home, where fortunate students were invited to eat dinner, play ping-pong, and converse with their peers on topics beyond those discussed in her office or classroom.

As she packed up her office over the summer, at least half had been removed. Yet some of the remaining photos dangled by their pushpin over the corkboard's edge, indicating just how full of memories it had become over the past 33 years.

One of the students pictured on the board is **Blain Namm '00**. "I happened to be away from home before I got to Landmark. I hadn't had a home-cooked meal in about a year, so it was great," he remembered.

Blain gives Higgins all the credit for turning around his own attitude about his abilities as a student. "She was very direct and straightforward, but she also spoke from the heart. She takes the time to put herself in people's lives in a very magical way. It was really

impactful because I started to see really great grades, and I started to believe that I can do this."

Another bulletin board member, **Rachel Wolfson '08**, had similar recollections as Blain about Higgins's ability to connect beyond the academics.

"Denise has an amazing sense of humor. She could just make me laugh and find the funny things in life," says Rachel. "She believed in me fiercely. She made sure I learned to advocate for myself. That played a role not just at Landmark but throughout my whole life."

By the time she came to LC in 1988, Higgins was a seasoned high school history teacher with stops in New York City and then in nearby Brattleboro, Vermont. When she started training in LC's universal design methods, she felt it naturally aligned with her own approach to finding creative ways to impart lessons. Soon after, she discovered just how novel and well-respected the College's philosophy was when she



Denise Higgins, second from left, and husband Mark, far right, with some of the alumni they have stayed connected to: Rob Lutz '17, Erica Loveland '20, and Ashlee Charette '17.

and her colleague would present at conferences for organizations such as the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA).

"I remember a session at a convention where we were met with several attendees who told us they always look for and attend the Landmark presentations," recalled Higgins, who was honored as an "Outstanding Academic Advisor" by NACADA in 2016.

Higgins says she enjoyed the mix of academic advising and classroom teaching at Landmark. The College's small size also allowed her to develop courses in subject matter that satisfied her own intellectual curiosities, which included history and the College's first sociology classes. She served as Phi Theta Kappa advisor for several years and became involved in the

College's Study Abroad trips to London when they started in the late 1990s and served as the program director the past four years.

While her daughter's marriage to an Icelandic diplomat will provide Higgins with opportunities to continue traveling to countries where he is posted, her only big post-retirement plans to fill the space left by teaching is spending time with her husband, Mark (who also just retired as controller at LC), and reading issues of *The New Yorker* the same week they arrive.

"It's been rewarding watching students come from one place and leave in another. I never once dreaded driving to work in 33 years. It never felt like work. So many times I'd think, 'I can't believe I'm actually getting paid to do this.'" 🐼

Debra Berigow

32 Years

By Chris Lenois

Debra Berigow joined the language skills tutorial department at Landmark College in 1989.

Even though she had a Special Needs certification and had worked with neurodivergent learners in both adult education and high school settings, she says her first year at the College was a brand new experience.

"I took advantage of all the professional development opportunities, and my supervisors and colleagues were great mentors," says Berigow.



Debra Berigow

Curriculum, who then remained until they graduated, was always a special experience."

When the College began having a greater need for supporting students with attention and organizational challenges, Berigow earned her certification as an ADHD/Executive Function Coach and continued working in that capacity until her retirement this past spring.

While her responsibilities included teaching Study Skills and Basic Math courses, she says she preferred working individually with students. As the College evolved from its early tutorial model to academic advising, Berigow went from working with five students at a time to more than 20.

Being a full-time academic advisor was especially gratifying, Berigow says, because it allowed her to follow the entire arc of a student's time at Landmark College. "Working with students who began their Landmark career in the Language Intensive

In 2019, Berigow's coaching colleague, Ruth Wilmot, retired. One of Wilmot's students, **Gabrian Raphael '21** was then assigned to work with Berigow. Gabriel expressed appreciation for her ability to make him feel comfortable. "She was very patient and very focused," says Gabriel. "I just felt like she was tuned in and rooting for me in a lot of ways."

Gabriel remembers Berigow having him block out his weekly schedule on large sheets of paper, which helped him manage his time and prioritize tasks. He says she was willing to meet with him even more

than once a week, if necessary, just to make sure he was meeting his goals, and that the work he did with Berigow remains valuable to him after graduation.

“Sometimes I forget the strategies that she and I came up with. But when I stick with them consistently, they work and they help me move forward,” Gabrian says.

In addition to catching up with family, taking hikes in the countryside, and working on home projects, Berigow says her post-retirement plans include learning to play the mandolin.

Wilmot provided the tribute to Berigow at the Spring 2021 retirement ceremony. She praised Berigow’s “incredible sense of humor” and her willingness to give presentations about the work coaches do with students.

“Landmark is losing an incredibly skilled coach with the departure of Deb Berigow, and I, for one, wish her the very best,” Wilmot said during the retirement ceremony. “I am sad to think that Landmark students will no longer be able to take advantage of her wonderful support.” 🌱

Ned Olmsted

31 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Professor Ned Olmsted’s first exposure to Landmark College happened because he was a supportive big brother.

John Olmsted ’88 enrolled as one of LC’s first students, and Ned, who was teaching in Boston at the time, came to visit his kid brother during Family Weekend.

“I sat in on a class taught by none other than Professor Dan Toomey and I thought to myself, ‘I can do this,’” the now-retired English professor remembers. “Little did I know how challenging teaching at Landmark could be.”

Olmsted cut his teeth on challenges, though: teaching English as a second language on a Peace Corps assignment in Afghanistan and volunteering at a remote fishing outpost in Newfoundland, Canada. After his pivotal visit to Putney, Olmsted joined LC part time in the late 1980s, training alongside fellow newbies Denise Manning Higgins and Geoff Burgess (both 2021 retirees). Olmsted became full-



Photo by Valerie Cox

Professor Ned Olmsted and wife Liz

time faculty in 1990, when LC exclusively enrolled students with dyslexia.

“It required me to slow down and take a more thoughtful look at how language is acquired by different learners and what I needed to do to reach those students whose processing styles were different.” Over the years, as the student population grew

to include those with ADHD, autism, and other LD, Olmsted kept adapting.

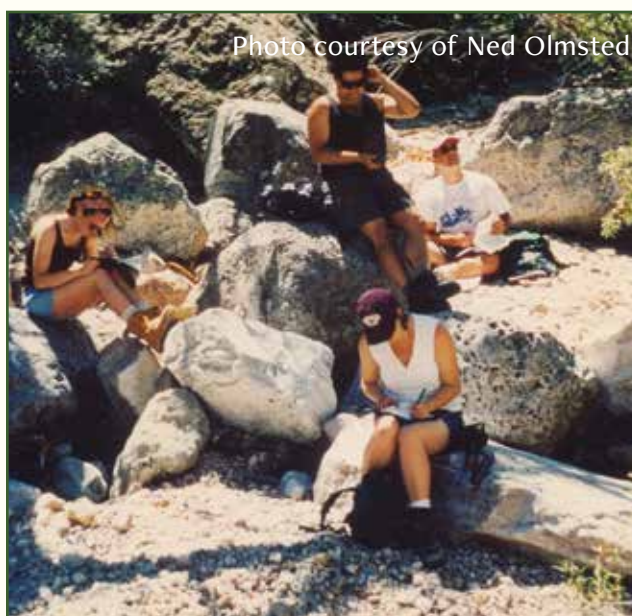
“It could be unsettling at first, but we all became more open to learning new styles and what eventually came to be known as neurodiversity,” he says. “That’s probably why I stayed here so long, because I enjoyed the challenge of trying to make good diagnostic calls and then adjusting my teaching design accordingly.”

One of Olmsted’s innovations was a mid-90s collaboration with science faculty member Tracy Devlin, team-teaching science and nature writing in

a course that included a spring break trip to the Sonoran Desert in Arizona.

“It was the College’s first study away program. We had about 10 students camping, cooking, and tenting together for the entire spring break. They sketched, kept journals, did team building and cooperative learning. I was able to do similar things later with the study abroad trips I led to Scotland with Prof. Lucy Stamp. Those trips had the same philosophy and goal of pushing students into new experiences.”

John Marino ’14 was on one of Olmsted’s trips to Scotland and he recalls the professor’s vibrant laugh and sense of humor. “There was a moment when (Olmsted) sheepishly admitted that he was a fan of SpongeBob Squarepants, and once the wall was



Ned Olmsted, far right, leading a group of students through the Sonoran Desert in March 1995.

broken, he laughed with us as he gleefully quoted all his favorite scenes,” Marino said in a recent email. “Ned treated me like a fellow human, waking up each day and sharing the quest of figuring out how to best live on this rock flying through space. It was refreshing and inspiring.”

In retirement, Olmsted plans to embrace his love of the outdoors “as long as my body holds up,” exploring the trails of Vermont and New Hampshire with his “hiking buddies,” Professors Stamp and Toomey.

“I want to convey the profound respect, admiration, and deep affection I feel for my colleagues and for the institution as a whole. It’s rare to be employed at a place where so many people are those I’m honored to call friends and who have been so significant to my life’s work.” 🌱

Patrice Nolan

28 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Jenny Beller ’20 recalls an anecdote her advisor, Patrice Nolan, told her during Jenny’s first semester at LC.

When Nolan was an art student, a classmate was perplexed by an assignment to deconstruct a wooden chair. The night before it was due, Nolan’s classmate was inspired by a pile of sawdust and brought that to class as her “deconstructed chair.”

“Patrice told me this when I was struggling with an art assignment that was vague and ambiguous in nature,” says Jenny. “I was spinning my wheels and getting frustrated because the literal parts of my brain were jarring with the abstract assignment.” Nolan helped Jenny get “unstuck” by citing her classmate’s example of a brilliant but simple solution to an ambiguous problem.

Nolan brought a direct but soft-spoken approach to her advising role at LC, from which she retired this

year after 28 years. Her background as an artist—she holds a bachelor of fine arts from Mount St. Joseph’s University in Cincinnati, Ohio—led her to open a successful frame shop and art gallery in Wilmington, Vermont. (She counted the Muppets among her clients.) Education was calling, though, and Nolan decided to earn a master’s in education from Antioch University New England.

A local ad for a tutor led her to LC in 1993. “I had been teaching elementary school and was fascinated by ADHD, which was new in the field,” Nolan says. “I knew Landmark was the place where I’d learn more about it.” Over the years, Nolan taught many subjects, including study skills, English, and drawing. She

piloted the first two study abroad programs at LC, and eventually became an advisor.

“When I was hired, I asked what the criteria was. They told me you have to intuitively be good with students; be resilient and have a good sense of humor; and be willing to step in and do a lot of things you’ve never done before. These were opportunities for all of us on the faculty, and we would all grow from them.”

The most recent opportunity for Nolan was becoming Transition at College (TaC) advisor, working with new LC students who need additional supports before deciding on a college path. In that role, she became colleagues with her former advisee, Jenny Beller, who worked for a time as a mentor in TaC.

“I’ve seen Jenny grow into a professional with maturity and strong communication skills,” says



Photo by Valerie Cox

Patrice Nolan

Nolan, noting that one of the most rewarding parts of her LC career is seeing such progress in her former students. Jenny even adopted one of Nolan’s favorite sayings, “Go forth, and do well” as a sendoff in her emails to TaC students.

In retirement, Nolan hopes to nurture her artist’s soul and spend more time painting and drawing, and to resume her passion for ballroom dancing. (She once competed in Brattleboro’s “Dancing with the Stars” fundraising event, performing an Argentine tango with a professional dancer.) Even with those fruitful hobbies to look forward to, Nolan is feeling pangs of sadness over leaving LC.

“The number one thing I’ll miss is my colleagues. We’ve been through so much together: a pandemic; 9/11; a lot of losses and support for each other. Landmark is a culture that doesn’t necessarily exist outside of campus. It’s a community and a family.” 🌿

Dr. Joyce Rodgers

26 Years

By Chris Lenois

When Joyce Rodgers came to Landmark College in 1995, she already had a wealth of experience from her work in the private and nonprofit sectors as well as teaching on the college level as an adjunct.

But the qualification that most piqued the interest of then-Academic Dean Jim Baucom during her job interview might have been an American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter program that she hadn’t even finished.

“I think Jim saw that I was interested in alternative ways of teaching and learning,” says Rodgers, adding that the ASL program helped her understand more about her own learning style as well. “I had been assuming all my life I was a visual learner because I was in the arts. But in that program, I found that I learned by listening as much, if not more, than by looking.”

Listening was a key component to working at Landmark College, Rodgers quickly discovered. Whether it was the one-on-one tutoring she provided to students in the early years or the classroom teaching she transitioned to a few years later, she grew to understand that guiding conversations—rather than having ready-made answers—best served students with learning and attention challenges.

Alumna **Theo van Roijen ’00** shared this anecdote to illustrate Rodgers’ guiding hand: “Joyce would



Photo by Mark DiPietro

Dr. Joyce Rodgers



Dr. Joyce Rodgers with students during a 2018 summer session.

meet with me after class to help me understand my coursework. None of it made any sense and I felt like dropping out. Joyce asked me, ‘Theo, how do you eat an elephant?’ I said to her I had no idea and she said, ‘You’re going to take one bite at a time. We’re going to go one section at a time with your work and your papers.’ She told me I could make it at Landmark and that I was indeed ready for college. Having Joyce believe in me gave me hope.”

Rodgers’ training in the fine arts and her master’s degree in art history enabled her to split time between teaching arts and humanities courses. She reveled in the opportunity to cross disciplines and feels it enhanced the creativity she brought into the classroom. (She also took an interdisciplinary tack with her doctoral studies, combining cultural anthropology, history, and art history.)

One of her favorite kinesthetic methods for teaching the vocabulary needed to learn both 2-D design and art history, for example, was employing a 19th-century parlor game known as tableau vivant (living picture). Students would be divided into groups and assigned an art history term. Each group would work together to come up with poses that demonstrated the principle that the other groups would try to guess.

“The concept of getting into a position by working together and holding that position helped them

remember concepts like rhythm, contrast, or variation,” she says.

Rodgers’s knowledge of the arts made her a natural choice to accompany students on study abroad trips. She was part of excursions to Italy, Greece, England, and Ireland either as a tutor or instructor of art history and modernism courses.

In 2012, she became chair of the Humanities Department, serving in that role for six years before its integration into the Department of Liberal Studies. In addition to teaching 2-D design and world art history, she also developed courses in women’s history and architectural history, and revised courses in Modernism, Utopian Studies, American Romanticism, and the 1960s, as well as Western Humanities.

“I’d spend the morning teaching about the Italian Renaissance and then design principles in the afternoon. It was exhilarating,” recalls Rodgers.

And while she looks forward to having time for artistic pursuits during retirement—including writing, painting, and weaving—she says she will miss her colleagues and the opportunity to work with students.

“I’m going to miss the classroom a lot,” says Rodgers. “I love to introduce people to things that they may not have heard about or been interested in, and watch their eyes light up with excitement.” 🌱

Kathryn Karmen

25 Years

By Chris Lenois

One of the ways Landmark College helps students succeed is by helping them better understand their strengths as a learner.

It's fair to say Kathryn Karmen took the same approach to carving out a successful career as an advisor and instructor here.

When Karmen came to LC in 1996, her background was in clinical counseling, not education. Her interest in the position stemmed from having tapped into some of the College's professional development resources during her time as director of counseling services at the Putney School, which helped her better serve students who would come to her with anxiety related to learning disabilities.

"I thought I would move back into counseling after spending a couple of years here. But here I am, 25 years later!"

Karmen's background was well-suited for the one-to-one tutorials she conducted with students. It also enabled her to teach psychology courses. And even though classroom teaching was new to her, she quickly found ways to adapt her style to the setting.

"Even though I was teaching a class there would be a lot of one-on-one dialogue," explains Karmen. By connecting and getting to know each student, it helped establish a dynamic where I could facilitate conversations about the lessons. I enjoyed doing that."

When the College evolved its academic advising model, Karmen's clinical training came even more to the forefront. She says she felt the advising role put her in a position to use her skills to help students at a time when they are seeking to grow.

"The essential skills of academic advising are building rapport, asking curious questions, and just knowing where to explore what is of interest to the person," she says, adding that during her time at the College she has also become a certified academic coach.

Christina Parish '16 certainly benefited from the rapport she established with Karmen. Coming straight

to Landmark from high school, Christina says Karmen "got to know me immediately as a person. It was so easy to talk to her about my learning difference. And she always worked with me, whether it was academics or any other situation. She always wanted to make sure I reached my fullest potential." Christina earned her associate here and then went to Manhattanville College for her a B.A. in Psychology, and now works as an admissions counselor at LC.

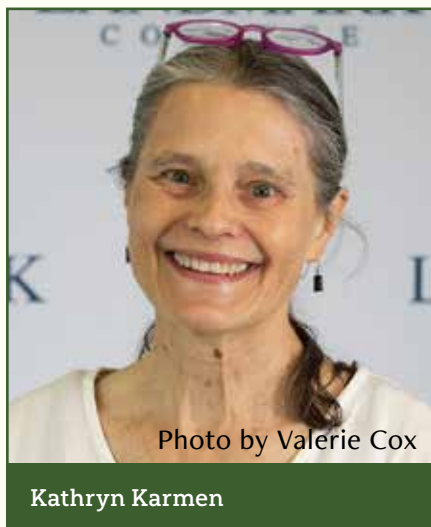


Photo by Valerie Cox

Kathryn Karmen

Danielle Coates-Connor '02 says she failed out of three schools before graduating with honors from LC and receiving an academic scholarship to Mount Holyoke College. She credits Karmen with helping her turn her academic career around, and applies many of the lessons she learned here.

"I can see myself back in Kathryn's small, windowless office, sitting on a yoga ball, as I color code my day planner to ensure I've got my priorities in order," Danielle wrote in an email. "Kathryn made space for my personal growth as a young adult to become confident, responsible, and steady; which, in the context of Landmark, anchored me in sticking to the plans I needed in order to have my abilities reflected in my grades and credentials."

A self-described "insane gardener," Karmen says her post-retirement plans include working to make her 20-acre property healthy and sustainable. She would like to continue working at LC in some capacity, if for no other reason than to continue that rapport with colleagues and students.

"At a college, there are always new people coming in that you can learn from. I stayed at this job because of the students and my colleagues. That has been very enriching for me." 🌱

Susan Frishberg

22 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Growing up on the Upper West Side of New York City, Susan Frishberg could have naturally segued into a career in fashion.

Her mother, an executive with Bonwit Teller, a prestigious department store on 5th Avenue, exposed Frosjberg to the world of fashion and women in leadership roles. In fact, after college, Frishberg started and operated a successful retail clothing business, The Right Track, for over a decade, in Brattleboro, Vermont.

But it was Landmark College—formerly the campus of Frishberg’s alma mater, Windham College—that she would call home for more than 20 years.

Frishberg first set foot on campus two weeks shy of her 17th birthday. “I came to look at Windham on May 1, 1970, and there was a huge rock-and-roll festival going on, with bands in front of the library and the hill covered with people,” she recalls. “I was like, ‘Do I have to wait until September to come? Can you just leave me here?’ I knew it was going to be a good place.”

Frishberg’s dormitory was what is now LC’s Davis Hall. Ironically, her office has been in Davis for the last two decades, until her retirement last spring. “I guess I haven’t gotten very far,” she joked during a recent interview.

After graduating from Windham, Frishberg bought land, built a house, pursued her passion for travel, and kept busy with her clothing business. She left the region for several years, but when she returned to Vermont, she earned a master’s degree and accepted a teaching position at LC.

Frishberg recalls saying during her job interview, “How about if I just say yes? And that’s what I did, I said yes, I would love to work at Landmark.” Since that day in 1999, she served in many roles and was offered many

professional opportunities. She started her new career as an advisor and tutor, but soon taught Spanish, the Wilson Reading Program, and began a rewarding leadership role with LC’s Study Abroad office. In addition to a six-week program in Spain in 2001, Frishberg took students to Costa Rica six times during the three-week J-Term sessions. She has worked in the College’s High School Summer Program since it began and even taught a ballroom dance class for several semesters.



Photo courtesy of Susan Frishberg

Susan Frishberg

Over the years, she also worked closely with Landmark College Institute for Research and Training, presenting workshops at conferences and high schools around the country (and several graduate-level classes on campus) titled, “Teaching Foreign Languages to Students with Learning Differences.”

Along the way, she formed close friendships with many colleagues and maintains close bonds with several students. She recently attended the wedding of **Samantha Jackson Mackay ’17**.

“Susan is like a cheerleader,” says **Amber LaFlamme ’20**, now LC’s assistant registrar. “She wants students to succeed and she cheers them on through their lows and highs.” Amber recalls starting with a GPA under 2.0 and raising it to a 3.4 by the time she graduated with her associate degree in May 2018. “The first day I met Susan she welcomed me back to campus with a warm smile. She is one of the main reasons I was successful that semester and every semester after.”

Frishberg continues to work for LC part time and she resists using the word “retired.” She and fellow retiree Debbie Gassaway-Hayward prefer to say, “I won’t be working full time anymore. That’s much better language,” Frishberg says, “because I know there are more opportunities out there.” 🌱

Debbie Gassaway-Hayward 21 Years

By Mark DiPietro

Professor Rebecca Matte's tribute in May to her retiring colleague, Professor Debbie Gassaway-Hayward, included an astonishing list of accomplishments for self-professed "short timer" Gassaway-Hayward.

Among them, chairing the First-Year Studies Department (now Core Education); leading multiple study abroad trips to Ghana and Botswana; helping establish LC as a Tree Campus USA; serving as director of advising; and establishing an academic award for late colleague Rob Gunther-Mohr.

"Deb gracefully and persistently pushes programs forward in all directions at the College," Matte said, as she quoted other faculty who call Gassaway-Hayward "an organizational dynamo" and "legend."

Gassaway-Hayward had traveled extensively before coming to LC in 2000. After earning a bachelor's in international studies and a master's in teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) from the School for International Training in nearby Brattleboro, she administered programs and taught English and reading to refugees in the Philippines and Kenya through organizations funded by the U.S. Department of State.

By the late 1990s, she had settled in Vermont and joined LC as a tutor in 2000. After a few years, Gassaway-Hayward began teaching in the Reading and Study Skills department (later First-Year Studies), and then was trained as an advisor.

"Advising gave me the full picture to understand a student's experience," she says. "I was mostly teaching, but I always had some advisees, too." She served as director of advising for a few years before her retirement, and she was also a longtime member of LC's placement team, determining into which track incoming LC students are placed. For eight



Debbie Gassaway-Hayward

years, Gassaway-Hayward also spearheaded (in coordination with Student Affairs) the LC student planner, that each student receives during orientation.

Gassaway-Hayward says her global work teaching ESL helped her connect with the struggles of students with LD. "There's a cultural piece that's very similar to learning a second language and having an LD or difficulty with reading. Working in other cultures helped me better understand the students I've worked with."

Rob Lutz '17 recalls Gassaway-Hayward's "motherly presence" on the first study abroad trip to Botswana, which she co-directed with Professor Andrew Stein in 2016. "Anybody could go to her and no one feels like a favorite. She gives equal attention to everybody, in a kind and supportive way. But she also has expectations for everyone to contribute."

Rob says he's taken Gassaway-Hayward's kind and nurturing approach to heart in his role as resident dean and Transition at College coordinator at LC. "To be able to come into a room and bring joy, but also an overall sense of adventure and exploration, because Deb has been all over the world—that's what I've learned from her, to try to keep that joy going."

Gassaway-Hayward says she'll recall all the experiences of triumph when her students realized what they could achieve. "There are lots of them over the years, those moments when you see students starting to believe in themselves, whether it's from my teaching or advising or because they've begun to see they see what they're capable of achieving." 🌱

Baucom named honorary doctor of humane letters

Landmark College conferred an honorary doctor of humane letters on retired founding faculty member Jim Baucom during the May 22 ceremony for 2020-21 retirees. Baucom was a full professor in LC's School of Education when he retired after 35 years in May 2020.

Baucom, taken by surprise when President Peter Eden called him to the stage to confer the honorary degree, quipped, "People have described me as unflappable in the past, but I'm flapped, I can tell you that." Eden called Baucom "an architect and engineer" of LC in its early years, noting, "You've not only understood young students who learn differently, you've been a champion for them."

Sydney Ruff '06 (now LC's director of admissions), called Baucom "the Landmark College GOATT: Greatest of All-Time Teachers. You are my most favorite faculty member of all time, and thousands of others would agree."



Photo by Todd Miller

LC's first president, Jim Olivier said, "If it were possible to see into Landmark College's heart and soul, right in the center we would find Jim Baucom."



Mark Higgins, 16 Years

A controller (sometimes called a comptroller) is, according to Merriam-Webster, "the chief accounting officer of a business enterprise or an institution, such as a college." Colloquially, the individual in this position may be referred to as a "bean counter."

Mark Higgins fulfilled this role at Landmark College for 16 years, arriving in 2005 and retiring this past May, along with his wife, Professor Denise Manning Higgins (see story, page 9). His boss, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer Jon MacClaren (who will also retire at the end of 2021), had some fun with the "bean counter" stereotype in a scripted video tribute to Higgins. MacClaren, along with LC employees (pictured, from left) Kimmy Kempf, Karen Belcher, Ginny Irish, Nancy DiSilva, Joyce Apenowich, and Terry Standish, recorded a short, humorous video that was presented at the May 22 ceremony honoring LC retirees. Watch the video at www.landmark.edu/BeanCounter.



Image by Valerie Cox

Academic Advising Model Evolves

By Chris Lenois

Since its founding in 1985, a cornerstone of Landmark College's approach to educating students who learn differently has been academic support. Now, as the College has evolved, so has the delivery model for its individualized support structure.

Faculty members hired during the College's early years typically started as tutors. Some continued working with students in this one-on-one role even as they began classroom instruction. The model worked very well, but as the College grew to serve different student populations and offer more degree programs, the Drake Center for Academic Support (DCAS) was established to provide deeper support across disciplines, and the academic advisor position was created to guide students along their journey. The College also created an office for coaching services to help students hone their executive function skills.

Now, LC has again refined how these offices interact to increase its ability to provide resources to students. It began with combining the advising and coaching offices with DCAS (now known simply as the Drake Center)—a move that gives students access to advising and aligns their support with LC's universal design approach to classroom instruction during fall and spring semesters as well as short-term summer sessions. The model also enables the College to better support the growing number of students taking courses online.

Advisors are still the linchpin of the student experience, says Director of Academic Support and Advising Dr. Eric Moschella, but the regular meetings that now happen between the coordinators for each area—along with other offices like the Registrar, Career Connections, and Residential Life—are streamlining the process.

"It makes for a better understanding of the process, and also offers a much cleaner flow for the student," explains Moschella. "What we're trying to do is make the connections between our different services more apparent to students and their families, so they can see all the pathways."

Moschella says this broader perspective of the advisor's role follows a current trend across higher education, but he believes LC's small size is helping his staff get ahead of the national curve.

"Our advisors are cross-training with other departments to help them provide answers for students on the spot," Moschella says. "Rarely at other schools will you find an advisor who has knowledge of career services, or who has been trained as an executive function coach, or can talk about how to write a paper. Our advisors can do that, and it gives us a lot of flexibility."



Image by Gabrian Raphael '21

Anna Habib, placement coordinator, advises LC students.

Bonhomme Receives LC-HollyRod Foundation Scholarship

by Chris Lenois

Anastasio Bonhomme is the 2021 recipient of the Landmark College-HollyRod Foundation Scholarship. The Maryland native enrolled at the start of the fall 2021 semester. The scholarship will cover his tuition in full while he pursues either an associate or bachelor's degree at Landmark College.

Bonhomme was selected by a committee that included staff members from the Landmark College Office of Admissions, Landmark College President Dr. Peter Eden, and actor/activist Holly Robinson Peete, co-founder of the HollyRod Foundation. Selection criteria included academic ability and a demonstration of financial need for a student with autism.

For Anastasio's mother, Nadja, the scholarship was a welcome surprise after the COVID-19 pandemic had impacted her ability to work as a personal chef. "When they told us about the scope of the HollyRod Scholarship and what it was going to cover, I was speechless. I think I'm still taking it in because that's an incredible gift," said Nadja.

After being an honors student all the way through high school, Anastasio began to experience stress and anxiety around writing assignments during his first year at college. "I would start to panic and things would just spiral. I wouldn't turn in an essay, then I wouldn't turn in my other assignments in that class, and then it spread to my other classes," he remembered.

That cycle continued at two other colleges before the Bonhommes sought help from a psychologist and had



Anastasio Bonhomme

testing done to diagnose Anastasio as being on the autism spectrum. Meanwhile, Nadja discovered Landmark, and the responsiveness of college staff stood out from other schools.

"Everyone was warm and embracing. It felt like they were listening to me," Nadja said, recalling how her admissions counselor had put them in touch with an academic advisor even before her son was enrolled. "Landmark was trying to tell

me that there was a place here for Anastasio and they would welcome him. Hearing that, after we had other doors slammed on us, was unbelievable."

The support has stood out to Anastasio as well. "It helps to be able to go down to the health center

and have weekly meetings with my counselor. I've never had that before," he said. Anastasio is also taking part in the Center for Diversity and Inclusion's Reach One, Teach One mentoring program for African-American students and has joined the "Dungeon Delvers" role-playing game club.

Bonhomme is the second recipient of the Landmark College-HollyRod Foundation Scholarship, following **Reece Rountree-Hanscom '21**, who graduated with his B.S. in Computer Science this past spring. The collaboration between LC and

Robinson Peete began after she received the LD Luminary Award during the College's fundraising gala in 2016. The HollyRod Foundation was founded in 1997 by Robinson Peete and her husband, former NFL quarterback Rodney Peete, to support families affected by autism or Parkinson's disease. ➡



Holly Robinson Peete and Dr. Peter Eden in 2016

Firestein is Learning Specialist at Bay Area Success Center

by Chris Lenois

The Landmark College Success Center officially opened in August in San Mateo, California (located at Compass High School). Under the umbrella of LC Online, the Success Center provides online and in-person support to neurodiverse teens, young adults, and adults.

Sarah Firestein is the Success Center's first learning specialist, bringing more than 22 years of experience in the fields of social services and education. She began her career in in the New York City public school system. After attending one of Landmark College's Professional Visit Days in 2011, she began tapping into professional development resources from the Landmark College Institute for Research & Training.

How is the Success Center a resource for students and families?

The Success Center is a place to connect with LC's trained experts. We help students and their families



Sarah Firestein

navigate transition periods in education and the workforce; understand accommodations and how to personalize them; support self-awareness and self-exploration related to study skills and executive function; and promote self-advocacy skills.

Tell us about your approach to working with students.

My style could be described as a curiosity-driven thought partner who primarily uses a nondirective coaching approach that is aligned with Landmark College's research-backed pedagogical practices.

As a learning specialist, paint us a word picture of what "success" looks like to you?

Success means students and families feeling seen, heard, and supported with an individually curated set of supports, and feeling well-versed in how and when to use them based on the student's diagnosis and personality. 🐦



College START

Dual Enrollment

5-Day Online Summer Boot Camp

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LC ONLINE
LANDMARK COLLEGE

lconline.landmark.edu



Dr. Brian Young



Dr. Michelle Wallace



Prof. Rebecca Matte

LC Awarded \$1.2 Million Grant from the National Science Foundation

Landmark College has been awarded a \$1.2 million grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) that will provide undergraduate research opportunities, cohort support, and scholarships for neurodiverse students studying in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields.

The award is the largest NSF grant that Landmark College has ever received. Funds will provide scholarships for as many as 36 students over a six-year period. First-year students may receive up to four years of support while transfer and associate degree students may receive up to two-years of scholarship support.

“There is a global need for well-educated scientists, including computer scientists, and this grant is critical for supporting high-achieving, low-income students as they pursue careers in those fields,” says Dr. Peter Eden, president of Landmark College, which exclusively serves students with learning differences such as dyslexia, ADHD, autism, or executive function challenges.

In addition to the scholarship money, the NSF grant also funds mentorships, research opportunities, and internships, among other activities, to better understand how these supports improve retention and graduation rates for this student population.

This funding also supports the further development of an undergraduate research assistance program, which

will allow grant recipients the opportunity to become actively involved in the planning and implementation of research and scholarship at Landmark College.

Landmark College faculty member Dr. Michelle Wallace, co-principal investigator with LC faculty colleagues Dr. Brian Young and Rebecca Matte, shared the team’s enthusiasm for the project. “We are excited to be able to work with and learn from such a talented and motivated group of STEM students. The project goals include sharing our lessons learned so that other educators can work with neurodiverse students with more confidence,” Wallace says.

Eden points out that the project has the potential to diversify participation in STEM fields and foster a strong STEM identity in neurodiverse students that will support their academic and career success.

“This project builds on our current model of individualized, well-resourced support in ways that will help us understand the psychosocial factors that contribute to early career success for neurodivergent students,” says Eden.





Photo by Valerie Cox

Left: This fall, the Centers for Diversity & Inclusion (CDI) officially launched its fourth center, Pa'lante, which means "forward," to celebrate the culture and heritage of Hispanic/Latin/x students.



Photo by Todd Miller



Photo by Gabrian Raphael '21

Top: **Patrick McKenna '14** hugs Coach and Resident Dean John Wood after McKenna was inducted into LC's Athletics Hall of Fame during Homecoming Weekend in September.

Left: During the Landmark Entrepreneurial Accelerator Program's (LEAP) Entrepreneurship Day on October 16, installation artist/sculptor Terry Marashlian, far right, helped launch the IDEA Lab's solar energy program with students **Jack Belinsky** and **Domnica Horst-Loy**.



Adam Lalor

Dr. Adam Lalor, director of the Landmark College Institute for Research and Training, recently led a group of experts in the field of learning disabilities and related disorders to develop a new Code of Ethics for AHEAD (Association on Higher Education and Disability).

Well done, Dr. Lalor!

View the new Code at <https://tinyurl.com/3ncxzz4k>.

Djunaedi Brings Neurodiversity Awareness to Indonesia

Dina Djunaedi '21, a graduate of Landmark College's Professional Certificate in Learning Differences and Neurodiversity, organized Indonesia's first online neurodiversity conference last summer, attracting 789 registrants over 11 days.

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Dina Djunaedi '21

Djunaedi reports that Neuminds Indonesia's Neurodiversity Conference was enthusiastically received, with "touching and heartwarming" feedback from attendees.

"Education in Indonesia is still one-fit-for-all," wrote one participant. "There is still a lot of 'homework' that needs to be done in order to support neurodiversity in education. I hope Neuminds can continue to educate us about this."



Another wrote, "First day of @neuminds.id and I am already crying. Was so incredibly excited and over the moon to have this finally be a discussion here in Indonesia. Overjoyed to simply be a participant."

And another participant said, "I begin to imagine my son and I can bring the hope story too, someday in the future. I hope I also never give up in this journey. Thanks again to you and your team in making and spreading the hope!"

Watch a recorded interview with Dina and Dr. Adam Lalor, director of the Landmark College Institute for Research and Training (which delivers the Professional Certificate), conducted by Mark DiPietro, vice president for marketing & communications, at landmark.edu/neuminds. 🐼



Wolf Launches 'I Am Able' Movement

LC's Office of Alumni Relations and the Center for Neurodiversity co-hosted an online chat with **Aaron Wolf '02** about "I Am Able," a new social movement he recently began. Wolf says he created "I Am Able" to squash stigmas surrounding invisible disabilities and promote an inclusive classroom for all. For him, this is one the most critical civil rights issues currently being overlooked and misunderstood by society. He says is on a quest to use his voice and work for positive change.

Watch the session at landmark.edu/Able.



Photo by Gabrian Raphael '21

Amber LaFlamme '20



Photo by Todd Miller

Isaac Alam '19



Photo by Gabrian Raphael '21

Katlyn Brooks '21

These LC Sharks joined the staff of Landmark College in 2021, Amber LaFlamme '20, assistant registrar of online and short-term programs; Isaac Alam '19, social coach; and Katlyn Brooks '21 assistant in the Transition at College track.



Photos by Todd Miller

Charles Strauch, a founding trustee (left), gave the reception speech during LC's Homecoming on September 27. The audience included his son, **Charley Strauch '87** and **Genevieve Friend-Land '96** (right). Genevieve received the Alumni Service Award, which is given to an alumnus or alumna who has achieved distinction through substantial contribution and voluntary service to Landmark College or to our international, national, state, or community welfare. Genevieve currently serves as secretary of the Alumni Advisory Board (AAB).

In Memoriam



Archive Photo

Ricia Gordon, third from left, in this 2006 photo. Also pictured, from left, are Professor Lucy Stamp and now retired faculty Virginia Scholl and Julie Forsythe.

Patricia "Ricia" Gordon, who taught at LC for nearly 20 years, passed away on August 5, 2021. She taught English and was one of the first faculty to participate in LC's Executive Function program, according to a story in the LC publication LINKS, published in 2006.

Professor Jan Thompson recalled Gordon's time at LC: "Ricia was an associate professor of English who made many contributions to the teaching of writing at Landmark. She was a wonderful poet and teacher, who spent many years encouraging, inspiring, and collaborating with students and faculty in our community. She was a highly skilled writing coach and faculty member of the Writing Center, which later became the Drake Center. In addition, through her connections with the African dance and drumming community in the Brattleboro

area, Ricia brought opportunities (artists, workshops, classes) to students to participate in culturally enriching experiences at Landmark. Ricia's husband, Bill Dixon, was a highly respected math professor and department chair at Landmark as well."

Jamell Mitchell Joins LC's Board of Trustees

On May 21, Jamell Mitchell joined the Landmark College Board of Trustees. Mitchell serves as the Neurodiversity Center of Excellence Operations Leader and the National ASA Tax and Assurance Practice Leader at EY (formerly Ernst & Young). He is responsible for driving awareness, identifying learning opportunities, sourcing, and aligning the Neurodiversity Centers of Excellence to the firm's service line.



Jamell Mitchell

Since 2018, Mitchell has been collaborating with Landmark College's Office of Career Connections to provide employment opportunities for LC graduates. He has participated in many on-campus, online, and off-site events in partnership with LC. As a result of this collaboration, one of LC's recent computer science graduates, **Brian Ramsaur '19**, was hired by EY to work in its Philadelphia office.

Mitchell has an MBA with specific focus on leadership and finance from Walden University; and he earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice Administration/Planning from John Jay College.

Photo by Gabrian Raphael '21



Jamell Mitchell interviews a student during LC's Neurodiversity Goes to Work event in October.



Lewis Academic Building Honors Former Board Chair

Landmark College has honored **Robert Lewis**, who stepped down from his position as chair of LC's Board of Trustees in February, by renaming the former East Academic Building as the Lewis Academic Building.

"To be honored in such a way touches and humbles me deeply," Lewis said. "My family found Landmark College for our son back in 2004 and his experience here changed his life. That means Landmark changed our family's life and we will be eternally grateful. It has been my privilege to serve as a trustee, working to sustain and grow Landmark so it will help change people's lives forever."



Bob Lewis

Alumni Association Corner

Greetings, fellow alumni,



It was exciting for alumni to return to campus for Homecoming the weekend of September 27—our first in two years! Despite restrictions on in-

person gatherings during the pandemic, the Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) has engaged and interacted with the LC community in many ways.

AAB members have participated in online open houses, mock interviews, graduation week, Shark Day, and more. We are grateful for the Alumni Association's involvement in supporting LC, and recognize how important and valuable those experiences we participate in are to the personal and professional development of current students.

In addition to helping current and admitted students, the AAB raises funds for student support. One of our Board's most important goals each year is to raise scholarship funds that give underserved students access to the amazing LC model. All of us, like you,

donated during Giving Day earlier this spring, leading to Landmark College recording its highest alumni donor turnout ever for Giving Day—over \$17,000 in support!

Landmark College continues to excel; it was recognized for the third consecutive year by *U.S. News & World Report* as number 1 in Best Undergraduate Teaching and number 1 in Most Innovative for the North region.

As my tenure as chair ends at the conclusion of 2021, I have been honored to serve in this role. I knew as a young professional that I wanted to give back to the College that afforded me the skills and confidence to be who I am today. I ask you, when ready, to give back to Landmark College. There are so many ways to get involved as a Landmark alum: do a mock interview, share your story, join the AAB, and make plans to take part in Shark Day next February!

Go Sharks!

Theodora van Roijen '00
Alumni Advisory Board Chair
alumni@landmark.edu

Alumni Advisory Board

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Learn more about your Alumni Advisory Board at landmark.edu/AAB

Meet LC's New VP for Institutional Advancement



Cheryl Adolph

Cheryl Adolph joined LC as vice president for institutional advancement in July 2021. Previously, Adolph served as executive director for institutional advancement and the College of Staten Island Foundation at the College of Staten Island. In 2017, Adolph was recognized as a "Woman of Distinction" by the Staten Island Chapter of New York State Women, Inc., and named to the "Top 25 Staten Island Influencers" by City & State Magazine.

Adolph's work experience also includes 12 years with the Staten Island Museum in a variety of ascending leadership positions, including president and chief executive officer, and six years with a New York City-based Information Technology company as a project manager and analyst. Her family includes her husband, Joseph Gobin, and their daughter, Joan.

Sherry Sherman and Jeff Raz

By Chris Lenois

Even with their faces obscured due to the mask requirement at LC's Spring 2021 Commencement ceremony, Sherry Sherman and Jeff Raz had an unmistakable look of joy when their son Micah's name was announced as the President's Award recipient.

The award, and Micah's Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Entrepreneurial Leadership, were the culmination of six years at Landmark College that Sherman says "has profoundly changed Micah's life and ours."

"My son has always and continues to amaze me," says Sherman, pointing out that Micah won the Charles Drake Award upon receiving his associate degree in 2018. He was also awarded the Student Leadership Award this year but didn't tell his parents. "We got to the hotel, and he started unpacking and just then he showed us the certificate. It affirmed all that we believed about him."

The Charles Drake Award is given to a student who "...helps the rest of us realize that we have more resources to draw upon than we think and helps us keep going when we feel discouraged." That certainly fits Sherman's description of her son, who grew up loving school and learning even though his nonverbal learning disorder presented academic and social challenges at an early age.

While his parents advocated for Micah every step of the way, they balanced that tenacity with a willingness to let him make his own decisions about many choices, including college. After exploring several colleges on the East Coast, including one that was recruiting Micah to play golf, he gravitated to Landmark. The only drawback was that it was 3,000 miles away from his home in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Fortunately, Micah had an ally to help him manage his homesickness in Landmark College President Peter

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Jeff Raz and Sherry Sherman with their son, Micah Sherman-Raz '21, who earned his Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Entrepreneurial Leadership.

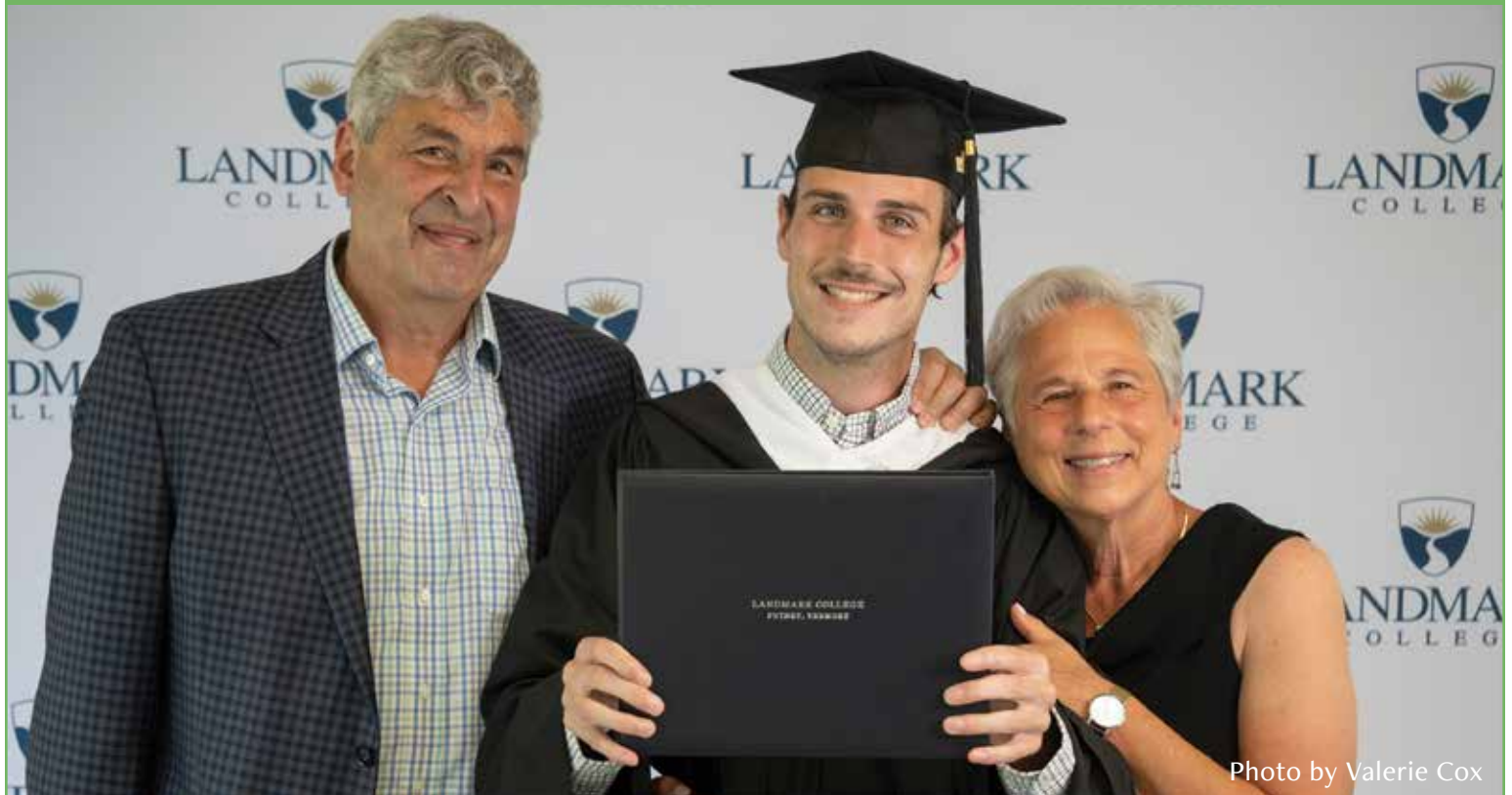


Photo by Valerie Cox

Eden. Sherman said the many opportunities to talk with Dr. Eden or even just wave hello as Micah went by the president's window was meaningful for her son.

Dr. Eden referenced those conversations when he presented the President's Award to Micah at commencement. "Micah, remember how at the beginning you were very homesick, but you said you recognized that being at LC was a huge opportunity, and you knew that if you looked at the calendar and planned out the days before you could go home that would help you? You were so honest about yourself, so I knew that this guy's going to make it because he's so honest about how he's feeling. And you stayed here, and you've become one of the most visible members



Micah Sherman-Raz '21 and fellow student Heather Dunham '20, having fun with LC's mascot Finn.

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of the community, helping out in nearly every corner," said Eden.

While Micah is now pursuing a career as an emergency medical technician, his parents remain supporters of the College, both financially and with their willingness to speak to other families about the how their son benefited from the experience. Sherman has participated in several webcasts and virtual events for prospective students and their families.

"Micah is always kind and always a deep thinker. The people and opportunities at Landmark, however, helped him feel more solid and come into himself," says Sherman. "Landmark is the type of place where there is permission and encouragement to ask for what you want and need as a student. It is the model of a caring and inclusive community that challenges students academically, vocationally, and personally."

When asked why they contribute to the Landmark College Annual Fund, Sherry talks about paying forward what Landmark gave their family, saying "We want other students who may not have the resources to attend Landmark to have the same opportunity Micah had to be part of this amazing community—to learn, grow, and find their true selves." 🐾

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Landmark College Gala

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Thursday, April 28, 2022, 6 p.m.
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For more details, contact the Office of Institutional Advancement at 802-387-6734 or at advancement@landmark.edu.