MOUNT UNION

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UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC MAJORS

Not long ago, I had a conversation with a Mount Union trustee who shared his thoughts about what families want out of college for their kids. As I listened, I found myself seeing the University through a refreshed lens - one shaped by his perspective. His reflections helped sharpen and simplify my focus. He inferred that college success really comes down to three things - great academics, great experiences, and great opportunities after graduation - and I couldn't agree more. I truly believe that, if we can deliver in these areas, we have done our job, and we've done it well.

room through unique offerings like the Wilderness Trip (read more on pp. 6-11), Steel Drum Band, Baha Racing Team, and International Choir Tour. Our campus hums with action and liveliness, providing a dynamic environment in which our students thrive.

And, at the heart of the University is a

compassionate and supportive commu-

nity. Lifelong friends, dedicated faculty

and staff, and a network of alumni form

the support team for every member of

the Purple Raider family - making stu-

dents truly feel at home on campus.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN RELEVANT FIELDS

STUDENT

ORGANIZATIONS

ON CAMPUS

GREAT ACADEMICS

GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

Our rich liberal arts tradition, combined with emerging professional programs, ensures that our students achieve success in any field they choose. With an array of undergraduate and graduate programs, we provide a comprehensive education that prepares students for the future.

As our students make their way toward life after graduation, our career development team is dedicated to preparing them for what lies ahead, offering guidance on career exploration, resumé building, and the job search process.

Over the past few decades, we've enriched our curriculum with programs in the health sciences, engineering, and data science. We've been lauded for having some of the top programs in the state - sport business and nursing among them - in addition to having the #1 online education program among private institutions in the nation. All the while, hands-on experiences like service-learning, study abroad, internships, and research remain at the forefront.

In fact, the entire Mount Union family is deeply invested in student success. The relationships students build here extend far beyond graduation, and with an outstanding success rate after earning their degrees, students can be confident that they are ready for the future.

OF STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

GREAT EXPERIENCES

Sincerely,

Mount Union is a vibrant and energetic place. From athletics to the arts, and student organizations to student media, there is rarely a dull moment. Learning continues to extend far beyond the class-

When students enroll here, they show up with a determination to maximize their investment in their education. In turn, we show up to support them every step of the way - with great academics, great experiences, and great opportunities after graduation paving the way.

Gregory L. King '89

SUCCESS RATE IN INDUSTRY-RELATED CAREERS OR GRAD SCHOOL



2025 COMMENCEMENT



MOUNT UNION HOLDS 179TH COMMENCEMENT

The University of Mount Union added nearly 550 graduates to its alumni family during Commencement Weekend, May 10-12, 2025.

The 179th Commencement began with the Commencement Ceremony for Graduate Students in the morning and the Commencement Ceremony for Undergraduate Students in the afternoon. Thousands packed the Peterson Field House of the McPherson Academic and Athletic Complex to witness the events in person, and both were livestreamed across the world to those unable to be on campus.

On Monday, May 12, 2025, the University hosted an additional Commencement Ceremony in Brush Performance Hall of the Giese Center for the Performing Arts. This event provided student-athletes engaged in postseason play throughout Commencement Weekend the opportunity to cross the stage and receive the degrees they had earned while remaining committed to the athletic teams that had been a significant part of their Mount Union experience. These teams included baseball, softball, and women's lacrosse.

During the celebrations, University President Greg King '89 asked new graduates to "Please return to campus often, share your life stories with us, renew relationships and form new ones, and contribute your efforts and ideas to ensuring a bright future for this University," He added, "And, may you always think of this place and your years here with great pride and affection."



WUCHTER NAMED 2025 GREAT TEACHER

Mount Union's 2025 Great Teacher Award was presented this spring to Dr. Gerald Wuchter, professor of mathematics. Wuchter has been a member of the Mount Union faculty since 1995. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mathematics and statistics from Miami University and both master's and doctoral degrees in mathematics from the University of Michigan.

The Great Teacher Award was initiated in 1962 and is sponsored by the Alumni Association to recognize excellence in teaching at Mount Union.



NASH NAMED 2025 OUTSTANDING SENIOR

The Class of 2025's DaeDae Nash was named the 2025 Outstanding Senior during this spring's Honors Convocation Ceremony. Nash, a physical education major from Akron, Ohio, served as a resident assistant, Preview and Orientation guide, and the president of Sister Circle during her time at Mount Union. She was also a member of the Black Student Union, and was the 2025 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Alpha Phi Alpha Prize recipient. She was a member of the women's basketball team and the indoor and outdoor track and field teams as well.

The Outstanding Senior is someone who excels in the areas of leadership, participation, loyalty, and service to the University and who has given unselfishly of their time and talents to Mount Union. The entire senior class nominated their top choices, and a select group of faculty and staff were asked to review the finalists and select the winner.

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. AWARDS

The University honored several individuals during its Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. celebration. Andrew Boothe '90, associate director of organizational impact and Title IX coordinator, received the Faculty/Staff Award. AJ Shorts '25, a middle childhood education major from South Euclid, Ohio, was awarded the Student Award, and the Community Award was presented to Willie Bell, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Alliance, Ohio. In addition, DaeDae Nash '25, a physical education major from Akron, Ohio, was presented with the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc. Iota Phi Chapter Citizenship Award.

PATHFINDERS

During Black History Month, local Fire Chiefs Kwameshallu Akbar Bennett, Barry Finley, Leon Henderson, Terry Ledwell, and Anthony Luke were honored as Pathfinders in the humanities, alongside Amari Kinnard '25, a criminal justice major from North Canton, Ohio. Dr. Loay Al-Zube, professor of biomedical engineering, and Alana Jackson-Tyus '27, a nursing major from Cleveland, Ohio, were honored as Pathfinders in STEM.

JANE WESTON CHAPMAN AWARDS

Darese Sparkman '26, a history major from Massillon, Ohio, and Dr. Tammy Daily, professor of psychology, neuroscience, and human development, who also holds the Lewis Miller Professorship in Psychology, were recognized as the 2025 Jane Weston Chapman Award recipients.

REGULA CENTER AWARDS

The Regula Center for Public Service and Civic Engagement presented two awards this spring. Joe French, president of Stark County Catholic Schools, and Alan Harold '98, Stark County commissioner, were the recipients of the Mary Regula Award for Community Service and the Ralph Regula Award for Public Service, respectively.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

The University presented several awards during its annual Employee Recognition Ceremony. Marci Muckleroy, director of the Center for Student Success, received the Davidson Staff Award. The Outstanding Support Staff Award was given to Kimberly Eckenrode, scheduling manager, and Cynthia Miner, maintenance, was honored with the Outstanding Hourly Staff Award. The Outstanding Adjunct Award was given to Dr. Karen McLachlan '84, lecturer in chemistry. The Distinguished Teaching Award was presented to Dr. Jennifer Sensor, associate professor of physical therapy. Kevin Kern, professor of theatre, was honored with the Distinguished Scholarship Award, and Dr. Jeremy Brueck, associate professor of education, was awarded the Distinguished Service Award.

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TURKO NAMED FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR

Dr. Kristine Turko, professor of psychology and director of the University's Spectrum Education Center, was recently awarded the Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program Award in Education.

Turko, a member of the Mount Union faculty since 2006, will work with students from the special education and rehabilitation master's program at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia. The project introduces hands-on training grounded in evidence-based practices, particularly applied behavior analysis, tailored for Slovenia, where autism education standards are yet to be fully implemented.



CRAIG RECOGNIZED BY QUALITY MATTERS

Dr. Stephen Craig, director of digital learning and design, has been selected as a recipient of the 2025 QM Ohio Outstanding Impact by an Individual Award by Quality Matters (QM). The award recognizes educational leaders who demonstrate commitment to making a positive impact on online learning excellence.

Craig provides strategic leadership in online program development and operations. In this role, he oversees development and assessment of online courses and programs, assuring they comply with federal, state, and Higher Learning Commission (HLC) accreditation requirements.

2025 HALL OF EXCELLENCE

OHIO FOUNDATION OF INDEPENDENT COLLEGES



University of Mount Union Trustee Nancy Hill '79 was recently inducted into the Ohio Foundation of Independent Colleges (OFIC) Hall of Excellence. Hill is the former president and CEO of the 4A's and recently-retired CEO of Marcus Thomas. She has spent her entire professional career in the advertising industry and has served on the Mount Union Board of Trustees since 2009.

University President Greg King '89 presented Hill with the award during the 2025 OFIC's 75th Anniversary Celebration and Awards Luncheon in May. The OFIC Hall of Excellence honors individuals and organizations whose leadership, innovation, and philanthropy have made lasting contributions to independent higher education in Ohio.

Pictured (l-r): Bill Spiker '81, president of the OFIC; Greg King '89, president of the University of Mount Union; Nancy Hill '79, Hall of Excellence inductee; and Barb Britenriker, board chair of the OFIC

RAIDER SPRING SPORTS MAKE HISTORY

BASEBALL

The baseball team, led by OAC Coach of the Year Paul Hesse, won the Ohio Athletic Conference (OAC) regular season title and its first NCAA Tournament game in program history. Two players were named to the American Baseball Coaches Association (ABCA) Rawlings All-America team – utility player Jaired Lehman '24, M '25 and shortstop Alex Stegman '25. Hesse was also named the D3baseball.com All-Region Coach of the Year.

SOFTBALL

The softball team won its second OAC Tournament title in three seasons and qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the third-straight year. Under head coach Meghan Simons '10, the Raiders won their NCAA Tournament first round game over No. 20 Pfeiffer University. Mount Union was led by pitcher Kendyll Cahill '26 and first baseman Sydney Mercer '26, who were both named to the National Fastpitch Coaches' Association (NFCA) All-Region teams.

WOMEN'S GOLF

The women's golf team won the OAC Championship, earning an NCAA Championship automatic bid. All five golfers earned All-OAC honors. Jocelyn Troyer '24, M '25 had a runner-up finish at the OACs and had a 26th-place individual finish at the NCAA Championship. The coaching staff, led by interim head coach Jenna Lisic, was named the OAC Coaching Staff of the Year. Bill Kirkwood was recognized posthumously with the Coach of the Year Award.

WOMEN'S LACROSSE

Women's lacrosse won both the OAC regular season and tournament for the first time since 2019. The Raiders, under the leadership of OAC Coach of the Year Bethany Snider '16, qualified for the NCAA Tournament for the second time in three years. Attack Katie Clark '24, M '27 was named the OAC Offensive Player of the Year, and goalie Abby Lindkvist '25 was named Goalie of the Year. Clark was the school's first USA Lacrosse Magazine All-American.

MEN'S AND WOMEN'S TRACK AND FIELD

The men's and women's track and field teams, led by head coach Kevin Lucas, had nine student-athletes qualify for the NCAA Outdoor Nationals. The women's 4x400 – Kenadee Wayt '23, M '25, Madison Miles '24, M '26, Mary Mason '25, and Carlie Besecker '28 – had an All-American finish at third. Wayt finished her career with 23 All-American trophies. The men's track and field team won its 13th straight OAC Indoor Track and Field title and 14th straight outdoor conference title, while the women's team won its fourth-straight OAC Indoor Championship. The coaching staff was named the OAC Staff of the Year.



MOUNT UNION A VOTER-FRIENDLY CAMPUS

The University has been recognized as a Voter Friendly Campus for 2025-2026. This is the fifth time Mount Union has received this designation, placing it among a small group of institutions committed to fostering student voter engagement.

The Voter Friendly Campus Initiative holds institutions accountable for developing and implementing plans to encourage student participation in elections. Mount Union's selection was based on its efforts to register, educate, and mobilize student voters during the past year. The University has hosted debate watch parties and other campus events, while also promoting education about the voting process to encourage informed and engaged citizenship.



MBA FACULTY NAMED BEST IN NATION

Mount Union's online Master of Business Administration (MBA) recently had its faculty ranked number one nationwide for training and credentials by U.S. News and World Report. The outlet's ranking measures an institution's ability to prepare instructors to teach courses in the virtual modality. This demonstrates Mount Union's dedication to teaching excellence and focus on a student's individual learning.



CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE

TENS OF THOUSANDS OF ALUMNI HAVE MOUNT UNION MEMORIES THAT HAVE STAYED WITH THEM LONG AFTER THEY RECEIVED THEIR DEGREES. FOR A FEW HUNDRED OF THEM, SOME OF THE MOST INDELIBLE RECOLLECTIONS HAPPENED MORE THAN 500 MILES AWAY FROM ALLIANCE, OHIO, AND MORE THAN 4,000 FEET IN THE AIR.





1978 TRIP

"This trip changed me. Until this trip, I was known as the girl who could 'trip over a Kleenex in an empty room.' Doing the Wilderness Trip not only gave me confidence to challenge myself but also to understand group dynamics, which served me very well in my career. Steve [Kramer] built a program that gives participants more than anything that could ever be attained in a classroom. I am forever grateful."

Nancy Hill '79

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

By 1976, Dr. Steve Kramer had been at Mount Union just long enough to know the names of everyone on campus. Picking at a muffin on a windy day in early March 2025, he sat on the Campus Grounds patio, reluctant to accept praise for his efforts in developing what many view as a core Mount Union experience.

More than 50 years ago, the up-and-coming psychology professor had gone on a few trips with Outward Bound (OB), a national outdoor education initiative that began in 1962. OB features expeditions for all ages that range from backpacking and rock climbing to canoeing and sailing. Kramer wondered how to incorporate some of its principles and activities into a course he was developing called Group Dynamics; doing so was a challenging concept for some on campus at the time.

"There was really not a lot of pushback when it was brought up, but a few faculty members spoke up about whether it should be worth credit simply because it wasn't in a classroom," Kramer said, wearing a knowing smile with decades of evidence.

"Steve Kramer worked tirelessly to create this program," said Gordon Brollier '73. "Few courses have had the intensity to change young lives in the way Group Dynamics did."

Before the course's final approval, Kramer was deciding where to take the students. His only requirements after the OB excursions were to be above timberline and within a day's drive of Alliance. After visiting the Adirondack Mountains, he knew he had the perfect location. Soon thereafter, Kramer and two faculty colleagues led eight students into the wilderness for the adventure of a lifetime.





"A few years after graduation, I had the opportunity to become an alumni leader for the Wilderness Trip - a role I continued to do for 11 summers. Through it all, I felt incredibly lucky to be stewarding this trip - introducing younger generations of Raiders to the magic of backpacking in the Adirondacks, helping them grow and overcome obstacles, sharing the foundations of wilderness ethics - all while having fun!"

Laura Klingler '03

The Adirondacks have since seen 50 groups of Mount Union community members pass through their trails, and they have left an indelible footprint on the lives of those who have participated.

"I have many favorite memories from the years I participated (2015 and 2016), but the most impactful one was summiting Mount Marcy for the first time," said Erica Hirsch '17. "When the clouds parted, I remember slowly turning in a circle, taking in the view - nothing but mountains for miles. Six million acres, forever wild. That was the first time I truly realized how small we are in the grand scheme of things and experienced a bit of existential optimism."

ADAPTING TO THE TERRAIN

Nothing stands the test of time without some adjustments, especially as the groups became larger and generated the interest of more Purple Raiders. The trip lasted two weeks in its first eight years, but it was trimmed to 10 days after students became weary of the length or unable to find time in their schedules. Elements like whitewater rafting and the "group solo" expedition have also been discontinued over the years. Yet, the focal points of backpacking treacherous terrain, rock climbing, service projects, and overcoming environmental challenges as a group remain to this day.

Another constant over time is what Abby Daley '13, M '17 calls "Kramer Questions." Daley, a participant in 2012 who has helped lead trips since 2019, still uses these questions and said they, "bring you closer together than you can even imagine." When asked what one of those questions was, Kramer laughed at their branding.

"We would just sit around the campfire and talk about key experiences in our lives," Kramer said. "One question would be, 'Tell me about a time you've overcome a challenge in your life.' These would really help the group become more cohesive."

After more than 30 years, physical limitations began to set in for Kramer, making it harder for him to lead the experience to what he considered as its fullest potential. Campus colleague Dr. Paul Tidman - a self-described outdoors lover who spent his honeymoon backpacking with his wife, Barbara - shadowed Kramer on the trip in 2006 to see what it was all about. The baton was officially passed in 2010, and a new era of environmental exploration was introduced.

Tidman's first trip in 2010 came at a downturn for the course. New regulations made it more difficult for students to traverse to the highest peaks, lessening the experience for some, and only seven students participated. While Tidman kept many of the trip's foundational elements, he aimed to shine a new light on the environmental ethics of the nature they would inhabit. This idea, serendipitously combined with the seven students being impactful campus leaders, led to word spreading on campus later that fall of a life-affirming experience in the mountains.

"We went from having seven students in 2010, to 24 in 2011, and having to turn people away and create a waitlist in 2012," Tidman said. However, as the groups grew, the connections remained stronger than ever, thanks in part to personal touches like Barbara preparing an array of trail-worthy food each year.

"Trail mix has never tasted quite as good as it did after we had summited our fourth high peak of the week," said Adam Infantino '17, who participated during the 2016 trip. "The challenge of carrying everything you'll need to survive a week in the mountains in a backpack was both enlightening and empowering. I think we all found that we needed very little to be satisfied."

While the response to the trip has been overwhelmingly positive during its 50 years, both Kramer and Tidman recalled a few unique hiccups over the decades.

"Growth has always been the goal, and that often comes from dealing with stressful situations," Kramer said.

Included among those harrowing moments are students getting lost, bumps and bruises, fears of heights, and, as Tidman described with a wry smile of joy and relief, two separate bear encounters from a distance. Both professors view these hurdles as perfect encapsulations of what the course is all about, and 2014 participant Adam Lundberg '15 agrees.

"This trip was incredible!" he said. "I loved growing closer to those in my group. The hikes were challenging at times but totally worth it when we got to the top of the mountain."

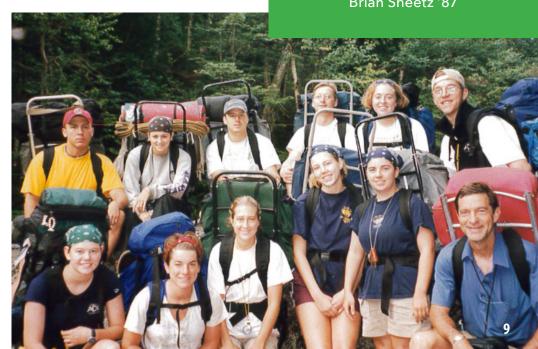


1985 TRIP

"My wife, Chris
(Wolonsky '86) Sheetz,
and I had been dating
a short time before the
trip. So, our courtship
included not bathing
for a week or so,
and a whole lot of
togetherness.
It became a key part
of our touchstones
together, and we
still talk about our
experiences that
summer."

Brian Sheetz '87









1993 TRIP

"My favorite memories include the time spent with my classmates navigating the various challenges of the trip, learning how to work together and simplify our lives to become a team in nature. At the end of each day of hiking, we would cook, eat, clean, and talk about our daily experiences. The wilderness trip is one of my fondest memories of my college experience."

Matt Durchik '94

Coincidentally, Lundberg also shared the story of a black bear coming into their camp the first night while they were out checking on another group – an experience he shared with Tidman and their entire group. These shared moments of awe, unpredictability, and resilience perfectly capture the spirit of the course and the lasting bonds it forges.

"To go from seeing some students in tears on the hike and seeing the sense of wonder and accomplishment on their faces while reaching new heights and doing hard things is just awesome," Tidman said. "This and the Social Responsibility trip are the most rewarding opportunities because you get to learn about students and share experiences in unique and different ways."

FIFTY YEARS AND BEYOND

Kramer and Tidman have both earned rightful emeritus status from Mount Union, with the peaks of the Adirondacks almost entirely in their rear-view mirrors. Yet the experience built by Kramer and extended by Tidman is aiming to continue its success with the help of Abby (Honaker '10) Schroeder. Schroeder, who serves as the director of Mount Union's Regula Center for Public Service and Civic Engagement, has gone on four different Wilderness Experiences, including two as an alumni leader. Her knowledge of the trips and direction from Kramer and Tidman have prepared her to guide the next generation of Purple Raiders on this rewarding journey.

"I have met so many alumni who also participated, and we are able to share similar but unique stories no matter the year we went," Schroeder said. "My brother went on the trip 10 years after I did, and being able to share that Mount Union experience is something I cherish."

Along with maintaining stability in the number of participants and inspiring them to connect with nature, one of her goals is to work with the Office of University Advancement to secure additional funding for the trips, making them as affordable as possible for interested students. Carrying the weight of such an established and monumental opportunity is not lost on Schroeder.

"Getting to continue that legacy is an honor that leaves me speechless. I cannot express what it means to take on leadership of something that was started 50 years ago and has continued ever since, and not only that, was started by Steve Kramer, one of the most influential people in my life," Schroeder said.

Her sentiments about Kramer echo those of countless alumni who have talked about the trip.

"The best thing about this experience is that it is an opportunity to truly get to know people you'll never likely otherwise know meaningfully," said Chris Underation '88, who was part of the 1987 trip. "Many members of our group hung out at college following the experience. Some of us are still connected to one another on social, and we touch base from time to time."

To those current and future Mount Union students considering the Wilderness Trip, Underation said, "This can be one of the best things about your Mount experience." Kaycee Nikses '16, M '19, who participated in the trip in 2015 – nearly three decades after Underation – couldn't agree more.

"Absolutely do this trip," she said. "It changed my life and is a core memory I have forever. It will open your eyes to a new perspective, and you will grow from this trip for the rest of your life."

For Kramer, the trip was never about an enduring legacy but rather small moments that would leave a lasting impression.

"I don't think I could have dreamed of this lasting 50 years back then," Kramer said with a laugh. "But I'm very happy that it's happened, and I hope the experience has made a difference in participants' lives."





"Experiencing the Adirondacks as a student in the trip the first time around, my favorite memory was jumping off the rocks by the waterfall and going under the waterfall into the cave. As a student leader, my favorite memory was hiking up Mount Marcy before sunrise and experiencing the best view as the sun came up."

Rachel (Amos '20) Ramsey





A CENTURY of the Student Experience

When Florence Roe arrived on Mount Union's campus, her activities mirrored those of many of the students beginning classes in the fall of 2025.

She met her roommate, ate dinner, confirmed

her class schedule, and felt a small pang of homesickness. The difference between Florence and other students on campus today is that she started her collegiate journey in September 1919. Thanks to the preservation and transcription by Florence's granddaughter, Karen Thomas, and daughters, Marcia (Miller '55) Thomas and Ellen (Miller '61) Sol, more than 100 of the matriarch's letters to home from the 1919-1920 academic year were donated to the University of Mount Union archives in March. These artifacts provide unparalleled, first-person access to the thoughts and feelings of a new Mount Union student more than 100 years ago – and how those thoughts might remain constant to students throughout time.

ADJUSTING TO COLLEGE

Florence arrived in Alliance via train from Mingo Junction, Ohio, a small village outside of Steubenville, Ohio, that boasts a mere 3,200-plus residents today. While many parents today send their students off with a hug after helping transport mini-fridges and box fans, Florence began writing her letters to her parents, Alex and Velma Grace Roe, the night she arrived to report that she, "...arrived safe and sound and everything is just lovely."

Florence's initial commentary on campus life is hard to discern from the 18-year-olds of today (see right). These opinions range from early wake-up calls to campus meals and football excellence.

Pictured Below: Roe's granddaughter, Karen Thomas, hands many of Roe's letters to Alan Zahorsky, reference and instructional librarian.

"They serve breakfast at 6:30, and I'm so fired I don't believe that Ill ever get up."

- September 19, 1919

"We have pretty good meals but breakfast and lunch are kind of slim ... we get hungry between time so send us some cake or cookies or something because we nearly starve."

- September 19, 1919

"... Yesterday we went to the first football game of the season. Mount Union played Canton Hi. Of course, it was all one-sided and Mount Union won 61-0."

- September 23, 1919



"... (Ve have been introduced so much that I am weak from shaking hands and telling my name..."

- September 22, 1919

"Up here at the college I feel like I know everyone..."

- September 23, 1919

"Think of going to school Saturday.

That is what we have to do tomorrow and the next. (We have just loads of work before us. But we are going to tackle anything."

- January 11, 1920

"The girls didn't have school either of course since the boys had to go home to vote. I wish we did too but just to have a vacation is a great relief."

- November 5, 1919

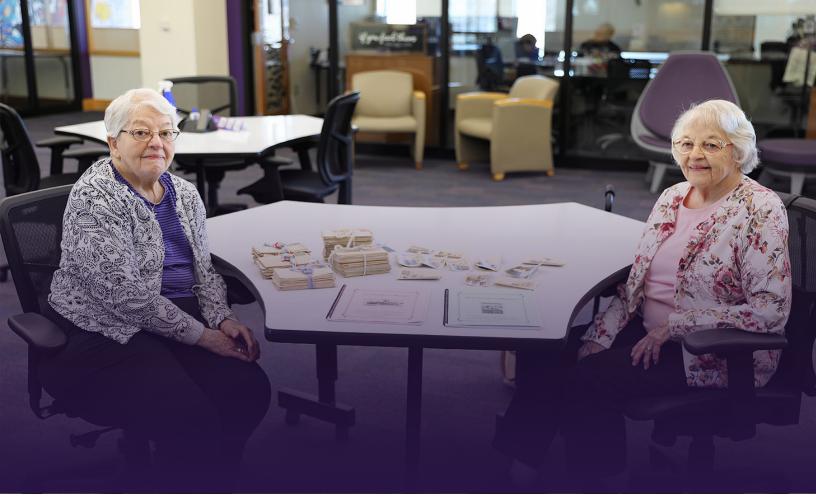
Her first week on campus was a whirlwind, but it was clear that the welcoming nature of the people who make up Mount Union has been steadfast since the beginning of the institution.

As the semester began in earnest, Florence's letters became sparser. She continued to express how much she missed her family, but her increased campus involvement immersed her in the Mount Union experience. She rushed Alpha Xi Delta, joined the choir, and stressed over her first college exam. In October, Florence joked, "I was ready to think you had forgotten about me," after not receiving a letter for a few days. Yet, by November 10, and several letters after, she was so busy that each began, "I suppose you think I have forgotten you but I haven't," a notion similar to many texts or calls today.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

While many of the day-to-day activities of college life have persisted, there were notable hurdles of the era Florence and her peers had to overcome. Most important to Florence was the safe shipment and return of her clothes, as they had to be sent back and forth by train to be laundered. Several communications regarded the status of specific items of clothing as a priority, which might be a fair lament for something so unimaginable today.





Pictured Above: Ellen (Miller '61) Sol (left) and Marcia (Miller '55) Thomas (right) pose with the letters and photographs from their mother, Florence Roe.

The young freshman also endured several Saturday classes and lessons (see left), with some occurring "before daylight." Despite the unfamiliar circumstances to her, Florence's mind-set carried her through the toughest stretch of her brief college career.

Whether an indicator of the infancy of indoor plumbing or the expectations of a young adult, Florence "celebrated" the conclusion of those difficult Saturday classes in January with a bath stating, "It is the first time the water has been hot enough."

Though she did not often comment on the world outside of the Mount Union bubble in which she lived, Florence's year on campus took place during a landmark time in American politics. Soon before she arrived on campus and not long after she left, the 19th Amendment was passed by Congress in June 1919 and subsequently ratified in August 1920, granting women the right to vote. While monumental for the country's future, Florence acknowledged the occasion in a letter to her boyfriend as many a college student might (see left).

ENDURING LEGACY

Florence Roe's Mount Union career lasted one quick year, but it made an indelible impact on her children. After moving to Georges Run, Ohio, not far from Mingo Junction, and marrying her high school sweetheart, Ray, the couple had five children. After their older brothers went to serve in the military, Marcia and Ellen were all but directed by their parents to attend college, and Mount Union seemed like the obvious choice.

"She didn't talk about Mount Union much to us kids, but we knew how much her time there meant to her," said Marcia. "Once I visited campus, I knew there really was not another option for me."

Both Marcia and Ellen pursued education degrees while at Mount Union. While Ellen's personal and professional journey took her across the country, she eventually settled with her family back in Alliance in the same Rockhill-area neighborhood as her sister. Both women remained active with the University over the years by engaging with student organizations and attending concerts, sporting events, and lectures.

"Things have definitely changed a lot since we were here, but they also changed a lot from our time to when our mom went here just from reading her letters," Ellen said.

While more than a century separates Florence and today's students, they all share a unique Mount Union experience rooted in a rich, everlasting tradition.



AMBITIQUS Means

KATE KUETER '25 FORGES PATH TO GOVERNMENT WORK

Kate Kueter '25, a national security and intelligence analysis and French graduate, has been driven to achieve her dream of working for the government throughout her time at the University of Mount Union.

"There are a variety of pathways I could pursue with my degrees in national security and French," said Kueter. "I could work in security helping other countries or with private government agencies, but my dream job is to work for the national security administration in Washington, DC."

An Iowa native, Kueter has worked alongside Iowa Senator Joni Ernst as an intern in DC, where she was exposed to the daily routines of government officials. Kueter has also developed and presented both independent and faculty-led research. These experiences have allowed her to discover what working for the government is like.

"When working with Senator Ernst, I was exposed to a different work environment; I was able to do things my way," said Kueter. "Throughout my time at Mount, I have worked on three research projects, one of which I presented at SCHOL-AR Day, Youngstown State University, and a conference in Boston."

As an out-of-state student, Kueter has become an independent woman because, compared to local or regional students, she does not have family nearby who can immediately help her when needed. However, she has found support from faculty like Dr. Michael Grossman, professor of political science, and Dr. Theresa (Young '95) Davis, professor of history.

"Dr. Grossman is both my academic advisor and professor. He has pushed me to continue producing research in the field," said Kueter. "Dr. Davis has been influential in my career as she was the first person to encourage me to present my first project at a conference."

As she looks back at her achievements in the Department of Social Sciences, Kueter is wrapping up an internship with Northrop Group in northern Virginia before traveling to London, United Kingdom, to begin her one-year master's program. Upon returning from London, she hopes to move to Virginia or Washington, DC to work for government security agencies.

Excited to conclude her journey at Mount Union and begin her professional career, Kueter cherishes every opportunity that has shaped her into the professional she is and helped her career take flight.

"If a quote were to describe my collegiate journey, it would be 'experience tells you what to do, confidence allows you to do it," said Kueter. "This is because one must gain real-world experience to apply the skills that the classroom material gives them and continue bettering oneself in that field."

CLASS **NOTES**

Class Notes to be included in the Winter 2026 Issue of *Mount Union Magazine* must be received before October 31, 2025.

Material for Class Notes is obtained online or through news passed along from alumni to the offices of Alumni Engagement, Advancement, and the Mount Union Fund. Notices sent by the Post Office are not printed in Class Notes. You may also submit your class note via email at alumni@mountunion.edu or the form found at mountunion.edu/alumni.

1950s

W. Paul Jones '51 recently released his 15th book, *Remnant Christianity: In a Post-Christian World* (Wipf and Stock), published with seven different publishers, several of which have earned awards. Jones is also the resident director of the Hermitage Spiritual Retreat Center, located on the shores of Lake Pomme de Terre in the Ozarks near Pittsburg, MO.

Carol (Hall '55) Wier was recently married.

1970s

Cheryl Boots '73 and Diane Wondisford '74 met at the Metropolitan Museum of Art on March 21 to see the Caspar David Friedrich exhibit featuring *The Soul of Nature*.



David Joachim '73 earned a YMCA Lifeguard Instructor certification, V7.

1980s

Thomas Maderia '80 was inducted into the New Jersey Interscholastic Athletic Association Coaches Hall of Fame in January 2025.



Robert Todor '83 was inducted into the Ohio Prep Sports Media Association Hall of Fame. Todor dedicated over 40 years to sports journalism, working at The Alliance Review and the (Youngstown) Vindicator. He served as sports editor from 1999 until his retirement in 2023.



1990s

Kelly (Wright '91) Shaffer was promoted to vice president of human resources in March 2023 at Astro Shapes LLC, Aerolite LLC, and Datco Mfg. LLC (aluminum extrusion manufacturers).



2000s

Robbie Blackburn '03 has launched Scoboki Publishing, an independent platform showcasing his passion for storytelling and poetry. His works include *The Darkness Within* and an upcoming memoir, *Hey Dick: How I Loved and Lost My Brother.* Visit scoboki.com to explore his books, poetry volumes, and updates on his publishing journey.

John '06 and Ally (Shultz '04) Burkey announce the birth of a son, Luke Burkey, on January 14, 2025.



Sarah Gray '04 and Erik Miller were married on September 14, 2024.



2010s

Brandon Alexander '10 is a database administrator SME with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the U.S. Joint Forces Command Joint Deployment and Maritime Operations Center, located at Naval Support Activity in Norfolk, Virginia.



Kelly (Emery '12) and Andy Buechner announce the birth of a daughter, Mallory Lynn, on November 25, 2024.



Sean '14 and Marissa (Earl '13) Butler announce the birth of a daughter, Kyah Rose, on January 27, 2025.



Anthony DiGeronimo '12 and Elizabeth George were married on December 27, 2024. Fourteen Mount Union alumni attended the wedding, including bridesmaid Eileen Vogel '14 and groomsman Kevin Marcinick '13.



Megan (Stacey '12) and Micah Goldfarb, announce the birth of a son, Martin James, on October 12, 2024.



Alison (Feucht '16) and Jesse Knowlden announce the birth of a daughter, Juniper Jane, on January 24, 2025.



Thomas '18 and Sarah Mason, announce the birth of a son, Maxwell Perry, on April 26, 2024.



Jessica (Grove '10) Noll is the mother of two sons, Lincoln, 2, and Landon, 9.



Amber Veverka '11 and Jeffrey Axner announce the birth of a daughter, Sloane Caroline, on November 13, 2024.





A MESSAGE FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Hello Raiders.

As we anticipate the start of a new academic year, we also welcome the Class of 2025 to the ranks of University of Mount Union alumni.

To the Class of 2025, thank you for your positive contributions to the campus community during your time as students, and thank you for preserving traditions and memories while also creating new ones.

As you continue your journey toward fulfilling lives, meaningful work, and responsible citizenship, I encourage you to continue your relationship with the University and campus community. Come back for a visit during Alumni Weekend, attend one of the many alumni events across the country, or volunteer your time as a member of the Alumni Association. Congratulations and remember "Once a Raider. Always a Raider!"

Go Mount Go!

Nick Walker '11 President Alumni Association



ALUMNI WEEKEND AND HOMECOMING OCTOBER 3-5, 2025

RUN-A-MUC 5K | ACADEMIC, ATHLETIC, AND MILESTONE YEAR REUNIONS | MUCAW FUNZONE

DETAILS AND REGISTRATION ARE AVAILABLE AT **MOUNTUNION.EDU/HOMECOMING**



CLASS OF 1975 CELEBRATES 50 YEARS

Row 1: Cindy (Thorn) Hubert, Robbi (Infield) Holzer, Paula (Cope) Andreani, Barb (Korosy) Giordano, Phil Ehrman, Kathy Adams, Janice (Byers) Monks, Dona (Crowell) West, Jeanie (Eagle) Krugh, Julie (Clark) Sauner, Kathy Sasak-Lindholm, Susan (Weiss) Stuber. Row 2: Ron Pierce, Cindy (Kimmel) Miller, Curt Tinlin, Merabeth (Shively) Steffen, Tim Taylor, Kathe (Yockey) Paidas, Shirley Freed-Matula, Kathy (Davis) Hopkins, Sharon (Kauffman) Cramer, Connie Crim Syron, Janet (Gilliland) Chumney, Elise (Treu) Hassink, Paul Monks. Row 3: Rich Healey, Scott Kell, Chuck Holzer, Rick Russell, Dave Reichard, Paul Morris, Bob Gray, Randy Hunt, John Nussbaumer, Gary Adams, Keith Stanley, Tim Krugh.

DEATHS 1940s

Alyce (Springer '47) Hall of Sebring, Ohio passed away on January 29, 2025.

Carl Jelichek '49 of Canton, Ohio passed away on February 3, 2025.

Edwin Marini '49 of Kent, Ohio passed away on January 3, 2025.

Miriam (Maxwell '46) Moore of Sebring, Ohio passed away on January 30, 2024.

1950s

Joan (Alworth '59) Biery of Findlay, Ohio passed away on November 29, 2024.

Jean (Fiedler '59) Heilman of Columbus, Ohio passed away on March 3, 2025.

W. Eldon Kropf '59 of Canton, Ohio passed away on February 22, 2024, in Sun City, Arizona. He is survived by his wife, Carol (Puttkamer '60) Kropf; daughter, Michelle Kropf; and sons, Brent and Brian Kropf.

Vincent Obmann '55 of Alliance, Ohio passed away on December 3, 2024.

Thomas Palmer '59 of Munroe Falls, Ohio passed away on January 20, 2025.

Eugene Taylor '52 of League City, Texas passed away on October 19, 2024.

1960s

Paul Biery '60 of Findlay, Ohio passed away on September 23, 2024.

Linda (Logan '62) Byrd of Malvern, Ohio passed away on November 20, 2024.

Betty (Wehner '65) Davis of Alliance, Ohio passed away on January 31, 2025. Martha (Hosler '62) Durey of Norwalk, Connecticut passed away on February 1, 2025.

Charwin (Harvey '64) Erich of Boca Raton, Florida passed away on March 20, 2025.

Emmett Garlock '69 of Lakeville, Minnesota passed away on January 4, 2025.

Robert Hackley '60 of Poland, Ohio passed away on December 16, 2024.

Susan (Korosy '67) Hines of Alliance, Ohio passed away on March 11, 2025.

Sandra (Schlottman '61) Hukill of Carlisle, Pennsylvania passed away on February 7, 2025.

Elaine Lyons '63 of Oak Creek, Wisconsin passed away on November 18, 2024.

Ed March '68 of Canton, Ohio passed away on November 28, 2024. He is survived by his wife, Sue (Dugle '67) March.

Melanie Russell '65 of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania passed away on February 22, 2025.

Betty (Palmenter '64) Schermesser of Sun City Center, Florida passed away on February 2, 2018.

Norman Summer '65 of Minerva, Ohio passed away on November 7, 2024.

1970s

Kenneth Fisher '71 of San Diego, California passed away on January 27, 2025.

Daniel Hopkins '79 of Marion, Ohio passed away on February 8, 2025.

Harter March '70 of Akron, Ohio passed away on January 28, 2025.

Nancy (Davies '78) Evans Miller of East Canton, Ohio passed away on November 11, 2024.

EMPLOYEES

Robert Hinchliffe '64 of Alliance, Ohio passed away on December 28, 2024. He served as the head wrestling coach at Mount Union from 1974 until 1978.

Mary Ellen Lloyd of Youngstown, Ohio passed away on March 5, 2025. She was an emeritus professor of accounting and a member of the faculty at Mount Union from 1988 until 2007.

Marie Luck of Louisville, Ohio passed away on February 1, 2025. She worked for Mount Union as a member of the support staff in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

Dennis Nordquest of Peoria, Arizona passed away on October 24, 2024. He worked in admission in the 1970s.

Kirk Schuring of Canton, Ohio passed away on November 22, 2024. He was the assistant director of university advancement for the Ralph and Mary Regula Center for Public Service and Civic Engagement from 2010 to 2018 in addition to serving the State of Ohio as a state senator.

Marie Shanks of Alliance, Ohio passed away on December 2, 2024. Marie worked in the mailroom at Mount Union for over 33 years.

Theresa Umlauf of Canton, Ohio passed away on January 22, 2025. She served Mount Union as a member of the support staff.

Wesley Vesey of Delaware, Ohio passed away on February 16, 2025. He was an emeritus professor of religion and served as a member of the institution's faculty from 1963 until his retirement in 1990.

ALUMNI IN THE NEWS

NICK SIRIANNI '03

Nick Sirianni '03, head coach of the Philadelphia Eagles, made history this year as the first Mount Union alumnus to win the Super Bowl as a head coach. After claiming the title, he credited Mount Union for teaching him a winning attitude and instilling in him a demand for excellence, which he continues to teach his own players.

Before he was leading his team to a Super Bowl win, he was winning championships as a member of the Purple Raider football team, first as a receiver and then as an assistant coach. Throughout his years with the program, he was a part of four championship winning teams.



Graduating with a degree in education, Sirianni was hired for his first NFL coaching job with the Kansas City Chiefs in 2009, followed by stints with the Los Angeles Chargers and the Indianapolis Colts. Sirianni eventually became the head coach for the Eagles in 2021 and has garnered the highest winning percentage of all active NFL coaches.

"Mount Union taught me how to win, that's for sure," Sirianni said in an interview with the Canton Repository following his Super Bowl win. "So grateful to everybody at Mount Union, [Hall of Fame] Coach [Larry] Kehres, all my teammates there, everyone that helped me develop from there."

TRUSTEES

DR. LARRY SHINN

Dr. Larry Shinn, a member of the University's Board of Trustees since 2003, passed away on April 2, 2025.

He was president of Berea College in Kentucky from 1994 to 2012. Prior to this appointment, he taught at Oberlin College and served in leadership at Bucknell University. A native of Alliance, Ohio, Dr. Shinn earned degrees from Baldwin-Wallace College, Drew University, and Princeton University.

He is survived by his wife Nancy, daughters Christie (Peter) and Robyn, five grandchildren, and one great-grandchild.



James Sellers '74 of Willard, Ohio passed away on November 4, 2024.

Laurie (Henderson '74) Thomas of Poland, Ohio passed away on January 17, 2025.

<u>1980s</u>

Michael Klingensmith '84 of Fishers, Indiana passed away on December 29, 2024.

Stephen Miller '84 of Canton, Ohio passed away on January 18, 2025.

Martha Thatcher '85 of Canton, Ohio passed away on November 24, 2024.

David Wack '81 of Salem, Ohio passed away on January 31, 2025.

1990s

William Becker III '92 of Estero, Florida passed away on December 26, 2024.

Craig Neimanis '90 of Hartville, Ohio passed away on March 8, 2025.

2000s

David Ross '02 of Cleveland, Ohio passed away on February 28, 2025.

Christina Sariochek '05 of Beaver Falls, Pennsylvania passed away on February 11, 2024.

Friends

Ann Hendel of Alliance, Ohio, spouse of Dr. Douglas Hendel, professor emeritus of theatre, passed away on March 6, 2025.

James Jacobs of Northbrook, Illinois passed away on March 1, 2025. He attended Mount Union in the late 1940s and early 1950s.

David Kaercher of Youngstown, Ohio passed away on March 1, 2025. He attended in the early 1950s.

Patricia (Neel) Linz of North Canton, Ohio passed away on February 10, 2025. She attended in the early 1960s.

Linda (Little) Ramage of Columbiana, Ohio passed away on November 10, 2024. She attended in the mid 1960s.

Beatrice (Butler) Renaud of Chester, Iowa passed away on February 13, 2025. Beatrice volunteered for many positions within the drama department.

Harold Ringer Jr. of Canton, Ohio passed away on February 15, 2025. He attended in the late 1950s.

ALUMNI

VIOLET (BICA '44) ROSS

Violet (Bica '44) Ross passed away on March 24, 2025, less than six weeks before her 102nd birthday. Vi dedicated her life to education and community service. During her career, she served the school districts of Alliance, Maple Heights, Cleveland Heights-University Heights, and Shaker Heights.

Beyond her professional achievements, Vi was deeply committed to her community and "the schools," her shorthand for her husband's alma mater, Washington and Jefferson College, and her alma mater,



the University of Mount Union. Both colleges have modern residence halls named Bica-Ross Hall, in recognition of Vi's financial support and honoring her husband, Clay, and her brother, George.

Most recently, her philanthropy at Mount Union helped create the Violet Bica Ross Center for Student Success in the Kolenbrander-Harter Information Center and the Violet Bica Ross Football Coaching Wing in the Dom and Karen Capers Football Coaching Center. Her generosity also impacted various facility projects, including Bracy Hall, the Dewald Chapel, the Hartshorn and Union Avenue Townhouses, the Hoover-Price Campus Center, the Kolenbrander-Harter Information Center, Kehres Stadium, and the Sigma Nu house.

In addition, she established the Violet Bica Ross and L. Clayton Ross Scholarship and the Virginia Bica Endowed Scholarship, in addition to supporting the engineering program, the Rachel Boyce Lang International Choir Tour, and the Mount Union Fund.

MARY ANN (CLOSE '55) STOCKUM

Mary Ann (Close '55) Stockum passed away at the age of 90 on November 20, 2024. A proud alumna and lifelong advocate for education and service, Mary Ann left behind a remarkable legacy through a bequest to the University. Her transformative gift will support the Dr. Alfred E. Stockum and Mary Ann Stockum Endowed Scholarship, while the remainder will be used to advance Mount Union's mission through unrestricted support.



Mary Ann's life was defined by compassion, humility, and a deep commitment to helping others. After earning her nursing credentials from St. Luke's Hospital School of Nursing, she served as a medical nursing supervisor and diabetes educator at The Ohio State University Hospital. Her dedication extended beyond the hospital walls, as she helped develop a camp program for children with diabetes and volunteered as a guide for the Ohio State School for the Blind's marching band – a role she cherished deeply. Mount Union was a constant presence in Mary Ann's life, and her final gift ensures that future generations will benefit from the same transformative experience she once did.



When Ben Utterback '96 reflects on his time at the University of Mount Union, he remembers more than just the academics – he remembers the people, the personal attention, and the life-shaping experiences that helped launch his career. Now, Ben and his wife Torie are giving back in a way that blends their shared passions: by helping fund two new pickleball courts on campus through a generous matching gift to the Class of 2025 Senior Gift Project.

Ben was drawn to Mount Union by its small class sizes and individualized attention. His father, Dr. Geoff Utterback '69, founded the family dental practice that Ben would later take over in 2012. He shared, "Seeing the success that my dad had in his dental career led me to know that Mount Union could be a nice piece to the overall puzzle of life."

During his time on campus, Ben found mentors who left a lasting impression. He credits Dr. Len Epp, his pre-med advisor, with helping him navigate the decision between medical and dental school. Professors like Joel Collins and Steve Kramer also played key roles, offering courses in art history and psychology that broadened his perspective. "They helped shape me in ways I didn't fully appreciate until later," he said.

In January 2025, Ben sold Utterback Dental Group and launched Dental Sleep Solutions of Northeast Ohio, the region's only dental office dedicated exclusively to treating obstructive sleep apnea and snoring. A Diplomate of the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine and a recognized leader in the field, Ben has lectured widely and contributed to state and national dental sleep medicine initiatives.

Ben has remained closely connected to Mount Union, giving annually and returning to campus to lecture to pre-med and physician assistant studies students. "Those days are always so gratifying," he said. "The students are brilliant, and their questions and engagement remind me why I love giving back."

Torie, a 1996 graduate of John Carroll University, shares his passion for education and wellness. The couple, who bonded over tennis, have recently embraced pickleball. "Torie now destroys me on the tennis court," Ben joked. "So, we've transitioned to pickleball."

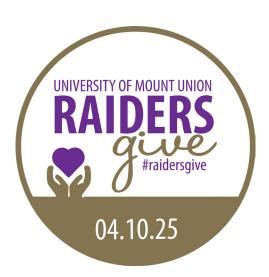
When they learned the Class of 2025 was fundraising for a single pickleball court, they saw an opportunity to do more. Their matching gift expanded the project to two courts, creating more space for students to connect and recharge.

The Utterbacks hope the courts will become a vibrant hub for recreation and community on campus. "We want students to have a fun, healthy outlet to balance the demands of coursework," Ben explained. "It's about creating spaces where students can meet new people and enjoy their time at Mount Union."

For Ben and Torie, philanthropy is a way to honor the institutions that shaped them and to ensure future students have access to the same transformative experiences.

"Small universities like Mount Union rely on alumni support to maintain their unique, personalized approach to education," Ben said. "We're proud to be part of that legacy."





ON APRIL 10, 2025, THE PURPLE RAIDER COMMUNITY CAME TOGETHER DURING OUR EIGHTH ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING, RAIDERS GIVE, TO MAKE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR STUDENTS IN JUST 24 HOURS!

Thank you to the **855** generous alumni, students, parents, employees, and friends who collectively raised **\$413,441** – surpassing last year's total by roughly \$29,000 – in direct support for all current and future Purple Raiders. On behalf of the entire Mount Union community, thank you to everyone who made this impactful day possible. It takes ALL of us!



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