

WEBBER

VIEW

MAGAZINE

volume 11 | 2022

Degrees of Success

Par for the Course

Alumnus at the Helm of
Elite Golf Club in Spain

A Solid Foundation

Webber Grad Realizes
Entrepreneurial Dreams

Supporting Our Heroes

Webber Recognized for
Dedication to Veterans



Warrior Athletics

It's a Season to Shine
For Women's Basketball

Looking Forward With Great Anticipation!



I recently joined Webber International University in January of 2022 as the Director of Annual Fund and Alumni Affairs, and I couldn't be more excited! You may wonder why such excitement, so let me tell you. I see opportunity — opportunity to be part of something special.

Webber International University is a long-standing educational institution with a rich history and an even brighter future. Webber's bright future is not a one-person show, however, it is a community effort. That community consists of my department, alumni, donors, friends, and business partners. As a community, we can advance the institution to new heights.

My ask today is that we all **celebrate, give, and advance** Webber International University.

As a community, let's **celebrate** our graduates of the past, present, and future, with special congratulations to our May 2022 graduates. We wish them the best of success as they enter their next journey in life!

For those future Webber Warriors, let's **give** our time and resources. Giving has a direct impact on educational opportunities and growth.

Finally, let's **advance** the Warrior Community through communication so we can help to connect and elevate Warrior Pride. Let's share our Webber successes.

In closing, this magazine is a showcase of Webber's impact and successes of the past year, as well as continued opportunities. I hope you enjoy this edition of the *Webber View*.

Go Warriors!

Sincerely,

Ryan Reis

Director of Alumni Fund and Alumni Affairs
reisrj@webber.edu

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on the cover

Julian Romaguera may be managing the links at the prestigious Los Naranjos Golf Club in Spain, but his roots trace back to Webber. Learn how the university fueled his success. Page 6

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WEBBER VIEW

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Webber Is Success

95 years. That's an awfully long time. And they haven't always been great times. We've survived the Great Depression, WWII, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, Y2K, the Persian Gulf War, the seventh cholera pandemic, SARS, swine flu, MERS, and COVID-19.

What carries an institution through all of that? What keeps us going? For those who answer the call, it's the mission. Distilled down to its most basic: Webber is success.

Cognizant that our students will likely get jobs that don't even exist today, everything we do is tied to equipping our graduates not just for their first jobs but also for their first couple of promotions. Our curriculum is based neither on the current fad nor what high school students think sounds fun. Rather, it's based on our continuous conversation with businesses about what they expect an employee to know to earn their keep on day one and be promotable on day 180. Our faculty aren't just well published and academically qualified — we've got a higher percentage of terminally degreed faculty than just about any school you can name — but the vast majority have actually worked in the field in which they teach. Sure, all of our faculty bring a pretty impressive portfolio, but most also bring a pretty impressive Rolodex. (Boy, that reference doesn't date me any, does it?) Classes are hard. We police grade inflation. About half of the students who apply to Webber get accepted, and not everyone makes it through. We've actually had graduates say their Managerial Accounting exams were harder than the CPA exams! Like it or not, if we're going to turn out graduates who are better than their contemporaries, it takes not just a lot of resources and a good plan, but a lot of hard work.

But oh my, is it worth it! As you leaf through the pages of this magazine, you'll read a number of great stories. And these are just the tip of the iceberg. Faculty and staff come and faculty and staff go. But for those of you who are alumni, it will always be your Webber. And you have every right to be proud of your alma mater. As the stories on these pages — and so many that are as yet untold — illustrate, Webber is many, many things, most importantly success.

Webber is success. Thanks to all of you who make that true and possible.

Best Regards,

Keith

Dr. Keith Wade, President

Webber Alumnus and Former Golf Team Member Julian Romaguera Manages One of Spain's Top Golf Courses

by PAUL CATALA

Speaking from the clubhouse of Los Naranjos Golf Club, Julian Romaguera says he has ample opportunity to “stare outside at the golfers playing.” But due to his busy schedule as the general manager of one of the most prestigious golf clubs and courses in Spain, Romaguera, now general manager of Los Naranjos Golf Club, Marbella, confesses that any free time he has to get out and personally take some swings is getting more and more scarce.

Romaguera spent a lot more time on the links from 2006 to 2009 when he was a member of Webber International University men's golf team and a student at the university. It was at Webber that Romaguera says not only did he improve his golf game via a golf scholarship, but he also learned the theories of business management that prepared him for a successful career in golf club and course management.

“The experience was fantastic, not only from an academic standpoint but also I was surrounded by students from different countries from around the world; I made lifelong friends during this period,” says Romaguera, a native of Algeciras, Spain, who was raised in Malaga.

Romaguera began playing golf when he was 11 years old after his father bought him a small set of golf clubs and Saturday golf lessons. After high school, Romaguera got an academic



and golf scholarship to Webber through International Doorway – a Coconut Grove, Florida-based organization specializing in undergraduate, graduate, and

ESL student recruitment and scholarship placement. He was offered the scholarship in 2005 due to his academic accomplishments in Spain and performance in U.S. golf showcases arranged by European companies.

“They had a list of options and the south of Spain and Florida are similar for good golf, so that's how I ended up at Webber,” he says.

Romaguera was immediately active with the Webber golf team, which made the NAIA Men's Golf National Championship nine times, including 2006, 2008, and 2009. Romaguera was playing for the team under now-retired coach Nancy Nichols, with whom he says he still visits occasionally.

The experiences Romaguera says he had through Webber's small class sizes (undergraduate enrollment was about 250 in 2020) made an impact on his success off the course and into the course offices. Along with Nichols, he still maintains contacts with Nikos Orphanoudakis, retired professor and dean of the Webber graduate school, and Fred Fening, who still teaches as a professor of management and international business, noting both as significant influences on his professional career.

“The main thing I enjoyed there was having a small environment

OR THE COURSE

where I could get to meet everyone pretty much at the university. Having that familiar feel to me was important for my adaptation to the country as well,” says Romaguera, whose wife, Rachel, is expecting their first child at the end of June. “Many of the friends I made there, I’m still in touch with them thanks to social media. I enjoyed campus life there and going to basketball, football, and soccer games.”

In May 2008, Romaguera graduated with a bachelor’s degree in business management and administration and a year later, had earned a master’s degree in business administration.

In addition, Romaguera earned a master’s in negotiation from Harvard Business University, Cambridge, in March 2021; an MBA in Digital Marketing in July 2020 from Windup Marketing School, Malaga, Spain; a masters in hospitality management from Cornell University, New York, in August 2018; and from the Association of Golf Directors of Spain, he received an advanced course in Golf Course Turf Management from 2016 to 2017.

Romaguera’s professional experience started as operations manager at Blue Canyon Country Club in Phuket, Thailand, the Asian tour headquarters, and the property of the Sofitel Luxury Hotels. He also worked in management at the Bahía Príncipe Golf Club in Riviera Maya, México, serving as director of golf and residences from 2014 to 2016; as director of golf from 2013 to 2014 at Sofitel Luxury Phokeethra Country Club in Siem Reap, Cambodia; and



as business development manager in 2013 at Lyon & Dianzi Marketing & Advertising Agency in Singapore.

In 2016, at the age of 29 and with a multitude of golf and hospitality industry experience under his belt, Romaguera joined Los Naranjos Golf Club as general manager.

Since working at Las Naranjos, Romaguera says he’s proud of the successful final of the Ladies European Tour at the course in 2021 and is hoping to upgrade course standards in 2022. The Los Naranjos Trophy Tournament is scheduled for April 25-28, and is known as one of the best amateur tournaments in Europe.

Additionally, Romaguera is involved with the addition of a 17-court paddle tennis center being built at Las Naranjos, supported by a new boutique gym, physio services, and a bar.

He says his career off the links has been rewarding, and he’s enjoyed making Los Naranjos “the most

successful, semi-private club in the country.”

“I’ve always been very passionate when I was a student and today, I still work with a lot of intensity, with both the ‘goods’ and the ‘bads,’” he says.

“Like at Webber, the more effort I put into (the golf club), the more I get back. Success is not guaranteed, so the more knowledge I acquire, the more tools I put into my backpack. 🎒





A SOLID *Foundation*

Tyler Auerbacher's Webber Degrees Gave Him the Tools to Make a Difference

by BRENDA EGGERT BRADER

ALUMNUS TYLER AUERBACHER says earning his degrees from Webber International University has been the most beneficial career step he could have made. Earning his bachelor's degree in marketing in 2012 and his master's in business management in 2014 has provided the foundation he needed to launch two businesses and a motivational opportunity that gives back to the community.

"Webber enabled me to learn the ins and outs of business through professors, the intimate learning style, and the people that developed those relationships," Auerbacher says.

He says he was on a journey in marketing at Webber.

He played basketball during his first year in college at the University of North Florida in Jacksonville. When his coach was fired, Auerbacher

was forced to find a new option. After looking around, he decided that Webber was his best option because of the overall fit and because it was the best school to learn business.

“It was a big shock for me to go from a large school to a small university,” Auerbacher says.

“I chose small class sizes. In a larger university with many more students, you are not so tight. The learning style at Webber was a really good benefit because you are so secluded you form deeper bonds. You have to be in the right headspace to survive. It is all about making the most of it, and it helped make deeper relationships.”

Auerbacher says there are a couple of professors he remembers quite fondly.

“Dr. Tom Aaron really influenced me,” he says. “Not a professor in my major, but he was a really good confidant who helped and encouraged me. He was one person who stood out to me at Webber.”

Auerbacher says Ronald Weber was another teacher who made his time at Webber more memorable.

While transitioning from a large school to a small school may have been a culture shock, Auerbacher soon realized the benefits.

“You have the ability to network with people from all different walks of life at Webber and have relationships and have a good time. The quality of the people really stood out. Students were 90 percent athletes or international or both. I learned a lot from other people.”

Auerbacher found the group projects in which he participated at Webber to be particularly helpful.

“There are bonds with students and advantages of the smaller school – professors who care for students,



bonding within athletics and with students making lasting friendships.”

After Auerbacher graduated, he worked selling tickets for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and was then hired full-time. After two years and the realization that he was not happy doing the same thing every day, he changed course.

“I needed more challenges, and that is what entrepreneurship does ... it is putting out fires every day, it keeps you on your toes, something is different every day. Working in a cubicle was not for me.”

Auerbacher then turned to real estate. He got his license, worked as an agent for six months, then worked for a real estate online marketing platform for two and a half years. That experience became a pivotal pathway to other endeavors.

The first of which was starting Dippidi as a co-founder/owner in 2019. Dippidi, located in downtown Lakeland and launched before the pandemic, is a done-for-you social

media advertising and content marketing company for real estate professionals that creates custom, highly targeted ads and strategies on social media to increase brand awareness and develop trust from prospects. Dippidi is now observing its three-year anniversary with seven employees.

“It is really amazing how fast we have grown in three years and will surpass \$1 million this year with the grace of God,” Auerbacher says.

In 2020, Auerbacher launched Thryve Media, a video marketing agency focused on creating ongoing video content to grow national digital brands.

“We are really getting our feet underneath Thryve and will be bringing another person on board,” Auerbacher says. “It is doing well, and that is really good.”

Seeking a way to give back to the community, he also created Lakeland Business Owners, a nonprofit organization highlighting amazing businesses and community leaders in Lakeland. Auerbacher’s service offers free advice, quick tips, interviews, and other valuable resources from industry experts, business leaders, and local organizations to help people grow their businesses so that they’re always in the best position to succeed. Areas include marketing, branding, advertising, sales, finance, human resources, and legal, along with events, updates, and information that every Lakeland business owner should know about.

“I wanted to give back to the community through helping businesses to make them more profitable,” Auerbacher says.

And this Webber alumnus has done just that. 🌍

CHALLENGING, *Yet Rewarding*

Haines City Director of Finance Omar DeJesus Reflects on Time at Webber

by TERESA SCHIFFER

WEBBER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY alumnus Omar DeJesus has been working hard since graduating with his master's degree in Business Administration and was recently hired as Haines City's Director of Finance.

DeJesus was a dedicated student athlete who grew up in Lake Placid. His passion for baseball got him a scholarship to attend Webber International University, which

set him on his current career path. As he considered his options for a major on enrollment day, he chose Accounting because he had always been good with numbers, despite

having no previous experience in the field. It turned out to be an ideal fit for DeJesus.

From 2007 to 2010, DeJesus worked on his undergraduate degree. Because he had some advanced credits from high school when he entered the university, he was able to graduate with his bachelor's degree in just three years.

DeJesus took some time off from

college to start a family with his high school sweetheart-turned-wife, Berta. After their first son, Jadiel, was born, DeJesus returned to Webber for his master's degree. For two years, he attended classes at night while working full time during the day to support his family. Almost a decade later, the DeJesus family welcomed a second baby boy, Jase, who is now 2 years old.

Thinking back on his days as a student at Webber, DeJesus recalls, "It was challenging and rewarding at the same time."

Living in the small town of Lake Placid meant he had an hour-long commute to the campus each day for classes, athletic practices, and games, but his dedication was unwavering. The small, structured environment of Webber allowed DeJesus the freedom to ask questions and absorb the curriculum in a manner most beneficial to him. He appreciates how the professors were willing to work with him to accommodate his athletic schedule while putting in the time and effort to help him truly succeed.

"Being a student athlete makes it a little difficult, trying to juggle the balance of sticking to your academics as well as giving a hundred percent to your sport. But overall, it was a good experience. I really enjoyed my time there," he recollects.

"I think being a student athlete and having those challenges really prepares you for the workforce. You do have to work as a team once you get into the corporate workforce, and coming from that athlete background, wanting to excel, wanting to do your best, applying yourself, hard work, and ethics always

play into that. I think that's a big part of what student athletes take away, making that transition."

In DeJesus' new role as Director of Finance, his responsibilities include overseeing all the financial transactions for Haines City. This includes the city's annual budget preparation, financial reporting and annual audits, management of the city's Treasury, all the debt the city takes on, and procurement (the purchasing responsibilities). Finance

pretty big step up careerwise. I do foresee myself with Haines City for quite a while as a long-term venture for me. I'm looking forward to making some big, progressive gains for the city, making sure we can get some infrastructure loans and some capital projects that we need to get done for the city that have kind of been neglected over the past years."

Haines City's population has been growing in recent years and needs some updating within its



I think being a student athlete and having those challenges really prepares you for the workforce.

You do have to work as a team once you get into the corporate workforce, and coming from that athlete background, wanting to excel, wanting to do your best, applying yourself, hard work, and ethics always play into that. I think that's a big part of what student athletes take away, making that transition.

— Omar DeJesus



also oversees all the utility billing operations for Haines City.

DeJesus shares his thoughts on the trajectory of his career.

"Right now, I think this has been a pretty big milestone for me," he says. "I'm 32 years old. I was the Director of Finance in Sun 'n Lake for seven years before transitioning. The Sun 'n Lake municipality was about a \$10 million budget, and Haines City now has a \$100 million budget, so it's a

infrastructure in order to maintain this trend. DeJesus looks forward to the challenges of helping the city become better equipped to handle continued growth in the future. Government projects tend to take a little extra time to accomplish, and he expects the current goals he has set for himself and the city to take about the next five years to fully achieve. 🌍



In Loving MEMORY

Webber Mourns the Passing of Longtime Administrative Assistant Patty Beasley

by TERESA SCHIFFER

IF YOU ATTENDED Webber International University within the past 20 years, there's a good chance you were at some point greeted and warmly welcomed by Patty Beasley, who worked in the Admissions Office. Beasley lost her battle with bone cancer in June 2021, leaving a space impossible to fill in many people's hearts. Her good friend and co-worker, Amanda Amico, spent some time reminiscing about Beasley with *Webber View*.

Amico met Beasley in 2004. Over the years, Amico had left Webber to work at other colleges, but ultimately it was Beasley's magnetic personality that drew her back to working at Webber International University.

A real "people person" at heart, Beasley always worked in the Admissions Office. She was an administrative assistant who had done a little bit of everything in that office during her time with Webber. Over the years, she had worn many hats in Admissions, at one time serving as Interim Director, and at other times going to high schools to recruit students.

"She loved to meet the new people coming in and helping them," Amico says. "She used to love to give tours when she could get up and walk around. She worked with the international students, as well. She really liked helping them get into Webber and get started."

Beasley was proud to have been raised in Babson Park and to be a Webber Warrior. She loved to point out the home on the lake where she grew up as she gave tours. It thrilled her to see that each new class starting was larger than the last. She was the type of person who never met a stranger – everyone she came

in contact with was a new friend.

"She was always the first to say, 'Welcome! How can I help you?'" Amico says. "She was that first friendly face that everybody saw when they walked in. A constant over the years, people would say that one of the main people that they would remember here would be Patty, and how friendly she was."

Beasley had a good-natured nickname for everyone, and in return was known by many as "P." It was common to hear her call out "Sparks!" through the office to a coworker.

Beasley meant a lot to

everyone who knew her, and “Sparks” (Rebecca Coleman) even surprised Beasley with a special commemorative brick on campus – without revealing her identity as the purchaser. It reads: Patty Beasley made her mark in Babson Park.

“Patty was blown away when she was gifted it,” Amico says. “She didn’t know who did it, but she was very touched by it, and she absolutely loved that brick. It meant so much to her.”

“She had a very good way of keeping everybody calm,” Amico says of her friend’s effect on those around her. “And she always got everyone excited about move-in day, even though we knew it was going to be a bunch of work. She was always

the big office cheerleader. Keep everybody calm, but keep everybody excited about the new term starting or the new group of students coming in. She would get along with everyone.”

The friendships Beasley made during her life kept her busy. Though she was satisfied living in Central Florida, she loved to travel and frequently visited friends in California.

In true Florida native fashion, the beach was Beasley’s second home. She was known to hop in her car and cruise out to any Florida coast for an afternoon in the sun with her toes in the sand. If a beach trip wasn’t feasible, she would just head to the nearest lake for a bit to

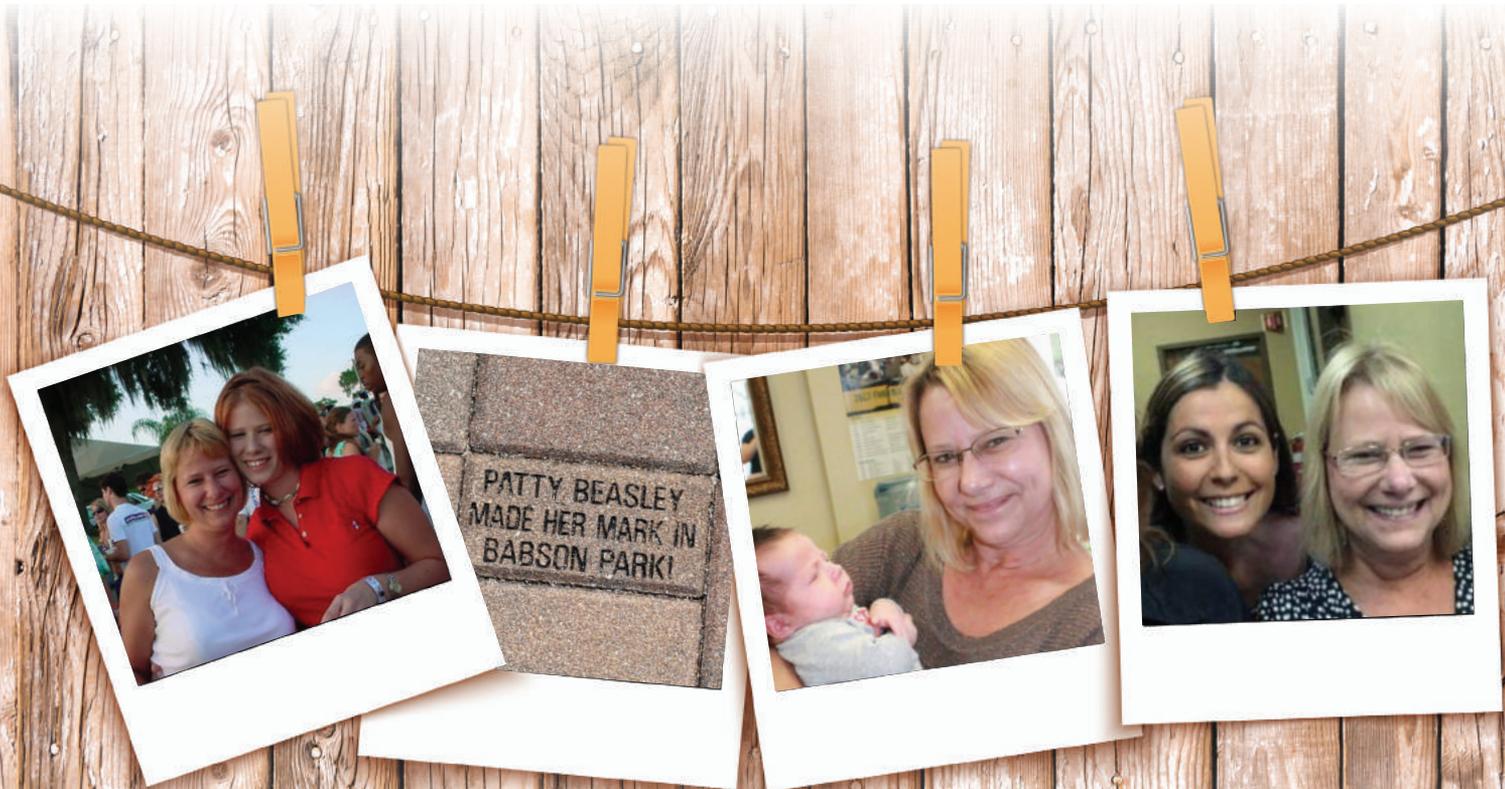
recharge near the water.

Beasley loved music, and she loved to dance. She particularly enjoyed live music and listening to her talented husband of over 40 years, Mike, and their son, Mikey, play their own instruments. Once cancer impaired her mobility, she would still dance in her chair at work.

Beasley, 57, passed away peacefully in her home, surrounded by her family.

Like the lyrics of one of her favorite songs, Van Morrison’s “Into the Mystic”:

*“Hark now, hear the sailors cry,
Smell the sea and feel the sky.
Let your soul and spirit fly
Into the mystic.”*





STRENGTH *Lies Within*

Senior Counselor Nellie Madrigal Taps Into University's Energy to Recruit

by TERESA SCHIFFER

WEBBER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY has a new Senior Counselor in the Admissions Office, and she is eager to welcome lots of new students to campus in this role. Nellie Madrigal is bringing in record numbers of new students to the university, and a short conversation with her reveals why she is an outstanding representative of Webber's values.

Madrigal grew up in New Orleans and moved to Florida about 18 years ago, relocating to be with her husband. She got her bachelor's degree in business at Warner University, then spent some time teaching because it worked well with her children's schedules.

As the kids got older and no longer needed their mother at home quite as much, Madrigal found time to work as an Admissions Counselor while simultaneously pursuing an MBA at Webber. This August will mark four years that she has been working at Webber.

"I am still working with students, doing tours, and things like that," Madrigal says of her current duties. "In addition to that, I am helping with training. We are growing our team in Admissions, so I'm trying to see where my peers need a little more strategy and skills, and trying to refine them and help them with getting training more often. We are so busy in Admissions, so I've been working on that."

Like the rest of the world, Webber was affected by the pandemic, and recruiting events had slowed greatly over the last couple of years. Now

Madrigal is hard at work planning exciting events to draw prospective students.

Madrigal enjoys her new position and is excited to introduce interested students to Webber International University's campus, as well as to the Financial Aid Office and Admissions.

"I like having a little bit more of a leadership role," Madrigal says of how she relates to her co-workers since she has been promoted to Senior Counselor. "A lot of my peers already feel really comfortable with me, and since I was just an Admissions Counselor prior, I feel like I'm able to help them a little bit, and then I'm also learning a lot of things from them."

As an employee who also attended Webber to earn a degree, Madrigal has a dual perspective on the university, with a deeper insight as to what students really need and

how the school can best support students who may have numerous responsibilities to shoulder.

“With the MBA, I did get a lot of skills from Webber, not just as far as work-wise, but from the professors also,” she details. “I’ve learned a lot about the student experience here, which is pretty valuable as well.”

Her optimism and bright outlook are notably admirable, as Madrigal’s road to success has had some rough patches. Last September, she lost her husband to COVID. Despite this blow, she has soldiered on in order to provide the best possible life for herself and her family.

“I’m still trying to grow – I want to grow in Admissions. I feel it all came in due timing. While I was doing my MBA, my husband was helping me through the whole process, taking on responsibilities and such,” Madrigal recalls.

When she was offered the Senior Counselor position, she recognized its potential significance for her family, saying, “It’s something I needed to help my family move forward, because he was the breadwinner. It just kind of all fell into place.”

Madrigal sincerely enjoys working in Webber’s Admissions Office. She values the mentorship she receives from her fellow employees, and she looks forward to being with Webber for the long term.

“I still have kids that are younger,” she says. I’m planning on staying in Lake Wales for a while. I definitely want to grow with Webber when the opportunity arises. I do still feel that I bring in a good amount of students, so it would have to be somewhere where I’m still helping enrollment. I don’t want to leave that spot, because I do help the team with bringing in students.”



With the MBA, I did get a lot of skills from Webber, not just as far as work-wise, but from the professors also. I’ve learned a lot about the student experience here, which is pretty valuable as well.

— Nellie Madrigal

People frequently ask Madrigal what her secret is, as she recruits record numbers of students for the university. Her cheerful demeanor might play a role, and there’s an underlying warmth to her personality that is certainly magnetic.

“There’s not really a formula,” she explains. “It’s just that everybody in this life wants to be wanted. That’s kind of a focus that I put when I work with my students, making sure that Webber is the right fit for them, but also letting them know that I care about them. I do still have a lot of

current students reach out to me, just because we felt that connection.

“I think really, at the end of the day, us being a smaller school, getting a more personalized environment, but also caring about people and helping them find their way is key. Everything is so busy now, so maintaining a constant connection, keeping communication open, while also letting the students know that there’s no pressure. It’s just helping them find the best fit as they transition into adulthood.” 🌍



FROM THE FIELD TO FULL PROFESSOR

Criminal Justice Program's Dr. Peter Barone Earns Promotion

by MICHAEL JOSEPH FOX



DR. PETER BARONE has been involved in the criminal justice field at various levels since 1975. This year marks not only his 10th year with Webber International University but also his first year as full professor. He started at Webber as an assistant professor in 2013-2014 and was promoted to associate professor in 2018.

“You sit there and think about what it means to you and your career reaching the top level to be the best professor you can to your students,” Barone says.

“Everyone wants to aspire to the pinnacle of their profession. To have gone from the bottom to the top is an accomplishment.”

He has worked as a consultant in criminal justice and police procedures, managing cases in the United States and Canada. He is also a published writer,

with articles and chapters appearing in publications such as “The Handbook on Research of School Violence in American K-12 Education” and “Police Brutality, Racial Profiling, and Discrimination in the Criminal Justice System.”

Barone created the new Criminal Justice Management program for students at the campus. It is the newest chapter in his extensive career in criminal justice and education.

He has been instructing police officers and students for years, first becoming a police instructor in 1983 and then a university professor in 1996. He has taught at schools like the University of Connecticut, Sacred Heart University, and the University of New Haven.

He created his first course at St. Thomas University and eventually created a new Homeland Security program at Thomas Edison University in Trenton, New Jersey.

“My goal is to give the students a full toolbox to help them learn,” he says.

Barone joined Webber International University not long after retiring from law enforcement. He wanted to get back into teaching, but he didn’t want to travel much.

More importantly, the smaller classes at Webber International University give him the ability to relate more closely with his students. It’s a more personal experience than when he taught at larger universities, where he found it difficult to talk with and connect with his students.

“The classes are smaller and you truly get to know your students,” he says. “You can tell what’s going on with your students; you know them and what they do. It’s more like a family.”

He’s passionate about what he does and has organized multiple activities to help support Webber’s criminal justice studies. These activities include luncheons, Federal Day and Military and Law Enforcement Day, 50/50 raffles, and even fun activities like car washes and murder mystery dinners.

To best prepare students for the challenges they’ll face, Barone pulls from his personal experience and extensive background in law enforcement. He first entered the field in 1975 and has grown his skills ever since, attending more than 200 certification courses



involving law enforcement and legal activities. He earned his Ph.D. in Public Safety and Criminal Justice from Capella University, graduating “With Distinction,” an honor similar to Summa Cum Laude. He also holds a Master of Laws degree in International Law from the University of Miami School of Law.

Barone also has been involved in high-stress situations, including serving as a hostage negotiator.

He also has developed and participated in many active shooter scenarios.

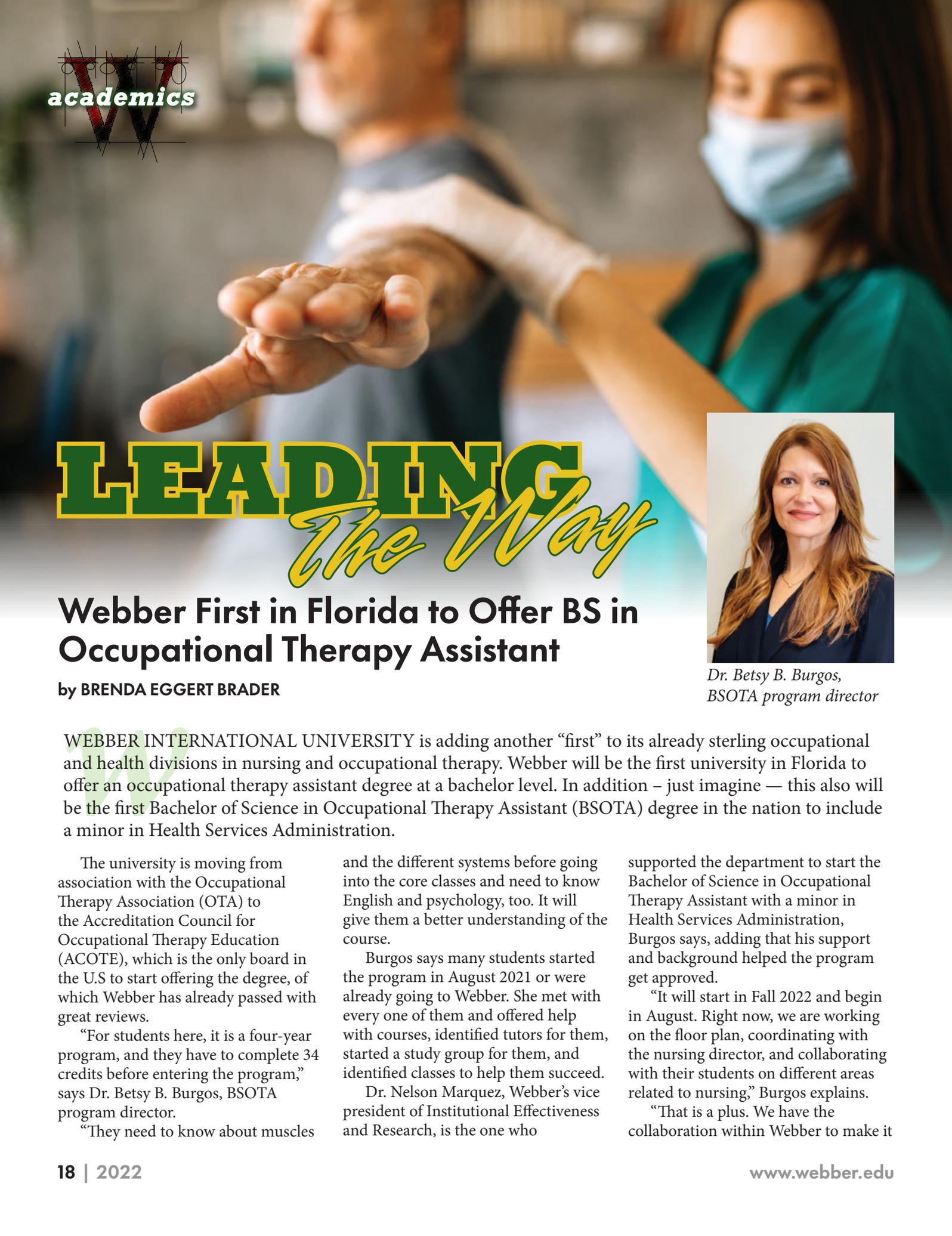
Barone briefly served in the Middle East as a Certified Counterintelligence Agent with the Department of Defense. He was attending the University of Connecticut’s Graduate School for a Ph.D. in Political Science with a focus on Public Law and International Relations and had 46 Ph.D. credits, but he withdrew after being activated after the 2001 terror attacks to serve with United States Central Command, a group that supports the protection of American security interests in the Middle East and Northeastern Africa.

His work has included investigations of various major criminal activities, including investigations in the Miami River Cops case, one of the largest cases of police corruption in the country’s history.

His interest in law enforcement started early as he got a series of academy books when he was 16 and studied to enter the policy academy in his home state of New Jersey.

“I couldn’t even buy my own bullets,” he says. “An 18-year-old on the police force in New Jersey can’t purchase bullets until 21.” 🌍

Learn more about Webber’s Criminal Justice Management Program at webber.edu/criminal-justice-management/



LEADING *The Way*

Webber First in Florida to Offer BS in Occupational Therapy Assistant

by BRENDA EGGERT BRADER



*Dr. Betsy B. Burgos,
BSOTA program director*

WEBBER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY is adding another “first” to its already sterling occupational and health divisions in nursing and occupational therapy. Webber will be the first university in Florida to offer an occupational therapy assistant degree at a bachelor level. In addition – just imagine — this also will be the first Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant (BSOTA) degree in the nation to include a minor in Health Services Administration.

The university is moving from association with the Occupational Therapy Association (OTA) to the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE), which is the only board in the U.S to start offering the degree, of which Webber has already passed with great reviews.

“For students here, it is a four-year program, and they have to complete 34 credits before entering the program,” says Dr. Betsy B. Burgos, BSOTA program director.

“They need to know about muscles

and the different systems before going into the core classes and need to know English and psychology, too. It will give them a better understanding of the course.

Burgos says many students started the program in August 2021 or were already going to Webber. She met with every one of them and offered help with courses, identified tutors for them, started a study group for them, and identified classes to help them succeed.

Dr. Nelson Marquez, Webber’s vice president of Institutional Effectiveness and Research, is the one who

supported the department to start the Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant with a minor in Health Services Administration, Burgos says, adding that his support and background helped the program get approved.

“It will start in Fall 2022 and begin in August. Right now, we are working on the floor plan, coordinating with the nursing director, and collaborating with their students on different areas related to nursing,” Burgos explains.

“That is a plus. We have the collaboration within Webber to make it

stronger — the simulated environment and the ability, most accurate and close to the situation. We will be ready for the students when they start.”

Students need to complete 34 credits before entering the four-year program so they will know about muscles, the different systems, English, and psychology before going into the core classes. That will give them a better understanding of the course.

The BSOTA program is an entry-level, 120 credit-hour degree program with a minor in Health Services Administration (HSA), which trains and qualifies graduates to work in the occupational therapy field.

The program admits two cohorts every year — one in the fall and a second in the spring. As students complete the foundational courses, they need to decide which cohort will best fit their educational goals and timelines.

Occupational therapy practitioners help people participate in meaningful activities and enjoy life to its fullest.

Occupational therapy assistants (OTA) are effective in the lives of people of all ages. Common occupational therapy interventions include helping children with disabilities participate in school and social situations, helping people recover from injuries to regain skills, and providing support to older adults who experience physical and cognitive changes.

The U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics recently published that the job outlook for occupational therapy practitioners will continue to improve steadily. It's expected that jobs for occupational therapy practitioners will increase by 27 percent or more by 2029.

Under the supervision of an occupational therapist (OT), occupational therapy assistants (OTA) contribute with the evaluation, implementation of treatment, and documentation of progress toward treatment goals of individuals who are experiencing difficulties engaging in their daily activities due

to emotional, developmental, and/or physical disabilities. Occupations (meaningful and purposeful activities) are used as a means of preventing, reducing, or overcoming physical, social, and emotional disabilities. The OTA modifies and adapts the environment and/or occupations to maximize independent functioning for clients of all ages and diverse cultural backgrounds. Webber graduates with a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy Assistant will be prepared to assist with the managerial aspects of the OT practice and assume leadership roles within the profession.

“We are very student-centered by having the program and the way we have been assigning the classroom — it is a lab, study, and presentation area,” Burgos says.

“Our goal is for them to identify topics to do a good, required research project and be the best OTA program in Florida.” 🌍

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Get your Webber International University specialty plate now. The license plates are a great way to display your Webber pride and support the institution all at once. You can learn more about the specialty tags through your Tax Collector's Office.

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Specialty license plates make great gifts! The State of Florida has a specialty license plate gift certificate program. Give the gift of Warrior pride!

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Friends

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THEN
and **NOW**

Gym



QUICK HITS IN WEBBER HISTORY

Did You Know?

Birth of Webber

In April 6, 1927, Grace Knight and Roger W. Babson founded the university and named it after their granddaughter, Camilla Grace Webber. Babson's philanthropic contributions included the formation of several institutions of higher learning and service on a number of corporate boards, as well as the endowment of several charitable foundations.

Changing With the Times

Webber was founded as a women's college. In the beginning, the university was created for the exclusive purpose of teaching women about business.

Trailblazer

It was the first school chartered under the educational and charitable laws of the State of Florida as a non-profit organization.

Diversified

Originally, the Babson Park campus was only used for the Spring term, while fall classes were taught in Boston.

At Home in Florida

In 1940, Babson Park became the university's permanent campus.

A New Era of Warriors

In 1971, the student body became co-ed.

On the Field

Webber competes as a member of the NAIA and the Sun Conference. Webber is also an associate member of the Mid-South Conference for football, men's volleyball, and women's lacrosse and the Appalachian Athletic Conference in men's lacrosse.

Women's Sports

There are plenty of opportunities for female athletes at Webber, including basketball, beach volleyball, bowling, cheerleading, cross country, flag football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, track & field, and indoor volleyball.

Men's Sports

Likewise, the men compete in basketball, baseball, bowling, cross country, football, golf, lacrosse, soccer, track & field, and indoor volleyball.

True to Its Mission

With a long tradition of education, Webber continues to look to the future and propagate the ideals envisioned by its founders. Built upon a solid legacy of experience and knowledge, Webber will prepare tomorrow's leaders to meet the challenges of the future by instilling a desire for innovative thought and creative accomplishment.



Recognizing Outstanding Achievement

STUDENTS WHO EARN a grade-point average of 3.5 or higher for 12 or more hours are honored and placed on the Dean's List. Webber International University is proud to announce the following honorees:

SPRING 2021

Acevedo, Luis
Akimoto, Mei
Anguelidis, Tanguy
Bartek, Natalie E
Benton, Dalilah E
Berry, Jacob A
Bond, Kevin J
Brewer, Cole L
Brod, Michael W
Brown, Lauren M
Burgos-Heredia, Nora I
Butler, Serteria A
Champion, Kalani J
Clark, Kendal L
Cross, Jack W
Curry, Frederick L
Dowling, Patrick J
Fernandez Sassoni, Mateo
Ferraro, Julia A
Figueroa, Yanileb
Ford, Dayne O
Friend, Kelsea
Frieson, Lea Sophie
Fusarelli, Molly C
Gilbreath, Cole A
Given, Joshua D
Gordon, Hunter
Grammar, Austin S
Greene, Nicole J
Hatfield, Harold D
Hawlitzky, Julian
Hilker, Kristin Leighann
Hindersman, Abbigale L
Hodgson, Harrison S
Houston, Marques
Ishizuka, Maria
Itakura, Kinari
Johnson, Christion J
Jordan, Brianna M

Keown, Delaney L
Kori, Kumi
Li, Shuoxu
Lonadier, Hunter M
Mason, Shi-Lesia H
Matsunaga, Yasuka
Mejia, Diego S
Morales, Hunter L
Mueller, Malcolm
Murrell, Jordon M
Natana, Loro G
Negrin Ruiz, David
Neidenmark, Emelie J
Niehoff, Isabelle K
Nio, Ryosuke
Pagan, Mackenzie B
Paige, Isaiah
Peacock, James T
Pelak, Montana-Rae
Rafu, Sami R
Rast, Hannah R
Redin, Facundo
Rivera, Paola B
Robinson, Trevor J
Rodriguez Zapico, Lucia
Rosero, Kylie Rose-Elizabeth
Simpson, Summer L
Slaughter, Sterling K
Smith, Kayleigh D
Sneed, Sydney O
Sprigle, Kyleigh M
St. John, Kyle J
Stull, Kristina R
Terrell, Jaronda N
Terry, Jessica L
Thompson, Abigail E
Thompson, Trey E
Todd, Richard G
Valdez, Brianda J
Westley, Brandi M

Whalen, Sean P
Williams, Christopher L
Wiseman, Matthew H
Wolstenholme, Allen E
Young, Peyton E
Zanin, Kelsie R

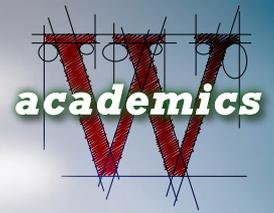
FALL 2021

Acevedo, Luis
Acuna, Andrea
Austin, Clayton S
Averill, Dylan S
Barquin, Brandy
Bartek, Natalie E
Bedoya Riveros, Daniel S
Bender, John H
Benton, Dalilah E
Berry, Jacob A
Bertuca, Robyn D
Blackmore, Joshua D
Blanchette, Samuel W
Borders, Caden T
Brewer, Cole L
Brown, Camryn J
Brown, Lauren M
Buchanon, Gavin C
Burns, Kristoffer C
Campos, Leandro
Clark, Brazil S
Crow, Paysee
Cullen Cooper, Faith
Lillian Catherine
Curry, Frederick L
Day, Hunter J
Denison, Kaden J
Dombroski, Lauren D
Domingo, Malia B
Donkor, Liyah A
Elam, Jordan
Eletto, Piero
Elhaouaji, Khalil

Esher, Samantha
Fernandez Sassoni, Mateo
Finstein, Madalyn L
Foraker, Emily
Friend, Kelsea
Garcia Taboada, Eduardo J
Goncalves de Araujo, Ana Clara
Gordon, Hunter
Greene, Nicole J
Gutierrez, Nicole A
Hernandez, Jonathan A
Hernandez, Nicole
Hilker, Kristin Leighann
Hilliard, Juliana M
Hilliard, Sophia P
Hodgson, Harrison S
Itakura, Kinari
Kamm, Brea D
Kew, Alexander J
Landsman, Steven
Lawson, Casey D
Leuthold, Abigail E
Lira, Silas H
Long, Brian T
Marciniak, Austin H
Matsunaga, Yasuka
Maybell, Kieli
Mendes, Gabriel Q
Mills, Morgan L
Milne, James LS
Moore, Jackson
Mundt, Jordan E
Ndavazocheva, Tinaishe I
Neidenmark, Emelie J
O'Hagan, Brook
Pacheco, Samantha E
Pagan, Mackenzie B
Pages, Diego A

Palino, Hayden T
Pelak, Montana-Rae
Pothier, Samuel T
Rast, Hannah R
Rauma, Trista N
Reid, Arthur G
Rey, Reynold E
Rivera, Paola B
Robinson, Trevor J
Rosenholm, Carl A
Rosero, Kylie Rose-Elizabeth
Roy, Riley
Rupe, Hayden M
Sanders, Katey M
Schroschk, Sidney J
Sikkema, Bailey E
Skelcher-Maxwell, Jay
Smith, Alondre
Smith, Christopher T
Smith, Wyatt R
Snyder, Rhia
Stephens, Kaleb P
Stull, Kristina R
Swinson, Kayla M
Szabo, Kornel
Taylor, Jordon K
Terrell, Jaronda N
Thompson, Abigail E
Tisdale, Kiersten I
Valdez, Brianda J
Vega, Jonathan A
Venditto, Michael A
Wallace, Parker A
Wandick, Dasia L
Weisrock, Sara J
Wiseman, Matthew H
Wolstenholme, Allen E
Wyers, Sean M
Young, Peyton E
Zhang, Shuyi

SUPPORTING *Our Heroes*



Webber Officially Recognized as A Military Friendly School

by ANNABEL ROCHA

WEBBER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY is committed to offering life-transforming educational opportunities to all of its students, but especially those who have sacrificed the most. A recent military distinction recognizes Webber's inclusion and support of the brave service members who have worked to keep this country safe.

Webber has been named a Military Friendly School for the 2022-2023 academic year. This designation is given to American institutions with an investment in supporting veterans and military families. This rating was determined by six categories, including Academic Policies, Admissions and Orientation, Culture & Commitment, Financial Aid & Assistance, Graduation & Career, and Military Student Support & Retention — all areas in which Webber has displayed excellence.

"We know that our military needs and deserves support," says Bobbi Andrews, Webber's Director of Admissions.

"Servicemen and women, and their families, often seek out colleges where they already know that this support will be available to them. Now, when they search for those skills, they will see Webber on the list and can come [to campus] assured that we are designated as a place that supports their unique needs."

The Military Friendly standards have been implemented in Webber's curriculum and services in numerous ways. Seeking higher education at a private university can be pricey, so in order to assist active duty personnel and veterans in paying for their classes, Webber offers a reduced rate of \$250 per credit hour for graduate and

undergraduate classes.

The lower cost per credit hour helps military members pursue their degree with less of a financial burden weighing on them. While there are some existing external programs to assist veterans in affording education, sometimes those fall short. Andrews explains that the reason for the discount is to balance the difference in payment that the GI Bill does not cover.

"We recognize that many servicemen and women provided their service for a pathway to an education that they may not have been afforded otherwise. The military does only pay up to a certain amount, however, and often the cost of a private university can exceed that. We want these men and women to be able to attend the college of their choice for the cost of the sacrifices they have made," she says.

The military support doesn't end with distinctions and discounts. Other military resources available include a Veteran Affairs representative on campus to offer guidance to members and veterans on how to navigate their military benefits. Military students also have access to on-site healthcare, including counseling and physical health services.

The university is constantly working to

improve life for its military students. Last year, Webber modified its acceptance of nontraditional credits to be more inclusive of service members. The registrar staff is also specifically trained in understanding military transcripts in order to ensure students are able to maximize the credits that they earned while on duty.

"These students come with a unique background, experiences, and needs," Andrews says.

"We support and appreciate what these students have done for us, and we want them to have the education they need as they transition back to civilian life."

As a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration participant, and now recognized Military Friendly institution, Webber International University has solidified its dedication to the military community. Webber is committed to serving those who serve this country and does so by providing them with support catered specifically to their needs, as well as a diverse and close-knit educational community to learn and thrive in.

"Again, we recognize that there are many reasons that people join the service and often it is to receive an education upon completion," Andrews says.

"We want to help hold up this end of the bargain, and we also know they are often shaped by their experiences while on duty. We want to make sure they have a level playing field as it relates to being a successful student."

Learn more about Webber's services for veterans at <https://bit.ly/3tGkgfg>



PRIMED FOR SUCCESS

Webber Expands Online Master's Program to Increase Accessibility

by ANNABEL ROCHA

IN ADDITION TO THE ALREADY rich and well-rounded curriculum traditionally offered by Webber International University, a new path toward earning a master's degree will soon launch for Webber students.

Webber is proud to announce the extension of its online MBA program launching in fall 2022, making its graduate degrees more accessible to alumni and other prospective students by creating courses that make it possible to earn a degree virtually. The Online Master's Programs include Master's of Arts in Education, Accounting, Criminal Justice Management, Sports Business Management, International Business, and Business Administration.

"We've always had a great avenue for graduate degrees, but we've decided to make the change to offer all of our MBA programs in an online fashion, which is definitely going to give the public another avenue to take classes," says Bobbi Andrews,

Director of Admissions.

Adding the MBA programs online was not directly linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, but Andrews says that handling coronavirus was an eye-opening confirmation of the benefits of online education.

"With the pandemic, we did see a change in education, and the world really kind of changed to this format and it worked really well for some people. That also helped us understand that it can be done in that fashion," she says.

In this digital age where everything is done online, virtual courses have become somewhat normal in higher education. Webber already offered International Business and Criminal Justice Management

as options for students seeking to earn their master's through online coursework. While a few factors played into the University's decision to upgrade their online MBA offerings, Andrews says that Webber's commitment to accommodating their students' needs was the major driving force.

"It goes back to meeting students where they are and the workforce changing. There's a lot of adults that in order to move up in their careers need an MBA," says Andrews. "We want to give them the opportunity to earn their degree and to have a degree from a private school like Webber International University because it's our same degree, but to be able to do that in a fashion that

works for them where they don't have to disrupt their entire life to get it done," she explains.

This online program also offers alumni who no longer live in Polk County or Florida the chance to further their education as a Webber Warrior, no matter where they reside. This applies to international students as well, as these courses can be completed virtually anywhere with internet access.

The new programs offer convenience and the ability for students to balance their master's program with their careers, family responsibilities, and other commitments that can be difficult to work around.

"Everybody has so much going on, but especially working professionals and adult students. A lot of times you want a degree from a regionally accredited university but don't have the ability to uproot your life and go back into the classroom. This gives those students and working professionals an opportunity to advance their careers and work on themselves while they continue on with the life they already had going," she says.

Webber provides numerous resources to assist students on their journey. Enrolling in online programs still provides students full access to all the amenities offered on campus.

"What is unique about our program is that it's not just an online school. They're not just talking to the front desk or people on the phone or via email, but they can come onto campus and use our Learning Commons, they can connect with the professors, they can use our computers but have the flexibility to earn their degree completely online," explains Andrews.



What is unique about our program is that it's not just an online school.

They're not just talking to the front desk or people on the phone or via email, but they can come onto campus and use our Learning Commons, they can connect with the professors, they can use our computers but have the flexibility to earn their degree completely online.

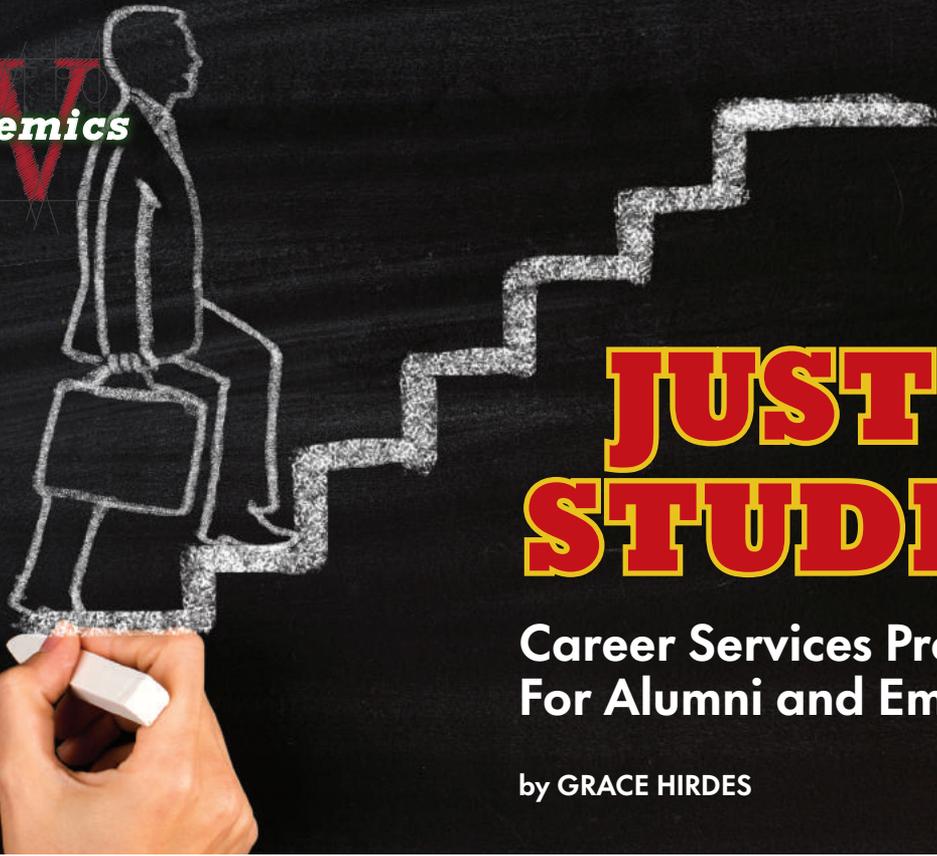
— Bobbi Andrews, Director of Admissions

Students also have the benefit of Webber's application-to-graduation system, in which an admissions counselor is assigned to help students through the application process, an advisor assists in class selection, and a financial aid counselor helps them establish an individualized financial aid plan that works for them. Webber alumni, specifically, are eligible for an additional \$4,980 scholarship per term, totaling \$14,940 over three

terms.

"I think it's valuable that it's a private, regionally accredited, nonprofit university that students can complete their degrees online with versus just a strictly online school," Andrews says. "What we hope to achieve is to provide more of a level of service to these students, given that they have access to all our resources on campus. 🌍"

Learn more about Webber's Online Programs at webber.edu/programs/



NOT JUST FOR STUDENTS

Career Services Provides Connection For Alumni and Employers

by GRACE HIRDES

AS ANY COLLEGE GRADUATE can tell you, getting a quality education is only half of the battle. The part that follows — starting a career — can be just as tricky to navigate.

That's why it's important for any college or university to help connect students and alumni with information, resources, videos, and tools to assist with the career preparation and job search process.

Devyn Montalvo, MSW, Director of Webber International University's Career Services & Community Outreach, says the department helps alumni and students in many ways by "offering assistance with resumes and other job search documents, job search strategies, and just overall guidance on career paths."

Students and alumni can find tailored resources and support around shared interests and connections based on majors through job fairs and training events. A

counselor at Career Services can help current and former students identify what careers may interest them or narrow a search in a specific field. Career Services also uses self-assessment tools to examine values, personalities, interests, and abilities. Based on the results, they can suggest possible options or help individuals determine whether the career they have in mind is a good match. These counselors also can help students decide what academic major will align best with the desired career.

If students and alumni need assistance with resumes, cover letters, and interview preparation, Career Services offers assistance through workshops or one-on-one sessions. The workshops help individuals learn



DEVYN MONTALVO

how to present themselves well in a job interview, including appropriate attire and answer preparation. The mock interviews help them practice their skills and can help job seekers feel more prepared and less anxious about real interviews.

Montalvo recalls one particular instance in which she was able to work with an alumna, Kimberly Yates (Davis).

“Davis graduated in 2016 with her undergraduate degree in marketing and again in 2018 with her MBA. From there, she began her job search. In an effort to prepare herself for the application process, she reached out to the Career Services office to work on her resume and interviewing skills. We worked together to tailor her resume for the jobs she was applying to, and she ended up landing a Program Planner job with Lockheed Martin. She was in that position for two years and then moved into a finance role with Lockheed in November 2020.” This is just one of the many times Montalvo has been able to assist students and alumni through Career Services.

Montalvo says Webber also offers Handshake, which is a career management platform.

“It is available at no cost to all Webber alumni, and they can use it to search for job opportunities.”

Students and alumni aren’t the only ones to benefit from Career Services, though, Montalvo says.

“We partner with employers to provide opportunities to share job and internship openings with students. This is mostly done via career fairs (on-campus and virtual), in-classroom presentations, and employer info tables. We are more than willing to discuss alternative options, though, and love partnering with employers!”

Employers can visit the campus during job fairs to recruit students who are about to graduate and enter the workforce. They can also post employment and internship listings with Career Services to



attract qualified graduates to their business and fill the necessary positions.

Overall, Career Services is a great way for students and alumni to obtain guidance and support to achieve their career goals and for employers to access a pool of highly qualified candidates who are primed and ready to start successful careers. 🌱



To learn more about Career Services, go to webber.edu/career-services/



PLANNING FOR SUCCESS

New Learning Commons Director Lacy Edwards Discusses Improvements and New Services

by GRACE HIRDES

LACY EDWARDS, the new Learning Commons director, will be serving as the primary student point of contact for learning support services as well as coordinating with faculty, coaches, and administration. In this role, she will be a key part of students' success.

"So far this semester, I have helped students with various assignments, monitored four weekly sessions of study halls, and provided academic counseling where we discuss how to calculate grades, time management, study skills, and withdrawing from a class," she says.

"We have also coordinated with a couple of faculty to have work sessions to assist students in their courses to complete big assignments. The Learning Commons has also hosted a few writing workshops in coordination with Dr. Iantorno, who is the Writing Center Director as well as an Associate Professor of English. Micah Walsleben, who also works in the Learning Commons, has hosted a couple of research help sessions in the Learning Commons as well as in various classes this year."

Webber's innovative Learning Commons offers four separate yet interrelated student services – Tutoring Center, Writing Center, Computer Lab, and Library Services – under one roof.

Edwards offers a glimpse into how far the Commons have come and further plans to improve them.

"This year, the Learning Commons has updated their scheduling system where students can schedule an appointment with a specific tutor, research assistance, or counseling," she says. "We have also updated the lab

check-in process to a digital check-in where students can sign a QR code rather than a physical sign-in sheet. With the physical sign-in sheet, we had to type the sign-ins for the week and send them out. With the digital check-in, the student's information is automatically added to a spreadsheet for reference."

The Learning Commons also serves as the testing center for students who need to make up their tests or quizzes from a class they may have missed.

"We have created an online proctor request form for faculty to use that will allow them to provide their rules for the exam as well as upload the exam document," Edwards says.

In the past, faculty had to either physically bring it over or email it. The new format puts all requests in one area for the Learning Commons to have instant access.

"I have also added an online at-risk report for faculty and staff to use



LACY EDWARDS

to notify us if there is a student they are concerned about — whether it is academically or personally," she says. "We've had almost 200 reports so far this semester."

Once a student is reported, Edwards says, the Learning Commons receives the report and evaluates what type of intervention is appropriate. Once the matter is resolved or a plan for a solution is established, the person who raised the concern receives an update.

In addition, Walsleben is working on updating the Intranet to give all students an easy way to access documents and research databases.

But that's not all.

"We have a few academic workshops coming up and look to add more as we reach the end of the semester and major projects/assignments are due," Edwards says. "We also hope to have a workshop to help students apply for scholarships in the next few weeks."

As midterms approach, Edwards says they will use the mid-term warnings to reach out to students who are struggling to provide counseling and support to get them back on track. 🌟





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PHI BETA LAMBDA WARRIORS UNLEASH WINS

Students Head to Nationals After District and State Success

by TERESA SCHIFFER

PHI BETA LAMBDA, also known as the Future Business Leaders of America, has long been a highly respected student organization at Webber International University, and this year's highly motivated group of enthusiastic young people continues the tradition of exemplifying the Warrior spirit by winning numerous honors in competition.

Dr. Joanne Muniz, associate professor of accounting, Accounting Chair, and PBL advisor, accompanied 17 Webber students to UCF/Valencia in Downtown Orlando on January 26, to compete in the District III Future Business Leaders of America – Phi Beta Lambda competition held there. The PBL students of Webber University did phenomenally well, pulling in 29 first-place awards, 15 second-place awards, and three third-place awards.

Some of the top performers at

this year's competition were Reynold Rey, who placed first in Impromptu Speaking; Ellora Santiago, who won first place in the Job Interview competition; and Katy-Rose Hill, who got first in Business Ethics as well as Global Business Analysis and Decision Making. Seth Harper took home another first-place distinction in Future Business Executive, and Andrea Acuna achieved first place in the Marketing Analysis and Decision Making category.



Isaiah Paige and Emelie Neidenmark worked together as a team on Digital Media, garnering second place for their efforts. Jonathan Vega and Elias DeJesus also competed as a team in the same category and took home the third-place award.

Paysee Crow won a total of four first- and second-place awards for various objective tests, such



as Accounting for Professionals and Project Management. Caitlyn Capozucca, Nichole Greene, and Caitlyn Chapman each took home three awards in this portion of the competition.

The PBL students sustained their outstanding performance as they attended the next PBL competition, too. They qualified to participate in the Florida State Leadership Conference, which was held March 17–20 in Orlando. A total of 18 Webber International University students attended the state event and competed in 26 objective test events designed to measure their proficiency in various skills and simulated business world performances.

The students went on to win another 22 awards plus \$1,450 in sponsorship funds at the state event. Twelve of the 18 participants also qualified to go on to the PBL National Leadership Conference in Chicago in June.

Of the students who went to State, Nichole Greene did particularly well, winning first place in Information Management, second place in Insurance Concepts, and second place

in Management Concepts.

Hill, Neidenmark, Jonathan Vega, and Andrea Acuna each won two awards at the state competition, with Emelie Neidenmark taking first place in Sports Management and Marketing.

Webber’s PBL chapter also won the Largest Local Chapter Membership Award, plus the Gold Seal Award for community service. These honors recognized the efforts made to increase PBL membership during the 2021–2022 school year and the annual Trick-or-Trunk event that is held each year in October for the enjoyment of Webber students as well as the surrounding Babson Park community.

The state competition was more than just a chance for students to showcase the business skills they’ve been honing. Business tours of various companies throughout Orlando were offered to highlight the types of jobs that exist within these organizations. Some of the businesses that participated in these behind-the-scenes tours included AdventHealth, Hilton Orlando, and the Amway Center.

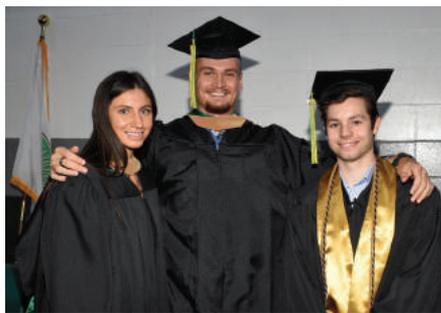
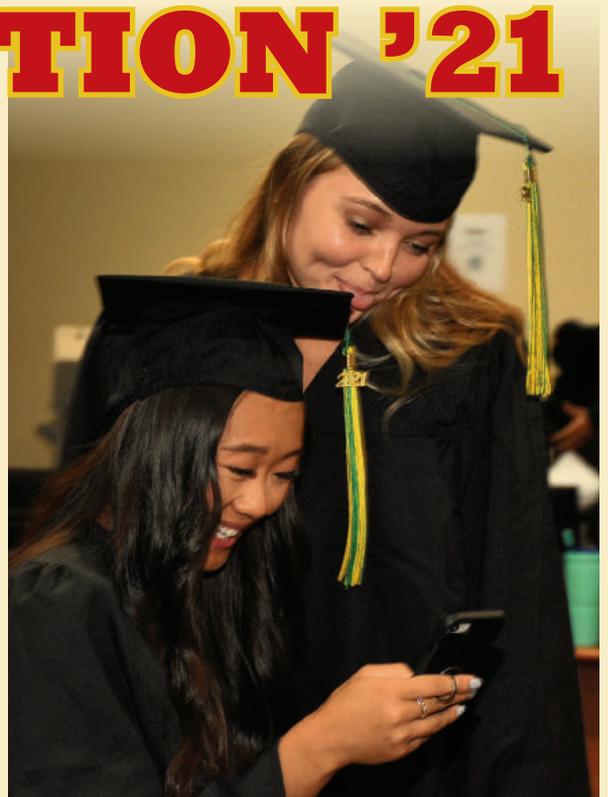
There were also special guest speakers on hand – PBL alumni who are now employed with such

prestigious institutions as the FBI and FDIC. Other speakers included entrepreneurs who are now running companies of their own after college and others who are attending graduate schools.

Muniz and Webber International University are thrilled with the many successes achieved by the Future Business Leaders of America and anticipate that the PBL Warriors will continue to impress at the national competition in Chicago this summer.



GRADUATION '21





ADVANCEMENT

Make a Mark That Helps Continue the Webber Tradition

Alumni, students, and friends of Webber International University are invited to make their mark on the WIU campus through the purchase of a personalized engraved brick. Your brick will be part of the beautifully redesigned International Flag Plaza, located just outside of the new Health Science Building, featuring the historic Rogers granite monument as its centerpiece. Your name, carved in a brick and placed in the plaza, will symbolize the spirit you felt when you were at Webber— the same spirit still present on the campus today!

The International Flag Plaza Brick Campaign is a unique opportunity for students, alumni, faculty, staff, and loyal supporters of Webber to show their WARRIOR pride by donating a timeless gift. What a wonderful way to offer encouragement to students. At the same time, you can honor or pay tribute to someone important to you through your brick's inscription. Alumni may purchase a brick to commemorate their school years, a parent may honor a graduate or future graduate, or alumni may honor a special faculty member. A brick is a permanent means of honoring something or someone special in your life. This is your unique opportunity to extend Webber's proud tradition of academic and athletic distinction by paving the foundation for a promising future for all Webber students.

Bricks are available in 4x8 inch and 8x8 inch sizes and are priced at \$100 and \$300 respectively. Bricks will be installed in the order they are purchased.

In addition to enhancing the overall appearance of the Flag Plaza, your contributions to the Brick Campaign will be used to support various initiatives aimed at beautifying our campus. Projects include: design and landscaping the entrance to the campus; beach beautification project; and outdoor basketball court for residential students, just to name a few. Each 4x8 inch brick will accommodate 3 lines of engraving and up to 16 characters per line, including spacing and punctuation. Donate a brick today, and invest in the future of Webber International University.

For more information, contact Director of Annual Fund and Alumni Affairs Ryan Reis at reisrj@webber.edu or 863-638-2918.



Scan the QR code with your smartphone and order online today, or visit www.webber.edu, and click on the Flag plaza link.

American Criminal Justice Association Presents

MURDER *Mystery* DINNER



On February 19, the American Criminal Justice Association of Webber International University presented its Murder Mystery Dinner Show, “A Fall From Grace,” to raise funds for its National Conference that was held in March. The program was written and performed by members of the ACJA to give those in attendance a taste of what Criminal Justice Management Program professors Dr. Peter Barone and Lon Lovett have been teaching them about investigations, interviews, and gathering evidence.

The show followed the Aristocratic Blacknote family (played by Rocky O’Rourke as Bernard, Malia Domingo as Katherine, Keyoun Busby as Edward, and Madalyn Finstein as Martha) and their staff (Natalia Romero as Ms. Carmin and Sydney Britton as Mrs. Shaw). An investigation was conducted by Inspector Harris (played by William Lovett) and Constable Rex (played by Chandler Kerr) for the untimely murder of the Scullery maid, Grace (played by Maria Horrell). Over the course of the evening, the audience was treated to mystery while solving who had carried out this sinister action through deductive reasoning, interviews, observing the evidence, and the audience participating in questioning.

Starting in October 2021, the cast

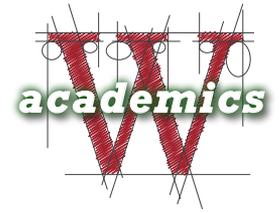
and crew devoted their time and effort to the Murder Mystery Dinner Show planning, rehearsing, and adapting schedules to provide the best show possible. The night of the event was met with overwhelming positive reactions for the show and the dinner by all who attended. The show exceeded all expectations by meeting the fundraising goals and providing an entertaining show and a tasty meal.

ACJA members involved in this year’s Murder Mystery Dinner Show are grateful and would like to express their

thanks for the support from faculty and staff. They’d also like to thank a large number of local community members from Babson Park, Lake Wales, Sebring, Winter Haven, Bartow, and Lakeland. Finally, the ACJA would like to thank family and friends who attended from around the state, including (but not limited to) Jacksonville, Miami, Tampa, Orlando, and Lake City. Due to this support, the ACJA is already making plans for the next Murder Mystery Dinner Show and looking forward to next year’s production. 🍷



SOPHOMORE COMES IN SECOND AT NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE CONFERENCE



by GRACE HIRDES

WEBBER INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY was well represented in March when sophomore Criminal Justice major Madalyn Finstein earned second place in the category of Forensic Psychology at the National Conference for the American Criminal Justice Association (ACJA) in Kansas City, Missouri.

Finstein attended as a representative of Webber International University's chapter of Alpha Omega Rho. The conference consisted of an opening banquet where she was able to network with other students and professionals, a career fair, and an awards ceremony.

"I heard about ACJA through my criminal justice classes and was instantly intrigued with the opportunity to grow within the criminal justice field as a student and as an athlete," Finstein says.

Preparing for the competition was not easy. In fact, Finstein says it was a lot of work preparing for the conference.

"My team — Malia Domingo, Rocky O'Rourke, Chandler Kerr, William Lovett, Natalia Romero, Maria Horrell, and myself — dedicated a lot of our time to ultimately compete at nationals this year. We participated in car washes, sold candy, and facilitated and acted in a very successful murder mystery dinner. As we were raising funds, we were gaining the experience needed to compete through our criminal justice classes and by meeting outside of our practices, work, and classes."

At the conference, Finstein competed in the lower-level academic written examination and came in second place in Forensic Psychology.

"There were not a whole lot of guidelines for the test other than a textbook, but forensic psychology is a field I have been interested in since high school so I was willing to dedicate spare time to studying that subject," she says.

After the competition, the team was able to connect with fellow ACJA members from around and attend seminars on current themes in the criminal justice field.

The conference was a great opportunity for Finstein, who plans to go to pursue a law degree to eventually work with the FBI.

"I grew up falling asleep to shows like forensic files and true crime documentaries," she says. "I also see it as a field that is flawed, and getting people involved that are motivated to make a positive change is vital for justice."

She hopes to return to the conference next year to "bring home some more trophies." 🏆



Alumni Football Dinner Celebrates the Past, Looks to the Future

by MICHAEL JOSEPH FOX

WEBBER UNIVERSITY CELEBRATED its football legacy on May 22 of 2021 during the school's first Alumni and Supporters Dinner. The event was held in the Yentes Center and was a celebration of the team's history. The event also helped raise funds to support the growth and success of the program.

Head Coach Eric Potochney was excited to hold the event to celebrate the positive impact the school's football program has on the lives of its student-athletes.

"It was good to see alumni and supporters of our university and football program back on campus," Potochney says. "We raised around \$7,000 for the football program."

The 2021 dinner also brought in two substantial donations from alumni: Kyle Dicks made a \$50,000 donation and received the naming rights to the football fieldhouse, and Michael Bruck made a \$20,000 donation, attaining the naming rights for the football team's locker room.

Potochney and the rest of the football staff will be looking forward to bringing in more funds during the 2022 edition of

the event on May 21. The 2022 Football Alumni and Supporters Dinner will be at the Yentes Center once again, with tickets going for \$50 each.

But for Potochney, the event is about more than raising funds. "The main goal of this event is to have an enjoyable night for our alumni and football program supporters," he says. "It is a chance to get our alumni back on campus and keep them involved and supporting our university."

The event will start with a tour of the football team's many facilities, including the locker room and the fieldhouse. Guests also will learn about the improvements the school is making for these sites.

A silent auction and a 50/50 raffle will also occur alongside Webber football

apparel giveaways. The banquet will feature a full dinner with dessert and will even include a DJ with music for entertainment.

Potochney is excited about this year's alumni dinner, and he is looking forward to this year's event being a little more active than last year's.

"We are looking forward to getting more alumni and program supporters involved every year," he says. "The itinerary (for this year's dinner) will be pretty similar to last year, but we expect to have a larger event with more supporters of our program."

The dinner comes amid an exciting time for Webber Warriors football. The Warriors football program recently joined The Sun Conference, an NAIA conference that includes schools from Florida and Georgia.

To learn more about the event, contact Coach Eric Potochney at 863-734-1548 or PotochneyES@webber.edu



Webber FOOTBALL 2022

athletics

August 27

HOME
vs. Lincoln University
(Calif.)
1:30 p.m.

September 3

AWAY
@ Cumberland
University

September 10

HOME
vs. Atlantis
University
1:30 p.m.

September 17

BYE

September 24

HOME
vs. University of
Fort Lauderdale
1:30 p.m.

October 1

AWAY
@ Warner
University

October 8

AWAY
@ Southeastern
University

October 15

HOME
vs. Ave Maria
University
1:30 p.m.

October 22

HOME
vs. Florida Memorial
University
1:30 p.m.

October 29

HOME
vs. Virginia
University-Lynchburg
1:30 p.m.

November 5

AWAY
@ St. Thomas
University

November 12

HOME
vs. Keiser
University
1:30 p.m.

Save the Date for the

2022 ALUMNI FOOTBALL DINNER

Saturday, May 21, 2022 | 5-10 p.m.

Webber International University Yentes Center

1201 North Scenic Highway | Babson, Park, FL 33827

For more information, contact Coach Eric Potochney
at 863-734-1548 or by email at PotochneyES@webber.edu.

FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE COMPETITION

There were 121 first-year students enrolled in the FYE course during Fall 2021 competing in various events:

- Water Pong*
- Rock, Paper, Scissors*
- Cornhole*
- Kahoot*
- Family Feud
- Debate
- 6-Minute Pitch – this was a competition for students to pitch a product that would be helpful for first-year students. One group pitched an app, while the other group pitched something called smart gum.

WINNERS:

- First place: Dr. Choquette
- Second place: Professor Lake
- Third place: Professor Edwards



This occurred during week 12 of the semester. Each class was its own team, and the first and second place for each round earned points for their class. Events in bold and marked with an asterisk were required for all students while the others were voluntary from each class.

A SEASON TO SHINE

Girls Basketball Team Stealing the Spotlight

by TIM CRAIG

IT ONLY TOOK A FEW GAMES into the 2021-2022 basketball season before Webber women's coach Grady Morrell realized this season was going to be a bit extraordinary. The Warriors had been playing well and were facing an opponent that didn't quite have the same talent, but it didn't matter.

"The guys just stepped on their throat," says Morrell. "They had a killer instinct, no one cared who scored. I knew then that this team was going to be special."

It was, indeed, special.

The Lady Warriors finished the season 21-8 overall, 12-4 in the Sun Conference. The team finished as regular season and tournament runners-up and, for the second year in a row, were given a berth to the NAIA National Women's Tournament in Tennessee.

"We just had a group of seniors who had a great work ethic and helped create a cohesive environment," says Marshall. "The players really seemed to love each other, and it showed on the court and off it."

Indeed, the Warriors were experience-heavy this season, listing 12 seniors or graduate students and four juniors on the roster. That number, though, is balanced with three sophomores and 10 freshmen, including Jaida Burgess, a 5-2 guard from Miami who had a significant impact on the team.

Burgess was one of three players named to the Sun Conference All-Conference team, along with Eletra Graham and Leandra Franklin.

Burgess led the team in scoring with 11.6 points per game. She had a season-

high 21 points in the team's season-ending loss to Bryan College in the NAIA National Tournament.

Graham, a 5-4 senior from Leesburg, averaged 11.1 points per game, including 80 three-pointers, which was 14th in the NAIA. Graham was named the Sun Player of the Week on November 15 after averaging 14 points on 42-percent shooting — including nearly 50 percent from three-point range — in the team's two victories for the week. Between the Warriors' two games that week, Graham scored 36 points in 31 total minutes.

Franklin, a 5-2 senior point guard from Jacksonville, was a defensive threat with 3.9 steals per game — second in all of the NAIA. She also dished out a team-high 4.4 assists per game.

"Whenever we were down, I always told myself, 'But I got Leandra,'" says Morrell with a laugh. "She's a very special player, and I've seen her do things on the court that I've never seen anywhere before."

A fourth player, Amaya Small, was also awarded as a Sun Conference Player of the Week on February 14. For that week, Small, a 5-8 senior from Lakeland, led the Warriors on both sides of the ball averaging a double-double with 15.7 points and 10.3 rebounds per game. On the defensive end, she averaged 3.7 steals and 2.0 blocks per game.

Small is one of three players from the powerful (and local) Winter Haven High School. Rushell Jacob, a 6-2 senior center, and Florence Martinez, a 5-1 freshman guard, are the other two. Two additional players, freshmen Taylor Howard and De'Aja Clark, also come to Webber from local high schools.

If it seems that Morrell likes to highlight local talent, that's intentional.

"The Winter Haven program, Coach Johnnie Lawson, has an outstanding program and those players come with the right mindset and are fundamentally sound," says Morrell. "Like most college coaches today, I recruit players from junior colleges or transfers, but I also like to hold at least three or four spots on my roster for girls from Polk County. There is a lot of talent here."

That philosophy has worked. In his 12 seasons with the Warriors, Morrell has consistently built a strong program. In his second season leading the Warriors in 2012-13, Webber won its first Sun Conference Tournament Championship. He has guided the team to three NAIA Women's Basketball National Tournaments (2012-2013, 2020-2021, 2021-2022). He has three 20-win seasons and tallied a winning record in nine of his 12 seasons.

"We've tried to consistently push the program toward excellence," says Morrell. "This year we really played well and, hopefully, that success will carry over as the remaining players take this year's experience and grow with it." 🍀



CASTING FOR SUCCESS

Anglers Breathe New Life Into Fishing Team

by PAUL CATALA

WHEN IT COMES TO BASS FISHING collegiate powerhouses, Bethel University, Auburn University, and Bryan College are three of the top teams in the nation. Webber International University hopes to soon join them.

Webber has launched a new fishing team made up of two freshmen anglers — Andrew Ready and Vincent Maffei. Although the team has plenty of room to grow and is new, the Webber Warriors' fishing team has already hit the water and taken a bite out of some of its competition.

The fishing team is under the direction of Coach David Driggers, a Palatka native who has spent most of his life fishing. He was recruited to coach at Webber by Jay Culver, Webber's Vice President of Student Life.

Driggers says the fishing team isn't sanctioned by the National Collegiate Athletic Association and is technically recognized as a club at Webber.

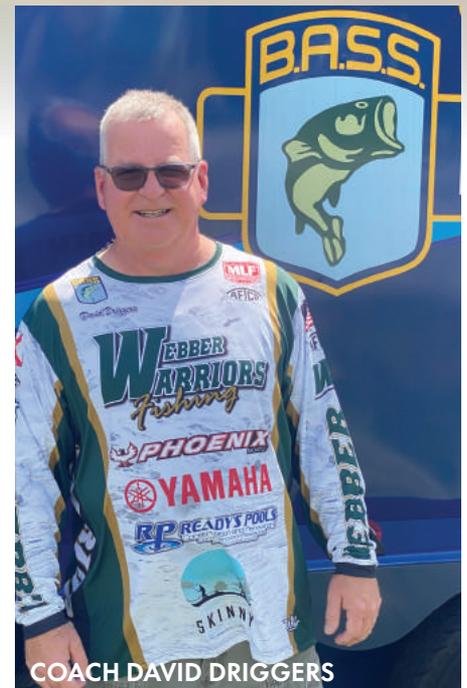
Although currently made up of just two team members, the new WIU Fishing Team is already reeling in the competition. Ready, who lives in

Auburndale and is a 2021 graduate of Lakeland's George Jenkins High School, and Maffei, a 2021 Lake Wales High School graduate, are competing at the collegiate level for the first time.

As of March, the men have fished four tournaments, finishing second twice, losing both tournaments by less than a pound. They placed 56th in a Major League Fishing tournament and 92nd in a BASS collegiate event.

With those results, Ready and Maffei have qualified to compete in the Bassmaster College National Tournament on September 1-4 and the Major League Fishing College National Tournament to be held in spring 2023. The tournaments average about 200 to 250 teams, depending on the fishing circuit.

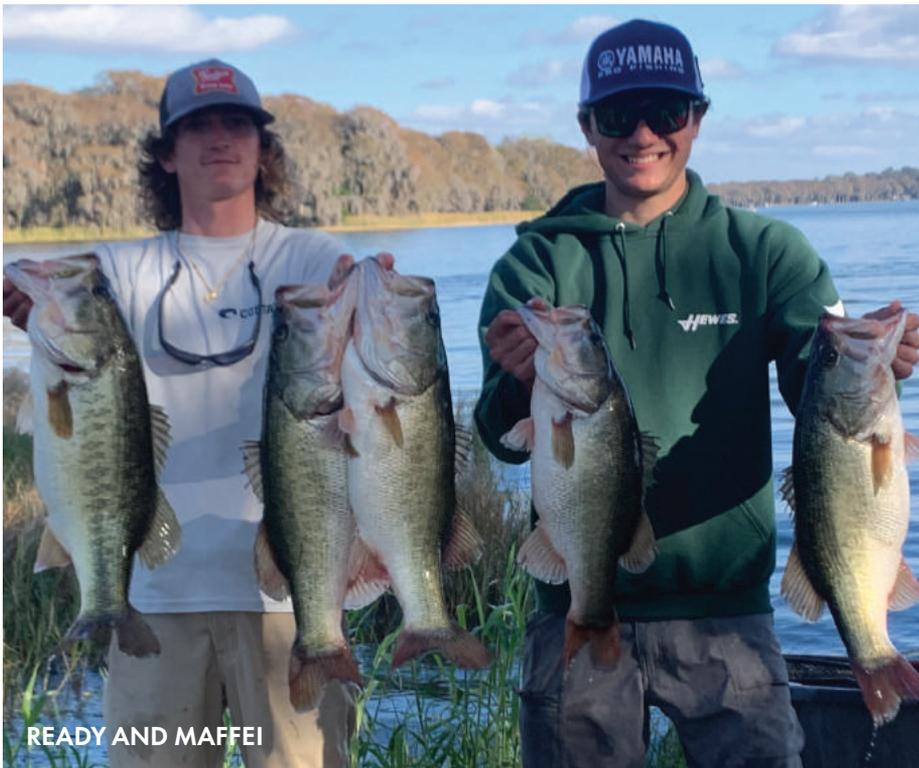
The group just recently participated in the Bassmaster Tournament on Lake Norman in Cornelius, North Carolina,



COACH DAVID DRIGGERS

on March 25-26.

Speaking from Wildwood on his way to Bainbridge, Georgia, for a middle and high school fishing tournament, Driggers — who started working part-time at Webber in October 2021 — says he meets with his team in person every two weeks. He says Webber had a fishing club with



READY AND MAFFEI

that “fizzled out” about 2020, “so they asked me to come in and put some structure to (a new club) and oversee it.”

“We’re doing MLF with a lot of one-day tournaments around the U.S., mostly fishing the southeast region. Bassmaster has four college tournaments; we’re trying to fish them all,” Driggers says.

Driggers, who’s also the Florida Bass Nation state president, said Webber’s team only fishes bass tournaments and will travel as far as Saginaw, Michigan, to compete this season. The season runs from January to July, fishing two tournaments per month, entering 11 tournaments, including the two nationals.

“The way I was going to go about (forming the team) is, with the recruits, getting them acclimated to being used to being out on their own. And then, after the first semester and when the season kicks off, adding the fishing to it — slowly get them acclimated and introduce them to being out on their own and being responsible young adults,” he says.

To finance the fishing team, Driggers put together a budget and Webber committed to covering all travel and associated costs,

membership fees for the competition trails, lodging, dining, and gas for cars and boats. That amounts to a roughly \$10,000 investment for each team angler. With added costs for coaching, it can amount to \$12,000-\$15,000 per angler.

Culver explains that the fishing team is worth the financial investment because it helps diversify the student body. He says the two current team members are “high-achievers” with good grade-point averages and are “the type of students we want.”

“The anglers get a quality education where they are ready to enter the workforce upon graduation and are promotable within their first year,” Culver says. “They also gain experience and exposure in the fishing world. For this year’s team, money from

tournaments goes directly to their education.”

“That’s part of the recruiting tool when I’m out talking to kids. I say, ‘Look, if you want to continue to fish and you want to get your education, Webber is the university to come to, they’re going to pay for your fishing, you just worry about your education,’” he adds.

As for team fishing boats, Ready and Maffei use Ready’s boat for competition and Maffei has a backup boat if needed. If the program continues to grow, Webber may invest in a boat.

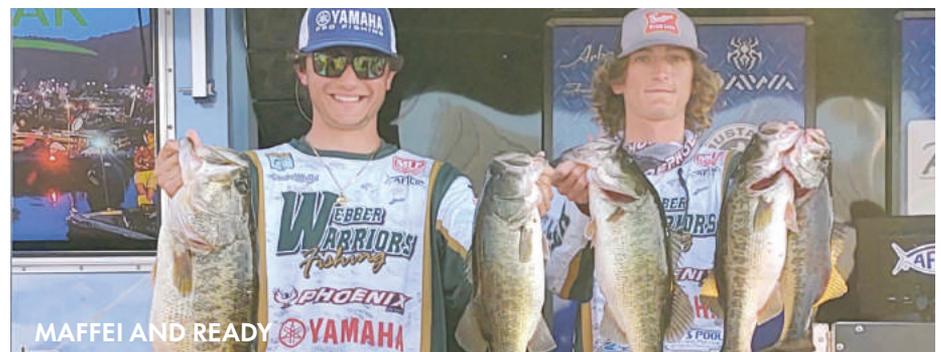
Ready, 19, a native of Auburndale, is a freshman majoring in business at Webber. He says he’s been fishing since he was a boy, and is it’s “awesome” to be part of the team. He says he hopes the team will “put Webber on the map for fishing” and become the fishing “school of the year” in the near future.

“When people hear the name Webber, I want them to think, ‘Okay, these kids can catch them,’ and so far, being part of the team has been great,” Ready says. “For our first year, I’m pretty happy with it. It’s been a lot of fun.”

Maffei, 19, a native of Fort Lauderdale, has been fishing with his father, Vince Maffei Sr., since middle school. The freshman business major says he’s looking forward to the team’s growth.

“It’s pretty cool to be on the first team and hopefully, next year, we’ll get more people involved and expand a little,” he says.

Driggers says his aim for the future is to grow the Warriors’ fishing team to five teams of two people, adding two teams in fall 2022 and adding two to three more by fall 2023. 🌱



MAFFEI AND READY

SHARE YOUR SUCCESS

CLASS NOTES SUBMISSION FORM

Deadline for the next issue is January 31, 2023

Name (First/Maiden/Current Last Name) _____ Class Year _____

Title _____ Employer _____

Spouse Name (First/Maiden/Current Last Name) _____ Class Year _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Photos are welcome! (Please send non-returnable photos)

Here are some examples of news for alumni to share:

- Job changes, promotions, or retirements
- Awards and other milestones (professional or recreational)
- Publications, studio recordings, art exhibitions, etc.
- New service projects, civic appointments, etc.

Contact the Department of Alumni Affairs • Email: alumnimailbox@Webber.edu

Warrior Week is Coming May 2-6, 2022!

Join fellow alumni, donors, and friends as we take a week to highlight all the ways we can CELEBRATE, GIVE, and ADVANCE Webber International University.

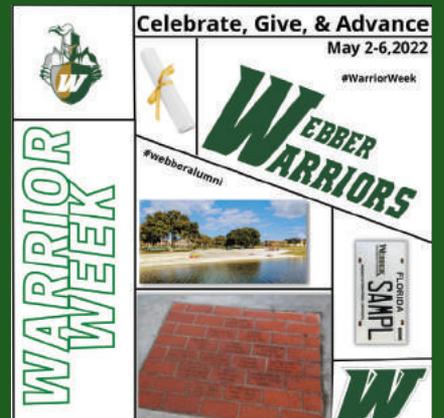
Any gift of any size is an opportunity to positively impact future Webber Warriors.



Monday, May 2: Annual Fund
Tuesday, May 3: Licenses Plates
Wednesday, May 4: Other ways to give
Thursday, May 5: Brick Pavers
Friday, May 6: Graduation Day!

If you want to learn more about supporting Webber International University visit our website at <https://www.webber.edu/giving/>

Thank you for your support.
Go Warriors! #webberalumni #warriorweek



Show Your **WARRIOR PRIDE!**



Find the latest Webber apparel, souvenirs, and gifts at the Webber bookstore.

Visit us on campus located in the Learning Commons building or online at webber.edu and click on Shop@Webber

SAVE THE DATE

President's Golf Tournament

**Fall 2022
Location
& Date:
TBA**



*Entries and sponsorships available.
To learn more and register, email
ReisRJ@webber.edu*

ALUMNI WEEKEND

**October 2022 Date: TBA
Location: Webber campus**

*Dates and details as
they become
available: [www.
Webber.edu/alumni](http://www.Webber.edu/alumni)*



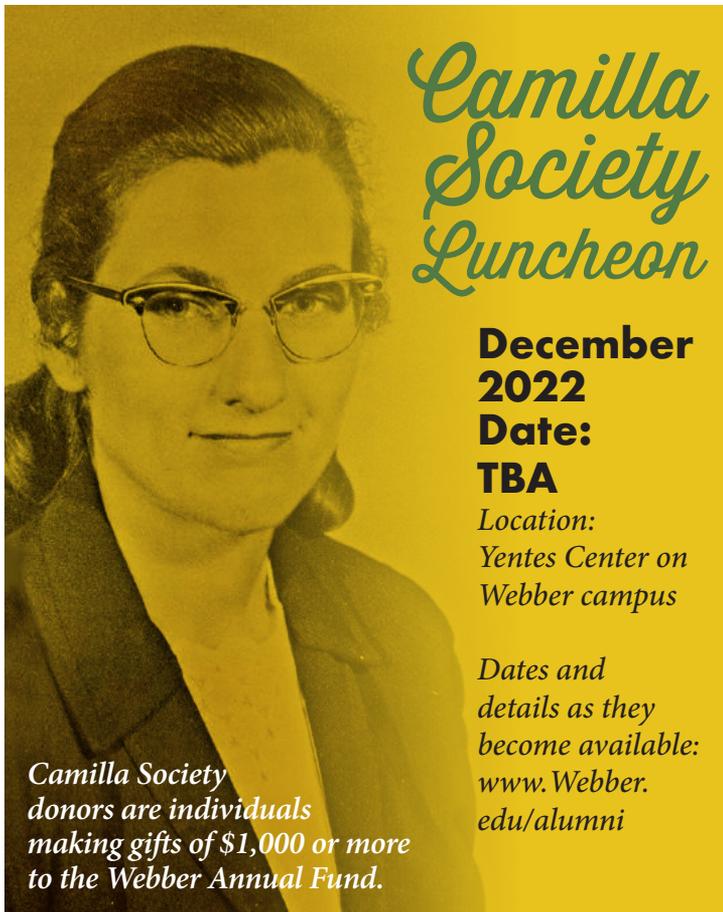
Camilla Society Luncheon

**December
2022
Date:
TBA**

*Location:
Yentes Center on
Webber campus*

*Dates and
details as they
become available:
[www.Webber.
edu/alumni](http://www.Webber.edu/alumni)*

*Camilla Society
donors are individuals
making gifts of \$1,000 or more
to the Webber Annual Fund.*



Giving Day November 29 (Giving Tuesday)

*Give back to the
institution behind
your success!*



*Scan the QR code to
learn how you can give back to
Webber International University!*



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FOR YOUR GIFT, WE SAY...

Thank You

WEBBER ANNUAL FUND

The same global appeal, intimate classes, and applied learning that brought you to Warrior ground continues today. Becoming an advocate for Webber International University enables us to carry on the highest standards of excellence in education while fostering competitive leadership through hands-on training and athletic programs. Your continued support enables current and future students to achieve success in the real world.

Please consider making a contribution to the Webber Annual Fund. The commitment of all of us who are closest to Webber and know it best will motivate and inspire other donors as they consider supporting the University.

GIVE ONLINE



Donations can be made online at
webber.edu/giving
or by scanning the QR code here.

GIVE BY MAIL

Webber International University
Institutional Advancement Office
1201 North Scenic Highway
Babson Park, FL 33827

For a list of Advocates, please turn to page 47