



# THE DREXEL 100

A Newsletter for Drexel University's "Alumni Hall of Fame" - Fall 2024

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## A NOTE FROM THE CHAIR



Dear Drexel 100 Members,

I hope you had a great summer filled with warm weather, fun family time and delightful adventures. I am excited to welcome the new Drexel 100 members, share our impact on the Drexel community and introduce you to Denis P. O'Brien, MBA '87, a fellow Drexel 100 member and our interim University President.

Last May, we proudly inducted 25 exceptional individuals into the Drexel 100 Alumni Hall of Fame during Alumni Weekend. These outstanding honorees represent nine colleges and schools across Drexel. Their graduation years range from 1962 to 2021. Each one of them exemplifies excellence, having led transformative efforts, from founding impactful nonprofits to pioneering groundbreaking research in critical areas such as women's health, orthopedics and gene therapies. Their disciplines span engineering, robotics, medicine, business, science and mental health advocacy. We are inspired by their innovation and leadership.

This exceptional group includes individuals who have served our country with distinction, including those who have risen to the rank of Major General. Others have contributed to Drexel and the Academy of Natural Sciences as trustees or held prominent positions at NASA, Goldman Sachs, ExxonMobil and the National Football League to name a few. I encourage you to explore their captivating bios in this newsletter — there is so much for us to admire. A virtual meeting via Zoom will be scheduled later this year to provide more formal introductions.

Last year, we launched the Drexel 100 Endowed Scholarship Fund, with the goal of building a \$1.2 million endowment to provide lasting scholarship support for deserving students. We are off to a wonderful start! I invite all members to consider making the Drexel 100 Endowed Scholarship Fund a part of your philanthropic portfolio. There are several meaningful ways you can contribute:

- Make a gift online by visiting [giving.drexel.edu/Drexel100](http://giving.drexel.edu/Drexel100) and learn more about the Fund.
- Donate appreciated securities. Publicly traded stock owned for over a year provides tax benefits.
- Apply for employer matching gifts. Many employers will match, double or triple your gift to Drexel.

In closing, thank you for all you do to ensure the future success of our Drexel community, both in the classroom and in the global community.

Warm regards,

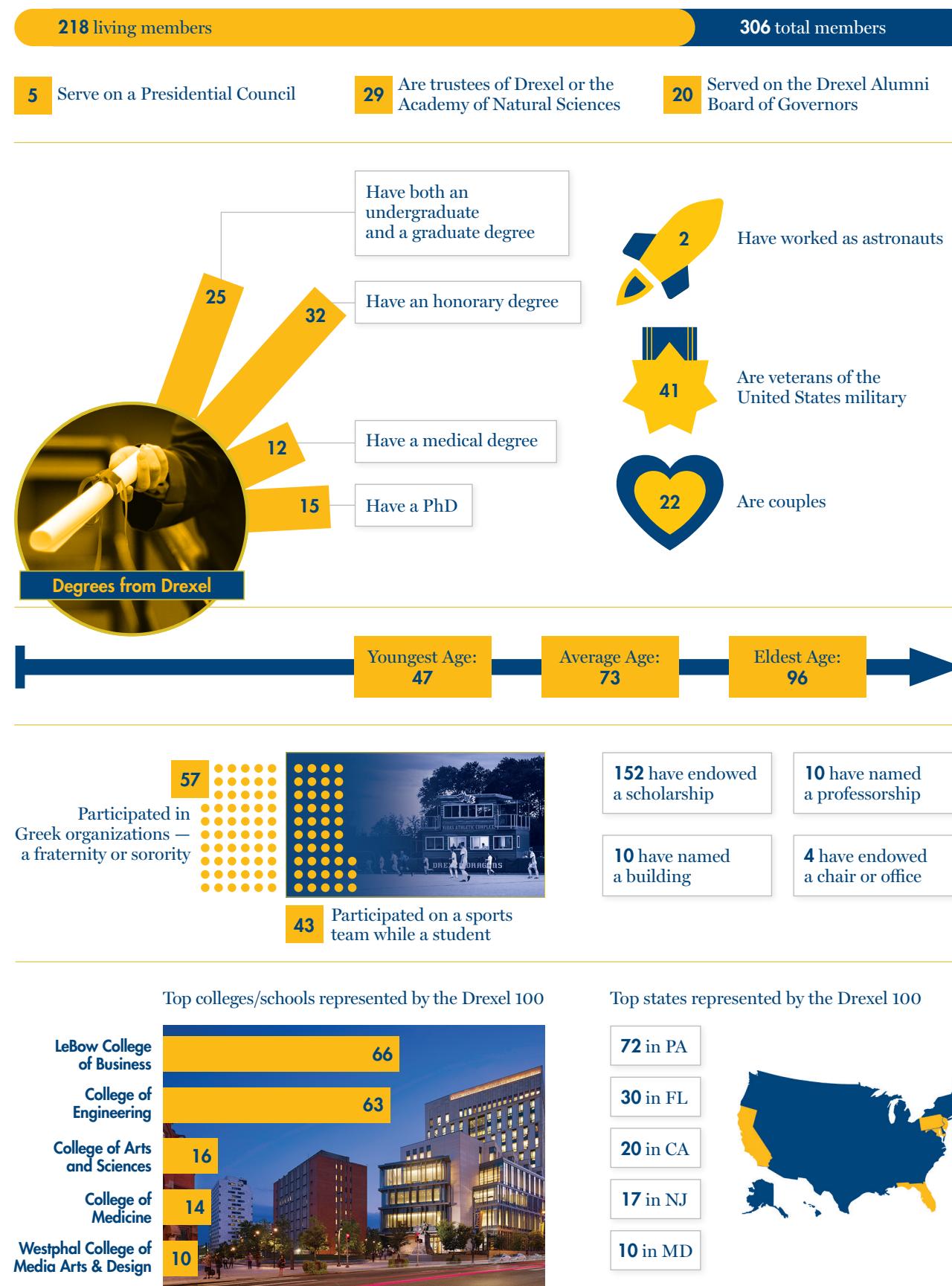
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela Dowd-Burton".

Angela Dowd-Burton '74, '79

Drexel University Trustee

Chair, The Drexel 100

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# Denis P. O'Brien

**MBA Business Administration '87**



Denis P. O'Brien, a prominent alumnus and Board of Trustees member, is poised to leave an even deeper mark on Drexel University in his newest position: interim president.

In July, Drexel University's Board of Trustees appointed O'Brien interim president

of the University. O'Brien, a former executive of the Exelon Corporation, has served on Drexel's board for 20 years and currently chairs its Buildings and Property Committee.

"Denis is a deeply engaged, collaborative and visionary leader," said Richard Greenawalt, chair of Drexel's Board of Trustees. "He has served the University as a trustee for two decades and is a recognized leader throughout the Philadelphia region. Denis is the ideal person to lead Drexel through this transition and into a new era in our proud history."

O'Brien will serve in the position until the University appoints its next president, the 15th in Drexel's 132-year history.

"It's an honor to serve in this role during Drexel's time of transition," O'Brien said. "As an alumnus and member of Drexel's Board for more than 20 years, I have witnessed first-hand the University's trajectory to excellence. I am looking forward to working closely with Drexel's talented faculty, dedicated professional staff, outstanding

students and a committed Board of Trustees to ensure the continued success of this remarkable university."

O'Brien is a 1987 MBA graduate of Drexel's Bennett S. LeBow College of Business. He spent more than 35 years at Exelon — the nation's largest family of electrical and natural gas distribution companies — rising to the role of senior executive vice president and CEO of Exelon Utilities. He guided the transformation of the company from two independently managed utilities to an integrated six-utility enterprise. Prior to that he served as the president and CEO of PECO Energy, one of the nation's most profitable and highest-performing utility companies.

O'Brien has served on numerous boards, including tenures as the chair of the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia, the Electric Power Research Institute and the Pennsylvania Business Roundtable. He also served as a director at the Franklin Institute. He currently serves on the board of Independence Health Group.

Drexel named O'Brien its 2009 Business Leader of the Year. In 2019, he was the recipient of the William Penn Award, the highest honor presented to a business or civic leader in Greater Philadelphia.

Greenawalt said, "Having the pleasure of getting to know Denis well through the years, I can assure you: Drexel is extremely fortunate to have his expertise and thoughtful leadership during this important transitional moment." •

# WELCOME TO THE NEW DREXEL 100 INDUCTEES

## Linda M. Abriola, PhD

BS '76



Dr. Abriola, an esteemed environmental and civil engineer, is renowned for her pioneering research in groundwater hydrology and soil remediation. She currently holds the prestigious Joan Wernig and E. Paul Sorensen Professorship at Brown University School of Engineering, through which she has significantly advanced the understanding of multiphase flow and contaminant transport in porous media. Previously, she served as the inaugural dean of the Tufts University School of Engineering and achieved the distinguished status of university professor, a testament to her academic excellence and leadership. Her groundbreaking work on chlorinated solvent-contaminated aquifers has earned her numerous accolades, including the Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz International Ground Water Prize as well as fellowships in prestigious organizations like the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Geophysical Union. Dr. Abriola is a member of both the National Academy of Engineering and the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In addition to her remarkable achievements in academia, Dr. Abriola remains deeply engaged with Drexel, where she has been recognized with prestigious awards like the Engineering Leader of the Year and the Alumni Circle of Distinction. Her involvement extends to roles as panelist, advisor and founding member of the Advisory Board for ELATE (Executive Leadership in Academic Technology and Engineering), a program dedicated to empowering senior women faculty in STEM fields. Dr. Abriola's enduring commitment to advancing engineering education and fostering leadership among women in academia exemplifies her profound impact both within the scientific community and at Drexel. She holds two master's degrees and a doctoral degree in civil engineering from Princeton University.

## Major General Theresa C. Carter (USAF, Retired) DBA '21



Dr. Carter's illustrious career spans 31 years of dedicated service in the U.S. Air Force, culminating in her retirement as a major general in 2016. She holds the distinction of being the first female civil engineering officer promoted to brigadier general and the first to serve as the Air Force Civil Engineer, the career field's highest-ranking officer. Notably, she commanded various units, including Joint Base San Antonio, and led the Air Force's largest reorganization since 1992 as commander of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center. Dr. Carter continues her impactful work as an independent consultant supporting the Department of Defense and corporate clients. In this capacity she mentors future commanders, provides strategic advice related to installation management and speaks to a variety of audiences on leadership.

In recognition of her outstanding achievements, Dr. Carter has been honored with numerous awards. She was inducted into the Purdue ROTC Hall of Fame and named a Distinguished Engineering Alumna by the Purdue College of Engineering. She remains an active member of several prestigious groups and boards, including the Purdue University Board of Trustees, the Purdue Alumni Association and the Purdue Applied Research Institute. Following degrees from Purdue University, University of Oklahoma and National Defense University, Dr. Carter's academic journey culminated in a Doctor of Business Administration from Drexel, reflecting her commitment to continuous learning and excellence. Her legacy of leadership and dedication to service exemplify the values upheld by Drexel, making her a distinguished alumna and an inspiration to future generations of leaders.

## Captain Paulette R. T. Cazares, MD EMPH '11



Captain Cazares stands as a dedicated mental health leader, Naval officer, psychiatrist and public health servant. She has served her country in uniform since 2000. Most recently, she served as the director for mental health at the U.S. Naval Hospital Okinawa, overseeing mental health services for forward deployed tri-service patients and beneficiaries. Across Japan and Guam, through the COVID-19 pandemic, she led the only regional military inpatient mental health unit and Level II Substance treatment program. She was a mental health leader in disaster drills, providing island-wide education on the use of Psychological First Aid teams.

Prior to her assignment in Okinawa, she developed innovative programs and spearheaded initiatives such as the Comprehensive Women's Health Clinic pilot, which was the first clinical Department of Defense program to address the unique needs of active-duty servicewomen. As the inaugural chair of the Women's Health Clinical Community for Navy Medicine, she championed women's health, overseeing three sub-communities working in perinatal health, family planning and mental health, and oversaw the creation of 28 technical publications shared across Navy Medicine. Captain Cazares' commitment extends beyond her assigned professional duties, as evidenced by her involvement in various professional and civic organizations. She serves as the secretary on the Executive Board of Directors for the American Medical Women's Association, where she established the Active Duty and Veterans Chapter. She is an assistant professor of psychiatry at the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences (USUHS), is actively involved in research and gives frequent lectures. She has received several awards for her outstanding service, including several Meritorious Service Medals, the Navy Senior Female Physician

Leadership Award and multiple Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medals. Her academic journey includes degrees from Boston College, an MPH from Drexel University and an MD degree from USUHS.

After 24 years of service, she will be retiring from the Navy in 2024 and working in mental health research in San Diego as well as teaching for the Family Health Centers and Naval Medical Center San Diego's Psychiatry residency programs.

## Leonard A. Comma

BS '92



Spanning over 30 years, Mr. Comma's distinguished career is marked by his transformative leadership as a public company chief executive officer and board director. Notably, he served as the chairman and chief executive officer of Jack in the Box Inc., where he orchestrated successful growth strategies that led to significant organizational evolution and alignment with brand strategy. He began his career at Mobil, where he held roles of increasing responsibility. After the ExxonMobil merger, he became regional manager, leading a team that supported more than 300 franchisees across southern California. His tenure witnessed strategic and financial advancements, culminating in his induction into the WACE Co-op Hall of Fame by Drexel in 2015. His commitment to education and mentorship is evident through his engagements with Drexel's Dean's Lecture Series and Alumni Career Services, embodying the values of continuous learning and giving back to the community.

In addition to his corporate endeavors, Mr. Comma serves as an independent director for Burger BossCo Holdings Inc. and a board member of the Wills Group, further demonstrating his commitment to fostering organizational excellence. He has been recognized as an influential business leader in San Diego and received numerous recognitions, being named Director of the Year in the Corporate Citizenship Category by the Corporate Directors Forum. In addition to his Drexel degree, Mr. Comma received an MBA from Nova Southeastern University.

## Lynne L. Cutler

BS '72



Ms. Cutler is founder and president of Women's Opportunities Resource Center (WORC), serving greater Philadelphia since 1993. WORC aims to promote self-sufficiency for economically disadvantaged women and their families. It was the first micro-enterprise organization in Philadelphia and is the only agency in the region to integrate programs in business lending,

self-employment saving and incentive saving into an overall asset-building approach. WORC has received numerous awards, including the 2001 Presidential Award for Excellence in Microenterprise Development: Poverty Alleviation from the U.S. Department of the Treasury.

Under Ms. Cutler's leadership, WORC has made 1,131 micro and small business loans totaling \$10.16 million (including 995 micro loans averaging around \$6,400) to help businesses start or expand. WORC has also trained over 4,175 low-income, underemployed, dislocated and mature workers on how to start and run a business; and enabled 1,843 families to save \$3.73 million and receive matches of \$4.03 million for an economic impact of \$52 million toward purchase of a home, education, business or emergency family savings. WORC was a pioneer of the incentive-savings program in Pennsylvania, partnering with PA-DCED in 1997 to design the state's Family Savings Account (FSA), which became one of the largest statewide programs in the nation, and launching our own program shortly thereafter.

Of the 602 clients WORC served in FY23, 84 percent were women, 89 percent people of color and 91 percent low-income. WORC's clients are most heavily concentrated in neighborhoods in west and north Philadelphia with the highest incidence of poverty and need for economic development.

Ms. Cutler's 30+ years at WORC build on her history as a champion for asset-building and empowerment of women. In the late 1970s, she founded the Women's Association for Women's Alternatives, now known as PathWays PA. She has also received numerous awards throughout her career for her work and leadership, including the World of Difference Award by the International Alliance for Women in 2011 and the Women of Distinction Award 2019

sponsored by the Philadelphia Business Journal. Ms. Cutler earned her bachelor's degree from Drexel and master's degree in Interdisciplinary Social Sciences from Michigan State University.

## John J. Degnan III, PhD BS '68



Dr. Degnan is a distinguished physicist renowned for his expertise in laser theory and instrument design. Over a six-decade career, he dedicated almost 40 years to NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center (GSFC), accumulating extensive technical knowledge and supervisory experience. Notably, Dr. Degnan's doctoral research led to the development of the first successful laser oscillator/regenerative amplifier, which generated ultrashort laser pulses to transfer time between ground-based and airborne atomic clocks and verify Einstein's predictions on the effects of gravity and velocity on clocks. A duplicate device was later adopted by Lawrence Livermore Laboratory as the initial light source for their laser fusion experiments. While at NASA, Dr. Degnan published widely cited theories on optical antenna gain, waveguide gas lasers, actively and passively Q-switched lasers and, most notably, compact millimeter accuracy satellite laser ranging systems such as SLR2000. In 1998, he co-founded the International Laser Ranging Service (ILRS) and served as the first governing board chairman until his 2002 retirement from NASA to assume the position of chief scientist at Sigma Space Corporation. At Sigma, he pioneered Single Photon Lidars (SPLs) for high data rate topographic and bathymetric measurements from aircraft or orbiting satellites. His SPL technique was adopted by NASA for their 2018 ICESat-2 mission and achieved 60,000 measurements per second compared to only 40 measurements per second on the predecessor ICESat-1 mission. While at Sigma, Dr. Degnan also developed the concept of Asynchronous Laser Transponders to extend laser ranging, time transfer and wideband communications throughout the solar system and participated in successful NASA experiments to spacecraft enroute to Mercury and in Mars orbit. He has also served as "laser expert" on NASA and other space agency review panels for Deep Space missions such as OSIRIS-Rex, which recently returned surface samples from the asteroid Bennu.

A luminary in his field, Dr. Degnan's influence is global, as evidenced by over 260 technical publications and his fellowship in esteemed organizations like the Optical Society of America (now Optica). His impact on the scientific community is further underscored by a multitude of awards, including the NASA Space Act Award, the NASA GSFC Annual Moe Schneebaum Award, the ILRS SLR Pioneer Award, the Tsiolkovsky Medal from the Russian Space Agency and the Drexel Alumni Circle of Distinction Award as well as recognition in the Marple Newtown School District Hall of Fame. A perennial presence in Marquis Who's Who publications, Dr. Degnan's remarkable achievements culminated in the prestigious Marquis Who's Who Lifetime Achievement Award in 2020, solidifying his legacy as a pioneering figure in physics and space exploration.

### Kathleen M. Devine MS '71, DrNP '17, NEA-BC

Dr. Devine, senior vice president and chief nursing officer at Cooper University Health Care, epitomizes dedication to nursing advocacy and patient wellbeing. With a variety of leadership roles at Cooper, including executive oversight of nursing and patient care services, she has tirelessly championed professional nursing practice and quality outcomes. Along with a decade-long tenure as a flight nurse, Dr. Devine's clinical expertise encompasses critical care, emergency and trauma nursing, underscoring her commitment to holistic patient care.

Beyond her impactful leadership at Cooper, Dr. Devine is an active member of esteemed nursing organizations, including the Organization of Nurse Leaders of New Jersey and the Nursing Workplace Environment and Staffing Council. Her accolades, including the 2021 Nurse Executive Award and the Philip & Carole Norcross Award for Excellence in Nurse Leadership, reflect her unwavering dedication to her field. Additionally, Dr. Devine's passion for aviation, evident through her pilot's licenses and membership in The Ninety-Nines, highlights her diverse interests and pursuit of excellence both within and outside of the healthcare sphere. She obtained her Master of Science and Doctor of Nursing Practice from Drexel College of Nursing and Health Professions and holds a Lean Six

Sigma Green Belt certification and a Nurse Executive Advanced certification. Dr. Devine's profound impact on nursing and healthcare embodies the values and mission of Drexel.

### Carole Gardner Dodson BS '71



Mrs. Dodson, a dedicated ExxonMobil retiree with nearly three decades of service, distinguished herself through her versatile career spanning financial reporting, procurement and SAP systems management. After graduating from Drexel, Mrs. Dodson declined a management position at Bloomingdale's to pursue an MBA at New York University Stern School of Business. Later, she worked as a Certified Public Accountant at Coopers & Lybrand and Rohm and Haas before joining ExxonMobil. She made significant contributions to ExxonMobil's SAP STRIPES project, serving as the sole African-American woman on the procurement team and contributing to its global success. Mrs. Dodson's professional acumen, coupled with her educational background, has enriched her contributions to both the corporate world and her community.

Beyond her professional achievements, Mrs. Dodson's commitment to community service shines brightly. She has participated in her church's planning committee, taught financial literacy to women, engaged in political advocacy, fostered community bonds by co-founding a neighborhood book club and served as a board member for The Beacon of Downtown Houston, a nonprofit organization helping end homelessness. Alongside her husband, Samuel, Mrs. Dodson has been a steadfast advocate for Drexel, participating in alumni events, contributing a story to A Legacy to Share, serving as a keynote commencement speaker and helping launch initiatives like the College of Arts and Sciences BRIDGE program, reflecting her dedication to empowering future generations of students.

### Christine Ann Dorfler MBA '09



Ms. Dorfler serves as the chief financial officer of the National Football League (NFL), bringing over two decades of financial leadership experience. Prior to joining the NFL, she served as chief financial officer of NBC Sports. At NBCUniversal, she played a pivotal role in modernizing the media landscape by expanding to a digital/streaming model and overseeing significant partnerships, including those with the NFL, NASCAR and International Olympic Committee. Ms. Dorfler's distinguished career trajectory also includes military service as a U.S. Army Military Intelligence Officer in Europe.

Recognized as a trailblazer in sports business, Ms. Dorfler has been honored with the Game Changers: Women in Sports Business award from Sports Business Journal and the Spectrum Award from the American Red Cross Eastern Pennsylvania Region. Her commitment to education and veteran advocacy is evident through her roles as a Board of Trustees member for Villanova University, a keynote speaker for Drexel's Veterans Day Celebration and a member of the Drexel Leadership Council, the Drexel Veterans Alumni Network and the LeBow Dean's Advisory Board. Ms. Dorfler's impactful leadership, both in her professional domain and the Drexel community, embodies the spirit of excellence and service upheld by the University.

### Faith Dyson-Washington MS '03, PhD '06, MBA '20



Dr. Dyson Washington is a distinguished clinical psychologist and healthcare administrator renowned for her expertise in mental health. Driven by personal experience and a passion for helping others, Dr. Dyson Washington has dedicated her career to providing compassionate care and advocating for mental health awareness. From her early days as assistant director of Drexel's Counseling Center to her prestigious position as chief executive officer of Community Behavioral Health (CBH), she has been a beacon of inspiration and transformation in her field. Under Dr. Dyson Washington's leadership, CBH earned the National Committee for Quality Assurance's (NCQA) Multicultural Healthcare

Distinction, highlighting her commitment to eliminating health disparities and enhancing health outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities.

Dr. Dyson Washington's commitment to eradicating mental health stigma and promoting wellbeing extends beyond her professional endeavors, as evidenced by her involvement in community development projects and nonprofit organizations like the Mount Vernon Manor Community Development Corporation, Drexel's Second Story Collective Placekeeping Project and LiveWell Foundation. During Pennsylvania's Tom Wolf administration, she was appointed to the Behavioral Health Commission for Adult Mental Health. She has been recognized as a Healthcare Power Player by Metro Philadelphia, honored as one of the Women of Distinction by the Philadelphia Business Journal and bestowed the Service to the Community Award from the LeBow College of Business in 2022.

### Daniel K. Fitzpatrick, CPA, CFA MBA '92



Mr. Fitzpatrick, president of Citizens Bank Mid-Atlantic Region and head of its National Industry Verticals, brings over three decades of commercial banking expertise to the table. His tenure at Citizens Financial

Group, Inc. includes a pivotal role on the Executive Leadership Group, where he orchestrates strategic initiatives aimed at fostering long-term growth for one of the nation's foremost financial institutions. Previously, he served as president and chief executive officer of Citizens Bank for eastern Pennsylvania, Delaware and New Jersey, overseeing regional operations and charting a course for business expansion. Prior to his tenure at Citizens Bank, Mr. Fitzpatrick held esteemed positions at Bank of America and FleetBoston, where he demonstrated remarkable leadership in commercial banking. A distinguished figure in the banking industry, Mr. Fitzpatrick has been honored with numerous accolades, including Most Admired CEO by the Philadelphia Business Journal and the Annual Commodore John Barry Award by the American Catholic Historical Society.

Beyond his professional endeavors, Mr. Fitzpatrick remains deeply engaged with civic and educational initiatives, exemplified by his involvement with organizations such as Philadelphia Works and the Greater

Philadelphia Chamber of Commerce. Notably, he has actively contributed to Drexel, serving on the Advisory Board for the Raj & Kamla Gupta Governance Institute and the College of Engineering Dean's Executive Advisory Council. Mr. Fitzpatrick's unwavering commitment to community service and education underscores his dedication to fostering positive change and nurturing future leaders.

### Rajeev Gautam, PhD MS '76



Dr. Gautam's illustrious career spans over 40 years at Honeywell International, Inc., where he served as president and chief executive officer of Performance Materials and Technologies (PMT), one of Honeywell's key business groups. His leadership diversified PMT's customer base, focusing on sustainability and expanding into new verticals, such as life sciences, automation and digitization. Under his guidance, PMT continued to deliver high-performance products and solutions, contributing significantly to Honeywell's reported fiscal year 2021 revenue of over \$34.5 billion. Dr. Gautam also played a pivotal role in navigating the company through the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

A highly respected engineer, Dr. Gautam was elected to the prestigious National Academy of Engineering in 2020, a testament to his outstanding contributions to the field. Throughout his career, he has been recognized with several significant awards, including the inaugural AIChE Government and Industry Leaders Award and the Chemical Engineering Personal Achievement Award from Chemical Engineering magazine. Dr. Gautam's dedication to advancing engineering extends to his involvement with Drexel, where he serves on the College of Engineering Dean's Executive Advisory Council. He also established the Rajeev Gautam, PhD '76 Fellowship Award Fund to support graduate students, further solidifying his commitment to fostering excellence in engineering education.

### Randolph Holmes III BS '70



Mr. Holmes, retired since 2005, had a distinguished career as the former vice president of employee benefits at Prudential Insurance Company of America in Newark, New Jersey. His professional journey also includes overseeing employee benefits at Instinet Corporation in New York City and serving as the director of Casualty Administration for Colonial Penn Insurance Company in Philadelphia. Throughout his career, Mr. Holmes has been actively involved in various professional and community organizations, most notably the United Negro College Fund, the Urban League and National Black MBA Association. He is also a life member of the NAACP and former chairman of the Edison, New Jersey Zoning Board.

Mr. Holmes is also a member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. He holds an MBA from Northwestern University as well as CLU and CPCU professional designations. In recognition of his outstanding contributions, Mr. Holmes has received prestigious accolades such as the Golden Dragon Award in 2021 and the Paragon Trailblazer Award from the Drexel University Black Alumni Council in 2020. His commitment to Drexel is further demonstrated through his involvement in several University committees, including the Drexel University Black Alumni Council and the LeBow Dean's Advisory Board. Moreover, Mr. Holmes generously supports Drexel's initiatives, having donated to the LeBow BRIDGE program, endowed the Drexel University Black Alumni Scholarship Fund and served as a long-time member of the Anthony J Drexel Society, exemplifying his unwavering dedication to fostering excellence within the Drexel community.

### Helen Meeks Horstmann, MD MCP '72



Dr. Horstmann is a retired board-certified orthopedic surgeon and a pioneer for women in the field. After earning her MD, she trained in orthopedic surgery at Thomas Jefferson University as their first woman resident. In her career, she specialized in the care of orthopedically

handicapped children and adults. She is nationally renowned for her work in cerebral palsy as well as for the care of adults with post-polio syndrome. Dr. Horstmann has also been an educator and mentor of medical students, surgical residents, orthopedic residents and young women at both the Drexel College of Medicine and Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania.

Dr. Horstmann has received distinguished alumna achievement awards from every school she has attended. When she became a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgery, she was only the 35th woman of 18,000 fellows. In addition to serving on the Drexel College of Medicine Dean's Executive Advisory Council, Dr. Horstmann received a Lifetime Achievement Award from Drexel College of Medicine in 2022 and a Distinguished Alumna Award in 1996.

Dr. Horstmann has been president of the American Academy for Cerebral Palsy and Developmental Medicine as well as the women's National Orthopedic Society, the Ruth Jackson Orthopedic Society. She has served on the boards of Villanova University, Rosemont College and Pennsylvania Horticultural Society among others. She chaired the Philadelphia Flower Show from 2000 through 2024.

## W. Nicholas Howley III

BS '75



Mr. Howley is the founder and chairman of the Board of Directors of TransDigm Group, a NYSE public company and one of the largest worldwide suppliers of highly engineered aerospace parts, subsystems and systems. In addition, Mr. Howley is co-founder and chairman of Perimeter Solutions, also a NYSE public company that is the world leader in forest fire control products and services. His philanthropic endeavors through the Howley Foundation have also provided educational opportunities to countless individuals, including over 900 currently active scholarship students primarily in Philadelphia and Cleveland. He is deeply committed to social and economic mobility through education, as evidenced by impactful initiatives like the ASPIRE Scholars Program at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and the Howley ASPIRE Nurse Scholars Program and Howley ASPIRE Pathways at Cleveland Clinic. In addition to the recently established Howley Foundation

Scholarship program, Mr. Howley also supports Drexel students through the Doug Peacock Scholarship established by TransDigm, highlighting his dedication to fostering academic success.

Beyond his professional achievements, Mr. Howley's civic contributions are equally remarkable. Serving on the boards of various prestigious institutions like Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland Clinic and the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, he continues to shape communities and institutions. His accolades, including the 2022 Singleton Award CEO Prize for Excellence in Business Leadership and The Spirit of Cristo Rey Award, underscore his outstanding leadership and commitment to excellence. Through initiatives like the Howley College Scholars Program, established in partnership with Drexel, Mr. Howley continues to leave a lasting legacy, transforming lives and inspiring others to achieve their fullest potential.

## Mariell Jessup, MD

HU '76



Dr. Jessup stands as a pioneering figure in heart failure research and treatment, having played a pivotal role in establishing heart failure and transplant cardiology as certified secondary subspecialties. As the chief science and medical officer of the American Heart Association (AHA), she leads the organization's science enterprise, shaping its medical strategy and fostering key scientific relationships. With over 24 years of dedicated service to the AHA, including a tenure as president, Dr. Jessup has left an indelible mark on the AHA's mission to combat cardiovascular diseases.

Throughout her illustrious career, Dr. Jessup has garnered recognition for her groundbreaking contributions, including prestigious accolades like the Gold Medal from the European Society of Cardiology and the Gold Heart Award from the American Heart Association. Her commitment to advancing cardiovascular health extends to her alma mater, the Drexel College of Medicine, where she received the Distinguished Alumna Award in 2015. Despite her global influence and professional achievements, Dr. Jessup remains dedicated to mentoring young professionals and continues to inspire future generations in the field of cardiology.

## Rita Johnson-Greene

BS '99



Mrs. Johnson-Greene is a seasoned healthcare executive with over two decades of experience. Rita specializes in the commercialization of innovative gene therapies for rare diseases and is currently serving as the chief operating officer of the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine (ARM). Rita leads ARM's operations, finance and strategic initiatives to advance engineered cell therapies and genetic medicines globally. Prior to ARM, Mrs. Johnson-Greene held key positions at Bluebird Bio and Spark Therapeutics, where she played pivotal leadership roles in launching three of the first four gene therapy products to be approved in the United States. Rita also spent 10 years at AstraZeneca and has a background in finance, sales and consulting.

In addition to her professional accomplishments, Ms. Johnson-Greene's civic engagement reflects her commitment to social impact. She gives back to the Philadelphia community by facilitating an annual book drive and mentoring youth at New Birth Baptist Church. She serves on the boards of public health organizations and community nonprofits, actively contributing to initiatives addressing healthcare disparities and youth empowerment. Rita served as the chair of the Drexel University Black Alumni Council Scholarship Committee and continues to impact lives by fostering educational opportunities for aspiring scholars. Her accolades, including Diversity MBA Magazine's Top 100 Women of Influence, Diversity MBA Magazine's Top 50 Under 50 Executives and Working Mother Magazine's Working Mother of the Year, underscore her exemplary leadership and dedication to making a difference. Alongside her husband, Bernard Frederick Greene III, a fellow alumnus and vice chair of the Drexel Alumni Board of Governors, she exemplifies the University's values of leadership, service and community engagement.

## Mary Ann Leeper, PhD

BS '62



Dr. Leeper is a prominent figure in the field of women's health and reproductive rights. She began her career as a research and development scientist and later held senior

management positions at G D Searle & Co. Dr. Leeper became the president and chief operating officer of the Female Health Company, where she led initiatives in developing protective agents against HIV/AIDS and contraception. Her unwavering commitment to this cause has prompted her to deliver presentations and lectures globally, advocating for women's health across the world.

Throughout her esteemed career, Dr. Leeper has held influential roles in various organizations, including serving as a chair and board member of the Female Health Foundation, which she founded in 1994; co-founding the Business Woman's Initiative against HIV/AIDS; and chairing the Nominating & Governance Committee at Neenah Paper. Her groundbreaking efforts have garnered recognition from the United Nations and global health agencies, earning her a Recognition Award in 2005. She was also honored with the Women's Entrepreneurship Award from Temple University's School of Business in 2003.

Dr. Leeper's association with Drexel includes her membership in the Drexel Legacy Society, where her dedication to advancing women's health and empowerment continues to leave a lasting impact.

## Judson C. Linville, PsyD

HU '85



Dr. Linville possesses more than 35 years of international leadership experience at the intersection of financial services, technology, media and marketing. He led Citigroup as the chief executive officer of Global Cards and Consumer Services, where he was responsible for the largest global credit card franchise, representing \$13 billion in revenue and 55 million individual and small business customers across 18 countries. He also served as president of the U.S. Consumer Card Services Group and president of Corporate Services at American Express, where he led the Consumer Card, Membership Rewards and Consumer Travel businesses in the United States, as well as the Prepaid Card and Travelers Cheques businesses on a global scale.

Currently a senior advisor at General Atlantic, Dr. Linville brings his wealth of expertise to provide strategic support for growth companies worldwide. He is actively involved in various professional and civic engagements, serving on

the Board of Trustees at Lafayette College and as a board member for Creative Planning. Dr. Linville's dedication to philanthropy is evident through his advisory role at Share My Strength, a nonprofit organization combatting hunger and poverty. Notably, he has been honored with awards such as the Legend of Lafayette Lacrosse and the George Washington Kidd '86 Award.

## Jerry J. Martin

BS '77



Mr. Martin has been an active and generous volunteer, advocate and supporter of Drexel. He is the chair of the Drexel University Black Alumni Council, which strengthens the bonds among Black alumni, students and community members. He also serves on the LeBow BRIDGE Advisory Council. In 2015, he established the Jerry J. Martin '77 LeBow BRIDGE Endowed Scholarship Fund, which provides scholarship awards to LeBow undergraduate students.

Before retiring, Mr. Martin was a senior bank regulator in the Office of Thrift Supervision, the successor to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board, which was established by Congress on August 9, 1989, as the primary federal regulator of all federal and state-chartered savings institutions across the nation that belong to the Savings Association Insurance Fund (SAIF). He was stationed at the ING office in Wilmington, Delaware. With extensive experience working for the federal government from the time of his co-op, he was responsible for regulating banks and holding companies in the United States and abroad. Mr. Martin has received the John McGarrigle Alumni Service Award and the Silver Dragon Award. In 2020, Mr. Martin became a Drexel trustee. He also serves on the Institutional Advancement Committee and Student Life Committee. Mr. Martin has also been a real estate investor, buying, renovating and renting apartments for income.

**Patricia McCaul, AIA, LEED AP**  
BS '87

Ms. McCaul's career in interior design and architecture spans over two decades, marked by her exceptional ability to cultivate client trust while adeptly managing project intricacies. As principal at

Rottet Studio since 2021 — and a team member at Rottet Studio since its inception in 2008 — she has played a pivotal role in the firm's success, particularly in the hospitality, workplace and multifamily residential sectors. Rottet Studio, an internationally acclaimed architecture and interior design firm, has thrived under her leadership, delivering innovative and timeless spaces that redefine the built environment. Ms. McCaul's dedication to detail, coupled with her capacity to balance diverse project requirements, ensures that each endeavor aligns precisely with client needs.

In addition to her professional achievements, Ms. McCaul remains actively engaged with professional organizations such as the American Institute of Architects and the Association for Women in Architecture. Her contributions to the field have been recognized with prestigious awards, including the Arthur E. Mann Award for Excellence in Architecture, an American Institute of Architects Honor Award and numerous Interior Design Magazine Best of Year Awards. She continues to support Drexel through her membership on the Westphal College of Media Arts & Design Dean's Council and Westphal Interior Design Advisory Council as well as her interactions with students through the co-op program and during campus visits, exemplifying her commitment to nurturing the next generation of design professionals.

## Andrew J. Pennoni

BS/BS '91



Mr. Pennoni is a licensed professional engineer with multiple industry certifications and serves as regional vice president and principal-in-charge of Construction Engineering Services at Pennoni Associates Inc. Under his leadership, Pennoni has grown into one of the most highly regarded bridge fabrication inspection firms in the nation and one of the most comprehensive private construction materials testing laboratories in the region. He joined Pennoni in 1994 and has over 30 years of engineering-related experience that includes civil engineering design, construction management, construction engineering inspection and construction materials engineering and testing. Prior to joining Pennoni Associates Inc., Mr. Pennoni was a project engineer at Keating Building

Corporation. In addition to his degrees in civil engineering and architectural engineering from Drexel, he has an MBA from St. Joseph's University.

Mr. Pennoni has also served on the board of the Central Delaware County Authority, the board of Nether Swarthmore Baseball and the Nether Providence Township Parks and Recreation Committee. He has been an active member of the American Council of Engineering Companies (ACEC), including chair of ACEC of Pennsylvania's Legislative Affairs Committee and chair of the ACEC Geoprofessional Coalition. Mr. Pennoni serves on the board for the March of Dimes' annual Transportation, Building & Construction Awards Luncheon. For more than 25 years, he has also participated on quality committees with various departments of transportation and Federal Highway Administration. In 2014, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame of the World Association for Cooperative Education after being nominated by Drexel. In 2018, he received the Special Distinction Award from the Drexel Alumni Association. In addition to serving on the College of Engineering Dean's Executive Advisory Council, Mr. Pennoni serves on the President's Leadership Council and has served on the Athletic Director's Leadership Circle.

### Ron Philip BS '96

 Mr. Philip is a seasoned leader in the pharmaceutical industry, boasting over three decades of experience across various therapeutic categories and global markets. His extensive career includes pivotal roles at Pfizer, Wyeth Pharmaceuticals, Deloitte Consulting and Merck & Co., underscoring his diverse expertise and profound impact on the pharmaceutical landscape. Since becoming the chief executive officer of Spark Therapeutics in February 2022, Mr. Philip has been instrumental in steering the company's rapid growth and achievements. His notable contributions include spearheading the commercial launch of Spark Therapeutics' groundbreaking gene therapy, LUXTURNA®, which has revolutionized treatment options for individuals with genetic diseases.

Recognized as a trailblazer in healthcare technology and a top influencer in the industry, Mr. Philip has been listed in the Philadelphia Business Journal's Power 101 and named among

the Top 25 Healthcare Technology Leaders of Pennsylvania in 2023. With a Bachelor of Science in Information Systems from Drexel, Mr. Philip continues to foster strong ties with his alma mater, exemplified by his role as a trustee for the Academy of Natural Sciences as well as Spark Therapeutics' significant presence on Drexel's campus.

### Joel E. Ruffin Sr.

BS '05



Mr. Ruffin, a seasoned executive with nearly 26 years at Goldman Sachs as a senior vice president in Engineering, now holds the position of director, global head of BBPLC Technology & Cyber Resilience at Barclays. His distinguished career is profoundly influenced by the foundational education at Drexel, which not only deepened his appreciation for education's transformative power but also paved the way for his subsequent advanced degrees from Columbia University and New York University. Outside his professional pursuits, Mr. Ruffin actively participates in both local and global efforts, focusing on empowering communities, especially in areas involving youth and mentoring programs.

Demonstrating his dedication to education and community service, Mr. Ruffin has taken on roles in academia as a part-time adjunct professor at Thomas Jefferson University and currently as an adjunct at Drexel's Goodwin College of Professional Studies. Here, he plays a crucial role in shaping future leaders in fields such as public policy, customer relationship management and management information systems.

Mr. Ruffin holds various leadership and advisory roles in prestigious organizations, including the Heritage and Cultural Society of Africa (HACSA) and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Essex, Hudson & Union Counties. He has been honored as Big Brother of the Year for the State of New Jersey twice. His contributions extend to speaking and lecturing at significant initiatives like Year Up, the Mandela Washington Fellowship and the Professional Career Panel for HCZ Elite Scholars, among others. He has also been a guest speaker at Columbia University and the HCSA Summit Year of Return in Ghana. A graduate of Drexel with a Bachelor of Science in General Studies, Mr. Ruffin actively gives back to his

alma mater, serving on the Goodwin College Advisory Council having served as a keynote speaker at Goodwin's 2018 commencement ceremony and the Goodwin Great Talks series.

Mr. Ruffin resides in Washington Crossing, Pennsylvania, with his beloved wife Novetta, to whom he has been married for 35 years.

### Richard M. Satava Jr., MD

HU '68, FACS



Dr. Satava, professor emeritus of surgery at the University of Washington Medical Center, boasts a distinguished career spanning prestigious academic and governmental positions. He has served as a consultant to NASA on surgical robots, professor of surgery at Yale University and professor of surgery in the Army Medical Corps assigned to General Surgery at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. His military tenure included notable achievements as a flight surgeon, Army astronaut candidate and MASH surgeon during the Grenada Invasion, all while maintaining clinical surgical practice. Notably, he led advanced biomedical technology initiatives at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency and held a senior science advisory role at the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command. Dr. Satava's affiliations include directorship of the NASA/Yale University Commercial Space Center for Medical Informatics and Technology Applications, complementing his medical training at Hahnemann and undergraduate studies at Johns Hopkins University. His surgical expertise was honed through internships at the Cleveland Clinic, a residency at the Mayo Clinic and a fellowship focused on surgical research.

A pioneer in surgical innovation, Dr. Satava contributed significantly to the development and funding of the first surgical robot, later commercialized as the DaVinci Surgical Robot. With over 200 publications and book chapters, he has delved into diverse areas such as surgery in space, virtual reality surgical simulation and the ethical implications of medical technologies. His relentless pursuit of advanced medical technologies defines his commitment to shaping the future of clinical medicine, education and training. In recognition of his exemplary contributions, Dr. Satava received the Hahnemann Distinguished Alumnus Award from Drexel College of Medicine in 2008 and the inaugural Maestro Award from the Institute for Surgical Excellence.

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## INDUCTION CEREMONY AND RECEPTION, HOSTED DURING ALUMNI WEEKEND





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