

## MAL & FRIENDS

*NJIT Magazine* invites new correspondents to join Mal Simon in sharing news about class members and alumni organizations. Professor emeritus of physical education and athletics, Mal was director of physical education and athletics, and men's soccer coach, for 30 years. In 1993, he received the Cullimore Medal for his service to the university.

If you would like to be a regular correspondent, don't hesitate to send an email to the editor of *NJIT Magazine*: [crovetto@njit.edu](mailto:crovetto@njit.edu)

First, the latest news from Mal –

**H**ere is a question to test your memory. What two events happened at NCE in 1949?

Give up? 1949 was the year in which the baseball team and Air Force Reserve Officers Training Corps (AFROTC) Detachment 490 were established.

In its early years, as many as 400-500 students (cadets), which included students from Rutgers-Newark and Stevens, were enrolled in the AFROTC program. The detachment was very active and included a drill team called the Highland Rifles. I remember being awed by the drill team's

Vasilik, who completed their AFROTC program and were commissioned 2nd Lieutenants in the USAF. Also featured will be Walter Appel (Rutgers University-Newark '62), Keth Edmondson '69 and Bob Lucas, a respected officer in the AFROTC detachment during the group's college days. The idea for the column lit a light bulb when I received an email and photo from Dennis Beebe. All in all, it was a team effort that would not have been completed without their input when I contacted them to make sure I had all the details correct.

begin flight training when his orders were rescinded and he was told to return to Los Angeles AFB. He was able to negotiate an assignment to Cape Canaveral, Florida, where he was a member of the Minuteman III launch team. In 1971, Dennis served as a civil engineer in Thailand after which he was assigned to the Defense Intelligence Agency in Washington, D.C., from 1972-75. From 1975 to 1979, he was assigned to the Advanced Ballistic Reentry Systems office and the F-15 Anti-Satellite program at the Los Angeles AFB. For his last two assignments, he was appointed Commander of the Missile Test Group at Vandenberg AFB where the first Peacekeeper test ICBMs were launched, and finally back at the Los Angeles AFB as program director of the Inertial Upper Stage and Deputy Commander for launch systems.

After his retirement from the USAF in 1988, Dennis joined a group of retired military officers — many who were generals and admirals — who consulted for U.S aerospace companies. Their primary job was evaluating proposals

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performance at the Washington, D.C. armory. I also recall fondly the Military Ball, at which Bob Swanson, Paul Hausser and I were judges to select the ball's queen, and the "dining in" for officers and cadets where toast after toast were made, each one followed by spectacular hijinks as the number of toasts increased. At the end of their sophomore year, the students had to commit to a minimum of four years in the United States Air Force (USAF) after graduation or leave the program. Those who stayed on would receive their commissions at a ceremony after graduation from NCE. This column will feature a group of 1962 NCE alumni, Dennis Beebe, Joe Crecca, Bob DuBois, Ray O'Mara, Arnie Simonsen and Mike

**DENNIS BEEBE'S** commissioning was delayed due to a collapsed lung he incurred during his junior year's Summer Training Unit (STU). As a result, he had to attend another STU prior to being commissioned in July 1962. He then earned a master's degree at the Air Force Institute of Technology at Wright Patterson Air Force Base (AFB) for two years. Dennis spent most of his USAF career in Research and Development (R&D), mostly in missiles and space, with assignments at Los Angeles AFB and Vandenberg AFB in California, and Patrick AFB in Florida. In 1967, the collapsed lung incident again caused a change in his USAF future. He was almost on his way to Reese AFB in Texas to

prior to their submission to government agencies. Their consulting work included significant Department of Defense weapon systems and programs such as the Joint Strike Fighter (F-35), the Airborne Tanker (KC-46) and many satellite and launch vehicle programs including the European Ariane launch site in South America.

Dennis has fond memories of being on the NCE fencing team when Paul Hausser was coach. He recalls how he came to be on the saber squad. Paul would begin all his fencers with the basic foil weapon, which required more finesse than the epee and saber weapons. After observing Dennis, he handed him a saber, voila! Dennis volunteers for a number of nonprofits, including being a docent at a

nature reserve and teaching woodworking in the summer to grades K-6. He and his wife, Chris, live in Solvang, California.

**WALT APPEL** attended Seton Hall Preparatory School before enrolling at NCE. Walt decided after one year at NCE that engineering was not for him, so he transferred to Rutgers-Newark as an economics and marketing major. As his main objective was to get a commission in the USAF, he stayed in the AFROTC at NCE. After he became a 2nd Lieutenant, he served at Stead AFB in Nevada, Shephard AFB in Texas, Tan Son Nhut AFB outside Saigon, and McGuire AFB in New Jersey. He retired from the service in 1965 and enrolled at Lehigh University, where he earned a master's degree in business cycles and forecasting.

Walt spent 31 years from 1966 to 1997 at Mutual Benefit Life Insurance Company in Newark. He started as a fixed income securities analyst and ended up as the company vice president and treasurer. As a longtime railroad enthusiast, Walt wrote a weekly rail and travel column for the *Newark Sunday News*, including one year from Vietnam, until the paper ceased publication in 1972. The column was titled "High Iron," which is a railroad slang term for the main line.

Walt has also written three railroad history books. His first book, *ALCO Official Photography*, is a collection of color photos of new diesel locomotives produced by the American Locomotive Company of Schenectady, New York. The second book, *Trackside along the Be-O*, which he wrote with Edward P Griffith, a graduate of Stevens Institute of Technology, includes photos of steam and diesel locomotives, employees and industries. The last book, *Jersey Central Lines in Color*, Vol. 3, is a history of the Jersey Central from the 1940s until its absorption into Conrail in 1976. Walt and his wife, Sandra, live in Lynwood, Virginia.

**JOE CRECCA** is NCE's bona fide hero. He took a different route to achieve his singular objective to be a USAF officer and fighter pilot. In his own inimitable style, he wrote, "I went to a local school offering an engineering degree; not one of those wimpy liberal arts colleges where I could get an education in stuffy, useless subjects like business, finance and politics. Nope. It was mechanical engineering at NCE for me. Four years later and many hours of wailing, gnashing of teeth and lost sleep, I graduated with a bachelor's degree." He began working as an ordinance engineer at Picatinny Arsenal, the headquarters of the United States Army Munitions Command. Midway through 1963 the Vietnam War heated up and Joe decided it was time for him to get involved. He passed his Air Force Officer Qualifying Test and



Joe Crecca '62

after completing pilot training with "flying colors" received an assignment to George AFB, California, to fly F-4C Phantoms.

Joe flew his first combat mission out of Danang AFB, North Korea, in August 1966. Three months later, while on his 87th mission near Hanoi, North Korea, his plane was shot down by a Russian Surface to Air Missile (SAM). Joe and the plane's other pilot, Scotty Wilson, both ejected. Scotty perished when a second SAM detonated next to where his parachute opened. Joe was immediately captured

upon landing. Thus began his 2,281 days as a prisoner-of-war in North Korea's infamous Hanoi Hilton until his release and repatriation in February 1973. For the first 228 days, Joe was held in solitary confinement until his status was upgraded to include a cellmate. In the summer of 1968, Joe was caught trying to pass a note to another prisoner and was returned to solitary confinement in a cell right next to USN Lieutenant John Sidney McCain. They tapped through the wall to each other. Although already badly injured, McCain had an arm broken for defying the Viet Cong. Despite this, he continued to tap words of encouragement to Joe and was an inspiration to all who knew him.

During the next few years, Joe and the other POWs were moved to different prisons, all the time enduring vicious treatment, especially if they were caught talking to another POW. In 1970, when they were in large cells of 50 POWs, their treatment eased and they began to hold classes in various subjects that made their prison life almost bearable. Joe taught math, physics, classical music and automotive theory and practice.

On February 18, 1973, Joe was released from captivity and returned home. While a prisoner, he demonstrated his strength of character and when released showed he had not lost

his sense of humor by writing that "All good things must come to an end." After repatriation, Joe flew F-4Fs in the 33rd Tactical Fighter Wing and the 3246th Test Wing at Eglin AFB in Florida. Then when Joe was to be assigned a desk job, he decided to leave the USAF to fly Douglas DC-8s and Boeing 747s for the Flying Tiger Cargo Line and later for Federal Express on domestic and international routes before retiring in 2005. Joe has received numerous well-deserved honors including being inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame and Museum in New Jersey. He also is featured in the Museum of Flight, the world's largest nonprofit air and

space museum in Seattle, Washington, where he is actively involved in the B-52 Restoration Project, a plane that saved his life 40 years ago. Joe and his wife, Joan, who hails from Liverpool, England, now reside in North Bend, Washington.

The first week of June 1962 was the beginning of a long journey for **BOB DUBOIS**. It began with marriage to Anne, his wife of 56 years and followed within days by graduation and commissioning in the USAF. Bob and Anne set off on a honeymoon car trip around the United States, the highlight of which was a week's stay in Oregon with his favorite AFROTC professor, Captain Bob Lucas and his wife,

the engineering consulting business. In 1982, he joined Science and Engineering Associates (SEA), and later JAYCOR, and Los Alamos Technical Associates (LATA), becoming a vice president at each of these companies. At LATA, Bob started a new division that provided local "Russian" engineering and logistics support to U.S. Government-sponsored projects in the former Soviet Union (FSU) aimed at eliminating as many ex-Soviet weapons of mass destruction as possible. In 1996, he formed a new company, Technology Management Company, Inc. (TMC), which grew into a multi-million dollar, Albuquerque-based employee-owned

in Virginia and his final assignment as director of the Defense Mapping Agency, also in Virginia. Ray flew 172 missions in Southeast Asia as a B-52 bomber pilot. His favorite aircraft was the FB-111, in which he progressed as the junior pilot in 1970 to wing commander in 1985. In addition to numerous other aircraft, Ray flew the EA-6B and F-14 off the carrier Saratoga, and the Buccaneer, Harrier and Nimrod planes while with the RAF.

After retirement, Ray worked for one year with Mason and Hanger in Lexington, Kentucky, after which he was hired as a program manager by Booz Allen Hamilton, a management and technology

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**“Bob’s NCE engineering education combined with 20 years of USAF experience provided him with a solid understanding of complex problem solving which led to a new career in the engineering consulting business.”**

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Dot. In September, Bob and Anne arrived in Durham, New Hampshire, to begin a graduate program in electrical engineering at the University of New Hampshire. His “real” USAF career began a year later at Griffiss AFB in Rome, New York, followed by the Air Force Weapons Lab at Kirkland AFB in New Mexico, where he got involved in nuclear weapon development and system survivability. This background led Bob to a survivability assignment with S-Cubed in San Diego, California, tours with the Minuteman System Program at Norton AFB in California, the Minuteman logistics center at Hill AFB in Utah, and the Nuclear Missile and Weapons office at the Pentagon and then back to Kirkland AFB at the Air Force Operational Test and Evaluation Center. In 1982, firmly settled with his family in Albuquerque, New Mexico, he did not want to move again and decided to retire from the USAF.

Bob’s NCE engineering education combined with twenty years of USAF experience provided him with a solid understanding of complex problem solving which led to a new career in

company with projects throughout the FSU countries plus projects in over 50 other countries around the world. Bob retired from TMC in 2013.

**RAY O’MARA** transferred to NCE from St. Peter’s College. He had some classes to make up due to his transfer and graduated in 1963, but stayed in touch with his 1962 classmates over the years. Ray worked as a manufacturing engineer at Western Electric in Jersey City, New Jersey, where he met and married his wife, Carole. He intended to return to Western Electric after his Air Force commitment but the love of flying and life in the Air Force intervened, so 31 years later he retired from the USAF at the rank of Major General.

Ray’s Air Force career included assignments at Williams AFB in Arizona, Westover AFB in Massachusetts, Okinawa, Plattsburgh AFB in New York, the Royal Air Force (RAF) in the United Kingdom, the Pentagon, Wurtsmith AFB in Michigan, Minot AFB in North Dakota, the Strategic Air Command at Offutt AFB in Nebraska, the Atlantic Command

consulting firm, in McLean, Virginia. In 2000, he moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado, as manager for contracts supporting the United States and Air Force Space Commands. He was on the Board of Directors for the Plangraphics Corporation, a geospatial information systems company, in Lexington, Kentucky. Among numerous volunteer activities, Ray has been a campaign manager for United Way, worked for The Home Front Cares, a disabled veterans support organization, and as a fundraiser for the Catholic Archdiocese.

**ARNIE SIMONSEN** was another of the group to get hitched in June 1962. After graduation, he married his sweetheart, Joy, after which he was commissioned in the USAF as a second lieutenant. He and Joy then headed off to Salt Lake City to start a year of study in meteorology at the University of Utah. After Utah, Arnie got orders to move to Davis Monthan AFB in Tucson, Arizona, where he was assigned as weather officer to the bomb wing, which flew B-47s back and forth to Alaska. After the B-47s were phased out, Arnie



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became the U2 outfit staff meteorologist and chief forecaster. In 1965, his AFROTC commitment was up and Arnie had to decide whether or not to go regular Air Force. To help make his decision, Arnie took a week's leave to check out the market for engineers and meteorologists. He received two offers: one in San Diego as an engineer for General Dynamics (GD) and one in Chicago as a meteorologist for United Airlines. Even though Arnie and Joy had decided to leave the USAF, they had not yet determined which of the job offers to accept. That decision was made easier when they learned that there was a blizzard in Chicago and San Diego was sunny and warm. Guess what? They chose San Diego. Duh!

At GD, Arnie was assigned to a group doing transistor circuit design work for the Apollo Instrumentation Ships timing system. Their sojourn in warm and sunny San Diego was short-lived as his group was moved to Quincy, Massachusetts, because the ships they were working on were being built there and

their electronics would be installed and tested there. He also got involved with servo drive systems for telemetry and UHF antennas, and to get up to speed on these systems took graduate courses at Northeastern University. This work led him into the Radio Frequency and microwave world, which became his specialty for the rest of his career.

When the Apollo ships were finished and GD wanted him to return to San Diego, he and Joy decided to stay in New England, so Arnie began work with Raytheon. He started working on the Basic Hawk Missile antenna design and test. His new job offered a lot of opportunities for Radio Frequency work and enabled him to work on improved Hawk, Patriot, Sparrow and AMRAAM missiles. In 1988, Arnie went to Paris, France, to provide technical assistance to European companies on a co-project between Raytheon and NATO. It was a great assignment as Arnie, Joy and their three children enjoyed trips throughout Europe and Scandinavia.

After returning to Massachusetts, Arnie continued work on missile antenna issues before moving back to Tucson in 2000 when Raytheon bought Hughes Missile Systems. In 2006, Arnie retired as senior principal engineer after 38 years with Raytheon. Arnie and Joy try to take advantage of the best weather by splitting their retirement time between their homes in Tucson and

Cape Cod.

**MIKE VASILIK** served as the 490th detachment Cadet Wing Commander and was commissioned a 2nd Lt upon graduation. He subsequently received a master's in aerospace engineering from the Air Force Institute of Technology in 1964, a Ph.D. in industrial engineering from Arizona State University in 1971 and a Diploma in international relations from the National War College and Defense University in 1980. Mike served as a program manager in the nation's Space Program, a professor in the National Defense University, and an assistant to the USAF Deputy Secretary in international research and development. He was the U.S. Liaison Officer to world-class technology centers and worked with top engineers and scientists in the NATO countries.

After retirement from the USAF, Mike worked at turning around troubled companies serving as president/CEO/COO for high-tech organizations including RADCOR and ALM in Virginia, Research Triangle Labs and Nutech Instrument Company in North Carolina, AMA in Rhode Island, Meta Trace Labs in Missouri and National Microelectronics Manufacturers Center in Indiana. After a second retirement, he directed a national technology center in the energy and environmental field. His latest efforts have been volunteering in the medical health field as president of the regional affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI). Mike was recently appointed an alternate medical representative to the National NAMI Council for Service Members, veterans and their families and will chair this council for representatives from all 50 states. He resides in Annapolis, Maryland.



Mike Vasilik '62



Left: In 2012, AFROTC Detachment 490 gathered for a 50th-anniversary reunion in Boston.

hear from his former students and can be contacted at 6084 Sunset Drive, Guymon, OK 73942.

In 1962, 35 seniors in Detachment 490 received their commissions and have kept in close contact with each other since then. In 2008, the detachment had a reunion in Colorado Springs, Colorado, hosted by Ray and Carole O'Mara and William Barreire '62, a 50th-anniversary reunion in 2012 in Boston, Massachusetts, hosted by Dick '62 and Janet Hendl which included a special tour of the USS Constitution (Old Ironsides) where they were "piped aboard" by Navy swabs, and a reunion in Seattle, Washington, in 2016 hosted by Joe and Joan Crecca. There is talk about another reunion in Annapolis, Maryland, where Mike Vasilik lives and is within reach of a number of AFROTC veterans who reside in nearby states. Speaking for myself, I hope the reunion takes place, as I would like to attend to greet these fantastic alumni, some I already know and others for the first time, all who have served our country with distinction. ■

Left: In 2012, AFROTC Detachment 490 gathered for a 50th-anniversary reunion in Boston. Bottom: Top row, left to right: Arnie Simonsen, Walt Appel, Mike Vasilik, Dennis Beebe, Bob DuBois, Mike Lanni, and Sal Guttilla. Bottom row, left to right: Joe Crecca, Ray O'Mara, John Shroeder, and Frank Sabo.



**J. KETH EDMONDSEN '69** was a four-year member of the NCE varsity soccer team. Being a Jamaican, the weather was a wee bit colder than he was used to, so he sometimes wore gloves during practice and games. In addition to soccer, Keth spent four years in the AFROTC including two years on the Highland Rifles Drill Team spending many weekends in drill competitions. After graduating and commissioning, he went to pilot training at Webb AFB in Big Spring, Texas, and spent four additional years there as a pilot instructor while awaiting an assignment to Vietnam. However, as the war was winding down, Keth was instead assigned to Los Angeles AFB, where he served as a project manager doing Research and Development for the Space Program. His next assignment was to return to the cockpit flying C-141s at McGuire AFB in New Jersey followed by a position as Chief of Safety at Hickam AFB in Hawaii. His final assignment was back to Los Angeles AFB as part of the team that worked on the Inertial Upper Stage Booster which was deployed from the space shuttle taking satellites to their designated orbits. He retired from the USAF in 1989 and was

hired by United Airlines, where he flew the B-727, B-737, B-767 as flight engineer, co-pilot and captain, retiring as an A-320 Captain in 2005. Keth and his wife, Yolanda, also a retired USAF officer, live in Frisco, Texas.

All of the 1962 Detachment 490 AFROTC class remember Captain Bob Lucas as their favorite professor and have managed to stay in touch with him periodically over the years. Bob wrote that NCE was the most significant assignment in his career and that the AFROTC students were the finest young men he ever taught. He said that he was lucky to keep in touch with some of the students for many years after retiring from the USAF. After a second career of college teaching, Bob retired in 2016 and now lives in rural Oklahoma, where he takes daily walks with his wife, Dot. Bob would love to



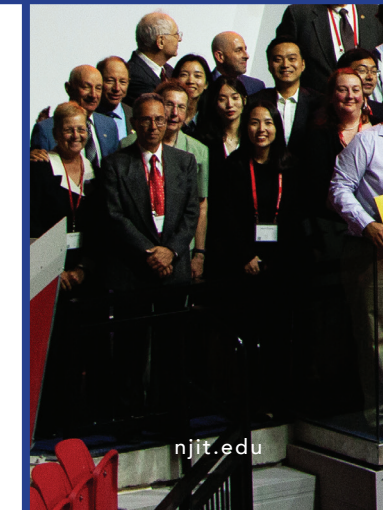
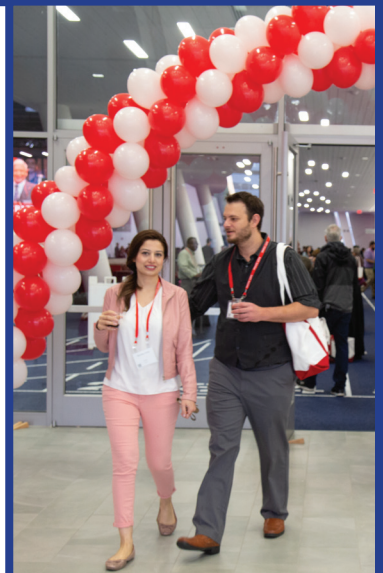




DAYS

TO

RE UNITE  
ENGAGE  
MEMBER







Kevin  
Carswell '79



Antonio  
Crincoli '86



Karen  
Ekshian '12



Jerome  
Gallagher, Jr. '80



Patrick  
Natale '70 '75



## ALUMNI WEEKEND 2018

drew more than 300 alumni back to campus on May 18-20. Hot on the heels of NJIT's Commencement ceremonies, which took place only days prior, dozens of alumni returned on Friday, May 18 to kick off the weekend festivities. Alumni donors were recognized at the Cornerstone Lunch; many then took a tour of Newark's finest restaurants, and concluded their evening with cocktails on campus.

Saturday morning started cloudy, but the promise of fun proved irresistible. Alumni braved the weather to explore a transformed campus, visiting the new Makerspace, Central King Building (the former Central High), and the new Wellness and Events Center (WEC). They gathered to hear President Bloom's annual Address to Alumni, and enjoyed the Lunch and Wine Festival on the WEC Concourse. Standing out among the day's reunions was the Class of 1968, who proudly celebrated their 50th anniversary with a pinning ceremony. Others reunited as well, including the Greeks, and the School of Management, hosted by the EMBA Alumni chapter.

All gathered at the annual Alumni Awards Ceremony on the ground floor of





# ALUMNI CIRCUIT



the WEC. Alumni Achievement Awards were presented to **Kevin G. Carswell '79**, vice president of Worldwide Sales at Solid State Cooling Systems; **Antonio Crincoli, PE '86**, vice president of Global Engineering at Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Inc.; **Jerome F. Gallagher, Jr. '80**, attorney with Norris McLaughlin Marcus, P.A.; **Patrick J. Natale, PE, Dist. M.ASCE, FASAE, CAE '70, '75 M.S.**, vice president at Mott MacDonald; and **Karen Ekshian '12**, senior designer at Marvel Architects.

The Robert W. Van Houten Award for Teaching Excellence was presented to **Andrew Sohn, Ph.D.**, associate professor in the Ying Wu College of Computing. A special citation on behalf of the Alumni Association was also presented to **Tony Howell**, executive director of EOP at NJIT.

The day concluded with the traditional Alumni Dinner Dance, which also took place in the WEC. This year marked the largest number of attendees in NJIT's history. Make sure to save the date for Alumni Weekend 2019: May 31-June 1, 2019!



Tony Howell



Andrew Sohn



Anita Rubino '83  
Awards Committee  
Chair

## ANNUAL HONORS FOR ENGINEERING EXCELLENCE

In March, Newark College of Engineering marked 20 years of honoring the accomplishments of notable alumni, industry partners and high-achieving students at the college's annual Salute to Engineering Excellence.



Alvaro J.  
Piedrahita,  
PE '73

This year, Alvaro J. Piedrahita, PE '73 and Dieter Weissenrieder '76 each received an Outstanding Alumnus Award. Neil Brandmaier, chief information officer at CDPHP, received the

Newark College of Engineering Spirit Award. Paulus, Sokolowski & Sartor was the recipient of the Outstanding Industry Partnership Award — an award received on behalf of the group by Joseph J. Fleming, PE, PP '76, a member of the NCE Board of Visitors.

For more than 40 years, in a career that has included awards and special recognition for innovative design and successful delivery of major infrastructure projects, **ALVARO J. PIEDRAHITA** has successfully led technical design professionals on multi-million dollar transportation infrastructure projects for major airports, highways, bridges, transit and rail, and support facilities worldwide. Piedrahita has remained active in the development of large-scale projects, such as the design and construction of the New Northside Runway at Miami International Airport, his technical advisory role on a Florida DOT committee for the \$1.2B Port of Miami Tunnel, and his strategic direction to procure the I-395 to MacArthur Causeway Signature Bridge structure over downtown Miami, yet another billion-dollar project.

As president and chief executive officer of T.Y. Lin International, Piedrahita leads the firm's strategic direction and market diversification. His leadership has guided the firm to achieve double-digit growth, remain at the forefront of technology, and

continue to rank among the top design firms in the country. Piedrahita received his M.S. in engineering administration from the University of Tennessee and his B.S. in civil-structural engineering from Newark College of Engineering. He is a registered professional engineer in the state of Florida. His professional affiliations include the Florida Engineering Society (FES) and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE).

**DIETER WEISSENRIEDER** '76 emigrated from Germany in 1960 as a tool



Dieter  
Weissenrieder  
'76

and die maker to work for his uncle's tooling business. He quickly became the manager of the company, and after working for the family business for

10 years, the company was sold to a large firm. He then founded Weiss-Aug in 1972 with his partner, Kurt Augustin, while pursuing his industrial engineering degree at NJIT. Weissenrieder's vision has led to the growth of Weiss-Aug Company and now The Weiss-Aug Group.

**PAULUS, SOKOLOWSKI** and **SARTOR**, the Outstanding Industry Partner for 2018, provides total engineering, design, and environmental compliance services to higher education, institutional, corporate, public, real estate developers, pharmaceutical, utility, and industrial clients in the United States and overseas. Established in 1962, the firm is headquartered in Warren, New Jersey, and has regional locations in Cherry Hill, Newark, Wall and Atlantic City, New Jersey; and Lake Success and Yonkers, New York.



Neil Brandmaier,  
chief information  
officer at CDPHP  
and a member of  
the NCE Board  
of Visitors since  
its inception in  
1992, received  
the NCE Spirit  
Award.

Among the NCE student honorees, Ivan Mitevski, Helen and John C. Hartmann Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, was named outstanding senior of the year. Jaasrini Vellore, Biomedical Engineering, received the Madame Mau Outstanding Female Engineering Student award. Other seniors recognized for their exceptional academic achievements were Brianna Bohn, Biomedical Engineering; Victoria Harbour, Otto H. York Department of Chemical, Biological and Pharmaceutical Engineering; Bryan Wild, John A. Reif, Jr. Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering; Andrew Bartz, Mechanical and Industrial Engineering; and Mina Moawad, Engineering Technology. Pamela Hitscherich was recognized as the outstanding graduate student and Xueqing Huang '17 received the Outstanding Doctoral Dissertation Award. ■



Joseph J. Fleming,  
PE, PP '76 of Paulus,  
Sokolowski and  
Sartor accepted  
the Outstanding  
Industry Partner  
award on behalf  
of the company.

Keep the news coming, folks,  
to [mjs@njit.edu](http://mjs@njit.edu).





## The Time of His Life: JONATHAN FERRER '14

Jonathan Ferrer sits in a cushy armchair inside the bustling coffee shop on the NJIT campus. The watch designer is in his element, casually scrolling through his phone while sipping a cup of joe amid the harmony of coffee beans grinding and milk gurgling.

“I lived on campus when I was a student here, and it’s a good thing I did,” says the Woodbridge native, who graduated in 2014 from NJIT’s School of Art + Design with a B.S. in industrial design. “If you come to NJIT and leave right after class, you’re just getting your feet wet. Class time is great, but being around other students after hours taught me things that I couldn’t learn in a classroom, and it allowed me to really connect with other students.”

Ferrer’s idea to meet up at Tech Café to chat about his enterprise is no coincidence. Brew Watch Co. offers a luxe line of contemporary watches that are born out of a love of coffee and draw inspiration from espresso machines. “I wanted a watch that would play into the ritual of something that we do every single day,” he says. “And for me, and many others, it’s coffee.”

It took seven months to complete the technical drawings, create the 3D design and prepare Brew’s prototype for manufacturing, and another five months of photography and marketing research to ready the watches for launch. Ferrer says family members — his father works for Tiffany & Co. and his grandfather was a designer for Cartier — influenced his decision to study industrial design and establish a watch brand. “I would see my father working on pieces,” he recalls. “He would give me a piece of blue wax and say, ‘Jonathan, you can carve out a ring or we can go further and actually make this.’ As a child, you don’t realize the significance of it. Little did I know, it was nudging me into this groove indirectly.”

Ferrer cut his teeth in the horology

industry, working for premier watchmakers like Movado, designing licensed brand watches and helping smaller firms establish their brand and tighten up their marketing and business plans. When he wasn’t on the clock, Ferrer would use his downtime to sketch, network at biweekly watch events and pick the brains of experienced professionals in the industry to learn the ins and outs of the market.

“After a few years, you start to feel a little arrogant,” admits Ferrer. “I was like, ‘Why can’t I do this for myself?’ So I quit my job and started my own business. I had the connections with manufacturers and people all around the world to help me. So I took my idea and ran with it.”

Independently designed and crafted in New York City, Brew’s latest timepiece collection, HP-1, is water-resistant, encased in surgical grade stainless steel, boasts a scratchproof sapphire crystal cover and automatic mechanical movement, and comes in black (Darkbrew HP-1 and Atom Blue HP-1), steel (Proto HP-1) and rose gold (Joy HP-1). Translating the design of the espresso machine into a watch was a meticulous process that conjured up an understated design.

The nimble cutouts and vented aesthetics found on the caseback are a play on the steam vents found on brewing machines. “It’s minimal enough so that it’s not overbearing, but at the same time you’ll recognize its origin,” he says. “If the design was too literal, I don’t think the watch would be as timeless.”

Ferrer recently diversified Brew’s catalogue by adding sunglasses to the product line. “I thought it would be cool to have a product that’s perfectly timed for a season,” he says. He worked with a manufacturer in Japan to craft the shades, which have polarized UV lenses and high-grade acetate frames — and come in custom packaging with a microfiber

carrying pouch.

In fact, Ferrer goes to great lengths to use high-end packaging and customization to treat his buyers like VIPs, creating unique value in the products and a lasting impression of the brand. Brew’s debut watch collection was delivered to customers and backers in a hand-stamped, kraft box with a personalized handwritten note from Ferrer tucked inside. He also modifies watch components and colors, and adds personal engravings for buyers who want to make their ticker just a wee bit more exclusive. “It’s all about the little details,” he insists, “and going the extra mile to add a personal touch.”

Ferrer’s resolve to stand out from the crowd is something he learned from NJIT Industrial Design Lecturer Jose Alcalá. “He taught me that design is about telling a story, and you can’t be afraid of going too far to share it,” he recalls. “If you’re going to build a product, you should also instill a certain experience that people can connect with.”

For now, the impassioned entrepreneur — who has returned to his alma mater as an adjunct professor — has his hands full with around-the-clock marketing and branding — and the effort is paying off. To date, Brew Watch Co. has been rubber-stamped by *Esquire*, *GQ* and *New York Magazine*, to name a few. And when he needs to shake off the daily grind, you can find Ferrer at one of his favorite coffee haunts in New York City, savoring the moment, treasuring his time and conceptualizing his next big idea.

“Will it stop at just sunglasses and watches? Definitely not,” he declares. “I think the passion to create and design over time is just going to expand...these ideas are going to cultivate so many new things.” ■

*Author: Shydale James is an NJIT Magazine contributing editor.*





## MBA Alumnus Carves Global Career Path in Medical Technology: ROGERIO HENRIQUES '15

Eight years ago, while working as a business development manager for diagnostic testing company CGC Genetics in his native country of Portugal, Rogerio Henriques '15 was sent to the U.S. for an assignment that happened to be based in the Enterprise Development Center (EDC) at NJIT. It was then that he began researching MBA programs and learned the advanced management degree at the university's Martin Tuchman School of Management (MTSM) focused strongly on technology, innovation and entrepreneurship.

"I knew that NJIT was a perfect match because of its curriculum, designed to educate the new generation of technology-savvy business leaders," he remembered. "In addition, the fact that it is close to New York City, an important business and financial center, and it's fully accredited by AACSB [Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business] made me have no doubts about my decision."

Henriques opted to study on campus rather than online to fully immerse himself in the educational experience, which enabled him to collaborate with other engineers and technical professionals, and team with EDC-based companies. He got involved in extracurricular activities as well, serving as president of the Graduate Business Club and co-representing the university at the APICS Business Case Competition.

With his MBA in hand, Henriques, who also holds both a bachelor's in biomedical engineering and a master's in medical electronics from Universidade do Minho in Portugal, is today the European product manager for Becton Dickinson (BD). His primary responsibility at the

global medical technology company lies in driving the strategy of the region's portfolio of specimen collection devices to achieve optimal financial performance. He is based in BD's European headquarters in Switzerland.

Of his greatest accomplishment at BD to date, he said, "I was able to work on the strategy for a very critical and strategic product line, as well as create new synergies with other relevant stakeholders in different company divisions. This is even more relevant, taking into account the dimension of BD with recent major acquisitions."

### PAST PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

Possessing a strong background in health care and medical equipment, Henriques is well suited for his current position. He began his career in Portugal at Siemens Healthcare as an application specialist intern for MRI and computer tomography systems. From there he moved on to CGC Genetics, where he later became regional sales manager, and then served as a consultant for GI Supply, a medical device business for which he managed distributors in Latin America and Europe. He also oversaw sales and marketing activities in Europe, the Middle East and Africa for nuclear imaging company Spectrum Dynamics Medical, part of Biosensors International Group.

And while he pursued his MBA, he worked at S&A Technologies, an EDC-based company, and New Jersey Innovation Institute (NJII), an NJIT entity. At S&A, he was a project manager for life sciences. At NJII, he helped in the implementation of a federal grant by assisting startups with improving their

strategies and business approaches.

"Since I started my career back in Portugal, I have had the opportunity to work in countries such as France, the U.S. and Switzerland. This has helped me to grow professionally and personally," remarked Henriques, who grew up the youngest of five in the small town of Fafe. "I've been able to learn how people do business in other countries, learn about their laws and regulations — especially in the health care field — and meet great professionals that shaped the way I perform today."

Such professionals include those he met at NJIT and MTSM. "I made really good friends and mentors, such as (former Director of Graduate Programs and Executive Education) Elaine Frazier and (Associate Professor of Entrepreneurship) Cesar Bandera, whom I still call when I'm in need of advice." ■

*Author: Julie Jacobs is a staff writer/editor in NJIT's Office of Strategic Communications.*

CLASS NOTES

1960's

**'62 MARTIN TUCHMAN** (Mechanical Engineering) has been appointed to the board of directors of CircleBlack, an online financial data aggregation and empowerment platform for financial advisers and their clients. Tuchman is the chairman and chief executive officer of The Tuchman Group.

1970's

**'70 RAYMOND BAILEY** (M.S. in Chemical Engineering) has been appointed to the board of advisors of PetroBLOQ. Bailey is an officer and director of the company is currently the chairman of Bailey Petroleum, LLC, a consulting firm for major oil and gas exploration and development corporations. In addition, he is chief operating officer of Indoklanicsa, Nicaragua, and vice chairman of Trinity Energy Group, Inc.

**'77 CHARLES NICLAUS** (Civil Engineering) has joined Barry Isett & Associates Inc.'s PMCS department as a senior project engineer. A licensed P.E. in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Niclaus is also a registered waterworks operator, sewage treatment plant operator and a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers.

**'79 BRION CALLORI** (Engineering Science) has been elected to the board of directors of the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). Callori is currently senior vice president, engineering and research at FM Global.

1980's

**'80 JOSEPH BARRY** (Civil Engineering) has been promoted to associate principal at design and engineering firm PS&S. Previously he spent six years with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey as senior project controls manager for the \$15 billion World Trade

Center Construction Program, which included the Freedom Tower, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum and the WTC Transportation Hub.

**'80 JEROME GALLAGHER** (Certificate in Mechanical Technology) has been appointed to NJIT's Newark College of Engineering Board of Visitors. Gallagher is a member of law firm Norris McLaughlin & Marcus, P.A. and engages in civil trial and appellate practice, concentrating in the areas of commercial, creditors' rights, construction lien and contract litigation.

**'82 MARCOS CHRISTODOULOU** (Architecture) is capping a career in the corporate world with a pivot to the arts. He has been painting and exhibiting for several years, and recently earned a Master of Fine Arts at the University of California in Santa Barbara. His work (which can be seen at marcos-art.com) tries to make sense of an uneasy world through what he hopes is expressively compelling, often provocative imagery. His conceptual and pictorial sources are classical mythology, Hollywood cinema, art history and images snatched from social media. This new occupation is a shift but also very much a return to his roots at NJIT and Newark, where he graduated in architecture and practiced at the Grad Partnership downtown. He followed that with MBA and MA degrees at the University of Pennsylvania and a business career in high tech in California.

**'85 KEN GAYER** (Chemical Engineering) has been appointed chief executive officer of Gelest Inc. Most recently, Gayer served as business president of Honeywell Specialty Products of Honeywell International.

**'86 JAMES ANDERSON** (Civil Engineering) has been named to the Rowan College of Burlington County board of trustees as one of its two gubernatorial appointees. Anderson is the director of solid waste compliance and development for Mercer Group

International, a Trenton recycling company.

**'87 JAMES GAZZALE** (Construction Engineering Technology, M.S. in Civil Engineering) was promoted to senior associate in Dewberry's Bloomfield office. Gazzale is the geotechnical department manager and is a professional engineer in Connecticut, New Jersey, New York and Pennsylvania.

**'87 VINCENT REYDA** (Electrical Engineering) has been appointed senior vice president, manager, innovation implementation at FM Global. Reyda most recently served as senior vice president, division manager, EMEA division, based in FM Global's Windsor, U.K., office.

**'89 ERIC BOSCHEN** (Civil Engineering) was promoted to senior associate at Dewberry in Bloomfield. Boschén manages the water resources department.

**'89 MICHAEL SCHNOERING** (Architecture) has joined the New Jersey Theatre Alliance board of trustees. Schnoering is a partner with Mills + Schnoering Architects, LLC where he manages many of the firm's theater, educational and government projects. He is a registered architect in 15 states.

1990's

**'90 ROBERT GRIFFING** (Management) is now serving as chief commercial officer at Napo Pharmaceuticals, Inc. He previously held positions at Jaguar Health, Inc. and Merck & Co., Inc.

**'90 JAMES HEEREN** (Civil Engineering, M.S. in Environmental Engineering) was promoted to senior associate in Dewberry's Parsippany office. Heeren is a senior environmental engineer and a professional engineer in Georgia and New Jersey.

**'90 VENKATA SIMHADRI** (M.S. in Electrical Engineering) has been

appointed chief executive officer and managing director of MosChip Semiconductor Technology. He is the founder, president and chief executive officer of Gigacom Semiconductor LLC and founder/director of Gigacom India.

**'91 KETAN PAREKH** (Industrial Engineering, M.S. in Electrical Engineering) has been appointed president and chief executive officer of Wi-LAN Inc., a subsidiary of Quarterhill Inc.

**'92 PAUL BRETZGER** (M.S. in Architecture) was the winner of the annual Gettysburg Civil War Roundtable Distinguished Book Award for his book entitled "Hancock at Gettysburg: The General's Leadership through Eyewitness Accounts." His career has centered in computer aided design, a subject which he has been teaching in several places of learning.

**'92 JOANNE SLAMAN** (Architecture) has been promoted to associate in Dewberry's Parsippany office. Slaman is the assistant department manager in the telecommunications group.

**'93 BENNET DUNKLEY** (Architecture) has joined HLW as principal and will lead the firm's education sector. Dunkley has nearly 30 years of experience as an architect and is a member of the Royal Institute of British Architects as well as the American Institute of Architects.

**'93 MARIO IANNELLI** (Civil Engineering, M.S. in '01) has been promoted to senior associate in Dewberry's Parsippany office. Iannelli is the land development department manager for the site/civil group.

**'95 MARCELLA BODNER** (Chemical Engineering) has joined Cole Schotz P.C. as special counsel in the company's intellectual property department. She applies her patent prosecution and technical expertise to enforcing and

defending patent rights in U.S. federal courts and in post-grant proceedings at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office.

**'96 SUMIT SHARMA** (Mechanical Engineering) has been appointed chief operating officer at MicroVision, Inc. Sharma joined MicroVision in 2015 and most recently served as the company's vice president of engineering and operations.

**'96 ANTHONY TRIOLO** (Ph.D. in Electrical Engineering) was appointed to National Spectrum Consortium's executive committee as a representative of the large company sector. Currently Triolo is chief scientist and senior manager at Vencore Labs.

**'97 JOHN PELESKO** (Ph.D. in Mathematics) has been named interim dean for the natural sciences of the University of Delaware College of Arts and Sciences. Pelesko, who is also a professor of mathematical sciences, has served as associate dean since January 2016 after being interim associate dean for a year.

**'97 SAMIR SAINI** (Civil Engineering) was recently named one of the world's 100 most influential people in digital government for 2018 by Apolitical. Saini is commissioner of the New York City Department of Information Technology and Telecommunications.

**'97 THOMAS SHROBA** (Civil Engineering) has been promoted to vice president of operations at New Jersey American Water.

**'98 SUBU DESARAJU** (M.S. in Computer and Information Science) has been promoted to executive vice president, director of performance analytics, for MRM//McCann's North American operations. Desaraaju previously held a similar position at MRM//McCann Detroit.

**'99 ATILIO LEVERATTO** (Architecture) has been promoted to vice president

of CallisonRTKL's New York office. A licensed architect with more than 15 years in the industry, he specializes in architecture for retail flagships, spearheading the realization of complex, bespoke facades with functional and complementary core and shell elements.

**'99 GARY THOMAS** (M.S. in Management) has been promoted to chief operating officer at Tyber Medical, LLC.

**'99 KIM VIERHEILIG** (Architecture, M.S. in Management) has joined AECOM's design and consulting services group as vice president and managing principal in New Jersey. Vierheilig joins AECOM after most recently serving as vice president for LAN Associates, where she managed the architectural, business development and marketing departments.

**'00 ROBERT WARD** (M.S. in Management) has been appointed chief executive officer of Eloxx Pharmaceuticals, Inc. Ward previously served as the chief executive officer and president at Radius Health, Inc.

**'01 MANISH BERI** (Computer Engineering) now has a dual role as chief information officer and chief security officer of the American Club. He has responsibility for overall strategy in the development and implementation of the organization's information technology and related capabilities, including systems enhancement and cyber-security.

**'01 MARK BOUCOT** (M.S. in Management) assumed a new role as administrator of Potomac Valley Hospital in West Virginia. Boucot is also president and chief executive officer of Garrett Regional Medical Center.

**'02 MARK CHMIELEWSKI** (Architecture) has been promoted to associate principal at design and engineering firm PS&S. Chmielewski



CLASS NOTES

joined the firm in 2002 and previously was a senior project manager.

**'03 PHILLIP COLLIN** (M.S. in Engineering Management) has been promoted to Northeast division sales officer at HNTB Corporation. Collin joined HNTB in 2008, serving in a series of increasingly responsible roles including most recently as New York office sales manager.

**'04 KEITH LUDWIG** (Surveying Engineering) has been elected president of the Society of American Military Engineers (SAME), Philadelphia post. Ludwig works as an associate and the northeast survey operations manager in Dewberry's Mount Laurel, New Jersey, office. He is a member of the National Society of Professional Surveyors and the New Jersey Society of Professional Land Surveyors.

**'04 MARY KATE NAATUS** (MBA in Management of Technology) has been named KPMG dean of the School of Business at Saint Peter's University. Naatus previously served as an associate professor of business administration and business department chair at Saint Peter's University and was the founding director of the Ignite Institute at the school.

**'05 JOE WARAKOMSKI** (Management) has been promoted to chief information officer of FlightSafety International.

**'07 CHAD CORONATO** (Architecture) has been named vice president at Perez, APC.

**'07 LUIS ESPINA** (M.S. in Biomedical Engineering) has joined the staff of Barnabas Health Medical Group (BHM), a multispecialty practice affiliated with RWJBarnabas Health, and will be practicing in both Nutley and Belleville, N.J.

**'08 ÁINE O'DWYER** (M.S. in Civil Engineering) was named to the

*Engineering News Record* National Top 20 Under 40 for 2018. O'Dwyer is majority owner in Enovate Engineering, LLC and is a registered professional engineer in New York, New Jersey, Michigan and Delaware and is actively involved with the American Society of Civil Engineers, Professional Women in Construction, New York Building Congress and American Council of Engineering Companies of NY.

**'09 IBIKUNLE DARAMOLA** (M.S. in Telecommunications) has been appointed director for public relations and information of the Nigerian Air Force (NAF). A member of 39 Regular Course of the Nigerian Defence Academy, Daramola was commissioned into the NAF as a Regular Combatant officer in September 1991.

**'10 BRIAN LEE JR.** (M.S. in Architecture) was named by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of 40 people under 40 making a significant impact on protecting America's historic places. Lee is founding director of New Orleans-based multidisciplinary nonprofit Colloqate Design.

**'10 LISA PETERSON, PE, PLS, CME** (Survey Engineering Technology) has been promoted to associate in Dewberry's Mount Laurel, New Jersey, office. Peterson, who works as the transportation department manager, has more than 16 years of industry experience.

**'10 BALAVIGNESH THIRUMALAINAMBI** (M.S. in Engineering Management, MBA in Business Administration), government affairs and finance director at NJIT's New Jersey Innovation Institute, was named an NJBIZ 2018 Forty Under 40 Winner.

**'10 WILLIAM WARD** (M.S. in Engineering Management) retired from the military with 12 years of cumulative service. Ward was previously with the

U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command and served with the U.S. Air Force in Vietnam. He was honorably discharged in 1974.

**'11 ANDREW BERNOSKY** (Chemical Engineering) has been hired as technical sales manager at KARNAK. Bernosky previously worked at GAF Materials Corporation where he spent the past six years in a technical role.

**'11 MELISSA SALSANO** (Civil Engineering) has been promoted to senior associate at Peckar & Abramson. Her primary areas of practice are construction law and complex commercial litigation. Salsano provides legal counsel to a range of clients in the construction industry and advises on an array of projects constructed in New York City and throughout the United States.

**'14 MICHAEL KUHLMAN** (Architecture) has joined SOSH Architects as project coordinator and will work in the firm's Atlantic City office. Kuhlman has prior architectural experience working at various firms in Northern and Central New Jersey and adds his technical skills in graphic modeling, architectural project and project management to the team.

**'14 KETTY PAULINO** (M.S. in Civil Engineering) was named "Young Government Civil Engineer of the Year" by the American Society of Engineers Metropolitan Section. The award is bestowed to young civil engineers employed in government service for outstanding contributions to the profession.

**'17 ROLAND KEKELIA** (M.S. in Mechanical Engineering) has joined O&G Industries as a project manager with over seven years of construction industry experience working on education and transportation projects.

## IN MEMORIAM

William Harrison '41  
 Daniel Smith '44  
 Norman Damron '50  
 Arnold Katz '50, '53  
 Richard Hirsch '51  
 James Shequine '52  
 Martin Sheehan '53  
 John Abate '54, '67  
 Lawrence Ferrari '55  
 David Gullett '55  
 Edward Katz '55  
 Joseph Berenato Sr. '56  
 Thomas Egan '56  
 Charles Gruber '56  
 Vincent Ingato '56, '62  
 Robert Beck '57, '64  
 Herbert Levin '57  
 Jeremiah Murray '57  
 Thomas Link '58  
 Richard Douglass '61  
 Robert Margiotta '61  
 Paul Cafone '64  
 Gene Girard '64  
 John Enea '69  
 Matthew Wernock '70  
 Edward Herr '72  
 Salvatore LoSauro '74  
 Walter Helfrecht '75  
 Kenneth Hunter Jr. '75  
 Robert Young '75  
 Janet Ford '78  
 Paul Boniface '88  
 Duyhane Miller '17

### REMEMBERING HERMAN BLACKMAN '38, 1917-2018

“My dad was a total engineer,” recalls Herman Blackman’s son, Mike. “We never called a contractor when something didn’t work. Dad was part of the ‘keep it going society.’ He did all the repairs himself.”

Mike and his sisters were not surprised to find, next to the boiler in their father’s house, a tray of spare parts and instructions for keeping the unit in good working order.

While Herman’s homespun self-reliance might seem a little quaint by today’s standards, his story is not so different from those we hear every day at NJIT. In Herman’s life, as in so many others, an NJIT education offered an accessible route to a successful future.

Herman was only ten when he lost his father. It was 1927, two years shy of the stock market crash that launched the Great Depression. Thrust into the role of head of household to his five younger siblings, he did whatever he could to help keep his family afloat. He quickly developed an entrepreneurial spirit, selling flowers on Mother’s Day, poppies on Veterans Day, and pencils on the days in between.

Affordability and location were the chief factors in Herman’s choice to enroll in the Newark College of Engineering (NCE). The annual tuition cost of \$180, although significant, put higher education within financial reach, and the Newark campus was a short drive from his childhood home in Bergenfield. It was one of the best investments Herman ever made.

He began his career in the roofing products industry at the Ruberoid Company, advancing quickly from sales to materials allocation. Soon after, he was drafted by the Army to serve in the infantry division during World War II. His abilities were recognized in this arena as well, and, after six months, Herman transferred to the Navy as an engineering officer aboard ship. He rose

through the ranks to become lieutenant.

Herman returned to Ruberoid after the war, met and married his wife Anne, and started a family. Ever the entrepreneur, he left corporate life in 1949 to launch Duncan Hardware in Jersey City. The store remains in operation as a family-owned, neighborhood-focused enterprise.

“Dad applied his math and engineering skills to everything he did, from real estate deals to investing. Analytics, reasoning — he always went to the numbers,” Mike notes. “In this way, he built several businesses as well as a very nice life for his family.”

Herman never forgot where he got his start. He was one of NJIT’s most devoted Highlanders and could often be seen at university events, especially at commencement time. At the age of 100, Herman returned to campus to march in the 2017 commencement ceremony and to receive a special award as “most senior alumnus.”

While he enjoyed being part of the excitement of NJIT’s growth — he often remarked with pride about the size and scope of the university’s programs and enrollment — Herman also saw something of himself in the challenges faced by today’s NJIT students, and in their determination to succeed. His concern for their welfare led him to establish and endow the Blackman Family Scholarship, which provides financial assistance to women living in Hudson County who are interested in becoming chemical engineers. He knew from experience that hard work, a little ingenuity, and an NJIT degree could transform your life.

Although, if you asked him, Herman probably would have put it more simply. “My dad wanted to give back to the university, to the students,” Mike tells us. “He always taught us that it is important to give somebody a leg up if you can.”