

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

Greetings! Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2024 edition of the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association Newsletter.

Before I write about anything else, I want to tell you that our 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration was marvelous. Yes, the new locale was great, and the food was amazing. For me though, the best part of the day was watching former coworkers reconnecting and *catching up*. There were lots of hugs, high-fives, laughs and occasional squeals. I saw folks that I have not seen for more than 15 years. Some of the photos from the event are in the *Social Committee* section – enjoy!

I want to acknowledge and thank KKAA members **Jim Rodowsky** (*Graffs Garage*), and **Jennifer Ashley** (*VIP Attractions*) for their donations that helped to make our Celebration a fantastic affair.

Here's more good news – our Association has **343** members. Thirteen former KKI employees have joined KKAA since our last newsletter. You may recognize the names of some of them when you read the *Membership Committee* segment.

The *Health Corner* offers something different this time. Instead of the usual beneficial information about keeping your bodies and minds in tip-top condition, there is valuable advice that will help us manage the *health* of our electric devices.

We share other updates in this newsletter: One KKAA member has embarked on a new career, another has transitioned from helping children to supporting adults with speech difficulties. There is a profile about a former colleague as well as exciting details and photos from the fabulous trips that alumnus have taken.

Please continue to send us your updates and suggestions. Remember, this is one way that we *stay connected*.

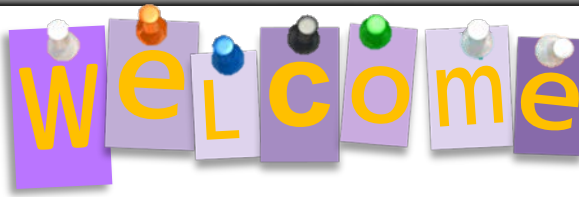
I hope you enjoy the rest of the summer; and please stay safe.

Until the next time, take care!

*Roni*



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



*We are happy to welcome the following new members to the  
Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association*

**Janet Arconti** (formerly Janet Messersmith) was a member of the Physical Therapy Department for 10 years.

**Dr. Christiane Cox** was a member of the Developmental Cognitive Neurology team for 17 years.

For 5 years, **Jim Rodowski** worked in the Facilities Department.

**Roberta Mason** was a member of the Communication Sciences and Disorders Program for 37 years.

The Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities was **Jenny Jones'** work setting for 19 years.

For 35 years, **Delorse Young (Neice)** was a colleague working in the Nutrition Department.

**Debra Fike** was a member of the Feeding Disorders Program for 5 years.

We welcome the following new KKAA members from Kennedy Krieger's Nursing Department.

**Terryce Elliott**, 15 years

**Jennifer Nagy**, 7 years

**Wanda Lincoln**, 7 years

**Geneva Pettus**, 14 years

**Doris Monroe**, 32 years

**Paula Reber**, 22 years

**Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association now has 343 members!**

Remember, if you know former KKI colleagues who have not joined the Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association, please send us their contact information so we can extend an invitation to them to become a member.

The Alumni Email address is [webmaster@kkaumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kkaumni.org).



## MEMBER NEWS

What makes our newsletter interesting? You do! **SHARE** your “news” with us in the next edition, by emailing Jean at [smootjean@yahoo.com](mailto:smootjean@yahoo.com)

**Check out our latest Member News and you will see what I mean...**

### **NANCY BJORK - A NEW HOME AND A NEW CAREER**

Nancy Bjork (Information Systems) and her husband have been living in Naples, Florida since 2017. Nancy didn't just change her home state, she also completely changed careers. In 2018, she became a realtor. According to Nancy, being a realtor is very different than working at KKI and the transition was a big one. Nancy says she “didn't know what she didn't know!” but has figured out the market and how to work as an independent contractor. She likes the flexibility it gives her.

Nancy and her husband like the quieter lifestyle, away from the city with easy access to the beaches and the Gulf of Mexico. She says, “the water is beautiful and the sunsets are just stunning!” They love the Florida weather and the lifestyle so much that she sold a house to her sister and brother-in-law, who now live in her neighborhood! Nancy stays in touch with several former coworkers and says she misses the days she worked at Kennedy. She has incorporated her technology knowledge and the teaching that she did at Kennedy into her real estate career and is working with the team and mentoring newer agents.

Nancy has some big plans to travel after she retires. We are looking forward to hearing all about it!

### **LAINY LEBOW SACHS HAS TRAVELED THE WORLD**

Lainy (Philanthropy) has been keeping busy traveling and staying in touch with former coworkers. She has traveled around the world visiting China, Russia, London, Israel, the Grand Tetons and Grand Canyon, Alaska, and a Mississippi cruise just to name a few. She always goes with a company that does all the planning, making it a great trip.

### **JODY LUTTRELL ENJOYING RETIREMENT**

Jody (Nursing) retired 1 year ago and has been making good use of her time. She is still active on the National and local Board of Directors of the National Case Management Association and attended the National Conference in Providence, RI, in June. She has also become a bit of a Pickleball addict – which she credits for keeping her sane and busy in retirement :) She and her husband, John, spend the chilly months in Port Charlotte, FL, not only playing pickleball but hanging at Tiki bars and hosting visitors for many Oriole Spring Training games! She can't believe she just attended her 50th high school reunion in June – saying, “I thought only old folks had those!!”

### **JOE PILLION HAS AN ADVENTURE BY RAIL**

In May, Joe (Audiology) and his wife took a memorable ten-day train trip to the southwest on Vacations by Rail. They flew to Chicago where they boarded the California Zephyr which took them to Grand Junction, Colorado. Can you believe that in May they encountered a snowstorm traveling through the Rocky Mountains? Their group was picked up in Grand Junction and taken by bus to Moab, Utah, where they spent two nights at a wonderful lodge. While there, they toured Arches National Park and Capital Reef National Park. They went on to tour of Bryce Canyon National Park, Grand Staircase-Escalante, Zion National Park and the Grand Canyon, where they spent two days. They took the Grand Canyon railway from the Grand Canyon to Flagstaff, Arizona. It was an entertaining trip including being held up by a group pretending to rob the train! There was also other entertainment onboard. They wrapped it up going to Phoenix by bus and flying home to Baltimore. Joe says, "This was an event filled trip with magnificent scenery".

### **ROBIN AND GREG CHURCH CONTINUE THEIR ADVENTURES**

Robin and Greg Church continue to be busy traveling and competing with their dogs. They traveled from Amsterdam to Basel on a Viking River cruise and did a wonderful bike trip through the windmills and into the Black Forest. They ended their trip with a stay in Basel because they have family in Switzerland. They had a family reunion dinner in Zurich.

In April, they took their two grandsons, William (age 14) and Jake (age 11) to Italy for two weeks. They went to Rome, Venice and Milan. In Venice, the boys and their Dad took a gondola rowing lesson and in Milan they took a cooking class. They ended their trip in Switzerland to show the boys where their parents got married in Locarno, Brione.

Next on the agenda was a trip to LA where their grandsons live to take care of the boys while their Mom was away. She is a show runner/producer for the show "The Summer I Turned Pretty" and has been in North Carolina shooting season three. All in all, the Church family is busy and happy!



## MEMBER NEWS cont.

### **LIZ KENT PROVIDING THERAPY TO MOMS**

Liz Kent has started two businesses, saying that this gives her more flexibility with her 3 young kids. She owns a small private therapy practice, Perissos Therapy, specializing in maternal mental health. She sees clients in person in Lutherville or via telehealth. She also has an online group coaching program for overwhelmed moms, helping them go from burnt out and resentful to being present and engaged with their families. The coaching program is called Mental Load Mastery for Moms!

Liz can be reached at the following:

<https://www.instagram.com/stories/liz.kent.coaching/>

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/lizkentcoaching>

<https://mailchi.mp/lizkentcoaching/mental-load-mastery-for-moms>

[liz@lizkentcoaching.com](mailto:liz@lizkentcoaching.com)

### **STEPHANIE CUTE LOVING LIFE IN SOUTH CAROLINA**

Stephanie Cute is an alumna from the Kennedy Krieger Speech Pathology Department now living in Charleston, South Carolina. She is still working as a speech pathologist but is now assisting adults. She and a colleague started a support group for people with aphasia.

This photo is from an event where they painted rocks and placed them around the community to raise awareness. They even had a therapy dog there!



Stephanie says Charleston and Folly Beach are great places to live and visit.





# SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The Kennedy Krieger Alumni Association turned **10 years old** this year! We celebrated with a wonderful luncheon held at the Arnold Capute Conference Center. The food was great, the door prizes were fantastic, but the best part was catching up with former friends and coworkers.

Kennedy Krieger is truly a place where people come to work, but they stay to make a difference. This was evident by the fact that we had 13 people attend the luncheon who worked at Kennedy for over 30 years, and the total number of years for all attendees was an amazing 2264 years!



# SOCIAL COMMITTEE

The 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration 2024  
Was a huge success!!



## ***KKAA Is Almost Everywhere***

***By Jacqueline Cross-Daniels***

One of the great benefits of retiring is being able to return to a place where family and great memories lure you back. For Estelle Bouchard, that idyllic place is the state of Maine. In the early 1990s, Estelle and her family spent immeasurable time sailing off the coast of Maine.

In 2000, Estelle moved to Baltimore where she started a 15-year career stint in the Baltimore/Washington area. Her eight-year employment at Kennedy Krieger Institute was at full throttle as she progressed from Human Resources Department Intern to Recruiter to Generalist. In 2008, she moved to the Washington Post where she served as Director of Employee Relations until her retirement in 2015.

Moving back to Maine to be near family was a catalyst for the most meaningful trip of Estelle's life. Along with her sisters, she set out for Alsace, a cultural region on the east coast France, in search of her maternal ancestry. Locating and obtaining copies of their great grandmother's birth and marriage certificates from the 1840's was the highlight of the trip. Completing this adventure was a tour of the only concentration camp in France, a trip to Normandy, and an excursion to Stockholm Sweden.

Estelle spends her spare time, when not loving on her Portuguese Waterdog, Homer, taking online educational courses. She has completed 16 thus far and strongly encourages her fellow retirees to do something similar. Estelle credits Raymond Short, KKI Senior VP, for her positive attitude and outlook. She hopes that current employees realize "what an absolute gem of a leader they have in Raymond".

As I said goodbye at the conclusion of our talk, Estelle asked me to add a message to everyone:

"Keep going and embrace a whole new life".

*If you live outside of the Maryland area or plan to relocate, please drop us a line at [webmaster@kkalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kkalumni.org). We would like to feature you in an upcoming column.*





## KKAA IS ALMOST EVERYWHERE

Where in the world can you go when you are retired? Jackie Krick has visited cities on two different continents! Her beautiful photos were taken in Nashville, Greece and London.



The Parthenon is the centerpiece of Centennial Park in Nashville. The recreation of the 42-foot statue of Athena is the focus of the Parthenon just as it was in ancient Greece.



Mammoth cave outside of Nashville is the longest cave on the planet!



Ancient marble from the 400's BC. The marble was in Greece at the Parthenon until Elgin took them. They are now known as the Elgin marbles and are in the British Museum in London.



St Paul's Cathedral in London.



Westminster Abbey

## KENNEDY KRIEGER NEWS

### KENNEDY KRIEGER HAS A NEW LOGO

The Kennedy Krieger Logo was designed in the 1980's making it over 30 years old. Since the original design much has changed: computers, the internet, smart phones and so much more.

The logo is designed so everyone that Kennedy serves can "see" themselves in the logo. The design and format can also be easily viewed on all screen sizes and on all devices.

The KKI tag line has also changed. It is now, "Pursuing Possible." which conveys how KKI helps patients, students and others to pursue all that is possible in their lives.



### EXPLORING CAREERS AT KENNEDY KRIEGER

Kennedy Krieger introduced students from Joppatowne High School to careers in healthcare with an immersive day of exploration and hands-on learning. The students toured the Institute, attended informational sessions, sensitivity training and panels that introduced them to various professionals.

"They will be able to see, they will be able to dream, they will be able to understand that this can be them", said Shellie Williams, the Institute's Chief Nursing Officer.

Students were also introduced to summer and mentorship opportunities.



### **Protecting Yourself Online**

By Chris Small

In an increasingly digital world, knowing how to protect yourself online has become essential. Here are some practical steps to ensure your online safety.

- 1. Strengthen Passwords:** Using strong, unique passwords for your accounts. Combine upper- and lower-case letters, numbers, and special characters. Avoid easily guessable information like birthdays. Consider using a password manager to keep track of your credentials securely.
- 2. Be Wary of Phishing Scams:** Phishing scams often come in the form of emails or messages that appear legitimate but are designed to steal your personal information. Be cautious of unsolicited communications asking for sensitive information. Verify the sender's identity by contacting the company or individual directly through official channels.
- 3. Keep Software Updated:** Regularly update your computer, smartphone, and tablet software. Updates often include patches for security vulnerabilities that cybercriminals could exploit. Enable automatic updates whenever possible to ensure you're always protected.
- 4. Use Antivirus and Anti-Malware Programs:** Install reputable antivirus and anti-malware programs on your devices. These programs help detect and remove malicious software. Regularly scan your devices to ensure they are free from threats.
- 5. Enable Two-Factor Authentication (2FA):** Two-factor authentication adds an extra layer of security by requiring a second form of verification, such as a code sent to your phone, in addition to your password. Enable 2FA on all accounts that offer it, especially for banking and email. There are applications and hardware that can help with this, such as Google Authenticator, Microsoft Authenticator, and Yubi Key (hardware) password tokens.
- 6. Be Cautious with Public Wi-Fi:** Avoid conducting sensitive transactions like online banking or shopping over public Wi-Fi networks, which can be less secure. If necessary, use a virtual private network (VPN) to encrypt your internet connection.
- 7. Educate Yourself Continually:** Stay informed about the latest online threats and safety practices. Many organizations offer free resources and courses on internet safety. By taking these steps, you can significantly reduce the risk of falling victim to online scams and ensure that your personal information remains secure. Remember, vigilance and education are your best defenses in the digital age. When in doubt, ask someone you trust.



## COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

If you enjoy our newsletter, know that it is your input, suggestions and ideas that make it successful. Keep in touch. Don't think that you have to write an article. You can contact me at the KCAA email address ([webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org)) or at [smootjean@yahoo.com](mailto:smootjean@yahoo.com). **Remember, you don't have to write anything.** We can talk by phone or communicate by email, and I will take care of the rest.

### ***IMPORTANT***

**Every time we send an email or USPS mail, we get a number of returns. If you haven't been receiving our communications, it is because we don't have your current home or email address. Please keep us up to date with your current information. *The Alumni Email address is [webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org).***

We don't want to lose our ability to stay in touch with you. Let's stay connected!

### **HOW YOU CAN STAY IN TOUCH**

Join our Facebook group, Kennedy Krieger Alumni

Check out our Website [kcalumni.org](http://kcalumni.org)

We keep it simple; we have one main Email address...

email the Alumni at [webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org)

President Roni Gross at [webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org)

Vice President Jean Smoot at [webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org)

Membership Committee at [webmaster@kcalumni.org](mailto:webmaster@kcalumni.org)

To reach us by phone: 410-215-8972

KCAA Newsletter [smootjean@yahoo.com](mailto:smootjean@yahoo.com)

Be sure to keep us up to date with any changes in your email address, your mailing address or phone number.

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*Do you have anything interesting to contribute to the [KK Alumni History Page](#)? Take a photo and send it to us, or we will try to come to you to photograph the item.*

*We would love to continue to build this page and hope to hear from you!*