

# young alumni

LEADERS COUNCIL

# 2024



University of Miami  
**30 UNDER 30**

UNIVERSITY  
OF MIAMI



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**Adam White, B.S.Ed. '17**

**CEO & Founder, Front Office Sports**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

Working at the Rat and working my way up from a dishwasher to a manager. I had a wonderful time working with all of my peers and was some of the best four years of my professional life. The lessons I learned at the Rat are ones I have carried with me since I graduated.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I learned that you are truly a product of your surroundings. Because I went to school in Miami, I was able to experience many different types of cultures, lifestyles, and ways of life, which truly helped me establish a broader world view. I don't think many other schools can say that because there are no other schools like Miami.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Apart from donating to the University, I support UM students with internships and career advice, attend sporting events, and am active with the NYC alumni group

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I'm currently building Front Office Sports (FOS), the leading multi-platform media and news organization covering the business of sports.

Front Office Sports is the category leader in scale and engagement, with an audience that delivers more than 150 million social impressions, 35 million newsletter opens, 10 million video views, and two million page views each month. In addition, with over 15 distribution partners, FOS content appears on screens in more than 50,000 buildings and venues across North America.

Front Office Sports is backed by SC Holdings, a New York-based investment and strategic advisory firm, and RedBird IMI, a joint venture between RedBird Capital Partners, a New York-based private equity firm founded and led by Gerry Cardinale, and International Media Investments (IMI), a global media company based in Abu Dhabi.

In 2021, Front Office Sports was named one of Fast Company's Most Innovative Companies. In 2022 and 2024, Front Office Sports was named 'Hottest in Sports' on AdWeek's Media Hot List. In 2023, Front Office Sports was named to the Inc. 5000 list of the fastest-growing private companies in America.



**Ajiri Uzere, B.A. '22**

**Analyst, The Cadmus Group**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was winning the “Best New Initiative” award for the LAUNCH leadership summit, an initiative I created as vice president of student government. Winning that award was a special full-circle moment because it symbolized the culmination of all that I poured into student leadership at the U. When I arrived as a first-year, I felt a void of representational leadership and committed my four years at the U to creating a more inclusive and equitable campus. LAUNCH was an effort to fill the gaps in student leadership by giving individuals from all parts of campus the opportunity to claim stake in the game and carve out the experiences they sought to have.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I learned how to dream big at the University of Miami. I learned that the only thing standing between me and my dreams was my ability to visualize my desired future and the path to get there. The U taught me that greatness is always within reach.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

The 'Canes Care for 'Canes legacy is defined by kindness, empathy, and collaboration within our community. In my endeavors, I aim to perpetuate this legacy by fostering a culture of care and inclusivity, advocating for the well-being of my colleagues, and promoting teamwork to bridge the gap between developing and developed nations. I prioritize engaging in projects that contribute to social inclusion, promote gender equity, and value climate resilience and mitigation efforts, all with the aim of creating a better tomorrow for our world.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

My most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation was creating the first-ever professional community healthcare worker (CHW) policy dashboard. Professionalizing CHWs is an essential effort within global health to improve health outcomes for millions worldwide. The dashboard I helped create is the first of its kind, displaying how funding and policy in 95 low- and middle-income countries worldwide are committed to professionalizing healthcare workers. This effort has been instrumental in identifying policy and funding gaps, creating cohesion in the field, and pinpointing successful strategies for professionalizing CHWs.



## Alejandro Narciso, B.S.C. '15

### Director & CEO, SDLN

#### *What was your brightest moment at the U?*

Running through the smoke with the football team. Growing up, it was always a childlike dream to act as a player and walk out into a packed stadium. When I got to do that for a 12 p.m. kickoff against Virginia, the stadium wasn't exactly packed, but the thrill of running through the smoke was beyond anything I could've ever imagined as a kid.

#### *What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

It's not so much about what I learned, but how I learned. I got to be around people in my industry in one of the biggest markets in the country. I interned at a big news station, met athletes, and created opportunities for myself that I wouldn't have had anywhere else.

#### *How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Our first ever employee is a wonderfully driven person named Nate Dumont. When we met, he shared an interesting tidbit—he used to be Sebastian the Ibis. That fact sealed the deal for me. Surviving hours in a sweaty fur suit in scorching weather takes serious resilience, a quality I knew would serve him well in any challenge. But I like to think that Nate takes more care of me than I do him.

#### *What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Creating a company alongside my best friend encapsulates the big picture. Over the course of our collaborative journey spanning eight years, we've traveled the globe, spearheaded global campaigns, and, most notably, my directorial debut in a documentary has garnered recognition in different film festivals.



**Alix Earle, B.B.A. '23**

**Content Creator and Podcast Host of “Hot Mess”**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My first year, when we had the 'Canes Welcome Ceremony, we went to the basketball auditorium—the Watsco Center—and I immediately felt the University of Miami school spirit. From the lights and dancing to Sebastian the Ibis running around, I knew I made the right decision and was going to have a great next four years.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Besides what we learned in the classroom, being in the city of Miami gives you so much real world experience that you would not get at small-town colleges. I was able to go out and venture into the city for both work opportunities and networking, leading me to meet people I still work with to this day.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

A lot of the content I posted in college, and still post, highlights how amazing UMiami is. I love to stay connected with other alumni and am always running into fellow 'Canes. When I'm in the DJ booth at the clubs, I always throw up a U and the 'Canes in the crowd throw me a U back.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Upon graduating, I established the Alix Earle Scholarship, for students in the Miami Herbert Business School, in hopes that they are able to follow their dreams, like I did mine. I was also honored by Forbes on their Top Creators and Fashion 50 lists, featured in Rolling Stone's 2023 Creators Issue, and was nominated by Allure as a Top Beauty Creator for their 2024 list.





**Anne Noel, M.A. '21**

**Manager of Quality, Bon Secours Mercy Health**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the University of Miami undoubtedly occurred when I made history as the inaugural graduate of the global health master's program. Enrolling in this program amid the turbulence of the pandemic was both daunting and exhilarating. Completing the program was not merely about obtaining a degree; it was about pioneering a path for future scholars and contributing to the field of global health in a meaningful way. Every lecture, assignment, and discussion served as a building block in laying the foundation for this groundbreaking achievement.

On the day of my graduation, as I walked across the stage, I reflected on the countless hours of hard work and dedication that had led me to that moment. Being recognized as the first graduate of the global health master's program was a testament to my perseverance and commitment to excellence. But beyond personal triumph, this milestone represented a beacon of hope amidst uncertainty. It symbolized the resilience of the human spirit and the power of education to transcend barriers.

As I look back on my time at the University of Miami, I am filled with gratitude for the support of my professors, peers, and loved ones who helped me navigate this extraordinary journey. And as I continue to chart my course in the field of global health, I carry with me the lessons learned and the memories forged during my time at the U.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Studying global Health amidst a global pandemic was an intriguing journey in itself, offering a unique perspective that I couldn't have gained elsewhere. However, the University of Miami provided countless opportunities and experiences that truly set it apart.

One of the most significant aspects of my education at the U was the exposure to influential guest lectures facilitated by the University's extensive network of connections. These lectures brought real-world insights and expertise directly to our classrooms, enriching our learning experience. One standout moment was when we had the privilege of hearing from Chelsea Clinton, whose firsthand knowledge and experiences added a dynamic dimension to our understanding of global health issues.

Furthermore, I had the extraordinary opportunity to be taught by President Julio Frenk. His leadership and vision not only inspired me but also demonstrated the caliber of education and mentorship available at the University of Miami. And to cap off this remarkable experience, having Chelsea Clinton return as a guest lecturer for our final class was a testament to the university's commitment to providing unparalleled learning opportunities.

Moreover, my program director presented me with an incredible opportunity to focus my thesis on a population close to my heart: the Haitian immigrant community. This personalized approach to education allowed me to delve deep into a subject that held personal significance, while also making a tangible contribution to the field of global health. In essence, the University of Miami provided a rich tapestry of experiences, connections, and opportunities that not only expanded my knowledge but also shaped me into a more informed and compassionate global citizen. It's an education that I know I couldn't have received anywhere else.

### *How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Carrying on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into my industry and community has been a guiding principle in my post-graduation endeavors. In the field of global health, I've prioritized integrating the values of compassion and service championed by the University of Miami into my work.

Within my industry, I'm committed to addressing the needs of vulnerable populations, promoting health equity, and fostering collaborative partnerships. This involves conducting research on community-based interventions, advocating for policies that ensure health access for all, and working closely with local organizations to implement impactful health initiatives. Furthermore, in my community engagement efforts, I extend the impact of 'Canes Care for 'Canes by participating in service projects, volunteering my

time and expertise, and advocating for underserved communities' well-being. Additionally, I strive to inspire others to embrace these values by serving as a mentor and advocate within my community, as well as through my involvement in the College of Arts and Sciences Industry Advisory Council.

Ultimately, by embodying the principles of 'Canes Care for 'Canes in both my professional and personal endeavors, I aim to honor the legacy of compassion and service upheld by the University of Miami community, while making a meaningful and lasting impact in the world.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Since graduating, I've been fortunate to achieve several noteworthy accomplishments that align with my passion for serving the Haitian community and advancing global health initiatives. One of the most significant milestones occurred in November 2022 when I was honored by Mayor Daniella Levine Cava for my contributions to Miami-Dade County's Haitian community. This recognition affirmed the impact of my ongoing dedication and efforts to support and uplift those in need.

In addition to my community involvement, I've also continued to pursue academic and professional growth. Following my graduation, I enrolled in a doctor of health sciences program at George Washington University. This reflects my commitment to furthering my education and expertise in the field of health sciences.

Furthermore, in February 2023, I had the incredible opportunity to attend the Global Peace Summit in Dubai, where I was selected to participate in various panel discussions and lead workshops on community health work. This international platform provided me with the opportunity to share insights, exchange ideas, and collaborate with fellow global health advocates from around the world.

These accomplishments represent significant milestones in my journey beyond graduation, highlighting my continued dedication to making a positive impact in my community and the world at large. As I strive to create positive change and promote health equity, I remain grateful for the opportunities that have allowed me to pursue my passions and contribute to a brighter future for all.



**Ariana Aboulafia, J.D. '20**

**Policy Counsel, Disability Rights in Technology Policy,  
Center for Democracy and Technology**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

While at the U, I had the honor of working with the HOPE Public Interest Resource Center on many occasions. I led an alternative fall break, and was selected as both a Summer Public Interest Fellow and HOPE Summer Fellow, which funded my 1L and 2L summer internships. These experiences, and the ability to be in community with other public interest-minded students, helped to lay the groundwork for my current career. I am forever grateful to Dean Marni Lennon and the HOPE team for instilling in me a public interest ethos that I continue to embody as an attorney and advocate.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I went to law school because I dreamed of being a civil rights attorney, but never considered the role that technology could play in impacting the rights of marginalized populations. Taking courses with Dr. Mary Anne Franks – and serving as a fellow to the Cyber Civil Rights Initiative – changed that, and quickly! Now, I am one of few leaders who focus on the ways in which technology can contribute to discrimination affecting people with disabilities, including in the fields of employment, education, and healthcare. I would not have even begun working in this field if not for the educational opportunities provided by Dr. Franks and Miami Law.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

The crux of 'Canes Care for 'Canes is an emphasis on serving and caring for your community. I have spent my entire career thus far working in public service – first, as a public defender, then as a program officer for a philanthropic foundation, and now as policy counsel leading disability rights work at a nonprofit. I have always centered the

needs of marginalized people, particularly people with disabilities, in my work, and I am thankful to work currently in a role where I have the opportunity to do that each day.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I am incredibly privileged to work for the Center for Democracy and Technology, at the intersection of disability rights and technology policy – I consider all of the work I do here to be my most noteworthy postgraduate accomplishment. If I had to get into specifics, I would say that I am particularly proud of a piece I wrote in Slate last year about how certain technologies and policies can impact disabled Medicaid recipients, as well as an article on the importance of centering disabled people in mitigating the harms of Bluetooth-enabled tracking technology.



## Braxton Berrios, B.B.A. '17

### Professional Athlete, Miami Dolphins

#### *What was your brightest moment at the U?*

It's pretty hard to quantify one singular moment as the brightest in my years at The U. Between the memories I shared with some of my lifelong friends, the incredible football season of 2017 (beating FSU, Notre Dame, hosting College GameDay), and being inducted into Iron Arrow, I can't nail it down to just one.

#### *What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

The U is such a special place that blends a top-tier education while being immersed in one of the liveliest and most popular cities in the country. The real-world experiences and lessons I garnered by stepping off campus couldn't have been replicated by any university out there.

#### *How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

My community is still the city of Miami where I run into, work with, and go to dinner with alumni weekly. Also my industry is littered with fellow 'Canes and after a game the first thing we do is seek each other out to connect. Whether we played together at the U or missed each other by a few years, the brotherhood among we 'Canes remains the same.

#### *What do you think is your most note-worthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Although my day job doesn't call for the application of my degree, I've still made sure to use what I've learned. Because of my entrepreneurship classes I'm a part-owner of a coffee shop brand called Almost Home. I've become very active in the venture capital community and own commercial real estate—both of which I directly attribute to taking FIN 409. Outside of business and finance, I was named an NFL First Team All-Pro as a kick returner.



**Breana Ross, B.S.C. '19**

**Reporter, WBAL-TV**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was when I was tapped into the Iron Arrow Society right before Homecoming during my senior year. I still remember hearing the sound of the drums in the distance as I worked inside the Office of Academic Enhancement. I didn't think much of it until I saw a line of people coming to grab me and tap me into Iron Arrow, the highest honor attainable at the U. That was the moment I knew I'd accomplished the goal I set for myself freshman year, to make a positive impact at the school I love.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Going to school at the University of Miami helped widen my horizons in more ways than one. By attending such a diverse school, I learned alongside people from all over the world. I learned from their perspectives and worldviews. Attending school in Miami also exposed me to so many different cultures that I learned from daily, especially as a journalism student covering stories in the community. Attending the U and expanding my worldview prepared me for my job as a journalist today, where I'm privileged to tell stories about people with different perspectives, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences every day.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Through my career as a journalist, I use my platform to amplify the voices of people who often feel ignored or forgotten. I care about the people behind the stories and lead with compassion so people feel comfortable and empowered to share their stories. Through my non-profit, I empower kids to share their stories through poetry. I've found a way to use my love for storytelling to make sure people I come in contact with feel a sense of belonging, support and empowerment.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

After college, I've continued making a difference using my love for storytelling that I cultivated at the University of Miami. Right after graduation, I started my first job as an on-air reporter at WINK News in Fort Myers, Florida. In Fort Myers, I used my platform to tell stories about social issues and minority communities and helped produce the station's first half-hour Black History Month Special.

I currently work as a reporter at WBAL-TV in Baltimore, Maryland where I do the station's Project CommUnity stories. These feature segments that shine a light on the positive people and organizations in Baltimore City.

Aside from accomplishments in my career, I've also continued making a difference using my love for service. While at the University of Miami, I started a service organization called Written in My Soul. The program is designed to teach youth how to use poetry as a healthy form of self-expression. Since graduating, I've turned the organization into an official non-profit. I've done cycles of Written in My Soul at schools and community centers in Fort Myers and Baltimore.

My mom and I also recently wrote and published a children's book called "I Am Affirmed from A to Z." The book is designed to help children learn how to affirm themselves with every letter of the alphabet and to encourage parents and educators to help kids build self-confidence.





**Cameron Dobbs, B.S.C. '20, M.A. '21**

**TV Host & Producer, WSFL Channel 39 (Scripps)  
Official broadcast contributor, Florida Panthers**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was being tapped into the Iron Arrow Honor Society. Yes, it was the highest honor—quite literally—but the timing was extremely special. This took place following my third brain injury within twelve months. I had been forced to medically retire from playing volleyball with the Hurricanes, received incompletes in all my classes to take a leave of absence to heal, and felt quite insecure in my identity. When Iron Arrow tapped me, it reassured that I mattered for more than just the accolades, athletics, and accomplishments. The way I did everything I could to love my university and the people within it was simply enough. It brought me so much pride in my alma mater knowing they were rooting for good people, and honored I was considered one of them.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

By coming to the University of Miami, I encountered the most unique cultural experience. As a country girl at heart, I would joke that Miami is too south to be southern, and it feels like you are living in a different country. The joke is true, and it has made me completely fall in love with my now-home for seven years. I have learned about countless cultures, tried fantastic foods, learned bits and pieces of new languages, and crossed paths with amazing people with diverse backgrounds. That, plus the electric sports center that is South Florida, is truly a remarkable experience that you can only find in Miami.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Funnily enough, I quote 'Canes Care for 'Canes constantly! This is something I hold near and dear to my heart. I remember being a freshman at the U—how badly I wanted to

network, grow, and belong. Now, in the position I am in, it is my greatest joy helping others do just that! I take great pride in giving myself the title of an “older sister” to all Hurricane students. No matter what I am doing, I am forever eager to help students with class projects, review broadcast reels, offer endless shadow opportunities, mentor the next generation, and build others up.

As a TV host, I selfishly look for several Hurricane-related stories, continuing to feature the great Miami Hurricanes and shine a light on the best university with the best people. Additionally, I care for ‘Canes at every sporting event I host. Whether it is Miami basketball or baseball, my sole purpose is to bring joy to the fans, players, coaches, and staff’s lives—and joy, in my opinion, is the greatest cure and care.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Since graduating, I have written and published two books (as of June 2024), spoken across the country inspiring thousands of athletes, youth, and young adults, hosted an MLB game, commentated for an NFL post-game show, and was hired as the TV host and producer for Inside South Florida on WFLA Channel 39 as well as an official broadcast contributor for the Stanley Cup champion Florida Panthers. I am forever pinching myself as I walk into arenas, approach conversations, and hold the mic. My current reality is exactly what I worked for as a UMTV student just a few years ago. It fires me up that I have been given a public platform only because I strive passionately to use it for the purpose of positive impact and forever remember the places and people who helped me here.



**Charis Pitter, B.A. '22**

**Law Student, Harvard Law School**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was, without a doubt, being honored as a University of Miami Trailblazer during my senior year. The U Trailblazers were the first Black graduates of the University of Miami, and they played a key role in desegregating the University. Every year, a handful of students are chosen as Trailblazers for their dedication to paving the path forward for others. This award meant so much to me because my life motto has always been to lift as I climb. I strive to create opportunities and open doors for others in any way that I can. Every day, I feel so honored to be a part of such an amazing league of changemakers.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I learned how to be a leader at the University of Miami. It seems like that would be a lesson you could learn anywhere, but I think this was unique to my experience here. The University of Miami is a very supportive place for student leaders, and unlike other college campuses where you need connections or to be part of Greek life in order to hold leadership positions, the University of Miami has always been a very equitable campus. If you are dedicated and hardworking, you will be trusted with big tasks from the very first day. Not only are you trusted to do the job, but you are surrounded by diverse faculty, staff, and administration who support you in any way possible. I grew so much in my confidence while at the U—as a freshman, I could never see myself leading the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council or running for a presidential election—but after years of being poured into by the people around me, I felt so comfortable to go after anything I wanted. I think the confidence that was instilled in me at the U is what led me to be so successful when I applied to law school.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I have carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes by really pouring into the pre-law community at UMiami! When I was a student at the U, there were few resources for pre-law students or specific pre-law advising. As a first-generation student, I spent a lot of time trying to understand the application cycle and process and wished I had someone who could have assisted. Since being accepted into law school, I've mentored over a dozen students through the law school application process, most of them from the University of Miami. Although I am still a student myself and don't have a plethora of resources, I have tried to use the knowledge I gained going through the process to make it easier for others who wish to do the same. Witnessing these students get accepted to programs that they thought were out of reach has been such a fulfilling and heartwarming experience.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

After graduation, I began the next step of my education at Harvard Law School. It has been an incredible journey, but I don't think I would be able to traverse this space so easily if it wasn't for the person I became at the University of Miami. In addition to attending law school, I had the amazing opportunity to work at the White House for the Biden administration last summer. I worked on a team with a major priority of bolstering diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. This included vetting candidates for positions on federal boards and commissions and conducting legal research and writing. I committed my summer to the president's ideal of creating "an administration that looks like America." It was one of my greatest learning experiences, and I was even able to connect with some of my fellow 'Canes who had also worked there! Upon graduating from law school, I'll return to DC to work at a V25 law firm as a litigation associate in the employment and labor practice.



**Daria Pietropaolo, B.A. '21, J.D. '23,  
LL.M.I.A. '23**

**Attorney, Shook, Hardy, & Bacon L.L.P.**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

One of the greatest highlights from my time at the U was participating in Miami Law's International Moot Court Program. As a member of the 29th Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot, I collaborated with other law students, guided by Paula Arias, and competed with students from across the globe. This enriching experience exposed me to diverse legal systems, various approaches to the law, and different styles of advocacy. With support from faculty and practitioners, our team benefited from significant preparation and adaptability during the oral argument rounds, which led to recognition both locally and internationally.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

You can shape your education based on your passions and interests; it does not have to be the other way around. The U afforded me the opportunity to work with faculty and administrators to develop a curriculum for my independent major, design coursework, and tap into the University's wealth of academic resources to further my personal educational goals. This personalized approach allowed me to best contribute meaningfully to my peers and career. Exceptional faculty not only challenged me academically but also provided unwavering support inside and outside of the classroom. This supportive experience enriched my educational journey and fueled my career interests.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I credit my positive experience at the U to those who have guided me along the way. As a former 'Cane and mentor once told me, "the best way to say thanks is to pay it forward." I try to serve as a resource for prospective 'Canes, current students, and graduates, sharing experiences to strengthen our community. It has been particularly rewarding to

invite 'Canes to become involved in the American Bar Association (ABA), extending academic connections beyond graduation to professional collaborations.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Since graduating, I have actively engaged with the ABA Section of Litigation as a member and a leader. Through my involvement in the Judicial Intern Opportunity Program and Young Advocates Committee, I have had the privilege to contribute to connecting law students with judicial internships and building a nationwide network of young lawyers.



**Delaney Reynolds, B.S.M.A.S. '21**

**J.D. / Ph.D. Candidate, University of Miami Abess Center for Ecosystem Science & Policy**  
**CEO & Founder, The Sink or Swim Project, NGO**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

President Frenk recognizing my environmental work by honoring me with the prestigious Roberta 'Bosey' Fulbright Foote Prize, the University's highest environmental award, is most certainly a highlight. I'd also say that being accepted into the highly competitive Leonard and Jayne Abess Center for Ecosystem Science & Policy dual graduate degree program, a collaboration between the School of Law and the Rosenstiel School of Marine, Atmospheric, and Earth Science, where I earned my law degree in May and will complete my Ph.D. in a couple of years, is a true honor and a highlight of my time here at the U.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Although my grandfather and both parents are proud Hurricanes, I elected to apply to the University of Miami not because of my legacy, but because I felt strongly that my interest in tropical environmental topics such as shark research and climate change would be better served at the U than anywhere else in the world. Seven years and two degrees later I can say, without exception, that I have received a profoundly enlightened education from the University of Miami that will serve my heart and mind for the rest of my life.

For example, South Florida is, sadly, ground zero within the United States for earth's climate change crisis and resulting sea level rise, two areas of interest that I've long been passionate about and built my NGO, The Sink or Swim Project ([www.miamisearise.com](http://www.miamisearise.com)), around. The opportunity to learn from, collaborate with, and be inspired by world class climate professors such as Dr. Hal Wanless, Dr. Ben Kirtman, and Dr. Katharine Mach, has truly changed my life and professional goals in countless positive ways while

inspiring me to follow in their footsteps to find the solutions to problems that place much of our region at the real risk of extinction.

As another example, my lifelong love of sharks led me to learn about the University's Shark Research and Conservation Program (SRC) at an early age. As a student at the Rosenstiel School, acting as an SRC intern since my freshman year and more recently as a research assistant, as well as working under our esteemed director (and my Ph.D. advisor) Dr. Catherine Macdonald, has been a dream come true. In addition to shark-related science, part of our mission at SRC is to engage youth who have historically not been exposed to STEM education, especially young women. While working hands-on with sharks in their natural environment has been an amazing experience the lessons the lab has taught me about mentoring and motivating young people have inspired me to embrace a professional career in research academics to help educate future generations.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Caring for one another and embracing a culture of belonging where everyone's voice is heard and respected was instilled in my childhood and I am proud to say that it was perpetuated during my entire time here at the University of Miami. I saw countless examples of how 'Canes Care for 'Canes supporting others while serving in student government, during my work as an intern and research assistant in the Shark Research and Conservation Lab (SRC) at the Rosenstiel School, and elsewhere on campus.

In recent years, the values that 'Canes Care for 'Canes embodies were especially important to me when a dear friend and fellow Hurricane was going through a stressful family crisis. Our bonds as Miami Hurricanes and the experiences we've shared over the years through the University acted as a positive beacon of hope that helped soothe the pain, provided a comforting ear, and led my friend to know that her life would soon be better because she had her 'Cane family behind her every step of the way. I am pleased to report that her crisis has since been resolved, her life turned fully positive and, as always, we shout together "It's Great To Be A Miami Hurricane!"

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Two items come to mind, one here on campus and one that holds the promise of benefiting the State of Florida for generations to come.



Near the end of my undergraduate career, I helped lead an initiative with the University's Department of Sustainability, University administration, and a selected contractor to advocate for, design, locate, negotiate, and install the largest (277 panels generating 96 kilowatts of power) solar power system on our campus. During graduate school I was then able to complete those negotiations and witness the installation of the solar power system that today sits atop the Watsco Center's Field House practice facility and produces enough energy to power that entire complex. In addition to being the largest solar power system here at the University of Miami, it is also one of the largest such systems ever installed in the State of Florida and the United States.

Secondly, while a first-year student in the School of Law I proudly led a statewide petition for rulemaking which demanded that Florida's Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services implement rules to require that our state's public electrical utilities transition from obtaining their power from fossil fuel sources, as is the case today, to exclusively using 100% renewable energy sources such as solar power by 2050. Ultimately, hundreds of youth from all over Florida joined me by signing my petition and I am proud to share that in August 2022 Florida Agricultural Commissioner Nikki Fried and I held a press conference at the Frost Museum of Science to announce that her office would, in fact, embrace my petition. That announcement was followed by the Florida Department of State enacting "Administrative Rule 5O-5: Renewable Energy" within our legal Administrative Code and led the news media to hail its implementation as the "most important step Florida has taken in nearly two decades to protect our climate and atmosphere."



**Elayna Paulk, B.S.C. '16**

**Lecturer, University of Miami School of Communication  
Owner, EL Management Group, LLC.**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was breaking convention as the first Black woman to host UMTV's late-night comedy show, "Off the Wire."

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

The hands-on learning opportunities the university provided were unparalleled, particularly through my involvement with UMTV. The experience taught me how to think on my feet and adapt to unexpected situations—skills that have been crucial in my post-graduate career.

At the time, I didn't fully appreciate the significance of these experiences. However, looking back, I realize just how instrumental these opportunities were in preparing me for the professional challenges ahead. I'm profoundly grateful for the practical experience and the unique tools I gained at the university, which I doubt could have been replicated elsewhere.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

In my industry, I've prioritized creating a supportive network similar to the one I valued at UM. This involves mentoring young professionals, advocating for inclusive practices, and ensuring that everyone has the tools to succeed regardless of their background. This legacy of deep caring has not only enriched my interactions and relationships but has also fostered a culture of empathy in every team I'm part of.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Returning to the university as a member of the faculty has been my most noteworthy accomplishment. It has allowed me to directly contribute to the success of the next generation of UM's 30 under 30 honorees. In this role, I leverage my experiences and the lessons I learned to mentor and guide young innovators and leaders. I take great pride in fostering an environment that nurtures their talents and pushes them towards excellence. Being a part of their journey, witnessing their growth, and seeing them achieve remarkable feats fills me with immense satisfaction. It's a full-circle moment that not only reflects my commitment to giving back to the community that shaped me but also underscores my dedication to empowering future changemakers.



**Gray Crow, B.A. '15, J.D. '20**

**Attorney, Nason Yeager Gerson Harris & Fumero, P.A.**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My commencement ceremony after law school sticks out. I remember sitting in a chair in the Watsco Center reflecting on eight years of countless hours spent on the field and in the classroom. I was sitting in the same spot a few years prior for my undergrad ceremony and felt uneasy because my athletic career was coming to a close. I was fully immersed in athletics for most of my life until that point.

Fast-forward to my J.D. ceremony, the future was a little more clear, and it was a moment where I felt very grateful for the opportunity to attend the University of Miami for so long.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Attending the University has allowed me to connect with, and learn from, so many interesting people. I left high school early and arrived on campus at age 17 from the Tampa Bay area. Although Tampa Bay is diverse in its own respect, I believe there's truly no place like South Florida. Because of sports, I have always had relationships with people from many different backgrounds and cultures. I was fortunate enough to be recruited to play for one of the top programs in the country for my sport at the University of Miami. That allowed me to get to know many people and form lasting relationships, which I know I would not have had the chance to do if I didn't come to school at UM. I'm grateful for every single person I have crossed paths with since arriving in Miami and feel there's something to learn from everyone I encounter.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Because of my professional role, I have the privilege to advise people and sometimes advocate for those who may not be strongly represented in the community. That puts

me in a unique position, which I am always mindful of. Throughout my time on campus, and still today, I have always sought opportunities to give back to the community.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

No one accomplishment sticks out. I am really grateful for the position that I am in and I attribute that to my experiences at the University. Because of those experiences, I have been able to choose a career where I get to do work that is meaningful to me and have gained experience in both the public and private sector. I have also been able to do things outside of my career, like teach at the undergraduate level and coach high school football in the community. These opportunities would not have been possible without my time at the University.



**Jared Silberlust, B.S.B.E. '17, M.P.H. '21,  
M.D. '21**

**Physician, NYU Langone Health**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was on March 30, 2017—the day I was accepted into the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine’s M.D./M.P.H. program. I was preparing for my last set of final exams at the College of Engineering when I got the call. I put down my books and invited everyone I knew to celebrate with me at the Rat.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

At the U, I learned that it only takes one person who cares about your success to elevate you. This person can open a door, make a connection, and advocate for you when you need it the most.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I've had a ton of fun continuing to work with current UM students and faculty through workshops and educational sessions focused on medical technologies and caring for older adults. I think the University of Miami is uniquely positioned to be a leader in geriatric health technologies, and I hope that sharing my passion for this work with current students inspires our community to grow and prosper.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

After graduation, I am proud to have been able to continue the work I started at the University of Miami in combining medicine, engineering, and public health. I've built and studied tools within electronic medical record systems to provide better care for my patients and improve my efficiency as a physician. I am fortunate to have been invited to share my work across the country at national conferences and at universities with students, professors, and other physicians.



**Miranda Hernandez, M.S.Ed. '19**

**Litigation Associate, Simpson Thacher & Bartlett LLP**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was being admitted to the University and becoming an official part of the 'Canes community. As a Miami native, I have been a University of Miami fan my entire life. Going from admiring the school and its athletic programs, to actually being a student and now an alum has been a surreal experience.

The University of Miami community really does show up for their people. While at the U, I was a fourth- and fifth-grade teacher at Liberty City Elementary. As part of the fifth-grade science curriculum, I had to teach a lesson on human anatomy. I reached out to University of Miami Miller School of Medicine and asked if they could come to my classroom and bring human organs to show my kids. They did! It was an incredible experience for my students which filled my heart with joy.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

At the University of Miami, I learned that the diversity of the student body and faculty truly enriches your learning experience in ways I couldn't have imagined elsewhere. Learning alongside individuals with unique viewpoints not only expanded my knowledge but also taught me invaluable lessons in empathy and collaboration. The University of Miami is truly one of a kind in the way it's able to foster a dynamic learning environment.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I have carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes in my industry and community through mentorship. As an attorney, I have made it a priority to mentor students (especially 'Canes!) who are either interested in attending law school or figuring out what legal career path they want to pursue. I am a firm believer in lifting up others as you climb.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I have been very blessed! My noteworthy accomplishments include being elected as the National Chair of the Hispanic National Bar Association's (HNBA) Law Students Division, serving as a senior editor of my law school's Law Review and spearheading a symposium where a Supreme Court Justice provided opening remarks, graduating from law school with honors, working as an attorney at an incredible law firm in New York City, passing the Bar Exam in New York and Florida, and now serving as the national chair-elect of the HNBA's Young Lawyers Division. All thanks to God.





**Morgan Kokaram, B.B.A. '17**

**Corporate Counsel, Veritiv Corporation**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the University of Miami was meeting my now-husband, Kyle Kokaram. Kyle and I met at the TGIF across the street from the campus. I was with my line sisters (Iota Nu Fall '15) and Kyle was with his classmate from the law school. If it wasn't for our time at the U, we would not be together today. Our love for the U was a starting point for the love we share with each other now!

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

While attending Miami I learned to work hard, but network even harder. The University of Miami regularly produces some of the brightest minds and most talented individuals across myriad industries. The U is such a diverse and unique community with a student body composed of different economic, religious, and political backgrounds that come together to uplift fellow 'Canes.

Going to classes and regularly interacting with people possessing totally different views of the world helped expand my own perspective and promoted tremendous personal growth as well as empathy for those who don't necessarily see eye to eye with me. As a 'Cane I am blessed to be a part of such a strong global network in which I place immense value. The U is truly a one of a kind place that fosters creativity, innovation, and understanding.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I have carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes by mentoring other Miami graduates who are interested in a career in law. I love being able to help younger 'Canes learn about the practice of law and what is needed to have a successful legal career.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Following graduation, I attended Georgetown University Law Center in Washington, D.C. I then moved back to Atlanta and started practicing corporate law, with a focus on the representation of corporate and institutional clients on matters ranging from mergers and acquisitions deals, venture capital transactions, and private equity financing to general corporate governance.

I also serve on the U.S. Board of Directors for Heart for Africa, a faith-based humanitarian organization that focuses on bringing HOPE to the Kingdom of Eswatini, Africa in the areas of hunger, orphans, poverty and education. Additionally, I founded The She League, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement of professional women of color in business by providing opportunity, access, and exposure while building a community of support, collaboration, and connection to ignite change in the world through leadership and mentorship.

Through The She League, I started The She League Conference, a multi-day career development conference for women in the early or mid-stages of their career. Our speakers are all women of color who have excelled in their fields and are dedicated to bringing up more powerful women leaders. Most importantly, since graduating from the U, I married a fellow 'Cane graduate and became a mother to two future 'Canes, my daughter and bonus son!



**Nicholas Karpathy, B.S.C.E. '19,  
M.S.C.E. '19**

**Site Civil Group Manager, EXP**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

I have two very bright moments from my time at the U, and both stem from representing my alma mater while traveling. The first that comes to mind is leading the U's student chapter of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) to compete in the annual Student Symposium at the University of Florida. After a couple of years of helping to rebuild the program in the College of Engineering, we proudly represented the U to other universities from Florida, Georgia, and Puerto Rico, including in the famous concrete canoe races. Our canoe may have been a few pounds heavier than some of the regular winners, but ours still floated while decked out with U colors (better than all others at the races).

The second is a series of events: playing tenor sax in the Frost Pep Band of the Hour at men's and women's basketball tournaments. I had the honor to represent the U at many games including the ACC tournaments across the country. There is nothing quite like repping the U by playing the "Miami U How Dee Doo" in a packed stadium to cheer on our canes!

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

At the U, I discovered the unparalleled value of building a network of friends and alumni who not only support you personally but also professionally. The bonds I formed at the U are like no other; they have stood the test of time, separation, and diversity. Some of my best friendships date back to my undergraduate career built upon late nights of working on group projects with copious amounts of cafecito keeping us awake. Despite one of those groups of friends now pursuing various careers across the U.S., our friendship remains, which speaks to the strength of our camaraderie formed at the U.

Another friend group has stayed local to South Florida and become a tightly-knit foursome of weekend golfers whose combined backgrounds in engineering, finance, and music business wouldn't normally converge. We can each thank the U for pulling us together. And outside of bettering our golf game, we regularly push each other to grow as a professional in our respective fields and do more to give back to our community.

The U also introduced me to an incredible network of alumni who have woven themselves into my life in various ways. For instance, a couple of the College of Engineering alumni I met while at an event freshman year ended up becoming my bosses at my first full-time job. These people, who share their alma mater with me and with whom I connected at 18 years old, gave me a chance to work with them in the civil engineering industry and have since become my colleagues, professional references, and even better, my personal friends. I have had multiple alumni offer me jobs, help me move, refer me for community awards, and more because of our ties back to the U. Remarkably, these connections continue to be formed nearly everywhere from airports to breweries where simply wearing some U gear could lead to a good conversation or much more. I never know where I will run into another U alumni and how they might impact my life and that truly makes it great to be a Miami Hurricane!

### *How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I have been giving back to the U and supporting the next generation of 'Canes since the moment I finished my degree! Right after graduation, I took on the role of Field Day Scholarship fundraiser chair with the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) Miami-Dade branch, continuing my previous involvement with the organization as a student. We were able to raise over \$10,000 for scholarships for UM and FIU students.

I have also become the UM ASCE student chapter practitioner advisor and regularly find myself getting back on campus to present to and chat with current students about career opportunities and life after college. Outside of ASCE, I also contribute my time to supporting the next class of 'Canes civil engineers through guest lecturing in the College of Engineering civil and architectural engineering department senior design classes a couple of times per semester. I have also served as a mentor to multiple U engineering students via the Florida Engineering Society (FES) mentorship program to help them fine-tune their resumes, find jobs, and develop a roadmap for their first five years in the industry.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

My most noteworthy professional accomplishment after my time at the U was earning my first PE (professional engineer) license a couple of years ago. Shoutout to Dr. Chin for ensuring we knew our stuff as it comes to fluid mechanics and water resources! I sat for the principles and practice exam with a focus on water resources years after graduation and everything I learned in his classes was in my head as fresh as ever.

My most noteworthy accomplishment from a community impact perspective was leading a team with the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce's Leadership Miami (LM) program to put together an ambitious community service project for Together for Children. Our team organized a youth summit and resource fair, which brought together over 110 students from Miami-Dade's most at-risk neighborhoods for a day of personal and professional development with an opening keynote session from Mayor Daniella Levine Cava and Congresswoman Frederica Wilson, and personalized presentations on topics such as how to get a job, how to make money work for you, sexual health, and how to become a leader in your community.

This project required organizing over a dozen presenters, coordinating with local coalition volunteers to sign up student attendees, arranging transportation to the host location, setting an event schedule so that students could participate in four sessions that they picked on the spot, and raising over \$20,000 in cash and in-kind donations. And this was accomplished by our team of 10 local professionals, all of whom came from different fields/backgrounds and had never met each other, in under 100 days from the time we met each other to holding the event.



**Osama Siddiqui, B.S. '17**

**Internal Medicine Resident, University of Chicago (Northshore)**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moments at the U were the times I spent volunteering at free clinics in the greater Miami area. Helping care for underserved patients reminded me of my father's work as a physician in our underprivileged hometown in rural Pakistan. Seeing the impact he had on people's lives is what initially inspired me to pursue a career in medicine. And having the opportunity to do something similar during my time at the U reinforced my passion to serve as a physician.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

The biochemistry and molecular biology program at the U pushed me to apply what I know, to think for myself, and to pursue independent scientific inquiry—a rarity at the undergraduate level. The skills I learned by doing independent research and writing a thesis have been incredibly valuable in my journey as a physician-scientist. I am incredibly grateful to my mentors (Dr. Richard Myers, Dr. Thomas Harris, Dr. Angela Szeto, and Dr. Philip McCabe) for teaching me so many things that I could not have learned anywhere else.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

The motto 'Canes Care for 'Canes resonates strongly with my personal values and professional goals. At every step in my medical training, I have dedicated time to serve the local community, to advocate for health equity, and to mentor younger students. As I progress in my career, I hope to continue leading positive change and to inspire the next generation of physicians to do the same.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Since graduating from the U, I have continued my medical training and led positive change in my profession through service, advocacy, and research. I have authored multiple peer reviewed publications, written a medical textbook chapter, and received research funding from the United States National Institutes of Health.

In addition, I have volunteered at free clinics, provided pro bono consulting services to community health organizations, and led multiple health equity advocacy projects in collaboration with students, faculty, and hospital administration. In recognition of my leadership and scholarly work, I was inducted into the Alpha Omega Alpha and Gold Humanism honor societies, two of the most prestigious medical honor societies in the United States. As I progress in my career, I hope to continue leading my colleagues in bringing the best possible medical care to all people regardless of socioeconomic status.



**Priyen Patel, B.S. '17, M.S. '21, M.D. '21**

**Cardiovascular Disease Fellow, Hofstra University—Zucker Northwell**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

I think living in the freshman dorms, being surrounded by a community of similarly aged individuals with global energy and perspectives, all under one roof, truly made me feel like a member of something much larger. I think I felt the most connected and built the largest net as a freshman because of all the opportunities and natural relationships that I formed. I had neighbors from Paris, from Dubai, from Britain, and all over the United States. In addition, being a member of the President's 100 Tour Guides was a highlight, reminding me every day how fortunate I was to be a part of a university campus that so many prospective students wanted to be a part of.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I learned balance. I learned to take on more than I thought I could handle and still found a way to make it work. If there was something I was interested in, the U already had it, and I made sure to take risks I wouldn't otherwise take. I still talk about the variety of organizations I was a member of as an undergraduate, the documentary filmmaking classes I took on because they were my passion, the photography classes I spent more time in than my biology classes, or the novice piano classes I participated in knowing little to nothing about reading music.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

No matter where I go, whether it is Houston, Long Island, or Miami, to this day, some of my strongest friendships are with my fellow 'Canes. In my career, my closest friend from undergraduate and medical school with whom I lived for 5 years is someone I will be working alongside as a cardiology fellow. I make the time for my friends, and I know they are going to be with me for life because we all share the experience of what it means to be a 'Cane. Whenever I wear the U on my shirt, even among strangers in a park, there is



not a day that I don't get someone throwing up the "U" with their hands. The bond runs that deep, and I will never stop taking care of those that know what it means to be a Miami Hurricane.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I can think of several: becoming a Gold Humanism Honor Society member, finishing my internal medicine residency training at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, successfully matching in cardiovascular disease fellowship at Hofstra Zucker in Long Island, and completing and presenting multiple research studies at regional and national conferences.



**Raghuram Reddy, B.S. '20**

**Medical Student, Florida International Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

There were a lot of bright moments at the U, but one of my favorites was participating in Battleship and Tug of War with my floor PT9 as part of SportsFest. Through SportsFest and other memorable times while at the U, I have been able to cultivate lifelong friendships.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

I learned a lot more about how people come from different walks of life, and that each person has something to share that we can learn from. One event on campus that was unique was International Week held by UM Council of International Students and Organizations (COISO). Each day of that week was dedicated to learning about different parts and cultures of the world.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I strive to carry on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes by volunteering with different organizations such as The Green Haven Project, The McKenzie Project, and NeighborhoodHELP. I want to see the city of Miami continue to grow and be able to inspire the next generation to do great things.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

My most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation is helping other pre-medical students be able to achieve their medical school dreams. I learned how important it is to be a bridge builder through the mentors I have had in my life. I like uplifting others and watching them succeed.



**Riva Trivedi, B.S.B.A. '17**

**Vice President, Parthenon Capital Partners**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

One of my highlights at the U was my time on the Hyperion Council, where we provided pro-bono consulting services to micro- and small businesses, primarily in underserved areas in our local Miami community as well as abroad. In 2016, I had the opportunity to travel to the Dominican Republic where we spent time working with six micro-entrepreneurs on their businesses. It was a deeply humbling experience to realize that you can't always apply textbook solutions to real-world problems. I probably learned more from the entrepreneurs than they did from us. That experience keeps me grounded and reminds me how I can best support business owners as I continue to work in investing roles.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Coming to the U opened my eyes in many ways. The diversity of the student body and faculty exposed me to brilliant new ideas and perspectives very early in my career, which set me up to enter the world with an open mind. Additionally, the academic freedom and professional support I was given by the University taught me how to make the most of every opportunity. Because of this support, I stretched out of my comfort zone to try new things such as joining a dance team, exploring careers in finance, and pursuing part-time internships from freshman to senior year to gain real world exposure—something I knew I could have only done successfully at the U. My experiences at the U shaped who I am today, and for that I am deeply grateful.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

At RBC Capital Markets, I helped organize recruiting sessions for UM students through the Bermont Carlin finance scholars program, a program which was incredibly

meaningful in helping me start a career in finance. Two of my best friends to this day were fellow BC scholars, and we have remained close ever since in both our professional and personal journeys.

Anytime a 'Cane reaches out, I do my best to make time to chat and offer my support in their professional journeys, particularly in finance. At Harvard Business School, I sought out other 'Canes in the community and organized get-togethers. I hope to always seek out my fellow 'Canes in every community I am a part of and continue to lift each other up.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I have had the privilege of serving as a board member of Girls 4 Science (G4S), a nonprofit organization that provides completely free STEM programming and mentorship opportunities for female youth in the Chicagoland area. Nationally, there are significant disparities in access to employment in STEM between women and men, with even more disparity amongst races. G4S is committed to making STEM exposure accessible and fun so that girls can confidently pursue advanced study and professional careers in STEM fields. During my time serving on the board in the last few years, the organization has grown from approximately 190 participants in 2020 to well over 400 in 2023.



**Ryan Donahue, B.S.B.E. '17**

**Director of Preclinical Translation, Cartilage Inc.**  
**Translational Postdoctoral Fellow, University of California, Irvine**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U occurred as my freshman year drew to a close, marking the start of a journey filled with dynamic involvement and leadership opportunities across campus. From obtaining a resident assistant role in Hecht Residential College to earning an appointed position on the Student Government's Executive Board, I was excited by the possibilities unfolding for me. Simultaneously, I embraced a role on the Homecoming Executive Committee and accepted a research position at Bascom Palmer Eye Institute.

These milestones weren't just achievements; they were the beacon that ignited my enthusiasm for my remaining 3 years at the U. Stepping into diverse leadership roles became the bedrock of my commitment to and affection for the University of Miami. They empowered me to take ownership and contribute meaningfully to the institution that had become my home away from home. These experiences were transformative, shaping not only my collegiate journey but also the decisions I made, the friendships I forged, and the path I charted beyond graduation. Looking back, I can attribute my growth and development to these formative experiences and the remarkable individuals I encountered along the way.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

One invaluable lesson I learned at the U, which I firmly believe I couldn't have acquired elsewhere, is being confident in myself. Preceding my college years, I would have described myself as somewhat introverted and reserved. However, amidst the vibrant culture of the U, pulsating with confidence and pride in everything ranging from athletics to philanthropy, I was able to cultivate and grow my ability to be confident and engage in these varying scenarios. In other words, I grew and was able to come out of my shell.

This confidence was largely developed through my involvements at UM, which all required leading and interacting with peers. These experiences pushed me beyond my comfort zone, propelling me to embrace challenges and seize opportunities I might have previously shied away from. I owe much of this growth to the support and encouragement of my friends, colleagues, and mentors, whose guidance nudged me towards realizing my full potential.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

At the heart of 'Canes Care for 'Canes lies a commitment to extending a helping hand to those in need, be they fellow 'Canes or members of a broader community. In my professional endeavors, I make it a priority to embody this ethos by facilitating connections, offering solutions to complex challenges, and providing a supportive ear to those facing difficulties. I am grateful for the tight-knit communities I've been a part of, where such acts of kindness are not only encouraged but celebrated. Furthermore, I dedicate my time as a scientific advisor to the TMJ Association, a vital patient advocacy group for individuals grappling with jaw, or TMJ, disorders. Serving on their International Scientific Advisory Panel allows me to collaborate with other leading experts in the field and gain insights from patients themselves. Together, we strive to ensure that our research efforts are not only advancing the field but also directly benefiting those affected by these intractable conditions.

*What do you think is your most note-worthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Three particular achievements stand out to me as most noteworthy in my post-graduation journey. I have completed a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering, a feat that tested my limits and resilience; co-founded Cartilage Inc., a startup company rooted in the innovative research of my doctoral dissertation; and secured \$6 million in funding to conduct pivotal studies to bring Hyaleon®, a tissue-engineered implant, to human clinical trials.

These milestones represent a rare opportunity to translate my work from the laboratory bench to the clinical bedside. This journey, from conception to realization, is a privilege not often afforded to scientists and engineers. I am particularly enthusiastic about the Hyaleon®'s potential to address cartilage afflictions of the jaw, or temporomandibular joint (TMJ). I eagerly anticipate seeing its impact in clinical practice.



**Sam Peurifoy, B.S. '16**

**Partner, Hivemind Capital**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

Just walking around the lake on any ordinary day. There's a spirit to the U that's really difficult to ascribe to any singular event or activity. You miss it when you move to the "big city" and everything is metal and noise, not a tree in sight for miles, no water or unobstructed lake sunset to be seen. There's something really human about being at the U. That extremely ephemeral abstract experience is what I'd describe as my "brightest moment."

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

The value of staying focused. Miami has a complex social environment that I view as one of the best places in the world to learn the importance of finding really good friends, great memories, and, beyond all else, really good self-control. The ability to just be OK staying extremely focused on one particular task while the world is in its own little hurricane around you is something that's very uniquely Miami.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I love helping out folks from the U looking to climb in chemistry or venture [capital]. I think there's something really special about having that shared experience in the same space. While I don't have a lot of time to chat on calls, I'm always more than happy to exchange a few quick messages with other 'Canes – feel free to reach out and say hi!

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I'm a dad and I got married. I have a near-two year-old son and he's the bee's knees. I read him "Science for Babies" books in the morning and walk him around a lake - not too dissimilar from my own experience at the U. I've also finished an organic chemistry Ph.D., landed on the Forbes 30U30 Venture Capital list, and worked at the top banks. But I just really can't wait to bring my son back to the big lake someday.





**Sarah Miranda, B.B.A. '20**

**Business Development and Capture Manager, ACT1 Federal, LLC**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

Being on and eventually captain of the SunSations Dance Team was such an honor. I'll never forget my sophomore year in 2017 when ESPN's College GameDay came to campus for the home game against Notre Dame. The energy was palpable! Fast forward to game time in the stadium - every seat was packed! I'll admit, I even shed a tear on the field during the national anthem. I can still hear the stadium chanting in unison: "MIAMI.. HURRICANES.. YELL, LET'S. GO. U." I had never felt so a part of something. Students, staff, and community members alike all came together with love for the U and waited in anticipation to see the turnover chain. We brought home the win, remained undefeated, and in that moment I had never been more proud to be a 'Cane.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

From the time I stepped foot on campus as a high school senior visiting via the "Cane for a Day" program, to my last virtual class senior year in 2020, I was amazed at the level of detail and interest every professor in Miami Herbert Business School put into getting to know his/her students. If you wanted advice, assistance, or even just a listening ear, the door was always open. This taught me leadership and human capital management skills that have served me well in the federal government bids and proposals industry. Whether coordinating a multimillion dollar opportunity for my company or leading a team with various personalities, I strive to reflect the simultaneous professionalism and empathy that my professors taught me was possible while attending the U.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

My favorite "ping" on my phone is one that is from a University of Miami student or alum from LinkedIn asking for an introduction or advice on the government consulting world in the D.C. area. Over the last four years, I've probably chatted with about 12 previous or

current University of Miami students regarding career or company advice, all reaching out because we simply have the same alma mater! I love connecting with and facilitating other introductions for a fellow 'Cane! Why? Because that courtesy was given to me as well. 'Canes will always care for 'Canes - in health, humor, and business alike!

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Once I graduated from the U in May 2020, I joined the government proposal industry, first working on state and local government bids, then international government bids, and now federal government proposals, typically assisting the Department of Homeland Security and valued anywhere from \$8 million to \$100 million.

At the age of 25, I was selected to be on the Board of Directors for the Association of Proposal Management Professionals, making me the youngest member to serve since the organization's inception. In 2023, I was selected as an APMP 40 Under 40 Honoree. Apart from work accomplishments, I was crowned Miss Alexandria, Virginia two years in a row and placed top 5 in the Miss Virginia USA pageant the same two years, winning Miss Photogenic in 2023. However, I'm most proud of my time as a youth leader for high school girls. Whether helping assist them with college applications or relationship struggles, I love helping the girls in my community navigate the sticky transitions of life.



**Sierra Domb, B.S.C. '21**

**CEO & Founder, Visual Snow Initiative**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

One of the darkest moments of my life led me to some of my brightest moments at the U. I had to stop taking courses midway through my academic journey due to the onset of a debilitating neurological condition called Visual Snow Syndrome (VSS). Once my condition stabilized to the point where I could function, despite some newfound medical challenges, I returned to the U with resounding determination to finish what I started.

One of my brightest moments was when I had the honor of representing UM alumni at TEDxUMiami, where I gave a TEDx Talk called “What Is Visual Snow Syndrome? Transforming Anguish Into Action,” which detailed my journey of starting a nonprofit and funding medical research to help millions of people affected by VSS around the world.

The other brightest moment was when I graduated with distinction, which was a significant milestone considering that a couple years earlier, it seemed impossible. My experience at the U empowered me to remain resilient in the face of adversity. It also helped propel me into my current global health advocacy as the youngest person on the International Advisory Board for the Columbia-WHO Center for Global Mental Health and through my philanthropic work for VSS.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

As a Miami native, University of Miami offers a fulfilling and immersive experience that reflects the unique multicultural essence of the city while also incorporating additional global perspectives. Learning at the U is not linear or one-dimensional. It is multifaceted, encouraging exploration of diverse interests and connections between multiple fields, which can often complement each other. These different types of knowledge culminate in a comprehensive, well-rounded education. Encompassing multiple fields, including philanthropy, medicine, science, research, digital production, and communication, my

work today is enhanced by the vast knowledge I gained at the U, particularly as it pertains to curriculum in communication (health and interpersonal), qualitative research methods, genetics, writing, and multimedia/film. Additionally, joining the WVUM 90.5 FM family allowed me to gain hands-on experience as a DJ, radio personality, and live on-air host live, as well as learn about the technical side of the industry. This ultimately led to opportunities for me to pursue professional voice acting prior to my nonprofit work.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

Struggling with lifelong medical issues and experiencing the onset of a neurological disorder in 2015, I learned how millions of people worldwide suffer not only due to their health issues, but also because many physicians do not understand or acknowledge their conditions. Members of our own 'Canes community have been through this scenario, which can have devastating impacts on both their physical and mental health.

Just as the 'Canes Care for 'Canes philosophy encourages us to look out and stand up for one another, through my nonprofit organization and advocacy efforts, I am dedicated to fostering awareness, health equity, effective physician-patient communication, resources, research, and treatment development for people of all ages affected by marginalized medical conditions, particularly neurological disorders. We are dedicated to addressing both the physical symptoms and mental health-related aspects associated with chronic, debilitating, disabling, or life-altering medical conditions like VSS. Striving to make the world a more accessible, educated, inclusive, and accommodating place, I have made it my mission to establish support and visibility for underrepresented patient populations both within the 'Canes community and on a global scale.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

After realizing most of the medical community knew nothing about my condition and there were no resources available to help me, I was determined to find solutions and help others around the world who faced similar struggles. I founded the Visual Snow Initiative, a nonprofit organization dedicated to global awareness, education, resources, patient advocacy, treatment development, and research for VSS.

I also organized the first Visual Snow Conference at University of California, San Francisco, a summit that brought together patients, their families, and VSS experts from around the world. Connecting with people affected by VSS in over 93 countries, I

established a global research team consisting of physicians, scientists, and researchers with expertise in neurology/neuroscience, neuro-ophthalmology, ophthalmology, optometry, and advanced technology. Together, we have produced critical research in seven countries that led to the clinical, scientific acceptance of VSS as a distinct, neurological condition (with both visual and non-visual symptoms), discoveries regarding the pathophysiology and biological basis of VSS, as well as the development of treatments for VSS symptoms where none existed.

We also developed the first diagnostic criteria for VSS, created the first global directory of VSS physicians, produced hundreds of educational videos about VSS for healthcare professionals and patients, established newfound awareness for VSS through multimedia content, and created physician-patient resources to improve health literacy, communication, and education regarding VSS.

International health organizations like WHO, Mayo Clinic, and NIH utilize the resources we have created, and our studies have been published in medical journals, such as *Frontiers in Neurology*, *Brain Communications*, the *Journal of Neuro-Ophthalmology*, *PubMed*, and more. Additionally, Visual Snow Initiative sponsored the Daytime Emmy Awards and has gained support from notable public figures. Currently, I am leading an initiative to secure an ICD code for VSS, which can lead to global insurance coverage/ financial support, accurate diagnosis, clinical recognition, data collection, more treatment options, and further research.



**Sumedh Shah, B.S. '15, M.D. '20**

**Resident Physician, Department of Neurological Surgery,  
Jackson Memorial Hospital / University of Miami**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was matching into our neurological surgery program. It meant that I would get to spend another seven years studying at the institution I fell in love with, doing the thing I was most passionate about. It also meant that I would be privileged to call myself a triple 'Cane.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

While at the University of Miami, during my undergraduate education, I had the honor of studying under the late Dr. Jeffrey S. Prince, associate professor of biology and director of the University's Electron Microscopy Lab. It was in that laboratory where Dr. Prince taught me the nuances of utilizing the transmission electron microscope. That experience gave me a rare research skill that I know was only possible at the University of Miami. I then used that knowledge to form collaborations between the undergraduate campus and the medical campus to perform research studying the ultrastructural effects of various therapies, such as novel chemotherapeutics and radiation, on brain cancer stem cells.

I believe that this opportunity was only afforded to me through Dr. Prince at the University of Miami. It jump-started my career in research, and the tutelage that was afforded to me by Dr. Prince laid the foundation for my career in research and neurological surgery.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

During my whole academic career in medicine, I sought to exemplify the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes. During my medical training at Miller School of Medicine, I participated in any educational opportunity available to tutor and/or mentor my fellow students and co-residents.

At Miller, I served as an anatomy course TA, academic coordinator for the medical societies, and as a general tutor for coursework. As a resident at Jackson, I have had the pleasure of being involved with the Neurosurgery Interest Group, mentoring students interested in neurological surgery through clinical research opportunities, shadowing, and direct skills education.

I am also in the process of converting my infant daughter into a die-hard 'Canes fan. Teaching her how to throw a "U" sign is an on-going process!

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

During residency, I was awarded an NIH National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke R25 Research Education grant for my work on inflammatory mediators of neuron dysfunction in the the spine. The University of Miami Department of Neurological Surgery is one of a handful of programs across the country that has been awarded this funding, and therefore, it represents the training and opportunities I've received at the University of Miami.



**Susan Taghioff, B.S.Ed. '17, M.D. '22**

**Plastic Surgery Resident, University of Miami**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

Matching into my first-choice plastic surgery residency program here at the University of Miami!

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

As a medical student at the U I learned how to work with incredibly diverse populations, allowing me to relate more closely to my patients when performing global medical mission trips.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

As a resident physician we are teachers to the University of Miami medical students. I have made it one of my personal missions as a 'Cane to mentor these 'Canes into the next generation of physician-scientists.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

After graduation I have become a plastic surgery resident and continued to pursue quality research endeavors to advance the field of reconstructive surgery, multiple of which were recognized with awards at international meetings.





**Valeriya Gorelova, B.B.A. '16**

**Product Designer, Atos**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was graduation. Walking across the stage to receive my diploma, I felt an overwhelming sense of pride and achievement, knowing that I had conquered numerous challenges to reach this milestone. It was a moment of great joy and gratitude, not only for the education I received but also for the support of my professors, mentors, and family who had stood by me throughout my journey.

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

The U taught me how to be a leader, whether it was hosting a conference for the simulation of the United Nations, leading the Undergraduate Honor Student Council, or organizing events for the Alpha Kappa Psi business fraternity. There was always an opportunity to practice and improve my leadership skills. The U let me hone my skills through hands-on experience and allowed me to take on responsibilities and opportunities to mentor others. The U showed me the value of collaboration, perseverance, and continuous improvement, which have been instrumental in my journey to becoming a leader.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

The legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes has deeply influenced my approach to both my career and community involvement. I am always happy to engage with a fellow 'Cane. And I love coming back to U and finding opportunities to stay involved with the community.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

I've had the privilege of earning advanced degrees and receiving recognition awards while working for prestigious companies. However, the most rewarding aspect of my journey has been making a tangible difference in people's lives. As a lead product designer, I've led projects that have notably enhanced user experiences, reduced frustrations, and boosted satisfaction. My focus is on transforming everyday tasks into more enjoyable experiences, elevating the overall quality of life for the users I serve.



**Vinessa Burnett, B.S.C. '16**

**Early Career Program Manager, AECOM**

*What was your brightest moment at the U?*

My brightest moment at the U was serving as a President's 100 tour guide throughout all four years as a student. Being a tour guide helped me gain public speaking and interpersonal skills that I use every day in my career, helped spark a love for storytelling and communication (which I later changed my major to!), and helped me make an impact on prospective students and their families. My favorite moments as a tour guide include giving a tour to my family when my brother was a prospective student and reconnecting with students to whom I had previously given tours after they are enrolled. It's a great feeling to see things come full circle!

*What did you learn at the U that you know you couldn't have learned anywhere else?*

Because of UM's student diversity, unique location, and endless opportunities to learn about other cultures, I learned how to connect with people from different backgrounds and thrive in a global setting. As a student I had the opportunity to study abroad in Australia for a semester, room with an exchange student from Ireland, and take classes on intercultural communication. I also served as an ambassador for the Office of Study Abroad, which allowed me to connect with dozens of international students studying at UM. The diverse exposure to other cultures as a student has allowed me to be successful throughout my career in global roles across Fortune 500 companies.

*How have you carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into your industry and community?*

I have carried on the legacy of 'Canes Care for 'Canes into my industry by returning to UM to speak to an introductory human resources class and offering mentorship and career guidance to UM students interested in pursuing a career in human resources. In my community, I continue to carry on this legacy by mentoring K-12 students and early

career professionals and also offering free career coaching and workshops in partnership with local organizations. This allows me to reciprocate all of the knowledge and skills that I gained as a student at UM by pouring into the next generation.

*What do you think is your most noteworthy accomplishment after graduation?*

Some of my most noteworthy accomplishments after graduation include receiving the Graduate Enrichment Fellowship from The Ohio State University Fisher College of Business to complete my master's in human resource management. As a graduate student, I also won the PepsiCo HR Case Competition.

Since graduating with my master's, my career accomplishments include working in a variety of human resources roles at Texas Instruments and Hewlett Packard Enterprise where I have been instrumental in leading talent initiatives for early career professionals and driving programs that enable employees to develop in their career. My success as the U.S. internship program manager at Texas Instruments (TI) led to TI being nominated by WayUp as a Top 100 internship program for the first time in the program's history, along with record-breaking intern conversion and offer acceptance rates. And in my recent role as performance enablement program manager at Hewlett Packard Enterprise, I recently achieved record-breaking completion rates for quarterly performance conversations.

Other accomplishments I am proud of are having worked as an adjunct professor at the University of North Texas at Dallas, where I achieved an overall 4.6/5 average on student course evaluation ratings across semesters, and obtaining my SHRM-SCP (Society for Human Resource Management Senior Certified Professional) certification.