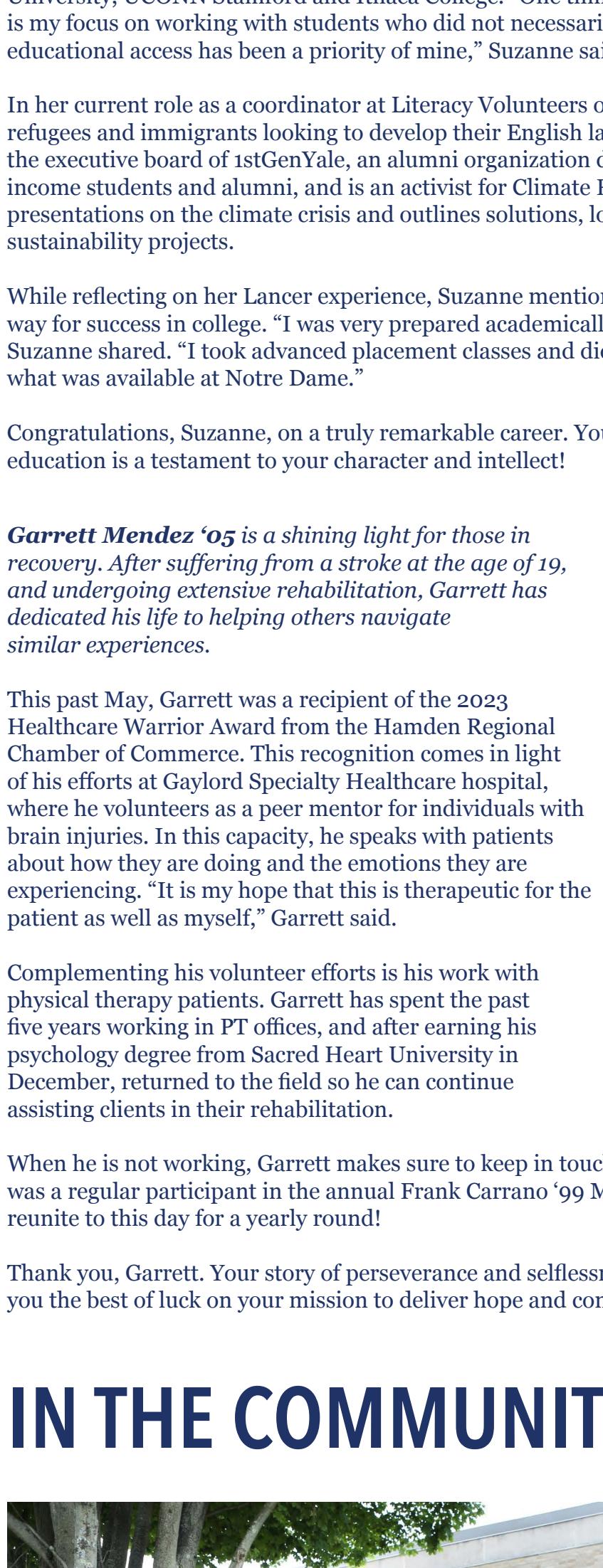


LIVING THE LANCER LIFE

ALUMNI CORNER



Suzanne Solensky '79 is on a mission to build a more equitable world. As a first generation low income college student, Suzanne recognizes the importance of higher education, and she is driven to make educational access a reality for all.

After graduating from Notre Dame High School, Suzanne majored in classical civilization at Yale University. Upon earning her bachelor's degree, she went on to become a freelance writer and editor, specializing in science, health and biotechnology. Suzanne would later attend Wesleyan University for her Master in Liberal Studies before embarking on a career in the field of higher education.

experience working in admissions and advising. She has also led classes in first year writing, critical thinking, research and inquiry. Over the years, Suzanne has either worked or taught at Fairfield University, Norwalk Community College, Quinnipiac University, Southern Connecticut State University, UCONN Stamford and Ithaca College. "One thing that I'm most proud of in higher ed is my focus on working with students who did not necessarily think they were going to college, so educational access has been a priority of mine," Suzanne said.

In her current role as a coordinator at Literacy Volunteers of Greater Bridgeport, Suzanne works with refugees and immigrants looking to develop their English language skills as adults. She also serves on the executive board of 1stGenYale, an alumni organization dedicated to helping first generation low income students and alumni, and is an activist for Climate Reality. In this capacity, Suzanne delivers presentations on the climate crisis and outlines solutions, lobbies elected officials, and works on sustainability projects.

While reflecting on her Lancer experience, Suzanne mentioned how her ND education paved the way for success in college. "I was very prepared academically for work in an Ivy League university," Suzanne shared. "I took advanced placement classes and did independent study; I really maximized what was available at Notre Dame."

Congratulations, Suzanne, on a truly remarkable career. Your effort to lift others up with the power of education is a testament to your character and intellect!

Garrett Mendez '05 is a shining light for those in recovery. After suffering from a stroke at the age of 19, and undergoing extensive rehabilitation, Garrett has dedicated his life to helping others navigate similar experiences.

This past May, Garrett was a recipient of the 2023 Healthcare Warrior Award from the Hamden Regional Chamber of Commerce. This recognition comes in light of his efforts at Gaylord Specialty Healthcare hospital, where he volunteers as a peer mentor for individuals with brain injuries. In this capacity, he speaks with patients about how they are doing and the emotions they are experiencing. "It is my hope that this is therapeutic for the patient as well as myself," Garrett said.

Complementing his volunteer efforts is his work with physical therapy patients. Garrett has spent the past five years working in PT offices, and after earning his psychology degree from Sacred Heart University in December, returned to the field so he can continue assisting clients in their rehabilitation.

When he is not working, Garrett makes sure to keep in touch with his fellow Lancers. For instance, he was a regular participant in the annual Frank Carrano '99 Memorial Golf Tournament, and his friends reunite to this day for a yearly round!

Thank you, Garrett. Your story of perseverance and selflessness is an inspiration to us all. We wish you the best of luck on your mission to deliver hope and comfort to individuals in need.

IN THE COMMUNITY



Each year, the class celebrating their 50th anniversary is invited to attend our **Golden Diploma Event**. On June 2nd, members of the Class of 1973 were the special guests who returned to campus for a reception, an honorary diploma, and recognition during our graduation ceremony. It was a meaningful homecoming for all!



As the 2022-23 school year comes to a close, we would like to thank our **Assistant Principal Scott Bannon** and **History Teacher Frank Skawinski** for their years of service to Notre Dame High School.

We have been truly blessed to work alongside two kind, generous and dedicated educators here on Jefferson Street, and we wish them all the best as they each begin their next chapter.

Just remember, once a Lancer, always a Lancer!



Congratulations to Thomas Bergamasco '13, who married his wife Emily at Our Lady of the Lakes Church in New Milford on Saturday, June 24th.

Joining Tom in the festivities were his friends from the Class of 2013: **Duncan Plumb**, **Thomas Bergamasco**, **Brendan Wardlowe**, **Evan Yiannoulis**, **Mark Salvio**, **Mike King** and **Will Clyne**. Also in attendance was Thomas' sister, **Alyssa Bergamasco** '15, who was one of Emily's bridesmaids!

Earlier this month, the Class of 1979 came out in numbers to support their fellow Lancer and 2023 Barnum Festival Ringmaster, **George Estrada**, P'98, '05, at this year's Barnum Festival Golf Tournament!

Left to right: **George Estrada**, **Dave Riley**, **Paul Sacramone** and **Tim Speer**.

Middle row: **Dan Guerrera**, **Declan Maher**, **Mike Lepore**, **Jack Wynne**, **Theresa Saia**, **Marzik**, **Frannie Melmore**, **Leonard**, **Jack Kinsella**, **Estrada**, **Janet Sereis**, **Wynne**, **and** **Kathy Eckenrode**, **Whittaker**.

Kneeling: **Tom Wuehnemann**.

In his new book, *The Invisible Generals*, **Doug Melville** '94 shares "the amazing true story of America's first Black generals, Benjamin O. Davis, Sr. and Jr., a father and son who helped integrate the American military and created the Tuskegee Airmen." Thank you, Doug, for recounting this important piece of U.S. history! For more information, click [HERE](#).

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