

MED Researcher, Alum Make *TIME*'s Most Influential People List

Ann McKee “may have saved my life,” former San Francisco 49ers linebacker Chris Borland writes in *TIME* magazine’s annual list of the world’s 100 most influential people. Her research into chronic traumatic encephalopathy (CTE), the progressive brain disease crippling many athletes and soldiers, persuaded Borland to abandon pro football after just one season.

Joining McKee, a School of Medicine professor of neurology and pathology, on *TIME*'s list is Carmen Yulín Cruz Soto (CAS'84, Hon.'18), mayor of San Juan, P.R., cited for her “passionate, courageous and articulate”

advocacy for the island after it was devastated by Hurricane Maria last September. The storm caused

up to \$95 billion in damage and plunged the island into a humanitarian crisis. Cruz, who spoke at BU's Baccalaureate Service May 20, received an honorary degree at the University's 145th Commencement (see page 4).

McKee says *TIME*'s honor is a tribute to her research team. They also made news this year with a study suggesting that the disease may not be caused by concussions, as had been suspected, but by repeated head injuries. If true, efforts to protect athletes from concussions would have to be redirected toward the more difficult task of reducing head impacts and “the fundamental danger these activities pose to human health,” McKee said at the time.

In December the *Boston Globe* anointed her 2017 Bostonian of the Year. RICH BARLOW



ANN McKEE

The urban future in metropolises like Shanghai is one of the topics in BU's general education program of courses.



BU Hub Debuts This Fall

More than 400 classes in University-wide general education program will span disciplines

SCIENCE REQUIRES MORE than intelligence, says Richard Samuel Deese (GRS'95,'07), a College of General Studies lecturer in social sciences. “It requires courage.” Deese backs his statement with examples. In addition to Galileo’s famous flip-off to the Vatican when he showed that the Earth circled the sun, Albert Einstein’s political views prompted the subversion-obsessed FBI director J. Edgar Hoover to open a file on the brilliant physicist. Chemical companies spent money smearing Rachel Carson for her exposé of the pesticide DDT’s toxicity in the 1960s.

Less known to Americans, Chinese astrophysicist and human rights activist Fang Lizhi fled to the United States in the 1980s after the People’s Republic spilled blood at Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Scientists who defy authorities, and the social and moral consequences of their defiance, are the subjects of Deese’s fall 2018 class Science and Political Engagement in the 20th Century. It’s one of about 400 classes this fall expected to inaugurate the BU Hub, the first University-wide general education program.

“The Hub,” says its managing director, Amanda Urias, “ensures that all undergraduates, no matter their major, develop intellectual capacities that will teach them to thrive throughout their lives.”

New courses in the Hub will be rolled out semester by semester over the next four years, threading throughout undergraduates’ time at BU, “not only as electives, but in their majors and minors as well,” Urias says. Current students (whose general education requirements won’t change) will

have an opportunity to enroll in courses that are part of the Hub beginning this fall. Incoming freshmen will register for courses in the Hub during this summer's Orientation sessions.

"This is an immense undertaking, and many people are working hard in many areas to prepare for first-year students who will be entering under BU Hub" this fall, says Elizabeth Loizeaux, associate provost for undergraduate affairs and cochair of the University Council General Education Committee, which approves courses and cocurricular activities for the Hub.

Loizeaux, also a College of Arts & Sciences professor of English, says that while the committee anticipates more proposals for new courses for the Hub as it goes forward, the bulk of them to date have involved existing classes.

Classes such as Religion, Community, and the Birth of Social Sciences. Stephanie Nelson, a CAS associate professor of classical studies, says the course studies the religious basis of society, focusing on reformers, probing such questions as: What is a just war? Do people have natural rights? Is tolerance of others a utopian goal? In Introduction to Climate and Earth System Science, taught since 2015 and tweaked for the Hub, students will learn that "Earth is an amazing but complex system," says Christine Regalla, a CAS assistant professor of earth and environment, who coteaches the course with Diane Thompson, also a CAS assistant professor of earth and environment.

And in Living in the City, taught by Diana Wylie, a CAS professor of history, students will study selected cities, from Uruk, a pivotal ancient Sumerian city, to modern Shanghai, China's largest urban center. They will read histories and documents and discuss issues affecting the urban future, such as justice, health, worship, human rights, and city planning. **RB**

Cecilia Lopez makes more than 300 omelets on a typical day.

ONLINE:
Watch a video of Dining Services employee Cecilia Lopez crafting an omelet and talking about what she loves most about her job at bu.edu/bostonia.

ON THE JOB

Meet Warren Towers' Omelet Lady

CECILIA LOPEZ

Dining Services employee is a campus celebrity



CYDNEY SCOTT

Students may not know her name, but chances are that if they've ever had an omelet at Warren Towers, they know her face. Cecilia Lopez has been a Dining Services employee for 25 years, and could rightly be called a campus celebrity, as famous for knowing the orders of her regulars as she is for her delicious omelets.

While her shift technically starts each day at 5 am, Lopez likes to arrive at work 30 minutes early to change clothes and arrange her hair. She boils water for the oatmeal and then begins stocking the omelet station with onions, tomatoes, peppers, ham, and more. "Everything has to be perfect by 7 am," she says through a translator (her first language is Spanish).

She greets each customer, always asking first how they are, then how they want their omelet prepared. Lopez has a college-age daughter and takes a genuine interest in the students, serving as a kind of mother figure, commiserating with them if they are sick or have pulled an all-nighter. "When I see a student that is very tired, I try to encourage them," she says.

Born in El Salvador, Lopez came to the United States at the age of 19, arriving in Houston, Tex. "At that time the revolution and guerrillas were emerging in my country," she says, "and they were kidnapping young women my age, so my mother was very worried."

In 1992, she moved to Boston and started working at BU part time. Her first job was as a dining hall custodian. At the time, she says, she didn't know much English. One day, a coworker asked if she would like to serve food, and from there, she went on to work the grill and prepare burritos before becoming an omelet chef 15 years ago. By her own estimate, a typical morning sees her making more than 300 omelets.

When she isn't working, she loves to watch the Discovery Network and cook for her daughter, but only on weekends. One of her specialties is the traditional Salvadorean dish pupusa, a corn tortilla stuffed with a savory filling. Other favorite dishes include tamales, enchiladas, and soup. Eggs are almost never on the menu, she says. "I don't buy any eggs because I see too many eggs here." **AMY LASKOWSKI**