



# the Collage

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences  
Kutztown University

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2023



**Dr. Louis Rodriquez | History  
Emeritus Highlight**

Dr. Louis Rodriquez, history professor Emeritus from Kutztown University, did not find his way into teaching until later in life. After earning his bachelor's degree in political science, Dr. Rodriquez went on to do other things, including a year fighting in the Vietnam War and then becoming a professional boxer. He eventually found his way to Lehigh University, where he completed his Ph.D. in History. "I wasn't ever intending to be a college professor,"

says Dr. Rodriquez. "It just sort of happened."



At KU, Dr. Rodriquez taught American history, and found he continued to learn and see historical events and concepts differently throughout his teaching career. He learned that talking to students and trying to explain historical concepts helped him gain a deeper understanding and broader

point of view in his subject area, an understanding he applied to his teaching and research. "The whole concept of truth and memory, what we know to be true and not true, doesn't seem to apply anymore," he notes, as he has continued to investigate the importance of accuracy in history.

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Dr. Rodriquez also worked with Dr. Maria Sanelli in the Frederick Douglass Institute at KU to educate people about Douglass and his work. Dr. Rodriquez says Douglass is particularly relevant to many of today's issues, including racism and equity for women. The book is compiled of current scholarship and lesson plans to facilitate conversations on how teachers can use Douglass within different disciplines as a tool to address current topics.

Since his travel plans were postponed due to COVID, Dr. Rodriquez is focusing on reading and improving his writing. "Now it's about reading authors who write really well to see how I can make my writing better," he notes. "I'm just constantly working on and improving articles and making myself sound better." He has also been working to publish his articles, writing for online publications around the world.

Looking back at his teaching career now, he says it was the best thing that ever happened to him. "I'm a minority coming from a very poor background. To get that kind of education and then this opportunity [at KU], just for me was life changing." Dr. Rodriquez advises students to stay disciplined in their work and to finish their degree, as that can make all the difference. "Those who want to finish and are determined to finish, will finish," he says. "It's perseverance and discipline, that's all it is."

## Congratulations, May Graduates!

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Dean's office would like to congratulate the spring 2023 graduates. You have met many challenges during your journey here at KU, but you have made it to the end with success. We hope you are proud of your accomplishments and wish you all the best in your future endeavors.

Congratulations, class of spring 2023!





### Dr. Michael Lawrenson | Bio Pre-Med Alumni Highlight

Dr. Michael Lawrenson contacted many colleges in the U.S. after high school in South Africa but found KU to be the most responsive and generous. He came to KU on an Academic scholarship, and his rugby coach, Dr. Gregg Jones, helped him discover an interest in chiropractic, which led him to biology: pre-medicine. “I had never even heard of chiropractic before I got to Kutztown,” he notes. “Dr. Jones helped me recognize the importance of the profession.” Dr. Lawrenson graduated Magna Cum Laude with a minor in biochemistry and went on to attend Palmer College of Chiropractic in Iowa on a rugby scholarship.

Dr. Lawrenson looks back at his time at KU very fondly, having learned a lot not only in his classes, but through being an international student. He found friendships and discipline through rugby and feels his involvement in the sport helped him grow as a person as well as a student. Despite how tough it was to juggle school and rugby, it helped Dr. Lawrenson stick to his plan: “I think that the rugby helped me stay focused on what was important... I had to be structured and remind myself of the plan and stay true to it.” He carried this mindset on to chiropractic school, where his KU training helped him concentrate.

Dr. Lawrenson was also a tour guide at KU and believes current students can benefit from being a part of this program: “The admissions department and being a tour guide is one of the most rewarding programs you can be a part of,” he explains, as he got to show prospective students what he loved about KU and what he didn’t know coming in. As an international student, Dr. Lawrenson stayed in Kutztown during breaks and in between school years: “I almost never went home,” he says. “Sometimes, at the time, I felt overwhelmed and that I wanted to go home. But looking back, it was the greatest four years of my life. I know my experience was great because of KU Staff, Janet Chladni, Jason Stauffer and my KU Rugby family and friends.”



Dr. Lawrenson was also awarded homecoming king, one of his proudest achievements at KU!

Now a practicing chiropractor, Dr. Lawrenson and his wife Dr. Alyssa Lawrenson, also a chiropractor and KU alum, live in Denver, CO, and are raising their growing family. He also still tries to make time for rugby. “Once I got to [Denver] it was very difficult for me to stop my rugby addiction,” he jokes. He found a club near him and played for a few years but has now moved on to refereeing. Dr. Lawrenson advises current KU students to be on top of their time management, as this was one of the biggest lessons he learned at KU. “There’s always time in the day to get started,” he says. “Even if it’s just fifteen minutes.”

