

# the grinnell magazine

summer 2025



**Grinnell: The Next Generation**



## FEATURES

### 6 Grinnell Graduates Bring the College's Values to Life

Meet a few of the members of the Class of 2025 who are pursuing their dreams, propelled by a Grinnell education.

by Jacqueline Hartling Stolze



### 14 Building Bridges

From scholarships and mentoring to care packages and study breaks, alumni affinity groups support students while connecting Grinnellians from every era.

by Anne Stein '84



### 22 A Legacy of Service

The Lori Ann Schwab '95 Alumni Grant helps Grinnellians make a difference.

by Tim Schmitt



## DEPARTMENTS

- 2** President's Message
- 3** Letters
- 4** Campus News
- 28** Then and Now
- 30** Authors and Artists
- 32** Giving
- 34** Class Notes
- 41** In Memoriam
- 50** Quintessential Grinnell

### FEATURED PHOTOS

Justin Hayworth: cover, pages 2, 6-13, 20, 28, back cover

Contributed photos: pages 16-19, 21, 23-26

Grinnell College Archives: pages 22, 29

## The Grinnell Magazine

Summer 2025  
Volume 57 Number 3

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### Mission Statement

*Grinnell Magazine* is published three times a year by the Office of Communications and Marketing. Contents are selected to demonstrate a range of opinions and activities on campus and provide news about the College and its alumni. Views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official Grinnell College policy.

### POSTMASTER

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### A Message from President Anne F. Harris

## Connections That Sustain Us

It is good when Grinnellians gather. Our shared experiences, what we value, and what we are working to make possible in communities, research, and practice are amplified when we connect. Grinnellians inspire each other, challenge each other, and champion each other in specific moments and in enduring ways. The great privilege and joy I have in experiencing both



Commencement and Reunion within the same three-week period in early summer sustains me and all of us on campus for exactly those reasons — Grinnellians remain active seekers of knowledge, connection, and discovery. This year, both grand gatherings brought people from all over the country and the world to Grinnell, and the collective presence of so many brilliant, vibrant people truly did give me hope for the world.

The College's long-held values of excellence in education, diverse community, and social responsibility — themselves founded on the founding and profound principle of serving the common good — are being challenged and scrutinized with an intensity and consequence rarely exercised in the history of higher education or this nation. Our campus community gathered this spring in Campus Forums to discuss academic freedom and free speech, immigration, student privacy, and multiple civil rights protections. We gathered to identify resources and engage in scenario planning and move the knowledge we shared into practical civic action. As we did so, we were keenly aware of all of the ways that Grinnell alumni have shaped and strengthened the very issues and values on which we were so keenly focused — we are grateful for you and inspired by you. In being challenged, our values are simultaneously being affirmed: their vitality and impact are more apparent and more prized, and we are more connected in upholding and safeguarding them. Those connections — between campus community members and alumni and among all Grinnellians — matter. They sustain us and replenish our resolve for the work ahead, for the community we cherish, and for all that both champion in human dignity and thriving. The Grinnellians

featured in this magazine exemplify this principle.

A spirit of connection is a common thread in the stories of members of the Class of 2025, hailing from Vietnam and Togo and places in the United States ranging from New York City to Nevada, Iowa. Gathering in Grinnell over the past four years, these brilliant graduates have challenged themselves and created partnerships, following and forging paths through Grinnell and beyond. As Grinnellians, they found their purpose and lived it in partnerships.

Finding broader connections is also the theme of a vibrant set of alumni affinity groups that bring Grinnellians together around common experiences and interests. Through these groups, alumni share their expertise, build community, and find many meaningful ways to mentor and support students who are finding their place on campus and in the world.

Recipients of the Lori Ann Schwab '95 Alumni Grant embody the power of connection. These innovative alumni serve communities across the United States by encouraging high school students to consider attending college, teaching chess to young people, and empowering aspiring youth to build connections that lead to meaningful careers.

In these pages, you will also see this spirit of connection in the life and career of **Randy Morgan '65, DS'92**, to whom I had the honor of presenting the inaugural Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award at this summer's Reunion. It was a true and distinct privilege to celebrate Dr. Morgan for his service to Grinnell College and his contributions to orthopedic medicine and health equity, and to addressing racial and ethnic disparities in health care. Known as both a caring physician and a leader in finding systemic solutions to complex problems, his career and life demonstrate that connection at multiple levels of society can create lasting and powerful change.

Thank you for your support of Grinnell as a place and an education that exemplifies not just the avid pursuit of knowledge, exploration, and discovery but also the joy and fulfillment created through connections with people and ideas that start here and spread across the globe in the vital and needed work of championing the values and relationships that have made us who we are. 🍷





## Professor (and Alum) Al Jones

In the “Grinnell-in-London” article (Spring 2025), you missed that Professor of History Al Jones is a 1950 graduate of the college. Al was proud of being an alumnus of Grinnell.

**Jen Jacobsen '95**  
St. Paul, Minnesota

## More Georgia Dentel

Thank you SO much for the article about Georgia Dentel (Spring 2025). I wish there were more mention of her life history and education, her retirement and life after Grinnell. She was an extraordinary person who brought us wonderful music. It is always so good to get *The Grinnell Magazine*; I just wanted more.

**Kathy Karlson '69**  
University Park, Maryland

## Georgia Dentel's Theater Role

Thank you for the excellent article about Georgia Dentel (Spring 2025). And thanks to Ms. Stolze and the researchers for their work on the project, the webpages, and the research. It is a pleasure to see that Miss Dentel's work continues to expand interest and documentation ... Miss Dentel's purview included professional theater performances. It might be difficult to separate them out from the plays presented by the college theater department, but it would be worth the effort, I think.

**Keith King '66**  
New York, New York




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Editor's note: Visit <https://concertshistory.sites.grinnell.edu> to view a concerts timeline and add stories at the “Share Your Memories” tab. To inquire about sharing photos or other memorabilia, contact Sarah Purcell at [purcells@grinnell.edu](mailto:purcells@grinnell.edu).

## Letters to the Editor

Letters about magazine content are welcome; include author's name and address. Letters selected for publication may be edited for length, content, and style.

Contact: *Grinnell Magazine*,  
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## PHILANTHROPY

### \$1 Million Gift Establishes CLS Endowment

Life Trustee **Penny Bender Sebring '64, DL'15**, and her husband, **Charles Ashby Lewis, DL'15**, have made a \$1 million gift to the College to establish an endowment for the Center for Careers, Life, and Service (CLS). The endowment will help ensure that the CLS can embrace new opportunities for supporting students. Prior

to this gift and beginning in 2013, the couple contributed a total of \$1.4 million to establish and sustain the College's first career community in education professions. Initially, the new fund will help students who need financial support to participate in internships and research experiences.

### Emmett and Pierrette Harris Endowed Scholarship

President **Anne F. Harris** and her husband, Professor of Art History **Michael Mackenzie**, have created the Emmett and Pierrette Harris Endowed Scholarship to honor Harris' parents and benefit under-resourced students at Grinnell College. For Harris, honoring her parents (a locket with their photos is pictured) in this way is powerful because her late father,

Emmett, benefitted so much from educational opportunities. After service in World War II, he attended Columbia University with support from the GI Bill, then went on to a successful career in banking and later teaching international business at the University of North



Carolina-Charlotte. Harris and Mackenzie are delighted to have created a scholarship at Grinnell. Mackenzie says, "It's an investment in one generation's hope for the next generation."

## ACADEMICS

### New Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean Appointed



**Ruth P. Feingold** is the new vice president of academic affairs (VPAA) and dean of the college for Grinnell. She came to the College from Willamette University in Salem, Oregon, where she served as the dean of the college and dean of the faculty of arts and sciences. In her Grinnell leadership role, Feingold will work to ensure that faculty members have the time and resources to fully explore and create knowledge, encourage interdepartmental collaboration and educational partnerships, and foster inclusive and sustainable academic governance.

### Commencement Celebrations

This year's 400-plus graduates came from 46 U.S. states and 20 countries. Celebrated author and Pulitzer Prize-winner Isabel Alexis Wilkerson delivered the Commencement address, assuring graduates that "If anyone is ready for the challenge of our times, it is you, the Class of 2025." Wilkerson, **Robert Hodierne '68, JoEllen Maly Hoth '62, M.D.**, and Jasmine Gilstrap Hunter were awarded honorary degrees.







## ALUMNI

### Reunion 2025 Celebrations

Grinnell's 145th annual Alumni Reunion weekend was attended by 1,174 alumni, faculty, staff, and guests from 45 states, Washington D.C., and 21 foreign countries. Alumni from 46 different classes — ranging from 1964 to 2016 — reconnected with classmates, socialized at events, took part in presentations, rediscovered favorite places on campus and in town, and made new Grinnell memories. Alumni

Assembly attendees were excited to see President **Anne F. Harris** present the inaugural Presidential Lifetime Achievement Award to **Randy Morgan '65, DS '92**, an orthopedic surgeon and life trustee of the College. Read a profile about Morgan at [grinnell.edu/morgan-lpa](http://grinnell.edu/morgan-lpa).



Read stories and the latest news about campus, events, research, grants, and more at [grinnell.edu/news](http://grinnell.edu/news).



# GRINNELL GRADUATES BRING THE COLLEGE'S VALUES TO LIFE



Meet a few members  
of the Class of 2025 who  
are pursuing their dreams,  
propelled by a Grinnell  
education.

by Jacqueline Hartling Stolze

**G**rinell graduates have always gone forth with high ideals and determination to pursue their passions and goals.

As members of the Class of 2025 begin to put their Grinnell educations into action, they are sustained by the guidance, mentorship, and support they've received. They start their journeys with optimism, a willingness to work hard, and a passion for making a difference.

We are proud to introduce you to a few of the newest Grinnell alumni.





## BEN CURRAN

has a passion for music and performing that has infused joy into his Grinnell experience.

**Hometown:** Bettendorf, Iowa

**Academics:** Curran chose to major in sociology after taking an introductory course and loving it. “It was challenging, but I learned so much. When I saw all the interesting courses offered in sociology, I thought, ‘I want to take all these classes. Why would I not major in it?’” he says.

**Activities:** Grinnell Singers, Con Brio (a cappella), My Best Friend (independent Midwest folk rock band), Eighth Avenue Newgrass (bluegrass), theatre productions and musicals, and Neverland Players.

**Passions:** Music has always been a part of Curran’s life. “I’m so glad I came to Grinnell, because I’ve never been so musically fulfilled,” he says. As a first-year student, he formed a band with two friends that they

**“I’m so glad I came to Grinnell, because I’ve never been so musically fulfilled.”**

call My Best Friend. “The three of us have such a strong musical connection,” Curran says. “We started out doing a lot of covers, but now we spend almost all our time writing and performing original music.”

Recently, My Best Friend won a grant from the College’s Wilson Center for Innovation and Leadership to professionally record and release an EP of their music (available through Spotify and Apple Music).

**Future:** Curran is currently building on his Grinnell education by gaining some work experience as a trainer. He is considering applying to law school in the future.



Ben Curran (seated) performed with several bands and ensembles as a Grinnell student.

Sarah Booher (in white) demonstrates the focus and intensity she brings to the basketball court.



## SARA BOOHER

appreciated Grinnell's balanced approach to academics and athletics. She excelled at both.

**Hometown:** Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

**Academics:** "Political science had me hooked right away. Rosenfield Professor and Professor of Political Science **Wayne Moyer** was such an amazing adviser and mentor," Booher says. She majored in political science with concentrations in environmental studies and education studies.

Booher was one of four students awarded an Archibald Prize for achieving the highest grade-point average during four years of study, and she received the President's Medal, which is awarded to the person who best embodies the values of Grinnell. She was also named a Truman Scholar finalist in 2024.

**Activities:** Women's basketball (first-team All-Midwest Conference, Academic All-Conference teams, and Academic All-District), women's track and field (Academic All-District), Student Athlete Advisory Committee, and Phi Beta Kappa (elected her third year).

**Passions:** "Sports have always been important to me. At Grinnell, basketball was a bigger part of my life than ever before. Basketball helped me maintain balance. I think the mind-body connection is so important."

**Future:** Booher wants some work experience before pursuing law school. "Grinnell has prepared me for my next steps as a project manager at Epic Systems. I'm excited to see where this new journey will take me."





## ESSI ADOKOU

plans to become a health care worker in her native Togo.

**Hometown:** Adokou, who spent most of her childhood in the West African country of Togo, attended high school in Chicago, which her family now calls home.

**Academics:** Adokou arrived planning to pursue medicine after Grinnell. She double majored in biochemistry and sociology, became a certified nursing assistant, and volunteered at the University of Iowa's mobile clinic for underserved communities. A fluent French speaker, Adokou also served as a translator.

**Activities:** QuestBridge (a national nonprofit that brings together high-achieving, underserved high school students with the nation's best colleges and universities), Grinnell Science Project (connects new students with Grinnell's STEM community), Weekend (hosts substance-free events on campus), African and Caribbean Student Union, Minority Association for Pre-Health Students mentor, and Black Cultural Center Advisory board member.

**Passions:** Adokou's passion for research grew after working with Associate Professor of Education

**Stephanie Jones** on a project titled "Mapping Racial Trauma." Later, she collaborated with Associate Professor of Physics **Keisuke Hasegawa** on a confocal microscopy project. Adokou also worked with Patricia A. Johnson Professor of Neuroscience **Clark Lindgren** on a Mentored Advanced Project (MAP) focusing on neurophysiology; together, they presented their findings at the Society for Neuroscience Conference in Chicago.

Adokou also studied in South Africa through a Center for Careers, Life, and Service (CLS) program. "As part of my internship there, I went to three different HIV community centers, where I learned how involved community health care workers are in the well-being of the community," she says.

**Future:** Adokou has shifted her focus from medicine to nursing; she will be attending the Mercy College of Health Sciences in Des Moines, Iowa, in September. Adokou says she plans to transition to medicine later and is confident that her Grinnell experiences and connections have prepared her well for her next steps.



Essi Adokou developed a passion for research at Grinnell.



## NAM DO

grew up in a city of 8 million people.  
He was ready for a change.

**Hometown:** Hanoi, Vietnam

**Academics:** “When I took my first computer science class, I experienced the Grinnell way of teaching this subject. The computer science faculty framed it as a way of problem-solving through code, which I really liked,” Do says.

He decided to major in computer science and forgo a double major. “It was worth it,” he says. “I got to take singing and rock-climbing lessons, participate in hands-on classes, and unexpectedly fall in love with so many fields of study.”

**Activities:** Student Government Association (SGA) and campus sustainability projects.

**Passions:** “In my third year, I became the treasurer of SGA. It was transformative getting to know so many student leaders with burning passions for what they do.

It fueled my passion and instilled in me the motivation to help them succeed.”

Do wanted to improve sustainability on campus. Through the Wilson Center’s SPARK Challenge, a community-based social innovation competition, he made end-of-year move-out more sustainable by collaborating with community partners to put items that are often thrown away to good use rather than sending them to the landfill. “I was passionate about the project and so happy to see it implemented,” Do says.

**Future:** “Working as the SGA treasurer taught me a lot of problem-solving skills,” Do says. At Grinnell, he realized how much he enjoyed working on community-focused projects. He’s considering a career in product management and hopes to apply his skills to real-world problems.

Nam Do (left) at the International Student Organization’s Cultural Evening.





Eleanor Elliott-Rude (second from right) with friends at the Conard Environmental Research Area.



## ELEANOR ELLIOTT-RUDE

craved new experiences.

**Hometown:** Nevada, Iowa

**Academics:** “I grew up on an Iowa organic farm. I was interested in the biological side of agriculture but didn’t feel that biology captured the whole picture. My tutorial adviser, Professor of History and Religious Studies **Caleb Elfenbein**, suggested an independent major, and everything started to click,” Elliott-Rude says. Her major covered a range of disciplines, from biology to economics to anthropology, and she studied how land ethics, social responsibility, and economic policy affect the ways communities interact with their environments.

**Activities:** Cross country, track and field, Student Environmental Committee, and an internship at Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA).

**Passions:** As a George Washington Carver intern at the World Food Prize in Des Moines, Elliott-Rude coordinated events and researched food security issues.

She studied abroad with Grinnell-in-London, where she conducted research on a nearby community garden with longstanding inequities due to lack of investment and resources. She traveled to India for an internship with the Sehgal Foundation, a rural-development nonprofit, conducting research that later culminated in her senior thesis on the Indian agricultural market system.

In Singapore, Elliott-Rude job shadowed a Grinnell alumni couple, both involved in human rights law, through the CLS’ externship program. “We worked on a training program for lawyers to help defend freedom of speech in Eastern Europe. They taught me a lot about the importance of fighting for your values,” she says.

**Future:** “I plan to go to grad school, but first I want a year or two of work experience. I hope to work in international affairs or public policy in the Chicago area. I know the skills and knowledge I have built at Grinnell will serve me well.”



Maddie Hartog (left) made going to Pub Quiz her Wednesday night tradition.



## MADDIE HARTOG

wanted to meet people from all over the world.

**Hometown:** New York City

**Academics:** “I randomly stumbled into anthropology and ended up loving it. I decided to take another anthropology class, and I was hooked,” Hartog says. “I love learning about Jewish people and media stereotypes. In my senior thesis, I studied Jewish comedians. I also paid attention to the ways identity and politics interact in comedy.”

**Activities:** Chaverim (Jewish Students Club), Pub Quiz, and Ultimate Frisbee.

**Passions:** “My friends and I loved going for walks. Even in the middle of winter, we’d ask each other, ‘Should we go on a walk? The sun’s about to set. It’ll be beautiful,’” Hartog says. “I also tried Ultimate Frisbee and loved it. It’s an intramural team that competes against other Midwest college teams. It’s a big group, but very close.”

**“At Grinnell, I’ve been equipped with a lot of skills that will make me successful.”**

“As a first year, I started attending Friday night dinners and services at Chaverim, the Jewish students’ club, and became involved in that community. I’m very conscious of maintaining balance, and I need that for myself,” Hartog says.

**Future:** “I’m still figuring out what’s ahead for me. I have diverse interests. I’d like to take some time to work so that I’m able to focus on my interests,” Hartog says. “Grinnell has great resources that are never going to leave me, and I’m definitely taking advantage of them.”





## ALEX STEIN

was looking for a college where he could challenge himself.

**Hometown:** Mansfield, Pennsylvania

**Academics:** “I knew I wanted to major in economics, but I wasn’t sure what to do with that degree. I’m happy to say that my advisers, professors, and I figured that out together,” Stein says. “My statistics concentration adviser challenged me to take classes outside my major. Thanks to his support, I also explored philosophy. I loved that I could apply the knowledge from my Philosophy of Life and Existentialism classes to my life.”

Stein also conducted two internships; the first was recommended to him by Grinnell’s Center for Careers, Life, and Service. “I worked for the Iowa Center for Economic Success in Des Moines, where I helped Iowa entrepreneurs get funds to start their businesses. This showed me how I can make a positive impact,” Stein says.

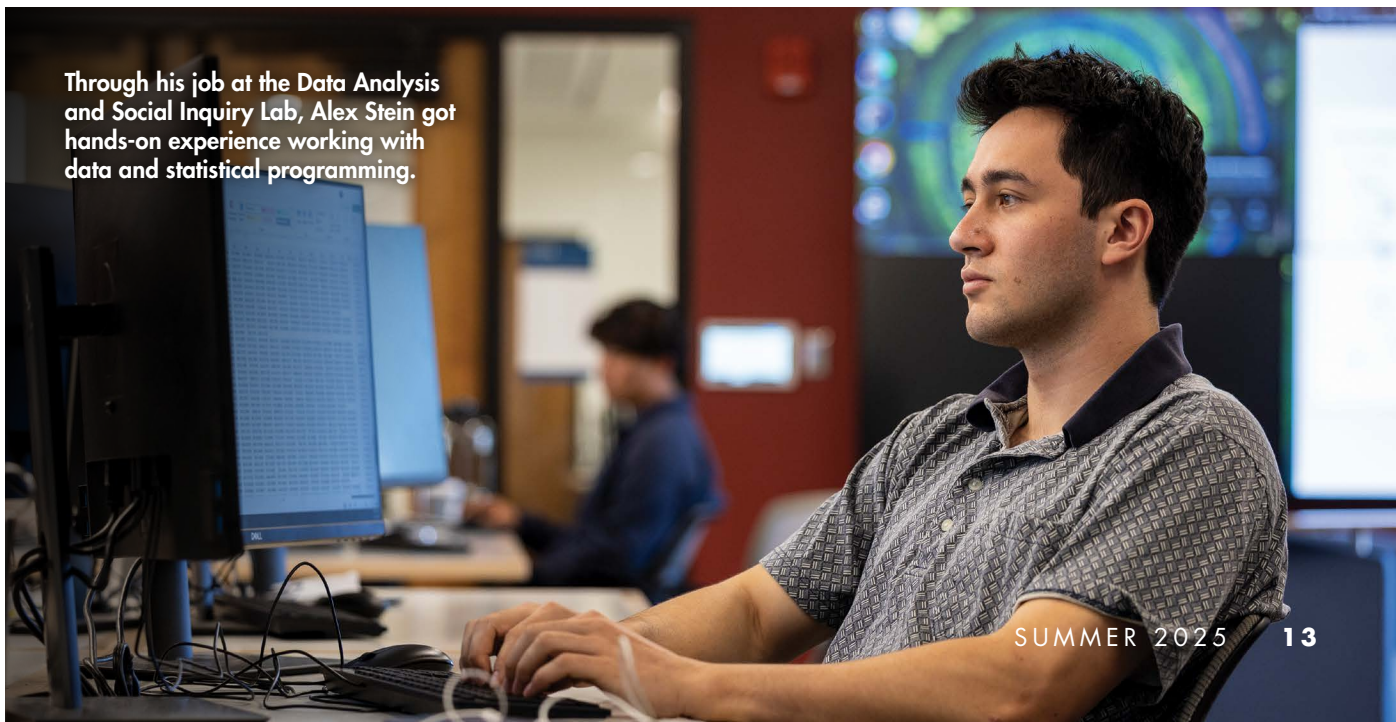
“A year later, I transitioned to a corporate internship in New York City. I focused on accounting for high-net-worth clients. It was a rewarding experience. I worked nine-to-five, lived in one of the greatest cities in the world, and met great people.”

**Activities:** Men’s basketball, Grinnell Advocates (raises awareness about sexual assault and dating violence on campus), and Student-Athletes Leading Social Change (SALSC) president.

**Passions:** “I enjoyed being SALSC president. It was amazing to host events for the whole campus. I believe I fulfilled my goal of leaving Grinnell a better place than when I arrived.”

**Future:** Stein accepted a full-time position as a recruiter at Northbound Executive Search in New York. “I am thrilled to be back in the Big Apple and take advantage of all the opportunities that present themselves.” 📖

Through his job at the Data Analysis and Social Inquiry Lab, Alex Stein got hands-on experience working with data and statistical programming.





# BUILDING

## From scholarships and mentoring to care packages and study breaks, alumni affinity groups support students while connecting Grinnellians from every era

by Anne Stein '84

Whether it's sharing career advice, sponsoring a study break, or endowing scholarships and other funds, four new alumni affinity groups are giving Grinnellians a multitude of ways to support and connect with students while celebrating identity-based communities on and off campus.

Affinity groups, explains **Sarah Smith-Benanti**, associate director of alumni and donor relations for diverse communities, create space for Grinnellians of shared identities to connect beyond traditional class year and regional structures.

"Affinity groups lift up diverse leaders and give voice to their unique experiences," she says. Affinity groups

are about acceptance and interaction and are open to anyone, whether or not they belong to or identify directly with that identity-based community. Anyone with an interest in these cultures and communities is welcome to join in the efforts to build bridges.

Now in its second full year, Grinnell Rainbow Alumni (GRA) was the first identity-based affinity group to organize, and it has since been followed by three more: the Grinnell Black Alumni Network (GBAN); Conexiones, for Grinnell's Latine/x community; and most recently the Alumni Disability Alliance (ADA).

Grinnell's Office of Development and Alumni Relations also plans to form future affinity groups



# BRIDGES



GBAN



GRA



Conexiones

around first generation/low income, Jewish, Asian American and Pacific Islander, and international student identities.

“Most of us getting into this alumni affinity group effort are doing it for the current students, rather than ourselves,” explains **Noel Green ’94**, who co-leads GBAN with **Opeyemi Awe ’15**. “The more that we can surround the students with our experiences, expertise, and knowledge, the more it benefits them. And I love the feeling of giving back and having an influence on an up-and-coming student,” says Green, who is executive director of a charter middle school.

The affinity groups also have worked to educate and engage alumni more broadly about issues impacting today’s students. For example, GRA suggested an online

town hall for alums to meet with President **Anne F. Harris**. Recently, both GRA and GBAN have hosted presidential town hall meetings to discuss current political events. Even though they were organized by the affinity groups, the meetings were open to all alumni.

## GROWING THE LEGACY

There have long been outreach activities to engage Black alumni with campus life — along with efforts to connect current Black students with alumni for coaching, mentoring, and job hunting. And there is a long list of Black alums who worked with and on behalf of students over the years.



**Above:** GBAN members gathered in Chicago in March to discuss plans for the coming year, including the Black Alumni Weekend events in October. **Below:** Grinnellians at the Chicago gathering included (l-r) Aziza Mabrey-Wakefield '25, Sarah Smith-Benanti, Jeffrey Fields '90, and GBAN co-chairs Ope Awe '15, and Noel Green '94. **Right:** Debbie Gottschalk '90 and Jasiah Villalta '26 had a chance to talk at the Reunion multicultural reception.

The GBAN organizers say they hope that their group will serve as a lasting way to honor the work of the committed Black alums who came before them and be a tangible support for those who come after them.

Alumni from across generations will have a special opportunity to come together this fall. GBAN has been instrumental in helping to organize a Black Alumni Weekend to be held on campus Oct. 3-5, 2025, the first such gathering in over a decade. The theme of the reunion, “Rooted in Excellence: Reawakening Our Legacy, Rebuilding Our Community,” is envisioned as a way to engage with the brilliance of Black Grinnellians while honoring the array of their respective experiences. All alumni are welcome.

## MENTORING CONNECTIONS

Affinity group members regularly talk with students from SOL (Student Organization of Latine), BSU (Black Student Union), and SRC (Stonewall Resource Center) to determine how they can best serve them.

One area of focus has been an intentional partnership with the MentorGrinnell program, which provides an online platform for students to seek guidance and support from alumni, and for alumni to share their experiences and insights.



When **Kristina Hall '27**, a BSU cabinet member and economics major signed up for MentorGrinnell, she was paired with **Kari Bassett '98**, who co-chairs GBAN's Student Engagement Committee and oversees the Iowa Black History Research Collective.

“I wanted to meet with Black alumni specifically because as a Black woman, I wanted to see how (Kari) handled any academic or personal hardships and get any advice she could give me,” Hall says. “Having these affinity groups for students (like the Black Student



# “The more that we can surround the students with our experiences, expertise, and knowledge, the more it benefits them.”

—NOEL GREEN



Union) to connect with someone of a similar race, or cultural identity, or other identities, is important.”

Bassett, who lives outside Des Moines and frequently comes to campus, says she is impressed with the level of engagement with affinity groups by students. “I really commend current students because they’re actually interested in interacting with us,” says Bassett, who admits she was “completely terrified of alumni” when she was a student.

**Juliana Gaddis ’25** previously served as BSU co-president and did an internship with Bassett on Iowa Black history two summers ago. “When you’re a student, it feels like the relationship between students and alumni is really distant. But meeting with Kari and other Black alumni helped close that gap.”

## PACKAGES FILLED WITH CARE

Even the simplest gestures can create important connections. Many alums make care packages for students as a part of the Alumni Care Package project that was first launched by a group of alumni on the Everyday Class Notes (ECN) Facebook page. Now in its 11th year, the project is aimed at sending every Grinnell student a small package of goodies in late February.

A group of alumni have done LGBTQIA+ care packages for years and sometimes labels such as “This package contains Queer Pride (and also food)” or “Asian Snacks to Share with Friends” offer hints about the theme of the contents inside. Many alums include notes about their time on campus and offer words of encouragement.

GRA has become active as a group in the Alumni Care Packages program, putting together queer-themed packages. Recently, Conexiones members also decided to participate in the Alumni Care Package project as a group. In addition, GRA, Conexiones, and GBAN coordinate with staff on campus to sponsor study breaks for students during finals and other stressful times, and they often purchase culturally specific foods that are popular with the students for those breaks.

## FROM SCHOLARSHIPS TO DRAG SHOWS

Grinnell Rainbow Alumni (GRA) has four committees, a quarterly newsletter, and Pride Month alumni get-togethers. Ren-Gay-Vous gatherings were held in nine cities this year.

GRA has also created an endowed internship fund — **Kian Witherspoon ’25** was the first recipient to receive support from that fund last summer — and has established an endowed scholarship fund that will

support an award to be given for the first time this year.

“We have about 500 members,” says **Rick Rose ’88**, a communications professional who co-chairs the group with **Carly Jerome ’11**. “It’s not just for LGBTQIA+ people; it’s also for allies.”

The past two years the group has sponsored Drag Show as a fundraiser at Reunion. Last year they raised about \$20,000 to finish endowing the Rainbow Alumni Endowed Scholarship Fund. This year, the show raised more than \$17,000 from over 200 donors.

The second fund is the Rainbow Alumni Endowed Internship Fund, which annually will provide full funding to a student from any identity group to complete an internship at an LGBTQIA+ nonprofit. The internship was initially funded by a single alum but since then, says Rose, “we’ve raised about \$100,000 from scores of alumni.”

As the first Rainbow intern, Witherspoon spent the summer at Coextensive Collective, an experimental art collective focused on the queer and trans people of color (QTPOC) community in Houston. “It was

life-changing,” they say. “I built networks of care, grew professionally, and had a blast along the way!”

In addition to scholarships, GRA encourages members to donate to the Stonewall Resource Center, a staff-supported multipurpose space in Younker Hall that serves the LGBTQIA+ community and other student groups. The center will be celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2026.

There have always been generous and involved queer alumni, says Rose, explaining why he and others have put so much effort into this affinity group. Those who founded the GRA also wanted to build better connections between alumni and the LGBTQIA+ community on campus. “We felt like it was time to establish something more focused that not only supports students (as well as faculty and staff) but reminds people that regardless of their experience at Grinnell, students can use their help and advice. This is an opportunity to make things better for students and to reconnect with the College.”

In a survey of GRA members, the mentorship



Left: Rainbow Alumni members hosted a Ren-Gay-Vous event in Washington, D.C. in July. Above: Conexiones co-chairs Jasmine Sánchez (red dress) and Luis Hernandez (brown shirt and black shorts) are pictured to the right of a banner in a group photo taken during Conexiones’ Reunion open house.



program was ranked highest in interest. “There’s a strong desire to support students directly,” says Rose, “and queer people helping other queer people is a very personal and fulfilling part of being a volunteer. And being able to work one-on-one via a mentorship is particularly fulfilling.”

GRA also sponsors study breaks at Stonewall Resource Center as well as the Lavender Brunch celebration for graduating students.

## CONNECTIONS GROW INTO CONEXIONES

The Conexiones alumni group officially launched in September 2024 and is co-chaired by **Jasmine E. Sánchez ’10** and **Luis Hernandez ’15**. “We’re a group of alumni who identify as Latinx/Latine,” says Sánchez, “and we’re building community with students and reconnecting alumni who have a wealth of experience to build bridges across generations, so students have a network and don’t feel alone at college or when they leave.”

“Our mission is to support and develop lifelong relationships with Grinnell alumni, current students, and with other alumni communities.”

Sánchez says the group is building slowly but surely. To attract members, Conexiones shares stories about and profiles of Latinx/e students and alumni via social media and meets with student leaders from the College’s Student Organization of Latine (SOL). Conexiones and SOL focus on uplifting Latine/x alumni and current Latine/x students, respectively, and are open to any interested alumni and students.

“We need to know what students’ needs are,” she says. “If we don’t, we aren’t doing our job.” Among other topics, Sánchez says, students are interested in hearing from alumni about their career paths, how internships helped them, and how they have looked for jobs. SOL student leaders also support leadership development as they host campus events and build community on campus.



During finals week, **Julianna Gaddis ’25** (left) and **Bethle Ayele ’27** were among the students who gathered in the **Conney M. Kimbo Black Cultural Center** to enjoy a study break and some goodies provided by GBAN members.

Sánchez has met with students and talked to them about navigating life as a first-generation college student, balancing work study with academics, and being away from family for the first time.

“Sometimes you don’t have to take action,” she says. “You can just listen, and I think it is reassuring to students. It’s important to connect in informal spaces and just say ‘hello’.”

In addition to putting together care packages, Conexiones has sponsored study breaks with snacks and a get-together with students and alumni at Reunion. As membership continues to grow, the group is planning to have alumni social events in different cities during Latine Heritage Month and to sponsor career conversations and panels with other affinity groups and students.

“Sometimes you just want to be in a space where someone understands your lived experience,” says Sánchez, about why affinity groups are important. “For me as a student, it would have been great to hear from



first-gen, low-income, first-born alums about carrying all the pressures of how do I graduate, how do I land a job successfully, and navigating other things that my parents didn't know about."

"I also enjoy building community across generations because as alums, we have so much to share, but most importantly, we have so much to learn from current students on campus," she says. "At the end of the day, we want to make sure that students who connect with us feel seen, held, and cared for."

## A NEW DISABILITY ALLIANCE

The fourth affinity group, and the newest, is the Alumni Disability Alliance (ADA), headed by **Emma Potter '24** and **Em Huss-Lederman '24**. The program is just getting started, says Huss-Lederman, who currently works for the College in Alumni Relations as a program

coordinator and previously worked in the Disability Resources office when she was a student at Grinnell. The group is open to all alums and allies.

At the first of three meetings so far, Alliance leaders talked to students about what could be done to support them and help them navigate disability resources on campus. Then they had a roundtable with alums and **Autumn Wilke**, the College's associate chief diversity officer for disability resources, to learn about current issues on campus and discuss what alums think is important.

Topics included how to navigate the transition from college to graduate school; how to access accommodations processes; how to help students get through externships; how to navigate job hunting and careers with a disability; how to handle invisible disabilities; and how alumni can support students and one another.



**“At the end of the day, we want to make sure that students who connect with us feel seen, held, and cared for.”**

–JASMINE E. SÁNCHEZ



Far left: Caito Scherr '09 performed during the Reunion Drag Show fundraiser sponsored by GRA during Reunion. Near left: Alums gathered for a group photo at the Des Moines Ren-Gay-Vous event in late June. Above: Alums celebrating the GRA group's kickoff included (l-r) Rick Rose '88, Fae Townsend '01, Randell Christopher '87, and Conner Stanfield '21.

“As alumni, the ADA allows us to find community post-Grinnell, to reconnect and build new connections. It allows us to bounce ideas off one another to continue to support each other and current Grinnellians,” Huss-Lederman says.

The ADA also celebrated student graduates with disabilities last spring. Each graduate was awarded a pin by the Office of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, along with contact information for the affinity group in case they have questions or need advice. Potter also spoke at the ceremony. In the future, ADA plans to help fund the Disability Cultural Center, located in Steiner Hall, with furniture, snacks, activities, or other items students might like.

“To be able to pass on any helpful knowledge that benefited us and can benefit students as they graduate from Grinnell, to make that transition as easy as possible for them, allows us to continue our support for

the Grinnell community as alumni,” Huss-Lederman says. “We’re excited to see how things grow and develop.” 📖

## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

Every Grinnell College alumni affinity group is open to all alums, without regard to identity. Alums interested in getting involved with any of the alumni affinity groups can contact Sarah Smith-Benanti at [smithben@grinnell.edu](mailto:smithben@grinnell.edu) or 641-269-9888.

## LEARN MORE ONLINE

Affinity Groups: [alumni.grinnell.edu/affinity](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/affinity)  
 Rainbow Alumni: [alumni.grinnell.edu/rainbow](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/rainbow)  
 Black Alumni: [alumni.grinnell.edu/gban](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/gban)  
 Conexiones: [alumni.grinnell.edu/conexiones](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/conexiones)



# A LEGACY OF SERVICE



**The Lori Ann Schwab '95  
Alumni Grant Helps Grinnellians  
Make a Difference**

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by Tim Schmitt





With funding from a Schwab grant, Tara Neavins enlisted the help of her daughters' Girl Scout troop to create and donate 175 blankets to survivors of sexual assault.

When **Tara M. Neavins '93**, PhD, and her daughters, Sofia and Angelica, delivered 175 colorful, hand-tied fleece blankets to a clinic in Sacramento, California, they weren't just offering warmth. They were offering dignity, choice, and compassion to survivors of sexual assault.

Made by the girls' local Girl Scout troop with support from the **Lori Ann Schwab '95 Alumni Grant**, the blankets replaced drab hospital-issued coverings with vibrant patterns, bright colors, and messages of empowerment. Survivors, some as young as five, were invited to choose the blanket they liked best, restoring a measure of agency in a moment often defined by fear and powerlessness.

"So much had been taken away from them and lost and now they could make a choice," says Neavins, who earned her doctorate in human services psychology. "As a psychologist, I know that was an actual intervention that helped prevent long-term harm. They now have a choice, and that matters."

The project also sparked powerful conversations within the troop about sexual violence. "They felt empowered, too," Neavins says. "They felt heard; they felt seen."

## REMEMBERING LORI ANN SCHWAB

Created in 2006 by Doug and Lisbeth Schwab in honor of their daughter, the alumni grant program honors **Lori Ann Schwab '95**, a Berkeley native and Grinnell art major who died suddenly from an illness while studying abroad in London.

Lori's parents used the collective memorial gifts that were received after her passing to fund the program. Alumni from the classes of 1992 to 1998, who would have overlapped with Lori's time at Grinnell, are eligible to apply for the grant. More than 40 alumni have now received the award.

The program provides up to \$2,000 to as many as five alumni each year for projects that reflect Lori's

values. Known for her compassion and activism, Lori volunteered at the campus preschool, advocated for women's issues, and was deeply committed to making the world a better place by helping others.

"She was quick to smile and give support," recalls **Molly Campe '96**. "She was active beyond the college walls, and she loved working at the preschool."

Campe became friends with Schwab during her time at Grinnell and was one of the first recipients of the Lori Ann Schwab Prize for Community Service, another award granted in Schwab's name to recognize

a fourth-year student's service to the campus and local community.

"Although she was very humble and wouldn't like the attention, I think Lori would love to know that once a year, we stand and say her name in Herrick Chapel and bring the energy of her life to the surface again," says Campe. "She lived a great life, and it's important we remember her year after year. I think she would love that we remember her by supporting others who are doing good."

## LOCAL EFFORTS, LASTING IMPACT

This year's Schwab Grant recipients are meeting the needs of communities from coast to coast in powerful, personal ways. The awardees demonstrate the wide range of projects the fund supports — all rooted in a shared commitment to uplift and empower others.



**Charlie Wong '95** will use his grant to expand K-12 chess programs across Iowa. "The award will have a significant impact on our project," Wong says. "It will increase the number of scholastic chess tournaments in Iowa and encourage more children to take up the game. By supporting this project, we can make chess more accessible for all children and reduce financial barriers for top players competing nationally."



**Erin Owen '94** (third from left) received the grant to support her work with Workshop U, a postsecondary coaching program for underserved young adults in the greater Philadelphia area. Her project focuses on training career coaches who reflect the racial and ethnic identities of the students they serve. "This grant validates our work," Owen says. "Receiving support from the Schwab fund feels like a full-circle moment — connecting my Grinnell education to work that empowers young people to build meaningful lives and careers."



**Kate Beran '97** (center) is using her grant to help students from College Hill High School — many of whom have never set foot on a college campus — visit Oregon State University for hands-on STEM workshops and immersive college experiences. "Once they come to our school, they find hope not only in graduating from high school, but in what they might achieve after," Beran says. "This grant helps make college feel within reach."





Above: Bill Mabon '95 used his 2024 Schwab grant to purchase winter coats, hats, gloves, and warm socks in support of the nonprofit Coats of Friendship organization, which serves homeless and impoverished individuals in south central Pennsylvania. Right: Kristin Stuchis (right) used her second Schwab grant to help students attend a Latina Youth Leadership conference in 2020.



## ART, ACCESS, AND COMMUNITY

In 2024, **Don Elmore '98** used his Schwab Grant to bring arts programming to children living in emergency shelters in Dedham, Massachusetts. As the state responded to a rapid influx of migrants by opening two emergency shelters, more than 160 families — many with young children — found themselves without access to enrichment or recreational activities. Most children, even those enrolled in local public schools, couldn't participate in after-school programs due to transportation barriers.

In response, a group of local volunteers, including art teachers, community members, and the Dedham Arts Boosters, stepped in to create art-based enrichment sessions at the shelters.

"With the award, we were able to purchase supplies like Magna-Tiles, building toys, and general art materials," says Elmore. "These allowed us to create engaging, hands-on experiences that supported the children's development and well-being."

The sessions, which began in late spring 2024 and will continue through winter 2025, focus on creative play, collaborative building, and open-ended art exploration. Each session serves between 12 and 20

children, offering not just activities but a sense of community and resilience.

"The Schwab Award gave us the flexibility to respond quickly," Elmore says. "And by emphasizing reusable materials, its impact will continue well beyond this year."

## YOGA AND BREAKING BARRIERS

**Kristin Stuchis '98** is a two-time Schwab Grant recipient (2013 and 2020) whose work exemplifies the award's spirit.

In 2013, Stuchis received a Schwab Grant in support of her project, Yoga for All, which allowed her to offer free yoga classes to the Marshalltown community, including residents of a transitional housing program. "It wove people together, broke down barriers, and built community and connections," she says.

A longtime Spanish heritage teacher at Marshalltown High School, where more than 60% of students identify as Latinx, Stuchis wanted to build something lasting for her students. With help from her 2020 Schwab Grant, Stuchis created the Heritage Spanish Resource Center (HSRC), featuring books by Latinx authors. From poetry and personal memoirs to



Left: Students from Marshalltown High School with books they received through the Heritage Spanish Resource Center, with support from a Schwab grant. Below: Kate Beran (left) with College Hill High School students, who will have the opportunity to visit Oregon State University thanks to the Schwab grant Beran received in 2025.



**“My students now are using their voices, sharing their stories, and adding their perspectives to the world.”**

—KRISTIN STUCHIS

historical accounts from Mexico, El Salvador, and the Dominican Republic, the collection invites students to see their own stories reflected.

“I really needed access to books they’d be interested in,” she says. “It was thrilling to pick them out with the students. They met in the public library over the summer to help me choose titles. Several students have told me ‘This is the first time I’ve read my own story.’”

That sense of connection has continued to grow, as students are now creating their own stories and presenting reflections on books they read. “They’re so engaged,” Stuchis says. “Now they’re writing and hoping to publish their work as open educational resources this summer. About 40 of them have been working with ISU mentors over the past three years.”

With funds from the grant, Stuchis also purchased gift certificates from Prairie Lights Books, an independent bookstore in Iowa City. This allowed students to purchase additional Latinx titles either online or in person and encouraged the store to

increase its inventory of underrepresented voices. “It had an impact in a lot of areas,” says Stuchis.

## CARRYING LORI’S LIGHT

In the 18 years since its creation, the Lori Ann Schwab ’95 Alumni Grant has emboldened others to carry forth Lori’s legacy of kindness, love, service to community, and commitment to leaving the world a better place. For recipients like Stuchis, Beran, Elmore, Wong, Owen, and Neavins, it’s more than financial support — it’s a seed, a spark, and a legacy.

“My students now are using their voices, sharing their stories, and adding their perspectives to the world,” says Stuchis. “The grant planted a seed, and that seed continues to grow.” 📖

The annual grant application deadline is March 1. Learn more or apply at [alumni.grinnell.edu/awards/schwab-award](https://alumni.grinnell.edu/awards/schwab-award).





GRINNELL  
BLACK  
ALUMNI  
NETWORK

# ROOTED IN EXCELLENCE: REAWAKENING OUR LEGACY, REBUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

The Grinnell Black Alumni Network (GBAN) warmly invites you to join us for Black Alumni Weekend Oct. 3 – 5, 2025.

Through this weekend (the first in over a decade), we hope to engage with the brilliance of Black Grinnellians while honoring the array of our respective experiences.

More information to follow but for now, mark your calendars for Oct. 3-5 and spread the word.



Grinnell Black Alumni Weekend planning committee.



## THEN AND NOW

On May 19, Grinnell College celebrated the achievements of the Class of 2025 in a commencement ceremony unlike any in nearly three decades. Due to forecasted storms and strong winds, the event was moved to the Field House at the Bear Athletic Center — the first indoor ceremony since 1996. But the spirit of the day remained unchanged: one of joy, pride, and possibility.







1996 vs. 2025

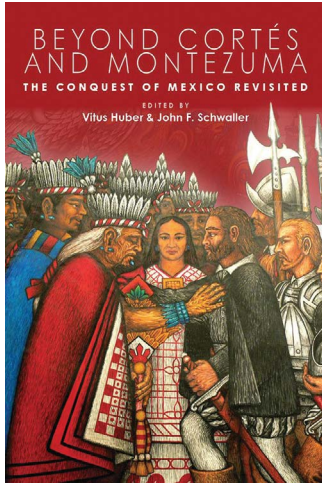




### *Beyond Cortés and Montezuma: The Conquest of Mexico Revisited*

**John Schwaller '69, DHL '09**, and Vitus Huber, editors, University Press of Colorado, February 2025

*Beyond Cortés and Montezuma* sheds light on the complex narrative of the “conquest,” or rather conquista, of Mexico through case studies that interrogate how historians understand that period. This compilation of nuanced reflections on the language, narratives, and memories of the conquista balances the crimes of Spanish colonialism and asymmetries of power that existed within early New

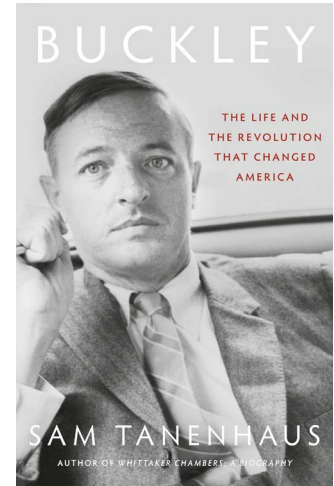


Spain with the abilities of Native peoples to resist, negotiate, and survive. Schwaller, a former president of the Alumni Council, is an emeritus professor of history at the University at Albany, SUNY, and a research associate in history and Latin American studies at the University of Kansas.

### *Buckley: The Life and the Revolution That Changed America*

**Sam Tanenhaus '77**, Random House, June 2025

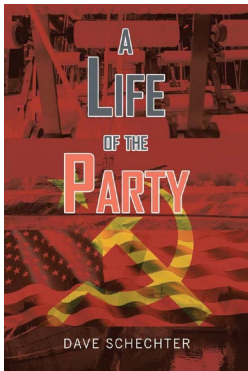
In the 1950s, William F. Buckley Jr. seized the public stage and commanded it for the next half century as he led a new generation of conservative activists and ideologues to the peak of political power and cultural influence. Ten years before his death in 2008, Buckley chose prize-winning biographer Tanenhaus to tell the full, uncensored story of his life and times. Thus began a deep investigation into the vast and often hidden universe of Buckley and the modern conservative revolution. *Buckley* offers a powerfully relevant story about the birth of modern politics and those who shaped it. Tanenhaus, the former editor of *The New York Times Book Review*, is the author of the national bestsellers *Whittaker Chambers: A Biography* (winner of the Los Angeles Times Book Prize and a finalist for both the National Book Award and the Pulitzer Prize) and *The Death of Conservatism*.



### *A Life of the Party*

**Dave Schechter '77**, Fulton Books, February 2025

*A Life of the Party* is a work of historical fiction about Amy Schechter (the author's great-aunt), who devoted four-plus decades of her life (1920s-50s) to the struggles of working men and women as a member of the Communist Party. Amy's adventures took her twice to Russia and across the United States, from strife in coal fields and textile mills to docks and shipyards. Her name appeared in newspaper headlines during a textile strike in North Carolina, and she chronicled labor issues for Communist Party and other sympathetic publications. Dave Schechter has spent a lifetime in journalism, from a daily newspaper and local television stations in the Midwest to the Cable News Network bureau in Jerusalem and CNN's national desk. For the last decade, he has been writing freelance.

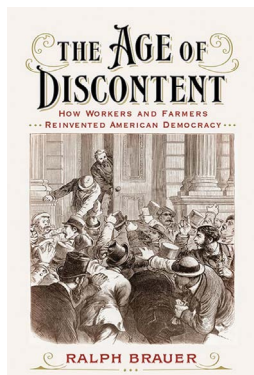




## *The Age of Discontent: How Workers and Farmers Reinvented American Democracy*

**Ralph Brauer '67**, Georgetown University Press, April 2025

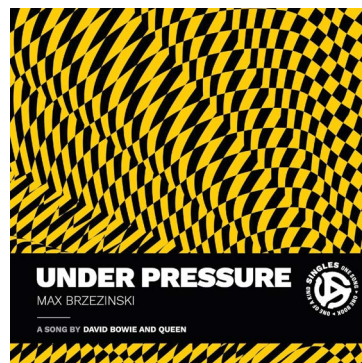
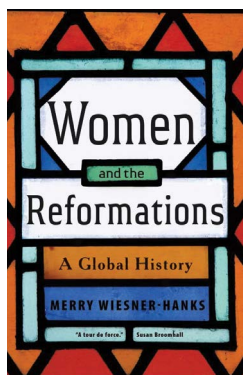
Prevailing narratives of late 19th century American history often focus on wealthy individuals and tycoons while downplaying the very high social and economic stresses they caused. *The Age of Discontent* reveals that it was not the tycoons but rather the laborers and farmers who, in a great uprising of popular democracy, reinvented the nation. Despite a frayed social safety net and violent opposition, they pulled off what has been described as the “Second Emancipation.” *Discontent* chronicles their fascinating story of perseverance and commitment.



## *Women and the Reformations: A Global History*

**Merry Wiesner-Hanks '73**, Yale University Press, October 2024

The Reformations, both Protestant and Catholic, have long been told as stories of men. But women were central to the transformations that took place in Europe and beyond. Renowned scholar Wiesner-Hanks explores the history of women and the Reformations in full for the first time by examining well-known figures like Teresa of Avila, Elizabeth I, and Anne Hutchinson, as well as women whose stories are only now emerging. *Women and the Reformations* explores women's experiences as monarchs, mothers, migrants, martyrs, mystics, and missionaries, revealing that the story of the Reformations is no longer simply European — and that women played a vital role.



## *Under Pressure: A Song by David Bowie and Queen*

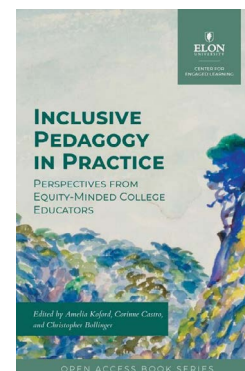
**Max Brzezinski '01**, Duke University Press, February 2025

In 1981, David Bowie and Queen both happened to be in Switzerland: They met and made “Under Pressure.” Recorded on a lark, the song broke the path for subsequent pop anthems. In *Under Pressure*, Brzezinski tells the classic track's story, charting the relationship between pop music, collective politics, and dominant institutions of state, corporations, and civil society.

## *Inclusive Pedagogy in Practice: Perspectives from Equity-Minded College Educators*

**Amelia Koford '07**, Elon University, April 2025

This collection contributes to the literature on inclusive teaching by sharing examples of ways to motivate, engage, and evaluate with diversity, equity, and inclusion in mind. Koford is the lead editor and the co-author of one of the chapters in this book, which came from her collaborations with colleagues at Texas Lutheran University, where she is a librarian and faculty member. *Pedagogy* is an open-access book.



## From Pioneer to Partner: Simmons Champions Mental Health in Athletics

*A lifelong athlete, Austin Simmons sees numerous benefits to having specialized sports counseling at Grinnell.*

by Jeremy Shapiro

When it comes to Grinnell College, **Austin Simmons '90** will tell you he's the luckiest guy alive.

"I am in love with Grinnell, and it's a very visceral reaction for me," Simmons says. "I've had other educational experiences, but I have a transactional feeling about those. Grinnell was everything I needed and more. My foundation is very much from Grinnell, which is why I believe that I have a debt that can never be repaid, but no one will ever say that I didn't try."

Simmons and his wife, Kelly, recently made a \$250,000 gift that will support mental health initiatives for student-athletes. As a student, Simmons played soccer and ran track at Grinnell. He says he could have benefited from seeking guidance from a mental health professional with sports expertise.

"Therapy is like stretching," Simmons says. "You should stretch before you work out, and therapy is really no different. It's just an exercise for whatever endeavor you're working on, and it really can help you get a better focus."

Grinnell College has taken an innovative approach to directly supporting student-athlete mental health and wellness. In 2018, Pioneer Athletics began a partnership with the College's Student Health and Wellness (SHAW) with the utilization of University of Iowa psychology doctorate counselors in support of student-athletes, explains **Holly Roepke**, director of athletics and recreation.

Thanks to the Simmons family gift, there will be funding to hire a sports psychologist so this type of support can continue.

"With this gift, we will be able to provide one-on-one and small group counseling," Roepke says. "We'll also be able to provide education to the broad base of our student-athletes around mental health and wellness, performance, and resilience. I want to express my appreciation to Austin and Kelly for being the lead in realizing solutions for this need and for valuing this area of support for our student-athletes."

Austin works in real estate acquisition and

development as a principal for Brightwork Real Estate in Florida. He's been an athlete his whole life and says it has been a help to him in all sorts of organizational, connection, structural, and health ways.

After graduation, Simmons returned to Grinnell for the next decade to play on the alumni soccer team in their annual Labor Day weekend game against the current Pioneers. While back he would spend time at **John Pfitsch's** house, reinforcing a special relationship Simmons had built with his former coach.

"Those were fantastic memories," he says. "And there's the camaraderie. My best friends are people that I went to school with. I recently flew to Minneapolis to see two guys I played soccer with, though we now play pickleball."

Kelly Simmons is also a longtime athlete, as a long-distance runner and pickleball player. Kelly and Austin's two daughters also played sports growing up, so the Simmons family is well versed in the physical and mental rigors of athletics.

"Athletics can be a high-pressure, intense circumstance, which is why it can give you so many skills, but I think it poses its own challenges," Austin says. "Having someone to talk to with a specific understanding of the athletic endeavor can provide a common language. Sports psychologists can provide a more focused approach in the context of athletics, which I think could help with relating to what student-athletes are going through."

Roepke would like to develop a pipeline for athletics mental health professionals, noting the next opportunities in the College's partnership with the University of Iowa counseling services.

"The idea would be to work with early career counselors throughout the psychology program at the University of Iowa, providing an opportunity to get professional experience at Grinnell," she says. "The roles could range from graduate assistantships to postdoctoral fellowships. It's a way to support Grinnell student-athletes and simultaneously build





**The Simmons family (l-r): Ellie, Austin, Molly, and Kelly Simmons**

opportunities to widen the sport psychology pipeline.”

Simmons said he’s a believer in mental health initiatives, and he’s excited about what Grinnell plans to do to support its student-athletes.

“I like the idea of how it makes you able to better focus and in turn be better at your sport,” he says. “It’s a cycle that makes everyone better, and I try to do things that make us all float just a little higher than we might otherwise.”

Grinnell College student-athletes compete in 20 sports at the Division III level. During this past school year, 418 students competed in Pioneer Athletic programs, and some students are on more than one team. Grinnell’s athletic teams claimed a second consecutive combined Midwest Conference All-Sports title, which is awarded to the school with the best cumulative finish in the conference.

For 2024-25, the Pioneers won five regular season conference titles (women’s golf in SLIAC, men’s and women’s tennis, and men’s and women’s swimming) and were runners up in three more sports. Grinnell College teams were represented at the NCAA Championships in men’s basketball, men’s and women’s tennis, women’s golf, and individually in men’s swimming and diving, men’s track and field, and women’s golf. 🏆

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Alumni interested in discussing a contribution for athletics mental health or other areas of athletics can contact Mary Zug, associate director of development for athletics, at [zugmary1@grinnell.edu](mailto:zugmary1@grinnell.edu) or 641-269-4554.

## 1940s

### 1949

**Juanita Vandas Baburek** celebrated her 100th birthday on Feb. 4.



**Joyce Ogle Martin** celebrated her 100th birthday on April 4.

**Renny Hauer Vanstrum** celebrated her 100th birthday on June 6.

## 1950s

### 1951

**Loran Olsen's** generosity helps support the Ruth and Loran Olsen Festival of Native American Music, an annual event during Native American Heritage Month that highlights the depth of Indigenous artistry through performances and educational events held on the campus of Washington State University at Pullman.

### 1958

**Carolyn Hewes Toft** (from St. Louis) and **Jane Green Hayes** (from Washington state) met for a mini reunion of music majors at **Judy Wise Bond's** Northfield, Minnesota, townhouse in early December 2024. Faced with an outside temp of 6 degrees, their plans to attend St. Olaf's Christmas Festival devolved into couch-watching a DVD performance from another year. They did, however, make it to their favorite restaurant (see photo), where they raised a toast to Grinnell. Judy and Carolyn had been in Grinnell earlier in 2024, when they picked up Russ Leggett (honorary class of '58) for a whirlwind celebration of opera at Ottumwa. The trio reached their destination, the once-elegant Hotel Ottumwa, just in time for a false-alarm tornado siren — summertime in Iowa. After enjoying two nights



**Judy Wise Bond, Carolyn Hewes Toft and Jane Green Hayes, all 1958 music majors, at the Ole Store in Northfield, Minnesota.**

of ever-more-riotous performances of Puccini's "Gianni Schicchi," Judy dropped Russ in Grinnell before she and Carolyn headed back to Northfield in time for a splendid local theater production of "The Children's Hour." Carolyn flew home the next day, only to return to "The Cities" a few weeks later for a Minneapolis Christmas with daughter **Jessica Toft '89** plus granddaughters **Sophia Schott '21** and **Linea Schott** (University of Puget Sound, 2025).

## 1960s

### 1964

**Phil King** and **Dave Weir** met for lunch on May 29 and took a photo under the Grinnell Street sign in Claremont, California. Phil also just published a new novel/memoir, *The Curious Case of the Cleveland*



*Indians: A Time Traveler's Memoir*, through BookLocker Press. He notes that a considerable amount about Grinnell (all positive) is included, although the College and persons are not named per se.

**Ann Lousin** celebrated 50 years of service in legal education in January and was recognized by the Illinois General Assembly for her impact on the legal field. She is recognized as an expert on the Illinois Constitution and regularly

writes columns for the *Chicago Daily Law Bulletin*.

**Tom Phillips** won a gold medal in basketball shooting at the 2024 World Senior Games in St. George, Utah.



# 1970s

## 1970

**Tom Greenfield**, professor of English emeritus at SUNY Geneseo, performed an original song titled “Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead: An Argument” at 54 Below Cabaret Club in New York City as part of its sixth annual 54/54/54 concert on May 4. A video of his performance is available on YouTube.

## 1973

**Mark Brenner** was elected a 2024 Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) for outstanding paleoenvironmental change research and publishing, multidisciplinary contributions, and collaborations across geology, geography, and archaeology.

**Thomas Farr and Deirdre Schechtman Farr** ’75 celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary May 25. They are the parents of **Kathleen Farr Matthews** ’05.

**Jefferson Fox** was awarded a Distinguished Visiting Fellowship from the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University in Kyoto, Japan.

**Gary Giddins** received the 2025 AB Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Academy.

**Irma McClaurin, DSS** ’23 was a featured presenter and honoree at the “Trailblazers Talk: Celebrating Women in Hip-Hop” symposium sponsored by Lincoln Center on April 5. The event was held in collaboration with the Hip-Hop Education Center, where it was

announced that the Fresh Bold So Def: Women in Hip-Hop Collection will be housed in the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst.

## 1975

**Al Cabbage** was inducted to the Hall of Achievement in Northwestern University’s Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications. This is the

## ALUMNI PROFILE BARBARA BEALE ARNOLD

**Barbara Beale Arnold** ’64 comes from three generations of First Congregational United Church of Christ ministers, a denomination known for its leadership in social justice circles. And while she did not continue this career, it certainly has shaped how she moves in the world.

“I’ve done this ministry in my own ways,” Arnold explains.

And lately, one of those ways has been to dress as a stereotypical old grandmother while singing at social justice events. Barbara is part of the Madison, Wisconsin, chapter of Raging Grannies. “I saw them sing at a Dane County fundraiser and was enchanted,” she explains. So, when two Raging Grannies friends asked her to join, she was intrigued.

Founded in 1987 in Victoria, British Columbia, the Raging Grannies is an international movement whose focus is “using creative and humorous protests for political education.” They challenge age and gender stereotypes, often dressing the part of the sweet old granny while simultaneously singing lyrics that are bold and sometimes bawdy.

The Madison chapter began in 2002, performing their own satirical songs that elevate issues around gender, the environment, and numerous other social concerns. They regularly perform at the Dane County Farmers’ Market and social justice events and are easy to spot in their colorful “granny glam.”

“We are raging, so we don’t hide in nooks and crannies,” Arnold says.

by Melanie Drake ’92



highest honor Medill bestows on its graduates. Cubbage holds two master's degrees from Medill. Cubbage is married to **Charlotte Strader Cubbage '75**. His parents, **Jerome Cubbage '49** and **Marion Bendixen Cubbage '48**, and his children **Gwen Cubbage '06** and **Geoffrey Cubbage '08**, are all Grinnell alumni.

**Casey Malcolm** attended the inauguration ceremony at Connecticut College in New London, Connecticut, April 26, as the delegate representative on behalf of President Anne F. Harris and Grinnell College.

## SHARE YOUR NEWS

Tell us about awards, promotions, family milestones, and more, so we can share your news in future class notes. Submissions may be edited for length, content, and style.

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Class notes are published on a rolling basis in the next available issue. The magazine is published three times a year: fall (November), spring (March), and summer (July). Class notes production for each issue closes approximately eight weeks prior to publication.

**Need to update your address or contact information?**

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## 1978

**Keith Harmon** received the Earl Young Physician of Excellence Award from Park Nicollet/Methodist Hospital in Minneapolis in recognition of his outstanding care and leadership. For 32 years, Harmon has practiced at Park Nicollet Clinic and Methodist Hospital in pulmonary diseases, critical care medicine, and sleep disorders. He has been department chair and president of the medical staff, participating in numerous committees. He also has been recognized annually by Mpls.St.Paul Magazine as a "Top Doctor."



**Lisa Hopp** was appointed dean of the College of Nursing at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science.

## 1980s

### 1982

**Ellen Rose** is a senior advisor at Asurity Advisors, a leading provider of regulatory risk and compliance consulting services to mortgage and financial service industries.

**Reid Wilson** was named lead of the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality.

### 1983

**Joan Clinefelter** gave two presentations in April for the History Hour Series in Colorado

titled "Holocaust 101." Clinefelter discussed lesser-known aspects of the Nazis' genocide of European Jews as well as the Nazis' postwar plans and the role of Auschwitz in those plans.

### 1984

**Cathy Sullivan** teaches English at Instituto Na'atik in Felipe Carrillo Puerto, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

### 1986

**Julie Cassiday's** book *Russian Style: Performing Gender, Power, and Putinism*, was awarded the AATSEEL's 2024 Svetlana Boym Book Prize in Cultural Studies.

**Neil Weintraub** was a part of the Sedona Heritage Museum's Sedona Stories speaker series in April. Weintraub shared his favorite stories from his four decades of adventures, discoveries, challenges, and lessons learned in backcountry locations across the Colorado Plateau, including the discovery of "Tim's Cave" outside of Sedona.

### 1987

**Catherine Duncan's** book, *Everyday Awakening*, published in July 2023, continues to gain momentum. Duncan has had book signings across the country, been on 50 podcasts and seven TV stations, and is now launching a podcast.

### 1989

**Ann E. Haker** completed a Master of Science in Health Systems at Cedars-Sinai Health Sciences University.

**Neva Specht** was appointed executive vice chancellor and provost at Appalachian State.



# 1990s

## 1992

**Thomas Meglioranza** appeared on two recent recordings. The first is “Into the Still Hollow,” an album of vocal music composed by John Christian Rommereim, Grinnell College Blanche Johnson Professor of Music, with pianist Reiko Uchida. The second was in the role of The Host in Lukas Foss’s one-man chamber opera, “Introductions and Good-Byes,” with the Boston Modern Orchestra Project, conducted by Gil Rose.



**Thomas Meglioranza (right) and Reiko Uchida at Oktaven Audio in Mt. Vernon, New York.**

## 1994

**Andrew Weiner’s** new book *The Frog Daddy*, the second in an early-reader graphic novel series, was published by Little, Brown on June 10. The books are loosely autobiographical (very loosely, as *The Frog Daddy* retells the time he got turned into a frog while on a class field trip to New York City). He also co-wrote with Alicia Keys the graphic novel *Girl on Fire* (HarperCollins, 2022).

## 1997

**Lisa Kirkpatrick Gill** was named acting U.S. attorney for Minnesota in February.

# 2000s

## 2001

**Josh Blue** has been appointed head of education-curriculum, learning, and assessment for the English Schools Foundation in Hong Kong.

**Theresa Duncan** has published a coffee cookbook, *Destination Coffee: 60 Recipes from Around the World*. Duncan is associate vice president of principal gifts at the Wildlife Conservation Society.

## ALUMNI PROFILE GEOFF HOOPS

There are classrooms, buildings, offices, and other campus spaces that more than a few alumni have never stepped foot in. Thanks to **Geoff Hoops ’89** and the 35th reunion cluster, alums attending Reunion 2025 got to rediscover many of those places on campus.

Hoops, along with **Tom Worth ’89**, **Austin Simmons ’90**, and George A. Drake Professor of Religious Studies **Henry Rietz ’89**, came up with the idea for the Doornation Scavenger Hunt during the Reunion planning process.

“It’s a typical treasure hunt, but it got people moving around the campus and into different buildings,” Hoops says.

Alums adopted a door for a \$20 donation to the College’s Pioneer Fund. Once Reunion attendees arrived in Grinnell, they picked up a map highlighting locations to find doors, which were marked with the sponsor’s name, along with an explanation of what the room behind the door is used for.

The Hoops are multi-generation Grinnellians, and **Jenny Hoops ’17** is probably the family member most familiar with the current campus layout. Her dad and mom are Geoff, who’s a professor and chair of the chemistry and biochemistry department at Butler University, and **Joanna (Gibbs) Hoops ’91**, a longtime preschool teacher. The couple met at Grinnell. Geoff’s parents, **Stephen Hoops ’62** and **Shirley (Neuhaus) Hoops ’64**, also met on campus and are now retired.

by Anne Stein ’84



**Matthew Warner-Blankenship** was elected to the board of directors for Dentons Davis Brown, a full-service Iowa law firm.

## 2003

**Erin Stutelberg** was awarded a University System of Maryland Board of Regents Award for Excellence in Teaching. This is Stutelberg's ninth year as a professor teaching courses in Methods of Teaching English, Young Adult Literature, Critical Approaches to Language and Literacy, and Teacher Wellness in the Seidel School of Education at Salisbury University.

## 2005

**Christopher deBree** and **Nicole deBree** welcomed **Dean Nichols deBree** in August 2024.



## 2006

**Andrew Behrendt** was elected to the Rolla (Missouri) City Council in April and received a Missouri Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching in May. Behrendt is an associate teaching professor of history at the Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla.

**Elizabeth Hipp** is an associate attending board-certified medical physicist at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and married **Keith Voetsch Jr.** on March 22, 2025, in Florham Park, New Jersey. Other Grinnellians in attendance were the bride's parents, **Joan (Brockmann) Hipp '76** and **Mark Hipp '75**, sister **Christina**

(**Hipp**) **Aslin '10**, and former roommates **Vashti Davis Sawtelle '06** and **Kendra Banchy '06**.

## 2007

**Michele Goad** was elected to the Board of Aldermen for Ward 2 with the City of Brentwood, Missouri.

**Katie Mineck** was appointed to serve as the first chief data officer at Candid, a nonprofit organization that provides comprehensive data and insights about the social sector.

**Daren Proebstel** recently joined the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as a senior attorney in the Office of Compliance in Washington, D.C.

## 2009

**Jacob Sagrans** (right) and **Pendred Noyce** (daughter of **Robert N. Noyce '49**) attended Boston's Stand Up for Science protest on March 7. Both work for Tumblehome, Inc., a STEM-education nonprofit.



# 2010s

## 2010

**Elizabeth Bowen** and **Nathan Krishnan '12** welcomed their third child, **Wells Brock Krishnan**, on April 9. He joins big sister **Rory** and big brother **Lucas**.

**Erika Graham-Goering** and **Nelson Goering** welcomed their first child, **Roan Emeric**, in March.



**Madeline Hart-Andersen** welcomed her daughter, **Elinor**, on Sept. 8, 2024.



## 2011

**Saelyx K. Finna** (formerly known as **Courtney Sheehan**) is the recipient of a \$100,000 grant from the Knight Foundation for a film project about dream neurotechnology.

## 2012

**Anne Ross** (right) spent the past year working at AIA Chicago, where she had the unexpected pleasure of working alongside fellow Grinnellian **Joan Pomaranc '74**. United by a shared love of history, great conversation, and liberal arts tangents, their experience proved the wisdom of the saying, "once a Grinnellian, always a Grinnellian." Anne is now returning to teaching but says she will always treasure the serendipity of finding a kindred Grinnell spirit in the workplace.





## 2013

**Julia Baker** was the recipient of the 2025 Early Achievement in Extension and Outreach staff award from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Iowa State University.

**Steven Davidheiser-Kroll** and **Andrea Lakiotis '15** welcomed their first child, Felix Ernest Lakiotis, on March 22.



## 2015

**Mary Zheng** competed on the 48th season of *Survivor*, making it to day 21 and then joining the jury.

## 2016

**Samuel Ross** and **Beth Tsuha '17** celebrated the first birthday of their child at Wisteria gardens in Japan; Cassandra Ross '46 was born on April 23, 2024.



## 2017

**Austin Schilling** and **Samanike Hengst '18** married on Oct. 18, 2024.



## 2018

**Isaac Mielke** was elected president of his union, AFSCME Local 1842: City of St. Paul Technical.

**Reed Roffis** is midway through a solo bicycle ride from the Arctic Ocean in Alaska to Patagonia. He shares updates on Instagram @reedroffis.

## ALUMNI PROFILE JULIA SHANGGUAN

**Julia Shangguan '18** is excited to help bridge the disconnect between niche science concepts and the public's general understanding of them.

When Shangguan started her fifth year in her biochemistry and biophysics doctoral program at the University of Chicago in 2023, she had an epiphany. "I realized there are people with science expertise conjoining their skills with art," she recounts.

Shangguan reached out to the biological sciences communications staff at the University of Chicago. She sent over her two-page comic about her research on a molecule called myosin-10 and asked if they'd ever consider collaborating on a weekly informational column that uses comics.

It worked. The University of Chicago's Comprehensive Cancer Center invited Shangguan to collaborate on a five-part comic series explaining what causes cancer, how it is treated, and more. During her time at the Cancer Center, Shangguan and her collaborators had interesting conversations

on approaching the topic in her comics.

"Cancer is obviously a nuanced topic — you have to be careful about how you even talk about it," she says.

During 2024-25, Shangguan worked as an intern at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History, where she created more educational comics about bumblebees being one of Earth's great pollinators.

"It's really great to work with such a cute character, but it's also been illuminating to learn how critical they are to our ecosystem," she says.

by Yesenia Mozo '22



## 2019

**Sarah and Patrick McHale** welcomed their daughter, Finley, on Sept. 24, 2024.



## 2020s

### 2020

**Francesse Dunbar** was named a 2025 AICA-USA (Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art) art criticism fellow. Her essays have appeared in *Burnaway Magazine*, *Hyperallergic*, *The Art Newspaper*, *Oxford American*, *Miami New Times*, *Too Much Love Zine*, and more.

**Lily Fitzsimmons** received her MFA in Theatre and Dance, Stage Management, from the University of California-San Diego.

**Pratik Karki** founded Anthromind, a startup developing datasets to improve AI model performance.

### 2022

**Amy Cooper** and her team, The Iowa Nitrogen Initiative, received the 2025 Team Award from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at Iowa State University.

### 2023

**Theo Prineas** is the assistant to the president-elect of the American Library Association, Sam Helmick, who took office in May.

## Alumni Events



### Tokyo Reception

On April 12, alumni in and around Tokyo came together for a vibrant afternoon of connection, conversation, and community at Eataly Harajuku, an Italian restaurant in Tokyo. The event was graciously organized and hosted by **Patricia Thaung-Higase '93**. From reminiscing about campus days to making new connections, it was a beautiful reminder of how strong the Grinnell bond remains — no matter where you are in the world.

### Virtual Trivia Tournament

The class of 2019 is moving into trivia dynasty territory. Team Ooba won the 2025 Grinnell College Alumni and Student Virtual Trivia Tournament in March. This class of 2019 group of trivia enthusiasts has won the tournament three times since its inception! Team members pictured are **Dylan Welch '19**, **Takshil Sachdev '19**, **Lucie Duffy '19**, and **Nolan Boggess '19**. Also on this year's team were **Steven Duong '19** and **June Hernandez '19**.



### Young Alumni Socials

During the evening of April 9, Grinnell graduates spanning class years from 2014 to 2024 came together for Young Alumni Socials in five cities. During the happy hour-style events, young alums caught up with old friends, reminisced about their student days, and supported current students by talking about Scarlet & Give Back Day — the College's annual giving day, which also was going on at the time.

Young alums gathered at Rhein Haus, a German restaurant in Seattle. The event was hosted by **Aalton Lande '17**, **John Gallagher '17**, and **Rebecca Villa '21**.



**Some alumni and friends inquire about making a memorial gift. If you would like to do so, please call 866-850-1846 and ask for Jayn Bailey Chaney '05.**

**Marian “Cindy” Friend Pritzker '45**, March 15, 2025, Chicago. See tribute on page 49.

**Constance “Connie” Lauderdale Voorhees '45**, Dec. 24, 2024, Denver. Connie met *Koert Voorhees '45* at a first-year dance. They married in 1944 and later took over Koert's father's grain-elevator manufacturing business. Skiing was a longtime passion for the Voorhees. After living in Switzerland, they returned to America and became lead investors in the founding of Keystone Ski Resort in Colorado. Survivors include Connie's husband of 80 years, Koert; and their three children, including daughter *Elizabeth Voorhees Walter '69*.

**Beverly Burd Stubbee '48**, Dec. 19, 2024, Durham, North Carolina. Bev won a music scholarship to Grinnell, where she met *Grover “Bud” Stubbee '49*. They married in 1947 and had three children. Bev went on to earn an MSW at the University of Iowa. She and Grover divorced in 1974. In 1975, she moved to Washington, D.C., where she became a director in the Children's Bureau in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 1990, she retired and relocated to Durham but continued to be involved in local social issues, including protecting children from gun violence. Bev enjoyed concerts, museums, traveling, gardening, and visiting family. She was a class agent (1996-2024), inaugural representative (1999), and member of the Alumni Council (1998-2002).

**Gertrude Horn Douglas '49**, Jan. 12, 2025, Spokane, Washington. Gert earned degrees at Grinnell and the University of Washington. She taught biology at St. George's School for 30 years. She also was a Peace Corps volunteer in Grenada. She enjoyed travel and was an avid gardener and potter. Survivors include her son, *Jim Douglas '75*, and a daughter.

**M. Jeannette Mallinson James '49**, March 8, 2025, Omaha, Nebraska.

**Paula Rhoads Menary '49**, Jan. 9, 2025, Round Lake, Illinois. Paula married Bob Menary in 1948, and they had four children. She and Bob ran their small business for many years. Paula was recognized as an award-winning watercolor and oil painting artist in northern Illinois. She enjoyed travel and loved spending time with family. Her husband predeceased her.

**Orma Townley Strunk '49**, Nov. 13, 2024, Sioux City, Iowa. Orma earned a teaching degree, and she married Harold Strunk in 1949. She worked at Fairmont Dairy and taught PE and swimming at the YMCA. Orma later worked at Cudany Packing, Siouxland Credit, and as a PE teacher. She was a member of Wesley Methodist Church. She enjoyed sewing, bowling, and golf. Orma's family was the most important thing to her. Harold died in 2011. Survivors include three children.

**Myra Stewart Boots '50**, June 22, 2024, Waterloo, Iowa.

**W. Dean Froelich '50**, Jan. 25, 2024, Van Wert, Ohio. Dean married Ellen Oderkirk in 1950, and they had three sons. Dean served in Korea as a U.S. Army tank commander (1950-52). Upon discharge, he began a 36-year

career with DeKalb Agriculture. After retiring, he volunteered at the Cincinnati Zoo and traveled extensively. He and Ellen were active volunteers, and he was a member of the Lebanon United Methodist Church. Dean was preceded in death by his wife of 71 years.

**Kenneth E. Scott '50**, Jan. 10, 2025, Fairmont, Minnesota. After Grinnell, Ken married Gloria Thompson, his wife of 69 years. Ken graduated from William Mitchell College of Law in 1959 and practiced law in Fairmont until his retirement at age 77. During the early years of his law career, he entered politics and served two terms as a legislator in the Minnesota House of Representatives. Ken had a lifelong passion for hunting, fishing, and flying. Survivors include his son, *Mark Scott '79*; sister, *Margaret Scott '52*; and grandniece, *Kara Nielsen '17*.

**Robert E. Stanton '50**, April 23, 2024, Tulsa, Oklahoma. After Grinnell, Bob served in the U.S. Army, earned an MBA at Northwestern University, and completed missionary studies at Princeton Seminary, where he met his wife, Gerry. They married in 1955 and entered missionary service with the Presbyterian Church in Pakistan, where they served for 16 years. Later, he was a business professor at Sterling College. He coordinated the building of a hospital and was instrumental in establishing an endowment for Forman Christian College, both in Pakistan. Bob was an active member of his church. Gerry died in 2014. Survivors include his three children.

**David H. Wilder '50**, March 23, 2025, Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. Dave started his studies at Grinnell

then transferred to Oberlin College, where he earned bachelor's and master's degrees in psychology. He served with the U.S. Marine Corps during the Korean War. Dave met Margaret "Peggy" Collings while working on his doctorate in psychology at Boston University. They married in 1960 and raised two children. Dave became the director of the counseling service at Bucknell University in 1963, a role he held for 28 years. Dave enjoyed skiing, hiking, biking, sailing, motorcycling, and photography. He and Peggy attended the First Baptist Church in Lewisburg. Survivors include his wife of 64 years and their children.

**Jay E. Decker II '51**, June 18, 2024, Port Isabel, Texas.

**Max R. Greenlee Jr. '51**, April 15, 2025, Fort Collins, Colorado. Max spent two years at Grinnell before earning his degree in chemistry at the University of Colorado-Boulder. He married Elizabeth Clark in 1953 and graduated from University of Colorado-Denver School of Medicine in 1955. After a dermatology residency, he began his practice at the Boulder Medical Center. He was board certified in his specialty in 1961. He taught at the University of Colorado School of Medicine for many years. Max enjoyed backpacking, birding, golf, skiing, sailing, and camping. He loved the Orthodox Christian faith and was devoted to his wife, who predeceased him. Survivors include his two children.

**Jane Conner Holland '51**, April 25, 2024, Wagoner, South Carolina.

**Esther Schultze Martin '51**, Aug. 21, 2024, Colchester, Vermont. After a couple of years at Grinnell, Essie married Paul Martin. They had three children. Essie was active

in the Aurora (New York) Players and a local children's theater. She finished her degree at Daemen University. She was an assistant at East Aurora High School and a gift shop salesperson. She enjoyed exploring around western New York.

**Catherine Cole McCord '51**, April 30, 2025, Iowa Falls, Iowa. Catherine earned her degree in speech at Grinnell. In 1951, she married Franklin McCord. They traveled the world during his career with the U.S. State Department. They retired in 1978. Catherine loved volunteering in various community groups, including the Iowa Falls Historical Society, for which she served as president for several years. She was a member of the Iowa Falls First Congregational United Church of Christ. Survivors include her three children.

**William A. Merrick '51**, Dec. 27, 2024, Bozeman, Montana. After serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, Bill attended Grinnell and the University of Colorado and graduated with a degree in marketing. He married Mary Lou Dickerson in 1954, and they raised three children. Bill owned and managed KBMN radio in Bozeman for 19 years and was a partner in two other Montana radio stations. He was active in many civic and community organizations. In retirement, he worked as a ski instructor and earned a commercial pilot's license. He loved the outdoors and time spent hiking, playing tennis, canoeing, sailing, flying, and gardening. He was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years.

**Jack E. Mimmack '51**, March 19, 2025, Buffalo, New York. Following Grinnell, Jack earned his DDS then

served in the U.S. Navy, retiring as a Lt. Cmdr. He then became the third generation to join his family's dental practice, where he saw patients for over 40 years. Jack loved the great outdoors and travel. He enjoyed local sports teams, yardwork, gardening, music, golf, and tennis. He lived most of his adult life in Amherst, New York, with his wife of nearly 40 years, Barbara. She died in 1993. He later remarried, and he and Carol were wed for 26 years, until she died recently. Survivors include his two children.

**Clay F. Crum '53**, April 21, 2025, Mount Vernon, Ohio. After graduating, Clay served in the U.S. Army for two years, followed by graduate studies in psychology at the American University in Mexico City. He worked as an insurance underwriter and retired as a vice president in 1996. Clay enjoyed gardening, painting, photography, and collecting art. In later years, he became an avid online collector of 19th-century Japanese woodblock prints. He was preceded in death by his wife, Joanne (Loser) Crum, in 2005. Survivors include a daughter and son.

**Eleanor Wilcox Jorgenson '53**, Nov. 8, 2024, Hastings, Nebraska. At Grinnell, Eleanor was president of the Mortar Board honorary society, a member of Pi Kappa Lambda Music Society, and the graduation soloist. She married Thomas Jorgenson in 1953. Eleanor taught for a time, then dedicated herself to raising their three children. Later she returned to work, taking a job at Dutton-Lainson. Eleanor was active in PEO and with the Hastings Community Concert Association. She was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, where she sang in the choir



for over 50 years and served as an elder. She was preceded in death by her husband.

**Nancy Moulton Polivka '53**, Jan. 24, 2025, Geneva, Illinois. In 1952, Nancy married her high school sweetheart, James Polivka. Together they raised four children in Naperville and La Fox, Illinois. Nancy was a charter member of the Naperville chapter of PEO. In the 1960s, she became president of a restoration group dedicated to preserving local historical homesteads. Nancy was preceded in death by her husband of 70 years.

**Lois Christensen Wilcoxon '54**, March 8, 2025, Laguna Beach, California. Lois met *William Wilcoxon '54* at Grinnell. They married in Heidelberg, Germany, in 1955, while Bill was serving in the U.S. Army. Lois, who earned a master's in library science from UC Berkeley in 1959, worked as the librarian at Top of the World Elementary School in Laguna Beach for 25 years. Lois was a wonderful cook, voracious reader, history enthusiast, world traveler, and gracious host. She was involved in her community, spending time as a docent at the Laguna Beach Art Museum and volunteer with the Assistance League. Bill passed away in 1997. She is survived by four daughters, including *Jennifer Wilcoxon Rosenfeld '82* and *Katherine Wilcoxon '88*.

**Mary Sue Gray Wulfmeyer '54**, Feb. 20, 2025, Carmel, California. Sue earned her degree in education from Washington University in St. Louis. She taught school and married Howard Lincks, who passed away in 1976. Later, she married Jack Wulfmeyer, who preceded her in death in 2018. Sue was an active church member

and civic-minded volunteer. In California, she held leadership roles in a variety of Christian women's organizations and volunteered for the Monterey Symphony and the AT&T Pebble Beach Pro-Am. Survivors include her two children.

**Kenneth G. Kingston '55**, March 24, 2025, Woodstock, Illinois. Kenny was a junior high math teacher for nearly three decades. He also worked as an auctioneer. He cherished his church and was actively involved in various missionary efforts. He served with Wycliffe Bible Translators for 15 years, including a six-year stint in Lima, Peru, and one year in Mozambique. Kenny, who played semi-pro baseball in his youth, was an avid sports fan. Survivors include his wife of more than 65 years, Patricia, and four children.

**Mary "Mimi" Beuckman Niehaus '55**, April 23, 2025, Burlington, Iowa. Mimi's mother, *Suzanne Heil Beuckman '30*, was a Grinnell alum. Mimi married Whitford Niehaus in 1957. She taught school for three years and later helped in the office of Niehaus Motor Company. She was an active member of Christ Episcopal Church. Mimi belonged to PEO and was a member of the Asa Turner Society. Her husband died in 2001. Survivors include her daughter, Suzanne; daughter, *Mary Caroline Niehaus '85*; son-in-law, *Sanjeev Pandey '87*; sister, *Anne Beuckman Crowl '57*, and brother-in-law, *Harry C. "Bud" Crowl '55*.

**Mary Kuster Brooks '56**, Feb. 14, 2025, Maywood, Illinois. Mary met *Donald Brooks '56* at Grinnell, and they married in 1957. Their life together was marked by many moves due to Don's career in the U.S. Air Force. Mary was deeply involved in her church,

PEO Chapter GI, and other philanthropic organizations. She had a special gift for supporting others. Survivors include her husband and two children.

**Patricia Schmidt Stevens '56**, Jan. 10, 2025, Hopkins, Minnesota. Patricia met *Walter Stevens '54* at Grinnell. They married in 1954, had four children, and lived for more than 50 years in Austin, Minnesota. Patricia served on the Austin School Board, planning and zoning commission, and sesquicentennial committee. She was president of the League of Women Voters of Austin and helped lead First Congregational Church educational programs. She had a passion for design, crosswords, theater, the Minnesota Orchestra, and world travel. She was a two-time cancer survivor, enthusiastic tennis player, talented artist, and frequent attendee at Grinnell events. Patricia and Walter were married for 70 years, until his death in 2024.

**James L. Fuller '58**, Feb. 11, 2025, Iowa City, Iowa. Jim majored in biology, played basketball, and was involved in journalism at Grinnell. In 1960, he married *Karole Kinsey Fuller '60*, and he earned his DDS at the University of Iowa in 1962. He began teaching at the UI Dental College in 1967. He was honored as Dental Educator of the Year in 1999. Family was first and foremost for Jim. He participated in Kiwanis and was active with Zion Lutheran Church. Jim's parents, *Lowell Fuller '31* and *Jane Culbertson Fuller '32*; and his sister, *Anne Fuller Williamson '68*, predeceased him. Survivors include his wife of nearly 65 years, Karole; three daughters; brother *Charles Fuller '63*; sister-in-law *Ellen Brodsky Fuller '64*; brother-in-law *Benjamin Williamson '68*; and nephew *David Fuller '90*.

**James E. Hautzinger '58**, April 27, 2025, Denver. Jim met his first wife, *Sue O'Brian '59*, at Grinnell. They had three children. After Jim earned his Juris Doctor from the University of Chicago, he began his legal career at Sherman & Howard in Denver. He soon made partner and became renowned for his skills in labor and employment law and antitrust work. In 1999, he was elected to the inaugural class of fellows of the College of Labor and Employment Lawyers, a national distinction and great honor. He practiced law for 46 years. Jim attended Grinnell on scholarships, so supporting the College by attending events and reunions and making donations was important to him. Jim liked sports, hiking, birdwatching, and playing folk guitar. He is remembered for being patient, kind, sensitive, and a true gentleman with an irreverent sense of humor. After many years of friendship, Jim married Anne Newman-Clark in 2000; they enjoyed decades together. Jim's son, *Peter Hautzinger '84*, and Peter's first wife, *Cathy Welty '84*, both graduated from Grinnell. Jim's grandson, *Ryan Hautzinger '15*, and two granddaughters, *Shannon Hautzinger '18* and *Alair Ferguson '29*, all followed in Jim's footsteps. Jim loved Anne, his wife of 25 years, his family, and his dogs. Survivors include his wife and children.

**Gerald C. Sorensen '58**, Nov. 9, 2024, Madison, Wisconsin. Gerry met *Sonja Anderson Sorensen '58* at Grinnell. He earned a doctorate at the University of Minnesota in 1966. Gerry was an English professor at the University of Illinois in Chicago for 35 years. He spent his last 20 years in Madison, where he and Sonja retired to help raise their grandchildren. He was a

skilled gardener. Survivors include his wife of 65 years and a daughter and son.

**Janet Thomas Tait '58**, March 6, 2025, Boone, Iowa. In 1958, Janet married James Tait, and they had three children. She worked in the biology program at Iowa State University for 25 years until her retirement in 2010. She was a member of the AFSCME clerical local union and later became president. She was active with Habitat for Humanity, Boone County Historical Society, and the Mamie Doud Eisenhower Birthplace. Janet was a member of the Episcopal Church and attended Open Bible Church. She was an avid reader and loved to knit, crochet, and do cross-stitching. Janet was a frequent attendee at Grinnell events, helped with class letters, and served on her 50th, 55th, and 60th Reunion committees. Her husband predeceased her in 1991.

**Jon W. Walker '59**, April 11, 2025, Cantonment, Florida. Jon met *Marilyn Kay Cooke '58* at Grinnell. They married in 1959 and went on to have two children. He was commissioned as an ensign in the U.S. Navy in 1961. Jon's distinguished military career included service as a rescue helicopter pilot, a yearlong combat tour in Vietnam, and assignments in London, Saudi Arabia, and the Republic of Panama. He rose up the ranks to become a commander, retiring from the Navy after 27 years of active duty. He obtained his master's degree in public administration and became the borough manager of a small town in Pennsylvania. In 1998, the Walkers retired. Marilyn passed away in 2020. Survivors include his daughter, *Diane Walker Renaud '84*.

**Charles S. Yoak '59**, May 23, 2025, Amery, Wisconsin. Chuck was a track and cross-country team captain and the holder of many records in long-distance running at Grinnell. He also was president of his hall and the Board of Religion. Chuck graduated from Chicago Theological Seminary in 1964 and served pastorates in Chicago, Omaha, Nebraska, and Anamosa, Iowa, until 1968. He then pursued other career interests as a journalist, professional boxer, and farmer. Chuck married *Judith Crist '60* in 1959 and had two children. He later married Marilyn Ames and raised two stepsons.

**Theodore A. McConnell '60**, Nov. 7, 2024, Queensbury, New York. Following Grinnell, Ted graduated from Yale Divinity School. He was ordained in the United Church of Christ in 1963 and the Episcopal Church in 1965. He earned a master's at the Episcopal Theological School in 1965. He served as an associate pastor at three churches in the northeast and later as a priest at Episcopal churches in New York and Virginia. He was an editor for several religious publications and wrote four books. Ted was preceded in death by his first and second wives.

**O. Carl House Jr. '61**, March 7, 2024, Boca Raton, Florida. After Grinnell, Carl earned an MBA at Harvard University and served in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve. He helped plan the city of Columbia, Maryland, and worked with the MacArthur Foundation on the development of North Palm Beach County. He also did consulting throughout the world with the U.S. Agency for International Development. Carl was involved with nonprofit organizations in Palm Beach County and



contributed to social justice efforts. He was an enthusiastic master's swimmer. Survivors include his wife, Nancy Stroud.

**Mary Bryden Feldsien '62**, Sept. 16, 2024, Tucson, Arizona. Mary earned a degree in sociology at Grinnell and a master's in public service at Roosevelt University. She worked for several nonprofit organizations as a fundraiser for underserved people. Mary was a talented cook, loved traveling, and was very involved with the local school board. Mary and Tom, her husband of 54 years, retired to Arizona in 2001. She remained active within her community and was passionately involved with PEO. Mary was a frequent attendee at Grinnell events and served as a class solicitor. She was preceded in death by her husband. Survivors include her son and daughter.

**Martin E. Gibbs '62**, Feb. 7, 2025, Clinton, Connecticut. Martin met *Sonja Banks Gibbs '62* when they were both first-year students. After Grinnell, he graduated from Andover Newton Theological Seminary. He served at four churches during his career, concluding his ministry at the First Church of Christ Congregational in Clinton, retiring in 2002. He also was a high school football official for 50 years. Martin and Sonja enjoyed travel with family and friends. They also built houses with President Jimmy Carter for Habitat for Humanity in South Africa and Georgia. Survivors include Sonja, his wife of 63 years; a son; and his brother, *Gordon Gibbs '64*.

**Daniel J. Herndon '62**, Nov. 21, 2024, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Dan attended Grinnell and the University of Iowa, where he received a degree in history. He went on to seminary at Methodist

Theological School in Ohio, where he met his first wife, Virginia Johnson. They raised three children. Dan served multiple churches in Ohio and Iowa. In 1997, Dan married Cynthia Ensign. He retired in 2003 after serving Jesup (Iowa) First United Methodist Church. Dan enjoyed traveling, reading, and time with his grandchildren.

**Lowell T. Hockett '62**, March 2, 2025, Sarasota, Florida. Lowell was on the Grinnell golf team for three years. He was designated Most Valuable Golfer each of those years and was a multiple golf conference medalist. After graduation, Lowell earned master's and education specialist degrees at the University of Iowa. He served as a principal at schools in Iowa, Illinois, and Missouri. He later worked in various academic roles with the Sarasota County School District, retiring in 2003. Lowell's grandchildren were his greatest joy in life. Survivors include his wife, Judie, and two sons.

**Wayne L. Mattice '62**, March 24, 2025, Wimberly, Texas. Wayne met *Jacqueline Rodriguez Mattice '66* at Grinnell, and they married in 1965. He earned his doctorate in chemistry from Duke University, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship at Florida State University. Wayne, Jackie, and their two daughters then moved to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, where he became a professor in biochemistry at Louisiana State University. In 1986, Wayne became the Alex Schulman Eminent Scholar at the Polymer Science Institute at the University of Akron. He also served as an editor of the scientific journal *Macromolecules* and published hundreds of peer-reviewed articles. Wayne enjoyed birding, hiking, and

traveling with his family. He was a member of the Asa Turner Society. Survivors include his wife, and his brother, *John Mattice '69*.

**Susan K. Spence '62**, April 10, 2025, South Kingstown, Rhode Island. Susan chose Grinnell, as had her parents, *John D. Spence Sr. '38* and *Phyllis J. Spence '38*. Susan went on to earn an MBA from Columbia and to do crisis management work in the New York City mayor's office under John Lindsay, Abe Beame, and Ed Koch. In 1982, she married Richard Glassberg. They started a public relations firm that ran for about a decade. In 1991, they moved to West Tisbury on Martha's Vineyard. Susan and Rick divorced in 2011. In West Tisbury, Susan worked on housing and building projects, designed and built a cottage, and enjoyed creative projects with friends. Survivors include her brother, *John D. Spence Jr. '64*.

**Mary Porter Wyly '62**, Dec. 17, 2024, Oaxaca, Mexico. Mary and her late husband, Jim Wyly, were great supporters of the arts throughout their lives. They had many gatherings and concerts in their home, where they would welcome family and friends.

**Bayard L. Catron '63**, Jan. 13, 2025, Charlottesville, Virginia. A philosophy major, Bayard was a member of "The Grinnell 14," the group of students who organized a three-day protest fast in Washington, D.C., in 1961, in support of a ban on atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. He went on to earn a master's in philosophy from the University of Chicago and a master's in city planning and a doctorate in social policy planning from the University of California-Berkeley. He spent 28 years as a professor of public

policy and administration at George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He founded the Ethics in Public Service Network, was founding editor of the quarterly newsletter *EthNet*, and chaired the American Society of Public Administration Standards and Ethics Committee. Later he moved to California, where he taught at California State University in East Bay, and the University of San Francisco. Survivors include his wife of 18 years, Alexis Halley. He is also survived by his first wife of 30 years, Beverly Elliott Catron, and their two children.

**Carol Miller Parssinen '63**, June 12, 2024, Tampa, Florida. Carol enjoyed singing in the choir and playing cello and was a classical pianist. After graduating, she married *Terry Parssinen '63*. Carol subsequently earned a doctorate in English literature at Brandeis University, after which she taught English at Grinnell for a few years. She worked as a professor at the University of Pennsylvania and Temple University. Later, she was an executive at Cigna insurance, then at PATHS-PRISM, and the Franklin Institute science museum in Philadelphia. She retired in 2007 and moved to Tampa, where she and Terry team-taught at the University of Tampa until 2022. She was a member of her 50th Reunion committee. Survivors include a son and a daughter.

**Terry M. Parssinen '63**, June 12, 2024, Tampa, Florida. After graduating, Terry married his Grinnell classmate, *Carol Miller Parssinen '63*. He taught history at Grinnell for a time (1966-70) and received his doctorate in history from Brandeis University (1968). After 20 years teaching at Temple University and two years at the

University of Maryland, Terry joined the University of Tampa as a professor of history in 1992. He also served as dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences until 1995. His academic specialties were European and American history, British social history, the history of narcotics, and the history of World War II. He wrote *The Oster Conspiracy*, considered one of the most important books about resistance to Hitler. He retired in 2022.

**Paul B. Courtright '64**, Dec. 9, 2024, Atlanta. After graduating, Paul spent a year as assistant rector at Ahmednagar College in India, which laid the foundation for his love of the country. He went on to earn an M.Div. from Yale University and a master's and doctorate in religion from Princeton University. Paul taught at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro and Williams College before joining Emory University as a professor of religion and Asian studies and chair of the religion department in 1989. He published and taught on Hindu marriage, pilgrimage traditions, and the religious landscape of British colonial India. He helped found Emory's doctoral program in West and South Asian religions. He was a frequent Grinnell event attendee, a regional volunteer, and a member of his 50th Reunion Committee. Survivors include his wife, Peggy, and four children.

**Keith S. Felton '64**, Jan. 4, 2025, Grass Valley, California. Keith was a theatre arts major at Grinnell and earned an MFA in playwriting from UCLA. He married his wife, Susan, in 1981, and they had two sons. They later divorced. During his career, Keith worked as a photographer, law firm secretary, and high school photography

teacher. He was the author of more than a dozen nonfiction books. Survivors include his two sons and his brother, *Gary Felton '61*.

**Carol Pajak Rolander '64**, Sept. 9, 2024, Boulder, Colorado. Carol met her husband, *Ted Rolander '63*, at Grinnell. They later divorced. In her later years, Carol moved to Colorado, where she took great joy in her grandchildren. She was an accomplished watercolorist and volunteered at Boulder Community Hospital, where she took photos of newborns for their parents.

**Jean Watson McCandless '65**, April 27, 2024, Burlington, Vermont. Jean was a retired clinical social worker and coalition builder. Her husband, Christopher, passed away in March 2024.

**Barbara Lewis Spivak '65**, Nov. 23, 2024, Port Washington, New York. Barbara, who majored in English, was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. She went on to earn a master's in education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduated from New York University School of Law. At NYU, Barbara met and married a fellow attorney, David Spivak. She spent her entire legal career with the United States Government, ultimately serving as regional chief counsel of the Social Security Administration for the New York region. Family and friends meant everything to Barbara. She also loved classical music, choral music, and ballet. Later in life, she discovered her talent for photography. Survivors include her husband.

**Ruth Ann Unruh '65**, Jan. 21, 2025, Merriam, Kansas. After Grinnell, Ruth Ann earned a master's from Columbia University. She spent her career as a fifth-grade schoolteacher. She was a master



gardener and enjoyed traveling. Ruth Ann was a devout member of Southminster Church for 48 years. She was a Grinnell event host (2011-15) and served as a GRASP volunteer. She was preceded in death by her husband, Loren Sommer, and a son. Survivors include two sons and a daughter.

**Marta Nevampaa Whitlock '65**, Dec. 23, 2024, Worthington, Ohio. Following graduation, Marta earned a master's in teaching from Harvard University and a doctorate in history from Ohio State University. She had a deep love for history, immersing herself in Russian, World War II, and American historical works. Marta worked as the first acquisitions specialist in women's history at the Ohio Historical Society. She was a skilled gardener and volunteered at Inniswood Gardens. Survivors include her husband of 58 years, Scott, and a daughter.

**Robert W. Main '67**, Jan. 12, 2025, Alexandria, Virginia. After graduation, Robert pursued doctoral studies in economics at the University of North Carolina. He served in the U.S. Army (1969-71), including service in Vietnam as a finance officer. He had a 29-year career as an economist with the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Bob enjoyed classical music, reading, and keeping a keen eye on the markets.

**Jeffrey L. Dunn '69**, Nov. 21, 2024, Alameda, California. A music major at Grinnell, Jeff earned a master's and doctorate in geosciences. During summers, he worked as a park ranger and naturalist in Grand Teton National Park and developed a passion for the geology and formations of Death Valley. After a stint in the

oil industry, he transitioned to IT project management and business analysis for Visa, Pan Am, and other companies. He also was a classical music critic for two decades. In retirement, he wrote music and lyrics for a musical, composed an operetta, and worked on eight opera productions. Family was Jeff's greatest joy. Survivors include his wife of 38 years, Susan; a son; and Susan's three children.

**Roy W. Pengra '69**, May 30, 2025, Buffalo Gap, South Dakota. Roy and *Lilah Morton Pengra '69* were married two days before they graduated from Grinnell. He went on to earn a doctorate in mathematics at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1980, Roy and Lilah moved to South Dakota, where they built an underground, passive solar home. A few years ago, he retired from Ainsworth-Benning Construction as a site supervisor. He played the cornet in his high school band, the Grinnell College Orchestra, and the Rapid City New Horizons Band. He loved his cats, music, and science fiction. His wife survives him.

**Philip B. Mears '71**, April 24, 2025, Iowa City, Iowa. Philip met *Julia Szabo Mears '70* at Grinnell. They married in 1971 and had two children. After graduation, Philip faced a decision about service in Vietnam. He applied for conscientious objector status, and for his alternate service, he worked as a preschool teacher at the Grinnell Community Daycare. He went to law school at the University of Iowa, then started his own law firm with Richard Zimmermann in 1979. Julia joined them when she graduated law school in 1980. His most recent work was on sex offender registration modification cases. He made much of the law

in this area. He and a colleague also handled the federal case that established meaningful mental health care in the Iowa prison system. He was respected by other lawyers and admired by his clients. An avid gardener, Philip combined his love of plants with his desire to do good by running a plant sale, which over five years netted more than \$30,000 that was donated to local food pantries. In 2007, he was named an Alumni Award recipient by the College. Survivors include his wife, Julia; daughter, Maggie; and daughter, *Catherine Mears '03*.

**Paula R. Sprotte '71**, Dec. 26, 2024, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin.

**John "Mark" Shanstrom '73**, Jan. 5, 2025, Denver. With a background in art, Mark found his true calling in custom framing. He purchased Foxridge Framing in Centennial, Colorado, followed by Old South Frame & Gallery in Denver. He retired in 2020. Mark was an avid reader. He enjoyed home remodeling projects and hosting barbecues for family and friends. Survivors include his wife, Gloria, whom he married in 1987.

**Phillip M. Vaughan '73**, Jan. 5, 2025, Richmond, Virginia. Phillip loved the natural world. He presented his short documentary about the destruction of an old-growth forest, *Children and Trees*, at the White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1971. He studied at Grinnell, the Maryland Institute of Art, and the University of Iowa. Later, he earned his bachelor's at George Mason University. Phillip worked as a photographic equipment salesman, substitute teacher, and documentary and nature photographer. His interests included drawing, painting, writing

poetry, politics, scriptwriting, travel, playing guitar, and singing. Survivors include a son; and his brother, *Chris Vaughan* '71, DS '06.

**Sylvia Wallace Sargent** '74, March 18, 2025, Southaven, Mississippi. At Grinnell, Sylvia was a member of the Young, Gifted, and Black touring ensemble and graduated *summa cum laude* in communications. She went on to work in upper management and training roles in the corporate and private sectors in Memphis. During this time, she met Willie Sargent, whom she married in 1979; he preceded her in death. Her management abilities and strong work ethic facilitated moves to run offices in Atlanta and Nashville, where she met Albert Moses, her companion for over 31 years. Sylvia faithfully served congregations at several AME Zion churches as well as St. Paul Baptist Church (2008-25). While at St. Paul, she earned two master's degrees from Strayer and Capella universities. Sylvia was a trained counselor in association with the Healing Center. She was inspired to draft devotions, which led to the publication of her first book, *Musings: Reflections on Pain and Purpose During the Pandemic of 2020*. Sylvia possessed a spirit that touched many. Survivors include Albert Moses.

**Kenneth R. Zuckerman** '74, Feb. 26, 2025, Basel, Switzerland. Kenneth attended his first Indian classical concert, featuring Ali Akbar Khan and Shankar Ghosh, at Grinnell. The experience profoundly impacted him, leading him to enroll at the Ali Akbar Music College in California, where he became a disciple of Khan and spent 37 years training with him. Kenneth became an acclaimed sarod musician in his own right

and was involved in several cultural crossover projects, including the Grammy-nominated albums *Diáspora Sefardí* and *Indian Ragas & Medieval Songs*. In 1985, Khan founded the Ali Akbar College of Music in Basel and asked Kenneth to run it. Kenneth served as the director of music for four decades and made significant contributions to the development of India's traditional instruments.

**Mary Brandt Kerr** '77, Oct. 31, 2024, Sudbury, Massachusetts. Mary graduated with a degree in anthropology, then moved to Britain to work and travel. She met her future husband, John Kerr, in London. They worked for a time as English teachers in Sudan. In London and later back in the U.S., Mary found her calling as a writer. Mary's other outlets included creating and running a grade-school parent resource center for underserved immigrant families, managing school library activities, coaching kids' soccer, serving on the town's finance committee, running for selectman, and covering events for the local newspaper, all while raising two boys. Mary also was a GRASP volunteer for Grinnell (1998-2015). Survivors include her husband and sons.

**Carla Jean Breunig** '79, March 4, 2025, Edina, Minnesota. Carla majored in Russian at Grinnell. Following graduation, she studied Russian language and culture at the University of Leningrad. In the 1980s, Carla did volunteer work for Elliot Park Neighborhood, where she was primarily involved in housing issues, and she worked at North Country Food Co-op. She earned a doctor of chiropractic degree from Northwestern College of Chiropractic in 1993, then worked in private practice for 28

years. She married Gail Lewellan in 2019. Carla was actively involved in Clouds in Water Zen Center in St. Paul. She was a frequent Grinnell event attendee, served as an area event host, and helped plan several class reunions. Carla's survivors include her wife, Gail.

**Martha L. Silano** '83, May 5, 2025, Seattle. Martha graduated from Grinnell with an English degree and earned an MFA in creative writing from the University of Washington, where she met fellow writer *Langdon Cook* '94, who later became her husband. She held teaching positions at Everett Naval Base, Seattle Central Community College, and Edmonds Community College before joining Bellevue College. She also was a guest lecturer, poet, and writer at several other schools. Martha filled her poems with nature. As a nationally renowned, award-winning author of six full-length poetry collections, Martha was celebrated as a gifted and passionate creative writing teacher who was equally at ease sharing poetry with kindergartners as with doctoral students. Her poetry received several awards, including the 2010 Saturnalia Books Poetry Prize and the 2023 Blue Lynx Prize. Her book of poems, *Terminal Surreal*, a chronicle of her struggle with ALS, is scheduled for publication in September, and *Last Train to Paradise: New and Selected Poems*, will publish in October. Survivors include her husband and their two children.

**Daniel M. Schulte-Sasse** '04, March 11, 2025, Minneapolis. Daniel, a computer science and philosophy major, went on to study at the University of Freiburg and travel the world. In 2011, he completed a joint JD-business administration degree at the University of



Minnesota and Carlson School, after which he pursued private finance in Minneapolis. A lifelong animal lover and cyclist, his greatest passion was for music. He was a self-taught guitarist. In 2013, he and some friends founded Wastrels, a post-punk psychedelic band for which he was the frontman, composer, and lyricist. Survivors include his partner, Clare Andre.

**Philip C. Shubert '09**, Jan. 29, 2025, Brooklyn, New York. Philip was a talented artist and musician, known for his creativity and passion for self-expression. He cherished

time spent with family and friends. As a devoted cat dad, he found comfort and companionship in the company of his beloved pets. An avid fan of berries and ice cream, Philip enjoyed indulging in his favorite treats while watching episodes of *Jeopardy!*, a show he never missed. He was a dedicated fan of Chelsea Football Club and the New York Knicks and loved to play tennis.

## Submit an Obituary

*The Grinnell Magazine* publishes brief obituaries of alumni and other Grinnellians but does not attempt to write definitive obituaries. Submissions are welcome and may be edited for clarity, length, and style. Please share a link to online obituary, if available. Submit to [classnotes@grinnell.edu](mailto:classnotes@grinnell.edu) or [alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes).

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

### **Marian "Cindy" (Friend)**

**Pritzker '45**, a prominent Chicago-area civic leader and philanthropist who served as a member of the Grinnell College Board of Trustees (1971-78), passed away on March 15, 2025, aged 101.

Cindy was well known as the beloved matriarch of one of Chicago's most prominent families. With her late husband, Jay Pritzker, she founded the Pritzker Architecture Prize, among the world's most prestigious awards for architecture. She served for many years as the founder and president of the Chicago Public Library Foundation. She also served on the University of Chicago Women's Board and the governing boards of Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, Harold Washington Library, Michael Reese Hospital, and the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

Cindy and Jay married in 1947 and had five children. She also was the aunt of Illinois Governor JB Pritzker, whom the family took in as a child when his father died and his mother fell ill.

Cindy and Jay were married for more than 50 years. During his career, he helped grow his family's business holdings, which included the



Pritzker & Pritzker law firm, into a multibillion-dollar enterprise through development of the Hyatt Hotels chain. Jay passed away in 1999.

Several of Cindy's family members shared ties to Grinnell, including her late brother *Robert Marcus Friend '44*, her sister *Suzanne Friend Deitz '49*, her late brother *Hugo "Skip" Friend '50*,

and nephews *James H. Friend '73* and *Peter A. Friend '76*. Cindy maintained friendships with many Grinnellians, including the late *Carolyn Swartz Bucksbaum '51, DL '12*, and *Matthew Bucksbaum*; and the late *Samuel Rosenthal*, who also had served as a Grinnell trustee.

Cindy was appointed to the Chicago Public Library Board when Harold Washington first became mayor. Her friend *James Lowry '61, DL '08* was president of the library board at that time. (Lowry was first elected to the Grinnell College Board of Trustees in 1969 and became a life trustee in 1995.) She led the effort to build the Harold Washington Library Center, which opened in 1991.

Cindy's survivors include her daughter, Jean; three sons, Tom, John, and Dan; 14 grandchildren; and 13 great-grandchildren.



The Grinnell Magazine  
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