



# The Grinnell Magazine

Spring 2014

Star athletes excel in academics, careers



# Baghdad Reborn

*Student's future molded by conflict*



**Samah Shda '14** is a political science major from Baghdad. She participated in a November campus panel entitled "Raised in Conflict."

On March 19, 2003, my immediate and extended family gathered in the kitchen of my childhood home in Baghdad and made a collective decision to relocate to Northern Iraq until the war and the chaos were over. Little did I know that the Baghdad I once knew would never be the same. Completely isolated from the rest of the world and exposed only to censored media, we did not know what was happening between the United States and Iraq at that point. In the face of this uncertainty, we packed our bags with the essentials and left for our ancestral village in the North.

Many other families who had left Baghdad, desperate for any kind of refuge, stayed in churches and monasteries. Unable to find shelter, my family was left with no choice but to break into a house. Once the residents returned, we explained our situation, upon which we were given the keys. With our food and bedding donated by the village community, 21 of us stayed in the one-room house. Although warmed by this generosity, we were still scared and uncertain about the future. As we tuned into the radio on our first night in the village, we learned of the first air strike attack on the presidential palaces in Baghdad. We continued to follow the news about the situation in Baghdad. As terrifying as the prospect of moving back was, my parents were increasingly worried about running out of money and food, which would hasten our return to a chaotic Baghdad. At 13, I was completely uninterested in politics and was more preoccupied with the fact that school was out before midterms and that our life in the village — with its limited access to electricity and running water — was notably different from that in Baghdad.

We weren't completely sure what to expect when we finally made the decision to return to Baghdad. Our desire to put the rumors to rest and the drying up of our resources were the two main reasons we decided to return. We shared a bus with other families returning to Baghdad, and as we took in the sights of our ravaged city, I could sense everyone's distress. The damage was everywhere. It was in the empty streets, the destroyed buildings, and the abandoned schools. As we drove along, I saw that the well-known market in the Mansour neighborhood had been razed. I realized at that moment the impact of the war and the immensity of such violence. Right then I truly started wondering about my school, my friends, and my house.

Life in Baghdad after the U.S. invasion became all about the essentials. We were introduced to a new vocabulary — "curfew," "military checkpoints," "electricity generators," "ice shops," and more. Classes resumed, but a lot of my friends dropped out because there were a

constant fears of bombings near schools or being caught in the crossfire. Nobody left home unless it was absolutely necessary. In our absence, my father had lost his business; what had been his treasured mechanics workshop had been taken over and transformed into an armed militia base. National electricity generators had been destroyed, so there was no electricity for days, sometimes weeks. Professors, doctors, lawyers, and many other intellectuals were targeted and threatened simply for stating their political views. My history teacher was shot for that very reason, and the dean of students at my school was killed for being a former member of the Ba'ath party. One of my friends died in a church bombing during a Sunday mass, and another died from a street bomb in the famous Abu Nuwas Street in Baghdad. The corruption and violence in postwar Iraq motivated my desire to continue my education elsewhere, a place where I could go to school and pursue my goals without a constant fear for my life.

In October 2009, I joined the Iraqi Student Project (ISP) in order to pursue my education in the United States. ISP is a program that helps Iraqi students who cannot finish their college education in Iraq, providing an opportunity for them to continue their education in the United States. It was through this program that I applied to Grinnell and received a generous scholarship through the Iraqi Student Project. I would have never been able to attend Grinnell without such a scholarship. At Grinnell I chose my major, my course, and my schedule, something inconceivable in Iraq.

At Grinnell, my interest in social justice was nourished, and I was able to pursue internships and volunteer work that helped me grow more confident about my ability to make a change in my home country. During the summer after my first year, I interned at Stony Point Center in New York, where I volunteered on large-scale organic farms and participated in educational workshops on issues such as food justice, interfaith dialogue, Israel-Palestine conflict, and immigration. Last summer, I interned in AMIDEAST (America-Mideast Educational and Training Services) in Tunisia, a nonprofit that is engaged in international education and development. I participated in two Grinnell Alternative Break service trips during which I helped in reconstruction in New Orleans and worked directly with newly arrived refugees in St. Louis. I am coleading another service trip to Chicago to work with refugees and war victims this spring. These positive changes shaped my interest in nongovernmental organization and nonprofit work as a career choice. Growing up in Iraq forced a desire in me to become more involved in exploring a peaceful change in my country.



**Chloe Briney '17**, left, and **Nora Coghlan '17**, examine the point on a skull where a muscle attaches as they work on the burial lab for their Intro to Anthropology class, taught by professor **Vicki Bentley-Condit** in Goodnow Hall.

Photo by Justin Hayworth

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# The Grinnell Magazine

## Spring 2014

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#### Mission Statement

The Grinnell Magazine is published quarterly for alumni, students, parents, faculty, and friends of the College by the Office of Communications. The contents of this magazine are selected to stimulate thought and discussion, to demonstrate the range of opinions and activities on the campus and in its broader community, and to provide news about the College and its alumni. Views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official policy of Grinnell College.

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#### On the cover:

Grinnell sports memorabilia include Morgan Taylor's Olympic sweater, shorts and spikes; Veronika Platzer's weight belt; discuses; a basketball commemorating Jack Taylor's NCAA record 138 points in a game; and an old letter jacket.

Photo by Justin Hayworth.



## EDITORNOTES

### Grinnellians Shine in Worldwide Initiatives

#### From Guatemala to India, they make their mark

Grinnell College's strong worldview and international appeal have been reflected in events from Grinnell and Guatemala to Costa Rica and India in recent months.

President **Raynard S. Kington** in February led a delegation to India to visit alumni, parents, prospective students, and friends at colleges and business. The trip posed a great opportunity to expand our cherished network of alumni, and to look for additional opportunities for students and graduates, including internships, study abroad, and employment.

**President Kington** announced an expansion of the Grinnell Global Gateway program, which now will invite a select group of guidance counselors from abroad to campus to learn about Grinnell more directly. U.S. counselors will also continue to visit through an application process.

Grinnellians are busy in Central America, too. Three people who attended Grinnell are working to plant trees along a corridor in Costa Rica to tie their farmland near a World Heritage Site, La Amistad Biosphere Reserve, to the Caribbean Sea. **Karin Stein '84**, who lives in the Grinnell area, her brother, **Jurgen '86**, and sister, **Sofia '89**, who attended Grinnell for two years, want to improve habitats for plant and animal species while also fighting climate change by sweeping carbon from the atmosphere. You'll read more about it in this issue.

You'll also learn of a student-organized group that went to Guatemala and worked with the grass-roots organization Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala.

**Tanya Santiago '14** and **Amy Flores '15** led the trip, with assists from **Jenny Dale '06** and **Gabriel Barela**, residence life coordinator. The Center for International Studies paid for the trip.

In an article about the importance of learning foreign languages, **Hanna Griff-Sleven '81** says her study-abroad experience in France gave her new insight into French culture. A double major in French and American studies, she still speaks French regularly.

While we're in western Europe, let's note that Grinnell-in-London is gearing up to celebrate 40 years of changing lives with off-campus learning. Look for more on that in a future issue.

Recently, our website profiled **Tefiro Serunjogi '15**, who thought globally during an internship that included analyzing data about Ugandan farmers' behavior patterns and traits related to their economic choices.

A final note: We have welcomed two new members to our editorial team, writer **Michele Regenold '89** and **Dana Boone**, our internal communications coordinator/writer.

– Perry Beeman, editor  
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... these students who produced  
the Grinnell *Beowulf* have  
earned the right to some serious opinions  
about that original monument  
of Anglo-Saxon verse and the  
challenges it poses for modern translation.

—James Kissane '52

## LETTERS

### Beowulf

I read with particular interest and admiration the account [*The Grinnell Magazine*, Winter 2013] of the remarkable Mentored Advanced Project involving Professor **Tim Arner** and six students in a translation of *Beowulf*. That's because the whole undertaking seemed in such striking contrast to — and must have been so much more educational and generally enriching than — my own experience with that Anglo-Saxon epic when I was in graduate school almost 60 years ago.

We were all required to study Anglo-Saxon and Middle English in the first year of my doctoral program in English, where I learned enough to realize that could never be my field of expertise. But later I did take the course in *Beowulf*, since the noted authority who taught it was in his last year before retirement. Who in good conscience could pass up the chance to study that poem under someone who, at that time, was perhaps the world's most renowned *Beowulf* scholar?

Sorry to say, it was a sad letdown. Every class meeting followed the same routine. Some dozen of us students took turns translating the next few lines of the poem; then the professor would correct imprecisions and infelicities in that student's translation and address himself briefly to any cruxes in the swath of text under consideration. That great man was an awesome presence; classmates concentrating in medieval lit., who got to know him better, told me his forbidding manner was a coverup for shyness. In any case, sometimes that professor's classroom remarks, though they never invited broader discussion, were illuminating and even humanly interesting; often, however, they were not. I wasn't the only one in that class who came away from our tedious slog through *Beowulf* with no real grasp of the poem's overall contour, no appreciation of its rugged grandeur, its surprising sophistication, its emotional depth. It was years after graduate school — perhaps not really until I

read Seamus Heaney's persuasive verse translation — that I had much sense of these and other qualities in so long and complex a poem.

I have another recollection of *Beowulf* and translation that some readers may feel closer to, and which the translators of "*Beowulf*-in-Grinnell" will, I hope, not take amiss. At some Grinnell English department party during the late '60s, the conversation somehow turned to *Beowulf*. (Is *that* how departments socialize, you may wonder!) **Mike Liberman**, our creative-writing mainstay at the time and master of the delayed-action quip, delivered his judgment as follows: "*Beowulf* is one poem that loses a great deal in the original!" Some of us held our breath, because the noted British poet and literary critic, Donald Davie, who was a visiting professor at Grinnell that semester, was present at that party; but Donald — a very serious, almost stern, person — actually thought Mike's wicked remark was hugely funny. Years later I was in

London and happened to have lunch with Donald Davie. Donald remembered what Liberman had said about *Beowulf* and was still cracking up over it.

Odds are that my old friend and colleague Professor Liberman never read *Beowulf* — in the original. He simply saw the chance of a wry joke and had the wit to go for it. On the other hand, these students who produced the Grinnell *Beowulf* have earned the right to some serious opinions about that original monument of Anglo-Saxon verse and the challenges it poses for modern translation. Thanks to their instructor's enterprise and their own intelligent efforts, I'm sure these students had an infinitely more worthwhile experience at Grinnell than I did back in 1957 in my graduate class in *Beowulf*.

—James Kissane '52  
professor emeritus of English  
Athens, Ga.

*But the Grinnell-in-Pittsburgh  
alumni group has found a way  
to engage grads across several decades  
to help raise awareness of the  
plight of juveniles serving time  
in adult prisons.*

—Jill Kriesky '78

## Pittsburgh Alumni Find a New Way to Serve

I read with interest the short stories about the Wall Service Award and Grinnell Prize recipients in *The Grinnell Magazine* (Winter 2013). While many of us admire the impressive efforts of these women on behalf of the disadvantaged and oppressed around the world, most of us don't have careers that focus on social justice concerns on a daily basis. But the Grinnell-in-Pittsburgh alumni group has found a way to engage grads across several decades to help raise awareness of the plight of juveniles serving time in adult prisons.

When chemistry professor **Tara Meyer '86** and I were tasked with developing a service project for our chapter, we sought an out-of-the-ordinary project that would call on our grads' intellectual talents and inquisitive natures. Social work and law professor **Jeff Shook '92**, an expert in juvenile

justice, had a project that fit the bill. He introduced us to actor and playwright Bonnie Cohen. A native of Pittsburgh, Cohen spent several decades on the West Coast, acting and working with incarcerated juveniles as a drama therapist. When assigned to teach girls sentenced to a women's prison in Washington state, she processed the experience by tape-recording her thoughts each day. Later she incorporated them into a play, *Day Room Window*, which she decided to produce after returning to Pittsburgh. She offered to give a reading of the play to our alumni group in exchange for our willingness to help recruit audiences for the premier performances in October 2014.

Our contribution to this effort has drawn on the interests and talents of Grinnell alums

from all walks of life. Furniture maker **Garth Jones '88** donated his Slaughterhouse Gallery space for the Jan. 26 reading. Retired chemist **Steve Hoops '62** created a poster of photos and facts for the event, highlighting the challenges juveniles face in adult prisons, then donated it to Cohen for use at other readings. Retired Social Security administrator **Shirley Neuhaus Hoops '64** approached her minister about sponsoring a reading at her church. Costume designer **Joan Markert '69** introduced Cohen to one of her students, who will serve as the *Day Room Window* costume designer. Jeff Shook will organize discussion panels after each performance, including one on Oct. 25 when the Grinnell-in-Pittsburgh group

will invite all area alumni and their families and friends to join us. We are working to bring a Grinnell theatre department faculty member to the event to discuss the role of theatre in advocating for social justice.

We believe that these efforts by Grinnellians in Pittsburgh will make a significant contribution to *Day Room Window's* mission to "educate the public and effect societal attitudes and policies regarding the treatment and incarceration of children."

—Jill Kriesky '78  
Pittsburgh

**The Grinnell Magazine welcomes letters from readers concerning the contents of the magazine or issues relating to the College. All letters should include the author's name and address. Anonymous letters will not be printed. Letters selected for publication may be edited for length, content, and style. Address correspondence to: *The Grinnell Magazine*, Office of Communications, Grinnell College, Grinnell IA 50112-1690, or send email to [magazine@grinnell.edu](mailto:magazine@grinnell.edu).**

## CAMPUS NOTES

### Outstanding

#### New dean and vice-president joins Grinnell

**Michael E. Latham** will join Grinnell College on July 1 as its new dean and vice-president of academic affairs. Latham is currently dean of Fordham University's 3,600-student Fordham College at Rose Hill in the Bronx, N.Y. He will succeed **David Lopatto**, a Samuel R. and Marie-Louise Rosenthal Professor of Natural Science and Mathematics, who has been serving as interim dean.

"Michael Latham's impressive tenure as a liberal arts leader; his scholarship and teaching; his ease in relating to our faculty, staff, and students; and his focused vision for Grinnell's future made him an outstanding choice to become our new academic leader," says President **Raynard S. Kington**.

In addition to serving as dean, Latham — who has his Ph.D. in history from the University of California-Los Angeles — will be a tenured professor of history. He will be charged with helping create an adaptive curriculum and pedagogy; expanding



**Michael E. Latham**

collaborations within and between disciplines; expanding opportunities for students to directly experience the creation, interpretation, and application of knowledge; increasing the role and impact of academic mentoring; and attracting and retaining the best faculty and students from around the world. Latham grew up in Honolulu. He and his wife, Jennifer, have two daughters, Maile, 11, and Anya, 9.

### Applications Are Up, Up, Up Record tally tops 6,000

This year, the Office of Admission is reading more applications than ever before. The final tally was 6,022 applications for students seeking admission in fall 2014. That's nearly a one-third increase over last year.

**Doug Badger**, director of admission, says there were signs by late October last year that the applicant pool would be significantly larger. "In anticipation of that possibility, we began reading applications two to three weeks earlier this year," Badger says, which meant starting in mid-November.

To speed things up, the staff has been more aggressive in identifying the strongest and the weakest of applications.

"Still, the vast majority of the applications go through two full reads by admission officers and a committee," he says. Four to 10 admission-staff members sit around a table and ultimately vote on whether to admit someone. It's a time-consuming process that took until mid-March.

The largest increases come from international and domestic students applying Regular Decision.

Badger says that most of these students haven't visited Grinnell before applying. They've gotten to know the College through the website; through their interactions with the Office of Admission; through their parents, teachers, and counselors; and from the media.

"For many of these students," Badger says, "it's only after they've been admitted, visited Grinnell, and gotten to know the place and people better that they fall in love with the College."

Students admitted through the Regular Decision process have until May 1 to say "yes."

Grinnell's two windows for Early Decision applications for the 2014-15 school year did not bring a significant change in the number of applications compared to the past few years.



## Couple Endows New Deanship

### Finkelmans support work at Center for Careers, Life, and Service

A couple appreciated as stalwart supporters of Grinnell College have announced they will support a new deanship aimed at helping students succeed in life after Grinnell.

Grinnell Trustee **Patricia Jipp Finkelman '80** and her husband, **Daniel Finkelman '77**, of Granville, Ohio, committed \$1.5 million to a deanship at Grinnell's Center for Careers, Life, and Service.

The Daniel '77 and Patricia Jipp Finkelman '80 Deanship will support internships, mentoring, job shadowing, skill development, and other opportunities that prepare Grinnell students for what the donors call "a satisfying, remunerative, flexible, and productive career and life."

"The odds are very slim that today's graduate will stay in the same profession for 40 years," the Finkelmans say. "Whether a student is interested in academia, business, the professions, arts, nonprofit service, or other career paths, we want to make sure they're prepared to pursue their goals for life after Grinnell — and be successful in achieving those goals."

## Financial Future Update

### Access and the Endowment

Grinnell College is among a handful of small, private, national liberal arts colleges with endowments valued at more than \$1 billion. If Grinnell has this level of resources, why does it need to raise more money?

Currently, Grinnell's \$1.74 billion endowment is responsible for funding 53.7 percent of the college's operating budget. Our endowment covers a larger share of annual operating expenses than similar endowments at Amherst, Pomona, Swarthmore, Wellesley, and Williams.

At the same time, financial need is growing in Grinnell's admit pool, and at schools across the country.

From 2008-09 to 2010-11 at Grinnell, the number of entering students with high financial need increased 10 percent. Domestic students who are admitted have their full financial need met, with aid rising along with any increase in tuition and fees. Grinnell's resources will steadily erode unless revenue growth — backed by reasonable cost controls that don't harm our mission — keeps pace with the demand for aid.

Even with a highly diversified, high-quality portfolio, our ability to achieve our mission and values would depend on the ups and downs of global markets.

To strengthen the financial forecasts, Grinnell focuses on three diverse revenue sources: the endowment, student revenue and philanthropic giving.

Grinnell's list price for tuition and fees is similar to other schools with similar endowments, so at a glance, it looks like Grinnell is taking in about the same amount of revenue from students. Except it's not.

Within the context of Grinnell's access-oriented admission process, a large number of qualified students with low financial need are offered admission to Grinnell each year. Relatively few of them choose to enroll. By contrast, Grinnell is particularly appealing to high-need students, who have been nearly three times as likely to enroll.

The difference in net student revenue — the comprehensive fee minus institutional financial aid — between Grinnell and the other colleges with large endowments is stark. On average, the other liberal arts schools with large endowments are bringing in nearly \$10,000 more per student every year.

That's \$16 million annually that Grinnell lacks to spend on academic excellence, diversity, and access.

Why the big difference? In 2013-14, 11 percent of Grinnell students paid the full comprehensive fee. By comparison, the other schools averaged more than 40 percent full-pay students.

So work to encourage access among well-qualified students across the financial spectrum — not strictly for high-need students — remains vitally important.

Part of attracting qualified students who have the capacity to contribute any sum of money — or no money at all — toward comprehensive fees requires tremendous effort. Fortunately, more than

“This gift is intended as an ‘and,’ rather than an ‘or,” Dan Finkelman adds. “We hope it will reinforce and enhance the outstanding work Grinnell faculty and staff are already doing to prepare students for a rewarding life intellectually, professionally, and personally.”

President **Raynard S. Kington** applauds the donors’ vision. “Through their mentorship, volunteer leadership, and philanthropy, Patricia and Dan Finkelman have already helped many individual students draw on their Grinnell education to achieve their career and life goals,” Kington says. “At a time of heightened public attention to the value of higher education, they are helping place Grinnell in the very top rank of schools that simultaneously encourage students’ love for learning and their ability to live fulfilling, impactful lives.”

Patricia Finkelman, a former health-care policy consultant who works with a variety of nonprofits and community organizations, serves on the College’s Board of Trustees and chairs its Trustees and Trustee Organization Committee. She served on the College’s Alumni Council 1991–98, including a 1997–98 term as Council President.

Dan Finkelman, a nationally recognized marketing expert and former senior vice president of Alliance Data Systems and Limited Brands, as well as a former McKinsey & Co. consultant, has taught short courses and seminars on campus, served as a mentor and adviser to numerous Grinnellians, and provided internships to students over several decades.

Dan Finkelman majored in economics and history at Grinnell and has an M.B.A. from Harvard University’s Graduate School of Business, where he graduated as a Baker Scholar. Patricia Finkelman majored in economics at Grinnell and in 1987 received her master’s in public and private management from the Yale University School of Management.

“The shifting landscape of higher education and ongoing uncertainty in today’s marketplace call for innovations in career development and preparation,” says Mark Peltz, the first Finkelman dean. “Patricia and Dan’s generosity not only signals their compassion for helping future generations of Grinnellians pursue an array of career pathways, but also reflects their leadership and steadfast service to the College.”

250 alumni volunteers are involved in interviews and receptions to help Grinnell make a stronger case for enrollment among all qualified admits.

Philanthropy is also crucial. Grinnell’s giving in recent years has been less robust than the support at peer schools with comparable endowments. Changing that will be difficult, but ultimately it is crucial to keep Grinnell accessible to all who are academically qualified, regardless of their ability to pay.

These factors help explain why Grinnell is focusing so intently on financial sustainability, even as the endowment remains at a high level.

The history of access: <http://bit.ly/1laJNIA>

– Michele Regenold ’89

### Access philanthropy update:

Pledges for need-based financial aid from July 1, 2013 to March 25, 2014: \$341,073 from 1,295 supporters. The goal is \$4 million a year. The Board of Trustees voted in February 2013 to continue the policy of need-blind admission and meeting 100 percent of domestic students’ financial need until fall 2015, when it will assess whether Grinnell is on a sufficiently sustainable path to continue the policies.

## Accomplished Grinnell alum becomes CIO

**Scott Wilson ’98** has been appointed the College’s new chief investment officer. Wilson’s hire is the outcome of a rigorous global search for a College CIO who will usher in a new era of outstanding investment performance and endowment growth for Grinnell. He will work closely with Kate Walker, the new treasurer and vice-president for finance.

Wilson succeeds **David Clay**, whose 27 years at Grinnell saw him hold many titles, including treasurer, from 1990 to 2012, and CIO. His careful financial stewardship was central to the growth and stature of the College’s endowment.

A familiar face at Grinnell, Wilson has served as director of investments since 2010. He previously managed a team of traders specializing in interest-rate option trading for Barclays Capital Japan. He has also worked in option trading for Bank of America Securities and as an equity research analyst for Merrill Lynch. He holds a B.A. in



**Scott Wilson ’98**

economics and mathematics, with honors, from Grinnell and is a chartered financial analyst.

“The hire of Scott Wilson is an extraordinary accomplishment,” President **Raynard S. Kington** says. “As both a Grinnell alumnus and an accomplished investment professional, Wilson is ideally equipped to manage the College’s portfolio in service of our enduring mission and core values.”

**BAX****April 11–May 4, 2014**

*The Bachelor of Arts Exhibition* features work by third- and fourth-year art students — both art majors and those who have taken a number of art courses while pursuing other majors. Formerly called the *Student Salon*, this is a professional exhibition of mature student work.



2013 Best in Show  
Vadim Fainberg '13,  
*C/M/Y/K, 2013*,  
screenprint on  
canvas.

## Holtzes Underwrite Identity Project

### Gift will support work by Crane MetaMarketing

Grinnell College Trustee **Steve Holtze '68** and his wife, **Elizabeth Alexander Holtze '68**, have made a generous commitment that will help the College communicate the many ways Grinnell is distinctive and special.

After discussion with the College, the Holtzes, who live in Denver, wanted their \$300,000 pledge to help Grinnell with initiatives separate from their support of academic programming. They concluded that a gift to underwrite the institutional identity project would bolster Grinnell's worldwide reputation for excellence. The Holtzes are passionate about Grinnell's programs, including classics and literature, science, and athletics. Their support helps equip the College to improve its financial position through increased net student revenues and alumni giving.

"As proud Grinnellians, we see this commitment as a way to help attract outstanding students by clarifying and communicating

the special, distinct, and valuable elements of a Grinnell education," the Holtzes said in a statement.

Grinnell has contracted with Crane MetaMarketing to help articulate Grinnell's distinctive character in ways that will be meaningful and attractive to qualified applicants, while also

remaining authentic to the College as it is known and loved by students, faculty, staff, and alumni around the world.

Steve Holtze was elected to Grinnell's Board of Trustees in 2002. He is chairman and majority owner of Magnolia Hotel Corp., a hotel development

and management company with properties in historic buildings in downtown Denver, Dallas, Houston, St. Louis, and Omaha. He earned his B.A. in physics at Grinnell, where he also swam for legendary swimming and diving coach Ray Obermiller. After Grinnell, Steve earned both B.S. and M.S. degrees in civil engineering from Columbia University.

Elizabeth Alexander Holtze is professor emerita of English at Metropolitan State University of Denver. Elizabeth's life-long interest in language and literature, evident throughout her academic career, are rooted in her B.A. in classics from Grinnell, followed by an M.A. in Latin from Columbia University and a Ph.D. in medieval English literature from the University of Nebraska.

Through their philanthropic support for Grinnell, the Holtzes are helping to nurture the College's outstanding reputation and worldwide impact.

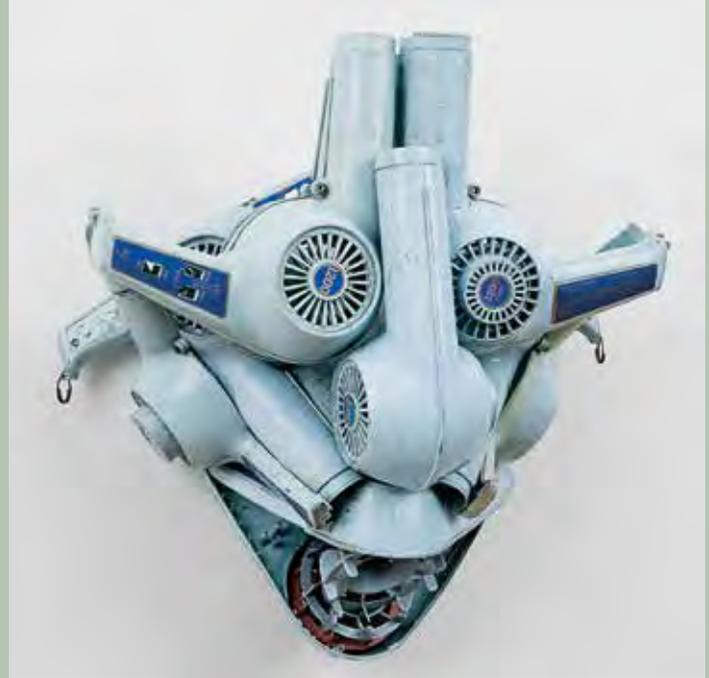


## Complex Conversations: Willie Cole Sculptures and Wall Works

April 4–June 1, 2014

*Complex Conversations* is an exhibition of 40 works assembled from public and private collections. The exhibition was organized by the James W. and Lois I. Richmond Center for the Visual Arts, Western Michigan University, and is curated by Patterson Sims.

Willie Cole grew up in post-industrial Newark, N.J., and sees himself as an “urban archaeologist.” His work draws from traditional African art and other sources to create contemporary works in many media. He is best known for his found-object sculptures, prints, and photographs. In his art, Cole transforms everyday, mass-produced objects into icons or symbolic representations that explore ideas of diversity, identity, and commercialization.



Willie Cole, *Wind Mask*, 1991, assemblage with hair dryers, 20½ x 19 x 10 in., Alexander and Bonin Gallery, New York

## Town Halls

### Diversity issues discussed

Grinnell College last fall began a series of scheduled town hall meetings to encourage transparency and frank, civil discussion of topics that faculty, staff, and students consider important. Each town hall has sessions at noon and in the evening. The first set covered harm reduction, Title IX, and diversity; the second, technology and learning. The most recent sessions, on Feb. 25, focused on diversity and are summarized below.

Once again, attendance was strong, with about 100 at the noon gathering and another 70 at the night session.



Photo by Justin Hayworth

### Issues discussed included:

- Institutional diversity.
- Implicit bias.
- Self-segregation and the need for safe spaces to gather.
- Socioeconomic diversity.
- Accessibility.
- The need for a physical space dedicated to addressing diversity issues.

- The role of student leaders in addressing diversity issues.
- Grinnell’s commitment to diversity.
- Ways the administration can work with students to improve campus experiences.
- Specific programs the College has for first-generation college students, international students, and low-income students.

The College’s work in making diversity a key part of the educational experience includes the comprehensive work of several key committees considering proposals for action, and collaboration with departments and organizations such as the Office of Diversity and Inclusion, the Council on

Diversity and Inclusion, the Office of International Student Affairs, the Office of Intercultural Engagement and Leadership, the Black Cultural Center, Stonewall Resource Center, and the Multicultural Leadership Council.

## Quiet Smiles

May 16–June 28, 2014

*Temper the bitterness with a quiet smile,  
for nothing on this earth is ever entirely sweet.*

—Horace, Odes

The Grinnell College art collection in Faulconer is known for its hard-hitting social and political commentary. The collection includes the work of Goya, Picasso, German expressionists, Ben Shahn, and Kara Walker. But in the Solander boxes and on the shelves are paintings, drawings, and etchings created by artists who, with their humor and gentle wit, help us temper everyday sadness with a quiet smile.

Among the artists included in the exhibition will be Charles Germain de Saint-Aubin (1721–1786), James Gillray (1756–1815), Mary Cassatt (1844–1926), Yves Klein (1928–1962), and Justin Gibbens (1975).

Justin Gibbens, *Bird of Paradise II: Unicorn Chickadees*, 2007.  
Watercolor, graphite, gouache, oolong on paper, 30 ¼ x 22 ¾ inches.  
Image courtesy of the artist and Elizabeth Leach Gallery.

## Caring Goes Viral

### Alumni create care-package campaign

When you were a student at Grinnell, did you receive any care packages out of the blue?

In a not-so-random act of kindness this winter, born of a Facebook-group discussion, more than 300 alumni sent 1,500 care packages to students on campus. Just to show they care.

### What they sent

Snacks, of course: home-baked cookies, chocolate, tea, ramen noodles, mac and cheese, Skittles, M&Ms, and microwave popcorn, to name a few.

Fun and practical stuff, too: Silly String, whoopee cushions, stickers, markers, crayons, sidewalk chalk, playing cards, hand-knitted hats, T-shirts, glow sticks, coloring books, balloons, candles, novels, handmade bracelets, and Emergen-C.

Several also shared the letters they wrote to the students. A few snippets:

“Even though we’ve never met and may never meet, I hope you

love your time at Grinnell. When it’s time to leave Grinnell, I hope you have an amazing life. Knowing there’s one more Grinnellian in the world leading an amazing life makes me confident the world is going to be a better place in the future than it is now.”

— Glen Brown ’91

“Grinnell is a special place. That you may have heard many times, I am sure. That you may have also come to see for yourself, I imagine. What I can add is this. Grinnell is also a special spirit. It is a special state of mind. And it stays with you after you leave that college town.”

— Saty Patrabansh ’98

“So, in these winter doldrums, enjoy this care package, dream about spring coming, and know that after graduation, whenever that is for you, you will be joining a network of the awesomeness that is the Grinnell alumni community in all of its unruly forms.”

— Sarah Fowles ’98



Photo by Justin Hayworth

Andrew Clark '14 opens his care package.

### Logistically speaking

A few alumni wanted to send their packages to the students using their old mailboxes, but the numbering system in the current mailroom, which was relocated to the Joe Rosenfield '25 Center, is different.

Andi Tracy '99 worked in the mailroom all four years when she was a student and offered to help coordinate things

on campus. She's an assistant professor of psychology and neuroscience at Grinnell; her office is right across the street from the mailroom.

Tracy, Jeetander Dulani '98, and Brandy Agerbeck '96 wrote a note to explain the care package project to students. Mailroom workers put a copy of the note in students' mailboxes. Students

## Mayflower Community Eyes Expansion

### Grinnell College helps assemble land for senior apartments

Housing availability for seniors may be improving thanks to a proposed expansion of Mayflower Community.

Grinnell College is part of a group that assembled land near the Old Glove Factory for possible expansion of Mayflower Community, a senior living center. The new development is called Watertower Square.

Mayflower hopes to build 26 well-appointed apartments to be sold to buyers age 55 or older, if Mayflower can sell enough units before construction. Nearly half have been reserved.

The project cleared a key city block for development, making way for more senior units. The site is south of the Old Glove Factory and west of Mayflower's current buildings, reports **Monica Chavez-Silva**, the College's director of community enhancement and engagement.

The city of Grinnell's redevelopment goals call for new housing options, says Russ Behrens, Grinnell city manager. The complex offers parking and a range of services, including meals, housekeeping, and nurse response.

The Mayflower plans to accept reservations through June 1, with construction beginning later this year. Units should be available by spring 2015.



The location is close to downtown, Central Park, churches, and Grinnell College. Mayflower is home to a number of retired Grinnell faculty and staff members.

For more information, go to [www.mayflowerhomes.com/watertower-square](http://www.mayflowerhomes.com/watertower-square).

traded the note for a care package at the mailroom window.

The simplest way for mailroom staff to keep track of who received a package was to start distribution at the beginning of the mailbox numbers.

The first notification slips went into student boxes Feb. 13.

Students shared their reactions to the out-of-the-blue care packages on Instagram: <http://stagr.am/tag/gcboxthanks/>.

### An idea that went viral

The idea to send the care packages bubbled up from a Facebook discussion among several alumni about their old Grinnell mailboxes in Carnegie Hall. Several people mentioned either receiving notes from prior mailbox owners or sending something to the new mailbox owner after they graduated, says **Donna House Lohmeier '96**.

The mailbox discussion took place in a Facebook group called Everyday Class Notes that Lohmeier created in January

this year specifically for Grinnell alumni. The group "started from a point of humor," Lohmeier says. "It's like talking with people in your dorm hallway."

**"Ryann Haines Cheung '93** and Dulani quickly jumped on the care package idea and started a separate thread to see how many folks were interested."

She says the interest was immediate. The mailbox thread was created at 8:04 a.m. on Feb. 7. At 9:40 a.m. the care package thread started, and by 10:37 a.m. a Facebook event was created.

Will Everyday Class Notes alumni do this again next year? Lohmeier says, "I wouldn't be surprised."

"I don't think there is a better example of what it means to be a Grinnellian than this Everyday Class Notes project," says **Sarah Jolie '87**.

—Michele Regenold '89

**Samantha Fitzsimmons Schoenberger '17** opens her care package.



Photo by Justin Hayworth

# Not for a Single Season, But for the Years

A visit with Grinnellians at W.W. Norton & Co.



## Grinnell alums at Norton:

### Front row (l to r):

**Jon Durbin '89**, vice president and editor (history).

**Pete Simon '90**, vice president and editor (literature and philosophy).

### Back row (l to r):

**Pete Lesser '98**, vice president and editor (political science).

**Robin Kimball '01**, media editor (biology, physical anthropology)

**Spencer Richardson-Jones '03**, vice president and editor (literature and film).

### Not pictured:

**Allen Clawson '85**, vice president and associate national sales director

**Ann Treistman '92**, senior editor with Countryman Press.

### Recent Grinnell grads with a parent who works at Norton:

**Sam Forman '11**, son of Steve Forman, vice president and editor (history)

**Susanna Moller '12**, daughter of Marilyn Moller, vice president and editor (composition)

by Danny Penny '13

On the corner of 42nd Street, 500 Fifth Avenue rises up like a large and frightening uncle. On the sixth of its 60 floors, Grinnellians sit behind their desks tapping away at their keyboards, assembling many of the best textbooks on the market today.

W.W. Norton & Co. is a small, but influential, publisher of trade and academic books, perhaps best known for its authoritative anthologies of English and American literature. The company publishes college textbooks and critical editions in seemingly every subject: cognitive psychology, geophysics, the history of rock 'n' roll. With about 450 employees, Norton manages to put out 400 titles a year, many of them the top sellers in their respective fields. Take a look at your bookshelf, and there is a good chance a Norton textbook is among the volumes. Digging through my own dog-eared piles, I found 11.

In the name of full disclosure, last year one of my essays won Norton's college writing contest.

It may surprise you to learn that this illustrious publisher has a cadre of Grinnellians. Seven graduates and two parents of alumni work at the company as editors, sales directors, and vice presidents. Why have so many Grinnellians wound up at Norton? I visited its offices to find out.

Talking with many of Grinnell's alumni at W.W. Norton, I quickly realized that the publisher offers, as Grinnell College does, a progressive environment. Unlike the Big Five (Hachette, HarperCollins, Macmillan, Penguin Random House, and Simon & Schuster), which are all owned by larger media entities, Norton is a completely independent and cooperatively run company. Its shares are employee owned, a legacy of the husband-and-wife team of William Warder and Mary Dows Herter Norton. The couple began the company in their New York living room in 1923, publishing Cooper Union lectures and endeavoring to "bring to the public the knowledge of our time."

Within a few years, Norton had acquired the U.S. rights to some of the world's most important thinkers: Bertrand Russell, Paul Henry Lang, Sigmund Freud. Ninety years later, Norton is still "pushing the envelope," says **Jon Durbin '89**, vice president and history editor. He touts Norton's willingness to experiment with new ideas,

new pedagogical tools, and new media in an increasingly digital publishing landscape, chalking up this experimental bent to the publisher's independence from outside shareholders. "Norton has been more of a risk-taker," he says, "because we answer to ourselves."

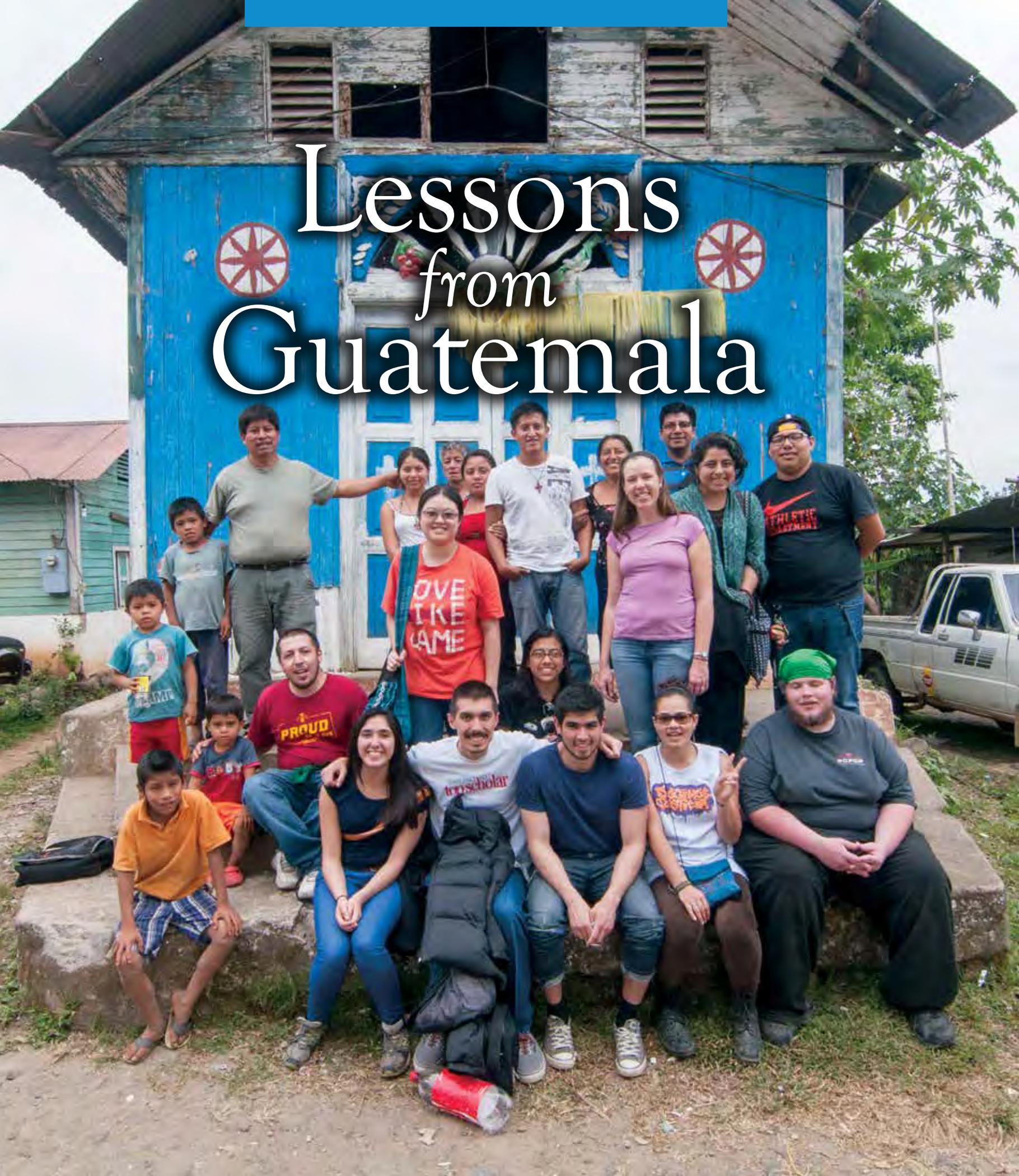
Like students at Grinnell, Norton employees seem to have a palpable love of learning. **Robin Kimball '01** describes employees as "cultural omnivores" with a "constant, genuine curiosity." This bookishness extends to every aspect of the company; even its chief financial officer has a doctorate in economics, and sales reps are required to sell titles from the entire list, which means they must speak to expert scholars about each book with confidence. Durbin says he was recruited by another Grinnellian who noticed he was always trying to talk with professors after class. Listening to the stories of Kimball, Corbin, and **Pete Lesser '98**, I was reminded of those enthusiastic exchanges by the printer on the first floor of Burling Library. "Let me tell you about my paper," a friend always seemed to be saying, delirious with excitement and lack of sleep.

And, like Grinnellians, Nortonians are willing to stretch themselves beyond their comfort zones. "The hardest book I ever had to edit was *Our Origins: Discovering Physical Anthropology*," says Lesser, a Grinnell English major and vice president and political science editor at Norton. "But it was also the most satisfying."

Finally, I wondered whether Norton's communal, tight-knit vibe also may have attracted Grinnellians. "It's like a family," Lesser explains. And unlike publishers who turn over employees as quickly as readers turn pages, Norton has an incredible retention rate. Many Norton workers start right out of school, like **Allen Clawson '85**, associate director of college sales, who began his career at Norton as a college sales rep six months after graduating from Grinnell and who just cracked his 28th year at the company. "I'm a lifer," Durbin admits, almost bashfully.

Grinnell alumni and current students might recall that well-worn, apocryphal line every incoming batch of first-years absorbs, as they're sweatily packed into the pews of Herrick Chapel. The one about Grinnellians' propensity to marry one another. They also seem to have an affinity for W.W. Norton. ■

# Lessons *from* Guatemala





## The Student Organization of Latinas and Latinos' trip to Guatemala inspires action on campus.

by Donna Dralus '89

photography by Jhonathan F. Gómez

Tanya Santiago '14 and Amy Flores '15 led a group of 10 Grinnellians on a January trip to Guatemala made possible by a co-curricular travel grant through the Center for International Studies. Alumna Jenny Dale '06 linked the group up with a grassroots organization that helped the students better understand the cultures in Guatemala. They returned with lessons learned from artisans, small-business owners and activities, information they plan to share through special events, programs and publications.

### *Lesson One:*

#### **Find a Sense of Place**

Santiago, a Spanish and economics double major from Pomona, Calif., liked the feel of the campus – including the fact that she saw more diversity than at other schools she visited – when she visited Grinnell as a prospective student.

She joined the Student Organization of Latinas and Latinos (SOL) – a group that educates the campus community about the Latino community in the United States – toward the end of her first year. She has become progressively more involved, and this year she is a coleader.

Flores, a math major from Rockville, Md., heard about Grinnell and SOL through Posse Scholars, a renowned college access and youth leadership development program. She loved SOL's members and the space and eventually became the group's secretary.

### *Lesson Two:*

#### **Be Prepared to Lead**

Flores and Santiago spearheaded the trip to help students travel beyond America's borders to better understand many of the issues facing Latino communities in this country.

Santiago reached out to SOL alumna Jenny Dale '06, who enthusiastically arranged for them to work with the grassroots organization Network in Solidarity with the People of Guatemala to plan a 10-day trip to the country. The group also recruited the help of a staff sponsor, Gabriel Barela, residence life coordinator, and secured College funding from the Center for International Studies.

The nine students selected to travel, Santiago says, were a very diverse group. Some were fluent in Spanish, others not. Many, but not all, had taken Latin American studies courses. Some were first-generation Americans; most weren't. In addition to a few undeclared second-years, the students major in economics, Spanish, chemistry, music, sociology, math, psychology, and art.



### Lesson Three:

#### Learn from Those Who Live There

The students immediately began learning about the country from Guatemalans. They met with student activists who reclaim public spaces with art, with academic experts, with artisans and small-business owners. They traveled from urban centers to rural areas. The Guatemalans, they say, openly shared their experiences and frustrations. Each night the students and Barela reflected on what they'd learned, posting to a daily blog when they had Internet access.

Each student took away something different. Santiago says the trip left her feeling "very empowered." It gave her a different lens for viewing the economic, social, and legal structure behind Guatemala's society; it helped her connect the products and things she buys back to the people who created them, she says.

Flores says that now they "know people from the community. They hosted us and were very honest about their struggles, but still had a lot of pride and hope." On a more personal level, she says, it was the art that meant the most to her. Her fall semester, studying abroad in Budapest, was "very science-related," she says. "By the end, I felt my passion for art was dead. In Guatemala, I found out how amazing and powerful it could be."

### Lesson Four:

#### Share Knowledge Back Home

This semester, the students created an action committee called Grinnell Latin American Solidarity Society. They are planning several events and programs to share what they learned, including:

- Supporting an artists' workshop and taking part in a graphic arts competition.
- Curating and sharing images, photos, videos, and blogs from their trip.
- Publishing written works and photos from the trip in a book.
- Hosting a workshop to help students understand the economic, legal, and social aspects of fair trade.

The group is also exploring ways to work with the Guatemalans they met on their trip, including:

- Creating a SOL coffee blend – similar to the Grinnell blend at the Spencer Grill – to sell, working through direct fair trade with an organic farm they visited on their travels.
- Ordering SOL graduation stoles through a weaving collective that hosted them.

"We're trying to wake people up in what we do. We're not radical ... [but] with this group we want to take it to another level and do something tangible," Flores says. ■



To read more about the Guatemala trip, see the daily blog posted by the group here: <http://bit.ly/1bi0p81>

# True Student-Athletes:

Grinnellians succeed on the field, in the classroom, at work

by Perry Beeman



When Grinnell guard **JACK TAYLOR '15** punctuated the 2013–14 basketball season with his second 100-point-plus game in two years, the world's media again took notice. The year before, Taylor set an NCAA record with 138 points, so his face, and his shooting style, were familiar around the globe. His playing style has graced *Good Morning America*, *Today*, and *Jimmy Kimmel Live*.

A few of the accounts, though not many, stressed an important substory. Taylor is part of a Grinnell tradition of true student-athletes, players who are on campus as much because of the College's widely recognized academic excellence as they are because they are good, or great, at basketball, swimming, or track.

Recalls Taylor: "After the 138 (points), a couple of articles came out that said the most impressive thing is that I attend Grinnell College." He plans to take advantage of Grinnell's academic excellence by attending medical school eventually.

He won't be the first to set soaring goals. Pioneer athletic stars include an Olympic gold medalist who went into retail, a physics and math major whose educational and whimsical videos went viral on the Internet, and a California rheumatologist. **Robert Noyce '49**, a conference champion diver, graduated Phi Beta Kappa and became one of the greatest scientific minds in the world, co-creating the integrated circuit and co-founding Intel Corp. His name adorns the College science center.

Many student-athletes credit Grinnell's roster of famed coaches and mentors for superior and caring mentoring and guidance that helped them soar, on and off the court or field.

Among them is current and famed basketball coach **David Arseneault**, architect of The System, the platoon-style, high-scoring strategy that brought international attention to Grinnell and to Taylor and his teammate, Patrick Maher, holder of the national record for assists.

**Ray Obermiller**, who often spoke of how sports enriched students academically, coached swimming and diving teams to 20 championships in a 29-year career. He also was the College's first director of academic advising and testing, a position he held for 25 years. **John Pfitsch** spent several decades coaching virtually every sport — starting with basketball and tennis — and also served as athletic director. Pfitsch was fond of reciting his former players' successes in business, law, medicine, teaching,



Photo courtesy of the Iowa Room.

research, and coaching. Current athletic director **Greg Wallace**, the former football coach, is an associate professor of physical education. His assistant, **Andy Hamilton '85**, is the tennis coach. Many Grinnell coaches over the years also have taught at the university.

**Will and Evelyn Freeman** logged dozens of championships since 1980 as track and field and cross country coaches, and relish their students' accomplishments outside of sports.

"I think that is what Grinnell has taught me, that sports play a role in a much bigger picture, in the individual developing as a human being," says Will, who competed in Olympic Trials

as a pole-vaulter out of the University of Florida. "It's really taught me about human capacity and capability."

The storied student-athletes below praised their coaches' work to teach time management, perseverance, teamwork, dedication, and graciousness, among other life skills.

## **F. MORGAN TAYLOR '26**

**Olympic gold medalist.  
Retail manager.**

Perhaps Grinnell's most famous athlete, certainly from the pre-Twitter days, track and field star and hurdling specialist Taylor won medals in three Olympic Games. He took gold in Paris in the 1924 games, setting a record in the process. He won bronze in Amsterdam in 1928 and again at Los Angeles in 1932, after carrying the U.S. flag in at the beginning of the games.

Taylor still holds the Grinnell record in the long jump, with a leap of 25 feet, 2 inches. Coached by Harry J. Huff in track, he also was a receiver on the football team.

He began his career selling ads for the *Chicago Tribune*, and went on to a long stint in retail, much of it with Marshall Field's department stores, where he started by filling orders and wrapping packages before working his way into management. He also represented International Harvester in Europe.

## CHRISTINE THORBURN '92

**Champion runner.**  
**Olympic cyclist.**  
**Rheumatologist.**

A conference champion in cross country under coach Evelyn Freeman, Thorburn went to Nepal on a Fulbright Scholarship after graduation, then attended medical school at Stanford. After developing knee problems, she turned to cycling and made the Olympic team. She narrowly missed a spot on the medal stand, but was the U.S. women's time trial champion in 2004 and competed in the Olympics that year and in 2008. She later became a professional cyclist.

Thorburn, a Grinnell chemistry major, is a rheumatologist at Palo Alto Medical Foundation in California, cycling for fitness but not competition. She readily recalls the impact and value of Freeman's coaching. "She was positive and encouraging for every athlete on her team, irrespective of talent, which created wonderful team chemistry."

Similarly, Grinnell professors provided the diverse skills, knowledge, and mentoring she needed as she completed her education and began her medical career.

"Although it may sound cliché by now, it is absolutely true that a liberal arts education at Grinnell College, irrespective of major of study, provides the most important skills for a successful career: effective writing and speaking skills and critical-thinking skills to not only be able to ask the appropriate questions, but then to know how to pursue solving them," Thorburn says.

And it wasn't just the quality of the classes, she adds.

"Of equal importance were the close relationships built with faculty that allowed for more in-depth

professional exploration while on campus and then provided the all-important personalized letters of recommendation for the next phase of study."

Thorburn discovered that her Grinnell experiences had provided something far more powerful than championships.

"Spending four years with an incredibly talented and diverse group of fellow students also pushed me to consider a slightly atypical academic pathway and a focus on serving others throughout life – far more important than titles and awards in the long term," Thorburn adds.

## JACK TAYLOR '15

**Basketball star.**  
**Biochemistry major.**  
**Future doctor.**

Despite all the publicity surrounding his quick-release shots, many from three-point range, Taylor has other things on his mind as graduation approaches.

He's a biochemistry major and, though he still has a year left at Grinnell, he's already decided he will pursue medical school – after he takes care of one lingering basketball goal.

"I want to play basketball in Europe for a couple of years, then go to medical school," says Taylor, coached by David Arseneault.

And, yes, he realizes that setting the books aside for that long could pose an academic challenge when he enrolls in a medical school. "I'll take the MCATs before I go to Europe," he says, flashing a wide smile at the thought of the admission exam.

**Jack Taylor '15 and Katy Oldach '16** work on a lab in Professor Vince Eckart's Biology 252 class in the Robert N. Noyce '49 Science Center Center on Feb. 27.



Photo by Justin Hayworth

Taylor says he is getting good preparation for those exams, and for medical school at an accessible school with an enjoyable climate.

“Coach Arseneault encourages us to excel, on the court and in class, and sees us as the true student-athletes we are,” Taylor says.

“The professors have doors that are a lot more open. I’ve really enjoyed getting to talk to them about things in class, and about things outside of class. I came from a large state school, and it wasn’t like that.

“The relationships you can built with professors and others in class really help,” Taylor says. “I am a name here, not a number.”

Classes have emphasized skills essential to excelling in graduate school, but Grinnell also allows students to study a broad range of topics. Taylor enjoyed economics and philosophy, for example.

“In addition to the critical thinking, the wide range of things that you learn with a liberal arts education is something that will benefit me later,” Taylor adds.

When Taylor leaves campus, he’ll cherish the education he received and the basketball that provided exercise, camaraderie, teamwork, and a different kind of achievement. And he’ll eventually focus on the academics – no surprise even to sportswriters and other journalists around the globe.

## VERONIKA PLATZER '87

**National discus champion.  
World-class rower.  
Coach.**

A star discus-thrower and shot-put specialist, “Ronnie” Platzer became a three-time NCAA discus champion. Of course, she set school records along the way.

In 1991 Ronnie was recognized as one of the top women athletes during the first decade of NCAA women’s competition. After fighting off lymphoma, Platzer switched to rowing, making the national team. She represented the United States in World Cup races from 1993–97 as well as in the 1993 World Championships.

Coached by Will and Evelyn Freeman, she was voted the NCAA’s Female Track and Field Athlete of the Decade for the ’80s and was inducted into the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association Hall of Fame.

Platzer discovered the power of Grinnell academics in a way decidedly different than some other Grinnellian student-athletes. The classes nearly overwhelmed her, but ultimately provided some world-class character-building she treasures to this day.

“While I had an amazing athletic career at Grinnell, my academic career was fraught with ongoing confidence crises and struggles,” Platzer recalls. “I barely kept one nostril above the water, much less my whole head.

“But, there was one particular class that both encapsulated my academic career as well as served as a

Photo courtesy of the Iowa Room.



## GRINNELL ACADEMIC ALL-AMERICA ATHLETES

Year	Student-Athlete	Category
2013	Laura Krull (Tennis)	At-Large
2012	Kelly Bruce (Swimming)	At-Large
2012	Mike Nodzinski	Baseball
2009	Henry Reich	Track & Field/ Cross Country
2005	Rachel Moskowitz	Women’s Soccer
2004	Adam Booth	Track & Field/ Cross Country
2002	Art MacKinnon	Baseball
2000	Matt Johnston	Football
1998	Richard Wemer	Football
1996	Ed Brands	Men’s Basketball
1995	Steve Diekmann	Men’s Basketball
1994	Steve Diekmann	Men’s Basketball
1991	David Hammond (Swimming)	At-Large
1991	Melissa Sharer	Women’s Basketball
1990	Laura Van Sickle	Women’s Basketball
1989	Randy Seeley	Baseball
1989	Laura Van Sickle	Women’s Basketball
1988	Randy Seeley	Baseball
1988	Ian Lin	Baseball
1982	Paula Moon	Women’s Basketball
1981	David Smiley	Football
1978	Steve Bolestra	Football
1978	Drew Muehrke	Football
1976	John Haigh	Men’s Basketball
1971	Edward Hirsch	Football

Source: Official All-America designations from CoSIDA, representing sports information directors.

constant personal and professional inspiration,” she adds. Roman History and Civilization. She signed up mainly to earn credits toward graduation.

“However, I also noted that it was taught by the indomitable Professor **Ed Phillips**, an unapologetic perfectionist,” Platzer recalls.

She could run, but she couldn’t hide.

“I was way out of my league in this class,” Platzer says. “I had no prior knowledge of Roman history and everything I read felt excruciatingly difficult to decipher, much less understand. Every paper I submitted barely registered a passing grade and my contribution to class discussion left me feeling dumb and useless.”

Then, a turning point. The class read and analyzed Virgil’s *The Aeneid*, which tells the story of Aeneas, a Trojan who traveled to Italy after the fall of Troy and founded the Roman culture.

Platzer got it. “The lightbulb finally went off and ultimately inspired my best written work. In fact, I ran to Professor Phillips’ office to hand-deliver my final essay, breathlessly thanking him and, incredulously, asked him to read my paper, right there on the spot. Naturally, he declined, but his congratulatory hug let me know that he understood my small, hard-earned victory.

“I carried this lesson with me throughout my post-Grinnell athletic career and current profession as a coach,” Platzer notes. “Coaching is all about chipping away at the word ‘impossible,’ and there is no doubt that my Grinnell academic experience fuels the passion and work ethic to show athletes how to achieve success amid seemingly impossible odds.”

## HENRY REICH '09

**Cross country star.  
Academic All-America.  
Creator of Internet physics craze.**

Reich has the distinction of amassing 8.9 million hits for a YouTube video. His MinutePhysics clips on Twitter and YouTube have been highly popular. He uses time-lapse photographs and stick figures drawn on a simple sketchbook to bring complex science questions home to the viewer.

His take on what happens when an unstoppable force meets an immovable object is closing in on 9 million hits on YouTube.

MinutePhysics is so popular that Reich teamed with his brother, **Alex Reich '11**, another Grinnellian athlete of note, to create MinuteEarth, the story of our planet. Name aside, the segments sometimes are two to three minutes long.

Reich not only earned a degree in physics and math, but posted the highest grade-point average in his class, winning the Archibald Prize.

He also was a conference champion and national qualifier in cross country, coached by Will Freeman.

Reich now realizes how valuable his Grinnell days, in the classroom and on the running routes, were to his budding career.

Reich credits Freeman for just the right amount of guidance. “Will helped us set high goals for ourselves and figure out how to achieve those goals, but ultimately he stepped back to let us take ownership of our training and team and make it our own,” Reich says.

“It would be safe to say that Grinnell set me up excellently for life after Grinnell, though in some ways I did not know it at the time,” Reich says.

“The real kicker was the writing education I got. I was lucky enough to be placed in a tutorial with **Elizabeth Dobbs**, hands down the best teacher of nonfiction writing I have ever met,” Reich says. “Her tutorial transformed my writing by giving me the tools to understand why and how stories and arguments are structured and how to fix them if they’re not working. Given that I now make a living explaining complicated science concepts in two-minute videos, I can’t overstate the importance of what I learned about writing at Grinnell.”

Reich’s appreciation of sports and Grinnell did create some tough decisions. He decided to skip a Rhodes Scholarship interview in favor of joining his teammates at the NCAA national meet, the College’s first appearance in 16 years.

Still, academics were on his mind. “I was equally proud that we had the highest average grade-point average of any Division III men’s cross country team in the nation. That, if anything, speaks of our dedication both to running and academics, and shows that sports and school don’t have to compete. They can build on each other.”



Photo courtesy of the Iowa Room.

## KATE FURNISH '89

**Record-setting swimmer.  
Spanish major.  
Physical therapist.**

Furnish was a conference-champion swimmer who qualified for the national meet, setting a school record of 24.27 in the 50-yard freestyle while placing fourth. The 1988 record still stands. She was coached by Sheila Cain.

Furnish excelled in class, too. In her fourth year, she received the President's Medal for academic achievement, extracurricular activity, and service to campus and community. She now is a physical therapist in Anthem, Ariz.

"I was pushed toward excellence," Furnish recalls. "My writing, speaking, and thinking were held to a high standard. These were questioned not only by my instructors, but also by my fellow students. My opinions became considered and developed. My learning deepened."

There were more life lessons. "I learned basics of time management, coordinating a schedule to accommodate multiple demands, and how to stretch mentally, physically, and emotionally. The rigor, the high standard, is essential in this learning. The skills I developed are foundational to everything I do professionally and personally."

Furnish studied Spanish, which she uses regularly. She used her language training while earning a graduate degree in the sciences, by treating the technical terms she had to learn as though she were still learning a new language.

"Grinnell was a complete life experience for me – one that tested and affected my heart, soul, body, and brain," she says. "The rigor of Grinnell is not the challenging curriculum; it is an experience. It's an experience, that, when you plant yourself in it, your roots grow deep and that allows your branches to expand in many directions."

"I am not sure how one cannot become immersed in the Grinnell experience, because it does require that, and so, produces its fruit," Furnish says. "For me, I loved the coupling of academics and athletics and the way they balanced each other. Each improved my performance in the other."

## MICHAEL BRUS '14

**Record-holding swimmer.  
Chemistry major.  
Future physical therapist.**

A national record holder, Brus earned his fourth trip to the NCAA national championships this year, where he was scheduled to swim both backstroke and freestyle events. Coached by Erin Hurley and Tim Hammond, he set a national record in the 200-yard backstroke while winning last year's title in that event.

"My coaches not only helped me excel as a swimmer, but also helped me learn to negotiate a schedule jam-



Photo courtesy of the Iowa Room.

packed with practices, classes, and study," Brus says. "That will pay off for the rest of my life."

Brus has his eyes on a career in physical therapy and possibly coaching. He says Grinnell's exceptional classroom instruction helped prepare him to reach for professional accomplishments, too.

"Grinnell's academic rigor has made me a much more efficient person," Brus says. "When the academics are paired with varsity athletics, I had to be very careful with my time."

You know what they say – if you need something done, find a busy person. They learn how to deliver.

"I have been able to do some cool things while still being very academically invested," Brus says. That included swimming in the national championships and the Olympic Trials, completing a summer Mentored Advanced Project in chemistry, and working with "an amazing faculty" while interacting with "the most incredible friends." ■

### MORE

To nominate an athlete for the Grinnell College Athletics Hall of Fame, or to read about other star student-athletes, visit <http://bit.ly/1oubchE>.



*“It’s kind of  
a weird superpower,  
but if I had something  
I could immediately wish for,  
I would love to be able to  
speak any language.”*

**— President Barack Obama**

# Why Language?

## Grinnell project promotes power of knowing multiple languages

by Stacey Schmeidel

There are all kinds of reasons to learn to speak another language; cultural literacy, career advancement, and global engagement come to mind.

For **Todd Armstrong**, professor of Russian, it's simple. "Grinnell College aims to graduate students who can think clearly, speak and write persuasively, and evaluate their own and others' ideas," he says, paraphrasing the College's mission statement. "If our students can't think critically and communicate effectively – not just in English, but in the languages and cultures of the world – we fail."

And so Armstrong and a cadre of committed colleagues have mounted the Why Language Project, aimed at educating people about the importance of foreign language study and its central role in the liberal arts.

Walk the halls of Alumni Recitation Hall, and you'll see early evidence of their effort: large, colorful posters proclaiming the value of speaking another language.

One poster features Colin Powell, former U.S. secretary of state: "To solve most of the major problems facing our country today – from wiping out terrorism to minimizing global environmental problems to eliminating the scourge of AIDS – will require every young person to learn more about other regions, cultures, and languages."

Another cites *Forbes Magazine* on the importance of multilingualism in business. Other countries are educating business leaders with extensive experience *and* the ability to speak more than one language, *Forbes* notes. "Do you really think your experience is enough?"

And – because work isn't everything – there's this philosophical take from *The Observer*: "If you don't have another language, you are condemned to occupy the same positions, the same phrases, all your life. It's harder to outwit yourself, harder to doubt yourself, in just one language. It's harder to play."

At Grinnell, where there are no required courses beyond the First-Year Tutorial, it's especially important to raise student and faculty awareness about language study, Armstrong notes, adding that Grinnell is one of the best places in the country to study another language. Grinnell has multiple autonomous language departments, offering programs in Chinese, Japanese, French, Arabic, German, Russian, and Spanish (as well as courses in Hindi, Italian,

and Portuguese). Grinnell students who study other languages develop a multidimensional command of them – not only learning to speak, but also conducting research in other languages, and even publishing their research findings in languages other than English. And students who double major in a foreign language and another subject are especially well-positioned for success after graduation.

**Hanna Griff-Sleven '81** is one of those well-positioned double majors. Currently director of cultural programs for the Museum at Eldredge Street (a national historic landmark and restored synagogue on New York City's Lower East Side), she was a keynote speaker at a Languages for Life Reunion program on campus in November. Featuring class visits, lunchtime language tables, and a festival of foreign films, the two-day event was an opportunity to share stories – in English, French, Spanish, and a variety of other tongues.

In her keynote, Griff-Sleven confirmed that she has benefited from her double major in French and American studies. She enjoys speaking French with foreign visitors to the museum. And her study-abroad experience in France during the first semester of her senior year at Grinnell deepened her insight into French culture, "and gave me a greater understanding of what it meant to be American," she says.

Griff-Sleven's deepening understanding of another culture is just what Armstrong and colleagues hope to inspire with the Why Language Project. In Griff-Sleven's case, the learning began early.

"There were two things that my parents required of their children while we were growing up," says Griff-Sleven, whose parents grew up bilingual in Yiddish and studied French in school before serving abroad in the military during World War II. "My parents' service experiences broadened their horizons and their love of languages, and so they required all of their children to learn to love music and to learn to speak another language. And that's where it all started for me."

She then came to a realization that is at the heart of Grinnell's language initiative.

"I understood that in order to make a better world, we needed to speak another language." ■

# Bird Lives!

## Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker



Author **Gary Giddins '70**, a columnist for the *Village Voice* newspaper in New York City for 30 years, is a noted jazz critic. This excerpt, reprinted with permission, is from the beginning of his book, *Celebrating Bird: The Triumph of Charlie Parker*, published in 1986 and revised in 2013. Giddins left the *Voice* in 2003 and is now executive director of the Leon Levy Center for Biography at the Graduate Center of City University of New York. For more, see [garygiddins.com](http://garygiddins.com).

Mythologies die hard. The witness to Charlie Parker's death heard a clap of thunder at the moment of his passing. The companion of his last years remains in spiritual contact with him after more than thirty years. His childhood sweetheart and first wife continues to hear his music as nothing more or less than the "story of our lives together," though all his recorded music and innovations postdated their relationship. Countless musicians tell their own stories in terms of Parker's influence on them, as if they had been dawdling contentedly down one path until they heard his call and abruptly about-faced. Such testimonies of veneration and awe, shot through with religious symbology, suggest the extent to which Parker's posthumous life is clouded with desire and romance. The deification did not begin with his death. Parker enjoyed remarkably little renown during his short life, yet he was faithfully attended by disciples and hagiographers — musicians, critics, and a coterie of enthusiasts drawn mostly though not exclusively from the fractious, defensive world of jazz, inspired by his music to a voluble rapture that finds comfort in the elaborations of hyperbole, allegory, myth.

Parker's status as a prophet evolved inadvertently, a by-product of his willed destiny to become "a great musician." As an apprentice in Kansas City jazz circles, he got off to a painfully slow start, impressing fellow apprentices with little more than his confidence and determination. Some thought him lazy, obdurate, and spoiled. But the young man was favored with supernatural abilities, and the tempo of his life quickened soon enough. Resolve gave way to obsession and a desire to succeed equaled only by a vertiginous desire to fail. He hurled himself at the gates, falsifying his age to gain entry into the most competitive nightclubs, daring Kansas City to reject him (it did), and maximizing every rejection as a stimulus for new feats. He pursued his muse with astonishing assurance. At sixteen, he was laughed off a bandstand; at seventeen, he made converts — including Jay McShann, a stranger in town, who eventually offered him a chance to reject Kansas City. The fledgling, who many years later would answer a query about his religious affiliation by declaring himself "a devout musician," was too conscious of his talent, too possessed

of pride, too much the product of racial repression and maternal sanction not to suspect that a larger world awaited him — a world he could recast in his own image.

Parker's followers dogged his footsteps, often armed with tape recorders to preserve his improvised performances (but not necessarily those of his accompanying soloists, who also have claims on posterity). Some put words to his music. One such lyricist, a singer who called himself King Pleasure, made a profession of the practice and paid Parker the dubious but canonical tribute of predicting his death in his words to "Parker's Mood." Parker sought allies (and could be stern with musicians who failed to make the grade), but he did not seek followers and tended to be contemptuous of idolizers. He has little use for cult foppery — beret, beard, jive talk — or cult arrogance. If he seems to have attracted converts rather than mere fans, the reason is obvious. Parker was

the first jazz player since Louis Armstrong whose innovations demanded a comprehensive reassessment of all the elements of jazz.

A great saxophonist influences saxophonists, and a drummer, drummers. But Parker, like Armstrong before him, engineered a total shift in the jazz aesthetic. The autodidactic country boy from Kansas City brought modernism to jazz. He forced players on every instrument to face their worst fears or realize their most prized aspirations in his music. Established players, satisfied with approved jazz styles, encountered in

Parker's music fresh concepts of harmony, melody, and rhythm — all of which evolved from precedents easily found in classic jazz — and something more unsettling: an iconoclastic sensibility that threatened to undermine generally accepted standards of excellence. Younger players were more open to Melville's shock of recognition, which binds not only the community of geniuses but that of apprentice artists impatient to express their own powers in a world paralyzed with orthodoxy. No surprise, then, that so many musicians of Parker's generation (and not a few elders) tell of how he changed their lives with a way of playing and thinking about music they scarcely imagined. No sooner was he buried, in Easter season, than the graffiti appeared: *Bird lives!* ■



Photo courtesy of The Library of Congress. Photographer: William P. Gottlieb

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### Deadlines:

Summer 2014 Issue: May 5, 2014  
Fall 2014 Issue: Aug. 4, 2014

## Errata

The last name of author **Gary Giddins '70** was misspelled in the Winter 2013 edition of *The Grinnell Magazine*. We apologize for the error.

# CLASSNOTES



## Donald K. McInnes '51

McInnes led a group of 13 people on a human rights trip, sponsored by Unitarian Universalists for Justice in the Middle East, to Israel and the West Bank in the summer of 2013. It was the fifth time he has led such a venture. The group met with a wide range of Israeli and Palestinian organizations and individuals to learn as much as possible about the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Read more about the group at [www.uujme.org](http://www.uujme.org).

## 1959 55th Reunion Cluster

**Janet Schaab Mann** received the 13th annual Camerata Award from the University of Utah School of Music, November 2013. Mann, an emerita professor of piano, was honored at a concert dinner gala.

## 1963

The opening night party of the Gravers Lane Gallery, Philadelphia, featured ceramic vessels by **R. Bennett Bean** and rugs by Bennett Bean Studio, November 2013.

## 1967

**Thomas W. Hill** performed seven classical pieces at his second senior recital at McCoy Community Center for the Arts in New Albany, N.Y., November 2013. The idea for a second senior recital almost a half-century after the first followed a discovery. His wife, **Laurie Houdeck Hill '66**, found a Steinway grand piano at an estate sale. Hill invited 400 people to the program, which included works by Brahms, Chopin, Gershwin, Mozart, Rachmaninoff, and Ravel.

## 1972

**Donald C. Pachner** presented "What to Know when Applying for and Renewing Your Insurance" at the National Outdoor Leadership School's Wilderness Risk Management Conference, Moran, Wyo., September 2013. He also presented "What Every Mountaineering Guide and Guide Service Needs to Know about Workers' Compensation Insurance: It's Not Just for Employees," and "Insurance Ramifications for Guide & Guide Service Arrangements With Business Partners Plus 2013 Trends in Mountaineering Liability Insurance" at the American Mountain Guides Association meetings in Boulder, Colo., October 2013. His 10-year-old business, Pachner & Associates, which specializes in insurance for outdoor recreation, nature education, environmental, and research organizations, and is based in Bedford, N.Y.

## 1978

**Jonathan M. Neiderbach** is a candidate for the Democratic nomination for state auditor in Iowa. The primary election is June 3, 2014. He and **Mary Bauer Neiderbach '78** live in Des Moines.

## 1981

**Robert T. Shannon** received the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) International Max Hecht Award for his outstanding service to Committee D19 on Water, November 2013. ASTM is one of the largest international standards development and delivery systems in the world. Shannon is a radioanalytical consultant at Quality Radioanalytical Support LLC, Grand Marais, Minn.

## 1984 30th Reunion Cluster

**James A. Becker** was honored as the Man of Merit at the Eighth Annual Men of Merit Celebration, honoring men in Contra Costa County, Calif., October 2013. The celebration is part of a Domestic Violence Prevention Enhancement and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) Project program, which emphasizes that violence does not equal strength.

## A Forest Reborn

### Family wants to help species, fight climate change

Any biologist will tell you that a fragmented forest doesn't pack the biological punch of a pristine woodland.

It can be difficult to restore what has been lost, but with the right plan, a stitched-together forest can again provide the kind of habitat some species will use. A bonus: in an age of record carbon emissions, the forest can help clear the air and filter pollutants before they reach water supplies.

**Karin Stein '84** is in the middle of that type of effort in Costa Rica. She's teaming with her brother **Jurgen '86** and sister **Sofia '89**, who attended Grinnell for two years, to reconnect the family's 2,500 acres with other land in a reforestation to create a biological corridor running between Costa Rica's highest mountain, Cerro Chirripó, and the Caribbean Sea.

As it stands, "It is a hugely endangered ecosystem," Karin says.

It is the latest in a series of eco-efforts in Costa Rica that go back to at least 1996, when the family formed a private foundation there to fight illegal logging. The Grinnellians' father bought the family's land in 1974.

An ecologically rich environment is at stake, and local residents depend on the landscape for more than a nice view: the Bananito and Banano Rivers currently supply drinking water to about 80,000 people.

Part of the Steins' land is connected to one of Central America's largest protected areas, La Amistad Biosphere Reserve, a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1982 that spans parts of Costa Rica and Panama. "Much of the corridor already exists," and the family has 200 acres available for reforestation immediately, Stein says.

There are 37,000 acres already protected, but the goal is to have a seven-kilometer area with 3,700 acres more preserved to connect the pieces.

"As we see how climate change is impacting our planet, the importance of the corridor becomes more tangible," Sofia Stein says. The larger habitat would give the incredibly diverse flora and fauna of the area a better chance to adapt and survive. With 100 species of bats alone, the area is among the most diverse in the region, she adds. Among other species are jaguar, ocelot, Geoffroy's spider monkey, and bare-necked umbrella bird that call the area home.

Karin Stein, who lives near Grinnell with husband and Grinnell professor **Jonathan Andelson '80** and is a widely known vocalist and guitarist when she isn't planting trees, says the reforestation project will



### Edward A. Hirsch '75

As the new chief medical officer for the Children's Hospital of Illinois, appointed in November 2013, Dr. Hirsch is responsible for planning and directing the Peoria hospital's medical affairs, including quality initiatives, physician services, medical education, risk management, and will provide leadership for patient safety and the highest quality of care.

### 1985 30th Reunion Cluster

**E. Ann Justice** was one of 104 St. Louis-area educators receiving an Emerson Excellence in Teaching Award, November 2013. Justice was selected by the administration of Mark Twain Elementary, Brentwood, Mo. The awards program began in 1989 and is sponsored by Emerson, a diversified global manufacturer headquartered in St. Louis.

### 1988

**Heather A. Leith** became general counsel of the American Academy of Family Physicians in Leawood, Kan., October 2013.

### 1992

**Adrienne L. McAdory** has purchased the rights to **dot.wed**, a new top-level domain where newly engaged couples will have the opportunity to claim their own **dot.wed** domain name, November 2013.

**Maria E. Walinski-Peterson** began her second semester as a part-time adjunct instructor in the geography/geology department at the University of Nebraska, Omaha, January 2014.

### 1997

**Kevin M. Rich** recently joined Illinois State University as artistic director of the Illinois Shakespeare Festival. He helped redesign the M.F.A. acting program to focus on community outreach and civic engagement.

### 1999

**Kimberly Sherman** received the 2013 School Psychologist of the Year Award at the Louisiana School Psychological Association's annual conference, November 2013.

**Misty J. Huacuja-LaPointe** was promoted to director of prehealth advising at Brandeis University, Waltham, Mass., July 2013.

**Brian P. Vicente** received the Justice Gerald Le Dain Award for Achievement in the Field of Law at the International Drug Policy Reform Conference in Denver, October 2013. Vicente received this award for his role in leading the Amendment 64 campaign, which resulted in Colorado becoming the first state in the nation and the first geographic area in the world to make the possession, use, and regulated distribution of marijuana legal for adults.

### 2000

**Luna Ranjit**, cofounder and executive director of New York-based Adhikaar, a human rights and social justice organization, was chosen as one of the Asia 21 Young Leaders by Asia Society, November 2013.

### 2004 10th Reunion

**Justin A. Stewart-Teitelbaum** has joined the antitrust, competition, and trade practice of the Washington, D.C., office of Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer LLP. His wife, **Dree Collopy '04**, will author the seventh edition of the *American Immigration Lawyers Association's Asylum Primer*, which provides practical, interpretive guidance on asylum law and practice. It should be released in the fall of 2014. Stewart-Teitelbaum and Collopy live in Washington, D.C.

### 2007

**Alexander A.F. Muller** accepted the position of sponsored international student adviser in the Office of International Student Admissions and Services, Park University, Parkville, Mo., where he oversees and specializes in working with students from Arab countries and Arabic-speaking countries in the Arab world, April 2013.

be involved, but it will only become more difficult as time elapses and various pressures on the land increase.

With their father moving out of managing the farm, the pressure on this family of environmentalists is to protect this land not far from the ocean, Karin says. The family doesn't want the land to succumb to oil palm plantations, which have famously robbed the endangered orangutans of Indonesia much of their habitat, in part to keep microwave popcorn consumers around the globe happy.

Karin says the Grinnellian family hopes to involve other Grinnellians, and dozens of others, in the project.

The family dreams of a project in which "the Grinnell spirit comes to life and where Grinnellians can make their own carbon footprint lighter; where they can come and see the fruit of their participation; explore; bring family and students; regain hope and be rejuvenated; make their businesses greener; or carry out scientific studies. The place is magical and ecologically very important for Central America, and the possibilities are endless."

For more information, visit [www.fclimon.org](http://www.fclimon.org).



Left to right: Karin '84, Jurgan '86, and Sofia Stein '89.



### Joan H. Neuberger '75

"15-Minute History," a podcast series by Neuberger, became the No.1 ranked podcast series on iTunesU, Oct. 31, 2013. The podcast for educators, students, and history buffs is synced to the National Core Standards for World and U.S. History; each episode comes with a transcript and suggestions for related reading. It is a co-production of Hemispheres, the international outreach consortium at The University of Texas at Austin, and Not Even Past, the main public history website she edits.

## Degrees

**Jeremy L. Scott '89**, master's in education in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) with distinction, University of Exeter, U.K., Nov. 11, 2013. He now is teaching English as a foreign language at a Japanese university.

**Gabrielle M. Zartman '95**, associate's degree in nursing, GateWay Community College, Phoenix, May 10, 2013.

**E. Ramsey Williams Unal '97**, master's in clinical research, Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, June 2011. She completed a fellowship in maternal-fetal medicine/perinatology at Medical University of South Carolina, Charleston, June 2012.

**Joshua A. Blue '01**, international executive master of arts in educational leadership and change, Hong Kong Institute of Education, February 2014. He has accepted a position of deputy principal at Kennedy School, English Schools Foundation, Hong Kong, January 2014. Blue will help lead teaching and learning, professional development, and the implementation of the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme.

**Benjamin K. Johannsen '06**, Ph.D. in economics, Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., June 21, 2013. He became an economist with the board of the Federal Reserve System in August 2013.

**Trymore Magomana '07**, master's of public health, specializing in health care administration, American Public University, St. Charles, W. Va., May 2012; master's in international relations, Webster University, St. Louis, August 2013.

**Brooke A. Weber '10**, master of arts with merit, specializing in modern history, Royal Holloway, University of London, September 2013.

## Marriages and Unions

**Jeffrey R. Wirtz '95** and Zachary M. Oswald, Aug. 24, 2013. Attending were *Kirk D. Johnson '95* and *Eric J. Riensche '97*.

**Evonne J. Gantz '98** and Xavier Anderson, Dec. 31, 2013.

**Clara Rice '99** and Andrew Hlavac, Sept. 21, 2013. Guests included her maternal uncle, *Joseph J. Walka '60*.



### Mark A. Finkelstein '82

A business law and litigation partner at Smith Moore Leatherwood LLP, in its Raleigh office, Finkelstein was elected president-elect of the 10th Judicial District of North Carolina, with his term as president to begin Jan. 1, 2015. He has been selected to teach for the National Institute for Trial Advocacy for more than a decade.



## Workplace Ethics in Astronomy

### Grad joins in study of tough ethics calls in workplace

In “The ethical grey zone” (*Nature*, Vol. 504, No. 7476, November 2013), **Kartik Sheth '93** and Caitlin Casey discuss their exploration of ethically ambiguous situations in the academic world. Sheth, associate astronomer at the National Radio Astronomy Observatory in Virginia, and Casey, a fellow at the University of California-Irvine, both actively work to increase diversity in their field. Their article discusses the friction that can accompany such increases.

In their article, Sheth and Casey discuss situations that range from simple misunderstandings to unconscious bias, sexual harassment, and plagiarism. They took 25 situations that they or their colleagues encountered over the past few years and presented them as hypotheticals at the Aspen Center for Physics in May 2013. The scenarios were purposely abbreviated and context was left out for later discussion. Two groups of astronomers were then guided into a continuum activity where each person discussed his or her situation forming a continuum of behaviors – from “blatantly unethical or illegal behavior” on one end to “desirable behavior that we would like to foster in our community” at



### David P. White '90

White received the 2014 Attorney of the Year award from the John M. Langston Bar Association of Los Angeles, February 2014. Langston is the oldest and largest African-American bar association in California. White is executive director of SAG-AFTRA, the American labor union representing some 160,000 film and radio performers. He received his law degree from Stanford Law School and also was a Rhodes Scholar.

**Michael A. Shapiro '01** and **Marcy J. Brant '02**, Nov. 9, 2013. The wedding party included *Laura A. Shapiro '04*. Attending were *Rachel L. Melis '01*, *Snow Brook Peterson '01*, *Erika Zimmermann Damer '02*, *Molly H. Ekerdt '02*, *Ann E. Mikos '02*, *Ann K. Myers '02*, *Sarah G. Neilsen '02*, *Jennifer Wheeler Rothschild '02*, and *Erik H. Burton '03*.

**Benjamin J. Bloom '02** and Sarah O'Halloran, Aug. 17, 2013.

**Gregory S. Fuller '03** and Alicia Cohen, Oct. 6, 2012.

**Danijela Gazibara '04** and Jeremy Kimball, May 11, 2013. Attending were *Puran R. Parsani '04*, *Katherine A. Hogan '04*, *Nicholas J. Lloyd '04*, *Colin K. Loftin '04*, and *Jonathan D. Horowitz '04*.

**Catherine L. Bardelson '05** and Chris Blair, Sept. 14, 2013. Attending were *Tawny W. Lane '03*, *Jacob A. Nuetzel '03*, *Sarah E. Cornwell '05*, *J. Adelia Chrysler '05*, *Baylis N. Beard Molina '05*, *Anne I. Salomon '05*, *Madeline Ruth Shirman '05*, *Lucinda Richard Woodward '05*, and *Nathaniel Inglis-Steinfeld '06*.

**Lusiana A. Lumanau '05** and Robert Candra, June 29, 2013. Attending were *Shihan C. Abeygunawardana '05*, *Presha Rajbhandari '05*, and *Marie K. Tan '05*.

**Benjamin H. Baker '06** and **Elisa M. McCool '06**, Aug. 11, 2013. *Anna S. Murphey '06* attended.

**Benjamin K. Johannsen '06** and Emily J. Thompson, June 29, 2013. Attending were *Anne I. Salomon '05*, *Elizabeth A. Braverman '06*, *Peter L. Brown '06*, *Nathaniel Inglis-Steinfeld '06*, *Graeme H. Miller '06*, *Rebecca A. Ohman '06*, *Robert D. Pedersen '06*, and *Ryan J. Long '07*.

**Eli L. Zigas '06** and Savanna Ferguson, Sept. 21, 2013. Attending were his parents, *Jodie Levin-Epstein '72* and *Barry H. Zigas '73*. *Brian R. Turner '02*, *Ursula C. Hill '05*, *Terrill T. Legueri '05*, *Julia L. Sundermann '06*, *Laura R. Mason-Marshall '06*, *Linn B. Davis '08*, and *Caroline I. Rodriguez '08* also attended.



### Morgan T. Page '02

“Midwestern Fault Zones are Still Alive” in [news.sciencemag.org](http://news.sciencemag.org), January 2014, discusses a recent study by Page and coauthor Susan Hough that has reinvigorated a debate about the level of risk in the New Madrid seismic zone, named for a small town in Missouri that experienced large earthquakes in 1811 and 1812. Page is a geophysicist with the U.S. Geological Survey in Pasadena, Calif.

the other end. Casey and Sheth then led the two groups in a frank and spirited discussion of the rankings. They often provided more context and/or changed the paradigm by reversing gender roles or changing the power structure in the different scenarios.

Although there was no “right” answer, their goal was to encourage the community to start thinking and acting actively on these situations. Instances of blatant plagiarism or sexual harassment were universally ranked as unethical and illegal. Other situations, such as those that dealt with false assumptions or well-intended but potentially flawed attempts at increasing diversity, received a wider range of responses.

The workshop lasted much longer than initially expected and yet none of the participants left the exercise. Since returning to their institutions, the attendees have started their own initiatives to improve the conditions for diversity in their own departments and universities.

After the initial workshop, Casey and Sheth posted the exercise online at [AstroBetter.com](http://AstroBetter.com), a blog that supports the astronomy community. Of the site’s 3,000 readers, nearly 500 responded. Sheth

said that the intent of the questions was to stimulate discussion of these ethical grey areas.

Since his graduation from Grinnell, Sheth has been deeply involved in increasing diversity in his field. “The more different kinds of opinions we have and the more different ways we can look at a scientific problem, the better chance we have to make real progress,” Sheth says.

Sheth is currently focusing on building a pipeline for future science, technology, engineering, and mathematics leaders from underrepresented groups in the United States and overseas, specifically in Africa and China.

–Luke Saunders ’12

(Read the full article by Casey and Sheth online at <http://bit.ly/1jEpgbG>)

## Births and Adoptions

**Madeleine V. Lee ’08** and **Jonathan B. Tsu ’08**, Aug. 24, 2013. Attending were *Jacob A. Englander ’06* and *Julie P. Bir ’09*.

**David A. D’Angelo ’08** and **Margaret O. Potthoff ’08**, Sept. 1, 2013.

**Adam D. Wert ’10** and **Kendall L. Hiedeman ’11**, Oct. 19, 2013. The wedding party included *Sarah C. Goff ’11*, *Kate R. Moening ’11*, *Steven R. Sando ’11*, and *Jennifer R. Peek ’13*. *Lauren E. Johnson ’11* also attended.

**Nabila Mirza ’11** and **Tausif Salim**, July 1, 2013. Attending were *Gayatri Jayal ’11* and *Gaurav Thapa ’12*.

**Stephanie A. Wang ’11** and **Marcus Krigsman**, Aug. 10, 2013. Attending were *Derek L. Bates ’08*, *Ivy Hsieh ’10*, *Alexander G. Cohn ’11*, *Carly A. Jerome ’11*, *Stephanie L. Swenson ’11*, *Kodi L. Thompson-Moore ’11*, and *Sara L. Woolery ’11*.

**Tara M. Neavins ’93** and **Michael Maltese**, Aug. 4, 2013, their second child, second daughter, *Angelica Cristina Neavins Maltese*.

**Kendra Potz Watkins ’96** and **Jonathan Watkins**, Dec. 1, 2013, their fourth child, second daughter, *Violet Odelia Watkins*.

**Misty J. Huacuja-LaPointe ’99** and **Brent LaPointe**, March 4, 2013, their first child, daughter *Madeline Eleanor LaPointe*.

**Emily R. Lutgen ’00** and **Luke T. Stevens**, Oct. 31, 2013, their second child, first son, *Graem David Stevens*. Maternal grandmother is *S. Catharine Repke Lutgen ’65*.

**Alexander S. Brown ’00** and **Chian Wu ’00**, Oct. 19, 2013, their first child, daughter *Sybil Wu Brown*.

**Allyson W. Goose ’00** and **Ellen S. Gallagher ’03**, Jan. 25, 2014, their first child, a son, *Jasper Gallagher-Goose*.

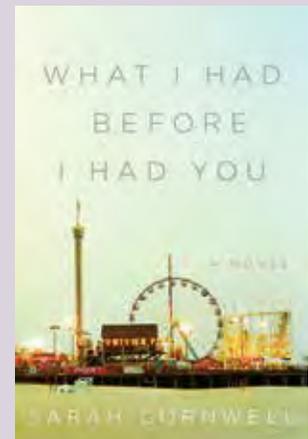
**Brigid I. Naughton ’01** and **Kevin L. Travis**, Dec. 13, 2013, their first child, daughter *JoHanna Victoria Rose Travis*.

**Sherman P. Willis ’01** and **Kristie Henderson Willis ’03**, Dec. 11, 2013, their second child, first son, *Titus Willis*.

**Damien C. Specht ’02** and **Rachel Adcox**, Nov. 29, 2013, their first child, daughter *Lucie Evelyn Specht*.

**Kristina Van Doren-Shulkin Coskun ’05** and **Murat Coskun**, July 19, 2013, their second child, second son, *Aaron Coskun*.

**Elizabeth J. Lewis Jackson ’05** and **Matthew Jackson**, Dec. 31, 2012, their second child, second son, *Aaron Albert Jackson*. Maternal great-uncle is *Scott P. Lewis ’78*.



### Sarah Cornwell ’05

Cornwell’s debut novel, *What I Had Before I Had You*, is a novel set on the Jersey Shore about mothers and daughters, mental illness, and family secrets. Cornwell started the novel in 2003 in professor Paula Smith’s fiction workshop. The novel has received starred reviews from *Publishers Weekly* and *Booklist*. Cornwell works as a screenwriter in Hollywood.

## A Future in Fried Pies

### Generous support from blog readers helps Grinnellian launch her business

By the time the first customers visit her farmers market stand in Knoxville, Tenn., **Dale Mackey '07** has been awake for hours, frying and packaging hundreds of her signature palm-size pies.

Fried pies are a well-known southern treat, but not one that Mackey, originally from Illinois, had ever made before moving to Tennessee via Kentucky following graduation. She began experimenting with them in her home as a novelty for visitors and dinner guests, using her family's traditional pie recipe.

"I simply started making them," Mackey recalls. "I come from a whole family of bakers. We love food! And these are a food rooted to place — many people here have a nostalgic connection to fried pies." Over time, traditional favorites such as apple or cherry also made room for combinations such as bourbon pecan or chipotle mac and cheese.

With both a resurgence of interest in local food production and the growing popularity of mobile food trucks, it wasn't long before Mackey's knack for pie-making transitioned into the kernel of a small business idea.

"It all started with a blog," she quips, describing the process of fleshing out the idea and floating it among her friends. So convincing

was her rough vision that people — including many Grinnellians who heard about her blog secondhand through social networks — began sending unsolicited donations to make her dream a reality.

"Grinnellians have been essential to my success from the beginning. It is so crazy how generous and enthusiastic people are [about my business]; I have received an outpouring of support from people I've never even met."

This initial backing spurred Mackey to take the first steps toward selling pies, including construction of an iconic small blue stand. Then, reality struck: Working through necessary but tedious bureaucratic regulation delayed her launch for three crucial months of the 2012 summer market season.

That struggle found Mackey more committed than ever to bringing her pies to the public. She sought more support, and converted a food trailer so she wouldn't have to rely on the kindness of friends with certified kitchens. It also means a couple hours of extra sleep and less waste, since she will be able to fry her pies on demand rather than before the market begins.

## Publications, Productions, and Exhibitions

"Kaleidoscope," a showing of original prints on paper, acrylics, and monotypes by **Philip E. Bennet '51**, The Old Print Gallery, Washington, D.C., April 11–June 14, 2014.

*The Hollywood Fantasy: The Life and Times of a Lifetime Film Student*, by **Robert M. Konikow '66**, PublishAmerica, Baltimore, Md., Oct. 3, 2013; and also, ... *I Come for to Sing*, PublishAmerica, Baltimore, Md., April 30, 2013.

*like socks in the dryer*, a collection of poems that combines old and new production values, by **T. Keith Liggett '72**, Salmonberry Press and Clawhammer Press, Fernie, B.C., November 2013.

"15-Minute History," a podcast series by **Joan H. Neuberger '75**, became the No.1 ranked podcast series on iTunesU, Oct. 31, 2013.

*Le Grand Kallé: His Life, His Music*, two CDs and a book written by **Kenneth C. Braun '77**, Sterns Music, October 2013. This is the fifth volume of 20th-century Congolese music that Braun has compiled and annotated. This volume celebrates Joseph Kabasele, the pre-eminent Congolese singer, composer, and bandleader of the 1950s and early 1960s, the tumultuous era at the end of Belgian colonial rule in the Congo and the misbegotten beginning of the independent Congo Republic.

*Wisconsin Waltz*, a CD of original songs by **Beth Brody '77**, self-produced, December 2013. The CD is available at [bethmyrabrody@gmail.com](mailto:bethmyrabrody@gmail.com).

"Late One Night at the Local Radio Station, circa 1984," by **Timothy J. Finn '79**, in *From Beyond the Grave: A Collection of 19 Ghostly Tales* (Michael J. Evans, ed.), Grinning Skull Press, Bridgewater, Mass., May 2013. Also, "Never Name He Who Shall Not Be Named," in *Strange Versus Lovecraft: A Strange Anthology*, Strangehouse Books, Wood River, Ill., June 25, 2013.

"The Preacher's Daughter," a short story by **Jeffrey C. Dickey-Chasins '81**, [sharkreef.org](http://sharkreef.org), Issue 23, January 2014.

*Prospect Avenue*, a solo album by Rabbi Darkside, aka **Samuel J. Sellers '00**, Say Word Entertainment, June 2013. The album features luminaries DJ Rob Swift, Homeboy Sandman, Nicodemus and Da Beatminerz, as well as contributions from France and Germany. Sellers is also known for his arts education work in New York City, most widely for the development of the rap-song-based test prep curriculum "Fresh Prep." He lectures and presents at academic conferences and universities around the country and is the cofounder of the nonprofit Hip Hop Re:Education Project. He will be touring the United States this year.

"Mapping networks to improve knowledge exchange among family planning and reproductive health organizations in Ethiopia," by lead author **Sarah V. Harlan '01**, with Tara M. Sullivan and Samson E. Hailegiorgis, *Knowledge Management for Development Journal*, 9(2), 140–161, September 2013.

*Walks on the Margins, A Story of Bipolar Illness*, by **Matthew B. (Max) Maddox '02** and his mother, Kathy Brandt, Monkshood Press, April 7, 2013.

The pies themselves are responsible for only part of Mackey's success. On market days, she plays a role, donning a vintage-inspired costume, subtly evoking the period many of her customers associate with fried pies. Comfort is built directly into the transaction. It's a role that comes naturally to Mackey, one that she explored in her independent women's literary studies major, which culminated in a thesis performance of her own one-woman show critiquing domesticity in the 1960s.

Well aware of the effect that the spark of other people's enthusiasm and a small bit of funding can have on an idea, Dale's Fried Pies regularly offers proceeds to young women with their own promising projects, an initiative Mackey calls Awesome Girl Squad. The program cultivates the same support for girls, telling them, "We think you can do this and here's some money to support your dream."

Check out Mackey's blog on food and entertaining: [bitly/1hsWK6Y](http://bitly/1hsWK6Y).

—Hilary Bown '11



Photo by Shawn Poynter

## In Memoriam

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 Meg Jones Bair.

**E. Jean Matthews Knutson '34**, Clear Lake, Iowa, Aug. 8, 2013. Survivors include her daughter-in-law, *Julia Chatterton Knutson '63*.

**Jayne Newcomer Samuels '36**, Evanston, Ill., Nov. 2, 2013.

**Esther McCollough Vogelei '36**, Mercer Island, Wash., Sept. 27, 2012.

**Eleanor Davis Von Boehn '38**, Unionville, Conn., October 25, 2013.

**James A. Knowlton, Jr. '39**, Naples, Fla., Sept. 22, 2013. Survivors include his daughter, *Leslie Knowlton Thompson '71*, and his great-granddaughter, *Elizabeth J. Hulse '03*.

**Elizabeth Buchanan Brown '42**, Sioux Falls, S.D., Dec. 25, 2013.

**Louise Skidmore Downey '42**, Madrid, Iowa, Oct. 2, 2013.

**Carl H. George '42**, Lincolnshire, England, August 1, 2013.

**George H. Gruenwald '44**, Rancho Santa Fe, Calif., April 23, 2013.

**Lloyd L. Fry '45**, Brighton, Mich., Sept. 15, 2013.

**Jack E. Hebbeln '45**, Davenport, Iowa, Dec. 16, 2013.

**Frederick D. Collins '49**, Scottsdale, Ariz., Sept. 27, 2013. Survivors include his wife, *Nadine Osincup Collins '48*.

**Shirley Adcock Cope '49**, Prescott Valley, Ariz., Dec 1, 2013.

**Patricia Nixon Longenecker '49**, Urbandale, Iowa, May 25, 2013.

**Royal F. Ruth '49**, Des Moines, Iowa, Nov. 14, 2013. Survivors include his wife, *Jean Bouma Ruth '50*, and son, *Makino Ruth '79*.

**Lawrence H. Fowler, Jr. '50**, Fargo, N.D., Nov. 10, 2013.

**William D. Blackley '53**, Lakeland, Minn., Sept. 12, 2013.

**Terry P. Ellis '53**, Chicago, July 9, 2013.

**Antonia Garst Lee '54**, London, Nov. 25, 2013. Survivors include her sister, *Mary Garst Doyle '58*.

**Gary W. Kraus '57**, Mount Dora, Fla., June 30, 2013.

**John M. Eiel '60**, Longwood, Fla., Nov. 14, 2013. Survivors include his wife, *Lauren Harris Eiel '61*.

**Timothy E. Flinn '62**, Athens, Ga., Aug. 7, 2013.

**C. Wayne Gano, Jr. '63**, Rockford, Ill., Sept. 23, 2013.

**Alice Allen Messimer '63**, Axtell, Texas, Sept. 31, 2013.

**Sue Hogan Moore '63**, Wyndmoor, Pa., Nov. 21, 2013.

**Betsy Hamsher Waltz '64**, Kirkwood, Mo., Nov. 6, 2013.

**Theretha Nelson-Littlejohn '70**, Indianapolis, Jan. 14, 2014.

**Michael Wiener Goodman '78**, San Rafael, Calif., Dec. 1, 2013.

**Wallace S. Squibb '89**, Ozark, Mo., Dec. 19, 2013.

**Scott C. McNiven '99**, San Francisco, Dec. 7, 2013.

**Lyle Bauman**, former dining hall supervisor, passed away Tuesday, March 18 at his Brooklyn, Iowa home. He was 58. In 1978, he began working for the College as a groundskeeper and carpenter. He left in 1980, and returned in 1998 as the dining room supervisor. Since 2000, he supervised student employees in the dining hall. He eventually became Marketplace supervisor. As a fixture on campus, Lyle endeared himself to students, faculty, and staff. He is also the namesake of the campus pub.

**Matthew Bucksbaum**, husband of College trustee **Carolyn “Kay” Swartz Bucksbaum ’51**, died Nov. 24, 2013. Matthew Bucksbaum cofounded General Growth Properties, one of the nation’s largest developers of shopping malls. Although not an alumnus, Bucksbaum, was a longtime and enthusiastic supporter of Grinnell College.

**Howard Burkle**, teacher, mentor, and colleague, died Jan. 7, 2014. He was a widely known and respected former lecturer and Grinnell College emeritus professor of philosophy and religion. He was the first faculty member to work with student volunteers in what eventually became Grinnell’s Liberal Arts in Prison Program at the Newton Correctional Facility. He also was one of the first mentors for Posse Scholars, a Grinnell access program that supports diverse students from Los Angeles and Washington, D.C.

**Rebecca Dayton**, an employee in Grinnell College Dining Services for more than 20 years, most recently as a chef de cuisine, died Sept. 13, 2013, after being injured in a motorcycle accident.

**Marvin Kelley**, a former private voice instructor at the College, died Thursday, Jan. 16, 2014 at St. Francis Manor in Grinnell.

## 2014 Alumni Awards and Pioneer Awards

**Help celebrate this year’s recipients —  
and nominate next year’s!**

Since 1946, the Alumni Council has recognized 714 Alumni Award recipients for contributions and dedication to their communities, to their professions, and to Grinnell College. Recipients will be honored at Reunion 2014 during Alumni Assembly, 4 p.m. Saturday, May 31. Information about each awardee will be available online after the reunion and in the summer edition of *The Grinnell Magazine*.

**Please join us at Reunion 2014, May 30–June 1,  
to honor the following Grinnellians:**

Elizabeth Barnard Brooke ’54  
John Copeland ’59  
Anne Brineman Anderson ’64  
Martha Grodzins Butt ’64  
Peter (Cohon) Coyote ’64  
Samuel Schuman ’64  
G. Pete Ferrell ’74  
Anthony Hyatt ’85

The Pioneer Award is a distinctive alumni award, given to young alumni who have graduated within the past 10 years. This year, the Pioneer Award will be presented to:

Sarah Labowitz ’04  
Noga Ashkenazi ’09

To register for Reunion 2014, go to  
[forum.grinnell.edu/activities/reunions-alumni-college](http://forum.grinnell.edu/activities/reunions-alumni-college).

### **Nominate a Classmate for 2015!**

We invite your nominations for the 2015 Alumni Award recipients. Nominate Grinnellians by July 15, 2014, for a 2015 award from the following class years: 1944, 1945, 1946, 1955, 1956, 1965, 1969, 1970, 1971, 1975, 1990, 1994, 1995, 1996, and 2005.

For a complete listing of past recipients, information about how to submit a 2015 nomination, and the nomination form, visit  
[forum.grinnell.edu/alumni-awards](http://forum.grinnell.edu/alumni-awards).

**Antonia “Tosh” Garst Lee ’54**, a longtime Grinnell College benefactor and wife of **Harold Lee**, former trustee and adjunct professor, died Nov. 25, 2013, in London. Lee, formerly of Coon Rapids, Iowa, had taught at the American School in London. The Lees’ strong commitment to education was honored in the naming of the Garst Environmental Classroom at the Conard Environmental Research Area, recognizing the support of the Garst and Lee families. Tosh Lee was the daughter of Roswell and Elizabeth Garst, noted farm leaders.

**Willard Wille**, a member of the Grinnell College facilities management staff for 13 years, died Sept. 11, 2013. In the past few years, he was assigned to the Joe Rosenfield ’25 Center.

# Iowa's Dirty Water

*Alumnus leads efforts to keep pollution out of water supplies*

Many Grinnell alumni probably don't dwell on the many necessities of life that we may take for granted: safe shelter, breathable air, ample food, improving transportation and communication systems, and safe drinking water. But, if you've ever faced a shortage of one of these aspects of your daily lives, it's probably an experience that shapes your thoughts of the future.

Coming from the Grinnell tradition of liberal arts and community service, I did not imagine that my professional focus and contribution to the community I live in would center around safe drinking water for nearly one-half million central Iowans whom I call both customers and neighbors.

While drinking-water scarcity is a worldwide issue, often with tragic consequences in less affluent areas, perhaps the central Iowa context for drinking water provides an illustrative example. As the chief executive officer and general manager of Des Moines (Iowa) Water Works, I'm privileged to lead an organization that for nearly 150 years has turned the runoff flowing down the Raccoon and Des Moines Rivers into safe, affordable, and abundant tap water for Des Moines and the majority of residents in Polk, Dallas, Warren, and Madison counties. Water Works initially was a private water company owned by the venerable Hubbell family, then a century ago became a municipal water utility owned by Des Moines ratepayers but serving customers now scattered mostly in suburbs and more-distant area cities.

The fact that this water is drawn from rivers is a critical concern. That makes us captive of the upstream land uses in an area encompassing nearly 10,000 square miles, most of it used for agriculture.

The landscape, part of the geologic "Des Moines Lobe," includes some of the richest farmland in the world. It is dominated by intensively fertilized row crops, mainly corn and soybeans.

That farming sets the groundwork for an environmental disaster known as "nutrient pollution" in our rivers, lakes, and streams. This overnitritification of farmland pollutes the downstream recipients of our surface waters, creating the hypoxic area, or dead zone, in the Gulf of Mexico. As Iowa's soils erode, farmers increase fertilizer use to sustain crop yield. Runoff from these fields increasingly pollutes the water destined for central Iowa taps.

Even though our tap water supplies in the United States are considered among the safest in the world, contamination can still occur. There are many sources of contamination, including farm-chemical and

manure runoff, discharges from wastewater-treatment plants, discharges from factories, and elements that occur naturally in soil. Water pipes can introduce contaminants, too.

Those pollutants can lead to health issues including gastrointestinal illness, reproductive problems, and neurological disorders. Infants, young children, pregnant women, the elderly, and immunocompromised persons may be especially susceptible to illness. So it's important to limit contaminants and to properly remove them from source-water supplies such as the rivers. Grinnell's tap water, which comes from the Cambrian-Ordovician aquifer, met all safety standards in the most recent annual report.

The EPA and state governments are responsible for setting and enforcing drinking-water standards in water that has been shown to pose risk to human health. Standards are set to ensure that drinking-water supplies are as safe as possible.

Water issues are far-reaching, from the quality of Des Moines' drinking water, to healthy beaches along the Mississippi River, to the access to seafood from the Gulf of Mexico. High levels of nutrients (nitrate and phosphorus) threaten the quality of drinking water and the protection of public health across the country. Swimmers, canoeists, and kayakers can become ill or develop rashes when they come in contact with algae and cyanobacteria blooms in rivers and lakes. The economic impact to Gulf fishermen who are unable to harvest seafood in the Gulf of Mexico due to the dead zone threatens their livelihood. There is a connection between a healthy ecosystem, a robust economy, a safe population, and a sustainable quality of life for everyone.

States and numerous independent reports indicate that agriculture is the leading (nonpoint source) contributor to water quality impairments today – impairments that threaten safe drinking water and cause beach closures, loss of habitat, fish kills, and many other environmental and human health concerns. Yet we continue to rely on farmers' voluntary, taxpayer-subsidized conservation projects, not on regulations. How long can we afford to continue to do the same thing and expect a different outcome?

It is time to engage in serious discussions locally and globally about this growing problem. These should not be sterile discussions influenced by data and statistics, although alarming data and statistics exist. Healthy source waters and agriculture can coexist. They must; both are critical to a sustainable future.

## Alumni Musings



**Bill Stowe '81** is CEO and general manager of Des Moines Water Works, a regional utility in Iowa serving about 500,000 people. Stowe earned a bachelor's degree in political science at Grinnell. He also has a master's in engineering at the University of Wisconsin; a master's in industrial relations from the University of Illinois; and a Juris Doctor from Loyola University in New Orleans. A former public works director for the city of Des Moines, he joined Water Works in September 2012.



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## *Iowa View*



*Nathaniel Tingley '15, grinds and smooths a weld in an art class in the basement of Bucksbaum Center for the Arts at the end of first semester. (Photo by Justin Hayworth)*