



the  
**grinnell**  
magazine

summer 2016

**Comic Book  
Artists Studio Tour**

A conversation with Zander  
Cannon '95 and Kevin Cannon '02



Photo courtesy of Burling Library Archives, Grinnell College

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Professor and College administrator Waldo Walker reads a letter to black students occupying a room in Burling Library in 1971. Frustrated with the College's slowness in creating the promised Black Library, between 30 and 40 students take over a room in Burling, removing the books from it and moving most of the library's black studies books onto the shelves.

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## Feature Contributors

Chicago-based journalist **Tequia Burt '98** is a former member of Concerned Black Students and believes black lives matter.

**Erin Peterson '98** sends more than 60 unsuccessful story pitches to her editors every year. She is legitimately thrilled that one of her successful pitches resulted in a story about failure.

When **Michele Regenold '89** entered Big Time Attic, the artist studio of **Zander Cannon '95** and **Kevin Cannon '02**, she felt like she was walking into Willy Wonka's candy factory.

## The Grinnell Magazine

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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:

Photo by Justin Hayworth

## Contemporary View of Career Change



Career change is well articulated in “Right Livelihoods” (Spring 2016). Career change was not always acknowledged as an appropriate remedy for employment malaise. Indeed, the notion of “giving up” a job was seen as aberrational at best, mentally ill — insane — at worst. In the ’70s when I was a career counselor, work certified [one’s] status as an honorable citizen. Absent this confirmation brought self-assessment of disgrace and socially raised eyebrows. Ironically, it was the extent of unemployment at that time that brought about tolerance for being out of work and nurturance of career change as an acceptable strategy.

I am pleased to have a special relationship to career counseling at Grinnell. The College’s first career counselor spent a week training with me.

– **Stephen Fischer ’53**, Miami

## Yes, Jimmy Carter Visited

I had just finished a phone discussion with one of my daughters regarding my participation in the 1976 Iowa caucuses, when I opened the Winter 2015 *The Grinnell Magazine*. While 40 years have grayed my hair and thickened my waistline (just a bit), I think I recognized myself in the picture on the inside front cover, second row, kinda slumped over, ready to listen to Governor Carter. Finally, a bit of proof that at least one of “Dad’s college stories” has some legitimacy!

**Carroll McKibbin ’60**’s piece on the caucuses was terrific and a wonderful reminder of the political arguments I had with **Jim Strickler ’78** and **Jack Dane ’79**, as well as all the fabulously interesting small towns we visited during the campaign.

Thanks for a great edition. Please keep up the good reporting and interesting articles.

– **Dan Finkelman ’77**, Granville, Ohio

I was appalled by the letter in the spring issue of *The Grinnell Magazine* saying: “How disgusting!” it was to have a photo of Jimmy Carter on the cover of the previous issue.

Is that what our political dialogue has come to?

– **Alan Goldfarb ’52**, San Rafael, Calif.

## Jimmy and Georgia

Your “Letters” section (**Liz Rosen Kroin ’80**) reminded me of a cartoon from the fall of 1976 that appeared in *The S&B*. The caricature was Jimmy Carter smiling. The line below read: “What do Grinnell College and Jimmy Carter have in common? A Georgia Dentel problem.”

Can you please forward to her and let her know that I too remember those days?

– **Cornell Rudov ’79**, Princeton, N.J.

## Student Research Collaborators

As the chair of the committee that proposed the [Mentored Advanced Project] MAP program to the Fund for Excellence during the Osgood administration, I was delighted with “The Essence of Inquiry” focus in the spring 2016 issue. I realize that the subject is too big to cover in a single issue so I look forward to further treatment of the range of MAPs done in the social studies and humanities divisions. We too produce and publish new knowledge.

Many of my student collaborators, for example, have been presenters or co-presenters at one, or preferably two, professional conferences. They also co-author journal articles, book chapters, and newspaper articles. Some of our papers even win prizes from professional organizations.

[The article] plausibly contends that MAPs are one reason why “Grinnell ranks seventh among all private and public national institutions for graduating students who go on to earn Ph.D.s.” This kind of research collaboration is one of the reasons that the Department of Anthropology, among other Grinnell social studies departments, is so highly ranked, third among national institutions for graduating students who go on to earn Ph.D.s in anthropology.

Thanks for the good start to the story of MAP research collaboration at Grinnell.

– **Doug Caulkins**, professor emeritus of anthropology and director emeritus of the Wilson Program in Enterprise and Leadership



## Redesign Kudos

My copy of the spring Grinnell magazine arrived today, and I have read it cover to cover. The magazine keeps improving, and this one had many of the features I have been hoping for for a long time including small bios of those who have passed on.

– **Judy Mahle Lutter ’61**, St. Paul, Minn.

Piles of kudos to everyone involved in the redesign of *The Grinnell Magazine*. It manages to be both more informative/engaging and less stuffy — a fine line to walk. I especially like the combined layout and graphic design of “Classnotes,” Kevin Cannon’s illustrations, the overall size and paper stock, and the Grinnellian feel of the whole thing.

I know undertakings like these aren’t easy, and it can feel like your work disappears into the void with little to no — or only negative — feedback. Consider this a ping from the darkness that your work hit its mark.

– **Sarah Cook ’98**, Cavendish, Vt.

Congratulations on the latest issue of *The Grinnell Magazine*. It has the look, feel, and editorial judgment of a magazine that I want to read from cover to cover with good surprises on almost every page.

The double page spread is a beautiful example of eco-friendly printing. One small suggestion: Use the adjectival form of “pertaining to all things Grinnell” — which is Grinnellish. Save Grinnellian for references to “Grinnell people.” Now *that* is so Grinnellish.

Old English majors never die. We just parse away.

– **Mark Schorr ’66**, Watertown, Mass.

## Hands Up

I was disappointed that *The Grinnell Magazine* showcased the series of prints entitled “All Hands on Deck” in its Spring 2016 publication. The hands-up mantra was shown through eyewitness accounts as well as the grand-jury testimony to be a total fabrication, to such an extent that even Obama’s sympathetic Justice Department didn’t deem it worth pursuing.

From the grand-jury testimony: “... Brown then reached into the SUV through the open driver’s window and punched and grabbed Wilson.” “Brown used his right hand to grab and attempt to control Wilson’s gun.” “... Brown’s hand was within inches of the muzzle of Wilson’s gun when it was fired.” “... Brown was moving toward Wilson when Wilson shot him.” “... [W]itnesses describe Brown then dropping his hands and ‘charging’ at Wilson.”

Tragically, a decent and honest police officer will never be able to work in his profession any longer due to this fabrication.

– **Rich Bohm ’86**, Tega Cay, S.C.

## In Memoriam: Dennis Haas

Of all the instructors I had at Grinnell, [Dennis] Haas was the one who had the greatest influence on me. Not only did he offer the normal course of instruction, amplified for some by his regular Sunday sermons, but he also opened his own home for additional, voluntary seminars for students interested in pursuing biblical study more seriously. I attended none of his sermons but went to every one of his seminars, inspired by him to read far beyond the requirements of his courses, inspired by him to positively enjoy close textual analysis and the discipline of biblical exegesis.

While I had approached biblical study with little more ambition than to finally read all the texts, Haas inspired me to go much further, transforming my life in the process. It was he who encouraged me to go on to his old school, the Union Theological Seminary in New York, and it was he and the seminary itself which led me to further study in philosophy afterward. Even now, never employed in any related field and never converted to any variety of Christianity, I continue along the political, intellectual, and scholarly paths he pointed out.

– **Erik Graff ’74**, Chicago

*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 be discarded. 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).

# Student Research and Its Impact

**D**avid Lopatto, professor of psychology and director of Grinnell's Center for Teaching, Learning, and Assessment, has spent much of his career analyzing the impact of student research experiences. And he has discovered something profound — when students create new knowledge, they are fundamentally transformed. Lopatto writes: “Personal development benefits from undergraduate research experiences include the growth of self-confidence, independence, tolerance for obstacles, interest in a discipline, and a sense of accomplishment — features of student maturation that are ‘seen out of the corner of the eye.’”

That phrase captures the serendipity created when students step into laboratories, archives, and field research sites. It also reflects the way that student research has provided Grinnellians with a learning experience that has deeply enriched their lives. They have become co-authors on professional journal articles, delivered papers at national and regional conferences, and stood shoulder to shoulder with experts in their fields, at times the only undergraduate in the room. Their experiences have enabled them to demonstrate the creativity and skill that have won them admission into professional school in law or medicine and have made Grinnell among the top 10 institutions in the

United States, per capita, in sending students on to Ph.D. programs in the arts and sciences.

Yet the impact witnessed “out of the corner of the eye” goes much further. It helps students discover interests and talents that they didn't know they possessed. It enables them to begin professional lives of great purpose and meaning.

**Edward Hsieh '16** partnered with **Jackie Brown**, professor of biology, to pursue a growing interest in the evolution of animal populations. After working summers on research projects supported by the National Science Foundation, he has gained an incisive perspective on the way that forces of climate change are transforming life across the planet.

Through study abroad in India, **Liliana Bagnoli '15** developed an interest at the intersection of anthropology and economic development. When she returned to Grinnell, she researched informal labor activity in India, presented her work at the Central States Anthropology Society, and won the American India Foundation William J. Clinton Fellowship for Service, an award that placed her with an Indian nongovernment organization, providing critical analysis of health care, education, and infrastructure for the Indian government.

**Alexandra Odom '16** knew that she was interested in the history of the American civil rights

movement. Study abroad in London and inquiry into the history of British women's activism deepened her curiosity in the movement's international dimensions. As a Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship Program fellow, Odom conducted civil rights research with **Al Lacson**, associate professor of history, and gained a full scholarship to complete a Ph.D. in history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, launching her scholarly career.

The benefits of student research are so compelling that Grinnell's faculty members are now seeking ways to embed research experiences throughout the curriculum, making such transformative work an integral part of the College's degree. The forms of those experiences will vary. Some students will complete Mentored Advanced Projects, while others may engage in department-based research seminars, course-embedded projects, or independent studies.

As a key part of Grinnell's inquiry-led curriculum, over the next few years the College will work to provide all students with an opportunity to link the creation of knowledge with compelling, personal transformation. That's a very exciting step, and one that will have impacts for decades to come. 🗨️

— *Michael E. Latham,*  
vice president for academic affairs  
and dean of the college

Photo by Justin Hayworth



John Rommereim and Austin Morris work together.

## Artistic Alumni Engagement

Innovation Fund pilot project allows alumni to collaborate musically

**I**magine scores of Grinnell Singers from across generations coming together to perform major choral works. While the performance would be amazing, it could be a major challenge to schedule rehearsal and concert dates.

But what if individual parts could be recorded by each singer at home? And what if all those parts could be edited together to create collaborative video performances online?

Then it would be the Grinnell *Virtual* Choir, and that is exactly what **John Rommereim**, Blanche Johnson Professor of Music, has launched with the help of the College's Innovation Fund.

The Innovation Fund was established in 2012 by President **Raynard S. Kington** to support projects with new approaches to teaching and scholarship. It is open to proposals from faculty, staff, and students that foster a learning liberal arts environment conducive to experimentation and imagination.

“The main goal of the Grinnell Virtual Choir is to create an online platform that facilitates choral performances that are connected virtually,” Rommereim says. “It's a way to engage and connect alumni in an artistic endeavor so they can actually collaborate with current students and with each other.”

A prototype of the virtual choir was produced this spring that shows seven current students performing a movement from Rachmaninov's *All-Night Vigil*. Alumni who want to contribute vocals to the performance can access the score, a conducting video, and tips for recording and submitting files at [grinnellvirtualchoir.wordpress.com](http://grinnellvirtualchoir.wordpress.com).

Basically, it's as simple as making a video of yourself singing into your phone.

“We want it to be fun and inspiring,” Rommereim says. “We're hoping it will blossom into a significant artistic endeavor.”

Rommereim says he's considering ways to incentivize participation in the virtual choir, partly because the follow-up project to *All-Night Vigil* is much more adventurous.

“Our strategy is to do something ambitious, so the second project will be Thomas Tallis' *Spem in alium*, a 40-voice motet with eight choirs of five voices,” Rommereim says. “Grinnell Singers from the '90s and 2000s sang in it, so the concept is familiar to them.”

**Austin Morris '15**, a mathematics major and Grinnell Singers alumnus, is the talent behind the scenes working to clear technological hurdles and develop website aesthetics. Both Rommereim and Morris say audio and video editing challenges have been considerable.

“Once we get the videos from all the people that we contact, it's my job to put them all together in the final project,” Morris says.

Faithful to Innovation Fund criteria, the project has a number of teaching and learning goals as well, including using videos to better evaluate the parts of individual singers in the chorus. “As we get better at the technology, using it on a regular basis as a pedagogical device will become more feasible,” Rommereim says. 🗨️

— *Denton Ketels*

# At the Faulconer Gallery



**Anders Krisár**  
July 1–September 11, 2016

Swedish artist Anders Krisár was included in the Faulconer Gallery’s spring 2005 exhibition, *Scandinavian Photography 1: Sweden*. Since then he has turned to sculpture, producing figurative pieces that are uncannily lifelike — cast primarily from members of the artist’s own family — and which explore the impact of familial relationships and sociological structures on our lives as individuals.

Anders Krisár, *Untitled*, 2014–15. Acrylic paint on polyester resin, polyurethane, and mixed media. Courtesy of the artist.

**Tim Berg and Rebekah Myers**  
July 1–September 11, 2016

In a global cultural exchange routinely reduced to seconds-long sound bytes and rapid-fire images, we often refer to “shiny objects” as those rare things that focus or capture our attention for a moment or two longer. Tim Berg and Rebekah Myers, an artists’ collaborative in Claremont, Calif., explore this phenomenon in their sculpture, all high-gloss and slick-surfaced, recasting everyday objects and animals in unexpected ways that emphasize the power of packaging and presentation in stoking human desire.



Tim Berg & Rebekah Myers, *a cloud on the horizon*, 2014. Urethane painted LDF 21 x 27 x 13 in

Alexander Archipenko, *Architectural Figure*, 1939–54. Painted terra cotta. Private Collection. Alexander Archipenko ©2016 Estate of Alexander Archipenko/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

**Archipenko: A Modern Legacy**  
September 30–December 11, 2016

*Archipenko: A Modern Legacy* is a major retrospective exhibition of the life and work of Alexander Archipenko, a maverick in modern sculpture, whose creations remain as important today as they were when they were initially conceived in the 20th century. Featuring more than 50 sculptures, mixed media reliefs, and works on paper, the exhibition spans Archipenko’s entire career. Drawn from major museum collections as well as private holdings, the exceptional objects chosen for this exhibition will convey the richness of Archipenko’s vision as an innovator of modern art.

*Archipenko: A Modern Legacy* was organized by International Arts & Artists, Washington, D.C., in collaboration with the Archipenko Foundation.



# Grinnell College Innovator for Social Justice Prize

Winners announced; nominations for 2017 open July 1

Among the 2016 Grinnell Prize winners is, for the first time, a Grinnell College graduate. **Luna Ranjit ’00** founded Adhikaar in 2005 to promote human rights and effective social justice work in Nepali-speaking communities in New York City and the United States. Adhikaar works to understand and address the needs of the growing Nepali immigrant communities through community-based participatory action, research and leadership training. In 2006, Ranjit received the Joseph F. Wall ’41 Alumni Service Award, which is given to Grinnell College alumni to either jump-start or complete a project that shows creativity and commitment to effecting positive social change. She also won an Alumni Award in 2016 (see Page 49).

**Diana Jue** and **Jackie Stenson** co-founded Essmart Global, which works directly with local street vendors in India upon whom the majority of households rely for their consumer needs. Essmart engages local consumers, vendors, and technology users as active decision-makers in their product choices and distribution methods. Essmart’s innovative and interdisciplinary, last-mile distribution model is sustainable and gives developing

communities decision-making power in their own well-being and economic growth.

“Our prizewinners inspire our students to explore how they may use their liberal arts education to become the next generation of social innovators,” says **Susan Leathem Sanning**, director of service and social innovation at the Center for Careers, Life, and Service. “Winners have offered numerous internship opportunities for our students, have taught workshops on social entrepreneurship, and are now beginning to collaborate with faculty and students at a curricular level.”

Nominations for the 2017 Grinnell Prize open July 1 and close Oct. 9. To submit nominations, see [www.grinnell.edu/grinnellprize](http://www.grinnell.edu/grinnellprize).



The prizewinners will be on campus for Prize Week during the week of Oct. 3. The awards ceremony will be held Oct. 4.

# New Athletic Director Named

Andy Hamilton ’85 takes the helm July 1

**Andy Hamilton ’85** will become the College’s next director of athletics and recreation, effective July 1. He served as interim director during the 2015–16 school year.

Hamilton, who also serves as an associate professor of physical education and head coach of both the men’s and women’s tennis teams, will succeed **Greg Wallace**, who was on sabbatical this year.

“Andy Hamilton’s deep understanding of Division III athletics, record as a coach, excellence in the classroom, and commitment to the student-athlete ideal make him particularly well suited to this role,” says **Michael E. Latham**, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College. “I am very confident he will provide excellent leadership for Grinnell athletics and the department of physical education.”

“I look forward to maintaining Grinnell’s tradition of robust co-curricular programming,” Hamilton says.

A Phi Beta Kappa graduate, Hamilton has served

as head men’s tennis coach since 1995 and head women’s tennis coach since 2007, leading both teams to multiple Midwest Conference championships. A national search for a tennis coach will be conducted.

During his career Hamilton also coached women’s basketball, was a men’s basketball assistant coach, and assisted with football.

Wallace joined the College 28 years ago and had been athletics director since 2007, men’s golf coach for 15 years, and head football coach for 20 years. He is moving to senior faculty status, focusing on recruiting student-athletes.



Photo by Justin Hayworth

– Lisa Lacher

# Second Annual Giving Challenge Successful

Scarlet & Give Back Day increases number of donors

Grinnell's second annual Scarlet & Give Back Day, held April 7, set a new, one-day record for the number of donors to the College: 3,578, up from 1,922 in 2015.

At 6:08 p.m., donor number 2,000 made a gift that unlocked the \$1 million challenge gift from an anonymous donor. A second challenge was issued by the same donor — an additional \$100,000 to be released if another 500 donors who had not yet given that day signed up. That challenge was also met.

Total gifts, including the \$1.1 million challenge, came to \$1,384,553.48.

One technique that worked well last year that was expanded further this year was the use of “celebrity calling,” says **Mae Parker**, director of annual giving. Grinnell's celebrity callers this year included past and present College presidents **George A. Drake '56** and **Raynard S. Kington**. Beloved faculty and staff members including **Wayne Moyer**, **Dee Fairchild**, **Emily Pfitsch**, and **Jenny and Luther Erickson** also took pledge calls, as did **Angela Onwuachi-Willig '94**, Alumni Council president-elect.

New activities on campus included an ice cream social and a person cavorting in a squirrel costume. **Aamir Walton '15**, assistant director of annual giving, and **Greg Ruzich '16** both dressed up as Scarlet the squirrel for part of the day and asked Grinnell trivia questions while giving students rides across campus on a golf cart.

One of Walton's favorite questions: “How many varsity sports teams does Grinnell offer?” The answer: 20 total varsity teams, and they're split evenly, 10 male and 10 female.

Walton also “acted like a squirrel,” he says. He'd scamper from behind trees to give out candy and stickers.

“It was playful,” Parker says of the squirrel costume.

The number of student, faculty, and staff donors more than doubled this year compared to last year. Parker attributes the student numbers (381 gifts made) to **Michelle Czarnecki**, assistant director of student programs. Czarnecki has helped raise the awareness of all elements of philanthropy among students through her work with the Student Alumni Council.

Parker says progress has been made in giving at Grinnell. “We can actively see and touch the results of our efforts,” she says, but adds there is still much they want to do. 🐿

## Results by the numbers:

729  
First-ever gifts  
to the College

102  
Most donors by  
class year, class  
of 2012

1,084  
Most donors by  
class decade,  
2000-09

2,089  
Gifts  
from alumni

719  
Gifts  
from parents

# \$5 Million Gift Supports Global Grinnell Program

Alumna wants to expand global opportunities at Grinnell

**Carolyn “Kay” Swartz Bucksbaum '51**, former chair of the Grinnell College Board of Trustees and now life trustee, has committed \$5 million to support the expansion of the College's Global Grinnell program.

“The program is close to my heart because of my own global views and experiences,” Bucksbaum says. She adds that her desire to make this commitment was influenced by various aspects of her own life, including having foreign visitors living in her family home, her mother's world travels, and her own daughter's involvement in the international arena.

“Kay Bucksbaum's generosity will enhance Grinnell's commitment to global engagement by providing increased opportunities for students to develop valuable leadership skills and global experiences throughout their education,” says President **Raynard S. Kington**. “The development of the Global Grinnell program will continue to set Grinnell apart from our peer institutions.”

“This commitment gives us the chance to pursue an integrated and sustainable global strategy,” says **Michael E. Latham**, vice president for academic affairs and dean of the College. “Our large and diverse international student population, excellent off-campus study opportunities, inquiry-led curriculum, internship programs, alumni network, and external partnerships around the world have made Grinnell a profoundly international institution.”

Bucksbaum's gift will establish two endowments. The first funds the creation of a chief global officer position to promote and ensure an integrated and innovative approach to building and expanding international education across the College.

The second endowment will create a Global Distinctiveness Fund that will enhance programs and student opportunities, including internships abroad, scholarships for global course work and language studies, and faculty and student research focused on collaborative, international projects exploring global problems and challenges.

Bucksbaum has also agreed to serve as honorary chair as Grinnell College prepares for a comprehensive fundraising campaign.

“We are currently organizing the College fundraising priorities in advance of the launch of a campaign, and Kay's leadership arrives at a pivotal point in the life of this endeavor,” says **Shane Jacobson**, vice president for development and alumni relations. 🐿

— Lisa Lacher



Photo by Hal Williams

“I believe in the leaders of the College and their vision for the future. I want to see Grinnell College increasingly recognized, and measured accordingly, for its leadership among similar colleges in my lifetime.”

— Carolyn “Kay” Swartz Bucksbaum '51



Far left: Scarlet the squirrel quizzes Andrea Conner and Adrienne Squire while Nino Parker '07 zooms all over campus.

Left: Nicolette Musachio '19 and Bryce Lew '19 getting some air.



Left: Dan Davis, a math major and president of the Student Government Association this year, and President Raynard S. Kington.

Below: Rosie O'Brien (left), a political science and studio art double major from Lawrence, Kansas, and Kit Nika, an English major from Springfield, Ill., during procession.

# Commencement 2016

Photos by Justin Hayworth



Above: Shaun Mataire, computer science major from Harare, Zimbabwe.



Right: Phineas Schlossberg, computer science major from St. George, Vt., and Rosie Crockett, English major from Towson, Md., at the all-campus picnic.

Left: Award-winning novelist Zadie Smith was the Commencement speaker. She told the graduating seniors, "Generations are defined by the projects they take on together."

Below: Jeanette W Au, an independent major focused on international affairs, from Honolulu, Hawaii.



## Faculty Tenure and Promotions

Promoted to associate professor, with tenure:



**Jeffrey Blanchard**,  
mathematics and  
statistics



**Caleb Efenbein**,  
history and religious  
studies



**Heriberto  
Hernandez**,  
chemistry



**Matthew Johnson**,  
history



**Kelly Maynard**,  
history



**Angelo Mercado**,  
classics



**Gemma Sala**,  
political science



**Mervat Youssef**,  
Arabic

### Awarded tenure

**Ross Haenfler**, sociology

### Promoted to full professor:

**David Cook-Martin**, sociology; director  
of the Center for International Studies

**Brigitte French**, anthropology

**Kathryn Jacobson**, biology

**Peter Jacobson**, biology

### Moving to senior faculty\* status:

**Jean Ketter**, education

**Mark Schneider**, physics

**Henry Walker**, Samuel R. and Marie-Louise Rosenthal  
Professor of Natural Sciences and Mathematics;  
computer science

**Gregory Wallace**, physical education

### Moving to emeritus status:

**Gail Bonath**, library

**Bob Grey**, political science

**Edmund Gilday**, religious studies

### Other appointment:

**Sarah Purcell '92** to the L.F. Parker Chair in History

*\*Senior faculty status recognizes those faculty members who are released from regular, full-time teaching obligations to pursue scholarly and professional activities associated with the College.*

## Honorary Degrees Conferred

Recipients have stellar achievements in the arts, public service, and education

Photo by Justin Hayworth



**D**uring Commencement 2016, Grinnell College awarded honorary degrees to individuals making major contributions to the fields of literature, politics, music, and education.

Celebrated British novelist **Zadie Smith** was May's Commencement speaker. A native of North London and a 1997 graduate of the University of Cambridge, Smith burst onto the literary scene in 2000 with a novel about contemporary multicultural London titled *White Teeth*. The book won numerous honors, including the Guardian First Book Award, the Whitbread First Novel Award, and the Commonwealth Writers Prize.

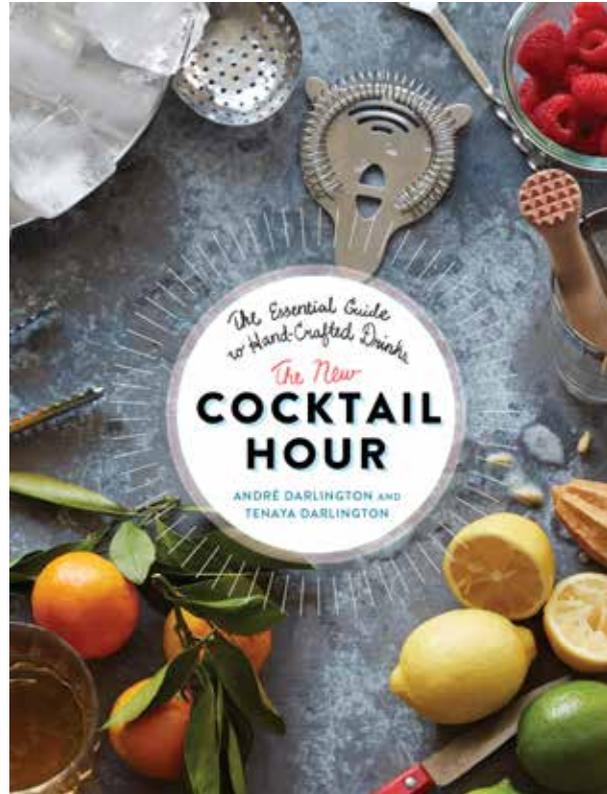
Smith's subsequent works received the Jewish Quarterly Wingate Literary Prize for Fiction and the Orange Prize for Fiction. She has twice been named among the "Best of Young British Novelists" by *Granta* magazine. *The New York Times* called her novel *NW* one of the 10 Best Books of 2012. A professor of creative writing at New York University, Smith writes regularly for *The New Yorker* and *The New York Review of Books*. She received an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

**Thomas Cole '71** has served as U.S. Representative for Oklahoma's 4th District since 2002. Chairman of the National Republican Congressional Committee, he is the fourth-ranking Republican leader in the House. Cole is one of only two Native Americans now serving in Congress and was inducted into the Chickasaw Hall of Fame in 2004. He received an honorary doctor of laws degree.

**Fred Hersch '77** is a pianist, composer, and one of the world's foremost jazz artists. He is described as "one of the small handful of brilliant musicians of his generation" by *Downbeat* magazine. A member of the jazz studies faculty at the New England Conservatory of Music, Hersch received a 2003 Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship for composition and numerous Grammy nominations. He was awarded an honorary doctor of humane letters degree.

**Claudia Swisher** was an English teacher for several decades at Norman North High School in Norman, Okla., where she was admired for going above and beyond in her efforts to connect with students. Swisher is known for her belief that education should be formed around children and their interests rather than having those interests manipulated to conform to education. She received an honorary doctor of social studies degree. 📖

*From left: Thomas Cole '71, Claudia Swisher, Zadie Smith, and Fred Hersch '77.*

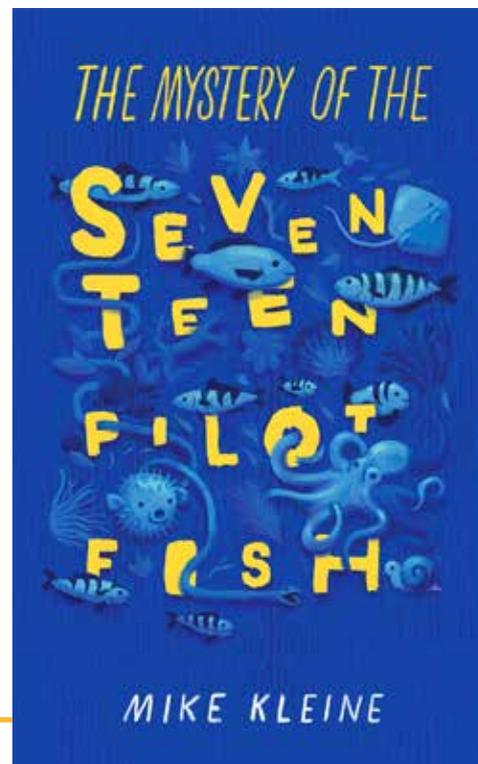
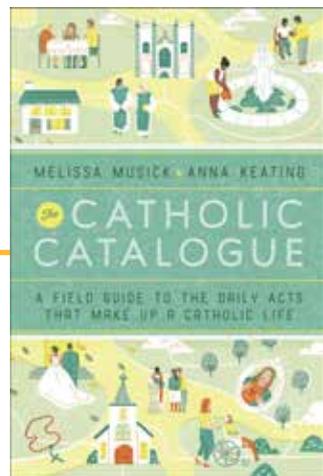


## The New Cocktail Hour

**André Darlington '98** and his sister Tenaya Darlington freely admit that they are not bartenders, but both have written about food and drink for years. When they're together, they gravitate to a cocktail venue. One night they got the idea to drink their way through history together and started meeting online — they live 900 miles apart — with shakers for long-distance happy hour. *The New Cocktail Hour: The Essential Guide to Hand-Crafted Drinks* (Running Press, 2016) is the result of their project.

## The Catholic Catalogue

**Melissa Musick Nussbaum '74** and her daughter, Anna Keating, bring new light to traditions that have been lost through the years and reveal how Catholics can keep the spirit of Sunday in every day with their book, *The Catholic Catalogue: A Field Guide to the Daily Acts That Make Up a Catholic Life* (Penguin Random House, 2016).



## The Mystery of the Seventeen Pilot Fish

**Mike Kleine '11** published his first play, a one-act titled *The Mystery of the Seventeen Pilot Fish* with Plays Inverse, 2016. He also released his third book, *Kanley Stubrick* (Dostoyevsky Wannabe, 2016), a character study.

## More Books and Art

### His for Harry

**Susan Sink '86** has published her third book of poetry, *His for Harry* (North Star Press, 2016), a tightly woven collection of poems on a variety of subjects, including divorce and remarriage, the role of language and literature in life, and the ways in which language contributes to identity. [www.susansinkblog.com/books](http://www.susansinkblog.com/books)

### Where We Go When All We Were Is Gone

**Jeremy "Sequoia" Nagamatsu '04** has published his first book, *Where We Go When All We Were Is Gone* (Black Lawrence Press, 2016). "The Return to Monsterland" opens the collection of genre-bending stories inspired by Japanese folklore and pop culture. Demons with marital problems, orientations for neophyte ghosts, the twilight years of legendary heroes, and a dance party in a post-apocalyptic Tokyo populate these pages. Every story turns to the fantastic, the mysticism of the past, and the absurdities of the future to illuminate the spaces we occupy in times of uncertainty.

### Searching for Bear Eyes

Did a grizzly bear kill Melody Applegate? Or was it something else stalking the remote edge of Yellowstone National Park? **Kathleen Snow '65** reveals the secrets in her new mystery novel, *Searching for Bear Eyes: A Yellowstone Park Mystery* (University of Montana Press, 2016). [www.kathleensnowbooks.com](http://www.kathleensnowbooks.com)

### Clear Day in January

**Mark S. Maire '78** won the 2015 Emergence Chapbook Series Prize for his poetry collection, *Clear Day in January* (Red Dragonfly Press, 2016).

### A Rogue's Revenge

**Cara Rowe Hoch '11** has published her second Regency romance novel, *A Rogue's Revenge* (Corvallis Press, 2016). It is currently available for Kindle, with the print version to follow.

## Gallery Opening

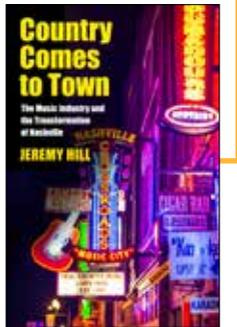
### The HQ Gallery in the Arsenal

**Susan Coop Street '64** opened a new art gallery, The HQ Gallery in the Arsenal, in her hometown of Benicia, Calif., in early May. Works from 18 artists, including herself, will be shown regularly. The gallery is a place where artists who may not have another venue to show their art can exhibit their works. It's also a place where more established talent like Nikki Basch-Davis and Lee Wilder Snider will exhibit.

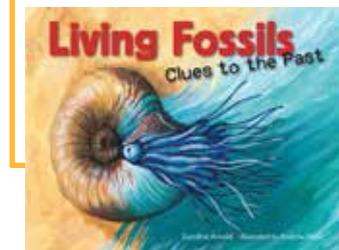
[www.susanstreetartist.com](http://www.susanstreetartist.com)

## Country Comes to Town

**Jeremy Hill '98** argues that country music has found such expansive success because its songs and its people have forcefully addressed social and cultural issues as well as geographic change. In *Country Comes to Town: The Music Industry and the Transformation of Nashville* (University of Massachusetts Press, 2015), Hill demonstrates how the genre and its fans developed a flexible idea of "country," beyond their rural roots, and how this flexibility allowed fans and music to "come to town" to move into and within urban spaces, while retaining a country "character."



## A Day and Night in the ...

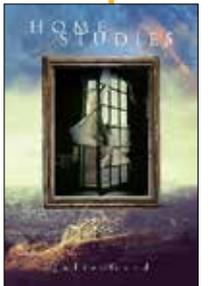


Prolific children's book author/illustrator **Caroline Scheffer Arnold '66** has published two series of animal board books that were rewritten for younger readers. From the habitat

series: *A Day and Night in the Rain Forest*, *A Day and Night in the Desert*, *A Day and Night on the Prairie*, and *A Day and Night in the Forest* (Capstone: Picture Window Books, 2015). From the animal series: *A Zebra's World*, *A Panda's World*, *A Polar Bear's World*, and *A Penguin's World* (Capstone: Picture Window Books, 2015). Arnold also authored *Living Fossils: Clues to the Past*, illustrated by Andrew Plant (Charlesbridge, February 2016).

## Home Studies

**Julie Gard '95** published her first full-length book of prose poetry, *Home Studies* (New River Press, 2015), winner of the 2013 Many Voices Project Prize at New Rivers Press. Themes in the book include LGBT parenting, long-term partnership, surviving a hate crime, and international adoption.

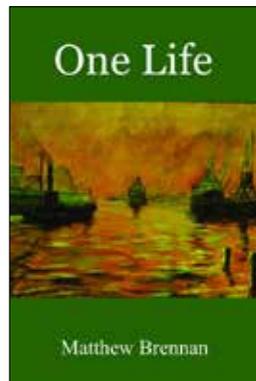


Short Stories

**Nelson Ogbuagu '16**, an economics major, won the 2016 Associated Colleges of the Midwest Nick Adams Short Story Contest and earned a \$1,000 prize. His story, "Playing It Safe," was selected from 32 submissions. **Grace Lloyd '16**, an English and theatre double major, won an honorable mention for her story, "Crush."

"Test of English as a Foreign Language"

**Walt Giersbach '61** published his short story, "Test of English as a Foreign Language," in the January 2016 issue of *Mulberry Fork Review*: [www.mulberryforkreview.com](http://www.mulberryforkreview.com). His two volumes of short stories, *Cruising the Green of Second Avenue* (Wild Child Publishing, 2014), are also available at online retailers.



One Life

**Matthew Brennan '77** has a new book of poems, *One Life* (Lamar University Press, 2016). He has previously published four books of poems and two chapbooks. He is professor of English at Indiana State University.



Photo by Christine Pearl

Heartland Shakedown

**Kat Jarvis '09, Erik Jarvis '12, Katie In '13, Caleb Neubauer '13, Justin Carter, and Phill Smith** make up The Plain Mosaic, a band/music collective, which is releasing an album, *Heartland Shakedown*, this summer. See [theplainmosaic.com](http://theplainmosaic.com) to watch a video teaser. They recorded most of the album over two weekends in an Omaha, Neb., basement studio.

From L to R: Phill Smith, Kat Jarvis '09, Justin Carter, Erik Jarvis '12, Caleb Neubauer '13, Katie In '13.

Scholarship

A Delicate Relationship

In *A Delicate Relationship: The United States and Burma/Myanmar Since 1945* (Cornell University Press, 2015), **Kenton Clymer '65** explores the two countries' sinuous diplomatic relationship. In 2012 Barack Obama became the first U.S. president ever to visit Myanmar, formerly known as Burma. From the challenges of decolonization and heightened nationalist activities that emerged in the wake of World War II to the Cold War concern with domino states to the rise of human rights policy in the 1980s and beyond, Clymer demonstrates how Burma/Myanmar has fit into the broad patterns of U.S. foreign policy and yet has never been fully integrated into diplomatic efforts in the region of Southeast Asia.

After the Trouble Times

**Brigitte French**, professor of anthropology, won a grant from the American Philosophical Society to collect supplementary data in Ireland for her current book project, *After the Trouble Times: Conflict, Discourse, and Belonging in Post-War Ireland*.

My Bohemian Heritage

**Jetta Marie Vašák '50** wrote *My Bohemian Heritage: The Music and Art of Chicago's Černý and Vašák Families* (Blue Dolphin Publishing, 2016), which highlights two families who contributed greatly to the art and musical culture of Chicago in the early 1900s. Through compiling personal vignettes, Vašák passes on a small portion of her family story while providing a window to the personal lives and times of those who contributed their gifts and talents to the rich and diverse culture of early Chicago.

Start With the Future and Work Back:

*A Heritage Management Manifesto* **Bruce Weindruch '78**, founder and CEO of The History Factory, has published a lively, perceptive take on the business of history and the history of business. *Start With the Future and Work Back* (Hamilton Books, 2016) explores The History Factory's role in creating and shaping the global heritage management industry, drawing on its work with a broad array of corporations and the original business characters the firm has served since its founding in 1979.

Quote Board

"I wish people in the real world understood me like Grinnellians understand me."

– Kimmie Kasperitis '15, Twitter

"Meeting with prof about their next tutorial and they're like 'I'm either going to teach about Calvin and Hobbes or bananas. The fruit.'"

– Mollie Blahunka '17, Twitter

"I have a burning Dewey Decimal question for you' — typical conversation between Grinnell alumni."

– Hannah Lundberg '18, Twitter

"Is this what Bernie Sanders means by a political revolution? This @#\*! is intense. #TheWalkingDead."

– Patrick Inglis, assistant professor of sociology, Twitter



Woman at the MSP airport saw my Grinnell basketball hoodie and asked if I liked to shoot threes. I said yes."

– Hayes Gardner '15, Twitter

## Finding a Way to **Win**

Floor leader Alissa Hirsh '16 closes out an impressive career

by Denton Ketels

**W**hen Dana Harrold became head coach for Grinnell women's basketball in 2013, she told her players she wanted to go from being a basketball *team* to a basketball *program*. The difference, she said, is a year-round commitment.

The payoff became apparent this season as the Pioneers earned a trip to the Midwest Conference Tournament for the first time since 2004.

Harrold knows that citing her team's "never-quit mentality" sounds like a sports cliché. But it does take a certain something to go from only three wins in her first season to 10 wins in 2014–15, to a 15–9 record and legitimate respect this year.

"They were working just as hard on the last day of practice as they were on the first," Harrold says.

Four-year starters **Anne Boldt '16** and **Alissa Hirsh '16** were this year's captains and floor leaders. "They were the building blocks," Harrold says. "Anne was our vocal, positive leader, and Alissa our gritty, hard-nosed competitor."

Point guard Hirsh earned first team all-Midwest Conference honors for the second year in a row. She had a field goal percentage of .491 and led the team in minutes played, points, scoring average, assists, and steals. Hirsh ends her career third in all-time Pioneer scoring, first in assists, and fifth in steals.

"She'll go down as one of the best players in program history," Harrold says. "She has been a lot of fun to coach. The tough part of my job is finding another Alissa Hirsh."

Harrold bids farewell to three seniors – Boldt, Hirsh, and guard **Jordan Matosky '16**. Always on the lookout for high-academic basketball prospects, the coach can now add Grinnell's winning trajectory to her recruiting pitch.

Photo by Justin Hayworth



Alissa Hirsh and Anne Boldt celebrate with teammates as they come off the court.

"My biggest goal for kids who play in our program," Harrold adds, "is that they graduate and have a plan after four years."

An economics major, Hirsh played most of this season secure in the knowledge that she had a job after graduation — she'll be doing investment research for an asset management firm in San Francisco. She says the team's success this year was partly due to the chemistry it developed during the tough times.

"When we were going through that 3-20

season, I sometimes didn't even realize that we were losing so many games because there were so many positive moments," Hirsh says. "We just kept chugging no matter what and let our love for each other and the game really fuel us. So it wasn't as hard for us as I think it would have been for other teams to climb out of that."

Indeed, they started producing wins through court awareness, play-making, energy, and team chemistry — things that don't necessarily show up on stat sheets. Hence the team motto, "Find a Way."

"We had talked so much about being process-oriented, not worrying too much with the product or specific goals," Hirsh says. "After my third year when we were around .500, we could feel ourselves getting over the hump — and we were like, process isn't enough. We need to start turning in product, getting wins. Every game we need to find a way to do that, no excuses. I think that got us through a lot of close games this season."

For Hirsh, starting a new career in an international city doesn't completely take the

sting out of hanging up her uniform in Darby Gymnasium for the last time.

"It's definitely a loss in the sense that it was a source of so many positive and emotional and intense things for four years," Hirsh says. "I am sad about this part of it being over because it was so special, but I think I'm still going to grab a ball after work and go to the park. I'm going to try to find adult leagues. I'm going to teach my kids the game. I think this is just the start of a new relationship with basketball." 🍷

# Then and Now

Photos courtesy of Grinnell College Archives



Photo by Justin Hayworth

# Comic Book Artists Studio Tour

A conversation with Zander Cannon '95 and Kevin Cannon '02

by Michele Regenold '89

**B**ig Time Attic, the Minneapolis cartooning studio where **Zander Cannon '95** and **Kevin Cannon '02** (no relation) forged their business partnership and later launched solo careers, is a little like your favorite bookstore, toy store, and coffee shop combined. It exudes fun and promises delight.



Zander Cannon left, Kevin Cannon right.

Photo by Justin Hayworth

“There’s essentially no money in this business so you should always follow your passion.”

– Kevin Cannon '02

### The evolution of Big Time Attic

Zander and Kevin founded Big Time Attic in 2004 with a third partner. “We thought if we teamed up as this three-part company we could basically be stronger as a unit than individuals,” Kevin says. “That’s when we immediately landed animation jobs with Cartoon Network and a project with Target. And really big stuff kept coming.”

After the animation partner left in 2007, Zander and Kevin focused on illustration and storyboarding.

“For the first seven or eight years, we would work exclusively together on every project,” Kevin says. “I consider those the golden days. We’d be physically across from each other at the table, physically passing pages back and forth.”

Looking at the work later, Zander says he often couldn’t tell whose work was whose.

“It was really good to spend five or six years doing whatever came across, especially adapting to technology,” Zander says. “When I started, computers were barely even a part of it. Everything was done on paper. I was shipping artwork that’s irreplaceable all over creation, hoping it gets there, hoping it gets back.”

“It was nice for us to take on jobs that we never knew what we were going to get so we could adapt to that technology, learn a new skill, learn a new program.”

“I think 90 percent of the skills that I have now I was basically forced to learn on the fly over the last 10 years,” Kevin says. “That’s what I love about the variety of client jobs. From designing a family fun center theme park or buttons or websites, I’m always pulling skills that I learned on one job and using them on another job.”

Over the years, they worked on many nonfiction books — about space, evolution, rhetoric.

“I like the [projects] that are like, ‘We’re going to try to explain in the simplest possible terms these vague concepts,’” Zander says. “Where you have to draw things that are noncorporeal.”

“Or don’t even exist,” Kevin adds. “I wish the books we make now were around when we were learning and growing up because they would have been so helpful.”

### The siren call of fiction

And then for fun, Kevin wrote an arctic adventure graphic novel, *Far Arden*, published in 2009. “It got nominated for awards and got a lot of critical attention,” Zander says. “Then I did a graphic novel basically in the same mold as *Far Arden*, called *Heck*. By the time that was finished, I felt like I really wanted to do fiction again. I hadn’t done fiction for years.”

*Heck* received critical attention too. After that, Zander says, “The fire went out of me for nonfiction.”

“There’s essentially no money in this business,” Kevin says, “so you should always follow your passion.”

Since fall 2014, Zander’s passion has been funneled into his own monthly comic book series, *KAIJUMAX*, about giant monsters in a maximum-security prison. “It’s for diehard fans of monster movies and prison movies. It’s so genre-based,” Zander says.

It takes him five or six weeks to create a comic. “I’m writing and penciling and inking and lettering and coloring. I’m writing the letters pages. Basically everything. I have one assistant on colors,” he says.

“I used to be a little more like let’s jump in and do page one. Now when I’m doing *KAIJUMAX*, I do it all visually before I write a word because that gives me the pacing of it, and I make sure there are no boring panels. They all have to communicate something visually.”

“Only when I’m doing tightened up pencils do I actually do final dialogue. It helps too because it keeps me from being too wordy and lets me see what I have already explained through the visuals.”

The series has a six-issue season, similar to a TV season. “Then I get a break,” Zander says.

The first season “ends on sort of a cliffhanger, but basically that starts a new story,” Zander says. “I like each issue to have its own little episode and its own little arc and each season to have its own arc and really tell a story. I want to skip ahead in time for the second [season] so that it really starts fresh. If that’s the first issue you pick up, you’re not behind.”

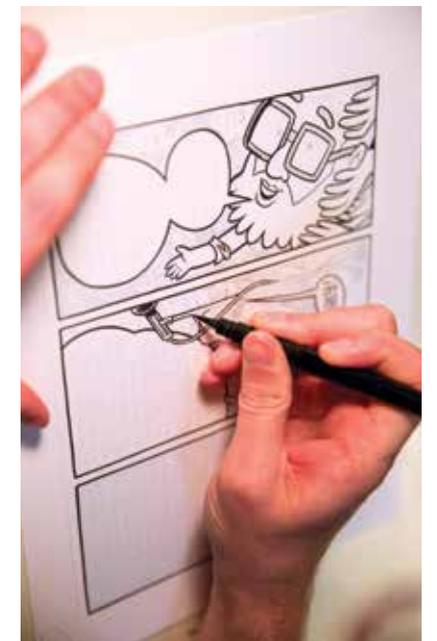
With all the work involved in producing a monthly comic, he no longer takes on clients.

“All the stuff that I used to be doing I can’t do anymore,” Zander says.

Photos by Justin Hayworth



Zander Cannon '95 draws his comic book series, *KAIJUMAX*, entirely on the computer. “It has its quirks, like any other tool,” he says, “but I’d never be able to keep up if I did it on paper.”



Kevin Cannon '02 starts with paper and pencil and does inking by hand. He scans in the images and applies color on the computer with Photoshop.

## An approach to nonfiction comics

"I'm the opposite," Kevin says. "I think my career has gone more down the path of client-driven. Small projects. Big projects. And very diverse projects from mugs for Starbucks in Seattle all the way to doing large graphic novels."

In 2014 Kevin co-wrote *The Cartoon Introduction to Philosophy*, published in 2015 by Hill and Wang. His co-author, philosopher Michael Patton, supplied a prose document that provided the chief narrative conceit of a river and the basic points of view of the major philosophers.

"Experts are too wordy," Zander says. "When you're writing comics, you can't make those word balloons longer than a Tweet. We'll be able to do a better job at coming up with metaphors and narrative structure."

"I took the master document and broke the whole thing down into an outline to try to tease out what the major elements were," Kevin says. "I created a script out of it, which was actually kind of easy after doing 1,000 pages of personal graphic novel stuff. At a certain point, you get into the rhythm. I could see a joke clearly goes here. Here's a good page break."

"Visuals all came later. It's all white guys. How do you make them distinct? I really wanted to push the caricature aspect of each of the philosophers so when people heard Descartes, they saw this guy with this mustache and this flowing hair."

## How comics have changed

"There are essentially no rules in the comic book industry anymore," Kevin says, "which is exciting. On one hand, it's a very Wild West atmosphere, but it's also a little frightening too to people like us who grew up with this track to become a comic book artist, and now we just have to wing it for the rest of our lives."

"Twenty years ago you could be a letterer," Zander says. "You could be an inker. You can't be that anymore. You have to be a creative person with a lot of abilities or you have to be a graphic designer. You can't be a drone anymore in comics because computers have taken all that away in a good way."

"It increases my appreciation for pen and paper but only for the things that pen and paper really provide," Zander says. "If I was going to draw something with a pen, I wouldn't make it neat. I hand-letter the book even on the screen. I like keeping a little bit of that wiggle."

## When they were kids

"I wanted to be a newspaper cartoonist, like *Calvin and Hobbes* or *Garfield*," Kevin says. "Doing the cartoon for *The Scarlet & Black* was my way of feeling out that process. I had so much freedom, I realized I could never do this professionally." He drew *Johnny Cavalier* all four years at Grinnell, in addition to trying other gag strips. Kevin also contributed to *The Grinnell Magazine* for nine years.

"From about 12 on, I wanted to be a comic book artist," Zander says. He was the editor of his high school newspaper and did cover illustrations. "Some knucklehead would turn in seven inches instead of 11 so I'd have to fill in."

At Grinnell, Zander majored in English and worked in theatre. "Theatre was where I felt you were doing art with a purpose," he says. "Pip Gordon [former assistant professor of theatre] was the tech director and was essentially my adviser. She was really sharp about the use of art in narrative and set design and costume design."

Kevin majored in art, specifically painting. "I thought the Grinnell art department was great for getting the classical art foundation. I had a great friend in **Bobbie McKibbin** [professor of art], who was my adviser. She paid attention to what we were interested in. Next class she'd have a stack of books of famous artists so we were constantly inspired."

## Making art and making a living

"There's a constant struggle between doing what's asked of you, doing what you think is important, and doing what you want to do, what you need to do as a creative person," Zander says. "You're writing stuff that's meant to sell. Trying to reconcile that commercial aspect of what sells with the things that are in your mind, that preoccupy you, that you want to get out in a piece of art, and hiding them, in my case, in a silly genre story, I don't think that anything really prepares you for that."

"I'll definitely have periods where I feel sort of a void," Kevin says, "where I'm constantly doing projects that other people tell me to do. It helps me pay rent, but there's nothing coming from inside. I'm not telling my stories. It's always good to have a balance. You have to make time to tell your own personal stories."

"On the flip side, I think there's a lot of people who only want to tell what's inside them," Zander adds. "I feel like those people wash out pretty quick. You can't throw yourself 100 percent into everything. They ask for a logo. Give 'em a logo. Don't give 'em a \$20 million ad campaign. Save your care for something that deserves it." 🐣



# Tips for writing comics

**Zander:** Inspiration's a real thing. If I get it at home, I'll try to write it out or sketch it out, but you can't do a whole comic on inspiration alone.

**Kevin:** Unless you want to make the leap to go pro, it's good to have a day job so you can just do the cartoons you want. There's no pressure. You can experiment. You can fail. Failing is key number one.

**Zander:** Whenever you plan on doing one thing, do three. The first one you do is so lousy that immediately you think about going into the next one so you can fix all those mistakes.

**Zander:** Doing Web comics is so helpful to people, because the specifics of print are a little outdated and a little irrelevant to the skills. Let's just do the panels, throw them up online, and see what people think.

**Kevin:** You put something online and things are either faved or not faved pretty quickly. It's like you tap the vein of your audience faster and in a more immediate sense than print.



# Is Less than Perfect Enough?

Grinnellians expect big things from themselves. So what happens when expectations and real life collide?

by Erin Peterson '98

“I felt like a complete failure at life. It was bad, and I didn’t tell anybody for a really long time.”

– Amy Hagan Ketteran '97

For years, **Amy Hagan Ketteran '97** seemed to have everything all figured out. A successful muralist and business owner, she was making money doing work she loved, and she was teaching others to do the same. She was president of an international arts organization. She and her husband **Mark Ketteran '97** had a young child and another on the way.

And then the 2008 recession hit. Work dried up. Their credit card bills mounted, and the pair could no longer afford to pay their mortgage. Their electricity got shut off. They struggled just to buy food. “I felt like a complete failure at life,” Amy Ketteran says. “It was bad, and I didn’t tell anybody for a really long time.”

If the struggles that the Ketterans faced would have been difficult for anyone, Amy says that her Grinnell degree made the sting of their circumstances especially sharp. “I was supposed to be smart,” she says. “I felt like I wasn’t living up

to what I should have done with my education.”

Grinnellians are bright, idealistic, and motivated to succeed. But they are not invincible. A poor decision, a health crisis, a divorce, or a series of unlucky breaks can derail Grinnellians with even the most promising paths ahead of them.

Facing real failures — setbacks that require us to recalibrate our expectations of ourselves or even the trajectory of our lives — can be heartbreakingly painful and disappointing. But they can also make us more empathetic, open us up to the generosity of others, and give us the opportunity to help others struggling with similar issues.

For Amy Ketteran, who is now working as a day care provider and whose family is still digging out from those rough years, a turning point came in 2014. After a frustrating morning, she posted about her struggles for the first time on Everyday Class Notes, a 4,000-alumni-strong Facebook

group. “It felt weird, but I knew if I didn’t get it out, I would explode. I needed to talk to someone, and the only people I was going to see that day were under 6 years old.”

She returned to the post a few hours later to find hundreds of supportive responses. “People cared,” she says. “They were there, they were listening, and some of them said, ‘Yeah, my life’s not that great, either.’ I was crying. It made me feel not so by myself.”

Telling the stories and mining the lessons from our darkest moments — or simply the stretches that will never merit a classmate — won’t guarantee that we’ll make our way to some better-than-imagined future. But they can be a welcome counterbalance to the endless stream of upbeat Facebook posts and perfectly filtered Instagram photos that make everyone else’s lives seem flawless. And sharing our setbacks can remind anyone who is struggling that even in a sea of Grinnell success stories, they are not alone.

## Climbing the wrong mountain

By all outward appearances, **Christine Newkirk '02** was a Grinnell success story. A strong student at Grinnell, she was thrilled when her adviser helped her line up a top-notch grad school and research opportunity in anthropology that included free tuition, a generous stipend, and the chance to do research in Brazil over several summers with funding from the National Science Foundation. "It was such a huge vote of confidence," she says of her adviser's support.

There was just one problem: She wasn't particularly invested in the topic, cognitive anthropology. Still, it seemed to be the next obvious step in the trajectory of her career, which she assumed would include getting a Ph.D. and becoming a professor.

And Newkirk had always been good at meeting others' expectations. "I was really driven to do well and get good grades," she says. "But that didn't always include thinking about my own opinions and ideas."

The focus and drive she had honed to perfection at Grinnell weren't enough to propel her all the way to a Ph.D. on a topic she didn't love. She specifically remembers the moment it all came crashing down. On the night she arrived in Brazil for her third summer of research, she knew almost instantly that she'd made a terrible mistake. "I walked into the apartment, and I was bereft," she recalls. "I just thought, 'Oh, my God. What have I gotten myself into?'"

The next morning, after a run on the beach, she sat down on a wall that overlooked the ocean. As she looked out on the water, she understood with crystal clarity that she couldn't do the research or the program she'd set out to do. "Even now," she says, her voice breaking, "it's still upsetting."

After four years of grinding away at a topic she couldn't connect with, Newkirk left her Ph.D. program. She worried that she had disappointed mentors who had believed in her, and she hated knowing she was no longer moving forward in the academic career she thought she wanted.

Since leaving the program, Newkirk has spent years working in nonprofits and mentoring teenagers through a variety of programs. In her role as a high school director at the Heart of Los Angeles, for example, she has particularly zeroed in on the high-achieving kids who seem more focused on garnering praise than finding a passion. "The advice I dispense to them is often about knowing yourself first and then figuring out how to apply yourself, rather than just being concerned about prestige and racking up accomplishment," she says. "Don't compare yourself to other people."

Over the past few years, she has discovered what she *is* passionate about: education. Now, years later, Newkirk is applying to graduate schools in education, hoping to earn the Ph.D. that eluded her the first time around. She is now more certain in the direction she wants to go, but her previous experiences still weigh heavily on her. "You only live once, and you should go after what you want," she says. "But the feeling of failure and shame still haunts me."

## Finding a home, and gratitude, in a quieter life

Many times, the lives we carve out for ourselves don't match up with the grand plans Commencement speakers have dreamed up for us and veer far from even our own ideas of our lives' trajectories after we graduate.

**Alethea Drexler '00** says she might not have had a clear vision of what awaited her after Grinnell, but she didn't exactly envision her current life, in which she lives with her parents in a suburb just outside of Houston. She's there for a complicated mix of reasons — among them, to support her aging parents and save on housing costs so she can live on her modest salary working in the historical archives of the Texas Medical Center. "I don't have a job that will really support me in a big city. I don't have a partner or family of my own," she says. "All of the things that everyone seems to take for granted as cornerstones of life aren't here."

She knows she has many things to be grateful for: her health, a job she generally enjoys, parents she loves. Still, she sometimes wishes for a bigger life. "I should have pushed myself harder for my own sake and gotten that library degree, but I've lost the steam for it now," she says. "It's not as though I'm suffering, but my life is very quiet and small scale."

**Bill Turner '87**, meanwhile, admits he sometimes feels frustrated with his life, which looks little like what he had expected. After sailing through Grinnell and finishing his Ph.D. program almost effortlessly, complete with peer-reviewed and prize-winning papers, his ascent

up the academic ladder seemed all but assured.

But after a series of one-year contracts and administrative positions at three universities, he stalled out. He went to law school and graduated, and found work on a legal history project he enjoyed. But it was short-lived. "The HIV that I had been ignoring for two years finally caught up to me, and I had to quit working," he says. "I muddle along, and at the moment, I have one project I'm working on that may yet allow me to salvage a real life from the current mess. We shall see."

And while he acknowledges that "we're never supposed to admit failure," he says he truly works at feeling gratitude for the good things in his life, including a stable family growing up, a strong education, and being gay, which he believes has allowed him to meet people and have experiences that would have been possible no other way.

## A move from reaching up to reaching for each other

In the end, it may be perfectly Grinnellian to go off and change the world; but it is also perfectly Grinnellian to lead a messy, imperfect life. And if Grinnellians are known for their capacity for compassion, perhaps it is time to show some kindness to ourselves and to other Grinnellians. Sharing more honest stories about our own lives, messy and difficult as they are, is a start.

"It's so hard, when you're in the trenches, to see that there's a way out," says Amy Ketteran. "But if you can be honest about what's happening to you, you never know who might be out there to help you out. Maybe they'll just hold your hand for a minute. But sometimes that — just that — can make a difference." 📖

# Learning How to Fail

## Today's students have an array of resources to address setbacks of all kinds

**W**hen new students arrive at Grinnell, they're often used to being among the best at what they do, both in the classroom and beyond it. But that can change quickly when they join hundreds of other similarly brainy students, tackle classes that are a big step up from high school, and adjust to living on their own in a new community.

Whether students are struggling with classes, relationships, depression, or any of the myriad issues that can come up during big transitions, College faculty and staff can often give students the advice and resources they need to make changes.

Academics can be a particularly fraught area for students who are used to doing everything perfectly on their own, says **Joyce Stern '91**, dean for student success and academic advising. "I think that students sometimes think that 'adulthood' is about complete independence and doing everything by themselves," she says. "But of course adults ask for help all the time, whether it's hiring an accountant to help with their finances or talking with their friends to get help with parenting. But that's what we're *supposed* to do — to get guidance when we need it."

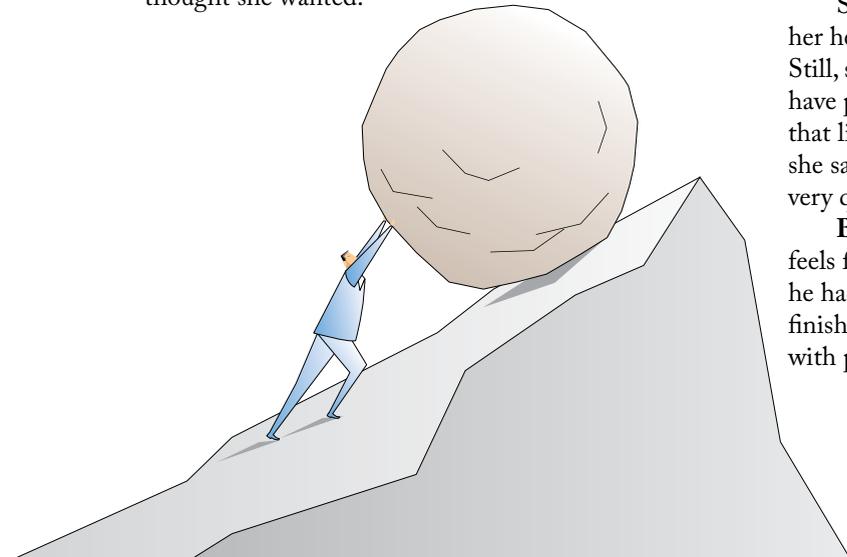
A robust array of tutoring services and programs, including the Writing Lab, Math Lab, and Science Learning Center, are all designed to help students get back on track.

Even for students facing serious consequences, such as academic suspension, Stern tries to reframe the suspension as an opportunity, not a banishment. Many students return after a semester or two off to deal with whatever has derailed them, whether it's a family issue, substance abuse, or other problems.

"We want to help students understand that something has to change," Stern says. "We want them to know that we really are on their side; we don't want them to be paying thousands of dollars for something that isn't working."

For many Grinnell faculty and staff, helping students accept and learn from their failures is a big part of their job. **Jen Jacobsen '95**, director of wellness and prevention and assistant track and field coach, says athletics can be particularly "failure-friendly."

"Some of us are really intentional about asking athletes what went well after a performance, even if the overall result is not what they hoped for," she says. "One of the biggest lessons I want them to draw from a competition is that no performance is an unmitigated disaster — let's find the parts under their control that they did well and what we need to reinforce in practice. Also, sometimes they can do everything 'right' and still not achieve the outcome they hoped for. That's frustrating, but it's why we work on valuing the process as well as the outcome." 📖



# Legacy of Activism

Concerned Black Students' 50-year history at Grinnell College

by Tequia Burt '98



Photo courtesy of Burling Library Archives, Grinnell College

Leaders of CBS circa 1970 included, from left to right: the late Booker Carter '71, the late Ernest Weston '71, the late Gregory Cogs '70, and Frank Thomas '71.

Last fall, black students at dozens of colleges across the country protested against racial discrimination on their campuses, including demonstrations at Yale University, Claremont McKenna College, and Ithaca College. The most high-profile protests were held at the University of Missouri, which led to the ousting of Tim Wolfe, president of the University of Missouri system.

As black youth organize via Black Lives Matter to speak out against police brutality, our nation finds itself amid a new civil rights movement. As it spreads, black student organizations have become lightning rods for controversy on college campuses, and Grinnell College has been no different.

In early 2015, racist slurs were posted anonymously on the social media app Yik Yak, specifically targeting black students on campus. In addition to calling for the disbanding of Grinnell College's black student organization Concerned Black Students (CBS), messages harassed black student leaders by name. One post called a black student a "spear chucker"; another accused "blacks" of "ruining Grinnell."

"The dominant narrative is that Grinnell is this great liberal place, that we're all into social justice, that we're a post-racial society," says **Alexandra Odom '16**, house monitor for the Conney M. Kimbo Black Cultural Center this past year. "But black students see the opposite side of this; we are often confronted with really conservative racist ideas projected on us. The school is radical until it comes to issues of race and black people."

She adds: "I've had some of the best times in my life on this campus, but also some of the worst."

As it has for almost 50 years, CBS serves as a home for black students during controversies big and small. It has also been a powerful vehicle for getting the administration and the Grinnell College community at large to consider a black perspective.

## Origin story

Black students at Grinnell formed CBS in the fall of 1967 after hearing Martin Luther King Jr. speak at the college.

“We were just so inspired by Dr. King,” says **Frank Thomas ’71**, an administrator at the College for many years. “Plus, in ’67 there were a lot of things going on nationally — black student unions were forming in various colleges around the country, and there was a lot of unrest in various cities. So, the students at Grinnell, though not particularly ‘militant,’ still had concerns. We felt we needed to do something.”

Not much happened that fall, but the need to “do something” intensified in the spring of ’68 when King was assassinated in April. Before his assassination, multiple black students and faculty reported being verbally harassed and threatened with physical harm in town, according to *The Scarlet & Black*. Town-gown relations got so bad that a Grinnell College student, **Lou Kelley ’68**, was attacked and beaten up in his dorm room by a Grinnell townsman. “The baddest black guy on campus was harassed and beaten up, so that was the impetus for us to decide, look, we’re really not safe around here,” Thomas says. King’s murder was the final straw, and black students got serious about organizing.

But things were relatively quiet until 1971, when black students chained the doors to Burling Library and locked themselves inside. *The S&B* reported that during the takeover, which lasted from 7:15 a.m. until 12:30 p.m., no white people, with the exception of a few administrators, including then-President **Glenn Leggett**, were admitted to the library. The chained doors were adorned with posters featuring such slogans as “Do You Deny Us As Black People The Right To Be Free?” and “We Are An American People Proud Of Our Blackness: We Want To Express Ourselves And Our Blackness In Our Academic Life On This Campus.”

Leggett met with a group of about 10 black CBS members in the president’s office, which was inside Burling at that time. CBS presented him with its “black manifesto,” a list of 10 demands designed to improve campus life for black students and faculty. Demands included boosting black student enrollment to “no less than 200” and establishing a larger black cultural center, a black library in Burling, and a black studies major.

“Campus opinion was widely split on the issue, ranging from full support to unspeakable bitterness and a parody ‘manifesto,’” stated the May 15, 1973, special commencement issue of *The S&B*. “CBS held meetings with students and trustees clarifying its position and undertook extensive negotiating sessions with the



“The House” as it appeared in 1970. It’s located on the northeast corner of Park St. and 10th Ave.

Photo courtesy of Burling Library Archives, Grinnell College

administration.”

Many goals of CBS’s “black manifesto” have not been realized — there still aren’t 200 black students on campus. Current students still contend the campus sees its share of racial unrest. So the question remains: What has been gained through CBS’s efforts?

## Recruiting black students

Following the Burling takeover, Leggett, along with the trustees, agreed to establish a black studies major and an admissions board for black students. They also agreed to give black students space in the form of the Conney M. Kimbo Black Cultural Center, which has been affectionately called “The House” over the years.

However, the Black Admissions Board was doomed from the start. The faculty dissolved it in 1976 after the College received a letter from the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare indicating that a separate black admissions board was “unacceptable.” Students were promised that the general admissions board would be sensitive to black needs, according to *The S&B*.

Over the years, Grinnell College has had varying levels of success in recruiting black students to campus, but it still isn’t known as a destination school. For example, it failed to rank on *Essence* magazine’s recent list of the 50 best colleges for African Americans, while similar private liberal arts colleges such as Amherst, Wellesley, and Williams (all in Massachusetts) made the cut. According to Amherst, for example, black students composed 10 percent of first-year students this past year, the lowest it has been in the past few years. In comparison at Grinnell, average black enrollment has

hovered at about 6 percent since 2003.

According to the latest figures from Grinnell’s Office of Analytic Support and Institutional Research, during the 2015–16 academic year there were 96 African American students at Grinnell, who overall made up 5.6 percent of the student body. In 2014, the College for the first time reached a 100-student milestone. That may not seem like much, but Grinnell has never had a big black student population — in 1998, which had the lowest population of African American students in the past 25 years, there were only 35 black students.

“There were fewer than 30 of us when we formed CBS,” Thomas recalls. “As an organization, it was really important for us to be there to support current black students, but also to call for increased enrollment of black students.”

According to **Joe Bagnoli**, vice president for enrollment and dean of admission and financial aid, the College has made great strides toward increasing those numbers. On staff is a coordinator of multicultural recruitment, and each year the admission office revisits its goals and strategies for the enrollment of underrepresented students.

“We have a nationwide recruitment strategy with a special focus on [African American and Latino] populations,” he says. “Our outreach efforts include targeted school visits and building relationships with CBOs [community-based organizations]. And we underwrite the costs associated with trips to campus for underrepresented students to ensure that cost is not an impediment to the campus visit for domestic students of color who may be living in lower-income households.”

Those efforts have recently yielded an unprecedented number of applicants, Bagnoli says. This year almost 50 percent of the College’s domestic applicants identified as students of color. Additionally, domestic students of color currently make up almost 25 percent of the student body.

But Bagnoli admits that because of federal mandates that would discourage the College from identifying quotas, they address recruitment in terms of promoting broader diversity rather than focusing on how to specifically increase numbers of black students.

“We’re not just talking about [black students] as a group,” he said. “We’re talking about them as representative of various underrepresented students within that broader category. So, black students are often a part of our conversation. Latino students are often a part of our conversation, as well as first-generation college students and Pell-eligible students.”

## Posse impact

Recently, Grinnell College President **Raynard S. Kington** announced that the College was severing ties with the Posse Foundation. Grinnell had partnered with Posse since 2003, and it has been a significant source of black students for the College. In 2015, there were a total of 33 black Posse Scholars, making up 27 percent of black domestic students.

The Posse Foundation works to discover public high school students across racial groups with extraordinary academic and leadership potential, many of whom might be overlooked in a traditional college selection process. Once those Posse Scholars have been identified, they receive four-year, full-tuition scholarships to one of the organization’s partner schools.

“Posse has helped us to pursue our goals for diversity and student success and grow as a diverse institution,” Kington said in a statement. “Posse Scholars have brought great energy and student leadership to campus and given us a good sense of what close faculty-student mentoring can achieve. As we plan for the future we will seek to incorporate those ideas into our planning and engage Posse scholars and alumni in it.”

The decision caused a furor both on campus and in the alumni community. A letter signed by hundreds was sent to the administration asking for clarity on the memo announcing the decision.

“More troublingly for us, the memo provides very little insight into how the College will continue to recruit excellent students from urban areas and support these students. The memo alludes to a ‘more comprehensive approach to achieving our goals for diversity,’ but it fails to explain what this approach entails and does not specify the nature of the goals,” the letter read.

Bagnoli says he understands the frustration, but that the College is moving in the right direction in terms of getting more students of color on campus.

“When we entered into a relationship with the Posse Foundation, we were having a much more difficult time trying to attract the attention of underrepresented populations of all kinds,” he says. “Fast-forward to an applicant pool of over 7,300 students in 2016, when almost half of those domestic applicants are from students of color.”

He adds: “The Posse Foundation has provided Grinnell access to 20 finalists in two cities. We have loved getting to know the Posse finalists. They’re great people. But they now represent a small fraction of the total pool of underrepresented students who apply for admission. So, by virtue of an agreement that we reached

“I joined CBS to expand my support network within the black community to better position myself for success in the classroom, in a predominately white community, [in] my profession of choice, and life after Grinnell.”

– Darryl Dejuan Roberts '98

over a decade ago, the seats we reserve for them are off-limits to a growing population of other talented applicants who don't have the same opportunity to be considered for admission. Eventually, it leads to the question: Is there equity in the admission process? And it is increasingly difficult to answer that in the affirmative.”

### Helping black students succeed

CBS has also done its share in helping to keep black students on campus once they've arrived. Grinnell formally tracks first- and second-year retention, which was 100 percent for black students in 2014. The most recent four-year graduation rates are 81 percent for black students, compared with 84 percent for white students.

For many of the more than 30 alumni interviewed for this story, being a member of CBS was key to thriving at Grinnell — and beyond.

“I joined CBS to expand my support network within the black community to better position myself for success in the classroom, in a predominately white community, [in] my profession of choice, and life after Grinnell,” says **Darryl Dejuan Roberts '98**. “Being in CBS also provided a support system, which was essential to my survival at Grinnell, and it provided me with leadership opportunities, which gave me the confidence to participate in other campus organizations.”

For many students of color on campus, daily macro- and micro-aggressions can be an additional burden. These range from big assumptions that black students are only accepted to Grinnell because of affirmative action to smaller slights like comments about the texture of African American hair.

“If I listed all the micro- and macro-aggressions that I endured as a student, it'd be a long list,” says **April Dobbins '99**. “It got to a point where it was literally making me crazy. Don't get me wrong, I do have fond Grinnell memories, but to say that I fought to get to the other side of all the negative would be an

accurate description.”

Dobbins did not originally join CBS. But being a black kid on a predominantly white campus took its toll.

“Honestly, I avoided CBS like the plague my first two years at Grinnell. It seemed like a really tight-knit group, and I didn't want to try to get into their circle,” she says. “I came to Grinnell pretty exhausted from being bullied by other black kids all through high school for not being black enough. I was naive and I underestimated the need for CBS on campus. After being at Grinnell for two years, I came back from study abroad in London, and I just needed CBS. I needed a place where I didn't have to explain my hair or certain struggles on campus. I needed a place [like The House] where I could watch *Poetic Justice* or something and not have to have a big dialogue. I found my spot there.”

### Multiculturalism debates

For black students used to being both invisible and hypervisible on campus, becoming a part of CBS was a way to get their distinct voices heard. Over the years, black students tried to become a part of the conversation by advocating for a black perspective in the curriculum.

Starting in 1980, Grinnell began to offer “a special nonmajor program” in Afro-American studies. By the time the '90s rolled around, though, the concentration suffered due to a lack of classes, faculty, and enrollment. At the same time, racial tension was ratcheted up on campus. It was then that students demanded that an African American Studies concentration be launched and a black faculty member be hired to helm it.

In 1995 student organizations of color, including Asian Students in Alliance (ASIA) and Student Organization of Latinas/os (SOL), lobbied the College for physical space in which to hold meetings and cultural events. While black students already had The House, CBS decided to lend its support to these groups.

Some white students were very unhappy about it. In 1995 *The S&B* published a column written by a student, a senior editor, claiming minority faculty

were unqualified and that the College's efforts to promote multiculturalism fostered reverse racism and segregation. “The College also pursues an ambitious affirmative action employment program at all levels of hiring with little regard to the quality of the candidate or actual cultural contributions he or she might make,” the column said, concluding: “Grinnell is degrading into a racial battleground. Minorities are arguing over who deserves houses and departments while the administration points proudly at the number of colored sanitation workers and calls the school multicultural.”

**Kesho Scott**, associate professor of American studies and sociology, took issue with being called unqualified and wrote a letter to the editor in response: “I take your insults personally, for while I uphold freedom of speech, it becomes problematic when it is used to slander, especially when such slander is not based on any factual information; for example, there are no ‘colored sanitation workers’ employed by this institution, unless of course you were reducing those of us who teach here to sanitation workers.”

Racial tensions continued to escalate. First there was an incident at a basketball game where students used racial slurs and then, separately, two disc jockeys from KDIC were suspended after they used the n-word on the air. In response to these events, CBS staged a demonstration. Black students wore all black, taped their mouths shut, and stood in the back of their morning class with signs explaining they were protesting racial tension on campus. “Many [white] students were both shocked and offended by the demonstration, which was not widely understood,” according to *The S&B*.

But for black and other students of color, the protest was seen as an effort to talk about racial issues on campus that they dealt with on a daily basis. “That article kind of had like a Trump effect. It set off a lot of stuff that was simmering beneath the surface,” says Roberts. “Then we had the KDIC DJ using the n-word over the air. All these little incidents began to add up. It

was almost like they ignited a fire and pulled the covers back to expose some things that had been going on on campus. Some white students felt it was acceptable to say things that were very hurtful and racially motivated, and we wanted to challenge that.”

After the protest was staged, CBS led campuswide discussions, as well as discussions with the administration. As a result, the College established an Africana studies concentration and hired **Katya Gibel Mevorach**, professor of anthropology, to head the now-defunct program, which lasted six years.

### Black studies history

Grinnell first began its foray into black studies in 1969 when it introduced “a special upper-class general education program” called African and Afro-American studies, similar to concentrations today, but with a much lower credit requirement (16). The program ended in 1971, according to **Jason Maher**, registrar of the College.

Members of CBS lobbied for the creation of a black studies major in the “black manifesto,” and College administrators responded by establishing an interdisciplinary major in black studies in 1972. It was a 36-credit major and included courses in anthropology, economics, English, history, music, political science, and sociology. The major was discontinued in 1979 due to lack of interest. At the time, *The S&B* reported that just 10 students graduated with majors in black studies from 1972 to 1979.

After the protest in 1995, Grinnell introduced an interdisciplinary concentration in Africana studies in 1997, replacing the largely ignored Afro-American studies program that was launched in 1980. For the first time, the program had dedicated introductory and seminar-level coursework, Maher says.

But despite bringing on board Gibel Mevorach, who created a nationwide conference and brought numerous and varied speakers to campus, the concentration was never very popular with students and was discontinued in 2005. From 1999 to 2005, there were a total of 20 students who graduated with an Africana studies concentration. In comparison, the very popular gender, women's, and sexuality studies (GWSS) concentration had 124 concentrators from 2000 to 2012. The program was so popular that it was turned into a major in 2010 that has since seen 87 majors graduate.

Africana studies wasn't so fortunate. After seeing zero interest in upper-level Africana courses and limited interest in introductory classes, the faculty, including Gibel Mevorach and Scott, suggested dissolving Africana studies as an interim move toward something

Photo by Harry Baumert/The Des Moines Register



Protests in 1995 put a spotlight on Grinnell College. Grady Murdock '98, Fredrick Mann '98 and Lisa Alexander '97 appear on the front page of *The Des Moines Register*.



The House as it looks in 2016.

and works directly with students on the cocurricular side. Yik Yak was also ultimately banned from campus.

Since Johnson and Bleichner were hired, the two have invigorated the Diversity Council, a board of students, faculty, and administrators. The Office of Intercultural Affairs is also developing a “diversity plan” to address some of these issues on campus. An early draft of the plan was released recently for feedback. It includes expanding the preorientation program for underrepresented students into a full first-year program; developing a local-host program to promote connections and ameliorate feelings of isolation for students; and increasing the number of staff who provide support for student success and diversity issues.

“I’m excited about the new structure because people are finally thinking strategically about the student-of-color experience at Grinnell,” Bleichner says. “We are finally getting the right combination of folks with the right skill sets who can help students really address what it means to be a student of color in the middle of Iowa.”

Following the Yik Yak incidents, CBS also helped to foster campuswide discussions to address what they feel is a hostile and unwelcoming climate, including an event last fall designed to show solidarity with students at the University of Missouri.

“The biggest issue we have is with white students who didn’t think the racist attacks were a big deal or who were defending what took place on Yik Yak,” Romeo says. “Our dialogue was not directed at the administration, but to white students on campus.”

Just like at Missouri, Romeo claimed the Yik Yak attacks were not isolated, but part of a larger pattern of racially charged incidents on campus.

“The Yik Yak incident was just the biggest one,” Romeo says. “Whenever people talk about this, they talk about it like it was just one incident. There were multiple incidents. Students were saying hateful things about CBS.”

For black students dealing with racist incidents like Yik Yak, joining CBS can be like grabbing a lifeline. In addition to providing them with the support to help them address the special challenges that go along with attending a predominantly white college, it also gives black students a unique and powerful voice on campus.

“After the Yik Yak scandal, we were in a room discussing our concerns with the president of the College and various deans within a week or two,” says Odom. “Whether or not people are satisfied with the outcomes, it is huge to know that we can begin these conversations. My hope is that CBS has helped to promote a campus culture that encourages transparency and honest communication between the students and the administration.”

more comprehensive.

“The administration had nothing to do with this decision. This was not a problem of not enough faculty to teach a course — there were no students,” Gibel Mevorach says. “GWSS absorbed most students of color interested in diversity who were interested, as well, in gender studies; and more than a few potential recruits were sociology majors.”

Following last year’s Yik Yak incidents, black students in CBS once again began advocating for the establishment of an Africana studies concentration, despite the tumultuous history of black studies at Grinnell. “This is an issue of institutional amnesia,” Gibel Mevorach says.

In light of this history, some students are unsure if a new major is the best way to proceed. Some alumni say advocating for more black faculty might be a better way forward.

“There have been huge things we’ve accomplished since ’67. CBS’s activism has profoundly influenced campus,” says **Dixon Romeo ’16**, one of CBS’s leader’s last year, “Ultimately, though, I would much rather have a positive, healthy, and safe space for black students to support them academically and mentally until they graduate. Right now we’re trying to find balance between these two things.”

### CBS today

Shortly after the racist Yik Yak posts appeared last year, members of CBS met with President Kington and presented a list of demands, including the creation of a mentorship program with minority alumni and a hate crime/bias-motivated incident team, increased diversity training during New Student Orientation, and improvements to the Office of Diversity and Inclusion.

Romeo says, “No one that we were meeting with in the administration had any issues with supporting us. They were ready and willing to help.”

Since then, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion has been restructured. **Lakesia Johnson**, associate professor of gender, women’s and sexuality studies, was tapped as chief diversity officer to address diversity within the curriculum and help recruit and retain a diverse faculty. **Leslie Turner Bleichner ’07** was hired as director of intercultural affairs

## Giving

# Building a Legacy

The class of 1966’s united funding effort

by **Luke Saunders ’12**

The class of 1966’s 50th Reunion gift of \$3.6 million is the largest such gift in the history of the College, \$1.2 million more than the previous record set by the class of 1963. More than \$1 million of the gift will go to the Class of 1966 Endowed Scholarship Fund and eventually fund one student’s entire Grinnell experience; it’s one of only two such scholarships established by an individual class. So far more than \$70,000 of the reunion gift has been designated for a named space in the planned Humanities and Social Studies Complex (for its 25th Reunion, the class of 1966 designated funds for the Writing Lab in Alumni Recitation Hall). There are further designations for financial aid, the Pioneer Fund, and a number of personal passions of individual class members. The total encompasses outright gifts, pledges, and planned gifts.

**Jim Holbrook**, class fund co-director, attributes the success of his class’s giving to a combination of the right people and the right circumstances. Holbrook and **Laurie Houdek Hill**, co-director, worked with **Ruth Koehler Bergerson**, class agent, and the fundraising team of **David Maxwell**, **Anne Campbell Spence**, and **Ed Atkins**. Although Holbrook emphasizes each person’s specialty and the significance of their contributions to the class’s efforts, he singled out Bergerson for her long-term commitment. “Ruth is the golden thread on whom we have strung all our beads of memory,” Holbrook says. He also speaks of her as a maternal figure to the whole class. “She holds us together,” he says, “And she shares information about all of our far-flung siblings.”

Holbrook’s own contribution is not to be ignored. He made a substantial planned gift that served as the lead gift for the class. What really “blew the doors off,” he says, was an anonymous seven-figure gift.

The class of 1966 aimed to break both the total giving record and the class participation record. They have comfortably broken the former but have not yet surpassed the latter. The class set the bar high with a goal of 66 percent participation. As of June 1, they had exceeded 56 percent, but it remains to be seen whether they’ll set that second challenge for subsequent classes to try to beat.

Holbrook attributes the class’s fundraising success to a healthy level of competition with the class of 1965 and work on the class’s memory book. But more than anything else, it was the forces that shaped the class of 1966 while they were students in the early- to mid-1960s. In October of their first year, they witnessed the Cuban Missile Crisis. The following year John F. Kennedy was assassinated. The Gulf of Tonkin incident colored 1964, and 1965 saw a massive increase in troops being sent to Vietnam. Each summer a number of students would travel to the South and participate in the civil rights movement. And when students weren’t directly involved in world-shaping events, they followed them closely on television. The seismic shifts happening across the United States and the world resonated with these students and shaped their views and politics — and it also drew them together.

The class is collectively considering its legacy. Its members want to contribute to the well-being of the world, and they choose to do that by providing access and resources to future Grinnellians.



Anne Campbell Spence congratulates Jim Holbrook.

Photo by Justin Hayworth

# Council votes to create diversity committee, selects new members

by **Mary Knuth Otto '63**,  
Alumni Council Communications Committee

Greeted by a dusting of fresh snow and sent home on the winds of the approaching Iowa spring, the Alumni Council met in the Joe Rosenfield '25 Center March 3–5.

## Diversity and Inclusion Committee

**Angela Onwuachi-Willig '94**, Alumni Council president-elect, proposed creating a Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The new committee seeks to address issues of equity and inclusion regarding alumni of color, international alumni, GLBTQ alumni, first-generation alumni, or alumni with disabilities, to name but a few.

The purpose is to engage Grinnell's alumni body "in ways that celebrate their unique Grinnell experiences and seek to create additional connections between diverse alumni and students," Onwuachi-Willig explains.

The council unanimously supported the resolution, and the bylaws of the Alumni Council will be revised to reflect the changes.

Another major change combined two committees — communications and alumni engagement — into one, the Alumni Communications and Engagement Committee.

The Alumni Council is a group of 26 Grinnell alumni and two student representatives working under the Office of Development and Alumni Relations. The council's mission is to foster strong connections between alumni and the College, and among the 20,000 Grinnell alumni located in the 50 states and 55 nations. Additional information is available at [forum.grinnell.edu/alumnicouncil](http://forum.grinnell.edu/alumnicouncil).

## New Members

A concluding highlight was the Membership Committee's nomination of eight alumni, from an applicant pool of 41, to membership in the council. These alumni were selected based on their commitment to the College through volunteer activities as well as for their reflection of Grinnell's diversity.

They will join the council at its fall meeting in October. The new members are **Howie Schein '66**, Urbana, Ill.; **Chris Meyer '70**, Sarasota, Fla.; **Claudia Beckwith '77**, Grinnell, Iowa; **Ann Poor Cary '81**, Dallas; **Kelly Clements Hopfer '96**, Highlands Ranch, Colo.; **David Jarvis '04**, Portland, Ore.; **Archie Tyson '06**, Memphis, Tenn.; and **Lester Alemán '07**, Los Angeles.

**Ed Senn '79**, Alumni Council president, thanked departing members for their years of service: **Jim Decker '75**, **Catherine Gillis '80**, **Susan Henken-Thielen '80**, **Nancy Schmulbach Maly '61**, **Rania Mohamed Robb '03**, and **Sherman Willis '01**.

Senn acted as host at a final Saturday night dinner and facilitated his own spirited invention of "Grinnell Jeopardy." For example, from "Profs and Toffs," *This art professor was accosted by Jimmy Carter's Secret Service in the Forum basement*, or *This physics professor saved Robert Noyce from being expelled for stealing a pig*. And if you're on a roll, from "Here Come the Pioneers," *He appeared in Darby Gym on Sept. 20, 1975*.

# Prompted

THE PROMPT:

## How or when did you know Grinnell was "home" for you?

### Holidays Without Family

During my first year at Grinnell, going home for the Jewish holidays at the end of September wasn't an option, so I attended the student-led Rosh Hashanah services in Main Hall and felt homesick for the first time since I arrived on campus. Instead of spending the afternoon and evening enjoying home-cooked, traditional holiday foods with family and friends, I was bored and lonely in my third-floor Dibble Hall dorm room. Around dinner time, there was a knock on my door. It was my student adviser, **Catherine Carter '94**, accompanied by all of my floor mates.

They couldn't imagine being away from their families on one of their most important religious holidays, and they didn't want me to spend my holiday alone. The entire floor was taking me out for a Rosh Hashanah dinner at Pagliai's Pizza! It wasn't home-cooked, it wasn't traditional — of course, it wasn't even kosher! — but it was perfect. And, that was when I realized I had made the right college choice — I was exactly where I belonged.

— **Rachel Erlich Kamin '96**,  
Lake Zurich, Ill.

### Floor Mates

When I first got to Grinnell, I was scared. Getting to know my floor mates made me part of a group of people that supports each other. To this day, we almost always have lunch and dinner together as a floor, since all of us started here at Grinnell at the same time.

— **Mark Duncan '19**, Phoenix

### Good for Boys, Good for Girls

When I visited the Grinnell College campus in August 1967, it was as though I had entered the pages of *A Separate Peace* by John Knowles, the story of two boys in an elite all-male private boarding school in the Northeast. I longed to join the domain of the narrator Gene and his friend Phineas, not only for a rigorous academic program set against the backdrop of antiquated stone edifices covered in ivy, but [I] also yearned to emulate the idealism, athleticism, and camaraderie experienced by adolescent males such as Gene. In the mid-1960s, girls were not always entitled to the same privileges.

My first sight of Grinnell, from the backseat of my parents' car, was Burling Library. As we passed the dormitories of South Campus, the orderly succession of the brick buildings resonated in me like a distant memory. The afternoon shadows lengthened as we reached North Campus, where the towers of Gates and Rawson stood like sentinels.

Even in the quiet of an ordinary summer afternoon, Grinnell was stunning. I desperately wanted to be admitted to this school, sensing that it might grant me some of the opportunities conferred on boys like Gene and Phineas.

— **Margaret Rayburn Kramar '72**,  
LeCompton, Kan.

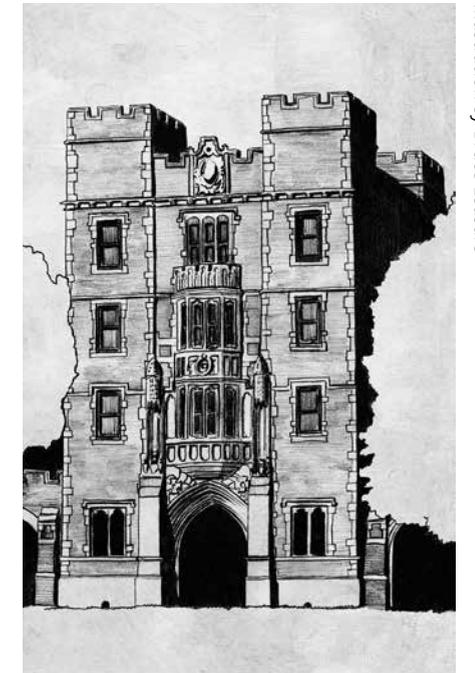


Illustration by Bruce Leasure

### The Clark Men

I knew I was home as I returned from spring break of my freshman year, in March 1969. President Eisenhower had just died and classes were suspended for Monday, so we all had an impromptu holiday at the most opportune time: no exams, no homework. Simple freedom with the Clark men. I felt comfortable, welcomed, and home. At Grinnell. In Grinnell. With Grinnell.

— **Mitch Erickson '72**,  
New Providence, N.J.

### Prompt for Fall 2016

In honor of **Victor Verrette**, professor emeritus of French (see "In Memoriam," Page 54), share a story about how a Grinnell professor — any professor — made an impact on your life.

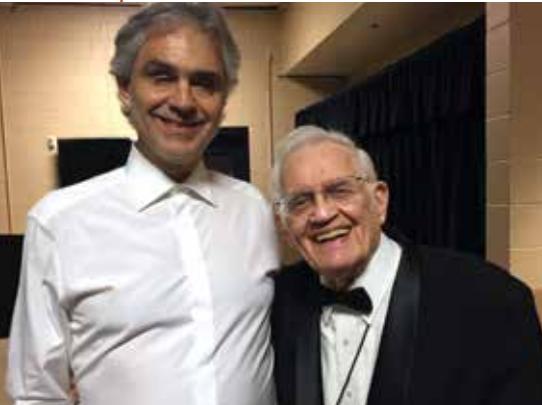
Submit up to 200 words by July 31, 2016, to [magazine@grinnell.edu](mailto:magazine@grinnell.edu) with "home" in the subject line. If we publish your story, we'll send you a special T-shirt.

## 1950S

1950

### Douglas Peterson '50

**Douglas Peterson** recently celebrated his 90th birthday. Conductor Eugene Kohn described Peterson as “a powerhouse of energy” who is dedicated to “the world of sound colors.” Peterson has worked with renowned singers, including Andrea Bocelli, a classical tenor.



## 1960S

1960

The Recording Academy honored **Herbie Hancock** in an awards ceremony and live tribute concert on April 23, 2016, giving him the academy’s lifetime achievement award. Hancock has been at the forefront of almost every development in electronic and acoustic jazz and R&B, earning 14 Grammy Awards during his impressive solo career.

Hancock also performed at the New Orleans Jazz and Heritage Festival April 24, 2016, with Wayne Shorter. The two have been making music together since Miles Davis’s Second Great Quintet in the 1960s and have penned an open letter to the next generation of artists. See the letter at <http://bit.ly/1WBsqy8>.

**James Kimball** is executive producer of *The Waiting Room*, a short comedy/drama film. His wife Mary Ellen is the art director. Kimball also was cast in *12 Angry Men* in February 2016 at the Des Moines (Iowa) Community Playhouse.

### 1962 (55th Cluster Reunion)

**Susan Fernald Smith** and her husband Ronald A. Smith were honored by the Centre County (Pa.) Historical Society at the 2015 Awards for Excellence in Historic Preservation ceremony, October 2015. The Jacqueline J. Melander Award went to the longtime Lemont, Pa., residents, who have spearheaded the effort to restore and preserve the Granary and to create annual events held in the Granary and on the surrounding village green that recall the stories and community traditions of the past. Built in 1885, the John L. Thompson Grain Elevator and Coal Sheds, commonly known as the Granary, has become the focal point of the Lemont Historic District.

**Ann Hamilton Campbell** was named one of nine “2015 Women of Influence in Iowa” by *The Business Record*, published weekly in Des Moines. Campbell, mayor of Ames, Iowa, is the first woman outside the Des Moines metro area to receive this honor, which was presented at a Des Moines ceremony in August last year. She has been mayor of Ames since 2006 and served as a member of the Ames City Council from 1986–2001. When her term as mayor ends in 2017, she will have completed 28 years of public service as an elected city official.

### 1965

**Mick Hager** was profiled as a “rare specimen” in the Feb. 24, 2016, issue of *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, following an announcement that he is retiring June 30 as president of the San Diego Natural History Museum. Hager was involved in more than 30,000 square feet of permanent exhibits, including a new exhibition called Extraordinary Ideas from Ordinary People: A History of Citizen Science, which opened early summer 2016. Read the full story at <http://bit.ly/1pxZWrT>.

**Mary Sue Wilson Coleman** and **Ken Coleman** share that “after failing retirement completely,” Mary Sue has accepted the position as president of the D.C.-based Association of American Universities. AAU is an invitation-only organization comprised of 60 U.S. public and private research universities, plus

two Canadian members. Coleman took office officially on June 1, 2016. She retired from the University of Michigan in 2014 as president. Ken will also have a role at the AAU, organizing the partners program for spouses and significant others of the presidents and chancellors, the first time a man has held that role.

### 1967

**Kathryn Jagow Mohrman** was honored on Nov. 6, 2015, when Colorado College dedicated a campus theatre in her honor. Mohrman was the college’s 11th president and the first woman to hold that position, serving for nine years. The campus theatre is now the Kathryn Mohrman Theatre in Armstrong Hall, Colorado Springs, Colo.

### 1968

**Robert Hodierno’s** exhibit, *Robert Hodierno: Vietnam War Photographs*, ran from Sept. 17, 2015, to Jan. 26, 2016, at the Lora Robins Gallery of Design from Nature at Virginia’s University of Richmond. The exhibit included more than 40 images, most of which had not been published before. The exhibit announcement states, “The majority of his work was in black and white, although the exhibition includes one battle he photographed in color. To this day, Hodierno says when he dreams about Vietnam, it is always in black and white.” More information: <http://bit.ly/1Vye6aO>.

**John C. Holbert**, noted author and professor emeritus of homiletics at Southern Methodist University, Dallas, received an honorary master of sacred music degree from SMU in the summer of 2015, honoring his long association with the program.

This spring **Trip Kennedy** finished a three-year project to walk from Rome to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, with a 1,000-kilometer trek across the Pyrenees and northern Spain. “With 1,000 people a day arriving in Santiago, the pilgrimage in Spain is a much less solitary experience than my walks up Italy and France,” he says.

**Harry Ruth** reports he “has been a volunteer for Iowa’s State Health Insurance Information Program.” After



For many, the first thing that comes to mind when we think of philosophy is Plato sitting around in his toga thinking abstractly about the universe. At its core, philosophy is the study of the fundamental human question: “What’s all this about?” Too often, however, this universally relatable question is obscured in jargon and abstract theory, driving many eager students to abandon the subject altogether.

However, for **Scott Samuelson '95**, professor of philosophy at Kirkwood Community College’s Iowa City campus, “philosophy is for everyone.” Samuelson has made it his mission to make philosophy accessible to people from all walks of life.

“I try to pose the idea that the liberal arts shouldn’t be the exclusive goods of an upper class, but that a liberal arts education is important and should be available as widely as possible,” says Samuelson. “Everyone has these philosophical concerns and questions, but sometimes the study of philosophy itself can be intimidating.”

Samuelson decided to teach at a community college in order to encounter a wider range of students from all ages and backgrounds. “It’s not just that I have helped my students to see the value of philosophy,” Samuelson says. “In a lot of ways, they have helped me to understand that these aren’t just theoretical issues we’re speculating on, but that we’re enmeshed in them and they matter a lot to our lives.”

In one such instance, Samuelson was conducting a class discussion on Immanuel Kant’s idea that the consequences of an action are irrelevant to the moral worth of the action — in other words, the idea that an

action can be inherently good even if it causes something bad.

“A student came up to me in tears after class and told me about how she had to authorize a surgery for her son that eventually led to his death,” says Samuelson. “This question was at the very core of her identity, and it made me remember the importance of what Kant was trying to figure out.”

Samuelson’s first book, *The Deeper Human Life: An Introduction to Philosophy for Everyone*, as well as an article he published in *The Atlantic* entitled “Why I Teach Plato to Plumbers,” are his attempts to show people how philosophy actually applies to their lives in a meaningful and important way.

Due to his commitment to making philosophy and the liberal arts accessible, Samuelson received the prestigious 2015 Hiett Prize in the Humanities. The Hiett Prize awards \$50,000 to people who are in the early stages of their career and are working to bring the humanities to a wider public audience. He will use the prize to support his work on a second book, *Seven Ways of Looking at Pointless Suffering*, in which he examines the ways in which philosophers have thought about the problem of evil and unjust suffering.

“We sometimes forget how valuable our lives can be, and I see philosophy as one way of reconnecting with what is truly valuable in our humanity,” Samuelson says. “Each of us contains within us the whole mystery of being human. The deepest human life is all around us.”

— Elise Hadden '14

lots of training, he now provides free counseling to Medicare beneficiaries to help determine best coverage.

## 1970S

1973

### Irma McClaurin '73

On April 6, 2016, at an affinity dinner hosted by the staff of University of Massachusetts' Amherst W.E.B. Du Bois Library, **Irma McClaurin** announced the opening of the Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive in collaboration with the special collections staff. The archive, centered around McClaurin's papers and books, is interdisciplinary and focuses on preserving the intellectual and activist history of black women.



1974

The Fulbright Specialist Program in February 2016 selected **Amanda Golbeck**, a University of Montana professor, as a specialist to advance the understanding of public and global health research at the University of Latvia in Riga. Golbeck will spend two weeks sharing her knowledge through a series of lectures and seminars about modern, state-of-the-art statistical research methods to enable more sophisticated and useful public health research at the University of Latvia.

1977

**Dan Finkelman** was elected a member of the Granville, Ohio, Village Council. He will serve a four-year term on the seven-member council. This is Finkelman's first elected office and most likely the pinnacle of his career as a public official. He retired from the corporate world and is now a dealer-

principal with American Heritage Motorcycles (AHM), which sells Indian and Victory brand motorcycles (made in Spirit Lake, Iowa) through five dealerships in the Midwest. Finkelman serves on a number of startup company boards and is also a member of Grinnell's Wilson Program Leadership Council.

## 1980S

### 1980 (35th Cluster Reunion)

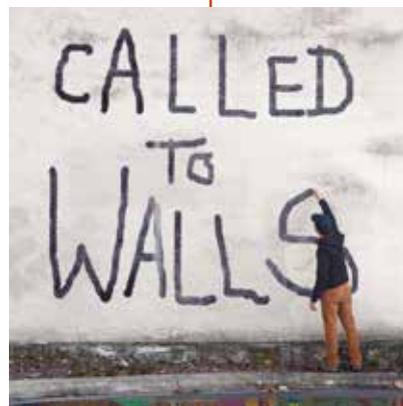
**Kenneth Krimstein** is now an esteemed cartoonist for *The New Yorker* magazine. An article by Lori Rotenberk about his work, "The Mind of a Cartoonist," can be seen at *Craftsmanship*, Spring 2016: [www.craftsmanship.net/the-mind-of-a-cartoonist/](http://www.craftsmanship.net/the-mind-of-a-cartoonist/).

### 1982 (35th Cluster Reunion)

Interior designer **Mitchell Channon** was one of the featured designers in a March 29, 2016, article at Refined Haystack, a Chicago design network, called "A Look Back: The Evolution of the Interiors Industry." A March 1, 2016, article at Lux & Concord featured Channon's advice on "How to Put a Room Together Like a Pro." His bedroom vignette was also showcased on May 3, 2016, at the Chicago Luxury Beds event, Dreaming of Design. Channon also blogs about top local tastemakers and trendsetters on his website, Friday Fifteen with Friends. See his website and blog at [www.mitchellchannondesign.com](http://www.mitchellchannondesign.com).

### Dave Loewenstein '88

**Dave Loewenstein** writes: "I am in a feature-length documentary, *Called to Walls* by Nicholas Ward and Amber Hansen, which premiered Feb. 27, 2015, in Lawrence, Kan. The documentary focuses on a six-state mural project I led between 2010-13 and explores the way communities in middle America explore their histories and cultural identities through the creation of collaborative murals in the hearts of their downtowns." You can see the film trailer and screening dates (Queen Alidore Films) here: [www.calledtowalls.com](http://www.calledtowalls.com). "This spring, I'll be traveling to Brazil to do a series of mural projects and workshops sponsored by the Meridian International Center," Loewenstein adds. Read more about the program here: <http://bit.ly/1YDIE9l>.



1984

**Diane Walker Renaud** obtained her doctorate in nursing, July 2014, from the University of South Alabama, Mobile.

1986

**Richard Beck** is now manager, social work and clinical documentation, at Edward Hospital in Naperville, Ill. He started in January 2016.

**Valorie Voigt** and Wilfredo Urzagaste were married in Tarija, Bolivia, on Dec. 12, 2015.

1988

**Jennifer Sultz** began a full-time position as development director at a community mental health center, Turning Point Behavioral Health Care Center, Skokie, Ill., in August 2015.

### Doug Zang '88



**Doug Zang** recently started a new business called Doug Zang Voiceovers. "I can do commercial spots, narrations, audiobooks, technical/medical pieces, and a range of other services," he says. He started his business after a colleague was on the phone with his wife and stated in his presence, "I'm with Doug, who has the voice of God." That was his embarrassing cue to start working on his talent. After receiving professional training, he set up a small home studio and had the opportunity to do voiceovers for his "day job." Visit [dougzang.com](http://dougzang.com).



Photo by Green Chair Stories

## The Wish Specialist

An alumna helps senior citizens' dreams come true

The power of making a wish is no small thing; it gives us hope and allows us to envision something better. However, not many of us expect those wishes to be granted — that would be just a little too Disney. While there may not be any fairy godmother waiting to swoop in and make our dreams come true, **Sally Webster '08** has found a way to bring a little magic into the lives of senior citizens across the country by literally granting wishes for a living.

Webster developed an interest in nonprofit work when she participated in a ReNew Orleans trip while at Grinnell. After the trip, she took a semester off school and stayed in New Orleans for six months helping to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. After graduating and moving to Denver, Webster discovered Wish of a Lifetime, a Colorado-based organization that grants wishes to senior citizens who are isolated from friends, family, or the activities they once loved.

"We try to grant really life-enriching, meaningful wishes," says

Webster. "They're always connected to this vast personal history, to their passions and important people in their lives."

When she started there in 2010, she worked as a wish coordinator, helping to interview seniors and plan the logistics of making their wishes come true. Webster now works as the director of community outreach, where she manages external communications, social media, and the organization's volunteers and interns.

"Some of the wishes are just incredible," Webster says. "We reunited two Holocaust survivors this past summer in Israel, a man and his cousin. And to hear about his perspective on life after the unimaginable things he's been through — it was amazing."

The organization recently fulfilled the wish of one of Grinnell's oldest alumni, **Louise Goodwin McKlveen '35**, who dreamed of throwing the first pitch for the Minnesota Twins. In the weeks before her wish was granted, she did

exercises to increase her arm strength in preparation for the big occasion. (See "Classnotes," Page 38, Winter 2015).

"We have a lot of anecdotal evidence that isolated seniors become more involved in their communities after having a lifelong wish granted," Webster says. They often begin volunteering, joining social clubs, re-engaging with past passions, and learning to view the last decades of their lives as "productive, involved, and exciting." But the organization has an even larger goal in mind.

"The intention is really to change the way people view and value seniors in their everyday lives," says Webster. "There is going to be a huge demographic shift over the next couple of decades, and there will be a large elderly population. Getting people to engage with seniors and getting seniors to engage in their communities is the difference between a dependent population and one that is still contributing to society." From their humble beginnings fulfilling only a handful of wishes annually, Wish of a Lifetime now grants more than 200 wishes each year.

Webster can vouch for the personal value of interacting with seniors and learning from their life experiences. "I have a lot more perspective on the personal challenges in my life," she says. "I've listened to the incredible obstacles these people have faced. They've overcome so much that my problems seem manageable in comparison!"

For more information or to nominate a senior in your community, visit [www.wishofalifetime.org](http://www.wishofalifetime.org).

— Elise Hadden '14

## 1990s

**1992**  
**Thomas Meglioranza** makes his Mostly Mozart Festival debut in David Geffen Hall in New York on Aug. 9, 2016, singing Hugo Wolf's *Mörrike-Lieder* with pianist Reiko Uchida.

**1993**  
**Rachel Bly** is making a name for herself in Scandinavian media. She was filmed by a Danish film crew campaigning for Hillary Clinton and was interviewed on Swedish television about the caucus process.

### Erica L. Tarpey '93



**Erica L. Tarpey** has been named managing director of the Denver-based commercial law firm, Ireland Stapleton Pryor & Pascoe. Tarpey served

on the firm's executive committee for two years. "It is an honor to lead this team of brilliant, accomplished attorneys and staff," she says. Tarpey focuses on corporate governance, business formation, SEC compliance, and corporate finance. She also serves on the development committee for the Rocky Mountain Multiple Sclerosis Center.

**1994**  
 On Jan. 21, 2016, **Rabbi Jason Kimelman-Block** was named director of Bend the Arc Jewish Action in Washington, D.C., which mobilizes Jewish Americans to advocate on a range of domestic policy issues, including comprehensive immigration reform, criminal justice reform, a progressive tax code, LGBT equality, voting rights, and increases to the federal minimum wage.

**Jeff Sullivan** recently participated in a video series called *Unimpossible Missions*. Sullivan and his team were tasked with catching lightning in a bottle. The video is intended to capture the spirit of General Electric's 300,000 employees doing incredible things every day. Check out the results at <http://invent.ge/1SnIpNi>.

### 1995 Julie Gard '95



**Julie Gard** writes, "In June 2015, I received tenure and was promoted to associate professor of writing at the University of Wisconsin-Superior."

A section of her book, *Home Studies*, about an arson attempt on her family's home, was set to music by composer **Vineet Shende '94** and was performed at Bowdoin College in spring 2014.

### 1996 Eileen Curley '96



The U.S. Institute for Theatre Technology appointed **Eileen Curley** new editor-in-chief of *Theatre Design & Technology*. Curley is associate

professor of English at Marist College in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. Her role is to grow the status of the publication as the journal of record on the history of and innovations in entertainment design, production, and management.

## 2000s

**2000 (15th Cluster Reunion)**  
**Sam Sellers**, aka Rabbi Darkside, has launched Rabbi Darkside Radio ([www.mixcloud.com/RabbiDarkside/playlists/live-the-lesson/](http://www.mixcloud.com/RabbiDarkside/playlists/live-the-lesson/)), featuring weekly mixes recorded live at The Lesson in New York's Lower East Side and posted for streaming on Mixcloud. On Feb. 27, 2016, he also was a co-judge for the Sixth Annual American Human Beatbox Festival at the La Mama Experimental Theatre Club in New York.

**2001 (15th Cluster Reunion)**  
**Rebecca Asch-Kendrick** and Paul Kendrick announced the birth of their first child, a son, Sean Kendrick, Aug. 20, 2015. Maternal aunt and uncle are **Sarah Asch '99** and **Evan Schnell '98**.

**Anna Donovan** and Andy Hameroff announced the birth of their second and third children, first and second daughters, Emma Camille Hameroff and Olivia Claire Hameroff, Jan. 5, 2016.

**2002 (15th Cluster Reunion)**  
**B.J. Bloom** and Sarah O'Halloran announced the birth of their first son, Diarmuid Halloran Bloom, March 18, 2016.

"As of April 2015, I am the environmental and sustainability education program supervisor at the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction for the state of Washington," writes **Rochelle Gandour-Rood**. "It's a mouthful that means I get to support Washington educators in teaching core subjects through an environmental lens."

**2003**  
**Mike Zabel** and Jaclyn "Jackie" Baier were married Aug. 22, 2015. Family who attended included **James Zabel '67** (father), **Mary Kay Tyler Zabel '69** (aunt), **Bob Zabel '69** (uncle), **Marnie Fox Zabel '75** (aunt), **Tom Zabel '92** (brother), and **John Zabel '95** (brother). Also attending were **Carmen Steward Darling**, **Justin Lea**, **Amy Bailey**, **Jeff Zdunek**, all from the class of 2001; **Dan Olson '02**; **Arik Anderson**, **Anthony DiRocco**, **Aaron Kidd**, **Jeff Stone**, all class of 2003; **Naomi Bethel Olson**, **Andrew Borneman**, **Chris Darling**, **Steven Fenigstein**, **Matt Johnson**, **Megan Pluskis**, **Sonia Teas**, **Kai Steenboek**, **Sarah Weiss Steenboek**, all class of 2004; and **Harry "Chip" Seidel IV** and **Andrew Stroup** from the class of 2005.

**2004**  
**Dree Collopy** is now a managing partner of Benach Collopy LLP, a boutique immigration law firm in Washington, D.C. ([www.benachcollopy.com](http://www.benachcollopy.com)).

**Emma Kelty-Stephen** and **Damian Kelty-Stephen** welcomed their first child, a girl, Violet Greear Kelty-Stephen, Jan. 22, 2016. Her first visitors in the hospital were **Andi Tracy '99**, **Paul Chrisman '99**, and **Lorraine Gaynor '04**.

**Lauren Miller Hoye** and **Adam Hoye** welcomed their second child, second boy, Benjamin Thomas Hoye, Feb. 16, 2016. Paternal aunt is **Julie Hoye '09**, and paternal uncle is **Damian von Schoenborn '10**.

**Dr. Nathan A. Jacobson** and Jennifer Jacobson welcomed their second child, a girl, Cheyenne Ceclia Jacobson, Jan. 29, 2016.

## Spreading Joy Through Song

A musician shares music in hospitals and care centers

**Anthony Hyatt '85** never knows what he'll encounter when he opens a door, violin in hand, and enters a room. There can be a critically ill child sitting alone, or a dozen elderly residents staring at a television, or a group of developmentally disabled adults, eagerly waiting. But wherever he goes, Hyatt isn't just the entertainment. The Bethesda, Md.-based musician is a facilitator of joy and creativity, a believer in the power of improvisational music and dance to engage and lift the spirits.

"I could never have written the script for my career path," says Hyatt, who started playing violin at age 8, came to Grinnell as a reluctant — and ultimately unhappy — chemistry major, then switched to music under the guidance of **Kenneth Goldsmith**, artist in residence (violin) with the Mirecourt Trio.

After graduation, Hyatt had a variety of jobs — carpenter, outdoor education teacher, accountant, and landscaper, then worked full time at a violin repair shop. He continued taking violin lessons and jamming with friends and other groups. He also volunteered with a local nonprofit, Arts for the Aging (AFTA), leading a seniors' dance class. Over the years his volunteer work turned into more and more paid jobs in music and creative aging. He has been busy ever since.

For nearly two decades Hyatt has been a teaching artist with AFTA, leading arts programs at dozens of care facilities, from nursing homes to adult day care. He still co-directs the dance company, called Quicksilver; is a MedStar Georgetown University Hospital artist in residence, making bedside music visits in pediatric and cancer

care settings; lectures worldwide on creative aging; and has clients through his own company, Moving Beauty.

Though the 2014 Grinnell Alumni Award winner is a natural in settings that many find uncomfortable, he admits to being nervous when he began visiting critically ill patients.

"You have different ages, cultural backgrounds, different physical conditions, so improvisation and complete presence are essential for a good bedside manner," he says. "I come in and assess the situation — I don't know their diagnosis ahead of time. I show patients my violin and play a song. Sometimes kids want to touch it or play it. And sometimes I go in and just talk to a kid, or their brothers and sisters, who need attention."

It's a path that's made an enormous difference for him and those he's touched. "There was a 4-year-old girl I used to visit every two weeks or so at Georgetown. She was there for months," explains Hyatt. One day a nurse found Hyatt while he was seeing other patients and asked him to come to the little girl's room. He walked in and found her grandparents standing uncomfortably at the edge of the room. "I started playing fiddle tunes, like 'Turkey in the Straw,' and we put the little girl in a bouncy chair because she was enjoying the tunes so much. The grandparents started dancing with the girl and everyone was laughing and having a joyful time."

The grandfather asked Hyatt if he knew some hymns, so he played "What a Friend We Have in Jesus" and "Amazing Grace."



"It was a really beautiful visit. I said goodbye and thanked them for the time we had together, and they thanked me."

Hyatt chokes up as he finishes the story. "I went home and was feeling so good about it," he says. The next morning he learned that the little girl had passed away.

"All I could think about was that because I'd been there, the grandparents will always remember their granddaughter dancing and laughing and having a good time. I think that's tremendously valuable. I was in the right place at the right time and something special happened." 🍷

— Anne Stein '84

**Katharine Lee** graduated from Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N.J., with a Ph.D. in history, May 2016.

**Jeremy “Sequoia” Nagamatsu** has accepted a tenure-track creative writing position at St. Olaf College, Northfield, Minn. He also announces his marriage to Nicolette Bucciaglia. The two will move from Boise, Idaho, to Northfield, Minn., in the summer of 2016.

**2005**

**Elvis Bakaitis** writes, “Just finished a self-published zine called ‘Sally Ride – Lesbo to the Stars!’” They are now working on an oral history of Bluestockings, a New York bookstore and café.

**Dina Chou** and Jim Skoog welcomed their first child, a boy, Fredrik Robert Zhong Skoog, Oct. 14, 2015.

**Anne Salomon** and **Nathaniel Inglis-Steinfeld ’06** were married Oct. 17, 2015, in Chicago. Attending were *Justin Jeffryes, Tawny Lane, Arlie Nuetzel, Panda Prouty*, all from the class of 2003; *Cate Bardelson Blair, Baylis Beard, Adelia Chrysler, Sarah Cornwell, Rebecca Miller, Julia Nierengarten, Lucinda Richard Woodward, Mollie Ruth Shirman*, all class of 2005; *Jan Beukelman, Elizabeth Braverman, Peter Brown, Austin Dean, Emily Hainze, Ben Johannsen, Erik Larson, Brian Lawson, Becky Ohman-Hanson, Rob Pedersen*, all class of 2006; and *Katharine Dean ’10*.

**Archie Tyson** and Chanette Perry were married on Oct. 9, 2015, in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico.

**2006 (10th Reunion)**

**Matt Cleinman** obtained his master’s of information system management from Heinz College at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, December 2015.

**Sarah Desprat-Reed** and Andrew Reed announced the birth of their first child, a son, Nathan Reed, July 29, 2015.

**2007**

**Leslie Turner Bleichner** and Jeffrey Bleichner were married on Jan. 16, 2016, in Grinnell, Iowa. She is assistant dean of students and director of intercultural affairs.

**Katie Hail Jares** completed her Ph.D.

**Nino Parker ’07**

**Nino Parker** and Mae Turley (now Parker) were married in Miami on Nov. 27, 2015, surrounded by family and alumni **Archie Tyson ’05** and **Patrick Ritter ’08**. Both continue to work for the College; she is director of annual giving and he is associate director of alumni and donor relations for regional and special events.



in justice, law, and society at American University, Washington, D.C., December 2015. She has accepted a postdoctorate appointment with the Griffith Institute of Criminology in Brisbane, Australia.

**Alvin Irby**, was featured in a March 3, 2016, CNN article, “Barbershops Place Books in Boys’ Hands.” Irby, founder of Barbershop Books and a former elementary school teacher, has been partnering with barbershops since 2013 to help pair haircuts with childhood literacy. Barbershop Books, a nonprofit organization, is now in 11 barbershops in Harlem and Brooklyn, N.Y., and there are plans to expand to Detroit, Columbia, S.C. and Birmingham, Ala., this year. Organizations and individuals may sponsor a reading space for their local barbershop anywhere in the United States at [www.barbershopbooks.org/sponsor/](http://www.barbershopbooks.org/sponsor/). Irby used two crowdfunding campaigns and foundation grants to fund Barbershop Books. Last year he received a \$25,000 Joseph F. Wall ’41 Service Award from Grinnell College. See the article at <http://cnn.it/1OVkBeE>.

In spring of 2015, **Tyler Ostergaard** accepted a position as assistant professor of art history at University of Wisconsin, Platteville.

**Kate Pecsok Ewert** and Josh Ewert announced the birth of their second child, second son, Frederick Logan Pecsok Ewert, Aug. 22, 2015.

**2008**

**Shiela Lee** and Andrew Chow announced the birth of their child, a daughter, Kayla Lee Chow, March 6, 2015.

**2010S**

**2012**

**Marcus Eagan** was appointed director of Internet of Things security at Luma in Atlanta in January 2016 after Luma acquired Nodal Industries, an internet security company which Eagan co-founded and led as CEO. As a startup, Nodal Industries recently developed its first product, Numa, an in-home intrusion detection system designed to protect the connected home — including smart thermostats, refrigerators, control system, and more.

**Paul Tavarez** was honored April 15, 2016, at the Providence, R.I., New Urban Arts 19th annual fundraising event, where he received the Carole Harman Memorial Award. The award recognizes Tavarez’s achievements as an alum of the organization and member of the board of directors and his continual commitment to keep alumni engaged in the organization. He works with local artists and activists in the queer community, focusing on building supportive communities for queer and trans people of color.

**2015**

**Aamir Walton** and **Robin Campbell ’17** announced the birth of their second child, a boy, Obadiah Clayborn Walton, Jan. 5, 2016. Obadiah joins big sister, Aaliyah. Aamir Walton is assistant director of annual giving at the College.

**Submit your Classnotes to:**  
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**Deadlines:**  
Fall 2016 Issue: July 22, 2016  
Winter 2016 Issue: Oct. 9, 2016

Photo by Justin Hayworth



**2016 Alumni Awards**

10 alumni are recognized for outstanding service, work, and impact on others

Each year several Grinnell alumni are recognized during Reunion for their service, work, and impact on others. Here are the 2016 Alumni Award winners at a glance:

When **Caroline Tollefson Owens ’62** learned about the work that Grinnell College Innovator for Social Justice Prize winner James Kofi Annan does to support survivors of slavery and child labor, she applauded it, and then she helped. She went to Winneba, Ghana, to catalog more than 8,000 books in a newly-built library for 700 students.

Through his community college teaching and advocacy, **David L. Palmer ’62** has helped give many people opportunities to live better lives.

**Susan Scholl Folstein ’66** has done groundbreaking scientific work on autism. After retiring in 2004, she continued to serve as an expert witness in legal cases linked to the inaccurate idea that vaccines cause autism.

**James W. Randall ’66**, an active volunteer for Grinnell for many years, shared his love for Grinnell with his son **Jim ’94**, who became the College’s swim coach. After Jim’s 2003 death in a car accident on the way to a swim meet, James and his wife Janie started a scholarship fund in their son’s name.

For more than 25 years, **David W. Gillcrisp ’81** has helped make New York City a more humane and habitable place for vulnerable seniors through his work with publicly assisted housing.

**Laura Cleveland Shepherd ’82** and **Scott Shepherd ’82** served as class agents for years and have

been longtime volunteers for the Grinnell Regional Admission Support Program (GRASP). Their work on class committees has ensured a remarkable turnout at each of their reunions and strong financial support for the Pioneer Fund.

As a lawyer with the Southern Poverty Law Center, **Daniel A. Werner ’91** recently spearheaded a lawsuit against a shipbuilder for labor trafficking, fraud, and discrimination against Indian workers, resulting in a unanimous jury victory and a \$14 million civil award, the largest of its kind.

Since 2005 when she launched a tiny nonprofit, **Luna Ranjit ’00** has helped improve the lives of the Nepali-speaking and other immigrant communities in New York City by exposing unfair labor practices and becoming a powerful voice for vulnerable populations.

**Mrinalini Watsa ’06** (not pictured) is the recipient of the Pioneer Alumni Award for graduates within the last 10 years. Her research with tiny tamarin monkeys has grown into PrimatesPeru, now known as Field Projects International, which offers multiple international field study opportunities to students.

For more details about award winners’ work and service, see [forum.grinnell.edu/alumni-awards](http://forum.grinnell.edu/alumni-awards). You will also find information about nominating alumni for 2017 awards. 📖

**Elizabeth Tebbens McKee '35**, Appleton, Wis., Feb. 9, 2016. Betty met her husband *Bob McKee '34* while both were students at Grinnell. After graduation they moved to Appleton, where Betty continued to pursue her intellectual, social, and artistic interests. She was proud that all five of her children earned advanced academic degrees. Betty gained certification and began teaching first grade at age 55. She was an active community volunteer and was a nature guide. After her husband's death in 1994, she enjoyed the company of active fellow seniors. "Don't grow old!" was Betty's familiar advice for the young at heart. She was 103.

**Ruthe Edwards Kinnamon '41**, El Cajon, Calif., Feb. 6, 2016. Ruthe graduated from Grinnell with a degree in business administration. After the war she worked in Washington, D.C., then returned to Iowa and married her college sweetheart, *George Kinnamon '39*. The couple moved to California, where Ruthe was administrator of the nuclear division of General Electric in San Jose from 1956 to 1987. After retiring, Ruthe was active in the community of Quail Run and the town of Paso Robles. She was an avid tennis player, enjoyed bridge, and loved the theater and the arts. A spitfire of energy, she was fondly referred to by the family as "Mighty Mouse." Preceded in death by her husband, Ruthe is remembered as a friend and mentor to many.

**William W. Whiting '41**, Owatonna, Minn., Feb. 24, 2016. Bill attended Grinnell and the University of Arizona until his father's death brought him home to manage the Journal-Chronicle Co. in Owatonna. Called into service after Pearl Harbor, he saw

military duty during World War II in Texas, West Virginia, and Guadalcanal. He is a past president of the Owatonna Rotary Club, Owatonna Chamber of Commerce, and Owatonna Country Club. He was a trustee of the Owatonna Foundation and organized the River Trails Girl Scout Council. Bill is remembered as a tireless community leader who helped organize major projects and fundraisers.

**Dean W. Hess '43**, Okoboji, Iowa, Oct. 30, 2015. After graduating from Grinnell, Dean served two years as a flight instructor in the U.S. Army Air Forces. He graduated from University of Iowa Law School and worked for the Hess Law Firm until his retirement in 1989. Dean served on the airport board and Dickinson County (Iowa) Tax Commission. He was a committed community volunteer, belonging to the Lions Club, Masonic Lodge, and Eastern Star, where he was Worthy Grand Patron of the state of Iowa. Dean enjoyed boating, golfing, and traveling and is remembered for his love of family.

**Lucia Carter Taylor '44**, Sarasota, Fla., March 6, 2016. An English-journalism major, Lucia worked on several newspapers as a reporter and columnist before becoming a reporter and TV critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times*. She was a public relations writer for several years in Chicago and Florida until her retirement in 1969. Lucia volunteered for numerous organizations and traveled in Europe and Latin America extensively with her husband.

**Mary McCoy McFadden '47**, Pittsburgh, Feb. 13, 2016. Mary graduated and went to work at Swift and Co., where she met

her first husband, the late Loren Watson. The couple settled in Pittsburgh, where Mary was a docent at Carnegie Museum and a member of several philanthropic organizations. She married her second husband, the late Lee McFadden, 16 years after Loren's death. A class fund director for many years, Mary had a large circle of friends. She is remembered as a dear friend with a big heart.

**Jean Stacy Buldain '48**, Carlsbad, Calif., March 10, 2016. Jean graduated as a French major and became a systems analyst at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia. She was married to retired Col. Louis Buldain, who died in 2000. Jean was a photographer and world traveler as well as a wonderful wife and mother.

**Charles L. Wendorff '48**, Tulsa, Okla., Jan. 22, 2016. Survivors include his wife *Ann Walton '49*. Chuck earned a degree in chemistry at Grinnell after serving as an ASTP American Specialist in World War II. He met Ann at Grinnell; the couple celebrated their 68th anniversary in December 2015. Chuck's 36-year career with Dow Chemical Co. included multiple patents in the development of oil field chemistry. In retirement, he was a master gardener, skilled woodworker, and member of the Tulsa Ship Modelers' Society. His work with the Up With Trees organization included design of its familiar community signage. Chuck valued his relationship with God and his family above all else.

**Stanley R. Barber '49**, Iowa City, Iowa, Jan. 21, 2016. After serving in the Army Air Forces during World War II, Stan and his wife *Corrine Scott Barber '49* attended Grinnell together. Stan earned an economics

degree followed by an M.B.A. at Indiana University. The Barbers moved to Wellman, Iowa, when his family purchased Wellman Savings Bank, and Stan enjoyed his 40-plus years of banking and community service. He was appointed in 1973 by Iowa Gov. Robert Ray to the state's Board of Regents. He taught money and banking as an adjunct professor at the University of Iowa. Stan and Corinne met as lifeguards, and Stan continued his love for swimming throughout life. A swimmer for the Grinnell College team, he later swam in the Iowa Games and the Arizona Senior Olympics.

**Robert P. Bosley '49**, Bellingham, Wash., Jan. 9, 2016. An economics major, Bob served in World War II and succeeded in business. He collected fine wines and pursued a love of sports, stamp collecting, duplicate bridge, and fine dining. Bob met his wife Van at a bridge tournament in British Columbia, and they became life partners, travelling extensively. Bob had a wide circle of friends, with whom he and Van shared many good times.

**Helen Blair Kristl '49**, Warsaw, Ind., Nov. 7, 2015.

**Harriet Friar Otis '50**, Omaha, Neb., March 19, 2016. Harriet loved combining travel and art to connect with people around the world. She was an artist who created drawings and paintings from sketches inspired by her travels and the people she met. Her art studio was her favorite space. Harriet was preceded in death by her husband *Bill Otis '49*, whom she met at Grinnell. Survivors include her three sons and five grandchildren.

**Lionel E. Oberlin '51**, Seattle, Feb. 17, 2016. Lionel started his work

life with a practical bent — he had a tool-and-die apprenticeship with the Hoover Vacuum Co. in Ohio. In 1943, Lionel joined the Navy, trained as an aviation mechanic, and served in the Pacific theatre. After the war he returned to Hoover but then decided to go to Grinnell College, where he majored in psychology. Later, he and his wife Starr developed an interest in antiques and historic home preservation. After moving to Castle Rock, Colo., to be closer to grandchildren, the couple formed the Castle Rock Historical Society and led the effort to establish the Castle Rock Museum. Lionel served as the museum's director from its opening in 1997 to 2007. He was preceded in death by his wife of 65 years and is survived by their three children and three grandchildren.

**Robert G. Risse Jr. '51**, Jamaica Plain, Mass., Aug. 31, 2015.

**Richard G. Tomlinson '51**, Portage, Mich., Jan. 16, 2016. Dick majored in psychology at Grinnell and earned a master's in experimental psychology and statistics in 1952 from the University of Nebraska. He joined the Air Force after graduate school and served until 1956. He worked for Upjohn Co. in Portage, Mich., until he retired in 1994. His passion was volunteerism. He served on many different boards and committees, from the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra to the Kalamazoo Nature Center to Planned Parenthood of Southwest Michigan. He was preceded in death by his wife *Ruth "Posie" Potts Tomlinson '53*.

**John Wills Jr. '51**, Wellesley, Mass., Jan. 20, 2016. John joined the U.S. Army and served in the Korean War. He retired from ownership

of Sterling Building Materials in Waltham, Mass.

**Joan Moede Brown '52**, Prior Lake, Minn., Feb. 15, 2016. Joanie majored in speech and language pathology at Grinnell and followed that up with a master's from the University of Minnesota before beginning her long career in education. She taught two years in Portland, Ore., and from 1956 to 1991 in Minneapolis. Joanie met *Charles C. Brown '53* at Grinnell and knew he'd be the love of her life. He preceded her in death. She is survived by two children and six grandchildren.

**Judith Anne Helfrich Hased '52**, Westcliffe, Colo., Jan. 10, 2016. Judith's childhood dream was to own a horse. Although no one in her family was familiar with horses and her family lived in the city, Judith saved her own money and bought a horse that she took to Grinnell College her freshman year, riding with him in a cattle truck. Judith was only 32 when her husband James died, leaving her with four children, ages 4 to 9, in an era when single motherhood was much less common. She worked various jobs to support her children, including several years as a school secretary and later as a bookkeeper. For many years she developed a Rottweiler breeding program. She also became an avid quilter and had her work published in *Leisure Arts* instructional magazines and books. Survivors include her daughter *Elizabeth Anne Hased Laue '75*.

**George A. Lane '52**, Midland, Mich., Jan. 9, 2016. George majored in chemistry and went on to earn a doctorate in physical chemistry at Northwestern University. He worked at Dow Chemical Co. from 1955 to 1992. He held more than 150

patents. George was a dedicated environmentalist and a charter member of the Leon P. Martuch Chapter of Trout Unlimited, Midland, Mich. He was also keenly interested in education. To assist Grinnell students who are interested in the biological, chemical, or physical sciences, George established the Lane Family Scholarship in 2005. His grandmother *Lillian McCulloch Lane 1902* graduated from the Grinnell Academy with her teaching certificate. His parents, *George Lane '27* and *Clarinda Murphy Lane '28*, met at Grinnell. George also met his wife *Patricia Anne Graves Lane '52* at Grinnell. She preceded him in death.

**Sylvia Millerd Brammer '52**, Littleton, Colo., Feb. 1, 2016. Sylvia earned her bachelor's in education at Grinnell and a master's in 1968 from the University of Iowa. Survivors include her daughter, *Cynthia Brammer Maricle '75*.

**Donald W. Young '52**, Bloomington, Ill., Aug. 17, 2015. Don was an entrepreneur who owned the Mrs. America pageant for five years. He traveled the world, loved to cycle, and made friends everywhere he went.

**Carl F. Couve '54**, Rolling Meadows, Ill., March 7, 2016. Carl served as mayor of Rolling Meadows from 1991–1995, after serving for more than a decade on several city commissions and boards. A veteran of the U.S. Air Force, Carl served as a pilot, attaining the rank of first lieutenant. Survivors include his spouse, *Barbara Scott Couve '55*.

**Mary Ann Langness Paul '54**, Mandan, N.D., March 8, 2016. She is survived by her spouse Jack and two sons.

**David Nicholas Ryan '55**, Grinnell, Iowa, April 1, 2016. Inducted into

the College's Athletics Hall of Fame, Nick was co-captain of the football team and first-team All Midwest Conference. He also broke Grinnell's rushing yardage records for a single game, season, and career. After serving a tour in the U.S. Navy Air Corps as an aircraft carrier-qualified naval aviator, he returned to the College to work from 1959 to 1978, eventually as dean of admission and financial aid and later director of admission. He retired as University of Iowa's assistant director of financial aid, where he worked from 1978 to 1990. His survivors include three children and five grandchildren. Memorials may be made to the Nick Ryan Scholarship Fund at Grinnell College. A memorial service and celebration of his life will be held June 25 at Herrick Chapel on campus.

**Mary Norelius Sander '55**, Longmont, Colo., Jan. 29, 2016. She served as a class agent for more than 60 years. Survivors include her son, William; and nieces, *Kristine Norelius '80* and *Juli Nelson*. Preceding her in death were her brother, *William Norelius '50*; and parents *Everett '23* and *Lucile Quinn Norelius '26*.

**Jean Wood Anderson '55**, Pensacola, Fla., Feb. 7, 2016.

**Gwendolyn Meinershagen Decker '56**, Lincoln, Neb., Nov. 24, 2015. She is survived by her spouse Lowell; four daughters; and her sister, *Marilyn Meinershagen Hecht '55*.

**Mary Sindt Lounsbury '57**, Gallatin, Mo., July 26, 2015. She is survived by her husband Robert, four children, 14 grandchildren, and 19 great-grandchildren.

**John J. Condon '58**, New York, N.Y., Nov. 29, 2015. Survivors include his sister, *Barbara Condon*

*Heckman '53*.

**Ralph C. Cernohouz '59**, Willow Springs, Ill., Jan. 19, 2016. Survivors include his wife *Dianne Stevenson '59*, two daughters, a brother, six grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter.

**Gale Horton Dukes '60**, Hillsboro, Ohio, Feb. 4, 2016. Survivors include her husband *Lawrence Dukes '59*, four children, and nine grandchildren.

**Harvey W. Huxol Jr. '61**, Hondo, Texas, Dec. 17, 2015. In his youth, Harvey liked to race his Packard straight 8 1940 Olds ragtop. The aircraft salesman and pilot also enjoyed boating. Survivors include his two sons.

**William B. Patton '61**, West Des Moines, Iowa, April 5, 2016.

**Martin H. Weltman '61**, Edina, Minn., Feb. 2, 2016.

**Senn R. Brown '62**, Madison, Wis., Nov. 17, 2015. While a student at Grinnell, Senn spent his summers working on fishing boats in Alaska and Ontario. His experiences in the wilderness of these regions convinced him to move to Seattle after his second year to work for *The Seattle Times* for nine months before returning to Grinnell to finish his degree. After graduating, Senn moved permanently to Wisconsin and began working for the Wisconsin Association of School Boards. After 35 years there, he retired and turned his attention to state and national educational reform initiatives. He co-founded the Wisconsin Charter Schools Association in 1999 and co-founded the Green Charter Schools Network in 2007 to combine his passion for educational reform and environmental stewardship. Senn was a great lover of the outdoors but was just as much a lover of

meeting new people and forming lasting friendships. He is survived by Kathleen, his wife of 46 years; two children; and his granddaughter, nieces, and nephews.

**Marilyn Alt Scholl '64**, Deerfield, Ill., Feb. 18, 2016. Marilyn was founder and chairman of Scholl Communications; she earlier worked from 1971 until 1982 in the College's Office of Admission. She remained active in college admissions professional associations for many years. Survivors include her brother, *James Alt '73*; and sister in-law, *Deborah McKnight '73*.

**Neal M. Blacker '65**, Seattle, Dec. 28, 2015. Neal had a long and distinguished career in the field of domestic and international alternative dispute resolution (ADR). He became regional director and vice president of the American Arbitration Association in 1974, then transitioned to positions with Los Angeles County Bar Association Dispute Resolution Services, California State Bar ADR Committee (and its International ADR Subcommittee), and others before working as the senior vice president of dispute resolution services for the CPR Institute of Dispute Resolution until retiring in 2007. He was also a member of the U.S. Agency for International Development's consultant team 2002–2005, during which time he was responsible for implementing Croatia's first national business mediation program. He is survived by his wife Neil and two stepdaughters.

**William C. Colbert '66**, St. Louis, Jan. 29, 2016. Bill was an economics major at Grinnell and earned an M.B.A. from Washington University in 1968. During the Vietnam War, he served as a military intelligence specialist in the 2nd Squadron of

the 1st Armored Cavalry Regiment of the U.S. Army, earning a Purple Heart and Bronze Star for his service. Following his discharge, Bill began a career as a banking financial analyst, retiring in 1993, when he turned his attention to advocating for social justice through several churches and the Eastern Missouri Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. In 2005, he embarked on a new adventure, living on his family's ancestral farm in Creston, Iowa, but returned to St. Louis in 2009 because of health problems and lived the final years of his life at a retirement community there. He passed away peacefully surrounded by family. Survivors include his brother, *Larry Colbert '61*; and nephew, *Trent Colbert '88*. His mother was the late *Lydia McDaniel Colbert '33*.

**Mary V. Damsgaard '74**, San Antonio, Feb. 22, 2016. After graduating from Grinnell College, Mary earned an M.B.A. from the University of Texas at San Antonio and an R.N. from San Antonio College. She worked her way up from an entry-level position at United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County to several vice president positions. Mary was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive form of cervical cancer, which she fought fiercely until her treatment options ran out.

**Kathleen S. George '77**, Omaha, Neb., Feb. 1, 2016.

**T. Duffer Schultz '81**, Minneapolis, Feb. 13, 2016. Survivors include his wife *Rebecca Jenkins Schultz '82*.

**Miriam B. Pillos '86**, Midland, Mich., March 26, 2016. Born in the Philippines, Miriam moved with her family in 1970 to Hawaii, where she spent the remainder of her childhood. After a year at the

University of Hawaii, she transferred to Grinnell and graduated with a degree in biology. At Grinnell, she won the NOAA Junior Fellowship with the National Marine Fisheries Service and spent many summers working on sea turtle and Hawaiian monk seal recovery in the outer Hawaiian Islands. She met her future husband *Steven Kaganove '85* while at Grinnell, and they moved together to Los Angeles after graduating, marrying in 1992. Miriam loved the outdoors and had a passion for dance, especially ballet. After studying ballet for several years at the Stanley Holden Dance Studio, she taught ballet for 15 years. Survivors include her spouse and her two children.

**Christopher D. Doemel '94**, Okemos, Mich., March 9, 2016. Grinnell classmates knew Chris for his capacities as a musician, residential adviser, friend, and juggler. After graduating, he worked for Macalester College, Apple Computers, Keynote, and Dynatrace in various Web development positions.

**Ragnar Thorisson '11**, Seattle, Feb. 12, 2016. In 2003, Ragnar was diagnosed with AML leukemia, a rare form of blood cancer. Throughout his illness, Ragnar maintained an outstanding sense of humor and compassion, and inspired many people throughout the country with an online journal of his experiences and insights. While on campus, Ragnar was an active, thoughtful, and respectful leader in the Grinnell community. In addition to completing an internship with the Gay-Straight Alliance, Ragnar also served as programming coordinator for the Stonewall Resource Center and was a student leader in campus organizations such as A Just Grinnell and the Stonewall

Coalition. He was instrumental in the writing and passing of the Hate Crimes and Bias-Motivated Incidents Response and Protocols. Ragnar received the Judith Louise McKim Sociology Award and the President's Medal. He is survived by his partner, *Alyssa Penner '10*.

**Errata**

Two errors were made in the "In Memoriam" department of the Spring 2016 issue.

The obituary for **Sujeev Wickramasekara**, Page 46, incorrectly listed his title. He was a full professor of physics, not an associate professor. **Jacob Willig-Onwuachi '95**, associate professor of physics, writes: "It is worth noting that he was promoted to full professor faster than anyone in recent memory, which is a testament to his productivity as a scholar and impact in the classroom."

In the same issue, on Page 44, the year of death for **Robert G. Crumpton '57** was incorrectly listed as 2016. He died in Beaverton, Ore., Oct. 6, 2015.

*The Grinnell Magazine* regrets the errors.

**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 **Jayn Chaney '05**.



**Victor S. Verrette**, professor emeritus of French, died in Grinnell on April 18, 2016, at the age of 84. During Vic's more than 40 years at Grinnell College, his love of the French language and Francophone culture enriched the campus and the lives of countless students.

Vic's most dramatic impact on Grinnell College may have been in 1974, when he and Doug Caulkins (then instructor of anthropology) created the Grinnell-in-London program. Vic's enterprise and perseverance brought the dream to reality. He created a miniature version of Grinnell in London, using the museums, libraries, theatres, and countryside of Great Britain to teach courses ranging from literature to theatre to history.

Vic is survived by his wife Sallie and his children, **Charles Verrette, Claire Verrette Mathias '86**, and **Paul Verrette '94**.

**Tributes to Monsieur Verrette**

Professor Verrette was energetic, kind, and above all, patient with a young woman who may not have always been his most serious student. After graduation I remained in Grinnell, marrying and starting a family. Through the years Vic became part of the fabric of my community; we swam in neighboring lanes in the PEC pool and joked at the coffee shop. He was one of those Grinnellians I was always happy to run into around town. I thought highly of Vic, and I will miss him.

– **Sarah Parrish Hamilton '91**, Grinnell, Iowa

Back in the early 1970s I took several courses with Vic Verrette, beginning with a freshman seminar, War and the Novel, and ending with an independent study my senior year, Literature and Existentialism. I always enjoyed the widely varied reading and broad-ranging discussions. He was Grinnell's existentialist, though he wore his philosophy lightly, and never dogmatically, in the classroom. By the time I graduated, we were as much friends as professor and student, and we kept in touch over the years. I'll miss not being able to visit him during class reunion gatherings, to sit and let the conversation wander where it may, as it always did with Vic.

– **Michael Wreen '74**, De Pere, Wis.

Victor Verrette was my major adviser and became a stand-in father figure when I was a freshman away from home, emotionally immature, socially timid, and not prepared to start this new phase of life. His patience, kindness, and optimism about my future bolstered my confidence in my own ability to succeed at Grinnell and beyond. Although I didn't become a French teacher, as he advised, I am still an avid Francophile, reading and speaking with fair fluency. Now working in higher education myself, I remember how essential a single professor can be to the unworldly students who appear in our classes; Vic Verrette made a difference in my life and in many students' lives. Bon voyage and merci, Professeur!

– **Karen Jensen '86**, Fairbanks, Alaska

From our first meeting during a brief job interview at the Modern Language Association convention in 1976 to my arrival as a faculty member in the French department in 1977, Vic's energy and vision for the future of the French department were unmistakable, as was his commitment first and foremost to students. A progressive thinker and tireless engagé, Vic was always devising ways to involve and engage students, bringing them together both formally and informally as learners and fellow travelers. As a new faculty member, I was thrilled to share in that vision as colleague and full collaborator from my very first days on campus.

Vic inspired our work together on the 101-102 curriculum with the early use of film and Sartre's *Les Jeux sont faits* in French 102, along with training advanced students of French to lead weekly practice sessions for beginning students and the adoption of the groundbreaking method of French in Action based on a playful video story filmed in France. He embraced the value of interdisciplinary study and played a key role in the Western European studies concentration.

Clearly, Vic's most passionate commitment was to enlarging and enhancing study-abroad opportunities. After helping establish Grinnell-in-London, Vic launched Grinnell in France, a study-abroad semester in Tours beginning in 1980. Well before Global Grinnell, Vic stood at the forefront of promoting study and travel abroad for all students, regardless of their major. Mission accomplished!

At a time when technology was off the radar screen at Grinnell, Vic argued for its importance as essential to the study of language, literature, and culture. He experimented with computer-assisted instruction and insisted that Grinnell needed a state-of-the-art language laboratory and media collection, including an audiovisual classroom space in ARH that was used by the entire campus. He even directed the lab in its early days of operation.

Beyond the important contributions that Vic clearly made to the French department and the College, I most valued his personal generosity of time and energy. In his office, at French Table, abroad, in his garden, or in his home, Vic never said "no" to welcoming others. He and Sallie opened their dining room and backyard to countless student gatherings, pre-departure and returning-student orientation meetings, departmental picnics, French assistants, visiting guests, etc. I will always remember the rabbit pâté that resulted from one of Vic's hunting outings; it was the centerpiece of a dinner that we hosted for three large sections of French 101. How many first-year language students could say they sampled rabbit pâté served by their profs? In ways too numerous to mention, the seeds sown by Vic's tireless efforts over the years have led to what my new colleagues in the French and Arabic department have brought into full bloom.

Merci pour tout, Vic!

– **Jan Gross**, Seth Richards Professor in Modern Languages, professor of French (senior faculty status)

Thank you, Victor Verrette, for your study-abroad leadership at Grinnell College. I was a participant on the Grinnell/Beloit program to Rennes, France during my junior year, and Monsieur Verrette was the faculty leader that spring semester of 1991. I fondly remember our once-in-a-lifetime excursions to places like the World War II memorials at the Normandy beaches, organized by Victor Verrette. He even drove the van! Thank you for instilling in me a lifelong love of travel and culture, especially all things French!

– **Maria Pikuleff Myers '92**, Waukesha, Wis.

Dr. Verrette taught me French more than 45 years ago. In doing so, he helped prepare me for a junior year abroad in Besançon, France. It was one of the most important years of my life. I returned a much more confident, mature young woman with a lifelong love for international travel and languages. During my senior year, I got to work with him one on one in a self-designed seminar on French poetry (a topic I now cannot believe I could ever discuss). He was such a gentle, kind, patient, scholarly man that I have never forgotten him.

– **Dr. Margaret Schottstaedt '71**, Gladewater, Texas

## From Secular to Chassidic Judaism A Grinnellian's transformation

Becoming a Chassidic observant Jew was the furthest thing from my game plan as a free-spirited, liberal-minded Grinnellian back in the '80s. I loved walking barefoot around campus, diving deep into philosophical discussions at the Forum, and hanging out underground at the Pub Friday nights. Here, in the middle of the vast cornfields of Iowa, lay fertile ground for an adventurous and meaningful life. Meeting people from across the globe, taking classes about any and every subject under the sun, and having professors who cared to give time and attention to each student was such a gift. My young mind opened to questions and controversies, always focused on making the world a better place.

After graduating, I moved to Berkeley, Calif., where I received a letter (life before the Internet) from my College boyfriend, **David Feldman '90**, who was visiting Israel. He spoke about miracles, G-d, eating kosher, and learning from ancient texts. My once-partner in liberal-secularism had taken an unexpected detour — he was embracing religious Judaism.

Since I had never heard of a secular Jew becoming an observant Jew, I brought the letter to a rabbi that I found in the Yellow Pages. He told me that David was in a cult and advised that I go to Israel and get him out, as he was being brainwashed. Wow. That threw me for a loop — hopefully it wasn't too late.

I boarded a plane for Israel, armed with a slew of antireligious books, feminist books, evolution books — whatever I could read and carry, I brought. When I met up with David, he already wore the traditional knotted fringes (*tzitzits*), covered his head with a *kippa* (*yarmulke*), and donned black boxes called *tefillin* every day. He was learning traditional Judaism based on an educational movement started by the Lubavitcher Rebbe to increase Judaic knowledge and practice among Jews worldwide.

Upon lengthy discussions with David, I realized that it was not a cult that he was following, but the ways of his ancestors, a tradition of strict laws carried down for centuries.

I enrolled in classes myself and spent my days and nights learning and arguing the authenticity of the Torah (Old Testament) with my teachers, rabbis and rebbetzins — as female teachers are called. My experience at Grinnell taught me how to meet intellectual challenges head on, with courage and open-mindedness. While the concepts were foreign to me as a secular-minded individual, I was open enough to explore the possibilities of this significant spiritual reality. It was such a paradigm shift that it was a several-year transformative journey.

Today, David and I are married and living in Chicago as committed Lubavitch Chassidim (a mystically minded form of traditional Judaism). As much as this faith-based, traditional path differs from the liberal path that I walked at Grinnell, I still consider myself a Grinnellian. I lead an adventurous life raising six children and engage in deep, philosophical discussions around our guest-laden Sabbath meals. Although I'm not dressed in the same clothes that I wore on campus, preferring a head covering and modest clothes instead, my Grinnell values have never waned. From Grinnell I learned the importance of making the world a better place, doing acts of kindness, and living life true to one's values. These core traits I carry with me on my journey through life. 🌱



**Meryl Cook Feldman '88** leads an adventurous life as a wife, mother, mind-body life coach, writer, artist, and speaker. She manages Blossom Within Coaching: [blossomwithincoaching.com](http://blossomwithincoaching.com).

# That's So Grinnellian

Photo by Justin Hayworth





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## Iowa View

Photo by Justin Hayworth

Reflections on the glass outside  
the Joe Rosenfield '25 Center

