Mission: Outcomes
Veteran Alumni Make Columbia Proud

Dr. Trevor Dixon
’99PBPM
Rises Up and Gives Back
THE OWL
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Letter from the Dean

GS itself has experienced its own transformation. For more than a decade we have worked to revolutionize the student experience from that of a commuter, coming to campus to take one or two classes a week, to one that allows for full integration in the Columbia community. This academic year, 75 percent of our students attend full time, compared to just 54 percent in 2005-2006. For more than a decade, we have addressed everything from our financial aid model to extracurricular activities, while also overhauling our financial aid model and significantly increasing the availability of University housing. Additionally, the Office of the Dean of Students has worked tirelessly to create a cohesive student community. In 2015, a nontraditional student’s experience is one where he or she has significant resources available in order to succeed and thrive at Columbia and beyond.

The articles on the following pages highlight the extraordinary accomplishments of members of our community. I have no doubt that many of you will relate to the transformative power of a Columbia education cited throughout this issue. I am inspired by the paths of recent alumni, featured in the issue’s cover story (page 10), who are also U.S. military veterans—what they have accomplished as students, and now, as alumni. Furthermore, learning about the successes of Allison Fillmore Magliocco ’97 (page 17), Elaine Hochberg ’82 (page 30), and Trevor Dixon ’99BPBM (page 31) further confirms the power of our mission.

As a publication and, more importantly, as a college, we have accomplished much. We have more work to do; however, I think it is important to take a moment to recognize the results of our transformation and how it has, and will continue to, foster personal triumphs for generations of GSers.

With warmest regards,

Peter J. Awn, Dean
After new arrivals signed and picked up their goody-bags in Low Rotunda, this fall’s School of General Studies New Student Orientation welcome assembly was held on Low Plaza. Columbia University President Lee C. Bollinger welcomed 471 new matriculants saying, “We are all with you. We all want to be GS students.”

Six GS students—out of an overall group of eight from Columbia University—received summer 2015 scholarships from the Gilman International Scholarship Program, a program that gives undergraduates with limited financial resources grants to study or intern abroad. The six GS recipients were chosen from a pool of more than 6,300 applicants nationwide. GS students Wooyoung Lee (Jordan), Theodore Nelson (China), Sang Ri (South Korea), Justin Restivo (China), Kyung won Grace Beck (South Korea), and Sean Piekarski (Germany) were offered awards ranging from $2,500-$8,000 to study or intern abroad.

GS student veteran and political science-international relations major Nate Smith was selected as a 2015 Tillman Military Scholar by the Pat Tillman Foundation. The Tillman Military Scholars program supports veterans from all branches of the military by providing scholarships that cover educational costs as well as other needs like housing and child care. Smith enlisted in the Marines after the 9/11 attacks and served with the U.S. Marine Corps for nine years.

Cody Wiles, a Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African Studies major, won the prestigious FLAS (Foreign Language and Area Studies) fellowship to study abroad in spring 2015 at SOAS, University of London, one of the world’s preeminent institutions for the study of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Meanwhile, Andrew Christian won a full-year FLAS to study Mandarin at Columbia for the 2015-16 academic year.

Preserving culture, improving education, increasing scientific collaboration

After winning the highly competitive U.S. Department of State European Institute Undergraduate Summer Fellowship, Catherine Marris spent summer 2015 as an intern at the U.S. Mission to UNESCO in Paris.

Student-veteran Kristoffer Goldsmith, an active member of the Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans of America, was instrumental in convincing federal lawmakers to pass the Clay Hunt Suicide Prevention for American Veterans Act last February. According to Newsday, the Belleville, N.J., native, and the paper’s student writer worked with U.S. Senator Kristen Gillibrand to convince lawmakers that providing suicide-prevention resources will help potential victims to overcome their trauma and lead productive lives.

17 GS students, out of 50 Columbia undergraduates overall, were chosen to participate in a fully funded, Columbia University-Japan study tour in May. This one-time opportunity, supported by a grant from the Japanese government, was established when Prime Minister Shinzo Abe of Japan came to Columbia in fall 2014. During the 10-day tour, students engaged in lectures, sightseeing, and cross-cultural experiences.

Political science major Arden Walentowski is a 2015-16 Presidential Fellow at the Center for the Study of Congress and the Presidency in Washington, D.C. She was also the 2015 recipient of the Phyllis Stevens Sharp Fellowship for Political Science Research.

The Postbaccalaureate Pre-Nursing Program—Columbia College of Physicians and Surgeons (P&S) linkage program reached a milestone this past spring. A Ph.D. student veteran and member of the 50th linkage student at P&S since the agreement was established five years ago. One of 13 linkage programs through which Columbia’s Postbac Premed Program students can forgo the traditional application year, P&S is by far the largest we have in terms of students who apply and who are accepted each year,” says Senior Associate Dean of Academic Affairs Victoria Rosner.

Rosner attributes this success to the great fit with the Postbac Premed Program student profile, saying, “We recruit students with life experience, students with a strong sense of personal commitment to the practice of medicine, students who are interested in working with underserved populations, and those are exactly the kind of students that P&S is interested in recruiting.

One such student is Emma Marquez ’15P/PM. While an undergraduate at the linkage of Chemeketa Community College and Columbia in Eugene, Marquez designed her own women’s health research project. After graduation, she went on to work for an NGO doing cervical cancer research, and is now a medical student at the Columbia Medical Center. She says, “I love the hospital. I love the staff. I loved the patient population. When it came time to apply through linkage, there was no question.” There was no question, either, for Reuben Heyman-Kantor ’15P/PM, a former associate producer for 60Minutes, who left journalism for medicine to make a direct impact on people’s lives. Heyman-Kantor says P&S’s commitment to the underserved was inspiring and is evident in its choice of Dr. Stephen Nicholas for Associate Dean of Admissions. A generalist devoted to the care of HIV-infected children, Nicholas was a strong advocate for the medically underserved in Harlem and Washington Heights. “Putting a man like that in charge of admissions says a lot about the type of doctors they want to produce,” says Heyman-Kantor.

Rosner says another draw to P&S is its belief that doctors should be well-rounded individuals, which is made possible through a “really robust extracurricular organization, the P&S Club.” The Club is an array of over 70 activities—from sports teams and professional groups to theater and cultural programs. Caine Tobias ’12P/PM, who entered P&S through the linkage program and will graduate in 2016 says, “P&S focuses on you as an individual, not just on your GPA.” Tobias has been active in the Band Hall Players and MCJA, the Medical College Jewish Association. She admitted she is loose to leave P&S and said the school “gave me the opportunity to do other things and build a community here.”

The fact that students like Tobias are happy socially and academically at P&S is certainly no accident. The Premed Program’s strength lies in its advisors’ astuteness about P&S’s requirements ensure the Columbia P&S linkage program will continue to deliver successful outcomes for Postbac student applicants. Rosner explains the Postbac Premed Program’s commitment: “We worked really closely with Pace for a number of years to develop a ‘good fit’ for the kind of students they are looking to recruit so that we can advise our students who would be a good match.”

“Students created profound, moving work for the Arts Option of the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative (artsop. Columbia.edu). They talked about the ways that thinking and acting creatively about the issue of sexual violence on campus opened up new room for them to reflect on their own experiences—as survivors, bystanders, supporters—through dance, visual art, poetry, and other mediums.”

Suzanne B. Goldberg, Executive Vice President for University Life Discussing a project introduced to prompt conversations as part of the Sexual Respect and Community Citizenship Initiative.

In March, The New York Times featured retired N.B.A. Golden State Warriors forward Troy Murphy, now a sociology major at GS. The piece detailed Murphy’s journey towards earning his bachelor’s degree.

Columbia P&S Linkage Program Draws More Postbac Students

By Nancy J. Brandwein

GS students Maya Bogulwa ’15 and Carmen Erin ’15 were awarded Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHFTR) Fellowships by ICAAP at Columbia University. The MHFTR Fellowship consisted of a fully funded, 11-week, summer research training program, two weeks of which were spent in New York City followed by eight weeks in Belgium assisting with a research study that explored models of HIV care.

Global Justice

Serenata Mackool ’15 spent spring 2015 as a Regional Programs Intern at the New York office of the Coalition for International Criminal Court. Her position required her to attend relevant meetings at the United Nations on behalf of the organization.
In May, 27 students graduated as the inaugural class of the Dual BA Program between Columbia University and Sciences Po. This joint-degree program enables students to experience a truly international education: undergraduates in the Program study for two years at the French university Sciences Po and then matriculate at Columbia School of General Studies where they complete their two degrees. Jessica Sarles-Dinsick, Senior Assistant Dean of International Programs, says 63 first-year students enrolled in fall 2015, a testament to the Program’s growing reputation.

After a rigorous admissions process, the class of 2015 enrolled in fall 2011 at Sciences Po and studied the social sciences. Students chose to matriculate at one of three campuses—Reims, Menton, or Le Havre, each of which specializes in a region of the world: the Middle East and Mediterranean at Menton; Asia at Le Havre; France. In addition to participating in moot court competitions, Basuljevic revelled in the intimate international community of exceptional students in his Reims campus, even participating in student government. As director of nightlife he spent his weekends in Reims, developing relationships with bars and clubs, organizing the intercollegiate college program, and, of course, perfecting his French.

Now with degrees in social sciences/law from Sciences Po and financial economics from General Studies, Basuljevic heads to Singapore as a private equity investment associate. "I had never studied the social sciences. All my education was in engineering. In terms of broadening horizons, this is what the Dual BA program offers, expanding your horizons and developing project management skills," he says. "The Dual BA came out of nowhere as the perfect fit that allowed me to do all those things."

"What is going to differentiate me down the line?" so he took up the challenge of the Dual BA Program, both to stand out upon graduation and to study an undergraduate degree in France. In addition to participating in moot court competitions, Basuljevic revelled in the intimate international community of exceptional students in his Reims campus, even participating in student government. As director of nightlife he spent his weekends in Reims, developing relationships with bars and clubs, organizing the intercollegiate college program, and, of course, perfecting his French.

In her years of shaping and growing the Dual BA Program, Sarles-Dinsick says she has learned "how philosophically aligned Sciences Po and Columbia are," which points to the "kinds of students we’re looking for, students who want to learn as much as they can about the world around them."

Close friends and Dual BA grads Adam Basuljevic ’15 and Anton Bengt Fredriksson ’15 are two such students. Originally from New York, Basuljevic radiates purpose and drive. Having been admitted into several lives, he thought, “What is going to differentiate me down the line?” so he took up the challenge of the Dual BA Program, both to stand out upon graduation and to study an undergraduate degree in France. In addition to participating in moot court competitions, Basuljevic revelled in the intimate international community of exceptional students in his Reims campus, even participating in student government. As director of nightlife he spent his weekends in Reims, developing relationships with bars and clubs, organizing the intercollegiate college program, and, of course, perfecting his French.

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“Perfect fit and international pedigree notwithstanding, Fredriksson’s admission to Sciences Po came as a “…real shock,” he says. “I was absolutely impressed, intimidated. I had never studied the social sciences. All the other universities I was accepted to were for civil engineering. In terms of broadening horizons, this is what the Dual BA program offers, expanding your horizons and developing project management skills,” he says. “The Dual BA came out of nowhere as the perfect fit that allowed me to do all those things.”

“Why are we nontraditional students?” were questions that dogged him when he began the program. “What we’ve found,” he says, “is that … GS is about more than teaching older students. It is pretty much the only school in the United States that has a nontraditional students program. It is the only school that has a nontraditional students program.”

Now both graduates are involved in starting the first-ever alumni network for the Dual BA graduates, and Fredriksson raises an interesting point as he looks back upon his experience. “Why General Studies?” and “Why are we nontraditional students?” were questions that dogged him when he began the program. “What we’ve found,” he says, “is that … GS is about more than teaching older students. It is pretty much the only school in the United States that has a nontraditional students program. It is the only school that has a nontraditional students program.”

"The Dual BA gives your Columbia University degree extra cachet." —Anton Bengt Fredriksson, ’15

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Lizzie Valverde ’15: Embracing the Beauty of Things Outside of Her Control

By Allison Scola

Even as a child, Lizzie Valverde fiercely sought excellence. She wrote her first poems at four years old, and by first grade she had found her first chapbook. With such conviction, her childhood dream to become a poet “when she grew up” seemed promising, yet somewhere along the way, well-meaning advisors dissuaded her, suggesting poetry to be a wonderful hobby, but not a viable career path. As a teenager, Valverde gravitated towards fine arts, and after spending a year as an exchange student in Peru, she withdrew from high school, obtained a GED, and dedicated herself to preparing a stellar portfolio to gain admission to art school.

Like the enthusiastic child poet she once was, the young artist threw herself into her work. She gained admission to the School of Visual Arts in New York, yet after one semester, Valverde concluded that she did not have the distinct talent required to build a life as a professional sculptor—she aimed to be extraordinary at whatever it was she set out to do, and art did not fulfill that charge. Soon afterwards, she matriculated at Loyola University Maryland to study public relations; however, her lack of sincere interest for the subject was not an obstacle. After six months while Estela grew physically stronger, mother and infant were medicinally quarantined to a single room in their home. “It sounds claustrophobic, but it was actually so beautiful and incredibly healing. Each of us grew stronger, entirely because of the other,” Valverde described.

Estela’s harrowing beginnings inspired Valverde to seek clearer direction for her life. At first, that took in the form of LuLu’s Amorese, a whimsical boutique featuring children’s apparel that Valverde co-owned with her mother. Later, the inspiration manifested itself in an application to Columbia University School of General Studies. “I wanted to make Estela proud,” Valverde stated, “to be the type of woman she might draw from when she grows up and begins to make her own life choices. For me, this meant righting a great regret of my life: pursuing my childhood dream of being a poet.”

While preparing her GS application, managing the store, and raising Estella, Valverde’s curiosity about her biological parents grew. She researched her adoption history, learning that she now deceased, and her birth mother, whom, just prior to applying to Columbia, she successfully contacted. Valverde had mixed feelings about connecting with her birth mother, whom, just prior to applying to Columbia, she successfully contacted. Valverde said. “On the first day, and one hour before the class, I was on SSOL [the online, student registration system] hoping a spot would open. I repeatedly pressed the Register button. Suddenly, a spot opened up and my registration went through. There was no time to look back or think it over!” Valverde, who lives an hour by car from campus in Hillsdale, N.J., “the first six months of life” to get to the class to guarantee her spot. When she arrived, there was a line out the door.

“I happened to sit across the table from Katy [Olson], who I recognized from the reading,” Valverde said. As at the start of many courses, students were invited to introduce themselves and explain their interests in taking the course. As Olson listened to Valverde’s introduction, something clicked. Immediately after class, she grabbed Valverde and pumped her with a series of “This is Your Life” questions. After a few minutes, the puzzle pieces of both of their infant adoptions fell together, and the two deduced that they shared the same birth mother. It was astounding. “So much changed in that one moment,” recalled Valverde.

Together Valverde and Olson, who graduated from GS in 2014 and is currently a student in Columbia’s MFA Creative Writing Program, embarked on a journey of discovery. Over the subsequent weeks and months, they waded through the “awkward, funny, beautiful, painful, and miraculous moments” that grow out of such a stupefying revelation. This past May, Valverde and Olson’s remarkable discovery was featured in The New York Times. On Class Day, the two were reunited with their biological mother in front of an international press corps. It was a thrilling few days. Although not named validatorian, Valverde graduated at the top of her class and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. This fall, with her childhood dream of being a poet in sharp focus, she matriculated at New York University’s MFA program in creative writing. Most exciting perhaps is that she recently contracted with William Morris Literary agency to share her story—one of learning to embrace things out of one’s control and the beauty that brings to life.

“As had been her practice since childhood, while at GS Lizzie Valverde strove for excellence—but this time, with invaluable support from family, mentoring by outstanding faculty and academic advisors, and significant scholarship support, she found her sweet spot.”
Six years after the inauguration of the Yellow Ribbon Program, GS’s veteran alumni continue to make Columbia proud.

Mission: Outcomes

As the locus of the transition between military service and civilian life, GS marks a crucial period in the lives of veterans.

W hile veterans have been drawn to the School of General Studies ever since its founding in the wake of World War II, in the 21st century a new generation of veterans has arrived at Columbia in significant numbers. And though these veterans have had a major impact on campus, from providing an important voice in classroom discussions to advocating for new policies, what’s even more impressive is what they have gone on to do next.

In 2002, the veteran community began to coalesce when GS students founded the U.S. Military Veterans of Columbia University, or MiVets, a student organization intended to bring together veterans. By 2008, 60 veterans were enrolled at GS, the largest veteran presence in the Ivy League. In 2009, the Department of Veteran Affairs announced the Post 9/11 GI Bill, the most comprehensive suite of education benefits for U.S. military veterans since the original GI Bill. That fall, veteran enrollment at GS rose by two-thirds, to 100. The next year, the number of veterans at GS doubled, and has continued to grow each year, with nearly 410 veterans studying at GS in the spring 2015 semester—still the largest number, by a wide margin, among any of Columbia’s peer institutions.

That significant veteran presence has been an important element in the school’s recruitment efforts. Andrew King ’15 offers an instructive example. A linguist in the Marine Corps’ 1st Radio Battalion who served in Afghanistan, King was stationed at Camp Pendleton when he heard from a friend and fellow Marine about a college that served veterans at Columbia University. He did some research, learned more about GS, and reached out to current student-veterans. After scheduling an interview with GS Vice Dean Curtis Rodgers through the base education center, King applied through the Marine Corps’ Leadership Scholars Program and was accepted, as was his friend Ben Vickery. Vickery and King graduated together this May: during their senior year, Vickery served as president of the MiVets, while King was the MiVets treasurer as well as the salutatorian of the class of 2015.

“I knew that, coming off of a deployment, I was going to need to have people I could talk to and bond with similar to what I had in the Corps,” King says. “The size of the community and how easy it was to connect are a big part of why I decided to come to GS.”

A MiVets-led mentorship program pairing new students with more experienced counterparts has helped veterans become acclimated quickly to the University and felt the ground running, while veteran alumni have been active in outreach to current students, providing an important sense of continuity and institutional memory. More than any other factor, though, the growth of the veteran community has been fueled by the efficacy of support systems—from academic advising to educational financing—that have long been in place to meet the needs of the school’s nontraditional students. For Rory Minnis ’11, that administrative support was instrumental in helping him to connect with his fellow students.

“There’s a unique working culture at GS,” says Minnis, who served in Iraq and Afghanistan as a sergeant and staff sergeant, respectively, in the Marine Corps. “You go into the GS Lounge, and it’s so multidimensional. Everyone’s coming from a different place and working on a different thing. But there’s a sense of commonality in the difference that stems from the support structure that’s in place.”

Columbia faculty members tout the benefits of having veterans share their experiences in the classroom; on a larger scale, the large veteran presence has also helped GS to advocate for new campus-wide policies and services. King cites housing accommodations for students with disabilities as one example—that in turn benefit a larger swath of the Columbia student body. But the impact of the veteran community radiates beyond Columbia, as Minnis points out.

“Less than 1 percent of the American population fought in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and you could do a demographic analysis to see how that’s concentrated socioeconomically and geographically,” Minnis said. “The danger is that, when these wars are over, there aren’t going to be constant reminders in the headlines or on the nightly news; they’ll fade very quickly from memory. The way to prevent that from happening is to look at the next generation of leaders, policymakers, NGO workers, journalists—it’s so important to have
veterans interacting with other students at the undergraduate level, because everyone branches off into different pathways. That’s why the mission of a place like GS is incredibly important in affecting questions that will be raised in the future.”

Of course GS’s veterans are also making an impact themselves, in a wide variety of fields. King is now working as a consultant at Oliver Wyman; Minnis is in his second year at Yale Law School. Some veterans have undertaken advanced study at highly selective graduate programs, including Harvard Medical School, the London School of Economics, and New York University’s Tisch School of the Arts; others have returned to public service, using their expertise to work on Capitol Hill, in the U.S. Department of State, and at mission-driven nonprofits; still others have gone on to leadership roles at some of the world’s leading companies, including Accenture, Amazon, Bank of America, Barclays Bank, Boeing, Atten Hamilton, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, Google, McKinsey & Company, Morgan Stanley, USB Financial Services, and Vacas, to cite only a few.

GS plays a critical role in preparing veterans for future success, notes Elvis Camacho ’13, who served in the Marine Corps and the Army Reserves in Bahrain, Japan, Hawaii, and Iraq in security operations and as an infantry leader. Now in his third year as an MD candidate at Columbia’s College of Physicians and Surgeons, he credits both the Columbia curriculum and the advising he received at GS with preparing him for medical school.

“The intensity and rigor of the academic program, the support and resources, the students—everything was at a completely different level than what I was expecting, but rather than discourage or daunt me, it only pushed me and helped me to work on my weaknesses, so that by the time I got to medical school, I was ready,” he recalls.

“I was very austere coming from the military and was so direct and direct when asked questions. A workshop from the premedical advising team completely changed the way that I interviewed by helping me learn how to express myself and articulate my thoughts. Retrospectively, I may have been able to obtain interviews at medical schools but I doubt they would’ve accepted me if I would’ve continued to interview in the way that I was accustomed.”

Reflecting on his career options and his experiences after graduation, which include studying Arabic and conducting research in Egypt as well as working for the Qatar Museums Authority in Doha, Minnis exposes a similar sentiment.

“If you had told me in 2007 that I’d be at Yale Law School, I’d have laughed in your face,” he says. “I’m amazed at the opportunities I have right now that GS helped me to get.”

As the locus of the transition between military service and civilian life, GS marks a crucial period in the lives of veterans. As an incubator for academic and professional development—whether fostering an interest first kindled during military service, introducing new intellectual currents, or providing services such as advising, academic support, and career counseling—GS exemplifies what undergraduate education can accomplish.

“It’s been interesting to see the different conversations that happen among veterans and how they change as someone’s exposure to the academy changes,” King says. “You can really tell someone in their first semester from someone who’s been here. That’s one of the first things we tell new students: ‘You’ve got so many books to read.’”

“I think that general broadening of worldviews is one of the most important things about GS. I’ve been exposed to so many different ideas, and so many possible options for the future.”

Valentini explains that his own story, with its modest start, is his source for relating to the diversity of students at Columbia, which is evidenced by the fact that since his time as a professor, Valentini has been a champion of GS and its students.

“When I was growing up,” recalled James J. Valentini, Dean of Columbia College and Vice President for Undergraduate Education, “one day, you’d be dean of an Ivy League school.”

Born and raised in the Appalachian town of Laferty, Ohio, the 2010 census reported as having a population of 304, it was more probable that Valentini would have headed to a coal mine than to college as a young man. His father, a radio operator for the Ohio Department of Transportation, did not graduate from high school. His mother, a homemaker, did, but her education terminated there. It was their examples of hard work that inspired Valentini to excel as a student. After earning his bachelor’s degree in chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh, he went on to earn a master’s at the University of Chicago and a doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley.

Valentini conducted postdoctoral work at Harvard University, was a researcher at Los Alamos National Laboratory, and a professor at University of California, Irvine before relocating to New York in 1990 to join the faculty of Columbia’s Department of Chemistry, where he focused his research on chemical reaction dynamics and the spectroscopy of molecular transients.

Throughout his tenure at Columbia, Valentini served not only on various committees, but also as chair of the chemistry department and as the department’s director of undergraduate studies. His upbeat tone of voice as he talks about teaching and interacting with students illustrates his passion for pedagogy. Moreover, when he discusses his current position as dean of Columbia College, he demonstrates an excitement about leading the College at a time when it is flourishing and the University, in his words, “is at a moment of particular prominence, recognition, and excellence.”

“We are preparing students for a world that neither we nor they can imagine,” he says. “Having students from throughout the globe, with every kind of perspective, background, interest, and expectation— and having four different undergraduate schools—enables that, since everyone interacts with everyone else. They learn as much from one another as they do from their instructors, and this is important for enhancing their lives.”

Valentini explains that his own story, with its modest start, is his source for relating to the diversity of students at Columbia, which is evidenced by the fact that, since his time as a professor, Valentini has been a champion of GS and its students. “There are a lot of trajectories and a lot of paths,” he explains. “Columbia’s a place where we can admit individuals to Columbia College and General Studies. We do not admit transcripts, GPAs, SAT scores. We don’t admit people because of a particular aspect of them. We admit them because of their total identity.”

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Valentini conducted postdoctoral work at Harvard University, was a researcher at Los Alamos National Laboratory, and a professor at University of California, Irvine before relocating to New York in 1990 to join the faculty of Columbia’s Department of Chemistry, where he focused his research on chemical reaction dynamics and the spectroscopy of molecular transients.

Throughout his tenure at Columbia, Valentini served not only on various committees, but also as chair of the chemistry department and as the department’s director of undergraduate studies. His upbeat tone of voice as he talks about teaching and interacting with students illustrates his passion for pedagogy. Moreover, when he discusses his current position as dean of Columbia College, he demonstrates an excitement about leading the College at a time when it is flourishing and the University, in his words, “is at a moment of particular prominence, recognition, and excellence.”

“We are preparing students for a world that neither we nor they can imagine,” he says. “Having students from throughout the globe, with every kind of perspective, background, interest, and expectation— and having four different undergraduate schools—enables that, since everyone interacts with everyone else. They learn as much from one another as they do from their instructors, and this is important for enhancing their lives.”

Valentini explains that his own story, with its modest start, is his source for relating to the diversity of students at Columbia, which is evidenced by the fact that, since
Sicong (Ellen) Mo, left, and Denise Marte share some study time in Butler Library. Mo, a native of Beijing, graduated with two bachelor’s degrees in May as part of the second class of students in the new Joint Bachelor’s Degree Program between City University of Hong Kong and Columbia University. Marte completed her Prebaccalaureate Premedical Program Certificate in May. She is one of 17 graduates of the Postbac Premed Program who took advantage of GS’s linkage application agreements. She matriculated at Brown University’s Warren Alpert Medical School this fall.
By Allison Scola

At her Commencement ceremony in 1997, Allison Fillmore Magliocco was overwhelmed with gratitude. She remembers feeling grateful for having had the opportunity to study the great works of literature, art, and music; for instruction and guidance from renowned professors; and for the freedom to learn at Columbia as an adult student. When she heard GS Dean Gillian Lindt confer her degree, granting her with the “rights, responsibilities, and privileges, thereto attached,” the statement deeply struck her heart.

“It’s a responsibility. Take very seriously,” Magliocco says. “With all of the rights and privileges that we have as a result of a Columbia University education, we also have a responsibility. It would be very empty to have this kind of privileged education and not put it to good and share it with others.”

Magliocco has spent much of her adult life sharing the fruits of her success with others. After earning a degree in the sciences early in her life, she started her career in Denver, Colo., in E.F. Hutton’s analyst training program. Over the years, she built a notable résumé in asset management with E. F. Hutton, Fidelity Investments, and PaineWebber; however, in 1994, she decided to take a leave of absence in order to attend Columbia and earn the education she aspired to have. While at GS, Magliocco majored in comparative literature with a focus in Italian. She spent a summer studying in Scandiano, Italy with Professor Jo Ann Gay Cashit; she took Shakespeare with Professor James S. Shapiro; and she honed her critical thinking and writing skills. Her professors and fellow students challenged her to think differently.

Ultimately, the experience enhanced her strengths. “As a young person, I didn’t have a support system guiding me through the college search and application process. I found myself trying to figure it out for myself,” Magliocco recalls. “Coming out the other end of [my Columbia education] … experiencing all of the ways it has changed my life and developed me into the woman I am today—my career changed, my connection to my Italian heritage changed, my sense of philanthropy changed, and my personal politics changed.”

After graduation, Sierra Global Management, a New York-based European long/short equity hedge fund, hired Magliocco because of her analyst background, coupled with her newly acquired Italian language skills, experience of having lived in Europe, and Columbia University degree. Eventually, she became a partner responsible for investor relations, executive marketing, and operational management. Her work in the hedge fund industry enabled her to participate in social-justice causes, specifically those that assist women and children in need. She served as the philanthropy committee chair of the international nonprofit 100 Women in Hedge Funds and a board member of High Water Women, and she was a president’s council member of the International Women’s Health Coalition.

“I’ve experienced poverty, I know what it feels like. My Ivy League degree gave me the confidence to transform that experience and give me the courage to look into the eyes of confused children and terrified women in dire situations and treat them with dignity. It enabled me to support them,” Magliocco says.

In 2007, Magliocco’s years of experience led her to become a cofounder and managing partner of Monitor Capital, LLC, a broker-dealer specializing in private placements for hedge funds and private equities. Then, in 2011, when her younger sister faced a life-terminating illness, Magliocco again shuffled her priorities. She asked her partners to buy her out and she became her sister’s healthcare advocate.

The time away from the industry changed Magliocco’s life. Once her sister received a clean bill of health, instead of returning to the world of finance, Magliocco decided to focus on her home life in order to support her husband Joseph and stepson Matthew and to give more to philanthropic causes.

That led Magliocco to play a vital role in 2013 during Columbia Giving Day, when she and Joseph supported GS’s Yellow Ribbon Program Fund with a matching donation.

“For those people who didn’t start their lives in privilege, education is still the path to upward mobility,” Magliocco states. “Because so much of my current life can be attributed to what I learned at Columbia, I understand the value of having this educational opportunity. If I could change the doubting voices in one student’s head, I know I will have been successful. The point is, giving back is a responsibility.”

“Allison Fillmore Magliocco

“Expanding Her Horizons”

ALLISON FILLMORE MAGLIocco ‘97

Thanks to our supportive alumni, the Annual Fund raised $1,053,646 from 1,726 gifts for fiscal year 2015. We were thrilled to set another record and to surpass $1 million for the second consecutive year. This year, we continued our momentum on Giving Day, October 21, when alumni, friends, and students raised more than $233,000.

The NY Metro Chapter of Bank of America’s Military Support and Assistance Group invited GS alumni and leadership to Yankee Stadium to celebrate the Veteran Associates Program, an initiative to recruit and hire veterans at Bank of America. Pictured from left to right are Director of Global Transaction Services Mark Carnevale, Yankees reliever Mariano Rivera, Dean Peter Awn, and Vice Dean Curtis Rodgers.

“I would be very empty to have this kind of privileged education and not put it to good and share it with others.”

By Allison Scola
Class Day 2015

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT

1. 2015 Class Day Speaker Christopher Hood ’91
2. The graduates processed into the ceremony.
3. Kirsten Jardine waves to her family.
4. Dean Awn and Christina Gray
5. Class Day band leads the procession.
6. Valedictorian Lindsay Hadad
7. City University of Hong Kong, Associate Vice President, Global Services Office, Dr. David Cheng, Dean Awn, and Sicong (Ellie) Ma
8. Chris Mulligan was awarded the Alumni Key Award.
9. Student-athlete Andrea Keing
10. Precious Frazier and Anton Frederikson
11. Lizzie Velez and daughter Estella, with Provost John H. Coatsworth
PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT

1. Juliana Gamino, Professor Lise Hazen, and Emma Marquez
2. Dr. George Henrich delivers the keynote address.
3. Postbac Program Director Andrew Sunshine presents the graduates.
4. Reuben Heyman-Kantor delivers the student speech.
5. Nick Ramsey is congratulated by Dean Awn.
6. Ying Zhou with Assistant Dean Limary Carrasquillo
7. Denise Marte collects her scrubs with her family.
8. Premedical Association President Isaac Hughes and Senior Associate Dean Victoria Rosner
9. Senior Assistant Dean Mike Allen with Matthew Wright and his mother
10. Jared West and family with Postbac Program Director Andrew Sunshine
11. Carly Ray receives her alumni pin from Ashley White-Stites ’14.
**Donna De Sante**

Donna De Sante took classes at the University of California, Berkeley, while raising two children and working as a legal secretary. She has devoted much of her life to volunteering with organizations that provide assistance to at-risk and underserved children and adults. Though she did not complete her degree in California, Donna always knew she wanted to return to school, and eventually she applied to GS. During the following year, she devoted herself fully to academia while raising two children, and she graduated cum laude with a degree in ethnic and race studies. She plans to pursue a career as a nonprofit organization worker that works with underserved communities.

**Kaitlyn Gilland**

Kaitlyn Gilland lost her first pre-ballet class at the age of four, and spent the next twelve years studying at the Seattle Dance Theatre under the tutelage of her mother and grandmother, who founded the theatre. At 16, she moved to New York City to train with the School of American Ballet, where she received the Mae L.ウィン Award for outstanding promise. From 2006 to 2011, Kaitlyn danced with the New York City Ballet as a member of the corps de ballet, but after several discouraging injuries, she decided to stop dancing and pursue her education. While at GS, Kaitlyn found her way back to dance, performing with the Columbia Ballet Collaborative and joining the faculty at the School of American Ballet. She recently appeared at the Joyce Theater and plans to teach summer master classes across the country. Undecided about the path she will eventually pursue—either in the field of psychology, with a specific focus on neuroscience, or the contrasting world of business—Kaitlyn is interested in connecting her future graduate studies with her passion for dance and the arts.

**Molly Heller**

Molly Heller came to Columbia from Palos Verdes, Calif., where she was very active in school, both as a student and as an actor. She continued pursuing this passion at GS, where she directed the 123rd Annual Varsity Show, an annual musical that celebrates life at Columbia. In addition, she wrote the lyrics for the musical’s hit song “I Love Song,” a new musical that was performed at Barnard College in Fall 2014. She is a graduate of the GS Joint Program with List College at The Jewish Theological Seminary, and she served for two years as president of the List College Student Council. Upon graduation, Molly received two degrees, one in modern Jewish studies and one in theater and drama arts.

With her cowriter, composer Fernanda Douglas (6OC), she revised her musical Love Song. The revised version, now titled Flatt, premiered at the New York International Fringe Festival in summer 2015.

**Sicong (Ellen) Mo**

Sicong (Ellen) Mo graduated from the Joint Bachelor’s Degree Program between the City College of New York, Hong Kong and the School of General Studies. A mathematics major with a concentration in statistics, Sicong is a language and culture enthusiast. While at GS, she pursued her interests in financial markets and quantitative analysis both inside and outside the classroom, serving as a teaching assistant for the courses Analysis and Optimization and Computational Linear Analysis. During her time at GS, Sicong spent her weekends and summers volunteering in local communities. Aside from academic and volunteer activities, she enjoys international travel. Sicong is currently pursuing a career as a financial analyst at Morgan Stanley.

**Stephanie Hart**

Stephanie graduated from Columbia College in 2011 with a bachelor’s degree in economics. After graduation, she broke from a strong family tradition of careers in finance in order to pursue her love of science and desire for a life in medicine. As a student in the Postbac Premed Program, she worked as an orientation leader, peer advisor, and held leadership roles in the Premedical Association (PMA) and Surgery Club. In winter 2014, she served as a medical field clinic volunteer for VIDA (Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Adventures), traveling to Nicaragua and Guatemala to help local doctors perform basic medical exams, take patient histories, and provide vaccinations and Pap smears. As a Postbac student, Stephanie volunteered in the emergency department at Mount Sinai St. Luke’s hospital and in the cardiorthoracic surgery department at Columbia University Medical Center. Stephanie completed coursework for the premied program in May 2015, as she was preparing to apply to medical school for the PMA during her application year.

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Ivy League baseball champion Joey Falcone knows firsthand how it feels to succeed thanks to hard work. At 17 years old, after graduating from Bolton High School in Alexandria, La., Falcone enlisted in the military, believing it was the best option for his future. He had lost interest in academics, and, though he loved playing baseball as the school’s right fielder, he had not distinguished himself enough to gain the attention of any college teams.

In the military, Falcone was a Marine Corps combat medic, and he served tours of duty in Iraq in 2007 and 2008 and in Afghanistan in 2009. “It was nasty business,” he said about his experience as a medic. “You see stuff you don’t want to exist.” After six years in the military, Falcone was discharged and again stood at a crossroads, deciding his next path in life. He arrived at two answers: go to college and play baseball.

Falcone’s love of the game began at a young age. His father, Peter Falcone, played in the major leagues for ten years, pitching for the Giants, Mets, Cardinals, and Braves, and passed his affinity for baseball on to his son. Falcone said his passion for the national pastime grew stronger toward the end of his military service. “My desire to play and give it a shot never left me,” he said.

Having underperformed academically in high school, he had difficulty finding a college baseball team that would recruit him. So, looking to strengthen his portfolio, Falcone enrolled at College of Staten Island where he could play baseball while improving his grades. His plan worked. At Staten Island, he bolstered his grades and his game, and eventually he applied to and was accepted to GS.

He matriculated in spring 2012. During his first semester, Falcone approached the Lions’ head coach Brett Boretti about joining the Columbia baseball team. Boretti’s decision to add Falcone’s bat paid dividends. The next season, he helped the Lions win their second Ivy League championship in six years, and he was voted to the All-Ivy second team. During his career as an outfielder and designated hitter for Columbia, Falcone helped lead the team to three consecutive Ivy League titles and a strong showing in the 2015 NCAA tournament. In 2015 he was a unanimous choice for the All-Ivy first team, and was also named second-team All-America—the first Columbia player to receive that honor since 1984.

Meanwhile, off the field, Falcone applied his military training, balancing the demands of Columbia’s academic workload and his athletic schedule to graduate with a degree in history. In early summer 2015, soon after graduating, Falcone signed a minor-league contract with the New York Yankees, with whom he will pursue his goal of playing professional baseball.
What work have you been doing with the General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA)? I am a new member of the GSAA Communication Committee. I am always eager to stay connected to Columbia and GS, so this affords me a good opportunity to do just that, as well as meet other alumni. As for the ‘work,’ I have contributed to the weekly posts found on the GSAA LinkedIn site that highlights and links alumni to information and resources that they may find valuable in their professional lives.

What drives you to contribute to the GS alumni community? Simply stated, GS changed my life. Like other GS alumni, I had pursued other passions in my twenties. In my case, it was my passion of skiing! As meet other alumni. As for the ‘work,’ I have contributed to the weekly posts found on the GSAA LinkedIn site that highlights and links alumni to information and resources that they may find valuable in their professional lives.

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校友会的接待于今年的全校校友会期间举行。周五晚上的新生派对在Stage 48夜总会举行，171名从学院毕业的学生聚在一起，庆祝他们的母校，重逢老朋友，与新朋友建立联系。校友会主席Elizabeth Hollister ’07，以及包括Yael Israel ’84, Adam Casdin ’95, 和 Luz Maria Lambert ’04,’09CE，在内的志愿者列出了毕业生名单，涵盖了从1950年毕业的校友，到最近毕业的校友。虽然特别关注了那些毕业50年以上的校友，被亲切地称为“金色的猫头鹰”；如Jules Wertheimer ’50, Nicholas Falcone Arena ’50, Grace Krumwiede ’52, John McGough ’54, 和 Joyce Hurley ’58，但是，几十年的校友，如Elaine Bernstein ’72, Catherine Scott ’84, Stephen Negron ’91，和 Estelle Raboni ’97，也都出席了会议。

晚上，受到GS校友协会（GSAA）联合主席Mason Beard ’04的邀请，所有校友都被邀请到GS的教育使他们成为可能，向校友会讲述他们的故事。她详细说明了GSAA在第一年取得的成就，超过800名校友参加了活动和项目，一年中，超过120名志愿者在各种委员会中工作，邀请校友们与Columbia和GS保持联系，解释说他们的参与将为他们的教育和职业生涯，增强更大社区，为当前学生毕业后成功做出贡献。

更多信息，请访问gs.columbia.edu/2015-reunion。
When you shake Elaine Hochberg’s hand, you know immediately why she has had a successful career in business: She possesses a firm grasp, and her eyes transmit a character that is at once pragmatic and warm-hearted. One of eight children, Hochberg grew up in a lower-middle-class, close-knit family. Her mother worked during the day and her father worked at night. “I’m a New York City kid,” Hochberg says proudly. “I lived in the projects and went to Stuyvesant High School.”

Having excelled in the third class of girls to enroll at one of New York City’s top public secondary schools, upon graduation she was awarded a United Federation of Teachers (UFT) scholarship. In fall 1975, Hochberg headed west to University of Wisconsin at Madison to pursue her passion for Latin and the classics in the Integrated Liberal Studies program. However, after battling debilitating ice storms during her first year, she decided that Wisconsin was not for her. She returned home to New York, and consequently gave up her UFT scholarship.

A strategic thinker even at a young age, Hochberg sought other means to pursue her education during an era when financial aid was scarce. She learned that if she worked full time at Columbia University, she could earn part of her tuition. Soon thereafter, she landed a position as a librarian in the University computer center and enrolled at the School of General Studies. GS gave her the flexibility to work and study, and its more casual atmosphere enabled her to pursue a new love: French language and literature.

While at Columbia, Hochberg thrived. She graduated magna cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa. Furthermore, she was recognized with the Lily Parker Award for excellence in French. Furthermore, she served as Chief Commercial Officer—her work contributed to almost two dozen product launches that resulted in billions of dollars of revenue. Products such as the antidepressants Celexa and Leoxapro and the Alzheimer’s medication Namenda achieved sales of $1 billion. Her competence, focus, and acumen delivered results both professionally and personally.

Hochberg’s success, however, is not only limited to her career as a marketing executive. Since moving to Forest Laboratories in 1991—where, until a recent acquisition, she served as Chief Commercial Officer—her work contributed to two dozen product launches that resulted in billions of dollars of revenue. Products such as the antidepressants Celexa and Leoxapro and the Alzheimer’s medication Namenda achieved sales of $1 billion. Her competence, focus, and acumen delivered results both professionally and personally.

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Under her watch, sales of Children’s Advil doubled. “I’m a salesman at heart,” Hochberg says. “I understand where the other person is coming from, and because of my education, I am able to edit out, get to the point, and deliver results.”

Elaine Hochberg

By Allison Scala

Corporation, where over the next six years she adroitly rose through the ranks. In 1991, after joining Wyeth-Ayerst Laboratories in St. Davids, Penn., as a senior product manager, Hochberg led the initiative to convert Children’s Advil from a prescription medication to an over-the-counter product.

“I understand where the other person is coming from, and because of my education, I am able to edit out, get to the point, and deliver results.”

Elaine Hochberg

He has also embarked upon a comprehensive initiative to improve health care in Jamaica, first on his own and then through the JAHUJ Foundation (Jamaicans Abroad Helping Jamaicans At Home), which he founded and now chairs. “My mother died in 2005, and I felt that I wanted to give back to Jamaica as a tribute,” he said.

Initially he traveled to Jamaica and worked with Kingston Public Hospital to train its staff on ultrasound technology, and then, in 2003, created the foundation to formalize and expand its efforts. The foundation’s two primary areas of focus reflect Dixon’s priorities: bringing together healthcare professionals from the U.S., U.K., Canada, and Jamaica for conferences on ultrasound medicine and pediatrics and cancer prevention and promoting access to medical services and education. On the latter front, much of JAHUJ’s work strives to partner with the community and celebrate Jamaican culture—even down to its name, a nod to the Rastafarian term for God, “Jah”—from mounting healthcare clinics at dancehall parties to enlisting the support of reggae legends Beenie Man and Bounty Killer.

“It’s so natural for me to do this work with the JAHUJ Foundation,” Dixon says. “In Brooklyn, music is how I kept in contact with my culture, especially reggae music, which speaks about suffering and fighting against oppression.”

In broadening his experience, the Postbac Program helped Dixon on his path to activism and a career in medicine.

“One of the things that pushed me to be a physician was the underrepresentation of African-Americans,” Dixon says. “I thought that it would be important for patients to see someone who looks like them, and now when I’m in the hospital, I see how the patients look at me, and even if they don’t say it, I can sense the pride they feel. It’s humble.”

“They were against me—well, nothing’s really against you, you’re just supposed to stay in your lane, so to speak. I’m grateful for the opportunity Columbia provided. I’m humbled by this whole journey more than anything else.”

Elaine Hochberg ‘82, ‘85BUS

From City Kid to Model Executive

Dr. Trevor Dixon ’99PBPM

Rise Up / Give back

By Robert Ast ’08

“Growing up in Brooklyn, I wasn’t trained to become a physician,” Dr. Trevor Dixon ’99PBPM notes. “This was during the drug epidemic in the late ’80s/early ’90s. About 90 percent of my friends from those days are either locked up somewhere, in jail, or these were bright kids.”

Born in Jamaica and raised in East Flatbush, he credits a neighborhood mentor, a music store owner named Witty, with helping him to avoid a similar fate. “She said, ‘You don’t really belong here. I see more in you,’” Dixon recalls.

He went on to earn an associate’s degree in chemistry from New York Technical College and then a bachelor’s degree in ultrasound technology from SUNY Downstate, all while working full time, first at a bakery and then at Consolidated Edison. When he was nearing graduation, another mentor, the late Professor Jacqueline Jakway, encouraged him to apply to the Postbaccaulaureate Premedical Program.

“She saw my enthusiasm about wanting to learn more,” he says. “She said, ‘I know you’ve been in Brooklyn your whole life, but maybe it’s time to get out of Brooklyn. There’s a wonderful program at Columbia, and the students who come out of it seem to do well in medical school.’”

Dixon applied to the program, and was accepted, attending classes at night while working as first an ultrasound technician at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, then later at a job with Israeli Wine Direct, while her son is a professional dancer with the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and Ellison Ballet. In tribute to her mentor, after her death in 2005, she endowed a new scholarship in Dixon’s name, a nod to the Rastafarian term for God, “Jah”—from mounting healthcare clinics at dancehall parties to enlisting the support of reggae legends Beenie Man and Bounty Killer.

“It’s so natural for me to do this work with the JAHUJ Foundation,” Dixon says. “In Brooklyn, music is how I kept in contact with my culture, especially reggae music, which speaks about suffering and fighting against oppression.”

In broadening his experience, the Postbac Program helped Dixon on his path to activism and a career in medicine.

“One of the things that pushed me to be a physician was the underrepresentation of African-Americans,” Dixon says. “I thought that it would be important for patients to see someone who looks like them, and now when I’m in the hospital, I see how the patients look at me, and even if they don’t say it, I can sense the pride they feel. It’s humble.”

“They were against me—well, nothing’s really against you, you’re just supposed to stay in your lane, so to speak. I’m grateful for the opportunity Columbia provided. I’m humbled by this whole journey more than anything else.”

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Dr. Trevor Dixon ’99PBPM
1950s

Fiber artist and weaver Dolores Bittleman ‘52 created a 6’ x 6’ tapestry, “Entrance II,” in 1964. In 2014 it was featured in an exhibit at the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA). “Entrance II” is part of MoMA’s permanent collection.

Robert Goldfarb ‘54 recently penned an article for The New York Times that focuses on the importance of veteran hiring initiatives. In the piece, Goldfarb demystifies issues corporations and nonprofits may face while hiring re-tired service men and women. The article also offers advice to veterans seeking employment.

U.S. Navy Veteran Seymour Koenig’s ’49, ’52GSAS, Contributions to the 1955 Nobel Prize and the Dawn of the Computer Age

When World War II ended, Dr. Seymour Koenig, who had been serving in the U.S. Navy for a year and a half, was given a choice to stay in the military or return to civilian life. Having started at Brooklyn College prior to his deployment, he opted to return home and take advantage of the G.I. Bill’s educational benefits. Like thousands of other veterans, he enrolled at Columbia, where he began studying electronics.

It was 1947, and the newly formed School of General Studies at Columbia was at the forefront of computing technology. Under the leadership of its founder, astronomy professor Wallace Eckert, the lab became known as the Watson Laboratory in honor of Dr. John Watson, the university’s first president.

“GS presented me with the freedom and flexibility to follow what my interests were,” Koenig said. “It was an exciting time.”

Koenig said that when he defended his thesis in Schermerhorn Hall, “Fifteen people were sitting on the committee, every one of whom went on to receive a Nobel Prize for their work.”

Those scientists included Charles Townes, who is credited with inventing the laser; E. M. Purcell and Felix Bloch, who together discovered a way to measure nuclear magnetic resonance; and his mentor, Columbia professor Polykarpo Kusch, who won the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1955 for “his precision determination of the magnetic moment of the electron”—research for which Koenig is credited as a contributor and co-author.

Upon earning his doctorate, Koenig was recruited for a position at the IBM Watson Scientific Computing Laboratory at Columbia University. Founded in 1945, the Watson Lab was at the forefront of computing technology. Under the leadership of its first director, Dr. John E. Atanasoff, the lab took on an increasingly important role in the development of computing, eventually developing the world’s first supercomputer, the NORC, in 1954 and the first personal computer, the IBM 610, in 1956.

The Watson Lab team sought increasingly powerful scientific computing systems that could predict the navigation of ships and calculate nuclear objects with great precision. The Watson-designed SSEC computer delivered just that, helping ships navigate the seas during the Korean War and giving the Apollo moon missions of the 1960s.

In addition to his research position at the Watson Lab, Koenig served as an adjunct associate professor of electrical engineering from 1957 to 1968, and during the summers, because of his expertise, he consulted for IBM at the Los Alamos National Laboratory in New Mexico, one of the U.S. laboratories dedicated to classified work with nuclear weapons.

While in New Mexico, Koenig and his wife Harriet, who holds a Master of Arts in anthropology from Hunter College, became fascinated with the Native American populations of the Southwest. During their free time, the couple conducted field research where they observed rituals, interviewed locals, photographed people and scenery, and collected tribal art such as rugs, pottery, and dolls. Over time, they accumulated a unique expertise that culminated in co-authoring the 2005 book Religion of the Peoples of the Southwest.

When World War II ended, Koenig spent the majority of his career with the Watson Lab, finally acting as its director from 1967 until 1970, when the lab moved to IBM’s headquarters in Yorktown Heights, N.Y.

“Things were very different when I started—the technology was so new,” Koenig said. “The transistor wasn’t yet invented. We relied on vacuum tubes. Micro- and nanotechnology was only a vision. All of the work we accomplished is a source of great satisfaction,” Koenig said.
John Seaman '66 recently published Memory and Movies: What Films Can Teach Us about Memory (FT Press) is a Professor Emeritus of psychology and neuroscience and behavior at Wesleyan University. His latest book shows how the treatment of memory in popular movies can shed new light on how human memory works. The 1967-68 editor of The Owl student newspaper, Brian Leary '68, wrote to remind us of the origins of this publication and the accomplishments of the dedicated team during a newsyearly Leary and his classmate Tom Smith were instrumental in campaigning for the implementation of the BA degree at GS.

1970s

Roger Pilon '71 (D. Phil) and his wife, Linnar Geran Pilon, have generously created a new fellowship program available exclusively to Columbia University School of General Studies students. The Roger Pilon Fellowship will annually award two qualified GS students who plan to pursue academic or legal careers $10,000 each.

Diane M. Falt '73 is a freelance writer, editor, researcher, and Ambassador for Peace with the United Peace Federation. She writes for scholarly publications with an emphasis on youth issues and the media, biographies, and arts and culture.

Two-time Oscar nominees and production designer Kristi Zea '74 was featured this past July in an article published by The Journal News. Her most recent work as a “creator of environments” can be seen in the film The Intern, starring Anne Hathaway and Robert De Niro and the NBC television series Gracefully Graziella. Additionally, Zea is currently working on a documentary about visual artist Elizabeth Peyton.

1980s

Architect and writer F.D. Rick Shands '80, '82 GSAPP currently resides in Abu Dhabi. Having lived and worked in New York City, Stockholm, London, Jeddah, Kuwait, and Malta, he drew upon his life experience when writing his first novel Frame 39. The recently published work follows John, a Swedish architect commissioned to design a center for world peace, discovers immersion and Jennifer, an American screenwriter in search of a screenplay. The two become connected by a fascination with 39 black and white photographs of spiritual places.

This past summer, Tom Bovo '81 displayed a collection of photos titled “The Other Side of Summer” at 440 Gallery in Brooklyn, N.Y. The exhibition featured images Bovo captured in Santa Barbara, Calif. In a June article in Brook lyn Magazine, Bovo discusses his first photographery series shot outside of New York City.

Garden City High School student Estaban Ortiz wrote an award-winning essay about his mother Cecilia Sacato de Ortiz ’82 for the Hispanic Heritage Essay Contest sponsored by Olympusat and Cablevision. Her son’s essay describes how Sacato de Ortiz inspires him despite health challenges she has faced. Es teban’s essay can be read at www.gcnnews.com.

New York City-based interdisciplinary musician, theatre artist, independent scholar and teaching artist Tamara Cauthur ’83 won a 2015 Bronx Council on the Arts EGO grant in musical composition. Her work, Queens: A Study of Gender in Music for Strings and Harp, was presented at the 2015 International Alliance of Women in Music International Online Conference and performed at the Two Lands, Once Voice Festival in Rome, at Lefrak Concert Hall at Queens College, and under the auspices of the New York Composers Circle. The Leonard and Nancy Thalia Theater at Symphony Space. Also in 2015, Cauthur conducted the Orlando Legnami’s chamber composition Vertic d’ Intree at St. Peter’s Citsopera concert space.

Lauree Feldman '86 is a photographer, artist, writer, world traveler, and communications professional. She is a three-time grant recipient from the New York Foundation for the Arts. This year she self-published a book of photographs she took during her travels in Tibet. A beautiful coffee table book, Tibet contains more than 200 color photographs chronic ling a personal journey through the country. Its contents are presented in four sections: narrative, people, art & architecture, and landscapes. More at www.laurenefeldman.com.
Mary Prendergast ’93, ’98SOA recently edited the new Michael Mann film Blackkklister starring Chris Hemsworth, Viola Davis, and Wesley Snipes. A longtime editor, Kamitsuna was born in Hawaii and raised in Hiroshima, Japan. In addition to studying at GS, she attended the NYU-Maurice Kanbar Institute of Film & Television at Tisch School of the Arts. Kamitsuna has worked on more than 25 films.

Mary Prendergast ’93, ’98SOA received a 2015 Guggenheim Fellowship in film. Since graduating, Baca has worked as a filmmaker and media strategist and as creative director at non-profit Vivos. Her award-winning documentary films such as 2004’s Control Room, 2006’s Encounter Point, and 2009’s Budrus have received accolades throughout the world for fostering constructive conversations about some of the most divisive issues of our times.

In 2013 film My Neighbourhood, which follows a Palestinian teenager struggling to reclaim his home in East Jerusalem from Israeli settlers, won the Academy Award. Her TED talk, “Pay Attention to Nonviolence,” was selected as one of the best talks of 2011 and has been viewed by over a million people worldwide.

Ariel Beery ’05, CEO of MobileOCT, won the Tel Aviv installment of Elevator World Tour, a program that gives entrepreneurs an opportunity to pitch their ideas to influential investors, while actually in the world’s most impressive elevators. One hundred Israeli startups had the opportunity to give an elevator pitch to investors in Tel Aviv’s Azrieli Control Room.

The Babushkas of Chernobyl received accolades throughout the world for its documentation and nonfiction manuscripts. Recently, he coauthored a memoir titled No Place for a Lady with former CNN correspondent Velilla, who was recognized for this honor at the 16th Annual El Regreso gala in March at Low Memorial Library. He also serves as assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership. After earning his BA in psychology from GS, Velilla attended the Graduate Center of the City University of New York where she received her PhD in social/personality psychology.

Julia Bacha ’03 was awarded a 2015 Guggenheim Fellowship in film. Since graduating, Bacha has worked as a filmmaker and media strategist and as creative director at non-profit Vivos. Her award-winning documentary films such as 2004’s Control Room, 2006’s Encounter Point, and 2009’s Budrus have received accolades throughout the world for fostering constructive conversations about some of the most divisive issues of our times.

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Ryan Kendall ’14 Featured in Speak Now

In 2010, Ryan Kendall ’14 was a key witness in Hollingsworth v. Perry, the federal trial that challenged California’s Proposition 8, which banned same-sex marriage. Kendall’s testimony during the intensive, 12-day trial included recounting the trauma he experienced as a teenager from having undergone conversion therapy, a discredited process that claims to change someone’s sexual orientation or gender identity. His contributions to building the case against Proposition 8 are now featured in a new book by NYU Law Professor Kenji Yoshino, Speak Now: Marriage Equality on Trial. The Story of Hollingsworth v. Perry (Crown Publishers).

Participating in Hollingsworth v. Perry instilled in Kendall the confidence to apply to GS and complete his undergraduate degree. Today, Kendall is a candidate for a Juris Doctor in the Epstein Public Interest Law and Policy Program at UCLA School of Law.

Miguel Morel ’12

In March, The New York Times reviewed guitarist Jonathan “Yonatan” Gat’s ’14 performance at Union Pool in Brooklyn, N.Y. Gat’s latest album, Director, on the label Joyful Noise was released earlier this year. The record of 11 punk-inspired, improvisational, psychedelic pieces was recorded in less than three days. Gat has been presenting concerts in the U.S. and internationally.

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Elizabeth Walsh ’14

In early 2015, Elizabeth Walsh ’14 was one of 40 U.S. recipients awarded the prestigious Gates Cambridge Scholarship, full-tuition scholarship to the University of Cambridge. She will use the grant to complete a Master of Philosophy in social anthropology.

In fall 2015, Jason Everman ’14 was enrolled at New York Law School with scholarship support. The 59-year-old former opera singer and radio broadcaster completed GS in 2014 after a 30-year break from her first fury at school in the 1980s.

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On Giving Day, October 21, 2015, Dean of Students Tom Harford baited alumni, students, and colleagues with a game of chance. The second annual Drench the Dean event whetted the interest of many who hoped to leave him soaked and push GS ahead in the day’s fundraising efforts. Both succeeded: Dean Harford left the afternoon all wet, and GS raised $233,000 for student scholarships during Giving Day.