

THE OWL

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GENERAL STUDIES



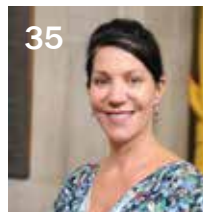
**Celebrating
70 years of GS**

**Looking Back and
Looking Forward:**
President Bollinger
and Dean Awn Reflect
On the Evolution and
Revolution of GS and
Global Education

Names Matter:
The Quandary of
“General Studies”

2016-2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS



IN THIS ISSUE

- Feature Story 8** **Names Matter: The Challenge of “General Studies”**
In an age when the meaning of *studium generale* is hardly common knowledge, “General Studies” no longer signals a radically inclusive and intensely rigorous model of liberal education. Instead, it presents a quandary
- Cover Story 12** **President Bollinger and Dean Awn Reflect on the Evolution of GS**
Dean Peter Awn and University President Lee Bollinger discuss the work they have done together to cultivate the School of General Studies and nontraditional education at Columbia.
- 11** **Celebrating 70 Years of General Studies**
Seventy years ago this year, the School of General Studies was established, welcoming students who followed a path different from the traditional high-school-to-college route. In 2017, we celebrate this milestone with events throughout the country.
- 34** **GS Alumnus Spotlight: Richard M. Space, Jr. '05**
At May’s commencement, Richard M. Space, Jr. was awarded the University’s highest honor given to alumni in recognition of distinguished service to the University.
- 35** **Postbac Premed Alumna Spotlight: Dr. Judith Tanenbaum '83**
Psychiatrist Judith Tanenbaum’s contributions to her field reach well beyond her work with her patients.

SECTIONS

- 4 In General: Campus News
- 17 Faculty Spotlight
- 18 The General View
- 20 Giving
- 22 Graduation: GS Class Day Gallery, Postbac Premed Class Day Gallery, and New Grad Notes
- 29 General Interest: Alumni News
- 34 GS Alumnus Spotlight
- 35 Postbac Alumna Spotlight
- 36 The General Direction: Alumni Notes
- 44 Last Look

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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

As you may already be aware, after 20 years as Dean of GS, I will be stepping down on June 30 and returning to the faculty.

After almost 40 years on the faculty and 20 years as Dean, I can say without hesitation that GS has now taken its place at the heart of Columbia, and that the mission of this unique college is an essential part of what makes Columbia a great university. The undergraduate classroom at Columbia is unlike that at any other Ivy League university because we take diversity to its logical conclusions by integrating age and experience into the intellectual discourse among students and faculty. In addition, we bring to the community exceptionally talented and diverse students who are pursuing innovative and equally untraditional Dual and Joint BA programs. Finally, we are privileged to have in the undergraduate classroom and community students in the Postbaccalaureate Premedical/Prehealth Program, who are intellectually gifted and dedicated to alleviating suffering both in the United States and internationally. This full integration of traditional and untraditional students from Columbia College and General Studies into the same undergraduate program represents to me the cutting edge of undergraduate education and deserves to be emulated at other highly selective colleges and universities.

In partnership with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, we will be launching this spring a new and exciting initiative, the Columbia Veterans' Center for Transition, Integration and Leadership. The Center will allow us to have a national impact in facilitating the transition of veterans from the military to education, from education to the workforce, and from the workforce back to education. The new dean will be fully engaged with the Center as well as with our ongoing efforts to recruit exceptionally talented veterans to GS.

I also cannot say enough about the deans and administrators at GS. I believe that GS is, without doubt, the best run division in the entire university. I am also proud that, year after year, GS staff have

consistently improved services for students, and continue to look for new ways to help them be successful at Columbia. There is no better person to lead the transition to a new dean than Vice Dean Curtis Rodgers, with whom I have worked for 17 years and who has been the architect of most of our successful initiatives.

Because we are doing so well and have the highest quality deans and managers, I am convinced that this is the time to transition to a new dean who can move GS to even higher levels of distinction. GS is an exciting place to lead, and, therefore, will attract talented and creative candidates for the deanship from within the Columbia faculty and from faculty members outside the University.

I also firmly believe that one of the greatest responsibilities for any school dean is to prepare as carefully as possible for an orderly succession. A search committee, co-chaired by President Lee Bollinger and Executive Vice President for Arts and Sciences, Professor David Madigan, has already initiated the process. The hope is that a new dean of GS will be named sometime during the spring semester and officially assume the deanship on July 1. The new dean will inherit a college of exceptional alumni, students, and staff, but will also face serious challenges: improving financial aid and housing opportunities, changing the name of the School, and finding more space to accommodate additional staff and the sophisticated programs sponsored by the Academic Resource Center, Student Life, and the Veterans' Center. I hope you will give the new dean the support she or he will need to pursue vigorously all of these initiatives.

I want you to know that it has been a privilege to have led the School of General Studies. I will miss being an integral part of this exceptional college. I look forward to "graduating" in the spring with the Class of 2017 and beginning the next chapter of my own story. I hope you will stay in touch, and, if I can be of help, do not hesitate to ask.

Warm regards,



Peter J. Awn

Peter J. Awn, Dean

IN GENERAL

“It was truly inspirational to be among some of the brightest minds in the computer science field. It pushed me to hone my own skills and stimulated an intellectual curiosity toward solving societal problems through computer science.”

DENNIS ZHAO, student, said after participating the Google Scholars’ Retreat at the company’s Mountain View, Calif. headquarters in June. Zhao was one of eight recipients of the 2016 Google Student Veterans of America Scholarship. He received \$10,000 to use toward pursuit of a bachelor’s degree in computer science.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF FLIP

GEN Day was celebrated on April 25. The nationwide, all-day event raised awareness about socioeconomically diverse and underrepresented students like SiLin Huang, pictured.



Noam Alon, Nina Bechmann, Matthew Hess, and Nathanael Shoemate were four of 12 students chosen to be 2016 Columbia Presidential Global Fellows. The tuition subsidies and stipends for travel and living expenses they received enabled them to study at or near one of

the University’s Global Centers during the summer of 2016. Funded with a seed grant from Columbia President Lee C. Bollinger, this prestigious program enables students to have international experience early in their undergraduate careers—experience that upon their return to New York, enhances their classrooms with their new perspectives and experience.

6 The number of years since Columbia produced a Rhodes Scholar. In 2016, Luca Springer, a student in the Dual BA Program Between Columbia University and Sciences Po became one of only 89 recipients of this prestigious award worldwide. This fall, he enrolled at Oxford University where he will pursue a Master of Public Policy.

Columbia Establishes Veterans’ Center for Transition, Integration and Leadership

During All-year Reunion in June, Dean Peter Awn announced the establishment of the Columbia Veterans’ Center for Transition, Integration and Leadership. Awn said: “After working in the space of veterans’ education for more than 14 years, we have developed best practices in recruiting and integrating and supporting veterans into the educational system. We want to disseminate what we’ve learned nationally about veterans cycling out of the military into education, and from education into the work force and civilian life.”

Awn explained that, along with an array of on-campus units, GS will be partnering with the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and a number of national veterans’ service groups to create an online course as well as workshops and trainings aimed at sharing knowledge and supporting institutions around the country that help military personnel transition to student and civilian life. The Center will enable Columbia to have a direct and lasting impact on the issue of veteran transition by creating and providing access to the tools and knowledge veterans need as they transition to college, graduate school, and the workforce.

2016 Medical School Fair Expands Offerings, Impresses Students and Deans

The 2016 Columbia University Medical School Fair, held on February 19 and organized by the Premedical Association (PMA) of the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program, was an impressive feat of coordination and innovation. The fair brought together 55 medical, dental, veterinary, and allied health graduate schools, and more than 400 students from Columbia University, Barnard College, and other universities in the New York area. “Each year, those responsible for planning the fair seem to raise the bar a little higher,” said Andrew Sunshine, Director of the Postbac Premed Program. “It’s always an exciting event.” This year’s fair featured a large number of schools in attendance, in addition to enhanced programming.

The highly anticipated Admissions Deans Panel kicked off the day with an engaging conversation between Dr. George Heinrich (Rutgers New Jersey Medical School), Leila Amiri (University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine), Dr. Koong-Nah Chung (Washington University School of Medicine), Dr. Steven Gay (University of Michigan Medical School), and Deborah Benvenger (Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine). “This is an opportunity to demystify a process many premed students find perplexing,” Dean Sunshine said before introducing the guests. The 90-minute discussion

addressed topics from interview preparation to finding the right fit in a school, as well as the new MCAT.

Following the panel, students headed for Boone Arledge Auditorium, where admissions representatives from around the country and the globe met students individually and answered questions about their programs. “It’s an amazing opportunity to gather the kind of information we can’t search for on a website,” said Sarah Bohler, Postbac Premed student and volunteer at the Medical School Fair.

The 2016 fair doubled the number of breakout sessions, which addressed topics such as pursuing osteopathic medicine, financing medical school, and preparing for multiple mini-interviews. 2016 PMA President Stephanie Hart said the attendees appreciated the enhanced offering, noting that students “found the breakout sessions very informative, and the presenters were receptive to their follow-up questions.” Incorporating feedback from attendees remains a key component of the PMA’s strategy when planning future Medical School Fairs. Ahead of 2017’s event, which will be on March 31, the PMA plans to develop its program to provide the resources most requested from premedical students.



“The subject of my fellowship deals with the influx of the Syrian expat community into the European Union and how to find sustainable and community-orientated housing through the lens of architecture and urban planning,” Franklin Forbes said. Forbes, who is majoring in architecture at Columbia, was awarded the sole 2016 Beesen Global Research Fellowship at Columbia. The award funded his research on the remodeling of a building in the Seine-Saint-Denis arrondissement of Paris.

Additionally, four of the six Columbia University Beesen Global Scholarship winners this year were GS students. The winners—Mary Reilly, Erin Giventer, Michael Wedd, and Michael Falkenstein—each received \$5,000 to study in Paris this past summer.

Cody Wiles, who worked as a combat marksmanship coach in the Marine Corps prior to enrolling at GS, was one of five undergraduates from Columbia University to receive a Critical Language Scholarship (CLS) this year. The CLS is a U.S. Department of State program created to support American undergraduate and graduate students studying and mastering select foreign languages. “I studied Arabic at Columbia’s Global Center in Amman, Jordan, after my first semester at GS, and the Critical Language Scholarship [gave] me the opportunity to further improve my Arabic, this time in Morocco,” Wiles said.

Of five undergraduate students from Columbia University who received the Critical Language Scholarship in 2016, two were from GS. In addition to Wiles, Justin Wiggins traveled to Dushanbe, Tajikistan, to study Persian.



Putting It All into PERSPECTIVE

Dual Degree Student Ana Maria Szilagyi

By Nancy J. Brandwein

“I have always been brave and lucky,” remarks Ana Maria Szilagyi, describing her circuitous path to the Dual BA Program Between Columbia University and Sciences Po. With the opportunity to study in both France and New York, this unique program helps its students to cultivate an international perspective. But Szilagyi, an immigrant in multiple countries with an intrepid sense of discovery and deep intellectual curiosity, developed an international perspective long before her first class.

Born in Romania three years after the fall of Communism, Szilagyi grew up in a society in flux. Her early schooling was rigid and authoritarian, which, along with her training as a top-seeded tennis player, instilled habits of discipline and hard work. When Szilagyi was 10, she and her mother immigrated to Calabria, Italy, a drastically different social and cultural milieu.

“My perspective about the world changed completely,” she says. “In Romania I was the daughter of engineers, and, in Italy, the daughter of a cleaning lady. In Italy, personal life was hard as an immigrant in a society that looked down on Romanians ... [but] it was the country that opened my mind intellectually.” For the first time in her life, Szilagyi marvels, “I was allowed to think and express my personal opinion.”

Despite Calabria’s educational freedom and natural beauty, Szilagyi eventually saw no future there for an outsider with few connections and principles opposed to the organized crime that dominates the region. At age 18, she bravely set out for England, knowing no one and speaking little English. Like her mother, she buried her pride and took the only job she could find—that of a cleaning lady. Then an opportunity presented itself when a Frenchman told Szilagyi about Sciences Po: “I was reading and asking myself many questions about identity, nationality, what it meant to be European ... and I learned that I would have the chance to ask and answer these questions at Sciences Po.”



PHOTO: BRUCE GILBERT



After two years at the Sciences Po campus in Dijon, France, Szilagyi was drawn to the Dual BA Program. Not only was she excited about the chance to live in the United States and New York City, but she also wanted “the chance to see and experience two different worlds, different methods of approaching classes and everything around.” That opportunity came with enormous challenges. Unlike Dijon, where Szilagyi could focus exclusively on her studies, in New York City living is expensive, and she is tasked with combining work with her studies in economics and philosophy. “Partly because of its cost,” she says, “New York pushes you to do more and take more responsibilities. My worldview has become more complex in the sense that it takes into account more situations, variables, and cultures.”

Having spent more than half of her life as “the Other,” this past summer Szilagyi was motivated to volunteer for a European

NGO in Ankara, Turkey, where she helped Syrian refugee children gain the language skills they need to attend school. Working during a turbulent summer that included a bombing at Istanbul’s Ataturk Airport and an attempted coup against President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, Szilagyi developed a deep understanding of the children’s plight. She returned to New York convinced that “one has to keep fighting for one’s ideals even after terrorist attacks and coups.”

The worldview Szilagyi developed as an immigrant has been broadened and deepened by the “exceptional education” she has received at Sciences Po and Columbia, she says. Moreover, her experience seeing children facing immense difficulties for the right to go to school has helped her to recognize her international perspective for what it is: an advantage, born out of challenges, which can make a difference in the world.

JustCity: A Transformation in Two Weeks

By Adrienne Anifant

“Two weeks can change your life” is the catchphrase for the *JustCity* Leadership Institute, a two-week program for high school students initiated in 2013 by The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS). Designed within the framework of Jewish tradition, *JustCity* incorporates experiential learning to educate and expand students’ understanding of social justice and each individual’s responsibility and capacity to change the world, one issue at a time.

High school juniors and seniors drawn from across North America develop critical leadership skills and gain hands-on experience through site visits in New York City, classes, and conversations about society, advocacy, and themselves.

So, can two weeks really change your life?

“Absolutely,” said Anna Serviansky, director of *JustCity* and assistant dean at List College. “I see it from the very first day. Students have intellectual and heartfelt conversations about global issues they care about and gain new perspectives on how to address those issues.

“Time and again, students say that this program is life-changing because it transforms teenagers’ understanding of their own power to make a difference in the world.”

Through two morning instructional classes, *JustCity* teaches students about the relationship between the texts and traditions of Judaism and social responsibility, and develops skills in leadership and advocacy. In the afternoon, students apply what they have learned into action through tours of key sites in New York City and meetings with key community organizations, such as The Brotherhood/Sister Sol, Dorot, and Citizens’ Committee for Children, among others.

JustCity students live in the JTS residence hall and participate in immersive community programming. Although students’ religious affiliations include secular, Orthodox, Conservative, and Reform, all form one community and share a commitment to social activism that is rooted in, and is an expression of, Judaism.

“You know a program is successful when students don’t want it to end,” said Serviansky. “That said, we know they bring the program home with them both through the personal social action projects that they create and then implement upon their return home and the friendships that last well beyond the summer.

“Our goal is that these students become change makers using the leadership and advocacy skills they learn from the program. And we know from past experience that our teenagers are inspired to act and will put their passions into action.”



Participants in *JustCity*, from left to right, Sarab Goldfarb, Josh Cooperman, Gali Davar, Haley Klein, Sarab Elighberg, Jacob Shapero

PHOTO: COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY/FRANK OUDEMAN

Lenfest Center for the Arts (left) and Jerome L. Greene Science Center (right).

Columbia Dedicates Its New Manhattanville Campus

President Lee C. Bollinger welcomed local officials, leaders from across the University, and renowned architect Renzo Piano at the dedication of Columbia’s new 17-acre campus. The Renzo Piano Building Workshop designed the open campus plan with Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. It is the first site in New York City to receive LEED-ND Platinum certification for sustainable neighborhood development. The first new, Piano-designed buildings on the campus—the Lenfest Center for the Arts and the Jerome L. Greene Science Center, home to the Mortimer B. Zuckerman Mind Brain Behavior Institute—will officially open in spring 2017.

Nur Arafah '13 Selected As 2017 Rhodes Scholar

Nur Arafah '13 was recently selected as a 2017 Rhodes Scholar, and will pursue a Doctor of Philosophy degree in international development at Oxford University next fall. Arafah is one of just three students who were selected from Syria, Jordan, Lebanon, and Palestine for 2017, the first year that the Rhodes Trust has awarded scholarships for that region.

Arafah studied political science, economics, and Middle Eastern studies in the Dual BA Program Between Columbia University and Sciences Po. She was inducted into the School of General Studies Honor Society and Phi Beta Kappa, and graduated *summa cum laude* from Columbia University. Thereafter, she attended the University of Cambridge, where she received an MPhil in development studies in 2014.

Arafah has since been living and working in Palestine, first at an economic policy research institute and as a visiting lecturer of economics at Al-Quds Bard College. Currently, she is the policy fellow of Al-Shabaka, a virtual think tank whose mission is to promote policy analysis on Palestine.





Names Matter:

The Quandary of “General Studies”

By Alexander Gelfand

What’s in a name?

Plenty, if it belongs to a college or university.

Consider Western Maryland College, which many prospective students assumed was a not-so-great satellite of a public university located in the wilds of rural Maryland.

It was not.

Rather, it was a private liberal arts college situated just 45 minutes northwest of Baltimore.

Confused? Don’t be: The college was originally named for the nearby Western Maryland Railroad. But while that appellation made sense when the college was founded in 1867, it eventually obscured the school’s identity as a selective liberal arts institution, and the first coeducational college south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Hence the decision in 2002 to rename the school McDaniel College, in honor of William Roberts McDaniel, an alumnus who after graduating in 1880 went on to serve as everything from professor to president to trustee. This allowed the college to link its public profile to a figure who, as its own website declares, “helped shape its destiny and today personifies its mission,” instead of yoking it to a descriptive phrase that, with time, had grown to be profoundly misleading.

The change did not go unnoticed: By 2008, applications were up 68 percent.

This is not unusual. In 2001, the unfortunately titled Beaver College, so named for its birthplace in Beaver County, Pennsylvania, refashioned itself as Arcadia University. By 2006, student applications had doubled.

Admittedly, this was a special case; according to the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, internet browser pornography filters used by some parents and libraries prevented prospective students from even accessing information about “Beaver College” online. Yet the basic point still applies: Names matter.

You can probably guess where this is heading.

Like McDaniel and Arcadia, the School of General Studies was born with a name that made perfect sense at the time, but that now does more to obfuscate than to illuminate. And a name change, if done right, could be just what GS needs to build on its achievements—and secure its future.

The School’s current name is itself the result of an earlier renaming that occurred after World War II, when an influx of returning soldiers supported by the G.I. Bill forever changed the character of what was then known as University Extension. The latter, in turn, originated in 1904 as Teaching Extension, Columbia’s first foray into adult education; and over time, it came to offer a broad range of courses—some vocational, some academic—along with a Bachelor of Science in “general studies.”

As the number of students seeking undergraduate degrees through University Extension ballooned after the war, the division was reorganized as a full-fledged undergraduate college. The name School of General Studies was chosen both for the sake of continuity, and because the phrase held deep resonance for faculty and students steeped in the classics: In the Middle Ages,

the great universities of Bologna, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge were known as *studia generalia*. As the scholar and Columbia graduate Frank Pierrepont Graves explained in his 1910 tome, *A History of Education during the Middle Ages and the Transition to Modern Times*, those institutions accepted students “from all parts of civilization”—unlike the earlier *studia particularia*, which “taught only a few from the neighborhood.” The effect, says Dean Peter Awn, was to open up what had previously been an exclusive realm of elite higher education “to people from anywhere, to study anything.”

To those who know what the phrase originally meant, and who also know that the School of General Studies is now the finest liberal arts college in the country dedicated specifically to nontraditional students from around the world, the name seems perfectly apt.

Alas, far too few know any such thing.

In an age when the meaning of *studium generale* is hardly common knowledge, “general studies” no longer signals a radically inclusive and intensely rigorous model of liberal education. Instead, it just seems vague.

“It sort of sounds like you couldn’t decide on your major,” says Robert Moore, a higher-education marketing consultant whose agency, Lipman Hearne, helped shepherd McDaniel through its name change. (The firm’s clients also include Columbia, Brown, Cornell, Penn, and Princeton.)

To make matters worse, a number of schools that lack GS’s singular mission and accomplishments have adopted similar-sounding names, devaluing the currency of the original and sowing confusion in the

minds of prospective students.

Schools ranging from Arkansas State to the University of Pittsburgh now offer programs with the name “general studies” attached to them in one form or another. But none have anything to do with making an Ivy League education available to nontraditional students. As a result, the people charged with attracting the best possible candidates to GS must dispel a fog of mistaken assumptions before they can even begin talking about what the school actually has to offer.

“With a new name, we would just be saying who we are,” says Vice Dean Curtis Rodgers, “and we wouldn’t have to say who we’re not.”

Yet if the name General Studies is no longer one to conjure with, the college behind it is stronger than ever. The School’s curriculum is fully aligned with that of Columbia College; its students participate fully in the life of the University; and it has gained an international reputation as a center for innovative programming. And it has achieved all of this while developing a recruitment, admissions, and advising system designed specifically to identify and support exceptional students who hail, to use Graves’ apposite phrase, from all parts of civilization, whether that means the U.S. Army Special Forces or the New York City Ballet.

All of which has led the GS senior administration to consider what kind of title would best serve the School’s constituents, and its underlying mission, in the years ahead.

“We need a name that doesn’t need to be explained away before you get to the identity of the college,” says Awn. Ideally, the new name would be one not easily replicated elsewhere—the simplest way to achieve that, he contends, would be to use a proper name, one belonging to a proper person. In addition to being unique and easily identifiable, such a name would also carry with it another major advantage: a significant donation.

Renaming GS in the absence of a gift would still make a difference. Neither the McDaniel nor Arcadia name changes were made in honor of major donors, but both schools were nonetheless buoyed by the experience. As Moore explains, the very act of renaming an institution can raise its profile, providing it with an opportunity to tell its story to an audience that might not even know it exists.

Yet a donation on the scale required to secure naming rights would, says Rodgers, “change everything” for GS, allowing it to provide an unprecedented degree of support

to students who typically arrive on campus with far greater responsibilities—financial, familial, and otherwise—than their traditional counterparts.

And the list of potential donors is long, partly because GS’s unique mission and innovative programming—its pioneering Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program; its joint and dual degree programs with List College of The Jewish Theological Seminary, Sciences Po, and City University of Hong Kong; its commitment to veterans’ education, which has made it a model for selective colleges and universities across the country—tend to attract the support of people who have little else to do with the University. Indeed, the School’s largest donor in recent years never even attended Columbia.

It’s one thing, however, to recognize that a name change would be a good move—even a necessary one—to safeguard the gains that GS has made in recent years, and to place the School in the best possible position to accomplish even more. It’s quite another to actually do it, let alone with minimal fuss and maximal impact.

For every McDaniel and Arcadia, there is an NYU Polytechnic School of Engineering, whose remodeling as the NYU Tandon School of Engineering drew vocal protests from students, alumni, and faculty—not to mention coverage of their outrage in *The Wall Street Journal*. Or a King’s College London, whose administration ultimately abandoned a seemingly modest attempt to drop the word “College” from the school’s name after it sparked a firestorm of protest, garnering more than 12,000 signatures on an online petition and plenty of unflattering exposure in the British press.

To those who have a personal connection to a college or university, the institution’s name can be a powerful symbol, a kind of shorthand for a formative period in their lives and a set of values and experiences that are integral to their sense of self. So the prospect of seeing it change is practically guaranteed to provoke some kind of response.

“There’s going to be noise,” says Moore. “A name is a real touchpoint. It can be a lightning rod, or a point of pride.”

In the NYU Tandon School and King’s College cases, much of the furor arose from a lack of communication. Simply put, the proposed changes came as a surprise to everyone but the administrators who had been planning them, engendering more anger than excitement.

The meaning of General Studies no longer signals a radically inclusive, rigorous model of liberal education. Instead, it just seems vague.

By contrast, when Western Maryland’s trustees initiated the process of renaming the college, they were as open as possible about it. A committee comprising students, alumni, faculty—“every single stakeholder group imaginable,” says Moore—was convened; input was solicited from the entire community; and in the end, everyone seemed to feel that the new name belonged to them.

That kind of transparency and engagement are crucial, Moore says. They also involve a good deal of time and effort, just as the renaming itself can involve a fair amount of money. Marketing materials must be revised, databases updated, and a thousand other details arranged, all of which can add up to hundreds of thousands, even millions, of dollars, depending on whether the institution decides to fully capitalize on the change by reintroducing itself to the world at large with an integrated marketing campaign.

Considering the payoff if done properly, however, these would seem to be wise investments. A well-executed renaming would put the School’s endowment on a new and far more secure footing, while at the same time allowing it to engage all of its constituents, from prospective students to alumni, in a conversation about how the college fits into the larger Columbia system, what it does, and where it is heading.

In that sense, a name change would help GS further the mission that the phrase “general studies” did, once convey: to welcome, as Awn says, all kinds of students into what had previously been an incredibly closed environment. That is precisely what the School continues to do today, albeit on an ever grander and more ambitious scale. The time has come for it to adopt a name that will announce that mission, and declare its true identity, once again.

Columbia University School of General Studies Celebrates Its 70th Anniversary

By Beth Kwon

Seventy years ago this year, the School of General Studies was established, welcoming students who followed a path different from the traditional high-school-to-college route. The School was previously known as the University Extension Program, begun in 1904 by Columbia University President Nicholas Murray Butler to serve working men and women of New York City.

The University Extension Program offered a broad range of courses to prepare students for new careers, from classical studies to engineering and millinery. It was an academic pioneer in many respects: It was one of the first programs in the nation to offer college-level courses in creative writing and dramatic arts, and the first division at Columbia to hire female professors and award bachelor's degrees to female undergraduates.

To celebrate GS's 70th anniversary and its long tradition of offering a rigorous academic education to adult students, Dean Peter Awn will visit alumni clubs around the country, and there will be events celebrating the School throughout the year.

Join Dean Awn to Celebrate 70 Years of GS

Tuesday, March 28

Thursday, March 30

Saturday, June 3

in Los Angeles

in San Francisco

**in New York for the Reunion
Weekend Gala Dinner**

Visit gs.columbia.edu/alumni for more details.

1947

After World War II, thousands of veterans came to Morningside Heights, encouraged by the GI Bill. To meet their needs, in 1947, the University Extension Program reorganized as an undergraduate college and became Columbia University School of General Studies. Over the next decade, the School focused on students pursuing bachelor's degrees, upholding stringent admissions and graduation criteria that aligned with the rigor of other colleges at Columbia, while continuing to serve a unique population.

1968

In the 1950s, GS established its own faculty and Phi Beta Kappa chapter as well as the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program, the first of its kind in the United States. In 1968, the School began to offer a Bachelor of Arts degree.

1991

1991 marked another turning point, when Columbia created the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, which unified the faculties of the School of General Studies, Columbia College, the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, and the School of International and Public Affairs.

1995

Dean Gillian Lindt, who served from 1994 to 1997, led an administrative reorganization in 1995 that separated the School of General Studies and the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program from the School of Continuing Education, the Summer Session, the American Language Program, and Columbia-sponsored study abroad programs.

2017

After 20 years as dean, Peter J. Awn retires and leaves a legacy that includes a deeper applicant pool, increased student matriculation and persistence in both the undergraduate and postbaccalaureate degree programs, full participation of nontraditional students in student organizations and undergraduate life, and two new joint-degree partnerships with Sciences Po in France and City University of Hong Kong.

Looking Back and Looking Forward



President Bollinger and Dean Awn Reflect on the Evolution and Revolution of GS and Global Education

Dean Peter Awn sat down with University President Lee C. Bollinger to discuss the work they have done together cultivating nontraditional education at Columbia and to consider the future of a liberal arts education.

Peter Awn (PA): It's a great pleasure to have a chance to talk about the University and GS's place in it with you. Over the last 16 years under your leadership, the University has made enormous strides. I think if we look back 20 years, we would not have thought that this was possible. But GS is very much a part of that, and I was wondering if you could speak a bit about how you see GS in the fabric of the University.

Lee C. Bollinger (LB): Let me begin, Peter, by saying that you have been vital to everything that has happened here. I'll say why, in a more fulsome way in a moment. I think General Studies is one of those parts of the University that is very distinctive. That is, there is no other university that has anything like General Studies. The qualities of General Studies that make it distinctive are that it is integrated into the life of the University: It's not an adjunct, it's not on the side, it's not on the periphery—it is part of the educational system. When I teach my class on the First Amendment every fall, there are College students, there are SEAS students, there are GS students, there are Barnard students, there are a whole array of students, and GS students are critical—as equal members, if not more so—of the class. It's integrated.

The second thing is that it truly lives up to its stated mission. That is, we all know that we develop our intellectual capacities differently over the course of our lifetimes. [GS] is recognition that, if you're interested in quality, you really want to have an opportunity for people at different stages of their lives to come into the enterprise of the university. You have made that possible.

The third thing I'd say is that, when you do that, you inevitably get people who have extraordinary life experiences that are very relevant to the educational mission. So, people have gone out, they've done interesting things, they've established careers, they've done service in a variety of ways—[including] of course, the military. That brings into the mix a sense of maturity, of accomplishment, of just interesting people, and all of those things together just make this a vital part of Columbia University.

Now, you!

You have represented this. Advocated for it. Articulated it. Nurtured it. You have been there for this, every step of the way. You have that capacity, Peter, where, your own identity is enmeshed in the entire institution of General Studies. There is a famous line that I love from Montaigne: "The closest of friendships, you can't tell where you start and the other person leaves off or begins." And that's been true of you and General Studies.

You're the only dean I haven't appointed. Except, I've appointed you in my heart every single year. So, you have done this and it's crucial. And as you know, General Studies has evolved and become better in its own mission.

PA: And that is so much a part of seeing the whole University evolve in this incredibly positive direction.

LB: Right. Yes.

PA: As the bar gets set higher, if you don't meet that bar, then you feel you're not part of the mix as you should be. So, it's been really inspirational to see how the school has evolved with the help and support of so many people. And the integration with the College in the classroom is really quite extraordinary.

LB: It is. It really is.

PA: 2017 is our 70th anniversary. We were founded in 1947 in large part because of the first GI Bill. In a wonderful way, we are back to our roots.

LB: Yes, the military—you and I know the history intimately. In World War II, universities were as much in the service of the country in the war effort as any other institution in the society. Indeed, Columbia was directly involved in the training of military personnel as well as other kinds of support. Then comes 20 years later, 25 years later the crisis of Vietnam and the separation of the university-world, and Columbia in particular, from the military. You and I have lived through the separation and have now lived long enough to see the rejoining of these institutions. That may be too strong a term, but [there is] a sense of collective responsibility—joint responsibility—to the country. That kind of re-integration of the armed services and the university-world has been facilitated, eased, made better by General Studies.

And you have articulated this so powerfully. And now that we have Navy ROTC back on the campus for the first time in 50 years, but, more importantly, the number of veterans who we have welcomed into the University, with all that that means, has been primarily through you and General Studies. That's absolutely historic. That is one of those things that, on the scale of "What important things happened in your lifetime?," that's one of those. And you and General Studies have been leading that.

PA: And your passionate support for the returning of NROTC, in some ways—it was really wonderful to lay the groundwork by trying to change the culture. Many of the undergraduates, many students, had never met anybody in the military. Encountering some in class, you begin to see people developing far more nuanced views of how one can collaborate effectively.

LB: That's right. And in my own experience—you teach the First Amendment, you teach the Pentagon Papers, you use a hypothetical of Snowden or Private Manning, and the WikiLeaks, and the release of this military data. And to have people from the military in the discussion, it's perfect. You can't have a better class than that.

PA: And again equally important, I think, is your extraordinary support for the globalization of the University. And at least from my perspective, to offer undergraduates the opportunity to create multiple identities. Where that was considered quite avant-garde in my generation, I don't think these young people have a choice if they want to be able to truly engage intellectually in the academic world, the business world, and beyond.

LB: Again, you have helped lead that effort, which both you and I speak about similarly, I think, each in our own words. But you with your own background as an expert in Islam and religions and history, but also your general, global personality.

I think we have both seen almost the imperative that a university, especially a university in New York City, especially Columbia, which has such an international tradition—we must embrace this new world of a much more integrated life, and build a global society. What better way to do that than by taking young people and offering them the opportunities to experience the world and see the issues of a global society? General Studies is great both in that it brings people in from around the world, but also because it naturally helps us feed our students out into the world.

PA: If you could speak about—I know you care deeply about—the Presidential Global Scholarships for undergraduates. I'm proud to say we've had a number of GS students selected for the program.

LB: The problem that we face is that in this new interconnected world, how do we provide an educational experience on our campus that is rich and deep and reflective? In a sense, in order to really have a great undergraduate education, you need to spend a lot of time alone with a book or in a lab thinking. To be educated is not easy. It requires a lot of time alone. At the same time, you bring to your education life experiences. If you've never been to China, if you've never been to India, if you've never been to countries in Africa, it's very difficult for you to have that kind of knowledge that comes when it is coupled with a lived experience. So, we absolutely have to have students out in the world in order to make their education come alive. But how do you fit it in to 4 years or 5 years? That's not easy either.

The Global Scholars is an effort to get our first-year students out into the world so that then they will come back and want to do more, talk to other students, be in class and raise issues that they wouldn't otherwise have raised. So this is the beginning, I think, of what hopefully will be an educational experience a decade from now in which almost every student will be educated while having the lived experiences of being around the world.

PA: Which is really extraordinary. For GS, especially, we have had enormous success from an academic perspective with our Dual BA programs, the principal one with Sciences Po in France, from which we have a Rhodes Scholar this year...

LB: Is that right?

PA: Oh, yes, he's the only Rhodes Scholar from Columbia this year!

LB: Fantastic!

“... People have gone out, they’ve done interesting things, they’ve established careers, they’ve done service in a variety of ways— [including] of course, the military. That brings into the mix a sense of maturity, of accomplishment, of interesting people, and all of those things together just make [GS] a vital part of Columbia University.”

*Columbia University President
Lee C. Bollinger*

PA: But again, what you’ve allowed us to do—as you did with the Global Centers—is not pick one model in which you invest everything that you’ve got, but to say, “This is a whole new process. Let’s try different, creative experiments. And then, hopefully, have the wisdom to then evaluate them in a way that the good ones stay and the less effective ones can move on.”

LB: That’s expressed perfectly.

Yes, we know that the world became much more “international”—that’s the word we use—in the Post World War II era. We developed international, regional institutes. We had many more students coming from abroad. Study abroad programs were developed where you would go during your junior year, we have experts on almost every part of the world—all that’s great. But this is a world [that is] more integrated, and so many more people travel all the time. So, it’s less exotic, but it’s more important substantively.

How the world resolves issues like climate change, or movements of people, or economic regulation, or environmental issues, or the internet, and my field, and norms about freedom of expression and forms of government ... How we do all of this really requires us to have a very different—not abandoning what we have—but very



different still—sense of how you understand the world than what we had before.

PA: Absolutely. You’ve raised something that I think is really very interesting. When I grew up, at least in the world I was functioning in educationally, people thought they knew what you had to learn.

LB: Yes, right!

PA: ... and that it was easily definable.

LB: Right!

PA: Now these undergraduates, the vast challenges they face in technology, in learning language, engaging internationally: How do you see that challenge for undergraduate education moving forward? How do we help people pick and choose what they study—you can’t do everything!

LB: Yes, that is the dilemma. It does seem, doesn’t it, that the amount that you should know has increased exponentially in the space of a decade? So, you really should know about all of the religions, you should know about every civilization and their cultures, you should know about the geopolitical problems that are faced, you should

understand exchange rates and central banking, and yet, how can you from ages 18 to 24, or in the case of GS with average ages of 27 to 29, how can you do that? I think about this all the time.

I believe we should prepare our students better than we do by having some kind of very quick way to introduce them to the issues of the time. I think we should have it be the norm that in the course of the academic year you go two or three places as part of your courses and you are able to participate still by video technology, the internet, and so on. I think we need to integrate global issues more into our discussions about any subject that we have. All these things I think we're working on doing, but it's quite a process.

PA: As we look to the future, what do you see the challenges that undergraduate education is going to face?

LB: I'm not one of those who thinks that the internet will eventually undermine the old financial model of the university in the way that it has the American press. I know the argument. I've thought about it a lot, but I'm not persuaded that it will undermine our existence the way that it has the press. On the other hand, I think to remain vital and meaningful as we fulfill our mission, I do think we do have to adjust very significantly. In particular, I think we need to offer our students—as we've been talking about—opportunities that they would never get by simply taking a course online.

If you think about it, if you take a recent course by Professor John Huber of the political science department taught utilizing the Global Centers in Amman, Jordan, and Istanbul, and you're interested in how democracies emerge from authoritarian regimes, and you can have a class in Tunis and Istanbul and have speakers and opportunities to discuss these issues with students from other parts of the region, that's an experience you cannot get by simply sitting in a classroom and listening to somebody lecture. The more we can do that, I think, the better. The more we'll feel it's an exciting time, the more students will feel that it's worth the tuition. So, that's one.



I think the other is that there are these vast new areas—neuroscience, the brain, precision medicine, genetics, data science. All of these are extraordinary and quite complicated and are difficult to penetrate, in a way, but they are extremely important for all of us to understand. And then there is—not to be forgotten—sitting with a Shakespeare play, Montaigne essay, or Virginia Woolf novel in an environment that thinks about it, that values that as the most meaningful thing to do. This is an experience that we must preserve.

PA: We live in an educational environment where the liberal arts is, at least in the press, taking a beating to some degree. And you see this move towards instrumentalizing education: “What kind of job is it training you for?”

GS is immensely proud to be one of the two embedded liberal arts colleges at Columbia. That's what we do. It's what our mission represents. How do you respond to these critiques?

LB: I have two principal thoughts, Peter. One is, in all honesty I can't imagine a good life without all that we think of as a liberal arts education. I mean, we don't have to reveal what you read last week, what I read last week—but, we all know a tome that has stuck with us for years and years and rewards us every time we go back to it, or a novel, or a painting, or an understanding of ideas and how they evolved over the course of centuries. What gives life meaning? Why do we fall in love? Why do we have friendships? Why do we ... ? I mean, these are the bulk of what life is about. So, I don't understand the so-called crisis, because I feel like it's such an essential part of living that I don't think there's any threat to it.

The second is that it is true that thinking about how to start a business, how to solve a problem, how to build a new technology, how to make a new drug: these are part—no question—of the discourse. How do we measure what we're doing? How to get a return on investment? How do we have a strategic plan? This is the language of our time.

What I say is that even if you're in that kind of mind-set, you will never solve anything—certainly not on the global stage—unless you have a rich understanding of the history, the culture, the religion, the art. And so, even in the instrumentalist mentality and outlook, I think the so-called liberal arts or humanities is utterly essential. So, I don't see the crisis.

PA: What you're saying, I think is ... I would love to invite every alum to come in and sit in on my Lit Hum class with GS students. We just read *King Lear*, and we had some of the most compelling conversations and arguments and debates that I've had in a year. And now, we're reading *Don Quixote*, and you get that same inquiry to, “What does it mean?” to “What is our place in society?”

And these people, you know, they're veterans, they're people from all sorts of backgrounds going off to high-tech, to science, to research, to business, but in no way do they find this contradictory—quite the opposite. And so, I think that's what we have to do: invite folks to come sit in on a Columbia class!

LB: We'll sharpen the serpent's tooth!

PA: Yes, that's right!



This interview has been condensed and edited.

Spotlight on Geraldine Downey

Championing Student Identity To Transform Formerly Incarcerated Individuals



By Allison Scola

sentenced to an alternative to prison or a shorter prison stay, with limited impact on public safety.”

As a featured speaker in December 2015’s Talks@Columbia, Downey offered a possible solution. “It’s been recognized that mass incarceration is simply not working, and it’s been well established that taking on the student identity is a pathway to success,” she said. “Being a college student in prison is the best-known protection against recidivism. It cuts the rate almost in half.”

Originally from Kilkenny, Ireland, Downey earned a PhD in psychology from Cornell University in 1986. When she came to the United States, she had intended to return home upon completing her degree, but poor job prospects led her to a postdoctoral program at the University of Michigan. Still, the class system and the stigmatization of disadvantaged communities back in Ireland inspired her research on rejection sensitivity, examining the factors that shape people’s expectations regarding whether others will accept or reject them.

While at Michigan, she volunteered at a woman’s prison, and what she learned from the women incarcerated there—the notion that a college education sets people free—put her on the path that she has been on for over 25 years.

“Criminal identity is so stigmatizing that it gives people with a criminal conviction the idea that they can’t contribute to society,” Downey said in an interview. “Working in prisons, you see how much people who are in prison value the identity of ‘student.’ They come to class with a motivation. They bring their all. The student identity gives them a positive sense of themselves and a great sense of respect from their families.”

Experiencing such results firsthand motivated the professor to teach classes such as Social Factors and Psychopathology and Children at Risk. Additionally, her research on the personality disposition of rejection sensitivity and her experience teaching in prisons has been instrumental

Geraldine Downey, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Center for Justice at Columbia University, and her colleagues have made it their mission to address U.S. mass incarceration and rehabilitation practices. In a speech on criminal justice at the David N. Dinkins Leadership and Public Policy Forum at Columbia in April 2015, Hillary Rodham Clinton discussed the scale of U.S. incarceration: “It’s a stark fact that the United States has less than 5 percent of the world’s population, yet we have almost 25 percent of the world’s total prison population. The numbers today are much higher than they were 30,40 years ago, despite the fact that crime is at historic lows.”

Furthermore, an estimated 39 percent of state and federal prisoners are incarcerated with little public safety rationale, according to “How Many Americans Are Unnecessarily Incarcerated?,” a report recently published by the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law. The report suggests that these individuals “could be more appropriately

GERALDINE DOWNEY

Professor of Psychology
Director of the Social Relations Lab
Director of the Center for Justice

Faculty member since: 1991

Education: BS, University College, Dublin; PhD, Cornell University

Recent Publications: “A Dyadic Perspective on Speech Accommodation and Social Connection: Both Partners’ Rejection Sensitivity Matters” in Journal of Personality with co-authors L. Aguilar, R. Krauss, J. Pardo, S. Lane, and N. Bolger

Fun Fact: Managed a youth soccer team—once.

Hobby: Yoga

in establishing the Center for Justice’s programs such as the Columbia Justice-in-Education Initiative, the Rikers Education Program, the Directly Impacted Group, and the Beyond the Bars Fellowship.

Current School of General Studies student Leyla Martinez, who was formerly incarcerated and is a graduate of the Justice-in-Education Initiative, explained the impact of Downey’s mentoring and the opportunities presented to her by Columbia and the Center for Justice. “I have had many challenging moments [since enrolling at GS]. I even considered quitting, but Professor Downey has not let me give up on myself or this amazing opportunity I have been given,” she said. “I successfully completed my first year as a Columbia student with a 3.6 GPA, which has been in great part due to the support I have found in her.”

Martinez’s transformation is one example of what educational opportunity offers these individuals and the powerful work that the Center for Justice performs. “The [formerly incarcerated] students go beyond themselves,” Downey said. “They bring a richness that enhances the classroom discussions. They go on to careers, and they return as volunteers. Our programs help change people’s lives.”

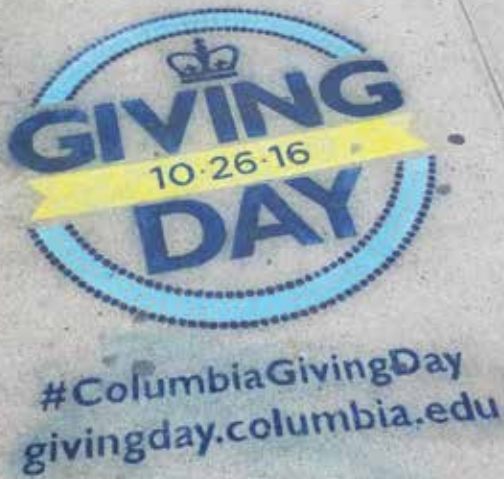
THE GENERAL VIEW



Honorable Mention

Fifty-seven juniors and seniors, including Travis Williamson, pictured with Dean Awn, were inducted into the GS Honor Society on February 9, 2016, during a formal ceremony held in the Presidential Ballroom at the Faculty House. Since 1997, the GS Honor Society has recognized the academic achievement of exceptional GS scholars. Membership is by invitation only, and students must have completed at least 30 credits and possess a 3.8 GPA or above. Through events, lectures, excursions, and social gatherings, the Society cultivates interaction among students, alumni, and faculty committed to intellectual discovery.





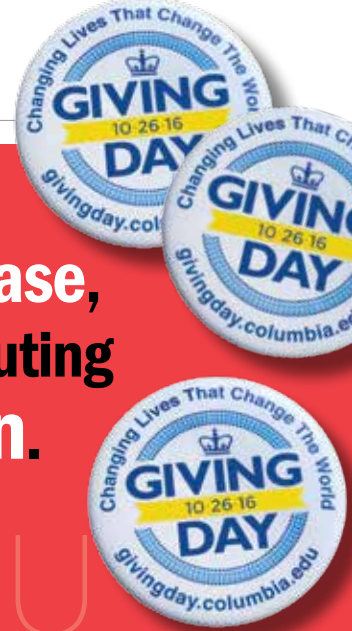
Giving Day 2016: GS's Best Year Yet

On Giving Day, Wednesday, October 26, Columbians from around the world came together to **change lives that change the world**. During the 24-hour, online-based campaign, donations designated for the School of General Studies amounted to **\$212,949**—more than any other year in the history of the five-year annual fundraising event.

Current students, faculty, staff, parents, friends, and alumni were invited, either on campus or by way of several online platforms, to contribute to the day's activities, which that included hourly participation challenges between the University's various schools and departments. GS won the 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. hourly challenge for a randomly selected gift from a parent or friend of the School. By the end of the 24-hour period, GS exceeded its goal of garnering more individual gifts than past years. A total of 332 people gave to support student scholarships.

Last year, the Annual Fund experienced a **20% increase**, with **1,673 donors** contributing a total of **\$1.23 million**.

THANK YOU



Top: Stephen Tobias '10 and his wife Maddie hosted a stewardship reception in their New York City home on April 19, 2016. Above: Dean Peter J. Awn addressed attendees, explaining how valuable their participation and support is to the School's mission.



The 2015-2016 Scholarship Celebration honored the benefactors and recipients of Columbia University School of General Studies endowed and named scholarships. It was held on November 10, 2015.

William W. Strong (back row, fourth from the left) is a generous friend of the School of General Studies. Nearly 20 international students who attended GS during the 2015-2016 academic year were recipients of the William Strong Scholarship.

GS Board of Visitors Announces \$1 Million Match in Honor of Dean Awn's 20th Year

The School of General Studies Board of Visitors announced at the Scholarship Celebration in November that it has raised nearly \$1 million as part of a matching fund to create a \$2 million scholarship endowment in Dean Peter J. Awn's honor. An assembly appointed by the dean with the objective of employing its members' expertise across various fields to support the college's mission, long-range planning, financial strategy and fundraising efforts, the Board of Visitors counsels the dean and administrative leadership regarding the School's direction and informs the University president and trustees about the state of GS and its needs. In addition, this diverse group of leaders, which is composed of many GS and Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program alumni representing a wide range of graduation years, serves as a liaison between the School and its graduates. For more details about the Board of Visitors and its role, or to make a contribution to the Peter J. Awn Scholarship Fund, please contact Dyer Ridley, Director of Development at rdr2124@columbia.edu or 212-851-7966.



The 2016-2017 Scholarship Celebration was held on November 1, 2016, in the Rotunda of Law Library.

Clockwise from upper left: Students Diego Filiu, Franklin Forbes, Erin Giventer, and Michael Price, with Christopher Riano '07, Dean Peter J. Awn, and student Jonab Tischler.

As a Tribute to Dean Aaron Warner, Miriam Warner Further Endows Scholarship

By Allison Scola

“So many people change their outlook because of their experiences in their 20s and 30s, but few elite schools have a program for older students. It is for this reason that I am pleased to contribute to the GS scholarship fund to ensure that more students benefit from the opportunities presented by a Columbia education,” said Miriam Warner, widow of the late Aaron W. Warner, former dean of the School of General Studies.

In 1994, members of the General Studies Advisory Council—friends and former students of Dean Warner—established the Aaron W. Warner Scholarship. Since then, the award has been given annually to two General Studies students in their final years of study toward the bachelor’s degree who not only illustrate academic achievement and financial need, but also demonstrate a strong commitment to public service.

“Being awarded the Aaron W. Warner Scholarship has meant so much to me because it made achieving a lifelong dream of attaining an Ivy League education a reality,” said James Reyes ’15, who received the award at the age of 28 for three academic years, beginning with the fall 2012 semester. “The scholarship has allowed me to carry on the incredible spirit of public service and dedication to GS of the late Dean Warner.”

Hearing such gratitude pleases Miriam Warner, who changed her own life’s path many times. Originally from Winter Park, Fla., Warner, née Firestone, graduated from Oberlin College as an economics major. A pioneering woman, soon after school she left for Paris, where she obtained a job as an assistant, first with journalist Theodore H. White and then at *Newsweek* magazine. After 4 years, curiosity prompted a move to Israel to live and work on a kibbutz. After a few months, however, Warner realized she was not suited to farm life and relocated to Jerusalem where she helped establish a firm that focused on publishing science books.

Three years later, Warner returned to United States, landing a position at the American branch of Cambridge University Press, where she remained for 10 years, first as publicity director and then as an acquisitions editor.

In 1970, Miriam was introduced by a Columbia professor to Aaron Warner, who had recently begun his tenure as the dean of General Studies. The couple married in 1971, settling on the Upper West Side. During this time, Miriam began working at the Board of Higher Education for The City University of New York, while also supporting Aaron’s demanding career as a professor and college administrator.

Like Miriam and the students of the school he would come to lead, Aaron had a rich, varied life and career. As a young lawyer out of Harvard Law School, he fought for the rights of workers, first as a litigator and then as a regional director of the National Labor Relations Board. His obituary in *The New York Times* included a quotation outlining his sentiments, as reported by *The Salt Lake Tribune* in 1939: “In guaranteeing the rights of workers to organize,



we are strengthening those forces which will enable us to remain a free people long after other nations with less foresight have felt the crushing heel of fascism.”

After serving in World War II, Aaron earned a PhD in economics from Columbia at the age of 45. Understanding the significant value older students added to the classroom, Warner made it his mission as an administrative leader at Columbia to maintain a strong presence for working and older people and veterans on campus. “Older people are good people to teach,” he said in 1976. “We find them very highly motivated, very thoughtful people ... Their life experience is rich.”

He served as Dean of GS from 1969 to 1976, when he retired to become Director of the University Seminars. His appreciation for GS continued until he passed away in 2000 at the age of 92.

Graduate Matthew John Paul Travers ’15, who received the Aaron W. Warner Scholarship in 2014 at the age of 24, serves as a testament to Warner’s ideals. “The scholarship was awarded to me at the time I needed it the most, and it provided me the assurance that I would indeed be the first in my family to graduate from college. I am eternally grateful to GS and the Warner Scholarship benefactors for allowing me to achieve more than I had ever dared to dream,” he said.

Miriam Warner is pleased to know that the scholarship awarded in Aaron’s name makes a significant contribution to the lives of deserving students pursuing their educational goals. Having met the exceptional undergraduates who have received the award over the years, she decided while considering estate planning that adding to the existing scholarship would be a wonderful tribute to Aaron’s legacy. Mrs. Warner hopes that others will consider setting up similar scholarships in their own names to help support more GS students.

GIVING

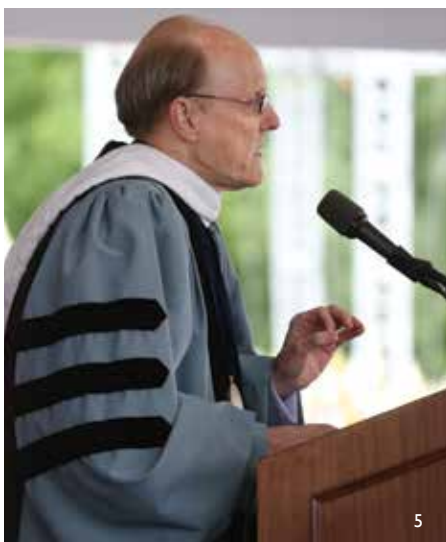
GRADUATION

CLASS DAY 2016

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT



1. Ryan Tavel Hudson served as the Class of 2016 Salutatorian.
2. With the early morning sunlight pouring through the windows, the graduates started their procession on the Lerner ramp.
3. Graduates commemorate their achievement.
4. GS Dean Peter J. Awn and University President Lee C. Bollinger enjoy the graduates' enthusiasm.
5. Class Day Keynote Speaker Dr. James C. Mabry '81, '98GSAS, President of Middlesex Community College, addresses the Class of 2016 and their guests.
6. Class Day is held in grand style on the South Lawn of the Morningside Heights campus.
7. The graduates celebrate their day.



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8. Class of 2016 Valedictorian Christina Cheung addresses her fellow bachelor's degree recipients.

9. Dean Awn congratulates graduate Katharine Celentano, winner of the Campbell Award for exceptional leadership and Columbia spirit.

10. Graduate Corwin McCammon walks proudly with his fellow graduates.

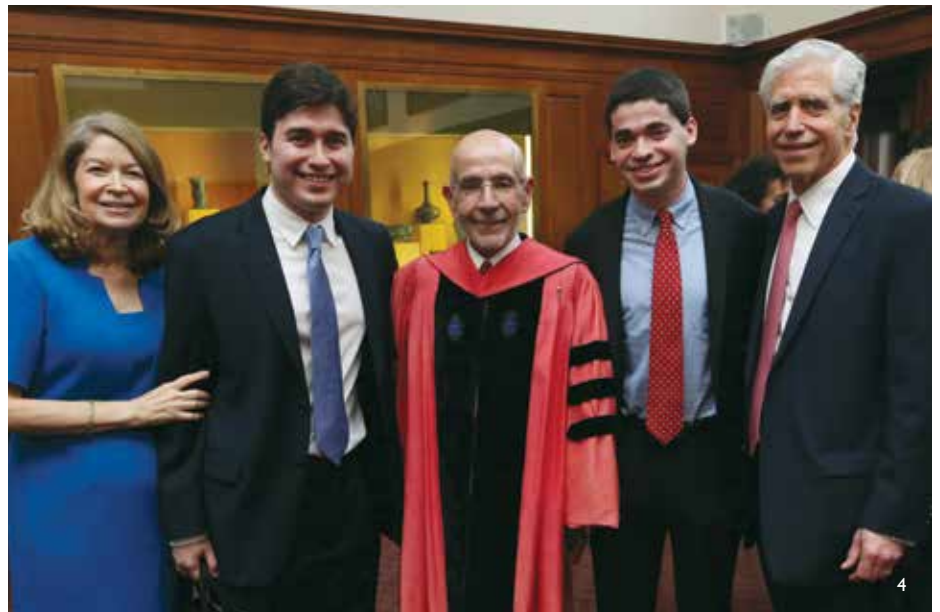


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POSTBAC PREMED CLASS DAY 2016

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT





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1. Assistant Dean Limary Carrasquillo with Mentoring in Medicine participants Jenny Ruiz (mentor) and Ekvia Jimenez Ramos (mentee).
2. Dr. Martha G. Welch delivers the keynote address.
3. Student Speaker Ryan T. Brummond addresses his classmates.
4. Dean Awn with the Heinrich family: Debra, Andrew '16, Marc, and 2015 Postbac Class Day Keynote Speaker Dr. George Heinrich.
5. Randall Li and Alexa Minc show off their new Columbia Postbac Premed Program scrubs.
6. Dean Awn congratulates Anna Blackwood.
7. Allison Horan is excited to receive her scrubs.
8. Stephanie Patterson receives her alumni pin from Emily Frey '15.
9. Erin Templeton is congratulated by Dean of Students Tom Harford.
10. Dean Awn with Erica Udow and guest.
11. Postbac Program Director Andrew Sunshine with Raviv Markovitz and guests.
12. Jenny Soiffer and Chloe Soukas with Postbac Program Director Andrew Sunshine.

NEW GRAD NOTES 2016

GS Bachelor of Arts Recipients



Luca Springer was the first School of General Studies student ever to win the prestigious Rhodes Scholarship, and the first international student from Columbia to

be selected as a Rhodes scholar from his home country in 18 years. Springer, a German and Austrian dual citizen, played basketball competitively in Europe before coming to GS. Springer enrolled in the Dual BA Program Between Columbia and Sciences Po to major in philosophy with a concentration in business management, with a goal of changing the public sector in Europe and promoting a policy of inclusiveness. He has served as an admissions ambassador for both GS and Sciences Po and graduated with a BA from both. He is a member of the GS Honor Society.

Born in Westwood, Calif., **Alexandra Cohen** has been competing as a figure skater since the age of 12. A 2006 Olympic silver medalist, three-time World Championship medalist, 2003 Grand Prix Final Champion and 2006 U.S. Champion, Cohen was recently inducted to the U.S. Figure Skating Hall of Fame as a member of the class of 2016. Following both her grandfather and sister in attending Columbia, Alexandra majored in philosophy, played for the Columbia women's rugby team, and was named to Dean's List. Since graduation, she has continued to train as a figure skater while pursuing a career in finance.



Born in Lusaka, Zambia, **Alena Dooner** attended the School of General Studies while raising three daughters. Her youngest, Ailis (19), is currently enrolled at Columbia

College. Dooner transferred to GS in 2013 from Monterey Peninsula College where she maintained a stellar GPA. Prior to college, Alena worked full time for 10 years at the Monterey Bay Aquarium as an educator and lab technician while interning with the Monterey Bay Aquarium Research Institute. After graduating with her BA in sustainable development, Alena returned to the Monterey Bay Aquarium to pursue her passion for marine conservation and environmental education.



In 2010, **Edna Simbi** was granted asylum in the United States after refusing wife inheritance, a patriarchal cultural practice of her tribe in Nyanza Province, Kenya. She speaks

several languages including Swahili, Spanish, Twi, Luo, Duruma, and French. Prior to GS, Edna worked as a public relations executive, managing a portfolio of over 300 corporate clients. She attended American River College in Sacramento, Calif., where she served as president of a local chapter of Phi Theta Kappa. At Columbia, she participated in the five-year dual degree program with SIPA, studying political science at GS while pursuing an MA in international security policy. She is a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Scholar, and, while a student at GS, acted as a representative of Working Students, GSSC, and Columbia University Family Support Network. Edna currently works at both the United Nations and Goldman Sachs. She hopes to become a UN diplomat serving

developing nations and communities impacted by political oppression, gender inequity, and resource scarcity.



Born in Hong Kong, **Nga Sze Choi** is a graduate of the Joint Bachelor's Program between City University of Hong Kong and Columbia University. Before attending

college, Nga was selected to attend the Hong Kong Academy for Gifted Education, a non-governmental organization providing research-based education to gifted students. While a student at CityU, she was awarded the Chow Sang Sang Group Entrance Scholarship which enabled her to enroll in the Joint Bachelor's Program in 2014. Prior to arriving in New York to attend Columbia, Choi conducted research in geographic imaging at the Satellite Remote Sensing Receiving Station at The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Inspired to study biology by public health issues in Hong Kong, Choi graduated with a BA in biology and plans to become a microbiology researcher.



Yanyang Chen is a graduate of the Joint Bachelor's Program between City University of Hong Kong and Columbia University. While attending high school in Beijing,

Yanyang interned at the Institute of Genetics and Developmental Biology at the Chinese Academy of the Sciences. During the one-month program, she researched the process of plant tissue culture, which encouraged her to major in applied biology at CityU. Yanyang plans to pursue a PhD in biology while developing her programming and image-processing skills at a research institute. She is a member of the GS Honor Society.

Welcome
to the
**GS Alumni
Association**

Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program Graduates



Ryan Brummond, a native of Milwaukee, Wis., graduated from Marquette University with a Bachelor of Science in computational mathematics in 2003. Following his graduation, he was commissioned as an infantry officer in the United States Marine Corps and was deployed multiple times to Iraq and the Horn of Africa. In 2009, he joined the United States Army Special Forces Regiment, serving as a Green Beret team leader in Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Middle East. Brummond received numerous awards for his service and leadership to his country, including the Bronze Star Medal and the Marine Corps Achievement Medal with "V" for valor. In the military, Brummond dedicated his professional life to education, care, and protection, and the medical field became a natural continuation of these personal values

upon his transition into civilian life. During his deployments, he witnessed the positive impact of quality health-care delivery services in remote parts of the world, leading him to enroll in the Columbia Postbac Premed Program in the fall of 2014. A Dean's List student in 2015, Brummond will be returning to Afghanistan with his reserve unit after graduation. Upon his safe return, he will apply to medical schools, with plans to enroll in the fall of 2017.



Max Pensack grew up in Steamboat Springs, Colo., where he was the valedictorian of his high school class. He graduated from Columbia College in 2011 with a Bachelor of Arts in philosophy, earning Dean's List honors in each of his final five semesters. Having performed in six productions for the Columbia University Theatre

Department while an undergrad, he briefly pursued an acting career, performing in the 45th Street Theatre's *Something Outrageous*. After deciding that an acting career would not provide the fulfillment he sought, Max moved to Japan for two years to teach English as part of the prestigious JET Program. Inspired by the compassion, intelligence, and selflessness of the medical staff who had cared for his father, a physician himself, during various medical procedures, Max then decided to pursue a career in medicine and enrolled in the Columbia Postbac Premed Program in the fall of 2014. During his time in the Postbac Premed Program, he founded the Columbia Society for Medical Humanities and worked as a research assistant in an Alzheimer's clinic and neurobiology lab at Weill Cornell Medical College. A two-time Dean's List student, Max was accepted via linkage to Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons, where he enrolled in fall 2016.

Medical Training's *Rite of Passage*

Since the early 1990s, more than 100 medical, dental, and other health care schools in the U.S. and internationally have held White Coat Ceremonies, an event that marks the start of a student's training toward becoming a health-care professional. In addition to including a recitation of the Hippocratic Oath, the centuries-old promise medical professionals make to uphold the ethical standards of their soon-to-be profession, the ceremonies include a formal robing of students in a short, white lab coat in the presence of faculty members, family, and friends. Some 2016 graduates of the School of General Studies and the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program shared their White Coat Ceremony photos with *The Owl*. For more, visit gs.columbia.edu/postbac/news-alumni?article=white-coat



1. *Nicolas Ramsay '16 is training at Florida International University Herbert Wertheim College of Medicine.*
2. *Casimir Klim '16 is training at University of Michigan Medical School.*
3. *Juliana Elkouri '16BPM took advantage of GS's linkage agreement with Columbia University College of Dental Medicine and matriculated in the fall.*





Elizabeth Ross '16

From Rural Tennessee to the Ivy League

Growing up in rural Tennessee as the child of parents who were mentally ill and substance abusers, Elizabeth Ross's prospects were bleak. Yet through pure determination, the support of her partner, and inspiration from her two children, she graduated from Columbia in May. This fall, she matriculated in an exclusive JD/PhD program at Harvard University in African American studies with a focus on mass incarceration and prison reform.

From age 16, Ross worked in hospitality and restaurant management. As a young mother at 25, she was diagnosed with Takayasu's Arteritis, a rare, life-threatening, incurable disease that causes inflammation and damage to the aorta and its branches. She was forced to take permanent medical leave and give up her career. While seeking treatment, she incurred significant medical debt, and, as a result, lost her home and exhausted her savings, but these struggles only strengthened her resolve.

Determined to set a positive example for her children and advocate for health care reform so others would not need to suffer financially as she had, Ross became active in her community. Her partner encouraged her to return to school, and she enrolled at Northeast State Community College

in Blountville, Tenn. She excelled as a student, maintaining outstanding grades that garnered her induction into the Phi Theta Kappa (PTK) honor society. Eventually, she was awarded the PTK Distinguished Chapter Officer prize and a Jack Kent Cooke Foundation Undergraduate Transfer Student Scholarship, which enabled her to attend Columbia, beginning in spring 2014.

"I found a family here at General Studies," Ross said to guests at Reunion. "The advising staff is phenomenal. Along with the [Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship], my GS scholarship made it possible [for me] to come to Columbia.

"The support we found here was life changing—I can't say enough good things about Columbia and the School of General Studies. I was able to join the Family Support Network, which was great with having two children.

"Coming to Columbia School of General Studies helped me change my life," Ross explained. "It allowed me to have my two children see me walk across the stage as the first person in their family to graduate from college, and I know that they now know that they can do something like this. They can attend a school like Columbia."

"The support we found here was life changing—I can't say enough good things about Columbia and the School of General Studies."

Elizabeth Ross '16

GENERAL INTEREST

Alumni News

Before GS

Groups

After GS

Grad Student

GENERAL INTEREST



PHOTO: DOROTHY KURZYDLOWSKI

meet

Jesse Dean '08

New Co-Chair of the General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA)

What do you hope to accomplish as the Co-chair of the GSAA?

As a new Co-chair of the GSAA, I hope to build upon the successes that Jaysen Medhurst and the preceding co-chairs accomplished in creating a robust alumni network. Specifically, I'd like to reach more alumni who graduated 10, 20, 30 years ago and beyond to reconnect them to the GS and University communities as well as to GSAA, so they can contribute to, and benefit from, the wonderful work we are doing.

What drives you to contribute to the GS alumni community?

The GS community has always been richly diverse, talented, and broad-minded, and continues to inspire me to excel at everything I do. I have found that the more I contribute to the GS alumni community, the more I receive in return, including deep and lasting friendships.

What's been the most fun and/or rewarding GSAA project with which you've been involved?

One of the most rewarding GSAA projects was helping to create the by-laws that formed what is now GSAA. GS is the premier Ivy League school for nontraditional students, and now we have a premier alumni association to match.

What are you currently doing career-wise? Where do you work, and what do you do?

Currently, I am Director of Digital Communications and Marketing at VNA Health Group, New Jersey's largest nonprofit provider of home health, hospice, house call doctors, and public health services. GS was my path out of Wall Street and into nonprofit work. Since graduating from GS, I have been fortunate to have had a series of roles that have helped me build expertise in digital and content marketing, intersecting health-care, nonprofits, and aging. I enrolled at GS wanting to pursue journalism, and although I did not take that specific path, I am grateful for opportunities to tell stories of how the organizations I work for positively impact the health and well-being of so many people.

What do you do for fun in your free time? Tell us about your home life.

In my free time, I enjoy foraging farm stands, cooking and baking, and spending time with my partner in our North Fork home. I have always enjoyed preparing meals for others for as long as I can remember and have advanced as a cook over the years. Now, I often experiment with food that is in season and locally sourced. I also like to stay active with yoga, running, and cycling, and I have started training for my first triathlon.

What is your favorite GS memory?

In my second year at GS, I participated in Columbia University's SEE-U summer program in the Dominican Republic and studied the impact of development on nesting sites of the endangered hawksbill sea turtle. At least half of us were GS students, and I made great friends. Spending five weeks on a Caribbean island studying marine ecology, eating goat for the first time, and learning about the people of the Dominican Republic and their culture was pretty amazing!

GS Alumni Association News

Reintroducing the OWL AWARD

Endeavoring to reestablish a tradition from the past, last summer the GSAA reinstated the School of General Studies Owl Award. Originally created by Barbara Levy '48 and Marshall Page '35, for years the Owl Award was given to graduates, benefactors, and faculty members in recognition of outstanding service to the School. The first iteration of the reinstated prize will be presented at the annual Alumni Dinner during Reunion Weekend in June.

Over the six months leading up to Reunion, nominations will be solicited for candidates with proven volunteer work that benefited the School with community building and rich programming. Nominations will be considered by the GS Alumni Awards Committee, and then select candidates will be proposed to the Dean of the School of General Studies and finally confirmed by the GS Alumni Board.

To nominate a graduate, benefactor, or faculty member who has demonstrated exemplary service to GS, the following supporting documentation is required: a narrative outlining service to GS and criteria for nomination; a professional curriculum vitae and/or résumé; a minimum of two letters of recommendation outlining supporting examples that reflect the award criteria. (One letter must be from a GSAA board member.) Importantly, the recipient must be present at Reunion to accept the award.

For more information regarding the Owl Award, please contact the Office of Alumni Relations at gsalumni@columbia.edu or 212-851-7432.

GSAA Officers

GSAA Co-chairs:

Jesse Dean '08, Jaysen Medhurst '06

Awards Committee Co-chairs:

Justin Nathaniel Carter '14, Anita Christy '88

Communications Committee Chair:

Nicholas Sinchak '13

Outreach Committee Co-chairs:

Andrea Gardner '13, Kirsty Jardine '15

Programming Committee Co-chairs:

Jessica Garza '09, Lydia Chan '12

Annual Fund Committee Co-chairs:

Arthur Bingham '84, Stacia Kargman '80

Contribute your expertise!

To participate in a GSAA committee, contact

Columbia GS Alumni Relations

622 West 113th Street, MC 4525

New York, NY 10025

Phone: 212-851-7432

Fax: 212-851-1957

email: gsalumni@columbia.edu

You've Got The Low Down

A new Columbia Alumni Association blog and podcast called *The Low Down* showcases the latest thought leadership, musings, and views from Columbia's diverse and opinionated alumni community. Divided into sections including CAA Today, Alumni Life, Culture, Careers, and Innovations, the site offers an edgy look at what's going on on campus, the latest alumni news, and fun facts for Columbia insiders. Check it out at <http://thelowdown.alumni.columbia.edu>.

Community: A New Online Experience Awaits

Community is a new and improved alumni website. Launched earlier this year, the easy-to-use site is the only verified and comprehensive private Columbia alumni online network. Once Columbians sign in with their UNI, they can create a profile, locate classmates and other CU friends, network with fellow alumni, showcase their latest writings and other work, and share news and updates.

Terrific for pursuing career opportunities, meeting fellow alumni in a new city, or reconnecting with old friends, *Community's* groups make networking with fellow Columbians seamless. To get started, visit <http://alumni.columbia.edu/Community>, set up your profile, introduce yourself, and seek out others listed in the directory.



PHOTO: SCOTT PESNER

At Commencement, Richard M. Space, Jr. '05, pictured, was awarded the Alumni Medal, the University's highest honor given to alumni. Along with others being recognized for 10 years or more of distinguished service to Columbia, Richie was interviewed for a video that premiered during Alumni Leaders Weekend in October. To watch the outcome of the shoot, visit the CAA YouTube Channel.

2016 REUNION RECAP

“From a faculty perspective, an undergraduate is an undergraduate is an undergraduate,” School of General Studies Dean Peter J. Awn reported at the GS Alumni Lunch on Saturday, June 4, when he spoke to approximately 100 alumni in attendance in the Skyline Ballroom of Faculty House. Such news is a tribute to the work that the School’s administration and students have accomplished over the last two decades—work that Awn outlined in his annual State of the School address and was highlighted throughout the annual All-Year Alumni Reunion.

“This is not the GS of the 1970s or 1980s; on campus, GS is celebrated,” Awn said.

Furthermore, the beloved dean explained that as GS approaches its 70th anniversary in 2017, the definition of nontraditional students is being expanded, with programs such as the Dual BA with Sciences Po and the Joint Bachelor’s Degree with City University of Hong Kong growing steadily.

After a morning of intellectual stimulation prompted by lectures, such as the keynote remarks from Robert Siegel of National Public Radio’s *All Things Considered* and “Resistance Theory, Domestic Conduct and Shakespeare’s *Othello*” given by Julie Crawford, the Mark Van Doren Professor of Humanities and Chair of Literature Humanities, the luncheon offered an opportunity for alumni to reconnect with old classmates as well as to make new friends.

Throughout the day, more than 200 GS alumni and guests took advantage of various activities, including tours of the Morningside campus and the surrounding neighborhood, a presentation about the burgeoning Manhattanville campus site, and mini-Core classes led by Arts and Sciences faculty. In the early afternoon, “How Can the Sacred Be Sensuous?” led by Professor of Indian Art Vidya Dehejia, and “The Disappointments of Aeneas: High Hopes and Low Blows in Vergil’s *Aeneid*,” given by Classics Department Chair Gareth

Williams, inspired GSers and their guests.

Later on Saturday, GS hosted an affinity reception, in cooperation with Columbia Veterans, a nonprofit organization that serves Columbia alumni, faculty, staff, and students. Host Richie Space ’05 recounted accomplishments and initiatives of the group, while Dean Awn announced the establishment of the Columbia Veterans’ Center for Transition, Integration, and Leadership.

Following an early evening wine-tasting event on Low Plaza, General Studies alumni regrouped at Faculty House for a cocktail reception and formal dinner co-hosted by Reunion chairs Lydia Chan ’12 and Jessica Garza ’09. Recent graduate Kirsty Jardine ’15 addressed attendees, explaining how GS opened doors for her, and how her success as a nontraditional student led to her enrollment in the accelerated MPH program at Columbia’s Mailman School of Public Health.

New graduate Elizabeth Ross ’16 spoke about her life’s path, from growing up in rural Tennessee to the Ivy League. A child of parents who were substance abusers, she described how she beat the odds and, through hard work and with the support of her partner, was awarded a Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship upon graduation from community college—a scholarship that enabled her to attend GS, which in turn positioned her for acceptance at Harvard University, where this fall she enrolled in a JD/PhD program.

To conclude the dinner, Dean Awn briefly spoke to attendees, highlighting the contributions founding members of the new GS Alumni Association have made. Awn, along with GSAA Co-chair Jaysen Medhurst ’09, recognized outgoing GSAA Co-chair Mason Beard ’04 for her work with the growing organization. The moment was a heartwarming capstone to a day recognizing the recent accomplishments of both the School and its alumni organization.

The night concluded with the much-anticipated Starlight Reception, a well-attended annual gathering featuring live music and dancing on Low Plaza.



1. Saturday night featured the Starlight Reception, an annual gathering that features live music and dancing on Low Plaza.
2. Outgoing GSAA Co-chair Mason Beard ’04 was recognized by GSAA Co-chair Jaysen Medhurst ’09 for her work with the growing GS Alumni Association.
3. Mini-Core classes led by Arts and Sciences faculty, including “How Can the Sacred Be Sensuous?” presented by Professor Vidya Dehejia, were attended by alumni.
4. Velma George, Syl Nyamu, Dean Peter J. Awn, Fidel Malena ’11, and Veronica Murray ’92 enjoyed an elegant cocktail hour and dinner at Faculty House.

PHOTO: MICHAEL DIVITO



Alumnae Anita Christy '88 and Sheridan Gayer '04 congratulated new graduate Hilary Price '16 at the **Reception for February Graduates** on December 15, 2015.

PHOTO: CHAR SMULLMAN



An exuberant group of alumni gathered on February 11 at Upper Story by Charlie Palmer for the **Midwinter Mixer** in Midtown Manhattan.



The **Senior/Alumni Graduation Reception** was hosted at the Columbia Alumni Center on May 5.

Graduate Joshua Rapp '16 (left) was welcomed to the GSAA by Stephen Caruso '14 (right).

PHOTO: MICHAEL DISARNO



PHOTO: DAVID DINI

More than 600 alumni attended **Columbia Alumni Leaders Weekend** from October 7-9.

Club leaders from around the globe came together to learn best practices and exchange ideas about how to best represent the University and build alumni communities in their regions.

Michael Rain '10 and gBadebo Williams '11 are leaders in CAA shared-interest groups.

Upcoming Events

All-Class Reunion June 2-3, 2017

Join us June 3 for a gala dinner celebrating **Dean Awn's leadership and GS's 70th Anniversary!**

Save the Date

More details coming soon at gs.columbia.edu/reunion

Contribute your ideas! Help us plan! Contact gsalumni@columbia.edu



PHOTO: EILEEN BARROSO

Richard M. Space, Jr. '05

Vision into *Action*

and White co-founded the Recent Alumni Leadership Committee (RALC) in 2007.

A Vice President of Investment Banking at Morgan Stanley, Space was raised in Queens, N.Y., where he attended St. Francis Preparatory School. Following high school, he enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps and served for four years. He then returned to New York and worked full time at the United Nations in diplomatic security while also attending GS full time. An economics-political science major, he served on the General Studies Student Council and was a member of the Columbia Rugby Football Club.

While at GS, Space, like many of his fellow military veterans, sought a student community that understood his service background. Along with about a dozen friends, he formed what started out as a social club and eventually became the U.S. Military Veterans of Columbia University (MilVets). Over time, MilVets evolved into a robust organization that not only worked to support and mentor new undergraduates who were transitioning to civilian and student life, but also served as an advocacy group that contributed to the implementation of national veterans' education policies such as the Yellow Ribbon Program.

"As a student, Richie worked hard to build community among GS students," said Mason Beard '04. "This led organically to his work after graduation to connect all GS alumni via RALC, then connecting the GS alumni to the broader network via the Columbia Alumni Association, and finally, focusing on the unique needs of our veteran students and alumni as he built MilVets and the Columbia Veterans Inc."

Space is masterful at seeing where and how he can contribute. "Richie has a huge passion for the GS alumni community," said Janet Griffin, Associate Director of

"Over the last 10 years, his innovative views have been transformative for GS."

– Janet Griffin, Associate Director for Alumni Relations

Alumni Relations. "He has always been willing to serve his alma mater and rally his classmates to join him."

Such contributions, which include mentoring young alumni, advising students, and promoting active alumni engagement over the last decade, drew the attention of fellow GSers and University administrators. In May 2016, along with nine other Columbia graduates, Space was awarded the University's highest honor bestowed upon alumni, the Alumni Medal, an award that recognizes graduates for 10 years or more of distinguished service to Columbia.

Winning the award "was very humbling," Space said, emphasizing that many people contributed to the honor, including the aforementioned White, Beard, and Ariel, as well as Christopher Riano '07, Alexandre Vial '09, and other alumni and administrators, such as Jose Gonzalez, Sheila Brogan Testa '91, and Griffin.

Suggesting that the recognition belonged to a community of people, Space explained: "At Commencement, it was very exciting to see the GS graduates on the right side of the Plaza waving and cheering as I walked down the stairs from Low. The energy was palpable. You are reminded of the responsibility of the degree—the rights, responsibilities, and privileges thereto attached.' It refocuses you."

By Allison Scola

As a new alumnus in 2005, Richard M. Space, Jr., known as Richie to friends and family, felt disconnected. Introductions to previous graduates of Columbia University School of General Studies were few, meaning that current students and new graduates like himself had a tenuous connection to the existing General Studies alumni network.

Soon after graduation, Space and a group of his fellow recent graduates including Justin White '05, Mason Beard '04, and Matan Ariel '06, to name a few, discussed how they missed the community that they enjoyed while students. They craved a network they in which they could participate, and more importantly, "a framework for future alumni to push the ball forward," Space explained. Out of this desire to "graduate into something," Space



Judith Tanenbaum '83PBPM

Profound Impacts

psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine because people aren't often comfortable attaching their name to psychotherapy, like Brooks has been," Tanenbaum says. "Hopefully she will inspire more philanthropy."

“Judy is an inspirational therapist who deserves great recognition in her community of fellow physicians.”

– *Brooks Betts*

“I would not have the life I have today without the work I have done with Dr. Tanenbaum,” Brooks Betts says of psychiatrist Dr. Judith Tanenbaum '83PBPM. “Our work together is and has been more than significant—it changed my life.”

While Betts' testimonial speaks to the success of her therapeutic work with Tanenbaum, even more impactful is her recent action: endowing the Betts-Tanenbaum Chair in Clinical Psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medicine. The contribution came about when Betts began to plan her estate; she sought a way to honor the support she received from Tanenbaum and to enable other psychiatrists to have similar outcomes with their patients. Although she considered donating toward a scholarship for medical students, upon further investigation it became clear that an endowed professorship would greatly benefit Weill Cornell's clinical program by providing support to an eminent faculty member and offering an opportunity for medical students, residents, and, ultimately, patients to benefit from the chair's work in teaching, research, and clinical practice. In addition, Betts' gesture brings greater visibility to a medical field that can often be overlooked.

“There is only one other clinical chair in

One might say that the Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program had an equally significant impact on Tanenbaum's life. She says the support, encouragement, and education she received from her advisors, faculty, and coursework as a student at Columbia thoroughly prepared her for Weill Cornell Medical College, where she earned her MD in 1988. Since completing her psychiatry residency at New York Presbyterian's Payne Whitney Clinic in 1992, Tanenbaum has been in private practice specializing in affective disorders (primarily anxiety and depressive disorders); couples therapy; family therapy; and personality disorders. Additionally, she is a Clinical Assistant Professor in Psychiatry at Weill Cornell and New York Presbyterian Hospital, where she devotes her time to teaching medical students and supervising psychiatry residents, and also serves on the Psychiatry Residency Selection Committee, interviewing psychiatry resident candidates.

Tanenbaum is currently working on her first book intended for general audiences. Aimed at helping readers achieve healthful relationships across their lives, the text will have a particular focus on interpersonal relationships leading to marriage or

a partnership and the work that such commitments entail.

Tanenbaum credits GS with launching her into the career she loves. Describing her time as a Postbac Premed student, she says, “I felt stimulated and supported, and I was challenged. Yes, it was competitive, but I couldn't wait to become a doctor.”

Her experience inspired her in 2010 to establish the Phyllis M. Kippur Memorial and William A. and Dr. Judith H. Tanenbaum Family Scholarship, an award that supports three Postbac Program students each year as they pursue their goals towards becoming a physician. Furthermore, Tanenbaum contributes her time and energy to supporting the School. From 2009 to 2013, she participated in the GS Leadership Committee, and has served on the Board of Visitors since its inception 2011. For a number of years, she has lent her expertise by serving on career panels, leading students in stress-management workshops, coaching students through the medical school application and interview process, and guest-lecturing about psychiatry.

A dedicated philanthropist, Dr. Tanenbaum is a member of the Weill Cornell Medicine Dean's Circle. Along with her husband William, she has helped fund a small consultation room in New York Presbyterian's new psychiatric emergency facility, and the couple has also given in support of a new auditorium at New York Presbyterian and toward the fund of the Weill Cornell Class of 1988. Most important to Tanenbaum, however, is the time she volunteers in support of medical and premedical students.

“I want to help make clinicians for the future,” she says. “I want to help people change their lives, whether through therapy or through scholarship. The validation of my work comes from seeing people change.”

THE GENERAL DIRECTION

PHOTO: DIANE BONDAREFF

Alumni Notes

1950s

Erica Herz Van Adelsberg '51 published her memoir, *Feeling Great and Grateful: My Journey Through the Holocaust and Beyond*. Available from Amazon, the work details the despair and unspeakable horrors that defined her adolescence, which was spent at the Westerbork Transit Camp during the Nazi occupation of Holland, but also discusses how, once liberated, she learned to live a life with hope, persistence, and joy at its center. Today, Herz Van Adelsberg speaks with students and adults about her life to increase awareness of the Holocaust and spread peace.



John D. Simmons '56 P: '85CC, '87LAW wrote a note of gratitude to the Office of Alumni Relations. He explained, "Columbia alone made it possible for me to receive a world-class education while working full time and paying 100 percent of my expenses." Listed in *Who's Who East, America, Business & Finance*, and *World* since 1962, the British-born Simmons also earned an MBA from Rutgers University and completed coursework toward a PhD from New York University—all while working full time to pay his tuition and fees, a practice he started in 1952 upon matriculating at Columbia GS. "General Studies understood my background and made it possible for me to rise in the world," wrote Simmons.



In 2015, author **Robert L. Gold, PhD '57** published a historical murder mystery based in Savannah, *Dead to Rights*, for Marcinson Press. A public speaker and prolific writer, Gold taught history at Southern Illinois University, Michigan State University, Northwestern University, and the University of South Florida. Much of his work focuses on the history of American penal institutions. In 2016, he released another historical murder mystery, *Cut of the Cross*, part of his Colonial City Murder Mystery Series.

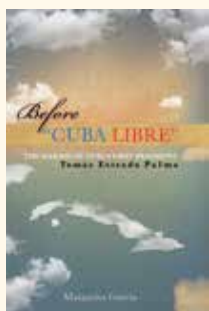


Herbert Kuhner '59, who lives in Vienna, Austria, continues to write and translate the literature of Austrian ethnic groups into English. He has written several novels, such as *The Assembly-Line Prince* and *The Grey Haze*, and in 2014 was featured in a film, *En Route with Herbert Kuhner*, by Fritz Kleibel. Learn more at www.HerbertKuhner.com.



1960s

Kenneth A. Green '64 is an artist, lecturer, and writer living in Florida. He recently published *SHOCHET, Redefining the Meaning of Ritual Slaughter*. *SHOCHET* explores the devolution of Jason from a seemingly upwardly mobile, middle-class individual to a serial killer fascinated with Kabbalistic occultism and human sacrifice. *SHOCHET* was published by Outskirts Press and is available on Amazon.

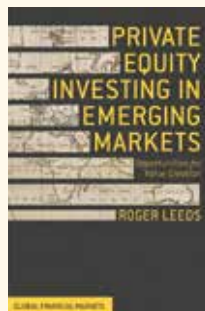


Margarita Garcia '65, '67GSAS, '72GSAS is a Professor Emerita in the Department of Psychology at Montclair State University. After retiring from teaching, Garcia returned to her first love, history. In 2004 she began researching the life and work of Tomás Estrada Palma, the first president of Cuba (1902-1906), and the result of her labor is *Before "Cuba Libre": The Making of Cuba's First President Tomás Estrada Palma*, a biography published in English by Outskirts Press in 2016. The book, which Garcia also wrote and published in Spanish, describes the intimate story of the patriot, teacher, idealistic revolutionary, scrupulously honest man, and stubborn president.

Wolfgang von Manowski '65 submitted a memory of beloved teacher Herman Ausubel, writing: "[He] knew just about everyone. Ausubel taught his favorite course, An Introduction to Western Civilization, 1500 to the Present, for many years. He was a master of the Socratic method of teaching. He was an example of a gifted teacher who knew how to inspire his students. Ask anyone who studied in GS in the 1960s and '70s, and the one course that many will remember is Ausubel's. As someone who worked closely with him, I detected in him a strong desire to publish; and he did write several books on Victorian England. But his fame derived from being a great and inspiring teacher even if he did not want to openly admit it."



John Boyd '66 earned a doctorate in applied technology, training, and development with a special emphasis in higher education at the University of North Texas. Boyd taught at Baylor University in Waco, Texas, from 1985 until he retired in 2011. After retiring, he served as an adjunct professor at the University of Mary Hardin-Baylor, where he taught microeconomics.



Roger Leeds '66 is a Professor at Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies. Leeds recently published *Private Equity Investing in Emerging Markets: Opportunities for Value Creation*. Published by Palgrave Macmillan US, *Private Equity Investing in Emerging Markets* draws on Leeds' four decades of experience as a practitioner and academician working with private equity investors, entrepreneurs, and policymakers in over 100 developing countries around the world.



Demetria Daniels '67 recently published *Adventures of a Buxom Blonde (Meeting Celebrities in New York)*. An account of her encounters with celebrities in New York City and beyond, the memoir is an extension of Gotham Gossip (gothamgossip2.blogspot.com), a blog that she has published since 2001. Additionally, Daniels has written the book and lyrics to a musical titled *Holiday in Heaven* that can be previewed on YouTube.



Emmy Award-winning producer **Eva Zelig '67** recently released the documentary *An Unknown Country*, about European Jews who escaped the Nazis during the Holocaust and found refuge in Ecuador. Featuring firsthand accounts and archival material, Zelig not only tells her family's story about escaping Czechoslovakia and the transition to their adopted country, but also that of others who she knew from her childhood in the South American country. Zelig has written and produced works for PBS, The Learning Channel, ABC, National Geographic TV, and The New York Times TV, to name a few. Visit AnUnknownCountry-Movie.com for information about screenings.



Lesnevich, Marzano-Lesnevich & Trigg, LLC announced that co-founding partner and chair of its Family Law Department, **Madeline Marzano-Lesnevich, Esq. '68**, was sworn in as the vice president of the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers at its annual meeting in Chicago, Ill. Marzano-Lesnevich is a past president of the organization's New Jersey chapter; a past chair of the Family Law Section of the New Jersey State Bar Association, and a recipient of the Saul R. Tischler Award, given for lifetime contributions to family law.



1970s

Ed Coll '73, '76BUS participated in a Columbia Welcome Reception in Singapore in April.



1980s

Nancy Rappaport '83PBPM, a child psychiatrist and associate professor at Harvard Medical School, wrote a one-woman show about her recent battle with breast cancer and her journey back to health. Called *Regeneration*, the play is not only about her illness and healing, but it is also about mortality and “what we do when we get to look on the other side,” Rappaport told *Boston Magazine* before performances this past fall at Harvard and Mount Auburn Cemetery, a place where Rappaport found solace during her illness.



Susan T. Bigger '84, '85BUS has been a real estate professional since 1998. Recently, she was recognized by *Continental Who's Who* as a Pinnacle Professional because of her work with Houlihan Lawrence. Originally based in New Rochelle, N.Y., she recently relocated to Hilton Head, S.C., where she is working as a referral agent for her New York colleagues who have clients considering buying or selling properties in her new area. *Westchester Magazine* named her a Five Star Real Estate Agent and the National Association of Professional Women acknowledged her as a VIP Woman of the Year.



Bideawee, a leading pet adoption and animal welfare organization serving the New York metropolitan area and Long Island, named

Dolores Swirin-Yao '84, '88GSAS President and Chief Executive Officer. Swirin-Yao's career spans more than 25 years of experience in the leadership of nonprofit organizations. She was most recently Executive Director of the York College Foundation and Vice President for Institutional Advancement at York College of the City University of New York. Previously, Swirin-Yao served as Chief Executive Officer of the Girl Scout Council of Greater New York and Executive Director of the New York City chapter of The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.



In July, **Dr. Calvin Thomas '84PBPM** was featured in an article in *The Port Arthur News* of Port Arthur, Texas. Thomas is vice chair of obstetrics and gynecology at Woodhull Medical Center in Brooklyn, N.Y. He earned his MD at New York Medical College.



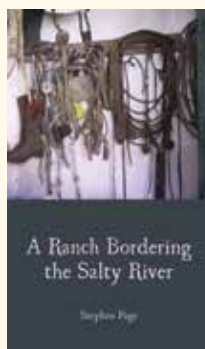
Author **Nkosi Ife Bandele '89** recently released his latest novel, *The Ape is Dead!*, on Crimson Cloak Publishing. *The Ape is Dead!* is the story of a black student's journey toward true love on Columbia's politically charged campus in the late 1980s, when an alleged racist attack perpetrated by a gang of white football players prompts a city-wide crisis. Bandele is an adjunct professor of academic writing and literature at several universities in New York City. He has completed three novels and a number of screen plays. Learn more about Bandele at <http://eshubandele.com>.

1990s

Emily Moorefield '96 is a spoken-word poet known publicly as Emily XYZ. In 2015, she published a Ramones memoir titled *Too Tough to Love: My Life with Johnny Ramone*, co-authored with Cynthia Whitney, the former girlfriend of the late punk guitar icon. Through a series of interviews that took place over a period of about 7 years, Moorefield chronicles Whitney's memories of her longtime and often complex relationship with Johnny Ramone, and provides a no-holds-barred account of Whitney's life as a teenage stripper in 1970s New York, the early days of punk and the Ramones, and the betrayal that nearly shattered the band. *Too Tough to Love: My Life with Johnny Ramone* is available from Amazon.



Writer **Stephen Page '97** recently released *A Ranch Bordering the Salty River* through Finishing Line Press. A gripping tale written in verse, the book is about a disenchanting rancher. Page, who lives in Argentina, is part Shawnee and part Apache. His other books of poetry include *The Timbre of Sand* (1999) and *Still Dandelions* (2004). He has received a Jess Cloud Memorial Prize for Poetry, a Writer-in-Residence award with stipend from the Montana Artists Refuge, a full Writer Fellowship from the Vermont Studio Center, an Imagination Grant from Cleveland State University, and an Arvon Foundation Ltd. Grant.



Film director and writer **David Ariniello '99** co-produced the film *Spa Night*, which premiered in competition at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. The film, which was written and directed by Andrew Ahn, went on to win the Sundance's U.S. Dramatic Special Jury Award for Breakthrough Performance for its lead actor Joe Seo and the OutFest 2016 U.S. Grand Jury Prize for Best Narrative Film. A story about a young man navigating his own self-discovery and the wishes of his traditional Korean family in Los Angeles, the film may be viewed at screenings throughout the globe. Ariniello holds a doctorate in English literature from the University of California, Irvine.



2000s

Deogratias “Deo” Niyizonkiza ’01 has been named a 2016 Great Immigrant by the Carnegie Corporation of New York. Niyizonkiza is the Founder and CEO of Village Health Works, a nonprofit organization in Burundi committed to providing primary health care services as well as economic development programs. Niyizonkiza is one of a distinguished group of honorees that includes Google CEO Sundar Pichai; Ronald J. Daniels, the president of Johns Hopkins University; and actress and filmmaker Isabella Rossellini.

Audrey (née Shore) Beerman ’04GS/JTS has joined Meridian Risk Management in Pelham, N.Y. as a Wealth Preservation Specialist. She is also active in the Junior League of Pelham.

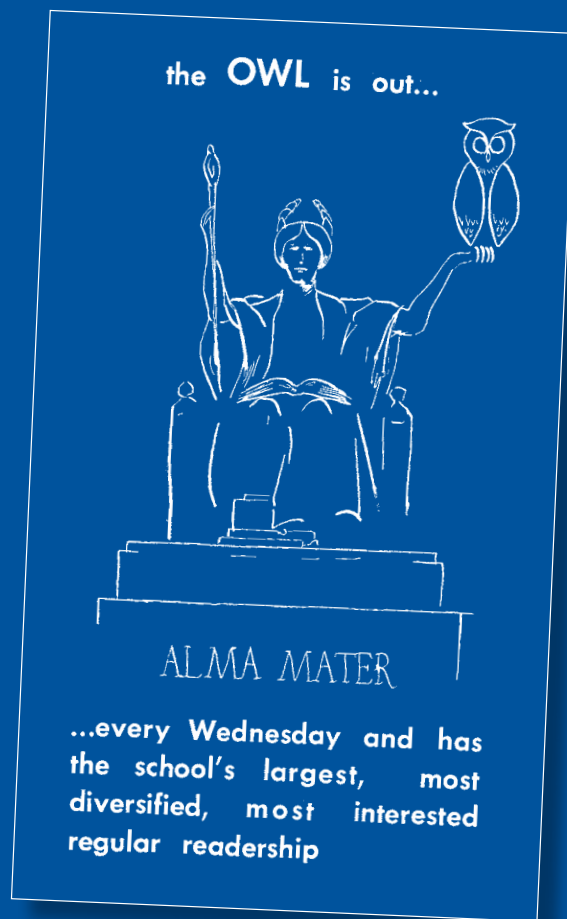


Ariel Osterweis ’06 joined the faculty of The Sharon Disney Lund School of Dance at California Institute of the Arts, teaching dance history, aesthetics, and pedagogy.

Tom in America, a film by producer and director **Flavio Alves ’07**, has received more than 32 awards, including Best Short Film at the 2016 Albuquerque Film Festival, Best Director at the 2015 Nevada International Film Festival, and Best Short Film at the 2015 Moondance International Film Festival. Starring Academy Award nominees Burt Young and Sally Kirkland, *Tom in America* has received accolades from around the world. Alves, who received political asylum upon arriving in the United States from Brazil in 1998, is currently in production on his first full-length feature film, *The Garden Left Behind*.



Christopher Riano ’07 was named a Scholar in Constitutional Law and Civics for New York by the James Madison Legacy Project, a nationwide initiative of the Center for Civic Education that aims to increase the achievement of over 200,000 students in attaining state standards in civics and government. Over the next three years, Riano will provide professional and curricular support to teachers of high-need high school students in the areas of constitutional law, jurisprudence, and civics.



Burton Arkin ’61 Reminds Us of the Early Years of The Owl

In 1961, *The Owl* was a weekly newspaper produced by an editorial team of less than 10 people. Burton Arkin, who worked on public relations and advertising sales, explained that the dedicated staff, consisting of Thomas C. Dillenbergh, Tom Lewis, Fergus O’Sconnlain, Thomas Simpson, Wallis E. Wood, Miriam Micable, and others, worked to create the four-to-six-page publication with a typewriter and carbon paper while maintaining their coursework.

“The *Spectator* was the University’s daily. *The Owl* was like a little orphan. We had a good following. I think we were successful getting our paper out and at maintaining a position on campus. We were trying to make *The Owl* the voice of us older people,” Arkin said.

In April 1961, the paper hosted a concert in McMillin Theater, now the Miller Theater, that featured Ossie Davis & Ruby Dee, George Tipton, The Journeymen, and the Clyde Turner Chorale with Irving Barnes. An advert for the event that Arkin submitted for this issue stated the spectacular was a benefit to aid the “Southern Freedom Movement of which Dr. Martin Luther King is leader.”

“The mood at the time was difficult, to say the least,” Arkin said, alluding to the notion that the atmosphere of the nation was similar to today’s. “There was a growing sensitivity towards civil rights. A lot of students at the time were on the GI Bill after fighting in the Korean War. You had a lot of people with broad experience and with families, like me.

“The newspaper helped cultivate the community. We jammed into the GS Lounge. We made new friends. Everyone was working their backsides off!”



Anne Tilney '81 Fosters Connections

By Adrienne Anifant

With almost 12 percent of the millennial generation out of work and many more underemployed, as well as 10,000 baby boomers retiring every day, Anne Tilney '81 believes her organization can offer a remedy. Tilney is Founder and Board Chair of Apprenticeship Connections, an organization that connects individuals who are passionate to learn a discipline with talented mentors who are excited to impart their professional knowledge, skills, and experience to the next generation.

"I was inspired to create this organization because I believe human mentorships are key to fostering every successful individual," Tilney said. "It was conceived to provide 'a means to a beginning.'"

Among many things, Apprenticeship Connections provides individuals with the opportunities to learn a new skill that may lead to a career, training in valuable skills, the creation of rich relationships between mentors and apprentices, and job references.

After high school, Tilney completed a two-year Associate of Arts degree in liberal arts and then embarked on a career in the financial industry. While working in a field that was unfulfilling, she realized her passion for understanding how people learn. Having honed her interests, she was motivated to return to college to learn more about education, from the varying styles of teaching to the effects of different educational settings and experiences.

"When I knew what I wanted from an education, I was able to go after it and find people to encourage and nurture me to that end. The human aspect of being personally encouraged was critical," Tilney said.

Tilney believes the symbiotic relationship between mentors and apprentices is of mutual benefit.

"Apprenticeships provide a metaphorical arm of encouragement to an apprentice from a mentor. This allows the apprentice to see how he/she can contribute to the community giving him/her emotional maturity to make better decisions on their own behalf, whether he/she remains working in the discipline or chooses an alternative future direction," Tilney said.

"Mentors learn what they know by teaching. They are rewarded by witnessing the flowering of a seedling."



Marey Jencks '08, who writes under the pseudonym Mara White, was featured in the *NY Daily News*. A successful novelist in the urban erotic genre, she has published six novels including *Killing the Sun*, *Missed Connection*, and *Maldeamores (Lovesick)*. The Heightsbound Series is a trilogy that includes the beloved erotic romance books *Heights of Desire* and *Fear of Heights*. Learn more at MaraWhite.com.



Jacqueline Wayans '08 continues to create and produce compelling projects. The radio host, speaker, and singer recently published another book, *Don't Give Up & Win: A Survival Guide to Renewed Virginity*. Based on her own 15 years of experience with abstinence, Wayans focuses on delivering key tips to keep one's commitment during a challenging and often isolating time. "I want to make this journey easier for anyone else that is courageous enough to take it," Wayans said.



Author **Jamie Guzzardo '09** recently published her first novel, *Beechwood Park*, under the name Jamie Righetti. Told in a series of alternating flashbacks and set partially in New York City during the cultural revolution of the 1960s, *Beechwood Park* is the story of twin sisters, Cait and Abby—one fated to destroy the other—mirroring the downfall of Cain and Abel. Guzzardo, who lives in Asheville, N.C., is currently working on her second novel, *The Vanishing Bridge*. Learn more at www.jamierighetti.com.

2010s



Filmmaker **Gerald Jackson, Jr. '12**, the creator of Five Alive Films, has completed production on his latest project, *Missy's Musical Misadventure!*. The production was officially the largest student film short made in the history of Orlando's Valencia College Film Production Program. After a year of planning, production, post-production, and promotions, Five Alive Films premiered the work in February at the school's 2016 Film Celebration event. In August, Jackson released the film's trailer, and during September and October, along with his production team, Jackson sought support for distribution and other costs through a Kickstarter campaign.



Michael Taylor '12 was elected to the Board of Directors of The Old Globe theater in San Diego. "Michael's excitement and love of our art form and his desire to make theater matter to more people are in complete alignment with our values," said Director of Arts Engagement Freedom Bradley-Ballentine. "Michael's presence affirms the Globe's desire to increase diversity and inclusion at every level of the institution."

Eric Drath '94 Steps It Up In More Ways Than One

By Adrienne Anifant

Eric Drath was heading to indoor lacrosse practice in the old Ferris Booth Hall when he made a wrong turn into WKCR, Columbia University's student-run radio station. This serendipitous misstep evolved into a prolific career as a writer, producer, and director, garnering him two Emmy Awards in recognition of his excellence in the television industry.

"It was love at first sight," Drath said, describing what he witnessed at the station. "It was in November and during the elections, and the excitement and importance of communicating news and telling stories immediately hooked me."

Drath's time at WKCR led to an almost decade-long career in network journalism, starting with an internship at ABC News, followed by a stint in Atlanta at CNN, and finishing with the launch of Fox News Channel in New York City. While on an assignment in New York, Drath covered a boxing match at Yonkers Raceway. The match led to another fateful choice: to become a boxing agent. He proceeded to represent over 40 fighters and traveled to championship matches around the world.

In 2008, Drath combined his two passions to make *Assault in the Ring*, a compelling documentary recounting the scandalous boxing match between Billy Collins Jr. and Luis Resto—a story of the most heinous crime committed inside the ring, little known outside of boxing. "College helped create a curiosity and prompted me to look underneath the surface," Drath said. "It also led to a desire to better understand the plight of humanity, and in this case, to understand why some would go to any lengths to win."

Nevertheless, the story of *Assault in the Ring* was not so straightforward, and Drath almost abandoned the project when it seemed like a pointless endeavor. "There were moments making the film when it would have been easy to stop rolling and quit," said Drath. Yet the hard work paid off when he received his first Emmy for Outstanding Sports Documentary after it premiered on HBO. "It really showed me that if you want something bad enough and are willing to work for it, you can do anything."



Since then, he has produced and directed more than 15 films and shorts including *Renée*, the story of a transgender pro tennis player and Yale graduate Renée Richards, which aired on ESPN after its 2011 premiere at the Tribeca Film Festival.

Other projects included a short film series for Marvel and ESPN titled *1 of 1 – Origins*, which used animation and interviews to explore how professional athletes harness and develop their superpower-like abilities and athletic talents. He won his second Emmy for *No Más*, about Roberto Duran and Sugar Ray Leonard's infamous 1980 boxing match.

Drath has expanded into areas other than sports. He produced a feature documentary, *Theodore Bikel: In the Shoes of Sholom Aleichem*, about Yiddish theater and culture. In March 2016, at the Tribeca Film Festival, Drath debuted *A More Perfect Union*, a short film produced for FiveThirtyEight.com about the 2008 presidential election controversy surrounding remarks made by the Rev. Jeremiah Wright, longtime pastor of then-candidate Barack Obama '83CC. His current projects include a documentary for ESPN on the 1995 NCAA champion Nebraska Cornhuskers football team, and he recently returned from Panama, where he spent three days filming with former dictator Manuel Noriega for an upcoming project.

"It's most satisfying when you can evocatively communicate a story to a wide audience," Drath explained.

The director and producer is now launching another story. Drawing on his passion for sports and inspired by his two young daughters' athletic activities, Drath, alongside his former Columbia University roommate, John Trbovich '93SEAS, is currently starting a nonprofit called EvenFooting.org. The mission of the organization is to empower underprivileged girls through athletics. EvenFooting.org is collaborating with the New York City Department of Homeless Services to create events that cultivate community building, where free sneakers and youth coaching are provided. The inaugural EvenFooting.org event is planned for fall 2017 in New York City.

Pinches Dirnfeld: From GED to PhD.



In early 2016, **Pinches Dirnfeld '13**, '14GSAS was profiled on LoHud.com of *The Journal News* about his path to a secular education. Dirnfeld, who is currently a doctoral student in mathematics at University of Utah, discussed the challenges he faced growing up in the Hasidic community of New Square.



Former fellow students **José Giralt '13** and **Ahmadou MBoup '12** were happy to reconnect last year when they were interviewing for Teach for America. Giralt is a photographer and videographer living and working in New York City. Learn more about his work at www.giraltphotography.com.

FAU Medical Student



Benjamin R. Childs '15, a student at Charles E. Schmidt College of Medicine at Florida Atlantic University, was featured on FAU.edu in fall 2015. Childs, a soldier in the U.S. Army, is enrolled in the Health Professions Scholarship Program. After graduating from FAU with his medical degree in 2019, he will complete his military residency, then spend four years as an attending physician at a military health care facility.



**Keir B.
Sterling '61,
'73GSAS
(1934-2016)**

Founding Member of *The Owl* staff, General Studies Student Association President, and Junior Dean in the Late 1950s and Early 1960s

By Anne Sterling

Arriving on campus after serving in the U.S. Army, Keir B. “Kerry” Sterling immediately became active in the General Studies Student Association. One of his jobs was to seek University approval for events such as the “Witches Wiggle” and the “Snow Ball.”

With other GS students, including Wally Wood and Tom Simpson, he and his girl—down from Vassar College—wrote and mimeographed the first issues of *The Owl* in early 1959. The student-produced paper came out irregularly at first, but copies stacked on the marble staircase in Lewisohn Hall flew into eager hands within minutes. One popular feature was Wood’s “Subway Notes,” by A. Haggard Rider. Simpson, an aspiring critic, wrote music reviews, while Sterling recruited fellow students to report on campus events, adding humorous gossip. Sterling himself chose the paper’s title, *The Owl*, noting the bird peeking out from under Alma Mater’s robe, in front of Low Memorial Library.

Sterling later obtained a PhD from Columbia in American political history, concentrating on the history of the natural sciences. His last book, published in August 2016, was a centennial history of the American Ornithologists’ Union.

Dean Clifford Lord hired Sterling as a junior administrator at General Studies, tasked with serving as liaison to the student body and researching potential donors. Sterling’s salary of \$400 each month supported him, his Vassar-educated wife, and their first son in an apartment on Morningside Drive, one floor above an Hispanic grocery (on the Amsterdam Avenue side)—with tuition paid by the GI Bill.

During his career as an historian, Sterling taught at Marymount College, Pace University, and the University of Wisconsin (Madison). He also served as command historian to the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps. Over the years, Sterling authored several books, served as general editor of two 30-volume series for the Arno Press, and wrote numerous articles and reviews until his death in September in Richmond, Va.

In Memoriam

Henry J. Frank '38, '58GSAS, P: '71CC (1919-2016) was a World War II veteran and professor of finance. Frank served in the Army Corps of Engineering during World War II as a reconnaissance officer; and, after V-E Day, closed out his active military career by running a U.S. Army nightclub in Grenoble, France. In 1958, he received his doctorate in political economy from Columbia. He taught economics and finance at the New Jersey College for Women (now Rutgers University), Fairleigh Dickinson University in Rutherford, N.J., and Rider University in Lawrenceville, N.J. He firmly believed in academic freedom and actively participated in the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) for 70 years. Frank is survived by his children, Elyn McMullin, Elliott Steven Frank, and Carolyn Frank.

Born in Kansas City, Mo., **Marvin L. Edwards '49, '59GSAS (1915-2016)** served overseas in various divisions of the U.S. Army between 1943 and 1946. Upon returning to the United States, he received his BS, MA, and PhD degrees from Columbia University. He was an instructor of history for the School of General Studies from 1950 to 1956. From 1964 until his retirement in 1980, he taught at Clarkson University, where he served as Chair of the Department of Social Sciences from 1965 to 1973. He published *Stresemann and the Greater Germany, 1914-1918* in 1963. He married Marga Schuhmann in 1951. He is survived by his daughter Audrey of Syracuse, N.Y.

Marga S. Edwards (née Schuhmann) '50, '52GSAS (1920-2016) was born in Plauen, Germany. After receiving her schooling in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., she returned to Germany and worked at the American Embassy in Berlin. During World War II, she was unable to return to the United States. In 1947, she was finally able to return to New York, where she enrolled at Columbia, receiving her BS and MA degrees. She served as an instructor at Barnard College and the School of General Studies until 1955. For most of her career, Edwards taught at St. Lawrence University as an Assistant Professor in the Modern Languages Department, retiring in 1983. She is survived by her daughter Audrey of Syracuse, N.Y.

Richard H. Kreitman '59 (1937-2015) had a lengthy career as a self-employed real estate attorney. He is survived by his wife Sarah, whom he wed in 1989, and their children Alexandra, Micaela, and Gavin.

Since high school, **James N. Finney '63, '66LAW (1937-2016)** was a civil rights activist. After serving in the U.S. Army, he

continued his commitment to civil rights and social justice as a staff attorney for the NAACP and Associate General Counsel at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Finney is survived by his daughter Karen of Washington, D.C.

After earning his bachelor’s degree from GS in 1965, musicologist, recorder player, and educator **Charles H. Kaufman '65, P: '94CC (1928-2016)** completed his PhD at New York University. He later published his dissertation, *Music in New Jersey 1655-1860: A Study of Musical Activity and Musicians in New Jersey from Its First Settlement to the Civil War*. Dr. K, as he was affectionately called by generations of music students, joined the faculty of Mannes College of Music in 1974. In 1979, as the result of a faculty coup, he became president of the college, leading it from near collapse to a fiscally sound, nationally recognized conservatory. In 1989, he forged a relationship with The New School, further ensuring the school’s future.

Denis Preziosi '74, '80GSAS (1942-2015) was a good friend to GS. He established the Joseph and Norma Preziosi Scholarship in honor of his parents and served as a member of the GS Reunion Committee. Preziosi retired from his position at the New York Stock Exchange, where he helped configure the program that handled trades when the volume at NYSE was roughly a few hundred million per day. He was also a teacher at Medgar Evers College, City University of New York. Preziosi is survived by siblings April Torre, Sharon Pihlquist, Deana Huminski, and Gregory Preziosi, and many nieces and nephews.

Francine Schwartz '97 (1954-2016) was a proud alumna of GS. A freelance writer, Schwartz wrote contemporary literary fiction and boomer-oriented essays, including a science fiction screenplay titled *A Stitch in Time* and a novel called *The Last Place I'd Be*.

Not only did **Edward D. Lauth '16 (1961-2016)** graduate in *May cum laude*, but he also served for many years as a member of Columbia’s Department of Facilities and Operations. Since 2000, he held various positions at the University, culminating in Director for Commercial Operations. For years Lauth dreamed of earning a college degree; however, with five children and a full-time job, he kept putting it off until 2012, when he enrolled at GS to study architecture. In January 2013, he was diagnosed with metastatic, Stage IV male breast cancer. Lauth lost his long and courageous battle with the rare disease in July. Read more about him at <http://news.columbia.edu/content/1148>.

“It’s not only what
you learn inside
the classroom, but
also the experiences
along the way—
Columbia
transforms you...”

*Aries Dela Cruz '09GS,
Anthropology Major*

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The Columbia Postbac Premed Program Premedical Association's annual Medical School Fair, pictured from February 19, 2016, is an impressive feat of coordination and innovation that brings together 55 medical, dental, veterinary, and allied health graduate schools and more than 400 students from Columbia University, Barnard College, and other institutions in the New York metro area. Prospective medical students relish the opportunity to meet admissions representatives from around the country and the globe. This year's fair is on March 31. See the full story on page 5.

