

THE OWL

THE ALUMNI MAGAZINE OF COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GENERAL STUDIES



U.S. ARMY



U.S. ARMY



**Mission: Outcomes
Veteran Alumni Make
Columbia Proud**

**Dr. Trevor Dixon
'99PBPM
Rises Up and
Gives Back**



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Peter J. Awn
Dean

Malcolm A. Borg '65
Advisory Council, Emeritus

Curtis Rodgers
Vice Dean

Scott Pesner
Senior Director Alumni Relations

Janet Griffin
Associate Director for Alumni Relations

Editor

Allison Scola
Communications, Special Projects

Editorial Assistance

Robert Ast '08

Contributors

Barbara Alper
Robert Ast '08
Christian Balmer
Eileen Barroso
Nancy J. Brandwein
Klinton Ceku
David Dini
Michael DiVito
Bruce Gilbert
Christina Gray '15
Catherine Griggs
Tinatin Japaridze
Noah Kutzy
Raymund Maravilla
Alan Orling
Anna O'Sullivan
Kira Pole
Dyer Ridley
Allison Scola

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Questions, Comments, and Change of Address

Office of Alumni and Development
408 Lewisohn Hall, MC 4121
2970 Broadway
New York, NY 10027-9829
gsowl@columbia.edu
Tel 212-851-7432
Fax 212-851-1957

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LETTER FROM THE DEAN

From our students, who are transformed intellectually in the classroom, to our alumni, who transform the world around them with their accomplishments, to our school, and the incredible transformation that has taken place over the last 68 years, transformational is the best way to describe the School of General Studies.

The Owl, too, has transformed, as I was reminded recently by Frances (Pettinelli) Galton '66, '78GSAS and Brian Leary '68, two alumni who helped to create the student newspaper after which this magazine is named. Dr. Galton was one of the first writers for the newspaper in 1965, reviewing theater productions and writing about issues facing students at that time. Mr. Leary recounted how in 1967 and 1968 they constructed the weekly publication in the basement of Lewisohn Hall before bringing it to the printer in lower Manhattan where they printed the eight-page paper using hot lead type. These stories are great illustrations of how far the School of General Studies has come, and how important our foundation is for our success today.

After more than 18 years as dean of GS, I continue to be inspired by how our students and alumni continue to transform themselves. During June's All-Class Reunion, when I read the "Before GS and After GS" board (see page 32), it confirmed again how proud I am of all that we have accomplished together. Alumni shared concise before-and-after versions of their "GS stories," highlighting the transitions they have made in life. Some of my favorites include transitioning from administrative assistant to director of public health for 13 Bronx schools, from an electronic store salesman to an English teacher at Baruch College Campus High School, and from an EMT/waiter to a debt and currency reporter for Dow Jones and Bloomberg News. The Reunion theme of transformation is a potent motif that continues to drive all that we do.

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

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

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

With warmest regards,



Peter J. Awn
Peter J. Awn, Dean

IN GENERAL



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



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



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



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

外语与区域研究

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

Preserving culture, improving education, increasing scientific collaboration

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

17

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



On May 21, Staff Sergeant Patrick Franklin Poorbaugh '15 was commissioned as an officer of the United State Marine Corps in a ceremony held in Low Rotunda. It was the first such ceremony held for a Marine on the Columbia University campus in more than four decades. The event included remarks by Hon. Juan M. Garcia III, Assistant Secretary of the Navy (Manpower and Reserve Affairs), as well as Brigadier General Terry V. Williams. Staff Sgt. Poorbaugh took the Marine Corps Oath of Office and received his first salute.



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



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

Columbia P&S Linkage Program Draws More Postbac Students

By Nancy J. Brandwein

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

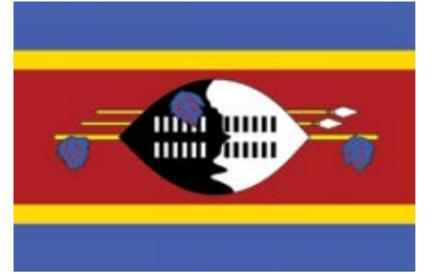
Rosner attributes this success to the great fit with the Postbac Premed Program student profile, saying, "We recruit students with life experience, students with a strong sense of personal commitment to the practice of medicine, students who are interested in working with underserved populations, and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

One such student is Emma Marquez '15PBPM. While an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, Marquez designed her own women's health research project. After graduation, she went on to work for an NGO doing cervical cancer research, and she eventually landed a position at Columbia Medical Center. She says, "I love the hospital. I love the staff. I loved the patient population. When it came time to apply through linkage, there was no question." There was no question, either, for Reuben Heyman-Kantor '15PBPM, a former associate producer for *60 Minutes*, who left journalism for medicine to make a direct impact on people's lives. Heyman-Kantor says P&S's commitment to the underserved was inspiring and is evident

in its choice of Dr. Stephen Nicholas for Associate Dean of Admissions. A pioneer in the care of HIV-infected children, Nicholas was a strong advocate for the medically underserved in Harlem and Washington Heights. "Putting a man like that in charge of admissions says a lot about the type of doctors they want to produce," says Heyman-Kantor.

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

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



GS students Mayla Boguslav '15 and Carmen Ervin '16 were awarded Minority Health and Health Disparities International Research Training (MHIRT) Fellowships by ICAP at Columbia University. The MHIRT Fellowship consisted of a fully funded, 11-week, summer research training program, two weeks of which were spent in New York City followed by eight weeks in Swaziland assisting with a research study that explored models of HIV care.

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

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

Global Justice

Serena Mackool '15 spent spring 2015 as a Regional Programs Intern at the New York office of the **Coalition for International Criminal Court**. Her position required her to attend relevant meetings at the United Nations on behalf of the organization.

Columbia/Sciences Po Dual BA Graduates Inaugural Class

By Nancy J. Brandwein

In May, 27 students graduated as the inaugural class of the Dual BA Program Between Columbia University and Sciences Po. This joint-degree program enables students to experience a truly international education: undergraduates in the Program study for two years at the French university Sciences Po and then matriculate at Columbia School of General Studies where they complete their two degrees. Jessica Sarles-Dinsick, Senior Assistant Dean of International Programs, says 63 first-year students enrolled in fall 2015, a testament to the Program's growing reputation.

After a rigorous admissions process, the class of 2015 enrolled in fall 2011 at Sciences Po and studied the social sciences. Students chose to matriculate at one of three campuses—Reims, Menton, or Le Havre, each of which specializes in a region of the world: the Middle East and Mediterranean at Menton; North America, Africa, and Europe at Reims; and Asia at Le Havre. Then, once at Columbia for their final two years, students chose from one of 70 majors.

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

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

Now with degrees in social sciences/law from Sciences Po and financial economics from General Studies, Basuljevic heads to Singapore as a private equity investment associate for Sovereign Wealth Fund. He was surprised at how well received his degree was by prospective employers. “It had a story, and [interviewers] found it incredibly interesting. When you’re in

the thick of it, it doesn’t seem as special. When you talk to other people you realize, ‘Wow, this... program changed everything for me.’”

Anton Bengt Fredriksson agrees that the Dual BA was a game changer—in life and on the job hunt. Fredriksson, who is now working for McKinsey & Company’s public sector clients, graduated from the Le Havre campus of Sciences Po with a degree in social sciences/Asian studies and a degree in urban planning from GS. “The Dual BA gives your Columbia University degree extra cachet,” he concurs.

Having grown up in Vancouver, B.C., with a Swedish father and a mother from Hong Kong, Fredriksson sought a European education and a way to work on his Chinese language skills. “The Dual BA came out of nowhere as the perfect fit that allowed me to do all those things.” Perfect fit and international pedigree notwithstanding, Fredriksson’s admission to Sciences Po came as a “...real shock,” he says. “I was absolutely impressed, intimidated. I had never studied the social sciences. All the other universities I was accepted to were

“The Dual BA gives your Columbia University degree extra cachet.”

—Anton Bengt Fredriksson, '15

for civil engineering. In terms of broadening horizons, this is what the Dual BA program does best—introducing you to new disciplines, new thoughts.” Like Basuljevic, Fredriksson was also active in student government, which testifies to the time-management skills they mastered as Dual BA students—Sciences Po required 10 classes a semester but had less homework, whereas General Studies limited classes to 5 but required more independent work.

Now both graduates are involved in starting the first-ever alumni network for the Dual BA graduates, and Fredriksson raises an interesting point as he looks back upon their experience. “Why General Studies?” and “Why are we nontraditional students?” were questions that dogged him when he began the program. “What we’ve found,” he says, “is that ... GS is about more than teaching older students. It is pretty much the only school in Columbia that is innovative enough, that is flexible, that allows you to challenge existing norms and conventions. It makes perfect sense that the Dual BA Program is housed in GS, because throughout its history GS has been an innovative hotbed for education.”



JTS Sets Its Sites for the Next Century

The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS) recently announced a plan for major capital improvements featuring a landmark building that will include a state-of-the-art library, conference facilities, an auditorium, and a residence hall. “JTS wants to remain the center of important conversations about the matters that affect not only the Jewish community, but also the community at large,” said Marc Gary, Executive Vice Chancellor and Chief Operating Officer.

With an eye towards repositioning their resources for the next century, the institution aims to enhance their existing community base and attract the general public. “We want our library facility to showcase our treasures,” Gary said, speaking about the largest collection of Hebrew and Judaic material outside of Jerusalem.

In JTS’s general collection there are 400,000 volumes, 25,000 rare printed books, and 11,000 Hebrew manuscripts—including 350 precious Esther, Torah, haftarah, and Kabbalistic scrolls, a few of which are hand-decorated. Under the capital plan, these treasures will be exhibited in an environment open to the general public.

Ultimately, JTS seeks to draw the community at large to its new auditorium and conference center. “We need to have the right facilities to accommodate high-level discussions and events and transform JTS into a center for interfaith dialogue, not only in New York, but also across the country and internationally,” Gary said.

In addition to a new library that will include collaborative spaces, a new rare book room, and advanced technological infrastructure, the project includes constructing modern residence halls located within the flagship quadrangle at 122nd

Street and Broadway. “We want to invigorate the community at JTS by providing more amenities to undergraduates and graduate students,” Gary said.

In order to fund the ambitious project, JTS is selling the existing Horace W. Goldsmith and Mathilde Schechter residence halls, as well as a portion of land near the current library for which the school has no need. The school hoped to sell the properties by the end of 2015.

JTS will also be conducting a capital campaign with naming opportunities for facilities that will be a part of the new building. Institutional leadership is currently identifying architects and contractors with the aim of demolishing the existing library during the summer of 2016 and beginning construction immediately thereafter. If all succeeds according to administrators’ plans, the new building will open in 2019.

“We’re really excited. There is a wave of enthusiasm among faculty, students, and administrators,” Gary said. “It’s a re-imagining, not only of the campus, but also of our mission for the next hundred years.”



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

By Allison Scola

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

Like the enthusiastic child poet she once was, the young artist threw herself into her work. She gained admission to the School of Visual Arts in New York, yet after one semester, Valverde concluded that she did not have the distinct talent required to build a life as a professional sculptor—she aimed to be extraordinary at whatever it was she set out to do, and art did not fulfill that charge. Soon after, she matriculated at Loyola University Maryland to study public relations; however, her lack of sincere interest for the subject prompted her to withdraw before earning her degree. While sorting through these disappointing setbacks and determining where next to put her energy, Valverde tended bar, tutored, and worked as a celebrity’s personal assistant.

In 2008, everything changed. At 28, she gave birth—two months early—to a baby girl. Her best-laid plans once again defied expectations. “Throughout my pregnancy, I was ‘perfect,’” explained Valverde. “Organic food ... I gave up deodorant; no caffeine; no parabens. You name it ... and she still came early.”

“She” was Estella, named after Dickens’ Estella Havisham. Valverde was adopted as an infant, and so her baby daughter became her first blood relative. It was an epiphany. “There she was, this person who looked quite a lot like me—an experience I had never once shared with anyone before. The connection was bigger than I

ever could have fathomed,” Valverde said.

“Suddenly, my past and my roots and all of that mystery surrounding my identity were both heightened and simultaneously resolved.”

For the first six months while Estella grew physically stronger, mother and infant were medically quarantined to a single room in their home. “It sounds claustrophobic, but it was actually so beautiful and incredibly healing. Each of us grew stronger, entirely because of the other,” Valverde described.

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

While preparing her GS application, managing the store, and raising Estella, Valverde’s curiosity about her biological parents grew. She researched her adoption history, learning that she had half-siblings and uncovering the troubled pasts of her birth father, now deceased, and her birth mother, whom, just prior to applying to Columbia, she successfully contacted. Valverde had mixed feelings about what she learned, but found peace with knowing the story behind her adoption.

Once accepted and enrolled, while at GS, Valverde pursued a creative writing major with fervor. As in the past, she set her sights on being extraordinary. Her goal was to be class valedictorian. She sought courses with top faculty and contributed to the literary magazine *Quarto* as a writer and editor. She maintained over a 4.0 GPA, and became a member of the GS Honor Society. During the summer of 2014, she attended the prestigious Ashbery Home School of Hudson, N.Y., a poetry retreat facilitated by luminaries such as Tracy K. Smith, Adam Fitzgerald, and Timothy Donnelly. Having received a George Selden Scholarship at GS, she was able to focus on school and excel; she was finally pursuing her passion. In addition to poetry courses, Valverde found herself taking several film classes and out-of-genre writing courses, each of which helped her hone her craft.

“Columbia not only shaped my story, but it also completely transformed my ability to tell it,” said Valverde as she gushed about

professors such as Dorothea Lasky and Alan Ziegler, whom she cites as champions of her work and credits with shaping her voice. Additionally, she savored courses with Nelson Kim, Marni Ludwig, and Adam Wilson.

In fall 2012, Valverde gave the introduction for faculty member Joseph Fasano at the annual Creative Writing Program reading. Also that evening, Assistant Professor Cris Beam, a specialist in memoir writing, presented her work on foster care and adoption. Having been adopted, the topic intrigued Valverde—as did the fellow student who introduced Beam, Katy Olson ’14. “She was very funny and lit up the room,” Valverde recalled.

The next semester Valverde learned that Beam would be teaching Literary Reporter, a nonfiction seminar. She considered enrolling, but because she had trepidation about delving into the world of nonfiction, she missed the first round of registration—the course was full. “On the first day, and one hour before the class, I was on SSOL [the online, student registration system] hoping a spot would open. I repeatedly pressed the Register button. Suddenly, a spot opened up and my registration went through. There was no time to look back or think it over!” Valverde, who lives an hour by car from campus in Hillsdale, N.J., “tore out of the house” to get to the class to guarantee her spot. When she arrived, there was a line out the door.

“I happened to sit across the table from Katy [Olson], who I recognized from the reading,” Valverde said.

As at the start of many courses, students were invited to introduce themselves and explain their interests in taking the course. As Olson listened to Valverde’s introduction, something clicked.

Immediately after class, she grabbed Valverde and pumped her with a series of “This is Your Life” questions. After a few minutes, the puzzle pieces of both of their infant adoptions fell together, and the two deduced that they shared the same birth-mother. It was dumbfounding. “So much changed in that one moment,” recalled Valverde.

Together Valverde and Olson, who graduated from GS in 2014 and is currently a student in Columbia’s MFA Creative Writing Program, embarked on a journey of discovery. Over the subsequent weeks and months, they waded through the “awkward, funny, beautiful, painful, and miraculous moments” that grow out of such a stupefying revelation.

This past May, Valverde and Olson’s remarkable discovery was featured in *The New York Times*. On Class Day, the two were reunited with their biological mother in front of an international press corps. It was a thrilling few days.

Although not named valedictorian, Valverde graduated at the top of her class and was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa. This fall, with her childhood dream of being a poet in sharp focus, she matriculated at New York University’s MFA program in creative writing. Most exciting perhaps is that she recently contracted with William

As had been her practice since childhood, while at GS Lizzie Valverde strove for excellence—but this time, with invaluable support from family, mentoring by outstanding faculty and academic advisors, and significant scholarship support, she found her sweet spot.

Morris Literary agency to share her story—one of learning to embrace things out of one’s control and the beauty that that brings to life.

“When I was accepted to Columbia, I set out to be the very best,” said Valverde. “But I have since learned that perhaps being the best isn’t the most important thing. ... Sometimes you meet your biological-half-sister in a Columbia classroom, and you realize the universe has other plans for you ... better to be unforgettable than to be superlative.”

Lizzie Valverde '15 (center) with her daughter Estella (left) and half-sister Katy Olson '14 (right)



PHOTO: BRUCE GILBERT



Mission: Outcomes

Six years after the inauguration of the Yellow Ribbon Program, GS's veteran alumni continue to make Columbia proud.



By Robert Ast '08

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

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

That significant veteran presence has been an important element in the school's recruitment efforts. Andrew King '15 offers an instructive example. A linguist in the Marine Corps' 1st Radio Battalion who served in Afghanistan, King was stationed

at Camp Pendleton when he heard from a friend and fellow Marine about a college that served veterans at Columbia University. He did some research, learned more about GS, and reached out to current student-veterans. After scheduling an interview with GS Vice Dean Curtis Rodgers through the base education center, King applied through the Marine Corps' Leadership Scholars Program and was accepted, as was his friend Ben Vickery. Vickery and King graduated together this May: during their senior year, Vickery served as president of the MilVets, while King was the MilVets treasurer as well as the salutatorian of the class of 2015.

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

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

instrumental in helping him to connect with his fellow students.

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

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

"Less than 1 percent of the American population fought in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, and you could do a demographic analysis to see how that's concentrated socioeconomically and geographically," Minnis said. "The danger is that, when these wars are over, there aren't going to be constant reminders in the headlines or on the nightly news; they'll fade very quickly from memory. The way to prevent that from happening is to look at the next generation of leaders, policymakers, NGO workers, journalists—it's so important to have



veterans interacting with other students at the undergraduate level, because everyone branches off into different pathways. That's why the mission of a place like GS is incredibly important in affecting questions that'll be raised in the future."

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

GS plays a critical role in preparing veterans for future success, notes Elvis Camacho '13, who served in the Marine Corps and the Army Reserves in Bahrain, Japan, Hawaii,

and Iraq in security operations and as an infantry leader. Now in his third year as an MD candidate at Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons, he credits both the Columbia curriculum and the advising he received at GS with preparing him for medical school.

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

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

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

espouses a similar sentiment.

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

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

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

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

Spotlight on James J. Valentini

Dean of Columbia College and Vice President for Undergraduate Education



“When I was growing up,” recalled James J. Valentini, Dean of Columbia College and Vice President for Undergraduate Education, “if someone said, ‘One day, you’ll be dean of an Ivy League school,’ I would have asked, ‘What’s an Ivy League school?’”

Born and raised in the Appalachian town of Lafferty, Ohio, which the 2010 census reported as having a population of 304, it was more probable that Valentini would have headed to a coal mine than to college as a young man. His father, a radio operator for the Ohio Department of Transportation, did not graduate from high school. His mother, a homemaker, did, but her education terminated there. It was their examples of

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

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

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

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

hard work that inspired Valentini to excel as a student. After earning his bachelor's degree in chemistry from the University of Pittsburgh, he went on to earn a master's at the University of Chicago and a doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley.

Valentini conducted postdoctoral work

much from one another as they do from their instructors, and this is important for enhancing their lives.”

Valentini explains that his own story, with its modest start, is his source for relating to the diversity of students at Columbia, which is evidenced by the fact that, since

James J. Valentini

Dean of Columbia College and Vice President for Undergraduate Education since: 2011

Faculty member since: 1990

Department: Chemistry

Education: BS, University of Pittsburgh; MS, University of Chicago; PhD, University of California, Berkeley

Hobbies: Collects Columbia memorabilia thanks to alumni gifts to the College; rebuilds 170-year-old home in New Jersey

Fun Fact: Failed driver's license exam twice

his time as a professor, Valentini has been a champion of GS and its students. “There are a lot of trajectories and a lot of paths,” he explains. “We admit individuals to Columbia College and General Studies. We do not admit transcripts, GPAs, SAT scores. We don't admit people because of a particular aspect of them. We admit them because of their total identity.”

“Our graduates need to be prepared to interact with any kind of person any place in the world at any time,” Valentini explains. “We have a set of expectations and outcomes that we are aiming to achieve for every Columbia undergraduate. We want to expand the range of opportunities for all of our students, and the diversity of the classroom makes that possible. The academic integration is a reason to come to Columbia.”

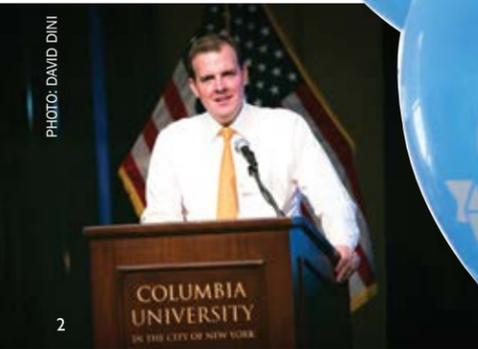
Valentini is a strong supporter of the Presidential Global Fellowships, a grant that enables rising sophomores from Columbia College, Engineering, and GS to engage in a summer study-abroad project, and the combined Committee on Instruction (COI), the body of faculty and academic administrators that sets the curriculum for undergraduates in Columbia College and the School of General Studies. He explains: “The opportunities for collaboration among schools are greater now than ever, and that's one of the things [that], as dean, I pursue.”

THE GENERAL VIEW



Sicong (Ellen) Mo, left, and Denise Marte share some study time in Butler Library. Mo, a native of Beijing, graduated with two bachelor's degrees in May as part of the second class of students in the new Joint Bachelor's Degree Program between City University of Hong Kong and Columbia University. Marte completed her Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program Certificate in May. She is one of 17 graduates of the Postbac Premed Program who took advantage of GS's linkage application agreements. She matriculated at Brown University's Warren Alpert Medical School this fall.

GIVING



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



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

1-3. The 2014 Scholarship Reception was held on Veteran's Day and celebrated the support donors have given to the GS Annual Fund, Yellow Ribbon Program fund, and more.

4. Giving Day 2015 engaged alumni, students, and friends of GS to "change lives that change the world."

5-7. On April 16, Allison Magliocco '97 generously hosted a donor reception at her home.



RESPONSIBILITY THERETO ATTACHED

ALLISON FILLMORE MAGLIOCCO '97

By Allison Scola

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

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

Magliocco has spent much of her adult life sharing the fruits of her success with others. After earning a degree in the sciences early in her life, she started her career in Denver, Colo. in E.F. Hutton's analyst training program. Over the years, she built a notable résumé in asset management with E. F. Hutton, Fidelity Investments, and PaineWebber; however, in 1994, she decided to take a leave of absence in order to attend Columbia and earn the education she aspired to have.

While at GS, Magliocco majored in comparative literature with a focus in Italian. She spent a summer studying in Scandiano, Italy with Professor Jo Ann Cavallo; she took Shakespeare with Professor James S. Shapiro; and she honed her critical thinking and writing skills. Her professors and fellow students challenged her to think differently. Ultimately, the experience enhanced her strengths. "As a young person, I didn't have a support system guiding me through the college search and application process. I found myself trying to figure it out for myself," Magliocco recalls. "Coming out the other end of [my Columbia education] ... experiencing all of the ways it has changed my life and developed me into the



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

Allison Fillmore Magliocco

woman I am today—my career changed, my connection to my Italian heritage changed, my sense of philanthropy changed, and my personal politics changed."

After graduation, Sierra Global Management, a New York-based European long/short equity hedge fund, hired Magliocco because of her analyst background, coupled with her newly acquired Italian language skills, experience of having lived in Europe, and Columbia University degree. Eventually, she became a partner responsible for investor relations, executive marketing, and

operational management. Her work in the hedge fund industry enabled her to participate in social-justice causes, specifically those that assist women and children in need. She served as the philanthropy committee chair of the international nonprofit 100 Women in Hedge Funds and a board member of High Water Women, and she was a president's council member of the International Women's Health Coalition.

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

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

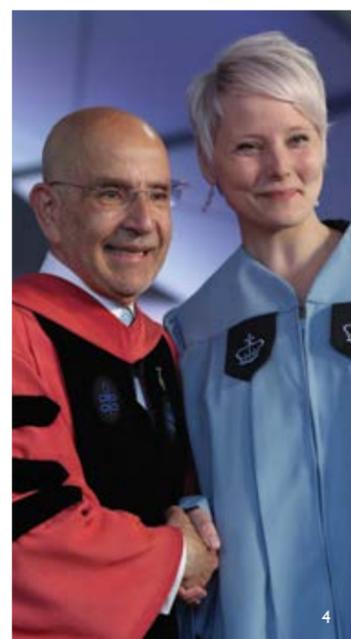
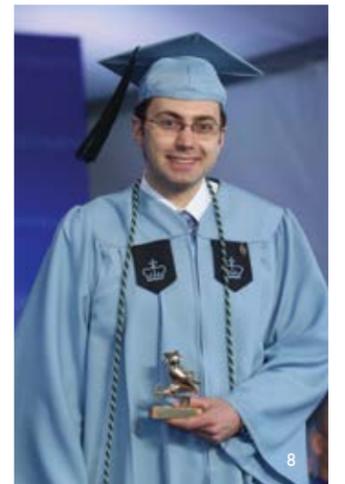
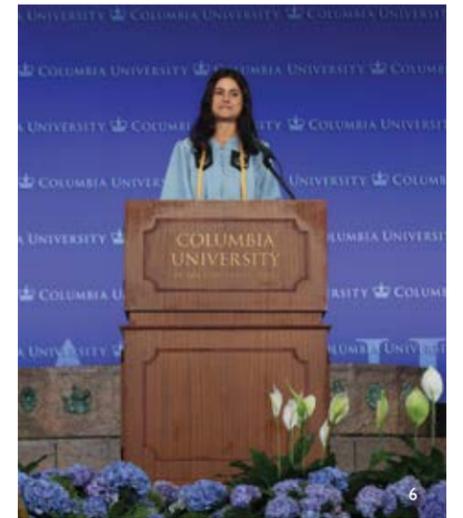
The time away from the industry changed Magliocco's life. Once her sister received a clean bill of health, instead of returning to the world of finance, Magliocco decided to focus on her home life in order to support her husband Joseph and stepson Matthew and to give more to philanthropic causes. That led Magliocco to play a vital role in 2013 during Columbia Giving Day, when she and Joseph supported GS's Yellow Ribbon Program Fund with a matching donation.

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

GRADUATION

CLASS DAY 2015

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT

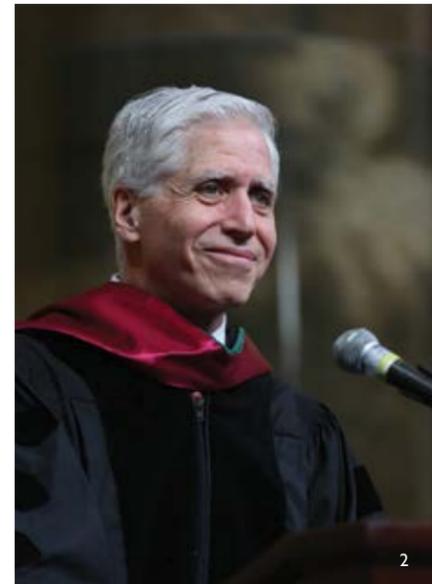


1. 2015 Class Day Speaker Christopher Hood '91
2. The graduates processed into the ceremony.
3. Kirsten Jardine waves to her family.
4. Dean Awn and Christina Gray
5. Class Day band leads the procession.
6. Valedictorian Lindsay Hadad
7. City University of Hong Kong, Associate Vice President, Global Services Office, Dr. David Cheng, Dean Awn, and Sicong (Ellen) Mo
8. Chris Mulligan was awarded the Alumni Key Award.
9. Salutatorian Andrew King
10. Precious Frazier and Anton Fredriksson
11. Lizzie Valverde and daughter Estella, with Provost John H. Coatsworth



POSTBAC PREMED CLASS DAY 2015

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT



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

NEW GRAD NOTES 2015

GS Bachelor of Arts Recipients



Donna De Santis took classes at the University of California, Berkeley while raising two children and working as a legal secretary. She has devoted much of her life to

volunteering with organizations that provide assistance to at-risk and underserved children and adults. Though she did not complete her degree in California, Donna always knew she wanted to return to school, and eventually she applied to GS. During her time as a GS student, she devoted herself fully to academia while also enthusiastically pursuing educational opportunities outside of the classroom, including attending community meetings, public forums, and workshops. Donna graduated *cum laude* with a degree in ethnic and race studies. She plans to pursue a career with a nonprofit organization that works with underserved communities.



Born in Vancouver, Canada, **Anton Fredriksson** also lived in Hungary, Switzerland, Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom before enrolling in the Dual BA program between

Columbia University and Sciences Po. Anton spent two years in Le Havre, France, referring to the experience as “unparalleled.” A Canadian ambassador and communications department management team member for the World Scout Foundation, during his time at GS, Anton also served as the Ambassador for International Students. He was selected for the prestigious Columbia Global Scholars Program, and spent four weeks in the summer of 2014 traveling and studying in Berlin, Moscow, Ulaan Bataar, and Beijing. An urban studies major, Anton was awarded the Spirit Award for outstanding contribution through his dedication to leadership and service to GS. He is a member of the GS Honor Society and Phi Beta Kappa.

PHOTOS BY BRUCE GILBERT
AND CHRISTIAN BALMER



Kaitlyn Gilliland took her first pre-ballet class at the age of four, and spent the next twelve years studying at Minnesota Dance Theatre under the tutelage of her mother and grandmother,

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



Molly Heller came to Columbia from Palos Verdes, Calif., where she was very active in the theater, both as a director and an actor. She continued pursuing this passion at GS,

where she directed the 121st Annual Varsity Show, an annual musical that satirizes life at Columbia. In addition, she wrote the lyrics for *Mad Girl's Love Song*, a new musical that was performed at Barnard College in Fall 2014. She is a graduate of the GS Joint Program with List College at The Jewish Theological Seminary, and she served for two years as president of the List College Student Council. Upon graduation, Molly received two degrees, one in modern Jewish studies and one in theatre and drama arts. With her cowriter, composer Fernanda Douglas '16CC, she revised *Mad Girl's Love Song*. The revised version, now titled *Plath.*, premiered at the New York International Fringe Festival in summer 2015.



A native of China, **Junjie Jiang** had always aspired to have a solid education that would foster her interest in service and leadership. As the top student in her area, Junjie was admitted to one of

the most prestigious high schools in Shanghai, and consecutively won academic prizes and awards for public service and environmental protection. As a long-term community volunteer, she served as a minister in the student government and president and founder of a student company. She came to Columbia as a visiting student, and fascinated by the liberal arts education the University offered, applied to GS and was accepted. She won a service award at the GS Student Leadership Awards, and is now pursuing East Asian Studies at Harvard University.



GS Class of 2015 Salutatorian **Andrew King** served as a military linguist in Afghanistan, brokering conversations between civilians and Afghan National Army officials. He completed his

military service a week before starting classes at Columbia. During his time at GS, Andrew majored in Middle Eastern, South Asian, and African studies, with a focus on language and culture. Contributing to a thriving veterans' community, he volunteered with Team Rubicon for Superstorm Sandy relief efforts and actively attended World Leaders Forum events on campus. He was awarded the prestigious U.S. Department of State's Critical Language Scholarship in 2013, which enabled him to spend a summer studying abroad in Turkey. Andrew wrote his senior thesis on Islamic finance. Applying the same discipline he had learned in the military to his studies at GS, Andrew excelled in his courses and was named to the Dean's List. He is a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the GS Honor Society.



Born in Linz, Austria, **Dominik Koll** juggled academics, trained in swimming, and worked a part-time job throughout his time in high school. His devotion to swimming paid off,

and just weeks before his senior year, Dominik found himself at the 28th Olympiad in Athens. After graduating from high school, he joined the Austrian Army, and before long competed in the Olympics for a second time. After five years of military service, Dominik decided it was time to pursue a college education, training his mind in the same way he had spent the past two decades training his body: with discipline, courage, and enthusiasm. During his time at GS, Dominik joined the swim team and also co-founded the Columbia Varsity Swim School and the Germanic Cultural Society Club. A Professor C. Lowell Harriss Scholarship recipient, Dominik is currently working as an analyst at J.P. Morgan.



Sicong (Ellen) Mo graduated from the Joint Bachelor's Degree Program between the City University of Hong Kong and the School of General Studies. A mathematics major with a concentration

in statistics, Sicong is a member of the GS Honor Society. While at GS, she pursued her interests in financial markets and quantitative analysis both inside and outside of the classroom, serving as a teaching assistant for the courses Analysis and Optimization and Computational Linear Analysis. During her time at GS, Sicong spent her weekends and summers volunteering in local communities. Aside from academic and volunteer activities, she enjoys international traveling. Sicong is currently pursuing a career as a financial analyst at Morgan Stanley.



Born in Pakistan, **Amna Pervez** moved with her family to Southern California during elementary school. Following high school, she began her career as a makeup artist for MAC

Cosmetics in Los Angeles. For MAC Amna styled the likes of Aerosmith and the Kardashian family. However, through it all, she remained set on returning to school, and eventually enrolled at Mount San Antonio Community College. Her college honors advisor encouraged her to apply to GS. While at Columbia, Amna was actively involved in several groups on campus. During her senior year, she was co-chair of the New Student Orientation Program (NSOP), a peer advisor, and the president of the Columbia University Student Family Network (CUFSN). Through her work with CUFSN, Amna strove to support an underserved segment of the GS community: students with spouses and children, who experience heavier demands on their time. Working with these organizations, she succeeded at making a difference in people's lives, and she received the Spirit Award in recognition of her remarkable service. A GS Ambassador for General Scholarships, Amna graduated with a major in English and comparative literature. She has been accepted to the Forté Foundation Pre-MBA program, which provides guidance and resources to women who are intending to pursue an MBA degree.

**Thank you for
Changing Lives
that Change the World**

Thanks to you, our generous donors,
approximately 70% of GS students
receive some form of need-based
financial aid and/or merit
scholarship.

Postbaccalaureate Premedical Program Graduates



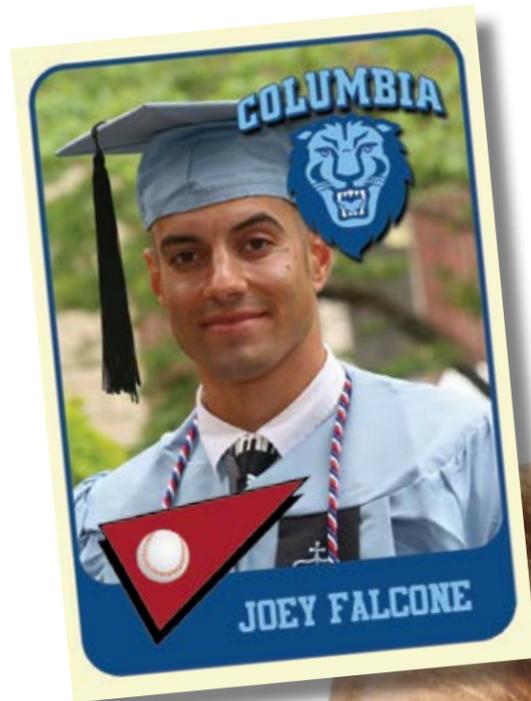
Stephanie Hart graduated from Columbia College in 2012 with a bachelor's degree in economics. Upon graduation, she broke from a strong

family tradition of careers in finance in order to pursue her love of science and desire for a life in medicine. As a student in the Postbac Premed Program, Stephanie served as an orientation leader, peer advisor, and held leadership roles in the Premedical Association (PMA) and Surgery Club. In winter 2014, she served as a medical field clinic volunteer for VIDA (Volunteers for Intercultural and Definitive Adventures), traveling to Nicaragua and Guatemala to help local doctors perform basic medical exams, take patient histories, and provide vaccinations and Pap smears. As a Postbac student, Stephanie volunteered in the emergency department at Mount Sinai St. Luke's hospital and in the cardiothoracic surgery department at Columbia University Medical Center. Stephanie completed coursework for the premed program in May and is now serving as vice president of medical school fair operations for the PMA during her application year.



Born and raised in New York City, **Reuben Heyman-Kantor** earned a Bachelor of Arts with high honors in political science from Swarthmore College. He then

accepted a prestigious fellowship from the Center for Arabic Study Abroad to enroll in a 12-month, intensive Arabic immersion program at the American University in Cairo. Reuben spent the next six and a half years working as a journalist for CBS News and *60 Minutes*, coordinating and producing stories from Afghanistan, Botswana, Tanzania, Uganda, Spain, and locations throughout the United States. Several segments on which he worked for *60 Minutes* earned prestigious awards, including Emmys, a Peabody Award, and a Columbia University Alfred I. duPont Award. Reuben entered the Columbia Postbac Premed Program in spring 2014 and was on Dean's List for the entirety of his enrollment. He was accepted via linkage to Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, where he enrolled in the fall.



JOEY FALCONE '15: COMBAT MEDIC TO THE NEW YORK YANKEES

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

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

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

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

He matriculated in spring 2012. During his first semester, Falcone approached the Lions' head coach Brett Boretti about joining the Columbia baseball team. Boretti's

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

Meanwhile, off the field, Falcone applied his military training, balancing the demands of Columbia's academic workload and his athletic schedule to graduate with a degree in history. In early summer 2015, soon after graduating, Falcone signed a minor-league contract with the New York Yankees, with whom he will pursue his goal of playing professional baseball.

GENERAL INTEREST

Alumni News



PHOTO: BRUCE GILBERT

2015 Midwinter Mixer

GENERAL INTEREST



meet

Craig Wilson '95

What work have you been doing with the General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA)?

I am a new member of the GSAA Communication Committee. I'm always eager to stay connected to Columbia and GS, so this affords me a good opportunity to do just that, as well as meet other alumni. As for the 'work,' I have contributed to the weekly posts found on the GSAA LinkedIn site that highlights and links alumni to information and resources that they may find valuable in their professional lives.

What drives you to contribute to the GS alumni community?

Simply stated, GS changed my life. Like other GS alumni, I had pursued other passions in my twenties. In my case, it was a career in television news. I wasn't smart enough at the time, however, to realize completing my undergraduate education was more important. I was 29 years old when I was accepted to GS. I was terrified of failure. Still, I found administrators at GS and professors university-wide devoted

to helping me succeed. I did the work, but there was always someone prepared to lift me up or guide me forward.

What's been the most rewarding project with which you've been involved?

I've been fortunate to be asked to participate in various GS panels or workshops over the years. I always appreciate the warm greeting I receive from Dean Awn. But it is my interaction with current GS students—whether it be at a networking workshop or speaking to a small group about journalism—that is the most rewarding for me. The questions are always smart and sharp.

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

I am fortunate to have returned to my passion: television news. Since graduation, in 1995, I have worked for CBS News as a producer, writer, and editor. I've covered nearly all the great and dreadful events of the last two decades. I gave up my staff job a few years ago, which allowed me a more

flexible schedule and time with my wife and two children. Still, I'm fortunate to be an in-demand freelancer who produces the weekly "Eye Opener" for *CBS This Morning Saturday*, writes the news for Charles Osgood on *CBS Sunday Morning*, and acts as a backup writer on the *CBS Evening News with Scott Pelley*.

What do you do for fun in your free time?

I'm Canadian, so I depend on snow for a lot of my fun. I love to downhill ski as much as possible, and wherever possible. My favorite escape is to ski the powder in Alta, Utah, or make a run home to ski the slopes in Banff National Park in my home province, Alberta.

Tell us about your family life.

My wife and I just celebrated our 22nd anniversary. She's actually the reason I enrolled at Columbia in the first place. We met at a wedding in my hometown of Medicine Hat, Alberta in 1993. Soon I found myself in New York with big plans for the future but little education. As a well-schooled attorney, Mary Lou knew what was best for me. Within weeks of my arrival, I was in class at Columbia. She made it possible both personally and financially. Like GS, she changed my life. We are also blessed with two children. Jack, 19, studies at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. Olivia, 16, is a junior at Gill St. Bernard's, near our home in Basking Ridge, N.J. Both share my passion of skiing!

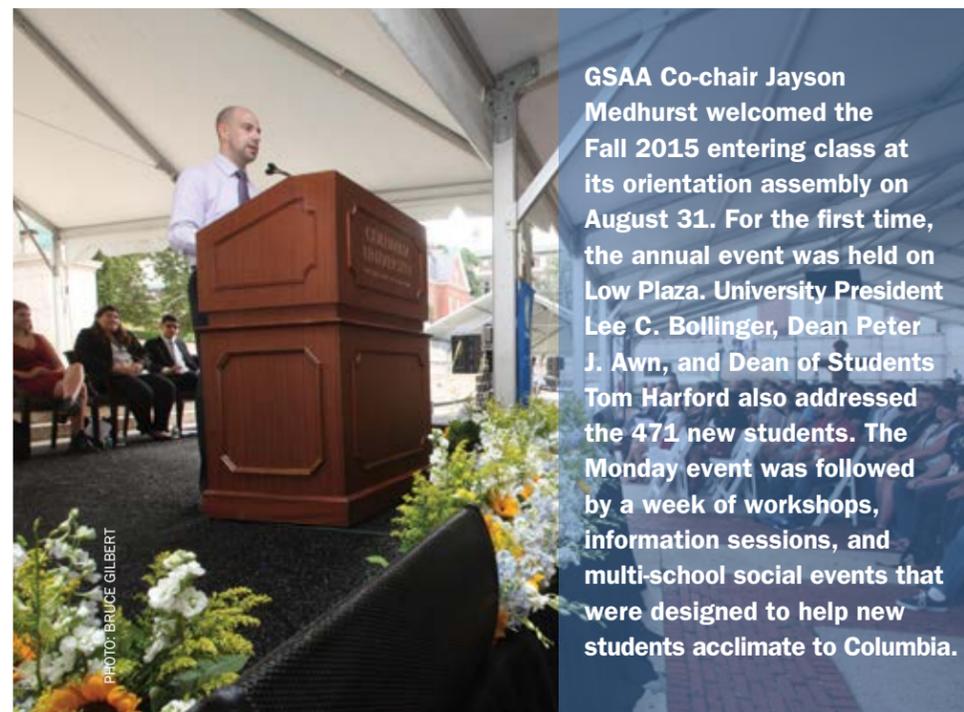
What is your favorite Columbia GS memory?

My favorite GS memory actually happened outside the U.N. Security Council in July, 1995. I was there covering one of the many emergency sessions of the council and waiting for the diplomats to emerge to talk about the latest atrocity during the Balkan war. Mounted on the wall immediately outside the Security Council was a tapestry copy of Picasso's great work, *Guernica*. It was painted as an immediate reaction to the Nazis' devastating casual bombing practice on the Basque town of Guernica during the Spanish Civil War. I was struck by my realization of the moment—the Balkan war—and my recognition of the work. I would have known neither had it not been that I was required to study art history to complete my European history degree. I credit Columbia GS for that—and changing my life.

Alumni News

All GS graduates—more than 16,500 strong—are members of the new General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA). Since GSAA's inauguration in 2014, more than 800 alumni have attended GS events, and more than 120 volunteers have participated in GS programs and committees.

The new organization has solidified its bylaws, and the Communications Committee will reveal a redesign of the GS alumni website—with changes intended to make it a center of alumni news and information—in the months ahead.



GSAA Co-chair Jayson Medhurst welcomed the Fall 2015 entering class at its orientation assembly on August 31. For the first time, the annual event was held on Low Plaza. University President Lee C. Bollinger, Dean Peter J. Awn, and Dean of Students Tom Harford also addressed the 471 new students. The Monday event was followed by a week of workshops, information sessions, and multi-school social events that were designed to help new students acclimate to Columbia.

CAA Regional Groups and Interest Groups

There are more than 100 alumni groups nationwide and worldwide. All regional clubs and interest groups welcome Columbia alumni and students. GS alumni are encouraged to participate. To learn more about where and how to become involved, visit <http://alumni.columbia.edu/alumni-community/alumni-clubs>

Participate!

Alumni Networking Opportunities

- Join us in person at events worldwide
- Connect with others through the Columbia Alumni Directory
- Join the CAA and GS LinkedIn groups
- Participate in social media channels across the Internet

For more information regarding your alumni benefits, visit <http://alumni.columbia.edu/alumni-discounts>.

GSAA Officers

GSAA Co-chairs:

Mason Beard, Jaysen Medhurst

Awards Committee Co-chairs:

Sheridan Gayer, Anita Christy

Communications Committee Co-chairs:

Jesse Dean, Katie Daily-Bruckner

Outreach Committee Co-chairs:

Azar Boehm, Sabrina Buckwalter

Programming Committee Co-chairs:

Jessica Garza, Lydia Chan

Annual Fund Committee Co-chairs:

Patrick Burke, Arthur Bingham

The committees above are seeking more members. To participate in a committee, contact:

Columbia GS Alumni Relations
622 West 113th Street, MC 4525
New York, NY 10025
Phone: 212-851-7432
email: gsalumni@columbia.edu

Columbia Alumni Benefits

There are more than 320,000 Columbia alumni worldwide, and multiple ways to connect with this powerful network.

CAA Arts Access

Exclusive events and discount tickets for performances with fellow Columbia alumni.

CAA Travel Study Program

Share travel experiences with fellow alumni that are often enriched by the participation of Columbia faculty members.

Campus Facilities

Take advantage of campus facilities including:

- Center for Career Education
- Dodge Fitness Center
- Alumni Center
- Faculty House
- Butler Library

**ALL YOU
NEED TO
KNOW IS AT:
alumni.columbia.edu**

2015 REUNION RECAP

After a full day of lectures, tours, luncheons, and receptions, on Saturday evening, May 30, alumni in attendance at this year's all-school Reunion were energized. Beginning with Friday night's recent alumni party at Stage 48 nightclub, 171 graduates of the School of General Studies had gathered together to celebrate their alma mater, reconnect with old friends, and network with new ones. Reunion Committee Chair Elizabeth Hollister '07, along with a long list of volunteers including Yael Israel '84, Adam Casdin '95, and Luz Maria Lambert '04, '09CE, hosted graduates from classes reaching as far back as 1950. Although particular attention was paid to those who graduated more than 50 years ago—affectionately recognized as the "Golden Owls"—such as Jules Wertheimer '50, Nicholas Falcone Arena '50, Grace Krumwiede '52, John McGough '54, and Joyce Hurley '58, alumni across the decades, such as Elaine Bernstein '72, Catherine Scott '84, Stephen Negron '91, and Estelle Raboni '97 were present.

The evening's featured speakers talked about the transformative power of Columbia and the School of General Studies. Lizzie Valverde '15, a creative writing major, recalled how encouragement from her professors and generous scholarship support

made it possible for her to strive towards her personal best. Maurice Decaul '12 reminisced about the community of fellow student-veterans he encountered after serving in Iraq and how his academic advisor, Phil Mendoza, coached him through challenging phases of his tenure. Both expressed their appreciation for the transformative power of GS.

To that end, on a set of easels, all alumni were invited to display cards that detailed the remarkable transformations they experienced through opportunities afforded them as a result of their Columbia educations.

During her remarks, however, General Studies Alumni Association (GSAA) Co-Chair Mason Beard '04 reminded attendees that their GS story continues. She detailed the accomplishments that the new GSAA made during its first full year in existence, explaining that more than 800 alumni attended events and programs throughout the year, and more than 120 volunteered in various committees. Beard invited alumni to stay engaged with Columbia and GS, explaining that their participation will add value to their educations and careers, strengthen the greater community, and contribute to current students' post-graduation successes.

See gs.columbia.edu/2015-reunion for the full Reunion 2015 recap.



1. Linden Byass '88 with Dean Awn and Debbie and Bob Caldwell '07
2. Jessica Garza '09 with GSAA Co-Chair Jaysen Medhurst '06 and Reunion Committee Chair Elizabeth Hollister '07
3. Maurice Decaul '12 addressed alumni
4. Vikas Bajpai, Manya Bajpai (née Naidu) '13, Bryan Degnan, and Salomé Gvaramia '13



To welcome new students who matriculated at GS for Spring 2015 semester, an **Alumni-Student Spring Orientation Mixer** was held on January 14, 2015 at Bernheim and Schwartz on Broadway.

1. Peter Schaefer '59 and New Student Orientation Leader Dalitso Nkhoma
2. Steve Gutton '07 (right) welcomes new students to the GS family.



3. Ayuka Kawakami '13, Rachel Boehr '13, Anatole Asbraf '12, Gergana Pancheva '12, Helena Lellis '09
4. Demetrius Braxton '15 and guest Tariq Sanda
5. Alumni mingle at The Attic Roof & Lounge.

On February 12, 2015, more than 150 alumni gathered for the annual **Midwinter Mixer** at midtown Manhattan's The Attic Roof & Lounge.



Alumni socialized with graduating students on May 6, 2015 at the **Alumni-Graduating Seniors Reception** at the Columbia Alumni Center

6. Patrick Burke '89, Mobammed Umar Najeeb '15, and Pete Brennan '08
7. Alumni welcomed graduating students to the Alumni Center.



Upcoming Events

Midwinter Mixer February 11, 2016

All-Class Reunion June 3-4, 2016

Save the Date

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

Elaine Hochberg '82, '85BUS

From City Kid to Model Executive

When you shake Elaine Hochberg's hand, you know immediately why she has had a successful career in business: She possesses a firm grasp, and her eyes transmit a character that is at once pragmatic and warm-hearted. One of eight children, Hochberg grew up in a lower-middle-class, industrious family. Her mother worked during the day and her father worked at night.

"I'm a New York City kid," Hochberg says proudly. "I lived in the projects and went to Stuyvesant High School."

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

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

While at Columbia, Hochberg thrived. She graduated *magna cum laude* and Phi Beta Kappa. Furthermore, she was recognized with the Lily Parker Award for excellence in French. With that momentum, immediately following her graduation from GS, she matriculated at the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. "I had dreams of being a college professor and writing books in a castle on a lake," she recalls.

Yet after one semester, her funding—and, as a result, her enthusiasm—waned. She concluded that a master's degree in French literature with a specialization in the writer-philosopher Denis Diderot would not pay her bills. Facing costly student loans, she withdrew from the program.

Hochberg weighed her options, and seeking an outcome of financial stability, in spring 1984 she matriculated at Columbia Business School. As a student, she concentrated on marketing—a nontraditional path at the finance-focused school—and upon obtaining her MBA, she secured a position at Sandoz Pharmaceutical



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

Elaine Hochberg

By Allison Scola

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

Under her watch, sales of Children's Advil doubled.

"I'm a salesman at heart," Hochberg says. "I understand where the other person is coming from, and because of my education, I am able to edit out, get to the point, and deliver results."

Such self-assurance and tenacity has driven Hochberg's 30-year career as a marketing executive. Since moving to Forest Laboratories in 1997—where, until a recent acquisition, she served as Chief Commercial Officer—her work contributed to almost two dozen product launches that resulted in billions of dollars of revenue. Products such as the antidepressants Celexa and Lexapro and the Alzheimer's medication Namenda achieved sales of \$1 billion. Her competence, focus, and acumen delivered results both professionally and personally.

Hochberg's success, however, is not only limited to her career as a marketing executive. Back when she was cataloguing instruction manuals in the University computer center in the late 1970s, she met and married engineering graduate student Arie Hochberg '84SEAS. The couple raised two children who have excelled themselves. "Your contribution to your children and the world can be fairly remarkable. It's a challenge for parents with careers, but with the right partner, family, company, and determination, it can be done," Hochberg reflects.

Today, her daughter is a partner in her husband's latest venture, Israeli Wine Direct, while her son is a professional dancer with Nevada Ballet Theater. And now that she is "non-permanently retired," Hochberg has sought ways to keep learning and to give back. She has become an active member of the Columbia Alumni Association (CAA), hosted Engineering students at her Upper West Side home, and currently serves on the boards of Symphony Space, the Metropolitan Opera Guild, and Ellison Ballet. In tribute to her own modest beginnings and appreciation for the opportunities her Columbia education presented her, she has started to become more involved in GS and Business School alumni activities.

"It's a daily practice," she says. "I've been deriving great joy from participating in the CAA and reconnecting with Columbia—it gives me a new sense of discovery."

Dr. Trevor Dixon '99PBPM

Rise Up / Give back

By Robert Ast '08

"Growing up in Brooklyn, I wasn't tracked to become a physician," Trevor Dixon '99PBPM notes. "This was during the drug epidemic in the late '80s/early '90s. About 90 percent of my friends from those days are either locked up or dead, and these were bright kids."

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

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

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

Dixon applied to the program and was accepted, attending classes at night while working as an ultrasound technician at Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn. Columbia proved to be a different academic experience, from the large introductory classes with few African-American students to the intensive coursework and competitive atmosphere.

"It was a culture shock," he says. "It was hard, but it helped me to see who I was and where I came from; you don't really know where you come from until you go somewhere different."

Dixon quickly adjusted, making some close friendships and, through his Postbac advisor, finding a mentor in Dr. Gerald Thomson, a professor and senior associate dean at Columbia's College of Physicians and Surgeons, who helped him prepare for the medical-school application process. He earned his MD at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey and, drawing upon his previous experience, began to specialize in emergency ultrasound medicine. Known primarily for its use in sonograms, ultrasound technology has "become the principal diagnostic tool used by trauma surgeons on unstable patients," Dixon says.

Given the importance of mentorship in his own life and career, it is no surprise that Dixon has gravitated toward professional opportunities that allow him to serve as a teacher and mentor, with stints at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, the University of Missouri, and now Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, where he currently serves as the director of emergency ultrasound.

"No matter where I go, that's the job I choose to take," he says. "It's not about chasing the money; it's about being in an academic center where I can teach residents and medical students."



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

Initially he traveled to Jamaica and worked with Kingston Public

“I’m grateful for the opportunity Columbia provided. I’m humbled by this whole journey more than anything else.”

Dr. Trevor Dixon

Hospital to train its staff on ultrasound technology, and then, in 2011, created the foundation to formalize and expand his efforts. The foundation's two primary areas of focus reflect Dixon's priorities: bringing

together healthcare professionals from the U.S., U.K., Canada, and Jamaica for conferences on ultrasound medicine and pediatric cancer and promoting access to medical services and education. On the latter front, much of JAHJAH's work strives to partner with the community and celebrate Jamaican culture—even down to its name, a nod to the Rastafarian term for God, "Jah"—from mounting healthcare clinics at dancehall parties to enlisting the support of reggae legends Beenie Man and Bounty Killer.

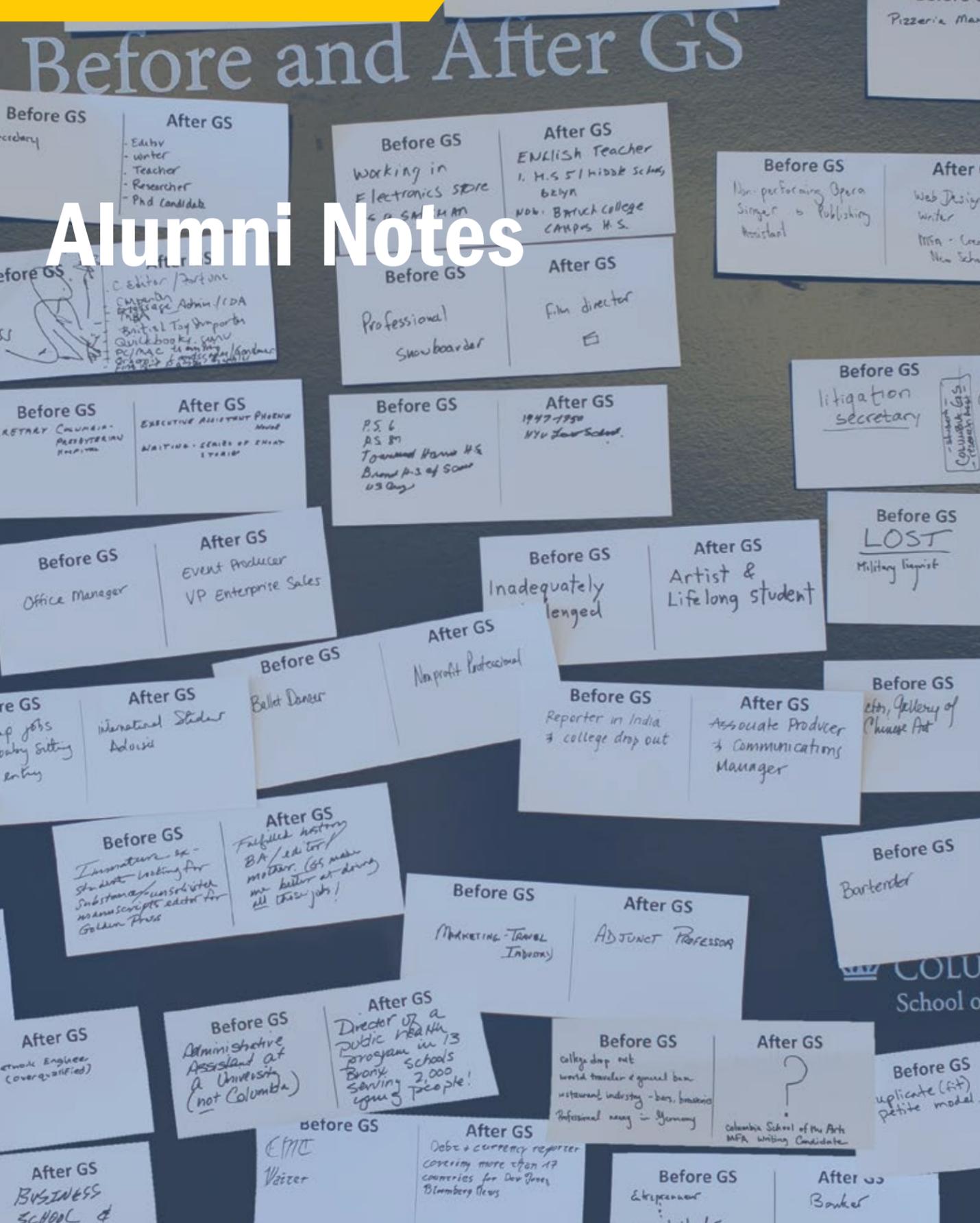
"It's so natural for me to do this work with the JAHJAH Foundation," Dixon says. "In Brooklyn, music is how I kept in contact with my culture, especially reggae music, which speaks about suffering and fighting against oppression."

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

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

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

THE GENERAL DIRECTION



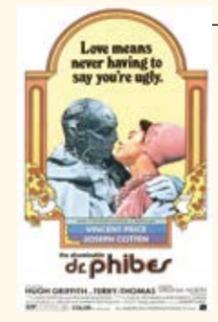
Alumni Notes

1950s

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



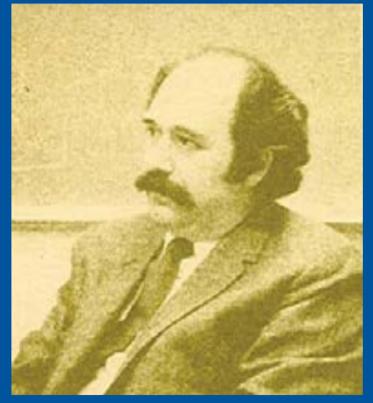
Robert Goldfarb '54 recently penned an article for *The New York Times* that focuses on the importance of veteran hiring initiatives. In the piece, Goldfarb demystifies issues corporations and nonprofits may face while hiring retired service men and women. The article also offers advice to veterans seeking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



William I. Goldstein '55 created Dr. Phibes, a character that drives the cult-classic series of films including the 1971 *The Abominable Dr. Phibes* starring Vincent Price. The Dr. Phibes films were recently released by Arrow Films and Video on Blu-ray. Today, the California native is collaborating with his son, Damon J.A. Goldstein, on the next Dr. Phibes novels including book five, *The Real Androbots*.

Former U.S. Senator for the State of Alaska **Mike Gravel '56** was recently appointed Chief Executive Officer and Chairman of the Board of THC Pharmaceuticals, Inc.

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



When World War II ended, Dr. Seymour Koenig, who had been serving in the U.S. Navy for a year and a half, was given a choice to stay in the military or return to civilian life. Having started at Brooklyn College prior to his deployment, he opted to return home and take advantage of the G.I. Bill's educational benefits. Like thousands of new veterans, he inquired about matriculating at Columbia. Because he had excelled in mathematics at Brooklyn College, his first inclination was to apply to the School of Engineering; however, after reviewing the course offerings, which included building radios and designing transformers and motors, his impression was that he would find studying physics more stimulating.

It was 1947, and the newly formed School of General Studies enabled Koenig to intensely study both physics and mathematics. "GS presented me with the freedom and flexibility to follow what my interests were, so I followed my curiosity," Koenig said. While at GS, he took every mathematics course available at the University. After earning his Bachelor of Science in 1949, he subsequently pursued his master's at Columbia, and eventually earned a PhD in physics in 1952.

"It was an exciting time," Koenig said, recalling when he defended his thesis in Schermerhorn Hall. "Fifteen people were sitting on the committee, every one of whom went on to receive a Nobel Prize for their work."

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

Upon earning his doctorate, Koenig was recruited for a position at the IBM Watson Scientific Computing Laboratory at Columbia University. Founded in 1945, the Watson Lab was at the forefront of computing technology. Under the leadership of its founder, astronomy professor Wallace Eckert, the lab took on an increasingly important role in the development of computing,

eventually developing the world's first supercomputer, the NORC, in 1954 and the first personal computer, the IBM 610, in 1956. The Watson Lab team sought increasingly powerful scientific computing systems that could predict the navigation of ships and calculate lunar orbits with great precision. The Watson-designed SSEC computer delivered just that, helping ships navigate the seas during the Korean War and guiding the Apollo

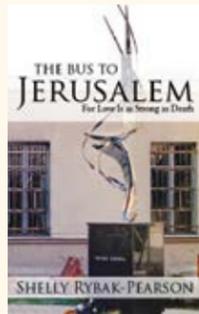
moon missions of the 1960s.

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

While in New Mexico, Koenig and his wife Harriet, who holds a Master of Arts in anthropology from Hunter College, became fascinated with the Native American populations of the Southwest. During their free time, the two conducted field research where they observed rituals, interviewed locals, photographed people and scenery, and collected tribal art such as rugs, pottery, and dolls. Over time, they accumulated a unique expertise that culminated in co-authoring *Acculturation in the Navajo Eden: New Mexico, 1550-1750, Archaeology, Language, and Religion of the Peoples of the Southwest*, which was published in 2005. Their research propelled Harriet to serve as an adjunct professor at University of Connecticut at Stamford for 44 years, while Koenig lectured in art history at Columbia, inspiring a number of his students to seek their doctorates in art history and archaeology.

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

"Things were very different when I started—the technology was so new. The transistor wasn't yet invented. We relied on vacuum tubes. Micro- and nanotechnology was only a vision. All of the work we accomplished is a source of great satisfaction," Koenig said.



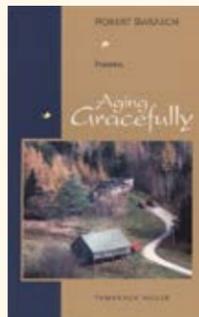
Shelly Rybak-Pearson '56 blended fact and fiction when she wrote *The Bus to Jerusalem*, published by Xlibris earlier this year. The story draws influence from Jewish mysticism and is based on true events lived by the author's parents. Rybak-Pearson is the founder and director of the International Foundation for the Arts, Inc. A Costa Rican native of Lithuanian Jewish descent, she spearheaded a campaign to install a monument in Lithuanian's capital city, Vilnius, to commemorate the atrocities of the Holocaust.



Herbert Kuhner '59 lives and works as a writer and translator in Vienna. After emigrating with his parents to the U.S. in 1935, he returned to Austria in 1963, and has subsequently been an advocate of the literature of Austrian ethnic groups, translating related works into English. In cooperation with the Theodor Kramer Society, in 2014, he released *Smoke and Fire/Rauch und Feuer*, a collection of English and German poems, and in 2015, *Jazz-Poems/Jazz-Gedichte*, a collection of original and translated works, and *Wände .../Walls ...*, a bilingual collection of Austrian-Jewish poetry.

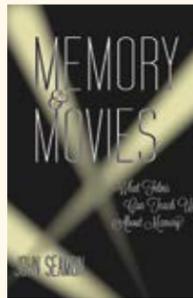


Author **Alan Winter's '59** latest novel *Island Bluffs* was released earlier this year. It is a story of love, forgiveness, and understanding the dark side of the human spirit. Winter's previous book, *Savior's Day*, was selected as a "Best Book of 2013" by Kirkus Review. Winter has also published two other novels, *Someone Else's Son* and *Snowflakes in the Sahara*.



1960s
Since retiring, psychologist **Robert Barasch '66** has published a book of poetry, *Aging Gracefully*, and a novel, *Parallel Play*. One of his poems won an international poetry prize by *Atlanta Review*. A resident of Vermont for 25 years, Barasch earned a PhD in clinical psychology from Yeshiva University and taught at Goddard College and St. Michael's College.

Frances (Pettinelli) Galton '66, '78GSAS holds a PhD in dramatic theory and criticism from CUNY where she taught for 20 years. Once retired from teaching, she founded American Playwrights Theatre, a professional theater company in New York City, which she ran from 1997 to 2003. Since 2005, she has lived in Massachusetts, where she has led a troupe of actors in their 60s through 90s, producing original works about seniors that have been presented around the country.



John Seamon '66 recently published *Memory and Movies: What Films Can Teach Us about Memory* (MIT Press). Seamon is a Professor Emeritus of psychology and neuroscience and behavior at Wesleyan University. His latest book shows how examining the treatment of memory in popular movies can shed new light on how human memory works.

The 1967-68 editor of *The Owl* student newspaper, **Brian Leary '68**, wrote to remind us of the origins of this publication and the accomplishments of the dedicated team during a newsworthy year. Leary and his classmate Tomec Smith were instrumental in campaigning for the implementation of the BA degree at GS.



1970s
Roger Pilon '71, JD, PhD, and his wife Juliana Geran Pilon, PhD, have generously created a new fellowship program available exclusively to Columbia University School of General Studies students. The Roger Pilon Fellowship will annually award two qualified GS students who plan to pursue academic or legal careers \$10,000 each.



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



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

On November 16, Columbia President Lee C. Bollinger dedicated the Susan K. Feagin Welcome Center at the Columbia Alumni Center "in recognition of her extraordinary accomplishments and exemplary service to the University," according to a special Trustee resolution. Susan Feagin '74



has had a distinguished career at Columbia, most recently as Special Advisor to President Bollinger. From 2003 to 2010 she served as Executive Vice President for University Development and Alumni Relations.



1980s
Architect and writer **F.D. Rick Shands '80, '82 GSAPP** currently resides in Abu Dhabi. Having lived and worked in New York City, Stockholm, London, Jeddah, Kuwait, and Malta, he drew upon his life experience when writing his first novel *Frame 39*. The recently published work follows John, a Swedish architect commissioned to design a center for worldwide, interfaith ecumenism and Jennifer, an American screenwriter in search of a screenplay. The two become connected by a fascination with 39 black and white photographs of spiritual places.

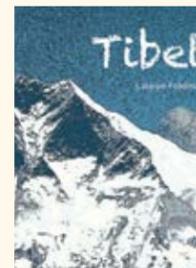


This past summer, **Tom Bovo '81** displayed a collection of photos titled "The Other Side of Summer" at 440 Gallery in Brooklyn, N.Y. The exhibit featured images Bovo captured in Santa Barbara, Calif. In a June article in *Brooklyn Magazine*, Bovo discusses his first photography series shot outside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

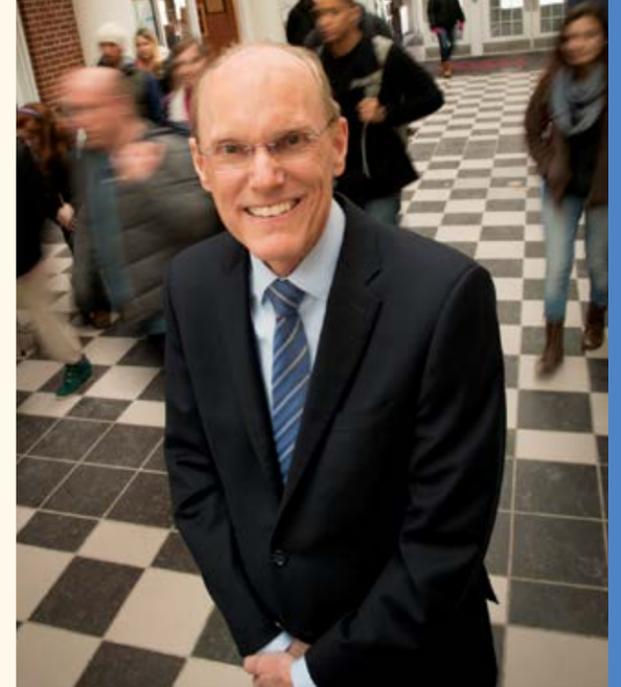
Garden City High School student Esteban Ortiz wrote an award-winning essay about his mother **Cecilia Sacoto de Ortiz '82** for the Hispanic Heritage Essay Contest sponsored by Olympusat and Cablevision. Her son's essay describes how Sacoto de Ortiz inspires him despite health challenges she has faced.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



New York City-based interdisciplinary musician, theatre artist, independent scholar, and teaching artist **Tamara Cashour '83** won a 2015 Bronx Council on the Arts BRIO grant in musical composition. Her work, *Queens Suite: A Study of Gender in Music for Strings and Harp*, was presented at the 2015 International Alliance of Women in Music International Online Conference and performed at the Two Lands, Once Voice Festival in Rome, at LeFrak Concert Hall at Queens College, and under the auspices of the New York Composers Circle at the Leonard Nimoy Thalia Theater at Symphony Space. Also in 2015, Cashour conducted Dr. Orlando Legname's chamber composition *Vortici d'etere* at St. Peter's Citicorp concert space.



Lauree Feldman '86 is a photographer, artist, writer, world traveler, and communications professional. She is a three-time grant recipient from the New York Foundation for the Arts. This year she self-published a book of photographs she took during her travels in Tibet. A beautiful coffee table book, *Tibet* contains more than 200 color photographs chronicling a personal journey through the country. Its contents are presented in four sections: narrative, people, art & architecture, and landscape. More at www.laureefeldman.com.



James Mabry '81, '98GSAS Named President of Middlesex Community College

In October, Dr. James Mabry was inaugurated as the fourth president of Middlesex Community College in Massachusetts. Mabry graduated from GS in 1981, after which he went on to the London School of Economics for a Master's of Science and then returned to Columbia for a PhD in U.S. History. The position Mabry held prior to his presidency at Middlesex was Vice President of Academic Affairs at Mesa Community College in Mesa, Arizona.

Mabry's path to GS began as a civilian employee of the U.S. Air Force in Germany, after which he received an associate degree from the University of Maryland in the six years between high school and matriculating at GS. He believes that his experience studying at GS was the first step of what later became his mission to provide opportunities for students in higher education.

"GS changed my life and put me on the path to where I am today," Mabry said.

Mabry expressed his goals in an interview with *The Bedford Citizen* in December: "I want all community college students to have an opportunity to learn and to succeed." Mabry has spent most of his career in community colleges, first as a teacher. He said that he "wants higher education to be accessible and to create learning environments that are welcoming and promote success."

"I am looking forward to a great new challenge knowing I am stepping in to lead a strong organization with many great people," Mabry said.

1990s



President of Kellogg Europe **Christopher Hood '91, '93BUS** addressed the Class of 2015 at this year's Class Day celebration. During his inspirational speech, Hood discussed his career path, starting as a successful chef and then, after attending Columbia GS and Business School, moving on to a career as an executive for Proctor and Gamble and eventually Kellogg.



Award-winning film editor **Mako Kamitsuna '92** recently edited the new Michael Mann film *Blackhat* starring Chris Hemsworth, Viola Davis, and Wang Leehom. A longtime editor, Kamitsuna was born in Houston and raised in Hiroshima, Japan. In addition to studying at GS, she attended the NYU-Maurice Kanbar Institute of Film & Television at Tisch School of the Arts. Kamitsuna has worked on more than 25 films.



Former editor-in-chief of *The Owl* (1992-2000), **Melissa Bell '93** wrote the libretto for the new stage musical *Devil and the Deep* that premiered at New York's Theatre East in June. *Devil and the Deep* is a reimagining of Robert Louis Stevenson's classic *Treasure Island*. Bell's plays and librettos have been presented at a variety of theatrical venues, including the Triad Theatre, the Abingdon Theatre, and TheatreLab in New York City.



Mary Prendergast '93, '98SOA received a 2015 Academy Award nomination for best documentary feature for *Finding Vivian Maier*. Prendergast worked as an associate producer on this critically acclaimed film about a nanny whose unknown cache of photographs earned her a posthumous reputation as an accomplished street photographer.

This summer, **Alessandra Ciucci '95** joined Columbia University Department of Music as an assistant professor of ethnomusicology. Prior to this appointment, Ciucci served as a full-time lecturer of ethnomusicology in the Northeastern University College of Arts, Media and Design. Ciucci received her PhD in music-ethnomusicology from CUNY Graduate Center and was a Mellon Post-Doctoral Fellow in the Columbia Department of Music from 2008-2010.

In May, former high fashion model and now practicing psychiatrist **Lauren Helm '99PBPM, PS '03** was profiled in a piece titled "Proof It's Never Too Late To Pursue Your Calling" in *O, The Oprah Magazine*.



PHOTO: ALESSANDRA PETLIN

2000s



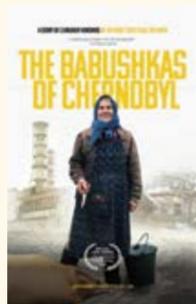
Dr. Elizabeth V. Velilla '02 was awarded the Latino Alumni Association of Columbia University's Young Alumni Award for her work as the youngest and first Latina assistant dean and director of research operations at the United States Military Academy at West Point. Velilla, who was recognized for this honor at the 16th Annual El Regreso gala in March at Low Memorial Library, also serves as assistant professor in the Department of Behavioral Sciences and Leadership. After earning her BA in psychology from GS, Velilla attended The Graduate Center of the City University of New York where she received her PhD in social/personality psychology.



Julia Bacha '03 was awarded a 2015 Guggenheim Fellowship in film. Since graduating, Bacha has worked as a filmmaker and media strategist and as creative director at non-profit Just Vision. Her award-winning documentary films such as 2004's *Control Room*, 2006's *Encounter Point*, and 2009's *Budrus* have received accolades throughout the world for fostering constructive conversations about some of the most divisive issues of our times. In 2013, her film *My Neighbourhood*, which follows a Palestinian teenager struggling to reclaim his home in East Jerusalem from Israeli settlers, won the coveted Peabody Award. Her TED talk, "Pay Attention to Nonviolence," was selected as one of the best talks of 2011 and has been viewed by over half a million people worldwide.



Ariel Beery '05, CEO of MobileOCT, won the Tel Aviv installment of Elevator World Tour, a program that gives entrepreneurs an opportunity to pitch their ideas to influential investors, while actually in the world's most impressive elevators. One hundred Israeli startups had the opportunity to give an elevator pitch to investors in Tel Aviv's Azrieli Center. Beery successfully proposed MobileOCT's smartphone add-on device that helps doctors in developing countries diagnose cervical cancer early, garnering \$100K for his company.



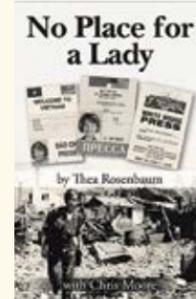
Gene Park '07 runs Toneburst Audio, an audio engineering, sound editing, design, and foley studio that specializes in mixing and designing sound for narrative and documentary films, advertising creative, and short-form content. Over the past five years, eleven of Park's films have been shown at Sundance Film Festival; at this year's DOC NYC festival, two films which Park mixed, *The Babushkas of Chernobyl* and *Bounce*, were shown.

Attorney **Christopher Riano '07** has been serving as the chair of the Columbia University Senate Rules Committee. In this capacity, he was instrumental in fostering through a landmark change in the University's Rules of Conduct that protect the rights of student journalists who are covering protest activity.



Danielle Aarons '08 (née Klein) and husband Avi Aarons are excited to announce the birth of their son, Skyler Dean Aarons. Skyler was born on March 16 in New York City and was 8 pounds 4 ounces and 21 inches.

2010s



Writer **Chris Moore '10** specializes in co-authoring and ghostwriting full-length fiction and nonfiction manuscripts. Recently, he coauthored a memoir titled *No Place for a Lady* with Thea Rosenbaum. The book details Rosenbaum's life from her childhood in Berlin escaping the Soviet A with her mother to her historic career as the first woman stock-broker at Oppenheimer & Co., the only female German war correspondent in Vietnam, and a White House press pool producer.



Earlier this year, **Sabrina Buckwalter's '11, '12JRN** was featured in an article that appeared on *Vice*. The article details Buckwalter's coverage of the Khairlanji massacre, a vicious crime that involved the rape and murder of a mother and her daughter and two sons in September 2006. Buckwalter is currently a news producer at France 2 television in Washington, D.C.



Lukas Huffman '11 is a film director working in Brooklyn NY. Earlier this year he was interviewed by *The Inertia* regarding his career and latest film, *When the Ocean Met the Sky*, which he directed and cowrote. The film about three estranged brothers has won several awards on the festival circuit. Prior to attending GS, Huffman spent ten years as a professional snowboarder. He is currently working on a feature film about a female snowboarder.



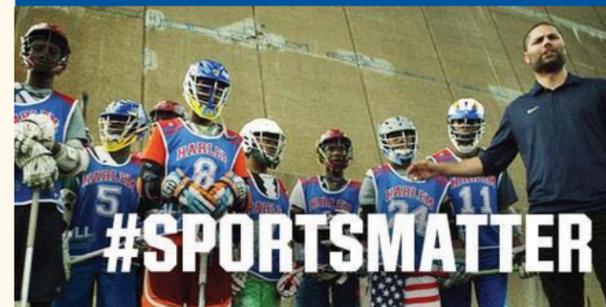
In fall 2014, at the height of the Ebola crisis, **Dr. Neil Shahrestani '11** was interviewed on CNBC, discussing stocks for biotech companies that were developing drugs to fight the deadly virus. Shahrestani is now chief investment officer of Ikarian Capital in Dallas, Texas, a long/short equity healthcare hedge fund that he cofounded.



Sam Klein '11PBPM Sees the Fruits of Seeds Sown while at Columbia in More Ways than One

While a student in the Postbac Premed Program, Sam Klein '11 volunteered as a lacrosse coach at Frederick Douglass Academy in Harlem. The public school's modest lacrosse program quickly grew into a holistic youth services organization, now called Harlem Lacrosse and Leadership (HLL). Today, the nonprofit organization provides at-risk boys and girls with school-based academic intervention, lacrosse programming, leadership training, and admissions counseling at P.S. 149, P.S. 76, Promise Academy II, and Frederick Douglass Academy I in Harlem. Klein, a cofounder of the organization with teacher Simon Cataldo and Paul DiCarlo '11BUS, is now expanding HLL to Baltimore with a program at the Commodore John Rodgers Elementary and Middle School.

This past summer, student participants in Harlem Lacrosse were featured in a Dick's Sporting Goods "Sports Matter" video campaign. The piece illustrates the positive impact HLL's work has had on its participants. It may be seen on YouTube. Additionally, HLL reports that since 2011, 100 percent of participants in the Frederick Douglass Academy program have graduated from middle school. Furthermore, HLL participants have a nearly 20 percent higher passing rate than the other students in their same core classes. Notably, the program's students have been awarded over \$9.5 million in scholarships from some of the most prestigious preparatory and secondary schools in the country. Needless to say, Klein, who is currently in his final year of medical school at Brown University and preparing for his medical residency, is extremely proud of his ongoing work with Harlem Lacrosse and Leadership.



Ryan Kendall '14 Featured in *Speak Now*

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

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



Fashion model **Cameron Russell '12** is working to transform our conception of the word "beauty." Her TED talk entitled "Looks Aren't Everything, Believe Me, I'm a Model" is one of TED's 20 most popular talks. It addresses society's biases on benefits of beauty. In February, Russell was featured as *Self* magazine's cover story.



Recording artist and performer **Johnathan Celestin '13** released "Be-You-tiful," a music video about self-empowerment with an anti-bullying message. In addition to the video, Celestin called upon fans of his music to create their own "My Own Be-You-tiful" messages. Watch Celestin's "Be-You-tiful" video along with other songs on YouTube. More at JohnathanCelestin.com.

Jason Everman '14 is currently earning his master's degree in military history at Norwich University. Everman is a 2015 Tillman Military Scholar.



In fall 2015, **Fadel Friedlander-Fulkerson '14** enrolled at New York Law School with scholarship support. The 59-year-old former opera singer and radio broadcaster completed GS in 2014 after a 30-year break from her first foray at the school in the 1980s.



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



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



Born in Adama, Ethiopia, **Atti Worku '14** is a former model and Miss Ethiopia working to create progressive education and community development centers within urban communities in Africa. In 2005, Worku founded Seeds of Africa, a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating, motivating, and cultivating underprivileged children and young adults in Ethiopia. In August, Worku was honored with the 2015 African Youth Excellence Award, a prize that celebrates the achievements of a dynamic young leader in the African Diaspora.



After graduating with a master degree's in poetry from NYU, in September, **Maurice Decaul '12** enrolled in Brown University's MFA program in playwriting. Awarded a Cave Canem Fellowship, he will have the opportunity to study with leading faculty. Earlier this year his work *Dijla Wal Furat: Between the Tigris and the Euphrates* was presented by Poetic Theater Productions in New York City.



Filmmaker **Gerald Jackson '12** leads Five Alive Films, an independent film company that focuses on music videos, promotional videos, film shorts, and motion pictures based in Jacksonville, Fla. Jackson is currently distributing the feature film *Truly Everlasting*, based on a novel by Brenda Jackson, and this year he began production for a new film titled *Missy's Musical Misadventure*, which is currently in post-production.



In August, **Miguel Morel '12** and **Kyle Riggle '12** were featured in Pennsylvania's *Daily Local News* for their work as General Manager and CEO, respectively, of Orth Cleaners. The two have set out to revolutionize the clothing cleaning business by putting customer service at the center of its suburban Philadelphia-area enterprise. Along with a silent partner, they purchased Orth in October 2014, and since taking over operations in February, they have used mobile technologies and an environmentally-driven mission to overhaul the business, to name just a few improvements.

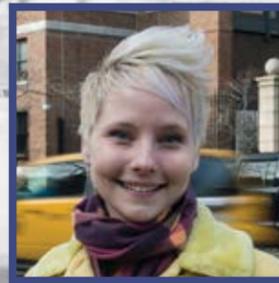


In April, **Aelfie (Starr Tuff) Oudghiri's '12** textile and rug designs were featured in *T: The New York Times Style Magazine*, as a part of a new series of limited-edition rugs at SHOP Cooper Hewitt. Oudghiri's work was also recently featured in *Vogue*. For more about Oudghiri's designs, visit aelfie.com.



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



PHOTOS: BRUCE GILBERT

