

# Owl & Spade

Power of Place

Fall 2019



A Magazine for  
the Alumni &  
Friends of  
Warren  
Wilson  
College

# Owl & Spade Magazine

EST. 1924

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photo courtesy of the Warren Wilson College Archives

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# A Letter From the President



Dear Alumni and Friends,

It has been an honor to serve as Warren Wilson College's President during its 125th year (called the quasiquicentennial, I've learned). As I thought about the institution's beginnings in 1894 as the Asheville Farm School to the present moment, I recognized that the primary unifier of each educational chapter has been this location and the work that sustains all that has happened here. It's powerful that one place means so much to so many people. But there's much more to the power of *this* place than the sum of all our historical records.

Here in the Swannanoa Valley of the Blue Ridge Mountains, we educate bright, passionate, hard-working students in one of the most biodiverse regions of the world. The natural beauty here is spectacular – unparalleled in higher education, in my opinion. The history of this place is culturally dense. Rich narratives develop here. We learn the value of stories from the past while we create our own new stories. And in this place, we feel a daily sense of awe for the land that surrounds us. It's no wonder we themed our quasiquicentennial year *Power of Place*.

Fine Arts Division Chair and Professor of Art Lara Nguyen painted the cover of this magazine. On this year's All-In for WWC Giving Day in April, donors voted for their favorite places on campus, and the winning view would serve as the inspiration for the cover art in this *Power of Place* issue of the *Owl & Spade*. We are thankful for the nearly 500 donors who collectively gave more than \$100,000 that day and selected the gorgeous view of the white barn from Dogwood Pasture.

This magazine explores the connections that make us who we are and who we will become. Over the past year, we held a *Power of Place* lecture series, which brought speakers to campus to galvanize our community around our strategic imperatives of innovative land management and just, sustainable practices. The features in this magazine

highlight another strategic imperative: our commitment to academic excellence through work done by talented and dedicated faculty, staff, and students. These innovators are investigating new solutions to climate change, curating never-before-seen exhibitions, and creating craft programming that honors the past and looks to the future. How has place shaped us? How have we shaped this place? How can we harness the energy of the community we nurture at Warren Wilson to continue improving our world as we face the challenges of this particular time in our history?

I can't tell you that these questions will be answered within the pages of this magazine. However, the questions are meant to inspire you to join us in exploring new ways to understand ourselves in the context of our time and place. Our new Center for Integrated Advising and Careers pushes our students to reflect regularly, to chart their paths, to change course as they continue to refine who they are. This work is central to the identity of what our College offers students – the ability to test and hone their theories of themselves and the world through practice. We hope that, upon graduation, our alumni continue to reflect throughout their lives, to recognize those who came before them, and to pave the way for those who come after we are all gone.

That provocation and reflection is what I hope you will find in this publication dedicated to celebrating the *Power of Place* at Warren Wilson College and our predecessor schools. If you are reading this letter, your participation in our community has helped shape who we are. We hope that, as a part of our continuous community, you will come back to this place – in body and in spirit – and continue to feel its impact on your life.

In community,

*Lynn M. Morton*  
Lynn Morton, President

# Profiles

**Saleem Hue Penny '01** | Relevant Role Model

**Lisa Gonzalez '02** | Practical Idealist

**Kim Wright '81** | Intentional Adventurer

**Ashley Rogers '04** | Creative Critical Thinker

# AMBASSADOR FOR PLAY: DEFENDER OF CHILDHOOD

Profile by Melissa Ray Davis '02, portrait by Morgan Davis '02



s Vice President of Community and Educational Partnerships at the Chicago Children's Museum, Saleem

Hue Penny '01 envisions "a world where children are respected, lifted up, and valued, our childhoods are embraced, and we don't stray too far from those lessons that childhood teaches us." Both his work and service have tremendous range – from museum to prison, community center to hospital. But he still returns to a common touchstone: "ambassador for play" and "defender, preserver of childhood."

"What we as the United States of America do and do not value about children is something that I'm very keenly aware of," Penny said, explaining that the United States is the only United Nations member that has not ratified the Declaration of the Rights of the Child. "To say that we, as political leaders, cannot unequivocally say children's lives matter – why is that so hard?"

A parent of preschool twins himself, Penny designs and leads community engagement initiatives and access programs at the Chicago Children's Museum. "When you design something well, whether it's an exhibit, a program, or a play structure," he said, "whatever the thing is, it can live on past you."

Beyond work at the museum, Penny writes poetry and music, and he

volunteers with several community organizations. Penny is a 2019 Cave Canem Fellow and received a Pushcart Prize nomination in 2017 for his poem "Sunset, Before," a poignant juxtaposition of power and vulnerability as the spectre of a white mob looms on an interracial couple. He leads writing salons in Cook County Jail with ConTextos, where he uses personal memoir writing as a violence prevention model. And through Open Heart Magic, he performs interactive, therapeutic bedside magic for hospitalized children. "I just want to suspend disbelief for a little while and feel that magic is still in the world and that there's still something that could bring people together."

Penny recently had the police called on him while he sat in his car with his napping son in front of the condo he owns. "If you don't create something from this, it eats you alive," Penny said, so he channeled that experience into "Napping While Black," his forthcoming dialogue project with the Sweet Water Foundation. "We have a lot of conversations about teens and the police and about adults and the police, but we don't have a lot of conversation about children birth through five and the police."

Warren Wilson College was the first place where Penny said he felt he had intellectual freedom. "College was the first time where somebody said, 'Here's a blank piece of paper,

and there aren't lines on it, and here's a charcoal crayon, a can of whip cream, some silly putty, and a pencil. Go.' I already had the bravery, but not necessarily the confidence to try." A Chemistry major, Penny stretched even further in grad school, earning master's degrees in both Psychology and Social Work.

"I hope people don't take their time [at Warren Wilson] for granted," Penny said, adding that Warren Wilson's strong community is a very rare thing. "The majority of what I do is try to create community wherever I am. But there's never been one like the College. People rise to the occasion because of how this place has shaped them."

**Saleem Hue Penny '01 is Vice President of Community and Educational Partnerships at the Chicago Children's Museum. His poem "Sunset, Before" was nominated for the Pushcart Prize, and his chapbook *The Attic, The Basement, The Barn* is available through Tammy Journal.**



Saleem Hue Penny '01 | Relevant Role Model



Lisa Gonzalez '02 | Practical Idealist

# LEAD BY FOLLOWING: PLANTING COMMUNITY SEEDS

Profile by Melissa Ray Davis '02, portrait by Reggie Tidwell

“I’ve learned that there are a lot of leaders in the world,” Lisa Gonzalez ’02 said, “but we need followers too. You can’t always be the leader; you have to learn to follow other people, especially people you’re trying to help.” When she first started her work in food systems, Gonzalez said she wanted to “save the world and bring people out of hunger,” but she realized, “that was my privileged perspective going into it.”

Gonzalez believes that you can’t simply plop down a garden in a low-income community and then leave, expecting community members to take care of it for free. “Projects that are successful are the ones that are community-driven,” she said. “And you can’t think that you know what the community needs; you have to ask them, and you have to engage them in the process from the beginning.”

Frequently, community problems stem from much larger, systemic issues. That’s why Gonzalez is also active in political advocacy, and she likes to cut directly to the source. “Back in the day, I used to protest and go to marches, but now I just make appointments with my senators,” she said.

Gonzalez used carrots as a metaphor. Before, she had always just pulled them up to eat a few months after planting the seeds. But carrots are actually biannual, so out of curiosity, she let one grow for its full life cycle. “By the time that carrot finally flowered and produced seeds, it was humongous, and it looked just like Queen Anne’s Lace, which is wild carrot.” She explained that, like the carrot, you cannot know a community from a one-time meeting, you have to put in the time and work to better understand how your service can support existing community-driven efforts.

Gonzalez said her time at Warren Wilson College and on the Environmental Leadership Crew built her character.

“I feel really lucky that I went here in this peaceful, calm, conscious environment, because then I was able to go into the big wide world, the urban centers that I’ve lived, and still maintain this peaceful energy and positive attitude.”

That attitude brought her success in a variety of settings. After earning her bachelor’s degree in Environmental Studies with a concentration in Environmental Education, Gonzalez went on to bring hands-on lessons in gardening and cooking to children as a teacher at a Waldorf school in Florida. She later joined the University of Maryland Extension, where she held positions as a Gardening for Nutrition Educator and then a Family and Consumer Sciences Extension Agent, while earning her Master of Science degree in Nutrition and Integrative Health. Now, she is a District Food Systems Specialist with the University of Florida IFAS Extension. She supports schools, communities, and farmers to build strong food systems throughout Southeastern Florida.

“It is not about me, not about what I want, not about my career,” Gonzalez said. “This country cannot be sustainable if all we’re thinking about is ourselves. We have to step aside and think about other people, what they need, what the environment needs, what the world needs.”

**Lisa Gonzalez ’02 is a District Food Systems Specialist with the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences Extension, where she supports schools, communities, and farmers to build strong food systems throughout Southeast Florida.**

# LEGAL REBEL WITH A CAUSE

Profile by Jake Frankel '02, portrait by Zaldi Ero

**I**n a field often defined by combativeness, Kim Wright '81's collaborative approach to law has earned her the honorary title of "Legal Rebel" from the American Bar Association (ABA). A leader in the Integrative Law movement, she travels the globe and works with a wide range of partners to redesign legal systems so they are more holistic and humane.

She traces her skills back to her days at Warren Wilson, where she complemented her cross-cultural communication classes with life in the International Dorm and learned from the diverse perspectives of her housemates.

"Warren Wilson ruined me in the best way," Wright said. "Professors like Bill Mosher encouraged curiosity. My experience there gave me the courage to ask questions and empowered me to appreciate different ways of living."

Wright was the first person in her family to go to college. She came to campus at a time when it was filled with students from 50 countries, and it felt a world away from her small town upbringing in St. Cloud, Florida.

"Warren Wilson was as different as I could get at the time. The Appalachian Mountains were downright exotic," she said.

But it wasn't until decades later that Wright had a chance to travel abroad for the first time and experience international cultures and cuisine in their native lands.

She had been busy. Her first child was born during her sophomore year, and she played a role in bringing up a total of 16 children in the years that followed. After graduating from Warren Wilson with a double major in Business Management and International Studies, she earned her law degree from the University of Florida and maintained a successful holistic law practice.

In 2008, at age 50, with her children raised, Wright hit the road in search of inspiring new legal models. Her documentary film project featuring interviews of over 100 legal pioneers led to her first ABA bestselling book, *Lawyers as Peacemakers: Practicing Holistic, Problem-Solving Law*. She published her second book, *Lawyers as Changemakers: The Global Integrative Law Movement*, in 2016.

Publication opened a wealth of travel opportunities, and she hasn't seen the need for a permanent address since. She wove together a global movement by connecting lawyers, consulting, training, and advocating for values-based approaches to law.

"Integrative law is about getting along as diverse people, which I learned a lot about at Warren Wilson. The school fostered three values that have stood the test of time – dignity,

belonging, and curiosity. They've been good guideposts for everything I've done since," Wright said. "Warren Wilson gave me the experience of living in a diverse community and empowered me to do what I do now, which is to try to build community on a bigger scale."

**Kim Wright, J.D., '81 is a leader in the Integrative Law movement. She travels the globe to redesign legal systems that are more holistic and humane.**



Kim Wright '81 | Intentional Adventurer



Ashley Rogers '04 | Creative Critical Thinker

# TELLING UNTOLD HISTORIES

Profile by Melissa Ray Davis '02, portrait by Reggie Tidwell

**M**ost plantation museums showcase the decadent lives of the wealthy plantation owners, romanticizing the “Old South,” but the Whitney Plantation instead serves as a memorial to the enslaved people who lived and died there. The narrative

is told from their perspectives, the art installations and memorials are dedicated to them, and the exhibits encourage visitors to understand the wider context of slavery. Ashley Rogers '04 is the Executive Director.

“As a white woman who is a scholar of slavery and who’s also running a major slavery museum, how I became interested in this topic is a thing that people want to know all the time,” Rogers said. “But I don’t really know. People are curious because they think there’s an expectation that white people wouldn’t care about it – because a lot of them don’t. I think, to me, I don’t know how you could not be fascinated by it. I don’t know how you could not care when it’s so central to our history. It explains so much of what’s happening right now and always will.”

Rogers started reading slave narratives when she was 10, but Warren Wilson College was where Rogers first did original research on slavery. Dr. Philip Otterness then introduced her to the field of public history and museum studies. The rest is history: Rogers eventually earned her Master of Arts in Public History at Colorado State University while working as the Assistant Director for Denver Regional Museums, and now she is enrolled in the Ph.D. program at Louisiana State University.

“I wanted to come back to the South and work in a plantation site interpreting slavery, but I thought I was going to have to invent that from the ground up. I thought I was going to have to get a job at a plantation and then be like, ‘Surprise. We’re going to talk about slavery,’” Rogers said. She later explained, “There’s a great erasure in this country of the history of slavery. We really downplay its significance. What happens when those stories aren’t told? The oppressor wins, right? The oppressor’s narrative gets to be *the* narrative if the oppressed don’t have a voice.”

Rogers said that when people tell children, “You can do anything,” they don’t actually mean *anything*. But at Warren Wilson she was told, “You can do anything, and here’s a shovel.” She started digging.

After moving to New Orleans, Rogers learned about the Whitney Plantation, which had not yet opened. She immediately wrote to them – a plantation museum that told the narrative from the perspectives of enslaved people was precisely the history she had hoped to tell. She asked to volunteer. Instead, after a national search, the Whitney Plantation hired Rogers as Director of Museum Operations. They later promoted her to Executive Director.

“The biggest thing that I want people to get from the experience is that I want them to look around at the world differently. We’re not going to be able to teach them everything,” Rogers conceded, but she said, “I want people to buy books. I want them to read the newspaper. I want them to look around at what’s happening.”

**Ashley Rogers '04 is Executive Director of the Whitney Plantation in Wallace, Louisiana, one of the first plantation museums to tell the story of the people enslaved there rather than the owners who enslaved them. She is currently earning her Ph.D. from Louisiana State University.**



— ATHLETICS —



— FARM —



— BRYSON —





— CHAPEL —



# For 125 years,

Warren Wilson College has educated generations of students to lead lives of dedication, meaning, service, and beauty – lives that matter. We're ringing in the College's 125th anniversary with a series of events celebrating our history that focus on what it means to be located physically, ecologically, and culturally within the overlapping communities that make up this special place. As we reminisce about the past, we look forward to an exciting future at Warren Wilson College!

Photography by Genevieve Gualtiere '16, Casey "Red" Herring '21, Reggie Tidwell, and the Warren Wilson College Archives



— STUDENTS —



# Commemorating Warren Wilson's 125th Anniversary:

## Power of Place Lecture Series

Heather Wingert

*"When I applied for the presidency at Warren Wilson College in 2017, I was fully aware of Warren Wilson's strong sense of place in the beautiful Swannanoa Valley, close by the vibrant city of Asheville, in the ancient southern Appalachian mountains. For nearly two years, I have personally experienced the daily wonder of the gem that is our land – nearly 1,200 acres of farm, garden, forest, and core campus. It is exceedingly rare for a college to sit on this much land, but beyond that, our land is our classroom, our place of discovery, our source of joy and solace, and a central part of our future as well."*

– President Lynn Morton, Ph.D.

To commemorate the 125th anniversary of Warren Wilson College and its predecessor schools, a Power of Place lecture series launched in the 2018-2019 academic year with a focus on what it means to exist physically, ecologically, and culturally within a place. Over the course of five months, three lectures drew more than 700 community members to campus. Each lecture sparked reflection and dialogue, inspiring attendees to be conscious of the nuances of place and its relationship to history and people of different backgrounds.

The series began with Peabody Award winner Majora Carter, who delivered a timely message about the significance of improving under-resourced communities within the larger urban revitalization conversation. Carter shared about her

successes in the South Bronx with green infrastructure projects, policies, and job training. According to an article in *The New York Times* in 2016, Carter's investment in a coffee shop in the South Bronx transformed a dormant neighborhood into a "community hub and tinderbox for creativity." Steps away from the coffee shop, Carter's face appears in a mural with words that read, "You don't have to move out of your neighborhood to live in a better one." Her message about community building, people, and connection in urban planning was a powerful launch to the series.

In the spring, Jay Erskine Leutze, author of *Stand Up that Mountain: The Battle to Save One Small Community in the Wilderness Along the Appalachian Trail*, used topographic maps during

his lecture to bring a 30,000-foot perspective to conservation efforts. He used this perspective to make a case for opportunity, hope, and progress. Zooming in, he revealed Warren Wilson College's campus: a place full of ecological diversity and wildlife that is an educational incubator for future conservationists. Leutze then shifted to a wider view of the United States to show before and after maps of land reconfiguration due to privatization and changes in bird migration routes due to climate change. These maps demonstrated the need for policies that promote state and federal conservation funding for investment in public lands. Rooted in his connection to special environmental places, Leutze's advocacy work secures public land along the Appalachian Trail for all to enjoy.

*"There are so many different ways of looking at our place. How many of you have been on the River Trail at Warren Wilson College? That's where it's happening. That's where these connections are taking place."*

– Jay Leutze, *Zooming Out: Our Place in the Conservation Cosmos*, Power of Place Lecture

The 32nd Harwood-Cole Memorial Literary Lecture presented a deeper perspective on how passion for place is often connected to personal and societal assumptions that can lead to a cognitive dissonance between environmental conservation and race. Ornithologist and author J. Drew Lanham, Ph.D., combined bird photography and poetic prose from his award-winning book *The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature* to give attendees a new perspective about race and identity in relation to place, specifically in nature. Many Warren Wilson students read Lanham's book as part of their classes

in Conservation Biology and Psychology of Sensing and Perception.

Through revitalizing neighborhoods, protecting public lands, and poetic truth-telling, Carter, Leutze, and Lanham celebrated place as something we all can influence through advocacy, education, inspiration, and conservation.



photo by Zanne Garland



photo by Zanne Garland



photo by Casey "Red" Herring '21

*"Warren Wilson College is in the inspiration game. We want every single person who walks onto this campus to be inspired – by our students, our work, our place. Through The Power of Place Lecture Series, we've been introduced to a community that fought to make their neighborhood what they want it to be rather than what other people think it should be. We've learned about efforts to protect landscapes that are not only beautiful but also essential to the cultural and ecological integrity of the region. And tonight, we've heard from a truth-teller who turns science into poetry and shows us that life experiences make people see nature in different ways."*

- Dave Ellum, Ph.D., Dean of Land Resources

# Helping Students Build Their Dreams

## Integrated Advising for Applied Learning

Melissa Ray Davis '02

Warren Wilson College's unique integrated education model provides students with a diverse array of applied learning opportunities that stretch far beyond academics: hands-on community engagement opportunities, work crews, research, professional internships, fellowships, study abroad possibilities, and more. The possible combinations of these experiences are multitudinous. In Fall 2018, the College opened a new Center for Integrated Advising and Careers with Integrated Advising Coaches who help students find the ideal experiences to complement their studies in a sustained, one-on-one advising relationship that spans the full length of each student's undergraduate career.

"Integrated Advising is a far more intentional way to make sure every single student has conversations built on an advising curriculum," Associate Dean of Career Development Wendy Seligmann said. "Before, it really took a student making a choice to come in and seek out those conversations, but now every single student is having these conversations a few times a semester."

The foundation for the Center began in 2017 when President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., brought together several departments that were previously in separate divisions. Academic Support, Retention, Advising, and Careers joined the Applied Learning Division, led by Vice President for

Applied Learning Cathy Kramer. This fusion allowed the staff and missions of each area to become more clearly aligned and provide seamless, student-centered service.

"No matter their major or interest, the Center will transform the way we serve our students, providing them with the foundation they need to find their passions and the tools to enable them to change the world, one engaged and conscientious citizen at a time," President Morton said.

Now, Integrated Advising Coaches serve in addition to faculty Academic Advisors, and they make sure students know all of their options. Integrated Advising Coaches are able to combine their wide perspective of everything the College has to offer with their personal understanding of what each student wants to achieve. They can ensure that each student's experience is equitable and comprehensive. Integrated Advising establishes a consistent structure for reflection, connection, guidance, and support.

"With our Integrated Advising Coaches, low-income or first-generation college students have a person who is trained in all areas of the College to help them navigate all of the aspects of a college environment that may be challenging or new to them," Associate Dean of Integrated Advising Brooke Millsaps said.

Morton and Kramer's vision for the Center for Integrated Advising and Careers was to transform the space in Jensen's first floor to create a welcoming and supportive environment for students, as well as provide offices for the new Integrated Advising Coaches and the other departments housed there. The Center brings under one roof all of the resources students need to support their goals. Students who are struggling can get help through tutors, peer coaches, academic support, study labs, or an accommodation plan. They can use the Textbook Exchange or visit the Career Closet for professional clothes and shoes for their next interview. They can get career advising or find out about shadowing or internship opportunities.

Coaches also prepare students for whatever comes next, be it graduate school, a new job, travel, or nonprofit service. They help students articulate and document the value of their Warren Wilson experiences and build impressive résumés and portfolios full of their achievements. Coaches make excellent references, too, because they have watched their advisees integrate all of their varied experiences throughout their time at the College.

"This way, the conversation about what you want to do following graduation is with the same person you talked about your first semester classes with, who has seen you grow and develop and change, and has seen you come back from an internship with fresh ideas. They're going to know your strengths, your personality, who you are," Seligmann said.

“My experiences at Warren Wilson have been incredibly diverse. And I am so grateful that the fact that I am a Global Studies major doesn’t keep me from being the Cattle Boss. That is a liberal arts education! While I was in Mexico, I got to see the convergence of my different passions at Wilson come together in a beautiful way. And as I leave Wilson, I know that I am not limited. I am fully equipped to think critically.”

— Anne Clare Courtway '18, now working for Heifer International



photo courtesy of Anne Courtway '18



photo by Casey “Red” Herring '21

*The Center for Integrated Advising and Careers and the new Integrated Advising Coach positions were made possible through philanthropic gifts from Trustees, former Trustees, alumni, and parents of alumni. More than \$250,000 has been raised as of June 2019 to launch the Center. If you would like to help support Applied Learning and Integrated Advising, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*

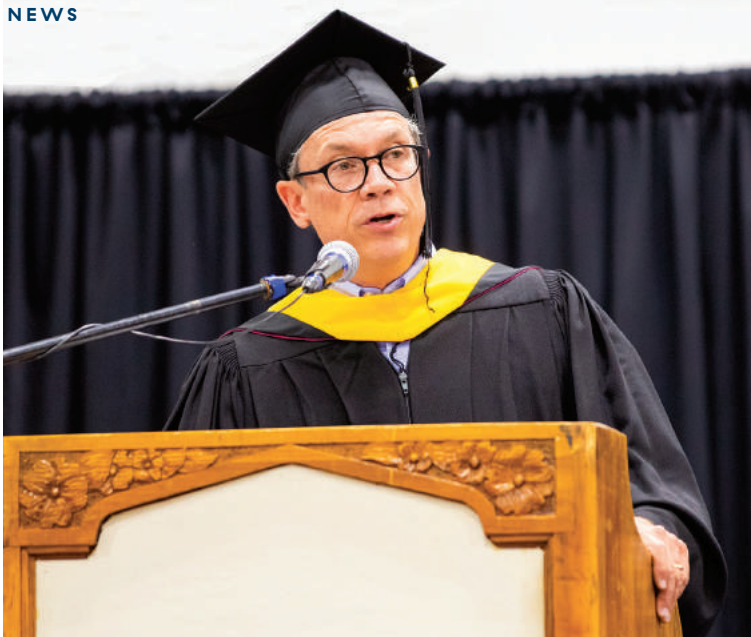


photo by Reggie Tidwell

# Countering Fear with Facts

## Pulitzer Prize-Winning PolitiFact Founder Bill Adair Speaks on Campus

Melissa Ray Davis '02

"Some people seem to revel in fear – and share that fear with others in destructive ways," Commencement Keynote Speaker Bill Adair said to the Warren Wilson College Class of 2019. Adair explained that this fear can often be exploited by politicians. But he spoke of an antidote: facts.

Adair is the founder of the Pulitzer Prize-winning website PolitiFact. He encouraged the class of 2019 to "establish a better community" by making a point to explore and understand other points of view, to talk to people outside of their regular connections, and to make friends outside of their usual community.

"Plant seeds for more understanding and humanity every place you can. You never know where they will sprout," Adair said. "Here's where the facts come in. You may decide that your new friend doesn't have the facts right on tax policy or immigration. [...] Have a gentle conversation about it. But remember that it's also possible that they have their facts right and you don't. One conversation at a time, one fact at a time, we can rebuild trust and understanding."

Adair is currently the Knight Professor of the Practice of Journalism and Public Policy at Duke University and Director of the DeWitt Wallace Center for Media & Democracy, where he conducts research on fact checking in the Reporters' Lab, experimenting with new ways of presenting fact-based information through digital and mobile technologies.

Adair launched PolitiFact as a pilot project for the *Tampa Bay Times* in 2007. The website grew into the largest fact-checking effort of all time. PolitiFact has served as a model for fact-checking around the world and is known for rating officials' public statements for fact on a scale

called the "Truth-O-Meter." The PolitiFact team was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting in 2009.

"Bill Adair's journalistic integrity and his leadership in the practice of fact-checking have provided much-needed tools to bridge what feel like impossible chasms in our national conversations today," Warren Wilson College President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., said. "Dedication to truth and willingness to consider other points of view are two values we encourage our students to build in themselves."

Dialogue across difference has been one of President Morton's initiatives at the College. Every year, the whole campus gathers to hold deliberative dialogues – a curriculum designed to ensure that all viewpoints are heard on a controversial topic. The College also holds a series of trainings and workshops to embed deliberative dialogue skills into the campus culture.

Adair writes about accountability in journalism and digital media. He has published articles in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *Poynter*, and the *Nieman Journalism Lab*. He is also founder of a global association of fact checkers called the International Fact-Checking Network.

Adair's son, Miles '20, is currently a Warren Wilson College student. Adair described how impressed he was that on his son's move-in day, one of the people helping families carry boxes into the dorm was the College's president. "Warren Wilson is a role model for how communities should work," he said.

"Our world can sometimes look pretty bleak, filled with misunderstanding and darkness. But with facts and friendship, we can bring light back to the world and make it over," Adair concluded.

**Bill Adair's complete speech from the 2019 Commencement can be found at:**  
**[warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)**

**"Plant seeds for more understanding and humanity every place you can. You never know where they will sprout." – Bill Adair**



# Nourishing Relationships

**Building Local Food Systems Together** Jay Lively '00

On any given Saturday morning, you're likely to find Robin Lenner '05 and Molly Nicholie '99 strolling through the farmers market in downtown Asheville, flanked by fresh vegetables and bright flowers on one side of the street and handmade goods and grass-fed beef on the other. Lenner and Nicholie support the market's local farmers and small businesses through their work at the Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project (ASAP), which manages the Asheville City Market.

Their shared Warren Wilson College experience helps nurture a work environment that values collaboration and teamwork. It also makes for a lot of "That's so Wilson" moments and plenty of laughter. While stories of making superhero costumes or handing out deodorant to student volunteers keep things light, the two work diligently to improve lives across Western North Carolina – from farmers to restaurant owners to children in public schools. The two acknowledge the important role that Warren Wilson has played in food system work across the region

for more than a century, and they are honored to help continue to build that legacy.

"You think about Warren Wilson heritage as the Farm School. People came to farm and do good work," said Nicholie, who now serves as Program Director for the Local Food Campaign at ASAP. "They saw the value of working on a farm, feeding your community, building something to leave for the next generation."

While Nicholie started at ASAP in 2004 and Lenner in 2011, the two originally met in 2002 at Warren Wilson when Lenner was a student. They reunited in 2011 when Lenner returned to Warren Wilson as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer with the Service Learning Program (now the Center for Community Engagement). During that year, Lenner said she was excited to connect Warren Wilson students with ASAP for volunteer and internship opportunities, while personally reconnecting with Nicholie, who was serving as the Growing Minds Education Coordinator and living on her own farm in Madison County.

"When I finished my AmeriCorps year, I reached out to Molly to see if there were any job opportunities at ASAP," said Lenner, who serves as the ASAP Event Coordinator. "They were looking for someone to help coordinate their Business to Farming Conference. I was able to jump in and take on that role." The two have worked closely ever since.

"Coming into ASAP, my background was in environmental education and trail work, not so much working in an office environment," Lenner said. "So, I've appreciated absorbing a lot of Molly's experience and methods that have helped me grow professionally."

Officially, Nicholie is Lenner's supervisor, but she quickly pointed out that they have learned a lot from each other. She said that is necessary in such a collaborative work environment.



Molly Nicholie '99 and Robin Lenner '05

"As a team, we have built a lot of institutional knowledge at ASAP [...] working together in partnership," Nicholie said. "I do a lot with farmer training and technical assistance, and Robin is the event coordinator, so we work together really closely on events like the farm tours and farmers markets."

And for those who appreciate sipping a cup of coffee as they peruse one of the 40-plus farmers markets in Western North Carolina, chances are ASAP was instrumental in creating that experience. While you're there, you will likely see Warren Wilson alumni selling veggies, flowers, free-range eggs, grass-fed meats, and more.

"It's really fascinating to be a part of food systems work in Asheville because there are so many Warren Wilson connections," Nicholie said. "[From] working with area chefs who I went to school with, to farmers [who] are alumni, to students who I know from volunteering at the farmers market [...] local food systems are about relationships and a sense of place and community. And so much of that applies to Warren Wilson, too."

*Lenner returned to school this fall to pursue a Masters in Education in School Counseling at Western Carolina University.*

photo by Morgan Davis '02





## ALUMNI ON CAMPUS & AROUND THE WORLD

Reconnecting with a WWC alum instantly reminds you of the power of this place. This year we celebrated 125 years of Warren Wilson College with local alumni gatherings, events around the country on Giving Day, Homecoming, and much more. Thanks for all the memories over the years! Here are a few of our favorites from 2018-2019.



# A Powerful Place

## Modeling Conservation & Climate Action for a Changing World

Melissa Ray Davis '02

*Recent conservation initiatives, experimental programs, and groundbreaking research have proven that Warren Wilson College is a leader for sustainable land management, building on the College's long legacy as a model for land stewardship and environmental innovation. But what good is a model if no one sees it? Warren Wilson College is establishing new initiatives to share that model with the region and beyond and is using its applied learning philosophy to spread hope and meaningful action against the backdrop of climate change.*

**T**he Blue Ridge Mountains of Western North Carolina are one of the most biodiverse non-tropical regions in the world. These mountains contain more plant species than any other similarly-sized area in North America and more salamander species than any other place in the world. Home to the highest peaks east of the Mississippi River, these mountaintops and hollers hold unique microclimates and ecosystems, habitats to a myriad of flora and fauna species found nowhere else in the world.

Climate change and its rising temperatures threaten these unique mountain microclimates, the only remaining homes to several endangered species that need cooler southern climes to survive. The extreme weather patterns formed as a result of climate change are causing alternating floods and droughts in the region – sending water raging through the river valleys and wildfires tearing down the mountainsides. In this threatened context, the incredible biodiversity of the region has a potentially devastating capacity for loss.

Like many unique ecosystems around the globe, the Blue Ridge Mountains have a vital need not just for conservation, but for research into what actions actually help. And realistically, landowners need examples of practices that will make conservation a financially viable option for them.

Nestled in the heart of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Warren Wilson College is uniquely placed to meet these challenges. With over a thousand contiguous acres of working farm, garden, and forest, the College's hundreds of students work and conduct original research on the land every day. Hundreds of hands and minds mean hundreds of potential solutions.

## Land As Learning Laboratory

"This year, I have personally experienced the daily wonder of the gem that is our land – nearly 1,200 acres of farm, garden, forest, and core campus. It is exceedingly rare for a college to sit on this much land, but beyond that, our land is our classroom, our place of discovery, our source of joy and solace, and a central part of our identity and history. I know that land is a central part of our future as well," Warren Wilson College President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., said when she announced her creation of a new Dean of Land Resources position in spring 2018.

President Morton appointed Professor of Ecological Forestry Dave Ellum, Ph.D., to serve as the



Dean of Land Resources to integrate land management at the College. Morton explained that a central land manager with accountability for land management and a structure to support land resources was critical to creating and implementing the College's vision.

"Warren Wilson College wouldn't be Warren Wilson College without the land. Without the land, we'd be every other college," Ellum said. "The land is so important as an applied learning laboratory, as a place where our community gets out and enjoys themselves recreationally. It's an aesthetic side of the campus. The land is integral to what we do – it has been since our founding as the Asheville Farm School." He added that "to make



photo by Reggie Tidwell

a dean's position around land shows that the College is committed to the land, and we understand how important the resource is."

But the new deanship isn't about land management alone. Ellum has focused a great deal of his energy on creating new initiatives and partnerships to promote and improve Warren Wilson's outreach and community involvement. By integrating farm, forest, and garden landscapes within one system, the College's sustainable land management model is a particularly useful example for landowners.

"You can't call yourself a model just because you're doing good work. You're not a model unless people are looking

at you," Ellum said with a grin. "Community outreach was my number one objective coming in, to get the

***"It is exceedingly rare for a college to sit on this much land, but beyond that, our land is our classroom, our place of discovery, our source of joy and solace, and a central part of our identity and history."***

– President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D.

word out that we want involvement from the community. We want to help with education in the community, and we want the community to help educate us. We want to truly be a model for

innovative land management," Ellum said. "We want to become the hub for sustainable land management for Western North Carolina, so that landowners can come here to learn these techniques from us and our students."

## Seeing the Forest, Not Just the Trees

Trees are extremely effective at combating climate change – they pull vast amounts of carbon dioxide out of the air. Yet throughout the world, forested land is diminishing at alarming rates. Warren Wilson College has operated for several decades under a series of forest management principles that model how sustainable forestry might be enhanced across the region, increasing carbon sequestration as a result.

"We have four objectives for forest management, and we prioritize them in this order," Warren Wilson Forest Manager and Forestry Crew Supervisor Shawn Swartz said on a recent *Green Walkabout* – a public tour of sustainable practices on campus. "The first is ecosystem health, restoration, and protection. The second is education – we're a college, so it's a living laboratory for us. Recreation and aesthetics is third – we have a lot of people, not just ourselves, who are using the forest trails and have a sense of investment in it. And then last is utilization of products, both timber and non-timber."

Swartz said the College never meets any lower objectives by hurting one of the higher objectives. "The products that we have are generated as by-products of protecting the forest. Same with recreation and aesthetics – we're not going to hurt educational objectives in order to make sure the public has places to walk."

Ellum explained that these four principles and their order of priority were

put in place in the 1980s by Alan Haney, Ph.D., the College's first Forestry Professor and founder of Warren Wilson College's Environmental Studies Program. Haney's forest principles have guided the College's intentional forestry endeavors ever since.

"The other philosophy of our forest is that we never go out and look for products. That's not a sustainable way to manage," Ellum said. When trees are cut, he explained, they are cut individually or in small patchy disturbances, and only when cutting protects the forest's ecological health. "The management drives the products. The products don't drive our management."

Ellum does recognize, however, that the products *do* drive the management in many other forests. To inspire the widespread adoption necessary for climate action, landowners need models that show how sustainable forestry can be profitable.

## Non-Timber Forest Products



photo by Mary Bates

One of the major causes of deforestation is that forests frequently become an economic drain on landowners. Timber takes decades to mature, which means decades of property taxes with no profit. Landowners sell their forested land for development or other more lucrative uses, and in the end, unprofitable forests

are likely to be cut. In order to prevent deforestation – and carbon increases as a result – landowners need a forestry model that is economically viable.

Warren Wilson College has a model to show them. For several decades now, students, faculty, and staff have used the College Forest to develop innovative ways to make profitable forestry a reality through non-timber forest products.

"One of the things we're doing with the forestry program here is developing innovative, scale-appropriate, entrepreneurial endeavors that landowners can use to bring value to their land until their timber is due," Ellum said. Through these projects, students learn not only sustainable forestry – they gain business and marketing skills as well.

The Shitake Mushroom Project, initiated during Haney's time, is one of the early examples of Warren Wilson's non-timber forest product research. Mushrooms are a crop that can be grown on the forest floor in the shade of the trees. Over the decades, the shitake operation was refined with experiments oriented to the goal of improving yield. The Forestry Crew has tested other mushroom species too, like maitake, chicken of the wood, oyster, lion's mane, reishi, and wild-harvested turkey tail.

Not to mention truffles, an extremely profitable crop. The Forestry Crew established a hazelnut tree plantation on the College's land recently, and the tree roots are inoculated with black perigord truffle mycorrhizae. Swartz says it will take a few more years for the plantation to mature, and then they will know if truffles are a viable crop in these mountains.

The Forestry Crew has developed other non-timber products in the College Forest as well. Recently, they thinned out other species in a pawpaw tree stand on Jones Mountain and planted ramps across the forest floor. They have also experimented with black walnut trees – not just harvesting the nuts, but

also tapping the trees for sap to produce black walnut syrup.

Many recent experiments have involved determining effective propagation techniques for wild medicinal plants that were overharvested nearly to extinction in the past. Trays full of economically important plants like ginseng, wild ginger, goldenseal, black cohosh, and ramps are grown from seed in shade houses on campus and then propagated throughout the College Forest and beyond. The College has started to sell these "Guaranteed from Seed" seedlings to the public and distribute them to landowners, "so that they can put them back out on their land and get the economic value and the biodiversity value from it," Ellum said, all while protecting natural populations from overharvest and extirpation.

Some non-timber forest products have proven more viable than others, but that, Ellum said, is part of the point. Landowners do not have the time or resources to experiment and figure out what works, but the College does – donations and grants fund the research. In the end, after students work out the difficulties and streamline the process through experimentation, the College can show landowners proven models for profitable forestry and prevent deforestation in the region.

Ellum asserted that even if an individual experiment fails, the College is still doing its job: teaching students through applied learning. Curiosity, research, experimentation, and work are graduation requirements, and Warren Wilson College's land is a classroom, laboratory, and workplace.

***"Warren Wilson College wouldn't be Warren Wilson College without the land. Without the land, we'd be every other college."***

– Dean of Land Resources Dave Ellum, Ph.D.



photo by Reggie Tidwell

## A Quest for Carbon-Neutral Cattle

“This land has been tended by young people stewarding the land for 125 years,” Interim Farm Manager and Farm Crew Supervisor Virginia Hamilton ’13 said during a recent *Green Walkabout* tour. “There’s this power of lineage that we have here. When we think about power of place, I’ve always found that lineage to be really special, and it was something that was very inspiring to me as a student, being the latest in this long line of students who brought something, took care of this place, and added their own little thing to it.”

The College Farm is committed to sustainability and habitat conservation, and that goes beyond avoiding pesticide use, maintaining organic farming practices, keeping buffers and riparian areas along waterways,

and setting aside acreage for habitat in the Conservation Reserve Program. Because livestock farming usually produces a very large carbon footprint, the College is using several regenerative farming methods in an effort to reduce that footprint.

“Right now, we’re operating as a regenerative model in the Southeast for an integrated crop and livestock system,” Hamilton said. She explained that most farms specialize in either growing crops or farming livestock, but at Warren Wilson, all of the grains that students grow on College land are kept on the farm to feed the animals.

“To be doing both of them on the same piece of land is quite unique, and we’ve found that it has been really beneficial to our system,” Hamilton said. She explained that farms operating on a strictly plant-based system remove the natural plant-growth stimulators that grazing animals provide and export all of those nutrients and carbon with their

crops, never returning them to the soil. Commercial grazing, Hamilton clarified, is continuous, which is not sustainable. Recent regenerative agriculture studies have suggested that to achieve sustainability and maintain a carbon-neutral agricultural operation with livestock, farmers must reduce livestock numbers dramatically below conventional commercial numbers and practice rotational grazing so that the plants have time to grow back.

Hamilton cited studies that show promise that this managed grazing technique may mitigate the carbon footprint of a farm. “You’re capturing carbon from the atmosphere – plants are turning that carbon into plant tissue. There’s a massive potential for carbon sequestration when you’re doing managed grazing.” To test these ideas, the land resources team plans to test 10 years of soil samples taken from the College’s pastures to determine how much carbon was sequestered due to the College’s rotational grazing method.



photo by Mary Bates



## Promoting Pollinators

Pollinators and the plants they pollinate are facing extreme pressures due to climate change, and the College's garden and landscaping crews are going beyond just protecting these fragile populations. Organic practices and habitat preservation are not enough – these crews are doing everything possible to promote increased populations of pollinators.

The College's Landscaping Crew, which includes the Tree Crew, has encouraged pollinators on main campus, where they maintain a naturalized aesthetic of native species and plants that pollinators love. They include a diverse variety of plants that bloom throughout the growing months, so nectar is always available. They encourage specific pollinator species with particular plants, such as milkweed for monarch butterflies. Insect habitats are scattered all over campus – such as handmade boxes with short lengths of rivercane stacked inside, a favorite for several wasp and bee species.

Garden Crew students are also working to restore pollinator populations on campus, and not just through growing the plants butterflies and bees need for food. They are growing the pollinators themselves: honey bees.

"We mainly [keep bees] for education and pollination," Garden Manager Benjamin Mackie said on a recent *Green Walkabout* tour. "We do harvest hive products like beeswax and honey, but only when the hives can sustain it, because we really are trying to grow populations of really healthy pollinators that don't need a lot of treatment or interventions from humans. That's our goal: promoting those genetics and getting the hives really happy and healthy."

These efforts are attracting a lot of attention – and not just from pollinators. Warren Wilson College's central campus has been named

a National Wildlife Federation Certified Wildlife Habitat, a North Carolina Native Plant Sanctuary, a certified Monarch Butterfly Waystation through Monarch Watch, and a "Tree Campus USA" by the Arbor Day Foundation.

## Conservation Exchange

With so many exciting conservation efforts on campus to showcase and multiple valuable research conclusions to share, Ellum has made communication and collaboration with the public a top priority. Ellum's first major initiative as Dean of Land Resources was a new community outreach program called the Conservation Exchange. The name, he said, was chosen very intentionally.

"We need to be able to exchange the knowledge that we have about land with the community," Ellum said. "But there are plenty of folks out there whom we can learn from too. Good conservation can't be a one-way



photo by Mary Bates



photo by Pete Erb

street. Good conservation has to be a community effort.”

Warren Wilson’s campus is bursting with public lectures and workshops related to conservation throughout the year as a result, from Archeology Department lectures about the on-campus archeological dig site where a historical Native American village once stood to a Conservation Biology Department lecture on research into the bat species that live on campus. The week after Earth Day was particularly filled with a slew of Earth Week events, lectures, movie screenings, tours, and workshops.

New partnerships between Warren Wilson College and other experts in the region are developing every day. In collaboration with the Asheville Museum of Science (AMOS) and The Collider, for example, the College is cohosting a *Science Pub* series of talks and panels in downtown Asheville featuring Warren Wilson faculty and

## Remeandering: Waterway Remediation

*A major project is underway to restore campus streams to their original meanders and wetlands.*

In the 1920s, many of the streams and creeks that used to meander through Warren Wilson College’s current farm fields were channelized, tiled, and put underground for agricultural purposes – a common practice at the time.

“Right now what happens when you get these rains, it’s just a straight pipe of sediment going down into the river,” Dean of Land Resources Dave Ellum, Ph.D., said. Sediment and agricultural runoff is very detrimental to river, stream, and wetland creatures. “By putting in meanders, some berms, and planting trees, we’ll be able to settle out some of that sediment again.”

The project will involve restoring several of the College’s streams to their natural meanders, removing invasive species, enhancing wetlands, and planting about 25,000 trees. Restoration Systems, a third-party company, will do the work. Scheduled to start in fall 2019, the project will take a few months to complete.

“It will look much worse before it looks better. There will be a lot of big equipment on the property, but they’re going to be really sensitive to the farm,” Ellum said. The College has placed conservation easements on the affected lands to protect them as wetlands once the project is complete, but research will still be allowed in those areas.

“It’s better for runoff. It’s going to be great wildlife habitat. We’ve talked to them about putting edible trees in there, like pawpaw and persimmon and some trees that will actually produce products. It’s going to be more visually pleasing. So all the way around, it’s going to be a far better system,” Ellum said.

The project was funded in part through stream mitigation credits that the government purchased to offset the negative effects of construction for the I-26 connector project currently underway in Asheville. Restoration Systems donated an additional philanthropic gift to support the farm. Regulated by the Clean Water Act, stream mitigation banking allows developers to offset the ecological impacts of their construction projects through buying credits from third-party companies that are then used to restore wetlands and streams elsewhere.

photo by Reggie Tidwell





photo by Elsa Cline '20

## Land as Laboratory: Climate Change Gardens

“Did you know that four out of five bites of food that we consume on a regular basis are estimated to be the result of pollination by some kind of animal?” Biology Professor Alisa Hove, Ph.D., asked the crowd at a recent Conservation Exchange lecture at Warren Wilson College. “Those animals have evolved over time to align their seasonal activity with the seasonal activity of many flowers.”

Phenology is the study of seasonal events in nature. A phenophase is a stage in the annual life cycle of a plant or animal, like the budding of flowers or the fledging of juvenile birds from their nests. But some flora and fauna are adapting their phenophases to the earlier spring induced by climate change, and others are not.

Hove said that sometimes this phenomenon leads to what is called a phenological mismatch between two interdependent species. For example, a plant may adapt to the warmer temperatures and flower earlier in the spring than it used to, but the butterfly that eats its nectar does not adapt. The butterfly is still migrating at the same time each year, missing the earlier flowering of its main food source – and also failing to pollinate the plant.

“This phenological mismatch and its association with a population decline, in many ways, sets us up to use phenology as an indicator of how our Earth’s natural systems or wild places may respond to climate change,”

Hove said. “It allows us to ask questions like, ‘What species might be most vulnerable? For what species might environmental cues be really much more important than genetic cues?’ Or vice versa. That’s a pretty tall order for the scientific community, so one way the scientific community is taking it on is through establishing coordinated research networks.”

Hove and her students have recently established the Warren Wilson College Phenology Stewardship Program. They contribute their phenological observations and research to the USA National Phenology Network. They have established several phenology garden plots and a phenological monitoring trail on campus to serve as long-term research locations. Students and faculty then carefully observe and track seasonal changes in select plants growing on these plots and trails. They are encouraging community members to get involved, take the training, and become “citizen scientists,” contributing to global climate change research.

“Ultimately, it’s our hope that this kind of work – in dedicated research plots and through our ‘citizen science’-focused phenology trail – will help us to answer some of these questions that I think are really pressing, as we consider how our wild places may change as the climate changes,” Hove said.

alumni experts in environmental science. The Conservation Exchange is building into a vibrant network, where connections are made and ideas are shared.

Ellum said this sort of conversation is essential when it comes to global challenges like climate change. “We can directly affect conservation efforts on our land, because it’s our land. We can somewhat affect conservation efforts in the region through education and exchange of ideas. But when you talk about climate, it’s a global issue, and it’s one of the hardest ones. We can do whatever we want on site, but [climate change] is a huge off-site issue that’s really difficult for us to get our hands around. It will affect us deeply.”

Ellum explained that every conservation effort that the College makes on its land has only a miniscule physical effect on the global climate. But if the College can communicate the ideas behind those efforts to the world, the impact could be far greater.

“A lot of folks are thinking about climate from the energy point of view and carbon dioxide emissions point of view. I think we have a special place where we can contribute to the climate conversation in the region through land management,” Ellum said. “There are not a lot of folks doing that right now. We have a perfect laboratory for looking at how forestry, agricultural, and landscaping practices affect [climate change].”

## Signs of Hope

Just as small successes point to bigger possibilities, tiny possibilities point to larger successes. Against very daunting odds, one small, furry sign of success recently showed up at Warren Wilson College.

Endangered gray bats, *Myotis grisescens*, were recently detected along the section of the Swannanoa River that snakes through Warren Wilson’s campus. The discovery came when researchers from the University of Indiana got permission

from the College to put an acoustic monitoring station by the Swannanoa River to listen to the ultrasonic vocalizations of bats.

Bats face challenges from multiple stressors. Habitat destruction, the effects of pesticides on the insects that make up their diet, climate change, and most of all white-nose syndrome – a disease that has caused a massive decline in their numbers – have all conspired to put several species on the brink of extinction. But the effects of habitat loss, and perhaps even climate change, can be reversed.

“We have an endangered bat – that a few years ago was not documented at all in North Carolina – foraging along the Swannanoa River on our campus. It gives me goosebumps, saying it. It makes me so excited,” Conservation Biology Professor Liesl Erb, Ph.D. said in a recent lecture for the Conservation Exchange. She explained that this small sign of hope is also a sign that the College is doing several things right.

“It matters what the garden chooses to do, what our forest managers choose to do,” Erb said. “All of those decisions add up to making habitat for these species, and it’s really stinking exciting!”

*To support conservation and climate action at Warren Wilson College, designate your gift to the Conservation Exchange. To learn more about these efforts or to sign up for the Conservation Exchange newsletter, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*

## PHILANTHROPY ENABLES EXPERIMENTATION

*Climate change solutions and conservation research require investment.*

Education and innovation are at the heart of Warren Wilson College’s work. But to determine the rate of carbon sequestration from rotational grazing, students need time and equipment. To establish new protocols for seed propagation of endangered wild plants takes supplies, and sometimes false starts. Warren Wilson College is able to experiment and take risks because of charitable gifts such as these:

- Fred and Alice Stanback, renowned philanthropists in renewable energy and land conservation, supported the new land innovation programming under the Dean of Land Resources.
- The Irene Pennington Broyles ’39 and Glenn Boone Broyles Fellowship created an innovation fund for the Forestry Program’s new endeavors such as black walnut syrup and truffle production.
- A philanthropic gift from Restoration Systems, the business restoring campus streams to their original meanders and wetlands (see “Remeandering,” page 26), provided funding to the College Farm.
- New Belgium Brewing provided funding to repair recent flood damage on the River Trail.
- Numerous individual donors have also invested in Warren Wilson’s conservation and climate research.

*To support Warren Wilson College’s conservation and climate action efforts, designate your gift to the Conservation Exchange. To donate, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*

photo by Elsa Cline '20



Researchers capture and tag bats along the Swannanoa River.



**Photo:** Michael Oppenheim. Jacob Lawrence is pictured second from left in the photograph of the faculty and spouses of the 1946 Black Mountain College Summer Art Institute.

# POWERFUL PROXIMITY

## Warren Wilson College & Black Mountain College

### Pioneering Philosophies, Persevering Partnerships

Melissa Ray Davis '02

**O**ne valley, two colleges – both nationally known for their innovative educational philosophies. Black Mountain College closed in 1957, leaving behind an extraordinary impact on progressive education, philosophy, and the arts. That same year, just three miles down the road, Warren Wilson Junior College graduated its last high school class. It remained a junior college until 10 years later when it became Warren Wilson College, a full liberal arts college offering bachelor's degrees.

In many ways, Black Mountain College's work program drew inspiration from

the work program at the Asheville Farm School, Warren Wilson's founding institution. Later, Warren Wilson College grew into a four-year institution that incorporated many aspects of what Black Mountain College had been. The two colleges shared a core philosophy of experiential education, applied learning, and democratic shared governance.

Though Black Mountain College closed long ago, its legacy became known worldwide. Its progressive philosophy combined with its isolated, rural location in the

Swannanoa Valley drew world-changing scientists, artists, and philosophers such as Albert Einstein, Jacob Lawrence, Carl Jung, John Cage, R. Buckminster Fuller, and John Dewey. In collaboration with Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center, current Warren Wilson College professors and students preserve Black Mountain College's legacy and keep its spirit alive.

### Pioneering Philosophies: Experiential Education

At first glance, the Asheville Farm School of the 1930s seemed worlds apart from Black Mountain College, said Dr. Jay Miller,

Warren Wilson Philosophy Professor and Director of the Honors Program. “It was a boy’s school. It had to do with rural life and creating basic literacy. It wasn’t about a liberal arts education, and it was informed by religion, by Presbyterian identity.” Yet the core philosophies of the farm school resonated around the same principles as those at Black Mountain College, and those similarities became even more apparent as the farm school evolved into Warren Wilson College.

“I think that both institutions grew out of an awareness that there were real limitations to the way that traditional liberal arts colleges were being administered,” Miller said, “and that there was a real resistance to the front-loaded organization of higher education – that [there is] a fairly rigidly defined curriculum, that there are these core aspects of knowledge, education, and facts that a student has to master before moving on. I think that both institutions rightly were skeptical of that, and I think that they both rightly understood the importance of integrating work.”

Miller explained that these shared principles – along with other similarities between the two schools such as shared governance – derived from John Dewey, an American philosopher who was very influential in the progressive education movement at the time. Dewey, who served on Black Mountain College’s advisory board, had argued that education should have a democratic focus.

“Even at Wilson, we use this term ‘experiential applied learning,’” Miller said. “This is deeply, deeply grounded in the philosophy of John Dewey. His idea was that these two are reciprocal. They’re deeply integrated, that one learns by doing, and one understands what one is doing by taking intellectual reflection.”

Dewey intended for the integrated model to be applied to primary and secondary education, but John Andrew Rice, the founder and first rector of Black Mountain College, thought that it could be done in higher education. Right down the road, Rice had an example of a school that was also a working farm. In that fertile valley

## Exhibitions

Two Warren Wilson College professors curated exhibitions for the Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center in Asheville during the 2018-2019 academic year.

### ***Between Form and Content: Perspectives on Jacob Lawrence and Black Mountain College***

Curated by Art History Professor and Chair of the Art Department Julie Levin Caro, Ph.D., this exhibition was the first to focus on the famed modernist painter Jacob Lawrence and his summer teaching at Black Mountain College in 1946 in the segregated American South. The exhibition also included three groundbreaking commissions of new media art curated by the museum’s executive director Jeff Arnal. See page 33 for details.



photo courtesy of Julie Caro

Caro and students from her African American Art and Thought course in the Lawrence exhibition. The students helped facilitate a Jacob Lawrence Community Day event at the museum.

### ***Politics at Black Mountain College***

Co-curated by Philosophy Professor and Director of the Honors Program Jay Miller, Ph.D., along with Connie Bostic, Jon Elliston, and Alice Sebrell, this exhibition explored the political context of Black Mountain College’s history from its founding in 1933 to its closing in 1957.



Miller at a PERSPECTIVES lunchtime conversation series at the museum.

photo courtesy of Jay Miller

soil, the philosophy behind both Black Mountain College and Warren Wilson College grew.

“Running a farm means that there’s an opportunity to learn biology and ecology, and even get into issues of ethics,” Miller said. “All of these things were supposed to be deeply integrated.”

In fact, Miller said Black Mountain College faculty developed their work program with a lot of help and inspiration from the Asheville Farm School. “They had no idea what they were doing, and they wanted to start it with a farm, which was a tremendous failure at first. They worked with the Asheville Farm School at the time to build up that program,” Miller said.

Black Mountain College faculty and students visited the Asheville Farm School regularly to study farming methods and learn from Bernhard Laursen, the farm supervisor at the time. The farm at Black Mountain College improved dramatically as a result – by World War II, it was providing at least 80 percent of the food served to faculty and students.

“I think it’s no coincidence that as people grow a bit more disenchanted with higher education, and the corporatization of it, and the expense of it, and all the criticisms we can make of higher education, people become more fascinated with these alternatives,” Miller said.

While Black Mountain College is often held up as a model for open-ended, experimental education, Miller said he finds it interesting to examine the school’s challenges as well. Black Mountain College had constant tension between tradition and innovation, which often led to conflict.

Warren Wilson students “notice right away that there is this similarity,” Miller said of the two colleges’ views on alternative education, “but of course there are significant differences as well. We do have grades, for example. We

have a curriculum. It’s not as open-ended as Black Mountain College was, and we also have more graduates. Very, very few students actually graduated from Black Mountain College. [...] If you say, ‘Well, higher education is about the experience,’ it reinforces the idea that it’s not about the degree. In fact, [Black Mountain] was an unaccredited college. People went to learn something and move on, not necessarily to get a certificate. I think that it’s hard to find that mentality today, even if you embrace that spirit.”

### Persevering Partnerships: Politics and Painters

Arts advocate Mary Holden founded the Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center and located its first office on the Warren Wilson College campus. Mary Holden is the daughter of past Warren Wilson College President Reuben “Ben” Holden, Ph.D., and Betty Holden – arts patron, teacher, and beloved community figure for whom the Elizabeth Holden Art Gallery is named. Though the museum has since relocated to downtown Asheville, Warren Wilson College has had close ties to the organization ever since.

This year, two Warren Wilson professors explored this shared legacy as they curated exhibitions for the Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center. Art History Professor and Chair of the



photo courtesy of the Warren Wilson College Archives

Art Department Julie Levin Caro, Ph.D., curated *Between Form and Content: Perspectives on Jacob Lawrence and Black Mountain College*. Professor Miller co-curated the exhibition *Politics at Black Mountain College* along with Connie Bostic, Jon Elliston, and Alice Sebrell.

Both Caro and Miller see Black Mountain College’s proximity and the wealth of local historical material not only as an opportunity for their own research but also as an excellent chance to put Warren Wilson’s applied learning philosophy into practice.

“I didn’t learn how to use an archive until I was in graduate school,” Caro said, emphasizing how important it is for students to have first-hand work experience in their chosen fields. She explained that she did not want any of her student artists to be intimidated to go into an archive. “Some people won’t go because they think it’s only for researchers.”

Johanna Engebrecht ’22, an Art major with a concentration in Sculpture and Ceramics, was already interested in Black Mountain College when she arrived at Warren Wilson. She jumped at the chance to help her professor, Miller, with his research and spent hours at the Western Regional Archives, which holds an extensive collection of recorded interviews and historical materials on Black Mountain

College. She selected recordings for the museum to include in the exhibition and also collaborated with Miller to create a collage of historical newspaper clippings and photos.

"Seeing the curatorial process up close was an amazing opportunity," Engebrect said. "Exhibitions can sometimes feel like this magical thing that happens, while you focus on the artwork or whatever else they are showing, but it's such a human endeavor of problem solving and collaboration amongst a team."

Caro incorporates primary-source research and museum experience into the curriculum in several of her courses. Her students have used Black Mountain College as a frame for extensive research in the Western Regional Archives for her Research Methods in Art course, and several of her courses also involve students doing community service work directly in Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center and other galleries and museums, where they work in various capacities such as writing passages for the catalog, curating, and working as museum docents and guards.

Her students have also attended conferences, given tours, and helped with community days.

Warren Wilson students find themselves more professionally prepared than their peers at other colleges. Engebrect said she was pleased that Miller would trust a first-year student with such important research. "I see situations like this happen all over campus between teachers and students, or a group of students, where what brings them together is a common interest and a loose end goal, and they make something amazing out of it," she said.

## The Power of Place

"We share the landscape; we're in the same valley. [...] People who went to Black Mountain College, whether they were the students or the artists and the scientists, talked about the impact of being in this landscape with the mountains, and how that in and of itself was an inspiration to them," Caro said.

In 2016, the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center sponsored an M.C. Richards workshop held at Lake Eden, the former campus of Black

Mountain College, and it included a trip to Warren Wilson College for dinner with food from the student-run garden. There in the same valley, the similarity of the two schools' philosophies struck the participants immediately.

"We took them out to see the sheep," Miller described, "and you had these people riding in the back of the truck, and they were just like, 'This is what it was.'"

Warren Wilson College found a balance between the open-ended innovation and experimentation of Black Mountain College and other more traditional forms of liberal arts education. That balance resonates with Warren Wilson's current student body, who earn traditional degrees but still experience an innovative curriculum infused with applied learning at a college rooted in the same fertile valley soil.

*To learn about the exhibition Between Form and Function: Perspectives on Jacob Lawrence, see page 33-34. For additional multimedia materials about the two recent exhibitions and Black Mountain College's relationship with the Asheville Farm School, or to help fund more research and collaborative projects like this one, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*

collage: Johanna Engebrect '22 and Jay Miller, Ph.D.





Photo by Bacia Stepner Edelman. Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence and Jacob Lawrence, Summer 1946, gelatin silver print, 3.625 x 4.25 inches. Black Mountain College Project Collection, Western Regional Archives, State Archives of North Carolina.

# Groundbreaking Jacob Lawrence Exhibition

Melissa Ray Davis '02

*Between Form and Content: Perspectives on Jacob Lawrence* was the first exhibition to focus on Jacob Lawrence's summer of teaching at Black Mountain College in 1946, an experience that Lawrence later described as "a milestone for me." Warren Wilson College Art History Professor and Art Department Chair Julie Levin Caro, Ph.D., curated the exhibition for the grand opening of Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center's new space on Pack Square in downtown Asheville in September of 2018. The exhibition also examined Lawrence's legacy through the lens of four new media artists curated by the museum's executive director, Jeff Arnal.

"Both the historical and new media portions of this project [...] look at art, culture, and race and examine issues of equality that are vital to our national conversation today," Caro said in the museum's announcement.

Lawrence is one of the most widely regarded American artists of the 20th century. His paintings, prints, drawings, and murals portray African American history through "a style that hovers between abstraction and socially inspired narrative realism," as the exhibition described it. The galleries featured a wide range of Lawrence's art and displayed works

Jacob Lawrence, *Steel Workers*, 1946, gouache and black ink on paper, 14 x 20 inches. Private Collection. Image credit: The Jacob and Gwendolyn Lawrence Foundation/Art Resource, NY.

from several of his contemporary 1946 Black Mountain College colleagues, along with the new media works.

Caro's research explored the historical and sociological context of Lawrence's time at Black Mountain College in the segregated South. Jacob Lawrence and his wife, Gwendolyn Knight Lawrence, were the first African Americans to teach at the newly integrated Black Mountain College.

Art critics in the 1940s tended to write about African American artists differently than they did about white artists, Caro said, with coded language that



sometimes portrayed racist views. “They wrote about them as having emotional feeling for color rather than a modernist understanding of color, and so [Lawrence] was largely being talked about as a self-taught artist. [...] But I think when you actually look at the art criticism, it’s right around that moment when he goes to Black Mountain College and becomes associated with that tradition of European modernism that the Bauhaus represented through [Josef] Albers, that people start talking about him as a modernist,” Caro said.

“The real inspiration for me in doing the show was to highlight Jacob Lawrence as one of the great American modernists, and by that I mean his interest in and his mastery over color, line, shape, and form,” Caro said. “Yes, he’s a brilliant storyteller and an important American storyteller, but his paintings are so powerful and the stories are so powerful because of the way he portrays them through the formal elements.”

*For details about Jacob Lawrence and the exhibition, instructions on how to purchase the full-color exhibition catalogue, or the opportunity to donate to fund further research at Warren Wilson College, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*

# {Re}HAPPENING

Every year at Lake Eden, where Black Mountain College was located, the Black Mountain College Museum + Art Center sponsors an event called the {Re}HAPPENING, a performance and installation art festival inspired by John Cage’s 1952 *Theatre Piece No. 1* at Black Mountain College, considered by many to be the first Happening.

“I’ve always been involved [in the {Re}HAPPENING], and I’ve always brought students to it, because I think it’s a wonderful opportunity for them to see contemporary art and to understand Black Mountain College,” Dr. Julie Caro said.

For the 2018 {Re}HAPPENING, Warren Wilson College students and faculty members Caro, Jacob Brault, and Anna Helgeson collaborated to create a “Trojan horse” modeled after a similar wooden horse that the free-spirited artist Jean Varda had built with his students at Black Mountain College’s 1946 Summer Art Institute.

Caro found many photographs of Black Mountain students with the Trojan horse in her research. She was inspired to recreate the horse in a curating workshop at the Royal College of Art in London. “The focus of that workshop, or intensive, as they called it, was creating evocative objects and creative, evocative exhibitions,” Caro said, “so I got this idea to recreate the Trojan horse to scale as an example of creating an evocative object.” Students brought the wooden horse to life in a performance art piece for the 2018 {Re}HAPPENING that was inspired by historical records they researched at the Western Regional Archives.



▲ Beaumont Newhall, Black Mountain students with Jean Varda and the Trojan horse, Black Mountain College, Summer 1946, gelatin silver print (study print from original negative). NC Museum of Art, Black Mountain College Research Project, Western Regional Archives, State Archives of North Carolina.



▲ Caro and students in Anna Helgeson’s performance art course with the recreation of Varda’s Trojan horse at the 2018 {Re}HAPPENING event.

# A PLACE FOR CRAFT

The New Master of Arts in Critical Craft Studies

Melissa Ray Davis '02

The new Warren Wilson College Master of Arts in Critical Craft Studies is the first and only graduate program in craft history and theory in the United States. The low-residency program's faculty and students are shaping an emerging field, and they could not create a program like it anywhere else.

"Warren Wilson has been really well positioned to do something like this for a long time," President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., said. "At Warren Wilson, we are surrounded by craft, surrounded by beauty, all the time. The College has a long history and tradition of craft. This is a perfect program for us."

In the past decade, the College has increased craft programming at the undergraduate level, establishing craft crews and creating a new Craft Minor. This foundation has allowed students to connect to the field, providing a potential pipeline for the graduate program.

## A Program Like No Other

"Several students said that it was the program they'd been waiting for. It's interdisciplinary. It honors makers as part of history — as making history," the program's director Namita Gupta Wiggers, M.A., said, describing the first program residency after it concluded. "They wanted to be in a program with other people who are interested in craft — this collective focus is unique to our program. That's not possible in other programs. Craft history can come through making — that's one way of understanding it. But a program designed to learn to write and think critically about craft and to develop and connect theory with it? That's not available elsewhere."



photo by Lydia See

The revolutionary new MA in Critical Craft Studies integrates critical craft theory and craft history with some elements of American studies, anthropology, art history, decorative art history, design history, social history, and material and visual culture studies. These other fields have held an adjacent allure for prospective students, but they do not focus on craft, which is emerging as an academic field in its own right.

“I think there’s a feeling amongst everyone that this is the first of a first. It’s the first [program] of its kind. It’s

the first session of the first group of students. That comes with a certain pride, I think, a circulation, a certain feeling of making history, in a way,” core faculty member Ben Lignel, M.A., said during the program’s first residency on campus in July 2018. He said that the students and faculty felt both honored and accountable. “We were brought here to do a certain job, and we feel accountable to the large mission that Namita has shaped for us and that the College is allowing us to do.”

The MA in Critical Craft Studies was developed in partnership with the Center for Craft in Asheville, and the core faculty are leaders in their fields from around the world. As a low-residency program much like the Warren Wilson College MFA Program for Writers, the MA in Critical Craft Studies allows students to complete the graduate program without having to quit their full-time jobs or leave their busy lives. Students are able to live at home, and they complete most of their coursework remotely. Every six months, students and faculty attend a two-week-long residency, which is hosted

at Warren Wilson's campus in the summer and in the Center for Craft in downtown Asheville in the winter. The intensive residencies feature lectures, workshops, seminars, readings, project work, individual conferences, and field trips to historical and contemporary craft locations throughout Western North Carolina.

## In a Place Like No Other

"The western part of North Carolina is a hotbed where many histories cross, some of [those histories] quite problematic," Lignel said. As he is from France, Lignel brings an international perspective. "There are all types of crafts that are living at the same time in the same place. We've got different people staking different claims about what they are. And I don't think that

there are many places in the world where there's a concentration of archives, histories that are heritage and contemporary craft at the same time, and a college willing to look at this and to provide the means to unpack it. There is something about those different layers of experience, which is very special."

Wiggers pointed out that with craft, there is a richness wherever humans are, "which can feel different from the broader art world, where there's a perception that unless you're in New York, L.A., or London, that you're on the fringes, you're an outlier. Craft doesn't reside in our communities that way," she said, noting that the students in the program "can go out and understand how the local connects to the national, connects to the global, and

be able to value the local for what it offers that's different."

Western North Carolina, she said, is an excellent place to teach them to do that. "I don't think we could find a better place to have as a laboratory to study craft in all its different iterations and forms," Wiggers said. Citing a string of examples from Cherokee heritage to Appalachian folk art, the Western Regional Archives to the Southern Highland Craft Guild, Black Mountain College to the region's tourism industry, and the Center for Craft to Warren Wilson College itself, Wiggers said the College is located where many complicated craft traditions and narratives intersect and layer.

Lignel gave an example from the first residency. The students went

to Oconoluftee Village, a re-creation of a Cherokee village from the 18th century, followed by a workshop at Qualla Arts and Crafts on basket weaving, taught by basketmakers Louise Goings and Faye Junaluska. Then they went to the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.

"But the day before," Lignel said, "you've had a long conversation with a craft historian who introduced you to the contested histories of the Appalachians and the relationship to basketry, and you started to realize



photo by Lydia See

that there are many aspects of this, which hadn't been discussed."

The students also went to several archives, including North Carolina's Western Regional Archives, to connect Cherokee history with other regional histories, such as those of Black Mountain College and the Appalachian Trail. They looked at books written about the Cherokee basket weavers, "books that now need to be unpacked and questioned," Lignel said.

"Inherent to the program," Lignel said, "is the fact that you are looking at this with different methods and different types of engagements. You know, the very physical act of making a basket, next to being a spectator of a Cherokee-identified person who is making a basket in front of you, which is a very different relationship."

Wiggers described how the entire stacked experience, incorporating layered perspectives, helped the students reach their own epiphanies. "The energy shifted. It felt like a moment when all the different pieces came together, and they saw craft in a different way. [...] It really gave a chance to have intense discussions about who speaks for you. Who speaks for anyone? Who gets to construct history, and how? And where does craft fit into all of these bigger questions about culture and how history is made?" Wiggers said.

"What is special," Lignel said, "is that density and variety of engagements with craft. It feels like the students are coming out of it with their minds probably shaken and inspired."

*As part of Warren Wilson's recent Craft Initiative, the new Master of Arts in Critical Craft Studies was developed in partnership with the Center for Craft in Asheville and is supported by a grant from the Windgate Foundation. The initial think tank was funded by the John & Robyn Horn Foundation. To learn more about the Program, or to donate in support of the Craft Initiative at Warren Wilson College, please visit: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019)*



photo by Lydia See

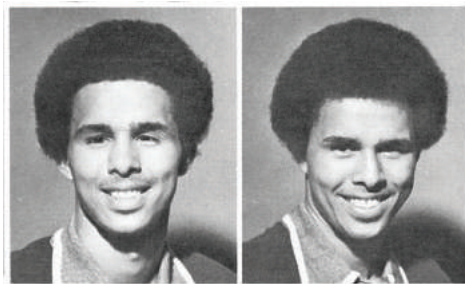
Namita Gupta Wiggers, M.A., (left) is Director of the MA in Critical Craft Studies. Linda Sandino, M.A., (right) is core faculty in the program and is from the United Kingdom.

*"At Warren Wilson, we are surrounded by craft, surrounded by beauty, all the time. The College has a long history and tradition of craft. This is a perfect program for us."*

– President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D.



1



2



4



3

1  
Susi Gott Séguret '84  
& Tim Gott '87

2  
Rodney Lytle '73  
& Ron Lytle '73

3  
Susannah Wheeler '00  
& Galen Holland '00

4  
Chris Nelson '09  
& John Nelson '09

5  
Mark Tucker '89  
& Lisa Tucker  
Vickery '80

6  
Thomas Bowman '87,  
Timothy Bowman '89,  
& Julie Davis Bowman

5



6



7

## SIBLINGS

We often hear that the Warren Wilson Community feels like one big family. Perhaps that's because plenty of twins, siblings, and family members have shared our campus over the years! Enjoy a sampling of some of the many siblings who have opted to do their Warren Wilson experience together.



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7

William Hamilton '99  
& Annie Perkinson '96

8

Molly Johnson '06 &  
Patrick Johnson '03

9

Doug Ager '07 &  
Jamie Ager '00

10

Esther &  
Emmanuella  
Afrane '22

## ENDOWED FUNDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

*More than 85 percent of Warren Wilson students receive need-based financial aid so that they may benefit from the College's nationally renowned program. Students graduate curious, confident, and capable because of their integrated academic endeavors and complementary hands-on work and service opportunities. Earnings from endowed funds provide additional support as the College works to provide students with this distinctive undergraduate education.*

Consider becoming a part of the legacy that Warren Wilson College students build as they go on to create solutions to problems and inspire new generations to make a great impact on the world. If you are interested in establishing a scholarship, please contact Renée Danger-James: [rdangerjames@warren-wilson.edu](mailto:rdangerjames@warren-wilson.edu).

The following scholarships and endowed funds were initiated or fully funded between July 2018 and June 2019.

### The Dr. Alan W. Haney Fund for Undergraduate Research in the Natural Sciences

After 20 years at the University of Illinois and Warren Wilson College, Dr. Alan W. Haney served as Dean and Professor of Forestry in the College of Natural Resources at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point from 1988 until he retired in 2005. Monies from this fund will be used to support undergraduate student research in the Division of Natural Sciences and Environmental Studies. Support will include, but is not limited to, student research awards, technology and equipment needs for student research, and travel funds for students to present their research.



### Jamie Lisa Forbes Music Endowed Fund

Jamie Lisa Forbes created this gift "in honor of the many happy summer weeks my grandsons and I have spent at Warren Wilson College at the Swannanoa Gathering.

I have so many happy memories that it is impossible to encapsulate them, but many years ago, on a summer evening when I was jamming away with a group playing 'June Apple,' I looked around at the musicians and realized that, in that moment, these were people at their very best." This fund will provide financial assistance for the most urgent annual budget needs of the Warren Wilson College Music Department and the Swannanoa Gathering.



### Joan Day Beebe Fund in Social Work

Joan Beebe helped to begin what is now the Social Work Program in 1969 when she taught the first Social Psychology course. Jacksie Chatlas '70, a proud alumna and former student of Joan Beebe, began this scholarship in honor of Beebe, who was instrumental in starting Chatlas in a lifetime career in social work. This scholarship will provide financial support to social work students completing their field internships.

### McKinley Faculty Development Fund

This fund, established by retired Vice President for Academic Affairs, Virginia McKinley, will provide support and recognition for full-time faculty members of Warren Wilson College who hold an extended contract or are eligible for eventual review for an extended contract. Faculty members may seek support to pursue individual or collaborative research for scholarly presentation or publication, to complete academic and creative projects that lead to challenging new undergraduate courses or substantial curriculum enhancements, or to create new research opportunities for Warren Wilson College students.

### Piccard Scholarship

Ann M. Piccard '77 created this scholarship in recognition of her three children — Elizabeth, Mary, and Paul — whose higher educations were made possible, in large part, by the generosity of other similarly minded benefactors. This scholarship will

provide recognition and financial assistance to the most outstanding undergraduate students enrolled or planning to enroll in Warren Wilson College.



### Patricia K. and Ernst R. Laursen Student Life Award

Honoring the beloved Pat and Ernst Laursen and their lifelong service to the College, this student life award will be presented to a Warren Wilson senior chosen by the Dean of Students who has achieved exemplary academic, service, and work records. Ideally, this student will have made their presence known beyond the immediate campus.



### The Russell Dean and Mary Pauline "Polly" Zumstein Basketball Fund

Russell D. Zumstein '47 and his late wife Polly '47 met at Warren Wilson, played basketball, and married in the College Chapel. Mr. Zumstein created this endowment to provide equal financial support to the Men's and Women's Basketball Teams and their coaches.

## ALUMNI NEWS

### 1960s

**Randi Tuxen Ringkjoeb '60** has four children and six grandchildren. Her children all have good jobs, some of which require frequent travel to Russia, Korea, the U.S., and China. She and her husband "are fine, but of course not spring chickens anymore." She stays in contact with **Olga Gonzalez '60**, who now lives in Cuba.

**David A. Wilson '61** is celebrating the 50th anniversary of his publishing company. He has produced over 100 book titles and sold 65,000 on subjects including solar energy, nature, Christianity, and poetry. His present project is getting everything off CDs and onto paper. In his personal life, he enjoys his comfortable nest, walking, sniffing flowers, and being friendly. "Life is a joy."

**Charlie Gentry '62** and his wife, Trudy, moved to North Augusta, South Carolina, about 11 years ago from Kansas to be closer to family. He likes not having to shovel snow and occasionally visiting WWC. They spend a lot of time traveling the United States. He would like to hear from other alumni at [gentry413@comcast.net](mailto:gentry413@comcast.net).

**Patsy Byrd '63** is retired and is an active volunteer with her church, Friends of the Library, and Community Watch. She also attends lifelong learning classes at the University of Alabama in Huntsville.

**Bob Vinson '64** and **Kathy Vinson '65** stay busy with church. Bob has been making quilts for survivors of California's devastating fires the last two years.

**Jim Dedman '65** is an Executive Editor for the National District Attorneys Association's new *Trial Advocacy Manual*. He has also begun work on his second book about famous American criminal trials; this one is about the trial of John T. Scopes. Although retired, he still teaches criminal trial advocacy to attorneys.

**Nancy Coleman Mace '66** moved to Durango, Colorado, to be near her son, his wife, and a new grandbaby!

### 1970s

**Margaret "Maggie" Murphy '70** is a feisty 70-year-old with four degrees. She retired, moved to Paris, returned, remarried, and now savors time with nine grandchildren who have made her life phenomenal. "Life has been a tough-and-beyond-blessed one."

**Glenn Ferrell '71** continues as the pastor of First Orthodox Presbyterian Church in San Francisco, where he has been for eight and a half years. He and his wife, Susan, share 19 grandchildren who are scattered across the country. He is considering possible semi-retirement and a return to his native Kentucky in the not-so-distant future.

**Kathryn Johnson Cameron '75** and her family relocated from Albuquerque, New Mexico, back to Western North Carolina in 2017, nearly 40 years post-WWC days. While she works in downtown Asheville and sometimes preaches near Pritchard Park, Kathryn lives over by Dupont Forest where good days find her on the waterfall trails. She still hopes to visit India.

**Catherine Neill '76** has recently become the Executive Director of Dorje Denma Ling, a Shambhala Buddhist meditation retreat center located in Nova Scotia, Canada.

**Dennis Thompson '77** is a retired academic advisor after 30 years of advising undergraduate arts students at Ohio State University. He is currently an adjunct professor of Theatre at Kent State University at East Liverpool in his hometown. He and his wife, Barb, share five children and eight grandchildren. A current member of the Warren Wilson College Alumni Board, he recently completed a term as its president.

**Richard Blackburn '78** is entering his 34th year at CaroMont Health as the Vice President of Support Services. His wife, Peggy, is completing her 45th year at CaroMont Health. They have two sons, a daughter-in-law, one grandson and another grandchild on the way. One son is an attorney, and one is a nurse at Duke University Hospital. Richard wants everyone to know that WWC is in his heart every day.

**Nancy (Bell) Rupert '79** was named UNC Asheville Distinguished Teacher of the Year 2018 and serves as the Chair of the Education Department.

### 1980s

**Guenet Abraham '80**, an Associate Professor of Graphic Design at the University of Maryland, Baltimore, received a second consecutive Fulbright to teach graphic design and conduct research in Ethiopia.

**The Rev. Dr. Howard W. Boswell Jr. '80** began work as Pastor of Buena Vista Presbyterian Church in Buena Vista, Virginia, in August 2018 after 19 years at Kenmore Presbyterian Church in Kenmore, New York.

**D. Lynn Medford '81** worked as a nanny and in childcare jobs following her graduation from WWC. She then spent five years working with adults with disabilities at Haywood Vocational Opportunities. She went on to work for 18 years in the public school system and now works for The Arc of Haywood County. She is a cancer survivor since 2004, and she has recently taken on the role of "Tutu" (Hawaiian for grandmother) and is enjoying her baby grandson.

**Charlie Talley '81** and his wife, **Marriette van der Sluijs '84**, hosted a week-long bike and barge trip in Holland during the summer of 2019. In the summer of 2020, they'll host a similar trip for alumni. Please visit [www.windmillbiketours.com](http://www.windmillbiketours.com) for more information.

**Polly Sherrill '82** started making pottery while working in the craft shop as a student and is "still making pots..." Thank you WWC for turning my light on."

**Bill Finch '83** was honored this year at Native Plant Conference in Mobile, Alabama. Finch is an award-winning writer, botanist, natural historian, and specialist in landscape interpretation and restoration and has received national recognition for his garden columns and environmental reporting. While serving as Conservation Director for the Nature Conservancy of Alabama, he was instrumental in developing a number of large conservation efforts throughout the state.

**Susi Gott Séguret '84** orchestrated the 15th summer session of the Seasonal School of Culinary Arts on the campus of WWC, July 28 through August 3, 2019. *Child of the Woods* and *Appalachian Appetite* are her recent book releases.

**Sarah Toivainen Cannon '85** and her husband Eddie made a permanent move from Asheville to Concord, North Carolina to help take care of Eddie's 90-year-old mother. They and their two 12-year-old Shih-Tzus are content in their new home, even though there are no mountains to see!

**David Abazs '86** and **Lise Abazs '87** transitioned from farming to working at the University of Minnesota. They purchased 80 acres of land, including a 30-acre lake adjacent to their farm, in the Sawtooth Mountains along the south shore of Lake Superior. David was named the new Executive Director of the Northeast Regional Sustainable Development Partnership, where he provides leadership to a regional board of directors who build community-university connections and support sustainability projects across northeast Minnesota.

**Barb Abelhauser '86** got married for the first time at age 53 on September 9, 2018. She waited that long to find a keeper. She's keeping her last name, though — too set in her ways to change now!

**Nicola Simmersbach '86** is Regional Director for Turning Point Community Programs in Sacramento, California, and she is eager to have interns and applicants for social service jobs.

**Jeff Stump '87** moved to Tbilisi, Georgia, in August 2018 and is working for the U.S. Department of State. His wife, Denise, is working for USAID. Their 7- and 3-year-old daughters are enjoying Georgia and explore almost every weekend.

**John Wyatt '87** lives in Chicago with his wife, Christine, and their Bichon Frise, Maxwell.

**Andrew Kang Bartlett '88** is with the Presbyterian Church USA's Hunger Program in Louisville, Kentucky. One of his roles is to connect Presbyterians with grassroots and movement-building groups and campaigns so that they can together address immediate concerns and build toward structural changes that will realize economic, social, racial, and environmental justice.

**Jean Gilman '88** lives in western New York with her husband, Greg. They have two grown children and one granddaughter. They enjoy camping, hiking, gardening, and golfing. Jean works at The College at Brockport, a SUNY University, and is the Assistant to the Executive Director of Auxiliary Services.

**Lilace Mellin Guignard '89** published a book in April 2019 from Texas A&M Press: *When Everything Beyond the Walls Is Wild: Being a Woman Outdoors in America*.

**Christine Christine Onyango '89** graduated with a Master of Science in Nursing from Johns Hopkins University in May 2019 and works at a Baltimore-based hospital.

## 1990s

**Brian Morgan '92** was recently highlighted in *American Builders Quarterly* for leading the creation of a 180,000-square-foot new headquarters in Danbury, Connecticut, for his employer, Linde, formerly known as Praxair. He redesigned, renovated, and relocated the global headquarters, which serves more than 300 employees.

**Amber Angel Rose '93** and her husband, Scott, currently reside on the beautiful Island of Oahu, Hawaii. Amber is a self-employed copywriter, and Scott is a career naval aviator

and real estate investor. "If any Owls fly out to Oahu, please look us up!"



**Kari Seaman Childs, Ph.D., '94** retired from the military on August 31, 2018, after 20 years in the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps. Now, she lives in Clarksville, Tennessee, with her children and grandchildren.

**Angie Newsome '94**, Executive Director at North Carolina Public Press, won the "AdvaNCing the Issues Award" at the North Carolina Women's Summit on November 10, 2018, for her work as an outstanding female journalist who has encouraged constructive public dialogue and information on social issues impacting women's lives.

**Jessi (Cinque) Herr '96** and **Josh Herr '99** still live in Asheville, North Carolina. Jessi will begin graduate school in December 2019 to earn her BSN at Western Carolina University and will be an RN at a regional hospital. Josh is still an acupuncturist at The Chinese Acupuncture Clinic in Montford. Their son taught blacksmithing at a boys' camp last summer and began attending the Fish and Wildlife Management program at Haywood Community College this fall. Their daughter has a pony named Pixie and started at Asheville High this fall. They have plenty of room, if anybody comes back to the area and needs a place to stay.

**Tikkun Gottschalk '97** celebrated his 15th year as a lawyer with the Asheville law firm of Deutsch & Gottschalk, PA.

**Carol (Miranda) Fair '98** graduated from Western Carolina University with her master's degree in counseling last December. She works at Women's Recovery Center in Asheville.

**Erin (Eller) Jones '98** and **Jerry Jones '00** are still hanging tight on the coast of North Carolina. They both are teaching at a local all-girls charter school. Jerry is teaching science,

and Erin is teaching ELA in the middle school. They are looking forward to the school moving into a brand new building next fall. Their two kids, Grace (11) and Elijah (13), are growing into amazing young adults.

## 2000s

**Chad Riley '00** is living in Denver with his family and is the Director of Realwell, a nonprofit thinktank that unites healthcare professionals, wellness experts, designers, builders, and the public with the real estate development community to identify and implement best practices designed to enhance the health and well-being for all building occupants.

**Jennifer Schwager '01** and husband William Goodrich welcomed baby River James on January 6, 2019. They all live in Boulder, Colorado.

**Lara Lustig '02** is Marketing and Administrative Coordinator at the nonprofit Working Wheels, where she works with **Mike Campbell '05** and former College Auto Shop supervisor Ray Cockrell to transform donated cars into reliable transportation for WNC families. She also manages productions for her husband's video production company. She is raising twins who are in kindergarten and has a "really excellent" stepson who is a junior at Asheville High.

**Meghan Grafton King '03** and her husband, Grant, welcomed their daughter, Eliza, into the world on June 29, 2019. Her 3-year-old big brother, Roan, is thrilled. They recently purchased a home in Dighton, Massachusetts, and Meghan is working as a nurse practitioner specializing in dermatology at a private practice in Rhode Island.

**Mariel Epstein Olsen '03** and Colin Olsen (honorary alum)'s son, Levon Rex Epstein Olsen, arrived earthside on January 4, 2019.

**Ryan Walsh '03** published a book of poems, *Reckonings*, in 2019 with Baobab Press. His debut collection explores the impacts of extractive industries and technology on rural communities and the environment, particularly in Appalachia, while also "celebrating the persistent beauty of the natural world and human love."



**Sonya Schewe '04** has been busy since she graduated: "I got married, had three kids, and I work as a Waldorf teacher."

**Meredith Leigh '05** lives with her partner and four children in Asheville, North Carolina, traveling and teaching charcuterie and food production while working part time for Living Web Farms.

**Denise (Linde) Tudor '05** moved to Germany, about an hour from Frankfurt. "WWC family are always welcome, so look me up on your next trip!"

**Amanda Grant '06** finished her doctorate in Psychology: Consciousness and Society, and was offered a faculty position at Prescott College. She is "so grateful to have landed in a place that shares WWC's values and grateful to have the opportunity to share with my students so many of the things I was first exposed to at WWC." She made the move to beautiful northern Arizona with her amazing wife of seven years, their daughter, and three unruly but adorable canines.

**Gelsomina (Gelsey) Malferrari '06** is the co-founder of a nonprofit called the Laughing Coyote Project, teaching Primitive and Ancestral Skills to homeschool youth and teens as well as adults in Longmont, Colorado. She and her husband, Neal Ritter, live on a 20-acre homestead where they are raising their kids Lutreo (5) and Fianna (2), teaching, and farming. They have cows, pigs, chickens, geese, and a large garden.

**April Nabholz '06** and Andy Brooks welcomed a second son on March 23, 2019. Peter Jordan was born at home so quickly that the midwives didn't make it in time. All are well and healthy. Brother Sam (3) loves little Pete.

**David Chester '08** is an Assistant Professor of Psychology at Virginia Commonwealth University, where his laboratory received a \$730,000 grant from the National Institutes of Health to study the genetic and brain mechanisms that promote alcohol-related violence.

**Sam Christopher '08** joined the writing staff of *The Blacklist*, a crime thriller series on NBC, after working for the show as a script coordinator.

**Emma Nicole Meistrich '08** graduated from Goddard College in June 2019 with her MFA in Creative Writing, specializing in Poetry and Hybrid Writing.

**Emma Richardson '08** received the Virginia Museum Educator of the Year award for her outstanding achievement in museum education, creating exceptional experiences for school-aged visitors. Emma received

her M.A. in Museum Studies and Historical Preservation from Morgan State University.

**Laurel Ady '09** is back in Baltimore, living in a little yellow row house next to a florist and a diner, with big dreams of planting a native plant and pollinator-friendly garden.



**Bethan Kannapell '09** is a math instructor and a professional circus artist. In September of 2018, she married her love, Rachel Petty. Many alumni attended the wedding and contributed their skills in Wilson-work-crew style for the ramen feast and festivities!

**Meredith Talbert '09** bought a house with her boyfriend of seven years in Monticello, Utah, this year and will be working as a Park Ranger at Kane Gulch, Utah.

## 2010s

**Andy Driscoll '10** and his wife, Leila, are excited to welcome their first child, Cyrus, into the world. They look forward to taking him to visit WWC.

**Nicole Connor Hardy '10** celebrated 10 years of being with **Alexa Hardy '08**, after meeting each other at WWC in Laura Vance's class. They're both busy taking care of their son, Zev, who was born in May 2018!

**Ali Yee '10** just finished her Master of Occupational Therapy and is working as a school Occupational Therapist in Bellingham, Washington. She looks forward to having summers off to focus on continuing to develop an urban homestead and fantasizes about operating a dairy goat cooperative off the neighboring vacant lot.

**Jess Sutt '11** became a Fellow of the University of Florida's Natural Resources Leadership Institute, after spending nine months traveling throughout Florida to make field visits and meet stakeholders while practicing collaborative decision making and conflict resolution with contentious issues facing the state. This certification complements Jess' background in human dimensions and her work as a Wildlife Refuge

Specialist managing issues like Florida panther recovery and sea level rise in the Naples, Florida, area.

**Patrick Sweatt '11** and **Rosie (Barger) Sweatt '12** are both pursuing higher education this year. Rosie was admitted to Le Cordon Bleu in London and is studying patisserie, and Patrick will be starting graduate school at Northern Arizona University in the fall. They also celebrated five years of marriage, "probably by backpacking somewhere dangerous."

**Nick Biemiller '12** finished his master's degree in Forestry from Yale University in May 2018 and is now working as the Southeast Region Coordinator for the Forest Stewards Guild.

**Kelsey Brown '12** and **Adrian Smith '11** founded Preservation Dyehouse, their new business venture, with a mission to provide healthy alternatives to chemical dyes while supporting regional agriculture, providing high quality jobs, and helping to create beautiful products. They also got engaged in January 2019!

**Elena Salisbury '12** graduated with a master's degree in Social Work and a master's degree in Criminology & Criminal Justice from the University of Nebraska Omaha.

**Madeline Wadley '12** moved to Nashville, Tennessee, in August 2019 to begin her Master of Education in Community Development and Action at Vanderbilt University's Peabody College. She enjoyed her two years working in the WWC Advancement Office, and will miss her Asheville community.

**Megan Gordon-Kane '13** and **Zachary Kane '14** married in September 2019.

**Eric Zimdars '13** started a master's degree in Environmental Engineering at the University of Washington in Seattle.

**Rhys Williams '14** received a Master of Science in Natural Resources with a concentration in Forestry from the University of New Hampshire for the thesis, "Distribution, Presence, Ecology, and Harvest Dynamics of the Chaga fungus (*Inonotus obliquus*) in the White Mountain National Forest," a joint project with the U.S. Forest Service.

**Christina Brown '15** and **Will Major '15** welcomed to the world their first child, Logan Sylvie Major, on March 15, 2019. The two former Rentals



## MILESTONES

and Renovations Crew members are already teaching their daughter how to wield a hammer at their home in Burlington, Vermont.

**Jackson Grimm '16** released a new album, "The Bull Moose Party." It's available on iTunes and Spotify now!

**Nadia Marti '16 and Kaila Woodson '17** were married on May 25, 2019, in Warwick, Massachusetts.

**Michael Pittard '16 and Khaetlyn Grindell '16** were married on June 21, 2019. In May, Michael earned an MFA in Poetry from UNC-Greensboro and Khaetlyn completed her first year of an MA in Political Communication at American University in Washington, D.C. They met in their first-year seminar.

**Jason Faulds '18** began an AmeriCorps service term with Conserving Carolina in Polk County, North Carolina, with their office of Agricultural Economic Development, where he is promoting farmland preservation.

**Nick Macalle '18** received a Fulbright scholarship to pursue agroforestry research on the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. He will focus on bridging gaps between social and ecological analyses of agroforestry management systems by analyzing the impact of coffee agriculture intensification on soil fertility, biodiversity, crop productivity and farmer livelihood.

**Keaton Scanlon '18** received a Fulbright scholarship to pursue agroforestry research in Joal, Senegal. She will focus on traditional wild food in rural villages by collecting and cataloguing native medicinal and edible plants. She plans to compile her data into a format that may be used by locals who wish to share the information with their communities.



**Danasia Dumas '19** became a four-time First Team All-American during her senior year at

Warren Wilson and finished her career on the Women's Basketball Team with 2,509 total points.

## FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

**Dr. David Abernathy**, Chair of the Department of Global Studies, presented "Geo for All: Blending OER, Open Data and FOSS in GIS Education" at the North Carolina Geographic Information Systems Conference in March 2019. This paper focused on the use of open educational resources and open source software tools to promote student learning in geographic information science.

**Dr. Shuli Arie Archer**, Associate Dean of Community Engagement, completed her doctoral degree from the University of Massachusetts Amherst in Educational Policy and Leadership in December 2018. Her dissertation entitled, "'No One is Gonna Tell Us We Can't Do This': The Development of Agency in Student-Initiated Community Engagement" is available online.



**Dr. Paul J. Bartels**, Professor of Biology and Interim VP for Academic Affairs, completed a number of research projects stemming from his sabbatical work during the 2017-2018 academic year. In 2019, his book chapter on the ecology of tardigrades was published as well as a journal article on a marine tardigrade commonly found on beaches around the Atlantic Ocean. Four additional journal articles by Bartels and his colleagues are awaiting publication.

**Dr. Amy Boyd**, Professor of Biology and Chair of the Division of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, received a grant from the North Carolina Native Plant Society for floristic research on the Christmount preserve in Black Mountain, N.C. Among other things, the grant will support WWC alumna **Abigail Doyle '19** as the Summer Field Research Intern. *Carolina Spring Beauty*, one of the many diverse wildflowers found at Christmount preserve. Photo by Amy Boyd.



**Dr. Christine Bricker**, Professor of Political Science, received a National Science Foundation Scholarship to present her paper "What Contiguity?: Using a TERGM to Understand State Similarity" at the Political Networks Conference in May 2019. Dr. Bricker also received the Warren E. Miller Scholarship to attend the 2019 Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Program in Quantitative Methods of Social Research at the University of Michigan.

**Danielle Burke**, MA in Critical Craft Studies Program Coordinator, completed an internship with the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage in May 2019. Her research focused on "ginseng wanted" classified advertisements from the mid-1800s to the present. In summer 2019, a series of her weavings were included in the Appalachia Now! exhibition at the Asheville Art Museum. Danielle also curated a Point of View Exhibition at the Asheville Area Arts Council that focuses on historical and contemporary textiles from Buncombe County, presenting in fall 2019.



**Dr. Christey Carwile**, Professor of Anthropology and Global Studies, accompanied 10 students to the Pine Ridge Reservation, an Oglala Sioux reservation in South Dakota, for a week-long community engagement experience in Fall 2018. This 11-year relationship between Warren Wilson College and the Reservation stems from an open invitation from Lakota elders. The experience was part of the upper-level anthropology course, "Race, Power, and Place." Students learned about the National Park Service and the history of Native American displacement, the use of solar and renewable energy on the reservation, and the revitalization of Lakota ceremony, language, and traditions.

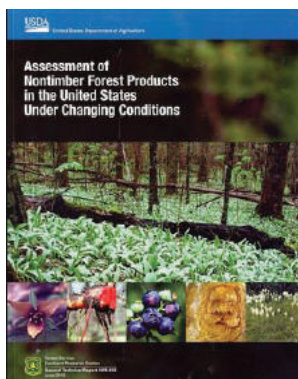
**Mary Davis**, Controller at Warren Wilson College, was appointed to the position of Treasurer by the Board of Directors at MANNA FoodBank in January 2019. Mary has served as a member of the MANNA finance and audit committees for the past five years and began as a full member of the Board of Directors in 2018. If you are interested in learning more about MANNA or becoming a volunteer, let Mary know!



**Dr. Maura Davis**, Visiting Professor of Early Childhood Education and Liaison to Verner Center

for Early Learning, and **Dr. Annie Jonas**, Chair of the Education Department, secured a \$121,000 grant from Buncombe County to support the founding of the Partnership for Excellence in Early Childhood Education (PEECE) in summer 2018. PEECE supports the professionalization of early childhood educators. Warren Wilson is the lead partner on this initiative that includes Verner Center for Early Learning, Buncombe County Schools, and AB Tech Community College. In the first year of the PEECE grant, Warren Wilson enrolled three students to complete a concentration in Early Childhood Education within the Psychology major.

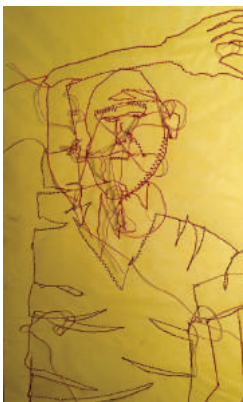
**Jason DeCristofaro**, adjunct faculty in the Music Department, published his musical composition *Singularity Triptych*, a three-movement work for solo percussion, in 2019 (Tapspace Publications). DeCristofaro's *Trio for Flute, Marimba, and Piano* was performed in May 2019 at the Konzerthaus Berlin, a 19th century concert hall in the heart of Berlin, Germany. The work has been performed in Sweden, China, New Zealand, and throughout the United States.



**Dr. Dave Ellum**, Dean of Land Resources and Professor of Ecological Forestry, along with a colleague from Yale University School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, contributed a chapter to the

USDA's *Assessment of Nontimber Forest Products in the United States Under Changing Conditions*. The publication provides a nationwide outlook on the future of these important conservation and economic resources in the face of climate change. Dr. Ellum's chapter focused on silviculture techniques that can be implemented for managing NTFP's as part of future forest management practices.

After five years as the College Farm's Assistant Farm Manager, **Virginia Hamilton '13** will serve the College as the Interim Farm Manager following the departure of **Asher Wright '08**. Hamilton is the first woman to occupy both of these positions in the College's 125-year history. Hamilton is simultaneously working on a Master of Science in Land Resources & Environmental Science through Montana State University.



**Dr. Gary Hawkins, MFA**, Director of the Center for Faculty Innovation & Excellence and Professor of Creative Writing, contributed illustrations to *Meaningful Grading: A Guide for Faculty Artists* (West Virginia University Press, 2018) and "Defining What Matters: Guidelines for Comprehensive Center for Teaching

and Learning (CTL) Evaluation" (Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education, 2018). He also designed and printed a broadside of "Old Road" for featured poet

**Rose McLarney '03, MFA '10** for the finale of the *Vandercooked Poetry Nights* series, which he co-founded with his wife, Landon Godfrey, at Asheville BookWorks.

**Dr. Alisa Hove**, Professor of Biology, was awarded the Appalachian Colleges Association's Faculty Sabbatical Fellowship. She will spend the 2019-2020 academic year collaborating with her students on the College's Genetics Crew to investigate the evolutionary responses of plant and animal populations to climate change. Some of this research was recently presented by Professor Hove and WWC alumni **James Kitchens '19** and **Dakota Wagner '19** at the 2019 Association of Southeastern Biologists annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee.

**Dr. Carol Howard**, Dean of the Faculty, published an essay on Elizabeth Blackwell, the first female physician, in "The Dictionary of Unitarian Universalist Biography" in 2018. Dr. Howard's monthly magazine column, "The Literary Gardener," has recently included such topics as "Wendell Berry's Sacred Earth;" "Emily Dickinson, The Gardener;" and "Thoreau's Winter Landscape."

**Dr. Annie Jonas**, Chair of the Education Department, secured a grant from the Association of American Colleges and Universities to explore how to embed civic learning into specific academic disciplines. The Psychology and Chemistry/Physics departments joined Dr. Jonas in Fall 2018 as a Community of Practice to explore how their majors could nurture students' civic identity development. This work resulted in the successful proposal "Infusing Civic Identity Development in the Major: A Faculty-Led Initiative," presented at the North Carolina Campus Compact conference with **Dr. Martha Knight-Oakley**, **Dr. Cristina Reitz-Kreuger**, **Dr. Kim Borges**, and **Dr. Langdon Martin** in February 2019.

**Dr. Siti Kusujarti**, Professor of Sociology, was invited to speak at both the third International Conference on Gender Equality and Ecological Justice at Satya Wacana University and the fifth

International Conference on Contemporary Social and Political Affairs at Airlangga University in Indonesia in July 2019. While in Indonesia, Siti also collaborated with colleagues from several universities to conduct research on gender, climate change, and disaster.

**Benjamin Lignel, MA**, faculty for the MA in Critical Craft Studies, taught courses in a number of institutions across Europe, including: "The Making of Care," at the EASD Valencia Dialogos seminar in Spain; "Mission & Governance," at the Sandberg Instituut in Amsterdam; and "Unpacking 'Show and Tell,'" at the Estonian Academy of Art in Tallinn. Lignel's artwork was exhibited at the Pinakothek der Moderne | The Design Museum, Munich in "Schmuckismus," curated by Karen Pontopidan, and at The Fuller Museum, Brockton in "Striking Gold: Fuller at Fifty," curated by Suzanne Ramljak. His essay on the work of Manon van Kouswijk, "The Possibility of Someone" was published in Fall 2018 in *Making Faces - A Jewelry Playbook*.

**Jim Magill**, Director of The Swannanoa Gathering, received a "Best of Category" PICA Award from the Printing Industry of the Carolinas for the 2018 Swannanoa Gathering catalog. This is Magill's 14th PICA Award.



**Mei Mah, MA, MS**, Catalog Librarian, completed a digital story on the Asheville Farm School Library. Go to [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019) for more information.

**Dr. Langdon J. Martin**, Chair of the Chemistry & Physics Department and Director of General Education, worked with former Farm Manager **Asher Wright '08** and Interim Farm Manager **Virginia Hamilton '12** to earn a Work Colleges Consortium grant to develop a collaborative laboratory in which students analyzed the pregnancy status of bred ewes on the Farm. With Professor of Animal Science **Dr. Kirk Adams**, farm crew students collected blood samples from the flock of bred ewes. Professor of Biochemistry **Dr. Kim Borges** then developed a lab for Biochemistry and Organic Chemistry students to test those blood samples for the pregnancy-specific antigen. The Farm used the results to make management decisions on their sheep flock. This lab and the equipment purchased through the grant will continue to be used in future semesters.

**Dr. Mallory McDuff**, Professor of Outdoor Leadership and Environmental Studies, participated

in the Climate Reality Leadership training in March 2019, led by Vice President Al Gore and the Rev. William Barber. She wrote about her experience for *Sojourners* magazine in the piece “Toward a new conversation for climate justice.” She also wrote about learning from her students at WWC: “My students show me how climate action is better than despair,” in *Sojourners*. During her sabbatical, McDuff worked on a memoir about family and our changing climate and also led conference workshops on topics ranging from green burial to writing about place.

**Dr. Jay Miller**, Professor of Philosophy, co-curated the exhibition *Politics at Black Mountain College*, which opened in January 2019 at the Black Mountain College Museum + Arts Center in Asheville. Combining scholarly and curatorial practices and drawing on a variety of media, this show represents various dimensions of politics at BMC that shaped the trajectory of the college. Miller’s book project, currently under review with Columbia University Press, explores the intersection of contemporary art and contemporary cultural politics through the theoretical framework of G.W.F. Hegel.

**Dr. Jill Overholt**, Professor of Outdoor Leadership, published an article based on her dissertation research in the journal *Leisure Sciences*, entitled “Role Shifts and Equalizing Experiences through Father-Child Outdoor Adventure Programs.”

**Linda Sandino, MA**, faculty for the MA in Critical Craft Studies, helped launch the College’s new graduate program, developing Research Methods I and II. She co-authored “Inspiration Examined: Towards a Methodology,” published in *Art, Design and Communication in Higher Education*. Her exhibition review of “Katagami in Practice: Japanese Stencils in the Art School, Asia House, London, 10-14 April, 2018” appeared in the *Journal of Textile Design Research and Practice*. Sandino was also appointed External Examiner for the MA Curating Collections and Heritage at the University of Brighton, UK for both the 2018-2019 and 2020-2021 academic years.

**Wendy Seligmann, MBA**, Associate Dean of Career Development and Faculty in Business, received a three-year fellowship from the Sullivan Foundation to work on the development of coursework in social entrepreneurship. The fellowship provides customized guidance on the proposed project including class design, access to relevant resources for teaching and implementation, and introduction to a network of speakers and leading social innovators and entrepreneurs.

**Dr. Bob Swoap**, Professor of Psychology, earned a research sabbatical to partner with the Asheville Fire Department. Swoap and his colleague, Scott MacGregor of Asheville Mindful

Living, are examining the effects of the Resilient Mind Program (RMP), a 12-hour class designed to educate and empower new firefighters with knowledge and coping strategies to support tactical readiness and mental, physical, and social resilience. Swoap is assessing the impact of the training on the mental and physical health of this group in two studies: a retrospective analysis and a prospective experimental design.

**Christine Swoap, MA**, Professor of Spanish, presented her research, “Mindfulness-Based Activities in the Foreign Language Classroom,” at the Annual Conference of the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages in November 2018. In summer 2019, Swoap also presented “Exploring self in community: benefits of intercultural learning between college students and Latino immigrant youth” at the fifth International Colloquium on Languages, Cultures, and Identity in Schools and Society in Soria, Spain.

**Namita Gupta Wiggers, MA**, Director of the MA in Critical and Historical Craft Studies, worked with many collaborators to launch the College’s new graduate program in 2018. Additionally, she lectured at Konstfack as a visiting scholar with IASPI in Stockholm, speaking on Gender and Jewelry with research collaborator **Ben Lignel**. Wiggers participated on panels including: “A Reckoning with the Recent Future of Art Historical Knowledge Production” (College Art Association) and “Unsettling Coloniality at Shared Ground,” a national symposium for which she served on the organizing committee. Wiggers also published articles in *American Craft* and *Kunsthåndwerk* magazines.

## Awards and Works by MFA Program for Writers Alumni and Faculty

### FACULTY AWARDS

The film based on **Dean Bakopoulos’s** first novel, *Don’t Come Back from the Moon*, was released in January 2019 and received a Critic’s Pick review from *The New York Times*. The film stars **James Franco MFA ’12** and Rashida Jones and was directed by Bruce Thierry Cheung.

**Marianne Boruch** is the 2019 Fulbright Senior Lecturer at the International Poetry Studies Institute at the University of Canberra, Australia.

**David Shields** wrote, directed, and produced *Lynch: A History* — a film about NFL star Marshawn Lynch and his use of silence as a form of protest. The film premiered in June 2019 at the Seattle International Film Festival, as an official selection in the documentary competition.

**Marisa Silver** is the 2018-19 Mary Ellen von der Heyden Fellow at the Cullman Center at the New York Public Library where she is working on her fifth novel, *The Mysterries*.

**Bennett Sims** and **Kirstin Valdez Quade** are the two Literature Fellows at the American Academy in Rome for the 2018-2019 year.

**Eleanor Wilner** was awarded the 2019 Frost Medal by the Poetry Society of America in April for distinguished lifetime achievement.

### ALUMNI AWARDS

**Melissa Berton MFA ’93** (poetry) won an Oscar for the documentary short film, *Period. End of Sentence*.

**Margaree Little MFA ’12** (poetry) won the Audre Lorde Award for Lesbian Poetry for her book *Rest* at the April 2019 Publishing Triangle Awards, which honor LGBTQ fiction and poetry.

**Hieu Minh Nguyen MFA ’19** (poetry) was one of five 2018-2019 recipients of the Ruth Lilly and Dorothy Sargent Rosenberg Fellowships awarded by the Poetry Foundation and *Poetry* magazine. He also won the Thom Gunn Award for Gay Poetry for *Not Here* (Coffee House, 2018) at the April 2019 Publishing Triangle Awards.

Albanian poet **Luljeta Lleshanaku MFA ’12** (poetry) was a finalist for the Best Translated Book Award for *Negative Space* (New Directions, 2018), translated by Anji Gjika.

**Leslie Schwerin MFA ’16** (poetry) released a new film with *National Geographic* about those on the front lines of the Ebola epidemic. *Going Viral: Beyond the Hot Zone*, premiered in May 2019 on the *National Geographic* channel.

### PUBLICATIONS

#### FACULTY

**Sally Ball** *Hold Sway* (Barrow Street Press, 2019)

**Christopher Castellani** *Leading Men* (Viking, 2019)

**Tony Hoagland** *The Art of Voice* (WW Norton, 2019)

**Caitlin Horrocks** *The Vexations* (Little Brown, 2019)

**James Longenbach** *How Poems Get Made* (WW Norton, 2018)

**Kevin McIlvoy** *At the Gate of All Wonder* (Tupelo, 2018)

**Pablo Medina** *The Cuban Comedy* (Unnamed Press, 2019)

**Alix Ohlin** *Dual Citizens* (Knopf, 2019)

**Peter Orner** *Maggie Brown & Others* (Little Brown, 2019)

**Michael Parker** *Prairie Fever* (Algonquin, 2019)

**Alan Shapiro** *Against Translation* (U of Chicago Press, 2019)

**David Shields** *The Trouble with Men* (Random House, 2019)

**Daniel Tobin** *Blood Labors* (Four Way, 2018) and translation of *The Stone in the Air: A Suite of Forty Poems after Celan* (Salmon Poetry, 2018)

**Connie Voisine** *And God Created Women* (Bull City Press, 2018) and *The Bower* (U of Chicago, 2019)

#### ALUMNI

**Catherine Barnett MFA '02** (poetry) *Human Hours* (Graywolf, 2019)

**Jane Brox MFA '88** (fiction) *Silence: A Social History of One of the Least Understood Elements of our Lives* (Houghton Mifflin, 2019)

**Joe Capista MFA '16** (poetry) *Intrusive Beauty* (Ohio State University Press, 2019)

**Patrick Donnelly MFA '03** (poetry) *Little-Known Operas* (Four Way Books, 2019)

**Justin Gardiner MFA '05** (poetry) *Beneath the Shadow: Legacy and Longing in the Antarctic* (U of Georgia Press, 2019)

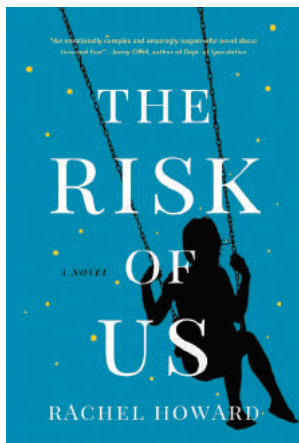
**Jenn Givhan MFA '15** (poetry) *Rosa's Einstein* (U of Arizona Press, 2019)

**Kimberly Kruge MFA '15** (poetry) *Ordinary Chaos* (Carnegie Mellon, 2019)

**Krys Lee MFA '08** (fiction) translator of *Diary of a Murderer* by Young-ha Kim (Mariner Books, 2019)

**Luljeta Lleshanaku MFA '12** (poetry) *Negative Space*, Anji Gjika, translator (New Directions, 2018)

**Rose McLarney '03, MFA '10** (poetry) *Forage* (Penguin, September 2019)



**Rachel Howard MFA '09** (fiction) *The Risk of Us* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2019)

## IN MEMORIAM

We remember the following for their service and dedication to Warren Wilson College.

### Mary Bartholomew

Mary Windsor Bartholomew, a longtime patron and organizer of the chamber music series at Warren Wilson College, died February 19, 2019. She and her husband Leland, who died in 2016, moved to Asheville in 1991 following Leland's retirement as Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences at Fort Hayes State University in Kansas. Both accomplished French Horn players and active in many Asheville organizations, Leland and Mary were coordinators of Warren Wilson College's Chamber Music Society of the Carolinas (formerly known as the Swannanoa Chamber Music Festival) for five years in the 1990s, working closely with Frank Ell and Jane Weis. They remained enthusiastic and generous patrons of the series, which is celebrating its 50th season.

### Elizabeth Carlyle Byerly

Elizabeth Carlyle Byerly, mother of alumnus **John Byerly '93**, died Sept. 20, 2018. She was a steadfast believer in the mission of Warren Wilson College and appreciated its unique educational philosophy. Byerly was a teacher, writer, and editor with a fondness for the arts. She especially enjoyed the chamber music concerts held at the College. Byerly was part of the community of Warren Wilson parents whose support for the College endures long after their children have graduated. Her bequest will help sustain the programs that make the Warren Wilson experience exceptional for students and their families.



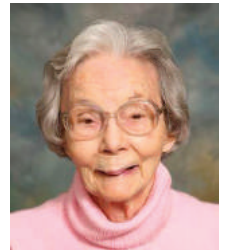
### Lila Bellando

Lila Bellando, wife of **Richard Bellando '59**, former Trustee and Alumni Board member and grandmother of **Layla Bellando '22**, died Feb. 16, 2019. A passionate advocate for education and art, Lila Bellando's leadership and talent spanned two states

and numerous organizations. In 1973, the Bellandos purchased the Churchill Weavers handweaving company in Berea, KY, and Lila Bellando served as president and designer until 2007. In 2009, the Bellandos donated a loom to revitalize the long-dormant fiber arts program at Warren Wilson College. Their support ensured that fiber arts and craft programs at the College will continue to grow and thrive for years to come. In addition, Lila Bellando served as a member of the Kentucky State Board of Education and the Kentucky State Arts Council, where she received the Governor's Award in Arts Education. Bellando also served as president of the Southern Highland Craft Guild in Asheville.

### Norma Forbes

Norma Forbes, a longtime friend of Warren Wilson College and active member of the Asheville community, died Oct. 27, 2018. Forbes and her sister, Nina, who died in 2010, attended Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church, where their love for the College was sparked by Fred Ohler's sermons. The sisters established the Robert Alanson Forbes Scholarship for international students in need of financial assistance at the College. Norma Forbes was an avid hiker, international traveler, and advocate for women and girls. Her involvement with the Girl Scouts as a state representative to the international conference inspired lifelong friendships across the world, and her work with the YWCA helped many families in our community. Forbes was a true friend to Warren Wilson College whose legacy will live on through the students her scholarship supports.



### Sam Scoville

Sam Scoville, beloved Warren Wilson College English professor of over four decades, died May 31, 2019. Scoville came to the College in 1971 and was instrumental in its transition from a two-year to a four-year institution. As Dean of the College, he led the collaborative process of creating a new general education curriculum. A Socratic educator, Scoville's lasting gift to his students was confidence in the power of their own minds and in their ability to thrive in the world of academics and beyond. He never confined his teaching to the classroom: long, open-ended conversations in his office, at the lunch table, and on work crews were formative and transformational experiences for many of his students. Scoville's distinctive voice is no longer with us, but the creative energy he imparted continues to work in the lives of his students and colleagues.

### Ron Wilson

Ron Wilson, longtime Warren Wilson College History professor and husband of alumna and former Controller Pat Wilson '78, died June 25, 2019. Ron Wilson came to the College in 1961 and, in addition to teaching, started the tennis team which he coached to

(in memoriam continues on the next page)

great success from 1974 to 1978. In 2015, he was inducted into the Warren Wilson College Athletics Hall of Fame. His former students started a scholarship in honor of Wilson's devotion and tireless efforts on behalf of Warren Wilson College, ensuring that his legacy in both academics and athletics lives on.

*As of July 19, 2019*

#### **ASHEVILLE FARM SCHOOL**

None

#### **DORLAND BELL SCHOOL**

None

#### **ASHEVILLE NORMAL AND TEACHERS COLLEGE**

Dorothy Davis '44  
February 24, 2019

Mary Elizabeth (Sain) Elam '40  
November 16, 2018

Margaret Stewart '43  
March 20, 2019

#### **WARREN WILSON HIGH SCHOOL**

Orlene (Davis) Carroll '50  
September 29, 2018  
Wilma Irene "Billie" Starr '44  
June 2, 2019

Joe Roger Waddell '56  
November 29, 2018

Iva Ruth (Williams) Winebarger '47  
August 5, 2018

#### **WARREN WILSON JUNIOR COLLEGE**

William Keith Anderson '64  
April 18, 2018

Kerry Landon Camper, Sr. '55  
December 20, 2017

Ray Ernest Ertzberger '53  
July 8, 2019

Coreen Case Finley '56  
January 22, 2019

Molly Kelly '58  
September 26, 2016

George Wesley Lollar '61  
May 7, 2019

Harvey David Miller '53  
May 18, 2019

Leach R. Shelton '49  
September 12, 2018

Russell Lee Shuping '60  
November 24, 2018

Claude Eugene Taylor '58  
December 2, 2018

Jack Thomas Willis '51  
October 15, 2018

Iva Ruth (Williams) Winebarger '49  
August 5, 2018

#### **WARREN WILSON COLLEGE**

Margaret "Meg" E. Denson '85  
September 11, 2018

Joshua William Haddix '97  
February 22, 2019

Nicholas Tremayne Hester '03  
November 5, 2018

Ralph Hill '70  
June 28, 2019

Robin Ledbetter Hinson, Jr. '89  
September 17, 2018

Enrique Ospina '71  
March 29, 2019

Susan (Freeman) Price '87  
October 16, 2018

Christopher "Ken" Kendall Rowden '88  
May 21, 2019

Elias M. Shomali '70  
May 1, 2017

Karen Shuart '82  
January 31, 2019

Paul Andrew Vernarsky '71  
September 9, 2018

Isley Mae Whitfield '87  
October 14, 2018

Zella Rea Banks Whitson '71  
May 24, 2019

Rebecca Jane Wing '95  
August 3, 2018

Michael David Zipf '88  
September 20, 2018

#### **EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, TRUSTEES, AND FRIENDS**

Mary Bartholomew  
February 19, 2019

Lila Bellando  
February 16, 2019

Melinda Taylor-Briggs  
December 19, 2017

Elizabeth Carlyle Byerly  
September 20, 2018

Rita Case  
February 22, 2019

Norma Forbes  
October 27, 2018

Anthony "Tony" Hoagland  
October 24, 2018

Jean Ramey Hutton  
February 1, 2019

James "Jim" Chapman Jackson  
August 9, 2018

Sally Lewis Rhoades  
September 24, 2018

Samuel "Sam" Scoville  
May 31, 2019

John "Jack" Shorter Stevens  
April 23, 2019

Wiecher Van Houten  
March 8, 2019

David Theodore White  
March 19, 2019

Mamie R. White  
June 27, 2019

Glenda Willis  
May 7, 2019

Ronald "Ron" Cloyd Wilson  
June 25, 2019

## Warren Wilson College Named first “Official Gap Year College”

Warren Wilson College was recently named the first “Official Gap Year College” by the Gap Year Association.

“If a gap year is to go out, explore the world, and understand yourself and your place in the world better, then college is the next step to really cement the better attributes of society and self, especially for those who took a gap year. Warren Wilson is a great place for students to land,” said Ethan Knight, executive director of the Gap Year Association.

Between 5 and 10 percent of Warren Wilson’s incoming class each year are students returning from a gap year. The national average is less than 1 percent. **Brian Liechti ’15**, Director of Admissions at Warren Wilson, knows there are reasons that gap year students are choosing Warren Wilson College in much higher numbers. “The values that lead students to take gap years in the first place – intellectual curiosity, desire to grow, dedication to community engagement, hunger for a lived experience and yearning to lead meaningful lives – these are values that Warren Wilson shares and nurtures.”

The College’s initiatives to specifically support gap year students include leadership scholarships for students who have excelled in gap year experiences, varied international and domestic study away programs and internships, themed housing for gap year students, and a general education program anchored in a commitment to civic identity and community engagement. The deferral policy allows students to secure their admission and set their financial aid package a year ahead of enrollment, with counselor contact throughout the gap year to help these students keep on track for college.

“Nationally, there’s lots of conversation that colleges are dying, that colleges aren’t prepared to meet the needs of the future student workforce,” Knight said. “This feels like a very significant way to say, ‘That’s not true for *all* colleges.’”

photo by Corey Nolen



## 2022 Strategic Plan - THE PROCESS & THE PLAN

When President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., arrived on campus in the summer of 2017, she recognized that the recently approved strategic plan had some elements that should be moved forward immediately (like the Center for Integrated Advising and Careers) and some elements that didn’t make sense or needed fleshing out (like the fact that the diversity, equity, and inclusion and the environmental sustainability components were under one overarching goal area). She also thought that the seven-year plan in place was too long, and we needed to plan in shorter bursts to keep pace with a quickly changing higher education landscape. To create this plan, President Morton launched an inclusive process in conversation with the entire community, surveying on- and off-campus stakeholders. She then began to work with a Strategic Planning Committee that included the College vice presidents, a strategic planning subcommittee of the faculty and staff shared governance body of Forum, and many other volunteer faculty, staff, and students willing to help. The committee conducted focus groups to bring in more voices, and the Board of Trustees weighed in throughout the process. The Trustees approved the three-year strategic plan on February 8, 2019.

### WARREN WILSON COLLEGE 2022 STRATEGIC PLAN APPROVED 2/8/2019

The following strategic imperative categories have accompanying information describing their direction. Please go to: [warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019](http://warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2019) to learn more.

**Strategic Imperative 1: College Identity and Mission**

**Strategic Imperative 2: Academic Excellence**

**Strategic Imperative 3: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**Strategic Imperative 4: Land and Environmental Sustainability**

**4.a. Land Stewardship**

**4.b. Just and Sustainable Practices**

**Strategic Imperative 5: Co-Curricular Programs**

**Strategic Imperative 6: Foundation for Growth**

## RETIREMENTS

### David Bradshaw

By Carol Howard

Dr. David J. Bradshaw joined the English Department in 1980, shortly after completing his doctoral degree at Yale University. He served as English Department chair for nearly two decades. Bradshaw's eminent career included nearly 150 honors, publications, and lectures, including prestigious NEH Seminars and scholar-in-residence appointments at nine different colleges and universities. He was also elected President of the North Carolina Honors Association in 1985. Professor Dr. Michael Matin writes, "I have never met a more dedicated or well-versed teacher or a more honorable individual... I can't imagine having a better colleague or a better friend." Bradshaw's students remember him for tea and cookies on Jensen's second floor, for the Gaudeamus Igitur Society apple tasting event each fall, and for their ability to write grammatically correct sentences. In honor of David J. Bradshaw, I leave you not with a quote, which is a verb, but with a quotation: "*Caesar non est supra grammaticos.*" (Caesar is not above grammar.)

### Mary Craig

By Kelly Ball

For the past 35 years, Mary Craig has overseen and kept the records of our alumni, parents, and friends as well as the gift processing and donor relations that have been crucial to the advancement of the College. We have been so fortunate to have Mary with her steadfast devotion, impeccable eye for detail and database management, deep knowledge of the College, and her wonderful sense of humor and adventurous spirit. Mary recently retired as Database Manager with the Advancement Office, and we want to give thanks to her for all that she has brought to the Advancement Office team and to the College and its many constituencies. Luckily, this is not a sad goodbye as Mary will continue her service to the College as a volunteer. You can still find her in the Advancement Office most mornings, continuing to keep our files clean and our rich history alive.

### Wayne Erbsen

By Phil Jamison

For 37 years, Wayne Erbsen has served as a music faculty member at Warren Wilson, where he has taught young people to play bluegrass and old-time music. Wayne took over the Warren Wilson Appalachian music program in the early 1980s, which laid the

groundwork for the College's new distinctive major and minor in Traditional Music. Over the years, Wayne taught fiddle, banjo, guitar, mandolin, and country singing to countless students, and he led the College's old-time and bluegrass bands. For over 30 years, Wayne has also hosted a weekly radio show, "Country Roots," on WCQS. This show, featuring old-time and bluegrass music, is the longest-running program on Blue Ridge Public Radio. While Wayne is stepping down from leading the Warren Wilson bluegrass band, he will continue to teach Appalachian music at his Log Cabin Cooking & Music Center in Asheville. We hope that he will continue to be a part of the music community at the College.

### John "Lightning" Griffith

By Paul Bobbitt

Lightning has been a mentor of mine since I started at WWC because of his dedication to not only creating an amazing student experience but also the depth and level of training he provides for his crew members. I believe that Lightning has birthed more electricians in WNC than all of the mothers combined. His dedication to his students' safety is unparalleled and has always been a motivation to me in my work with students. He has shaped the lives of so many students that have come through facilities it is difficult to imagine what things would have been like without him, and it is even more difficult to imagine what it will be like without him. Thank you for all you have done for us, Lightning!



### Robert Hastings

By Mandy Kutschied

Robert Hastings retired this year after 12 years as an instructor at Warren Wilson College. Robert started by teaching one Geology class as an adjunct and, before long, became a familiar face around campus.

In his time here, he taught or co-taught eight different courses, including a Study Away course to Alaska as well as First Year Seminars, Geology of the Southern Appalachians, Soil Science, and many others. In addition, he developed the Water and Earth Resources concentration in Environmental Studies alongside Mark Brenner. By simultaneously working half-time at Warren Wilson College and half-time at an environmental consulting firm, he was able to bring real-world experiences to our students. Robert was nominated several times for the teaching excellence award and supervised many NSURS projects. We're thankful to Robert for sharing his time and talents.



### Sharon Lytle '78

By Morgan Davis '02

Sharon first started at Warren Wilson as a student in 1972, and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in English. Sharon began her career in the Warren Wilson Admission Office in 1991 under Director Tom Weede. By 1994, Sharon had taken on the most complex parts of Admission, overseeing transfer and international students. Sharon has worked with almost every prospective student population, recently working with transfers, first-years, international students, and readmits...*at the same time*. Sharon has a unique ability to make anyone feel welcome and accepted, and she's welcomed countless students, families, and friends of the College into the Admissions Office and into her home. Sharon is the heart of the College – one of the precious few who have made this place the passionate work of a lifetime. In her retirement, I hope she can spend more time with her grandkids and granddogs and enjoy late afternoons on the deck of her home on College View looking over the valley she's helped sustain for so long.

# NC Free Tuition Program Sparks Record Freshman Enrollment

Adapted From “Warren Wilson College Celebrates Record Freshman Enrollment” By Marla Hardee Milling, reprinted with permission from *Black Mountain News*.

Warren Wilson College rolled out its North Carolina Tuition Free program in October 2017 for students who qualify for state and federal financial aid. The result — a staggering 246 percent increase in the number of freshman from North Carolina. It's the largest freshman class in the College's history and the largest group of North Carolina first-year students that the College has enrolled for at least 20 years.

NC Free was one of the first initiatives President Lynn Morton established when she joined the College in July 2017. “I noticed we didn't have as many North Carolina students as I would have expected, so I started working with our Vice President for Enrollment and thinking about how we could specifically make college more affordable for North Carolina residents,” President Morton said.

When the NC Free program was announced, many prospective students got the good news in the middle of their application process. Sierra Davis '22 was one of them. Davis first learned about Warren Wilson from a college fair in 10th grade. She fell in love with the College but didn't think it would be a possibility to attend. “When I found out how much it cost, I thought it was my unachievable dream school.” The free tuition program changed her dream into reality.

Another student, Clairissa Hitcho '22, said looking at a private college seemed risky because her family wasn't in a position to help support her financially. “I'm here completely on scholarships and loans,” she said. “Without NC Free, it would be impossible for me to go to school here.” Hitcho visited campus during her junior year of high school, before the plan was announced. “I knew immediately it wasn't like any



other school. It's a very unique and special place. The free tuition opens it up to people who are lower income and creates a more diverse population.”

The NC Free Program is funded through a reorganization of existing financial aid.

“We have scholarship dollars, as all institutions do, that donors provide, and we reorganized those scholarships around this NC Free program and also our Milepost One Program, which is directed at the middle class,” said Morton. “Milepost One is open to international students and those from any state who are from families making up to \$125,000 a year. I call those the

families who are stuck in the middle. They don't qualify for state and federal financial aid because they make too much money, but they don't make enough to afford college, particularly for multiple children.”

To qualify for the NC Free Tuition program, admitted students must be North Carolina residents who are enrolled full-time, have financial need, live on campus, and participate fully in the Warren Wilson work program. The plan is guaranteed for four years, but students have to file a renewal FAFSA each year to confirm continued eligibility. In addition, all admitted students are considered for merit scholarships, which can be as high as \$18,500 per year. There are also work grants and other need-based aid to help students achieve their dream of going to Warren Wilson.

“When I received full tuition, it felt like everything was falling into place,” Hitcho said. “It has made it possible for me to be able to achieve my dreams, be close to my family and get to stay in the beautiful state of North Carolina.”

Warren Wilson College is currently in the second cycle of implementing the NC Free and Milepost One programs for incoming students and has seen continued growth in student numbers and expansion of access for prospective students to the College.



# Warren Wilson COLLEGE

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