

Owl & Spade

Exploring Uncharted Territory

Fall 2020



A Magazine for
the Alumni &
Friends of
Warren
Wilson
College

Owl & Spade Magazine

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A Letter From the President



Dear Alumni and Friends,

When the magazine committee and I determined the theme of this year's *Owl & Spade—Exploring Uncharted Territory*—in October of 2019, it was months before the coronavirus barrelled through our world. The pandemic deeply affected Warren Wilson College and quite literally everyone in our extended community, thereby making this prescient theme even more resonant. And, as I write this letter in the middle of the summer of 2020, the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police has become a tragic and historic cultural reckoning point that inspired significantly more widespread support for the Black Lives Matter movement—not only adding pressure on police departments to dramatically improve their practices, but also calling on all of us to examine the systemic racism at our own institutions as well as our own individual biases.

I'm inspired by the renewed focus on racial justice work in our country and at our College. We have a long-standing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and social justice; these values are explicitly named in our 2022 Strategic Plan. As a result of an important catalyst provided by our own Black Student Union (BSU) demanding that the administration move more quickly, we committed at the end of June to several programmatic plans and the hiring of two new positions: a Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Initiatives working with faculty to complement our existing student-facing Director of Wilson Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity (WIDE), as well as a Chief Diversity Officer at the cabinet level. This is an evolving process. There have been starts and stops in the past, but I am committed to investing in the long-term sustainability of this work and our accountability as leaders supporting it.

In recent years, higher education has faced an uncertain future on many fronts. In early spring 2020, we had begun to leverage our strengths to prepare for the challenges ahead.

As a result, we created the inaugural Blue Ocean Strategy Summit to bring together a room full of community innovators to explore partnership opportunities for the College. At the event, we discussed the thematic work of Harvard researchers who created the concept of the “Blue Ocean Strategy”—an approach in which businesses create new marketspaces and demand instead of fiercely competing in existing, densely competitive markets. While the ideas generated that day were all suggested in the context of what I'll call the “old normal,” one of the benefits of having them as we began to tackle the health challenges of the coronavirus and resulting economic downturn was that the working groups we created to respond to the immediate crisis are also utilizing these new ideas to look to the future of our College and our world. I'm proud of our community for rising to meet the task at hand, as well as dreaming about—and working toward—an innovative future.

Warren Wilson has always explored uncharted territory. It's in our DNA. The stories you'll read and the images you'll see in this magazine metaphorically represent the calculated risks we are willing to take to develop ourselves, our community, and our region through trying new things and supporting each other through difficult experiences.

The cover of this magazine, by Art Professor Lara Nguyen, incredibly represents who we are and where we are right now. We may be a small boat, but we will continue, as always, to embark on endeavors that match our lofty ambition much more than our actual size. We have had to make difficult decisions, but that will always be the case for institutions like ours. And we know that we'll emerge from this time stronger than before because of the ethos of this community and the support of our alumni and friends.

In community,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynn M. Morton".

Lynn M. Morton, President

Profiles

Melissa Berton MFA '93 | Relevant Role Model

Anne Graham Masters '73 | Practical Idealist

Jesse Fripp '94 | Intentional Adventurer

Willow Collins '15 | Creative Critical Thinker



Melissa Berton MFA '93 | Relevant Role Model

A SOURCE OF STRENGTH. PERIOD.

Profile and portrait by Mary Bates

Melissa Berton MFA '93 admits that the leap from earning an MFA in poetry at Warren Wilson College to producing a documentary about a sanitary pad manufacturing machine in rural India is not an obvious one.

But Berton, who won an Oscar for her short documentary *Period. End of Sentence.*, said the lessons she learned from each of her four mentors during her time at Warren Wilson College gave her the confidence to pursue her dreams and trust that she could make that jump.

“When our crew came back from India, we had over 40 hours of footage that we had to cut to 26 minutes,” Berton said. “Creating the documentary from all of that footage felt somewhat like crafting a poem from a novel-length journal entry.”

Period. End of Sentence., streaming on Netflix at the time of this publication, follows a group of women in rural India as they learn how to make low-cost, biodegradable sanitary pads, which they sell to other women at affordable prices. The machine helps improve feminine hygiene by providing access to basic products, and also empowers the women to fight the taboos in India surrounding menstruation—all while contributing to the economic future of their community. The film won an Academy Award for Best Documentary Short Subject in 2019, and it sparked a worldwide conversation about menstrual justice and equity.

Berton currently works as a high school English teacher at Oakwood School in Los Angeles, California. After learning that the deep-rooted stigma around menstruation and subsequent lack of hygienic sanitary products cause nearly a third of Indian girls to miss school during their periods, her class was inspired to raise over \$55,000 for a pad machine and create a documentary about the issue.

“The subject touched me, because I would hate for somebody’s intellectual growth and opportunity to stop

because of a natural bodily process,” Berton said. “I see how brave my students are in terms of their own advocacy, and I saw that they can be advocates in a way that’s more convincing than adults about this issue.”

Berton said she has been humbled and overwhelmed by how many people relate to this issue. Since the documentary aired, she has received thousands of requests for pad machines. She created a nonprofit organization called The Pad Project, which raises money to purchase pad machines around the world. The students who were involved with the initial project became employees and the advisory board for the organization.

In October 2019, Berton screened the film and gave a lecture at Warren Wilson where she shared her aspirations for the future of her work. “I would hope that people take away an awareness that periods are a source of strength, not a source of shame, that the fight for menstrual justice is a real fight, it’s a worthwhile fight, and that girls and women can do so much to help the world when they are invited to participate as full and equal citizens,” Berton said. “On a personal level, if anybody has a passion for an injustice and they want to take action, they can do it.” ■

Melissa Berton MFA '93 won an Oscar in 2019 for the documentary that she produced, *Period. End of Sentence.* The film, which Berton created as a high school English teacher together with her students, sparked a worldwide conversation about menstrual justice and equity.

CARRYING THE KINDNESS

Profile by Jake Frankel '02, portrait by Mary Bates

A distinguished perinatologist, Dr. Anne Graham Masters '73 has dedicated her life to helping women navigate high-risk pregnancies. Her urge to give back to society is at the heart of her passion for the profession, as she seeks to return the kindness of those who made it possible for her to be the first person in her family to succeed in college and bring so many of her dreams to life.

As she grew up in Jamaica, Masters' interest in the medical profession began humbly—admiration for her public health instructors' spiffy uniforms sparked in her the idea of becoming a nurse. But the principal at her Presbyterian missionary high school cultivated higher aspirations.

“He said, ‘You should become a doctor because you’re independent and you’re smart enough.’ And from that point I thought, ‘I’m not going to become a nurse, I’m going to become a doctor,’” Masters said. He helped arrange for a scholarship to Warren Wilson College, where she found a supportive community that paved the way for her success.

When she worked toward her degree in Biology, she fed off of the passion of her professors, and she excelled working with them as a laboratory assistant. But her education went well beyond the lab and included some formative experiences in the College’s laundry room. Despite her scars from

rubbing up against the rollers, Masters remembers it fondly.

“It was a great job. You had systems in place in order to get it done. You had a sequence, and coordination between team members,” she said. “Your experience at Warren Wilson is very holistic. It’s not just about hitting the books and learning knowledge, it’s about applying that knowledge in a lot of different ways to create a positive effect. I do the same thing now to get a healthy result.”

Plus, in an act of kindness that continues to be an inspiration all of these years later, the Laundry Crew supervisor, Miss Snyder, made Masters a lovely dress, for no particular reason. “It’s the small things like that along the way that you’re really thankful for,” Masters said.

She earned her M.D. from the Tulane University School of Medicine and an MBA from the University of London. She earned a position as the Medical Director and owner of The Perinatal Center in West Palm Beach, Florida. Masters has earned a long list of awards during her career, including the “Women Who Make a Difference” honor from the National Association of Women Business Owners. She currently serves as a volunteer physician at the Greenville Free Medical Clinic in South Carolina.

Through it all, Warren Wilson has never been far from her heart, and she currently serves on the College’s Board of Trustees.

“Warren Wilson is a special place,” she said. “You carry the place with you. You carry the kindness that you receive there, and the talents that you’ve seen, and the friendships that you make.” ■

Dr. Anne Graham Masters '73 has dedicated her career to helping women through high-risk pregnancies. A distinguished perinatologist, she currently serves as a volunteer physician at the Greenville Free Medical Clinic in South Carolina and is on Warren Wilson College's Board of Trustees.



Anne Graham Masters '73 | Practical Idealist

INVESTING IN GLOBAL COMMUNITIES

Profile by Zanne Garland, portrait by Morgan Davis '02

“People often ask me how an Appalachian native with a first degree from a small, liberal arts mountain college managed to develop a career as a global development executive,” Jesse Fripp '94 said. “The defining principles that I honed at Warren Wilson College—that hard, persistent work can overcome most obstacles, that there is a solution for most problems if you are willing to be open to unconventional possibilities, that no situation is ever completely hopeless despite the odds, and that listening carefully to others can be transformative—helped me at every step of my personal journey.”

For over five years, Fripp has served as the General Manager of the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance (AKAM), headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland. The Aga Khan Development Network, of which AKAM is a member agency, has more than 80,000 employees, works in over 30 countries, and is by many measures the largest private multinational development organization in the world. In his role, Fripp has overseen more than 5,000 employees and supervised over \$600 million in assets. His work intermediating local savings into local lending has helped people become more financially self-reliant and has provided \$350 million in annual community loans and a safe place to save for more than two-million households across 10 developing countries.

Despite growing up in a single-parent, low-income household in Western North Carolina, Fripp took every opportunity to travel abroad. One of the first was at the age of 12, when Fripp joined his mother, who was an on-site medical provider, on a two-month immersive journey to the Yucatán Peninsula on a service trip with Warren Wilson College students. That experience gave him insight into service learning at the College and inspired him to apply to Warren Wilson.

“The analytical discipline and focus on effective listening and written communication instilled in me through

participation in Warren Wilson’s excellent English Honors program and the practical skills of working in direct service to the College and extended local community have served me very well throughout my career. I learned the business, finance strategy, and management skills later, but I have discovered—somewhat to my surprise—that these foundational skills are fairly hard to come by in the business world, and they enabled me to distinguish myself in the highly competitive development field,” Fripp said.

Though his work has taken him to more than 70 countries around the world, Fripp remains connected with Warren Wilson. He has shared his business and global expertise with students in several courses at the College. In January of 2018, Fripp and his wife Marga, with family and friends, created the Appalachian Leadership Scholarship. With this endowment, the scholarship honors the mission of Warren Wilson College and Fripp’s personal background. In the Fall of 2018, Fripp achieved the Distinguished Alumni Award for his dedication to Warren Wilson and for his international leadership.

“My career internationally has largely focused on conflict and crisis-affected environments, entailing coming to terms very personally with some of the worst realities of our human condition,” Fripp said. “However, I always come back to that core resilience and optimism of the human spirit that I first discovered during those weeks in the small village in the jungle with the Warren Wilson student service crew, just living and learning alongside total strangers who became close friends and mentors.” ■

Jesse Fripp '94 has served as the General Manager of the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance in Geneva, Switzerland for the past five years and plans to relocate to Western North Carolina in 2020 to continue his work in economic and social development.



Jesse Fripp '94 | Intentional Adventurer



Willow Collins '15 | Creative Critical Thinker

WHERE ART AND EDUCATION INTERSECT

Profile by Melissa Ray Davis '02, portrait by Sarah Murray

Have you ever visited a museum and wondered who created the models of extinct creatures or who engineered the mounts displaying historical artifacts? Willow Collins '15 is the youngest Model Maker at the Smithsonian Institution. She loves her work in exhibit creation, where art and education intersect.

"It is my passion. It is quite literally my dream job. It is what I have always been working toward," Collins said. "My favorite thing is the scope of the work that we do. There's always something new and a little challenging. Every project is a little bit different, so I'm constantly learning and constantly skill sharing with an incredibly talented crew."

Collins may be creating a model of a sea creature for the natural history museum one day, but the next she is devising a way to display Thomas Jefferson's writing desk—the one on which he wrote the Declaration of Independence. "You'll be talking to somebody about jellyfish," she said, "and then you turn around and realize that you were talking to one of the top jellyfish experts in the world."

Collins had wanted to create exhibits at the Smithsonian Institution ever since she completed a high school internship there, so she went to college with that end goal

in mind. She started out at a more conventional liberal arts college, majoring in museum studies, but she was not getting the hands-on making experiences she craved.

"I needed to know how to build an exhibit from the ground up," she said. "I wanted to know how to build the walls, apply the graphics, and then make everything that went on top of it." She transferred to Warren Wilson College because the Work Program would give her the tangible skills she needed.

"A lot of people didn't understand why I was making the choices I was making, and it was because I always had my sights set on being a jack of all trades and being able to do a lot of different types of things under the umbrella of educational art," Collins said.

At Warren Wilson, Collins majored in Art with a studio concentration in Sculpture and Ceramics. She kept her "materials lexicon" wide, working with a variety of artistic mediums, rather than specializing. That philosophy held outside of the Art Department as well as she took other courses such as Biology and Personal Finance, which she said gave her an ability to pursue knowledge and understanding in subjects that fell outside of her specialty. "I never regretted any of the classes I took," she said.

Meanwhile, her work crews gave her valuable skills. "Warren Wilson

was really amazing in that regard, and I definitely got opportunities that I would not otherwise have had," Collins said. The Design and Construction Crew gave her the technical background she needed to later learn 3D modeling. And the Rentals and Renovations Crew gave her a range of skills in building and construction. She found the wide variety of experiences and opportunities at Warren Wilson incredibly valuable.

"I think a lot of people spend a lot of time chasing and valuing rarity instead of celebrating abundance," Collins said. "Abundance is a word that I would describe Warren Wilson as having." ■

Willow Collins '15 is the youngest Model Maker at the Smithsonian Institution, where she innovates new ways to make history, science, culture, and nature come alive in exhibits.



An aerial view of one of Warren Wilson's restored campus streams running through the Farm. Photo by Pete Erb.

Healthy Rivers, Healthy Ecosystem

Warren Wilson College has finished an extensive project to restore 11,455 linear feet of campus streams back to their original meanders and natural courses.

Many of the streams that run through the College's current farm fields were

channelized, tiled, and routed underground for agricultural purposes in the 1920s. Restoring them has improved water quality, created wildlife habitat, and provided educational opportunities for students.

The project involved first reshaping the land to



Stages of Warren Wilson's stream restoration project. Photos by Elsa Cline '20, Pete Erb, and Restoration Systems.

remeander the waterways, then removing exotic species along the old channels and revegetating the buffers with native trees, shrubs, and herbs. Restoration Systems, the third-party company that did the work, planted 25,000 seedlings and live stakes, and students grew 10,000 native grass and wildflower plugs to plant. The new stream beds have 30-foot buffers on each side that are under permanent conservation easement.

"The largest impact of the project is the establishment of planted riparian buffers around the restored streams," said Worth Creech, Vice President—Southeast of Restoration Systems. "These vegetated areas provide a lasting water quality benefit immediately for the Swannanoa and ultimately the French Broad River. Reduced nutrient and sediment loads into these receiving waters means a healthier ecosystem all around."

As part of the project, the College also created a 1.2-acre wetland—along Clingman Creek through Little Berea pasture—that will serve as a teaching and research resource and provide an important habitat that was previously under-represented on the property. The new stream beds were designed with riffle and pool sections that provide improved habitat for aquatic organisms in comparison to the original channels.

The project was partially funded by stream mitigation credits, which the government purchased to offset the harmful effects of ongoing road construction in Asheville.

Restoration Systems set up a 10-year research fund to support student undergraduate research around wildlife habitat, hydrology, and aquatic ecology. The company also made a generous gift to the Warren Wilson College Farm. ■



Mariah Parker '13 (front with megaphone) leads "A March for a World Without Cops" in Athens, Georgia on May 31st. Photo by Sean Dunn.

COMMANDING A CROWD WITH HER WORDS

MARIAH PARKER '13 AT THE INTERSECTION OF POLITICS, HIP HOP, & LINGUISTICS

By Mary Bates

Mariah Parker '13 is an elected politician, a hip hop artist, and a Ph.D. candidate in Language and Literacy Education. As protesters mobilized across the country this summer in response to the murder of George Floyd by an officer of the Minneapolis Police Department, Parker led thousands who were calling for change in Athens, Georgia.

"So I'm out there at one point, standing on a Confederate monument, and the crowd is chanting 'Say His Name, Which One? Say Her Name, Which One?' at which point, I just broke down and started sobbing, with my feet planted on this relic of white supremacy and thousands of people spread out in front of me, because it was beautiful," Mariah Parker '13 said, describing the May 31st protest she led, "A March for a World Without Cops."

It was one of many Black Lives Matter actions Parker organized this summer in Athens, Georgia, where she serves as an elected County Commissioner. She recounted this scene on her podcast, *Waiting on Reparations*, which explores the intersection of hip hop and politics.

Going into "A March for a World Without Cops," Parker had been filled with fear, terror, anxiety, and almost a sense of hopelessness. She didn't know if the people she led would be

subjugated to tear gas or rubber bullets. She didn't know if the protest would get out of control—if people broke into businesses, would she be held responsible for damages?

"I was so shaky. I couldn't eat. I couldn't sleep," she said. "But I stood up because I felt like it was my duty for People of Color, Black people, and in particular Black women, Black queer folks, to take the lead in situations like this as the most marginalized people, to make the demands and be the face of change."

Though the protest remained peaceful, her fears were not unfounded. After it ended, a few hundred people stayed behind to peacefully occupy the main plaza with tents. A curfew was put in place retroactively without anyone knowing. The National Guard came into town and used tanks, tear gas, and rubber bullets against those who remained. Many were arrested, and leaders were separated from the rest of the group in what Parker believes to be "an act of retaliation and targeting for their involvement in bringing those folks together."

"I saw firsthand how folks coming together to demonstrate, as is their right, non-violently, are met with violence," Parker said. "I witnessed firsthand how the armed forces, the arms of the police state, are the agitators. And I witnessed this firsthand as well, how powerful it is when we come together nonetheless."

The protest advocated for the 50/10 Plan, which Parker drafted together with the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) of Georgia. It called for transitioning 50 percent of Athens' armed officer positions to social work, restorative mediation, mental health specialization, and other forms of compassionate community response over the next 10 years.

At a budget vote in June, the Athens County Commission adopted several elements of the plan, including adding a social work position for the Public Defender office, adding a third mental health co-responder team for the Police Department, bringing EMS dispatch for

911 calls in-house, and raising Public Defenders' salaries.

"We didn't get everything we wanted, of course," Parker said. "Just because we just got started this last month, doesn't mean that this movement is over. There are still going to be marches, there are still going to be caravans, there is still going to be work to do, letters that need to be written to our Commissioners, and calls that need to be made."

Parker said she sees her role in the movement as multi-pronged, as she recognizes that progress is made not through one single tactic.

"We need people in city halls to listen to the masses when they take to the streets. We need allies in seats of power to translate their outrage and heartbreak into concrete proposals that address the conditions they're living in," Parker said. "I see a lot of my role as a County Commissioner as continuing to mobilize people and do mass political education, in addition to making policy. So I continue to organize protests to give my constituents, the people I represent, an outlet for their frustrations and to remind them of the strength we have in numbers."

Parker sees the movement through three separate lenses: through the lens of public policy as a County Commissioner, through the lens of a hip hop artist under her stage name Linqua Franqa, and through the lens of education as she works on a Ph.D. at the University of Georgia in Language and Literacy Education. All of these lenses, she said, inform each other.

For example, bringing people together around a shared goal, managing speakers, giving people a platform to give testimony to their experiences, and the "act of commanding a crowd" with her words are all skills she learned as Linqua Franqa.

"I STOOD UP BECAUSE I FELT LIKE IT WAS MY DUTY FOR PEOPLE OF COLOR, BLACK PEOPLE, AND IN PARTICULAR BLACK WOMEN, BLACK QUEER FOLKS, TO TAKE THE LEAD IN SITUATIONS LIKE THIS AS THE MOST MARGINALIZED PEOPLE, TO MAKE THE DEMANDS AND BE THE FACE OF CHANGE."

— Mariah Parker '13

On the day she was sworn in as a County Commissioner, Mariah Parker '13 stands in the Athens-Clarke County City Hall in front of photographs of past mayors of Athens. Photo by Raphaela Aleman.



“The ability to face down that fear with grace and think flexibly and creatively in the face of opposition are skills that I honed through hip hop performance,” Parker said. “I now use them daily in making arguments at city hall and facing down the public at these marches.”

At Warren Wilson, Parker studied Creative Writing and Modern Languages, worked at the Writing Studio, and wrote for the student newspaper, *The Echo*. Those experiences inspired her to get her master’s degree in Linguistics, and then to work toward her Ph.D. in Language and Literacy Education. Her dissertation focuses on activist literacy, or the ways in which interpreting texts, speaking, writing, and other forms of communicating are critical to successful movements toward social change.

“The way we define terms or frame arguments through language has very material consequences in the way that resources get allocated, in the way that law is upheld, or argued, or interpreted,” Parker said. “My background in discourse analysis impacts that very much.”

Her hip hop career is very influenced by both linguistics and politics. Linguistics gives her a toolkit to create really inventive

**“THE WAY WE
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— Mariah Parker ’13



hip hop verses. She uses hip hop as a platform to inspire people, do mass civics education, and share personal experiences. She hopes to inspire people to political action through music.

Parker seeks to follow in the legacy of folks like Angela Davis, Huey P. Newton, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcolm X. When she was sworn into the County Commissioner office two years ago, she did so with her hand on the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*. That action went viral on social media, and she was interviewed by major news outlets such as *Teen Vogue* and *Buzzfeed*.

“Going viral helped build out a movement across all of Georgia, and nationally, of folks who support our work in Athens, who may have been inspired to run for office themselves, having seen a young queer woman of color run and win,

a young queer hip hop artist run and win,” Parker said. “To be part of that national conversation about what change looks like at a local level, what possibilities exist at a local level, and to be able to leverage national resources towards these ends in Athens has been a really good outcome.”

Moving forward, Parker has plans to continue the fight to end unpaid inmate labor in Athens, advocate for more affordable housing in her district, petition for the economic development department to invest in creating worker-owned co-ops, and establish a worker center as a place where folks can learn about organizing in their workplaces, what their rights are as workers, and help support people in agitating for better worker conditions and better pay in their workplaces. She also said she will continue to advocate for prison abolition and significantly reducing, if

STUDENTS & ALUMNI ACT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE

Madi Devericks '23

Devericks organized a protest in Hope Mills, North Carolina, that featured a police escort, speeches from local leaders, and protection and support from The Black Panthers. Devericks also performed an original poem entitled "Are You Black?" "The entire day was youth-led and created," Devericks said.

Phyllis "Fig" Ferrell '80

An elementary school teacher of more than 30 years, Ferrell joined a local protest organized by The Jefferson County Teachers Association in Louisville, Kentucky—home to Breonna Taylor. Ferrell said, "I was proud to walk with my fellow educators in support of Black Lives Matter, my Black students and their families, and in support of justice."

Bryan Thompson '21

Thompson, a Creative Writing student, is enacting change in Asheville, North Carolina. Their involvement started with a march organized by Black Leader(s)/Change Makers. "To say the least, that day was so healing and electrifying, and since then I have been a part of organizing several marches in Asheville and working intimately with BlackAvl Demands," Thompson said. Thompson also currently serves as President of the Black Student Union (BSU) at Warren Wilson and helped write the list of demands to address institutional racism at the College.



Bryan Thompson '21, WWC BSU President.
Photo by Angela Wilhelm.

Tim Deutch '83

"In the days after George Floyd's murder, I would describe the emotions within Minneapolis and Saint Paul as 'raw and determined,'" Deutch said. He observed "many things important for the moment: more White people than I've ever seen shouting that 'Black Lives Matter,' armed military hoping to contain the emotions, brutal honesty of signs and voice, the masks of COVID-19, the building where real change must be enacted, and collective outrage that we've come to this. It felt tragic, but also optimistic... that the collective energy could finally matter."

Mariah Parker '13 says she sees the current racial movement through three separate lenses: as a County Commissioner, as a hip hop artist, and as an academic. Photo by Sean Dunn.

not ending, the practice of policing as it currently exists in her community. "As an abolitionist, I believe that we abolished slavery, but we are still pushing to abolish other structures that enslave Black people, which include police and prisons," she said.

"At times I'm inspired, and at times I'm disheartened by the pushback I see from policy makers around our demands," Parker said. "But mostly I feel very hopeful that we can achieve real material change in this moment, that we can educate others and bring them into the movement and gain momentum as we move along." ■

To listen to Parker's podcast *Waiting on Reparations* or to see her hip hop performances as *Lingua Franqa*, please visit: warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020



Photo courtesy
of Tim Deutch '83,
Saint Paul,
Minnesota.



From left: Paul Dhalla, Dave Ellum, Zanne Garland, Virginia Hamilton '13, Prince Rahim Aga Khan, Princess Salwa Aga Khan. Photo by Mary Bates.

A Global Partnership for Rural Landowners

Why one of the world's largest multinational development organizations sought guidance from Warren Wilson College

By Zanne Garland

What began as a relatively normal introductory phone call in August 2019 quickly advanced into an incredible opportunity for Warren Wilson College to make a global impact.

Last summer, Jesse Fripp '94, General Manager for the Aga Khan Agency for Microfinance and one of the alumni profiled at the beginning of this magazine, visited campus and met with President Lynn Morton, Ph.D., and myself, Vice President for Advancement Zanne Garland. We were about to publish last year's *Owl & Spade*, replete with an eight-page spread detailing our new land innovation work under the Dean of Land Resources, Dave Ellum, Ph.D. We shared components of that story with Fripp in advance of its publication.

Fripp knew that the Aga Khan Development Network—by many counts the largest multinational development organization in the world and the umbrella network where he holds his position in the microfinance agency—was developing a plan to incorporate environmentalism into all aspects of their work serving more than 50 million people each year. He asked Ellum and me to speak on a call with their Director of Research Paul Dhalla, who was developing plans to integrate sustainability into their broader mission.

Fripp said that Prince Rahim Aga Khan would be on the call as well, because he was very excited about and interested in our work. Prince Rahim is the son of His Highness the Aga Khan, the Imamate of the Nizari Ismaili people and head of the highly acclaimed Aga Khan Development Network. Prince Rahim had already contributed to the scholarship fund that Fripp started at Warren Wilson, so he was somewhat familiar with the College.

On that call, Prince Rahim, Dhalla, Fripp, Ellum, and I realized that there are many more connections between their primary service area, Central Asia, and ours, rural Appalachia, than we had initially thought. In both regions, culture and conservation are interconnected as primary motivators for preserving farmland and forest land. Many people in both regions are forced to sell their land or move away from rural regions for economic reasons. Prince Rahim asked if he, his family, and Dhalla might be able to visit Warren Wilson to see the land management practices we are developing and better understand if there could be interconnectedness with their work. We scheduled a two-day visit in November 2019.

During the visit, Ellum and his team of land managers showed Dhalla, Prince Rahim, Princess Salwa, and their young children

how our land operations provide a working microcosm of the type of landscapes that families in our region might own. We demonstrated how Warren Wilson, in Ellum's words, is not just "doing what works, but seeing what works" in order to be a resource for landowners to be able to keep their land and find value in it. Ellum and his team showed them the shitake mushroom project, our seed-propagation work, and the Herb Crew's value-added products, and they discussed potential new initiatives. For example, our students could create land management plans and show landowners how to cultivate valuable plants such as black cohosh, ginseng, and truffles on their land, enabling them to stay and pay their taxes instead of selling their land. After their extensive land tour, President Morton, Former Trustee Chair Joel Adams, Ellum, and I took them out to Table, an alumni-owned farm-to-table restaurant, where they served us appetizers made with vegetables from our garden.

In our conversations, we recognized that not only do we see opportunities to partner and support each other's efforts in land management, but also the Aga Khan Development Network manages the University of Central Asia, whose mission has many parallels to our mission at Warren Wilson College. President Morton discussed the Work Program at length, as they saw great value in that aspect of our programming.

Prince Rahim emailed immediately after they left and said, "It wouldn't be an overstatement to say that we felt a little homesick for the College when we left." Shortly thereafter, he and his family created the Earth Steward Scholarship to provide a full tuition, room, and board scholarship for a Warren Wilson student interested in majoring in a field associated with environmental sustainability.

The power of this place, land that has been cultivated as part of our school's work and academic programming since 1894, truly inspired this family of international leaders in a way that could impact the Aga Khan Development Network and affect millions of people as a result. ■

To learn more about Warren Wilson's Land Innovation Program, visit:

warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020

Agents of Change

The Building Diversity Fellows Program

By Erika Orman Callahan



At the outset of the QEP program, students, faculty, and staff were invited to participate in a photo project to capture what they hoped the program would achieve on campus. Photos by Chris Polydoroff.

“What small things can we do to make an eventual big change?” That was the question a team of faculty and staff answered when they developed the Building Diversity Fellows Program at Warren Wilson College.

The program began in 2015 as Warren Wilson’s five-year Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), a requirement of the College’s accreditation. Based on proven research and best practices, the program created a learning community designed to prepare faculty and staff to be “change agents” who could infuse equitable practices and diverse content into their classrooms, work crews, and community engagement initiatives to ultimately improve student learning and the campus climate.

Professor of Anthropology and Global Studies Christey Carwile, Ph.D., a key member of the team that wrote the initial proposal, oversaw the program as the QEP Director. According to Carwile, voluntary participation and an intimate group setting were crucial to its effectiveness. “What I discovered in the research is that mandatory equity training is not as effective,” she said. “It reaches a wide range of people, but not everyone is invested, and it often lacks depth.”

Each year, the program accepted up to eight applicants who met weekly to research and discuss topics such as race and ethnicity, LGBTQIA+ identities, disability access, needs of first-generation college students, and more. These meetings allowed staff and faculty to strengthen their own social justice knowledge before putting it into practice in their work with students.

“The power of the program was the sustained dialogue,” said Shuli Archer, Associate Dean of Community Engagement. “To be in a longstanding mixed group of faculty and staff, and to have that community, and to get to learn from each other and be together—it was really inspiring.”

Each fellow implemented a culminating Change Project, an initiative that would challenge students to engage with diverse perspectives. In total, nearly 400 students participated in one of these experiences, which left a significant impact on the students and the fellows who implemented them.

For his Change Project, Professor of Psychology Bob Swoap, Ph.D., taught a course in which students explored the intersections of race, class, and health. Swoap said he and his students “learned to empathize more deeply, to more fully develop compassion, and to practice skills around such issues as implicit bias and historical trauma.”

Professor of Theatre Candace Taylor organized a Martin Luther King Jr. Day performance where students portrayed, and subsequently discussed, stories about race and class. “I believe my Change Project was the first time some Students of Color had the freedom to talk frankly about their experiences on campus and off,” Taylor said. “It gave me a lot of hope.”

Through their Change Projects and everyday work with students and colleagues, the 39 Building Diversity Fellows planted seeds to make the College a more inclusive place. Although the program is coming to a close after five years as the official QEP, Carwile made it clear that the work will not stop. “It’s so exciting, and it feels like we’ve been so productive,” Carwile said, “and then it also feels like there’s so much more to be done. Social justice work is never done. It’s a practice.” ■



From left: The Rev. Dr. Brian Ammons, Mollie Donihe '16, and the Rev. Dr. Steve Runholt share a moment after Donihe's sermon.

Ministering to Her Mentor Exploring Faith and Identity

By Philip Bassani

Whether closing a service or beginning a meal, “you are a beloved child of God, and nobody can take that from you” is a consistent part of the Rev. Dr. Brian Ammons’ blessing. Those words were groundbreaking for Mollie Donihe ’16, one of his students. “I didn’t realize at the time,” she said, “but hearing that over and over again gave me trust in him as a friend.”

In the fall of 2012, Ammons and Donihe were both growing roots as new members of the Warren Wilson community. Donihe was beginning her first year, and Ammons had just been hired as the Ralph and Orlean Beeson Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life.

Donihe’s faith was important to her identity, so she joined the Christian group on campus. As she became acclimated to life at Warren Wilson, Donihe felt tension between the Christian identity that she had arrived with and the social student identity that she wanted to develop. Even though her values were in line with those of her peers, she was initially reserved in telling friends she was going to church on Sunday mornings.

“Through talking to Brian, I realized there are certain identities we have that feel in tension with each other, and that’s okay. They don’t have to make sense to other people. I think that might have been one of the most influential things that he has ever told me,” Donihe said.

In her sophomore year, Donihe collaborated with Ammons to shape Christian student life on campus, evolving what it

meant to be a visibly religiously-identified student. Among other religious groups and programs, Ammons started a Communion service for students where Donihe sang and played guitar. This service developed into a series of casual monthly gatherings called the Back Porch Sessions, which were shared between students and the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church congregation. They gathered around the outdoor fireplace on the porch of Ransom Fellowship Hall—complete with storytellers, musicians, and simple Communion.

Ammons was influential in Donihe’s decision to attend divinity school after Warren Wilson, as was her coursework as a Social Work major and her community engagement with local faith-based organizations. She found company among those whose religious identities were intertwined with their social justice efforts. Donihe leaned on Ammons while considering her options and was drawn to Vanderbilt Divinity School because it “is socially engaged, communally embedded, and also really theologically and ministerially strong,” Donihe said. After graduating from Warren Wilson, she moved to Nashville, spent a year working as an AmeriCorps VISTA, and then began her studies at Vanderbilt.

In October 2019, Donihe was invited by the Rev. Dr. Steve Runholt to give a sermon at Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church on the Sunday of Homecoming Weekend. The tradition of an alumni guest sermon predates the current configuration of the College and Church being two separate, parallel entities (*see sidebar for this history*). That Sunday was also World Communion Sunday.

“It felt serendipitous,” Donihe said. “Brian was the main person who helped me realize that I love Communion. I love the embodiment of kneeling and taking a piece of bread.”

Adding to the significance of Donihe’s sermon was the Church’s display of the Shower of Stoles, a nationally touring exhibit of clerical stoles donated by LGBTQIA+ ministers who formerly had been denied access to ordained ministry. Ammons said, “I have a stole in the Shower of Stoles from back in my twenties, when I had to leave the denomination that I grew up in because I wouldn’t have been allowed to be ordained.” Ammons recognized that some of the language Donihe used about Communion was language he uses as well. “It was a really beautiful moment to realize that I was a part of that bridge between the faith and practice of her childhood and her stepping into ministry. It was a real gift,” Ammons said.

While leading Communion alongside Runholt after Donihe’s powerful sermon, Ammons scanned the familiar faces of his beloved community, considered the Shower of Stoles surrounding them, and felt an overwhelming desire to step back into congregational ministry.

“It really did feel as close to a burning bush moment as I can remember,” Ammons said. “I adore Warren Wilson and am deeply invested in it, but I want to preach and preside at the table in a way that isn’t and shouldn’t be the primary function of a college chaplain. I want to lean into this part of me that

Warren Wilson has helped me reclaim.” Ammons will remain at the College through the end of the year, and then he plans to return to congregational ministry.

At the end of the service, Ammons thanked Donihe for energizing him, but Donihe did not realize the full meaning of those words until later. “I underestimated that my sermon could have impacted him that deeply,” Donihe said. In seeing his former student confidently step into ministry, Ammons felt called to take his own next step. ■

In May 2020, Donihe graduated from Vanderbilt Divinity School with a Master of Divinity. She was awarded the Saint James Academy Award for composing the most outstanding sermon of her class, and the Luke-Acts Prize for composing the most significant paper on an aspect of Luke-Acts. To see the full text of her Homecoming sermon, or to support this style of personal mentorship that Warren Wilson fosters, please visit: warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020

“It was a really beautiful moment to realize that I was a part of that bridge between the faith and practice of her childhood and her stepping into ministry. It was a real gift.”

— Brian Ammons, Chaplain and Director of Spiritual Life

Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church was hosting the Shower of Stoles collection when Mollie Donihe '16 gave a sermon there during Homecoming Weekend. Photo by Mary Bates.

The History of the Church: An Evolving Relationship

By Diana Sanderson

The Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church and College Chapel has been the resident campus congregation since its founding in 1925 as the Farm School Presbyterian Church. For decades, it was the church where everyone at the school worshipped. Starting in the 1970s, with the College gaining independence from the United Presbyterian Church, more people from outside the Warren Wilson community began attending. Currently, most members have no connection to the College, though some members are faculty, staff, retirees, and alumni.

Since the 1990s, the College and congregation have shared the Ohler Spiritual Center—which includes the Chapel, Ransom Fellowship Hall, and the Christian Education and Church Office wing—through a “covenant” agreement. This Covenant, which is reviewed every five years, “celebrates our shared past and... establishes our shared future by outlining expectations and responsibilities, and identifies mutually beneficial partnerships and collaboration.” These partnerships lie in shared religious programming, speakers, social justice initiatives, and communal support. The Rev. Dr. Steve Runholt, who is the current pastor, says that presently, “The Church/College relationship is as strong as it’s ever been, and is in a very healthy place.”





Trail Blazing

For over 25 years, the Outdoor Leadership Program at Warren Wilson College has prepared graduates with the technical skills and theoretical knowledge to explore uncharted territories of outdoor adventure education. These students embody the very best of the Warren Wilson spirit through their grit, curiosity, and service to others.



Photos by
FJ Gaylor
and the
Outdoor
Leadership
Department



Exploring the Blue Ocean

Partnerships in Uncharted Territory

By Melissa Ray Davis 'O2



Blue Ocean Strategy is a concept developed by the Harvard Business School. Where most businesses operate is the “red ocean,” metaphorically red and roiling with the blood of sharks, all going after the exact same bait... and each other. Blue Ocean Strategy involves innovating new business models, creating demand that did not previously exist, and identifying new areas of expansion where the waters are clear. Higher education, it could be argued, is currently mired in an alarmingly red ocean, with dozens of colleges drowning every year. Blue Ocean Strategy usually applies to for-profit organizations, but what if it were adapted and used by nonprofits—by colleges? Through expanding community partners to include businesses, can Warren Wilson College discover a “blue ocean”?

THE RED OCEAN

Every day, a new headline questions the “value of higher education” and prophesies the “end of higher education as we know it” or “the death of the liberal arts.” The narrative has shifted, nationally, to one that sounds very challenging for small, independent colleges like Warren Wilson.

“I don’t like what I read in the newspapers about higher education,” Joanne Soliday said. Soliday is the author of the book *Pivot: A Vision for the New University*, a higher education consultant, and a strategic planning specialist with over 30 years of experience on college and university campuses. “I don’t like the statistics I see about people’s ideas about the value of higher education these days, because I will never feel that the kinds of things we teach in college are obsolete. The kinds of liberal arts and integrated situations that we put students in are so important. But I’m

reading it. And you're reading it too. The value of higher education has got to become as relevant today as it was years ago."

Demographics are changing. Population decline means that there are fewer college-age students for institutions to recruit, and that lack of students will come to a crisis point once those born after the recession of 2008 come of age. Many students are shying away from the downplayed value of small, residential colleges and leaning more toward large state universities, community colleges, or technical schools. And with so many narratives questioning the value of going to college at all, many young people simply are not. Those students who do attend want to see strong evidence of outcomes, robust career and technical skills training, excellent affordability, and state-of-the-art facilities and technology.

As a small, independent college with a modest endowment and no operating budget support from the state, Warren Wilson College's budget comes mainly from tuition, room, and board. Having recently implemented ambitious scholarship programs to increase student access and reduce the average amount each student pays for tuition, the College operates on a tight budget without a net revenue surplus. With so little margin for error, that formula quickly becomes unsustainable—especially in the context of major struggles, such as a worldwide pandemic.

"The business model of higher education is completely driven by tuition, room, and board. It is essentially a broken model," Warren Wilson College President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D., said.

President Morton knew when she arrived in 2017 that in order to survive the challenges facing higher education today, Warren Wilson would need to diversify its income—would need to explore outside of the red ocean to find a Blue Ocean Strategy.

"If you're going to change and you need to grow, leap up to a strategy that is significant," Soliday said. "The Warren Wilson community has already done that before. It is part of your history. You did that years and years ago, to leap to a work strategy that none of the rest of us had and still don't have, and that you do better than everybody else."

THE BLUE OCEAN

"If we look outside the historic constraints of traditional higher education," Vice President for Advancement Zanne Garland said, "look outward to see what our community needs, consider how the economy is changing, and determine where we can work with outside partners to create new educational experiences and revenue streams, opportunities will abound."

Warren Wilson College's leadership has been highly sensitive to this need for new strategies. In 2019, both President Morton's Cabinet and the Board of Trustees

read Joanne Soliday's book *Pivot: A Vision for the New University*. They were seeking to further develop their strategy to ensure a resilient financial future for the College in the challenging years to come. *Pivot* highlights innovative ways that colleges are embracing change, while still staying true to their missions.

"Part of what *Pivot* talks about is the creation of partnerships that are symbiotic—we do things for businesses, and they do things for us," Morton said. "Most of our partnerships up to this point, which have been wonderful, have been nonprofit. *Pivot* suggests that you need to expand from the nonprofit world into the for-profit world, with organizations that might need your scientific expertise for example, want your students as interns, collaborate on research, or want to work together to develop new ideas."

Morton stressed that Warren Wilson College has long been ahead of the times in this regard. "At Warren Wilson College, collaborations and partnerships come naturally to us," she said. "For over 50 years, we have had a Community Engagement Program partnering very effectively with nonprofits throughout the region. For 125 years, we have had students working on our campus, and have also offered high-quality academics integrated with that work in a truly applied learning environment. Now, we are looking for creative ways to further expand that learning environment in ways that will benefit our wider community."

PROFITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

"Given our current environmental, economic, and social issues of the day, we really need a new way to do education—a way to do education which helps our students be successful in this new world, but also helps our College thrive into the future," Dean of Land Resources Dave Ellum, Ph.D., said. "These partnerships provide the unique opportunity for our students to take what they've

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— Joanne Soliday, author of
Pivot: A Vision for the New University

College Partners

Eda Rhyne Distilling Company

Eda Rhyne distillery in Asheville, North Carolina, is an alumni-owned business that strives to capture the character and flavors of Southern Appalachia in their small-batch, craft spirits. They source local heirloom corn, grains, and botanicals that evoke a uniquely Western North Carolina flavor.

Eda Rhyne's environmentally responsible ethos and commitment to sustainably harvested, organic botanicals makes Warren Wilson College an ideal production partner. Forestry Crew students source and harvest native botanicals such as spicebush and sumac berries from the College Forest to be sold to Eda Rhyne. Through this partnership, students develop scale-appropriate sustainable market opportunities while protecting the ecological integrity of the region's forest ecosystems through a responsible land management model.

The Chop Shop Butchery

The Chop Shop Butchery is a whole-animal butcher shop offering natural, custom, and local meats in Asheville, NC. They prioritize a direct relationship with local farmers so they can know the specifics about each cut of meat they sell.

The Chop Shop is a regular buyer of the Warren Wilson Farm's pasture-raised pork. They recognize the marketing value of the College's sustainable and humane practices, quality genetics, and the integration of Warren Wilson's educational mission with applied agricultural production. In addition to being a customer of the College Farm, The Chop Shop Butchery runs workshops for Warren Wilson students on meat processing, whole animal butchery, and marketing.

EcoForesters

EcoForesters is a nonprofit, professional forestry organization based in Asheville, NC, dedicated to preserving and restoring Appalachian forests through positive impact stewardship. EcoForesters is unique in the way it combines a strong educational mission with aspects that are typical of conventional for-profit forestry operations.

The company uses the Warren Wilson College Forest as a demonstration site for private landowners who are interested in better understanding their forest-management options. Warren Wilson College students looking to begin their careers in forestry have interned with EcoForesters, and two graduates of the College's Ecological Forestry Program are currently employed there.

Oak and Grist Distilling Company

"Where does your spirit lead you?" Oak and Grist Distilling Company in Black Mountain, North Carolina, is an alumni-owned business committed to creating custom Appalachian spirits by supporting local and regional farmers, businesses, and nonprofits. They aim to foster stronger connections between producers, consumers, and place.

Warren Wilson College Organic Chemistry students use Oak and Grist's facility every year to study fractional distillation at the commercial scale, which contextualizes their learning experiences and makes the jump from theoretical to applied knowledge. Additionally, Sustainable Business students in the Applied Business and Consulting course this spring partnered with the distillery for their Capstone projects, conducting market research into possible locations where the distillery could expand its distribution. They then presented their findings to Oak and Grist and at the Capstone Carnival.

learned in the classroom and put it into play alongside entrepreneurs and business people who share our mission of contributing to the common good."

Ellum has been a leader amongst the faculty in establishing these partnerships, but both Morton and Ellum stressed that not just any business is a good partner for Warren Wilson—their values must be aligned with the mission and strategic plan of the College.

"I really look at three criteria," Ellum said. "Do these partnerships and projects bring student experiences? Second, do they contribute to positive visibility for the College? And third, do they have the potential for revenue generation? I believe that when we put all three of those metrics together, we develop successful students who can positively change this world. We can also thrive as a College into the future, and we can contribute positively to the community in which we operate."

One of those successful College partnerships has been with Abundant Labs, a producer of customized industrial hemp products, including CBD isolates, distillates, and oils. In the summer of 2019, Warren Wilson began the partnership with Abundant Labs when the Garden Crew performed for them a late-season, direct-seeding trial for a CBD industrial hemp variety.

"We're super excited about working with Warren Wilson to develop opportunities both in the science of figuring out what's available, and also the commercial opportunities to benefit us and Warren Wilson economically," Abundant Labs CEO Chip Miller said.

It gave Abundant Labs an excellent opportunity to collect data and help identify different ways to grow potentially different hemp genetics and to work with the plant from flower to oil. And for the College, the learning experience for students has been phenomenal. Once the crew had harvested, processed, and delivered the hemp to Abundant Labs, the company opened their state-of-the-art facility in Canton, North Carolina, to Warren Wilson Chemistry students, involving them in product refinement and testing.

"I have been lucky enough to work with Abundant Labs through my involvement in the Warren Wilson Garden hemp crop and my undergraduate research project, which developed laboratory methods for testing cannabinoid concentrations in hemp here on campus," Grace Girardeau '20 said. "I was able to tour the Abundant facilities and perform some hemp extracts using their incredible instruments. I was really blown away by all the fun applications of what I was learning in my Chemistry courses."

The partnership has been profitable, as well. Environmental Studies students have conducted

market-driven research on repurposing waste byproducts from the operation to develop new products that can be used in other industries. This work could lead to lucrative patents. And at the end of the trial, Abundant Labs donated the CBD oil that they produced from the Warren Wilson-grown hemp back to the College. Biology and Environmental Studies students, the Herb Crew, and faculty have initiated studies on CBD-infused value-added products that the College can sell in an emerging market.

The valuable connections that students are making through the field experience with Abundant Labs have been plentiful. One recent graduate, Jenna Joyner '19, went on to start a full-time Lab Technician position with them after graduation. Other students have taken advantage of the opportunity to connect with scientists working in an emerging field for their Natural Science Undergraduate Research Sequence Capstones.

"Abundant Labs Chief Science Officer, Stephen Nerlick, played a great role in helping me to complete my undergraduate research," Girardeau said. "I think relationships like this one, where the College and the business are able to share lots of different resources, are a great way to provide groundbreaking opportunities to the students and the College as a whole."

New connections for Warren Wilson College have come from the partnership as well. On the recommendation of Abundant Labs, seed producers iHEMPx and High Grade Hemp Seed have partnered with Warren Wilson for further variety trials and intercropping studies, which are being performed this summer and fall at the Warren Wilson College Garden.

The College has developed several of these mutually beneficial arrangements with local businesses in recent years. Another partnership has been with the National Wiper Alliance, a manufacturer of cleaning wipes that is Warren Wilson College's next-door neighbor. The partnership started as a collaboration with students in Business classes at the College, and it recently expanded to become interdepartmental.

"We're a small business, and we don't have the resources in-house to do a lot of the testing in some of the things that we work with," National Wiper Alliance President Jeff Slosman said. "So having a university next door that has the lab and some of the resources has been a great asset for us. One of the great things about working with Warren Wilson is

"I think relationships like this one, where the College and the business are able to share lots of different resources, are a great way to provide groundbreaking opportunities to the students and the College as a whole."

— Grace Girardeau '20

Chemistry students Madeline Stine '20 and Adam Gelfand '20 learn about the CBD oil refinement process during a tour of College partner Abundant Labs. Photo by Pete Erb.



College Partners

National Wiper Alliance

National Wiper Alliance in Swannanoa, North Carolina, has been a leader in converting and manufacturing non-woven cleaning wipes for commercial industrial use since 1995. The company's 650,000-square-foot facility neighbors Warren Wilson College's campus in the Swannanoa Valley.

This hyper-local partnership benefits both the manufacturer and the College. Students in the Chemistry Department test the antibacterial effectiveness of wipes manufactured with different antimicrobial treatments. Environmental Studies students and faculty collaborate with National Wiper Alliance to investigate the compostability of synthetic wipe materials. The National Wiper Alliance develops a better product, and Warren Wilson students gain insight into manufacturing processes and have hands-on opportunities to develop applications of their research methods to improve green enterprises.

Riverbend Malt House

"Malt with a Mission." Riverbend Malt House works tirelessly to forge connections between the land and the craft beverage industry, bringing new varieties, flavors, and value to consumers.

Warren Wilson College is working with Riverbend Malt House to perform variety trials for barley types that are well-suited to the environmental conditions of the Swannanoa Valley and that produce the nutritional requirements necessary for successful malting. This partnership has given Sustainable Agriculture students the opportunity to think about the role of regionally appropriate crop varieties that can bring increased value to landowners while remaining resilient to a changing climate.

Abundant Labs

In their state-of-the-art facility in Canton, North Carolina, Abundant Labs creates fully-customized and water-soluble industrial hemp products, including CBD isolates, distillates, and oils.

Warren Wilson College began partnering with Abundant Labs in the summer of 2019, when the Garden Crew performed a late-season, direct-seeding trial for a CBD industrial hemp variety. Once the hemp was harvested, processed, and delivered, Abundant Labs opened their facility to Chemistry students, involving them in product refinement and testing. At the end of the trial, they donated the crude CBD oil, which they produced from the Warren Wilson-grown hemp, back to the College. Biology and Environmental Studies students and faculty have initiated studies on CBD-infused value-added products that the College can sell, and they have also conducted market-driven research on repurposing waste byproducts from the operation for uses in other industries.

Fonta Flora Brewery

Fonta Flora Brewery, an alumni-owned business in Nebo, North Carolina, integrates the soul of agriculture with the artisanship of zymurgy to create a menagerie of rustic and savory libations. With an emphasis on seasonal flora, Fonta Flora brings English tradition and Belgian inspiration to the Appalachian mountains of North Carolina.

The Warren Wilson College Garden grows and processes lemongrass for the brewery's production of "Owl in a Day's Work," a signature Warren Wilson College brew that was developed for President Morton's inauguration and is currently marketed to the public. Fonta Flora serves as an example for students of a successful agricultural-based business that connects directly to their academic and work endeavors.

their beliefs in sustainability in the environment, and a lot of the products that we're trying to develop for the future tie in to these same beliefs."

BLUE OCEAN STRATEGY SUMMIT

This new strategy of creating mutually beneficial partnerships with for-profit businesses that are oriented to the common good was off to a great start, but it was limited in scope. "We were really looking forward to the next step," President Morton said, "which was to create new partnerships with people who might not have thought about partnering with us before." But how could the College attract those new innovators?

"What the Advancement Office has found is that there are a lot of people out there with a lot of big ideas for the institution, but it can be really hard to get meetings with them all and vet those ideas," Garland said. "Bigger and more innovative ideas can come from bringing a lot of people together. We needed to do something that would be more engaging and way more exciting than a typical advisory council would offer. We wanted to create an event that would inspire local business leaders and innovators and also College leaders. We needed to create a venue for creativity, innovation, and exploration of new connections."

The Blue Ocean Strategy Summit took place at Warren Wilson College on February 29th, Leap Day, this year. It attracted more than 100 business leaders and innovators from across the region, along with campus leaders including students, staff, faculty, trustees, and alumni. Joanne Soliday, the author of *Pivot: A Vision for the New University*, was the keynote speaker.

"What problem is Warren Wilson College uniquely positioned to solve?" Soliday asked. "Think higher level into this strategic pivot stage, where you can ask, Why do we do it this way? Should we rethink the whole thing? How can we do it in a better way together? There's nothing these days that any of us would like better than to see communities come close together and solve problems together. It would make all of us happier, and it would make all of us feel better. And you are uniquely positioned to do this in your part of the world."

Soliday gave the crowd a sweeping summary of the challenges facing higher education, but also several examples of ways that other institutions had met those challenges in remarkable ways.

"Things are changing around us so quickly. So we want you to leapfrog into some new space. Reflect an understanding of the urgency for change. Part of my job today is to make you aware enough of how we're all facing change—it's that bit of urgency that gives you



On a tour of Oak and Grist Distilling Company with her Organic Chemistry class, Denia Carlton '22 looks into the still as it separates alcohol from water during an active distillation. Oak and Grist, owned by Warren Wilson alum William Goldberg '08, is one of the College's community partners. Photo by Mary Bates.

creativity,” Soliday said. She then challenged the audience: “Sometimes out of that urgency come ideas that you would never have had before, and we really want you to find those today. Change and pivoting typically require a higher level of risk than we normally would take.”

Soliday explained that good pivots for colleges center around finding the right points on which to change direction, with the success of the institution and its students depending on that change. They must be tied closely to the mission of a college. They must respond to the needs of their community and region. And strong pivots allow a college to “leapfrog” into new space.

President Morton presented Warren Wilson’s strategic plan and encouraged the participants to think of innovative ideas that also would fit into the College’s mission.

“What we have tried to do with our strategic plan is to say both ‘Who are we?’ and also ‘Who will we become?’” Morton said. “The strategic plan is also a vision. Whatever we do, whatever we choose, whatever blue ocean we swim into, we have to ground it in our mission and in our strategic plan.”

Participants formed small discussion groups and responded to various prompts in creative brainstorming sessions meant to spark new ideas about strategies for Warren Wilson College and new partnerships that would benefit both the wider community and the College. College faculty and staff leaders served as facilitators and note

takers. At the end, each small group picked one or two of their best ideas and shared them with the whole room.

The room buzzed with creative energy and excited conversation. By the end of the afternoon, Warren Wilson College had an impressive list of ideas for new partnerships and projects, and participants made hundreds of connections and left feeling inspired.

“It was an honor to attend the Blue Ocean Summit, because it was an opportunity to include students in the important conversations about Warren Wilson’s future,” Girardeau said. “It was a great way to include all members of the Wilson community, especially our friends and partners around the region who share a very similar vision to our own.”

EXPLORING UNCHARTED TERRITORY

It felt bittersweet for many of the participants and for Warren Wilson’s leadership team that the Blue Ocean Strategy Summit was the last large-scale event that any of them attended before most of the world shut down due to the COVID-19 pandemic. But Morton and her team were

“At Warren Wilson College, collaborations and partnerships come naturally to us. For over 50 years, we have had a Community Engagement Program partnering very effectively with nonprofits throughout the region. For 125 years, we have had students working on our campus, and have also offered high-quality academics integrated with that work in a truly applied learning environment.”

— President Lynn M. Morton, Ph.D.



Community leaders brainstorm creative ideas and partnerships together with faculty, staff, and students at the Blue Ocean Strategy Summit in February. *From left:* Trustee Amy Ager '00, President Lynn Morton, Ann Skoglund, Vice President for Applied Learning Cathy Kramer, Brianna Martin '23, Cissie Stevens, Trustee Nate Gazaway '00. Photo by Zanne Garland.

determined to make sure that the ideas generated at the summit did not go to waste.

“We’ve launched working groups to determine next steps as our campus community works to navigate what’s next,” Morton said. “The ideas we generated at the summit are being shared with working groups in Academics, Applied Learning, and Student Life as we programmatically look at the short-term changes we need to make and the long-term opportunities we can begin to foster now.”

The devastating world pandemic has made painfully obvious many inequalities and injustices in a world where institutions and governments have not done enough to share their knowledge and resources with one another.

“The idea behind the partnerships and of developing a Blue Ocean Strategy for Warren Wilson College is to move in the direction of collaboration, of seeing community needs and filling them, of sharing knowledge in ways that are mutually beneficial,” Garland said. She sees the hard work of coming together to support one another as more important than ever, in uncertain times. The Advancement team has continued to follow up with attendees who offered new partnership or project ideas involving their businesses or areas of expertise, and several new partnerships are in early planning stages.

“With the situation that we’re in, we have an opportunity to work with other people in a way that we haven’t before,” Morton said. “With these College working groups thinking big, these ideas may have more traction and conversation earlier on than we would have had otherwise. While we’re heartbroken that this pandemic happened, we are happy to know that these groups of people thinking about the institution’s future have so much input from our community as they move forward into new waters.” ■

To learn more, contribute, or suggest new ideas about partnerships, please visit: warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020



Senior Speaker Rayna Berger '20 addresses her peers during the virtual Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, May 9th via a live YouTube event.

Resilience in the Face of Change

Graduating from college is an incredible milestone under any circumstance. When the COVID-19 pandemic turned the world upside down, Warren Wilson College seniors adjusted to the sudden shift and completed their final semester by way of online learning, video conference Capstone presentations, and a virtual Commencement Ceremony. Below is the Commencement message delivered by Senior Class Speaker Rayna Berger '20.

As the graduating class of 2020, we look into a more precarious future than ever before. Whether you entered this class in the fall of 2016 or joined along the way, this is certainly not how many of us pictured this momentous occasion. However, we are a class of strong, resilient, creative, and adaptable individuals who can find a way and make a way, no matter what obstacles are in our path. I am so proud of all of you, my spectacular friends.

Since we are, as a graduating class, now scattered all over the globe, it is impossible for us to have one last shot at doing so many of the things that will provide us with everlasting memories in the mountains of Western North Carolina. How about one last dip in the Swannanoa, one more fire at Dogwood? How about one more walk along the River Trail, or one more harvesting day on the garden? How about one more cow-move across the road, one more theater performance, or one more soccer game? How about one more classroom debate, or even one more late-night discussion pondering the existence of a just and sustainable human society?

Instead of the joy of actually doing, we now are feeling the grief of the loss of these last few months of our senior year, and that is very real. But at the same time, we know in our hearts and

our minds and our soul that we've built a home and a community at Warren Wilson that will last a lifetime. Usually at this time in our lives, we would be moving ahead, focusing on our future and career pathways. But there is a silver lining that forces all of us now to all slow down, check in on our loved ones, pay attention to our physical and mental health, and begin to reevaluate our priorities in life.

Having to adjust to the world of Zoom for our final Capstones, recitals, performances, presentations, and projects has demonstrated to us just how innovative, resilient, creative, and powerful we have become during our time here at Warren Wilson. Yes, college changes you. But so does the world, and we are finding that out now, even before we venture into our real-world challenges. One thing that we will always remember, and will be our North Star, is that Wilson stretches us by providing the tools, space, and motivation for deep learning and growth through the heralded Triad of academics, work, and community service—which creates who we are: curious and creative individuals ready to tackle complex problems with forethought, care, and hard work. And, boy, are we facing complex problems today.

At this time of radical upheaval, we find ourselves at a window of opportunity. There are multiple policies being pushed through to hit the pause button and temporarily ease the pain, but this is an opportunity to permanently change the rules so that millions of people aren't so vulnerable to begin with. It is time to not only reenvision our society, but it is also time to embody that change. We know how to take classroom knowledge and apply it with hands-on experience. We know how to be a part of a community where everyone pitches in. We know how to turn mistakes into lessons learned. We know how to challenge the status quo. We know how to think deeply. This is why I believe that we are some of the most prepared young creators and doers to lead this change. The world needs us. Our communities need us. Our environment needs us to change.

There is a lot of work to be done, but there is no better time than now and no better cohort than us to rewrite the rules and change the narrative. Congratulations to the Class of 2020! I can't wait to celebrate with you all on the other side of this. ■



Each of the 136 seniors received a package in the mail prior to graduation that included a cap and tassel, honor cords and stoles earned, a letter from President Morton, and a packet of seeds. Pictured, Chandler Scott-Smith '20 and Andrew Huffman '20.

We honor the Class of 2020

**Miles Ryan Adair
 Carly Rose Andrews
 Aleister Roan Avenmarch
 Matthew Patrick Baranco
 Kelly L. Bartoldus
 David Nsame Bellangue
 **Rayna N. Berger
 Jon Charles Speer Bierce-Wilson
 **Orlie Sunshine Blalock
 Elaina Caraway Blount
 John Cameron Bolin
 Aster Julian Brunsting Frazer
 Rose Helen Callagy
 Sarah Claire Carraux
 Lea Kay Nadri Churchill
 Angeneris Elizabeth Cifuentes
 *Elsa A. Cline
 Lauren Rebecca Colbert
 **Lucy Rose Collins
 *Robert David Crumley
 Joshua S. Darby
 William Jacob Dempf
 **Joseph Michael DeVito
 Willow Sophia Dillon-Keasler
 *Elijah Nicolae Dumitrescu
 Annie Margit Duncan
 Francesca J. Farris
 **Camille Roseann Ference
 **Eva Elyse Fischer-Rech
 Denise Tamira Folz
 Charles Evan Gammons
 Liam Jacob Gardiner
 Adam M. Gelfand
 *Atewerines Mackenzie George
 Stephen A. Gifford-Bell
 Lessie G. Gilliam
 Grace M. Girardeau
 Amber Wilamena Sophia Godfrey
 *Ellie Piper Goldstein
 *Gray Goliszek
 *Nate Gross
 Rachel Katherine Gunsch
 Zander X. Hall
 *Kristen Meredith Hernandez
 **Kathryn Ann Hoerman
 Maggie Elizabeth Hollar
 Holly Leigh Honeywell
 Linden Andrew Huffman
 *Jenna Ashley Joyner
 Sydney Mae Keating
 Kendall Louise Keohane
 *James Nicholas Kitchens
 Jack Konyk
 Simon Vincent Kroth
 Sarah Morgan Landis
 Bennett H. Lapides
 Emily Sophia Lehman-Rios
 JaQuann Edward Lockhart
 Abigail Faith Marstiller
 Jacob Casey Maxfield
 Mackenzie Anne McClay
 Morgan Ellery McConnell
 Ka-Jah-Da Suyama Mckoy
 Ellianna Sedona McLaughlin
 **Willow Elizabeth McLeod
 *Ziyang Meng
 Nico Petry Mokhiber
 Cayce Emmons Morrison
 Lydia Arden Morrow
 Lyla Claire Moseley
 Mariah J. Murdock
 Sadie Fusayo Musick

Darrin Winston '20
 was honored as
 the 78th Alton F.
 Pfaff Cup recipient.

Amelia Maria Napper
 Tayler LeAnn Neese
 **Cecilia Maya Neill
 Allyson Marie Dharma Nestler
 Chloe Fern Norris
 Kelly Eileen O'Hara
 Reid L. Overton
 **Milah Victoria Paholak
 Catherine Faith Paulson
 Kayla E. Pekny
 Alexandria P. Pena
 **Daniel James Peraza-Rudesill
 Maisie Morse Perkins
 Sidney Rose Perkinson
 Tristan William Perryman
 Markkus Aleksandr Pfirmann Schlosser
 Dylan Forester Pope
 Lia Janel Purdy
 *Jiahao Mingxi Qie
 Abigail Ives Raeside
 John Laszlo Reed
 Phoebe Morgan Reichel
 *Aspen Eleanor Reynolds
 Sophie Reese Schnitzlein
 Carl Peter Schwartz
 Neil Pendelton Schwarz
 Chandler Hennessy Scott-Smith
 Jacob K. Shields
 *Zosha Luz Silverstein-Belden
 Sonia Norine Sipe
 Tucker James Spady
 Madeline Kerala Stine
 *Isabel K. Symancyk
 **Luke Alexander Tiner
 Mara Anne Trowbridge
 Heaven L. Valentine
 **Ashley Vargas
 Adam Gabriel Wagman
 *Ryan Alexander Wallace
 Corrina Rose Wenger
 **Esme Florence Wessel
 Reed Patrick Whisler
 **Joseph Clarke Williams
 Margaret Susanna Wilson
 Kebony Celeste Winebarger
 Darrin Juwon Winston
 Sienna Elizabeth Wire
 Matthew R. Wodicka
 Mary Pritchard Yeager
 Ruby Z. Yearwood
 Jordan Laughter Zachary
 Qingshu Zhao
 Avalon J. Zimlinghaus

*Graduated December 16, 2019
 **Expected to Graduate December 2020



Kopano "KP" Mmalane '09

Faithfully Leading the Way

How Alumni Served During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Kopano "KP" Mmalane '09

The pandemic hit just before Mmalane was scheduled to begin her residency in South Africa to become a cardiothoracic surgeon. Her original plans put on hold, Mmalane volunteered for temporary employment treating ICU patients at Sir Ketumile Masire Teaching Hospital, the largest hospital and primary COVID-19 treatment center in her home country of Botswana. Mmalane said, "Warren Wilson College students need to make a difference in this world, to do things of importance to give back to our communities and be a catalyst for change in our worlds. That is exactly what made me volunteer my time to help in this pandemic, the need to make change and assist where I can, not for reward, but because I owe it to the humans around me as a part of this community. I cannot put into words the positivity and change Warren Wilson has taught me, but through my actions I hope I can always honor my *alma mater*."



Ryan McLaughlin '08

McLaughlin is an Emergency Medicine Physician at Virginia Commonwealth University Health in Richmond, Virginia. He has found his time working in an ER during the pandemic difficult, but extremely rewarding. "Warren Wilson College instills in us a sense of duty to work for the greater good, regardless of the challenges," McLaughlin said. "The College also teaches us to recognize and value the contribution of every community member, no matter what their role may be. Teamwork and empathy are getting us through these times."

Will Goldberg '09

Goldberg is the owner of Oak and Grist Distilling Company in Black Mountain, North Carolina. Responding to local needs, he repurposed the company's operations to make 600 gallons of hand sanitizer per week out of beer donated by New Belgium Brewing Company and grain donated from College partner Riverbend Malt House. Oak and Grist donated the hand sanitizer to individuals and organizations across the state, including health care providers, production facilities, and Warren Wilson College.

Bob Vinson '64

Alongside a group of quilters from his church in Newark, California, Vinson regularly makes quilts for people who are sick or affected by other disasters, like California wildfires. When COVID-19 struck, Vinson put his sewing skills to use making dozens of cloth face masks to benefit those in his community.

Julie Stewart '93

Stewart redirected her 26-year-old manufacturing company to design and manufacture masks during the COVID-19 outbreak. Inspired by the extra care people needed during this long period of isolation and anxiety, she simultaneously launched JaneCare, Inc. JaneCare allows people to send care packages to others during times of unexpected change. JaneCare fills the gifts with 80 percent or more of products curated from women-owned businesses and donates to charities. Learn more at www.janecareinc.com.

Madeline Wadley '12

Wadley began her relationship with Homeward Bound of Western North Carolina in 2008 as a Warren Wilson Bonner Scholar and worked for them on-and-off in various roles over the past 12 years. When the health crisis began, she knew Homeward Bound would experience increased and emergent needs. She returned to Homeward Bound as a volunteer, serving at AHOPE Day Center and at the emergency shelter at Harrah's Cherokee Center in Asheville, while still pursuing her graduate degree. In late April, she became Homeward Bound's Volunteer Engagement Coordinator. Wadley said, "I am living the Warren Wilson College Triad during this pandemic: earning an M.Ed. in Community Engagement, serving people in Asheville experiencing homelessness, and working to connect volunteers with meaningful service opportunities!" Those in the Asheville area can get involved by emailing volunteer@homewardboundwnc.org.

Maddie Harris '18

Harris was stationed as an AmeriCorps VISTA at Warren Wilson, running six after-school programs and staffing the Center for Community Engagement, when the COVID-19 pandemic began. Shifting to remote work necessitated that she find new opportunities to serve the Asheville community. "I reached out to so many people when everything happened to find out who needed help and where I could plug in and support. I was willing to shift gears too, which helped, because you really have to be flexible and know that every day can be different," Harris said. She began volunteering with the United Way, reaching out to partner organizations to ensure that their volunteer and donation needs were listed and active in the Hands On Asheville-Buncombe volunteer database.



Maddie Harris '18

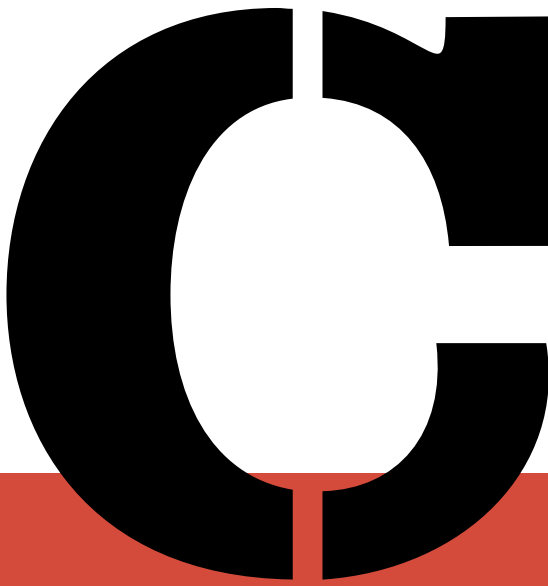


*View of the
capitol building
in Havana,
Cuba.*

Uncharted Territory:

Crossing the Cultural Chasm to Cuba

Story and photos by Melissa Ray Davis '02



Cuba is one of the United States' closest neighbors, a mere 90 miles south of Florida's coast, yet very few U.S. citizens travel there. The relationship between our two nations is both fraught and complicated. The two countries have a staggering gap in ideologies—a capitalist democratic republic versus a socialist one-party-ruled republic. Between the differences in worldview and the decades-long political animosity, the cultural gap between the two countries is vast.

Despite—or perhaps because of—those challenges, dozens of Warren Wilson College students have now reached across that international divide through the College's Cuba Study Abroad course. These students have returned to the United States with a changed perspective—not just of Cuba, but of themselves.

"A lot of what I had learned about Cuba before visiting came from TV shows or from 'word on the street' in New Jersey, which is slang for 'what the mafia says' about Cuba. I grew up hearing about the Bay of Pigs, JFK, and Cuba from that perspective. It's spoken about with very little empathy. Now that I've been to Cuba, all of that doesn't even feel real anymore. I can see Cuba clearly now. It was something I couldn't see before, because the U.S. has a way of putting a shadow over Cuba." — Student participant

Warren Wilson College's Social Work course to Cuba, which won a national award in 2018 for the most innovative new Study Abroad program in the international education field from NAESA: the Association of International Educators, incorporates different interdepartmental topics each time. Most recently called *Isolation and Innovation: Self Sufficiency and Self Expression in Cuba*, the course focused on self expression and speculative fiction in Cuba in addition to its usual social welfare themes.

The course met weekly on the Warren Wilson campus throughout the Fall 2019 Semester with a two-week cultural immersion in Cuba in January 2020. Social Work Program Director Dr. Lucy Lawrence—the course's creator—and myself—Writer for Enrollment and Marketing Melissa Ray Davis '02—led the course.

"It's Complicated"

"There's a really large problem in American academia where Cuba or Vietnam are talked about as a piece of history and not usually as, 'What's it like today?' Cuba is not mentioned past the 1960s much in academia, unless you go looking for it specifically. And it's really not just Cuba—we do that to a lot of other countries, too." — Bennett Lapides '20

"It's complicated," became a mantra in each of our weekly on-campus class sessions before we left the United States. We instructors stressed to the students that we were not experts but were, like them, explorers. We adopted a group philosophy of curiosity.

We encouraged them not to come to conclusions, but instead to find new questions, to consider ideas from multiple perspectives, and to recognize that there are as many truths in an intercultural exchange as there are people. Individual people are complicated, and entire countries are even more so. Uncertainty can be a good thing.

We read various Cuban perspectives, ranging from speculative fiction novels to bloggers to academic texts. We studied topics such as Cuba's extensive social welfare systems, Latin America's popular education movement, intercultural communication principles, Cuban literacy initiatives, and recent political and cultural changes on the island. We discussed difficult and complicated issues as they related to both Cuba and the United States, such as censorship and self expression, the different forms and mechanisms of oppression and liberation, how poverty can be addressed or ignored in a myriad of different ways, or how inequality and inequity can take different forms and have different contexts.

We asked our students to think critically about their own ingrained and implicit biases and cultural perspectives. Each student chose a topic about Cuba to research through academic texts before we left and then to explore once we arrived in Cuba. They critically examined U.S. social issues from their own cultural perspectives and wrote speculative fiction short stories about those issues, much like the Cuban stories that we had read.

Jordana Swartz
'21 bonds with
her host "sister"
Briana by playing
songs on her
ukulele.



But in the end, we knew that no amount of reading, discussion, or research would give them enough understanding of Cuba. *"It's complicated."* For that, they would have to experience it.

"Seeing socialism enacted in Cuba was both inspiring and complicated. The thing is, it's very contradictory, in a lot of ways. Because they say, 'Yeah, we have enough for everyone, and everyone is provided for. Not everyone gets exactly the same things, but everyone gets enough to survive.' But then there are always shortages. And there is inequality, but it's on a completely different scale, in a different context, than it would be normally perceptible to most Americans who grew up with the scale of inequality that we have in our country. So inequality still exists there, but it's different, and it's not comparable to America."
— Adam Gelfand '20

Pogolotti, Where Doors Are Always Open

"I loved my host family. The entire extended family lived in three buildings, with a courtyard in the middle. I was talking to my host mom, and she was saying, 'Yeah, one of my daughters doesn't live here, and it's really hard not to live with her.' But it turned out that she lives two blocks away. Family is so important and is such an integral part of their culture that having her daughter two blocks away was just too far." — Michelle Padrón '21

Our Cuban host families lived in the Havana neighborhood of Pogolotti, in the district of Marianao. Folks played music and danced in the courtyard, while children played games in the yard. Cars almost never ventured down the bumpy dirt roads, but horse carts did, cheerful bells ringing. The bread man pushed his handcart down the street every morning and evening, blowing his whistle and yelling, *"¡Hay pan! ¡Hay pan!"* And sometimes, we'd glimpse the bone man walking down the street, a pack of street dogs following him, as he slowly doled out their dinners from his bag of animal parts.

We witnessed how our host families integrated their extended family, friends, and neighbors seamlessly and constantly throughout their days in their activities and in their homes. Every day we saw new faces at the dinner table, or yelling at the game on TV,



Warren Wilson
College students
take a historical
tour of Havana
Vieja with Ernesto
Dominguez, their
Cuban guide and
professor.

or chatting on the porch, or simply waving cheerily as they walked from the front yard through our host family's living room to get to the shared courtyard out back.

The students compared this to how structured and separated many of their own social groups were back in the states, with family activities fitting neatly into one box and planned friend gatherings in another, with the two rarely crossing. Many of the students had never even met their childhood neighbors, let alone had them in their houses daily.

Cuba from the Cuban Perspective

"In the U.S., we do not do things in a community-oriented way, but we're not just acting on impulse. We are strategically placing ourselves to gain capital and to gain advantage, because that's how we are culturally programmed. You have to be intentional to go against your society. My friends say Americans don't have culture. But we do have culture. What do we learn as a whole from our schools, from our media, from our leaders? That is culture."

— Willow McLeod '20

For the study abroad portion of the course in Cuba, we partnered with the Autonomous University of Social Movements (AUSM). They wanted to give us as authentic a Cuban experience as possible. This cultural immersion started with our host families, but it was enriched with a packed schedule of classes and field trips to cultural and social centers.

Every morning, we walked several blocks through Marianao to the Martin Luther King Community Center, where we took Spanish language classes and listened to lectures on topics ranging from "U.S. and Cuba Political Relations" to "Afro-Cuban Religions." Whenever our students referred to Cuba as "communist," as is commonly used in the United States, the teachers gently corrected them. "No, Cuba is socialist," they insisted firmly.

In the afternoons, our AUSM guides took us all over Havana. We visited the Malecón, Revolution Square, the Museum of Fine Arts, Old Havana, a medical clinic, several art and community centers, the Museum of the Revolution, an organic farm, a women's cooperative for domestic violence survivors, and more. We saw the variety of ways in which

Cubans supported one another, learned, met their needs, and made art.

Often, the classes unexpectedly turned a mirror on our group's cultural biases. Our cultural tendencies for individualism and personal choice in the U.S. frequently butted up against Cuban ideals of socialism and communal-mindedness.

For example, when our students asked a doctor if any Cubans ever protested vaccines, she looked confused and said no, "It would be selfish to refuse something that protects everyone from disease." When the same doctor explained how Cuban women have full paid leave from the start of their pregnancies until their babies start walking, at which point universal child care is provided, a student asked, "But do women ever return to work sooner?" She said no, "They breastfeed, of course." One of us clarified, "Well, what if she pumps her milk?" The doctor asked, "Why would she want to do that?" We explained that maybe she would *want* to work. The doctor shook her head disapprovingly. "No, a mother wouldn't do that. That bonding year is too important for the baby's development." The students were taken aback.

When one of our students called the class "*americanos*," the Spanish language instructor smiled, shook her head, and said that she's an "American" too—everyone in the Americas is American. In Spanish, she told us, we should call ourselves "*estadounidenses*"—a word that translates, "people from the United States."

Striving for an Evasive Utopia

"Cuba matters to me now, and I knew nothing about it before. I genuinely didn't know what Fidel Castro looked like before I got here. I had no clue what to expect, and now I'm going to pay attention when I hear news about Cuba. I'm going to think about it as a place with real people, instead of, 'Oh, yeah, Cuba. You'll see the old cars.'" — Willow McLeod '20

Lucy Lawrence and I stayed with a host family in Pogolotti just as our students did. One evening, late, our host "mother" Daisy Rojas came quietly up the stairs and laid a photo down on the table, beaming with pride. In the picture, a much younger Daisy stood next to Fidel Castro, looking at him with adoration. She told us, in rapid, breathless Spanish, about the two different moments in her life when she had met Fidel, which were clearly cherished memories.

Our students reflected that the people we met in Cuba had nothing but positive, proud, and kind things to say about Castro, their longtime leader. They revered this man for banishing corruption and restoring equity to their government, while so many in the United States describe him as corrupt, an enemy, a dictator.

We found contradictions in post-revolutionary Cuba that were sometimes very difficult to process as U.S. citizens, with our ideals of individual liberties and personal choice. Cuba has accomplished impressive benchmarks of progressive socialism, but many ask, "At what cost?"

Cuba was the first country to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of HIV, for instance. But early on, the Cuban government used their goal of containing the disease to justify involuntarily imprisoning LGBTQIA+ Cubans in internment centers—a tactic widely condemned as inhumane. Cuba has one of the highest literacy rates in the world, but also some of the strictest censorship. So, while more Cubans can read at a high school level per capita than in the U.S., what they are *allowed* to read is severely restricted. Castro once claimed to have eliminated racism, but Cubans told us that while he made great strides in reducing systemic racism, racial bias is still very much alive in Cuban culture today.

Cuba's most popular science fiction author, Yoss, agreed to have dinner with us one night in Havana. Our class had read his dystopian novel, *A Planet for Rent*, while we were still in the United States. The book is banned in Cuba, and the students were excited for the opportunity to talk to him about it. He described how, in his several publication attempts, every time the answer from the censors was, "No. Maybe in a few years." So he published internationally, instead. Yoss wrote it during Cuba's "Special Period" in the 1990s, directly following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, when their economic support of Cuba abruptly ended and caused a severe economic crisis and period of great scarcity and famine. He used the novel as an allegory to talk about conditions in Cuba during that difficult time.

Yoss explained that the Cuban Revolution was an attempt to create a utopia, but it hadn't quite succeeded. We asked if he thought utopia was possible. He said, no, he didn't think so, but that certainly doesn't mean we shouldn't *try*.



Warren Wilson College students perform with Cuban students at the Korimakao Cultural Project, a government-funded artist collective for musicians, actors, artists, and dancers.

Poverty and Innovation

“One night when we were going home, we got into two taxis because there was a big group of us. The taxi that I was in broke down, so a 10-minute car ride turned into a 45-minute car ride. But at one point, we looked under the hood of the car while he was working on it, and there was cloth in there, zip ties, a plastic bottle, and other everyday items. It was just incredible, the materials that they were repurposing to get their cars going. It was a kind of creativity that I had never seen before.”

— Michelle Padrón '21

Some say the United States has so many innovators because of free-market capitalism's competition. But necessity breeds innovation too, and perhaps with more urgency. We were continually impressed with the incredibly creative workarounds to broken or missing materials that we saw Cubans using every day—on appliances and cars, plumbing and electrical wiring, food and toilets. The longstanding and ongoing U.S. blockade created scarcity, and that scarcity mixed with necessity bred innovation.

Not to say that poverty in the United States doesn't breed similar creative fixes. But in the U.S., if you are poor and your immediate family or maybe a close friend can't figure out a way to fix something that is broken, and you can't afford to pay someone else to fix it, generally, you might be out of luck. Our safety nets do not

catch everyone. Too many people fall through the perilous gaps.

Continuously, in Cuba, we saw again and again complete strangers trying to help each other in these ways. If family or a friend couldn't fix it, a neighbor or even a complete stranger might. There was a general ethic of making sure the needs of others were met, in everything from a broken handle to literacy to healthcare, welfare, childcare, and education.

During the trip, one of our students had a bad reaction to a supplement, and her host family had to take her to the hospital in the middle of the night. She remarked afterwards that it was the most relaxed and stress-free visit to a hospital that she could imagine. The doctors and nurses never asked her to sign anything or pay. They took excellent care of her, glanced briefly at her educational visa, and sent her on her way.

“I think a lot of what comes from our perception of Cuban socialism—the poverty that is related to it and the lack of resources—comes more from the U.S. embargo than as a result of socialism itself. The U.S. has severely limited Cuba's access to international trade, which the U.S. justifies as a reaction to the Revolution and to Cuba remaining socialist. So those two things are connected, but not as poverty being the result of socialism itself.”

— Lucy Collins '20



Photo of Fidel Castro and Daisy Rojas, the course professors' host "mother."

The Warren Wilson College Cuba course visits the Museum of Playa Girón (the Bay of Pigs).



Who Wants to Be an “Imperialist”?

“This trip has changed me in so many ways that I don’t even know how to express. I feel like this is the first time that I’ve understood what community can really mean. I think the Cuban idea of community can’t really thrive under capitalism. I’m going to be so much more attentive to different languages, now, more mindful to making sure there’s room for everyone and that they have what they need. I’m going to think about being in Cuba every time I spend money, every time I talk to someone. I can’t imagine something in my life that won’t change. This was a really big diversion from what I usually study, and something really entirely divergent from anything I’ve ever done. I spend a lot of time in a lab, so this is a really different way of learning for me.” — A. Rae Strand '22

In 1961, the United States covertly trained, paid, armed, and orchestrated a group of Cuban exiles to attempt a hostile takeover of

Castro’s Revolution. Their forces landed in Playa Girón. In the U.S., this conflict is known as the Bay of Pigs Invasion. In Cuba, they call it the Victory of Playa Girón.

Near the end of the trip, we traveled to Playa Girón. At the Museum of Girón, we saw the memorials and poetry to fallen Cubans, the photos of Castro fighting alongside soldiers on the front lines, the bloodied uniforms and civilian clothing, the hall of heroes, and the displays of airplanes, artillery, and equipment that the invading mercenaries used, with their “U.S. Property” labels displayed prominently. We watched the historical Cuban news reels depicting the battle.

Our discomfort grew each time the announcer on the news reel said “the Imperialists” when referring to U.S. citizens or our government. “Imperialists” sounded ugly against the tuning of our past cultural programming, but we were starting to see ourselves from the Cuban perspective, to see the truths they saw behind the “Imperialist”

label—the weight of decades of United States domination-based foreign policy backing up that label. We thought about how many times Cubans patiently corrected us to say “socialist” when “communist” accidentally slipped out, and we started to understand.

Security Is in the Eye of the Beholder

“Something that surprised me was how safe I immediately felt, going there. Not that I was going in with the mindset of, ‘Oh, I’m going to Latin America. It’s going to be dangerous.’ But more that I didn’t expect to feel any safer than I do here, in Swannanoa. But I did.”

— Adam Gelfand '20

From the moment we deboarded the plane that first day in Havana, we were amazed at how relaxed we all felt. The immigration officials were casual, patient, and welcoming. We were outside the airport within 10 minutes, hugging and greeting our new AUSM guides. Throughout the trip, we continuously marvelled at how relaxed and safe we felt, which seemed unlikely when everything was unfamiliar. Shouldn’t we feel confused and a little stressed? Shouldn’t we be experiencing culture shock? But we did not feel those expected anxieties.

Once we returned to U.S. soil, soldiers in full-body armor with assault rifles clutched across their chests met us on the disembarking ramp. More armed soldiers were stationed at regular intervals as we slowly made our way through the crowded, long line through immigrations and border control. Eventually, we each answered a string of complicated questions at computer kiosks, and then we waited in another long line to interview with homeland security officers, who each stood inside a cubicle of bulletproof glass with another two fully armored soldiers standing by and security cameras recording our every move. The officers looked at us with skepticism as we answered their rapid questions in what felt like an interrogation. I, a White woman and a born U.S. citizen, was nervous and trembling by the end of it; I can barely imagine the extremity of stress I would have felt were I not White or documented.

Most of the Cubans we met defined “security” as having sufficient food to live a healthy life, with access to universal healthcare, welfare, childcare, housing, and education. In the U.S., our definition of security trends

instead toward defense. Defense of laws, of borders, of property. Issues such as food security, however, are not a consistent priority.

We all realized in that hour spent trying to get through customs and immigration back into our home country that perhaps the reverse culture shock was going to be far more difficult, after this trip. Our anxieties and stressors ramped back up to their normal, high levels. Subconsciously, we knew that the safety net no longer existed. Suddenly on the tightrope walk of life, the risks were very high again.

With the Revolution, Cubans made certain sacrifices in their personal freedoms. They are not assured certain rights that U.S. citizens have, like the right to privacy or the right to freedom of speech and the press. They cannot always say what they want to say, or do what they want to do. But their social safety nets are vast and strong. While U.S. citizens enjoy a great deal of personal freedom and choice in comparison, many frequently feel as if they are one step away from disaster.

By our return, we were left wondering what middle ground could be explored. Could Cubans have more personal rights without sacrificing those social safety nets? Could U.S. citizens have more safety nets without sacrificing their freedoms? Perhaps that uncharted territory would be an impossible utopia. But could we not at least *try* to achieve it? ■

To view the full photo gallery from this Cuba trip, or to support innovative courses and cultural exchanges like this one, please visit:
warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020

*Sunset over
Havana, Cuba.*



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 programs. Students graduate curious, confident, and capable because of their academic endeavors integrated with complementary hands-on work and community engagement 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. If you are interested in establishing a scholarship, please contact Renée Danger-James:

rdangerjames@warren-wilson.edu.

The following scholarship and endowed funds were initiated or fully funded between July 2019 and June 2020.



Earth Steward Scholarship

Prince Rahim and Princess Salwa Aga Khan created and funded the first ever full tuition, room, and board scholarship for a student at Warren Wilson College. The purpose of the scholarship is to support students pursuing—or planning to pursue—a degree in Environmental Studies or Conservation Biology. The Aga Khan family visited the College in 2019 to connect with the Land Innovation work on campus and to determine opportunities for future partnerships.

Ki Sub '56 & Myung Cho (Ha) '58 Joung Scholarship

2011 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient Dr. Ki Sub Joung '56 and Myung Cho Ha Joung '58 began their studies in the U.S. at Warren Wilson Junior College. Myung went on to earn her M.S. in Pharmacy and Ki an MBA and his Ph.D. in Engineering Mechanics. Their children, J. Keith Joung, Minnie P. Joung, and Meerie M. Joung, have established this scholarship in honor of their parents to support students in their senior year who are studying the biological, chemical, or natural sciences.



Viola Rust Pryde Memorial Bell Tower Maintenance Fund

Viola Rust Pryde was a member of the faculty at the Farm School from 1934-1935 with her husband David Pryde, Campus Engineer. Their son Philip, with his step-siblings Wallace and Lynn Rust, established the fund to provide ongoing maintenance and landscaping to the Bell Tower. Dr. Henry Jensen oversaw the original construction of the tower, built in 1939, and it is dedicated in memory of Viola Rust Pryde and her service to the Farm School.



ALUMNI NEWS

1950s

Bill Young '54 received the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award in 2019. His biography was included in the 77th edition of *Who's Who in America*. His biography has also been included in *Who's Who in Religion*, *Who's Who in Education*, and *Who's Who in the South and Southwest*.

Irene (Case) Baker '55 graduated from both Warren Wilson High School and Junior College. She married **Dr. George Baker '54** in the WWC Chapel on September 11th, 1955. Together they invested the next 20 years in the Marine Corps, and she taught wherever they were stationed. After raising three children and seven grandchildren, they retired in Greenville, South Carolina, in the first tier of their beloved Blue Ridge Mountains.

Joyce (Lunsford) Osterman '57 would like to get in contact with alumni from 1955 and 1956. Her email address is josterman37@gmail.com.

1960s

Randi Tuxen Ringkjoe '60 enjoyed her time at Warren Wilson and considers her suitemate from Cuba, **Olga Gonzales '60**, a lifelong friend. She has been to Cuba twice to visit Olga. Randi turned 80 in July and celebrated with her husband and four children. She has six grandchildren. Randi has lost contact with **Maggie (Graham) Fazioli '60** and **Lindle Sikes '60** and hopes others can help.

Jack Allison '63 published a memoir, *The Warm Heart of Africa: An Outrageous Adventure of Love, Music and Mishaps in Malawi*, about his experiences as a Peace Corps Volunteer. All proceeds from book sales will be donated to various charitable organizations, including MANNA FoodBank in Asheville.

Jim Dedman '65 edited the new courtroom practice *Trial Advocacy Manual* for the National District Attorneys Association. Now retired, Jim taught courtroom trial skills for government attorneys for 28 years at the University of Houston and the University of South Carolina National Advocacy Center.

Mary (Cribbs) Heck '65 lost her husband of 26 years, James (Jim), who passed away on April 1, 2020. He fell from a step ladder, was unable to get the treatment he needed because of the pandemic, and died about a week later.

Nancy (Coleman) Mace '66 is hunkered down waiting for the pandemic to pass with her husband of almost 51 years, Tom, in their new home in Durango, Colorado. They spend most days with 15-month-old grandlove, Olive, who lives close by. In normal times, Nancy sings in the Durango Chorale, is a music facilitator for folks with dementia, plays pickleball, and enjoys biking and reading. She loves the mountains but misses the nearness of the ocean in Maryland.

Jim Oiler '66 retired from teaching Anatomy & Microbiology after 20 years. He is thankful for former WWC professor Larry Adamson for influencing his teaching career over the past 50 years. He also credits his work ethic to Sam Millar, who taught him there was no such word as "can't."

Carol (Glass) Glenn '69 is a Buncombe County Schools retiree and resides in Asheville. She would love to hear from former classmates. She can be reached by email at sixtiescandygirl@yahoo.com or by phone at 828-748-8173.

Joyce '69 and Ed Hawkins '69 celebrated their 51st wedding anniversary this year. They are both retired and reside on a farm in McDowell County, raising cattle and dust. They have three children, four grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and another due in early fall. They extend a big hello to all their buddies from WWC.

Betty Reitz '69 loved celebrating her 50th reunion at Homecoming last fall. Her classmates enjoyed recognizing one another and were kind. The College provided opportunities to share memories and meals. She encourages classmates to visit campus, and recommends reading the College's history written for the 80th anniversary to appreciate the work done by past and present staff and supporters.

Anne (Wolfe) Steinhart '69 moved to Fort Lauderdale in 1971 and then met her husband Craig while teaching. They married in 1972. Their son lives in Plantation, Florida, and their daughter lives in Cincinnati, Ohio. Anne quit teaching to help with the family business, but she now has free time to visit grandchildren and family members.

1970s

Emily (Tuthill) Best '70 now has two more grandchildren, making a total of three so far. Her two oldest children are both law partners; one in Toronto, Ontario, and the other in Belleville, Ontario. Emily has a home in Belleville and in Delaware.



Betty Ma '70 is part of an anti-human trafficking team whose members received awards from the District Attorney in Oakland, California, last summer.

Deb (Watson) McCallum '70 and her husband John are selling their Morehead City, North Carolina, home of 35 years and will make their mountain cabin outside Glendale Springs, North Carolina, their permanent home. They can be contacted by mail at PO Box 39, Glendale Springs, NC 28629; email: debmccallum1122@gmail.com; cell: 252-241-2544. Visitors welcome!

Glenn Ferrell '71 is in his 10th year as pastor at the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church of San Francisco, California. He is considering retirement near the end of this year and a move to Central Kentucky to be nearer to his children and grandchildren. We'll see.

George Kubanda '72 retired from his ITS Senior System Analyst position with Harris Health Systems in June 2019. He is currently catching up on numerous home projects that were put off until retirement, looking forward to doing some travel, and becoming a first-time grandpa on Thanksgiving.

Dr. David Briscoe '74 received the 2020 University-wide Faculty Excellence Award in Public Service at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

Bo Walker '74, LCSW, DCSW, was inducted into the NASW Social Work Pioneers program, which honors members of the social work profession who have contributed to the evolution and enrichment of the profession. The Pioneer Program identifies and recognizes individuals whose unique dedication, commitment, and determination have improved social and human conditions.

Steve Pendleton '75 has been at SUNY Buffalo State since 1979 and is currently the Chair of the Political Science Department. In 2018, he received the SUNY Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Faculty Service. In 2016, he also received the highest statewide award for the SUNY faculty and staff union, which is the largest higher ed union in the nation.

Catherine Neill '76 is currently the Executive Director of Dorje Denma Ling, a Shambhala Meditation Retreat Centre located in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia. Her daughter, **Cecilia Neill '20**, recently graduated.

Sharon (Nichols) Randolph '77 completed her 14th year as Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice for South College. She moved to Northeast Indiana in 2019 to be closer to her granddaughter and teaches online.



Richard Blackburn '78 and his wife Peggy share the following celebrations: Peggy retired from

CaroMont Health after 45 years. Their son Ben is an ER RN at Duke and a frontline hero treating COVID-19 patients. Their older son Marshall and wife Lauren have two great boys, Patterson and Hays.

Elaine Ferguson '78 is happily retired after 25 years of attempting to teach Earth Science to 14- and 15-year-old students. She is even happier not to be attempting to teach during a pandemic! In her 20th year of owning a house in SwannaNoWhere, three miles from WWC, Elaine says there is "no better place to be."

Maj-Britt Johnson '78 retired from Unitarian Universalist ministry in 2017 after 25 years in parish ministry. Living with her husband on the "Crystal Coast" of North Carolina, she's now a real estate agent with Keller Williams. In this unprecedented time, she hopes that old friends will call and reminisce about the good old days. 252-725-7480.

Sherry Lee '78 retired early in December 2019 and moved to Ashburn, Georgia, to care for her 93-year-old aunt. She is enjoying getting back to her roots and looking forward to starting a community Diabetes Support Group when social distancing is no longer necessary.

Kevin Moorhead '78 retired after 28 years of teaching at UNC Asheville. Kevin taught a variety of courses for the Department of Environmental Studies, including Soils, Wetland Ecology, and Agriculture. He focused most of his research on nutrient and metal cycling in ecosystems and restoring ecosystems.

Martin Jones '79 retired after more than 30 years as a mathematics professor at the College of Charleston. He and his girlfriend plan to move to New Mexico and rent an Earthship home for a couple of months and travel around the Southwest.

Leila Percy '79 reports that life in Maine is quiet this year. Her husband, Jeff, retired from his career as a tugboat captain. They continue as caregivers for her mom, who turned 90. Sadly, her father passed away last October. Leila says, "Sending love to all my classmates. Stay safe and happy."

Joan Solomon '79 just celebrated 20 years of teaching at Randall Middle School, which she helped to open as a reading teacher. This marks 40 years of her teaching in Hillsborough County, Florida. She plans to retire in June 2021.

1980s

Beth (Leedham) Bero '80 was awarded the American Institute for Aeronautics and Astronautics Educator Achievement Award for her work since 1980 with students in science and astronomy. The award is given to three teachers annually. She has served as the Gifted Specialist of Horizon Elementary School in Madison, Alabama since 2003.

Paddy Cunningham '80 coordinates the Everglades Birding Festival, which had its best year ever in 2020 and sold out. It attracted

birders from 40 states and six countries, and 150 species of birds were found. Paddy had a 20-year career as a naturalist and completed her 16th year as a Gifted Science Teacher in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Suzanne (Timm) Armstrong '81 attended last year's Homecoming and left with new friends, feeling very proud of WWC. She loved the Thousand Stars dinner's food and speakers. Suzanne is hard at work building several tiny houses on land she recently purchased in Burnsville, North Carolina. She is glad to be back in North Carolina and close to the College.

J. Kim Wright '81 has been a global digital nomad for 12 years. In 2020, she had gigs scheduled on six continents, but COVID-19 had other plans. She's now spending time with family, working on a new book, *Lawyers as Designers*, and working with colleagues in Italy, Spain, and Brazil on translating her first two books.

Julia (Nunnally) Duncan '82, MFA '84 continues



to write and publish, but she is most proud to announce that her daughter, **Annie Margit Duncan '20**, recently graduated from Warren Wilson College with a B.A. in Psychology.

Dorothy Easley '83 is a board-certified appellate lawyer and has been working on U.S. and State Supreme Court Petitions and various appellate filings. She was named among Best Lawyers 2020 and Florida Super Lawyer for the 15th year. In the pandemic, she has also been busy sewing and donating filtered masks for the local hospital.

Janet Henry '83 downsized this year and moved to a lovely place in Etowah near Brevard, North Carolina. She is relieved to be among farms again! Matt and Janet are still loving WNC & enjoy regular visits to Saint Simons Island, Georgia. Janet, **Martha Dukes '84**, and **Agnes Black '82** are planning for a reunion soon!

David (Bartlett) Abazs '86 is the Executive Director of UMN Extension—Northeast Regional



Sustainable Development Partnership and leads community teams focused around agriculture/food systems, natural resources, resilient

communities, and clean energy. COVID-19 prompted rapid assistance to 17 different community emergency projects. This year, he and **Lise (Treichsel) Abazs '87** will celebrate the 33rd anniversary of their 1987 WWC garden wedding.

Sarah (Linney) Anderson '87 finally got married on December 31, 2019. She and her new hubby bought a home in Cocoa, Florida. They have four dogs and lots of birds in the yard to watch. Sarah is a volunteer field trip leader during the annual Space Coast Birding and Wildlife Festival in Titusville. Two years ago, she survived brain surgery to remove a large meningioma tumor.

Katey Williams '88 retired in March 2020 after 27 years with the Henderson County Department of Social Services.

Lilace (Mellin) Guignard '89 teaches Creative Writing, Women's Studies, and Outdoor Recreation Leadership at Mansfield University of Pennsylvania where she lives with her husband, Jimmy, and two teenage kids. Her book, *When Everything Beyond the Walls Is Wild: Being a Woman Outdoors in America*, was published last spring.

Rick Stalnaker '89 is currently working on his dissertation concerning a phenomenological study examining the key perceptions and challenges facing psychologists who treat individuals who exhibit psychopathic behavior.

1990s



▲ **Laura Luce '90** married Leaann Mercer in front of an Arkansas waterfall in October 2019. Laura's WWC roommate, **Stephanie Hayes-Hsu '91**, was her matron of honor.

Greg Wilkins '90 is one of ten LGBTQ fiber artists to be selected for PRIDE, the inaugural queer fiber art exhibition at the Textile Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota. A 2020 semifinalist of the McKnight Foundation's inaugural fiber art fellowship, Greg has also had works selected for a number of other exhibitions.

Lucy Wheeler '92 was elected to her first term on the Warren Wilson College Board of Trustees in October of 2019. She is serving on the Academic Affairs and Athletics Committees.

Heidi Berkovitz '96 moved back to WNC last August and resides in Fairview. She works as a

clinical herbalist and educator. Her website is communityherbals.com.

Jessi (Cinque) Herr '96 completed an accelerated B.S.N. program at WCU in December, graduating *summa cum laude*. She is now the RN and medical manager at a residential treatment center for young women with mental health and substance use disorders. She is grateful and feels that she's landed in just the right place. She lives in North Asheville with her husband **Josh Herr '99**, their kids Jasper and Josie, their golden retriever Cooper, and their cat Mikey.

Keri Parker '97 is currently the Chief Conservation Officer of Save Pangolins, a not-for-profit she co-founded in 2008. Each summer, she returns to the National Audubon Society's Project Puffin in Maine, where she was a WWC-sponsored intern in 1997. She and her husband Paul live in the D.C. area with their dog Kodama.

LouAnne Verrier '97 moved to Austin, Texas, three years ago and loves it. She continues to feel like a bird let out of a cage after 15 years in Manhattan. LouAnne is a Family Nurse Practitioner at the People's Community Clinic. She recently bought a house in South Austin and continues to find new swimming holes, hiking trails, and lots of other ways to soak up her daily quota of Vitamin D.

Charlie Simms '98 left the advertising world, at last, and joined Deloitte in Stamford, Connecticut, in 2019. He enjoys working for a firm focused on helping businesses of all sizes as they recover from the current health epidemic. He misses frequent travel but is enjoying his time at home with his wife, dogs, and garden.

Jessica Alton '99 lives in Asheville with her husband and newborn child Charlie Wild. She has been a Spiritual Channel for 15 years and connects people with their divine guidance systems. You can find her online as Queen Jess Lee or at Instant Karma on Lexington Avenue. Her passion as a poet has reawakened as she recently participated in Zoom readings and had a one-woman poetry show, and she is writing new material with fervor.

Betsy (Fife) Archer '99 lives in Swannanoa with her spouse, Shuli, and their three kiddos (Milo, Ami, and Nan). She is the owner of PlayFit AVL, a boutique fitness studio focusing on helping folks undo the damage of diet culture and find joyful movement practices. She enjoys running into fellow alums all over Asheville and looks forward to not-so-socially-distant adult beverages with friends in the near future.

Stacie Greco '99 is still loving life in sunny Gainesville, Florida! She now serves as the Water Resources Program Manager at the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department. She recently acquired a property where the Icheetucknee and Santa Fe Rivers converge and would love to connect with alumni!

Becky (Cole) Kadel '99 graduated with a Master of Science in Nursing from St. Joseph's College of Maine! She is so grateful for the unending

support of her husband, Laxman, and their children, Maya and Ravi. Becky accepted a new position as a Nursing Professional Development Specialist at Yale—New Haven Hospital, where she has practiced as a Registered Nurse for the past 16 years.

Julia (Minor) Tarr '99 lives in Durham, North Carolina, with her husband, three kids, an old dog, and a flock of chickens. She is looking forward to transitioning from a clinical social worker role at the Chapel Hill Community Health Center to a new job at Duke Hospital on the maternity/newborn floor.

2000s

Ginny Hastings '00 has been working in film, TV, and live events for 12 years. *Farewell Amor*, a feature film she designed, premiered at Sundance 2020. Ginny has worked on the Super Bowl Halftime Show, the Tony Awards, and on the side of a dang volcano in Nicaragua. She is based in Brooklyn.

Jay Lively '00 started a new job at Warren Wilson College, serving as one of five Integrated Advising Coaches in the Center for Integrated Advising and Careers. In this role, Jay serves as an academic advisor and helps students navigate and integrate the Work Program, Community Engagement, Study Abroad, and Career Services for a more holistic approach to their WWC education.

Erica (Engelsman) Rawls '03 and her husband Brent welcomed Robin Angelou Engelsman Rawls to the world on April 27, 2020. Their son, Lucian, is over the moon to have a baby brother.

Johnelle Causwell '03 was recognized as one of the "50 Most Influential Women" of 2020 by the Mecklenburg Times. She also received the 2020 FBI Director's Award for Community Leadership for North Carolina. Both award ceremonies were postponed due to COVID-19. A local presentation was held with the Charlotte FBI Office.

Pablo Romero '03 is an operatic tenor and decided to forego live performances due to the pandemic. He started a series of online performances aimed at making classical music more accessible. Content can be found at pabloromerotenor.com.

Lea Shepard '03 helped launch Sugar Creek Hemp, which offers hemp flowers grown with soil and spring water along with olive oil-based extracts. Their website launches soon.

Jeannie (Payne) Pfautz '04 completed her doctorate in curriculum and instruction from the University of Virginia in the spring of 2019.

Ashley Rogers '04 completed her coursework toward a Ph.D. in History at Louisiana State University in May 2020. There are still 1,000 years (approximate) until she graduates.

Jodi Wygmans '04 and **Noah Wilson '10** welcomed their first child, Zea, into the world and are so excited to see all the places she will go!

The Bannerman Society: Planned Giving at WWC



Now, more than ever, the world needs Warren Wilson. Our distinctive education cultivates curious, engaged leaders who are building supportive, sustainable, and resilient communities across the globe. You can help secure the future of Warren Wilson while planning for your own.

Warren Wilson College established the Bannerman Society, named for the College's first President Arthur Bannerman, to recognize those benefactors who have made enduring gifts by including the College in their estate planning. We want to thank the many alumni, parents, and friends who have already made a planned gift to the College.

Why make a bequest to Warren Wilson?

- **Leave a lasting legacy** at the College in appreciation of what the institution has meant to you, your family, and your career.
- **Plan for the future** while retaining control of your assets during your lifetime.
- **It's simple** to name the College as a beneficiary of your will, trust, life insurance policy, or retirement account.
- **Bequests are customizable** and can include a specific amount, a percentage of your estate, or a portion of what remains.
 - **Tax benefits** may result from your gift.
- **Gifts at all levels** can make a transformative impact.

"I added Warren Wilson as a beneficiary in my estate plans because I believe in the mission and values of the College, and I want to ensure it remains financially strong for future generations. I want Warren Wilson to continue to attract and retain people who think outside the box and work hard to improve our local communities, our country, and our planet." — Erin Jasin Hadary '03

For more information on becoming a member of the Bannerman Society, or to inform us of your estate plans, please contact our office at 828-771-3756, email advancement@warren-wilson.edu, or visit warren-wilson.edu/plannedgiving

This ad presents general information only and should not be construed as legal, financial, accounting, or other professional advice. Please seek professional assistance to determine how any giving approach discussed here might impact your situation.

Omar Barnaby '05 is a finalist for the 2020 Bioanalysis Rising Star Award, which is a recognition for early career emerging leaders in the field of Bioanalysis.

Matthew George '05, Chelsea Peterson '08, and 4-year-old Oliver welcomed another little boy, August, during their second week of quarantine. They are living in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where Chelsea plays her viola in a string quartet with her dad and sister, and Matthew works as a physical therapist specializing in treating people with Parkinson's disease.

Robin Lenner '05 is pursuing an M.A.Ed. in School Counseling at Western Carolina University and is living with her lovely wife, Liddell, and their galumphing dog Lucy in West Asheville.

Miriam McNamara '05 was awarded the Bronze Medal for Young Adult Fiction from this year's Independent Publisher Book Awards for her second novel, *An Impossible Distance to Fall*. Her debut novel, *The Unbinding of Mary Reade*, won the Gold last year.

Will Pierzala '05 completed his doctoral degree in Nurse Anesthesia from Virginia Commonwealth University. He is thankful for his loving wife

Amanda (Tuzik) Pierzala '05 and the support of his mom Cynthia Pierzala. Will, Amanda, and their two young boys are now very much enjoying life in Forest, Virginia.

Heidi Stucker '05 and her wife, Sutton Kiplinger, joyfully welcomed their daughter, Cass Trillium Kiplinger-Stucker, into the world on April 25, 2020. They live in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. Heidi works for Metro Boston's regional planning agency, where she promotes healthy community design, planning, and policy.

Tim Dooley '06 and **Erin McDuff '07** welcomed their daughter Willow into the world in February. The three of them reside outside Portland, Oregon, where Tim manages crime statistics for a local law enforcement agency, and Erin does public affairs for the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Anna Chollet '07 and a group of WWC grads from 2006-2009 proved that after more than 10 years, forever friendships were still going strong

on a four-day trip down the beautiful Buffalo River in Arkansas, in May 2019. Pictured (left to right) are **Renee Gaudet '09, Nicole Accordini '07, Lily Doyle '06, Anna Chollet '07, Celia Barbieri '07, Shannon Waldron '08, Sarah Rawleigh '06, Amelia Taylor '09** (center), and Dozer Chollet-Rahman. **Mica Mead '07** and **Katie (Walsh) Fetzer '07** not pictured, but present in sisterhood.

Amanda Frayeh '07 was shocked to meet another WWC soccer alum, **Laura DeGroot '80**, at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health this past January. They reminisced about their time on the Farm and adventures with Molly, Marshall, and LW. It's true, you never know when you'll run into a WWC friend!

Katie (Blankenship) Johnson '07 married Garrett Johnson at the Cathedral of All Souls in Asheville, North Carolina, on July 13, 2019.

Katie Kuehl '07 resides in Seattle and is an Associate Professor for WSU College of Veterinary Medicine. As an instructor, she enjoys helping vet students hone their surgical and clinical skills. She is passionate about delivering veterinary care to families experiencing or at risk of homelessness and sharing the joy of service-learning with her students.

Christina Milne '07 completed her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine from Western University of Health Sciences and earned membership to the Phi Zeta National Veterinary Medicine Honor Society. She will begin a rotating internship program at an emergency and specialty hospital in Boise, Idaho. Her professional interests include orthopedic surgery and emergency medicine.

Katie Walsh '07 did it all this past year! She moved from rural Pennsylvania back home to the Mississippi Gulf Coast with her husband and two girls. In August, they bought a house and welcomed their third child shortly after moving in. She is the Education Manager at the Pascagoula River Audubon Center in Moss Point. In her limited spare time, she loves birding (thanks Lou Webber), boating, gardening, and listening to records. Y'all come visit!

Curry Patricia Anton '08 spent the past 10 years in Tanzania building Ohana Amani, a Transformative Learning Center, permaculture farm, ecolodge, and regenerative community. This year she sold her farm in Africa and moved with her partner and son to Florence, Italy. There she will continue her work in resilience, regeneration, and the healing arts.

Gia (Campanella) Bankanella '08 and her wife, Julie, welcomed Rosby Bankanella on August 7, 2019.

Danielle Baumgartner '08 and Shay Tippens welcomed their first child on August 30, 2019. Westley Shay Tippens has light brown hair, brown eyes, and is growing and changing so fast! He enjoys music, exploring, crawling, climbing, and going on walks with mommy and daddy.

Nate Bell '08 and **Emily Gary '10** got married in November 2019. Emily received her Ph.D. in Human Development from Virginia Tech in May. They are living in Greensboro, North Carolina, where Nate is remodeling their new home.

Sam Christopher '08 wrote *The Blacklist* episode "The Kazanjian Brothers," which aired in May 2020 on NBC as an animated episode after filming was shut down during COVID-19.

Emma Meistrich '08 married Rylan Marshall in a private ceremony on November 11, 2019. The pair are building their nest together with their two beloved pups in the Front Range of Colorado, where Emma works as a creative writing editor and author, and Rylan is the head route-setter for a rock climbing gym.

Arhm (Choi) Wild '08 received the 2019 Write Bloody Publishing Award for their first book of poems, *Cut to Bloom*, which came out in April 2020. They are taking their book tour online with the Little Lights Reading Series. RSVPs can be found on their Instagram account @arhmcwild.

Tori Hurst '09 married James Jayroe at her parents' home in Seneca, South Carolina, on April 25. The couple is moving to Lake Murray in Chapin, South Carolina, and has a celebration scheduled for spring 2021. **Tabby Kube '09** was in attendance at the April celebration, as she was sheltering in place with Tori's family.

Kenny (Hummel) '09 and **Brett Parmenter '12** were married on June 22 in Benton, California. Brett and Kenny fell in love while swimming together on the WWC Swim Team and have been adventuring together ever since. They are now living with their dog and cat in Sylva, North Carolina. Many Warren Wilson alumni attended the celebration.

Conner '09 and **Leah (Cameron) Soderquist '09** had a joyful spring. They celebrated the birth of their son, Warren Cole Soderquist, in Burlington, Vermont, and a few short months later, Conner graduated from the University of Vermont Larner College of Medicine. Conner has been accepted into the Family Medicine Residency at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center, in Worcester, Massachusetts.

Adrienne Testa '09 earned her MFA in Museum Exhibition Planning & Design from the University of the Arts. She is now the Vice President of Museum Experiences at Sciencenter in Ithaca, New York. In this position, Adrienne directs the development and design of new exhibits for the Sciencenter and exhibits that will travel around the country.

2010s

Geneva '10 and **Jon Bierce-Wilson '20** welcomed their new baby, Corvus Morgan Bierce-Wilson, into the world this April. Geneva gave birth at their home in Asheville, and all are happy and healthy.

Rae Jager '10 started her own doula business, the Modern Doula of Cincinnati. She provides birth and postpartum support for expecting

families and offers breastfeeding consultations. Rae draws upon much of what she learned at WWC: how to listen, be kind, be guided by her own intuition, and use creativity when problem-solving.

Katie (Williams) Niday '10 has worked in public school finance for the past seven years. In 2019, she was recognized as an Emerging Leader in School Business by the International Association of School Business Officials. She lives in Des Moines, Iowa, with her husband, two daughters, and two elderly dogs. She is pursuing a master's degree and serves on the board of the Iowa Food Cooperative.

Samantha Capps '11 recently bought a house in Raleigh, North Carolina, with a fenced-in backyard for her two dogs, Daisy and Haruki. In March, she was promoted to a software developer role at the NC-based telecommunications company Bandwidth.

Abi Locatis Prochaska '11 received her M.S. in Environmental Studies and M.P.A. from the College of Charleston earlier this year. She works as the Coastal Training Program Coordinator for the ACE Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve and SC Department of Natural Resources, bringing science-based training to coastal decision-makers in her home state.

Martha Skelley '11 ventured back out west in November 2019 to take a position as Livestock Manager for Paicines Ranch in Paicines, California. Back to the rangeland, she goes.

Emilene Whidbee '11 graduated in May 2020 from Meredith College in Raleigh, North Carolina with a Master's in Nutrition. Her program emphasis was in Community Food Security, and she was recognized by her faculty with the Graduate Service Award.

Claire Wisker '11 graduated with her MLitt (Master of Letters) in History from the University of Glasgow in Glasgow, Scotland in December 2019.

Wendy (Thoreson) Eggerman '12 married Johnny Eggerman on May 9, 2020, on a rainy day during the pandemic. The couple was joined by a handful of close family and their two adorable pitbulls. They live in Saint Paul, Minnesota, where Wendy is a potter/taproom bartender and Johnny is a union millwright.

Jay Sorensen '12 earned his MA in Sociology from the University of Iowa in December. He is now a Ph.D. student. He spoke virtually with a class of current WWC students about his graduate school experience and how much his time at Wilson prepared him to be a successful student and graduate teaching assistant.

Virginia Hamilton '13 and **Armin Weise '16** got hitched! It's cute. They live in Asheville, North Carolina. Virginia is working on a Master of Science degree from Montana State and working at the local farmer's co-op, and Armin is working as a consulting forester for EcoForesters.



Hannah (Mason) '14 and **Tamlin (Bley) Dawson '14** were pleased to welcome their first child, Fiona, on March 9. Everyone is doing well, happy, healthy, and adapting to new-parent-dom. They

are enjoying watching their daughter grow and watching their dog figure out this new creature.

Michi (Stewart-Nunez) '14 and **Dominic DeRose '15** were married on Christmas Eve 2018 in Maui, Hawaii, officiated by Dominic's brother. They reside in Oregon in the Willamette Valley on a half-acre homestead with a dog, two geese, and five chickens.

Hannah Sommer '14 graduated with an M.S. in Environmental Science from Miami University of Oxford, Ohio.

Emily Sprouse '14 graduated in May 2020 with a Master of Social Work from the University of Kentucky.

Eva Westheimer '14 moved to Vermont in the spring of 2019 after living in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, since graduating. She recently started a job as the new Programs and Volunteer Coordinator with Out in the Open, where she connects rural LGBTQ people to build community, visibility, knowledge, and power.

Autum Martin '15 moved back to Asheville, North Carolina, to start a new job at Galaxy Digital consulting for nonprofits in volunteer management software. She also got engaged to her partner of five years, Joe Brown, and they plan on marrying in the spring of 2021.

Katarina Wittekind '15 completed her coursework at Western Carolina University and graduated with her Master of Social Work.

Lilvia Bradbury '16 moved from Black Mountain, North Carolina, to Aurora, Colorado, with her partner in April and got a cool new job as an arborist (so much better than being stuck at a desk all day)!

Leyla El-Baba '16 completed her coursework at Western Carolina University and graduated with her Master of Social Work.



Evan Lamb '16 and **Kelly Wilson '16** were married on campus in the formal gardens on September 28, 2019. They met during their NSURS for Conservation Biology in 2015 and now live in Boston, Massachusetts.



Retirement

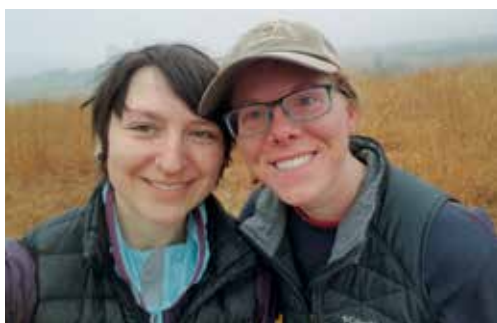
Christa L. Bridgman '76

By Carol Howard, Ph.D.

After 48 years at the College, Christa Bridgman has retired. For the past 35 years, Christa has served as Registrar, the College official who oversees all academic records. She has done so mostly behind the scenes, with unstinting energy and dedication, to advance the quality of a Warren Wilson education and to ensure the integrity of the degrees awarded to our graduates. Before becoming Registrar, she was on the Admissions staff, where she specialized in working with international students.

Christa was a student at Warren Wilson from 1972-1976 and was awarded the Pfaff Cup, the College's highest graduation honor. She completed her degree in Behavioral Science, while gaining experience on work crews in Academic Affairs and Admissions. A woodcarver, outdoor enthusiast, and talented musician, she often played bass in the orchestra for musical theatre productions at Kittredge Theatre. She performed with the Mountain Women's String Band and sang with the College Choir. Although generally regarded as a no-nonsense individual, Christa has been known to don a poodle skirt and blonde wig in order to lend her talent to the trio of Elvis impersonators, known as "The Elvi," which included Richard Bellando '59, Doug Orr, and Billy Edd Wheeler '53.

Alumni News continued



▲ **Claire Lamberg '16** and **Virginia Pszczolkowski '16** were married in a legally-as-small-as-possible outdoor ceremony on April 13, 2020. They plan to have a proper celebration sometime in the next few years. They currently live in Madison, Wisconsin, with their dog, two cats, and numerous house plants.

Shannon Waldman '16 graduated from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago with master's degrees in Arts Administration and Policy, and Art History, Theory, and Criticism. She was awarded the Dual Degree Fellowship and an honorable mention for the Student Leadership Award. She is relocating to Los Angeles with her partner **Matthew Tennant '18**, where he will pursue his MFA in Writing for the Screen and Television at the University of Southern California.

Debra Hass '18 is living in Asheville, where she has a private practice for energy balancing and massage therapy. She has also co-founded Moon Sisters Alliance, which holds events for sacred gatherings in Asheville monthly and online weekly. For private sessions, email: DebraHassLMBT@gmail.com. To join in gatherings, email: MoonSistersAlliance@gmail.com.

Joscelyn Gradstein '18, AKA Vitakari, is an LA singer & visual artist. She curates her own event series, "Vitawood," an immersive art installation and music showcase. Vitakari has over 200,000 streams on Spotify & just dropped her music video for "Bad Weather." Peep her Instagram @vitakari <3

Will Bahr '19 moved to Minneapolis after graduating for a Fellowship with Cow Tipping Press. He teaches creative writing to adults with disabilities and publishes their work. He also published an article in the local City Pages about his time working in a group home.

2020s

Ellie Goldstein '20 started working at CooperRiis, a residential healing community, last winter as a Crew Leader helping to program-plan and lead/assist in daytime activities. In May, she began the Clinical Mental Health and Counseling graduate program at Lenoir Rhyne in Asheville.



A Tribute to Steve Williams at His Memorial Service

Excerpts from Remarks by Philip Otterness
January 11, 2020

Steve Williams spent his entire professional career at Warren Wilson College—almost 40 years—starting at the age of 25 as the Chapel and College Organist and joining the faculty of the Music Department at the ripe old age of 26. His accomplishments at the College were many and varied and demonstrated that his skills extended far beyond being a great organist and musician. In the eyes of the College, he was, first and foremost, a talented and much-loved teacher. It is no surprise that he was the first recipient of the College's Teacher of the Year Award. Of course, the way that many of us remember Steve most is his leading us in song. How many times did the poor man have to drag us through the *Alma Mater*?

At a College that promotes, above almost all else, the ideal of a deep and shared sense of community, Steve was one of the few who actually made this elusive ideal a reality. He did this, of course, through music, but not in a way that centered on his own tremendous musical talent. Rather, he served as an eager shepherd to a flock of less musically-skilled members of the College—students, staff, faculty, and volunteers—gathering them together into a group that worked hard, supported one another, and shared the beauty, laughter, and exuberant spirit that comes from working toward a common goal. Steve pulled this off most notably in two ways—as the Music Director of an amazing range of musicals that the College produced for well over two decades, and as the Director of the College Choir. What made Steve so skilled in creating community was that, despite his own great talent as a musician, he was always the gentle and patient teacher, perfectly happy to welcome anybody to his ensemble.

Read the full tribute at: warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020

From the West Bank to Warren Wilson

How the tuition-free Milepost One scholarship is supporting one student's path to medical school

By Mary Hay

In 2018, Warren Wilson College launched two tuition-free scholarship initiatives for low- and middle-income families: Milepost One and NC Free. The initial 87 students who benefitted from these scholarships completed their first year at Warren Wilson College in 2019. It is hard to understand the full impact of these programs on our community without getting to know some of the incredible recipients, students like Milepost One awardee Bassam Shawamreh '22.

Shawamreh's parents met and fell in love in Jerusalem. His mother, an American Ashkenazi Jew from Skokie, Illinois, had traveled to Jerusalem to visit after obtaining a J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School. His father, a Palestinian Muslim, was from an impoverished village in the southern part of the West Bank. Due to the high tensions in that part of the world, the two decided to move to Jefferson Park in Chicago, which had a reputation for being an ideal place to raise a family at the time.

As a child, Shawamreh was a successful student, earning straight-A's in his classes. As he got older, however, he started veering off course from his academics and being drawn toward—by his own admission—the “wrong” crowds and influences, which began his battle with addiction. By the time he entered high school, he was determined to change the path he was going down. He asked his parents if he could live with his father's family in the West Bank. His parents encouraged the idea, thinking this might be an opportunity to realize his full potential. Although he learned Arabic during those years, the move deepened his struggles with addiction. Eventually, he returned to old habits.

After years of struggling with addiction, Shawamreh eventually sought treatment and began his road to recovery. Not only did he enroll in classes at City Colleges of Chicago, earning his Associate Degree, but he also worked at the treatment center that helped him get back on track.

Shawamreh knew he wanted to further his career, so he began looking at colleges that

would support his goals. Upon discovering Warren Wilson, he became enamored with the mission, educational model, student-to-faculty ratio, and physical landscape—a welcome change from the urban dwellings surrounding Chicago. As a recipient of the competitive Milepost One scholarship, not only did he receive the financial assistance he needed to attend Warren Wilson, but he also gained the confidence to continue his academic journey.

Shawamreh completed his first year at the College this past May, receiving Dean's List honors after securing a 4.0 GPA for the year. At Warren Wilson, he has felt supported by the Natural Sciences and Social Sciences faculty who have not only been accessible but have also consistently exhibited their interest in student success. With a major in Biochemistry and a minor in Neuroscience, he plans to go to medical school following graduation to pursue a career in psychiatry.

Thanks to the support of our donors and our tuition-free scholarships, Shawamreh says that he has found himself amongst a community of “caring, dedicated, hardworking, creative, and courageous people” at Warren Wilson. These qualities are underpinned by the generosity of our supporters and, according to Shawamreh, help to build a community that fosters “individuals who will make important and impactful global contributions.” ■



***Milepost One** is a competitive scholarship for students whose families earn less than \$125,000 per year. NC Free is a free tuition program for North Carolina residents who are eligible for Pell or state financial aid.*

AWARDS AND WORKS BY MFA PROGRAM FOR WRITERS ALUMNI AND FACULTY

FACULTY AWARDS

Danielle Evans received a 2020 Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Vanessa Hua received a 2020 Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts.

Nina McConigley is the 2019-2020 Walter Jackson Bate Fellow at the Radcliffe Institute.

ALUMNI AWARDS

Reginald Dwayne Betts MFA '10 (poetry) won the 2020 NAACP Image Award for Outstanding Literary Work for *Felon* (Norton, 2019).

Lara Egger MFA '16 (poetry) won the 2020 University of Massachusetts Press Juniper Prize for Poetry: First Book for her collection *How to Love Everyone and Almost Get Away with It*.

Carlos Andrés Gómez MFA '18 (poetry) won the 2020 Felix Pollak Prize at University of Wisconsin Press for the forthcoming *Fractures*.

Diane Kerr MFA '99 (poetry) won the 2020 Brittingham Prize at University of Wisconsin for the forthcoming *Perigee*.

Sonya Larson MFA '18 (fiction) received a 2020 NEA Fellowship in fiction.

Hieu Minh Nguyen MFA '19 (poetry) is currently a 2019-2021 Wallace Stegner Fellow at Stanford University.

Karen Olsson MFA '05 (fiction) was awarded a 2020 NEA Fellowship.

Maya Phillips MFA '17 (poetry) was a finalist for the PEN Open Book award for her collection *Erou* (Four Way, 2019).

Daniel Tam-Claiborne MFA '20 (fiction) received a prestigious Fulbright Scholarship, which will enable him to pursue ethnographic research and write a novel that addresses questions about culture, identity, and belonging against the backdrop of contemporary U.S.-China relations.

PUBLICATIONS

FACULTY

Marianne Boruch *The Anti-Grief* (Copper Canyon, 2019)

Amaud Jamaul Johnson *Imperial Liquor* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020)

James Longenbach *How a Poem Gets Made* (Norton, 2019)

Maurice Manning *Railsplitter* (Copper Canyon, 2019)

Heather McHugh *Feeler* (Sarabande, 2019)

Jason Schneiderman *Hold Me Tight* (Red Hen, 2020)

Anna Solomon *The Book of V* (Penguin Random House, 2020)

Laura van den Berg *I Hold a Wolf by the Ears* (FSG, 2020, forthcoming)

ALUMNI

Dilruba Ahmed MFA '09 (poetry) *Bring Now the Angels* (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2020)

Tommye Blount MFA '13 (poetry) *Fantasia for the Man in Blue* (Four Way, 2020)

Victoria Chang MFA '05 (poetry) *Obit* (Copper Canyon, 2020)

Helen Fremont MFA '91 (fiction) *The Escape Artist* (Simon & Schuster, 2020)

Justin Gardiner MFA '05 (poetry) *Naming the Lifeboat* (Main Street Rag Press, 2020)

Tariq Luthun MFA '18 (poetry) *How the Water Holds Me* (Bull City Press, 2020)

Kerrin McCadden MFA '14 (poetry) *Keep This to Yourself* (Button Poetry, 2020)

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

Laura Otis MFA '17 (fiction) *Refiner's Fire* (iUniverse, 2019) and *Lacking in Substance* (iUniverse, 2019)

Maya Phillips MFA '17 (poetry) *Erou* (Four Way Books, 2019)

Angela Narciso Torres MFA '09 (poetry) *To the Bone* (Sundress Publications, 2020)

The Best American Poetry 2019, edited by Major Jackson, includes poems by **Dilruba Ahmed MFA '09** (poetry), **Catherine Barnett MFA '02** (poetry), **Victoria Chang MFA '05** (poetry), and **Joanne Dominique Dwyer MFA '09** (poetry).

A Literary Field Guide to Southern Appalachia (University of Georgia, 2019)—a hybrid literary and natural history anthology—was edited by **Rose McLarney '03, MFA '10** (poetry) and **Laura-Gray Street MFA '97** (poetry). It includes poems by MFA faculty **Debra Allbery**, **Maurice Manning**, **Kevin McIlvoy**, and **Ellen Bryant Voigt** and by MFA alumni **Adrian Blevins MFA '02** (poetry), **Justin Gardiner MFA '05** (poetry), **Gary Hawkins MFA '95** (poetry), and **Glenis Redmond MFA '11** (poetry), along with the two editors listed above.

FACULTY & STAFF NEWS

Dr. Paul Bartels, Professor of Biology, published five papers on his research on microscopic tardigrades, known as water bears. He was the co-author on three papers in 2019, two dealing with marine tardigrades and one examining the ecology of moss and lichen dwelling tardigrades in the Smokies. He was the lead author on two papers published in 2020, one completed during his last Study Abroad course in the Bahamas searching for tardigrades living as symbionts with sponges, and the other was the surprising discovery of Bergmann's Rule in marine tardigrades.

Dr. Amy Boyd, Professor of Biology, and colleagues have studied an endangered cactus in the Arizona desert for over 25 years, and they received a \$10,000 research grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Arizona

Department of Agriculture to fund their work. In October 2019, their most recent publication on the study, "Growth and demography of a declining, endangered cactus in the Sonoran Desert" was published in the journal *Plant Species Biology*.

Dr. Mark Brenner, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies, and students in his *Aquatic Ecology* class discovered a toxic algal bloom in Beaver Lake in Asheville. Dr. Brenner notified state officials, and the lake was closed, potentially saving many beloved pets who could have been affected by the toxins. The story was featured in the *Asheville Citizen-Times* and on the local news.

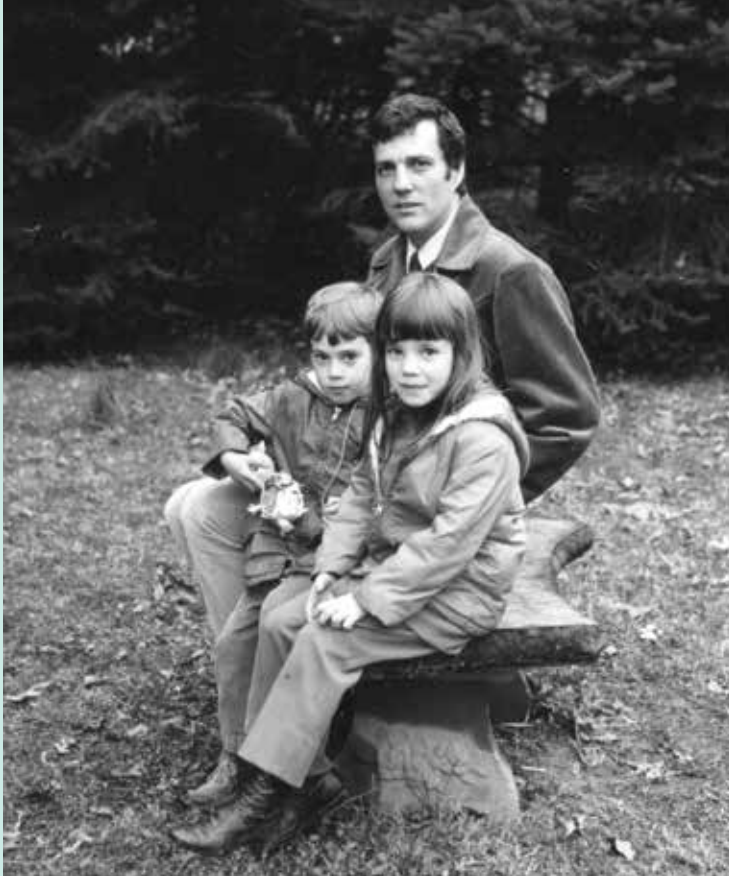
Dr. Christine Bricker, Professor of Political Science, published a co-authored article in *Political Research Quarterly* that shows how people's perceptions influence how state policies are enacted across the United States. Bricker presented a paper at the Annual Political Science Association conference in September on what makes people think states are similar. She also presented a paper on the effect of high school grade point average on rural students' likelihood of moving out-of-state at the Western Political Science Association.

Dr. Jason DeCristofaro, adjunct faculty in the Music Department, wrote the article "Exploring Textures in Jazz Vibraphone Performance" published in *Percussive Notes*, the journal for the Percussive Arts Society (PAS), the world's largest percussion organization. DeCristofaro's composition "Sonatina for Vibraphone and Piano," was published by HaMaR Percussion Publications in the summer of 2020. Finally, Per-Mus Publications published DeCristofaro's composition "Children's Sonatina" for solo vibraphone and his arrangement of the traditional carol "Still, Still, Still."

Dr. Ben Feinberg, Professor of Anthropology, was selected as this year's winner of the Magnarella Family Faculty Scholarship Award. The award was created by Professor Emeritus Paul Magnarella and his family to recognize faculty scholarly publication. Feinberg has modeled a dedication to teaching and leadership over many years, making his frequent contributions to scholarship in his field particularly inspiring.

Dr. Gary Hawkins MFA '95 (poetry), Director of the Center for Faculty Innovation and Excellence, contributed a drawing entitled "Lackawanna" that was selected as cover art for *Southern Humanities Review* (Vol. 52.3, Fall 2019), and his installation "Forty One-Drop Bear" was selected for the juried group exhibition, "Form Line Shape Space" at the Todd Art Gallery at Middle Tennessee State University. He co-presented two interactive sessions at the Professional and Organizational Development in Higher Education (POD) Conference. The first, "Unbiasing Faculty Hiring & Retention: What is Faculty Development's Role?," was co-facilitated with

(continued on page 51)



Ronald C. Wilson—A Tribute

By Mark Banker '73, Ph.D.

My first encounter with Ron Wilson was unforgettable. It was the first day of class for Warren Wilson College freshmen in late August 1969. Ron's *World History* course was scheduled for a mid-morning time slot in the classroom just to the right of the half-flight of stairs at the entrance to Carson Hall.

For perhaps the only time, we as a class arrived early and attentive... but also anxious. Many of us represented Warren Wilson's long-time Appalachian clientele; others came from an array of U.S. states and the four corners of the world. By default, we were truly a *world* history course, and by Ron's careful design that vision became more real than any of us could have imagined.

As Ron came through the door that morning, he bumped into a set of maps. With impressive athletic agility, he regained his balance, caught the maps before they crashed to the floor, then offered a nervous grin that put us all at ease.

Even casual acquaintances recall that smile. But we who were fortunate to know Ron Wilson well deeply appreciate his genuine humility, good nature, and the wisdom he generously shared. And yes—his reassuring smile.

Except for the fall semester of 1971, when I studied in Mexico City, I enrolled in at least one course with Ron every semester of my undergraduate years. After the *World History* survey, that eclectic array of courses included *Regional Geography*, *Britain Since 1714*, *Europe Since 1914*, and two provocative semesters of *Western Political Thought*. Regretfully, my semester abroad coincided with Ron's signature *Ancient History* course. This regimen reflected Ron's intellectual breadth

and challenged students to confront history's broadest themes and most elusive questions.

Beyond history, Ron and I shared a deep love for baseball. We attended our first Asheville Tourist game together when I was an undergrad. During summer trips home from New Mexico, I scheduled my visits to Warren Wilson to coincide with Ron's plans and the Tourists' home schedule. That tradition became regular after I returned to East Tennessee. Ron and I probably attended at least 50 games together. Still, we were a bit of an odd couple. Ron excelled at the sport; I did not. As spectators go, he was a lifelong Cincinnati Reds fan, and I began cheering for the Braves as a first grader—when they still called Milwaukee home.

Still, baseball's methodical pace offered a backdrop for us to converse about mutual interests and concerns. We could be attentive to action on the field, discuss the fortunes of our favorite teams, delve into an array of history-related topics, and reflect on the latest political developments and what was happening at Warren Wilson—all in nine innings!

When Ron's health declined, our routine adjusted. After a meal out, we would return to his Swannanoa Valley residence and carry on our regular banter over a televised game. My last visit with Ron was in June 2019. Ron applauded the Braves' fortunes and lamented those of his beloved Reds. But we also shared dismay for our nation's polarized paralysis and dearth of leadership.

More positively, we applauded the determined efforts of Dr. Lynn Morton, Warren Wilson's first woman president. They reflected, we agreed, a theme critical to Warren Wilson's surprising history. More broadly, that history validates an essential—often misunderstood—premise about the human experience that I first glimpsed under Ron's tutelage. ■

The above is an excerpt; you can find the full story online at:
warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020

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Editor's note: Mark Banker '73 is a retired history teacher. He graduated from Warren Wilson with a degree in History and went on to earn his Ph.D. in History from the University of New Mexico. Banker and former College President Reuben Holden co-wrote the most recent Warren Wilson College History book A Centennial Portrait in 1994. When long-time Professor of History Ron Wilson passed away in 2019, Banker wrote this personal tribute about the History Professor whose career at Warren Wilson spanned four decades. Pictured below: The 1989 History Department.



MILESTONES

Julie Sievers from Southwestern University and the second, “Expanding Your Reach: A Workshop on Making Strategic Connections,” was co-facilitated with Michael Reder of Connecticut College.

Dr. Carol Howard, Dean of Academics, has written “The Literary Gardener” columns for *The Laurel of Asheville* each month since 2017. Recent stories include “A Landscape of Travels,” on poet Elizabeth Bishop’s 1940 visit to Brevard; “Annie Dillard’s Winter Vision”; “Neruda’s Garden of Love”; and “Shirley Jackson’s Gothic Landscape.” She especially enjoyed doing the research for a Thanksgiving story on Louisa May Alcott’s time spent, in 1843, at a vegan, transcendentalist farming community called Fruitlands.

Dr. Alisa Hove, Professor of Biology, traveled to the Yunnan Metabarcoding School in Kunming, China, during her sabbatical to attend an international ecological genetics workshop funded by the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Hove spent two weeks living and collaborating with researchers from around the world on DNA metabarcoding and the uses of environmental DNA in ongoing efforts to characterize biodiversity in natural systems. In Summer 2019, Hove presented her research on using Classroom-based Undergraduate Research Experiences (CUREs) to study climate change in biology classrooms at the Botanical Society of America’s annual meeting in Tucson, Arizona. In October 2019, Hove presented her research on plant evolution in response to abiotic stress at a departmental seminar at the Nanjing Agricultural University in Nanjing, China.

Dr. Annie Jonas, Chair of the Education Department, presented a conference session, “The Critical Role of Experiential Education: Civic Identity in a World in Flux” at the National Society for Experiential Education’s (NSEE) 48th annual conference in Saint Pete Beach, Florida, in September 2019. NSEE serves as a national resource center for the development and improvement of experiential education programs nationwide.

Rachel Keefe, MSW, LCSW, Counselor, published an article in the *Violence Against Women* journal entitled, “Policy Roles in Promoting Affordable Housing for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence.”

Dr. Jeff Keith, Professor of Global Studies, joined the graduate faculty for the MA in Critical Craft Studies at Warren Wilson College. In addition, he mentored an undergraduate student who received a grant to study gentrification in Asheville, published an article called “Presha’s Coverlet” about his great-great-grandmother from east Tennessee weaving an overshot bedcover, and released a website of oral histories in conjunction with the University of Kentucky.

Dr. Ben Krakauer, Professor of Music, released *Heart Lake*, an album of original banjo music for Blue Hens Music. *Bluegrass Today* wrote, “Subtlety and complexity coexist within the framework of each of these entries...Kudos to Krakauer for providing such an intriguing set of songs, one that broadens the bluegrass boundaries while also piercing further parameters in the process.”

Dr. Lucy Lawrence, Professor of Social Work Program Director, co-presented “Beyond Fences and Walls: Teaching and Learning Intercultural Communication in a Prison Setting” with Inside-Out students **Ainara Hidalgo ’22** and **Michelle Padrón ’21** at the Workshop on Intercultural Skills Enhancement at Wake Forest University.

Lori Lewis, MBA, Director of Financial Aid, received her Certified Financial Aid Administrator (CFAA) certification, a national recognition for Financial Aid Administrators through the National Association of Financial Aid Administrators. Lewis was one of 75 administrators across the nation to be part of the inaugural class of this certification program, the purpose of which is to enhance the future of the financial aid community by inspiring quality job performance, encouraging continuous learning, and promoting professional development among financial aid administrators at colleges and universities across the country.

Brian Liechti ’15, MBA, Interim Vice President for Enrollment and Marketing, graduated with an MBA in Sustainability from Bard College in May 2020. His capstone included work in support of the Environmental, Social, and Governance Advisory Committee of the WWC Board of Trustees, supporting the further integration of sustainability and environmental, social, and governance factors in the College’s investment decisions. After completing his MBA, Liechti was appointed as the first Director of Sustainability at the College.



member and African American expatriate Pete O’Neal. It breathes life and historical memory into the ancient and transnational idea that Black Lives Matter.”

Robin Martin, MS, Head Women’s Basketball Coach, achieved a major milestone by earning her 100th career win in her sixth season at the helm. The Lady Owls also won the first EMAC

Conference Championship in Warren Wilson Women’s basketball program history.

Dr. Mallory McDuff, Professor of Environmental Studies and Outdoor Leadership, published an essay in the *New York Times* entitled, “Rest Me in a Pine Box and Let the Fiddle Play.” She received a two-book contract from Broadleaf Press—first to write about natural burial and climate change, and second to share climate stories for youth. Lastly, she gave a presentation to the North American Association for Environmental Education on the intersection of green funerals and land conservation.

Dr. Olya Milenkaya ’03, Professor of Conservation Biology, was appointed as the co-facilitator of the *Batrachochytrium salamandrivorans* (Bsal) Surveillance Working Group. In this role, she works with colleagues across North America to coordinate surveillance for an emerging lethal pathogen that threatens native salamanders. Part of this effort includes the development of undergraduate curriculum in which students learn about the conservation threat posed by Bsal and then contribute to the broader surveillance effort by sampling their local salamanders.

Dr. Dave Moore, Professor of Anthropology, discovered the Berry Site—an active archaeological site of a Native American town and a Spanish fort—and has led research and excavations there for nearly three decades. The Berry Site Archaeology Project received the 2019 Shanghai Archaeology Forum’s Field Discovery Award.

Dr. Jill Overholt, Professor of Outdoor Leadership, published the article “Role Shifts and Equalizing Experiences Through Father-Child Outdoor Adventure Programs” in the journal *Leisure Sciences*. Additionally, her co-authored textbook *Natural Environments and Human Health* (2014) was released in a paperback edition this year, and she began work on a new textbook *Health and Natural Landscapes: Concepts and Applications*, which is expected in 2021.

Dr. Rima Vesely-Flad won a Fulbright to teach courses in Africana Studies in the Department of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences at the Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA), one of the oldest universities in Ghana.

Jessica White, MA, MFA, Professor of Art, was honored as the McKinley Faculty Innovation Award recipient for her creation of a “Papermaker’s Garden” on campus in support of a new class, *Books and Paper from the Land*. According to the selection committee, White was chosen to receive this award for her creative, cross-disciplinary, and innovative approach to the project. The award is endowed by a generous gift from Dr. Virginia McKinley, retired Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the College.

Melanie Wilder, Fiber Arts Crew Supervisor, along with Fiber Arts Crew students, participated

in *Growing Color: Natural Dyes from Plant*, a biannual symposium held at the NC Arboretum. Wilder gave a lecture called “Craftscape,” detailing how she incorporates natural dyes into the curriculum at Warren Wilson College. She also shared the stage with leaders in the natural dye community by moderating a panel discussion with Rowland Ricketts and Sarah Bellos called “Indigo: A Sense of Place.”

Namita Gupta Wiggers, MA, Director of the MA in Critical Craft Studies program, presented the Keynote Address at the 50th Anniversary Conference of the Society of North American Goldsmiths, moderated two sessions at a national conference organized by the American Craft Council, and participated in a Think Tank at the Center for Art Research, University of Oregon—where she is the Center’s inaugural Writer-in-Residence. Selected publications include contributions to *RAW: Craft, Commodity, and Capitalism*, an exhibition catalog published by Craft Contemporary, LA, and a group discussion with Warren Wilson College MA in Critical Craft Studies students in *Metalsmith Tech* (Vol. 2. No. 2, 2019), and a forthcoming essay in *The New Politics of the Handmade: Craft, Art and Design*, Bloomsbury Visual Arts. Wiggers received funding support from the Blumhardt Foundation, New Zealand, for her independent research collaboration on Gender and Jewelry with Ben Lignel (Core Faculty, MA in Critical Craft Studies).

Dr. Julie Wilson, Director of the Writing Studio, and **Dr. Annie Jonas**, Chair of the Education Department, presented a workshop, “Community Engaged Writing and First Year Seminar: A Foundation for Civic Identity Development” at the Pathways to Achieving Civic Engagement Conference (PACE) at Elon University in February, 2020. NC Campus Compact’s annual PACE Conference seeks to grow and share the practice and scholarship of engagement.

Heather Wingert, MSW, LCSW, Parent and Community Relations Manager, co-led a study demonstrating the first evidence to date that a Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) can improve college student well-being and retention. The manuscript is a peer-reviewed scientific publication in the *Journal of American College Health* co-authored by **Bob Swoap, Ph.D.**, and colleagues at UNC Asheville. Wingert will present the findings at the Work Colleges Consortium Faculty/Staff Conference in October 2020.

Nathaniel Wyrick '10, MFA, Assistant Director of Admissions, was published in Volume 8 of *Emergency Index*. His performance and installation work, “It All Belongs to Another Place and Time,” was published in the book, which features 285 works from 48 countries performed during 2018, documented in the words of their creators. Wyrick was also juried into a 2020 Signal Fire Artist Residency & Backpacking Retreat, a public-lands-based back-country trip to New Mexico.

IN MEMORIAM

By Renée Danger-James and Mark Newman

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

Martha Guy, former member of the Warren Wilson Board of Visitors, died on October 12, 2019, at the age of 97. She was known throughout North Carolina and beyond as an icon and pioneer for women in the banking industry. A native of Newland, Guy served and led Avery County Bank for more than 60 years in every capacity from assistant cashier to president. Guy received a bachelor’s degree in chemistry from UNC Chapel Hill and an associate’s degree from Lees-McRae College. After firmly establishing her banking career, Guy emerged as a community leader and benefactor. She served as a founding trustee of Mayland Community College in Spruce Pine. She also served on boards of directors and visitors at Appalachian State University, Lees-McRae College, Mars Hill College, and Montreat College. In addition to all of her business and community accomplishments, she will be remembered for her intelligence, generosity, loyalty, love of travelling, and enjoyment of the company of friends and family.

F. Deborah (Eid) Johnson, M.D., former Trustee of Warren Wilson College, died on February 24, 2020, at home in the care of her devoted family. Johnson was a pioneer in medicine as one of only three women to earn her M.D. from the University of Wisconsin in 1953. Her expertise was in internal medicine with an emphasis on oncology. Johnson sustained a long and storied career in California, and she was honored in 1995 by the San Mateo County Unit of the American Cancer Society with its Humanitarian Award for her dedicated service to cancer patients. While practicing medicine and raising a family, Johnson also contributed to a wide range of philanthropic interests including the arts, education, and children’s and women’s issues. Johnson and her late husband, Charles, were introduced to Warren Wilson College through the Rev. Paul Watermulder of First Presbyterian Church in California. She served as a Trustee of Warren Wilson College from 1988 to 1991 and established the Ida Johnson Scholarship Fund in honor of her mother.

Ki Sub Joung '58, husband of alum **Myung Cho (Ha) Joung '58**, passed away on February 5, 2020. Born in Japan and raised in southern Korea, Joung came to study at Warren Wilson Junior College with one suitcase and \$150. At Warren Wilson, he began his education and met Myung, and he later earned his master’s in mechanical engineering and MBA, rising to VP/General Manager of Mining Systems with Allis-Chalmers and Senior VP for Business Development with Svedala. Upon receiving the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award, Joung remarked, “Whatever I have accomplished wouldn’t have been possible without the advice,

encouragement, and cooperation of my bride and the best friend of half a century, Myung. In raising our three children, we stressed to them the importance of knowing one’s roots and told them they had two places—one in Korea and the other here in Warren Wilson College.”



▲ **Katherine “Kat” Cole Rorison**—longtime friend, generous supporter of the College, and grandparent of alumni **Cameron Mullenneaux '08** and **Conner Soderquist '09**—died February 15, 2020. Rorison was a fierce advocate for a variety of local, state, and national organizations supporting education and children’s and women’s welfare. She loved world travel, family beach vacations, reading, genealogy, and playing bridge. Conner noted in a speech read at her memorial service: “In many ways, Kat Rorison, ‘gma,’ helped set the tone for my life. She was the matriarch of our family—a role she held with dignity, humility, and a profound sense of purpose. Family was the center of her universe. She was generous, and with her gifts came a sense that with great opportunity comes great responsibility. She taught this by example, supporting community organizations that she believed in and empowering her family to prioritize education.”

Nathan Sharp '52 passed away on September 24, 2019, at the home he built for his family 55 years ago. Sharp was born July 23, 1934, in Brush Creek, West Virginia. A lifelong learner, Sharp developed his woodworking skills at Warren Wilson College and received an education-focused bachelor’s degree from Morris Harvey College and a master’s degree from West Virginia University. He was proud to serve his country in the Air Force where he was stationed at Scott AFB in Illinois and Tripoli, North Africa. Sharp enjoyed his 30-year career as an educator at South Charleston Junior High, where he served as a social studies teacher, vice principal, and later principal. During his time at South Charleston Junior High, Sharp recognized that information technology and computers would be important to students’ future careers and advocated for the use of computers in the school curriculum. Utilizing his entrepreneurial skills, Sharp was also instrumental in starting a computer business that served West Virginia for three decades. Sharp utilized his creativity and craftsmanship skills to build custom and unique furniture, cabinetry, and homes in Charleston.



▲ **Ray Stock**, esteemed former Warren Wilson College professor of mathematics and physics, director of administrative computing, and assistant basketball coach, died on Sunday, July 12, 2020 surrounded by loved ones. Stock was beloved and respected by generations of Warren Wilson College students, earning the reputation of being tough but fair in his classes. Stock embodied the soul of the College through his exemplary teaching, expert work on the staff, and enthusiastic coaching of the men's basketball team. After he retired, he could often be seen at College functions in the company of his dear friends. His service to the Warren Wilson Presbyterian Church—including numerous committees, task forces, and building projects—is unparalleled and continued until his passing. He is remembered fondly by fellow congregants as the Master Record Keeper for the church cemetery, which he helped to maintain for many years. He was a devoted father, a loving partner, a skilled builder, and a diehard fan of Tar Heel basketball.

Edwin Van Clarke, Jr., former Warren Wilson Trustee and parent of alumn **Tripp Clarke '89**, died on Sunday, January 5, 2020. Clarke had a very successful career with Westinghouse, rising from sales engineer in the Detroit lamp division to president of the multi-billion-dollar Industry Products division with 22,000 employees. In 1979, he was awarded the Westinghouse order of merit, the corporation's highest award for individual achievement. He served on the Westinghouse management committee, the top policy-making body of the corporation. He was active on many boards, including Provident Insurance, National Steel of Mishawaka, JA Jones, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, as well as President of the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce. His family and faith were the foundations for his life. He was a tireless worker and above anything else believed in "doing what was right and not what's popular."



▲ **Russell Dean Zumstein '47** died on April 21, 2020. Russell began as a student at Warren Wilson after his sophomore year of high school. Zumstein left briefly to serve his country during World War II but returned to complete his education. Zumstein played football, baseball, and basketball along with working on various building projects around the campus. Zumstein was also joined by his younger brother, **Don Zumstein '51**, who completed his education at Warren Wilson and went on to a career as a pilot in the U.S. Air Force. Russell Zumstein met his wife **Mary Pauline "Polly" (Gosnell) Zumstein '47**, who grew up locally in Swannanoa and attended the Junior College. Polly also played basketball and worked on campus in various functions. They dated, fell in love, and got married on campus in The Elizabeth Williams Chapel. Upon graduation, Zumstein took a job with Carolina Power & Light, now Duke Energy, and worked there for 42 years while raising two children, Gary and Janice. Polly Zumstein passed away in 2002. The Zumstein family have always had a special place in their hearts for Warren Wilson College. Zumstein established the first athletic endowment to support the Men's and Women's Basketball programs. In addition, the family established a scholarship in Russell and Don Zumstein's names and dedicated a room to them in Myron Boon Hall, the new academic building that replaced Carson Hall.

As of July 13, 2020

ASHEVILLE FARM SCHOOL

Alex C. "Punchy" McNeill '42
November 26, 2019

ASHEVILLE NORMAL AND TEACHERS COLLEGE

Frances (Tomblin) Mann '41
June 5, 2020

Martha Elizabeth "Libby" Curtis '43
November 28, 2019

Helen Hensley '43
November 8, 2019

WARREN WILSON HIGH SCHOOL

Jackie Stamey '47
December 23, 2019

Russell Dean Zumstein '47
April 21, 2020

Nathan H. "Sharpie" Sharp '52
September 24, 2019

Mary Henry '54
February 6, 2020

Samuel E. Ray '56
January 10, 2020

WARREN WILSON JUNIOR COLLEGE

Carl Eugene "Gene" Mills '47
April 30, 2020

Christa Freeman '49
May 8, 2020

Ki Sub Joung '56
February 5, 2020

David M. Brodrick '57
November 1, 2019

Sara Rebecca York '58
November 21, 2019

William E. "Bill" Gumm '60
September 3, 2019

William N. "Bill" Combs '61
August 26, 2019

Nola Franklin '61
April 25, 2020

Sylvia P. Carter '63
October 2, 2019

Samuel Ann "Sam" Wagoner '65
February 17, 2020

Elizabeth Good '66
September 13, 2019

WARREN WILSON COLLEGE

Shirley Hise '72
October 1, 2019

John D. Spence '73
October 27, 2019

Martha Eloise Styles '73
February 8, 2020

Gustavo Adolfo "Gus" Villar '75
January 20, 2020

Peter Lorenz '76
March 25, 2020

Maryland Gayle O'Dell '87
January 29, 2020

Leonardo A. "Leo" Zapata '88
June 24, 2020

Britta Joanna Dedrick '93
October 16, 2019

Stephen Michael Surles '99
March 20, 2020

Jason Nicolas Clements '15
October 4, 2019

Jarred Anthony White '18
May 10, 2020

Leilah Mirit Cohen '19
March 20, 2020

EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, TRUSTEES, AND FRIENDS

Ed Anderson
November 6, 2019

Richard E. Burdette
December 6, 2019

Edwin V. Clarke
January 5, 2020

F. Deborah (Eid) Johnson
February 24, 2020

Paul L. Fleisig
February 6, 2020

Martha Guy
October 12, 2019

Dorothy Herbert
November 23, 2019

Joseph M. "Joe" Lalley
August 2, 2019

Wayne Lang
May 19, 2020

Lisel Mueller
February 21, 2020

Kathryn Preyer
August 31, 2019

Harry R. Robbins
October 18, 2019

Carroll P. Rogers
August 29, 2019

Katherine C. "Kat" Rorison
February 15, 2020

Ava Spencer
August 20, 2019

Ray Stock
July 12, 2020

Pete Tolleson
May 1, 2020

Willie Warren
September 7, 2019

Steven A. "Steve" Williams
December 18, 2019



Photo taken in Trinity and Emma's room, prior to the COVID-19 outbreak that necessitated students return to their off-campus homes. Photo by Iman Amini '23

Roommates From Afar

By Erika Orman Callahan

Emma Strong '22 and Trinity Esola '22 first "met" virtually in the Warren Wilson Class of 2022 Facebook group the summer before their first year, and they quickly connected over shared interests. Only a few weeks later, they learned that they had coincidentally been paired as roommates. They both had taken a gap year after high school and were assigned to live together in Archie Sutton Residence Hall, the hall newly designated for gap year students. In their first year living together, Emma and Trinity continued to discover common hobbies, including a passion for cooking "wholesome but not too snobby" foods like kitchari (a mung-bean stew) and roasted curry potatoes. Their first year also included learning—and accepting—one another's habits, such as Trinity's tendency to rearrange their entire room multiple times per semester.

Over time, they developed a deep friendship and mutual trust and decided to be roommates again for their sophomore year in 2019-2020. Everything was going swimmingly in their Schafer A suite until March, when precautions against COVID-19 necessitated that campus residence halls close for the semester.

So, how can two students be "roommates" while living apart during a global health crisis? For Emma and Trinity, it meant texting regularly, video calling every other day, and of course, sharing the best memes they came across. From their respective self-isolation locations in Maine and upstate New York, they still supported each other as if they were sharing a room.

Trinity and Emma eagerly await the day when they can return to Warren Wilson and sunbathe in their favorite campus spot on the banks of the Swannanoa River. Until then, they will keep each other—and the College—close to their hearts.



Warren Wilson COLLEGE

P.O. BOX 9000
ASHEVILLE, NC 28815-9000

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“None of us know when our time is up. All we can do is live in the now. Something about making a paper boat this morning, walking down to the campus stream that was re-carved to mimic Mother Nature’s original route, and finally setting it to sail... renewed the importance of being present.

In these uncertain times, in this ‘Uncharted Territory’... I hope we come away with the knowledge that we may come into this world alone and leave it alone, but during the time in between we are lucky to have each other.”

— Professor of Art Lara Nguyen, on her inspiration for the cover art.

Read her full remarks at:

warren-wilson.edu/owlandspade2020



SUSTAINABILITY

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