

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# reach

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

Driven to Discover

## **THE ART OF LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI**

Story and special art poster

## **BUILDING THE FUTURE OF CLA**

An interview with Dean James A. Parente, Jr.

## **BEYOND BORDERS**

It takes a village (of scholars) to study global migration

SUMMER 2009

# summer contents

## Features

- 8 **BUILDING THE FUTURE OF CLA**  
CLA's new dean, James A. Parente, Jr., talks about how the college will thrive in the 21st century. Interview by Mary Pattock
- 11 **THE ART OF LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI – SPECIAL ART POSTER**  
An MFA student helps Twin Cities teens draw new meaning from life by the river.  
By Mary Pattock
- 16 **BEYOND BORDERS**  
Great migrations are continuously changing our world. To get a handle on a topic this vast, CLA scholars must cross borders of a different kind. By Joe Kimball
- 20 **CONNECTING COMMON CHORDS**  
His passion is partnership. David Myers, the School of Music's new director, wants to "connect education with the rich world of music as it exists in real life."  
By Mary Ann Feldman

## Departments

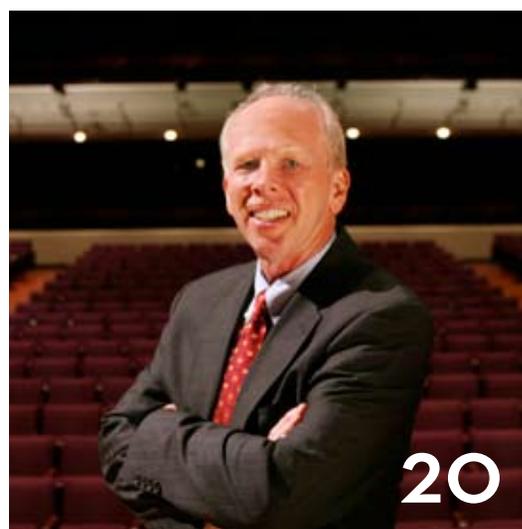
- 2 **FIELD OF INQUIRY**
- 15 **MARGIN OF EXCELLENCE**  
Environmental Justice expert David Pellow holds new Martindale Chair.  
By Greg Breining
- 24 **ON A PERSONAL NOTE**
- 25 **SUPPORTING CLA**  
Graduation: with smarts, grit...and a load of debt? By Mary K. Hicks

### ON THE COVER

"Story boats" on the Mississippi (see page 11). Photo by Laura Corcoran Mahnke



# reach



The Magazine of the College of Liberal Arts  
University of Minnesota  
Summer 2009

DEAN  
James A. Parente, Jr.

CHIEF OF STAFF  
Jennifer Cieslak

DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT  
Mary K. Hicks

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MEDIA & PUBLIC  
RELATIONS, AND REACH EDITOR  
Mary Pattock

DESIGN  
Kelly MacWilliams

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS  
Greg Breining  
Mary Ann Feldman  
Jodi Gustafson  
Mary K. Hicks  
Joe Kimball  
Mary Pattock

PHOTOGRAPHY  
Everett Ayoubzadeh  
Kelly MacWilliams  
Laura Corcoran Mahnke  
Rodrigo Zamith

PRINTING  
John Roberts

REACH is published twice a year for alumni, donors,  
and friends of the College of Liberal Arts.  
© 2009 Board of Regents of the University  
of Minnesota

Send all correspondence to the editor:  
CLA Office of Media and Public Relations  
University of Minnesota  
115 Johnston Hall, 101 Pleasant St. S.E.  
Minneapolis, MN 55455

EMAIL: [clareach@umn.edu](mailto:clareach@umn.edu)  
CLA ONLINE: [www.cla.umn.edu](http://www.cla.umn.edu)

This publication is available in alternative  
formats on request. Please call 612-624-0812.  
The University of Minnesota is an equal opportunity  
educator and employer.

REACH costs approximately \$.61 to produce and mail.



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

Student Allison Witham and Tony Kushner

## ANGELS AUTHOR TONY KUSHNER IS NOW “DOCTOR”

One of the great figures of American theater and literature, playwright Tony Kushner, received a University of Minnesota Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree this spring. The degree is the highest honor conferred by the University.

He was nominated by faculty members from the English and American studies departments and the Center for Jewish Studies.

“Kushner’s work is a call to struggle for justice, for responsibility, and for love,” said Riv-Ellen Prell, former chair of the University’s Department of American Studies and an affiliate faculty member in Jewish studies. “In his work devoted to the experiences of gay men and lesbians, Jews, outsiders, men and women of color, and those without power . . . Tony Kushner changed American theater and became one of the great voices of the citizen-artist of our century.”

Dean Jim Parente called Kushner “a man who represents the soul of the liberal arts—or, we might say, the liberating arts,” because he “holds a mirror to our human experience.”

In 1993 Kushner received a Pulitzer Prize for his play, *Angels in America*. He was in the Twin Cities this spring for the world premiere of his work, *The Intelligent Homosexual’s Guide to Capitalism and Socialism with a Key to the Scriptures*, at the Guthrie Theater.

In its history, the University has awarded only 47 other honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degrees. Recipients include Frank Gehry, Dominick Argento, Yanni, Merce Cunningham, Thomas Friedman, Gwendolyn and Jacob Lawrence, James Rosenquist, Charles Schulz, Robert Penn Warren, and August Wilson.



## CAN IMMIGRATION HISTORY HELP CONTAIN SWINE FLU?

Researchers at CLA’s Immigration History Research Center (IHRC) are opening a window onto the pandemic flu of 1918 and how it was transmitted within a specific ethnic community. Their findings may well hold clues to containing the spread of H1N1 (swine) flu.

Using Ukranian Fraternal Association documents ranging from correspondence to insurance policies, the researchers are creating a database that will reveal social patterns associated with the spread of the flu. Health scientists will study the data to see what patterns could be modified in the interest of containing diseases like swine flu.

The documents had been inaccessible to most researchers because they were written almost entirely in Ukranian. IHRC researchers are translating and digitizing records from 1918 to 1920 as part of the Ukranian American Health, Mortality and Demography Project, which is funded by the University’s Minnesota Population Center.

Why records from a fraternal organization? Haven Hawley, IHRC acting director, says such groups were often the only institutional providers of assistance for new immigrants. Among other things, they tracked mortality and health, villages of origin, changes in family size, and type of occupation.

The IHRC is seeking a grant to expand the project back to 1911 and across the 20th century.

Read more at <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/flu>



### TEENS SPEED-DATING LANGUAGES

CLA—home to around 40 language programs—hosted nearly 2,000 students from 25 Minnesota high schools during World Languages Day on May 19. It was a fast-paced affair. Students attended three 40-minute classes in or about one of 24 different languages: Arabic, ASL, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, ESL, French, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Hmong, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Latin, Norwegian, Ojibwe, Persian, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Swahili, and Turkish.

Already studying second languages in their high schools, students came from communities as close as Minneapolis and as far away as Pillager to explore language opportunities at the University.

### “CRITICAL LANGUAGE” STUDENTS GET STATE DEPARTMENT SUPPORT

Eleven CLA students are spending the summer overseas as part of a federal government effort to dramatically increase the number of Americans who are proficient in what it deems “critical languages.” Eight of the 11 languages are taught in CLA: Arabic, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, Persian, Russian, Turkish, and Urdu.

The Department of State’s Critical Language Scholarships for Intensive Summer Institutes Program, launched in 2006, sends students to participate in intensive language and cultural study institutes in countries where the targeted languages are spoken.

Recipients are expected to continue their language study beyond the scholarship period and apply their critical language skills in their careers—which, in the case of the U of M winners, range from neuroscience to linguistics, anthropology to public affairs.

See the full list of awardees, their majors, and the languages they are studying at: <http://cla.umn.edu/teachResearch/students.php>

## LORD OF THE FOSSILS MAKES IT A HOBBIT

Maybe J.R.R. Tolkien was on to something. Fossilized skeletons found in Indonesia in 2003 that resemble his famous “hobbits” turn out to be the remains of a hitherto unknown species in humanity’s evolutionary chain that lived at the same time as our very own ancestors.

That is the finding of anthropology assistant professor Kieran McNulty—named this year a McKnight Land-Grant Professor—and his colleague Karen Baab of Stony Brook University in New York, published online in the *Journal of Human Evolution*. The researchers used cutting-edge 3D modeling methods to compare the cranial features of the 18,000-year-old *Homo floresiensis* with those of a simulated fossil human of similar size to determine conclusively if the species was distinct from modern humans—and it was.

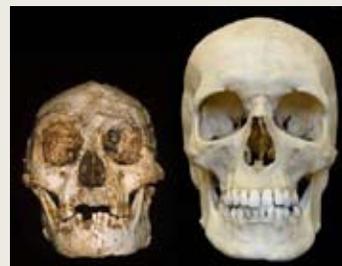
[*Homo floresiensis*] is “the most exciting discovery in perhaps the last 50 years,” says McNulty. “The specimens have skulls that resemble something that died a million years earlier, and other body parts are reminiscent of our three-million-year-old human ancestors, yet they lived until very recently—contemporaries with modern humans.”

One theory is that the species underwent a process of size reduction after branching off from *Homo erectus*, one of modern-day humanity’s ancestors, an even more primitive species.

Learn more about the “hobbit fossils” at: <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/hobbit>



KELLY MACWILLIAMS



PETER BROWN / NATURE

Only three feet tall, *Homo floresiensis* had a brain about one-third of the size of a human’s, but was still able to make stone tools. Professor McNulty and his colleague established that the species was distinct from *Homo sapiens*.

## LEARNING MORE THAN SHE THOUGHT POSSIBLE

ELLIE LIJEWSKI IS RESEARCHING THE EFFECT OF ANTI-DRUG ADVERTISING ON TEENAGERS.



RODRIGO ZAMITH

A J-School freshman, Ellie Lijewski joined professors in a research project: (left to right behind her), Professor Ron Faber, Assistant Professor Marco Yzer, Professor Bruce Cuthbert, and Associate Professor Angus MacDonald.

She wasn't a professor or a Ph.D. student, but a freshman in the School of Journalism.

Last year Ellie Lijewski and 44 other students received CLA Freshman Research Awards that enabled them to work on research projects with faculty and graduate students. CLA hand-matches students and their mentors to create the best possible partnerships.

Lijewski's team includes professors and grad students from advertising, psychology, and marketing. "We have been measuring the perceived and actual effectiveness of anti-drug ads," she explained. "We are also trying to explain the effects of weak ads versus strong ads and why anti-drug ads sometimes are ineffective or even counter-effective." The study is funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse.

How valuable is the experience? Says Lijewski, "I'm learning how to work with people who don't even necessarily speak the same academic language, how to solve problems, and how to go about designing and testing unprecedented topics and procedures, all on a deadline. I've discovered that it takes a huge amount of effort to set up studies and recruit volunteers. The most important thing to me, however, is that I am getting this experience so early in my academic career . . . . The relationships and networks I am forging through this experience are priceless. I'm learning more than I thought possible, and it's more rewarding than I ever thought it could be."

*Find out more about Ellie Lijewski's research at <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/lijewski>*

## FIRST IN THE NATION—AGAIN

The nation's first American Indian studies department hosted the nation's first Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) conference this May.

To honor the 40th anniversary of the University of Minnesota's Department of American Indian Studies, NAISA invited more than 600 scholars from the Americas and as far away as Taiwan, Australia, Czech Republic, Israel, and Norway to its first conference, in Minneapolis.

Before 1969, studies of Native Americans were scattershot and held mostly in anthropology departments. With the creation of the

University's department, there was finally a place dedicated to the study of native languages—in this case, Minnesota's Dakota and Ojibwe—as well as Indian culture, history, education, and other topics.

Since then, American Indian studies have exploded across the United States and Canada; there are now almost 120 programs and departments in the United States and Canada, not counting the 32 tribal colleges.

The May conference was a milestone. "It used to be that while we would read each other's research, we never came together. Finally, we will

be working less in isolation and instead sharing our commonalities and similar professional challenges," said Jean O'Brien, an associate professor and former chair of the Department of American Indian Studies and member of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe.

*To learn more about the conference, go to <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/naisa>*



## CLINT EASTWOOD AND ME

If you've seen the movie *Gran Torino*, you've seen Bee Vang. He's the 17-year-old who co-starred with Clint Eastwood in the hit film about reform and redemption across cultures and generations.

A senior this fall at Armstrong High School in Plymouth, Minnesota, Vang nevertheless attends the University full-time through Minnesota's Post Secondary Enrollment Option (PSEO) program, which allows high school juniors or seniors to earn college credit, tuition-free, while in high school.

Although *Gran Torino* is set in Michigan, it was inspired by the Hmong community in inner-ring Minneapolis suburbs. Vang, who is Hmong, lives in one of those suburbs—Robbinsdale. He won out over some 2,000 competitors for the role of Thao, whom the Eastwood character, Walt Kowalski, tries to reform, and who ultimately helps Kowalski along the path of his own redemption.

Vang says the acting experience is much harder than he thought it would be . . . and life-changing. It made him more self-aware, his voice and actions stronger and more confident. "Being an actor helped me be sensitive to every detail of my actions. We do so many things unconsciously. For example, you don't realize that if you breathe in when you wave your hand, it shows a different emotion than if you breathe out."



COURTESY OF BEE VANG

Bee Vang, fourth from left with Clint Eastwood behind him, and other actors on the set of *Gran Torino*.

It also broadened his thinking about the future. "I was definitely heading into the science field, but [being in the movie] helped me rekindle my love for the arts."

He's already earned 30 college credits through PSEO, and will return to the University this fall

as a high-school senior. Last spring he took a PSEO class in fundamentals of performance, and he plans to study film this fall, in addition to anthropology, karate, and journalism.

"PSEO is an amazing program," he says, that lets him "get education beyond high school during high school. It helped me find myself quicker. It is helping me find out what I am passionate about. I'm glad to be here, to live in Minnesota."

And what's the scoop on Clint Eastwood? "He was a sweetheart," says Vang. "He is charming, down-to-earth, humble. It makes me so happy that he chose Hmong to play Hmong instead of just any Asians. We got to portray ourselves."

## DAVID NOBLE RETIRES



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

American Studies faculty honored David Noble with an American Indian "Chief Joseph" blanket.

He co-authored the first multicultural history of the United States. He taught brilliantly, memorably. Supervised 100-plus doctoral dissertations. Influenced the development of American studies at the University and nationwide. Reshaped scholarship in American and cultural history, literature, women's studies, race theory. Wrote nine books, retired, is writing his tenth book.

Did you catch that he retired? Professor David Noble did retire this spring, legendary and lauded, after more than 50 years of scholarship and teaching. But his work continues, as he focuses full bore on a new book, which some of his colleagues are predicting will be his most important. Its working title: "Is the Global Marketplace the Last New World? Economists, Literary Critics and Ecologists Debate the End of History."

Celebrating the retirement were students, colleagues, family, and friends at an event that was variously happy, serious, funny, and poignant, and featured a panel of former students.

Dean Jim Parente spoke to Noble's career as a scholar and educator: "He could chair the American studies department or impersonate Richard Nixon, write books or pack an auditorium. He could attack a problem with full academic rigor, or—as former student Nan Enstad, now at Wisconsin-Madison, says, 'create a warmer space to form a community of scholars.' David, you have made a difference here in more ways than we can count or imagine."

Read more about David Noble: <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/noble>

## HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM HELPS HMONG FAMILIES FIND PEACE



Hmong refugees remaining in Thailand sent images of the desecration of loved ones' graves to family and friends in the Twin Cities.

Wat Tham Krabok is a Buddhist monastery located in the rolling plains of central Thailand, about two hours north of Bangkok. In 1992 it became a refuge for some 15,000 Hmong people who had supported the United States during the Vietnam War and would no longer be safe under communist rule in their native Laos. Many who lived at the monastery eventually relocated in the Twin Cities—home to the largest urban Hmong population in the nation.

Three years ago, word began to spread that more than 900 Hmong graves located on monastery grounds had been desecrated. Refugees

remaining in Thailand sent videotape to Twin Cities friends and family showing in graphic detail the remains of loved ones being dismembered, boiled, thrown into open graves, and burned. Two bodies were reported displayed in a mini shrine at a shopping mall—for good luck. The reason given by the Thai government for the disinterment had to do with water quality.

The desecrations were more than horrifying. In the Hmong religion, the spirit of a deceased person who is not properly buried will wander for eternity, never reaching its ancestors, never reincarnating in the world of the living, interrupting the cycle of life.

Members of the community approached the University for help, and CLA's Human Rights Program, which is part of the Institute for Global Studies, responded. Program director Professor Barbara Frey organized a town hall meeting at which the 20 students in her human rights internship class and two Hmong graduate students collected statements from 159 aggrieved families. Taking the position that families have a human right to honor their dead, they forwarded the statements with a formal complaint to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

In December, James Anaya, U.N. Special Rapporteur on Human Rights and Indigenous Issues, held a public hearing at Coffman Union on the Minneapolis campus. Several hundred people attended; the testimony was moving. Anaya described the accounts as "assault to culture, assault to a people." In addition to reporting his findings and his recommendations to the U.N. Human Rights Council, he committed working to resolve cultural differences that led to this violation and ensure that it will not happen again.

Frey says that the Human Rights Program, on behalf of the Hmong families, is seeking a three-part resolution from the Thai government: a declaration that the rights of an indigenous community have been violated, the opportunity to reclaim the bodies, and reparations for expenses related to either reclaiming the body or paying for ceremonies to put family spirits at peace.

Grave desecration is not a problem unique to Hmong people. It has also been experienced by the Bahá'í in Iran, Jews worldwide, and Native Americans in the U.S.

*Watch a video and read more:*  
<http://reach.cla.umn.edu/hmonggraves>

## FACULTY & STAFF

**JAMES DILLON**, music, was honored with a film about his work, *Traumwerk [Dreamwork]*, *Book 1 for Violin Duo*; the film won the 2008 Annual German Record Critics' Award for film and sound production.

**JOHN FREEMAN**, political science, was named a Fellow of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences. He also won the Gosnell Prize for Excellence in Political Methodology.

**BARBARA FREY**, Human Rights Program, received the 2008 Don and Arvonne Fraser Award from the Advocates for Human Rights.

**MICHAEL GOLDMAN**, sociology, global studies, received the 2008 Best Book Prize from the Political Economy of the World-System Section of the American Sociological Association.

**JO-IDA HANSEN**, psychology, received the Society of Vocational Psychology's Lifetime Achievement Award. She is only the fourth recipient of the award—the society's highest honor—in 57 years.

**BILL IACONO**, psychology, received the National Institute of Health MERIT (Method to Extend Research in Time) award, and a Distinguished Scientist Award from the Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology.

**ELLEN KENNEDY**, Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies, received the Anne Frank Center USA Outstanding Citizen Award.

**TIM KEHOE**, economics, was named Doctor Honoris Causa by the Universidade de Vigo, Spain.

**NITA KREVANS**, classical and Near Eastern studies, won the 2009 award for teaching excellence from the Classical Association of the Midwest and South.

**J. BRUCE OVERMIER**, psychology, received the American Psychological Foundation's Arthur W. Staats Award/Lecture for Unifying Psychology.

**ANDREW OXENHAM**, psychology, won the 2009 National Academy of Sciences Troland Research Award.

**CARLA RAHN PHILLIPS**, history, was named a Knight of Spain's Order of Isabella the Catholic, in recognition of her research and teaching on Spain and its overseas connections.

**T. MYCHAEL RAMBO**, theatre arts and dance, was awarded a Regional Emmy® Award in the Community/Public Service Campaign category by the National Television Academy's Upper Midwest Chapter.

## STUDENTS WIN TOP AWARDS

Congratulations to CLA students who won prestigious national and international scholarships in 2009.

**DUSTIN CHACÓN**, linguistics, was one of 18 students nationwide to receive a Beinecke scholarship for graduate studies in the arts, humanities, or liberal arts.

Of the 14 U of M students to win Fulbright grants, 11 were from CLA. The grants support a year of study, research, teaching, or creative work in another country. Graduate students are: **RYAN CHELESE ALANIZ**, sociology, who will go to Honduras; **CLELIA ANNA MANNINO**, psychology, Italy; **ASHLEY MCKIM OLSTAD**, Germanic studies, Germany; **DREW ANTHONY THOMPSON**, history, Mozambique. Undergraduates are **ALIA EL BAKRI**, political science, Jordan; **DANIEL GROTH**, English, South Korea; **CARMEN PRICE**, English and German studies, Germany; **ZACHARY SAATHOFF**, violin performance, Austria; **JENNA ROSE SMITH**, English and cinema & media culture, South Korea; **JILLIAN STEIN**, Spanish studies and speech-language-hearing sciences, Spain; **ANTONI TANG**, marketing and African American and African studies, Venezuela; **ANH TRAN**, neuroscience and psychology, United Kingdom.

**ANH TRAN** was also one of 20 students nationwide to be named to the All-USA College Academic Team by *USA Today*, in recognition of excellence in scholarship and reach beyond the classroom to benefit society. **ASHLEY NORD**, physics, astrophysics, and global studies, won a Rhodes scholarship for two years of post-graduate study at Oxford University. **PHILIP BRODEEN**, sociology and American studies, won a Udall Native American Congressional Internship for 10 weeks in the Washington office of South Dakota Representative Stephanie Herseth Sandlin, focusing on tribal public policy.

## J-SCHOOL CELEBRATES GREAT JOURNALISM IN MINNESOTA

The quality of news reporting may be in jeopardy, but the School of Journalism continues to carry the banner for excellence with its annual Frank Premack Public Affairs Journalism Awards.

One of the state's most coveted journalism honors, it celebrates Minnesota newspapers that are doing public affairs journalism in their community or region.

### THIS YEAR'S WINNERS WERE:

*MINNPOST.COM*, THE COLEMAN-FRANKEN RECOUNT  
BY JAY WEINER

*THE BEMIDJI PIONEER*, "HELP FOR CATTLE FARMS"  
BY BRAD SWENSON

*ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS*, "THE DEATH OF SUBJECT 13"  
BY JEREMY OLSON AND PAUL TOSTO

*ROCHESTER POST-BULLETIN*, "MYSTERY ILLNESS"  
BY JEFF HANSEL

*STAR TRIBUNE*, "RESOLUTION NEEDED IN AG CONTROVERSY"  
BY JILL BURCUM

*MORRISON COUNTY RECORD*, "EVERY COUNTY RESIDENT SHOULD BE SADDENED BY TUESDAY'S EVENTS"  
BY TOM WEST

The competition was started to honor Frank Premack, a reporter and editor at the Minneapolis Tribune, who died in 1975.

**JOSÉ-VÍCTOR RÍOS-RULL**, economics, was elected a Fellow of the Econometric Society.

**KAY REYERSON**, history, was elected a Fellow of the Medieval Academy of America.

**MICHAEL SOMMERS**, theater arts and dance, and collaborative arts, won a Bush Foundation Enduring Vision Award.

**GARY SCHWITZER**, journalism, won a Syracuse University Mirror Award, a Knight-Batten Award for Innovations in Journalism, and an e-Healthcare Leadership Award.

### >> UNIVERSITY AWARDS

**ROSE BREWER**, African American and African Studies, was awarded the Ada Comstock Distinguished Women Scholar award/lecture.

Named McKnight Land-Grant Professors this year were: **GIANCARLO CASALE**, history; **ALAN C. LOVE**, philosophy; **KIERAN MCNULTY**, anthropology.

**HELGA LEITNER**, geography and global studies, and **JOSEPHINE LEE**, English and Asian American studies, received the University of Minnesota Alumni Association Graduate-Professional Teaching Award.

**JUDITH A. MARTIN**, geography, received the President's Award for Outstanding Service.

**ELLEN SUNSHINE**, Martin Luther King, Jr. Program, received the John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising.

President's Faculty Multicultural Research Awards went to **ANANYA CHATTERJEA**, theater arts and dance; **KALE FAJARDO**, American and Asian American Studies; **ENID LOGAN**, sociology; **SARAH-JANE (SAJE) MATHIEU**, history; **YUICHIRO ONISHI**, African American and African studies; **TERESA SWARTZ**, sociology.

**LISA SASS ZARAGOZA**, Chicano studies, won the Office of Public Engagement's Outstanding Community Service Award.

### >> CLA AWARDS

**JOHN FREEMAN**, political science, is the 2009 Dean's Medalist.

**SONJA KUFTINEC**, theatre arts and dance, and **C. KENNETH WATERS**, philosophy, were named Scholars of the College.

**CHARLENE HAYES**, global studies, received the CLA Outstanding Service Award.

# Building a Future for CLA

JIM PARENTE, CLA'S NEW DEAN, TALKS ABOUT  
WHAT THE COLLEGE NEEDS TO THRIVE IN THE  
21ST CENTURY: RESEARCH, INTERNATIONALIZATION,  
AND EXCEPTIONAL UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION.



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

JAMES A. PARENTE, JR.  
Dean of the College of Liberal Arts

**NOT LONG AGO THE NEW YORK TIMES RAN A STORY ABOUT THE LIBERAL ARTS, WONDERING IF THEY ARE A LUXURY IN THIS ECONOMY. WHAT DO YOU THINK?**

Actually, they are more viable than ever. First of all, alumni tell me that what they really like about their liberal arts employees is that they are very trainable, can do lots of different things. As old jobs disappear in the age of technology and students prepare for jobs that haven't yet been created or even imagined, versatility will be a life-long career advantage for the liberal arts graduate. >>

On a deeper level, the liberal arts help prepare us for life's most important decisions: What do I want? What am I seeking? Do I imagine my life to be simply one of self-preservation and self-interest, or do I have other aspirations? The liberal arts help us understand our choices ranging from what I want my children to learn in school, to whom I want leading the country, to what my societal responsibilities are.

This year I met with undergraduate students about every three to four weeks—a good cross-section including those guys in the back of the room who don't say anything during class. I wanted them to tell me what's going on, and what they think this is all about. One thing I heard is that sometimes parents, who are very worried about their children, say, "Oh my gosh, you're going to major in philosophy. You've got to be kidding. What are you going to do with that?"—without thinking that philosophy might actually be a superb foundation for many professional schools, certainly for any additional schooling.

So, say you do major in philosophy. If you have been savvy about remaining connected to the world while you are studying this subject—which you find really cool—you put it together with something you're interested in, say, an internship in a business or nonprofit. And you come out prepared for quite an interesting career.

**PRESIDENT BRUININKS'S GOAL IS FOR THE UNIVERSITY TO RANK AMONG THE TOP THREE PUBLIC RESEARCH UNIVERSITIES. HOW DOES CLA CONTRIBUTE TO THAT DIRECTION?**

Substantially. In CLA we have psychologists trying to figure out how the brain processes language. We have a research team working on how adolescents respond to anti-drug ads. By the way, that team includes a CLA undergraduate—we are increasingly opening research experiences to undergrads. And just recently two CLA researchers made national headlines—Gary Schwitzer with his findings



“As the largest liberal arts college in Minnesota we want to provide students the most beneficial, enriching, and academically challenging undergraduate experience possible.”

on the decline of health journalism, and Kieran McNulty with his breakthrough on the “hobbit” fossils of Indonesia. This is all highly significant work.

If I were to compare CLA research with research in the hard sciences, I’d say that rather than looking at the biology of the basic cell, we ask questions, for example, about the ethics of science, about why specific medical protocols are used, about what exactly is health and what is disease. Liberal arts research goes to the essence of humanity itself—who we are as human beings, questions about our societies, political systems, religious beliefs, languages, and philosophical principles.

**YOU’VE BEEN THE DEAN OF CLA FOR ALMOST A YEAR. HOW DO YOU THINK IT SHOULD CHANGE?**

CLA is by far the University’s largest college, with about 16,000 graduate and undergraduate students, roughly 45 percent of the University’s total enrollment. So the more distinguished our programs are, the stronger the entire University becomes. I want our strong departments to remain strong, and those on the cusp to move to a higher level.

Great faculty and students are drawn to us when they know we are top-tier, and when they know about the signature programs that make us unique. For example, if you are in psychology, you know Minnesota is outstanding in that field. If you are in humanities you know there is a really exciting group of people involved in a creative approach to the study of Asia, or in developing a unique position on the study of Islam.

In addition to strengthening our signature programs, we are having discussions about integrating language instruction more intimately with upper-level classes across the college in order to internationalize the curriculum.

**WHAT DO YOU MEAN—“INTERNATIONALIZE THE CURRICULUM”?**

Say a student is majoring in history, and she has also studied Spanish. How can we help her break out of an English-only environment so she can conduct research and work in history in Spanish at her actual academic level? With an internationalized curriculum we could offer that student a course in, say, Latin American history, which would be conducted entirely in the Spanish language.

**SOME COLLEGES OFFER “CORE COURSES” THAT SHOW STUDENTS HOW THE LIBERAL ARTS ARE CONNECTED.**

Yes, we have been talking about this since I was named dean, and a CLA task force is now looking at how we can constitute the curriculum to help students more fully understand what a broad liberal arts education is, and why it is so valuable.

The better we can answer those questions, the more likely it is that students will approach their studies holistically, rather than as specific fields that promise more hope for employment—which is very understandable given the cost of higher education and the reason most kids go to college in the first place. I think when students come to CLA thinking, “I’m going to major in this because it is something I can get a job in,” they shortchange themselves and perhaps close off opportunities to learn about other areas that might be more exciting to them.



“Rarely in your life do you have an opportunity to study as diverse an array of fields as you do here, to open your mind to new experiences and academic fields you didn’t even know existed.”

These four years that students spend at the University are important; rarely in your life do you have an opportunity to study as diverse an array of fields as you do here, to open your mind to new experiences and academic fields you didn’t even know existed.

**THE U HAS A GREAT ARTS PROGRAM—WHAT IS ITS FUTURE?**

CLA has two great advantages in the arts. One is we have outstanding, internationally recognized artists on our faculty,

and the other is we are located in the extraordinarily vibrant arts community of the Twin Cities.

A lot of the arts excitement on campus now comes from innovative thinking about how studio arts and performance arts can collaborate, in partnerships both on campus and in the community. One of our great success stories is the bachelor of fine arts program we offer with the Guthrie Theater. David Myers, our new director of the School of Music, is a national leader in college-community partnerships, and he has a lot of ideas on how we can reach more deeply into the community.

**OTHER CHANGES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE?**

So far I’ve talked about strengthening academic programs. But that’s not by any means the entire story. There is also the actual student experience. As the largest liberal arts college in Minnesota we want to provide our students the most beneficial, enriching, and academically challenging undergraduate experience possible.

We also have an obligation to make the University a national and international player in terms of cultural diversity and the diversity of our students. They need to learn how to understand and benefit from many perspectives. Currently, the number of international applications is up significantly. We need national diversity as well, and we think our signature programs will help draw undergraduates from across the country.

**E-EDUCATION IS A MAJOR TREND.**

Yes, it already represents almost 10 percent of all U of M course offerings. Both faculty and students are highly interested in new media and are using it in all sorts of exciting new ways, and we have a group of faculty and staff studying how to do that.

People associate e-education with serving people who are distant from the campus or who need flexibility, and it certainly does that. But our faculty are very innovative and are integrating new technologies into their on-campus courses as well. For example, they use technology to

present material in formats that accommodate various learning styles, or let students proceed at their own pace. And technology is a connection to the vast resources available online, including contact in real time with experts in various disciplines, or with research partners who may even be in other countries.

E-education also lets us offer courses at specialized or more advanced levels. For example, if a college wanted to offer a course in a less commonly taught language that would not be practical for a single college to teach, one institution could host it and students from two, three, four other institutions could be virtually present by technology.

**DOESN'T COMPUTER LEARNING HAVE ITS LIMITS?**

Every teaching method has its advantages and its limitations. So yes, sometimes there is no substitute for in-person classroom interactions, where there is strong face-to-face human connection. A lot of the learning that goes on in universities happens outside the classroom, with experiences that provide peer support and reinforce classroom learning.

Also, there is the cost factor. Some people think online courses are big money-savers, but they are actually quite expensive. We have to buy, maintain, and constantly upgrade software and hardware. We have to design courses for online presentation, put them online, hire support people, train faculty and staff, and so on.

**SOME PEOPLE MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN WHAT A LIBERAL ARTS DEAN READS IN HIS FREE TIME.**

This year I’ve read several Scandinavian detective novels. Last year I read works about early 20th-century European history starting with Geert Mak’s memoir, *In Europe: Travels Through the Twentieth Century*. I kept thinking about the event of 9/11 that brought to the foreground issues that had not been resolved in the late teens and early 1920s. Those wounds are wide open again, and the West’s inability to bring responsible, sensitive, and deep knowledge to the Middle East in the early 20th century is what we are repeating in the 21st.

It reminds me of what you get with a liberal arts education. The time we take to find out about other people—what is important to them, their history, language, society—helps us deal with very difficult situations—both personal and global.

I try to read some of the latest work in fields represented by our departments and books on higher education in the United States. I also try to keep up with the exciting work our faculty sends me that they have authored themselves.

**BIG PICTURE, WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR THE LIBERAL ARTS?**

The basic one is the need to communicate to students, families, alumni, high school counselors and others a clear sense of how vital the liberal arts are to our society. Without them the world would be bereft of knowledge, imagination and beauty. We’d lack understanding of the past, and of the increasingly complex society we live in today. The liberal arts stimulate our imagination, so we can have dreams for the future. They lay the foundation for higher levels of learning, careers in law, education, health care, public service, business, the arts and more. They help us make sense of our world and give our lives meaning. ∞

Metcalfe designed a way to connect a group of young people to the river, through art. And just as it did for Huck, their encounter with the river left them with a story—a story about where they'd been, a story that had new value and meaning because someone was listening.

She worked with nearly 50 teenagers who had summer jobs either with the "Green Team," a group sponsored by the Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board, the Minnesota Watershed Management Organization and the National Park Service; or with The Conservation Corps and the Garden Corps, hosted by St. Paul's Community Design Center.

During the summer she met with the young people, offering them new ways to understand the river. They learned about watersheds, rain gardens, and pesticides, and studied maps showing how the urban river had changed through history. They made connections between their summer jobs and the health of the river. They considered the river's vital role in their lives, and how it connects them to the millions of people throughout the midsection of the country who also depend on it for survival.

Finally, she invited them to draw and write their own stories about the river; she silk-screened these images onto porcelain clay boats she had molded, which she then fired.

Now there were 50 story boats, each one articulate. One told about its maker's first time on a boat. Another traced a

map of the Upper Mississippi, yet another drew the plants growing in the Conservation Corps' organic garden.

And one pictured a refugee family's perilous escape across Thailand's Mekong river on one side, and their crossing of the Mississippi, in a new land, on the other. "That story was rich and powerful," says Metcalfe. "It brought it all together—the young woman's family, its history, what she is doing in conservation now."

Early one morning at Father Hennepin Park, where the river gorge cuts through downtown Minneapolis, Metcalfe and the students met to ceremonially tell the stories and launch the boats into the water. The Saint Paul group held a similar ceremony at Lake Phalen. They were gestures that made explicit the teens' relationship with the river, and signified their

role in building a community of citizens concerned about the river.

"The project gave the students a chance to talk about the same issues they were dealing with in their jobs, but within the context of art," Metcalfe says. "They were excited to see their drawings turn into objects."

Like Huck Finn's raft, the boats eventually came out of the water. They were exhibited at Homewood Studios, a North Minneapolis space for local artists and their community, where the teens again told their stories, and visitors added their own stories and drawings to the river tales.

And just as it did for Huck, their encounter with the river left them with a story—a story about where they'd been, a story that had new value and meaning because someone was listening. ∞



## YOU ARE INVITED...

### EXHIBITS

**Stories of the Somali Diaspora**  
Photographs by Abdi Roble  
Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum  
Through Sept. 27

**Muslim Spain: Conquest, Expulsion, Legacy, 711-2009**  
Andersen Gallery  
Through Oct. 30

**Encounters: The Past Re-Configured**  
Paintings by Xu Guang and Li Shu  
Nash Gallery  
Sept. 8-Oct. 8

**Celebrating 40 Years of African American Studies and American Indian Studies at the University of Minnesota**  
Andersen Gallery  
Oct. 7-Dec. 5;

**Here and Now**  
Faculty, student and alumni photography, curated by James Henkel  
Nash Gallery  
Oct. 13-Nov. 12

**Talking Suitcases: A New Conversation**  
Suitcases filled with handmade objects that tell stories, curated by Joyce Lyon and Susan Armington  
Nash Gallery  
Nov. 17-Dec/ 17

**Almost Here: Migrations, Dislocations and Borders in art.**  
Nash Gallery  
Jan. 19-Feb. 18

**THE ULTIMATE HOMECOMING**  
2009 Homecoming Exhibition:  
*Through the Years*  
Larson Art Gallery, St. Paul Student Center  
Sept. 21-Oct. 11; Reception Friday, Oct. 2, 7-9 p.m.

**TCF Bank Stadium Tours & University Open House**  
Sunday, Oct. 4, 1-4 p.m.

**Student Scholar Showcase**  
TCF Bank Stadium  
Wed., October 7, 1-4 p.m.

### CONCERTS

**School of Music Convocation**  
Keynote by internationally acclaimed conductor Marin Alsop: "Education and the Arts: Musicians as Engaged Leaders." Alsop will be awarded the Doctor of Humane Letters.  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Tues., Oct. 6, 10 a.m.

**University Symphony Orchestra**  
*Academic Festival Overture*, Johannes Brahms;  
*Symphony No. 1 (Titan)*,  
Gustav Mahler  
Mark Russell Smith, conductor  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Wed., Oct. 7, 7:30 p.m.

**Symphonic Band: Seasons of Change**  
Works by Dmitri Shostakovich and Jonathan Newman.  
Jerry Luckhardt, conductor  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Wed., Oct. 14, 7:30 p.m.

**Jazz Ensemble I**  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Thurs., Oct. 15, 7:30 p.m.  
**Collage Concert**  
More than 300 students and faculty in a musical extravaganza. Works include Leonard Bernstein's "Make Our Garden Grow"  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Sat., Oct. 17, 7:30 p.m.

**University Singers**  
*Symphony of Psalms*, Igor Stravinsky  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Frii., Nov. 13, 7:30 p.m.

**Wind Ensemble: An American Wind Band Spectacular**  
Regional premieres of works by Steven Bryant, Carter Pann, and Joseph Turrin; "Symphonic Dances" from *West Side Story*, Leonard Bernstein  
Craig Kirchoff, conductor  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Tues., Nov. 24, 7:30 p.m.

**Guest and Faculty Recital**  
*Mikka & Mikka "S,"* and *Dikthas*, Iannis Xenakis; *Traumwerk Book III, Del cuarto elemento*, James Dillon

Irvine Arditti, violin and Noriko Kawai, piano  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Sun., Dec. 6; we still need the time for this

**University Symphony Orchestra**  
World premiere performance of Roger Zare's *Aerodynamics* for Orchestra (Winner of the 2009 Craig and Janet Swan Composer Prize); *New Morning for the World*, Joseph Schwantner; *Symphony No. 3 (Eroica)*, Ludwig van Beethoven  
Mark Russell Smith, conductor  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Wed., Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m.

### OPERA

**Stravinsky in Paris!**  
*Le Renard, Mavra*, and *Le Rossignol*, Igor Stravinsky  
School of Music students conducting  
Ted Mann Concert Hall  
Thurs., Nov. 19-Sat., Nov. 21, 7:30 p.m.;  
Sun., Nov. 22, 1:30 p.m.  
Tickets: \$20/\$10 U of M students;  
2-for-1 U of M students, faculty, staff  
612-624-2345 or [www.tickets.umn.edu](http://www.tickets.umn.edu)

### DANCE

**Dance Revolutions**  
Rarig Center, Whiting Proscenium Theatre  
Fri., Dec. 11, 7:30 p.m.;  
Sat., Dec. 12, 8 p.m.;  
Sunday, Dec. 13, 2 p.m.  
Tickets \$7-17; [www.theatre.umn.edu](http://www.theatre.umn.edu),  
or 612-624-2345; \$2 more at the door

### THEATER

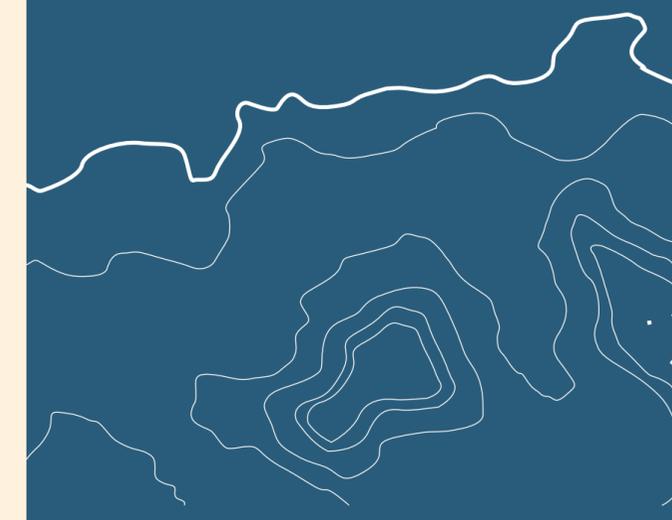
**Big Love**  
Rarig Center, Proscenium Theatre  
Includes adult scenes and brief nudity  
Oct. 16-24  
Tickets \$7-17; 612-624-2345 or  
[www.theatre.umn.edu](http://www.theatre.umn.edu),

For a complete listing of news and events visit us online at:  
<http://cla.umn.edu/news/events.php>

ADMISSION TO ALL EVENTS FREE EXCEPT AS NOTED



TOP: TEENS LAUNCH "STORY BOATS"  
BOTTOM ROW, IN PROFILE: MFA STUDENT ANNA METCALFE



POSTER INSIDE >>

# THE Art OF LIFE ON THE MISSISSIPPI

By Mary Pattock

"SO, IN TWO SECONDS, AWAY WE WENT, A-SLIDING DOWN THE RIVER, AND IT DID SEEM SO GOOD TO BE FREE AGAIN AND ALL BY OURSELVES ON THE BIG RIVER AND NOBODY TO BOTHER US."

—ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN, MARK TWAIN

It was probably inevitable that Huck Finn, the 13-year-old hero of the Great American Novel, sought freedom and a new life on the Mississippi. After all, it was and still is the country's mainstem river, connecting it North and South, dividing it East and West, and providing major geographical and historical coordinates—not to mention fruitful metaphors for writers and ordinary folks alike.

Teenagers today are no less eager than Huckleberry Finn was to find meaning in their lives. But today's world, unlike Huck's, can be such that those who live on the Great River may not be very aware of it. In fact, as Anna Metcalfe, artist and environmentalist, found out, some may never have even seen the Mississippi, much less been invited to consider what meaning it may have for their lives.

So it was that in the final year of her master's of fine arts program, Metcalfe designed a way to connect a group of young people to the river, through art.





PHOTO: LAURA CORCORAN MAHNKE

*Create your life's meaning*



COLLEGE of LIBERAL ARTS  
UNIVERSITY of MINNESOTA

## ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE EXPERT DAVID PELLOW HOLDS NEW MARTINDALE ENDOWED CHAIR

Talking with Department of Sociology chair Chris Uggen, you get the impression that last year's hunt for a new sociology professor was a bit of a feeding frenzy. Competition for candidates was ferocious—not only from other public universities, but also from well-funded private schools, “the Yales of the world,” Uggen says. “There's intense market pressure in the social sciences right now.”

Fortunately, the department was able to offer a powerful inducement—an endowed chair funded by Edith Martindale, the widow of long-time faculty member Don Martindale.

“The Martindale chair really provides that margin of excellence we need to maintain our position in the discipline,” Uggen says. “In this case we were able to recruit a real rising star and make it especially attractive for him to come to Minnesota.”

That recruit was David Pellow, a young sociologist from the University of California—San Diego who has written extensively on environmental justice. The hire of that emerging talent, Uggen says, has strengthened the department, adding to its reputation for cutting-edge, real-world research, and enhancing teaching.

“This is someone who is right now advancing the field of environmental justice studies by leaps and bounds,” says Uggen.

### HONORING A RENAISSANCE SCHOLAR

The story of the endowed chair—the department's first—began in February 2008, with the gift from Edith Martindale, then 92, of \$2 million. Mrs. Martindale shies from the limelight but makes her aim clear—to support a faculty position to further the legacy of her husband, a mainstay of the sociology department for 35 years.

Don Martindale arrived at the University in 1948 as an assistant professor, and became a leading spokesman for social behaviorism. He wrote about social theory, social stratification, and the sociology of culture, knowledge, and art. An enthusiastic theorist, Martindale was by all accounts also a captivating speaker and lecturer.

“He was a bit of a renaissance scholar,” says Uggen. “It's certainly rare for somebody today to

have the range that Don Martindale had.”

Perhaps Martindale's greatest legacy was his students. He advised 78 Ph.D. and more than 200 master's graduates during his career—one of the highest totals of any professor in University history. He and Edith often invited students to their Shoreview home overlooking Lake Owasso.

Martindale retired in 1983. He died two years later of a heart attack.

### ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE TO IMPROVE THE WORLD

“In my view, part of Don's intellectual legacy is in those students.

He taught many generations,” Uggen says. “I would like to think he would very much like the direction the department has taken in the last decade. Our alumni have been getting excellent jobs in world-class universities. We've nurtured the graduate program, which I know he would have appreciated. Also the intellectual diversity on the faculty has just blossomed and bloomed.”

Pellow's field of expertise, environmental justice, concerns the downside of many environmental issues that fall disproportionately on poor people, communities of color, and poverty-stricken nations, who increasingly protest becoming dumping grounds for the wealthy.

Pellow's work, Uggen says, reflects the department's attitude toward research—“the sort of work that makes a real difference in the world.”

That's how Pellow sees it, too. “What really keeps me going is being able to connect what's going on in my research to what's going on in the classroom, to what's going on off campus,” he says. Sociology is “not only understanding and explaining social institutions in the world around us, but also ultimately improving and changing the world.”

His books include *Garbage Wars: The Struggle for Environmental Justice in Chicago*, a study of how and why the city's landfills and toxic waste dumps were sited most often in low-income communities and communities of color;



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

PROFESSORS DAVID PELLOW AND DON MARTINDALE (INSET)

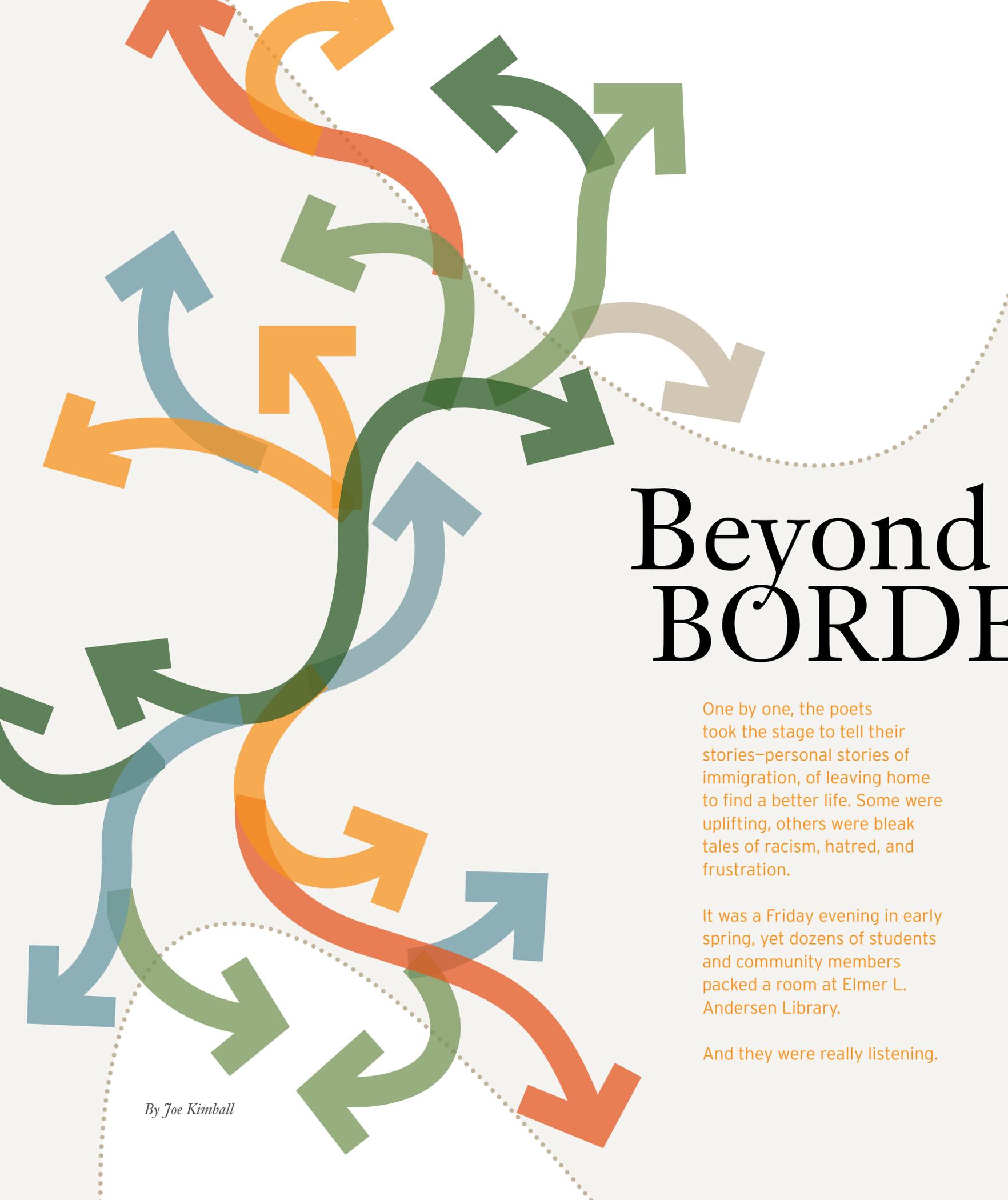
and his most recent work, *Resisting Global Toxics: Transnational Movements for Environmental Justice*, which examines how income disparities force hazardous waste and unsustainable industries on poor nations.

Pellow and faculty member Lisa Sun-Hee Park are currently conducting research for a book on immigration and labor conflicts in glitzy Aspen and the rest of Colorado's Roaring Fork Valley. “What surprises a lot of people is how strong the effect of race continues to be,” he says. In many cities, “Southeast Asians and Latin Americans are really bearing the brunt of many of these siting decisions.”

He plans to soon begin research on how the effects of global climate change are likely to be distributed among communities and nations rich and poor.

Pellow expects these issues to become even more critical, and says the support of an endowment will be of tremendous value to his work. “I'm able to hire research assistants. That in turn professionalizes and trains the research staff and helps them in their careers. It provides me with a lot I wouldn't have had. I'm really grateful.” ∞

Watch DAVID PELLOW'S MARTINDALE lecture at <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/pellow>

A decorative graphic on the left side of the page features several thick, curved arrows in shades of orange, green, and blue. These arrows are arranged in a complex, overlapping pattern, some pointing upwards and others downwards. A dotted line follows the path of the arrows, curving around them. The background is a light, neutral color.

# Beyond BORDE

One by one, the poets took the stage to tell their stories—personal stories of immigration, of leaving home to find a better life. Some were uplifting, others were bleak tales of racism, hatred, and frustration.

It was a Friday evening in early spring, yet dozens of students and community members packed a room at Elmer L. Andersen Library.

And they were really listening.

*By Joe Kimball*

**S**ome were students in a course on immigration; one said the gritty and realistic accounts were almost more than she could bear. But that is the kind of reaction that professors anticipated. They wanted to extend students' learning experience beyond the policies and politics of immigration, so students could hear the voices of people who have come here from Africa or Mexico and have thrived—or who were frustrated, even angry.

What better way to supplement the classroom setting?

Weeks later, students were still raving about the event, which was sponsored by several University departments and The Loft Literary Center.

Expanded learning opportunities like this one, as well as a photography exhibit on the Somali diaspora (on display at the Weisman Art Museum through September 27), are among the many fruits of an interdisciplinary initiative at the College of Liberal Arts called Global REM—Global Race, Ethnicity, Migration.

Global REM brings together interested faculty members from all aspects of the humanities, social sciences, and the arts. Research contributions come from all across the University: public health, public policy, law, education and human development, family social science, and medicine. The program is administered through the Institute for Global Studies and the Immigration History Research Center.

Notice the term in the title is *migration*—rather than the more common, United States-centric *immigration*. It frames these broad issues in a way that helps faculty, students—and the broader community—to see that we are living in an age of global migration, and that to really understand it we have to navigate far beyond traditional concepts and academic borders.

In fact, the co-director of Global REM, Donna Gabaccia, a history professor who also directs the Immigration History Research Center, says the initiative's wide-ranging mission involves research, community engagement, and teaching components. It encourages broad, thematic thinking, and transcends the typical curriculum.

The program's research mission is aimed at a highly specialized audience. It can take the form of a lunchtime seminar

in a brown-bag setting where graduate students and faculty talk about their research, or a sponsored research collaboration, perhaps with other universities.

And the poetry reading is one example of how the program engages people in the community in the work of the University. Another example is Gabaccia's next project: looking at how young immigrants and refugees use Facebook, Twitter, and other social networks to communicate and discuss their lives in Minnesota. Members of the immigrant community "are interested in research related to their homelands and often want to know more about visiting scholars from their countries," she says.

### A GROWING TREND

At a place as large and diverse as the University it can be a challenge to connect like-minded people. But initiatives like Global REM that cross disciplinary lines increasingly attract faculty and student interest.

A classic example is American studies—created by University historians and literary scholars more than 60 years ago when they banded together to create one of the nation's first such programs. Today the department, still a national leader, includes faculty from more than a dozen disciplines, from sociology to gender studies, geography to political science to art history.

Besides Global REM and American studies, CLA's robust interdisciplinary roster includes, among others, Chicano, American Indian, Asian American, and African American and African studies, cultural studies and comparative literature, collaborative arts, and gender, women and sexuality studies. In addition, many traditional disciplinary departments have faculty with interdisciplinary interests. Thomas Wolfe, an associate professor of history, says interdisciplinary—or transdisciplinary—programs have gained importance in recent years to respond to an increasingly complex world.

"The academic disciplines look to each other, more and more, for perspectives, and theories and methodologies, as we work to understand society, politics, and cultures," he says.

"There was a time when the disciplines tended to be 'silo-ized,' or compartmentalized, but now we read more broadly. And the trend has been accelerated with globalization. It's hard to say that culture is understandable without politics, or that politics are understandable without society."

Wolfe also believes that students, like faculty, increasingly are seeking opportunities to interact with scholars from other departments but with interests in the same themes and ideas.

# ERS



EVERETT AYOUBZADEH

**DONNA GABACCIA**  
director of the Immigration History  
Research Center and co-director of  
Global REM

“There was a time when the disciplines tended to be ‘silo-ized,’ or compartmentalized, but now we read more broadly. And the trend has been accelerated with globalization. It’s hard to say that culture is understandable without politics, or that politics are understandable without society.”

—Thomas Wolfe, associate professor of history

The University’s early embrace of work that crosses academic borders has put it in the national vanguard. It is the lead institution in the Consortium on Fostering Interdisciplinary Inquiry, a 10-member group of distinguished private and public research universities on a mission to remove barriers to interdisciplinary collaboration. It is looking at issues ranging from funding, to faculty evaluation, to the design of interdisciplinary spaces, to better involvement of students in research projects.

Last fall University President Robert Bruininks told the consortium that despite the current financial climate, interdisciplinary work must be a priority.

#### BUILDING COMMUNITY

Klaas van der Sanden, a program coordinator at the Institute for Global Studies, says Global REM is a product of the ongoing effort to create intellectual communities around broad themes.

In the past, faculty and graduate students with shared interests but different departments might not have found many opportunities for collaboration or discussion. But Global REM, like other CLA interdisciplinary programs, has created a community of interest for those who want to explore outside the commonly accepted boundaries.

Shaden M. Tageldin’s work is a case in point. An assistant professor in the Department of Cultural Studies and Comparative Literature, she is interested in the migrations, not of people, but of ideas.

Last spring she gave a lecture about how liberal Egyptian intellectuals in the early 20th century tried to prove that Egypt was really part of Europe and should “take its place in the family of nations, not in the ranks of the colonized.”

“Broaching a topic like this one—with its unconventional contexts of race and ethnicity and off-beat interpretation of ‘migration’—would be nearly impossible in a program that operates on the typical U.S.- or Euro-centric paradigm of migration and diaspora studies,” she says. Global REM allowed her to extend an invitation to scholars everywhere to rethink race, ethnicity, and migration.

Another recent lecture concerned government openness to immigration, with Crystal Myslajek, a graduate fellow in the Institute for Global Studies, collaborating with a faculty member outside of CLA, Professor Kathy Fennelly of the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs.

Says van der Sanden: “If our goal was to create an intellectual community that brings faculty members together who don’t always know each other, in the perspective of a common interest, then I think it’s going very well.

“Where else would you find a professor interested in salsa dancing collaborating with a professor in American studies with an expertise in blacks in France, putting together a poetry program?”

#### A COORDINATING OCTOPUS

Developed with grant money from the United States Department of Education, Global REM is not a separate center, but a resource to bring faculty together around common research and develop coordinated curriculum, using existing administrative resources.

Its website lists more than 100 faculty, students, and staff members who have participated in seminars or expressed an interest in staying informed on upcoming topics. Their departments run the gamut of University interests.

As a result of the program, there has been more team teaching and co-teaching, and class scheduling that is more sensitive to student needs.

Evelyn Davidheiser, the program’s other co-director, views it as an initiative that makes connections throughout the college, building intellectual strengths, and pulling faculty together around themes that run through major issues of our day. In the coming school year,



**EVELYN DAVIDHEISER**  
director of the Institute for Global Studies and co-director of Global REM

KELLY MACWILLIAMS



according to Gabaccia, the Global REM research seminar will focus on gender, refugees, plural societies, and memory.

And van der Sanden compares it to an octopus—“maybe an octopus without a head, creating connections and synergies within a broad interest.”

### RESOURCES FOR HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

Outreach is another large component of Global REM, emphasizing K-12 teachers. “Race and migration are big topics in the schools, especially teaching them from a global perspective,” says Molly McCoy, outreach coordinator at the Institute for Global Studies.

Last spring she presented teaching modules designed for advanced-placement high school classes in history and social sciences to teachers attending the Minnesota Council for Social Studies conference.

The aim of the modules, prepared by graduate students, is to internationalize the study of race, ethnicity, and migration.

Teachers can learn more about resources and classes at the website: <http://globalrem.umn.edu/teachingmodules>. Videos of Global REM seminars—with closed captions—are available at: <http://www.globalrem.umn.edu/seminarLunchesArchive.php>.

### POETRY FOR THE CLASSES

Back at the immigration poetry performance, students really heard the messages of hope and struggle, says Thien-bao Thuc Phi of The Loft Literary Center, who helped organize the program.

They learned something about art, too. “Students came up to the artists afterward, wanting to learn more,” he says. “They appreciated what the artists were saying. Some said they didn’t really get poetry before, and wanted to explore it more.”

You could describe the event as an effective, interdisciplinary learning experience: a poetry reading, with dimensions of sociology, psychology, political science, and history mixed in.

But the sum of the parts made it even more powerful. In that room, in those moments, the wholeness of human experience came together, and was shared by artists and audience. And that you might describe as transcendent. ∞



ABDI ROBLE

A close-up look at the Somali diaspora—where fleeing residents from that wartorn African country have sought refuge in other lands, including Minneapolis—is another major Global REM initiative.

A year-long series of events, including coursework and lectures, has been built around the work of Abdi Roble and Doug Rutledge, whose book **“THE SOMALI DIASPORA: A JOURNEY AWAY”** <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/somalidiaspora> follows Abdisalem, his wife Ijabo, and their three daughters as they traveled from a Kenyan refugee camp to a new home in the United States. Through photographs and essays, the book looks at the family’s wrenching upheaval—from learning English and finding work, to living an American lifestyle while maintaining their Islamic faith and cultural identity.

The project continues with an exhibit of Roble’s photographs at the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum on campus.

**JUNE 20 - SEPTEMBER 13**

More information online at: <http://reach.cla.umn.edu/roble>

# Connecting Common Chords



## INTRODUCING DAVID MYERS

DIRECTOR OF THE SCHOOL OF MUSIC

His passion is partnership: orchestras, schools, and communities, all collaborating as music educators. (He literally wrote the book on it—a seminal study funded by the National Endowment for the Arts.) And if David Myers's vision is populated by a wide cast of characters, it has an equally broad setting: world, rock and popular music, jazz, ethnic and classical. /// CLA's new School of Music director wants to "connect education with the rich world of music as it exists in real life." /// Distinguished music educator Mary Ann Feldman explores how Myers's vision might translate to reality, especially for classical music.

From his Ferguson Hall office David Myers commands a view of the Mississippi as broad as his vision for music in the 21st century. Fortunately for Minnesota, he was willing to leave the gentle climate of Georgia for the University's sometimes wind-whipped campus on the Mississippi—at the core of the Twin Cities thriving arts scene—to head the School of Music.

A thin, friendly man, Myers brings to this scene a compelling vision of new and stronger connections between the University and the abundant institutions that have earned Minnesota its identity as "State of the Arts."

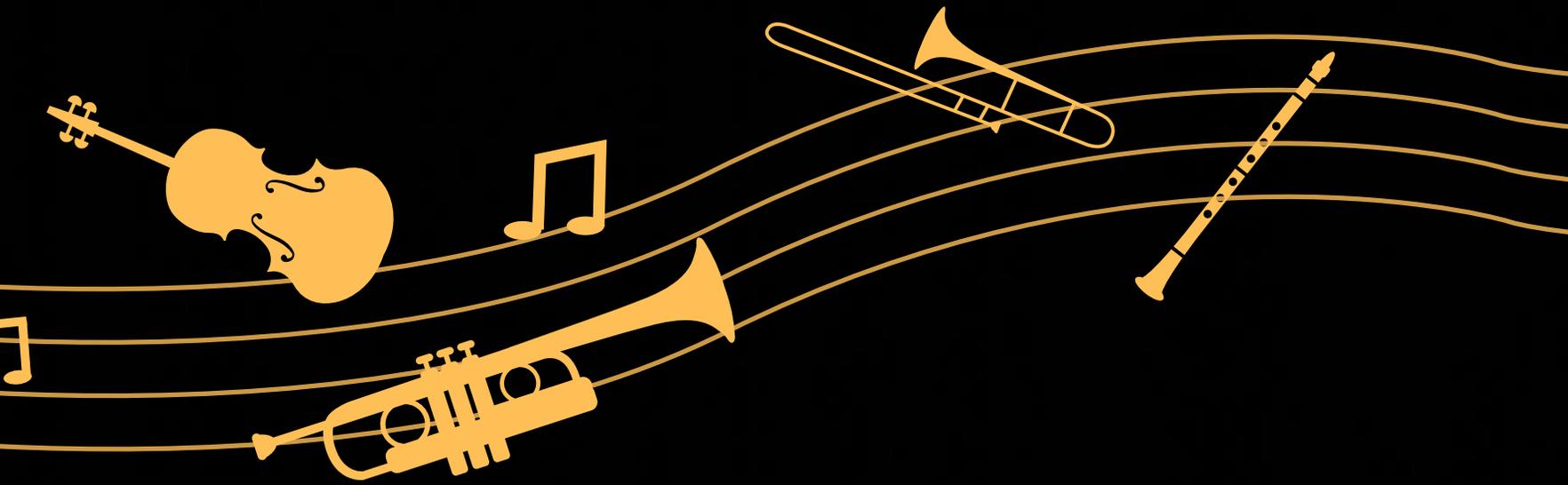
No surprise that Minnesota, richly endowed with choral and orchestral traditions, would be a draw, as was the opportunity to stage performances at the University's acoustically vibrant Ted Mann Concert Hall, a glamorous public space crowning a spectacular urban setting.

Arriving at the start of the 2008-09 academic year, he brought from

his professorship at Georgia State University, and collaborations with organizations such as the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, strong ideas about music education rooted in the relationships of music with society and with other art forms.

Myers's impressive accomplishments include founding Atlanta's Center for Educational Partnerships and its innovative "Sound Learning" enterprise, linking it with Georgia State University, the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra, community musicians, and inner-city schools. Spurred by the National Endowment for the Arts, his efforts resulted in a seminal publication examining the arts in today's challenging environment: *Beyond Tradition: Partnerships Among Orchestras, Schools, and Communities*.

"One of the reasons I'm glad to be here is that this artistic community provides real-world connections and experience for our students, the musicians of tomorrow," says Myers. "When I moved into higher education, I felt strongly that students preparing for a career needed a broader view of their place in society. How were they going to function in their communities?"



David Myers

*Professor and Director of the School of Music*

“This artistic community provides real-world connections and experience for our students, the musicians of tomorrow.”

– DAVID MYERS

I did everything I could to connect my students to the vitality that people in the real world, musicians or not, find in a musical life as performer, teacher, or listener.”

That is a rubric he has observed from the earliest days of his career. “Long ago, when I first taught public school music, one of the first things

I did was to write grants that brought professional musicians into the school. I knew that as a music teacher I myself could not give the classroom a sense of what musical life is in the real world—the richness, excitement, and value of it all. I even had a composer-in-residence in the middle school where I taught in Pennsylvania. Students not only heard the composer’s words but also music he wrote for and with them. They encountered the creative process.”

Time was, a University of Minnesota musical education benefited from a major on-campus creative process: residency of the renowned Minnesota Orchestra, known as the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra during its 44 seasons at Northrop Auditorium (1930-1974). Generations of students had easy access to musical bonanzas: not only access to high-ranking teachers, but also rehearsals under master conductors like Eugene

Ormandy and Antal Dorati, free tickets for Friday-night dates, and the coveted role of concert hall usher.

Today Myers is working to enlarge the University’s musical circle to embrace Minnesota’s super-charged music environment. He has lost no time in pursuing partnerships with students and people with musical lives—performers, educators, administrators—at the University and throughout Minnesota. In under six months, with few silent nights at Ted Mann Concert Hall, he has made meaningful connections with stellar arts and educational institutions, including such expert audience-developers as the Schubert Club, Saint Paul Chamber Orchestra, and numerous other professional and community orchestras. Meanwhile, he is the American consultant on a new degree that may be dubbed “Master of Music for New Audiences and Innovative Practice,” an idea pioneered by five European conservatories including London’s Guildhall School of Music and Drama.

“Today’s students,” he observes, “come to campus with a wealth of musical interests far beyond what I had when I entered music school. They’re not only interested in classical music, but world music—all that is outside the classical sphere, including rock, jazz, and ethnic music. Here is a rich foundation for our schools to build on as we prepare them—in most cases—to be fine classical musicians, our primary calling.”

That means student recruitment requires not only a stellar performance faculty, but also experts from musicology and ethnomusicology, theory and composition, music therapy and more—diverse fields that give students a sense of the vital education available to them in a music school, and illumine possibilities awaiting them beside a place in a performance ensemble.

#### CLASSICAL CRISIS

He faces challenges, of course, especially in a time of economic downturn, and certainly at the core of musical instruction, in the realm of classical music, where instruction takes place one-on-one, and on costly instruments.

The American concert hall audience has not grown appreciably since the pervasive rock beat of the 1950s established one-two-one-two as the throb of a global society. Moreover, the myriad attractions of cyberspace have emerged as mighty competitors for leisure time, hitting hard at an art form hailed as the language of human emotions, transcending words. Studies by the National Endowment for the Arts indicate that the percentage of concert attendance has not increased over the past two decades—partly because of intense competition for audiences. In this high-tech world of round-the-clock distraction and entertainment, classical music is at risk of continued marginalization.

Is there a crisis? Myers thinks that may be too strong a word. “There are literally hundreds



KELLY MACWILLIAMS

# David Myers

## EDUCATION

- Ph.D. from University of Michigan
- M.M. from Eastman School of Music
- B.S. from Lebanon Valley College, Pennsylvania

## PREVIOUS POSITION

- Professor and associate director of the Georgia State University School of Music

## PROFESSIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

- Accomplished organist
- Founded the Center for Educational Partnerships in Atlanta
- Conducted the research for the seminal report, *Beyond Tradition: Partnerships Among Orchestras, Schools, and Communities*, a project of the National Endowment for the Arts

“David Myers understands the human longing to speak and to hear music, and is committed to transcending whatever barriers prevent it from flowing freely through every part of the community.”

James A. Parente, Jr.  
Dean, College of Liberal Arts

“David Myers’s leadership has tremendous potential for putting pieces together in this remarkable community. We’ll all be better citizens if we figure out how to collaborate in the arts ecology of Minnesota.”

Steven Rosenstone  
University Vice President for Scholarly and Cultural Affairs

of thousands of people leading active and vital musical lives. What I’m not so sure about is how we in the classical realm are connecting with audiences and inviting them to find meaning in the exploration of classical music. America’s symphony orchestras have been doing wonderful things to engage the public, often beyond the music itself. Across the board, the arts are more conscious of audience needs.”

In fact, in a study Myers conducted a few years ago, participants stressed their desire to understand how music works. He believes that in order to persuade a large science-and-business-oriented population that the arts play a crucial part in society, we must all become advocates, with musicians demystifying the arts from the stage as well as in the classroom. Connection is the key.

“Fortunately, the arts have become entrepreneurial—in fact, we’re fascinated with the word ‘entrepreneurship,’” Myers says. “All musicians need this spirit in order to share their art with the public and get their feedback. How do people like to become engaged in our art form, what intrigues them? There is much to learn.”

And much to teach: “Every musician—whatever his or her job—has to be a teacher, not only of an instrument but of the audience.”

Spurring new ideas and forging connections in the name of a public university’s commitment to education and the State’s quality of life—these are goals that challenge the indomitable spirit of an idealistic spokesman for music, David Myers. ∞

*Dr. Mary Ann Feldman was author of the Minnesota Orchestra’s program notes and editor of its Showcase magazine for 37 years. A prolific writer and speaker, she holds graduate degrees in musicology from both Columbia University and the University of Minnesota. As a University of Minnesota undergraduate she was the Minnesota Daily music critic. Her musical career continues at Wyoming’s Grand Teton Music Festival.*

# On a Personal NOTE

## ALUMNI

**Richard Sandor, Ph.D. '67**, recognized internationally as the father of carbon trading, received Ernst & Young's Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the Midwest region.

**Richard Koshalek, M.A. '68**, has been appointed director of the Hirschhorn Museum in Washington, D.C.

**Larry Johnson, B.A. '70**, won first prize in a contest celebrating active seniors, sponsored by Mid-America Events & Expos.

**Constance Van Hoven, B.A. '76**, is publishing a children's picture book about winter and holiday activities, *Twelve Days of Christmas in Minnesota*, this October.

**Fernando Alvarez, Ph.D. '94**, was elected a Fellow of the Econometric Society.

**Paul Meierant, B.A. '94**, received the University of Minnesota Board of Regents Alumni Service Award.

**Fiona Quick, B.A. '96**, is a contributing writer for *Minnesota Hockey Journal*, and author of its "Quick Facts" column.

**Scott Muskin, M.F.A. '98**, was the inaugural winner of the Parthenon Prize for Fiction for his novel, *The Annunciations of Hank Meyerson, Mama's Boy and Scholar*.

**Robert Ngwu, B.A. '99**, President and CEO of Megasouk Group, has been elected President of the Black MBA Association, Twin Cities chapter.

**Saidah Arika Ekulona, M.F.A. '96**, played the lead role of Mama Nadi in the off-Broadway show *Ruined*, at the Manhattan Theatre Club.

**Polly Carl, Ph.D. '00**, is joining Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre as director of artistic development.

**Carla Scholtes, B.A. '02**, is a program manager for Wells Fargo, designing classroom and online training programs.

The Playwrights' Center in Minneapolis has awarded **Kevin Kautzman, B.A. '03**, a 2009-10 Jerome Fellowship for his play *Then Waves*. The play is also a finalist in the Yale Drama Series, Great Plains Theatre Conference, and Id Theater's Seven Devils Playwrights Conference competitions.

The *New York Times* called **Matt Amendt, B.F.A. '04**, "charismatic" and "skillful" in the title role of *Henry V*, a co-production of the Guthrie Theater and New York City-based The Acting Company. The cast included **William Sturdivant, B.F.A. '05**, and **Samuel Taylor, B.F.A. '06**, both in multiple roles.

**Santino Fontana, B.F.A. '04**, plays Tony and **Joel Hatch M.F.A. '83**, plays George in *Billy Elliot*. The Broadway show—music by Elton John—won 10 Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

**Andrea Uselman-Brandt, B.A. '04**, has appeared in plays at the Guthrie and other Twin Cities theaters. She's also published *Beyond Talent*, a practical guide for individuals interested in starting and sustaining a career in the performance arts.

**Laura Krider, B.M. '05**, is a choral singer in the Twin Cities and works in administration at the University's School of Music. She was featured on Minnesota Public Radio's Art Hounds program this spring, talking about shape note singing.

**Jeff Hnilicka, B.A. '04**, is making waves in New York with FEAST (Funding Emerging Artists through Sustainable Tactics). It's a monthly public dinner he co-founded to "democratically fund new and emerging art makers" in the face of declining arts revenues.

**Natalie Volin, B.A. '07**, philosophy major, has postponed attending U of M Law School to serve as Senator Al Franken's legislative aide for judiciary affairs in his Washington, D.C., office.

**Melissa Critchley-Rodriguez, B.A. '08**, now a master's student at the University in complementary therapies and healing

practices, received the Outstanding Civil Service Award and the Excellence and Community Building Award from the University's Institute on Community Integration.

## MINNESOTA BOOK AWARDS

**Brian Malloy, M.F.A. '06**, won the 2009 Minnesota Book Award for Young People's Fiction with his novel *Twelve Long Months*. Finalists in other categories included **Greg Breining, B.A. '74**, *A Hard-Water World: Ice Fishing and Why We Do It*, general nonfiction; **Laura Flynn, M.F.A. '06**, *Swallow the Ocean*, memoir and creative nonfiction; University geography professors **John Fraser Hart** and **Susy Svatek Ziegler**, *Landscapes of Minnesota: A Geography*, Minnesota; **Margaret Hasse, M.A. '04**, *Milk and Tides*, poetry; **Alison McGhee, M.A. '93**, *Julia Gillian (and the Art of Knowing)*, young people's literature; **David Lanegran, B.A. '70**, *Minnesota on the Map: A Historical Atlas*, Minnesota; **Tim Nolan, B.A. '78**, *The Sound of It*, poetry; and **Will Weaver, B.A. '72**, *Saturday Night Dirt: A Motor Novel*, young people's literature.

It's easy to share your news!

Go to <http://cla.umn.edu/updates/>

## IN MEMORY



**Allan Spear**, professor in the Department of History from 1964 to 2000 and the country's first openly gay male state legislator, died in October 2008 at age 71 from complications following surgery.

Spear was president of the Minnesota State Senate, led the Judiciary Committee, and helped to craft and pass the 1993 Human Rights Act Amendment, which he called his "proudest legislative achievement." He co-founded the National Association of Gay & Lesbian Elected and Appointed Officials, and served on the board of the OutFront Minnesota Political Action Committee. In 2008, as part of Minnesota's 150th Anniversary, Spear was honored by the Minnesota History Center as one of the most

influential forces in the history of the state—one of the “MN150.”

Memorial gifts may be made to the University’s Schochet Center Distinguished Lecture Series: [www.giving.umn.edu/spear](http://www.giving.umn.edu/spear).

**Ernest Bormann**, professor in the Department of Communication Studies, died of a heart attack last December. Bormann originated the Symbolic Convergence Theory of human communication, in which the stories (“fantasies”) that groups create develop shared meaning and social cohesion. Memorial gifts may be made to the Ernest Bormann Symbolic Convergence Theory Fellowship: [www.comm.umn.edu/giving](http://www.comm.umn.edu/giving).

**James Dickey**, 69, died in November 2008 after struggling for a year and a half with prostate cancer. A professor of theoretical statistics, he had taught and conducted research at the University since 1986.

**Peter Firchow**, 70, died October 18, 2008. In 1967 he joined the English Department where he taught British and comparative literature, often in the context of utopian dreams, until his retirement in 2007.

**René Jara** died November 19, 2008, after a serious illness. A professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese for 28 years, he was an expert in post-colonial studies and Hispanic literatures, and had a passion for poetry.

**Leslie C. Johnson**, B.A. ’64, died in January 2009 at the age of 66. She started the *Mississippi Rag* in 1973, chronicling the stories of jazz and ragtime musicians to a global audience for 35 years. With her passing, the traditional-jazz and ragtime communities lost their principal voice.

**Roger Page**, 91, former psychology professor and associate dean of CLA, died December 19, 2008, after a long illness. Memorial gifts may be made to the Roger Page Leadership Scholarship: <http://cla.umn.edu/page>.

**The College of Liberal Arts appreciates its generous supporters. Donors for the 2008 fiscal year are posted online at <http://cla.umn.edu/giving>**

**GIVING MAKES GREATNESS POSSIBLE.**

## GRADUATION: WITH SMARTS, GRIT... AND A LOAD OF DEBT?

BY MARY K. HICKS

Even in hard times, there’s much to be grateful for. Last May, yet another batch of talented CLA graduates crossed perhaps the most important stage of their lives—in Northrop Auditorium.

The world they ventured into requires smarts and grit, not to mention a mother lode of CLA ingenuity and know-how. And one of the more daunting challenges that many will face is a hefty load of debt. We think their CLA education is worth millions. But it’s no secret that even those who land the job of their dreams could be hobbled by significant debt well into the next decade.

Fortunately, some will go into the world with a smaller debt load, thanks to the generosity of our donors. In 2008-09, CLA awarded nearly 1,000 scholarships and fellowships totaling more than \$4 million. That’s an impressive number. But with roughly 16,500 undergraduate and graduate students in the college, the bucket is still barely six percent full.

It certainly won’t come as news to you that our students and their families are facing some of the hardest times in decades, and so is our college. And yet, as President Obama noted this spring in his speech on education, a college education is more necessary than ever.

I can certainly understand if you say that now is not the time for us to be asking you for support. After all, the dismal economy has hurt everyone. But there’s also never been a better time to give. The need is critical. And the cumulative impact of not giving could be catastrophic for our students, not to mention for our college.

We understand that a President’s Club gift (\$25,000 or more) is beyond the capacity of many of our donors, and may be a stretch even for those who have given at that level in past years. But we’ve taken very seriously President Bruininks’s call for new ideas and creative solutions in these times. And as we’ve brainstormed, we’ve found that sometimes the best new ideas are revivals of old ones.

So we’ve renewed a successful giving program called the Legacy Scholarship program. Here’s how it works: We ask donors to make an annual gift of \$3,000, which will be awarded directly to a student who meets the selection criteria—financial need and merit. Why \$3,000? That amount is based on research showing that \$3,000 is roughly the breaking point for many students; it can make the critical difference between enrolling or not, between staying in school or dropping out. If it’s the latter, just think of the loss of human potential—and at what cost to Minnesota!

Today’s CLA students are tomorrow’s creative problem solvers and trailblazers in every field. If you invest in our students, I promise that you won’t be disappointed. If you want to know more, go to [www.cla.umn.edu](http://www.cla.umn.edu) or contact me at [hicks002@umn.edu](mailto:hicks002@umn.edu) or 612-625-5541.

To contribute to the LEGACY SCHOLARSHIP  
<http://cla.umn.edu/legacy>





COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Driven to Discover

REACH  
115 JOHNSTON HALL  
101 PLEASANT STREET S.E.  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55455

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
PERMIT NO. 155  
MINNEAPOLIS, MN

ELECTRONIC CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED



**THE GOPHERS ARE MOVING INTO TCF STADIUM**

*Be part of history at the*

## **ULTIMATE HOMECOMING OCTOBER 2-11**

- *One-time-only public tours of one of the nation's best on-campus football stadiums!*
- *Parade and Pep Fest*
- *Competitions, 5-K run/walk, research expo... and much more!*

See complete schedule at [www.homecoming.umn.edu](http://www.homecoming.umn.edu)