

Minnesota ALUMNI

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Fall 2016



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Awesomely Urban

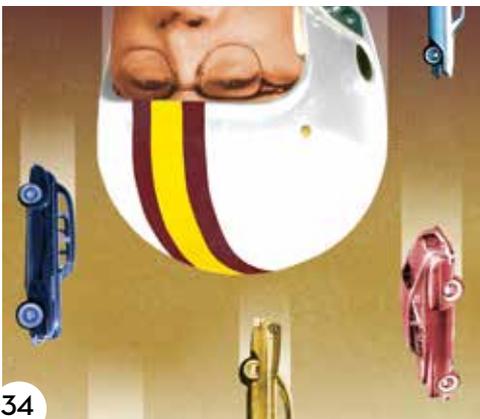
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If you're getting older, read this

The next issue of *Minnesota Alumni* will explore aging—and who better to help us than people who are doing it? **We're calling on readers of all ages** to help us write the winter issue of this magazine.

"But I'm not a writer!" you say. Sure you are. If you can tweet, write a note to a friend, or make an entry in your diary, we're interested. We're looking to publish short pieces (**up to 300 words**) that speak from the heart about your experience. **Don't know where to start? Here are few teasers:**

What matters as you age?
How has this changed
over time?

What do you know now that
you wish you'd known earlier?

Is aging a big deal?
Why or why not?

What's funny about getting
older? Most surprising?
What's the best thing?

What age do you feel and why?

What is the best thing
about your age right now?
What's the worst thing?

How do you describe
romance later in life?

What does "young" feel like?
What does "old" feel like?

What's not on this list that you
really want to write about?

THE FINE PRINT

**Submit your reflection by
October 14 to:**

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or email scott325@umn.edu,
subject line "Getting Older"

Publication priority will be given to reflections written from the heart and focused on life experience. Editors reserve the right to edit for length, style, and clarity. **Submissions longer than 300 words will not be considered.**

Include name, telephone number, and mailing address. (Telephone number and mailing address for verification purposes, not for publication.) Anonymous entries will not be considered.

Questions? Call the editor at 612-624-8490.

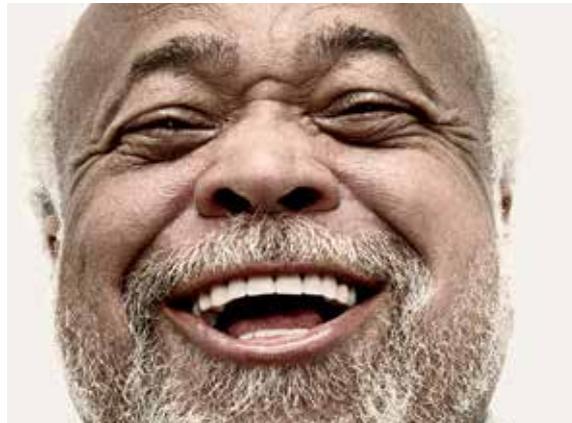
Now get writing!

—Cynthia Scott (M.A. '89)





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Location, location, location



THE OTHER DAY I was walking back to my office from lunch and was struck by the vibrant, diverse, and beautiful setting our campus has become. The Washington Avenue sidewalk was buzzing with hurried students, curious parents, and health care providers in different-colored scrubs. The Metro Green Line light rail train rolled by as I strolled past a pharmacy, an independent bookstore, new student apartments, and Vietnamese and Middle Eastern restaurants with lines snaking out their front doors. Ahead of me rose the downtown Minneapolis skyline.

I was in the heart of our campus and one of the nation's most dynamic metropolitan areas. We are a strong University for many reasons: our unique location, the vibrant urban personality we have because of it, and opportunities and challenges that need our attention and commitment.

Unlike the vast majority of public research universities across the nation, we're not located in "a college town." Our location is even better: We're in the 16th largest metro area in the nation with an extraordinary cluster of Fortune 500 companies, filled with internship and job opportunities for our students and alumni.

It's why our strategic plan—titled *Driving Tomorrow*—calls on us to "establish a culture of reciprocal engagement, leveraging our unique location, and to better leverage the resources and relationships available in the Twin Cities and across the state to benefit our students, our communities, and the world."

We are working to live out the plan, and as a rare *urban* land-grant university, we must embrace our location in all that we do. We remain a statewide asset and a leader in fueling Minnesota's agriculture industry, and our city location allows us to attract the best and brightest from across the country and around the world. For this fall's incoming class, we received a record 50,000 applications for about 5,800 first-year spots, and 67 percent of our applicants said they chose the U because of our campus life opportunities, which are driven by our uncommon location.

Exceptional learning and career opportunities for our students and alumni, and research topics for our faculty intersect with the challenges that come with life in our diverse and open environment. While it's true that we must work harder than other campuses to ensure ours is safe and welcoming for all who live, work, and visit here, it's also true that our campus is safer and more inviting today than it was a few years ago.

Our location and our mission also mean that we must be good neighbors—be it with the Somali community in Cedar-Riverside; our partners in North Minneapolis, the home to our Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center; or in the booming Prospect Park neighborhood. In particular, this includes using our resources and expertise to help close the economic, educational, and health disparities that burden our communities and state.

If you haven't been on campus recently, please visit. Join me and other alumni for Homecoming Week festivities October 15 through 22. And watch for the Alumni Association's monthly events calendar in your email and see firsthand how the University is the beating heart of Minnesota's culture of innovation, caring, and urban energy. 

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ABOUT
CAMPUS





Schedules aren't the only thing these students juggle as they enjoy Northrop Mall on a late summer day.

Photo by Mark Luinenburg



Sheri Stoneman

A Sure Sign

AS FAR AS Francesca Catibog (B.A. '12) knew, her visit to campus in late May with boyfriend Ty Jesinoski (B.S. '12) was just that: a visit to campus from their current home in Nashville. But Jesinoski, his eye on the future, had other plans. In cahoots with his mom, Toni, who helped make a series of lawn signs, Ty pulled off a surprise marriage proposal outside of the Tate of Lab of Physics, where he and Francesca met in 2009. "I was hoping she would start crying, but she was confused as to why we were walking around campus on a Sunday night and didn't realize what I was doing. I almost had to straight up tell her, 'I am proposing to you' because she didn't put two and two together with all the yard signs." They're pictured on the right after Francesca put two and two together and said yes. The wedding is set for next July 15. The couple plans to move back to the Twin Cities after she completes her studies in a dental program.



Marching On

BETSY KERNS MCCANN (B.A. '03) is the new director of the University of Minnesota Marching Band and Athletic Bands, succeeding Tim Diem (B.A. '92, UM, Morris) who served in the position for 16 years. She is



the first woman director of the U's marching band and the first woman band director in the Big Ten Conference. McCann started with the U of M Marching Band in 2013 as assistant director.

This is the marching band's 125th anniversary season. Marching band

alumni, members of the band, and others raised more than \$300,000 to fund new uniforms—the first in 23 years—which will debut this fall. Marching band alumna and design apparel graduate Elizabeth Bischoff (B.S. '16) helped design the new uniform.



“The U of M is not the poke-Siberia I originally believed it was: there were Weedles and Pidgeottos and Drowzees to be found from Mariucci Arena to Williams Arena and especially around TCF Bank Stadium.”

Star Tribune writer AMELIA RAYNO reporting on her inaugural foray into the world of Pokemon Go.



U to Commemorate 9/11

THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA will mark the anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks with a ceremony during the Gopher football game on September 10 to honor the three known alumni who died and three who survived. (Other commemorative events are being planned but details were not available at press time. Check back at UMNAlumni.org.)

Those being honored posthumously are Clarin Schwartz (J.D. '73), Gary Koecheler (J.D. '72), and Tom Burnett Jr. (B.S.B. '86). Burnett died trying to wrest control of Flight 93 from the hijackers in order to prevent it from hitting another target—likely the U.S. Capitol or White House. The plane crashed into an open field in rural Pennsylvania, killing all on board. His family has established the Tom Burnett Family

Foundation, which funds a scholarship for Carlson School students and the Tom Burnett Advanced Leadership Program, among other programs. Members of the family will be in attendance.

Survivors Scott Wallace (B.S.B. '80), Terry Placek (B.A. '68), and Mark Lewis (B.S.B. '71, M.B.A. '79) will also be present.

Wallace, a Twin Cities-based financial executive, was in New York for meetings on the 63rd floor of the World Trade Center's North Tower when the first plane hit. He and others made their way to the stairwell and 45 hair-raising minutes later emerged onto the street. "I can tell you that a day does not pass that I don't think of what happened, the impact it has had on our country, and most importantly the impact it has had on my family," Wallace says. Wallace serves on

the Alumni Association Board of Directors.

Lewis and Placek, both retired, worked for the Department of the Army and were in the Pentagon when the plane hit. Placek and colleagues were walking out of the building to catch the subway when people started running toward them. "We had no idea what was going on," she says. "It wasn't until we got out of the building and looked south that we saw all the black smoke." Placek ended up walking 3½ miles home, where the first thing she did was call her dad in Minnesota to let him know she was OK.

The experience, Placek says, "made me even more grateful for my family, and I'm very lucky because I have a very close family and dear friends. I had calls from all over the world making sure I was OK. It made me even more patriotic."

THE LEDGER

THE BELL MUSEUM of Natural History's new Minnesota Biodiversity Atlas is up and running. Funded by the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund, the searchable database offers public access to the Bell's extensive data on birds, mammals, fungi, fishes, and plants. Data will be added over time, including from a current citizen science project on Minnesota bees. Find the Atlas at bellatlas.umn.edu. Here is some of what it offered when it launched in June.

5

Terabytes of data in the Atlas

400,000+

Biodiversity records

175,000+

High-resolution images

16,000+

Species in the Bell's botanical and zoological collections

750,000+

Specimens of wildlife, plants, and fungi in the collection

REGENTS ROUNDUP

• In July, the Board of Regents and the University of Minnesota Physicians voted to terminate a letter of intent to merge with Fairview Health Services. The merger, which had been under negotiation since last October, would have created a new, fully integrated academic health system. In June, the University presented what President Eric Kaler (Ph.D. '82) called its "best and final offer." When the Fairview board of directors rejected it, the U halted negotiations.

In a letter to Alumni Association members in late July, Medical School Dean and Vice President of Health Services Brooks Jackson and University of Minnesota Physicians CEO Bobbi Daniels expressed their disappointment, but said the University is still committed to developing a strong statewide academic health system and will explore new opportunities and partners to achieve that goal.

• The July meeting also included the Alumni Association's annual report to the Regents. To read the highlights, see page 44 of this issue.

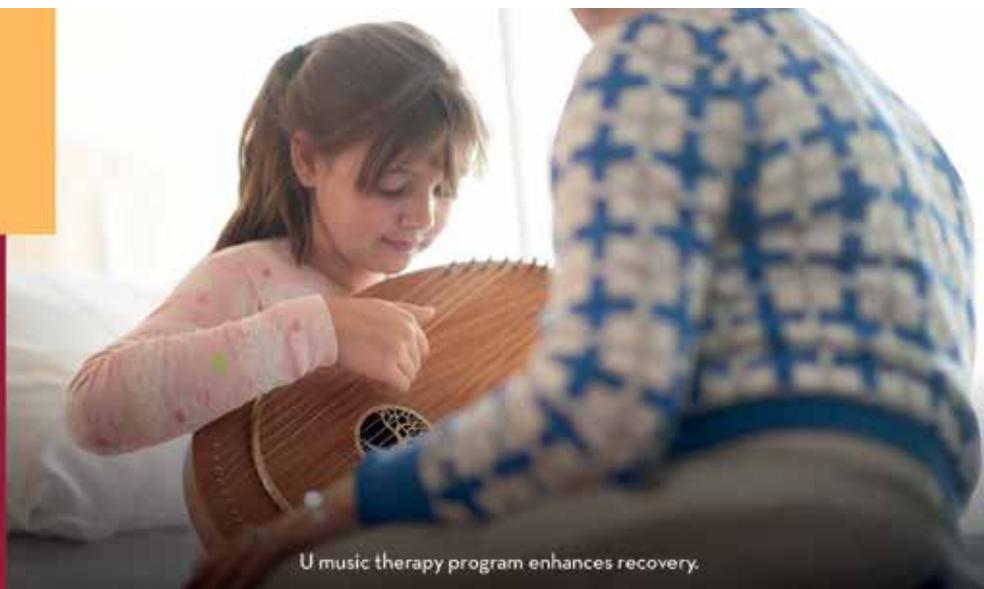
Board of Regents agendas, minutes, and meeting schedules can be found at regents.umn.edu.

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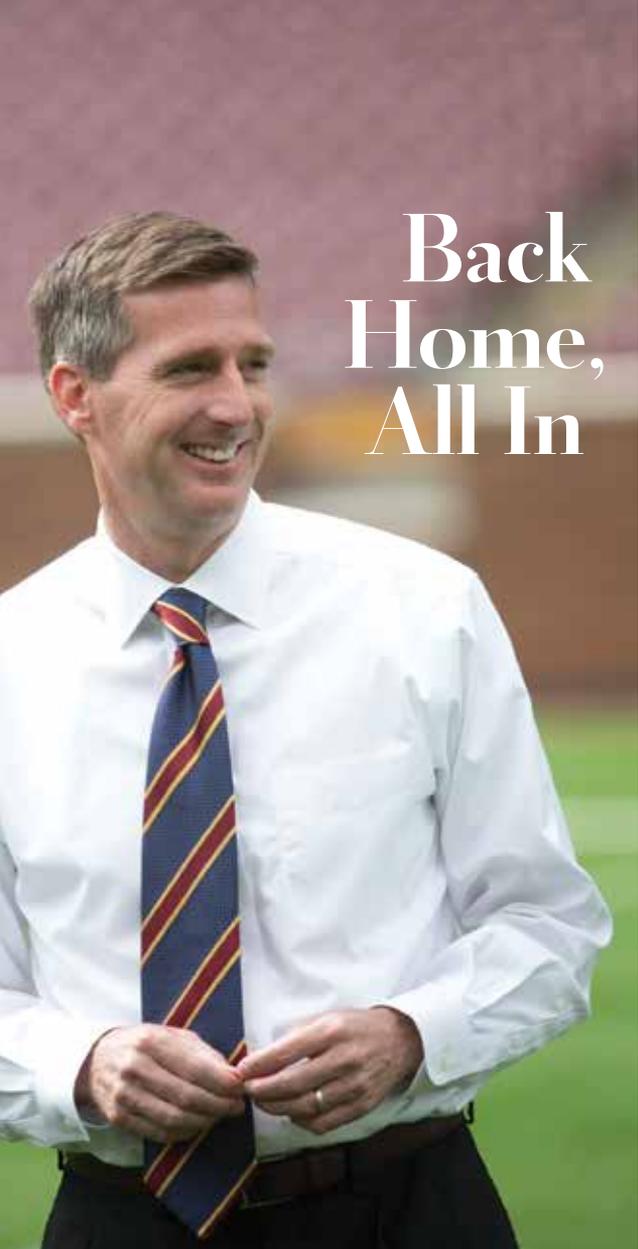
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U music therapy program enhances recovery.



Back Home, All In

IT TOOK MARK COYLE all of 90 seconds to go off script when he was introduced at a May news conference as the U's new athletics director. Coyle was starting to explain why he chose to come back to Minnesota, where he was an associate athletics director from 2001 to 2005, when he looked over at his family and got emotional.

After a pause, he told the story of his daughter Grace's 3rd birthday party back in 2005. When Goldy Gopher made a guest appearance, she spontaneously broke into "The Minnesota Rouser," stunning everyone and leaving Goldy doubly speechless. It was a moment that permanently etched a maroon "M" into the native Iowan's heart.

"It's one of the memories that we'll always have about Minnesota. And to have the chance to be back here, it's just humbling," he says.

Coyle, who most recently served as director of athletics at Syracuse University, returns to a program that is both successful and enigmatic—flourishing by many measures but beset by a series of challenges. The successes include women's hockey's continued dominance with another national championship; softball's Big Ten

tournament title and national ranking; and Minnesota placing 18th in the Learfield Directors' Cup standings, which measures the overall excellence of college athletics programs. In the classroom, Gopher athletes are near the top of their game, with more sports receiving top-10 percent Academic Progress Rates scores than any other public university.

But it's been a challenging 12 months as well, with the departure of former Athletics Director Norwood Teague amid sexual harassment allegations; the sudden retirement of football coach Jerry Kill due to ongoing health concerns; and an abysmal season for Gopher men's basketball.

Coyle knows that action, not words, will improve public perception. "We can talk about it all day—we can say we're going to do this and we're going to do that to get better—but our actions will define us," he says. "Anytime you walk into a program you're going to encounter 'opportunities' that you have to work your way through, and these are some that we have to work our way through."

"I think he's the right person for the job and at this time," says former Athletics Director Joel Maturi, who

“I sure went through hell with that thing. I got a lot of heat and nasty letters.... We played in the South looking for games, and hotels wouldn't take us because of blacks and often we'd have to sleep in a black hotel. You'd go to eat and they wouldn't feed you and tell you to 'get out of here.'”

John Kundla (B.S. '39), in the *Minnesota Daily*, reflecting on his basketball coaching career on the occasion of his 100th birthday. Kundla coached the Gophers from 1959 to 1968 and was the first Gopher coach to offer scholarships to black student athletes.

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was Coyle's boss at the U. He says Coyle listens well and gauges what needs to be done. And he has a certain quietness about him that manifests as the opposite of arrogance. "Most important, he has great integrity, honesty, and openness," Maturi adds. "It's what we really need, and it defines what he is."

One thing is certain. The U's cupboard is not empty, and neither is the trophy case. "I think that the success of so many of our programs got lost this past year," says Coyle. "Six conference championships, the national championship in women's hockey, the academic success; I think we had 14 teams with their academic progress rate recognized nationally. We need to do a better job of making people aware of the success we've had."

The challenge is to maintain that overall success while appeasing Gopher alumni and fans who want nothing more—and will settle for nothing less—than a Big Ten title in football, a meaningful banner for men's basketball, and a return to dominance in men's hockey.

Coyle has seen firsthand the fruits of success in his other stops since 2005: in men's basketball at Kentucky, where he was deputy athletics director, and in football at

Boise State, which made a name for itself while he was AD. Last year at Syracuse both basketball teams made it to the Final Four. His takeaway from those places? "Everybody is 'all in,' from the alumni to the students to the donors to the fans. Everybody is committed to seeing those programs achieve at a high level."

There's no doubting alumni support and the ability to have success across all sports at the U, he says, "and it's on us to figure out how to put those pieces together to make sure we support [the revenue programs] and challenge them to compete with what our other programs are doing." He's let it be known that he wants the entire athletic program to reflect one basic principle: to be "low-ego and high-output."

Minnesota reminds him of Iowa—he is from Waterloo and his wife Krystan, a physical therapist, is from Council Bluffs—in its Midwest values. They're looking forward to raising their three sports-minded children, Grace, Nicholas, and Benjamin, in a part of the country "where your word means something."

"He's liable to be here for a long, long time," says Maturi. "And Minnesota needs that right now."

—Rick Moore

“You know it’s a problem when you’re ice skating for 10 minutes and taking pictures for 45.”

College of Education and Human Development student SAIGE FEHRESTI describing the moment she realized that she and her peers spend too much time occupied with their phones. She created a short video encouraging people to put them down and enjoy each other in the present moment.



American Conundrum

How Larry Jacobs is teasing out Americans' mixed feelings about health care reform

By Stephanie Soucheray

SEVEN YEARS AFTER former vice presidential candidate Sarah Palin made famous the term “death panels,” a researcher from the University of Minnesota’s Humphrey School has documented that the Affordable Care Act (ACA), commonly known as Obamacare, is still a polarizing topic among Americans—even those who say they’ve benefited from it.

Political scientist Larry Jacobs, director of the Center for the Study of Politics and Governance at the Humphrey School, published his findings about popular opinion and the ACA in the journal *Health Affairs*. Americans, Jacobs says, are experiencing cognitive dissonance when it comes to health care reform.

The findings come out of an ongoing panel study of 1,200 participants Jacobs is conducting with Suzanne Mettler, a political scientist at Cornell University. A panel study, unlike other political opinion polls, measures the opinions of the same individuals over a long period of time to determine how their thoughts and attitudes change. Jacobs polled participants in 2010, 2012, and 2014.

During the period of the study, there was a 19 percent increase in the number of participants who said the law is providing tangible benefits to Americans. The most often cited benefits were: subsidies to pay for insurance, better drug coverage for seniors, and allowing children to stay on

“LOOK AT SOCIAL SECURITY. WHEN PEOPLE GET BENEFITS, THEY USUALLY LIKE THE PROGRAM, BUT NOT THE ACA.”

parents’ policies until age 26. Respondents who said the law had little or no impact on access to health insurance decreased by 18 percent.

Though Americans are more appreciative of its tangible benefits, popular opinion of the law is still stubbornly divided: 45.6 percent of respondents had a negative view of the law, while 36.2 percent favored it. And even more confusing, among individuals who have had an unfavorable view of the ACA since 2010, the number who support a repeal of the law decreased by 9 percentage points, to 72 percent, by 2014.

“Health care reform is a huge puzzle in America,” says Jacobs. “If you look at media polling, there are more people who dislike than like the ACA, yet over 20 million people benefit from the health insurance and new regulations.”

Jacobs says a panel study is the only way to understand the complex and conflicting emotions surrounding health care reform. “Panel studies are the gold standard in social science, but they’re challenging and expensive,” he says. “Everyone else does snapshot polls of separate groups of people, but a panel gives us enormous power in explaining this mystery of why Americans are appreciative but so negative about the law.”

Jacobs says the fraught partisan politics that have been the hallmark of the Obama presidency are to blame for this confusion. “The positive feelings about the law are overtaken by the toxic environment,” Jacobs says. “If you’re a Republican and you hate Obama, there’s a ‘circle the wagons’ mentality when it comes to the ACA. And the constant efforts to repeal the law undermine it and influence public opinion.”

Besides extreme partisanship, Jacobs says the other main reason for the law’s unpopularity is a general distrust of government programs, and the sense that the government is inept at handling health insurance. “The health care exchange website was bad in 2013, and there continued to be technical snafus,” says Jacobs. “Premiums have also risen.”

Humphrey School Dean Eric Schwarz says Jacobs’s work is vital in today’s divisive political climate. “Larry does what good scholars in public affairs should do,” says Schwarz. “He cuts through unsupported instincts and impressions to identify political and social phenomena based on careful analysis.”

The mixed attitudes about health care reform are remarkable in the context of American social policy, Jacobs says. “Look at Social Security. When people get benefits they usually like the program, but not the ACA.” Jacobs also says the passing of Medicare in 1965 also provides an interesting history lesson.

“When Medicare was first introduced it was called socialism in the doctor’s office,” he says. “Ronald Reagan [then an actor] was hired by the California medical board to speak out against the law.” In other words, the nation was divided on Medicare, just as it is on Obamacare. But once the law passed, Jacobs says, there was a general sense of acceptance. “After Medicare was passed it was ‘Let’s get this thing working.’ There was no talk of repeal.”

Jacobs and Mettler will conduct another survey of their participants this fall and in 2018. He says he’s interested in seeing what will happen to public opinion when a new president is in office. ■



SOS

Weddell seals are one of Antarctica’s iconic species and an important player in the Southern Ocean’s ecosystem. Scientists, led by a researcher at the University of Minnesota, are looking to the public for help in getting a first-ever count of their population. The citizen science project Satellites Over Seals (SOS) aims to enlist people all over the world in counting the seals by viewing high-resolution satellite images online. Researchers believe the count will be a step toward helping them learn how fishing in the Ross Sea is affecting the seals and the entire ecosystem.

“We couldn’t do this without help from citizen scientists,” says Michelle LaRue (Ph.D. ’14), a research ecologist in the University of Minnesota’s Department of Earth Sciences and lead researcher. SOS is funded by the National Science Foundation and is a joint effort between the University of Minnesota, University of Colorado at Boulder, H.T. Harvey & Associates Ecological Consultants, Point Blue Conservation Science, and DigitalGlobe. The count is made possible through the crowdsourcing website Tomnod.

To start counting seals, visit Tomnod.com.



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For questions please contact cconney@umn.edu



Gut bacteria may predict the risk of life-threatening blood infections following high-dose chemotherapy, according to a study coauthored by Dan Knights and Emmanuel Montassier of the University of Minnesota Department of Computer Science and Engineering and researchers at Nantes University Hospital in France. Each year, about 20,000 cancer patients receive high-dose chemotherapy in preparation for bone marrow or stem cell transplants. Twenty to 40 percent of them develop blood infections as a result, many of them fatal.

Currently there is no good way to predict which patients will get an infection. Researchers collected fecal samples from 28 patients with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma prior to treatment and sequenced the bacterial DNA to measure the health of the ecosystem in each person's gut. They found that 11 out of 28 patients who acquired a bloodstream infection following chemotherapy had significantly different mixtures of gut bacteria than patients who did not get infections.

Researchers then created an algorithm to help predict with around 85 percent accuracy whether a new patient will get an infection. "This method worked even better than we expected because we found a consistent difference between the gut bacteria in those who developed infections and those who did not," says Knights. The next step will be to validate their approach with a much larger group of patients.

The study was published in the April 28 issue of *Genome Medicine*.



People with chronic low back pain have higher odds of using illicit drugs and more commonly use prescription opioids than people without chronic low back pain, according to a study by researchers at the University of Minnesota Medical School.

While addictive medications, such as opioids and benzodiazepines, are frequently prescribed to patients with chronic low back pain, little is known about illicit drug use in that population. For this study, researchers analyzed data from more than 5,000 adults between ages 20 and 69 from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, about 13 percent of whom reported chronic low back pain. Fourteen percent of people in that group said they had used illicit drugs within the past 30 days, including cocaine, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine. The study noted that further evaluation of illicit drug use as a predictor in longitudinal studies of chronic low back pain will enable a deeper understanding of the relationships between pain, illicit substance use, and prescription opioid administration and assist in the design of safe and sustainable interventions for patients with chronic pain.

"As we face a prescription opioid addiction epidemic, careful assessment of illicit drug use history may aid prescribing decisions," says lead author Dr. Anna Shmigel.

The research was published online in the May 19 issue of *Spine*.

Investment in the restoration and preservation of ecosystems pays off, according to new study coauthored by Stephen Polasky, professor of applied economics at the University of Minnesota, and other researchers in China and the United States. Rapid economic development in China has taken a toll on the nation's environment, diminishing normal ecosystem functions such as storing carbon, filtering nutrients to clean water, preventing erosion, mitigating floods and sandstorms, and providing habitat.

So, China began investing in ecosystem restoration in 2000 as a way of increasing its "natural capital," spending more than \$50 billion by 2009. Results indicate that six of seven ecosystem functions improved, and researchers believe China's restoration investments likely contributed significantly to four of those: carbon sequestration, soil and water retention, and sandstorm mitigation. Provision of habitat for biodiversity did not improve. Researchers say the Chinese experience shows that improving ecosystem services can coexist with economic growth. That lesson, they say, could be applied to other countries and be attractive to all political persuasions.

Polasky's involvement in the study grew out of his position as a cofounder of the Natural Capital Project (NatCap), a partnership between the University of Minnesota and Stanford University in collaboration with the Nature Conservancy and the World Wildlife Fund. NatCap works to ensure that important societal decisions around the world take into account their impact on nature and the consequent impact on human well-being.

The study was published in the June 17 issue of *Science*.



The Alumni Association warmly invites you to join us for these events during Homecoming week.

ALUMNI DAY OF SERVICE

October 15

Join Gopher alumni in your area in the Alumni Association's third annual Day of Service. Alumni and friends from around the world will serve their communities at various volunteer sites in the spirit of maroon and gold.

Confirmed locations at press time include the Twin Cities, Boston, Chicago, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Denver, Washington, D.C., San Francisco, and Detroit.

To register and to see new locations, go to UMNAlumni.org. #DayofServiceUMN



GOPHER GLORY HOMECOMING 2016



**GRAND MARSHAL:
CLARA ADAMS ENDER**

It's a long road from tending tobacco fields in North Carolina to being named one of the 350 women who changed the world by *Working Woman* magazine, but General Clara Adams-ENDER (U.S. Army Ret., M.S.N. '69) has always defied convention.

The daughter of sharecroppers and the fourth of 10 children, Adams-ENDER wanted to study law but went into nursing at her father's urging. She earned a bachelor's and two master's degrees on Army scholarships, one of them at the U, and embarked on

Homecoming design elements by College of Design student Brittany Ottum

OCTOBER 15-22, 2016

For full schedule and details visit homecoming.umn.edu
#GopherGlory

ANNUAL AWARDS AFFAIR

October 20

5:30 p.m. check-in, dinner 6:15 p.m., program 7 p.m.
Commons Hotel, 615 Washington Ave. SE

Meet Homecoming Grand Marshal Clara Adams-Ender and celebrate with the Alumni Association and Student Unions and Activities as we honor exceptional alumni and students. Reception, dinner, and presentation of the Alumni Association Awards, Alumni Service Awards, and President's Student Leadership & Service Awards. Registration required. \$40. Go to UMNAlumni.org

Parking available in the Washington Avenue Ramp adjacent to the Commons Hotel. The Green Line light rail East Bank Station is just steps from the Commons Hotel.

SKI-U-MANIA

October 22, 8 a.m.

McNamara Alumni Center,
200 Oak St. SE

\$10 for Alumni Association members; \$15 for nonmembers

Ring in Homecoming at the premier pregame party for alumni and fans. Hear from new Athletics Director Mark Coyle, Alumni Association President and CEO Lisa Lewis, and University President Eric Kaler.

Stay for coronation of the Homecoming king and queen, an appearance by the Goldy and the Spirit Squads, and the alumni band. Tickets include \$15 to spend at food stands at the event plus a swag bag to ensure you're fully prepared to cheer the Gophers to victory. Registration required. Go to UMNAlumni.org/SUM16

HOMECOMING PARADE

October 21, 6:30 p.m.

University Avenue
Parking available in the 4th Street Ramp. Limited access to the University Avenue ramp due to the parade route.

a remarkable 34-year military career.

Career highlights include being promoted to brigadier general; over-

seeing 22,000 nurses as chief of the Army Nurse Corps; and being the first Army nurse to command a major Army base, which involved managing 12,000 people and a budget of \$90 million.

After retiring, Adams-Ender spent 15 years as president of Caring About People with Enthusiasm, a management consulting firm. She



also wrote a book, *My Rise to the Stars: How a Sharecropper's Daughter Became an Army General*.

Now focused on "shoring up" her legacy, she recently committed a bequest of \$2 million to the University of Minnesota. "The U was instrumental in my earning my master's and moving on to executive positions," she says. The Clara Adams-Ender Endowed Leadership Chair will support a dean at the School of Nursing.

HOMECOMING GAME

October 22, 11 a.m.

Gophers v. Rutgers Scarlet Knights
Purchase tickets at
mygophersports.com

Stay connected throughout Homecoming. Share on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter how you're celebrating by tagging [@UMNAlumni](https://www.instagram.com/UMNAlumni) and using [#GopherGold](https://twitter.com/UMNAlumni)

Do you have the
**HOMECOMING
MOBILE APP?**



Event details • Campus maps • Hotel & restaurants • Transportation & parking info



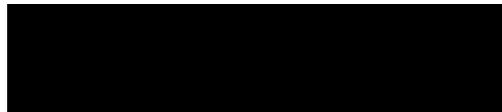
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Awesomely Urban

The metropolitan setting of the Twin Cities campus is increasingly helping shape its mission and identity.



By Meleah Maynard
Illustrations by Jacob Thomas

A Conversation with Andrew Furco

WHAT DOES IT MEAN for a land grant university to be engaged with the community at a time when higher education is undergoing fundamental change?

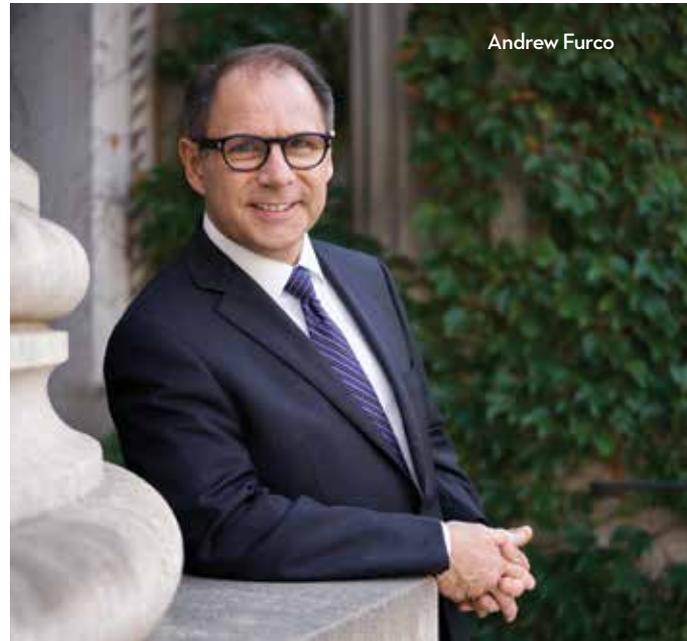
Andrew Furco has spent his career exploring that question. Furco, the University of Minnesota's associate vice president for public engagement and professor of higher education in the Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development, is an internationally known leader and thinker on public engagement. He talked with *Minnesota Alumni*.

What does it mean to be an urban university?

We have to remember that the University of Minnesota has five campuses [Crookston, Duluth, Morris, Rochester, Twin Cities], so it's not all about location or where campuses are situated. All of the campuses have robust community engagement agendas designed to connect students, faculty, and academic units in partnership with local organizations.

For example Crookston, perhaps our most rural campus, is doing excellent work on urban forestry in the horticulture department. The Center for Small Towns at Morris has partnered with the City of Morris and area schools on a project titled *Adapting to Change: Managing Urbanization in Rural America* to develop mentorship programs, park development, and managing a \$400,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Across the system, we also have faculty, staff, and students doing work globally, much of which is focused on addressing



health, environmental, educational, and other urban-focused issues.

And there are programs and units specifically focused on addressing urban issues, such as the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, the Robert J. Jones Urban Research and Outreach/Engagement Center, the urban studies undergraduate program, and masters in urban and regional planning.

What is unique about the Twin Cities campus?

It is one of the few Carnegie-classified “very high research university” campuses situated in an urban, metropolitan center [see sidebar next page]. This provides the Twin Cities campus with a unique opportunity, and I would say awesome responsibility, to integrate its research and educational activities with the needs of the communities that surround the campus. Given the size of the metropolitan area, there is a rich array of valuable opportunities to partner with nonprofits and governmental agencies to address issues that affect our neighborhoods; with national companies and innovative small businesses on strengthening the development of the future workforce; with educational entities to address K-12 needs; the list goes on.

What kind of engagement is required?

Many issues that urban communities face require a long-term, sustained investment in deriving and implementing

solutions. They require systemic solutions coordinated across agencies and stakeholders. The K-12 education achievement gap is a good example. No one agency or entity can solve it alone, and it can’t be solved overnight. For an urban-situated campus, it begs the question: What is the role of a research university in addressing these challenges? Because of its metropolitan location, the Twin Cities campus has a proximal advantage to work directly with these urban issues. It therefore has a responsibility to consider what it can do to work in partnership with external entities to tackle these intractable issues. This is what the Twin Cities campus’s strategic

Engagement Programs vs. the Engaged University

THERE’S A DIFFERENCE between being a university with community engagement programs and being an engaged university, says University of Minnesota Associate Vice President for Public Engagement Andrew Furco.

The difference lies in these five factors.

Engagement differs from outreach.

Traditionally, universities’ missions have entailed research, teaching, and outreach, and community engagement has been equated with fulfilling the outreach mission. In contrast, the 21st century model sees engagement also as a means to produce research and conduct teaching.

Engagement is at the heart of the University’s identity. Public engagement must go beyond fulfilling the land grant mission. It must be viewed as integral to the University’s identity as an institution that builds and implements research agendas, shapes classroom experiences, promotes educational opportunities, and influences broader society.

Engagement focuses on partnerships.

Historically, the biggest complaint from community members is that researchers come in, do their work, and then leave when the project or grant ends. The 21st century model moves away from implementing short-term *projects* to building long-term *partnerships*.

Engagement is with, not to, for, or in communities. It honors knowledge and experience within communities in ways that allow the University and community to codevelop, codiscover, coconstruct, and coproduce.

Engagement is about institutional transformation. For engagement to flourish, a university must implement a comprehensive institutional plan that refines and reimagines the existing culture, policies, and infrastructure.

To learn more about public engagement, go to engagement.umn.edu.

plan, launched last year, focuses on: solving the grand challenges of a diverse and changing world.

One important part of this agenda is how we engage our students in addressing these community issues. One of my research projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education, which I'm conducting with educational psychology professor Geoffrey Maruyama, is finding that many of our students, especially those from urban centers and from underrepresented groups, see community-engaged learning as a central and important component for enhancing their sense of belonging at the University and to their overall persistence and academic success. A large portion of our diverse student body comes from the metro area and other urban communities. Connecting their academic work with authentic community issues allows them to see that the education they're getting at the U has relevance in their personal lives and that it can help them make a real difference in the society.

Is community engagement a core function of the University?

Yes. In the 25 years I have been studying this issue, there has been a dramatic shift in how community engagement is perceived, valued, and legitimized in higher education. However, while it is an important function and increasingly a valued one, we in higher education still need to find a way to reward faculty who do community-engaged teaching and research.

At the U of M, as a system, we have made great strides in building what we call a 21st century approach to community engagement, which means moving from being a university with community engagement programs to being an "engaged university." This is what we mean by making community engagement a core function.

Higher education is changing. The nature of our student body, the nature of faculty work, the organization of our higher education institutions, disciplinary boundaries, advances in technology, new funding models—all of these are reshaping how higher education operates. And community-engaged work, conducted through the 21st century lens, can help it achieve contemporary goals. This is happening at all types of institutions of higher education across the globe. For universities situated in urban centers, community-engaged work can be the key to strengthening relationships with the broader community and leveraging partnerships that help address the most intractable and challenging issues that urban centers face.

How the U is Unique

THE UNIVERSITY of Minnesota Twin Cities campus is one of the first urban public research universities to have earned the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching's prestigious Community Engagement Classification. The Carnegie Classification is the accepted framework for classifying colleges and universities in the United States.

Colleges and universities with an institutional focus on community engagement were invited to apply for this elective classification, which was first offered in 2006. To earn the Community Engagement Classification, institutions must demonstrate an institutional agenda to integrate community engagement with teaching, research, scholarship, and strategic initiatives.

Campuses must reapply for the classification every 10 years, demonstrating substantial advancement in deepening community engagement within the institutional culture. In late 2015, the campus was notified that it had earned its second 10-year community engagement classification.

The University's 2015 application for reclassification featured more than 100 examples of research and teaching-focused community engagement. Here are six of them. >>



1» Partnering with North Minneapolis

THE ROBERT J. JONES Urban Research and Outreach-Engagement Center (UROC), established in 2009, connects the University and North Side Minneapolis communities through partnerships that address critical issues while improving people's quality of life and advancing learning. Among UROC's high-profile research projects is the Northside Job Creation Team (NJCT) initiative, a collaborative effort with many public and private partners, including the city of Minneapolis, local businesses, community-focused organizations, and the Carlson School of Management's Carlson Consulting Enterprise.

Launched in 2012 in response to Governor Mark Dayton's promise to boost job creation in North Minneapolis, NJCT's goal is to attract 1,000 living wage

jobs to the North Side—where research has shown that 94 percent of residents are employed outside the community—by 2019. So far, the NJCT has created more than 600 jobs, says Heidi Barajas, UROC's executive director. Talks are currently underway with several companies interested in relocating or expanding to the North Side, including Thor Construction, which plans to move its headquarters, and Cut Fruit Express, a retail and wholesale food service provider.

"There are many challenges to economic development in North Minneapolis, but few are as complicated as issues of land use," Barajas explains. "That's why UROC's partnerships with the city, county, nonprofit, and private sectors are so critical. The NJCT team has worked to bring the right people around the table so when the unexpected pops up, we can move forward in nimble and creative ways."

In addition to collaborating with graduate students in

UROC's Northside Job Creation Team, photographed on the future site of Thor Construction's headquarters, includes (left to right): Richard Copeland, Thor Construction founder and chairman of the board; Heidi Barajas, UROC executive director and chair of the U's Organization Leadership, Policy, and Development department; Ravi Norman, Thor Construction chief executive officer; and William English, Northside Job Creation Team community director.

the Carlson School of Management to research best practices in economic development and what types of businesses would be a good fit with North Minneapolis, NJCT has partnered with the Schulze School of Entrepreneurship at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul.

Other UROC projects include:

- **The Trauma Recovery Project**, which aims to improve the quality of life in urban communities like North Minneapolis, where residents are disproportionately affected by high rates of violence, incarceration, and other challenges. Anchored by research, best practices, and deep partnerships with community members, the project works to address individual and community trauma on local and personal levels.

- **The Sex Trafficking and Community Well-Being Initiative**, which since its launch in 2011 has helped raise awareness of policy concerns around the growing problem of sex trafficking and prostitution in the Twin Cities. Led by UROC Director of Research Lauren Martin, the initiative has produced research on the market structure of juvenile sex trafficking and is currently examining the behavior of traffickers and johns in metropolitan and Greater Minnesota.

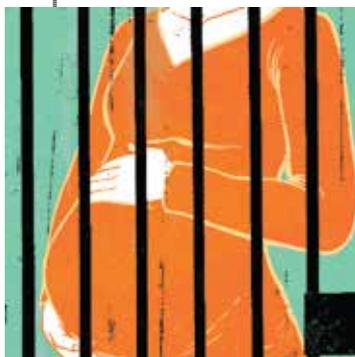
- **The Generation Next/UROC Faculty Fellows project** has charged six University researchers with creating teams of professors and community members to tackle the question, "Why is there an achievement gap in the context of Minneapolis and St. Paul and what promising practices are helping close that gap?" The fellows were chosen for their community-based scholarship in education, health, gender studies, communication, and the arts.

2>> Supporting Incarcerated Moms

SINCE 1977, the number of women who are incarcerated in the United States has increased by more than 800 percent, according to Bureau of Justice Statistics. More than 25 percent of those women have either given birth during the year before their arrest or are pregnant when they are arrested. With little or no access to education, services, or support related to birth preparation and delivery, outcomes for mothers and babies are often poor.

The Minnesota Prison Doula Project is striving to change that. Founded by Erica Gerrity, a social worker and doula who serves as program director, the prison-based project provides women incarcerated at the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Shakopee with multidisciplinary care that includes doulas, nurses, midwives, nutritionists, mental health practitioners, and others. In addition to helping women in prison have healthier pregnancies and births, the program offers support to teach mother-baby bonding, break cycles of child abuse and neglect, and prepare incarcerated women to be confident, capable mothers after their release.

Women participating in the project take part in educational groups facilitated by doulas and childbirth educators. Women who are pregnant are invited to participate in the Doula Program, which involves meeting with a doula individually about once a month for prenatal education and birth planning. During labor, doulas meet mothers at the hospital



and stay with them throughout the birth, as well as during the emotional time when the babies are taken from their mothers. Minnesota law does not allow mothers to keep their babies with them while in prison. Doulas also meet with the mothers to provide postpartum support once they return to the correctional facility.

Rebecca Schlafer (Ph.D. '10), an assistant professor in the University's Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health, serves as the project's research director. In addition to collecting information from doulas and women about their experience with the project, she is also assessing birth outcomes, including birth weights, delivery methods, and gestational age. Initial results indicate that doula care for incarcerated women could be a promising strategy for improving the health of the mothers and babies. Support for the evaluation process comes from the University's Clinical and Translational Science Institute and the Program in Health Disparities Research.

3 >> Immigrant and Refugee Health Care

FOR MICHELE ALLEN (M.D. '99), a community-based approach to health care and research means listening. In her work with immigrants, refugees, and community organizations, the University of Minnesota physician and assistant professor in the Medical School's Department of Family Medicine and Community Health is known for an approach that fosters two-way conversation.

"People don't want researchers coming in and telling them things like, 'You have too much diabetes in your community.' We need to listen to how they frame their own issues, which could be to tell us, 'We don't have access to enough fresh fruits and vegetables.' Then, we can work with them to come up with solutions."

In 2014, Allen received the University of Minnesota President's Community-Engaged Scholar Award in recognition of her longstanding commitment to engaged scholarship focused on, among other things, health equity for immigrants and refugees. Her own work focuses on adolescent health issues using community-based participatory research, and she is also an investigator in the Medical School's Program in Health Disparities Research. Two of her projects are funded by the National Institutes of Health and include a longstanding partnership with Extension and community organizations to develop a program that supports Latino families in preventing youth substance abuse. "It's a family program that's focused on supporting parents trying to help their children navigate what it means to be a teen in the United States," she explains.



4 >> Ending Homelessness

IN 2007, Minneapolis and Hennepin County launched Heading Home Hennepin, a 10-year plan to end homelessness. The number of families seeking shelter increased dramatically during the great recession, from 2008 to 2010, reflecting high unemployment and the housing foreclosure crisis. In response, Heading Home Hennepin's research and evaluation director Lisa Thornquist (B.A. '80, M.A. '84, Ph.D. '92) partnered with Humphrey School of Public Affairs Associate Professor Maria Hanratty to create a graduate student research project to identify patterns of shelter use among families.

Their report, *Family Homelessness in Hennepin County: A Mixed Methods Examination of the Rapid Exit Program and Patterns of Shelter Mobility*, found an upward trend and higher return rate to shelters by young parents. The study helped launch Hennepin County's Stable Families Initiative in 2014, which included new or refocused interventions for families at risk of reentering a shelter. It also helped get the attention of seven foundations that helped fund the pilot initiative. Outcomes have been positive. For those in the pilot group, income rose substantially and they returned to shelters less frequently than those in comparison groups. More broadly, the number of families in shelters is 45 percent lower than two years ago, the lowest level in 10 years.

Hennepin County's Stable Families Initiative helped Tiffany Sherrod and her daughter find stable housing.



5 >> Half a Century of Care

THE COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY Health Care Center (CUHCC) is one of the University of Minnesota's oldest examples of a partnership with the urban community. Established by the U as a pediatric pilot project in 1966 in the Philips neighborhood of Minneapolis, CUHCC was the first community health care center in Minnesota. Its mission was to provide primary care to children and low-income families in South Minneapolis. Today, in addition to primary care, it offers dental, mental health, victim advocacy, and, through a partnership with a Twin Cities law firm, legal services.

As a department within the U's medical school, it also serves as a clinical training ground for health science students and medical residents. It's the largest urban primary care center in Minnesota, serving nearly 11,000 patients each year with over 55,000 visits annually. The population it serves comes from over 12 different racial and ethnic groups from five continents.

6 >> Creating the Region's Future

THE BOARD OF REGENTS established the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) in 1968 to strengthen the University's involvement in addressing the urban crises of the time. CURA embodies the philosophy that urban and regional issues are inextricably linked. Communities determine their priority issues and CURA connects them with the University's knowledge, expertise, and technical assistance so they can forge solutions together.

One particularly successful effort is the Resilient Communities Project (RCP). Led by cofounder and director Mike Greco, the program seeks applications annually from cities and counties that want to accomplish specific goals focused on long-term resilience and sustainability. Greco matches projects with applicable University courses and faculty, and students from those courses assist with projects for an entire academic year. Over the last five years, more than 50 departments across the University have been involved with RCP.

One example is RCP's partnership with the city of North St. Paul, which wanted to help older residents age in place. Greco matched the city with three University classes: the housing studies course Promoting Independence in Hous-



North St. Paul seniors met with gerontology graduate students from the U to talk about the challenges of aging in place. Students then made recommendations to city staff.

ing and Community; a social work class called Health, Disabilities, and Aging; and the gerontology course Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Aging. "Each discipline provided a unique perspective on what policies, programs, and services can help residents remain in the community and in their homes as they age and, collectively, the courses helped the University address the city's needs," Greco explains.

Last year's partner, Carver County, identified 29 different projects related to housing, transportation, public health, the environment, and other concerns that were matched with more than 50 University courses. This fall, RCP will begin

collaborating with Twin Cities suburb Brooklyn Park. "We don't just do one project and leave," says Greco. "This is a deep and intensive partnership that creates lasting relationships between faculty and the community."

One of the biggest advantages of this approach, Greco explains, is that engagement opens up the entire University to communities. "It's easy for people to look at a big institution like the U and not understand how it's relevant to them or how it impacts them," Greco adds. "This is an opportunity for people to see firsthand how research, teaching, and outreach can impact people's lives in a very real way."



Lifting Up Detroit

Alumnus and University of Detroit Mercy
President Antoine Garibaldi makes his mark

By Kate Lucas

IF YOU WERE TO PLOT ANTOINE GARIBALDI'S career on a graph, you would find a clear through line from his days as a graduate student at the University of Minnesota to his current position as president of the University of Detroit Mercy. Garibaldi (Ph.D. '76), a native of New Orleans, has devoted more than four decades of service to urban communities facing major challenges. A scholar and leader, he's held an Education Policy Fellowship in Washington, D.C.; worked for the National Institute of Education, where he completed research for the landmark 1983 report *A Nation at Risk*; and served in leadership roles at Xavier University of Louisiana, Howard University in Washington, D.C., and as a senior fellow at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton before being named president of Gannon University in Erie, Pennsylvania, in 2001.

But Garibaldi is clear about what he calls his "best and most important job," held some 40 years ago when he was a 24-year-old graduate student at the University of Minnesota: director and school psychologist at the St. Paul Urban League Street Academy. A collaboration between the College of Education (now the College of Education and Human Development) and the St. Paul Urban League, the school was one of 15 street academies in the nation, part of a growing movement in alternative education. The goal was to make sure children with school suspensions or expulsions could graduate. Or, as Garibaldi says, to work with students who "might have been given up on."

Garibaldi, who received an Outstanding Alumni Award from the University of Minnesota in 2006, brushes aside credit for his penchant to serve in stressed communities. He laughs and says simply, "the Lord works in mysterious ways." When pressed, he points to the commitment to service that he learned early on, in part through his work with the Street Academy. He sees its influence in his work even today, and relishes the challenges of his current post at Detroit Mercy, where he is the Catholic institution's first lay president and—as he was at Gannon—the first African American president.

"I never hesitated because it was Detroit. It's a great time for the city—it's a nice challenging opportunity. Things are changing, and we're making a difference," says Garibaldi. Founded 139 years ago by the Jesuits and Sisters of Mercy, the 5,000-student Catholic institution is located in Northwest Detroit and has a strong emphasis on career preparation and community service, including a nationally recognized cooperative education program that places hundreds of undergrads across various fields in career-related part-time salaried positions each year.

The university has established a vigorous presence in the local community during Garibaldi's tenure. In his first few months on the job, he began meeting with neighborhood residents and several community organizations in Northwest Detroit to hear their expectations of Detroit Mercy and discuss how the university might fulfill them. "In a city like Detroit, with bankruptcy, declining population, and shrinking public school attendance, we have a responsibility to work closely with the local community, and everyone—students, faculty, staff, alumni—is involved in the revitalization efforts," he says.

In addition to meeting with community organizations, Garibaldi also reached out to education leaders, from community colleges to K-12, as well as foundations and local government officials. "I believe that asking individuals to work together allows everyone to create opportunities that are beneficial to the community and to the institutions within them." That outreach has paid off in partnerships with foundations such as Kresge, Ford, and Kellogg, and The Live6 Alliance, a nonprofit economic development organization that coordinates and promotes revitalization efforts in the neighborhood around the university.

"From the very beginning, Dr. Garibaldi saw the needs and the opportunity and the hunger of the neighboring community to be revitalized. He wanted to be a catalyst," says Rip Rapson, president and CEO of the Kresge Foundation and former deputy mayor of Minneapolis, when announcing the foundation's support of the alliance. The Live6 Alliance "has all been driven by Dr. Garibaldi's sense of urgency, his decency, and his commitment to making this a better place to be."

"The neighborhood around the campus wouldn't be what it is today without the school. The university is a real anchoring institution," Garibaldi says. He points to Detroit

As a university president, Antoine Garibaldi has maintained his scholarship and focus on the community.

“From the very beginning, Dr. Garibaldi saw the needs and the opportunity and the hunger of the neighboring community to be revitalized. He wanted to be a catalyst.”

Kresge Foundation President and CEO Rip Rapson

Mercy’s many community outreach activities, including helping local high school students prepare for college entrance tests; giving middle school pep bands opportunities to play at sporting events; and providing local residents with reduced cost or pro bono services at the dental, law, and architecture schools, and in psychology and business. He’s put considerable thought and effort into making the campus accessible and welcoming, and it seems to be making a difference: He has heard people say they’ve been on the Detroit Mercy campus more in the last two years than in the previous 20.

And he’s never left behind his action-oriented research and writing about issues facing students like those at the Street Academy. In 2014, he published an article in Howard University’s *Journal of Negro Education* on the expanding gender gap in higher education—boys and men are falling behind in student performance, high school graduation, and college enrollment. The gap has worsened considerably for African American males over the past 25 years. Garibaldi shared a number of recommendations to address the issue, such as expanding precollege programs like Upward Bound; using college students as mentors for high school students; and increasing the emphasis on college preparation while lessening the focus on athletic success starting in grade school. About his research, Garibaldi says, “These aren’t the ‘ain’t it awful’ kind of reports, but instead, ‘let’s solve these problems.’”

Last spring, Garibaldi wrote an editorial for the *Detroit Free Press* that continued his work championing the students who “might have been given up on.” It was inspired by the growing challenges in the Detroit Public School system, including plummeting enrollments, poor student performance, and budget shortfalls, despite the historically outstanding education offered by the district. “We really need solutions, which are not going to happen if we assume there isn’t a problem. Some people say [when they hear about the issues,] ‘I had no idea,’” he says.

Detroit’s challenges, Garibaldi says, were strikingly familiar to those facing urban schools 30 years ago, so he referred to his 1987 research in New Orleans, which found considerably higher aspirations and expectations among black male students and their parents as

compared to their teachers: 60 percent of students said their teachers should push them harder, and 80 percent of parents expected their sons to attend college—yet a full 60 percent of teachers said they did not expect their black male students to attend college.

Garibaldi called for a concerted effort among parents, teachers, and the community of Detroit to reenvision Detroit Public Schools and urged the community to “keep the focus on the children.” Clearly, Garibaldi has kept this focus throughout his career, and he seems well suited to call others back, too.

Gophers at Work

Alumni networks in the office benefit employers and employees.

By Suzy Frisch

WITH MORE THAN 10,000 employees in the Twin Cities, U.S. Bank’s workforce is larger than the population of many Minnesota towns. Sensitive to the need to keep its employees connected, the company has organized affinity groups, called business resource groups, to bring together workers who have shared experiences.

So it wasn’t a surprise when the bank formed a network for University of Minnesota alumni. The bank launched its Minnesota network about two years ago to connect alumni with one another and to bolster its potential employee pipeline of graduating seniors and alumni.

“We viewed this as a great way to engage our University of Minnesota alumni with the bank and with each other and give them a chance to expand their networking opportunities,” says Stephen Heinen (B.S. ’82, M.B.A. ’88), vice president and commercial banking portfolio manager. “It



creates a smaller community within the greater bank.”

The response has been strong. The bank’s network hosted several gatherings for its 400 members, including speeches by former football coach Jerry Kill, hockey coach Don Lucia, and an event at Surly Brewery featuring its founder, Omar Ansari.

From United Health Group to Ameriprise and Target, many Twin Cities employers are experiencing the benefits of forging robust ties between the U and their alumni employees. Some are new, while others were Carlson School of Management groups that expanded to include all alumni. Overall, they strive to take the University into the workplace and the alumni workforce back to the U through networking, professional development, and engagement, says Jon Ruzek, senior director of alumni networks at the University of Minnesota Alumni Association. “We have so many alumni working at these corporations,” Ruzek says. “These employers want to empower our alumni to tell others what great places those are to work.”

As a Carlson School graduate and mentor, Best Buy employee Natalie Fogal (B.S.B. ’07) aimed to continue building ties between the U and her coworkers. Shortly after she started at Best Buy in 2007, she helped start a Carlson network. Fogal, an e-commerce global planner, has been working since last summer to expand it into a global U network so that all Best Buy Gophers could benefit as she did from her connections.

The network has about 150 members and several

committees, including volunteering, networking, and mentoring. Events range from sitting in the U of M section at a Twins game to exclusive meetings with Best Buy executives.

In addition to gaining different leadership skills from her job, Fogal names many other benefits of membership: “Knowing people who attended the U and are at Best Buy means that’s a network I can always tap into—I have a connection with them,” she says. “It’s great to feel involved with a community with a common passion.”

Charlie Montreuil (M.A. ’06), senior vice president of compensation and benefits who earned his master’s in human resources and industrial relations from the University, backs Best Buy’s Minnesota alumni network. He views it as a powerful tool for building connections between all Best Buy employees and an excellent vehicle for giving back to the community.

“Very rarely does a decision get made in this organization that doesn’t take a collaborative, cross-functional effort,” says Montreuil. “By getting this group together, we’re starting a network where people can make connections outside of their own function.”

Workplace alumni networks are mutually beneficial for employers, staff, and the University. They serve as a front door to the U for employers and graduates, and build enduring links between fellow alumni and the school that helped give them a start. If you want to learn more, contact Jon Ruzek at ruzek010@umn.edu. 

Members of Best Buy’s alumni network at the company’s headquarters. Left to right are Michael Dunn, Jeff Thaler, Chris Woodbury, Jason Bruce, and Natalie Fogal

Crash Test Genius

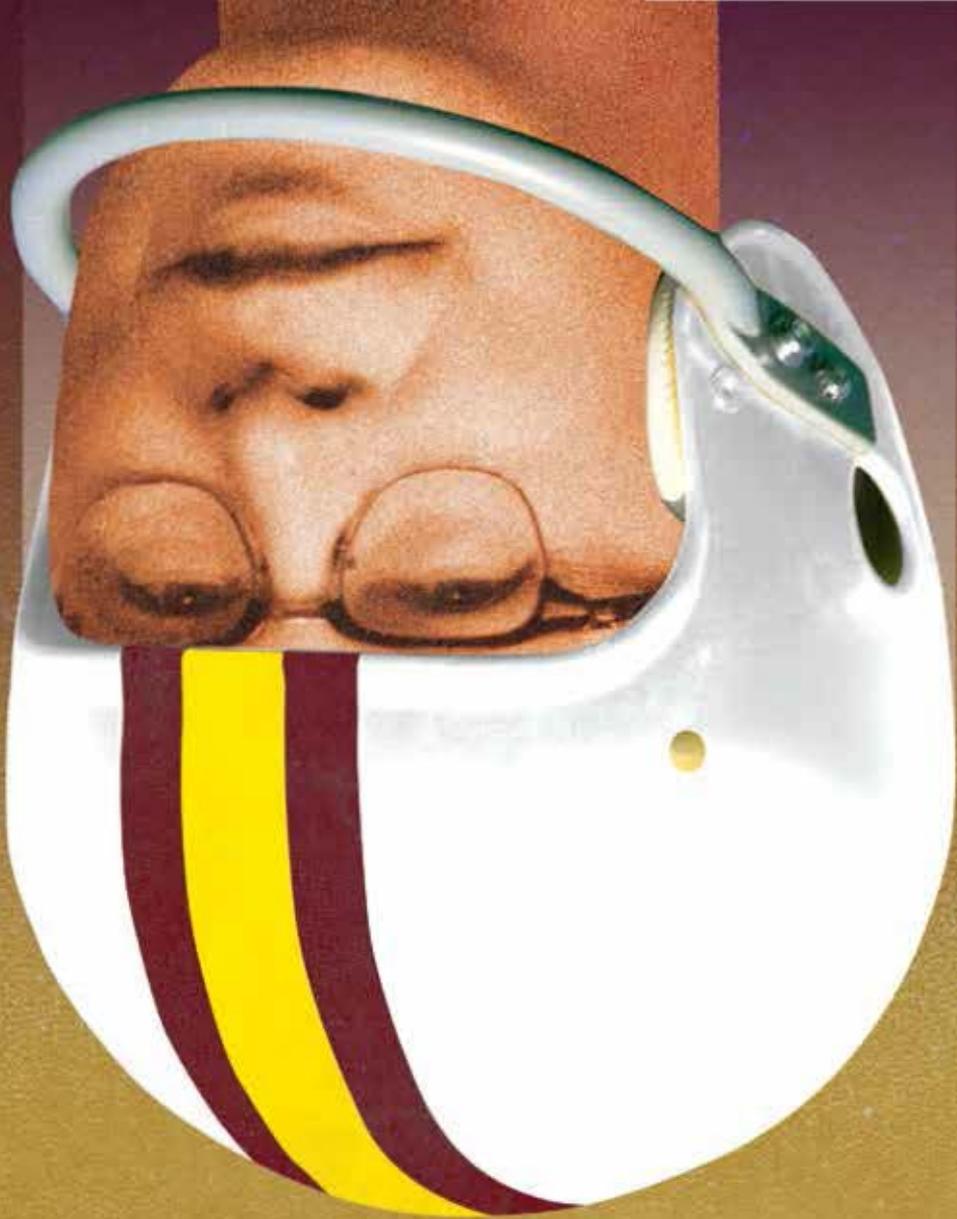
James Ryan's determination in the face of industry opposition led to the invention of the flight data recorder and the retractable seatbelt. His showmanship didn't hurt, either.

James "Crash" Ryan earned his nickname honestly: He had a habit of smashing up cars. In September 1959, when he drove a Plymouth into a concrete wall between the University's engineering building and Memorial Stadium at 30 miles per hour, onlookers included Governor Orville Freeman (B.A. '40, LAW '46), members of the University of Minnesota Board of Regents, hundreds of students, the local press, auto safety experts, and a documentary film crew.

In the cab of the Plymouth, two crash test dummies were strapped into their seats by midriff and shoulder harnesses, which were novel then but, thanks to Ryan, would one day be standard safety features. On the passenger side in the front seat, the dashboard had a deep cutout designed to prevent someone riding shotgun from banging her head. The steering wheel was designed to collapse on impact, preventing the driver from smashing into its otherwise unyielding frame. Hydraulic pistons, designed to absorb the impact, rested between the bumper and the body of the car, causing the bumper to jut out several inches.

After a brief speech and a countdown from 10, the driverless car accelerated toward the concrete. The unmistakable thud of metal against immovable object quickly followed. Glass shattered, metal wrinkled, and the audience made a noise somewhere between a gasp and nervous laughter. When the echo of the crash died away, the crowd responded with oddly polite applause.

Ryan had been in the habit of smashing cars since the early 1950s, often behind the wheel with a Gopher football helmet on his head. Born in small town Iowa to a second-generation Irish American family, he earned an



A young consumer advocate named Ralph Nader called Ryan the only independent researcher to “squarely and persistently challenge automobile manufacturers.”



undergraduate degree in engineering from the University of Iowa in 1925. He went to work for Westinghouse, was let go at the height of the Depression, but then found a job as an assistant professor in the mechanical engineering department at the University of Minnesota in 1931. He stayed for 32 years.

Prior to his foray into crash safety, Ryan worked on a project with Dr. Ancel Keyes to create a treadmill for the exercise, dietary, and altitude studies Keyes was conducting at the Mayo Clinic. Soon Ryan was doing another experiment through Mayo, which involved automatic opening devices for parachutes.

Here began Ryan's first experiences with test dummies, which in this case were flung from 40,000 feet with parachutes strapped to their backs. Too many real live parachutists were passing out from lack of oxygen after jumping at such high altitudes. There was also a problem with jumpers being jerked violently as the chute opened. Ryan was asked to determine the safest altitude for the parachutes to open, which turned out to be around 15,000 feet.

The recorder that Ryan built to measure speed, altitude, and the tension of forces on the falling dummies as they descended to earth spurred an idea for another application. Couldn't a similar tracking device record the flight path of airplanes? And wouldn't those measurements have value in helping understand the nature of the forces affecting its flight?

During World War II, Ryan and his engineering grad students began working on such a flight data recorder for General Mills, which had parlayed War Department contracts into the creation of an engineering division that worked out of the Thorp Building in northeast Minneapolis, the same building that's now home to scores



One of Ryan's testing methods involved dropping cars from cranes.

Opposite: James Ryan working on the Black Box recorder



of artists and part of the annual Art-a-Whirl festival. Ryan developed a test model for the machine in 1945 that recorded speed, altitude, vertical acceleration, time in the air, and flight direction on a strip of aluminum foil.

But development of the recorder ran into what would prove to be an ongoing problem: Airlines were not all that interested in finding out the circumstances under which planes crashed. As is true today, the companies in the 1940s objected to adding weight to a commercial airplane. They also contended that any recorder that couldn't survive the impact of a plane crashing or the heat of the ensuing fire was not worth the cost. Ryan managed to place his first flight recorder on a DC-4 that flew between Minneapolis and Tokyo and collected eight months' worth of data. The airline that had agreed to fly the recorder, however, was so blasé about the results that not once did they ask to check the readings.

Seeking federal aid for his invention, Ryan took it to the Civil Aeronautics Administration (CAA, forerunner to the Federal Aviation Administration), which agreed with the airlines' argument that if the data recorder couldn't withstand a crash, it wasn't all that useful. So Ryan returned to Minneapolis, wrapped the recorder in steel spheres with a thick cushion of insulation, and took it back to the CAA. There it was run through a battery of tests that included blowtorches, ovens that heated it to 1,000 degrees, then attached to the exterior of an airplane wing and slammed into barricades at speeds exceeding the pull of gravity by 100 times.

The flight recorder survived every brutality and won support from the CAA. Though commercial airlines and manufacturers remained unenthusiastic, lawmakers responded favorably. Congress enacted legislation

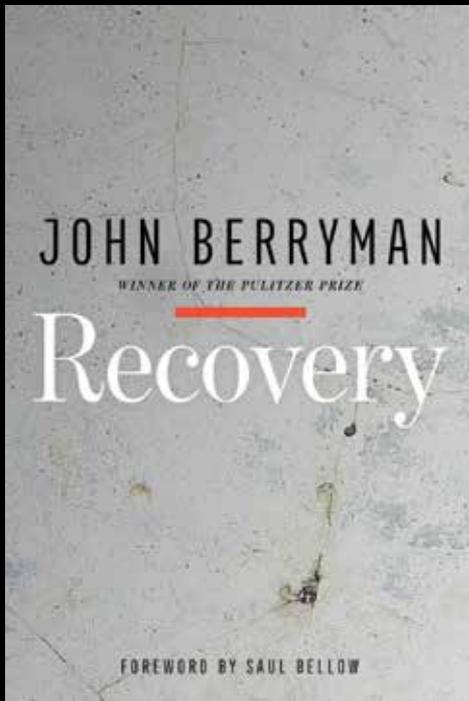
requiring installation by the mid-1950s of a flight data recorder on every jet that left the ground.

Meanwhile, Ryan had moved on to the auto industry, where safety standards were essentially nonexistent and car crash casualties were astronomical: 30,000 deaths and 1.2 million injuries in 1960. With a \$1,500 grant from the U, Ryan purchased a 1941 Buick, which he modified with a shock-absorbing hydraulic front bumper (a prototype of the one he would use a decade later for his experiment behind the engineering building). As added safety measures, he reversed the backseat so that passengers would be facing the back window and installed padded steel plates in front to protect driver and passenger.

As with his other experiments, Ryan knew the true test of his safety devices was a crash. He built his first concrete and sand barrier in back of the engineering building. So confident was he of the outcome that he eschewed dummies, donned a Gopher football helmet, and climbed behind the wheel. Unfortunately, the oil in his hydraulic bumpers stiffened in the 10-degree weather and failed to cushion the impact of the crash. Ryan was knocked unconscious.

Undeterred by his concussion or the fact that the U decided not to fund another test, Ryan secured money from the U.S. Air Force and began to test his safety systems by dropping cars suspended from cranes onto deserted highways. At 50 feet up, the impact approximated an accident at 40 miles per hour. The novelty of the tests began drawing broad attention, including from NBC's *Dave Garroway Show*, which filmed one of the experiments and interviewed Ryan about what he was doing.

Ryan was soon doing more tests at the wheel of a modified '56 Ford. At a test site in Alamogordo, New



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Mexico, he drove the car into a barrier at 20 miles per hour. Not only did the Ford survive the impact, Ryan and the grad student with him drove off for a downtown lunch. This experiment earned him a \$100,000 grant from the Public Health Service and also put him back in the good graces of the U.

The big show with the '59 Plymouth behind the engineering building soon followed. Despite severe damage to the car, it was determined that the occupants would have walked away, and the experiment was deemed a success.

Ryan's safety tests continued until his retirement in 1963. Automakers continued to pay as little attention as they could, but by the mid-1960s lawmakers in Washington, with the aid of Ryan's data, began to grow more receptive to the idea of implementing safety standards. Spurred by a newcomer to the debate, attorney Ralph Nader, whose book *Unsafe at Any Speed* had become a surprise bestseller in 1966, Congress passed the first meaningful national traffic safety act. It required automakers to equip cars with headrests, energy-absorbing steering wheels, shatter-resistant windshields, and safety belts. By 1970, motor vehicle death rates began to decline for the first time in American history.

In a 1967 trip to the U to deliver a lecture on auto safety, Nader sat with Ryan in one of his last crash-proof cars and acknowledged his pioneering work. In his book, Nader called Ryan the only independent researcher to "squarely and persistently challenge automobile manufacturers to build crashworthy vehicles."

Ryan passed away at age 69 in 1973. In the garage at his home on Mississippi Boulevard in St. Paul were the '56 Ford and the '59 Plymouth—a little dusty and covered in cobwebs, but still equipped with hydraulic bumpers and otherwise ready to be crashed into a concrete barrier.

A final note: the car that Ryan drove on a daily basis at the time of his death was a Corvair, the same vehicle that was the prime culprit in Nader's book *Unsafe at Any Speed*. ❧



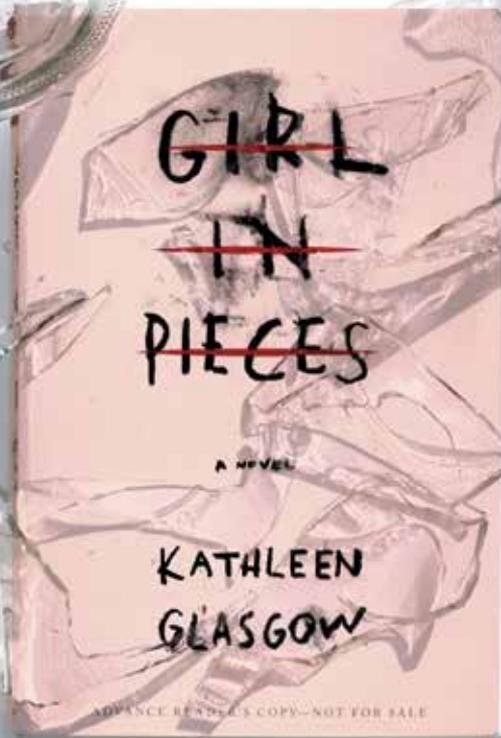
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Photo by Rich Ryan

Picking Up the Pieces



Girl in Pieces

By Kathleen Glasgow
(M.F.A. '02)
Random House, 2016
416 pages

KATHLEEN GLASGOW (M.F.A. '02) was riding the bus to her job at the University of Minnesota when a teenage girl sat down next to her. The girl had downcast eyes; her hair hung in her face. And when one of her sleeves rode up, Glasgow glimpsed something all too familiar: fresh thin red scars. The girl was a cutter, one of the estimated one million girls and boys each year who engage in self-harm, or non-suicidal self-injury. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, about 14 to 24 percent of adolescents and young adults have engaged in some type of self-harm.

Seeing the young girl on the bus stopped Glasgow in her tracks. "I was basically looking at myself when I was 15. Head down, hiding away. And I thought, I'm still hiding away. And I should have said something to that girl, like, 'It's going to be OK,' but I didn't. I let her get off the bus. And I thought, you know, maybe it's time that I tell this story."

Glasgow was working on a different book at the time, but she put it down to start writing *Girl in Pieces*, her young adult debut novel about a girl much like her younger self. Eight years later, she signed a six-figure, two-book deal with Random House for *Girl in Pieces*, which was published in August. The second book, still untitled, comes out in fall 2017.

Like 70 percent of girls who self-harm, the narrator of *Girl in Pieces*, Charlotte "Charlie" Davis, is a cutter. Her world has been defined by loss—her father's suicide, her mother's subsequent neglect, her best friend's devastating accident—and at 17, after a stay in a St. Paul hospital treatment program, she makes her way to Tucson, Arizona, where she hopes to reconnect with an old crush. Instead, she gets involved with a washed-up yet charming musician who's also a drug addict. The other characters, all vivid, sympathetic, and struggling in their own ways, help lighten the intense, sometimes harrowing story. Through them, Charlie rediscovers the healing power of her first love, drawing, and begins to pick up the pieces of her life.

Glasgow recently talked about her book.

Why do people harm themselves?

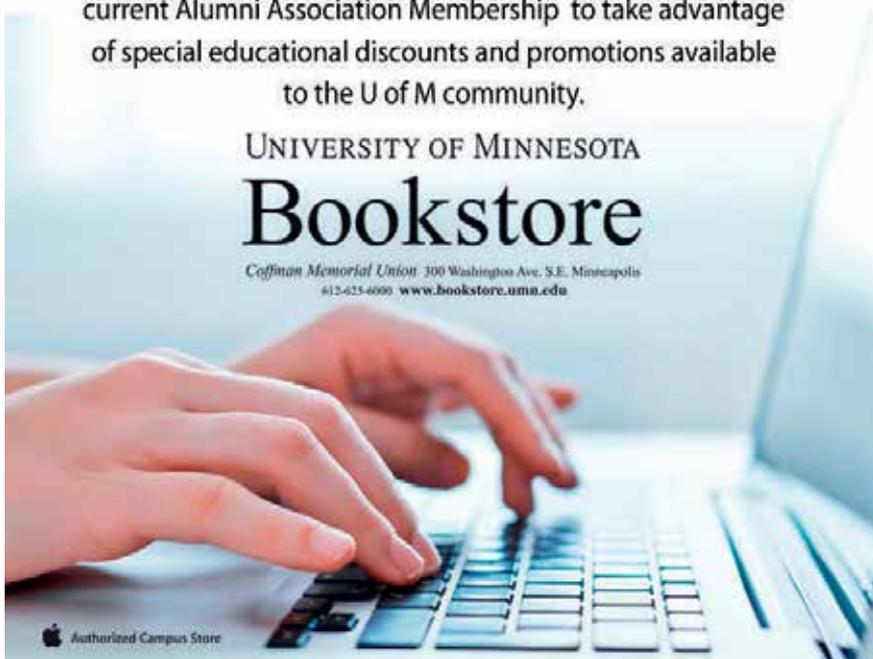
I would say the most common reasons that young people start self-harming are abuse, trauma, or severe depression. Harming is a coping mechanism, a way to control their feelings on their own terms, or, in a strange way, to take care of themselves, like Charlie does. And as I show in the book, it does become kind of a vicious cycle. You learn that to feel better you have to feel pain, and then you have to unlearn that.

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Were you ever homeless, like Charlie?

There was a period of my life when my depression was very acute and I was unable to work and was in and out of the hospital for treatment. I was lucky enough to have friends who let me stay on their couches and to receive welfare and food stamps. I know what it's like to have to steal toilet paper and public bathroom soap, and subsist on crackers and peanut butter, or be hungry at your restaurant job. I don't see enough of that in books—how people actually struggle day to day to make a living and sometimes just to eat.

Was there a particular reason you set part of your book in the Twin Cities?

I wanted to go from one extreme climate to another, from a cold climate where she could hide under layers of clothing to a climate where she was going to be forced to take off her clothes. And she would be shedding parts of herself, physical and emotionally, as she made that journey.

It's nice to see that Charlie has a happy ending.

Yes, I did give Charlie a happy ending. This is a book, more than anything, about hope and survival. It's not really about what Charlie does to herself; it's about the life she crafts for herself out of bits and pieces. It's about learning how to live as a girl in a world that constantly questions your value, your intelligence, and your dreams. The struggle is so hard. All of us and all of the kids who are doing it right now deserve a happy ending. 

—Laura Silver



Stephanie D.

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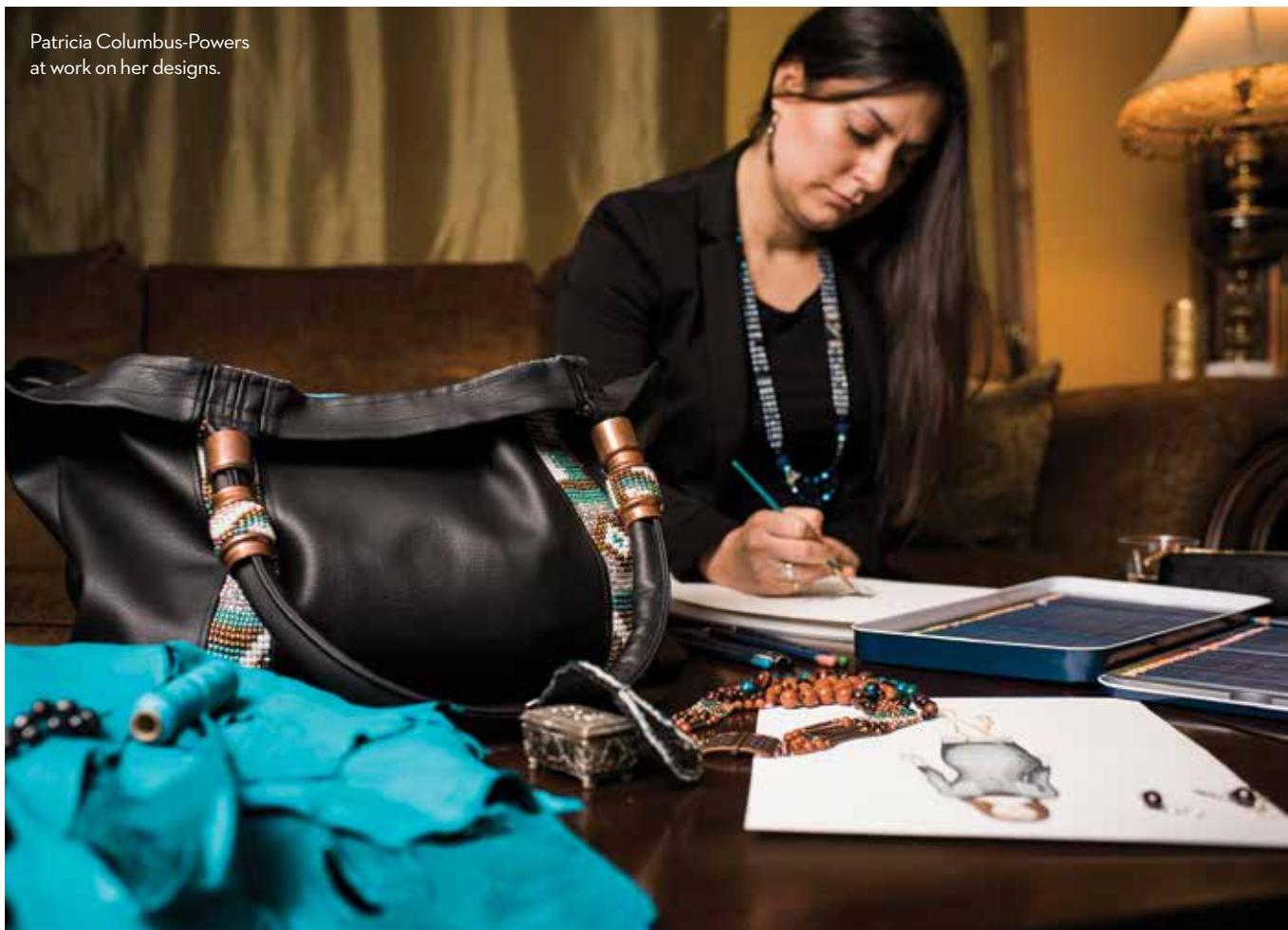
A former mechanical engineer creates a high-end fashion house for Native women.

By Katie Spielberger

PATRICIA COLUMBUS-POWERS (B.M.E. '06, M.S. '11) has lived in the same St. Paul zip code for most of her life, but her mind has never stopped moving. Her new venture, a high-end Native fashion house called Siobhan Powers, will weave together her understanding of business theory, industrial engineering, design, cultural appropriation, and the legacy of colonialism to create a business that only she could create—and that she hopes will help her Native community. “Human society progresses as a whole; you can’t leave anybody behind,” Columbus-Powers says.

The Dakota woman’s shift to entrepreneurship comes after nearly a decade of working as a mechanical engineer at St. Paul-based 3M. There, she took full advantage of the company’s policy of allowing employees to spend 15 percent of their time exploring projects outside their usual realms. When she realized her interests were moving from engineering systems to business systems, she decided to leave engineering to pursue an M.B.A. from the University’s Carlson School of Management.

Patricia Columbus-Powers at work on her designs.



"I'M NOT USUALLY A SPEECHLESS KIND OF PERSON, BUT I COULDN'T TAKE IT IN, AND I KEPT SAYING 'REALLY? ME?' IT TOOK ABOUT A WEEK TO TRULY UNDERSTAND THAT IT WAS REAL."

Composer **LIBBY LARSEN** (B.A. '72, M.F.A. '75, Ph.D. '78) upon being named the 2016 recipient of Minnesota's top cultural prize, the McKnight Distinguished Artist Award. The award recognizes artists who have made their lives and careers in Minnesota.

Meanwhile, she had been thinking about how to represent her Dakota identity at work. She started designing her own jewelry, drawing on beading skills she first learned from her mother when she was 3 years old. As friends asked her to design jewelry for them too, she realized there was a market for high-end fashion for professional Native women. She secured funding from multiple sources, including \$1,000 plus eligibility to receive \$5,000 more from the 2016 Acara Challenge, a social startup competition held by the University's Institute on the Environment, and \$2,500 from the Tiwahe Foundation for Native peoples.

"Beadwork is an intricate piece of so many people's lives in the Native community," Columbus-Powers says. She thinks fashion is one of the most personal and effective forms of artistic expression. "It's an art form that can communicate with the masses," she says. She often shows people a photo of intricately detailed beaded high heels created by Shoshone-Bannock and Luiseño artist Jamie Okuma she saw on display at the Smithsonian. "They're exactly what I would love to wear to work," she says.

There's a world of difference between fashions created by Native designers and "Native-inspired" fashions. Outside of museums, it's easier to find the latter. During the 2015 New York Fashion Week, a line by the KTZ brand was widely criticized for appropriating designs that bore strong similarities to those created by Northern Cheyenne and Crow designer Bethany Yellowtail, who Columbus-Powers cites as one of her biggest inspirations. "If people are constantly stealing your identity and selling it, they are degrading you because they are discounting your value within society," she says.

The first product launch, planned for this fall, will showcase Columbus-Powers's own jewelry, handbags,

and dresses, but she intends to showcase other Native designers from Minnesota and eventually across the country.

Siobhan is Columbus-Powers's middle name, but she likes that the initials of her venture match those of St. Paul. Her family has lived in the area for generations. "My ancestors have always been there, even precolonization, so I think that kind of ties me to this area—as well as trying to stay with the land that my ancestors worked so hard to protect for so long," she says.

The effects of colonization still reverberate today in Native youth suicide epidemics, substance abuse, and disproportionately high incarceration rates. A critical part of Columbus-Powers's business model is offering employment to Native Americans whose felony records make it nearly impossible to find work. She also envisions her business mentoring Native youth as they develop their own artistic voices. The key to mentoring younger generations, she says, is "not to teach them to be as good as you, but to teach them to be better than you are, to be greater than you could ever be." She emphasizes that she's been successful because her parents worked "extremely hard, through really bad poverty, in order to give me a structure in which I could actually learn and pull myself up to a higher social class." She also gives effusive credit to the mentors who have helped her navigate and succeed in the dominant culture, including University professors, 3M managers, tribal leaders, and Native business owners.

Columbus-Powers has heard business leaders talk about finding your "personal board of directors," but this is an old idea for Native Americans, she says. "We depend on the wisdom of our elders, and we incorporate this in our lives to produce success for ourselves—and generations to come." ■



"Your name is not Pocahontas. It is Siobhan Ma'iingan, and you should never let anyone make you feel anything less than proud of who you are."

Minnesota state Representative and White Earth Nation of Ojibwe citizen **PEGGY FLANAGAN** (B.A. '02) addressing the Democratic National Convention on July 29. She was speaking to her 3-year-old daughter watching at home, who wants to be president of the United States when she grows up. Flanagan, one of 147 Native delegates, made history as the first Native woman to address the DNC from the podium.

Stay connected.

UPCOMING EVENTS & PROGRAMS

GROW

Feast on these forthcoming Alumni Association webinars (note: times are Central).

The Purpose Checkup

Thursday, September 29
Noon to 1 p.m.

The Final Countdown: Politics of the Presidential Race and the Election Day Process

Wednesday, October 26
Noon to 1 p.m.

Take Control of Your Stress

Thursday, November 3
Noon to 1 p.m.

Can't make it in person? Webinars are available 24/7 at UMNAlumni.org/goldmind. Free of charge, webinars and other Alumni Association programming are made possible through membership and our business partners. To learn more about becoming a business partner, email Lisa Huber at lhuber@umn.edu.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Join other Gopher alumni in your own community for the third annual Alumni Association Day of Service on Saturday, October 15. Alumni from across the nation can serve their communities in the spirit of maroon and gold in a variety of settings. Find details in the Homecoming Guide on page 20 of this issue. **#DayofServiceUMN**

NETWORK

Connect online with other U of M alumni from a variety of industries to exchange career knowledge and build new professional connections. The Alumni Association's Virtual Networking Series is speed networking, only online. Sign in from anywhere.

Student-Alumni Virtual Networking

Wednesday, October 5
Noon to 1:30 p.m.

#UMNCareerChat (on Twitter):

Effective Interview Strategies

Wednesday, October 12
Noon to 1 p.m.

All-Alumni Virtual Networking

Wednesday, November 2
Noon to 1 p.m.

Join us! To learn how, go to UMNAlumni.org/virtual

LEARN

Information may be the currency of our knowledge economy, but shaping and directing its use depends on creativity. That's the viewpoint of University of Minnesota Professor **Brad Hokanson** (right), instructor for the online course Creative Problem Solving, available exclusively to U alumni October 22 through November 22.

The course is made possible by the Alumni Association and presented through the U of M partnership with Coursera, an educational technology company that offers online courses through universities and other organizations. The

special alumni registration fee is \$15, discounted from Coursera's standard fee of \$49. This will be the third online course in creativity for Hokanson, who teaches in the University of Minnesota College of Design and has published widely in the fields of creativity and educational technology.

The course will feature live, online sessions as well as an in-person wrap-up on campus. Each participant will have the opportunity for an in-person consultation with the instructor. Course materials will be available 24/7.

To register, go to UMNAlumni.org.



WHAT A DIFFERENCE YOU MAKE!



Dear Alumni,

In July, I met with the Board of Regents to report on the activities of the Alumni Association during the past year. I'd like to share my report with you, our members, who make possible all of our programming and events.

Because alumni are a huge asset and make a profound impact on our mission, the Alumni Association is continually seeking new ways to serve you. Among the new opportunities this past year were:

Minnesota Sparks, a series of outreach events that took U researchers tackling the state's most critical issues into conversation with communities across Greater Minnesota. These conversations supported the Board and President Kaler's goals of further statewide engagement and were a partnership of the Alumni Association, the president's office, University Relations, Extension, and others. Three initial events in Red Wing, Mountain Iron, and Brainerd were successful and three more are planned this fall in Fergus Falls, Marshall, and St. Cloud.

More than 100 alumni served as student recruitment ambassadors in seven states, in partnership with the Office of Admissions. Through one-on-one conversations, alumni share their U of M experience with prospective students and answer questions.

Enhanced career support via webinars, virtual networking, and establishment of corporate networks engage U alumni in the workforce and highlight how they're leading and contributing to the local and regional economy. Networks exist at Best Buy, U.S. Bank, and Target, and more are planned.

During the last year, more than 44,000 Twin Cities campus alumni donated more than \$167 million to the U and contributed to a 1,000 percent increase in the number of emails sent to legislators supporting University priorities.

Whether helping to recruit students, supporting the U at the Legislature, or giving back time, talent, and treasure, you and all alumni are truly ambassadors for the University. Thank you.

—Lisa Lewis
President and CEO

NEW BOARD CHAIR TAKES OFFICE



Daniel McDonald (B.E.E. '82, J.D. '85), a partner at the intellectual property law firm Merchant & Gould, is the new chair of the Alumni Association's Board of Directors for 2016-17. He is the 80th chair in the organization's 112-year history.

"I'm honored to serve," says McDonald. "Our Alumni Association has ambitious goals to strengthen our relationships with alumni all over Minnesota and the world. While this will take much hard work and focus, the end goal will benefit alumni, the University and the state of Minnesota in many ways."

McDonald was named Attorney of the Year 2015 by *Minnesota Lawyer*. He serves on the Advisory Board for the University of Minnesota Law School.

In addition to McDonald, 11 new board members also took office on July 1, including Akira Nakamura (M.B.A. '92), the organization's first-ever international board member. Nakamura lives in Tokyo.

MEMBER ADVANTAGES

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- ▶ Invest in yourself with a course in the Carlson Executive Education program (save 10 percent).

EXPLORE CAMPUS

- ▶ Visit the Bell Museum of Natural History and Weisman Art Museum (discounted membership rates).
- ▶ See the finest Northrop Dance, U of M Theatre Arts, and School of Music performances (member ticket rates).
- ▶ Dine with a view from the Campus Club (local and non-Twin Cities membership discounts).
- ▶ Tour The Raptor Center for a beak-to-nose educational experience (weekend program discounts, save 20 percent on birthday parties).

MEMBERS-ONLY ACCESS

- ▶ Advance notice and special pricing of exclusive events. Keep an eye on your inbox!
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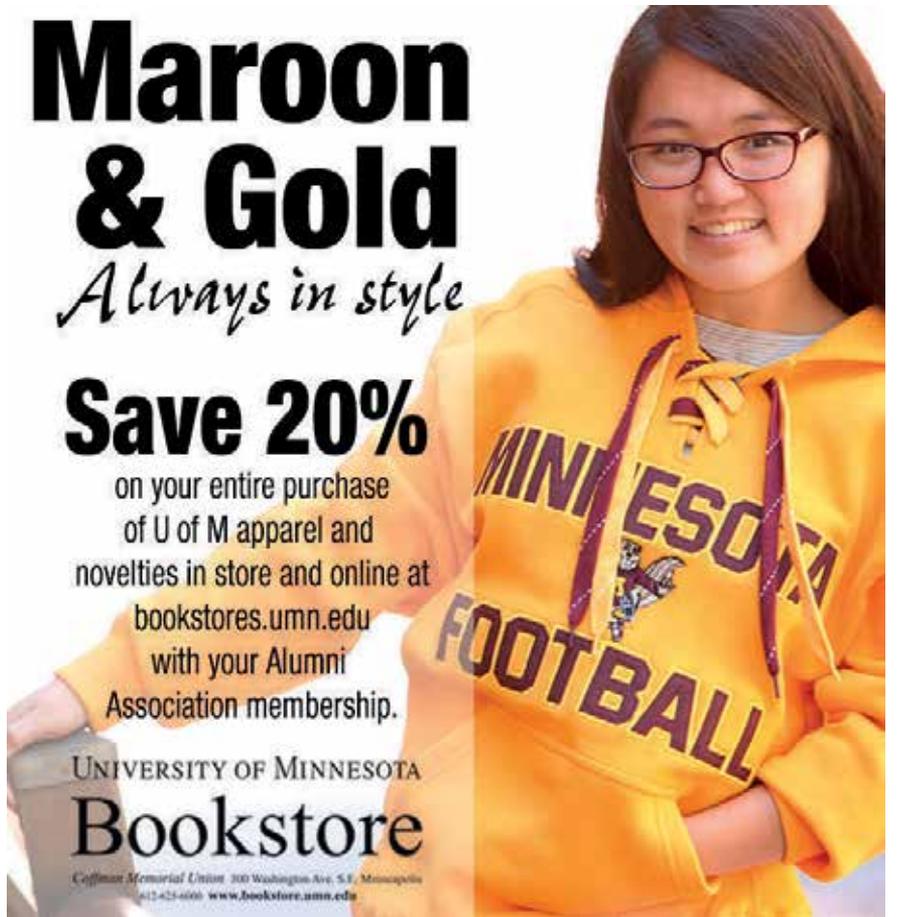
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Being part of the Alumni Association as a student and recent grad has helped me grow and start my career. As an alumna I'm looking forward to giving back, whether it's through being a mentor or attending events. I'm proud to call myself a Gopher and join the ranks of the many great alumni before me!

Claire Tompkins (B.S. '16)



Letting a Song Go Out of My Heart

By John Toren (B.A. '74)

THEY SAY THAT SINGING can be therapeutic. When my wife, Hilary, recently decided it might be fun for us to join a choir, I found that it can be a lot more than that. Our vague aspirations sprang abruptly to life when we heard from a friend about the University of Minnesota's Summer Chorus (cosponsored by the Oratorio Society Choir). The commitment consisted of eight two-and-a-half-hour rehearsals followed by one Saturday dress rehearsal with full orchestra, and a performance later that same evening.

To me, the prime virtue of the program was the repertoire—opera choruses! So I sent the organizers a delicately phrased question: If you love opera but haven't sung in a choir in 40 years, aren't good at sight-singing, and don't sing very loudly, would it be appropriate for you to sign up?

The reply was pleasant. Sight-singing wasn't required because you'd have YouTube videos and MP3 files to study. There was no need for loud singing. In short, if you could carry a tune and were willing to send in the entry fee you were welcome to participate. Next thing I knew, Hilary and I were sitting in a large rehearsal hall on a hot summer evening in a sea of 150 strangers.

Rehearsals invariably went by in a flash. Returning to the parking lot afterward, I often noticed I felt twice as alert as I had been when we'd arrived. Practicing at home, though, was much more difficult than I'd expected. At times it seemed we lived in a madhouse—Hilary in the living room pounding out her line on the piano while I in the nearby office tried to parse "Gloria all'Egitto, ad lside!" among 10 notes of varying length and emphasis.

It was easier to find the right path once we reassembled with the group. (Perhaps the practicing made

a difference.) Soon, the complexity of the task we'd undertaken became obvious. Phrasing, emphasis, dynamics—they all needed attention. Before long my score was highlighted with advice written in pencil: "stop," "go to the top of 13," "breathe," "quick page turn," "dramatic volume," "sing *piano*, but with *fortissimo* consonants."

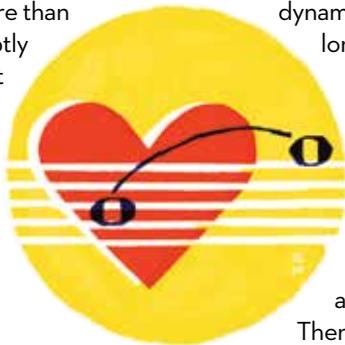
Only during our last Wednesday rehearsal did our conductors say they expected us to look at *them* rather than at our scores during the performance.

Then, how were we supposed to make use of all of our scribbling?

Whatever butterflies I had vanished the moment we arrived at the concert hall on the afternoon of the performance. The event was still six hours away, but there was already electricity in the air. Singers and orchestra members started to arrive, and after rehearsal and sandwiches we waited some more, like athletes in a locker room before a big game.

I felt a surge of confidence as the performance began. Most of the things I'd learned during rehearsal seemed to come back unbidden, and the wonderful sounds coming from the orchestra added a whole new dimension. Looking out at the people in the audience, it suddenly occurred to me for the first time that, aside from being a lot of fun, what was taking place really *meant* something. We were all contributing freely to a musical effect that people in the audience seemed to be enjoying.

It was an exhilarating experience, and for weeks afterward I caught myself humming "Va' Pensiero" or "Treulich Geführt" with a little grin on my face, and sometimes a tear in my eye. Those arias had become the soundtrack to my summer. ♫



John Toren is a book editor at Nodin Press and the author of several books, including *The Seven States of Minnesota*.

Illustration by Ilana Blady



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Nicole Ballou ('15)

“

FOCUS ON BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

My advice for young alumni and parents of recent graduates is for them to understand the importance of seeking out opportunities. Attend networking events through the Alumni Association and connect with alumni through UMAA's LinkedIn page. The activities that I participated in as a student on and off campus and the reliance I had on my mentor and alumni community helped me expand my professional network in ways I never could have imagined.

”

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