

Minnesota ALUMNI

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

FALL 2019

Seeds of Health

U alumni, researchers, and Native groups work to improve nutrition and fight chronic disease in American Indian communities through traditional foods.

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a yellow and green striped sweater, is holding a young boy in her arms. The boy has curly hair and is wearing a brown jacket. They are outdoors in a park with trees showing autumn colors. The background is slightly blurred.

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Back at the U



MY FIRST BRUSH WITH THE U—although I certainly didn't know it at the time—was as a child growing up on a farm in far southwestern Minnesota. I was in 4-H, a program ably run by the U of M Extension service to provide sometimes-isolated farm kids with both a social outlet and a way to learn contemporary ag techniques. I'm proud to report that despite a particularly obstinate young heifer calf named Daisy, who dragged me willy-nilly about the show ring at my local county fair, I still possess a sympathy blue ribbon for my program efforts.

The second time I encountered the U and the first time I stepped foot on the Twin Cities campus was during the summer of 1980, just prior to my senior year of high school. I had been invited to attend a journalism boot camp designed for incoming editors of high school newspapers. The camp offered me and my fellow editors-in-training a chance to stay in the U dorms for a few days while we traipsed around campus goggling at both the buildings and “the city.” It also gave us an opportunity to hear from a variety of journalism school professors about how we might best wield a pen in service of our respective audiences.

Some of my memories of that stay are absolutely crystalline: We visited the old James Ford Bell Museum near University and Church to poke around among the dioramas, then stayed to watch the terrible but cult classic movie *Plan 9 from Outer Space*. I also remember walking in a laughing, hungry horde over to Sammy D's restaurant to meet the legendary Mama D for a little coddling and red-sauce-rich spaghetti. Perhaps my most vivid recollection is hopping onto the back of a cute boy's motorcycle in a parking lot behind my dorm and pressing the inside of my shorts-clad leg firmly against the screaming-hot muffler. (That particular move is, unfortunately, burned into my memory.)

As a sort of shy, bookish, longing-to-be writer, the few days I spent here at the U many years ago gave me my first chance to meet others who also hoped to someday make a living telling stories.

In both subtle and not so subtle ways, the U has played a unique role in shaping who I became as an adult, as it has for so many people, even those who are not part of the traditional student experience.

And now, I'm grateful to be here, sitting in the editor's chair, looking forward to sharing meaningful, important stories with you.

It's good to be back. □

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Minnesota ALUMNI

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Minnesota Alumni (ISSN 2473-5086)

is published four times yearly—in September, December, March, and June—by the University of Minnesota Alumni Association, 200 Oak St SE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, MN 55455-2040. Periodicals postage paid at St. Paul, Minnesota, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Minnesota Alumni, McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak St SE, Suite 200, Minneapolis, Minnesota, 55455-2040

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LETTERS

"Was I the First?"

In "Everybody Wants to Live Someplace Special" (Summer 2019), Jennifer Vogel quotes Marvin Meltzer (B.Arch. '61) as saying, "I was the second Jew to ever attend the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota." If Meltzer is right, I may have been the *first* Jew to choose and study architecture at the U, 1951-55.

In the fall of 1951, I switched to architecture after a first year of basic engineering. I made the switch partly because many advisers told me that the anti-Semitism then rampant in Minnesota meant I would never get a job in chemical engineering, my desired major. It never occurred to me that architecture, too, might be a closed field to Jews.

I was a good student, but not quite straight-A, as my design work was not outstanding. Indeed, my mentor in my final year dissuaded me from pursuing architecture any further: Instead he encouraged me to go into the new field of city planning. I later earned my master's in city planning from the University of Pennsylvania in 1957.

It was a perfect fit. I had a productive, satisfying, and honorable career, retir-

ing in 2009 at age 75. Now, at 86, I continue to be involved with my profession as the editor of a news magazine for urban planners in northern California.

**Naphtali H. Knox, FAICP
(B.Arch. '55)
Palo Alto, California**

Playing Ball

I recently read John Rosengren's article "My Father's Glove" (Summer 2019). It reminded me about a classmate who sat across from me in Home Room 206 at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis. I was playing softball during a gym class and Bill Rosengren [Ed. note: John's father] was pitching. As I recall, I had hit a home run early in the game, mostly thanks to the left fielder. When I came to bat, Bill threw a perfect change-up pitch I was not prepared for and struck me out! Needless to say, a person does not forget memories like that, even after 68 years. An additional memory I have of Bill Rosengren is that we both worked at the Dairy Queen across from Minnehaha Park.

**Roger Long
Roosevelt High School 1951
B.S. '55, M.A. '59, Ph.D. '63**

Attention '09, '14 Alumni Career Survey

Are you an alumnus/a who graduated in 2009 or 2014? The U of M has partnered with the Career Leadership Collective to conduct a national online survey of career choices at five and 10 years post-graduation.

The National Alumni Career Mobility Survey (NACM) is open through November 2019. Data collected by this survey will be used to help better understand the professional pathways of graduates and to prepare future alumni for improved career success.

If you are a 2009 or 2014 graduate, please visit <http://bit.ly/UMNtwincitiesNACM>

John Rosengren responds: I'd never heard the story about my dad pitching softball in gym class. Wish he were still around so I could ask him about that. The writer mentions working at the local Dairy Queen with my dad. It's still there, last stop on Minnehaha Avenue before the roundabout near Minnehaha Park. My dad often talked about it. He had a long, successful career as an attorney, including 24 years as general counsel of Ecolab, but, based on the frequency of his DQ stories, I think he was most proud of his ability to put the little twist on top of soft-serve cones.

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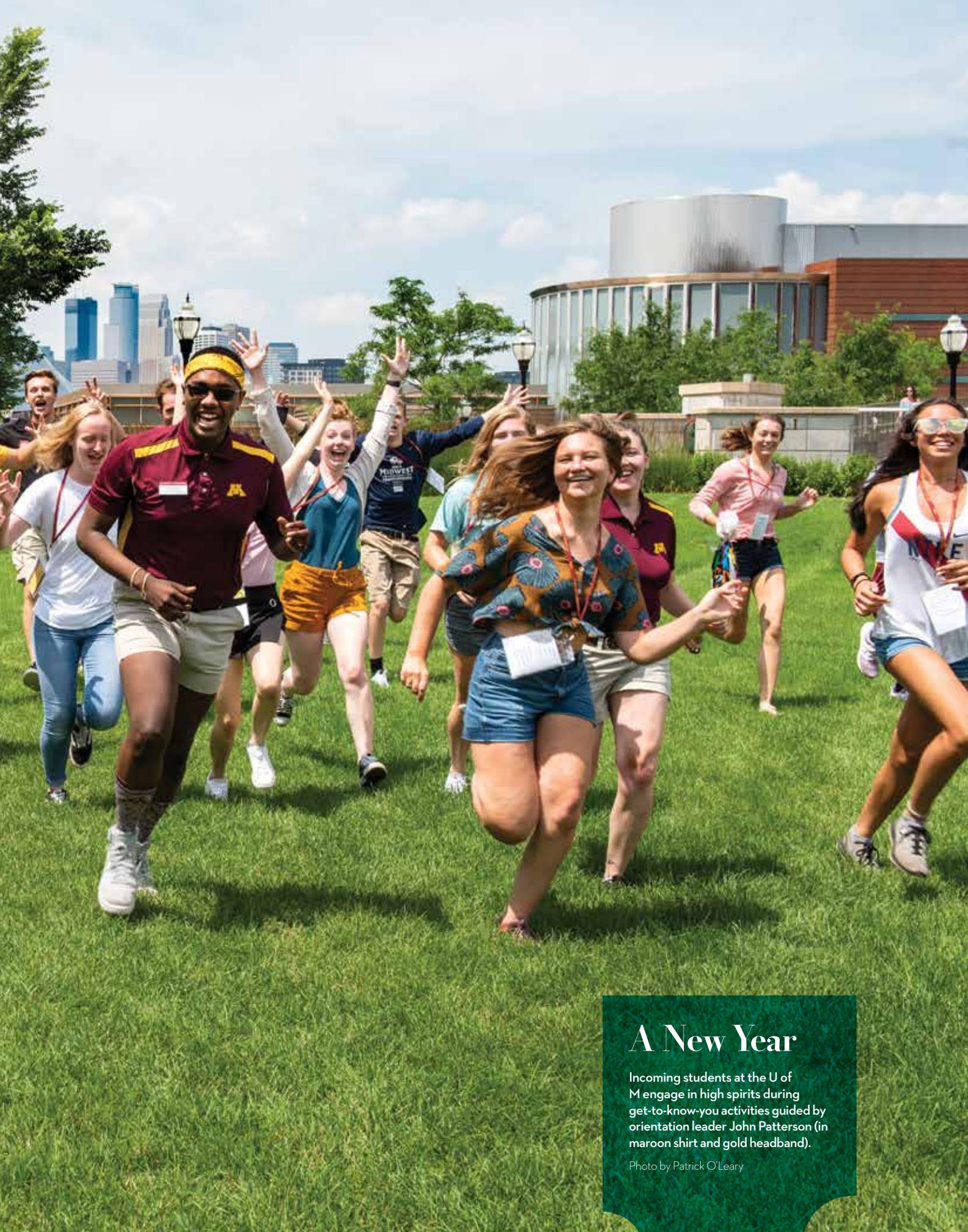
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A New Year

Incoming students at the U of M engage in high spirits during get-to-know-you activities guided by orientation leader John Patterson (in maroon shirt and gold headband).

Photo by Patrick O'Leary

Who Gets Set in Stone?

Not women, according to a U research project that looks at female representation in statues and memorials. *By Elizabeth Foy Larsen*

Statues are everywhere on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol. There's Charles Lindbergh, dressed in a flight jacket and aviator cap, striding purposefully toward a storied future. U.S. Vice President Hubert Humphrey (B.S. '39), his right hand raised mid-oration, stands several yards away. Elsewhere you'll find explorer Leif Erikson—he's got two swords—and a host of past Minnesota governors, including Floyd B. Olson, John Johnson, and Knute Nelson.

What seems to be missing in all these stone and marble tributes at the Capitol is any depiction of the women who have shaped our state and country's history.

In 2015, U of M landscape architecture professor Rebecca Krinke wrote to the public arts administrator for Minneapolis with a simple question: Are there any statues of women in Minneapolis besides that of the fictional TV character Mary Tyler Moore? The answer wasn't encouraging.

Although there are bronze portraits of former mayor Sharon Sayles Belton and civil rights activist Nellie Stone Johnson in the city, the statue list was limited to Minnehaha, the fictional American Indian woman in Longfellow's poem *The Song of Hiawatha*, and several little girls standing near the statue of the first

superintendent of the Minneapolis park system, Theodore Wirth.

Krinke responded that she could feel the beginnings of a public art proposal, an impression that was solidified when she attended the Women's March Minnesota at the Capitol in January 2017, an event designed to spark transformative change around issues of gender equity, among other goals.

To investigate, Krinke obtained a grant from the U's Imagine Fund, which supports research focused on the arts and humanities, to look into female statues in Minneapolis and St. Paul. She in turn hired students Bria Fast and Sydney Shea (B.Ed. '18, M.L.A. '19), who was a graduate student in the landscape architecture program at the College of Design, to engage in some feet-on-the-ground research around the issue.

They decided to begin at the Capitol, with the intention of eventually creating a curriculum for a course Krinke was teaching that included an assignment on memorials. Both Fast and Shea presented their findings to Krinke's students, and Shea eventually became so interested in the topic that she decided to focus on statues at the Minnesota Capitol as a separate independent project, which she titled "The (Un) Named Woman."

"I hadn't been to the Capitol since



I was on a field trip in elementary school," says Shea. "But when I went to do research I was shocked by what I saw—or rather, what I didn't see."

Other than two plaques inside the Capitol, which honor suffragettes Clara Ueland and Martha Ripley, the only female sculptures Shea could find were allegorical and metaphoric figures, including Prudence, Bounty, Industry, and Agriculture. All are dressed in flowing Grecian-style robes; some have bare breasts.

The lack of statues celebrating the accomplishments of women is an issue that's getting attention from communities across the country. (Shea notes that one reason for the oversight is

Sydney Shea explores the Capitol grounds in search of female statues. Her findings? Lots of male figures, but no women.



that the heyday of statue memorials was before women gained access to the halls of power.) In New York City, an initiative called She Built NYC has set out to increase the number of statues of history-making women in outdoor public spaces; there are currently five, as opposed to the 145 that honor men. There are plans to add five new statues of women in New York, starting with Shirley Chisholm, the first African-American woman to serve in Congress. In San Francisco, city leaders have decided that in the future, at least 30 percent of real people depicted in public art, building names, and streets must be women.

The cumulative effect of these past

omissions, according to Shea, has an impact on the public. "We see these statues all the time but we don't really make note of what they are," she says. "But subconsciously I think they really influence the way our society thinks."

To explain, Shea turns on her laptop

and pulls up images she made of all the statues at the Capitol—both male and female. The men are standing tall, shoulders back, heads raised. The allegorical women, by contrast, often have bowed heads and are shown carrying things, including a child. "These caring and nurturing stereotypes are being represented in the statues and graphics we see in our day-to-day life," she says.

Shea, who was also a lecturer in a course taught by Krinke that looked at women and memorials, has now expanded her research beyond the state Capitol to international locations in both Spain and the Netherlands, where she spent a semester studying. Neither she nor Krinke are sure about the next direction this initiative will take and are in the process of exploring options for additional funding.

"I think this work will be propelled a long way," says Krinke, who suggests a number of crowdsourced opportunities, including letting people create their own placards or signs on sticks with the images of women—dead or alive—they'd like to see immortalized. Shea also hopes to be able to talk with the committee that is in charge of curating and maintaining the Capitol grounds.

In the meantime, Shea hopes to continue tracking images of women in public memorials. "Once I put on that lens I couldn't stop seeing [this dynamic]," she says. "It's everywhere." □

Which influential women do you think should be recognized with a statue at the Capitol? Share your thoughts with us at minnesotalumni.org

AROUND TOWN

“He loved the Boundary Waters.”

Wilderness Watch director KEVIN PROESCHOLDT (left), speaking to the Pioneer Press about U of M Professor WILLIAM PATRICK CUNNINGHAM (right), who helped lobby Congress to create the BWCA. Cunningham died July 24.





President Gabel's First Day

President Joan T.A. Gabel spent a few minutes with Goldy Gopher, the U of M Twin Cities campus mascot, at a get-acquainted coffee on her first day.

As she prepares for her inauguration on Sept. 20, the 17th president of the U now oversees the five campuses that comprise the University of Minnesota System, nearly 67,000 students, and more than 27,000 faculty and staff. There will be a campus-wide celebration at Northrop Plaza immediately following her inauguration and the event will also be livestreamed. Visit president.umn.edu/inauguration for more information.

Four Join Board of Regents

Legislators elected four new regents, including two Twin Cities campus alumnae, to the U of M governing board in early May. They will serve six-year terms.

Kao Ly Ilean Her, At-Large Representative



Maplewood
Her (J.D. '94) is the CEO of Hmong Elders Center, an adult day center serving Hmong seniors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area. Previously, she served as executive director of the State of Minnesota

Council on Asian-Pacific Minnesotans, and founded several nonprofits, including Allies for Mentoring Asian Youth, Hnub Tshiab: Hmong Women Achieving Together, and the Heritage Center for Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders. She has served as a trustee of the Minneapolis Foundation, the Asian Pacific Endowment of the St. Paul Foundation, and Women's Foundation of Minnesota.

Janie Mayeron, Congressional District 5



Minneapolis
Mayeron (B.A. '73, J.D. '76) is a retired United States magistrate judge and lawyer. As a lawyer, she specialized in civil litigation and mediation.

She has held numerous leadership positions in a variety of nonprofit and legal organizations, including president of the Alumni Association. She received the University of Minnesota Alumni Service Award, the WCCO Good Neighbor Award, and the Highland Park Senior High School Hall of Fame Award.

CONTINUING THE CONVERSATION

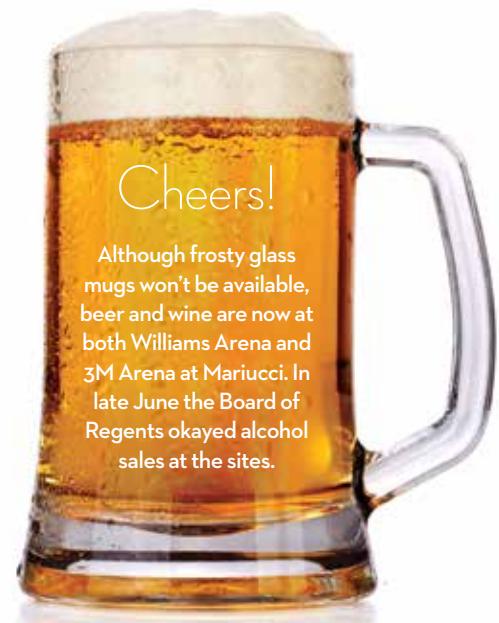
Update on the Renaming Debate

At the U of M Board of Regents meeting in April, the board voted 10-1 against renaming Coffman Memorial Union, as well as Nicholson, Coffey, and Middlebrook Halls. The board's action came after more than a year of campus debate over the issue, and despite recommendations of a task force that the buildings be renamed because of concern over past actions by their namesakes.

Although the board declined to rename the buildings, they did acknowledge past discriminatory practices at the University and charged President Joan Gabel's administration "with developing

permanent exhibits and other educational means to keep ever-present the challenge of this University to do better," as well as for it to "determine how to further remedy discriminatory practices—past and present."

As one response to the controversy, this fall the History Department has begun offering a new special topics class called Prejudice and Protest at the U of M. The class aims to help students "critically analyze the U's institutional history" and to continue the conversation that started after the 2017 exhibit "A Campus Divided" explored the U's legacy with regard to race, religion, and eugenics.



Although frosty glass mugs won't be available, beer and wine are now at both Williams Arena and 3M Arena at Mariucci. In late June the Board of Regents okayed alcohol sales at the sites.

The Carlson School Celebrates 100 Years

A century ago, the University of Minnesota Business School was formed. In its inaugural year, the school enrolled 14 students. Today, what's now known as the Carlson School of Management (CSOM) has more than 4,500 students enrolled and 55,000 graduates worldwide.

Over the past months, CSOM has been celebrating its centennial with a number of events. On Friday, Sept. 13 from 6 to 9 p.m., a celebration will take place at U.S. Bank Stadium, and on Saturday, Sept. 14, the school will host Carlson Day at the Gopher football

game with a tailgate event at noon at TCF Bank Stadium, prior to kickoff at 2:30 p.m. Tickets are required. Visit carlsonschool.umn.edu for more information.

Many illustrious alumni have passed through CSOM. Among them were Helen Canoyer, an early faculty

member who mentored many through the business school's women's organization. She was among the first women in the country to earn a Ph.D. in economics and the first woman to earn her doctorate at the school. Canoyer also received the U's 1956 Alumni Achievement award.



Mary Davenport, At-Large Representative



Mankato

Davenport is a former higher education administrator with 30 years of experience with Minnesota State, including as a faculty member, dean, vice president, and president. She earned undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and the University of Wisconsin-Stout and her Ph.D. at Colorado State University. She has served on boards for the Governor's Workforce Development Council, Minnesota Job Skills Partnership, KSMQ Public Television, the Austin Area Commission for the Arts, and the Greater Rochester Arts and Cultural Trust. She was awarded a Bush Leadership Fellowship in 2003.

Mike Kenya, At-Large Representative



Maple Grove

Kenya serves as a consulting analyst for Accenture PLC in Minneapolis. He was born in Nairobi, Kenya, and immigrated to Minnesota in 2002. He received a B.B.A. in management information systems from the Labovitz School of Business and Economics at the University of Minnesota, Duluth (UMD), where he served two terms as student body president. He also served as student representative to the Board of Regents. In 2019, he received the Sieur du Luth award, the highest award given to a UMD student for service to the campus and community.

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Walker Art Center

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Mixed repertoire
Thu, Nov 7, 7:30 pm

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Sat, Jan 25, 7:30 pm

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Sat, Mar 21, 7:30 pm

MARTHA GRAHAM DANCE COMPANY

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Sat, Apr 4, 7:30 pm

THE STATE BALLET OF GEORGIA

Nina Ananiashvili,
Artistic Director
Mixed repertoire
Wed, Apr 29, 7:30 pm

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Tue, Oct 1, 7:30 pm

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& Sat, Mar 28, 8:00 pm



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Fighting Ebola

A University of Minnesota team helped test an Ebola vaccine in the midst of an epidemic.

By Elizabeth Foy Larsen

On New Year's Day 2015, Cavan Reilly (above) arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, to begin work on the first clinical trial in West Africa for an Ebola vaccine. Liberia and its neighboring countries, Guinea and Sierra Leone, were in the midst of an Ebola epidemic that would ultimately infect more than 28,000 people and claim more than 11,000 lives. It was into this scenario that Reilly had flown, and his family and friends were anxious about the risk of him contracting the highly contagious and deadly disease.

Reilly (B.S. '93) is the associate director of the Coordinating Centers for Biometric Research at the University of Minnesota's School of Public Health (SPH). He was one of several members of a U of M team that included biostatisticians, epidemiologists, data management experts, and project managers who traveled to the region during the epidemic. And although Reilly had assured his loved ones he'd be perfectly safe in an office, supervising procedural details of the trial and talking with government officials, when he disembarked in Monrovia's crowded airport, he realized he'd underestimated the risks.

"To try and get your baggage, you're walking shoulder to shoulder with Liberians," he says, sitting in a conference room at the U's Biometric Research offices on University Avenue. Since Ebola is spread through direct contact with bodily fluids of an infected person, Reilly quickly realized that avoiding close contact with people who may have been infected was impossible. (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention would later report that Liberia was not deemed Ebola-free during that particular outbreak until January

“PEOPLE WOULD SAY WE ARE THE GO-TO PEOPLE TO DESIGN AND CONDUCT STUDIES,” SAYS PROFESSOR JIM NEATON.

2016, although the number of new infections diminished sharply by late 2015.)

That Reilly and his U colleagues felt the need to travel to Liberia at such a dangerous time speaks to the complexities of setting up drug trials in developing nations. Biostatistics, a field that uses statistics to advance biomedical research, is employed in medicine and public health to determine not only the effectiveness of new drugs but also the causes and long-term outlook for different diseases. Reilly, who has a Ph.D. in statistics, says he was drawn to the field because it gives him an opportunity to merge his talent with numbers with his desire to have a positive impact on people’s health and wellbeing.

The U’s involvement in Liberia during those tests actually started in the fall of 2014, when Jim Neaton (B.A. ’69, M.S. ’70, Ph.D. ’84), a professor in the Division of Biostatistics, got a call from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) asking for help with vaccine and treatment trials. “People would say we are the go-to people to design and conduct studies,” says Neaton of his department, which is known throughout the world for their research on infectious diseases.

While statistics are often used to summarize data that’s already been gathered, biostatisticians set up rules before experiments are conducted. “A big part of my job is developing procedures *prior* to seeing the data,” Reilly explains. In other words, the process is key.

And that can get challenging when working in developing countries. “It’s not like doing research in the U.S., where we can recruit patients through clinics,” says Reilly. Liberia has no national identification system; houses don’t even have addresses. It’s also not uncommon for medical trials in the country to take place without control groups. Given these challenges, Reilly and Neaton said it was important to travel to Liberia to make sure the details were in order.

“I wanted to be able to look at the control and make sure nobody could tell the difference between the active and the placebo drug,” says Reilly. “And I wanted to see

what the procedures were like . . . so I could speak to the integrity of the data.”

While the epidemic waned before the team—which included experts from the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases and the Liberian government—was able to get full enrollment for the study, members were able to establish the safety of two vaccines, including one which would ultimately be used in the mid-summer 2019 Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The team’s most recent study, conducted in collaboration with NIH and the Liberian Ministry of Health, looked at the health status of Ebola survivors. Published last March in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, the study confirms that Ebola survivors suffer from a variety of ongoing health challenges. Not only do they experience increased urinary frequency, fatigue, headaches, and neurological and musculoskeletal problems when compared to close contacts who did not contract the disease, they also report higher rates of memory loss than people who were not infected. Genetic material from the Ebola virus was also found in the semen of some male survivors for more than three years, which could potentially result in the infection of their sex partners.

There was some better news: The study disproved the prevailing wisdom that Ebola survivors suffer from higher rates of uveitis, an inflammation of the eye that can lead to blindness. “I think we were the first study to really demonstrate that actually there’s just a lot of uveitis in West Africa,” says Reilly. He adds that the study findings also showed a need for follow-up care to help survivors cope with ongoing health problems associated with the disease. The results could also help improve response to other outbreaks, including the Ebola epidemic that was raging in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as of midsummer, with more than 2,000 people infected and two-thirds of those dying.

The team is currently conducting a vaccine trial in Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Mali that focuses on vaccine safety, particularly in children. “This is a very poor part of the world,” says Neaton. “There is a tremendous burden of disease and it’s very good that the United States is bringing some research to this region.” □

AROUND TOWN

“Scientific evidence tells us that climate change is occurring.”

U sustainable cropping specialist AXEL GARCIA Y GARCIA on how Minnesota farmers must prepare for altered growing conditions, according to UMN News.





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Chloe Barnes died from a rare disease. Her mother, Erica Barnes (opposite), asked the Minnesota legislature and the U to help.

University to Form Rare Disease Advisory Council

Legislature funds four-year program after mother's appeal.

CHLOE BARNES WAS A HAPPY, chubby baby with golden curls and a ready giggle. But when the Hopkins, Minnesota, toddler was 14 months old, her mother, Erica Barnes, started worrying about her development. "I began noticing subtle symptoms like her trunk stability and her gait seemed off," remembers Barnes.

Because her husband, Philip, and their pediatrician didn't share her concerns, Barnes tried to discount them—until a visit to Chloe's French grandmother when the girl was 22 months. "My mother-in-law noticed it too," says Barnes, "and that's when we got serious."

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At Minneapolis Children's Hospital just four weeks later (fast for rare diseases, says Barnes, which often take years to diagnose), Chloe was diagnosed with Metachromatic Leukodystrophy (MLD), a rare genetic, degenerative, neurometabolic disorder. MLD is progressive and has no known cure.

Chloe's only hope was to have a bone marrow transplant, which she underwent in the fall of 2010 at the Mayo Clinic. Sadly, she died of complications from the transplant just two weeks later, at 27 months.

After that tragedy, her mother was moved to start the nonprofit Chloe's Fight Rare Disease Foundation. A few years later, Barnes also began lobbying Minnesota legislators to fund a rare disease council based in the state.

That dream finally came true in May, when the legislature agreed to fund—for \$150,000 a year for four years—a Rare Disease Advisory Council, to be housed at the University of Minnesota.

"I thought, instead of putting the onus on families" to start a foundation for every disease out there, "let's have a single council that can work across rare diseases, and serve as a clearinghouse for clinical trials, natural histories, and FDA drug approval," Barnes says.

In the United States, rare diseases are defined as those that affect fewer than 200,000 people. Some are what the medical community would call "ultra-rare," meaning they affect just a few dozen or hundreds of people. However, other better-known health conditions such as multiple sclerosis or ALS (commonly known as Lou Gehrig's disease) are also considered rare, a fact that surprises many laypeople.

Altogether there are roughly 7,000 rare diseases in the United States, says pharmacy professor Jim Cloyd, who holds the Weaver Endowed Chair in Orphan Drug Development at the U's College of Pharmacy. As



scientists make advances in understanding diseases, they "narrow down and define more and more conditions, thus leading to more diseases that qualify as rare." Up to 1 in 10 Americans now suffers from some kind of rare condition, he adds.

The legislature has asked the Council to start its work quickly. The first task will be to choose a staff member to administer the council; the second to name 24 advisory council members, drawn from the research, patient, industry, health insurance, and genetic counseling sectors.

Although the council's specific physical home has yet to be determined, having it based at the U of M is meaningful, says Barnes. "I love that the U of M is a land grant institution," she says. "Baked into that model—and the council's—is an emphasis on the public good." □

—Lynette Lamb, M.A. '84

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Climate Change and the World's Food

From shrinking ice sheets and rising sea levels to an increase in severe weather, the impact



of climate change on the earth is well documented. Now, a study led by the University of Minnesota Institute on the Environment (IonE), in collaboration with researchers from the University of Oxford and the University of Copenhagen, shows that climate change is also affecting the world's food production.

Using weather and reported crop data, researchers found that climate change causes significant variations in the yields of the globe's top 10 crops—barley, cassava, maize, oil palm, rapeseed, rice, sorghum, soybean, sugarcane, and wheat. That's particularly important considering the fact that these staples supply 83 percent of all calories from crops.

How these variations play out ultimately depends on

location. Food production has been negatively impacted in Europe, Southern Africa, and Asia, while results have been mixed in Asia and Northern and Central America—crop yields

have actually been up in some parts of the Upper Midwest. Researchers also saw a positive impact on food production in Latin America.

"This is a very complex system, so a careful statistical and data science modeling component is crucial to understand the dependencies and cascading effects of small or large changes," says the study's coauthor Snigdhansu Chatterjee of

the University of Minnesota's School of Statistics.

This study was published in May in *PLOS ONE*.

Childhood Cancer and IVF

Since 1978, when Louise Brown became the first baby conceived and born through in vitro fertilization (IVF), researchers have been studying the possible health consequences of the breakthrough treatment for infertility—including premature deliveries, lower birth weights, and even possible cancer risks to both the mother and the baby. Now, University of Minnesota researchers have concluded the largest study to date of childhood cancer rates after IVF conception.

In a study funded by the

National Institutes of Health, live birth records were linked to cancer registries in 14 states—a data set that comprised 66 percent of births in the U.S. and 75 percent of IVF births. The results showed a small association between IVF and early childhood cancers and an increased rate of rare liver cancers for IVF-conceived children. However, the study wasn't able to tease out whether those cancers were caused by IVF treatment or the underlying infertility.

Researchers say that because the increased risk only applies to rare forms of cancer, the results should reassure parents who have conceived children through IVF. "The most important takeaway from our research is that most childhood cancers are not more frequent in children conceived by IVF," says Logan Spector, the study's coauthor and a professor in the U of M Medical School's Department of Pediatrics.

This study was published online in April in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Help for the Walleye

At a time when aquatic invasive species are clogging lakes across the United States with weeds, one might think that water getting clearer in any lake would be good news. Unfortunately, that's not the case for the walleyes in Lake Mille Lacs, a popular fishing area located about 100 miles north of the Twin Cities. Beloved by anglers for their feisty disposition and by diners for their flaky white meat, the numbers of these Minnesota state fish have

decreased dramatically at the lake since the 1990s.

According to Gretchen Hanson, a natural fisheries, wildlife and conservation biology assistant professor at the U's College of Food, Agriculture and Natural Resource Sciences, walleyes thrive in deep water that's cool and dark. At Mille Lacs, which is relatively shallow, researchers found that walleyes can no longer seek out the darker, tea-colored water that's found in deeper clear lakes. (Researchers theorize Mille Lacs is becoming clearer because of improvements in septic systems around the lake and an invasion of zebra mussels, which strain out microscopic algae.)

In addition to tracking the walleye population decline, the study also identified tools to sustain walleye populations even in less favorable conditions. The hope is that by altering the harvest according to changing circumstances, Mille Lacs will be able to remain a walleye fishery. U researchers are also working with the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources to assess walleye habitat in other Minnesota lakes. That project is scheduled for completion by the end of 2020.

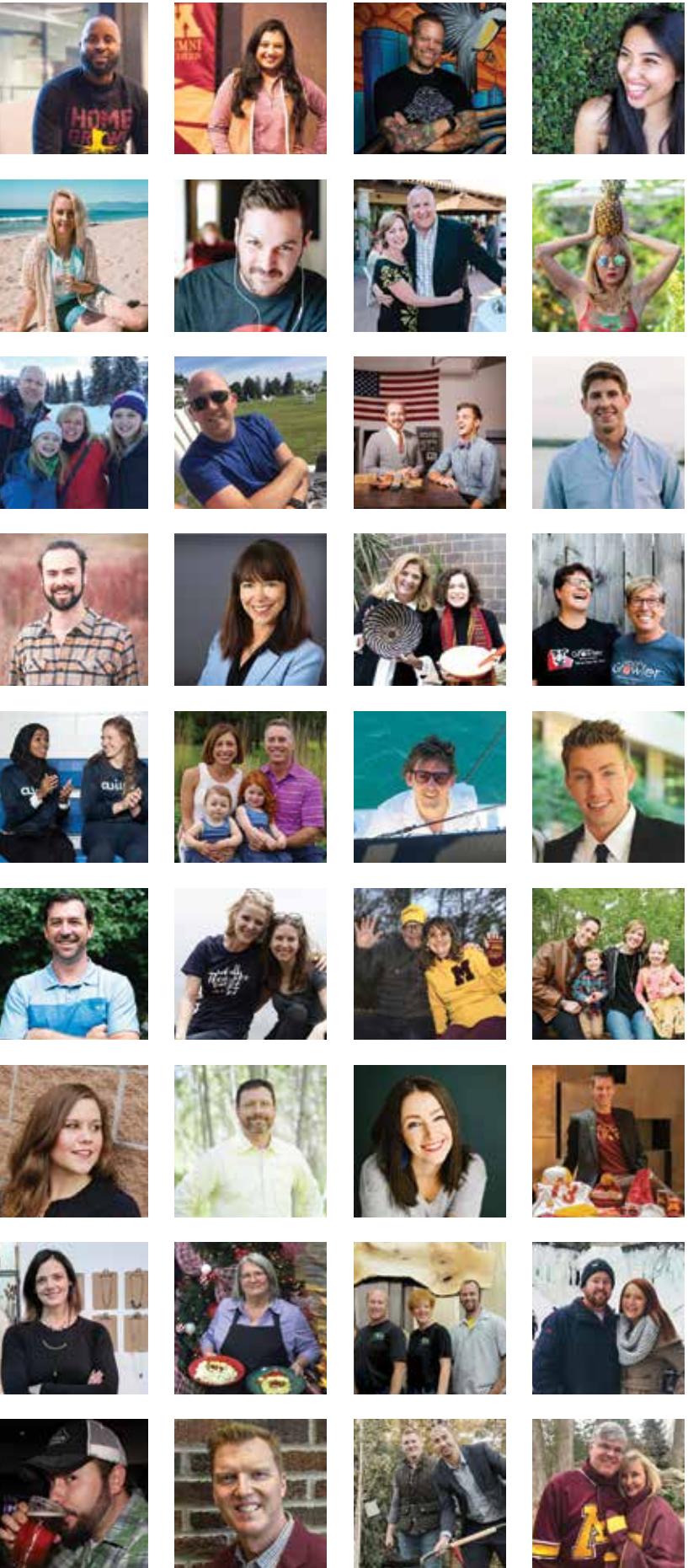
This study was published in May in *Ecosphere*.

As always, a deep bow to the folks at the University Relations News Service team.

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Coaching Generation

Coaches discover that today's student athletes respond better to nurturing than negativity.

By Dan Emerson

Last January, in Lindsay Whalen's (B.S. '06) rookie season as the Gopher women's basketball coach, the team was in the midst of a four-game losing streak, and Whalen was looking for answers.

Then assistant coach Carly Thibault-DuDonis emailed Whalen an article about the book *Not Everyone Gets A Trophy: How to Manage the Millennials*. The 2016 management book, by author Bruce Tulgan, focuses on how understanding the personal needs of a relatively new generation in the workforce can help managers get the most out of them.

According to the Pew Research Center, Whalen's players are part of what's commonly known as Generation Z, children born after 1996. Whalen, 37, is herself considered a millennial (born between 1981 and 1996). But even though the Tulgan book addresses millennials in the workforce, Whalen found the advice both compelling and useful in helping her connect with the students of Generation Z.

As the season went on, Whalen made time for one-on-one talks with her players and made more effort to get to know them as individuals, advice touted by the book.

A month after the losing streak started (on December 31), the Gophers began a six-game winning streak. Whalen isn't sure how much credit the book should receive, but feels it definitely helped. "There were a lot of things happening during that time, but I was better able to lead and be a lot more direct, and I give a lot of credit to that book. It was eye-opening and I'm thankful I read it," she says.

Whalen's experience is one example of what seems to be a global phenomenon: a gradual shift away from the more authoritarian approach to coaching that once prevailed in favor of a more empathetic, collaborative style that focuses on the needs of individual players. Coaches say this transition seems to parallel a similar

evolution in parenting styles that has taken place in recent decades—at least in the United States.

Thinking back on her own experiences as a Gopher, Whalen doesn't recall having had any one-to-one meetings with her University coaches, except for one with her final college coach, Pam Borton. (Whalen had three different head coaches in four years). "The 'older' coaches were really caring, too; there just wasn't as much dialogue as there is now," Whalen notes.

Whalen says since she's begun devoting more time to getting to know her players as individuals, "I feel I have gotten much more out of my players and they have gotten much more out of their experience.

"Today, everything is about the [coach-player] relationship, even more so with this generation," she adds. "Coaching needs to be a little more hands-on, a little more one-on-one. But if you really do it right, you can probably get more out of this generation than any one before it. Because they are really eager to learn...but, it's going to take more than just saying, 'Go do this.' If you explain to them, 'These are the steps you need to take, and these are the reasons why,' not only as a team but with each individual, they will be that much more invested in you as a person and the team goals."

Whalen isn't the only high-profile U of M coach whose methods and style have evolved.

It's been four decades since John Anderson played for the iconic Gopher baseball coach Dick Siebert, but the current Gopher baseball coach still has indelible memories of the namesake of Siebert Field. Siebert was the craggy-faced Hall of Fame coach who led the Gophers from 1948 to 1978, winning three NCAA titles, 12 Big Ten titles, and making five college World Series appearances.

Beginning in 1974, Anderson played four years at the U, then became one of



Siebert's assistants. After the 1981 season, Anderson became the youngest head baseball coach in Big Ten history.

Anderson recalls that he was a graduate assistant in 1978 when he observed one of Siebert's trips to the mound to make a pitching change. He vividly recalls Siebert's words to the pitcher. "He told him, 'Things were going OK until you got out here and screwed it up. You'll never pitch again.'"

"At the time I didn't think it was unusual," Anderson says now. "That's

just the way we were coached. The coach expected you to listen and do what you were told in a direct, straightforward way. There wasn't a lot of negotiation. We weren't coddled if we didn't perform. I also remember being chewed out by my high school football coach in a pretty strong way. If I didn't perform well, none of my coaches cared if my feelings got hurt."

Siebert was certainly both a winner and well respected. But coaching

has changed, Anderson says. "I'm not saying that the 'old' way was right or wrong. But we have evolved as a society; we no longer think it's necessary to intimidate or scream or threaten to get people to perform."

A few years into his head coaching career with the Gophers, Anderson started to notice a change in how players reacted to his coaching. "I noticed that they didn't handle it very well when I criticized them—to motivate them and help them get better. They

“I had to look at changes I needed to make as a person and a leader to be more effective.”

seemed to take that as ‘he doesn’t like me,’ ‘he’s mad at me,’ or ‘he thinks I’m a bad person.’ They seemed to be tuning me out and listening less.”

Anderson consulted Rick Aberman to help him sort through his dilemma. A sports psychologist for more than 30 years, Aberman has a Ph.D. in family therapy and developmental psychology and has worked with high school, college, and pro athletes. He currently has a staff position at the U helping the baseball and men’s tennis teams.

“I had to look at changes I needed to make as a person and a leader to be more effective,” Anderson says about working with Aberman, who co-authored a book with him in 2005

called *Why Good Coaches Quit*.

“If I had not taken a look at myself, I would have crashed and burned, and would not be relevant to this generation,” Anderson adds. “If I had continued to coach the way I was coaching, I don’t think I would have gotten the best out of our student-athletes.”

With Aberman’s help, Anderson changed his coaching style to better meet the needs and expectations of modern players. “I had to look more closely at the relationship piece,” Anderson notes. “It became evident [student-athletes] want to know, number one, that ‘He’s interested in me as more than just a player.’ They want me to help them grow and learn

and give them direction in life. Before you teach them how to hit a curve ball, players want to know that you care about them as a person. In my generation, that relationship was just about sports.”

Anderson says that today’s coach’s job also extends well beyond the playing field. “I’m here to prepare them for the next 50 years of their life. I have to get to know them and their families, find out what their values and goals are...why they’re here...and spend a lot more time in personal interaction. Then they start to trust you and you have a better chance of getting closer. If you don’t have that relationship, players won’t let you coach them.”

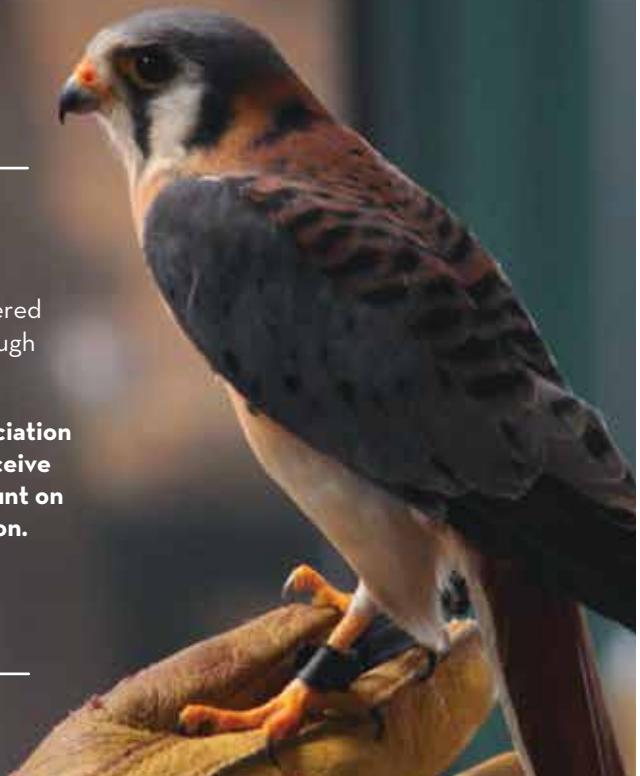


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"A lot of people think the kids have changed," Aberman says about Generation Z. "But I think it's more that we have realized that the way we used to coach just doesn't work very well anymore. I think the burden is on the coach to be flexible, grow and learn and learn to be self-aware. That's been the biggest change."

In Siebert's era, leading by fear and intimidation may have been common practice. But subsequent research has demonstrated that is not the best approach, says Aberman.

"Physiologically, we know that when somebody yells at us, berates and humiliates us, that triggers the 'fight or flight' syndrome, which interferes with our cognitive ability, and we stop learning. Kids want to feel understood, versus feeling controlled. In the short-term, yelling

can get you somewhere, but it's not sustainable. It triggers someone's defenses, so that they are just trying to protect themselves; they're not listening, not learning, just waiting for you to stop yelling."

And for coaches, yelling also leads to burnout, Aberman adds. "The old school approach was no good. We know so much more now about how we can be effective. I find most successful coaches tend to have good parenting skills. They understand that what they are doing is for the benefit of their child, not about their own needs."

"The good coaches, the ones who survive, are the ones who have learned to be flexible, take time to get to know their people and stay connected."

Sometimes coaches ask Aberman for advice on getting their players to listen and to better motivate them. His

standard response is, "We have to start with you. You have to have to be willing to take look at yourself as the leader and how you may be contributing to the very problems you are complaining about." Anderson was able to make the necessary adjustments fairly quickly, Aberman notes. "And he is probably having more fun than he ever has."

Anderson confirms that. "There's no question I am in a much better place now. I have a better understanding of why I coach, and I'm a much better leader. Before, I was too focused only on getting my players to play better and win more games. Now I'm focused more on preparing people for the next 50 years of their lives and mentoring them so they can lead." □

Dan Emerson (B.A. '74) is a freelance writer in the Twin Cities area.



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UMAA Guide To Homecoming

September 28 - October 5, 2019

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SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

SATURDAY, SEPT. 28

U of M Day of Service
presented by TCF Bank

Various locations

THURSDAY, OCT. 3

Alumni Awards Affair

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

FRIDAY, OCT. 4

Alumni Leader Summit

3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Johnson Room
McNamara Alumni Center

Homecoming Parade

6:30 p.m., University Avenue

SATURDAY, OCT. 5

Ski-U-Mania
presented by TCF Bank

11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
McNamara Alumni Center

Homecoming Football
Game

2:30 or 3 p.m.



Grand Marshal

Michele Brekke

Michele A. Brekke (B.S. '75, M.S. '77) holds degrees in aerospace engineering from the U of M. She retired from the NASA Johnson Space Center in 2014 after 37 years of service in spaceflight mission operations. Her career started as an instructor to the space shuttle astronauts in 1977 and advanced to leadership roles in the space shuttle and space station programs.

She served as payload officer in mission control for several missions, trained as a space shuttle flight director, and was the flight manager for six space shuttle missions, including John Glenn's return to space in 1998.

Brekke is now a flight manager for the Boeing CST-100 Starliner operational missions. One of the world's first commercially owned crewed spacecraft, the Boeing CST-100 Starliner will transport NASA astronauts to and from the International Space Station.

Brekke has received several leadership awards, including NASA Exceptional Achievement Medals and recognition from the U's College of Science and Engineering. During her time at the U of M, she was also a volleyball letter winner. In 1986 she was inducted into the Golden Spikers, Minnesota's volleyball hall of fame of that time.

Residing now in Houston, she is the proud mother of two sons and a daughter and the grandmother of two, with a third on the way.

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September 28



Join alumni, students, and friends in volunteer activities that benefit communities, from planting trees to baking cookies. Confirmed locations as of press time include the Twin Cities, Denver, San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Las Vegas, Dallas, and Tokyo.

UMNAAlumni.org/Homecoming #DayofServiceUMN

Alumni Awards Affair — OCT. 3

Celebrate with the Alumni Association as we honor exceptional alumni and students. Includes reception, dinner, and presentation of the Alumni Association Awards, Alumni Service Awards, the Distinguished Leadership Award for Internationals, the Donald R. Zander Alumni Award, and the Mary A. McEvoy Award for Public Engagement and Leadership. Registration required. \$50.

[UMNAlumni.org/Homecoming](#)



Alumni Leader Summit — OCT. 4

Network with fellow alumni volunteer leaders, hear from University leadership, and connect with UMAA staff. Information and to RSVP: Stephanie Klein kleio759@umn.edu

Homecoming Parade — OCT. 4

Parking available in the 4th Street ramp. Limited access to the University Avenue ramp due to the parade route. For full schedule and details about U-wide events, visit [homecoming.umn.edu #UMNHC](#)

Ski-U-Mania — OCT. 5

presented by TCF Bank



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Game tickets not included. **[UMNAlumni.org/Homecoming](#)**

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OCT. 5 — 2:30 or 3 p.m.

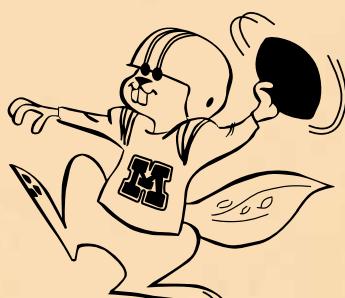
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Seeds of Health

U alumni, researchers and Native communities come together to fight chronic disease with better nutrition and traditional foods.

By Kelly O'Hara Dyer

Harvesting wild rice (known as manoomin in Ojibwe) on the White Earth Reservation

or Kibbe McGaa Conti, food—access to it, control over it, and respect for it—is a source of power.

Conti (B.S. '90) is a Lakota woman, a registered dietician with the U.S. Public Health Service Commissioned Corps' Indian Health Service (IHS), and an enrolled member of the Oglala Lakota community at the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota. She's on a mission to spread her message that American Indian communities are suffering greatly from what she terms an addiction to "pale meals."

She says these meals—heavy on processed grains, sugar, and fat—are cheap, filling fare for a population often struggling with poverty. They also damage the health of those eating them.

What Conti has witnessed during her three decades of work as a dietitian, including practicing both on and near Pine Ridge, is an ongoing health crisis.

It's been brought about, she says, in large part by historical damage done to indigenous communities by mistreatment. Before many American Indian communities across the U.S.



Kibbe McGaa Conti hopes reconnecting American Indian communities with the traditional foods of their past will help fight chronic disease.

were forcibly moved to reservations, she notes that their diet, as hunters-gatherers-farmers, focused primarily on unrefined foods, including corn, beans, squash, bison, fish, and wild game, or on gathered fruits such as chokecherries or seed-grains such as wild rice.

Today, however, those foods no longer form the basis for most Native diets. That's a key factor that Conti and others feel has directly led to ongoing poor health in many American Indian communities in the form of diabetes, obesity, heart disease, and other chronic conditions.

According to the Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, American Indian/Alaska Native adolescents are 30 percent more likely than non-Hispanic whites to be obese. Adults are 50 percent more likely to be obese. In addition, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that American Indians have a higher risk for diabetes than any other U.S. racial group—a rate that's twice that of whites. Diabetes is the cause of two-thirds of kidney failures for American Indians.

Conti notes that mortality rates within her own community of Pine Ridge are high, and life expectancies for those on the reservation are among the shortest in the country.

"I'm in the trenches and I see it every day, the impact of this food system that Native people are maladapted for," she says during a visit to Minneapolis. "[Native people are] really the canary in the coal mine in that what happens to us is what happens to the greater population eventually. We're always the ones who have epidemics first—the diabetes epidemic, the obesity epidemic. They struck us first."

Systemic Solutions

The issue of how food contributes to a person's health is deeply complicated, especially in parts of the American Indian community. Limited access to food that is nutritious and affordable combines with systemic factors such as racism, entrenched poverty, a disrupted traditional food-system, and often a lack of food sovereignty.

Today, however, tribes such as the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community and a national campaign it assembled called Seeds of Native Health are demanding across-the-board changes to improve food and nutrition for American Indian people throughout the U.S. They also want tribes to be more able to control their own destinies when it comes to improving food sovereignty and health.

The Mdewakanton community, which is the largest philanthropic benefactor for Indian Country nationally, contributed an initial \$5 million in 2015 to start Seeds of Native Health. The nonprofit has three overarching goals: improving access to healthy food, improving nutrition education, and funding relevant research around related subjects that affect American Indian communities.

As part of that endowment, the Mdewakanton community also provided the U of M with an initial \$1 million grant, part of which was to be used to create an annual Conference on Native American Nutrition, the only conference in the world devoted to food and nutrition for indigenous peoples.

The group enlisted the Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute (HFHLI) at the U to spearhead the conference. HFHLI, established in 2007, focuses on an interdisciplinary approach to improving food, agriculture, and health via research and community engagement.

Conference organizers say the annual event has been designed to bring together tribal officials, researchers, practitioners, and others to discuss traditional Native knowledge about food, paired with the latest academic research on nutrition and food science, in order to help strengthen indigenous food systems and food sovereignty.

"Getting healthy food and making it both accessible and affordable for people is critical," says Mindy Kurzer, Ph.D., the director of HFHLI, who has led the efforts to create and run the conference. "When it comes to communities of color and indigenous people worldwide, they have been affected by so many things that have in turn affected their food. Indigenous people ... [survived an] attempt at genocide and cultural extinction and assimilation. So, part of their journey is to reconnect with their traditional foods, to learn about them, and to grow them or to have access to them."

This year's conference, the fourth annual, is being held at Mystic Lake Center in Prior Lake, Minnesota, from

"When it comes to communities of color and indigenous people worldwide, they have been affected by so many things that have in turn affected their food."

MINDY KURZER, Ph.D., director of the U's Healthy Foods, Healthy Lives Institute

Deciphering the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations

SINCE 1977, the Food and Nutrition Service, part of the USDA, has operated the national Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs) or state agencies administer FDPIR on a local basis.

The FDPIR program provides households

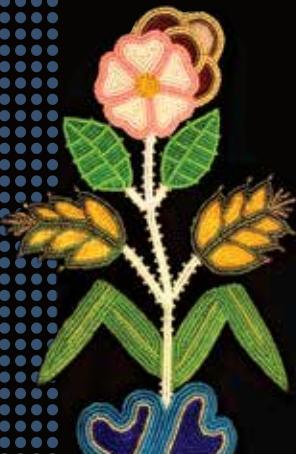
that fall under a certain income level with direct monthly distributions of food. According to the government, some 276 tribes receive benefits under FDPIR and approximately 92,500 individuals on or near reservations receive food from it each month. Direct food distribution is often used instead of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly known as food stamps), because of the lack of accessible,

full-service grocery stores or other food vendors available to people in those communities.

A June 2016 study of FDPIR by the USDA found that the program serves a low-income group, with many recipients relying solely on Social Security, supplemental security income, or disability insurance payments. The study also found that in 2013, the percent of FDPIR households with *low* food security was more than

four times that of U.S. households (34 percent compared to 8 percent), and 22 percent of FDPIR households had very *low* food security, as compared to 6 percent of U.S. households. (Food security refers to having access to good, nutritious, affordable food on a reliable basis.)

Although FDPIR is only intended to supplement a household's food, for 38 percent of recipients, it is their primary source of food.



September 15-18. The gathering is expected to draw more than 600 attendees, roughly 60 percent of whom will come from American Indian communities.

Topics at the conference include Foraging for Native Edible Plants; Preparing Healthy Traditional Food, and a wide variety of best-practice panels, the majority led by tribal members. Breakout panels address subjects such as national food policy; empowering and supporting American Indian communities in reclaiming their health through nutrition, and the sharing of both personal and community success stories.

"We're going to have four or five people give a 5- or 10-minute talk about how they've healed through food," says Kurzer, "through their reconnection with traditional food or nutrition or about [food] policies that have personally affected them."

The team behind the conference includes Linda Bane Frizzell, an Eastern Cherokee/Lakota elder and assistant professor at the U's School of Public Health. She sits on the advisory council for the conference and has been involved as both a planner and participant in the event for the past several years.

Frizzell says topics at the conference cover not only academic research around the subject of nutrition, but also honor the knowledge about foods and food gathering that Native people possess.



Advocating for Healthier Food, Native Producers

EXPERTS SAY trying to improve American Indian health through nutrition is best approached from many directions simultaneously, including political advocacy.

The Seeds of Native Health campaign assembled a Native Farm Bill Coalition, supported by 170 tribes and other organizations, to lobby Congress prior to its enacting the 2018 Farm Bill.

The coalition noted two key factors in assembling the group: First, Native communities have the highest rate of reliance on federal feeding programs. Second, Native food producers represent the key to future tribal food sovereignty and self-reliance, but currently face major

regulatory and financial obstacles.

One of the coalition's priorities was to improve programs such as the national Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR) by having the Farm Bill support purchasing traditional, locally grown food for food packages. The group's materials note that "Traditional and locally grown foods from Native farmers, ranchers, fishers, and producers encourage healthy living, cultural sustainability, and traditional practices. They also support economic development, food production, and agribusiness in Indian Country."

The coalition's lobbying

efforts met with significant success. The finished bill, signed into law by President Trump in December 2018, ultimately contained 63 new food and farming provisions benefitting American Indian communities.

Among the new provisions is a \$5 million demonstration project that allows tribes to purchase food for FDPIR themselves. Another provision added "regionally grown" to the traditional foods' purchasing language under FDPIR. Advocates say these developments will help Native communities begin to more directly influence and affect food security for their own people.



Robert Pilot (right, B.S. '12) selects fresh produce at the Four Sisters Farmers Market on east Franklin Avenue in Minneapolis. A number of Native farm vendors sell at the market, including Dream of Wild Health Farm from Hugo, Minnesota. That farm describes its mission as an attempt to "restore health and well-being in the Native community by recovering knowledge of and access to healthy indigenous foods, medicines, and lifeways." The Four Sisters market is run by the Native American Community Development Institute.

Conti and Lakota community elder Bob Chasing Hawk developed a nutrition teaching tool based on the sacred medicine wheel. Its image historically represents balance.

"There's a lot of indigenous knowledge that relates to even before you *plant* a food," Frizzell says. "Whenever we plant our crops, it's by moon signs and cultural traditions. In addition to that are the spiritual practices. There are different rules for plants that you harvest for what grows below ground, as opposed to above ground, and rules for crops that should be adjacent to one another. And rules for preservation."

Frizzell says she personally belongs to a "rice camp" near the Leech Lake Reservation, and that as part of the traditional, annual harvest of wild rice, a variety of blessings are part of the activity. She also notes that academic research shows the act of gathering wild rice in a traditional manner is good exercise, another factor that could contribute to better health for American Indians.

In keeping with the idea that sharing indigenous knowledge and wisdom helps combat health-related dietary issues, Kibbe Conti and Lakota community elder Bob Chasing Hawk developed a teaching tool based on the sacred medicine wheel. Called the Four Winds Nutrition Model, the image—a circle separated into quadrants—historically represents balance. The duo wanted to use its symbolism to help them visually share the message about better nutrition among American Indian communities.

To demonstrate, Conti grabs a sheet of paper and begins scribbling on it to show how an ideal diet should balance fruit/vegetables, starches, water (rather than sweetened drinks), and lean meat or other protein. In one quadrant, she places the "pale grains" she feels represent too much of a current Native diet—bread, pancakes, pasta, white rice, oatmeal. Then she replaces those options with a few of the Native foods she wants her patients to substitute—blue corn, squash, sweet potatoes, and beans of many colors.

"Colorful carbs are low-glycemic, so they're going to break down more slowly," she says. "When our food system was based on these starchy vegetables, we didn't have diabetes, although we were also a very active people, so it's a combination."

Healthful Options

Jason Champagne (M.P.H. '17) readily admits that his past eating habits nearly killed him, despite the fact that he has a background in professional cooking and nutrition.

After high school, Champagne, who is a member of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa, had saved money from working construction jobs to attend culinary school. After graduation, he worked as a chef for Walt Disney



Alumnus Jason Champagne improved his own health through food and now shares lessons with others about the connection between dietary habits and chronic disease.

World in Orlando, Florida, for three years. While he enjoyed it, Champagne missed having a connection with people—the reason he'd started cooking in the first place.

He returned to school and graduated from the University of North Dakota with a degree in community nutrition and Native American studies, and then earned his master's in public health at the U of M.

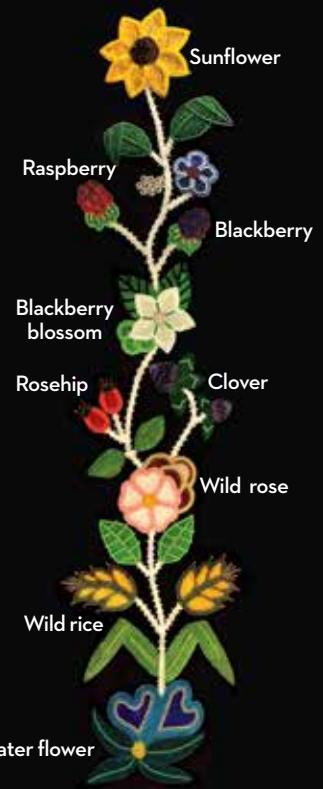
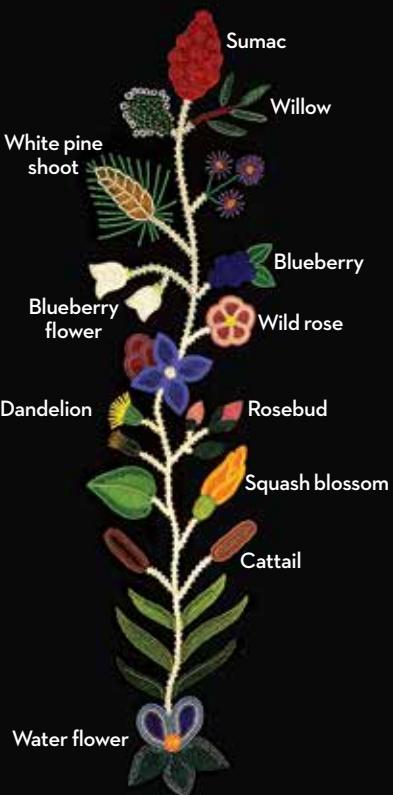
In 2015, Champagne discovered he was facing many of the same issues that plague other members of the Native community: He developed "really, really bad" diabetes; had what he describes as a borderline stroke-level blood glucose reading; high blood pressure; and extremely elevated cholesterol. Despite his education in nutrition, Champagne says he wasn't eating right, was drinking too much, and wasn't exercising. He was also taking 12 pills a day to treat his various medical issues.

Champagne decided to change. He quit drinking and began using both his chef's training and nutrition background to radically transform his eating habits. The most significant change? He began preparing and eating more vegetables and vegetable-based dishes. He also started working out. Today, he says he's lost about 60 pounds, no longer has diabetes, and doesn't take any medications.

Motivated by his experience, Champagne started Native Chef LLC, a mobile culinary arts class that he founded in

About the Cover Art

Jessica Gokey is an American Indian artist from the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe. She practices traditional Ojibwe beadwork, which historically features floral patterns. She received an artist-in-residence fellowship at the Minnesota Historical Society in 2014-15 and created this piece depicting a number of traditional, indigenous foods. The artwork displays 25 different flowers, berries, and other food plants native to the Great Lakes area.





Terry Sylvester/VWPics/Alamy Stock Photo

For Native peoples, traditional foods can vary based on location. For instance, here Karuk tribal fishery workers clean freshly caught salmon from a tributary of the Klamath River in northern California.

Introducing the U's new American Indian Health and Wellness Minor

ACCORDING TO the U's School of Public Health, there are 573 federally recognized tribes in the U.S., 74 state-recognized tribes, and 34 federally funded Urban Indian programs that collectively are home to nearly 4 million American Indians.

SPH recently created an American Indian public health and wellness graduate minor to train professionals to "thoughtfully and effectively address the unique health needs of this culturally diverse population, as well as understand the government-to-government relationship the federally recognized tribes have with the U.S. government."

You can learn more about this here: sph.umn.edu/academics/degrees-programs/minors/american-indian-health-and-wellness/

2017 in Eudora, Kansas. He now works to educate others about how food affects health and he travels around the country to teach other Native peoples—including kids—how to change their eating and cook healthier food. As part of his demonstrations, he includes traditional native foods, but he doesn't focus exclusively on them.

"I use a lot of wild rice, a lot of beans, a lot of corn, a lot of squash," Champagne says about cooking with traditional ingredients. He recently made what he calls a Three Sisters Corn Salsa as a demonstration item highlighting traditional Native foods. The salsa featured roasted hominy, squash, and beans, accented with fresh onion and lime.

But while Champagne is a fan of traditional foods, he also spends a lot of time answering questions from audience members about how they can eat healthier when they must rely on supplemental government commodity food, which depends heavily on dry, canned, and frozen items.

"I think what I'm having with people is a realistic conversation," Champagne says. "We have to look at the incomes of these families and how much commodities they use. That's realistically the food that a lot of these people are eating. They're trying to survive, and commodities help. Fry bread might be that person's only meal of the day, so I try and help them understand how

many calories and fat and carbohydrates are in one of those pieces. I may also show them how they can take their elbow macaroni [from a commodity box] and dice up a zucchini and a red onion and then add a simple vinaigrette to make it a more healthy option."

Like Champagne, Kibbe Conti knows that encouraging her patients to seek a better diet is complicated by many factors, including familiar, inexpensive, and culturally nostalgic foods such as fry bread, which is dough deep-fried in oil. She also sees that link as further evidence of past wrongs that continue to affect Native communities.

"Our people signed treaties like the Fort Laramie treaty [in 1868], and right in there it said the government was going to issue us flour" in return for them giving up their traditional territory and moving to a reservation, she says. "We'd never seen flour before. We didn't know how to eat it; we didn't have ovens; we didn't have bread. But eventually we got hungry and reports say pioneer women showed us how to make fry bread. So, we ate it. And we still do. That was the beginning to me of this radical shift in our food ways, which led to the chronic disease we still suffer from." □

Kelly O'Hara Dyer is the editor of Minnesota Alumni.



Fresh food from a basement? Urban Greens is an unconventional, city-based farm.

By J. Trout Lowen

Clean and

ANDREW RESCORLA (M.S. '12) doesn't look like most people's image of a farmer. There's no farmer tan, no dirt under his fingernails, no mud on his boots—er, shoes. But then again Rescorla's farm, Urban Greens, doesn't look much like a typical farm, either.

Located in the concrete basement of a strip mall in the Minneapolis suburb of Columbia Heights, Urban Greens is a hydroponic farm. Inside the space, windows are covered to block out light, and the room is filled with the murmuring of running water and the thrum of blowing fans. An eerie pinkish light illuminates several 6-by-8-by-8-foot-tall racks in the center of the space, each outfitted with shelves filled with thriving plants growing in long, gutter-like trays of nutrient-enriched water. There's lettuce, kale, chard, arugula, sorrel, parsley, thyme, and basil plants with leaves as big as a man's hand.

When Rescorla tells people he's an urban farmer, he says some are confused, many others intrigued. "People are more and more curious about where their food comes from," says Rescorla, "so they are interested in hearing how we grow greens in Minnesota year round."

RESCORLA STARTED THIS urban farm-to-table business two and a half years ago with his childhood friend, Joel Love, with little more than a wish and some trial-and-error knowledge. Today they provide direct-delivery boxes of fresh herbs and greens on a weekly or biweekly schedule to between 75 and 100 households in northeast Minneapolis, Columbia Heights, and St. Anthony.

Neither Rescorla nor Love knew much about farming when their venture began. The two friends grew up in Indiana and studied engineering at Calvin College in Michigan. After college, Love took a job in the energy industry and Rescorla moved to Minnesota to earn his master's degree in environmental engineering at the U before taking a job working on clean drinking water systems.

The idea of developing an urban farm—a nontraditional spot for growing produce and vegetables within a city—first took root in around 2013, he says, and continued to grow while he was working on clean drinking water projects in Ecuador and West Africa.

Initially, he was intrigued by a variant of hydroponic farming, something called aquaponic farming. With aquaponic farming, plants are still grown in a hydroponic setup, but freshwater fish are added to the closed-loop system as a second crop. Waste from the fish produce nitrogen and other nutrients that growing plants need.

"When I heard about aquaponics," Rescorla says, "I was really intrigued and inspired by the idea of fish and plants living symbiotically."

Green

Enlisting Love's help, the two set up a test project in Love's attic in Pennsylvania. It was a modest table-top affair consisting of four pet store goldfish and three heads of lettuce. Rescorla says it's almost embarrassing now to look back on that science-fair-style experiment, but it actually gave them momentum to move forward.

After their initial aquaponics experiment, Love and Rescorla conducted a slightly larger test run in the basement of Rescorla's house in Minneapolis using a hydroponic system alone. (Rescorla explains that aquaponic operators must keep both fish and plants happy, which the duo found a difficult balancing act both technically and economically.) Based on their second experiment, the pair decided to give up on raising fish but to move forward with hydroponics. In 2017 Rescorla convinced Love to quit his job and move his family to Minnesota.

Rescorla started his urban farm-to-table business two and a half years ago with little more than a wish and some trial-and-error knowledge.

Neil O. Anderson, (M.S. '85, Ph.D. '89) a professor in the Department of Horticultural Sciences, says the U has conducted several grant-funded research projects involving aquaponics and hosted three educational symposiums on the subject. Although the idea is enticing from a sustainability perspective, the economics of aquaponics is tough, especially in a northern climate, Anderson says. Unlike plants, fish grow slowly and the cost of raising them, at least on a larger scale, cannot be made up in the market where they have to compete with cheaper imports.

"The economics are all just in favor of the plants," Anderson acknowledges.

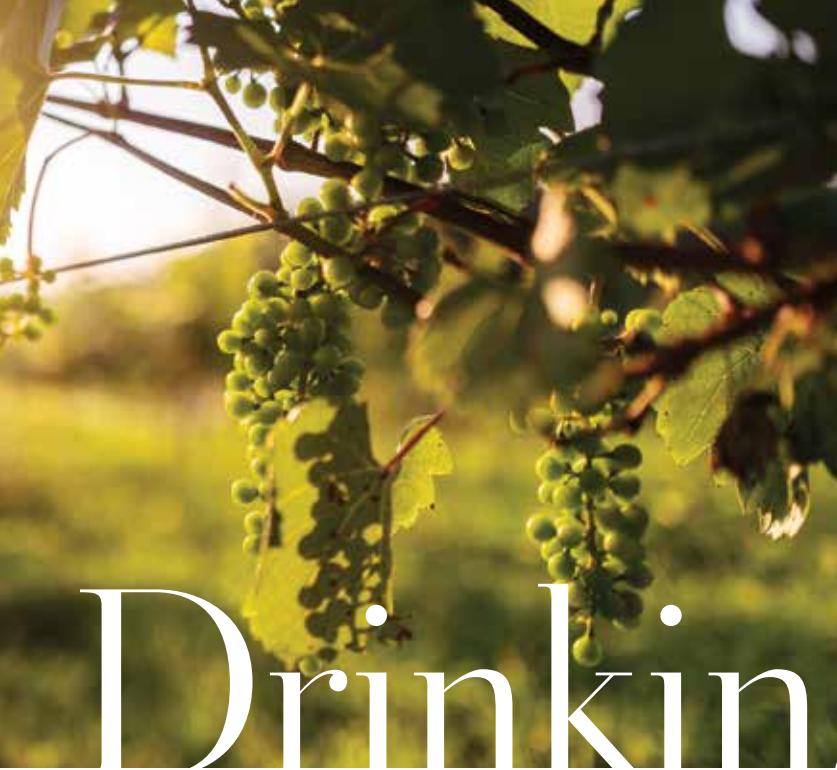
Hydroponic farming also offers other economic benefits. Unlike traditional soil-based farming, it requires less space, less water, and is not dependent on the weather. At Urban Greens, each rack holds 400 to 500 plants in a footprint hardly bigger than a big backyard garden. "That's a pretty good use of space compared to farming in dirt," Rescorla notes. "The yield per square foot is much higher."

Plants grow more quickly, too. Conventionally grown lettuce takes eight to 10 weeks to mature. Urban Greens lettuce is ready in just six weeks and is delivered to customers' doors hours after being picked. "The greens you get from us are very fresh," Rescorla says. "They can keep up to three weeks in the fridge. The taste of ours is good, but ultimately, it's about freshness."

Home delivery also makes economic sense, he says. Profit margins in farming are as slim as a new reed, so cutting out the middle man by selling directly to customers makes Urban Greens' business model more economically viable. It also makes it possible for the company to give back to its community by providing fresh, healthy food.

"Part of our vision from the beginning was to enrich the local community, to be part of the community," Rescorla says. □

J. Trout Lowen (B.A. '89) is a freelance writer and editor living in Minneapolis.



Drinking Deep

Wines made from cold-hardy U of M grapes are winning awards and gaining fans, thanks to winemakers like Steve Zeller and the U's breeding and outreach programs. By Joel Hoekstra

STEVE ZELLER IS HUNTING for a thief. Circling the interior of a small farm shed turned chemistry lab, the 60-year-old winemaker (B.S. '82, M.B.A. '92) rummages through several boxes and drawers, kicks a plastic jug, trips over a rubber hose, and nearly bowls over a set of drying glass beakers before he finally closes in on his prey.

He nabs a glass pipette the size of a small turkey baster from its hiding place. Grinning broadly, he explains: "They call it a thief because it allows you to steal a little bit of wine from the barrel."

Zeller removes the stopper from the top of an oak wine cask and slips the nose of the thief into the opening. He transfers a few sips to a wine glass, swirls and sniffs the contents, then takes a taste. "It's still not quite there," he says. "There's a little harshness yet. But it's getting close."

The same might be said of Minnesota's winemaking industry, which has begun to produce some noteworthy bottles in recent years. Once dismissed as too acidic or overly sweet, Minnesota wines have recently won awards in regional and even national competitions. In 2018, Parley Lake Winery in Waconia, where Zeller serves as head winemaker, won two silver medals and a bronze for its red native/hybrid varietals in the *San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition*, the largest competition worldwide for American wines.

Zeller is quick to credit the University as the source of the local wine industry's success. In addition to developing cold-hardy grapes that can survive hard winters and ripen in the region's short growing season, the U's Horticultural Research Center, located in Victoria, just five miles from Waconia, has developed a number of outreach

programs that educate grape-growers and winemakers. "I wouldn't be a winemaker in Minnesota if it wasn't for the amazing grapes from the U of M," Zeller says.

ZELLER NEVER INTENDED to become a winemaker. But after graduating from the Carlson School in 1992, he landed a position in facilities management with Emerson Electric that would lead him to Germany, where wine-making has a long history. Zeller and his wife, Deb (B.S. '82) had developed a taste for fine wine on a trip to California a few years earlier. Now in Europe, they were impressed by the bottles they sampled as well as



Sara Rubinstein

the relaxed attitudes around drinking. "It was part of the culture," Zeller recalls. "You'd have wine at a meal, or wine with family. Wine was part of your everyday life."

The couple eventually returned to Minnesota and in 2005, they joined friends Lin and Bonnie Deardorff, owners of an apple orchard in Waconia, in a new business venture—planting grape vines. Eventually, they thought, they could hire a winemaker and produce their own bottles. "But I spent some time looking for a winemaker and couldn't find anyone. At the time, nobody from California wanted to move to Minnesota to make wines," Zeller recalls. Eventually, he was persuaded by a former enologist from the U,

Nick Smith, to tackle the task himself. "I read books, went to conferences, and took classes at the U," Zeller says.

Wine-making is complicated, however. ("I'd say it's 20 percent science and 80 percent art," he says.) And producing bottles from local grapes can be particularly tricky. Growers must contend with long winters, short summers, unexpected frosts, and a host of fungi and pests—from powdery mildew to Japanese beetles.

According to the Minnesota Farm Winery Association, in 1870 a German homesteader named Louis Suelter first tried to grow more than a dozen varieties of wine grapes in Minnesota. But it took more than a century for the first



Alumni Steve and Deb Zeller
at the Parley Lake winery in
Waconia, Minnesota

Food for Thought

commercially viable vine to take root in the state: In 1996, the U's breeding program developed Frontenac, a disease-resistant fruit with flavors of cherry and plum. Since then, it has released several other cold-hardy grape varieties, including Frontenac Gris, Frontenac Blanc, Marquette, La Crescent, and Itasca and more potential grapes remain under trial for future release.

It can take decades to develop a successful grape, says Matthew Clark (M.S. '10, Ph.D. '14), an assistant professor of grape breeding and enology at the U's Department of Horticultural Science. More than 12,000 experimental vines are planted on the 12 acres owned by U's Horticultural Research Center, but only a handful will prove successful. "I sometimes joke that plant breeding is mostly about killing plants," says Clark, who oversees the U's grape-growing efforts. "But we have plants that we've been looking at for 25 years that we're still interested in. This work takes time."

IN 2009, THE ZELLERS and Deardorffs opened Parley Lake Winery on 125 acres planted with apple trees and trellised grapes. "The first weekend we sold out of three of our five wines. We thought it was easy!" Zeller recalls with a laugh. "You just make wine and sell it, right?"

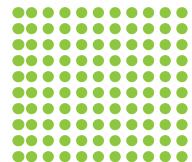
In fact, it took nearly a decade for the winery to break even financially, and even today only a sliver of the revenue it generates comes from bottle sales. Most of the winery's income comes from agritourism and from hosting events, like weddings, in a reconstructed barn on the property.

Zeller also hasn't given up his day job, serving as director of global real estate at Donaldson, a filtration services company headquartered in Bloomington. But he's increasingly bullish on the future of Minnesota wines—and in fact, early criticism of wines made from cold-hardy hybrid grapes may be fading: A writer for *Bon Appetit* in December 2018 proclaimed such vintages as "some of the most exciting wines in America, if not the world," adding, "I'm talking bottles of La Crescent that crackled with the acidity of a dozen grapefruits ... Frontenac Noirs that gave me goose bumps ... and Marquettes that left my insides as fuzzy as my favorite sweater."

Some Minnesotans might regard that as hyperbole, but Zeller believes the time has finally come when locals can crow big about regional wines. "The public is now beginning to understand what we can do with these grapes and they're discerning," he says. "The grapes are maturing. The skill set is maturing. And the demand for better wines from Minnesota is growing." □

Joel Hoekstra is a Minneapolis writer and editor.

U Center for Spirituality and Healing senior fellow and food maven Brenda Langton shares a lifetime of insight on how what we eat makes us who we are. By Cathy Madison



"I WAS JUST A HIPPIE," says Brenda Langton, as if that humble characterization explains the profound influence this organic food and sustainable source pioneer, restauranteur, consultant, cookbook author, and educator has wielded on the Twin Cities food scene for more than 40 years.

While most teens in the '70s haunted the mall, Langton was busy devouring wisdom from older friends as they juiced, cooked, and launched a vegetarian cooperative restaurant named Commonplace in her St. Paul neighborhood.

"I was into healthy food at that time," says Langton, then a student at St. Paul's first alternative open school. "Then [the cooperative] opened up down the street. I loved it, loved the people there. I did everything—cooked, cleaned, took money to the bank, bought all the veggies. It didn't matter that I was 15." She learned the business so well that by the time she was 21, she had taken over.

It was the beginning of an education that would stick, advance, and proliferate. "College" for her meant spending nine months in Europe, visiting every market in every little town she had time for to study local ingredients. Thus inspired, Langton remodeled and opened Café Kardamena on Selby Avenue in 1978. In 1986, she launched the popular, light-filled Café Brenda, which occupied a downtown Minneapolis corner until 2009. In 2006, when the Guthrie Theater relocated near the Mississippi River, she opened Spoonriver next door and a Saturday morning Mill City Farmers' Market on the adjacent plaza.

Even after a lifetime spent with food, Langton plans to stay on that path, including sharing her unique perspective with others through the U of M.

For more than a decade, Langton has taught a multi-week, nine-hour cooking class, now called Inspired Cooking for



Brenda Langton at the Mill City Farmers Market

Healthy Lives, at the University's Earl E. Bakken Center for Spirituality & Healing.

"Brenda was one of our first senior fellows," says CSH Director Mary Jo Kreitzer. "Nutrition is so important to our health and well-being, yet people are lacking in both nutrition literacy and knowing how to prepare food. The class focuses on the what, why, and how of healthy eating."

A vegetarian early on, Langton remembers "lots of brown casseroles—nuts, seeds, protein powder" in her younger days. "But food has changed for me," she says. "Now I pay much more attention to texture and freshness and colors and balance, and getting enough nutrients and protein." Meat, which once helped her heal from surgery, now has an occasional place at her table, as does a nice glass of red wine.

Nutritional science also informs her menus. "Now, thankfully, they're discovering the importance of the gut biome," Langton says. "If we don't have healthy gut flora, we'll have more issues with what we digest." She recommends choosing organic bread and pasta, suggesting that many of those who now seek gluten-free foods may be more sensitive to the chemicals used to

treat wheat than to wheat itself. She also replaces canola with sunflower, sesame, and coconut oils because she believes they are healthier, especially for aging eaters who need more fats and good oils.

While Langton cooks during her classes, licensed nutritionist Carolyn Denton, who teaches at the Center, offers color commentary, supplying

tidbits about phytonutrients and detoxifiers, along with a dollop of humor. "Part of my job is to tease her," says Denton, who teaches functional nutrition. "What makes her such a good teacher is that she's like your sister. Here's this award-winning, high-caliber chef who is just the most wonderful, normal person. She makes cooking seem so simple."

Kreitzer agrees. "Brenda is not only incredibly knowledgeable, but also so much fun. She offers such real-world wisdom that people leave inspired."

"By being in the community day in and day out, serving hundreds of meals to our guests, I know how very important it is for people to taste and experience and appreciate what a good, natural food meal is and can be," Langton says. "It makes them feel good for the day. [That's why] the farmers' market is a very important piece of my journey. It's reaching out to the community, and it's an extension of my belief that food is medicine." □

Cathy Madison is a writer and editor in the Twin Cities and the author of *The War Came Home with Him: A Daughter's Memoir*, published by the University of Minnesota Press.

The Art of Craft

Alumna Sarah Schultz heads the nation's premier nonprofit dedicated to celebrating both makers and handicrafts. *By Elizabeth Foy Larsen*

When Sarah Schultz received a call in fall 2017 asking if she was interested in interviewing to become the next executive director of the American Craft Council (ACC), she was intrigued. The ACC is a revered institution, established in 1939 to support and champion handmade arts and the people who make them.

However, Schultz wasn't sure if she was the right person for the job. She and her husband were living in New York City and Schultz (M.A. '92) was working as the interim vice president of public programs and education for Friends of the High Line, a nonprofit that maintains and operates the High Line park on Manhattan's West Side. She also was putting together shows for Mural Arts Philadelphia, the country's largest public art program.

"I'm not a maker. I'm a curator," explains Schultz, who studied art history and American studies in graduate school at the University of Minnesota. "I had to ask myself, 'Why craft?'"

Before she moved to New York in 2015, Schultz had been the education director and curator of public practice at the Walker Art Center, where she produced programs that included artist-designed miniature golf and Open Field, a series of happenings that turned the grassy hill adjoining the museum into a creative commons. When she got the call from the ACC, her career lens was focused primarily on contemporary fine art, not quilting or glass blowing or carving spoons out of wood.

To determine if her museum experience could translate into running ACC, Schultz made herself answer that "Why craft?" question. The exercise convinced her not only that she dearly wanted the job, but also that she was well suited to the needs of an organization devoted to the intersection of art and everyday objects.

"What I realized is that craft has always infiltrated my life," she says now, gesturing around her airy office in ACC's head-



Scott Streble



quarters in the former Grain Belt Brewery in Northeast Minneapolis. “Whether it was my grandmother teaching me how to knit and that kind of social and personal bond that gets created in skill sharing, to the gifts I’ve given and received, or things I’d acquired because they were beautifully made and wrought.” As an avid cook and gardener, Schultz realized she’d always valued quality materials, even if they were simply flour and plants.

That eureka moment made Schultz realize that crafts are everywhere—not just in her life but also in the lives of every living person. “If you are interested in engaging the broadest number of people in a conversation about why making matters, why creativity matters, craft, I realized, was the perfect place for me to be.”

AT A TIME WHEN the popularity of DIY has given rise to everything from pubs specializing in artisan pale ales to the hundreds of thousands of candles and candle holders sold on the online site Etsy, crafts and crafting are indisputably on trend. “There is such a phenomenal interest right now in the handmade and the idea of the authentic object,” says Schultz.

Why we yearn for experiences and items that are rooted in traditions that stretch back centuries may stem from our increasingly digital existence, say Schultz and other craft experts. “We are in a place in history where you can get everything on Amazon or at Target,” says U of M art history professor Jennifer Marshall. “Craft matters now because in a world where you can punch an app and get something instantly, we have become alienated from how things are made.”

ACC relocated from New York City to Minneapolis in 2011, almost seven years before Schultz took the helm. Schultz says the move came from a need to reduce the organization’s overhead expenses, as well as a desire to be more inclusive of regions beyond the country’s major metropolitan areas. The Twin Cities was an attractive option in part because there is such an established craft community, including Northern Clay Center, Textile Center, and Foci – Minnesota Center for Glass.

The U certainly contributes to that craft culture too, from legendary Regents Professor and ceramic artist Warren MacKenzie (see *Minnesota Alumni*’s profile of MacKenzie on page 42 in this issue) to the Weisman Art Museum’s extraordinary collections and the Goldstein Museum of Design’s extensive catalog of handmade

apparel, jewelry, metal work, and textiles—some of which date back to the late 1700s.

A number of small-scale initiatives at the U also honor craft, including a dye garden of plants, which includes indigo, zinnias, and amaranth, used to add color to linen, cotton, and wool. Located between the Rarig Center and Wilson Library on the U’s West Bank, the garden was the brainchild of Art History doctoral student Colleen Stockmann (M.A. ’17), who is focusing her studies on the history of artistic practice, a topic that is central to why crafting resonates with today’s makers.

“Craft helps us reconnect with our bodies and our hands,” Stockmann says, citing a BBC News report in late 2018 that said an increasing number of today’s medical school graduates don’t have the manual dexterity to sew stitches. In addition to craft’s physical benefits, Stockmann praises the practice of making for helping people prioritize the process over the end product. “These hobbies don’t necessarily require a finished aspect,” she says.

That insight will come as welcome news to the legions of knitters with half-completed sweaters stashed in their knitting bags. And it is central to how Schultz sees the mission of ACC, which is to cultivate a culture of making, whether by hosting national craft shows and conferences, sponsoring grants and awards, or publishing *American Craft* magazine and the journal *American Craft Inquiry*.

“All kinds of research [shows] how making reduces your stress levels and increases social bonds,” Schultz says. She also believes craft helps people navigate life, and that establishing a craft ecology that nurtures makers and artisans and the small businesses that sell their work is crucial.

“I think making also helps us understand the world differently,” she says. “Because when we engage with materials, we start to think more about where our things come from, who made them, and what it took to make them. That’s really important because we become more conscious about the things we make and produce, which then has tremendous impact of the environment, on the economy, on social relationships, on justice.” □

Elizabeth Foy Larsen (M.F.A. ’02) is *Minnesota Alumni*’s senior editor and the author of *111 Places in the Twin Cities That You Must Not Miss*.

The Hand of the Potter

World-renowned ceramicist and potter Warren MacKenzie shaped both clay and students during a 40-year career at the U. *By Tim Brady*

When Warren MacKenzie was hired to teach ceramic arts at the University of Minnesota in 1953, the job came with a warning from Professor Harvey Arnason, chair of the art department: "If at any time there is a problem with a drop in enrollment or budget problems," MacKenzie was told, "ceramics is going to be closed down."

It was perhaps not quite the warmest of greetings for a new hire, but as it happened, things worked out very well for both MacKenzie and ceramics at the U of M art department.

MacKenzie, who died on December 31 at age 94, would go on to teach at the U for the next 37 years, eventually becoming head of the art department. He is the only pro-

even more important to MacKenzie is that his pottery continues to be used and appreciated in regular homes at thousands of tables around the country.

ARRIVING AT THE U OF M after an early career that began with studies at the Art Institute in Chicago, MacKenzie had initially been interested in becoming a painter, but along with his soon-to-be wife (and fellow student), Alixandra Kolesky (Alix), MacKenzie made the switch to pottery. He was deeply influenced by the work of a British potter named Bernard Leach, who himself was influenced by the pottery of a Japanese master named Shoji Hamada, who practiced a type of art that the Japanese called *mingei*, or art of the people.

Leach had published *A Potter's Book* in 1940, describing his work and methods, and the volume was passed among a handful of MacKenzie's fellow students in Chicago like a sacred text. After a stint in the army during WWII, marriage, graduation from art school, and a first job at the St. Paul Gallery and School of Art, MacKenzie and Alix decided to head to England in 1949 to apprentice with Leach.

Both Leach and the *Mingei* style emphasized a sort of holistic approach to pottery making. The beauty and art in the craft was to be found in the process of creating everyday, utilitarian objects.

The artist's role was to sit at the potter's wheel day after day making bowls, vases, *yunomis* (a form of teacup), and teapots from lumps of clay. The idea was to perfect the craft through the work, feeling the earth in the artist's hands, and shaping it into functional beauty for daily use by ordinary people.

It was this sensibility that MacKenzie brought back with him to Minnesota, and his teaching position at the University. He and Alix also soon established a pottery studio outside of Stillwater and began raising a family as they created their pottery and Warren taught. The Stillwater-based pottery would eventually become a kind of mecca for Minnesota ceramic artists practicing a



Warren MacKenzie and his wife and fellow potter Alix MacKenzie in 1953.

Right: A 1961 installation of their work at Walker Art Center.

essor in its history to be named a Regents Professor, the highest honor the U of M bestows on a faculty member.

Over more than seven decades of artistic and aesthetic mastery, MacKenzie not only left behind a legacy of beautifully shaped and humbly made pottery, but he likewise molded the careers of generations of students who went on to spin and shape pots with their own clay-spattered hands.

Today MacKenzie's work can be found in museum and gallery collections around the world, including in a special exhibit at the Weisman Art Center, with which MacKenzie had a long and fruitful association. What would prove



style of the craft nicknamed *Mingei-sota* in honor of the tradition in which MacKenzie worked.

After a few years, tragedy struck in the early 1960s when Alix developed cancer. When she died, MacKenzie was left a widower with a studio, two young girls to raise, and a steady stream of students troup ing to Stillwater to learn the ways and means of the potter's life.

"He was a single guy raising two kids when I first met him," says Mark Pharis, who began studies with MacKenzie in the late 1960s and who would later both teach at and serve as chair of the art department at the U of M before his retirement. "But I think even with all the inherent difficulties of his circumstances, he fit them into the world he created around his work. Pottery-making, as he practiced it, was a domestic craft. His ethic, his studio work, and his life were all seamlessly intertwined."

Pharis, along with a slew of other aspiring ceramics artists in this period, including former U students and now well-known potters Randy Johnston (B.F.A. '72), Karl Borgeson (M.S. '70) Wayne Branum (B.F.A. '71), Sandy Simon (B.F.A. '70), and many others, would take up the wheel and ultimately form the core of a next generation of Minnesota artists working in clay. Like Pharis, who ultimately became a colleague of MacKenzie's at the U, many of these early students not only established their own pottery studios, but filled ceramic department faculties in colleges and universities around the region.

Mark Pharis recalls that when he first started to take art classes from MacKenzie, another art department faculty member told him that he and his fellow students didn't know how lucky they were to be studying with someone like MacKenzie. "Of course it was all Greek to me," Pharis says. "I was just a kid from small-town Minnesota. I didn't know anything about the traditions that were informing his work. Didn't know about Leach or Hamada. Or the fact that Warren was world-renowned. Or that he was a unique figure in the world of pottery and that we were, in fact, extremely lucky to have him. Darned if it didn't all turn out to be true."

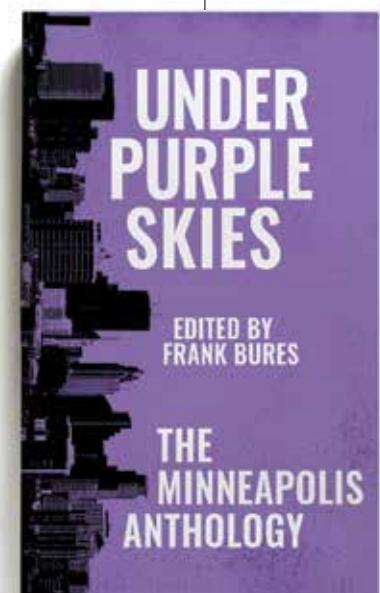
After Alix's death, MacKenzie would eventually remarry—to an accomplished textile artist, Nancy (Spitzer) MacKenzie—and they settled into MacKenzie's home and studio in Stillwater to live out their lives. After 30 years with Warren, Nancy died in October 2014.

At Warren MacKenzie's March 2019 memorial, many of his former students and admirers gathered to salute him, including Pharis.

MacKenzie's pottery can be seen both in the permanent collection at the Weisman Art Museum and in a special exhibit *The Persistence of Mingei*, currently on display at the museum through March 2021. □

MacKenzie in his studio, a still from the documentary *Warren MacKenzie: A Potter's Hands*, directed by Mark Lambert.

Everything Interesting About Minneapolis, Somali Stories, and More



Minneapolis is known for its surfeit of excellent writers, so it's not surprising that a collection of writing about the city by the writers who know it best would turn out to be a reader's delight.

In *Under Purple Skies: The Minneapolis Anthology* (Belt Publishing), editor **Frank Bures** pulled together 57 essays and poems about the North Star metro—half written for

this anthology and the rest reprinted from elsewhere. In doing so, he made the book stronger by ensuring that it represented Minneapolis in its full modern-day multicultural incarnation, incorporating works by Hmong, East Asian, First Nations, black, and Somali authors, as well as white writers. Ten of the group are University of Minnesota alumni, including prolific, well-known authors **William Souder** (B.A. '77) and **Neal Karlen** (M.A. '09).

In its nearly 200 pages, *Under Purple Skies* includes contributions from familiar, award-winning writers such as

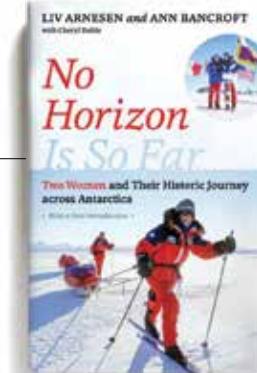
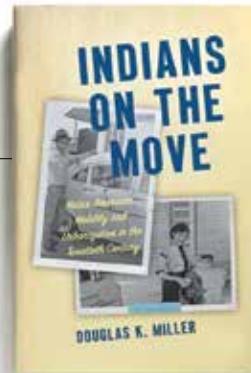
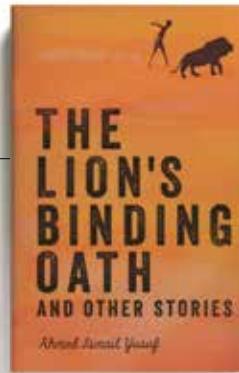
Kevin Kling, Marlon James, and Sarah Stonich, along with equally delightful entries by lesser known writers such as Rae Meadows (who evocatively reflects on her first frigid Minneapolis winter); J.D. Fratzke, a veteran chef who remembers his earliest Hennepin Avenue cooking job and the mentor who molded him; and Sofia Burford, a Mexican-American who explains the abiding weirdness of being a Hispanic person in what remains an overwhelmingly white city.

The range of topics is broad, moving from the Seward neighborhood home of writer Kao Kalia Yang (*The Latehomecomer*); Minneapolis as seen from Segway by former tour guide Doug Mack; and the city's magical sidewalk gaps, where as a child, Kelly Barnhill (Newbery medal-winning writer of *The Girl Who Drank the Moon*) found wildness could still creep in.

Naturally, given its title, three Prince pieces found their way into this anthology, the most unlikely and enjoyable of which was written by Wisconsinite Michael Perry (best known for writing about farm and small-town life in books such as *Population: 485*). In "Prince of the Midwest," Perry describes viewing the iconic film *Purple Rain* four times, then draping his teenage bedroom with purple scarves and fishnet in an attempt to evoke some Prince magic in rural Wisconsin. "In a box in my barn there are snapshots of me reporting for skateguard duty at the roller rink in 1986 wearing pink hair dye and a satin magenta head scarf. Goofy as hell and so short of the mark, but further proof that Prince precipitated profound change."

A less successful but no less impassioned musician, Eric Dregni (M.F.A. '07) writes in hilarious detail of the "squalid rental houses full of sketchy musicians" that made up his 20s, from which he and a handful of friends attempted in vain to join the city's burgeoning indie rock scene (The Replacements, Husker Du, The Jayhawks, etc.). Although their reality turned out to be less *Rolling Stone* and more mouse-ridden kitchens, Red Owl creamed corn, and used clothes purchased by the pound, Dregni fondly recalls his rocker youth, and readers will enjoy it, too.

With such a wealth of Minnesota writers, it's easy to forget that as recently as the '60s, most people considered our state to be literary



flyover land. In a fascinating introduction to this anthology, *Star Tribune* books editor Laurie Hertzel recalls the summer of 1966, when her UW-Superior English professor father organized a workshop about North Country writers. He brought together such luminaries as Robert Bly, Sigurd Olson, and J.F. Powers, "all solid Midwestern writers," as Hertzel puts it, but also all white men.

In the years since, Minnesota—and Minneapolis—writers have become far more diverse, and the city has grown, as Hertzel writes, "quietly, steadily, and rather stupendously... into one of the most sophisticated literary centers in the country."

For one varied, top-notch taste of that literary splendor, don't miss reading *Under Purple Skies*.

And the rest....

Much farther from Minnesota, yet an inextricable part of it now, are the Somali people. In *The Lion's Binding Oath and Other Stories* (Catalyst Press), **Ahmed Ismail Yusuf** (M.P.A. '09) tells compelling tales covering many recent experiences of his beleaguered people, from toiling as sheep-herding nomads to cheering at thronged soccer stadiums to surviving the violence, desperation, and resulting diaspora of their country's civil war.

Another group of people vital to Minnesota—and indeed its original and rightful occupants—are American Indians. To read the often painful but—argues the author—sometimes beneficial story of their relocation to U.S. cities, look for *Indians on the Move: Native American Mobility and Urbanization in the Twentieth Century* (University of North Carolina Press) by **Douglas K. Miller** (B.A. '06).

A quieter journey, yet significant in its own right, was the one made by Minnesota's **Ann Bancroft** and Norway's **Liv Arnesen** and told in

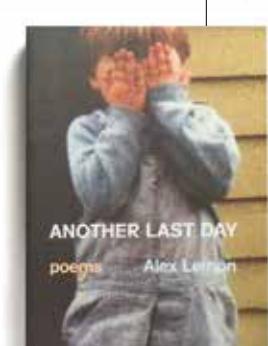
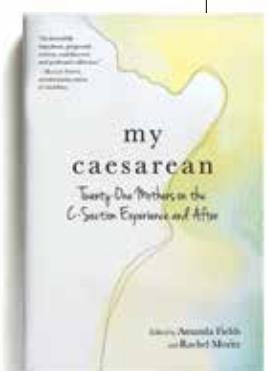
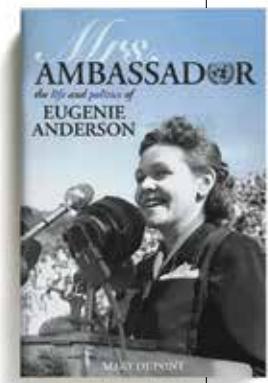
the newly reissued book, *No Horizon Is So Far: Two Women and Their Historic Journey across Antarctica* (University of Minnesota Press). In three months of 2001-02, Bancroft and Arnesen became the first two women to cross Antarctica, doing so via foot, ski, and ice-sail, all the while towing 250-pound supply sledges.

Another brave female groundbreaker was Minnesota politician Eugenie Anderson, who served as the first woman ambassador for the United States—to Denmark in 1949. Her story and long political career are thoroughly and compellingly told by her granddaughter **Mary Dupont** (B.A. '89) in *Mrs. Ambassador: The Life and Politics of Eugenie Anderson* (Minnesota Historical Society Press).

When it comes to women's bravery, few life events require more fortitude than giving birth. When things go wrong, and a birth must take place surgically, the experience is often both physically and emotionally painful. For a thoughtful consideration of this all-too common experience, pick up a copy of *My Caesarean: Twenty-one Mothers on the C-Section Experience and After* (The Experiment Publishing), edited by **Amanda Fields** (M.F.A. '05) and **Rachel Moritz** (M.F.A. '06).

A U of M creative writing student of the same era, **Alex Lemon** (M.F.A. '04) has written a very different, but no less moving, volume. In *Another Last Day*, award-winner Lemon's fifth book of poetry, he has created a book-length celebration of a natural landscape both dark and thrumming with life. □

Lynette Lamb (M.A. '84) is a longtime Minneapolis journalist now writing a memoir of her young husband's catastrophic stroke.



Speaking Truth to Power

Film pro Scott Burns took his sense of true north with him from Minnesota to Hollywood.

By Susan Maas

Urgeant truth-seeking is often at the heart of writer and filmmaker Scott Z. Burns' work. Screenwriter on *The Informant*, producer on *An Inconvenient Truth*, playwright of *The Library*—which examines a Columbine-style school shooting—and now director of the political thriller *The Report*, the Minnesota native and U grad (B.A. '85) crafts fiction and nonfiction stories that explore themes of deception and reality when stakes are high.

This spring, Burns was a guest of honor at the 38th annual Minneapolis St. Paul International Film Festival. In conversation with a roomful of movie buffs, he shared experiences from some of the dozen-plus films he's worked on, devoting special attention to the forthcoming *The Report*, which confronts issues surrounding the CIA's brutal "enhanced interrogation" program—which many, including Burns, consider state-sanctioned torture. (The film will be in theaters September 27 and on Amazon Prime October 11.) Burns also spoke about his Minnesota upbringing, how it informs his work, and some of the themes that pervade his diverse and wide-ranging filmography.

Burns grew up in Golden Valley, Minnesota, and spent his summers in the time-honored tradition of attending summer camp "up north." His love for the natural world and ethic of environmental stewardship is embodied in both *An Inconvenient Truth* and its follow-up, *An Inconvenient Sequel: Truth to Power*, as well as the new Sundance-winning eco-documentary *Sea of Shadows*, of which Burns is executive producer. That passion for

nature stems directly from his early outdoor Minnesota experiences, he says.

"I was always fascinated by the wilderness ... I loved nature and I loved the [Native] names of things," Burns says. "When I was in second grade, my mom encouraged me to do a project to raise money for humpback whales. I guess it's been a lifelong thing for me, our stewardship of the place we live."

"When I moved to LA, I became very involved with the NRDC [Natural Resources Defense Council], and it was through them I heard Al Gore do his slideshow," Burns recalls about the former vice president's traveling presentation to raise awareness and alarm about global warming. "We were able to get a meeting with Al—me, [film producer] Lawrence Bender, and [environmental activist] Laurie David—and we said, 'If you keep doing the slideshow, you're going to be able to reach 100 people a day. But if you let us make a movie, we can reach millions of people.'" The subsequent film *An Inconvenient Truth* netted several Oscars and helped jump-start the international climate change mobilization effort.

Burns has done his share of popcorn fare—see *The Bourne Ultimatum*—but much of his work wrestles with heavy political and societal quandaries. His forthcoming investigative drama *The Report* is a hard, exhaustively researched look at the "enhanced interrogation" program ("We'll just call it 'torture' from now on," Burns says) implemented by the CIA in the wake of 9/11 and the fight to expose those practices. The CIA program included

techniques such as sensory deprivation and use of detainee-specific phobias.

The film, which stars actors Adam Driver, Annette Bening, and Jon Hamm, shouldn't necessarily be viewed as "political," Burns says, but rather an exploration of right, wrong, and longstanding American values. "Torture is against the law. It's against the Geneva convention; it's against the uniform code of military conduct," he says. He notes that torture has also proven wildly counterproductive, yielding false confessions and jeopardizing critical alliances.

Burns says he chose not to depict the methods described in the real-life report but rather to relay them to the audience through quoted excerpts. "I don't want to do 'torture porn,'" Burns says about his decision. "What I tried to do was use the language in the report; I think the words are going to stick with people as much as any images."

The *summa cum laude* English major who started out in advertising—working on the "Got Milk?" campaign—counts U of M English Professor Emeritus Tom Clayton as one of his biggest influences. He recalls sitting rapt as Clayton lectured with "incredible abandon," and of chatting with Clayton in his office "about what it's like to be young and existentially lost like Hamlet—or Joe Strummer [vocalist and co-founder of the pivotal British punk rock band the Clash]. Professor Clayton showed me that storytelling is a continuum and that the tools of drama and comedy and storytelling can be found in plays that are ancient or in songs on the radio."

Burns is grateful for his time in the College of Liberal Arts. "I think a liberal arts education teaches the student about how to live and think in the world, how to think critically, and what the role of art and expression are in society," he says. "Studying English literature taught me the impact of stories on society—and the impact of society on the storyteller. That has been invaluable to me throughout my career." Burns feels lucky to make a living telling stories that matter to him and, he hopes, to many others. "Being a writer allows you access to all these different worlds. Every day is sort of a field trip." □

Susan Maas is a writer and chief copyeditor for Minnesota Alumni.

Getting Women Into Africa's Boardrooms

Marcia Ashong, recipient of a recent Archbishop Desmond Tutu Fellowship, is helping cultivate women leaders in Africa.

By Lynette Lamb

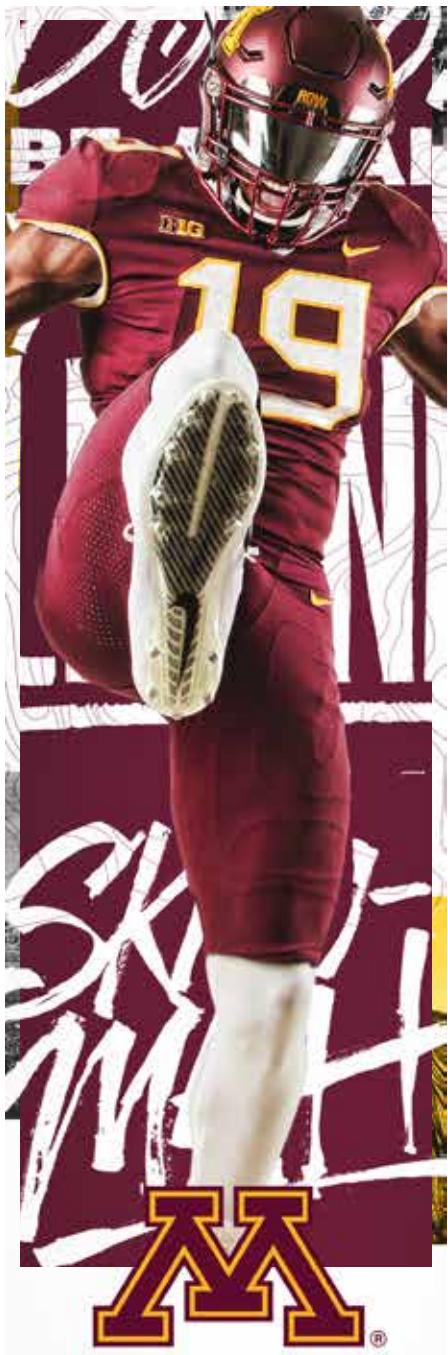


In 2016, Marcia Ashong (B.A. '06) was a U.K.-trained lawyer and highly successful executive working in the Ivory Coast for the Houston-based oil and gas firm Baker Hughes. After several years with the firm, she had diligently worked her way up the corporate ladder to country manager, but as she did, she noticed not many women were following her up the ranks.

It was at that point that Ashong decided to do something to help other women make it to the top throughout Africa. That year she launched TheBoardroom Africa, whose goal is placing women on for-profit and nonprofit boards throughout the continent.

Ashong considers lack of diversity on boards to be "the thorny roots of the problem" of gender equity, arguing that boards are "unique environments where leaders can really flourish." Furthermore, she adds, "research shows that diverse boardrooms lead to more diverse executive teams."

Ashong and TheBoardroom Africa set a goal of doubling the number of women in boardrooms across the region by 2026. And



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they've made a good start. After just three years, says Ashong, they've placed more than a dozen women on boards across Africa, while building a network of nearly 800 senior executive women. "We want to end excuses for not seeking out and appointing high-caliber female talent," she says. "There is no excuse when companies can use us as a resource to diversify their executive talent."

Recently, for example, TheBoardroom Africa helped arrange for a number of women to join high-profile boards, including PricewaterhouseCoopers tax partner Ayesha Bedwei's appointment to the board of Ghana's Kuenyehia Prize for Contemporary Ghanaian Art, and for development firm director Allen Asiimwe's and GE Africa communications and public affairs officer Patricia Obozuwa's appointments to the board of The Water Trust, a nonprofit organization based in Uganda.

The importance of adding women to boards of directors cannot be overstated, says Ashong. "Diverse boards mean embracing diversity of thought and experience," she says. "Women on boards bring openness to new perspectives, collaboration, and inclusiveness, and strength in ethics and fairness. By changing the dynamics at the top of the business ... diversity radiates across all levels of the company."

Ashong says her diversity activism started while she was an undergraduate at the University of Minnesota, earning her B.A. in political science and international relations in 2006. Although her earliest years were spent in the U.K. and Ghana, she "spent the majority of my formative and early adult years in Minneapolis," Ashong says. "Minneapolis is

where I honed my interests and passion for making an impact," and although today she lives in Ghana, "Minnesota will always remain my second home."

Her effort to make an impact has been noticed. For her work with TheBoardroom Africa, Ashong was recently awarded a prestigious Archbishop Desmond Tutu Fellowship, administered by the African Leadership Institute. Just 20 individuals from more than 300 applicants—considered some of Africa's highest-potential young leaders—are named Tutu Fellows each year. Among the program's goals, says Ashong, are fostering Pan-African perspectives and sharing leadership experiences.

The fellowship program is a part-time, six-month commitment that includes two intensive interactive workshops—one held in South Africa and one in Oxford and London. The workshops feature important African leaders, including such past speakers as Dr. Mamphela Ramphele, former vice chancellor of the University of Cape Town and former managing director of the World Bank Group; Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete, former president of Tanzania; and Graça Machel, international human rights advocate and former first lady of Mozambique and South Africa.

Between workshop modules, fellows undertake group projects designed to develop solutions for some of Africa's most pressing challenges. Recent projects have aimed to improve destitute patients' access to medicine in Nigeria, to mentor and encourage higher education among South African girls, and to supply microloans and vocational training for farmers in Kenya.

—Lynette Lamb, M.A. '84

AROUND TOWN

“ Taking away that is like more than just taking away coffee. ”

Student SOPHI HEIM on the closing of the last Perkins Restaurant in Minneapolis, near Cedars-Riverside, according to the *Minnesota Daily*.



A Force for Good

**Chief Deputy
Attorney General
John Keller
wants to protect
the rights of all
Minnesotans.**

By Elizabeth Foy Larsen

Growing up as the youngest of eight siblings on a dairy farm outside of Stillwater, John Keller never imagined he'd spend his career as a lawyer. "I doubt I ever knew a lawyer," says Keller (B.A.'92), sitting in a high-ceilinged conference room in the Minnesota State Capitol, where he serves as the state's chief deputy attorney general. "If my dad ever talked about a lawyer, it probably wasn't a fun discussion."

That perspective changed in 1988 when Keller, having completed his sophomore year as a Peace Studies major at St. John's University in Collegeville, Minnesota, had the opportunity to take a year off to work for a human rights nonprofit in Lima, Peru. The South American country was in the midst of a crisis. Unemployment was rampant and the government—long a violator of human rights—had implemented economic shock policies that sent inflation soaring. The Shining Path rebels were also terrorizing urban areas with bombings and assassinations.

It was in this setting that Keller met a nonprofit lawyer who was valiantly working to document the human rights abuses by all sides so that he could present his findings to the United Nations. The experience, Keller remembers, was a revelation. "It was just eye-opening to see a lawyer and an organization doing that kind of work in the midst of an extremely precarious and challenging environment," he remembers. Law, Keller realized, could be a tool for social justice.

After returning to Minnesota in spring 1989, Keller transferred to the U of M. He says the U was attractive to him because it offered a Latin American studies major, was more affordable, and had a more socially and economically diverse campus than St. John's. He completed studies for his fall quarter before returning to Peru in January 1990. Six months later, he married Maria Keller Flores, a Peruvian whom he'd met during his previous stay. (Today, after being married for 29 years, the couple have three kids between the ages of 28 and 18.)



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The young couple returned to Minnesota in August 1990. Keller says his wife's paperwork was the first immigration form he ever filled out. "Fortunately, I didn't mess it up," he jokes. Keller says the flexibility the U offered him in taking independent study and evening classes while he worked full time and was a new dad was crucial to him finishing his undergraduate degree. To save costs, they lived with family in Stillwater.

Keller received his undergraduate degree in 1992 and entered law school at Hamline University in 1993, graduating in 1996. After a year clerking for the Minnesota Court of Appeals, he joined the Immigrant Law Center of Minnesota (ILCM), a nonprofit that provides legal representation for new Americans and promotes public policies that benefit them. He stayed at ILCM for more than 20 years, becoming the executive director in 2005. While working at ILCM, he also served as a policy fellow at the U's Humphrey School of Public Affairs from 2007 to 2008.

"We were committed to taking on complex cases because we believe that people deserve a second chance," he says of his work at ILCM. During his tenure, the nonprofit expanded its mission to include public policy research and advocacy. Today the organization works with government officials, labor unions, and other organizations that support immigrants and refugees to advance immigration policies that meet the needs of local economies, while also respecting immigrants' human rights.

In 2013, ILCM was instrumental in passing the Minnesota Dream Act, which provides education benefits to undocumented students who meet certain requirements. The organization also provided assistance at the federal level to pass Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), a policy that offered undocumented residents who were brought to the U.S. as children work permits and temporary protection from deportation. (The Trump administration issued orders to rescind this program in 2017, but ongoing legal challenges have forced the government to postpone terminating it. The Supreme Court will hear the case in its next term.)

In 2013, Keller was also part of a team that launched the James H. Binger Center for New Americans at the University of Minnesota Law School. The Center was created in response to the unmet need for pro-bono legal services in Minnesota's immigrant and refugee communities.

"The work he did at ILCM speaks to the quality of the collaboration and the breadth of the advocacy John has always pursued," says Benjamin Casper Sanchez, director of the Center for New Americans at the U of M. "We would be much worse off, especially during this period, if ILCM hadn't been developed under his leadership."

Quiet and self-effacing, Keller doesn't seem to view his many accomplishments as anything to crow about. So, when he received a phone call in November 2018 from newly elected Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison (J.D. '90), Keller assumed Ellison wanted to discuss how the attorney general's office could network with ILCM.

In fact, Ellison was calling to ask Keller to be his second in command.

"It was his combination of experience, leadership, and values that made me know John Keller was the right fit for chief deputy attorney general," says Ellison. "First, John showed he knows how to grow a law firm, and I knew we needed to grow the Attorney General's Office after years of no growth. Second, John inspires confidence in people as a leader because he's organized, purposeful, clear about expectations, honors other people's strengths, and is steady and kind. Finally, I wanted someone with a track record of commitment to social and economic justice, and there's no one in Minnesota who's stood more consistently on the side of justice than John."

In addition to serving immigrants and refugees, Keller now advocates for every Minnesotan. "To work with a team of 130 attorneys is a dream for someone who wants to use the law for good," says Keller. "And I couldn't think of a better place to do that than working at an organization whose mission it is to defend the rights and opportunities for all of Minnesota." □

Stay connected.



ALUMN NEWS & EVENTS

DEAR MEMBERS,

As the new academic year begins, we are extremely excited about what lies ahead.

This summer, the University welcomed Joan T.A. Gabel as its 17th president. We look forward to her leadership and to supporting her plans for this institution.

I'd also like to offer our warmest wishes to new UMAA Board Chair Laura Moret (B.A. '76, M.B.A. '81) and our new and returning board members, as well as our deepest thanks to past Chair Doug Huebsch (B.S. '85) for his service.

On July 12, Laura, Doug, and I presented the annual UMAA Report to President Gabel and the Board of Regents. Here are some highlights:

This year the Alumni Association continued its 115-year history of “welding graduates into a single unit of influence,” as our original mission statement mandated. We do this by offering services we know are important to you, such as Career Services. Our first-ever Career Month took place in February and featured webinars, in-person speakers, and networking events across the globe. Thousands of alumni attended or viewed these events.

In addition, last year Alumni Association Day of Service events were held in 49 cities in 14 states, ranging from Florida to California to Michigan. Events also took place in several countries, including Japan, Scotland, and Saudi Arabia. We hope to see you at a 2019 Day of Service event on September 29! (At press time, confirmed locations include the Twin Cities, Denver, San Francisco, New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Las Vegas, Dallas, and Tokyo, with more to come!)

We know alumni care deeply about student success. Because of that, over the past year UMAA continued creating resources that elevate and advance student accomplishments. As one example, UMAA partnered with the University’s Office of Admissions to help recruit more international students. In addition, alumni volunteers generously supported students and represented the U in multiple ways, such as attending career fairs and writing letters to newly admitted students.

Alumni like you constantly advance and strengthen the University in so many ways. Your efforts and talents are deeply appreciated.



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WELCOME NEW UMAA CHAIR AND BOARD MEMBERS!

Alumna **Laura Moret** (B.A. '76, M.B.A. '81) has been elected chair of the UMAA board of directors for 2019-2020. She joined the board in 2014 and has served as the organization's treasurer and chair of the Finance and Audit Committee. She also received the University's Alumni Service Award in 2015, served on the Carlson School Alumni Board, and has served on the Carlson School Board of Overseers since 2017.

Moret is a managing director and associate general counsel for Piper Jaffray Companies, an NYSE-listed investment banking and asset management firm.

In addition to Moret, alumni joining the 2019-2020 UMAA board of directors are:

Michael Clausman (J.D. '02), Austin, MN, At-Large Director, completing 2018-2021 term
Nadia Hasan (B.A. '02, J.D. '06), Minnetonka, MN, Collegiate Council Director, completing 2017-2020 term

Roger Reinert (B.S. '93), Duluth, MN, Geographic Council Director, completing 2017-2020 term

Betsy Vohs (M. Arch. '04), Minneapolis, MN, Collegiate Council Director

Student Reps:

Joshua Clancy, president of Professional Student Government

Mina Kian, president of Minnesota Student Association



Why I'm a Member

Mary T. Johnson (B.S.N. '76) and her husband, Scott (B.A. '77, M.B.A. '81) have been members of the UMAA for more than 40 years, and Life Members for "nearly as long," Mary Johnson says. "I've been a member since at least the late 70s. And now I'm a lifetime member, and my husband is too. We're very proud members. Very proud!"

"I like everything about being a UMAA member—hearing about current students, hearing about alumni, hearing about professors. I love it," Mary says with a chuckle. "And we've received Minnesota Alumni for so many years and I've often shared stories from it with others. I really like keeping in touch with what's going on at the U. I wear my U of M t-shirts and sweatshirts all of the time. My license plate holder even says I'm a U of M alumna!"

The Johnsons, who live near Ann Arbor, Michigan, have four children, three of whom are also U alumni.

Mary earned her nursing degree from the U and Scott earned both an undergraduate degree in philosophy and German, and an M.B.A. from the Carlson School of Management. He also holds a Ph.D. from Michigan State. Mary says one of her daughters also earned her M.B.A. from CSOM, and even Scott's father received his doctorate from the U.

Mary says these strong ties make her whole family's interaction with their respective alma mater a close one, and that's why they choose to support the Alumni Association as members.

A SPECIAL WELCOME to our newest Life Members!*

By joining more than 19,800 loyal and enthusiastic UMAA life members, you are changing lives and creating possibilities for the U of M community, including students and recent graduates. Your membership accelerates careers, creates local and global connections, supports alumni-owned businesses, sparks learning, and so much more. Thank you.

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*Reflects April 16-July 10, 2019

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Little Gophers



Thomas B. Jones
(B.A. '64), a long-retired professor of history, attended University High School from 1956-1960.

Illustration by James Heimer

By Thomas Jones

Long ago, in a far corner of the University of Minnesota's East Bank campus, generations of youthful students participated in what was then known as the University High School.

The College of Education, which was awarded oversight of the school in 1908, chose it as a site to help in the training of student teachers—a mission the school-age student audience enjoyed exploiting with impish, sometimes perverse enthusiasm.

When asked to circle their desks for a class discussion, it was not unheard of for the UHS students to tightly press together to surround and entrap the aspiring instructor. Chalk and erasers also routinely went missing, much to the frustration of the student teachers.

By the 1950s, "U High" enrolled not just professors' offspring, but girls and boys from all over the Twin Cities and suburbs.

In an academic context, things seemed positive for all involved, especially the students. Most students posted excellent scores on precollege testing, only a few decided not to pursue college, and a daunting percentage enrolled at Ivy League schools and other high-profile institutions.

Despite small classes, up-to-date facilities and equipment, a wide-ranging, progressive curriculum, and classroom visits by renowned U professors—not to mention near full access to the University's facilities and campus events—the U High experience did have its drawbacks.

Among them were peevish glances and grumblings from University undergraduates at the Cooke Hall swimming pool, indigestible lunches at Shevlin Hall

cafeteria, and the long commutes to get to U High in the first place. Above all the nickname bestowed on the high school athletic teams cut deeply to the very soul of the student body: The Little Gophers.

Try going to away games at gymnasiums packed with jazzed, hostile crowds of young kids whooping it up with exposed buckteeth and high-pitched rodent squeals. A shriveling of school spirit and a team's *machismo* could be the only result.

Research and scholarship sponsored by the College of Education also meant students were asked to wield #2 pencils in service of the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) and the Torrance Tests of Creative Thinking, both of which were developed by researchers affiliated with the U. Year after year, a long list of puzzling and weird questions had to be answered: *True or False: I am very seldom bothered by constipation/ I would like to be a florist/ I have never been in trouble because of my sexual behavior.*

At a recent reunion, a classmate recalled that the Torrance Tests included an intentional, incomplete drawing of a dog. Her bewildered response? She drew an appropriate set of genitalia for the pooch. To this day, she wonders, "Why did I do that?"

Alas, answers to such questions were not then available. Even the 1968 merger of U High and nearby Marshall High School failed to shut the door on the MMPI and its artistic cousin.

On the bright side? The Little Gophers would become but a ... umm ... burrowed footnote. □



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A close-up photograph of a young woman with long brown hair, smiling broadly. She is wearing a dark blue textured blazer over a white collared shirt and a thin necklace. The background is blurred green foliage.

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