

BENNINGTON

A stylized, light green map of Bennington, Vermont, serves as the background. It features various street names such as "Jennings Meadow", "Orchard", "Paris-Borden", "Merck", "Fels", "Leigh", "Dewey", "Swan", "Wooley", "Canfield", "Stokes", "Franklin", "Sawtell", "Bingham", "Kilpatrick", "Welling", "Noyes", "COMMONS LAWN", and "END OF THE WORLD". Numbered markers in green and orange circles are scattered across the map, ranging from 2 to 18. The word "BENNINGTON" is printed in large, white, sans-serif capital letters at the top.

winter
2017-18

IN & ABOUT TOWN

THE COMEBACK BLOCK
ALUMNI ENTREPRENEURS ON MAIN STREET
THE ECONOMIC IMPACT
BENNINGTON'S ART SCENE
FOR GOOD: STUDENTS GET TO WORK
DOWNTOWN ASSIGNMENTS

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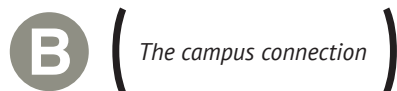
THE 25 BEST COLLEGE TOWNS IN AMERICA

#15 BENNINGTON

“Tucked into the southwest corner of Vermont, Bennington offers an exceptional college experience for those who want a small-town atmosphere. The downtown is walkable, and there is a vibrant arts and culture scene. There are green spaces for hiking, biking, swimming and skiing. The Green Mountain and Finger Lakes National Forests are nearby as well. Like its community namesake, Bennington College is small and unique. The school has a strong focus on the arts but also requires all students to complete an internship to ensure they have real-world work experience prior to graduation. Bennington ranks 12th for entertainment and very highly for the percentage of adults older than age 25 who have a bachelor’s degree. The city also ranks in the top 10 percent for its median rent as compared to the median income in the area. That means it offers an affordable option for those who want to live in New England but are hoping to avoid sky-high rents.”

“To find the best college towns, we analyzed data from 170 communities with populations of fewer than 150,000 residents. At that size, cities are big enough to offer plenty of amenities but small enough that students don’t get lost in the crowd. We looked at factors that are important to college students right now—such as entertainment options and the number of young adults living in the community—as well as those things that may be important later, like the unemployment rate and median cost to rent.”

—Schools.com



Coffee at the Brown Cow Café (run by alumna **Amy Blomquist Buckley '83**—for more, see page 12). The exhibitions at MASS MoCA (especially when they include the work of Bennington faculty members, like **Mary Lum's** *Assembly (Lorem Ipsum)*—see page 27). The Bennington Farmers' Market. The trails between the Frost House and Lake Paran. These are just a few of the things that have become staples in my and my family's life.

Having lived in New York City, Bangkok, Phoenix, Los Angeles, and DC, friends always ask me how we've settled into life in Vermont. Then they come to visit, and they want to move here too. They find what I found, of course, richness beyond my imagining—surrounded by green spaces instead of Beltway traffic.

Every year, we build an incoming class of students, most of whom visit for a day or maybe two before deciding to spend four years here. (Some, as you'll see in this issue, stay much longer.) We attract top-level faculty through national searches; they look at the job and the work, but also at the place they will be making a life.

The College's connections to the town, are, of course, in our DNA. Town leaders were among our founders; support from members of the local community was instrumental in getting the College off the ground.

Nurturing the relationships between Bennington College, the Town of Bennington, and the Village of North Bennington is a priority of mine. I've been thrilled to see—thanks to the creativity and hard work of the faculty, students, staff, and their off-campus partners—those ties deepening and expanding.

Bennington was also founded to be at the cutting edge of higher education. One aspect of this vision has always been that Bennington would more fully recognize the learning that happens outside the classroom, including through volunteer and paid work within our local community. These can be valuable aspects of students' education.

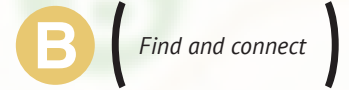
But this is a symbiotic relationship. When the region was rocked by the discovery of the chemical PFOA in local wells, the College brought its full resources—intellectual and more—to bear to help respond to the situation, as you'll read. We are thrilled to join other local institutions in partnership on the Putnam project to revitalize downtown. The College also hosts hundreds of talks, readings and performances—all free and open to the public.

This issue reflects only a small sampling of the impacts the College has had on the town, and vice versa. I encourage you to ask around, learn more, create more, and come see for yourself.

I'll see you at the farmers' market.

Sincerely,

Mariko Silver
President



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BENNINGTON ALUMNI APP

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- Make professional connections
- Search for other alums using the Alumni Directory
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or log in with your LinkedIn account.





WINTER
2017/18

A rendering of live/work building on the corner of Valentine and Main Street in Bennington by **Jesse Gates '16**. Gates conceptualized the building as part of Donald Sherefkin's course, "Three Houses, Three Sites."

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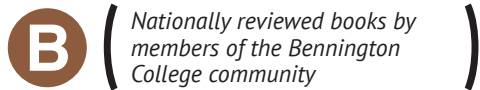
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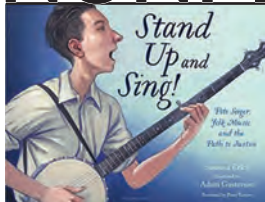
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BENNINGTON



NONFICTION



Susanna Reich '75
Stand Up and Sing!:
Pete Seeger, Folk Music, and the Path to Justice
 Bloomsbury USA Children's Books (March 2017)

“The ‘We Shall Overcome’ songwriter’s legacy spans decades, and this will surely help a new generation understand his fervor and still-relevant message.”

—Booklist



Janet Capron '69
Blue Money
 The Unnamed Press (June 2017)

“A bracing personal narrative set against the backdrop of a simpler New York.”

—The National Book Review



Introduction by **Dr. Ava Heyman Sieglar '59**
How Do I Explain This to My Kids:
Parenting in the Age of Trump
 The New Press (July 2017)

“An overriding debate in this collection is over how forthright to be with children about the president’s proclivities and prejudices.”

—The Washington Post



Andrea Jarrell MFA '01
I'm the One Who Got Away
 She Writes Press (September 2017)

“...one of the most buzzed-about books of fall... [a] brave and vulnerable memoir—the author’s first—that touches on themes of family, love and survival.”

—Today Show

TO SCREEN



Mirka Prazak, faculty member
Making the Mark
 Ohio University Press (August 2016)

“*Making the Mark* provides a richly detailed grass-roots perspective of the procedure (and of male circumcision) among the Kuria people in southern Kenya”

—The Washington Post



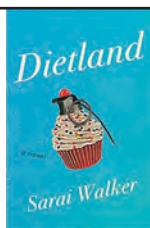
Jeffrey Haas MFA '07
The Assassination of Fred Hampton
 Chicago Review Press (November 2009)

The Assassination of Fred Hampton by Jeffrey Haas MFA '07 is being developed into a movie directed by Antoine Fuqua (*Training Day*, *The Equalizer*, *The Magnificent Seven*).

Jill Eisenstadt '85
Swell
Lee Boudreaux Books (June 2017)

“Rockaway
Beach is
granted the
sort of soulful
reflection that
knocks you
flat...”

—*New York Times Book Review*



Sarai Walker MFA '03
Dietland
Houghton Mifflin Harcourt
(May 2015)

AMC has greenlit 10
episodes of *Dietland*—
adapted from the 2015
novel by Sarai Walker
MFA '03—to be written

and produced by Marti Noxon (*Mad Men*,
UnREAL, *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*).

The Bennington Bookshelf includes work that has been published within the calendar year and that has been reviewed by national publications. To submit a book to Bookshelf, email magazine@bennington.edu with your name, class year or affiliation to the College, title of your book, and a link to a national review. You may also mail the books directly to the attention of Briece Della Rocca:

Bennington College
One College Drive
Bennington, Vermont 05201





*Alumni making a life and running a business
in and around Bennington by Heather DiLeo*

T(OWN)

Bennington College alumni can be found throughout the area, working in schools and businesses, but some work outside of posted positions—opening some of the town’s most recognized businesses. We spoke with them about why they chose entrepreneurship in Bennington.

Bennington Potters began as Cooperative Design, the studio of the late David Gil and first wife **Gloria Goldfarb '52**, and two others, in 1948. Goldfarb Gil and Gil, who took pottery classes in high school through the WPA and demoed working the wheel at 17 at the 1939 New York World’s Fair, started the business by buying an unheated barn in Bennington with savings from his wartime merchant marine service.

In the 50s and 60s, Gil won awards, exhibited internationally, and his tableware designs were distributed under the influential mid-century-modern Raymor mark.

Sheela Harden '69 partnered with Gil in the late 70s, first by taking over the Potters Yard Brasserie. The two later married and today Harden is president and CEO of the company.

She explains that Gil was inspired both by the Bauhaus movement in Europe in the 1910s and 20s and by the idea that beautiful designs could be replicated by machine, “so they could be available to anybody and everybody at a price people could afford.” By having his own factory, Gil understood, “people could have really good design as part of their everyday life without needing to be rich.” Gil’s owner-operated pottery was unusual, Harden says. “The designer started it, ran it, and the design ethos runs through the whole company.”

Visitors to Bennington Potters, which relocated in the 1970s to a former grain mill Harden playfully calls the “grist mill,” can watch, for instance, how a trigger mug is made step by step. “You’ll see how we’re using the machines that we’ve tailored to do what we want them to do. Or alternatively, it’s a conversation between designer and machine, and how you optimize that.”

Because the Potters has been in operation for nearly 70 years, its pieces are not only collectible but part of people’s lives over generations. “I just was over at the hospital and the person who was signing me in said, ‘you know I have a creamer and a pitcher that I got for my wedding 38 years ago and I’m still using them and I still love them. And I was there last month buying plates,’” Harden says. “That’s a longtime customer.”

The Potters’ huge array of home furnishings, tabletop items, and gifts changes constantly, making it a place for design inspiration as well as resource for things for the home.

“Bennington has proven to be a wonderful location for the Potters,” Harden says, “partly because it’s close to New York City and Boston and because lots of people come through the town. But more than that, Bennington works well for entrepreneurs.”

“If I were speaking to somebody who wanted to start a business, especially somebody who wanted to be an owner-operated business as we are, Bennington is extraordinary in the way that it’s open and accessible,” Harden says, emphasizing her access to and support from members of state and local government and other business owners.

“Newcomers to Bennington can quickly become an integral part of the community because we really have skin in the game as independent business owners,” says Harden. “We’re alert to how our community is doing and committed to always making it better. We recognize that change and growth is life and it is really essential.”

A woman with short grey hair, wearing a bright red button-down shirt over a black top, is smiling broadly. She is standing in a pottery shop. In the background, there are shelves filled with various pottery items, including bowls and vases. To the right, a glass display case contains several ornate crystal glasses. The lighting is warm and indoor.

BENNINGTON POTTERS

Bennington Potters CEO, Sheela Harden '69 inside the Bennington Potters shop



FIDDLEHEAD AT FOUR CORNERS

Nina Hardt Lentzner '91 and Joel Lentzner '91 opened contemporary craft and fine art gallery Fiddlehead "the last day before Y2K" in the grand neo-classical marble building that housed their bank when they were Bennington students. Seventeen years later, Fiddlehead was named 2017's Best Craft Gallery in Vermont by *Yankee Magazine* editors. Neither artist Nina nor Joel, then a teacher, had plans to open a gallery.

"It just evolved from the turns our lives had taken," Joel says. "We happened to live next door to a well-known marble sculptor and he got us into doing craft shows."

The two sold Nina's hand-painted

furniture at shows around the country. Over time, they decided that instead of traveling 25 weeks a year, they'd find a space where they could show not only Nina's work but the work of the amazing artists they'd discovered on their travels.

"We met a whole crew of artists we wanted to invite back and represent in this area," says Nina.

With artisanal glassware, ceramics, jewelry, sculpture, paintings, and fiber works, Fiddlehead is a tantalizing mash-up of things handmade.

"We really like the blurring of the line between fine art and fine craft," says Joel. "You'll see a \$3,000 marble sculpture displayed next to a \$23 glass

tumbler because they have an aesthetic relationship rather than a pricing relationship or a relationship of mediums."

Because Nina and Joel want the gallery to provide experiences that aren't about shopping, they covered the walls of the bank's main vault with chalkboards where visitors express themselves with drawings and in writing, and installed a vintage pinball machine and a 1932 Story & Clark baby grand piano. They host openings, as well as listening parties, and offer children's and adult art classes.

"We try to involve people in different ways so it's not just about buying and selling of merchandise but about the whole experience."

Originally from Whittier, California, “the birthplace of lowrider trucks and Richard Nixon,” **Bill Scully '94** knew as a freshman he wanted to settle in Bennington. “The town is well suited for a Bennington College mindset,” he says. “You have to have vision and you have to be a self-starter here because most things aren’t obvious.”

In 2002, Bill and his wife Maria opened their first restaurant, Pangaea. They also took over Powers Market in the village of North Bennington (later selling it) and later opened Allegro restaurant in Bennington, before also selling that establishment to focus on a new business.

The original idea for Pangaea was novel—bring the world (and international cuisine) to North Bennington in a restaurant where people could have great conversations.

“We were told we couldn’t do international cuisine, that fine dining would never work,” Scully says. “But what everybody else thought was impossible we saw as an opportunity.”

Pangaea’s formal, contemporary American-leaning French menu was successful from the start, attracting loyal patrons and dedicated staff. Scully opened The Lounge, Pangaea’s casual next-door neighbor, one year later and



has expanded it several times to meet demand.

He plans for co-owners Nick Disorda and **Lani DePonte-Disorda '11** to take things over at some point, wanting the restaurants to “remain in the Bennington [College] family.”

In a move that would be very unexpected for any other restaurateur and chef, over the last decade Scully has turned his attention to hydroelectric

power. He and his wife Maria bought and cleaned up the abandoned Vermont Tissue Mill on the Walloomsac River in Bennington, rebuilding and refitting the paper mill dam constructed in 1784.

“Hydro is the oldest technology: the state was founded on it,” he says. “Still, by the time we got the plan going only one other plant (six months prior) had come back on-line in 35 years. Although it seemed obvious, it wasn’t to everyone, so it took eight years to get it done.”

PANGAEA & CARBON ZERO



The new hydroelectric station produces 1.45 gigawatt hours per year, the equivalent of powering roughly 114 homes. It is enough to supply power to CAPA, Pangaea, and the surrounding area. This has helped to avoid the release of 658 tons of carbon dioxide a year into the atmosphere. Scully began another hydroelectric site in Pownal with several more opening throughout Vermont. With his range of interests, from food to sustainable fuel sources, Scully’s future is one to watch.

BROWN COW CAFÉ

What Amy Blomquist Buckley '83 started as a "niche" place to go for great coffee and homemade food in 2012 quickly blossomed into what many locals—and tourists—consider an essential Bennington hangout spot. At a smattering of outdoor tables or in the cozy leather chairs of its large main room, Café-goers can enjoy maple walnut oat toast with almond butter and banana slices drizzled with local organic honey for breakfast. Or roasted farm-stand veggies on a baguette with pesto goat cheese and balsamic reduction for lunch. Thanks to Buckley's relationship with the Vermont Arts Exchange, the Café offers a "kind of gallery space."

Buckley, who worked as an artist and for an architect before opening Brown Cow, wanted "fresh, healthy, yummy food—nothing complicated and nothing fried" and knew others did, too. "I always had a garden. I baked from scratch with my kids. There was no place to go and eat in town so I decided I would fill that niche."

A friend warned Buckley that it would be a lot easier to hang out in cafes than run one, which proved to be all too true. "The first year I was working sixteen hours a day and people would ask if I was having fun. I had a hard time answering yes," she says.

Although she claims to be taking a step back, Buckley shops daily, getting produce and products from local purveyors whenever possible. "People come to us," she says, "when they have excess. Right now Clear Brook [Farms, an organic grower in Shaftsbury] is dropping off tomatoes."

Five years on, Buckley appreciates what she's accomplished. "It wasn't my intention to become a wildly popular hotspot that we can barely keep up with but that's kind of what happened," she says.

On top of having a successful business, she says, "I'm so much more connected to the community and have made good friends and good contacts." **B**

B

A brief look at the College's economic and cultural impact on the Bennington region

\$2.1 BILLION

PRIVATE COLLEGE CONTRIBUTIONS TO VERMONT'S ECONOMY EACH YEAR

—The Association of Vermont Independent Colleges

the economic impact

237

TOTAL NUMBER OF COLLEGE EMPLOYEES LIVING IN VERMONT

202

FULL-TIME STAFF

103

UNDERGRADUATE FACULTY

29

PART-TIME STAFF

6th

LARGEST EMPLOYER IN BENNINGTON COUNTY

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

\$23+ MILLION

TOTAL PAYROLL/ BENEFITS EXPENDITURES (7/16–6/17)

35%

OF THE COLLEGE'S FOOD IS SOURCED FROM LOCAL PRODUCERS

\$8.9 MILLION

PAID TO VERMONT VENDORS (7/16–6/17)

TOTAL INSTITUTIONAL ECONOMIC IMPACT

\$32 MILLION

BENNINGTON COLLEGE

Total of Vermont vendor spending and payroll expenditures

B

The collaborative approach to revitalizing and redeveloping Bennington's downtown by Heather DiLeo

THE COME BACK BLOCK

Labor Day 1979 was the last truly hot day of a difficult summer marked by gas shortages, inflation, and high unemployment—the summer when President Carter named Americans' loss of faith in the future a crisis of confidence. That Monday, "My Sharona" was number one on the radio and Hurricane David was churning toward South Florida.

Ted Bird—immediate past president of the Bennington Chamber of Commerce, the Vermont Retail Association, and the local Rotary Club, loaded his Mazda GLC wagon and drove south from Bennington a defeated man. "It was over," he says, "pretty much the worst day of my life."

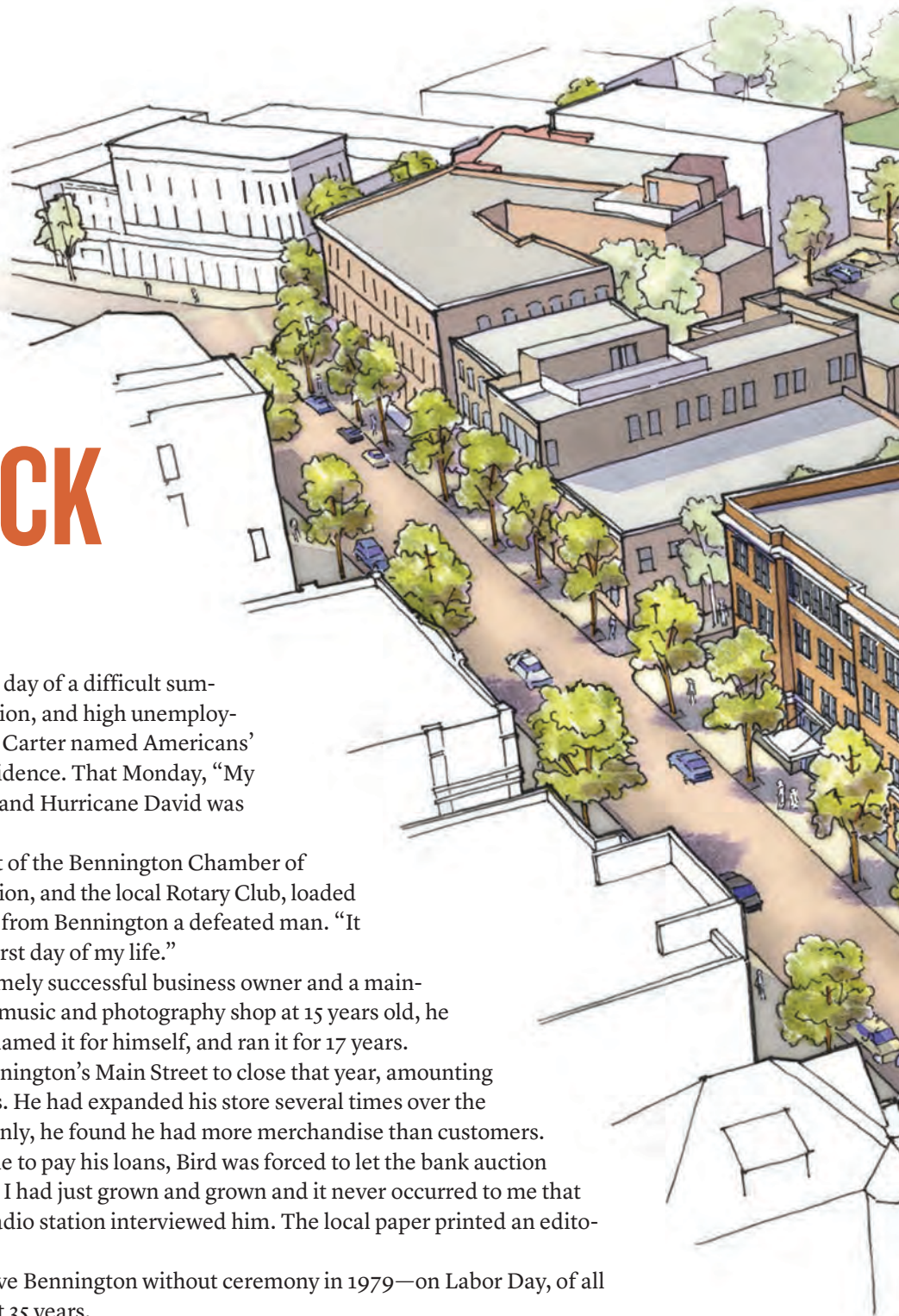
Bird was by every measure an extremely successful business owner and a mainstay of Main Street. A clerk at Noveck's music and photography shop at 15 years old, he bought the business in his early 20s, renamed it for himself, and ran it for 17 years.

Bird's was one of nine stores on Bennington's Main Street to close that year, amounting to roughly 25% of downtown businesses. He had expanded his store several times over the years to meet customer demand. Suddenly, he found he had more merchandise than customers. The town was no longer growing. Unable to pay his loans, Bird was forced to let the bank auction off his stock. "I was a born optimist and I had just grown and grown and it never occurred to me that that growth would stop," he says. The radio station interviewed him. The local paper printed an editorial on the trouble with downtown.

Some of what compelled Bird to leave Bennington without ceremony in 1979—on Labor Day, of all days—didn't change much over the next 35 years.

Today Bennington College, Southern Vermont College (SVC), Southern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC), the Bank of Bennington, and smaller businesses and residents have joined forces to fundamentally address the town's vitality and sustainability, issues that have preoccupied Bennington for decades.

These local leaders, together with town planners, have developed the Putnam Block Project, which entirely reimagines four acres in the heart of downtown Bennington—offering market-rate housing and new retail, office, and gallery spaces. The Putnam Block, a 205,000-square-foot development that includes the august Putnam Hotel and





Reimagining downtown Bennington's Main and South Streets. Plans include mixed-use residential and commercial buildings. Drawing provided by Bennington County Regional Commission



With mixed-use housing and commercial spaces, regional planners and business leaders expect to drive multigenerational groups' living, working, and shopping in town.

now retired Greenberg hardware and building supply, intends to attract new dwellers and businesses, and to encourage greater integration of the colleges and the town.

LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

Like cities and towns across the country, Bennington has suffered from the gradual disappearance of manufacturing jobs. Known in the 19th and early 20th century for textiles and paper, its mills employed hundreds of employees per shift and up to three shifts a day.

Eventually, Bennington area mills evolved to make things like tools, gift wrap, and batteries. But in the

1980s and 90s businesses continued to leave; several of the largest left the area, including Stanley Tools in Shaftsbury, Benmont Paper in Bennington, and Johnson Controls (formerly Globe-Union). They moved for various reasons, including the cost of remediating environmental issues.

So began a vicious circle. Fewer jobs discouraged some working-age folks from putting down roots. Fewer workers and customers made the area less attractive for businesses. Each trend aggravated the other. Over time, both Bennington County and the Southwestern Vermont region as a whole have steadily aged.

Through these vicissitudes, area colleges have remained a constant.

Colleges benefit communities in economic terms because they're immobile and uncommonly stable enterprises. Unlike for-profit businesses, higher ed institutions don't relocate and often weather business down cycles. Indeed, just last year alone, private colleges contributed \$2.1 billion to the Vermont state economy.

"Colleges and universities are essential economic and community anchors, particularly in small towns," Bennington College President **Mariko Silver** says. Since joining Bennington four years ago, she has engaged area leaders and the Bennington campus on community engagement matters, aware that stu-



dents and staff want to be meaningfully involved in the places that they live.

“The role that institutions of higher ed play in engaging with the community shapes not just the growth trajectory but also the ongoing community development of the places where they’re located. The students coming in today want to be engaged in their communities and that includes while they’re in college. They participate in community events and community organizations and their lives are changed by it. We should make the most of that from both sides of the equation. The more we can engage directly with the concerns and interests and ideas of the

community and the more there can be a back and forth, the better.”

Southern Vermont College president David Evans agrees. His institution is situated just less than two miles from downtown Bennington, and his students also converge in the town for jobs and internships, participate in volunteer days and power charity drives as well, some even start businesses downtown. But Evans cites what other leaders in his position also point to: that students want to do more than contribute and work downtown, they want to consume locally as well.

“Our students want an engaging community to be involved in and diverse places to eat and access to amenities,” he says.

Student surveys over the years have also shared as much, many resulting in a common issue: affordable rentals, vibrant downtown nightlife, and reliable public transportation. And until recently, those calls have been more difficult to address.

THE TOWN/GOWN EXCHANGE

Despite the advantages colleges provide communities and vice versa, the “town and gown” relationship is not always an easy one.

Janet Lillie is President of the International Town and Gown Association (ITGA), an information resource and meeting point for institutions of higher learning and their communities. She also works as assistant vice president for community relations at Michigan State University. MSU and East Lansing, Michigan were among the ITGA’s first members.

Initially, Lillie says, many of the conversations the ITGA facilitated between colleges and towns all over the country were motivated by friction between local residents and students. These town-gown discussions were likely to be focused on student behavior and off campus housing, particularly at larger institutions,

and their impact on the community.

Lillie cites a typical example of the kinds of public safety issues the ITGA helped mediate at its founding: “There was a decade where students across the country were going crazy celebrating a sports season loss or victory.”

“ Unlike for-profit businesses, higher-ed institutions don’t relocate and often weather business down cycles. Indeed, just last year alone, private colleges contributed \$2.1 billion to the state economy.”

Today, the ITGA is increasingly focused on hosting proactive conversations between colleges and communities about their mutual thriving—something she sees in Bennington.

“What impresses me about Bennington is the high level of entrepreneurship,” Lillie says. “I see the inverse issue [of addressing unwelcome student impact on a community at Bennington].” Instead of mediating unwelcomed behavior by college students or townspeople, at Bennington, “It’s about economic development.”

“Colleges and universities are essential economic and community anchors, particularly in small towns,” Bennington College President Mariko Silver says.

According to Lillie, economic development is the distinct opportunity colleges and towns can focus their efforts. When it comes to economic development, schools of every size, she says, face similar issues. “The region I’m from is much, much bigger than Bennington but we’re not growing as much as we should. We’re graduating several thousand students a year and asking ourselves what can we do to make this region more attractive so they stay?”

These are some of the same issues Bennington’s local business and education leaders began talking about several years ago: how to revitalize downtown and balance the needs of its various constituencies.

Colleges in town are not the only institutions with a reason to want to engage in community planning. Southwestern Vermont Medical Center (SVMC)—the town’s top employer—faces similar challenges when it comes to recruiting and retaining highly educated medical professionals to the area.

“We’re in a very competitive market in terms of talent. We need to make sure not only that we’re performing well as an organization and that we have the right opportunities but that we have reasons that people will want to come here,” SVMC CEO Tom Dee explains.

Dee points out that professionals who relocate to the area do so for a better quality of life, but can later find friction when it comes to finding affordable and updated rental hous-

ing, access to common retail goods, regular public transportation, and an active downtown nightlife.

“You have to be able to live and work in an area that meets your needs,” Dee says. “Having to leave for services in Albany does not work in the long haul. We have to be able to become a self-sustaining community that has a high quality of life and that attracts people. That means having a downtown area that people live in and one that stays open after dark.”

A REVITALIZED DOWNTOWN

In 2015, the Town hired the Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC) to devise a downtown-area-wide revitalization plan, taking into account Brownfields—a term used to describe land previously used for industrial or commercial purposes with known or suspected pollution including soil contamination due to hazardous waste. Brownfields represent a particular development challenge for urban and town planners, including in Bennington where virtually every property in a historic downtown falls in that category.

BCRC director Jim Sullivan and assistant director Bill Colvin completed the public planning process, which included substantial public input, in January of 2016, generating conceptual redevelopment scenarios, a market study, and an analysis of existing conditions downtown. Together they met with local leaders to discuss strategies that would move the needle on the local economy.

Colvin and Sullivan had to solve a difficult puzzle: identifying the features of a viable, sustainable community and fitting them together in a way that works for everyone. They envision “a place where folks can walk to get their food, walk to dinner, and get their basic services without having to get in a car,” says Colvin.

Around the same time, The Bennington Redevelopment Group LLC formed. The group—which includes the Bank of Bennington, Southwestern Vermont Health Care, Bennington College, and Southern Vermont College, as well as several prominent local business leaders—was also weighing how to revitalize downtown and balance the needs of its various constituencies. Like many efforts in Bennington, two different groups were working in parallel course towards a similar goal when a rare opportunity presented itself in the form of the Greenberg properties, approximately four acres primely located in the heart of downtown that includes the Putnam Hotel, the Old Courthouse/Pennysaver office, the Winslow Building, Oldcastle Theatre, H. Greenberg and Son Hardware, and the Mobil station. Now with a vision that meets many of the needs expressed by the stakeholders and citizens, the group has helped to engine the project with actual downtown investment.

“Our group first met about a year ago,” said Jim Brown, CEO of Bank of Bennington, “We had a common understanding that Bennington was struggling and something needed to be done to change that. We also had a belief that private investors would have to lead that with a civic mindset in order for it to be successful. We recognized that the Putnam Block and its redevelopment was the transformative project that needed to happen in Bennington to change the momentum.”

Not only was there a chance to invest collectively in a significant portion of downtown with the sale of the Greenberg properties, it was a chance to begin to operate these connected and highly visible locations with a similar set of leaders. “Having four acres on the market in the heart of a downtown in ostensibly single ownership is a unique opportunity,” Colvin says. “It didn’t take me very long to convince the group that maybe making a run at redeveloping the Putnam block would be the way to go. We’d be hard pressed to find something that would be more significant both psychologically and in very real financial terms.”

Work on the second phase is planned to begin in early 2019. Once started, the block will constitute slightly less than half the entire 205,000-square-foot redevelopment project and will commence the first phase of the project which will include approximately 26,000 square feet of retail/restaurant and 7,000 square feet of office, along with five two-bedroom apartments and 24 one-bedroom apartments.

Work on a second project phase is planned to begin next fall, with the site expected to include six downtown structures on four acres, also including a former hardware store and lumber yard, a gas station/convenience store and a large parking lot—all located to the west of the former hotel and bordering on Washington Avenue.

Anticipating that new residents will work and shop and eat locally, Colvin and Sullivan have also developed more office space and commercial storefronts. They’ve been working to attract employers, restaurateurs, a grocer, and other businesses to complete the picture. The most difficult task, Colvin says, is to bring in brick and mortar retail: “That’s kind of the last piece to fill in. In the world of Amazon, retail anywhere is challenging but particularly in rural communities.”

THE COME BACK

Bennington College has already relocated its Institutional Advancement office across the street from the Putnam Hotel this summer, and also has plans to locate future faculty housing in town in the coming year. Southern Vermont College is exploring moving its nursing and radiologic services program to downtown facilities as well. SVMC is also considering adding a satellite location to the area. Between the three major employer groups, and the young, highly educated people these groups attract, the institutions are helping to bring the very people that the town (and state on the whole) have lost in the commonly referred to “brain drain.” While Bennington College, SVC, and

“It is the most important thing to happen in downtown Bennington in its history.”

SVMC primarily serve the highly educated, young, and middle aged, their investment and vision has inspired private investments from individuals and groups catering to retirees.

Tony and Jackie Marro, also members of the Bennington Redevelopment Group, were among the first to invest in the Putnam Block. They grew up in the area and went on to great things—Jackie as a fashion designer and Tony as a Pulitzer-Prize-winning journalist. As aspiring young people they felt they had to leave, not because they were unhappy with Vermont but because of

their work. In retirement, the Marros chose Bennington mainly because of family but also because the town suits them well.

“When we discuss this with people our age, they’re all very intrigued with the idea of having culture so close and so easy. Vermont rates really high on places to retire—it’s a very healthy state. You have a hospital that’s only one mile away. For those who want to stretch out, Williamstown is only 14 miles away. MASS MoCA is there and Saratoga is only 45 miles to the west.”

Ted Bird also returned to Bennington in the late 90s, a clear-eyed commercial realtor and local historian. Bird sees the Putnam project as a watershed: “It is the most important thing to happen in downtown Bennington in its history—more important than building the Opera House, more important than building the Hotel in the 1870s.”

Largely seen as one of the most significant developments in the town’s history, and with real investments brought to bear on the vision of a revitalized downtown, the project has generated major momentum that has driven support from state officials.

In August, the project earned a \$1 million dollar grant from the state of Vermont. Governor Phil Scott came to town to praise the project, surrounded by an enthusiastic crowd and the project’s key partners. In his remarks, he lauded the Putnam Block’s job creation potential, its promise to provide much needed housing, and thoughtful downtown renewal. But, like many others, the most celebrated aspect was the unprecedented collaboration between colleges, civic boards, private investors, and regional groups. “This is truly a joint effort that we’re here to celebrate today,” Governor Scott said. “It shows what we can achieve when we work together and all pull in the same direction.” **B**

TUNE-IN

Listen to first person accounts of life in Vermont from the perspective of migrant workers; what motivates students to come into GANAS; and learn how one faculty member has helped support the work inside and outside of the classroom.

bennington.edu/news-and-features/ganas



B*(A student-led community partnership that weaves advocacy, activism, academics, and community partnership to make a safer, less isolated environment for Vermont's 3,000 undocumented migrant workers)*

GANAS

(a Spanish word meaning motivation to act)

Approximately 3,000 undocumented immigrants support Vermont's dairy industry. Most work in constant fear of deportation and racial profiling.

Recognizing this fear and isolation, several Bennington College students formed GANAS in 2014. Since then the program has grown to include approximately 40 students. Informed and supported by faculty member **Jonathan Pitcher** and the College's Elizabeth Coleman Center for the Advancement of Public Action—GANAS brings together students, migrant workers, and organizations focused on promoting healthcare, human rights, and education for the undocumented workforce that supports Vermont's dairy industry.

In partnership with the Vermont Migrant Education Program, the Bennington Free Clinic, and Legal Resistance Alliance, today GANAS provides informative programming.

Their evolving work has been documented in video and audio storytelling formats, digital features that are produced, edited and broadcast by students active in the GANAS community.



Bennington's cultural collaborations create a hotbed for arts in the community by Heather DiLeo

Fort Edward

197

Goose Island

Argyle

Cossayuna

40

29

Greenwich

372

Cambridge

Center
Cambridge

Eagle Bridge

Hoo

7

Grafton

2

Taconic Lake

the ART SCENE

SITUATED BETWEEN TWO OTHER MAJOR CULTURAL HUBS—the Berkshires and New York's Capital Region—Bennington has often been defined by its neighbors and less often by its own creative pull. In 2017 that changed when the National Center for the Arts ranked Bennington the third most vibrant arts community in the U.S. for its size.

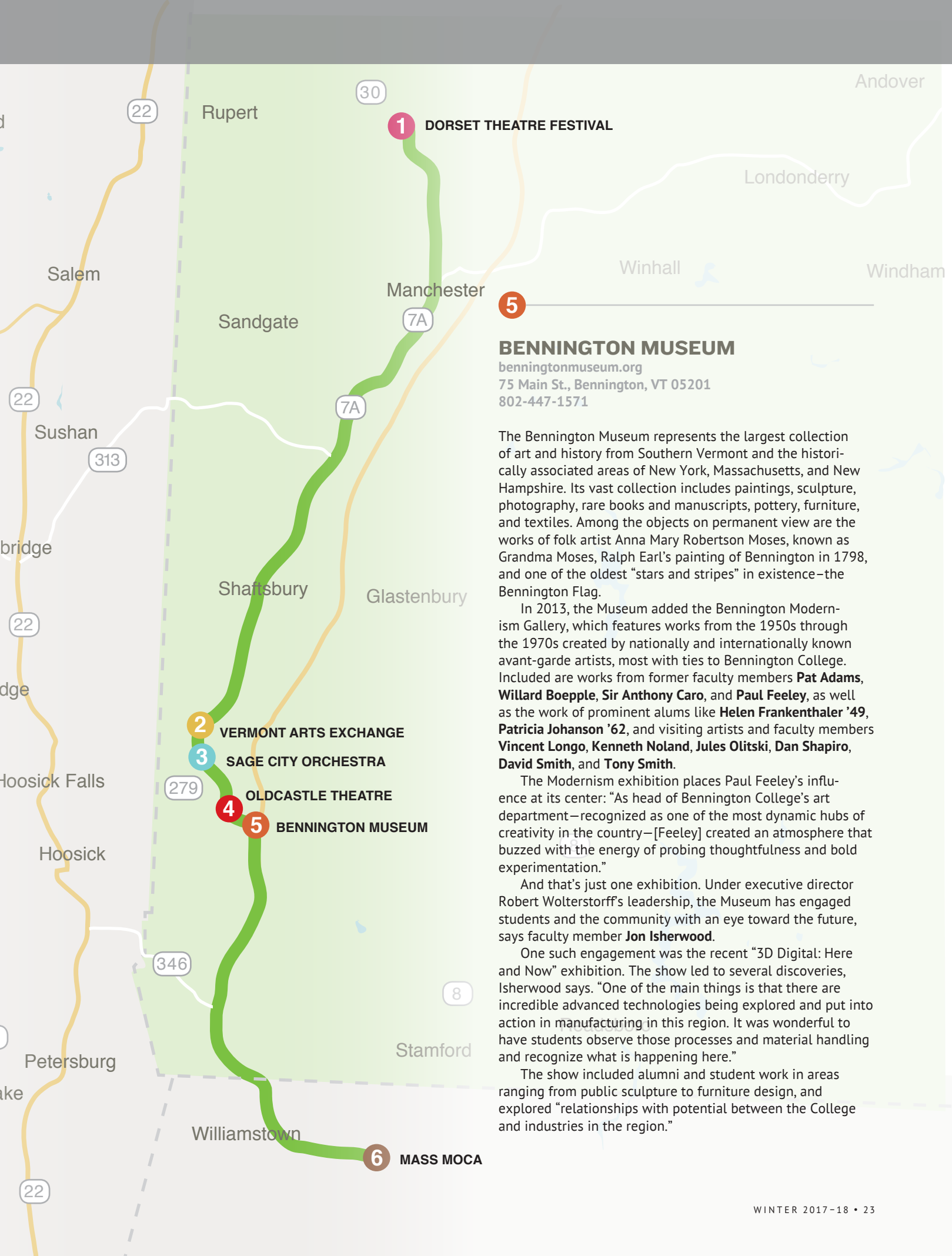
Bennington's artistic vitality owes considerably to the way area arts organizations share objects from their respective collections, synchronize shows, and think about how their programming can complement one another's. Then, there's the symbiotic relationship these organizations have with the College.

When you pair College faculty and student artists, the start and stop of these collaborations between institutions can be difficult to distinguish. Members of the College community curate for, perform, exhibit, volunteer, and intern with nearly all of the cultural organizations in the area. The history of specific College-institutional collaborations would fill several volumes. Underlying all of them is a common vision of the vital role the arts play in the community.

Anne Thompson, inaugural director and curator of Bennington College's Suzanne Lumberg Usdan Gallery, came to Bennington drawn to the local/campus permeability. She sees her role as curator inside and outside of the Usdan Gallery—one that will build on the myriad of developing partnerships with arts organizations locally, regionally, and globally.

"Bennington has a rich history and stunning landscape," Thompson says. "I'm talking with a lot of people, looking at campus, looking at the region, seeing what opportunities there are to work in a context-specific way here in Vermont. The College's history of innovation lends itself really well to thinking in an experimental way about how art gets exhibited on and off campus and in collaboration with institutions in the region and around the country," she says.

While the area is saturated with a growing art scene, here are some of the current cultural exchanges between arts organizations and the Bennington College community.



1 DORSET THEATRE FESTIVAL

5

BENNINGTON MUSEUM

benningtonmuseum.org

75 Main St., Bennington, VT 05201

802-447-1571

The Bennington Museum represents the largest collection of art and history from Southern Vermont and the historically associated areas of New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Its vast collection includes paintings, sculpture, photography, rare books and manuscripts, pottery, furniture, and textiles. Among the objects on permanent view are the works of folk artist Anna Mary Robertson Moses, known as Grandma Moses, Ralph Earl's painting of Bennington in 1798, and one of the oldest "stars and stripes" in existence—the Bennington Flag.

In 2013, the Museum added the Bennington Modernism Gallery, which features works from the 1950s through the 1970s created by nationally and internationally known avant-garde artists, most with ties to Bennington College. Included are works from former faculty members **Pat Adams**, **Willard Boepple**, **Sir Anthony Caro**, and **Paul Feeley**, as well as the work of prominent alums like **Helen Frankenthaler '49**, **Patricia Johanson '62**, and visiting artists and faculty members **Vincent Longo**, **Kenneth Noland**, **Jules Olitski**, **Dan Shapiro**, **David Smith**, and **Tony Smith**.

The Modernism exhibition places Paul Feeley's influence at its center: "As head of Bennington College's art department—recognized as one of the most dynamic hubs of creativity in the country—[Feeley] created an atmosphere that buzzed with the energy of probing thoughtfulness and bold experimentation."

And that's just one exhibition. Under executive director Robert Wolterstorff's leadership, the Museum has engaged students and the community with an eye toward the future, says faculty member **Jon Isherwood**.

One such engagement was the recent "3D Digital: Here and Now" exhibition. The show led to several discoveries, Isherwood says. "One of the main things is that there are incredible advanced technologies being explored and put into action in manufacturing in this region. It was wonderful to have students observe those processes and material handling and recognize what is happening here."

The show included alumni and student work in areas ranging from public sculpture to furniture design, and explored "relationships with potential between the College and industries in the region."

6 MASS MOCA



Inside the Bennington Modernism exhibition, featuring the work of many prominent college alumni and former faculty members, at the Bennington Museum.

3

SAGE CITY SYMPHONY

sagecitysymphony.org
802-447-2149

Community orchestra Sage City Symphony plays the traditional repertoire and contemporary music, and also commissions and premieres new pieces each season. Founded in 1972 as a “community/college orchestra with close ties to Bennington College,” Sage presents ambitious programs that offer challenging playing opportunities for musicians and rewarding experiences for audiences—drawing from amateur and professional players from New York, Southern Vermont, and Western Massachusetts. Music director **Michael Finckel** trained at the Oberlin College Conservatory of Music and Bennington College—where he studied with former Bennington College faculty member and Sage’s founder **Louis Calabro**. Finckel is interested in tackling unique, “large-scale works that community orchestras in the outlying

areas are not equipped to take on.” Finckel’s vision for the orchestra tends to make it primely suited for Bennington collaborations.

The College’s music faculty members frequently solo with and compose for the Symphony. Currently, faculty member **Nick Brooke** is teaching an orchestration class in which students write pieces they will audition for Sage to perform—something other faculty and students have also done in years past.

In addition to performance collaborations, Sage’s Young Composers Project pairs mentors with student musicians to prepare works for orchestral performance, alternating each year between area high school and college age students primarily drawn from Bennington College.

2

VERMONT ARTS EXCHANGE

vtartxchange.org
48 Main St.

North Bennington, VT 05257
802-442-5549



*A scene from the world premiere of “Downstairs” at Dorset Theatre Festival starring **Tim Daly ‘79** and Tyne Daly.*

Making art available to everyone, the 23-year-old Vermont Arts Exchange (VAE) provides locals with arts education, performance, and exhibition opportunities. The VAE works with therapeutic and community organizations, Head Start and preschool programs and schools, often employing Bennington College students as teachers.

With several exhibition spaces in the community, and a concert venue in the downtown Masonic Hall, the VAE



The Dorset Theatre Festival playhouse—open June through September.



Vermont Art Exchange’s iconic art bus seen throughout town.

is a kind of proving ground for College student artists and musicians where they can present to a wider audience and be part of shows that occasionally feature knockout talent, says VAE founder Matthew Perry.

Faculty member **Thorsten Dennerline** sees the pedagogical value of this. His advanced printmaking students have presented work in an annual show hosted by the VAE over the last ten years. “It’s about students’ engagement not only with their own work but with the work of their peers and a broader audience than what they might encounter in an academic setting,” he says.

In addition to the many formal collaborations the VAE has with the College, the organization’s basement music series showcases national and international musicians and regularly features Bennington students, alumni, staff, and faculty musicians.

Perry feels that the communities of Bennington and North Bennington have helped incubate and foster the VAE’s mission. “We’ve been nurtured by people like (visiting artist and former Bennington board member) **Ken Noland** and (former faculty member and writer) **Jamaica Kincaid** and people who have been in and out of the College who’ve laid the groundwork,” he says. “Their spirit is here.”

4

OLDCASTLE THEATRE

oldcastletheatre.org
331 Main St.
Bennington, VT 05201
802-447-0564

Founding artistic director Eric Peterson started Oldcastle as a touring theater out of New York City and decided to bring the theatre to Bennington’s Main Street during Oldcastle’s 45th season.

Peterson, a Bennington native, was inspired by the area’s wealth of artistic influences and wanted to continue that legacy. “Bennington is so connected to the arts and I want to be able to pass that on to future generations,” Peterson says. “To know that **Shirley Jackson**, and [former Bennington College faculty members] **Nick Delbanco**, **John Gardner**, and **Jules Olitski**, and on and on have lived and worked here is remarkable.”

Oldcastle brings in actors from New

York and also works with many local actors (including staff member, Meredith Meurs), writers, designers, and directors to program a full 52-week year. The Theatre spent two summers at VAPA’s Lester Martin Theater, with the College and the Theatre having mounted several joint productions, including George Bernard Shaw’s *The Devil’s Disciple*. Currently, the Oldcastle is staging numerous faculty and student music concerts.

1

DORSET THEATRE FESTIVAL

dorsettheatrefestival.org
104 Cheney Road, Dorset, VT, 05251
802-867-2223

Dorset Festival, now in its 40th year, mounts four main stage productions a year from June to September, drawing some of the country’s most talented playwrights, actors, and directors. Under the leadership of artistic director and Bennington faculty member **Dina Janis**, the Festival has become known for bold and innovative programming and for its commitment to new play development, something the *Boston Globe* recognized in a glowing feature of the Festival that ran this summer.

Janis, who hosted several summer play-development intensives at the College for New York’s prestigious LAByrnth Theatre Company, has applied her gift for nurturing the most promising voices in contemporary theater to Dorset’s New Play Development Program in collaboration with playwright Theresa Rebeck and The Lark Play Development Center. Drawing on the vast talent pool of Bennington students and alums, as well as her own stage partnerships, Janis has built a festival in Dorset that attracts not only local residents, but an expanding and discerning audience seeking groundbreaking theater.

In addition to bringing audiences to the mountains, Janis is also bringing in headlining talent. Dorset performers have included **Tim Daly ’79**, as well as a long roster of well-known actors such as Tyne Daly, Kristine Nielsen, and Alfre Woodard. Artists come to Dorset partly because of the challenging material it stages, and partly because it frequently offers actors the chance to originate



a role in a show’s world or regional premiere. This past summer, faculty member **Kirk Jackson** opened the season with *The Tarnation of Russell Colvin*.

DTF can seem, sometimes, like a second Bennington campus with its many connections from the formal Dorset’s Young Playwrights Program, which pairs advanced Bennington College student playwrights with local middle- and high-school students to the healthy population of faculty artists and students working at the Festival and participating in the annual apprentice program.

6

MASS MOCA

massmoca.org
1040 Mass MoCA Way
North Adams, MA 01247
413-662-2111

MASS MoCA is the nation’s largest contemporary art museum and one of the most influential—“a site for all eyes,” raves *The New York Times*, a “mecca,”



A viewer encounters James Turrell's Into the Light exhibition, which opened as part of MASS MoCA's new Building 6 collection. Building 6 also features former faculty member Gunnar Schonbeck's handmade instruments in No Experience Required (opposite), as well as faculty member Mary Lum's commissioned large scale wall mural, Assembly (Lorem Ipsum).

according to the *Boston Globe*. MASS MoCA's expansive 16-acre, 28-building former factory complex is infinitely flexible, as ideal for idiosyncratic shows and the priorities of the moment as it is for grand retrospectives and monumental art installations. Because the MASS MoCA campus is home to numerous fabrication and rehearsal residencies, it is also among the most productive art-making sites in the country.

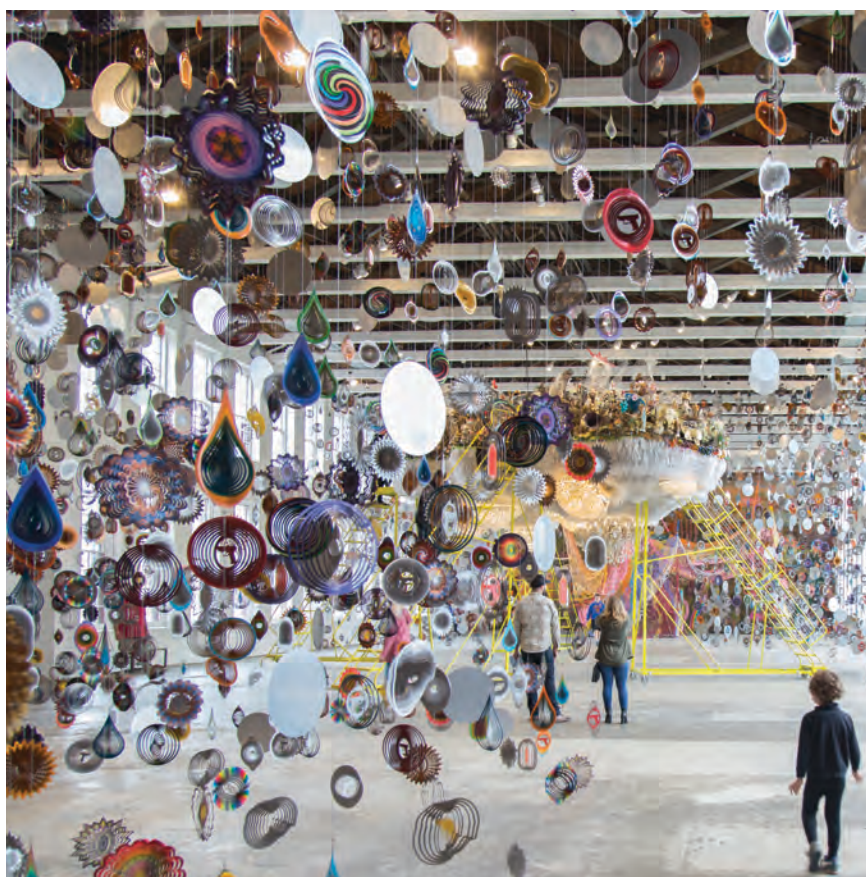
"Bennington and MASS MoCA have a shared set of values that guide our respective missions," says **Paige Bartels**, Bennington's senior vice president for strategic partnerships, "as Bennington leads in higher education, MASS MoCA leads in the cultural sector, continually experimenting and pushing the envelope of what it means to present art (and performance). We also have a shared desire to collapse the divides between the region's small towns—when we do, we collectively have an enormous impact on the cultural landscape of the area."

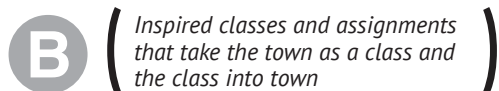
The connections between the two institutions are many: Bennington faculty regularly show at MASS MoCA, students work during FWT in a range of museum departments, and President **Mariko Silver** serves on the museum's Board of Trustees. MASS MoCA featured a solo photography exhibition of faculty member **Liz Deschenes** in 2016 and faculty member **Mary Lum**'s recent monumental mural "Lorem Ipsum," was created specifically for Building 6. In May 2017, the Museum's massive Building 6 opened to the public with galleries devoted to works by, among others, James Turrell, Laurie Anderson, Robert Rauschenberg, and former beloved Bennington faculty member and musicologist **Gunnar Schonbeck**. The Schonbeck Gallery is singular evidence of what likeminded institutions can accomplish together.

In 2011, music faculty member **Nick Brooke** captivated Bang on a Can All-Stars performer Mark Stewart by showing him Schonbeck's experimental, often oversized instruments made of found objects, which Schonbeck and his students fabricated by hand over the decades he taught at Bennington. The two worked with the Schonbeck family, as well as with Sue Killam, the museum's managing director of performing arts and MASS MoCA director Joe Thompson to transfer the collection

from Schonbeck's former "instrumentarium" on the College's Commons building to MASS MoCA, where Stewart guided local luthiers and students, including museum intern **Webb Crawford '18**, who worked over several summers and FWTs, in restoring them. Over the last several years, musicians visiting MASS MoCA, including Wilco, incorporated Schonbeck's instruments in their performances and projects. Now installed in a dedicated gallery in Building 6, the instruments in the Schonbeck Gallery are available for visitors to experience first-hand Schonbeck's distinctive approach to music-making.

Bartels notes that the College's connection to MASS MoCA is a prime example of the way Bennington is approaching institutional partnerships. "We're committed to building collaborations that go beyond Field Work Term students and relationships our faculty have with MASS MoCA; we're looking to work collectively to advance and strengthen the artistic communities we're in, advancing and extending our missions as we do." **B**





In any given term, members of the College's faculty design courses, modules, tutorials, and assignments that bring students into the intellectual, physical, cultural, or communal life of the Bennington region. These are just some of the many examples of how they have prompted this essential engagement.



STUDY PLACE: PROJECTS

Kerry Woods and Donald Sherefkin

How have interactions between culture and biological/physical environment shaped the history and current nature of the Bennington community and its surroundings? How does their interplay constrain and enable its future? How might planning for Bennington's future best recognize this history and build on the landscape presented by it? All students interested in the class should submit a written (up to one page) project proposal to Donald Sherefkin or Kerry Woods. The proposal should focus on the primary questions or purposes motivating the project and on a basic framework for anticipated approach. Class meetings will be devoted to presentations to the group and for discussion and trouble-shooting by the full group of questions and materials encountered in individual projects. Each student will work closely in project development and execution with at least one of the six faculty members involved with the "Mill-Town" project, and should expect to meet with that person weekly in addition to the regular class meeting. Students should plan on committing a substantial amount of time to independent background research, development, and execution of the project. Projects will all result in a full write-up, an open presentation, and a visual presentation by poster, model, or other means.

ASSIGNMENT: Students will develop projects addressed to these or similar questions. Projects may be driven by questions rooted in the social sciences, humanities, or natural sciences and student work may focus on problems of design, planning, or analysis. Projects should include original work that might include data collection and analysis, synthetic analysis or modeling based on existing data, or purposeful design, but all projects must be focused on understanding of and/or planning for the community and landscape of Bennington and its environs.



REGULATING TOXICS IN VERMONT

Brian Campion

The discovery that PFOA contaminated drinking water in Bennington put the Vermont legislature on a path toward further regulating toxics. Act 154, which passed the legislature in 2016, proposed a series of recommendations to protect Vermonters and our environment from harmful chemicals. Students will look at where Vermont is in the process of implementing the Act, where the struggles exist around such implementation, and work to develop solutions to those struggles. Students will hear from both sides of the toxic reform argument and also better understand where Vermont's regulations are in relation to other states, the federal government, and the world.



THE PERSONAL LEARNING PLAN: VERMONT ACT 77 EDUCATIONAL REFORM

Susan Sgorbati

Vermont Act 77 is a recent bill passed in the Vermont Legislature to enact educational reform. It includes implementing a Personal Learning Plan for all Middle and High School students in public education in Vermont. It is a radical new vision of public education and shares many of the same goals as a Bennington College Plan Process. This Module will introduce Bennington College students to VT Act 77, and ask them to engage with Middle and High School students locally by mentoring them through their personal learning plan process.



SOCIAL KITCHEN: CERAMICS, FOOD AND COMMUNITY

Yoko Inoue

This course will provide students with an opportunity to learn about creative community engaged practices and ethical processes that take up issues of food insecurity in the Bennington region. The class activities will be centered around a collaborative project, Empty Bowls, that links a community service organization (Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services Inc.) with students, staff, and faculty from Bennington College.

Through direct dialog and face-to-face interaction with community participants and by investigating various forms of creative interventions devised by artists and community activists dealing with issues of food sovereignty and social justice, students will help design and participate in events that benefit the Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services food distribution program, Kitchen Cupboard.

ASSIGNMENT: Collaborate with members of a community service organization in Bennington, VT to help planning, promoting and assisting at Empty Bowls, a fundraising event for Kitchen Cupboard. Learn about local food insecurity issues through direct dialog with local residents who participate in a series of ceramic workshops at Bennington College to collectively produce 500 soup bowls for the event.

RESEARCH METHODS

Noah Coburn

This course is an exploration of the basic tools that social scientists use when conducting research, particularly in the field. Students will learn how to use a variety of tools, including interview techniques, focus group discussions, participant observation, and surveys. Workshops will provide the opportunity for students to use these techniques on topics of their own interest. Methodological and theoretical perspectives will be examined, as will methods for recording, analyzing, interpreting, and writing up qualitative data. Topics including formulating research proposals and ethics will be discussed. This course is particularly encouraged for sophomores and juniors considering either study abroad or advanced work in social science with research components.

ASSIGNMENT: Do a group ethnography of the Bennington Museum. Conduct interviews with patrons and staff at the museum, design a survey for visitors, and do participant observation in and around the museum. Spend time there every week and write about that work.



TEACHING JAPANESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AT BENNINGTON ELEMENTARY

Ikuko Yoshida

Students in this tutorial will learn methods and techniques of foreign language teaching and apply the knowledge and experience to actual classroom teaching. Students collaboratively develop a Japanese language and culture curriculum for Bennington Elementary School. After creating a curriculum, students are required to design Japanese language and culture lessons on the assigned dates and share the lessons with their classmates. Then, students teach the lessons to their classmates and give feedback to each other on their lesson plans. After receiving feedback, students will revise and improve their lesson plans and teach their lesson to the third graders at Bennington Elementary School. This is a service learning project of the Japanese program at Bennington College. Students learn Japanese language and culture through teaching them to the community and enrich their learning experiences and make their learning meaningful.

ASSIGNMENT: Students design Japanese language and culture lessons by applying their knowledge of foreign language teaching methods and techniques. All teaching materials will be created by students and shared with classmates and Bennington Elementary teachers. They are also required to reflect on their teaching experiences to improve their language learning and teaching skills.



DRUMMING: AN EXTENSION OF LANGUAGE

Michael Wimberly

This course serves as an introduction to learning rhythms, chants, and songs from Africa, Brazil, Cuba, Haiti, and the African Diaspora. Using percussion instruments from these regions, students will experience basic hand and stick techniques while learning to

recognize drumming patterns associated with these traditional rhythms. The rhythms of Lamban, KuKu, Zaouli, Samba, Yanvalu, Rhumba, and others will be explored. Weekly rehearsal is required in preparation for showing works in progress at music workshop, as well as on and off campus events.

ASSIGNMENT: Use your acquired percussion skills to trigger memory in Alzheimer's and dementia patients in a local hospital.



SOCIAL PRACTICES IN ART

Robert Ransick

In this course we examine the history of social practice and focus in on how artists are moving out of the studio and into the public realm with their work. Social practices in art incorporates many diverse strategies from interactive media, online networks, public discourse, activism, manifestos, street interventions, social sculpture, design, performance, open systems, and more. Special attention is paid to how media and technology are impacting and shifting current practice. Students will work collaboratively on projects focused off-campus that critically engage topics pertinent to this moment in history and are situated in the public sphere—local or global, online or offline. There are lectures, reading assignments, studio projects, and critiques during the course.

ASSIGNMENT: Working in teams, create artworks that are situated off campus and engage the residents of the town of Bennington as active participants and collaborators.



EXPLORATIONS IN PUBLIC HISTORY

Eileen Scully

This class introduces students to the fundamentals of Public History, meaning history that is generated for wide audiences through collaborations with communities, stakeholders, and profes-

sional academics. Through student-led discussions and short weekly assignments, students will develop a working knowledge of Public History, its scope, controversies, and opportunities. A major component of the course is our partnership with a local elementary school, which opens the way for students to gain first-hand experience in creating and using historical materials in mentorship and educational outreach. The instructor will assist students in completing the background check that is required whenever working with elementary school students.

ASSIGNMENT: Develop some form of educational outreach to improve outreach programs of an existing local facility (school, museum, monument, etc.). You should have a plan of action, an action, and a written analysis of the outreach and how it can improve.



COMPOSING FOR THE CHOIR

Kitty Brazelton

Composers who sing (or would like to), singers who compose (or would like to), songwriters who would like to stop singing alone, writers who would like to hear their writings sung (and maybe sing some too), and anyone who's always wanted to learn how to shape music for a vocal group—this class is for you. We will compose, rehearse, and then perform our own repertoire in several live concert effusions through the term. Fun, hard work, and more fun.

ASSIGNMENT: Perform final SATB *a cappella* compositions workshopped in class since midterm for live audiences at the Bennington Centers for Living and Rehabilitation on the Southwestern Vermont Medical Center. Principle: a gig is worth 1000 rehearsals. Learn from your audience. **B**

working class

A SELECTION OF LOCAL SITES WHERE BENNINGTON COLLEGE STUDENTS HAVE WORKED AND VOLUNTEERED AS PART OF THEIR CLASS OR DURING FIELD WORK TERM

- Akin Studios
- Bennington County Coalition for the Homeless (BCCH)
- Bennington County Head Start
- Bennington County Regional Commission (BCRC)
- Bennington Early Childhood Center
- Bennington Elementary School
- Bennington Free Clinic
- Bennington Free Library
- Bennington Museum
- Bennington Project Independence
- Bennington Rescue Squad
- Blooming Chefs
- Center for Restorative Justice
- DREAM Program
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hiland Hall School
- Hoosic River Hydro
- Kimberly Farms
- The Lightning Jar
- Maple Street School
- McCullough Free Library
- Mighty Food Farms
- Molly Stark School
- Mount Anthony Union High School & Union Middle School
- Project Against Violent Encounters (PAVE)
- Recurrent Hydro
- Rhythm Hollow Stables
- Second Chance Animal Center
- Spirit Hollow
- Southwestern Vermont Center for Disease Control
- Southwestern Vermont Medical Center
- Sunrise Family Resource Center
- Threshold Collaborative
- Turning Point
- United Counseling Service
- Vermont Arts Exchange
- Vermont Legislature: Senator Brian Campion
- Veterans Home
- Village School of North Bennington

B (Retiring faculty member Doug Bauer on teaching and time at Bennington by Keegan Ead and Madeline Cole '16)

BAUER ON WHAT'S NEXT

After teaching for 12 years at Bennington, writer and faculty member Doug Bauer will retire. Bauer has written critically acclaimed works including *The Book of Famous Iowans*; *The Very Air*; and *Dexterity*. He has also published three works of nonfiction: *Prairie City, Iowa*; *The Stuff of Fiction*; and *What Happens Next?: Matters of Life and Death*, which won the 2014 PEN/ New England Book Award in Nonfiction. This fall he reflected on his career at Bennington, the students, courses, and what will come next. Tune-in to listen to the Bauer audio portrait at www.bennington.edu/magazine or go directly to the College's soundcloud page to download the piece and listen on the go.



[soundcloud.com/
benningtoncollege/
doug-bauer-literature](https://soundcloud.com/benningtoncollege/doug-bauer-literature)

B

When residents in nearby Hoosick Falls, NY and North Bennington, VT discovered their wells and water contaminated, the College stepped in to study, train, and educate students and citizens



UNDERSTANDING PFOA

In 2014, the community of Hoosick Falls, New York—5 miles southwest of Bennington—was rocked when they discovered the chemical Perfluorooctanoic Acid (C8 or PFOA) in their public drinking water. As concern over this contaminant grew, other nearby communities began testing their drinking water. Over the past two years, PFOA has been detected at alarming levels in the municipal water supply of three towns in New York and Vermont and in more than a thousand private residential wells in the region. *The public water system of North Bennington, where Bennington College gets its water, has tested free of PFOA.*

PFOA was once a key ingredient in the manufacture of high-performance plastics like Teflon and Gore-Tex. Today, PFOA and related per- and polyfluorinated compounds—once touted for their inertness—are coming into new focus as an intricate human health risk that operates on the scale of parts per trillion and

unfolds over the course of decades. These dimensions, the granular scale of risk, and the extended timeframe of injury, have made PFOA a new kind of problem for environmental science and policy.

Enter the Center for the Advancement of Public Action (CAPA), which has brought many resources to bear—from human to grant capital. **David Bond**, the associate director of CAPA, along with faculty members **Janet Foley** and **Tim Schroeder**, were awarded two National Science Foundation (NSF) grants: the first a \$90,000 RAPID Response Grant to offer a new course, “Understanding PFOA,” and community-driven research into PFOA contamination in the region. A second \$300,000 NSF grant was later awarded to deepen and expand the College’s response to PFOA with additional courses and research.

“Support from the NSF will allow Bennington College to do what it does best: engage the big problems of

our present directly and put students and faculty to work crafting new insights and new solutions in real-time,” Bond, the principal investigator of the grant, explained.

Alongside Bennington students, Understanding PFOA was opened to local residents, including high school teachers, nurses, local journalists, and community members from Hoosick Falls and Bennington. Offered as a primer on PFOA, the course equipped students and citizens with the tools to better navigate the complicated science of PFOA, to produce data more attuned to local concerns, and to demand better protections for water resources moving forward.

“A key part of the course we are offering and the research we will conduct centers on equipping students with the scientific literacy now required to be effective citizens when a disaster like this strikes,” Schroeder said.

Hoosick Falls Central School District Superintendent Ken Facin was one of the first to sign up for the class. “It was great because the class was informative and allowed me to network. I learned from others who were in the class about their situation, (they learned) what our situation was in Hoosick Falls and how we were going to proceed as an educational institution in teaching our students.”

Doug Reed, a retired environmental educator who lives in Cambridge, New York, said he “jumped on it” when he learned about the class and returned for the second series of classes. “It was a repeat the second semester but it’s such demanding material that I could take it again and again and still learn something.”

While the classes continue to be a major resource for residents still struggling to keep up with the daily deluge of new information, Facin said what he most appreciated was that the College took the role of becoming a “community hub of knowledge and information” not just in Vermont but in neighboring New York. “It was a great prototype for other colleges that should be doing these types of things when there’s an environmental impact or some issue in a community. The expertise of Tim Schroeder and David Bond and Janet Foley was essential to my understanding and my work with my school board and the community.”

Expanding on these early engagements, the most recent NSF grant awarded to Bond, Foley, and Schroeder in June has fostered and supported additional PFOA courses, as well as developed original research on PFOA contamination in partnership with state agencies, local

public schools, and regional colleges and universities.

This summer, Bond in coordination with former Regional Administrator of Environmental Protection Agency Judith Enck, environmental engineer Robert Chinery, physician Dr. Howard Freed, and Bennington College’s dean of research and assessment, Dr. Zeke Bernstein designed a community health questionnaire distributed for current and former residents of Hoosick Falls and Petersburg, NY and North Bennington, VT impacted by PFOA contamination.

Responding to community concerns, the questionnaire gathered local insight about the incidence of six illnesses that previous scientific studies have linked to PFOA exposure. This information, under review now, provided a preliminary outline of the health of residents in New York and Vermont impacted by PFOA.

“This is a relatively new pollutant and there is a lot of confusing information out there,” Foley said. “This project enables us not only to teach at the frontier of what is known about PFOA but also to conduct original research with students that will produce better informa-

“Facin said what he most appreciated was that the College took the role of becoming a ‘community hub of knowledge and information’ not just in Vermont but in neighboring New York as well.”

tion for our community. Whether in testing the mobility of PFOA from contaminated soil into garden vegetables or maple syrup or in measuring the movement of PFOA in our aquifers, we hope to involve students in research questions that really matter to our community.”

In addition to the survey and a study of the health impacts, the team is also using the course to build a foundation for ongoing monitoring and research.

“As more and more attention has turned to PFOA, we’ve begun to realize how extensive the problem of groundwater contamination might be,” Schroeder said. “Part of our project will consist of building a database for our region that can identify hot spots and locate points for long-term monitoring as well as future research projects for students and other scientists.”

Early 2014

Michael Hickey, a private resident of Hoosick Falls, NY became alarmed at an overlap between the rare cancers that afflicted his friends and family and the probable carcinogenic effects of PFOA (manufactured in Hoosick Falls, NY for many decades). Hickey requests that the Village Board test the drinking water. The Board declines. Hickey sends the water to a lab. After independent lab results indicate a high level of PFOA in the Village drinking water, Hickey makes a second request that the Board test the drinking water for PFOA. —As reported by the Albany Times Union

November 2014

The Village Board tests the public drinking water, with lab results detecting high levels of PFOA (540 parts per trillion), concentrations above the EPA's health guidance level of

400 parts per trillion (ppt). Calling the test results "encouraging," the Village Board erroneously informed the 4,500 residents connected to the public water supply that PFOA concentrations were "within and under the EPA guidelines." —As reported by the Albany Times Union, and the Village of Hoosick Falls archive

December 2015

An Albany Times Union investigative report finds that PFOA was regularly dumped behind the plant in the field that is home to the Village's water supply well. Frustrated citizens request clarification from the EPA. The EPA instructs residents of Hoosick Falls, NY to stop drinking and cooking with tap water. **David Bond**, Associate Director of CAPA at

Bennington College, along with a group of concerned students begin attending community meetings in Hoosick Falls, NY.

February 2016

Residents of North Bennington, VT contact local legislators expressing concerns about the former Chemfab property. Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) samples five private wells near the Chemfab facility and the North Bennington municipal water supply. Elevated levels of PFOA are detected.

March 2016

PFOA is also discovered in the groundwater of Petersburg, NY; Merrimack and Bedford, NH; as well as Pownal, VT. David Bond teams with Bennington College faculty members **Janet Foley** (chemist) and **Tim Schroeder** (geologist). The team is awarded a \$90,000 RAPID Response Grant from the National Science Foundation to support a new class on PFOA and community-driven research. At a White House Water

Summit, their work is recognized as a leading example of how universities can respond to water contamination.

April 2016

Understanding PFOA, a class co-taught by Bond, Foley, and Schroeder, offers a primer on PFOA, introducing students to the chemical properties, environmental pathways, and PFOA policy concerns. It begins with 20 Bennington students and eight local residents, including the high school superintendent, public school teachers, nurses, and local journalists.

Spring 2016

Bond, Foley, and Schroeder bring students into impacted communities in Vermont and New York to conduct independent research into PFOA contamination in conversation with community concerns and questions. The group organizes a lecture series on

PFOA, bringing leading PFOA scientists and policymakers to Bennington. The project is covered by national media outlets.

Summer 2016

A Bennington student begins work with the Vermont State Agency, helping to map the geology of the region and studying how PFOA moves through groundwater.


Fall 2016

Bond, Foley, and Schroeder repeat the Understanding PFOA class with 18 Bennington students and five local residents. They continue the lecture series on PFOA and provide regular updates on their research at community meetings in Hoosick Falls, NY and Bennington, VT.

A TIMELINE OF RESPONSE

the course

UNDERSTANDING PFOA IN OUR WATER

In 2014, the chemical Perfluorooctanoic acid (C8 or PFOA) was discovered in the drinking water in the Village of Hoosick Falls, NY. As concern over this groundwater contamination grew, other communities began testing their water for PFOA. As of March 2016, PFOA has been discovered in the groundwater of Petersburg, NY, Merrimack, NH, and in North Bennington, VT (the public water system of North Bennington, where Bennington College gets its water, have tested free of PFOA). PFOA is a man-made chemical that is persistent, mobile, and bioaccumulative. Classified by the EPA as an “emerging contaminant,” PFOA has been correlated with a range of health problems. This course will investigate the social and physical aspects of this ongoing disaster, from how the regulation of chemicals in the US shaped the disaster to how the specific chemistry of PFOA guides its environmental and biological pathways to how the geological structure of an aquifer influences the distribution and direction of a groundwater contaminant plume. Students will gain formal training in environmental organic chemistry and toxicology, contaminant hydrogeology, and environmental policy. Students will conduct field research on water contamination in North Bennington and Hoosick Falls, collect water samples, interpret laboratory data, and use geospatial analysis techniques and technology to characterize a groundwater plume. Students will also assist faculty members in preparing presentations of early research findings to citizen groups in North Bennington and Hoosick Falls and develop curricular materials that can be used in area public schools. 

Field Work Term 2017, four students, sponsored by Bennington College, pursue advanced work on PFOA, collaborating with Vermont state agencies to map groundwater, and support the work of a nationally acclaimed journalist reporting on the issue.

Spring 2017, Schroeder reviews all of the state data on PFOA in Vermont and provides an early analysis of trends in the levels of PFOA in private wells.

May 2017, Bond organizes a student water conference with Hoosick Falls Central School District Superintendent Ken Facin, bringing more than 100 AP science students from area high schools to Bennington College. The College also hosts attorney Rob Bilott, whose groundbreaking work on PFOA has been instrumental in exposing corporate malfeasance around the manufacture of PFOA and advancing new scientific understandings of the health risks of PFOA.

June 2017, Bond, Foley, and Schroeder are awarded a \$300,000 National Science Foundation grant to continue their work on Understanding PFOA for three additional years.

October 2017 Bond and Foley are featured in Vermont PBS special, “Saving Our Water.”

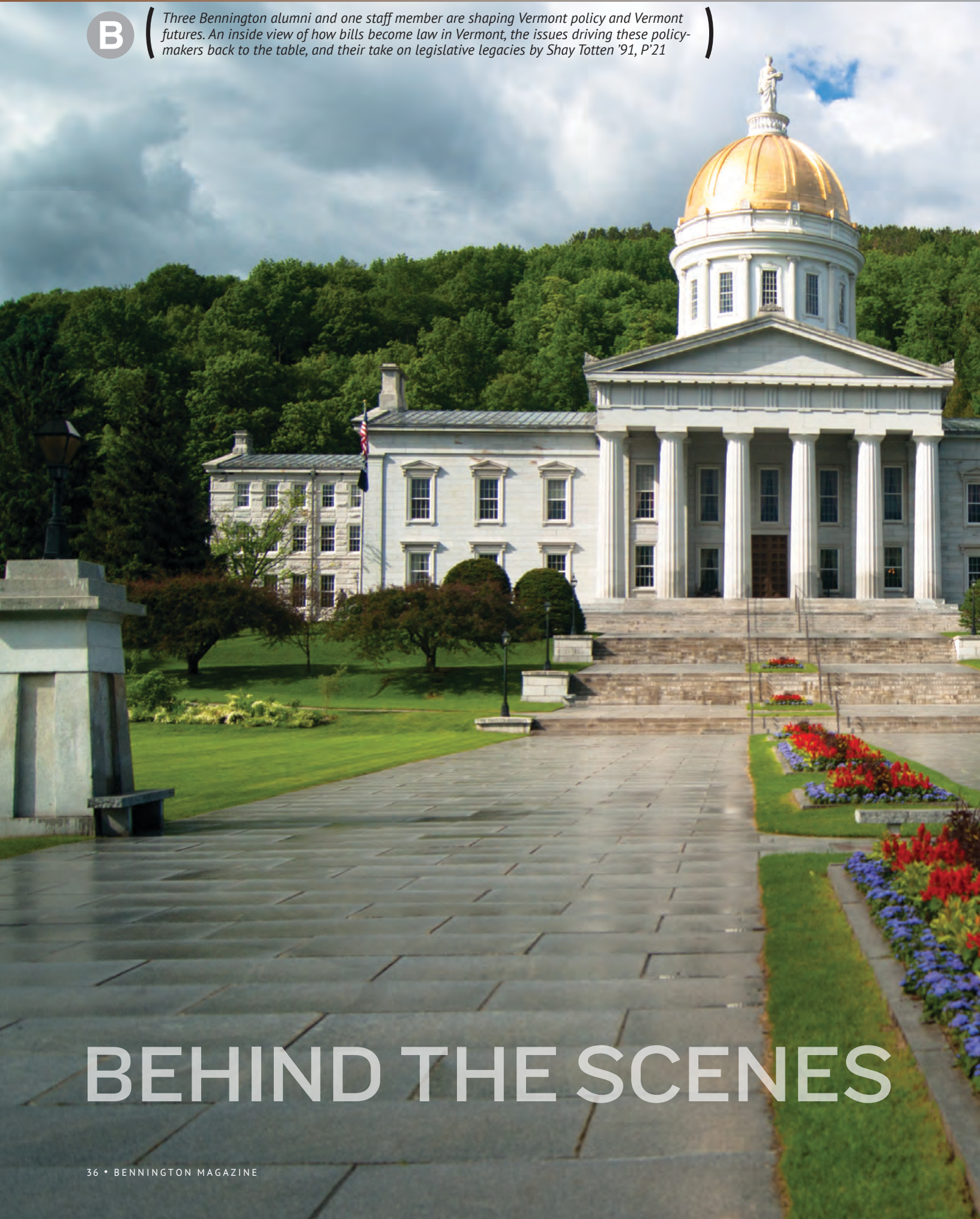
KEY:

PFOA was a likely suspect as it had been used in plastics manufacturing in Hoosick Falls since the 1950s, most notably and most recently at the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics plant (where PFOA was on site in Hoosick Falls, NY until about 2002).

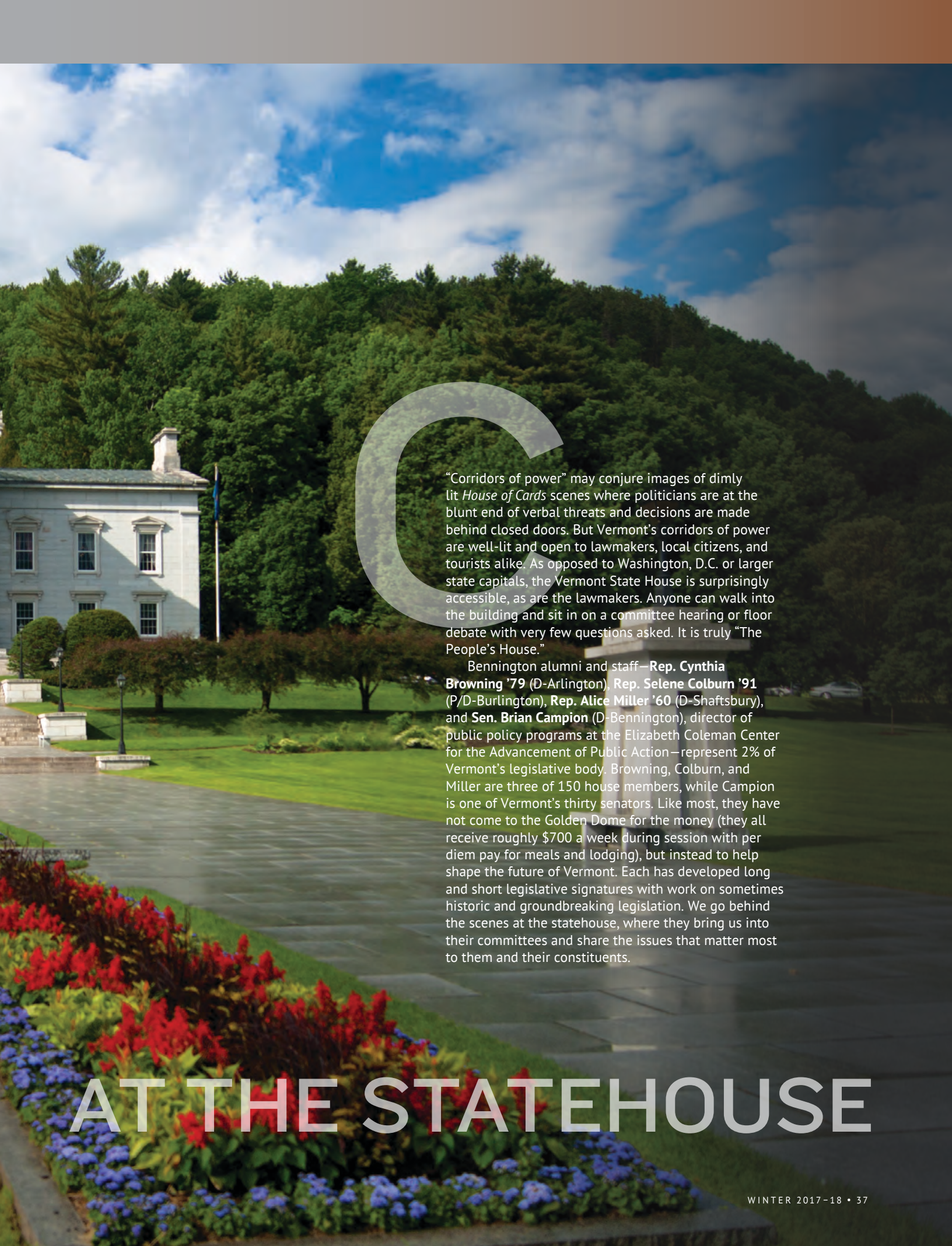
National Science Foundation RAPID Response Grants enable universities and colleges to respond quickly to unfolding events to produce much-needed data on current events.

B

Three Bennington alumni and one staff member are shaping Vermont policy and Vermont futures. An inside view of how bills become law in Vermont, the issues driving these policy-makers back to the table, and their take on legislative legacies by Shay Totten '91, P'21



BEHIND THE SCENES



C“Corridors of power” may conjure images of dimly lit *House of Cards* scenes where politicians are at the blunt end of verbal threats and decisions are made behind closed doors. But Vermont’s corridors of power are well-lit and open to lawmakers, local citizens, and tourists alike. As opposed to Washington, D.C. or larger state capitals, the Vermont State House is surprisingly accessible, as are the lawmakers. Anyone can walk into the building and sit in on a committee hearing or floor debate with very few questions asked. It is truly “The People’s House.”

Bennington alumni and staff—**Rep. Cynthia Browning '79** (D-Arlington), **Rep. Selene Colburn '91** (P/D-Burlington), **Rep. Alice Miller '60** (D-Shaftsbury), and **Sen. Brian Campion** (D-Bennington), director of public policy programs at the Elizabeth Coleman Center for the Advancement of Public Action—represent 2% of Vermont’s legislative body. Browning, Colburn, and Miller are three of 150 house members, while Campion is one of Vermont’s thirty senators. Like most, they have not come to the Golden Dome for the money (they all receive roughly \$700 a week during session with per diem pay for meals and lodging), but instead to help shape the future of Vermont. Each has developed long and short legislative signatures with work on sometimes historic and groundbreaking legislation. We go behind the scenes at the statehouse, where they bring us into their committees and share the issues that matter most to them and their constituents.

AT THE STATEHOUSE



"I DON'T JUST TAKE THINGS AT FACE VALUE; I STUDY. I LISTEN TO DIFFERENT VOICES AND DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES. I TRY TO COME TO CONSENSUS."

CYNTHIA BROWNING '79 (D-Bennington-4)

"I am independent. I work hard. I question and verify everything," said Browning who not only serves at the statehouse but also directs the Battenkill Watershed Alliance and sits on her town's Selectboard. But at the statehouse, this doctor of economics (PhD University of Michigan) sits on the house Ways and Means Committee, which establishes taxes and fees. "I don't just take things at face value; I study. I listen to different voices and different perspectives. I try to come to consensus. I am always trying to figure out what is really going on, and not just what may be politically convenient."

It is this independent streak that, at times, has frustrated her party. She has different ideas about how to fund core political initiatives. One of those was a state-based, single-payer system touted by then-Governor Peter Shumlin (D) in his 2010 election.

Browning, who stated her objection at the time, ruffled some political feathers. "I didn't like Gov. Shumlin's promise to pay for it without really knowing how he was going to pay for it." But, she explains, "I was not, and am not, against single-payer health care, but I do think it's hard, if not impossible financially, for a single state to do it. I think it's a better idea for the full country. In my mind, though, it is policy malpractice to make promises we can't keep."

Browning has served in the House for 10 years, representing Arlington, Sandgate, Manchester, and parts of Sunderland. She first ran for Selectboard in 2004, after serving on Arlington's Planning Commission for several years. Then, when a seat opened up in her legislative district, she was encouraged to run for office and now serves as both a member of the Selectboard and a legislator.

"When I moved back to Vermont and got involved in local government, I wanted to work on solving economic and environmental problems in my community," Browning said. "For me, elective office has always been about serving the community I live in. Serving in the legislature has been both one of the most satisfying experiences in my life because I feel like I'm making a contribution and it has also been one of the most frustrating experiences in my life because so much of what is done is not founded in the realities of what I see."



"IT WAS PROBABLY THE MOST EXCITING FOUR YEARS I'VE EVER EXPERIENCED. I HAD A FRONT ROW SEAT TO HISTORY."

REP. ALICE MILLER '60 (D-Bennington-3)

For Miller, governing is problem solving with purpose. It is what has kept her coming back to Montpelier for 21 years. Miller began her public service on her town Selectboard in Shaftsbury in 1994 before becoming a legislator in 1996 after being asked by her local Democratic Town Committee to run for office.

"At that time, it was rare for a woman to run for the legislature," she explains. Miller is well known for championing issues that impact working Vermonters, children, and families. Her work in the legislature representing their interests has been honored by Vermont After-school, which celebrated Miller with the inaugural Afterschool Hero Award last year, by Vermont Association for the Education of Young Children, and the Sunrise Family Resource Center. What she has learned throughout her career is that most governing—and listening—happens in committee.

"In the committee process we listen to everybody on an issue. We take testimony every day, almost every minute of the day, and work around the clock to ensure that everyone has a voice before we make decisions."

Miller's first two sessions dealt with two heady and controversial topics: overhauling the state's education funding system and enacting civil unions. The latter was a separate but equal approach to same-sex marriage in Vermont, but it laid the groundwork for Vermont to make history when it became the first state to adopt same-sex marriage by a vote of the Legislature (rather than a court or executive order).

"It was probably the most exciting four years I've had," she said. "I had a front row seat to history." Miller supported both bills. Her political courage had some drawbacks though, namely that she "had very tough races to run for the first few sessions."

As a member of the House Education Committee, Miller was instrumental in developing a landmark education funding law that helped to level the school funding playing field across Vermont. Among other things, Act 60—the Equal Education Opportunity Act—made it so that local school taxes were no longer based on the value of a citizen's property alone but also their income.

"I worked very hard to make that equal educational opportunity act pass because it helped peo-

ple pay their property taxes, and if they lost their job, they wouldn't get punished because their taxes were based on income."

For Miller's region in southwestern Vermont, the original passage of Act 60 delivered roughly \$5 million in property tax relief to homeowners and renters, and redistributed state funding to support area schools.

In recent years, Miller has served on the powerful House Appropriations Committee, which develops the state's annual budget. In the coming months, Miller will join lawmakers upstate concerned with a federal administration that is expected to make deep cuts to key programs like Medicaid, as well as funding for education and the environment. "We're going to have to be creative going forward because we're a small state and there's not a lot of places for us to raise money."

Although education is near and dear to her heart—and the committee she has served on for the majority of her tenure—Miller has also served on the Appropriations Committee where she worked to eliminate the food and clothing tax, as well as the machine inventory tax; and on the Fish and Wildlife Committee where she worked on legislation to end bear and deer baiting, streamlined among other committee work.

SELENE COLBURN '91 (P/D-Chittenden-6-4)



**"I REALLY BELIEVE
THAT CITIES
ARE AMAZING
PLACES TO DO
PROGRESSIVE
POLITICS,
BECAUSE IT'S THE
POLITICS OF THE
POSSIBLE."**

Selene Colburn was elected to the state legislature in 2016, after serving on the Burlington City Council for two years, beginning in 2014.

Colburn, who grew up in Burlington, was very active in the city youth office under then-Mayor Bernie Sanders. Later, she would draw on that hands-on civic experience when she returned to Burlington after graduate school and dove back into local politics and advocacy. She started a nonprofit—Vermont Access to Reproductive Freedom—to equalize access to reproductive health services in Vermont, and to help women pay for abortions if they couldn't afford them. In addition to supporting women's reproductive rights, Colburn also became more vocal about the opioid crisis.

"I found myself lobbying people more and more on issues," said Colburn. She worked on political campaigns and became very involved in the Progressive Party in Vermont. And while not exactly having major influence on candidates, she did find that her political work gave her access to politicians. She liked having the ability to get people with influence and power to listen. Eventually, she thought, "Why not cut out the middleman? I could be doing that!"

Colburn started first on the City Council in Burlington, and was elected to the state legislature last year. "I really believe that cities are amazing places to do progressive politics, because it's the politics of the possible. The ability to make change is more nimble, but there were some issues where I reached a wall," said Colburn. "And the issue that I most ran into a wall on was the opioid epidemic and trying to shift our understanding of substance abuse as policymakers."

Lawmakers pick their choices of preferred committees, but in the House the Speaker of the House selects who sits on what committee. Colburn was picked to sit on the influential Judiciary Committee. One of her first orders of business was to introduce legislation that would extend the time that opiate addicts are provided treatment while incarcerated. Under current state policy, a person who is receiving outpatient treatment for opiate addiction will see that treatment cut off if they are incarcerated for more than 30 days. In January of this year, Colburn introduced H. 468, a bill that, if passed, would extend that timeframe from 30 to 120 days of incarceration.

"The state's current approach makes no sense, from a treatment perspective. You wouldn't stop giving a diabetic insulin if they were in jail for 30 days, so why would you for someone struggling with opiate addiction? It's crazy," Colburn says.

In a recent private meeting with the Vermont Commissioner of Corrections, Colburn was told that in response to her legislation the department planned to voluntarily increase the time limit to 90 days. It's not unheard of for a bill, once it has a hearing in a committee and state officials are brought in to testify, that changes happen without the bill getting to the floor.

"In the meeting I asked, 'So, you're telling me that you're going to change state policy.' The Commissioner said yes. 'And you're going to find the money to pay for the treatment in the budget adjustment process?' I asked. After some prodding she said yes. It was an odd feeling to be in that position of being able to simply get that high level of a commitment from a commissioner, and realize that it was because I had introduced a bill," Colburn recalled. "But, it was kind of incredible at the same time."

Colburn will wait and see if these changes are made, and what, if any, impact that may have on her proposed legislation.

Another of Colburn's bills this session that generated media attention was H.333. The bill's premise is simple: require all single-stall restrooms to be gender-neutral in buildings that are open to the public. The bill passed the House, 123-19, and will be taken up by the Senate in January 2018.

**SEN. BRIAN CAMPION (D-Bennington), director of public policy programs
at the Elizabeth Coleman Center for the Advancement of Public Action**



**"IT WASN'T
ENOUGH TO JUST
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PROBLEM, IT WAS
NECESSARY FOR
MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE TO
HEAR FROM THE
PEOPLE DIRECTLY
AFFECTED."**

In the Senate, a lawmaker serves on two committees. Senators are given their committee assignments by a three-person committee, called the Committee on Committees. It's comprised of the Senate President Pro Tempore, the Lt. Governor, and one other senior member of the Senate. Campion is Vice Chairman of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee and a member of the Finance Committee.

For many people who run for office, there's often a tipping point. Campion's was same-sex marriage. An environmentalist, Campion had always thought about running for office but he finally took the political leap when his local representatives voted against same-sex marriage in 2010.

In that first election, Campion defeated the well-known Republican incumbent, and became one of a roughly half dozen openly gay members of the Legislature. After two terms in the House, he won his Senate seat in 2014 with wide support.

In the past year, Campion's leadership has been crucial on an issue that has had a major impact on his district—groundwater contamination by a local manufacturing plant.

During the height of the PFOA water contamination crisis in Bennington, Sen. Campion brought members of the Senate Natural Resources and Energy Committee to a public hearing hosted at CAPA.

"It wasn't enough to just talk about the problem, it was necessary for members of the committee to hear from the people directly affected. To hear about the empty water bottles piling up. To hear about the water that, even after being filtered, wasn't trusted to be safe," he said. "After that hearing, we went back to Montpelier and almost immediately passed S. 10, which is a bill that says if you pollute public waters, then you will be held financially responsible to hook homes up to municipal water, and more."

Shortly after Gov. Phil Scott signed the bill into law, the state brokered a \$20 million settlement from Saint Gobain for its role in polluting nearby drinking water.

"It's not enough," Campion explained, "but it's a start. Given what our community is facing, we have to hope for more down the road. But, this bill will help other communities in the future."

Campion said his work at CAPA, where he serves as the public policy director and teaches, and as a lawmaker inform each other in a myriad of ways, but fundamentally it comes down to finding universal solutions to concrete problems that can be replicated in other communities.

Campion has expanded his fight by working to take on toxic chemical reform this winter. **E**

LEGISLATIVE INTERNS

For several years now, under the leadership of CAPA public policy director and Vermont state senator Brian Campion, Bennington students eager to engage with policymaking and advocacy are invited into the legislative process working in jobs and internships at Vermont's statehouse during the College's winter Field Work Term. Some of their work has resulted in reforms that have impacted the lives of citizens living in and outside of Vermont. Recently, *Vice* magazine spotlighted Bennington's student-led Incarceration Task Force for their role in advancing prison reform. In past years, Bennington interns have helped advanced transportation access; informed Vermont's Child Safety Act with actionable recommendations; and have researched issues related to education, mental health, environmental protection, economic development, and clean water provisions among others.

2017 Emma Bushmann '20 • Elizabeth Fox '20 • Everett Haddard '18

2015 Benjamin Ehlers '17 • Alexander Formanek '15 • Liam McRae '18 • William Neale '17 • John Lawson '15 • Ben Simpson '16

2013 Ray Stevens '15



Leaders of local organizations on the impact of student work and volunteerism throughout Bennington by Alex Dery Snider

for good

Students
Volunteering
to Support
Bennington, Vermont

“i

was wicked nervous,” Kayla, a Mount Anthony Union High School student says, remembering her experience with International Term. The Term is an informal partnership between the College and the Mount Anthony Union High School **Quantum Leap** program. Taking place during the College’s annual Field Work Term, the Term has international college students assisting teachers and students in the Quantum Leap program at Bennington to re-engage with their education.

For Kayla and others in her class, the Term would be the first time they ever engaged directly with someone from another country. “Some students haven’t left the town of Bennington much, and myths become embedded. They have to meet a human, not just hear a teacher talk,” said Ric Crosier, co-director of Quantum Leap. “I can’t think of anything we’ve done in the last few years that has had as much of a positive impact as International Term.”

Across town, at the **Bennington Museum** curator Jamie Franklin has his hands full, getting multiple installations and exhibitions up.

Franklin leans on Field Work Term interns to take one of the smaller projects from concept through to the exhibition. “I don’t know that many undergraduate students would be able to do that at that level,” said Franklin.

Noting that most Bennington College students are from further afield, Franklin appreciates the opportunity for students to be steeped in the local history. The Museum has been expanding that work through partnerships with faculty members to provide other opportunities outside of the winter work term. “Getting [students] excited and interested only benefits the community at large.”

Through a partnership between Sue Andrews, who runs **Greater Bennington Interfaith Community Services**, and faculty member **Yoko Inoue**, students help Andrews’ small nonprofit assist Bennington citizens living in poverty to meet their basic food, shelter, medical, and dental care needs. The area is the second most food insecure area in Vermont, with one in four families needing assistance to survive. For several years, the nonprofit has hosted an **Empty Bowls** event as a fundraiser to support their efforts.

Inoue teaches ceramics and is interested in socially engaged art, issues of food sovereignty, and community build-

ing. She and Andrews saw the overlap between their work, and Inoue developed a class in which students and community participants collaboratively created 500 bowls. “Craft can be a vital tool for building new social relationships through skill sharing and stimulating face-to-face dialog while working together toward a mutual goal,” Inoue says.

At the **Bennington Free Clinic**, also run by Andrews, students volunteer as translators and medical recorders, with post-bacc and pre-med students more likely to take on expanded roles.

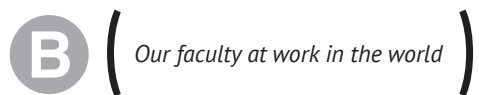
At **Second Chance Animal Shelter**, Cathleen Perrone marshalls volunteers who walk dogs, socialize cats, help with events, and more. One animal-loving photography student offered to take pictures of pets looking their adoptable best. Perrone sees the impact on the animals—human contact can help them cope with the stresses of shelter life. “I have never seen a student enter or leave our facility without a smile on their face,” said Perrone. “We, both furry and human, appreciate all that they do.”

Throughout its history, Bennington students in each and every class have formally and informally volunteered to work with hundreds of local organizations, and in some cases have even started organizations to address community concerns. But in the last several years, the College has worked to put more formal structures in place to organize and recognize the impact of this ongoing work.

In 2015, the College created a Student Engagement Kilpatrick Fellowship, in which recent graduate **Michael Thomson ’15** would lay the groundwork to help formally connect students eager to pitch in with local organizations that could use the help. Thompson held fairs, arranged for transportation, and served as the internal and external community contact for volunteer opportunities.

This year, the College expanded that work opening an Assistant Director for Community Engagement staff position. Already these structures have helped calculate what was once an illusive measure—hours spent volunteering in Bennington. Last year alone, the total was 520 volunteered hours. Next year, leaders predict, it will be even more. **B**

For more information on student community engagement, contact Anya Piotrowski at apiotrowski@bennington.edu.



faculty notes



Barbara Alfano's essay, "A Platon-

tonic Look at Herself: Knowledge, Love, and Soul in Sibilla Aleramo's *Dialogo con Psiche*," was accepted for publication by *Quaderni d'italianistica*, the official journal of the Canadian Society for Italian Studies. The essay examines *Dialogo con Psiche* [Dialogue With Psyche], Sibilla Aleramo's most overlooked work.



This summer **Brooke Allen** reviewed two books for the *Wall Street Journal*—Jenny

Allen's *Would Everybody Please Stop?* and the new Everyman Library edition of Horace Walpole's letters.



Benjamin Anastas reviewed two books for *The New York Times*—Martha Gellhorn's *A Stricken Field* and *Our Short History* by Lauren Grodstein.



An essay written by **Doug Bauer**, "Girls Win, Boys

Lose," originally published in *Sports Illustrated*, was included in the anthology *Basketball: Great Writing About America's Game*, edited by Alexander Wolff. It will be published by The Library of America this spring.



In the fall, **Tom Bogdan** prepared and directed Meredith Monk's *A Celebration Service* for the Gogol Festival with the Alter Ratio Vocal Ensemble in Kiev, Ukraine, and later at the University of Montana. He has previously received three Fulbright grants to teach the piece in Budapest, Sao Paolo, and Manila. Last winter he received a fourth Fulbright grant to teach vocal production and choral music of Meredith Monk at Kattaikkuttu Sangam in Southern India.



David Bond, Janet Foley, and **Tim Schroeder** have been awarded a \$300,000 National Science Foundation grant to deepen and expand the College's response to PFOA contamination in New York and Vermont. Bond also co-convened two conferences in May: Taconic Mountain Student Water Conference, organized with Ken Facin of the Hoosick Falls Central School District and Volatile Futures / Earthly Matters, which was organized with Joseph Masco of the University of Chicago. Volatile Futures dovetailed with a course taught under the same name and investigated the current debates over the Anthropocene in social research.



This past season, as dramaturgical advisor for Off-Broadway's Mint Theater Company, **Maya Cantu** contributed playwright program biographies for the company's productions of Miles Malleon's *Yours Unfaithfully* and A.A. Milne's *The Lucky One*. Her essay, "Feather-Footed Impresario: The Scandals of George White," was published in *The Palgrave Handbook of Musical Theatre Producers* (2017). She also presented new research at the Song, Stage and Screen conference, at the University of Surrey, UK, and at the Association for Theatre in Higher Education (ATHE), in Las Vegas.



Andrew Cencini returned to campus this fall following a two year

leave. While away, Cencini served as Vice President of Engineering and Co-Founder of Vapor IO, a data center infrastructure startup. During that time, he was named as an inventor on five U.S. and international patent applications, as well as several provisional patent applications. Cencini has spoken at a number of conferences and was named one of "10 Innovators South of the Rack." Vapor IO has garnered extensive media coverage with pieces most recently appearing on/in



Poet and essayist **MARK WUNDERLICH**—a faculty member since 2004 and core Writing Seminars faculty member since 2009—was appointed as the director of Bennington’s Master of Fine Arts in Writing program this summer following a national search. Wunderlich is the third director in the program’s history, following Sven Birkerts, who will return to the program’s faculty in June, and founding director Liam Rector.

CNBC, *Forbes*, *Fortune* and *The Wall Street Journal* among many others. Named one of the “10 Coolest Cloud Startups (So Far)” by CRN, Vapor IO drew heavily from Bennington’s talent pool with a software engineering team that included **Erick Daniszewski ’14** and **Klemente Gilbert-Espada ’14**, along with interns **Morgan Mills ’17** and **Linh Hoang ’18**.



The Diplomat published an opinion piece by **Noah Coburn** about the decreasing confidence many Afghans feel for their government and the possibility of change.

In September, **Liz Deschenes** had work exhibited again with Sol Lewitt’s wall



drawings, this time at the Fraenkel Gallery in San Francisco. Art Unlimited in Basel, Switzerland also included a large installation of work by Deschenes this past June.

Elena Demyanenko in collaboration with **Erika Mijlin** will premier a new multimedia piece entitled *Echo/Archive* at the Curtis R. Priem Experimental Media and Performing Arts Center in Troy, New

York. The piece incorporates asymmetrical portraits and fractured narratives that aggregate through the polyrhythmic organization of video, light, and live performance. The focus of the three-part, multimedia work is a dialog between female dance/movement artists of different aesthetic genealogies—women that bookend a generation in age and dance history. For more information on the performance visit <https://www.echo-archive.com>.

Sarah Harris published two new articles on Spanish comics and memory. “Blurring the Margins: *Ardalén* (2012) and Collective Memory in Spain” appeared in the Spanish academic journal *Brumal: Revista de investigación sobre lo fantástico*. Harris’s article, “I had not dared to remem-

ber': Trauma and Historical Memory in Recent Spanish Comics" appeared in a special forum dedicated to trauma and comics in *ImageText*—a peer-reviewed, open access journal with a focus on interdisciplinary comics studies.



Yoko Inoue has received a grant from the Japan Foundation for an exhibition project, *Tea Taste Democracy and Upside Down Objects*, at SPACES

in Cleveland, Ohio, where she is currently an artist-in-residence.



Jon Isherwood was a panelist at the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Canada where he discussed the work of Anthony

Caro. Isherwood also lectured on his own work and digital fabrication processes at William Paterson University in New Jersey this spring. His sculpture, *Metamorphic Resonance* was shown at the Ex Marmi Gallery in Pietrasanta, Italy last July. One of his new sculptures, *French Mist*, was recently installed at the Cass Foundation in Goodwood, UK.



During her spring sabbatical, **Mirka Prazak** was a visiting fellow at the Oakley Center for the Humanities and Social

Sciences at Williams College. Prazak has conducted follow-up research in rural Kenya, in colonial archives in Berlin, Germany, and at the Seventh Day Adventist world headquarters in suburban Maryland. Early in the summer she attended a peacebuilding institute at the Eastern Mennonite University in southern Vir-

ginia. Prazak's new book project will focus on how experiences and ideas of womanhood have changed in rural Africa from the precolonial to the colonial and postcolonial eras and will draw largely on a life history of a Kuria woman she has interviewed since the late 1980s. Prazak's ethnography, *Making the Mark*, which was released last year, was recommended by *The Washington Post* as part of their fourth annual summer series highlighting books that tackle important issues in African politics (see Bookshelf).



The Tarnation of Russell Colvin, directed by **Kirk Jackson**, opened the Dorset Theatre Festival's 40th anniversary season.

Stephen Shapiro has spent the last year on sabbatical working in the Archives of the Bastille on a rich series of documents about homosexual culture in eighteenth-century Paris. In addition to presenting work at a number of conferences, Shapiro was invited to give talks in Boston by the History Project and in Brest, France by the University of Brittany. He has written an article entitled "Louis de Bourbon ou le soleil maudit: Fashioning a Gay Grand Siècle," which reviews contemporary gay historical fictions of seventeenth-century France. Shapiro returned to campus this fall and is teaching a new course on Queer Spaces.



Anne Thompson's curatorial project, the I-70 Sign Show, was featured in an *Artforum* video interview in May. In July, Thompson was profiled by *The Organist*, the arts-and-culture podcast from McSweeney's and KCRW.



Bruce Williamson recently released a new trio CD with pianist Art

Lande and guitarist Khabu Doug Young, recorded in June. Williamson performed at Jazz at Lincoln Center with an ensemble that included pianist Fred Hersch, drummer John Hollenbeck, and vocalists Kurt Elling and Kate McGarry. The performance presented portions of Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, set to music by Fred Hersch. This month he is recording with pianist/composer Carmen Sandim for a 2018 album release.

MFA IN WRITING



This summer Penguin Publishing released the paperback edition of *The Kite and the String: How to Write with Spontaneity and Control—and Live to Tell the Tale* by **Alice Mattison**. The anthology *New Haven Noir*, published by Akashic Books, included Mattison's "Innovative Methods."

Crossing Borders, an anthology on translation edited by **Lynne Sharon Schwartz**, was released in November and published by Seven Stories Press.

Major Jackson won the 2016 Vermont Book Award for his fourth collection of poems, *Roll Deep*.

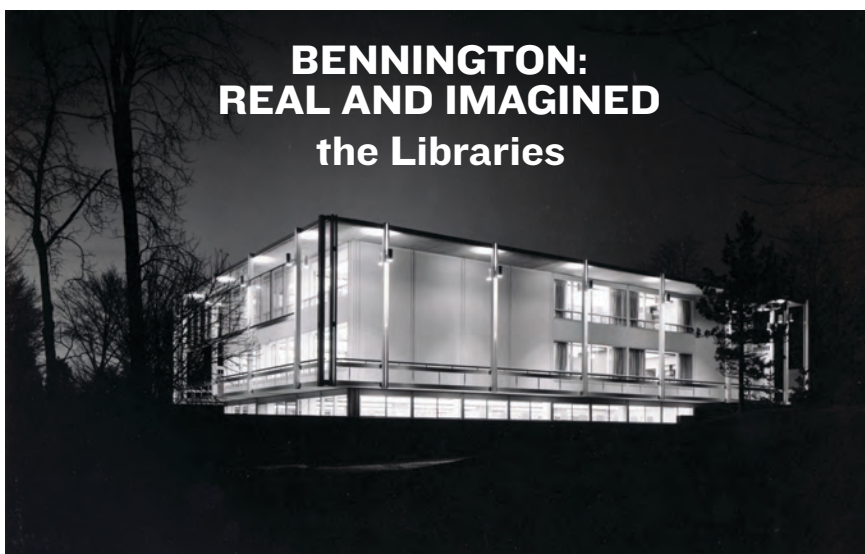
Jill McCorkle won The Thomas Wolfe Prize and Lecture at the University of North Carolina. Along with with director of programs **Megan Mayhew Bergman MFA '10** and **Jamie Quatro MFA '09**, McCorkle weighed-in on Southernness in literature for *Southern Cultures Magazine*. **B**

ALUMNI ONLINE CLASS

Over the span of the past 90 years there have been multiple designs for the campus and its buildings. This class taught by **Donald Sherefskin** will focus on the history of the library, from its first Ames and Dodge designs for the Monument Campus of 1927, to the 2006 proposed expansion by Allied Works Architects. Between these two designs, there were at least six other design proposals, including the Edward Clark Crossett Library.

For each class, there will be readings and a slide presentation exploring these designs, including their formal and theoretical precedents. Each week an assignment will be given focusing on a particular aspect of a design proposal. We will explore siting, geometry, light, structure, materials, and movement. Scaled architectural plans and Rhino 3-D software files will be made available to all.

There will be weekly readings and slide presentations to review and course participants are encouraged to make drawings, analytical diagrams, models, or written responses to weekly prompts. For a final assignment, we will invite participants to propose their vision for a new addition to the Crossett Library, guided by a brief prepared by our Dean of the Library, Oceana Wilson.



Bennington: Real and Imagined - The Libraries will run for seven weeks beginning the week of February 26, 2018 and ending the week of April 13, 2018. In the spring, course participants are invited to campus to share their work and to meet with students who were enrolled in the same class in the fall.

MATERIALS: Access to the internet.

COST: \$100. Travel and accommodations for the on-campus gathering are not included.

A faculty member at Bennington College since 1996, **Donald Sherefskin** practices architecture in New York and Vermont, and also pursues various graphic and product design ventures. He has taught at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, where he also headed the University's in-house architecture office at Mies van der Rohe's historic campus. He has participated in architectural juries at Harvard, MIT, McGill, and Pennsylvania State University, BArch, The Cooper Union; graduate work with Daniel Libeskind, Cranbrook Academy.

ALUMNI COOPERATIVE EVENTS

Look for Alumni Cooperative events, alumni performances, openings, and more in 2018. To learn more or suggest a gathering in your region, join us on Facebook or email: alumnicooperative@bennington.edu.



Keep in touch with the Alumni Cooperative on Facebook

NEW YORK: NYC Bennington Alumni Coop

BOSTON: Bennington Alumni Coop Boston

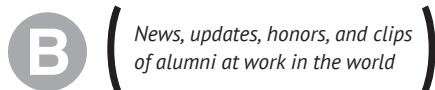
LA: Bennington Alumni Cooperative Los Angeles

SF: Bennington Alumni Cooperative - San Francisco Bay Area

PORTLAND: Portland Bennington Alumni Coop

SEATTLE: Seattle Bennington Alumni Group

DC: Bennington College Alumni Cooperative, Washington, D.C.



(News, updates, honors, and clips
of alumni at work in the world)

40s

The NGO, PCI-Media, led by **Rita Fredricks Salzman '45**, won a Webby award for the best environmental website. Visit wildfor.life to check it out.

Joan Alpert '47 recently returned from Prague where her son was awarded the Uwe Dieter Neue Award in chromatography chemistry.

Ella Russell Torrey '47 spoke with the *Chestnut Hill Local* about studying dance with Martha Graham at Bennington and her memories of working with, and learning from, Eleanor Roosevelt.

50s

This summer, in a *New York Times* op-ed, Amelia Earhart biographer **Susan Butler '53** weighed-in on alleged photo evidence and resurfaced theories of Earhart's fate, and why her disappearance and legacy remain a subject of public fascination 80 years later.

Frances Smith Cohen '53 is the Artistic Director for Center Dance Ensemble in Phoenix, co-director for Dance Theater West, and the Regional Director for Arizona Wolf Trap. She reports that she lost her life partner in 2009 but is surrounded by the love of her three children, two daughters-in-laws, three grandchildren, and hundreds of students—past and present.

Madi (Frances) Springer-Miller Kraus '54 is still skiing and going to art shows and operas.

This summer **Judith Wagner '55** appeared as Mote the Fairy in The Public Theater's Shakespeare in the Park production of a *Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Sheldon Appleton, the husband of **Elizabeth Green Appleton '55**, reported that Elizabeth

has been diagnosed with advanced Alzheimer's disease. Before the diagnosis, Sheldon wrote that her life was crowded with many professional and personal accomplishments including teaching dance at several universities, award-winning work with emotionally troubled children, as well as volunteer efforts and travel that brought her around the world.

The Reynolds School of Journalism at the University of Nevada has announced a scholarship named in honor of retired professor **Bourne Gaffill Morris '58**. Morris taught journalism for 26 years at the school and retired to write fiction. Three of her novels have been published by Henry Press.

Elizabeth Durant '59 and **Rebecca Stout Bradbury '59** "get together twice a year to play."

60s

"The time has come to close down the small indie fiction publishing company that has been my avocation since I retired from the University of Alaska Press," **Carla Ostergren Helfferich '61** writes. "McRoy & Blackburn's penultimate book is the novella, *Colors of the Morning Sky*. It is the fictional biography of an Alaska fisherman whose life is upended by a remarkable catch from the cold ocean."

Arlene Heyman '63 writes that her critically acclaimed book, *Scary Old Sex*, is now out in paperback. The book has been featured in several national media outlets and has been translated into Dutch, Taiwanese and French. Heyman continues to practice psychiatry in New York City and is working on a new novel.

Barbara Rohdie '63 is a docent on the High Line in New York. In September, her garden was featured in *Garden Design* magazine.

"I just celebrated another birthday (76). Birthdays are good," **Ellen Kardon '63** writes. "I'm still living in same house in Weston; 44 years. Unfortunately, my beloved husband died

three years ago. Busy with family, friends. Fond memories of Bennington. **Susie Fogg '63**, where are you?"

Last summer, **Deborah Arnold '64** participated in an exhibition about the cosmos titled *Eclipse*. The show featured work from five artists at the Sivarulrasa Gallery in Ontario, CA.

In March, **Liz Blum '64** wrote a piece and recorded a segment on Vermont Public Radio, "Counterculture Women in Vermont."

Elena Delbanco '64 published *The Silver Swan* with Other Press NYC in 2015. She recently retired following 30 years of teaching at the University of Michigan Ford School of Public Policy.

Stage West in Fort Worth, TX, revived *Ann* (*The Ann Richards Play*), the critically acclaimed, award-winning, and Tony-nominated one-woman show written and performed by **Holland Taylor '64**.

The work of **Maren Hassinger '69** was featured in the groundbreaking exhibition *We Wanted A Revolution: Black Radical Women 1965-1985* at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. In July, she restaged her iconic 1982 performance "Pink Trash," which explores ideas of public space and ethical citizenship, in Prospect Park.

Dance Magazine covered recent honors for **Liz Lerman '69**, and praised the way her dances enter the political conversation.

The New York Times published an essay by **Sara Lukinson '69** in their *Ties* column, about life after the loss of her sister.

70s

Joanna Cobb Biermann '70 is a professor of musicology at the University of Alabama. "My husband Peter and I spend summers in Germany, where I work at the Beethoven

SI

FORTIES FIFTIES SIXTIES SEVENTIES

RECENT RELEASES

(Recently released alumni work)

Wilma Kantrowich Chandler '60, P '89 released two books this year, *Directing Theater 101: 10 Steps to Successful Productions for New Directors and Regional Theater Companies* and *The Night Bridge*, a poetry collection.

Ruth Doan MacDougall '61 has added two more sequels to her Snowy Series: *A Gunthwaite Girl* and *Site Fidelity*. They continue the story that began with *The Cheerleader*, a novel set in the 1950s.

Maya Healers: A Thousand Dreams a photo book by **Fran Antmann '69** was released by Nirala Publications and was a 2017 finalist for the Lucie Prize.

A photography collection by **Margo Davis '65**, *Antigua 1967-1973*, was released by Nazraeli Press. Email orders.antigua@gmail.com to purchase a copy.

In August, **Florian Louisoder '82** released the novel *Shock Wave*.

Heart Smart for Women written by **Dr. Jennifer Mieres '82** was released in October by Onward Publishing.

Radha Marcum '96 had her collection of poems, *Bloodline*, published by 3: A Taos Press.

Hunger for Salt, a book of poetry by **Elaine Fletcher Chapman MFA '99**, was published by Saint Julian Press in May.

Rust Belt Boy: Stories of an American Childhood by **Paul Hertneky MFA '01** was released in May by Bauhan Publishing.

Leah Tieger '03 has just released her first poetry chapbook, *We and She, You and Then, You Again*, published by Finishing Line Press.

Dirt Roads and Diner Pie by **Shonna Milliken Humphrey MFA '04** was published in August by Central Recovery Press.

Going to Wings, a memoir by **Sandra Worsham MFA '06** was released from Third Lung Press in August.

Woody Lewis MFA '07 published a mini-collection of short stories, *Three Lost Souls: Stories about race, class and loneliness*, which is available in paperback, and as an e-book at gothamlane.com.

A Filament Burns in Blue Degrees by **Kendra Tanacea MFA '07** was published by Lost Horse Press early this year.

A cookbook by **Andrew Barton '09**, *The Myrtlewood Cookbook: Pacific Northwest Home Cooking* was independently published and later picked up for a new edition by Sasquatch Books, distributed by Penguin/Random House and republished in October.

The first essay collection, *Everything We Don't Know* by **Aaron Gilbreath MFA '11**, was released in November by Curbside Splendor Publishing.



ELIZABETH COLEMAN VISIONARY LEADERSHIP AWARD

Ben Hall '04 returned to campus for Family/Life After Bennington (LAB) Weekend to receive the 2017 Elizabeth Coleman Visionary Leadership Award. Since graduating, Hall has created an equitable workplace at his restaurant, presented to congress in support of programs that alleviate food insecurity, and provided free soup to the Detroit Public School System. Visit the Bennington College YouTube channel to watch and listen to his conversation with CAPA director **Susan Sgorbati '72, MFA '86**.

Honeysuckle Drift by **Virginia Johnson MFA '12** was published in January.

Lost in Arcadia by **Sean Gandert MFA '16** was published by 47North in May.

Sally's Genius, a **Sally Liberman Smith '50** biography written by Brooks Clark was published this summer.

Botticelli's Muse by **Deborah Bluestein '65** was released by The New Press in July. Artnet news identified it as the Best Book of 2017.



(News, updates, honors and clips
of alumni at work in the world)



Archive. We have two daughters: Elizabeth and Rebecca. Many fond memories of Bennington friends, especially **Erica Clark '69** and **Ellie Segal '69**."

Andréa Vaucher '70 read an excerpt from her new novel in progress, *Venice/Venice*, for *52 Men the Podcast*.

Andrea Woodner '70 stepped down from the board of the Design Trust in 2015. She began a new enterprise, Hercules Art/Studio Program, which provides affordable studio space and a collaborative work environment for recent MFA graduates in and around New York (www.herculesart.com). With Design Trust co-founder Claire Weisz (WXY Studio), Andrea completed a study called *Sharing The City*. The study examines the "public space movement" of the past 20-25 years in New York.

This summer Vermont Public Radio commentator **Charlotte Albright '72** reflected on her Bennington commencement ceremony 45 years ago in a radio essay.

Marsha Winsryg '72 is at work developing women's economic initiatives in Livingstone, Zambia. She has helped turn the Zambezi Doll Project (zambezidolls.com) into a worker-owned business. The dolls are individually hand sewn by a 12 woman cooperative and will be available in five skin tones. They will be offered to hospitals, schools, museums, and therapists.

The first major retrospective exhibition of work by **Philemona Williamson '73** is on view at Montclair Art Museum in New Jersey until January 7, 2018. Her work was also shown at the June Kelly Gallery in October and was included as part of the exhibition, "Converging Voices: Gender and Identity" at the Hofstra University Museum. Philemona was a visiting artist at Hunter College, where she taught narrative painting this last year.

Bruce Berman '74, chairman and chief executive of Village Roadshow Pictures and "possibly Hollywood's most ardent photography collector" spoke with *The New York Times* about his long-standing passion for buying photos, cultivated from his own study of the medium while a student.

Nina Butts '74 has retired and is living in Santa Fe, NM where she reports that she is "doing absolutely nothing." Reach her at seasageblvd@gmail.com.

Deborah Kaufmann '74 has been a healthcare clown for more than 30 years. She was one of the first members of Big Apple Circus Clown Care Unit and former associate creative director of community programs at Big Apple. In 2016, Deborah co-founded Healthy Humor, a nonprofit performing arts organization whose performers humor and comfort hospitalized children. This fall she headed out to Australia to teach future "Clown Doctors" for The Humour Foundation.

Susanna Reich '75 finished her eighth children's book (see Recent Releases). She writes, "I've been having fun leading sing-alongs at book signings, accompanied by my husband, Gary Golio, on banjo. I live in the Hudson Valley and would love to hear from classmates."

Julie Neidich '76 is now an associate professor in pathology and immunology and director of the cytogenomics and molecular pathology lab at Washington University in St. Louis, MO. She writes, "It is unusual for many reasons, not the least of which is that I'm not a pathologist nor an immunologist, but a pediatrician and geneticist." Julie would love to hear from any Bennington folks in St. Louis.

Tim Daly '79 starred alongside his sister, Tyne Daly, in Theresa Rebeck's drama, *Downstairs*, which opened the Dorset Theatre Festival's 2017-18 season.

Lorca Peress '79 directed *Temple of the Souls*, a musical that was chosen as a Next Link Project in New York Music Festival 2017. It premiered at the The Acorn Theatre.

80s

Peter Kaizer '80 is a lead technologist/UXUI designer for Booz Allen Hamilton in Laurel, MD. He writes, "I spend most of my days working to make large-scale public facing

federal government websites easier to use. In non-professional news, I had the great joy of walking my daughter Hannah down the aisle at her wedding in June and got to repeat the joy with my daughter Isabel in October."

Paintings by **Corinne Robbins '82** were on display at Carrie Haddad Gallery in Hudson, NY last summer. **Jennifer Blaikie '84**, **Catherine Croner '85** and **Lindsey Brown '85** attended the artist's reception.

Shoshana (Suzanne) Ilene Schiller '83 was recently listed as one of the Top 50: 2017 Women Pennsylvania SuperLawyers™. Shoshana is furthering diversity in the profession, recently spearheading a new initiative to bring together women from around the country who practice in the niche area of complex Superfund litigation. She proudly serves on the board of the Philadelphia Diversity Law Project and writes, "I am particularly excited to add a 'P '21' after my name when my child Ellery began their freshman year at Bennington this fall."

A cellist, composer, teacher, producer and writer, **Lori Goldston '85** is busy touring throughout the US and abroad. This year Lori composed and performed a new work for cello and orchestra, commissioned and performed by the BBC Scottish Symphony for the Glasgow Tectonics Festival. In 2016 she returned to campus to perform a live film score to accompany Clyde Petersen's film *Torrey Pines*. Lori plans to release two solo albums this year.

In February, Navona Records released *Clay Jug* by composer **Edie Hill '85**. The CD is a collection of Hill's work composed between 1999-2015.

Melissa Hall '86 has spent the last 18 years in the sand hills of North Carolina. She is now assistant to the Artistic Director of The Carolina Philharmonic.

Chris Boscia '87 invites all alums from all classes to the third "Study Group in the Desert" reunion in downtown Las Vegas. The reunion will begin Wednesday, February 20 and end on Sunday, February 24. Past reunions (2013 and 2015) have convened more than 75 alumni

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and included poetry readings, performances, BBQ's, mountain hikes, pool parties, midnight breakfasts, film showings, brunches, and much more. For details, discount hotel info, itinerary information visit their Facebook page www.facebook.com/groups/55792554362/ or contact Chris at bosciaemail@gmail.com.

90s

Jenni Person '90 traveled to Aix-en-Provence on a cruise and arranged a Cezanne tour only to find that the guide, **Pamela Morton '76**, was a Bennington alum. She writes, "In true Bennington style, we spent time together in Cezanne's historic studio."

Jolien Schukking '90 sends greetings from Strasbourg, France where they have been elected judge in the Netherlands at the European Court of Human Rights.

Elissa Jane Mastel '91 relocated to Vail, CO with her 15-year-old son to teach business at Battle Mountain High School. The move comes after Elissa obtained a BA and accelerated MAT at Bard College last year.

After attending her 25th reunion on campus last year, **Amanda Frank '92** did more than reconnect with old friends—she bought a 1750s farm house and barn in nearby Sandgate, VT. Amanda still lives in West Roxbury, MA with her teenage daughter. She is the Director of Alumni Affairs and Special Events at the Brimmer and May School.

Karina (Melanson) Mitchell '94 was a panelist at Made in NY Media Center where she discussed her interactive art installation, "One Million Is Nothing." The installation allows participants to create a unique animated digital artwork on demand and offers one million potential visual outcomes for the audience participants. "If you're still weird," Karina writes, "Reach out to me at karina@membit.com."

Erica-Lynn Huberty '95 has been busy writing and making art in Sag Harbor, where she lives with **Alex Huberty '95** and within a few miles

of at least ten other alums. She recently mounted several on-site art installations at the Parrish Art Museum, Sag Harbor Whaling Museum, Matta, and has exhibited at several galleries. She writes regularly for *Edible East End* and *Huffington Post*, most recently about the books of Grey Gardens.

After seven years as a criminal appeals and habeas corpus attorney, **Lisa Sciandra '95** closed her law practice and has started a new job as an attorney editor for the California Supreme Court.

Rachel Whitman Groves '96 is the proud mother of two-year-old son Daniel. She teaches theatre and recently shot the recurring role of Beth in the new TNT hit series *Claws*. Tune-in.

David Levavi '96 is pursuing a Master of Science in health services administration at the University of South Dakota. He would be happy to hear from other members of the class of '96. Reach him at www.davidlevavi.tel.

Taiya Shiner '98 and partner welcomed their son Steven Edward into this world last August.

00s

Matthew Pillischer '00 writes, "The best thing in life right now is my toddler, Asa. Also doing really fulfilling work as Director of Racial & Social Justice for YWCA Delaware. Still livin' and lovin' in the burbs of Philly."

Liana Conyers '03 teaches dance at Bard High School Early College in Newark, NJ. In May, she presented two pieces of work in collaboration with sound designer **Justin Vitello '04** for "Dance and Process" at The Kitchen in New York City.

Work by **Heather Dewey-Hagborg '03** was featured in an exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in Paris. "Mutations/ Créations: Imprimer le monde" brought together a younger generation of artists, designers and architects who make use of 3D printing as an analytical and experimental tool.

Eric Unger '03 released an album that was recorded in 2001 by **Katrina Monta '03** and **Jonathan Mann '04** in the Jennings mansion. You can find the remastered album at ericunger.bandcamp.com, as well as on Spotify and other streaming services.

Nicole Czapinski '06 lives and works at the Vermont Studio Center as a staff artist. She encourages anyone with an upcoming residency at VSC to email her at nicoleczapinski@gmail.com.

Sarah McAbee '07 married her longtime partner Kevin Mooney in June. She writes, "We were thrilled that more than a dozen Kilpatriots and other Bennington people from near and far were able to join us deep in the heart of Texas. The bridal party included **Emi (Pimentel) Tice '07**, **Luna Galassini '08**, and **Brian Pietras '07**. **Sarah (Crow) Biracree '07**, **Ryan Biracree '07**, and **Mary Terrier '10** gave the ceremony readings."

Austin Powers '08 writes, "I ran away from America after graduating and have been living in China for the past 10 years. My work is part tech, part art, and a lot of marketing. My life is part tech, part art, and a lot of travel."

Anna Stallmann '08 and her husband welcomed their son Jesse Charles Woolf in April.

Andrew Barton '09 had his first book published (see Recent Releases) and continues to teach preschool and run the small press, Two Plum Press, which he started in 2013. Andrew and **Sofie Sherman-Burton '13** have been refurbishing a house on the outskirts of Portland, OR where they are setting up a homestead with extensive gardens.

Filmmaker and photographer, **Christie Goshe '09** just launched Tiny Oak Media in Oakland, CA. She also co-founded and helps run CreativeMornings Oakland. In August she traveled to Japan and Taiwan.

In June, **Hannah Wolfe '09** completed her Master's in Computer Science at the University of California Santa Barbara. She is continuing at UCSB for her PhD in Media Arts and Technology, where she will focus her research on human robot interaction

AWARDS & HONORS

The National Endowment for the Arts honored **Kathryn Posin's '65** dance company with a \$10,000 Art Works award.

Joanna Pousette-Dart '68 was one of nine artists in 2017 to receive a Art Award from the American Academy of Arts & Letters.

Tim Daly '79 is the 2017 recipient of the Unbridled Charitable Foundation Inc. National Arts Advocates Award.

SJ Chiro '87 won the Grand Jury Award at the Seattle International Film Festival last month for her film *Lane 1974*, and was selected for an international debut at the Shanghai International Film Festival.

The popular design blog, *Remodelista* awarded **Cemre Durusoy '97** the 2017 Considered Design Award for Best Professional Kitchen.

Adnan Iftexhar '97 was selected as a 2017 Google Innovator.

A short story collection, *Unaccompanied Minors*, by **Alden Jones MFA '01** won the Lascaux Book Prize. It was the third prize the book has won. Her third book, *Cheryl Strayed's Wild: Afterwords*, a hybrid work of criticism and memoir, will be published by *Fiction Advocate*.

Dancer and choreographer **Melinda Ring MFA '01** was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Cosmo Whyte '05 was one of four artists to be named a finalist for the \$50,000 Hudgens Prize.

"Something for a Young Woman," a story **Genevieve Plunkett '10** originally published in *New England Review* was chosen by **Laura Furman '68** to be included in the 2017 O. Henry Prize Stories.

Shawna Kay Rodenberg MFA '12 won the 2016 Jean Ritchie Fellowship in Appalachian Writing awarded by Lincoln Memorial University.

Rachel Feingold MFA '14 was awarded a 2017 Literature Translation Fellowship by the National Endowment for the Arts, jointly with Roman Kostovski, to complete an English translation of Czech writer Hana Andronikova's novel *Heaven Has No Ground*.

"Planes," a story by **Libby Flores MFA '14** placed second in this year's *Hayden's Ferry Review* Flash Fiction contest.

Cassie Pruyn MFA '14 won the 2017 Walt McDonald First Book Prize in Poetry. Her book-length collection, *Lena*, was published this spring by Texas Tech University Press.

Erin Kate Ryan MFA '14 won a 2017 Minnesota Emerging Writer grant. She is also a 2016 Minnesota State Arts Board Artists Initiative grantee. Both awards support work on her novel about Paula Jean Welden, the sophomore who went missing from Bennington College in 1946.

Carlos Mendez-Dorantes '15 was one of 60 students nationwide to be awarded a Ford Foundation Predoc-toral Fellowship by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine, to support his graduate research into cancer at City of Hope.

Lydia Martín MFA '16 won The Ploughshares Emerging Writer's Award for her story "The Adjustment Act."

In August, the Academy of American Poets announced that **Frances Revel '17** won the Promising Young Poet Award.

"The Promotion," a story by **Grace Singh Smith MFA '17**, was listed as a "notable" story in the *Best American Short Stories 2016*. It was originally published in the *Santa Monica Review*.

Five alumni from Bennington's MFA in Writing program were distinguished in *The Best American Essays 2017* for their notable essays published in the previous year: **Megan Galbraith MFA '15**: "Sin Will Find You Out," *Catapult*; **Peter Grandbois MFA '03**: "Honor," *North Dakota Quarterly*; Faculty member **Dinah Lenney MFA '03**: "A Longer Reach," *Los Angeles Review of Books*; **Sue Repko MFA '12**: "The Gun Show," *The Southeast Review*; **Walter Robinson MFA '14**: "This Will Sting and Burn," *The Sun*.

and artificial creativity. This summer, she presented an interactive art installation at the International Symposium of Electronic Arts (ISEA) in Bogota, Colombia.

10s

Anastasia Clarke '10 is currently pursuing an MFA in Electronic Music and Recording Media at Mills College.

The widely anticipated sophomore album—*What Now* by Sylvan Esso (a duo including lead singer **Amelia Meath '10**)—was released in February. It has been covered extensively, including in *The New York Times* and on NPR.

Sara Judy '11 began a PhD program in English Literature at the University of Notre Dame this fall.

Eleanor Thom '12 is pursuing a graduate degree in Landscape Architecture with a focus in historic preservation and conservation at the

University of Florida. She is a chair of her local Planned Parenthood's Leadership Action Team and lives in an old house with a porch swing.

Veronica O'Leary '12 is working towards receiving her M.Ed in Autism Studies and Applied Behavior Analysis. She is a behavior analyst just outside of Boston, MA. She was pleased to report that the literary magazine *Hollow* recently published one of her poems.

Naomi Washer '12 is designing new project-based writing courses at Oak Meadow, a

THOUSANDS TENS OF THOUSANDS

progressive distance-learning school. She is publisher and editor-in-chief of *Ghost Proposal*, a post-genre literary journal and small press. Naomi recently completed a residency in writing at the Corporation of Yaddo and is at work on two lyric essay collections; one on the Progressive Education Movement and one on indigenous/colonial histories of the first towns settled in New England. She lives in Brattleboro, Vermont.

In the four years since graduation, **Amanda Buckley '13** moved from New Jersey to New Hampshire to Massachusetts to Illinois to Pennsylvania to New York. She's packed a lot into her post-graduation years including performing in theater productions, enrolling in a class at Harvard, speaking at a conference, taking up several new instruments, bartending, podcasting, and recording music in her basement. She has also managed personal health struggles, and reports that more than anything else, she cherishes the relationships with her family and friends.

Abby Neale '13 recently obtained her Masters in Art Education from MassArt. She is working on various projects at the intersection of art, social justice, and education and is involved in Boston's Standing Up for Racial Justice Arts Working Group and other social justice efforts in her community.

Anna Rogovoy '13 lives in Brooklyn, manages a toy store, and is working on a multi-year dance project commissioned by the Oye Group (aka Brooklyn Gypsies), directed by **Modesto Flako Jimenez '06**, whom she met at Bennington in 2015 during an alumni panel.

Verses at Work, a documentary co-produced by **Gregory Thompson '13** was shown last year at the Los Angeles Brazilian Film Festival and was screened at the Harlem International Film Festival in the fall.

Kelly Nichols-Hoppe '14 left her work as city operations manager for Postmates to accept a position at Wonder Research, where she is the director of growth.

Mariam Shah '14 waited 11 years to attend Bennington College graduating with only one

marginal pass at 35. She now has a degree. Her closest friends are more than 12 years younger. This means she's very cool. She has lost more than 34 pounds since graduating and can tie her shoelaces without inducing an angina attack. In 2016 she was able to pay for three months of rent on her own. Shah finally dated some good-looking men discovering, and happily accepting, that she is shallow. After seven years of living in Bennington she moved to New York in March. In September she had the opportunity to show off her Pakistani culinary prowess hosting a pop-up kitchen in Brooklyn. Shah hopes that by the time this is printed *The New York Times* is stalking her business "garam garam" on Instagram.

Me, More Normal, a one woman show by **Tenara Calem '15**, was staged at the Art Church of West Philadelphia in June. Tenara and director **Krista Thorp '15** will partner with the Arc of Philadelphia, an advocacy organization for communities with intellectual disabilities, to offer inclusive theater workshops.

Alanna Cooper '15 has joined the Speak About It team as a touring actor-educator. Speak About It is a Maine-based nonprofit that offers sexual assault prevention and consent education through performance, narrative, and dialogue. Educators tour schools across the country, engaging students in creating lasting change on their campuses. Educators use true stories written by real young adults to talk frankly about sex, consent, bystander intervention, and sexual assault.

In February, *Mothership Zeta* published "Montreal, 2014," a short story by **Ray Stevens '15**, first written for Becky Godwin's short story workshop.

Karen Trop '16 enters her second year of a radio producer fellowship at KNOM Radio Mission in Nome, Alaska. She writes, "Particular highlights of postgraduate life in rural Alaska include traveling for stories across the region by plane, boat, helicopter, snowmobile, ATV, and of course, dogsled."

The New York Times spoke with **Lily Houghton '17** about "magical objects" from her late father's office. Her father, Signature Theatre

founder James Houghton, passed away last year.

Emma Maasch '17, **Emma Plotkin '17**, **Geoffrey Ballinger '17**, and **Lauren Roshan '17** were selected to participate in a seven week course and workshop at ASU, in collaboration with the Center for Curatorial Innovation and funded by the Ford Foundation. ASU and Bennington students worked together with artists and activists to use art and design thinking to reimagine the future of arts and culture in America.

Mitra Haque '17 and **Sarah Shames '17** along with other students in the Art in the Public Realm class had their work shown at Bennington Museum, as part of an exhibition focused on advances in 3D digital design. Also on view in this exhibition was Chestnut, a 3D printed prototype created in the class-slash-start-up Future Studio; **Rohail Altaf '17** and Sarah Shames '17 were part of the team.

Dado Čobo '17 was one of five Bennington students from Bosnia who explored the intersections between peacebuilding and theatre in their work with The Center for Peacebuilding in Sanski Most, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Annika Kristiansen '17 has been a regular contributor to the Sierra Club following her internship with the group last winter. Annika writes on pressing environmental issues.

Sarah Hamilton '18 wrote an op-ed in Minnesota's *Star-Tribune* on the pervasiveness of body-shaming in today's political discourse. The article was inspired by an assignment in David Bond's The First Hundred Days course taught last year.

The Deli, which highlights emerging local music, favorably reviewed an album by **Jack Labbe '18**, which was completed in collaboration with **Rohan Edwards '18**, **Dana Foote '19**, **Paris Parks '19**, and **Griffin Manos '18**.

The latest project from **Asad Malik '19**, *Holograms from Syria* was reported on by *Vice*. The project brought haunting holographic images of the ravages of the Syrian Civil War into familiar contexts, starting with Bennington's own VAPA building.



(News, updates, honors, and clips
of alumni at work in the world)

MFA's

Gail Hosking MFA '97 published two essays: "Recovery" in *Upstreet: A Literary Magazine* (Summer 2016); and "Girl With Green Hair Bow Figurine" in *Ellipsis* (Spring 2016). Her poems also appeared in *The Big Window Review* and *Easy Street* this fall.

Elaine Fletcher Chapman MFA '99 is a staff member with the MFA in Writing program and has released a volume of poetry (see Recent Releases). The book trailer and poetry videos produced by **Laura Lipson MFA '18** was chosen as the "Trailer of the Day" by Shelf Awareness.

Mary Beth Ellis Hunter MFA '02 won the All Souls Retreat Writing Scholarship.

John Coats MFA '06 reviewed *Kingdoms in the Air: Dispatches from the Far Away* by MFA in Writing faculty member **Bob Shacochis**. He also wrote an article "To Live in Deep Waters" for *Consequence Magazine*.

Stephen Page MFA '08 had his poem, "Kitchen Haiku," published in *brass bell*.

A poem by **Albert Abonado MFA '10**, "How to Unbend The Tongue," was featured in *Apogee's* September issue, and three more of his poems appeared in *Public Pool*. In the fall, Albert gathered MFA alumni living in Rochester for drinks and a talk. "Our ranks keep growing!"

Judith Hertog MFA '10 was a runner-up in the 2016 New Letters Literary Awards for her essay, "Jerusalem Syndrome."

In a piece on NPR, **Michelle Mercer MFA '10** highlighted the continued sexism in the jazz world.

Ellen Collett MFA '11 wrote an essay "Undue Familiarity" that was published in the September edition of *The Sun*.

Kathy Stevenson MFA '11 wrote an essay titled "Phillip Lopate's Handkerchief" for *Brevity*.

Michael M. Meguid MFA '12 published "The LeRoy Catastrophe: A story of death, determination, and the importance of nutrition in medicine," in *Columbia Medical Review*. Two

other essays, "The Colors of Pride" and "It Takes a Team" were published in *Hektoen International: A Journal of Medical Humanities*.

Maryland State Arts Council for Creative Nonfiction grant recipient **Barrett Warner MFA '13**, penned "Three Men and One Dead Animal," which was nominated for a Best of the Net award by *The Adroit Journal*. "Sit and Discuss the Reflections," a review of *Antiquity* by **Michael Homolka MFA '08**, appeared in *Consequence Magazine*.

Ani Kazarian MFA '14 reviewed Danuta Hinc's *To Kill the Other* in her essay "The Idea of Other" for *Consequence Magazine*.

Jennifer Miller MFA '14 has poems included in *Hayden's Ferry Review* and in *Sycamore Review*.

"Needlework," a poem by **Emily Mohn-Slate MFA '14** was nominated by the *Tupelo Quarterly* for the Best of the Net anthology.

Kelly Browne MFA '15 had her short story, "Toucan," published in *Ascent*, the literary journal of Concordia College.

Linda Michel-Cassidy MFA '15 had a series of stories published in *Bridge Eight* this spring. She has three pieces out this fall in *the museum of americana*, and several reviews and interviews in *The Rumpus*, *Electric Literature*, and *Entropy Magazine*.

"Writerly Fingerprints: Syntax as Style," by **Colleen Olle MFA '15**, appeared in the September issue of *The Writer's Chronicle*.

"On Living with Geese," by **Susan Pagani MFA '15**, was published in *Switchback*.

The essay "Stay Put" by **Katie Powers MFA '15** was published in *River Teeth's Beautiful Things*.

"On Becoming a Freshman," a poem by **Jayne Guertin Schlott MFA '15** has been published in *Brain Teen* 2016. Her poem "Snow Angel" was published in *Literary Mama's* January issue.

Miriam Camitta MFA '16 received Honorable Mention in the May/June *Glimmer Train* Emerging Writers Contest.

Amber Caron MFA '16 wrote "Frontload the Strangeness: On Mark Slouka's 'Dog'" for her "From the Archives" blog series at *Ploughshares*.

A new story by **Kevin Fitton MFA '16**, "Something Worthy of His Shame," appeared in *The Indianola Review* in September.

An essay by **Jean Hey MFA '16**, "Behind My Mother and Mandela," was published in *Solstice Magazine*.

"Forgive us Our Sins but Not Theirs: On Kundiman," an essay by **Katherinna Mar MFA '16** was published in *Mangal Media*.

Namrata Poddar MFA '16 wrote "Is 'Show Don't Tell' a Universal Truth or a Colonial Relic," for *Lithub*.

keep us posted

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You can submit your Class Note in one of three ways:

1. by email to classnotes@bennington.edu or magazine@bennington.edu
2. online at bennington.edu (click on "Alumni & Families," "Connect," then "Share Your News")
3. by mail to the Office of Institutional Advancement, Bennington College, One College Drive, Bennington, VT 05201-6003

Please note: Due to space constraints, *Bennington* reserves the right to edit and condense Class Note submissions. **B**

While every effort has been made to include class notes submitted on time for this issue, we apologize for any omissions. Please inform the Office of Institutional Advancement (800-598-2979) if we have omitted your class note in error. Thank you.



JUDITH BAILEY JONES '45

Legendary editor Judith Jones—whose career included introducing the world to Anne Frank and Julia Child among others—died August 2, 2017 in her Vermont home. She was 93.

Judith spent her life traveling and sampling both cuisine and culture from France, Italy, Israel, the American South, and beyond. After graduating from Bennington, she went to work for Doubleday in Paris. It was there that she rescued *The Diary of Anne Frank* from the reject pile. “I read it all day,” she remembered in interviews. “When my boss returned, I told him, ‘We have to publish this book.’ He said, ‘What? That book by that kid?’” Unrelenting, she brought the diary to the attention of Doubleday’s New York office, where she convinced the publisher there was a market for it in America. The diary would go on to sell more than 30 million copies.

When she returned to New York, she began working at Alfred A. Knopf—spending the next 50 years there, retiring as the senior editor and vice president. At Knopf, she again championed an obscure and previously rejected text called *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*. With Judith’s support and enthusiastic backing, Julia Child’s work became a seminal cookbook and a major cultural force, opening the door to a golden age of food writing in America.

In her long and storied career at Knopf she helped launch many careers, among them James Beard, Marcella Hazan, and Madhur Jaffrey and others, as well as editing some of the 20th century’s most notable authors including John Updike, Ann Tyler, Langston Hughes, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus.

A prolific writer herself, Judith co-authored many cookbooks with her husband Evan Jones and others. In her later years, she wrote the memoir, *The Tenth Muse: My Life in Food* (Knopf, 2007), as well as two cookbooks—*The Pleasures of Cooking for One* (Knopf, 2009), and *Love Me, Feed Me: Sharing with Your Dog the Everyday Good Food You Cook and Enjoy* (Knopf, 2014). Her work has been honored with multiple lifetime achievement awards, including the James Beard Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award in 2006.

In addition to generations of grateful authors, privileged dinner party guests, and enthusiastic readers, she is survived by four stepchildren, five grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

LYDIA PHELPS STOKES KATZENBACH '45

A remembrance by John Katzenbach, son

Lydia Phelps Stokes Katzenbach entertained statesmen and senators, sat beside queens and princesses, and treated a wide range of patients, from Wall Street executives to Hollywood movie stars, in her psychoanalytic practice. She died on August 27, 2017 at the age of 95.

Lydia was born to a famous editorial writer and his wife (the first woman ever to be allowed to cover the New York State Legislature for the New York *Knickerbocker News*). She had a life that seemed to go through several incarnations. A rebellious, iconoclastic young woman, she prized the comment she received as an elementary grade student. A teacher wrote: “Lydia is a natural born leader, except in the wrong direction.” She kept this comment with her throughout her entire life.

After her graduation from Bennington, in the immediate aftermath of World War II, Lydia was introduced to Nicholas Katzenbach—and they were married not long after. Nicholas would go on to become the Assistant Attorney General in John F. Kennedy’s administration, where he was a prime figure in desegregating southern

B

schools. Following President Kennedy's assassination, he became Attorney General for Lyndon B. Johnson, and subsequently Under Secretary of State.

During this time, Lydia Katzenbach combined social works with socializing. She helped found what was then called The Negro Student Fund in Washington, D.C. This provided scholarships to students of color in need of financial assistance. She remained on their board for years. Lydia also became famous as an entertainer. An editorial cartoon in the *Washington Evening Star* depicted a distraught woman in evening dress yelling at her mousy husband with the caption: "How can I expect Lydia to invite me with a baboon of a husband who can't do the monkey?"

At her dinner table, there were likely to be any number of diplomats, congress people, journalists, and artists. On one government trip, with her husband to London, she sat just one chair away from the Queen of England. Asparagus were served. The Queen took her asparagus in her fingers to eat, while Lydia began to cut hers with a knife and fork. A British minister leaned over and whispered to her: "If the Queen can eat with her fingers, so can you..." to which she confidently replied, "The Queen can eat her asparagus the way she wants. I'll eat mine the way I want." Scandal was avoided with difficulty.

Following the end of the Johnson Administration in 1969, Lydia and Nicholas moved to New York City. It was there that she went back to school. She first obtained a Master's in Social Work from Columbia University. She followed this degree with intense training at The Freudian Society in Manhattan, in order to become a lay psychoanalyst. Lydia opened her practice in midtown New York and saw patients there for many years. There are at least three different books dedicated to her. She did not fully retire until her late 80s.

She is survived by two sisters, Anne Phelps Stokes Ketcham and Elizabeth Phelps Stokes Hawkins; four children, sons Christopher and John and daughters Mimi and Anne deBelleville Katzenbach; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

HOLLY BLOCK '80

Holly Block—a renowned and pioneering arts leader—died on October 6, 2017 in her Manhattan home. She was 58.

Holly was the executive director of the Bronx Museum of the Arts for more than a decade. Under her leadership the museum earned international acclaim, quadrupled annual attendance from 25,000 to 100,000 visitors, and propelled community revitalization. In 2011, Holly oversaw the launch of smARTpower, a partnership with the State Department that enabled U.S. artists to work with youth and local artists in sites around the world. That same year the museum staged its first biennial. A year later it eliminated its admissions fee, opening access to art to many thousands of local visitors for whom the museum was once less accessible.

Holly's emphasis on community outreach, education, inclusivity, and international connections was a theme throughout her career. Before joining the Bronx Museum of the Arts, she served as executive director of Art in General—a leading arts organization in lower Manhattan dedicated to commissioning and presenting contemporary art. During her 18 years leading Art in General, Holly exhibited and presented the work of more than 4,000 artists, and firmly established herself as a dynamic force in the contemporary art world.

In 2013, Holly was appointed co-commissioner of the United States Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale. In 2003, she served as a co-commissioner for the Cairo Biennial. And in 1994, she led a group of curators, museum directors, artists, and critics to Cuba during the embargo to attend the Fifth Havana Biennial. She later authored *Art Cuba: The New Generation* (Abrams, 2001), a comprehensive survey on contemporary art from Cuba. Block also staged a groundbreaking exchange with Museo Nacional de Bellas Artes in 2015, a show dubbed "Wild Noise / Ruido Salvaje" that brought Bronx Museum works to Havana. At the time of her passing, she was spearheading an effort to bring a replica of Central Park's famed monument to Cuban writer José Martí to Havana's busy Paseo del Prado street.

Holly returned to campus in 2014 to receive the inaugural Elizabeth Coleman Visionary Leadership Award, which honored her work and its profound impact. She later partnered with the College in launching the Museum Fellows Term, hosting the first cohort of Fellows at the Bronx Museum in 2015.

She is survived by her partner, Dana Emmott, her brother, Eben, stepmother Margaret Almazan, half-brother Charles Block-Almazan, sister-in-law Wendy Block, and niece and nephew Sydney and Aiden.

JOAN HUTTON LANDIS '51

Joan Hutton Landis—celebrated poet, music-lover, and educator—died on May 7, 2017. She was 87.

An already budding actress and writer, Joan only applied to one college after high school—Bennington. Despite coming from a family without means to pay for college, she was able to attend thanks to a scholarship—a generosity she extended to future generations of Bennington students as a leadership donor and Silo Legacy Society member. While at Bennington, she studied poetry, honing her craft under the inspired instruction of Stanley Kunitz and Ben Belitt.

Following graduation, Joan married Kendall Landis, whose job with Citibank took their growing family to live in Paris, Jeddah, Beirut, and Casablanca. Upon returning to the states in 1967, she re-entered academia—receiving a Danforth Graduate Fellowship to complete her Ph.D. at Bryn Mawr, before being hired in 1977 by the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia.

At Curtis, Joan would go on to develop a liberal arts program and create workshops in poetry, fiction and theater, in addition to teaching courses in American literature, Shakespeare, Chaucer, and Joyce, and restructuring the school's core curriculum. She was elected Chair of the Liberal Arts Department in the early 1980s and remained in that position until her retirement in 2001.

Joan continued to write throughout her life, with her poems featured in *Transatlantic Review*, *The New York Times*, *Parnassus: Poetry in Review*, *The Gettysburg Review*, *Poetry*, and many more. She also released two books of poetry, *That Blue Repair* (Penstroke Press, 2008) and *A Little Glide* (Penstroke Press, 2016).

Joan is survived by her husband Kendall; three sons Christopher, Joshua, and Ethan, and their wives; and six grandsons.

ANGEL B. "SONNY" ORSINI '93

A singular figure who is remembered for his dynamic personality and passion for both politics and barbeque, Angel B. "Sonny" Orsini died July 25, 2017 following a brief battle with cancer. He was 48.

A native of Guam, Sonny graduated from George Washington High School at the age of 16 before attending the University of Guam and later Bennington College. At Bennington he studied politics and economics, and spent his Field Work Terms interning in a number of legislative and political arenas—most notably with U.S. Senators Ted Kennedy and Elizabeth Arriola.

Returning to Guam, Sonny ran for office. In 1994 he was elected to the 23rd Legislature at 25 years old, making history as the island's youngest senator.

After years of service in the legislature, Sonny and his brother Buddy opened the hugely successful Asu Smokehouse, in Chamorro Village, winning multiple barbeque and grilling contests and putting the restaurant on the national barbeque map. This summer, at a state funeral to honor his life, Guam's Governor Eddie Calvo celebrated his public service as well as his dedication to family and friends.

Sonny is survived by his wife Kim, their three children Joshua, Leonardo, and Isabella, and his brother Buddy Orsini.



ALUMNI

The Bennington community extends its deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the following alumni.

Nancy Guy Syme '62
April 4, 2017

Anne Eaton Parker '41
May 1, 2017

Solveig Peterson Cox '53
May 6, 2017

Joan Hutton Landis '51
May 7, 2017

Barbara Bacon Rosenberg '43
May 17, 2017

Waldo Brighton Jones '50
May 17, 2017

Peter S. Delano '77
May 21, 2017

Ellen Lynn Chapman '76
May 26, 2017

Martha Egloff Hume '45
June 3, 2017

Margaret Ramsey Meachem '42
June 10, 2017

Paulus Berensohn '59
June 15, 2017

Joan Marcotte Fuller '50
June 19, 2017

Emily Dorrance Mayer '47
June 29, 2017

Miriam Marx Allen '49
June 29, 2017

Anne Sharp Juergens '51
July 2017

Mary Estelle Bacon Lyon '46
July 15, 2017

Suzanne Bunker Hopkins '51
July 27, 2017

Judith Bailey Jones '45
August 2, 2017

Jane Dalzell-Milner '73
August 5, 2017

Lina Pomeroy Tans '92
August 14, 2017

Sidra Levine Rausch '59
August 14, 2017

Mary Manigault Gilbreth '47
August 15, 2017

Hope Duveneck Williams '40
August 17, 2017

Erik Banks '93
August 18, 2017

Margaret Mallia Ender '48
August 20, 2017

Carolyn Kimball Chamberlain Cross '51
August 23, 2017

Justin D. Palmer '91
September 1, 2017

Elizabeth Anne Galt '75
September 10, 2017

Lucy Blatchford Pinkerton '48
September 15, 2017

Irene Moore Jaglom '49
September 23, 2017

Maribel Asher Leiter '49
October 8, 2017

PARENTS, FRIENDS,
AND FACULTY

The College is sad to learn of the following deaths of parents, friends, and faculty of the Bennington community who have died since April 1, 2017.

Marjorie J. Manning
April 2, 2017

Joanna Kirkpatrick, former faculty
April 7, 2017

Frank J. Scanlon
April 22, 2017

Phillip R. Viereck
May 26, 2017

Virginia S. Burke
July 3, 2017

Kate T. Guinzburg
September 17, 2017

We honor the memory of those who have passed on, and regret that space restrictions do not allow the publication of full obituaries. This memorial list contains the members of the Bennington community who have died between April 1, 2017 and October 13, 2017. If you would like more information please contact us at alumnirelations@bennington.edu



AND MILES TO GO BEFORE I SLEEP

THE FRIENDS OF ROBERT FROST—a nonprofit group that acquired The Robert Frost Stone House Museum and operated the historic museum for the last 15 years—has generously gifted the house to Bennington College. The property, located five miles from campus in Shaftsbury, Vermont, includes The Frost House, built in 1769, as well as seven acres of property and two barns. Frost purchased the home in 1920 and lived there for a decade; it is where Frost wrote one of his most famous poems, *Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening*, in June 1922, and where Frost was living when he won his first Pulitzer Prize in 1924.

In addition to continuing as an historic house and museum, the College will use The Frost House for educational purposes, incorporating it into its acclaimed literature and writing programming, which brings the nation's leading poets, academics, and students together for lectures and rigorous writing instruction. The Frost House will provide enhanced learning and event space for Bennington's literary efforts, including the Bennington Writing Seminars; The Bennington Review, the College's literary journal; and Poetry at Bennington, a residency series that brings award-winning poets to campus for readings.

The Frost House will be closed in the winter; the College will reopen the house to the public and for academic programming in the Spring 2018. To sign up for updates, email frosthouse@bennington.edu.



BENNINGTON COLLEGE
One College Drive
Bennington, Vermont 05201-6003
CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

IN & ABOUT TOWN

Farm House

Jennings
Cottage

Orchard

JENNINGS MEADOW

THE POND

Paris-Borden

Merck

Perkins

Fels

Leigh

Booth

Dewey

Swan

McCullough

Canfield

Wooley

Sawtell

Bingham

Kilpatrick

Stokes

Noyes

Welling

COMMONS LAWN

Franklin

Faculty Row