

★★★★★★ 50 Years of ★★★★★★
U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS
In Pursuit of Excellence



Published by the U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association

**THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
CELEBRATES THE NEXT
GENERATION OF LEADERS**

2014 U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS



“I am very proud to welcome you to the White House as the first “Presidential Scholars.”
I congratulate you, and I congratulate your parents and your teachers for their part in
producing your talents for our times. ...

You are here because of what you have accomplished, in your own right, and what you
have the capacity to accomplish in the future in your own right.

You have excelled in the scholarship of your class of 1964.
You have the potential to excel even more in the citizenship
of your country of 1974 or 1984 or 1994.

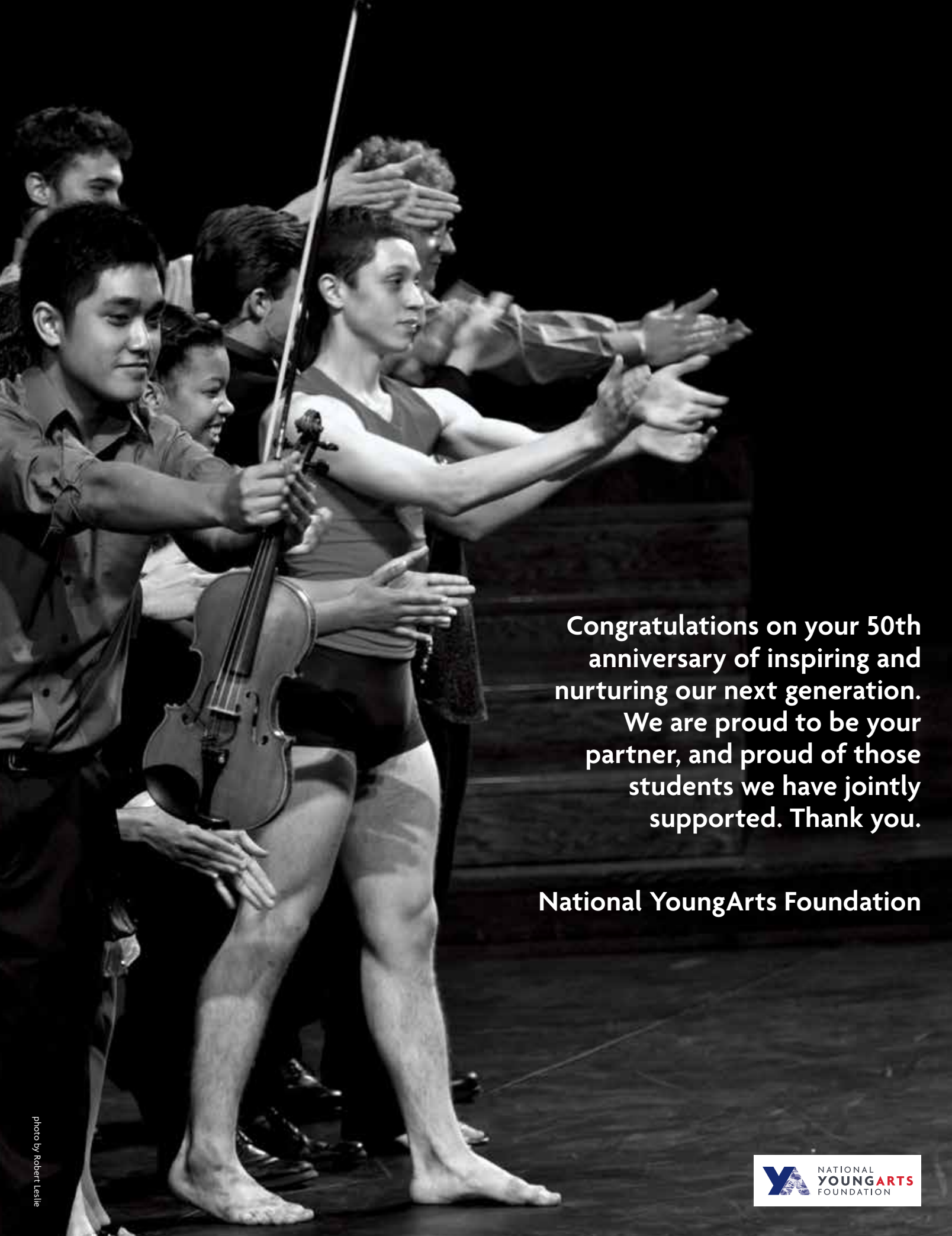
I have congratulated you. I want now to challenge you – to challenge you to develop
and apply that quality of excellence which is within you. ...

I believe the destiny of your generation, and your Nation,
is a rendezvous with excellence. ...

You are younger than most of the earth’s quarrels, and you are older than most of the earth’s
governments. You are younger than most of man’s ignorance, and older than much of his knowledge. ...

[This] is your challenge – to give your talents and your time in our land and in all lands to cleaning
away the blight, to sweeping away the shoddiness, to wiping away the injustices and the inequities of
the past so that all men may live together in a great world community of decency and of excellence.”

– President Lyndon B. Johnson,
Remarks Upon Presenting the First Presidential Scholars Awards,
East Room of the White House, June 10, 1964



Congratulations on your 50th anniversary of inspiring and nurturing our next generation. We are proud to be your partner, and proud of those students we have jointly supported. Thank you.

National YoungArts Foundation

EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT

Providing for the recognition of certain students as Presidential Scholars.

EXECUTIVE ORDER 11155

WHEREAS it is necessary in the national interest that the Federal Government encourage high attainment by students in secondary schools, both public and private, throughout the Nation, and

WHEREAS national recognition of scholastic attainments will tend to enhance the accomplishments of such students generally and their potential after graduation:

NOW, THEREFORE, by virtue of the authority vested in me as President of the United States, it is ordered as follows:

Section 1. There is hereby established the Commission on Presidential Scholars (hereinafter referred to as the Commission). The Commission shall be composed of such members as the President may appoint from time to time from among appropriately qualified citizens of the United States. The person chosen each year, with the cooperation of the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, as National Teacher of the Year shall be one of the members of the Commission for a period terminating one year after the date of his or her selection as National Teacher of the Year or at such earlier time as a next-succeeding National Teacher of the Year is chosen. The President shall designate one of the members as chairman of the Commission. Members of the Commission shall serve at the pleasure of the President and without compensation from the United States.

Section 2. The Commission, in accordance with such standards and procedures as it may prescribe and on the basis of its independent judgment, shall annually choose Presidential Scholars, subject to the following:

1. The Presidential Scholars shall be chosen from among persons who have recently been graduated, or are about to be graduated, from secondary schools, public or private.
2. They shall be chosen on the basis of their outstanding scholarship.
3. One boy and one girl shall be chosen as Presidential Scholars from each of the following, namely:
 - i. Each state of the United States.
 - ii. The District of Columbia.
 - iii. The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.
 - iv. The following collectively: American Samoa, Canal Zone, Guam, Virgin Islands, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and, if the Commission in its discretion shall so determine, other places overseas. In respect of the said other places overseas, only children whose parents are citizens of the United States shall be eligible to be chosen hereunder as Presidential Scholars from those places.
4. In addition to the 106 Presidential Scholars provided for in paragraph (3) above, the commission may choose other Presidential Scholars, not exceeding fifteen in number for any one year, to be chosen at large from the jurisdictions referred to in that paragraph.

Section 3. This is hereby established the Presidential Scholars Medallion which shall be of such design and material as the President shall approve and shall be presented to each Presidential Scholar chosen by the Commission under this order.

Section 4. As necessary and subject to law, the Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, shall facilitate, or make arrangements for facilitating the carrying out of the purposes of this order.

Lyndon B. Johnson
The White House

May 23, 1964



EXECUTIVE ORDER OF THE PRESIDENT

Awards for Special Capability in the Visual and Performing Arts and in Creative Writing

EXECUTIVE ORDER 12158

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and statutes of the United States of America, Section 2 of Executive Order No. 11155 is hereby amended by adding thereto the following paragraph:
“(5) In addition to the Presidential Scholars provided for in paragraph (3) and (4) above, the Commission may choose other Presidential Scholars not exceeding twenty in any one year. These Scholars shall be chosen at large, from the jurisdictions referred to in paragraph (3), on the basis of outstanding scholarship and demonstrated ability and accomplishment in the visual and performing arts or in creative writing.”

Jimmy Carter
The White House

September 18, 1979



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Today, we're very proud to congratulate the Presidential Scholars Program on 50 years of recognizing some of the nation's most distinguished high school seniors. We share your commitment to giving the brightest young minds the support they need to find new solutions in the world of energy and beyond.

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JIMMY CARTER

June 21, 2014

On the occasion of its 50th anniversary, I congratulate the United States Presidential Scholars.

Since the award's creation by President Johnson in 1964, this outstanding organization has served as a model for scholastic achievement. In 1979, it was my privilege to expand the scope of the program to include scholars in the arts. Together, you continue to embody the spirit of intellectual vigor, cultural diversity, and public spirit.

Rosalynn and I send our best wishes for your anniversary celebration. We applaud your hard work and accomplishments, and we wish you much continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jimmy Carter".



February 2014

Barbara and I send our congratulations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Foundation.

As U.S. Presidential Scholars, you exemplify excellence in learning, leadership and service. You remind us that hard work and a commitment to serving others are the backbone of achievement. Your accomplishments honor your parents, your teachers, and all those who have supported you throughout the years; and you inspire those who follow in your footsteps to reach for the stars. May you continue to serve as role models for our Nation's young people.

Best wishes for a joyous celebration of this momentous milestone and for your continued success in the years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of the initials "G W" followed by "B U", representing George W. Bush.



WILLIAM JEFFERSON CLINTON

June 21, 2014

I'm delighted to congratulate all those celebrating the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program—and to recognize the young men and women who have recently been named 2014 Presidential Scholars!

For half a century, Presidential Scholars have represented the very best and brightest graduating high school seniors in America. As the next generation of innovators, visionaries, and leaders, these students have exemplified the ideals of intellectual determination and civic commitment. Their accomplishments, both before and after their selection, demonstrate that hard work and a willingness to serve others are essential keys to a bright future.

I challenge all Presidential Scholars, both past and present, to continue to uphold this strong legacy of academic excellence and service. Best wishes for a meaningful milestone celebration and many more decades of success.

Bill Clinton



GEORGE W. BUSH

June 21, 2014

Congratulations to every U.S. Presidential Scholar on your achievements and dedication to excellence over the last 50 years.

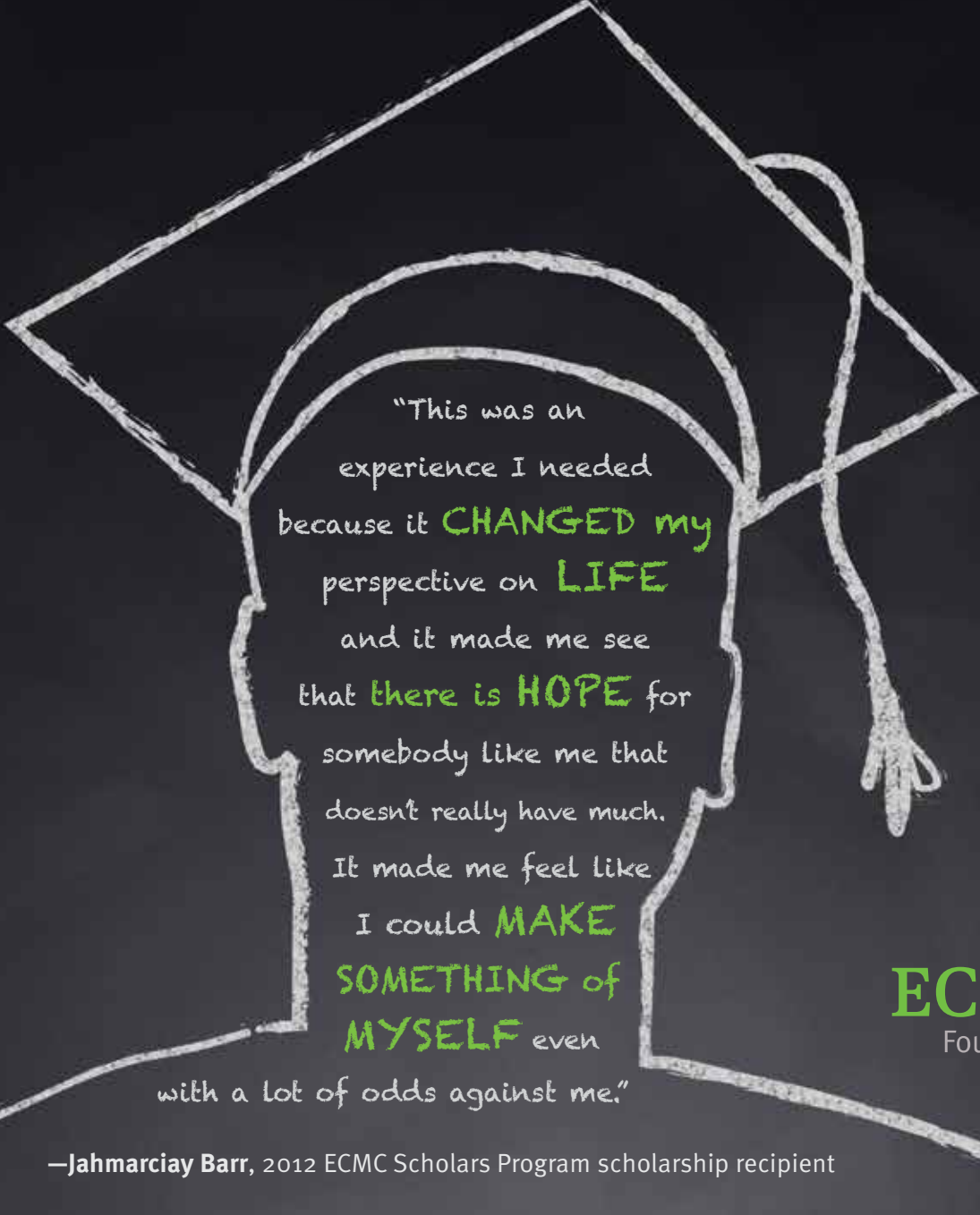
During my time as President, I was honored to recognize some of America's finest students as Presidential Scholars. Many of you have gone on to pursue careers in public service, science, technology, business, law, medicine, and the arts. I applaud you for your accomplishments and commend you for your hard work, discipline, and perseverance in pursuit of your goals. I also thank your parents, teachers, and mentors for their roles in your success.

Thanks for your contributions to our Nation. I encourage you to continue to use your gifts to serve a cause greater than self. Your energy, talent, and service strengthen our great Nation.

Laura and I send our very best wishes.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "George W. Bush". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

DARING STUDENTS TO DREAM BIG



"This was an experience I needed because it **CHANGED** my perspective on **LIFE** and it made me see that **there is HOPE** for somebody like me that doesn't really have much. It made me feel like I could **MAKE SOMETHING of MYSELF** even with a lot of odds against me."

—Jahmarciay Barr, 2012 ECMC Scholars Program scholarship recipient

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We challenge students to recognize their potential and dare them to dream big. Through innovative programs and scholarships, we help students plan and pay for college, succeed academically and achieve their dreams.

ECMC Foundation is proud to be an ad sponsor for the *Fifty Years of U.S. Presidential Scholars: In Pursuit of Excellence* publication. For more information about ECMC Foundation, visit www.ecmcfoundation.org.



Dear Fellow U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni,

A half-century! What an extraordinary milestone.

Something that began as an idea over 50 years ago has transformed into one of the highest honors in the nation for graduating high school students. And what began as a loose group of individuals with a shared experience has coalesced into a vibrant and robust alumni association with over 6,500 members. Its ranks now include award-winning scientists, elected officials, Broadway stars, Hollywood actors, entrepreneurs, CEOs, lawyers, doctors, and teachers, among others.

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association was formed in 1996 with the goal of forging a whole that transcended the sum of its parts. In recent years, the Alumni Association has launched a number of exciting initiatives, including a mentorship program, a service week, college meet-ups, professional networking, and social gatherings, to name just a few. Presidential Scholars alumni have mentored one another, hired one another, worked alongside one another, funded one another's companies, and performed with one another. In the years and decades to come, my hope is that new Scholars' days in Washington, D.C., are just the beginning – an induction into a society of diverse and kindred spirits with whom they will interact throughout their entire lives.

What Presidential Scholars have achieved as individuals is undoubtedly impressive. Our challenge for the next 50 years is to accomplish things together. By the time we publish our next book of memories, I hope it will tell the story of small groups of Presidential Scholars who collaborated with a sense of higher purpose: starting companies, publishing books, trying cases, teaching classes, collaborating on research, serving alongside one another, and maybe even saving lives.

Together, we can be much more than talented individuals. Together, we can build things. Together, we can realize the promise and potential of the honor that President Johnson created 50 years ago to challenge us to do more. Every new era begins with a new decade, a new year, a new class of Scholars, and a new week in Washington, D.C. The next half-century of U.S. Presidential Scholars begins today. What will you do to answer President Johnson's call?

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B.T. Abrams".

Brian T. Abrams
Chairman, U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association



December 2013



I'm delighted to welcome you to this special publication, which commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars Program, 1964–2014. The theme of the anniversary celebration is “Lessons from the Past: Challenges for the Future.” With that theme, we alumni are committing ourselves to defining who we are, evaluating what we have accomplished, and determining what kind of resource we can become for our nation and our world.

Presidential Scholars from this century and the last are a divergent group, but all began the journey in a similar way: traveling to Washington, D.C., as high school seniors, feeling eager and expectant and exhilarated and perhaps just a little scared. I was one of those excited travelers in the first year, 1964, and for 50 years, my medallion has reminded me that I have a job to do. People expect things of me, and I need to deliver.

And what an opportunity has been delivered to me now! In 2012, Brian Abrams, the president of the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association, asked me to lead the planning effort for the 50th anniversary. I accepted with that same sense of exhilaration (and, yes, perhaps a little fear) that I had known in youth because I could see what this golden anniversary might mean to the community of Scholars, now more than 6,000 strong. We live in different places. We pursue different career paths and make different personal choices. We span three generations, yet we are united by much more than just an award received as high school students. As Presidential Scholars, we move through our lives in ways both ordinary and unique. We live our years as all people do, but around the edges of our experience glows an aura of expectation: We are, after all, Presidential Scholars, and we have serious work to do.

The occasion of the 50th anniversary invites us to celebrate our history and to plan what our future work will be. We ask ourselves what our shared honor demands of us, young and old alike. We look backward to understand where we have been; more important, we look forward, with renewed vigor, toward defining what our collaboration can become.

This publication chronicles the history of the Presidential Scholars Program, captures some of the memories of Scholars of all ages, and showcases the achievements of some of the program's most accomplished alumni. But it does more than that. It invites everyone who reads this – whether Scholar, parent, educator, or government official – to join actively in this community of scholarship, leadership, and innovation, for which new decades of productivity and promise lie ahead.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Faith Brynie".

Faith Mace Brynie
Presidential Scholar, West Virginia, 1964
50th Anniversary Planning Chair
Vice Chair, Presidential Scholars Alumni Association





50th Anniversary Honorary Co-Chairs



Jane Case Williams

Executive Director, Presidential Scholars Program, 1975-79



Drs. Paul Pressly and Bill Pressly, sons of the late **Dr. William L. Pressly**, Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, 1978-81

Jane Case Williams is the oldest living former Executive Director of the Presidential Scholars Program and was instrumental in the growth and establishment of the program as it exists today. The Scholars application process, the expansion of National Recognition Week activities, the creation of an Advisors program, private funding, and the Arts Scholars program all took shape under her leadership.

William L. Pressly oversaw the creation of key aspects of the program – in particular the Arts Scholars component. **Bill Pressly** and **Paul Pressly** have continued their family’s tradition of excellence in and devotion to education, particularly in the arts and humanities: Bill as a distinguished scholar, a professor of art history at Yale University and

then at the University of Maryland, a recipient of a Guggenheim Fellowship, and a member of the Institute for Advanced Study at Princeton, and Paul as a Rhodes Scholar, an esteemed historian, and former headmaster of Savannah Country Day School. The Pressly family, including William’s wife and Paul and Bill’s mother, Alice McCallie Pressly, founded and/or served as headmaster at three prestigious private schools in the South that have produced 24 Presidential Scholars: The Westminster Schools (15), the McCallie School (7), and the Savannah Country Day School (2).

We honor **Jane Case Williams** and the **Presslys** for their service to the Presidential Scholars and for their dedication to excellence in American education.

FELICE KAUFMANN

COURTESY: JIMMY CARTER PRESIDENTIAL LIBRARY

NANCY PRESSLY PHOTO COURTESY OF BILL PRESSLY



50th Anniversary Steering Committee

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50th Anniversary Chair: Faith Brynie

Editor-in-Chief, 50th Anniversary Publication: John Knox

Summit: Jenny Li

YoungArts: Allison Ball

Communications: Booyeon Han

Graphic Design: Tina Lawrence

Logo Design: Shipra De

Volunteers: Kris Garcia, Randy Seybold, Ernest Baker, India Carney, Glenn Schatz, Ryan Schwarz, Lisa Leung, Rudy Spraycar, Lawrence Lee, Tiffany Lundquist, Anne Large, Orde Kittrie

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Reunion: Faith Brynie, Jon Sasser, Linda Levitt, Sandy S. Chung, Ke Ji, Nick Burjek, Keith Barnett, Betsy Riley, Jesse Streicher, Steve Loh, Galen Gao, Duffy O'Craven, Chelsea Shover, Bob Goisman, Beth Ingram, Steve Eglund, Duncan Arie, Rudy Spraycar, Jack Walker-Pearson, Kathy Frankovic, Timothy Poppert, Ryan Schwarz, Alice Cox Nelson, Leslie Holt, Thomas Tsao, Matt Hisle, Stanley Eleff, Colin Lualdi, Lawrence Lee, Kathy Compagno, Glenn Schatz, Akshat Shekhar, India Carney

Summit: Faith Brynie, Jenny Li, Carlene Byron, Ruth Bahe-Jachna, Ke Ji, Sejal Hathi, Samita Mohanasundaram, Kathy Schneider, John Knox

Arts: Leonard Cruz, Jenny Li, Nigel Campbell, Ken Balkus

Challenge: Booyeon Han, Nigel Campbell, Betsy Riley, Justin Erlich, Jenny Li

Teachers: Sophia Gershman, Chair; Teri Forscher-Milter, Jerry Reising, Patricia Bank, Norman Anderson, Cheryl Duncan, Michele Buche, Jane Larke, Miranda Dungan, Rebecca Bowlen, Steve Loh, Megan Phillips, Helen Petach, Ken Balkus

Historical Archive and Speakers' Bureau: John Knox, Sandy S. Chung, Carlene Byron

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Outstanding

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admissions.uoregon.edu

About the Logo

A great celebration needs a great logo. Toward this end, Blick Art Materials, a century-old, third-generation company that is the largest and oldest provider of art supplies in the United States, sponsored a logo design competition for the Presidential Scholars 50th anniversary. The competition was open to all Presidential Scholars alumni from 1964 through 2012. The designs were to represent the Presidential Scholars' commitment to excellence in education and achievement past, present, and future, and to be distinctive, memorable, creative, marketable, and suitable for mass distribution.

A design incorporating 50 stars by Shipra De (2006, NV) of Las Vegas was selected as the winner of the anniversary logo design contest. Blick Art Materials awarded a gift certificate of \$1,000 to De.

De was named a U.S. Presidential Scholar in 2006 while a senior at Green Valley High School in Las Vegas. She graduated from the University of Nevada-Las Vegas in 2011 with undergraduate degrees in mathematics, computer science, and economics, and continues to live and work in Las Vegas, where she is an operations test analyst for JT3, LLC. In her spare time, De enjoys reading, writing, and making pottery.



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June 2014

As the exclusive nominating agency for the U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts, the National YoungArts Foundation (YoungArts) congratulates the 51st class of U.S. Presidential Scholars. Every year I continue to be impressed by the excellence of these Scholars. Their talents are astounding and they serve as an inspiration to us all.

Since 1982, YoungArts has been proud and honored to nominate high school seniors for the special designation of U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts. These bright young artists are some of the country's most promising artistic talents. To put their talent into perspective – the 20 Scholars in the Arts are among this year's 687 national YoungArts Winners who have been recognized for their outstanding work, which stood out from more than 11,000 applications nationwide. Being recognized as a U.S. Presidential Scholar in the Arts is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and the highest form of recognition that can be bestowed upon an artistically talented graduating high school student.

The 2014 U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts include published writers, recording artists, community leaders, volunteers, and first-generation artists. Each year PSA students are actors, dancers, filmmakers, musicians, cinematic and visual artists, vocalists and writers and represent a diverse number of states, cities, cultures and ethnicities.

They join an illustrious group which includes Tony Award-nominated dancer and choreographer Desmond Richardson, American Ballet Theatre Chief Executive Officer Rachel Moore, novelist and National Book Award Finalist Allegra Goodman, Grammy Award-nominated violinist Jennifer Koh, Metropolitan Opera star Eric Owens, BRAVO's Work of Art winner Abdi Farah, and OBIE Award-winning actress Donna Lynne Champlin.

YoungArts is proud to be involved with this high honor and continue our tradition of supporting the next generation of young artists in this country. For the National YoungArts Foundation, our role as the sole nominating organization for these awards is a cherished responsibility, which we strive to earn year by year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Paul T. Lehr'.

Paul T. Lehr
President & CEO
National YoungArts Foundation





Jan. 1, 2014

Welcome to *Fifty Years of U.S. Presidential Scholars: In Pursuit of Excellence*. It's the culmination of a dream that, for me, began over a quarter-century ago.

On July 19, 1988, five years after my magical time as a Presidential Scholar, I called the program's Executive Director in Washington, D.C., to discuss some of my ideas for alumni activities. I still have the 11 pages of handwritten notes I drafted for my follow-up letter to her!

In April 1996, the program hosted a charter meeting of alumni at the U.S. Department of Education in Washington. I left my very pregnant wife, Pam, and an even more overdue Ph.D. dissertation back in Madison, Wis., to make my pitch for identifying and highlighting Scholar alumni. That alumni effort, spearheaded by Kevin Berlin (1983, MD) and Elsa Ortiz-Suarez (1964, PR), dwindled after several years. But in late 2004, a more durable alumni effort took shape under the leadership of Matt Anestis (1991, CT) and Avery Gardiner (1993, ME), the guiding spirits of Executive Director Melissa Apostolides and longtime Presidential Scholars Foundation Treasurer Sandy Nemitz, and others, including myself as the chair of the Distinguished Alumni Committee. From the beginning, this alumni effort had as central goals a 50th anniversary celebration and a commemorative publication. Nearly a decade later, both of these goals are now a reality.

Fifty Years of U.S. Presidential Scholars: In Pursuit of Excellence is our story, told comprehensively for the first time, told in words, pictures, and statistics that largely come from the Scholars ourselves:

- The story of the origins of the Presidential Scholars Program is relayed by educational researcher Felice Kaufmann, who has spent her entire career following the members of the first five classes of Scholars and who served as “housemother” during the Scholars’ visits to D.C. in the late 1970s.
- Its history is chronicled by David Sheldon (1981, NH), a Chief Advisor and Assistant Director of the program in the 1980s.
- The experience of being honored in Washington is recounted through the memories and photographs of Scholars from the 1960s to the 2010s.
- We hear from some of our most accomplished peers in a series of interviews conducted with acclaimed scientists, authors, politicians, journalists, artists, public servants, and business leaders who, like us, were Presidential Scholars.
- Even the work of the White House Commission that selects the Scholars is told partly through the words of three Scholar alumni, Amy Levin (1974, London, England), Michael Weiss (1975, OH), and Carolyn Bennett Hendricks (1977, Wiesbaden, Germany), who served on the Commission in the late 1970s.
- As an atmospheric scientist and an associate professor of geography at the University of Georgia, I have a predilection for hard data. Toward that end, I have compiled information on Scholars’ college choices, assembled from scratch a complete database of Scholars who have been selected as Rhodes and Marshall Scholars, and unearthed other numbers (some originally compiled by the late John Stalnaker, the stalwart first Executive Director of the program) that help flesh out our collective story.
- All the stories are accompanied by images that are, in many cases, published for the first time. They come from the attics and drawers and scrapbooks of Scholars, from my research at the LBJ Presidential Library in Austin, Texas, and in one case from a negative I bought on eBay!

While not all of our stories are here, nearly all of us should be able to recognize ourselves somewhere within this book. Just as we Scholars are representatives of a wider group of outstanding American youth past and present, this book is representative of, but inevitably not the totality of, the experiences of all Scholars past and present. ***This is a book about the Scholars, by the Scholars, for the Scholars*** – and for everyone else, too.

At the same time, we have sought out and included the stories of our mentors. For example, this book includes a roundtable interview with some of the teachers who, since 1983, we have nominated to be recognized at National Recognition Week. We hear the perspective of a former Executive Director, Jane Case Williams, who helped expand the scope of the program in ways that not even the original founders envisioned. And we can revel in the vivid recollections of the Commissioner, Murry Sidlin, who made the clinching argument for the addition of the Arts Scholars component of the program.

You wouldn't be holding this book in your hands, or looking at it online, without the efforts of many. Fiftieth Anniversary Planning Chair Faith Brynie (1964, WV) talked me into serving as editor-in-chief, and has been repaid with countless e-mails and questions while simultaneously working hundreds of hours on other aspects of the 2014 Summit. Alumni Association President Brian Abrams (1996, CO) has been indispensable as a supporter; liaison between this project, the Foundation, and our publisher; and procurer of Presidential epistolaries. At Faircount Media Group, Robin Jobson, Ana Lopez, and Chuck Oldham have helped make this dream come true, both financially and journalistically, along with ace interviewer Craig Collins. And then there are the Scholar alumni who have contributed images and ideas, especially Virgil Calejesan (1998, PR), whose excellent work as editor of the Presidential Scholars alumni newsletter, *The Medallion*, has been a model for my own work. Thanks also to Jeff Gunton, former webmaster for the Presidential Scholars Foundation and son-in-law of Sandy Nemitz, for providing archival material and photographs. Finally, every part of this book is better because of the advice, connections, and friendship of the wonderful Felice Kaufmann.

As is obvious, the Presidential Scholars Program has enriched my life. I now know Scholars from every decade of the program and in all kinds of different contexts. Even my marvelous graduate teaching assistant at UGA last fall, Amber Ricke Ignatius, was a 2002 Scholar in the Arts from Florida. ***I think of the Presidential Scholars as the most quintessentially American of all scholastic honorees, with a diversity of recipients that might make a Walt Whitman proud.*** My goals as editor-in-chief are to share this perspective through the stories of the Scholars, to enlighten the reader about this unique program, and to knit together an even closer, yet wider, community of Scholars. In my July 1988 letter to the Executive Director, I said that an alumni effort for the Presidential Scholars had to be “future-directed,” not merely “a remembrance of things past.” This book contains both, as you will see in the concluding essays on the past, present, and future activities of the Alumni Association and Foundation.

The past fifty years?

As LBJ said to the Scholars in 1964, “a rendezvous with excellence.” Take it all in.

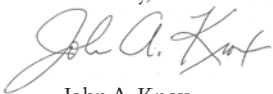
The future?

Even brighter. Take part in it.

The book?

Enjoy. Take a look.

Sincerely,



John A. Knox

Presidential Scholar, Alabama, 1983

Editor-in-Chief, *Fifty Years of U.S. Presidential Scholars: In Pursuit of Excellence*

Chair, Presidential Scholars Alumni Association Distinguished Alumni Committee, 2004–present





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The 2014 Commission on Presidential Scholars

Marina C. McCarthy, Commission Chair

José M. Amaya

Michael Caplin

Jeff Charbonneau

Martha Darling

Alan H. Fleischmann

Judy Gaynor

Richard P. Herman

I. King Jordan

Colin Crowell Kippen

Reginald Lewis

Yvette Lewis

Choco Gonzalez Meza

Sondra Myers

Alapaki Nahale-a

Jackie Norris

Sheldon Pang

Carol Pensky

Robert Saltzman

Jeanne Unemori Skog

Srinija Srinivasan (1989, KS)

Donald M. Stewart

Cynthia Ann Telles

Tamara Toussaint

E. Faye Williams

Although the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars could not be involved in the creation of this publication, and therefore offers no endorsement of it, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association wishes to recognize and appreciate its service to the program.

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The USC Sol Price School of Public Policy congratulates the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program on 50 years of honoring the nation's most distinguished high school seniors. We salute Presidential Scholars – past, present, and future – for demonstration of leadership, excellence, and service to school and community.



"I looked toward the Price School because I want to leave a positive impact on society. The Price School taught me how to be a next-generation catalyst for innovative, multidisciplinary change and leave the world a better place than before."

**Karina Casillas (BS '13),
Public Policy and Law track**

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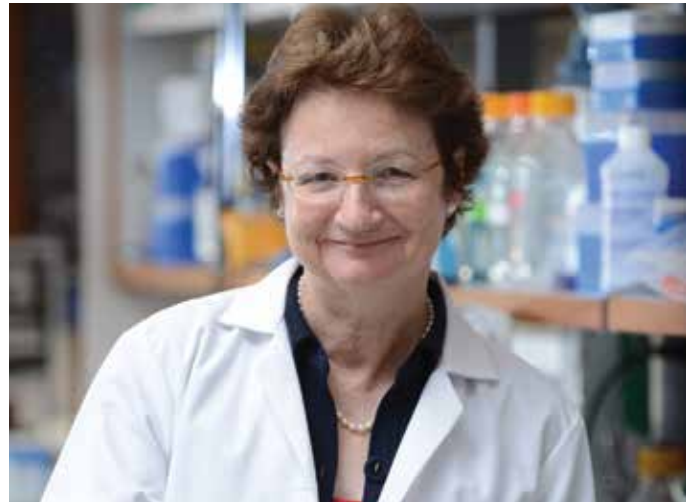
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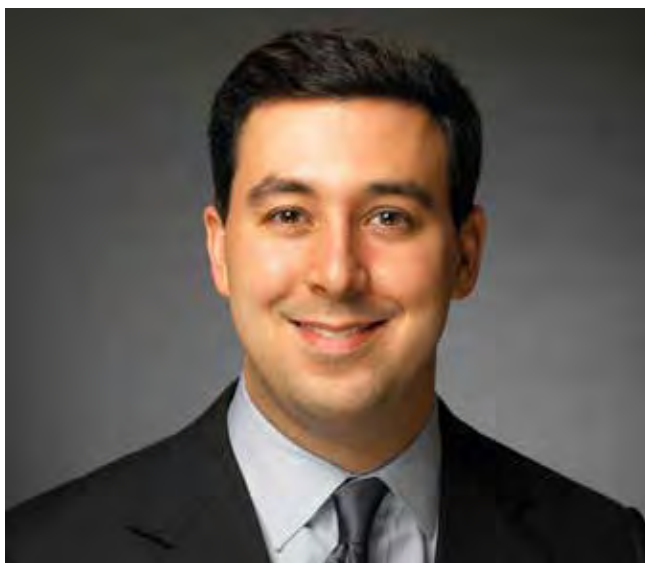
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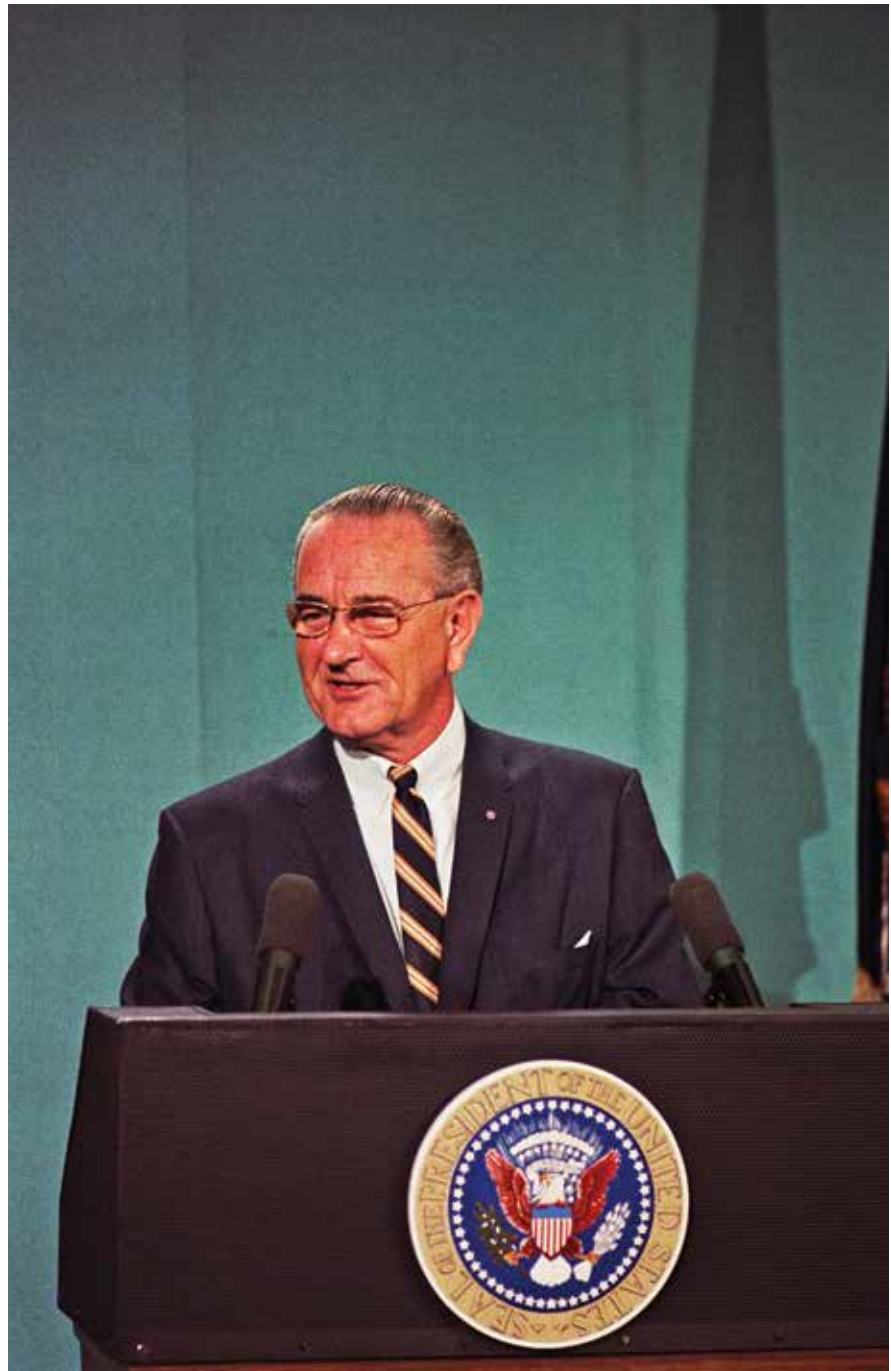
To Conquer the World

The origins of the Presidential Scholars Program

BY FELICE A. KAUFMANN

TEN DAYS AFTER BEING SWORN in as President on Nov. 22, 1963, Lyndon B. Johnson asked a Princeton history professor named Eric Goldman to meet with him in the Oval Office. Trying to pull the country out of its post-assassination gloom, Johnson hoped that Goldman – an eminent scholar, author, and the moderator of a weekly public affairs program on NBC called *Open Mind* – might have some ideas about how he might infuse his sudden presidency with a dose of intellectual and creative energy. The President and the professor knew one another only by reputation, but by the end of their conversation, Goldman found himself a member of the administration. As the White House’s “intellectual-in-residence,” as he would come to be known, Goldman would be Johnson’s link to the nation’s most distinguished thinkers and educators, one of the functions Arthur Schlesinger Jr. had performed for John F. Kennedy. It was in that capacity that Goldman pitched an idea to the President a few months later.

After soliciting the thoughts of half a dozen people he admired, Goldman was struck by how all of them shared the sense that two decades of postwar prosperity had eroded the nation’s values. As he later wrote, “The impoverishment of the American imagination came partly from the prestige the general population gave to money, social position, athletic stardom and the aura of celebrity – almost to the exclusion of status for intellectual and creative achievement.” What Goldman proposed to the President in February of 1964 was the creation of a new program to recognize and raise the value of



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Opposite page: President Lyndon B. Johnson hoped the Presidential Scholars Program might serve to infuse his presidency with intellectual and creative energy and might put the American public back in touch with values that had diminished after World War II. Right, top: Dr. Milton S. Eisenhower, president of Johns Hopkins University and brother of President Dwight D. Eisenhower, served as the first Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars. Right, bottom: Eric Goldman, a Princeton history professor, Bancroft Prize winner, and the Johnson White House's "intellectual-in-residence," proposed to President Johnson in February 1964 the creation of a program that came to be known as the Presidential Scholars Program. Goldman is pictured here in his office at Princeton in February 1964.

intellectual accomplishment by young people. A distinguished committee would be assembled to choose two high school seniors from each state – a boy and a girl – whose superior achievement and high promise could be held up as models. They would be brought to Washington for a grand ceremony in which the president would bestow medallions and declare them to be the embodiment of the best of America, a symbol of the nation's future. These elite young people would be designated Presidential Scholars.

Johnson loved the idea, and ordered it implemented immediately, in time to make the Class of '64 the first group of Presidential Scholars. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation agreed to take on the job of whittling down the nation's million-and-a-half graduating seniors into a manageable list of candidates – a mere 14,000 students who had already won Merit scholarships and represented the top one-half of 1 percent of the nation's graduating seniors. But the numbers weren't the only challenge. As he talked about the program with educators and testing experts, Goldman realized that the selection process might be inherently unfair and open to criticism from some of Johnson's core constituencies. The top 100 might well turn out to be dominated by kids from privileged backgrounds. So he added 15 "at-large" scholarships that would be used to assure at least some degree of racial and socioeconomic diversity.



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Above: 1964 Presidential Scholar Jeffery Mark Liebman of Evanston, Ill., grins widely while holding the Western Union Telegram with the message from President Johnson informing him of his award and inviting him to the White House. 121 high school seniors were named Presidential Scholars in 1964. Right: A page from President Johnson's "Daily Diary" includes an entry for the 5:30 p.m. reception for Presidential Scholars on June 10, 1964.

PRESIDENT JOHN F. JOHNSON DAILY DIARY (Workbook) The President's diary for any day at (place)		White House	WEDNESDAY Date: June 10, 1964
Time	Topic	Remarks	Notes
5:31p		<p><u>5:30 pm Entry - Presidential Scholars Reception</u> Introduced by Francis Keppel, Commissioner of Education. ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT - concluded @ 5:45p Students and parents filed by and the Pres. handed each student an appropriate medal. Present were: George Balanchine, Director, School of American Ballet Herbert Block, Cartoonist Gwendolyn Brooks, Poet Jules Feiffer, Cartoonist Jose Ferrer Abe Fortas Martha Graham, Director, Martha Graham School of Contemporary Dancers Dr. Leland Haworth, Director, Nat'l Science Foundation Helen Hayes John Hersey, Novelist J. Edgar Hoover Dr. Donald Horning Kingston Trio Alfred A. Knopf, Publisher Willem de Kooning, Painter Joseph Kraft Harper Lee, Novelist Walter Lippmann Marya Mannes, Writer Judge Thurgood Marshall Wm H. Mauldin, Cartoonist Gerry Mulligan Quartet Stan Musial Ogden Nash Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer</p>	

By April, the Commission on Presidential Scholars was in place. Milton Eisenhower, the president of Johns Hopkins University and President Dwight D. Eisenhower's brother, was appointed the Commission's chairman. Also on the board was a trio of luminaries – Leonard Bernstein, Katherine Anne Porter, and



Johnson's personal pick, Sen. J. William Fulbright – along with half a dozen lesser-known judges: three university presidents, a professor of English, a high school science teacher, and the superintendent of schools of Portland, Ore. Meanwhile, Goldman commissioned the sculptor Jacques Lipchitz to cast Johnson's profile in bronze for the medallions the President would bestow upon the chosen.

The Commission members met for the first time in the Hamilton Fish Room of the White House on a Sunday in May, and when Johnson heard they were in the building, he marched from the Oval Office to personally launch the Commission's work. "This program," he told them, "will revolutionize American education,"

Leonard Bernstein chats with Presidential Scholars on the White House South Lawn in June 1964. Bernstein was a member of the Commission that selected the inaugural group of Scholars.

whereupon he returned to the Oval Office, leaving the Commission members to begin the task of revolutionizing American education.

For two days and nights, they pored over the qualifications of the 500 strongest candidates culled by the National Merit staff, sifting through the list of achievements, personal statements, and

teacher recommendations the students had submitted on their National Merit Scholarship applications. It was ultimately a highly subjective judgment: All the contenders had exceptional SAT and National Merit scores, and many had perfect grade-point averages. The stacks of candidates included many class valedictorians, but even that was not much of a distinction in this crowd. High school valedictorians, after all, were as common as Main Street: Every town had one. What the Commission members had to discern was which of these teenagers rose above the rest in the breadth of their intellectual enterprise, their achievements outside the classroom, and their potential for distinction as they completed their

"I went into the room at one point, and beheld the spectacle of the president of one of America's great universities, the chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the nation's best-known serious musician huddled over a file of papers arguing the intellectual merits of three teenagers."



educations and pursued their careers. “I went into the room at one point,” Goldman later recalled, “and beheld the spectacle of the president of one of America’s great universities, the chairman of the United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and the nation’s best-known serious musician huddled over a file of papers arguing the intellectual merits of three teenagers.”

After two days and nights of deliberation, Eisenhower, Fulbright, Bernstein, and the other members settled on their choices. There were 64 boys and 57 girls. Virtually all of them scored at least 1500 on their SATs; 20 had perfect scores on either the SAT or the National Merit exam. About a quarter of the group planned to major in math, 13 in physics, seven in chemistry. Surprisingly, only one planned a career in medicine.

The winners included a boy who had spent hundreds of hours in a college physics lab conducting, as he described it, “an independent project concerning the metric properties of Riemannian

Thurgood Marshall, a guest at the Presidential Scholars festivities, was one of the select luminaries invited to the White House for the occasion.

manifolds with occasional excursions into, and contributions to, parametric theory, Klein manifolds and calculus of imbedding by tensors. Unexpectedly, my conclusions appear to be highly significant and received the First Awards in Mathematics from the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, among others, at the recent National Science Fair in Albuquerque.” There was a girl who scored a pair of perfect 800s on her SAT and spoke French, Spanish, and Russian. There was another boy who had won a Carnegie creative writing award for an essay on Salinger and Kafka, a national prize for a one-act play, a statewide science contest, and a varsity letter for wrestling. All this without the ability to hear: He’d been born deaf.

Even without having to rely on the “at large” spots to assure that the ranks would not be overwhelmed by children of privilege, the Commission found no shortage of Presidential Scholars from modest backgrounds. One of the winners, a hospital orderly’s daughter, was one of the few black students to enter – and graduate from – Little Rock’s Hall High School after it was integrated by federal troops. She would be heading for Radcliffe on a scholarship in the fall. The group included the children of a laborer, an elevator operator, and a shipping clerk who’d quit school after eighth grade. One was an orphan who had spent his childhood being shunted from one destitute relative to another. A handful had grown up on farms.

The White House dispatched the news in the swiftest and most dramatic fashion available at the time. Across America that day, 121 teenagers came home to telegrams informing them that they had been chosen by the President of the United States as one of the most brilliant



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young people in the nation. Just eight days later, they arrived in Washington by plane and train and were brought to the White House for a dizzying day of events: briefings with Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Chief Justice Earl Warren, and Mercury astronaut Alan Shepard. Lunch with the students' senators and representatives. Then, finally, the main event: the teenagers were ushered into the huge, gilded East Room, where they met President Johnson, along with Lady Bird and their daughter Lynda. "Your destiny will not be a faceless and thoughtless existence in a dull and dreary society," Johnson told them. "You must prove wrong those who believe your generation will be too content with the average to take on the arduous, too concerned with conformity to be creative, too 'cool' to be committed, too callous to be caring." In the audience were a score of luminaries – Nobel laureates, literary figures, artists, entertainers – whom Johnson, in his enthusiasm, had instructed his social secretary to invite.

One by one, the young honorees came up and received their medals, a process the commander-in-chief himself kept

Lynda Johnson, daughter of the President, socializes at the White House with actor Sidney Poitier, who emceed an evening of literature and music for the 1964 Presidential Scholars.

moving with an occasional admonition to step lively. They had their pictures taken with the President and Lady Bird, the photos destined for Page 1 of a hundred hometown newspapers.

At one point, Johnson went back inside and interrupted a Cabinet briefing on Southeast Asia, emerging moments later with the Attorney General, Robert F. Kennedy. In the evening, Sidney Poitier emceed an all-star program featuring José Ferrer reading Whitman and a Whitman's sampler of modern American music: the Kingston Trio, the Gerry Mulligan Quartet, the Metropolitan Opera tenor Nicholas diVirgilio, and a rare appearance at the piano by Bernstein.

The President returned to work after the reception. But at 11 p.m. the

“I’m going to bed tonight knowing the country is in safe hands,” Johnson told the Presidential Scholars, sending them off to conquer the world.

Then they repaired to a barbeque picnic on the South Lawn, mingling with an incongruous array of notables of the day – Ogden Nash and Jules Feiffer, J. Robert Oppenheimer and Rosemary Clooney, Stan Musial and Harper Lee, George Balanchine and Robert Penn Warren, Leonard Bernstein and J. Edgar Hoover.

lights in the Oval Office went out and he reappeared with Lady Bird on the South Lawn, in time to say goodnight, one by one, to their guests. "I'm going to bed tonight knowing the country is in safe hands," he told the Presidential Scholars, sending them off to conquer the world.

The Stalwart Supporter: John Stalnaker

BY JOHN KNOX AND DAVID J. SHELDON

HE WAS PRESENT IN THE BEGINNING, when Eric Goldman first presented his brainstorm of a Presidential Scholars Program. He was the first Executive Director. He oversaw the selection of the very first Scholars on a tight timetable, and did so for another decade under what he referred to euphemistically as “difficult conditions.” He wrote letters and memos complaining of the lack of presidential involvement in the program. Without his annual January letter to the Commissioner of Education, the program might not have been run at all. For the first 18 years of the Presidential Scholars Program, he was the glue that held it all together. His name was John Stalnaker, and no Presidential Scholar should look at his or her medallion without knowing a little something about this stalwart supporter whose legacy is, in part, this program.

Stalnaker was born in 1903 in Duluth, Minn., and attended the University of Chicago, where he earned bachelor’s and master’s degrees and Phi Beta Kappa honors. Beginning at age 23, he served on the faculties of Purdue and Princeton, developing a keen interest in scholastic testing. In between those two academic stints, he developed the concept of “open book” exams back at the University of Chicago. He became an early expert in testing at Princeton with the College Entrance Examination Board, and then during World War II with the Army-Navy College Qualifying Test. After the war, Stalnaker was Dean of Students at Stanford University. From 1949 to 1955, he worked with the Association of American Medical Colleges and was responsible for establishing the National Intern Matching Program, which continues to this day. Along the way, Stalnaker wrote more than 150 articles for educational, professional, and technical journals.

But the work that Stalnaker is best known for today was still to come. In 1955, he became the founding president of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC), the organization that selects National Merit Scholars. For the first 14 years of its existence, via

the initial financial support of the Ford and Carnegie foundations, Stalnaker led the National Merit program to the prestigious position it holds today in American higher education.

It was in the context of his position with NMSC that Stalnaker became associated with the Presidential Scholars Program. Despite the demands of being president of NMSC, Stalnaker immediately took the Scholars Program under his wing. A self-described “broker in brains,” he recounted his introduction to the program to David Sheldon in 1986:

When Goldman suggested the program, I was tremendously interested. I had the impression that the general attitude of those present was very negative, but I also had the impression that Eric Goldman was going to do it no matter what, so I was going to do all that I could to make it work.

“Make it work” is what he did, throughout good times and bad, without contracts or written authorizations because of a rushed selection process, as Executive Director for the first 11 years of the Presidential Scholars Program and as a key Commission member for another seven years. He wrote letters to the Scholars, compiled the earliest history of the Scholars, and even in his eighties regretted not receiving annual



COURTESY OF FELICE KAUFMANN

updates on the program. To this day, no other figure has been so closely identified with the Scholars Program.

And so if you ever took an open-book exam, or went to medical school and then endured “match day,” or were named a National Merit Scholar, the life and work of John Stalnaker has touched your own life. This much you can learn from reading his August 1990 obituaries. But what is not included in those obituaries is Stalnaker’s leadership of and devotion to the Presidential Scholars Program. Without his stalwart commitment to this program, it’s likely that we would not be celebrating its 50th anniversary today. As he himself wrote in his 1976 history, “the [Presidential Scholars] Program has been held each year in part because a very few interested individuals felt it worth continuing in the hope that one day it would again come forth with increased support and greater national interest.” We honor the memory of John Stalnaker by making this anniversary occasion that “one day” – and supporting this program that he nurtured from its inception.

On behalf of our member
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50

years of excellence!

Words from an Insider

Excerpts of writings by John M. Stalnaker

JOHN M. STALNAKER, AN EDUCATOR and an early expert in scholastic testing, was the first Executive Director of the Presidential Scholars Program and served in that capacity from 1964 to 1974. He continued his involvement with the program as a member of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars from 1975 to 1981. In various writings, he shared the history of the program and his thoughts on it from his “insider” perspective. What follows are excerpts from two such pieces of writing.

From *The Background of the Presidential Scholar Program (1976)*

The idea of a Presidential Scholar Program originated in February, 1964, according to historian Eric F. Goldman, then a special consultant to the President. The purpose was simple enough: “to influence the American order of prestige values among the young.” The reasoning ran that if the highest office in the land, the Presidency, would honor scholastic and intellectual excellence in our youth, then the youth as well as their parents and the American people in general would place a higher value on school attainment. What a nation honors tends to prosper and to grow, so the well established logic ran. Honoring a representative group of “the best” in scholastic attainment both in the classroom and in leadership and artistic achievements outside the classroom, would focus the national spotlight on such young leaders and hopefully others would emulate them by increasing their efforts toward greater performance in school work and in leadership roles.

The small planning group called together at the White House gave a mixed reception to this idea. It was proposed that one boy and one girl be selected from each state, the District of Columbia, and Americans living abroad; that the selection be made by a distinguished commission named by the President; that the selection be based on academic attainment and promise; and that each winner be [given] a four-year all-expense scholarship for college – the money to be supplied from private sources. These Scholars would be brought to Washington, entertained and given a

medallion to symbolize the event. The scholarama would be designed to generate widespread publicity nationally and thus the purposes of the program.

The major problem with this proposal was its financing. A quick survey showed that the private sector – foundations and businesses – was not enthusiastic about financing a government program. Also, most of the winners would be sought-after individuals and probably would have won scholarship support, if they needed it, before their selection in the senior year as Presidential Scholars. Thus the financial support concept was dropped, much to the vocal regret of some of the subsequent Presidential Scholars.

A national selection method was outlined in some detail and an “at large” group of 15 was included to take care of those who might be missed in the state-by-state competition, such as students who attended private school away from their home state, extra members of large states, ethnic minorities, scholars in the arts, etc.

When the program was presented to the President, the reaction was favorable. Moreover, the President wanted it executed immediately, although the Executive Order 11155 officially establishing the program was not issued until May 25, 1964. It established a Commission on Presidential Scholars, to be composed of such members as the President might appoint from time to time from among “appropriately qualified citizens of the United States.”

The selection of the Scholars was to be made by this Commission “in accordance with such standards and procedures as it may prescribe from time to time and on



The 2009 class of Presidential Scholars gathers with Vice President Joe Biden on the steps of the White House. Thanks in part to the efforts of John Stalnaker, the Presidential Scholars Program has endured and Scholars continue to be named and honored each year.

the basis of its independent judgment.” Scholars were to be selected “on the basis of their outstanding scholarship” from among the high school seniors.

The U.S. Commissioner of Education was directed to facilitate the implementation of the executive order. The National Merit Scholarship Corporation [of which Stalnaker was founding president] was contracted to handle the details of the preliminary selections, with the final selection of Presidential Scholars to be made by the Commission itself.



Every member of that first Commission was present in Washington to work through the mass of papers presented for the selection of the winners. There was discussion and some disagreement as is inevitable when selections are made from among such highly qualified candidates as the finalists represented. No candidate knew he was under consideration. After the selections were completed each school confirmed the student's good standing and the earlier high recommendation of the school.

The Washington reception of the initial group of Scholars was made into a gala event with the press and the television in full evidence. Despite some apprehensions about the interaction of a large group of unusually bright and unpredictable group of young people, all went peacefully and well. The program was deemed a success and its continuation recommended. The coverage by the media was extensive and favorable.

With changing priorities in international and domestic affairs, national interest in the education of gifted

and talented youth has also fluctuated. Nonetheless the program has been held each year in part because a very few interested individuals felt it worth continuing in the hope that one day it would again come forth with increased support and greater national interest. ...

In the 13 annual selections which have been held, through 1976, a wide diversity of talent has been found. Presidential Scholars have come from the large cities, the small towns, and the rural areas. Excellence in sciences, in the humanities, and in the arts have all been found. The selections have covered the range of economic backgrounds and a variety of interests and ambitions which characterize the able young students graduating today from our secondary schools. To honor them and call the attention of the public to this symbolic group of highly superior students is a worthy task justifying the attention of the highest office in the land. The program should continue, evolve,

and become a goal for all students of ambition, ability and talent. ...

From "The Presidential Scholars Revisited" (August/September 1972 issue of *American Education*)

I agree that it is impossible to select the 121 "most outstanding" high school seniors in the Nation by the method used to choose candidates for Presidential Scholars, or by any other method that I can conceive. And yet the quality of the responses we have received from the first three groups of Scholars persuades me that the selection process which lifted each of these individuals to national recognition was wrong in few if any instances. Most of the selections appear to have been outstandingly justified. ...

Our best hopes of building a higher education system (and for that matter a Nation) worthy of our needs and aspirations lie in continued attempts to systematically seek out and develop the best we have. The Presidential Scholars program is directed to this end.

The Evolution of the Presidential Scholars Concept: A Time Line

BY DAVID J. SHELDON AND JOHN KNOX

February 1964: Eric Goldman drafts a memo for President Lyndon B. Johnson proposing the “Presidential Scholars.”

April 16, 1964: Johnson announces the Presidential Scholars

Program and the Commission members at a presidential press conference.

May 23, 1964: Executive Order 11155 is issued by Johnson, formally creating the Presidential Scholars Program.

June 10, 1964: The first medallion ceremony is held, in the East Room of the White House, followed by a reception in the State Dining Room and a hamburger supper on the South Lawn. An entertainment program follows, emceed by actor Sidney Poitier and featuring Leonard Bernstein on piano, José Ferrer reading





Opposite page: The 1964 Presidential Scholar medallion featured President Lyndon B. Johnson's likeness. Above: Presidential Scholar Elsa Ortiz of Puerto Rico meets President Johnson and receives her medallion at the White House in 1964. Right: President Gerald Ford speaks at the 1975 Presidential Scholars medallion reception.

Shakespeare, and with luminaries in attendance ranging from Robert Kennedy and George Balanchine to Alan Shepard, J. Edgar Hoover, and Stan Musial.

1969: The Presidential Scholar medallion, which originally bore the profile of Johnson, is redesigned to include the Great Seal of the Nation.

1973: The Presidential Scholars Program finds a home in the Office of Education (later the Department of Education).

April 17, 1973: After several years of reduced presidential involvement in the program by the Nixon administration, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Caspar Weinberger rejects advice to simply mail the medallions to Scholars and instead sends a memo to President Richard Nixon affirming support for Executive Order 11155 and continuation of the program as



per Goldman's original vision. Weinberger also supports continuation of presidential participation again in 1974.

1975: Initial evaluation of Scholar candidates is transitioned from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation to Educational Testing Service (ETS), administrators of the SAT, via the connections of former Executive Director and White House Commission member John Stalnaker.

1976: For the first time, ACT scores as well as SAT scores are considered in the initial evaluation of Scholar candidates.

Executive Director Jane Case Williams creates the Presidential Scholar Advisors program, in which former Scholars help chaperone new Scholars and organize events during the Scholars' visit to Washington, D.C.

A booklet of essays by the Scholars on issues facing the nation is issued by the Joint Commission on Arrangements for the Bicentennial.

May 25, 1978: On the 15th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars Program, President Jimmy Carter presents a plaque to Lynda Bird Johnson Robb honoring her father's creation of the program. In response, she says: "I know my father would be very proud of all of you. The thing he was most proud of was the young people of this country and the education, the opportunities that they had and what he expected from all of us. ... I feel like a child of the program ... having been here when it was born 15 years ago."

1979: Williams develops a partnership with the Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge Foundation to present a \$1,000 grant to each Scholar, fulfilling a portion of Goldman's original vision. This partnership continued for almost 20 years. Other partnerships, most prominently with General Motors Corporation, GMAC Financial Services, the Saturn Corporation, and the Merck Company Foundation, were developed in conjunction with the Presidential Scholars Foundation in subsequent decades.



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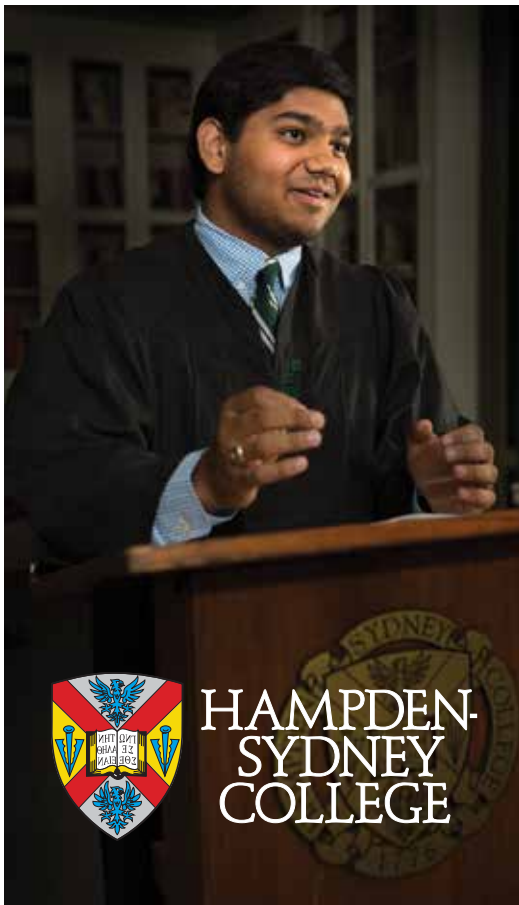
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Above: Pianist Lorin Hollander performs for the 1979 Presidential Scholars. Later that year, President Jimmy Carter enacted Executive Order 12158, which provided for the annual selection of 20 Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Right: The Advisors for the 1983 National Recognition Week. Chief Advisor David Sheldon is in the center of the second row. Future *The Wire* star Wendell Pierce is kneeling in front.

Sept. 18, 1979: Carter enacts Executive Order 12158, providing for the selection of 20 Presidential Scholars “on the basis of outstanding scholarship and demonstrated ability and accomplishment in the visual and performing arts or in creative writing.”

1980: The first class of Scholars in the Arts is selected, and a compendium of Scholars’ essays, poems, and musical compositions is published following a performance by the Scholars in the National Academy of Sciences auditorium.

Aug. 30, 1982: The first full-time, year-round Executive Director, Gary Stember, is appointed.



January 1983: The National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (NFAA), now YoungArts, takes over the role of ETS in the Arts Recognition and Talent Search leading to the selection of Arts Scholars. NFAA/YoungArts becomes a primary supporter of the program.

April 1983: The Commission approves the concept, developed by 1983 Chief Advisor David Sheldon (1981, NH), of giving each Scholar the opportunity to

identify a teacher who most contributed to the Scholar’s education. The Distinguished Teacher Award, later renamed the Teacher Recognition Award, begins with the 1983 Scholars, and continues for the next 30 years.

June 1984: On the 20th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars Program, one Scholar from each of the preceding years is invited back to participate in some of the National Recognition Week events. Included in this group are Jacquelyn Evans (1964, AR), a



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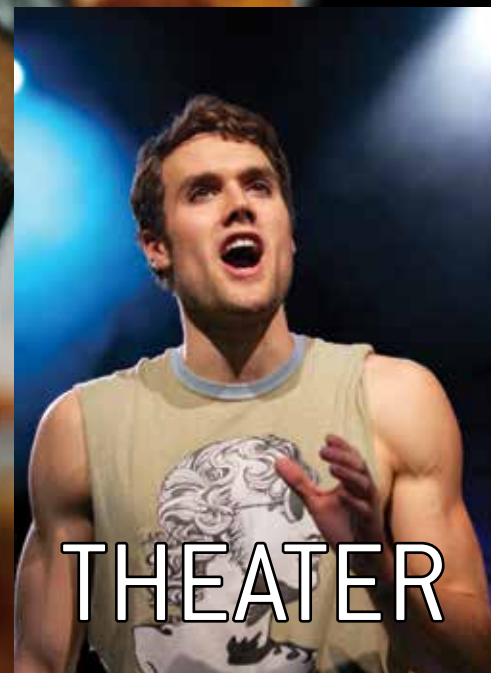
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Right, top: The very first class of Distinguished Teachers, identified by the 1983 Scholars, in front of the Folger Shakespeare Library. The Chair of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, Beverly Fisher White, is near front and center. Right, bottom: Longtime Presidential Scholars Foundation treasurer Sandy Nemitz, his wife Evelyn, and President Bill Clinton at a Scholars event on June 27, 1997.



CPA; Nelson Burton (1967, UT), an Army surgeon specializing in heart and lung transplants; Steven Spradling (1972, OK), a Methodist pastor; Kathryn Gamberoni (1973, PA), an opera singer; David Cruickshank (1974, WY), an engineer for Martin Marietta; and Louis Sisneros (1978, CO), a high school English teacher.

1986: At the suggestion of Stember, now-Assistant Director David Sheldon creates a 72-page “A History of the Presidential Scholars Program” based on Department of Education files, newspaper accounts, and personal interviews with Goldman, Stalnaker, Williams, William Pressly, and others.

1989: The Presidential Scholars Foundation is conceived of and created by GMAC Vice President James Farmer and White House Commission member Sandy Nemitz to raise funds from public and private sources to make National Recognition Week possible and to offer other benefits for current and past Scholars. Nemitz, a 13-year member of the Commission from 1981-93, serves as the Foundation’s treasurer for 20 years.

1994: The American Association of Gifted Children publishes a working paper entitled “The Presidential Scholars: A Portrait of Talent and its Development,” identifying the



importance of support from parents and family members and encouragement by teachers in helping Scholars to cultivate their gifts and talents.

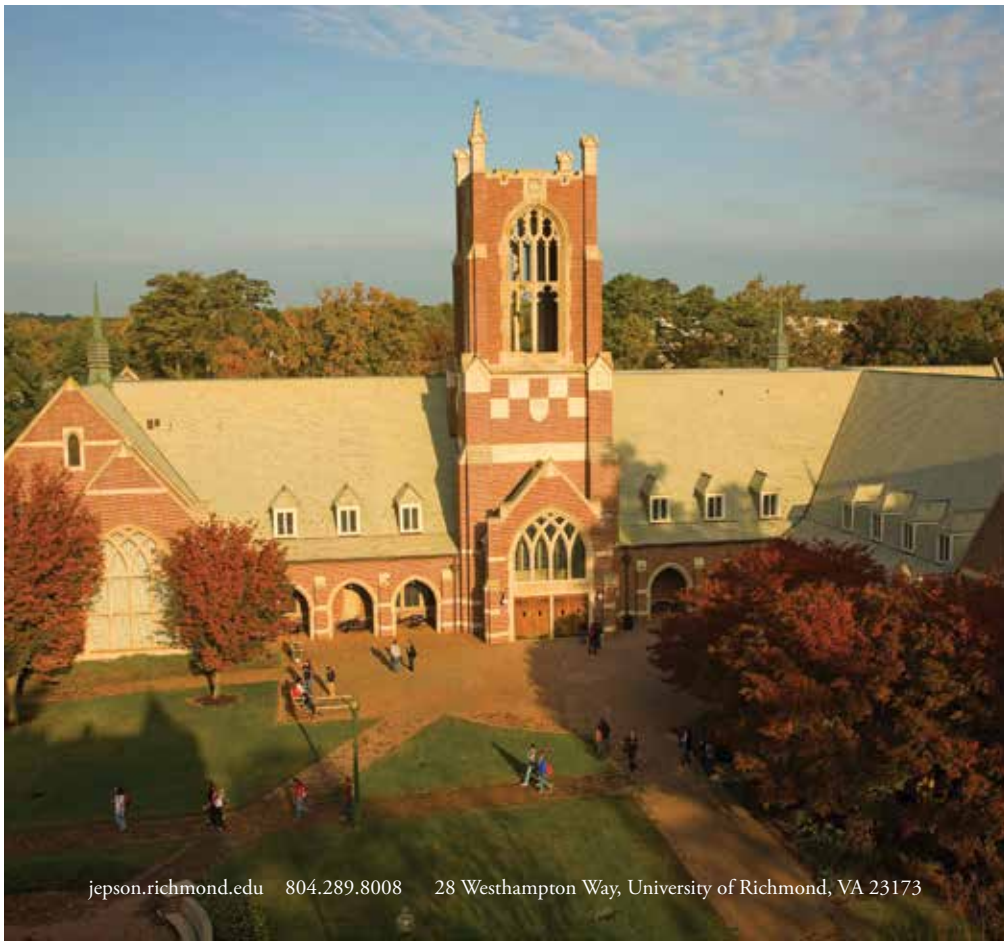
April 14-15, 1996: The Presidential Scholars Foundation, led by Foundation President Ronnie Liebowitz, hosts a charter meeting in Washington, D.C., of the “Presidential Scholars Alumni Society Advisory Council.” Support from

the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation makes the event possible.

Twenty-six Scholar alumni from around the nation attend this meeting, forming the core of an alumni effort lasting several years under the leadership of Kevin Berlin (1983, MD) and Elsa Ortiz-Suarez (1964, PR).

1999: The Presidential Scholar Community Service Project is held.

June 1984: On the 20th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars Program, one Scholar from each of the preceding years is invited back to participate in some of the National Recognition Week events.



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Right, top: Newly named Presidential Scholars meet Secretary of Education Rod Paige and President George W. Bush in 2003. Right, middle: A Presidential Scholars meet-up in New York City. Presidential Scholar Alumni started meet-ups in some larger cities in 2005. Right, bottom: Presidential Scholars gather for a photo at the White House during the 2010 medallion ceremony.



2004: Twelve Scholars participate in a two-week, expenses-paid summer study tour to China in coordination with the Chinese Ministry of Education and the National Committee on U.S.-China Relations.

Dec. 21, 2004: The current Alumni Association effort commences under the leadership of Matt Anestis (1991, CT) and Avery Gardiner (1993, ME), with a 10-year prospectus. This prospectus details plans for an expanded alumni database, the creation of chapters and alumni events, and a 50th anniversary celebration with alumni presentations and a *50 Years of U.S. Presidential Scholars* publication in 2014.



2005: Alumni meet-ups are held in New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and Boston.

2006: Alumni social media groups form on Facebook and LinkedIn.

2010: The Presidential Scholar Alumni Mentorship Program begins.

2011: The first Presidential Scholar Alumni Service Week is held.

June 2014: The Alumni Association hosts the 50th Anniversary Summit, with alumni speakers, arts performances by alumni, and this publication.





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Executive Directors of the Presidential Scholars Program

John M. Stalnaker, 1964-74

Jane Case Williams, 1975-79

Martha Bokee, 1980-81

Clara Chapala, 1982

Gary Stember, 1983-86

Patricia McKee, 1987-88

Carolyn Moore, 1989-93

Joanne Livingston, 1994

Kimberly Watkins-Foote, 1995-2002

Melissa Apostolides, 2002-09

Simone Olson, 2009-present

Although the Department of Education could not be involved in the creation of this publication, and therefore offers no endorsement of it, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association wishes to recognize and appreciate its service to the program.

Expanding the Program

A conversation with Jane Case Williams, Executive Director of the Presidential Scholars Program, 1975-79

BY JOHN KNOX

What is your background and previous experience and relevant employment?

I was born in South Dakota. My father was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and then U.S. Senate, and so I was educated in both South Dakota and Washington, D.C. I earned a bachelor's degree at George Washington University, and a master's at American University.

My first relevant government job was at the Office for Economic Opportunity, working under the legendary Jule Sugarman, who designed and implemented Head Start under Sargent Shriver. ... He was the smartest man in the room, but never let anyone else know it. ... [Editor's note: Sugarman was described by others as an "administrative genius."] From there, I went to the U.S. Office of Education [now the U.S. Department of Education]. ... While there, I was assigned responsibility for the congressionally mandated report to Congress on the education of the gifted and talented.

That sounds important; I'm Googling it now. It was the first national report on gifted education, I see. You had a key role in this report?

I organized, planned, and directed the implementation of it. The study recommended the creation of the Office of Gifted and Talented [OGT] within the Office of Education. I went to that office when it was established.

When did you first learn about the Presidential Scholars Program?

The Presidential Scholars Program was assigned to the OGT. In 1974 or so, we were receiving calls from Dr. John Stalnaker, questioning his continuing role as Executive Director. At this time, new federal privacy laws had taken effect, which affected how the Scholar candidates could be identified. Previously, Dr. Stalnaker had personally overseen the identification via his role as president of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. I called Educational Testing Service [ETS], and spoke to their president, Dr. William Turnbull. His daughter had been a Presidential Scholar [Brenda Turnbull, 1968, NJ], and he was immeasurably helpful in his generosity and assistance.

And your first big task as Executive Director was ...

Two tasks: one, identify the Scholar candidates, and two, develop a method

of application for them. ETS sent information to schools, asking them to identify possible candidates. Those students expressing interest returned information to ETS. That was how we developed the pool of those wanting to be considered. ETS assembled college admissions personnel to sort through and identify the most promising candidates. [Later, ACT scores were also considered.]

At which point did the Commission on Presidential Scholars enter the process?

The pool was narrowed down so that the Commission could not make a mistake in their selections. They were all excellent candidates at that point. But, as Allen Wallis [Chairman of the White House Commission, 1969-77] said to the Scholars, "You can't assume you are the best. You can only be here as representative of the best, and that is your role."

I've always wondered, who wrote the essay questions that were in the application?

Some Commission members, I think, had a role in it, especially if they served on the Executive Committee of the Commission.

For many Scholars, the medallion ceremony and time in Washington are extremely memorable moments in their

lives. It can't be easy to assemble all the moving parts of their visits and the ceremony on the Executive Director's end. Do you have any memorable stories of the logistical feats you pulled off to make it all happen?

It was often extremely difficult to organize it. One year, one of the Presidential Scholars Program staff consultants, Lee Leonhardy, called me and said it was pouring rain. The medallion ceremony was moved inside to the Indian Treaty Room. She got a very large supply of garbage bags to use as ponchos for the Scholars.

Amy Levin [1974, Americans Abroad] was at the ceremony that year, and she vividly remembers the garbage bag ponchos! Lee Leonhardy told me several stories of logistical challenges, including hastily writing notes for President Jimmy Carter before his address to the Scholars, arranging a tour of the Embassy of Iran, and lining up the State Department reception through her connections as a former Foreign Service officer. You certainly surrounded yourself with interesting and talented people! Can you say more about them?

Yes. I saw Lee one day with her kids and said, "You'd like to work on this program." Felice Kaufmann did her doctorate on the Presidential Scholars, and had been a fellow on a grant through Columbia University Teachers College. I selected people who were knowledgeable and creative and wanted to do it. Similarly, we worked very hard to have very competent people on the Commission, such as Murry Sidlin.

[My philosophy is:] Programs become effective and survive because of the vision and the administrative skills of the people who implement them.

And you also created the Advisors concept, as well – the Scholar alumni

who help with subsequent National Recognition Weeks.

Yes. When I took responsibility for the program, I knew we needed a lot of people to work with the Scholars. There was a need for staff, and particularly the ability to communicate with young people.

Several alumni remember their Advisor service fondly for decades afterward, including the master of ceremonies for our 2014 Summit, Leonard Earl Howze. You also were Executive Director when the funding from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation was established, a \$1,000 cash award to each Scholar that continued for the next two decades or so. How did that come about?

Many members of the Commission had said, "What a shame it is there's no monetary award." I drafted a proposal on behalf of Dr. [William] Pressly [Commission Chair, 1978-81] for submission to the Dodge Foundation. It may have been the first private funding for any governmental education program. The funds were to be channeled through the American Association for the Gifted as grantee and administrator on behalf of the Commission.

You were breaking new ground, in other words.

Yes. It was unrestricted money, for the Scholars to buy whatever they needed.

Now we turn to the biggest development of the past 35 years in the Presidential Scholars Program: Executive Order 12158 (September 1979), which expanded the ranks of the Presidential Scholars to include up to 20 Scholars in the Arts. Tell more about where this idea came from, and how it came to fruition.

There was much help and significant financial support in initial implementation of selection procedures from ETS, because of Dr. Turnbull's extreme interest in the program. Implementation was not easy. We earlier did a pilot study from the existing pool of Scholar finalists who indicated their artistic abilities; I recall Murry Sidlin listening to recordings, trying to judge the applicants, saying, "This is a tuba solo? You're joking!" And music seemed



Jane Case Williams (center) speaking to a Scholar at National Recognition Week. At left is Mary Frances Berry, assistant secretary for education in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in the Carter administration.

to be the easiest of the arts to judge by Commission members.

Murry has related the story of his speech to the Commission for the creation of Arts Scholars. Was he the source of the idea?

Yes, I'll give him credit.

How did the idea for the Scholars in the Arts make it all the way to President Carter's desk? That must be a hard thing to pull off.

The very effective liaison person from the White House organized the Executive Order. But, I will reiterate: Programs become effective and survive because of the vision and the administrative skills of the people who implement them. It's one thing to say, "That's a good idea," and a very different road to actually implement the idea.

What were the most rewarding and challenging aspects of your time as Executive Director?

The most rewarding aspect was working with all the wonderful people involved, and making friendships around the country. The challenges often involved money even within the federal agency, and there were always administrators who didn't understand the value of the program.

Many of the aspects of the program that you implemented remain a part of it in 2014. From a Scholar alumnus to a former Executive Director, thank you for your impact on our lives!

Thank you, that's very gratifying.

"Programs become effective and survive because of the vision and the administrative skills of the people who implement them."



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Chairs of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars

Milton S. Eisenhower, 1964-65

J. E. Wallace Sterling, 1966-68

W. Allen Wallis, 1969-77

William L. Pressly, 1978-81

Beverly Fisher White, 1982-85

Ronna Romney, 1986-89

John Engler, 1990-92

Jim Florio, 1993

Barbara Holt, 1994

George A. Sinner, 1995

Stuart G. Moldaw, 1996-98

Thomas E. Britton, 1999-2000

Bruno V. Manno, 2001

Mary E. Kramer, 2002-03

Linda K. Richey Graves, 2004-06

Stanley E. Taylor, 2007-09

Marina C. McCarthy, 2010-present

Although the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars and the Department of Education could not be involved in the creation of this publication, and therefore offer no endorsement of it, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Association wishes to recognize and appreciate the leadership of the Commission Chairs and their service to the program.

The Guiding Light

An interview with Murry Sidlin, former member of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars

BY JOHN KNOX

MURRY SIDLIN IS AN INTERNATIONALLY RENOWNED orchestra conductor and educator who has won awards ranging from the Distinguished Alumnus Award from the Peabody Conservatory of Johns Hopkins University to National Educator of the Year from the National Association of Independent Schools of Music to the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Medal of Valor. From 1975 to 1980, he was appointed by Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter to serve on the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. He eagerly agreed to an interview recounting his experiences on the Commission, revealing along the way his integral role in the establishment of the Arts Scholars component of the program.

When did you first learn about the Presidential Scholars Program?

I came to Washington in June of 1973. Prior to that I was assistant conductor of the Baltimore Symphony, and then I became resident conductor of the National Symphony. Not too long afterward, Jane Case Williams [Executive Director of the Presidential Scholars Program from 1975-79] spoke to me about the program. At the time, I was developing the National Symphony's education Program. She got wind of this, that I was working with a lot of young people, so she contacted me and said, "You ought to be a part of [the Presidential Scholars Program]." ... Jane really cared about this program. ... I was invited to participate.

When were you a Commissioner? How did you come to serve in this role?

That came a little bit later [1975]. I came to the White House and was sworn in at the Teddy Roosevelt Room. That was handled by a White House public liaison, Pam Powell. She was easy to remember because she was the daughter of actors June Allyson and Dick Powell!

Do you have any memories or good stories of the Commission and its Chairmen?

Bill Pressly [Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars 1978-81] was a wonderful man from Atlanta, very inspiring. He was on the board of the

Atlanta Symphony. Now I laid low on the Commission at first, but then I started asking questions about why the arts were not recognized as part of scholarship and achievement in the Presidential Scholars Program. With everyone except Bill, it seemed like I was speaking Martianese! He spoke privately with me, and said that he wasn't sure it was the objective of the program. I asked, "Why not?"

[Surprised] So, were you responsible for the creation of the Arts Scholars program?

I'll be interviewed in January by [the National YoungArts Foundation, commonly referred to as YoungArts] to talk on film about my role in development of the Arts Scholars component, so I suppose I had something to do with it! ... I recall an ETS [Educational Testing Service] staff member who was a former armed forces member saying to me at the Commission meeting, "I don't know if this is where the program belongs. But if you bring it up, we have to consider it." I thought that a bone and a possible signal were being thrown to me.

So I made the case that artistry and performance are the same as research. When one performs, he/she is exploring the music for its historical place in the history of art; the composition is both window and mirror: a window into artistic thinking (traditional or the stretch of artistic persuasion) and the mirror of the composer's sensibilities and life experiences at a time and in a place. Scales and arpeggios which must be mastered to

perform any music are but the grammar – not even the punctuation – [and] certainly not the art.

Beethoven, for example, is never divorced from democratic ideals and the complexities of his time [1770-1827], during which Vienna was never free or far from major wars. In fact, at the premiere of the Ninth Symphony, there were soldiers wearing five different national uniforms in the audience. Beethoven also claimed that he was a "tone poet" and that the poets were the great teachers of society. In his symphonies, string quartets, piano sonatas, and in his one major opera, what was Beethoven attempting to teach us? Therefore, how can studying Beethoven not be research into history, the science of acoustics, the psychology of one who is hearing impaired communicating in tonal language, and that his compositions are comprised of language beyond the tonal relationships into the core of mid-19th century/post-French Revolution society? Here is a German composer who identifies his Third Symphony with an Italian title, *Eroica*, and dedicates it to a French emperor. And when the emperor fails Beethoven's expectations, he tears up the dedication and writes instead "to the memory of a great man."

Music is never only music, but steeped in psychological result, from the living mind of a person of an era and circumstance. The young musician studies all of these components and then offers the result as if it were a thesis, a lecture, a conclusion. How can a Commission which rewards scholarship exclude the painter, the architect, the poet, the choreographer, the film maker, and the musician, all of whom search and explore and deliver their understanding of moral truth told through art? This is the essence of the case I made for the Presidential Scholars Commission to broaden its vision and perspectives to allow into its temple those who would shape the



artistic legacy of America. To be an artist is to be a scholar of the creative and/or co-creative arts.

The arts are research. And every time someone reveals their research as a musician, painter, writer, poet, whatever – you are judged by the universe. The scrutiny is actually much greater than for scholarly research. And the journey begins much younger for artists, by age 5 or 6. How are they not scholars?

I made my speech, the vote took place, and my proposal was accepted.

Did the Arts Scholar component begin immediately?

No, there was an “embryo year” when a couple of musicians were chosen among the 121 Presidential Scholars. I remember being there, and being especially proud because they were musicians and President Carter acknowledged that musicians were being honored among the traditional Scholars. Starting the next year, Jane Case Williams developed a system for choosing the 20 Arts Scholars. ... I’m very proud of the Arts Scholars component. I think that my job was to illuminate the need to move in this direction, but the other Commissioners had to accept this suggestion.

Conductor and educator Murry Sidlin made the case for including Arts Scholars in the Presidential Scholars Program while serving as a member of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars.

How were the Commissioners involved in the selection process?

It was a wonderful process. Lively and fair; the stakes were high. ... We broke into groups. We all saw the files of the candidates – records, recommendations, what they’d written. Did arguments break out? No, I wouldn’t use that word. Discussion, yes. All the discussions were important, not nit-picky. [As a Commission], you’re setting a standard for others to follow. The President is going to award these kids. [I feel] it was taken very seriously. ... I was very proud to be a member of the Commission.

What was the most rewarding aspect of your time on the Commission?

The Arts Scholar component. Also, to be in the room with very serious people who were concerned to choose from among very accomplished students. ... I

miss being around people who for a few days would ratchet up the thinking and passion about what’s right about education in this country, [asking the question], “How do we make sure these young people are recognized, saluted, and inspired to continue what they’re doing?” ... A number of the Scholars came from poor families, from areas not famous for great schools. We were able say to them, “Your nation recognizes your hard work and outstanding achievements.”

What was the most challenging aspect?

One thing that concerned us was that the program was not as well known as it should have been.

Any last thoughts?

The Presidential Scholars Program should be the guiding light and major beacon for educators everywhere, for kids to strive for. It would help if it were better known everywhere. It needs to be the crème de la crème of recognition, a major reward. It should be given the same level of recognition as other major public awards given by the President. Scholars should become as famous as other major honorees, to give similar dignity to what all this program represents.

“How can a Commission which rewards scholarship exclude the painter, the architect, the poet, the choreographer, the film maker, and the musician, all of whom search and explore and deliver their understanding of moral truth told through art?”

It Changed My Life: YoungArts and the Presidential Scholars in the Arts

BY AMBER HOLLOWAY, SCHOLAR IN THE ARTS (2011, AL)

AT THE REQUEST of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars, YoungArts serves as the exclusive nominating agency for the U.S. Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Each year, 20 YoungArts winners are chosen as Scholars in the Arts. They showcase their work at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, D.C., and are awarded as U.S. Presidential Scholars. In this essay, Arts Scholar alumna Amber Holloway, a young writer and aspiring comedienne living in Tuscaloosa, Ala., describes the process of selection from her own perspective.

In the past few years, whenever I have found myself feeling unsure, I need nothing but to close my eyes, and in an instant, I am trembling. I'm 18 again, in a large room filled with laughter reverberating off the thick walls of the Smithsonian, equipped only with my Southern accent, the gift of storytelling, and 140 of my remarkable new friends. I go back to this moment often, and let myself explore the depths of the feelings that overwhelmed me; a self was born that I had never imagined, made possible by YoungArts.

At a very young age, I imagined myself growing up to become a multitude of things. I took karate classes for years, guitar, piano, and choir. I danced and hopped through the hallways of my home in a pink tutu, I ran for student council, and I smoothed my hands over my first blazer as I practiced the first speech I ever wrote, picturing myself as the first female President and dreaming of a world wherein I could promise that each water fountain would overflow with chocolate milk.

Each year for Halloween, rather than being a monster or a ghost, my ambition for change in the world became more apparent, as my mother helped me dress myself as a doctor, a lawyer, a policewoman. At the age of 10, something changed my direction, when alongside my cursive workbook, I had my first poetry lesson. I still remember my first poem – the simplicity and the comical rhymes.

That year, on career day, I came dressed as an author, wearing large eyeglass frames with the lenses popped out, a very retro long-sleeved shirt that I had borrowed from my grandfather, and I was covered in yellow Post-it notes that were filled with the verses and lines of some of my favorite stories and poems. This is to say that when I profess my love and longing for the art of the written word, it is no exaggeration. From this moment on, I actively ran after the beauty and hope that I saw in the world, desperate to get it down on paper, to transform the miracle of human life and condition into words, into art, that I could share with everyone.

When I applied to the Alabama School of Fine Arts, I was going into the ninth grade. Upon being interviewed, they asked why writing and art mattered to me; they asked what I wanted to do with my writing, with my life. I remember their faces, the reaction when I told them that I wanted to change the world. When they followed up by asking how I might do this, I did not know how to answer them. I did not know how to put my hands around the urgency I felt toward the capabilities in the prosperity of my craft. Now I do.

As a finalist attending YoungArts Week in Miami, there was an energy that seemed as if it might lift me up and carry me into the very palm trees I rested my back against. Surrounded by other young writers, attending master classes during the

day, and joining the fellow finalists at night to attend one another's performances, I was simply moved to tears by the sheer amount of talent, virtue, and refinement displayed by my peers. Each note, each movement, each line, each color, each idea, each individual was undeniably significant and beautiful. It was the most inspired and awestruck I had ever been in my life. There were many times when I could not fathom the fact that I was worthy in the face of these incredible artists and teachers. I found that I had to remind myself that not only were they there, but I was, too.

So many things in our lives, especially in the life of a young creative, seem to be left up to chance or fate. I cannot convey how astounding it was to know that I had been chosen to be a part of this prodigious phenomenon.

As bizarre as it may be, there is a definitive point in each of our lives wherein we are consumed by boundless energy, filled with imagination and inspiration, but it is also when we are the most defenseless, suddenly finding ourselves on the precipice of adulthood, hysterically teetering back and forth between aspiration and panic. In 2011, when I became a YoungArts Winner and subsequently a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, it immediately gave me tangible answers to questions that at the crucial age of 18 were fundamental to my life's direction.

For the first time, not only were my dreams possible, but they were becoming true when I least expected them to. Every inkling of doubt or difficulty I had experienced along the pursuit of what I felt to be my lifework was lifted from my shoulders. I found that I could stand taller, look straight forward, and see a tomorrow in which my ambitions were reality. The most important realization may seem like a simple one, but over the course of our entire lives becomes more complex; through YoungArts I discovered that I was not alone, and that I never would be again.

After the Writing Finalists' reading in Miami during YoungArts Week, I received a standing ovation. I was humbled again moments later when people began to come up to me, pouring their own stories of loved ones who had passed, right into my very heart. As an artist, it was every hope that I had when writing that particular essay, as it is with almost every artist producing any work, to acknowledge a universal experience, and to connect with others in a way that creates a defined moment of humanity, something that reminds us of the sanctity of the things that art pulls from the very pit of who we are: love, spirit, vision, compassion.

Just as I had experienced a sequence of the most proud and intimate moments of my life with these amazing strangers, I was introduced to Lin Arison, who was no stranger at all, as I immediately recognized her as the co-founder of YoungArts. There was a glow in her eyes and her cheeks as she spoke with me. Though it was daunting to come face to face with someone who had made possible so many wonderful things, there was a comfort and a kindness in her presence, which made sense, as she and her late husband, Ted, are truly the source of the passion from which all of this came to be, not only in my life, but in the lives of countless artists before me, each artist I had met that week, and so many more to come.

I could not help but to nervously thank her for the opportunity and for her efforts and belief, to tell her that she had changed my life and the lives of so many others. In this moment, she took my hand, smiled, and with the most radiating grace, said, "I am the one who should be thanking you. All of you."

By providing an already extraordinary network of 141 young Americans with prestigious recognition of their work, endless scholarship opportunity, and a professional skill set that allows them to immediately engage themselves within their fields of merit, these programs, when combined, single-handedly strengthen the beginning



2011 Presidential Scholar in the Arts Amber Holloway credits the National YoungArts Foundation and the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program with making a huge impact on her life.

for some of the most promising young thinkers, innovators, and artists in our nation, staying true to the original mission of the National YoungArts Foundation.

It is profoundly important, as the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program approaches in June of 2014, to celebrate and recognize the integrity of the sweeping societal influence they have had while partnered with the National YoungArts Foundation, founded in 1981 by the Arisons.

When there is intention to change the world, it is never accomplished by one. Each shift toward a better state of shared existence may begin with few, but triumphs through the actions, voices, and accomplishments of many. To incite change on a large scale is to dedicate oneself to relentless work and a standard of excellence, and also to acknowledge and confront one of the most universal objectives: fostering the education, talents, abilities, and overall capabilities of our youth.

Organizations like YoungArts and the Presidential Scholars Program invest in the futures of their participants, and by doing so make monumental social impact upon America's cultural climate, each year forging an innovative, progressive, and bright future for America, and, in turn, the world.

“These programs, when combined, single-handedly strengthen the beginning for some of the most promising young thinkers, innovators, and artists in our nation.”

Being Taken Seriously: Presidential Scholars on the White House Commission

An interview with Amy Levin, Michael Weiss, and Carolyn Bennett Hendricks, Presidential Scholars and former members of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars

BY JOHN KNOX

IN THE SEVENTIES, three Presidential Scholars were tapped to serve on the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars: Amy Levin (1974, London, England) in 1975-77, and Michael Weiss (1975, OH) and Carolyn Bennett Hendricks (1977, Wiesbaden, Germany) in 1978-80. Levin is professor and chair of English and former director of the Women's Studies Program at Northern Illinois University in DeKalb, Ill. Weiss is the Cowan-Blum Professor of Cancer Research and professor of biochemistry and medicine at Case Western Research University in Cleveland, Ohio. Hendricks is a nationally recognized medical oncologist specializing in breast cancer in private practice in Bethesda, Md. I interviewed them separately regarding their experiences and the impact on their lives.

What was your experience of being a Scholar?

Amy Levin: It was really exciting. My father was an Associated Press reporter in London. When the invitation arrived, we didn't believe I really would be given a ticket to D.C., and we all joked about how I would go when Richard Nixon paid for me to go to D.C. for two days. It was the first time I'd flown across the Atlantic alone. The first night, I was amazed. ... I'd finally landed where people were as studious and, well, nerdy as I was. I remember the reception at the State Department; I'd never been wined and dined like that. I remember that Julie Nixon Eisenhower wore the same dress at the medallion ceremony that she wore on the day that Nixon resigned. I saw it on TV and recognized the dress! ... I stayed in touch with a few Scholars for a couple of years.

Michael Weiss: It was an electrifying visit for me and my family. I hadn't often been outside of the Midwest – beyond the region near Cleveland. It was a big thrill. We went to Wolf Trap, and there was the penthouse reception at the State Department. Some of the Scholars were my future college classmates at Harvard.

Come freshman year, we knew each other from our time in Washington, so we had a head start bonding.

Carolyn Bennett Hendricks: It had a very big impact on my life as a senior in high school in Wiesbaden, Germany. My father was an Air Force pathologist stationed there at the time. ... It was a very big deal for my small Department of Defense high school, which was completely unfamiliar with the program before I was nominated. My great-grandmother accompanied me to the medal ceremony in D.C., also definitely a life-altering event for her. ... To see Jimmy Carter was a big thrill!

When were you a Commissioner? How did you come to serve in this role?

AL: My family moved back to Denver from London. I didn't know many people there, and I needed a job my first summer after my freshman year of college. I thought I'd contact the Department of Education to see if there were any internships. Nothing came of it, but when it came to selecting a Scholar on the Commission, it probably didn't hurt that they had a current address for me and an indication of interest on my part!



Amy Levin was the first Scholar to serve on the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. She was a Commission member from 1975 to 1977.

MW: First, I was an Advisor in the program [from 1976-79]. As I recall, Jane Williams [Jane Case Williams, Executive Director of the Presidential Scholars Program, 1975-79] played a key role. I think I was nominated in the fall of 1977, and the first meeting of the Commission was held at Princeton in 1978. Before attending, I had dinner with Amy Levin at one of the Radcliffe Quadrangle dining halls, where she was a student. Amy generously gave me guidance because she'd already served on the Commission.

AMY LEVIN

Michael Weiss served on the Commission from 1978 to 1980. He was also an Advisor from 1976 to 1979.

CBH: Jane was responsible for it. We had a conversation after the medal ceremony. She was very supportive of me. Her advice and support were invaluable. Jane's vision was to bring the experiences of Scholars to the Commission, and to diversify their exposure to different points of view. As an African-American and as a Scholar from overseas, I was able to provide some of that diversity.

Do you have any memories or good stories of your experience on the Commission?

MW: It made me wonder how I ever got to be a Presidential Scholar! I became very confident in the future of the U.S. because of the quality of the candidates.

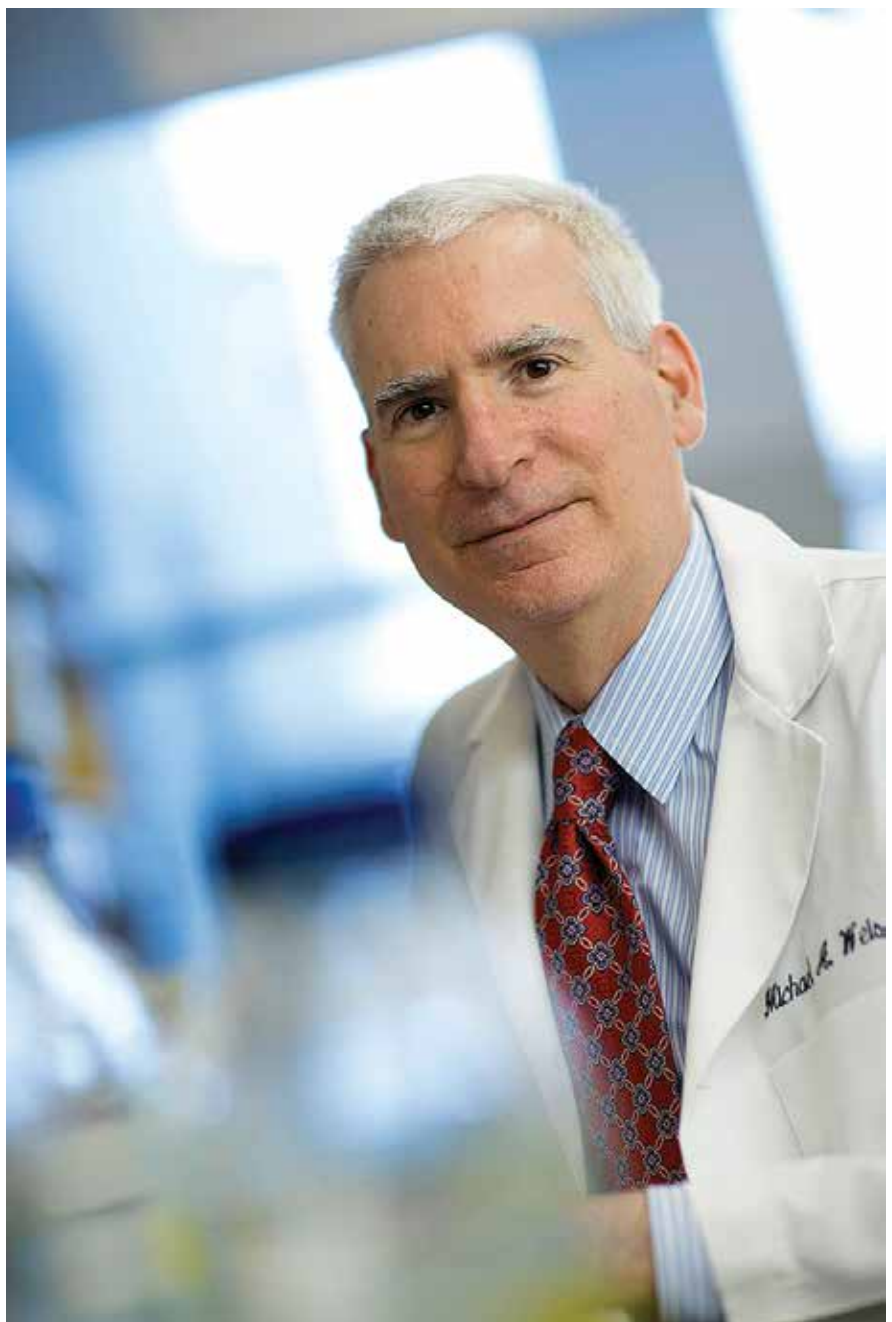
AL: I was still 18 years old! ... I felt pressure to be mature. ... For three years, I was invited to Princeton to pick the Scholars. It was inspiring to have Commissioners listen to me. Murry Sidlin [former member of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars], in particular, was just wonderful to me. We met up later when he was conducting in Aspen, Colo.

MW: I remember how respectful Bill Pressly [Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars from 1978-81] was to everyone, accumulating different points of view. President Carter had broad representation on the Commission. I learned a lot from Bill about how to be a leader later in life. When I did an MBA several years ago, I took a course in diversity management, and I realized that Bill was decades ahead of his time in that respect. And it was great fun to work with Carolyn!

CBH: I can remember feeling appreciated and valued as a Commission member because of my own ethnic and geographic diversity.

Can you describe in a little more detail the process by which Scholars are selected by the Commission?

AL: We spent a long weekend in Princeton and read files all day Saturday. We wrestled over every single application,



especially the Scholars in the Arts. No college admissions committee probably wrestled as much.

MW: The Commissioners would break into committees of two or three for each state, or a group of states, and worked intensely together. We got to know each other. It was a lot like a National Institutes of Health study section, looking at grants, thinking back on it. The opportunity for choosing at-large Scholars meant some discussion among the different teams. Because there are only 15 at-large Scholars, not every state could have one.

Several committees would be advocating for an additional slot.

CBH: The applicants had been vetted quite thoroughly by the time the Commission saw the applications. I can remember being very impressed with the quality of the applicants, which made the selection process very challenging.

How did your experience as a Scholar inform your work as a Commissioner? Was your input valued?

AL: I didn't feel as useful as a Commissioner, because I was younger

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Carolyn Bennett Hendricks, Commission member from 1978 to 1980, has carried her experience serving on the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars into her later board positions.

and didn't know as much as the others did. But, yes, the Commissioners valued my input. As a Commissioner, I cared about candidates being involved in activities, not just being good students.

How did your Scholar and Commission experiences impact your later career and life?

CBH: It was the first time I'd been on a board like it. It was a valuable experience, to see decision-making done at an executive level by such a high-functioning board. I now serve on the board of the American Bird Conservancy and the Maryland Commission on Cancer and I formerly served on my local hospital board here in Bethesda, and the experience of serving on the Commission at such a young age has served me well in these roles. I think the experience of being a Scholar alters our pathways – it's both a benefit and a gift, and it has made me want to give back.

AL: Being taken seriously by the Commission at such an early stage in my career really gave me a sense of "you can do it" as I went ahead. It's been important to me as an educator. I have actually gone out of my way in my educational career not to teach just the gifted and talented. I was turned off by the elitism I encountered in college, not by the program.

MW: It stimulated my interest in being on admissions committees in my university work. In the interviews I don't have any set questions, and let the young person select the topic – what's most interesting to him or her. In Cleveland, I continue this interest as an interviewer for Harvard College and for the Case Western Reserve M.D.-Ph.D. Program.

Then I'll deviate from my own set of questions and ask, what was most interesting to you regarding your experiences?

MW: Under the influence of the Scholars Program and my late father's



idealism, I've seen my career as a way to take advantage of research in universities in an effort to influence the world in a positive way. But I didn't realize that it could take 25 years or more to go from a basic idea to a translational advance as, for example, in my laboratory's ongoing diabetes research. Perhaps in a few more years we may get to the stage of helping patients with better insulins.

AL: I knew that the other members of the Commission were selected for a variety of reasons. Some were gifted musicians, artists, or writers; others made important contributions to education,

and yet appeared to be major political donors. I was fascinated by their interactions, as well as in the way the selection process was structured and the meetings were organized.

CBH: I am still in contact with Sharon Malone [1977, AL], whom I met during our time in D.C. as Scholars in 1977. She has a private OB-GYN practice in D.C., and we share patients occasionally. She is a phenomenal woman, African-American like me and married to U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder. It is amazing to follow their relationship in such a high-visibility marriage. After all these years, I still maintain contact with her!

Fifty Years of Memories

The Presidential Scholars in Washington, D.C.

IN 2013, FAITH MACE BRYNIE (1964, WV), 50th Anniversary Committee Chair, reached out to Presidential Scholars from the last five decades and asked them to share their memories and thoughts on being named Scholars and, more specifically, of their National Recognition Program experiences in Washington, D.C. The pages that follow feature

Scholars' recollections – in their own words – of their time spent in the nation's capital. Represented here are stories ranging from 1964, the first year of the program, to 2013, the most recent National Recognition Week. While each Scholar's experience is unique, a common thread of excitement, wonder, and gratitude runs throughout this collection.

Ann Karen Grekel Hightower (1964, OK)

The 1964 trip to receive the Presidential Scholar medal was amazing and has to some extent motivated me ever since. For years a standing joke in my family went this way:

(Cute White House military attaché with impeccable courtesy): "Hello, I'd like to introduce Miss Hayes."

(My mother): "Oh, hello, Miss Hayes. What do you do?"

(Attaché): "Miss HELEN Hayes."

(Mother): "Oh, my goodness, THAT Helen Hayes?"

(Helen Hayes): "Yes, I'm afraid so."

To have shaken hands with Helen Hayes, Edward Teller, Robert Kennedy, Sidney Poitier, Leonard Bernstein, among many others, and to have hobnobbed with so many bright students with fascinating résumés gave me memories that provided courage and solace when I felt like a failure and nudged me to share on the love of learning and to contribute to society in thanks for the gift.

The significance of the photograph of me shaking President Johnson's hand is obvious, but for my family there is more to the story. At my daughter's graduation from the LBJ School of Public Policy at the University of Texas, I got to shake Lady Bird Johnson's hand and tell her how happy I was to do that again – 28 years later!

As to what I've done in my lifetime, I earned a Stanford University A.B. in English after which I taught community



college and high school English. That wasn't the challenge I was looking for, so I returned to Rice University to get a master's in chemical engineering, after which I worked for ExxonMobil

Ann Karen Grekel receives her Presidential Scholar medallion from President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964.

ANN KAREN GREKEL HIGHTOWER

From left to right, 1964 Oklahoma Scholars Thomas Earl Erbar and Ann Karen Grekel shake hands with their state's senators, Almer Stillwell "Mike" Monroney and J. Howard Edmondson.



Chemical Company until I retired. Since retirement I've trained as a master gardener, undertaken major volunteer work at a small independent school, and served on church, neighborhood, and school boards.

I still take out my medal out every now and then and look at it. And remembering, I try to deserve it. 🍷



Tom Hammer at the 1964 White House reception with nuclear scientist J. Robert Oppenheimer.

Tom Hammer (1964, DE)

I arrived in Washington and have vague memories of being an 18-year-old in shock, never imagining I would visit the Presi-

dent, picnic on the White House lawn, and chat with Leonard Bernstein about *West Side Story*, and shake hands with Bobby Kennedy. My sense of being in another

world continued at the reception in the White House among all the Scholars, with my parents milling around, too, among Nobel Prize and Pulitzer Prize winners. As an upcoming physics major, I knew vaguely who Dr. Oppenheimer was, but my dad, the physicist, knew all about Oppenheimer's triumphs and troubles. My dad walked up to him and said, "You were right all the time, Oppie." I went further into shock hearing my dad use a nickname for such a famous person and spent the rest of the reception in a dream. 🍷

Kathy Bertsch Compagno (1964, CA)

My memories are not as sharp as I would like them to be, but some have stayed with me, clear and vivid as the day they happened. I flew in from California and checked in wherever we were staying. I have no recollection at all of that first evening, although the agenda tells me we were at Crawford Hall at George Washington University. The next day was very exciting, with visits to the State Department, NASA headquarters, the Supreme Court, and the Capitol. I remember my emotions as I sat in the balcony at the Capitol while senators

debated a cloture vote for the Civil Rights Act. I knew that I was witnessing a momentous event as our country chose the right direction for our future. Later, I remember the total awe I felt when hearing astronaut Alan Shepard describe his adventures in space. Space is "another world" for me, one that has always fired my imagination.

And then ... on to the White House. Wow! It was difficult for me to grasp that I was there as an "honored guest," sitting in the East Room and preparing to shake hands with the President of the United States. I remember waiting for the arrival

of President Johnson and looking at my father and grandmother sitting with the other families. Soon, Johnson arrived, and he spoke for a little while, but his words were a blur to me. (I'm grateful we were sent the text of his speech later.) Then, one by one, we were called up to shake the President's hand and receive our certificates and medals. Johnson made me feel quite comfortable. I do not remember any nervousness.

There was a short reception after that, with many famous people present. I was hesitant to approach most of the celebrities and dignitaries, but I remember

Guests present at Presidential Reception for Presidential Scholars
at 5:30 p.m., June 10

George Balanchine	Walter Lippman
Leonard Bernstein	Marya Mannes
Herbert Black	Judge Thurgood Marshall
Miss Gwendolyn Brooks	William H. Mauldin
Willem de Kooning	Stan Musial
Jules Feiffer	Ogden Nash
Jose Ferrer	Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer
Abe Fortas	Sidney Poitier
Martha Graham	Dr. I. L. Rabi
Dr. Leland Haworth	James Raston
Helen Hayes	Professor David Riesman
John Hersey	Philip Roth
J. Edgar Hoover	Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
Dr. Donald Hornig	Ben Shahn
Francis Koppel	Alan B. Shephard, Jr.
Alfred A. Knopf	Roger L. Stevens
Joseph Kraft	Edward Durrell Stone
Miss Harper Lee	✓ John Walker
Gerry Mulligan Quartet	Robert Penn Warren
Rington Trio	William S. White
Virgilio (met opera tenor)	



Left: The guest list from the reception held on June 10, 1964, for the first class of Presidential Scholars. Above: A group of Scholars sits on the South Lawn listening to Leonard Bernstein. Opposite: The 1964 Scholars posed for a photo on the White House steps with Lynda Johnson (in the pink dress in front).

talking comfortably with Jules Feiffer and Harper Lee. Along with my fellow Scholar from California, Patrick Hogan, we shared our feelings of disbelief at being in the White House for such a wondrous occasion. I was surprised that Feiffer and Lee seemed down-to-earth as they talked with us and just as excited as we were. In retrospect, I regret not being more assertive about meeting with some of the famous people who were present; on the other hand, I'm not sure what I would have said to them. But one thing is for

sure. If I had realized baseball hero Stan Musial was there, I certainly would have sought him out and shaken his hand.

And then we adjourned outside, which was a total delight for me, and made my most vivid memories. It was a lovely spring-summer evening, warm and pleasant, and we were free to stroll the grounds and enjoy the lawns and landscaping. At some point, we gathered on the stairs for a group photo with Lynda Johnson, which seemed to take a long time. I wish I had realized where the photographer was and made sure

I was visible to his lens. I'm obscured by the tall Scholar in front of me, but at least my hair shows clearly.

Then came a picnic buffet, very casually but elegantly served, and a perfect choice for us. Lynda was our official hostess, and she was there most of the evening, mingling and chatting with us, and I remember speaking simple pleasantries with her. I don't remember what was served (my collection of newspaper clippings tells me hamburgers), but I do remember sitting on the lawn to enjoy my food. There I had an amazing encounter. Both hands full of plates and napkins and drink, I looked up to see President Johnson and his Attorney General, Robert



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Kennedy, walking toward me. It was very emotional for me to see Kennedy after agonizing so recently over John Kennedy's assassination.

That was the one time I asserted myself that evening. With my plate and cup still in hand, I jumped up and headed toward them, calling "Wait!!" to the President, and "I want to shake your hand" to Robert Kennedy. (I recall thinking that I had already shaken LBJ's hand, so I didn't think I was being rude to the President.)

Kennedy nodded, smiled, and kept walking. But I insisted, "No, I really want to shake your hand," and they both waited patiently and politely while I struggled to free my right hand and extend it in greeting. That handshake meant the world to me, especially after Robert Kennedy came to share his brother's fate.

The evening continued with casual conversation groups around the lawn. At one point I sat on the fringes and listened to a spirited conversation between musically

inclined Scholars and Leonard Bernstein. And then the entertainment began, featuring the Kingston Trio, a popular folk group at the time. I wandered for a while and then reclined on the lawn to listen, admiring the many twinkling stars in the darkening sky. Then Leonard Bernstein serenaded us with the lyrical notes of a Chopin nocturne. The day ended with a moment of peace and serenity, a time to savor the delights of such a memorable time in such an unforgettable place. 🌟

John Reiff (1965, TX)

Being a Presidential Scholar influenced my life in two ways that stand out to me. The first was the experience of being placed in the company of so many famous people, the movers and shakers of the world, and being honored as a future member of this company. Justice Hugo Black briefed us on the functions of the Supreme Court. At the reception in the Rose Garden, I shook hands with and tried to make small talk with John Glenn and Jonas Salk, among others. The sense of myself that I took away from those three days was both a blessing and a burden – the sense that I had been recognized as having extraordinary potential, and that I was responsible for fulfilling that potential for the public good. The whole process of selecting and recognizing Presidential Scholars might be designed to bring about just this outcome in the young people who are chosen.

The second is more a product of happenstance. Close to 15 years after my selection, I was contacted by a researcher [Felice Kaufmann] who was conducting a follow-up study on Presidential Scholars, and she sent me a quite lengthy questionnaire. To fill it out, I had to essentially tell the story of my life since graduation from high school. That instrument led me to reflect on the pivotal role of the Vietnam War in my life path. I had claimed the status of conscientious objector in 1968, and in 1970 was drafted and spent two years doing civilian alternative service as a CO. The commitment I had made at that time to the practice of nonviolence both informed and challenged all my major



John Reiff with students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

decisions since then. At the time I filled out the questionnaire, I was a doctoral candidate in a program in American Culture, trying to figure out what my dissertation topic would be. I realized that given the way my involvement with the war had shaped what followed in

my life, I was deeply curious about the impact of the war on other men of my age – both those who refused to go, and even more, those who went. My dissertation ended up as a life-history study of Vietnam veterans. That then led me into teaching about war and peace studies, which eventually led me to a career working with service-learning and civic engagement. I'm not sure this career path would have emerged as it did had I not been a Presidential Scholar included in the population who received that questionnaire at that time. 🌟

Brother and sister Presidential Scholars Adele Ausink Dolan (1969, WY) and John Ausink (1972, WY)

by Adele Ausink Dolan

Both John and I remember the Presidential Scholar award coming out of the blue. There was no application process at the time, and the completely unexpected nature of the honor made it that much more special. I remember walking up the interior staircase of the Washington Monument, eating specialty-of-the-house bean soup in the Senate cafeteria, and learning from a Boston Scholar that a “water fountain” was called a “bubbler” in the Northeast. I recall some disappointments: buses never arrived to take the group on a White House tour, and President Nixon was unable to present the medals in the Rose Garden as scheduled. Instead, we received our awards from (pre-scandal) Vice President Spiro Agnew. John’s main memory of the trip to Washington, D.C., was attending a performance of Bernstein’s *Mass* at the Kennedy Center and being impressed by the way the other Scholars discussed it. He does not recall the presenter of his medal, but whoever it was apparently remained scandal-free!

The experience did not lead either of us to a career in politics, but I ran for governor at Girls’ State, and John attended Boys’ State and Boys’ Nation. I studied at Cottey College, the University of Tulsa, and Vanderbilt University, married and raised four children in Hudson, Wis., taught college French, and now maintain involvement in my church, the Phipps Center for the Arts (singing and acting), and other community activities. I currently serve on the Cottey College Alumnae Association Executive Board, and as a committee chairman for Wisconsin State Chapter of the P.E.O. Sisterhood. John attended the Air Force Academy, Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, and the Kennedy School of Government. After a career in the Air Force, he ended up with his family in Arlington, Va., working for a Washington, D.C., think tank.

We both greatly appreciated the Presidential Scholar recognition and enjoyed seeing the nation’s capital with peers from around the country. John still thinks it’s neat that he’s part of a sibling pair of Scholars (and wonders how many there have been), and sometimes annoys his kids by showing them the medal that he keeps in a drawer in his desk. 🟦



Scholar siblings Adele Ausink Dolan and John Ausink display their Presidential Scholar medallions.

Susan Supernaw (1969, OK)

Besides meeting student intellectuals, being a Presidential Scholar in 1969 allowed me to embarrass myself thoroughly and still get a great job. Here’s how it happened.

The culmination of our weekly activities was lunch with President Nixon. However, he was delayed on his return from Vietnam. I was disappointed when Vice-President Agnew presided over the presentation of our Presidential Scholarship’s medallion. Afterwards the press milled around with the politicians, talking with various Scholars. Bud Wilkinson had been Oklahoma University’s football coach when the

Sooners won three National Football Championships. He offered his hand.

“Hi, I’m Bud Wilkinson.”

“Yes, I know. I’m Susie Supernaw.”

“Yes, I know,” he laughed. “Are you any relation to John Supernaw?” he asked.

“He’s my father.” My dad had gone to the University of Oklahoma from 1948–1952.

“Well, I remember your dad,” he said, “Even though he didn’t make the starting team, he had some good moves out there on the field.”

The press noticed our conversation. At first just one camera panned to the scene, then another, and then another. Suddenly

a crowd gathered. Bud asked, “Is there someone in particular that you’d like to meet but haven’t?” “Yeah, I’d like to meet Shirley Chisholm.” Shirley was the first black Congresswoman and I admired her.

“That can be arranged. Tell me, have you seen the old S.O.B. yet?”

“Do you mean Nixon? No, I’m supposed to meet him tomorrow.” Suddenly there was a roar of laughter from the crowd. I saw House Majority Leader Carl Albert walking toward me, giving a hand signal to the press that made them disperse respectfully.

Bud stifled a laugh and said with a straight face, “I meant the Old Senate



Office Building [which went by the acronymic nickname “Old S.O.B.”]. I thought you might like a tour.”

I tried to act normal, hoping to hide my embarrassment. “Sure, I’d love to see it.” I turned toward the door hoping to get away quickly when I heard a voice.

“Wait a minute, Susie. Please, I want to talk to you.” It was Carl Albert, who was also from Oklahoma.

“May I talk to Susie alone for a minute?” he asked. Bud nodded and left. “Susie, I



want you to work for me here in D.C., in my office.”

“All right, but why?”

“Anyone who can call Nixon an S.O.B. and get away with it has to work in my office.”

Sure enough, I got a job. 📍

Excerpted with permission from Muscogee Daughter by Susan Supernaw, University of Nebraska Press, 2010, p. 102-103.

Left: Today Susan Supernaw enjoys dancing at pow-wows in her traditional Muscogee regalia. Right: Carl McCafferty (left), principal of Central High School in Tulsa, Okla., congratulates Susan Supernaw on her award in 1969. J.B. Goodknight (right) represented the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company, which became Susan’s scholarship sponsor.

Barbara Wezelman (1971, AZ) and her nephew Daniel Wezelman Bartlett (1999, AZ)

My nephew Daniel and I had a great many things in common. We liked puns, singing, and science fiction; we participated in speech tournaments during high school and services at our synagogues; and we were both privileged to be selected as Presidential Scholars.

I have to admit that the letter that informed me I had been named a Presidential Scholar came as quite a surprise. I hadn’t heard of the program before. My trip from Tucson to Washington, D.C., in 1971 was the journey of my lifetime up until then. I had never been east past the Midwest, and hadn’t traveled on my own farther than California. I’ve

not made it back to D.C. since then, but my memories remain strong. I remember staying up late in the dorm that first night in D.C., talking with the other kids and making a friend who would live in my freshman dorm that fall, I recall, and walking for what seemed like miles while visiting Washington’s wonderful museums. I remember meeting and listening to the Chief of Naval Operations Adm. Elmo Zumwalt; astronaut Neil Armstrong; and the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare, Elliot Richardson. Their words made current events come alive for me.

In 1999, my nephew Daniel Wezelman Bartlett became one of three Presidential Scholars from Arizona, all from his school in Tucson, which was quite unusual. Daniel’s experience was the same as mine in many

ways, but it had its differences, in part because the program had grown in scope and in recognition. I remember visiting him when he was working on his application. He was surprised to learn that I had been a Scholar back in the day, and I was surprised to learn that students now had to apply!

Daniel had already traveled widely around the U.S. and Europe with his family, and he had gone on his own to D.C. and elsewhere for a variety of programs and competitions in chess, math, and the arts. Yet his Presidential Scholar trip was special. Daniel enjoyed the time in the dorms, a trip to Baltimore to see the National Aquarium, and the show at the Kennedy Center put on by the Arts Scholars. He appreciated being able to invite one of his teachers who



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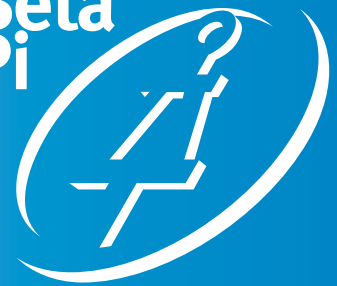
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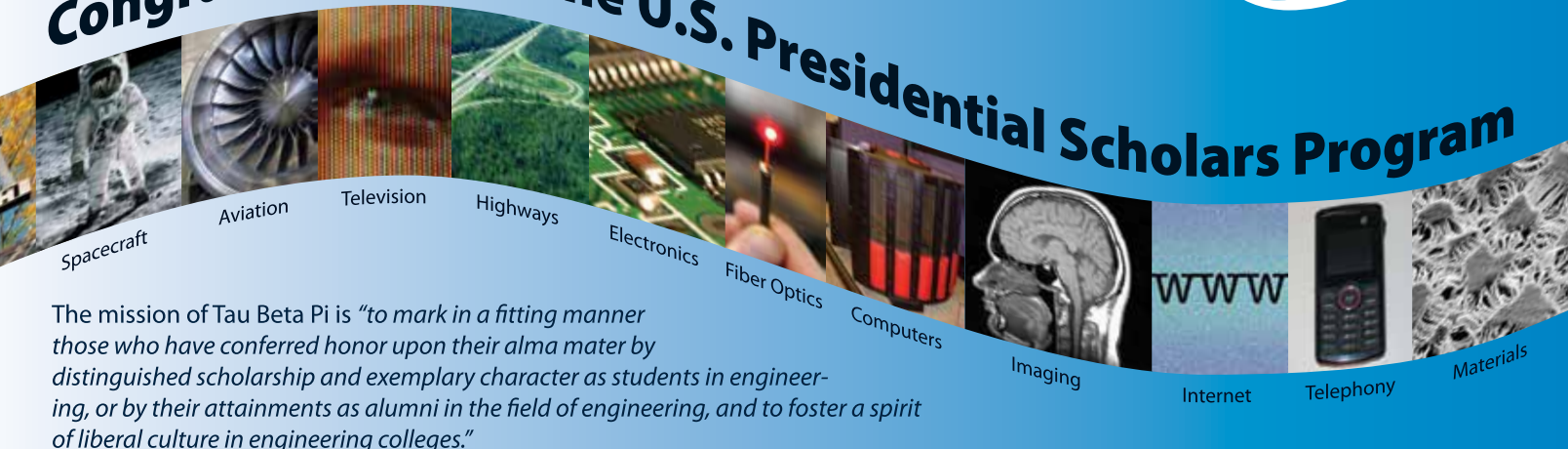
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had influenced him. And at Georgetown that year, President Clinton gave a major address before he presented the medallions. Never lacking in self-confidence, Daniel was interviewed in Spanish by Telemundo before realizing that maybe the reporter should have been talking instead to the classmate who was a native Spanish speaker.

Being selected as a Scholar was an honor Daniel always valued. He made

Left: David Wezelman Bartlett meets President Bill Clinton in Washington, D.C., in 1999. Right: Barbara Wezelman relaxes at home after her work at the University of California, Berkeley, where she directs special projects in the Budget Office.



friends during National Recognition Week whom he met again at college. Daniel made sure to give a copy of his picture with the President to his grandparents, and he always kept a copy in his own room as well.

Daniel passed away in 2006, at the age of 25. I am so thankful to have had him in my life, and to have been able to share with him the experience of being a Presidential Scholar. 🇺🇸

Eric Kaler (1974, NM)

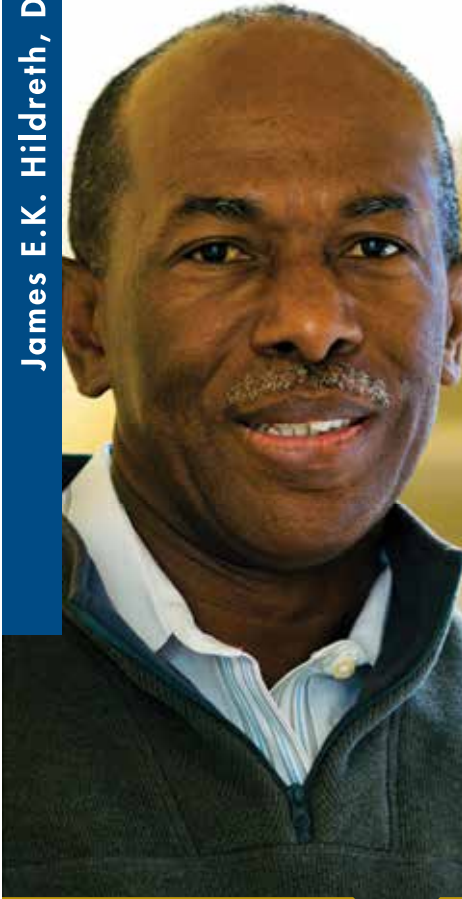
I still have the envelope with the simple return address: The White House. It has a greasy thumbprint on it because I opened it when I got home from work at the gas station. And I still remember sitting on the front porch and learning there was such a thing as a “Presidential Scholar.” Alamogordo, N.M., had not had one before.

It was, and still is, an exceptional honor made even more so by the trip to Washington, D.C. My mother – as proud as she could be of her only child – came with me, and the days were remarkable. A State Department lunch with gazpacho (and yes, I did ask why



Eric Kaler speaks with Julie Nixon at the White House medallion ceremony in 1974.

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Luis Godoy, School of Medicine



"A child of farmworkers, I went from teenage father, to community college student, to UC Davis biology graduate and med-school student. I followed my passion to UC Davis, where I found people who believed in me."

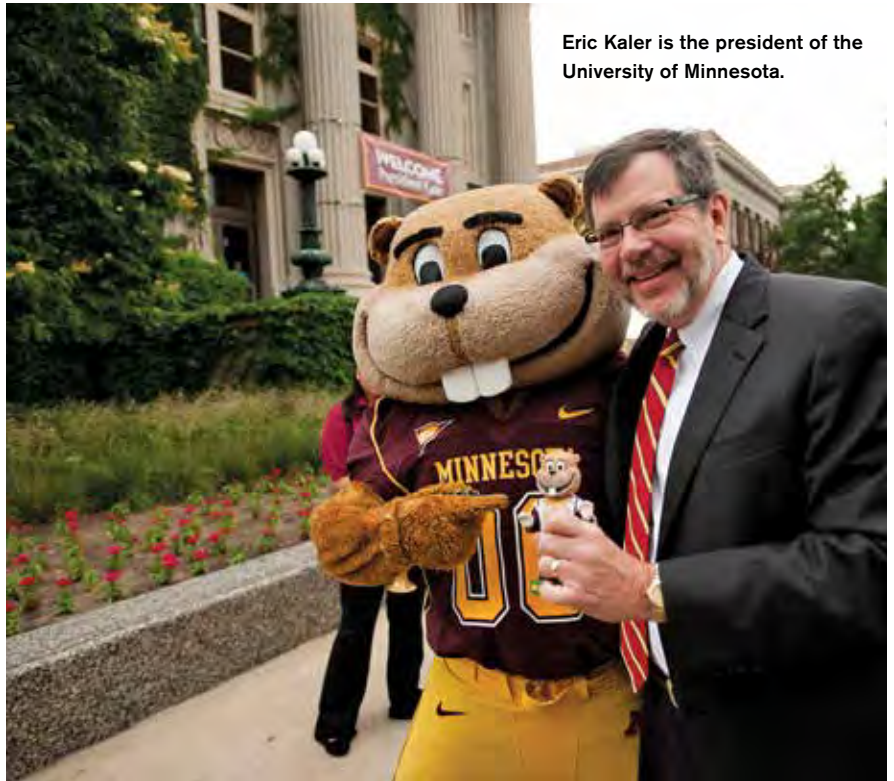
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the soup was cold), a bus hitting the fence post at the White House, and the absence of President Nixon (the summer of 1974 was not his best) all made impressions on me. In retrospect, that trip was my first step toward realizing that there really was a big world out there and maybe, just maybe, I might play a role in it.

I still list that award on my CV. It's the first one, and it gave me confidence and pride. I was not well prepared for college, and I reflected more than once that I wasn't a Presidential Scholar by accident and so probably I could figure out the math, and maybe even some of the physics that was put before me. The award was an enormous and perhaps even an essential boost to my belief in myself.

I go to Washington a lot nowadays, and the trip is routine. I make my way from office to office on the Hill, and it is normal to run into groups of young people there for one reason or another. I hope their time there today is as meaningful as my first "business" trip was for me nearly 40 years ago. 🇺🇸

ERIC KALER



Eric Kaler is the president of the University of Minnesota.

Sankar Swaminathan (1975, MD)

Many years later, what do I remember of being a Presidential Scholar? When I look back on it, I still see the long hair and dated clothes that I wore, as did the rest of the award recipients. It was 1975, and Washington, D.C., and the nation were still in turmoil from the effects of Watergate. Those of us from Maryland and Virginia who lived near D.C. were immersed in the drama of those years. We received our award from Gerald Ford, who had been appointed by Richard Nixon shortly before he resigned. Despite all the politics that permeated that summer, being invited to the White House and the ceremonies was a great honor to all of us. I think most of the students and their parents were awed by being guests at the State Department and in the Rose Garden. But I also remember that we had a lot of fun. We went on a sightseeing trip around D.C., and one evening went to Wolf Trap Farm Park for an outdoor concert. I met two other guys who became friends during the events, and I found that we were all going to Harvard College in the fall. I lost touch with one of them, but over the years I have remained good

SANKAR SWAMINATHAN

Today Sankar Swaminathan is an expert in infectious diseases working at the University of Utah. He enjoys hiking with, from left to right, his daughters Sara and Priya, and his wife, Mary.



National Recognition Program

friends with Forest Reinhardt, who is now a professor at Harvard.

So what does it mean to have been a Presidential Scholar? I find that few people know what the honor represents, but when they see it in your CV, many ask curiously, “What is a Presidential Scholar, anyway?” I tell them, with a little embarrassment, that the honor is given to two high school students chosen from every state, to honor scholastic and personal achievement. I also

tell my kids, without any embarrassment, because it is always hard to impress one’s own kids with anything – but they seem to listen with interest when I tell them about this experience.

I do think, at the time, as a 17-year-old, I was very grateful for the award and the activities of those few days. I remember my fellow Scholars with fading memory, but very pleasant feelings. They were all excited to be there, and despite having received

this prestigious award, most were down-to-earth and friendly. I had a feeling that this is what it is like to meet really talented people. The experience inspired me to be worthy of being chosen to be among them, and I resolved to continue to try to meet such interesting and intellectually engaged and morally committed people. There really were a lot of idealists at that time. I hope that today’s awardees feel as fondly about the experience in 40 years as I do today. ☑

Patrick O’Carroll (1975, NV)

As I look back to 1975, the year in which I was honored as a Presidential Scholar, that time seems almost inconceivably far way. In 1975, the Watergate scandal had led to a President’s resignation; the Vietnam War had just ended, whereas the Betamax vs. VHS format war had just begun; Bill Gates and Paul Allen founded a new company called Microsoft; construction of the Trans-Alaska pipeline began; and it seemed as if Frank Sinatra, Wayne Newton, Don Rickles, Joan Rivers, and Sammy Davis, Jr., would forever be the headline acts in my hometown of Las Vegas, Nev. But my clearest memory of my time as a Presidential Scholar has nothing to do with politics, technology, entertainment, or even the award itself. What I recall most clearly is my mother’s pride and immense delight when we visited Washington, D.C., for the awards event.

My mother and father immigrated to this country from Ireland shortly after their marriage in 1952, and they became naturalized U.S. citizens as soon as possible after that. Like many immigrants, my parents were enthusiastic patriots, proud of their adopted country and determined that their children would be well educated and given every possible opportunity to succeed. My mother, in particular, sought to instill in all her children a love of reading, learning, and scholarship. So for my mother, my selection as a Presidential Scholar came not only as a kind of validation for her as a parent, for all her years of patient love and support, but also as a cherished opportunity for her as an adopted American citizen to visit Washington, D.C., and the White House



itself as an honored guest. That was my mother’s first visit to our nation’s capital. She visited Washington, D.C., on only one other occasion: to attend the ceremony for my promotion to flag rank in the U.S. Public Health Service in 2006. As proud as I am to have been selected as a Presidential Scholar, I am forever grateful for the opportunity it afforded my mother to share with me our first, extraordinary visit to Washington, D.C. ☑

Patrick O’Carroll is Assistant Surgeon General, Regional Health Administrator, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Region X, Seattle, Wash. He is shown here in 2012 with then-Surgeon General Regina Benjamin (center) and Deputy Regional Health Administrator Karen Matsuda (right).

Eric Schoenberg (1980, GA)

I didn't know what it meant. Yeah, it was cool that I got a nomination, and then a notification that I was in consideration for the final selection, but nobody from my high school had ever been awarded before. I had no idea what would happen if I were selected.

And then came the telegram. Totally awesome way to be notified. The only time in my life I ever received a telegram – and they sent it to the school! That was a very, very good day.

A few weeks later, we 1980 Scholars were scheduled to gather for National Recognition Week in Washington. I was numb from all the craziness of that season – deciding on a college, graduating from high school, saying goodbye to school friends – and suddenly it was time to head off. I had lived in northern Virginia as a child and had visited Washington a number of times, so going there wasn't novel to me. The excitement and energy of the Presidential Scholars were, however, overwhelming. The selection process almost guarantees that those named will be the kind of individuals who are not afraid to jump in and get involved, often with a shocking amount of talent and enthusiasm. I admit to being abashed by the outpouring of energy I felt when we united as a group. I found some refuge by quietly retreating to the background and trying to absorb the experience. My primary recollections include our outing to Wolf Trap Park for a concert (Roberta Flack); the uncomfortable (hot, sunny, and overdressed) medal ceremony in the White House garden; some vague awareness that we visited our legislators and attended a couple of leadership panels; and one very attractive young Scholar from Puerto Rico. To quote Forrest Gump, "That's all I have to say about that."

When my family and I returned home, the celebration wasn't over. That year, and possibly in some years to follow, the Presidential Scholars from Georgia, as well as a number of other students from the state, were sponsored by the Coca-Cola Company to attend the American Academy of Achievement. The three Presidential Scholars from Georgia and about 15 other recently graduated high school seniors gathered at the Atlanta airport for a flight to Los Angeles. The three-day program brought together a number of famous people from different fields of endeavor; they talked to us



and signed autographs. That experience gave me my first (only?) brush with fame. On the plane I sat next to Herschel Walker, who that year was lauded as the best football player coming out of high school in the U.S. and who was soon to prove that prediction right in his career at the University of Georgia and later in the NFL. Although his physical presence was intimidating even then, he proved to be a friendly, intelligent, and humble companion for the cross-country trip. After that little outing, my hometown decided to honor its two Presidential Scholars (one of the other Georgia Scholars chosen that year was also from our little unincorporated area of metro Atlanta, but attended a different high school) by making us the Grand Marshals of the Fourth of July parade. When that was over, the party was truly over, unfortunately.

I attended the University of Virginia, and there was only one other 1980 Presidential Scholar there that year. We became acquainted, but headed off in different directions and eventually lost contact. After college I was involved in a couple of abortive attempts to establish an alumni association, but we sputtered along feebly for a few years and the effort eventually faded away. That preceded the Internet and

Eric Schoenberg enjoyed a long celebration of his being named a Presidential Scholar, and is pleased that an Alumni Association has grown in recent years, allowing him to get back in touch with friends from his 1980 class of Scholars.

Facebook, so keeping up with "friends" was more difficult than it is now. Presidential Scholars tend to be busy, active people, and they don't stay in one place long.

There is good news on that front, however. Finally, it seems the Presidential Scholars Foundation and the Alumni Association have found a mechanism to transform what once was a high-speed, somewhat blurry weekend into what those of us on the national board would have it become: a lifelong association of interesting and interested people, working for the betterment of their peers, their associates, their communities, and – by happy coincidence – themselves. I look forward to that continuing association, and I welcome our latest class of Scholars into our extended family. ☑

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John Knox (1983, AL)

“Just finish the essays so you can get the certificate.” That was my mom’s practical advice on the evening of March 31, 1983, a few scant hours before my Presidential Scholars application had to be postmarked. I sat in a state of delirium on the couch in our den in northeast Birmingham, Ala., running a high fever. I was physically and mentally stressed out – not only over the application, but also over choosing a college, a decision that was required the very next day. Under the circumstances, my hopes for winning the honor had diminished to simply sending in something/anything so I could get a certificate from the Department of Education commemorating my finalist status in the Presidential Scholars competition.

I barely managed to squeeze out the required essays in time. My mom and dad flew out the door. In the only recorded instance in his life of my dad driving over the speed limit, they made it to the downtown post office with just 10 minutes to spare. Back at home, I stumbled off to bed.

I quickly forgot about it; a last-minute, fever-driven attempt to be recognized as one of the top 141 high school seniors in the nation had no chance. That is, until the day my mom showed up, beaming, at my high school with a crumpled-up telegram from President Reagan, informing me that I had been chosen as a Presidential Scholar. And so began the most remarkable



Left: John Knox, now a professor at the University of Georgia, receives a university-wide award for undergraduate teaching in October 2013. Right: John (left) in 1983 with his teacher, Peggy Park (center), and White House Commission on Presidential Scholars member Victor Gaston from Alabama (right).

experience of what had already been a fantastic senior year.

The 1983 National Recognition Week was held shortly after the “A Nation at Risk” report on American education was released, and to my surprise I was chosen to be one of the opening questioners for an event hosted by Secretary of Education Terrel Bell. I still remember the question he posed to all of us Scholars: “How many of you are planning a career in teaching at the precollege level?” The answer: zero out of 141. Secretary Bell’s question compels me to work with schoolteachers in my current university faculty position, over 30 years later.

An attempt to petition President Reagan regarding a nuclear freeze led to a media blitz at the 1983 events, from coverage on *Nightline* to stories in newspapers around the nation. I’ll never forget the extensive scaffolding that was needed on the South Lawn of the White House to hold all the camera equipment. By virtue of my being from the first state alphabetically, video of me during the medallion ceremony ended up on CBS News – to the astonishment of one of my cousins watching in New York. It was also the very first year that teachers were recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program, and I was proud to have Peggy Park, my gifted-education teacher for fifth through 12th grades, at my side on the South Lawn. It was the best week of my life.

But what I remember most about that week is the people, in particular the Scholars themselves. Never before or since have I been in the presence of such brilliant, intellectually omnivorous, and personable individuals. It felt like home. The inseparable Alabama and Alaska Scholars were the “Alacrew.” We referred to the Arkansas Scholars, with their beautiful accents, collectively as “Y’all.” I corresponded (in the days before email and social media) with several of my newfound friends, a few for more than two decades. I published my first poem in a journal



created by one of the 1983 Arts Scholars, and I even sent her a tape of music that I had composed. Then and later, these connections helped me through periods when “impostor syndrome” gnawed at me.

My longing for the Scholars increased even more during and after college. More than once I found myself in the company of other, more famous, and famously selective groups, but the people in those august groups were just less *interesting* than the Presidential Scholars. These experiences planted the seeds for my efforts starting in the late 1980s to help launch a Presidential Scholars alumni collaboration, which I describe in the “Welcome” near the front of this book. Through the Alumni Association, I’ve collaborated with Scholars across the full history of the program, from the inaugural class of 1964 to newly honored Scholars. During our Alumni Association conference calls and emails and the interviews I’ve conducted for this book, I continue to feel just as much at home as I did in the Georgetown dorms during our glorious week in June 1983.

And in these ways, a feverishly composed application and one crumpled telegram changed my life. Ever since, I’ve been trying to give back as much as I’ve gained. 📍

Tamara Duckworth Warner (1987, WV)

Being named a Presidential Scholar in 1987 was a heady time in the life of this African-American teenager from West Virginia. Awards, accolades, and speeches charging us to do wonderful things in the world abounded. Then came the address presented by Dr. Lester R. Brown, president of the Worldwatch Institute, which I had never even heard of. I should have because we had each been sent a copy of the book *State of the World 1987*, which Dr. Brown edited. I hadn't bothered to read it during the closing week of my school year – quite unlike my usual conscientious self.

I sat stunned as Dr. Brown outlined with statistics and graphs how humans were threatening the ability of the Earth to sustain life for all its inhabitants, including ourselves. With a palpable and persuasive sense of urgency, he detailed how various forms of environmental pollution, accelerating worldwide urbanization, and overpopulation (particularly in the East despite China's one-child rule) were seriously jeopardizing the future of our planet. His speech was the first time I had ever heard about climate change and sustainability. The previously benign term fossil fuels took on a new, menacing tone for me.

Dr. Brown's message became personal when he discussed the 1984 Bhopal, India, gas leak disaster, which resulted in nearly 4,000 deaths, with thousands more dying or suffering severe, permanent injuries in the aftermath. You see, the only other place in the world where one of the chemicals involved in the Bhopal disaster was produced was at a plant in Institute, W.V. – only 20 minutes from home! Back home, many were still reeling from a chemical leak at that plant that took place in 1985, a "Bhopal bullet" that was dodged with no deaths and "only" 135 people treated for injuries. By the time Dr. Brown began discussing the 1986 catastrophic nuclear accident at Chernobyl, I felt shocked and numb.

But that was not all. Dr. Brown then charged us with doing something to fix these grim global messes. That was the first somber note in a year full of intoxicating speeches about potential, success, and possibilities. The class song selected by my high school's graduating class was "The Future's So Bright, I Gotta Wear Shades." Not so, any longer. While there had been a



Above: Tamara Duckworth Warner vacationing with her son Jameson in 2012.

Left: Tamara in 1987 (right) with her honored teacher Shirley Kelly (left) and Ronna Romney (center), who was Chairman of the White House Commission on Presidential Scholars. Today Tamara is a pediatric neuropsychologist at the University of Florida.



few dim notes sounded here and there about the changes or improvements expected of the "best and brightest," nothing matched the clarity and unequivocal insistence behind Dr. Brown's words. I don't recall whether he was a particularly dynamic speaker. His style didn't matter. The seriousness of his charge swept through my mind with the power and fierceness of hurricane-force winds. I understood clearly that we were world citizens, and our world desperately needed our help. 🌍

Tiffany Madden Lundquist (1989, England)

It seems like a dream. When I try now to remember those few days in Washington in 1989, I have only snatches and vague emotions. There was a scavenger hunt that had us chasing fireflies on the grass at Georgetown University. Monuments. A concert, at the Kennedy Center, featuring the honorees in the arts. A White House tour ... or was it an actual reception? And of course, shaking the hand of President George H. W. Bush on the lawn on that hot summer day.

I remember being awed by the talents, smarts, and charisma of fellow Scholars, and easily enjoying an instant rapport with a few. I remember wishing my parents could have made the trip, and at the same time feeling very grown up and independent. On the whole, I remember knowing that participating in National Recognition Week was special and a true honor, but one that felt very much apart from real life. Like a short chapter from

Today Tiffany Madden Lundquist is director of marketing and communications for the Peabody Institute.

someone else's book had been inserted into my biography.

The one memory that stands out clearly as my own, as true "recognition," happened not in Washington, D.C., but back at Lakenheath American High School in rural England. When the principal announced to the entire student body at the honors assembly that I had been chosen as a Presidential Scholar, the reaction was a truly, memorably, unbelievably overwhelming honor. A long, long, loud and amazing standing ovation. For me. From a gym-full of peers I had only just met when I started my senior year there as the "new kid." That kind of tribute stays with a person. It remains one of the proudest moments of my life and anchors the whole experience in my own reality. 📍



Leonard Earl Howze (1995, CA)

Being a 1995 Presidential Scholar was an opportunity of a lifetime and truly a monumental experience. I recall receiving the very official letter in the mail. It was signed by President Clinton and had an embossed image of the White House on the letterhead. I remember reading the letter with my mom, and in that moment recognizing how happy and proud she was of me for receiving this accolade. I was excited to be considered as a recipient, as I was also a recipient for the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts.

I had the opportunity to meet students from across the country from varied cultural and academic backgrounds, which was an eye-opener for a student like me at that time. National Recognition Week (NRW) served as an introduction to my collegiate career and allowed me to welcome what was to come after high school.

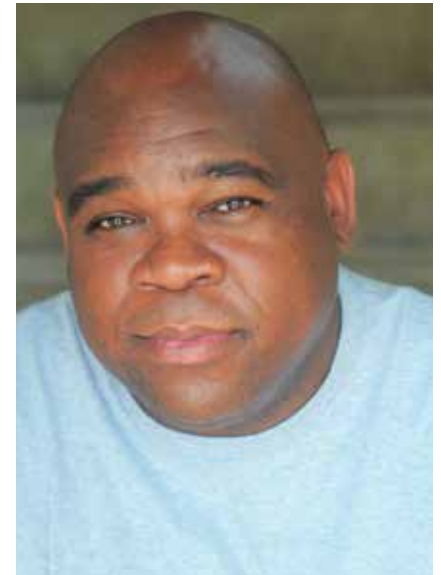
During NRW I created great friendships with many students. I remember visiting the Mall, the national monuments, and specifically visiting the Vietnam [Veterans] Memorial. I also recall reading the name of a fallen soldier who shared the same last name as mine. That particular soldier had the distinct honor of serving his country during

Leonard Earl Howze played in the films *Barbershop* and *Antwone Fisher*. In 2010, he appeared in the TNT series *Memphis Beat*.

a time of war, and I felt that I, too, had been recognized for my service in the arts.

Surreal experiences were not lacking during my time in Washington, D.C.; I remember having the opportunity to shake President Clinton's hand on the South Lawn, and noting the happiness and pride of my parents and teachers as I received my honor. One of my favorite memories is performing on stage at the Kennedy Center. I performed a monologue from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Throughout my career as an actor, I often reflect on being on that stage and how being a Presidential Scholar led me to that opportunity.

I was invited to return each year of my collegiate career to serve as an Advisor for NRW. I accepted each invitation eagerly. Being an Advisor allowed me to use what I learned in college and as a previous Scholar to assist the incoming students. I welcomed the opportunity to serve, as it was a two-fold experience that reinvigorated me to prepare for the following year of study.



Each year lent itself to greater opportunities and prepared me for the next phase of my life after college graduation. I knew that through my experience as a Presidential Scholar and subsequent summers as an Advisor, I would be ready to face the career path that chose me, as well as any challenges and obstacles that presented themselves.

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Wherever the journey of life has taken me, and especially after my return home to Los Angeles, I have been blessed to share with the youth of my church and neighborhood all that my experiences

have had to offer. I hope that my opportunities have inspired others to pursue their dreams and goals.

Since becoming a Presidential Scholar and Advisor, I have lost my mother, and I

remember how very proud and happy she was as she watched me receive my honor on the White House lawn. That memory is the one that I will forever cherish most as a Scholar and a son. ☐

Kenyon Adams (1997, FL)

My memories of National Recognition Week are as varied and diverse as the vocational life that would follow. Aside from the singular honor of performing for an audience of dignitaries at the Kennedy Center, preceded with much pomp and circumstance by a color guard, there were numerous moments that stood out for me because I found myself among such impressive peers. Those moments have stayed with me and proven formative. I remember the grand tour of American arts and culture that I derived from the showcases, readings, and exhibitions that featured my fellow awardees. At one such event, Stuart Moldaw, the founder of the Ross stores chain, handed each of us a \$1,000 check to support our entrance into college life.

I'll never forget President Clinton walking into a large room at the White House for a broadcasted interview we were allowed to attend. Upon entering the room he addressed my aunt using her first name as though she were an old friend while I stood giddily nearby waiting to meet him. During the interview a large black fly landed on the President's nose for an extended period of time, during which he remained unflinchingly calm.

I remember the fluorescent lighting in the rehearsal studios of the Kennedy Center where we waited, warmed up, rehearsed. With a lump in my throat and teary eyes, I recall being surprised to see my mother among the sea of attendees at our Kennedy Center performance. I had not expected any family member to be present for the occasion, the sadness of which was made real to me as I found myself searching the crowd despite myself. She had taken a bus from Florida, and she stood smiling and crying silently. An almost inconceivable coincidence was the appearance of my aunt, Sharon Draper (National Teacher of the Year that year), as the guest speaker for one of our events.

I think it's fair to say that no single experience more powerfully shaped my perception of myself as a young person



Above: Kenyon Adams meets President Bill Clinton in 1997. Right: Today Kenyon is a performing artist and arts advocate.

capable of contributing to my culture than being named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. It remains for me a benchmark experience. This is true precisely because of the "naming" element involved in the award. The Commission names Presidential Scholars. Naming has an ancient heritage in many traditions but at the very least it suggests a new season of possibilities for the one who is named. That person may henceforth be known with a new sense of identity, a commissioning perhaps, carrying the name with some actual and some idealized responsibility.

Many of my fellow arts awardees have gone on to create artwork that continues to inspire me, particularly Clyde Archer, Michael Benjamin Washington, and Camille Brown, though I still remember them for their breathtaking performances in rehearsals leading up to the Kennedy Center performance. This is where I first learned what serious artistry was about. What it might cost me. It was in the intensity of



their focus: something I saw in myself, and which was answered in their work. They had found something transcendent, which must be shared with others for some purpose, for the good. Bill T. Jones has said that every young artist needs this affirmation of calling, because the road is hard and we will want to give up creating. The Presidential Scholar award gives this affirmation to artists, and in so doing, to the arts. They answered us with "yes." And we believed. ☐

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Scholars*

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Ilana Goldberg, 2007
Jeff Picker, 2007
Kate Davis, 2009
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*Teacher Recognition
Award Recipients*

Justin DiCioccio, 1995 & 1998
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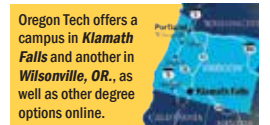
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Magali Fassiotto (2001, HI)

June 2001. Wow. That was a long time ago. I flew out to D.C. from Honolulu with my fellow Scholar, Naupaka, who I really thought was a rock star. If he intimidated me, what was I supposed to do when I met the other 140 or so students in D.C. upon landing?

We landed and I remember being assigned my roommate, Meredith from Oklahoma. That is, of course, how we referred to everyone: So-and-So from Somewhere.

From then on, the week was a blur and, although everyone was intimidatingly awesome, it was spectacular.

- I remember making fast friends with Julie from Louisiana.
- I remember forming a Six Flags posse of six to go on all the rides together. (We strategized that six would be the perfect number so that we could split into groups of two or three, depending on the ride's requirements. What nerds!)
- I remember the pool-and-pizza party.
- I remember jogging on the Mall in the early morning with a newly formed group of running friends.

Magali Fassiotto recently finished her Ph.D. in organizational behavior at Stanford University and is working as a researcher in Stanford School of Medicine's Office of Diversity and Leadership in San Francisco. She enjoys beach time on Waikiki with her family and husband, Mervin John.

- I remember meeting a Hawaii senator and representative (now the governor!) with the Distinguished Teacher I had brought with me, my third-grade teacher, Hattie Phillips.
- I remember the awards ceremony with the President.
- Most important, I remember hanging out with Saritha from Missouri (who I would later find assigned to my college freshman dorm with me!); Isabel from Puerto Rico; Elliott from Missouri; Paulomi from Arkansas (who had the first

live – and best – Southern accent I had ever heard!); Mary Etta from the Marshall Islands; Nora from D.C.; Marco from Florida; Brooke from Massachusetts; Mariangela from Connecticut; Neil from West Virginia; Chris from Wyoming (who I AIM-ed with all through college!); Melissa from Oklahoma; Justin from California; Caroline from Michigan; Denise from California; and Tina from Wisconsin (with whom I became such great friends in college that she came to my wedding in Hawaii last year!).

In that one week, I met so many people from so many places with so many incredible backgrounds. It was, without doubt, the most nonstop fun week of my 18-year-old life. Yes, June 2001 sounds like a long time ago. The people in my year have graduated from college, finished post-grad programs, started careers, gotten married, had kids ... But that time doesn't feel that far back.

So-and-So from Somewhere: What amazing things are you up to now? 🍷

Hana Adaniya (2003, OH)

I was born in Florida and grew up in Ohio, a first-generation American and the daughter of immigrants from Colombia and Peru. I have distinct memories of my parents studying for their citizenship test when I was young. Later in my high school years, I volunteered helping refugees study for their citizenship tests. For us it was an honor just to be an American. Therefore, my family and I were left without words when I received the honor of being named a Presidential Scholar in 2003. To be recognized by the President and to be invited to Washington, D.C., for National Recognition Week felt like the epitome of the American Dream. Once at National Recognition Week, I came to realize that my family story of coming to the U.S. for a better life had a lot in common with those of many of

Hana Adaniya is now a graduate student in business at Stanford University.

my fellow Presidential Scholars. I met Chinese-Americans, Nigerian-Americans, Russian-Americans, and so many more Scholars of diverse backgrounds and upbringings. It was a once-in-a-lifetime week where I learned about the lives and accomplishments of my fellow Presidential Scholars. I felt deeply inspired to be part of this group. In the years since 2003, I have continued to cross paths with Presidential Scholars from my year and learned about their current endeavors – in public service, social impact, entrepreneurship, and other arenas. I continue to feel motivated and inspired by their vision and ongoing achievements.



HANA ADANIYA

And I continue to feel incredibly proud to be an American and thankful to my parents for having chased the American Dream. ☑

Meghan Bhave (2004, AZ)

Every day I have the opportunity to help people get through the toughest days of their lives, as they undergo and recover from surgery. As an aspiring anesthesiologist currently in residency, I am learning the science and art of modern medicine, specifically focusing on the care of patients in the perioperative period. I try to make a difference in patients' lives on a daily basis because I strongly believe in giving back to our community and to humanity. That has been a dream of mine since high school, when I wrote "I am an active dreamer and achiever, motivator and participant, leader and team player with a commitment to my community and myself" for the 2004 Presidential Scholars Yearbook. Reading those words again now, I realize how little – and yet how much – I have changed since then.

I remember the emotion I felt as I walked into the welcome reception for Presidential Scholars in Washington, D.C. I could feel the buzz of excitement, nervousness, and ambition in the room. We had come from different parts of the country, and it was an honor to be included among students who were working hard to achieve their dreams. What impressed me most was



MEGHAN BHAVE

Meghan Bhave (right) with her twin sister, Manali, upon graduation from the Feinberg School of Medicine of Northwestern University.

the diversity of passions that we all pursued, yet when we all met in one room, the conversations were incessant, and we realized we had so much in common and so much to learn from

one another! Presidential Scholars gave me the confidence to be true to myself and to follow my ambitions. The award taught me to never give up because there can be greatness under every leaf that is overturned. Younger generations who will receive this award, I hope, will continue to feel the same sense of pride and accomplishment that I experienced and that continues to motivate me to better myself and the community in which I live. ☑

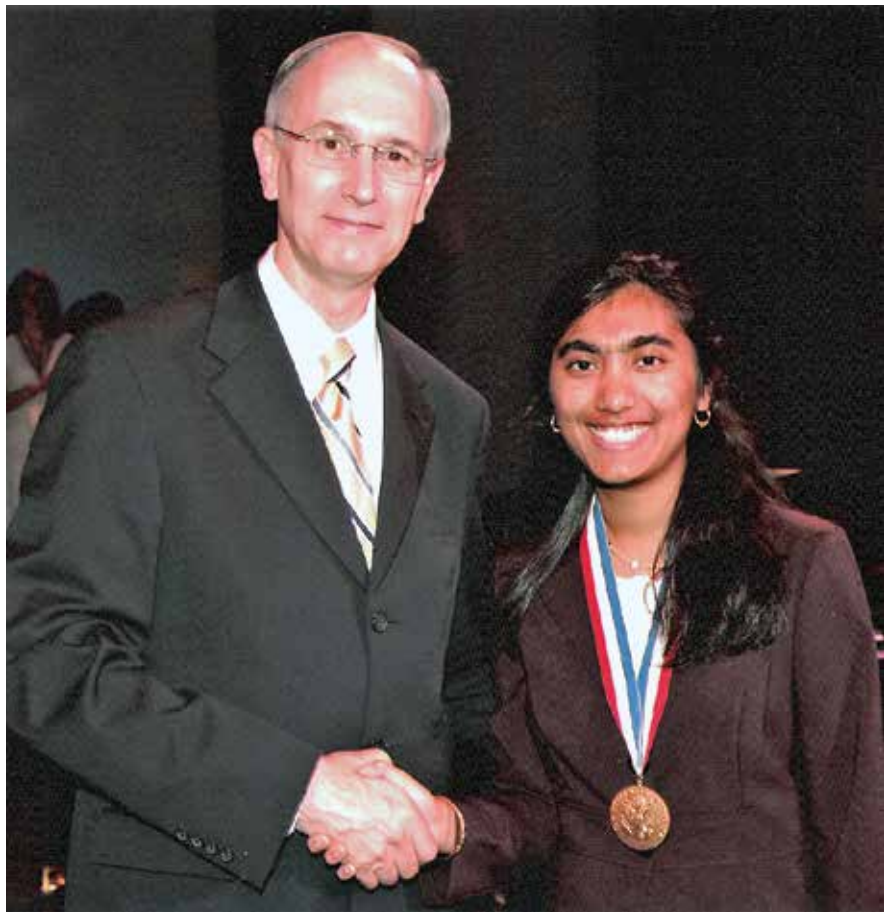
Shipra De (2006, NV)

From the moment that students discover they have been selected to be U.S. Presidential Scholars to the time of their actual arrival in Washington, D.C., for National Recognition Week (NRW), there is one event on the schedule they look forward to more than any other: meeting the President. Thus, imagine the level of disappointment when they learn that this occasion they have been waiting for might not occur ...

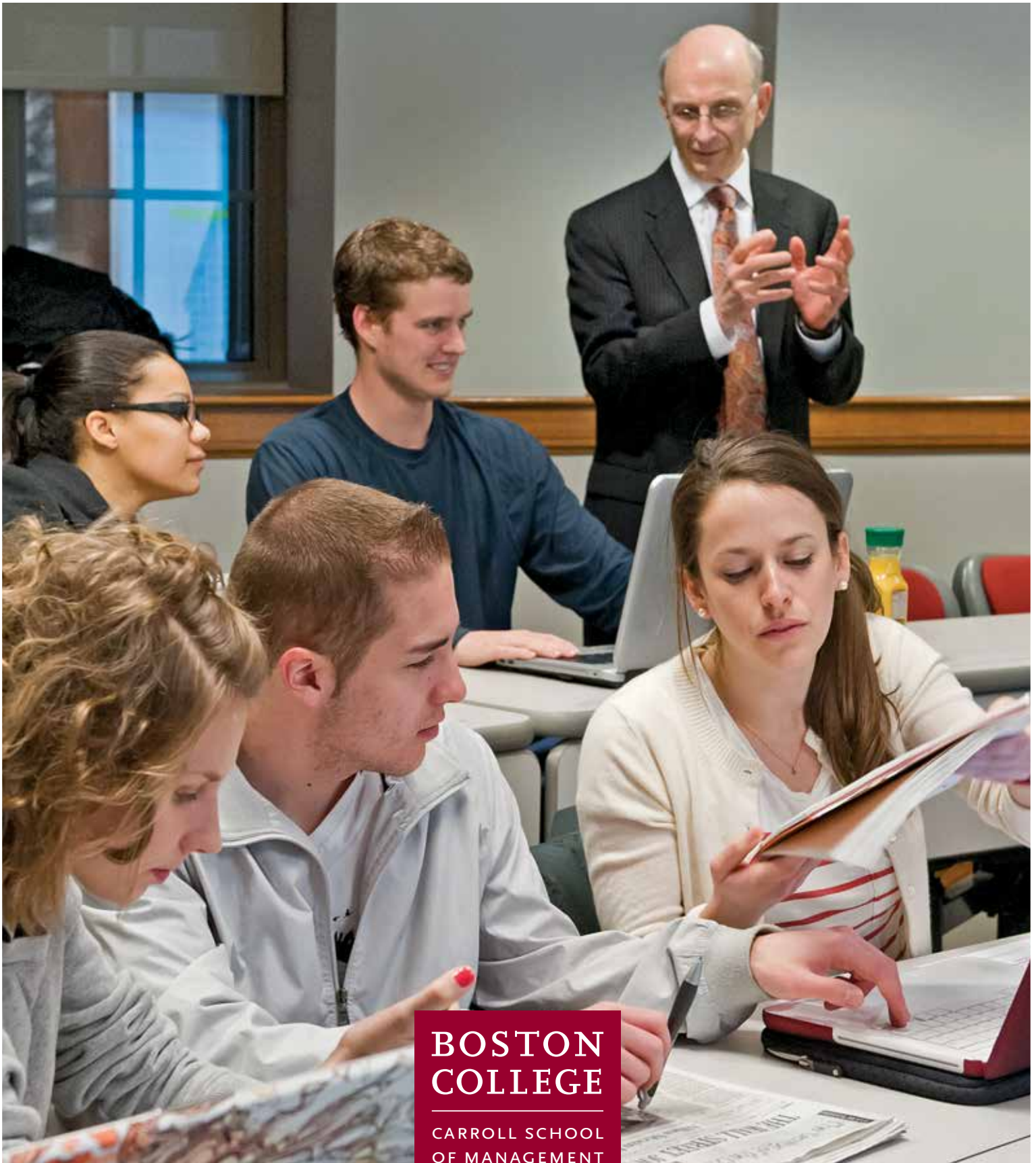
June 25, 2006, day two of our stay in the nation's capital, just happened to coincide with historic flooding in the D.C. area. I will never forget that night at the Andrew W. Mellon Auditorium. The buses that would take us back to Georgetown University from the night's Teacher Recognition Dinner had to pull up in the back alley for us to be able to board them without having to wade through knee-deep water. We all watched as the "river" we were driving through slowly edged up to the height of our bus windows.

Although we arrived at the Georgetown dorms safely, the next day's visit to the White House looked dubious. That morning we all stood outside while the NRW staff and volunteers tried to decide how we could get to our destination. It was determined earlier that the buses would not be able to get through. Plan B, walking to the Metro, also came to nothing since the subway systems had taken a significant hit from the record rainfall as well. All we could do was wait for the weather to clear up or for other circumstances to change. Eventually, they did. Somehow, a couple of hours later, we boarded our buses and miraculously made it to the White House without hitting any heavily flooded streets.

There we finally were, lined up in the East Room, waiting for President George W. Bush to join us. It was a moment that just a few hours prior had seemed impossible, and the excitement was tangible. Suddenly, someone started clapping, and we all joined in, thinking the President was making his debut – but, alas, one of the Scholars was just playing a practical joke. It was a half-hour later that the real entrance occurred, but it was well worth the wait. You never forget the moment you meet your country's commander in chief, that moment when he commends you for your leadership, service, and potential for future greatness. 🌐



Top: Today Shipra De works as an operations test analyst for JT3, LLC in Las Vegas. Above: Deputy Secretary of Education Raymond Simon congratulates Shipra on her award in 2006.



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So here's how the
interaction went:

PBO: Where
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Me: I'm
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On Being a 2010 Presidential Scholar

By Phoebe Nir (2010, NY)

In 2010, Phoebe Nir answered the call to be an embedded NRW reporter. In the pages that follow, Nir deftly captures the awe and curiosity, the honor and humility we all fondly remember. Reprinted herein are Phoebe's live-blogs posted via Facebook in 2010.

Part I 6/12

Hello, former and current Presidential Scholars! My name is Phoebe Nir, and I'm an Arts Scholar from New York City. I was asked to do a bit of Facebook blogging (Flogging?) about National Recognition Week 2010, so I thought I'd get started with an introductory post before we all get to Washington.

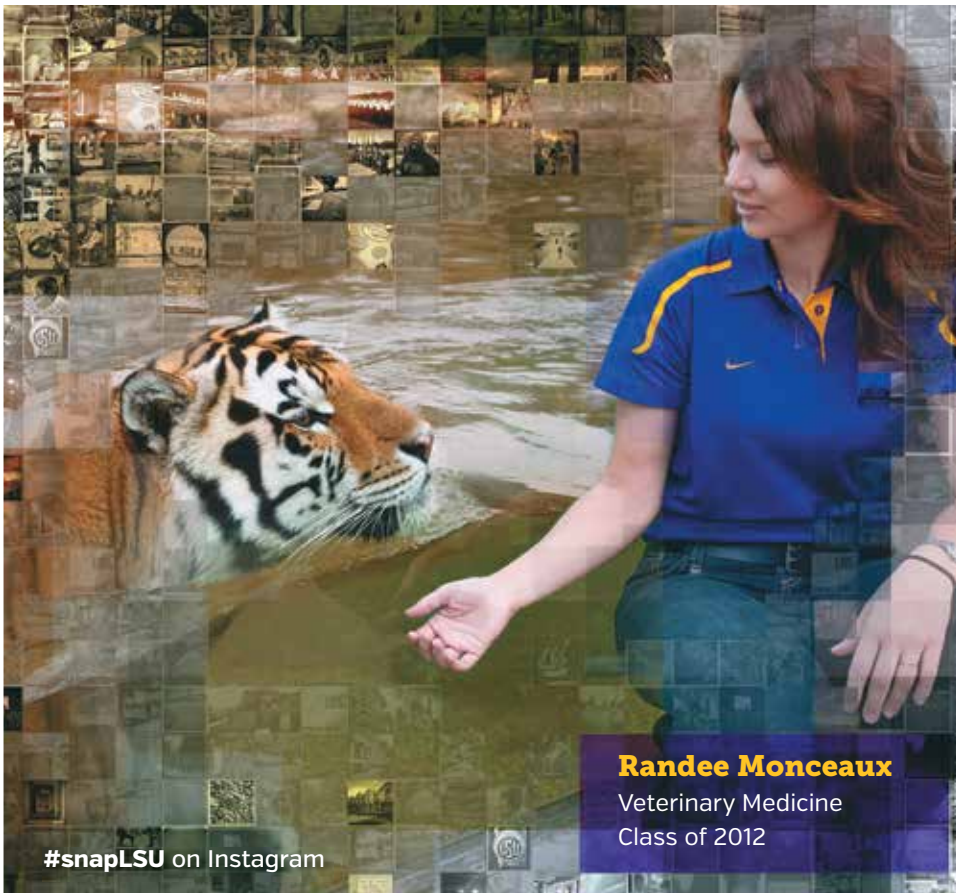
I am so incredibly humbled and grateful for this awesome opportunity. If someone had

told me a year ago that next June I would be going up to the White House ... Well, I probably would have gotten complacent and slacked off, to be honest.

I can't wait to meet all of the other Scholars! I've been doing a bit of Facebook stalking and I am the very best kind of intimidated. Distinguished company, indeed. I actually already know the other 19 Arts Scholars from the time we spent together at YoungArts, the contest that we all won that is run by the National Foundation for Advancement in the Arts. Tremendous people, as well as tremendous artists, although I wonder how well we'll blend in with all of the regular Presidential Scholars ... Hopefully, by the end of NRW,



② third nicest outfits. Everybody that I've so far has been ...
③ ... through hallways ...
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I'm not really sure what to expect for NRW, as we've only seen snippets of the itinerary, but I look forward to meeting all of the influential educators, scientists, public servants, artists, etc. The one thing that all of my friends have been asking me is what I'm going to say to President Obama. I have my answer:

True story, this past summer I was in a store with my mom, shopping for sweaters, when Vice President Biden walked through the door with his wife. He was wearing a polo shirt with a popped collar, Aviator sunglasses, and boat shoes, grinning ear to ear, and I thought he was some eccentric nautical millionaire, until I saw the Secret Service men stationed outside the door.

So naturally, I went up and introduced myself. Even though I was sure that this sort of thing had happened to him a thousand times just that morning, he looked me in the eyes like he really cared what I was saying and gave me a firm handshake.

Then he draped his arm over my shoulders and pulled me into a semi-bear hug.

"How old are you, Phoebe?" he asked me.

"I'm 17, Vice President Biden," I replied.

He nodded. "Well, tell your father, no boys until you're 30. Executive order!" Then he patted me on the back and went back to his wife.

President Obama has two daughters; I think he'll appreciate the advice.

Part II 6/19

Greetings from Washington! We've just moved into our glamorous Georgetown dormrooms, and as there is no Wi-Fi to be wified, I'm blogging this the old-fashioned way – with a pencil, in a notebook (nlogging?).

The past few hours have been a total whirlwind – introducing myself to people, forgetting their names, reintroducing myself; but now I'm sitting in an auditorium with the other 140 Presidential Scholars, all dressed, as per instruction, in their "third nicest outfits."

Everybody that I've met so far has been very friendly, but I get the sense that I'm walking through hallways full of Clark Kents. Over the course of the next few days, I look forward to watching them turn into Supermen.

I've spent a lot of time rambling about how I feel inadequate, so this is a list of why I belong here:

- I am, by nature, very prone to losing things. I thought I would be unique in this group of hyper-intellec[t]s, but I have seen at least five people walk up to the front desk and say, "I'm with the Presidential Scholars Program, and I've lost my room key."
- There is a kid from New Hampshire named Harry Potter: 'Nuff said.
- There is another person here named Phoebe. She is an astrophysicist from North Dakota and her bio says, "I'm going to be the next Elle Woods."
- And finally, my nametag kept falling out of its plastic holder, so I chewed a piece of gum and used it as adhesive. Very presidential. I don't mean to brag, but I am a genius.

Part III (Day 2 in D.C.) 6/20

We all woke up at the crack of dawn this morning to head over to our leadership training seminar at the Dept. of Education. A lot of bleary eyes on the bus this morning; we all got very into the group bonding thing last night. After we assembled toiletry cases for Dress for Success, we played a midnight game of dodgeball, a 12:45 game of ultimate Frisbee, a 1:30 tournament of four-square, and a 2:00 competitive round-robin of an invented hybrid of "Trivial Pursuit," *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, "Apples to Apples," and "Monopoly," which I dubbed "Who Wants to Monopolize the Pursuit to Apples."

After suffering humiliating defeat at the hands of my peers at all the athletic events ("What am I?" I asked my snickering friend, "A Presidential Scholar of Sports?"), I was looking forward to a mellow, sociable gathering for the board games. I did not, however, anticipate the Quiz Bowl factor. At least 50% of the people who played had been participating in academic trivia contests since middle school, and had consequently memorized pretty much every fact ever, be it vegetable, animal, or mineral.

It got INTENSE. I felt like it could have been a World Cup game, minus the vuvuzelas.

So anyway, we're tired. But happy. The group seems to be meshing, and instead of everybody conforming to some sort of mean, the new level of comfort and mutual appreciation is allowing people to let down their barriers and sparkle. It's an amazing motley crew, one that I feel proud and humbled to be part of.

I'm going to be reading a short story at the Smithsonian this evening. Pinch me.

Part IV 6/21

Hi again!

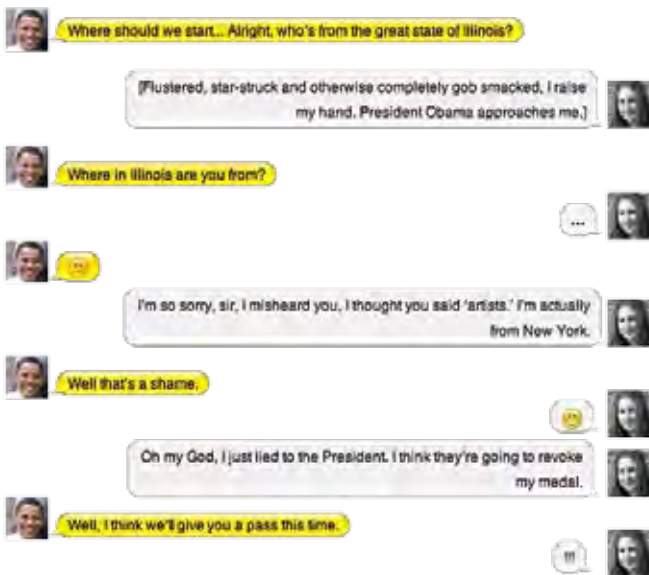
I'm actually sitting in my room right now, for what feels like the first time this entire trip. Thus far, I think I've only been in here to scramble into a fresh outfit or else passed out catatonic on my bed. What is there to talk about ...

Oh, yeah, we just got back from the White House.

We all squeezed ourselves onto risers in a room in the East Wing chattering and fidgeting with our shiny new medals, until I walked President Barack Obama himself, grinning ear to ear and looking exactly the same as he does in pictures. Except, like, he moved. And talked. To us. To me!

He gave a very lovely impromptu speech about how we set a good example for Sasha and Malia, and how the nation is dependent upon us for the future. Then he announced that he was going to shake everybody's hand, and we all cheered.

So here's how the interaction went:



"Oh my God, I just lied to the President. I think they're going to revoke my medal."

Part V 6/28

Hello again!

It's been one week since National Recognition Week(end), and I've had some time to reflect on my experience/check out all of the photos on Facebook/fumigate all the clothing I brought to Washington, D.C., so I thought I'd wax nostalgic for a little bit and try to bring everything to a snappy conclusion.

NRW was by far one of the most exhilarating, exhausting, hilarious, humbling, inspiring and insane experiences of my life. I got to meet an incredible group of young people that I'm going to keep in touch with for years to come, and saw a vision of what the future could look like with their hard work and ingenuity. And then I got to watch them all dance like maniacs at the final night toga party.

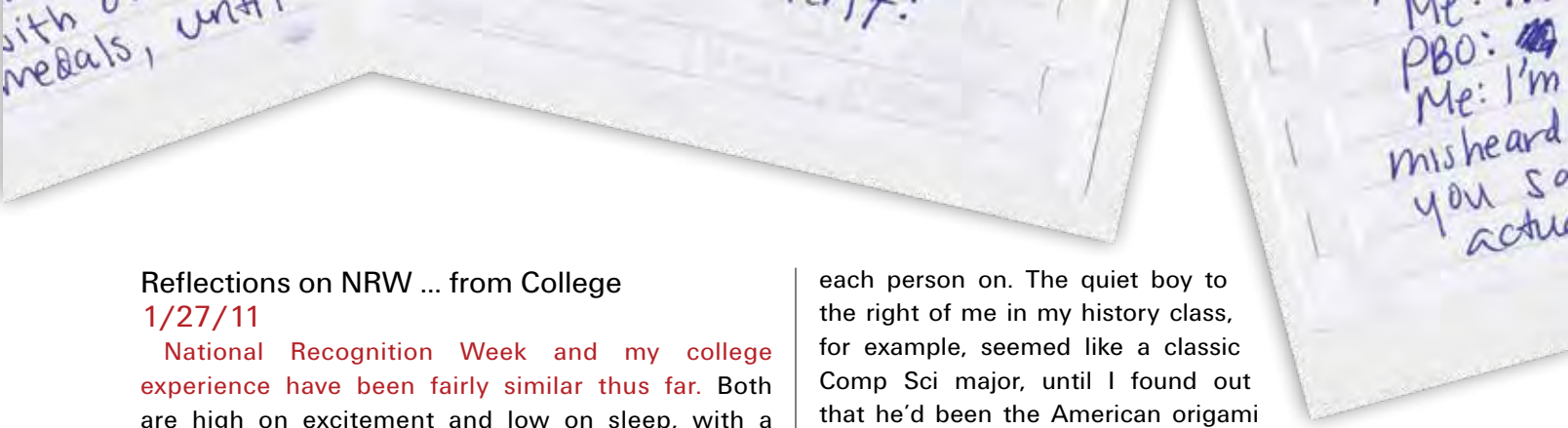
I can truly say that I feel like a member of a fantastic community that's been around since 1964, and it'll be easier than ever for us to stay in touch with one another, thanks to the Internets and such.

This is really bittersweet for me, because while I'm certain I'm going to be seeing and hearing from these people again in the future, I know that it'll be a long time before I get to witness an explosion of talent and passion to match that of NRW.

So before I get too sappy, I'll just thank everybody who helped to make my experience possible, and wish the best of luck to all present and future Presidential Scholars. You guys are an amazing bunch of people, and I look forward to the great things that you're going to achieve. Peace.

"It'll be a long time before I get to witness an explosion of talent and passion to match that of NRW."





Reflections on NRW ... from College 1/27/11

National Recognition Week and my college experience have been fairly similar thus far. Both are high on excitement and low on sleep, with a whirlwind of new faces and names and occasionally lousy food, but the strongest parallel for me is the feeling of being surrounded on all sides by uniquely special people. It's weird.

Perhaps as a result of some ancient Darwinian adaptation, I've always assumed that the anonymous masses were less interesting and developed than the people that I knew, and certainly less so than myself. In any given situation, be it my high school or the sidewalk or a football stadium, I would perceive there to be a minority of main characters, surrounded by a whole bunch of extras.

And then I got to NRW, where all of my comfortable ratios fell to pieces. I remember standing in the hallway of our dorms, looking at all of the closed doors and realizing how incredible literally 100% of the people behind them were. Every single person around me had killed the SATs, and just for good measure, patented some medical apparatus to bring them back to life. I was sitting on buses and at tables with back-to-back fascinating people, and all I wanted to do was get to know their stories before the short trip ended.

College has been the same way. Everyone here is brilliant and accomplished and motivated, and most of the time you could never guess what it is that turns

each person on. The quiet boy to the right of me in my history class, for example, seemed like a classic Comp Sci major, until I found out that he'd been the American origami champion three years in a row. NRW was four days, whereas this is four years, but I still have the sensation that time is ticking, that I need to meet as many people as possible and learn from them as much as I can.

But the fact of the matter is that while college and NRW both have freakishly high proportions of geniuses, my entire conception of the world as being split between persons of note and hoi polloi was a total fallacy. Every single human being on this Earth has thoughts and feelings and stories to tell, and we should embrace this astounding reality even if it challenges our own [inflated] feelings of self-worth. And NRW made me realize more than ever before that talent and intelligence are worthless if they are cloistered in an echo chamber of superiority; we are given these gifts to go and heal the world.

"On Being a 2010 Presidential Scholar" text and graphics originally appeared in The Medallion, the newsletter of the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association. Thanks to Medallion editor Virgil Calejesan (1998, PR) for his assistance and inspiration.



The 2010 class of Presidential Scholars.

COURTESY OF VIRGIL CALEJESAN

expressive

Purchase College, State University of New York, congratulates all who have been honored as Presidential Scholars over the past 50 years.



creative

THINK WIDE OPEN

intense



diverse

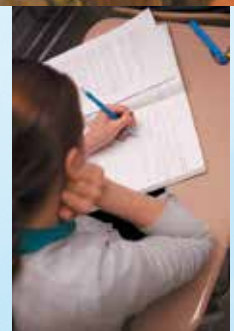


eclectic

focused



intelligent



collaborative



Purchase College

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Open Mind, Open Doors Lillian Peng (2013, CA)

To be honest, I was feeling rather intimidated on the plane ride to D.C. In less than a day, I would be meeting some extremely accomplished and decorated individuals; the future government leaders, Nobel Prize winners, and esteemed professors. The prospect seemed so abstract, distant, and unimaginable. But when I stepped off the plane into the dorms of Georgetown University and saw my fellow Scholars, I realized this weekend wasn't going to be a bragging contest of who had the longest list of achievements but simply an opportunity to hang out with some down-to-Earth, passionate, and talented people. I decided to keep an open mind and meet as many Scholars as I could.

During the panels and presentations, I was impressed by my fellow Scholars' eloquence and intellectuality. Through unofficial events and casual conversations I got to learn many of my peers' stories. I realized that the Presidential Scholars were a beautiful conglomerate of different backgrounds, personalities, and wide-



Lillian Peng with her AP U.S. History teacher, Dr. Deborah Robbins. Lillian named Dr. Robbins her most influential teacher.

ranging interests, held strongly together by the common sense of passion and drive. I was blown away by how multifaceted and well-rounded everyone was: engineers were posing thoughtful questions to government representatives, Arts Scholars were eager to hear about the biology research another Scholar conducted, and I debated with a

computer science major about Bloomberg's soda ban. We were all well informed and appreciative of the fields of others. Some of my favorite events were the talent show, the Kennedy Center performance, and the art gallery in the Smithsonian. This was because it was thrilling to see how multitalented everyone was, not only in academics but in poetry, in playing the upright bass, in drawing urban art ... You name it, a Presidential Scholar probably can do it. Not to mention, the Presidential Scholars have an awesome sense of humor, which made the talent show incredibly enjoyable.

The National Recognition Weekend gave me a once-in-a-lifetime chance to grow myself and help grow this community of Scholars. Being surrounded just for a few days by people with such talent, passion, and ambition has inspired me to work hard and love what I do throughout college and beyond. ☑

Julia Gilbert (2013, VT)

My experience as a Presidential Scholar does not fit tidily into a column of an anniversary magazine, and National Recognition Week cannot be adequately characterized by a handful of buzzwords. Indeed, as a member of last year's class, I am still coming to understand what it means to be a part of this remarkable group of alumni. What I can say with confidence, however, is that I have never before been in such good company.

During NRW, I was especially struck by the diversity of Scholars' strengths, passions, and backgrounds. Sharing stories and perspectives from our various home communities, we came to understand better the complexity and paradoxes of the United States. And, as is often the case in learning about others, we gained new insights into our own selves, values, and assumptions. For me, the opportunity to connect with so many inquisitive, thoughtful, passionate people was an honor far greater than a medallion or ceremony. I hope that those personal

Julia Gilbert is a member of the 2013 class of Presidential Scholars. After a gap year volunteering in Northern India and Latin America, she will matriculate at Yale in fall 2014.

connections can be maintained and even strengthened in the decades ahead.

As Presidential Scholars – and as human beings – our greatest accomplishments are not measured by gold medals or test scores, but rather by the degree to which we better the world. Members of my class of Presidential Scholars are only beginning their higher education, but I can testify that my friends from NRW have already begun to make their mark in classrooms, concert halls, art studios, and the global community. We are curious, hungry, and ignited, and we are just getting started.

NRW showed that even in a brief period of time, it is possible to build a community of Scholars that transcends state lines. I look forward to seeing this



community and its individual members strive to transcend other distinctions – whether between regions, nations, or schools of thought. In doing so, we can perhaps come to celebrate both the commonalities and diversity of American citizens and all humankind. ☑

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Courage, Fortitude, Character: Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc.

Founded in 1947, the Horatio Alger Association of Distinguished Americans, Inc., honors the achievements of outstanding individuals who have succeeded in spite of adversity and encourages youth to pursue their dreams through higher education. The Association grants lifetime membership to outstanding individuals who demonstrate perseverance, integrity and a determination to succeed. Horatio Alger Members wholly support the Association's scholarship programs through private donations and serve as mentors for young men and women as they pursue higher education and their own versions of the American Dream.

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In support of its mission to promote values that foster attainment of the American Dream, the Horatio Alger Association established its scholarship program in 1984 to support young people who have experienced adversity. Today, it is one of the country's largest providers of privately-funded, need-based scholarships. The Association awards more than \$9 million in undergraduate and graduate scholarships yearly. To date, more than \$100 million has been invested in students across the United States and Canada.

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The Horatio Alger Association is proud to share in common with the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program the goal of encouraging young people to reach their highest potential, in the best interests of individual students and our nation as a whole.



A Decade-plus of Invited Speakers at National Recognition Week

From the late 1980s to the late 1990s, the yearbooks of the Presidential Scholars National Recognition Week include details on distinguished speakers who participated in events with the Scholars. Some of the speakers whose names are recognizable to several generations of Scholars are listed below, along with one special event:

1987: Conservation biologist and inventor of the concept of biodiversity **Thomas Lovejoy**; Worldwatch Institute founder and MacArthur “genius grant” recipient **Lester Brown**

1988: “Multiple intelligences” education researcher **Howard Gardner**, a MacArthur Fellow

1989: Astronomer **Carl Sagan**; U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Sandra Day O’Connor**

1990: Best-selling author **Tom Clancy**

1991: Secretary of Defense **Dick Cheney**

1992: U.S. Poet Laureate **Rita Dove** (1970, OH);
U.S. Supreme Court Justice **Antonin Scalia**

1993: Founder of Teach For America **Wendy Kopp**; PEN/Martha Albrand Award winner and former Dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University **Nicholas Lemann**; Oscar-nominated actor **Edward James Olmos**

1994: PEN/Faulkner Award-winning author **David Bradley** (1968, PA)

1995: U.S. Attorney General **Janet Reno**

1996: Olympic torch ceremony

1997: U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations **Bill Richardson**

Don MacGillis (1964, CT)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

WHEN HE TOOK HIS FIRST TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C., in 1964 to be recognized as one of the first Presidential Scholars, Don MacGillis was both flattered and dazzled. After a ceremony in the White House at which President Lyndon Johnson addressed all the scholars, MacGillis and his cohorts posed for a collective picture on the Capitol steps, and then returned to the White House lawn for a reception. “This was the first one,” he said, “and it was really a big deal. I remember seeing Leonard Bernstein and Herblock, the cartoonist for *The Washington Post*. I knew of him, and so I was delighted – there were all kinds of notables from different fields and endeavors.”



MacGillis had been a stellar student at William Hall High School in West Hartford, Conn., and had already been accepted to Yale University, but, he conceded, “I had only the dimmest idea what I was going to do with my life then. I may have been thinking about being in government before that, and the ceremonies made government look more approachable as a career, and certainly more attractive. But in the four years after that, things changed dramatically, in the perception of people in my generation, about Lyndon Johnson and government – most personally for me, because of the Vietnam War and the prospect of getting drafted, which did eventually happen.”

After graduating from Yale, MacGillis, inspired by the work of war correspondents such as David Halberstam and Bernard Fall, joined the *Hartford Courant* as a reporter – a job he enjoyed for only a few months before being drafted into the Army. “So now the notion of working for the government,” he said, “was: Yeah, I was going to work for the government



– as an infantryman, and involuntarily. So any notion I had coming out of the Presidential Scholars Program about going into government and being part of this great endeavor had pretty much gone by the wayside in '68, when the same Lyndon Johnson who sent me the Presidential Scholars notification sent me the draft notice that began with ‘Greetings.’”

MacGillis served with the Army's 3rd Infantry Division in Aschaffenburg and Wuerzburg, Germany, first as a medic and then as a public affairs specialist. He established a division-wide program to improve relations between GIs and young Germans, most of whom were staunchly anti-war. After being discharged in 1970, he studied modern European history at the

University of Wuerzburg on the GI Bill, and then resumed his career in journalism. He spent more than two decades at *The Berkshire Eagle*, a daily newspaper in Pittsfield, Mass., where he was named executive editor in 1992.

In 1995, MacGillis joined *The Boston Globe* as coordinator of “The People's Voice,” a journalism project aimed at enhancing civic engagement in the 1996 New Hampshire presidential primary and the Massachusetts Senate race between John Kerry and William Weld. He joined the *Globe's* editorial department in 2000, specializing in health, science, and the military; in 2007, he was named the paper's assistant editorial page editor. He became the *Globe's* national politics editor in 2011, and led the paper's coverage of the 2012 presidential election before retiring later that year.

MacGillis lives in western Massachusetts with his wife, Ingrid, whom he married in 1974. Their son, Alec, is a senior editor for *The New Republic* and lives in Baltimore; their daughter Lucy, an artist, lives in Fratta Todina, Italy. Today, he views the Presidential Scholars Program as an academic honor that has grown from unavoidably political roots – a view he once shared with Eric F. Goldman, the American historian who was, in 1964, a special advisor to Johnson.

“He was the Johnson staffer who came up with the idea of [the Presidential Scholars], to put a greater emphasis on academics and intellectual pursuits,” said MacGillis. “I think it was a very good idea. He wrote about that in his book, *The Tragedy of Lyndon Johnson*, and to write the book he got in touch with some of us Scholars in the original group. He asked me what I had thought about it. I told him I didn't have strong feelings about it, but I saw it as something of a political maneuver – as Lyndon Johnson trying to achieve some of the cachet that Jack Kennedy and the White House had, to elevate the intellectual standing of the White House. I guess I saw it in somewhat political terms, but I didn't begrudge President Johnson. I was so flattered to be down there and be part of what was really quite a big deal.”

Amory Lovins (1964, MA)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

IN 1964, AMORY LOVINS, AT THE TENDER AGE OF 16, was not yet a world-renowned iconoclast. But as he was preparing to be recognized among the first class of Presidential Scholars, he demonstrated the uncanny foresight that has made him one of his generation's most influential thinkers.

"There was another scholar from Reed College in Oregon," he recalled, "who was organizing a movement for Scholars to give back their medals to protest the war in Vietnam, which was a very hot political issue. Now, I happened to agree with them about the war, but I wrote to all the Scholars – I think with maybe one or two others, I don't remember – suggesting that we put aside our views about the war, because we didn't want a very worthy program for future Scholars to be either politicized or discontinued. We thought our views about the war, whatever they were, should be expressed in other fora. And in the end, that was the view that prevailed."

At the ceremony, led by President Lyndon B. Johnson, Lovins described himself as initially speechless – but he got over it quickly. "I got to spend most of the morning with Leonard Bernstein and most of the afternoon with Robert Oppenheimer, talking about music and physics, my two main pursuits in those days. They had a remarkable group of probably 20 or so celebrities of that intellectual and cultural caliber who spent the whole day interacting with the Scholars in small groups."

Lovins' vigorous pursuit of varied passions and interests has made for an inimitable career trajectory, one that began with his leaving Oxford University without a degree; a university don, he wanted to pursue a doctorate in energy, which the university – two years before the 1973 oil embargo – did not consider an academic subject. While the world caught up with him, Lovins wrote a book about North Wales' Snowdonia National Park, *Eryri, the Mountains of Longing*, commissioned by his mentor, Friends of the Earth co-founder David Brower; he also guided mountaineering trips in New England's White Mountains, and later contributed photographs to a book about the region.

The 1973 energy crisis validated what *New York Times* columnist Thomas

Friedman has said about Lovins: that he has "been so far ahead of his time, for so long, that he's lapped us." With his landmark article, "Energy Strategy: The Road Not Taken?" published in *Foreign Affairs* in 1976, Lovins became a leading visionary, and in 1982 he and his then-wife Hunter Lovins founded the Rocky Mountain Institute in Snowmass, Colo., a nonpartisan "think-and-do-tank" devoted to market-based solutions providing energy and resource efficiency.

In the midst of a four-decade career that shows no signs of slowing down, Lovins has amassed a portfolio of achievements and awards difficult to catalog: He's a physicist, a photographer, an honorary architect, and a Foreign Member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Engineering Sciences. He is a lover and staunch advocate of orangutans, whose portraits line his bedroom walls. He's written 500 papers and 31 books. He's taught at 10 universities, redesigned buildings, vehicles, and factories, and advised industry in more than 50 countries. He's a member of the National Petroleum Council who advises the Chief of Naval Operations. He's received the Right Livelihood Award (also known as the "Alternative Nobel Prize"); the MacArthur and Ashoka Fellowships; the Blue Planet, Volvo, Zayed, Onassis, Nissan, Shingo, and Mitchell prizes; and the Heinz, Lindbergh, National Design, and World Technology awards. He holds 12 honorary doctorates, and *Time* magazine has named him one of the world's most influential people; *Foreign Policy*, one of the 100 top global thinkers.

Not surprisingly, Lovins sees his fellow Presidential Scholars as an untapped fount of ideas. Over the years, though he has occasionally run into other Presidential Scholars – notably Robert "Hutch" Hutchinson (1977, VA), a managing director at Rocky Mountain Institute – he has mostly lost touch.



"When I became a MacArthur Fellow," he said, "they had a wonderful custom of offering a free reunion for all fellows, past or present, for maybe three days in Chicago about every other year. And I think many of us thought it was the most valuable part of the fellowship; even more valuable than the money was the opportunity to have a very exciting intellectual feast where each of us was likely to give an hour's talk. It was kind of like a Renaissance Weekend or eg Conference or TED Conference, but supercharged. We learned a lot of exciting things from the cutting-edge work of our colleagues, in areas we wouldn't normally learn about. Of course the Presidential Scholars, at the time they are appointed, don't have such maturity of achievements to share, although they are impressive people. But I think later in life, if they had a chance to post a little profile of what they are up to, some of us would find it very interesting to enjoy networking. We have such easy online tools to provide an online platform for Scholars to contact each other, or to opt out. I think a much richer network could develop, with unexpected benefits."

Michael McPherson (1964, WI)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

IN 1964, WHEN MICHAEL McPHERSON was notified by Special Delivery that he was among the first class of Presidential Scholars, the program did not yet ask each Scholar to name the educator who had the greatest impact on them – that facet of the program would begin in 1983. But if McPherson could have named a teacher back in 1964, he would've chosen George Ludwig, his physics teacher at Rufus King High School in Milwaukee, Wis.

“He was a very generous person with his time and he was that way with I think all of his students. He was the advisor to the Astronomy Club, and was sort of ‘Chief Caretaker for Geeks,’ probably would be the way to put it. He noticed me, and even though I was very shy, he reached out to me and was very encouraging about my talent. He was just a very good teacher – a really smart, capable person. He made a lot of difference to me.”

In fact, McPherson figured he would likely become a physicist or mathematician himself. But after majoring in math at the University of Chicago, he felt less passionate about the subject and took a different tack for graduate school; he earned both his master's and doctorate in economics, also at the University of Chicago. It was during graduate school that he began his work on the interplay between education and economics, a topic that has been the hallmark of his career:

“I've always been fascinated by universities and learning. So, in econ, labor economics and economics of education are closely allied. The University of Chicago was pretty much the base of the whole theory of human capital [that] developed in really just the five or 10 years before I had started graduate school. And so, it was natural to look in that field for possible dissertation topics. I wound up doing a dissertation on what, in the lingo, would be called the cross elasticity of demand for public and for private colleges – so, to what degree did the price at a public college influence people's likelihood of going to private colleges and conversely? So, I started out my career doing work in economics of higher education.”

After finishing school, McPherson went on to teach economics at Williams College in Massachusetts, where he eventually served as chairman of the economics



department as well as dean of faculty. He then became president of Macalester College in St. Paul, Minn., and held that position for seven years. In 2003, he left St. Paul for Chicago, becoming the fifth president of the Spencer Foundation, an organization that supports research about education. He is currently also a trustee of McNally Smith College of Music and the DentaQuest Foundation, as well as President of the Board of Overseers of TIAA-CREF.

Along the way, McPherson co-authored and edited several books: *Crossing the Finish Line: Completing College*

at America's Public Universities; College Access: Opportunity or Privilege?; Keeping College Affordable; and Economic Analysis, Moral Philosophy, and Public Policy.

As for his Presidential Scholar recognition, McPherson remembers the award being a complete surprise, as it was the first year it had been given. At the Washington events, he recalls spotting Robert Kennedy, not even a year after President John F. Kennedy's assassination, “standing under a tree and looking just shattered ... fragile and grey.” But, describing himself as a social scientist, he for the most part reflects on his Presidential Scholar award more in practical terms than sentimental ones:

“I don't think that a program of this kind probably has much effect on the lives of the Scholars. People like me who have done super well in high school, scored well on tests, and have high levels of academic ambition ... they're going to go on to ambitious lives and study. They're all going to college and then their lives are going to really unfold. I don't think the award is actually going to make a difference to them. But symbolically, celebrating extraordinary intellectual capacities is probably a healthy thing. So, I think the symbolism of a thing like that probably is a good thing, especially in a society that increasingly seems to value only money.”

Though McPherson has not maintained contact with any of the Scholars from 1964 – “I'm embarrassingly anti-social,” he said – he remembers a Presidential Scholars-related interaction that took place a few years after he received his award:

“Somebody at some point did a little study, I think it was probably a graduate student: I remember filling out a questionnaire about my life since I had become a Presidential Scholar. And it was part of some inquiry.” [For more about this study, conducted by educational researcher Felice Kaufmann, please see pages 168-171 in this publication.]

It's the kind of alumni contact he can get behind: “Thinking about the Presidential Scholar alumni as a potential source of some kind of sociological information – I think that's interesting.”

A Scholar, on Steroids

An interview with Harrison “Skip” Pope

BY JOHN KNOX

DR. HARRISON G. POPE JR. (1965, MA) is professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and director, Biological Psychiatry Laboratory, at McLean Hospital in Belmont, Mass. He is one of the most highly cited psychiatrists of the 20th century, with research foci on substance abuse, the “repressed memory” and “recovered memory” controversy, and the biological treatment of psychiatric disorders.

What was your background?

I attended Phillips Exeter Academy in Massachusetts, then went to Harvard, where I first majored in physics, then changed to math, and then changed to psychology. In my heart, I had always been fascinated by psychology, and one day in my sophomore year I said, “Dammit, I’m going to do it.”

And what happened next?

It was the time of the Vietnam War. I had a very low draft number, No. 8, meaning that I would be sent to Vietnam almost immediately. So I went to medical school instead of graduate school, to get a deferment. ... I ended up doing a psychiatric residency, at McLean, and I’ve spent the past 40 years here! I’ve watched my field transformed, from Freudian psychiatry to the kind of work I do today in biological psychiatry. Half of everything I learned in the late 1970s – for example, the beliefs that conditions such as schizophrenia, homosexuality, and autism were caused by defective mothers and could be cured by psychotherapy – have been completely discredited.

You have done a great deal of research on abuse of anabolic steroids. How did you get started on that?

Since 1980, I have lifted weights six days a week at the gym, and many of the guys that I met at the gym had used steroids. When the War on Drugs commenced in the late 1980s, I submitted a grant application to study the psychiatric effects of steroids. Since then I have gone through many grants and many studies, and now I’m probably the most widely cited researcher on anabolic steroid abuse in the world. The steroid research got me interested in body image among men. For example, I wrote a paper about “reverse anorexia nervosa,” where men would look in the mirror and think that they look too small when they

actually were large and muscular. I was amazed when this paper landed me on the front page of *USA Today*. It seemed that I had touched a nerve.

Is this where G.I. Joe comes in?

G.I. Joe and other action toys have been growing increasingly muscular over the last several decades, almost as if they were on steroids. The evolution of these toys is an interesting index of the increasing emphasis on male body image in modern Western societies.

In this age of Barry Bonds and A-Rod, this is research that everyone can identify with, which has real societal importance.

If I could rewind the tape, I would do it all over again.

Now let’s talk about your Presidential Scholar experience.

I received the telegram from the President when I was at Phillips Exeter Academy. My parents were invited to the White House. They got into the taxi; my father took out the piece of paper and said to the driver, “Take us to the Southeast Gate of the White House.” The driver said, “Sorry, it’s too late, the gate closes at 5 p.m.” To which my father replied, “I have an invitation from the President!” What could the taxi driver say to that? I remember that one of the medallion recipients dropped the medallion on the floor in the East Room of the White House, where it landed with a clank. Stan Musial and Edwin Land, the photography inventor, were two of the guests I happen to remember well. Many of us Scholars became autograph hunters!

Did you get to know any of the other Scholars from your year?

Larry Siever [1965, MA], who also became a psychiatric researcher, spent much of his career at the National Institutes



of Health. And Karen Johnson [1965, WY], who was my girlfriend in my first year at Harvard, who also later became a psychiatrist.

Any other recollections? How did the Scholars experience benefit you personally?

The Scholars experience was a help socially in college. Coming to Harvard from Exeter, it was my first time at a school with girls. I went to a mixer and noticed Karen Johnson. I was able to go up to her with the ultimate opening line, “Hey, didn’t I run into you on the South Lawn of the White House a couple of months ago?”

Martha Bergmark (1966, MS)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

LIKE MOST OF THE RESIDENTS OF JACKSON, MISS., Martha Bergmark can never forget June 12, 1963 – the day civil rights leader Medgar Evers was gunned down in his driveway. At the time, Bergmark was 14 years old. “That was just a few miles from our family home,” she recalled. “Before that, I was certainly aware of the burgeoning civil rights movement in my home state. My parents were already involved. But I’d have to say if there was a first moment, when I had to ask myself: ‘Where do I stand, and what am I willing to risk?’ that was probably it.”



Bergmark spent most of her remaining school years in Jackson living what she called a “split life” – lying low, hanging out with all the other white teenagers at Murrah High School, while working for the civil rights movement in the after-hours – until her senior year, when Murrah’s first African-American students were enrolled. She helped to orient the new students, both before and after their arrival at the school. “So I had an interesting senior year,” she said, “kind of a tough senior year. It was the first time I really experienced ostracism – and some worse than that – because of taking a stand.”

Learning that she had been selected as a Presidential Scholar, she said, was “just a very sweet revenge, almost. It was a validation that there was a world out there that thought about things differently, maybe, than the white power structure in Jackson, Miss., did. It was on my senior class day that the telegram came from the

White House, inviting me to be there. So that was a very exciting moment.”

Like many of the program’s early honorees, Bergmark was astounded by the award ceremony staged by President Lyndon B. Johnson. “They really brought out the top political stars,” she said. “I sat next to Thurgood Marshall, if you can imagine that, on the White House lawn for the award ceremony itself. We met all kinds of interesting people just wandering around the Rose Garden.” Her father took photos of some of them, including television journalist John Chancellor, playwright Edward Albee, and Sargent Shriver, special assistant to the President. A troupe of actors performed a scene from *Man of La Mancha*, which was then the talk of Broadway, on the lawn.

“The two mementos I have of that time,” she said, “are that telegram and a photograph. After the White House event, an envelope arrived in our mailbox, all wadded up. It was a big envelope, and it

said very clearly on it: ‘Photos, Do Not Bend.’ But it was from the White House. And the mailman had taken the trouble to crumple it up in our mailbox. It was a photograph of me getting the medal from Lyndon Johnson, a big 8-by-10 picture, slightly creased. So my family got a good chuckle out of the fact that the postman – Who knows? Maybe it was completely unintentional – but we could not help but think this was our postman’s way of saying he didn’t care a hoot about delivering the White House envelope to our house.”

When she left Jackson to attend Oberlin College in Ohio, Bergmark believed she would never return to Mississippi, but she had already changed her mind before receiving her law degree from the University of Michigan. “In the North,” she said, “if you were a white female with a Southern accent, you kind of had to prove you weren’t stupid.” She practiced civil rights law in Hattiesburg, Miss., for 14 years before moving to Washington to advocate for justice for racial and ethnic minorities. During the Clinton administration, she served as president of the Legal Services Corporation, the federal government’s largest funder of civil legal aid for low-income Americans.

In 2003, Bergmark returned to Jackson to establish the Mississippi Center for Justice, an organization focused on providing access to justice for low-income Mississippians. In founding the center, she said, she hoped to revive some of the state’s capacity to fund legal aid for low-income and civil rights-related problems – funding that had tended to fluctuate dramatically in public budgets.

“What is different about the Mississippi Center for Justice,” she said, “and the reason I think it has gained a measure of national recognition, is that we are using something of a different model. It’s a truly multifaceted approach to addressing the systemic issues of races and poverty that still afflict Mississippi. Yes, we do litigation. We use our standard legal tools, but we are also very much in the policy arena. We’re very much in the media arena, and we have organizers on staff. So it’s a much more multifaceted approach than, I think, some previous models of civil legal aid.”

PHOTO BY TOM BECK

Joe Blatt (1966, IN)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

THE ACCURACY OF HIS MEMORIES FROM 1966, Joe Blatt admits, is uncertain. But he certainly remembers receiving a telegram from the White House, signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson.

At the time, friends often sent each other telegrams to mark special occasions – and Blatt thought the telegram was a joke. “I really thought it was a prank from a friend,” he said. “I can’t remember exactly what we did to verify it, but it was my high school principal who eventually confirmed it was real.”

The Presidential Scholars Program was only two years old, and Blatt had never heard of it. When he learned what the honor meant, he was thrilled – but ambivalent. “I was just beginning to recognize that I was opposed to the war in Vietnam,” he said, “so there was a certain awkwardness about getting an award from Lyndon Johnson. But I remember in particular that at the lunch on the White House lawn, I was lucky enough to sit at the same table as Sen. [J. William] Fulbright, who was chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee at the time, and who was emerging as a critic of the war. And that reinforced my feeling that it was okay to be there, while at the same time having real doubts about the war, doubts that became more profound and better informed over the next couple of years.”

At 17, despite his reservations, Blatt was awestruck by the lavish ceremony at the White House, where he sat between Fulbright and Buckminster Fuller. When he joined the other Scholars in the receiving line to shake the president’s hand, he was still so astonished that he inadvertently shuffled past the president’s wife, Lady Bird Johnson. “I had to back up and hold up the whole ceremony for a minute in order to apologize and shake hands with her,” he said. “Later, I was tempted to pretend I had done that on purpose, as a political statement, but actually I was just so nervous and excited that it was a complete accident.”

As a Harvard College undergraduate, Blatt studied English and American

History and Literature, graduating with honors. After working five years in film and video, he earned an Ed.M. degree from the Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE). It was then that he launched a career that blended his fascinations with the media and education.

For three decades, Blatt has created educational multimedia and broadcast television programs, including an eight-year stint at WGBH Boston, and currently as president of RiverRun Media. He has produced more than 100 public television programs with funding from the Annenberg Foundation, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Science Foundation, and the Sloan Foundation. His recent creations include the *BreakThrough* television series profiling African-American, Latino, and Native American scientists. He has served as a consultant and advisor for several major production companies, including Sesame Workshop, WGBH, PBS Kids, and Walden Media.

Blatt currently teaches about children’s media, digital technology, and informal learning at HGSE, where he is Senior Lecturer in Education and Faculty Director of the Technology, Innovation, and Education program. His research and teaching focus on the effects of media and technology on human development, learning, and civic behavior. Today the father of a 15-year-old son and a 12-year-old daughter, Blatt directs the HGSE Faculty Focus on Teaching project and the Entertainment through Education series of Askwith Forum presentations, and is the creator of HGSE’s accessible research website, Usable Knowledge. In 2011, Blatt received HGSE’s highest faculty honor, the Morningstar Award for Teaching Excellence.

“My advice to today’s Scholars,” said Blatt, “would be to enjoy their few moments of relative fame as much as I did



“It was the rare kind of award that I actually feel good about.”

back then, and then realize that it’s just a nice cap to the first phase of growing up – then it’s time to dig in again when you go to college. As an educator, I’m pretty much opposed to awards and distinctions that promote certain skills or talents over others – so I’m not a big fan of awards in general. But [the Presidential Scholar award], at least in my era, seemed to me to be based on a genuinely holistic assessment of young people. It wasn’t just standardized test scores. It wasn’t just good citizenship in high school. It wasn’t any of the sorts of things that usually characterize academic achievement awards. It seemed to be – and I say this because of the people I met, [the 120 or so] of us in my cohort – just a really well-rounded group, with all kinds of different talents and abilities. So it was the rare kind of award that I actually feel good about.”

Mitchell Elias “Mitch” Daniels (1967, IN)

BY CHUCK OLDHAM

TWO-TERM INDIANA GOVERNOR MITCH DANIELS served in the presidential administrations of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, but still remembers his first visit to the White House, when he was a Presidential Scholar, as extraordinary.

“You know, [President Lyndon B.] Johnson spent a lot of time, with us,” Daniels said. “They had us down to the White House – I think it was the East Room – for the presentations. I remember John William Gardner, the secretary of what was called HEW [the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare] at the time, was handing them out, and then you went over and shook hands with the President. Then they had a thing out on the veranda, out on the portico out back that lasted quite a long time. It was amazing. You know, I worked in two White Houses after that, and I don’t remember anything like that quite happening. Johnson walked around, kidded around with some of us – you know, ‘don’t steal the silverware,’ that sort of thing – teasing us. It was very memorable.”

For Daniels, it was also a sign of things to come. The 1967 Presidential Scholar graduated from Princeton’s Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs

two had four daughters together. In 1979 he earned his law degree from Georgetown University. Appointed as the executive director of the National Republican Senatorial Committee in 1983, Daniels played a major role in the GOP retaining control of the Senate, and in 1985, Daniels went to work for his first presidential administration, becoming chief political advisor and liaison to President Ronald Reagan during Reagan’s second term.

Daniels left government service in 1987, returning to Indiana as president and CEO of the Hudson Institute, a contract research organization. In 1990 he left the Hudson Institute to become president of North American operations at the Indiana-based drug company Eli Lilly, later becoming senior vice president for corporate strategy and policy.

In 2001, Daniels returned to public service when he accepted a position as director of the Office of Management and



categories: Transformative Education; Affordability and Accessibility; STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) Leadership; and World-changing Research.

“Recognizing academic excellence in its purest form is really important,” Daniels said. “We can’t do too much to encourage things like STEM, but there ought to be a place for one gold standard for all forms of scholastic excellence at that level. As far as I know, the Presidential Scholars Program is it. I only hope that it will get even wider publicity and recognition. There’s been this sort of leveling tendency again to dilute sometimes the very purest form of excellence and I think in some ways we went too far in that direction.”

“Thank goodness there are some ways we encourage and recognize [STEM

“There ought to be a place for one gold standard for all forms of scholastic excellence at that level. As far as I know, the Presidential Scholars Program is it.”

in 1971, but by that time he had already become personally involved in politics, working on William Ruckelshaus’ ultimately unsuccessful campaign for a U.S. Senate seat in 1968. Shortly after, Daniels began an internship in the office of then-Indianapolis Mayor Richard Lugar, eventually becoming Lugar’s principal assistant.

When Lugar was elected to the U.S. Senate in 1976, Daniels followed him to Washington as his chief of staff, and ran three successful reelection campaigns for the Indiana senator. He met his wife, Cheri Lynn Herman Daniels, in 1978, and the

Budget in the President George W. Bush administration. Daniels left the OMB in 2003 to run for governor of Indiana, and was elected in 2004 and again in 2008, receiving more votes than any other candidate for public office in the state’s history. He served for two consecutive four-year terms, the most allowed under Indiana law.

Today, in a way, Daniels has come full circle. As president of Purdue University, he now leads its efforts to foster the sort of academic excellence that launched his own success. He has named 10 priorities for his administration, organized into four

education] and can’t do enough of it. Inevitably a Presidential Scholars Program must pick up the nation’s best STEM students each year, and that’s a really good thing. Obviously I’m strongly supportive of the program as it is, [even] a broader one, but I’m just guessing that a high percentage of [Presidential Scholars] are also winning science fairs and national math competitions.

“I would think if you didn’t have the Presidential Scholars Program, now would be a good time to invent one, with an absolute emphasis on superb academics.”

Don Beyer (1968, DC)

BY CHUCK OLDHAM

DON BEYER REMEMBERS well his visit to the White House to receive his Presidential Scholars award. He and his fellow Scholars were being honored at a particularly turbulent time in American history.

“[Deputy Secretary of Defense] Cyrus Vance had just come back from Vietnam. It was June of 1968, after the Tet Offensive, after Lyndon Johnson had announced that he wasn’t running for re-election. It was only a week after Bobby Kennedy’s assassination, and just two months after Martin Luther King’s assassination. So, we were still reeling. It was a pretty traumatic time. But I remember the excitement of being in the White House with my parents – their first time, too – and seeing the President on the sidelines, talking with Cyrus Vance about the Vietnam trip.”

That fall, Beyer went on to Williams College, where he was elected to Phi Beta Kappa, and graduated *magna cum laude* in 1972 with a degree in economics. Then he began to prepare for graduate studies in medicine, but his life ended up taking a very different path.

“I was out a year. Didn’t know what I wanted to do. I did post-baccalaureate undergraduate pre-med. Crammed four years pre-med into about nine months, got into the Georgetown Med School, came back to Washington to go to Georgetown, and my father had just purchased the first dealership. And so I spent the summer driving the parts truck for him, because that was the only saleable skill I had after four years at Williams. Over the course of the summer, I got cold feet about med school. It had never been my lifelong ambition.

“I asked him if I could hang around for six weeks until I could figure out what graduate program I wanted to pursue, and ... it will be 40 years in May. I don’t regret it at all.”

Today, Beyer owns nine automobile dealerships, selling vehicles from five different manufacturers. The road from parts truck driver to successful entrepreneur, two-term lieutenant governor of Virginia, and ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein may seem

an unlikely one, but Beyer believes that without the skills he gained through his work experience, moving up the ranks at the car dealership, he might not have been as successful in politics.

“As the ‘wunderkind’ math, physics, economics guy, my social skills weren’t all that developed. They were average at best. But when you’re in a retail business ... you have to learn how to be intimate with people quickly and effectively, in a way that’s not invasive, but in a way where you’re a good listener, and responsive to their needs. And that translates enormously well to other leadership challenges in life, especially political [ones].

“And, of course, I spent a lot of years as sales manager, selling cars, which of course was also very helpful for everything else, because if you can learn to sell cars, you can sell just about anything. It’s also very helpful raising money in politics because you get used to rejection.”

It wasn’t until later in life, however, that Beyer actually became involved in politics.

“I guess I always had the fantasy of running for office since I was a little kid. ... I had harbored those political ideals, even with my, I would say, not well developed social skills, all through high school and college. But you turn 30 and say, ‘Okay, you can just dream about this all your life or you can do something,’ so I went and volunteered for my first campaign in May of 1982.

“And for 27 straight years, I was either the campaign chairman or the finance chairman or the campaign manager or the candidate.”

He was first elected to office in 1989, when he became lieutenant governor of Virginia alongside Gov. Douglas Wilder. While in office, Beyer chaired the Virginia Commission on Disabilities, led Virginia’s Poverty and Welfare Reform Commission, and was credited with passing landmark welfare reform legislation. As chair of the Virginia Economic Recovery



Commission, he helped pass permanent pro-business reforms and promoted high-tech industries as co-founder of the Northern Virginia Technology Council. Following his two terms in office, he continued to serve Virginia through programs and organizations like Jobs for Virginia Graduates and Youth for Tomorrow while continuing to support state- and national-level Democratic candidates. In 2009, he was appointed ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein and served until 2013.

His message for Presidential Scholars of today and tomorrow?

“This creates a responsibility to make a difference,” Beyer said. “We’ve now established that you’re special, that you’re really bright and you can accomplish things, and not everybody can do that. We live in a pretty good world, but with enormous problems still. You really now have a responsibility with the rest of your life to use these great talents to make things better for everyone else, and to build things that live long beyond you.”

On Jan. 24, 2014, Beyer announced he was running for Congress in Virginia’s 8th Congressional District.

Cornelia “Connie” Clark (1968, GA)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

NOT LONG AFTER BEING NOTIFIED that she’d been named a Presidential Scholar – via “a telephone call from Western Union reading me a telegram signed by the President of the United States” – Connie Clark found herself in Washington, D.C. “It was my first trip to Washington, D.C. So, I had never been to the White House. And to have your first trip be essentially a ceremony and party in your honor is very memorable.”



Connie Clark (center) during her tenure as Chief Justice of the Tennessee Supreme Court.

But for Clark, who has always had an interest in politics, more somber recollections of that trip come to mind, too. “We arrived there, I think two or three days after Robert Kennedy’s funeral in 1968. It was an incredible year. Dr. King, of course, had died in April, and his oldest daughter attended the same high school I did in Atlanta. Then we come to D.C. in June, right after Robert Kennedy’s funeral. Resurrection City was there. The Poor People’s campaign had been going on and we actually ... we weren’t supposed to, but we walked down – some of us – and just watched, observed that group.”

In college, Clark pursued her ambition to become a high school history teacher. She graduated from Vanderbilt, earned her Master of Arts in Teaching from Harvard, and taught high school history and government for four years. Then she went to law school – a career shift she says was

prompted by politics. “Living in Atlanta and starting in 1972 – when I got out of school – I just got involved in some volunteer and political campaigns. And in some of those campaigns, I listened to lawyers who were involved at a much higher level. And they amazed me. They were idealistic – thought they could change the world. The degrees that they had and the talents that they had allowed them to do that. I didn’t have lawyers in my family. I was the first person in my immediate family to graduate from college. So, I didn’t have close role models. But I looked at them and I thought that that degree and that license might get me an opportunity to impact people in ways very different than I had ever imagined.”

Clark earned her law degree from Vanderbilt University School of Law and in the ensuing years has cultivated an impressive career. She practiced law in Nashville and Franklin, Tenn., for 10 years

before hearing civil and criminal cases for 10 years as a circuit judge. In 1999, she became director of the Tennessee Administrative Office of the Courts, where she served as chief administrative officer of the state court system. In September 2005, she was appointed to the Tennessee Supreme Court and served as Chief Justice from Sept. 1, 2010, to Aug. 31, 2012. She is a member of (and has served in leadership roles in) several Nashville and Tennessee bar associations as well as other law-related associations; she was the first woman to serve as chair of the Tennessee Bar Foundation.

In her hometown of Franklin, Tenn. (she lived in Georgia during her teenage years), Clark has served on various committees and boards, including the Steering Committee of Franklin Tomorrow, Inc., and the Williamson County-Franklin Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. She is a lifelong member of First United Methodist Church in Franklin and serves on the Building Committee and the Staff Parish Relations Committee; she also is currently vice chair of the United Methodist Publishing House Board of Directors as well as chair of its Finance Committee.

Despite her full schedule, in more recent years, Clark has made an effort to reach out to Presidential Scholars from Tennessee. She writes them letters and shares with them the impact the award has had in her life:

“I was 17 years old. I sat in a room where the President of the United States said to us, ‘You represent all the outstanding young people who graduated this year. The future of this country is in your hands. And it’s your responsibility, for the rest of your life, to live up to the promise that we’re recognizing today.’ I took that very literally and very seriously.

“Wherever I have been since then, the photograph of President Johnson handing me the medallion has been in my office. And when I look at it, I still naively believe and hopefully believe that it is my responsibility to do good and do the best I can in order to live up to that promise.”

Eugene Robinson (1970, SC)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

SOMEWHERE IN HIS HOUSE – he doesn't know exactly where – Eugene Robinson keeps the Presidential Scholar memorabilia his late mother collected during their trip to Washington, D.C., in 1970, when he graduated from Orangeburg High School in S.C. But he remembers only stray details of the events of that trip: He remembers meeting in the East Room of the White House, and being given his medal by a stand-in for President Richard Nixon. He also recalls that Sen. Strom Thurmond was particularly generous with him and South Carolina's other two Scholars, treating them to lunch in the Senate Dining Room.

"I just don't remember much about the affairs, honestly," Robinson said. "I remember staying up way too late in the dorm and talking about Vietnam – which was really kind of thrilling, I think, for the students, because these were smart kids from around the country, coming to Washington and getting to meet other smart kids who were aware and active, and having the kinds of conversations that, for me, were difficult to have in Orangeburg, S.C., which was a fairly out of the way and a very conservative place." 1970, he recalled, was the year a group of Presidential Scholars circulated a petition calling on the United States to get out of Vietnam. "I don't remember whether a majority of us signed it," Robinson said, "and I don't remember whom we chose to present it to. I know we didn't get it into the hands of the President."

When he entered the University of Michigan in the fall, Robinson thought he'd be an architect, but found he wasn't a particularly good architecture student. "But I went to work at the student newspaper at Michigan and fell in love with journalism," he said. "And that was that. I never really considered doing anything else after the first few weeks in Ann Arbor." His senior year, he was named co-editor-in-chief of the paper, the *Michigan Daily*.

Robinson began his career in 1976 as a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, where he covered the trial of kidnapped newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst. In 1980, he joined *The Washington Post*, first as a city hall reporter and then as assistant city editor. Shortly thereafter, he had a surprising encounter with a colleague, Claudia Townsend, also an assistant city editor.



"There was some story that involved the Presidential Scholars that year," he said, "and I told Claudia: 'Oh, when you go talk to Larry Feinberg' – who was doing the story – 'tell him to look at the clips, because in 1970 the Presidential Scholars were putting a petition together to get out of Vietnam.' And she said, 'Yeah, I already told him.' And we looked at each other for a moment. I said: 'Were you there?' And she said, 'Were you there?'" Townsend, who left the *Post* in 2012, had been a Presidential Scholar from Georgia in 1970 – but the two had not met, and didn't remember each other.

After a year off from the paper to serve as a Nieman Fellow in Journalism

at Harvard University, Robinson was the *Post's* South American correspondent, based in Buenos Aires, Argentina, from 1988–1992 – a job for which he learned to speak both Spanish and Portuguese. From 1992 to 1994 he was the *Post's* London bureau chief; he was named the paper's foreign editor in 1994, the same year he was elected to the Council on Foreign Relations. He became assistant managing editor of the *Post's* style section in 1999.

In 2005, Robinson began writing twice-weekly columns for the opinion page of *The Washington Post*, and within a year, his column was syndicated to more than 130 newspapers. His columns about the 2008 presidential campaign and the election of President Barack Obama earned him the 2009 Pulitzer Prize for Commentary – according to the Pulitzer Committee, "for his eloquent columns ... that focus on the election of the first African-American president, showcasing graceful writing and grasp of the larger historic picture."

In addition to his written commentaries, Robinson is the author of the books *Disintegration: The Splintering of Black America* (2010), *Last Dance in Havana* (2004), and *Coal to Cream: A Black Man's Journey Beyond Color to an Affirmation of Race* (1999). He appears on television regularly as a political analyst for MSNBC cable network shows such as *Morning Joe*, *The Rachel Maddow Show*, *Hardball with Chris Matthews*, and *PoliticsNation with Al Sharpton*. He lives in Arlington, Va., with his wife, Avis, and their two sons.

Robinson believes his trip to Washington in 1970, in some small way, may have laid the groundwork for his career. "I had relatives in Washington," he said, "but I'd never set foot in official Washington. The thrill of going to the White House and the Capitol, to see what we saw and experienced, I think consciously or not, definitely played a role in steering me toward – not journalism, specifically, but it ignited an interest in the news and world affairs and events, and in how you could understand and try to influence them. So I think it was a very important and formative experience for me."

The Greater Good

An interview with Merrick Garland

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

MERRICK GARLAND (1970, IL) is Chief Judge of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. He was appointed to the court in 1997 and was named Chief Judge in February 2013. A graduate of Harvard College and Harvard Law School, Garland has spent the majority of his career in public service, serving as Special Assistant to the Attorney General (1979–1981), Assistant U.S. Attorney for the District of Columbia (1989–1992), Deputy Assistant Attorney General in the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice (1993–1994), and Principal Associate Deputy Attorney General (1994–1997). He was widely discussed as a possible U.S. Supreme Court nominee in 2010, following the announcement of the retirement of Justice John Paul Stevens.

What are the memories you have of your trip to D.C. to receive your Presidential Scholar award?

I had been to Washington once before on a summer trip with my family. But we traveled by car because airplanes were awfully expensive. This time we took a plane, so that made it a big deal all by itself. I have some memories of specific things. I remember meeting the other Presidential Scholars at the dorm at GW [George Washington University]. I remember visiting one of our Illinois senators' offices to meet with him. I remember talks by some government officials; in particular, I remember George Shultz and David Packard.

At that point, did you know that you wanted to study law?

No. It was something I decided later. When I went to college, I was planning to be a doctor. I thought then, and I still think, that doctors have a more unambiguously positive impact on other people's lives than lawyers. But it turned out that I liked my social sciences courses far more than the science courses – no doubt, because social sciences came a lot easier to me.

When I went to one of the people who was serving as my pre-med advisor, he offered some advice that I took to heart: He said that I would be able to do public service in almost any career I chose, and that I would be able to make more of a contribution if I chose a field I was comfortable in. So, I switched from pre-med

to social sciences. And then eventually went to law school.

After you finished law school, you clerked for Justice William Brennan.

I did. And for Judge Henry Friendly. Right.

Was it your goal once you graduated from law school to eventually become a judge? Or did those experiences point you in that direction?

Well, I did want to go into public service. That was something I had always wanted to do, whether through medicine or through law or through anything else. I never really planned on being a judge. I think you could consider me a kind of "accidental judge." ... I was in the Justice Department at the time. I had just come back from Oklahoma City, where I had been working on an investigation. I was told that I was going to be nominated to be the head of the Criminal Division of the Justice Department. I began going through the process. Then an opening came at the U.S. Court of Appeals. And I think that because I had been going through the nomination process pretty smoothly, the powers-that-be decided it would be easier to just shift me into the judgeship than it would be to start anew with somebody else.

As you've said, being in public service was important to you – even in your college years. But you also worked in private

practice. What, for you, have been the highs of each of those things? And also, what have been the lows?

Well, actually I don't think I have had any lows in either one. I liked both private practice and public service very much. I like legal problems. I like learning about legal problems. I like cooperating with other people in figuring out legal problems. So, there really haven't been any lows in either one. The high, though, is that there really is nothing like public service for giving you an opportunity to help other people and to sort of pay back – in a metaphorical way – for the good luck that you've had. So, I think nothing can really match that.

Can you describe the types of cases you're ruling on in your current position?

I'm on the United States Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit. It's one of the regional courts of appeals. The country is divided into 94 federal districts, where there are federal trial courts called federal district courts that decide federal cases that arise in those districts. Appeals from those trial courts go to the regional courts of appeals, which we call circuit courts. So, my court hears federal appeals arising in the District of Columbia. We're somewhat different from the other circuit courts, though, because we are in the nation's capital and so are most of the federal agencies. And the statutes normally provide that people who don't like what happens in an agency can appeal to us. Sometimes they can appeal to another regional court of appeals, but they can almost always appeal to us. So, our court has a much higher percentage of cases involving challenges to federal statutes, to federal programs, to acts of the President – that sort of thing – than other courts of appeal.

That must be pretty exciting.

It's very interesting. ... And because the cases are often of great importance, a lot of people are always watching.

Speaking of watching and scrutiny, you mentioned that you were overseeing an investigation in Oklahoma City. You're talking about the Oklahoma City bombing case. And you were also involved with the case against Ted Kaczynski, the Unabomber. How do you deal with the pressure of such cases where people really are paying attention – I mean people like me who aren't involved in the legal system at all, but who see it in the news and are curious and want to know?

You're right. Those are two of the cases I worked on. They were very serious cases. And the media and the public were looking closely, and I think rightfully so. The rule of law requires not only that justice be done in an individual case, but that the public be confident that justice is being done. And that requires transparency in our judicial system and our prosecutions. I think there isn't any magic way to deal with pressure in these cases, other than to try to make sure that every "i" is dotted and every "t" is crossed, so that when the cases are over, people have confidence that the law was fairly applied.

What do you see as the next step in your career?

Well, that is an easy question. The Constitution grants federal judges life tenure; I intend to serve out my term.

Fantastic! Looking back over the course of your career and your education, what impact would you say the award has had on your life?

Well, I'd say that the most important impact was really the immediate impact. I came from a large public high school in Skokie, Ill. At the time I was named Presidential Scholar, I was about to go off to Harvard, which was a place I was sure was filled with graduates of elite private high schools who were much smarter and better prepared than I was. Being named a Scholar meant that a pretty impressive-sounding commission had decided that I'd be able to hold my own in an institution like that. And that gave me the kind of confidence to approach my first year in college that I needed to



do well, and that I likely might otherwise not have had. And doing well in your first year helps you do well in your second year, and thereafter.

Do you remember your fellow Scholars being an impressive and diverse kind of group?

Yes, I do. I don't have that many strong memories, but I do remember that. Several of them came with me to Harvard as well. And it was very nice having some people there who you already knew, from ... other parts of the country and every kind of background. So that was another

advantage, being with people for the week or thereabouts that we were in Washington together, [and then] having a couple of them with you when you went to a new place for college – people you could share your thoughts with.

Like a little bit of a social safety net.

Yes. I think that's not a bad description.

You've received other awards and honors in the course of your education and career. What, if anything, stands out for you about the Presidential Scholars award?

It was the kind of thing that, coming at a pretty important juncture in my life, gave me the confidence that I would be able to do my work and get along in an environment with extremely high-powered people. The other thing that stands out about it is that it came so completely out of the blue and without applying. I don't know whether there's anything else I've ever received that came in quite the same way [that was] of such importance.

What would you like this honor to mean to the Scholars of today?

Well, given its tie to the President and to the Department of Education, I would like it to constitute some kind of encouragement for smart high school students to think about spending at least part of their careers in public service. You come to Washington for this event and meet with people who are public servants. That's the most exciting part of the trip. If there could be not only that one trip, but also some kind of follow-on program while the students are still in college and thinking about their futures, that would both encourage public service careers and help Presidential Scholars find a way into those kinds of careers.

I think President Johnson's initial vision for the program was for these high school students to be recognized for their achievements, but also to challenge them to use their talents for the greater good.

That sounds like exactly the hope I would have for the program.

“Being named a Scholar meant that a pretty impressive-sounding commission had decided that I'd be able to hold my own in an institution like [Harvard].”

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Sam Viviano (1971, MI)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

PRESIDENT RICHARD NIXON was meeting with West German Chancellor Willy Brandt and could not attend the 1971 Presidential Scholar recognition ceremony. So Sam Viviano and the other Scholars instead received their medallions from Elliot Richardson, U.S. Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare, at the White House. Two years later, Richardson, as U.S. attorney general, resigned rather than obey Nixon's order to fire special prosecutor Archibald Cox, who was digging up dirt on the Watergate scandal – an act of defiance that, in Viviano's words, made his Scholar medallion seem like a badge of honor.

A native of Detroit's east side, Viviano – whose most powerful early influences were the *Popeye* cartoons of Fleischer Studios, which inspired him to draw his first funny pictures at the age of 3 – was initially puzzled by his selection as a Presidential Scholar, though he had already, at the age of 15, published several cartoons in DC Comics titles. At the time of his high school graduation, he was the editorial cartoonist of a weekly newspaper.

After the White House ceremony, Viviano and the other Scholars toured the Smithsonian. "There was an exhibit of the work of Rube Goldberg," he said, "which I took as a very positive sign because then, as now, I had a great deal of interest in cartooning, and Rube Goldberg is certainly one of the legendary cartoonists of all time."

The Scholars also toured the Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, which hadn't opened yet. They were being shown the complex's different venues, and the adjacent parking lot, when Viviano asked their guide a seemingly innocuous question: "I said, 'Will there be simultaneous events at these theaters on any given evening? You could go to either the opera house or the theater?' And he said, 'Of course.' I said, 'But that adds up to, like, 6,000 people, and you said you had parking for 1,500 cars.'" After an uncomfortable pause, the tour guide joked that future visitors would have to carpool to the center.

"For some reason," said Viviano, "this caught the attention of our official chaperone – I believe his name was Scott, but I don't remember much else about him other than that he wore a really big bowtie, which I took as a sign from the administration that he was hip and young

– and he pulled me aside later and told me that was a really great question." The encounter led somehow to Viviano being interviewed for an article in *The Washington Post's* style section, which he considered the week's second badge of honor.

Viviano attended the University of Michigan and, following the advice of everyone – his parents, teachers, and

drawing the cover for issue #223 (June 1981) of *Mad* magazine: a caricature of actor Larry Hagman in his role of J.R. Ewing from the television series *Dallas*.

He didn't work for the magazine again for several more years, and continued to earn his living as a freelancer and teaching at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts. He eventually became a regular freelance contributor to *Mad*, and in 1999 was offered the position of art director for the magazine. Viviano, by then a married father, accepted. He's now been in that position for 15 years – "But I like to point out," he said, "that I'm still thought of as one of the new kids there, because we have now over half a dozen contributors who have been with the magazine for more than 50 years."

Today, Viviano lives in Manhattan with his wife, Diane Bloomfield, a pediatrician



counselors – began to pursue a broad liberal arts education, but it didn't take. He transferred into the School of Art & Design, where he graduated *summa cum laude* with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. From there he went straight to New York, where he endured life as a struggling young artist – designing textiles, drawing party caricatures, illustrating Christmas cards at Bloomingdale's – before breaking into the magazine market in the late 1970s, including illustrations for the Scholastic publications *Dynamite* and *Bananas*. In 1980 he got his first big break,

at Montefiore Medical Center in the Bronx. Bloomfield, he points out, has been named at least twice in *New York* magazine's annual list of the best doctors in New York City. Their daughter, Alicia, is now 20.

He still considers his selection as a Presidential Scholar to be a great honor, but Viviano describes his enduring impression of the events of 1971 as "a sort of ironic, wistful thought: I was named a Presidential Scholar, and I ended up the art director of *Mad* magazine. It just seems sort of odd in my own head. But the fact is, I really ended up living the life I always wanted."

Cecilia Conrad (1972, TX)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

WHEN CECILIA CONRAD received a letter from President Richard Nixon in 1972 informing her that she'd been named a Presidential Scholar, she read it. And then she threw it away.

"It was a moment in time [when] there was a lot of scrutiny of Nixon," Conrad explained. "My first thought was that it was an attempt to recruit the youth to vote. That it was just a political thing."

It was only after her high school principal called her about the award that she began to realize this was for real and that it was a big deal.

"It was very exciting, particularly for my high school to have that kind of recognition – it was [essentially] a segregated school in the South that didn't have the kind of reputation I think people expect for someone who gets named a Presidential Scholar."

Once at National Recognition Weekend, Conrad found, to her delight, that the 1972 class of Presidential Scholars was quite diverse: "One of the exciting things was meeting people from lots of different backgrounds who were all excellent scholars and creative thinkers. ... It was an opportunity to meet not only other African-American students from around the country, but other students from all sorts of backgrounds. And that was a lot of fun."

In the years since that D.C. trip, Conrad has built an impressive résumé. She had a noteworthy career at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif., as an economics professor and an administrator; she served as associate dean of the college (2004–2007), as vice president for academic affairs and dean of the college (2009–2012), and as acting president (fall 2012). She was also an economist at the Federal Trade Commission and was a visiting scholar at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies. She has served on

the faculties at Barnard College and Duke University.

In January 2013, Conrad joined the MacArthur Foundation as vice president in charge of the MacArthur Fellows Program, popularly known as the "genius grants." She describes it as "one of the coolest jobs in the world." In a typical workday of researching fellowship nominees and their work, she might find herself watching a trailer for a documentary film, listening to a musical composition, and reading an article on physics or chemistry. "[It's] a lot of investigation and reading – it's a very great interdisciplinary education," she said.

In reflecting on her Presidential Scholar recognition and where she finds herself today, Conrad found parallels.

"One of the impacts that the Presidential Scholar award had on me was that it helped to build my self-confidence. It was a form of validation because you are working hard and excelling in a really small pond. And you know that it's a very specific pond and you're not sure how you would fare in the great outside world. And then you get this recognition that says, 'Oh, yes. We think you're special.' And that kind of changes your ambition and your mind view and also conveys this certain responsibility. So, there's an impact on you as an individual from being a Presidential Scholar. And then there was also kind of a secondary impact on my school, on my classmates, and on the people who came behind me that was sort of an inspiring impact, that, 'Oh, gee, our school produced a Presidential Scholar. We could do something like this, too.' So, there's that kind of two-stage impact.



"When I look at the Fellows program, it's very similar. We have an impact on individuals. There's the impact of the financial reward, which is substantial, in that it gives them some freedom and some flexibility that they might not have otherwise. But many of the Fellows tell us that a big impact is that it builds their credibility. ... Sometimes – particularly in the creative work – you are toiling away and what you're trying to do is outside the box and people are looking at you with skepticism. And so, that validation is very important; it's confidence-building. And then there is the secondary impact, much like the Presidential Scholar award, in that there's an impact on the field: the impact on the institutions that you're going to associate it with. The impact on a community around you. And in a recent review of the program, we found that a significant percentage of people who have heard of the Fellows program says that it inspires them. So, I see that that's an important part of the program and it's a part of the program that I have focused more attention on than I think we have in the past. That credibility, inspirational impact."

“There is the secondary impact [of the MacArthur Fellows Program Conrad administers], much like the Presidential Scholar award, in that there’s an impact on the field: the impact on the institutions that you’re going to associate it with. The impact on a community around you.”

Charles Shepard (1972, CT)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

WHEN HE LAUNCHED HIS CAREER as a newspaper reporter in the mid-1970s, Charles Shepard was, like many journalists of his generation, inspired by the work of *The Washington Post's* Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, whose coverage of the Watergate scandal ultimately forced President Richard Nixon to resign.

“It’s ironic to think,” he said, “that the scandal was about to break open as I was getting this Presidential Scholar certificate. The Watergate burglars were arrested on June 17th [1972]. If you check, you’ll find that my class of Presidential Scholars was in the White House just days before that.”

It would take some time, of course, for the irony to sink in. Shepard and the other Scholars spent their time in Washington, D.C., blissfully unaware of the chaos about to descend on the Executive Branch. His memories of the visit include the White House ceremony – at which Nixon was conspicuously absent – and a performance, at the newly opened Kennedy Center for Performing Arts, of what

At the *Observer*, Shepard met two reporters, Allen Cowan and Frye Gaillard, whose investigative stories about the transgressions of local televangelist and PTL Club host Jim Bakker had drawn the attention of federal investigators. By 1984, Shepard was a full-time investigative reporter responsible for the PTL story at the newspaper. Over the course of the next three years, Shepard was able to uncover evidence that PTL funds had been used to pay off a church secretary from Long Island named Jessica Hahn who had privately accused Bakker of sexual misdeeds. That story, and his other disclosures during the so-called Holy War (between televangelists) in spring 1987, prompted Bakker’s



other executives would be convicted and sent to prison in 1995 – the same year Bob Packwood, the U.S. senator from Oregon, would resign in light of reports, chronicled by Shepard and a colleague in the *Post*, of repeated allegations of sexual misconduct.

After two decades spent breaking momentous national stories, Shepard left

“These are very old memories,” he said. “There is a picture of me at the ceremony with incredibly long hair, which I guess was a vestige of the time. There was a cocktail party at the Smithsonian Museum [the National Museum of American History], where we saw the Foucault pendulum. ...

he calls a “dramatic, memorable event:” a performance of *Mass*, a requiem for President John F. Kennedy composed by Leonard Bernstein.

“These are very old memories,” he said. “There is a picture of me at the ceremony with incredibly long hair, which I guess was a vestige of the time. There was a cocktail party at the Smithsonian Museum [the National Museum of American History], where we saw the Foucault pendulum. ... It’s funny; Washington had been a magical place to me from afar, and I think maybe those couple of days helped cement that.”

Shepard wasted no time in returning to Washington, D.C.: After graduating from Harvard College, where he had been an executive editor of the daily student newspaper, *The Harvard Crimson*, he became an intern at the *Post's* city desk, his first real reporting job. He was promptly hired by *The Charlotte Observer* in 1977, where he would do the work for which he’s most often remembered today.

resignation and his eventual conviction and imprisonment on fraud charges. Three other top PTL aides went to federal prison as well.

The Observer's reporting, led by Shepard, was awarded the 1988 Pulitzer Prize for Meritorious Public Service “for revealing misuse of funds by the PTL television ministry through persistent coverage conducted in the face of a massive campaign by PTL to discredit the newspaper.” A year later, Shepard published the book *Forgiven: The Rise and Fall of Jim Bakker and the PTL Ministry*, which *Publisher's Weekly* described as a “devastating, behind-the-scenes portrayal of deceit, mismanagement and greed.”

Shepard returned to Harvard in 1990 for a year of study after being awarded a Nieman Fellowship in Journalism. In 1991 he was hired by the *The Washington Post*, where his investigative reporting revealed that the nonprofit United Way of America was being looted by William Aramony, its president. Aramony and two

journalism to launch a second career. Soon after earning an MBA from the University of Virginia’s Darden School of Business, he began working with Menasha Corporation, the packaging and logistics firm that began, in 1852, as a wooden pail factory purchased by his great-great-grandfather in Menasha, Wis.

As a member today of the company’s board of directors, his own children now grown, Shepard and his wife are based in Reno, Nev. He skis whenever he gets the chance and loves living in a mountain town. Over the past several months he has flexed his investigative muscles, checking up on the dozens of inspiring young men and women he met more than 40 years ago in Washington. “When I look through the list of names of Presidential Scholars from my year,” he said, “I only recall some of the faces. It’s kind of a shame that we go through this experience when we’re probably too young to really remember or appreciate it.”

Discussing Law, Politics, and Religion with Michael McConnell

BY JOHN KNOX

MICHAEL McCONNELL (1973, KY) is the Richard and Frances Mallery Professor and director of the Constitutional Law Center at Stanford Law School, as well as Senior Fellow at the Hoover Institution, one of the nation's leading constitutional scholars, and a frequently mentioned name for possible nomination to the U.S. Supreme Court during the 2000s.

You grew up in Kentucky, correct?

The Louisville area, Waggener High School ... I also worked for the Louisville *Courier-Journal* in the summers during college. I thought it was the best newspaper between the two coasts at that time.

What stands out about your trip to Washington, D.C., to receive your award? Do you have any memories of the experience?

Actually, I do. It's kind of amusing in retrospect. Richard Nixon was President at the time, and the Soviet leader, Brezhnev, was visiting Washington. The Old Executive Office Building, on the side facing toward Lafayette Square, was draped with the hammer and sickle flag for the occasion! Also, as our bus pulled up behind the White House – I think that entrance is closed now – there was a moving van up against the West Wing. Someone on the bus – not me – chirped, “Someone moving out?” As in, the President.

I also remember a dance at the Mayflower Hotel ballroom, and breakout sessions where I met with some public interest groups. Oh, and the George Washington University dorms – they were a real pit!

That wouldn't be the last time you would be in Washington. Were you interested in law and politics early on?

Yes, very interested in both. I was a high school debater. I remember my junior year of high school, our debate topic that year had to do with pollution. Then legislation was passed – the Clean

Water Act, I believe – and the whole topic was preempted. We had to pay close attention to the news every day.

After law school at the University of Chicago you clerked for Judge J. Skelly Wright on the U.S. Court of Appeals, and then Supreme Court Justice William Brennan, after which you worked in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and as assistant to the Solicitor General. Any notable stories or characters?

When I was a lowly person working under David Stockman at OMB, one day the phone rang and it was the Secretary of Education! He called to find out what was going on in his own department.

Which Secretary of Education was this? Terrel Bell.

Bell has a pretty important place in Presidential Scholar history, and is forever associated with the “A Nation at Risk” report, which came out shortly before the 1983 National Recognition Week. We talked about it a lot that year at NRW.

I admired Bell for doing that [calling]. It's so hard for people at the top of organizations to know what's really happening.

After your time in D.C., you were a law professor back at the University of Chicago. Any interesting characters from that time, anyone stand out particularly?

Are you referring to my “huge claim to fame,” of having brought Barack Obama to Chicago? He edited an article of mine

when he was president of the *Harvard Law Review*. He was a very good editor.

And you would know a lot about editing, with your journalism background.

Yes, in college I wasn't sure if I would go into journalism or law ... So I said to him, “Have you thought about teaching?” And Obama replied, “Um, not really” or something to that effect. It was really a no-brainer to bring him to the attention of the Appointments Committee [at the University of Chicago].

After Chicago, you went to the University of Utah, and then were nominated and confirmed as a Circuit Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Tenth District. Any good stories from those times?

There was quite a confirmation battle. I was on a list of the four most controversial nominees out of the first group of 11 presented by President George W. Bush [in 2001]. The process took 19 months ... the hearing was uproarious. The *New York Times* editorialized against me, the *LA Times* too. ... I wasn't saying anything to the press about it, but a reporter from the Louisville paper latched onto my mom, and she was not circumspect at all.

Has the contentiousness of the confirmation process gotten even worse over time?

It was ugly then, and it's ugly now. In every administration it seems to be worse than the one before it.

And now you are at Stanford.

Yes, to leave the bench and go to academia is unusual. But I find that life is more interesting and fun as a law professor.

For readers who, like me, aren't experts in law, where does your work fit in with what we hear on the news?

Frequently what I teach and work on is on the front page. One of the first things I studied was separation of powers and executive power. I also have argued many cases on religion and the First Amendment.

Including arguing cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. Is it 13 cases? ...

It's now 14 [cases]. I have a pretty good win-loss record, although one of the losses [*Christian Legal Soc'y Chapter of the Univ. of Cal. v. Martinez*, 130 S. Ct. 2971 (2010)] completely appalled me.

That case involved religious freedom, correct? Could you expand on the intersection of politics and religion in your personal as well as your professional life?

I am involved in a church, it's an important part of my life. My son just graduated from Calvin College, which I think is the most intellectually rigorous of the religiously affiliated schools I'm aware of. I am teaching a seminar on the arrest, trial, and execution of Jesus here at Stanford. But professionally, what was appealing to me about the constitutional law of religion was this: As a law clerk, I came to the view that the Supreme Court was completely mixed up about what religious freedom meant. It seemed to be a particularly screwed-up area of law. And that's an advantage in academia, to find something that's screwed-up and to work to clear it up. I think the doctrine [of the Supreme Court] is closer to my arguments today than it was, say, 30 years ago.

How does one juggle all the various responsibilities while achieving at your level?

The hardest thing is to prioritize the important over the urgent. It is easy to spend the entire day on immediate tasks



that are really not all that important, and leave the most important – but less urgent – tasks undone. It is also important to take

time for family, recreation, and relaxation. I try to be efficient and keep focused. I work when I work and play when I play.

“Are you referring to my ‘huge claim to fame,’ of having brought Barack Obama to Chicago? He edited an article of mine when he was president of the *Harvard Law Review*. He was a very good editor. ... It was really a no-brainer to bring him to the attention of the Appointments Committee [at the University of Chicago].”

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Richard Alley (1976, OH)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

DR. RICHARD ALLEY, Evan Pugh Professor of Geosciences and associate of the Earth and Environmental Systems Institute at the Pennsylvania State University, has spent his career sampling the world's great ice sheets in Antarctica, Greenland, and Alaska, and the data he's collected there is helping scientists to predict future changes in climate and sea level. He's published more than 240 refereed papers on the subject of climate change, chaired international panels, advised the White House and Congress on science, and written an award-winning book. So he can be forgiven for not remembering much about being named a Presidential Scholar in 1976, when he was a high school senior from the suburbs of Columbus, Ohio.



"I can remember being hugely excited by it," he said. "I thought: What is this, and how is it possible? Because I was nobody." The trip to Washington, D.C., was his first time on an airplane, but Alley doesn't remember where the ceremonies were held – only that the Scholars were unable to meet President Gerald Ford, who was tending to some now-forgotten political crisis. "I can remember just being blown away by Washington," he said. "We went to the Kennedy Center for something, and we went to the Folger Shakespeare Theatre. There were fascinating people to talk to, but I'm a terrible human being – I don't remember any of their names. I was not a worldly wise person. So I spent a lot of the time with my mouth open."

Alley returned to the Ohio State University for his studies, earning both B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees in geology. He earned his Ph.D. in geology from the University of Wisconsin–Madison in 1987. In the years since, as he has become one of the world's most-cited experts on the relationship between global climate change and the

Earth's cryosphere (the portions of the Earth's surface where water is in solid form), he has become much more worldly wise. In 1994, Vice President Al Gore invited him to testify about climate change. He appeared before the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation in 2003, and before the U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology in 2007 and in 2010. In 2007, he was lead author of the chapter on cryospheric changes in the Fourth Assessment Report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change – the panel that was co-recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.

Alley has been honored for research (including election to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences, the Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement, the Heinz Award, the Revelle Medal of the American Geophysical Union, the Seligman Crystal of the International Glaciological Society, and others), teaching (four teaching-related awards at Penn State), and service (including the American Association for the Advancement of Science Award for Public Engagement

with Science, the Public Service Award of the Geological Society of America, the American Geosciences Institute Award for Outstanding Contribution to Public Understanding of Geology, and the Schneider Award for Outstanding Climate Science Communication). In January 2014, it was announced that Alley would receive the Arthur L. Day Prize and Lectureship, a prize awarded every three years, from the National Academy of Sciences for contributions to researching polar ice sheets. As a presenter for the PBS television program *Earth: The Operators' Manual*, he is also one of the most recognizable figures in climate science today. His popular account of climate change and ice cores, *The Two-Mile Time Machine*, was Phi Beta Kappa's science book of the year in 2001.

Today, Alley lives happily in Pennsylvania with his wife; their two daughters are now a schoolteacher and a grad student. While he's become more comfortable with his success, he does believe that perhaps years ago, as an 18-year-old Presidential Scholar, walking around Washington with his mouth open might have opened his eyes a bit, as well.

"I was doing what I should as a student," he said. "I came from a great family background. And I was going to go and get a job, because I thought that's what you did: You went to school and you got an education so you could get a job and move on. And in the course of my career I have had some amazing opportunities: I've talked to the Senate and I've talked to the Vice President and I've talked to the President's science advisor, and I've worked with the United Nations. But the idea that little old me would do that sort of thing hadn't occurred to me very much at all [when I was in high school]. And when you're a Presidential Scholar, and you get flown to Washington and meet interesting people and see these wonderful things – you know, it's got to goose you at some level that maybe you can do something big. So I think it was a wonderful thing for me in making me a little more worldly wise, and also in demonstrating that there are levels above levels, and that you could aspire to use that undergraduate degree and that job to really help other people and make a difference."

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Anya Hurlbert (1976, TX)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

ANYA HURLBERT was a multi-talented prodigy at Bellaire High School just outside of Houston, Texas. A gifted pianist, writer, and swimmer, she also excelled at math and science. After she enrolled at Princeton University in 1976, she earned a University Scholarship in music, which allowed her to practice three hours a day and perform in concerts while studying mathematics and physics.

The daughter of two research scientists, Hurlbert already knew she was headed for a career in neuroscience. After being selected as one of Texas's 1976 Presidential Scholars, she went to Washington alone – only her second time on an airplane.

“I met John Tower and J.J. Pickle,” she said, “and I do remember being quite thrilled by talking with U.S. congressmen. Unfortunately I can't remember what we talked about – it might have been education policy, or women in science; I would have gone on about something like that – but I remember feeling it was nice to be taken semi-seriously by them.”

At Princeton, where she earned a B.A. degree in physics in 1980, Hurlbert was drawn to the intense and scholarly style of her British professors, and decided to pursue a graduate degree at the world's preeminent physics department. Upon being awarded a Marshall Scholarship, she traveled to Cambridge University, where she studied at King's College and earned a Part III Diploma in Theoretical Physics (1981) and an M.A. in Physiology (1982). “I wanted to marry physics and brain science,” she said, “and understand what makes neurons fire. I wanted to use hard science to understand the brain.” Before learning of her Marshall Scholarship, she had been accepted to a joint M.D./Ph.D. program at Harvard Medical School and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Hurlbert had not been prepared, however, for the powerful influence her biophysics and physiology studies at King's College would have on the rest of her life: She was introduced to the science of visual perception, which seized her imagination. She decided to enroll in the Harvard/MIT program and, under the guidance of renowned MIT brain researcher Tomaso Poggio, focus her research on computational vision, neuroscience, and the perception of color.



In 1984, an English writer from *The Economist*, Matt Ridley, visited MIT while researching an article on visual perception and the possibility of creating machines with artificial intelligence that could “see.” He interviewed Poggio's young doctoral student about her work in color perception and artificial vision systems; afterward the two chatted from time to time, began dating in 1986, and were married in 1989 – the same year Hurlbert received her Ph.D. in brain and cognitive sciences from MIT. A year later she earned her M.D. from Harvard, and shortly afterward she and her husband returned to England, where she held a Vision Research Fellowship at Oxford University.

In addition to being an award-winning science writer, Dr. Ridley, as it turned out, was also heir to the titles of 5th Viscount Ridley and 9th Baronet. His family has resided at the manorial Blagdon Estate in northeast England's Northumberland countryside since the early 18th century.

Hurlbert and Ridley moved to Blagdon Hall in 1991, and Hurlbert joined the Medical School faculty at Newcastle University, one of the United Kingdom's leading public universities, with one of the nation's largest EU research portfolios. Her research into visual perception and neuroscience continued, with a focus on how colors are perceived – and, once perceived, how they affect both cognition and emotion, a question that combines her passions for both art and science. In 2002, Hurlbert, along with the late Dr. Colin Ingram, co-founded Newcastle University's Institute of Neuroscience, which joins scientists and clinicians in seeking to understand the human brain.

As the institute's director, Hurlbert enjoys hosting seminars and other events on the Blagdon grounds, about 10 miles outside Newcastle. Though she has chosen to remain in Britain with her husband, her son, Matthew (now 20), and daughter, Iris (17), she maintains strong ties and collaborations with her colleagues in the United States, including Poggio.

Among the many honors and awards she has amassed over the course of her remarkable career, Hurlbert still remembers – and treasures – her Presidential Scholarship medallion. “I still have the medal,” she said, “and I like looking at it and showing it to my children. I've kept photographs of me with J.J. Pickle and with John Tower, hung up in a little photo gallery, and I like looking at those. It actually means a huge amount to me. I can't exactly put my finger on it, but I think of it now as a validation of achievement outside one's local world. And when I say it opened my eyes to a bigger world, I'm not exaggerating. I never really understood fully, until I went to Princeton, how far away people thought Texas was from the rest of the world. And being a Presidential Scholar was sort of the first step towards realizing that. It really made me want to spread my wings.”

“Being a Presidential Scholar was sort of the first step. ... It really made me want to spread my wings.”

The Porchlight Is On

A conversation about morals and higher education with Elizabeth Kiss

BY JOHN KNOX

ELIZABETH KISS (pronounced “quiche”; 1979, VA) has served as the eighth president of Agnes Scott College, a prestigious women’s college in suburban Atlanta, Ga., since 2006. Before assuming this position, she was the founding Nannerl O. Keohane Director of the Kenan Institute for Ethics and an associate professor for the practice of political science and philosophy at Duke University. Previously she taught at Princeton University, Randolph-Macon College, and Deep Springs College. We spoke during a major ice and snow storm in Georgia in February 2014 that shut down both of our college campuses.

You have a fascinating family story to tell ...

I’m the daughter of Hungarian refugees. My parents and two older sisters left Hungary in 1956 [during the Hungarian Revolution]; I’m the “American kid.” Both my parents were political prisoners. My dad holds the distinction of having been imprisoned by both the Nazis and the Communists. My mom was arrested by the Communists. I grew up in New York City in a tight-knit Hungarian community, speaking Hungarian first and then learning English.

So you are part of that amazing Hungarian-American contribution to American higher education! Do you have any memories of your time in Washington as a Presidential Scholar?

It was one of the first times that I saw myself as part of a cohort that was national in scale. The Scholars were incredibly interesting and diverse. We had lots of little conversations that I remember. There were those who were seeking the limelight, and others who were cynical about the limelight.

One person I got to know at National Recognition Week was Gordon Turnbull – we had a wonderful conversation. Then we both attended Davidson College!

If I remember correctly from our alumni records, Gordon is now a Presbyterian minister in Tennessee. Besides that connection, are there other ways the Scholars experience had an impact on your later life and career?

As the daughter of refugees, it was very important for my parents. They could say, “We came here with nothing and now, oh my gosh ...” It was a powerful moment for my family. It was a step on the journey. Later, I was chosen as a Rhodes Scholar. Both experiences were important for me as a young woman. ... They gave me that sense of, wow, I *do* belong. ... Often for young women, it takes a nudge for you to acknowledge the potential within yourself. ... Ever since, I have tried to pay it forward, for example by serving on Rhodes Scholar selection committees for the past 25 years.

You’ve served on the faculty of several institutions, including Princeton. But the one I’m most interested in is Deep Springs. Tell more about how you got connected to this tiniest of two-year colleges in the remote desert on the California/Nevada border.

When I was an assistant professor at Princeton, a friend from Oxford, who was then the president of Deep Springs, called me and invited my husband and me to go out there. Now, Deep Springs has 24 students, all male, in the middle of nowhere. At first I said, “Over my dead body.” But then I was intrigued. We went out and did a one-week visit through an endowed lectureship. It was a hyperintellectual community in the midst of this stunning, remote high desert landscape. I took a year’s leave from Princeton, and returned to Deep Springs. My husband [international relations expert Jeff Holzgrefe] and I co-taught a course there, and our marriage survived! It was such a very intense, intentional community.

At Deep Springs, we had to institute the “porchlight rule”: If the light’s out, that’s it, you can’t come and discuss philosophy with us. Light off, no Kant. Because the Deep Springs students would come after midnight and want to talk about Kant!

But now you are president of an all-women’s college! Speak about why women’s education is especially important to you.

We are at a very important moment in history when women are stepping into roles that were never before open to them. It’s easy to forget that this is such a recent phenomenon ... in fact, it almost coincides with the history of the Presidential Scholars Program. For example, well into the 1960s, Help Wanted ads in the newspaper were segregated by gender: “Help Wanted: Men” and “Help Wanted: Women.” Women did not serve on juries, and this was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court! Women could attend law school, but just two at a time, because “they needed company.” So we are still in the early stages of the global social revolution for gender equality.

As a philosophy major at Davidson, I learned about feminist theory and it profoundly changed my understanding of the world. And then at Oxford and Duke, this was a continuing thread of my research. At Duke, a research study of female students found that there was a decline in women’s sense of self-worth from the freshman to senior years ... why? Even in places where the obvious barriers have been removed, gender stereotypes still shape women’s lives and influence the extent to which women do or do not “lean in,” take charge of their destinies, and seek positions of leadership and influence.

So when I got the call from Agnes Scott College, the opportunity to lead a place focused on women’s education and empowerment was exciting to me. The timing was right to leave Duke; the Kenan Institute for Ethics was in good shape with



Presidential Scholar Elizabeth Kiss (pictured top left) was born in the United States, but her parents and sisters moved to New York City as refugees from Hungary in 1956.

good leadership. It was time for “the next chapter.” And this opportunity at Agnes Scott spoke to my heart. It’s an incredibly diverse liberal-arts college with a strong honor code, full of smart, strong, feisty women. It was entrancing. And they were crazy enough to hire me!

Another key theme in your career is moral education. You’re the co-author of a book on this subject [Debating Moral Education: Rethinking the Role of the Modern University, Duke University Press, 2010]. Given what everyone reads these days about college sports and spiraling tuition, are colleges and universities moral? Can they teach ethics and morals? If so, how?

Colleges are a mixed bag because they are human institutions, shaped by the “crooked timber of humanity,” as Kant put it. But in many ways, they are places of moral formation even when this is not intentional. A scientist who is passionate about the importance of honesty in reporting research results, because such honesty is a cornerstone of scientific progress, is engaged in moral education. A humanities or social science professor who respectfully engages disagreement is helping students develop an important moral skill. Conversely, when colleges turn a blind eye on bullying, or harassment, or ignore or condone cheating, that’s moral formation in a negative sense.

So I think [colleges and universities] can be profound centers of moral education.

How? By recognizing that we are places where young people figure out who they are, what matters in life, and who they want to be, and then intentionally creating cultures of moral commitment and inquiry both inside and outside the classroom. Colleges can do this through honor codes. By developing an ethos where people raise ethical questions across the curriculum. By fostering a culture where people feel empowered to say, “No, this is wrong.”

At Agnes Scott, we have a mission statement that makes ethical concerns central to who we are:

Educating women to think deeply, live honorably and engage the intellectual and social challenges of their times.

So our students can cite our mission and say, “No, we shouldn’t do X, because it is not ‘living honorably.’” That’s a powerful tool for moral education.

So it’s not just teaching some disconnected class on ethics. It’s more than that.

Absolutely.

You mentioned your husband, Jeff. So many of us Scholars are immersed

in the two-career juggle, the “two-body problem,” and in many cases these days it’s the wife who is the star, or at least the co-equal. As a college president with an accomplished spouse, how do you two handle this juggle?

We are collectively navigating uncharted territories of gender roles and marriage. Jeff not only left his native land of Australia, but has also had to manage chronic health issues. I am blessed by sharing my life with someone who is intellectually stimulating, fun, and excited to be in a partnership with me. It’s different in every relationship. I’m grateful to have someone in my life who takes pride in what I do. I know that two-career couples have to make wrenching decisions sometimes, and that all of us still have to fight against our unconscious gender stereotypes. But I love it that more and more people are willing to talk about these situations, about the decisions they are making, and are open to different ways of making relationships work.

Thanks for making time in your very busy schedule for this interview. One last Presidential Scholar tidbit: I saw in your bio that you serve on the president’s advisory committee for The Westminster Schools of Atlanta [whose alumni ranks include historian Taylor Branch]. Did you know that those schools were founded by a Chairman of the Commission on Presidential Scholars, William Pressly, who in fact was Chairman the very year you were selected as a Scholar?

No, I didn’t!

Dr. Pressly might have looked at your application file! And the story comes full circle.

“Both [the Presidential Scholar and Rhodes Scholar] experiences were important for me as a young woman. ... They gave me that sense of, wow, I do belong.”

Wendell Pierce (1981, LA)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

YOU'VE SEEN WENDELL PIERCE'S FACE. Or heard his voice. The successful actor has appeared on stage, on television, and in numerous films (*Waiting to Exhale*, *Get on the Bus*, *Bulworth*, and *Ray*, among them), and currently hosts the public radio program *Jazz at Lincoln Center*. He produced the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Clybourne Park* on Broadway. He is perhaps best known for portraying Det. William "Bunk" Moreland for five seasons on the award-winning HBO series *The Wire*. And, hitting close to home, Pierce, a New Orleans native, played the role of musician Antoine Batiste (pictured at right) on HBO's acclaimed *Treme*, which tells the story of New Orleans residents trying to rebuild their lives and the unique culture of their city in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.



HBO/PAUL SCHIRALDI

But in 1981, Pierce didn't know such a successful career would be his. In 1981, he was a kid very interested in acting – he was a student at the New Orleans Center for Creative Arts (NOCCA) and had participated in the Arts Recognition and Talent Search (now known as YoungArts) program – and was deciding to make his passion his career. It was in June, while in Washington, D.C., to receive his Presidential Scholar in the Arts award, that Pierce realized just how serious he was about acting.

"[To be] thrown amongst a pool of people your age with the same passion and the same seriousness, it was overwhelming and it inspired you and it gave you fuel for the fire to go on," Pierce said. "[The award] immediately validated [my] choice to be an artist ... [and] it solidified for me that it wasn't a frivolous choice."

Pierce earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in drama at The Juilliard School. During a couple of summers off from school, he returned to Washington, D.C., volunteering as an Advisor with the Presidential Scholars Program.

"No matter what, every year ... the kids seemed to be better and even more talented than the year before," he said. "And it was a humbling experience because it just showed you how much talent is out there."

It was during those summers that Pierce met Roosevelt Thompson, a 1980 Scholar from Arkansas who was the "chaperone of the chaperones." A student at Yale who

aspired to go to law school and eventually seek public office, Thompson had been named a Rhodes Scholar and was finishing his senior year when he was killed in a car accident. "Rosey's friendship was my greatest friendship in the Presidential Scholar Program. And whenever I am a little hesitant, I know he would never be hesitant. Act on what you want to act on and pursue what you want to pursue. And that, on the personal side, has also contributed to me moving forward and having the life and career that I have."

2010 saw the premiere of *Treme*, and for Pierce, it was a case of art imitating life; after Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans in 2005, he has endeavored to rebuild Pontchartrain Park, and to bring people back to the neighborhood where he grew up. His work there, which he describes as "one of the most important things I've ever done in my life," has focused on building new homes that incorporate renewable energy technology and environmentally friendly construction. Pierce has also addressed the issue of neighborhood residents' lack of access to healthy food by opening, with partners, Sterling Farms, a grocery store.

And while such action inarguably is making a difference for people, Pierce is proud to be able to make an impact through his art as well.

"While I'm working here in New Orleans to rebuild my neighborhood, building solar-generated homes, and bringing people back to the neighborhood

we grew up in and saving it and making it better, on Sunday nights they could turn on the television and watch a show [*Treme*] that reflected what their pain was and what they had gone through and what their triumph is."

As he prepares to take on a new role in the cast of Showtime's *Ray Donovan*, Pierce took time to reflect on his Presidential Scholar award. "The work that this program has done over these decades is so far-reaching, far-reaching in its ability to give people an opportunity, a sense of belonging, and ultimately far-reaching in that one day, those that go through this program will touch generations for years to come. ... It's feeling wonderful to ... call up the memories about this time because I can honestly say that I was at a place where I was wondering if my best days were behind me, if my work was having an impact to be where I wanted to be. And to have this reminder of the fire that was ignited so many years ago [by] the Presidential Scholars in the Arts Program, the Arts Recognition and Talent Search program, kind of reignites a fire in me now to know that my best days are not behind me, but are yet to come. So I would like to thank the program for touching me twice, and sending me off yet again as this middle-aged man. So thank you."

"The work that this program has done over these decades is so far-reaching. ... [It] reignites a fire in me now to know that my best days are not behind me, but are yet to come."

A Desire to Give Back

An interview with Paul Skarpness

BY JOHN KNOX

AT THE TIME OF OUR INTERVIEW, Capt. Paul A. Skarpness (1981, ND) was acting chief of staff to the commander, Submarine Force U.S. Pacific Fleet. He is a 1985 graduate of the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology with Bachelor of Science degrees in electrical engineering and computer science. After completing Officer Candidate School at Newport, R.I., he was commissioned in September 1985. His continued education includes a master's degree in engineering management from George Washington University.

What was your initial reaction to being named a candidate for the Presidential Scholar award? What were your first thoughts?

Frankly, I was pretty surprised, given that I was from a very small public school in rural North Dakota. I didn't believe that I would be very competitive with students from the much larger schools in the big cities. When I was selected, I felt very honored, primarily due to the pride expressed by my family and community.

What stands out about your trip to Washington, D.C., to receive your award?

It was an inspiring and humbling experience. I was exceptionally grateful that my family was able to travel with me and share in the experiences. It was our first visit to the White House, and the ceremony was quite memorable. I still have my picture shaking hands with Nancy Reagan in my office. Unfortunately, I was unable to meet President Reagan, since he was recovering from the recent assassination attempt.

In what ways has being recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program had an impact on your life?

Through the experience, I realized that although a very diverse group, the other 1981 Presidential Scholars were not that different from me. This realization gave me renewed confidence that regardless of humble beginnings, anything was possible, through hard work, a few opportunities, and the right mentors.

What have you learned from your experience of being recognized as a Presidential Scholar?

Fundamentally, that the little things can make a big difference in someone's life. When I see an opportunity as a leader to give someone a little push, or recognition, I need to take advantage of the moment. Those small opportunities can often pay big dividends in terms of an individual's confidence, motivation, and momentum.

What makes recognition by the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program special?

I think that the most special aspects of the program are the timing of the recognition and the connection with our President. The transition between high school and college is a vital nexus in the life of a young person, marking the threshold to adulthood. This timing makes the personal impact of selection that much more significant, because the recipients are far less likely to have been recognized in such a visible way before. Selectees are also old enough to appreciate the significance of their selection. Additionally, the opportunity to travel to the capital and meet with the leader of the greatest nation on Earth is a truly special and inspiring occasion.

What do you feel is the value of a program like the Presidential Scholars?

Ultimately, the program's value is realized through the impact it has on the young citizens who are selected and recognized by the program. If it inspires these students to greater academic and civic achievements, then it is well worth the small investments.



You are in a somewhat different profession than many of our other Scholar alumni interviewees, such as journalists, scientists, or politicians. Did/does the recognition of being selected as a Presidential Scholar have particular meaning to you, as someone who has devoted his career to service to his country in the military?

As I approach 30 years of military service, I can reflect on many things which have led me to continue to serve our country in uniform. First among these has been a sense of duty to country and also the joy of serving side by side with so many exceptional American citizens throughout the years. Although I didn't join the service until 1984, I think that the 1981 Presidential Scholar recognition was one of those things that planted the seeds of a possible career in public service – a desire to give back. Experiencing the seat of our government firsthand, at a very impressionable age, made a big impact on me.

Congratulations to all Presidential Scholars, past, present and future!

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Sallie Krawcheck (1983, SC)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

WHEN SALLIE KRAWCHECK, THEN A SENIOR at the Porter-Gaud School in Charleston, S.C., received a letter from President Ronald Reagan in 1983, she was so flabbergasted she drove straight to her father's office and showed it to him. "He was literally absolutely speechless," she said. "We weren't a family who traveled a lot. I think I had been on a plane one time before going to D.C. for the events. And I remember my parents just standing there, at the reception at the State Department, with their jaws on the floor."

Later, at the award ceremony on the South Lawn of the White House, the photo opportunity of her mother's life ended somewhat tragically. "President Reagan spoke to us," she said, "and as he was leaving to go back in the White House, my mother, with her brand-new camera, ran up to the velvet rope that was keeping everyone separated from the President's entourage and started taking his picture. I thought: 'Oh my God, Mom. Please.' And he turned around and with his trademark Reagan charm, said: 'Did you get a good shot? Do you want another?' And he smiled at her and waved, and went back into the White House. But we got home and she had left the lens cap on for the entire trip. She did not have a single picture from that trip."

After attending the University of North Carolina on a full scholarship and graduating with a degree in journalism, Krawcheck earned an MBA from Columbia University in 1992. As she launched her career in financial services, her unique gifts – drive, integrity, independent thinking, and a sense of humor – immediately revealed her to be a leader in the field; she continues to be regarded as one of the industry's most successful and influential executives.

She began as an equity analyst at the financial research firm Sanford C. Bernstein, where she rose quickly to become chairman and chief executive officer. During her tenure, *Fortune* magazine called her "The Last Honest Analyst." In 2002, she joined the multinational Citigroup, where *Fortune* now called her "The Most Influential Person Under the Age of 40." For its part, *Forbes* magazine placed her at No. 7 on its 2005 list of "The World's 100 Most Powerful Women."

Her tenure at Citigroup ended in 2008 when Krawcheck, then-CEO of Citi

Global Wealth Management, continued to argue for the company to reimburse clients for defective investments distributed by Citi brokers and bankers – an argument that fell on deaf ears.

In 2009, she joined Bank of America to head its newly acquired Merrill Lynch division. In her two years as head of the unit – in the midst of the nation's historic economic downturn, when Bank of America overall was losing billions of dollars – Krawcheck led it to \$3.1 billion in profits.

At the time she left in 2011, Krawcheck was president of Global Wealth and Investment Management for Bank of America – the largest wealth management business in the world, with \$17 billion in revenue and \$2.2 billion in client balances. In that position she once again – alone among senior Wall Street executives – had insisted on reimbursing investor clients for a portion of losses incurred from poorly performing investments.

Her departure from executive life has cleared the way for Krawcheck to pursue a renewed focus on her passions: women in business, regulatory reform, and investor protection. Her integrity and frank speech have made her a sought-after industry expert in the media and in Washington, D.C. In May of 2013, she purchased 85 Broads, a global professional women's network of 30,000 people. Her scant spare time is spent rooting for the Tar Heels, serving on a number of boards, and education-oriented philanthropy.

While Krawcheck has never lacked confidence, she feels the Presidential Scholar award might have given her



the nudge she needed to look beyond Charleston – which, lovely as it was, was not known for its rapid pace of change in the 1980s. "It was a very traditional place to grow up, and a little slower economically and in terms of receiving ideas from the outside world. There was a fellow who came to our school in first grade, and in 12th grade we were, literally, still calling him 'the New Guy.' I was given typing lessons when I was in high school, to prepare me for my eventual career as what they, back in the day, called a secretary.

"But to receive the [Presidential Scholar award] – I think the boost in confidence that this recognition can give can be enormously important for young women. I know it was for me, as was the scholarship to the University of North Carolina, which was also a really big deal. If those two things had not happened, there is no doubt in my mind I would not be sitting here in New York City today and had the career I've had. I remember thinking: 'What the hell, the President believes in me. Maybe I'll believe in me, too.'"

“I remember thinking: ‘What the hell, the President believes in me. Maybe I’ll believe in me, too.’”

Leonard Cruz (1983, TX)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

FOR LEONARD CRUZ, renowned dancer and choreographer, the Presidential Scholars award is an honor that continues to drive him.

Cruz was born in Pampanga, the Philippines, and grew up in San Antonio, Texas. He started dancing at age 4, studying his art in cafeterias in the Filipino community because, financially, dance studios were not an option. To be named a YoungArts Winner and subsequently a Presidential Scholar, especially having come from a low-income school district, was “amazing and exciting.”

“I didn’t think that I would be able to achieve what I have achieved in my life – as an artist and as a scholar. Being named YoungArts finalist as well as Presidential Scholar was just an amazing, surprising event.

“To be selected as one of the best seniors in the nation and graduating high school – that’s huge. Because it’s early enough in one’s career to be able to say to yourself ... ‘This is a huge accomplishment.’ And being 17 – I didn’t know what was to come. But ... to receive such early recognition just gives you that push, that responsibility, to achieve and to continue to achieve.”

And Cruz has done just that. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in dance from UCLA and went on to work professionally as a dancer and choreographer. He performed with Robert Wilson, Kei Takei’s Moving Earth, Shapiro and Smith Dance, Sally Silvers, and Bill T. Jones/ Arnie Zane and Co. In 1993, he moved to Germany and was a guest with Pina Bausch at Tanztheater Wuppertal and a member of the Folkwang Tanz Studio in Essen-Werden. From 1994 to 2001, he danced in the Bremer Stadttheater under the directorship of Susanne Linke and Urs Dietrich.

In his forties, Cruz decided to pursue a doctorate. He cites his Presidential Scholar award as a factor in that decision.

“[The award] had a great impact,” he said. “It affirmed that I’m an artist as well as

a scholar. And I suppose that’s why [after] having performed internationally and with well renowned choreographers and [having] had such a long artistic career, I decided ... to get my Ph.D. Being made a Presidential Scholar gave me that confidence as well as recognition ... that I can not only be an artist, but also a scholar.”

In 2013, Cruz obtained his doctoral degree in urban education with a multidisciplinary focus on the creative and performing arts at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, where he also received his Master of Fine Arts degree in performance/choreography in 2009. Since 2008, he has amassed teaching experience in dance, dance history, and choreography at a handful of institutions, including Duke University, MIT, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and Webster University. Currently, he is in his second year as Assistant Professor in Theater, Movement and Dance at St. Mary’s College of Maryland.

In addition to the impact his Presidential Scholar award has had on him professionally, Cruz has found the honor meaningful in regard to community involvement. The challenge the award makes to scholars to use their talents to enrich the country and the world reinforced lessons from his parents and still drives him today.

“I think [one of the reasons I] was named Presidential Scholar was my community involvement as a teen. My parents instilled in me [the importance of] being involved and giving back to the community. So, I was working already as a teenager within my community, giving back to the community ... whether it meant creating artistic, choreographic work with the community of San Antonio, Texas – doing artistic work



dealing with [people’s] stories of what they’re struggling with and going through – [and then] going into the profession of teaching and giving back the passion that I love, which is how to dance.”

Indeed, when Cruz lived in Germany, he taught dance and movement to the children of Turkish, Russian, and Polish immigrants. He addresses social justice issues in his solo performances as well as in dance and movement work with his students. Most recently, Cruz taught a yoga class and gave a special performance to raise money for disaster relief in the wake of the typhoon that struck the Philippines in November 2013.

Cruz, who has been involved in arts-related programming for the Presidential Scholars Program anniversary events, would like to see the award serve another purpose: to bring recipients back together. He believes creating a conference for alumni every couple of years could be a great thing.

“I’m sure most of us are accomplished, but how do we continue our accomplishments and share that with one another? ... For me and for the program itself, the ‘web’ aspect of staying connected and sharing our stories, our accomplishments, I think is very important.”

“Being made a Presidential Scholar gave me ... confidence ... that I can not only be an artist, but also a scholar.”

Cathy Salser (1984, CA)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

CATHY SALSER WAS TERRIBLY SHY growing up, terrified even at the thought of speaking in class. She loved art, and took classes in school as well as at a community center. “It was where I really felt like I could thrive and be me and reach out without talking,” Salser said. Excelling in both her artistic endeavors and academics, she was named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts in 1984.

Though Salser felt very honored to have her talent recognized, she found the experience somewhat daunting: “I didn’t feel like I was in the right place. For me, I felt like art was my safe refuge. [And] in some ways I felt like [the other artists who were there] knew more about the art world, the ‘real’ art world. I felt nervous and felt just like in class – if I had to speak out, that was the hardest thing.”

After graduating as valedictorian from Williams College with a degree in studio art, Salser set out on a life-changing journey to share art – and the strength and connection she’d found in it – with others: In 1991 she made an “Art Tour” across the country, conducting art sessions at domestic violence shelters in exchange for room and board.

Salser did simple art projects with the women at the shelters, but sometimes found the results profound. The day after a session where participants were instructed to put “whatever they wanted to let go of” in a piece of clay and what they wanted in their future in another piece, a participant told Salser she had been able to sleep for the first time in years. “Seeing what even a single art session could do, when you are given the time to respect what needs to come out, and then holding that tangible piece of art; it is amazing,” Salser said.

She’d planned to share art in this way for just one summer, but by the end of the tour, she realized two things: that she herself had grown up with domestic violence (mainly verbal abuse), and that the artistic outlet she’d provided to survivors was transformative. Salser soon founded A Window Between Worlds (AWBW), a nonprofit organization dedicated to using art to break the cycle of violence.

Today, AWWB provides 80,000 trauma-informed art sessions annually to more than 19,000 men, women, and children through 296 domestic violence agencies in 28 states.

“It’s a really unique art program. It’s not coming from an academic art world perspective, and it’s not coming from an art therapy perspective either.” Salser said, “No diagnoses are made or treatments suggested. Instead [it’s] sharing art as this window of time where you get to access your own creativity as a source of clarity and strength for your life. It’s really a peer-led process. So it’s very different.”

The success of AWWB’s approach to helping survivors of domestic abuse has led to a broadening of the organization’s scope to address other populations – such as combat veterans and the homeless – that have experienced violence.

“For anyone who has survived trauma, the art workshops can be a very powerful, accessible resource for them to open up, to release what’s painful, to build clarity and strength for what’s positive, and to communicate and break isolation,” she said.

Salser has been recognized at the local and national levels for her groundbreaking work with AWWB by Bank of America, Avon, and the Women’s Caucus for Art. Salser’s own *Portraits of Survivors* series, created on her first tour of domestic violence shelters in 1991, was displayed

in the U.S. Russell Senate Building Rotunda in Washington, D.C., when then-Sen. Joe Biden was introducing his Violence Against Women Act. Twenty years later, in 2011, in honor of AWWB’s 20th anniversary, Vice President Biden honored Salser in recognition of her “passion and drive to empower others.” In 2013, she received the Betty Fischer Award, presented by the Los Angeles Domestic Violence Council, which honors a leader who demonstrates extraordinary dedication to the field of domestic violence prevention or intervention. “That was really significant, because my peers here who are working within the domestic violence field [have] acknowledged that what I’ve been doing for these 22 years has made a contribution.”

Significant to her in a different way is her Presidential Scholar award.

“To be recognized on the national level is incredible, especially as a young student. I don’t think at that time I knew that what I experienced or the strength that I found could be so valuable to others. But to be asked to take it seriously meant a lot and means a lot to this day. I feel like what I’m imparting to others through A Window Between Worlds is that window of time for each person to take their visions seriously and to have support and connection to do that. And I’m grateful for having that from the Presidential Scholars Program at a time when there was no way I could know what kind of a difference I would make.”



Kristin Forbes (1988, NH)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

AFTER KRISTIN FORBES FOUND OUT SHE had been named a Presidential Scholar, she faced a tough decision: stay in New Hampshire to attend her senior prom or head to Washington, D.C., for National Recognition Week (NRW)?

The events coincided, and for Forbes, who didn't know much about the Presidential Scholars Program or what was in store for the Scholars in the nation's capital, it wasn't an immediately obvious answer. In the end, she passed on the dance and made her way to Washington – and she's so glad she did.

Forbes, by her own admission, hadn't had much exposure to the policymaking world, and she says the NRW trip was an eye-opener. Though she doesn't recall his name, one of the speakers talked to the Scholars about the importance of taking risks and getting outside one's comfort zone, an idea that stuck with Forbes. On a larger scale, being immersed in the events of NRW – meeting accomplished dignitaries and her fellow Scholars, visiting cultural and historic sights, and feeling the busy energy of Washington, D.C. – gave her, for the first time in her life, a real sense of just how much was out there, what was possible, and that people not that different from her were achieving extraordinary things.

With her NRW experience still fresh in her mind, Forbes headed to Williams College in the fall with a willingness to expose herself to as many new things as she possibly could. Her first semester courses included astrophysics, psychology, religion – and economics. While she continued to take a variety of classes in ensuing semesters, she found herself gravitating toward economics classes. "Economics provided a clear framework to analyze and understand a whole range of issues," Forbes said. "The approach just clicked. And the ability of good economic policy to improve people's lives was inspiring." She went on to major in economics, then pursued her Ph.D. in that field at MIT.

Forbes remained at MIT, hired in 1998 by the Sloan School of Management as a professor upon her graduation. She was on track to tenure – focusing on teaching and on her research on financial market contagion – when a call came from Washington in 2001: Was she interested in a job with the U.S. Treasury Department to start a new office tracking risks in emerging markets? She recalled: "Several colleagues advised me against taking the job and deviating from the traditional path taken by academics pursuing tenure. So I reluctantly said no. But the decision didn't sit well. I quickly realized that despite the risk to my career at MIT, this was a unique opportunity to help shape economic policy and make a positive difference."

She went for it, and served as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Quantitative Policy Analysis, Latin America and Caribbean Nations in 2001–2002. Then she headed back to MIT, picking up where she'd left off – only to receive another call from Washington. This time it was an offer to serve on the White House Council of Economic Advisers. At 33, she returned to Washington to take her place on the council and became the youngest person ever to hold that position. From 2003 to 2005, she advised President George W. Bush and other members of his administration on economic matters – global issues in particular – such as exchange rates, trade disputes, and China's increasing economic power.

Forbes returned to teaching at MIT in 2005 (she is the Jerome and Dorothy Lemelson Professor of Management and Global Economics), and so far has stayed put – though certainly not very still: She is a member of the Governor's Council



of Economic Advisers for the state of Massachusetts, a research associate at the National Bureau of Economic Research, and a member of the Bellagio Group, the Trilateral Commission, and the Council on Foreign Relations. Forbes is also a member of the board of Deworm the World, an organization focused on improving the education of school-age children across the globe by supporting governments and development partners to expand school-based deworming programs that decrease the incidence of parasite-caused illness.

Forbes has been recognized with numerous teaching awards and was named a "Young Global Leader" as part of the World Economic Forum at Davos. Among such accolades, Forbes has a soft spot for her Presidential Scholar award. She feels the award gave her a dose of confidence at a pivotal time in her life. Knowing that she'd been recognized for the things she'd accomplished and for the potential she'd demonstrated made her feel that she could take the kind of risks that NRW speaker had described and that "even this shy girl from New Hampshire" could dare to do great things and make a difference.

Her advice for future Scholars? If it comes down to it, skip prom. Go to D.C.

Her advice for future Scholars? If it comes down to it, skip prom. Go to D.C.

Because of the Presidential Scholars, "even this shy girl from New Hampshire" could dare to be the youngest person ever on the White House Council of Economic Advisers.

Patrick Chovanec (1988, IL)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

IN JUNE 1988, PATRICK CHOVANEC, one of that year's Presidential Scholars from Illinois, had a more somber National Recognition Week than most. After his graduation from Saint Ignatius College Prep in Chicago, Chovanec, like most Presidential Scholars, brought his parents to Washington, D.C., – but they all knew it would be his mother's last trip. "She had cancer at the time," he said, "and she was dying. She actually did die later, the day I arrived at college – it was almost as if she was hanging in there just for that. She'd also been hanging in there to see me go to Washington and receive this honor."

The week's blend of celebration and sorrow, at the launch of Chovanec's adult life, was something of a metamorphosis, and introduced what would become a recurring motif in his life and career. While a student at Princeton University, he saw history unfold in the June 1989 protests at Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, a country he had briefly visited just a few years earlier. "It was really the first world event that I had a personal connection to," he said, "in the sense that I had been there, and had some feel for what was going on. And a number of student leaders who escaped China actually ended up at Princeton the next year." He decided to take a year off from school and travel to Asia again, and spent a year backpacking

"He said, 'You've gotten this far by following the rules. But you have to take risks.'"

around China and India, crossing the Himalayas twice and volunteering for a time at Mother Teresa's Kalighat Home for the Dying in Calcutta.

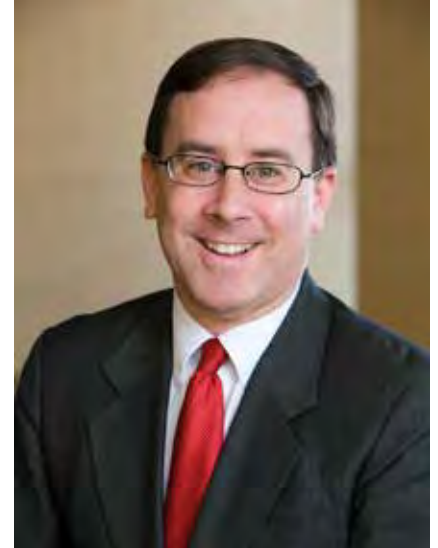
After graduating from Princeton with a degree in political economy, Chovanec went to work in Washington, D.C., for several years as a policy aide to several prominent Republican strategists, including William Kristol, Barry Jackson, and then-House Republican Conference Chair John Boehner. In 2000, Chovanec was presented with the opportunity to return to China, when *Institutional Investor* magazine hired him to direct its Hong Kong-based Asia Pacific Institute, a private forum for senior

leaders in finance. "Of course, going back there in '92, I had a feel for how much China had changed [since Tiananmen]," he said. "But when I returned in 2000 to work, it had changed even more. That's part of what brought me back, this sense of watching this transformation taking place."

He later ran a similar forum, in London, for European bond investors, and after earning his MBA in finance and accounting from the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania in 2005, he returned to Asia to work as a private equity investor for funds focused mostly on China. From 2008 to 2013, Chovanec was an associate professor at Tsinghua University's School of Economics and Management in Beijing. He also served as chair of the American Chamber of Commerce in China's Public Policy Development Committee, where he helped coordinate the American business community's annual White Paper on China and its Business Climate Survey.

During his years in China, Chovanec, in visiting each of that nation's 31 provinces, became a leading analyst of its political and socioeconomic complexities. In 2009, for example, in the online edition of *The Atlantic*, he published the interactive article, "The Nine Nations of China," in which he detailed the distinctive traditions and cultural dynamics of the nation's several regions. He is also one of the few U.S. citizens to have been permitted inside North Korea, which he visited twice – in 2008 and 2010.

In March 2013, Chovanec returned to the United States, joining Silvercrest Asset Management, a firm overseeing more than \$11.5 billion in investments, as



managing director and chief strategist. He lives in Manhattan with his wife and their three children.

Among all the addresses delivered during National Recognition Week – including speeches by an astronaut, Secretary of Education Bill Bennett, then-Vice President George H.W. Bush, and President Ronald Reagan – the one Chovanec remembers best was one given on the last day, by a man whose name he has repeatedly tried, and failed, to recall. "It was the morning when all the parents come, the last event before they let you go." He was, he said, the only one of the Scholars who was wide awake for the man's morning address; while he'd been tending to his mother, the other Scholars had been up all night talking in their Georgetown dorm.

The speaker was an archaeologist. "They described him as one of the people who was the inspiration for Indiana Jones," said Chovanec. "And he gave a talk about his adventures and the things he'd done – he told this particular story, a crazy story, about searching for where the *Bhagavad Gita* had been written. But his message was: 'You're all very bright, and people have been congratulating you all week long. But many of you will not achieve what you really want in life, because you're not risk takers.' He said, 'You've gotten this far by following the rules. But you have to take risks.'"

The words have had a profound influence. "His message stuck with me," said Chovanec. "At various points in my life, when there's been a safe route to go, and a more interesting and challenging route, I have remembered that."

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Leezie Kim (1989, AZ)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

LIKE MOST PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS, LEEZIE KIM looks back on her experience during the summer of 1989 with gratitude – but hers is on a slightly different level. “I wasn’t born here in the United States,” she said. “I learned English as a child. My parents are well educated, but they were adult immigrants in their thirties when they moved to the United States. So for someone like me, this was a really big deal. It was definitely the first time I had ever gone to a cocktail party at the State Department. It was completely out of the realm of what I had even pictured as possible for myself, and certainly nothing I had been exposed to as a child. My parents were at a loss for words because it was all just so foreign.”

As a senior at Saguaro High School in Scottsdale, Ariz., Kim, who had been accepted to Rice University, already had an interest in public service. In fact, when it came time to visit the White House to be recognized as a Presidential Scholar, she was working in Washington, D.C., as an intern in the Smithsonian Institution’s Books and Recordings Division: “Of course I had to tell my boss, ‘I really need this day off.’ And she said, ‘OK. Why?’ And I told her I had to go to the White House to get an award from the President. Can you imagine?”

As it turned out, President George H.W. Bush had a last-minute schedule change, and the Scholars’ medallions were awarded by Lamar Alexander, the Tennessee politician who was then president of the University of Tennessee. At the Rose Garden ceremony, said Kim, the biggest D.C. celebrity – First Lady Barbara Bush – was on hand to give each Scholar his or her certificate, and the Scholars were full of questions about Millie, the first couple’s English springer spaniel, who had recently borne a litter of puppies.

After graduating from Rice, Kim enrolled at the University of Virginia School of Law, where she earned a J.D. in 1996, and met her future husband, Gary Restaino, who is now Chief Counsel to the Criminal Division for the United States Attorney’s Office, District of Arizona. Kim practiced corporate finance law for several years in the Phoenix area, and when Janet Napolitano won election as Arizona governor in 2003, her passion for public service was reignited. She served as the governor’s general counsel, where she was responsible for all litigation involving the governor’s office and policy

matters relating to a variety of topics, from health care to transportation to Indian gaming compacts.

After Napolitano was appointed Secretary of Homeland Security in 2009, Kim joined the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the third-largest federal agency, as deputy general counsel, where for two-and-a-half years she provided legal advice and support directly to the secretary and general counsel. She worked on issues such as aviation transportation security, customs and border protection and enforcement, and disaster response. During the 2010 *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, she served as the liaison between the White House and the lead response agency, the Coast Guard, a position in which she had to constantly balance the administration’s need for information and open communication with the freedom of responders to do their work – all while establishing evidence-collection protocols for inevitable litigation. For her efforts, Kim received another medal, the Coast Guard Public Service Medal, from Coast Guard Commandant Adm. Thad Allen.

“One of the greatest gifts I’ve ever received,” she said, “was working in the capital in a really operational organization like Homeland Security. It’s not like other Cabinet departments, where long-term, large-scale projects are planned and results tracked. At Homeland Security, if there’s an oil spill, or an earthquake, or if somebody’s trying to blow up their underwear on an airplane, we’ve got to react now.”

Kim has recently returned to private practice, and is a partner in the Phoenix office of Quarles & Brady LLP, where she helps clients understand the laws of



national security and international business transactions. She’s happy to be back in Arizona with her husband, but also grateful for her time in public service.

“I definitely link that early visit to Washington – both my internship at the Smithsonian and the [Presidential Scholar ceremony],” she said, “to my going to law school, going into politics, and ultimately working in the administration of the first African-American President of the United States. It was such an extraordinary, unusual event in my life that it opened up a sense of incredible possibility.”

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Kermit “Kim” Roosevelt (1989, DC)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

FOR MANY PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS, their trip to Washington, D.C., is a personal introduction to the U.S. government, an institution both awe-inspiring and uniquely accessible. But in 1989, when Kermit “Kim” Roosevelt, great-grandson of President Theodore Roosevelt and a student at St. Albans School, arrived for the Presidential Scholar recognition ceremony, he and the federal government had already been introduced.

“My big impression from the ceremony,” he said, “was that there was this great pool of brilliant and talented people from all over the country. It was not so much opening up Washington or government to me, because I already lived in Washington and I had a fair amount of exposure to the government. To see these great people from all over gave me a sense of what a big, diverse, and talented country we were. And I ended up running into Presidential Scholars from my year over and over again at Harvard, at Yale Law School, and clerking at the Supreme Court. It was an introduction to the group of people that I was going to keep running into.”

A philosophy student at Harvard, Roosevelt was drawn to academia – but decided to pursue a career in law because, he said, “As a law professor, I would be working on topics of greater real-world significance, and topics that more people cared about than philosophy.” After clerking for Judge Stephen F. Williams of the United States Court of Appeals and U.S. Supreme Court Justice David Souter, he joined the Chicago office of the law firm Mayer, Brown, Rowe & Maw (now Mayer Brown), where he practiced appellate litigation for two years before joining the faculty at the University of Pennsylvania Law School.

As a legal scholar, Roosevelt applies his love for philosophy to a diverse range of issues, with a particular focus on constitutional law and conflict of laws. His articles have appeared in the *Virginia Law Review*, the *Michigan Law Review*, and the *Columbia Law Review*, among others, and he is the author of four books, including *The Myth of Judicial Activism: Making Sense of Supreme Court Decisions* (Yale University Press, 2006), *Conflict of Laws* (Foundation Press, 2010), and the novel *In the Shadow of the Law* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005), a legal thriller described by Alan Dershowitz in a *New York Times* review as “... an impressive first novel ... commendable in its perceptive and witty insights into the post-law-school life of big-firm associates.”

Now at work on a second novel, Roosevelt is also a member of the Presidential Scholars Foundation’s Board of Directors, where he hopes to strengthen the alumni network and encourage the interactions with other Scholars he has enjoyed throughout his career.

“I have very fond memories of the Presidential Scholars Program,” he said. “I think it’s very important to bring talented people together early in their careers and give them the sense that there’s a community of similar people out there that’s accessible to them.”



“It was an introduction to the group of people that I was going to keep running into.”

Anand Parekh (1994, MI)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

HISTORY WAS ANAND PAREKH'S FAVORITE SCHOOL SUBJECT, and he had a passion for government and current events. So after graduating from Detroit Country Day School in 1994, he had already planned to major in political science when he attended the University of Michigan in the fall. But he also had other goals.

"I made a decision that medicine was the career path I wanted to pursue," Parekh said. "The combination of it being a noble profession, and the fact that several family members – including my mother, who is a physician – had chosen it made me realize that improving health and helping people was what I wanted to focus on. But I also had this strong interest in current events and government, and I think the experience as a Presidential Scholar simply expanded that feeling. Coming here to Washington, D.C., and seeing history all around you – that feeling has never left me."

President Bill Clinton was on hand for the 1994 ceremony on the White House's South Lawn, and after he delivered an address to Parekh and the other Presidential Scholars, he shook hands with every one of them. Afterward, Parekh wasted no time pursuing his dual interests in medicine and public policy; in his first year as a student at the University of Michigan, he interned for Sen. Carl Levin. After earning his B.A. in political science, he continued his graduate studies at the university's Medical School and School of Public Health, where he earned his M.D. and M.P.H. degrees. He went on to complete his residency in the Osler Medical Training Program of the Department of Medicine at Johns Hopkins Hospital, where he conducted health services research. He has since served as a research fellow at the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services, the U.S. House Government Reform Committee, and the Institute of Medicine.

Early in his public service career, Parekh played key roles in public health emergency preparedness efforts at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). He served as a senior medical advisor in HHS's Office of Public Health and Science. For four months in 2007, he was delegated the

authorities of the Assistant Secretary for Health, overseeing 10 program offices, the U.S. Public Health Service and Commissioned Corps. In 2008, he was named Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health (Science & Medicine), a position he has held since then.

As an internist, a fellow of the American College of Physicians, and an adjunct assistant professor in medicine at Johns Hopkins University, Parekh still finds time to volunteer his clinical services at Holy Cross Hospital Health Center, a clinic for the uninsured in Silver Spring, Md. He has previously served on the Board of Governors of the University of Michigan School of Public Health Alumni Society and the Board of Trustees of the Michigan State Medical Society.

He has also, since the day he received his medallion, maintained an active relationship with the Presidential Scholars Program. For three years after his own award, he served as an Advisor to new Scholars arriving for recognition events. His engagement with the program also yielded one tangible result: He introduced one of the Scholars from his year to his best friend and college roommate – and the two are married now. Though he admits managing his time has become more difficult, now that he has a young family of his own, he remains an active member of the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association.

"Over the past two decades," he said, "every now and then, whenever there is an opportunity – because I'm here; I'm local – I'll try to either greet the Scholars when they are being recognized in June or to somehow support the program. I have particularly focused on career advice and mentorship, to try to help Scholars when they are here for the few days."

He's still proud of his selection as a Presidential Scholar, though Parekh has



never considered it an individual honor, but rather a symbol of something larger and more important: "I realized even then that there were hundreds of others who were likely equally deserving of this award," he said, "and essentially that I was representing students all over the state of Michigan, and all over the country. It really signifies that with hard work and dedication, you can achieve great things. Every year, 141 Presidential Scholars are selected out of [approximately 3.3 million] graduating high school seniors, and I think if there are ways this program – the Scholars who are selected and the alumni – can reach more people, to spread that message, ... that would be terrific."

Marc Katz (1994, PA)

BY CRAIG COLLINS

HE WAS A BRIGHT KID, PARTICULARLY GIFTED IN PHYSICS, but Marc Katz will be the first to tell you he was not a very good student. “All through high school,” he said, “I was never trying to be perfect. I was actually a bit of a hack, academically. I was always studying for my math test in English class – and if the English teacher noticed and made me stop, I wouldn’t do well on the test. I didn’t have a desire to do perfectly, but I did well overall and I was a good test taker.”



If that doesn’t sound like a ringing self-endorsement for a Presidential Scholar award, understand that there was much more to Katz than met his English teacher’s eye: “What I was really passionate about was community service,” he said. “I had first volunteered, in all candor, because my mom probably felt I needed to have some sort of extracurricular activity.” Whatever needed doing – working at a soup kitchen, helping out at a school for kids with special needs, offering in-home assistance to adults with severe disabilities – he found that he loved it, and threw himself into it with abandon. “It just ignited a passion in me. I really, really loved the feeling of helping people. I think it also scratched a bit of an entrepreneurial itch, to take responsibility for something and ultimately organize programs and events, and recruit and motivate other people to volunteer. It all had a lot of meaning for me. That’s what I poured myself into in high school.”

Katz was surprised, then, to learn he had been selected a Presidential Scholar: “I thought certainly they could do better than me. But I was excited about it.” He remembers shaking President Bill Clinton’s

hand and meeting an impressive assortment of people on the White House lawn, some of whom were exhibiting new inventions or experiments. “There was one kid,” he recalled, “whose experiment was being flown on the space shuttle or something – some crazy, crazy stuff. But on the other hand we were all 17- and 18-year-old kids, just teenagers, and everyone was trying to figure themselves out and have a good time.”

The gregarious Katz was invited back to ceremonies in ensuing years, to act as an Advisor to new Presidential Scholars – a position he likens to camp counselor. “You’re just basically there to make sure everyone knows where they’re going and have fun and just be a friend to everybody. It’s more like a hospitality committee than a group of advisors. ... I remember really getting to know a lot of each year’s honorees. Everyone would be up until 2 in the morning, just talking and hanging out – a very tame group, but interesting people and good senses of humor.”

After graduating from Harvard University with a degree in physics in 1998, Katz worked as a Wall Street financial analyst for a while before setting out on

a career path heavily influenced by his father, an entrepreneur who launched and operated three businesses in Philadelphia over a span of 25 years. As a teenager, he remembers, he began to feel increasingly anxious about what he was going to do with his life. His father, he said, had some advice many Presidential Scholars may find difficult to fathom: “I asked my dad: ‘What am I going to do? I just don’t know what I want to do.’ His response was: ‘Don’t worry about it. Something will come up.’”

In 2000, Katz and Harvard classmate Dave Christensen decided to launch CustomInk.com, an online retailer that enables people to design and order custom t-shirts. The company has grown rapidly since, and it’s considered a success not only for its revenues, which grew nearly sevenfold in its first four years, but for the atmosphere it provides its 120 employees. One of America’s fastest-growing private companies, CustomInk.com was selected by *The Washingtonian* magazine as one of the “Great Places to Work” in the D.C. area. *Inc.* magazine recently selected Katz as one of “America’s Coolest Young Entrepreneurs.”

“I think business is very worthwhile,” he said, “if you do it in a way that you’re proud of. And I really try to run the company in a way that I can be proud of, and the company can be proud of, as it relates to our customers, our team, and our partners.”

Today, when he participates with other Presidential Scholar alumni in panel discussions about choosing a career path, Katz offers advice similar to that given by his father years ago. “A lot of the kids getting honored are such extreme achievers that it can be hard to carry that around,” he said. “I remember a line from a commencement address Conan O’Brien gave at Harvard, about 10 years ago. First of all, the speech is painfully hilarious. Your sides will hurt if you listen to it. But additionally there’s a great, great message in it. He compares success to a white tuxedo: It looks great, but you’re afraid to get it dirty [and spoil it]. I often reference that at these career days, and I suggest people read that speech, so they don’t go into the next step of their lives with ridiculous expectations for themselves.”

An Expanding Universe

An interview with Jane Rigby

BY JOHN KNOX

JANE RIGBY (1995, DE) IS AN ASTROPHYSICIST in the Observational Cosmology Lab at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Md., and serves as deputy project scientist for operations for the James Webb Space Telescope.

What's your hometown?

I grew up in Seaford, Del., in the chicken-heavy, people-light part of the Delmarva Peninsula. A small town in a small state.

What were your first thoughts upon being selected as a Presidential Scholar?

Oh, back then, when dinosaurs roamed the Earth ... I remember, I found out right before softball practice. I was surprised. I thought, "Delaware isn't a big state, maybe that's how I got selected."

Oh, yes. The "impostor syndrome," which many Scholars allude to. What was National Recognition Week like for you?

It was incredibly memorable. ... There was incredible diversity, it was so exhilarating that there was no time or energy to feel humbled by it all. I remember not sleeping very much. ... Coming from small-town America, there were so many new experiences that week. The range of people – diplomats' kids who had lived all over the world,

people talking about important things. [The Scholars week] was a heady intellectual experience. It gave me some much-needed confidence before going to college – that I'd be smart enough, it'd be OK.

Did you stay in touch with any Scholars?

At Penn State I kept in touch with a few Scholars who went there. We had lunch. More recently, I've participated in alumni activities, such as meet-ups in the D.C. area.

Let's talk about your work as an astrophysicist. How and when did you get interested in it?

Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* series was the trigger, when I was in pre-kindergarten. Age 4. We had to color our favorite TV show, and I used up all the black crayon drawing in the dark of space!

And now you study ...

I'm an observational astronomer, which means I use telescopes around the world and in space, such as the Hubble

light because of their mass, as a telescope does. This allows us to see galaxies behind these clusters in finer detail than we could otherwise, just as telescopes allow us to see faraway objects better than we can without them. Using this gravitational lens effect, astronomers can study galaxies in ways we just can't with our current technology.

And another part of your job is to improve that technology, as well.

I am part of the team that supports the building of the James Webb Space Telescope, which will be launched in 2018. It will be 100 times more powerful than Hubble, and will be able to see the first generation of galaxies that formed in the history of the universe – which is the "holy grail" for us. It's my job to make sure the Webb Space Telescope can do the breakthrough science we're building it to do.

One other aspect of your position that caught my eye was your work in diversity in astronomy. Could you elaborate on that?

It's a small fraction of what I do, but diversity is part of my job. ... I am active on issues of diversity and inclusion through the American

“Carl Sagan's *Cosmos* series was the trigger, when I was in pre-kindergarten. Age 4. We had to color our favorite TV show, and I used up all the black crayon drawing in the dark of space!”

people from California. I'd never been to California. Everyone was so passionate. The artists were mind-blowingly talented.

How has the experience of being a Presidential Scholar impacted you, your life, your career?

It was a foreshadowing of what the best parts of college would be like. Very smart

Space Telescope. I study the evolution of galaxies with rapidly forming stars, and the supermassive black holes at the centers of galaxies. For example, how do galaxies evolve, over the 13.7 billion years of the history of the universe? Recently, I've been using clusters of galaxies as natural gravitational "telescopes." The galaxy clusters bend

Astronomical Society [AAS]. We created the Working Group for LGBTIQ Equality in the society. We emphasize networking and mentoring – there aren't many role models for queer scientists. We're trying to build a more diverse, welcoming profession. STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] still has a problem – it



COURTESY OF JANE RIGBY

doesn't look like America. We need to change that. Otherwise, we don't do as good science as we should.

Did your Presidential Scholars experience have any influence on this aspect of your career?

Yes. At National Recognition Week, I met one of the first openly gay people I'd ever met. I was still in the closet at that point, and I thought, "Wow." This was part of the diversity I mentioned; the Scholars were the most cosmopolitan group I'd ever been around.

I came across a video on your website that was just fascinating, which brings together several threads of your career. Could you tell us about it?

I was at Penn State to receive a distinguished alumni award, and I met with several student groups, including the group for queer science majors. They asked, "Why aren't there any famous gay scientists?" I said, "What about Frank Kameny?" They didn't know who he was.

I didn't know who Frank Kameny was, either.

Frank Kameny had my job, almost 60 years ago. He was a civil-servant astronomer. He was fired in the 1950s because he was homosexual. While many lost their jobs in that era for being gay, Frank was unusual because he fought back, all the way to the Supreme Court. He played a role in so many important moments in gay rights. He lobbied the American Psychiatric Association to admit that homosexuality is not a mental illness. Frank defended over 200 other people who were losing their federal government jobs because they were gay. Eventually, the federal government stopped firing employees because they were gay – because of Frank. I was proud to be part of the ceremony where the AAS honored Frank's memory. It's the only time I've seen a standing ovation at that meeting for something that wasn't Nobel Prize-winning research. Later, at the request of NASA administrators, I gave a few talks about Frank [see www.janerigby.net/public-speaking/] to tell his story.

Thanks for sharing your stories, and Frank Kameny's, too.

Nigel Campbell (2004, NY)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

ASK DANCER NIGEL CAMPBELL what stands out the most in his memory about his National Recognition Week trip to Washington, D.C., after being named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts and he'll reply without hesitation: "Being a 17-year-old and performing a solo at the Kennedy Center."

"Wow, it was an honor unlike any other," he recalls. "People – artists – work their entire lives to try to get to perform at the Kennedy Center. And here I was at 17, performing a solo to a packed, sold-out audience with the President and the Secretary of Education and my entire family. And a standing ovation. It was one of those really magical moments that you relive in your head throughout your life. This was, by far, the most special moment of a week that was filled with a lot of really special moments."

Campbell began studying dance at age 12 at Creative Outlet Dance Theater of Brooklyn (though he grew up in the Bronx). He attended The Juilliard School and embarked on his professional dance career after graduation. He first joined the Donlon Dance Company at the Saarländisches Staatstheater in Saarbrücken, Germany, where he danced principal roles in *Swan Lake*, *The Nutcracker*, and Kurt Jooss' *The Green Table*. He then danced with the Luna Negra Dance Theater before joining the GöteborgsOperans Danskompani in Sweden in 2013. Though he has made his dream of being a professional dancer a reality, the path has not been without challenges. He says being recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program has helped him along the way.

"Being recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program imbued me with a sense of confidence and a sense of my self-worth at a very early age. It really was the affirmation that I really could do this in a real way – that I could do all of the things that I'm doing now."

"I think that being an artist is really hard – it's very difficult. And as a dancer, you basically spend your life looking at yourself in the mirror with people in the front of the room telling you what you are and aren't doing correctly. And it's difficult. And without a really strong foundation and without a really strong sense of who you are and what your self-worth is, it can be really daunting. Being a teenager is such a crucial moment in your life and in your training, and to receive this kind of huge honor at [that critical] age gave me the sense that I really could do anything I wanted to do; if I just worked hard enough and I wanted it bad enough, I was capable of achieving greatness, because I already had. So, I tried to use it as a mirror for any other challenge that I would face – and that I continue to face – in my life.

"Sometimes, a lot of us need just a little push. And ... that little push, from something as reputable as this organization, gives you the confidence you need. It gives you something to believe in. And it gives you something concrete to hold onto. In times when you're insecure and you're doubting yourself, you have this to hold onto. And I think that that's just invaluable."

Campbell has stayed in touch with fellow Scholars – Chanel DaSilva (2004, NY), his best friend and classmate at LaGuardia High School for the Performing Arts, was also named a Presidential Scholar, and he attended Juilliard with a handful of Scholars from his year and others. He also has encountered others over the years – in fact, Campbell is one of three Scholars who are members of the



GöteborgsOperans Danskompani. "I meet someone who is a Scholar – we have a shared history. We have a common history and that's something that we can connect to. It would be great to have a real forum where we are all connecting and we are all talking about things. I think that there's so much talent in this program that it would be great to have an institutionalized way for us to really stay together and talk with each other and network for different things. I think that would be amazing because there's just such a large pool of incredible people."

"Being recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program imbued me with a sense of confidence and a sense of my self-worth at a very early age. It really was the affirmation that I really could do this in a real way – that I could do all of the things that I'm doing now."

Sean Chen (2006, CA)

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

IN THE EARLY YEARS of the Presidential Scholar Program, candidates for the award didn't know they were even being considered – there was no application at all. One day a telegram or letter arrived out of the blue informing the Scholar they'd been selected for the honor. That has changed in the last 50 years and today, Scholars have a hand in the process – a fact that pianist Sean Chen remembers all too well: “I was really happy to actually get the application in because it's a pretty big deal, a pretty big process,” Chen said. “You have to get a lot of people involved. And a lot of recommendations. And a lot of writing on your part. And it's not a typical essay – it's [long] – so you have to soul-search and really decide what you want to say and present.”

Chen first learned of the Presidential Scholars Program while participating in the National Foundation for the Advancement of the Arts (now YoungArts) ARTS Week (now YoungArts Week). “Once we were there [in Miami, Fla.], they had a little conference where they told us about the Presidential Scholars. That's how I found out about it,” he said. He completed that big application, and soon, news came that he'd been named a Presidential Scholar in the Arts. The award may well have been a fortuitous boost. “I was undecided in whether I wanted to do music or academics in college. And so, I applied to both universities and conservatories.” He was accepted at Harvard and at MIT, but in the end chose to study music at The Juilliard School, and feels that the award did play at least a small part in that decision.

Judging from Chen's blossoming musical career, it seems to have been an excellent decision indeed. He has performed as a soloist with the Indianapolis Symphony Orchestra under Gerard Schwarz, the Fort Worth Symphony Orchestra under Leonard Slatkin, Suwon City Philharmonic, New West Symphony, and the Juilliard Symphony. In 2013 alone, he won the American Pianists Association's DeHaan Classical Fellowship, one of the most lucrative and significant prizes available to American pianists and one that includes a solo recording on the Steinway & Sons label; third prize at the Van Cliburn International Piano Competition, making him the first American since 1997 to reach the finals; and third prize at the 2013 Morocco Philharmonic International Piano Competition.

Chen recalls a handful of memories from his time at National Recognition Week in 2006: meeting and hanging out with his fellow Scholars (“you just meet so many smart and talented people in both the arts and academic fields, people with lots of different ideas and from different backgrounds”); taking a photo with the president (“George W.”); and performing at the Kennedy Center (“it was really exciting”). But when it comes to the Presidential Scholars, at this point he's looking forward – to the 50th anniversary events and to the possibility of a future of better connectedness of Scholars.

“I have actually kind of brainstormed with some of the anniversary committee and seen some of the stuff they're planning on doing. Lots of interesting things: a lot of current issues, current events, a lot of things about the arts and about technology and research and everything,” Chen said. He volunteered to assist the anniversary planners on the technology side of things, since he's kept up with his computer and programming skills. In the midst of performing and finishing school (he is currently pursuing his Artist Diploma at the Yale School of Music as a George W. Miles Fellowship recipient), Chen has helped with advice on social networking, among other things.

“I'm in other scholarships where we're part of news feeds and email lists where I feel like every other week, I get news of one of our former fellows



doing something amazing or having this book released or something. ... For Presidential Scholars, something like that to keep everyone informed ... it's probably impossible to keep track of and everyone's doing incredible things. So, it would just be an endless list. But somehow – I don't know about maybe by dividing it up regionally – just to be more informed and in touch with what other Presidential Scholars have done would be cool. ... I mean, they are definitely setting up a lot of new infrastructure and alumni connection possibilities on the Internet through the new Presidential Scholars website [presidentialscholars.org] and for the anniversary. So, I know it will be better in the future.”

When it comes to the Presidential Scholars, he's looking forward ...

From Passion to Print

A tribute to all Presidential Scholars who write

BY FAITH MACE BRYNIE

FROM PASSION TO PAPER TO PUBLISHER TO PRINT – and then, perhaps, to an appreciative reader or a harsh critic.

Writers know it's a long haul from that original inking of a concept to a book signing at Barnes & Noble. Sometimes a half-formed idea wakes the would-be writer in the middle of the night with a turn of phrase or line of reasoning that insists on being scribbled on a bedside tablet or texted to oneself via cell phone. Sometimes good ideas turn sour and must be discarded. Sometimes they expand exponentially and consume not a few years of effort, but a lifetime. Those who write books know they don't own their work: Their work owns them.

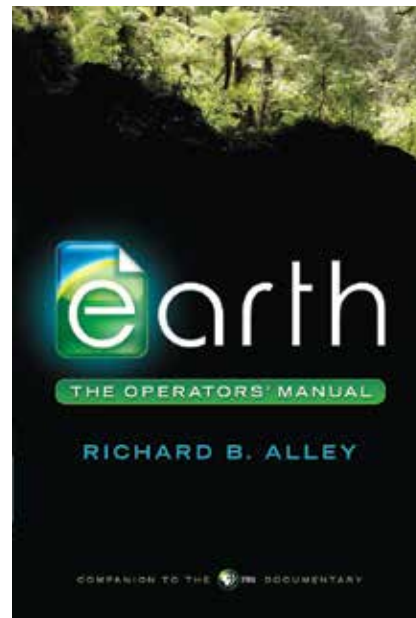
Those Presidential Scholars who have survived the arduous and often frustrating process of nurturing a book to its completion stick with it for a variety of reasons. Some burst with ideas and a talent for expressing them. They could no more give up writing than they could cease breathing. Others agonize over every word and produce a dozen drafts before they finally quit, still not satisfied that they have realized their vision. Some write for money; some write for love. Some write to advance knowledge in their field or scholarship in their society. Some garner praise and some suffer obscurity, but all contribute something of value to our culture.

Some Presidential Scholars work their way from newspaper journalism to find their place among the 7.5 million U.S. titles currently catalogued in *Books in Print*. For example, while a reporter for the *Charlotte Observer*, Charles E. Shepard (1972, CT) investigated fraud at the PTL television ministry of evangelist Jim Bakker. As a result of Shepard's reporting, Bakker and three associates were imprisoned, and in 1988 the *Observer* was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for Meritorious

Public Service. The next year, Shepard published *Forgiven: The Rise and Fall of Jim Bakker and the PTL Ministry*.

Eugene Robinson (1970, SC) is now an opinion writer at the *Washington Post* where he's been for three decades, working at various times as city hall reporter, city editor, foreign correspondent in Buenos Aires and London, foreign editor, and assistant managing editor for the paper's Style section. He started writing a column for the Op-Ed page in 2005. In 2009, he received the Pulitzer Prize for Commentary for "his eloquent columns on the 2008 presidential campaign that focus on the election of the first African-American president, showcasing graceful writing and grasp of the larger historic picture." Robinson's books include *Coal to Cream: A Black Man's Journey Beyond Color to an Affirmation of Race* (1999), *Last Dance in Havana* (2004), and *Disintegration: The Splintering of Black America* (2010).

Some Presidential Scholars write books that advance knowledge in their scientific fields and promote public understanding of scientific or technological research. One such author is climatologist and geoscientist Richard Alley (1976, OH), whose works include *The Two-Mile Time Machine: Ice Cores, Abrupt Climate Change, and Our Future* (2002); and *Earth: The Operators' Manual* (2011), the companion book to the PBS television series of the same name, for which Alley served as host. Some of the most prolific writers among Presidential Scholars are public interpreters of science. Physicist, environmental scientist, and energy policy expert Amory Lovins (1964, MA) is chairman and chief scientist of



Scholar Richard B. Alley served as host for the PBS companion series to his book *Earth: The Operators' Manual*.

IMAGE COURTESY OF WWW.NORTON AND COMPANY

PHOTO BY GEOFF HAINES-STILES

Among Scholar Sam Lipsyte's books are *Home Land* and *The Ask*.

Rocky Mountain Institute. In conjunction with his work there, he has authored or co-authored 29 books, including *Natural Capitalism* (1999), *Small Is Profitable* (2002), *Winning the Oil Endgame* (2005), and *Reinventing Fire* (2011).

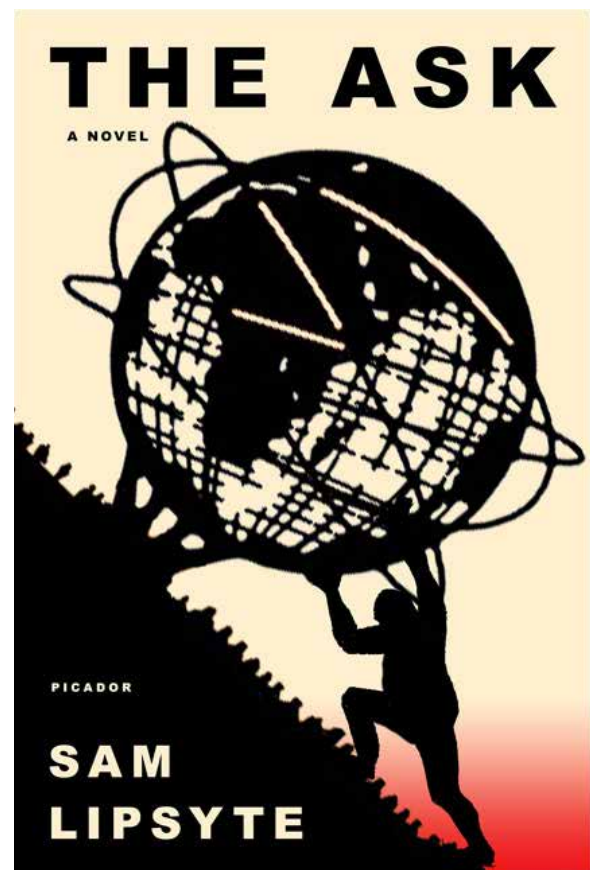
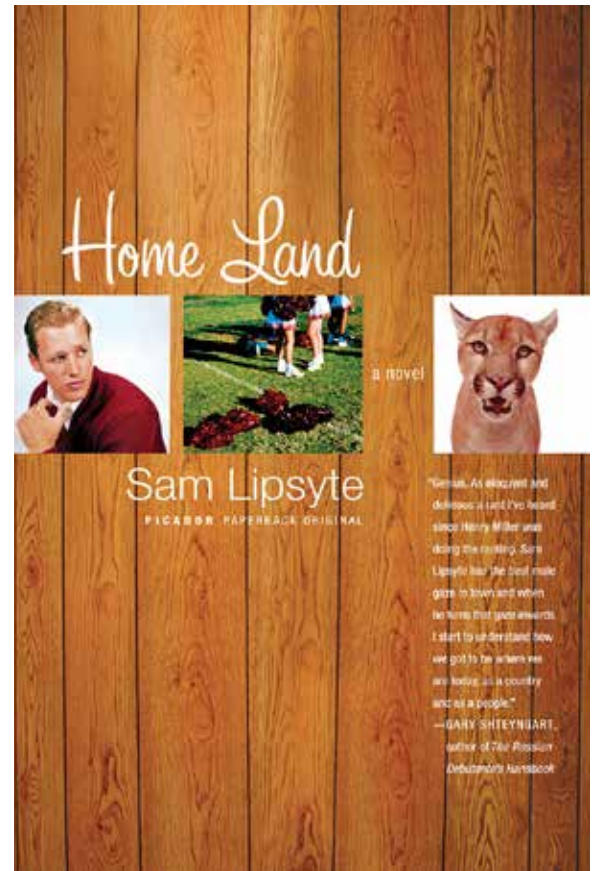
The environment is a favorite topic for some Scholar writers. **John Daniel** (1966, DC), who describes himself as a former logger, hod carrier, railroad, and rock climbing instructor, is the author of 10 books of memoir, essays, and poetry. His most recent essay collection, *The Far Corner: Northwestern Views on Land, Life, and Literature* (2009), won the 2011 Oregon Book Award in Creative Nonfiction from Literary Arts. His book *Rogue River Journal: A Winter Alone*, released in 2005, details a four-and-a-half-month experiment in solitude in the backcountry of the Klamath Mountains in southwestern Oregon. It was one of six books awarded a 2006 Book Award by the Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association. He has also won the Andres Berger Award for Creative Nonfiction, the annual John Burroughs Nature Essay Award, and a Pushcart Prize. His newest book is a poetry collection, *Of Earth* (2012).

The books of some Presidential Scholars spring from the writers' experiences in public service. **Mitch Daniels** (1967, IN), now president of Purdue University, was governor of Indiana from 2005 to 2013. Before that, he was the director of the Office of Management and Budget under President George W. Bush and a senior aide to President Ronald Reagan. He spent many years in the private sector as a senior executive at Eli Lilly and Company and the CEO of the Hudson Institute, one of the nation's most influential research centers. Daniels' book *Keeping the Republic: Saving America by Trusting Americans* (2011) was praised by Steven Pearlstein of the *Washington Post* as the work of "a principled but practical conservative who respects the intelligence of voters and would rather get something done than score political points."

Another political writer of distinction among the ranks of Presidential Scholars is **David Boaz** (KY, 1971), a well-known libertarian and executive vice president of the Cato Institute. He wrote *Libertarianism: A Primer* (1997) and *The Politics of Freedom: Taking on the Left, the Right, and Threats to Our Liberties* (2008). He is a frequent contributor to the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, and the *Washington Post*, and a familiar guest on several national television and radio shows.

Some Presidential Scholars use their writing to promote social improvement. **Olivia Golden** (1972, MA) is the executive director of CLASP, the Center for Law and Social Policy, an organization that works with policymakers to improve the lives of low-income people. She is a recognized expert in child and family programs at the federal, state, and local levels. From 1993 to 2001, she served as commissioner for Children, Youth, and Families and then as assistant secretary for Children and Families at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Her first book, *Poor Children and Welfare Reform* (1992), teaches lessons from welfare programs that tried to make a difference to families by serving two generations, both parent and child. Her more recent book, *Reforming Child Welfare* (2009), recommends policy, practice, and leadership strategies to improve outcomes for vulnerable children and families.


Some Scholars excel in writing fiction. **Sam Lipsyte** (1986, NJ) is well known as an accomplished satirist and debunker of some of contemporary culture's most absurd conventions. He is the author of



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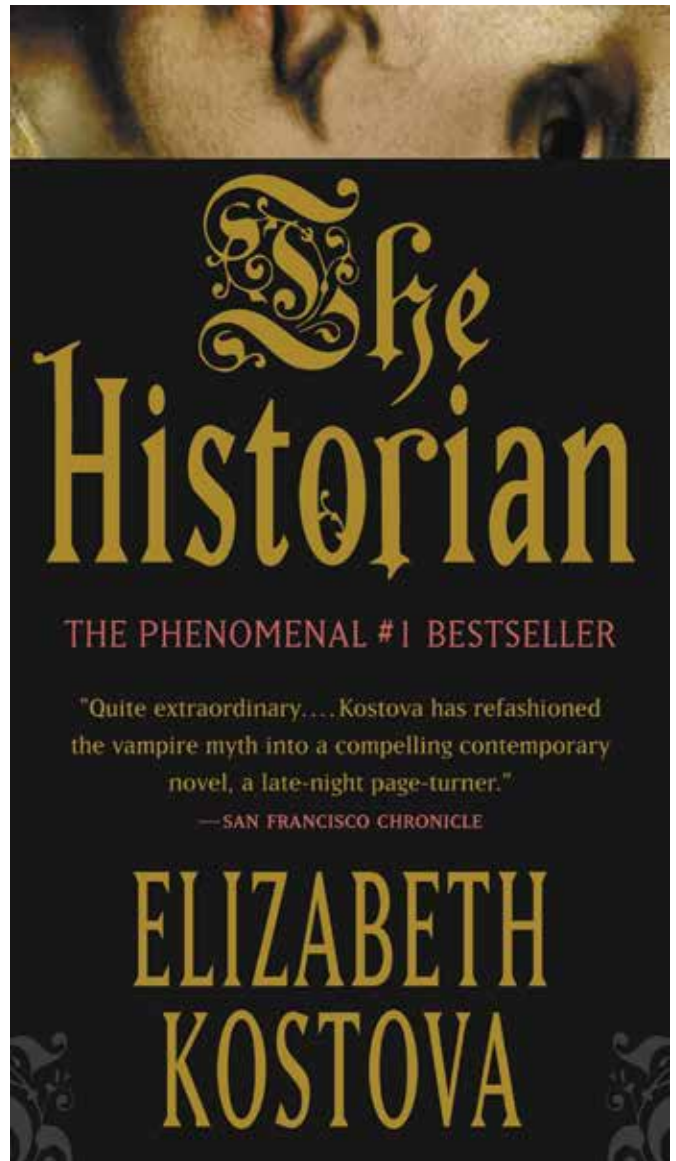
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Scholar Elizabeth Johnson Kostova is best known for her debut novel *The Historian*.



two story collections: *Venus Drive* (named one of the top 25 books of its year by the *Village Voice Literary Supplement*) and the 2013 release, *The Fun Parts*. He has also written three novels: *Home Land* (2004), which was a *New York Times* Notable Book and received the first annual Believer Book Award; *The Ask* (2010), which was a *New York Times* bestseller; and *The Subject Steve* (2011). Lipsyte teaches at Columbia University.

Also notable among Presidential Scholar fiction writers is **Elizabeth Johnson Kostova** (1983, TN), who is best known for her debut novel *The Historian* (2005). It's a vampire story with a twist, and it crosses genres, combining elements of thriller, adventure, mystery, and the Gothic novel. *The Historian* was the first debut novel to become No. 1 on the *New York Times* bestseller list in its first week of sale. It received the 2006 Book Sense award for Best Adult Fiction and the 2005 Quill Award for Debut Author of the Year. Kostova's second novel, *The Swan Thieves*, was published in 2010.

Another 1983 Scholar, **Rachel Pastan** (1983, MD), has published three novels: *This Side of Married* (2004), *Lady of the Snakes* (2008), and her latest, *Alena* (2014), a *Good Housekeeping* New Book Pick for January 2014. She has published short stories in numerous magazines and won various prizes for her short fiction. She is a member of the core faculty of the Bennington Writing Seminars MFA program.

Some Scholar writers combine writing with careers in entertainment and broadcasting. **Kurt Andersen** (1972, NE) is the author of three novels: *Turn of the Century* (1999), named a *New York Times* Notable Book of the Year; *Heyday* (2007), a *New York Times* bestseller that won the Langum Prize as the best American historical novel of 2007; and *True Believers* (2012), which appeared on the best-novels-of-the-year lists of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and *Washington Post*. Andersen has also written for film, television, and the stage. In the 1990s, he was executive producer and head writer of two prime-time specials



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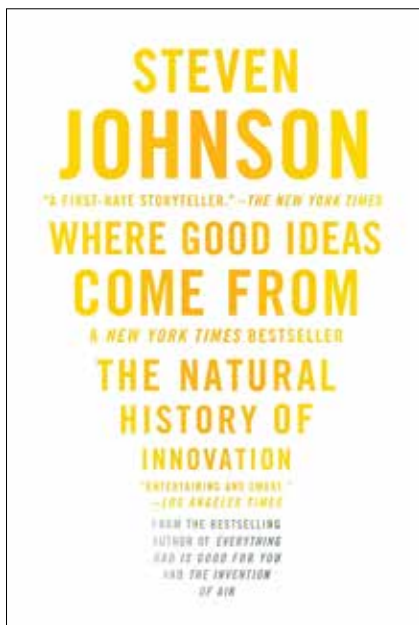


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for NBC: “How to Be Famous” and “Hit List.” He was co-author of *Loose Lips*, a satirical off-Broadway revue that enjoyed long runs in New York and Los Angeles. He is cohost and co-creator of *Studio 360*, a cultural magazine show produced by Public Radio International. The show won Peabody Awards for broadcast excellence in both 2005 and 2013.

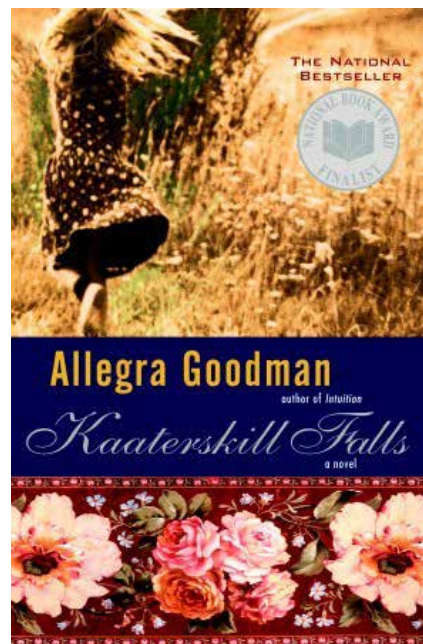
Another Scholar writer turned TV host is **Steven Berlin Johnson** (1986, DC). He is the author of seven bestselling books on the intersection of science, technology, and personal experience. His 2013 book *Future Perfect: The Case for Progress in a Networked Age* outlines a new model of political change that Johnson believes will transform everything from local government to classrooms to health care. His 2009 book, *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation*, was a finalist for the 800CEORead award for best business book of 2010, and was ranked as one of the year’s best books by *The Economist*. His book *The Ghost Map: The Story of London’s Most Terrifying Epidemic – and How It Changed Science, Cities, and the Modern World* was one of the 10 best nonfiction books of 2006 according to *Entertainment Weekly*. He won the Newhouse School fourth annual Mirror Award for his *Time* magazine cover article, “How Twitter Will Change the Way We Live.” His latest project is masterminding and hosting the PBS series *How We Got to Now with Steven Johnson*.

Left: *Where Good Ideas Come From: The Natural History of Innovation* by Scholar **Steven Berlin Johnson** was highly ranked by *The Economist*. Right: Among Scholar **Allegra Goodman**’s several novels is *Kaaterskill Falls*, a National Book Award finalist and bestseller.

Some Scholars excel in writing at an early age. **Allegra Goodman** (1985, HI) saw her first book, *Total Immersion*, published in 1989, on the same day that she graduated from Harvard. Her second book, *The Family Markowitz* (1996) was a collection of stories, most of them previously published in *The New Yorker*. After that came several novels: *Kaaterskill Falls* (1998), a national bestseller and a National Book Award finalist; *Paradise Park* (2001); *Intuition* (2006); *The Other Side of the Island* (2008, for young adults); and *The Cookbook Collector* (2011).

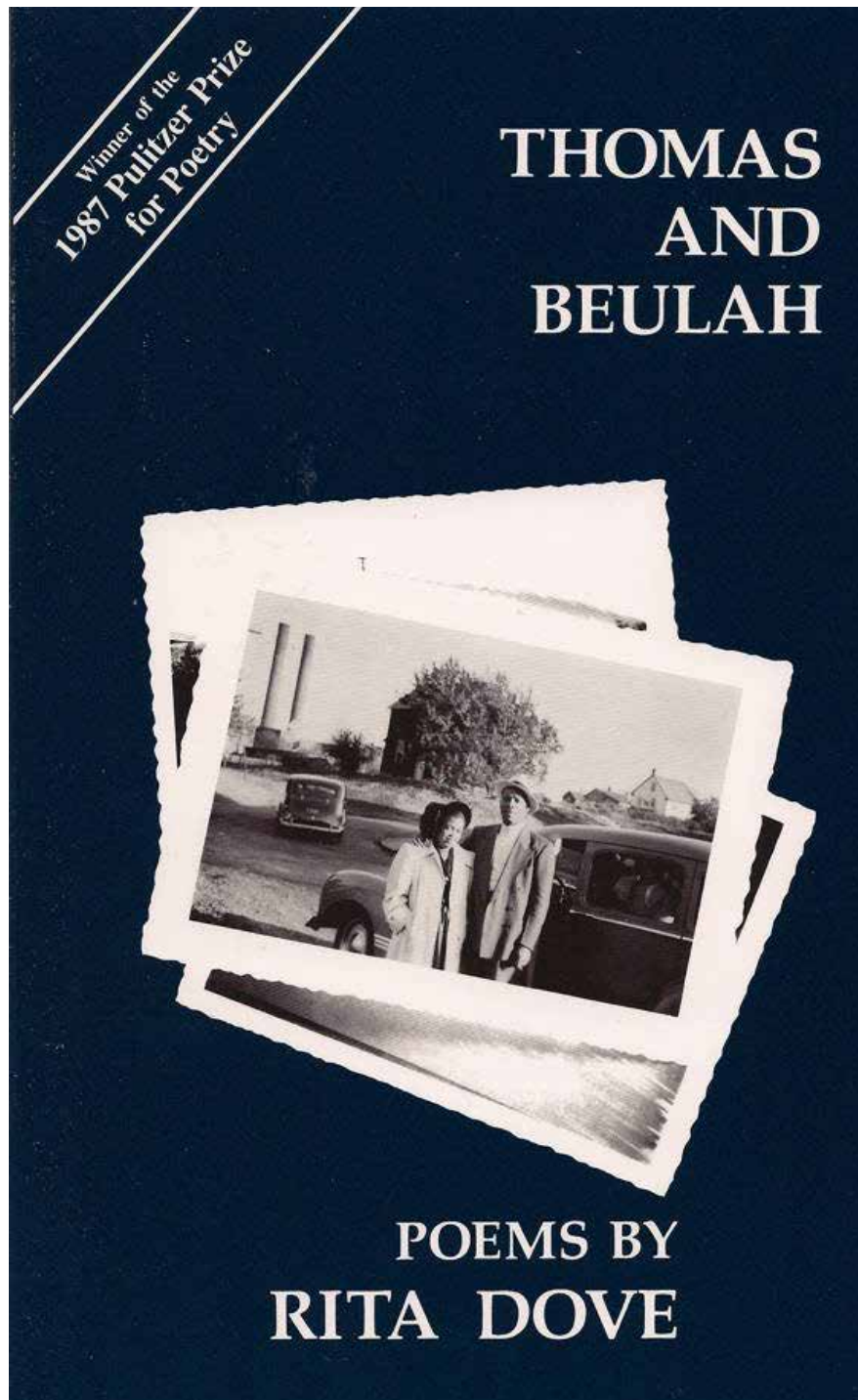
A relative rarity in the world of publishing is the writer who can operate with equal comfort in both the nonfiction and fiction worlds. One Scholar who’s earned praise in both arenas is **Kermit “Kim” Roosevelt III** (1989, DC). His novel *In the Shadow of the Law* (2005) portrays conflicts inside a powerful Washington, D.C., law firm where *pro bono* work is cast aside in favor of only wealthy clientele. The novel was the *Christian Science Monitor* Best Book of the Year and a winner of the Philadelphia Athenaeum Literary Award. Only a year after his novel was published, Roosevelt’s nonfiction treatise, *The Myth of Judicial Activism: Making Sense of Supreme Court Decisions* (2006), was released. The work has been praised as a substantive contribution to the debate over conflicting approaches to interpreting the U.S. Constitution.

Another writer of both fiction and nonfiction is **David Bradley** (1968, PA) whose articles, essays, and reviews have appeared in *Esquire*, *Redbook*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Magazine*, *The Philadelphia Inquirer Magazine*, *Los Angeles Times*, and *The Village Voice*. His first novel, *South Street*, was published in 1975. His second novel, *The Chaneyville Incident* (1981), won the PEN/Faulkner Award and was nominated for the National Book Award for Fiction. He is currently at



work on a nonfiction book, *The Bondage Hypothesis: Meditations on Race and History*, and a novel in stories, *Raystown*.

Like all authors, Scholars write about what they know and what they love. **K. Tsianina Lomawaima** (Kimberly Carr, 1972, OH) is a professor of American



Probably the best known writer who is also a Presidential Scholar is Rita Dove, whose *Thomas and Beulah* won a Pulitzer Prize in 1987.

(1970, OH). Her first published poetry collection, *The Yellow House on the Corner*, was released in 1980. It was followed by *Museum* (1983) and *Thomas and Beulah* (1986), a collection of interrelated poems loosely based on her grandparents' life. It earned Dove a 1987 Pulitzer Prize, making her only the second African-American poet (after Gwendolyn Brooks in 1950) to receive this prestigious award. Other publications by Rita Dove include a book of short stories, *Fifth Sunday* (1985); the poetry collections *Grace Notes* (1989), *Selected Poems* (1993), *Mother Love* (1995), *On the Bus with Rosa Parks* (1999), and *American Smooth* (2004); the novel *Through the Ivory Gate* (1992); the verse drama *The Darker Face of the Earth* (1994, 1996); and a book of her laureate lectures, *The Poet's World* (1995). Her latest poetry collection, *Sonata Mulattica*, was published in 2009. In 1993 she was appointed Poet Laureate of the United States and Consultant in Poetry to the Library of Congress, making her the youngest person – and the first African-American – to receive this highest official honor in American poetry.

The limited space available in this book prohibits mentioning every Presidential Scholar who has written a book, but no Presidential Scholar author should feel excluded. All those Presidential Scholars who write are honored here via the representation of these notable alumni. Alone and together, now and in the future, Scholars write with purpose and passion. They write for themselves and for their readers, knowing their words make a difference.

Faith Brynie, Ph.D. (1964, WV) is the author of 25 books on science and health, including *Brain Sense: The Science of the Senses and How We Process the World Around Us* (2009) and *101 Questions Your Brain Has Asked About Itself But Couldn't Answer ... Until Now* (revised edition, 2008).

Indian Studies at the University of Arizona. She is a member of the Creek Tribe. Her book *They Called It Prairie Light: The Story of Chilocco Indian School* received the 1993 North American Indian Prose Award and the 1995 American Educational Association's Critics' Choice Award. She co-edited and co-authored *Away from Home: American Indian Boarding School Experiences* (2000).

Her most recent book, *To Remain an Indian: Lessons in Democracy from a Century of Native American Education*, co-authored with Teresa L. McCarty, was published in 2006 by Teachers College Press, as part of the Multicultural Education series.

Among all the Presidential Scholars who are authors, perhaps the best known and best loved is Rita Dove



Statistical Snapshot of the 1966 Presidential Scholars: The Stalnaker Survey

In August 1966, Executive Director John M. Stalnaker wrote a letter to the newly appointed Presidential Scholars that summarized the results of a “confidential questionnaire” they had completed. Below is a summary of Stalnaker’s report to the Scholars, the results of which he described as illustrating that “the great common denominator of your answers – as of yourselves – is diversity.” Some of the tabulated responses provided by Stalnaker are summarized below. The responses reveal both what has changed radically, and what has changed very little, among the top high-school seniors in our nation from 1966 to the present:

- For 40%, the Presidential Scholar trip was their first visit to Washington, D.C.
- 20% were proficient in two foreign languages
- 33% played two or more musical instruments
- 60% played two to four sports well
- Their favorite sports were tennis, basketball, and football (men) and swimming, tennis, basketball, and volleyball (women)
- Their favorite hobbies were reading, music (both men and women), followed by chess (men) and sewing (women)
- 35% watched 0-2 hours of television per week
- 60% were very active in religious activities
- 60% came from families with an income above the average of \$6,000-\$7,000 per year
- 67% of fathers and 40% of mothers were college graduates
- 84% of men and 63% of women expected to obtain a Ph.D., medical degree, or law degree
- 50% planned to marry between the ages of 25 and 30 and to have two to three children
- 10% of men expected to earn more than \$25,000 annually; more than 50% of women expected to earn less than \$10,000
- The most commonly cited “distinguished living person whose accomplishments you admire” was the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- 60% reported themselves to be politically left of center, 30% to the right of center, and the other 10% classified themselves as “neutral,” “mixed opinions,” or “totally bewildered”

Presidential Scholars U

The Rhodes and Marshall Scholars connection

BY JOHN KNOX

IMAGINE FOR A MOMENT THAT THE U.S. Presidential Scholars Program is a college. But not just any college; it's a tiny college about one-tenth the size of Harvard or Yale, with a freshman class of only 141 students from all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and abroad.

How do the students and alumni of little “Presidential Scholars U” compare to the elite colleges? One common metric of college comparison is the number of winners of prestigious post-graduate scholarships. The Rhodes Scholarships, given to 32 U.S. students each year since 1904 (men only until 1977; only unmarried persons until 1995) for study at Oxford University, is often regarded as the most selective and prestigious of all such programs. Close behind in prestige are the Marshall Scholarships, given to between 12 and 44 U.S. college graduates each year since 1954 (men and women) for study at any United Kingdom university.

And, so, how many Presidential Scholars have gone on to win Rhodes and Marshall Scholarships? Since the mid-2000s, and with the assistance of Kannon Shanmugam (1989, KS), I have researched this question and have compiled a virtually complete list. **As of January 2014, 59 Presidential Scholars have been Rhodes Scholars, and 43 Presidential Scholars have been Marshall Scholars, for a total of 102 winners in these two renowned scholarship competitions.** (Furthermore, this count does not include those who declined or otherwise could not claim one of the scholarships.) They are, in chronological order of selection by the two competitions:

Presidential Scholar (PS) and Rhodes Scholar (RS)

1. Robert Darryl Banks, 1968 PS KY (1972 RS)
2. Terence David Valenzuela, 1969 PS AZ (1973 RS)
3. Charles Edward Garvin, 1970 PS MS (1974 RS)
4. Robert Bertelson Mitchell, Jr., 1970 PS ND (1974 RS)
5. James Austin Talcott, 1969 PS MT (1974 RS)
6. John Arthur Ausink, 1972 PS WY (1976 RS)
7. James Glynn Basker, 1970 PS OR (1976 RS)
8. Milton Minoru Yasunaga, 1973 PS HI (1977 RS)
9. Eric Oliver Fornell, 1974 PS MI (1978 RS)
10. Mark Milton Foulon, 1974 PS WA (1978 RS)
11. Harry William Printz, 1974 PS CO (1978 RS)
12. Ruth Sara Mazo Karras, 1975 PS OR (1979 RS)
13. Robin Uriel Russin, 1975 PS WY (1979 RS)
14. Linda Lucille Fletcher, 1976 PS TN (1980 RS)
15. Stephen Reeder Morillo, 1976 PS LA (1980 RS)
16. Michael Fleming, 1976 PS WY (1982 RS)
17. Bruce Nelson Reed, 1978 PS ID (1982 RS)
18. Elizabeth E. Kiss, 1979 PS VA (1983 RS)
19. Andrew J. Nussbaum, 1981 PS IL (1985 RS)
20. Beth Ellen Ebel, 1982 PS CO (1986 RS)
21. Vivian S. Lee, 1983 PS OK (1986 RS)
22. Elizabeth M. Cousens, 1981 PS WA (1987 RS)
23. William H. Lipscomb, 1983 PS VA (1987 RS)
24. Richard Yoonsik Chin, 1984 PS KY (1988 RS)
25. Marilynn J. Richtarik, 1984 PS KS (1988 RS)
26. Robert J. Esther, 1987 PS MO (1991 RS)
27. Kenji Yoshino, 1987 PS MA (1991 RS)
28. Jennifer A. Bradley, 1988 PS TX (1992 RS)
29. Akshay Desai, 1988 PS KY (1992 RS)
30. Noah Feldman, 1988 PS MA (1992 RS)
31. Alexander John Hartemink, 1990 PS FL (1994 RS)
32. Jonathan Beere, 1991 PS MI (1995 RS)
33. Rebecca Boggs, 1991 PS KY (1995 RS)
34. Letitia Marie Campbell, 1992 PS AL (1996 RS)
35. Alice Siau-In Chen, 1992 PS MS (1996 RS)
36. Jennifer Elizabeth DeVoe, 1989 PS MT (1996 RS)
37. Ben Ray Sharp, 1992 PS SD (1996 RS)
38. Adam Kenneth Ake, 1993 PS AK (1997 RS)
39. Jeremy Andrew Vetter, 1993 PS NE (1997 RS)
40. Valerie MacMillan, 1994 PS ID (1998 RS)
41. Vaughn Thomas Gray III, 1996 PS MD (2000 RS)
42. Rachel Rebecca Kleinfeld, 1994 PS AK (2000 RS)
43. Derek Eugen Lyons, 1996 PS WA (2000 RS)
44. Brandon David Miller, 1997 PS PA (2001 RS)
45. Alexis Renee Blane, 1998 PS NC (2002 RS)
46. Dave Ashok Chokshi, 1999 PS LA (2003 RS)
47. Adam Steven Cureton, 1999 PS GA (2003 RS)
48. Heidi Lie Williams, 1999 PS ND (2003 RS)
49. Delavane Diaz, 2000 PS FL (2004 RS)
50. Melissa Lynne Dell, 2001 PS OK (2005 RS)
51. Joseph Steven Jewell, 2000 PS MI (2005 RS)
52. Elizabeth W. Mayne, 2001 PS CO (2006 RS)
53. Brad M. Smith, 2001 PS TN (2007 RS)
54. Kyle Q. Haddad-Fonda, 2005 PS WA (2009 RS)
55. Samuel M. Galler, 2008 PS CO (2012 RS)
56. Katherine Niehaus, 2006 PS SC (2012 RS)
57. Victor Yang, 2008 PS KY (2012 RS)
58. Julian B. Gewirtz, 2008 PS CT (2013 RS)
59. Erin A. T. Mauldin, 2010 PS NM (2014 RS)

Presidential Scholar (PS) and Marshall Scholar (MS)

1. Patrick Diehl, 1964 PS TN (1968 MS)
2. Frank Snowden, 1964 PS DC (1968 MS)
3. Frederick Whelan, 1965 PS MD (1969 MS)
4. Nathan Fagre, 1973 PS MN (1977 MS)
5. Sharon Witherspoon, 1974 PS TN (1978 MS)
6. James D’Emilio, 1974 PS NY (1979 MS)
7. Anya Hurlbert, 1976 PS TX (1980 MS)
8. Mitchell Edwards, 1977 PS NJ (1982 MS)
9. Susan Hough, 1978 PS MN (1983 MS)
10. Michael W. Bender, 1980 PS MT (1984 MS)
11. Mark Templer, 1980 PS AZ (1984 MS)
12. Marc Spiegelman, 1981 PS DE (1985 MS)
13. Scott Lichtman, 1984 PS NJ (1988 MS)
14. Jan Rivkin, 1984 PS MD (1988 MS)
15. Byron Auguste, 1985 PS AZ (1989 MS)
16. Jennifer Wu, 1986 PS MD (1990 MS)
17. Thomas Killian, 1987 PS CT (1991 MS)
18. Karen Ho, 1988 PS PA (1993 MS)
19. Kannon Shanmugam, 1989 PS KS (1993 MS)
20. Karin Boxer, 1990 PS NY (1994 MS)
21. Paras Mehta, 1990 PS CA (1994 MS)
22. Aimee Crago, 1991 PS LA (1995 MS)
23. Scott Rottinghaus, 1991 PS KS (1995 MS)
24. Jesse Tseng, 1992 PS AR (1995 MS)
25. Benjamin Kleinman, 1993 PS GA (1996 MS)
26. Frank Pasquale, III, 1992 PS AZ (1996 MS)
27. Andrea Jackson, 1993 PS AZ (1997 MS)
28. Sewell Chan, 1994 PS NY (1998 MS)
29. Robert Ward, 1995 PS NM (2000 MS)
30. Adam Cohen, 1997 PS NY (2001 MS)
31. Katherine Dirks, 1997 PS LA (2001 MS)
32. Paul Vronsky, 1999 PS WA (2003 MS)
33. James Valpiani, 2000 PS NV (2004 MS)
34. Clara Shih, 2000 PS IL (2005 MS)
35. Hari Prabhakar, 2003 PS TX (2007 MS)
36. Betsy Scherzer, 2003 PS FL (2007 MS)
37. Megan Galbreth, 2004 PS TN (2008 MS)
38. Katie Huston, 2004 PS MI (2008 MS)
39. Kyle Mahowald, 2005 PS FL (2009 MS)
40. Mari Oye, 2007 PS MA (2011 MS)
41. Nathaniel Thomas, 2007 PS PA (2011 MS)
42. Christina Chang, 2008 PS TX (2012 MS)
43. Alyssa Bilinski, 2009 PS CT (2014 MS)

How do these numbers compare to the elite colleges and universities of America? Using data from the two scholarship organizations, I have compiled the following rankings:

Number of Rhodes Scholars by Institution, 1904-2014

1. Harvard University/Radcliffe College 347
2. Yale University 233
3. Princeton University 201
4. Stanford University 96
5. U.S. Military Academy 91
6. Dartmouth College 61
7. **U.S. Presidential Scholars 59 (1972-2014; class size 121-141 per year, ~50 percent women)**

8. Brown University 51
9. University of Chicago 50
10. University of Virginia 50
11. U.S. Naval Academy 46
12. University of North Carolina 43
13. Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) 41
14. Duke University 40
15. U.S. Air Force Academy 37 • University of Washington 37

Number of Marshall Scholars by Institution, 1954-2014

1. Harvard University/Radcliffe College 240
2. Princeton University 127
3. Yale University 112
4. Stanford University 85
5. MIT 64
6. Brown University/Pembroke College 46
7. **U.S. Presidential Scholars 43 (1968-2014; class size 121-141 per year)**
8. U.S. Military Academy 36
9. Cornell University 33
10. University of California–Berkeley 29
11. Columbia University/Barnard College 28
12. U.S. Naval Academy 27
13. Dartmouth College 26
14. Duke University 25
15. Rice University 24 • University of Texas–Austin 24

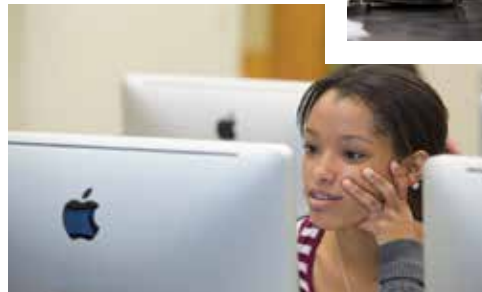
Presidential Scholars from 40 states and the District of Columbia have gone on to further their education in the United Kingdom as Rhodes or Marshall Scholars.

What can these statistics tell us? That the Presidential Scholars are among the elite of the elite, even by metrics that penalize the program for its relative youth, gender balance, small size, and its emphasis on the arts (which is not a priority, for example, in the Rhodes competition). The statistics also suggest that when you are in the presence of the Presidential Scholars, you are with the most concentrated group of exceptionally talented Americans likely to be found anywhere – as originally intended by President Lyndon B. Johnson at the creation of the program.

One somewhat unexpected outcome of this research deserves comment: namely, that there is less overlap than might be expected between the names on these lists and the best-known Presidential Scholar alumni who are profiled elsewhere in this book. As those of us in higher education are all too aware, success in later life depends on a variety of factors that cannot be ascertained easily at age 18 or 22. My research suggests that the Presidential Scholar selection process has been successful at the difficult balancing act of identifying a select few, some of whom will win prestigious scholarships early in life, others who will make a profound difference in American society later on – and those who end up doing both.

To the newest class of Presidential Scholars, I say, look around! Based on long-term averages, at least one of you will be a Rhodes Scholar, and another will be a Marshall Scholar. It could be you! Or you may go on to do even greater things. To alumni, I say, you are members of one of the most remarkable and diverse associations of talented Americans ever assembled. Think of us as “the greatest little college that never was” – and stay in touch with your classmates and your alma mater!

CONGRATULATIONS
to 50 YEARS OF U.S.
Presidential Scholars.
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Gone Too Soon: Roosevelt “Rosey” Thompson (1980, AR)

BY JOHN KNOX

FROM THE VERY FIRST YEAR of the program, Presidential Scholars have been lost due to untimely death. Their stories represent the nation’s loss whenever talented youth leave us before making their full mark on our society.

No Scholar’s death was felt harder by more people than that of Roosevelt “Rosey” Thompson (1980, AR) on March 22, 1984. Rosey was born in Little Rock, Ark., in 1962, the son of an African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Zion minister and a teacher. He attended Little Rock Central High School, the site of some of the most wrenching moments of the civil rights era just one generation earlier.

Rosey excelled in his classes and became valedictorian. He was named the all-star player on the state championship-winning football team. He was elected student body president, breaking down racial barriers. He was a National Merit Scholar. And, in the spring of 1980, Rosey was selected as a Presidential Scholar – one of 22 Scholars to come from Central High School during the first half-century of the program.

Rosey gave his all to the organizations of which he was a part, and this was true of the Presidential Scholars as well. He served as an Advisor in 1981 and 1982, becoming close friends with two other Advisors: Wendell Pierce (1981, LA; see page 122) and Marie Lynn Miranda (1981, MI). More than 30 years later, Miranda recounted her connection with Rosey: “I met him through the Presidential Scholars Program the year that I was a Scholar, and then the following year when we were both Advisors. ... Then and during the years that followed, we talked often about our desire to serve the world, our obligation to give back. ... He was humble in manner, but he had a lot of power in that humility. You could feel the energy he brought. He helped you to be your best self; he made you better. ... It was the purest and truest friendship I have ever had.”

As at Central High School, Rosey sailed through his classes at Yale while setting a standard for extracurricular involvement few could match. He double-majored in history and economics/political science; was elected president of his college’s student council; at five-foot-seven, played



offensive lineman on the football team; was inducted into Phi Beta Kappa as a junior; received the Hart Lyman Prize, given to the top Yale junior for high scholarship and character; and was chosen as a recipient of a prestigious Truman Scholarship. But Rosey also worked at City Hall, focusing on housing and neighborhood development, and revived a tutoring program in the New Haven Public Schools. Meanwhile, back in Arkansas, during the summers he interned for both Bill Clinton and Hillary Rodham Clinton, becoming close to both of them.

Aspiring to a career in public service and politics, Rosey took the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) in preparation

for law school – and made a perfect score, a feat accomplished by as few as 0.1 percent of test-takers nationwide. Slade Mead, a classmate of Rosey’s at Yale, recounted, “Rosey didn’t know when the LSAT was ... he basically just walked in and made a perfect score!” Another Yale classmate, Ned Harris, said matter-of-factly, “Rosey was a one-in-a-million type of person.”

As a senior, Rosey was selected as a Rhodes Scholar. But fate intervened, and Rosey never made it to Oxford the next fall; he was killed in a traffic accident while driving back to Yale from spring break, at the age of 22. Rosey’s friends packed the auditorium of Central High School for his funeral, portions of which were shown on national television.

“It was a loss for the world,” Miranda observed. Mead recalled, “We had already been planning our schedules for 2008 and 2012 so that we could take a year off to volunteer for Rosey’s presidential campaigns in New Hampshire then.”

The impact of Roosevelt Thompson’s short life is still evident today. The auditorium at Central High School is named after him, as is a scholarship and a school club. So is a local public library. At Yale, a senior prize recognizing public service bears his name, as does the football team’s weight room. The AME Zion Church sponsors a national scholarship in Rosey’s name. Harris teaches his students in Baltimore about Rosey, and Mead is the executive producer of a documentary-in-progress about him. Most poignantly, Miranda, now a dean at the University of Michigan, related, “My husband and I named our son Thompson after Rosey.”

Thirty years later, how can others pay tribute to Rosey’s life? Miranda exhorted, “‘Fight the good fight.’ It’s a phrase that dates back to [Rosey’s and my] conversations; it was the description we used. Our world faces difficult, complex problems that people need to engage with passionately and relentlessly. Honor his memory by being one of those people.”

“We all still miss him.”

Peter B. Lewis Center for the Arts
at Princeton University

Princeton in the Service of the

photo by Brian Wilson



photo by Bentley Dreiner

Princeton students work in intimate studio classes with award-winning artists and scholars within the context of a strong liberal arts education.

IMAGINATION



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photo by Denise Appelwhite



photo by Denise Appelwhite



photo by Frank Wojciechowski

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Presidential Scholars' College Choices: Snapshots Through the Decades

BY JOHN KNOX

WHERE DO PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS GO TO COLLEGE? For 50 years the answer has been: all over the nation (and, recently, the world). Each year's recipients choose to attend famous and obscure institutions, large universities and small liberal arts colleges and arts conservatories, the Ivy League and public universities in the North, South, East, and West.

This diversity of college choices has been true from the start. For example, in the inaugural year of 1964, *Time* magazine reported that 73 different colleges and universities were represented among the first Scholars' choices (72, if Harvard and Radcliffe are combined).

As the accompanying statistics that I have obtained and compiled show, for most of the history of the program no more than one-third of Scholars have reported the "top three" Ivies of Harvard/Radcliffe, Yale, or Princeton as their college destination. From 1964-75, the available data indicate that about one-quarter of Scholars attended these Ivies. A little less than a fifth of Scholars over this period attended public institutions, by comparison. Some clustering of college choices is implied in the steadily declining number of the colleges and universities represented from 1964 through 1975.

Subsequently, three changes in the selection of Scholars presumably affected the distribution of college choices. In 1976, ACT scores were included as well as SAT scores in the initial identification process for Scholar candidates. The expansion beyond SAT scores broadened the pool and "gave the program a nationwide breadth which it had never previously enjoyed,"

according to former Assistant Director and early program historian David Sheldon. This was accompanied by an application process following identification that also presumably affected the composition of the Scholars and thus their college choices in some way. Finally, beginning in 1980, Arts Scholars were selected, adding 20 Scholars to the original 121 and further broadening the backgrounds and college choices of Scholars, for example to conservatories of art and music.

Perhaps as a result, in 1983 the diversity in Scholars' college choices rebounded somewhat, with only about one-quarter of Scholars bound for the big three Ivies, and a fifth headed to public universities – the smallest (4.9 percent) gap between top Ivies and publics in the entire period of study. Also, 75 institutions were represented among the 141 Scholars' choices. Even adjusted for the increased number of Scholars, this is the greatest diversity of college choices in the data after 1964.

That same year of 1983, however, the *U.S. News and World Report* college rankings were introduced. These rankings have had a sizable impact on colleges and top students' college choices, according to various sources. For the past 30 years, the *U.S. News and World Report* rankings have indicated

that the top national universities in America are virtually all private institutions, with Harvard, Yale, and Princeton trading places year after year at the top of the list.

The statistics available during the 1990s suggest that something led to a long-term change in Scholars' college choices beginning in this decade. By 2000, more than 40 percent of Scholars were attending the top Ivies (with more than 30 percent going just to Harvard alone in 2000), the highest proportion I have found. Attendance at public universities and the diversity of Scholars' choices hit a low point in the data in 2000.

During the past decade the percentage of Scholars attending the "top three" Ivies declined a little following 2000, but rose to nearly 40 percent by 2012, with 52 colleges selected. The next year, in 2013, the numbers edged back a bit from these recent extremes.

Does the clustering of college choices in the 21st century versus previous decades reflect wiser choices by latter-day Scholars, who in an earlier era would not have dared apply to more prestigious schools? Or is it a reflection of the growing importance of college rankings and reputation in students' college choices? How have economic boom times and recessions affected the college decisions of Scholars? These are questions for researchers in higher education to tackle.

Regardless of the explanations, it remains the case that throughout the first half-century of the Presidential Scholars Program, its influence has been felt through its alumni at hundreds of institutions of higher education throughout the United States.

SCHOLARS YEAR:	1964 (121)	1966	1968	1975	1983 (141)	1990	1993	2000	2002	2006	2012	2013
Percentage attending Harvard/Radcliffe, Yale, or Princeton	22.3	28.1	20.7	26.4	25.5	27.7	33.3	40.4	34.0	32.3	39.5	33.9
Percentage attending public universities	17.4	22.3	15.7	18.2	20.6	17.4	17.7	10.6	12.1	18.1	12.8	15.6
Number of colleges represented	72	61	59	53	75	65	62	43	58	58	52	59
Top five college choices (Radcliffe with Harvard, Pembroke with Brown, Barnard with Columbia)	• Harvard • Stanford • Swarthmore & Yale (tie) • Princeton	• Harvard • Yale • Stanford • MIT • Michigan & Oberlin (tie)	• Harvard • Stanford • Yale • Brown & Mich. St. (tie)	• Harvard • Princeton • Yale • Dartmouth, MIT (tie) & Rice (tie)	• Harvard • Yale • Princeton • BYU & Stanford (tie)	• Harvard • Yale • Princeton • Duke & MIT (tie)	• Harvard • Princeton & Stanford (tie) • MIT • Yale	• Harvard • MIT • Princeton & Stanford (tie) • Columbia & Yale (tie)	• Harvard • Stanford • Yale • Princeton • Princeton	• Harvard • Yale • Princeton • Stanford • Duke & MIT (tie)	• Harvard • Yale • Princeton • Princeton • Duke • Stanford	• Harvard • Yale • Princeton • Princeton • Stanford • MIT

A Match Made at the Medallion Ceremony

An interview with Ruth Mazo Karras and Christopher G. Karras, Presidential Scholars

BY JOHN KNOX

RUTH MAZO KARRAS (1975, OR) is professor and chair, Department of History, at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis, Minn. **Christopher G. Karras (1975, SD)** is special corporate counsel at the City of Philadelphia Law Department, Philadelphia, Pa.

Where do you hail from?

Ruth Mazo Karras: I was a faculty brat from Eugene, Ore.

Christopher G. Karras: I grew up in Huron, S.D., where my parents owned a neighborhood grocery store that was the largest in town in 1926, but that did not grow.

And you were both selected as Presidential Scholars!

RMK: Yes, I remember being contacted out of the blue.

Any special memories of your time in Washington? Meet anyone interesting there?

RMK: A bunch of people, yes, several of whom were going to Yale in the fall, like me. Chris was one of them.

Do you remember the first time you saw him?

RMK: I do. All the boys were in suits, and he was wearing a National Forensics League [NFL] pin on his lapel. I was a debater, and was in the NFL too. But the people on my team always made fun of people who wore the NFL lapel pins. So I went up and said to him, "That's really tacky!"

Ah, love at first sight! What did Chris think of that?

RMK: He was a little taken aback.

CGK: That's an understatement. That pin now lives among Ruth's jewelry, but I have not seen her wear it.

What happened next?

RMK: Well, he must have gotten my attention, because a friend of mine kept a letter I wrote her – a real letter, back in those days – at the end of our time in

Washington, and I mentioned in this letter a guy I'd met.

Chris ...

RMK: Yes. And over that summer, Chris mailed me a couple of photographs of me at the White House that he had taken and developed. Back then, it took some effort to send pictures in the mail. He told me where he was going to be living at Yale. We started dating in the fall of our freshman year. ...

Some Scholars have brief infatuations during National Recognition Week, but you and Chris have been together for, what, 38 years now. And you've covered a lot of territory. First Yale, and then you were a Rhodes Scholar. Oxford had just recently started admitting women, correct?

RMK: Yes, it was the third year that women had been Rhodes Scholars. The Rhodes program was pretty well gender-integrated, but my college at Oxford was not. ... Chris and I were married after that, in 1984, when we were living in New York.

“We tell [our children] that they are the products of a government eugenics program.”

And that was just the start of the traveling.

RMK: Shortly after we married we moved to Pennsylvania for my first job. I've been at Minnesota for 14 years now. Chris is in Philadelphia but lived for a couple of years in London. And we have two children, ages 20 and 26.

Wow. And your professional accomplishments – eight books,

teaching, administration – are formidable. Presidential Scholars today are often two-career high achievers. Do you have any insights for past, present, and future Scholars who struggle with balancing life, career, and family?

RMK: I tell people, "I have no social life and my family eats pasta all the time." That's not quite true, but ... something has to give.

What's it like for your children, with two parents who are Presidential Scholars?

RMK: We tell them that they are the products of a government eugenics program.

[Laughing] How do they deal with it?

RMK: Whatever your parents are is what's normal for you. They went to school with a lot of other kids with two parents in high-stress professional jobs. Our older daughter worked in a neighborhood bakery, and we were happy about that, because you meet all sorts of people that way. It perhaps gave her some idea of what Chris's family did back in South Dakota.

Speaking of which, one focus of your research as an historian is on relationships –

RMK: – On gender, some of which is on relationships.

Have your own relationships, for example one that blossomed at the Presidential Scholars events, informed your work?

RMK: I think they have to. In my recent book on marriage and other paired relationships [*Unmarriages: Women, Men, and Sexual Unions in Medieval Europe*, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012], I wrote about how we don't have the same expectations in marriage today that the medieval world did.



I've benefited from a marriage that's very different from what would have been expected back then. I dedicated the book to my just-married daughter and son-in-law, saying, "I look forward to the day when everyone has the option to choose marriage as they have done, but also to choose other forms of partnership or singleness without incurring legal or social disadvantages."

You were a pioneer in this respect, or part of the "second wave" ...

RMK: Yes, the tail end of the second wave. I benefited hugely by the women pioneers who were a generation, or even a half-generation older than I was. Yale had been open to women for a decade, the Rhodes for three years. That said, I'm one of the few academic women of my generation who uses my husband's name.

CGK: I was lucky that Ruth got her first job before she had published. It was easier to explain to corporate law firms why I was leaving a white shoe firm in New York for the hinterlands if we were married, so we got married and she changed her name. As my mother asked her, "Will you keep your father's name or take your husband's?"

Looking back, how has the Presidential Scholars experience affected your life?

RMK: It had more of an effect on Chris than on me. As a faculty brat, I'd been to D.C. before. I was raised to think I could go to whatever college I wanted, have a high-powered career. It was different for Chris. He was at the National Youth Science Camp in West Virginia that same summer – another highly selective program that overlapped in time with the Presidential Scholars Program. Chris missed the opening ceremony in West Virginia, which he had to do on his own when he returned there. As one of the Science Camp "Staph Members" drove him to D.C., Chris had a feeling of possibility that he'd never felt before in his life.

CGK: Ruth underestimates the effect the Presidential Scholars Program had for her. We have two children and one grandchild to prove it.

Mother and Child Reunion: Two Generations Reflect on Being Presidential Scholars

An interview with Peg McCarthy and Sam Teeter

BY JOHN KNOX

MARGARET "PEG" McCARTHY (1983, KS) is a former journalist and licensed psychologist who maintains a part-time private practice in Topeka, Kan. She is an active volunteer in the community, serving on the Board of Education of the Topeka Public Schools since 2006 as well as numerous other local and statewide boards. Her son Sam Teeter (2011, KS) is a junior at Kenyon College and a 2011 Presidential Scholar in the Arts. I caught up with them via Google Hangout – Peg in Topeka, Sam in Ireland while doing a study abroad program at Trinity University in Dublin.

Peg, let's start by talking about your experience of being a Scholar in D.C. in 1983.

Peg McCarthy: I was very honored to be a representative of the state of Kansas.

I'd been to Washington before; that wasn't new to me. But I was excited to meet so many bright and motivated kids, including some who were going to my college [Yale] – being from Kansas, I didn't know anyone

else going there. It marked a transition for me from high school to college. ...

One thing that differentiates the Presidential Scholars from any other competition was, we were able to recognize a teacher. That was thrilling – I got to recognize Marge Bakalar, the venerable AP English teacher at my high school. I'm still the only Presidential Scholar from my high school, and so that was the one chance for her to be publicly recognized.

I think my experience was way different from Sam's. ...



Sam Teeter: For me, National Recognition Week in 2011 was the climax at the end of the whole YoungArts process. The whole week in Miami was the highlight for me – meeting so many other kids who were incredibly talented, who thought like me. Bright, gifted, dedicated kids. I felt at home among them.

PM: What about having your work displayed?

ST: The recognition was the neatest part. My writing was displayed at the National Portrait Gallery. It was fantastic to receive that kind of attention. Artists, especially young ones, struggle with confidence. Then, finally, you get this group saying to you, “Yes, you are worthwhile, you do belong” – in Miami, in D.C., at the Smithsonian. It was really an incredible relief.

What has been the impact of the Presidential Scholars experience on your life?

PM: One thing it did for me, in more of a general way, was to give me experience as being a representative of a state. My claim to fame was that I represented Kansas at the National Spelling Bee [McCarthy was the 1978 National Spelling Bee champion]. At National Recognition Week, I felt recognized, but also given a message to do something with my gifts for a greater good. It was validation and obligation.

Did it inspire you to, for example, serve on the Topeka school board?

PM: Yes, I come from a public school education, and the Presidential Scholars recognition was validation, proof that our system was working. I brought that sense

into my kids’ public schools, and now I serve on the board.

ST: To be honest, the Presidential Scholars experience has caused some confusion for me. Before it, I might have gone to college and been a science student. Instead, I became an English major. I’m trying to strike a balance between the two. I was inspired to be curious about things; without the experience, I might have eventually gotten bored with writing, and stopped. Or maybe not. ... It gave me a lot of courage. I was more confident entering classes, competitions, and putting my work out in public. Writing used to be much more for fun; I’m more self-conscious now. You feel pressure to live up to your success.

PM: One difference between our experiences is technology. The YoungArts people, they can stay in touch more easily [than we could in 1983].

ST: We’re all still friends online. I’m jealous of the New Yorkers – they get together all the time!

So, Peg, what’s it like to be the mom of a Presidential Scholar?

PM: Pretty amazing. The whole YoungArts experience was very different from my experience. [When Sam was in high school] I remember thinking about the Scholars in the Arts, so I Googled it, read about the process, and entered him in it. I cautioned him, there are only 20 Scholars in the Arts in the whole nation. Then the call came, on a very bad day. ...

ST: I remember why it was a bad day. It was the day I took the AP Chemistry test – if anything can kill a day, that can! I was late getting back to school, and a hall-sweeper caught me; it was the only day ever that I had to do detention after school! But then the bad day became a good day. ... Mom had signed me up with YoungArts and had given them my cell phone number. I answered the phone and a woman said, “You won!” I said, “Which one are you?” because I was entered in so many different contests, three or four at a time. “You won YoungArts, you’re going to Miami!” I replied “Thank you” a lot.

So, Sam, what’s it like to be the son of a Presidential Scholar?

ST: [Laughing] I wasn’t actually aware [she was a Presidential Scholar] until I won it. ... It was kind of surreal,

similar to when I won the county spelling bee.

PM: Out in Kansas, you do what you do because you love it, not for the recognition. Having them recognize you as one of the top five writers in the country ...

ST: ... it was the highlight of my life for several years. College was underwhelming after that!

Peg, as a National Spelling Bee champion, you've seen that award receive much more attention and visibility in recent years.

PM: Oh, yes.

Along those lines, do you have any ideas or thoughts about greater visibility for the Presidential Scholars?

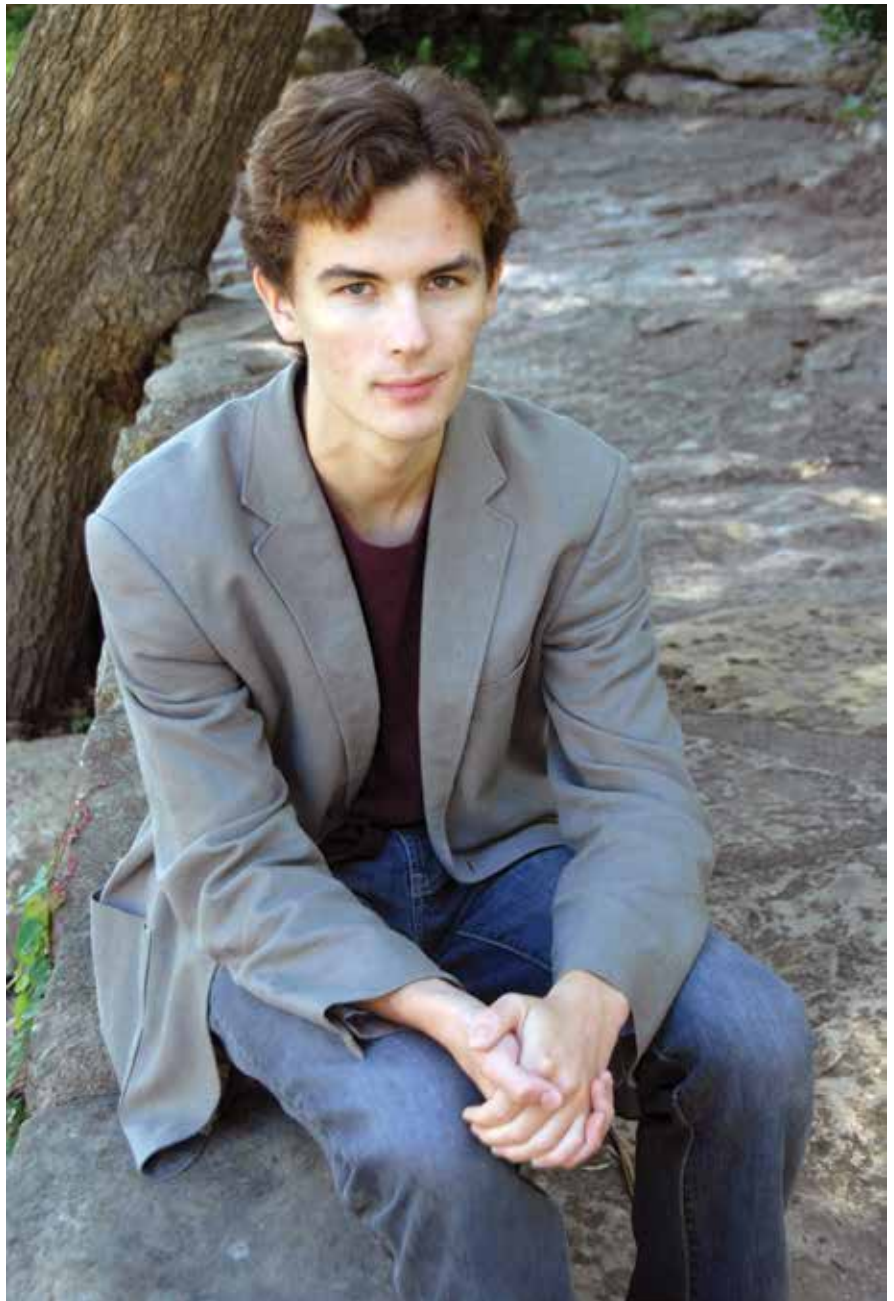
PM: I think the National Spelling Bee gets more attention because it's televised, there's the competitive aspect, and there's a single winner. It's really up to our local and national media to promote it, to put it more in the public eye. It's a little different for Scholars in the Arts, because of the HBO [Emmy-nominated] series *Masterclass*.

Tell more about that series.

ST: I wasn't part of it, but it's essentially a series in which performing artists [who are YoungArts participants] get to do master classes with famous performers in their field. For example, singers do classes with Patti LuPone. ... The YoungArts program needs to be better known. It's really an incredible opportunity. ... Kids should be dying to get into this.

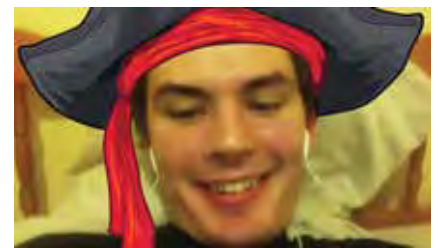
Any other thoughts about the Presidential Scholars experience and how it's affected your lives?

PM: Attending school in the very district that was a litigant in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* lawsuit, I grew up aware that educational opportunities could be different for children from different races and backgrounds. My own children attend school in the same district. Our school district in Topeka is very low-income, urban – a minority district with over 70 percent of its students qualifying for free or reduced school lunch programs. As a school board member now myself, including two terms as president, I have strived to keep equity in the forefront as we make decisions about curricula, personnel, facilities, really every aspect



of the school district. Opportunities like becoming a Presidential Scholar should be accessible to all of our students.

ST: I didn't really talk yet about meeting the academic Scholars – that was very inspiring too ... to hear these discussions about science, politics, economics; it was exciting to hear the ideas bouncing around. You hear a lot of talk about how our generation will have all these problems to deal with; it's *seldom encouraging*. [Laughter] But to hear those who have ideas, who are involved, who are animated, who want to solve these problems, that's inspiring.



Thanks so much for making time for this interview. Don't forget, I need a photograph for the book –

ST: How about this? [Laughter as Sam superimposes a pirate hat on his head in Google Hangout.]

Sibling Artistry

An interview with Rachel Goss and Alex Goss

BY ANA E. LOPEZ

RACHEL GOSS (2006, TX) AND ALEX GOSS (2010, TX) are siblings who were both named Presidential Scholars in the Arts. Rachel attended Vassar College and studied abroad in St. Petersburg, Russia, before graduating with degrees in art history and Russian studies. She is currently living in London, England, working toward a master's degree in art business at the Sotheby's Institute of Art. Growing up, Alex concentrated his artistic efforts in photography, but in the last few years he has devoted more time to sculpture as well. He is finishing his Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at the Cooper Union in New York City and hopes as his next step to study industrial design in Stockholm, Sweden.

Clearly you're both artistically inclined and gifted. Where do you think it comes from? Did you grow up in an artistic household?

Alex Goss: I guess my parents joke about it a lot because my dad's an engineer and my mom's a CPA, but we were always encouraged to get messy when we were young and were never really told no about an art project. Both my folks are pretty creative, I'd say. Our older brother did photography before Rachel and I did. But my dad actually was one of the people who helped me learn how to use a camera, along with my sister. He always claims he never had a creative bone in his body, but I remember one of the first days I used his camera, we went back home and he showed me the pictures he took when he was in the Navy on the same camera, and I was like, "Wow, these are really interesting," but he was like, "Oh, no no no." So I think it's definitely some kind of family thing. I guess my folks gave us opportunities to let it out.

Rachel Goss: Yeah. I think even at a really young age, we were both definitely encouraged to draw and tinker around. Any kind of creativity - if it was artistic or just asking questions and having any kind of dialogue - was encouraged. I am more into drawing and painting, and both my parents really encouraged that.

What stands out the most for you both as far as your time in D.C.? What are your strongest memories of that week?

RG: We had the opportunity to display our artwork at the Corcoran Gallery. We had all of the other Presidential Scholars come into the exhibition, and we got to talk to them about our art and our process, which to me was really, really great because I had interacted with all of these people during the course of the week. As a Presidential Scholar in the Arts, sometimes I felt a little not totally understood. So, I think that was really cool to be able to connect to people who maybe didn't have the same sort of experience I had.

AG: When I first got there, I was asked by the Director of the Event, the Showcase - to run around the city and make a video of monuments, along with some of the Scholars in the Arts. . . . And I felt like I was getting the best deal out of anyone, because I got to run around and be a tourist. That was definitely fun, but then, like what Rachel was saying, getting to know the Scholars - the academic Scholars. There were some people from Houston. Some people who were even going to the same school as I was - the Cooper Union - for engineering. I still see them in the hallways and we're like, "Remember that? That was crazy." It felt like a similar situation of Cooper Union now - there's the artists and engineers and people who have a different kind of capital of knowledge and talent.

In what ways has being recognized by the Presidential Scholars Program had an impact on your life so far?

RG: People are usually interested, so that begins a conversation. And people

are always impressed. It's opened a lot of opportunities, just in terms of having conversations with people and in career and job aspects as well.

AG: It fills the need for reassurance that you're, I guess, worth a darn. It almost feels like you're a representative of your discipline from your state, from your home. And that felt pretty amazing. It sounds strange, but even getting into Cooper Union, I was second-guessing myself - like, was this a fluke? Did they really understand that I only took pictures? I didn't believe that I was really ready for all this and good enough for all this. And I guess Presidential Scholars on top of that was like - wow. Maybe there *is* a chance that I could do something ...

RG: Maybe there's a reason.

AG: Yeah. Yeah.

Do you two discuss art in general and your own artistic endeavors with each other?

RG: I think we talk about Alex's art a lot because obviously he is a creator. Whenever we are able to go to galleries or go to museums, we can't help but talk about art.

AG: Rachel's been a big help, with the occasional art history paper that I kinda slack off on, she's helped whip me into shape.

RG: Oh, I forgot about that!

AG: Especially with the Russian. I was doing some Russian art history a year or so ago, and Rachel helped me understand some things that I was having trouble with. But - yeah, we don't do it enough.

You both are interested in the interaction between technology and art or traditional art-making methods. Can you talk about that a little bit?

RG: Technology obviously is really integrated into our cultures. For that reason alone, I think it's interesting. I am interested in how technology is changing our relationship to art. There

are online platforms that allow you to access databases of art and interact with art and sort of collect it in its own way. And then, in the art business capacity, it's also quite interesting to see how you can actually purchase art online and how that is changing how people are able to interact with art. So, the democracy that online technology has created is quite interesting. And then on the other hand, with the actual practice of creating art, I think some of the most interesting contemporary art today either explores our relationship to technology - how it's changing us through Twitter and Facebook, etc. - or utilizes technology - instead of painting, using your computer to create glitch art or creating an art installation on a website. Just the type of art that now is not really recognized as art, but I think in the future has a huge potential, just because that's the way history has always gone.

AG: It sounds backwards, but a lot of things you can't learn in school very easily any more, like machining metal and a lot of woodworking techniques, so I'm always watching YouTube late at night [to learn those skills]. Just one more video and then you go on to the next thing and the next thing. And then [actually] doing it is so much different, I found. But I learned a lot from YouTube. It's kind of sad on one hand, but it's been a huge tool.

RG: Alex is an interesting case. You can tell he's very interested in craft - that sort of process - and handmade aspect. But at the same time, he is able to combine that with new technology, which I think is quite interesting. Like 3-D printing.

AG: Yeah. Half the time, I just want to go disappear in the woods somewhere and just make little wooden things, furniture and whatever. But as much as I love that and tradition, technology has a lot to offer for a more democratic conception of art or just objects in general.

What do you feel is the value of a program like the Presidential Scholars?

RG: [In Washington, D.C.] I just felt inspired pretty much the whole time by everyone. And I think as a young person, it's really important to be around other young people that are equally as inspiring and challenge you and help you question your experiences and your belief system.

AG: I think offering a vehicle and environment where you can meet other people your age who have just



gone through applying to colleges and applying to this program and starting a new chapter. It was this moment where so many of us were going on to this next step and all seeing what we had in common and all of our different backgrounds and all the different schools we came from and where we were hoping to go. That was a cool thing [to experience] that I don't think could happen in any other way. And it should definitely be in a place like D.C., where you can be surrounded by such large things that are happening.

RG: I think it's also interesting because there was really so much diversity. As a person that has spent extended amounts of time outside of the U.S., that's one thing that we really, I think, take for granted a lot of the time - how we are so accepting of people's differences and their different points of view. I think it shows America maybe how we would prefer to see it all the time.

Any additional thoughts or comments?

RG: Well, I just want to add that our mom in particular played a really big part in helping us and encouraging us along the way to Presidential Scholars. She was just an amazing person to have on that process. And then now. Just a little shout-out to mom.

AG: Definitely!



The Presidential Scholars Program Teacher Recognition Award

Students honor the educators who have made an impact

BY CRAIG COLLINS

SINCE 1964, THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM and the events of the National Recognition Program have evolved continuously, broadening the community of past and present Scholars and the educators who have influenced them. The program’s first formal recognition of the influence of teachers was in 1983, when the Distinguished Teacher Award was created. Upon selection, each Presidential Scholar was asked to designate the teacher who had the greatest influence on his or her academic and personal growth. The new award enabled the program to honor the individual achievements of Presidential Scholars while acknowledging that each had been supported, guided, and encouraged by adult leaders – teachers, counselors, parents, and family members.

When the American Association of Gifted Children, in 1994, published a working paper titled “The Presidential Scholars: A Portrait of Talent and Its Development,” its conclusions supported this idea, suggesting that the talents of Presidential Scholars had blossomed in part due to the positive influences of parents and teachers, and in part because their own experiences had allowed their abilities to flourish.

The teachers’ honor was renamed the Presidential Scholars Program Teacher Recognition Award in 1998. It became customary, during National Recognition Week, for each Presidential Scholar to take

describing the educators they’ve chosen to honor – and these statements are startlingly revealing, not only about the teachers themselves, but also about the extraordinary relationships that develop a promising student, one with rare talents and sensibilities, into a Presidential Scholar. In 2004, to honor the 40th anniversary of the Presidential Scholars Program, each of the Scholars’ statements was printed in a booklet distributed to honorees and their families during National Recognition Week. Spencer Chu, a Presidential Scholar from Blue Valley North High School in Overland Park, Kan., in honoring his freshman

Teacher Michele Buche, who has been honored eight times with the Presidential Scholars Teacher Recognition Award, at the 2013 National Recognition Week in Washington, D.C., with students Tina Wei (2012, KS), who was an Advisor, and Gavri Schreiber (2013, KS).

that unyielding force pushing me towards realizing my potential. Whenever I felt the inevitable tug of ‘senioritis,’ Mrs. Radio would pull me aside and share an article or insight on some fascinating subject ranging from the string theory of the universe to Chinese family culture. Her passion for learning and achieving is truly contagious.”

Michele Radio – who goes by the name Michele Buche today – is now an eight-time honoree of the Teacher Recognition Award, and in her repeated trips with her students to Washington, D.C., she has met literally hundreds of the nation’s best teachers. “The teachers

“She said I was the one who understood her the best,” said Loh. “She said other teachers taught her how smart she was, and that I was the one who taught her how much she had to learn.”

a moment and acknowledge the teacher, counselor, or school administrator who had been his or her greatest inspiration or influence. In the years since, the activities of National Recognition Week have been expanded to include interactions and round-table discussions among these exceptional educators.

Every year, Presidential Scholars are asked to submit a brief statement

English and Enrichment teacher, Michele Radio, focused on her tireless efforts to both nurture his talents and to challenge him to do more – to work on both his strengths and his weaknesses.

“The living embodiment of determination, zeal, and dreams,” he wrote, “Mrs. Radio takes delight in cultivating the futures of her students. For me personally, Mrs. Radio has been

chosen by Presidential Scholars,” she said, “are the teachers who help kids make large and important connections in their learning. They’re the teachers who help students see that the world is much larger than their own lives, that the world is a global, interconnected place, and that these connections must be made – and if you’re not making them, you’re selling yourself short and you’re selling the world short.”



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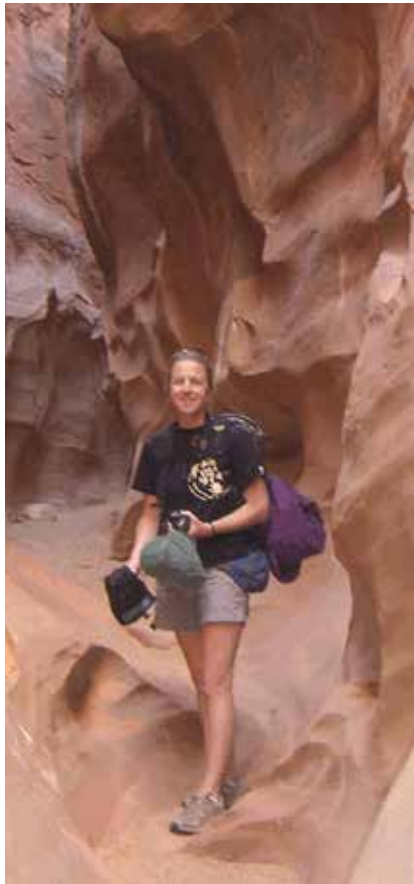
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Steve Loh, who taught chemistry, astronomy, and gifted education at Hoffman Estates High School in suburban Chicago before retiring last year, was recognized by his student, Mengran “Meran” Liu, at the 2012 awards ceremony. “She said I was the one who understood her the best,” said Loh. “She said other teachers taught her how smart she was, and that I was the one who taught her how much she had to learn.”

The Making of a Presidential Scholar

It’s almost universally true: The teachers recognized by Presidential Scholars have seen perfect grades and high test scores before, and none finds them to be particularly distinctive or impressive. The qualities such teachers recognize among Presidential Scholars – and that they see recognized annually by the program – reveal a culture of teaching and learning that values both capability and achievement; both drive and responsibility. “Every single year,” said Buche, “they seem to be able to recognize the kid who has the widest array of talents and the deepest sense of duty.”

For every Presidential Scholar, there is a story to be told that distinguishes him or her as more than just a good student. Patricia Bank, a geometry and statistics teacher from the Altamont School in Birmingham, Ala., was recognized by her student, Rakesh Goli, at the 2012 ceremony. “There is no opportunity,” she said, “that Rakesh doesn’t take to practice. Even reading his daily homework was interesting, because he’d make notes to himself, even on multiple-choice



Physics teacher Helen Petach of Boulder, Colo., was nominated for the Teacher Recognition Award by her student Cissy Chen (2012, CO).

out in their students is humility. Sophia Gershman, the physics teacher who guided Priyanka Goyal (2012) through a research project at Watchung Hills Regional High School in Warren, N.J., said: “Priyanka wasn’t accidentally a Presidential Scholar. She’s a very special kid. She didn’t actually seek this out. She was nominated by others. ... She doesn’t look for praise or validation from other people.”

felt would benefit him, and that he was interested in. He really lived his faith by working in a lot of charitable activities in town, one of which involved working with the homeless in the local food pantry, and he did it in a way that consumed huge amounts of time – but he received no publicity. He was just a joy to teach, because he wanted to learn; he worked hard; he accepted responsibility for himself; and he was humble.”

For Helen Petach, a physics teacher at Fairview High School in Boulder, Colo., learning that her student Cissy Chen had been chosen as a 2012 Presidential Scholar confirmed to her that the award “is not a random chance. Great students aren’t just smart, and don’t just learn. They have this bigger picture of the world around them, which they want to transform. They’re very internally driven – the work they do isn’t about their parents, or about their grades, or about what college they might get into. It’s truly intrinsic motivation of the most beautiful kind.”

Teachers in Washington

Among this small sample of teacher honorees, memories of their visits to Washington – and particularly the things

“For me, this was the best award I’d ever received, because I was chosen by a student. In my heart, that was the most rewarding thing that’s ever happened to me as a teacher. It was kind of the culmination of my career, and it was wonderful.”

questions, about what he was thinking. He’d come at problems in ways that sometimes I hadn’t thought of originally. He left a template for me to say: ‘This is how you do it. If you commit to this activity, this kind of disciplined thinking, you will be successful.’”

Perhaps surprisingly among the teachers recognized by Presidential Scholars, one of the traits they most often point

Miranda Dungan, who taught Advanced Placement (AP) Chemistry to Taufik Roharjo (2012) at Hoggard High School in Wilmington, N.C., said she was impressed by how, in the often cutthroat atmosphere cultivated by the school’s most competitive students, he distinguished himself, paradoxically, by remaining low-key. “Taufik was not involved in all that,” she said. “He just chose the courses he

they don’t remember very well – offer insight into the exceptional attributes and circumstances that combine to produce a Presidential Scholar. Many found the social events forgettable: “Most teachers,” said Buche, “are pretty socially inept. They’re not that great at cocktail parties.”

Loh acknowledged being thrilled by the fanfare surrounding National Recognition Week: “It knocked my

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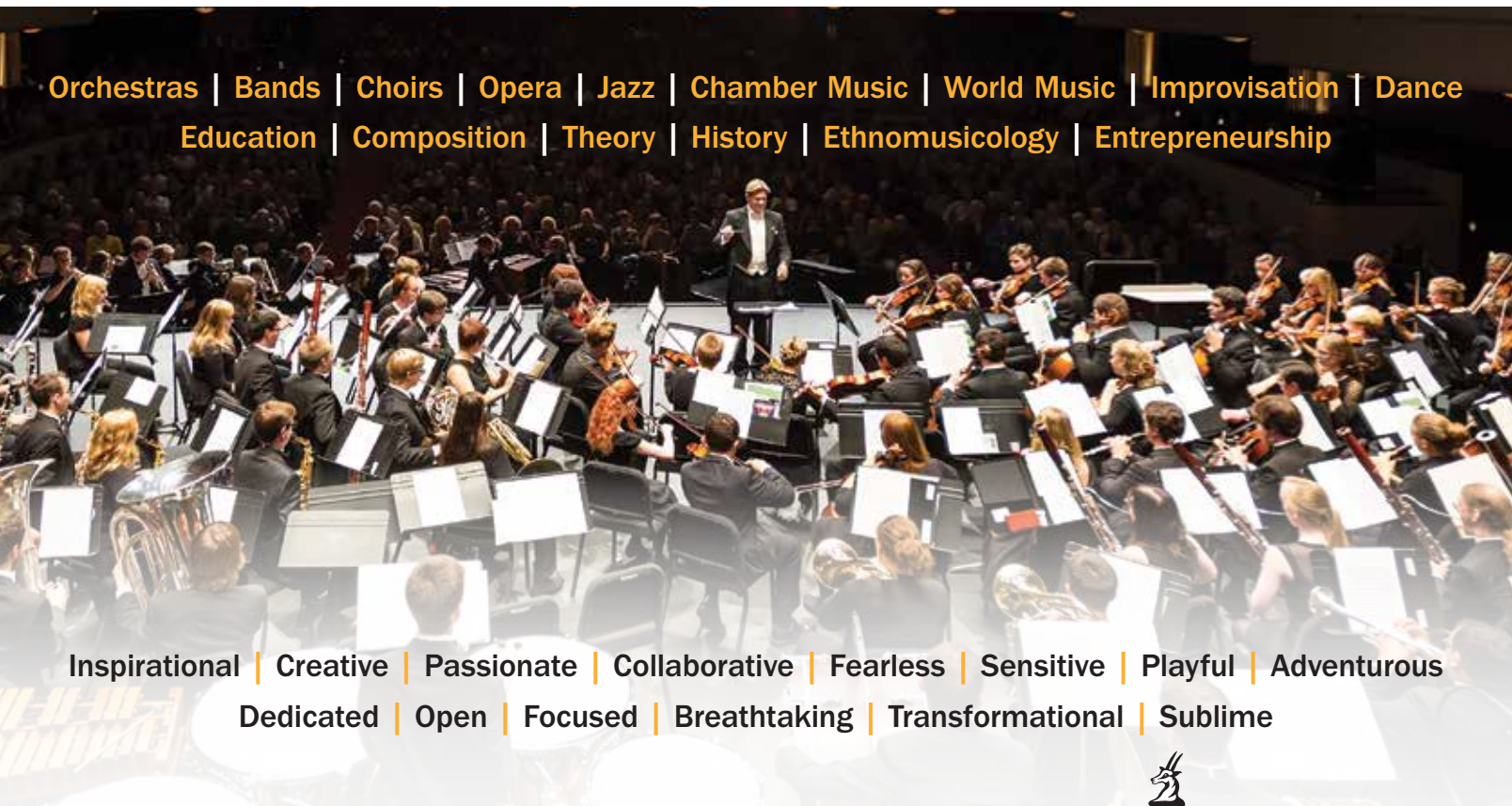
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socks off,” he said. “We don’t get into this job because we like the PR, but we were treated as very special from the start. I guess the fact that these kids had thought we were something special – everyone kind of bought into that, and said, ‘OK, she says you’re special. You must be.’ So right from the start we were just very appreciated, very respected the whole time. And that was a nice change.”

When it came to the details of the week’s events, many of the teacher honorees had trouble remembering the names of all the beautiful buildings they visited. However, they did remember the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, where they were thrilled to see the current years’ Arts Scholars perform, and the Lyndon B. Johnson Building, U.S. Department of Education Headquarters – where, despite their apparently muted performance at social events, they proved they had much to talk about.

For many of the 2012 teacher honorees, one of the most memorable events of National Recognition Week was the time spent in round-table discussions with teaching fellows selected to conduct the Department of Education’s RESPECT (Recognizing Educational Success, Professional Excellence and Collaborative Teaching) Project, a series of National Conversations aimed at renewing and transforming the teaching profession



like law and medicine, a field where – as in other countries – the best and the brightest are recruited to do it. That was definitely very interesting. I would have loved more days of that.”

As for the award presented to them at a dinner honoring their own efforts, many of the 2012 honorees seemed to have

Patricia Bank went to Washington, D.C., in 2012 after being nominated by her student Rakesh Goli (2012, AL). The teacher round-table discussions were a highlight of her time there.

Award has a larger symbolic significance. “In teaching, you don’t often see the result of your work,” she said. “You may never see the result. But when you go to the teacher recognition dinner and receive your plaque, with your student’s name, and the presidential seal, and your name, you have been validated. You feel as if you’re representing a whole group of teachers as you sit there – not just yourself, but all the teachers who do all of these things, every single day. And that’s special.”

A Student’s Award

In fact, it seems most of the teachers recognized by Presidential Scholars are happy to downplay any personal attention they might receive during the week. One of the very few teachers to be recognized more times than Buche is Walt Bartman, who taught an improbable 11 Presidential Scholars in the Arts – 10 of them during his 30-year tenure (1971–2001) as the

“In teaching, you don’t often see the result of your work,” Buche said. “You may never see the result. But when you go to the teacher recognition dinner and receive your plaque, with your student’s name, and the presidential seal, and your name, you have been validated.”

in the United States. While many of the fellows were younger teachers, said Dungan, the teachers recognized by Presidential Scholars – many of them experienced veterans – had much insight to offer. “I think this group of teachers, all of whom were selected by outstanding students as outstanding teachers, could be used in a way to comment on national policy and try to help promote policies,” she said.

“I had no idea they were doing this program,” said Bank, “where teachers go and spend a year in Washington to look at how to change the teaching profession ... to make it more like other professions,

felt almost embarrassed at being singled out. “We got called up and given plaques and it was very nice,” said Dungan, who has since retired from teaching. “I appreciated that. But this week was about the students. And for me, this was the best award I’d ever received, because I was chosen by a student. In my heart, that was the most rewarding thing that’s ever happened to me as a teacher. It was kind of the culmination of my career, and it was wonderful.”

Buche has also looked upon her Teacher Recognition Awards – all eight of them – primarily as honors bestowed by students, but she believes the Teacher Recognition

AP Studio Art teacher at Walt Whitman High School in Bethesda, Md. Though he lived in the area, he didn’t always go to the Recognition Week events, and today doesn’t remember much about being recognized as an outstanding teacher; he’s just glad some of his students were able to achieve the distinction he believed they deserved.

“I think young artists in particular need some sort of recognition in order to get their lives going in a direction that seems to be meaningful for them,” he said, “and I look at the [Presidential Scholars] Program as a support system for students. I think for the arts to be

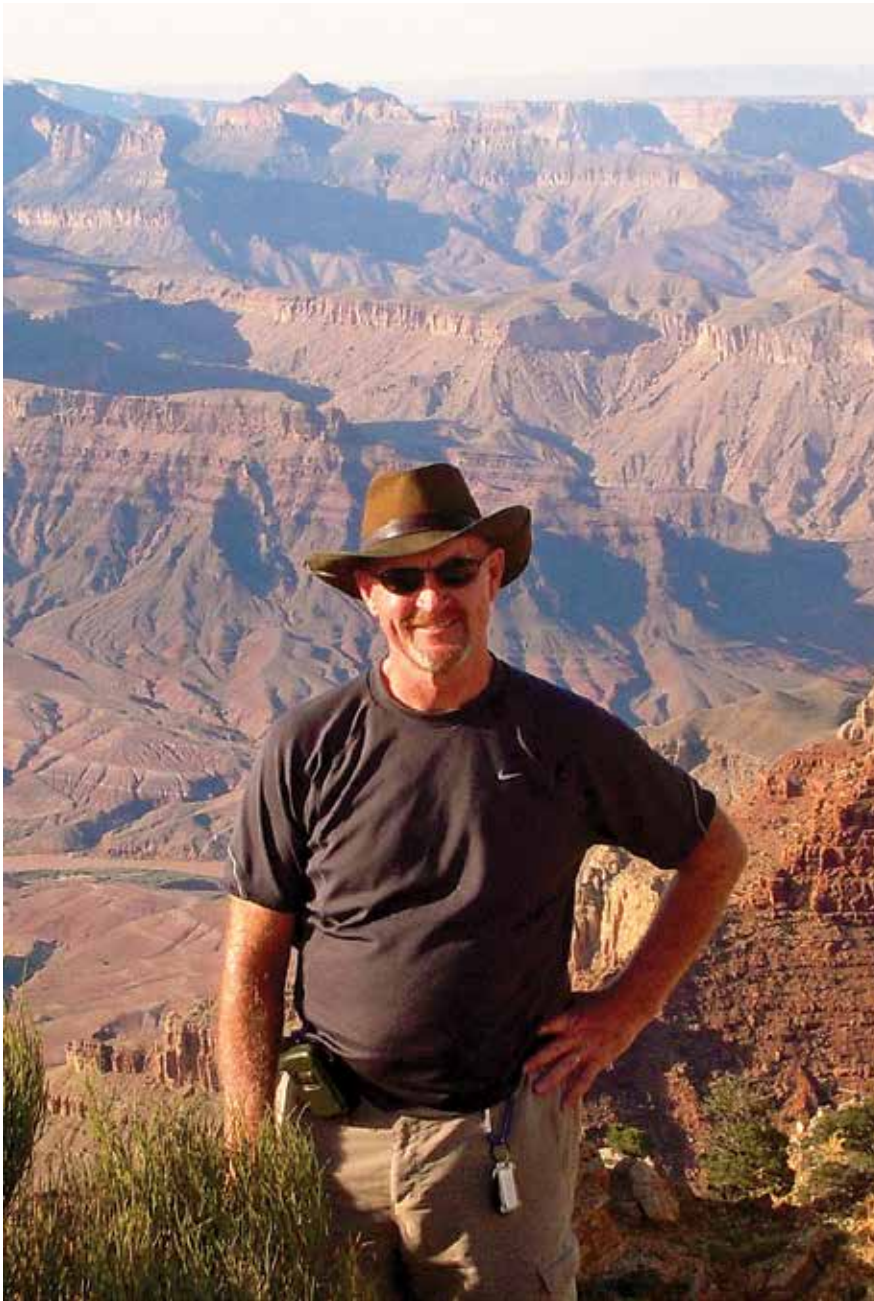


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Steve Loh, a now-retired chemistry, astronomy, and gifted education teacher, attended the 2012 events in Washington, D.C., with his student Mengran “Meran” Liu (2012, IL), and said he felt “very appreciated, very respected” during the trip. “That was a nice change,” he said.

United States that could benefit a lot by having role models who are students who recognize the value of their education. We need to make sure we continue to recognize academic achievement as much as we recognize achievements in, say, football.”

Said Gershman: “Meeting these phenomenal teachers – I don’t know if others feel this way, but I felt humbled the whole time. You think you’re just in your classroom, doing your own little thing, but then you meet these people. There were elementary school teachers there, chosen by high school seniors as their most inspirational teachers. Getting to know these people was amazing, and the conversations we had started new directions of thinking, bigger ways of thinking. How can we get more kids to extend themselves more, and better motivate them? Because many are as special as these Scholars are. There are many more great students who aren’t recognized, who could have done just as well if we’d maybe got to them earlier or motivated them a little bit better.”

On the other hand, Buche – a teacher who is constantly prodding her students to see themselves in relation to the wider world – is content to relax her visionary inclinations, if only for one week a year, when she attends National Recognition Week. Sometimes it’s nice, she said, to sit back and watch her students become just a little more aware of what they’ve achieved – and of what they can continue to do.

“When kids are learning two languages,” she said, “and taking two years of calculus along with 12 AP classes – and I’ve taught kids who’ve done as much as 1,200 hours of community service – they don’t have time to think about themselves very much, to think about how unique or special they are. I believe this might be sometimes the first time these kids really have a small window through which to glimpse their own greatness and their own possibility.”

powerful, they need to have that kind of support.”

Universally, teacher honorees see the Presidential Scholars Program, and the events of National Recognition Week, as

– for individual students, for individual educators, and for the wider American culture.

Petach sees them as a visionary exercise. “I think in today’s climate we need some

“We need to make sure we continue to recognize academic achievement as much as we recognize achievements in, say, football.”

much more than an occasion to honor excellence. In what they symbolize, they’re both purposeful and illuminating

very high-profile events that recognize the importance of education,” she said. “I think there is a certain population in the

Talent Through Time: A Longitudinal Study of the 1964-68 Presidential Scholars, and Lessons for Today

An interview with Felice A. Kaufmann

BY JOHN KNOX

Felice A. Kaufmann has been a teacher and counselor of gifted children; a professor at Auburn University, the University of New Orleans, and the University of Kentucky; a keynote speaker across North America, Europe, and Australia; and a member of the boards of directors of the National Association for Gifted Children and the Association for the Gifted. She has spent her entire career studying the first five classes of Presidential Scholars. We've known each other for a decade, and we spent three hours discussing her research in between epic digressions on a wide range of topics.

How did you come to know about the Presidential Scholars Program?

In 1974, I was teaching in a gifted program in Connecticut and was invited by [Executive Director] Jane Case Williams to come down and work as a “housemother,” overseeing the Scholars during their time in Washington. They asked me to do this because I had interned at the [U.S. Office of Education] Office of Gifted and Talented in D.C. in 1972 when the office was newly created and there were few people who had degrees in the field.

OK, back to the beginning – how did you get into gifted education in the first place?

By standing in the wrong line at registration at Columbia University! I ended up in a class on gifted education, and that was it. But in thinking about it, when I was 7 years old, I was on a bus with my mother after a particularly hard day at school and I told her, “When I grow up, I’m gonna teach teachers how to teach smart girls like me.” So maybe I always knew.

So, your connection with the Scholars began in 1974. How long were you a “housemother”? And what happened next?

Through 1979. Meanwhile, I moved from Connecticut to Georgia to do a Ph.D. at the University of Georgia. I was a student of E. Paul Torrance [the leading educational researcher in the world on creativity]. He “got” me and put me into

jobs that I was comfortable in, talking to kids. I said, “I wish I could do a dissertation like this!”

And you did! How did that come about?

First, when I was in the Rose Garden at the medallion ceremony in 1977, listening to President Carter say to the Scholars, “Go off and lead the world.” I started thinking about it: I wonder what’s going to happen to these kids – will they really go off and lead the world? Though I’d always worked with gifted kids, this was the first time I’d met gifted kids of this caliber – it was new to me. Many of the Scholars that year touched me deeply, but two in particular as I watched them get to know each other.

Later that summer I was on vacation and happened to be in a casino in Las Vegas, late in the evening, and it dawned on me. I called Dr. Torrance, not even thinking about the fact that it was 3 a.m. in Athens [Ga.] and screamed into the phone, “I KNOW WHAT I WANT TO DO FOR MY DISSERTATION! A FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS!” He said, “That’s very good, Felice, but it’s 3 a.m. . . .”

It was like a lightning bolt, there in Las Vegas. The grand “aha” moment you read about.

So you sent questionnaires to the Scholars from the first five years of the program and analyzed the results from various perspectives. This wasn’t supposed

to be a longitudinal study spanning several decades, though, was it?

No. I didn’t expect to fall in love with it the way I did and never got interested in anything else to the same extent. It was the first large-scale longitudinal study after the Terman study [the famous study of genius that began in 1921]. I have continued the study over nearly 40 years with as much passion as the day I started it. I am always thinking about Presidential Scholars, always looking for them no matter where I am in the world, no matter what I am doing. One time I followed my husband to a course he was teaching in Australia, and acting on a hunch, even found a Scholar living there! It’s all the wonderful surprises that keep me hooked!

What makes the Presidential Scholars worth studying for so long?

I’m constantly dazzled by the many different ways life can turn out, the story of talent through time. From a professional perspective, the Scholars were a national group, rarefied. I loved that the selection process was not based on IQ so the kids were extremely diverse in their interests and backgrounds. And it was the only program of that magnitude; the highest award a kid could get during those years. The people selecting the Scholars, the Commission, were a diverse group, too. The multiple perspectives of highly accomplished people making decisions – the perspectives of high achievers – led to those selected as Scholars being interesting, multitalented high achievers, too.

So, after 35 years, what have you learned?

I’m always asked, what is the takeaway message of this study? And strange or



SCOTT BARRY KAUFMAN

Felice A. Kaufmann, Ph.D., has followed the first five classes of Presidential Scholars for 35 years. She first learned of the program when she was invited by then-Executive Director Jane Case Williams to serve as a “housemother” to Scholars during their Washington visit.

Review], I include a wonderful quote from one of the early African-American Presidential Scholars:

The Presidential Scholar thing was like ... the Emancipation Proclamation. I was stuck in a small, bigoted town, with a life that was shaped by internal politics and standards. Along comes Massa Presidential Scholars Program and set my young ass free. I got to say, ‘So, there.’ Everybody who was on ‘my side’ got to say, ‘So, there.’ Then I went to college and got a C on my first paper. That was the experience of the Presidential Scholars. Confirmation, followed by reality check. Thank God for both.

The challenges don’t end in college, do they?

Oh, no. The thing about Presidential Scholars is that when they trip up, there’s so much further for them to fall [compared to other gifted individuals]. Being honored so publicly makes it harder for them when they encounter failure, I think, although I can’t document it quantitatively. The stories, however, are there.

I was at dinner several years ago with another 1983 Scholar and she remarked, wryly, that the two of us hadn’t become famous. Your 2012 article has a section on “Reactions to Not Being a Superstar.” Could you elaborate on that?

There are only a few superstars in the world. Within all groups, only a few are

glib as it sounds, the message is, “You never know.” You never know what life is going to throw at you. Wonderful things. But also challenges. Illness. Family crises. Problems at work. But good luck and great things, too. The Scholars I’ve studied have ended up in an enormous spread of occupations and responses to life, after being “once upon a pedestal” as Presidential Scholars. One lesson is, don’t shut down your options.

Be prepared for what happens, both good and bad.

Being a Presidential Scholar is a highlight of many alumni’s lives. But, as you note, there are challenges, too. Can you give an example of both?

In my most recent article on the Scholars [“On Becoming Themselves: The 1964–1968 Presidential Scholars 40 Years Later,” Kaufmann and Matthews, 2012 *Roeper*

“I’m constantly dazzled by the many different ways life can turn out, the story of talent through time. From a professional perspective, the Scholars were a national group, rarefied. I loved that the selection process was not based on IQ so the kids were extremely diverse in their interests and backgrounds.”

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- professional audio recording studios
- rapid prototyping facilities
- CNC routers
- 3D modeling computers
- large format printers
- electronic music studios
- 24-ft astro-tec dome planetarium
- 7 U-M museums
- artificial intelligence lab
- motion capture facility
- MRI scanners
- museum of zoology collections
- anatomy labs
- entrepreneurship clinic
- 121 music practice rooms
- dance studios

and more...

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- filmmakers
- dancers
- climatologists
- architects
- astrophysicists
- playwrights
- urban planners
- musicians
- art historians
- public policy makers
- journalists
- microbiologists
- nanotechnology researchers
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household names. Part of what matters is luck. But to my knowledge, there is only one model of giftedness – Abraham Tannenbaum’s – that includes luck as a factor. I got into gifted education because of luck, by getting into the wrong line! Also, it is important for gifted kids to learn the value of struggle and resilience, so it does not hit them so hard later in life if they don’t achieve to the extent they imagined.

That’s been true in my own life. I tell my graduate students how I struggled in my own Ph.D. work, to help them understand that it’s OK not to be perfect. In that vein, let’s shift focus to the younger alumni and the newest Scholars, in their teens and twenties. Based on your research, what advice can you give to them? What should they be thinking about? What should they not be thinking about?

Gifted kids are told to “do what you love.” But what happens if you fall out of love with it? Don’t focus

Kaufmann celebrates the completion of her Ph.D. dissertation in August 1979 with a cake whose jokingly misspelled message reads, “Kungradulashuns phrum the Prezidenshal Skolers!”

I wish I’d known you when I was a miserable Ph.D. student! You would have been a great mentor for me. Speaking of which, you’ve written about the importance of mentors to Scholars. What should young Scholars be doing to cultivate good mentoring experiences?

When you’re looking for a mentor, don’t just look for someone who’s great in the subject matter. You want someone who really understands you, who “gets” you.

Not necessarily the Nobel Prize winner in the lab, in other words?

Exactly – although the Nobel Prize winner can also have the qualities you need.



and said, “I heard you talk over 20 years ago in Kentucky. I remember the stories you told. It still informs how I approach kids in the classroom.”

“What should young Scholars not be thinking about? Don’t worry about worrying. Don’t be scared of it. Develop a capacity to think about multiple types of futures. And, most importantly, don’t get hooked on the trappings – the awards.”

on what you’re good at; think instead about what things you did to make that success happen. Look for your strengths – traits that can help you have future successes no matter what field you choose. What are the most magic moments in your life? What do they have in common? What is at your core? That’s a better predictor of what you should be doing with your life than anything else. And learn how to make connections between people and between ideas.

What should young Scholars not be thinking about? Don’t worry about worrying. Don’t be scared of it. Develop a capacity to think about multiple types of futures. And, most importantly, don’t get hooked on the trappings – the awards. The subjects of my research, now in their sixties, report that honors and awards don’t mean much to them anymore.

You want a mentor who helps you get better at being yourself. More generally, you should redefine “success” as knowing what your needs are, and knowing how to get them met.

Next-to-last question: LBJ said that he wanted the Presidential Scholars Program to “revolutionize American education” ...

Not exactly true. It was also to kick America’s spirits up, in the aftermath of JFK’s assassination.

OK. From your vantage point, what needs to happen to get closer to LBJ’s goal?

Exactly what we’re doing here: telling the stories. I’ve given speeches on the Presidential Scholars in 48 states, Europe, Australia, South America, all over Canada, and I always ask who has heard of the program; it’s astonishing how few have. And yet, just last year, a person came up to me

Finally, how has studying the Scholars for all these years changed your life?

Every major decision in my life has been made based on the Presidential Scholars.

Wow. How so?

From insights I gained from the Scholars’ lives. I even married my husband because of an insight I had from the Presidential Scholars stories (and the fact that he can tolerate my obsession with the study)! My life is richer. I never would have met the kinds of people I’ve met. And because of my work with the Scholars, I have a different take on giftedness than many of my colleagues. The Scholars’ lives tell the story that there is more to life than achievement. And that you can take your smarts to lots of different places.

This has been so much fun. I can’t wait for your talk at the Summit in June!

The U.S. Presidential Scholars Alumni Mentoring Program

BY CARMEN LAI (2009, NV)

AS U.S. PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS, MANY OF US graduated from high school with distinguished honors and an overall sense of accomplishment and possibility. However, the transition to college and the real world – where there are multiple paths to success and a broadened, non-universal definition of success itself – is not quite an easy transition for even the highest-achieving students. With the Presidential Scholars Mentoring Program, the Alumni Association strives to extend the Presidential Scholar experience beyond National Recognition Program in Washington, D.C., and leverage the truly unique network of alumni Scholars from the past 50 years to create an opportunity to continue the growing experience for existing and upcoming Scholars alike.

Initiated in 2011, the Mentoring Program connects undergraduate students in their third year to older professionals in the working and academic worlds, ranging from entrepreneurs to lawyers, professors, scientists, consultants, architects, doctors, and business leaders. The hope is to target junior college students who are at the peak of their career exploration, after having narrowed down their interests in college majors and right before searching for a summer internship – a time when real-world advice is most crucial and influential.

Each year, roughly 50 mentor and mentee pairs are matched based on professional interest and geographical location. The initial vision behind this initiative was to create meaningful mentoring relationships as opposed simply to job opportunities. While every match may not be an obvious or perfect fit, mentors serve as long-range guides to mentees and direct them to the right people and the right places. As Matt Anestis (1991, CT) noted, “We always said our goal was a few matches that happen to work well. If we make even five of them occur, then we have a big win.”

Although in its infancy, the Mentoring Program has already achieved notable success stories, and currently relies heavily on participant feedback to continue its improvement and expansion. From a recently conducted feedback survey, a mentee commented:

“My mentor selection was beyond perfect. He was working full-time in the position that I have been pursuing my entire career. I ended up getting an internship, and though he didn’t directly help me out with getting it, he provided an abundance of resources and advice, as well as numerous other contacts that were very helpful. We still talk often to this day.”

Similarly, mentors also conveyed that they too had much to gain from the Mentoring Program, noting the great conversations they had with their mentees in person or through Skype.

Based on participant feedback, the Mentoring Program distinguishes itself from mentoring already available on college campuses or in professional organizations by providing more long-range mentoring, with a network of mentors who are well established in their careers and have real-world experiences from which to draw advice. While short-range mentoring is important for college students in terms of figuring out what classes to take, how to interview, or which institutions to explore, long-range mentoring is equally important in terms of defining a broader career trajectory and keeping the big picture in mind. A graduating college senior, Heidi Lim (2010, NV), spoke highly of her relationship with her mentor:

“He was the first person to talk to me about something practical like making

money, and said that for what I want to do, I need to be in Silicon Valley. Usually you just hear about how X and Y are good for your career, but you don’t really know how. He’s been there and done it.”

While she was not looking to get a job out of her mentor relationship, given that she did not realize the immediate relevance to her interest in green tech, her mentor exposed her to a different way of applying her passion in the working world. After graduation, Lim will be working full-time for her mentor’s start-up company in Silicon Valley.

The Mentoring Program not only serves to connect young Scholars to the right people and places at the beginning of their careers, but also serves to build recognizable trust in the Presidential Scholar name. Based on participant feedback, when a mentor refers a mentee for a job position, there seems to be a trust among people not only in the internal referral itself, but also in the quality of work that a Presidential Scholar, as exemplified by each mentor, is known to deliver. In addition to creating connections, the Mentoring Program also hopes to propel the standard of excellence for all Presidential Scholars to come.

As one of the most well-received alumni initiatives, the Mentoring Program has a bright future ahead with many new improvements to implement:

1. A searchable online directory of alumni has recently been added to the official website (www.presidentialscholars.org), including Scholar profiles that can be personally updated. This allows Scholars more autonomy in independently seeking other Scholars with whom they wish to connect, in addition to the formal mentor they are assigned through the Mentoring Program.
2. As an effort to increase in-person meetings between mentors and



Carmen Lai, a 2009 Presidential Scholar from Nevada, helps to oversee the Mentorship Program.

reach beyond college juniors, including Scholars who may be mid-career but are looking for a career change who could use additional guidance or simply a different perspective.

The Alumni Association will take a forward-thinking approach with diligent participant feedback analysis to push this program toward its full potential. Over time, we expect that former mentees of the program will turn around and serve as new mentors for a new set of mentees in the future. The Mentoring Program will ultimately provide an opportunity for Scholars at any stage of life, in any profession, to continue contributing to and extracting from a learning experience within a community of leaders, and carry the Presidential Scholar legacy to new heights.

If you are interested in becoming a mentor/mentee, please fill out a short form available at www.presidentialscholars.org.

Carmen Lai (2009, NV) graduated from Duke University with distinction in neuroscience. She is currently working full-time for a biopharmaceutical strategy consulting firm in Boston, and enjoys playing the piano in her spare time. She has worked with Brian Abrams (1996, CO), Matt Anestis (1991, CT), Jenny Li (2004, NY), and Anjali Sawh (2011, OK) on this program.

mentees, we hope to increase the number of matches that fit in terms of not only professional interests, but also geographical location. Greater participation in this program would

yield more geographical spread so that quality mentor and mentee matches can be made within closer proximity.
3. As a long-term initiative, we hope to expand the Mentoring Program to

“My mentor selection was beyond perfect. He was working full-time in the position that I have been pursuing my entire career. ... He provided an abundance of resources and advice, as well as numerous other contacts that were very helpful. We still talk often to this day.”

A Message for Fellow Scholars

BY DON BEYER

ON JUNE 16, 2012, Presidential Scholar Don Beyer (1968, DC) delivered a speech to the 2012 class of Scholars at the National Building Museum in Washington, D.C. He took the opportunity to share with the honorees three lessons he's learned on his path from student to successful business-owner, lieutenant governor of Virginia, U.S. ambassador to Switzerland and Liechtenstein, and husband and father. The text of his speech follows.

It is great fun for me to be here with you tonight. My last interaction with Presidential Scholars was in 1984, the 20th anniversary of the very first Scholars Program. The Committee had invited one person back from each of the previous 20 classes, and I had the honor of representing the Class of 1968. When I asked the Director how I had gotten so lucky to be chosen, she said in the 20 years, Presidential Scholars had gone on to become scientists and lawyers, doctors and college professors, mathematicians and physicists – but only one car dealer!

I have truly enjoyed speaking with many of you tonight – this was interesting and energizing for me – and I offer my condolences to the large group of Scholars

when someone is ready to buy. I have played golf with folks I thought had just average IQ, until I watched them hit the subtlest of shots – 20 yards out of deep rough, flying high over a sand trap, landing, and then backing up from the backspin, right to the hole.

I was pretty cocky at 18. I bragged to my girlfriend about how I was going to kill in college, and then in life, because I was so blasted smart. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Just because I was good at math and physics – I could still crash and burn in a course on Plato and Aristotle, actually Greek to me. I tried to get a summer job as a carpenter one year, and the job chief just laughed at me, and asked me why my parents had never

will be blessed with much of what they know, and grow smarter every day.

Second – in life, intellectual IQ is far less important than emotional IQ! For 40 years, I have wished I could trade 10 IQ points for just two or three wisdom points. The planet is filled with brilliant failures. I read a detailed study of what had happened in the lives of the Harvard class of 1963 or '64 – there were far more failures than successes. As a business owner, as a political leader, I have had to hire and fire many hundreds of people over the years. Slowly, I have learned to hire on Character. Give me a person with courage, resilience, integrity, a hard work ethic, a sense of team play, humility – over someone with a high IQ – every day of the week.

One way to tell who will fail and who will thrive is to watch the decisions they make. The quality of our decisions is the best indicator of our emotional IQ. I had one friend – a Rhodes Scholar, Phi Beta Kappa, *magna cum laude*, Harvard, Yale Law – his first wife dumped him, his second

“There are a lot of different kinds of intelligence out there, and almost everyone you will meet is smarter in some way than you are.”

who must attend Harvard because they did not get into Williams.

I offer you three small ideas tonight. First – please be humble. Yeah, I know you are smart. But there are a lot of different kinds of intelligence out there, and almost everyone you will meet is smarter in some way than you are. My auto mechanics understand fluid dynamics, gear trains, and wiring diagrams far better than I do. I have salesmen who have a finely developed sense of knowing just

given me one of those hammer toys as a kid. I worked on a farm before my senior year – and the farmer threw ears of corn at me, hard, on at least five different occasions – for my sheer lack-of-common-sense stupidity. (I think he was aghast at the 8-foot-deep latrine I had fun digging for three days.)

Bottom line, just figure that most everyone out there is smarter than you – or knows more than you do. And if you are humble and open and respectful you

wife dumped him, and while his third wife was dying of cancer, he abandoned her. Sure he has a high IQ, but his life has been a disaster. Another friend was a brilliant businessman – creative, a financial genius, a born marketer. Beautiful wife, six kids, multimillion-dollar mansion on the side of the mountain. Then he discovered cocaine – and girlfriends who liked his cocaine – and started borrowing money, and his wonderful life shattered in just two years.

“Your goal must not be to be the smartest person in the room, but the greatest-souled.”



“Be relentlessly curious.”

A high IQ is absolutely no defense against depression, anxiety, OCD, difficulty making friends, etc. Here is where character is destiny. Nietzsche wrote about being great-souled. Your goal must not be to be the smartest person in the room, but the greatest-souled.

When life is hard for me, I retreat to the IQ-dependent things I am good at: cryptic crosswords, math and bridge problems, word games, piano and guitar. But the genuine challenges in life – death, meaning, aloneness, independence, the impossibility of knowing what those whom you most love actually think and feel – none of these are particularly amenable to your high IQ.

By the way, the most important emotional IQ trait I have tried to teach my kids is attitude. The old poker line: Every hand's a loser, every hand's a winner. In a crisis, a good attitude has enormous survival value.

Third – be relentlessly curious. Now we know that we grow new brain cells every day – but they die if not challenged with new information within a week or two.

People get old when they stop learning. Read, read, read. Stay open. Question everything. Keep learning new languages. Collect new hobbies. Plan new adventures. There is a powerful adage, probably apocryphal, that only 3 percent of Americans have written goals, and they have more net worth than the other 97 percent combined.

Please, don't let the prodigious intellects you have atrophy. Peter Mattheissen wrote, a person who is good at one thing is usually good at many things. You can be accomplished in many different fields and different ways.

In June 1968, I visited the White House for the first time. I stood in line to receive my medal from President Lyndon Johnson. He was a tall, strong man, he towered over me, and as he shook my hand, he drew me close to him and whispered, “Son, you are the hope of our future.” I was struck dumb. The President of the United States had just laid this huge burden of responsibility and leadership upon me. I believed him. Only years later did I realize that the President probably had whispered the same thing to every Scholar that day. (But maybe not.) I believed him. I still do. And I am certain this President feels the same way about you.

Don Beyer
Bern, Switzerland

The Alumni Association: Today, Tomorrow, and Beyond

BY BRIAN ABRAMS

IN 2004, A SMALL GROUP OF ALUMNI came together to ask some simple questions: Why should the Presidential Scholars experience begin and end in Washington, D.C.? Why do we come together for a handful of life-changing days in June and then scatter to the winds? What if the National Recognition Program (NRP, formerly National Recognition Week) represented not an end but a beginning? What if Presidential Scholars became lifelong friends, colleagues, and partners?

The response to those questions was the creation of the Presidential Scholars Alumni Association, formed under the leadership of Matt Anestis (1991, CT) and Avery Gardiner (1993, ME). In the decade since, the Alumni Association has become an increasingly robust and vibrant organization.

“Meet-Ups”

To start, alumni began organizing local “meet-ups.” In New York, Kathy Schneider (1984, NY) and Bryan Cummings (1990, ME) held gatherings at places like Metrazur restaurant in Grand Central station. Other get-togethers soon followed in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Denver, Kansas City, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Boston.

At one of the early gatherings, I recall a conversation with Bryan in which we were discussing the geopolitical situation in North Korea. Bryan served on the board of a national security think tank and had been sharing his insights. Suddenly from across the table, David Grossman (1995, NY) chimed in. “Were you discussing North Korea? I was just in Pyongyang!” he said to our amazement. As it turned out, David played bass with the New York Philharmonic, which had traveled to North Korea in what had then been called “symphonic diplomacy.” It’s hard to imagine any other group with such diverse experiences and common interests.

In some cases, touching friendships were formed. Kathy remembered a dear

Lauren Zletz (2005, NY), Roberto Ferdman (2006, PR), Kathy Schneider (1984, NY), and Dick Senechal (1965, ND) at a Presidential Scholars meet-up in New York.





postings, solicited advice, discussed world events, and even collaborated professionally. Each group is now approaching a thousand members.

If anyone knew how to capitalize on social media, it was Clara Shih (2000, IL). First, she published a book called *The Facebook Era*, which the Alumni Association helped promote on social media and in its newsletter. Soon after, Clara founded a company called Hearsay Social that raised more than \$50 million in funding from renowned Silicon Valley venture capital firms such as NEA and Sequoia Capital. Coincidentally, one of Sequoia's partners, Pat Grady (2000, WY), also happened to be from Clara's Scholar year. Although the two discovered the connection only after they had begun working together, it offered a powerful example of the potential for alumni collaboration.

In 2012, Annie Ryu (2009, MN) told alumni about her new social enterprise, Global Village Fruits, which planned to import jackfruit from India to sell to people in the United States and use the proceeds to support the local community. After posts on Facebook as well as a spotlight in the Alumni Association



Left: Clara Shih (2000, IL) with her book, *The Facebook Era*. Above: Annie Ryu (2009, MN) with villagers in India.

newsletter, Annie raised thousands of dollars for her venture and began importing the jackfruit. It has made a significant impact on the lives of her partners in India.

Service

In addition to social and professional networking, the Alumni Association began looking for ways to give back. In 2012, Kevin Weiss (2010, VT) and

friend, the late Sam Wee (1972, KS) in a post on the Alumni Association Facebook page after his death in 2012. "I met Sam at our very first NYC Presidential Scholars meet-up. With his kindness, insight, curiosity and humor, Sam was someone we always looked forward to seeing at our NYC gatherings," she wrote. "We will miss him greatly."

Social and Professional Networking

The Alumni Association's presence online quickly grew as Facebook and LinkedIn emerged as online gathering places for alumni. On Facebook, alumni posted about meet-ups held in various cities, books published, albums launched, and, of course, NRP in Washington, D.C. On LinkedIn, alumni shared job

Sussy Pan (2011, MI), Pam Chang (2011, CA), and Alejandro Jimenez Jaramillo (2011, CA) at a 2012 service project in Boston.



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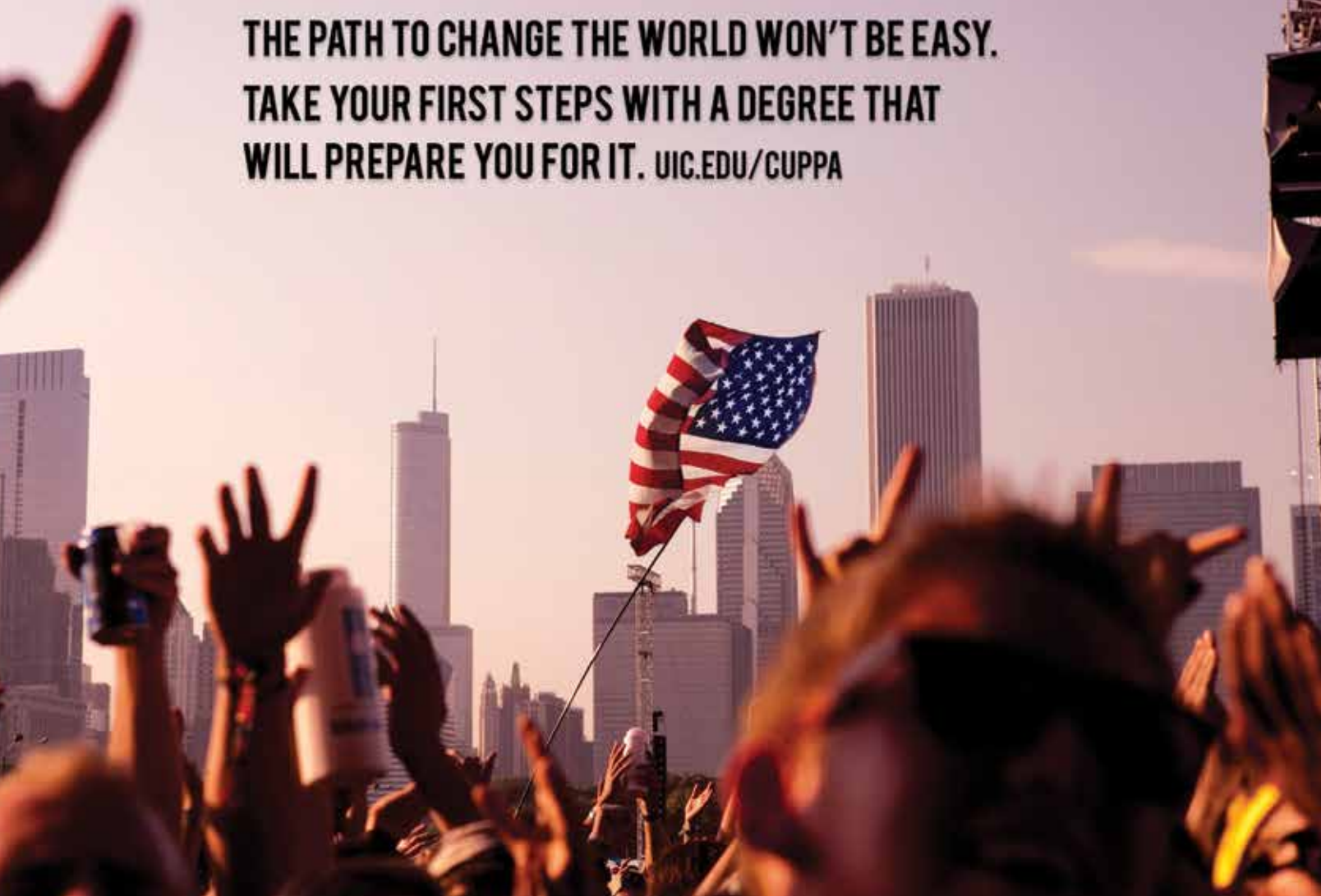
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Stephen Henrich (2009, IA) launched the first-ever Presidential Scholars service week. In Boston, Scholars partnered with City Year, a nonprofit whose mission is to reduce high school dropout rates through tutoring initiative, mentorship, and school improvement projects. In Chicago, Scholars worked with the Chicago Foundation for Education to help observe award-winning teachers and promote innovation in the classroom. Plans are in the works to expand the initiative to other cities in years ahead.

Mentorship

One of the most successful new Alumni Association initiatives has been its Mentorship Program. Launched in 2012 by Matt Anestis and continued by Carmen Lai (2009, NV), Jenny Li (2004, NY), and Anjali Sawh (2011, OK), the project paired junior year Scholar alumni with older alumni in their field of interest.

The initiative quickly led to some exceptional matches. A journalism major connected with a senior editor at the *Boston Globe*. A finance major received words of wisdom from a New York hedge fund manager. A biology major received advice on a career in academia from a tenured college professor. In one case, a senior executive even hired his mentee!

In the future, the Alumni Association aims to broaden the program so that younger Scholars of all years can connect with more experienced alumni in areas of mutual interest. Our expectation is that mentors and mentees will connect once or twice, but our hope is that alumni will form relationships that last for decades to come.

50th Anniversary

The 50th anniversary represents one of the largest efforts to date for the Alumni Association.

Led by 50th Anniversary Chairs Faith Brynie (1964, WV) and Jenny Li, the initiative includes the 50th Anniversary Summit June 20–23, 2014. Featuring an extraordinary group of speakers, from Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Eugene Robinson (1970, SC) to renowned scientist Amory Lovins (1964, MA) to civil rights leader Martha Bergmark (1966, MS) to finance executive Sallie Krawcheck (1983, SC), the Summit brings together alumni from all 50 years to reunite, share memories, exchange ideas, enjoy performances, and

Presidents of the Presidential Scholars Foundation

Francis T. West, 1988–1993

Ronnie Fern Liebowitz, 1993–2000

Joseph D. DiVincenzo, 2001–04

James E. Farmer, 2005–2011

Brian Abrams (1996, CO), 2011–present

celebrate the half-century history of this exceptional program.

Perhaps the most tangible by-product of the 50th anniversary is this publication itself. As editor-in-chief, John Knox (1983, AL) organized and conducted interviews with alumni and key people in the organization's history, and worked with alumni from every single decade to source articles, photographs, and mementoes and compile them into this most comprehensive survey to date of the Presidential Scholars.

Ultimately, the 50th anniversary initiative sought not just to celebrate the first 50 years of the program but also to serve as a catalyst for the future by reconnecting alumni with the Alumni Association and each other. With any luck, the organization will emerge from this milestone stronger than ever.

Alumni Association 2.0

As we look out toward the years ahead, the Alumni Association's challenge is to continue its existing programs, expand its reach to an ever greater community of alumni, and launch new initiatives.

By the time the Alumni Association celebrates its 20th anniversary (coinciding with the 60th anniversary of the

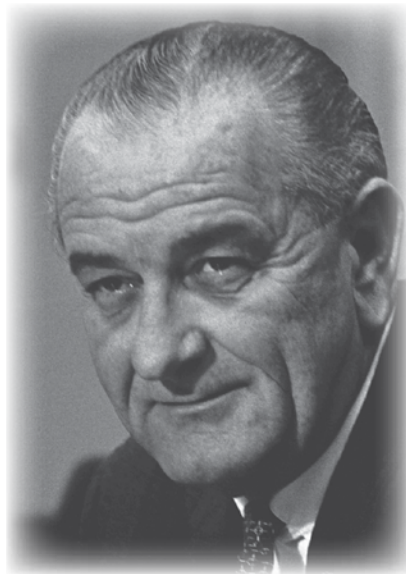
program), participation in meet-ups, social networks, service, and mentorship should be the rule rather than the exception. Alumni should be working alongside one another, performing together, hiring each other, and promoting one another's ventures. In the future, Presidential Scholar alumni should be omnipresent in each other's lives. Reaching out to fellow alumni who work in the same profession, live in the same city, or share the same interests should be automatic. Collaborating with one another with a sense of higher purpose should be the ultimate goal.

Might you be the one to help usher in the next phase of the Alumni Association? Are you a potential mentor, volunteer, committee member, or even board member? Can you support the organization with your time, your experience, or your donations? Do you have an idea we've yet to explore?

It's up to all of us to work together to create an organization that transcends its individual members. The Presidential Scholars experience is one that should begin in Washington, D.C., and last a lifetime. Fortunately, each day brings us one step closer to achieving that vision for the future.



“By the standards that you set, by the services that you render, you will show the world that when the doors of equal opportunity are kept open in our democracy young men and young women will respond with an instinct for excellence such as history has never known. I congratulate you, each of you, for what you have achieved. I am so proud of you. I honor you for what I know you, and your generation, will achieve in the years to come.”



– *President Lyndon B. Johnson, Remarks Upon Presenting the First Presidential Scholars Awards, East Room of the White House, June 10, 1964*

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The real celebrities would be the educators. Teachers would be asked for autographs. Crowds would clamor to catch a glimpse of a passing professor. The teachers' lounge would be an exclusive club. The *Teacher of the Year Awards* would be a red-carpet event. In our perfect world, priorities would be different, and education would be celebrated. Here's to you, the students bringing our dream a little closer to reality.



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