Founded by an Act of Parliament in 1953 and named in honor of US Secretary of State George C. Marshall, the Marshall Scholarships commemorate the humane ideals of the Marshall Plan and express the continuing gratitude of the British people to their American counterparts.

It has been 70 years since the first class of Marshall Scholars crossed the Atlantic by boat to begin their studies in the United Kingdom in 1954.

The Association of Marshall Scholars (AMS) is celebrating this milestone with a wide range of anniversary-focused events throughout 2024. This past January, the AMS hosted members of the United States Congress and the British Parliament for its bipartisan, cross-party US-UK Legislative Exchange. Approximately 250 guests, speakers, delegates, and Marshalls participated over the course of four days of programming, including more than 45 alumni, 30 current scholars, and 70 members of the UK government. The Exchange aims to further US-UK ties and understanding, share the expertise of the Marshall community, and support a valuable exchange between legislators from both countries.

The US-UK Legislative Exchange culminated with a 70th anniversary celebratory reception for the Marshall Scholarship at Parliament, co-hosted by Harriett Baldwin MP and Liam Byrne MP, by kind permission of The Right Honorable Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP, Speaker of the House of Commons.

In June, the AMS co-hosted the 2024 Marshall Forum with the Clark Center for Global Markets at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business. The purpose of the Marshall Forum is to consider strategic and economic issues impacting the future of transatlantic cooperation, peace, and security. The 2024 Marshall Forum focused on the role of global markets, monetary policy, and innovation, and included remarks by Lisa D. Cook (1986), member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors of the United States; Austan Goolsbee, President of the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago; and Peter Orszag (1991), CEO, Lazard; among others.

Throughout the summer and early fall, the AMS is hosting 70th anniversary virtual class reunions for all those interested in gathering (via Zoom) to catch up with classmates over tea. A final celebration will take place this fall, with Marshall Scholar musicians participating in the London Festival of American Music, organized by alumni and conductor Odaline de la Martinez (1972). The festival takes place in London from November 10-16, 2024, and all alumni who are interested will be offered complimentary tickets.

Alumni continue to provide important support for the Marshall Scholarship through their service as volunteers (for Reading and Selection Committees, the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission, the AMS Board, the AMS Advisory Board, and more) and through funding initiatives like the Marshall Xtra and AMS Emergency grants, which provide additional resources and critical support for students enrolled in the program.
We hope you enjoy this 2024 summer newsletter, which features a wonderful piece on Ahalya Lettenberger, a Paralympic swimmer who is making waves, as well as scholars who are engaged in the future of journalism and healthcare.

All alumni are invited to share their news, class notes, and story ideas for future issues. The AMS remains grateful to the entire AMS newsletter team, led by editor-in-chief Maureen Harmon, for their work in producing this issue.

It has been 70 years since the first class of Marshall Scholars crossed the Atlantic by boat to begin their studies in the United Kingdom in 1954. The Association of Marshall Scholars (AMS) is celebrating this milestone with a wide range of anniversary-focused events throughout 2024.

Dr. Nell Breyer is executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars
In This Issue ...

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Stem
BY MICHAELA COPLEN (2018)
Coplen’s poems have been published in *Adroit*, *The Atlantic*, *The London Magazine*, Poets.org, and *Rialto*. In this issue, the 2013 National Student Poet, appointed by then-First Lady Michelle Obama, shares an original piece.

07

The Poll
THE AMS
We polled 1,000 US residents to get their thoughts on the relationship between the US and the UK. Here is what they had to say.

08

Here’s to 70!
BY AROOP MUKHARJI (2010)
In January of 2024, the AMS kicked off the 70th anniversary of the Marshall Scholarship at Parliament.
Health at Heart
BY ALEXANDER GELFAND
Few issues raise as many thorny questions as healthcare. Danielle Dooley (1995) and Amy Finkelstein (1995) discuss the challenges—and some possible solutions.

Going for Gold
BY DIANA COOGLE (1966)
Ahalya Lettenberger (2024) was born with arthrogryposis, a disability that affects her hips and lower limbs. But that hasn’t stopped her from swimming—or deterred her from her path to the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.

The Path to Truth
A FEW OF THE WORLD’S TOP JOURNALISTS DISCUSS THE CURRENT STATE AND FUTURE OF THEIR PROFESSION
Adapted from “Skirball Talks, Facts Matter: Championing the World of Today’s Investigative Journalists,” an event co-hosted by the AMS and the John Brademas Center at NYU.
Winter and likewise bitter
in the university garden, I step inside
the glass house where money makes
all things grow. In humid air
the hyacinth congeals
like beaten cream. Lilies
hold their pistils up,
their orange stamens
swaying. From outside the reach
of the cocoa tree, you can’t see its
decaying; it’s at
the joints of branches
where the fruited body
rots. I won’t be adopted so easily.
The automated spraying; the hands
that come to feed the trapping plants
their flies and shit. A vine that supplicates the light
by opening a fist. My father
gave me everything
he could. I need so little.

Cut stems hover
in a glass that’s half
water, half air.

Michaela Coplen is a 2018 Marshall
Scholar, currently completing her DPhil in
International Relations at the University of
Oxford. In 2013, she was appointed a National
Student Poet by First Lady Michelle Obama.
Her poems have been published in Adroit,
The Atlantic, The London Magazine, Poets.org,
and Rialto. She won the 2019 Troubadour
International Poetry Prize and the 2020
York Poetry Prize, and she is included in
Here: Poems for the Planet and the 2020
Best New Poets anthology. Her debut poetry
chapbook, Finishing School, was published by
Ignitionpress in 2022.
WE POLLED 1000 US RESIDENTS TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY THOUGHT ABOUT THE US AND THE UK.

Here’s what they said.

IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US AND UK LEADERSHIP TO DEVELOP PROTOCOLS FOR THE SAFE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE?

- 79% of Democrats said yes
- 78% of Republicans said yes

SHOULD NATO COUNTRIES (INCLUDING THE US AND THE UK) SUPPORT UKRAINE AND ISRAEL?

- Yes (Ukraine: 77%, Israel: 76%)

HOW STABLE IS THE US/UK RELATIONSHIP?

- 85% said it has remained the same or improved over the past five years

HOW IMPORTANT IS THE US/UK ALLIANCE NOW VS FIVE YEARS AGO?

- More important (47%)
- Just as important (32%)
- Less important (19%)
- Don’t know (2%)

WHO IS THE UNITED STATES’ MOST VALUABLE ALLY AND STRATEGIC PARTNER?

- Respondents 30 and older: The UK
- Respondents under 30: China

IN THE FACE OF ESCALATING TENSIONS WITH CHINA, HOW IMPORTANT IS THE US-UK RELATIONSHIP?

- 93% said it is somewhat or very important

METHODOLOGY

All respondents in this study were part of a fully representative sample of n=1,000. Data were weighted by US population parameters. The margin of error for the sample is +/- 3% in 19 of 20 cases. The survey was administered by contacting a consumer list of emails and residents via an online panel. Data was collected between October 21-22, 2023. Emerson College Polling has been ranked as one of the most accurate collegiate pollsters by Nate Silvers’ FiveThirtyEight and Bloomberg News, and is a Charter Member of the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Transparency Initiative.

For full results and all poll data, please visit https://marshallscholars.org/news-and-updates/2023-poll.
In the early 1950s, as countries were navigating the political dynamics of the postwar world, the United Kingdom was eager to retain and strengthen its close association with its wartime ally, the United States. The United States had recently gifted Europe a massive amount of foreign aid through the Economic Recovery Program (ERP), better known as the Marshall Plan. The UK Foreign Office wanted to send a thank you.

Eventually, after considering competing proposals (such as gifting an original copy of the Magna Carta and sending chandeliers for the newly refurbished White House), the Foreign Office settled on an idea to start a UK scholarship program for American students. In its first year, 700 students applied for the new awards, 74 were interviewed, and 12 (eight men and four women) were ultimately offered Marshall Scholarships. The year was 1954.

In January of 2024, the Marshall Scholarship kicked off its 70th anniversary with a reception at Parliament allowing Marshalls to talk about their experiences and to celebrate the more than 2,200 students, including the Class of 2024 (see page 22), whose UK education was funded by the Marshall Scholarship.

Here’s to 70 years of critical thinking, education, and strengthened ties—and to the many more scholars to come.
FEATURE

HEALTH AT HEART

Few issues raise as many thorny questions as healthcare. How can we improve the quality of care while containing costs? How can we eliminate the health disparities between different populations? And what should healthcare even encompass when research shows that myriad social and economic factors can affect our physical and mental well-being?

Danielle Dooley, MD, MPhil (1995) and Amy Finkelstein, PhD (1995) have been pondering such questions for decades, albeit from different perspectives. Here, a front-row seat to their recent conversation about one of the nation’s more critical issues.

BY ALEXANDER GELFAND

As an economist at MIT and co-scientific director of the Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) North America, a research center that promotes randomized evaluations of domestic policy issues, Amy Finkelstein has studied both health insurance and healthcare delivery. She has conducted randomized controlled trials of programs to support high-need, high-cost patients and expand Medicaid coverage to low-income, uninsured adults; co-authored a book, We’ve Got You Covered, that advocates for providing free basic universal coverage to all Americans; and analyzed universal health insurance programs in other countries. “My particular passion is healthcare delivery and randomized controlled trials: trying to test and learn about what can be most effective in improving population health and cutting out waste in healthcare,” she says.

Danielle Dooley is seeing healthcare issues firsthand as a pediatrician at Children’s National Hospital in Washington, DC, where she also serves as medical director of Community Affairs and Population Health in the Child Health Advocacy Institute, which advances policy and systems changes to achieve health equity for all children. She has overseen school-based health centers; co-authored numerous publications designed to help clinicians and policymakers understand and address the effects of poverty, racism, gun violence, and justice involvement on child and adolescent health; and continues to see patients on a regular basis. “Over the years, my expertise has really evolved into school health, as well as caring for children and families who have immigrated,” she says.

Here the two former London roommates, one a researcher and the other a clinician, discuss what they have learned about healthcare from their respective vantage points—and consider the prospect of working together to further their shared mission of improving healthcare for all.
Amy, you and your colleague Liran Einav argue that we should scrap our current health insurance system and replace it with one in which everyone automatically gets free basic coverage. Why not just try to improve the system we already have?

AF: What we have now is a system that was never deliberately constructed and planned, but that grew up haphazardly as well-intentioned policymakers tried to plug specific gaps. We wound up with a patchwork system in which the whole is less than the sum of its parts—and that’s what made us think that to do this right, we need to start over and build a solid foundation with automatic universal basic coverage.

We spent a lot of time thinking about the problem that we are trying to solve with health insurance policy. And the more we looked at the history of what we have been attempting to do here in the US, as well the underlying philosophy and psychology in other countries, it became clear that there is a fundamental social contract: We are not going to stand idly by when people are desperately ill and unable to afford access to lifesaving care. But the way we have gone about trying to achieve that has not been very effective. So our point, which has been recognized by people across the political spectrum, is that we should just formalize that commitment and fund it up front through universal basic coverage.

Danielle, how large does insurance loom for you as a physician in the clinic?

DD: I’m in my 20th year in practice, and I see every day in my work that insurance shapes everything about kids’ trajectories and outcomes in ways both good and bad. At the practice level, every day, you are grappling with, “What is this kid’s insurance status? What can they access? What can they not access?” So I think the work Amy does is really critical because your insurance status and type are a determinant of your health; it fundamentally determines what kids are going to have access to, from basic immunizations to mental health care.

You’ve written about the effects of many other social determinants of health, such as racism and poverty. How do you address such factors, which often lie beyond the scope of standard medical care but can nonetheless lead to significant health inequities?

DD: People now need, expect, and want all those social determinants of health to be addressed. It’s a very hard time to be a clinician—partly because of the social fallout from the pandemic, but also because the complexity of families’ lives and their social needs is often overwhelming. And that’s what we face in the exam room every day: I can see you for your strep throat, but I’ve also got to be thinking about, “Is your family able to get you to school? Are they able to get food on the table?”
Because education is one of the most critical determinants of health for kids, I’m really focused on chronic school absenteeism. Before the pandemic, 15% of kids were chronically absent nationally. It’s now closer to 30%. In my city, it’s a real crisis: A quarter of kids were chronically absent before the pandemic, and almost 50% were chronically absent in the past year. My premise is that we really need school attendance data integrated into pediatric primary care, so we have a pilot going with DC public schools where our practice conducts outreach to students and families that are struggling with school attendance.

AF: I would love to hear more about what kind of outreach you’re doing, and if you’ve ever had any interest in trying to build a “test and learn” environment to try different interventions and see which are most effective. That’s exactly the kind of thing that J-PAL North America is designed to do: figure out which strategies are most effective.

I hadn’t previously heard of any data linking school absenteeism to healthcare records, and I almost immediately started thinking that you could see the channels going both ways: that a health crisis could provoke absenteeism, and an absenteeism crisis could in turn lead to health problems.

DD: Oh, definitely. If you cut kids off from school, they’re not getting their school meals; they’re not getting their physical activity; they’re not getting their social-emotional learning, their interactions with peers, their potential connections to supportive adults. The impact is really profound.

Amy, you suggest a complete overhaul of the health insurance system. What about healthcare delivery? What’s the best way to advance health equity and improve the efficacy and efficiency of care: radical reform or carefully targeted programs?

AF: We don’t yet know what we could do at scale to be super effective; if you made me king of the world, I couldn’t be sure how to dramatically improve population health without increasing healthcare spending. So unless and until the day comes when we really do find some major overhaul that would be valuable, we actually say that we should take a more cautious approach and engage in what my MIT colleague Esther DuBoo, who shared the 2019 Nobel Prize in Economics, argues for, which is the economist as plumber: tinkering, going in, and fixing the taps where you can. When we find something that works, and we’ve tested it rigorously, let’s try to expand it.

Increasingly, what we try and do is not just test a program but test alternative versions of it. For example, people at J-PAL North America have done work on outreach to encourage people to enroll in health insurance where they’ve said, “Let’s look at text messaging versus personalized phone calls versus other ways of reaching people.” So it’s not just thumbs up or thumbs down, but relative efficacy. Where is the greatest bang for the buck?

In that respect, people like Danielle are the unsung heroes of the story—practitioners who are not only committed clinicians working hard day to day in their communities, but who are also committed to a data-driven approach to figuring out what can be most effective. The more we learn, the better we can deploy whatever resources we have towards the most effective programs and policies.

Danielle, what does the path forward look like to you?

DD: I wish I had all the answers. I do believe that partnerships with people like Amy are critical because those of us who are practitioners can think of the idea or make the connection to the community, but we do not have the bandwidth, the time, or often the support to do the evaluations that need to be done. So we need researchers like Amy who are willing to partner with communities and community practitioners. If we are going to fix the system, the solutions have to come out of the community; they have to be informed by people in the community.

But I think the other reality is that people in healthcare have to be involved in public policy. It’s hard because we have such a shortage of people in practice, but we’ve just got to be at the table in some of these public health and public policy roles. And in order to amplify that work, we’ve got to partner with researchers and thought leaders like Amy and her team, who can help demonstrate evidence-based interventions.

AF: I’d love to see if we can partner together.

DD: We definitely need to talk some more!

Danielle G. Dooley, MD, MPhil, FAAP is a general pediatrician at Children’s National Hospital in Washington, DC, and associate professor of pediatrics at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences. She serves as Medical Director for Community Affairs and Population Health in the Child Health Advocacy Institute with a focus on school health and legislative advocacy. She received a BS degree in political science from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, an MPhil degree in community health from the University of Edinburgh as a Marshall Scholar, and an MD degree from Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons as a National Health Service Corps Scholar. She completed her residency in pediatrics at the Johns Hopkins Hospital Children’s Center. She is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.
Because education is one of the most critical determinants of health for kids, I'm really focused on chronic school absenteeism. Before the pandemic, 15% of kids were chronically absent nationally. It’s now closer to 30%. In my city, it’s a real crisis: A quarter of kids were chronically absent before the pandemic, and almost 50% were chronically absent in the past year.”

Top Health Reasons Kids Miss Too Much School

- Asthma
- Oral health and dental plan
- Influenza
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Parents’ physical or mental health
- Type I and II diabetes mellitus
- Seizure disorders
- Obesity

Over 80% of health outcomes are driven by the impact of socioeconomic and environmental factors—such as being exposed to trauma, not having stable housing, or not having access to food, transportation, and healthcare.

3 Things Healthcare Providers Need to Know

✓ Students who do not graduate high school have greater health risks as adults. The less education adults have, the more likely they are to smoke, be overweight, have diabetes, and die prematurely of certain chronic conditions.

✓ Youth who attend school regularly are less likely to engage in behaviors associated with poor health outcomes such as substance use or high-risk sexual behaviors.

✓ Not earning a high school diploma is associated with increased mortality risk or lower life expectancy.

Source: Children’s National Hospital, Child Health Advocacy Institute

Amy Finkelstein is the John & Jennie S. MacDonald professor of economics at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. She is the co-founder and co-scientific director of J-PAL North America, a research center at MIT that facilitates randomized evaluations of important domestic policy issues. She is also the founding editor of American Economic Review: Insights and the co-director of the Economics of Health Program at the National Bureau of Economic Research. Finkelstein’s areas of specialization are public finance and health economics. From 2008–2020 she served as co-director of the Public Economics Program at the National Bureau of Economic Research. She received her PhD in economics from MIT in 2001; an MPhil in economics from Oxford, where she studied as a Marshall Scholar, in 1997; and an A.B. in government summa cum laude from Harvard in 1995. Prior to joining the MIT faculty in 2005, she was a junior fellow at the Harvard Society of Fellows.
Ahalya Lettenberger (2024) was born with arthrogryposis, a disability that affects her hips and lower limbs. But that hasn’t stopped her from swimming—or deterred her from her path to the 2024 Paralympics in Paris.

BY DIANA COOGLE (1966)
In a video by Rice University (“Unconventional Students”), 2024 Marshall Scholar Ahalya Lettenberger stands at the edge of the swimming pool, ready to dive in. An aide is holding her by the hips. Her wheelchair has been wheeled away. At the signal to start, Lettenberger dives in and heads for the far end.

She swims powerfully, but she isn’t kicking. Her legs follow behind her, weakened to the point of uselessness by the arthrogryposis she was born with, a condition that limits the range of motion of the joints. In Lettenberger’s case, her hips and lower limbs are affected, so it is her upper body that propels her through the water. Smoothly. Fiercely. Fast.

Far from being a limitation, arthrogryposis has been a major factor in Lettenberger’s remarkable achievements. She not only embraces her disability; she is glad for it. “It has brought me where I am today,” she says.
“Where she is today” as an athlete is, for instance, a silver medal winner in the 200-meter IM SM7 (individual medley; S7 is her para swimming classification) at the 2020 Paralympics in Japan and winner of two silver medals and one bronze in the World Para Swimming Championships (2023, 2019, and 2022, respectively).

“What she is today” is on Team Speedo, as Speedo has offered her a sponsorship at the Paralympics in Paris this summer. “It’s super exciting,” she says. “My dream sponsorship.” Lettenberger’s excitement goes beyond just securing a sponsorship; it is spurred by the brand itself. “I’ve always worn Speedo,” she says. “I was a Speedo ambassador. I love the brand.”

Her disability has also brought her “where she is today” in academics—a summa cum laude graduate from Rice, a Marshall Scholarship recipient—because it has driven her passion for engineering. Her Bachelor of Science degree is in biometric engineering, and she will take her Marshall Scholarship at Loughborough University for a Master of Science degree in sport mechanics, followed by a second year at University College London for a Master of Science degree in disability, design, and innovation.

Growing up with a disability was difficult, she admits. Wanting to fit in with the other children, she tried playing soccer and softball in elementary school. It would seem obvious that a child who could hardly walk, much less run, wouldn’t be able to play those sports, but her parents never told her, or her two sports-oriented brothers, not to do something they wanted to do.

“One of our main objectives as parents,” Anna Lettenberger, Ahalya’s mother, says, “was to raise our children so that they are defined by their strengths and not by their challenges (visible or invisible). We had to recognize Ahalya’s physical limitations and not put her at greater risk of injury, while simultaneously being careful not to squash her passion for sport.”

The entire Lettenberger family is passionate about sports. The parents, Anna and Tom, love watching and attending sports events, and both of Ahalya’s brothers play sports (her younger brother, who was also born with arthrogryposis, which has affected both his arms and his legs, plays power soccer).

“Our parents were super encouraging,” Lettenberger says. “They let us find out for ourselves what our limits were.”

What Lettenberger found was that soccer and softball were too hard on her joints. But she was an athletic child with a keen sense of competition. When she was 10 years old, some neighbors who swam in a local swim club suggested she try swimming. Her parents, too, steered her in that direction. “The first time I jumped in the pool was so freeing,” she says. “I was freeer to move in water than she ever could be on land. Because swimming is non-weight bearing, my hips, which are very impaired, no longer impeded movement.”

When she was 12, she competed in a para swimming event in Cincinnati, a transformative experience that led to other competitions abroad in England, Japan, and Germany.

She swims every stroke, modifying technique as needed. For the breaststroke, for instance, she can’t kick, so she breathes every other stroke instead of every stroke, as swimmers usually do, and lets her legs drag behind her. Her main events are 400 freestyle and 200 IM, which includes 50 meters each of butterfly, backstroke, breaststroke, and freestyle.

Being in the Paralympics in Tokyo, she says, was the best experience of her life. “It blew away all my expectations—being in an Athletes’ Village, living with the best athletes in the world, and hearing their stories.”

Lettenberger is particularly looking forward to living in London because it will be her first chance to live in a foreign country for an extended time. “I’ve been to a lot of places,” she acknowledges, “but I haven’t seen many parts of those places beyond the pool.” She was a student-athlete in college, so she couldn’t do a study-abroad program. With her Marshall Scholarship, she will at last be able to experience a foreign country—its people, its culture, and its customs—by living in it.

The driving passion behind Lettenberger’s chosen career in bioengineering is to discover assistive technologies for people with disabilities, things that will help them find the kind of acceptance she has found. “Swimming did that for me,” she says. “I want to help other people find that acceptance through technology.” England is a good place for her to pursue those ambitions. Loughborough University, according to “QS World University Rankings by Subjects,” is the best university in the world for sport-related subjects.
With her Marshall Scholarship, she will at last be able to experience a foreign country—its people, its culture, and its customs—by living in it.

In addition, the public in Great Britain has better awareness of disabilities and para athletes than most places in the world, including the United States. “The UK is leading the charge in the field of disabilities,” Lettenberger says. “The 2012 Paralympics in London changed the way people in England saw disabilities. The public perception is greater [than in the US], and there are more opportunities for para athletes to compete.”

“It’ll be super cool living and studying in the UK and experiencing para sports there,” she says, because, of course, she hopes to swim on the para swim team at Loughborough. The sports biomechanics program she will enter at that university will allow her to study the physics behind human movement. She wants to learn to optimize that movement and help disabled athletes perform better and avoid injury.

At University College London she will follow a multidisciplinary program, looking at both the engineering and policy sides of disabilities.

What career Ahalya Lettenberger will follow with these passions and after these studies is an open question. Maybe she will go to medical school so she can work directly with patients. Maybe she will work with companies and conduct research. “I will go wherever my skills are needed most,” she says.

The place where she is needed is, yes, in biometrics and other areas related to her studies and research, but it’s also in developing awareness of para sports and helping other people with disabilities embrace their limitations, set their goals high, and dream big. Echoing lessons from her parents, “You have to learn to do things differently,” she says, “but you can set new goals and new dreams. Don’t let people tell you you can’t do a thing. Find out for yourself!”

Disability awareness is greatly needed in the US. Just because Lettenberger has an abundance of enthusiasm (“super cool” and “super exciting” are two of her most frequent phrases) and an indomitable spirit doesn’t mean she doesn’t get irritated at people’s attitudes. There are people who talk down to her because of her disability or assume she can’t do something because she’s in a wheelchair. Her response has an athlete’s determination: “I’m just going to prove those people wrong.” She reminds herself of her achievements: “I’m a Marshall Scholar! I’m in the Paralympics!” So there!

Diana Coogle (1966) was a Marshall Scholar at Cambridge University, where she received an English BA (Hons). She has lived in the Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon since 1972. In 2012, she earned a PhD in English from the University of Oregon. She has published seven books of essays and poems, was a finalist for an Oregon Book Award, and is now retired from a long and varied teaching career, including teaching at Gothenburg University in Sweden.
THE PATH TO TRUTH

In December, the AMS teamed up with the John Brademas Center at NYU to present “Skirball Talks, Facts Matter: Championing the World of Today’s Investigative Journalists.” During the event, Tina Brown CBE (Tina Brown Media) and Matthew Purdy (New York Times) discussed the future of investigative journalism in a conversation moderated by Linda Kinstler (The Dial). John Avlon (CNN) and Paul Tash (Tampa Bay Times) discussed speech and polarization in the digital age in a conversation moderated by Nabiha Syed (The Markup).

Here are just some of their thoughts on the current state and future of their industry.

ON THE THREATS TO JOURNALISM AND JOURNALISTS

TINA BROWN

International journalism, foreign coverage, is in the greatest peril. Budget cuts mean that people have cut their bureaus. Now we can have homegrown journalists doing the reporting, but I don’t think that’s the answer. They’re not protected. If you’re an Indian journalist, you can’t report on what Modi is doing, or you’re going to wind up in prison or your house ransacked. It’s very dangerous. Cutting all of these bureaus will put a lot of people in great danger from regimes that are going to try and repress what journalists are writing.

You can obviously do a huge amount of citizen journalism, and we are seeing it pour forth from people in places that are under attack. But we still need to have properly funded and legally protected journalists in these places who can tell the story and know that they’re going to have a proper structure behind them.

At our Truth Tellers Summit in London, we had the amazing journalist Anabel Hernández. She writes about the cartels. Her own father was murdered by the cartels. She’s done so much unbelievably brave reporting, and she’s had multiple attempts on her life. She cannot live in Mexico anymore. She had to move to California, and then she had to move from California—that was also too close. The only outlet for which she can write is a column in a German paper. She writes books, but she can’t be published in Mexico. It’s too dangerous because anyone who publishes her is also a target for assassination. These are the realities of these remarkable people—heroes, actually. They do unbelievable, valuable work for very little reward and increasingly little protection.

MATTHEW PURDY

One of the saddest things that’s going on is that in the US, journalists increasingly feel threatened. The rhetoric around political violence and the threat of political violence against journalists is real, and that is something that didn’t really happen until the last five to seven years, and that’s a scary
thing. Part of it is social media harassment and bullying, but part of it is the sense that something physical could happen. We’re facing it here as well.

**ON CHANGING LIVES**

**MATTHEW PURDY**
The great thing about this line of work is that you really can make a difference. It’s important, and you’re doing something that is beneficial to a lot of people. To do that is a great service, but it’s also a great feeling. It’s a great way to spend one’s time and energy. I’m thinking of Tina’s husband’s thalidomide investigation.

**TINA BROWN**
My husband, Harold Evans, spent 10 years essentially crusading for compensation for the victims of thalidomide. He just completely exposed the malef Photo by John Moore; ass, one thing. Part of it is social media harassment and bullying, but part of it is the sense that something physical could happen. We’re facing it here as well.

**ON THE STATE OF JOURNALISM TODAY**

**TINA BROWN**
Investigative journalism is flourishing, but under severe pressure. The pressure obviously comes from a perfect storm of things. The business model of journalism has been torpedoed by digital disruption, corporate timidity, legal bullying, the constant assault on anything serious, the attention span that is shrinking, and also the more alarming things like the rise of authoritarian dictators in so many places in which journalists are being harassed, incarcerated, and repressed. In the dark corners of the world, regions are increasingly ignoring the Geneva Conventions.

Journalism has become a very unsafe trade—perhaps more unsafe than ever before. Sixty journalists already have been killed in the Hamas–Israel war.

Every one of those deaths obviously is an assault on truth, but at the same time, against all of these odds, investigative journalism is flourishing. I recently launched an investigative journalism fellowship in my husband’s name within his foundation. We had 400 applicants, and they were most astonishing. It made me feel so encouraged at the end because these unknown journalists from all over the world—Nigeria, Eastern Europe, India, as well as, of course, the US and England—are doing the most remarkable work. There’s no money in it for them—no grandeur, just passion. The exciting thing about it is that those who have inquiring minds and a devotion to truth are much more numerous than one might think.

**MATTHEW PURDY**
It really is the best of times and the worst of times. I think we have opportunities and tools for investigative reporting. What we can do now in terms of data, in terms of visualization, is beyond what we could ever have imagined when I started in journalism back in the 1970s.

We also have amazing ways of reaching our audiences that we didn’t have then. Now, we’re beginning to figure out how to use AI to analyze giant data sets, which was unthinkable then.

**PAUL TASH**
Over the last 10 years we at the *Tampa Bay Times* have gone from being a universal general interest publication to, in some ways, a niche publication. We are reaching only some slices of the audience, potentially, rather than in the old days of the circulation trucks that could throw a paper basically at every household. So, in this role of gatekeeper, there are a lot more gates around us between information and the audience. We’re trying to find a way to connect with as many people on the other side of those gates as possible, but still recognizing that some of those folks are beyond reach, at this moment, for us as a general interest news provider in a geographic setting. There was a time when national news organizations could pick their lanes, and they would reach a particular segment of the audience. If you were left, you read one publication. If you were right, you read another. But at the local level, those distinctions were not as prominent. Certainly, over the last decade, those national identities have intruded upon local politics, audiences, issues, and the way people define themselves, so that a school board race that was nonpartisan now becomes very partisan.

Certainly, over the last decade, those national identities have intruded upon local politics, audiences, issues, and the way people define themselves, so that a school board race that was nonpartisan now becomes very partisan. Those divisions, which used to really stop in many ways at the county line or at city hall, are becoming more and more prominent and pulling apart some of the consensus that used to exist locally.
Those divisions, which used to really stop in many ways at the county line or at city hall, are becoming more and more prominent and pulling apart some of the consensus that used to exist locally. So now, not only is the question, “Can we be informed and intelligent guides for the audience that does turn to us?” but also “How do we try to reach people who have decided that everybody in the news media is biased against their side?”

JOHN AVLON
There’s no point in being nostalgic for the days of three networks and one or two local papers. I think we’ve come to appreciate the value that those constraints provided. What I think we’ve come to appreciate today is that institutions play an important role in filtering. One of the sinister things that’s happened in our era of multiple fractured media environments is that very often, the people who label themselves most loudly as truth-tellers are the ones who are most intentionally selling snake oil. So I think there is virtue to organizations and institutions that have an editing process in place, that have fact-checkers in place, that have a sense of rigor that hopefully their audiences can come to trust.

We need to give credit to the news organizations that are breaking news, really taking on that responsibility of elevating ideas seriously and not simply skimming along the surface, afraid of offending. I think the drift toward commodity news is a path to oblivion for any organization.

ON TRUTH

PAUL TASH
Most people will at least acknowledge—in concept—that truth matters. I think our work at PolitiFact and other fact-checking services matters—we can’t just let falsehoods go unchallenged.

We also now sponsor something called MediaWise, which is an effort targeted both to adolescents, often in schools, but also to seniors, to help them differentiate what might be true or false information they may see on their phones or social media. I tend to think about PolitiFact as an antibiotic designed to go after a certain germ. Efforts like MediaWise are set up to try to strengthen the immune system of public understanding.

JOHN AVLON
I think fact-checking is one of the most important things that journalistic organizations can do right now. There are moments when people will say, “Why are we belaboring the fact that Donald Trump lied when he was president?” I say, “The moment we stop calling it out, we normalize it.” We cannot give up on fact-checking, nor can we give in to the cynical idea that a fact check or reality check is somehow partisan. These fact checks are also part of civic education and understanding of history. That’s something we’ve undervalued. I love using history in journalism. It’s a way to create context and a continuity of the stories.

We need to consider amplification strategies that vary intentionally between news organizations—considering the ones that have the broader platform, elevating those stories and not simply rewriting someone else’s scoop, but actually giving them credit and a direct link back and thinking more holistically about how we get stories into the bloodstream in a fragmented environment. We’re not going to recreate the old world, nor should we.

ON THE MEDIA ECOSYSTEM AND ITS EFFECT

MATT PURDY
I’ve been thinking that our major competition right now is not, in our case, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, or the BBC. It’s really this whole other media ecosystem that is informing more and more people. That’s really our competition.

The New York Times has 10 million subscribers, which is really great for the business. But our mission is really about reaching people who are not going to sit down and read The New York Times or watch some long investigative documentary. How do we present investigations that take a long time and are very detailed and get them to people who are not going to sit down and read the three-part series or engage with something that takes 30 minutes, for example? We’re trying to figure that out.

We’re being much more open about how we do our work and letting people behind the screen. We’ve also started doing videos with reporters, allowing them to talk to you about a story, why they did it, and how they did it. We’re putting them on our site and on TikTok.

They’ve proven to be successful at drawing people in. We’re trying to expand our audience—not so much for the business, but for our mission.
I think that coverage needs to be rigorous and detailed and vivid in a way that goes beyond, “This is the most important election in a century and democracy is at stake.”

TINA BROWN
It’s possible that you’re going to have to see a serious, big investigative piece and then multiple repurposings of it in different formats that will reach a wider audience. Right now, as you say, it just doesn’t cross over. That’s the issue: People are living in completely separate information ecosystems where they’re not even aware of what’s being said in another ecosystem. Of course, it’s those people you’re trying to reach.

Whether it’s TikTok or another form of social media, we’ve got to communicate. The journalist who did the story may find it distasteful to see their work pushed out this way, but how can we communicate the central findings of a piece unless we can communicate it through popular channels?

ON THE ODDS VS. THE STAKES

JOHN AVLON
A quote by the late Jay Rosen, “It’s not the odds, it’s the stakes,” is absolutely essential for covering the 2024 election. The odds are a fixation on the horse race of the elections—who’s up, who’s down—and usually related to a poll that just came out. But this is about something bigger. It’s the stakes for democracy. Pull back, zoom out, and view this with a sense of perspective. Remind people that this isn’t just the election we have every four years, but this is a real moment of responsibility for citizens of a democratic republic. And think about the kind of country we have been, and the one we want to hand to the next generation. Don’t get sucked into “my team” versus “your team.” That is incredibly lazy and utterly insufficient for the moment we’re in.

PAUL TASH
I believe we have to do both. We must focus on the stakes because they’re very high, but we can’t ignore the odds. As a reader, as a viewer, as a citizen, I still want to know the odds because it helps me understand what the stakes are. That coverage has two purposes. One, it helps me understand what’s going on in the sentiment of the voters and in the electorate. Two, it helps engage an audience rather than just the coverage that is public policy on parade.

I think that coverage needs to be rigorous and detailed and vivid in a way that goes beyond just a statement like, “This is the most important election in a century and democracy is at stake.”

ON THE FUTURE OF JOURNALISM

PAUL TASH
If you had asked me 25 years ago to predict the kinds of things that I would be seeing today, it would have been impossible. I will say that I think the human desire to connect with each other and to know what is happening in other places and to know what is happening in ways that relate to your own life is fundamental to us as a species. We can find ways to connect, allowing journalism to be a force for good.

JOHN AVLON
Accountability often, if not always, comes via the press, at least at first. It’s a necessary check on people in power. The forms will change, and they will continue to change. What we should do is focus on the craft, the storytelling, and how it echoes across different formats. And we should defend it.

We can approach it any number of ways, from citizens feeling a sense of patriotic obligation to subscribe to their local newspaper to big foundations thinking about the role they play in a transitional time to Congress considering a law to make hiring local news reporters tax-deductible. We need to think very comprehensively right now, it seems to me, about how we defend a diverse liberal democracy, how we tell stories that unite us, given that we’re the only country in the history of the world founded on an idea, not a tribal identity. We need to make sure those ideas are being discussed in circulation, and that’s one of the things newspapers provide. We need to really think comprehensively about how we defend the idea of an educated citizenry, because I think, as Washington said, “Enlightened opinion is necessary for a self-governing society.”

The remarks contained here have been adapted and edited for print.
The British Government has awarded 51 winners of 2024 Marshall Scholarships, the largest class ever in the 70 year history of the scholarship program.

The recipients, considered among America’s most accomplished undergraduate university students and recent graduates, were chosen following an intense selection process and will begin graduate studies at top universities across the United Kingdom next year.

The program received 1006 applications this year from candidates representing academic institutions across the United States. 34 US universities across 21 US States and the District of Columbia are represented, nearly a third of which are state or public universities and military service academies.

The 2024 class will take up their studies at 18 different institutions across the UK starting next September, ranging from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to Loughborough University in Leicestershire.

Among this year’s class are aspiring diplomats, doctors, fighter pilots and scientists. Half of the 2024 class will pursue STEM-related degrees, including several who will study issues relating to the ethics and advancement of Artificial Intelligence.

“No nearly 70 years after the first group of American students journeyed across the Atlantic, the Marshall Scholarship program remains an integral part of the UK-US relationship.”

— Dame Karen Pierce
BRITISH AMBASSADOR
TO THE UNITED STATES
2024 MARSHALL SCHOLARS

Adrian Ali-Caccamo
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Richard Allen
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Robert Atkinson
YALE UNIVERSITY

Arushi Avachat
UCLA

Simar Bajaj
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Jamila Beesley
BROWN UNIVERSITY

Xavier Blackwell-Lipkind
YALE UNIVERSITY

Alexis Bradstreet
US MILITARY ACADEMY

Madison Brode
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

Jilkiah Bryant
UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

Kaitlin Bui
BROWN UNIVERSITY

Anushree Chaudhuri
MIT

Hari Choudhari
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Rosie Contino
UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Charlotte d’Halluin
US NAVAL ACADEMY

Alexander Dyer
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Ashley Fuchs
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Logan Glasstetter
DUKE UNIVERSITY

Liza Goldberg
STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Owen Graham
US AIR FORCE ACADEMY

Naomi Greenberg
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Austin Hickle
SOUTHERN METHODIST UNIV.

Robby Hill
YALE UNIVERSITY

Maeva Janecka
GEORGIA INST. OF TECHNOLOGY

Haaris Jilani
GEORGIA INST. OF TECHNOLOGY

Ayelet Kalfus
YALE UNIVERSITY

Ahalya Lettenberger
RICE UNIVERSITY

Michael Lundgren
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Andrew Lorenzen
CORNELL UNIVERSITY

Maryann Lorino
TULANE UNIVERSITY

Kit Neikirk
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII - HILO

Kendra Lyimo
UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

Sarosh Nagar
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Rupert Li
MIT

Gina Ngo
VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Mary Olson
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

Michael Ostrow
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

Nils Peterson
UNIV. OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

Amarachukwu Precious Ifeji
NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY

Eva Rothenberg
EMORY UNIVERSITY

Olivia Sally
YALE UNIVERSITY

Ronald Sullivan III
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Maxwell Teszler
DARTMOUTH UNIVERSITY

Samuel Thorpe
WILLIAMS COLLEGE

Cameron Tice
AUBURN UNIVERSITY

Kyle Tucker
INDIANA UNIV. - BLOOMINGTON

Martayn Van de Wall
US MILITARY ACADEMY

Iona Volynets
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

Anya Wahal
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Kathryn Yurechko
WASHINGTON & LEE UNIVERSITY

Dorothy Zhao
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

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ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION
OF MARSHALL SCHOLARS

The Association of Marshall Scholars works to strengthen US-UK ties and also the Marshall Scholarship. Historically, the transatlantic alliance has served as a lynchpin for liberal democracy, prosperity, and global peace. A valuable thread of this relationship has been the Marshall Scholarship, an educational program strengthening international exchange and advancement in nearly every field of human endeavor. Our Scholars do amazing things: Here are just a few of their stories.

IBOTTA COMPLETES SUCCESSFUL IPO LED BY BRYAN LEACH (2000)

Ibotta, Inc., the Denver-based technology company, completed its successful initial public offering (IPO) on April 18, 2024, the largest tech IPO in Colorado history, under the leadership of Bryan Leach (2000). Ibotta has demonstrated innovation, resilience, and a commitment to enhancing the consumer experience.

“Americans have been rebated approximately $1.8 billion through the Ibotta Performance Network since 2012. Bryan’s company joins the ranks of several Marshall Scholar-founded enterprises—such as Dolby, LinkedIn, and Guidewire—which harness engineering and technological advances to improve the experience of consumers and our daily lives,” says Nell Breyer, executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

Many Marshall Scholars have played integral roles in Ibotta’s success story, generously supporting Leach’s vision from its earliest days. Their investment and expertise have driven Ibotta’s growth and shaped its trajectory in the competitive tech landscape.

Founded in 2011, the company, a leading rewards platform that offers cash back on everyday purchases, has rapidly become one of the most prominent names in the tech industry, revolutionizing how consumers save money while shopping.
President Biden nominated Kurt Campbell (1980), a former member of the Association of Marshall Scholars’ Advisory Board, for the role of United States deputy secretary of state, the second-highest diplomatic office within the United States Department of State. Currently serving as the National Security Council coordinator for the Indo-Pacific, Campbell is the architect of President Biden’s visionary China and Indo-Pacific strategy and a trusted advisor on a broad spectrum of Asia-related policy issues.

“Kurt Campbell has a distinguished career in public service. His nomination to become the next US deputy secretary of state reflects the important contributions he has made to national security and international diplomacy. His significant expertise on East Asia and the Pacific region will continue to play a significant role in furthering the United States’ efforts to strengthen international cooperation and peace,” says Nell Breyer, executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

“Kurt Campbell’s nomination by President Biden represents a 70-year tradition of Marshall Scholars who have left an indelible mark on global affairs,” says Scott Grinsell, board president of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

As the U.S. coordinator for Indo-Pacific Affairs, Campbell played a significant role in the formulation and implementation of the AUKUS (Australia, United Kingdom, United States) partnership. Announced in September 2021, the trilateral initiative represents a significant commitment to take decisive actions in the Indo-Pacific region and the US’ efforts to link this endeavor with the US-UK alliance.

President Biden nominated Michael Sulmeyer (2004) to become the United States’ assistant secretary of defense for cyber policy at the Department of Defense.

“Michael Sulmeyer is one of our nation’s leading experts in cyber policy and has contributed to the country’s ongoing cyber strategy through his service for the United States Army, the United States Cyber Command, and the Department of Defense. His nomination will ensure that his expertise continues to help shape our nation’s cyber readiness, capabilities, and strategy,” says Nell Breyer, executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars. “Cybersecurity remains critical to the United States and its democratic allies, including the United Kingdom.”

“In an increasingly interconnected world, cybersecurity is not just a matter of national defense, but a cornerstone of our collective security,” says Scott Grinsell, board president of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

Currently serving as the principal cyber advisor to the Secretary of the Army, Sulmeyer advises on critical cyber matters, such as readiness, capabilities, and strategy. His extensive experience spans various key roles within the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the National Security Council, and U.S. Cyber Command.
GABE AMO (2010) WINS SPECIAL ELECTION TO REPRESENT RHODE ISLAND'S FIRST CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Gabe Amo (2010) won the special election to represent Rhode Island’s First Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Amo has dedicated himself to serving the public and improving the lives of all those living in Rhode Island.

“As the newest representative from Rhode Island’s First Congressional District, Gabe Amo will bring his energy, experience, and commitment to public service into the U.S. House of Representatives,” says Nell Breyer, executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

During his time as a Marshall Scholar in the United Kingdom, Amo pursued a master’s degree in comparative social policy at Oxford University’s Merton College. Amo worked as special assistant to the president and deputy director of the Office of Intergovernmental Affairs under President Joe Biden, a states strategy and program advisor with Biden’s 2020 presidential campaign, and the director of public engagement and community affairs of the Office of then-Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo, currently serving as US Secretary of Commerce.

Amo’s election is historic, as he is the first Black lawmaker to represent the state of Rhode Island in Washington. Amo joins Marshall Scholar Derek Kilmer (1993) (D-WA) in Congress.

SARAH STILLMAN (2006) AWARDED PULITZER PRIZE FOR EXPLANATORY REPORTING

Sarah Stillman (2006) has been awarded the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting. The annual award recognizes a “distinguished example of explanatory reporting that illuminates a significant and complex subject, demonstrating mastery of the subject, lucid writing, and clear presentation, using any available journalistic tool.” Stillman won the Pulitzer for her piece, “Sentenced to Life for an Accident Miles Away,” published in The New Yorker in December 2023. Stillman is a staff writer at The New Yorker and a visiting scholar at the NYU Arthur L. Carter Journalism Institute.

The award-winning article examines the legal doctrine of felony murder and its disproportionate and devastating impact on marginalized communities.

“Sarah Stillman continues to make significant contributions to the fields of journalism and investigative reporting,” says Nell Breyer, executive director of the Association of Marshall Scholars.

“Her dedication to pursuing ethically compelling storytelling helps to shed light on some of society’s most pressing and neglected human rights challenges.”

With the 2024 Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting, Sarah Stillman joins other internationally recognized Marshall Scholar journalists and writers who have been awarded the Pulitzer Prize, including: Anne Applebaum (1986), Sewell Chan (1988), Thomas Friedman (1973), Jeffrey Gettleman (1994), Annalyn Swan (1973), and Dan Yergin (1968).
THE 2024 MARSHALL FORUM

In June, the AMS hosted The Marshall Forum, an annual event that considers strategic and economic issues impacting the future of transatlantic cooperation, peace, and security. This year’s Forum, held at the David Rubenstein Forum building on the University of Chicago campus, focused on the role of global markets, monetary policy, and innovation and featured Lisa D. Cook (1986), a member of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors of the United States, as the 2024 Marshall Medal recipient. To view the sessions from the Forum, visit: https://bit.ly/2024MarshallForum.
Running the London Marathon will forever be a highlight of my Marshall experience. London has been a lovely city to live in, and I have fallen in love with different ways of exploring the various corners of my temporary home. However, exploring the city through running will always be my favorite mode of exploration. As I ran across Tower Bridge at the halfway point of the race where throngs of spectators cheered waves of runners along, I felt nothing but gratitude for the journey that brought me to London and the freedom that the Marshall Scholarship has given me to explore my hobbies in such a wonderful city. 26.2 miles later, I met some fellow Marshall Scholars at the finish line, and they joined me afterwards in a celebratory dinner.

—MARLEY WAIT (2023)

Seeing the Great British Museum with other Marshall Scholars has been a lovely highlight of my time in the UK—it’s incredible. I’ve also loved seeing all of the old architecture across England and Scotland, and learning about the rich history. In my studies at Cambridge, a highlight has been getting to learn about the incredible advancements being made in embryo and stem cell biology. Honestly, there have been too many highlights to count.

—ROSE SUMMERS (2023)

Since arriving in the UK, I have joined the Cambridge Dons Goalball Team. Goalball is a Paralympic sport designed for blind and visually impaired athletes. I had played as a child, but it had been years since I was last on the court, so when I heard that there was a Cambridge team (unaffiliated with the university), I jumped at the chance to play again! Through goalball, I have met so many wonderful friends, have connected with the local blind and visually impaired community, and have gotten a breather from my PhD! The Marshall Xtra grant has made it possible for me to afford equipment for the sport and to pay to travel to tournaments. Thank you!

—SARAH KANE (2023)
Highlights of my Marshall experience:
getting to continue my journey as a dancer, connecting with family I hadn’t
met before, seeing my growth as a scholar, befriending people from all over
the world, and learning more about British culture and the windrush era. I
understand my dad so much more now that I’ve met some of the people who have
shaped him and seen where he spent the first 14 years of his life. I had never spent
time in the UK before, and I have come to appreciate it a lot!
—ASSATA DAVIS (2023)

The generosity of the AMS community
and the Xtra grant made it possible for
me and my class to explore more of the
UK. Some highlights of my Marshall
experience in the last year include
spending time with other scholars,
traveling to new cities, and visiting
historical landmarks. During the first
term in the UK, about half of the 2023
Marshall cohort rented an Airbnb for
a weekend in Brighton. We cooked
together, hiked the Seven Sisters Cliffs,
and talked throughout the night. The
AMS Xtra Grant has also helped fund
trips to Bath, Cambridge, Edinburgh,
and Salisbury. In the process, I have
developed close friendships and a better
understanding of British life and culture.
—MICHAEL CHEN (2023)

Over the past year, I have had the
immense privilege to learn about British
studio pottery while working as a work-
study aid at Maze Hill Pottery. Maze Hill
is the pottery studio of Lisa Hammond,
MBE, who is one of the most celebrated
potters in the UK. While working
with her, I learned about both ceramic
techniques and traditions. Lisa is also
well known for her support of traditional
crafts education in the UK, and it has
been fascinating to watch her defend
hand skills in education. This has been an intense and
deeply thought-provoking experience and
would not have been possible had I not
had the Marshall Xtra funds to allow me
to take on this unpaid internship.
—NATHANIEL TROST (2022)

Hiking up Mount Helvellyn on the
Marshall Spring Retreat was one of the
moments that made me truly love the UK.
—ALEX HU (2023)

2023 Marshall Scholars at Seven Sisters Cliffs,
from left to right: Katie Pascavis, Sihao Huang,
Nathan Mudrak, Lauren Jarvis, Michael Chen,
Kavya Shah, Kyrolos Georgey, Sydney Menne,
Aristotle Vainikos, Hannah Gillespie, Grace Kim,
Banks Stamp, Rachel Chae, Kyra Jasper, Amy
Krimm, Daniel Chen (Photo Credit: Grace Kim)

2023 Marshall Scholars at Seven Sisters Cliffs,
from left to right: Katie Pascavis, Sihao Huang,
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Aristotle Vainikos, Hannah Gillespie, Grace Kim,
Banks Stamp, Rachel Chae, Kyra Jasper, Amy
Krimm, Daniel Chen (Photo Credit: Grace Kim)

Sydney Menne (2023) and Hannah Gillespie
(2023) joined Hu to hike Mount Helvellyn.

Nathaniel Trost sprays liquid soda (baking soda
or sodium bicarbonate dependent on which side
of the pond you claim) into a kiln that he and
Lisa Hammond are firing with her pots inside.
This is a technique that she helped to develop—an
innovation on traditional techniques going back to
the Middle Ages.
WHAT TO DO NEXT

We asked a few 2024 Marshalls to share their recommendations for books and podcasts to add to your queue.

A Brief History of Intelligence: Evolution, AI, and the Five Breakthroughs That Made Our Brains by Max Bennett

“Few books provide as excellent an illustration of the evolutionary history of the human brain and how our understanding of neuroscience can inform how we approach artificial intelligence as this one. The book works wonders—providing a rich evolutionary tapestry of how our brains evolved over millions of years and framing how key evolutionary breakthroughs can show us where artificial intelligence exceeds us and where it still needs to catch up with us. Truly an enjoyable read.” — Sarosh Naqar (2024), University College London and University of Oxford

The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity by Toby Ord

“The Precipice discusses the risks that humanity faces—risks that threaten our long-term potential. As a Marshall scholar, I find these global problems, especially those that are woefully under-addressed, to be an eye-opening call to action. And as a mathematician, I appreciate how Ord rigorously considers a broad range of risks, and attaches quantitative estimates to how important and threatening they are. Despite the book being on the long side, it’s incredibly pleasant to read and goes by quite quickly.” — Rupert Li (2024) Trinity College at Cambridge University

How to Slowly Kill Yourself and Others in America by Kiese Laymon

Kiese Laymon’s collection of essays delves into the complexities of being a black Mississippian, exploring themes of violence, trauma, and cultural richness in the state. Laymon explores what it means to be a black Mississippian in all its forms. Mississippi, the blackest and poorest state in the nation, has a profound history marked by both violence and activism. This duality underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of the state. Laymon delves into generational trauma and its enduring consequences. Laymon’s narrative is a call for honesty, tenderness, and responsibility in our relationships, urging readers to reflect on what we owe to ourselves and each other. The book’s powerful title encapsulates the profound insights into race, gender, and class that Laymon unpacks with vulnerability and brilliance. — Jilkiah Bryant (2024), the University of Sheffield and the London School of Economics

Have recommendations you’d like to share? Send them to us at newsletter@marshallscholars.org.
AMS EDITORIAL TEAM

**ZACHARY D. KAUFMAN (2002)**
Vice President, AMS Board of Directors; Chair, Marshall Alumni Newsletter Committee

BA, MPhil, JD, DPhil (PhD). Zachary D. Kaufman is professor of law at the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where he teaches criminal law, international law, national security law, and transitional justice.

**NICHOLAS HARTMAN (2003)**
Deputy Editor

BS, PhD. Nicholas leads a team at Amazon Web Services in New York City supporting early-stage startup companies. He lives in Westchester County with his wife and two boys.

**SHANNON FELTON SPENCE**
Director of Communications

Shannon Felton Spence leads successful public affairs, political, and communication strategies for clients across the United States and the United Kingdom, including the Association of Marshall Scholars.

**MAUREEN HARMON**
Editor

Maureen Harmon is the editor of the AMS Newsletter, as well as the editor-in-chief of publications at Rice University’s Jones Graduate School of Business, including Rice Business magazine and Rice Business Wisdom, the school’s online ideas magazine. She is also the managing partner of Dog Ear Creative, a consultancy aimed at higher education publications.

**CAMILLE MUMFORD**
Class Notes Editor

Camille Mumford has worked on the Communications team at the Association of Marshall Scholars since 2020. Her primary focus at the AMS is the public opinion survey of US residents that measures attitudes toward the UK and transatlantic issues.

**DIANA COOGLE (1966)**
Profiles Co–Editor

BA, MA, PhD. After writing a dissertation on Old English poetry, Diana finished her long teaching career at Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Oregon, with retirement in 2017. She continues to live and write in her little house in the Siskiyou Mountains of southern Oregon, hiking and cross-country skiing as often as possible.

*Views represented in this newsletter are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the AMS or the Marshall Aid Commemoration Commission (MACC).*

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*Cover image: Brandon Martin/Rice University*