



SCHEPP CONNECTIONS

LEOPOLD SCHEPP FOUNDATION • FOUNDED IN 1925 • VOLUME 1, NUMBER 8, 2005

Career Connections: A New Way to Connect

The Foundation hopes to set up a career-mentoring program, called “Career Connections,” which would put current and recently-graduated Schepp Scholars together with potential mentors. The mentors, Schepp Scholars already established in similar careers, would share their professional experiences and insights, offer practical advice, answer questions, provide contacts and leads, and hopefully provide relevant “career connections.”

In this edition of Schepp Connections, we feature several Schepp Scholars who are looking for mentors as well as Schepp Scholars who could potentially mentor them. The idea is to inspire scholars who seek mentors and those of you who are interested in becoming a mentor to contact us so the appropriate connection can be made.

We hope those of you who are potential mentors will seriously consider playing a role in Career Connections. Here’s what it would entail:

THE MENTOR’S ROLE

Most of the interaction would be by email or online at the Career Connections website.

There may also be some in-person activities such as career workshops in your area, which would require attendance and some preparation.

INTERESTED?

All who are interested should email the foundation at information@scheppfoundation.org. “Career Connections” is in the planning stages and we welcome your input, suggestions and involvement in what we hope is an outstanding way to share the considerable successes among Schepp Scholars. ⁿ

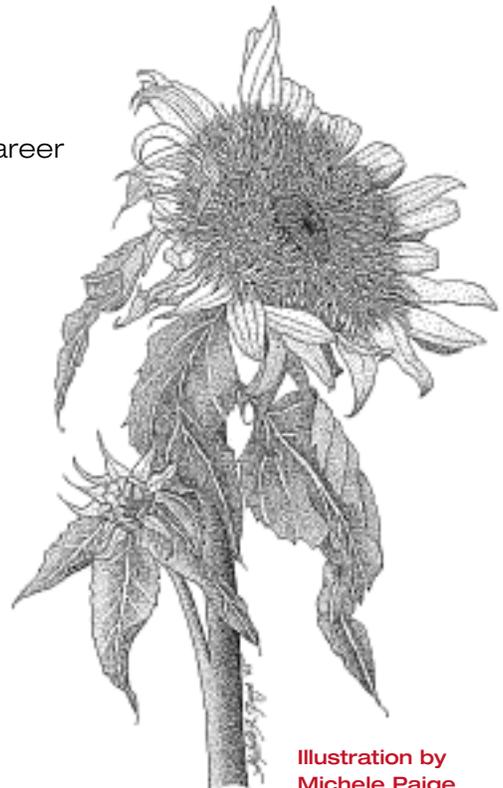


Illustration by
Michele Paige

Michele Paige

TRUSTEE, CAREER CONNECTIONS ADVOCATE

BY TRUSTEE BRUNO QUINSON

“I love the Schepp Foundation,” said Michele Paige, her eyes sparkling with her trademark enthusiasm and energy. “The Foundation helped me when I needed it, and now I am in a position to help the Foundation.”

Michele was a Schepp Scholar in the early 90s while a pre-med student at Brown University and again as a law student at Yale Law School. In 2002, she became a Trustee, and she serves on both the Investment Committee and the newly-formed Development Committee. In addition to her formal duties and obligations as a Trustee, Michele is always ready to take on special assignments.

Michele grew up in Queens, where her family has lived for four generations. “When my grandmother moved to Queens, most of her neighbors were farmers; her father owned a small store, so she learned to speak to all of his customers in their native languages,” Michele said. “Even in her 90s, she knew a number of different languages, and she was learning Spanish,” Michele added. Michele was the first member of her family to move away for college when she went to Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Later, she became the first member of her family to leave Queens, but she didn’t go far—she and her husband now live in Manhattan.

Michele has always been interested in the arts. She is an accomplished author, having written several books and articles on a variety of topics. Her first book, *After the SATs*, grew out of her own struggles making the transition to college. “It just made sense to me,” she explained, “to write down everything I had learned during my first year so that others could benefit from my experience.” Customers and critics agreed, and her book won an award from The New York Public Library. Currently, she is studying scientific botanical illustration at The New York Botanical Garden.

After interning at several prestigious law firms, including Cravath, Swaine & Moore, and after clerking for the Honorable Patricia M. Wald of the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, Michele realized that she didn’t want to be a lawyer or a judge. “When I thought about being a lawyer, I thought, ‘why stand around arguing about what other people have done when you can go out and change the world yourself?’” So, Michele attained her MBA at Harvard Business School.

Michele began her new career in finance with a summer associate position at the investment bank, Wasserstein Perella. After business school she joined Icahn & Associates, which was the primary investment vehicle for billionaire financier and corporate takeover king, Carl Icahn. “The best part about working for Carl Icahn is that he gives you all the responsibility you can handle; I like to think of

those three years as my duty on the front lines.” Along with all of her other duties sourcing and researching new investment opportunities and turning around Mr. Icahn’s other companies, Michele served as a Director for several publicly traded corporations and as the CEO of a New Jersey-based pharmaceutical company, Cadus Corporation.

After three years with Mr. Icahn, Michele moved to King Street Capital Management, where she is responsible for investing a significant portion of the firm’s multi-billion dollar fund. “There aren’t too many women in my position at a major hedge fund, so I’m always very conscious of the fact that I have a unique opportunity—an opportunity I received because I have a world-class education that I was only able to attain because the Foundation helped me. In a very real sense, the Foundation made my career possible.”

To ensure the Foundation can have a similar impact on the lives of other scholars, Michele proposed the new Schepp Mentoring Program. The program will establish a data bank with information about every Schepp Scholar so that other Schepp Scholars can contact each other for help and guidance in the true Schepp spirit. The program will also recruit former Scholars to serve as mentors for current Scholars. Michele explained, “Currently, Edythe Bobrow is the person who knows each and every Schepp Scholar and now that she is retired she has the time to use that knowledge to help spearhead this project.” In addition, Michele would like to see an annual meeting of Schepp Scholars evolve into opportunities for Scholars to share and develop their ideas to make our world a better place.

Although she insists the whole idea is a team effort involving Edythe Bobrow (Trustee), Barbara McLendon (the Chairman of the Board of Trustees), and her husband Chris, it’s clear that the project would be nothing more than an idea without Michele’s energy and drive. Thanks to Michele, however, the program is becoming a reality. “We’ve started the program with a much-improved website, and we expect the program to grow into an entirely new and vital part of the Foundation’s mission with the help of our alumni, staff, and Trustees.” ⁿ

Leopold Schepp Foundation Awards summary 1925–2005

Student Category	# of Awards	\$ Awarded
Endeavors (1925–1932) High School Youth	3,922	\$ 784,400
College/university	17,720	21,462,200
Research/post doctoral	151	1,636,815
May 19, 2005	21,793	\$ 23,883,415

Kris Tobiassen

SCHEPP SCHOLAR EXAMINES AMERICAN CULTURE AND POLITICAL DIVISION IN A NEW FEATURE DOCUMENTARY

Have you ever wondered how people on the other side of the political and cultural divide came to develop their world views? What sort of cultural, political, and historical influences have shaped our nation and its people? Schepp Scholar Kris Tobiassen was curious to find answers to these questions, and in 2003 set out on a series of road trips across the country to talk to average people about these issues.

The result was *The Average American*, a feature-length documentary film that introduces the viewer to 100 ordinary Americans who roughly reflect the population of the U.S. (according to the 2000 U.S. Census) with regards to age, race, gender, and state of residence. The randomly-selected 100 hail from 44 of the 50 states—from big cities, rural areas, and every place in between. They run the gamut from the poorest to the wealthiest citizens, from recent immigrants to people so entrenched in American life that they don't know the nationality of their ancestors, and from high school drop-outs to college professors. Some are world travelers, while others have never ventured beyond the borders of their home state.

The movie was completed in late 2004, and made its New York City premiere at the Pioneer Theater in the East Village on September 21, 2005. In attendance from the Schepp Foundation were Barbara McLendon, Kathy Smith, Edythe Bobrow and her husband Walter, Elizabeth Eiel (Scholar), and Suzanne Guard and her husband Tuck Stephenson.

The documentary explores the concept of the American identity, as invisible as it sometimes seems. The subjects discuss everyday issues such as personal worries and dreams. They discuss race relations and discrimination; religion and its influence on our society and government; poverty and class issues; gay marriage and hot-button topics; the media and how it influences us; the role of the U.S. government at home and abroad; and how capitalism shapes our society. Two of the interviews were conducted in

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Spanish and appear subtitled—as 7% of the U.S. population does not speak English well. Interspersed throughout are interesting statistics on the U.S. population, as well as results from national opinion polls (conducted by the Gallup organization).

Essentially holding up a mirror to our society, Kris's goal for the film is to foster a broader understanding of who and what America is, as well as to help identify some of the problems that we face as a nation—not only for Americans ourselves, but for everyone who is interested in getting to know us as a people. She feels that understanding and tolerance are now more important than ever as our nation grows more and more politically polarized—often to the point of blind hatred for those on the other side of the political fence. Massive social and civil changes have been a constant in our nation's short history. And while our past—both as individuals and as a nation—has made us into who we are today, who we are today will shape who we become in the future.

The catalyst for making the movie was a strange one. Kris (like 65% of all Americans) usually watches television while eating dinner. One night in 2002, a documentary about neo-nazis caught her eye. These overt racists were—literally—draped in American flags, and going on and on about how much they love America. Apparently, they consider themselves extremely patriotic and often plan acts of terrorism to coincide with patriotic American holidays, such as Independence Day. This angered and confused Kris. How could anyone who claims to love America want to destroy it? How could anyone who claims to love America hate the diversity that is the very definition of its people? The basic idea for *The Average American* was hatched that night. Intended as a portrait of the American people, the concept developed as Kris traveled around the country conducting interviews. Early on, she decided that the 100 people would be randomly-selected—and not culled from a larger body of participants—it seemed the only way to keep the portrayal fair.

A Manhattanite since moving to New York City to attend NYU in 1988, Kris has never owned a car. In the process of making her film, she drove over 15,000 miles and flew another 11,000. The interviews were conducted on a series of nine trips (including two cross-country drives) that totaled 43 days on the road. She saw the Grand Canyon for the first time, not to mention the world's largest ball of twine, in Cawker City, Kansas. n

Beginning in mid-January of 2006, *The Average American* will be available for viewing online at www.clickflicks.net. For more information about the project, please visit www.mightygoat.com.



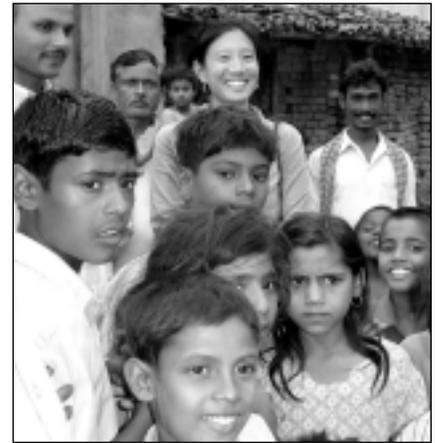
Kris Tobiassen at the Grand Canyon

Meet Schepp Scholars looking for mentors . . . and those who might mentor them

CHRISTINA KIM

AN IDEAL NURSE PRACTITIONER MENTOR

Christina Kim is currently based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, where she oversees the logistics of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. Her responsibilities include other public health initiatives as identified by country-specific needs, such as rural health development and avian influenza. Prior to this posting, she was based in San Francisco as a nurse practitioner in the Departments of Family and Community Medicine (UCSF) and Public Health. During that time, she also worked with various overseas programs as a technical advisor. Christina's academic background and work experience have provided her the opportunity to be creative and flexible in developing and administering effective, sustainable health programs. Her recent accomplishments include creating the Essential Healthcare Providers Training Program in East Timor; establishing a foundation for HIV/AIDS care countrywide; assisting with the roll-out of antiretroviral therapy in six countries for the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean States and participating in the Clinton Foundation's HIV/AIDS Initiative (2004-2005). ⁿ



Christina Kim in Bihar, India

Tina Renneisen

NURSE PRACTITIONER READY FOR SOME MENTORING

I chose to enter the field of nursing because of the opportunities which exist in policy, advocacy and mental health. I began graduate school in the psychiatric nurse practitioner program at the Yale School of Nursing in September 2004. I took a year off from school last January and I am working with adolescent girls in a strengths-based and gender-responsive, alternative to juvenile detention programs. One day, I would like to open an urban clinic addressing the mental health needs of at-risk girls. I want to take an active role

in advocating for access to quality mental health care for children and adolescents both domestically and internationally. I am excited about the prospect of the new mentoring program at the Leopold Schepp Foundation. A mentoring program provides guidance and a mutual exchange of ideas, goals and challenges that can be a wonderful opportunity for personal growth as well as career development. I am grateful to the Leopold Schepp Foundation for helping establish these enriching connections. ⁿ

Minnie Wood

NURSE PRACTITIONER

I guess I became interested in health-care in a kind of a roundabout way. After I graduated from college, I did not feel satisfied with my work for a private film archive in New York. I longed to do something more meaningful that had an impact on people's lives and made them feel better. I studied massage therapy for a year at the Swedish Institute of Massage and that was truly transforming, especially in helping me get in touch with my own body and the innate healing nature in all of us. After practicing as a licensed massage therapist for several months, I felt somewhat isolated and craved intellectual stimulation and challenge. When the opportunity arose to go

to India to volunteer with the Tibetan Government in Exile, I jumped at the chance. I had always been moved by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and by the struggle of the Tibetan people. I followed my then-boyfriend (now husband) to a small village in northern India and stayed for about 4 months tutoring a young monk in English and helping to create a museum that chronicled the occupation of Tibet by China, the ensuing Tibetan diaspora and the continuing Tibetan pursuit of freedom. That life-changing experience led to a series of others. I co-facilitated a one year fund-raising tour for a group of Tibetan Buddhist monks and then became the Executive Director of Tibet Justice Center, a non-profit organization dedicated to advocating for the human rights and freedom of the Tibetan people. I spent four years at the Tibet Justice Center organizing, fund-raising, speaking at public events and helping Tibetan refugees seeking political asylum in the U.S. obtain free legal assistance.

While doing that work, all my life experiences started to weave together in my mind and a new career began to take shape. I became inspired by nursing through a mentor and member of the

Tibet Justice Center's board of directors and that's when I started exploring the field. I realized that nursing embodies all of my passions and beliefs and that as a nurse practitioner, I could continue to advocate for marginalized people, work for social justice and be a part of a healing connection in people's lives. I began my second year of school at the University of California, San Francisco, just four weeks ago. While I pursue my goal of becoming an adult nurse practitioner, I'm staying active in my community as well. I have a great job as a Registered Nurse in a community clinic in San Francisco called the South of Market Health Center where about 25% of our patients are homeless. We serve the poor and underserved of San Francisco and work really hard to deliver great healthcare. I also volunteer in a weekly women's clinic in a homeless shelter in the city. It's been great to work with women who are getting connected into primary care for the first time and getting the healthcare they so desperately need. There have been so many formative and inspiring experiences in my life. I consider myself incredibly lucky and blessed to have met such strong and courageous people—both from far away countries and right here

in my own backyard. It's been an amazing journey and I can't wait to see what the future will bring. **n**

KEITH KASEMAN

ARCHITECT AND
POTENTIAL MENTOR

Since I last updated the Foundation Trustees in May 2004, the Pentagon Memorial design efforts have progressed by leaps and bounds. Through close collaboration with the spectrum of design and construction professionals that make up the Centex Lee team, the Memorial's design now reaches beyond the concept level and is on its way to full documentation. All engineered systems, ranging from structural and civil, to plumbing and electrical, are now configured to work in concert with each other and physically support the overall intent of the project. As a result of this intensive collaboration, the Pentagon Memorial's inner-workings are more akin to a large-scale Swiss watch than a typical park space.

Parallel with all of this progress, the prototyping efforts for the Memorial Unit, the heart of the Pentagon Memorial, have been in full swing. One could palpably sense the pride and honor felt by the foundry workers upon the successful pour of the first prototype—forklifts honked while everyone cheered on the factory floor. This was an incredibly heart-felt moment. Twenty-four hours later, the cast Memorial Unit was “shaken out” of the sand mold. Rosemary Dillard (Vice-President of the Pentagon Memorial Fund) even put on gloves to assist the seasoned foundry workers, dedicating her efforts to her husband, Eddie, whom she lost on Flight 77.



Christina Kim in Burma

Lessons learned from the numerous analyses performed on the first cast have been applied to strategic points in the overall process, and the second prototype was cast earlier this Fall. While the first prototype is being used to develop polishing specifications and other operational considerations, this new prototype is currently being studied dimensionally and it is anticipated that structural tests to confirm computer-generated strength predictions will occur in the near future.

Equally exciting is the fact that the Pentagon Memorial Fund has raised over \$8 million since the launch of a national fund-raising campaign in the spring of 2004. While the project is to be built through private donations to the Fund, the family members who make up the fund's board have tirelessly put their hearts and souls into the project, inspiring everyone on the entire team. Construction is currently anticipated to be completed in 2008, contingent on the fund-raising momentum. All in all, this is an incredibly exciting and active period as we work toward the realization of the Memorial, and Julie and I feel honored to be a part of it. □

Brett Hallacher

ARCHITECT LOOKING FOR MENTOR

With power comes responsibility. As a student of architecture, I am being given the power to create and design structures for all humanity. While progressing through my education, it has become apparent that the responsibility of architecture is a social one.

Architecture, at its primordial level, is about the creation of shelter from the elements. Knowing that there are people in this and other countries who have no shelter, I am taken aback. Homelessness is a problem that pervades all societies and the question of why is complicated.

Homelessness is far larger problem than people realize. When government funded mental health facilities close, those in need of such services are forced to find refuge elsewhere. When people lose their homes, due to a multitude of reasons, they must seek another place to live. Many other reasons exist as well. As with all social problems, it is not only about finding a solution, it is about prevention. Architecture's greatest question, therefore, is how it can affect what seems to be a socio-economic issue.

Like all architectural solutions, a site is needed—whether that means a new piece of land or an existing building. Looking around large cities and small towns, one can see abandoned buildings and land left to ruin (brown fields) after

industry leaves an area. What usually results is unemployment and a community in decline. Why are these sites going to waste while natural or farm land is destroyed in the name of progress? This is a trend that needs to be halted and a realistic solution found.

To me, the solution is obvious. Those who are without homes need a place to stay just as vacant buildings and brown fields need human interaction. Often, especially in larger cities, the homeless will seek refuge in these buildings. The conditions in which they live are less than hospitable in most instances. People are people and deserve better than that.

I must not be so naive as to think that simply providing a shelter will end homelessness. Shelter is, however, a predominant necessity. As an architect, I have the ability to create and organize useful space for organizations that are dedicated to helping the homeless. It is in this capacity as an organizer that I see architecture being socially responsive to homelessness. There already exists a movement within architecture that brings social service organizations together in an effort to network and provide a greater pull of resources. Sam Davis, architect and professor at the University of California at Berkeley, has dedicated his life to housing the

homeless and in 2004 published his book, "Designing for the Homeless: Architecture that Works." This book has become a valuable resource to me as I begin to explore solutions to homelessness through architecture in my Master's thesis.

Currently I am investigating the creation of a resource center within an urban community located just outside the center of downtown Detroit, Michigan. Conceptually it will provide resources for the entire community as well as the homeless and will promote social interaction. This exercise is still in its inception and many questions need to be answered. I am unsure of the outcome or what the next step will be, yet I know I have a responsibility and passion for people and architecture that must be explored. We are all created equal and sometimes the realization of this requires us to break down a social barrier which is neither easy nor quick, but noble in its pursuit.

Throughout life, we each have mentors, people who inspire us like role models and interact with us like parents. They are the ones we go to for guidance because we care about their opinions or advice.

My life has been and will continue to be shaped by mentors. There are

many professors and professionals who have inspired me, but there is one man who has taken me “under-his-wing.” He is another architect whom I have known since I was very young. When I have questions or need advice about the profession, he is always willing to share his

experiences with me. This is truly what the mentorship is about: experience.

The mentor relationship is extremely important during the years when we receive our professional education. A mentor can answer questions inherent to our fields as well as quell the

fears we all have when beginning a career. This kind of relationship is important no matter what we do in life. Mentorship programs are wonderful opportunities for anyone and great sources of inspiration. **n**

Stephanie Slack Ragle

ARCHITECT LOOKING TO CONNECT

Urban factors in relation to design have been of critical interest to me for a number of years—from the subways of New York to the slums of Bombay. I have traveled to and lived in a number of interesting cities, pursuing the study of architecture both inside and outside of the classroom. While earning my undergraduate degree, I was able to study abroad for my fourth year in Copenhagen, Denmark, in coordination with the Danish International Studies program and the Royal Danish Academy of Architecture. That year was invaluable to my future studies as well, affording me the opportunity to experience a number of amazing buildings and cities in my travels throughout Europe and Turkey. After graduating, I worked for four months in Pune, India, and traveled throughout the country for the remainder of the year, soaking in the culture, diversity, intensity, and the often-unbelievable architecture. From the ancient carved stonework of temples and mosques, to the seemingly precarious tied-bamboo scaffolding systems and makeshift housing solutions, there is such a strong will to survive. It is this type of intensity that interests me in all things—from my love of travel and study, which lead me to Paraguay and Brazil during this past year, to my passion for being immersed in areas of potential change.

I have recently returned to Los Angeles from New York City, where I lived and worked for the past five years. While in New York, I participated jointly in a number of design competitions from the small-scale, 70-square-foot rooms for the transitional homeless in the First-Step Housing Competition, to the large, urban scale re-design of the High Line, a defunct elevated railway on the West Side of the City. My interest does not solely lie in the creation of an individual building; I am also interested in finding solutions to holistic and larger-scale problems as well. An architect must re-orient his or her thinking to attack problems on all levels, and these design solutions will hopefully result in systems or frameworks that will create new landscapes to encourage future development. Furthermore, as technology and information constantly change our environment, so should our approach to the creation of buildings and our understanding of cities.

In the future, I want to combine architectural practice, design research, and teaching as critical investigations into the field of architecture. I plan to open a small firm with my husband—one that studies various architectural issues. Similar to the model that some current architects champion, we plan to create a firm that is equally research lab and design practice, and hopefully find

success in both. Problems such as the homelessness in Los Angeles are challenges that architects, not just politicians, have to face. I would like to work to develop more innovative and accessible low-cost housing in the downtown area. All cities are constantly changing and adapting, each in a different way—densifying and often gentrifying—and it is this evolution that is so fascinating. I also have a strong passion for the future of architecture and I look forward to investigating its role, both in the field and in the classroom, as a catalyst for change. Teaching will allow me to pass on my knowledge to future students and foster the same passion for architecture in others. **n**



Stephanie Slack Ragle on construction site in Austin, Texas

DR. EUGENE BRAUNWALD

POSSIBLE MENTOR FOR JAMES CALLOWAY

It was several hours before the concert was due to start, but one zealous patron was already waiting outside the recording studio, sitting on the floor and doing his schoolwork. The young student was determined to get a front row seat at the NBC Symphony's free performance, as close as possible to its legendary conductor, Arturo Toscanini. During his high school, college, and medical school years, that student, Eugene Braunwald, attended nearly 100 of Toscanini's famous radio-broadcast concerts.

A half-century later, music is no less of a passion for Dr. Braunwald, one of the world's foremost clinical and research cardiologists. You can tell by the way he talks about his work. Like his hero, Toscanini, he sees his greatest strength as being able to visualize the ensemble. "You need a conductor who can balance the oboes with the violins, and formulate schemes," he says. "That's what I think I do best—I see the big picture."

That perspective has enabled Dr. Braunwald to make discoveries of sweeping impact, saving the lives of countless heart patients worldwide. Some of his early work showed the role of brain hormone imbalances in heart failure. In 1971 he made a landmark discovery: Heart attacks are not "all or nothing" events—they escalate progressively. He further demonstrated that by increasing oxygen delivery to the heart, doctors could minimize the severity of a heart attack.

Thanks to these findings, doctors better understood how they could intervene during the heart attack process to reduce injury, leading to such modern treatments as clot-busting drugs. Other seminal discoveries of his abound. Recently his research group found that intensive lowering of cholesterol levels in patients who have just had a heart attack greatly increases their long-term survival rates.

The bookcases in Dr. Braunwald's office speak volumes indeed about the prolific and profound nature of his research. In all, his publications number more than 1,000—and counting.

After graduating from the School at 21, Dr. Braunwald made it to Chief of Cardiology at the then National Heart Institute of Health (NIH) by the time he was 31. Another decade later, he left to become one of the founding chairmen of the School of Medicine of the University of California, San Diego, now one of the best in the country.

Lured away from UCSD by Harvard Medical School and its affiliated Brigham and Women's Hospital, he received joint appointments as Professor and Chairman of their department of medicine. Today, although retired from his chairmanships after 25 years, he still heads the Thrombolysis in Myocardial Infarction (TIM) Clinical Trials Group at Brigham and Women's, a position he has held since 1984.

"When you speak of the true giants in American medicine, Dr. Braunwald is among the handful of people you talk about", says Anthony Fauci, M.D., Director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the NIH, and one of Dr. Braunwald's coeditors on *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*. "His contributions are very, very broad. He's one of the top cardiologists in the world, but he's also one of the all-time great teachers of internal medicine. And in addition to the fundamental research work that he has done over the years, his ability to use the clinical trial process to answer important public health questions in cardiology is legendary."

Dr. Braunwald is justly famous for his boundless energy, though he has trimmed back his schedule from 85 hours a week to 75. "I'm slowing down," he says with a smile. Music is the muse that he credits for his efficiency: "At this point I can't write or edit well without listening to music," he states. "I listen to classical, opera, and chamber music for three or four hours a day."

Some of the inspiration for Dr. Braunwald's success came from his late first wife, Nina Braunwald, A.B. (WSC '49), M.D. ('52), the first female board-certified cardiothoracic surgeon in the United States, and the first surgeon to replace a mitral valve. "I was very proud of her enormous achievements," he says, "and they motivated me to work even harder."

Born to a Jewish family in Austria, Eugene Braunwald was a boy when his family fled from the Nazis, ending up in New York after World War II. Within a scant eight years he completed high school, college, and medical school. "But there was a heavy price," he says. "I really didn't have an adolescence." The last to be admitted to NYU School of Medicine for the class of 1952, he graduated first in that class.

"I've been hacking away at the same thing for 52 years and never regretted it once," says Dr. Braunwald. His musical mentor, Toscanini, whose own career as a conductor lasted for more than 60 years, would no doubt have been impressed. [n](#)

James Calloway

FUTURE CARDIOLOGIST

As an aspiring cardiologist and 2005 Schepp Scholar, my life has revolved around the theme of cardiology for many years. Surviving the rigors of being raised in a tough Bronx neighborhood and becoming sensitized to the plight of less fortunate NYC residents gave me the resolve to use my talents to help others through a career in medicine. This resolve took me from the Bronx to Richmond, Virginia where I completed my premedical studies at Virginia Commonwealth University. Two weeks after graduation, I lost my beloved mother to a sudden and unexpected acute heart attack. My grief fueled my determination to pursue my medical aspirations and two years later, I was accepted at SUNY Upstate Medical University in Syracuse.

After my first year, I had the good fortune to round on the Heart Failure Service at Strong Health Hospital in Rochester, New York, with an alumnus of my school, Dr. John Bisognano.

As a member of the transplant team, my days were intense, as we visited a long roster of critically ill pre and post transplant patients. It was a tremendous educational experience to participate in the care of seriously ill patients and to witness the wide array of recent technical innovations now available to preserve a heart failure patient's life.

On my third day, I was assigned the task of performing a chart review of a selected patient and to give a report on that patient's progress each day before we rounded. Later that day, during our rounds, I encountered a patient that suffered from what the chart listed as cardiogenic shock and the sequelae of congestive heart failure. The resident on service and my attending were discussing a diagram of the cardiac function curve as it related to patient X's condition. I had a working but incomplete fund of knowledge of heart function dynamics from my med school physiology class and decided to follow

this patient's course. I knew, however, that I would have to do some intense reading in order to grasp the therapeutic decisions being made for this patient. While in the resident's quarters, I noticed a book called, *Heart Disease* lying on a shelf. I opened the book and was introduced to the writings of its chief editor, Dr. Eugene Braunwald. The knowledge I gained from Dr. Braunwald's writings, in conjunction with my rounding experience, formed a powerful picture in my mind of the etiology and pathologic mechanisms behind diseased hearts and their associated systemic and multi-organ system failure effects.

After that experience, the most surprising coincidence occurred. Suzanne-Clair Guard, director of the Foundation, informed me that I had been awarded a Scholarship and that there might be an opportunity to be connected through a mentoring program with a former Schepp Scholar, Dr. Eugene Braunwald! As an aspiring cardiologist, I could not imagine a greater honor. Within two weeks of receiving this news, I returned to Syracuse to start my second year. Within the first few days of classes, the alumni association gave every 2nd year med student the "gold" standard text in medicine: *Harrison's Principles of Internal Medicine*, co-authored by Dr. Braunwald. This text has become my most valuable resource in defining the pathophysiology of disease. Although it is my aspiration to meet Dr. Braunwald in person, it seems that in my journey towards medicine I have already fortuitously met him before. n



James Calloway on hospital rounds (middle)

JACQUELINE SIMMONS

A MENTOR WHO COULD PAVE THE WAY

I began working with the Teachers College, Columbia University (TCCU) Afghanistan Education Project in January 2004. As the stateside Project Coordinator, I helped to manage logistical issues for TCCU's partnership with the Afghanistan Ministry of Education and UNICEF. The partnership focused on two phases of education: curriculum and textbook development and teacher training. Our first task was to support the Ministry's textbook writers in creating new textbooks for grades 1 through 6 across a range of subject areas.

In March 2004, I traveled to Kabul with a team of curriculum consultants to generate a plan for syllabi and textbook development. Additionally, I conducted research and wrote a report recommending the implementation of experimental demonstration schools as part of a comprehensive teacher training program. During this first visit, I met with students and teachers in Kabul who after years of war and tribal conflict had just returned to reopened schools. School buildings were in various stages of devastation and reconstruction. Some classes were held outdoors under open air tents donated by the United Nations while other classes were held in newly constructed facilities with brand new furniture courtesy of international donor agencies and non-governmental organizations. What seemed constant in the schools was a general air of hope and enthusiasm from both children and teachers who were excited to return to normalcy, especially girls who during the Taliban years were prohibited from attending formal schools at all. However, beneath the promise and possibility of a brighter future, was a more subtle sense of urgency to do even more and a rarely spoken feeling of frustration that development was not happening fast enough to ensure that decades of conflict would not regain its hold over this tenuous nation. Even reconstructed schools suffered from cramped conditions, a lack of resources, and a dire shortage of trained teachers. An excerpt from my field notes describes teaching and learning conditions:



Jacqueline Simmons in a classroom in Afghanistan

The class I observed was the first lesson of the year in third grade Dari (an Afghan language). The new tables are arranged in rows facing a wall-mounted blackboard. Forty-eight girls, ranging in age from 8 to 12, crowd into the room sharing benches and even books. I am told that the government distributes the textbooks but they have not arrived in time for the start of the school term. However, some girls do have books—they are apparently for sale on the black market for families who can find and afford them.

The class waits in silence while the teacher writes the daily lesson from the textbook onto the blackboard. When he is ready, he turns to the group to begin recitation. The teacher reads the passage aloud. When he stops, the class responds in unison in hearty loud voices. After several repetitions of this pattern, the teacher calls on individual students to recite the lesson alone in front of the class. Almost all of the girls raise an index finger to the ceiling, hoping to be called on. When it is her turn, each girl takes her own or her neighbor's book to the front of the room to stand by the teacher's side and read the now familiar passage. The teacher corrects mistakes as she reads and asks for applause, which is enthusiastically given, when she is finished. This activity comprises the student activity portion of the class. It conceivably continues until the end of the period by which time hopefully all students have had a chance to read aloud.¹

New syllabi and textbooks were the cornerstone of the Ministry of Education's curriculum framework, which emphasizes child-centered learning and critical thinking skills. I returned to Kabul again in June 2004 to lead a workshop on syllabi construction for primary grade textbooks that were being rewritten for the first time in 25 years. This work with textbook writers in the Compilation and Translation Department of the MOE was the most rewarding that I experienced in my time with the project. My work involved daily meetings with educators in the Social Studies and Math departments focused on describing the scope and sequence of learning for each grade level. With the help of translators, we were able to engage in meaningful conversations about the themes and topics important to Afghan daily life and tentatively ventured into more critical conversations

about the cultural and political meanings of certain kinds of knowledge. It was clear that the task of creating new educational texts in a country with such a conflict-ridden past was a major undertaking. I was truly humbled to be a part of that conversation at such a pivotal time.

I am no longer employed by the TCCU Afghan Project but I continue to synthesize my experiences and observations of Afghan education with my colleagues back home in New York. I co-authored and presented an academic paper titled *The Lived Histories of Curriculum Development in Afghanistan*² at an international curriculum conference in Montreal in April of 2005. We have submitted that article to an educational research journal for publication and continue to develop our data for a second article on the challenges of educational curriculum consultancy across global contexts. n

1 Observations from field notes written during a visit to Sayed Jamaluddin, Kabul Province on 24 March, 2004

2 Unpublished paper co-authored by Yen Yen Woo, Assistant Professor of Education, Long Island University.

Christopher Loperena

CONNECTING WITH DEVELOPING COUNTRIES AND WANTING TO CONNECT WITH A MENTOR

My specific interest in Latin American human rights movements was sparked after I was awarded the Mellon Mays Undergraduate Fellowship. Under the guidance of Professor Susan Stokes, I investigated the historical and political context of Argentina's "dirty war" (1976–1983). My subsequent fieldwork in Buenos Aires enabled me to assess stark differences in opinion regarding *what happened* during the "dirty war." The complex and often contradictory accounts offered by *porteños*, and a rigorous investigation of narratives of memory as represented in commemorative rituals and monuments led me to question the processes by which "collective memory" becomes articulated.

My research in Buenos Aires revealed a grassroots effort to promote an active remembrance of state sanctioned terror as a means of critiquing highly contentious amnesty laws and socioeconomic policies which stemmed from the military dictatorship. Specific discourses were elaborated to create a bridge to the past. Moreover, a human rights framework was used to condemn the violent legacy of the past and to provide an international arena for the political legitimization of the human rights movement in Buenos Aires. Thus, the concept of collective memory surfaced as a powerful

instrument for the contestation of dominant state ideologies, and for the political viability of popular movements.

After completing my BA in International Studies at the University of Chicago, I co-founded Rising Roots International, a not-for-profit organization registered in Illinois. My professional experiences with Rising Roots International have provided me with greater insight into grassroots activism in Latin America. For our first project, we were fortunate to work with the Civic Council of Popular and Indigenous Organizations of Honduras (COPINH). In January of 2003, Rising Roots International began an intensive six-month computer-training seminar with COPINH. The goal was to facilitate the use of the Internet for communication, which is a powerful impetus for transnational grassroots organizing and the re-articulation of localized struggles within a global context.

The following year I spent three months in Kingston, Jamaica, working with the Myrtle Ferguson Women's Centre. Rising Roots provided computers and training to the young mothers who were studying at the center. The center's mission is to address the particular forms of economic discrimination confronting young mothers in Jamaica.

These experiences, in conjunction with my previous studies at the University of Chicago, led me to pursue a Master's degree in Latin American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin.

During my first semester of graduate study, I was awarded the Center for African and African-American Studies Anthropology Activist Research Fellowship. This fellowship provided me with an opportunity to connect my activist efforts with my academic research interests. I have just returned from seven months of fieldwork on the north coast of Honduras, where I collaborated on a collective land rights project with the Garifuna. The Garifuna are a black indigenous people dispersed



Christopher Loperena working with students at the women's center in Kingston, Jamaica

among 46 communities dotting the Atlantic coast. A component of my research will be used to support the legal claim for a collective Garifuna territory. I am also drawing on my fieldwork to write my Master's thesis, which will address black and indigenous identity politics in Honduras.

After completing my Master's degree, I plan to continue my graduate studies in pursuit of a PhD in anthropology or history, with a continued commitment to the region of Latin America. I also intend to continue my work with Rising Roots International by bringing technological tools and train-

ing to disadvantaged communities in the United States and abroad. [n](#)

WEBSITES

www.risingroots.org
www.myrtleferguson.org
www.jamaica-gleaner.com/gleaner/20040204/news/news1.html

BEN MACHIN

FOREST GUARDIAN AND WILLING MENTOR

I received an English and Biology degree from Bowdoin College in 1996 and a Master's in Forestry from University of Vermont in 2003. My research focused on using spatially explicit data to model the expected impact of the invasive hemlock woolly adelgid, an insect introduced from Asia that preys on native hemlock trees.

During my time at UVM, I served as a research and teaching assistant as well as a consulting forester for Redstart Forestry. In 2004, I was made a partner in Redstart. Redstart Forestry is a private consulting company with offices in Corinth, Vermont. We have approximately 500 private clients and manage roughly 40,000 acres of woodland. Most of our clients are non-industrial, private landowners and their parcel sizes range from about 30 to 1000 acres. The goals of the company are to act as agents for our clients to help them get the most value from their forestland while protecting and conserving ecological values. Educating landowners about forestry, establishing long-term relationships with both landowners and skilled, careful loggers, and assisting agencies manage relationships with the public are also important goals.

As well as a forester and tree climber, I am a maple syrup producer and have additional professional areas of expertise related to land conservation, exotic pest and disease management, small business management and entrepreneurship, and the integration of new technology into natural resource management systems. [n](#)

Caroline Simmonds

FUTURE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGER

Currently I am in the second year of my Master's degree in Environmental Management at Yale's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

From 2001 to 2003, I was the first Peace Corps volunteer in Makanjira, a village in the Mangochi district of Malawi, working in Natural Resource Management Extension. Throughout my service, I worked with 12 villages in community-based natural resource management projects, establishing tree nurseries and promoting improved agroforestry techniques. I conducted informal discussions with villagers and children about topics ranging from natural resources management to health matters such as HIV/AIDS prevention. One of my greatest successes was training trainers in tree nursery establishment and maintenance. These trainers took their new skills to more villages than I could ever reach on my own. With this training I, in effect, worked myself out of a job.

This past summer I decided to return to the same region of Malawi to conduct my Master's research project. I received the Teresa Heinz Scholarship for Environmental Research as well as support from the World Agroforestry Research Centre (ICRAF) to investigate the social impact of the recently paved \$58 million Bakili Muluzi Highway.



Workers along the Bakili Muluzi Highway

My research was carried out in two villages located alongside the new road to determine what impact the highway has on local villagers and the indigenous forest it bisects. Methods consisted of household surveys, participant observation, oral histories and in-depth interviews with traditional healers and key informants. Traditional healers, or *sinyangas*, were interviewed because they are directly reliant upon the forests for medicines and upon the road for customers and transportation opportunities.

Initial findings show that paved roads are both simple and complex human constructs. My Master's thesis will examine the effects of road building on markets, forests and human health. Reports will be submitted to both the Malawi Ministry of Transport and Public Works and the Department of Forestry, with the hope that it will guide future road and forestry policy. I hope to present my findings at two conferences next spring: the Society for Applied Anthropology's annual meeting, "World on the Edge," and a graduate conference at the University of Califor-



Caroline Simmonds in Malawi last summer

nia, Santa Cruz, "Roads and Walls: Concrete Histories."

More than three years of work in Malawi has impressed upon me the need to understand the links between people and their environment for international development and natural resource management programs and policies. Upon graduating, I am interested in a career in the analysis and management of conservation and devel-

opment programs. I am considering working domestically, for a federal agency or NGO, or in the international development sector. Two agencies within the Federal Government align with my interests: USAID and the African Development Foundation. I am also interested in working at the UN, either with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) or the UNDP program. [n](#)



Native walking down the new Bakili Muluzi Highway (photo taken by Carolyn Simmons)

LINDA CARLISLE

CONSULTANT TO PUBLIC AND NOT-FOR-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS AND INTERESTED IN HELPING CAREER CONNECTIONS GET OFF THE GROUND

Linda Carlisle is a program and project management consultant, whose clients are public and not-for-profit organizations. Her credentials for this important work are excellent, having served as commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, where she headed the state's child welfare system for many years. Prior to her appointment by Governor Weld to that position, Linda was an adjunct professor at the Columbia University School of Public and International Affairs and before that, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Policy and Planning at the New York City Child Welfare Administration, responsible for planning and developing programs as well as the oversight of residential treatment agencies and preventive services. Linda has a Master of Public Affairs and Administration from Columbia and a BA in political science from Washington State University. She has had many articles published and is the recipient of numerous honors and scholarships. **n**

Mark Linton

HUMANITARIAN, STUDENT, AND FUTURE NGO LEADER

Before returning to school for a Master's in Public Policy, I spent five years working and consulting for a large international humanitarian organization—Catholic Relief Services (CRS). In our world headquarters as well as overseas, I administered development projects, educated constituents and built the capacity of local partner organizations to combat poverty. During that time, I became convinced that non-profit organizations would have to partner more effectively with government and business to achieve lasting impact

on the lives of the poor—be they impoverished farmers scraping by in Bolivia's troubled Cochabamba region or displaced persons trying to build peace in war-ravaged Pristina, Kosovo.

What occupied my time and energy then continues to occupy my time now: mitigating poverty and inequality by finding new ways to promote the common good. That's why at Harvard's Kennedy School I am studying the relationship between the public and private sector. How can we marshal the tremendous capital resources at the private firm level to benefit society while also promoting profitable, responsible investments? How can mission-driven non-profit organizations and government agencies collaborate with business without compromising core values? These questions are filled with tension and yet focusing at this nexus is where I believe we will ultimately find the kind of sustainable solutions that will reduce poverty around the world and here at home.

Desiring to serve the poorest in my own country as well, last month I spent a week in Baton Rouge helping the Governor's office set up the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation (LDRF). Evacuees living in shelters—mostly poor, mostly African-American—who

have little information about when and how they will be able to return to flood-affected areas. They lost everything and yet still have to struggle through bureaucracy at all levels of government just to find basic services. This new foundation will link different public and private agencies to ensure that a just and timely recovery reaches the poorest citizens. In the initial design meetings, I was the fly on the wall—hearing about the tremendous challenges but unable to immediately solve them. Hence, when I returned to the Kennedy School, I decided to devote my second year applied research thesis to exploring just recovery options for the most impoverished residents affected by Katrina.

Applying lessons from Baton Rouge, my overseas work and my studies at the Kennedy School, I hope to ultimately lead a domestic NGO that forms partnerships with private corporations and State & Federal agencies to promote economic and social development in some of our poorest regions. This aspiration is based on the idea that tackling poverty doesn't require magic but at the same time has no silver bullet. We just need to remain creative, flexible and tenacious believing that it won't always be like this. **n**



Mark Linton

Harold Stolper

STUDENT OF URBAN POLICY AND ADVANCED POLICY ANALYSIS

I'm currently pursuing a Master of Public Administration (MPA) degree at Columbia's School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). I plan on a double concentration in Urban Policy and Advanced Policy Analysis, and expect to graduate in May of 2006.

Academically, my focus has been twofold: (1) further development of analytical skills—quantitative and otherwise, including statistics and applied economics; and (2) coursework focusing on specific urban policy issues, such as housing, economic development, and transportation planning, among others. Academic projects of note include being part of a student team that carried out a land use survey in the Greenpoint-Williamsburg area of Brooklyn; and participating in a workshop that is to deliver a process map on public-private

partnerships to the NYC Economic Development Corporation this winter.

While enrolled at SIPA, I have completed several internships with the city government. Last spring I interned in the Planning Division of the NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development. There I was responsible for compiling information on city-owned vacant land in order to make program recommendations for housing development, as well as helping to develop related information management systems for agency-wide use. During the summer I worked for the New York City Office of Management and Budget as an intern in the Fire, Parks and Sanitation Task Force. There I was primarily responsible for building a staffing model for the Department of Parks and Recreation and analyzing dif-

ferences in personnel spending across the five boroughs.

I currently work as a Teaching Assistant for a graduate statistics course (Quantitative Methods I and II, a first-year core curriculum requirement of SIPA's MPA program), and in my spare time (i.e. hardly ever) I produce hip-hop music.

After I graduate, well, I don't quite know what I'll do. My professional interests lie primarily in policymaking and policy analysis in the urban arena. Possible jobs might include analyst positions with city government, public finance, or research organizations, or perhaps public sector consulting. I am also contemplating a PhD in public economics, among other things, but that would likely be further down the road. ■

JESSICA ROTHENBERG AALAMI

GLOBAL ECONOMIST, READY TO CONNECT AS A MENTOR

Like many, Dr. Jessica Rothenberg Aalami believes the gap between the haves and have nots is detrimental to the global economy. She has spent her career in international economic development researching the role that major multinational corporations (MNCs) play in addressing this gap through their social responsibility campaigns and the impact their efforts have had on the communities involved. Affiliated with the Center for Responsible Business at the Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley, Jessica works to improve global business practices. Concurrently, she is a research scholar at the Berkeley Roundtable on the International Economy, where she focuses on untangling the complex webs of production



Jessica Rothenberg Aalami and family

and outsourcing networks. Part of this work evaluates “digital inclusion”—the attempt by businesses, governments and non-governmental organizations to bring low cost information technologies to the developing world to increase social and economic opportunities. Jessica is currently working on a book and has written articles on a variety of topics (the latest: *Coming Full Circle?: Missed Links Along Nike’s Production Networks in Viet Nam*, *Global Networks*, October 2004). She holds a PhD in Economic Geography, an MA in International Studies and a Master’s Certificate in Business Administration and Management. Her undergraduate degree is from UC Berkeley in Political Economy of Industrial Societies (PEIS). She is fluent in German and Vietnamese. She is enjoying a research leave while in Chicago with her husband, a fellow at Northwestern Memorial Hospital, and their three young children. She credits the Leopold Schepp Foundation for fueling her dreams and exposing her to a broad international community. n

Julie Egan

NORTH AFRICAN SPECIALIST AND PhD CANDIDATE, READY TO BE CONNECTED

I am currently pursuing doctoral research on US / Maghreb economic policy in an integrated program at Columbia University (Master’s in International Affairs) and Institut de Sciences Politiques de Paris (PhD in Contemporary Arab Politics). My specific research looks at US foreign policy regarding peripheral regions (that is, world regions traditionally on the periphery of US interests), using American / North African economic relations since 1998 as a case study. My prior academic training is in international political economy.

My initial interest in international relations probably stems in part from my own bi-national background: Canadian and American. My more spe-

cific interest in the Arab world and in US-Arab relations dates back almost fifteen years. I grew up in Detroit, Michigan, a city which is home to the largest Arab-American community in the United States. In Detroit, I went to school and worked with many Arab-Americans from this community, which sparked an initial curiosity in the culture and history of the region. Given my fluency in French and my later studies in France, I began to focus more specifically on the Maghreb/North Africa.

Within the context of my graduate work, I have had the opportunity to study, work and travel in the Maghreb. In September 2004, I received a Fulbright grant to study and conduct research in Morocco. In addition to research in Morocco, I also conducted interviews and archival research in Algeria, Tunisia and Libya. In Algeria and Tunisia, I met with members of the US diplomatic corps, the government, the press, the private sector and civil society. In Libya, I was invited by the Green Book Center to deliver a lecture on US-North African relations and meet with members of the US and Libyan private and public sectors. In addition, in 2003 I was awarded a David L. Boren Fellowship from the Department of Defense/State Department for Arabic language study and research on Libya/North Africa. Other

professional opportunities related to the region include work with Moroccan and Tunisian NGOs on development and trade issues, research with UNESCO on legal and economic reform in the Arab world, and research on international trade and security issues for the consulting firm Booz Allen Hamilton. I also spent seven months at the US Embassy in Paris as a State Department Intern.

After completing my graduate work, I plan to continue working in the Arab world, preferably in North Africa. In the short-term, I plan to accept a position with the government working on economic policy issues. In the long-term, I hope to build on this policy experience by spending time in the private sector—either in consulting or industry—followed by teaching.

Overall, it is my aspiration to make a modest intellectual and diplomatic contribution to building stronger and more mutually beneficial economic and cultural ties between the United States and the countries of North Africa.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude and appreciation to the Schepp Foundation for its generous funding through the Schepp Scholar program. This financing has allowed me to make significant progress toward the completion of my graduate degree without incurring significant additional educational debt. n



Julie Egan

Saleem Joseph

A STORY OF PERSISTENCE AND DETERMINATION

I was born and raised in the developing country of Jamaica, in a Lebanese family that had fled persecution a few generations before. My father did not have a high school education and my mother was terminally ill during my senior year of high school. My family's difficult economic and social situation later shaped my journey in the United States.

These circumstances gave birth to the profound realization that there is very little that one has the ability to choose. No one chooses the health, financial resources, ethnicity, culture, or value systems into which he or she is born. Each person inherits what the environment or God has imposed upon him or her at birth. However, we do have the capacity to make choices to overcome and transcend these circumstances. I began to embrace the Biblical precept that "from him to whom much is given, much is required." Despite the circumstances I was born into, I realized that I had been given much relative to the majority of the people in the world and these words became the cornerstone of my conscience.

I was determined to make good choices and sacrifices "today" in order to reap the benefits "tomorrow" and hopefully create a better future for my family. I was determined to invest in my future through education. While attending Florida Southern College, I drew upon the strength of my mother's legacy of excellence in everything one does, dedication to one's family, and making persistence one's most embraced virtue. I was further moved by the words of Calvin Coolidge who said: "Nothing in the world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded

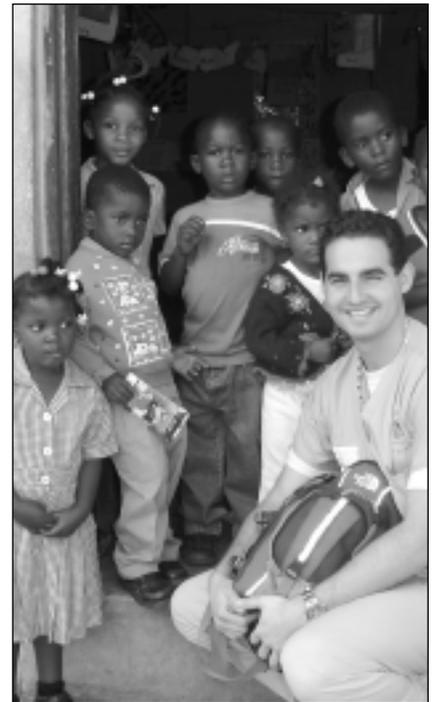
genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination are omnipotent. The slogan 'press on' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race." My mother's memory and President Coolidge's words provided perspective and I continually asked myself, "Where do you want to be in five years and are your decisions today going to help or hinder you in getting there?"

After college, I decided to take a year off before entering dental school to volunteer with the mentally handicapped in Lebanon. I wanted to explore my ethnic roots while making a useful contribution to the country. Serving the handicapped children further affirmed the notion of how much I was given, and I was determined to make an impact. After volunteering for three months, I backpacked through Lebanon, Jordan and Syria. I met many people who had little hope and only despair. They told me stories of how they dreamed of the opportunity to come to America, and I knew that their passion would produce phenomenal results, if they were only given the chance.

This exposure gave me tremendous perspective and I returned to America with a newfound passion and love for this great country. I was determined to let no opportunity pass me by. Moreover, I was resolute about helping others transcend their own circumstances to realize their potential.

I came to Columbia University with this hunger and have taken advantage of every opportunity. The dental school offers a unique program that allows me to pursue dual degrees with the schools of public health and business. I was confident that I could complete both dual degree programs within five years

and graduate with a DDS, MPH and MBA, provided I made tremendous sacrifices. In May of 2006, I will be the first student in the United States to accomplish this eight-year curriculum in five years. Furthermore, during my tenure at Columbia, I have served as Class President, University Senator, founder and president of the Student National Dental Association (a community service organization), school ambassador, researcher, and founder of the international dental externship to Jamaica, where Columbia dental students have provided thousands of teeth extractions to underserved communities for the past two years. It has been a fulfilling journey thus far and I am grateful to be living the highly coveted "American Dream." n



Saleem Joseph in Jamaica last summer

TALIESIN THOMAS

ARTIST, TRAVELER, AND EMERGING MENTOR

World travel has been an essential part of the evolution of my career path and my development as a person. I will always thank the Leopold Schepp Foundation for providing the first step in my adventurous life as a woman in the arts.

During my sophomore year at Bennington College, I discovered a study-abroad program in southern Spain that I knew would complement my Fine Arts & Spanish Language major. It was during that time that I applied for the Leopold Schepp grant. In the fall of 1995, I met Edythe Bobrow at my application interview. She asked me how I intended to use the scholarship if selected, and I boldly described my plans to study in Seville. I distinctly remember how attentively she listened to my Bohemian ideas and seemed to be picturing the journey along with me as I expanded on the notion of using the Andalusian backdrop as a means of enhancing my education.

That year abroad proved to be the most extraordinary time in my undergraduate life. I reveled in the glory of Spain and her culture. I broadened my understanding of the remarkably rich history of Spanish art, from Goya to Gaudì. I painted, visited many of the great museums of Europe, and ensured my fluency in Castellano. I returned to Bennington a year later and completed an ambitious thesis project that drew on all the abundance of my renaissance year in Spain.

Since then, I have traveled and worked internationally on several occasions. For two years I taught English to high school students in Jingshan, a remote village in central China. My time in Asia yielded yet another magnificent chapter in my life, allowing me to experience firsthand many of the aesthetic marvels of the Eastern world. Upon returning to New York City, I began work as the director of a contemporary Chinese art gallery, further combining my passion for the arts and my travel experiences.

After nearly four fabulous years with the gallery, a stint that took me in and out of many dynamic corners of the art world, I am now the Assistant to the President of the American Academy in Rome, one of the leading American overseas centers for independent study and advanced research in the fine arts and the humanities. In September I traveled to the Academy before beginning my work in its New York office. While wandering the streets of Rome, I recalled my initial days in Seville, when beauty and discovery awaited me at every turn. I could not help but look back and remember all the little steps that had sent me down this path, and the support of the Leopold Schepp Foundation which helped me start the journey. Much like Janus, the Roman god of passage, whose two faces simultaneously regard the past and survey the future, I am moving forward with an abiding sense of joy and certitude that the adventure has only just begun. **n**



Taliesin Thomas in Rome, Italy

Virginia Colwell

EMERGING ARTIST AND TRAVELER, ON THE LOOK-OUT FOR A MENTOR

Virginia Colwell creates architectural environments that present social critiques through sumptuous multimedia installation art.

Her interest in blending cultural analysis and a studio art practice motivated her to pursue an interdisciplinary Master's degree in architecture and urban theory at the Metropolis Institute in Barcelona, Spain.

"As an artist, I've dedicated myself to a career that is fundamentally based on observing the world, articulating those observations visually, and then putting the final artwork back into the commu-

nity which stimulated it. Living and studying as a foreigner in Spanish society has made my observations skills more acute and provoked me to rethink how I approach making art about the environment I live in," says Virginia.

Presently, Ms. Colwell is developing a thesis project on public art and collective memory, which will be presented through both written and artistic components. In addition to her studies, she has recently been awarded an artist-in-residence position at Hangar, a prestigious international visual arts center based in Barcelona. **n**



Virginia Colwell