ON THE COVER

“Looking Toward the Future”
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Generous friends of the Foundation
THE FOUNDATION MOURNS THE LOSS OF TRUSTEE
CARVEL H. CARTMELL
August 26, 1934 – February 24, 2007

Carv Cartmell served the Foundation as a loyal and dedicated trustee for 32 years, interviewing candidates, assessing applications, and attending meetings, which he invariably enlivened with his unique wit and sense of style. Until his retirement, Carv worked as a compliance officer at the European American Bank/EAB Securities, Inc, where he was responsible for all non-deposit products (e.g. mutual funds and annuities) sold through the bank’s branch network. A graduate of Claremont Men’s College, Claremont, California, with a degree in economics, Carv lived on his boat off the north shore of Long Island. Along with serving as a Schepp trustee, he was a member and past commander of the United States Power Squadrons, assisting in emergency situations at sea and teaching classes in boating safety.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SUZANNECLAIR GUARD
REMEMBERS CARV CARTMELL AT HIS MEMORIAL SERVICE

It is a privilege to be speaking for the Leopold Schepp Foundation in memory and respect of our honored trustee, Carv Cartmell. I am rather humbled to be speaking to his group who clearly has known Carv far longer than I. We were friends for only about three years... that said, I did spend most of my Fridays with him at the Foundation which sometimes spilled over into evenings in a favorite New York restaurant or bar with my husband. Heaven knows, Carv was always the source of laughter and sometimes outrageous comments.

You don’t know me but if you did, you would know that my father is a real live cowboy living in Arizona on a ranch and he is my valued cowboy philosopher. When I am at a loss for words, I call him. So last night I explained to him that I was representing the Foundation and was responsible for honoring a friend and colleague at his memorial service and was at a loss for words. In his usual cowboy fashion, he said, “You mean that if words were oil, you would be a quart low.” Then he said,
“STOP worrying. Worrying is like riding a rocking horse. It is something you do that won’t get you anywhere.” Dad told me to divorce my worries and remember that “the best way between a rock and a hard place is through it and you should just speak from the heart.”

So Carv from the heart…

The Leopold Schepp Foundation is going to miss your warmth, dedicated service, peppered humor, valued opinions, and positive attitude. I will especially miss those Friday mornings when you were scheduled to interview candidates for scholarships and were always late… ALWAYS. You would walk in the door half asleep and I would say, “You are late; however, you look fabulous!” Talk about dapper. He reminded me of a character that just walked out of “Guys and Dolls” on Broadway. Grey striped pants, patterned suspenders, a tie that would glow in the dark, a shirt perfectly ironed that somehow didn’t match the tie or the jacket but on Carv… it looked perfect.

On Fridays, Carv interviewed undergraduate and graduate students who were applying for scholarships from the Foundation. He interviewed medical and law students, architects, nurses, students returning from the Peace Corps, students interested in international affairs and politics, physical therapists, and musicians. He was comfortable with them all and was the best ambassador the Foundation could ever wish for.

Carv found the good in each and every candidate and after his interviews, applicants would tell me how wonderful it had been to meet him — that he encouraged their work and cared deeply about their goals. How lucky we were to have Carv as a trustee of the Leopold Schepp Foundation for over 32 years. I found his resume and loved discovering the last entry where he listed under hobbies and outside diversions: “I am a confirmed bachelor. That is my hobby!”

One Friday after Carv finished his interviews, I thanked him for always coming
through for us in a pinch, saying yes to our many requests for favors, and always being reliable, helpful and an absolute joy to work with. He looked at me, frowned and said, “You are ruining my BAD reputation.”

My dad says, “The best seasoning around a campfire is a salty sense of humor.” Well, the Schepp Foundation has been well seasoned by Carv’s dry wit, funny emails, great wardrobe and outfits, and his ability to interview scholarship candidates and leave them with a desire to pursue their humanitarian dreams.

Carv, your heart is warmer than the desert sands and would shade an elephant. We will miss the shade your heart provided and the laughter you left behind. We are deeply sorry that you jumped the fence and decided to ride on ahead into the sunset before we were ready.

The day before he died, Carv arrived at the Foundation LATE of course and spent the day interviewing candidates. When he popped into my office to say goodbye, he placed a fantastic, new hat on his head... it was a cowboy hat... I grinned and said, “You know that bad guys were black hats!” He smiled knowing that I would love that hat and be reminded of my dad. I looked at him and said, “You look fabulous.” He smiled, tipped his hat and left. He backed out so we would always remember him as though he were coming in.
REPORTS FROM THE FIELD AND THE LAB —

Schepp Scholars continue to make a difference
“Egsavier yestilling” were the first words I learned in Amharic. The literal translation is ‘May God give you,’ but the general idea of the expression is closer to ‘May God give the same good things to you that you have given to me.’ I heard this expression each time I finished bandaging a patient at Mother Teresa’s Mission in Addis Ababa. I arrived in Ethiopia three weeks after graduating from Columbia University to work on medical and educational projects with the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC) of the Jewish Service Corps for one year.

During my first month, I started a health education summer camp for Ethiopian children. Together with my Ethiopian counterparts at the JDC, we held the camp five days a week. I started each day teaching a science or sports class – blowing up balloons using vinegar and baking soda, explaining the theories behind gas and volume, and teaching games like dodge ball. These hands-on classes were followed by a peer health education session. We focused on basic health topics, including cleanliness, spread of disease, and HIV. While HIV is present in Ethiopia, it is not as large a health problem as in other HIV-stricken countries in the developing world (the national prevalence rate was 1.4 percent as of 2005). However, the stigma and fear of those who are HIV positive remains a significant problem in Ethiopia. Ethiopians in general have a very communal society in which everyone takes care of one another. For example, feeding friends during meals is common. When one tests positive for HIV, communities tend to ostracize the person due to fear of the disease spreading. In our classes, we educated the children on how the disease spreads and the steps they needed to take to protect themselves from contracting the virus, so that they would not fear those who have it.

After I got my feet wet on the ground, I expanded my role and worked on the JDC’s women’s scholarship programs. We sponsored over fifty women studying to obtain their degrees at the Unity University Girls Education Project. I worked with our fifteen new scholarship recipients, helping prepare them for classes at Unity
University. In my English class, we learned new vocabulary, engaged each other in group discussions, and performed communication exercises using “Harry Potter and the Sorcerer’s Stone.” Some of my students were struggling with the book’s vocabulary. I wanted to get electronic dictionaries for them but lacked funds. On a tip from my supervisor, I was put in touch with a women’s group in Dallas, Texas, which agreed to purchase the dictionaries for our students. Even though I had enough for each student, I decided that a round of Harry Potter Jeopardy would be fun. Teams ‘Aseel’ and ‘Rafiki’ battled it out over questions about the places, vocabulary, wizard culture, famous wizards and witches in Harry Potter. In the end, I distributed the dictionaries to the winning team and took pictures. The winning team members were all happy and smiling, while the losing team members all looked gloomy. After playing this game for five minutes, I looked in the bag and said, “Oh, what do I have here?,” revealing the other dictionaries. I will never forget the way they screamed. The atmosphere in the classroom was euphoric. Both teams were laughing – some crying because they were laughing so hard. In the true Ethiopian way, the winning team was ecstatic that their classmates would get dictionaries too.

In addition to our public health and educational projects, I was heavily involved in our medical work. With my supervisor, Dr. Richard Hodes, the JDC medical director in Ethiopia, I helped coordinate our medical projects in collaboration with the Missionaries of Charity, commonly known as Mother Teresa’s Mission. The Missionaries of Charity (MOC) serve the poorest of the poor in Ethiopia. Most of the patients are from the rural countryside and have very little money. It is one of the few free clinics with weekly outpatient service. Working at the mission, I performed basic wound care for most of the morning. I cleaned the skin, drained any visible infections, and bandaged the wound. After bandaging the ambulatory patients, I helped bandage patients bedridden from sickness or paralysis – most had terrible bedsores. While I dressed their sores, I ‘techowt’ (Amharic, literally meaning ‘play,’ but also used to induce lighthearted social interactions) with these patients.

The JDC medical program focuses on the patients that have treatable diseases and cancers but cannot get proper therapy in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian medical infrastructure is limited. Doctors often do not have the drugs or equipment they need, re-
sulting in the majority of Ethiopian-trained physicians leaving the country for higher paying jobs at hospitals with well-stocked pharmacies and better equipment. Armed with funding from the JDC and outside donors, Dr. Hodes was able to purchase life-saving cancer drugs for our patients. The treatment program initially focused on Hodgkin’s lymphoma, osteosarcoma (bone cancer), and Pott’s disease (spinal tuberculosis), and is expanding. We were an official operation with government approval, but our program was more of a hodgepodge that tag teamed between ordering drugs, getting them to patients, and taking care of diagnostics and blood-work. During the year, we helped over thirty cancer patients become cancer-free, but not all were so lucky. One of our patients, who I’ll call Zelalem, had metastatic osteosarcoma, a bone cancer that had spread to his lungs. The prognosis for this, even in a western country, is poor, but Dr. Hodes designed a regimen in an attempt to cure Zelalem. I delivered Zelalem’s medicine daily and got him to a hospital for x-rays to check his progress. Zelalem and I slowly became friends: each week we would eat tibs (roasted meat) and ice cream after his tests were done. After about ten months of treatment, his metastatic lesions shrunk, indicating some hope for his future.

While I am proud of my accomplishments and service in Ethiopia, the truth is that Ethiopia gave me back much more in return. It is a beautiful country, full of smiles so rich and wide that you immediately know you are among a special and unique population. This is not the Ethiopia you read about in the newspaper: Ethiopians taught me the true meaning of hospitality and politeness. Wherever I went, armed with my newfound ability to speak Amharic after intense study, I was invited to peoples’ homes. I still clearly remember the first invitation—the five person family’s house consisted of a single room, a tin roof and a hard mud floor. The rent for their home was 150 Ethiopian birr per month, or a little less than twenty dollars (the average Ethiopian day laborer makes 10 birr). My time included conversations with the entire family, sharing a meal of Ethiopian bayenetu (a vegan dish usually served Wednesdays and Fridays due to religious observance), and drinking tea. It concluded with an Iskista dance party. Iskista is one of the most common Ethiopian traditional dancing styles and involves a lot of shoulder movement while the rest of the body stays still. At the end, the grandmother joined in and put us all to shame.
It was moments like this one that defined my time in Ethiopia. Almost everywhere I went I was welcomed with open arms. The Ethiopians I met usually didn’t want anything in return. They recognized a foreigner in their country and primarily wanted to share their lives and culture. The students I taught English to held a coffee ceremony in honor of my departure. Some of the patients I took for x-rays called me multiple times to say goodbye. Ethiopia is warm, friendly, and beautiful, and I look forward to returning there as a doctor. I had an extraordinary year full of amazing learning experiences, powered by creamy avocado juice and squishy injera. Although I did contribute to many programs, I owe so much to the people of Ethiopia for all that I’ve experienced and learned. It is I that should be saying to Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian people: “Egsavier yestilling.”
AT THE FOREFRONT OF CANCER RESEARCH
Dr. Paul A. Marks, President Emeritus and member of the Sloan-Kettering Institute

It has been 58 years since I graduated from Columbia University’s College of Physicians and Surgeons. During these six decades, there has been remarkable progress in every aspect of medicine and, in particular, in my area of interest, oncology. I have had an extremely rewarding career in medicine and biomedical sciences. I owe a great deal to the people at the Schepp Foundation, without whose support I could not have completed my medical education.

Today, oncology is one of the hottest areas in biomedical research and health care. Advances in our understanding of the nature of cancer, approaches to its prevention, early detection, and treatment have been remarkable. The pace of these advances is accelerating. Nevertheless, in many areas of cancer care, we are still in the early stages of discovery. The future is challenging and promising.

There are now three modalities which can effectively “cure” many cancers: surgery, radiotherapy and drugs. Surgery remains the most important modality for curing cancer. If the tumor can be removed, it can be cured. The technology in surgery is increasingly effective with a decreasing morbidity and mortality. Radiotherapy can be “curative” for certain neoplasms. The technical advances in radiotherapy have also been remarkable with increased efficacy and decreased morbidity. It is possible to aim radiation precisely at the cancer, increasing the opportunity for cure and decreasing the side effects. Future advances will permit delivery of even more radiation with greater precision and less toxicity, and will markedly improve chances for an effective control of the cancers.

Perhaps the most exciting advances are being made with respect to drugs to treat cancer. Today, added to the “cytotoxic” drugs are a number of chemical and biologic (eg, antibodies) agents that have significant anti-cancer activity at well tolerated doses. Many of these new agents are “targeted” to specific cancers or even
specific abnormalities within a cancer cell. These new agents can induce remission of tumors that are durable and measured in years. Cytotoxic agents remain an important part of treating cancer. Drugs targeting specific defects in the cancer cell are the future of cancer drug therapy.

For the past thirty years, my own research has been in this area of targeted anti-cancer drug development. It began in the early seventies with a quest to understand why certain solvents (“polar compounds”) cause growth arrest and death of cancer cells. At Columbia University and, subsequently, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, my colleagues and I followed a path that led to the discovery of a compound (SAHA) that targets a group of enzymes called histone deacetylases (HDAC). These enzymes can alter the structure and function of many proteins involved in the control of gene expression, of cell growth and cell death. In many cancers, the functions of these proteins are altered. Our drug can normalize the function of certain genes and proteins and induce the death of the many (not all) cancer cells with little or no effect on normal cells. In October of 2006, the USA Food and Drug Administration approved the use of SAHA (vorinostat) for the treatment of a rare form of lymphoma. This represents the first of a promising new group of drugs for cancer treatment. Since cancers have multiple defects, attacking the cancer at different molecular levels is likely to improve the efficacy of treatment strategies and the durability of responses. Combination therapy with these new targeting agents holds great promise for the future.

We have come a long way in cancer therapy. Clearly, we have a long road ahead to achieve our goal of effectively controlling most neoplasms.

Our progress depends on increasing our scientific understanding of normal cell growth and death and how it is altered in different cancers. Technology is rapidly advancing our ability to address questions in these areas that were literally unthinkable a couple of decades ago.

Cancer is not a single entity in terms of cause or characteristics. Even cancers of the same clinical diagnoses can be dramatically different at the cellular and molecular
level from patient to patient. This translates into the fact that most agents to treat cancer have a variable response rate. It is unlikely that we will discover agents that will cure the underlining cause of a cancer. What will happen is that we will progressively succeed in treating many cancers as a chronic disease.

Mapping of the human genome has provided a basis for going forward to identify all of the so called cancer genes (DNA)- genes that carry defects that predispose cells to grow out of control. Basically, all cancers involve defects in DNA which predispose the cells to grow out of control. A current theory is that there are so called cancer stem cells which develop defective DNA and give rise to daughter cells with similar defects permitting them to grow uncontrolled. The future will see targeted anti-cancer agents that are more effective and less toxic than any now available. A major goal is the discovery of agents that prevent the growth of the cancer stem cells.

This progress will only be possible if we continue the quality and breadth of our scientific enterprise. This depends on our being able to educate and train adequate numbers of biomedical scientists and health care providers. As our population increases, the need for well-educated, trained scientists and clinicians will increase. This will challenge our educational and training institutions. A large source of funding for this enterprise is the government. It is unlikely that there can be any substitute for government expenditures in this area which must and, I am optimistic, will increase to keep pace with the potential that science will afford us.

Realizing the benefits of our advances in prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancers depends on our ability to contain the cost and assure access to appropriate healthcare. Our country should not have over 40 million individuals without adequate healthcare insurance. Given the heterogeneity of our population with respect to health care needs, health care has been and probably will continue to be most effectively funded and regulated at a state level. Insurance programs should guarantee a minimal level of coverage for everyone. For those who cannot afford a private healthcare insurance program, government subsidies should be provided.
We must also increase the number of minority biomedical scientists and health care providers. Cost is frequently a factor in minority student enrollment in expensive graduate schools and government subsidies for these students must be improved.

In summary, remarkable progress will be made in the prevention, early detection, and treatment of many cancers over the next decades. It is exciting to find answers that were beyond our dreams even a few years ago. This progress will be accelerated and our goal of curing many cancers and turning almost all cancers into chronic treatable diseases may well be achieved.
A RESEARCH BIOLOGIST IN THE MAKING
Yana Thaker, biology major

I came to Drexel University not knowing exactly why I had chosen biology as a major. Four years later, after completing 3 semesters of research at Merck, several years of laboratory work at Drexel, a semester at sea conducting research on the North Pacific Ocean, and now a semester in a competitive biotech program in Turkey, I am certain of my interest in biology and my future in science.

Confirmation of my choice of major began the second week of my freshman year when I interviewed and was offered a work-study position assisting a PhD student with her research. I worked in a lab for the entire academic year and then took a summer position in a biochemistry lab using yeast as the model organism in a study involving the storage and metabolism of fat. In September, after rotating through the labs for a year, I was firmly committed to my major.

I am enrolled in a five-year co-op program at Drexel University which requires 3 six-month periods of employment with academic credit. My first 6-month internship was at Merck & Company in the Drug Metabolism Department. This proved so successful that I returned to Merck to complete my two remaining internship rotations – one in the Oncology Department which was focusing research on the RNA Interference mechanism and its potential for healing and the final rotation with the siRNA Therapeutics Group. This last rotation provided me with information regarding a new technology that could potentially revolutionize medicine.

In the siRNA Therapeutics Group, I helped genetically engineer a cell-based system for screening RNAi molecules. This work gave me the confidence to continue in a highly competitive field of study. When I returned to Drexel University to complete the rest of my coursework, I attended a required research day and as luck would have it, I found an excellent opportunity to work in the virology lab which was involved in the development of a microbicide against sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) using RNAi. I was committed to this project because of my experience
working with RNAi at Merck. At Drexel, I worked in Dr. Howett’s lab receiving research credit. Dr. Howett assigned me to my own project involving the growth characterization of engineered lactobacillus in vaginal tissue cultures. This particular bacterium was created to secrete a protein that could block HIV from infecting tissue. The idea is to determine how the bacterium grows on vaginal tissue and how it withstands competition from endogenous vaginal flora. Concurrently, the lab is developing a gel based microbicide with another compound to prevent STDs. This compound is highly stable and shows activity against HPV and HIV which could be distributed in countries that stigmatize using protection or do not have sufficient resources.

Over these last 4.5 years, I have had the opportunity to acquire a variety of research skills and sample various biological disciplines. Last year, I participated in the Sea Education Association Semester program where I took classes on oceanography, nautical science and maritime studies, and conducted research on a sail boat. The boat sailed from Hawaii to Vancouver Island, and down to Seattle. My research project focused on “Investigating the horizontal abundance of phycoerythrin-containing cyanobacteria in the euphotic zone of the North Pacific Ocean.” Through this program I gained an understanding and appreciation for the ocean; furthermore, I became eager to explore my interests outside of the Drexel classroom. I felt my studies were missing an international science experience. As a result, I am currently studying in a biotech program in Ankara, Turkey, at the Middle East Technical University (METU). When I return from METU in January, I will continue my research in Dr. Howett’s lab and prepare for my next phase which is applying to graduate school. I would like to pursue a career producing products that help alleviate some of the health issues in developing countries.
DOCUMENTING OUR FRAGILE NATURAL RESOURCES
J. Scott Parker, documentary film maker

Dreams are funny things. They can spin around inside your head for ages like just so much gossamer and then sometimes they escape out into the world to become a tangible reality. For me, 2006 was a year of dreams come true. I had the great fortune of going to New Zealand on a Fulbright Grant to make a documentary about braided rivers. These rivers have multiple channels that shift constantly throughout the year as floods redistribute gravel across the riverbed. They only occur in places with high mountains that produce large amounts of gravel, but in New Zealand they are abundant and more accessible than in Alaska or the Himalayas. It was a year of intense learning about the craft of filmmaking, but it was also a chance to make new friends in a culture that has many differences despite our shared use of the English language. I came back to the United States with a sense of euphoria, but, as is often the case, an extended period of good fortune is followed by a bit of turbulence.

This past March was a rough spot. My car engine blew a gasket as I was driving back to school in North Carolina after shooting a video of the Paynes Prairie Nature Preserve in central Florida. After multiple trips to different mechanics’ shops, I finally had to scrap the car and get a rental. The trip from Columbia, South Carolina to Greensboro, North Carolina, which normally takes three hours, took three days.

With a large credit card bill in tow, I arrived back in Greensboro, where I am pursuing my MFA, to find a notification that the Graduate School wouldn’t accept some of the transfer hours that I had counted on to help keep me on track for degree completion. No matter how you look at it, doing thirty graduate hours in one year is a daunting prospect. For the next month, I spent a great deal of time contemplating how to fit in all that I needed to get done in one academic year. Then one day I received an e-mail from an employee at the US Department of Education asking that I call her at my earliest convenience.

When I returned the call, I was informed that I had been selected for a Jacob K.
Javits Fellowship that would cover my full tuition and cost of attendance for up to three years. I had applied to the program months before, and the notification deadline on the forms had already passed, so I was greatly surprised to receive this news. It was, as my friend Karishma put it, as if someone had waved a magic wand over my conundrum. My greatest challenge transformed into a chance to fulfill all of the learning goals that I held for my graduate career.

I am now developing a plan for my Masters in film production. I hope to make a documentary about a small-scale commercial fisherman named Otto Permin. I met Mr. Permin five years ago while on exchange in Denmark. His daughter kindly invited me to participate in her family’s Christmas festivities. During my stay at his home, Mr. Permin showed me his boat and told me about his methods of harvesting shrimp. I wished then that I had more time and a camera so that I could make a film about his life and work. Now that wish may come true. I will be submitting a grant application for funds to go back to Denmark for a month this coming summer to shoot the film I imagined a half decade ago. I will then spend the following academic year editing this piece.

The Jacob K. Javits Fellowship is the vehicle that will drive my career as a filmmaker to a new level, but it is important to remember the previous assistance which made it possible for me to receive this prestigious award. The aid I received from the Leopold Schepp Foundation as an undergraduate was instrumental in permitting me to focus on my studies so that I could establish a strong academic record. At the time of my application to the Foundation, I was in my second semester at the University of Florida after having spent six months between high school and college working full-time in a seafood restaurant while my mother recovered from a back injury received in a car accident. There were no family resources to support my education, and there were not many scholarships I could apply for since I was no longer a high school student. But the Schepp Foundation gave me an opportunity
where few existed. To me, this is part of what makes the Schepp Foundation a special organization; it fills a niche not covered by other programs.

I remember catching a plane to New York, with my one wool suit in an over large rolling suitcase, to meet the Executive Director and several board members for an interview. I told them about an experience I had seeing a black bear for the first time on a backpacking trip with my Boy Scout troop in high school and how I hoped to make a career capturing such moments on film. A few weeks later I received notification that I had been awarded a scholarship. My receipt of a Fulbright Grant and a Jacob K. Javits Fellowship were both partly the result of the support of the Leopold Schepp Foundation. The generosity of the people who support the Schepp Foundation and other organizations like it is one of the hallmarks of what makes the United States such a wonderful place. Contributing to the education of students shows a strong sense of concern for the welfare of our society as a whole and a strong faith in the abilities of young people to benefit the future. While I cannot say for certain what I will do after graduation, I hope that it will in some degree repay the goodwill and kindness that has been bestowed upon me.

My ideal post-graduation scenario would be to work at a PBS station for a few years, and once I’ve built up my professional portfolio, to apply for the videographer position at Yellowstone National Park. It would be the ultimate opportunity to create visual images of the natural world and, at the same time, my work would benefit the public by increasing awareness of the fragility of our natural resources and the ways that we can protect them. Without the Leopold Schepp Foundation’s support, this dream would have little chance of becoming the reality that now seems so possible.
SUSTAINING FISHERIES, SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES
Jake Kritzer, marine biologist and conservationist

A southern New England upbringing almost invariably means some connection to the sea. My home in central Connecticut was less than an hour from the Long Island Sound, my mother’s side of the family was rooted on the Rhode Island coast, and my father’s cousin made our family her regular summer guests on Nantucket Island, where the smell of salt air is never far away and maritime history and tradition wait around every turn. Exploring the salt marshes, combing the beaches, snorkeling along the jetties, and fishing off the piers of these special places engendered in me a deep love of the coast, the sea, and the communities built upon them.

When I finished my Bachelor’s degree in biology at Middlebury College in Vermont in 1995, I left the mountains and returned to the coast to work as a research assistant at the University of California at Davis marine lab in Bodega Bay. From there, I traveled to North Queensland, Australia in 1996 to study marine biology on the incomparable Great Barrier Reef at James Cook University, then an emerging regional research center and now arguably the premier tropical marine science institution in the world. My doctoral studies at JCU began as a purely ecological examination of the life history of a tiny coral reef goby. However, the focus quickly shifted to the fisheries biology of a commercially and recreationally important tropical snapper as I became more interested in and excited by the intersection of marine conservation, public policy, and social and economic development that occurs in the realm of fisheries management.

Australia provides strong financial support for its domestic students at both undergraduate and graduate levels, but funding for international students is less readily available. I had lived sparingly while working in California, and therefore had saved to help pay for this experience. And good ole Mom and Dad helped me out as well. But there was still a shortfall. One option would have been to simply do more part-time tutoring work (some of which is nearly unavoidable as a graduate student), but that would have compromised my studies. Thankfully, the Leopold Schepp Founda-
tion looked favorably upon the application I submitted, and provided a generous scholarship to meet my remaining financial need.

It was a somewhat risky decision by the Foundation in that it involved a non-traditional field (marine biology) and an overseas institution, neither of which were common among Schepp scholars at the time. Since then, I have been pleased to see the marine and environmental sciences come to be more prominent among Schepp scholars, as well as increasingly more scholars based at international institutions. I have long been grateful for the investment by the Foundation and the opportunities it opened. My training in Australia established my scientific foundation, and provided my first international experience and first involvement with fisheries issues, all of which have come to be cornerstones of my career. With support from the Foundation during my first year in Australia, I was able to perform well and secure not one but two of the few scholarships available to international students. One covered my tuition and fees and provided seed money for research, while the other provided a living stipend. Those achievements would not have been possible without the latitude provided by the Schepp scholarship.

After nearly six years in Australia, I was fortunate to be awarded a post-doctoral fellowship with Dr. Peter Sale, one of the leading fish ecologists in the world. I was based in Dr. Sale’s lab at the University of Windsor in Ontario, Canada – far from the sea! – but our research was focused on the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef System along the coasts of Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras, and especially the small Central American nation of Belize. Our goal was to map ecological connections among reefs through the dispersal of the tiny fish and invertebrate larvae that ride ocean currents until they grow large enough to join the reef ecosystem. Understanding these linkages is critical for the strategic design of marine protected areas, a diverse suite of spatial management tools that can provide important benefits for both conservation and sustainable fisheries. My time in Dr. Sale’s lab also included an interesting project assessing the environmental impact of several development projects in the rapidly growing city of Dubai on the coastal marine resources of the Arabian (Persian) Gulf.
Between my doctoral and post-doctoral work, I had spent nearly a decade in academia focused on tropical ecosystems. As my post-doc was winding down in early 2004, I felt I needed to make two major changes. As much as I love the tropics, home is ultimately where the heart is, and I had a real desire to begin working on the coastal ecosystems and fisheries of my home in the Northeastern United States. I was also ready to move outside of academia into the world of environmental advocacy. Scientific research is critical to sound management of natural resources, and therefore to sustaining the communities founded upon those resources. But I wanted to play a more direct role in bringing about the policy and management changes needed for healthy and sustainable fisheries. So, in 2004 I accepted a position with the Oceans Program at Environmental Defense, a non-governmental organization that combines science, law, and economics to craft novel policy and market-based solutions to pressing environmental problems. I had worked as an intern in the California office of Environmental Defense during a break in my doctoral studies in 1999, and was now excited to join the New York City office and focus on the Atlantic coast five years later.

An unexpected bonus of my position with Environmental Defense was the opportunity to remain involved with fisheries management issues in Central America. Given my experience working in tropical ecosystems generally and in Belize specifically, I was recruited by a new program aimed at reforming fisheries management in Belize to provide more economic stability to the fishermen and better conservation of the fish stocks through limited access privilege programs. However, the majority of my work is focused on fisheries management and coastal habitat protection in New York and New England, also with emphasis on market-based solutions to fisheries management problems.

My overall career goal is to ensure responsible, science-based management of marine resources in order to sustain the coastal communities that rely on those resources in the places that I hold dear. I have been on that path since college, and expect to continue to be on it for many years to come. The early support I received from the Leopold Schepp Foundation was instrumental in making this happen, and I am grateful.
“Morning on the Beach”

Fishing Village, Ghana, West Africa,
Artist: Jivan Lee, Schepp Scholar
EMPOWERING CHILDREN:
FROM HELPLESS VICTIMS TO AGENTS OF CHANGE
Karina Weinstein, international development

I am passionate about creating viable opportunities to empower marginalized children and youth. And I am grateful to the Leopold Schepp Foundation for its support of my studies at the Kennedy School of Government in public policy and for allowing me to devote myself to the field of international development. Prior to my attendance at the Kennedy School, I worked in Chile with children from slums and I learned that they are powerful agents of social change in spite of very difficult barriers caused by the lack of full access to society’s opportunities.

Children living in slums face tough challenges: the quality of instruction in public schools is poor and their immediate surroundings create low expectations. If we really want to help these children, we cannot view them as helpless victims of social inequality. Even though it is the government’s responsibility to provide them with access to all of society’s opportunities, many Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have taken on the daunting task of empowering marginalized children to overcome barriers of social exclusion. In Chile, I worked closely with grassroots organizations such as Desde Adentro and Corporacion Siempre Contigo that ran a myriad of educational and leadership programs filling the void left by the dismal public school education and teaching children to think beyond their immediate surroundings. When I started Esperanza Cultural Center, I aimed to instill the love of reading and literacy in children who had minimal exposure to books at home.

In India, the NGO sector is filling in the huge gaps left by the government by providing educational programs for children living on the streets and in the slums. I had the privilege of interning with Akanksha, an impressive NGO that empowers underprivileged children through education. In addition to supplementing formal schooling, Akanksha teaches children to be creative, confident, and compassionate. I was especially impressed with Akanksha’s ability to nourish a sense of community service. The children I worked with did not want to escape the slums they lived
in but rather wanted to improve them. My experience in India with an exceptional group of Akanksha youth reaffirmed that children are agents of change and can exercise their agency through resilience, creativity and dedication.

I led a community research project that challenged Akanksha students not only to improve their research skills by interviewing people within their communities and NGOs but also to take responsibility by tackling the problems they were researching. Initially they felt powerless to address the problems of addiction, violence, sanitation and lack of education. I encouraged them to take small steps to mobilize others to join them. A climactic moment happened when the children were collecting signatures for a letter they wrote to the local municipal authorities to clean an open gutter which had claimed many lives and created a strong stench in the community. As they went from door to door asking their neighbors for support, they also picked up trash in the lanes to demonstrate the power of action by individuals. Not only did they double the number of signatures they aimed for, but they also managed to entice other children to join them in soliciting signatures and cleaning up the community. This transformation from helpless victims to empowered agents of change translated into heated debates in the classroom as to whether grassroots action was more effective than directly pressuring the government.

If I had not been interning with Akanksha and constantly surrounded by such positive and inspiring children, I would have spent the entire summer depressed. When I first arrived in India, the sight of endless pavement dwellers, child beggars and street hawkers shocked me. I could not reconcile the glaring contradiction of a booming economy in a country where 300 million people live on less than $1 (US) a day, one third of the population does not have plumbing in their houses and 45% of all children are malnourished. It is easy to lose hope in sight of such poverty. However, the children I worked with reminded me of how much hope there is. They are first
generation learners who speak fluent English (Akanksha is an English-run program), who aim high in their educational and professional pursuits, and who genuinely want to improve their communities.

The lesson that I walked away with from my summer in India, which will guide me as I pursue a career in international development, is that the future is bright if you look at children living in extreme poverty not as helpless victims who need charity but rather as empowered and resilient individuals who are capable of creating social change. These children need resources, opportunities, access to a quality education and a strong support network.
A NEW LEG TO STAND ON
Micah Casteel, mechanical and materials joining engineer

But history will judge you, and as the years pass, you will ultimately judge yourself, on the extent to which you have used your gifts to lighten and enrich the lives of your fellow man. In your hands, not with presidents or leaders, is the future of your world and the fulfillment of the best qualities of your own spirit.”

— Robert F. Kennedy, in a speech to college students, 1966

“From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.”

— Luke 12:48

I have been incredibly lucky to be involved in a program that has allowed me to do much with the things that have been given to me. Utilizing creative engineering, the LEGS (LeTourneau Engineering Global Solutions) team has been working to use the skills acquired in school to improve people’s lives. The team started three years ago as a senior design research project with the goal of designing a low cost, above knee, prosthetic leg for use in least developed countries. They were motivated by their faith and a desire to use whatever skills they had to help others. Over the past several years, the team has been to multiple countries, established two permanent test sites and fitted about 20 test patients. Due to high demand from prosthetic distributors, we are currently preparing our knee design for general release. This will allow prosthetists in least developed countries to use a biomechanically sound and high quality knee. Fortunately and unfortunately, this means much less travel for the team, allowing us more time to work on improving the technology, but less time to interact with patients.

As part of my work on the LEGS team, I was able to visit Bangladesh twice and on both occasions it was a memorable trip. The following narrative is an account of our first trip to Malumghat, Bangladesh.
Step outside on the opposite side of the planet and you step into more than another country; you step into the colors, sounds, smells, and feel of another person’s world. When the LEGS team hit the ground in Bangladesh on March 6th, we discovered that nothing in our engineering curriculum had prepared us for it. Horns honking constantly, a sea of blank faces pressing against the airport fence, oppressive heat and humidity, and guards with sticks and automatic weapons all waited to welcome us to the Dhaka airport. After the initial shock of the sights and sounds of Bangladesh, our team began to notice a subtler but more permeating sensation—the smell. It was a humid, earthy smell, mixed with body odor, heavily tainted with exhaust fumes and an ever-present hint of chicken curry. After another short flight and a three-hour bus ride, our team arrived at our final destination: the Memorial Christian Hospital in Malumghat.

After a few hours rest, our team met six amputees and began to prepare them for their new prostheses. Each amputee had a different story behind his or her amputation: Snake bite, car wreck, infection, even a fall caused by slipping on a banana peel: the stories seemed all too typical for a third-world country. That is, until we began talking to Rosa, the only female patient. She was a bilateral amputee, meaning both of her legs had been amputated. She lost her legs when she was 15 years old. Shortly after her wedding, she learned her husband was having an affair. Her father refused to pay Rosa’s husband the rest of her dowry. Some people comment about waking up and discovering their honeymoon is over; Rosa woke up on some train tracks with her legs sawed off.

Regardless of where you go in the world, there is a considerable amount of documentation to be done when health care is involved. Bangladesh was no different. Our team spent much of the first few days recording all the information we could get about the patient’s health, lifestyle, prostheses usage, work, home and home life, anything that could possibly assist us in tailoring future prosthesis designs to specific needs. At the same time, we began to learn how the Bengali technicians manufactured their prostheses.

Our LEGS team had been commissioned by the MCH clinic to adapt our knee
design to the prosthesis system that the Bengalis were currently using. This system used an outdated Jaipur Leg system that consisted of an aluminum socket, a window casement hinge (for the knee joint), an aluminum exoskeleton shank, and a vulcanized rubber foot. Our team had never witnessed someone manufacture a prostheses using this technique, so we were eager to see how our design worked with their system.

All six patients were fitted with their new prostheses two days before our team had to depart, so we were able to enjoy other facets of Bengali culture before embarking on the long trip home. There is no rock in Bangladesh, so they have no aggregate for concrete. To overcome this problem, they break bricks into gravel size pieces and use it for aggregate. Our team spent one afternoon breaking bricks for our translator’s son and daughter-in-law. We rode rickshaws, went shopping, learned to haggle over five cents, and wore local clothing. We also visited the world’s longest continuous beach, Cox’s Bazaar, and the Bengali version of a zoo. Finally, we discovered that though chicken curry and rice is good once, it loses its novelty after a couple meals. We learned a lot about Bengali culture in a short time frame: they like to stare, water is inherently pure, manual labor is demeaning, and, logically, vehicle speed is directly proportional to vehicle size.

Before leaving Malumghat, the locals hosted a feast in our honor. By this time, it was absolutely incredible to see the difference in the patients’ demeanors. They had appeared downtrodden and sullen when we arrived, but by the end of the trip, they had learned how to play soccer, ride a rickshaw and walk. Remarkably, somewhere in the course of events, they had also learned to smile, laugh freely, and look forward to their future.

We were able to return to Bangladesh the following year and check up on our patients; they were all doing extremely well. It was very exciting to learn how most of them had acquired a job, bettered themselves, and how our student engineering work had radically changed the lives of people on the opposite side of the globe. It is our hope that teams like ours will continue to use the skills they have been given to give back and improve the lives of people for the future.
RWANDA: LIFE AFTER GENOCIDE
Emmanuella Anyanwu, economics major

I did not have as much time as I would have liked to prepare for my trip to Rwanda due to a midterm one week prior to my departure and a summer economics course with a scheduled exam when I returned from my trip. It simply did not dawn on me that I was traveling until I boarded the flight. I grew up in Nigeria and was excited to see how Rwanda might differ from my birthplace. This curiosity to see the country, the people, and the progress they had made since the 1994 genocide kept my blood from turning into an ice-block while on the seemingly endless flight.

Upon arrival at Kigali International Airport, my host family and a battalion of their friends welcomed me. As we made our way through Kigali, we passed two and three story commercial buildings and finally arrived in an area dominated by hut-like structures with many small stores still open late at night regardless of the fact that there was no electricity. The car finally stopped and we made our way down a dusty and hilly road without streetlights.

“Watch your step…. cross the gutter…. over here,” were some of the utterances I heard. A gate opened and in front of us was a nice looking bungalow surrounded by a garden in the midst of dilapidated huts. We dropped our luggage and had our first Rwandan dinner.

I spent the next week exploring and learning about the history and culture of Rwanda. After my internship placements were finalized, I went to Lake Kivu in Gisenyi, which is in the west province of Rwanda across the border from the Congo, and visited three genocide memorial centers. We made several stops on our way to Gisenyi and at one point stopped to wait for runners in a marathon race. While we were waiting, several children walked up to our van and started to gawk at us and before we knew it a multitude of children came out of nowhere and joined the “gawking band.” We ended up in conversations with the children and I was fascinated with their interest in education. Most of the children asked for books and pen-
cils as opposed to asking for money or toys. One of the boys walked up to us and boldly proclaimed that he was able to say, “What is your name?” and “What is the time?” in English and French. I soon realized that even though there is restricted access to quality education, many Rwandans place a high value on learning and seek a means to self-educate. They make it a point of duty to master the English language in addition to Kinyarwanda, French and, in some cases, Swahili. They do this because they realize the importance of language in a global economy. They also realize that with globalization there is an advantageous edge that comes with knowing a second language. Hence, their disbelief when they asked, “You speak English only?”

Nyamata, one of the memorial centers, is a church where 40,000 people sought refuge during the genocide. Our tour guide happened to be one of those who came to hide in that church but is alive today because she hid under heaps of corpses. She is married to a Ugandan and expecting a baby. She admitted that it would be difficult for her to marry a Rwandan Hutu not knowing if he were a genocidaire – someone who contributed to the 1994 massacre. I couldn’t understand how an individual could live next door to and possibly share things with someone who killed their loved ones.

My internship was with an organization called AVEGA which was established by a group of widows who, after losing everything, decided to do something about their plight. AVEGA provides medical, legal and economic help to widows and orphans of the genocide. I worked in the socio-economic department helping to organize and teach widows and orphans how to make baskets, sweaters, hats, etc. These items were then sold to buyers in the U.S. and Europe. I also assisted in doing a productivity analysis for the Association of Rwandese Trauma Counselors. During my internship, I visited URWEGO, a development bank and microfinance institution initiated by World Relief. I met with the Director of the Savings and Banking Department, accompanied a loan officer to the market place where he disbursed loans to clients, and visited various commercial banks.

A typical workday in Rwanda usually ends at 4p.m. I used the rest of the day to better acquaint myself with local life. A Rwandan friend, another student and I spent
part of our free time interviewing ten prostitutes. The prostitutes we interviewed were all interested in pursuing other professions and expressed a shared interest in the business of trading shoes and clothes. I also discovered that they had not tried to obtain micro loans from the numerous microfinance institutions in Kigali. We asked if their elementary school age children were receiving an education and they said “oya”- meaning “no”.

We visited the women’s prison facility and discovered that children accompany their mothers to prison. Many convicted nursing mothers in Rwanda are forced to take their babies with them to prison. This is usually because they lost all their family during the genocide and as a result, there is no one to take care of their babies while they are serving time in jail. Some mothers were at most 16 years old. It was truly distressing to see a young woman nursing a baby in prison when she should be free and in school learning about life. Nevertheless, the women were very cheerful and seemed to be less troubled by the situation than I was.

My experience in Rwanda is something I will never forget. The tenacity with which they hold on to life against all odds is spectacular. The hunger for education is widespread among the old and young but limitations to development still persist. In the case of the prostitutes, fear is one of their main limiting factors. Elementary school education is free in Rwanda yet their children might grow up not knowing how to read or write. The prostitutes are afraid to enroll their children in school because a school administrator might discover the mother’s occupation, which would send her to prison. Rwanda is inundated with microfinance institutions yet the prostitutes are still hindered by lack of capital because they are afraid of being reported to the authorities.

Prior to embarking on this journey, I thought I was going to render help to Rwanda. It turned out that God used my experience to teach me more about Himself, life and my calling. I went to visit a friend in the hospital when suddenly I heard a woman lamenting. Policemen rushed her in because her husband beat her and ran away. This and other things I heard and saw made me search, question and begin to understand the nature of God and the suffering going on in the world. Just like
Job in the Bible, I feel like I now have a better understanding of life. I find peace in knowing that it is not the desire of God that anyone should perish and that God is truly in control (2 Peter 3:9; Job 38).

I am working with a Rwandan friend to see how URWEGO might be of financial assistance to the prostitutes and am also trying to find buyers for the items produced by the widows and orphans at AVEGA. I am conducting a research study on the tax system in Rwanda in order to see what modifications, if any, might be considered. I am a fourth year student majoring in economics and pursuing a minor in mathematics. I intend to obtain a PhD in economics in order to contribute to the financial growth of low-resource communities and economies.

Rwanda has an abundance of agricultural land. The problem is that farm work is manual and as such cannot yield enough produce to sustain the economy. However, mechanization of agriculture would mean unemployment for many of the locales who depend on farming as their means of livelihood. In essence, it is true that Rwanda has attained significant advancement but it still needs help in the future, not necessarily financial, in order to go beyond the level of subsistence at which it currently resides.
ENDING OLD CYCLES TO BUILD A NEW FUTURE
Rachelle Street, photographer and educator

During a recent trip to visit friends and family in rural Wisconsin, I had dinner with a family whose children I babysat and tutored for several years. The father is a lawyer and the mother is a recently-retired public school teacher. When I was in high school, I had been completely enamored—and slightly envious—of their cultured, intelligent lifestyle, which couldn’t have been more different from my own family’s low-income, limited-education background.

The mother had taught many of my extended family members and she spoke of the frustration of teaching children with unsupportive parents who suffer from their own lack of education. They are not untalented, unintelligent children, she explained. However, with their parenting and home-lives, they simply don’t have a chance and are inevitably doomed to lead lives that mirror those of their parents. This was a conversation that struck home. “Yes, it is very difficult to break away from the cycle,” I said. She looked at me and responded, “You’re amazing.”

I knew that she was referring to the fact that I had been one of those one-in-a-hundred children who somehow manage to move beyond the limitations of their environments, but I don’t feel amazing. I’ve worked with at-risk children in underserved New York City public schools long enough to fully realize and appreciate just how crushing the cycle of low-education, low-income can be, yet I still grope to express the complicated feelings that come with leaving that cycle behind.

These feelings were the impetus behind my MFA thesis exhibition, Untitled Wisconsin, at Pratt Institute. Untitled Wisconsin is a series of photographs taken of the area where I grew up and, more specifically, of my family and my family’s dairy farm. The images are part documentary, part social critique, part historical narrative—both a celebration and a nostalgic view of the honesty of man working on the land, revealing the problems created by low-income, low-education family cycles.
Through working on *Untitled Wisconsin*, which I anticipate will become a life-long project, I grapple with what it means to come from a social class of which I am no longer part, and the subsequent feelings of alienation that arise from that situation. It is important to understand that I am not ashamed of where I came from, quite the opposite, yet I cannot help but judge it, and often not in a positive light. This leads to complicated interactions with a family that is proud of me, but that can no longer relate to me.

Alienation is a theme I often touch upon when working with my Upward Bound students. Of all the non-profit organizations I teach for, I am most proud of the Upward Bound Project, which works with high school students from low-income backgrounds who want to become the first in their families to attend college. It has an astounding 95% success rate, which is even more amazing when one considers that these students come from communities where the high school drop-out rate is nearly 50%.

With other organizations, such as Community-Word Project and Young Audiences / New York, I work with elementary school children, using visual arts and poetry to create connections between themselves, their worlds, and the arts. At Upward Bound, I focus on using literature as a way to understand the interconnectedness of just about everything. Last semester, I read Franz Kafka’s *The Metamorphosis* with my students. After they got past the sheer strangeness of the story, they were able to examine the text as a metaphor and quickly related to the theme of change leading to alienation from one’s own family and surroundings.

Students join Upward Bound as high school freshmen or sophomores and stay with the program through college graduation and beyond. As they mature and develop, I see many of them beginning to deal with the issues and emotions connected to
growing beyond their communities. They are all like Kafka’s Gregor Samsa, struggling to relate to a world in which they no longer fit, yet not feeling fully comfortable in the world which they are attempting to enter.

I believe that education and income are cycles, and while it is very difficult to end those cycles, it is possible. I believe that one out of one hundred children is a large enough number to make a difference in this world. And, most importantly, I believe that advancing one’s own history doesn’t have to mean leaving one’s family and community behind. More often than not, those one-out-of-a-hundreds return to their roots in order to build new communities and new futures.
REVITALIZING A DYING PHILADELPHIA NEIGHBORHOOD
John Reinhardt, student of urban planning and design

The future is a topic that has been especially poignant for me during the past several months. In late February of this year, I was in midtown Manhattan, interviewing for a Schepp Foundation Scholarship; on that chilly but sunny Friday morning, my future looked bright. The next evening, back in Philadelphia, I found myself lying in a hospital bed at the University of Pennsylvania – unable to breathe and uncertain of exactly what my future held. A diagnosis of Burkitt’s Lymphoma (a rare and aggressive blood cancer) came shortly thereafter and it presented a choice: to face the future with positive energy or to live with despair because my life had changed overnight. I chose the former and never looked back.

Despite frequent week-long treatments at the hospital, I continued with all five courses for my Master of City Planning degree at the University of Pennsylvania School of Design – not only passing, but excelling in my program. In May, I received the Wallace Roberts and Todd Award for distinguished work by a first-year student in a workshop, presented by a Philadelphia architecture firm. Workshops are semester-long, pro-bono group projects assigned at the beginning of the spring semester – each of which is focused on a Philadelphia neighborhood. Focusing on the future of a neighborhood in Northwest Philly got me through the long treatments and provided just the creative outlet I needed to stay positive.

Our team of six focused on Germantown, an historic neighborhood that was once a vibrant commercial center. In the 1950s, it was second only to Center City in importance, but faltered once malls opened in the suburbs. The team zeroed in on the neighborhood’s intrinsic assets such as great transportation links, committed non-profit institutions, and gorgeous architecture in order to restore its vibrancy. In addition, the project benefited from vacant land surrounding the SEPTA R7 station – a commuter rail station that links Germantown with Center City Philadelphia including a connection through Trenton to New York City.
The team realized the multitude of possibilities on the vacant R7 site and worked with community members to generate a development plan that would serve as a catalyst for larger neighborhood revitalization. After a thorough market analysis, we proposed a transit-oriented plan with a movie theatre, family-style restaurant, institutional and retail space, and elderly housing (all needs noted in the market study and cited by community stakeholders). Throughout the process, I began to see linkages between the project and my own health – in both cases working hard and staying focused to see something positive come out of a difficult and complex situation.

The final plan, The Hub at Germantown Station: A Place to Live, Work and Interact, was crafted with the comprehensive, sustainable future of the neighborhood in mind and considers environmental, financial, project management, non-profit, housing, and economic development issues. Our client, the Central Germantown Council, has begun work with Philadelphia politicians and local banks in order to turn the plan into a reality, thus forging a new future for a neighborhood so deeply tied to the past.

As for my own future, the past several months have brought focus and meaning. This September, I will finish my last chemotherapy session. Thanks to the wonderful doctors and nurses at Penn, I have been able to live a full and rich life despite a diagnosis of cancer and the aggressive treatment it entailed. My success speaks to the hard work of those, including Schepp Scholars, who pursue the health professions and devote their lives to the advancement of medicine. After receiving my master’s degree and urban design certificate from PennDesign next year, I hope to continue work on projects that have a larger social impact – focusing on those that tackle environmental sustainability, promote quality urban design, or advocate social justice in lower-income neighborhoods. At least that’s the plan. As I’ve learned, who knows what the future will hold?
The Hub at Germantown Station: A Place to Live, Work and Interact

Maude Baggetto  Anne Carson  Paul Collins  Zev Moses  John Reinhardt  Melissa Yoon

Prepared for the Central Germantown Council
Schepp Trustee Banning Repplier is no stranger to public service. The Brooklynite got his first dose of it right out of Amherst College in 1968 when he joined the Peace Corps to teach English to secondary school students in Cote d'Ivoire in West Africa. “The experience was wonderful. I wasn’t much older than my students, so it was easy to become friends with them,” he said. On weekends, he often traveled to the countryside at the invitation of his students and their families. “Teachers there, as in many other societies, are held in high esteem.” Encouraged by his experience in Africa, Banning applied for and was awarded a Fulbright teaching grant to travel to Laos. After completing his Fulbright Fellowship, he decided to spend a few additional years teaching in an Iranian University, “on the eve of the revolution.”

Again, he grew close to his students and their families. “We all think that what has happened since the revolution is awful, but what was going on before it, under the Shah, was equally dreadful in a different way.” By the time Mohammed Reza Pahlavi was overthrown in 1979, Banning had left Iran. He wrote a number of articles about his experiences there for the Western press, which was hungry for writers with an intimate knowledge of the country and its people.

He continued to work as a freelance travel writer, but ultimately, got into advertising, sort of by mistake. “Since I could write, I was hired as a copywriter. I assumed it was a temporary job and even left it for a while to make documentaries, but eventually I got sucked in!”

His talents and energy led him to become Creative Director at BrandEdge, a consulting division of the marketing giant Grey Advertising. Somehow, he also managed to carve out enough time to co-author a book on the history of bees and honey.

I went to visit Banning at his office in the Flat Iron neighborhood of Manhattan. It was nearing 8 p.m. and the office was still abuzz in typical New York fashion. De-
spite having put in a long day, Banning remained meticulously groomed and sharply dressed. When he’s about to speak, he leans back slightly in his chair and clasps his hands. Occasionally, the ping of an email momentarily grabs his attention, but he’s quick to refocus on our conversation. With a team of art directors, writers and production staff who report to him, his current situation is light years away from the mud huts and stilt houses of his Peace Corps days. Yet it’s not hard to imagine him catching a ride in a tuk-tuk in Laos, or eating attiéké (fermented cassava) with his students in Côte d’Ivoire.

It’s Banning’s work with the Schepp Foundation that satisfies his altruistic cravings. He joined the Schepp Foundation Board of Trustees in 1987 at the request of his father’s first cousin, Barbara Banning Tweed Estill, who was President of the Board at the time. His primary role is “staff writer and editor” for the organization, helping to “tootsie up” letters and other institutional materials. In fact, it was Banning’s idea to start the Schepp Connections newsletter which is sent to former and current Schepp scholars as a way of keeping everyone abreast of the goings-on of the organization and the scholars it assists.

Keeping people connected is important to Banning and the rest of the Foundation’s board members. There have been 22,033 Schepp scholars and – that’s a lot of people, and a lot of potential for interaction. Out of this hopefully will grow more projects like the Mentoring Program that matches present scholars with former ones. “We hope it’s becoming a useful resource for our younger scholars and a way for former scholars to stay involved and interested by contributing their time and thinking.”

Banning believes one of the biggest challenges the Foundation faces is striking a balance between the size of the scholarship awards and the number of students who receive them.

“When I went to college, tuition, fees, room and board were $3,000 a year. Back then, even a $500 Schepp scholarship would have covered a significant percentage of a student’s educational costs. But today, the money doesn’t go as far. When
someone has to pay $40,000 a year in tuition, how significant can a $1,000 or $2,000 award be?” To keep up with rising costs, the Foundation increased the maximum grant amount to $8,500. “But we don’t give out the maximum often, because that would limit the number of individuals we could help.”

“Every application that makes it through our preliminary screening process to be considered by the trustees is deserving. So when it gets to the trustees, we want to give every candidate money, a lot of money, but we can’t. It’s quite frustrating,” Banning exclaims.

“We look for people who are committed to doing something interesting and to helping society. We don’t award many scholarships to people who want to get their MBAs and go to work for an investment bank,” said Banning. He pauses for a moment, and adds with a smile: “Although we probably should because they’re the ones who can give back millions!”

LEOPOLD SCHEPP FOUNDATION AWARDS SUMMARY, 1925–2007

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BEA AND DAVID POCKRASS: GENEROUS FRIENDS OF THE FOUNDATION
by Edythe Bobrow, Trustee

I met Bea on the day I started my very first job at the independent radio station WMCA in New York City. I was 19 years old and Bea was the Continuity Editor of the station. In those days, her job included responsibility for the editing and scheduling of commercial announcements as well as public service and day and night programs.

I worked in the program director’s office and quickly learned my way around the station. Just as quickly, Bea and I became close friends. Since it was wartime (1944), Bea was separated from her fiancé David, who was an officer in the U.S. Navy serving in the South Pacific.

When the war was over and David came home, he and Bea were married, and we three became good friends. That friendship soon included my husband, Walter, and eventually our three children, who always enjoyed Bea and David’s attention and company.

When not spending time with us, Bea and David enjoyed travel, theatre, reading and participating in community activities.

David grew up in Yonkers, New York, and was a graduate of New York University where he earned his degree in engineering. He loved sports, especially swimming which he kept up until his final illness. He was also a wonderful gardener. For many years, he and Bea lived in a penthouse apartment in New York City which provided just enough space for him to exercise his green thumb. After they moved to Ramsey, New Jersey, his gardening responsibilities increased but he was still able to find time to volunteer as a driver for medically impaired adults needing transportation to and from medical centers.

Bea grew up in New York City and attended Smith College. She always had a strong
interest in reading and eventually devoted much of her time to recording books for the blind. Like David, Bea volunteered for many Ramsey service organizations. Always a lover of classical music, she took comfort in listening to her favorite recordings as her health failed.

My relationship with Bea remained strong over the years. Both she and David loved to hear about the Schepp Foundation and my role in it. Since they had no children of their own, I believe the stories I told them about our remarkable young scholars made a real and positive impression on them — so positive, in fact, that they left us a generous legacy of over $100,000. We are very grateful for their gift — and for the fact that both Bea and David lived long, productive lives.
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