

GW

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE
FALL 2019







As part of his “World on a Plate” course, chef José Andrés took a GW class to the Folger Shakespeare Library on Capitol Hill in September to examine and decipher 400-year-old recipes.

WILLIAM ATKINS

GW MAGAZINE FALL 2019

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

CONTENTS

FEATURES

28 / (At Least) A Little Something For Everyone

This year’s gift guide, our sixth, has a theme. We found alums making and selling things spanning the present-giving spectrum. So, we hope, there is at least one thing here that will work for anyone on your list.

/ By [Caite Hamilton](#) /

40 / The Disinformation Age

It’s been well known for a long time that not everything on the internet is true, but recently it’s become more difficult to separate facts and fictions. The new Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics will try to help us tell the difference.

/ By [Charles Babington](#) /

50 / Home Work Help

Journalist and author Megan K. Stack, BA ’98, has been a finalist for a National Book Award and a Pulitzer Prize. In her new memoir, *Women’s Work* (excerpted on page 54), the former *Los Angeles Times* war correspondent reckons with motherhood, privilege, domestic labor and, to her surprise, her readership.

/ Q&A by [Rachel Muir](#) /

DEPARTMENTS

4 / Postmarks

6 / GW News

58 / Class Notes

On the cover:

Illustration by
John McGlasson, BA ’00,
MFA ’03

THANK YOU

to all alumni, faculty, staff, and friends of the George Washington University who have named GW a beneficiary of an estate gift. If you have already named GW as a beneficiary of a planned gift*, such as a bequest in your will or trust, or you are considering this soon, you may be eligible for an immediate cash match to direct to a GW area of interest of your choice (up to \$10,000). Please email pgiving1@gwu.edu or call 877-498-7590 to learn if your gift qualifies for a match.



You document your planned gift

+



10% cash match (up to \$10,000) to an area of your choice

=



Immediate impact to your area of interest at GW

x



Future impact with your planned gift

* Visit go.gwu.edu/give110 to learn more.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

WASHINGTON, DC

GW MAGAZINE

Fall 2019
Volume 29, Issue 3

ASSOCIATE EDITOR // Matthew Stoss

PHOTO EDITOR // William Atkins

PHOTO EDITOR // Harrison Jones

DESIGN // GW Marketing & Creative Services

ART DIRECTOR // Dominic N. Abbate, BA '09, MBA '15

ART DIRECTOR // John McGlasson, BA '00, MFA '03

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT // Jennifer Cheng, CCAS '2021

CONTRIBUTOR // Keith Harriston, senior managing editor, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Briahna Brown, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Kurtis Hiatt, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Tatyana Hopkins, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Kristen Mitchell, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Ruth Steinhardt, *GW Today*

Thomas J. LeBlanc

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

Donna Arbide

**VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT
AND ALUMNI RELATIONS**

Lorraine Voles, BA '81

**VICE PRESIDENT FOR
EXTERNAL RELATIONS**

Patty Carocci

**SENIOR ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT OF
ALUMNI RELATIONS AND ANNUAL GIVING**

Leah Rosen, BBA '96, MTA '02

**ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT FOR
MARKETING AND CREATIVE SERVICES**

Sarah Gegenheimer Baldassaro

**ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT
FOR COMMUNICATIONS**

Rachel Muir

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
FOR EDITORIAL SERVICES**

GW Magazine (ISSN 2162-6464) is published three times per year by GW's Division of External Relations, 2000 Pennsylvania Avenue NW, 300, Washington, D.C. 20006. Phone: 202-994-0817; email: magazine@gwu.edu.

© 2019 The George Washington University. The George Washington University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution.

Opinions expressed in these pages are those of the individuals and do not necessarily reflect official positions of the university.

POSTMASTER Please send change-of-address notices to *GW Magazine*, GW Alumni Records Office, 2033 K St., NW, Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20052. Notices can also be sent via alumni.gwu.edu/update, email to alumrecs@gwu.edu, or 202-994-9350. Postage paid at Washington, D.C., and additional mailing offices.



John B. Connally was governor of Texas from 1963 to 1969. He later served as secretary of the treasury.



Long-distance information, give me Memphis, Tennessee

I am distraught that our *GW Magazine* is losing such a competent and caring editor in Danny Freedman. No matter what I wrote, he always responded with graciousness and support when I probably really deserved a terse letter of rejection. He gave me direction when I went astray and kindly edited my letters to the editor when I got carried away and needed his guidance to really make those opinion pieces “sing,” but he always did so lovingly and realized that I, too, was a GW alum who met my husband there back in ’63, so we were both GW cheerleaders from the heart. I couldn’t imagine that Danny would ever leave but I wish his family well in Memphis. How we *GW Magazine* readers will miss him! He did us proud!

Kathy A. Megyeri, MA ’69, MA ’82

[Ed. note: Danny Freedman, BA ’01, was GW Magazine’s managing editor from 2014 through July 2019 when he and his family moved to Memphis.]

A gubernatorial omission

I greatly enjoyed this article (“The Border Ball,” summer 2019), though I’d like to address what is to me a glaring omission regarding the photo of the smiling man with his hand in a cast next to the couple portraying Martha and George Washington [on page 45 of 2019 summer issue]. He is, as the article puts it, one of the “state poobahs” who attended Laredo’s Washington’s Birthday Celebration. Specifically, he is then-Texas Governor John B. Connally, and he is in a cast as a result of his wrist being shattered along with his other wounds during the course of the assassination of President Kennedy not three months earlier. The fact that he made the trip from Austin to Laredo so soon after suffering three broken ribs, a punctured lung, a bullet in his leg, and the shattered wrist speaks volumes about the significance of the WBC.

William R. Harris, BBA ’81

A (true) tall tale

I still exist. Who am I? One of the GW men’s basketball team’s varsity players from 1952 to 1954. *[Ed. note: In the spring 2019 issue, we wrote about the 65th anniversary of the first GW men’s basketball team to make the NCAA tournament.]* Every team needs more than a few superstars; the Roman Guard, so to speak. In the year we went 23-3, there were at least 12 of us. My claim to fame: I was the tallest. According to the Southern Conference Championship program, I was 6-foot-8 and weighed 180 pounds. Unfortunately, fake news. But I did top Joe Holup by an inch (see page 142 of the 1953 yearbook), while he outweighed me by at least 50 hefty pounds.



Philip H. De Turk, BA ’54, JD ’56

Points of view

In the future, if the George Washington University chooses to discuss politics (“A Competition For Facts,” summer 2019), please show ALL viewpoints. GW should not be partisan. The university should not lean one way or the other.

Dayna McGhee, BA ’98





Memory Bank

We ask in every issue: What keepsakes—objects, photos, etc.—do you keep around as reminders of your time at GW? Recently, we heard from **Garry V. Wenske, BA '65**, about a particularly unusual item, which he kindly mailed back. (Garry, we are very much enjoying our new doorstep.)

More than a pile of bricks

The piece about a cut-glass window in the “Memory Bank” section of [the summer 2019 issue] reminded that I had collected the enclosed brick while an undergraduate student at GW in the 1960s.

Why I still have it is lost in the fog of memory, but I recall it came from an historic building next to the Circle Theater near 21st and Pennsylvania Ave. NW. One night when returning to then-Calhoun Hall, I noticed that the townhouse was no longer standing, but just a pile of bricks. Something prompted me to pick up this brick as it seemed sad that its history would be forever lost.

So, I am returning it (perhaps as a doorstep for your offices near where it originated) as another part of GW’s heritage.



Runs in the Family

Brains and brawn can pass from generation to generation, and so too can Colonial pride. If you have family members who have attended GW before or after your time here, we’d like to hear from you. Contact Marie Treanor, director of legacy family engagement, at mtreanor@gwu.edu. And for more about GW’s Legacy Alumni Network, visit: go.gwu.edu/legacyfamilies.



The Ghosts of Thurston Past

In honor of a planned \$80 million interior renovation of Thurston Hall, *GW Magazine* is cracking open the time capsule of Thurston’s past, and we need your stories for an upcoming feature: tales from too late and from bleary dawns; of shenanigans and fizzled plans and what-are-the-odds wins that became legend; of roommates and laundry and classes and life inside the dorm.

Send your memories to magazine@gwu.edu or mail them to us at the address below.



Have a keepsake you want to tell us about? Write us at magazine@gwu.edu or on Twitter at [@TheGWMagazine](https://twitter.com/TheGWMagazine); we’ll feature some of them in this space in future issues.



All Write!

We want to hear from you, too. Contact us through our website, gwmagazine.com, on Twitter ([@TheGWMagazine](https://twitter.com/TheGWMagazine)) or send a note to:

GW Magazine
2000 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Suite 300
Washington, DC 20006
magazine@gwu.edu

Please include your name, degree/year, address and a daytime phone number.

Letters may be edited for clarity and space.

Prelude

NEWS AND INSIGHTS FROM CAMPUS AND BEYOND



P. 12

A Plan for GW



P. 18

Indigenous D.C.



P. 19

The New Provost



P. 22

Service & Politics



“

I measure a guy by what he can do, not by what he can't do. And I think the world and a lot of people measure what a guy can't do, and at the end of day, you're only going to win with the 'cans.'

Jamion Christian,
New men's basketball coach

P. 20



JANE THE VIRGIN STILL: DANNY FELD / THE CW; JAMION CHRISTIAN: WILLIAM ATKINS / RIGHT: COURTESY ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

RESEARCH

The (Other) Eternal City

Across the walls and ceiling of the U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee meeting room, a professor finds the narrative of a “new Rome on the Potomac” and the artist’s elusive source of inspiration.

BY MENACHEM WECKER, MA '09





The U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee meeting room originally housed the Committee on Naval Affairs, and still bears Brumidi's effort to telegraph a notion of U.S. dominance on the water and the nation's claim to the Greco-Roman legacy.

THE ROOM MANAGES, AT ONCE, TO BE DIZZYING AND MEDITATIVE.

Frescoes and filigree enrobe the walls and high ceiling, an embarrassment of gilded splendor that's disarmed by dim lighting and broad fields of calming blue paint. Windows on the room's lone outward-facing wall catch the sunlight and frame a postcard-worthy view of the Washington Monument.

It's called S-127, a cavernous meeting room that's part of what is now the Senate Appropriations Committee's suite at the U.S. Capitol. For a century and a half, the room has been held by some of the nation's most powerful people, and the message of the art—mythological beings and symbols of seaborne prowess—matches their influence. But until recently, no one had fully decoded the room's symbolism.

It was designed and painted in the late 1850s by Constantino Brumidi, an Italian refugee sometimes referred to as “the Michelangelo of the Capitol.” In S-127 he'd wanted to forge a new visual language for the relatively young American republic, one that would telegraph power and echo America's claim to the classical Greco-Roman legacy.

“Just like our Founding Fathers were constructing a new nation rooted in ancient Greece and Rome, just as they were doing this in terms of political structures and philosophical values and statesmanship, they were also interested in creating a new Rome on the Potomac,” says Elise Friedland, an associate professor of classics and art history. Friedland has spent the past two years analyzing the room's complex visuals, first with seed money from GW's Office of the Vice President for Research, then with a fellowship from the U.S. Capitol Historical Society.

The thinking of the nation's leaders, she says, was that “in order to put this capital literally on the map, it'd better look like ancient Rome. And this [the

Senate meeting room and works throughout the Capitol] was part and parcel of the continuation of that well into the 19th and even early 20th centuries.”

To do that, Brumidi drew upon a style—characterized by faux marble, solid blocks of blue, and floating and realistic figurative vignettes—that unmistakably conjures ancient Pompeii. The Roman city entombed by volcanic ash in the first century was being excavated intensively at the time and yielding some of its biggest finds. Co-opting designs uncovered there conferred an air of sophistication and luxury in Brumidi's day.

“This is really the only room that is this coherent in Pompeian style and subject matter,” Friedland says.

But why this iconography and these motifs? And how? Brumidi likely needed more than imagination to design so intricate a room, she reasoned, but the trail seemed largely to begin and end with his final art on the walls. To try to understand, Friedland went hunting for a 160-year-old muse.

IT TOOK SOME CONVINCING FOR FRIEDLAND TO TAKE ON THE PROJECT.

In spring 2013 and in 2016, she took students in her course, “Greece & Rome in Washington, D.C.,” to tour the Capitol, where both trips included being taken to room S-127. Two successive curators for the Architect of the Capitol, Barbara Wolanin and the current curator, Michele Cohen, asked Friedland—an expert on Greek and Roman sculpture in the Roman Near East—if she wanted to be the first scholar to study the room in depth.

“I thought to myself, *That is after Constantine, and I can't help you after AD 324 ...*,” Friedland says. “*Plus, that's painting, and I do*

sculpture.”

She declined to Wolanin, and three years later to Cohen.

But being asked twice in three years to research Brumidi's work there did give Friedland pause. She mulled it over with her dissertation adviser (“I was thinking, ‘*Before I go off the ranch completely ...*’”) and, now reasonably assured her background might possibly bridge ancient Rome and early U.S. public art, she began to dig.

The room S-127 was Brumidi's first full-scale assignment in the Capitol, a job he would parlay into 25 years of work (with dozens of assistants) to adorn the building's interior—including his 4,600-square-foot *Apotheosis of Washington* in the eye of the Rotunda—up until his death in 1880.

Brumidi had worked for popes in his native Rome, but came out on the wrong side of a revolution there. He eventually was pardoned and allowed to leave for America.

He arrived in New York in 1852, where he painted churches, among other things. And in 1855, Brumidi began his work at the Capitol.

Meeting room S-127 only came to be occupied by the influential, federal-purse-string-holding Senate Appropriations Committee in 1912. Originally the room housed the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs—and later the Committee on Armed Services, the Committee on the Philippines and, temporarily, the Government Printing Office—so most of Brumidi's illustrations there deal with the ocean.

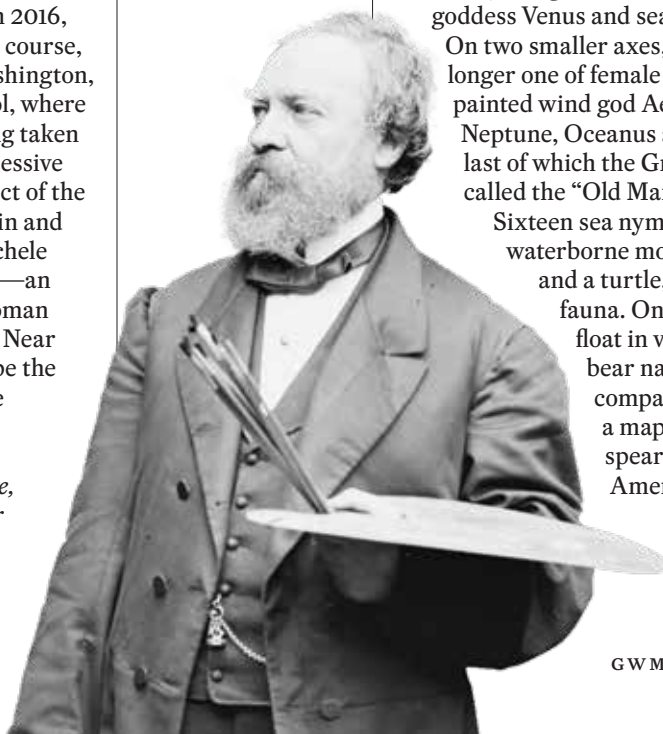
On the ceiling's longest axis, he painted America (cast as a Native American woman), sea goddess Amphitrite, love goddess Venus and sea nymph Thetis.

On two smaller axes, which bisect the longer one of female deities, Brumidi painted wind god Aeolus and sea gods Neptune, Oceanus and Nereus, the last of which the Greek poet Homer called the “Old Man of the Sea.”

Sixteen sea nymphs ride waterborne monsters, dolphins and a turtle, among other fauna. On the walls, maidens float in voids of blue and bear nautical objects—a compass, an anchor, a map—and staffs spearheaded with the American flag.

“The message is, ‘We have our naval power growing out

Constantino Brumidi





of these marine deities of the Greco-Roman world,” Friedland says.

One of the floating maidens, a maenad, or female follower of Dionysus, wears flowing robes and carries an American flag. She holds the flag pole with her outstretched right hand, and the flag goes over her right shoulder and behind her head. The figure’s left hand reaches forward, and she strides forward with her right foot.

Wolanin, the former curator for the Architect of the Capitol, previously had identified this as a near-exact copy of a first-century Pompeian fresco, now in the collection of Naples’ Museo Archeologico Nazionale. In that painting, a maenad is carrying a drum or tambourine in her right hand, and a thyrsus, a staff culminating in foliage, in her left. Brumidi essentially had just swapped in new attributes.

Wolanin, Cohen and now Friedland were left to wonder whether the maiden was the sole quotation from the art of Pompeii, with Brumidi’s mind filling the rest of the room, or whether—as Friedland suspected—more sources of inspiration were out there to be found.

After two months of looking and turning up nothing, Friedland was getting nervous.

Her research turned up plenty of illustrations of that lone maenad. But then, in a desk-sized, three-part book called *Beautiful Ornament and Remarkable Paintings from*

Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Stabiae by Wilhelm Zahn, a German decorative painter who lived in Pompeii in the early 1800s, she found an illustration of the entire wall that held the maenad.

“And as I was looking at this drawing and saying, ‘Yes, there’s our maenad,’ I started realizing: Hold on. I recognize other things, like these columns, right?” she told an audience last year at a lecture at the Library of Congress. “... I also recognized those columns, and then I realized that it turns out that Constantino Brumidi based his entire design of the room on this one drawing.”

The book’s author, Zahn, was unknown to Friedland, though it turned out he was an important figure in the development of color lithography and a friend of the famous writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

“[Zahn] was just hanging around [in Pompeii] while things were being discovered and drawing them,” Friedland said at the library.

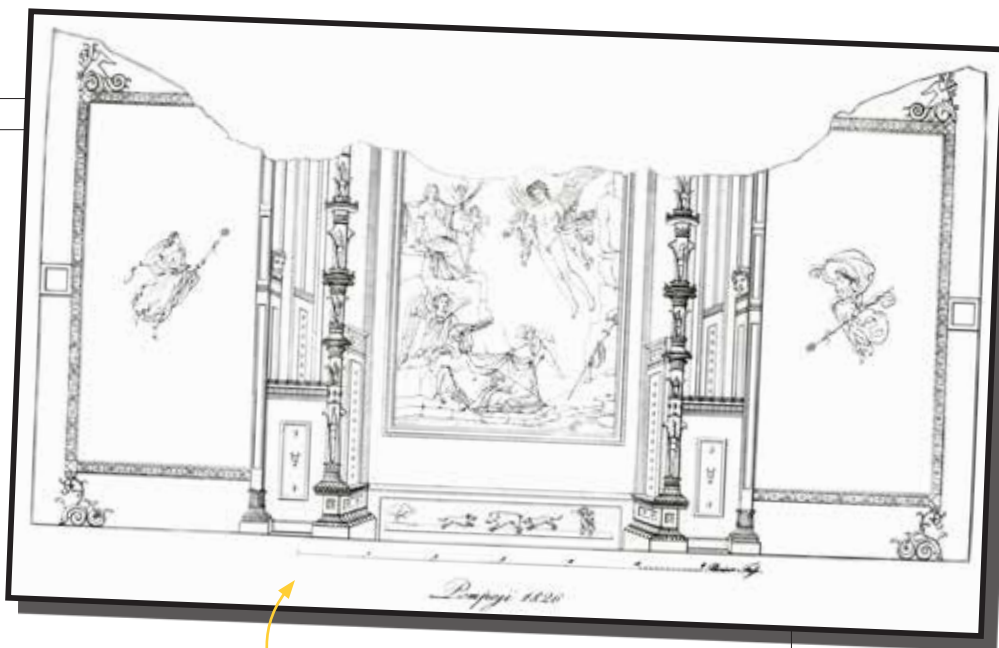
Friedland points to another floating figure in Zahn’s book

and then to her near-twin on the wall of S-127: “She was a victory goddess, carrying a trophy. So you just, y’know, lose the wings and change the trophy into a pennant—and you’ve got to put clothes on all these people in 19th-century America—and there you have another floating figure.”

Answering one research question, though, has a way of raising new ones.

Now that it seemed much of Brumidi’s work in the room could be traced back to Pompeii directly via Zahn (it’s common for artists to draw upon predecessors’ work), Friedland had to square how a refugee like Brumidi might’ve been able to afford an expensive book like Zahn’s. And would he really lug it across an ocean?

It turns out, he wouldn’t have had to: Friedland, with the help of librarians, curators and historians at the Library of Congress, identified a copy deep in the library’s storage. That would seem to answer the question, but it would help if she could show that Brumidi could have accessed one of the library’s



A lithograph Friedland found in Zahn's book appears to have been—from its intricate columns, floating figures and layout—Brumidi's inspiration for the Senate meeting room S-127.

volumes.

Inspecting library markings on the book, she learned it was in the Library of Congress collection by 1849. "That's in plenty of time for our hero to consult them," Friedland told the lecture audience.

But *did* he?

Friedland turned to a transcript of a journal kept by Montgomery Meigs, the engineer who oversaw part of the construction of the Capitol and who commissioned Brumidi. She found an entry from after the room's completion in 1858, in which Meigs writes that Brumidi's room is "better than the examples from Pompeii in the book of ...," but only a blank space follows. Meigs wrote in something called Pitman shorthand, and the word there had stumped the person deciphering it two decades ago.

Friedland has called the system of scribbles and dots "impenetrable" to the uninitiated. But with the help of the library she was able to consult another Pitman transcriber who decoded the inscrutable word: Zahn.

The assembled puzzle pieces have yielded some unexpected insights, Friedland says—about the role of art books "to transmit ideas and values" across worlds; the impact of color lithography on painting and politics; and the reach of libraries.

"At the time," Friedland says, "the Library of Congress was housed *in* the U.S. Capitol, so these books were very accessible to Brumidi ... [and] only a major library would own them."

The findings also add fuel to the original idea of a young nation attempting to associate itself with a long, illustrious past and the power of mythic realms.

"They were serious about founding a new Rome on the Potomac," Friedland says. "Where this place is situated looks like the bend in the Tiber. We have a Tiber Creek here."

D.C.'s boundary stones recall ancient Rome, as well, she says.

"I like to refer to Meigs as the American Medici," says Cohen, the curator for the architect of the Capitol, during a visit inside S-127. "He wanted the new Capitol to be a palace, as well as a temple of democracy. He really

wanted to rival European palaces."

And the value placed on that can be seen in the payroll: By 1857, Brumidi was being paid \$10 per day, outearning \$8 for members of Congress and \$6 for Meigs, she says.

RESTORATIONS OF THE ROOM OVER THE YEARS HAD MUDDIED SOME OF THE COLORS,

perhaps to the point that its unique qualities eluded scholarly interest, and a 2003-2005 cleaning returned the colors to Brumidi's original scheme, particularly returning very green backgrounds to their blue origins.

"That often happens when you are dealing with historic spaces and art—that if you're not seeing the original intent, you could be misguided and not recognize how good something is," Cohen says. "I definitely think that contributed to the lack of research."

Friedland, whose findings were published this summer in the U.S. Capitol Historical Society's journal, *The Capitol Dome*, is already finding other layers of inquiry.

One of the more perplexing elements in the painted landscape are small heads that one could be forgiven for missing amid all of the other business of the design. Some have been described as "colonists," although Friedland prefers "sailors." But the baffling ones are of Native Americans. Looking at the latter, Friedland saw parallels to ancient depictions of Medusa, the mythological monster or Gorgon, who had live snakes for hair and who turned everyone who saw her to stone. (Perseus, who killed Medusa, had to look at her only through his shield to avoid petrification.)

Where the white, vibrant sailors are cast in flattering three-quarter view, the Native Americans are shown straight on; they look comparatively puffy to Friedland, "and they have weird stuff under their necks," she says. "That's how ancient people pictured Medusa, and she's a monster."

Friedland plans to research further the degree to which these particular heads were "othering" Native Americans. Just as Brumidi drew from the then fashionable designs of Pompeii at a time when the city was undergoing some of its most extensive excavations, his portrayal of indigenous Americans may also have been consistent with continuing conflicts between white and Native Americans, particularly as gold rushes and other opportunities brought white Americans further west.

"This room," she says, "could take a lifetime to do." 

At the Library of Congress, Friedland admires the table-sized folio of Wilhelm Zahn's work that she identified as Brumidi's inspiration for S-127.





Q&A

President LeBlanc Discusses Strategic Plan

This summer GW leadership announced the initial framework for a five-year strategic plan that will guide the university into its third century. President Thomas LeBlanc talked to GW Magazine about the planning process and how alumni can be involved.

Why is GW creating a new strategic plan now?

A strategic plan is critical for a preeminent university like GW. The world is constantly changing and by planning we are anticipating these changes. We are leading rather than responding. And we are determining together the focused ways GW will make a real difference over the next several years, both for our university community and for society broadly.

Conversations about the future are always important and exciting, but they are even more so for this plan because it's the one that will lead us into our bicentennial in 2021, shaping the university as we enter our third century.

What has GW done to prepare for the strategic plan?

We've spent the past two years listening and working on some near-term priorities. Thanks to the contributions of so many, we have a strong foundation from which to build a plan.

I have talked extensively with students, faculty and staff. And I hit the road to hear from alumni, families and friends—from Chicago to Atlanta to New York and London. I learned so much about how people think we should advance GW, and it was inspiring to see the enthusiasm for GW's future.

Together we affirmed a shared aspiration: preeminence as a comprehensive global research university. We also immediately got to work making improvements within

five strategic initiatives, which include the student experience, the research ecosystem, our philanthropy and constituent engagement, the medical enterprise and our institutional culture. We have made a lot of progress in each area, and anyone can go to strategicinitiatives.gwu.edu to see the ways we are responding to what we've heard.

As we continue this work, we're also thinking about the long-term success of GW, and I am encouraging our entire community to think creatively as we plan.

Is there a basic framework for the strategic plan?

Each conversation I had with a student, meeting with faculty or staff, or event with alumni helped me better understand what our community wants for GW. I can sum up the feedback in three words: Better, not bigger.

That motto is now guiding our planning process, which is focused on four pillars that drive excellence in higher education: world-class faculty, high-quality undergraduate education, distinguished and distinctive graduate education and high-impact research.

What specific goals are included in the plan so far?

There are two objectives that we believe are critical to moving the university toward preeminence.

The first is gradually reducing the on-campus undergraduate student population by 20 percent over five years.

Many in our community asked us to do more to support the student experience. By gradually decreasing the undergraduate body, we can provide more resources—more staff and academic support and improved

housing and community spaces across campus, for example.

The second objective is deepening our commitment to science, technology, engineering and mathematics by increasing the percentage of undergraduate students who complete a STEM major, from 19 percent to 30 percent.

I want to emphasize that this is an “and” not an “or” effort. We will continue to build our exceptional strengths in international affairs, political science, journalism, law, public policy and many other areas. STEM will only add to these disciplines, compounding the impact we have on an increasingly technological world. And it offers all of our students the ability to learn the skills necessary for analyzing data using technology. As they join the modern workforce, these skills will be indispensable regardless of their profession.

Ultimately, these are just two objectives in the plan. We still have a lot to figure out. That's what this year's planning process is for.

What does that process include?

In short, more discussions and idea generating among our community.


In October, we convened four committees of faculty, staff and students to examine each of the four pillars. The committees are coordinated by a university-wide task force, which includes Board of Trustees members and other GW constituency representatives such as Alumni Association President Richard Jones.

Between now and the spring, the committees are gathering input and developing recommendations. They will make draft recommendations to the board in February 2020, so that initial ideas can influence the budget process for fiscal 2021, and they will continue to refine their plans during the spring. The board will consider the final strategic plan in May.

How can alumni get involved?

We want to hear from as many alumni as possible. We will be sharing more information about events for alumni throughout the year, so stay tuned. I also will continue to travel to visit with alumni, and discussing our future will be the focus of our conversations.

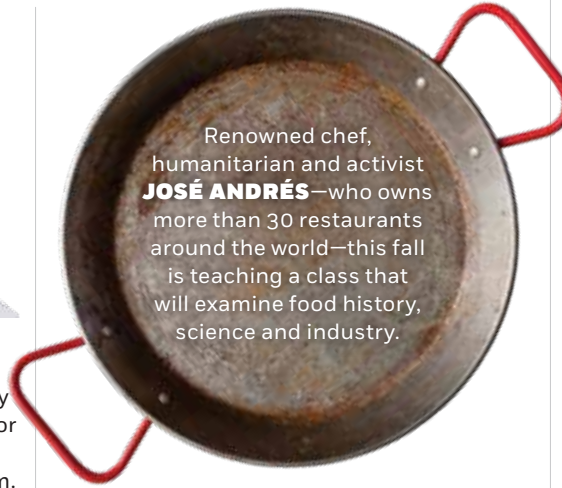
Alumni can learn more about the strategic planning process and submit comments, questions and ideas through the strategic plan website at strategicplan.gwu.edu. We are reading every suggestion.

I encourage everyone to get involved. This is a historic time for our university. We face a moment of choice, and we must choose to lead! 

Briefly...



Climate activist **GRETA THUNBERG** received Amnesty International's 2019 Ambassador of Conscience award in September at Lisner Auditorium. Thunberg, 16, is the 18th recipient of the award, which is Amnesty International's highest honor. Past awardees include Nelson Mandela and Colin Kaepernick.



Renowned chef, humanitarian and activist **JOSÉ ANDRÉS**—who owns more than 30 restaurants around the world—this fall is teaching a class that will examine food history, science and industry.



GW Dean of the Student Experience **M.L. "CISSY" PETTY** will become vice president of student affairs and dean of students and will report to GW President Thomas LeBlanc and serve as a member of the university's leadership team.



Rapper **KANYE WEST** made a surprise appearance at Lisner Auditorium in October in front of nearly 1,500 people to host a listening party for his new album, *Jesus Is King*, and hold an advance screening for the album's corresponding IMAX movie.

\$22 MILLION

The amount for which the National Institutes of Health renewed, for the next five years, the AIDS and Cancer Specimen Resource. The **GW SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND HEALTH SCIENCES** serves as the primary site.



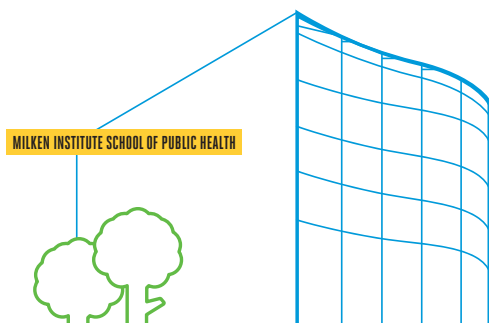
BARBARA LEE BASS, RES '86, has been named vice president for health affairs and dean of the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and will assume the role in January. The first woman to lead SMHS, Bass currently is chair of the Department of Surgery at Houston Methodist Hospital in Texas.



JOHN LACH, a former professor of electrical and computer engineering at the University of Virginia, was named dean of the GW School of Engineering and Applied Science.

\$7.8 MILLION

The amount the **NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH** awarded a GW research team to establish a rare disease network for myasthenia gravis, a chronic autoimmune disease.



MILKEN INSTITUTE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH



THUNBERG: RON ADAR/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO / PAN: ISTOCK.COM/FLOORTJE / PETTY: WILLIAM ATKINS / WEST: ZUMA PRESS, INC./ALAMY STOCK PHOTO / LACH: HARRISON JONES / SEHJ: WILLIAM ATKINS / BASS: COURTESY PHOTO

Calendar

DECEMBER 1

JACKSONVILLE, FLA.

Jacksonville Jaguars tailgate and watch party to cheer on the home-team Jaguars as they play the Tampa Bay Buccaneers. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

DECEMBER 4

ATLANTA

Gather for a pregame networking reception and then watch the Atlanta Hawks play the Brooklyn Nets. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

DECEMBER 5

SEATTLE

Annual Seattle Alumni Holiday Party, held at the Iconic Rainier Club, with hors d'oeuvres, drinks and holiday cheer (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

DECEMBER 6

NEW YORK

Connect with fellow alumni in finance in New York over a breakfast discussion focused on Venture Capital, moderated by Rodney Lake, director of GW's Investment Institute. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

DECEMBER 7

MIAMI

Annual brunch at Art Basel Miami Beach featuring remarks from GW leadership (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

DECEMBER 11

ONLINE

Connect with fellow GW alumni all over the world around our eight Alumni Industry Networks to share your experiences, exchange career tips and build your professional network. It's free, it's only an hour, and it's fun! (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

JANUARY 8

LOS ANGELES

Join fellow alumni and current GW students for an evening of professional networking in Los Angeles and to learn more about the Alumni Industry Networks. Hear from the students participating in Career Quest (a program for GW students to gain experience with leading organizations in major cities) and meet with staff from the Center for Career Services and the Office of Alumni Relations. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

JANUARY 8

ATLANTA

Join fellow alumni and current GW students for an evening of professional networking in Atlanta and to learn more about the Alumni Industry Networks. Hear from the students participating in Career Quest (a program for GW students to gain experience with leading organizations in major cities) and meet with staff from the Center for Career Services and the Office of Alumni Relations. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

JANUARY 23

ONLINE

Participate in the next GWebinar: "Solving Career Burnout, How to Get Reinspired," led by certified career coach, speaker, and author Hallie Crawford. There is no cost to attend, and alumni will have the chance to engage with Crawford and participate in a Q&A. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

FEBRUARY 1

RICHMOND, VA.

A pregame tailgate and a chance to cheer on the GW men's basketball team as they take on Atlantic 10 rival Richmond (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

FEBRUARY 7

CHARLOTTE

An opportunity to network with alumni and watch the Charlotte Checkers take on the Hartford Wolf Pack in American Hockey League action from an on-the-ice suite. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

FEBRUARY 26

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Join alumni for the career programs workshop, "Developing a Coaching Culture in Your Organization and Beyond," led by Ina Gjikondi, MPS '09, MA '15, director of executive education and coaching at GW's Center for Excellence in Public Leadership. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)

MARCH 24

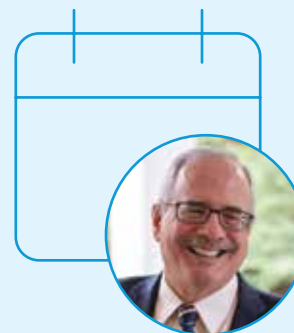
CHICAGO

Connect with fellow GW alumni in health care and hospital administration over dinner during the annual ACHE 2020 Congress on Healthcare Leadership. To register, visit go.gwu.edu/ache2020.

MARCH 28

PITTSBURGH

An evening at the Pittsburgh Opera at the Benedum Center to see *Carmen*, with a networking reception in the New Guard Lounge prior to the show. (alumni.gwu.edu/events)



CONNECT WITH PRESIDENT LEBLANC

Join GW President Thomas J. LeBlanc in 2020 as he visits cities around the country! Hear his university updates, share your feedback and network with GW alumni and families. For more details, visit: alumni.gwu.edu/PresidentLeBlanc.

JANUARY 14

Philadelphia

JANUARY 28

Los Angeles

JANUARY 30

San Francisco

FEBRUARY

Tampa, Fla. (details to come)

FEBRUARY

Miami (details to come)

MARCH 3

Northern Virginia

APRIL 14

Richmond, Va.

APRIL 29

New York

JUNE 9

Boston

JUNE 11

Washington, D.C.

JULY

Seattle (details to come)

JULY

Denver (details to come)

SPEAKERS

The Women Who Inspired Hillary and Chelsea Clinton

The former secretary of state and her daughter spoke at the second installment of the GW Presidential Distinguished Event Series.

By Ruth Steinhardt

F

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said “impeachment is the appropriate remedy” for President Donald Trump’s call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky seeking an investigation into the family of presidential candidate Joe Biden.

“When you have a president calling on foreign adversaries for assistance in his political campaigns, which he did in 2016 and which he is doing again,” Clinton said,

“that goes right to the heart of our sovereignty of a nation, to our national security, in a way that is almost unimaginable.”

Clinton visited Lisner Auditorium in October with her daughter, Chelsea Clinton, to discuss their co-authored *The Book of Gutsy Women: Favorite Stories of Courage and Resilience*. The Clintons’ visit, co-hosted by Politics and Prose, was the second in the GW Presidential Distinguished Event Series, which last year hosted historian Ron Chernow.

In introducing the two women, GW President Thomas LeBlanc said that the university “is fortunate to have benefitted from the Clinton family’s inspiring contributions to GW’s educational and research mission, especially through the Rodham Institute. We remain grateful for this partnership and for the impact the Rodham Institute has had on communities near and far.”

(The Rodham Institute, established at GW in 2013 and named for Hillary Clinton’s mother, Dorothy Rodham, seeks to increase the number of under-represented minorities in health care professions.)

Much of the conversation before the sold-out crowd—many of whom lined up hours early for premium seats—was affectionate and familiar, centered on the Clintons’ relationships with each other and with the women about whom they wrote.

The duo chose a selection of inspiring women from throughout history and around the world, ranging from civil rights activist Claudette Colvin to Sesame Street creator Joan Ganz Cooney and including groups like the largely female workforce of vaccinators.

It was important to both mother and daughter to tell women’s stories without idealizing them.

“We wanted them to be seen as whole people,” Hillary Clinton said. “They’re not perfect, they’re not up on a mountain somewhere. They worked hard, and they overcame obstacles ... and it wasn’t easy.”

The Clintons said collaborating had taught them the difference their generations made in their

conceptualization of female heroes. Most of the women who inspired Hillary Clinton as a child were distant figures from history books or the pages of *Life* magazine, or fictional ones like girl detective Nancy Drew.

“The only women she knew who worked outside home were schoolteachers and public librarians,” Chelsea Clinton said of her mother. In contrast, she said, her own childhood in the 1980s and ’90s was full of adult women who were doctors, lawyers, artists and activists.

The generational difference revealed itself in other ways, too. Chelsea Clinton revealed that her mother still writes and edits her books by hand—driving her more tech-savvy daughter a little crazy.

“I thought surely she would have to understand why track changes are important,” the younger Clinton said. “She does know how to use a computer.”

“In my defense,” the elder Clinton retorted, “you know who else writes his books longhand? Barack Obama.”

Moderator Lissa Muscatine, co-owner of Politics and Prose and a former speechwriter for Clinton, allowed a final question to address “the 800-pound gorilla in the room”: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi’s impeachment inquiry into President Trump.

Clinton said she supported the investigation and that she was heartened to see public support for impeachment.

“The issue that started with his call to the Ukrainian president has broken through in a way that many of his other actions have not, in terms of the threat they pose to our democracy and our Constitution,” she said.

She herself was on the impeachment staff investigating Richard Nixon, which she called “a solemn and serious deliberative effort.”

“I am in favor of what the House is doing—gathering the evidence and making the case—because this president has to be held to account,” Clinton said, “because of his unconstitutional abuse of power, his contempt of Congress and his obstruction of justice.”

The standing ovation that followed lasted about half a minute. EW

Chelsea and Hillary Clinton speaking in Lisner Auditorium in October



From Plays To Teleplays

Madeline Hendricks, BA '13, has been a writer on two TV shows: *Jane the Virgin* and *Good Trouble*. But she still thinks back to when she was 17 and had one of her plays performed by professional actors on Broadway.

By Matthew Stoss

W

When she was 17 years old, Madeline Hendricks, BA '13, won a playwriting contest. For her prize, she got to have her 10-minute, one-act play, *Driver's Education*, produced and performed by professionals at the Imperial Theatre on Broadway. She met Elton John—that picture remains easily found on the internet—and Queen Latifah, rode in a limousine from her hometown of Larchmont, N.Y., and spent that one New York City night rivaled by only sliced bread.

Ten years later, Hendricks is a television writer, notably working her way up from underling to associate producer to writer, to story editor on the highly regarded CW show and telenovela satire *Jane the Virgin*. By the end of the *Jane*'s five-season, 100-episode run in July, Hendricks had bylines on 37 shows, writing her first episode in season two. Now she writes for *Good Trouble* on the Freeform channel—it's about two young women navigating life in Los Angeles—while mulling pilots of her own for a distant day.

It's a good life that occasionally includes shopping for plants and hiking in canyons. She's worked hard—so hard that she

had to make a pact with her boyfriend that she wouldn't work Saturdays—and taken the risks obligated by dream-chasing, all in part kicked off by an Iowan aunt who had one degree of separation between herself and *Jane the Virgin* showrunner Jennie Snyder Urman.

And yet, there's something about that one June 2009 night at the Imperial Theatre...

"I still have a visceral reaction when I remember standing in the back of the theater and watching people laugh at jokes that I wrote, that are being performed on stage," says Hendricks by iPhone 7 from Los Angeles while commuting in her Ford Fusion Hybrid one weekday September morning. "There's just no better feeling in the world."

Hendricks, then-freshly graduated from high school, had won the Fidelity FutureStage Playwriting Contest. Honorarily chaired by Elton John, founded in 2006 and now defunct, the contest encouraged students in the theater arts. Queen Latifah emceed that night at the Imperial Theatre, which opened in 1924 and through its existence has showcased the work of Irving Berlin, Bob Fosse, Frank Loesser and Cole Porter. As of June 2009, the theater served as home stage to *Billy Elliot the Musical*. Eight days before Hendricks's play, *Billy Elliot* won 10 of the 15 Tony Awards for which it was nominated.

"It was like all of sudden, all of my dreams were coming true," says Hendricks, who also met *Billy Elliot* director Stephen Daldry. "I was going in and out of Manhattan and I was about to go off to college, and it was amazing. Then, honestly, it was all kind of downhill after that for a while because when you get to sit in this beautiful Broadway theater and watch your play go up with these incredible actors, and everyone's clapping and you're watching your work and then all of a sudden you have to go be a college student.

"... Even though I've had all these incredible experiences in L.A., I had these really insane moments when I was 17. I wonder if it's the way child actors feel, a little bit, where you get these sparks when you're young and then you're chasing those sparks for a while after that."

Hendricks moved to Los Angeles when she was 21, driving across the country with her dad five days after graduating from GW. She says she didn't know anyone and that her first L.A. job was begging to get coffee with any showbiz sort magnanimous enough to grant her an audience. Urman was one of those sorts. They met for breakfast somewhere in Sherman Oaks. Hendricks's Aunt Pam in Fairfield, Iowa, brokered the introduction. She's friends with one of Urman's Iowan relatives.

"I was like, 'I'll babysit your kids,'" Hendricks says. "I'll do anything, basically."

Babysitting wasn't necessary. Urman, apparently moved by Hendricks's passion, acumen and résumé—at GW, Hendricks was involved in more than 20 plays, including about eight her freshman year—helped Hendricks get a writer's production assistant job on the TV show *Reign*, a CW series about a young Mary, Queen of Scots.

A year later, Urman hired Hendricks for to be her assistant on *Jane the Virgin* and then went about developing into a writer the then-22-year-old New Yorker who came to L.A. preferring to be on screen than behind it. Hendricks, an inveterate "theater dork" since age 7 and who starred often in high school and college plays and musicals, wrote her first *Jane* episode during season two—in it, Jane considers sleeping with her college professor—and joined the writers room full time by 2017. She was the youngest by half a decade of the dozen or so staffers.

"It happened relatively fast, considering what most people have to go through to get staffed," Hendricks says. "Again,

Madeline Hendricks, BA '13





that's because Jennie is the kind of person who promotes her assistants and takes mentorship seriously.

"I knew that and I knew that she meant it when I got that first episode. I was like, 'OK, this is a place I can grow.' I have a lot of friends who work on other shows and then they leave because they know that there's no room for growth. A lot of showrunners don't promote their assistants. They'll work there for a year or two or three or four, and they're like, 'OK, this isn't going anywhere.'"

Hendricks describes her experience on *Jane the Virgin* as going to graduate school. She learned TV-writing fundamentals, the relevancy of some diminished by the streaming model—like cliffhangers before ad breaks. She had what she describes as an unusually positive experience in that *Jane* had a lot of staff continuity, which is something Hendricks ascribes to Urman's organization and creative single-mindedness.

"I've had an incredible journey so far," Hendricks says.

"I worked really hard and I think that some maturity comes from being in my 20s and kind of jumping immediately after school into this crazy industry. I basically haven't taken a break since. Part of what was so special about working on *Jane* was that when I started there, I was a 23-year-old woman who dreamed of becoming a writer. And I was working on a show about a 23-year-old woman who dreamed of becoming a writer. I was able to really plug in and make *Jane's* story personal to me."


To sate her inner playwright, Hendricks and a fellow writer friend in 2017 started See What Sticks, a Los Angeles-based monthly workshop that offers artists of all kinds a venue to present their work in a black box theater.

Hendricks wrote and directed a one-act play in March—that June 2009 night at the Imperial Theatre still tickling a romanticized place in her heart, even after three TV shows and two full-time TV writing jobs and nursing not-improbable TV show-creating and movie-writing aspirations.


***Jane the Virgin* ran for five seasons and 100 episodes from 2014 to 2019 on the CW. Madeline Hendricks was a writer on the show for its final two seasons.**

"It's me watching my work go up in front of a bunch of people and having people laugh and cry and understand what I was going for," Hendricks says. "That is the feeling. And in terms of if I felt it—it's tricky because it's very specific to theater.

"When I did the play in March in L.A., I didn't completely have that feeling. My actors were really brilliant, I'm proud of the play, but I'm much more critical of myself now than I was when I was 17, and I know so much more that the whole time I'm just thinking, Oh I wish I had this lighting effect or I wish I had changed the set or I wish I did a different costume or I wish I wrote a different line.

"... But in terms of: Have I gotten that feeling lately? I certainly got it the first time my episode aired, season two of *Jane*, and I saw my name on TV. That was pretty incredible. I got it the first time I punched up a joke and it made it on the air. These little moments—they're thrilling. But, yeah, I think in some ways, it's harder to get that thrill the older you get because you are harder on yourself. So it's kind of easy when you're 17 and you've never written a play before and the first one you write goes on Broadway. It's like, 'This is great, this is awesome,' and now it's more like, 'This is my career and I need to pay rent.' So maybe I will never quite get that exact feeling again because maybe that was just part of being that age and having your whole life ahead of you." 

TECHNOLOGY

A Guide to Indigenous D.C.

The AT&T Center for Indigenous Politics and Policy released an app highlighting Washington-area sites of Native American importance.

By Tatyana Hopkins

A

A new tool will help Washington, D.C., visitors discover the historic and contemporary landmarks of those who inhabited the city's land before its development as the nation's capital.

"Guide to Indigenous D.C." is a free mobile app developed by GW's AT&T Center for Indigenous Politics and Policy in collaboration with the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association.

The project, funded by the American Indian College Fund, Native Americans in Philanthropy and the Minneapolis Foundation, includes a walking tour map, directions and guide that highlight the contributions of Native Americans to the city.

"D.C. was built on Indian land and indigenous homeland," says Elizabeth Rule, a member of the Chickasaw Nation and assistant director of AT&T CIPP, "and there is a very strong history and ongoing contemporary indigenous presence in this city."

The app, which is available for free download for iOS devices, features a map of 17 locations, including learning institutions

and sites of important events.

"Some sites are very visible and very prominent, such as the National Museum of the American Indian," Rule says. "But as I talked to people as I was building the list of sites to be included, it kept growing."

One lesser known site is the Dumbarton Bridge, also known as the Q Street and Buffalo Bridge, which connects Q Street Northwest across Rock Creek Park.

Along with a buffalo theme, the bridge's arches feature 56 identical busts of Sioux Chief Kicking Bear, an organizer, warrior and religious leader, who was one of three delegates to take grievances to the Bureau of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., about local law enforcement's interference with Lakota trade practices in 1896.

"That is something just walking by the bridge that you

wouldn't notice," Rule says. "But he was a champion for his people."

Other destinations include the Embassy of Tribal Nations, Liberty and Freedom Lummi Totem Poles at the Congressional Cemetery, and the site of the Cowboy and Indian Alliance camp, which was erected in front of the U.S. Capitol during the 2014 protests of the Keystone XL oil pipeline. Rule developed the app's list of designations by consulting scholars, local tribal members and historians, including George Mason University professor C. Joseph Genetin-Pilawa and Smithsonian historian Gabrielle Tayac.

GW plans to use the app as a teaching tool for its Native American Political Leadership and Inspire Pre-College programs, which provide scholarships to American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students to study public policy and politics at GW.

"We wanted to develop this app for Native youth to make sure that they feel empowered by the things that have happened here," AT&T CIPP Director Wendy Helgemo says, "and by being here learning about how Native policy is made and how decisions that are being made every day in Washington, D.C., can affect their daily lives in their communities."

Helgemo says making a historical connection to the program's policy training is important in light of a recent study that revealed that 62 percent of Americans outside of Indian country reported being unacquainted with Native Americans.

"Anywhere you go in the United States, you're on indigenous land," she says. "As an indigenous center housed at GW, it's part of our responsibility to tell these stories and to acknowledge the people whose lands we are on and those who have come before us." **GW**



The app





ADMINISTRATION

Drexel's Provost Named to Same Role at GW

M. Brian Blake, an electrical and software engineer, has 20 years of academic experience and has worked for, notably, General Electric and Lockheed Martin.

Drexel University's **M. Brian Blake** has been named GW's new provost and executive vice president for academic affairs. Blake—who over 20 years has held faculty, dean and vice provost roles during stops at Georgetown University, the University of Notre Dame and the University of Miami—has served as Drexel's provost since 2015.

At GW, Blake replaces Forrest Maltzman, who announced in April that he would step down to return to the Department of Political Science after taking a sabbatical. Blake started at GW in November.

He received a PhD in information and software engineering from George Mason University, an MS in electrical engineering from Mercer University and BEE from Georgia Tech.

The provost is the chief academic officer of the university and oversees all academic endeavors across GW's 10 schools and colleges. GW's Office of the Provost includes offices for academic and faculty affairs; research; libraries; enrollment; and diversity, equity and community engagement.

An 18-member search committee selected Blake. It included 14 faculty members representing all of GW's schools and a range of disciplines, two trustees, a student leader and an administrator, and was assisted by the national executive placement firm AGB Search.

"Dr. Blake's career is defined by transformative academic leadership—for undergraduate

and graduate students and for faculty and researchers across all disciplines," GW President Thomas LeBlanc says.

An electrical and software engineer by training, Blake at Drexel, a private research university in Philadelphia, led all academic programs across 14 schools and colleges. Under Blake, Drexel enrolled its largest, most academically talented freshman class, oversaw the university's highest retention rate and the highest overall research activity in history. This led to the university's first "very high research activity" designation by the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education.

Outside academia, Blake spent six years working as a software architect, technical lead and expert developer with General Electric, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics and the MITRE Corporation. He continues to consult on information technology and software engineering for the Federal Aviation Administration, the Department of Justice, the Department of Defense and several legal firms. ☐

GW'S BICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
COMING SOON
2021

SPORTS

Cutting on the Bias

New men's basketball coach Jamion Christian, who twice led Mount St. Mary's to the NCAA Tournament, wants to question what he thinks he knows.

By Matthew Stoss

Jamion Christian runs a preseason practice in September.



N

New GW men's basketball coach Jamion Christian started his coaching career as an assistant at Emory & Henry, a 1,200-student Division III school in the 1,200-human Virginia town of Emory that, from Washington, D.C., waits quaintly at the end of a five-and-half-hour pastoral schlep south down Interstate 81. The exit, No. 26, is distinguished by a barn, congregating livestock and the phantoms of moonshiners gone by.

D-III recruiting, compared to D-I and D-II, is different. It's the lowest of the NCAA's three classifications and the only one at which athletic scholarships are verboten. Recruiting is done by volume. So during two seasons at E&H, necessity became Christian's muse.

In what has become his typical fastidious way, the then-recent college grad started developing a talent-assessment system designed to eliminate a coach's bias and focus on a player's particular, perhaps overlooked, strengths.

"I measure a guy by what he can do, not by what he can't do," says the now-37-year-old Christian. "And I think the world and a lot of people measure what a guy can't do, and at the end of the day, you're only going to win with the 'cans.'"

Christian spent last season at Siena in Loudonville, N.Y., and the four before that in Emmitsburg, Md., at his alma mater, Mount St. Mary's. There, he played basketball (shooting guard) and baseball

(shortstop), and contributed a short story to the student literary magazine. He graduated in 2004 with a communications degree.

"If a guy can only make shots from one spot on the floor," Christian continues, "my job is to get him to that one spot on the floor. It's not to complain and be upset that he can't make them from the other five spots, right? I've just got to get him to the one spot on the floor and allow him to be the very best. I really view it like a puzzle."

In his only year at Siena, the New Kent, Va., native maestro'd a nine-win improvement. At Mount St. Mary's, Christian went 101-95, won two Northeast Conference titles and made two NCAA tournament appearances, following assistant stints at, first, Emory & Henry, then D-I Bucknell, William & Mary and Virginia Commonwealth.

At VCU, Christian served under now Texas coach Shaka Smart, the innovator of "Havoc," a high-tempo defense-centric system predicated on pressing, turnovers and the forced bewilderment of opponents. Christian runs his own version of Havoc, modified for 3-point fecundity. He dubbed it "Mayhem."

"He's got a great sense of spacing on the floor and angles," says Smart, who hired Christian in 2012 and empowered him to oversee the Rams' offense. "I think every coach adapts to what he's got. I think, given the personnel, he likes to shoot 3s, like to play fast, likes to press, likes to run."

The aforementioned fastidiousness applies most intricately to the players.

At Emory & Henry, Christian was at first just trying to keep track of all the high school players he scouted, and then it all got inevitably more sophisticated.

"We just have these biases that are built into our minds about what we think basketball is supposed to look like," Christian

says, “and I didn’t want to be that way. I wanted to be able to look and find out who the very best player was and who had the best upside instead of making a mistake because a guy looks a certain way.”

Seventeen years later, Christian’s unnamed system looks like this. He has every position mapped. He knows how tall he wants each guy to be. He knows how fast they need to be. He knows what kind of reach he wants them to have—overall, he wants his guards taller and longer and his post players as big as nature allows and with the ability to pass—and he wants to know, as precisely as possible, the elemental things.

“What is fast?” Christian says. “Some people just say he’s fast—it’s a 5 [rating out of 5]. But we want to know where he’s at in that. Does he beat his man every time down the floor? Does he beat his man occasionally? Does his man always beat him down the floor? I think those three rankings are important to understand. Because now, if I evaluate him for that one game, and then maybe he’s fast this one game, and the next game he’s not as fast, then I can rate it that way.

“Overall, if I rate it as honestly as possible, I can create this picture for myself: All right, he’s just faster than most guys, or when he’s really locked in, he runs faster than them or he’s not that fast at all.”

In September, after a morning of on-campus recruit-wooing, Christian’s lounged the length of his 6-foot-2-ness over a mid-century-looking chair in his office across the street from the Smith Center, where the Colonials opened the season with a Nov. 1 exhibition game against D-III Hood College.

Christian has talked this afternoon about admiring and wanting to learn from storytellers (especially stand-up comics), how he wants to coach from a place of empathy, and how he’s the son of high school

teachers. He says childhood dinner table conversation often veered toward the philosophical, which, anecdotally, might explain the grownup Christian’s aversion to confirmation bias and recruiting off the eye test.

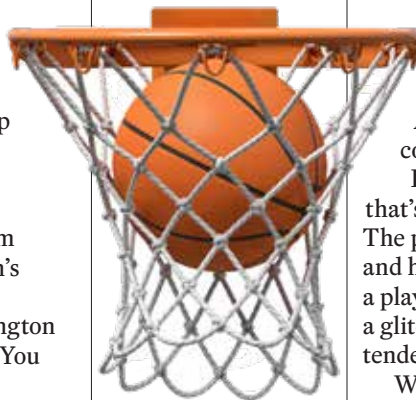
“I think it’s coming from a small town,” says Jamion’s brother, Jarell, four years younger and now a Washington Wizards assistant coach. “You are always fighting those biases—the competition’s not that great, or he’s doing that but it’s against a smaller class size or whatever it may be. Probably for [Jamion], it’s trying to find different ways to show that it doesn’t matter who the competition is.

“... That’s kind of been him. For as long as I can remember, he’s always wanted to take the analytic-type approach. He doesn’t just want to see something and go with it. He wants to do his homework, do his research.”

After Emory & Henry, Christian jumped to Division I, moving to Bucknell, then William & Mary, which has never made the NCAA Tournament in the 83-year history of its basketball program. The Tribe came close in 2015 but lost in the conference tournament title game.

That team, by the Tribe’s historically meager standards, was loaded. It featured Marcus Thornton, who the Boston Celtics took in the second round of the 2015 NBA draft, making Thornton the Tribe’s first NBA pick. It was Christian who lured Thornton to William & Mary, using his data-based evaluation system to ID an undervalued high school player. Then Christian courted him early and always.

“It’s about creating a niche and finding a way to overcome that childhood dream of a player,” says Smart, referring to some kids’ fantasy of playing for the college hoops gentry—at schools like Duke or North Carolina. “And that’s very, very



JAMION CHRISTIAN'S COACHING RECORD



2012-13
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
18-14

2013-14
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
16-17 (NCAA)

2014-15
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
15-15

2015-16
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
14-19

2016-17
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
20-16 (NCAA)

2017-18
MOUNT ST. MARY'S
18-14

2018-19
SIENA
17-16

doable. It’s something Jamion’s done in the past. I mean, he recruited Marcus Thornton to William & Mary, and Marcus Thornton, in retrospect, could have played anywhere in the ACC, the Big East, any school in the country.”

Basketball, Christian says in a statement that’s not as obvious as it seems, is a game. The players are humans—young humans—and have lives, the events of which can affect a player’s performance as much as (or more) a glitch in their jump shot mechanics or a tender knee ligament.

When Christian took over GW’s program in March, he instituted book clubs. The players read motivational books and then discuss them chapter by chapter. For one September Sunday morning convening, they parsed a chapter about trust.

“Basically,” says junior guard Justin Mazzulla, “guys got vulnerable—and that’s how you get to know someone truthfully is when they’re vulnerable. You know the truth about someone. A lot of the guys opened up about their lives. Coaches and the guys said stuff about their lives that was very hard for them, growing up. I saw the impact the next day. It gives you a sense of togetherness in that someone is actually listening to you, because everyone in that locker room listened to that story and saw how that impacted you and now you tend to understand how guys are affected, why they act the way they act. It opens your eyes so much more when you look at that person.”

Christian says that eliminating a coach’s bias is about more than the ratings on the specially designed forms he and his staff use to make notes when scouting. There’s something warm and personal beneath the ostensibly cold method. Excising bias isn’t just measuring size, speed and skill. It’s about humans, their identities, their individualism and their emotions.

“I would say you coach either how you wanted to be coached or how you were coached,” Christian says. “I coach how I wanted to be coached. I wanted to be in a positive environment every single day where I felt like the mistakes of yesterday didn’t linger today.

“I wanted to be in an environment where my teammates and myself were pushing ourselves in the right direction and really sharpening our swords every day. Those are the kinds of environments I wanted to be in. I want to be in the kind of environment where I could go for a risk and still be able to bounce back and be safe and secure.”

POLITICS

At Your Service

Emily Cherniack, BA '00, MA '06, founded an organization to recruit military vets as well as alumni of groups such as the Peace Corps and Americorps to run for public office. Among her clients? Former 2020 Democratic presidential nomination hopeful Seth Moulton.

By Tom Kertscher



JASON GROW

Emily Cherniack, BA '00, MA '06, was an unlikely candidate to start a political organization.

When she arrived in the political capital of the world from Minnesota in 1996 to study at GW, she was uninitiated. She didn't identify with a party, burn for an issue or know much about candidates. She simply liked volunteering with young people.

"I didn't even, like, vote," she says.

Helping a mentor twice run for the U.S. Senate convinced her to change her mind.

In 2013, Cherniack founded—and now runs as executive director—New Politics, which recruits and supports military veterans and alumni of national service programs such as the Peace Corps and AmeriCorps to run for public office. The nonpartisan group has offices in Boston, where Cherniack lives, and in Washington, D.C.

"I was around a lot of military and national service alums, and they were just amazing leaders," says Cherniack, who worked for two years at City Year, a Boston nonprofit where AmeriCorps members teach and mentor students. "And my experience in service, you're taught how to problem solve and work with people that are different from you and have different ideologies, and you're taught how to bring people together. It's larger than yourself."

New Politics has helped several candidates win seats in the U.S. House of Representatives: Democrat Jason Crow, an Army veteran from Colorado; Republican Mike Gallagher, a Marine vet from Wisconsin; Democrat Jared Golden, a Marine veteran from Maine; Democrat Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania, who served in the Air Force and in Teach for America; Democrat Elaine Luria, a Navy vet from Virginia; and former CIA official Abigail Spanberger, a Democrat who in 2018 flipped Virginia's

historically red 7th District. It had been held by a Republican for 48 years and was formerly represented by Eric Cantor, BA '85, who served as House majority leader from 2011 to 2014.

New Politics, which also works with state and local politicians, helped Massachusetts Congressman Seth Moulton get elected. Moulton briefly ran to be the 2020 Democratic presidential nominee.

"Look at all of the New Politics leaders, not just in Congress today, but running across the country and serving in many different capacities both in and out of elected office," Moulton says. "With more service-driven leaders being recruited and coming up through the ranks, the numbers will only increase. This isn't just about winning elections; it's about rethinking how we view politics. I can confidently say I wouldn't be a member of Congress without her help."

Cherniack's mentor at City Year was Alan Khazei, who co-founded the organization. Cherniack got into politics when Khazei decided to run for the Massachusetts Senate seat left vacant after Edward Kennedy's death.

Khazei tapped Cherniack as deputy finance director for his campaign in 2010 and as his deputy campaign manager in 2012. That year, Khazei dropped out after Elizabeth Warren, who won the race, announced her candidacy. In 2010, he lost to Martha Coakley in a four-way Democratic primary.

"[Cherniack] is a consummate servant leader, always focused on the mission and team first, and never putting herself as the top priority," Khazei says. "She is also an outstanding grassroots organizer, has both great IQ and [emotional quotient], and is an excellent judge of people."

After Khazei's campaigns, Cherniack decided—at Khazei's



NEW POLITICS U.S. REPRESENTATIVES

JASON CROW,
D-Colo.

**MIKE
GALLAGHER,**
R-Wisc.

JARED GOLDEN,
D-Maine

**CHRISSY
HOULAHAN,**
D-Pa.

ELAINE LURIA,
D-Va.

SETH MOULTON,
D-Mass.

MAX ROSE,
D-N.Y.

**MIKIE
SHERRILL,**
D-N.J.

**ELISSA
SLOTKIN,**
D-Mich.

**ABIGAIL
SPANBERGER,**
D-Va.

urging—to form an organization that would help service-oriented people run for office.

"My first experience in politics," Cherniack says, "was really because I believed in my boss and thought he was a good person to be in politics because he had gotten things done."

Cherniack says she "beta tested" her idea for two years before approaching political rookie Moulton in June 2012 to run against U.S. Rep. John Tierney, D-Mass., an 18-year incumbent. Khazei had convened the initial meetings about forming New Politics, and former presidential adviser David Gergen, one of the attendees, suggested Moulton as a candidate. Moulton defeated Tierney in the 2014 primary election, then easily won the general election.

The victories brought interest from donors to the point that New Politics now has a \$2.2 million budget.

"I was mission-driven and wanted to make the country better," says Cherniack, who in 2018 made *Politico* magazine's annual list of top 50 politicians "for putting service back in government service." The list also included Donald Trump, late-night host Jimmy Kimmel and U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y. "No one else was recruiting service candidates to run, so that was the opportunity I saw to step up and help."

Cherniack's organization advises candidates on building a campaign infrastructure, consults on how to hire staff and formulate messages. Notably, it ran the 2016 get-out-the-vote effort for Gallagher, a Republican, and raised more than \$60,000 for his campaign, which took in a total of \$2.76 million.

Unusual in this age of extreme political polarization is that New Politics is bipartisan. The vast majority of candidate-recruiting groups focus on ideology and party, and those that focus on veterans don't recruit service corps members.

According to the Pew Research Center, only 18 percent of U.S. House members and 19 percent of U.S. senators have prior military experience. The rates were four times higher four decades ago, before abolition of the draft in 1973.

"Because they've learned those skills early on in their life, between 18 and 25 years old," Cherniack says of vets and former public servants, "they carry that with them, and that's how they frame. They're framing about country first and community first."

"... We think that will fundamentally change how people work together." ☐

George Welcomes

Headliners at University Events

“The worst evil that science has not been able to find a cure for in human beings is apathy. We all have to become organizers.”

Dolores Huerta, legendary activist and co-founder of the United Farm Workers, at Lisner Auditorium in September urging GW students to continue advocating for those without a voice



“This is becoming dangerous. We have to understand the experiment of democracy can fail if we don’t think it is valuable and precious, and defend it.”

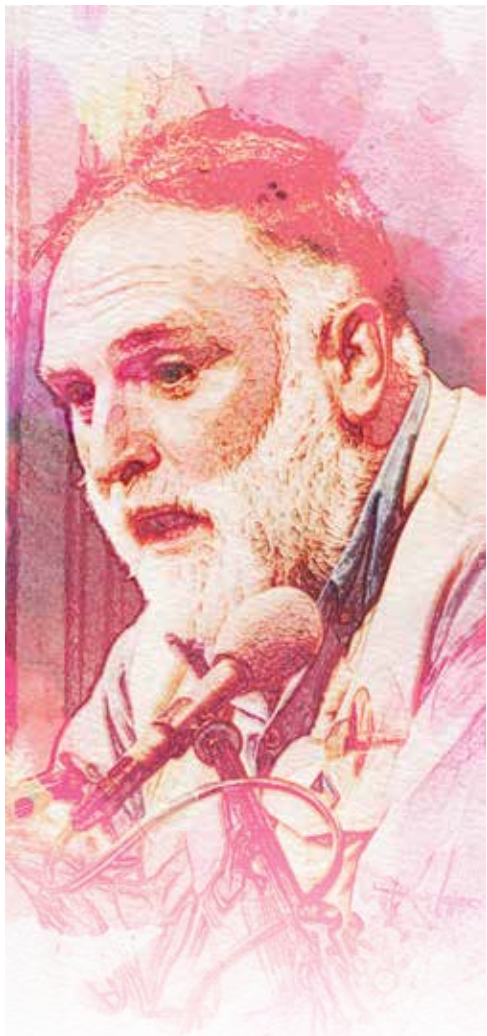
Former Secretary of Defense James Mattis speaking on the current tribal and political divisions in America in a conversation with *New York Times* columnist David Brooks. The September event, which highlighted the retired four-star general’s new book *Call Sign Chaos*, was co-sponsored by Washington, D.C.’s Politics and Prose bookstore.

“It’s a sad time in our culture where we are just out to get each other. There’s plenty we disagree on. I attack the heck out of ideas. I don’t back down from the fight at all, but cheap shots have got to stop.”

U.S. Rep. Dan Crenshaw, R-Texas, calling for civility on Capitol Hill. The Navy Seal veteran headlined the GW College Republicans’ fall kick-off event in September at the Dorothy Betts Theater in the Marvin Center.



DIGITAL ILLUSTRATIONS BASED ON PHOTOGRAPHS PROVIDED BY: HUERTA, CRENSHAW, MATTIS; HARRISON JONES



Ilhan Omar and Michael Moore spoke at Jack Morton Auditorium in October as part of a live recording of *The Intercept's* "Deconstructed" podcast, hosted by Mehdi Hasan.

"When they describe me as a terrorist, every single Somali girl or Muslim girl that's walking down the street that resembles me, her life is also in danger. What I am afraid of is what the messages they are putting out there could mean for every young girl who looks like me."

U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar (D-Minn.) on tech companies like Facebook not doing enough to crack down on hateful language



"If we really understand what's on our plate, we really understand what's going on in our country and our planet."

Chef and humanitarian José Andrés on the importance of knowing where ingredients come from, the experiences of people who brought it to the table and how those experiences are affected by business, environmental and other concerns. Andrés spoke at Lisner Auditorium in September on how food and immigration intertwine in the United States.

"We may be running a contest against Mitt Romney. [Michael] Bloomberg may decide to go back to being a Republican. This could go any number of ways."

Filmmaker Michael Moore on the uncertainty surrounding the Republican 2020 presidential ticket.



INTRODUCTION



Mourning in America

This chapter title is a deliberate play on Ronald Reagan's famous "Morning in America" speech. One of the points of this book is to have readers ponder why some Wampanoags and other indigenous Americans mourn on Thanksgiving while other Americans traffic in the sanitized, celebratory myth of Pilgrim-Indian friendship.

I urge readers of this book to reconsider having schoolchildren perform Thanksgiving pageants and other exercises that make white American expansion at Native American expense seem like a bloodless, consensual affair.

Binaries that continue to resonate in American political discourse, as in the "War on Terror." Society would benefit from a deeper historical understanding of the terrible uses to which these words have been put.

By this, I mean everyone. We all have scoundrels and worse in our people's past.

Serious, critical history tends to be hard on the living. It challenges us to see distortions embedded in the heroic national origin myths we have been taught since childhood. It takes enemies demonized by previous generations and treats them as worthy of understanding in their particular contexts. Ideological absolutes—civility and savagery, liberty and tyranny, and especially us and them—begin to blur. People from our own society who are not supposed to matter, and whose historical experiences show how the injustices of the past have shaped the injustices of the present, move from the shadows into the light. Because critical history challenges assumptions and authority, it often leaves us feeling uncomfortable. Yet it also has the capacity to help us become more humble and humane.

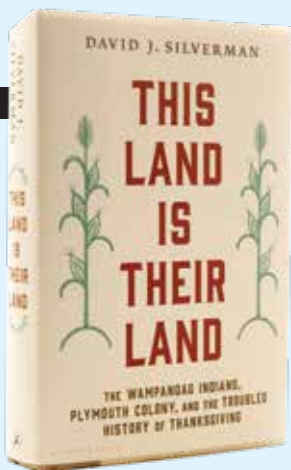
More needed than ever, in this author's view.

There are poignant through-lines connecting white America's violent subjugation and exploitation of American Indians in the past and the current plights of many Indian reservation communities. It's well past time for American society en large to grapple not only with the Native American past but with its present too.

There always have been and always will be reactionaries who accuse the tellers of such histories with iconoclasm. Today, such critics might make the charge of revisionism or political correctness. To defenders of the status quo, it does not matter if the origin myth or national history is untrue or hurtful to those it leaves out or vilifies. The point is that the story upholds the traditional social order by teaching that the rulers came by their position heroically, righteously, and even with the blessing of the divine. Such themes are favored by those guarding their privilege against the supposed barbarians at the gates.

In most cases, just a dismissive euphemism for someone being considerate and thoughtful.

Part of what I'm gesturing toward here is that the movement against public monuments to white supremacy must reckon not only with the nation's history of slavery and Jim Crow, but its subjugation and oppression of Native people.



***This Land Is Their Land: The Wampanoag Indians, Plymouth Colony, and the Troubled History of Thanksgiving* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019) By David J. Silverman, professor of history**

The Thanksgiving Myth

Underpinning mountains of turkey, cranberry sauce and gravy and behind the myth of a peaceful, celebratory meal that Pilgrims and American Indians shared, a tragic, painful story of oppression of indigenous people emerges. Thanksgiving as we know it today is a Civil War-era invention intended to unify the country and which New England tourism promoters found exceedingly useful and lucrative. “It was one thing for the people of Massachusetts to claim the Pilgrims as forefathers and a dinner between Pilgrims and Indians as the template for a national holiday,” Silverman writes. “It was quite another for the rest of the nation to go along.”

So how did the rest of the nation go along? For one thing, many found it useful to manufacture stories at the expense of American Indians. “It was no coincidence that authorities began trumpeting the Pilgrims as national founders amid widespread anxiety that the country was being overrun by Catholic and Jewish immigrants unappreciative of America’s Protestant, democratic origins and unfamiliar with its values,” the book states. It also created an inspiring yet fictive national heritage in an effort to minimize the blemish of slavery. This book attempts to give the American Indians a voice, even as, in its own words, it turns a bedtime story of Thanksgiving myth into a nightmare. — Menachem Wecker, MA ’09

***A Modern Contagion: Imperialism and Public Health in Iran’s Age of Cholera* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019) By Amir A. Afkhami, MD ’03, associate professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences, and of global health**

A 2008 cholera outbreak in Iran represents only the latest flash point in an ongoing epic between the nation and the gastrointestinal condition. The disease had a “formative role” in the development of modern Iran in the 19th and 20th centuries, Afkhami writes. One example cited in the book: Iran’s 1906 Constitutional Revolution, which occurred two years after a cholera outbreak, couldn’t have happened but for an increasingly secular view of outbreaks as preventable medical problems rather than inevitable, divinely mandated ones.

***Landfall: A Novel* (Pantheon, 2019) By Thomas Mallon, professor emeritus of English**

The novel—with fictional takes on dozens of very real characters—starts in 1978 with a love story, which finds a young man at a political rally falling simultaneously (in different ways) for a young woman also in attendance and for the man for whom the party has been thrown: George W. Bush. The latter was soon to lose a House bid, but the novel picks up again in the Bush White House. The work is fiction, but Mallon, who’s also novelized Richard Nixon and Ronald Reagan, has a well-calibrated ear for political dialogue.

***Naming the Dawn* (Seagull Books, 2018) By Abdourahman A. Waberi, assistant professor of French**

This book of poems, which Nancy Naomi Carlson translated, is divided into three sections: living soul, seemingly no big deal, and spiritual exercises, and is infused with religious and natural references. “I’ve come to realize you cannot touch/ without being touched,” one poem states.

Another titled “Bottle” strikes a different tone; “I’m getting drunk on disgusting wine/ I’ll call tomorrow, I swear,” it ends. “Absence” includes a line that’s happier and could be a statement about the promise of poetry more broadly. “It’s not the big ball of dough/ but the pinch of yeast that makes the bread.” “Many are those who find/ the sublime in the daily grind/ by beginning to grow as they shuffle along their way.”

***Ronald Reagan and the Space Frontier* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2019) By John Logsdon, professor emeritus of political science and international affairs**

President Reagan inherited a space program at a crossroads, with a transition team informing the president-elect that the agency was “without clear purpose or direction.” Unlike John F. Kennedy, whose interest in space was tied to the Cold War, Reagan saw civilian space exploration as manifest destiny, and he “personally would turn out to be the most pro-space U.S. president, before or since,” Logsdon writes.

***William Howard Taft. The American Presidents Series: The 27th President, 1909–1913* (Times Books, 2018)**

By Jeffrey Rosen, professor of law While recent books address President Taft’s character, foreign policy, progressive conservatism, psychology and relationship with the press, this one focuses on his interpretation of the Constitution. As the only president (1909-13) who was also chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (1921-30)—and even oversaw the building’s construction—Taft approached his presidency as a judge, not a politician chasing popularity; his true significance comes into focus when the two roles are viewed collectively, Rosen writes. Taft’s wife put it best when she sought to keep a gift that he felt violated the emoluments clause: “He stood firmly by the Constitution, as usual.” **EW**



GW GIFT GUIDE 2019

*(AT LEAST)
A LITTLE
SOMETHING
FOR
EVERYONE*

**BY CAITE HAMILTON
PHOTOS BY WILLIAM ATKINS**



This year's gift guide, our sixth, has a theme (if you need a clue, see the big headline on the opposing page). We found alums making and selling things spanning the present-giving spectrum. So, we hope, there is at least one thing in here—we've got everything from spirits to sheet masks, board games to socks—that will work for anyone on your list. And, because many of these alums are paying it forward by donating a portion of profits to worthy causes, your dollars will do double duty. (You can call that a free gift with purchase.)

It's in the Bag

Go Dash Dot

Multiuse (and stylish) bags for the gym and everywhere else / \$88-218

GoDashDot.com

Hannah Fastov, BA '12, had tried everything to keep from carrying an armful of bags to accommodate her gym-work-post-work events schedule: lululemon duffels, designer totes, even regular handbags with plastic grocery bags to hold her shoes.

"I just couldn't find a bag that could fit all of my stuff and keep it organized—and one that was cute and fashionable," she says.

Fastov started casually asking other ladies in the gym locker room what kind of bags they were carrying, figuring other urban women must be having the same issue. The response was unanimous: All of them told her they hated their current bag, but had a ton of ideas about what would make the "perfect one."

"I started writing all of these ideas down, and ended up making a survey to put on Facebook," Fastov says. More than 100 women answered her questions about what they'd want in a bag, and about their behaviors and lifestyle.

But even though Fastov had been working in fashion—in product development for Brooks Brothers and, later, Rag & Bone—she wasn't sure where to go from there.

"I really saw a hole in the market, but I didn't necessarily want to just make a gym bag," Fastov says.

She launched Go Dash Dot (a play on "go" in morse code, a language Fastov says has the same translatable quality as her products) in 2016 with the Infinity Bag, a carry-all that incorporates much of the original locker-room feedback. It features compartments for shoes and laptops, a machine-washable laundry pouch, an extra strap for crossbody wear, and pouches that snap to the side of the bag, rather than disappear to the bottom. Plus, it's stylish.

"Everybody uses the bag for different things, which is what makes it very versatile. They're great for travel, they're great for new moms, great for students," Fastov says. "That's been the key to our success—it's not just another tote bag. It's something different and something useful."



Use code "GW20" to save 20 percent on your first Go Dash Dot purchase at GoDashDot.com.

A Foothold in History

Liberty Socks
American history-themed fashionable socks / \$17.76
LibertySocks.com

Shortly after launching his history-themed sock collection, entrepreneur **Alao Hogan, MBA '18**, decided to send a pair to former president George H.W. Bush.

"Someone mentioned to me that President Bush enjoyed wearing fun socks," Hogan says. "I found his fan mail address and included a short note thanking him for his service to our country."

A few months later, he received a reply: "Love, love, love those Liberty Socks you sent me," wrote the 41st president, a Navy pilot during World War II.

Hogan was both shocked and happy. As a New York native and U.S. Army combat veteran, he wanted to combine his eye for fashion with his military background and interest in U.S. history. Bush had given him a stamp of approval.

"I found socks to be the perfect platform to try something niche and unique in the accessories market, particularly for men," Hogan says. "Many brands manufacture American-made patriotic apparel, but the majority are not historically accurate."

Liberty Socks honors American history with each pair, which Hogan designs himself then submits to his supplier for knitting.

"I set out to find unique ways to integrate shapes and symbols that are commonly associated with American patriotism," Hogan says. Take, for instance, *The Washington*. Named after George Washington, the socks feature 13 six-pointed stars that represent the original 13 colonies as well as Washington's personal flag as commander-in-chief of the Continental Army. They're Hogan's favorite.

But why socks? Like President Bush, "people of all ages love wearing fun socks," Hogan says. Plus, focusing solely (pardon the pun) on socks allows him to self-fund, which, in turn, provides him with the opportunity to donate a portion of profits to the East Harlem Tutorial Program, a New York-based nonprofit he's been personally invested in for more than two decades, both as a student and supporter. The socks are sold at *libertysocks.com* for, appropriately, \$17.76 per pair.

Use code "GW" to save 15 percent on your next pair of Liberty Socks at *LibertySocks.com*.



Use code "GWROCKS" at [HeroArts.com](https://www.heroarts.com) to get 20 percent off your first purchase.

A Stamp Act

Hero Arts

Supplies for cardmaking and crafting / \$2 to \$100 (subscriptions also available)

[HeroArts.com](https://www.heroarts.com)

Most kids don't get a hankering to be a small-business owner before they can even drive a car. But **Aaron Leventhal, MA '91**, had watched as his mother built up her fledgling stamp company, Hero Arts, and was inspired.

"A rubber stamp press was in our bathroom for much of my early childhood," Leventhal says. "It was the only room in our Berkeley, Calif., apartment with a three-prong outlet, which made for an awkward shower experience, but did cultivate a passion in me for business."

She eventually took the company from the family bathroom to a garage and, eventually, a proper manufacturing facility, where Hero Arts created (as it still does, "by hand with love and attention," Leventhal says) wood block stamps, clear stamps, inks, papers, and other supplies for cardmaking and crafting. Meanwhile, Leventhal was at University of California, Santa Cruz, and working as a packer and shipper at Hero Arts in the

summer and holiday breaks.

"Watching the company and employees was a formative part of my memories of Hero Arts, and a big part of my interest in studying community development, business and public policy," he says.

In 2006, Leventhal took over the company with his wife, Laura Ackerman, and together the couple focused on going green: Today, the company is toxin-free, having eliminated chemicals, resins and even water from its operational processes. Plus, it's asked each of its suppliers to sign a "Green Pledge" to work to do so in their operations as well.

Hero Arts, which is online at [heroarts.com](https://www.heroarts.com), also works to enrich the community, with a giving program that honors community arts, environmental initiatives, women's health, and children and education.

But the original mission—the one born in the bathroom of their Berkeley apartment—remains the same: "Hero Arts combines stylish design with the joy of handmade, and gives creativity-hungry crafters the ability to give something tangible and unique to themselves and the people they love," says Leventhal.

Playing Politics

Election Night!

A board game that makes civics fun / \$40
SemperSmartGames.com

Jim Moran's older daughter knew her multiplication tables before any other kid in her class. But, Moran says, “we didn’t do anything other than play the game.”

Moran, MSc '06, a retired Coast Guard officer and longtime SAT and ACT tutor, had invented a board game called Election Night!, which uses his patent-pending system of six, 12-sided dice to help teams compete for the presidency. Depending on the roll of the dice, each team has to change its strategy and make decisions about how best to earn the highest office, all while learning addition (or multiplication, on the opposite side of the board), geography and the mechanics of the electoral college.

Moran had been an SAT and ACT tutor for many years, but things changed when he got married and had kids of his own. He gained a new perspective.

“I started seeing high schoolers that had never really mastered the essential knowledge that I had found was so critical for me to be able to access higher levels of academic

achievement,” he says. “I saw them really struggling ... and I knew that some of the stuff that I was being told by teachers to work on with my kids, like math mastery, was just boring.” So he decided to try and sneak some kale into the spaghetti and meatballs, so to speak.

“One night, I just spread out a bunch of eight-and-a-half by 11 sheets on the table, made this big map and then we started playing the game,” he says. At that point, it was all conceptual—a crude prototype—but his girls were hooked. “We had dinner and then, after dinner, my daughters said, ‘Let’s finish that game.’ And I was like, ‘OK, I might have something here.’”

He did. His Kickstarter campaign brought in \$22,269 in 60 days off 180 backers—\$1,269 more than he was asking—and, now that the game is on the market (at SemperSmartGames.com and on Amazon), it’s garnered much recognition from the toy community. He’s earned Tillywig Brain Child, Mom’s Choice Gold and Family Choice awards as well as the 2019 Parents’ Choice Gold award, which is given to only five games per year.

“It’s great for families. Teachers are loving it,” he says. “There are no tools out there to keep upper-elementary and middle school kids sharp with the mastery of their math skills. You’ve gotta have games to help them do that that they find independently fun.”

Use promo code “GVALUM10” at SemperSmartGames.com to get 10 percent off.



Spirit of South Korea

West 32

A Korean vodka-like liquor / \$12.99-20.99

West32Soju.com

Some of the best ideas are conceived over drinks: Mark Zuckerberg famously live-blogged that he was “a little intoxicated” the night he launched the website that would eventually become Facebook; the founders of Reddit secured venture capital over beers in Boston; Tinder launched at a college party... The list goes on, and—who knows?—may one day include **Dan Lee, BS '05**, and **Max Fine, BA '07**, who came up with the idea for their liquor company, West 32, over drinks in New York’s Koreatown.

The college friends moved to New York after graduating from GW, and Lee, who’s Korean, would take Fine to K-Town to eat, drink and have fun. More often than not, that would involve South Korea’s national spirit, soju. Like a light vodka, soju (which means “distilled spirits” in Korean) is a popular beverage to sip on throughout dinner.

But after a few years of that, Fine says he just couldn’t drink it anymore. The reason why? Korean soju has a lot of artificial sweeteners in it like saccharine and glycerol, and its manufacturers use cheap grain like tapioca.

“We decided to make soju that’s all-natural, gluten-free, more premium and higher quality than what’s available in the United States,” Fine says. “It’s also an opportunity to introduce a piece of Korean culture to the U.S. market.”

They started in 2015: Lee bought a home-distilling kit and started experimenting with different grains in his Upper East Side apartment. Meanwhile Fine, a lawyer, started on the paperwork.

By January 2017, they’d launched their version, made with locally sourced corn and natural cane sugar, with the help of Yankee Distillers, a whiskey distillery in Clifton Park, N.Y. About a year later, West 32’s barrel-aged soju (which spends six months in American white oak whiskey barrels and, Fine says, ends up tasting like “a really, really light whiskey”) hit the market.

West 32 is now in 10 states, and available online at Total Wine & More or Warehouse Wine & Spirits. And while Fine says the company is really focused on bringing soju to the U.S., West 32 just started exporting to the motherland, South Korea. “That was kind of a bonus,” he says.

PRO TIP

*Try pouring a little West 32 into a beer to create what’s called a **somaek**. “It’s kind of like a boilermaker,” says Max Fine. “Because the soju is so neutral, it doesn’t change the flavor of beer, but gives it an extra kick.”*



Pour Me Another

The Hour

Vintage and modern barware
TheHourShop.com

What's your favorite cocktail? **Victoria Vergason, MBA '90**, says she gets asked this question a lot. And it makes sense, given that she owns The Hour, a vintage glassware and barware shop in Alexandria, Va. With an inventory totaling more than 10,000 pieces, it's safe to say she's somewhat of a connoisseur.

The shop owner began collecting vintage bar items while at GW, and held on to the notion of opening her own retail space throughout a career in international finance. When her three youngest kids (triplets!) entered grade school, she decided to make her move.

"I thought that opening a retail store that focused strictly on providing unique cocktail items and supplies for the home bar was something that would be new in the marketplace," she says.

That was 10 years ago, and since then she's penned two cocktail books, organized Alexandria's first-ever Old Town Cocktail Week and, to fulfill another longtime dream, launched her own line of glassware, The Modern Home Bar. It's a mix of Collins and rocks glasses with Art Deco and mid-century designs that draws inspiration from—where else?—inventory at The Hour.

For the record, while there's a current trend toward all things tiki, Vergason's a fan of the three-ingredient cocktail. ("My go-to is either a rye Manhattan, a gin martini or a negroni," she says.)

"Cocktail tastes and related glassware needs are somewhat regional," Vergason says. "In warmer climates, like Los Angeles, people tend to enjoy cocktails that contain ice and are served in less formal rocks and Collins glasses. Metropolitan cities in northern climates, like New York and Chicago, tend to serve cocktails in stemware."

Having sold to vintage-lovers, cocktail enthusiasts, and bar professionals the world over, Vergason knows one thing for sure: "My customers are as varied as my cocktail collection."

Mid-century vintage, brushed chrome pitcher and bar spoon:
\$450.00

Lehman Brothers vintage Art Deco black top shaker:
\$375.00

16 oz. Collins glasses:
Set of four / \$70

11 oz. rocks glasses:
Set of four / \$62

Use code "GW2019" for 20 percent off your order at *TheHourShop.com*, through Dec. 31, 2019.

Book and recipe cards:
Book: \$29.95
Cards: \$24.95



What a Treat

Dulceology

Latin American cookies and other confections / \$18-25
Dulceology.com

What is an alfajor? It's a soft, crumbly cookie, a popular Latin American treat, and, to Edith and Nicole Leiva, a link between their past and their future.

The sisters' story starts in El Salvador, where they were born to a chef mom and a father who manufactured restaurant equipment. But they moved with their family to the United States in 2001 and immediately felt the absence of their culture.

"One of the things we missed the most was the smell and taste of traditional homemade sweets that would permeate through our home," Edith Leiva, who will get her master's of arts degree in interaction design from GW in the spring, says. They started searching for connections and came across a tattered family recipe book.

"The pages were old," Edith Leiva says. "Some still had corners folded back by the ladies in my family who read from it religiously. That's where we found my grandmother's recipe for making alfajor cookies."

Made with dulce de leche and cornstarch, the alfajor recipe provided sweet inspiration for the sisters, who always dreamt of starting their own business.

They launched Dulceology on Etsy, hopeful they'd get a few sales and keep themselves busy with baking on weekends. They were only half wrong.

"Sales took off almost immediately. One order would hit the moment we finished another one," Edith Leiva says. "That's when we realized that we had something special."

Dulceology's alfajores, which are sold at Dulceology.com, have made their way to all 50 states, and, earlier this year, earned the bakers \$35,000 in prize money from GW's New Venture Competition. The business is definitely keeping them busy, especially since both of the women are still in school. Edith Leiva is studying interaction design at GW, and Nicole Leiva is working toward a degree in hospitality at Montgomery College in Maryland.

"Taking four graduate courses per semester while also running Dulceology is intense but also rewarding," Edith Leiva says. "In my classes, I worked on a variety of projects—from working with the Library of Congress' American Folklife Center to learning about 3D-prototyping technologies. Some of these include 3D printing and augmented reality, both of which taught me valuable skills that I used to improve Dulceology." Edith Leiva applied what she'd learned in class to make food-safe stamps and molds that allow her and her sister to offer more customization.

But enough nitty-gritty. What's the actual best part of running a bakery? The sweets.

"One of my favorite products is the gluten-free alfajor. It comes in different flavors and fillings—pineapple, guava, chocolate and coffee," says Edith Leiva. "It tastes incredible."

Use code "GW2019" to save 20 percent on your next order of alfajores at Dulceology.com.

Kid-Tested, Consumer-Approved

Berg Bites

Healthy, nutritious desserts / \$20 to \$30 for cases of eight to 12

BergBites.com

It was around the time **Daniel Berg, BA '18**, entered fifth grade that he started, as he tells it, "analyzing consumer-packaged foods and beverages."

"I forced my parents to stop drinking sodas and urged them to get them out of the house," he says. Then he turned his attention to the cookies and cakes they were serving

for dessert. Berg wanted a healthier alternative, so he started developing

"energy bites"—a nutritious dessert

that featured oats (rather than sugar) as its star player.

"I thought they'd be a great healthy dessert to serve to our guests," says the former personal trainer.

"Everyone loved them and some would even ask for bags to take home." Berg Bites were born.

But it wasn't until years later, in his junior year at GW while studying health and wellness, that Berg decided to turn his bites into a business. He joined Union Kitchen, a food-business accelerator, to test recipes with friends at night after class.

"We ultimately developed 10 flavors and decided to launch four," Berg says.

The OG flavor (the one he made back in fifth grade), Chocolate Chip Madness, is still everyone's favorite. It combines heart-healthy oats with nuts, chia seeds, coconut oil, and prebiotic fiber (plus dark chocolate and peanut butter for flavor). They're a hit among teams in the NFL and NBA as well as at gyms like Equinox. They're also sold in Whole Foods and on Amazon.

"I'm a health nut, so I like to describe the Berg Bites as a nutritious indulgence," Berg says. "But for the average consumer, they're a nutritious and delicious snack that satisfies the sweet tooth."

Drink Up

Berg has six flavors saved up in his recipe bank, so there are more coming. But he recently launched the company's sister brand, DRNX, a sugar-free adaptogenic performance water.

"As a personal trainer and health freak, I cannot stand watching pro athletes and young athletes consuming all those artificial colors and sugar with nothing really great inside," Berg says. DRNX is all natural, sugar-free, and contains more than 20 functional ingredients like ginseng, elderberry, chromium and a mix of good-for-you vitamins.

Skin Deep

Mask Moments
Sheet masks / \$20 to \$65 (by
subscription)

MaskMoments.com

Sophia Hong, BA '04, had always believed that innovation came from applying something from one discipline in a different context. So when she found herself working in the beauty industry in Seoul and Hong Kong—and, in particular, became fascinated with South Korea's skincare obsession—she knew she wanted to bring some of the same products to the American marketplace.

"Korean women were especially diligent about their skincare routines and skin maintenance, and had very high standards of maintaining youthful skin," Hong says. She began researching and even pursued her aesthetician license in Korea. Her research led her to sheet masks, K-beauty's answer to at-home, affordable facials that were being used every day, not just on special occasions. ("No wonder they had glowing skin and often looked a decade younger than their age," she says.) And what she found was that, when it comes to sheet masks, the sheet makes all the difference in quality and price.

The really good sheet masks—the kind with biocellulose technology ("a fancy way of saying they're made into a jelly using coconuts and naturally created fibers," Hong says)—are too costly to be used daily, and the cheaper ones (made of woven fiber or paper) will leave residue sitting on top of your skin.

"I wanted to democratize access to the highest-quality products by removing the brand markups and bring them directly to the consumer," Hong says. "That's how Mask Moments was born."

The subscription package includes four masks that treat the different stages of our skin cycles: anti-aging, brightening, calming, and deep hydration. And the best part is they're suitable for all skin types. Hong says the company uses all-natural biocellulose technology that's great for even the most sensitive skin, so everyone can have access to quality skincare—and feel pampered as they do it.

"We want every Mask Moment to be a moment of caring for oneself and reminding our customers how valuable they are," Hong says.



Get your first mask at
MaskMoments.com for \$1.

Wear and Share

Kicheko Goods

Earrings, necklaces and assorted jewelry /
\$30 to \$100

KichekoGoods.com

“Unrefined boldness, sophisticated earthiness and playful simplicity.”

That’s how **Sarah Bayot, BA '07, MA '09**, describes her jewelry line, Kicheko Goods—but that’s certainly not all it is. The designer’s collection is also a social-impact brand: Every piece sold equals one month of tuition for a student at Mango Tree, a primary school in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, where Bayot studied for a semester in grad school and led learning trips through her job.

But let’s back up, because jewelry-making wasn’t exactly in Bayot’s original plan. While job-searching in her field of study (international development), she started work as the office manager at National Community Church and, as she puts it, crafted her way into Kicheko Goods.

“It was nice to find an engaged entrepreneurial presence at NCC and, during my time there, the idea of starting a business one day began to take hold,” Bayot says. Around the same time, she was dabbling in fabric arts, first with sewing and then repurposing remnants.

“I started making jewelry out of the fiber and fabrics,” she says. “The stud earrings stuck, and I just went bananas making so many of them.”

NCC was her first big order—500 earrings for Mother’s Day—and Bayot considered her brand officially launched. The next step was figuring out how to give back.

“I [wanted] to employ creative means to partner with everyday men and women, our brand fans and customers, and also send kids to school together,” Bayot says. “You can include everyone in the process while making progress towards a social issue—in this case, lack of access to education in Congo.”

Earrings—like the Plume Tassels and the Solara, two of her most popular pairs—remain among the collection’s biggest sellers, which Bayot sells online and in 10 stores nationwide.

“There’s still far to go and I think I’ve learned so much about business, leadership and my point of view over these crucial beginning years,” Bayot says. “I know this is just the beginning.”

Use code “gwualum” for
15 percent off your order
at KichekoGoods.com.



THE DISINFORMATION AGE

IT'S BEEN WELL KNOWN FOR A LONG TIME THAT NOT EVERYTHING ON THE INTERNET IS TRUE, BUT RECENTLY IT'S BECOME MORE DIFFICULT

TO SEPARATE FACTS AND FICTIONS. THE NEW INSTITUTE FOR DATA, DEMOCRACY, AND POLITICS

ARE DEDICATED TO CONDUCTING RESEARCH TO SOLVE COMPLEX CHALLENGES FACING OUR NATION AND WORLD AND CONTENT RELATED TO CURRENT EVENTS IN ORDER TO BETTER INFORM PUBLIC POLICY DEBATE

BY CHARLES BABINGTON

PHOTOS BY HARRISON JONES

...THE RISE OF DISTORTED AND MISLEADING INFORMATION ONLINE, WORKING TO EDUCATE NATIONAL POLICYMAKERS AND ENGINEERING, THE ... WITH A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS SPANNING POLITICAL SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND ENGINEERING, THE ... OUR NATIONERS ... POLITICAL VISION ... SEARCH HUB FOR TRACKING THE SPREAD OF DISTORTED INFORMATION ONLINE, SHARING RESEARCH AND HOSTING EVENTS ... FROM THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION, ... OUR NATION AND WORLD ... GW PRESIDENT THOMAS LEBLANC SAID, ... WITH GENEROUS SUPPORT FROM KNIGHT FOUNDATION, THIS NEW INSTITUTE ... AND USING DATA ... AND RESEARCH TO SOLVE COMPLEX CHALLENGES FACING OUR NATION AND WORLD ... THE ROLE OF ONLINE ... CONTENT RELATED TO CURRENT EVENTS IN ORDER TO BETTER INFORM PUBLIC POLICY DEBATE ... CORRECT DISTORTED ... PUBLIC NARRATIVES. THE INSTITUTE WILL USE GW'S EXPANDING DATA INFRASTRUCTURE ... INCLUDING ON PLATFORMS ... SUCH AS TWITTER, FACEBOOK, ... PROFESSOR OF MEDIA ... AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND DE ... CH IS A CROSS-DISCI ... PLINARY INITIATIVE OF GW'S ... CULTY MEMBERS WHO ... SPECIALIZE IN DATA ANALYSIS AN ... HAVE THE GENEROUS ... SUPPORT OF KNIGHT FOUNDATION ... ALLOW US TO CONSOLI ... DATE THE EFFORTS OF GW'S ... THAT BENEFITS THE WELL-BEING OF ... THE NATION AND WORLD ... DR FRANK SESNO. ... ARE DEDICATED TO CONDUCTING ... COMPLEX CHALLENGES, ... SESNO, SMPA DIRECTOR, ... RESEARCH CAN HELP US BETTER UNDERSTAND THESE TRENDS. THAT KNOWLEDGE CAN CATALYZE ACTION TO SUPP ... COLLABORATE WITH THE POYNTER INSTITUTE, ... A GLOBAL LEADER IN JOURNALISM, AND ... ON IN THE UNITED STATES AND WINNER OF ... A PULITZER PRIZE. ... TRAIN JOURNALISTS AND THROUGH OUR FACT-CHECKING EXPERTISE THE POYNTER INSTITUTE STANDS READY TO ... AID. ... COLLABORATE ON FACE-CHE ... RS TO BETTER UNDERSTAND THE MISINFORMATION LANDSCAPE OF THE 2020 ELECTIONS AND HOW TO EFFECTIVELY ... TIFACT IS EXCITED TO COLLABORATE WITH THE INSTITUTE TO STRENGTHEN OUR FACT-CHECKING JOURNALISM ... SINFORMATION AND A SHRINKING NUMBER OF LOCAL JOURNALISTS, ... ANGIE DROBNIC HOLAN, THE EDIT ... BELIEF IN THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING CITIZENS ACCESS TO THE INFORMATION THEY NEED TO GOVERN THE ... ING ANALYTICAL INSIGHTS AND GROUNDBREAKING RESEARCH ON EFFECTIVE FACT-CHECKING INTERVENTIONS ... D RESEARCH THAT FURTHERS SCHOLARSHIP IN THIS EMERGING FIELD OF RESEARCH. THE INSTITUTE ... "HTTPS://GW.TODAY.GWU.EDU/PRESIDENT-TRUMP-SHOWS- ... LEADERSHIP ... DISINFORMATION ...



AMERICA'S POLITICAL DIALOGUE AND SOCIAL MEDIA ARE AWASH IN HALF-TRUTHS, OUTRIGHT LIES AND DELIBERATE DISINFORMATION, SPREAD ONLINE AT EYEBLINK SPEEDS. NOT ALL OF IT IS HARMFUL, BUT MUCH IS HATE-FILLED AND DESIGNED TO FURTHER POLARIZE OUR NATION AND DAMAGE OUR DEMOCRACY.

>>> Thinkers, pundits and partisans decry the situation daily, and now GW and a handful of other U.S. universities are launching rigorous, science-based examinations of hateful social media and disinformation campaigns. In doing so, they will try to provide the public a better understanding of what's true, and the confidence to believe in it.

In short, "we're trying to address the threat that disinformation campaigns pose to democracy," says Steven Livingston, the political communication professor heading the GW effort.

The university in July described the ambitious sweep of its mission: To establish "a data-rich multidisciplinary research capacity" that will create "knowledge to inform the policy debates in Washington; strengthen the capacity of professional fact-based journalism; deepen our understanding of disinformation ecosystems; and test the effectiveness of various approaches to correcting firmly held but factually inaccurate beliefs."

The effort is backed by a \$5 million investment from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Four other universities received the same amount from Knight through a competitive process that drew more than 100 applicants.

GW's new center is called the Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics. Housed at the School of Media and Public Affairs, it's drawing on expertise from academic disciplines including physics, computer science, engineering and journalism.

Livingston says GW has three major attributes that appealed to Knight Foundation and strongly qualify the university for the task, starting with GW's "amazing faculty." Next, the university has already devoted millions of dollars to gathering, managing and analyzing massive amounts of data, which IDDP can tap and

supplement. The new institute's executive summary says GW has "what is perhaps, for a university, unparalleled multiplatform data." Livingston says major components, which come from various sources, include "large-volume Twitter data," "all of Reddit constantly updated," huge amounts of data from Facebook and its Russian counterpart, VKontakte, bulk email lists and "dark web" message boards. All the data to be studied is available to scholars elsewhere.

Finally, Livingston says, GW's location provides vital access to the nation's top policymakers, journalists, think tanks and key corporations, especially now that Amazon is building a second headquarters in nearby Arlington, Va.

IDDP will collaborate with other organizations, including the Poynter Institute for Media Studies and its highly regarded fact-checking arm, PolitiFact. Other collaborators include Investigative Reporters and Editors, and the National Association of Black Journalists. IDDP will conduct training sessions for reporters and host speakers including federal communications staffers, lobbyists, pollsters, consultants and ad-makers.

[/]

[HTTPS://SMPA.GWU](https://smpa.gwu.edu)

WELL-TRAVELED PROFESSOR LEADS THE TEAM

HAVING JOINED THE GW FACULTY 28 YEARS AGO, Livingston

has an extensive network of friends and colleagues in political science, journalism, diplomacy and other fields. His manner is friendly but efficient, with little chitchat. He sometimes buys both a Kindle and hard-cover version of a book, to facilitate fast searches and screen-grabs as well as armchair reading.

He has held a string of faculty leadership posts; traveled to 53 nations in the past 10 years; and been a visiting scholar at Harvard, the Brookings Institution and universities in Germany, Britain, Switzerland and New Zealand.

Livingston says research capabilities >>>

HARRISON JONES



Steven Livingston is the director of GW's Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics and a professor in the School of Media and Public Affairs and the Elliott School of International Affairs. He joined GW's faculty in 1991.

>>> like IDDP's have become crucial. Not long ago, institutions such as the courts, mainstream news media and peer-reviewed academic articles helped establish a "vetted reality" for the public. But today, he says, "many people don't believe in these institutions. They don't know what to believe."

Before trying to remedy this problem, Livingston says, researchers must dig into "lots of evidence." Luckily, the countless postings that people make on Facebook, Twitter, chat rooms and other online platforms are providing huge, heaping gobs of material.

Livingston amplified the point at a GW panel discussion in September where he reminded the audience of roughly 200 that they leave digital trails when they walk with their cell phones, drive computer-laden cars and engage in social media. This is generating mountains of new data, he says, and his team, "is finding ways of tapping into all of that data for us to understand something about our world."

IDDP's two main areas of research are "mapping" and "effects." This involves mapping the ways that information and disinformation spread online. Livingston says important questions might include: "Where did this meme, this narrative, start? How did it go viral? Who were the online amplifiers?" (Amplifiers are social media activists with large followings who repeat and expound on a claim, whether true or false).

When assessing the "effects," he says, questions could include: "How do the messages affect people's beliefs? How do we fashion fact-checking in a way that is successful in helping people update their view of the world so as to disabuse them of their misperceptions?"

Disinformation is different from misinformation, Livingston says, although both can cause harm. The former involves deliberate efforts to deceive a targeted audience, such as Russian operatives working to sow hatred and mislead U.S. voters about candidates and issues. People spreading misinformation generally don't intend to deceive, but they've often had many chances to review evidence that disproves their claims. An example of misinformation is asserting a meaningful link between child vaccines and autism.

IDDP's researchers will include political psychologists exploring whether someone who strongly holds an inaccurate belief can be persuaded to change that belief.

[/]

D IS FOR DATA

"THE FIRST D IN IDDP IS 'DATA,'" notes GW physics professor Neil Johnson, a key team member. "If there's one thing GW scientists are good at, it's taking large

data sets, which are messy, and making sure you're not just picking out one story. If you look at the brightest star in the universe, you miss the big picture."

Johnson and his colleagues will use "complex systems science," data science and other disciplines to analyze huge amounts of data and look for patterns that can illuminate phenomena such as the spread of disinformation and hate speech. He says researchers must avoid making assumptions and let the data lead to conclusions. Regarding hate-speech campaigns, for example, "what are the tipping points?" he says. "Why are there sometimes riots, and sometimes not?"

The researchers are mainly interested in the actions of large groups, not individuals, Johnson says. He likens the online spread of hate speech to a pot of boiling water. "Water boils by bubbles forming and growing and joining together, not by a few 'bad' molecules suddenly doing something," he says. Each bubble is made up of many molecules, like an online crowd, or "cluster." Mapping these clusters, Johnson says, can reveal telling patterns and important connections.

Other IDDP team members are doing similar research, but from different academic perspectives. Rebekah Tromble, IDDP's associate director, calls herself a "traditionally trained social scientist" with heavy doses of computational and computer science skills. She too is mapping purveyors of disinformation and hate on sites such as Twitter and Reddit, and looking for patterns and links.

"Who are high-volume users who retweet the same content, use the same key words?" she says. "You look to find a network among these bad-faith actors." While some

researchers focus on one platform—say, Facebook—"IDDP can go further, looking at how these actors might be interacting across multiple platforms."

When mainstream platforms like Facebook or Twitter ban extremist groups, Tromble says, the groups sometimes move to more accommodating sites, such as Gab or 8chan. IDDP will monitor the groups as they mutate and migrate.

Disinformation and hate groups sometimes buy Google ads, Tromble says, placing them on many news sites, including mainstream outlets. Each time they do, she says, "they leave behind trace information," which are clues for her research team.

Johnson, the physicist, co-authored an article in the journal *Nature* that described a recent mapping model of online hate groups. He and researchers from the University of Miami tracked the ways that various online hate "clusters" found each other, collaborated, and moved to other platforms if they were banned.

Starting with Facebook and VKontakte, they found hate clusters forming, changing and migrating to sites such as Instagram, Snapchat and WhatsApp. "Hate destroys lives," Johnson says. His research team is gaining new insights "by looking at why it is so resilient and how it can be better tackled."

The *Nature* article urged social media platforms to adopt several intervention strategies, including:

- Ban small "hate clusters" to reduce the influence of the larger clusters they feed into.
- Randomly ban a small number of hate-promoting users to weaken the larger networks they might join.
- Help anti-hate groups find hate clusters and challenge them online.

That last recommendation is already having some impact, Johnson says. "People are writing us saying they're forming Facebook groups and pages to try to counteract the hateful speech." Strength in numbers is important, he says, because hate groups are certain to strike back. "You don't fight gang culture by yourself," Johnson says. "The power comes with the crowd."

Johnson says he hopes IDDP will be seen as a reliable explainer of online-driven events that confuse and trouble people. The goal, he says, is "immediately putting those surprise events in context. For example, when an election looks phony, people will call IDDP for the big picture. They can look at our data set, and test our model if they want."

[/]

A CLOSER LOOK

THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L. KNIGHT FOUNDATION

Knight Foundation was founded nearly 70 years ago by the late Knight brothers, John and James, of Knight-Ridder Newspapers. Today, the philanthropic organization invests in fields spanning journalism, technology and the arts to foster informed and engaged communities and promote democracy.

100+

The number of project proposals Knight Foundation received from research centers after an open request last year. The proposals came from public and private institutions across the United States.

\$5 MILLION

The amount Knight Foundation invested to found GW's Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics, which is housed in the School of Media and Public Affairs and will be a cross-disciplinary endeavor, involving researchers from physics, computer science, engineering and journalism.

\$50 MILLION

The amount Knight Foundation has invested across 11 institutions, among them GW, to "better understand how technology is transforming our democracy and the way we receive and engage with information."

\$300 MILLION

The amount Knight Foundation in February 2019 pledged to invest in "building the future of local news and information." GW's Institute for Data, Democracy, and Politics is part of this investment. Among the other recipients: American Journalism Project, ProPublica and Frontline PBS.

DATA AND MOST IMPORTANTLY OUR DEMOCRACY DEPEND ON FACTS

CAN FACT-CHECKING BE SAVED?

CURIOUS THINGS HAPPEN when people are presented with calmly explained factual information. Some embrace it. Others remain utterly unmoved—or they become even more invested in false information that the fact checker was trying to disprove (e.g., "Obama is a Muslim").

The Washington Post's well-regarded Fact Checker has documented more than 12,000 false or misleading claims made by President Trump. But it hardly seems to dent Trump's support, and some people openly mock fact checkers. (Note: IDDP is strictly nonpartisan).

Has fact-checking become useless? IDDP team members don't think so. But they do say it needs to become better engineered and more effective. And they hope to help.

Gauging the impact of fact-checking has proven difficult. Alarm bells went off several years ago when researchers (not at GW) described a "backfire effect" in which factual

corrections seemed to reinforce falsely held beliefs among some ideological people. The theory was that when people are told they're wrong, they can feel threatened and defensive, and dig in even harder to protect their self-image. Subsequent studies, however, have cast doubt on this phenomenon.

A leading researcher is GW's Ethan Porter. The political science professor recently co-authored an academic article that concluded: "We found no corrections capable of triggering backfire... Evidence of factual backfire is far more tenuous than prior research suggests. By and large, citizens heed factual information," even when it challenges their ideological commitments.

That's the good news. The not-so-good news is that fact-checking remains less effective than academics, mainstream news outlets and good-government groups would hope and expect. And it's not entirely clear how make it better.

Fact-checking "is not a panacea," says Tromble, the social scientist. But research points to some of its shortcomings, and IDDP's work may lead to improvements. >>>

<<physicist neil johnson>>

"Hate destroys lives." His research team is gaining new insights "by looking at why it is so resilient and how it can be better tackled."

TEXT-WITH-
<DIV CLAS
RESEARCH
RISE OF DIS
NATIONAL I
THE THREA
<P>WITH /
JOURNALIS
ENGINEERIN
DEMOCRAC
AND POLITI
OF DISTOR
EVENTS ON
INVESTMEN
<P>&LDQUO
IMPORTANT
THOMAS L
FOUNDATION
CONVENING
SOLVE COM
<P>IDDP R
OF ONLINE
PUBLIC PO
STORIES T
WILL USE
SPREAD OF
AS TWITTE
<P>STEVEN
INTERNATIO



SPAN CLASS="DATE-DISPLAY-SINGLE" PROPERTY="DC:DATE" DATATYPE="XSD:DATETIME"
LD-NAME-BODY FIELD-TYPE-TEXT-WITH-SUMMARY FIELD-LABEL-HIDDEN"> <DIV CLA
>A NEW RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY WILL FI
UCA"WE HOPE TO GIVE JOURNALISTS A BETTER STRATEGY TO GET
>WITH A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS SPANNING POLITICAL COMMUNICATION,
GINEERING, THE <A HREF="HTTPS://SMPA.GWU.EDU/INSTITUTE-DATA-DEMOC





CONTENT="2019-07-22T07:40:00-04:00"> JULY 22, 2019 DIV CLASS="FI
SS="FIELD-ITEMS"> <DIV CLASS="FIELD-ITEM EVEN" PROPERTY="CONTENT:ENCODE
GHT THE RISE OF DISTORTED AND MISLEADING INFORMATION ONLINE, WORKING
FACT CHECKS IN FRONT OF PEOPLE AND MAKE IT EFFECTIVE." N.<
JOURNALISM, PHYSICS, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, <<social scientist rebekah tromble>> /
RACY-AND-POLITICS" TARGET="_BLANK">INSTITUTE FOR DATA, DEMOCRA



>>> One dilemma, Tromble says, is that “people are much more likely to be exposed to the original misinformation than to the fact check.” That’s because the original claim might arrive via a sensational tweet or heavily publicized event. Fact checks, by contrast, typically show up later in dispassionate tones, often buried in a newspaper or its website.

Also, Tromble says, the “sticky thing” about someone’s perceptions—be they true or false—usually involves some “emotional contact.” If false claims come wrapped in exciting or agitating contexts, and the subsequent fact checks arrive in sober, academic language, the false claims are “stickier.”

“It’s a really complex problem,” Tromble says. “We hope to give journalists a better strategy to get fact checks in front of people and make it effective.” Perhaps, she says, a jazzier “classic clickbait approach” is needed.

Angie Drobnic Holan is editor of the Poynter Institute’s PolitiFact, known for its “pants on fire” label for egregious lies. Using a newspaper-style approach, PolitiFact has been assessing public statements since 2007. “But we feel like it’s time to take it to the next level and get some of our journalism methods improved by rigorous research,” Holan says.

These are highly partisan times, she says, “and some want to treat fact-checking like a political football. But I do think fact-checking is going to outlive the hyper-partisanship of the moment.” She says PolitiFact and GW are a good fit, “because they share these similar goals of creating knowledge that’s of lasting value.”

Livingston says fact-checking “has enormous value,” but he agrees it must improve. “How do we fashion fact-checking in a way that is successful in helping people update their view of the world so as to disabuse them of their misperceptions?” he said in an interview in his office. IDDP, he said, “will seek better methods.”

“In a sense,” Livingston says, “IDDP is a form of journalism. You try to find the truth, and you tell it for the public’s benefit.”

[/]

FOR JOURNALISTS, ORDER TO BETTER INFORM PUBLIC POLICY DEBATES, THEY ALSO WILL ASSIST JOURNALISTS

DEMOCRACY NEEDS DATA

AS IT SURVEYS THE ONLINE LANDSCAPE, the IDDP team sees plenty to worry about, and plenty of need for better research, data and insights. Even though it’s clear that Russian operatives undermined and damaged the U.S. democratic process in the 2016 elections, we seem poorly prepared to prevent worse interference in 2020 and beyond.

In a mid-August *Washington Post* op-ed, Livingston and two GW colleagues—Trevor Davis and Matthew Hindman—cast doubt on Facebook’s claim that it will use the lessons it learned from European elections to sharply limit foreign interference in future U.S. campaigns.

“Can Facebook really prevent a repeat of the kind of election meddling that Russia conducted in 2016, and that dozens of other countries and nonstate groups are now trying to replicate?” the op-ed asked. “Our research suggests the answer is no... Large-scale manipulation of Facebook is still possible.”

Rebekah Tromble has another concern about major social media platforms: They’re failing to provide researchers with large amounts of data they had promised. “We have less access to the essential data and information that would help us study disinformation ahead of the 2020 election than we did in 2015,” she says, “mainly

because of Cambridge Analytica.”

The Cambridge Analytica scandal of 2018 revealed that the British-based research group had quietly collected personal data from millions of people’s Facebook profiles and used it for political purposes. The revelations triggered public anger and increased scrutiny of Facebook, whose stock price fell sharply.

Tromble says researchers, social media platforms and others must be scrupulously careful and ethical about handling users’ information. But she says some platforms, including Facebook, are using Cambridge Analytica as an excuse to withhold data they rightly had agreed to share with researchers.

A recent *New York Times* article supports Tromble’s concerns. Facebook chief executive Mark Zuckerberg told Congress last spring about “an ambitious plan to share huge amounts of posts, links and other user data with researchers around the world so that they could study and flag disinformation on the site,” the *Times* reported. “But nearly 18 months later, much of the data remains unavailable to academics because Facebook says it has struggled to share the information while also protecting its users’ privacy.”

And the information Facebook eventually releases, the *Times* said, “is expected to be far less comprehensive than originally described.”

Tromble and other IDDP team members say they will make the best use of the data they have, and keep pressing Facebook and others for more. Our democratic, fact-based society demands it, they say.

IDDP’s research inevitably will touch on a highly contentious topic: the degree to which social media platforms like Facebook should be held accountable for hateful or maliciously false commentary on their sites. Team member David Broniatowski, a GW engineering professor specializing in

<<gw president thomas leblanc>>

"Our nation's political discourse, our media, and most importantly, our democracy, depend on facts. This new institute leverages GW's strengths, convening interdisciplinary teams and using data and research to solve complex challenges facing our nation and world."

experimental psychology, hopes eventual regulators will have a solid understanding of the underlying technology—something now often missing.

He notes that some critics call for widespread banning of suspected bad-faith actors and removal of their content, which he calls a "very heavy-handed" response. On the other side, Broniatowski says, many social media companies talk as if almost any new regulations are impossible. "There are gray spaces in between," he says, and meaningful, realistic regulations should be possible.

IDDP has hands-on support from GW President Thomas LeBlanc, who attended the IDDP panel discussion in September and announced the Knight Foundation investment when it was made.

"Our nation's political discourse, our media, and most importantly, our democracy, depend on facts," LeBlanc said. "This new institute leverages GW's strengths, convening interdisciplinary teams and using data and research to solve complex challenges facing our nation and world."

That's an ambitious mission. Livingston says his team is ready. 

TEXT-WITH-SUMMARY FIELD-LABEL-HIDDEN" <D
<DIV CLASS="FIELD-ITEM EVEN" PROPERTY="CONT
RESEARCH INSTITUTE AT THE GEORGE WASHINGTON
RISE OF DISTORTED AND MISLEADING INFORMATION OF
NATIONAL POLICYMAKERS AND JOURNALISTS ON STR
THE THREAT TO DEMOCRACY POSED BY DIGITAL PROP
<P>WITH A TEAM OF RESEARCHERS SPANNING
JOURNALISM, PHYSICS, INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS,
ENGINEERING, THE <A HREF="HTTPS://SMP
DEMOCRACY-AND-POLITICS" TARGET="_BLANK">INSTIT
AND POLITICS (IDDP) WILL BE A RESEARCH HUB
OF DISTORTED INFORMATION ONLINE, SHARING
EVENTS ON COMBATING DISINFORMATION. IDDP IS S
INVESTMENT FROM THE JOHN S. AND JAMES L
<P>&LDQUO;OUR NATION&RSQUO;S POLITICAL DISCOUR
IMPORTANTLY OUR DEMOCRACY, DEPEND ON FACT
THOMAS LEBLANC SAID. &LDQUO;WITH GENEROUS
FOUNDATION, THIS NEW INSTITUTE LEVERAGES
CONVENING INTERDISCIPLINARY TEAMS AND USING
SOLVE COMPLEX CHALLENGES FACING OUR NATION
<P>IDDP RESEARCHERS WILL PRODUCE TIMELY PUB
OF ONLINE CONTENT RELATED TO CURRENT EVENTS IN
PUBLIC POLICY DEBATES. THEY ALSO WILL ASSIST J
STORIES THAT HELP CORRECT DISTORTED PUBLIC M
WILL USE GW&RSQUO;S EXPANDING DATA INFRASTR
SPREAD OF INFORMATION ACROSS THE INTERNET, INC
AS TWITTER, FACEBOOK, REDDIT AND THE RUSSIAN
<P>STEVEN LIVINGSTON, PROFESSOR OF MEDIA AN
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, WILL BE THE INAUGURAL D
WHICH IS A CROSS-DISCIPLINARY INITIATIVE OF GW



PAUL MILLER

HOME

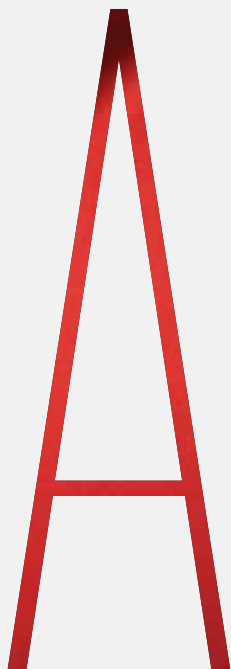
JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR MEGAN K. STACK, BA '98, HAS BEEN A FINALIST FOR A NATIONAL BOOK AWARD AND A PULITZER PRIZE.

WORK

IN HER NEW MEMOIR, *WOMEN'S WORK*, THE FORMER *LOS ANGELES TIMES* WAR CORRESPONDENT RECKONS WITH MOTHERHOOD, PRIVILEGE, DOMESTIC LABOR AND, TO HER SURPRISE, HER READERSHIP.

HELP

Q&A BY RACHEL MUIR



After her first son's first birthday, Megan K. Stack, BA '98, began to exclude her nanny from photos.

Little Max's birthday party had been small—his parents and nanny were the only guests—but joyous, feted with homemade carrot cake and cut-up fruit in their high-rise Beijing apartment.

Confused but happy, Max presided over the festivities from a balloon-adorned high chair, ravishing watermelon chunks with admirable speed and gusto.

Afterward while he was napping off the sugar, Stack went to look through the photos her husband had snapped.

Xiao Li—the woman who cleaned their apartment, cooked their meals and cared for their child—was front and center in them, beaming at the birthday boy from under a glittery party hat or giggling at Max's frosting-and-watermelon-besmirched face. Stack's husband, Tom, was not in a single shot.

The photos made it hard for Stack to look away from several uneasy truths: that Xiao Li was indeed with her and her son more than her husband was; that Stack and her husband relied on help to manage their household; and that the woman they employed, who doted on their son, could not afford to have her own daughter live with her.

The birthday pictures went unshared, unframed.

A National Book Award finalist for her 2010 book *Every Man in This Village Is a Liar: An Education in War*, a Pulitzer Prize finalist and *Los Angeles Times* war correspondent who'd reported from across the globe, Stack had quit her job in 2011 after

her first son was born, planning to write a novel. Her husband was a journalist stationed then in Beijing, where their first son was born, and later Delhi, where in 2013 their second son was born.

What emerged instead from the time was a different kind of book, *Women's Work: A Reckoning with Work and Home*, in which Stack unflinchingly chronicles her relationships with three women who were domestic employees—and a lot more. It's a Gordian knot of intimacy, imbalance, dependency, resentment and gratitude.

Drawing on her experience and interviews with the women and their families, Stack also raises a curtain on the inequality inherent in the domestic labor market, especially but not exclusively in developing countries, and how societal expectations for women and available inexpensive labor combine too often to buoy relatively wealthier women's success on the backs of their poorer counterparts.

Stack talked to *GW Magazine* from her home in Singapore about the experience of writing so intimately about herself and family, the outsized expectations women face, and how men aren't reading a book titled *Women's Work*.

You've spent your career as a journalist where you're taught to be objective, to not be the story. What was it like writing something so deeply personal?

I wasn't necessarily excited about writing about my family and my household. In day-to-day life I'm pretty private, but I did feel like there was no other way I would have the access to explain what I was trying to explain.

That said, I think that everything you write is incredibly personal. I think it's always risky. When I was writing the book, I didn't allow myself to think about people actually reading it, especially on the first draft, because if I did, I wouldn't be able to complete it.

For me, it's not so much myself that I worry about. I think you get beyond that feeling of shyness. But I did have to think about my kids. When they got older, would they somehow feel that this violated their privacy?

The truth is if you worry too much about what the people you're writing about will think, it compromises your ability to write anything. I think every writer just finds that line. There's a famous quote from the author Anne Lamott along the lines of if people wanted you to write more nicely about them, they should've behaved better.

You write in the beginning about how unexpectedly overwhelming new motherhood was for you, how you reached a certain sleep-deprived point where you were desperate for any help and that kind of set the stage for what followed.

It's a huge adjustment to have a baby, and I think that women and men don't necessarily experience it in the same way. For couples raised with more egalitarian expectations, you think you're going to live with maybe not an identical but a very equal experience with your romantic partner. It was probably less shocking in past generations when women didn't really grow up with these expectations.

I wanted to include this in the book because I wanted to capture the totality of the experience of what women go through with the process of pregnancy and birth and the marital adjustments. But it's interesting to me how many readers are really focused on that aspect. In the grand scheme of the book, it's kind of a minor aspect.

I think when you write about issues that are sensitive for most people, they tend to read their own lives into it. That's been interesting for me. I get a lot of notes about people's marriages and their relationships, and I'm like, "Whoa."

So what to you was the book about? What are they missing?

To me, this book is about domestic labor and how it functions in a globalized society. It's about inequality. It's an economic book in some ways. It is about the labor force, the ethics of operating as somebody from a wealthier country and a globalized context. All of these things, which I thought would speak to everyone.

I often see that the answer for women who want to participate in the job market is domestic labor. It's this idea that somehow you can, as I wrote in the book, bring poor people from elsewhere to work in your house. And I wanted to kind of sound the alarm on that.

You felt very conflicted about hiring domestic help, although obviously you did it anyway. I think a lot of times women do feel a level of guilt or shame, while men are often just another level removed from it and less dependent on it.

Yes, a hundred percent yes. I always find it disingenuous when I look at "perfect" images from families where everybody's working.

And I know that there's no way that this situation makes sense unless they have help.

But nobody wants to say I have help. No one wants to cop to that. It's easier for men to say, "We're just not going to do that," because they're ultimately not the ones who are going to pay the price in the same way that their wives will if they have domestic help, even though there may really be no other realistic option for women to be able to work.

If you do hire a domestic worker, you have a stain on your conscience. It's like you've preyed upon somebody weaker than you. The whole tone is extremely hostile to women and very, very unhelpful.

I did not write this book to beat anybody up for the choices that they've made, because I feel like none of us in this situation have great choices. The mothers who are the prospective employers do not have great choices, and neither do the women who are the prospective employees. For both, the way things are currently structured, that might be their best move or that might be their only chance to raise the money that they need for their families. The whole thing is kind of a mess.

You reach the conclusion in the book that the answer is men raising their awareness of how success for women, especially mothers, can often come at the expense of other women. How have men responded to the book?

Well, when I set out to write this book—in retrospect this was very naive of me—I did not think of this as being a women's issues book, that it would be targeted toward women, read just by women. I came out of a journalism background, writing about issues relevant to everybody. So I took for granted that what I wrote would be read by both genders.

And more than upset me, it just sort of surprised me that men aren't reading it. To be fair, I have had some male readers, and I think at least one man has written about the book. But the vast, vast majority of the readers that I hear from—as well as the people who have reviewed the book or written about the book in any way—they're women. And I didn't realize that was going to be a thing. I actually got a lot of notes from guy friends saying that their wives really liked the book.

In retrospect, if I had been a little savvy about the marketplace, I would've foreseen it. I still remember when I saw an old friend who's a journalist. I was telling him about the book I was working on, and he was like, "Oh yeah, that's really interesting, but is anyone who has a Y chromosome going to

read it?" And I was like, "What? What do you mean?"

Of course, I later remembered that remark because he foresaw this from a mile away, but it didn't even occur to me.

How then can we get men to pay attention?

As far as engaging men in this discussion, I think it's really difficult. But I feel like I've learned a lot through seeing readers' response to the book. I've been surprised how much anger there is. I feel that by the time women finally start talking about these things out loud, they're in many cases enraged.

In a lot of ways I think the anger is legitimate. But I do think, unfortunately, it's that same old trap in discussing women's issues with men, that if you sound angry it always ends up delegitimizing what you're saying, no matter how righteous your anger may be.

I think men have used that as a way to duck the conversation. I think in many households these issues are taboo. There's so much being written about the issue of men's participation in housework, but if you look at who's doing the writing, it's almost always women writing about this issue among themselves.

And so, is that going to move us anywhere? How do you force an entire gender to engage in something that they have historically not had to engage with? And that is going to mean in realistic terms more work for them? That's really difficult.

I do think that there are things we can do, both in our own personal lives and socially and structurally, there are solutions that do not involve hiring impoverished women in ad hoc positions. For example, Elizabeth Warren has a childcare proposal as part of her famous "plans." I've read it, and it's actually a pretty good plan that would change a lot for women being able to access the labor market, being able to work.

The way that we're raising boys and girls could be done in a more artfully and equalitarian way. Everybody could be introduced to basic domestic skills and everyone could be introduced to basic, let's say, manufacturing or tool skills. There are things that you can do to start to move the way that people think of gender roles. But I think that we're not really at a point where most men and even most women are ready to take this on with the seriousness that it requires. It's very hard because it's very personal and it exists in private places people want to protect.

So I think we have a long way to go.

What have you learned from the three women you depict in the book?

I think personally—and not that it's someone's job to come and give me an illuminating experience in life, to get the wisdom of the local people or whatever—but I did learn that it's not really over until it's over. These women went through unbelievable challenges, ups and downs, with really no resources to deal with them.

And the way that they could just somehow get back up on their feet after getting knocked down in all these different ways because they don't have a choice. These aren't people who can afford to languish in bed for a week and feel sorry for themselves, they have to get on with it. I think that kind of strength and that scrappiness is something that I really aspire to it. Now I feel like when I'm sort of starting to feel sorry for myself, I'm just like, oh yeah, come on.


Yeah, and how have these experiences changed your life? ... [long pause] ... Or have they?

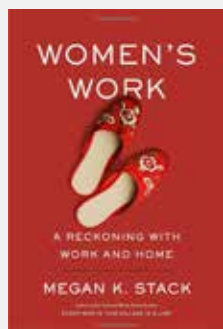
The truth is, during those years of my life, these women were my main companions. If you did a time-use study of those years, of who I spent the most time with, talked to the most, it would definitely be these three women, because we lived together in a kind of simulation of a family life, which, of course, is not a family life because they were employed.

I don't know if my life was changed, but I tried to imagine what it would have been like to be a mother in different circumstances, and it's very, very hard for me to envision it. This is what my experience was.

These women left a very strong mark on me and on our family, there's no question. Will I ever feel easy about these relationships? Probably not, I don't think I resolved everything and tied a nice bow around it because I wrote this book. I have lingering questions, lingering dissatisfaction. But I also think that's a part of life no matter where you are and what choices you're making.

Have the women who worked for you read the book?

I don't know, I'm thinking not. I really want them to, but I don't know that they will. It's kind of up to them if they want to read it or not. But I'm still connected with the women. I think we're part of each other's lives. With or without the book, it would've been that way. 



The following excerpt is drawn from *Women's Work: A Reckoning with Work and Home* (Doubleday, 2019) by Megan K. Stack.

MARY GOT SICK. She burned with fever; she threw up; she couldn't control her bowels.

I sent water and packets of rehydration salts back to her room. Every day I called and tried to convince her to go to a doctor. Every day she declined. She was getting better, she insisted. She'd rather rest.

Meanwhile, I was in a panic. My edits were due, and I'd planned to buckle down for two weeks of intense work. But I couldn't do it without Mary helping to watch my two young children.

Mary had been our kids' nanny since we moved to India four years earlier. A single mother who'd left her own children with their grandmother so she could earn money in the capital, she lived in the "staff quarters" that came with our rented flat. With my husband frequently gone on reporting trips, Mary was the only reason I got any work done at all.

Now, with Mary out of commission, I scrambled. I wrote groggily after the kids went to bed. When my husband was home, I holed up in cafes with my laptop. It wasn't enough time; I didn't have enough focus. I needed childcare. I needed Mary.

I was keenly aware that I'd been tripped up, yet again, by the very things I was writing about—the ethical pitfalls and logistical dysfunctions of paid

domestic labor. How easily Mary and I had switched from two women whose needs synched up neatly (my need for childcare, her need for money) into two women with serious problems they couldn't solve for one another. It happened overnight, with no warning or backup plan for either of us.

A week after Mary first fell ill, I was walking home from a long Saturday of revising my manuscript in noisy coffeehouses. Winter soot blew in drifts over the city; a faint wind combed the leaves. I was coming around the corner to our house when I heard a quiet voice: "Hello."

It was Mary, limping along with a sack dangling heavily from her wrist. Her face was grayish and bloated.

"How are you feeling?"

"Better." She spoke softly, like a small girl.

"Are you still having diarrhea?"

"Yes, too much."

"You look terrible," I said.

"I couldn't walk until today," she said. "The neighbors complained because the smell from my toilet was so bad. They thought there was a dead rat. They made me clean the bathroom and drain because, you know, they said, 'We'll all get sick.'"

"Oh my God." This was much bleaker than I'd imagined. "Why wouldn't you go to a doctor?"

"I didn't think I could come down the stairs."

"You didn't think you could get out of the house?"

"I thought, 'I will die here.'"

"But you kept saying you were getting better," I reeled with a mix of tenderness and frustration. "We

could have helped you.”

“Sorry.”

“No, it’s not—Listen. I think you need to go to the hospital. Go home and rest, okay? I’ll call you.”

I walked home in a daze, mulling the gravity of Mary’s condition. She had always led me to believe that Delhi brimmed with friends and relatives and church acquaintances. But I could see that, in her time of need, she’d been alone. She’d thought she might die, and nobody had come.

I should have checked on her in person, I thought now. I hadn’t wanted to infantilize her or barge into her private space with some kind of neo-feudalistic entitlement. I’d imagined how I’d feel if I called in sick only to have my boss show up at my door. But now it was clear to me that, according to the unwritten understandings of our employment relationship, I should have taken charge.

And yet this made no sense. This difficulty was built into our relationship: her moments of crisis would always find me overwhelmed by the abrupt loss of childcare. Never had the limitations of employment in my house been more obvious. Mary was not a daycare. I was not a company. We were just two people who’d tried to cobble together an arrangement that was mutually beneficial. When it came right down to it, we were each on her own.

I sent Mary to the hospital and, in a few days, she’d recovered.

But I was left shaken. Mary and I had been in different chambers of the same household. She’d needed me, and I’d needed her too, but we couldn’t

help or even see each other. We’d languished in parallel, together but separate, needing and not receiving, trapped in the rooms we’d chosen with the hopes of brighter circumstances.

And I kept thinking, there has to be something better.

I gave birth to my children in China and India. They are the sons of migrants, born into expatriation—Americans growing up in Asian megacities on the cusp of the Asian century. It wasn’t my goal to have children overseas; it just happened that way. I’m a journalist and a writer. I didn’t want to abandon my work for motherhood, and I didn’t.

The babies were born. My husband came and went for work. I stayed home with my children and my writing and the women we hired to watch our children and clean our house so that I could keep writing. These women and I had little in common. They were poor women, brown women, migrant women. But there was one crucial commonality, and it was the reason we had been tossed together: We were working mothers. The most important employees who worked for us—women who shifted my thinking and cleared the way for my work and cared most lovingly for my children—were migrants who’d left their own children behind to work in the city, and ended up in my house. We spun webs of compromise and sacrifice and cash, and it all revolved around me—my work, my money, my imagined utopias of one-on-one fair trade that were never quite achieved.

The same sets of stories echo around the globe. These are the stories of women who become mothers and still want to earn their pay. How can we succeed at a job when there is so much work at home? How can we raise our children when we are so busy with our jobs?

Our minds go to the same places—our partners, and when they fail us, who can we hire, and if we can't afford to hire anybody, then who can we otherwise press into service, what grandmother or aunt or neighbor? What leverage do we have; what chits can we cash?

The statistics tell us what we already know—women are doing most of the work. American women spend twice as much time cooking and cleaning as men, and three times as much time doing laundry. Into this global problem of women doing the housework flows the solution of domestic workers: There are as many as one hundred million domestic workers in the world, and their ranks swell every day.

Who are these workers? They are mostly women, and many of them are migrants.

The global boom in domestic labor is a story about income inequality, spikes in migration, rural decimation and the explosion of increasingly dystopian megacities. People abandon their dying villages to find work. They get to cities and wind up working in other people's households. These women migrant workers are crucial because they solve a conundrum: middle-class and wealthy women demand a place in the job market—or at least a measure of leisure commensurate with their social ranking—but their

male partners don't want to do more housework.

So they hire another woman and, in many cases, they hire a woman from somewhere else. People sometimes talk about poor women as if they were another product that should be moved to market, like underwear from Bangladesh or mobile phones from China. One day a thirtysomething American woman I know—single, white, successful, city-dwelling—posted an article on Facebook about how shockingly difficult it is to raise babies. “That's why we need to import cheap nannies!” one of her friends replied.

Her phrasing was brazen, but I've heard polite and veiled versions of this suggestion many times. Seldom do I hear the plainest truth: that this supposed model for women's emancipation depends, itself, upon a permanent underclass of impoverished women.

But of course these stories are not only about women—they also scream the reality of men who manage to duck not only the labor itself, but the surrounding guilt and recrimination. All those well-meaning men who say progressive things in public and then retreat into private to coast blissfully on the disproportionate toil of women. The disproportionate burden women carry is a daily and repetitive and eternal truth, and it's a dangerous truth, because if we press this point we can blow our households to pieces and take our families apart.

But cooking and cleaning and childcare are everything. They are the ultimate truth. They underpin and enable everything we do. The perpetual allocation of this most crucial and inevitable work along gender lines sets up women for failure and men

for success. It saps the energy and burdens the brains of half the population.

And yet honest discussion of housework is still treated as a taboo.

I'm not the sort of person who's supposed to have these kinds of problems. These are the rarified problems of an untouchable elite. That's not me. By breeding and temperament, I'm a peasant—more specifically, an American crossbreed of servants and supervisors. Status is a question of who may command and who must obey; who barges through and who steps aside. But mine was a white family in America, and so those distinctions are not carried in our genes. Status has been a circumstance external to ourselves; a thing we have gained and lost from one generation to the next.

When I was a fractious and chronically sleepless new mother with a book to write, I lived in Beijing. I hired a young woman I called Xiao Li, and quickly came to depend upon her. No, that's an understatement—I came to believe Xiao Li was the only reason I hadn't yet suffered a nervous breakdown. I doubted, in the madness of those early months, whether I could function as a parent without her.

Between us seethed an ocean of difference so vast we couldn't perceive one another clearly, even when we were in the same room. And yet it was always in the back of my mind that I came from people who did the same work as Xiao Li. I could trace the reversals of fortune that had elevated and abased generations of women in my family. I knew these changes were tied

to movement, to uprooting ourselves and crossing seas.

And we had done that. Xiao Li and I existed together in rooms that we'd traveled to reach. So maybe anything could happen. Maybe Xiao Li or her descendants will end up rich in the United States. Maybe I will end up poor.

Years later, when I started reporting about the lives of the women who'd worked in my house, I discovered that employers of domestic workers are extremely sensitive. When it comes to domestic work and motherhood—believe me, I have learned this—everybody has a point to argue. It was enough to hear that I was writing about my fate getting intertwined with impoverished working mothers in China and India; that I would write about their origins, their paths to domestic work, their childcare arrangements. At that point, the conversation usually disintegrated.

But I didn't want my family to leave behind a trail of forgotten women who once upon a time took care of our children. I didn't want my boys to grow up and say, I had nannies once, they were like part of the family, as if the women existed only as a function of ourselves. I wanted to commit a fuller truth to print. Our boys should know there were children we never saw; sacrifices we couldn't make right.

But to do that, I'd have to track down the women I'd lost. I'd have to interview them and ask their permission to write about them. I couldn't predict what I'd find, or how it would change my perception of my own household and my own responsibility.

Finding the women, I realized, could be dangerous.

CLASS NOTES

// 1960s AND EARLIER

Joan M. Bondareff, BA '65, was appointed vice chair of committee articles of the American Bar Association Marine Resources Committee for the 2019-20 term.

Frank Burtnett, MA '65, EdD '79, authored the second edition of *Careers Errors: Straight Talk about the Steps and Missteps of Career Development* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2019).

// '70s

Patricia Scangas, BA '72, authored *The Case of Emil Diesel*

(Xlibris Corp, April 2018), under her pen name, Patricia Menton. Inspired by true events of art theft and conspiracy, the novel traces a man's quest to reclaim his father's art collection, confiscated in East Germany during the Cold War. The novel received the 2019 "Best Fiction" prize from the Pacific Book Review.

Mark R. Pressman, BS '73, authored *Sleepwalking, Criminal Behavior, and Reliable Scientific Evidence: A Guide for Expert Witnesses* (American Psychological Association, 2018), which explores what happens when a person who is charged

with a violent crime claims "the sleepwalking defense," and sleep experts are consulted to examine the validity of the claim.

Joseph René Smith, BS '74, MD '80, volunteered this summer in central Vietnam as a medical director for the Vietnam Health Clinic, a University of Washington student-led volunteer organization responsible for establishing mobile medical clinics in rural Vietnamese villages. This was his sixth Vietnam visit in a medical volunteer role.

Howard L. Williams, LLM '75, was selected by his peers for inclusion in the 2020 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Ross C. "Rocky" Anderson, JD '78, received in July the Leonard Weinglass in Defense of Civil Liberties Award from the Civil Rights Section of the American Association for Justice.

Amy L. Edwards, JD '78, was elected fellow in the American College of Environmental Lawyers. She is currently a partner at Holland & Knight in Washington, D.C., and is co-chair of the firm's national environmental team.

Harry A. Milman, PhD '78, authored the novel *SOYUZ: The Final Flight* (Xlibris Us, November 2017). When the oldest astronaut to fly in space dies mysteriously after a Russian space capsule docks at the International Space Station, a forensic toxicologist attempts to uncover the source of the suspicious deaths aboard the station.

Mark Tobey, MBA '78, JD '84, joined Husch Blackwell as senior counsel in its Austin, Texas, office.

// '80s

Neal Barnard, MD '80, authored *Your Body in Balance: The New*



MULTICULTURAL & AFFINITY *Alumni Networks*

- GW Asian and Pacific Islander Alumni Network
- GW Black Alumni Association
- GW Latino Alumni Network
- GW LGBTQ+ Alumni Network

More networks to come - stay tuned!

Multicultural & Affinity Alumni Networks provide GW alumni the opportunity to connect with fellow alumni who share their identities and interests. By joining a Multicultural & Affinity Network, you will stay in the know about exciting ways to build community, including social events, service opportunities, and supporting multicultural students.

To learn more or to sign up, visit:

go.gwu.edu/MulticulturalAlumniNetworks

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC

GW

Alumni Association

Science of Foods, Hormones, and Health (Grand Central Publishing, February 2020), which offers advice on how to use foods to rebalance your body's hormones.

Robert Jacobson, MSA '80, has been elected chairman of the board for Pen Air Federal Credit Union in Pensacola, Fla. Pen Air has assets of \$1.5 billion and 100,000 members.

Ken Turino, MA '81, and GW Assistant Professor of Museum Studies Max van Balgooy edited *Reimagining Historic House Museums: New Approaches and Proven Solutions* (Rowman & Littlefield, October 2019). They offer tools and techniques drawn from nonprofit management, business strategy and software development to profile how historic sites use these newer methods to become more engaging and relevant to their communities.

Lynn M. Brown, JD '83, was honored at the *Long Island Herald's* 2019 Top Lawyers of Long Island Awards Gala. She is of counsel to Meyer, Suozzi, English & Klein, P.C., and is part of the litigation and dispute resolution and education law practice groups in Garden City, N.Y.

H. K. Roy, JD '83, authored *American Spy: Wry Reflections on My Life in the CIA* (Prometheus Books, September 2019), a memoir about a former CIA operations officer's years of danger, intrigue and adventure, written as a series of vignettes.

Luis J. Fujimoto, BS '85, was invested as a Knight of the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes and of Malta.

Mary Wakefield Buxton, MA '86, authored her 14th book, *Tripping: A Writer's Journeys*, which honors her 56-year-and-counting marriage to her husband, Chip.

Signed copies of her new book can be purchased by mailing Rappahannock Press, P.O. Box 549, Urbanna, VA 23175, and adding \$6 for fees and tax.

Michael Heim, JD '86, was named Houston Intellectual Property Lawyer of the Year through a peer-nominated process by *The Best Lawyers in America*.

Ian D. Meklinsky, BBA '88, JD '91, was sworn in as chair of the New Jersey State Bar Association's labor and employment law section.

Helen K. Michael, LLM '89, joined the insurance recovery group of Blank Rome LLP in its Washington, D.C., office.

// '90s

Eugene L. "Pete" Wolfe, MA '91, authored *Dangerous Seats: Parliamentary Violence in the United Kingdom* (Amberley Publishing, October 2019). The

book examines how instances of individual strife—from arrest and imprisonment to physical and verbal brawls on the floor—against members of Parliament have reflected changes and developments in British political history.

Christopher E. Ezold, BA '92, joined Wisler Pearlstine, LLP, as partner.

R. Thomas Sultzter, MEM '92, authored *Conception of Magnificence: John Quincy Adams and the Birth of American Astronomy* (Independently published, July 2019). The book traces from childhood to later life the sixth U.S. president's fascination with what he called "the sublimest science."

Jennifer Frank Pontzer, BA '93, became managing director and chief operating officer of ISOS Group, Inc., a leading sustainability consulting firm

Continued on page 62 →

DONOR SUPPORT HAS A DIRECT IMPACT ON GW STUDENTS' LIVES AND THE LIVES OF THOSE THEY TOUCH. IT'S WRITTEN ALL OVER THEIR FACES.

Make your annual gift at go.gwu.edu/annualgift.

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON, DC



"Because of donor generosity to the Capital Connection Fund, I had the OPPORTUNITY to intern at a health clinic in Guatemala. This hands-on experience affirmed my goal to design health programs that empower and promote healthy communities"

Eskedar Dejene, MPH
Class of 2020

"Gifts to the libraries and the Top Textbooks Program give me and my classmates access to the textbooks and resources we need to be SUCCESSFUL while reducing the financial burden each semester."

Steven Xinglan
Class of 2020



ALUMNI

Getting to Know Patty Carocci

Top alumni relations officer talks alumni engagement, D.C. sports and Cher.

By Ruth Steinhardt

Associate Vice President of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving **Patty Carocci** joined GW this summer, and she'll help shape the next stages of the GW alumni experience. But there's more to her than 25 years of professional experience. *GW Magazine* sat down with Carocci to find out her likes, her dislikes, and why she never leaves a baseball game early.

What her job means to her:

It's all about engagement. It's about finding ways to be meaningful to alumni. How can the school be of value to you? What can we offer? Before the internet, alumni associations would be a way to stay in contact with your friends. But with social media, you don't need us for that anymore. So we want to stay relevant by finding new ways to connect alumni with the school and each other, like industry networks and affinity groups and so on. We're asking alumni what they want and need, and we're going to figure out how to deliver that.

Plus, part of our job is throwing parties. So we always want to throw better parties.

Favorite place to live:

Washington, D.C. I've been in D.C. for about 20 years. I like the sports, the culture, the food, everything.

Favorite sports team:

The Nationals. I actually went to the National League Wild Card game this year—the energy in that crowd was

incredible. We never sat down the entire game. There was a long stretch where the Nats were losing, and we felt defeated. But I always force myself to stay until the end of games, because when I was a kid my father always made us leave early to “beat the traffic,” and we would miss all the good stuff.

So then that hit in the eighth inning came and suddenly the Nats were winning. It was electric. Everyone was on a high. I was dragging the next day, but it was so worth it.

I love being a sports fan. You make friends with your neighbors, you're dancing, you're high-fiving everybody. Which always makes me laugh, because we didn't do anything! I had nothing to do with that hit!

Favorite book she's read recently:

A Place for Us, by Fatima Farheen Mirza. It was a lovely reminder that you don't know other people's internal experiences.

Least favorite book she's read recently:

The Goldfinch. I think you either love it or you hate it.

Movie she'd watch forever:

The Birdcage. I've seen it so many times, and I laugh every single time.

Favorite superhero:

The Hulk.

A skill she'd love to have:

Figure skating.

Guilty pleasure:

I've been addicted lately to documentaries on fashion. And I love to watch awards shows and pick my favorite looks. Mandy Moore at the Emmys, that pink and red dress? Love, love, loved it.

Comfort food:

Ben and Jerry's Peanut Butter Cup, with a lot of chocolate sauce. I like a good Oreo, too—I definitely have a sweet tooth.

Dream vacation:

Bali, Morocco or Australia. I travel a lot—South Africa was my favorite. Once I hit North and South Dakota, I'll have been to all 50 states.

Celebrity she'd invite to a dinner party:

Cher. A hundred percent. She's just the best.



COLONIALS WEEKEND

2019 Spirit of GW Awards

Five alums were honored.

Formerly the GW Alumni Achievement Awards, the Spirit of GW Awards are given to alumni and university friends who epitomize achievement, commitment and generosity at GW.

The Spirit of GW Awards were bestowed in September during the annual Colonials Weekend 2019, which brought thousands of alumni, families and friends to campus.

RECENT ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Sally A. Nuamah, BA '11

Nuamah, an assistant professor at Northwestern, was recently named one of *Forbes* magazine's "30 under 30" in education. She also founded the TWII Foundation, a scholarship organization for women first-generation students, some of whom were featured in her first book, *How Girls Achieve* (Harvard University Press, April 2019). She served as a member of the GW Board of Trustees from 2014 to 2018.

ALUMNI OUTSTANDING SERVICE AWARD Barbara Ann Fleming, BS '81, MS '85

Fleming has served on the GW School of Engineering and Applied Science's National Advisory Council since 2016 and was a member of the 2018 NAC Women in Engineering Task Force where she investigated best practices at top engineering schools. She also has been a mentor for women in engineering through various organizations.

GW PHILANTHROPY AWARD Mary Jean Lindner, GWSB '51, and Tad Lindner, AA '50, BA '51, HON '94

The Lindners have been partners in life and philanthropy since 1951. The couple supports numerous endowed funds across GW, which benefit scholarships and faculty positions. They have also made annual gifts to the university for 68 consecutive years and established planned gifts to benefit GW after their lifetimes. Tad Linder is a GW trustee emeritus.

DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD Mark R. Shenkman, MBA '67

Shenkman is considered a pioneer of the high-yield bond and loan markets. He served in multiple executive asset management positions at companies such as Lehman Brothers Kuhn Loeb, First Investors Asset Management and Fidelity Management and Research Company before founding Shenkman Capital. He also established one of Wall Street's earliest departments for research and trading of high-yield securities. He is a GW trustee emeritus.



As GW approaches its bicentennial in 2021, we are proud to illustrate the strength of our community and our commitment to making history. (proud.gwu.edu)

dedicated to accelerating positive change through the advancement of nonfinancial/environmental, social and governance reporting and responsible management practices.

Jenny Thompson, MA '93, authored *The Takeover 1968: Student Protest, Campus Politics, and Black Student Activism at Northwestern University* (Evanston History Center Press, June 2019).

Scott Abeles, BA '94, has joined Carlton Fields as senior counsel in the firm's Washington, D.C., office. He is a member of the national class actions practice group.

Amy Impellizzeri, JD '95, authored *Why We Lie* (Wyatt-MacKenzie Publishing, March 2019), a story that exposes the core of the #MeToo movement in the legal and political realm.

Daniel McCuaig, BA '95, was named partner at Cohen Milstein Seller & Toll in the firm's Washington, D.C., antitrust practice.

Yahia Lababidi, BA '96, authored *Signposts to Elsewhere* (Hay House Publishers, 2019), a book of aphorisms to help re-awaken your day-to-day thought process.

David Poyer, MA '96, authored *Overthrow* (St. Martin's Press, December 2019), the next novel in the acclaimed series featuring Admiral Dan Lenson as the Allies struggle to survive World War III and converge against China, North Korea and Iran.

Aman Vij, BS '96, was appointed board member to the capital chapter of JDRCF, the leading global organization funding type-1 diabetes research.

Ada Sut-Man, BAccy '97, is the chief financial officer of the American Academy of Periodontology in Chicago.

Sorayana Bravo, MA '99, authored *¿Qué le pasó a Venezuela?: Un análisis sobre la historia y el patriotismo* (Bowker Identifier Services, May 2019). Providing an in-depth historical analysis, the book investigates the presence and absence of patriotism as it relates to Venezuelan society from the years leading up to the country's

socialist rise and through the death of Hugo Chávez in 2013.

Nick Nissley, EdD '99, was named president of Northwestern Michigan College in Traverse City, Mich.

// '00s

Marci Goldstein Kokalas, JD '00, joined Goldberg Segalla's Global Insurances Services in the firm's Newark, N.J., office.

Karen Sanzo, MA '00, EdD '06, was awarded the 2019 Master Professor Award from the University Council for Educational Administration.

Jason Benion, BA '01, joined Saxton & Stump as a shareholder and chair of the firm's newly formed death care group.

Theresa McCoy, BBA '01, became the owner of American Community Management. She had served since 2018 as CEO and president of the property management firm, which is based in Hanover, Md.

Christine Marie Schmidt, BFA '01, is the creative force behind Yellow Owl Workshop, which offers products with a sophisticated yet playful aesthetic—rose and rosé lapel pins, sloth socks, illustrated greeting cards and Carve-a-Stamp kits. She founded the company in 2007, and her products can be purchased online at YellowOwlWorkshop.com or at national retailers such as Barnes & Noble, Paper Source and Nordstrom.

Anibal Armendaris, BA '02, participated in Miami University's Earth expeditions global field course in Australia in August. She studied coral reef ecology and the conservation of marine systems along the Great Barrier Reef.

Lisette Morton, MA '02, a 20-year Capitol Hill veteran, was named the vice president of public policy and governmental affairs for Sony Music Entertainment.

Paula Wolferseder Yabar, MBA '02, joined American Rivers as senior vice president of advancement.

Ran Walker, JD '02, was awarded the 2019 National Indie Author Project Award and is the author

of *Daybreak* (45 Alternate Press, LLC, April 2018), a novel about a widower's struggle to return to normal life and his attempt to navigate a developing relationship with a woman half his age.

Josh Schimmerling, BBA '04, MA '06, was recently recognized by his two children, Abby and Jacob, and wife, **Jessica Schimmerling, BA '05, MA '09**, as the best father and husband in the world.

Liz Castelli, BA '05, along with **Adette C. Contreras, BBA '06**, and **Erica Taylor, BA '06**—all former a cappella singers with GW Vibes—founded in 2010 Tinsel Experiential Design, an event design and production company that BizBash named as one of the top 10 event designers in North America. At a recent conference, Taylor met **Emily Willis-Campbell, BA '96**, who owns her own wedding planning company, Bella Event Design & Planning, in Colorado, while volunteering with the Disabled Persons Organization of The Bahamas.

Najma Khorrami, BS '06, MPH '12, launched the Gratitude Circle, a social media empowerment app and positivity platform that functions by encouraging users to express gratitude as often as possible.

Alison Walsh, BA '06, was named to *PR Week* magazine's 2019 "Top 40 Under 40 Executives" list. In September 2018, she married David Hamerman, who, she says, did not make the wise decision of attending GW. Perhaps in an act of retributive justice, many of her former GW classmates, including her old rugby teammates, were in attendance at their Scranton, Pa., ceremony. The couple now lives in Inwood, Manhattan.

Anna K. Milunas, BA '07, joined Blank Rome LLP in its Los Angeles office as an associate in the insurance recovery group.

John-Carlos Estrada, BA '09, joined CBS Austin as a morning news anchor. He was previously a weekend evening anchor and reporter for WINK News in Fort Myers/Naples, Fla.

Paul M. Kerlin, JD '09, was elevated to counsel at Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP. He practices white-collar criminal and complex civil litigation

defense work in the firm's Washington, D.C., office.

// '10s

Alan Romero, BA '10, was appointed deputy attorney general at the California attorney general's office.

Joseph E. Silvia, LLM '10, joined Howard & Howard in their Chicago office.

Marisa Grimes, BA '12, will be serving for the next two years as One Acre Fund Rwanda's expansion lead and helping to extend the current program to include 300,000 new clients.

Shadi Bakour, BBA '13, founded PathWater, a company that produces the first and only infinitely reusable aluminum bottle in the beverage industry. The company's mission is to put an end to single-use plastic bottles.

Nicole Catá, JD '15, MA '15, finished in August her clerkship at the Staff Attorney's Office of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit. In September, she joined the Immigration Intervention Project at Sanctuary for Families. As a staff attorney at Sanctuary, she helps people who have experienced gender-based violence secure and maintain lawful immigration status and obtain U.S. citizenship.

Irina R. Sadovnic, JD '16, joined Genovese Joblove & Battista, P.A., as an associate in the firm's Miami office.

Sarah Fannon, BA '17, was a contributing author to the LGBTQIA+ horror anthology *Black Rainbow* (NBH, 2019).

Mounir Alafrangy, MS '18, was selected as one of four crew members at HERA's Mission XX, a 45-day-confined-space mission simulation to the Martian moon Phobos.

Nigel Mease, MA '18, joined the Institute for Defense Analyses as a research associate in their Strategy, Forces and Resources Division.

Erik Grossman, MA '19, was hired as a special advisor to the under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence at the U.S. Department of the Treasury.



IN MEMORIAM

Linda Lee Postlethwait Donnelly, BA '67, MA '69 (August 16, 2019, 73), was one of the first female computer systems analysts in the United States working for the Navy at the Naval Surface Warfare Center in Indian Head, Md. She retired as COO/CFO of a Virginia rehabilitation services firm. Along the way, she gave back to her community as a Red Cross volunteer, president of the Navy Wives' Club at Pearl Harbor and as a buyer for nonprofit Boutiki Gift Shop. She was an excellent bridge player and expert Sudoku solver. She found joy in light-hearted murder mystery novels (no gore!), romantic comedies (no unhappy endings!) and collecting anything blue and white. Donnelly is survived by her husband of almost 50 years, CDR Robert J. Donnelly, a retired U.S. Navy commander., daughter Ashley Donnelly Leonard, son-in-law Dr. Matthew M. Leonard, and grandchildren Maren, Quinn and Delen.

Mark Plotkin, BA '69, (September 22, 2019, 72, Washington, D.C.), was a longtime political commentator on WAMU and WTOP. Born in Iowa, he considered Washington, D.C., his adopted home and was a passionate advocate for its statehood. He had an encyclopaedic knowledge of District politics, and in 2000, he led the effort to have the slogan "Taxation Without Representation" on every D.C. license plate. In 2014, he received GW's Distinguished Alumni Achievement Award, and in 2018, he donated his papers to Gelman's Special Collections Research Center. He loved tennis and was a fan of GW basketball.

Jerry L. Coffey, PhD '71 (Dec. 30, 2018, Winchester, Va., 76), was, until his retirement, a senior mathematical statistician in the U.S. Office of Management and Budget in the executive office of the president. He served on the board of the American Statistical Association. He also served the chairman of the House Committee on Government Reform, analyzing the census. Jerry loved his children, Laurel and Jay, and his wife of 51 years, Gretchen.

James A. Wingate, Jr., GWSB '73, (June 20, 2019, 80, Fort Washington, Md.), worked for more than 40 years in accounting, auditing and tax consulting services at Wingate, Carpenter & Associates. An avid tennis player and incredibly social, he was a member of the American Tennis Association and United States Tennis Association for more than 50 years and traveled every year, multiple times a year, to places such as Annapolis, Baltimore, Detroit and Hilton Head for tournaments. He was dedicated to his community and was an active member of the Symposium Whist Club, which brought together families for weekly gatherings and donated profits from events to support young people who play tennis. He is remembered by his wife of nearly 50 years, Melvina, as a strong, kind and giving spirit.

George Hughes McLoone, PhD '82, (July 4, 2019, 73), taught college-level English for more than four decades in Northern Virginia. He spent his childhood in Phoenix and, after moving east for college, lived the rest of his life in the Washington, D.C., area. A fan of cleverly written mystery and spy novels by the likes of Agatha Christie and Ross Macdonald, he also loved music, classic movies, golf and visiting England, where he had returned every

couple of years since the 1970s for the people, the landscapes and terrain of the country as well as to London and its tea. He was a scholar of John Milton, whose work he focused his doctoral dissertation on, and he was in the editing stage of a novel set in the 1990s. He is survived by his wife, Catherine, and three daughters from a prior marriage.

Alvin E. Nashman, HON '86, (92), was a government contracting executive and a longtime friend and supporter of GW. He and his wife, Honey, a longtime GW professor, in 2015 made a gift to the university to endow the Honey W. Nashman Center for Civic Engagement and Public Service. For 27 years until his retirement, Nashman headed the multidivision systems group of the Computer Science Corporation, which under his leadership experienced more than \$1 billion in growth in its federal practice. He served in the Navy during World War II.

Alexa de Moura, BA '17, (Philadelphia, 24), was a former GW gymnast who twice was named to the East Atlantic Gymnastics League first team for the all-around. She also garnered accolades on the balance beam, vault, uneven bars and in the floor exercise. She competed for New Image Gymnastics on Long Island before coming to GW and most recently served as a coach there for young gymnasts. She is survived by her parents, Alexandre and Josephine, her brother, Nicholas, and her sisters Isabella and Giovanna. De Moura died while swimming with friends in Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, in June.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Arthur David Kirsch, BA '55, (August 2, 2019, Silver Spring, Md.), was a professor emeritus of statistics and psychology and chaired the statistics department during his tenure. He taught full-time at GW from 1965 to 1998. During his final year at the university, he was awarded the Trachtenberg Service Award for his commitment to multiple governing bodies including the Faculty Senate, Joint Committee of Faculty and Students and the Budget Advisory Team. He was a superfan of the GW basketball team since junior high, and he is quoted in a 1998 *GW Hatchet* article saying that he had missed, at most, three games ever held at the Smith Center.



Institutional Knowledge

Wisdom and How-Tos from Experts in the GW Community

SPACE

50 Years Later: Apollo 11

Space Policy Institute founder John Logsdon reflects on what it means to have put humans on the moon.

By Matthew Stoss

John Logsdon says he's been "wallowing in nostalgia" since July, which marked the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11—the U.S. space mission that, for the first time in world history, put humans on the moon. Logsdon founded GW's Space Policy Institute in 1987 and is an expert on the history of space exploration, having authored and edited several books, including 2010's *John F. Kennedy and the Race to the Moon*.

On July 16, 1969, Logsdon, then a 31-year-old rookie academic, was at Kennedy Space Center in Florida when Apollo 11 fired into the ether. Fifty years later, Logsdon, now 82, reflects on the legacy of Apollo 11.

What, other than the launch, do you remember about being there?

I was able to go out early in the morning at

John Logsdon at the Apollo 11 launch

6 a.m. and stand outside the building where the astronauts put their spacesuits on and watch them walk by me on the way to the moon. And if you're self-conscious at all, that's like seeing Columbus sail out of port. To be just a few feet away from the three as they left for the moon as the first people that were ever going to walk on the moon—that's an indelible memory.

Should we go back to the moon?

I think it's a necessary stop on the way to Mars or anywhere else. We didn't, during Apollo, really explore the moon. Apollo was a demonstration that we could get there and back. They landed near the lunar equator, only traveled a few miles, and so most of the moon has never been explored. There's the intriguing idea of deposits of water ice in the craters at the lunar poles, which, if it's there and if it can be accessed, could enable a lot of activity. ... We need experience living on another celestial body before we commit people to long-duration stays on Mars.

Getting to Mars will be really hard—the distance, the radiation, the Martian conditions. When can we make it?

Depends on your timeframe. Within this

century, I think the first human will reach the surface of Mars, and I would say within the next 25 to 35 years, there can be an initial expedition. One big difference between 1969 and the time of Apollo and now is you have some private actors who say they're going to do it, particularly Elon Musk. Let them try. Why not? But there are a lot of obstacles to be overcome, and multiple approaches to overcoming those obstacles are good things.

A moon follow-up. What makes the moon necessary for a Mars trip?

One is, in a sense, practicing for Mars. Another is the potential availability of resources, particularly water that can be used and processed into rocket fuel. And a third is the science yet to be done on the moon. It adds up to a pretty strong argument for having the moon in our sights as the first step in resuming exploration. We haven't been further away from Earth than Washington is from New York in 47 years.

What's caused the 47-year delay?

I think it was a victim of its own success. ... Part of it is that we've done it and the argument for a return has not been very clearly articulated to sustain a political consensus and a public consensus. And it's a discretionary act. I don't think there's any necessity for going back, and maybe the emergence of competition will stimulate the government to do this. Certainly China is developing the capability to do big things in space, and the summer celebration reminds us that we kind of think of the moon as ours. The only flags planted there have been American flags.

Will it be a private endeavor or sponsored by a state?

I think it's going to be the U.S. government. China's plans do not call for humans to go to the moon until after 2030. We're building the systems to be able to do this. We're building big rockets and building the spacecraft. Congress is dithering around with the money needed to get started on a landing vehicle, but I think there is a political consensus that if we're going to have humans in space under government sponsorship, they should go to the moon first. 🇺🇸



WE *Listened*

DIVERSITY

AMBASSADORS

GLOBAL

PURPOSE

CAREERS

NETWORKING

The GW Alumni Association thanks the ~350 alumni who provided valuable insights during our virtual listening tour.

Here is the path to our shared priorities:

Summer/Fall 2019

Listening Tour and first
GWAA executive
committee meeting

Winter 2019/2020

GWAA priorities identified

Spring/Summer 2020

GWAA priorities shared
and finalized with alumni
community

Recordings of the Listening Tour sessions and a summary of feedback are available at go.gwu.edu/gwaalistsens



Alumni Association

**THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY**

WASHINGTON, DC

The George Washington University
Washington, D.C. 20052
Change Service Requested

**2019-20
MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE**

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME (ET)	WATCH
Tue	Nov 5	at Towson	Towson, MD	7:00 PM	FloSports
SAT	NOV 9	HOWARD	WASHINGTON, DC	4:00 PM	ESPN+
TUE	NOV 12	AMERICAN	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	NOV 16	MORGAN STATE	WASHINGTON, DC	1:00 PM	ESPN+
Fri	Nov 22	UMKC	Nassau, Bahamas	5:00 PM	
Sat	Nov 23	TBD	Nassau, Bahamas	TBA	
Sun	Nov 24	TBD	Nassau, Bahamas	TBA	
Sun	Dec 1	at South Carolina	Columbia, SC	2:00PM	
WED	DEC 4	BOSTON U	WASHINGTON, D.C	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	DEC 7	DELAWARE	WASHINGTON, D.C	4:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	DEC 21	HARVARD	WASHINGTON, D.C	12:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	DEC 28	LONGWOOD	WASHINGTON, D.C	4:00 PM	ESPN+
Tue	Dec 31	at Vermont	Burlington, VT	2:00 PM	
SUN	JAN 5	ST BONAVENTURE*	WASHINGTON, DC	4:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 8	at Saint Louis*	Saint Louis, MO	8:00PM	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 11	DUQUESNE*	WASHINGTON, DC	4:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 15	GEORGE MASON*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Jan 18	at Massachusetts*	Amherst, MA	4:30 PM	NBCSN
Wed	Jan 22	at Fordham*	New York, NY	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	JAN 25	SAINT JOSEPH'S*	WASHINGTON, DC	4:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 29	DAVIDSON*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Feb 1	at Richmond*	Richmond, VA	6:00 PM	ESPN+
Wed	Feb 5	at St. Bonaventure*	Olean, NY	7:00 PM	STADIUM
SAT	FEB 8	RHODE ISLAND*	WASHINGTON, DC	12:00 PM	CBSSN
Sat	Feb 15	at George Mason*	Fairfax, VA	4:30 PM	NBCSN
Wed	Feb 19	at Duquesne*	Pittsburgh, PA	8:00PM	ESPN+
SAT	FEB 22	LA SALLE*	WASHINGTON, DC	4:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	FEB 26	RICHMOND*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Feb 29	at VCU*	Richmond, VA	4:00 PM	CBSSN
WED	MAR 4	FORDHAM*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Mar 7	at Dayton*	Dayton, OH	TBA	ESPN+

*A10 Conference Game

To purchase tickets, visit GetGWTix.com

Dates and times subject to change. For more information, visit GWsports.com

**2019-20
WOMEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE**

DAY	DATE	OPPONENT	LOCATION	TIME (ET)	WATCH
Wed	Nov 6	at Villanova	Villanova, PA	7:00 PM	
SUN	NOV 10	PRINCETON	WASHINGTON, DC	12:00 PM	ESPN+
Wed	Nov 13	at Lehigh	Bethlehem, PA	11:00 AM	
Sun	Nov 17	at Memphis	Memphis, TN	11:30 AM	
Wed	Nov 20	at Maryland	College Park, MD	7:00 PM	
SUN	NOV 24	GEORGETOWN	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	ESPN+
SUN	DEC 1	COPPIN STATE	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	ESPN+
Wed	Dec 4	at Delaware	Newark, DE	7:00 PM	
Sat	Dec 7	at Quinnipiac	Hamden, CT	2:00 PM	
TUE	DEC 10	MINNESOTA	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
FRI	DEC 20	JAMES MADISON	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sun	Dec 22	at American	Washington, DC	2:00 PM	
SUN	DEC 29	WILLIAM & MARY	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Jan 4	at George Mason*	Fairfax, VA	2:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 8	DUQUESNE*	WASHINGTON, DC	11:00 AM	ESPN+
Sun	Jan 12	at Fordham*	Bronx, NY	2:00 PM	CBSSN
Sat	Jan 18	at Davidson*	Davidson, NC	1:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	JAN 22	DAYTON*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SUN	JAN 26	MASSACHUSETTS*	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	ESPN+
Wed	Jan 29	at Saint Joseph's*	Philadelphia, PA	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SUN	FEB 2	SAINT LOUIS*	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	CBSSN
Thu	Feb 6	at St. Bonaventure*	St. Bonaventure, NY	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sun	Feb 9	at VCU*	Richmond, VA	1:00 PM	ESPN+
WED	FEB 12	LA SALLE*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	FEB 15	GEORGE MASON*	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00PM	ESPN+
Wed	Feb 19	at Dayton*	Dayton, OH	7:00 PM	ESPN+
Sat	Feb 22	at Duquesne*	Pittsburgh, PA	7:30 PM	ESPN+
TUE	FEB 25	RHODE ISLAND*	WASHINGTON, DC	7:00 PM	ESPN+
SAT	FEB 29	RICHMOND*	WASHINGTON, DC	2:00 PM	ESPN+

Support our student-athletes by making a gift at
go.gwu.edu/give2athletics or by calling 202.994.8412