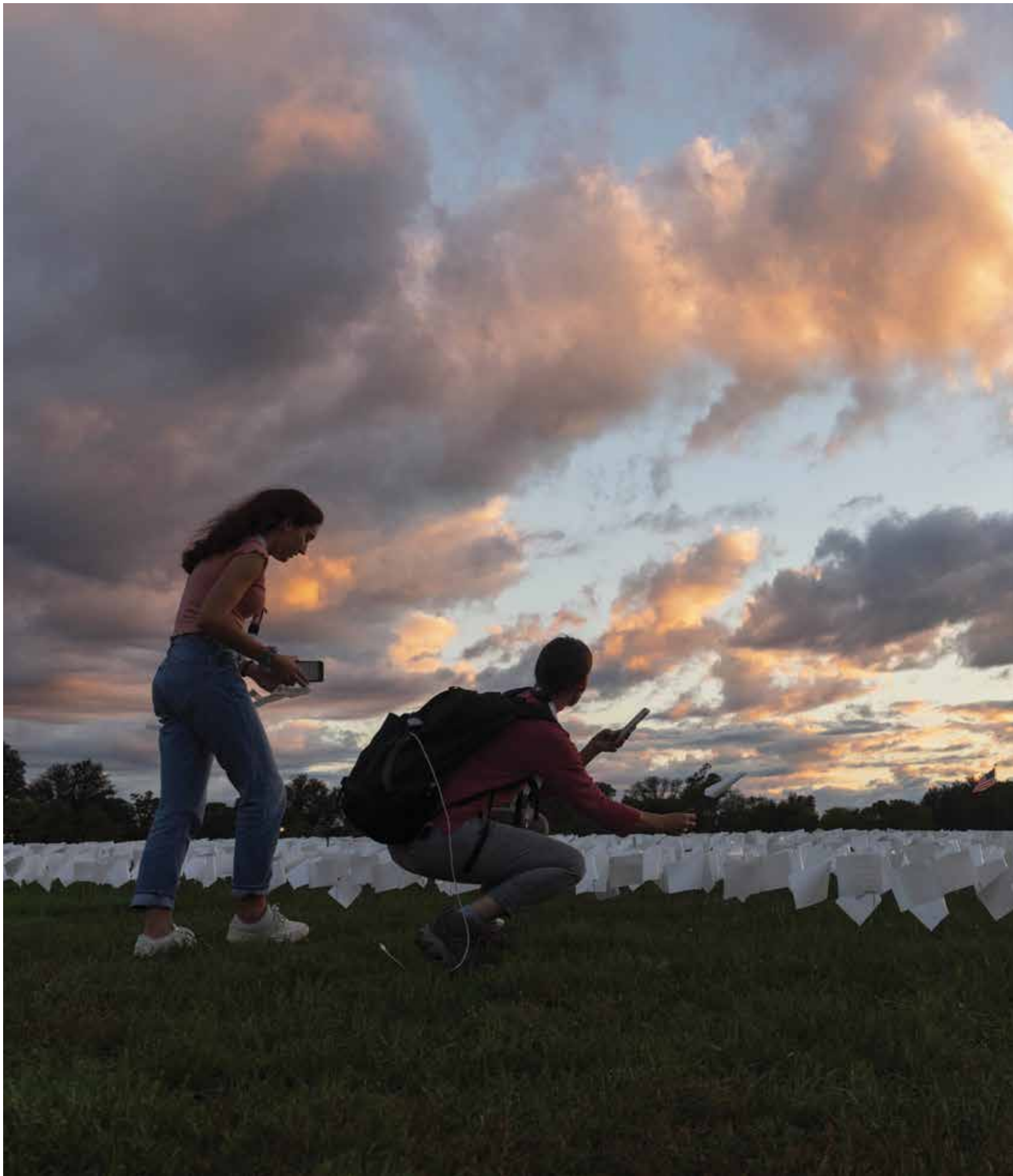


GW

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE
FALL 2021

MONUMENTAL





GW MAGAZINE FALL 2021

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

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Kogan Plaza was the place to be in October for the Bicentennial Bash, a celebration of 200 years of only-at-GW moments. Photo by Harrison Jones



A team of George Washington University researchers, led by Sarah Wagner, professor of anthropology in the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences, geolocated flags with personal dedications planted as part of artist Suzanne Brennan Firstenberg's "In America: Remember" installation on the National Mall. Each of the more than 600,000 flags represented an individual in the United States who died from COVID-19.

PHOTO: WILLIAM ATKINS



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H. Small**



“

“At a very competitive university like GW, getting a scholarship ... goes a long way toward making you feel that you’re seen and someone believes in you.”

Simisola Sodimu, BA '18, ▶
who relied on a scholarship to complete her dual degrees in philosophy and psychology. She is now a public relations specialist and owner of a skin care and wellness company.

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SODIMU: SODIMU / ALASKAN LANDSCAPE: HANA AKSEL ROD / BASH: WILLIAM ATKINS

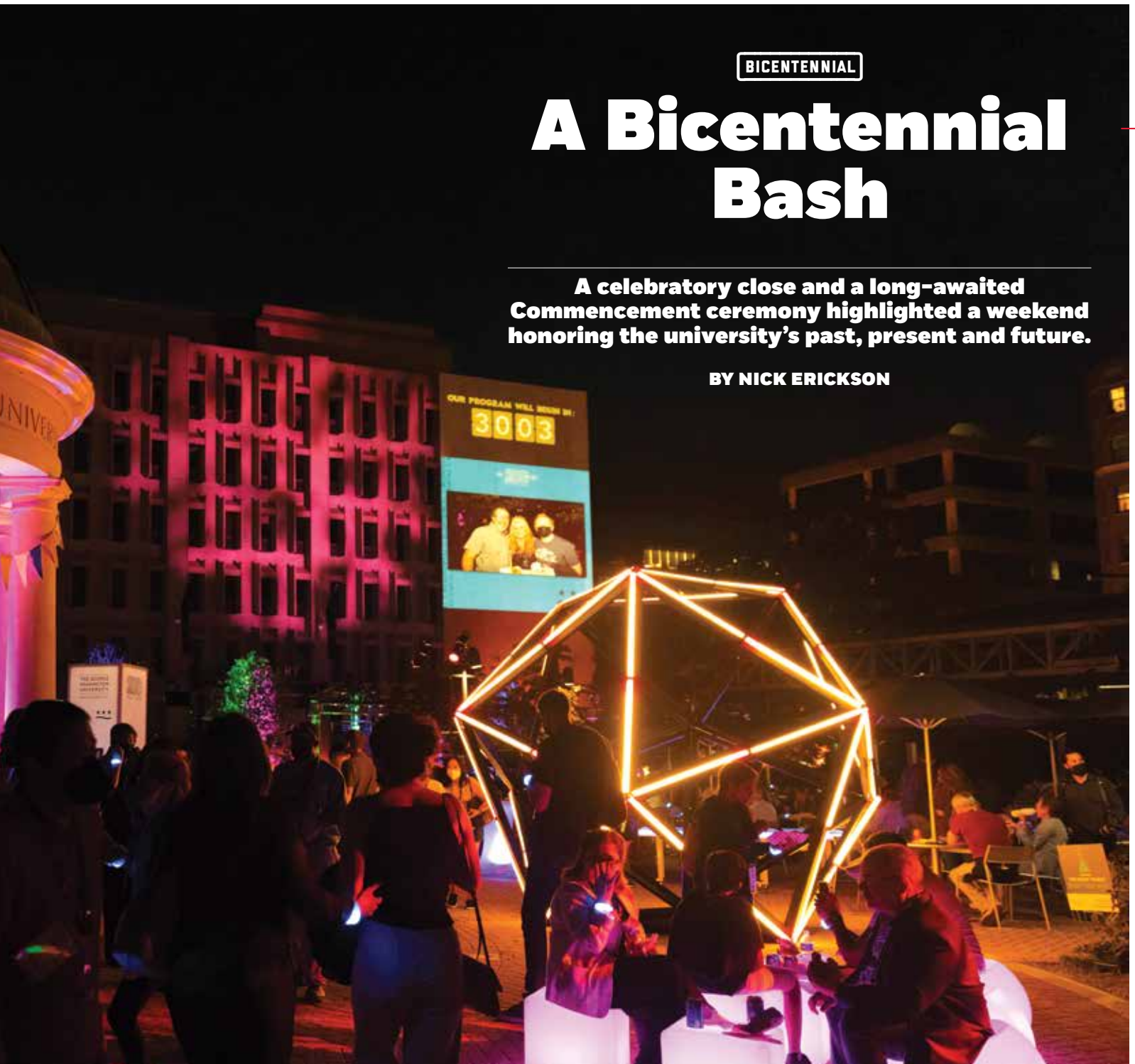


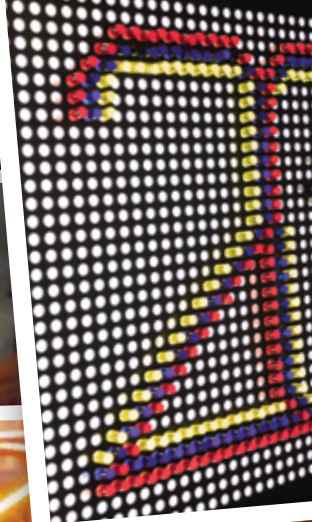
BICENTENNIAL

A Bicentennial Bash

A celebratory close and a long-awaited Commencement ceremony highlighted a weekend honoring the university's past, present and future.

BY NICK ERICKSON





A spectacular light display filling up the sky signified to all of Washington, D.C., that George Washington University's Foggy Bottom campus was the place to be on Saturday, Oct. 2.

The Bicentennial Bash, which closed off Kogan Plaza for an evening filled with food, games and even an acrobat performance, was the exclamation point of a weekend celebrating 200 years of only-at-GW moments.

It was a marquee event of the "Our Moment, Our Momentum: GW Centuries Celebration Weekend," which marked the culmination of the university's eight-month bicentennial celebration. Bringing together alumni, current students, parents, faculty, staff and friends, the Bicentennial Bash lit up the urban campus and sparkled with images from the university's past and present projected on the outside of Gelman Library. Later, the crowd was dazzled by a performance of acrobats on harnesses descending the library walls.

"This is a remarkable community, and it's an honor and a privilege to be a part of it," GW President Thomas LeBlanc said. "Not even a pandemic can keep us from coming together to celebrate this special bicentennial."

The Saturday evening celebration highlighted a weekend of momentous events. On Friday night, GW held a reception and dinner to honor its Monumental Alumni. The group comprises 73 alumni who have

made their mark on the greater world by living GW's mission of engaging as global citizens in their respective fields. Set up in a tent covering University Yard, the special event brought together members of the GW community to express their pride in their institution.

"GW alumni are game changers, laser focused on making a difference in their field, business or profession," said GW Alumni Association President Christine Brown-Quinn, MBA '92. "They are individuals who are committed to using their education at GW for a platform for making the better world a better place."

One of Friday night's more powerful moments was when more than 40 GW students, all clad in navy blue sweaters bearing the university's logo, circled the Monumental Alumni and GW benefactors during the reception at University Yard. Representing all 10 schools, the students held up a glass in a toast to thank those in attendance for both their inspirational example and continued support. Moments earlier, Board of Trustees Chair Grace Speights, JD '82,

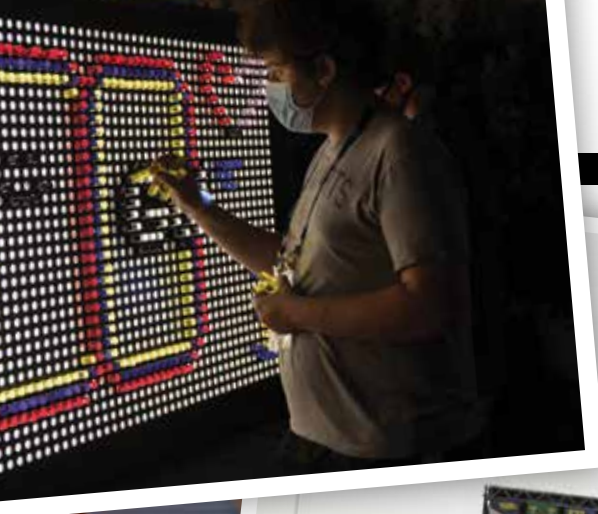
announced a new scholarship initiative to help make a GW education more accessible, especially for students who are facing financial challenges. (For more on the scholarship initiative, see page 38.)

"Those of us here tonight are representative of the entire GW community, thousands of aspiring changemakers who are diverse in culture, backgrounds and disciplines," said senior business administration major Jungwoo Yang, who led the student toast. "You have helped GW grow—so we can grow."

The next morning, the GW community gathered on the National Mall for a long-awaited in-person Commencement ceremony for the classes of 2020 and 2021. GW is the only university that holds its graduation ceremony on the National Mall, but the tradition was interrupted when the COVID-19 pandemic forced ceremonies for the classes of 2020 and 2021 to be moved online. Graduates and their families heard Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.), a Monumental Alumna who attended GW from 1966 to 1968,

GW Alumni Association President Christine Brown-Quinn, MBA '92





give an impassioned address. She urged them to make their presence felt in the political arena and to steadfastly advocate for their beliefs.

“Get in the fight,” Warren said. “Get in the fight for opportunity, for race, gender, sexual identity, for the opportunity to survive in a world not suffocated by climate change or bled to death by wars.”

A YEAR OF GW MOMENTS

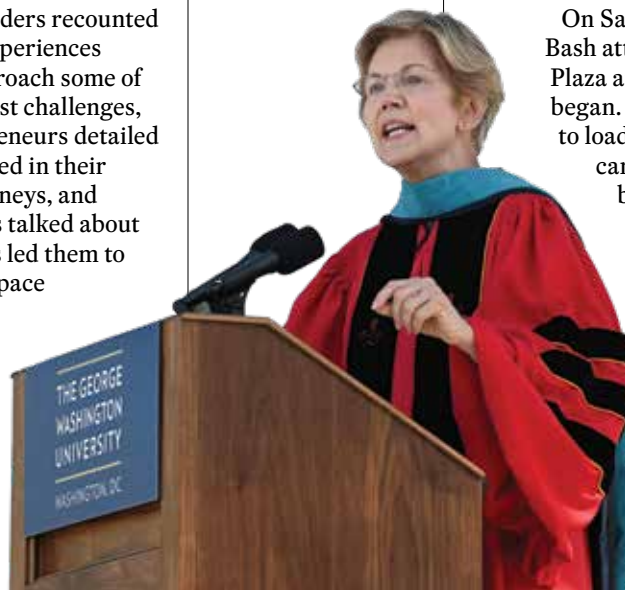
Throughout the year, bicentennial events traced GW’s growth from humble origins to a comprehensive, global research university in the heart of the nation’s capital. In telling GW’s story throughout its 200-year history and into its future, celebrations followed the university’s journey from the first class of 20 students and six faculty members to a home for 27,000 students, thousands of faculty and staff, and more than 310,000 alumni worldwide.

“The bicentennial is a celebration of our successes and accomplishments; of teaching, research and community building,” said Donna Arbide, vice president for development

and alumni relations. “More than anything, the bicentennial is about the people who have made GW great.”

Beginning with the virtual opening ceremony on Feb. 9—the anniversary of the 1821 congressional act that established the university—a series of bicentennial events highlighted GW’s past and present while looking ahead to its future. Many charted the legacy of the university through faculty, alumni and student accomplishments. Others involved honoring alumni leaders, innovators and artists over the centuries. At virtual events, global leaders recounted how their GW experiences helped them approach some of the world’s biggest challenges, business entrepreneurs detailed the role GW played in their professional journeys, and notable scientists talked about how their studies led them to the forefront of space exploration.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.)

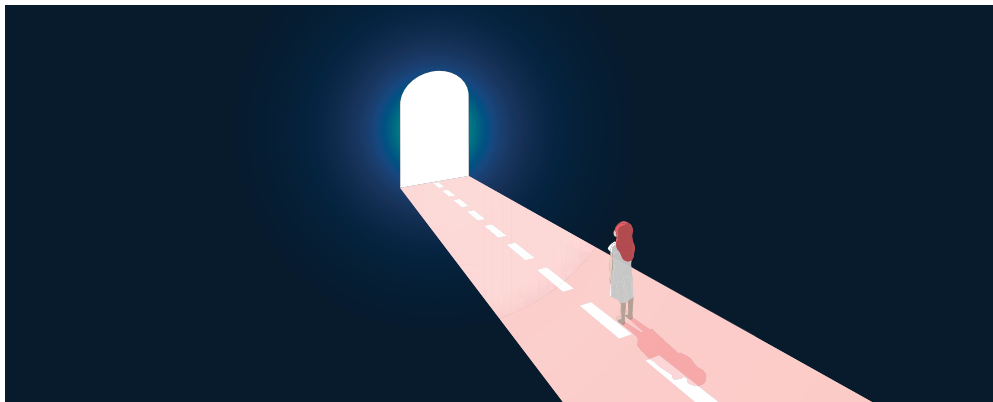


A WEEKEND TO REMEMBER

The celebrations continued throughout the October weekend as the bicentennial anniversary drew to a close. Alumni took trips down memory lane with fully booked tours of GW residence halls. In the afternoon, a University Yard audience watched a screening of the bicentennial short film series, a collection of documentaries spotlighting the GW experience. They included a look at GW’s role in studying the public health impacts of Hurricane Maria and a portrait of students navigating the 2020 elections and the COVID-19 pandemic. Other films explored how student innovators kept the university’s New Venture Competition alive during the pandemic and paid tribute to the iconic Thurston Hall and Leo’s GW Delicatessen—a.k.a. “Deli.”

On Saturday, Oct. 2, Bicentennial Bash attendees lined up near Kogan Plaza an hour before the event began. Some used that opportunity to load up on GW gear at the campus store. With buff and blue shirts dotting Kogan and day turning to night, the Bicentennial Bash was a highlight to a weekend that reminded all who attended what makes GW special.

As LeBlanc told the crowd: “We’ve got a lot to celebrate.”



MEDICINE

A Long Road to Recovery after COVID Illness

GW's COVID-19 Recovery Clinic works to put patients on the path toward normal.

By Thomas Kohout



LIFE BEFORE COVID-19 WAS BUSY FOR REBECCA,*

very busy. She's the quintessential Washington professional: a D.C. lawyer who regularly logged 60-hour work weeks, spent nights out at the Kennedy Center or at dinner parties with friends and always made time for the gym.

"My life was very active," she said. "I tend to keep myself pretty busy, and I'm reasonably fit for a middle-aged person."

So, in late February 2020, when she awoke feeling "off," Rebecca attributed it to overdoing it. She had been at a dinner party the night before and thought, "I'm just a little tired, or maybe it's the flu." She opted to skip church that Sunday morning, thinking that

with a little rest, she'd be back to herself by Monday.

The next day she decided to work from home, but by the afternoon, she was seriously ill. "The difference between the 48 hours before I got sick and after was like a light switch," she recalled.

That was the start of a 10-day stretch Rebecca remembers as "the worst case of flu" she'd ever had. There wasn't much reason to think otherwise. In early January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) had released a statement about a mysterious coronavirus-related pneumonia that the WHO was calling SARS-CoV-2 or COVID-19.

About three weeks later, on February 3, the United States declared a public health emergency. However, as late as Feb. 23, 2020, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, public health agencies had detected just 14 cases in the United States, and all of those were related to international travel.

There weren't any reports of community spread, and Rebecca hadn't been overseas. Besides that, she never had the extreme breathing difficulties that were already starting to fill headlines. She didn't have to go to the hospital or go on a ventilator. She didn't even consider going to the doctor until after her fever had broken.

Still, moving past that initial illness proved surprisingly difficult.

"It still blows me away how hard everything got, any sort of physical exertion," she said.

GETTING TO THE ROOT OF THE PROBLEM

Though she didn't know it at the time, what Rebecca was experiencing was Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID (PASC), otherwise known as "Long COVID." Those suffering from PASC have reported a range of symptoms, from respiratory problems to

exhaustion after even the slightest exertion, as well as nerve pain, persistent headaches, trouble concentrating or memory trouble sometimes referred to as "brain fog."

Typically, the symptoms persist for weeks or months after someone has recovered from COVID-19.

In fall 2020, Hana Akselrod, assistant professor of medicine at the George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences (SMHS), along with SMHS colleagues Aileen Chang, assistant professor of medicine, and Monica Lypson, clinical professor of medicine, formed the GW Medical Faculty Associates (MFA) COVID-19 Recovery Clinic. The trio of physicians had seen a growing number of patients complaining of lingering issues following bouts with COVID-19, and the GW MFA waiting rooms were starting to fill. Since then, the clinic has seen more than 100 patients from the Washington, D.C., area and beyond.

"We've noticed a remarkable number of people in their 20s, 30s and 40s, who were quite healthy, fit and active," suffering from persistent symptoms more than four weeks after getting sick, said Akselrod. "Probably three out of four are women, and they're coming in with those long, drawn-out symptoms such as trouble breathing, nerve pain, headache, brain function issues and sometimes difficulties with physical endurance. And these are people who have essentially never been chronically ill."

The multi-disciplinary clinic serves both those who were severely ill in the hospital and have had a difficult time recovering, as well as those whose initial symptoms were not severe, but who developed prolonged symptoms afterward.

The clinic links specialists across disciplines at the GW MFA, including pulmonology, cardiology, psychiatry and rehabilitation science to offer care for patients suffering from this previously unseen disorder. Through a comprehensive assessment, a team of physicians tries to pinpoint specific types of organ damage or an ongoing disease process, and then crafts an individualized plan for each patient.

"We know that people do better with guided and staged recovery plans," Akselrod said. "Physical therapy and occupational therapy, in particular, play a huge role with exercises that are safe and can be built up to restore physical endurance over time."

FORMING A NETWORK

According to a March 2021 article in the

journal *Nature Medicine*, persistent symptoms are not uncommon among severe coronavirus infections. “We do not know yet if there are certain genetic or environmental factors that may predispose [a patient] to these phenomena,” Akselrod said. “We do know that Long COVID is not limited to a single demographic group in the U.S. and [it] is also reported in other countries.”

Systemic studies into the root of the problem are rare at best, and there isn’t much in the way of evidence-based approaches to treatment. To help bridge that knowledge gap, physician scientists at academic medical centers across the country are meeting virtually to share impressions and experiences of a clinical syndrome that they don’t fully understand.

“We walk through different treatment protocols,” said Akselrod, who joined the informal network of researchers early on. “We’re in the process of building research to try and understand the biological versus contextual aspects of this condition.”

The GW MFA COVID-19 Recovery Clinic team is also using the clinic to study PASC and share their knowledge with academic researchers and physician scientists from 55 sites across the country through the National Institutes of Health’s National COVID Cohort Collaborative.

The nationwide effort represents one of the largest collections of clinical data related to COVID-19 symptoms and patient outcomes for accelerating research on the disease. It also includes a powerful analytics platform and tool set for online discovery, visualization and collaboration. Having access to a centralized enclave of this magnitude allows research teams to study, probe and answer clinically important questions about COVID-19 that they could not have answered previously.

The clinic also is involved in a multicenter, Phase III clinical trial designed to evaluate the efficacy and safety of using the drug Reparixin to treat hospitalized adult patients with severe COVID-19 pneumonia. The drug has been used in trials studying the treatment and prevention of breast cancer, metastatic breast cancer and pancreatotomy for chronic pancreatitis.

When COVID-19 cases first began to spike nationwide in spring 2020, Chang and Adrienne Poon, assistant professor of medicine at SMHS, teamed up to establish a specimen bank housing samples from COVID-positive patients at four different times during the infection period. The patients provide additional samples at 10 weeks, six months and a year after recovery.

The specimen bank was one of several COVID-19 research initiatives across GW to receive seed funding through the Office of the Vice President for Research as well as SMHS and the Milken Institute School of Public Health at GW. The project also found financial support through a fund established to advance scientific research by Virginia Keller Gray, MS ’70, who passed away in 2018.

A GLIMMER OF HOPE

Rebecca, after several trips to the doctor, was becoming discouraged. By that point she had been coping with the fatigue, brain fog and all the other symptoms for nearly a year. Rebecca was describing her problem as Long COVID based on descriptions she’d read in news reports. After a visit to a neurologist in December 2020 turned up nothing, her primary care physician referred her to GW’s COVID-19 Recovery Clinic.

“It was such a sense of relief,” Rebecca said, describing the first visit as a “glimmer of hope.”

“I knew that [going to a clinic affiliated with the teaching



FROM TOP TO BOTTOM:
Assistant Professors of Medicine Adrienne Poon, Aileen Chang and Hana Akselrod

hospital] there were going to be people who are really actively engaged in what’s going on,” she said. “They weren’t just going to say, ‘Well, your lungs are clear. Go home.’ They’re going to dive into my problem.”

Akselrod repeatedly has seen a similar reaction among new patients at the clinic. “I’m just completely overwhelmed with how many people have been looking for something like this,” she said. “We have people who come in struggling to find someone who can listen to them, acknowledge that this is happening, and then try to make some kind of sense of it clinically and scientifically.”

There are reasons for hope, said Akselrod, who has been treating Rebecca at the clinic. Health care systems have become expert at developing multidisciplinary approaches toward managing patients with chronic illnesses.

“I believe there are strategies we can adapt from other conditions to help patients with long-term symptoms after COVID-19,” she said.

After the initial comprehensive medical evaluation, Akselrod created a tailored approach for Rebecca, referring her to both physical and speech therapists to get the help and the tools necessary for her recovery. Stamina and brain fog had been her most troubling roadblocks. Although she is still not 100 percent, Rebecca says she has covered more ground in five months at the recovery clinic than she made in a year struggling on her own.

“The PT and OT provided information about how to move forward and support my recovery,” Rebecca said. “And the confirmation that there really was a problem, that this is not unusual, was so important.”

Speech therapy offered tools for cognitive rehabilitation, providing “good guidance tools,” for when she’s a little foggy, and tips for tracking how she is feeling, including what to do to feel better or conserve energy. The big lesson, Rebecca said, is to listen to her body—being more aware of how she’s feeling, how her mind is working and when she needs a break.

“One thing that always strikes me about my story,” Rebecca said, is that “if my primary care doctor had not been affiliated with GW and familiar with the [COVID-19 Recovery Clinic], I might still be trying to ‘push through’ my symptoms and, in so doing, stalling my recovery.” ☐

**The name of the patient in this story was withheld at her request to protect her privacy.*



Colin Powell

In Memoriam: Colin Powell

A historic politician, diplomat and four-star general, the GW Monumental Alumnus was a towering figure as a soldier and statesman.

The George Washington University community mourned the loss of Colin Powell, MBA '71, a trailblazing public servant who in 2001 became the first African American to serve as the United States secretary of state. The retired four-star general in the U.S. Army played a key role in shaping the nation's foreign policy in the 20th and 21st centuries.

Powell died on Oct. 18 of complications related to COVID-19. He was 84.

Powell, who served in the U.S. Army for 35 years, received an Honorary Doctor of Public Service from GW in 1990. He was

recognized during the recent Centuries Celebration as one of the university's distinguished Monumental Alumni, a group of 73 alumni who have made their mark on the world by living the university's mission of engaging as global citizens.

"General Powell is remembered for his deep commitment to public service, particularly as a veteran and as a leader in national security, diplomacy and foreign policy," President Thomas LeBlanc said. "Our university community has been fortunate on several occasions to learn from General Powell's vast world knowledge and experiences, and he will continue to serve as an inspiration to many of our students, faculty, staff and his fellow alumni. We share our condolences with General Powell's family."

Powell stayed connected to GW throughout the years. He formally opened the Elliott School of International Affairs building in September 2003, while serving as secretary of state. He represented the university as the keynote speaker in March 2012 at the GW Global Forum in Seoul, South Korea. Powell presented fellow

Monumental Alumna Tammy Duckworth, MA '92, with the Colin Powell Public Service Award at GW's Celebration of Service dinner in October 2009. He also returned to campus for a book signing at University Student Center in 2012 and spoke at Lisner Auditorium in 2014.

Born in New York City on April 5, 1937, to Jamaican immigrant parents, Powell received a commission as an Army second lieutenant in 1958 and rose through the ranks, going from combat duty in Vietnam to being one of the United States' leading national security voices.

Powell served Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan in national defense roles. He was Reagan's national security adviser from 1987 to 1989. In October 1989, President George H.W. Bush appointed Powell as the chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, making him the first and only African American to serve in that role. During his time as chair, he oversaw 28 crises, including the Panama intervention of 1989 and the 1991 Operation Desert Storm during the Persian Gulf War. Powell, who also served in President Bill Clinton's administration, held his post as chair until 1993.

He became the nation's 65th secretary of state when President George W. Bush appointed him to the position in January 2001, a role he'd hold until 2005.

Powell received many awards and recognitions throughout his career. His military accolades include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, the Army Distinguished Service Medal, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Soldier's Medal, Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart. He also received an abundance of civil awards, including two Presidential Medals of Freedom, the President's Citizens Medal, the Congressional Gold Medal and Secretary of Energy Distinguished Service Medal. His work in international diplomacy earned him awards in more than two dozen countries, including the French Legion of Honor and an honorary knighthood bestowed by Queen Elizabeth II.

Powell was active in the private sector after his work with the U.S. government, serving on numerous boards and councils. He has nine elementary and middle schools named after him. He obtained a bachelor's degree in geology from the City College of New York, where he was active in the Army ROTC program. Powell is survived by his wife, Alma Vivian (Johnson) Powell, whom he married in 1962, three children and two grandchildren. ☞

Remembering Albert H. Small

The philanthropist and real estate developer supported the university's commitment to the arts, history and research.

The George Washington University community mourned the passing of Albert H. Small, a real estate developer and philanthropist whose far-reaching impact includes the establishment of the Albert H. Small Center for National Capital Area Studies and the Albert H. Small Normandy Institute. Small, 95, died on Oct. 3.

Small attended GW Law from 1947 to 1948 and went on to become one of the university's biggest champions. He received the GW President's Medal in 2011 in recognition of his efforts to enhance cultural and educational opportunities and an honorary doctorate of public service in 2016. Small was also honored during GW's Centuries Celebration Weekend in October as one of the university's distinguished Monumental Alumni.

Vice President of Development and Alumni Relations Donna Arbide said she had the privilege of getting to know Small over the last few years and described him as "a man of tremendous passion and conviction, a remarkable philanthropist and a leader in this community."

"I was consistently impressed not only by his clarity of vision about the educational legacy he hoped to leave behind, but by the ways that legacy was already manifesting during his lifetime," she said.

GW President Thomas LeBlanc also recognized Small's legacy, remembering him as "a wonderful, wonderful man, a huge supporter of our university. We are deeply sorry about his passing and want to share our condolences with his family."

Small is survived by his wife, Shirley, children Albert Jr. "Sonny" and Tina Small, Susan and Gerald Savitsky, James and Anayansie Small, grandchildren and extended family.

A third-generation Washingtonian, Small was an avid collector of rare books and manuscripts for more than 65 years. In 2011, Small made a historic gift, donating his unparalleled collection on the history of Washington, D.C., to GW. The Albert H. Small Washingtoniana Collection, a collection of more than 2,000 prints, maps, manuscripts, books, newspapers

and photographs, is available to the D.C. community in its permanent home at the George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum's Woodhull House. This collection and the Woodhull House's Albert H. Small Center for National Capital Area Studies, a research center launched in 2015, have been a vital resource for GW students and faculty.

"Having worked with Mr. Small through the renovations of Woodhull House, transfer of his collection to our museum, establishment of the Albert H. Small Center for National Capital Studies, exhibitions of Washington history since 2015, D.C. Monday educational programs and our annual Albert H. Small Symposium—I can testify to Small's passion for history and even greater interest in perpetuating that enthusiasm to future generations," said Museum Director John Wetenhall. "I remember many, many visits to his office in Bethesda where Albert Small inquired about the details of exhibits and programs, always with words of enthusiasm and encouragement, as well as a joke or two. Through his collection, study center and a commitment to learning and research, he has

left us a magnificent legacy."

In 2019, GW became home to the Albert H. Small Normandy Institute. Small established the Normandy Institute in 2011 to honor the World War II soldiers who died in the 1944 D-Day Campaign. The institute sends teams of high school students and their teachers to Normandy, France, after participating in a series of lectures by GW history professors and conducting research on a fallen soldier from their respective hometowns. Small served as a second lieutenant in the United States Navy during WWII and had a deep interest in memorializing the D-Day Campaign, which he felt still had a profound impact on the world today.

Small, who attended D.C.'s Woodrow Wilson High School, co-founded Southern Engineering Corporation in 1950 and developed millions of square feet of office space, apartment communities and single-family homes in communities across the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. He served on many civic and cultural boards, including those of the National Trust for the Humanities, the National Symphony Orchestra, the National Gallery of Art, the Foundation for the National Archives, and the James Madison Council of the Library of Congress. He was a 2009 recipient of a National Humanities Medal, presented by the National Endowment for the Humanities to individuals and groups whose work has deepened the nation's understanding of the humanities. ☐



Albert H. Small

George Welcomes

Headliners at University Events



“If we learned one thing in the past 18 months, it is that we need to expect anything. It’s the flexibility and the awareness that change happens more frequently than we’ve ever expected before, and it will be the only constant moving forward.”

Astronaut Anousheh Ansari, MS ’92, CEO of XPRIZE Foundation, speaking in July on an alumni panel titled “Celebrating 200 Years: GW on the Pulse of Space and Technology”

“When I was in college, I always believed that once I graduated, the clouds would part, my future would be clear in front of me, and that calm certainty would be my lot in life. Boy, was I wrong. Trust me when I tell you that your lives will unfold in ways you can’t conceive of.”

Smithsonian Institution Secretary Lonnie Bunch III addressing graduates at GW’s virtual commencement ceremony in May





“I think the most important skill that I utilize as a journalist is being willing to see differences in other people and understand them. I get that from the fact that my parents came to this country from a completely different culture and had to learn how to acclimate to America and how to love America.”

Abby Phillip, CNN senior political correspondent, on the impact of her family’s immigration from Trinidad and Tobago on her work, as part of GW’s Race in America Lecture Series

“Under my leadership, we’re going back to doing what we do best, which is relying on science, facts and data.”

Environmental Protection Agency Chief Michael S. Regan, MPA ’04, speaking at the 2021 Planet Forward Summit

“The way some people, when they’re experiencing a lot of pain, they have to scream and curse? I use comedy. Oftentimes that helps me deal with the truth of it without feeling like all is lost.”

Daily Show host Trevor Noah, talking to GW students in a virtual event sponsored by the Program Board

“I would make up these songs and these poems and these stories. ... And then the next day I would be upset because I couldn’t remember any of the words, because I was 4, and my memory wasn’t that good. I remember thinking: Just you wait until I know how to write. When I know how to write, I’m not going to forget any of the words.”

Award-winning author Elizabeth Acevedo, BA ’10, on how she got her start telling stories at a GW bicentennial celebration event sponsored by the GW Alumni Association

“GW was my first choice—I was completely obsessed with going there. I was very excited to experience the school, the city and to go there with big eyes wide open, like, ‘OK, let’s see what I fall in love with.’”

Fashion designer, stylist and entrepreneur Rachel Zoe, BA ’93, speaking at an alumni panel titled “Celebrating 200 Years: GW’s Impact on Entrepreneurship”



The Illusion of 'Normal'

In *Nobody's Normal*, Roy Richard Grinker draws on his personal history—from his daughter's autism to his grandfather's analysis with Sigmund Freud—to challenge mental illness stigma.

In his undergraduate anthropology class, Roy Richard Grinker, professor of anthropology and international affairs, often cites statistics to help his students grasp the worldwide prevalence of mental health disorders.

More than 260 million people suffer from depression, he tells them. Approximately 1 in 50 children in the United States are diagnosed with autism each year. And, at any particular time, 25 percent of Americans meet the scientific criteria for a mental illness—not to mention the tens of millions more who regularly suffer through waves of anxiety and sadness.

As Grinker checked off figure after figure in a recent class, one student observed, "So, nobody's normal."

Not only had the student summarized the point of Grinker's lecture—in mental health, differences aren't always deficits—but she'd also given him the title of his next book. In *Nobody's Normal: How Culture Created the Stigma of Mental Illness*, Grinker reveals how centuries of moral judgments have fueled stigma against people with mental illnesses.

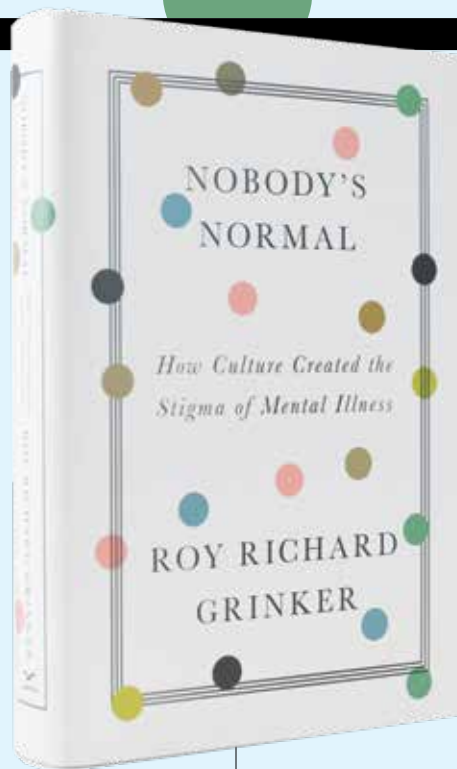
Few scholars are better qualified to cast a discerning eye on the history of mental illness than Grinker. He was raised among three generations of eminent psychiatrists. His grandfather was one of Sigmund Freud's last patients. And his books often draw on his personal history—including his daughter's autism diagnosis, his travels among hunter-gatherers in central Africa and his conversations with his students—for illustrations of shifting cultural perceptions.

In his book, Grinker acknowledges the challenges people with psychological conditions face, but he sees a light at the end of the tunnel. As old mental health prejudices are rejected and differences embraced, Grinker believes his student was right. "Normal is an illusion," he said—and one that's fading fast.

"We learned from our culture to put stigma and mental illness together," he said. "And that means we can also learn to take it apart."

Embracing Differences

Growing up the son of a psychiatrist in Chicago—and with his psychiatrist grandfather living across the street—Grinker said his family believed that everyone had a touch of mental illness. His grandfather (also named Roy Richard Grinker) regaled him with stories of working with Freud, from the legendary analyst's stale-smelling Vienna waiting room to his wish that some psychiatric conditions would someday be no less stigmatized than the common cold. During World War II, Grinker's grandfather conducted



Nobody's Normal: How Culture Created the Stigma of Mental Illness (W. W. Norton & Company, 2021)
By Roy Richard Grinker, professor of anthropology and international affairs

pioneering studies of American pilots suffering combat-related distress. "He said his patients were not abnormal, they were normal people in abnormal circumstances," he recalled.

Grinker's family was disappointed that he didn't pursue psychiatry. (His wife is a psychiatrist with the National Institute of Mental Health.) But as an anthropologist, he has become a leading voice in framing an understanding of cultural attitudes toward mental health. In his book, he traces the origins of mental illness stigma to the

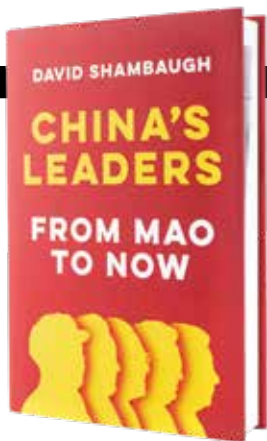
Industrial Revolution, when people were often confined to asylums less for psychological conditions than for being nonproductive workers. "Mental illness and stigma were born together of capitalism," he said. "Capitalism defined 'normal' as someone who was autonomous and independent and produced the most capital. And we stigmatized those who produced the least."

During his global field work, Grinker has observed how different societies embrace notions of mental illness. In Namibia, for example, he spoke with the father of a young boy who exhibited classic autism traits but was respected in his village for his goat herding skills. When Grinker asked the father if he was worried about who would care for his son after he was gone, the man gestured toward his neighbors and said, "We won't all die at once." Through the village's social support network, "they fashioned a society that accepts differences we shun," Grinker said.

Still, Grinker is hopeful that stigma is rapidly diminishing. He doesn't minimize the barriers that remain. In a TED Talk, he noted that 60 percent of Americans with mental illness get no treatment, worse among minorities; suicide is still the third leading cause of death among teenagers; and anorexia mortality rates are as high as 10 percent. But he also sees signs that, as both Freud and Grinker's grandfather hoped, mental illness is increasingly accepted as a common part of human diversity. Today, for example, 12 percent of American public school children receive some form of special education, he noted, while 10 percent of Americans use antidepressants—as many as take cholesterol-lowering statins.

In his own life, Grinker's daughter Isabel, 29, self-identifies as autistic, channeling her energy into caring for animals at a research lab. Grinker no longer hears the question he posed to the Namibian father: How will she survive on her own? And in a recent class, one of Grinker's students described her ADHD diagnosis as the highlight of her freshman year. "Finally," she said, "somebody saw that I wasn't lazy or stupid. I just needed a little bit of help."

"Our ideals are changing," Grinker said. "We value diversity more than sameness. We no longer worship the person who conforms to an illusion of normality. Normal is becoming whatever someone wants it to be." — John DiConsiglio



▲ ***China's Leaders: From Mao to Now* (Polity Press, 2021)**

By David Shambaugh, Gaston Sigur
Professor of Asian Studies, Political Science, and International Affairs

Building on nearly 50 years of Shambaugh's study of China, this book focuses on the idiosyncrasies of five leaders: Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin, Hu Jintao and current Chinese President Xi Jinping. The idea for the volume came to him when he realized that there were individual books he could assign to students, but no catch-all that covered the major rulers from 1949 (when the People's Republic of China was founded) to the present. With no checks and balances, totalitarian system leaders tend to have oversized impacts, Shambaugh writes, and that is true of "populist tyrant" Mao, "pragmatic Leninist" Deng, "bureaucratic politician" Jiang, "technocratic apparatchik" Hu and "modern emperor" Xi. The latter, the reader is informed, had a difficult upbringing after his father was purged from the party, which may have helped shape his independence. Among the other details we learn are that Xi was criticized as a teenager for feeding dumplings to stray dogs at a time when food was scarce, and there are accusations that his doctoral thesis was plagiarized.

***Tiger in the Sea: The Ditching of Flying Tiger 923 and the Desperate Struggle for Survival* (Lyons Press, 2021) Ⓟ**

By Eric Lindner, BBA '81

Sea tigers may conjure the film *Life of Pi*, but this gripping tale from 1962—which isn't for those with aerophobia—centers on Captain John Murray intentionally crashing (or "ditching") Flying Tiger



Line Flight 923 into the stormy Atlantic Ocean after the engines failed. The flight, which had originated in New Jersey, was en route from Newfoundland to Frankfurt. At the time, Lindner writes, flying was 100 times more dangerous than today, and this aircraft had a tendency to erupt into flames. The pilot—with a prior record of near-miraculous flying in tough conditions—tried to save as many of the other 75 people as he could. As one character thinks at the time, "It looks like fireworks. Nothing's gonna happen. We're just gonna have a great story to tell." For those that lived to tell it, the tale is riveting, and the author provides all the context a reader would want—not only during the dramatic events of that day, but also setting up what happened before and after, right up to the present day.

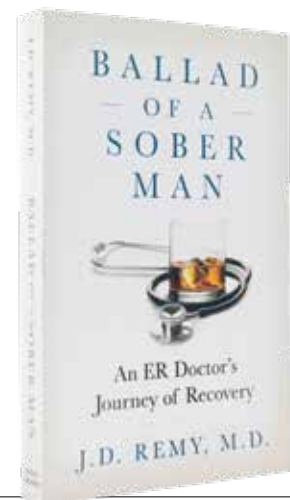


▲ ***Poems for Your Pandemic* (Outskirts Press, 2021)**

By Gary Alexander, JD '67

The author allows that some might balk at a poetic, often humorous, take on the pandemic. But this is ultimately an optimistic volume, though the poems sometimes reflect frustration and anger. One observes that even Santa Claus must follow Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance; "Yes, this pandemic affects jolly St. Nick./ The CDC warns: 'Kids will make Santa sick!'" Of his wife cutting his hair, the author records the barber in hiding (who did a first-rate job), "refused every tip!" Alexander is a lawyer who doesn't usually write poetry but found penning this volume at midnight gave him much needed

laughs and helped him go back to sleep. The book, which addresses the 1918 flu pandemic, too, notes of a COVID Thanksgiving "a feeling of doom./ To see your loved ones, you had to use Zoom!"—one of many passages that evoke Dr. Seuss. The latter would likely approve of the poem about scarce toilet paper ("I confess I took toilet paper for granted,/ Weren't zillions of toilet paper trees planted?") and the one on a lost mask ("I really loved this mask ... it will never, ever be the same./ My mask is gone, I've got no one else to blame!").



▲ ***Ballad of a Sober Man: An ER Doctor's Journey of Recovery* (AnnElise Publications, 2020)**

By J.D. Remy,* MD '92

"Successfully getting sober is much like successfully getting wealthy—it's slow and methodical, and it requires patience," writes the author in this hauntingly beautiful memoir about losing his house, marriage, medical career and children. After being wheeled into the emergency room where he works, he has to go about the long, hard process of a "wet brain drying out." The comparison between becoming sober and wealthy is one of many insights he shares, and many readers will wonder how he managed to observe so much during such difficult periods of his life. In a psychiatric ward, he notes many of the medical technicians are named Wayne; he finds echoes of *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*, *Star Trek*, *The Shining*, *The Catcher in the Rye* and others. Penning the book, he writes, has been "undeniably, a portkey in my recovery journey." Throughout, there is the refrain: "We are only as sick as our secrets."

— Menachem Wecker, MA '09

*pseudonym



LAND OF



ICE

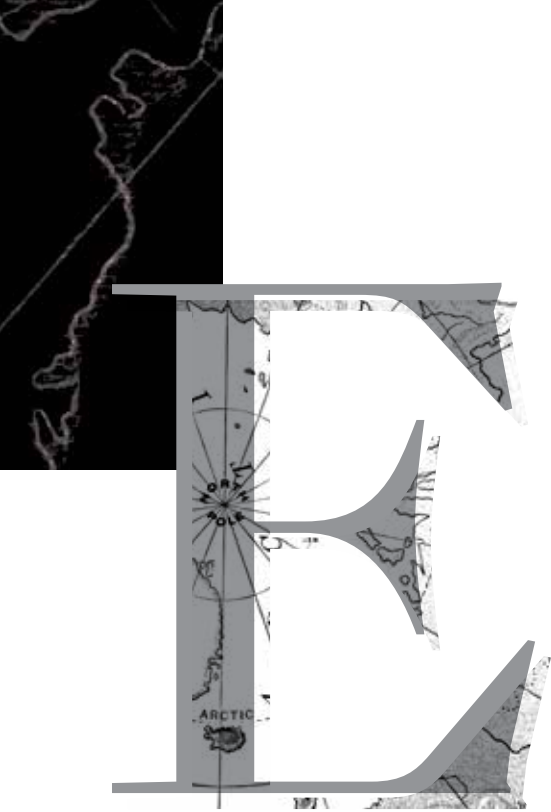
AND

FIRE

MORE THAN 4 MILLION PEOPLE

live in the Arctic, where climate change is progressing faster than on the rest of the planet. Researchers across GW are working to help sustain their cities, infrastructures and cultures.

// By Sarah C.P. Williams



EVERY YEAR, crews of Iñupiat men paddle from the northernmost reaches of Alaska into the Arctic Ocean in search of walrus, seals and bowhead whales. They float their catches back to land and—stocked with enough meat to last many months—lower it deep into the frozen ground.

In recent years, however, these ice cellars—or *siġuaq* in Iñupiaq—have started to collapse, threatening the food security of entire communities. And it's not just in Alaska. Ice cellars used by subsistence hunters in northern Siberia are also disappearing or decaying as the ground warms, says Dmitry Streletskiy, an associate professor of geography at GW.

"Imagine that you have a freezer—minus 18 degrees, and it becomes minus 15, minus 12, minus 10 and then minus 4. The meat is still frozen, but already some bacteria, mold starts to grow."

To help intervene, GW researchers installed temperature monitors in traditional Iñupiat ice cellars in Utqiagvik, Alaska. They also mapped the cellars—71 in total—to help direct snow plow drivers away. (Counterintuitively, extra snow on top of an ice cellar can insulate and warm it.)

But the thawing *siġuaq* are the almost literal tip of the iceberg when it comes to the challenges currently facing the people who call the Arctic home. With climate change, urbanization, political tensions, changing tourism and the boom-bust cycles driven by resource extraction, the Arctic is a place of upheaval. Unusual storms, increased wildfires, landslides, poor air quality and collapsing buildings are just some of what

people there have faced in recent years.

The Arctic is "the canary in the coal mine," says Robert Orttung, research professor of international affairs at GW. "What happens up there in the north is what's going to happen to the rest of the planet next."

In 2016, Orttung spearheaded the Arctic Partnership for International Research and Education (PIRE) project, an international research network based out of GW that aims to promote greater urban sustainability in the Arctic.

The project was funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), which, in 2016, unveiled "Navigating the New Arctic" as one of its "10 Big Ideas"—grand challenges that identified areas for investment at the frontiers of science and engineering. In the Arctic, the federal agency sought to spur multidisciplinary research that would advance understanding of the local and global effects of a rapidly changing region.

Since 2016, more than a dozen scientists across eight schools at GW have received approximately \$8 million in funding for Arctic research, much of it from NSF. They study areas ranging from geography, electrical engineering and transportation to politics and infectious disease.

GW Geography Research Scientist Vera Kuklina, for example, is leading a new NSF-funded project to study Arctic "frozen commons"—ice, snow and permafrost landscapes collectively used and managed by Indigenous peoples, local communities and governments. Kuklina comes from a nomadic, Mongolian-speaking Indigenous group in Russia and is passionate about including local people in research and planning.

"There's a lot of knowledge that isn't written down anywhere but exists about how people in the Arctic have adapted and kept in balance relations with their environment," she says.

The Arctic is a diverse place, of course—small towns in Alaska may, on the surface, have almost nothing other than their latitude in common with industrial cities of Siberia. But when you look deeper at the political fabric of Arctic locales, you find connections, Orttung says.

"Throughout the Arctic, the drivers of change right now are the climate and the demand for resources," he says. "Those shape everything we do."

The Arctic Circle wraps the globe at the 66th parallel, a line that cuts through Canada, Russia, Finland, Sweden, Norway and the top quarter of Alaska. Almost the entirety of Greenland falls inside the Arctic Circle,





LEFT Kelsey Nyland (second from right), a research scientist in the GW Department of Geography, led students in mapping Inupiat ice cellars in Utqiagvik, Alaska.

BOTTOM LEFT Ground ice exposure along the Dalton Highway in the North Slope of Alaska. Thawing permafrost causes the road, the only route stretching north from Fairbanks into the Arctic, to frequently wash out.

BOTTOM RIGHT Nyland (center) and students measuring permafrost thaw on Galbraith Ridge in the Alaskan North Slope.



PHOTO: VASILY TOLMANOV (TOP) / PHOTO: KELSEY NYLAND (BOTTOM LEFT) / PHOTO: TOOLIK FIELD (BOTTOM RIGHT)

while only a handful of Iceland's most northern peninsulas stretch into it, like fingers grazing a bowl. Above this imaginary line is the Arctic—land of the midnight sun and polar night. Here, the summer solstice is marked by 24-hours of constant daylight. On the winter solstice, the sun never appears.

At times, scientists have used summer temperatures, the edges of forests or the presence of sea ice to define the boundaries of the Arctic. But as the climate changes, these boundaries shift far from the 66th parallel. Areas historically considered Arctic by these standards are now too warm, watery or green.

“No region of the world is warming as fast as the Arctic,” says GW Professor of Geography Nikolay Shiklomanov. “I’ve been going there for almost 30 years, and you can see the change every year. It’s hard not to notice it.”

Indeed, the Arctic Council, an intergovernmental forum that addresses issues faced by Arctic governments and Indigenous people, concluded that the Arctic is warming about three times as fast as the rest of the planet. As the air warms, so too does the ground and the sea. Glaciers and sea ice retreat, and the dark open ocean absorbs more heat from the sun than the reflective ice and snow once did, increasing the water temperature and melting ice further. Partially decomposed plants and animals begin to decay again as the soil around them thaws—they too hasten climate change by releasing methane into the air.

Most people know some of this science—they can tell you that somewhere in the north glaciers are melting, releasing water that laps hungrily at coastlines around the world. But, in the 2016 NSF-funded Polar, Environment, and Science (POLES) survey, more than half of all Americans failed to recognize that the U.S. has any territory or people in the Arctic at all—let alone that an area of Alaska nearly the size of California lies inside the Arctic circle.

“Alaska shouldn’t be shrunk into a box on the side of U.S. maps,” Streletskiy says. “It makes it so disconnected. This is part of our country.”

Still, even if we are an Arctic country, why does this region matter so much? In other words, why should we care?

“There’s this perception that the Arctic is this white, uninhabited place with polar bears. But there are cities there. There are industries and people and communities. The economy of the Arctic is the size of the economy of Malaysia,” Streletskiy says.

Although that survey on Arctic perception didn’t ask, most Americans likely wouldn’t correctly guess that, across eight countries, 4 million people live in the Arctic. The region



includes 10 cities with populations of at least 30,000—the size of Alaska’s capital city, Juneau (which itself lies about 600 miles south of the Arctic Circle).

Some of the reasons we should care about the Arctic are the same reasons we should care about anywhere—compassion for our fellow humans and a desire to preserve the diversity of spaces, flora and fauna on our planet, Streletskiy says. But others are more tangible and self-serving.

“Changes in the Arctic affect everything else globally,” he says. “It’s the kitchen of the climate.”

He means, of course, that the weather in the Arctic shapes weather patterns around the globe. Not only do melting glaciers feed rising sea levels, but warmer Arctic air and water affect trade winds and weather systems as far away as the equator. A warmer

Arctic means more droughts and severe storms for all of us.

Moreover, Streletskiy adds, the lessons we learn in the Arctic can be applied elsewhere. Best practices to slow coastal erosion in Norway might also be useful in Florida. Lessons on sensing wildfires in Alaska surely have application in Los Angeles. And, ultimately, if researchers can make the Arctic—an isolated land of unpredictable fire and ice—a sustainable place to live, then maybe the rest of the world has a shot.

Shiklomanov has been visiting the same places in northern Alaska for so long that he talks about the journey to get to them in the same tone he might describe an outing to the grocery store. The trip, however, involves helicopters, hundreds of miles on dirt roads

and backpacking—sometimes hiking 10 miles a day—to remote field sites. “We have to carry guns for protection against bears,” he says.

Shiklomanov, in collaboration with Streletskiy, studies permafrost—soil or sediment that remains frozen year-round. Once, permafrost was considered permanent, hence its name. Now, however, much of it is thawing and the implications are far-reaching. Melting ice embedded in permafrost causes ground surface deformation and collapse, changes drainage patterns and triggers landslides.

“For decades, permafrost has been treated as relatively solid ground for pipelines, roads and buildings,” says Shiklomanov. “Now, when the permafrost thaws, that ground can collapse.”

A team of GW researchers led by Shiklomanov wants to better understand the process by which permafrost thaws, and how this weakening of the natural landscape affects the people and cities of the Arctic. They have been monitoring permafrost changes by measuring ground temperature and the depth of summer thaw at a large number of sites distributed across the Arctic. Some sites that were established to represent grassy tundra a mere five or 10 years ago are now covered with knee-high shrubs. The change in vegetation is another sign of the warming climate, with thicker shrubs making permafrost more resilient than once

thought and insulating the ground from summer heat.

“In the

1990s, we had this assumption that as the climate warmed, the permafrost would thaw quite fast,” says Shiklomanov. “Now we’re finding that it’s surprisingly robust.”

But there’s a tipping point to permafrost robustness, Shiklomanov notes. The thawing of permafrost doesn’t happen at a reliably steady pace. Instead, it can warm slowly until it hits a threshold—and then it can thaw quickly and dramatically, affecting the stability of the landscapes and infrastructure built on them.

As part of another NSF-funded project, Shiklomanov and his colleagues will monitor the permafrost-affected landscapes in order to better understand the relations between climate and permafrost and to identify areas threatened by permafrost thaw.

For years, Streletskiy has been sounding the alarm about the damage that warming permafrost can do to Arctic cities. In Igarka, a shrinking lumber town in northern Siberia, buildings constructed during the mid-20th century—the town’s heyday—are now crumbling as their foundations sink into degrading permafrost.

In the early 2000s, the government resettled more than a thousand people whose homes in Igarka were collapsing. The same, Streletskiy says, will happen in dozens of other Siberian outposts, where—for many years—posts were pounded into permafrost as if it were concrete.

“We’ve been telling people to pay attention for two decades,” he says. “But these local decision makers have other things keeping

them busy.”

One of the reasons it’s so easy to ignore, Streletskiy explains, is that thawing permafrost is like ice cream on a stick. For a while, it can warm up and keep its shape. You don’t notice that it’s losing stability. Then all of a sudden (and often too late to save infrastructure), it starts to slide. It’s the same idea of a tipping point that Shiklomanov’s data showed.

“You might not know that your house is on this unstable permafrost unless you measure it,” Streletskiy says. “It might look okay until it’s not.”

In 2019, using some of the data that he and Shiklomanov had collected from hundreds of boreholes drilled into the Arctic permafrost, Streletskiy worked with economists to model the future effect of thawing permafrost on the Russian economy.

By 2050, they concluded, the cost of replacing damaged buildings and infrastructure could add up to more than \$67 billion in U.S. dollars. Those dollar signs, he says, began to catch some policymakers’ attention.

Then, in mid-2020, a diesel oil tank collapsed at a nickel mine in Norilsk, less than 150 miles north of Igarka, and 21,000 tons of oil leaked into the Ambarnaya River. The assumed cause of the collapse: The permafrost around the tank had thawed and given way.

A week after the spill, the Russian government announced that it would begin inspecting other potentially dangerous infrastructure at



risk from permafrost changes.

“They didn’t pay proper attention to the permafrost, and I hope this changes that,” says Streletskiy.

In 2019, gusts of wind sent a tree careening onto power lines near Anchorage, Alaska. The lines—pulsing with electricity—hit the dry undergrowth below and sparked an immediate fire. Within a day, 52 homes and three businesses had burned to the ground. As the fire spread over subsequent days—eventually burning more than 3,000 acres of land—additional trees collapsed on power lines and poles. It took weeks for power to be fully restored to the region.

Every summer, hundreds of wildfires burn millions of acres of land in and near the Arctic. They blanket the region in smoke, lower air quality and destroy forests and structures. They affect millions of people’s lives. Orttung’s group ran focus groups in 2020 and 2021 to better understand the impacts of wildfires on Arctic communities.

“You don’t know that [the smoke] is affecting you until you wake up in the morning with a sore throat or scratchy throat,” said one participant in Alaska.

“You can be cut off from family and friends and shops,” said another from Sweden.

These fires have happened for decades—the Alaska Fire Control Service was first established by Congress in 1933 in response to the number of fires in the state. But now, like fires in many places around the world, they’re getting worse.

“Record-breaking temperatures and the resulting dried-out vegetation in Alaska have fueled major fires in recent years,” says Payman Dehghanian, an assistant professor of electrical and computer engineering. “Such events are projected to increase in both frequency and magnitude.”

Dehghanian received an NSF grant in 2020 to study the interactions between wildfires in the Arctic and energy grids, including Alaska’s unique network.

In the mainland United States, Dehghanian explains, a power outage in one area can often be solved—even in advance of repaired power lines—by rerouting energy from another area. But in Alaska, there are more than 200 remotely powered, isolated villages; if a wildfire or ice damage breaks the single line connecting one of these villages to their power source, they often lose power for days until the failure is fixed.

Dehghanian, through conversations with engineers, social scientists, local utility companies, firefighters and policymakers, has been trying to wrap his head around how to break the cycle of electrical grid damage

and wildfires in these remote places.

“On the one hand, the energy network can trigger wildfires when wires fall,” he says. “On the other hand, the fires can damage the energy network.”

The problems associated with numerous and lengthy power outages, Dehghanian says, can be solved in part with investment in mobile and renewable power sources—including backup generators, battery storage units and mobile wind turbines. (Solar energy can be difficult to obtain during the smoky conditions of a wildfire). But better sensing and monitoring—of both wildfires and the electric grid—would go further toward preventing outages and damage in the first place, he thinks.

Dehghanian is working on a new technology that might be especially useful in Alaska: an intelligent system that senses a broken powerline and, in the split second before the live wire falls to the ground, isolates the section of wire and cuts off the electricity flowing through it in an automated manner.

“By the time the wire hits the ground, there is no electricity, and there is no risk of sparking a fire,” Dehghanian says.

Learning about how this kind of innovative solution might be applied in Alaska can go far in not only helping lessen the effect of wildfires on Alaskans, but in deploying such technologies in other places—from California to Brazil and Australia.

“When we first started working on this project, our goal was to learn from other parts of the country and the world and apply that knowledge to Alaska,” says Dehghanian. “But we found there are also opportunities for others to learn from Alaska. These solutions that we will be trying on detection, prevention and mitigation can be applied elsewhere.”

Norilsk—the Russian city where an oil tank collapsed into thawing permafrost—is known for something else. Blanketed in black snow at times with air that tastes of rotten eggs, it’s been called the world’s most polluted city. And it’s not the only northern locale plagued with smog. In recent years Fairbanks, Alaska (which lies outside the Arctic Circle but is often considered a gateway to the Arctic), has topped a list of most polluted cities in the United States published by the American Lung Association.

Like other problems exacerbated by the dual threat of climate change and urbanization, Arctic pollution is getting worse. Throughout the early 2000s, Fairbanks averaged between five and 10 days



a year with unhealthy air; between 2017 and 2019, the average was 35.

“It’s counterintuitive because we think of the Arctic as this pristine place,” says Susan Anenberg, associate professor of environmental and occupational health and of global health at the Milken Institute School of Public Health and director of GW’s new Climate & Health Institute.

Despite its vast wilderness, the Arctic has a confluence of stagnant air, wood smoke and pollution that drifts northward from the rest of the planet. In industrial cities of Siberia, like Norilsk, pollutants spew from mines and factories, puffing black smoke into the air. But even small Arctic towns in Alaska and Scandinavia struggle with air quality.

“Even though we’re generally talking about small towns and cities, wood combustion is pervasive in the Arctic,” says Anenberg. Some of that wood combustion comes from wildfires, but it also comes from the Arctic way of life. People heat their homes with wood, cook on wood and smoke fish on smoldering wood.

That’s not all. In most places around the world, the air is colder the higher you go. In some places in the Arctic, the air is frequently inverted, with a layer of warm air

Smoke from forest fires fills the air near a road in the Irkutsk region of Russia. Authorities often lack the funding to fight fires, which leaves many landscapes blackened.



on top, trapping pollution in place. It's one of the reasons that air quality models, designed to simulate how proposed policy changes might affect air quality, are hard to apply to Alaska.

"A lot of our analytical tools don't work in Alaska," says Anenberg. Instead, she says, scientists like her must assemble new models from the ground up—a painstaking task that slows research.

With Orttung, Anenberg is carrying out studies on how forest fires and climate change affect air quality and, in turn, public health. Anenberg is analyzing recent wildfire episodes in conjunction with local medical records to see whether worsening air quality causes more people to die. This kind of analysis might help answer one of her lingering questions: Is burning wood more or less toxic than other kinds of pollution?

"Here in D.C., most of our pollution is from industry and vehicles. We're burning a lot of natural gas, gasoline and diesel but we're not burning very much wood so we just can't study it," says Anenberg. "In the Arctic, we have the ability to study pollution from wood combustion and that can help us improve our models elsewhere."

And it's not just the air quality affecting

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"NO REGION OF THE WORLD IS WARMING AS FAST AS THE ARCTIC. I'VE BEEN GOING THERE FOR ALMOST 30 YEARS, AND YOU CAN SEE THE CHANGE EVERY YEAR. IT'S HARD NOT TO NOTICE IT."

NIKOLAY SHIKLOMANOV

PROFESSOR OF GEOGRAPHY, COLUMBIAN COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES,

health in the Arctic. The presence of infectious diseases, and the changing burdens on the health system, are shifting as well, says infectious disease physician Hana Akselrod.

An assistant professor of medicine at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Akselrod has introduced lectures on climate change and health into the medical school curriculum. Her interest in the topic began with curiosity about how climate change affects infectious diseases—by changing the geographic range of disease-carrying insects, for example—but quickly grew broader.

Akselrod, who is collaborating with Dehghanian on a study to understand forest fire impacts (for example, fires connect climate change to asthma rates), shifted gears when COVID-19 began. Over the course of 2020, she has been collaborating on a study to look at Juneau's response to the pandemic.

After her infectious disease residency in Maine, Akselrod thought she had some insight into what it's like to live in a cold, coastal environment with isolated medical care and self-sufficient communities. "But whatever challenges we had in Maine, they're amplified by several orders of magnitude

in Alaska,” she says. “COVID was this opportunity to get some real insight into how an emerging infectious disease impacts a community like this.”

Community cohesion, strong communication, as well as the Indigenous historical memories of the 1918 flu—which disproportionately affected Native Alaskans—helped Juneau respond relatively effectively to the pandemic, Akselrod says.

“Looking at a small, contained community with a lot of resilience afforded us an opportunity to look at where things went right, and how the community adapted when things didn’t go right,” she says. “I think this is key to charting a course through not only COVID-19 or the next pandemic but also to the greater threats to health that are coming with a rapidly changing climate and destabilized natural environment.”

She points to a recent mysterious anthrax outbreak in Siberia that was traced to thawing permafrost. Anthrax spores had hidden, frozen in the icy ground, for years—perhaps decades. When the permafrost began to warm, the spores came alive again, a kind of zombie bacteria. Grazing reindeer picked up anthrax on the tundra and spread it to dozens of people.

Ultimately, the changing pressures on the Arctic are changing what it means to live in the far north. Researchers like Orttung and Kuklina want to know how, in the

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THE ARCTIC IS “THE CANARY IN THE COAL MINE. WHAT HAPPENS UP THERE IN THE NORTH IS WHAT’S GOING TO HAPPEN TO THE REST OF THE PLANET NEXT.”

ROBERT ORTTUNG

RESEARCH PROFESSOR OF
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, ELLIOTT
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

“We think of the Arctic as this pristine place,” says Susan Anenberg, director of GW’s Climate & Health Institute, but regions like Admiralty Island, Alaska, face challenges such as pollution and wildfires.

face of these changes, Arctic cities—and entire cultures—can survive. Orttung, again and again, comes back to the idea of sustainability. He is trying to understand how to make Arctic cities more sustainable—and how to gauge their sustainability in the first place.

“In the Arctic, but also elsewhere, sustainability means making cities where people can live in a way that doesn’t make it difficult for the next generation to live in the same way,” Orttung says. “It means not using more resources than you consume.”

Researchers around the world use urban sustainability indicators to help determine how sustainable local governments are. But in 2020, Orttung reported that one of the most commonly used of these indicators—an index known as ISO 37120 that measures city services and quality of life—is only useful as a starting point for Arctic cities.

“In a lot of ways, Arctic cities aren’t that different,” he says. “But these international standards don’t take things like permafrost and extreme isolation into consideration.”

To help build new indicators that can be used to design more sustainable communities in Alaska, Orttung is collaborating with Jim Powell, an assistant research professor at University of Alaska Southeast and former deputy mayor of Juneau. Powell has lived in Alaska for 45 years and seems to know just about everyone in the state doing anything related to sustainability.

“You can’t manage something unless you can measure it,” Powell says. “But if we want to get local decision makers on board, we also need to keep it simple.”

Frequently used indexes like ISO 37120 include more than 100 sustainability indicators. Powell points out that most local governments don’t have the time or patience to track this many indicators. He and Orttung recently contributed to a sustainability plan for Fairbanks and homed in on just three indicators for city officials to follow: food, energy and waste.

Orttung has carried out research on, among many other topics, how to make Arctic recycling programs cost efficient, what factors affect the sustainability of solid waste management programs, how to boost food security in northern Alaska and how cruise ship tourism is affecting the economies of Arctic cities.

He’s found that the more people in a city turn out to vote in elections, the better the city seems to rank in measures of sustainability. It’s one of the reasons he and Powell strive to involve local stakeholders—from farmers and Indigenous groups to city council members—in their work.

Powell and Orttung push for what Powell calls “co-design.” As he defines the



term, “it means you involve locals from the beginning.”

It’s a sentiment that Kuklina, as she studies local knowledge in the Arctic, strongly agrees with. Kuklina says that much of her work couldn’t be done at all without close-knit ties to Siberian locals. One of her most recent projects involved mapping an entire network of informal roads that snake through Arctic forests in Russia.

“This project actually happened because I was up there doing something different and people just kept talking about all these roads that didn’t exist on maps, and how important they were for locals,” she says. “I realized that nobody usually took them into consideration for environmental planning.”

To map them, Kuklina had to find them—that required tips from local hunters who regularly use the roads. Some, she found, were roads long ago established by oil and gas companies and believed to be abandoned. Others were widened from animal paths, and some had originated from long straight stretches of forest cleared for forestry or power lines.

“What I found was that these roads have a big impact on all sorts of things, from animal migrations to forest fires,” says Kuklina. “And nobody other than the locals had paid

attention to them before.”

Her backcountry travels on these informal roads—which often involve broken down off-road vehicles being tinkered with before the trips can progress—have also given her a glimpse at the effects of climate change. The roads and shoulders of the roads, most of which are built on permafrost, are cracking and drooping. Rivers, she says, are becoming shallower because of climate-related changes to waterflow. The hunters who guide her in the forested taiga tell her that plummeting fish and animal populations are making them abandon traditional hunting and consider moving to larger cities.

Now, Kuklina has turned her attention to how local communities use and manage green and blue spaces and, when they are covered with snow and ice, “white space.” Like Orttung and Powell, she thinks that studying the sustainability of Arctic towns and cities can help inform us about creating a more sustainable world.

Nearly all the researchers say they wish more people appreciated the Arctic’s importance. Not just its natural beauty—icebergs on a nature documentary or glaciers viewed from a cruise ship window—but the diversity of

people and cultures, its unique urban fabric and the outsized challenges the region faces.

That’s one reason GW Associate Professor of International Education and International Affairs Laura Engel launched #60above60, a program that pairs students in Washington, D.C., with students living above the 60th parallel in Alaska, Norway, Canada, Finland and Russia.

“I think it’s valuable for students who live at a great distance from the Arctic to see how their lives and their communities are intimately connected to what’s happening in the Arctic,” says Engel.

Through the program, students create and share 60-second digital stories that relate to the environments of their homes and communities. Engel and her GW graduate students are now studying whether the program informs students’ pro-environmental behaviors and ability to connect what’s happening around the globe with their own local community. The researchers are still analyzing data from student participants.

“What we hope,” Engel says, “is that this kind of program leads to enhanced perspectives about how different communities live, how their communities thrive and that it contributes to young people’s deeper thinking about sustainability and conservation.”

Engel would like to eventually expand #60above60 and involve college students in these kinds of global exchanges. Everyone, she says, could benefit from learning more about the ways their lives are connected to what is happening in other places.

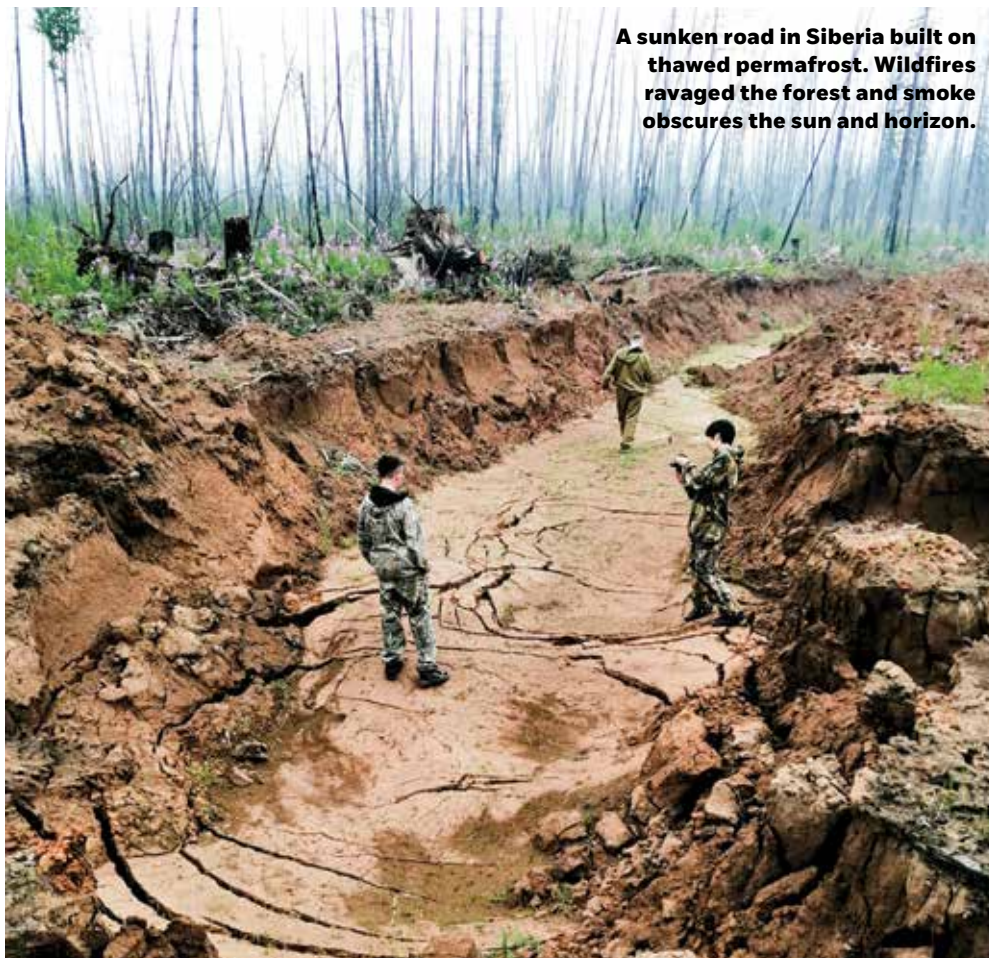
Orttung agrees and cites signs of momentum. The Biden administration, for example, has signaled it wants to make science and the input of Indigenous people a higher priority in U.S. Arctic policy. The five new commissioners and one reappointed commissioner to the U.S. Arctic Research Commission (USARC) reflect a significant shift: One-third of the current commissioners are now Indigenous, half are women and two-thirds live in Alaska.

“The consequences of global Arctic [policy] ripple all over the world,” said newly appointed USARC chair Mike Sfraga in a statement. “It’s very refreshing to see the United States leaning forward like this.”

The new officials also said they plan to address issues around economic development, infrastructure, shipping, tourism, sustainability and food security in U.S. policy.

“You would hope people would think through the fact that our whole planet is interconnected,” Orttung says. “Even though the Arctic is far away, it still has an impact on our daily lives.”

A sunken road in Siberia built on thawed permafrost. Wildfires ravaged the forest and smoke obscures the sun and horizon.



GIFT



IT





GW FALL GIFT GUIDE 2021

YOUR



ALL

Whether reinventing a room with a bright, textural art quilt or nudging a friend toward a personal style upgrade with a raw emerald ring, this year's gift guide goes bold.



Forget what you thought you knew about gift-giving. If you're reaching for a scented candle or a bestseller, just back away. This year's list has nine ways to gift better than ever—from hiking to visit mountain gorillas in Rwanda to sampling artisan wines from Bolivia.

GIVE BIG OR GO HOME.

BY CAITE HAMILTON



The Bold and the Beautiful

Cindy Grisdela Art Quilts

cindygrisdela.com

These days, **Cindy Grisdela, MBA '85**, may be recognized in the quilting world for art quilts that display an almost fearless use of color, but it wasn't always that way. "I made a lot of blue quilts," she says, "before I felt ready to break out of my comfort zone and explore other color palettes."

The artist learned to sew when she was 10 years old, making clothes for herself and as gifts into young adulthood, until, while as an undergraduate at the College of William and Mary, she picked up a magazine article on quilting and began using the craft as a creative outlet. It was at William and Mary, too, that she discovered the artists—like Henri Matisse, Morris Louis, Paul Klee, Helen Frankenthaler—who would eventually influence her signature style. "Studying modern painters showed me the way," she says.

At first, Grisdela created traditional pieces to be used, making bed quilts, baby quilts and lap quilts. But over time, she says, "it became important to me to create work that reflected my personal artistic aesthetic." She turned her focus toward contemporary art quilts, meant to add warmth and texture to the wall in the way a painting or photograph might.

Her work is bold. Unpredictable color palettes combine with improvised composition. That is, when she starts a quilt, she's never quite sure where it will end up.

"Typically I start with a color palette I want to explore and a few self-directed guidelines to give structure to my project," she says. "Through this process, I usually come up with a more interesting design that I might have if I had decided ahead of time what the quilt would look like."

The fiber artist sells her quilts, as well as books she's published on the topic, on her website, cindygrisdela.com, and at fine art and craft shows nationwide. And she accepts commissions.

But what of all the blue quilts? Her recent works don't play favorites when it comes to color. Although, she says, "I do love to add lime green and purple any chance I get."



Cindy Grisdela

Magic Makers

Chufly

chufly.com

Tealye Long, BA '15, hated chardonnay. Until, that is, she tasted the 1750 Chardonnay in Samaipata, Bolivia. A lesser-known wine region (for now, at least), Bolivia's vineyards are situated anywhere from 5,200 to 7,900 feet above sea level—a claim no other country can make, but one that amounts to an alluvial (read: slate, sandstone, limestone and clay) terroir and a healthier, antioxidant-rich grape.

When Long tasted the 1750 Chardonnay, she was tasting the work of Maria Eldy, the winemaker at the Vinos 1750 winery. Ironically, Vinos 1750 was co-founded by GW alumnus Francisco Roig, BA '97, from Santa Cruz, Bolivia. Roig married a French woman who inspired his love of wine.

Long had traveled there to help with harvest and learn more about the winemaking process as part of her work with Chufly, an online wine shop and club. What she got was more than just a memorable sip.

"Maria Eldy is one of the most inspiring women I know, and her love for the environment is contagious," says Long, who is a partner and investor in Chufly. "She taught me how making clean, natural wines challenges our current big market norms and revealed the potential for undiscovered regions."

That's the point of Chufly, to connect consumers to high-quality, small-quantity wines in unknown areas. The company—named for Bolivia's national cocktail—currently focuses on up-and-comer Bolivia but plans to expand to other countries soon.



"Wine has the power to transform entire communities, maybe even an entire country," says Long. "We believe that wine is magic. It has the ability to transport. One sip can take you to a faraway land while making the world a better place."

Also important to the business is amplifying the voices of women and Indigenous winemakers, and challenging the lack of diversity in an industry controlled almost entirely by five major companies.

"It didn't take long for me to take note of the lack of diversity within those five companies, even in terms of gender," Long says. "Every time I'm in Bolivia and witnessing our producers growing and experiencing success alongside them is thrilling."

At chufly.com, you can find featured wines like bestsellers 1750 Tannat and Aranjuez Tannat, bold, smooth reds that master sommelier Ian Cauble described as "the 300-pound pro footballer who works on his agility by taking ballet."



Tealye Long

It's Go Time

GW
FALL
GIFT
GUIDE
2021



OTGbaby otgbaby.com

For most of us, projects we were assigned in high school were completed in haste and then forgotten. But **Brett Guterman, BS '22**, is an overachiever.

As a senior at the Bullis School in Potomac, Md., he participated in an entrepreneurship capstone program and, along with five of his peers, created a diaper bag that converted into a portable bed for a baby to use as a makeshift crib on the go. But, as it turned out, sleeping on the go wasn't as much of an issue as the team had originally thought.

Diapering on the go, however, presented parents with many challenges.

"We came up with a portable diaper bag that folds open to form a contiguous changing pad so parents can change their baby anytime, anywhere," Guterman says.

The team won the school's *Shark Tank*-style competition and used the pre-seed money

to manufacture a first small run of bags and apply for a utility patent. But after going off to college, most of his teammates lost interest in pursuing the company—so Guterman bought them out.

As CEO of OTGbaby, he made two big moves: He hired his mom, seasoned entrepreneur Barbara Guterman, as president and COO, and he worked toward mass-producing the bags with updated feedback from consumers in mind. Meanwhile, they built up an audience, creating giveaways, reaching out to influencers and launching a Kickstarter campaign that only took one week to achieve full funding.

What's so special about the bag? According to Guterman, its main feature: the patented changing pad. Larger (36 inches long) and more padded (2 inches thick) than other portable changing pads on the market, the

OTG ("on the go") bag looks like a typical backpack on the outside but unzips into a water-repellant, wipe-clean pad. The bag, which can be found on otgbaby.com and on Amazon, also has seven pockets of storage for diapers, baby wipes or bottles, including a sleeve for a laptop or blanket.

"The Go Bag truly functions as an all-in-one device that puts parents in control of diaper-changing anytime, anywhere," says Guterman.

The company's utility patent was granted in July 2020—a moment Guterman had been waiting for since 2018. "It was an incredible moment for me to see something that we started in high school truly come to life," he says.

Use code **ONTHEGO25** for 25 percent off your purchase



Et Oliva

etoliva.com

It was a cold and damp February night in Copenhagen. There was no menu outside Sankt Annae, a small restaurant **Patrick Karsu, MBA '16**, and his partner Firat Karsu, MBA '16, had stumbled upon, so they stepped inside asking to see one. The chef said she was preparing chicken, so chicken they ate.

"The overall feeling was that we were sharing a meal in someone's home. Not a fancy meal, but something someone had put together just for us," Patrick Karsu says. "There was a small assortment of tables and everything was super local, from the pâté to the beer that was brewed in a farmhouse down the street."

It's this feeling—the way food (and food memories) can transport you, connect you to a person or a place—that Karsu aims to recreate with Et Oliva, a spices and provisions company that delivers the tools to create a special moment around the table.

"We have traveled the Mediterranean visiting family and friends and everywhere we go, food is important," Karsu writes on his website. "It is important in communities and

Taste Around the World

it is important in sharing each other's stories and histories."

Karsu's own story is varied. From his background in fine art and a culinary degree, to an MBA and, later, an internship with the World Wildlife Fund analyzing food waste in major hotel brands, the entrepreneur always knew he wanted to start his own business. It wasn't until the pandemic, however, isolated

from friends and family and absent a time-consuming commute, that he felt free to brainstorm.

What blossomed was Et Oliva, a collection of hand-crafted spice blends (like the Aegean with fennel, thyme, oregano, cumin, coriander and sweet paprika) and provisions (like bestseller olive tapenade, which Karsu likes because of its delicacy—"It is not just a big smack of briny olive flavors," he says).

"We want to transport our customers to the sun-dappled shores of the Aegean through every bite, so they can enjoy what makes these places so unique and special," says Karsu, who is also working with Washington, D.C., food business accelerator Union Kitchen to promote the Et Oliva brand.

Find the products at etoliva.com, along with recipes—from hamsi to circassian chicken—to let them shine on your own table.

Use code **20FORME** for 20 percent off your first purchase.

The Gift of Love

Marilyn's Gift marilyns.gift

On her 10th birthday, after opening the rest of her presents, **Cheryl Gossman, BS '83, MHA '86**, received a special package from her mother.

"I thought I was done getting gifts," she says. "Then my mom brought out a paper bag that moved." Inside was a kitten named Heidi, who would turn out to be Gossman's companion and confidante for the next 14 years. "Heidi brought me so much joy and happiness."

Gossman's mother, Marilyn Henry, had a knack for making people feel special. She worked for nearly 20 years in GW's Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering and, as Gossman tells it, would make others feel cherished "through kindness, empathy and encouragement." It was this quality that Gossman, herself a health care administrator, wanted to honor after her mother passed away from cancer. She launched Marilyn's Gift with the help of two college friends, Maggie Bergin, BA '82, and Laura McIntosh Simmons, BA '86. Together, the three women aim to make it easy to send something special to help someone feel special, with themed boxes for each season or occasion.

Here's how it works: Gossman hand-selects each item—socks, hand lotion or even puzzles, for example—for the boxes, ranging from the Soothe Box (for those who need to de-stress) to the Happy Birthday box (filled with treats, a banner and a birthday hat). Each box, sold at marilyns.gift, contains four to six items, plus a personalized note from the sender. "We don't put anything in the box that we wouldn't send ourselves," Gossman says.



She notes that the seasonal subscription boxes—sent quarterly—are a bestseller, customized to convey a theme. The Serenity box, for example, was filled with lavender-based items, to promote calm and relaxation. But the company will customize boxes, too, to include special products tailored to the recipient.

"We really do believe in making the people who get the box feel loved, cherished and cared for," she says.

These days, that's more important than ever.

"Loneliness has been such a huge health concern and has increased during COVID," Gossman says. "It has been especially impactful for those older individuals who can become easily isolated. We wanted to make it easy to send something out that lets the person know they are not forgotten. It's about keeping those connections strong," Gossman says. That truly was Marilyn's gift.

For 15 percent off a one-year subscription or a one-time box, use code **GW2021**. The price of the boxes includes free shipping.



Do You Believe in Magic?



AMERICAЕ

americae.com

It was a raw emerald ring—a brilliantly green, craggy gemstone fused to gold and brass atop a base of cow's horn—that let **Gabriela Guaracao, MA '16**, know her company had traction. Even before she officially launched accessories and fashion brand Americae, the designer would wear the prototype and it never failed to attract plenty of positive attention.

"Whether the compliments were coming from a more preppy, classically styled woman or a female interested in a more folksy or bohemian touch," Guaracao says, "it was such a signal of its potential."

The ring has become somewhat of an emblem for the company—raw emeralds feature prominently in the heritage of Guaracao's native Colombia—and she gives them partial credit for inspiring her to launch her business.

But it was also the early part of her career, spent in newsrooms, that inspired a pivot. Hoping to "tell a new story through the lens of

e-commerce, experiential retail and exciting fabrics and materials," she launched Americae in 2018.

"My career and education have been a trail of characteristics that I've woven together to found a company that requires business expertise, international trade literacy, socio-political know-how and a creative design focus," she says.

Americae tells its story through magical realism. Its driving ethos, #realityisextraordinary, is a rally cry, as Guaracao puts it, to pursue your own version of extraordinary right now. "It's a call to use your imagination to find the magic in the everyday," she says.

And the products reflect that. Like the raw emerald ring, the collection, sold at americae.com, is entirely fantastic, pushing the boundaries of color and texture. Current bestsellers include a classic T-shirt in the company's signature chartreuse and the

Ellipse Bucket Bag, a small oval handbag inspired by gothic architecture. Guaracao recalls a "pinch me" moment when one of the company's suits (also in its signature chartreuse) appeared on *The TODAY Show*. Other products have been featured everywhere from *Men's Health* to *Town & Country* magazines.

Guaracao designs each of the pieces herself and works exclusively with female artisans and manufacturers in New York City and Colombia to hand-craft them. In the end, Americae is about empowerment.

"Our ready-to-wear, jewelry, handbags and retail activations reflects what moves us: color, inventive thinking, vibrancy and celebrating the extraordinariness of every woman," says Guaracao.

Use code **GWxAMERICAЕ** for 20 percent off at americae.com.

Yellow Owl

yellowowlworkshop.com

In elementary school, **Christine Schmidt**, who earned a BFA from the Corcoran School of the Arts & Design in 2001, won a coloring contest filling in a picture of a fruit cart for the local grocery store. Her prize? A “beautiful but useless” fire-engine red racing bike—for an adult male. It wasn’t much of a trophy (for a 7-year-old, anyway), but, as she puts it, “Really I was just fortunate to have a mother who was an art teacher who always supported my creative efforts.”

So when Schmidt found a small hand-crank press on Craigslist, she quickly started putting it to use. While working as a cake decorator and personal assistant, she crafted a small batch of greeting cards and dropped them off at local stores. Soon the stores were placing orders for more, and more still. Eventually Schmidt needed to hire a team, and Yellow Owl Workshop was born.

She’s spent the past 14 years growing her San Francisco-based company and honing her aesthetic. It’s bright, fun and often a little cheeky (see: the company’s risograph cards, like one that says “So ducking grateful for you” ovetop a baby duck), but it’s not exactly what she envisioned. In fact, she didn’t envision anything at all.

“I’m not much of a planner or even a dreamer, really,” she says. “I came into running and owning my own creative business really slowly and organically, and right now I’m pretty pleased with it because I get to explore lots of different production processes.”

Yellow Owl’s line, sold at yellowowlworkshop.com and in stores across the world, runs the gamut—you’ll find socks printed with hot sauce next to award ribbons for things like “Somebody likes me enough to not just text” or “So extra.” And there’s a DIY component: Learn how to carve a stamp or create lapel pins with the company’s crafting kits. (Also on the site are Schmidt’s how-to books—she’s written three—for at-home art work.) It’s a diverse and energetic product line, owing much to Schmidt’s curious and creative mind.

“My jam is jumping into new products, to learn something new,” she says. “Each season I like to try on a different style or mode of making. I just aim to have the most unique and colorful things that I want myself.”

Use code **GWMAG** for 20 percent off your next purchase.

The Art of Craft



Christine Schmidt





Around We Go

Go Addis and Kigali Tours

gokigalitours.com and goaddistours.com

She was working in Ethiopia for the Frankfurt Zoological Society when **Eliza Richman**, who earned a professional certificate in sustainable tourism destination management from GW in 2017, had a great idea: She had been afforded a lot of exposure to local food and attractions thanks to her job writing guidebooks and developing website content. Why not set up a tour company?

“My partner and I had done a food tour in Europe and thought it would be a hit in Ethiopia because the food is so fantastic,” she says. With her co-founder Xavier Curtis, Richman launched Go Addis Tours in January 2013 with food tours in Addis Ababa, then began offering curated trips throughout Ethiopia. In 2016, they expanded again, moving to Rwanda and opening a second branch of the company, Go Kigali Tours.

How does it work? The team includes locals and experts in their fields—a.k.a. folks who know the area—who can provide guests with an authentic experience exploring the area, food and culture of the city. In Addis Ababa, for example, food guides take clients to five stops: three different restaurants (a vegetarian restaurant, a fish restaurant and a meat restaurant), a coffee house and a juice house.

“The tours are not just about great food but use cuisine as a lens to explore and learn about the culture of Ethiopia in just four hours,” she says. And for those who have a little more time to kill in either Addis or Kigali, the company also offers city tours, market

tours, day trips and private custom tours, from a whirlwind helicopter ride to two weeks visiting every corner of Rwanda. Richman’s personal favorite, a 10-night trip that starts in Kigali and ends in Kampala, Uganda, includes a hike to visit with critically endangered mountain gorillas.

In the eight years since it launched, the company’s built a positive reputation, earning a spot in the TripAdvisor Hall of Fame and more than 700 five-star reviews between Go Addis and Go Kigali. They even worked with the late Anthony Bourdain, helping to plan a few of the restaurant stops for the Ethiopia episode of *Parts Unknown* (a career highlight, if you ask Richman).

To learn more or book a trip, visit gokigalitours.com or goaddistours.com. Richman guarantees: “You will love it if you go.”

Tall Order

tallorder.com

Lisa Friedman Clark and her twin sons, Daniel and Mike Friedman, always knew it would be a tall order to repay the kindness they received following the death of their family's patriarch, **Andrew Friedman, BA '79**. After he died in the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center, "it was overwhelming how much people in the community helped us," Clark says.

Still, they knew they had to try to pay it forward. In his 44 years, Friedman had built a legacy of kindness and generosity, coaching his kids' sports teams and encouraging them to give part of their allowance to charity.

"When crisis strikes it's so important to be outwardly instead of inwardly focused," Clark says. "If you channel your energy toward helping other people rather than ruminating in your own grief, it just feels better."

After graduating from college, the twins entered the corporate world, Dan at Bloomberg Financial and Mike in commercial lending. But in 2015, they both returned home wishing they were able to do something different. Something more. They thought back to the weeks after the Twin Towers fell, when their mother took them into the city to deliver socks to the first responders.

"Not everybody has gone through the trauma we've gone through," Clark recalls her sons saying. "'And we feel like we want to do something that has more of a social impact.' And that's kind of how Tall Order was born."

The company specializes in socks for men of all sizes, from regular to XXL. At 6'9" and 6'11", Dan and Mike had experienced firsthand how difficult it could be to find socks for larger feet, and they knew there was a hole in the market. Their line, sold at tallorder.com, includes everything from low-cut ankle socks to extra-cushioned dress socks with patterns ranging from soccer balls to martinis. And they name a lot of them after Andrew's closest friends who he met in Thurston Hall freshman year—the David features golf balls and tees, the Scott features the American flag. They will also be introducing briefs and tees soon.

With orders from FedEx, the PGA and Hilton Hotels inked, Clark knows they've hit on something big. But, still, it's important to her and her sons that they give back even bigger. Ten percent of their profits are given to Tuesday's Children, a nonprofit that provides support for families impacted by terrorism, mass violence or military conflict. And the company donates money to support other causes, from the Aaron Judge All Rise Foundation to the American Kidney Fund.


"We give money to everybody," Clark says. "We haven't made very much yet, but that's OK. We're doing the right thing."

Best Foot Forward



Use code **GW** to buy one pair of socks and get another free.





OPENING DOORS, CHANGING LIVES

TOO OFTEN, STUDENTS MUST WEIGH THEIR ACADEMIC DREAMS AGAINST THEIR FINANCIAL CHALLENGES. A NEW UNIVERSITY-WIDE SCHOLARSHIP INITIATIVE SEEKS TO LIGHTEN THE BURDEN ON THEIR EDUCATIONAL JOURNEY.

BY
MARY A. DEMPSEY

"WITHOUT A SCHOLARSHIP, I WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GO TO A SCHOOL LIKE GW."

LYDIA SCHALLES, BA '19



SCHALLES PHOTO: COURTESY LYDIA SCHALLES / ALL OTHER PHOTOS: GW COMMUNICATIONS & MARKETING

LYDIA SCHALLES, BA '19,

HAD A PLAN FOR HER LIFE.

The New Jersey native aspired to a career working for the government on international issues. She knew a degree from George Washington University's Elliott School of International Affairs would take her there—and she was right. She was hired by the U.S. Department of Defense straight out of school to work on internationally focused projects. "One of the people who interviewed me for the job was a GW alum," Schalles noted.

But that happy ending would never have materialized if not for a scholarship.

A scholarship was a determining factor in Schalles' decision to attend GW—and perhaps in the course of her career. "Without a scholarship, I wouldn't have been able to go to a school like GW," she said. Indeed, over the course of her four years at GW, Schalles received multiple scholarships of varying sizes, all of which allowed her to continue her studies.

Schalles isn't alone. She's part of an ever-growing number of students whose academic pursuits are intertwined with financial challenges, a problem that the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated. Without scholarship funds, Simisola Sodimu, BA '18,

the daughter of Nigerian immigrants, might never have graduated from GW and founded her own skin care and wellness company. Scholarships helped Jennifer Meneray, MA '18, become the first in her family to earn a degree. And Sowmya Mangipudi relied on scholarships to lead her on a path toward the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences, where she is finishing her final year and planning a career in vascular surgery.

"Scholarships are a game changer," Mangipudi said.

Now GW is accelerating funding for scholarships and fellowships with a new initiative to increase student support. At the Our Moment, Our Momentum weekend in early October (see article, p. 4), which marked the culmination of GW's bicentennial celebration, the university announced the launch of a special focus on raising funds to support increased access to a GW degree. "Open Doors: The Centuries Initiative for Scholarships & Fellowships" will draw attention to the need for greater support, offer outreach to the broader GW community and coordinate targeted fundraising across schools and colleges.

"You've seen our alumni—they speak up, jump in, get involved, dream big and demand a greater world," said Vice President of

Development and Alumni Relations Donna Arbide. "In every corner of the world GW alumni are leaders, but not every future leader has the same opportunity. We begin our third century charting a new course to increase access at GW. It is the right thing to do for our students, and it is critical to the future of our university, its mission and its competitiveness."

"WE BEGIN OUR THIRD CENTURY CHARTING A NEW COURSE TO INCREASE ACCESS AT GW. IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR OUR STUDENTS, AND IT IS CRITICAL TO THE FUTURE OF OUR UNIVERSITY, ITS MISSION AND ITS COMPETITIVENESS."

Donna Arbide

VICE PRESIDENT OF DEVELOPMENT
AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

In addition to the Open Doors fundraising initiative, the university announced increased support to help close the financial gap for incoming undergraduate students who receive federal Pell Grants.

For this fall's first-year student class, the university will provide enhanced need-based grants, loans and work-study packages. Increased funding will cover most of the direct costs of a GW education and allow families to avoid parent loans beyond their expected family contribution. In addition, a portion of recent gifts from alumni and friends will continue to be used to assist students whose families have been financially impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

"As one of the first in my family to attend college and as a scholarship recipient myself, I know that affordability and financial aid are major factors for students in choosing a school," GW President Thomas LeBlanc said. "This fundraising initiative will provide consistent, ongoing support for talented students, making us a stronger university for years to come."

A LITTLE GOES A LONG WAY

Academic excellence and location in the nation's capital drive applications to GW. For more than 40 percent of applicants, however, affordability and financial aid are major factors in deciding whether to enroll, according to a 2018-19 student survey by the GW Office of Student Financial Assistance.

Among those who declined admission after being accepted to GW, 38 percent said the financial aid package was not competitive enough. Many students face a financial gap even after grants, work study, family contributions and loans are exhausted.

In many cases, just a modest amount of money can make a profound difference in a student's circumstance. The average annual financial gap for GW's undergraduate students is between \$3,000 and \$6,000.

For Kelly El-Yacoubi, MA '19, the two constants that anchored her degree in religious studies were her classes, which she loved, and her mad scramble for scholarship funding, which consumed her.

"I have a running joke that when I was in grad school, I spent more time applying for scholarships than my actual classwork," El-Yacoubi recalled. "I had a spreadsheet of scholarships, both at the university



**"SCHOLARSHIPS
ARE A GAME
CHANGER."**

**SOWMYA MANGIPUDI,
GW SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
AND HEALTH SCIENCES
STUDENT**

and outside the university, that I was continually updating. I drove my professors crazy because I asked them to submit recommendations constantly.”

El-Yacoubi applied to GW as a stay-at-home mother of two whose husband was the family breadwinner. For years she had dreamt of continuing her education. By the time she received the happy news she had been accepted, her marriage had fallen apart and her former husband had lost his job and moved away. She was raising her children alone.

“I was stubbornly insistent that no one would take this opportunity from me. I said, ‘I will find a way to make this happen,’ and I was laser-focused,” El-Yacoubi said.

Semester after semester, she pieced together financial aid, including the Columbian Women Scholarship, which also offered career networking opportunities; scholarships in her school and program; and private scholarships. At the same time, she balanced her home-life challenges with her demanding studies. She found herself working as many as four part-time jobs at one point while trying to keep up with her classwork and care for her children.

El-Yacoubi persevered and earned her GW graduate degree, which focused on Islamic studies. She credits the prestige associated with a GW graduate degree in helping boost her job search. She now works as a marketing and communications specialist at the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Alexandria, Virginia.

KEEPING STUDENTS ON TRACK

Endowed scholarship funds can enable generations of talented students to attend GW and carve out careers that bring them satisfaction. They also hold the power to prevent financial stresses from derailing degree plans. Up to 4 percent of GW undergraduates currently abandon their studies due to financial demands each year.

Some never return to school.

For Simisola Sodimu, who graduated in 2018 with dual undergraduate degrees in philosophy and psychology, a scholarship was an affirmation.

“At a very competitive university like GW, getting a scholarship ... goes a long way toward making you feel that you’re seen and someone believes in you,” Sodimu said.

She lauds scholarships as “a great equalizer” that can support “the minds that will ... move America even further forward and funding people who will produce the things that will change lives.”

Today, Sodimu is a freelance public relations specialist. “It seems like public relations doesn’t connect to my degrees, but it really does,” she said. “It’s about how people react and interact, about crafting messages and stories.”

Like so many of her GW alumni peers, she is also an entrepreneur who gives back. Sodimu founded and runs Simisola Naturals, a skin care and wellness company that sources main ingredients from women-owned businesses in West Africa.

GW recognizes that the cost of higher education disproportionately challenges the fastest-growing segments of its student body, including first-generation and historically underrepresented students.

Jennifer Meneray, who earned a master’s in women’s studies at GW in 2018, said, due to financial hardships, no one in her family had ever attended a university before. “Now my young cousins—girls—look up to me,” she said.

Meneray assembled a patchwork of grants, student loans and other financial aid so she could take advantage of GW’s highly regarded Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies Program at the Columbian College of Arts and Sciences in a city that “is really expensive.” She had been accepted to a graduate program at the University of California, Berkeley, which would have been in-state tuition for her, but GW was her dream.

**“I WAS STUBBORNLY
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KELLY EL-YACOUBI, MA ’19



SCHOLARSHIP AND FELLOWSHIP GIFT GUIDE

For many students, affordability is the make-or-break factor in determining whether they can pursue their dream of a GW education. By supporting endowed (existing in perpetuity) or current use scholarships and fellowships, donors step up to the front line in helping close the financial gaps that might scuttle a student's degree plans.

Undergraduate tuition currently runs close to \$60,000 a year; the full annual cost of attending GW is \$79,760. An annual gift of as little as \$10,000 is enough to establish a named annual scholarship.

There are many giving options to support undergraduate students or make gifts that enable GW to attract top graduate student talent. Depending on gift levels, scholarships may be named, may be designated for need or merit or may carry up to four recipient criteria, including the geographic region the student is from or their school, major, concentration or specialty area at GW.

\$100,000+ named endowed partial-tuition scholarship for an undergraduate or graduate student or multiple students

\$67,500 named endowed student internship fund in a school or industry for that #OnlyAtGW experience

\$25,000 named endowed prize or award fund

\$10,000 named one-year annual scholarship

\$7,500 eliminates federal student loan debt for a graduating senior

\$5,800 covers unmet financial need for a GW student from a family earning less than \$60,000

\$4,850 covers unmet financial need for a GW student from a family earning \$60,000 - \$120,000

\$4,000 space in a college readiness summer program for a high school student

\$1,400 provides books and supplies for a student for one year

\$700 provides books and supplies for a student for one semester

\$200 provides one week of on-campus meals for a student



To learn more about scholarship giving opportunities, please contact Development & Alumni Relations at giving@gwu.edu or 1-800-789-2611



"AT A VERY COMPETITIVE UNIVERSITY LIKE GW, GETTING A SCHOLARSHIP... GOES A LONG WAY TOWARD MAKING YOU FEEL THAT YOU'RE SEEN AND SOMEONE BELIEVES IN YOU."

SIMISOLA SODIMU, BA '18

"My focus was social change through policy, so the D.C. location mattered," she said. "It was a great program. I had really good professors."

She was thrilled with the coursework, but concerns about money sometimes made her question whether she'd be able to turn her ambitions into reality.

"I worried whether I could afford to stay in D.C., especially when I stayed on into a third year to finish my thesis," she said.

Meneray, who works in communications at the U.S. Forest Service, and other alumni talk about the power of scholarships to raise up students who might otherwise be left behind. "Scholarships bring a spectrum of diverse minds" to GW, she said.

LIFE-CHANGING AID

Graduate students come to GW to work with world-class faculty on cutting-edge, high-impact research. Fellowships make GW more attractive, including to the best and brightest students, because they eliminate the need for those students to take on additional loan debt, teach more hours or sign up for extra shifts at outside jobs while they juggle a demanding schedule of classes and research opportunities.

Sowmya Mangipudi, who is completing her medical studies at GW, is ardent about the way receiving a scholarship allowed her to explore medical specialties without feeling she had to focus solely on lucrative

practice areas.

"Without a scholarship, it would be so much more difficult," said Mangipudi. In addition to scholarships, GW paid the tuition for her to attend King's College London for a year—an experience she described as "irreplaceable."

The hidden cost of medical school can be crippling, particularly for students struggling with financial pressures, Mangipudi stressed. Preparation for medical board exams can run into the thousands of dollars; it costs \$600 just to take the test. Travel and interview costs associated with residencies are also formidable.

But for Mangipudi, scholarships are not just about helping medical students, they are also about reshaping the entire field of medicine—for the better.

"Scholarships are the key to attracting and retaining more black and brown students in medicine, which is needed," she said. "Scholarships also provide for economic diversity in medicine. We will turn out better doctors when they come from an economic spectrum, when they bring a perspective that better reflects the demographics of the patients they may treat."

As a medical student, she cherished the opportunity to work alongside colleagues from different backgrounds. "It's one thing to think about in the abstract, but it's another when you have those experiences on a personal level," she said.

"The more diversity we have in the workplace, the more perspectives we bring to situations." ■

FROM THE GW ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

To the GW Community!

I am honored to be writing to you as the new president of the GW Alumni Association from my home in London—a testament to our global alumni community and the impact a GW education can make. Starting my tenure in the midst of a pandemic has had its challenges. In true GW spirit, however, we have learned to embrace technology to connect across time zones and geographies in ways that even five years ago we wouldn't have thought possible.

GW's virtual programming during our bicentennial year has been stunning in terms of variety, depth and the positive energy from the speakers and student and alumni audiences. Kudos also go to all of our alumni networks from L.A. to Singapore who have created innovative and entertaining ways to engage with the university as well as alumni in other regions. We are looking forward to increasing our in-person events while also continuing to grow this vibrant virtual community.

This fall's Centuries Celebration Weekend was a joyous occasion and an "only at GW" moment on the National Mall. During my visit I could feel the buzz on campus, especially among the students. May our on-campus community as well as our 300,000-plus alumni continue to take great care of one another and shepherd in the safe return to campus and in-person activities and events.

As we approach our third century, I am eager to work with you to strengthen our alumni family—a community built on trust, a shared common experience and purpose. Your story is our story. We can change the world, but we can't do it alone—it's up to us as alumni to come together, get involved and do our part. We can elevate the student experience in the classroom, over coffees, through mentoring and networking and much more. With your help, we can attract the best students and most talented future leaders.

You are amazing. Everyone wins when you share your brilliance.

Raise High!



Christine Brown-Quinn, MBA '92
GWAA President



CLASS NOTES

// '70s

Arnold Arluke, MA '71, BA '69, co-authored *Underdogs: Pets, People, and Poverty* (University of Georgia Press, 2020), which examines providing veterinary care to underserved communities in North Carolina and Costa Rica.

Bruce Brager, BA '73, authored *Grant's Victory: How Ulysses S. Grant Won the Civil War* (Stackpole Books, 2020).

Roger B. Jeans, PhD '74, authored *American Isolationists: Pro-Japan Anti-Interventionists and the FBI on the Eve of the*

Pacific War, 1939-1941 (Rowman & Littlefield, 2020).

David A. Longanecker, MA '71, authored *The Late Truck Driver, Following The Dream* (Archway, 2021). He is a former assistant secretary of education for higher education.

Charles Axel Poekel Jr., BA '71, published the book, *Vencedor: The Story of a Great Yacht and an Unsung Herreshoff Hero in the Golden Age of Yachting* (Sheridan House, 2021).

Jerry Sussman, JD '76, co-founded LangleyCyber, a full-

service cyber security firm. He is a 30-year veteran of the CIA.

// '80s

Marie E. Betteley, BA '80, published the book, *Beyond Fabergé: Imperial Russian Jewelry* (Schiffer, 2020). She is a gemologist and an expert on Russian jewels and imperial Russian decorative arts.

Gail Weiss Gaspar, MA '85, authored *Carrying My Father's Torch: From Holocaust Trauma to Transformation* (Oceanwalk Press, 2020).

David Goldstein, BA '88, and his team from law firm Goldstein Hall were awarded the 2020 Grunin Prize for Law and Social Entrepreneurship by New York University School of Law. He is managing partner of the firm.

Henry Herz, MA '84, authored *I AM SMOKE* (Tilbury House, 2021), his 10th children's picture book.

Lorraine McCall, BA '88, co-authored *Immigration, Assimilation, and Border Security* (Bernan Press, 2020) with **Yoku Shaw-Taylor, PhD '98**.

David Samuels, MBA '85, was appointed to the board of directors of private equity-backed SemaConnect, a leading provider of electric vehicle charging stations across North America.

// '90s

Brooks R. Amiot, JD '93, was recognized in the 2021 Edition of Chambers USA: America's Leading Lawyers for Business. He is the office managing principal in the Baltimore office of Jackson Lewis P.C.



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Robert Borhart, BA '91, joined Ballard Spahr in its Minneapolis office.

Douglas Dietrichson, BS '97, authored *Into the Rubble* (Freiling Publishing, 2020), a book based on his experience being deployed to Haiti as a medical specialist following the 2010 earthquake.

George B. Donnini, BA '95, was named a "notable veteran" by Crain's Detroit Business. He was named the chair of the Litigation II department at Butzel Long.

Aicha Evans, BS '96, was named on the *Forbes* 50 Over 50 list for her work at the helm of an autonomous vehicle company, Zoox, which was purchased by Amazon for \$1.2 billion.

Kyle Farmbry, MPA '94, PhD '99, will be the new president of Guilford College in Greensboro, N.C., effective Jan. 1, 2022.

Pamela Houston, BA '93, joined the architectural team at CPL in Raleigh, N.C., as a health care planner.

Jennifer Jones, MA '99, joined the Washington, D.C., office of Goulston & Storrs as a director in the firm's Real Estate Group.

Michael A. Kotula, JD '90, was recommended by the Legal 500 in the "industry focus: insurance - advice to insurers" category. He is a partner with Rivkin Radler's insurance coverage group.

Sena Kwawu, BBA '90, was selected as board member and treasurer for the Executive Leadership Council, the preeminent membership organization committed to increasing the number of global Black executives in C-suites, on corporate boards and in global enterprises.

Diane Lebson, BA '92, wrote *For A Good Cause: A Practical Guide to Giving Joyfully* (She Writes Press, 2021). She leads a national philanthropic consultancy based in Camden, Maine.

Edward J. Marolda, PhD '90, authored *Admirals Under Fire: The U.S. Navy and the Vietnam War* (Texas Tech University Press, 2021). He is a former senior historian of the U.S. Navy.

Gregg Mitchell Mokrzycki, MFS '97, authored the novel *In*

the Absence of Struggle (Old Buoy Imprint, 2020).

Karen Sherman, MA '92, authored *Brick by Brick, Building Hope and Opportunity for Women Survivors Everywhere* (Rowman & Littlefield, January 2020).

Richard Sherman, BA '98, joined Blank Rome Government Relations LLC as a senior adviser in its Washington, D.C., office.

Adam M. Shienvold, BA '95, JD '98, joined the International Association of Defense Counsel, an invitation-only global legal organization for attorneys who represent corporate and insurance interests. He is a member at Eckert Seamans Cherin & Mellott, LLC, in Harrisburg, Pa.

Sidney Welch, MPH '93, was named among the American Health Law Association's Class of 2020 Fellows. She is a partner at Akerman LLP.

// '00s

Henry D. Almond, JD '07, BA '03, was elected partner at Arnold & Porter in Washington, D.C.

Asha Aravindakshan, BBA '02, authored *Skills: The Common Denominator* (New Degree Press, 2021).

Jason B. Blank, BA '02, was elected chair of the Florida Bar's Criminal Law Section.

Susan Wright Clutter, MFS '02, and **David McGill, MFS '96**, co-authored the textbook, *So You Want to be a CSI?* (Kendall Hunt, 2021), which presents crime scene investigation as students would encounter it in the real world.

Adam Conner, BA '06, is now a member of the George Washington University Board of Trustees. He is vice president of tech policy at the Center for American Progress.

Steven Clark Cunningham, MD '01, authored the children's book, *Your Body Sick and Well: How Do You Know?* (Three Conditions Press, 2020). Proceeds from the book go to charities supporting children's physical and mental health.

Shannon Dalton, MBA '06, joined Quinn Fiduciary Services, a locally

owned estate management firm in Santa Barbara, Calif.

Tony Dokoupil, BBA '03, and MSNBC anchor Katy Tur welcomed their second child, Eloise Judy Bear Dokoupil, on May 13, 2021.

Jeffrey Feinstein, BBA '05, joined New York City-based KBK Wealth Management as a principal.

John Forte, MSEE '07, was named president and chief executive officer of the Virginia Tech Applied Research Corporation.

Paul Kendrick, BA '05, MPA '07, co-authored *Nine Days: The Race to Save Martin Luther King Jr.'s Life and Win the 1960 Election* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021) with his father, Stephen.

Theodora Lau, MS '00, authored *Beyond Good: How Technology Is Leading a Purpose-Driven Business Revolution* (Kogan Page, 2021). She is a fintech consultant and speaker.

Erika (Schnure) Martinez, BA '07, married Anthony Martinez on March 14, 2021. She is a senior meeting planner with the American Veterinary Medical Association.

Erin Carlson Mast, MA '03, was named president and CEO of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Foundation.

David A. Michel, BA '06, was elevated to partner at Boston firm Sherin and Lodgen.

Evan Nierman, BA '00, authored *CRISIS AVERTED: PR Strategies to Protect Your Reputation and the Bottom Line* (Advantage/Forbes, 2021). He is a crisis management expert and the founder and CEO of the public relations firm Red Banyan.

Habeeba Park, BS '03, was selected to be the associate trauma medical director for Ascension St. Thomas Rutherford Hospital in Murfreesboro, Tenn. She has been a trauma surgeon at the University of Maryland School of Medicine and the Shock Trauma Center in Baltimore, Md., for the last five years.

Jonathan H. Schaefer, BA '07, was elected partner at Robinson+Cole.

Gregory Starace, BA '00, co-authored *Caesar's Great Success: Sustaining the Roman Army on Campaign* (Frontline Books, 2020).

Joshua Suchoff, BA '08, is the managing director of the Academic Engagement Network.

// '10s

Tracy Badua, JD '10, sold at auction world English rights to her debut middle grade novel, *Freddie vs. the Family Curse*, to Houghton Mifflin Harcourt. Publication is set for spring 2022.

Pernell "Perry" Choren, JD '11, joined the firm Ain & Bank as a senior associate.

Natalia Cineas, DNP '15, was selected as a fellow of the American Academy of Nursing. She was also named to the 2021 list of "25 Influential Black Women in Business" by Network Journal. She is the chief nursing executive and senior vice president in the Office of Patient-Centered Care at New York City Health + Hospitals.

Robert Contee III, BPS '13, was unanimously confirmed as chief of police of the Metropolitan Police Department of the District of Columbia. He has more than 30 years of experience on the force.

Amanda Gilmore Duckworth, JD '12, focuses her practice on real estate transactions and related areas at the law firm Troutman Pepper. She represents lenders in the origination, sale and servicing of loans under Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac multifamily programs.

Kim Fulmer, MA '11, and **Ben Horn, MA '18**, welcomed their son, Finn Clifford Fulmer-Horn, on July 19, 2021.

Raymond D. Jackson, JD '15, joined Greenberg Traurig, P.A., in its Tampa office as an associate.

Gabriel C. Kelly, MA '18, works for the city of Pittsburgh's county government as a grants manager. He was part of a multi-million dollar state and federal grant project to help improve health, recreation and economic opportunities for people living in poverty.

Danielle E. Meyer, JD '18, joined Goldberg Segalla's General

Liability group as an associate in Raleigh, N.C.

Dani Quattrone, BA '11, authored *In the Year 2020* (independently published, 2020), a children's book that takes place in an animal world where the COVID-19 pandemic serves as a catalyst to bring everyone together.

Jesse Regis, BA '11, founded Virgins On Fire Candle Co.

M. Andrea Rojas, BA '18, was a 2021 summer associate with Bousquet Holstein PLLC.

Jeremy S. Schneider, JD '12, was elevated to principal at national workplace law firm Jackson Lewis PC in its Washington, D.C., office.

David Shaw, JD '11, was promoted to partner at the law firm Troutman Pepper.

Mourad M. Shehebar, MD '11, was promoted to associate program director for the Pain Medicine Fellowship at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New

York. He is an anesthesiologist and interventional pain management physician.

Mohamed Sidibay, BA '15, is a law clerk at Covington & Burling in New York. He was profiled in the Reuters article "How Mohamed Sidibay went from child soldier to Covington associate" about his forced involvement in the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Christina Sledge, MTA '18, founded a publishing company called Sledge House Media with her husband. They co-authored and published their memoir, *The Story of Christina and I*, in 2021.

Tyler R. Smith, BA '17, MPH '19, joined the Des Moines-based law firm Bradshaw, Fowler, Proctor & Fairgrave, P.C. as an associate in the litigation and appellate law practice groups.

Gwendolyn Tawresey, JD '12, was promoted to partner at Troutman Pepper in its Boston office.

Travis Thul, DEng '18, was appointed a non-partisan White House fellow for 2020-2021 and was placed at the Export-Import Bank of the United States.

Travis Wright, MSPM '10, was selected to the National Small Business Association Leadership Council and Small Business Technology Council. He is director of growth with the services firm 3Gimbals.

// '20s

Joseph P. DiBella, JD '20, joined the firm Rivkin Radler LLP as an associate.

Abia Khan, BS '20, joined the Institute for Defense Analyses as a data science fellow in the Operational Evaluation Division of its Systems and Analyses Center.

Kathryn Crump Teague, MEd '21, was named a Fairfax (Va.) County Public Schools 2021 Outstanding Employee. She is the director of

student services at Lanier Middle School.

Rafael E. Torres, MBA '21, MD '02, was appointed chief quality officer at White Plains Hospital in White Plains, N.Y. He has been the director of emergency medicine at White Plains Hospital for the past six years.

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IN MEMORIAM

Michael B. Enzi, B.S. '66, (July 26, 2021, 77), was a U.S. senator for Wyoming from 1996 to 2021. A member of the Republican Party, he served as the chair of the Senate Committee on the Budget and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions and was a member of the committees on Finance as well as Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Before entering public life, he served for six years in the Wyoming National Guard and owned and operated his family's shoe store business. He was elected mayor of Gillette, Wyo., in 1974 and served until 1987. He was later elected to the Wyoming House of Representatives and the Wyoming State Senate. Enzi is survived by his wife, Diana Buckley; his daughters, Amy Strom and Emily McGrady; a son, Brad Enzi; and four grandchildren.

William Hovey, BA '83, (May 1, 2021, 59), spent his entire professional life as a passionate educator determined to challenge his students to step outside of traditional educational silos in order to think creatively, critically and independently. He is survived by his great friend and beloved wife of 27 years, Carmen Crenshaw-Hovey; Sam and Aleksander, his loving sons of whom he was extraordinarily proud; and Tracey, his devoted sister with whom he shared a special lifelong bond. He is also survived by brothers, John, James and Patrick McKenna. He delighted in the adulation and love of his 11 nieces and nephews.

Anne Herlinda Goldfinch Locascio, BA '69, (Feb. 7, 2020, 72), was raised in Westport, Conn.; Paris, France; and San Antonio, Texas. She was a devoted mother and wife, artist and patron of the arts. An avid reader with vast and varied interests, she was an alumna of, in addition to George Washington University, the Institut Saint Dominique, Paris; St. Mary's Hall, San Antonio, Texas; and Pine Manor College, Brookline, Mass. She went on to master's work in painting at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design, Meadows School of the Arts at Southern Methodist University, and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. She conveyed her passions to her daughters Lisa (an educator and author in Los Angeles) and Julia (a theater director in London) in a big beautiful Lannon Stone house just outside Chicago in River Forest, Ill., which she curated, as one of Julia's teenage friends put it, "like the most eccentric and wonderful museum." Her daughters survive her along with Larry, her loving husband of 36 years.

FACULTY AND STAFF

Deborah Berezdivin (June 21, 2021, 21), was a third-year student at the School of Business. She was among those who died in the collapse of the Champlain Towers South condominium building in Surfside, Fla. She was visiting Florida from her home in San Juan, Puerto Rico, to attend a funeral. She presided over the Puerto Rico chapter of Young Judaea, a local youth club focused on Jewish leadership, community and values. She continued her work with Jewish groups once she arrived at GW after transferring from Tulane University, including at the Rohr Chabad Jewish Student Center at GW and GW Hillel.

Dorn C. McGrath, Jr., FAICP, (Jan. 25, 2021, 90), was the founder of GW's award-winning Department of Urban & Regional Planning. He built an academic powerhouse that produced talented and dedicated planners and provided extensive community planning services throughout the District and the greater Washington region, from Anacostia to Annapolis. Another local leadership role he assumed was chairman of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. Michael La Place, BA '85, MURP '89, remembers riding with him from Foggy Bottom to the committee meetings. He recalls McGrath at the wheel as they flew through midday traffic to arrive just in time for the lunch sessions. La Place is deeply grateful to McGrath, his teacher, mentor, friend and planning hero.



Alumni Association

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