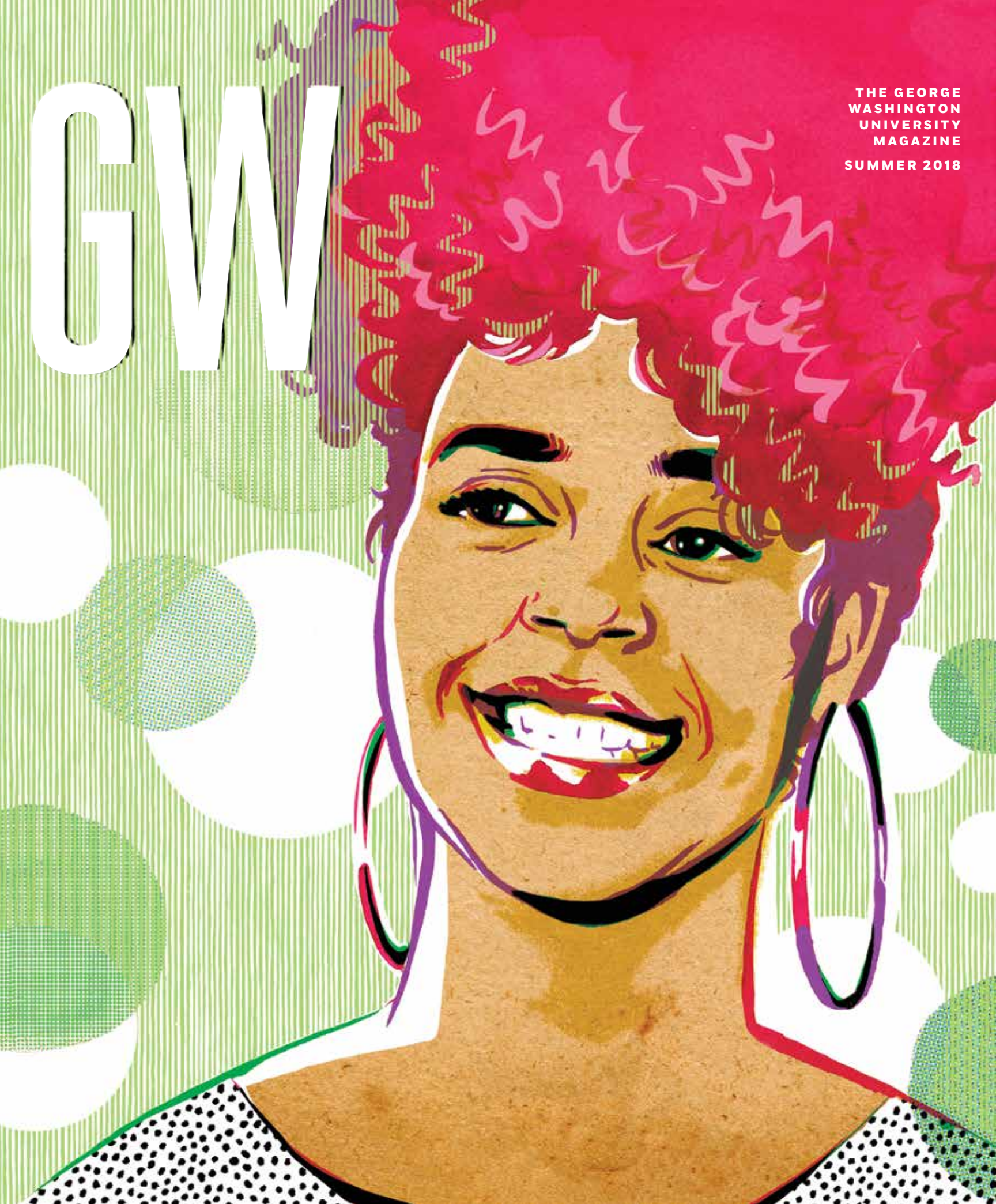


GW

THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
MAGAZINE
SUMMER 2018





People watch on June 8, 1968 as a train carrying Bobby Kennedy's body and a thousand mourners rolls by, en route from New York to Washington for the burial.



SETH BECKERMAN

GW MAGAZINE SUMMER 2018

A MAGAZINE FOR ALUMNI AND FRIENDS

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FEATURES

22 / Liz Acevedo Verses the Novel

After years on the spoken-word circuit, the poet and alumna is conquering the novel. Her debut, *The Poet X*, is a critically adored *New York Times* bestseller. It also seems like the book she was meant to write.

/ By **Matthew Stoss** /

34 / Looking Out at the People Looking In

Fifty years ago, the body of Robert F. Kennedy was carried by train from a funeral in New York to its burial near Washington—an unusual circumstance that drew reverent crowds to the trackside along much of the route. From an open railcar door, *GW Hatchet* photographer Seth Beckerman, BA '68, captured the scene in hundreds of photos, many of which have never been seen publicly.

/ By **Danny Freedman, BA '01** /

50 / Back to Sea

When a family illness prematurely ended Murray Snyder's career as a submarine commander, he turned to academia. The GW engineering professor got a PhD at age 47, and for the past nine years, he's studied ship air wakes for the U.S. Navy.

/ By **Matthew Stoss** /

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On the cover:

Illustration by
Delphine Lee, based on
photos by William Atkins



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GW
TODAY

GW MAGAZINE

Summer 2018
Volume 28, Issue 3

What did you do this summer?

“Hiked to the highest point along the east coast, the top of Cadillac Mountain in Maine.”

MANAGING EDITOR // Danny Freedman, BA '01

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PHOTO EDITOR // William Atkins

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“Became a father for the first time. That’s plenty.”

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CONTRIBUTOR // Briahna Brown, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Kurtis Hiatt, *GW Today* ————— “Inventoried my collection of tank tops and pig-themed novelty T-shirts to prepare for the Iowa State Fair.”

CONTRIBUTOR // Tatyana Hopkins, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Kristen Mitchell, *GW Today*

CONTRIBUTOR // Ruth Steinhardt, *GW Today*

“Explored the beautiful countryside of Tuscany.”

“Went on a near never-ending quest to find the perfect golf driver.”

Thomas J. LeBlanc
PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

Donna Arbide
VICE PRESIDENT FOR DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS

Lorraine Voles, BA '81 ————— “Trekking gorillas in Rwanda.”
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Our spring “Power Issue,” which explored power in myriad forms—from a lightning-strike survivor to the second-longest-held American prisoner of war to a Kuwaiti female bodybuilder, and so much more—was a hit ... and all the letters this time reflect that. None of these were written by own *bubbes* or parents or other relations. Honest.

If you missed the issue, find it online at GWMagazine.com, or send us an email (magazine@gwu.edu); we’ll put a copy in the mail for you. —Eds.

My compliments on your outstanding spring “power” issue. A seemingly mundane subject but executed with creativity and captivating interviews with GWU graduates.

I will hang on to this issue for a long time.

Brendan J. O’Donnell, Engr ’98

A few years ago, I was kindly invited to comment on the format and style of *GW Magazine*. I had a good bit to say about focus, format, etc., and made a few suggestions. I have just finished reading the current (spring 2018) issue and, frankly, could not put it down. I was especially taken with the focus on power in its many forms and congratulate you and your staff for the dynamic and interesting changes you have made in the magazine.

Nancy E. Rogers, PhD ’74

I enjoyed your interview with Garry Lyle (“To Hit (And Be Hit) in the NFL”). I’ve often wondered what he did after his Chicago Bears playing days. I remember him quarterbacking the Colonials in [one of] the final season[s] of GW football. He was fleet of foot, with quick reactions. He was a good passer and had an excellent receiver, Tom Metz. I didn’t know Garry personally but I did know Tom to speak to. I hope he did well in life.

Ron Denham, BA '67

My sincere compliments to Matthew Stoss (“The Length of a Flash”), Rachel Muir (“Some Men Never Came Back”), Irvin Yalom (“Circling Back”) and Danny Freedman (“First Light”) for the excellent articles in your spring 2018 edition.

I graduated from GWU in 1980 with a master’s degree, and have always enjoyed your magazine. But this spring 2018 edition is the absolute best!

Dave Bandy, MSA '80

One of the best issues ever. I would hope that current and prospective students would have easy access to this issue. The range and, dare I say, diversity of the GWU connection is impressive. I took pleasure in it all, however the Garry Lyle memory jog (“To Hit (And Be Hit) in the NFL”) was particularly pleasant as I remember football and its demise. And as a former Navy officer, the Everett Alvarez relationship (“Some Men Never Came Back”) was a surprise to me.

Kearney Bennett, BA '69

Tweet all about it



Baroque Breakbeats

The flickering lights turn Mumbai's Jio Garden, which hosts some of India's biggest music festivals, into a fluorescent galaxy of blue and purple flares.

magazine.gwu.edu

@maggie_nelsen

Can't believe I am only just discovering @VidyaVox — her musical creativity and East-West mashups are perfection 🤩



Memory Bank

A couple years ago we started asking, and we're still curious: **What keepsakes—objects, photos, etc.—do you keep around as reminders of your time at GW?** Let us know at magazine@gwu.edu or on Twitter at [@TheGWMagazine](https://twitter.com/TheGWMagazine); we'll feature some of them in this space in future issues.

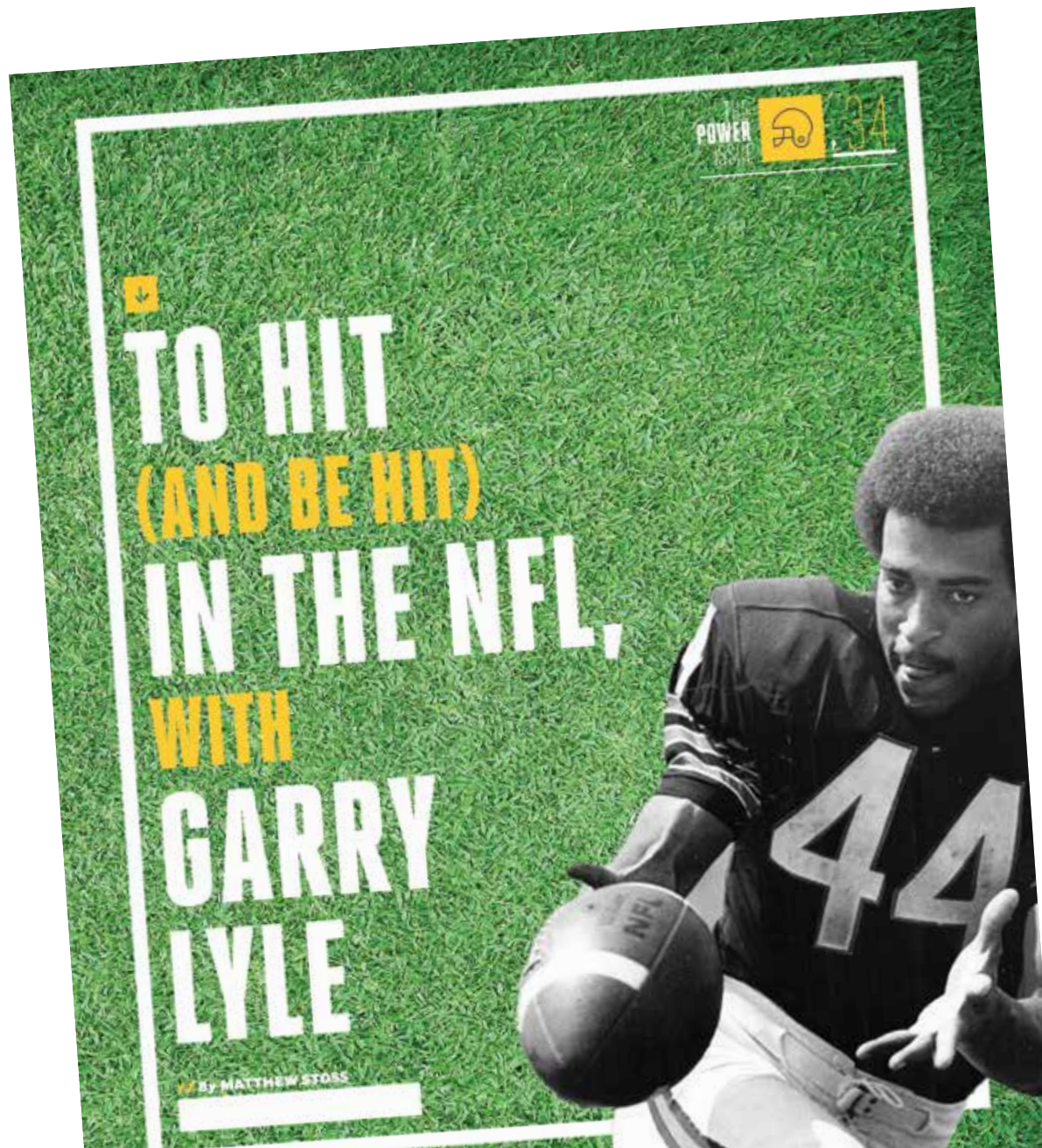
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Please include your name, degree/year, address and a daytime phone number.

Letters may be edited for clarity and space.



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GWPOWER
& Promise

"As a former foster youth, I chose to pursue law because I believe in the legal system as a means of advancing social justice. A scholarship enabled me to study at GW and take advantage of opportunities such as interning at the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless. I am now even more committed to practicing public interest law and helping disadvantaged communities."

Sacred B. Huff
GW Law '19



Empower GW students to make a positive difference in the world. Support the Power & Promise Fund for scholarships and fellowships.

go.gwu.edu/give2scholarships

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#ONLYATGW

Macron-mania

French President Emmanuel Macron, in town to meet with President Donald Trump and Congress, brought the high-powered frenzy of a state visit to campus, too.



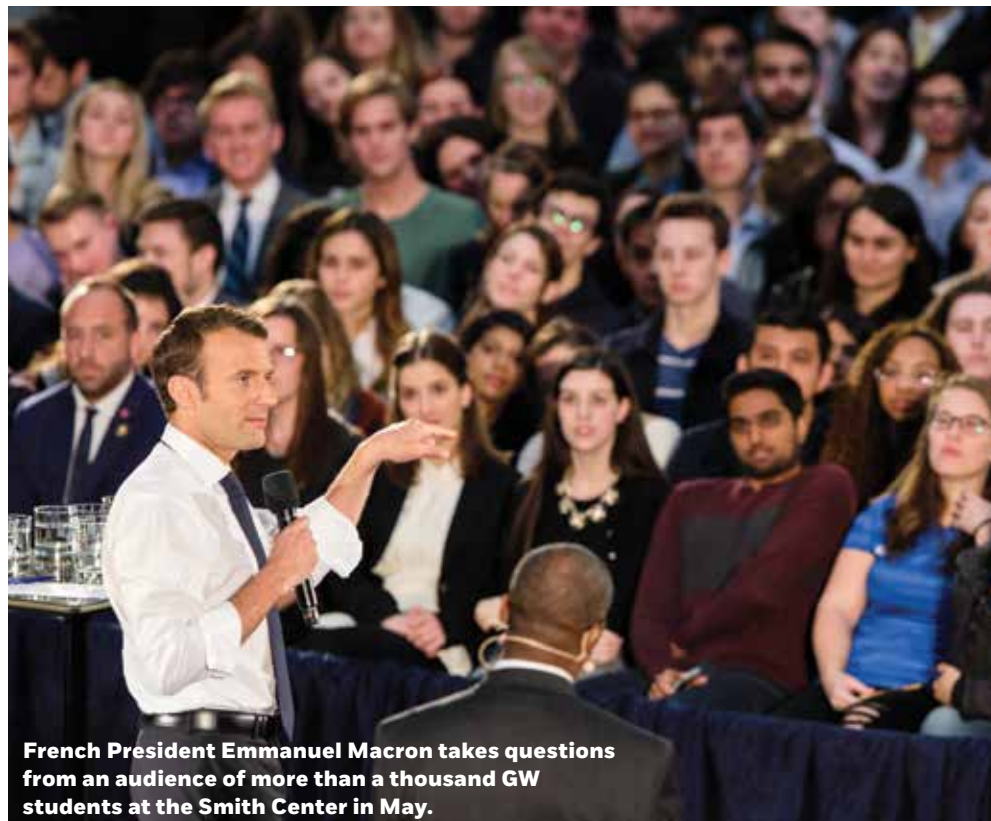


In May, on the heels of a state dinner in his honor at the White House and an address to a joint session of Congress the

day after, French President Emmanuel Macron next brought the pomp and hoopla of a state visit to Foggy Bottom, holding a Q&A with students at the Smith Center and a press conference at the Marvin Center.



“Your generation is the one to decide for itself. You are here to listen to your teachers, but tomorrow, and even now, you are also here to take your own responsibilities.”



French President Emmanuel Macron takes questions from an audience of more than a thousand GW students at the Smith Center in May.

And he jump-started the fanfare with a surprise (for the public, anyway) lunch at campus eatery Tonic at Quigley’s Pharmacy, alongside Democratic U.S. Rep. John Lewis of Georgia.

And yes, Macron had the tater tots. “It would be cliché to serve French fries to the president of France—luckily we only serve tots here,” restaurant owner Jeremy Pollok, BA ’94, said in a statement to *Washingtonian*.

Word of the lunch wafted beyond the brick walls like a griddling cheeseburger (which Macron also ate). And the French president emerged afterward—happily, it seemed—to find a crowd of students whose hands he shook, things he signed, questions he answered and selfies he posed for en route to the Smith Center. He also paused briefly, *The GW Hatchet* reported, to talk with a group of students protesting the U.S. and French involvement in Syria.

At the Smith Center—an event attended by more than 1,000 GW students, most of whom had won tickets in a lottery, and viewed by tens of thousands more via livestream—Elliott School Dean Reuben E. Brigety II moderated the Macron Q&A, which ranged from Syria to anti-Semitism in France, mass migration, the European Union and President Donald Trump’s then-budding trade war with China.

Macron, in a tie and rolled-up sleeves, told students that solutions for improving the global economy, climate change and national and world politics ultimately reside with them.

“Your generation is the one to decide for itself,” he said. “You are here to listen to your teachers, but tomorrow, and even now, you are also here to take your own responsibilities.”

Macron was elected in May 2017 and his trip to D.C. was the Trump administration’s first official state visit by a foreign leader.

It also marked the start of relations between Macron and the *other* president in this equation—GW President Thomas LeBlanc, who introduced Macron at the Smith Center event.

“Now that I am back in Paris, I wanted to express my sincere thanks to you for the wonderful welcome your university as a whole extended to me during my visit to Washington,” Macron wrote in a letter to LeBlanc. “I would be very grateful if you would pass on my warmest greetings to the students and faculty present that day; my conversation with them made a very deep impression on me.”

INVENTIONS**Pocket-Sized Protector**

A cocktail napkin to combat date-rape drugs gathers awards and momentum on the way to launch.

This spring, Danya Sherman spent her time between classes on the phone making plans—not with friends and classmates, but with business executives and distributors. She’s launching a company that could radically empower people against drug-laced drinks.

The company revolves around Sherman’s KnoNap, a cocktail napkin she developed that changes color when it comes into contact with liquid that’s contaminated with any of more than two dozen common date-rape drugs.

The past year has been a whirlwind for the rising senior. The idea for KnoNap grew out of a Women’s Entrepreneurial Leadership Initiative course that Sherman took in the spring of 2017. That year, she entered GW’s entrepreneurship contests—the New Venture Competition and Pitch George—and took home a combined \$12,500 in prize money plus in-kind support.

Sherman won a spot in a D.C. incubator offering startup support and was listed as one of *Washington Life* magazine’s 2017 Tech 25 Innovators and Disruptors. This year, she won another incubator fellowship; was awarded \$50,000 as one of Toyota’s three 2018 “Mothers of Invention;” she represented the U.S. at the Entrepreneurs’ Organization Global Student Entrepreneur Awards; and garnered media attention from *Washingtonian* magazine to *Elle*, *Glamour* and *Newsweek*.

And this summer, she plans to launch



Danya Sherman

a Kickstarter campaign that would bring her product to the market later this year. All the while, she’s balancing life as a full-time undergraduate in the Elliott School of International Affairs.

KnoNap was born out of personal experience. Sherman says that in 2016 she was studying abroad when a friend slipped drugs into her drink and took advantage of the situation. In its wake, she decided that she wanted to create a product to empower individuals and ensure they didn’t have to choose between social comfort and welfare.

Sharing her story and hearing from others has been a humbling experience, she says.

“We are so proud of KnoNap because it can be seamlessly incorporated into any social setting and used by anyone regardless of gender and sexual orientation,” Sherman says.

“What I want my company to do is join the movement of individuals, thought leaders, survivors and advocates to say: Enough is enough, and something has to change.”

In the meantime, Sherman is adapting to a new normal—the long nights and early mornings she’s putting in, victories to celebrate and failures to learn from. But always pushing forward and remaining flexible.

KnoNap, she likes to say, is first and foremost a safety company that uses napkins as a vehicle.

“I didn’t fall in love with my product,” she says. Instead, “I will fall in love with our mission. I will do whatever it takes and pivot and iterate to make sure that the products we’re putting out will be successful so that we can achieve our mission.”

—Kristen Mitchell

ENTREPRENEURSHIP**Turning the Tables**

A restaurant waitlist app tops the startups that vied for \$330,000 in prizes in the New Venture Competition.

The grand-prize winners of GW’s New Venture Competition aim to redefine the dining-out experience by taming one of its big frustrations: the wait to getting a table.

The team of Jonas Majauskas and Jason Korneich, seniors in the School of Business, and their business partner, Giuliano Senese, explained at the competition’s final round in April that their business, Time Table, works with restaurants to streamline the waitlist process.

Using a chatbot in the Facebook messenger app—and, eventually, they hope, other mediums like Amazon’s virtual assistant, Alexa—users are added to partner restaurants’ waitlists through the app, rather than having to call or show up to be placed on the list. And wait times are calculated in real time, helping diners avoid unexpectedly long waits.

“In essence, what we’re doing is replacing these buzzer systems or the outdated pen-and-paper system,” Mr. Majauskas told the judges. “There’s no need to have that initial interaction with the host or the restaurant. It’s all done through Facebook messenger.”

The team—which at the time already had partnerships with nearly three dozen restaurants in the New York City area and 200 beta-testing diners—took home the \$25,000 grand prize as well as prizes for Best Tech Venture and Best Undergrad Venture.

Time Table was among nine teams in the finals—out of a starting pool of 137—vying for \$330,000 in cash and in-kind prizes. Over the past decade, the competition has awarded more than \$1.5 million in prizes.

Rounding out the competition’s top four, in descending order, were: Nostopharma, a company built around a new treatment to prevent bone growth that can occur after an injury; the Wandering Raven, an e-learning tool to teach creative writing to children in India; and Sassy Pants, a women’s athletic apparel company.

—Briahna Brown



ARTS

A Glimpse of What's 'Next'

Tyree Brown's tiny portraits are intensely detailed, highly individual, as sharp and high-contrast as woodcuts. Up close, they are almost pointillist, the figures composed of short, precise lines of graphite. Each one takes Brown about a month to create—although, she laughed, “if I really focus, don't watch TV, cut out social media, I can do one in two weeks.”

Brown's work was featured in April and May in the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design's annual thesis exhibition, “NEXT,” which also included the work of 80 other students from programs that ranged from graphic design and fine art to photojournalism, theater, dance and exhibition design.

Master's degree candidate Maria Luz Bravo visited 52 buildings and interviewed hundreds of Washington residents for her DC Quadrants Project, which examines identical addresses in the District's Northwest, Northeast, Southwest and Southeast sections. It is a striking exploration of the city's contrasts, alive with

the voices of old and new residents affected by development.

“My work has always revolved around the city and the social issues that we can see in an urban landscape,” said Bravo, a professional photographer from Mexico City. “It's always been about people, but the city is the fabric.”

Quincy Mata's work was on both visual and performative display. His thesis, “Home,” is a digital graphic novel chronicling the lives of a group of superheroes from the LGBTQ community, centered around a drag fashion show at a gay club and inspired by the Orlando Pulse nightclub shooting.

While art from the comic filled the wall of one gallery, Mata—pink-wigged and heavily lashed, clad in a showstopping rainbow gown—took to the Flagg Building's marble steps and, flanked by two backup dancers, danced to Sia's “The Greatest” before a cheering crowd.

“I always read comic books, but I was always looking for something that I could identify with—as a kid, not even knowing what I was looking for,” Mata says. “So for me, now that I'm older, I want other kids to have that same experience. So if I can create gay superheroes, maybe there's something that they can look up to and aspire to.”

—Ruth Steinhardt

ARTS

Art From Former Corcoran Gallery Is Divvied Up

GW's Corcoran School of the Arts and Design is expected to acquire hundreds of pieces from the former Corcoran Gallery of Art's permanent collection.

Particularly notable pieces coming to GW include Jennifer Steinkamp's *Loop*, a vibrant audiovisual work once on display in the Corcoran Rotunda; Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller's *The Paradise Institute*, an immersive multimedia experience mimicking a grand, old-style movie palace, which was created for the 2001 Venice Biennale; and Robert Stackhouse's colossal wooden *Ghost Dance*. Among the 18 paintings, 642 photos,

93 prints, 15 sculptures and

more are works by Ansel Adams, Eugène Delacroix, Sally Mann, Mary Ellen Mark and William Wegman.

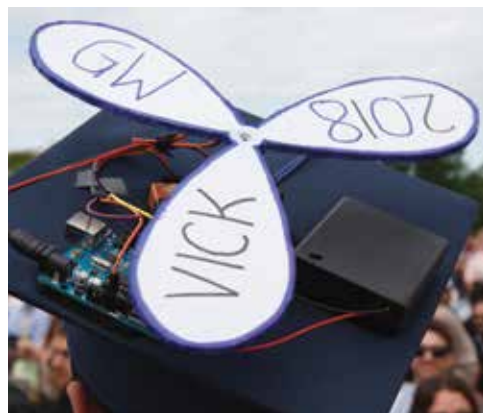
In 2014, an agreement between GW, the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Corcoran College of Art and Design and the National Gallery of Art gave GW responsibility for the college and for the Corcoran's historic Flagg Building home on 17th Street. A portion of the art collection was to be accessioned by the National Gallery of Art, with the rest distributed by the Corcoran Gallery of Art board of trustees.

This May, the Corcoran announced that distribution plan, which sends nearly all of the remaining 10,800 pieces to institutions in D.C., ranging from universities to Smithsonian museums, the Phillips Collection and the U.S. Supreme Court.

The National Gallery of Art accessioned more than 8,500 pieces of art, and as part of the 2014 agreement will maintain a “legacy gallery” in the Flagg Building.

The renovated second floor of the 1897 Flagg Building is expected to reopen to students this fall as part of ongoing construction work. For more information, visit go.gwu.edu/corcoran042018





RESEARCH

Emissions Test

Team advances to the finals of Carbon XPrize competition.

A team of GW researchers in April was named a finalist in the \$20 million NRG COSIA Carbon XPrize competition, aimed at spurring technologies that could convert industrial carbon dioxide emissions into useful products.

The team, led by Professor of Chemistry Stuart Licht, is one of 10 from five countries advancing to the finals. Licht's group is using low-energy, low-cost technology developed in his lab to turn carbon dioxide into hollow nanofibers, called carbon nanotubes. These lighter-weight alternatives to metals are strong and highly conductive, and currently are used in the bodies of airliners like the Boeing Dreamliner, high-end sports cars and batteries for electric vehicles.

Previously, Licht says, there was not a cost-effective method for preventing carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels or eliminating other CO₂, which as a heat-trapping greenhouse gas contributes to global warming.

Now, Licht says, "we have solved that problem" with carbon nanotubes that may be worth \$250,000 per ton. "We are already seeing that the market for such carbon composites is increasing similar to where the market for plastics was at the start of World War II," he says.

The process Licht's team is using involves dissolving carbon dioxide into a molten carbonate "bath," the researchers say. An electrical current is run through the liquid, splitting the CO₂ molecules into their constituent parts: carbon, in the form of nanotubes, and oxygen.

To get to the finals, the team had to demonstrate a pilot run of the technology during the 10-month semifinals round.

The 10 teams split a \$5 million purse for making it this far.

In the final round, teams will need to operate at full scale, either at a coal-fired plant in Gillette, Wyo., or—as Licht's team is doing—at a natural-gas-fired power plant in Alberta, Canada.

The final round runs until 2020 and carries two \$7.5 million grand prizes, one for each of the two power-plant tracks.

COMMENCEMENT

Away Messages

More than 20,000 people gathered in May on the National Mall, between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument, to fete 6,000 GW degree candidates. And a cascade of messages—advice, memories, pride—came with them.

From the dais, President of the National Academy of Sciences Marcia McNutt implored graduates to use their knowledge to "bring hope back into this world." GW President Thomas LeBlanc told them to keep learning, to listen first and debate second, to offer respect and empathy and to embrace change while "never forgetting where you came from, how you got here and those who supported you along the way." Olympian Elana Meyers Taylor, BS '06, MTA '11—who

fell short of making the 2008 Olympic softball team, only to find the bobsled team instead and medal in each of the past three Olympic Games—reminded graduates: "Keep in mind that sometimes a very bad day could be the best thing that ever happened to you."

But the graduates had messages of their own to deliver, too, sprinkled throughout a sea of mortarboards baking under the sun:

"Imagination is the only weapon in the war against reality," read one.

"This one's for you, Dad," read another.

There were hats covered in art, hats referencing *Star Trek* and *Finding Nemo*. One was outfitted with a battery-powered propeller.

And there was one that perhaps spoke for the lot of them: red, concentric rings with a black spot in the center, overlaid with the text: "That's all folks!"

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: WILLIAM ATKINS, RICK REINHARD, RICK REINHARD, SYDNEY ELLE GRAY, SYDNEY ELLE GRAY, RICK REINHARD



5 QUESTIONS

GW on Tour

In the year since President Thomas LeBlanc arrived at GW, he's realized that a big piece of what he intends to do here actually can't be done from here: "You can't build relationships by email. You eventually need to go meet folks." He's talking about galvanizing GW alumni, but also parents and donors—even newly accepted students. So this year he hit the road, hosting getting-to-know-you/him events in Boston, Miami, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and San Francisco. Now LeBlanc and Donna Arbide, the vice president for Development and Alumni Relations, are planning a half-dozen more stops, and to keep the show on the road, even going abroad. In this edited interview, LeBlanc and Arbide discuss the trips and their takeaways so far.

What was the goal with these first cities?

Thomas LeBlanc: We selected the cities that have the largest populations of families, alumni and donors so we could touch the maximum number of people with the visit. And the idea is to bring the university to them. It's not always possible for them to come visit us, and it's important when people have connected with the university that we do everything we can to maintain the connection.

Donna Arbide: It's so easy in your backyard to hear about other institutions; alumni don't always hear about the points of pride for their alma mater. So we go out there and talk about things that GW is doing that impact the world, and we provide networking opportunities that build the community. People leave very proud of GW!

What kinds of things are you talking about with the groups?

LeBlanc: The event typically starts with a presentation—I'll talk about our shared aspirations, and then how those lead to our strategic initiatives and the next stage for the university. But then when we get into sidebar

discussions and the Q&A, it can go anywhere. It can be about the meal plan; it can be about what's going on in this area and this school; "is professor so-and-so still there?" There's a certain amount of reminiscing and history that comes with it, too, which is great because it gives me a chance to learn about that history.

Arbide: There's a real hunger to know where GW is going. It's important to note, too, that we end with a charge for alumni, parents and the community about what they can do for GW, what GW needs from them to be better, to be aspirational ... They should come back to campus and recruit and mentor students, provide internships, provide alumni networking opportunities, give back financially and be positive ambassadors.

What kinds of things are you hearing?

Arbide: They want to hear about the university, but they also want to tell you their personal story. We're going morning to night, and you come back really inspired by the individual stories.

LeBlanc: When you're here on campus it's easy to get caught up in the day to day and to see all of the little things we could be doing better. When you get out, mostly people remember the good parts, and so it's like a shot of B12. You get out there and you talk to them, and they talk about meeting their spouse, or their child's life being changed, a professor who made a difference or an adviser or a program or an internship or whatever it is. And I would say the vast majority of people look back with incredible fondness for their experience. We can sometimes forget that.

Even during the Q&A sometimes there's a particularly difficult question, but it's a difficult question you might hear in your family, where they say: *I have a difficult question that has to be asked, but I'm doing this because I love the family.*

Are there any other takeaways you wanted to mention?

Arbide: There's one anecdote: We met with one person who had never been visited, and she gave her first gift to GW, a leadership gift—\$5,000—because she just felt she was acknowledged.

Just being visited made the difference between a gift and no gift?

Arbide: It always does. If people don't think you care, they'll give to something else. There's a lot of demand on people's time and giving, and we need to make a case at GW that we do care and they are part of our community and they are important to us and to our aspirations. People have choices. We understand that. And so we want to make a strong case that we should be that important choice for them.

LeBlanc: And the data is the data: We have a 9 percent giving rate for our alumni base. That is, by peer comparisons, quite low. Now there can be dozens of reasons why people choose not to give: We have more graduate students than undergraduates, and people typically give more to their undergraduate school than their graduate school; we have an urban campus, and for many years we didn't have a strong residential experience, which often encourages people to give. I could go on and on with the reasons why.

The reality is, if we can marshal more of our alumni to support the university we will be a stronger place, and alumni can take great pride in that. I think it's a simple matter of: We have to get out with a positive message and encourage people to become a part of it. And I think they will, because this is a great place.

For upcoming cities and dates, visit alumni.gwu.edu, and for questions and comments, write to alumni@gwu.edu.

IN BRIEF



“WHEN IT HAPPENS, WHEN STATEHOOD HAPPENS FOR D.C., WRIT LARGE WILL BE THE NAME OF MARK PLOTKIN.”

—Former D.C. Mayor Sharon Pratt, speaking about journalist and political commentator Mark Plotkin, BA '69, perhaps best known as one of the city's staunchest advocates for the voting rights of D.C. residents and D.C. statehood. Pratt—along with former mayors Anthony Williams and Vincent Gray, BS '64, and current Mayor Muriel Bowser—were with Plotkin at Gelman Library in March to celebrate the donation of his papers, including handwritten and typed scripts from his years at WAMU-FM and WTOP-FM, published articles from *Legal Times* and *The Washington Post*, personal documents and photographs.

Anuj Mehrotra joined GW in July as dean of the School of Business. Mehrotra arrives from the University of Miami, where he was the business school's senior vice dean for faculty development and research, the Leslie O. Barnes Scholar and a professor of management science. He has a doctoral degree in operations research from the Georgia Tech, a master's in operations research from the Virginia Tech and a bachelor's in mechanical engineering from Birla Institute of Technology and Science in India.

M.L. “Cissy” Petty has been named the inaugural dean of the student experience, the chief student affairs officer at the university—a new position that is part of a reorganization that created an administrative unit called Enrollment and the Student Experience. Petty most recently served as vice president for student affairs and associate provost at Loyola University New Orleans. She has a doctorate in higher education administration from Florida State University, where she also completed bachelor of science and master of science degrees.

SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING & APPLIED SCIENCE

David Dolling, dean of the School of Engineering and Applied Science and an internationally recognized aerospace engineer, announced in May that he will step down as dean at the end of the summer after a decade in the role. He will continue to teach at the university. Under Dolling's leadership, GW built Science and Engineering Hall, providing a new home for SEAS. His legacy also includes supporting women in STEM—the engineering school graduates twice the national average of female undergrads—and promoting undergrad participation in research and study abroad.

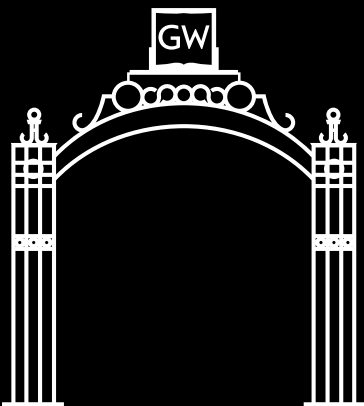
\$10 MILLION

The amount of a new National Institutes of Health grant awarded to GW and University of Georgia scientists to build an informatics portal for glycoscience, the study of the structure and function of carbohydrates. The GW-led work will integrate data on glycans—sugar chains made in the body—with that of genes and proteins, taking a big-data approach to revealing larger patterns and trends in glycobiology research.

SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

ELLIOTT SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

A gift of \$750,000 to the Institute for Korean Studies at the Elliott School of International Affairs will create an endowment to help forge links between the humanities and other disciplines, plus foster collaboration between scholars and policymakers. The gift, from Tom Chong Hoon Kim, BA '58, MA '61, and his wife, Pearl Chungbin Kim, will “help make GW the hub of Korean studies in the nation's capital and beyond,” says Jisoo Kim, who leads the institute.



HEADLINERS AT UNIVERSITY EVENTS

GEORGE WELCOMES

“I’ve never quite had a case like this case. I’ve never had opponents who’ve really done so much to help me.”

Stormy Daniels’ lawyer, **Michael Avenatti, JD ’00**, who is representing the adult film actress in her attempt to void an agreement that prevents her from discussing an alleged 2006 affair with President Donald Trump. Avenatti was at GW in April in conversation with Law Dean Blake D. Morant and Avenatti’s one-time law professor Jonathan Turley.

“I try every day to not be the excuse for somebody to be their worst self, and to be an inspiration for someone else to be their best self.”

Writer and political commentator **Sally Kohn, BA ’98**, speaking about her new book, *The Opposite of Hate*, at an event sponsored by Politics and Prose. Kohn said the impetus for the book came during her stint as a “lefty lesbian” contributor at Fox News, where she braced herself to be surrounded by “hateful monsters.” Instead, she found that not to be true and began to recognize her own preconceived notions as a form of hate.

“It has really to do with what you need to do. It is not that you are trained to become an ambassador.”

Rwandan Ambassador to the U.S. **Mathile Mukantabana**, speaking in April to students from GW’s Women’s Leadership Program, along with female ambassadors from Monaco, Oman and St. Kitts & Nevis. Mukantabana came to the U.S. for college, but most of her family would be killed in the 1994 Rwandan genocide. She created a nonprofit to aid survivors, and after the Rwandan government learned of her work, she was appointed ambassador.

“It’s time to build our own railroad.”

NASA Administrator **Jim Bridenstine**, drawing parallels in May between the future of space exploration and the Western expansion of the U.S. in the 1800s, which he said ultimately required government support of private companies to build the transcontinental railroad. Speaking at the Humans 2 Mars Summit, he called for a similar public-private effort to “solidify American leadership in space, science and discovery.”



Michael Avenatti, JD ’00

Sally Kohn, BA ’98

Mathile Mukantabana

Jim Bridenstine

Administrator
NASA

AVENATTI, BRIDENSTINE: LOGAN WERLINGER / KOHN: WILLIAM ATKINS
MUKANTABANA: NATHAN BAKER-LUTZ

“Keep someone like that in mind as we try to address this crisis.”

U.S. Health and Human Services Secretary **Alex Azar**, speaking about the opioid crisis and relating how he met a Dayton, Ohio, girl who was seven weeks clean from opioids and hoping to finish high school—having already lost her parents, a brother and her caretaker grandmother to drug abuse. Azar was on campus in May at an HHS event marking National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day.

“I’m out there living my best life, and he wakes up tweeting at me.”

Fired FBI Director **James Comey**, joking in April that for President Donald Trump (who has tweeted that Comey is “slippery” and a “slimeball”), their fallout seems like a bad breakup the president can’t shake. Comey, who was fired in May 2017, spoke at Lisner Auditorium to promote his book, *A Higher Loyalty*, at an event sponsored by Politics and Prose and moderated by journalist Mike Allen, co-founder of Axios.



Alex Azar

James Comey

David Rhodes



Reena Ninan, BA '01



Mosheh Oinounou, BA '02



“What those who are most critical of us want us to do is to take the bait, and that’s what you can’t do.”

CBS News President **David Rhodes**, on why the network doesn’t push harder against attacks on its credibility from Fox News. The best way to protect journalism, he said, “is by doing it.” Rhodes spoke in April at an event moderated by School of Media and Public Affairs Director Frank Sesno, which also included CBS anchor **Reena Ninan, BA '01**, and *CBS Evening News* Executive Producer **Mosheh Oinounou, BA '02**, who spoke about the challenges of producing a show in the digital age. “We put a rundown together starting at 10 a.m., cobbling together all these stories,” said Ninan, “and every afternoon at 12:35, the entire rundown gets busted.” Oinounou said that if a story breaks on Twitter 6:29 p.m., viewers still expect to see it on the 6:30 p.m. news. Now, he said, “our lead is called ‘White House TBD.’ And in my two months now at the show, nearly weekly the president is changing the headline or making news within 20 minutes of the broadcast.”

SHOWCASING NEW BOOKS BY GW PROFESSORS AND ALUMNI

BOOKSHELVES



Turning a Leaf, Over and Over

In *Grass Roots*, alumna Emily Dufton dissects the decades-long fight over marijuana in the U.S.

// By Menachem Wecker, MA '09

In March 2003, then-New York University undergraduate Emily Dufton boarded a bus to Washington to join a protest against the invasion of Iraq. Once she got to the National Mall, Dufton, MA '10, PhD '14, was surprised to see so many tie-dye shirts and drum circles.

"I thought to myself, 'Wait a second. This didn't work 40 years ago when the United States was in the Vietnam War. I don't think it's going to work today,'" she says.

Dufton was drawn to that notion of history repeating itself. And after reading Martin Torgoff's 2005 book, *Can't Find My Way Home: America in the Great Stoned Age, 1945-2000*, she found that drug use could be a fascinating lens through which to view

those cycles.

As a graduate student at GW in 2008, Dufton began researching grassroots social movements and decided to home in her doctoral work on parent-run anti-marijuana campaigns, which had been cursorily explored in Torgoff's book.

Parents concerned about their children's drug use became some of the most powerful grassroots activists in 20th-century U.S. history—some of the most influential since prohibitionists took their hatchets to saloons. In her new book, *Grass Roots: The Rise and Fall and Rise of Marijuana in America*, Dufton expands on that research to include the activists on the other side of this decades-long tug of war. Their efforts to destigmatize and decriminalize pot in the 1960s and '70s fueled the parents' movement—the success of which then spurred activists from the 1980s through the 2000s to focus on medical marijuana, and, more recently, recreational drug use.

"I realized there's always this pendulum swing," Dufton says. "I

loved watching these individuals battle for control of where drug policy was heading, and how they were able to get their foot in the door."

The issue, though, is actually about much more than pot, she says: It carries the currents of broader discussions about freedom, race, public health and safety.

In her two dozen or so interviews and in writing the book, Dufton sought to remain impartial and above the fray, though she says it seems "people read into the book a lot of what they want to hear."

What she's really hoping readers will see is that speaking up can have reverberations.

"There is a lot of power in political activism," she says, and the book offers plenty of examples: the lawyer who started a legalization lobby on Capitol Hill, the suburban Atlanta mom with a PhD in British literature who launched the pot counterrevolution, the former IHOP waitress who became the "Florence Nightingale of medical marijuana."

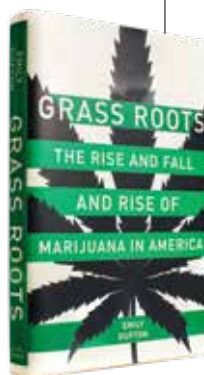
"None of those people seem like the political activists whom we recognize or think of as the real movers and shakers," Dufton says. "If you choose a real subject that truly lights your fire, there is so much potential to change things in this country."

Looking ahead at the politics of marijuana, Dufton thinks that it's premature for people to figure that legalization, in the absolute sense, is invariably on the horizon.

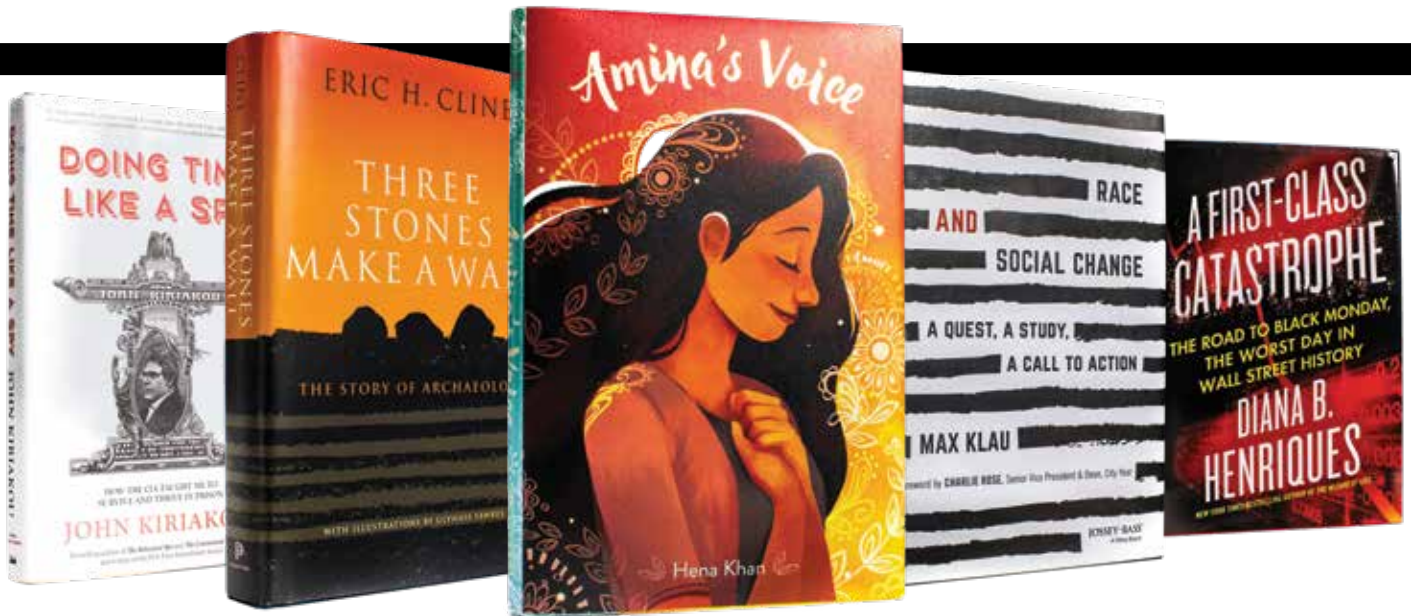
"There are a lot of unknowns," she says, not least of which is political will.

And while lessons have been learned on both sides over the decades—wisdom Dufton distills at the end of her book—the issue, largely, remains a leaf twisting in the wind.

Join fellow alumni in an online book club covering professional development, lifelong learning, personal growth and other career topics. (The club is hosted by PBC Guru, a book club management company, which is partnering with GW Alumni Relations.) For more information, visit: www.pbc.guru/gw



Grass Roots: The Rise and Fall and Rise of Marijuana in America (Basic Books 2017)



Doing Time Like a Spy: How the CIA Taught Me to Survive and Thrive in Prison (Rare Bird Books, 2017)

By John Kiriakou, BA '86, MA '88

When a CIA officer of nearly 15 years is prison-bound for blowing the whistle on the agency's torture of al Qaeda detainees, he draws upon 20 rules he learned at the CIA's famous Farm while training in spy recruitment and counterterrorism. "Prison couldn't possibly be tougher than Afghanistan, Pakistan, Iraq, Yemen, or any of the other dumps in which I'd served over the years," writes the author, whom the CIA recruited upon the recommendation of one of his GW professors, a retired agency officer (he doesn't say who). Of trying to stay safe for 30 months in jail, he adds, "Prison is a combination of seventh grade, *Lord of the Flies*, and a mental institution."

Three Stones Make a Wall: The Story of Archaeology (Princeton University Press, 2017)

By Eric H. Cline, professor of classics and anthropology

Despite tendencies to romanticize it, archaeology is nothing like *Indiana Jones*. Just as the author, who has dug on more than 30 excavations, once found part of a Hellenistic bronze piece of furniture that he initially mistook for a petrified monkey's paw, misconceptions about the field (and charlatans) abound; it's important to set the record straight, Cline writes. The book explores objects that are associated with the full span of human history, unearthed in digs that go back to the first decade of the 18th century, archaeology's infancy.

Amina's Voice (Simon & Schuster, 2017)

By Hena Khan, MA '97

Amina, a 12-year-old Pakistani-American girl in Milwaukee who has been called everything from "Amelia" to "Anemia," struggles to understand her hybrid identity, particularly when a friend of Korean descent, Soojin, begins to assimilate. In this novel for young adults, it takes a visit from a conservative uncle from Pakistan and a vandalism attack on her family's mosque for her

to realize who she is and how she fits in—at school and on stage, where Amina has both perfect pitch and a crippling shyness.

Race and Social Change: A Quest, A Study, A Call to Action (John Wiley & Sons, 2017)

By Max Klau, BA '94

From its start, the U.S. had been tied up in the contradiction of a clean break with the British monarchy while simultaneously enslaving people. Centuries later, Klau writes, the nation continues to struggle with racism as it articulates values of freedom. Following the election of the first U.S. black president, the country is now faced with a "real-life Rorschach test," with regular news reports of assaults, and worse, on people of color. The book, the author states, responds to a question that has long troubled him: "What's true about race and social change?"

A First-Class Catastrophe: The Road to Black Monday, the Worst Day in Wall Street History (Henry Holt, 2017)

By Diana B. Henriques, BA '69

On October 19, 1987, the stock market underwent nearly twice as large a decline, percentage-wise, as the worst day of 1929, the beginning of the Great Depression. That so-called "Black Monday" came on the

heels of unheeded warning signs, the author writes. And in the aftermath, where the financial system seemed to magically right itself, analysts weren't learning the lessons that would've prepared them for the 2008 crisis. The crises of 1987 and 2008, and future crashes that may loom, are of a different variety than the Great Depression and involve little-understood financial tools, breakneck automation and too much borrowed money, Henriques writes. **GW**

SPORTS



BASEBALL

Diamond Mind

Former MLB catcher John Flaherty, BA '91, who for 13 seasons has called New York Yankees games for the YES Network, talks about the crossover to broadcasting and toeing the line to be the fans' advocate in the booth.

// By Matthew Stoss

Major league pitcher-turned-broadcaster **Jim Kaat has a story** that illustrates

the dilemma facing retired professional athletes aspiring to the broadcast booth.

“I had a little brief period of chilliness between Alex Rodriguez and myself,” says Kaat, who turned to broadcasting in the mid-1980s after playing 25 MLB seasons, 14 with the original Washington Senators/Minnesota Twins franchise. “Eventually he came across the line and wanted to talk to me a little bit more and I had to point out to him that I’m not your cheerleader; I’m not your PR firm. I work for the viewer and it’s my job to tell the viewer what I see, honestly and objectively.”

Go too far in one direction and you burn a player. Go too far in the other and imperil your fan credibility (homerism can be so unbecoming). Critical balance is a thin, greased line not quite taut on a windy day. Some never toe it while others, like former catcher John Flaherty, BA ’91, appear to find it by intuition.

“I’ve always been a person who I think is very self-evaluating,” says the 50-year-old Flaherty, a New York City native who’s called Yankee games for the Yankee-owned YES Network since 2006. “I’ve always been kind of critical of myself as a player. I never gave myself a whole lot of credit and I was very aware of what my role was on every club that I played for and I’ve taken that same attitude up to the booth. If I see something, I’m going to call it like I see it. Every player struggles. We’re all used to being criticized a little bit, but if you can balance it out with a reason why that particular player is having a tough time, I think that goes a long way.”

Flaherty, drafted out of GW by the Boston Red Sox in 1988, finished his five-team, 14-year career with a three-year run

with the Yankees (2003 to 2005) that included a World Series appearance in 2003 and a tour as Hall of Fame pitcher Randy Johnson’s personal catcher.

An adequate hitter—his best offensive season was 1998 with Tampa Bay when he hit .278 with 14 home runs and 71 RBIs in 117 games—Flaherty had a reputation as a superlative defender and a cerebral player of baseball’s most polymathic position, one believed to produce the best managers and TV/radio analysts. (A.J. Hinch, manager of 2017 World Series champion Houston Astros, is a former catcher, so is Tim Lincecum, among the first and best-regarded ex-pros to turn broadcaster.)

Flaherty retired during spring training in 2006 and quickly landed a handful of TV auditions before YES hired him as an on-the-field reporter for that season.

time. He’s thinking with each pitch what the pitcher’s going to do, where the infield is, what base runners are thinking—and all players do that but I think a catcher has a unique perspective because they’re involved with each play of a baseball game. I think you see with John that that translates into his broadcast and he’s able to give you the insight into what a player’s thinking and he does it in a way that’s easy to understand.”

Flaherty’s transition from field to the broadcast booth seems charmed. He says he got into it at the urging of his agent Alan Nero who, Flaherty says, believed he could be a “really good broadcaster” and encouraged him to do a bit of preemptive brand-building.

“I was concentrating on being a player and I thought I’ll figure out the retirement stuff afterwards,” Flaherty says. “But [Nero] gave me great advice.

involved at one point, ensuring Flaherty ended up working for the Yankees instead of the rival Mets, for whom he had one of his first TV auditions. YES hired Flaherty as an on-the-field reporter a few weeks later, making him then the latest ex-pro to jump to TV.

Today, with 24 hours of lots of cable sports channels, countless studio shows and the proliferation of league- and team-owned networks, former athletes and their varying informed opinions fill time everywhere. Some pros make it on the largesse of their Q Score but Flaherty, according to Kaat and Marchand, made it on natural ability and then worked at it.

“You can tell when a guy is conscientious,” Kaat says, “and he’s just not there because *Hey, I was a ballplayer and they know who I am and I’ll be able to just sit and do this and I’ll get by on my name*. And then you found that, oh, you have to put the same amount of work into this that you did into being a player if you’re serious about making a career out of it.”

Marchand describes Flaherty as honest, articulate, studious and affable. Marchand’s only quibble with Flaherty’s style is the same one he has with many retired athletes in broadcasting.

“Could guys go a bit further? Yeah, I think they probably could,” says Marchand who covered for the Yankees for 11 years, overlapping with Flaherty’s time in the Bronx. “I do think that former players for the most part—[Charles] Barkley’s like the guy who doesn’t really seem to care. But for the most part, I think he could go a little bit further sometimes in terms of his criticism. But at the end of the day, I think he’s pretty good.”

Flaherty says he didn’t take speech or media classes to get ready, only that Kaat, a YES alum who now calls games for the MLB Network, mentored him. ▶

“... I was very aware of what my role was on every club that I played for and I’ve taken that same attitude up to the booth. If I see something, I’m going to call it like I see it.”

“As a color analyst—that’s his bread and butter,” *New York Post* sports media columnist Andrew Marchand says. “That’s where he’s best, as a former player. ... Flaherty sees the game a certain way and he sees it through the eyes of someone who had a catcher’s mask on for a long

I did a lot of on-camera stuff the last three years with the Yankees. Obviously some people were watching because I had four auditions right away when I never even told anybody that’s what I wanted to do.”

Flaherty says the late Yankee owner George Steinbrenner got



John Flaherty (left) and Yankees TV play-by-play man Michael Kay in the broadcast booth before a game at Yankee Stadium

▶ Kaat taught Flaherty not only the importance of preparation but also the equal importance of letting that preparation go during a broadcast. Kaat says it was John Madden who advised him to not rely on notes in the booth because it encourages the indelicate forcing of minutiae where it doesn't fit.

Flaherty says he used to struggle with this.

"Do your homework and do your research, have everything prepared," Flaherty says, "but when you get to the booth, put that in your briefcase and just talk. If all the homework that you've done is important or if it's something that's going to come up in a broadcast, you'll remember it and it'll be conversational and it'll come across a lot better to the viewer at home."

▲
JOHN FLAHERTY, BA '91

AT GW

He is a GW Athletics Hall of Famer, lettering in baseball for three seasons before the Boston Red Sox picked him in the 25th round of 1988 MLB draft.

IN THE PROS

A catcher, he played 14 years (1992 to 2005) for five teams: the Red Sox, Tigers, Padres, Devil Rays and Yankees, with whom he appeared in the 2003 World Series.

TODAY

He's in his 13th season broadcasting Yankees games for the YES Network.

Flaherty now does both play-by-play and color for YES, making his first full-game play-by-play outing this year in spring training (in the past, he had just done a few innings at a time). Retired pitcher David Cone, who threw a perfect game for the Yankees in 1999, was his color man.

Over 13 seasons, Flaherty has cultivated a diplomatic, somewhat self-effacing tone that scaffolds his credibility in the occasionally bloodthirsty New York media market. It also helps him when he has to be critical.

"My first interviews on the field were with Derek Jeter and Jorge Posada—guys that I played with. Jorge, I consider one of the best baseball friends that I've had," Flaherty says of the former Yankee catcher. "So when I was calling games and those guys

were struggling, it's not the most comfortable thing to do. But I think that one of the things that I realized—and I think growing up in New York helped me—is that you have to be honest with these fans. These New York fans are very knowledgeable; they know the game; you can't lie to them; you've got to call it like they see it."

"When you're critical of a player, you can always balance it. And by that I mean, if someone is struggling—say someone out of the bullpen has a tough night—you can acknowledge that they had a tough night but you also have to balance it and say he's worked three out of the last four games; I'm sure he's fatigued a little bit. If you find that balance, I think the players will respect that." ☐

ADMINISTRATION

En Vogel

A Q&A with alumna and new GW Athletic Director Tanya Vogel // By Matthew Stoss

Tanya Vogel, BS '96, MS '99, MBA '06, took over as GW's athletic director July 1 after handling the job in an interim capacity for seven months. She is a GW Athletics Hall of Famer, having played and coached women's soccer in Foggy Bottom.

Vogel moved from coaching to administration in 2011, serving as deputy Title IX coordinator, senior woman administrator and deputy athletic director. Here, she talks to *GW Magazine* about her new job and college sports.

Why did you switch from coaching to administrating?

I saw an avenue to get to the other side and build resources to build systems that could make things better for coaches. I saw that you can have a big impact and see the same type of return on investment that you get with coaching. I didn't know that when I was coaching until I started to dabble in administration.

How did you dabble?

I started running head coaches meetings in 2008. We didn't have formal head coaches meetings and so I started to pull those together, and we would talk about things that were questions and concerns.

Anything come out of those coaching meetings?

We were not all wearing the same GW brand at the time. We had like 80 different GWs. We didn't have a central mark for athletics; we had it for the university, though, and nobody could afford a T-shirt and so I went over and met with the people that were in charge of licensing and merchandising. I said, "Listen, I've got 400 student-athletes and 60 coaches. If you can get me two T-shirts for all of our student-athletes and a polo shirt for our coaches, we will get the brand out there. When we travel, when we recruit, we will get the brand out there." They said it was a no-brainer.

In the old days, athletic directors were, like yourself, usually ex-coaches. Then, with college sports in recent decades becoming a multibillion-dollar industry, universities started hiring CEO types as ADs. Now it seems there could be a shift back. Why is that?

The exposure that athletics can provide to a university is enormous, and President LeBlanc understands that. He says it's a "highly visible display of discipline and excellence." Because of

that, I feel that the coaches and student-athletes are the people providing exposure, and how you manage those two things is going to make or break your program. So just hiring a CEO who doesn't understand how to manage coaches, I think, can be shortsighted. Managing coaches is like managing professional athletes. And similarly, how you manage those 500 student-athletes or however many you have is going to make or break how successful you are. So having somebody that really understands intercollegiate athletics has become more valuable.

Do you foresee any major changes to college athletics in the next five, 10, 15 years?

Name, image and likeness and what we're going to do to let players make money off their name. The NCAA is in the courts in many different areas related to that. That is one thing we're going to have to pay attention to because I think the NCAA is probably leaning in a direction where student-athletes should be able to make money.


So we could see student-athletes in, for example, car commercials?

First of all, it scares us all because we want to be able to regulate and contain it. We don't want our students being taken advantage of in any way. But if a student-athlete were to, say, right now, have a product they've invented, they actually can't use their name to sell this product.

What do you think of this potential rule change?

I'm supportive of it. I think we've got to move slowly through it to figure out the best way to do it.

How do you think that would work?

I think the NCAA will look for a way to make it so that our students aren't getting pulled out of class and really taken advantage of. I think that you'll see the regulation in what's allowed. The NCAA may or may not move in a direction where they try to cap it. I don't think that would be in their best interest. They are probably going to be in favor of letting the market determine how much someone is worth—and I want to be clear that there's a difference between pay-for-play and image and likeness. I am 100 percent behind the intercollegiate model that we currently have, in terms of scholarships. 

I feel that the coaches and student-athletes are the people providing exposure [for the university], and how you manage those two things is going to make or break your program.



TANYA VOGEL

ABOUT


Vogel played and coached women's soccer at GW before switching to administration in 2011. She took over as athletic director July 1.

A woman with curly hair, eyes closed, and hands raised in prayer. The image is split vertically: the left side is red and the right side is blue. The text 'Liz Acevedo' is overlaid in white, cursive font.

Liz
Acevedo



Verses
The
Novel



After years on the spoken-word circuit, the poet and alumna is conquering the novel. Her debut, *The Poet X*, is a critically adored *New York Times* bestseller. It also seems like the book she was meant to write.

**Story // Matthew Stoss
Photos // William Atkins**

① The villain

in Elizabeth Acevedo's debut novel, *The Poet X*, is a mean and imperious mother, of whom Acevedo thinks I could be more understanding.

"You think she's that evil?" Acevedo says.

"When she [REDACTED AS TO NOT SPOIL THE MOTHER'S VILLAINY], that is horrible," I say. "I was walking from the train while I was reading this and I actually cursed out loud and someone walked by me and looked at me funny. [ALSO REDACTED] is such a vindictive thing to do."

Acevedo, BA '10, is the 30-year-old fierce, funny and coily-haired daughter of Dominican immigrants. Everyone calls her Liz. She grew up in New York City not far from Columbia University, reading and writing, and rapping with her older brothers and their friends on the corner of 109th and Amsterdam, in front of a deli that has the word "cigarettes" misspelled on its awning. The block is bookended by a couple of Catholic churches, the one more opulent than the other. The Acevedos went to the other.

Acevedo is an author, poet and spoken-word performer who has gigged at, among other venues of some size, Madison Square Garden, the Kennedy Center and the South African State Theatre in Pretoria. She's given TED Talks and been featured on BET, and her YouTube videos go occasionally viral.

As part of the D.C. Beltway Poetry Slam team, she won the 2014 National Poetry Slam in Oakland, Calif., topping a field of more than 70, and in 2016, she finished eighth out of 96 at the Women of the World Poetry Slam in Brooklyn, N.Y.

After GW, Acevedo matriculated through the D.C. poetry scene for a few years, anchoring slams and spoken-word shows at various bookstores, bars and cafes, building a following and getting an agent and finally going pro in 2014. Before she became a *New York Times* best-selling author this spring, Acevedo toured the country, averaging more than 100 stops a year, mostly at college campuses. Her most-attended shows drew hundreds, and the top poets on the circuit, according to Acevedo's agent Scott Talarico, can earn as much as \$5,000 for a performance. She has since halved her touring, in part, because of obligations to her publisher. She's writing a second novel and promoting *The Poet X*, a lightly autobiographical young-adult novel-in-verse released in March.

A quick-reading-but-emotionally-hefty 30,000 words, *The Poet X* centers on the coming-of-age of a 15-year-old Dominican American girl named Xiomara Batista and how she uses poetry to reckon with her agency and her sexuality. Both seem to belong to everyone but her, notably the Catholic church and its ultramontane devotee: Xiomara's mother.

"The reason the mom is such a good villain is you can see her point of view," I say to Acevedo. "That's probably why I hated her so much. She wasn't wrong—I mean, she was wrong but there is a rational argument for her side, which makes her much more three-dimensional than just being a Bond villain, and that's why I hated her so much and that's why [VILLAINY REDACTED ONE MORE TIME]. I needed her to repent, to say that maybe she shouldn't be so extreme."

"But do our parents do that?" Acevedo says. "Do our parents apologize? I think they might, but not with words, right? I think the mom changes. She's just not going to apologize. So much of the book is about what do we have the language to say? What are we able to communicate? And this character literally does not have the language in which to talk to her kids."

The mother speaks only Spanish; her two children are bilingual.

"Did you make her an older woman for that reason?" I say.

Acevedo and I are in the white-light window of a cafe that's also a bike shop and a hardware store. It's just off the waterfront in Southwest D.C., where Acevedo lives with her husband, Shakir Cannon-Moye, BBA '10, MBA '12, and where the fish smell stays low in the wind. It's a hot early weekday afternoon and Acevedo is drinking a pink tea through a straw, and her big hair isn't so coily right now. She's got it up in a business-serious samurai bun. For the moment, she can traverse doorways without an act of geometry.

"I wanted it to be this generational, old-school thing," Acevedo says. "This also is very reflective of the Bible; these older women having kids; this idea of miracles—how else could this have possibly happened, right? And raising kids is different when you're 45, and it's, again, about language. I think with certain communities, when you're an older →



Liz Acevedo speaks at the National Museum for Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C., during an event in June that also featured poets Nikki Giovanni and Emi Mahmoud. After the event, which included performances by each poet and a panel discussion, Acevedo signed copies of her novel, *The Poet X*, and chatted with fans.



→ immigrant, you're holding onto your values in a way that is not going to be like a 20-year-old who just moved here—who can still maybe get some English, who is open to a new place.”

②

It is the religious conflict in *The Poet X* that appealed to Rosemary Brosnan when over Memorial Day weekend in 2016 she read Elizabeth Acevedo's then-four-year-old manuscript of a young-adult novel-in-verse.

“In books for kids and teens, religion is often left out unless it's being published by a religious publisher,” says Brosnan, a vice president and editorial director at HarperCollins where she signed Acevedo to a multi-book deal and now serves as her editor. “But to have a book that shows a teen questioning her mom's view on religion, I think that that's important. I think religion is a part of a lot of kids' lives.”

Brosnan, a 20-some-year publishing industry vet, is chatting by landline from her office in New York, not too far from the Mexican restaurant in Tribeca where on July 26, 2016, she first met Acevedo face to face and they bonded over a mutual love of poetry, especially the writing of Lucille Clifton, who, along with Natalie Diaz and Nikki Giovanni, is among Acevedo's most enduring influences.

Off the top of my head, I propose to Brosnan a reason for the lack of religious plots in young-adult novels: Religion is delicate, and the printing of books in which its supremacy is submarined might put publishers on tenterhooks, wary of parents high on indignation and the perceived defenestration of traditional values.

“I don't think so,” Brosnan says.

Yeah, just kidding.

“I'm not seeing the manuscripts,” she continues. “I don't know that people are really writing them. It's not that we won't publish them. Maybe the people who write the books tend to be more secular? I don't know. ... I think it really depends on the author.”

(Acevedo, like her novel's protagonist Xiomara—pronounced “See-oh-mara”—is Catholic, although admittedly not a very good one. She veers ever nearer to apostasy.)

Brosnan says the heady concepts and the crisp verse in *The Poet X* compelled her to buy the book, describing Acevedo's writing as well-crafted and the diction well-suffered.

“Each poem stands on its own as a gem,” Brosnan says. “It's very difficult to write a novel-in-verse and write all these poems that are connecting poems between scenes. You have to have the story follow just as you would in a prose novel.”

Acevedo's contracted to produce about a book a year through 2021 for HarperCollins. The next one, *With the Fire on High*, scheduled to come out in spring 2019, is about a teen mother who becomes a chef. It's a prose novel, unlike *The Poet X*, which Acevedo finished in March 2016, abandoning all but 10 of 50 or so pages from her first go at the novel in 2012. She restarted it in January 2016 and had a book deal by June.

The novel spent four weeks on *The New York Times* Best Sellers list, a feat buoyed by Acevedo's four years of touring and an indie bookstore renaissance that, according to American Booksellers Association CEO Oren Teicher, has been more than partially powered by the localization movement and minority demographics. From the 2009 to 2017, the number of independent bookstores has gone up every year, jumping from 1,651 in to 2,321.

The Poet X stars, among other minority characters, a Dominican American teenage girl and her gay twin brother and nary a straight white guy.

Across these next pages is an excerpt from *The Poet X*. The poem, “Spoken Word,” describes the first time Xiomara Batista—the novel's main character—experiences spoken-word poetry.

"Spoken
Word"

When class starts Ms. Galiano projects a video:
a woman onstage, her voice quiet,
then louder and faster like an express train picking up speed.

↓

"I think all kids should be represented in books and see themselves in books," Brosnan says. "That wasn't really happening enough, so that was another thing that I just loved about this story."

Brosnan says most of her emendings to *The Poet X* focused on Acevedo beefing up the boyfriend character—a biology lab partner named Aman who supports Xiomara and her writing unconditionally—and few if any edits involved surgery on the actual writing. The integrity and the philosophies of the book arrived intact, Brosnan says, unique and all but fully formed, especially the big one.

"I liked the exploration of this very religious family and the mother in particular," Brosnan says, "and her influence on Xiomara and how strict she was and how Xiomara was trying to figure out her own ideas about religion and where they fit in. I just really like this girl coming into her own and finding her voice."

But isn't the mother horrid?

"Maybe it's because I'm a mom but I had some sympathy for her," Brosnan says, "which is interesting because she was really terrible to Xiomara and the [REDACTED AGAIN] made me almost physically sick. It was really just so powerful. But I did have some sympathy for her because I imagined this was her background and maybe the way she was raised and she felt like she was losing control of her daughter."

③

In the cafe that's also a bike shop and also a hardware store, Liz Acevedo is in a corner by the glassy cafe counter, adjacent to the pastries and a sighing blonde barista. Acevedo's facing the white light in the white window and the joggers and the baby strollers and the cyclists progressing upon the bike trail that rubs up Maine Avenue SW and she's expressive and intellectual even when she's not saying things.

And then she says things.

"I think my aesthetic and my politics are centered in a very particular area. My interest is in a particular narrative and it's typically not white men. I can recognize a lot of names and a lot of poems; I can talk about, like, why Whitman was who he was."

(I've asked about her poetry education and her fluency in the classics.)

At GW, Acevedo patchworked an interdisciplinary studies major from sundry courses plucked from relevant majors. In high school, after competing (and nearly dominating) her first poetry slam, she knew by age 15 that she wanted poetry to be her career and as an undergraduate she built a degree curated from performing arts and English and sociology classes.

In 2012, after a tour in Teach for America where she taught eighth-graders and met and befriended poet, scholar and future D.C. Beltway Poetry Slam teammate Clint Smith, Acevedo went to the University of Maryland where she got an MFA in creative writing in 2015 and served as an adjunct professor, teaching 100-level English classes to freshmen and creative writing. By 2014, other poets urged her to commit to poetry full time. Smith was one of those poets.

"She was sort of a young prodigy coming out of New York City," Smith says. "I had seen YouTube videos of her performing, so when people said 'Liz Acevedo,' I remembered the name. I remembered seeing videos of her when she was like 17 or 18 years old and winning poetry slams in New York and she had this unique style. I think a lot of poets try to emulate other poets, especially when they're first starting out, but I think one thing about Liz is she very much found her own style very early and that was very clear when you watched her work. Liz has this really remarkable ability to hold many truths at once."

Acevedo still did spoken-word shows and poetry slams in her spare time at GW and Maryland, treating the performances as something more than a hobby but less than a career. She hit open mics and et cetera, perhaps leaving more than a few amateur poets self-conscious. Basically, she went underground and built a style.

Smith says Acevedo has avoided spoken-word and slam poet clichés. She doesn't rely on personal trauma for cheap points or treat a hot mic as a confessional. Instead, she mustered her hip-hop bravado and swaddled it with her literary acumen, humor—Acevedo's act is at least one-half stand-up—and personal experience. She integrates Spanish as well as Dominican slang, for example.

"She brought the world that she occupied as a young person growing up in a specific



The poet talks about being black, about being a woman,
about how beauty standards make it seem she isn't pretty.

I don't breathe for the entire three minutes

while I watch her hands, and face,

feeling like she's talking directly to me.

She's saying the thoughts I didn't know anyone else had.

We're different, this poet and I. In looks, in body,

in background. But I don't feel so different

when I listen to her. I feel heard.

When the video finishes, my classmates,

who are rarely excited by anything, clap softly.

And although the poet isn't in the room

↓

“She was sort of a young prodigy coming out of New York City.”

Clint Smith

community,” Smith says. “She grew up in Harlem. She brought the Dominican Republic. She brought being black in America. She brought all of these tensions. She was almost the embodiment of intersectionality.”

Of course Acevedo learned Western poetry canon over those six years of college but little of it, she says, looked or sounded like her. It looked and sounded like everything else.

“I would look at folks and say, ‘This is an interesting thing,’” Acevedo says, “but it’s hard for me to be fully invested in narratives where I’m nonexistent or my community is nonexistent. I can enjoy it—like, ‘That was interesting wordplay, that was interesting language’ or even ‘that was a fascinating way to talk about love or this is a clear emotional truth,’ but there’s always going to be distance for me.”

“That’s how I felt when I started reading this,” I say, pointing to my hardback copy of *The Poet X* on the table in the white light. There’s also a copy of *Beast Girl & Other Origin Myths*, Acevedo’s 2016 poetry collection, and her pink tea. “I was like, ‘There’s no way there’s going to be anything in this for me.’ But this one poem was the first thing that really hooked me because it reminded me of when I was in middle school and I asked a teacher why Jesus wasn’t a girl.”

“That’s a good question, Matt. Asking the important questions.”

“It wasn’t because I had—”

“A big political agenda?”

“Ha, no. It wasn’t because I was this prodigious feminist at 13; I was just being difficult. But this line in this poem about how the holy trinity didn’t include the mother got to me.”

On page 14 of *The Poet X*, there is a poem called “God.” It’s part manifesto and part polemic and establishes Xiomara’s religious aggrievement and her struggle against catechism and by extension her mother, who wields her faith like a ferule.

A stanza of “God” says, “About a holy trinity/ that don’t include the mother./ It’s all the things.” The two ensuing stanzas plus one line say, “Just seems as I got older/ I began to really see/ the way that the church/ treats a girl like me differently./ Sometimes it feels/ all I’m worth is under my skirt/ and not between my ears.”

The poem establishes the novel’s tone—perhaps even its thesis—and every conflict to follow has at least a tendril from “God” stabbing somewhere inside it. Verses like those in “God” pervade Acevedo’s work. Her poetry is quiet, loud, comedic, heartbreaking, heavy, bemusing, profane, dark and defiant. Her poems explore and vivisection religion, gender, race, sex and politics and parse the anomie they wreak. She spotlights ignored identities and pulls point-of-view characters from the end of the historically staid literary bench.

Acevedo has said in so many interviews that she wrote *The Poet X* to be the book she wanted to read as a child but couldn’t because it didn’t exist. She says so again now, reasonably elated that bookstores all over Washington stock *The Poet X*, including her local Southwest D.C. location of Politics and Prose where it’s snuggled seven shelves high on a right-hand wall.

Acevedo also clarifies that *The Poet X*, while autobiographical in essence, isn’t a confession, veiled or otherwise.


“My emotional truths are my own,” she says. “It is most certainly fiction and it is fictionalized. There’s no way I would ever paint this as a covert memoir. I have no twin, my relationship with my mother was very different. My mother was not as staunchly Catholic. ... My writing was very sacred in my house. My journals were always left untouched and my family was very supportive. My family was very good about *Liz wants to be a rapper*. They rallied around this very untraditional girl doing this thing and *Yeah, she’s our storyteller*, and I think that automatically changes the whole tension.

“But did I grow up in a strict household? Was I challenged from an early age and hyper-aware of my own body and my interactions with men? Yes. Was I someone who was very confused by what, religiously, I was being told? Yes.”

④

At the hardware-bike cafe, Liz Acevedo told a story about the nascence of her street corner hip-hop career, the implication being that as a 10-year-old, she either didn’t know how rap worked, or if she did, she tried to circumvent established protocol.

“She would [rap] in a flow but she would be reading it—like, from



it feels right to acknowledge her this way,
even if it's only polite applause;
my own hands move against each other.

Ms. Galiano asks about the themes and presentation style
but instead of raising my hand I press it against my heart
and will the chills on my arms to smooth out.

It was just a poem, Xiomara, I think.

But it felt more like a gift.

“But they were real in tune with her abilities —You have the lyrics, you have skills ...”

Alberto Acevedo

an index card,” her oldest brother, Alberto Acevedo, says. He’s 38 now and works as a business analyst in New York.

Alberto says something like 15 guys would hang out at the corner of 109th and Amsterdam in Morningside Heights, in front of the agrammatical deli and between the churches. Liz, the only girl and the youngest by nearly a decade, would type her rap lyrics on the computer and print them and proffer shyly handouts to the assembled and slightly puzzled.

“Obviously you’re not gonna be a rapper doing that,” Alberto says, with a laugh. “You’re not gonna have the street credibility that people wanna see when you’re rapping off index cards. But they were real in tune with her abilities—*You have the lyrics, you have skills, now it’s just a matter of memorizing.* It took her a while to understand what we meant. They weren’t trying to tell her don’t rap; they were trying to mold her: *This is the image you want.*”

Alberto Acevedo is eight years older than Liz and the oldest of Antonio and Rosa’s three children, 34-year-old Robert being the middle child. Alberto says he treated Liz like a peer, talking to her like an adult and exposing her to hip-hop and rap that was maybe beyond her years but not her maturity. Liz loved the storytelling of Tupac and Nas and became infatuated with and saw herself in female rappers Missy Elliott and Eve and Foxy Brown. Alberto and his friends also talked to her about politics and the world and war and race and explained why the cops seemed to get to other neighborhoods faster than theirs.

“It wasn’t the best of neighborhoods,” Alberto says of his block. “We would try to limit the time we would spend out on the corner. ... The ’90s were a rough time. Drugs were the way that youths at that time saw their way out. Crack was huge back in the ’90s, especially in my neighborhood, and it depended on which corner you would go to. Everyone had their territory. One block, you would see cocaine. Another would sell crack. Another would sell weed, and they all kind of had their boundaries—but they also represented the neighborhood and who lived there.”

Part of the story Liz told at the cafe involved “shady” guys who may (or may not) have been selling drugs. Alberto, though, says he encouraged her to ask questions about the shady guys, the world—about anything—and she did.

“*Why are we going to war? Why is this person being discriminated against? Is that right or wrong?*” Alberto says. “We always tried to give her one point of view but also get her to remember that there’s always another side of the story, no matter how you see it. You may see it my way, you may see it your way, you may see it their way, but there’s multiple ways to look at something.”

As a fringe middle-schooler, Liz was writing about war and politics and race relations,

plying a conspicuously vast vocabulary broadened by, Alberto says, a persistent and eclectic reading habit. It carried her into The Beacon School, a college preparatory high school a then-15-minute

subway ride away near Lincoln Center, where she moved from rap to spoken-word poetry.

Abby Lublin was an English teacher at Beacon—a predominantly white and well-to-do 1,000-student school stuffed, at the time, inside a salvaged parking garage (the school has since moved)—and she sponsored the poetry club: Live Poets. It met Thursdays on Lublin’s classroom couch. A group of eight or nine members formed the club’s core and heart. Liz, steeped in hip-hop, joined as a ninth-grader in 2002, recruited by Lublin.

“She came in and she had, well, you can call it swagger,” says Lublin, who moved to upstate New York in 2010. “A lot of her early poetry was pretty political and pretty observant of the world around her and very outward looking. Through her time at Live Poets and through building this small community of trust and vulnerability, she really started going more inward and more toward self and family and then that intersected with her political work and her political consciousness, and her power just exploded and grew with every piece that she shared and she wrote.”

Liz Acevedo, at the urging of Lublin, did her first poetry slam in February of her freshman year. She was 14 and on the stage at the venerable Nuyorican Poets Cafe, a community arts and cultural hotspot in the Lower East Side that was founded in the early 1970s. Acevedo was among the youngest poets in a citywide slam for high school kids. More than 400 students entered, and Acevedo finished in the top 10, she thinks, by being “angrier and bigger” than everyone else, compensating for what she now sees as less than honed writing. Acevedo, not surprisingly, winces at her juvenalia but in it is the roux for her future work—the introspection and the politics and the quest for identity in alien places.

“So much of it is about cultural navigation and code-switching, both in language and culture,” Lublin says. “Liz is from a mostly Puerto Rican and Dominican neighborhood and went to a high school that was predominantly white—and not only in terms of student body but also culture. There are different ways to adapt to that. You either

The Nuyorican Poets Cafe in the East Village in New York City is a decades-old cultural institution that hosts music, poetry, theater and visual arts. It’s also the first place 14-year-old Liz Acevedo competed in a poetry slam.



shrink and become invisible in that space or you adapt and try to emulate that or you, in Liz's case, build an even stronger sense of who you are and try to use that as your source of power."

⑤

Liz Acevedo has sat smiling and patient and present listening to me assail with righteous vigor the mother character in *The Poet X*. I have unloaded my feelings about the mother and her ever-compounding feats of tyranny and how I really wanted her to **[REDACTED—FOR THE LAST TIME]** at the end.

It's been about an hour and a half in the window by the bike trail, and the blonde barista is ink-stamping the cafe logo on some to-go coffee cup koozies. After my latest and probably most vehement upbraiding of Mami Batista, we've moved on. Acevedo is talking about her career and how she went from middle school teacher to college professor and how she did amateur slams and spoken-word poetry on the side before going pro and (seemingly) coming out of nowhere.

"What do you think of all this?" I say. "I won't say it's a bizarre career path, but when you think about what you want to be when you grow up, this is the kind of stuff you think about. Most people end up in a cubicle but you made your own major and you wrote a novel in poems. I'm kind of jealous."

"It's not too late," Acevedo says.

"Not that I have a traditional job but yours is so much more romantic. Do you ever think about what you've been able to cobble together?"

She does not disagree that it's a cobbling.

"I think it was a lot out of a single-mindedness on the kind of life I wanted to live and what I thought I would enjoy doing and always trusting *the shift*," Acevedo says. "I'm in a place now where I know I have to cut back on how many events I do and it's because it's too many and I'm no longer as happy as I was doing that. I don't want to be on the road as much as I was. I had the book coming out—HarperCollins and I have a great relationship—and I'm sure there are going to be more books and so what I'm doing next has shifted. It's more about Elizabeth Acevedo the Author, so when I'm brought in, it's probably less performance, doing fewer poems, and it's more talking about the book, talking about my process as a writer, and things are shifting and I think I'm OK with following those shifts as long as I'm working with language."

"The kind of life you wanted? What do you mean by that?"

"I don't want to work 9-to-5s. I don't like working early mornings. I don't like having to be answerable to anybody but myself. I'm lucky to be at a point that if I don't want to do a show or an event or a school visit, I don't have to take it unless I want to take it. I've built my career so things are pretty flexible. I have a lot of ability to block out time for what's important to me—and that's not to say it's easy. I think it's easy to romanticize what this work is. A lot of people travel for work; very few people travel to a different city every single day for three months, where you literally cannot build a rapport with the concierge at the hotel, where you don't have a spot you can eat at again, where you don't see a human that you know for three months straight."

Sometimes she fidgets with the straw in the plastic cup of pink tea.

"You get on stage every single night and recite poems about things that have hurt you," Acevedo says, "and then you listen to young people tell you what those poems mean to them and the hurts they have and then you carry that as if you were a social worker when you are not a social worker and that's hard work. Clearly I'm not building

houses or doing construction, but in terms of having to, on a daily basis, show up in the same way and be impressive—I still feel that pressure."

"I never thought about it like that."

"Everybody who sees me is probably seeing me for the first time and I think I try to be mindful to not forget that, that every show is someone's first show, even if I've been doing these poems for 10 years. But I don't create albums, so it's not like every year is a new album. It's literally just phasing out certain poems, bringing in new poems. But there are certain things I've been doing and saying for a really long time that I still think need to be heard and I'm doing it and it becomes a routine. But—especially at 18, 19, 20, I don't know, that's a pretty impressionable age for a lot of folks who've never seen someone do this. A lot of schools in the middle of South Dakota or Wyoming or Texas, they've never seen a woman of color speak about race and gender in this way. I don't take it lightly."

"That sounds exhausting, not physically but emotionally. I never thought about this. I thought I did, but I didn't really. Your poems, especially these"—I point to *Beast Girl & Other Origin Myths* on the table next to *The Poet X*—"are very introspective. You're talking about heavy stuff and then to relive it every day on stage and have people react to it, I'm assuming, crying sometimes—you almost need to be a psychologist. Do you ever think of yourself as a therapist?"

"I try to be very clear that I'm not a therapist. I do a Q&A after every event, so sometimes people ask less about the craft and it's more about content, and people hear themselves in your story and then they want to share, potentially things they've never said. I've had to learn how to listen."

I am suddenly aware of how much I've talked about how her book made me feel.

"I've had to learn how to thank people for saying something," Acevedo says, "and not feel like I have to have an answer for them and that my story may be a mirror for them but that's it. I'm not a therapist."

It sounds as if people look to her for solace.

"I think the arts can really open folks up—and especially at particular ages when people are going through things that they have never been able to talk about, and a lot of them don't want to go to college counseling or don't know that they can or don't know how, particularly if you're talking about communities of color. *I don't want, you know, anyone to think these things*. There's a lot of taboo around mental health."

"When you get on stage and do work about your family and do work about being marginalized and someone feels that—"

She stops, exhales. Were her hair free to be coily, it would move softly.

"I mean, I've had students come up to me afterwards and share about sexual assault that they've never said to anyone and I don't know what to do with that. I don't know how to talk to a young woman about what may have happened and I can only encourage folks to keep talking and to find someone to talk with on a consistent basis that can help. I had people, particularly mothers—I have a lot of poems about my mother, my relationship with my mother. My novel is about a young woman and her mother and I get a lot of questions about very personal, particular situations about young people and their moms and it's like ..."

"Like?"

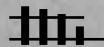
"I don't know."

I think I could be more understanding of the mother. ☞

Looking Out at the People Looking In



Fifty years ago, the body of Robert F. Kennedy was carried by train from a funeral in New York to its burial near Washington—an unusual circumstance that drew reverent crowds to the trackside along much of the route. From an open railcar door, *GW Hatchet* photographer **Seth Beckerman, BA '68**, captured the scene in hundreds of photos, many of which have never been seen publicly.



Story // Danny Freedman, BA '01
Photos // Seth Beckerman, BA '68







S



Seth Beckerman doesn't recall

the cadence of the wheels or the vibrations underfoot as the train rolled down the tracks. He doesn't remember which famous photographers stood nearby, or that the train—which looked like an Irish wake but moved like a dirge—had run out of food, water and, at last, booze. He doesn't recall it feeling as though the train were four hours behind schedule by the time it finally creaked into Washington, delivering a coffin under the moon.

Beckerman, BA '68, was fixed on the view. "It was an intensely visual story," he says.

Through a half-open Dutch door near the front of the train, Beckerman poked the lens of a Pentax camera and shot a startling, impromptu panorama of grief as it unfolded over the mangy trackside between New York and D.C.

People—maybe a million or even two, it's been suggested—were waiting along much of the 225-mile route just to see the train, forming a streak of sundresses, white tees, Chuck Taylors and bare-chested boys. As the train passed, Beckerman says, the people were almost statues, a doleful and disarmed terracotta army helplessly looking on at the dead.

They came out that day 50 years ago—Saturday, June 8, 1968—for Robert F. Kennedy, the 42-year-old U.S. senator from New York, the presidential campaigner who suddenly had become the man to beat, the bereft brother and heir to an American dynasty; the man who two months earlier, hearing of Martin Luther King Jr.'s assassination, reportedly held his face in his hands and asked aloud, "Oh God, when is

this violence going to stop?"

And now his own body, shot through the head, lay in a coffin at the foot of the 21-car train.

On board, more than a thousand invited family members, friends, hangers on and members of the press, including Beckerman—then a 23-year-old *GW Hatchet* photographer, one class shy of graduating—were en route from Kennedy's funeral at St. Patrick's Cathedral in Manhattan to a plot at Arlington National Cemetery.

From every angle, it was a sight: the massive, GG1 electric locomotive lugging a back-up engine plus all those train cars; the casket propped up on chairs so as to be made visible to the outside; the railcars filled with glitterati and the political orphans of Camelot and the loved ones left with phantom limbs from the decade's violence—Coretta Scott King; Medgar Evers' brother, Charles; Jacqueline Kennedy; Ted Kennedy; and now Ethel Kennedy.

From inside the train, the scene beyond the windows was viewed, largely, in astonishment. Some wept.

Author Thurston Clarke, in his book about Robert Kennedy's final months, *The Last Campaign*, called it "the most dramatic display of public grief for an American citizen who had never been elected to the presidency."

Abraham Lincoln's body toured by train. So did Franklin Roosevelt's.

"I remember seeing cops holding young children in their arms so that they could see the train clearly—oftentimes, black kids," train passenger Ivanhoe Donaldson, a civil rights organizer who would become an architect of political power, including Marion Barry's rise in D.C., told Jean Stein for her 1970 oral history, *American Journey: The Times of Robert Kennedy*. "I just thought, People can be so damn human sometimes, and so destructive at other times. I couldn't understand. ... That was the train ride for me. It was like Martin Luther King. It was trying to bridge the gap between the dream and the reality. There was the dream, all along the train tracks. But yet, in the last car, in that caboose, was the reality."

The stations especially were crammed. And after two onlookers were struck and killed by a northbound train in Elizabeth, N.J.,

the funeral procession slowed to half-speed.

"There were people really crowding the tracks," Beckerman remembers, "and people perched on everything that could be perched on. ... It was poignant. They were reverent, they were clearly moved. They were paying homage."

That he was there at all was happenstance.

"I happened to be home and I happened to answer the phone," says Beckerman, now 73 and a semi-retired academic writer and editor living just south of Pittsburgh, in Mt. Lebanon.

Kennedy was shot just after midnight on June 5 and died the next morning. In the mad dash to plan the church service, the burial at Arlington and the train ride in between—the only reasonable way to ship a thousand mourners same-day—there was a request, as Beckerman recalls it, for student journalists to be among those covering the train ride. Kennedy's people reached out to the U.S. Student Press Association; the organization, Beckerman says, was aware of his work for the *Hatchet* shooting the demonstrations of the late '60s, and called him at his apartment above a liquor store at 22nd and K streets.

Beckerman stuffed a clean button-down into his camera bag and headed to the airport.

The next day he photographed the funeral from beyond the folded arms of security outside St. Patrick's Cathedral, where a 36-year-old Ted Kennedy eulogized the last of his brothers. Then Beckerman boarded the train bound for D.C.

Unlike nearly everyone else on the train, Beckerman hadn't been connected to or even emotionally invested in Bobby Kennedy or his presidential run. Beckerman would end the 1968 election working at the Democratic National Committee headquarters at the Watergate, hoping to vault Hubert Humphrey over Republican Richard Nixon. But at the time Kennedy was killed, he says, "I don't think I had a favorite candidate."

And he was unfazed by political celebrity. Beckerman grew up in D.C., where he says "you get sort of insulated" from it. His father, Larry, worked in TV news, including as Walter Cronkite's director at →



KODAK SAFETY FILM







→ Cronkite's first TV gig, WTOP-TV; as a summer hire at a Department of Labor photo lab years earlier, Beckerman had seen John F. Kennedy speak at the White House; he'd once gone with other students to an event at Bobby Kennedy's Hickory Hill estate in McLean, Va.

So Beckerman arrived in New York not to mourn or gawk, but to record.

He took nearly 300 frames, many of them capturing the stillness of people who are simply watching. Where people stood in groups, there's an eerie, almost preternatural choreography to them.

What they thought, how long they waited, how long they lingered is anybody's guess.

But for all that, fewer than a dozen of the photos ever have been shown publicly. A few were published in 1968 in the *Hatchet* and the alumni magazine and, a decade ago, for the 40th anniversary of Kennedy's death, four images ran in the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. The only photo that's gotten considerable exposure is that of three nuns standing in the bed of a pickup truck parked along the tracks. (Beckerman likes to donate copies to charity auctions, where it's gone for up to \$2,000; a donated copy also hangs at GW in Mitchell Hall.)

Beyond that, for the better part of 40 years, the negatives sat in a box in his basement. By 2008, he says, he was thinking: "I'm getting to be an old guy. I don't know when I'm going to check out and I didn't want them to end up getting thrown in the garbage."

Beckerman called Allan Goodrich, who was the chief archivist at the John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum in Boston, which has become a de facto archives of sorts for President Kennedy's immediate family.

"He sent his negatives up and they were a great set of photographs," says Goodrich, who retired in 2010 after 39 years at the library, stretching back to its early years at a warehouse in Waltham, Mass. "... One in particular that's always stuck in my mind, it still does: He took a picture from the train of a kid standing in the middle of a field, just standing stock still watching the train," Goodrich says. "The loneliness of the kid is—the solitude of the kid is something that struck me then and still sticks in my memory."

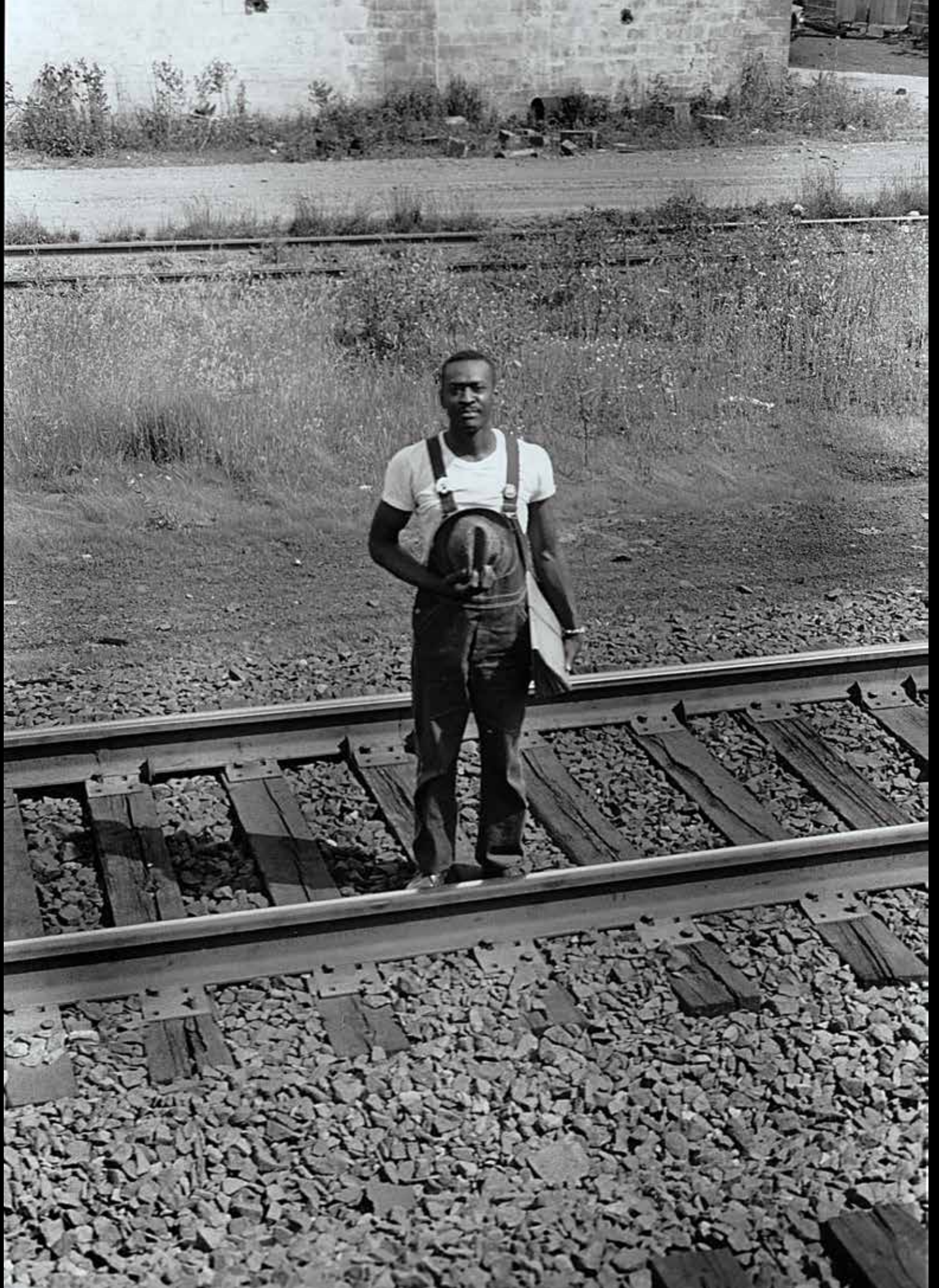
Up to that point, the Kennedy Library didn't have many images of the train. Beckerman's donation, which made the photos part of the library and, in turn, the National Archives, was perhaps the largest cache of funeral train photos the →











KODAK SAFETY 1 X 2 0 0 0



→ 11

KODAK SAFETY F 1



→ 11

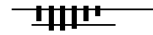
→ 11A







“People were perched on everything that could be perched on. ... It was poignant. They were reverent, they were clearly moved. They were paying homage.”



→ library had ever received, Goodrich says. The volume of photos offers significance to the library’s collection, he says, but it’s also “the quality of the images, the feeling you get when you look at those people trackside. ... He had a good eye.”



It was hot, dank and past 9 p.m. by the time the train arrived at Union Station. The U.S. Navy Band was ready, a hearse and dozens of buses and cars were standing by, and floodlights and 1,700 candles quickly were being arranged at Arlington National Cemetery, preparing for what had turned into a rare nighttime service at the graveyard.

“We had the opportunity to get on the bus and ride to Arlington National Cemetery,” Beckerman says. But instead he hailed a cab and headed for G Street, to the *Hatchet’s* darkroom where he could develop his film.

“Compared to the train ride, that was not a part of the story that interested me,” he says of the pomp and ceremony of the procession and burial. It seemed not so unusual.

The procession would follow Constitution Avenue past the Justice Department, Kennedy’s former post, and pause at the Lincoln Memorial for a rendition of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic* before crossing the Memorial Bridge into Virginia.

And inside the cemetery another national figure, another elected Kennedy in his 40s, another gunshot fatality would be returned to the earth. ☐

All images © Seth Beckerman. He can be reached at s.beckerman@vip.cgn.net.



When a family illness prematurely ended Murray Snyder's career as a submarine commander, he turned to academia. He got his PhD at age 47, and for the past nine years, he's studied ship air wakes for the U.S. Navy. The job allows the GW professor to keep helping sailors and lets him go ... // By MATTHEW STOSS


BACK

TOSCANA



**Murray Snyder aboard the
retrofitted midshipman training
boat he uses to study ship air wakes**





Murray Snyder remains plainspoken about his research, even in the face of its obvious fun-ness.

A stolid man with a stolid beard and a sense of humor he doesn't always seem to be aware of, the 58-year-old GW engineering professor studies the air wakes caused by U.S. Navy warships and how those wakes affect aircraft—helicopters, mostly—trying to land on, hover over or take off from those ships. This involves confirming and/or disconfirming a lot of computer flight simulations but, disappointingly, the use of no actual helicopters and no actual warships.

Instead, Snyder and his coterie of researchers fly sensor-rigged drones off the back of a boat—which is still an admirable level of fun, as is the fact that Snyder, a 30-year Navy vet and a private pilot who flies light-sport planes and autogyros, explored the North Pole while serving on a nuclear submarine. But Snyder, disinclined to hyperbole, keeps, at all times, the fun in appropriate (and necessary) perspective.

“The key things I’ve been able to show, using my research ship and lots of tedious data collection,” Snyder says, “is the computer simulations are reasonably accurate for the area immediately around the ship. What we’re working on now is how accurate they are for regions further away from the ship—which is why we have to fly stuff out there. We’ve validated the computer simulations up close, which no one’s been able to do so far.”

The Office of Naval Research has long considered the work of Snyder and his niche field of peers important because it affects how pilots fly and how ships are designed. (Research on the topic, Snyder says, goes back to about the 1960s when helicopters first started landing on ships; the earliest flight simulators came about in the late 1920s.) The ONR has continually funded Snyder for nearly a decade. At the moment, he’s in the home stretch of a three-year, \$655,000 grant and trudging through the applications for two others. Since 2009, Snyder, who started his academic career as a Naval Academy professor in 2006 before coming to GW in 2012, has collected \$2.5 million in funding.

“Folks who have been officers, they tend to have a mission-focused approach to how they do things, which is perhaps not found as much in folks who come from just purely the academic side,” says Can Korman, an associate dean for research and graduate studies who’s worked with Snyder since he arrived at GW. “I think that gives him an advantage. ... And since he has been in the

field and he works with people who had other experiences in the field, he understands the needs of the Navy and can appreciate the needs of the Navy from a technical point of view.”

About once a month, Snyder takes his 108-foot ship, a YP boat in Navy argot, out from an Annapolis harbor and into the Chesapeake Bay. This ship, ordinarily used to teach midshipmen to sail, has been converted to a research vessel and retrofitted with an ersatz flight deck so it mimics the shape and the air wakes of a 500-foot warship.

At sea, a professional drone pilot flies one of a number of anemometer-laden unmanned aerial vehicles off the back of the boat. Airborne, the anemometers record the wind speed, direction and temperature as high as 400 feet—the Federal Aviation Administration’s altitude limit for drone flight—above the deck and as far as 400 feet behind it.

Snyder’s drone fleet started with a \$500 remote-control toy helicopter and now is anchored by a 7-foot-wide, 54-pound, \$30,000 octocopter that’s festooned with \$20,000 of instrumentation and looks like something that’ll end up doing recon for the robots in the forthcoming machine uprising. (As far as we know, the octocopter is not yet self-aware.) Snyder also dabbles in fixed-wing aircraft and military drones.

It’s the glamorous side of his work, of which Snyder keeps a less-than-glamorous “humble tape.” In it you can see not only what it looks like to crash \$50,000 into a large body of water but also Snyder’s scientific mortality.

“But,” Snyder points out, “the flotation system worked. We recovered it and washed it with fresh water.”

And replaced all the electronics. And two of the motors.

It costs just \$500 a day for Snyder to boat-and-drone, which perhaps is why the Navy looks so charitably upon his work. To do this research at full scale with a real helicopter and a real warship would cost \$200,000 a day, expenses not included. And that’s if Snyder could even find a warship to borrow. Warships, after all, have stuff to do.

Until Snyder, scientists made do with flight simulators, math and, starting in the 21st century, supercomputers. Snyder uses those things, too, but his niche is defined by the drones and the YP boat and the deep résumé—submarine commander, licensed pilot, a mechanical engineering PhD from Johns Hopkins University—that earned him the imprimatur of the U.S. Navy.

Snyder says none of this was his idea.



One day during the Vietnam War, Navy helicopter pilot John Burks had to land a chaplain on a destroyer in the middle of a storm.

It wasn't a typhoon but you could've fooled the chaplain. It was 1973 and springtime in the Gulf of Tonkin.

"I was taking a chaplain to a small ship for services," Burks says. "My job was to go and take the chaplain and drop him down on a hoist. You've seen the pictures of the Coast Guard helicopters hoisting people up from the water?"

For Burks, retrieving and depositing via winch and cable a serviceman, supplies or mail on the deck of a warship was an everyday operation. Burks would hover his SH-3 Sea King—a 73-foot, 6-ton helicopter the Navy used until the mid-2000s for search and rescue missions and logistics (like the transporting of hapless chaplains)—above a ship too small to accommodate a landing helicopter. Then a crewman would hoist or lower the passenger/victim who was affixed by padded strap (or "horse collar") to the end of a steel cable.

Strong winds and angry seas imperiled the proceeding.

"We typically hovered 15 or 20 feet above the deck," Burks says. "However, with higher winds and rougher seas, we often had to hover higher. Envision the aft end of this 300-foot-long ship heaving up and down as it plows through high waves—which it must do to maintain control—swaying left and right, and the sides rising and falling as the ship rolls to port and starboard."

Which means...

"Your landing area is moving back and forth and up and down. At the same time, the wind coming around that superstructure is creating all kinds of turbulence and vortices and it's making the helicopter rock back and forth in a lot of directions in close proximity [to the ship]. You have to try to pilot it in such a way that you touch down softly and you don't break things."

Like a chaplain dangling in a sling at the end of a rope—a God-fearing pendulum swinging in a 25-foot radius across the deck of a several-thousand-ton destroyer that's moving up, down and side to side, cutting forward at an angle through 12-foot waves. There are also 30 mph winds, 50 to 60 mph's worth of helicopter rotor downwash and the ship's ever-swirling air wake.

"When I next saw the chaplain," Burks says, "he said he was praying all the way down. There was so much movement that the chaplain was swaying from side to side; the ship was swaying from side to side, heaving up towards him, and it took a tremendous amount of skill to hold the helicopter in place and try to get the chaplain on the deck

without getting smacked by either side of the ship."

The chaplain, whom in a likely understatement Burks called a "good sport," made it down intact and alive, his faith perhaps reinforced in perpetuity. Burks went on to become a test pilot before retiring as a Navy lieutenant commander in 1978 and joining the Air Force Reserve. He also spent 20 years as an aeronautical engineer at NASA and had two stints teaching at the Naval Academy, where he met Capt. Murray Snyder. Snyder recently had become a researcher and professor after a family illness prematurely ended his tenure as a submarine commander in 2001.

Academia offered Snyder, always scholastically inclined, a chance to stay involved with, and useful to, the Navy. So he went back to school. The Navy bankrolled his doctorate in exchange for his teaching at the Naval Academy when he finished it. Snyder became a professor at Annapolis in 2006 and he got his PhD in 2007. He was 47.

"This was an opportunity to stay in the Navy and do something I thought was of value and productive," Snyder says.

At the time he met Burks, Snyder, still on active duty, was teaching fluid mechanics and thermodynamics to midshipmen, researching bubbles and droplets in isotropic turbulence—the same topic as his PhD thesis—and running computer simulations on reactive metals. He describes these things as "equally unexciting."

Burks and Snyder were in different departments but occupied nearby offices. Proximity brokered their relationship, and Burks learned about Snyder's unique résumé. This, plus his test-pilot past life, sparked an idea that fermented in Burks's brain for six months before coalescing into cogency: Snyder could use his rare combination of maritime, engineering and aviation expertise to study ship air wakes, both theoretically and practically, and in the process maybe make life safer for military pilots.

"What really made him suited to do this was his having commanded ships," says the 71-year-old Burks, who now lives in Annapolis. "He's a sailor. He knows about ships and so he could request from the Naval Academy that he get one of these ships and really be in charge of a program. They had complete confidence in him doing that. And he was a researcher doing the computational fluid dynamics"—that basically means simulating the interaction between air and an object in a computer—"which is the basis of what the research is, so you don't always have to go out and do the testing on a ship. You can actually do it in simulation. He was uniquely qualified to do both."

Burks made his pitch. It was 2009.

"I'll be honest," Snyder says. "When this helicopter pilot came in with this idea, I was like, 'Hey, that's a lot more interesting than what I'm doing right now.'"

Murray Snyder's office on the second floor, or "deck" if you used to work on submarines, of Science and Engineering Hall looks like... an office—a standard-issue fluorescent square off a standard-issue fluorescent hallway.

The most interesting things about it are, in ascending order, the bookshelf serving as tabernacle for Snyder's regally bound PhD thesis, the window overlooking a reasonably grassy courtyard, Snyder's stacked boxes of research Legos and Snyder himself.

He spent 27 months as commander of the USS *Nevada*, one of the 14 ballistic missile, or "Trident," submarines that compose the sea prong of the United States' nuclear triad. Snyder spent 11 of his 30 Navy years on submarines, serving as a propulsion assistant, weapons officer, engineer and executive officer—one of only two posts that come without a roommate. (He still had to share a bathroom with the captain, though—and his spare bunk, if the sub had a visitor like an admiral.)

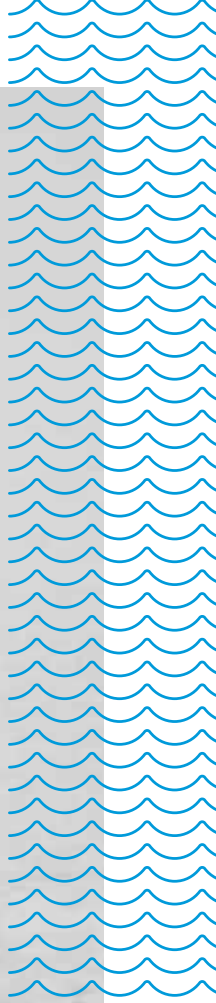
In 1998, Snyder became captain of his own ship.

Snyder says he did a lot of "fun" and "interesting" things while serving on submarines, many of which he demurs about because those things are classified. Life on a sub, he says, is cramped, even for someone who's a svelte 5-foot-9. The beds are 6 ½ feet long and could function admirably as coffins. Even a captain's stateroom is no larger than an office cubicle. Claustrophobia and the pall of waterborne catastrophe, Snyder says, are mitigated by exhaustion which, conveniently, also makes it easier to fall asleep. Two decades of submarine conditioning have left Snyder incapable of enjoying any more than an edge-ward sliver of his king-size bed.

Snyder grew up in a military family. His father was a West Pointer and paratrooper but discouraged his son, who was nourishing a lifelong interest in a military career, from attending an academy. The elder Snyder told his son that he'd have more fun at a regular college. Murray Snyder ended up at Duke University, where, he confirms, that he did have fun, before graduating in 1982 with a mechanical engineering degree. Then the Navy commissioned him an ensign and he volunteered for the submarine service, eventually sating a *National Geographic*-inspired childhood fantasy of exploring the icy Arctic in a submarine.

"It is pretty scary up there," says Snyder,

Navy pilot John Burks lowers a sailor from his Sea King helicopter to the deck of a Navy cruiser in 1973 during the Vietnam War.





“

**IT ALLOWS ME TO GO TO SEA ON A SHIP
AND I LIKE GOING TO SEA ON SHIPS. ...
IT'S A FLEET-RELEVANT ISSUE, AND IN
THE END, I'M A NAVY OFFICER MORE
THAN I'M AN ACADEMIC.**

sitting behind his standard-issue office desk and speaking in the tone you and I might use to describe how we boil water. “There are times when you realize you’re really on your own. We were up during the late summer, early fall, when the ice is broken up in places and you have these things called *polynyas*, which is just a lake in the ice.

“You keep track of where you can surface, so if you have a casualty, like a fire or something, and you need to come to the surface to ventilate, you know where you are and where you can do this. ... One of the things you would do on a watch-turnover is, ‘OK, where was the last surfaceable feature?’ And I remember one day, ‘Oh, it’s 250,000 yards behind us,’ which means there’s no way you’re going to get there. It’s just too far away. That’s 125 miles.”

Snyder says that on one submarine (he served on four), he spent eight weeks straight submerged in the Arctic, traversing cold, unknown waters and immured in ice channels.

“The ice gets broken up and it moves around and it has a tendency, if you’re close to land, to build up and get jammed in there—and it gets really deep,” Snyder says. “You can get ice down to 300 or 400 feet under the surface of the ocean. I can remember one night where we’re in a place where the ice was deep and the water was relatively shallow and we came all-stop and the ship was about 400 feet down. I had about 5-foot clearance above the top of the sail and about 2-foot clearance under the keel.”

Going to sea, Snyder says at various,

almost regular intervals during more than two hours of in-his-office chats, is dangerous. He stresses, albeit in less alarmist language, that the ocean is an easy place to die.

“On my first submarine,” Snyder says, “I can remember being 400 feet beneath the surface, rolling 10 to 15 degrees, when a typhoon went over us. Normally when you’re in a submarine, you don’t feel any wave effects below 150 feet but this was like 30-foot waves up there, and I can remember just the whole ship rolling because you have a typhoon above you. But going to sea, it’s a dangerous environment, and it’s nice to see how things work to keep it safe.”

One of Snyder’s more difficult moments as captain came when a petty officer second class suffered a pulmonary embolism. At the time, the *Nevada* was about 250 miles away

from its homeport near Seattle and returning from a patrol in the pelagic waters of the Pacific Ocean. Submarines aren't staffed with regular doctors because the Navy long ago determined that the military equivalent of a physician's assistant, a corpsman, sufficed for the medical needs of the average submariner. A PA isn't qualified to handle a pulmonary embolism, and further miring the situation were the Navy's rules of waterspace management.


"It's like air-traffic control," Snyder says. "Submarines are really quiet, so typically, two submarines, if you put them in the same water, they could hit each other. The bottom line was we didn't own the water from where we were at to get back to the place where we could put the person in for medical care."

Snyder had a decision to make: Violate the "rules of the road," surface and break the 7-knot speed limit or follow those rules and risk a sailor's life.

"I went 15 knots," Snyder says. "I made the conscious decision to not follow the rules of the road because I had this guy who was near death. ... I made the conscious decision to drive well above the speed limit for 12 hours or something like that to get the guy off the ship, and we got him off and he lived and we didn't hit anything—and we weren't stupid about it. We had extra personnel on watch, extra radar."

Snyder also informed the Navy of his decision, communicating with doctors on shore, and he made gratuitous use of the *Nevada's* foghorn. Had he hit something, like another submarine or a merchant ship, he would have been "relieved for cause." That's official Navy for "fired."

"I've done a lot of interesting stuff in the Navy," Snyder says. "A lot of it was fun; a lot of it was scary. But in the end, the people you work with in the military and in the Navy, as a group, are pretty good people."

 **usan Polsky** has been researching the air wakes of Navy ships since 1999 when she decamped from NASA's Ames Research Center in California, where she studied hypersonic aerodynamics, to Naval Air Systems Command in Patuxent River, Md., so she could be closer to her hometown of Rockville.

Ship air wake research had been going on for decades but it never rated enough to be anyone's concentration, always fizzling before the research went anywhere sexy. The technology didn't exist to model ship air wakes, and inevitably, the Navy fell back on the subjective experience of test pilots to develop the parameters (flight envelopes) for the average pilot to safely take off from, and

land on, seaships.

The advent of supercomputers in the early 2000s and their comparably super processors changed that.

"Until that time," says Polsky, now a senior computational fluid dynamicist at NAVAIR where she specializes in ship air wake research, "there just simply wasn't enough computational power to do what needed to be done."

The typical personal computer has a single processor. The computers Polsky uses today for flight simulations and the various sophisticated feats of algorithmic legerdemain have hundreds of thousands of processors. A supercomputer in the early 2000s ran on 200 or so processors.

These supercomputers didn't come about because of the air wake work of military engineers. Rather, those engineers—a small band that at the time consisted largely of Polsky and an infant's handful of her associates—saw its application and co-opted the technology.

Polsky, who started off by developing flight simulations for Army helicopters landing on Navy ships, emerged as a pioneer in an invigorated field, publishing her first paper on ship air wakes in 2000. Later, she fit 20-foot poles with ultrasonic sensors and placed them around Navy warships to take air-speed measurements while the ship moved through the water. She ended up with just 20 to 50 data points because of her limited access to Navy vessels—and none of those points were behind the ship or higher than 20 feet. She also missed out on recording aircraft turbulence, another factor considered when developing flight envelopes.

In almost 20 years of ship air wake research, Polsky says that she's been out on a Navy boat with her sensor poles no more than four or five times.

"We're too small potatoes to do something specifically for us," Polsky says. "The way it's always occurred is there's a flight test going on ... and they don't have anything else going on at the time other than the flight test, so they say, 'OK, we're not doing anything else; we're already stuck because we have to accommodate this aircraft testing, and as long as you don't interfere with this aircraft testing, you can bring your anemometers aboard and collect data.'"

It took someone flying a sensor-loaded drone off the back of a ship to fill in Polsky's research blanks. That's where Murray Snyder and Polsky intersect.

"Murray has added a piece of the puzzle that allows us to have confidence in our simulations," Polsky says. "... We can go in a wind tunnel, but one of the aerodynamic gotchas is that air flow doesn't necessarily behave the same on something you have

to shrink down to fit in a wind tunnel versus what the full scale is. This is true for airplanes and it's also true for ships. Murray has been able to give us that access where we can go back and collect more data as we need it. So if we hit some point where we're thinking, *Hmm, the simulation doesn't really compare very well here; we're not really sure why*, we can ask Murray, 'What if you go out and test in such and such conditions?'"

The practical applications of ship air wake research are less than grandiose. Suggesting to Polsky or Snyder that their work prevented an aircraft-to-ship crash—crash statistics are classified by the Navy—provokes a contravening response that is as immediate as it is impassioned.

"I have incrementally helped them quite a bit," Snyder says. "But please, do not say that I've saved a helicopter—or saved anyone. There's no way of knowing that. Science these days is incremental improvement, and I've helped make a whole bunch of incremental improvements."

Snyder has established more than 190 data points around a warship using his UAV-borne anemometers that measure the space within a roughly 16-centimeter cube of air. He's made flight simulations more reliable by virtue of testing them in praxis and has broadened the qualitative scope of Polsky's supercomputer models. For example, they now have simulations for aircraft as large as the 64-foot, 7-ton H-60 Seahawk helicopter—the SH-3 Sea King's successor. (It's harder to model larger aircraft because they're physically more complex—more bumps, protrusions—and they create their own big air wakes.)

According to Polsky, Snyder's also determined that, despite being designed from the same plans, each ship has individual imperfections that create ship-specific air wakes. Thus far, no boat has been so air-wake terrible as to merit a from-scratch redesign—and no one would design a warship solely with its air wake in mind, either. A ship has too many other superseding duties and functions, especially stealth, which necessitates streamlining and smooth surfaces, both things that exacerbate air wakes. But Snyder's research, concomitant with Polsky's, has led to occasional tweakings, like moving a gun turret to act as a windbreak.

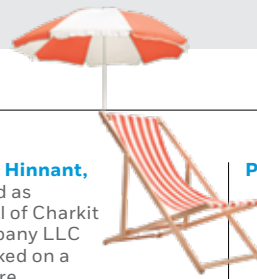
It's all stuff no one would know if not for the drones and little boat of Murray Snyder the Reluctant Academic.

"The issue is of interest to me because it's something that impacts sailors and ships," Snyder says. "It allows me to go to sea on a ship and I like going to sea on ships. ... It's a fleet-relevant issue, and in the end, I'm a Navy officer more than I'm an academic." ■

CLASS NOTES



With this spring's ceremony on the National Mall, some 6,000 degree candidates entered the community of GW alumni, boosting its rolls to more than 290,000 members around the world. "You sought excellence. You took risks. You chose to lead," GW President Thomas LeBlanc told the graduates.



// 1960s AND EARLIER

Gus A. Mellander, AB '59, MA '60, PhD '66, has written more than 300 articles on higher education, including "Financing a College Education: Past Versus Present." It was the cover story for an issue of *The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education*.

Evans J. Mandes, BA '61, MS '63, PhD '66, co-authored *Interpreting Visual Art: A Survey of Cognitive Research About Pictures* (Routledge Press, May 2017), which examines the aesthetic, emotional, perceptual and cognitive factors that affect how we enjoy visual art.

William A. Gralnick, BA '65, MA '68, authored his second book, *More Mirth, Wind and Ire: Social and Political Commentary with a Little Humor Thrown In* (December 2018), a compilation of his op-ed pieces from newspapers around the country.

Judith Kunzman Benderson, BA '67, MFA '70, had her art featured in "Latitude: The Washington Women's Arts Center 1975-1987," an exhibition at the American University Museum's Katzen Arts Center in Washington, D.C.

Karin Williamson Pedrick, BA '67, co-authored *Inside Affirmative Action: The Executive Order That Transformed America's Workforce* (Routledge, June 2018), which offers insights into the policies and politics of affirmative action and its role in advancing civil rights in the United States.

Charles R. McAndrew, BBA '69, was elected president of the Dulles chapter of the National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association for this year. He's also serving a two-year term as NARFE's liaison to the U.S. representative for Virginia's 10th Congressional District, Barbara Comstock.

// 1970s

J. Phillip London, DBA '71, executive chairman of CACI International in Arlington, Va., originated, sponsored and, in March, helped present the inaugural U.S. Naval Academy Superintendent's Leadership and Vision Award at the National Museum of the U.S. Navy.

Alan S. Nadel, BS '71, JD '76, of Panitch Schwarze Belisario & Nadel LLP, was named to the 2018 *Pennsylvania Super Lawyers* list.

Milford Bryant Hinnant, LLM '75, retired as general counsel of Charkit Chemical Company LLC and has embarked on a journey of leisure.

C. Douglass Couto, MS '76, MBA '83, was elected president of the Capitol Area chapter of the Military Officer Association of America in Lansing, Mich.

John Harrison, JD '77, authored *Steel Rain, the Tet Offensive 1968* (January 2018), which covers the bloodiest year of the Vietnam War and tells the stories of American soldiers who served. Harrison, a Vietnam veteran, was an officer in the 101st Airborne Division.

Joey P. Manlapaz, BA '77, MFA '80, had one of her paintings, a triptych, chosen by a master of Sogetsu Ikebana—a school of Japanese floral art—as the inspiration for a unique flower arrangement that was featured in an exhibit at The Art League Gallery in Alexandria, Va. Manlapaz is an adjunct professor at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design. For more information, visit JoeyManlapaz.com.

Peter Silverman, BA '77, partner of Shumaker, Loop & Kendrick, LLP, in Toledo, Ohio, was recognized by *Franchise Times* magazine as a "Legal Eagle" for 2018.

Paul R. Ried, MBA '78, was recognized as one of the "Best-In-State Wealth Advisors" in Washington state for 2018 by *Forbes*. He is president of the Paul R. Ried Financial Group LLC in Bellevue, Wash.

Michael Jordan, JD '79, was recognized in both *The Best Lawyers in America* and *Ohio Super Lawyers*. He also was named "Arbitrator of the Year" in Northeast Ohio. Jordan also authored *The Company of Demons* (Greenleaf Book Group, January 2018), a thriller that focuses on a troubled attorney whose life is upended when a notorious serial killer re-emerges to haunt the city of Cleveland.

// 1980s

Richard E. Cytowic, RES '81, a professor of neurology at the GW School of Medicine and Health Sciences, authored *Synesthesia* (The MIT Press, February 2018), an accessible, concise primer on the neurological trait of synesthesia, which creates vividly felt cross-sensory couplings.



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Annuities can support any area within GW. Mildred's gift will support the GW Institute for Spirituality and Health (GWish) and the Graduate School of Education and Human Development (GSEHD).

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Jaime Court, MBA '82, a senior vice president and private wealth manager at Merrill Lynch's Private Banking and Investment Group, was recognized as one of the "Best-In-State Wealth Advisors" in Florida for 2018 by *Forbes*.

Mark Eads, MA '82, retired after 34 years. He worked at Heiden Associates, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Environmental Protection Agency.

R.J. Hinkemeyer, MPA '82, authored *Shadows on the Soul: A Maryland Mystery* (February, 2018), a novel about a Catholic priest who gets entangled in a homicide investigation.

Susan Wild, JD '82, is the Democratic candidate for Pennsylvania's 7th Congressional District. Wild has been a litigator in Allentown, Pa., for 35 years and also served as city solicitor. For more information, visit WildForCongress.com.

Elliott M. Kugel, MS '83, was recognized as a top financial adviser in 2018 by *Forbes*, *Barron's* and *Financial Times*. Kugel has worked in Merrill Lynch's Bridgewater, N.J., office for 26 years.

Angela Lauria, BA '84, MA '00, president of The Author Incubator, was a finalist for Ernst & Young's 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year Award for the Mid-Atlantic region.

Kathleen McFall, BS '84, co-authored *Bonnie and Clyde: Dam Nation* (Pumpjack Press, March 2018), the second book in a historical-fiction series that reimagines the lives of the notorious outlaws and lovers as defenders of the working class during the New Deal era.

Cornelia Miller Rutherford, MFS '86, received the 2018 Unsung Virginia Award from the Electric Cooperatives of Virginia, Maryland and Delaware. She is president of Out of the Woodwork Productions, a nonprofit that organizes the Virginia Renaissance Faire.

Katherine E. Flanagan, BA '87, was elected to the board of directors at Littler, an employment and labor law practice.

Dave Ziolkowski, MBA '87, authored *Irrational Persistence: Seven Secrets That Turned a Bankrupt Startup Into a \$231,000,000 Business* (Wiley, April 2016), which follows how two entrepreneurs founded a salsa company and turned a million-dollar debt to \$100 million of annual revenue.

Scott I. Zucker, JD '87, authored *Rally on Two* (Authorhouse Publishing, February 2018), a novel about an attorney who is struggling to cope with the death of his family and manage a law practice.

Catherine E. Davey, BA '88, co-sponsored with the Down Syndrome Association of Central Florida the sixth "Low Down on Law," an event that offers legal advice to families who have members with special needs. Davey, an attorney in Maitland, Fla., founded the event in 2015.

Leisa Johnson, JD '88, authored *Grace Horse: The Redemption of a Teen Sentenced to Life* (Davis Simmons Publishing, 2017) with Damien Terrell Chapman. The book chronicles Chapman's experience being arrested at 15 years old and then receiving a life sentence to an adult prison.

Kurt R. Mattson, LLM '88, president of Union Legal Research in Chandler, Ariz., co-authored "Surprising Differences: An Empirical Analysis of LexisNexis and West Headnotes in the Written Opinions of the 2009 Supreme Court Term," a research article that ran in the fall 2017 issue of *The Law Library Journal*.

// 1990s

Juliette E. Lippman, BA '90, a partner at Birnbaum, Lippman & Gregoire, PLLC, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., is president of the Florida Bar Foundation.

Anthony Palermo, BA '91, MPA '93, is the assistant director of the Fort Myers, Fla., Community Development Department.

Greg Brower, JD '92, joined Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck as a shareholder in the litigation department.

Michael J. Loesberg, JD '92, was elected partner at Blank Rome LLP in Washington, D.C.

Dan Simons, BBA '92, owner of Farmers Restaurant Group, won the Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year 2018 Award for the Mid-Atlantic region.

William Hays Weissman, BA '92, was elected to the board of directors at Littler, an employment and labor law practice.

Aaron Chang, BA '93, MA '94, is the director of scheduling and advance, and chief of protocol for the secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security.

PJ Geraghty, BS '93, is the vice president of clinical services for Donor Network of Arizona, one of 58 federally designated organ procurement organizations across the United States. He lives outside Phoenix, Ariz., and is thrilled to be raising children in a world where the Chicago Cubs have won the World Series.

Hamid Ghanadan, BS '94, a biochemist and the founder of The Linus Group, received a lifetime achievement award from the Association of Commercial Professionals—Life Sciences.

Ethan Chazin, MBA '95, authored *The Compassionate Organization And the People Who Love to Work for Them* (AuthorHouse, November 2017), which explores how companies launch, grow, staff and lead their organization with strong values.

Sarah Stevens, LLM '96, was appointed vice president of content at Kiplinger, which is based in Washington, D.C., and publishes business forecasts and personal financial advice. She will lead editorial operations across the company's distribution channels.

Aaron Ford, MA Ed&HD '97, is running for attorney general of Nevada. Ford currently serves as Nevada's state Senate majority leader. For more information, visit FordForNevada.com.

Chad Goerner, BA '97, authored *A Tale of Two Tigers: The Historic Consolidation of The Princetons* (Amazon, February 2017), which recounts how, as mayor, Goerner helped merge two New Jersey towns: Princeton Township and Princeton Borough.

Monica Hawkins, MPH '97, authored *Raising Boys Into Extraordinary Young Men* (Authorhouse, April 2018), her blueprint on how to raise boys to be articulate, self-confident and intelligent leaders.

Shannon Lane, BA '97, co-authored *Political Social Work: Using Power to Create Social Change* (Springer, 2018), which provides practical steps that social workers can take to shape and influence policy and politics.

Adam Pasquale, BBA '97, and Gregory Lettieri, founded Recycle Track Systems, a recycling and waste management company that allows people to schedule trash pickup with a mobile app. For more information, visit RTS.com.

Maxine Griffin Somerville, MPA '97, co-authored

Dear Fear: 20 Powerful Lessons On Living Your Best Life On The Other Side Of Fear (KLC Publishing, November 2017), which offers strategies and tools to create a plan of action and move beyond fear and into greatness.

Michael Stankosky, DSc '97, authored *21 for 21: Leading the 21st Century Global Enterprise* (Emerald Publishing Limited, April 2018), which provides 21 guiding principles and offers case studies, aiding visuals and mantras to help facilitate a deeper understanding of the dynamics and complexity of leading and managing a global enterprise.

Richard Goldstein, BAccy '98, was promoted to senior associate at Dewberry, a professional services firm in Fairfax, Va.

Wendy Koritko, BAccy '98, was promoted to associate vice president at Dewberry, a professional services firm in Fairfax, Va.

Bobbie Peterson, MS '99, joined A-TEK Inc.—a small business in McLean, Va., that modernizes IT systems and services for federal agencies—as vice president of business development.

// 2000s

Heather Schweizer Greenleaf, BA '00, authored *An Imperfection in the Kitchen Floor* (Morgan James Fiction, May 2018), a novel about two women living 100 years apart who have to make similar sacrifices and decisions.

Grace Chen Phillips, MD '00, the deputy chief of the clinical trials program at the National Institutes of Health Vaccine Research Center, was awarded a 2017 NIH Director's Award for contributions to the institute's Zika response efforts.

Danielle Siler, CERT '00, MA '01, authored her fourth novel, *My Secret to Keep* (Rising Storm, LLC, February 2018), the second book in the *Secret Chronicles* series, which follows the tumultuous lives of three families introduced in *Secrets on Tobacco Road*.

Maura L. Burke, BA '01, was made a partner at Fox Rothschild LLP in Philadelphia and named to *Benchmark Litigation's* "Under 40 Hot List."

Seth J. Gillihan, MA '01, authored *Cognitive Behavioral Therapy Made Simple: 10 Strategies for Managing Anxiety, Depression, Anger, Panic and Worry* (Althea Press, May 2018).

David Holt, BA '01, was elected mayor of Oklahoma City. He is the city's first American Indian mayor and, at 39 years old, the youngest mayor since 1923.

Babatunde Oloyede, CERT '01, AS '02, BS '04, MS '07 is the 2018 chair of the Medical Laboratory Scientists Advisory Group in the U.S. Public Health Service and the chair-elect of the American Society for Clinical Pathology Council of Laboratory Professionals.

Paul Shapiro, BA '01, authored *Clean Meat: How Growing Meat Without Animals Will Revolutionize Dinner and the World* (Gallery Books, January 2018), which details the race to create and commercialize cleaner, safer, sustainable meat—without animals.

Todd Tucker, BA '01, authored *Judge Knot: Politics and Development in International Investment Law* (Anthem Press, March 2018).

Jason B. Blank, BA '02, an attorney at Haber Blank, LLP, in Fort Lauderdale, Fla., received a "Top 40 Under 40 Lawyers of South Florida" award from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



Kelly Fogel, BA '02, had an exhibition at the Blind Whino SW Arts Club in Washington, D.C., in June that featured photography from her trips to Africa and specifically Ethiopia's Omo Valley. For more information, visit LukayLukay.PhotoShelter.com.

S. Gregory Herrman, MS '02, was elevated to counsel at Blank Rome LLP in Washington, D.C.

Lisa de Saxe Zerden, BA '02, a senior associate dean for the School of Social Work at the University of North Carolina, received a \$1.9 million grant from the Health Research Service Administration to expand behavioral health services to underserved communities in the state.

Christopher Barbuto, BAccy '03, was promoted to principal of Drucker & Scaccetti, a tax planning and consulting firm in Philadelphia.

Josh Gerban, BBA '03, founder of Gerben Law Firm PLLC—which is celebrating its 10th anniversary—was named one of the top trademark filers in the United States by *World Trademark Review*, having registered more than 4,000 trademarks.

Christina Hein Williams, BBA '03, manager of Washington County Public Schools Education Foundation, Inc., was recognized in the 2018 list of "Maryland's Top 100 Women" by *The Daily Record*, a business and legal newspaper in Baltimore.

Keith Fechtman, AS '04, co-authored *Malina's Zoo Adventure* (Koehler Books, December 2017), a children's book about a young girl struggling with dyslexia who learns the names of animals with the help of her family and friends.

Tiffany Smith, BBA '04, JD '08, was promoted to partner at WilmerHale.

Justin Allen, BA '05, and his wife Tamar Greenspan welcomed their baby, Ari Joshua Allen, on May 6, 2018.

Katherine Brown, BA '05, was appointed president and CEO of Global Ties, a nonprofit that works to improve international exchange programs.

Emily C. Burns, MA '05, authored *Transnational Frontiers: The American West in France* (University of Oklahoma Press, May 2018), a visual history examining the cultural exchanges that revealed, defined and altered images of the American West.

Katy Chang, JD '05, was selected as a 2018 Stone Barns Exchange Fellow. She founded EatsPlace, a culinary business incubator and capital fund.

Chelsea Jennings, BA '05, authored *Transmission Loss* (University of Massachusetts Press, February 2018). The book of poetry won the Juniper Prize, which recognizes distinctive and fresh voices and has been awarded by University of Massachusetts MFA program faculty since 1975.

IN MEMORIAM

Naomi Biron Cohen, AA '36, BA '38 JD '43, (Feb. 19, 2018, 100) was one of only five women in her GW graduating law class and went on to work at the federal register in the National Archives and later with her husband at their own company, Apex Small Loan Co. She also was a social worker for the state of Maryland and, after retiring, volunteered in the Maryland attorney general's office and the Maryland voter's registration office. Cohen loved antiques, fine collectibles and anything with sugar.

Ethel King, BA '56, MFA '70, (April 13, 2018, Silver Spring, Md., 94) taught art at the University of Maryland and in the Montgomery County (Md.) school and library systems.

Vilas "Jerry" F. Adams, BA '57, (April 5, 2018, Murrells Inlet, S.C., 86) played hockey in the Yukon Territory, served with the Canadian Army as a teletype operator in the Korean War and survived a 1953 plane crash in San Francisco Bay. He also worked for *The Washington Post* before becoming a car salesman and settling near Myrtle Beach, S.C. Nicknamed "Tiger," he was an avid reader of military history and was on the crew team at GW.

William Stuart Riggsby, AA '57, BA '58, (Jan. 30, 2018, 81) spent more than 30 years at the University of Tennessee, starting as an assistant professor of microbiology and retiring in 2004 as dean of UT's College of Arts and Sciences. Riggsby, who had a PhD in microbiology from Yale University, loved music and to cook.

George Emory Fisher, BS '64, (Oct. 26, 2017, Hoodspout, Wash., 76) was an FBI special agent for 30 years. From 1980 to 1987, he served as the assistant agent in charge of the Seattle office. He retired in 1989 after two years as a unit chief at FBI headquarters in Washington, D.C.

Miguel Angel Méndez, BA '65, JD '68, (May 25, 2017, San Carlos, Calif., 74) was the Adelbert H. Sweet Professor of Law at Stanford University where he taught for more than 30 years. He enjoyed swimming, jogging, biking and tai chi and loved the outdoors.

Shawn Brimley, MA '07, (Jan. 9, 2018, Bethesda, Md., 40) was the vice president and director of studies at the Center

for a New American Security, a defense and foreign policy think tank. He also served as a special adviser to the Pentagon and the director of strategic planning on the National Security Council. He is known for devising the "third-offset strategy," which says the United States should rely on its technological superiority in the event of a regional conflict with China or Russia. But Brimley also was known for his sense of humor and enjoyed ambushing coworkers with Nerf guns.

Trustees, Faculty & Staff

Luther W. Brady, AA '44, BA '46, MD '48 (July 13, 2018, Philadelphia, 92) was a world-renowned radiation oncologist, a GW trustee emeritus and a passionate advocate for the arts, whose support and philanthropy extended from the National Gallery of Art to the Opera Company of New Mexico to becoming the founding patron and namesake of GW's Luther W. Brady Art Gallery, dedicated in 2002. Brady's teaching and clinical work spanned more than 50 years at Hahnemann University School of Medicine, which later became Drexel University College of Medicine. At GW, he also established a named professorship at the School of Medicine and Health Sciences and served on the board of directors of the George Washington University Museum and The Textile Museum. **(Look for more on Luther W. Brady in the next issue of *GW Magazine* and, in the meantime, visit gwtoday.gwu.edu/memoriam-luther-w-brady.)**

Gloria Horrworth (March 30, 2018, Hagerstown, Md., 86) was a longtime professor of education at GW and helped launch the Graduate School of Education and Human Development's first reading center, which provided literacy tutoring to Washington, D.C., children.

Cliff Kendall, MBA '65, (March 28, 2018, 86) was a member of the board of trustees at GW and was the longtime chair of the University System of Maryland board of regents. He also founded Computer Data Systems Inc., and was an adjunct professor at Johns Hopkins University.

Howard Sachar (April 18, 2018, Kensington, Md., 90) was a professor emeritus of history at GW where he spent 40 years and became an authority on Jewish history, authoring 16 books on the subject and significantly expanding the field. His most famous works are *A History of Israel* and *A History of the Jews in the Modern World*.



UPCOMING EVENTS

OPEN TO ALL ALUMNI

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER / *SELECT CITIES*

Join GW faculty and alumni as they share their expertise on local and national races of the midterm elections. Events will take place in New York City, Philadelphia, Washington, Denver, Los Angeles and Orange County, Calif. For details, visit go.gwu.edu/midtermelections.

5 / **SEPTEMBER** / *ONLINE*

Connect with alumni all over the world during an Industry Networks virtual networking hour to share your experiences, exchange career tips and build your professional network.

6 / **SEPTEMBER** / *WASHINGTON, D.C.*

Show your Colonial pride at GW Night at Nationals Park as the Washington Nationals take on the Chicago Cubs. For details, visit go.gwu.edu/GWNats.

22 / **SEPTEMBER** / *BAY AREA*

Join the new dean of GW's School of Business, Anuj Mehrotra, and winemaker Susie Selby, MBA '85, at Selby Winery for an afternoon of award-winning wine and conversation.

26-28 / **OCTOBER** / *WASHINGTON, D.C.*

Colonials Weekend—the annual celebration of alumni, families, students and friends—offers dozens of events and activities for all ages. For details, visit colonialsweekend.gwu.edu.

For more on these events
and others, visit
alumni.gwu.edu/events



Nathaniel Lifschitz, JD '05, was promoted to partner in Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP's real estate department.

Christopher Pope, BA '05, MA '06, married Whitney Howell at District Winery in Washington, D.C., on Feb. 3, 2018.

Cameron Sisser, BA '05, was promoted to vice president for external relations at Miami Lighthouse for the Blind.

Seth B. Burack, BA '06, JD '09, was promoted to partner at Fox Rothschild LLP.

Adaheid Mestad, MA '07, joined HGA, an architecture and engineering firm in Rochester, Minn., as a design anthropologist and senior associate.

Kirk Nooks, EdD '07, was named president of Gordon State College in Barnesville, Ga.

Jane Chen Klinger, JD '08, was elected counsel at Baker McKenzie in Washington, D.C.

Michael B. Nemerof, BA '08, joined Heritage Insurance in Sunrise, Fla., as staff counsel.

Justin J. Santolli, JD '08, was promoted to special counsel in Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP's litigation department.

Jhaymee Wilson Heinlein, MSPM '09, received the *Charlotte Business Journal's* 2018 40 Under 40 Award.

Simon Landau, BA '09, co-founded Open Goal Project, a nonprofit that provides opportunities for youth soccer players from low-income families in Washington, D.C. For more information, visit OpenGoalProject.org.

Meagen Moreland-Taliancich, BA '09, joined Gambel Communications, a public relations firm in New Orleans, as a communications strategist.

Jacob A. Schroeder, JD '09, was promoted to partner at intellectual property law firm Finnegan, Henderson, Farabow, Garrett & Dunner, LLP.

// 2010s

Daniel S. Cronrath, MPS '10, joined Florida State College at Jacksonville as a professor of political science.

Charles S. Rauch, LLM '10, was elected partner of Hodgson Russ LLP in Buffalo, N.Y.



Adam Vincent, CERT '10, MS '10, CEO and co-founder of ThreatConnect, was a finalist for Ernst & Young's 2018 Entrepreneur of the Year Award in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Veronica Weis Goodman, BA '11, authored *E is for Economics* (April 2018), a colorful introduction to the language of economics for preschool children.

Stephanie A. Mykonos, CERT '13, was appointed senior executive vice president, chief administrative officer, secretary and treasurer for Guess & Co. Corporation of Durham, N.C.

David Pomeroy, BS '13, joined Google as a project manager.

Michele Bichko, DNP '15, is among the first 204 physicians and 43 PhD/master's degree-level health clinicians to be certified as diplomates of the American Board of Lifestyle Medicine/American College of Lifestyle Medicine and the International Board of Lifestyle Medicine.

Kimberly Young-McLear, PhD '15, is a faculty member at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy and is building its new cybersecurity major. She also won an innovation award from the Coast Guard and developed an outreach program with the NAACP that helps children learn programming skills.

Antonio Ellis, MA Ed&HD '16, authored *Transitioning Children with Disabilities From Early Childhood through Adulthood* (BrillSense, January 2017), which collects research and methodologies about practices designed to help youths with disabilities move through school to adulthood.

Lydia Barber, BA '17, former coxswain for the GW women's rowing team, is featured in Daniel Pink's book *When: The Scientific Secrets of Perfect Timing* (Riverhead Books, January 2018) to illustrate the importance of a person's role as pacesetter to the success of a particular group's activity.

Rebecca Deepa Manikkam, BAccy '17, MAccy '18, joined the government and public sector division at Ernst & Young in Mclean, Va.



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INSTITUTIONAL KNOWLEDGE


PHOTOGRAPHY

How To Be Picture Perfect (or close enough)


Ten photo tips from Corcoran photography professor Ben Tankersley

People take a lot of pictures with their smartphones. Some people still even use a camera that doesn't make phone calls—like Ben Tankersley, BFA '99.


He's a photography professor at the Corcoran School of the Arts and Design and a photojournalist, and because people take a lot of pictures, we got Ben to give us 10 tips for a better photo, regardless of the camera you use. **GW**

1 


It's best to keep the sun/light source behind you, as your phone will adjust for the brightest light in the image. (On most smartphones, you can play with that by tapping the brightest spot on your screen and then manually adjusting.)

2 


Be aware of the way your camera sees the color of different light sources. Inside lights are typically very warm (yellow) and outside lights are much cooler (blue). You can get creative results by placing your subject in one type of light and showing another in the background or by keeping everything the same and letting your camera automatically adjust for a natural look.

3 


Keep your horizon line level or intentionally askew.

4 


Cell phones have wide-angle lenses generally, so frame your shot and take a step closer. Zooming in on a smartphone reduces the quality of the image.

5 


Don't cut off people's hands or feet.

6 


Think about the negative space in your frame. For example, do you need that much floor in front of your subject? Or perhaps it creates a space that balances the rest of your composition?

7 


Mind the background. It helps prevent photobombing.

8 

When shooting an event, look for the little details that sum it up—anything from table decorations at a party to the bait used on a fishing trip or a mark on someone's hand.

9 

Don't be afraid to climb up high or get down low to show a different perspective.

10 

Sometimes the best shots are not of the main event. Snap pictures of people's reactions. It will help viewers understand what you're experiencing.



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