Artist James Tyler’s pieces, “Brickhead Conversations,” welcome visitors and patrons of Purdue Theatre, the Division of Dance, and the Patti and Rusty Rueff Galleries. Performance and exhibition schedules for the 2013–2014 season for each can be found at:
cla.purdue.edu/theatre
cla.purdue.edu/dance
cla.purdue.edu/RueffGalleries

Artist James Tyler installs two eight-foot-tall “Brickhead” sculptures in front of Yue-Kong Pao Hall, home of the Patti and Rusty Rueff School of Visual and Performing Arts. The pieces he designed for Purdue, “Brickhead Conversations,” are made of architectural red clay and have a natural ceramic finish. They were funded by the Florence H. Lonsford Endowment, and feature natural soundscapes by Bryan Pijanowski, professor of forestry and natural resources. Photos by Mark Simons.
ON THE COVER. One of artist James Tyler’s two “Brickhead Conversations” sculptures, recently installed outside Yue-Kong Pao Hall, was captured in close-up by photographer Mark Simons. Photo by Mark Simons.
Dear Friends,

After more than three decades in this College and at Purdue, there are still moments when I am left speechless. In the span of three days in September, we announced $4 million in gifts to the College of Liberal Arts, a heartening affirmation of the important work we are doing and will continue to do.

An extraordinary gift of $3 million to our Department of History, coupled with strategic investment from the President’s discretionary funds, will provide $6 million to establish two new endowed chairs and allow the Department to create a niche specialty in the history of science, technology, and medicine that is timely, relevant, and altogether appropriate at Purdue.

This followed upon the heels of a grant of $1 million from the (Bill) Daniels Fund in support of the Purdue Institute for Civic Communication, the evolution of Project Impact in the Brian Lamb School of Communication, and an important project that provides dynamic leadership opportunities for our students.

These gifts, and all gifts to the College, sustain and enhance our programs. They also align with the sentiments of President Mitch Daniels, who recognizes that a liberal arts education is essential to prepare Purdue graduates to be powerful communicators and critical thinkers in our increasingly complex world. As we celebrate the 50th anniversary of the School of Humanities, Social Science, and Education, the College’s forerunner, we take pride in sharing how our alumni are doing just that by profiling 50 alumni who demonstrate excellence and leadership in a wide variety of fields.

I would be remiss if I did not also take this opportunity to thank all of the people associated with the College for their generosity of time, treasure, and spirit over the past five years. My term as Dean concludes on June 30, and a national search is underway to identify the next person to lead our dynamic College. I have complete confidence that the new Dean will find, as I have, that witnessing the passion and commitment of our people is perhaps the single greatest benefit of serving in the role. For your inspiration, I am most thankful.

We hope you’ll enjoy reading about the ways Liberal Arts alumni, faculty, and students apply the broad and visionary thinking required for bold leadership in our society—featured in these pages and in the work we do each day.

With best regards,

Irwin Weiser
Justin S. Morrill Dean
Marianne Boruch’s poetry embodies mystery, but even she was puzzled by her most recent collection. “I call the poems in *The Book of Hours*—with affection, and only half-jokingly—‘my little hair shirts.’ All were aware of themselves as something *other.*” While other poets might have shirked from such unruly creatures, Boruch used this quality to offer readers a glimpse into her writing process. Even the collection’s title served more than one purpose. It was inspired by prayer books from the Middle Ages, but it also defined the book’s organization. This spring the book won the prestigious Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award. At $100,000, it is one of the country’s largest annual poetry prizes.
“To write poems at all is to leave the world behind. You go empty to make those occasions, and have hope something will turn up. It takes time, courting such solitude.” Boruch’s poetry, much of which explores the natural world, feels like deep sea diving. It embraces stillness and space. Boruch, who has taught in the Creative Writing program at Purdue since 1987, considers the poem to be a way of knowing and is not afraid to mine the unfamiliar. “The discovery when you write is word by word—and you keep fiddling that way, into the gears and faulty wires, in revision.”

With eight books of poetry, poems in The New Yorker and the Paris Review, among other publications, and fellowships from Fulbright, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the Guggenheim Foundation, Boruch’s ideas seem endless. “My guiding notion for a while has been to put myself in situations about which I know nothing and have zero expectations, to do that out of simple curiosity, just to see what I might notice, how I might react.” Such an experiment triggered Boruch’s forthcoming collection—Cadaver, Speak.

During a Faculty Fellowship for Study in a Second Discipline, Boruch participated in a life drawing class while also attending courses in gross human anatomy at IU Medical School’s Purdue campus.

While Boruch is grateful that the Kingsley Tufts award may offer more readers access to her poetry, her impulse to affect readers extends beyond external affirmation. “These little hair shirts have their own life, and keep defending themselves, even against me. They are more than happy to be left to their own devices. Meanwhile, these days I’m finding other poems, such as they are. Or more accurately, they are finding me.”

By Melissa Fraterrigo. Photo by Will Dunlap.
At the core of exceptional teaching are dedicated faculty members who recognize the value of sharing their knowledge with undergraduates. As one of Purdue’s best teachers, associate professor of history and interim director of the American Studies program Nancy Gabin also recognizes the value in asking questions. “It is important for me to teach courses that can be troubling for students,” she explains, adding that it is also her goal “to provide the safe space to work out their ideas about those troubling problems.”

Gabin and her colleague Mariko Moroishi Wei, associate professor of Japanese and linguistics, are the two most recent Liberal Arts recipients of the Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Awards in Memory of Charles B. Murphy, in 2012 and 2013, respectively.

In her course “Women in America since 1870,” Gabin challenges students to learn about gender, race, politics, and culture—and how these topics have been represented in relation to women. Addressing these topics in the classroom helps students face big questions in their own lives, she says.

Wei mentors students of Japanese inside and outside the classroom as they search for opportunities to explore the culture. “Students want two things,” Wei says, “to study abroad and to get a job. Also, many of my students go on to graduate school to study East Asian studies.” Wei frequently advises her students, helping them choose schools or companies in Japan where they can best use their education. She’s happy to help, and grateful that her students are passionate, hard working, and interested in her native culture.

Both Gabin and Wei like to use primary materials in the classroom to immerse their students in the topics up for discussion. Gabin brings old editorial cartoons and illustrations and asks students to discuss the representation of women in her samples. Students in Wei’s 400-level reading course are challenged to watch and read Japanese news and then discuss the content with the class.

“It is very rewarding to see students succeed,” Wei says. Gabin, who hopes to engage her students in solving and analyzing historical problems, echoes this sentiment: “What I like most about teaching is when I can see the light bulb go on,” she says.”

By Elizabeth Hudson. Photo (top) by John Underwood, (bottom) by Mark Simons.
Making Connections at the Fountain Gallery

Purdue’s new Fountain Gallery, located in the historic Perrin Building in downtown Lafayette, opened this summer, marking an initiative by the University to share art with Lafayette, as well as to encourage Purdue students to explore the greater Lafayette community.

It’s about making connections, according to Craig Martin, director of Purdue University Galleries. “We want students to participate in things that are happening downtown, and we hope members of the arts and culture community on campus can use this space for their own presentations.”

The gallery’s first exhibition, “Connections: Works on Paper from the Purdue Galleries Collection,” was an opportunity to share pieces from the permanent collection. “These are works that Purdue University Galleries own and maintain,” explained Liz Erlewine, gallery coordinator. “It’s really exciting to get pieces from our collection out where so many people can see them. The collection includes a wide range of art by regional, national, and international artists, including works by current and former university faculty and students.”

The ever-changing exhibitions and activities are all focused on the same goal. “What we want to do here is expose people to things they haven’t seen,” says Martin. “We want to give them something weird and wonderful.”

Getting public participation in gallery activities is crucial, he says. Throughout the summer, members of the public participated in a number of hands-on printmaking projects where they could create prints alongside the work of artists from the collection. During future exhibitions, there will be many more such opportunities.

At the gallery on opening night, Cynthia Fortner was excited about the potential of the space. Fortner, who has a Ph.D. from Purdue and whose son is currently enrolled at the university, had invited her friend Dorothy, a longtime Lafayette resident unaffiliated with the university, to the show.

Both seemed entranced with Minna Resnick’s print lithograph/screenprint entitled Different Kinds of Nature, featuring a kaleidoscopic collage of people, animals, and buildings. It was one of the first prints that greeted visitors as they walked through the gallery door.

“I love that we have a Purdue gallery in Lafayette proper,” said Fortner.

By Dan Grossman. Photo by Andrew Jessop.

TOP: Big Baby Doll Fetish; Kathryn J. Reeves, Purdue professor of fine arts; archival pigment inkjet on Twinrocker Handmade Paper

RIGHT: Rosalee Clawson, department head and professor of the Department of Political Science, and her son Zo examine Minna Resnick’s print lithograph/screenprint Different Kinds of Nature.
Cultivating Civic Engagement

Liberal Arts faculty challenge their students to think broadly and critically about the global challenges they’ll take on in the workplace—but internships, mentors, and networking also play a big role in a student’s success. Recognizing this, Ambassador Carolyn Curiel, a clinical professor in the Brian Lamb School of Communication (BLSC), has launched the Purdue Institute for Civic Communication (PICC).

Curiel (BA 1976, Communication; HDR 2008, Liberal Arts), whose own student internships led to her career as a journalist at top media organizations, presidential speech writer, and former Ambassador to Belize, wanted to increase the number of opportunities that students have to connect with professionals doing the jobs they aspire to.

The Institute, housed in BLSC, counts C-SPAN and its Purdue-based archive as key partners, along with other media organizations like Bloomberg View. It gives students opportunities to engage with policymakers, journalists, media executives, and other national leaders and entrepreneurs on issues that affect us all, including the economy, energy sustainability, technology, climate change, disease, human rights, education, media, and policy.

Students interview experts and organize public forums at Purdue on a range of topics. They conduct background research, arrange event publicity, serve as emcees, and use social media and audience polls in real time to gauge the response. Each year a Maymester course in Washington, D.C., gives students the opportunity to meet with C-SPAN staff, government officials, media professionals, and policy experts.

PICC builds on Curiel’s desire to increase the scope of her previous initiative, Project Impact, which featured similar opportunities. PICC will increase the number of Purdue faculty involved in the experiential learning component, invite executive mentors to campus, and develop what may be the country’s first student-run national poll. It will also link STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) with the humanities, a partnership vital to communicating increasingly complicated policy issues.

The Institute was awarded a $1 million grant from the Denver-based Daniels Fund, named after the late cable television pioneer Bill Daniels. The fund’s initiatives include civic literacy and community engagement, which provided a meaningful match with the PICC mission. “The aspects of civic communication in the lives of Purdue students have not been fully explored,” Curiel says. “If you are a nuclear engineering student and you end up at the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, are you not involved in civic life? If you become a reporter at The Wall Street Journal, are you not involved with civic life?”

“Students learn that they will not get very far as leaders if they cannot clearly and concisely communicate complex thoughts,” explains Curiel, and PICC programs provide an excellent opportunity for students to hone these skills.

By Stacey Mickelbart.

Project Impact students, including sophomore Minjae Kim (left), meet with Ian Urbina, a reporter for The New York Times, whose series Drilling Down explored the practice of fracking in the energy industry. Photo by Erick Thomas.
An Education Rich in the Liberal Arts

Purdue’s current president, Mitch Daniels, is the product of a liberal arts education, with a BA in public and international affairs leading to a law degree and a successful career in both industry and public service. THINK editor Stacey Mickelbart recently sat down with President Daniels to find out how this background has shaped his ideas about a Purdue education.

“I’ve always believed that the liberal arts aren’t in competition with the STEM disciplines—they’re essential to them,” he says, pointing out that he stressed this at his first Purdue commencement speech.

Boilermakers, he explained to graduates and their families in May, “armed with a rounded education, rich in the liberal arts, go into the world prepared to lead, and to teach, in a time of unprecedented complexity.” That’s because Purdue produces “engineers and scientists who can distill, demystify, and communicate complex questions to their fellow citizens, and liberal arts graduates who absorbed enough of the transformative science of the day to teach it to our children or help shape the sound choices and tradeoffs that a free society must make together.”

Making those complex choices is aided in large part by critical thinking, says Daniels, which is “the essential skill one hopes higher education will cultivate, regardless of discipline.” While there are many ways to teach it, his own education consisted of frequent explorations in the Socratic method, as well as lots of writing. Instructor feedback is invaluable, he feels, especially from “those teachers and professors who expose flaws in your thinking or point out an angle or question you didn’t think about.”

Daniels stresses that communication and writing are essential, asserting that “an ability to employ the language with some fluency will be valuable no matter what your pursuits in life.” He also believes that wrestling with tough questions is vital, pointing out that “studying great figures and moments in history helps you make decisions and make connections between events that would otherwise elude you.”

Purdue’s international culture was one factor in the “pro” column when Daniels considered the top job, and he sees Purdue as a leader in helping graduates prepare for successful lives around the globe. “Free institutions of the kind that we take for granted are not the rule in history,” he says. “They’re not the rule in other cultures. And they’re not necessarily permanent. This is something that you’re not likely to learn even in the finest engineering class.” And that, he says, is one reason why the liberal arts are indispensable.

By Stacey Mickelbart. Photo by John Underwood.
There is no larger or faster-growing minority in the United States than the Hispanic population. One out of every six Americans self-identifies as Hispanic—a U.S. Census Bureau statistic projected to more than double by 2060.

These 53.3 million people—most of whom speak Spanish at home—are an integral, influential part of U.S. society, but scholarly interaction with that population requires specific effort.

Alejandro Cuza, assistant professor of Spanish and linguistics, acknowledges that reaching north central Indiana’s more than 25,000 Hispanics requires breaking barriers.

“But the moment we, as researchers in the College of Liberal Arts, lock ourselves in our offices and forget about what is outside Purdue, we’re pretty much done,” Cuza says. “This community is vulnerable in many aspects. We just have to be patient, go step by step, and find the means to convince them that what we can offer is important.”

“Purdue has helped to put a man on the moon, so we should be able to look at our own backyard and engage our community as much as possible. We’ve gotten a lot of great support from the University in our efforts so far.”

Cuza refers to his fruitful endeavors—and those of many others from the College of Liberal Arts—to engage and empower the area’s Spanish-speaking community through Purdue-sponsored research and community service programs.

These programs actively address language development, community health, and civic engagement within the Spanish-speaking community. But they also create hands-on outlets for Purdue students to apply and advance real-world skills, gain invaluable volunteer experience, and acquire cultural empathy—intangibles as important as any credit hour.

“I obviously knew Spanish-speaking people lived in our community, but this helped me to really see them,” says Brandon Neibert, a junior majoring in Spanish and linguistics who tutored in Cuza’s Aprendiendo a Leer (Learning to Read) program. “Even if it’s a tiny bit different because they’re speaking another language, they are right there with us, living the same lives.”
A way to keep our culture alive

Aurelio Lopez has taken no English classes since coming to America from Mexico 20 years ago. While he occasionally pauses to find the right word, this self-taught Frankfort resident explains why he found learning English essential.

“Learning English is the base to building a better life here,” he says.

But neither Aurelio nor his wife, Jocebet, wants their three sons to lose their grip on Spanish.

“It’s our first language, you know? And we want them to learn it right,” he says.

Their sons were among 55 elementary school students in Aprendiendo a Leer—a blend of research and engagement examining the extent to which strengthened Spanish literacy improves the acquisition of English as a new language and the overall educational growth of children.

Studies suggest that early bilingual development is beneficial in the development of higher cognitive ability, particularly problem-solving skills, Cuza says. He oversaw the local 18-week afterschool program, together with Ph.D. student Lauren Miller and colleagues from the University of Toronto. The project was partially funded by Purdue’s Kinley Trust and engagement grants from the Office of Engagement and CLA.

For an hour each week from October 2012 to March 2013, 15 Purdue undergraduates (most of whom are Spanish majors or minors) tutored Spanish-speaking kindergarten through fourth grade students in Frankfort and Lafayette. The program, which is scheduled to continue this year, focuses on Spanish phonological skills, vocabulary, and reading ability. Many tutors, like Neibert, were working with children for the first time.

“Being in charge of these kids definitely helped me manage my time better, work better in a group setting, and be more confident in coming out of my shell,” he says.

Tutors introduced children to meaningful Spanish words that could be reinforced at home—such as sofá (sofa), dormitorio (bedroom), and lámpara (lamp).

“Five-year-olds may not know the word ‘radiator,’ but if they know ‘radiador,’ they can use native-language context to process English meaning, which gives them an edge in
lexical development,” Cuza says. “We’re not just teaching new vocabulary but the ability to trigger acquisition in other languages.”

Cuza spent the summer analyzing the data with an eye toward publication and how it could support recommendations to improve bilingual literacy instruction. Preliminary quantitative results show a significant improvement for students in both English and Spanish.

Lopez appreciates how Aprendiendo a Leer empowered his family, too. “One amazing thing is that we’ve learned together as a family,” he says. “There are too many words I’ve forgotten from Spanish, and (my boys) have reminded me. It’s a way to keep our culture alive.”

Another aim was positioning tutors, many of whom are Hispanic and heritage speakers themselves, as role models for the college experience—an urgent message for this community.

Although America’s dropout rate for Hispanics aged 16 to 24 has fallen 50 percent since 1990, it remains the highest among all minorities. Cuza says one oft-cited reason is a loss of native language and resultant communication breakdowns between kids who are fluent in English and parents who are not.

Gustavo Lopez is a senior majoring in political science and economics with a Spanish minor who, in a way, mirrors the children he tutored. He came to the United States from Mexico at age 10, and hopes his participation will someday inspire a greater number of Hispanics to attend Purdue. Currently, they represent just three percent of the undergraduate population.

“It’s great for these students to see people like them who come from similar backgrounds and see they can do this,” Lopez says. “The program shows Purdue as an expert authority that says speaking Spanish is a good thing, as a University where positive things are happening, and as a place where somebody cares.”

An entire program here just for them

Another CLA initiative focuses on pressing healthcare issues within the Hispanic community. Among American adult minorities, the lack of health insurance is highest for Hispanics. One in three lacks a regular source of healthcare, and nearly 25 percent report no medical care in a given year.

“What we often hear is, ‘We don’t know where to go. We don’t know how to speak English. We can’t get any help,’” says Julie Harrell, a continuing lecturer who is the director of the Spanish service-learning Ayuda y Aprende (Help and Learn) program. “For them, English is a huge barrier, as is a feeling of trust and knowing who they can turn to.”

With support and partial funding from CLA associate dean for interdisciplinary programs and engagement JoAnn Miller, Ayuda y Aprende is a service-learning outlet for students in advanced Spanish. They sharpen their skills by conversing with native speakers and tutoring them in English at Klondike Middle School, McCutcheon High School, and Lafayette Adult Resource Academy (LARA).

FOCUSED ON ENGAGEMENT

Madeleine Henry, professor of classics and newly appointed head of the School of Languages and Cultures, knows firsthand the value that language skills have in community engagement.

In addition to being a classicist, she has enjoyed a second career as a dental hygienist. As a clinician at the University-Community Health Care Center in Minneapolis, she worked with underserved patients from several immigrant communities. Language skills benefited both health care professionals and patients, she says. Several U.S. medical schools are now offering programs focused on medical Spanish, and for immigrant children, strong maintenance of their first language is essential, since many of them translate for their parents in medical emergencies.

Henry applied this experience during her previous work at Iowa State, helping to establish the Latino Cultural Communication program, which provided basic Spanish instruction to health care professionals, clergy, and others involved in the Spanish-speaking community.

Her research in classics includes women’s history in ancient Greece and the reception of classical texts as they have been transmitted and adapted—including how Afro-centric writers use classical works in conjunction with African and indigenous literary and other cultural motifs. Part of what drew her to Purdue, she notes, is that the School of Languages and Cultures has strengths in fostering languages important to our cultural and intellectual heritage as well as developing and maintaining the study of languages critical for the coming century.

Purdue students and their communities are the beneficiaries of these strengths. “Students who graduate from our programs will go elsewhere and take that facility for, experience with, and commitment to engagement wherever they go, and it will blossom elsewhere,” she says.

Photo by Steven Yang.
“The idea for the health fair came from a student, and students will be the entire reason it keeps going,” Harrell says. “They don’t want applause or credit, and to not be from Lafayette and give so much to those living here really impresses me.”

Sommer Scarpino, a junior majoring in Spanish and communication, helped translate results of blood sugar and glucose tests.

“We would encourage some to try to eat a little healthier, explain that one number was good but another could be a little better,” Scarpino says. “It was extremely beneficial for me to interact with native speakers, and it was great to introduce them to resources they didn’t know were available.”

Harrell says each health fair takes four months to coordinate, but far-reaching rewards justify the long work.

“If you’re new to this country, maybe you don’t feel cared for or important. This helps people see someone

About 20 percent participated in social movements over the last year to promote a policy-driven path to citizenship—a solution the Pew Hispanic Center says is supported by 65 percent of all registered U.S. voters.

This community’s activism in, and knowledge of, American politics increased from the same time period in 2008.

Many subjects recommended a candidate or party to registered Hispanic voters they knew, as a sort of proxy vote.

But when a former student in Harrell’s independent study course suggested hosting a health fair, Harrell helped her incorporate it into Ayuda y Aprende.

There, Purdue pre-med and nursing students—including representatives from the nonprofit Nursing Students Without Borders—offer free health advice and screenings. Community health organizations, such as the United Way, Riggs Community Health Center, and the YWCA, promote their programs. Then, the Spanish students translate the information’s finer points for those in attendance.

In just its second year, the health fair tripled the number of LARA students served, to 150. There’s now talk of expanding to a 13-county region, and, at a local level, adding other resources suggested by Purdue students, such as financial services, the public library, and bilingual resources.

Among the findings of Professor James McCann’s 2012 research into the civic engagement of undocumented Mexican immigrants in north central Indiana:

Subjects overwhelmingly believed that English should be America’s common language.

Asked what being an American means, subjects often mentioned self-reliance and community volunteering.

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does want to help them, that there’s an entire program here just for them,” Harrell says. “In turn, they help the college kids by showing they have a voice, a story, a culture. And Purdue’s not just a bubble. These kids are going to take back what they learn here to their own communities.”

**Two steps away from the campus**

Purdue students also visited everyday environs of an often-underrepresented niche in this community—that of undocumented Mexican immigrants.

More than half of all undocumented immigrants in the U.S. hail from Mexico. Statewide, this population jumped more than 1,000 percent from 1990 to 2010. In north central Indiana, about half report a lack of working papers.

“The story of immigration over the last 20 years is really the story of towns like Frankfort, Indiana,” says James McCann, a professor of political science at Purdue.

McCann has conducted extensive research on Mexican politics. His latest project started in August 2012 and ran through the November elections, during which illegal immigration was a hot-button issue.

He sent students from his applied-research political science course—many who had studied abroad in Spanish-speaking nations—to Mexican groceries, soccer fields, and consulate offices in and near Frankfort, Logansport, Lafayette, and Indianapolis. Initiating interviews in Spanish, students gauged this population’s participation in American civic engagement despite their lack of legal voting rights.

“It felt a little uncomfortable at first, like I was profiling everyone,” says Connor Shearer, a senior majoring in political science who studied abroad in Spain and gave a presentation based on his experiences in McCann’s course at an honors colloquium.

“But I broke the ice by speaking Spanish and I think it was therapeutic for them. Sometimes, we’d end up talking for 90 minutes, and I felt we both walked away more knowledgeable. It’s a wholly different culture you wouldn’t think would be two steps away from the campus where I go to school every day.”
Taking Risk in Stride

What would you do if your boss asked you to call the world’s biggest pop star to ask him to appear at a company meeting? Panic? That wasn’t an option for Mark Achler when Steve Jobs asked him to call Michael Jackson.

It was 1983. Thriller was at the top of the charts and Achler was responsible for the worldwide introduction of the Apple IIc computer. He suggested an onsite launch for Apple dealers, and Jobs wanted Jackson for the entertainment.

In a pre-internet world, “I called the telephone operator and said, ‘Look, I know you can’t tell me this, but if you were me, what would you do?’” recalls Achler. “And she was really smart. She said, ‘He records under this label, so call the label and ask for his business manager.’ And that’s how you do it!”

Jackson was willing, but wanted $5 million for a one-hour performance. Achler says Apple’s board of directors burst out laughing—and they hired Herbie Hancock instead.

Problem-solving and innovation are hallmarks of Achler’s career in technology—though it’s one he didn’t imagine during his time at Purdue. With an interest in history and working with kids, he pursued social studies education, thinking he was eventually headed to law school. But shortly after he graduated, his father, who was an early adopter of Fortran and personal computers, suggested that they open a computer retail store together, and his path veered in a different direction.

Achler found his niche as an entrepreneur and venture capitalist, building and selling four companies and working the other side of the table as an investor. When he’s worked within an established company’s structure, he has sometimes called himself an intrapreneur, who “takes a lot of risk inside a corporate structure to try to create new, meaningful, scalable projects,” he explains.

His comfort with risk has sometimes driven his wife crazy, he admits. “I’m pretty fearless,” he says. “I’m confident in myself and my ability. And I’m comfortable that I can figure things out.” His confidence, however, is tempered by experience. “I’ve certainly had my hat handed to me a couple of times. So there’s a healthy dose of humility, too. But I love the adventure of exploring new ideas.”

His curiosity about what customers need and enthusiasm for improving lives is visible in the products he’s associated with, like those of Emmi Solutions. Emmi, one of the companies he cofounded, where he served as president and then CEO, provides online patient education, such as videos explaining surgical procedures. Doctors prescribe these resources to help patients feel more informed about and comfortable with their medical care. Though medical experts are key members of the team, what makes the videos so effective is that they are written from the point of view of the patient, not the doctor.

“There’s so much arcane terminology in medicine that for many people, the information goes above their head,” explains Achler. “We wanted to create an experience that was simple, calming, and personalized.” Emmi videos are used by a number of medical centers, including Indiana University, Stanford, the University of Chicago, the Cleveland Clinic, and Cedars-Sinai.

Improving lives isn’t all serious business, however, and Achler’s most recent position was senior vice president of new business, strategy, and innovation at Redbox—the company responsible for those instantly recognizable red kiosks in grocery stores, pharmacies, and McDonald’s, which transformed the video rental industry with its inexpensive offerings. Achler launched the company’s video game rentals, as well as helped formulate the strategy for a streaming movie service. He also started an initiative to sell tickets to live events, which is currently in beta testing, and attaches a convenience fee of only $1 to any ticket.

Part of delivering the best product, Achler says, is having true empathy for your customer. While Redbox customers often say they’d like to have every movie or TV show available to rent, further research identified that what they wanted most was value and convenience. Adding more selections to the kiosks would increase the price and the...
wait, as others browsed the choices. “We knew our
customer so well that we were able to build a business
around what they wanted, not necessarily what they said.
And we were able to prioritize accordingly,” he says.

After leaving Redbox in April 2013, Achler is
considering his next move. He’d like to spend more time
with his family, as well as on causes he cares about. He’s
an active mentor for tech entrepreneurs at Techstars
and Chicago High Tech Academy, and he recently joined
the board of Embarc, a nonprofit that offers cultural
experiences to high school students in socially and
economically isolated neighborhoods in Chicago.

His concern for community is also evident in the way
he works; maintaining good relationships with others in
the tech sector and creating jobs are important to him. “I
believe that companies with certain corporate values, and
more importantly, a culture that believes in and promotes
them, actually deliver better shareholder results, because
those values provide a context and framework for decision
making,” he asserts.

Some of his own values were honed at Purdue. While
Achler says he always had a strong work ethic, holding
down multiple jobs to help pay for college, he cites history
professor Jon Teaford’s constitutional history class as one
that forced him to study hard. “It was the first time I really
put in that extra effort to nail something—and I liked the
results of that,” he says.

By Stacey Mickelbart. Photo courtesy of Mark Achler.

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the birth of the School of
Humanities, Social Science, and Education, the forerunner of the
College of Liberal Arts, we’re profiling 50 of our alumni who vividly
demonstrate excellence. To read more about Mark Achler and other
outstanding alumni in the series, see www.cla.purdue.edu/alumni.
Marching To Be Heard

More than 5,000 people assembled for a parade near the Capitol building in Washington, D.C., behind a rider on a white horse, nine bands, four mounted brigades, and twenty-four floats. It was March 3, 1913, the first day of President Woodrow Wilson’s administration, and the parade started peacefully, but was soon in disarray. Men began to heckle the marchers, surging into the parade to trip and shove them. Ambulances took one hundred people to local hospitals.

Why would a presidential welcome result in such chaos? Because the parade wasn’t a welcome, but rather the first large-scale national women’s suffrage march in Washington, D.C.—and a demand for Wilson’s attention that worked. A federal cavalry troop was called out to protect the marchers, and they finished their route.

To celebrate Women’s History Month, as well as a century of public action of all kinds, the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) interdisciplinary program at Purdue commemorated it with a campus march. The idea began with the program’s director, associate professor of history T.J. Boisseau. “I realized that we really wanted to celebrate not just a single event, or even a single movement, but the broader implications of that event on social movements. What I want people to realize about that suffrage parade was that the method, tactics, and approach were then carried forth in so many other movements and marches on Washington,” she says. “From there, we see the whole century as 100 years of incredible activity on the part of American people of all different stripes.”

Seeking Visibility for All Women

Prior to the 1913 march, U.S. suffragists had used more conservative methods to gain support for their cause, circulating petitions, participating in World Fairs, and lobbying Congress as well as state officials. But Alice Paul,
Community members and Purdue students participate in the March at Purdue to celebrate a century of civic action. Photo by Mark Simons.
Marching To Be Heard

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an American suffragist and women’s rights activist who had moved to England after college, was inspired by her far more confrontational British colleagues, who overtly sought controversy to gain attention. When she returned to the U.S., she began organizing the Woman Suffrage Parade, and six years later, the 19th Amendment granting women in the U.S. the right to vote was passed.

The 1913 march became an inspiration and a template of sorts for many political demonstrations that followed over the century, including labor and unemployment marches, demonstrations for gay rights, anti-war protests, and civil rights action. March at Purdue organizers also wanted to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the famous 1963 civil rights demonstration, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, featuring Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

This variety of marchers and causes was reflected in the more than 450 people who participated in the March at Purdue, winding their way through the heart of campus chanting, drumming, and singing. The march finished with a rally of speeches and song from students, organizers, and guest speakers at the France A. Córdova Recreational Sports Center.

Diversity was especially important to Purdue’s march participants, given the history of the 1913 march. Alice Paul felt that African American women should march at the back of the parade, claiming that many white women would not march with black women, and that their integration would alienate Southern support for women’s suffrage.

“THe history of the women’s suffrage movement in the U.S., particularly in that period leading up to the passage of the 19th Amendment, is troubled on the issue of race,” says Nancy Gabin, associate professor of history and interim director of the American Studies program. “Although there were white women suffragists who were eager to make a common bond with women of color, to a certain extent the
national organizations were unashamed to play the race card.”

When she teaches about the march, she discusses the role that both class and race played in the women’s suffrage movement. While the 1913 march was one of the largest in Washington, D.C., Gabin stresses that it certainly wasn’t the first time that people, or women in particular, had organized marches. “The labor movement had a long history of public parades and demonstrations on behalf of working class and labor issues,” she explains, “and women were often very heavily involved in those marches and demonstrations.”

Before 1913, middle and upper class women rarely advocated for causes or policies in public; becoming publicly known, or even having your name appear in a newspaper (as Mrs. John Smith, of course) was considered scandalous. The term “public woman” was a euphemism for a prostitute, explains Boisseau. Collective action was the key to crossing this line, she asserts, “Though if you look at the newspaper coverage and even the action of men on the sidelines that day, it was quite obvious that men attempted to turn what was a collective political action into a spectacle of disreputable womanhood.”

To the extent that work was considered a public activity, combining marriage and vocation was deemed unfeminine and not respectable for middle and upper class women. For this reason, “Working class women were well used to having their reputations slandered in public,” says Gabin. “The same would be true for black women; they had very high rates of labor force participation.”

All of the national black women’s organizations supported women’s suffrage, even before many of the white women’s organizations did, she explains, “in part because they understood the importance of the vote to challenge racial segregation and discrimination, but also because they understood, even on its own merits, the importance of women as a group having the right to vote.”

In the 1913 march, the 22 African-American founding members of Delta Sigma Theta sorority from Howard University marched despite discouragement from organizers like Alice Paul. Chicagoan and fellow Delta Ida B. Wells-Barnett, a prominent journalist and activist for civil and women’s rights, forcibly integrated the march by refusing to march in the back and falling in step with two other delegates from Illinois.

In 2013, Purdue’s Delta Sigma Thetas proudly led the campus march, an idea that blossomed after then-president Sloane Bowman mentioned to Boisseau that she’d be marching with sorority sisters at a similar commemorative event in Washington, D.C.

Averiel Butts (BA 2013, Sociology) majored in law and society and marched in the Delta delegation because she’s passionate about public service—a deeply rooted value of her sorority.

Of the Deltas’ position in the back of the 1913 march, Butts says, “I am certain that that is not where they wanted to be. But they still marched proudly knowing that one day we would be able to choose where we marched. One hundred years later, it’s no surprise that we chose to march in the very front. We wanted to make our founders proud.”

### Calling on the Community

Other delegations included the Departments of History, Political Science, and English, women’s groups from the Colleges of Technology and Science, the Black Caucus of Faculty and Staff, and Purdue’s LGBTQ Student Alliance. The celebration also welcomed community participation, including groups from churches, Vox of Planned Parenthood, Lafayette Urban Ministry, Pride Lafayette, the Lafayette Crisis Center, the Lafayette Peace Coalition, and the League of Women Voters of Greater Lafayette.

Many community groups were made aware of the march as part of service learning projects by students in Introduction to Women’s Studies classes at Purdue taught by graduate instructors Dana Bisignani and Adrianna Ernstberger, doctoral students in English and history, respectively. Bisignani divided students into groups and asked them to select community partners with causes they were interested in. Students interviewed a member of the organization and learned about its history and its work (including what was potentially feminist or grassroots about it). Students then volunteered ten hours of their time to the group and recruited a delegation for the March at Purdue. Bisignani helped her students apply for and receive a Service-Learning Student Grant from Purdue’s Office of Engagement to work with their community group and prepare materials for the march.
It was a lot of work for them, but they learned even more outside of the classroom than they would have otherwise. I think they cemented some of the concepts they learned about in class,” says Bisignani. “They actually saw the march affecting real people in the community and saw people who were working for social justice even though they had full-time jobs.”

One of the things the march did for Bisignani’s undergraduate students was to dispel some of the misperceptions they had about activism, which she says were fueled by film scenes of the 1960s where protestors were dragged away by police. “A lot of them were saying, ‘We thought protests and activism were about scary, angry people yelling outside state capitals with picket signs.’ And that intimidated them, because they were not so sure they wanted to be scary, angry people. They didn’t want to get arrested.”

Through participating in planning meetings, working with their community partners, and taking part in the march, they learned how activism works, she says. They were also inspired by the intergenerational diversity of the march, because community members they met shared personal stories about historical events the students had learned about in class. By semester’s end, Bisignani saw the results she’d hoped for as students learned to bridge feminist theory and practice. She won the 2013 Berenice A. Carroll Award for Feminism, Peace, and Social Justice for this class project.

For Kera Lovell, a doctoral student in American studies who designed the march poster and helped manage social media for the event, Purdue’s structural support contributed to its success. “So many people who worked in the administration were eager to support the march. It didn’t feel oppositional; this was people celebrating women’s history.”

And this celebratory feeling, she says, “enabled people who weren’t normally so political to engage in the way that they wanted to,” and really brought together a group of people with a wide range of interests.

Gaining Momentum for the Future
Both Lovell and Bisignani note that the long-term results of the march and rally include the feeling that there are more people on campus who share common cause than they or other students realized. Lovell has seen an increase in traffic to the social media sites she continues to maintain related to social justice, and both cite an increase in a sense of dedicated participation to student activism on campus, including in response to a series of racial incidents earlier this year.

“As a historian, I’m pretty convinced that understanding the past, remembering it, and using it as a springboard for present and future action is absolutely crucial,” says Boisseau. “It’s important that the people of this country recognize that at times they are going to have to communicate to their leaders, and to each other, what’s important to them and the urgency behind it. So if we are not modeling for students and giving them the opportunity to experience what a demonstration looks like—How do you put it together? What’s the experience of recognizing your collective interests?—then I think that we’re not actually completing their education as citizens of the U.S.”

Gabin agrees. “But even for those who don’t want to participate in collective action, a commemoration is important because it makes people think historically, and helps them understand both the historical roots of something, but also the threads through time,” she explains. “There’s a really important value to that: it expands our sense of civic identity and responsibility.”

By Stacey Mickelbart.
Boisseau, associate professor of history and director of the Women’s, Gender, and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) program, arrived in 2012 and immediately set a goal to learn who was active on campus in women’s issues among faculty, staff, and students. Organizing a Women’s History Month event that would draw wide participation across Purdue’s campus was one way to do that, and the 2013 anniversaries of several prominent marches provided the perfect opportunity.

The diverse participation in the March at Purdue also mirrored the discussion taking place about the name of what was then “Women’s Studies.” In considering the discipline, her colleagues and students agreed that it was important to acknowledge that women’s studies “was not centered solely on women but on the relationship between men and women, and on the political reality of gender, sexuality, sexual identity, and sexual orientation,” Boisseau says. “Because we wanted to make that more clear, we changed our name.” The change, she explains, doesn’t reflect a change in the program’s emphasis, but rather a desire to communicate that emphasis, including a new minor in LGBT studies, more effectively.

Faculty and graduate instructors in the program were inspired by the success of the service-learning projects related to the march. They hope to build on this success, making service learning a core component of the introduction to women’s studies course. Boisseau is also working with a group on campus for next year’s big event, which will celebrate the annual International Women’s Day in March 2014.


**REFLECTING PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

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The decision to study philosophy usually starts with an argument. The internal debate takes many different forms, but rarely reaches the depths of, “What is a job?” or, “Is money real?” For many, the question is, “What happens next?”

The answer just might be, “What do you want to have happen next?” Philosophy is more about the means than the end. The end—an eventual career path or course of future study—is enhanced immeasurably, even if a student hasn’t specifically defined what that end will be.

Purdue graduates in philosophy, for instance, have transitioned comfortably into a diverse job market. Their varied career paths range from law and information technology to the FBI and an assortment of business pursuits, and include companies such as J.P. Morgan, Starbucks, and Wrangler Jeans.

I Think Therefore I Am…Able

Philosophy is not a technical subject designed to fill a specific need in the job market. Those who choose it, however, argue that the ability to do any job is improved with an improved mind.

“I think that there is something to learning how to think better, and how to express those thoughts, and how to question your own thoughts,” says Hank Childers (BA ’71), senior director of enterprise information and analytics at The University of Arizona. “And these capabilities transfer well to almost anything.”

Beyond the anticipated career path of teaching, there are boundless professions ahead for philosophy graduates. According to an extensive 2013 salary study conducted by PayScale, philosophy graduates start slow but pick up fast in their careers. Graduates studying philosophy start with a $38,300 median salary, which is in the lower half of the results. They earn their way by mid-career to a $72,600 median salary—a 90 percent increase.

If a career isn’t the immediate post-undergraduate plan, a 2012 study from the Educational Testing Service shows that students who choose philosophy as their intended graduate major have top scores on the GRE. Students in this group scored highest in the verbal and analytical writing category and in the top five on the quantitative portion, compared to students in all other intended graduate majors.
INVENTING A NEW DIRECTION

For many students, the choice of a degree path is deeply rooted in building the best square peg for a future square hole. Purdue philosophy student Aaron Trembath is testing that idea. His path is more about creating many different-shaped pegs while cognizant that the holes are ever-changing and difficult to predict.

Trembath, a philosophy and communication major from Sheridan, Wyoming, is president and CEO of NanoBio Interfacing Systems, a company that produces tracking sensors for human enzymes. NBI’s business plan won the undergraduate division of Purdue’s Burton D. Morgan Business Plan Competition in February 2013, which came with a $20,000 prize. He also developed and tested WalkThrough, which provides 3-D modeling from home blueprints. That business plan was a finalist in the same competition in 2011.

By applying philosophical principles to entrepreneurship, Trembath has reshaped his initial belief that jobs aren’t automatically waiting for a philosophy graduate.

“I realized my view of education up to that point was myopic: I had to get myself ready for a job that someone else had made,” he says. “But then it occurred to me, if you can identify a need in the market and a way to fill that need and communicate that effectively, there are investors interested in investing in problem solvers. It seemed like a natural extension.”

Trembath plans to complete his studies this semester and may continue with one of his entrepreneurial ventures, move on to law school, teach, get into communication and strategy consulting, or come up with another idea he has yet to perfect.

“Philosophy and entrepreneurship don’t really have a home,” he says. “But if you put them together, there’s no reason you can’t make one for yourself.”

Stephen Jaffe (BA ’64) headed to Purdue with an eye on an eventual career in brain science. Philosophy was a congruent course of study, he says, because it allowed him to expand beyond the scientific into a deeper understanding of how the mind works.

“I went into philosophy to broaden my knowledge of mind, behavior, and so forth, and then applied it to neurology,” says Jaffe, who has 45 years of medical experience and is now the Magale Professor of Neurology at Louisiana State University School of Medicine. “It was very helpful to get the background of previous philosophers and thinkers on the subjects: What is mind? How does it relate to brain? So much of neurology is on the border between science and science fiction, so it really helped.”

Jennifer O’Brien (BA ’93) started at Purdue with medicine in mind but added philosophy to her studies, ultimately planning to practice medical ethics as her career. She began her doctorate in philosophy at Rice University, but after two years of coursework she became discouraged with the economics of the medical debate. “In philosophy you study the right and the good, but not the right and the good for the number of dollars in a patient’s insurance plan or wallet,” she explains.

She instead took a philosophical mindset into the business world, nimbly moving from project management to technology to finance. She now serves as publications program manager for the Commercial Banking and Investment Bank divisions at J.P. Morgan, managing staff in Chicago, Louisville, Dallas, and Bangalore, India, as well as colleagues from her home base in Seattle. The diverse geographical locations of her team members force her to hire staff she can trust to deliver a clear, concise message.

“I ask our human resources department to include applicants with philosophy degrees in their screening, because I know they understand logic, they know how to write, they know how to present an idea or opinion or thought, they know how to ask questions,” O’Brien says. “When you know the way they’ve learned to process information and present themselves, then you can let them loose a lot more quickly.”
The Unexamined (Work) Life Is Not Worth Living

A philosophy education helps students develop such practical skills as critical and evaluative thought, articulate and persuasive expression, and problem seeking and solving. Students are offered a background on key historical figures and theories that pervade business, communication, education, mathematics, medicine, political science, science, religion, and many other fields.

Childers remembers telling his parents about his choice to study philosophy. Their reluctant acceptance was followed by a pointed response. His mother clipped and mailed him a one-panel comic. “The protagonist was at a big company [U.S. Steel], wanting to know where their philosophy department was,” Childers recalls. “Meaning, there’s no philosophy department at U.S. Steel, so what the hell are you going to do with that degree?” But philosophy taught Childers how to think logically, and he took that education and turned it into a career in a very logic-centered arena—information technology.

“They are hard questions that people in philosophy deal with. Arguably impossible questions that don’t have answers, so what we achieve is a better understanding of the question,” he explains. “We’re not trying to win arguments, we’re trying to understand.

It questions your beliefs, and so I think it subsumes the ego in service of the question being asked.”

Learning to reason through your own position is a hallmark of philosophy, but articulating that position is equally important. For example, when O’Brien’s peers present ideas, they often don’t make their pitch until three-quarters of the way into their presentation, when the audience is already tuning out. “Philosophy taught me that if you’re going to say anything novel, you have to state your position at the beginning and then back it up,” she says. “A poorly laid out theory, even if it’s brilliant, isn’t going to be accepted because no one knows what you’re saying.”

Philosophy also forces a distinction between an idea and the person who conceived it. Purdue senior Aaron Trembath, who has coupled his study of philosophy with a focus on entrepreneurship, has learned to divorce himself from his own ideas. “You cannot let your idea define you,” says Trembath, who has already experienced success with a couple of new ventures (see sidebar). “You let the idea be its own thing that you evaluate. The biggest flops in entrepreneurship occur when the person having the idea refuses to see the warts on the baby.”

Not What We Have but What We Enjoy

There is life beyond the career, and students of philosophy seem bent on living it. Childers plays guitar and owns a recording studio. He says philosophy is the tie that binds his expressive side (songwriter) and logical side (IT work). Trembath helps coach Purdue’s speech and debate team and trains his wards to think critically, drawing on reason, logic, and analysis of assumptions.

Jaffe travels extensively and speaks 10 languages, most of which he learned while in the army for 15 years. “You have less of a chance of getting shot if you can speak the languages,” he says. Jaffe and O’Brien both train animals (horses and dogs, respectively) and credit their philosophical thinking with helping them better understand the animals’ needs.
Blood Brothers

This excerpt is from Natalie van Hoose’s award-winning short story Blood Brothers, which won the Booth Tarkington Award in Fiction and the Budd and Betty Knoll Award for the Best Entry of the 82nd Literary Awards Contest, sponsored by the Department of English.

That summer, southern yellow jackets started squatting under the eaves of our month-to-month rental, and my father wouldn’t do a thing about it. Pressed by my mother to “investigate at least, Pete, won’t you?” he remained unconcerned, even when the nest swelled from the size of a man’s fist to that of a cantaloupe. He popped an RC Cola and retreated deeper into what he would later describe as the dark night of his soul. Meanwhile my mother pursued my brother Russell, who was highly allergic to stings, around the house with an EpiPen, urging him to carry it on his person at all times. “It’s a matter of life and death,” she’d say. The year was 1993. Russell was thirteen, and I was ten. Back then, my world consisted of three buildings: our low, sloping house, Parthenon Christian Academy—where Mom worked as an accountant and Russell and I attended on scholarship—and Second Baptist Church. My father had been assistant pastor of the church for five years and was impatiently waiting for the elderly reverend to retire so that he could take over and unleash his fresh-but-ever-less-fresh spiritual vision and zeal on its unsuspecting members, which was the whole reason we’d come here in the first place.

We were transplants, Florida natives living in Arlington, Texas, a mid-size town outside of Dallas. That we were straddling the line between middle class and lower was something I couldn’t have understood; all I knew was we wore shoes until the asphalt bit through the soles, we ate a lot of frozen chicken breasts from Sam’s Club, and we couldn’t afford a dog. The doglessness was an issue I frequently brought to God’s attention. How long, O Lord?

While the yellow jackets multiplied under my father’s neglect, Bill Clinton presided over the United States, the ashes of Waco drifted in the hot wind, and my mother shuttled me to Parthenon where she would file and type, and I would prowl the unlit school hallways with Melissa Bolen and Josey Palomino, classmates whose mothers were also PCA employees.

We called ourselves “The Silver Spur Gang” and spent most of our time roller-skating in the gym, sucking on sugar cubes in the teachers’ lounge, and arguing over who was prettiest (Melissa), who was the fastest sprinter (Josey), and who could best stuff herself into a locker (me). We also played Murder in the Dark, stalked the janitor, and hid under the foyer counter to pierce our fingertips with safety pins and discuss current events. I remember Lorena Bobbitt being a hot topic.

A recent graduate of Purdue’s MFA program in creative writing, Natalie van Hoose is the science news writer for the College of Agriculture. She writes an online series about Indiana grapes and wines for Agricultures, and her poetry and nonfiction are forthcoming in Lumberyard and Rougarou, respectively. Originally from Cocoa Beach, Florida, she now lives in Lafayette with a big, clumsy hound.

Photo courtesy of Natalie Van Hoose. Other photos by ©irin-k/Shutterstock.com and ©schankz/Shutterstock.com.
Don’t raise your voice. Improve your argument.”

Desmond Tutu

Desmond Tutu famously said, “Don’t raise your voice. Improve your argument.”

Members of the C. Richard Petticrew Debate Forum are working on perfecting that advice. With back-to-back state championships to its credit, the team is passionate about competing—and winning.

Pamela Deutsch, the Brian Lamb School of Communication faculty advisor, explains that the direction the team takes depends on them. John Schultz—the team’s coach and a graduate student himself in political science—tailors the practices to coincide with the team’s interests and chooses tournaments to focus in the areas the students want to address.

The team hosted its own debate tournament last spring using Worlds Style debate. This popular style uses four teams—two teams on both the proposition and opposition side—with two students on each team. After the round, each team is ranked first through fourth to determine the outcome. Worlds Style debate requires agility, as the opposing teams can interrupt a speaker with a “point of information” that requires an immediate response. The tournament that Purdue sponsored, with twenty-four teams from seven different schools—including colleges as far away as Clemson and Louisiana Tech—was the largest Worlds Style tournament to occur in the Midwest to date.

C. Richard Petticrew (BS 1937, Chemical Engineering) created the endowment that supports the debate team in 1990. When he was at Purdue, he and his debate partner, R. F. Royster, recorded 56 consecutive victories over a three-year period—a legacy that inspires the current team to excel.

The students will continue to improve their arguments and hope to extend their winning streak as they look forward to another successful year. As Schultz emphasizes, “Purdue’s been really small—but really good—for a really long time.”

Putting Fellowships to Work

In May 2009, interior design major Sharon Smith traveled to Mexico to study abroad for four weeks, hoping to learn Spanish. She loved it so much she stayed a year and a half, returning not only fluent, but with a new calling: teaching. Now one of three CLA students who have won prestigious fellowships, Smith will pursue her passion while helping other language teachers.

Teaching others on campus about the environment is the goal of Purdue junior Allison Turner, who received the University’s first Udall Scholarship. The Udall is awarded to students who have demonstrated commitment to careers related to the environment or an interest in Native American tribal policy or health care.

Turner, who studies political science and natural resources and environmental science, attended a week-long Udall orientation in Arizona, where she learned principles of negotiation and environmental conflict management. Her peers from around the nation also shared environmental initiatives she can initiate at Purdue.

Upon her return to Purdue from Mexico, Sharon Smith changed her major from design to Spanish and elementary education. The recipient of a Fulbright English Teaching Assistantship (ETA), she will teach at the Universidad Católica de Colombia in Bogotá, helping non-native speakers who teach English. She’ll also work part-time at the Ministry of Education and serve as a volunteer teacher for children from low-income families. She hopes to use her Fulbright experience to show others the true Colombia, rather than the inaccurate stereotype of a dangerous and crime-filled country. After her ETA experience, she intends to obtain a masters degree in English as a second language and return to Colombia.

Harper Otawka, the recipient of a research-based Fulbright grant, is determined that the benefits of her award ought to extend beyond borders. “I think people should do good things with this opportunity, not just for the United States, but for the country that they’re going to,” says Otawka, who will split her time between Mexico City and Guadalajara.

Drawing a parallel to the increase of women replacing men in the U.S. workforce during World War II, Otawka explains that in Mexico, “Instead of men going off to war, they’re migrating—sometimes permanently. I wanted to see if that changed women’s roles in their communities.”

Her research on the impact of gendered migration on the people and places left behind in Mexico during the 1990s and 2000s will expand her 2012 work on border regions and immigration in Morocco and Spain under a Purdue Global Research Synergy Grant.

Otawka, who majored in creative writing and Spanish, will begin applying for law schools while working in Mexico, and hopes to combine her passion for immigration and gender issues with a career in law. She also plans to publish—not only an academic paper on her research, but also a piece of creative nonfiction about the experience.

By Stephanie Larson. Photo detail courtesy of Harper Otawka.

Harper Otawka in Marrakech, Morocco, during her research trip under a Global Research Synergy Grant. Photo courtesy of Harper Otawka.
In the first chapter of *Lean In*, Sheryl Sandberg asks, “What would you do if you weren’t afraid?” The question, which usually sounds like a cloying aphorism, seemed somehow new, and I found myself reconsidering my life choices and future goals. What would I do? Is it the same as what I am doing now?

Sandberg’s insistence on self-examination and inquisitiveness is one of the primary benefits of *Lean In*, in which Sandberg contends that if women are to seek excellence and equality in the workforce, more of us must occupy positions of authority and power. She covers the difficulties of seeking out this power, a word often regarded (both implicitly and explicitly) as inimical to many of the qualities that we often identify with femininity.

In fact, in her chapter on “Success and Likeability,” Sandberg illustrates how even positive stereotypes—that women are consensus building and collegial, for example—can hold women back: the expectation that women are friendly and supportive, Sandberg explains, often works against us when we ask for a raise. The unspoken objection seems to be that women, stereotypically nurturing and concerned with the well-being of everyone, should not ask for something for themselves. Paradoxically, then, Sandberg’s argument suggests that while women need to take more risks and challenge ourselves more, a woman who figures out how to ask for a raise while seeming soft-spoken and more interested in others than herself might have better chances of success than the woman who projects confidence in her abilities to lead.

Sandberg hence argues that in order to overcome gendered expectations—even ostensibly positive ones—women must sometimes capitulate to them.

In asking for a raise, for example, Sandberg advises against using the first-person pronoun, a move perfectly effective for a man, but one that conveys the message that a woman is selfish.

Underlying the book’s argument, then, is the acknowledgement that it is sometimes effective to pandering to gendered stereotypes in order to advance the overall cause of feminism. This idea might not sit well with some readers, but I found it compelling. An assertive woman myself, Sandberg’s point made me wonder whether, had I sometimes behaved in more traditionally feminine ways, I might have succeeded where I ended up failing. I don’t like this possibility or think that it is just, and neither does Sandberg—but as Sandberg opines, using gender conformity in order to get that raise or promotion might ultimately enable us to overturn the paradigm that required conformity in the first place.

Photo by Steven Yang.
The Joy of Jewish Studies

I was flipping channels the other day and stumbled on The Chosen, the 1981 film adaptation of Chaim Potok’s 1967 novel. As I watched the scene where Robbie stares adoringly at his father, Reb Saunders, dancing during a wedding, I was hit with a wave of emotions as I remembered being 14 and finding the novel in my high school library in Chennai in India.

Although Potok was not my introduction to Jewish-American fiction—that honor went to Leon Uris—The Chosen still created a thirst in my mind for knowledge about Jewish culture, which would only be quenched when I got involved with Jewish Studies at Purdue.

From 1997 to 2002, I had the privilege of taking classes from a multitude of faculty while pursuing a minor in Jewish Studies. My experiences transcended the typical face-to-face classroom experiences and allowed me to become part of Purdue’s Jewish community, even though I was not Jewish! Some of the highlights included learning Hebrew with Sonia Barash; searching for the afikoman (broken matzo set aside as dessert) during a Pesach seder at Robert Melson’s house; being part of the minyan (the minimum quorum needed) for a group prayer at the Purdue Hillel; interviewing Auschwitz survivor Eva Kor while writing for The Exponent; and reading mind-blowing works by Michael Gold, Cynthia Ozick, Amos Oz, and E.L. Doctorow.

When I put together an honor roll of the most influential professors I had at Purdue, I think of the interdisciplinary influence of Jewish Studies faculty like the late greats in history, Gordon Young and Gordon Mork; Sandor Goodhart in English; and of course, Sonia (Barash) and Robert (Melson), with whom I still communicate.

Now, more than ever, students require a rich liberal arts education with an interdisciplinary focus that provides not only a good cross section of ideas, but one that also manages to weave it all together in a palatable way. We must not lose sight of the valuable contribution of the arts and social sciences toward developing a citizenry that understands this country’s rich history and is also civically engaged.

As I try to infuse my own curricula with ideas and themes from other disciplines, I look back with fondness at my time at Purdue and appreciate more than ever how Purdue was a place where I was introduced to critical thinking and writing from faculty who took a chance on a young man from India and rewarded his interest in Judaica with ideas and philosophies that changed his life.

Shyam K. Sriram is an instructor of political science at Georgia Perimeter College in Atlanta, the largest community college in the state. His areas of interest are Asian Pacific American politics and political science education.

Photo (left) by ©iStockphoto.com/Stele10 and (right) courtesy of Shyam K. Sriram.
1960
R. WAYNE PACE (PhD, Communication), founder and first president of the Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD), was honored by the AHRD with a Lifetime Achievement Award.

1964
BILL LEAVITT (BA, English) published Retirement: Life’s Greatest Adventure.

1967
BILL HICKS (BA, Communication; MS 1974, Education), director of forensics at Brebeuf Jesuit Preparatory School, was honored with the NFL Lifetime Service Award at the National Forensic League National Speech and Debate Tournament in Indianapolis, IN.

1974
NANCY AHLRICHS (BA; MS 1976, Anthropology), strategic account manager for Flashpoint, joined the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Board.

DOUG LOGAN (BA, Communication), director of Time Warner Cable Sports Channel, was recognized with a 2013 Outstanding Contributor to Amateur Football Award by the Central NY Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame.

KENT J. SHEETS (BA, Radio-TV-Film) was inducted, by a vote of the student members, as an honorary member of the University of Michigan Medical School Chapter Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society.

1975
LIONEL “BO” J. BEAULIEU (MS; PhD 1977, Sociology) was appointed the director of the Purdue Center for Regional Development in West Lafayette, IN.

RUTH CROCKER (MA; PhD 1982, History) was a recipient of the 2012 Creative Research and Scholarship Award from Auburn University, Auburn, AL.

1976
PAUL BROCKMAN (BA; MA 1978, History), director of manuscripts and visual collections for the Indiana Historical Society, completed two terms on the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Board.

RODGER DEAN DUNCAN (PhD, Organizational Communication) published the book, Change-Friendly Leadership: How to Transform Good Intentions into Great Performance (Maxwell Stone Publishing).

BRANDON MARIE MILLER (BA, History) published her 11th history title for young adults, Women of the Frontier, 16 Tales of Trailblazing Homesteaders, Entrepreneurs, and Rabble-Rousers (Chicago Review Press).

1977
ROGER LOSSING (BA, Political Science) was named senior vice president of the Delaware County Bank & Trust in Delaware, OH.

1980
LORETTA H. RUSH (BA, History) was sworn in as a justice on the Indiana Supreme Court in Indianapolis, IN.

1982
BOB BUGHER (BA, Political Science) was named as one of the “Best in the Business” by the American Correctional Association.

ALAN LEE (BA, Communication) released a new thriller, Sandstorm (Forge Books).

1984
ROSEMARIE SANTARE SCHWER (BA, Communication) earned the highest credential available to American educators by becoming a National Board Certified Teacher (NBCT) through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

1985
ROBERT SCHULTZ (BA, Communication) was selected by Indianapolis Downtown, Inc. to be its next vice president of marketing and communication in Indianapolis, IN.

1986
ANA PINTO-ALEXANDER (BA, Interior Design) was named a “Legend of Interior Design” by the American Society of Interior Designers in Indianapolis, IN.

RON LAMBERSON (BA, English) published the book The Kilimanjaro Club.

KRISTEN MORRIS (BA, Communication) became the chief government and community relations officer for the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, OH.

GREGORY WERICH (BA, History) was recognized at the Indiana Judicial Conference for 25 years of service as an Indiana probation officer.

1987
JOHN E. M. BROWN (BA, Languages and Cultures) was promoted to captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve, and is based at Stennis Space Center, MS.

P. MICHAEL PHILLIPS (BA, History) is a colonel in the U.S. Army who has been assigned to director of Asian Studies in the Department of National Security and Strategy at the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, PA.

DANIEL B. VINOVICH (BA, Political Science) became president of the Indiana State Bar Association for 2012–13.

1989
MELISSA BARNES (BA, Political Science) was promoted to chief ethics and compliance officer and senior vice president of enterprise risk management at Eli Lilly and Company in Indianapolis, IN.

LYNDA KACHUREK (MA, History) was appointed the new head of Rare Books and Special Collections at the University of Richmond in Richmond, VA.

1991
JOE BALITEWICZ (BA, Political Science) joined the advisory services practice of KPMG Consulting in Chicago, IL.

KEITH MATUNE (BA, Political Science) was named as the State of Illinois Law and Government “Teacher of the Year” by The Constitutional Rights Foundation of Chicago, which is one of the most prestigious awards given to social studies teachers in Illinois.

1993
BEY-LING SHA (BA, Communication) was honored by the Public Relations Society of America as its “2012 Outstanding Educator of the Year” at San Diego State University in California.
1994
WENDY M. CUMMINS (BA, Languages and Cultures) joined Henriott Group, Inc. as an employee benefits consultant.

1995
ALEX INTERMILL (BA, Political Science) has been named chair of the Indiana State Bar Association’s Environment Law Section for 2012–13.

JENNIFER LANCASTER (BA, Political Science) published The Tao of Martha: My Year of Living; Or, Why I’m Never Getting All That Glitter Off of the Dog (New American Library/Penguin).

JENNIFER PING (BA, History), principal of Bose Public Affairs Group, joined the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Board.

ALYSE VORDERMARK (BA, Communication) cofounded Branches Furniture, which specializes in upcycled furniture and accessories in Sherwood, OR.

1997
STEVEN STOFFERAHN (MA; PhD 2003, History) received the 2012 Community-Based Learning and Scholarship Award, which recognizes outstanding faculty whose community service joins their academic goals and activities with community issues. He is an assistant professor of history at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, IN.

1999
JOSHUA A. MILES (BA, Communication) was named one of the Indiana Business Journal’s “40 Under 40” for 2013. He is the owner of Miles Design in Indianapolis, IN.

2000
NICOLE VISNYAK (BA, Communication) is the senior project manager within the technology division of FTI Consulting in Chicago, IL.

2001
LORI J. BAUERLE (BA, Industrial Design) is a furniture specialist for Cardinal Copier Solutions in Lafayette, IN.

SUSANNA CALKINS (PhD, History), published her first historical fiction novel, A Murder at Rosamund’s Gate (Minotaur Books).

MICHAEL S. BOTTOFF (BA, English) is the technology administrative manager for Hamilton Southeastern Schools in Fishers, IN.

LAURA EDWARDS (BA, History) became the director of the IU Health Arnett Foundation in Lafayette, IN, and joined the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Board.

RYAN MICHAEL MCDANIEL (BA, Organizational Communication) was promoted to managing director of education and life sciences at Huron Consulting Group in Chicago, IL.

2002
STEPHANY RECHTSTEINER (BA, Communication) received her certification in volunteer administration, the only international professional certification in the field of volunteer resources management.

2004
JEWANNA CARVER (BA, Communication) accepted the position of senior writer for principal gifts at Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago, IL.

SCOTT KELLER (BA, Political Science) is the chief counsel for U.S. Senator Ted Cruz.

KATHERINE WETZEL (BA, Communication) was promoted to vice president of technology for Porter Novelli in Atlanta, GA.

2005
KENYA DAVIS-HAYES (PhD, American Studies), associate professor of American history at California Baptist University, was added to the media agency Past Preservers, which represents academics in the area of film, television, and documentaries.

EMILY FREED (BA, Communication) was promoted to regulatory affairs manager at Stryker Medical, a division of Stryker Corporation in Portage, MI.

STEPHANIE PEMBERTON (BA, Communication) was promoted to senior director of marketing for the Indianapolis Colts in Indianapolis, IN.

MICHAEL S. RHINEHART (BA, English) is an attorney and was named to the 2013 Illinois “Rising Stars” list.

2007
ANGIE KLINK (BA 1981, Communication) was awarded an American Advertising Federation Gold ADDY Award for her book, Main Street Mainstay, which she wrote for Lafayette Savings Bank in Lafayette, IN. Her next book, The Dean’s Bible (Purdue Press, 2014), will detail how five women, each a legendary dean of women or dean of students, successively nurtured students at Purdue from the 1930s to 1990s. Focused on changing attitudes at Purdue, the book also opens a window onto cultural change in America as a whole, exploring how each of the Deans participated nationally in the quest for equality—from the suppressive 1950s, the awakening sixties, women’s liberation, Title IX, 1980s AIDS and alcohol, to the impact of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Photo courtesy of Angie Klink.
2006
MARGUERITE ALLEGRETTI (BA, Communication) is an alumni relations specialist for Kendall College in Chicago, IL.

RYAN HEATER (BA, History) was named legislative director for Lt. Governor Sue Ellspermann of Indianapolis, IN.

SAMUEL LONDON (PhD, History) was promoted to associate professor with tenure, and appointed chair of the Department of History and Political Science at Oakwood University in Huntsville, AL.

2007
JAMES BUSS (PhD, History) published *Winning the West with Words: Language and Conquest in the Lower Great Lakes* (University of Oklahoma Press, 2011).

2008
BRITTANY J. FETZER (BA, Communication) completed the 2012 Wisconsin Ironman.

ANDREW KOCH (PhD, American Studies) was named an ACE Fellow at the John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education, where he is Executive Vice President.

KATIE THOMAS (BA, Political Science) joined Indiana's Soybean Alliance as a public affairs program manager.

DANIEL W. WILLIAMS (MA, History) was named the winner of the 2012 L. Ray Buckendale Lecture Award from SAE International.

2009
WHITNEY EMMERT (BA, History) was named group coordinator by Little Star Center in Carmel, IN.

ERICA HAGUE (BA, History) received the National Council on Public History’s 2012 Student Project Award at the OAH/NCPH conference in Milwaukee, WI.

2010
RONALD A. JOHNSON (PhD, History) was selected as the International Studies “Professor of the Year” by students and faculty of the Center for International Studies at Texas State University in San Marcos, TX.

RAY KROHN (PhD, History) accepted a position as lecturer in the Department of History at Boise State University in Boise, ID.

RYAN L. NUGENT (BA, Communication) is an inbound relationship manager for Groupon in Chicago, IL.

ERICA MORIN (PhD, History) accepted a position as a visiting assistant professor in the Department of History at Texas Tech University in Lubbock, TX.

DANIEL VAN DE VOORDE (BA, Communication) became the project coordinator for Strata Decision Technology in Chicago, Illinois, and joined the College of Liberal Arts Alumni Board.

WILLIAM VOGEL (BA, History) was named one of fifteen winners of the 2012 Gilder Lehman History Scholar Award, which recognizes outstanding graduating college seniors who have demonstrated academic and extracurricular excellence in American history or American studies.

Are you a fan of Liberal Arts at Purdue on Facebook? Do you follow @PurdueLibArts on Twitter? Both provide timely updates about Liberal Arts in the news, faculty research, student activities, and special events.

Be linked in to the College of Liberal Arts! Join the CLA group on LinkedIn and connect with fellow alumni and students to discuss jobs, internships, and careers.

MOVED? NEW CAREER? NEW NAME? To update your information with the College of Liberal Arts or to submit personal or professional accomplishments for this section of THINK Magazine, go to www.cla.purdue.edu/alumni and click on Alumni Information Update.
Honoring Our Alumnae

Two CLA alumnae received Honorary Doctorates from the College of Liberal Arts at Purdue during the May 2013 commencement ceremonies.

JANE CHANCE (BA 1967, English; HDR, 2013, CLA) Dr. Chance is the Andrew W. Mellon Distinguished Chair of English (Emerita) at Rice University in Texas. She taught medieval literature, medievalism, and the study of women and gender there from 1973—when she became the first tenure-track woman to teach in her department—until 2011. She also taught at the University of Saskatchewan-Saskatoon and was an honorary research fellow at University College, University of London. She has published 22 books and more than 100 articles, reviews, and poems.

KATHY (FITCHEY) CALVIN (BS 1971, Speech Pathology & Audiology; HDR 2013, CLA) Dr. Calvin, also a recipient of the College of Liberal Arts Distinguished Alumni Award, is the CEO of the United Nations Foundation. Calvin joined the foundation as chief operating officer in 2003, was promoted to CEO in 2009, and was named president and CEO in 2013. Prior to joining the UN Foundation, she was president of the AOL Time Warner Foundation. Her innovative work in the philanthropy and international non-governmental organizations sector was featured by the New York Times in 2011.

Marianne Boruch, the Purdue professor of English who won the prestigious Kingsley Tufts Poetry Award for 2013 (see page 4) gave the keynote address at the University’s 2013 summer commencement ceremony. Photo by Mark Simons.
PROGRESSIONS

Distinguished Alumni

For more than 25 years, the College of Liberal Arts has recognized the outstanding achievements of its graduates through the Distinguished Alumni Awards program. Recipients of this award have made significant contributions to society, and their accomplishments, affiliations, and careers honor the legacy of excellence at Purdue University and the College of Liberal Arts.

Throughout her career, Diane Arenberg has followed where her artistic instincts led. She cofounded her own interior design firm, Commercial Design Consultants, in Milwaukee, but after ten years in the field, decided to study art therapy and alcoholism counseling, joining a hospital drug and alcohol rehab unit. The pull to become a fine artist eventually led her to study pastels, oil painting, jewelry design, and ceramic sculpture with several artists she admires. She opened Art Escape Gallery and Compound with Purdue alumna Kyle Zubatsky, exhibiting their work and more than 60 other artists. Arenberg’s work can currently be seen at galleries in Wisconsin and New Mexico.

Her long volunteer history includes work with the Child Abuse Prevention Fund of the Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin. She is also a board member of the Ghost Ranch Education and Retreat Center in Abiquiu, New Mexico, where Georgia O’Keeffe lived and painted for many years.

Diane Arenberg
BA 1976, Patti and Rusty Rueff School of Visual and Performing Arts, Interior Design

Sara B. Cobb has more than 30 years of experience in fundraising and development at universities, corporations, and foundations, applying her law degree from Indiana University to understand the complexities of a variety of vehicles for charitable giving. Passionate about philanthropy and encouraging students to achieve their goals, she is vice president of education for Lilly Endowment, Inc., where she oversees a broad range of grantmaking activities in elementary, secondary, and higher education to help improve Indiana’s educational attainment levels. She has previously worked in advancement for the University of Denver, San Joaquin College of Law, and the Indiana University Foundation, and as the coordinator for corporate contributions at Procter and Gamble Company.

Cobb is a board member of the Arthur Jordan Foundation and St. Luke’s United Methodist church, and a committee member with the United Way of Central Indiana.

Sara B. Cobb
BA 1980, Political Science
Named to Advertising Age’s "A-list" and "Women to Watch List," Mary Murcko has built a successful career in print and digital media. As president of national sales for Gannett Co., Inc., she is responsible for national advertising revenue across Gannett’s digital and publishing businesses, including USA Today, USA Weekend, Gannett Digital, and U.S. Community Publishing. She previously worked in a variety of positions for Rodale, Inc., the publisher of such popular magazines as Men’s Health, Women’s Health, Prevention, and Runner’s World. She has also served as publisher for W, Elegant Bride, and Hachette Filipacchi Post, where she launched three magazines in the Thai market.

Her dedication to women’s empowerment extends to her community service, where she is an active board member of the YWCA in New York City. She also serves on the board of Cosmetic Executive Women and is a member of the Advertising Women of New York.

Combining his experience in government service with technological expertise and management skills, Andrew Maner has worked in a variety of sectors related to national security. Currently IBM’s Global Business Services Public Sector Practice Federal Leader, he provides solutions for federal clients in data center consolidation, predictive analytics, enterprise content management, and smarter buildings and infrastructure.

He has served in several capacities in both Bush administrations, as an assistant to the U.N. envoy to Somalia, and in U.S. Customs and the Department of Homeland Security. He earned his MBA from Northwestern University and has worked for tech companies ICG Commerce, Aligne, Inc., and his firm, National Interest Security Company, where as CEO he managed its acquisition by IBM.

Maner is the chairman of the CLA Dean’s Advisory Council and serves on the board of No Greater Sacrifice, a nonprofit that dedicates scholarships for higher education to families of fallen and wounded Service members.

In 2013–14 we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the birth of the School of Humanities, Social Science, and Education (HSSE), the forerunner of the College of Liberal Arts. This historic event marked the moment that liberal arts began to build its future as Purdue’s center for excellence in the arts, humanities, and social sciences.

Our alumni vividly demonstrate bold leadership in many fields and communities across the globe—so we’ve asked 50 of them to tell us more about their careers and lives. We hope you enjoy getting to know these fascinating and inspiring CLA alumni. You can find their profiles at cla.purdue.edu/alumni; simply click on “50 Alumni.”
Students rally at a mock political convention on campus in 1964. Mock-P, a popular student activity, was a campus version of political party convention activities. Students considered candidates from both parties and nominated a president and vice-president for the “Purduvian” ticket. Photo from 1964 Debris yearbook courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Purdue University Libraries.
TRANSFORMATIONAL GIFT FOR HISTORY

Purdue’s Department of History will develop a niche specialty in the history of science, technology, and medicine, thanks to a donor’s gift and strategic investment by the University.

The anonymous donor is giving $3 million to fund professorships in the history of science and history of medicine. The gift will be matched by $3 million in discretionary funds authorized by Purdue President Mitch Daniels. The new professorships will be combined with history of technology courses already taught in the Department of History.

“Our teaching and research in the history of science and medicine will provide a framework in which discoveries in these disciplines can be best envisioned, understood, and implemented for the benefit of individuals and society and help improve the quality of life and the impact of discovery,” said Department Head Douglas Hurt.