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# Williams



WILLIAMS WOMEN  
40 years of  
coeducation



**WILLIAMS' GRADUATING SENIORS**

had much to be proud of on June 7, the college's 226th commencement. Social media lit up with congratulatory messages, including "Go out and conquer the world!" "All the hard work paid off!" and "#proudmom." See more tweets, photos and videos at <http://bit.ly/Wms15>.









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# Williams



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Adam Falk

What we celebrate most deeply aren't the ways in which Williams has changed women, but rather how women have changed Williams.

## Women at Williams

Forty years ago, when the Class of 1975 walked across the Commencement stage, among its members were the first women to have spent their entire undergraduate years here. The 40th anniversary of coeducation is an occasion well worth honoring, and we've done that in this issue of *Williams Magazine*, profiling extraordinary Ephs drawn from the decades since. I'm inspired by the accomplishments of these women and by how well they exemplify our aspirations for all our graduates. I hope you'll be, too.

In marking four decades of coeducation, what we celebrate most deeply aren't the ways in which Williams has changed women, but rather how women have changed Williams. Today it's simply impossible to imagine this place without all of humanity represented here, both women and men (and, importantly, those who do not identify within the gender binary).

And yet, as with other ways in which the Williams student body has evolved over the years, what feels like an inevitable outcome was neither inevitable, nor is it a final outcome. There was a time when the presence of women as full members of our student body was unimaginable, the thought greeted with bewilderment and skepticism at best, with derision and hostility at worst. The groundwork for coeducation was laid largely during the presidency of Jack Sawyer, when fraternities were eliminated and the college took full responsibility for the housing and feeding of students.

Then, in 1971, 130 or so women arrived as first-years, following a trickle of exchange and then transfer students in the years before. Many of those pioneers speak of being warmly welcomed. Others, though, encountered resistance, as the college's entire community came unevenly to accept or accommodate our new student body. An extraordinary evolution would

occur at Williams over that decade; by its end, many students were barely aware that Williams had ever been a male-only institution.

Today, our student body is about half female, and our 40 years of alumnae have had a profoundly positive influence on Williams and the wider world. I'm also pleased to note that women now hold a majority of positions in the college's senior administrative team. And while I realize I'm currently standing in the way of this one, I expect Williams will see a woman president before too long.

Yet we certainly haven't finished the work of making Williams entirely inclusive to women. We renew the student body every four years, but to do so with a faculty takes at least a generation. While we have achieved approximate gender balance among our junior faculty, the legacy of a heavily male professoriate remains and is reflected in our senior ranks. And while women students and faculty are well represented throughout most of our curriculum, there remain fields such as physics and computer science where the numbers of women, both nationally and at Williams, do not reflect our nation's distribution of talent or potential interest.

There is no doubt, as well, that there's still considerable work to do to ensure that our campus is wholly supportive of women, and, more broadly, that Williams is experienced as fully inclusive by every member of our community.

Celebrating the women of Williams needn't wait until there's nothing left to be done. This anniversary represents and reminds us of a truly remarkable evolution. As a beneficiary of such change—and as a feminist—I'm deeply grateful to those who have worked so hard for so long, for they make possible the extraordinary Williams of 2015.

—Adam Falk, president

## STANDING STRONG



Thank you for “Standing Strong” (spring 2015). Given the demands of the “hook-up culture” (high expectations, low commitment), I believe

the following two preventive measures will enrich the community-driven approach to ending sexual assault. First, two years before Meg Bossong ’05 arrived at Williams as a freshman, I was profoundly moved by the First Days orientation dating-violence testimony. The afternoon before the evening “Rape is Wrong” program, I was scandalized by influential men on campus joking that certain “no’s” give consent. Just as scripture says, “Let your ‘yes’ mean yes and your ‘no’ mean no,” so, too, campus initiatives must empower non-consenting students to choose to avoid dangerous situations. Second, ending sexual misconduct will have to burst the bubble that one’s private flaws “aren’t hurting anyone.” The rise of such violence is a scourge (as President Adam Falk says), revealing the social impact of substance abuse and pornographic lifestyles. It’s on us.

—The Rev. Mike Sheehan ’03, Roxbury, Mass.

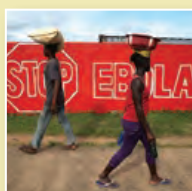
While it is nice—and even astounding—to see the number of administrators and good-hearted student groups trying to help victims of sexual assault, I wish that Caroline Rothstein’s article had told us more about what is being done to combat the causes of sexual assault. Rothstein briefly tells us of one freshman who refused to take advantage of a drunken woman, for example, but does not discuss how often sexual violence is closely connected to alcohol abuse. Until I have a better sense of how the college is dealing with alcohol issues and other root causes, I cannot help but feel that—even though sexual violence is greater among the same age group who are not in college—all those different administrators and student groups pictured in *Williams Magazine* will be far busier than they ought to be.

—Peter K. Frost, the Frederick L. Schuman Professor International Studies, Emeritus, Williamstown, Mass.

Your latest issue of *Williams Magazine* was terrific—and much needed. I got some hints from my students during Winter Study that the social situation needs to be remedied. In February, I was giving talks in Florida and met a well-known psychiatrist. She said that many of her clients are young women, whom she referred to as “victims of the hook-up scene” on many college campuses. She said these women are shattered and bewildered by what they have been through and are struggling to reshape their lives and their identities.

—Donald P. Gregg ’51, Armonk, N.Y.

## HOT ZONE



Thank you so much for your article “Dispatch from the Hot Zone” (spring 2015). It is wonderful to see the commitment of so many

Ephs in battling the Ebola epidemic in West Africa, and they deserve our deepest thanks. It should also be noted, however, that waterborne illnesses throughout Africa (and Asia and Latin America) exact a far greater toll on the population, especially among children, than Ebola. In fact, since 2000, more people have died of waterborne illnesses than from all wars combined. It is going to require a lasting commitment on all of our parts to ensure that everyone has access to what we, living in the U.S., take so much for granted—clean water.

—David H. Albert ’71, board chairman, Friendly Water for the World, Olympia, Wash.

## THE ITALIAN JOB



I was fascinated by “The Italian Job” (spring 2015), which recounts the collaboration between Professor E.J. Johnson ’59 and

his student Grace McEniry ’12 in arriving at a stunning Renaissance architectural discovery. I was fascinated—but not completely surprised. E.J.’s first year as a professor at Williams was my senior year, and although we had the great and fabled triumvirate of Faison, Stoddard and Pierson in our art history department, E.J. was an inspiring teacher and fresh face. He made Alberti, Brunelleschi and

Bramante come alive for us, and clearly he has not let up 50 years later. Very exciting! Thank you, E.J.—and thank you, Grace!

—David Tunick ’66, Stamford, Conn.

I want to compliment you and writer Abe Loomis on your recent piece on E.J. Johnson’s ’59 discovery of Serlio’s ephemeral theater design and the role played by Grace McEniry ’12 in its reconstruction. Fascinating!

—Dennis Geronimus ’95, New York, N.Y.

## SO MUCH, SO INTERESTING

I always read the Williams magazine when it arrives in my mailbox. This time (spring 2015) I still have not finished it all. So much. So interesting.

So big a change in content. Wow. Congratulations! —Peter Hoyt ’66, St. Louis, Mo.

## THANK YOU, CLASS OF ’60

Four years later, I still reflect often on the depth and impact of my experiences as a Class of 1960 Scholar for the art department in 2010-11. The program provided a critical space for focused and meaningful student leadership, and I am extremely grateful to the Class of 1960 for generously providing the funding that makes it all possible. I noticed in the spring 2015 issue (“Harrington Honored for Outstanding Research”) that the honor is referred to as the “Class of 1960s Scholar.” In fact, it is specifically the Class of 1960 that assembled and funded the initiative.

—Laura Staugaitis ’11, Denver, Colo.

EDITOR’S NOTE: *Our apologies for the error.*



*Williams Magazine* welcomes letters about articles or items published in recent issues. Please send comments to [magazine@williams.edu](mailto:magazine@williams.edu) or

Williams Magazine, P.O. Box 676, Williamstown, MA 01267-0676. Letters may be edited for clarity and space.





### BON VOYAGE, CLASS OF '15!

On June 7, Williams held its 226th Commencement, celebrating the Class of 2015. During the ceremony, President Adam Falk (bottom right, in purple) gave honorary degrees to (from left) Nobel Prize-winning chemist Mario J. Molina, Xerox Chairman and CEO Ursula M. Burns, two-term former Massachusetts Gov. Deval L. Patrick and writer Gish Jen. Burns (top, second from left) then gave the Commencement Address, telling the soon-to-be graduates: "You have a choice to make. You now have a Williams degree, which is your ticket to success and comfort. You can wring your hands over the sad state of affairs [in the world] or you can become part of the crusade for continuous change. You can reap the benefits of the sacrifices of those who have gone on before you, or you can honor the memory of those on whose shoulders you stand today and help build a better tomorrow. I suggest that you have no choice at all. In fact, when you enrolled at Williams, you already cast your vote. This noble institution does not graduate people content to sit on the sidelines."

### Williams Welcomes New Board Members

The college welcomed **Timothy A. Barrows '79**, **Jeffrey S. Harleston '82** and **Valerie A. DiFebo '84** to its Board of Trustees on July 1. They are joined by **Gregory H. Woods '91**, who stepped down after a brief term as alumni trustee in 2012, after he was appointed general counsel at the U.S. Department of Energy.

Barrows is a general partner at Matrix Partners, a private venture capital firm focused on early-stage investments in technology startups. He's a member of the Williams board's investment committee and

is an associate agent and chair of leadership gifts for the Class of 1979.

Harleston, who was elected by the Society of Alumni and appointed by the trustees, is executive vice president of business and legal affairs for Universal Music Group's North American division. He's also on the board of the Recording Industry of North America and SoundExchange, a digital performance rights organization. He's served the college as an admission volunteer for the Windows on Williams program, as a mentor to students and alumni, and as a class agent.

DiFebo is CEO of Deutsch Inc.'s New York office. One of three members of the

senior management team, she's been at Deutsch since 1992 and serves on the board of the Ad Council of New York. She is a Williams associate class agent and was class president, head agent and vice chair of the Alumni Fund.

Woods is a judge for the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York. He has served as an alumni administrator for the Tyng Bequest and hosted regional association gatherings.

**Patrick F. Bassett '70**, **Eric L. Cochran '82**, **Jonathan A. Kraft '86** and **Robin Powell Mandjes '82** stepped down from the board when their terms ended in late June.



## In Memoriam

“He was a large presence in our lives. ... It’s hard to imagine Williams without Jimmy, and his name ... and his memory ... will be there forever.”

President Adam Falk in a post on the *Wall Street Journal*’s MoneyBeat blog about the June 17 passing of James B. Lee ’75, a current Williams trustee, at the age of 62.



A vice chairman of J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., Lee was a deeply engaged volunteer and supporter of Williams. The Lee Family Track, part of the Weston Athletic Complex dedicated last fall, is named for his family, as is the Lee Snack Bar in the Paresky Center. Among many Williams friends and family members, he is survived by his wife Beth ’75 and their children Lexi ’04, Jamie ’06 and Izzy ’12.

## Leight Receives \$1.3M Dept. of Labor Grant

Economics professor Jessica Leight has received a \$1.3 million Department of Labor grant to study whether life-skills training and mentoring by older female role models in Rajasthan, India, can influence girls’ participation in education and the workforce. Leight will travel to India throughout the four-year grant period, and her research will be shared with policymakers and stakeholders there.

## Smith-Evans ’99 New VP for Institutional Diversity & Equity

**Leticia Smith-Evans** ’99 joined the campus community July 1 as vice president for institutional diversity and equity, succeeding **Mike Reed** ’75, who’s now a VP at Dickinson College.

In this role, she’ll lead efforts to develop programs and policies strengthening Williams’ commitment to equity and inclusion. She’ll also support the college’s work to diversify its faculty and staff and provide leadership nationally, including within the consortium of Liberal Arts Diversity Officers.

Smith-Evans previously served as interim director of the Education Practice of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund Inc. (LDF), working for racial justice within communities and managing the education practice of an organization that’s played a historic role



in the advancement of equity.

In announcing her appointment to Williams, President Adam Falk stated: “Her colleagues at LDF and elsewhere speak powerfully of Leticia’s ability to advocate

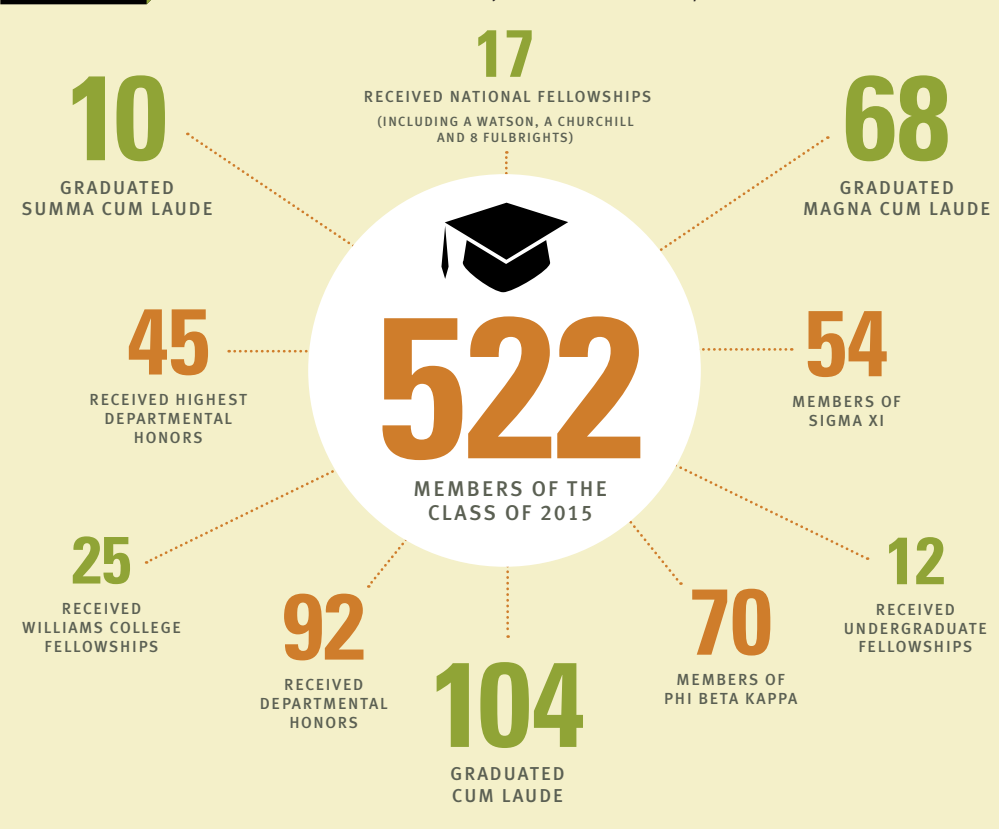
change, think strategically, build relationships and roll up her sleeves to get things done.”

Smith-Evans earned a Ph.D. in educational leadership and policy analysis and a law degree at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She is an active member of the Williams Black Alumni Network.

## BY THE NUM3ERS

### With Honors

While Williams’ 226th Commencement marked the start of the next chapter for the Class of 2015, it was also a time to pause and reflect on all that the students had achieved. It’s impossible to enumerate every accomplishment over the course of four years, but here’s a snapshot.





## Williams Wins 18th Director's Cup

Williams won the Learfield Sports Director's Cup in June—its 18th in the cup's 20-year history. The award is presented by the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA) to the best all-around sports program based on team performance.

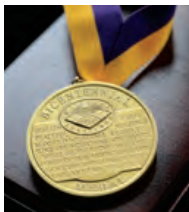
After trailing in fall competition, a strong spring season put Williams ahead of Johns Hopkins University by 36.25 points to win.



Overall, the Ephs scored 1,053 points in 15 sports (nine women's and six men's), with 10 of those teams finishing in the top 10 nationally. The cup was presented in June at NACDA's annual convention in Orlando, Fla.

The cup "serves as a fitting tribute to our student athletes' efforts and our coaches' dedication to the education of students at Williams," says Bud Fisher, acting athletic director.

## Alumni to Be Honored for Distinguished Achievement



Five alumni will receive Bicentennial Medals for "distinguished achievement in any field of endeavor" during Convocation Sept. 19.

This year's recipients are: **Mike Curtin '86**, CEO of D.C. Central Kitchen, whose groundbreaking programs train formerly homeless and incarcerated adults for culinary careers and provide millions of healthy meals to at-risk populations; **Jonathan Fielding '64**, whose academic research and leadership in public health have improved longevity and quality of life for millions; **Kristin Forbes '92**, MIT Sloan School of Management professor and external member of the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee, whose research and insights inform economic policy; **Hernando Garzon '84**, director of Kaiser Permanente's Global Health Program and leader of an Ebola response team in West Africa—his 20th humanitarian and crisis relief mission; and **Claudia Rankine '86**, acclaimed poet and professor, whose book-length poem about race and imagination, *Citizen: An American Lyric*, won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Poetry.



High Lawn Farm



Nitty Gritty Grain Co.



## Follow the Money

Dean of the Faculty Denise Buell details what Williams spends per student each year—and exactly how we spend it—in the video "College: What It's Worth, What We Value." While the concept of Mark Hopkins and the log "may sound simple," she says, "it's definitely not cheap." Learn why at <http://bit.ly/1GawgD6>.





PHOTOS BY THE OFFICE OF COMMUNICATIONS

A CLOSER  
LOOK

## From Farm to Dining Hall

It's 6 p.m. on a sunny day near the end of the spring semester. Just as High Lawn Farm Manager Roberto Laurens is ending his shift, Yvette Belleau (above), a prep and service attendant at Williams' Paresky Center, is beginning hers.

Belleau is getting ready to make gelato for the Lee Snack Bar—and the main ingredients, milk and cream, come from High Lawn, just 30 miles from campus.

Williams' relationship with the farm is just one example of its commitment to local sourcing. Today some 13.75 percent of the dining services food budget is devoted to food grown within 100 miles of campus, says Director Robert Volpi.

To name just a few suppliers: Black River Produce in North Springfield, Vt., provides grass-fed beef for chopped meat; Nitty Gritty Grain Co. in Charlotte, Vt., supplies flour for the '82 Grill's pizza dough; Peace Valley Farm in Williamstown is the source for many fruits and vegetables; and Gammelgarden Creamery in Pownal, Vt., makes a campus favorite—Skyr yogurt.

Meanwhile, composted food waste goes back to local farms every two to three months.

Buying local can be more expensive than working with a conglomerate food supplier, Volpi says. But the benefits go beyond getting the best-quality produce. It's about supporting sustainable growing and transportation practices as well as the local economy, in which agriculture has always been prominently represented.

"We want to preserve the environment—we live in a beautiful area," Volpi says. "Being a partner makes that commitment to keeping what we have in place."

High Lawn, for instance, has produced hormone-free milk from Jersey cows for more than 100 years—but Williams became one of its first major clients in 2002 and was the first college to buy all its milk from the farm. Now, High Lawn supplies schools like MIT and Wellesley College as well as New England supermarkets and coffee shops. The farm opened a new, larger processing facility this year to keep up with demand.

Working with Williams "opened our doors to the world," says Laurens. "For years, the only school we had was Williams College. ... It was essential—a first push to get out and try to compete."

The college's Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives has been an important link, connecting dining services with local farms and suppliers. "The direct relationship is really valuable," says Brent Wasser, who, until May, served as the center's sustainable food and agriculture program manager. "I think it's important to consider how to foster that kind of resiliency ... so there's not complete dependence on food from far away."

And, of course, fresher food tastes better—the less time spent on a truck, the better the taste. "If you're going to the Lee Snack Bar and buying a burger," says Volpi, "It's going to be a *good* burger."

—Francesca Shanks



ON THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY  
OF COEDUCATION AT WILLIAMS,  
WE CELEBRATE ALUMNAE ACROSS  
THE DECADES WHO'VE MADE  
A DIFFERENCE ON CAMPUS AND  
IN THE WORLD.

# WILLIAMS women

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STORY BY NANCY PICK   PORTRAITS BY PETER STRAIN

When Williams opened its doors to women in the late 1960s and early 1970s, news reports speculated about what would happen. Would women be a “civilizing influence” as the *Washington Post* stated? Would they be as inquisitive as men? Would they flock to art and English classes to become more well-rounded wives and mothers? Would they be, as one male student said in the *Williams Record*, “an invading horde?”

Looking at the accomplishments of Williams women of that era, and ever since, turns those questions on their heads. Whether it's A. Clayton Spencer '77, who's changing the face of higher education, or Cheryl (Robinson) Joyner '85, a top senior entertainment executive in an industry where women are rare, or neuroscientist Elissa Hallem '99, whose work on parasitic nematodes won her a MacArthur Foundation Fellowship (the so-called “Genius Grant”), or Elissa Shevinsky '01, a serial tech entrepreneur who publicly called out sexism in her industry—each generation of women has forged a new path.

In celebration of the 40th anniversary of the graduation of the first women admitted to Williams as first-year students, the magazine takes a look at the lives and the impact of these Ephs—one from each decade—and that of one of the newest additions to their ranks. As she ventures beyond Williams, Sara Fatima Hassan '15 plans to continue the work she began as a student on campus, breaking down stereotypes of Muslims and engaging with social and environmental justice.



QUALIFIED

SOMETHING I WAS DRIVEN TO DO

INTOLERANCE

WOMEN

DESERVE  
A CHANCE AT A



IS A  
REAL  
FACTOR

I LOVE

WILLIAMS  
EDUCATION



MY COMPANIES  
STAND UP FOR  
A BILLION

PEOPLE IN THE  
WORLD

TOUGH  
SKIN AND  
NERVES  
OF STEEL



NEED  
PURSUE  
EDUCATION SINCE



TO  
MAKE  
A DIFFERENCE  
ORIGINAL



## A. Clayton Spencer '77

WHEN SHE WAS GROWING UP IN NORTH CAROLINA, Clayton Spencer felt she had two paths to choose from: that of her aunt, an accomplished academic who never married, or that of her equally brilliant mother, who married and raised four children but didn't finish her Ph.D.

"It didn't seem very fair to me," Spencer says. "After all, men didn't have to choose. But if I had to make a choice, I wanted to be at the table, doing the interesting work."

She attended Phillips Exeter Academy in its first fully coeducational year and was thrilled when Williams began accepting women in 1971.

"I felt that the doors were opening," she says. "I wasn't the one pushing them, but I couldn't wait to walk through. It was inconceivable to me that I wouldn't have the same opportunities as boys and men."

At Williams, it took Spencer a while to find her niche. There were few female role models among the faculty, but religion professors Mark Taylor and Binks Little became mentors and lifelong friends.

As a college student in the 1970s, she felt the fire of the women's movement. "I wasn't burying myself in Gloria Steinem and Betty Friedan, but that brand of feminism was very much in the air," she says. The era's watchword stated, "The personal is the political"—and for Spencer, that turned out to be true.

"My notion as a very naïve 18-year-old was, 'Thank God we've got this equality problem solved,'" she says. "College had opened up for me just in the nick of time, and I thought that when I got married, everything would be even—seven, split right down the middle. This was my fundamental error, thinking that a switch had been flipped rather than understanding that feminism was a broad cultural movement that would require decades."

After Williams, Spencer went on to study religion at Oxford and Harvard and then to Yale Law School. In 1989, she became an assistant U.S. attorney in Boston, prosecuting federal criminal cases in "the most male place I've ever worked." She then worked as chief education counsel for U.S. Sen. Edward M. Kennedy of

Massachusetts. In that role, Spencer was central to developing the federal government's direct student loan program.

She continued to push for major changes in financial aid policy at Harvard, where she became a high-ranking administrator in 2005. Her reforms altered how the top Ivy League schools handle aid for families in a large swath of the middle of the U.S. income distribution. She became vice president for policy for President Lawrence Summers and, later, for Drew Faust, Harvard's first female president.

Spencer also served as a Williams trustee from 2003 until 2012, when she became president of Bates College.

Ultimately, Spencer says she followed neither the path of her aunt nor her mother. She devoted herself to her career and her two children, with little time for anything else. She and her equally career-minded husband divorced after 20 years of marriage.

She tells young women, in particular: "Pick the field that unleashes your creativity. Find a partner you're wild about. And then have some very fundamental discussions with that partner about your values and how you will support each other. As Freud and Tolstoy said, there are two things you need to get right in life: work and love. You've got to sort these things out early and keep working at them every day."





## Cheryl (Robinson) Joyner '85

AT WILLIAMS, CHERYL (ROBINSON) JOYNER USED TO UNWIND IN THE COMMON ROOM OF HER DORM, watching videos of Prince, Madonna and Bruce Springsteen on the fledgling MTV network.

Within a few years, she was creating global marketing campaigns and producing concerts for those same artists and many more. Today she's a senior entertainment executive in a field where top-ranking women are still rare.

Looking back, she says, "I did not realize the industry was male-dominated, nor did I really care, for I fully expected to succeed."

Joyner says she struggled to find her voice in college. Only 16 when she arrived on campus, she came from an inner-city high school in New Jersey. At Williams, she was one of about 20 black students in her graduating class. "I felt like a fish out of water that landed in the Purple Valley," she says with a laugh.

Despite coeducation, the college still hadn't yet shaken its all-male roots. "It seemed like the frat houses had merely closed and tried to rejigger themselves to fit women," she says. Still, the challenges prepared her for what lay ahead in a business that requires "very tough skin and nerves of steel."

She credits two leaders of the Black Student Union, Keith Hopps '83 and David Bowen '83, with helping her transition to college and beyond. But she had no shortage of initiative. She once waited for Arthur Levitt Jr. '52 to exit a meeting of Williams' Board of Trustees, introduced herself and asked if she could intern with him at the American Stock Exchange. He hired her on the spot.

MTV was only a few years old when Joyner watched its videos in her dorm, and she found the channel "keenly tuned in to what I valued in culture at the time, namely music and style." She decided that "contributing to society within the creative community was something I was driven to do."

Joyner graduated from Williams at 19 and became one of the youngest students accepted to Harvard Business School. From there, she made a name for herself developing marketing strategy for musicians represented by major labels including Sony Music, Warner Brothers Records and Universal Music Group.

She went on to serve as vice president of alliances for Live Nation music and events,

executing multimillion-dollar entertainment contracts for companies including American Express, GEICO and Major League Baseball.

This year she became chairman of her own company, PARA Music Group, which sources music from 144 countries for use in film, TV and ad campaigns. A typical day finds her immersed in a major project with rapper Timbaland, the executive music producer for Fox TV's smash hit *Empire*.

"I've now worked with and had great relationships with every major recording

artist and entertainment executive on the planet whom I ever admired while I was a student," Joyner says. "I am also proud to say that I have helped and mentored many people along the way.

"I think careers in the entertainment industry are well-suited for Williams grads because their liberal arts education makes them uniquely prepared to think fast on their feet," she says. "In my business, no two days are the same, and you have to wear many hats in order to succeed."





## Elissa Hallem '99

IN SEPTEMBER 2012, ELISSA HALLEM RETURNED TO HER OFFICE FROM HER NEUROBIOLOGY LAB AT UCLA AND FOUND DOZENS OF MISSED CALLS AND EMAILS. She wondered what on earth was happening—until she saw an email from a macfound.org address. The MacArthur Foundation had awarded her one of that year's 23 fellowships for her work on parasitic nematodes.

Hallem's lab works on understanding how parasitic worms detect odors to find hosts. Worldwide, some 20 percent of the human population is infected with various parasitic worms, and the problem is particularly severe in the tropics. In announcing the five-year, \$500,000 award, to be used however Hallem wished, the foundation emphasized her potential to improve global health. Her discoveries, the foundation stated, may lead to drugs or behavioral changes that could "eventually reduce the scourge of parasitic infections in humans."

Until that day, being selected for such an honor was "the furthest thing from my mind," Hallem says. "What meant a lot to me is that they award the MacArthur to individuals who they feel have the potential to make a difference in their field, as opposed to simply recognizing something they've already done. This validated both my work as a scientist and my career path."

Hallem had an inkling early on that she might become a scientist. In eighth grade, she participated in a summer program run by the Johns Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth, where she learned about neuroscience. "After the first homework assignment," she says, "the teacher said, 'You seem really interested and good at this. You should think about working in a lab.'"

In high school she did just that, working in the UCLA neurobiology lab of Professor Lawrence Zipursky, a family friend, whose research focused on the visual system of *Drosophila*, the fruit fly.

By the time Hallem arrived at Williams, she was already thinking neuroscience. At the time, the biology faculty had more men than women, but its female professors were quite accomplished. Hallem's mentors included biochemist Nancy Roseman, who held several administrative posts at Williams

before becoming the first female president of Dickinson College in 2013, and molecular biologist Wendy Raymond, who worked at Williams to increase access to STEM fields and is now vice president of academic affairs and dean of faculty at Davidson College.

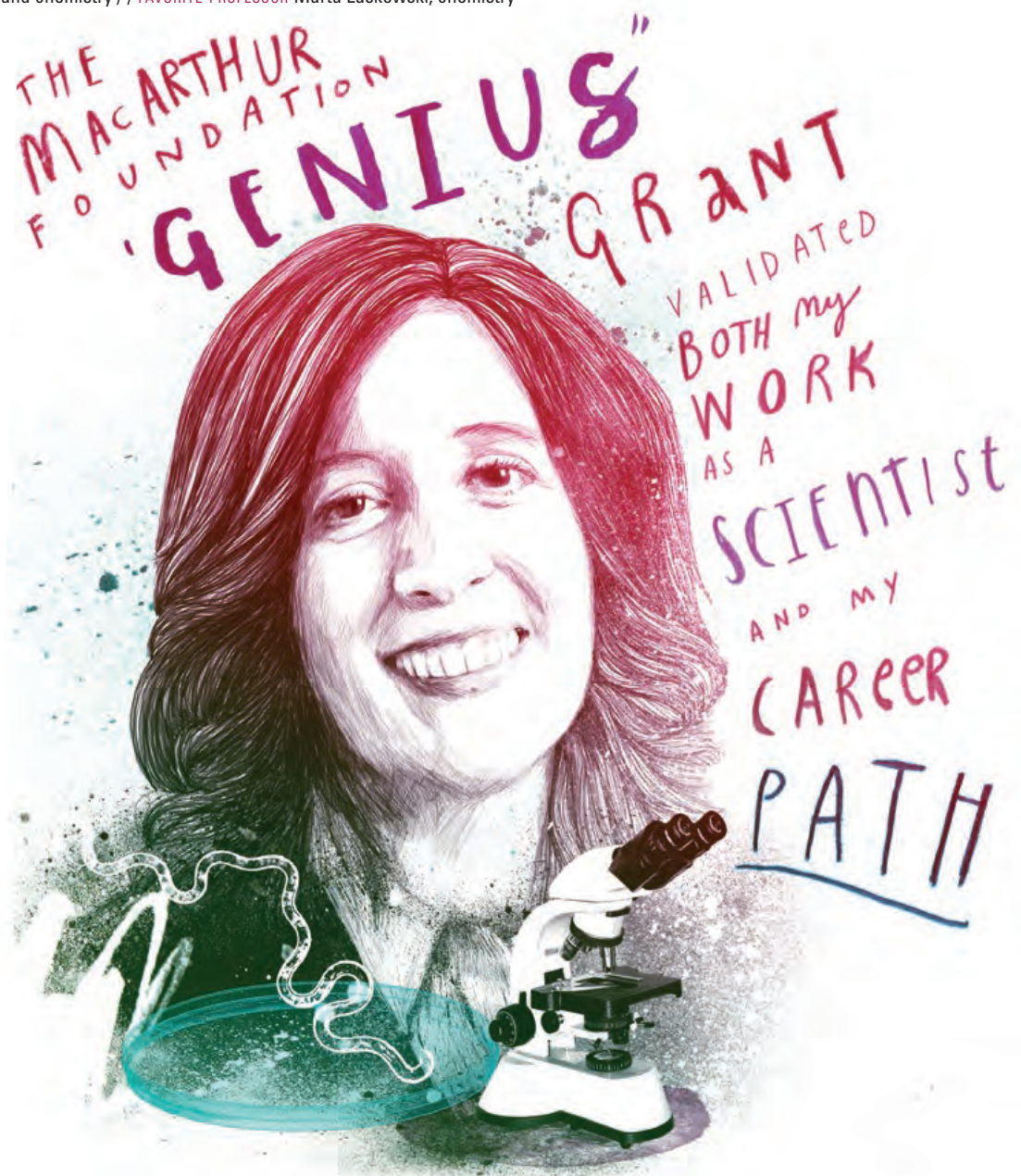
"They were really encouraging to their students," says Hallem, who also majored in chemistry. "Now that I teach undergraduates, I appreciate that even more."

Perhaps the most important class that Hallem took at Williams was Marta Laskowski's senior seminar in biochemistry and molecular biology, which had only six students. The high-level format of the class involved presenting academic papers, "and that inspired me to pursue grad school," she says.

Hallem headed to Yale, where she got her Ph.D. in neuroscience in 2005. Her dissertation on odor receptors—work that has the potential to lead to new biological pest controls—won a prestigious national award from the Council of Graduate Schools.

She says her first role model was her mother, a successful attorney in Los Angeles who raised two kids. Now Hallem is raising her own children, ages 3 and 7, with husband Joe Vanderwaart '99. The two met at Williams, and he works as a software engineer at Google.

Hallem says female role models are important for young women dreaming big: "My 7-year-old daughter is really excited that there's a woman running for president."





## Elissa Shevinsky '01

"I'M PRETTY HAPPY HANGING IN THE BOYS' CLUB—BOURBON AND CIGARS," says tech entrepreneur Elissa Shevinsky. But when an app showing photos of men staring at women's breasts kicked off the TechCrunch Disrupt Conference in San Francisco in fall 2013, it crossed a line for her, personally and professionally.

A debate erupted on social media over whether the app was misogynist or just bad taste. Shevinsky, then a partner with the startup Glimpse Labs, fired off a blog post for *Business Insider* titled "That's It—I'm Finished Defending Sexism in Tech." Her male business partner, meanwhile, stood up for the developers, prompting her to quit. She rejoined the company several months later as CEO, after her partner apologized publicly for his remarks. Their story landed on the front page

of the *New York Times* Sunday business section in April 2014.

Until that incident, Shevinsky hadn't questioned her place in the tech industry. At Williams she immersed herself in coding, which she learned from a boyfriend. Her programmer friends, with whom she found a home in Berkshire Quad, were "forward-thinking feminists," split evenly between women and men. And she received encouragement from professors in the computer science courses she took.

In 1999, she worked for Ethan Zuckerman '93, who was developing the pilot program for Geekcorps, a volunteer organization that sends experts to help technology businesses in developing countries. Zuckerman, who's now director of the Center for Civic Media at MIT's Media Lab, "was a very close mentor

for many years," Shevinsky says. "I still find myself quoting him on a regular basis."

As she made her way in her career, she says she responded to "the dominance of white male nerd culture" in tech constructively: by founding her own startups. That way, she says, "You create your own culture, and you create your own path. I love my companies, because I hire everyone who's there. If someone is out of line, I can fire them."

Calling herself a "serial entrepreneur," she worked in product development for several startups and co-founded an online dating site called MakeOut Labs before joining Glimpse, an app for disappearing text messaging.

In January she founded JeKuDo Privacy Co., which is building a platform for encrypted group messaging. (The name comes from Bruce Lee's fighting style, Jeet Kune Do.) Shevinsky plans to raise capital for the product in the fall, after a few dozen companies test the platform over the summer.

"The need for secure group collaboration is so urgent," says Shevinsky, who hopes to hit at least \$3 million in revenues next year. "I want to lead the market for 'easy to use privacy.'"

She also published her first book in June, an anthology called *Lean Out* (OR Books). With a nod to Facebook CEO Sheryl Sandberg's *Lean In*, Shevinsky calls her book an exposé on the reality of the tech industry for women.

"I can speak from my own experience: I have dropped out of more than one company because bigots were not going to let work get done," she says. "Women are leaving tech, and it's clear that intolerance is a real factor."

Shevinsky is a frequent speaker on privacy and innovation, giving talks at events such as South by Southwest, DefCon, Schmooscon and the NY Tech Meet-up. She advises young people, among them student interns from Williams, to go into tech and startups only if they truly love it.

"Startups are incredibly hard, and so is making software, even within established companies," she says. "When I started in tech, it was not a trendy thing to do. But I loved technology, and I loved building things. I'm a really good example of someone who followed my sense of adventure and pursued career paths because I loved the work—and who has done well because of that."





## Sara Fatima Hassan '15

"WHEN PEOPLE FIRST MEET ME, THEY DON'T JUST SEE ME AS A WOMAN, BUT ALSO AS A PERSON OF COLOR AND A MUSLIM," says Sara Fatima Hassan. "And they tend to make a lot of assumptions about me and my opinions."

One of those assumptions is that a person can't be a practicing Muslim and a feminist. In particular, the hijab—the headscarf worn by Muslim women—is considered a sign of oppression by some in the West.

Yet Hassan says faith and feminism "are not necessarily disparate identities," something she's defended when classroom discussions turned to politics or religion. "I believe in equality for all people as well as in the teachings of Islam and its role in my life."

At Williams, the history major has worked to break down stereotypes and raise awareness—not only about herself and other Muslim students, but also about Islam in general. An active member of the Muslim Student Union (MSU), serving as treasurer and co-chair, she says that work can be difficult.

"You can't just get to know other people who are just like you and disappear into that community," she says. "Williams' size forces you to form relationships with people you might never have engaged with at a bigger school—and in doing so you learn how many shared experiences you have with these 'different' people as well as how much you have to learn from those who hold different identities."

In the spring of her sophomore year, she helped organize a public demonstration in the Paresky Center to bring attention to the conflict between the Israeli army and Palestinians in the West Bank. Students participated in staged "security checks," in which their backpacks were searched as they knelt on the ground with their hands tied behind their backs. The demonstration raised many eyebrows and launched many conversations.

"For me the goal ... was not to interest every student passing by," she wrote in an op-ed about the demonstration for the *Williams Record*. "The larger goal is to encourage people to delve into the Israel-Palestine issue, to come to their own conclusions."

And when a portrait of a recent Muslim graduate—a friend of Hassan's—was

vandalized in Paresky this past October, Hassan worked with the MSU to "create space for healing and conversation." The incident happened during the week of Eid al-Adha, the Festival of the Sacrifice, one of the most important Islamic celebrations of the year. So the MSU moved services from the small Muslim prayer room where they'd normally be held into Paresky.

"We transformed Paresky into a mosque-like space that allowed for the whole community to join us in prayer, stand in solidarity and get to know the Muslim community better," Hassan says. "The response was intended to indicate that the ignorance and hate demonstrated by this act could not diminish or intimidate us."

Hassan was born in Pakistan and grew up in the U.K. and Canada, where she attended an all-girls high school. Her mother, Marzia Habib-Hassan '86, an internationally recognized expert on parenting and couple and family relationships, was one of the first Muslim women to attend Williams. An economics major from Pakistan, Habib-Hassan earned a law degree and pursued a master's in social work at the University of Toronto. Her work includes counseling attuned to the cultural sensitivities of Muslims and South Asians.

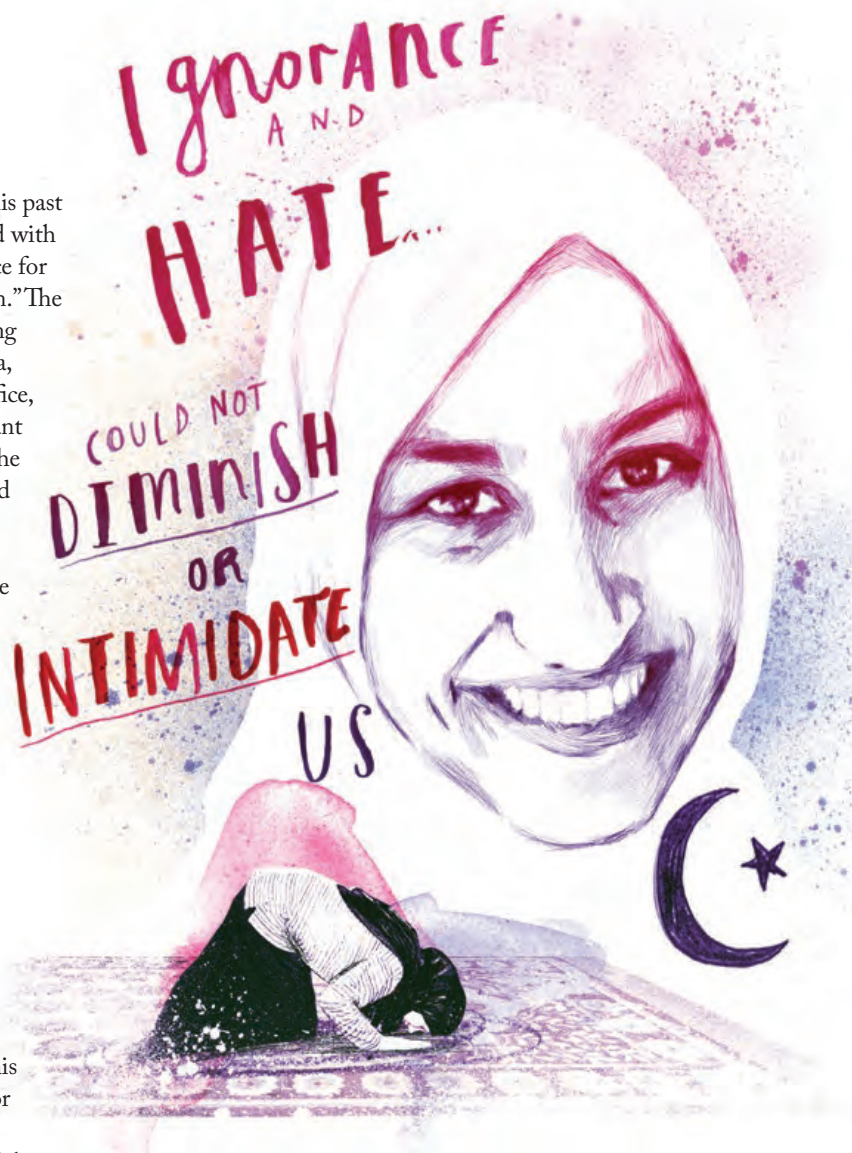
Habib-Hassan says it's been interesting to see Williams through her daughters' eyes. (Sara's older sister Zehra graduated from Williams in 2012 and encouraged Sara to join the MSU.) "In my day, there was much less awareness of Islam, so I was met mainly with curiosity or, to put it crudely, with ignorance," Habib-Hassan says. "In a sense, that was easier than what my daughters have faced: trying

to break down stereotypes and stand up for a billion people in the world."

Hassan, who's also been involved with Students for Justice in Palestine, the Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives and the Davis Center, says she plans to continue to engage with these issues in the future. She's looking at jobs and fellowships in education, child welfare and urban planning. She might also work as a writing tutor and teaching assistant at a university in Karachi, Pakistan, so that, she says, "I can educate myself about development challenges the city is facing and improve my Urdu language skills."

No matter what, she says, "Engagement with social and/or environmental justice is a requirement."

*Nancy Pick is an author and editor. She is co-translator of the fiction thriller The Swede, due out in July from HarperCollins.*





## EARLY WOMEN OF WILLIAMS

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MARTHA (WINCH) ASHER AND KATHARINE “KATHIE” (MILLS) BERRY stand among the handful of women who pursued full-time study at Williams in the 1950s, two decades before the college officially admitted female students.

They weren’t political—the women’s liberation movement hadn’t even taken shape yet—nor were they out to change the world. They knew they were barred from receiving a Williams degree (though each eventually received one). And yet they understood the power of a Williams education.

Asher is the daughter of Williams physics professor Ralph Winch. “I’m a townie and a faculty brat,” she says with a laugh. She spent her freshman year at a small co-ed college—one she’d rather not name—where, she says, “I was rather bored.”

So she came back home, got a job at the Williams library and enrolled in some courses in 1953. Classes were open to women, even if formal matriculation was not. In fact, in the 1940s, many World War II veterans returned to the college with their wives, who were permitted to take courses for credit. Faculty wives also took classes over the years, though they typically audited.

For Asher, the difference between her freshman-year experience and her Williams experience was startling. “I was just blown away by the level of intellectual excitement,” she says. “And I found that I could hold my own.”

Williams was also where she met her future husband, Anil Asher ’55. After he graduated, they moved to his hometown of Kolkata, India, where they married and lived for 12 years. He worked for the family businesses in cotton and cement; she raised their family. Ultimately, they returned to Williamstown, where she took a job, first as secretary and then as registrar at the Clark Art Institute. Attending Williams part-time, she also completed her final year of requirements. (She was excused from gym.)

“My timing was unusual,” she says. “I started with the Class of ’56 and finished with the Class of ’76.” Asher considers herself a member of the Class of 1955 and counts her husband’s classmates among her closest Williams friends.

Berry has a somewhat different story. She was a student at Vassar when she met and fell in love with a Williams student,

Charles Berry ’57. They married before their junior year, and she moved to Williamstown. “Younger women tell me they’re surprised I didn’t just drop out,” she says. “But that thought never even occurred to me. I wanted an education.”

Berry wasn’t daunted by her singularity. “Williams was enlightened in accepting me and being so welcoming. Yes, even my husband’s fraternity house, where we often ate dinner.” Granted, she says there was one professor who didn’t want “girls” in his classroom, so Berry simply steered clear of him.

For a time after Williams, Berry pursued what she calls the basic ’50s vision of happiness: three children, house in the suburbs, station wagon, dog. But in the ’70s, as soon as the kids were solidly on their feet, she went to work in public affairs and administration for a variety of large organizations, including Prudential Insurance and United Way. Friends began calling her to ask, “How did you manage to get a job? And how can I?”

In June 1975, when the first fully coeducational class graduated from Williams, Berry received her degree retroactively along with Beth Stoddard ’61 and Linda Armour ’62. Another early female student, Louise Ober, fell just short of the necessary number of credits to receive a diploma. But she was made an official member of the Class of ’64 at its 50th reunion last June. A talented actress, the Williamstown native starred in the 1969 movie *Riverrun*. She died in 1978 from cancer.

Berry has been hugely active as a Williams volunteer and, in the 1980s, became the first female president of the Society of Alumni. She also received the Rogerson Cup for alumni service in 2007, at her 50th reunion. “Ever since the moment in 1955 when Dean ‘Triple R’ Brooks told me I’d be allowed to take classes at the college, I’ve been flattered by Williams,” she says. “The college has had a huge, positive influence on our lives.”

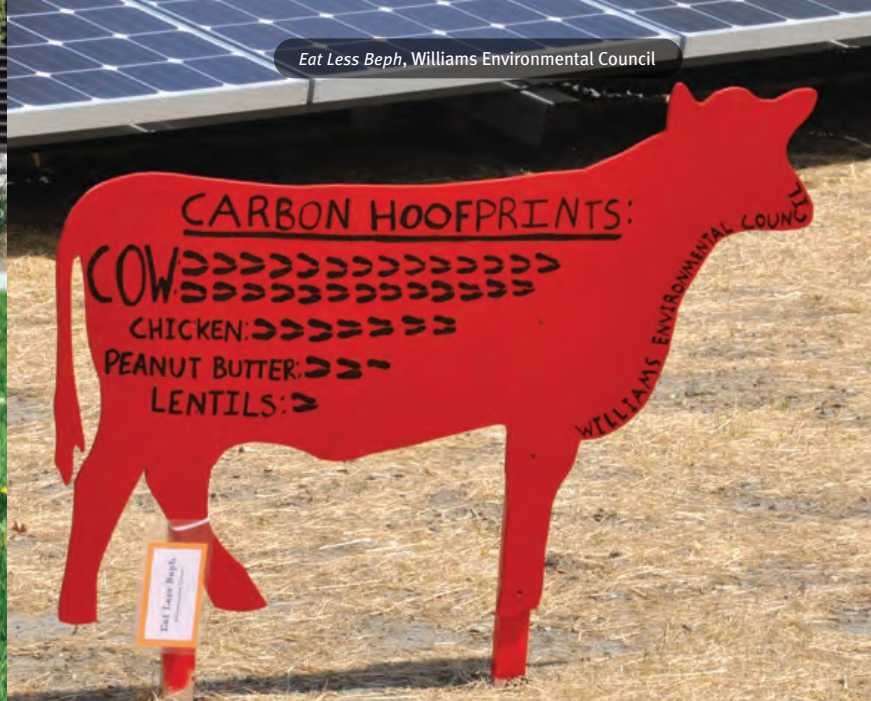
And to top it off, Benjamin Gips, the son of Berry’s daughter Elizabeth Berry Gips ’82, will enter the college this fall. Berry says she’s delighted he’ll be “among the first Williams students who will be able to say, ‘My *grandmother* is a Williams graduate.’” —NANCY PICK



Dean of FaCOWlty, Dean of the Faculty's Office



Eat Less Beph, Williams Environmental Council



PsyCOWlogy, Psychology Department



IceCOWpades, Figure Skating Club



CowBrain, Neuroscience Program



# udderl

Cows decorated in a rainbow of colors—sporting mortarboards, cigars and even a bathing suit—adorned the campus in late May, part of a herd of 95 designed by different members of the Williams community. Called Ephs on Parade and sponsored by the Committee on Undergraduate Life, “the goal

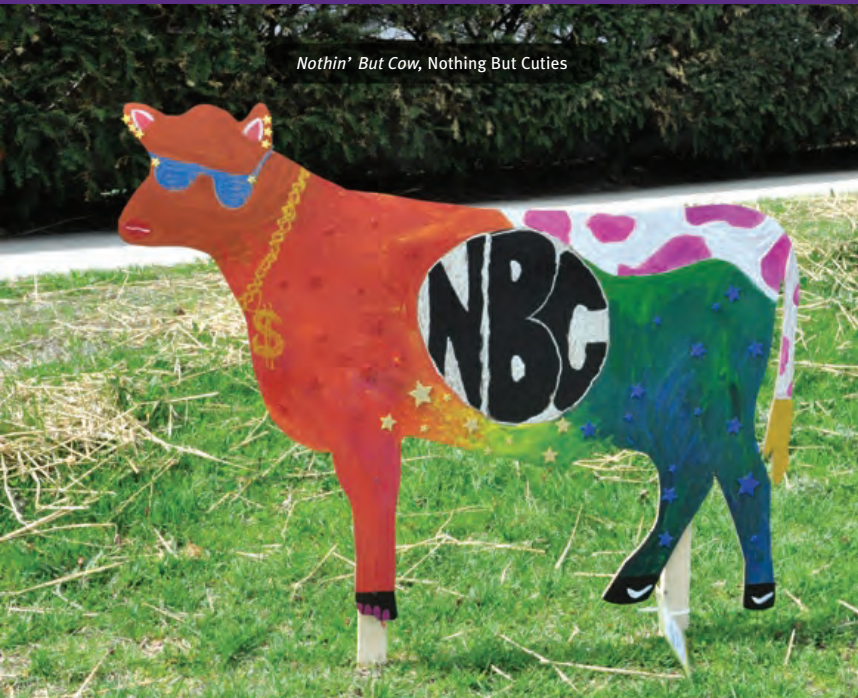




# y eph!

was for the entire campus to be talking about the same thing at once,” says Biology Professor Matt Carter, who helped coordinate the project. “We wanted to unite the campus, at least for a few days, and deliberately create something positive and with a sense of humor.”

View the rest of the herd at <http://bit.ly/1QjhpwX>.





# CUBA INC

MURAL BY JR AND JOSÉ PAULA - WRINKLES OF THE CITY, LA HAVANA



With relations between the U.S. and Cuba poised for sweeping change, Williams professors with ties to the Caribbean nation take stock—and share their thoughts on what may lie ahead. BY ABEL LOOMIS

# CONTEXT





**I**n April, music professor Ileana Perez Velazquez was watching news coverage of a New York delegation's visit to Cuba when something unexpected happened. She received several emails from musicians in Cuba who wanted to perform her work.

"They found me on the Internet," she says—something that would have been unlikely a few months earlier. Most Cubans don't have easy access to computers, and Internet use is monitored by the government. More importantly, ever since the Cuban-born Perez Velazquez traveled to the U.S. against her government's wishes 22 years ago, her music, which has garnered respect worldwide, rarely has been performed in her homeland.

But in December, the U.S. and Cuba made a historic announcement: After 50 years of hostility, the two countries would work to re-establish diplomatic relations.

Hearing from the musicians, Perez Velazquez, who's won numerous awards and was recently named one of five Cuban composers to watch by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra, was cautiously optimistic. "They must have some hope that things could be more flexible and open," she says. "I sent a bunch of music over. We'll see what happens next."

For some Williams faculty members watching closely as this new chapter in U.S.-Cuba relations unfolds, the interest is scholarly. Carmen Whalen, history professor and chair of Latina/o studies, teaches courses on Cuban migrations. History professor Shanti Singham spent last summer in Cuba studying the African roots of Cuban art. Next year, at least half a dozen courses—in disciplines including comparative literature, environmental studies, history and music—will address Cuba in one way or another.

But for three professors, intellectual interests in Cuba are entwined with deeply personal ones. James Mahon, the Woodrow Wilson Professor of Political Science, has been visiting the island for decades, feeding his fascination with Cuba and his broader understanding of Latin America with conversations with Cubans from all walks of life. Meanwhile, Perez Velazquez and Peter Montiel, the Fairleigh S. Dickinson Professor of Economics, are Cuban-born.

The three are hopeful for Cuba's future. As Montiel says, the normalization of diplomatic and trade relations with the U.S. "was long overdue. As a Cuban, I'm all for it."

Still, it's hard to tell how much will really change between the two countries—or how quickly—now that one of the last pillars of the Cold War is being dismantled.

## A REVOLUTION'S LEGACY

As a macroeconomist, Montiel would love to conduct research in Cuba someday. "I work on other developing countries," he says. "So to think about my own country going through this would be irresistible."

But in the 56 years since he left Havana for Miami at the age of 8, Montiel has returned only once. In 2003 he took advantage of a Williams trip for young alumni to "gain some insight into just how much of Cuba I had brought to the U.S. with me" and "to sort out, on an intellectual level, my opinions about the Cuban revolution."

Montiel's father was a high school classmate of Fidel Castro, who would go on to become the leader of Cuba. They studied under the Jesuits at El Colegio de Belén in Havana in the 1940s and then went to law school together at the University of Havana, where students carried weapons and political debates could end in gunfire. Castro used to visit the elder Montiel's home in the capital city, sometimes borrowing items he couldn't retrieve from his father's ranch in Oriente Province.

Montiel's father worked for the revolution that deposed President Fulgencio Batista, and he supported Castro's rise to power.

"But there was a split between the radicals and the moderates in the summer of '59," Montiel says. "My father, like most people, was a moderate."

Life became increasingly difficult for those who disagreed with Castro. They lived under the threat of losing their jobs and homes, of imprisonment and, in some cases, of assassination.

"My father had to leave in a hurry," Montiel says. "He basically drove his car onto a ferry, landed at Key West, and that was it. We followed five months later."





Soon after, relations between the U.S. and Cuba worsened to the brink of catastrophe, with the U.S. imposing economic sanctions, the failed Bay of Pigs Invasion and the Cuban Missile Crisis in the early 1960s.

Those years continue to color U.S.-Cuba relations. Politically, the effects of the revolution and communism are a source of pride for many Cubans and pain for many Cuban-Americans, Montiel says. Both countries continue to regard each other with suspicion, if not hostility.

Mahon, who teaches the Williams tutorial Cuba and the United States, has had access to Cuba for decades as a scholar of Latin America. When conversing with government officials, he says, "I'll act naïve and say things like, 'You guys are all so popular and you're doing so many great things for Cuba. Why don't you just have elections? You'd win.'"

Among the responses, he says, are: "All the best people are in the Communist Party, so it's no use to have another party," "The Americans would manipulate an election," or "The exiles would manipulate it."

For everyday Cubans, Mahon says, "It goes something like this: 'I'm a good socialist. I haven't known anything else. I wouldn't sacrifice the conquests of the revolution—in health care, in education and in national sovereignty—to anything.'

"I just wish they would trust me more. I would like to have more freedom, more choices, more than one news program at night. And I would like to have more of a connection with the world."

While that connection appears to be growing, much depends on the Cuban political landscape. Change seems possible for the first time in decades. Raúl Castro, who took over from his brother in early 2008, says he will step down in 2018. If he does, it will mark the end of 59 years of Castro rule in Cuba. First Vice President Miguel Díaz-Canel Bermudez is the likely successor. But what comes next isn't clear.

"We've had these thaws before," Mahon says, referring to times when U.S.-Cuba relations seemed to be improving. "Yet in the past, generally, something has happened to disturb them."

Díaz-Canel might be that disturbance. Mahon calls him "a cipher." "He's vigorous, young and considered to be a hard-liner. . . . We don't know whether he's a Cuban Gorbachev or someone who wants to radicalize."

Another question is how the push to strengthen ties with Cuba will play out politically in the U.S. Efforts to ease travel restrictions and establish a diplomatic presence there have been blocked by Congress. Meanwhile, normalization of relations is shaping up to be an issue in the 2016 presidential race.

"People who oppose ending the embargo because it will give a new funding source to the Castro brothers are absolutely right—it will," Mahon says. "The question is whether the gamble is worth it [for Cuba]. Because, on the other side, once you've ended the embargo and you've opened up, the regime loses the argument that the reason that 'Fulano'—the Cuban equivalent of 'John Doe'—'doesn't have chicken on his ration book is all about the U.S. They won't be able to say that anymore.'"

Nor will an end to the embargo bring about an end to Cuba's economic woes, Mahon says.

"Investment is sorely needed, even just everyday repairs and maintenance to capital stock and housing stock," he says. "You have buildings falling down—something like one per week in central Havana."

Says Perez Velazquez, "Havana looks like a city that went through a war, but, in this case, a war with time." The buildings and the road, water, sewer, electrical and phone systems "haven't been repaired for 65 years. No city can stand that without falling to pieces."

On top of that, an invasive plant called marabú, or sickle bush, is "taking over the countryside," Mahon says. The spiny bean plant grows 20 feet tall, creating an "impenetrable thicket" that's destroying agricultural land and is expensive to control, discouraging foreign investment.

Cuba can benefit from marketing its highly educated workforce, Montiel says. And there are other hopeful possibilities. Members of the New York delegation that visited in April are working on an agreement to allow a Buffalo, N.Y., cancer institute to bring a Cuban vaccine for lung cancer to the U.S. for clinical trials.

Still, it's critical to alleviate Cuba's economic woes, Perez Velazquez says. "Hospitals are in bad condition; patients need to bring their own sheets, pillows, clothes. It's difficult for a patient to find a prescribed medicine."



THESE THAWS BEFORE... YET IN THE PAST...  
SOMETHING HAS HAPPENED TO DISTURB THEM." JAMES MAHON



Says Mahon, “The idea that the U.S. embargo cripples Cuba at this point is a satisfying fiction for the Cuban regime and maybe some others. What’s hurting Cuba is its centrally planned economy.”

## DEEP ROOTS

Perez Velazquez still has family and friends in Cuba and returns when she can. The first time was in 2002 as part of a Williams Winter Study class on Cuban music and dance.

“It was a challenging trip, due to the many restrictions and the lack of communication between the two countries,” she says. “But the students loved it and, after they returned to campus, continued practicing and performing the dances and music they learned.”

That trip was also the first time she’d seen her mother in a decade. Perez Velazquez grew up in Cienfuegos, a picturesque port city on the southern coast. Her mother’s father, Juan Velázquez, owned a convenience store and was devastated when it was declared state property after the revolution of 1959. Her parents, meanwhile, were of Castro’s generation and had worked to support the revolution.

“It’s interesting to grow up with different opinions in the same house,” says Perez Velazquez, who lived with her extended family. “That taught me a lot—how people should get along even if they think differently. Respect for each other has to be more important than political belief.”

Perez Velazquez also grew up with music in her home. Her grandfather befriended members of Orquesta Aragón, a local charanga ensemble that caught the attention of RCA Records and other big labels in the U.S. Though not a musician himself, Velázquez was determined that his daughter would study music.

“My mother would play the piano, but just because he liked it,” Perez Velazquez says. “She would play in the afternoons. As soon as I could, I would jump on the piano. I started learning when I was 3.”

Musical training in Cuba was open to anyone who showed promise, so Perez Velazquez began music school at the age of 6.

“That was a positive result of the revolution,” she says. “In the U.S., for a kid to study music seriously, the parents need to have money to pay

for private lessons. Not in Cuba. I still think that’s a very positive way to do things.”

In ninth grade, she was selected in a national search to attend high school in Havana at La Escuela Nacional de Música. She won another competition to attend the prestigious Instituto Superior de Arte (ISA). That year, she says, the institute had room for only three pianists and one composer. She was chosen for both the piano and composition spots.

By the time she graduated in 1987, Perez Velazquez had reached the pinnacle of the state-managed musical meritocracy. She was interested in electroacoustic music, but Cuba offered no training in the field.

Then life took a sobering turn. Following the collapse of its patron state, the Soviet Union, Cuba entered what Castro dubbed El Período Especial en Tiempo de Paz—the Special Period in a Time of Peace. For most Cubans that meant hardship, hunger and breadlines—something Perez Velazquez had never before experienced. Her rations were cut to three eggs and a small portion of beans each week, with less than a bottle of cooking oil per month. In a year and a half, she lost 30 pounds.

In 1991, she was participating in a music festival in Cuba when she met Jon Appleton, chair of the music department at Dartmouth and an electronic-music pioneer. He invited her to study at Dartmouth, but her requests for a student visa were repeatedly denied, both by Cuban officials reluctant to release a musical prodigy and by American officials who refused to admit a Cuban who wasn’t a political refugee.

She left Cuba for the first time in late 1992 to attend a composition workshop in Bogotá, Colombia, and—despite grumbling from her government—stayed on when the Universidad Nacional de Colombia offered her a professorship. Appleton met her in Bogotá and accompanied her to the U.S. Embassy, where she finally secured a travel visa. She went on to earn a Master of Art in electroacoustic music from Dartmouth and a Doctor of Musical Arts from Indiana University. She came to Williams in 2000 and, a year later, became a U.S. citizen.

Looking back, she says, “The entire situation was sad for me. I would never have done it if I had a choice. I wanted to learn things that weren’t

“...FULANO (JOHN DOE) DOESN’T HAVE CHICKEN IN HIS RATION BOOK.”

JAMES MAHON





available to me at that time. And I learned so much that I've never regretted it. But it meant that I couldn't go back to Cuba for a long time."

Keeping in touch with her family in Cuba was complicated. "They didn't have a phone line at home, and letters would take several months to reach either way," she says. "I found out that my grandmother had died by a letter that arrived two months later."

Prior to her most recent trip to Cuba, with a Williams alumni group in 2012, Perez Velazquez tried to arrange a visit to the ISA. No one returned her emails. She later found out that her former colleagues and friends at the ISA couldn't reply because the administration didn't approve of her visit.

So she showed up unannounced, with the alumni in tow and a gift of orchestral chamber music, choral scores and compositions from the 20th century that were rare in Cuba. ISA then treated the group to a concert.

"It was a very emotional encounter," she says. "To see such talented young students working with such limited resources, on an old Russian piano, out of tune. The building, so beautiful while I was a student there, had deteriorated tremendously. It was sad."

### AN ENDURING IDENTITY

Both Montiel and Perez Velazquez have watched the consequences of U.S.-Cuba relations play out in their families' lives and their own. But they also have a sense of the abiding values of a nation with a strong identity rooted in place and family.

"It was a given," Montiel says, "every single Sunday, my family would go to my grandmother's house and have the same meal—chicken with rice, very traditional—and fried plantains and flan for dessert. There was a big boulevard with a big park in the middle of it. The kids would play, and the grown-ups would sit around and chat. Then we would walk down to the bay, to a seaside drive called the Malecón."

Similar traditions continue in Cuba and, for those who left, in Miami. "Cuba has almost been recreated in Miami," Montiel says. "The music and the cuisine today are not that different from my childhood."

His own three children have had "a lot of contact with their cousins and their grandmother. They love Cuban food." One daughter has already visited Cuba, and the rest of his family is clamoring to go.

Though Montiel didn't raise his children to be bilingual, "Later in life they all wanted to learn Spanish," he says. "And we talk about [Cuba] a lot. It's a little surprising to me. They see themselves as Cuban-American."

Says Perez Velazquez, "Being Cuban has always influenced my work as a composer—in the harmonic language and in my rhythmically intricate, multi-layered textures, which are influenced by Afro-Cuban percussion. I tell my student composers at Williams to pay attention to the rhythm and texture in a way that is not encountered often in Western music.

"Living in Cuba, you are exposed to so much popular music all day long, everywhere you go," she says. "Everybody plays drums or dances in the streets or has their windows open with the music loud. I had classical training in the conservatory, and I absorbed the popular side of it just living there, growing up in that environment."

The enduring rhythms of life there, along with a fierce national pride, make Montiel skeptical that there will be an "Americanization" of Cuba if and when relations between the two countries improve.

After the revolution, both radicals and moderates had "a real concern for Cuban sovereignty," he says. "Among the people who stayed in Cuba, there's a real desire to protect what's there. Raúl Castro talks about negotiating in good faith with the U.S., as equals. That is a big, big deal for Cubans.

"I think there is going to be a lot of resistance to being overwhelmed as relations are restored," he says. "There will be commercialization. There will be billboards and placelessness, I'm sure, in some parts of Cuba, and there will be McDonald's. But there's little chance that there will be a huge cultural revolution. ... I just don't see it changing—at least not in the short run."

*Abe Loomis is a freelance writer based in Western Massachusetts.*





## GREENER THAN GREEN

With its traditional, white clapboard siding offset by sleek, black solar panels, its rooflines pitched to maximize rainwater collection, and its newly planted gardens promising food for people, wildlife, birds and insects, it's impossible to miss the Class of 1966 Environmental Center. That's the point.

"It's a statement, both about Williams and its commitment to environmental issues," says Amy Johns, director of the Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives, which has its home in the new \$5 million, 7,000-square-foot building along with the college's Center for Environmental Studies.

And while all major construction projects on campus must seek at least LEED-Gold certification—a high standard for green building adopted by Williams' Board of Trustees in 2007—the environmental center is looking to achieve something more. It was one of the first 80 projects in the nation to register for the Living Building Challenge (LBC), a set of strict performance goals developed by the International Living Future Institute (ILFI). While some 270 projects around the world have registered since 2006, only eight buildings to date have received full LBC certification.

To meet the LBC, the environmental center and its occupants must prove, starting in late summer, that they can live within their means for a full year. That involves, in part, using only the power and water produced and collected on-site—no easy task, with heavy use expected for its classrooms, kitchen, library and meeting spaces. Adding to the complexity is the fact that the environmental center, built on the bones of the 1794 Kellogg House, is one of the first historic renovations to pursue LBC.

"Retrofitting a 220-year-old building to 21st-century performance standards is a remarkable achievement," Bill Moomaw '59, chief scientist at the Earthwatch Institute, said when the building was dedicated in April. "Marrying it to a structure that's designed from the start to meet 21st-century requirements is a bold step."

In fact, it's possible Williams won't meet the standards initially. "LBC is a learning process as much as it's about living within our means,"







“This building is addressing the issue of the next round of big change that is coming.” —Ed “Punky” Booth ’66



says Mike Evans, assistant director of the Zilkha Center. “There are risks involved, but we’ll learn from our mistakes, make adjustments and, if need be, start the clock again.”

It’s a risk worth taking, says Charley Stevenson ’93, who, as principal of the Williamstown consulting firm Integrated Eco Strategy, worked closely with the college and Black River Design Architects on the project and was named a 2015 Living Building Challenge Hero in April. “I think it’s really important from a leadership perspective,” he says. “What Williams does, other institutions take note of.”

**M**ost commercial and residential buildings are “imposed on the ecosystem,” says David Dethier, chair of the project committee and the Edward Brust Professor of Geology and Mineralogy. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, they account for nearly 40 percent of total energy consumption and carbon emissions in the U.S., and that doesn’t include the “embodied energy” required to extract, manufacture, transport, install and dispose of all the products that go into them.

LBC reimagines the built environment. “The LBC philosophy is that buildings should be part of the ecosystem, and maybe even work to improve it,” Dethier says.

That philosophy appealed to the project committee, which comprised a dozen Williams faculty, staff and students, as well as consultants, architects and green builders, many from the local and alumni community.

To receive LBC certification, a project must accomplish 20 “imperatives” organized into seven “petals”—place, energy, water, health and happiness, materials, equity and beauty—each with a clear intent. The purpose of the water petal, for example, is “to realign how people use water and to redefine ‘waste’ in the built environment, so that water is respected as a precious resource,” according to LBC. The intent of the materials petal is “to induce a successful materials economy that is non-toxic, transparent and socially equitable.”

These two petals in particular were daunting in their complexity.

“There was a point in this project when it occurred to me that this is not about a perfect building,” Stevenson says. “It’s about using the wish for a perfect building as a fulcrum from which to move the market.”

Water was a particular challenge. Though there were hookups for municipal supply and treatment on site, LBC prohibits using them. So, drawing from more than 100 years of precipitation data from nearby Hopkins Forest, the project team designed a supply system that’s expected to meet all the building’s water needs in most years. A rooftop capture system acts like a pristine forest watershed, and a 6,000-gallon cistern mimics a typical surface reservoir. The team worked with regulators to establish that the potable system could use small-scale versions of municipal water treatment technologies, creating the first non-chlorinated rooftop public water supply in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Treatment of gray water (used in bathroom and kitchen sinks as well as by the dishwasher) required similar regulatory creativity. Water leaving the building is processed through a man-made wetland cell and sand filter before seeping back into the ground (meaning only biodegradable cleaning products can be used inside the building). Because the environmental center’s system meets a higher quality standard than that of a standard septic system, it was permitted as a pilot project under state regulations and is the first of its kind in Massachusetts.

Storm water management on site is designed to mimic prehistoric conditions, collecting water in a series of rain gardens to allow sediments to settle out. The water that’s not reabsorbed into the ground will leave by



evaporation or transpiration, reducing strain on the watershed.

"Capturing rainwater may be of limited economic value to the college, but Williams has created a regulatory pathway where none existed before," says James Connelly, director of the Living Product Challenge at ILFI. As a result, "In a decade, thousands of buildings will be using rainwater, which the jurisdiction previously considered waste or storm water."

Meeting the requirements of the materials petal also required creativity and leadership. The building's siding is a case in point. LBC requires all wood in a project to come from sustainably harvested, living forests certified by the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC). It also requires locally sourced products.

Meanwhile, traditional New England cladding—the kind that's consistent with the period during which Kellogg House was built—is typically made from Eastern spruce. But there were no FSC-certified forests on the East Coast that produced spruce logs large enough for the project. Since supporting a sustainable economy is the highest priority for LBC, the college obtained FSC-certified red cedar from a mill in British Columbia.

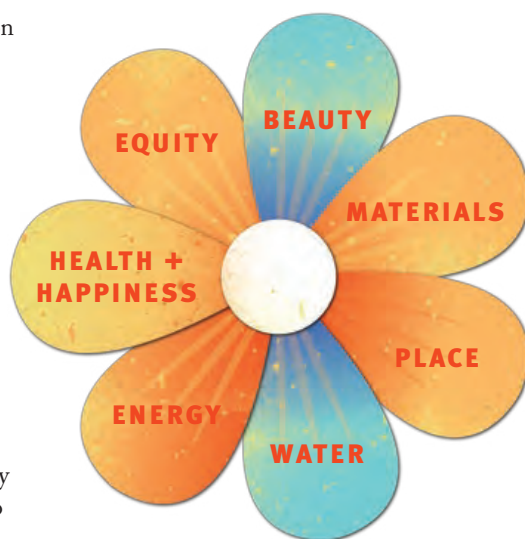
LBC projects are also prohibited from using 14 classes of toxic chemicals like phthalates and formaldehyde that become concentrated inside the bodies of living things and can threaten public health. The so-called "Red List" encompasses 362 actual chemicals, many of which aren't tracked in the manufacture of building components.

"We're sort of down a rabbit hole on all these things," says Stevenson, who sourced nearly 1,000 building products in the environmental center, down to each electrical socket. That involved thousands of phone calls, letters and, sometimes, protracted conversations with manufacturers, persuading them to disclose their ingredients and eliminate the chemicals from their products.

There were many success stories. After Stevenson signed a nondisclosure agreement, Benjamin Moore & Co., the paint manufacturer, provided an ingredient list for all the products he asked for—information the company typically doesn't share. Harmsco Filtration Products reformulated its carbon filtration system, replacing PVCs with urethane. Stancor Pumps Inc. eliminated PVCs from its wiring. Now these firms and others are beginning to use their new formulations to differentiate themselves in the market, in some cases adding them to ILFI's database for healthy products, called Declare.

In fact, a key aspect of LBC is its role as an advocacy tool, says Stevenson. "I picture LBC as an army of ants. No one can move all that much, but each is picking something up and moving it some distance. It's an accumulation of little things that is ultimately profound."

Says Ed "Punky" Booth '66, who with his classmates is supporting the environmental center with a 50th reunion gift, "It's about driving technology and the business of building forward and making a statement that this can be done. This building is addressing the issue of the next round of big change that is coming."



To achieve Living Building Challenge certification, a project must accomplish 20 "imperatives" organized into seven "petals," each with a clear intent.

**T**he Class of 1966 Environmental Center opened in the spring, "a marvel of sustainable materials choices, innovative design elements and a mix of useful teaching and program spaces," Moomaw said during its dedication. But its work to meet LBC has just begun, and there are many unknowns that make it an ideal living laboratory.

"We don't know if everything is going to work," Dethier says. "That's part of the process."

Computer science professor Jeannie Albrecht and her students are involved deeply in that process. With a \$161,260 National Science Foundation grant, they've developed sensors to monitor energy consumption, and they'll use the data to implement standards to help the building meet the LBC. A visualization tool designed by math and computer science major Sarah Abramson '15 allows occupants to see both the immediate and long-term energy use of a given appliance.

Once the data are collected and analyzed, Albrecht envisions working with colleagues in the economics and psychology departments, and their students, to study how to incentivize conservation. "From the psychologist's perspective, can we actually influence and change behavior?" she asks. "From a computer scientist's standpoint, can you assure privacy isn't violated? And from the economist's side, what incentive do people have if they're not paying the bill?"

In the meantime, there are many opportunities for scientific research. Caroline Atwood '16 is working with Dethier this summer mapping the environmental center site's drainage basin to figure out how much water is being collected, cycled through the system and used. Stephen Mayfield '16 is examining the site's hydrology with Jay Thoman '82, Williams' J. Hodge Markgraf '52 Professor of Chemistry.

While the new environmental center is an ideal home for the academic, programmatic and experiential aspects of environmentalism at Williams, perhaps its biggest effect will be on the wider community. John Rahill '68, the building's architect, says the connection between indoor and outdoor spaces will "inspire an engagement with the environment"—something at the heart of LBC's beauty and happiness petal, intended "to recognize the need for beauty as a precursor to caring enough to preserve, conserve and serve the greater good."

"Someone might not make a full commitment by knocking on the front door but suddenly becomes part of the building," he says. "It works as an attractor—the math major who doesn't care about environmental studies but sees people sitting around in a comfortable location or sees a group inside having an animated meeting. Somehow those barriers to explore are broken down."

Says Lauren McDonald '12, a program committee member who's now an apprentice at the Poughkeepsie Farm Project in Poughkeepsie, N.Y., "By building a building that embodies all the principles Williams is trying to teach students and trying to spread to the community, it's a much more powerful way to do it than just having somebody read it in a book."



## Philosophical Implications of Modern Physics

“Some of the discoveries made by physicists over the last century seem to show that our common-sense views are deeply at odds with our most sophisticated and best confirmed scientific theories.”

So begins the description for *Philosophical Implications of Modern Physics*, a new course taught this past spring by philosophy professor Keith McPartland and physics professor William Wootters. Students spent the semester exploring what relativity theory and quantum theory could tell them about the nature of space, time, probability and causality.

By way of example, Wootters, the Barclay Jermain Professor of Natural Philosophy, describes how a quantum particle like a photon of light can be in a “superposition.” That is, it’s understood to exist in two different states at once. As soon as a scientist measures the particle, however, the superposition collapses, and the measurement reveals the particle to be in only one state. This phenomenon lends itself to philosophical questions such as whether the measurement caused the change, whether the photon was really in both states simultaneously in the first place and whether observing something fundamentally alters its state.

The professors took turns leading the class and then participating alongside their 24 students, asking questions and taking notes. Because most of the students were either philosophy or physics majors, the challenge for both McPartland and Wootters was to present the ideas in their fields in a different way.

The course has its roots in a faculty study group convened several years ago to discuss the fundamental concerns

of quantum physics. McPartland—who long has been interested in the philosophy of science—joined. “I’m interested in questions about what exists,” he says. “Some scientific theories can be interpreted in different ways to give you different answers to that question.”

When the study group ended, McPartland and Wootters continued to meet over lunch to discuss how their fields overlapped. Their conversations continued when Wootters joined a faculty reading group organized by McPartland to explore philosophical questions about the foundations of physics.

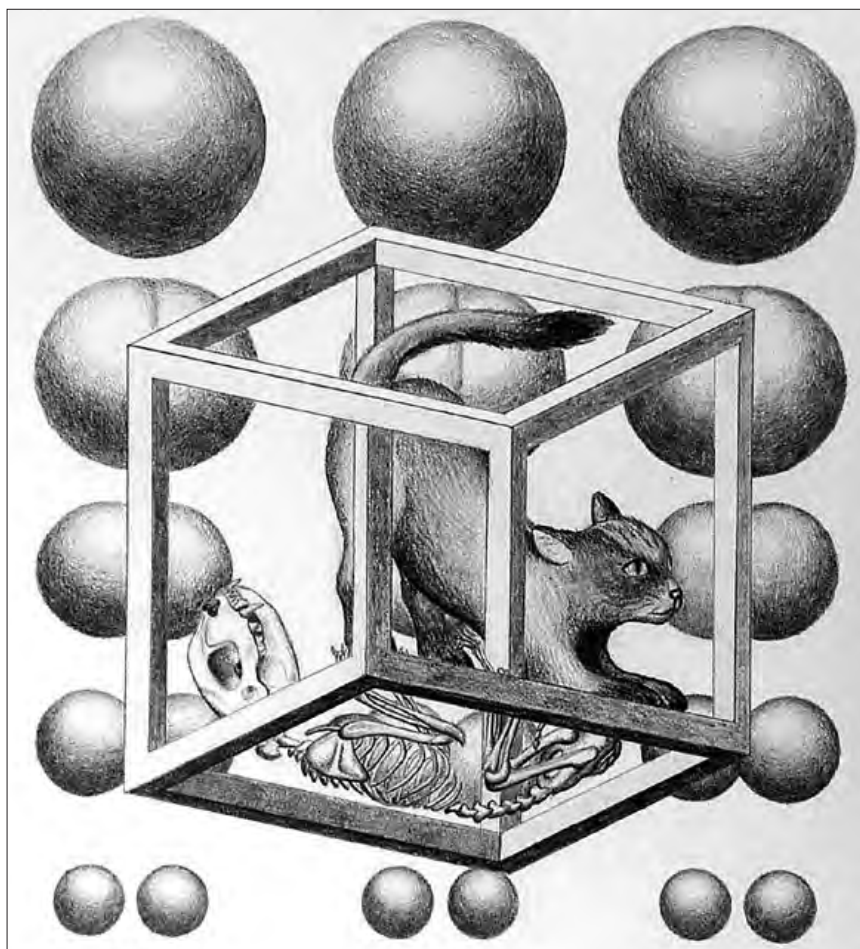
“There are problems in the interpretation of quantum theory that are at least as much philosophical problems as physics problems,”

Wootters says. “Quantum theory works extremely well in practice, but we have a very hard time figuring out what it’s telling us about the world.”

For John Russell ’16, a philosophy and physics major, the course—which McPartland and Wootters plan to teach again—seemed tailor-made. He says it revealed frictions between one’s ontology, or theory about the nature of being, and one’s understanding of the physical world. “Philosophers have no qualms about saying that stuff is out there even if we are unable to observe it,” he says. “But physicists need to be able to empirically test that something exists.”

Says Bryn Reinstadler ’15, a chemistry major who spent nearly as much time in philosophy classes as science ones, “It can be easy to unquestioningly accept the black-and-white view that science offers, but I think it’s useful to train the scientist part of my brain to accept the gray in life.”

ILLUSTRATION BY JIE QI



In their course, McPartland and Wootters used **Schrödinger's Cat**, a thought experiment devised by the Nobel Prize-winning physicist Erwin Schrödinger in 1935, to illustrate how quantum mechanics can be illogical. Inside a sealed box are a cat, a quantum particle in an equal superposition of two states and a bottle of poison that breaks open—killing the cat—if and only if the quantum state collapses in one of the two possible ways. Says Wootters: “Before we’ve opened the box and made a measurement, quantum mechanics allows us to describe the particle, the detector and the cat itself as being in an entangled superposition”—neither alive nor dead. Which, says McPartland, “makes us wonder how vast a gulf lies between some of our most firmly held common-sense beliefs and the implications of our best scientific theories.”

—Julia Munemo



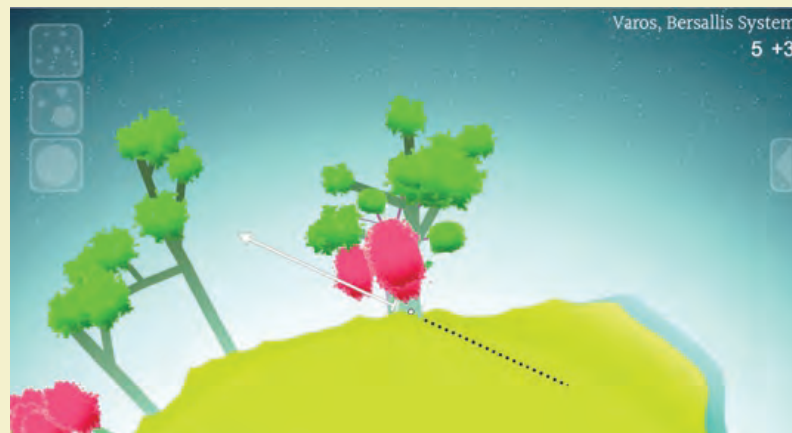
## Professor's App Reaches for the Stars

The objective: Sink a putt and then hurtle through an unexplored universe, avoiding asteroids and interacting with aliens until you reach the next planet, and hole, on a galactic golf course. Along the way, you're learning about space travel and astronomy.

This is Project Rocket Golfing, computer science professor Morgan McGuire's latest video game. Over the past six years, he's worked on games like *Call of Duty*, *Guitar Hero* and *Skylanders*, but this is his first solo effort since coming to Williams in 2006. Available for Apple devices, it marries addictive, simple gameplay with facts about space exploration in a family-friendly environment (meaning no violence or in-app ads or purchases).

Built using principles McGuire teaches in his 100-level Creating Games course, Project Rocket Golfing was born in January during a game jam—a programming party he holds four times a year in the college's Computational Graphics Research Lab. Similar to a “hackathon,” the game jam brings together computer science students, faculty and alumni for 48 hours of writing code.

Usually, ideas that come out of the game jam are scrapped, since the goal is “to build community and recharge our creativity,” McGuire says. But Project Rocket Golfing was well received, and he was encouraged to develop it further.



A screenshot from computer science professor Morgan McGuire's app, Project Rocket Golfing.

The game is simple to play but relies on complex programming such as procedural generation, an algorithmic technique that allows each player's universe—the backgrounds and scenarios—to be unique.

The algorithm creates planet names rooted in a variety of languages, including French, Mandarin, Swahili and English. Each level of the game is introduced with quotations drawn from a wide range of sources, including Carl Sagan, Octavia Butler and Buzz Aldrin. All of this is meant to convey to players that science is a field open to anyone who chooses to pursue it.

“Space exploration is a project that requires the entire human race,” McGuire says. “I wanted the game to express that we're all on Earth together and to inspire players to reach for the stars.”

► Learn more at <http://rocketgolfing.com>.

## Finding Home in Vietnam

Inspired by a spring break trip with her history class, Rachel Nguyen '16 is spending the summer in Vietnam, working on a documentary film about identity, displacement and community.

Funded by a Russell H. Bostert Memorial Fellowship research grant, the history major will spend two months in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon), filming and interviewing locals with the help of a translator. She also plans to interview Vietnamese refugees in the U.S.

Nguyen's parents were part of the wave of people evacuated by U.S. troops in 1975 at the fall of Saigon. But she didn't learn the details of her family's history until just before the spring break trip, part of the course War and Remembrance in Vietnam, taught by history professor Jessica Chapman.

“It was hard to picture a past beyond my parents' immigration here,” Nguyen says.

Her maternal great-grandfather was a well-known businessman who ran the Xà bông Cô Ba soap company until it was nationalized by the Vietnamese Communist Party.



For her documentary, Nguyen plans to use the company, which remains an iconic brand in Vietnam, as a lens for exploring how the country has changed through periods of imperialism, colonialism and communism.

“Talk of my ancestors was a part of my upbringing, but they were just kind of pictures on the altar,” says the California native, who on her father's side is the seventh descendant of a famous Vietnamese poet. “In the U.S., my parents are in the working class. ... It's incredible to understand that their history is more complicated than that.”

So, too, is Vietnam's history, which Nguyen and other students in Chapman's class were able to understand more deeply by comparing

scholarly readings to their firsthand experiences in the country. Their visits to war museums and conversations with Vietnamese people over spring break helped students view Vietnam outside the framework of U.S. history, Chapman says.

“The trip was an opportunity for students to go straight to the primary sources analyzed in the course readings and interpret them on their own terms,” she says. “They understood a lot more about the Vietnamese state's relationship to war memory than the average international tourist and were thus able to engage more critically with what they saw, read and heard, and to place their reactions in conversation with scholarly works.”

Nguyen will continue to work on her film when she returns to campus in the fall. Though she hasn't decided what she'll do with it when it's finished, she's grateful that the class and research fellowship opened the door to understanding a crucial part of her identity.

“Learning all this history has been great,” she says, “and it's all come from the prospect of going (to Vietnam) last spring.”



# Educating for Happiness

PHOTO BY EDWARD ACKER



Susan Engel

Twelve years ago, Susan Engel was talking with a group of teachers who were criticizing the standardized testing model that's now a major focus in American education. "I kept asking, 'What do you want the kids to learn?'" she says. "The word 'curiosity' kept coming up."

And so began years of research that resulted in two books: *The End of the Rainbow: How Educating for Happiness (Not Money) Would Transform our Schools*

(The New Press, February 2015) and *The Hungry Mind: The Origins of Curiosity in Childhood* (Harvard University Press, March 2015).

While *The Hungry Mind* talks about ways to measure curiosity, *The End of the Rainbow* focuses on teaching students in ways that will help them retain curiosity and passion later in life.

So instead of having third-graders add and subtract numbers of skateboards to make a math problem more palatable, Engel says, teachers could ask pupils to develop a skate park. The lesson offers room to explore many topics at once, such as dimensions, accounting and architecture—and the students can feel ownership of the idea and the process of learning.

School, Engel says, "should be a ticket to other aspects of life that provide happiness"—a sense of community, or the chance to figure out your passions and build on them through your life. "The most important task ... is to make school a place students want to be."

A developmental psychologist and former schoolteacher, Engel is a senior lecturer in psychology and the Class of 1959 Director of the Program in Teaching. She's been at Williams for 25 years and is the co-founder of the Hayground School in Bridgehampton, N.Y.

## EXCERPT ▼

Imagine that you are in charge of a school. You already have decided that in order to succeed the school will have to be a place where children want to spend their day. You realize that the first step is to articulate a compelling set of goals. These goals cannot just look good on a piece of paper in September or June. ... Instead you want to come up with concrete goals that mean

something specific and real in everyday life. If met, these goals will ensure that kids are leaving your school more thoughtful, more engaged and thus happier than they otherwise would be.

Let's say you've also come to realize that it is a travesty to use school as a job-training program. Getting educated and getting trained for a job are different. School should be the place where children become educated. Imagine you've thought long and hard about how schools can put children on the path to living decent, meaningful, satisfy-

ing lives. What are the abilities and dispositions that set children on that path? What would a school look like if it made happiness, rather than money, the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow?

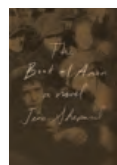
It's actually not that complicated, and it all comes down to a fairly simple list:

- Become immersed in complex and meaningful activities
- Develop a sense of purpose
- Acquire an eagerness for knowledge, and the ability to get it
- Think about things fully
- Become good at things
- Contribute to one's community
- Appreciate and understand those who are different from you
- Read for pleasure and for information

The next question is this: What would a school where children could acquire these abilities and dispositions look like?



## Other books



### The Book of Aron.

By Jim Shepard,  
Williams' J. Leland  
Miller Professor of  
American History,

Literature and Eloquence. Alfred A. Knopf, 2015. A fictional, child's-eye view of the atrocities of living in a Jewish ghetto during the Holocaust.



### The Oxford Companion to Sugar and Sweets.

By Darra Goldstein,  
Williams' Willcox B.  
and Harriet M. Adsit

Professor of Russian. Oxford University Press, 2015. A reference guide to all aspects of sweetness, including the chemical, technical, social, cultural and linguistic.



### Meander, Because You Can't See Much While Marching.

By Michael Glier,  
Williams professor of art,

et al. Opalka Gallery, 2015. A career retrospective provides a glimpse into Glier's intellectual and artistic processes.



### Brides on Sale: Taiwanese Cross-Border Marriages in a Globalizing Asia.

By Todd L. Sandel '86.

Peter Lang, 2015. An exploration of the long-term global effects of marriages between women from mainland China and Southeast Asia to men in Taiwan.

► Visit [ephsbookshelf.williams.edu](http://ephsbookshelf.williams.edu) to see more works by members of the Williams community and to submit new publications.



## Modeling Mutualism

Two Williams students are spending the summer deep in Hopkins Forest, collecting samples from roughly 200 goldenrod plants as part of a three-year project to understand inter-species dependencies called “mutualisms.”

The project, funded with a \$244,117 National Science Foundation grant, is being led by biology professor Manuel Morales and chemistry professor Enrique Peacock-Lopez. Their goal is to understand how species interact with and affect one another.

As the principal investigator, Morales is leading the fieldwork and analysis on a system involving an aphid-like insect called a treehopper, the tall goldenrod plant on which it feeds, and the ants that protect the treehopper from predators.

“Like many mutualisms, the one between the treehopper and the ant involves the exchange of a resource reward for protection from predators,” says Morales. “We want to know what the long-term effects are on the plant at the center of this

mutualism. How long does it take the goldenrod to recover after treehoppers have fed on it? And what can we learn from how treehopper populations disperse over a field of goldenrod?”

The short-term effect of mutualism is to increase the population of the plant-eating insect. That can lead to over-exploitation of the plants in the long-term, which will ultimately harm the insects’ ability to feed. “Conventional wisdom is that mutualisms stabilize ecosystems,” says Morales. “Our research suggests that in some cases the opposite may be true.”

Michael Chen ’18 and Graham Buchan ’17 are working with Morales to collect goldenrod samples and apply sprays that cause the plants to produce anti-herbivore chemicals, experimentally narrowing the range of dispersal patterns.

Their work will inform that of Peacock-Lopez, who has created a mathematical model that accounts for



time-dependent changes in the system. Because the model is being updated with information from the field, it can better measure treehopper population dispersal.

The two professors began collaborating several years ago, after they saw each other’s research at a Summer Science Research Program poster session. Of this summer’s research, Peacock-Lopez says, “It’s an incredible opportunity for the students to be able to interact among the disciplines. That can only happen at a college as small and integrated as Williams.”

—Julia Munemo

## Waste in Postwar Japan



Eiko Maruko Siniawer

A new book project by history professor Eiko Maruko Siniawer ’97 is delving into how perceptions of waste in post-World War II Japan have shaped—and

been shaped by—understandings of affluence and concepts of a good and meaningful life.

With a fellowship from the American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), Siniawer will spend the next year conducting research and writing full-time. Much of that research will be done in Japan, examining 60 years’ worth of government reports, magazine and newspaper articles, advertisements, children’s books and video games, among other resources that provide “a window into thinking about what people value,” she says.

Women’s magazines, for example, long have placed value on efficient households. But over time the desired result has evolved from efficiency for its own sake to maximizing leisure time, Siniawer says. Meanwhile, postwar consumerism has been tempered by events such as the 1973 oil crisis and the 2011 tsunami and subsequent nuclear disaster—which shifted the focus, at least temporarily, to conservation and restraint.

Her book, titled *Affluence of the Heart: Waste in Postwar Japan*, will examine waste in its broadest sense—including waste of resources, time, money and material possessions. These ideas “have much to do with defining Japanese national identity and priorities,” she says. “The early postwar focus on minimizing waste of all kinds for the sake of economic growth has given way to concerns about the fetishization of material affluence and its various costs.”

The seeds for the book were planted many years ago while Siniawer was living in Japan, researching the institutionalization of violence

in politics there. She and her neighbors took turns making sure their garbage was hauled away each week and cleaning up the area afterward. During one of her shifts, Siniawer came home later than usual to find that someone had already done it for her.

“This started me thinking not just about why there was such attention to garbage and what happened to this waste after it was hauled away, but also what these practices around waste assumed about social structures and daily life,” she says.

Siniawer specializes in the history of modern Japan. In 2008 she published her first book, *Ruffians, Yakuza, Nationalists: The Violent Politics of Modern Japan, 1860–1960* (Cornell University Press). She has a Ph.D. in history and a master’s degree in East Asian studies, both from Harvard University.

The ACLS is a nonprofit federation of more than 70 scholarly organizations and aims to support the advancement of studies in the humanities and social sciences.





“These two pieces catalyze rich discussions about changing geopolitical boundaries, ownership, propaganda and identity.”

Elizabeth Gallerani, Curator of Mellon Academic Programs at WCMA

## Unearthing the Future

Two ancient reliefs in the permanent collection of the Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) may be among the few surviving relics of a palace reportedly destroyed by the Islamic State.

The reliefs are carved into panels of gypsum that are each about 85 by 40 by 3 inches and weigh 1,500 pounds. The panels and many others like them once covered the walls of the Northwest Palace of King Ashurnasirpal II, who ruled the Assyrians from 883 to 859 BCE. WCMA's reliefs show different forms of the protective deity *Apkallu*. One has the body of a man with the head of a bird; the other is a man wearing what may be a crown.

The site of the palace where they came from, in present-day Nimrud, Iraq, was first excavated in the 1840s by British explorer and amateur archaeologist Sir Austen Henry Layard. Dwight W. Marsh, Class of 1842, a missionary in the region, met Layard and acquired the reliefs for his alma mater, saying he hoped students would “look upon the relics of the past [and] think wisely of time.” The reliefs were the first of their kind to arrive in the U.S.

Nearly two centuries later, they hang in the Stoddard Gallery in WCMA. On a screen mounted nearby is a virtual reconstruction of the Northwest Palace created by the local company Learning Sites Inc. The short video runs on a loop, taking visitors on a tour of what the palace would have looked like when it was built and pointing out where the reliefs were originally located inside. It's possible this computerized rendition is now the only remaining record of that ancient site.

Historian Magnus Bernhardsson is one of many Williams professors—in fields including anthropology, art history, classics, comparative literature and religion—who teach with the reliefs. He brings the students in his Modern Middle East course to the museum each semester to help them contextualize their conversations about history and imperialism. The question of cultural patrimony is one of the many issues they discuss.

According to the law of the land at the time Layard dug up the reliefs, the excavation of the site was legal. The Ottoman Empire, which had colonized the region, granted permission to unearth and transport objects. “Many Iraqi nationalists have argued that the Ottomans were foreign occupiers who were not concerned with the interests of Iraq and therefore question the validity of the Ottoman decree,” says Bernhardsson. “This is a similar argument that the Greeks have been using regarding the Elgin Marbles now at the British Museum.”

While Iraqi nationalists are not seeking the repatriation of the reliefs at WCMA, recent allegations of destruction by the Islamic State have prompted discussions about cultural and natural resources removed from Iraq over time. It's in that context that many students view the reliefs today.

“These two pieces catalyze rich discussions about changing geopolitical boundaries, ownership, propaganda and identity,” says Elizabeth Gallerani, Curator of Mellon Academic Programs at WCMA.

Says Bernhardsson, “They often evoke diametrically opposed emotions and political views among students. And that conversation serves as a starting point to discussing our role at WCMA, in the wider college community and in society in general.”

—Julia Munemo

At left: Computer rendering depicting a view east in the throne room of the Northwest Palace of King Ashurnasirpal II, Nimrud (ancient Assyria, present-day Iraq) taken from the 3D virtual reality computer model of the site created by Learning Sites Inc. Opposite page, from left: Guardian Spirit and Winged Guardian Spirit from the Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II, ca. 880 BCE, gypsum. Gift of Sir Austen Henry Layard through Dwight W. Marsh, Class of 1842. 1851.2, 1851.1.









Sara Clark '15

By viewing this house being built so prominently in the middle of our daily paths, group identity and consciousness began to shift.

# Place and Consciousness

By Sara Clark '15

I've always put a very strong value on place—and connection to place—and on how our surroundings can subtly shape consciousness and belief. So looking at colleges as a passionate environmental advocate, one of my main criteria was the relationship between the campus and the natural world. I was totally turned off by Amherst for the sole reason that there were not enough pines. Williams, on the other hand, went above and beyond.

To a large extent, Williams reflected my dearly held convictions. Our mountains could leave students with a strong appreciation for the natural world. Yet there were really no visual means to nourish the environmental values related to sustainability or energy efficiency needed in the context of 21st century climate change.

However, this past spring, the Class of 1966 Environmental Center opened, and it has the potential to make Williams' environmental studies program the strongest it's ever been. But more importantly, this remarkable building can shape the consciousness of students for generations to come in a more relevant, immediate way than our mountains can.

Foundationally, the Center for Environmental Studies was already an excellent program. For most of my time here, it was cramped into the now-destroyed Harper House on the western edge of campus. Yet such exile didn't curtail the department's power. The ill-heated house was transformed into an environmental studies home, nourishing the feeling of community that such a field of study needs. You'd walk in and immediately be confronted with the op-eds written for *The Record*, the poster with all the faces of students involved in activities and, over in the next room, the drawings that my peers and I did for our Environmental Planning Workshop, redesigning a vacant lot near campus. This all reminded me of the pictures parents hang on the fridge from elementary school, the visuals sending a clear statement:

"Here you are home. Here you are valued. And here we collectively want you to succeed."

This sense of community, in a way, makes environmental studies not just the quintessential liberal art but also the quintessentially Williams small liberal arts program. We always say on admission tours that professors come to Williams for the same reason students do—for the close personal interaction that cannot exist in giant lectures led by teaching assistants.

Environmental studies does all this and more. It's like Mark Hopkins and a student on a sustainably sourced log, and they've finished their tutorial and stayed on to brainstorm ways to engage non-environmental student groups in environmental affairs. They're working together academically but also toward something ideologically greater.

One might wonder how a building like the new environmental center could make an already strong program and community stronger. And here is where place and consciousness are at their most important.

While our old house was wonderful for environmental studies students, it was a flawed center for extracurricular affairs. Being so far away, the old house required student groups to meet in disparate conference rooms around campus, and there was no uniting force behind their actions. Activism was surprisingly latent, membership dwindling and energy difficult to sustain.

Yet this year things started to change. Maybe it was because of a group of enthusiastic freshmen, but I believe that by viewing this house being built so prominently in the middle of our daily paths, group identity and consciousness began to shift. We started to have summits with all of the student environmental groups to talk about our projects and find those formerly hidden means of collaboration. The divestment movement suddenly became a very vocal force. Now there is a conference room for meetings and a bulletin board that unites all group



information. These things may seem trivial, but they are absolutely essential for making us feel united, significant and able to effect change.

More broadly, here was a building being constructed in a revolutionarily sustainable way for us, for our community and for future students. Perception of possibility and importance subtly shifts when you realize that this beloved institution, though it may not always concede to group pressure, is saying very clearly that it supports environmental values and believes, in part, what we believe. Such a project legitimizes and institutionalizes environmentalism and affirms not only that it matters but also that it's of central concern to this college.

But this space's importance will permeate beyond the closer-than-ever-knit bonds of the environmental groups and incite something more than the simple appreciation for the natural world that our mountains do. Here now are giant arrays of solar panels staring into the windows of the beautiful new library and looking every student in the eye as he or she walks down to Mission for dinner. If you pass something like this every day, regardless of whether you have any connection to the environmental world on campus, your engagement changes. The panels are glaringly obvious—a statement—but over time they could blend into the built environment much like telephone poles: a clear, unquestionably necessary part of life. For students who then enter the “real world,” this environmental stewardship could very well seem like basic common sense.

The Class of 1966 Environmental Center is only a starting point. Let us take this energy and use this building not just as a symbol but also as a model for the wholehearted commitment to fighting climate change that the college could have.

**|** Sara Clark '15 graduated magna cum laude in June with a political science major and a concentration in environmental studies. A Class of 1960 Scholar and former chair of Williams Sustainable Growers, she has a summer fellowship with Hillary for America in New Hampshire. Her essay is based on a speech she gave at the dedication of the Class of 1966 Environmental Center in April.

PHOTO BY ROMAN IWASIWKA



Emilio Sanchez (Cuban-born, American, 1921-1999), *Casita Criolla*, after 1950. Color lithograph on paper, overall: 23 x 32 1/16 in. (58.4 x 81.4 cm.), Anonymous Gift, 78.22.89.

## Shadow and Light

Cuban-born artist Emilio Sanchez is known for his bright, sunny prints—welcoming pieces that also have an air of mystery. Searing sunshine highlights architectural details of homes, buildings and landmarks and plays against darkened doors and windows, keeping the secrets inside those structures safe, leaving the viewer to wonder.

The Williams College Museum of Art (WCMA) has dozens of Sanchez lithographs, including depictions of Puerto Rican windowsills, New York skyscrapers and Vermont estates. Though his works were last displayed at the museum in 1978 during a solo exhibition, they take on new significance as the U.S. and Cuba work to improve relations.

“The minimalist way he deals with architectural space, color, shadow and light are all ways to evoke memory and relationship to a site without being very specific,” says Lisa Dorin, WCMA’s deputy director of curatorial affairs. “It makes them more universal, in some ways.”

Sanchez left Cuba in 1944 to study at the Art Students League of New York. He traveled widely during his career and lived in New York until his death in 1999. Though his work depicts buildings all over the world, his preference was work that referenced Caribbean houses or landscapes, like *Casita Criolla* (above).

“I’ve always been a terrible Cuban,” he said in a 1967 interview that coincided with an exhibition of his work at the Brooklyn Museum of Art. “I’ve never lived there. And I became more aware of it when I was away.”

Dorin says his lithographs have a lot to offer Williams scholars. Art students can see the work of a career printmaker whose lithographs have been the subject of 40 solo shows and is represented in 30 museum collections. And they’re an excellent primary resource for anyone seeking cultural context for Cuban history.



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