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Karol Crosbie

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PAIN & GRACE
Alumni working for social justice are making a difference

GAULT SCHOOLHOUSE
The College’s newest residence hall
The truth about student debt

Ever since the total amount of U.S. student debt outstanding passed the $1 trillion mark almost two years ago, media outlets, pundits, and politicians across the spectrum have been issuing dire pronouncements about the impact of this debt on both the individuals who owe it and the economy as a whole.

This summer, the Brookings Institution’s Brown Center on Education Policy released a carefully researched report that provides a welcome corrective to the dominant media narrative.

In “Is a Student Loan Crisis on the Horizon?” co-authors Beth Akers and Matthew M. Chingos analyzed more than two decades worth of data to identify trends in student loan debt and its impact on the overall financial well-being of U.S. households headed by adults age 20 to 40.

They found that the share of those households with education debt has indeed increased from 14 percent in 1989 to 36 percent in 2010, while the median debt per person has grown from $3,517 to $8,500, in 2010 dollars, in part driven by more Americans pursuing higher education, especially graduate degrees. Akers and Chingos report that only about a quarter of those with student debt had balances that exceeded $20,000, and just 4 percent owe more than $100,000 (although reporters seem to have found every last one of them).

Even more striking was the impact of student debt on household budgets. “Surprisingly,” the authors write, “the ratio of monthly payments to monthly income has been flat over the last two decades. Median monthly payments ranged between three and four percent of monthly earnings in every year from 1992 through 2010.”

They attribute this finding to a combination of longer repayment terms (13.4 years in 2010 vs. 7.5 in 1992) and declining interest rates.

Their conclusion: “The transitory burden of loan repayment is no greater for today’s young workers than it was for young workers two decades ago. If anything, the monthly repayment burden has lessened.”

What has changed is the return on investment in higher education—“it’s gotten even better: “Over the last 30 years, the increase in lifetime earnings associated with earning a bachelor's degree has grown by 75 percent.”

At Wooster, the situation is better still: Half our students graduate with no debt at all, while those who do borrow owe $3,150 less than the national average for private colleges. Thanks to the generosity of our alumni, we continue to provide substantial amounts of grant aid—the kind that doesn’t have to be paid back—to the tune of $47 million last year, and are investing significant resources in APEX to provide our students the integrated academic and career planning, internships, and experiential learning opportunities they need to chart a course to post-Wooster success. What’s more, 90 percent of Wooster graduates are either employed or in graduate school within six months of commencement.

Borrowing a modest amount to help finance a college degree is an investment. And at Wooster, it’s a very good investment indeed.

GRANT H. CORNWELL
President, The College of Wooster
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Cover: Campus photographer Matt Dilyard captures the essence of the Gault Schoolhouse.
Learning to teach

In the past 50 years of reading Wooster, I don't remember any articles about the graduates who have chosen a career in K-12 schools. The spring 2014 issue was unique—timely, well presented, and showed how the practices of teaching grow from the depth and breadth of the liberal arts.

In my 40-plus years of a career in secondary schools and universities, I came to better understand that the best teachers are those who reflect on their teaching and how such reflection impacts learning—that of their own and that of the students they teach. Indeed, teaching and learning is a symbiotic process.

The Wooster graduates in this article spoke out. They have taught, learned, and in the process, made Wooster proud.

ROBERT EVERHART '62
PORTLAND, OREGON

A 60-year debt

A recent book that I co-edited (see opposite page) represents a contribution to my field and a debt that goes back 60 years to Professors Mateer, Coolidge, Clareson, and Molstad. I think with reverence of the English Department from 1956-1960, classical as it was, informed by the graceful dignity of Howard Lowry always, and full of other people as eager as I to make honing language arts and understanding great authors our life's work. In my years as a tenured professor I fought to try for something in our general education programs that would come fractionally close to Wooster's "Introduction to Liberal Studies." which, I understand still exists in a vestigial form.

ELEANOR ELSON HEGINBOTHAM '60
PROFESSOR EMERITA, CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
NORTH BETHESDA, MARYLAND
*Editor's Note: It does indeed, although today's faculty might argue with the "vestigial" characterization. It is now called "First Year Seminar." See the story on pg. 4.

Old alums happen by

My wife Kathy '69 and daughter Molly Carlson '93 with her husband and sons were in the area for a few days in early August and I spent part of a day on campus and around town. True to myself, I ended up with a poem which I thought I'd share.

Offhanded Campus Visit

old alums happen by

Evaporated years entice
a lacing of old memories
on shadows few embrace—for time
elapsed has swallowed all too much

from faces I might meet around
a living campus, liberating
this other round of youth unto
a blossoming maturity …

while those who earned their whiff of grace
in fragments of the campus now
in place, and savored where new grass
lies now and treasures tender signs

replacing shades still live in mind—
though gone for months or decades now—
these do not happen by today.
Through all these images in thought,
suggestions fraught with clarity
in too few haunts, ones nearly private,
the echoes of five decades past—
and twenty years, and nearer by
a few—these phantom ecstasies

found as revisions on revisions
are peeled aside in passion—well,
there is a subtle joy in bricks
and oaks and traffic ways, in hills

remodeled for reimagining
the campus rituals, the thrill
of nuance, pulse and faces long
since lost from habitat and sight.

AUGUST 7, 2014

BILL FLEWELLING '67
PROCTOR, W.V.
Recent publications by Wooster alumni


Darren C. Demaree '03, *As We Refer to Our Bodies*, a collection of poetry, 8th House Publishing, 2013.


Eleanor Elson Heginbotham '60 and Paul Crumbley, editors, *Dickinson’s Fascicles: A Spectrum of Possibilities*, Ohio State University Press, 2014


*A wide selection of alumni books is for sale at the Florence O. Wilson Bookstore on campus and online: https://tinyurl.com/14jv9p3*

On our reading list

Joan Chase, *During the Reign of the Queen of Persia*. Recommended by Gary Houston ’68: “In 1983, Ted Hearne, my predecessor as The College of Wooster’s Thistle editor, told me about this first novel, which is set in Wooster and was republished this year. The writing is exceptional.” http://shinynewbooks.co.uk/reprints02/during-the-reign-of-the-queen-of-persia-by-joan-chase/

Welcoming the Class of 2018

Newest students are diverse, accomplished

Wooster’s newest class—570 students chosen from a pool of nearly 5,600 applicants—represent 38 states and 27 countries. Nearly half were in the top 10 percent of their graduating high school classes and 22 were valedictorians. One in every three students is either a domestic student of color or international student.

First Year Seminar in Critical Inquiry

Its title has changed over the decades—from “Introduction to Liberal Studies” in the 50s and 60s, to “Freshman Colloquium” and “Freshman Studies” in the 70s and 80s, to its current title, first used in 1986: “First-Year Seminar.”

But the purpose of the required course for first years has remained constant: To introduce students to critical thinking and writing in a small group setting.

In earlier years, all first year students studied the same theme, which changed annually. (This approach is retained in today’s annual Wooster Forum and accompanying summer reading; see adjacent page.) Today’s students can choose from a tantalizing menu of topics. The 2014 lineup of 34 seminars included “Black Markets and the Underground Economy,” “Your Brain on Music,” “Sports and Social Justice,” “Romance, Bromance, and Besties: The Science of Close Relationships,” “To Tweet or Not to Tweet: Teaching and Learning in the Digital Age,” “B-Boys and Ballerinas: Examining Culture through Dance,” and “Choice or Destiny?”

In “Choice or Destiny?” Dean Fraga, Danforth Professor of Biology and chair of biochemistry and molecular biology, asks his class to discuss the balance between choice and destiny by reading three books, written from the perspectives of the humanities, social science, and natural sciences: Barbara Kingsolver’s Animal, Vegetable, Miracle: A Year of Food Life, Barbara Ehrenreich’s Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America, and David Epstein’s The Sports Gene: Inside the Science of Extraordinary Athletic Performance.
Wooster Forum on East Asia strengthens community, invites independent thinking

Every year, community members, students, faculty, staff, and alumni come together to learn more about a provocative topic.

This year, first year students prepared for the year's forum on East Asia by reading Yu Hua's *China in Ten Words*. Forum speakers included novelist Amy Tan and Susan Stratman ’68, who discussed the book she co-authored, *Fukushima: The Story of a Nuclear Disaster*. Also featured was an exhibit in the Burton D. Morgan Gallery, "The Jay Gates Collection: Art of China and Japan," a collection of more than 35 objects—from ancient to contemporary.

"My debt to the College is substantial."

Jay Gates ’68 recently gave his personal collection of Chinese and Japanese art to the College of Wooster Art Museum’s permanent collection. An art history major, Gates went on to a lifetime career as curator, teacher, and director of major art museums, including the Seattle Art Museum, Dallas Museum of Art, and the Phillips Collection in Washington D.C.

The gift was given in honor of Arn and Beth Lewis. Arn Lewis, who Gates calls his mentor, colleague, and lifelong friend, taught at Wooster from 1964-1996. Beth Lewis, a cultural historian, also taught in the department as an adjunct professor for many years. “My debt to the College is substantial,” said Gates.

The 18-year-old I.S.

Brittany Bullard was scheduled to graduate in 1996. But what she calls a “perfect storm” of events intervened and her Independent Study remained unwritten. It’s not that she didn’t try. Over the years. Three times she plunged into the I.S. process, encouraged by supportive bosses and colleagues.

About six years ago she became a mentor in the College’s Worthy Questions program, which teams community mentors with student questers; a friendship developed between her and her quester, Celeste Tannenbaum ’13. Just talking with Celeste and being on campus inspired me to try one more time," she says.

Bullard audited two classes, worked with economics faculty, including adviser, John Sell, James R. Wilson Professor of Business Economics, and researched how small business owners decide what kinds of retirement plans to offer. "I work with this every day and I love my job," said Bullard, a financial advisor with Monitor Wealth Group in Wooster. "The hardest thing was flipping my thinking from business to academic. I know why businesses do what they do in the real world—I needed to explain it to the academic world."

All steps have been completed, all trophies collected. The I.S. has been written and defended. The Tootsie Roll and Button #473 have been claimed. And on a chilly day in mid-September, Brittany Bullard ’14 took a day off work to come to campus to pick up her diploma.

Watch Wooster’s TEDx

The College’s third set of TEDx (technology, entertainment, design) talks will be held on campus Nov. 8, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., and live-streamed at http://www.wooster.edu/live. Organized by the student club Launch, with support from the Center for Entrepreneurship, this year’s event explores “Push” as a theme. Speakers, including John Dean ’61, Doug Reiser ’04, and Lauren Grimanis ’10, will talk about pushing the limits, pushing the way people think, and pushing themselves.
Built to last, the old brick structure on Beall Avenue is in its third incarnation—from elementary school, to human services center, to the College’s newest residence hall.

Each suite has its own common area—perfect for get-togethers.

"Having to clean your own suite and your own bathroom is a nice transition to living on your own after college." Emilie Vermilyea ’15, Germantown, New York.
The College’s newest residence hall is a historic building that has seen 113 years of growth, learning, and change.

Seventy-eight years ago, Stan Gault ’48 was a sixth grader at the Beall Avenue School, just up the street from his family’s home on College Avenue. The magnificent oak tree on the building’s south side shaded many after-school marbles games (including one in which he won the city championship). ▪ This fall, the stately red brick structure, built in 1901, became the College’s newest (or is that oldest?) student residence hall—Gault Schoolhouse.

Photos by Matt Dilyard
After serving the community for 95 years, the Beall Avenue School closed its doors in 1996 as part of a redistricting plan. Six years later, following a major renovation spearheaded by that former sixth grader, it was reborn as the Gault Family Learning Center, home to five independent but complementary community organizations that provided programs and services for young children and their families.

But by 2013, government cuts and program realignments rendered the model of housing independent programs under one roof economically unviable. That year, the Gault Family Learning Center’s board decided to close and transfer the 34,000-square foot building and 3.3-acre property to the College, at no cost.

Today, Gault Schoolhouse is home to 73 upper class students and a professional staff member from the Office of Residence Life. Classrooms have been transformed into loft-style suites accommodating three to five students. Many suites have soaring 14-foot ceilings and windows that fill the space with natural light. Each suite has its own bathroom, full-size refrigerator, and common area with comfortable seating and a flat-panel TV. A mix of singles and doubles, with loft beds, closet space, desks, and bookshelves, surround the common area.

Students say they love the light, the common space in each suite (plenty of room to have friends over to watch a movie or a football game), and the greater amount of privacy compared to traditional residence halls. “No more walking down the hall in my towel to take a shower,” says Mike Andes, a junior biochemistry and molecular biology major from Ashtabula, Ohio. Also popular are little touches, such as lightswitches and USB ports next to the loft beds, so that students needn’t climb up in the dark and can keep phones within close reach at night.

The ground floor “chill room” features soft seating, study tables, microwaves, refrigerators, exposed brick walls, and an LED projector and sound system for both study and leisure. The school’s old multipurpose room on the first floor has been cleaned up and outfitted with indoor/outdoor furniture. The intentionally minimalist approach will allow residents to have input into future decorating and renovation as it becomes clear how the space will be used.

During the development process, Dean of Students Kurt Holmes and other administrators met regularly with neighbors to answer questions and address concerns. Bollards were installed in the alley at each end of the building to maintain access but eliminate through traffic; a dozen parking spaces on the College Avenue side of the building were removed to channel student vehicles over to the building’s main parking lot on Beall Avenue and away from the quieter residential street. A high priority was increasing the amount of green space, which is used jointly by residents and neighbors.

Classrooms have been transformed into loft-style suites accommodating three to five students.
On a sunny day in early September, five residents of Gault Schoolhouse pay homage to childhood. The residence hall’s green space (including swings) is shared by residents and neighbors.
PAIN & GRACE

PAIN AND LOSS ARE INEVITABLE WHEN BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS ARE ABSENT. BUT WHEN CARING IS PRESENT, HEALING MAY OCCUR.
WE IMAGINE WHAT SEX TRAFFICKING LOOKS LIKE. Shadowy, dark transactions—perhaps in Cambodian bars or Thai brothels. Somewhere very far away.

Ramses Clements ’10, street outreach supervisor for Bellefaire JCB’s Homeless and Missing Youth Program in Cleveland, knows exactly what it looks like in Cuyahoga County. It begins with a youth running away or becoming homeless. Within 47–72 hours of being on the streets, chances are very high that a young person will become abused—either coerced into survival sex or assaulted.

He knows where to look and what to look for: gas stations, malls, and motels; teens with lots of cash and no IDs, wearing backpacks stuffed with unlikely contents—perhaps a pillow and toiletries. He is both educator and caseworker and knows that it takes a city to save a kid. He partners with many community organizations—the police, homeless shelters, schools, libraries, the Public Transit Authority.

Chances are very high that a young person will become abused within 47–72 hours of being on the streets.
On a hot summer day, as Clements and *Wooster* magazine staff hunted for a place to take a photo, Clements was approached by a homeless man seeking help. Clements gave him water and toiletries but was unsuccessful in convincing him to find the nearest bus to a homeless shelter. “The hardest thing about the job is cases like this,” he says, “when you try to get someone to do what he knows is the best thing and he turns it down.”

A philosophy major at Wooster who went on for his MS in community and social development, Clements is keenly interested in how public policy plays out in a community and on its streets. An intern with Ohio Senator Sherrod Brown and with Cleveland City Councilman Joe Cimperman, Clements says Ohio could do much to stem its homeless and missing youth population if its policies would address the vulnerability of 18 to 24 year-olds who have aged out of the state’s foster care system.

And, he says, when there is no support system in schools for young people who are LGBT (making up approximately 40 percent of homeless and runaway youth), the community has denied itself a life raft. “A lot of us take our families and support systems so much for granted that we can’t imagine being without them. A lot of these guys don’t have anything or anyone. If they’re not supported, if no one is taking into account who they are, they reach out to anyone who will accept them.

“Some of them have been on their own for years. I congratulate them. I say, ‘Look what you’ve done on your own. Think how much more you could do if we work together.’”

As a case manager for half a dozen youth at any given time, Clements’s goals for them are threefold: to find safe housing, to graduate from high school and continue vocational training, and to find a job. Each goal comes with hurdles, including fear of applying for a job because of a conviction on their record.

Is it hard to earn their trust? Clements laughs. “I give them clothes, and toiletries, and help them find shelter. It’s not too hard a sell. And I also tell them I understand some things. I grew up in a singleparent family in Chicago. I know about eating syrup sandwiches to stretch your food budget.”

Clements, who hopes someday to go into politics, says that education and information for every member of the community is key to change.

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**MAKE A DIFFERENCE: BE PART OF THE NETWORK**

“The lack of information is why policies fall short. We all need to be part of the network—have a contact, have a phone number, have an answer. Everyone must be our eyes, ears, and advocates.”

**RAMSES CLEMENTS ’10**

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**TAKE A CLOSER LOOK**

[www.bellefairejcb.org/campaign/youth-homelessness](http://www.bellefairejcb.org/campaign/youth-homelessness)

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A 30-day campaign initiated by Bellefaire JCB last spring captured the attention of the nation. For 30 days, mannequins were positioned on benches and sidewalks in downtown Cleveland. At first glance they appeared lifelike, but a closer look showed that they were faceless. Each wore a hoodie emblazoned with reasons for homelessness that were both individual and universal.
“The food security field is dynamic; global economic shocks, civil unrest, urbanization, climate change, and improvements in medical science mean that we must continually refocus our attention.”

JEFF MARZILLI ’80

EFF MARZILLI began his career 30 years ago, when famines and humanitarian disasters in developing countries always seemed to take the world by surprise. He has seen tectonic shifts in understandings, strategies, and realities.

As he talks about the early years, it is possible to detect some wistfulness. He remembers his first overseas assignment in Sierra Leone, when he motorcycled among 25 villages, organizing farmers’ oxen cooperatives. An economics major, he has analyzed information on the ground, designed tools, and tested methodologies. In 1987, he authored the first food needs assessment in Ethiopia for the U.S. government. He moved seamlessly to the role of socioeconomicist, as he turned information into informed decisions, and then to leadership, as he managed the UN’s network of food security analysts across 45 countries, recruiting and training personnel, administering budgets, and responding to the constant information needs of the UN system.

He was part of a shift in focus, as members of his profession began to understand that food insecurity was about more than just crop failure. He saw the importance of satellite technology flourish and wane, as understanding grew that the brown crops so easily detected by satellite were only one part of a more complex picture that also involves food prices, income opportunities, gender issues, access to social safety nets, and vulnerability to diseases such as HIV.

“The food security field is dynamic; global economic shocks, civil unrest, urbanization, climate change, and improvements in medical science mean that we must continually refocus our attention,” says Marzilli. “The newest development these days is our growing understanding that poor infant nutrition in the first 1000 days of life causes irreversible damage.”

As a humanitarian worker in the early years, he could serve in almost any country in the world and know that his life was not in danger. “I’ve been on a C-130 and flown into the middle of a civil war, where both sides agreed to stop shooting long enough for the plane to land so we could unload food. When I was a 20-something traipsing around Ethiopia during the civil war, I knew that even a child soldier wielding an AK-47 wasn’t going to do anything but protect me, because he knew he would suffer consequences.

“In today’s civil wars, there are no assurances because there are no leaders to give assurances. The UN’s blue helmet and blue flag are no longer recognized as symbols of neutrality. Our people aren’t safe, and that makes our job extremely more difficult and in some cases almost impossible.

“Over the last 10 years, three World Food Program (WFP) offices have been bombed. Last year alone, 17 WFP employees or contractors lost their lives to terrorism or other violence, 40 were injured, and another 41 were kidnapped.”
information management officer for WFP. “Although we were physically in the same place, the intensity of the work meant that we spent less than 15 waking hours together in four weeks,” he remembers.

An additional role for Marzilli is serving as WFP’s regional gender advocate in Asia. “This clearly goes back to my Wooster days, when I lived in Myers House—a gender awareness program. I joined Myers merely because I wanted to live in coed housing,” he says. “The women there quickly straightened me out.

“What I learned in Myers House I have always carried with me. I’m now the senior male in WFP serving as a gender advocate. It is a thankless post for which I willingly volunteered and I thoroughly enjoy. In my spare time I curate an independent Facebook page I created called ‘Food Security Gender and Protection.’ (http://www.facebook.com/pages/Food-Security-Gender-and-Protection-Network).

“This is a big Wooster carryover—not just the subject content, but also the fact that it is an unpopular job on an uncomfortable subject that deserves to see the light of day. Wooster taught me to embrace justice issues and to champion them, not to shy away from them.”

The hardest part of his job, says Marzilli, is trying to affect food security in regions torn by what he describes as “gang civil wars, driven not by ideology but by struggle over booty.” Another challenge, he says, is the politicized nature of the UN, where member countries’ foreign aid contributions are often driven by political expediency rather than by the most desperate humanitarian needs. “When a village elder looks at you and says, ‘You don’t give us money because we don’t kill each other,’ you have to admit that he’s right.”

How does he counter discouragement and fatigue? “The attitudes, energy, and enthusiasm of people immediately affected by disaster are far from discouraging. Even in the midst of disaster, children still play, people still sing, neighbors help neighbors, communities come together in remarkable ways, and even the poorest of households find small ways to contribute to the relief and recovery of those even poorer than themselves.

“Their energy and optimism keep us all going.”

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**MAKE A DIFFERENCE:**

**BUY THE ROSE**

“You know when you’re approached by an international worker who wants to wash your windows or sell you a rose? They’re not beggars. They send what they earn back home, pocket to pocket. In total, they send back $400-500 billion every year, more than twice the development assistance from all other sources combined, including the UN, NGOs, and everybody else. There’s a way for you to know that your money is having the biggest impact. Buy the rose.”

JEFF MARZILLI ’80
A new campus program: PEACE CORPS PREP

This fall, the College joined 24 other colleges and universities in offering a unique campus program in partnership with the Peace Corps. Described as preparation for the Peace Corps and a “launching pad for an international career,” the program offers mentoring; out-of-classroom experiences; and a curriculum that focuses on foreign language competency, both general international understanding and sector-specific knowledge, practical experience, and community engagement.

Village eyes

Peace Corps alumnus Jeff Marzilli says that whenever he gets the chance to speak to graduating college students, particularly those who might be pursuing a career in international development, he tells them about the importance of a Peace Corps experience.

“If I had to point to a skill set that has helped me in my career more than any other, I would say it’s my willingness to look at a confusing situation or at ‘peculiar’ behavior and know that this makes sense; it’s only that I don’t have enough knowledge to understand why it makes sense. This is a skill best learned by sitting in a village for two years and seeing your logic defeated time and again for reasons that you could not have possibly understood coming from your own background with your own cultural baggage. Two years with the Peace Corps opens your mind and convinces you that there are things you cannot, will never understand, given your own cultural biases. Your role and best contribution is not to propose solutions but rather to help those around you effect the solutions that they believe to be best, whether you understand them or not.

The second invaluable aspect of the Peace Corps is a little understood occupational perk. Returning volunteers receive one year of noncompetitive eligibility for federal jobs. That means if a returning volunteer meets the qualifications for a job in a federal agency, and that agency wants him or her, the volunteer does not have to go through the usual competitive hiring processes. The agency can simply hire the volunteer without advertising the post or interviewing anyone else. As a result, Washington, D.C., is one huge returned Peace Corps community, and one doesn't have to have served in the same country to be part of the gang. Being a returned Peace Corps volunteer earns you instant lifetime membership in a club with tens of thousands of returned volunteers of many ages, in many walks of life, across many continents. US embassies, UN agencies, and international NGOs all have active Peace Corps networks.

Of all the job titles I’ve had in the 30 years of working in development and humanitarian response, the job title that means the most to me is “Returned Peace Corps Volunteer.”
TRAILBLAZING

with the Presbyterians

MIKE VANDERSAAL '98
Founding pastor, Not So Churchy
New York, New York

Rev. Vandersall has been working with leaders of the Presbyterian Church since 2004 to end denominational discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression. In June, 2014 they did.

It was 1997, and Mike Vandersall, a junior majoring in cultural anthropology, was paying close attention to the deliberations of the Presbyterian General Assembly on the ordination of gay and lesbian ministers. She had known since she was in high school that she wanted to go into the ministry. And she was just coming out. The Assembly’s passage of a new amendment to replace a ban on gay installation, narrowly recommended for passage, was ambiguous, leaving congregants on both sides of the issue with opposite interpretations. In 1998 the Presbyteries voted for a recommendation to exclude gays and lesbians. In 2000 it declared a two-year moratorium on further decisions, for study and discussion.

Vandersall graduated from Union Theological Seminary in The City of New York in 2003 and was ordained in 2004, an event she calls “remarkable for the time.” As only the second openly gay or lesbian minister in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), she was in a kind of denominational twilight zone. But if the Presbytery’s deliberations on the matter were hazy, the realities of finding a parish preaching job if you were openly gay were clear. You couldn’t.

Since 2003 Vandersall had served as executive director of Presbyterian Welcome, a community of many individuals and 21 congregations with a mission of “full participation of individuals in contexts of faith, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity, or expression.”

In addition to years of lobbying, advocating, and educating, Vandersall also began the LGBTQ Future Pastors Program, an annual summer retreat that has nurtured more than 100 gay leaders in the Presbyterian Church. “We have come exactly as we are,” she wrote in the Huffington Post, “and over these years have created a safe place—free from judgment and fear—where we could pray, share stories, be a community, and gain both support and strength. For many, this has been the only place all year where we can find freedom and acceptance.”
“THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE JOY”

In 2010, the Presbyterian Church voted to ordain openly LGBTQ ministers. In June 2014 it voted to recommend with large majorities to change its constitution’s definition of marriage from “a man and a woman” to “two people” and to allow its ministers to perform same-sex marriages where it is legal.

Vandersall can now openly participate in ordination and same sex marriages without fear of recrimination. “This is an incredible joy,” she says.

Shortly after the June 2014 decision, Vandersall resigned from her post as executive director of Presbyterian Welcome. “I’ve seen massive shifts over the last 10 years and my call is shifting and changing as well,” she says. “I’ve worked so hard for this movement and it’s been great. But being in a movement doesn’t give you quiet space and time; I’m ready for that. And there’s a whole new generation of leadership coming up. We need to get out of the way to make room for their new energy and new ideas.”

She is beginning a new job as a fundraising consultant for church leaders and is continuing to lead a worshiping community that she founded called Not So Churchy. Some of the rituals are different from its “churchy” counterpart—there is much focus on the arts, with workshops, improvisation, and a lot of music (including Rev. Vandersall’s fiddle playing). Services are on Monday nights and a pre-service chocolate hour replaces post-service coffee. But much remains traditional, with scripture readings, prayer, and communion.

The congregation of about 25 worshipers are about half LGBTQ. “But that’s actually not what we spend our time talking about,” says Rev. Vandersall. “It’s about providing open and healing spaces for people who have been really hurt by the church and giving a new model of what church can be.”

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:
EDUCATE YOURSELF

“There are plenty of organizations you can join, volunteer for, and give money to. But to be a true activist, there’s so much that needs to be learned about the fluidity and variance of gender and sexual identity and expression. A book I recommend is Radical Love: Introduction to Queer Theology by Patrick Cheng.”

MIEKE VANDERSALL ’98

▲ A recent vote by the Presbyterian Church allows ministers like Rev. Vandersall to perform same sex marriages without recrimination.
organizing communities  TAKING BACK POWER

KARL HILGERT ’61
Director of community organizing, retired 2002
Sacramento Mutual Housing Association
Claremont, Calif.

KARL HILGERT ’61 IS A BELIEVER in the power of civil disobedience and in a form of community organization that he calls "militant reconciliation." He has taught higher education classes on the concept, written papers, and practiced what he preaches. He speaks with a hint of nostalgia as he talks about his own past civil disobedience—big gestures that have made a difference. For example, there was the St. Louis rent strike in 1969 and 1970, which contributed to the enactment of a federal amendment that limits rental rates on subsidized housing. There was Tent City in the mid-80s in New Haven, Conn., in which Hilgert slept, fasted, and joined homeless families in demonstrating. The action resulted in the development of a state rent subsidy program for homeless families. He has been arrested many times and served a few hours of token jail time.

“We’re finding that people don’t have the same image of homeless people when they sit down at a table with them, have a meal, and get to know them.”

KARL HILGERT ’61

“These kinds of big actions are the most effective at bringing about policy change,” he says.

These days, the scale of Hilgert’s work is smaller and more personal. He and his wife live in a retirement community in the beautiful community of Claremont, Calif., a city of 38,000 souls and five colleges. The couple moved there in 2012, just in time to get involved in the aftermath of Claremont’s Occupy Wall Street Tent City. “We call Claremont ‘The City of Trees and PhD’s,’” says Hilgert. “It’s the kind of community where the reality of homelessness is denied.”

The Tent City project resulted in a partnership between Hilgert, one of the homeless leaders, and seven volunteers. The group formed an ongoing outreach program called the Claremont Homeless Advocacy Program (CHAP). When he describes successes in Claremont, Hilgert chooses his words carefully because he believes that words matter. “We worked with the local Friends Meeting, which now has 10 men sleeping every night in their worship area and two women sleeping in the library. We call this ‘overnight accommodation’ instead of ‘shelter.’ We worked with these 12 people (whom we call ‘participants’) to develop a hot meal for others who need it at the St. Ambrose Episcopal Church. But we don’t say ‘soup kitchen,’ we say ‘café.’”

Words help defail stigmatization. So does empowerment and friendship. Every week, CHAP volunteers, church members, and participants share a potluck meal at the Chap Café. “We’re finding that people don’t have the same image of homeless people when they sit down at a table with them, have a meal, and get to know them.”

This smaller, more personal kind of activism comes with its own heartache. “It’s very hard when you’re trying to help people with difficult struggles with mental illness and drug addiction,” says Hilgert. “I’m seeing these very personal problems now more than when I was involved with the big picture things.”
“WOOSTER IS AT THE HEART OF MY AWAKENING...”

Hilgert, an ordained minister in both United Church of Christ and Disciples of Christ churches (a state of affairs that—combined with Wooster’s Presbyterian influence—prompts him to dub himself an “ecumaniac”) is also a licensed social worker who has directed community action programs. He considers the church and Martin Luther King his strongest influences and knows exactly when his passion for social justice began.

“I grew up in a very white Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, community. Lu Wims ’61 and Gerry Collins ’62 were my first black friends. One summer, Gerry and his friend, professional basketball player Gus Johnson, were playing basketball on a court in my hometown and got run off the court by the police. Gerry, Gus, and I went to the court, and when the police came and ordered them to leave, we sat down in the middle of the court. That was my first arrest for civil disobedience. The Akron NAACP got involved and the park opened up for everyone the next day.

“I saw that action could bring about change. Wooster is at the heart of my awakening to the world around me.”

Hilgert continues to participate in civil disobedience that highlights injustice. Last winter he donned a Santa suit and joined other protesters in Ontario, Calif., to protest Wal-Mart’s low wages and warehouse working conditions. Internet coverage of his arrest went viral.

But on the issue of income disparity, he says, “It’s difficult to feel like there’s really a movement. I had hopes that the Occupy movement would organize in the ways that we did in the civil rights movement. But I still hold on to the hope that people will become outraged enough to take action that will bring about changes, rather than just going along with what other people say is acceptable.

“It’s not acceptable.”

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Last winter, Karl Hilgert donned a Santa suit and joined other protesters in Ontario, Calif., to protest Wal-Mart’s low wages and warehouse working conditions. Internet coverage of his arrest went viral. Photo by Will Lester, reprinted with permission from the Inland Valley Daily Bulletin.

Karl Hilgert and other CHAP members during a sharing circle at their first café meal on the campus of Harvey Mudd College in late August.

Photo: Al Villenveva, CHAP

MAKE A DIFFERENCE:
WORK SMALL

“We need lots of methods to change our current terrible economic system. If you can’t be part of a national movement that can make a difference right now, find ways to work with programs in your community; get some smaller changes made.”

KARL HILGERT ’61
When rape occurs in the military, it is rarely brought to legal justice. But survivors’ emotional healing need not depend on prosecutions or convictions.

HEALING without JUSTICE

KRISTEN LESLIE ’83
Subject matter expert for the United States Navy Chaplains Corps on sexualized violence
Professor of pastoral theology and care
Eden Theological Seminary

The daughter of a minister, Kristen Leslie embraced peace-centered activities when she was at Wooster. She was involved with the women’s center, nuclear disarmament, liberation theology, and peace and justice work. In other words, she was similar to many liberal arts students in the 80s.

“For a good part of my life, my only experience with the military was to demonstrate against it,” she says.

But although she recognizes that there are still philosophical disconnects between herself and the military, she also believes that there are good reasons for leaders of mainstream and liberal churches to support and help members of the military. When she was a college chaplain, Leslie became nationally known for her book When Violence Is No Stranger: Pastoral Counseling With Survivors of Acquaintance Rape. The book caught the attention of leaders of the Air Force Academy—in the midst of an internal assault crisis—who contracted Leslie, then a professor at Yale Divinity School, to train their chaplains.

For the past 10 years she has consulted with various branches of the military and today works with chaplains in the Navy, Coast Guard, and Marines. She remembers a meeting with the Navy’s chief of chaplains. “He told me, ‘Our mission in the Navy—our starting point—is the principled and disciplined use of lethal force.’

“Well, as you can imagine, that has never been my starting point.”

For many mainstream theological seminaries, disconnects like this have been a deal-breaker for any involvement. Reflecting the mood of the nation, the position of many seminaries has been to exclude programs that prepare chaplains to serve in the military, says Leslie. “In the 70s, the Vietnam War drove seminaries’ decisions to get out of the business of war and training chaplains. In the 80s, it was nuclear disarmament; in the 90s, it was ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell.’”

Since the 1950s, most military chaplains have come from conservative, evangelical seminaries. Education and training, particularly in the area of sexual assault counseling, says Leslie, has been “uneven.”

“LAYERS OF COMPLEXITY”

It’s hard to find a job more complex and with more inherent conflict than that of a chaplain who is counseling a member of the military who has been raped by a fellow service member. Survivors may officially report the rape to military authorities, but if they do, “their military career is almost certainly over,” says Leslie. “There is almost no such thing as a clearly understood and easily adjudicated assault. Similar to cases on campuses, these are 18 to 22 year-olds who are getting into trouble with alcohol and drugs. In the military, there are also rules against fraternizing with people from different ranks. Survivors are afraid to report assault because they’re afraid of getting nailed for these other activities.”

Less than 1 percent of rape cases tried in the military legal system result in successful prosecutions. Some of the remainder are reported in an unofficial capacity to the chaplain, the only professional on base tasked with confidentiality. “One of my goals is to help chaplains understand what healing might look like without legal justice,” says Leslie.

Another of Leslie’s goals is to guide chaplains in their efforts to help survivors understand (or “make meaning”) of the ways the event has affected them, to identify their sources of strength and resiliency, and to let go of things that may be keeping them from healing. “These young people, who are still working on issues of identity and intimacy, were asked to give up their individuality in order to have ultimate trust in the military institution. They were told, ‘If you do this, if you follow the rules, we have your back.’ They were promised a way of life that was valorous. They are devastated.”

“A WHOLE DIFFERENT SET OF SKILLS”

As a peace activist, Leslie’s “starting point” will always be different from the military’s. In order to be successful, she says, she has developed a whole different set of skills to work with the military. “Early in my work with the military, I began to realize that if you’re on the outside of the gates and you bang on the gate and you preach prophetically—that’s one set of skills. But when you get inside the gate, how you ‘preach prophetically’ is very different. And in my present work, I’m on the inside.”

“It’s difficult for an institution—whether it’s the military or a college campus—to navigate well when the whole nation has you under the microscope. In many cases, institutions are trying to do the right thing, but
they have so many competing goals and when this happens it’s easy for survivors to get lost in the process.

“So it’s a hard time to change, but it’s the right time to change.”

Leslie says she believes that the recent increase in numbers of reported rapes on military bases is a reflection of more people reporting rather than an increase in assaults. “And I take that as a good sign.” She is also optimistic about increased numbers of progressive clergy who are now becoming military chaplains.

“Seminaries have begun to realize that the country is having a very different interaction with Afghanistan and Iraq veterans. There is a recognition that although we don’t support war, that it’s much more complex than just hanging a peace flag in the sanctuary.”

“It’s way more complicated.”

MAKE A DIFFERENCE: CREATE A HEALING SPACE

“Religious professionals and faith communities have not generally been safe harbors for survivors because of their lack of knowledge and their confusion over sexual activity versus sexual violence. To be redemptive sources of support for survivors of acquaintance rape, religious professionals and faith communities must break their complicity with the silence, know the realities of the violence, and help create a space where survivors can find healing.”

KRISTEN LESLIE ’83

From When Violence Is No Stranger: Pastoral Counseling With Survivors of Acquaintance Rape

▲ Kristen Leslie conducting a training at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif.

Photo: U.S. Navy photo by Christianne M. Witten
leave no VETERAN behind

ANNE ARCHIBALD ’83
Veterans justice outreach coordinator
Veterans Administration
Maine Healthcare System
Portland, Maine

ANNE ARCHIBALD KNOWS THE NUMBERS. She knows that although approximately one fifth of the veteran population has a mental health disorder or cognitive impairment less than half will seek help; that one in six veterans who served in the Middle East suffer from substance abuse; that veterans are twice as likely as other Americans to become chronically homeless; that 22 veterans kill themselves every day—twice the civilian rate. She knows that cycles of failure can lead to prison, which can accelerate and ensure a lifetime of despair.

She also knows that a downward spiral need not be inevitable.

Archibald, who came to her position as veterans justice outreach coordinator four years ago, represents a growing cadre of professionals who are driving programs that are making a difference. As a veteran advocate, Archibald serves as a liaison with the many systems that can shape a life—mental health, the courts, and community resources. Her work is often done during the pre-sentencing stage, when a veteran who has broken the law awaits sentencing.

Because active service members are trained to focus on the mission and not themselves, the prevailing culture in times of personal struggle is “suck it up.”

Anne Archibald: “I get to work for people who served their country in extraordinary ways and with amazing professionals who inspire me.” Photo: Judy Gailen
The result, says Archibald, is a hesitancy to ask for help or to access treatment until there is a crisis. When trouble with the law is added to the mix, veterans report feeling disgraced. “For many veterans, their military experience was positive. They felt good about who they were and they had a clear mission. The military provided for them. And then they come home, where no one is providing. They say to me, ‘I’ve never been in trouble before.’

“Along with their feeling of not being good citizens, there’s an intense amount of shame. A lot of the work I do is validation. I tell them, ‘Here you are—these things happened and there’s a reason they happened. But you have asked for help and you can get back to who you want to be.’”

**A SYSTEMS THINKER**

A philosophy major at Wooster who went on for an advanced degree in social work, Archibald describes herself as a systems thinker who looks for the big picture. And often the picture she sees includes formal, sanctioned policies that work against veterans. For example, federally subsidized housing is denied to veterans with specific felony charges.

“I push gently against the system,” says Archibald. “You know that saying, ‘Boots on the ground?’ We need to apply it to policies. We need to ask, ‘Will this policy do what we want it to do, when the boots are on the ground?’”

One of Archibald’s jobs is to facilitate her clients’ use of Veteran’s Court, a justice system equipped to understand each veteran’s bigger picture. But sometimes even a supportive system is not enough to prevent tragedy. Since she began her position in 2011, Archibald has seen five clients die of drug overdoses. “They were young, they relapsed, they didn’t mean to die,” she says. “It was very hard.”

But Archibald, who came to veterans services with more than 20 years working for children and family services, says she loves her job. “Families, particularly teens, get mad at you and tell you on a daily basis where you can go.

“I work in an incredible environment where I am thanked for my work every day. I get to work for people who served their country in extraordinary ways and with amazing professionals who inspire me. It is an honor to witness the change these veterans achieve for themselves.”

**Approximately one fifth of the VETERAN POPULATION has a mental health disorder or cognitive impairment**

**A MATTER OF DUTY** The documentary A Matter of Duty—The Continuing War Against PTSD, produced by Maine PBN, features a number of Archibald’s colleagues and clients.

**MAKE A DIFFERENCE: PRACTICE FORGIVENESS**

“In our society, it’s really easy to categorize people as good or bad. There is so much gray area. I would love for us to be a more forgiving society, to believe that people can change and be rehabilitated, and to allow them to change. Our solution of locking up people has not been effective.”

**ANNE ARCHIBALD ’83**
MAKING A DIFFERENCE

ADDRESSING CONFLICT

Listen to many voices

“Countries that have experienced a civil war in the past are more likely to face a recurrence of conflict. One of the primary reasons this cycle of violence continues is the failure of interventions to incorporate local wisdom and experiences. This creates problems in understanding the core needs of the people recovering from conflict. While there is no ultimate magic solution for post-conflict transitions, we should all work harder on listening to voices from multiple perspectives.”

SARAH MINOT ’11
Program coordinator and research associate
Center for Strategic and International Studies
Washington, D.C.

Seek neutrality

“The ability to provide humanitarian aid and protection to individuals and families stuck in the midst of armed conflict is a moral endeavor that depends on the ability of aid workers and organizations to remain impartial and neutral. But here’s the difficulty: Treating the result of conflict doesn’t address the underlying causes. And being neutral and impartial when we look at underlying causes is incredibly difficult for aid workers, who often have strong ideas of right and wrong, aggressor and victim. The ability to be neutral is challenged more in the current global climate than it ever has been before.

“Is neutrality and impartiality still achievable in today’s world? An inability to achieve it limits the aid we offer and endangers the lives of those trying to deliver it. The charity choices that we make and the policies we support have direct and often dramatic impacts on those who need help.”

SIMON SPRINGETT ’90
United Nations resident coordinator
Republic of Mauritius and the Republic of Seychelles

Contribute many voices

“One of the most important aspects of peacemaking and social justice work is that you can participate in it without changing your job or your interests. I direct the Peace and Justice Studies program at Pace University for undergraduates and I emphasize to them that whatever your interests, there is a way for you to participate in making the world a better, more peaceful, more just place. The interdisciplinary nature of the field means that we need mathematicians, political scientists, biologists, economists, actors and artists—not just mediators, UN diplomats, academics, and NGO employees. My personal area of engagement and research is with religious institutions and the ways in which they can contribute to peacemaking and conflict transformation. I am well aware of all of the ways that religion can and has contributed to violence, but these same religious traditions also have tremendous resources for justice and peace.

“Wooster alumni are well trained in interdisciplinary thinking and their liberal arts education has urged them to think in complex, creative ways. This makes them perfectly placed to ask hard questions about how they can use their professional careers and personal interests in ways that strengthen peace and justice.”

EMILY WELTY ’00
Assistant professor, Department of Political Science
Pace University, New York, New York
Additional alumni working in the area of peace and justice share their thoughts.

ORGANIZING COMMUNITIES

Steps to success

“In my work as a minister and community activist, I’ve spent decades working with hundreds of very smart, very motivated, hard-working people who are passionate about their issues (peace, poverty, racial justice, immigration reform, human rights for all those who are marginalized) and yet are frustrated about lack of progress in really making the world a better place.

“No matter what the issue, we need to learn how to be effective organizers. There are three essential steps to bringing about change: (1) Build relationships with those you know and those you otherwise wouldn’t know. (2) Be very disciplined about selecting goals—choose those that are actionable and winnable. (3) Understand power; learn how to build power for yourself and teach these skills to those you are organizing. Is there a community organizing project in your area? If so, join it. If not, start one. It can lead to great things.”

LINDA OLSON PEEBLES ’73
Minister of Faith in Action, Unitarian Universalist (UU) Church of Arlington, Va.
President of the International UU Ministers Association
Clergy leader, Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement

SUPPORTING WORKER EQUALITY

Vote with your fork

“As a society, we are often unaware of where our food was grown, how it was grown, or what labor standards were involved in the production of that food. We’ve come to expect extremely low food prices, but those prices do not reflect the true cost of food. Low food prices too often come at the expense of basic human rights and cause devastating environmental degradation.

“As consumers, we can advocate for fair treatment of workers and environmentally sustainable growing methods by supporting our local farmers. You can ’vote with your fork’ by shopping frequently at your local farmers market, becoming a member of a local food co-op, or growing your own food.”

CASEY HENRY ’11
Sales coordinator, Our Harvest Cooperative, Cincinnati, Ohio

Think before you buy

“We may vote in several hundred different elections over the course of our lives. But we will make literally millions of buying decisions. Each of those purchases links us back to the people who make the things we use, eat, and wear. Educating ourselves about how to buy products made by workers who were paid appropriately, treated decently, and worked in safe conditions is one thing that all of us can do to make the world a fairer place. Every year, I open my classes by asking my students if they know who made the shirt they are wearing. Asking that question reminds us that we can make a difference by buying products made by companies that respect human rights and protect the environment. Check out the GoodGuide (http://www.goodguide.com/) for a 1 to 10 rating of products based on health, environmental, and social impacts. Join my students in making a difference!”

SHAREEN HERTEL ’88
Associate professor of political science and human rights, University of Connecticut
Editor, The Journal of Human Rights
Students react to border conflicts and tragedies
BECCA LIPPS '14

“We didn’t expect to see the fence. You can look right across and see schools and houses on the other side. A photo had been posted in memory of a 16-year-old who had been shot by the American security guards 15 times for throwing rocks.”

Last spring break Westminster Presbyterian Church, the College’s on-campus affiliated congregation, sponsored a trip for eight Wooster students to visit and participate in the activities of BorderLinks, an immigration reform nonprofit located just north of the U.S.-Mexico border in Tucson, Ariz. Immigration reform is central to the mission of the Westminster congregation, and this was the third time they hosted a BorderLinks trip for Wooster students. Students from the trip shared images and reactions with members of the congregation.
MAYAMA NYAJRO '17

“We attended a vigil in memory of Carlos La Madrid, who had been shot in the back by a member of the American border patrol. It was a horrible case of racial profiling; he hadn’t done anything wrong. At the end of the vigil, balloons were released to honor Carlos. But they immediately caught in the limbs of the trees; they didn’t soar away like they were supposed to.”

BECCA LIPPS '14

“It was so symbolic and all of us felt its significance. Here was a family just trying to live their lives and feed their families and getting caught in the snare of branches, government, laws, and systems. It was really poetic and beautiful. Finally all of the balloons got loose from the tree. Some were released by shaking the tree, and some just had to find their way out.”
GRACE SPARKS '16

“We went on a desert walk along a path that immigrants experienced. The desert is unbelievably beautiful. After we'd walked for about 30 minutes, we turned the corner and there it was. Sitting buried among the cactus there was a small white cross. It had two words written on it—desconocido and presente—which mean 'unknown' and 'present.' It was a shock. One minute we were out with a group enjoying the stunning sights and desert and the next we were standing where someone had died only 30 minutes from the nearest house. I think as we stood there, it sunk in—this juxtaposition of beauty and death. There wasn't anything we could do for this person anymore. We encountered two more graves along our walk. Each time we did, it became more real to us why we were there. At the final grave, Dries (Rev. Coetzee) had us all stand in a circle around the cross and close our eyes. It was one of the more powerful experiences I've had. We could feel the breeze and feel the powerful and hot sun. And I could feel those people—all the people who had lost their lives in the desert. We read this poem:

In memory of those who never returned
We offer these flowers . . .
To them, we say with respect . . .
Your thirst is our thirst,
Your hunger is our hunger,
Your pain is our pain,
Your anguish, bitterness, and agony
Are also ours.
REVIEWING
fiscal 2014

A FINANCIAL SUMMARY

BY
JOHN L. HOPKINS

Associate Vice President for College Relations and Marketing
FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ending June 30, 2014, Wooster had $79.37 million in operating revenue. Net tuition (tuition less all financial aid provided by the College) accounted for just over $39 million, or half that total. Room and board, plus other auxiliary enterprises such as the bookstore, provided $22.18 million in revenue, while investment income, gifts, grants, and the annual payout from the endowment added $18.15 million.

Operating expenses totaled $78.57 million, with salaries and benefits representing almost two thirds of total expenses, at $50.5 million. Off-campus programs, travel, and general support services such as printing and postage accounted for $14.7 million. Supplies and equipment, which includes food purchased for the dining halls and merchandise for the bookstore, totaled $9.4 million. Capital project expenses were $3.9 million.
Endowing Wooster’s Future: How we do it

Wooster’s endowment is a strategic asset whose purpose is to support and advance the College’s mission. Income from the endowment augments the operating budget, providing vital support for financial aid, faculty excellence, and mentored student research. On June 30, 2014, the endowment’s market value was $270 million.

The endowment is managed by the investment committee of the College’s Board of Trustees, whose seven members all have significant investment experience. The committee selects investment managers, currently 28 in number, who in turn select individual investments in accordance with their particular mandate, such as domestic equities, international equities, fixed income securities, etc. The committee met 11 times last year in order to review asset allocations; conduct due diligence on managers; discuss strategy with the College’s investment consultant, Monticello Associates; and report to the Board of Trustees.

The focus is on long-term asset growth that preserves capital while providing a meaningful contribution to the College’s mission and strategic priorities. The investment goal, therefore, is for endowment growth to consistently exceed the target payout percentage plus inflation, while accepting a prudent level of risk. The current asset allocation is 50 percent to public equities; 35 percent to absolute return funds; and 5 percent each to real estate, private capital, and fixed income or cash.

Over the past five years, annual returns have averaged 9.75 percent, compared to a benchmark value of 8.21 percent, while taking a bit more than half the risk of an all-equity portfolio.

Wooster’s annual endowment payout target is five percent of a 12-quarter average portfolio value and may not exceed six percent. Last year, that policy resulted in an endowment payout that provided 15 percent of the College’s operating budget.

The endowment supports 585 need-based student scholarships, 39 professorships, and hundreds of other endowed funds.

On June 30, 2014, the endowment’s market value was $270 million.
This past year, the College received $19.73 million in gifts and grants from alumni, parents, trustees, foundations, corporations, and others. Almost $6 million of that total, which includes the money raised by The Wooster Fund, helped directly support the College’s operating budget and is reflected in the operating revenues chart on page 31. A bit more than $10.3 million was given for capital projects and $3 million for new or existing endowed funds. Ninety-five percent of the total raised came in the form of outright gifts, while 3 percent was the result of bequests. Wooster’s trustees, many of them alumni, contributed 37 percent, or almost $7.4 million, while non-trustee alumni invested $3.2 million in their alma mater.

In 2014, the College received

$19.73 MILLION
in gifts and grants
Wooster In classes

A deeper PERSPECTIVE

Classes that combine traditional meetings on campus with study abroad result in rich experiences and long-lasting relationships, as class members and mentors immerse themselves in unfamiliar cultures.

We thought you’d like to read about two of our “Wooster In” classes.

(Above) Pratistema Bhandari ’14 works with community members on the foundation for a new resource center in Vigitse Village in Western Kenya.

(Above right) Moira McShane ’16 helps make notecards from recycled paper with the Kibera Paper Group in Nairobi.

Photos by David McConnell and Sayantani Mitra ’16
Wooster in Thailand

Asian and Asian American Feminist Theology

Linda Morgan Clement, chaplain and faculty member in the Religious Studies Department, routinely conducts a class that begins in Thailand and Myanmar and ends in Kauke Hall. Study and engagement with Thai and Burmese women form the core of the course, as Wooster students meet and interview women from a wide range of social locations and histories and experience the context from which Asian feminist theologies emerge.

Wooster in Kenya

Peoples and Culture of Kenya

David McConnell, professor of anthropology; Doug Drushal ’74, a member of the Wooster Rotary Club’s International Service Committee; and Cathy McConnell, associate director of advising and experiential learning in APEX, conduct classes on campus prior to the students’ spring break trip to Kenya. The goal of the course is to introduce students to Kenya’s culture, history, politics, economics, and social life. The visit includes home stays in the villages of Viyetse and Vigiona and work on environmental and agricultural projects facilitated by the Maragoli Community Development Foundation.

From the journal of Samantha Murdock ’15

“I think this trip has completely confused my future goals while also defining them. I had never really considered the impact I could have by giving my time and skills to another place and feel as though I need to consider this. One thing is for certain. Kenya helped me determine that I want to be a teacher. Whether it is in Kenya or Dayton, Ohio, I want to work to provide opportunities for every child. Through my time in Kenya I learned that knowledge is truly power, and I am determined to provide children with the knowledge they need to follow their dreams.”

From the journal of Franny McHale ’16

“We started off this great day by going up this bumpy, hilly road and found ourselves at a small village, where the Hill People live. We looked at jewelry and tapestries, ate strawberries, and departed to a local temple, and then a jade factory. A part owner of the factory has strong Wooster ties and she gave us a marvelous introduction and a fantastic lunch. We returned for dinner at the home of Bill Yoder ’63, another Wooster alum who is the retired dean and professor from McMichael College of Divinity at Payap University in Chiang Mai. It was great to talk about old traditions, old buildings and Wooster memories... in Thailand”

(Above) Bridget Schmidt ’15 gives a gift to the Abbess of the Thandi Thukhanam convent in Yangon, Myanmar.

(Left) Emily Donato ’16, a dance and anthropology double major, in front of the medicine Buddha at the Songdhammakalayani women’s monastery in Nakhonpathom, Thailand.

Photos by Evangelene Smith ’16
In Closing

When the ice melts

On the one hand, there is sadness about the melting and retreat of the Columbia Glacier that Greg Wiles, professor and chair of geology and the Ross K. Shoolroy Chair of Natural Resources, calls “the most spectacular on the planet." “There is no doubt that the world is warming. The ice is melting; it’s going away and not coming back any time soon.”

But as the ice retreats, buried forests emerge and new landscapes are created. Funded by a National Geographic grant, Wiles and his students are studying how these ancient forests responded to climate in the past in order to inform and anticipate present and future changes in Alaska’s coastal forests.

(Left) Kaitlin Starr ’15 was among a four-person Wooster team that visited Glacier Bay, Alaska to study how the retreat of the Columbia Glacier is affecting the area’s vegetation. Photo by Nick Wiesenberg

(Above) An area that was the subject of eight Independent Studies between 2001-2005 has “profoundly changed” says Professor Greg Wiles. Today’s Wooster team stands where the Columbia Glacier was 10 years ago; it has retreated 8 km. Photo by Greg Wiles