

The College of Wooster

## Open Works

---

Wooster Magazine: 2011-Present

Wooster Magazine

---

Spring 2023

### Wooster Magazine: Spring 2023

Caitlin Paynich Stanowick

Follow this and additional works at: [https://openworks.wooster.edu/woalumnimag\\_2011-present](https://openworks.wooster.edu/woalumnimag_2011-present)

---

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Wooster Magazine at Open Works, a service of The College of Wooster Libraries. It has been accepted for inclusion in Wooster Magazine: 2011-Present by an authorized administrator of Open Works. For more information, please contact [openworks@wooster.edu](mailto:openworks@wooster.edu).

# WOOSTER

SPRING 2023



## From Wooster to the World

### FEATURED INSIDE

Read about alumni influencing change worldwide. p. 3

See how an opportunity to be part of an international forum taught students to raise their voices. p. 18

Find out how Wooster sets up international graduates for success in STEM. p. 20

# Contents



## 18 Students speak up for democracy

Wooster students engage in robust discussions and presentations at the Athens Democracy Forum for five consecutive years.



## 3 Global Changemakers

Alumni like Ishtiaq Ghafoor '00 share their experiences influencing change worldwide.



# 22

### Meet Wooster's 13<sup>th</sup> President

Dr. Anne E. McCall will begin her role as College president on July 1, 2023.

**SPRING 2023**  
**Volume 137 No. 2**

**Editor**  
Caitlin Paynich Stanowick

**Designer/Illustrator**  
Ariel Esser

**Photographer**  
Matt Dilyard

**Contributors**  
Melissa Anderson  
Julia Carle  
Jennifer Draher  
Kathleen Lawry  
Eleanor Linafelt '20  
Kevin Smith  
Sarah Stanley  
Anna Whiting '26

### WOOSTER

ISSN 0894-8798

**Address updates:**  
alumni@wooster.edu  
Office of Alumni & Family Engagement  
1189 Beall Ave., Wooster, OH 44691  
wooster.edu/alumni

**Contact the editor:**  
wooster\_magazine@wooster.edu  
www.wooster.edu

Wooster is published in the fall, spring, and summer by The College of Wooster for alumni and friends. Opinions expressed in the publication may not reflect those of the College or Alumni Association. Photo and text copyright The College of Wooster, all rights reserved.

### On the cover:

The photo illustrations on the covers are by Ariel Esser, featuring photos on the front of Lauren Vargo '13 who's now in New Zealand (provided by Vargo), Rashmi Ekka '08 in Rwanda (provided by Ekka), and Marco Roccato '20 in Greece (provided by Roccato).

The back cover features images of Kurt Russell '94 at the White House (photo by Ron Sachs), John Carwile '81 in Latvia (courtesy of the U.S. Army National Guard), and Samira El-Adawy '13 in Egypt (provided by El-Adawy). Read more about alumni affecting change in their communities and beyond beginning on page 3.

## 32 Fulfilling Promises

**“Receiving this support aided me in solidifying my love for helping people in need.”**

—Giuliana Morales '23 studied abroad in Greece through the Kendall-Rives Endowed Experiential Learning and Cultural Immersion Fund. While abroad, she volunteered with Médecins du Monde Greece to provide medical and other services to Ukrainian refugees.



## 26 Oak Grove

Read about the latest College news and achievements of faculty, staff, and students.



## 33 Tartan Ties

Catch up on Alumni Achievements, Wooster Encounters & Weddings, and Recent books by alumni; also, see Why I Give with Patrick Lai-Fang '13.

# The far-reaching impact of a Wooster education

“The world comes to Wooster” is a phrase we invoke on College social media accounts and admissions brochures with pride to represent the growing diversity of Wooster’s community and the impacts this has on the residential and classroom experiences we are able to provide. The fact that students come to Wooster to study from 77 countries and nearly all 50 states, making our campus among the most international in Ohio and the U.S., enriches the learning opportunities for all students.

What those students do in their careers beyond Wooster is equally as inspiring. This year as interim president and in my regular role as vice president for advancement, I have the amazing fortune of meeting regularly with Wooster alumni from all generations and all areas of the world, who contribute to a variety of existing and emerging fields. It is rare to visit with a graduate who does not attribute their professional success to some part of their Wooster experience. What’s even more uncommon is finding a graduate (of any age) who does not know the exact title of their Independent Study project.

In this issue, we explore the global impact of just a handful of these enterprising Wooster alumni, who are contributing expert solutions to some of the world’s most pressing issues. Their stories are not one-dimensional, and the interdisciplinarity of their work is noteworthy and underlines for me the intrinsic value of learning across the liberal arts. From leading international peace negotiations and responding to catastrophic natural disasters to tackling poverty with sustainable solutions and fighting climate change, each path is uniquely Wooster.

One of our featured alumni, Kurt Russell '94, is making an enormous impact from his classroom in nearby Oberlin, Ohio, and was recently named both the Ohio Teacher

of the Year and the 2022 National Teacher of the Year. Kurt made a pit stop to campus this January on his tour around the country to lead a justice dialogue as part of our annual MLK Commemoration and interact with education majors. Learn more about Kurt and his visit to Wooster on page 8.

On campus, faculty and staff have been collaborating throughout the year on ways to ensure we are able to continue to deliver on our mission of preparing students to become leaders of character and influence in an interdependent global community.

While it’s a fact that we are stronger than ever—with a revitalized Lowry Center that includes new spaces for our students to find community and connection, enhanced experiential learning opportunities, an increased endowment and financial aid budget, and higher wages than before the pandemic—Wooster, like many of our peer and aspirant institutions, must prepare for the increasing financial and competitive

pressures facing higher education and prospective families. I can proudly say that the broad and inclusive approach we are taking to increase revenues and reduce expenses at the College is the most comprehensive of any I have heard of based on a few dozen conversations with fellow presidents and leaders from around the country. We look forward to sharing more updates on this work over the next few months following our Higher Learning Commission accreditation site visit in April.

We also will make it a priority to continue this important and collaborative work as we prepare to welcome our next president, Dr. Anne McCall and her husband, Dr. Ravi Palat, to campus this July. Dr. McCall comes with deep knowledge of the higher education landscape and a broad range of academic and administrative experiences that position her well to lead this thriving campus into the future. I invite you to learn more about Dr. McCall, including a Q&A, beginning on page 22.

Go Scots!

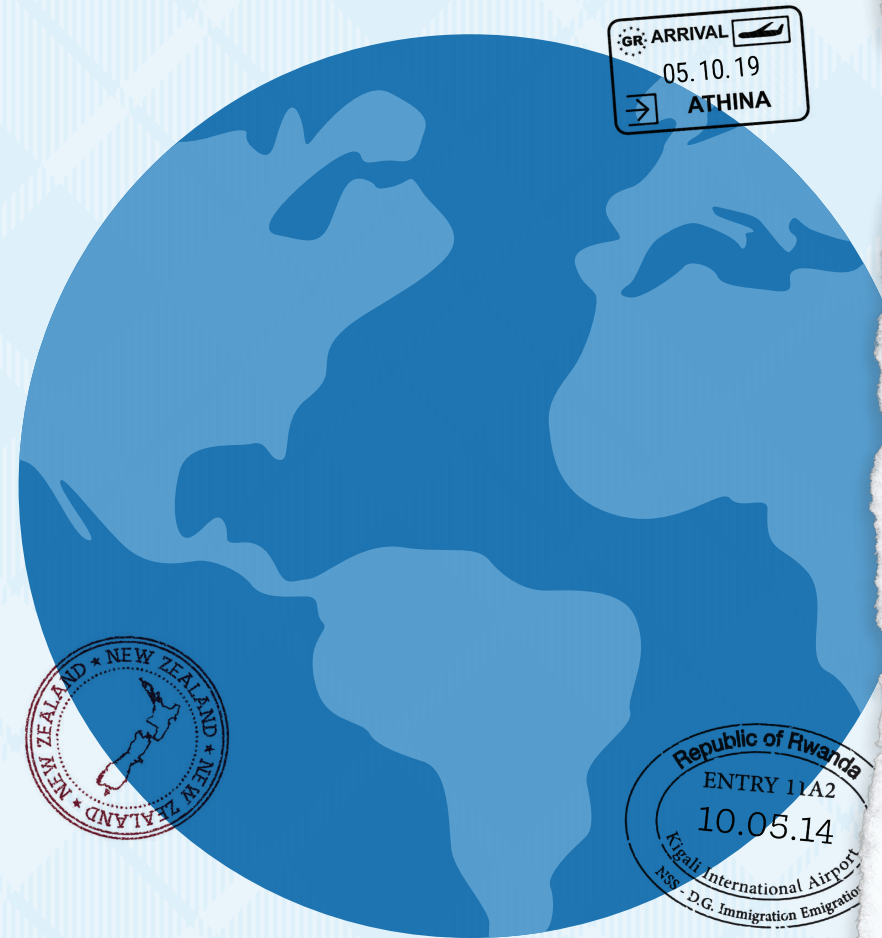


Wayne P. Webster  
Interim President



# Global Changemakers

OVERCOMING GLOBAL CHALLENGES requires diverse, action-based visionaries committed to a purpose greater than themselves and who have the capacity to make a positive impact. The College of Wooster prepares graduates to become global changemakers. Through the Wooster experience, alumni develop the context, empathy, insight, and drive to see opportunities where others see obstacles. They become leaders of character and influence in countries all over the globe. Regardless of their field or area of study, alumni leave Wooster, Ohio, prepared to listen to different perspectives and develop creative solutions to address problems. In this section, catch up with alumni living in different parts of the world and influencing change in their communities and beyond.



**JOHN CARWILE '81**, a career member of the U.S. Foreign Service, has spent over three decades advancing U.S. national interests in countries from Brunei to Peru and Ecuador to Latvia.

**RASHMI EKKA '08** sees the possibility of real change in big-world food problems with the use of microfinance and agricultural development.

**SAMIRA EL-ADAWY '13**, a Special Olympics youth manager in the Middle East and North Africa, has her eyes and heart on promoting inclusion among individuals with and without intellectual disabilities.

**ISHTIAQ GHAFUOR '00** is a diplomat with the British Foreign Service who provides economic and political analysis to make the world a better place.

**SARAH HAILE '03** uses biostatistics to research diseases from cancer to COVID-19 and inform medical solutions.

**KURT RUSSELL '94**, National Teacher of the Year for 2022, advocates for diversity in the classroom and the profession.

**LAUREN VARGO '13** monitors glaciers in New Zealand to study the connection between icecaps and climate change.



## Medical issues from a mathematical angle

Sarah Haile '03 uses biostatistics while researching diseases from cancer to COVID-19

As a student at The College of Wooster, Sarah Haile '03 (pronounced “highly”) learned the value of examining different perspectives. Every day in her work as a biostatistician at the University of Zurich’s Epidemiology, Biostatistics, and Prevention Institute, she appreciates the value Wooster placed on considering other beliefs, experiences, and views.

The lessons for the mathematics major and French and religious studies minor were in everyday college life. She lived in residence halls and interacted with people from all over the globe. In her French and Spanish classes, she read literature and watched films that helped her consider contrasting viewpoints. She and her classmates explored philosophies from around the world in religious studies classes. And she knew that playing cello by herself didn’t create an orchestra.

She also participated in a consulting project for Goodyear as part of AMRE, Wooster’s Applied Methods and Research Experience. “It was a great experience in learning how to talk to a group of people about a problem or task that I knew nothing about. Learning to ask the right questions and how to develop a plan of action was an important part of the process. I use those skills daily,” Haile said.

Her journey to biostatistics started at Wooster when she was choosing her major among the many subject areas she studied, including French, Spanish, religious studies, communication science and disorders, music, and math.

“I liked math enough that I took it every semester and often worked on those assignments first, but I shied away from declaring it as my major because I didn’t know what I would do with it,” she recalled. At the library, she found a book about career profiles of various people who had studied math, including someone who was a biostatistician. “I was intrigued. I had a few family members who had gone through bouts with cancer, but it never occurred to me that people with a math background were also essential to medical studies.” With that new-found knowledge, Haile declared mathematics as her major.

The career, which is extremely interdisciplinary, was a perfect fit for the integrative education she received at Wooster. According to Haile,

biostatisticians work closely with epidemiologists, medical doctors, and other health professionals to plan clinical trials and other medical studies to answer important questions related to medicine or public health. They talk about medical issues, research questions, and study populations. They figure out how to best measure the outcome of interest, consider what kind of bias might occur in a study, and how to reduce it. They design studies that answer research questions, think about how to communicate results to different audiences, and analyze the data and interpret the results.

“There are generally a lot of issues to consider and balance; it all needs to be communicated among people of different backgrounds,” Haile said. “The great thing about my job is that I’m always working on different projects with different people who have different specialties.” She has worked on studies related to cancer, cystic fibrosis, physical activity, sleep apnea, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), and COVID-19, among others.

During her graduate studies at the University of Pittsburgh’s School of Public Health, Haile had a research position with a large cancer clinical trials group. She worked on a genetic test to predict the likeliness of cancer spreading in the body. The test was to help determine how necessary additional treatment might be in individual patients. Recently, she was happy to hear that the test was used to guide treatment decisions for someone close to her.



“

I had a few family members who had gone through bouts with cancer, but it never occurred to me that people with a math background were also essential to medical studies.”

SARAH HAILE '03



Moving internationally was not part of her original plan, “but sometimes life has other plans. I met somebody from Germany. Our wedding was timed at the end of my Ph.D., and we decided to move to Europe for a bit. Germany was the initial idea, but we landed in Switzerland instead due to his job, and I was hired at the University of Zurich. We have been there ever since,” she said.

From mid-2020 through mid-2022, she focused on COVID-19 research. Involved in a Swiss school-based study, Haile investigated seroprevalence in children, or how many have antibodies for COVID-19, indicating they had already been infected. “Along the way, we also learned about the effects of the vaccination, the incidence of long COVID, and kids’ quality of life and lifestyles during the pandemic,” she said. The results of the study informed policy decisions in Switzerland related to COVID-19 strategies in school-age children. “It’s been nice to see the direct effects of our work, especially when it affects my own kids.”

Haile likes the variety each workday offers and the ability to collaborate with professionals from a range of backgrounds. “There are new questions to answer and new challenges to design a study or analyze the data. Sometimes there are easy ways to answer them; sometimes it requires a bit of research; sometimes it needs a pragmatic solution; and sometimes we have to explore methods we’ve never used before.” For her, the best part is knowing she is part of a team that is solving real-life medical issues.

← Haile pictured with her sons in Switzerland.



## Fighting poverty through economics

Rashmi Ekka '08 uses microfinance and agricultural development to tackle big-world food problems

Rashmi Ekka '08 grew up as part of the Oraon tribe in Jharkhand, India, and has seen first-hand the impact of poverty. Over one-third of the population in her home state lives below the poverty line. A large fraction of the poor are farmers and yet they don't have enough to eat themselves.

The College of Wooster economics graduate believes in the power of international development to reduce poverty. For almost 15 years, she has worked with farmers and entrepreneurs in places such as Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, and Rwanda, using her expertise in microfinance and agricultural development to boost food and financial resources.

Ekka helped reduce the loss and waste of tomatoes harvested for markets in East Africa and encouraged a young woman with a food science background to apply for a development grant to start a tomato paste factory through a project improving postharvest practices. After receiving the grant, she used it to professionalize the tomato paste operation, boost marketing, and empower her role as an entrepreneur. She started the factory to counter China's dominance in Rwanda's tomato paste market. It generated employment for many people and provided more access to a nutritious, locally produced food product.

In developing countries, 30-50% of fresh fruits and vegetables can go to waste because of

↑ Serge Ganza, agronomist entrepreneur and owner of Africa Food Supply, shows Ekka cabbages in his demo farm which he uses to provide training to local farmers in the Kamonyi district in Rwanda. Her work helped him set up a fruit and vegetable market shop which is used by all the farmers in the area. The shop includes a cold storage room which was funded by the project as well.



“

Her business was thriving, and she was able to use the money to provide better education for her children and more nutritious food. Meeting the clients made a huge impression on me.”

RASHMI EKKA '08

heat, poor harvesting practices, lack of proper packaging, and an inefficient supply chain, among a host of other reasons. Through research and training, Ekka's project demonstrated to farmers how packing tomatoes in 20-pound crates rather than 100-pound woven jute bags could improve the quantity and quality of their products and increase profits. This led to many farmers adopting crates for their harvest.

“Once you introduce these changes, the whole agricultural system in a country changes. There is a big impact on income as well as nutrition,” said Ekka, a political science and religious studies minor at Wooster.

When she was deciding on a college, Wooster's recruitment brochures showed a beautiful, small liberal arts college with strong values of togetherness and support. “The values and the traditions, like marching through the arch and I.S. Monday, really spoke to me. I felt like I wouldn't fall through the cracks if I went there, like somebody would be there to catch me and support me, and that is exactly what happened.”

The liberal arts education at Wooster made sense to Ekka. She came to Wooster to study computer science yet was interested in many subjects. She took an economics class with Amyaz Moledina, professor of economics & business economics, and was immediately drawn to the idea of using economics to work in international development. “From the beginning, I was able to see that this is a way I can make a difference and work in underserved communities and have a fulfilling and meaningful life.” She was also encouraged

and supported in her career choice by Kate Freed through the Worthy Questions program, which pairs college students with members of the wider Wooster community.

Ekka also served as a Wooster Ambassador, a program through International Student Services that selects international students to share interactive presentations about their countries, culture, and current events, on campus and in the local community. “I spoke a lot about what it means to be an Indigenous person from India and shared my culture. It really helped me come into my identity and gain confidence speaking to people,” said Ekka.

Her Independent Study, titled “Fulfilling the Promise of Microfinance: A Global Analysis on the Role of Joint-Liability in Achieving Profitability,” was the cornerstone of her Wooster education. She delved into the world of microfinance to help marginalized people, who are often excluded from traditional banking. In her junior year, she received Copeland funding to travel to India for field work to visit microfinance institutions. “We went by motor bikes through rice fields to these remote villages in Jharkhand. One of the women I met had started a tailoring business. She used her microfinance loan to buy a sewing machine,” said Ekka. “Her business was thriving, and she was able to use the money to provide better education for her children and more nutritious food. Meeting the clients made a huge impression on me.”

When Ekka graduated, she took her 200-page I.S. to a job interview with Connexus Corporation,

an international development consulting firm, to demonstrate she could do research. She landed the job as a senior finance and research specialist. “Analytical research and critical thinking skills were super important for my job. The I.S. really helps hone those skills and show to prospective employers that you can do the research and you can write.” she said.

During her first job, she provided technical assistance to microfinance institutions in Afghanistan between 2010-13. That project also worked in agriculture, and she started taking a keen interest in it. Though she feels like she has strong risk tolerance, after a few years of the violence in the area, she decided to take a break and pursue an MBA. “I come from a family of farmers, so this made sense!” Ekka said. She enrolled in the MBA program at the University of California, Davis, a leading university for agriculture. After receiving her degree, she worked in agricultural development for two Feed the Future Horticulture Innovation Lab projects in Rwanda and Burkina Faso. Most recently, she has also led Food Loss and Waste research projects in the United States-Midwest, Cameroon, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Ekka enjoys working to prevent food loss because it has a direct link to climate and climate change, including deforestation and greenhouse gas effects. She explained that the food that is lost has the double impact of food loss as well as greenhouse gas emissions. Also, to make up for the food loss, farmers clear more grasslands and forests to grow crops.

“The more efficient agriculture can be, the less deforestation we have. That's one of the main reasons why I think agriculture and the work in food loss and waste are very important. It impacts all of humanity. As the population increases and there are more weather events and different shocks to the agricultural system, it becomes even more important to save and eat the food that we're already producing,” she said.

In her newest role as project director at Connexus, which she started in November 2022, Ekka is working on land reforms and women's economic empowerment in Colombia. She loves her work and finds it especially rewarding because of the intellectual challenges and the nod to her heritage. “There is a lot of exciting research and work being done that has, thus far, provided for a very fulfilling and fruitful career.”

# Teacher on tour

National Teacher of the Year Kurt Russell '94 advocates for diversity in profession and curriculum

Veteran history teacher Kurt Russell '94 is taking a year-long sabbatical from teaching at Oberlin High School in Oberlin, Ohio. It's not a vacation by any means, but a professional victory lap of sorts to represent what he calls one of the most important professions: one that shapes young people's lives.

Last April, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) named Russell the 2022 National Teacher of the Year (NTOY). He was one of four finalists from a cohort of 56 educators from across the nation who represented the field as the top teacher in their state or territory.

"It's a very amazing honor, and I never could have imagined it when I first started 26 years ago," said Russell. "I don't think of myself as the 'best' teacher, but I am someone who is grounded in the work and who is learning."

Russell traveled to Washington, D.C., to receive his award at the White House and meet President and Dr. Biden. "It's a special memory I'll of course have for the rest of my life," recalled Russell. "How many citizens have the opportunity to go into the Oval Office where so many great individuals have sat on the couches and talked to our presidents? It's very surreal and there are a lot of emotions being a part of that." He traveled again to Washington to speak in front of the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions in June and for the State Dinner with French President Emmanuel Macron in December.

After finishing the school year and officially taking on the formal title July 1, Russell's been engaged in policy discussions at the state and national levels, advocating for the teaching profession and for students across the country. He will spend the balance of his NTOY tenure traveling to speak at organizations that have a commitment

toward education, such as the National Education Association, National Parent Teacher Association, and others. When he's not on the road, Russell takes the time to spotlight the work of his NTOY colleagues in his "Conversations with Kurt" video series on Facebook.

Russell decided to pursue a career in teaching after being inspired by his first Black male teacher in middle school. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from The College of Wooster in 1994, with a major in history and minor in Black studies. Two years later, he obtained a Master of Education degree in curriculum and instruction from Ashland University. Before the award cycle, Russell taught multiple courses, including African American history, U.S. history, International Baccalaureate history of the Americas, and a course on race, gender, and oppression. He's also an advisor for the Black Student Union, student council and junior class, and has coached boys basketball since 1996.

Russell says Wooster taught him to see multiple perspectives which influences his leadership inside and outside the classroom even today. "What's amazing about Wooster is the learning that happens in the cafeteria, at Lowry, even walking the pathways between classes," said Russell. "I met people from different cultures and learned from them, and that was key for me to be more of a well-rounded individual." He also met his wife Donna (Granderson) Russell '96 at the College.



Russell teaches at Oberlin High School. Photo: Cody York Photography

“

All teachers are responsible to provide our students with the best holistic education possible, and the way I know how to do that is by telling the truth. I'm a truth-telling historian. It's okay for my students to feel uncomfortable with topics because that's how we grow. I just want to make sure that what I'm teaching is real and that students are gaining knowledge.”

KURT RUSSELL '94

→ Russell meets First Lady Dr. Jill Biden and President Joe Biden at the White House, April 27, 2022. Photo: Ron Sachs

↓ Russell with CBS Mornings anchors Vladimir Duthiers, Gayle King, and Nate Burleson, after the show revealed Russell as 2022 National Teacher of the Year, April 19, 2022. Photo courtesy of the Council of Chief State School Officers



↑ Russell poses with U.S. Rep. Jahana Hayes (D-Connecticut), the 2016 National Teacher of the Year, at the National Teacher of the Year recognition gala, April 28, 2022. Photo: Ron Sachs

Academically, Russell was inspired by an African politics course with Akwasi Osei, then assistant professor of political science and Black studies, and by the intro to Black studies course with then associate professor of sociology Terry Kershaw. "These courses really garnered my attention because it was the first time I was introduced on



the collegiate level to the history of Black people. They're the reason why I developed an African American history class at Oberlin."

These foundational experiences at Wooster also prepared Russell to take ownership of his own learning and think critically—which he now emphasizes for his own students, especially when facing uncomfortable topics. "All teachers are responsible to provide our students with the best holistic education possible, and the way I know how to do that is by telling the truth," declared Russell. "I'm a truth-telling historian. It's okay for my students to feel uncomfortable with topics because that's how we grow. I just want to make sure that what I'm teaching is real and that students are gaining knowledge."

Russell also believes it's important that students feel represented in his lessons. In U.S. History, he includes stories of marginalized groups like women and their roles in the Revolutionary War. He's also gone out of his way to diversify his curriculum with new courses throughout his storied career. In the race, gender, and oppression course he launched several years ago, they

talk about economic oppression, the feminist movement, LGBTQ+ issues, and other wide-ranging topics.

"Teachers know what the kids are looking for, and Oberlin gives us the autonomy to introduce new courses," said Russell. "We run it by them and get the green light, but the administrators empower us as the experts to do so."

Russell saw the value in his diverse campus experience decades ago, and it's clear Oberlin values his perspective today (so much so that the community celebrated his NTOY win with a parade, a Kurt Russell day, and a street-naming). Above all of it, Russell wants each student to feel valued when they leave his classroom. He says he'll continue to use his platform to diversify the profession—along with the curriculum—for those who follow in his footsteps.



Watch Russell lead a justice dialogue for Wooster's Martin Luther King Jr. Commemoration at [wooster.edu/mlk](https://www.wooster.edu/mlk).

# A lifelong dedication to service

Wooster history alumnus John Carwile '81 serves as ambassador to Latvia



For 35 years, John Carwile '81 has dedicated his work to service—serving the United States in foreign countries.

Carwile, who recently completed his tenure as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia, admits, “Every post has had challenges.” Carwile dealt with terrorist threats in Peru and protests outside the embassy in Kuala Lumpur. He served in a war zone in Baghdad and navigated the Mission Community through the COVID pandemic during his time in Latvia.

Yet for every challenge, there have been more rewards. Carwile was a member of the team in

Nepal that responded when devastating earthquakes rocked Kathmandu in 2015, claiming the lives of about 9,000 people. Citing it as one of his most rewarding experiences, he recalled how they sheltered hundreds of Americans on the embassy compound for several days and arranged evacuation flights. They also supported large-scale relief efforts through the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. III Marine Expeditionary Force from Okinawa.

The career that allowed him to combine his history major and interests in international affairs and political science also granted him the opportunity to live and work overseas with

his wife, partner, and fellow Wooster graduate, Karin Hauschild '84. They are part of a solid Wooster legacy, both having had multiple family members attend the College along with their daughter Katherine, an international relations major who graduated in 2014. Together as lifelong learners, John and Karin have interacted with different cultures, eaten new foods, learned

↑ Carwile (front right) observes the Silver Arrow 2022 exercise live-fire demonstration closing event at Camp Adazi, Latvia, Sept. 29, 2022. Photo: U.S. Army National Guard

foreign languages, lived in a wide variety of living conditions, met people they otherwise never would have met, and understood issues up close. The couple welcomed their global adventures in Washington, D.C.; Lima, Peru; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Rome, Italy (twice); Quito, Ecuador; Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei; Belfast, Northern Ireland; Ottawa, Canada; Kathmandu, Nepal; and Riga, Latvia. Carwile also did an unaccompanied, one-year posting in Baghdad, Iraq, while his wife and daughters stayed in Ottawa.

“There have been a lot of adventures along the way,” he said. Before he entered the foreign service in 1987, Carwile earned a master’s degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Washington, D.C. and worked at CloseUp, a non-profit educational organization, writing on domestic and international issues. His post in Belfast was “a pretty cool job, working four years on the Northern Ireland peace process, interacting with Nobel Peace Prize winners, Irish nationalists, British unionists, paramilitary members, and local politicians,” he said. In Latvia, he headed the embassy in Riga and led the U.S. bilateral relationship with Latvia, employing 55 Americans plus their families, along with about 120 locally engaged staff from Latvia.

The job of embassy staff is “to advance U.S. national interests along a range of issues, including protecting American citizens, defense and security matters, and anti-corruption efforts.” U.S. Foreign Service members from the Department of State staff the traditional sections including political, economic, consular, public diplomacy, and management. There also are U.S. military officers and non-commissioned officers in the Defense Attaché Office and the Office of Defense Cooperation that is embedded in the Latvian Ministry of Defense. The embassy staff maintains close coordination with Washington, D.C., especially the State Department, the Pentagon, and the White House.

“I did a lot of personal engagement and relationship building with Latvian government ministers and officials, civil society, and the Latvian military. There’s also a lot of public speaking, press interviews, and other public interactions,” Carwile said.

In February 2022, when Russia re-invaded Ukraine—the Russians first invaded Crimea in 2014—the embassy had to shift its immediate focus. “My Embassy worked along a number of fronts with our Latvian allies—including military and humanitarian aid to Ukraine, NATO force posture in the Baltic states, and bilateral and

NATO training exercises. We also had extensive consultations with our Latvian counterparts on coordinating Allied sanction actions and countering Russian disinformation,” he explained.

Latvia has been a leader in NATO and European Union efforts against Russia’s war in Ukraine. “Latvians have painful memories of the Soviet Union’s brutal, 50-year occupation of their country, which only ended in 1991,” he said. If Putin succeeds in Ukraine, Latvians believe he would try to retake the country and the other Baltic states—Estonia and Lithuania. They maintain that “everything must be done to make sure Ukraine wins the war against Russia,” Carwile said.

The embassy also supported visits to Latvia by high-level U.S. officials, including the Secretary of State, Secretary of Defense, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, members of the Senate and House of Representatives, and port calls by U.S. Navy warships. Additionally, hundreds of U.S. soldiers have also been deployed to Latvia as a show of American commitment to NATO Ally Latvia and to exercise with soldiers from other NATO member countries that are stationed in Latvia.

Carwile’s career in the Foreign Service “has been an honor. Secretary of State (Madeleine) Albright was right, we are the ‘indispensable nation.’ For whatever shortcomings others may see in us or mistakes we might have made, we remain a tremendous force for good in the world. We are the country that can rally or lead others to protect human rights, promote economic growth, combat hunger, or counter aggression.”

#### CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT

Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken meets with Latvian Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš along with Carwile in Riga, Latvia, in 2021. Photo: State Department, Ron Przysucha

Carwile and his wife Karin Hauschild '84 stand at the U.S. Embassy in Riga, Latvia, on the Fourth of July in 2020.

Carwile (right) alongside U.S. Soldiers assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division artillery, serve a Thanksgiving meal to soldiers on deployment at Camp Adazi, Latvia in 2022. Photo: U.S. Army by Sgt. Lianne M. Hirano

In October, Carwile visited Riga Strazdumuiža Residential Secondary School for visually impaired students.





# Pathways to peace

Ishtiaq Ghafoor '00 finds harmony in his life's work with the foreign service

The College of Wooster provided Ishtiaq Ghafoor '00, an international student from Britain, with a foundation in writing and critical thinking that has helped him to listen, analyze, and participate in important peace negotiations.

The philosophy and economics major and French minor took the lessons he learned at Wooster onto the world stage in foreign service and into his current role as the Deputy British Ambassador to Yemen. From the initial first-year writing seminar to the seminal Independent Study, the Wooster experience emphasized for Ghafoor and his peers “how to read, write, speak, act, and be leaders.”

Ghafoor admittedly arrived at Wooster as a reserved, but ambitious British youth. “The liberal arts experience at a small college was possibly one of the best things I could have done at that age,” he said. In the first-year writing seminar, he learned to write, critique, and revise based on how someone with an opposing view might think about the topic. His I.S., which focused on international development, allowed him to “be independent and think freely without being circumscribed by high ideologies and prevailing orthodoxies”—all skills that he eventually would use in peace negotiations and other high-level embassy responsibilities.

If he had attended a university in the United Kingdom, he would have studied math and not had the opportunity to explore other subject areas. He credits Garrett Thomson, the Elias Compton Professor of Philosophy, and David Wilkin, professor emeritus of French and Francophone studies, with igniting his passion for philosophy and French. They have remained mentors and good friends on his path which started in journalism and led to an international career.

After he served as editor of *The Wooster Voice*, chief editor of a student-focused magazine that was part of a class, and an intern at Simon and

Schuster in New York City, Ghafoor sought a career in journalism. In his first post-college job, he wrote about national science and health issues for a specialized newspaper in Washington, D.C.

He returned to the United Kingdom a year later and worked for *Reuters* in Edinburgh as a financial journalist, a step closer to his economics degree. Two years later, he applied for and received an economic advisor position in the U.K. government.

Because of his acumen with political analysis, external engagement, and the ability to learn languages, Ghafoor moved easily through the levels of governmental and diplomatic hierarchy. He passed the Foreign Service exam and was admitted to the British Diplomatic Service in 2010 after training as a U.K. official in Strasbourg, France, at L'Ecole National d'Administration. As part of the training program, he interned with the European Commission working on European affairs and then with the French regional government. “I really enjoyed that and thrived in that environment. I started thinking that I would rather be in foreign affairs than in economic policy,” he said.



**ABOVE LEFT** In Sudan, Ghafoor (second from left) attends the Nuba Mountains Cultural Heritage Festival marking the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples.

**ABOVE RIGHT** Ghafoor leads a delegation to Darfur, a region in western Sudan, for peace talks with local tribes.

↓ Ghafoor spoke at a Yemen peace conference, part of his work in peace and mediation in war zones.



Photo: UNAMID

Prior to his current post with the British Embassy to Yemen, he served 12 years as a diplomat in Qatar and Sudan. Ghafoor has been very close to the peace processes in Sudan and Yemen. “I was trying to bring peace between the government and rebel groups in Sudan. I worked directly with the African Union mediators, encouraging both delegations, listening to them, and coming up with formulas that could satisfy both sides to try to reach a peace agreement,” he said.

The experience he gained in Sudan now helps him with his work in Yemen as he supports the United Nations in seeking peace. “There are always ups and downs; it's never straightforward and is incredibly complicated. But that is my niche.” He's most proud of his involvement in negotiations that resulted in the Yemen government and the rebels signing the Stockholm Agreement in 2018. The agreement averted a catastrophic military escalation at the time.

“The Stockholm Agreement was front-page news in *The New York Times* and certainly a moment to celebrate,” he said. “I, along with colleagues from other big nations—France, China, Russia, and the U.S.—were there when the talks were happening. We were supporting the talks to be a success, cajoling both sides, coaxing them, and offering them incentives to cooperate. At times, we warned them if they rejected a peace agreement there might be repercussions on the world stage.”

The agreement has not delivered the sustainable peace that leaders had hoped for. For Ghafoor,

“That is how it works. You try to move things forward in a modest, humble way. You recognize your contributions and realize you have a lot of responsibility. Most of all, you try to use your influence to make the world a better place. And sometimes it works.”

But sometimes it doesn't, Ghafoor pointed out. There is a “perceived influence of diplomats in the changing world. It may be less of an issue for diplomats from middle-ranking nations, but for those of us from the bigger nations, it's a bit of cold water on your head when you realize how



little actual influence you have,” he said.

“Diplomacy is being massively impacted by the fact that the world is moving at a faster pace than we can operate,” he said. For example, the Yemen conflict continues. There may be an organized attack by the Houthi rebels on the Saudi Arabian territory. “In the morning, the details are already reported by the news media, so by the time we at the embassy are done analyzing it and getting ready to send a cable to London, our bosses are already informed. The question becomes, ‘What can I provide that goes beyond the news reports?’ This is where diplomacy is changing,” he said.

Diplomats are being pushed to show the value-added of being on the ground and using contacts with good and bad people to share motivations that journalists might not have access to. According to Ghafoor, not everyone is rising to that challenge to provide a deeper level of analysis. The other challenge is a personal one: maintaining a happy family through the course of an unpredictable and globally mobile career. It is difficult for partners of diplomats to continue working, and children must cope with switching schools frequently. Ghafoor and his wife, Tamara, met and married in Jordan and will move together to Indonesia next.

Even in the changing times, he sees the charms of working in the foreign service, and he's grateful for the experiences he had at Wooster that helped him get there. “It's a career, a vocation, a life's work. It provides a structure that allows me to grow professionally and see the different possibilities.”

“I worked directly with the African Union mediators, encouraging both delegations, listening to them, and coming up with formulas that could satisfy both sides to try to reach a peace agreement.”

ISHTIAQ GHAFOOR '00



Photo: UN Women

# Alumna on ice

Lauren Vargo '13 studies connections between glacier melt and climate change

Lauren Vargo '13 came to The College of Wooster because she wanted the chance to take a wide variety of classes to figure out what she wanted to study. When a friend suggested that she take an environmental geology class, she became fascinated by the subject, declaring a major in geology and minor in environmental studies. Now, 10 years later, she has a Ph.D. from Victoria University of Wellington in New Zealand and is working as a postdoctoral fellow in the university's Antarctic Research Centre studying glaciers and climate change.

Vargo first became interested in glaciers as a student at Wooster, working on research with Schoolroy Chair of Natural Resources Greg Wiles. The summer before her senior year, Vargo traveled to Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska with Wiles to study glaciers. Vargo loved that the small size of the geology department allowed her to have hands-on research opportunities and form close relationships with students and professors. "Going in the field and going on field trips gives you the opportunity to bond with students but also get to know the professors a bit better," she said.

The department also has multiple female professors, which made an impact on Vargo as a young woman interested in science. "It was a big thing for me when I was there that two of the four geology professors were women," Vargo said. "I've definitely worked in places since then where that's not even close to the gender breakdown. Coming into the field and not seeing that bias was really nice."

Vargo is trying to change that status quo by establishing a New Zealand branch of a program called Girls on Ice, which takes teenage girls on expeditions to glaciers and teaches them science, art, and outdoor skills. "One of the goals is to get more women into science," Vargo said. "But we know that not all of them are going to go and become scientists, so the program shows all of them that science is something that is accessible to them and can be part of their daily lives."

Vargo did her Independent Study research with Wiles, using data from Wooster's tree ring lab to study how volcanic eruptions and long-term shifts in climate appear in tree ring records. She learned research techniques that she still uses today. "The



Photo: Hannah Perrine Mode

“

It was a big thing for me when I was at Wooster that two of the four geology professors were women. I've definitely worked in places since then where that's not even close to the gender breakdown. Coming into the field and not seeing that bias was really nice.”

LAUREN VARGO '13

junior and senior I.S. projects and the research with Dr. Wiles taught me how to ask questions about how things work, why things are changing, and how to better understand those questions," she said.

Because she enjoyed doing research for I.S. so much, Vargo decided to go to graduate school at the University of New Mexico for a master's in science. It was afterwards, while working at the Los Alamos National Lab, that she confirmed that she wanted to stay in the field of research and learned about the Ph.D. program in the Antarctic Research Centre. She applied and got in. "I thought I would come for just my Ph.D. for three or four years, but I've stayed since then," she said.

As a postdoctoral research fellow at the university, Vargo focuses on monitoring how glaciers in New Zealand are changing. While New Zealand doesn't

have nearly as many glaciers as other regions such as Alaska, Vargo said that they are still very important to study for multiple reasons. One is due to their impact on local water resources. "As the glaciers melt, they provide an input of water in the spring and summer. Once they start to melt more, there is more water for a few years, but then they lose enough ice that there is actually less water," Vargo said. She also explained that glaciers are an important tourist destination for the country, as well as culturally significant to the people indigenous to New Zealand. Part of Vargo's job is doing outreach with Indigenous communities who live near the glaciers and run helicopter tours, providing them with up-to-date science and helping to promote tourism.

She recently received a grant from the Marsden Fund to design a three-year project that expands the work she did during her Ph.D. to examine how much of the melt of New Zealand's glaciers is due to climate change. Her new project will study the melt of glaciers all across the world. "One of the things I'm especially interested in is how we can use the results to talk about climate change. I'd love to hopefully have it lead into more work with social scientists and science communicators to present these results," Vargo said.

**OPPOSITE** Vargo prepares for a flight to take photographs of New Zealand glaciers in March 2020. The images and data collected on the flight provide information that will be used in her research. Photo: Rebekah Parsons-King



Vargo measures glacier mass change on Brewster Glacier in 2018. Photo: Brian Anderson



ABOVE & OPPOSITE El-Adawy spoke at the opening ceremony launching Regional Youth Leadership Summit for the Special Olympics.

## Strokes of inclusion

Samira El-Adawy '13 encourages inclusivity through sports for those with intellectual disabilities

Samira El-Adawy '13 is an athlete on a mission to foster inclusion. A former competitive swimmer for the Egyptian Youth National Swimming Team as well as The College of Wooster women's swim team, she uses sports to promote inclusion in the world, primarily for individuals who are intellectually disabled.

Impassioned in her current job as youth engagement manager for Special Olympics MENA (Middle East and North Africa), El-Adawy has seen first-hand the daily challenges individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families face. "These days, we are all caught up in our hectic routines; we each have our own worries. Imagine having these worries and also having to handle and manage your child's daily basic needs, and their emotions of feeling different or left out and not understanding why," she said. Every day, she witnesses how the organization's incredible year-round engagement makes a difference for Special Olympics athletes and their families.

Volunteering for the Special Olympics World Games in Los Angeles in 2015 first opened El-Adawy's eyes to the impact of athletic engagement for these families. Thanks to her ability to speak five languages, including Arabic, the Wooster French major and German minor was selected as Egypt's delegation liaison. The experience "opened the door to opportunities that felt bigger than myself, helped my heart increase in size, and my mind in awareness of society's basic flaws preventing children with intellectual disabilities from feeling a sense of belonging in our world."



↑ El-Adawy stands at the regional headquarters in the United Arab Emirates.

She volunteered again with Special Olympics as a youth leader at the Winter Games' Global Summit. "As an athlete without intellectual disabilities, I was fascinated to see how sports were a tool for inclusion. Everybody loves sports; they bring together people in the best way," El-Adawy said.

In 2017, she was partnered with Sondos Mohamed, a Special Olympics athlete leader. They bonded and became good friends, and in 2017 traveled as a Unified Pair, which includes an athlete with intellectual disabilities and a partner who is an athlete without intellectual disabilities. They represented Egypt at the Global Summit, an inclusion-focused discussion that occurs alongside the Special Olympics World Games. "That was my first time truly experiencing the importance of having unified engagement as a core element of our work." She saw the movement's work from all angles and directly engaged with the movement that shaped her "very strong views on inclusion in our school communities," she said.

Today, El-Adawy's responsibilities as youth engagement manager for the MENA region focus on the schools that participate in unified sports where students with and without intellectual disabilities play sports together on the same teams. Her work targets students without intellectual disabilities because "inclusion in this world cannot happen unless those without intellectual disabilities start engaging, understanding, and changing their behaviors to become more inclusive."

“

The most beautiful thing about our work in Special Olympics is that we use sports as the catalyst for social inclusion. Seeing the direct impact of what sports can do for our society is the best thing about this job.”

SAMIRA EL-ADAWY '13

They train and play together forging a bond of friendship and understanding, and from there "magic happens." According to El-Adawy, "It is our goal to ensure that this engagement becomes a driver in all activities in the schools. The most beautiful thing about our work in Special Olympics is that we use sports as the catalyst for social inclusion. Seeing the direct impact of what sports can do for our society is the best thing about this job."

Working for Special Olympics has provided not only true friendships for El-Adawy, but also a sense of purpose. She was a global citizen from birth. Due to her father working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, she lived in Germany, Egypt, Uruguay, Ghana, Sweden, Ethiopia, and France,



before she attended Wooster in the United States. She always knew she wanted to make a difference in the world. As an international student, her Independent Study was the first experience to validate that desire to do good.

She chose "Life of Ivorian Refugees in Liberia: Obstacles with No Solution?" for her I.S. "to discover a whole new world, one that I had no previous exposure to." During the summer of her junior and senior years at Wooster, she interned in Liberia with the Norwegian Refugee Council as a translator in one of the refugee camps. She spoke in French with the refugees to find out what was preventing them from going back to the Ivory Coast. "It was amazing to think that my ability to speak French could help them to communicate their needs and get better support."

For El-Adawy, the Wooster experience, including I.S. and her involvement on the swim team, helped her find the right and meaningful path. "Wooster prepared me for the work I am doing without me realizing it," she said.

Through Wooster and Special Olympics, she learned, "It's often the little things we know how to do that make the biggest difference in some people's lives." Her current mantra is "Change does not have to happen with grand gestures and means; it can start with the simplest acts of compassion and desire to find ways to better the day-to-day of a human being."

↘ El-Adawy and Mohamed represented Egypt at the Global Summit during the Special Olympics World Games in 2017.



# Students speak up for democracy

## Wooster grads learn to engage on world issues through international forum

The face of democracy is changing around the globe. Repressive governments such as Iran and China are seeing protestors standing up for freedom, peace, and dignity. In the United States in 2021, political officials and their supporters tried to interrupt the democratic process of the peaceful transfer of power.

While the strength of democracy may feel a bit tenuous at times, The College of Wooster invests in democracy's durability by sending students to the Athens Democracy Forum held annually in Athens, Greece, to engage in robust discussions and presentations about the topic.

Every year since 2018, the College has nominated one or two students to participate in the forum

through the Global Liberal Arts Alliance. According to Sarah Sobek, professor of chemistry, associate dean for experiential learning, and chair of the faculty, the alliance has partnered with Deree-The American College of Greece for six years, each year sending a group of 20-25 students, usually one from each school, within the alliance. The forum is organized by the Democracy and Culture Foundation in association with *The New York Times*.

Sabrina Harris '19, political science major, represented Wooster in 2018, followed by Marco Roccato '20, global and international studies, in 2019; Saeed Husain '21, anthropology, and HahYeon Lee '21, philosophy and political science, (virtually) in 2020; Adam Hinden '22, anthropology, in 2021;

and Thomas Pitney '24, political science and French and Francophone studies, in 2022.

This fall, Pitney wanted to represent Wooster at the forum to share his unique perspective about the importance of local governance. He was elected to the legislative body for the Shrewsbury, Massachusetts, town meetings when he was 18 years old. With that experience, "I've noticed how much local government impacts people, from delivering water to providing basic services," he said.

Pitney enjoyed the conversations at the forum with other students from countries including Morocco, United Kingdom, and Slovakia. They talked and debated over meals, in between meetings, and during discussion groups. Instead of talking, he spent most of the time listening to ideas that were different from his own. "I wanted to understand why other people thought the way they did. I was trying to genuinely understand why and not judge them." Pitney made connections that allowed him to assimilate the experience with his knowledge and education to better understand the world around him.

"The Athens Democracy Forum provides an excellent experiential learning opportunity based around global engagement, both of which are core parts of a Wooster education," said Kent Killie, professor of political science and global and international studies. "The research and critical thinking skills they develop at Wooster are put to good use and bolstered by their participation. The students often return feeling empowered by the chance to have their voices heard in such an important setting."

When Harris attended the forum in 2018, she spoke as one of two students selected to participate in a panel session titled "Bridging the Generation Gap." Asked if there was something that needed immediate attention in our democracies, she expressed her concern for the lack of progress related to gender dynamics, climate change, and political rights for marginalized groups. "These are issues that everyone aims to work on, but we haven't achieved the progress we want. The onus of that is falling on my generation," she said during the panel session.

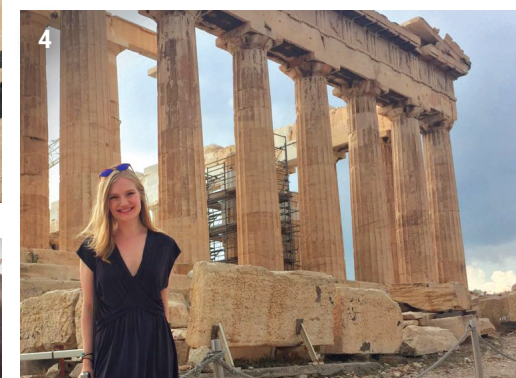
At the forum, "I put into practice all of the skills that I spent the previous three years learning," she said. The political science major is now working on a Ph.D. in political science at Virginia Tech. "I gained more confidence and conviction in myself," said Harris. "I learned that by virtue of being in the same room, you have a voice to express yourself, to share your opinion, to try and make a change."

Roccatto called the 2019 forum an "incredibly exciting" part of his Wooster experience. Honored to be nominated by the political science department, "It felt special to be in the place that is considered to be the birthplace of democracy and to talk about the challenges that democracy is currently facing in the world." As an international student from Rovellasca, Italy, Roccatto engaged with politics, economics, and history at an academic level. "It was incredibly valuable to see those core ideas reflected in the real world," he said.

"My time at Athens definitely confirmed and enhanced my love for international relations," said Roccatto, who moved back to Europe after graduating in May 2020 to pursue a career in internation-

al education. He is a history teacher, dorm parent, coach, and faculty advisor to the student government at The American School in Switzerland. "My daily duty is to keep my students engaged and excited about history and the world around them. I work with students from more than 50 different nationalities, so it's important to connect history to the current events that shape the world we all inhabit together."

Attending the forum virtually in 2020 informed Husain's Independent Study on Sikh American art collecting and its impact on the decolonial process. "If not for the forum, my I.S. would have been much more theoretically engaged rather than from an activist stance," said Husain, who completed



**1** The Zappeion, constructed for the 1896 Olympics, hosted the first day of events of the forum for Roccato.

**2** Roccato, who now teaches history in Switzerland, instructed his class during a visit to Palazzo Medici in Florence.  
*Photo: Graham Pearsall*



**“ I learned that by virtue of being in the same room, you have a voice to express yourself, to share your opinion, to try and make a change.”**

Sabrina Harris '19

a Master of Philosophy in Social Anthropological Research from Cambridge University after graduating from Wooster. He currently works on independent writing and film projects, including building sustainable and replicable development projects centered on ecology in Pakistan.

"Working alongside communities that I have studied before is really important to me. What I learned from listening to my peers is that democratic reforms need to come organically from citizens in their respective countries and regions," Husain said. "Unless we globally work together to make democratic processes that work for all, democracy will face grave impediments."

A universal interest in promoting democracy is a common thread that unites the participants.

"Regardless of where you come from, we all have these same concerns, the trivial ones and the grand ones about the state of the world," Harris said. "Having the opportunity to show up and say, 'This is who we are, this is what our interests are, and this is the world that we're trying to fight for,' I think was very powerful."

**3** Pitney was honored to shake hands with former U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the 2022 forum.

**4** Harris visited the Parthenon in Greece.

**5** Harris participated in a panel session titled "Bridging the Generation Gap" in the 2018 forum.

# Set up for success in STEM

International grads embrace opportunities to study and gain experience in their fields in U.S.

According to a report published by the National Science Foundation in early 2022, attracting international STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) talent is “crucial for America’s science and engineering enterprise, both because international students and workers bring valuable knowledge and skills and because the U.S. has failed to engage enough U.S. citizens in STEM education and careers.” Acknowledging the impact international scholars have on the nation’s ability to innovate and create jobs, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken announced a Joint Statement of Principles in Support of International Education, in which he outlined the principles that would guide the federal government in support of international education along with a series of actions.

“The robust exchange of students, researchers, scholars, and educators, along with broader international education efforts between the United States and other countries, strengthens relationships between current and future leaders,” wrote Secretary Blinken. “These relationships are necessary to address shared challenges, enhance American prosperity, and contribute to global peace and security.” Read the full statement at [bit.ly/intl-ed-statement](https://bit.ly/intl-ed-statement).

Pursing a degree in one of the many fields now recognized as part of STEM by the U.S. Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), allows international students at The College of Wooster to give context to their STEM interests by studying multiple



I’ve always been a proponent of approaching any sort of issue that I am passionate about with as many perspectives as I could. And Wooster teaches exactly that.”

Mahi Lal '22

disciplines across the liberal arts. It also provides new opportunities to gain experience in their field or pursue graduate study in the U.S. upon graduation.

“In most areas of the world, you have to know exactly what you want to study directly from high school,” said Jill Munro, former assistant dean of students and director of International Student Services at Wooster. That’s what makes Wooster’s immersive liberal arts experience so attractive and valuable to international students who want to earn a degree in a STEM field while continuing to study across the curriculum.

↓ **Minhwa Lee '22**, who came to Wooster from South Korea, had been in a track studying humanity and history in high school. “I didn’t have any chance to apply to universities in South Korea with a mathematics major or other science related major,” she said, noting that her interests had changed to math since she’d chosen history at a young age. Wooster allowed her to take courses in biology, chemistry, mathematics, sociology, and computer science, where she found the right fit for her.



“I realized that I want to do very interdisciplinary things for my career. I was fascinated by the interdisciplinary characteristics of computer science. In our final project in the intro course, we created programs to solve real-world problems,” said Lee, who earned her degree in computer science and mathematics. “There are all kinds of computational approaches to social problems or humanities problems.” Lee recently completed a data-science internship with Microsoft AI and is pursuing a M.S. in Computer Science at University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

“Wooster is a stellar foundation and education especially for students coming from overseas who are not sure what they want to do or know that they want to go to graduate school in the U.S.,” says Munro, who recently transitioned to a new role as associate director of community engagement in Wooster’s Advising, Planning, and Experiential Learning (APEX) center. “Students learn communication skills, collaboration, gain an understanding of worldviews, critical thinking—all things that employers and graduate programs are looking for.”

Even though she came to Wooster with a passion for economics, ↑ **Mahi Lal '22**, an international graduate from India, found the exposure to different subjects really added to her knowledge as an economics major, an area that became classified as part of STEM in 2021. “I’ve always been a proponent of approaching any sort of issue that I am passionate about with

as many perspectives as I could. And Wooster teaches exactly that,” she said. “I took many courses in psychology and women’s, gender, & sexuality studies that built up my perspective.” For Lal, that added perspective broadened her understanding of economics.

“Economists make assumptions to solve a problem, but it’s more valuable to nitpick at the assumptions themselves to create a more practical solution,” said Lal. “The things that we’re learning are not black and white, for example, there are different kinds of poverty. The kind of poverty in the U.S. is very different from what you would experience in India.”

As a research analyst at Optimal Solutions Group, a public policy consultancy firm in Washington, D.C., Lal is applying her broad perspective along with her quantitative and analytical skills from her major to study national problems. “We are looking at the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on student assessment



using the Nation’s Report Card scores for math and reading, to determine any significant changes during remote learning,” said Lal, speaking of a study that was covered by *The New York Times* in the fall. “I don’t think I could have asked for a better project to be a part of coming out of Wooster.”

She made a connection at Optimal with alumnus Sadaf Asrar '11, her supervisor, through her professors at Wooster and is using the work experience as her OPT, or Optional Practical Training, a federal program that allows international graduates to work in their area of study while on their student visa through the

College. STEM students can extend their OPT for up to three years.

“The OPT opportunity helps the student as an individual solidify what they want to pursue and what they want to do,” explained Munro. “It is also an incredible economic builder for the U.S. The number of international students hired after their undergraduate degree contributes thousands of workers to the U.S. economy.” Munro added that OPT is cost effective for the employer because the students continue their student visa status through Wooster, working with the College’s International Student Services team to complete their OPT or STEM OPT extension.

“Employers are very strong advocates for STEM extension because they get up to three years with an employee before making the determination of whether they want to sponsor them for a work visa or permanent residency,” said Munro.

Through OPT, ← **Hasan Malik '22**, a psychology graduate, is a business development executive for a business intelligence company in Chicago focusing on relationship building and client success. “The STEM OPT extension helped me pursue long-term career goals in the U.S.,” he said. “Pursuing educational passions while having good job prospects helps with both academics and career.”

Munro says international students also often use OPT as a bridge between their studies at Wooster and their next steps to graduate school. “When you acquire work experience from OPT, you’re more likely to get a fellowship or research assistantship that helps pay for grad school,” she said. “Saving money for that next step is significant. For those who decide to go back to their home country, having both the degree and the work experience in the U.S. make it easier to find a position at home related to your field. You gain the networking and work experience that industries around the world recognize as important.”

Interdisciplinary skills as well as knowledge of industry-related software programs, lab experience, and collaborating with Wooster faculty to create new knowledge through Independent Study research also help students to find graduate research opportunities and placement in advanced graduate programs.

We’re an interdisciplinary department. We have people studying biology, social network science, political science, physics, and epidemiology. My lab is focusing on political science and using a network science perspective.”

Zhen Guo '21



↑ **Zhen Guo '21**, a computer science and sociology major from Beijing, China, is pursuing a Ph.D. at the Network Science Institute at Northeastern University. “We’re an interdisciplinary department. We have people studying biology, social network science, political science, physics, and epidemiology. My lab is focusing on political science and using a network science perspective,” said Guo, whose I.S. used a computer model to investigate the spread of rumors on Twitter. “The rumor spreads like a disease. That’s the power of using models or abstractions like network science to understand social phenomenon. We see the similarity between two totally irrelevant things like rumor and disease.” Guo is using the same principles from her I.S. to study American elections and make sense of political polarization. She added, “The most important thing I learned from I.S. is not just technical skills but also how to be self-motivated in research.”

# Bonjour, Présidente Anne E. McCall!

## GET TO KNOW WOOSTER'S 13<sup>TH</sup> PRESIDENT



**T**

he College of Wooster shared news of the appointment of its 13<sup>th</sup> president, Dr. Anne E. McCall, in early December, following a 10-month search led by trustees, alumni, faculty, staff, and students. McCall will be the second woman to lead Wooster as president since its founding in

1866, and will also hold a tenured professorship in the Department of French and Francophone Studies. She officially begins her role on July 1, 2023.

“We knew that leading the College would present a compelling opportunity to the right candidate, and we are confident Dr. McCall embodies the formidable set of qualities embedded in the presidential job prospectus at the beginning of the search,” said Sally Staley ’78, chair of the Board of Trustees. “Dr. McCall is an inspiring advocate for expanding access to higher education for all who desire it, and she’s passionately committed to the liberal arts. She was immediately drawn to the internationality of our small campus and has already begun thinking of how to further expand Wooster’s international reputation by connecting our campus to her large network of scholars and students around the world.”

McCall currently serves as provost and senior vice president for academic affairs at Xavier University of Louisiana in New Orleans—the nation’s fifth-ranked historically Black college or university (HBCU). Since joining Xavier in 2016, McCall has collaborated with faculty, staff, students, alumni, and community organizations to create and implement a new core curriculum and nearly two dozen new graduate and undergraduate degree programs in areas of growing student interest, emerging knowledge, and professional opportunities. She has also supported the Center for Equity, Justice, and the Human Spirit; inter-university pipeline programs and partnerships, including international partnerships; and a major collaboration with southeast Louisiana’s largest health system.

Her prior leadership experience includes serving as dean of the Harpur College of Arts and Sciences at Binghamton University—one of New York’s largest public institutions; dean of arts, humanities, and social sciences at the University of Denver; and associate dean of the School of Liberal Arts at Tulane University.

In addition to a long track record of accomplishments as an academic administrator, McCall is an internationally renowned scholar of 19<sup>th</sup>-century



← McCall posed with Evelyn McCain ’25 outside Lowry Center for a selfie.

**OPPOSITE** McCall and Palat had the opportunity to visit with faculty, staff, and students at a reception while on campus in January.

nine years in Europe earning master’s and doctoral degrees in French literature from the Université de Strasbourg.

Moving to Wooster includes a return to Ohio for McCall, who grew up in Cincinnati. She is the daughter of the late John P. McCall, former president of Knox College in Galesburg, Illinois (1982 to 1993) and professor of English, and Mary-Berencie Morris McCall, who earned her Ph.D. in Spanish Literature and Romance Stylistics at Bryn Mawr College in Pennsylvania. McCall’s husband, Dr. Ravi Palat, a historical sociologist and political economist at Binghamton University, will join her in Wooster. She has three adult children who live in Texas and California with their families.

McCall is wasting no time getting to know the campus and preparing for the upcoming transition. She and Palat gathered with members of the Wooster campus and broader community as part of an in-person visit in late January. During her stay, she also had meetings with members of Scot Council, Staff Committee, and the faculty’s Big Five committees. McCall plans to visit campus monthly leading up to the beginning of her term as president in July.

French fiction and life-writing, most notably the works of French novelist and feminine trailblazer George Sand. She also maintains a special interest in migration studies and has implemented interdisciplinary courses on the topic at several prior institutions. Despite a full administrative load, she remains active in her field of scholarship, presenting papers and organizing workshops throughout the U.S. and internationally.

As the current chair of the Steering Committee for the U.S. section of Scholars at Risk, McCall works to support academic freedom and university values around the world, in particular by supporting persecuted scholars seeking placements, advocating for the freedom of jailed scholars and practitioners, and promoting the freedom to think. She is an alumna of the New Orleans Campaign for Equity training and its criminal justice reform cluster.

She earned a bachelor’s degree in French and German from the University of Virginia and spent



McCall enjoyed a lunch meeting with Scot Council on Jan. 26.

## Q & A with President-Elect Anne E. McCall

**Wooster's incoming leader answered our questions about what attracted her to the College, what she brings to the role, and the things she looks forward to experiencing as she joins the community this summer.**

### Q: What excites you about Wooster?

**McCall:** The College of Wooster stands out by the richness of the academic opportunities, including the well-known senior I.S., which requires that the entire student body—everyone!—positions itself under faculty guidance as producers of knowledge, experts who push knowledge forward rather than simply as learners. Wooster's distinguished history and reputation bear witness to the positive impact of generations of visionary, dedicated, creative, and accomplished staff, faculty, and students. I can't wait to join this highly charged intellectual community.

The combination of an intimate, diverse, and international community with a dense ecosystem of ambitious academic offerings is quite captivating with the focus on research, career preparation, long-term community involvement, and activities that invite students to stretch themselves in multiple ways. It's the whole package—the liberal arts experience at its best.

### Q: What is the value of Wooster's liberal arts experience in a residential setting?

**McCall:** The value is priceless. It's a privilege to be able to spend several years with peers and their faculty guides in a setting created for learning, to be able to eat, drink, breathe, and live it all day long and well into the night. To think about big issues, learn hard skills and vital knowledge with a wide range of fellow students that form a microcosm of our country and the world, it's a breathtaking opportunity and privilege.

Wooster shines for the opportunities students have to link in-class, experiential learning, career preparation, and service. And it does all of this in a close-knit, diverse community. Where better to learn about oneself, others, and

our world than in an intimate setting in which students of different backgrounds, locations, and identities are all called upon to do this work and become themselves more fully? At our best and by our very efforts, we show the world a better way to be together.

### Q: Why is Wooster the right fit for you?

**McCall:** I am passionate about the value of curiosity, the pleasure of learning, and the potential that knowledge has, especially the kind we focus on in liberal arts colleges, to transform individual lives and entire societies for the better. I enjoy working hard, hearing what others have to say, and cultivating a team approach to solving problems and building new opportunities.

### Q: What are some of the qualities you will bring to the role of president?

**McCall:** Having taught and held leadership positions at different kinds of higher education institutions, I have a strong sense of how differ-

ent types of colleges and universities contribute to a strong educational ecosystem, what we can do better than others. My experiences living in other countries and serving an HBCU as provost have, along with my marriage to a South Asian, fed my career-long commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice work and helped me grow in cultural humility.

### Q: How do you go about building support for diversity, equity, and inclusion on college campuses?

**McCall:** I have been engaged in DEI work at all the campuses where I have worked, and in all cases, building support is vital to keeping momentum going. We do this in a variety of ways—calling attention to strong practices and cultures on campus, so that colleagues and students can see first, that DEI work and results are possible and that they lead to an enriched context for teaching, learning, and knowledge production. Celebrating efforts and change matters, even when we are talking about small steps. Showing what becomes possible, what next steps look like, demystifies the process and the outcomes.

### Q: In what ways can Wooster aim to enhance the student experience?

**McCall:** Students aren't just talking heads; they are real people, who need opportunities to develop physically, emotionally, spiritually, professionally, and socially. I'm eager to learn from students what they think we need to do to enhance the student experience, so that more students 'hook into' Wooster, dig into the opportunities, and make connections between all these areas.



### Q: What do you see as the greatest opportunity and biggest challenge for Wooster?

**McCall:** Like all higher education institutions in the U.S., we have financial challenges, some of which are due to a decline in births about 18 years ago, others to rising economic inequality, which makes college harder to afford and also the high cost of providing a 'bundled' educational experience.

One of our greatest opportunities that we have now comes from the ability that we have to connect with partners of all kinds locally and around the world. This makes all of what we offer more dynamic, be it the opportunities to study documents, have research partners, and engage with partners around the world.

### Q: How do you plan to spend your first 90 days in office?

**McCall:** I need to meet and listen to as many people—staff, faculty, students, community partners, alumni, donors—as I can; dive into the data; and define projects/priorities. In a nutshell, learning, letting others learn about working with me, and mapping out first steps we can take together.

### Q: On a personal note, what do you most look forward to exploring in and around Wooster?

**McCall:** Of course, I want to learn everything possible about Wooster and the surrounding area. A top priority for me is getting to know people, seeing things for myself, and getting involved in associations that help build on community strengths and address gaps.

Having grown up in Cincinnati, I'm more familiar with the southern part of Ohio and other midwestern states as well as parts of Appalachia than I am with the agricultural enterprises, business centers, and cultural institutions of northeast Ohio or the broader Great Lakes region. As a result, visiting nearby areas will be important to my understanding of our local and regional context.

My hobbies are pretty simple—I get great enjoyment out of international movies, world literature, and fine and performing arts, as a

← McCall met with members of the community at a reception at the president's house.



McCall and Palat chatted with students outside Lowry during their visit in January.



To view The College of Wooster presidential announcement, video messages, biography, and more, visit [wooster.edu/presidential-announcement](https://wooster.edu/presidential-announcement).

spectator. So, count me in for movie nights, book readings, gallery openings, concerts, and plays. I am always curious about how things have come to be, so I grab time as I can for historical exhibits and walking tours. Physical health matters, so I try to keep at least a moderate schedule for walking, swimming, and general workouts.

### Q: How will you be involved in the broader Wooster community?

**McCall:** We all need to do what we can to help our communities become as strong as they can be. I don't know yet how I can best represent The College in the Wooster community, but on a personal level, I have been involved in racial equity work, criminal justice reform efforts, and issues around migration. As the current chair of the steering committee for the

U.S. section of Scholars at Risk, I support academic freedom and university values around the world.

### Q: What can alumni and friends do to support Wooster?

**McCall:** Alumni and friends are vital to our success! You are connectors to communities around us and to career opportunities. Working with our offices to make those linkages is an immense gift. We depend on the financial generosity of our alumni and friends to make Wooster and all our opportunities affordable to our students, to ensure our programs have the resources they need to be rich, and to help us attract and retain colleagues who will thrive on our campus. The perspectives of alumni and friends is essential as well for making sure we stay at the top of our game and continue to improve.

# Oak Grove



Mentoring  
Matchup p. 28

Word from  
Wooster p. 30

Fulfilling  
Promises p. 32

## Wooster Briefs

*Ethics and Insurrection: A Pragmatism for the Oppressed*, by **Lee A. McBride III**, professor of philosophy, is drawing interest from philosophers and publications in the field. Released in paperback this year, the book is part of

McBride's recent work in insurrectionist philosophy and was named among "8 Best New Pragmatism Books To Read In 2023" by *BookAuthority*, a site featured by CNN that identifies and rates the best books in the world based on recommendations by thought leaders and experts. McBride worked with Oxford Public Philosophy (OPP) to develop an online asynchronous course, *Insurrectionist Ethics*, based on the book and republished an article, "Insurrectionist Ethics and Racism," in *Philosophy Born of Struggle: Anthology of Afro-American Philosophy From 1917*, Third Edition edited by Leonard Harris, a highly regarded publication in the field.

**Jimmy A. Noriega**, professor of theatre and Latin American studies, traveled to Belgium with his theatre company, Teatro Travieso/Troublemaker Theatre,

to present *CAGED*, a play that he wrote and directed at the Théâtre Universitaire Royal de Liège in November at the Chiroux Theatre. The actresses in the production were Wooster alumna **Stephanie Castrejón '16**, and seniors, **Teresa Isabel Ascencio '23**, and **Amari Royal '23**.

Wooster students participated at a regional meeting of the American Physical Society (APS). **Eric Johnson '25**, a physics major, won the Undergraduate Student Outstanding Poster Award for his topic, "Avalanche Occurrence on a Conical Bead Pile with Cohesion," supervised by Susan Lehman, The Victor J. Andrew Professor of Physics. Four additional Wooster physics students also presented for the first time, and two first-year, prospective physics majors, joined the group to experience their first scientific conference.

A partnership with Ohio's Hospice LifeCare is allowing college students to intern with the organization and complete an EMT training course through the Wayne County Fire & Rescue Association while earning academic credit, including **Bailey Farrell '25**, a biochemistry and molecular biology major, and **Tudor Lungu '24**, a pre-med neuroscience major with a concentration in neurobiology.

**Zhenyu Tian**, assistant professor of communication studies at Wooster, won the Cheris Kramarae



Stephanie Castrejón '16, Teresa Isabel Ascencio '23, Amari Royal '23, and director Jimmy A. Noriega performed *CAGED* at the Théâtre Universitaire Royal de Liège in Belgium.



**LEFT** Paige Turner, dean of the College of Communication, Information and Media at Ball State University and past president of the OSCLG presents Zhenyu Tian with the Cheris Kramarae Outstanding Dissertation Award at the organization's annual conference.

**RIGHT** Mike Crescimanno, chair of the EGLS award committee (left), introduced the fall 2022 award winners including Eric Johnson '25 who was awarded undergraduate student outstanding poster (second from left).



↑ **Tudor Lungu '24**, a pre-med neuroscience major completed an internship and became a certified EMT through Wooster's partnership with Ohio's Hospice LifeCare.

Outstanding Dissertation Award presented by the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language, and Gender (OSCLG). The award, named for OSCLG founding member Cheris Kramarae, recognizes the outstanding dissertation concerned with communication, language, and gender.

**Amber Kempthorn**, adjunct faculty member of the Department of Art & Art History, premiered her four-part animation *Ordinary Magic: A Sunday in the Cuyahoga Valley* with the Akron Symphony Orchestra on Oct. 15, at the University of Akron's E.J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall. *Ordinary Magic* is a series of four animations that visually translate British composer Benjamin Britten's *Four Sea Interludes* (1945) into scenes inspired by Northeast Ohio and its inhabitants.

A new partnership between the College and Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) expands access to master's programs for Wooster students

seeking to earn master's degrees at CWRU's Weatherhead School of Management. Through the agreement, Wooster students accepted into the Master of Business Analytics & Intelligence, Master of Supply Chain Management, Master of Finance, and Master of Accountancy programs will receive scholarships with at least a \$10,000 value and the potential to receive additional merit aid.

A team of four computer science students from The College of Wooster won the annual Ohio Wesleyan University (OWU) Programming Competition. Eleven Wooster students participated as three separate teams including the team of **Patrick May '24**, **Taemour Zaidi '24**, **Addison Walling '24**, and **Eltahir Elawad '24**, who secured first place while another Wooster team placed in the top 10.



Read the full stories online at [wooster.edu/news](https://www.wooster.edu/news)

## ATHLETICS

### Communication Sciences and Disorders major becomes one of Wooster's latest international stars

The College of Wooster has proven to be the perfect fit for Ada Pan '25. The communication sciences and disorders (CSD) major was in search of a developed program where she could focus more on academics and balance out her other passion, golf.

"Wooster has everything I wanted," shared Pan. "Wooster's CSD major and the faculty are well known. I can keep playing with Wooster having a golf team."

A need for speech-language pathologists and audiologists at home in China made CSD a "good area to study," per Pan, whose father advised her to "find a major that has the potential to be in demand" upon graduation. Google searches, plus assistance from C.J. Gatto, an entrepreneur who connects international golfers with American college coaches—including fellow Wooster alumna Tongtong Wu '21—led to Wooster as a leading option. Pan then reached out to Women's Golf Head Coach Lisa Campanell Komara.

Pan is utilizing the courses she takes at Wooster to decide between focusing on speech-language pathology or audiology and is seeking an internship this summer where she can gain experience in both fields. The sophomore has already taken full advantage of some of Wooster's many resources, namely the Center for Advising, Planning, and Experiential Learning or APEX.

"APEX has helped plan my schedule, so I have a clear idea of which classes to take," summed up Pan. "The staff in APEX are always willing to help and are very professional. I can always find the help I need at Wooster."

On the course, Pan helped Wooster shatter its team low-round record by 11 strokes, and she broke the program's individual record twice. The Fighting Scots played five events this fall, and Pan was the North Coast Athletic Conference's Athlete of the Week following four of them.

Wooster's thriving international student body is well represented throughout the College's 23 varsity athletic teams. Twenty-four students from 16 countries are on a varsity roster this year.

→ **Ada Pan '25**





# Mentoring Matchup

**Anna Truong '23**  
Mathematics major

**Drew Pasteur**  
Professor of Mathematics

**A**nna Truong '23 has always been very independent. The daughter of parents who immigrated to the Colorado area during the Vietnam War, she is used to being the one who provides help rather than asks for it. From helping to complete governmental forms to translating conversations between her parents and teachers growing up, she overcame multiple challenges even before she was a first-generation college student at The College of Wooster.

Choosing the right major didn't come easy to Truong, who also had to balance her time as a member of the lacrosse team, but when she started to find her strength in math, she connected with Professor Drew Pasteur who helped her navigate a transition to the major. Pasteur, who's been teaching and mentoring student-athletes for 25 years, felt a connection to Truong having been a first-generation college student himself. While Truong was taking Pasteur's Differential Equations course in her junior year, both were struggling with their own challenges and found strength through their interactions during office hours that helped them through a difficult year. Truong is always excited to see Pasteur in the stands cheering her on during her Lacrosse games, and Pasteur says he's looking forward to seeing what Truong's "future looks like beyond Wooster, with the work ethic, time management, and grit that she's shown here."

**“ I've always seen myself as independent, but I owe my success to being vulnerable, asking for help, and letting go of that ego.”**

—Anna Truong '23



## What have you taken away from your interactions?

**Truong:** When I enter his office, Professor Pasteur can tell immediately if there's something going on with me. He listens, offers resources to connect me to what I need, and provides a second perspective. Having my advisor know that I'm struggling and hearing his stories of overcoming his own challenges helped me and makes me feel like I can do this; I can overcome this obstacle.

**Pasteur:** I've always appreciated Anna's humanity and compassion. Even if she was dealing with a lot, she always asked about my family and sees me as a whole person. I want to look out for not just the academic benefit of our students but also for them to grow and flourish as whole people. And likewise, Anna really took an interest in that for me and my family, which I was really grateful for.

**“ I want to look out for not just the academic benefit of our students but also for them to grow and flourish as whole people.”**

—Professor Drew Pasteur

## What has it meant to you to have this experience?

**Truong:** We built a connection through the DEQ class, and he helped me with the course. He shared his stories of also being a first-generation student and faculty member. It's an honor to be in his office and hear those stories that he came through obstacles as well.

**Pasteur:** When a senior presents on symposium day, you don't see the rough parts along the way. I want to be intentional about sharing my past struggles and failures with students. To be honest about those struggles and say, "Maybe it's different for everybody, but on some level, I've been there too, and I know other students that have been where you are, and now they're flourishing." Being able to share that kind of story is important. It's so much fun to see the students come through the other side of that.

# Why Wooster

WITH **MAKIBA FOSTER**  
LIBRARIAN OF THE COLLEGE

**Makiba Foster became the new librarian of the College in July and has been enjoying the community's love of learning and welcoming attitude.**

Foster holds three degrees from the University of Alabama, including a bachelor's degree in history, master's degree in American Studies with a concentration in African American Popular Culture, and a master's degree in library and information studies. Before coming to Wooster, she led the African American Research Library and Cultural Center in Broward County, Florida and worked on a project called Archiving the Black Web. She was also previously the assistant chief librarian at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at New York Public Library and a curator of oral history and subject liaison for American history, women, gender, & sexuality studies, and sociology at the Olin Library at Washington University in St. Louis. She believes that her transformative library practices will have a home in Wooster's open-minded, collaborative atmosphere.



## What drew you to Wooster and why has it been a good fit so far?

What drew me to The College of Wooster was its emphasis on the discovery of new knowledge and exploration of original ideas. Professionally, my work is rooted in creating transformative practices for libraries and librarianship. Learning that The College of Wooster fosters a culture of innovative problem solving, experiential learning, and collaborative community for not only students but also faculty, I felt encouraged that my ideas had a safe space where they could grow and flourish.

## What excites you about the College?

I am excited to be a part of a dynamic learning environment. I look forward to the spring and experiencing the excitement of seniors turning in their Independent Study projects and also attending the research symposium.

## What do you enjoy or appreciate about the Wooster community?

The people! The genuine expressions of welcome from the numerous colleagues who stopped by to say hello, some even bearing handpicked garden flowers! Included in this group is the talented Libraries' staff of knowledgeable experts that I enjoy working with and learning from every day.

## Word from Wooster

**“I’m honored and thrilled to be chosen as the next president of The College of Wooster.”**

—Future President Anne McCall was quoted in an article in *Diverse Issues in Higher Education* about her appointment.

**“We’re measuring the distance between damaged trees to measure density, and we’re looking at root balls, those trees that were uprooted. There are all kinds of micro habitats that can grow there. We’re looking at how those grow and succession around root balls.”**

—Jennifer Ison, associate professor of biology, spoke with Wooster’s *The Daily Record* about her *Population and Community Ecology* class’s work with Wooster Memorial Park to manage storm damage.

↓ Matt Pardi ’23 and Christine Johnston ’23 pour a mixture of mustard powder and water on a test area at the Wooster Memorial Park. PHOTO COURTESY OF THE DAILY RECORD



**“The media also has to be pushed to ask these tough questions. It seems like every big discussion is only about economics in a very narrow sense, where the environment suddenly is a big part of economic processes. ... There’s no economy without the environment.”**

—In an episode of *Our Culture*, a podcast about Ghana, Nii Nikoi, assistant professor of global media & digital studies, and Sefakor Agbesi, whose work focuses on energy, natural resources, and the environment, spoke about the impending climate crisis and its impact on Ghana as well as the need to encourage leaders to do better. The podcast is available on Spotify, RadioPublic, and other streaming platforms.



**“For those still in the United States, it was very difficult to celebrate. No matter where people were located during World War II, they were in survival mode.”**

—Pam Frese, professor of sociology and anthropology discussed holiday traditions during World War II in an article published by the *History Channel*.

**“In addition to a fresh, new space, the bookstore has been outfitted with modernized fixtures—which are also mobile—that add an exciting vibe to the interior.”**

—The November/December 2022 issue of *The College Store* magazine featured the new Robert C. Mayer Bookstore located on the lower level of Lowry Center in a two-page spread that showed off the bookstore’s new layout, displays, and merchandise.



## W WalletHub

**“Finding ways to build a younger and more diverse fan base, especially among Gen Z, will be crucial to baseball’s economic future.”**

—Drew Pasteur, professor of mathematics at Wooster, was featured on *WalletHub*, a personal finance website, ahead of Major League Baseball’s World Series between the Houston Astros and Philadelphia Phillies.

## COLLEGE NEWS

### HHMI grants Wooster \$475,000 to support inclusive excellence in research mentoring in STEM

The College of Wooster has received a grant of \$475,000 from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute Inclusive Excellence 3 (IE3) initiative for work over the next six years on inclusive excellence in research mentoring in the science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields (STEM). The initiative challenged United States colleges and universities to sustainably build capacity for student belonging, especially for those who have been historically excluded from the sciences. The Institute announced in November that 104 colleges and universities received grants through the IE3 initiative to continue their critical work to build capacity for inclusion of all students in science.

Wooster is part of a Learning Community Cluster collaborating with 14 other institutions of various sizes from around the country. The institutions will craft professional development resources and opportunities for faculty and staff that address effective inclusive teaching and evaluate those techniques in the rewards system including faculty promotion and tenure. At Wooster, the grant will support faculty learning communities on inclusive research mentoring.

“Mentored research is a key component of a Wooster education, however many faculty do not receive formal training in the skills of mentoring in general and inclusive mentoring in particular,” said Laura Sirot, professor of biology who served as lead applicant on the grant. “We hope that the work we do through the use of this grant will help to improve the research mentoring skills of Wooster faculty and thus the feeling of community, inclusion, and belonging for our students.”

Sirot along with co-leaders at Wooster Amy Jo Stavnezer, professor of neuroscience, Karl Feierabend, associate professor of chemistry, Meagen Pollock, professor of earth sciences, and Missy Schen, director of educational assessment, will develop a plan for the first Faculty Learning Community (FLC) that will run in the fall of 2023 on inclusive research mentoring. The grant will support the development of the FLCs, their implementation and participation, mini grants for participants, assessment of inclusive research mentoring, attendance at workshops and conferences, visits by experts, and collaboration with the other 14 institutions. The FLCs will run each fall for four years and will include 10 faculty members each time it runs. Participants in the program will drive the work of each community through sharing, reflecting, discussing, creating, and experimenting, in a way that is responsive to the needs and goals of the group.

“Each FLC will be unique, but the common goal is to build a safe and supportive community where faculty can learn and grow as inclusive mentors,” said Pollock, co-director of the program who will run the first FLC in fall 2023 along with Stephanie Strand, associate professor of biology and biochemistry and molecular biology. “We’ll meet faculty where they are and work on the things they need most,” Pollock added. “We expect the first FLC to focus on communication: how to have difficult conversations, talk across differences, give and receive feedback, and build trust in relationships. We want our participants to say, ‘Wow, that was so worthwhile and valuable. It changed the way I mentor.’”



### WOOSTER’S CAMPUS ENGAGES IN COLLABORATIVE PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Throughout the 2022-2023 academic year, members of the faculty and staff have been engaged in a five-pronged budget realignment process to position the College better financially, led by Interim President Wayne Webster and his administrative team with significant input from Wooster’s Strategic Priorities and Planning Action Committee (SPPAC) and other venues for faculty and staff input.

This process, conducted over the course of three years, seeks to reduce costs and create new revenues by better utilizing campus in the summer months, evaluating vacant staff lines every quarter, conducting program reviews of administrative departments and the academic program, and reviewing the faculty leaves program and the number of faculty visitors needed annually.

Staff have begun to look at ways to better align staffing and budget resources across divisions by improving efficiencies and reducing duplication of efforts. A faculty-elected task force comprised of seven faculty members from a cross-section of disciplines, with support from the provost and the dean for curriculum and academic engagement, was established at the end of 2022 and is now meeting regularly to review the academic program as part of a holistic practice to help Wooster recruit and retain students in this challenging higher education marketplace. Those faculty include Heather Fitz Gibbon, sociology and anthropology; Mareike Herrmann, German and Russian studies; Grit Herzmann, psychology; Susan Lehman, physics; Kara Morrow, art and art history; Jimmy Noriega, theatre and dance; Ibra Sene, history; Provost Lisa Perfetti, French and English, and Dean Jen Bowen, mathematics and computer science. The task force, in collaboration with the full faculty, administrators, and an external data partner, will make recommendations by Fall 2023 on programs to sustain, tweak, restructure, eliminate, reduce, grow, or possibly start.

Operational budget savings of approximately \$1.3 million have already been realized in the first six months of the academic year. Despite having to make difficult cuts to vacant staff positions, Wooster will continue to make investments in new positions, including donor-funded roles focused on campus sustainability and student retention.

## FULFILLING PROMISES

## Kendall-Rives Endowed Experiential Learning and Cultural Immersion Fund broadens study abroad opportunities

For first-generation students and students from limited-income households, study abroad can seem out of reach. The Kendall-Rives Endowed Experiential Learning and Cultural Immersion Fund, established by **Paul Kendall '64** and his wife, **Sharon Rives**, financially supports those students in their efforts to study abroad, which gives them the opportunity to deepen their major studies or Independent Study research, and provides a wider perspective of the world.

For Giuliana Morales '23, the fund allowed her to expand her experiences while studying abroad in Greece. "With the funding, I was able to volunteer with Médecins du Monde Greece to provide medical and other services to Ukrainian refugees who could not access healthcare services and care during the Ukrainian and Russian War that was happening during my stay in Greece," Morales said. "The funding allowed me to afford



the transportation that was needed to go to and from the headquarters safely."

While studying abroad in Stockholm, Sweden, another recipient, Megan Conklin '23, gained a sense of independence. "I learned that I can rely on myself. Having to make my own plans and navigate a country that speaks a language I don't isn't always easy, but I learned the value of planning ahead and that more often than not I can trust myself," she said.

Noah Leonard '23, who also received support from the fund in the past year, was able to stay in Argentina for three months after his program ended and work for a LGBTQ civil rights organization named 100% Diversidad y Derechos. It was while working on a research project for the organization that he determined his senior I.S. topic. "We were analyzing the demographics of transgender individuals who had experienced violence. The organization used the term 'travesticidio' which translates to 'transicide' to refer to extreme violence against trans individuals," Leonard explained. "As a political science and Spanish double major, I was immediately curious about this terminology and how it does not exist in English. My I.S. topic quickly became 'How do we make the most of an empowered term? and how do political actors shape language to provoke state response?'"

While Kendall was a student at Wooster in the early 1960s, he became involved in the civil rights movement and helped create the Abraham Lincoln Endowed Memorial Scholarship which enabled students who could not otherwise attend Wooster to do so. He has prioritized social justice efforts ever since.

Kendall and Rives wanted "to help the College expand its off-campus experiential and cultural offerings to those students who would otherwise not be able to benefit from them," Kendall said.



Giuliana Morales '23



Noah Leonard '23

"We believe that it should be a part of every Wooster student's college experience, especially for those who come from first-generation or limited-income families. The EL&CI Fund is our small contribution towards that goal."

A significant study abroad experience can help students figure out what they want to do for the rest of their lives. "Receiving this support aided me in solidifying my love for helping people in need. Being alone in a foreign country allowed me to create a new perspective of culture, society, and what I see myself doing in the future," Morales said.



Megan Conklin '23

# Tartan Ties

## Alumni Achievements

### '70s

**Julialynne Walker '71**, who has worked on addressing many of the barriers that have inhibited urban farming at the policy level convened the first-ever meeting of community gardeners from the near-east side of Columbus, Ohio, at the Franklin Park Conservatory in June. The gardeners discussed how they can combine their knowledge and person-power to expand the definition of what is possible for communities to achieve for themselves with regard to food sovereignty.

### '90s

**Jill Gregory '95** is the associate director of instructional technology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York City. She creates visual materials for academic purposes: journal articles, textbook chapters, and in-classroom, and online education. She also teaches classes and workshops in effective data visualization for medical and graduate students.

*Alumni updates and photos of weddings or encounters included in this issue were submitted online by Dec. 31, 2022, and edited for clarity, style, and length. Digital images of high resolution (files sized at least 1-3 MB) work best. Images that do not meet the quality standards necessary for printing cannot be included. More may be found online at [wooster.edu/classnotes](http://wooster.edu/classnotes).*

### '00s

**Nick Jones '05** has been named vice president of community wellness and will focus on the Columbus residents' health through the Healthy Neighborhoods, Healthy Families program. He will oversee community relations, social determinants of health, and social justice-related projects.

### '10s

**Kenny Libben '10** was recently elected to the board of the International Committee for Regional Museums.

**Gabe Wasylko '19** was named one of the "Most Interesting People of 2023" by Cleveland Magazine. Wasylko's breathtaking images of Cleveland's skyline have earned him more than 20,000 social media followers. He also works as Destination Cleveland's social media manager.



4



1

## Weddings

**1 Von Chorbajian '08** married his loving partner of twelve years Michael DiPietro in Narragansett, Rhode Island, on June 25, 2022. Chorbajian wrote, "We were delighted to have so many Wooster alumni in attendance to celebrate and are grateful for the many years of close friendship. Pictured are (back row) **Alana Cuellar '09** and her husband Paul Howe, **Paula Clark '08**, **Kate Blair '09** and her wife **Maureen Sill '10**, (front row) **Joe Besl '09**, **Laura Seaman '09**, and **Caitlin Fetters '09**. Also in attendance were **Julia Hendrickson '08** and her husband Anthony Creeden.

**2 Lizzi (Beal) Bramer '12** married Michael Bramer on June 25, 2022, in Louisville, Kentucky. Pictured are (back row) **Ron Beal '84**, **Liz Striegl '12**, **Devin Grandi '13**, **Zoë (Zwegat) Schmid '14**, (front row) **Kelley Johnson '13**, **Lizzi (Beal) Bramer '12**, **Liz (Crannell) Pratt '11**, and **Jordan Dieterle '13**.

**3 Andrew Collins '12** and **Tricia Hall '14** married on Sept. 10, 2022. Collins wrote, "We were married in a lovely ceremony in

Georgetown, Maine, surrounded by friends and family, including the Wooster alumni pictured: **Brett Hall '16**, **Joe Skonce '12**, **Katie (Heugel) Jankowski '12**, **Lauren (Klingshirm) Manella '14**, **Allison Chin '14**, **Jocelyn Lion '14**, **Devin Johns '14**, **Mac Collins '71**, and **Susan (Benson) Collins '72**."

**4 Emily Corwin '13** married Joseph Thornton on Oct. 15, 2022. Corwin wrote, "We married with friends and family in attendance in southern Michigan. Three of my bridesmaids, **Grace (Miller) Kramer**, **Keely Pearce**, and **Gwen (Symons) Coddington**, graduated with me in 2013 from Wooster. Pictured are **Meredith Eyre '13**, **Keely Pearce '13**, **Emily Corwin '13**, **Adrienne James '13**, **Grace (Miller) Kramer '13**, **Gwen (Symons) Coddington '13**, and **Matthew Germaine '15**."

**5 Alex Dereix '14** married **Dylan Jurcik '14** on June 4, 2022, surrounded by their friends and fellow Wooster alumni. Pictured are (back row) **David Hirsh '15**, **Audrey Kramer '14**, **Erica Rickey '14**, (middle row) **Anya Cohen '14**, **Gina Christo '14**, **Patrick McGowan '15**, **Eric Petry '15** (front row) **Hugh Reynolds '15**, **Allie Miraldi '15**, **Dylan Jurcik '14**, **Alex Dereix '14**, and **Kevin Dinh '14**.

UPCOMING EVENTS

I.S. MONDAY HAPPY HOURS

March 27, 2023

SCOTS CAREER ADVANTAGE: NEGOTIATION WITH LESS STRESS AND MORE SUCCESS

April 12, 2023 | 1-2 p.m. (ET)

ALUMNI WEEKEND 2022

June 8-11, 2023

Register to attend and find out all the latest event information [wooster.edu/alumni](http://wooster.edu/alumni).

Weddings

**6 Eric Petry '14** married Rachel Meyer on Sept. 24, 2022, in Columbus, Ohio. Pictured are (front row) **Gina Christo '14, Erica Rickey '14**, (middle row) **Alex Dereix '14, Oliver Paul '14**, (back row) **Dylan Jurcik '14, Rachel Meyer, Eric Petry '14, Ian Wilson '14, and Ryan Snyder '14**.

**7 Charlotte Tierney '16** married Connor Burnard on April 2, 2022, in Nashville, Tennessee surrounded by their Wooster family. Pictured are (back row) **Kathleen Hogg '16, Spencer Zeigler, Emily Hrovat '16, Shannan Burrows '17, Fox Dickey '16, Dan Ludin '17, Jen Whitehall '18, Whitney Spaulding '16, Gina Malfatti Brennan '17**, (front row) **James May '16, Leah Zavaleta '16, Maddy Baker '16, Sarah Van Oss '16, Gillian Spangler '16** (on Sarah's phone), **Tori Horvath '16, Connor Burnard, Charlotte Tierney '16, Madeline Horvat '17, Riley Bundren '14, Jo Turner '14, Levi Fawcett '15**.



**8 Allie Elchert '17** married Tanner Fisher on Sept. 3, 2022, at the Brengman Brothers Winery in Traverse City, Michigan. Elchert wrote, "Many of our friends from Wooster were in attendance! Two of my bridesmaids, Clara Deck and Abbey Partika, graduated with me in 2017. Pictured are (back row) **Warren Lewis '17, Fritz Schoenfeld '17, Giancarlo Stefanutti '17, Garret Hodos '17**, (front row) **Jack Berthiaume '17, Elena Soyer '17, Lucy Heller '17,**

**Abbey Partika '17, Tanner Fisher, Allie Elchert '17, Clara Deck '17, Lia Adams, Grace Gamble '17, Sophie Nathanson '17.**"

**9 Adam Clark '20** married **Taylor Wood '20** on Oct. 15, 2022, in Greenville, Pennsylvania. Many Wooster alumni were in attendance. Pictured: **Jake Cohen '21, Justin Robinson '20, Adam Clark '20 and Taylor (Wood) Clark '20, Seth Green '20, Morgan Barnett '21, Kate O'Doherty '21, and Nick Straughsbauh '20.**

READERSHIP SURVEY: What do you think of Wooster magazine?

As Wooster magazine continues to evolve based on feedback from our readers and the strategic goals of the College, we invite you to share your thoughts. Complete our anonymous survey online at [bit.ly/Wooster-RS-23](http://bit.ly/Wooster-RS-23).

ALUMNI PROFILE

Jeffrey Janus '15 credits Wooster education to success in Vienna

BY ELEANOR LINAFELT

**J**effrey Janus '15, who was a German studies major and now lives, works, and studies in Vienna, Austria, began studying German at Wooster by chance. While registering for classes during Academic Registration and Creative Horizons (ARCH) prior to his first semester, Janus was trying to decide on a final class to sign up for. Professor of German studies Beth Ann Muellner was his ARCH advisor and encouraged him to take *Beginning German Level 1*.

"After completing my first semester of German with Professor Mareike Herrmann, I fell in love with the program and declared my major in German Studies," Janus said.

After graduating from Wooster and briefly working in luxury retail, Janus moved to Austria to be a United States Teaching Assistant, a program facilitated by Fulbright Austria and the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education. He taught at a technical college and high school for fashion and art. "I fell in love with Vienna, Austrian culture, and the European way of life," Janus said.

"I wasn't ready for my chapter in Austria to end so I decided to apply to graduate school in Vienna."

Janus is pursuing a master's degree in gender studies at the

University of Vienna with the hopes of working in higher education diversity and inclusion, international education, or at a non-governmental organization. He enjoys the multi-disciplinary nature of his graduate school program and the chance to read literature in both German and English. He also tutors and teaches English on a freelance basis.

**"Had I not gone to Wooster, I would not be living in Vienna now. My most important take-away from Wooster is that you can do anything you put your mind to."**

—JEFFREY JANUS '15

In addition to studying German at Wooster, Janus worked as a Global Envoy in the Off-Campus Studies office, lived in the German Suite in Luce Hall, and studied abroad in Freiburg, Germany. "Had I not gone to Wooster, I would not be living in Vienna now," Janus said. "My most important take-away from Wooster is that you can do anything you put your mind to. The fact that I could start German from scratch and write my senior Independent Study in German is incredible."

Janus said that the smaller size of Wooster's German department benefited him. "The attention and individualization I received throughout my studies undoubtedly helped me thrive academically," he said. "I feel very fortunate to be using what I learned from my major in my daily personal, professional, and academic life."



## ALUMNI PROFILE

## Elena Mityushina '08 shares culture and connections with fellow alumni

During the first year of the pandemic, while working full-time as a customer success manager at an education technology company, pursuing an MBA at the University of St. Thomas, and raising two young children, Elena Mityushina '08 also cooked over 400 new recipes at home. Mityushina, who grew up in Russia and spent her high school years in the United States before coming to The College of Wooster, realized that she had many of the skills needed to open a Russian/Siberian restaurant. "I really like sharing Russian culture, I've been doing my MBA and have been in sales for eight years, and I know how to interact with customers," she said. In her job at Newsela, an instructional content platform, Mityushina works with school districts to maximize their use of the curricular products and instructional tools that the company sells.

**"I always reach out to people, and they're doing amazing things. We exchange ideas and inspire each other."**

—ELENA MITYUSHINA '08

Mityushina searched the Fighting Scots Career Connections database to find fellow Wooster alumni to ask for advice in the food service and restaurant industry. She connected with Jonathan Webster '05, vice president of Aramark, an international food service provider, and asked if he would mentor her. Though they did not know each other at Wooster, he set up several meetings, connected her with others, and provided helpful documents over several months.

Mityushina first discovered her love for connecting people through food when she was part of the Ambassadors Program at the College, which gives international students the chance to share their culture with the greater Wooster community. "I gave presentations to the local community,

and I sometimes cooked. I always liked bringing people together over food and culture," she said.

When the University of St. Thomas announced a business plan competition last December, Mityushina spent three weeks putting together a 20-page plan for her restaurant. She worked with a graphic designer in Russia to design a logo, created a menu, and calculated expenses. She won second place in the competition and \$5,000 to launch her restaurant. But when Russia invaded Ukraine on Feb. 24 and the war broke out, she immediately had to shift her focus.

Mityushina had family members in Ukraine, Russia, and Belarus, all of whom were affected by the war. She has spent months helping the Ukrainian part of her family move to Canada, mourning the stories she was hearing from the war, and helping settle Ukrainian refugees where she lives in Minnesota, an effort for which she recently received a Rotary Club Annual Community Service award. With her energy elsewhere, the restaurant idea is now on pause.

"If I do something in life it has to be out of inspiration. Starting the restaurant doesn't feel right with all the suffering going on," she said. "I'm following my intuition and just concentrating on my family right now, my MBA, and helping refugees." However, Mityushina has a wealth of knowledge from her MBA classes and meetings with Webster to make it possible to return to her restaurant idea when she is ready. She thinks it would look a little different and is considering including Ukrainian culture.

In the meantime, Mityushina remains connected to a strong network of Wooster alumni whom she is constantly motivated by. "I always reach out to people, and they're doing amazing things," she said. "We exchange ideas and inspire each other. All those people are a constant presence in my life."



11



### Connect with a mentor!

Find Wooster alumni in your field who can act as mentors and connect you with opportunities in your industry. Fighting Scots Career Connections provides you with an opportunity to connect with alumni in a variety of career fields, industries, companies, geographic locations, and more.

Sign up in just a few minutes here: [wooster.edu/alumni/career](https://wooster.edu/alumni/career).

↓ Mityushina visited Mt. Rainier National Park in Washington last fall with her children.



8



12



10

## Wooster Encounters

**10** These graduates independently found their way to OceanView retirement community in Falmouth, Maine and grouped up when they learned of each other's Wooster backgrounds. In early October, they hosted Quin Brunner, assistant director of annual giving at Wooster, for a lovely breakfast of reminiscing. Pictured are **Quin Brunner, Alice Bredenberg '59, Carolyn Jenks '60, Stephen Jenks '61, Lyall Rogers '58, Judy Hyde '59**. Also at OceanView but not pictured is **Dick Hyde '57**.

**11** **Julie Haines '16** wrote, "Had a wonderful trip to Wooster, perfect October gorgeous day on the steps of the Gault Alumni House!"

**12** **Shiwani Varal '18** wrote, "I had a post-pandemic Wooster reunion with my host family (Friends of International Students) in the UK. This is their second visit to the UK. My host mom, Mary Stockton, and my host sister, Elizabeth Perkins, came to visit me in England; we spent ten days exploring New Quay (the southwest coastal city of England). My host sister Elizabeth is currently studying abroad at Goldsmiths University in London."



Read more class notes online at [wooster.edu/classnotes](https://wooster.edu/classnotes)

## YOUNG ALUMNI DONOR

## Patrick Lai-Fang '13 supports lives of learning



Patrick Lai-Fang '13 is an application support engineer at a tech company, where he continues to live by a mindset that guided him through his time at The College of Wooster: "Learning is life and life is learning." Wooster taught him to constantly be open to learning something new, which he says he continues to do on a daily basis with his employees and clients. A major in physics and religious studies, Lai-Fang found value both in academics and extracurriculars at Wooster, where he helped to co-found the student organization Brothers of Diversity. He has chosen to support financial aid and student life in order to help current and future students comfortably enjoy the things that he loved about the College.

**Q: What inspires you to give to the College of Wooster?**

**Lai-Fang:** I grew up on the saying, "It takes a village to raise a child" and Wooster was a huge part of my village. My transition from child to young adult took place at Wooster. I want the students after me to have better experiences and opportunities during their transition. I want every student at Wooster to be able to find their own version of the greatness that I found in the College as a whole.

**Q: How did Wooster prepare you for the work that you are doing now?**

**Lai-Fang:** The first class I took as a physics major was an Introductory Computer Science course. While in this class, I realized I was really interested in computer science and software development. I didn't fully pick up on this until after I graduated, but this class laid the foundation. Another way Wooster prepared me for the corporate workspace in general was the diversity I was introduced to in terms of people, their views, and their lifestyles. In corporate America, I work with many different people of diverse backgrounds yet always feel prepared for any situation because of my experience at Wooster.

**Q: What does it mean to you to be an involved member of the Wooster community?**

**Lai-Fang:** Being an involved member of the Wooster community means I can build a bridge between my generation and the generations after me. As the student leader of Brothers of Diversity, one of my jobs was to assist in making my fellow students' campus life a comfortable and enjoyable experience. As an alumnus, I want to continue to put effort into making financial aid and campus life an easy-going experience.

# Graham Rayman '88 tackles the history of Rikers Island in new book

BY ANNA WHITING '26



**G**raham Rayman '88 has a career in journalism that spans over 30 years, a career that began as a journalist for *The Wooster Voice*. The College of Wooster's student newspaper. As a staff writer and investigative journalist for the *New York Daily News*, Rayman reports on criminal justice and policing in New York City. His new book, *Rikers: An Oral History* (Random House, 2023), written along with co-author Reuven Blau, takes readers through the history of Rikers Island, New York City's largest correctional facility.

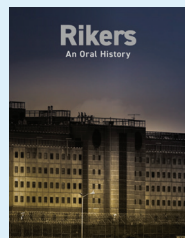
Jails, like Rikers, hold people as they either await trial or serve short sentences for minor crimes. But, as Rayman says, the impact of that time spent in jail can be lifelong. "If you serve time at Rikers, you're never going to forget it," he remarked. Rayman and Blau worked to center the voices of those most impacted by Rikers Island and the New York Department of Corrections. They interviewed over 130 people, ranging from incarcerated people and their relatives to officers, lawyers, and commissioners, with stories spanning from the 1970s to the present day. Their stories give audiences a personal view of life on Rikers Island.

For Rayman, his passion for journalism began as a student at Wooster. As a political

science major, Rayman learned the research skills necessary for his career. Wooster's liberal arts curriculum offered him the opportunity to take classes in journalism and communication studies as well—he calls a journalism class he took with Ray McCall, professor of English, "perhaps the most influential class I took at Wooster." As a writer and editor for *The Wooster Voice*, he got a valuable chance to apply these skills in journalism even as an undergraduate.

"I really got to explore what I was interested in. I'm incredibly grateful that Wooster took a chance on me," he said.

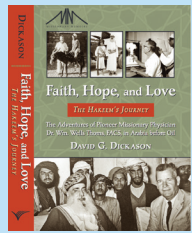
Rayman urges readers to consider *Rikers: An Oral History* as the story of not just one specific jail complex in New York City, but also to think about it within the context of a larger conversation on jails and policing. This book asks readers to consider what role they believe jails should play: a center of rehabilitation or a center of punishment. "Should jails be grim, violent, traumatizing places, as the book portrays Rikers, or places where there's hope and space to learn and grow? We want people to consider what they believe and what they want from jails in their own communities," Rayman explained.



**GRAHAM RAYMAN '88**  
*Rikers: An Oral History*  
Random House, 2023

Award-winning journalists examine Rikers Island and the New York City jail system through the voices of people incarcerated there, who worked there, and otherwise had a connection to it, with stories spanning from the 1970s to the present day.

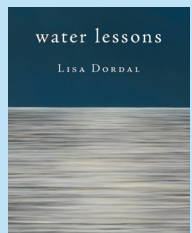
## RECENT ALUMNI BOOKS



**DAVID DICKASON '60**  
*Faith, Hope, and Love: The Hakeem's Journey*  
Van Raalte Press, 2022

This creative non-fiction biography recounts the life of

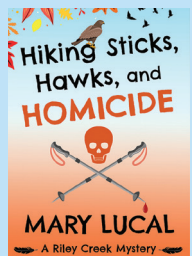
Arabia's first eye specialist in the age before oil, wonder drugs, and microsurgery.



**LISA DORDAL '86**  
*Water Lessons*  
Black Lawrence Press, 2022

Against the backdrop of personal griefs, the speaker in this book of poetry scrutinizes

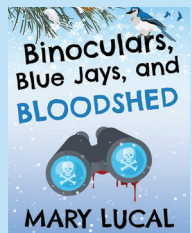
the patriarchal underpinnings of the world she grew up in as well as her complicity in systemic racism as a white girl growing up in the 70s and 80s.



**MARY LUCAL '92**  
*Hiking Sticks, Hawks, and Homicide*  
Independently published, 2022

In the first book of a new mystery series, main character Martha Sloane moves to Riley

Creek, Tennessee, after the death of her beloved aunt, but soon gets caught up in a web of deceit and betrayal when a body is discovered on her aunt's property.



*Binoculars, Blue Jays, and Bloodshed*  
Independently published, 2022

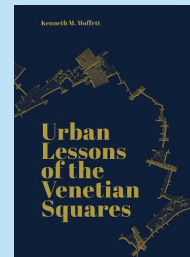
In the second book of the *Riley Creek Mystery* series, protagonist Martha Sloane has

relocated from Boston to out-of-the-way Riley Creek, Tennessee, to take over her beloved aunt's struggling coffee and birding shop when a blizzard blows in, the power goes out, and a dead body shows up.



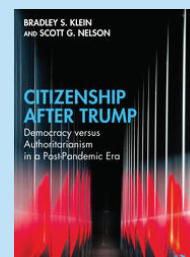
**KENNETH MOFFETT '66**  
*Architecture's New Strangeness: A 21st Century Cult of Peculiarity*  
ORO Editions, 2022

This book arose from two observations: that building design in these first decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has come to accept and pursue some increasingly odd and disturbing trends and that there seems to be insufficient architectural criticism that calls these trends to account.



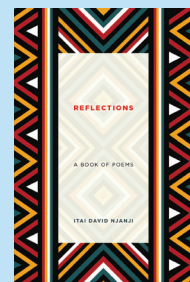
*Urban Lessons of Venetian Squares*  
ORO Editions, 2022

This book on architecture analyzes the urban squares of Venice, then examines a wide variety of modern-day urban spaces in America to determine which are being emulated today.



**SCOTT NELSON '91**  
*Citizenship after Trump: Democracy versus Authoritarianism in a Post-Pandemic Era*  
Routledge, 2022

Political theorists explore the meaning of community in the context of intense political polarization, the surge of far-right nationalism, and deepening divisions during the coronavirus pandemic.



**ITAI DAVID NJANJI '11**  
*Reflections: A Book of Poems*  
Independently Published, 2022

This poetic memoir is a tale of resilience, perseverance, and unexpected success that takes the reader along on Njanji's journey growing up in Africa, losing his parents, winning a cricket scholarship, and migrating to America.



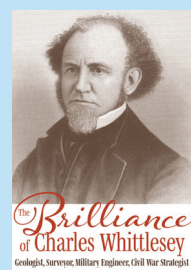
Email [wooster\\_magazine@wooster.edu](mailto:wooster_magazine@wooster.edu) to share your book!



**MEREDITH SPITZMILLER '96**  
*The Fair Oaks Four*  
Independently Published, 2022

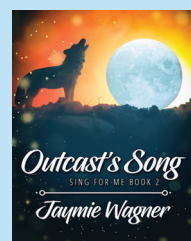
In this book of fiction, Astrid, Grace, Kana, and Madison are fabulous women with nothing in common. When they're brought together by a school committee, they

discover that their differences unite them and will help them survive. *The Fair Oaks Four* is published under the pen name Mere Walton.



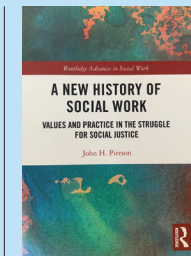
**STANLEY TOTTEN '58**  
*The Brilliance of Charles Whittlesey*  
Kent State University Press, 2022

In the first full-length biography of Charles Whittlesey (1808-1886), geologist Stanley Totten explores the life, accomplishments, and hardships of an influential geologist, surveyor, military engineer, and Civil War strategist.



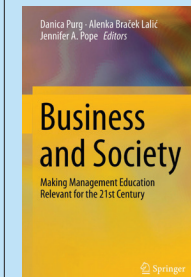
**JAYMIE WAGNER '03**  
*Outcast's Song: Song for Me Book 2*  
JMS Books LLC, 2022

Continuing from the events of *Orphan's Cry*, *Outcast's Song* focuses on the exiled werewolf Amelie, who has been living on the fringes of Werewolf society for more than fifty years.



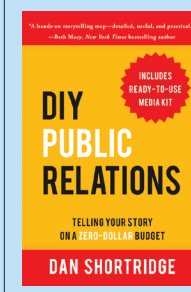
**JOHN PIERSON '66**  
*A New History of Social Work: Values and practice in the struggle for social justice*  
Routledge, 2022

From social work's beginnings in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day, this work recounts efforts to create a fairer, socially just society through work with individuals and families.



**JENNIFER POPE '91**  
*Business and Society: Making Management Education Relevant for the 21st Century*  
Springer International, 2018

Based on an extensive research study of 11 different countries, business experts explore the specific needs of businesses in emerging economies and how management education institutions can collaborate with these businesses.



**DAN SHORTRIDGE '02**  
*DIY Public Relations*  
Quill Driver Books, 2022

In this hands-on, practical guide to local public relations strategies and tactics, the authors advise small businesses, nonprofits, and schools on how to succeed without communications staff or expensive public relations consultants.

## Alumni Weekend June 8-11

Join us for a celebration with your fellow alumni. See how campus has changed since your time at Wooster, reunite with classmates, and be part of the Parade of Classes.

Registration will open in March at [WOOSTER.EDU/ALUMNI](http://WOOSTER.EDU/ALUMNI).

## In Memoriam

Since the last issue, the Office of Alumni and Family Engagement became aware of the deaths of the following alumni by Dec. 31, 2022. Contact [alumni@wooster.edu](mailto:alumni@wooster.edu) with information about the deaths of alumni or for more information. View alumni obituaries at [wooster.edu/classnotes](http://wooster.edu/classnotes).

'45, **Kathryn (Hauenstein) Gray**, Dec. 23, 2022, Wooster, OH

'45, **Lois M. (Hayenga) Lawson**, Dec. 1, 2022, Niles, MI

'45, **Donald C. Zavala**, Sept. 21, 2022, Myrells Inlet, SC

'47, **Arthur R. Griffin**, Oct. 5, 2022, Austin, TX

'48, **Duncan C. McCune**, Dec. 15, 2022, Holland, MI

'48, **Margaret J. (Hagen) Wilburn**, Oct. 27, 2022, Murrells Inlet, SC

'49, **Dorothy I. (Kempner) Martin**, Nov. 2, 2022, Baldwin, NY

'50, **Ruthanne (Cooper) Love**, Oct. 19, 2022, Guthrie, OK

'50, **David Poling**, July 26, 2022, Albuquerque, NM

'51, **Harriet A. (Hall) Deer**, Dec. 29, 2022, Tampa, FL

'51, **Charlotte (Fraser) Shipley**, Oct. 20, 2022, Hendersonville, NC

'51, **Stanford K. Siders**, Oct. 23, 2022, Dalton, OH

'52, **Ann (Strouse) Fox**, Oct. 6, 2022, Granville, OH

'52, **Beverly Jane (West) Oberlin**, Sept. 8, 2022, Massillon, OH

'53, **Ronald E. Austin**, Dec. 28, 2022, Chelsea, MI

'53, **D. Roger Erickson**, Oct. 16, 2021, Myrtle Beach, SC

'53, **John A. Fitch**, Sept. 8, 2022, Tupper Lake, NY

'54, **Marilyn (Price) Combs**, Nov. 8, 2022, Beverly, OH

'54, **M. Elaine (Egger) Hand**, Dec. 7, 2022, Millersburg, OH

'54, **Richard E. Simmons**, Aug. 6, 2021, Clifton, VA

'54, **Thomas F. Wise**, Feb. 22, 2022, Cincinnati, OH

'55, **Carol A. (Narrance) Bowman**, April 16, 2022, Beulah, MI

'55, **H. Robert Gerberich Jr.**, Nov. 29, 2022, Corpus Christi, TX

'55, **Ellyn Palmer Jones**, Dec. 14, 2022, Victor, MT

'55, **Folkert H. Kadyk**, Nov. 9, 2022, Honey Brook, PA

'56, **John C. Ballantyne**, April 11, 2022, Ringgold, GA

'56, **Robalee (Burns) Dinopoulos**, Dec. 10, 2022, Struthers, OH

'56, **Jacqueline (Straub) McMakin**, Oct. 2, 2022, Shelburne, VT

'56, **Sally L. (Roberts) Schroeder**, Feb. 21, 2022, Sacramento, CA

'56, **Marian A. Tignor**, Dec. 15, 2022, Princeton, NJ

'57, **Thomas Hill Jr.**, Dec. 26, 2021, Sacramento, CA

'57, **Robert Cameron Mitchell**, Nov. 5, 2022, Cambridge, MA

'57, **Jack H. Scaff Jr.**, Sept. 26, 2022, Honolulu, HI

'57, **Margaret (Williams) Stoops**, Dec. 17, 2022, Shawnee, OK

'57, **James W. G. Watson**, June 5, 2022, Westlake, OH

'57, **Robert L. Yoder**, Nov. 4, 2022, Scottsdale, AZ

'58, **H. Charles Kayser III**, Dec. 6, 2022, Richland, WA

'59, **Frederick R. Nobbs Jr.**, Oct. 14, 2022, Doylestown, PA

'60, **Bruce R. Wenner**, Oct. 27, 2022, Overland Park, KS

'61, **H. Christopher Day**, Sept. 19, 2022, Newton, NJ

'62, **David L. Dalrymple**, Dec. 11, 2022, Fredericktown, OH

'62, **Richard F. Werling**, April 19, 2022, Livingston, TX

'63, **Ralph E. Parker**, Aug. 5, 2022, Rocky River, OH

'64, **Shirley J. Wright**, Oct. 9, 2022, Rehoboth, MA

'65, **Robert O. Brown**, Nov. 29, 2022, Harbor Springs, MI

'65, **Beecher H. Hemmett**, Dec. 3, 2022, Charleston, IL

'65, **Joanna G. (Doob) Nickerson**, Oct. 18, 2022, Bedford, MA

'65, **Anne (Whitacre) Shabel**, Aug. 2, 2022, Oceanside, CA

'66, **James R. Bailey**, Aug. 24, 2022, Forest, VA

'68, **A. Steven Graff**, Sept. 17, 2022, Falls Church, VA

'68, **Greg E. Steele**, Nov. 4, 2022, Columbus, OH

'69, **Judith (Simkins) Haines**, Nov. 24, 2022, Frederick, MD

'69, **Jay A. Sherwood**, Oct. 7, 2022, Burnaby, BC

'71, **Robert L. Brashear**, Aug. 24, 2022, New York, NY

'71, **Petra (Kuchinsky) Martin**, Nov. 10, 2022, Hamburg, PA

'72, **Gary R. Manning**, Nov. 5, 2022, Ellensburg, WA

'74, **John F. Campbell**, Oct. 15, 2022, Lake Oswego, OR

'74, **Melinda J. (Reed) Hoppe**, June 24, 2022, Plainsboro, NJ

'75, **Barry W. Roop**, Oct. 12, 2022, Ambler, PA

'75, **Barbara Ann Stoops**, Jan. 31, 2022, Concord Township, OH

'76, **Suzanne (McMillen) Goerger**, Oct. 4, 2022, Chapel Hill, NC

'76, **Gordon L. Neale**, Oct. 20, 2022, Brevard, NC

'77, **Bradley D. Pearson**, Sept. 22, 2022, Palm Bay, FL

'78, **Susan Marian Roberts**, Aug. 18, 2022, Portland, OR

'79, **Miriam L. (Crissey) Dewitt**, Dec. 9, 2022, Millersburg, OH

'80, **Douglas C. Myers**, Sept. 19, 2022, Wooster, OH

'90, **Jennifer J. (Dunn) Quick**, Sept. 14, 2022, Rochester, MN

'93, **Karl G. See**, Sept. 9, 2022, Duxbury, MA

'15, **John F. Manion**, May 11, 2022, Fitchburg, WI

### FACULTY & STAFF

**Damon Hickey**, Dec. 26, 2022, Wooster, OH

Hickey served the College for 17 years as director of libraries. He shepherded the College through the renovation of Andrews Library and expansion to adjoin the Flo K. Gault Library for Independent Study and later the renovation of Frick Hall to become the Timken Science Library in Frick Hall. He oversaw the development of the Special Collections department. In his 17 years in the role, he saw the transformation from a card catalog to a fully online catalog. He was one of the founders of the Five Colleges of Ohio Consortium in 1996, expanding the libraries resources to those of similar liberal arts colleges in Ohio. Hickey and his wife, Mary, established the Damon D. and Mary T. Hickey Endowed Library Prize and the Damon and Mary Hickey Endowed Emergency Scholarship Fund.

**Claude Hinton**, Sept. 21, 2022, Wilmington, NC

Hinton began his service to the College in 1968 when he was appointed Mateer Professor of Biology. He began his career in 1955 as a member of the zoology faculty at the University of Georgia and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. His research focused on genetics and his interests took him to Canberra, Australia, Southern California, and North Carolina. He was a fellow with the American Association for the Advancement of Science. He was also a member of the Genetics Society of America, Society of America Naturalists, and the American Genetic Association.

## Q & A

In the midst of a blustery winter this season, we asked you to share some of your favorite winter Wooster memories. Thank you to all those who shared their experiences! Read some of our favorite responses below and participate in the prompt for the next issue.

### What's your favorite winter memory at Wooster?

"One Sunday walking back to our dorm from lunch it was snowing. My roommate, Jan Bayer had a fur muff. We stopped and others joined us as we looked at each snowflake as it hit her muff. All of us marveled at the beauty and difference each flake showed. This was probably the winter of 1954 or 1955."  
—Charlotte Wiegand Kibler '56

"In the winter of 1973, Wooster hosted the Women's National Volleyball Tournament (all divisions) on campus over the December break. I was a junior at the time and stayed during the winter break to be a line judge. Teams came in from all over the country, and I particularly remember the California and Texas teams in their colorful uniform shorts and tops. A few days into the tournament, it began to snow, and the teams from those areas were so excited. It was the first time for many of them to have ever experienced snow in person."  
—Brenda L. Meese '75

"It was when I first got my 35mm film camera in the second half of my sophomore year. I took pictures around campus during the winter and this picture I took of the arch (which is one of my favorite pictures I've taken of all time) was one of my core winter memories. It was around February 2022; the snow we had piled up to fill the arch was kept at the side."  
—Safal Shrestha '24

"Last year was my first winter in a cold climate, and I didn't leave my room as much as I should, so a lot of the days blurred together. What I remember best, then, is willing myself to trudge through the snow every night to go to Common Grounds. Coming in from the cold to that warm, inviting atmosphere is my favorite part of winter at Wooster."  
—Izzie Corley '25

### FOR THE NEXT ISSUE:

This issue catches you as students are in the middle of their spring semester. When you look back at courses you took at Wooster from your major or outside it, we want to hear from you about what you remember most. We'll share some responses in an upcoming issue.

**Q. What was your favorite class at Wooster and why?**

Respond at [bit.ly/woospring23](https://bit.ly/woospring23) or point your phone's camera at this QR code to share your experience.





## Global Changemakers

After they leave The College of Wooster, graduates take their liberal arts education into their communities around the world. No matter their field of study, they learn to listen to diverse perspectives and develop innovative solutions to address problems. Inside, read about alumni living all over the globe and influencing change in their communities and beyond, including **John Carwile '81**, career member of the U.S. Foreign Service (left); **Rashmi Ekka '08**, international development consultant; **Samira El-Adawy '13**, Special Olympics youth manager in the Middle East and North Africa (below); **Ishtiaq Ghafoor '00**, a diplomat with the British Foreign Service; **Sarah Haile '03**, a biostatistician at University of Zurich; **Kurt Russell '94**, National Teacher of the Year (lower far left); and **Lauren Vargo '13**, climate change researcher in New Zealand.

