



# LuxEsto®

SPRING 2017

**Home Journeys**  
Malikah Mahone '17



04



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28



32



## "MAYBE YOU'LL MEET SOME COUSINS"

A photo of the Great Mosque in Touba led LuxEsto to Senior Malikah Mahone's story. The photo, taken by Emily Dayton '08 in 2007, when she was studying abroad in Senegal, hangs in Mandelle Hall. Malikah saw it one day and exclaimed, "My family's Mosque!" Well, we had to hear about that story. Story on page 14.

# More in Four. More in a Lifetime.<sup>®</sup>

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**LuxEsto** is based on  
the College's official motto,  
*Lux esto*, "be light."

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### WHAT'S HAPPENING ON CAMPUS?

Planning a visit to Kalamazoo College? Check the Kalamazoo College website for the latest information about campus events. Calendar listings are regularly updated at [kzoo.edu/news/calendar-of-events](http://kzoo.edu/news/calendar-of-events).

## Features

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At K "The Daily Show" correspondent Jordan Klepper majored in math with an unofficial minor (thanks to Monkapult) in audacity. It's resulted in an amazing career.

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This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. Fifty years ago one of its key figures visited campus and delivered a lecture to a standing-room-only crowd in Stetson Chapel.

## Dear Alumni, Families of Students, and Friends of Kalamazoo College:

One of K's most important ideals is its commitment to an education that looks outward. As a result, K students come to see individuals, cultures, communities and countries as interdependent. They also carry that commitment into their lives after graduation, and thus grows a strong and healthy sense of the close tie between social engagement and individual prosperity.

This ideal is important to the life and well-being of the world. Given recent movements around the globe—events and elections that bespeak a prevailing headwind of turning inward and categorizing an “us” by defining (and often vilifying) an “other”—it is a good time for K to reaffirm the value of educating global citizens.

The value of looking outward is inherent in the genome of the *K-Plan*, in its emphases on study abroad, study away, civic engagement, social justice and a diverse campus. I love this distinctively K approach, and I love its long history at the heart of a K education. Our curriculum’s outward look and our diverse campus complement one another and teach us to live together in a way that celebrates our differences and makes them a source for deeper scholarship and creativity. Though subject to struggle and discomfort on occasion, living together is vital because the opposite—living segregated from those deemed “other”—has fostered persistent injustices that lie at the root of our most urgent dilemmas.

Solutions for those pressing issues will arise from an education that combines a commitment to the liberal arts with a commitment to looking outward. That’s why K matters so much to the world now, when the zeitgeist questions the value and legitimacy of those commitments.

Many stories in this issue affirm our educational ideal of looking outward. Among them is our students’ work in the Young Adult Diversion Court, which is an alumna’s effort to change the school-to-prison pipeline. Senior Malikah Mahone’s study abroad expanded her family by a continent. That expansion was literal and dramatic in her case, but is symbolically apt for every K student. By affirming and preserving an education that values the outward look—even when the spirit of the times pushes against it—we stand for a social commitment vital for ourselves and for civilization.

*Lux esto, and Saludos,*



Jorge G. Gonzalez  
President

## Still Seeking the Nietzsche Question

by Will Dickson '09

Will Dickson '09 and his friend, Melissa Konen. At K Will majored in economics and business; he studied abroad in London, England. Will is the managing director of Finance Michigan, Inc.



2016 was a big year for Kalamazoo College. President Jorge Gonzalez was inaugurated, and he continues to draw rave reviews during his “listening tour” with alumni and friends. The new Fitness and Wellness Center opened on campus, and students have been flocking to use it. Externships, internships and career placement continue to expand. K is doing well, and much of its well-being is due to the giving of alumni and friends.

K offers many ways for alumni to stay involved. I’m now living in my fourth city since graduating from K, and I’ve attended memorable alumni events in each. Alumni events also offer professional benefits and the opportunity to meet new alums doing exciting things, from starting a brewery to opening an art studio. The events remind me that some of my deepest friendships began at K. I keep in touch with many classmates, and some of us take a trip together every year.

It seems fitting to support a place by paying forward its support of us. Alumni have the power to make the K experience more impactful, and we have several ways to do so. We can expand scholarship funding, help develop career preparedness, and deepen engagement with diversity, among other possibilities.

We all share an affinity for a liberal arts education. Its breadth better prepared us for life’s challenges, though insights into that value likely come after graduation. It’s been eight years since I graduated, and I’m still waiting for someone at work to ask me about Friedrich Nietzsche’s views on existentialism. Nonetheless, my liberal arts education has helped me with a varied career that I’m sure will stay fluid with constant challenges. Our education, in all its forms, is something worth protecting and strengthening. In a sense, when we support K we support ourselves.

An added bonus of the liberal arts education? I’m willing to bet that K graduates outperform peers during trivia nights hosted by local bars. Hmm...maybe there’s a potential SIP investigation there; I know I’m ready for a question about Nietzsche. ☺

# WHY iGIVE



“Our SIP was an example of how K allows a person to be audacious. It was one of the highlights of my K experience.”

# GETTING THE CHANCE AT AUDACITY

BY RANDALL SCHAU

For Jordan Klepper ’01, one of the first steps in his road to success was creating the opportunity to pursue it, once he figured out what “it” was.

What “it” turned out to be is comedy. After years of mainly doing improv, he’s now living in New York City working his dream job—serving as a “correspondent” on Comedy Central’s “The Daily Show.”

Klepper joined “The Daily Show” in 2014, when its host was Jon Stewart. After Stewart’s retirement in 2015, Trevor Noah assumed that role. Although ratings have since declined a bit, the show still attracts more than a million viewers per night.

“I absolutely love this job,” Klepper says. “I get to do so many things—write, perform, edit, argue, travel—and be around smart and funny people. And I like working in an office setting, with fairly regular hours and a community of people I see every day. I’ve never had that before.”

Creating the opportunity at K to pursue his then undetermined goal was the result of a decision Klepper made as a first-year student. Because he’d accepted a Heyl Scholarship, he was required to focus on either science or math. He chose math, in part because it would more easily allow him to pursue a double major.

“When I came to K I didn’t know what I wanted to do with my life. I was good at math but I could see my limitations.” With a smile he adds, “But back in high school, in my math classes, I was pretty funny. I could kill there. Of course, the pool there for comedy was small.”

Some early success at K doing improvisational comedy and a little acting on stage caused Klepper to think, “Yeah, I can do this!” That eventually prompted him to decide that his second major would be theatre arts.

The key to how things played out, Klepper believes, was just getting a chance.

“I had thought about going to the University of Michigan, but to do theatre there you need to be really good, which I absolutely wasn’t. Even at K I really had no business being on stage, but



Jordan Klepper on the set of "The Daily Show"



they let me try anyway and that was the important thing."

One of the activities he quickly came to love was K's improv group, Monkapult. "I really enjoyed doing that, getting instantaneous feedback.

"Ed Menta [the James A.B. Stone College Professor of Theatre Arts] and some of my other teachers were so supportive. I was kind of conservative in my outlook, but they encouraged me to branch out and let me explore."

Klepper's Senior Individualized Project (SIP) was one result of such encouragement. With two friends (Allen Krause and Jeff Lung) he wrote a sketch comedy show featuring oversized foam cowboy hats and giving the audience free pudding.

"We wanted to put on a show with a lot of gumption, even though I knew there was a chance it would fail. Our SIP was an example of how K allows a person to be audacious. It was one of the highlights of my K experience."

Menta laughs when reminded of the "pudding" show. "That was really very funny," he recalls with a smile. "Jordan was just an outstanding individual, very hard-working. There's no doubt Monkapult was important in his development. He was a captain and very active."

"Monkapult, which is entirely student driven, has been good for a lot of people," Menta adds. "K used to offer classes in improv, but we stopped largely because Monkapult had become so sophisticated that it does the training for us. A lot of the students who are in it now see Jordan as a model for what they want to do."

After graduating from K, Klepper moved to Chicago to pursue performing. Initially, however, that didn't pay the bills. Needing a day job, he became a substitute teacher.

"I got called into a middle school and taught for a few days. They concluded I wasn't a crazy person, so they had me come in pretty much every day for two years, teaching whatever they needed taught—art one day, history the next."

For a short time he worked at a Chicago law office doing odd jobs. He had considered becoming a lawyer while in high school (Kalamazoo Central), where he was active in its national championship mock trial team. He

came to realize, however, that most of what appealed to him about law was the theatrical nature of trial work. That being the case, he concluded, it made more sense to remain focused on theatrical opportunities.

One of those opportunities was provided by Chicago's Second City, an improvisational comedy enterprise.

"I've always loved improv. You might have a ton of doubt about what you're doing but you can't show it. You have to leap. And it is a team sport, so you're never out there alone. It offers a lot of life lessons, one being that you have to be open to others' ideas."

Klepper performed so well that Second City included him in a group that toured places like Vienna, Los Angeles and "Middle-Of-Nowhere," Arkansas. "That was when I started making a living performing, when it became a full time job."

More importantly, Second City is where he met Laura Grey. At first their relationship was solely professional. The two joined their talents to become "Klepper and Grey," doing various short films, including "Peepers" and "Engaged" (available on YouTube).

After Second City came a three-year stint working for the Big Ten Network, where he did a "hybrid" show, part comedy, part news.

"I'd go to college campuses and kind of ape 'The Daily Show,' doing bits with mascots or the diving team or anything involved in campus life. Other times I'd do serious interviews with people like Lloyd Carr [former head football coach at the University of Michigan] and Greta Van Susteren [commentator and news anchor]."

In 2010 he and Laura, by then a couple, moved to New York City, where he taught and performed at the Upright Citizen's Brigade, the East Coast's premier improv comedy theatre. In 2013 the two were married.

Klepper's work in New York came to the attention of "The Daily Show." In February of 2014, when one of its correspondents (John Oliver) left, the show called Klepper to audition.

"They had me come in on a Thursday," he recalls. "I was

asked to write something up, then perform with Jon to see how we interacted. Later that same day I got a call from them asking if I could start work the following Monday.

"I was actually on air that first day, 'reporting' from Crimea. When we were about to do it, to tape it, I turned to the stage manager and asked, 'If I mess this up we can do it again, right?'

"He said, 'Actually, Jon likes to get it right the first time.'

"I was overwhelmed. I should have been more scared than I was, but 14 years of doing improv helped."

One initial challenge for Klepper involved his wardrobe. "I was told I needed to wear a suit when I was on camera, but I only owned one at the time—the one I'd bought for my wedding."

Pointing to a small closet in the corner of his office he adds, "I have more now; I have options."

Producing enough material for a show that is 22 minutes long, four days a week, 42 weeks a year is a challenge.

"That's a lot of content. I certainly don't have boring days."

Klepper's appearances on "The Daily Show" typically have him acting like a somewhat buffoonish newsman. On some occasions that means being on stage with Trevor Noah, interacting with the host from the other side of a desk. Other times he's standing 20 feet off to the side, in front of a screen that provides a background to give the impression Klepper is 'reporting' from

I've always loved improv. You might have a ton of doubt about what you're doing but you can't show it. You have to leap."

some distant land.

A very different type of performance occurs when he does 'field pieces,' which are filmed off-site. During the presidential campaign, a common piece involved Klepper going to Trump rallies with a cameraman to interview supporters.

"We looked for people who believed in their convictions. That sometimes aligned with those wearing the loudest shirts or hats. They were in abundance at Trump rallies."

Those interviews produced a series of "Don't they realize how stupid they sound?" moments. One woman, for example, worried that Hillary Clinton's judgment might be impaired by her "hot flashes." Another claimed that "other than his birth certificate" there was "no evidence" Barack Obama was born in the United States.

"People ask me, 'How can they say that? Why would they even agree to be on the show?' People like to be on television, they like the attention. Even when they say something shocking, later on we'll get feedback saying, 'The piece was great!' We're rarely catching them saying anything they wouldn't normally say."

One reason the people he interviews sometimes end up making outlandish statements is Klepper's feigned cluelessness, conveyed by what he describes as his "trustworthy dumb face."

One of his most popular field pieces was titled "Good Guy with a Gun" (available on YouTube). It involved Klepper taking firearm lessons so he could obtain a permit "and save American lives!" Although he repeatedly goofed off and made outrageous statements ("I don't obey rules; I'm kind of a wild card" and, to an imaginary foe, "Suck on this metal!") the trainer remained straight-faced and serious.

"He was aware of our show and what it's like, but he didn't think gun safety was funny."

At the end of the eight-hour training Klepper proudly announced that he'd "gone from gun idiot to idiot with a gun, ready to handle every crisis situation."

Klepper and his wife now live in Brooklyn, which reminds him of Chicago. "It's very 'neighborhood-y,' with each area having its own character."

Getting to work each day means a half hour subway ride, then a 15-minute walk. Does he get recognized much while in transit?

"Yeah, sometimes, but New York is pretty cool about that sort of thing. Everyone is on their way to get someplace. Besides, wearing a hat and headphones, I can stay pretty incognito."

When he is approached, does he get many autograph requests? "Actually it's all about selfies now days. Everyone wants a memento of their experience. I'm totally flattered by it."

He tries to get back to Kalamazoo a few times a year to visit family. That includes his younger sister, Caycee (Klepper) Sledge '05.

"She worked in Chicago for quite a while, but now she's back in Kalamazoo working for the school system."

He's come to appreciate the opportunity he's been given by "The Daily Show," and its importance to its fans. "I realize this show means a lot to people. They'll thank me for doing a good job, but as if to say, 'Thanks for not screwing it up.'

"I've been fortunate to get this job. I know people who work really hard and are super-talented but they haven't gotten that big break. Maybe I was blessed in not having a Plan-B, something I could fall back on. In this case, being unprepared was the best preparation." 



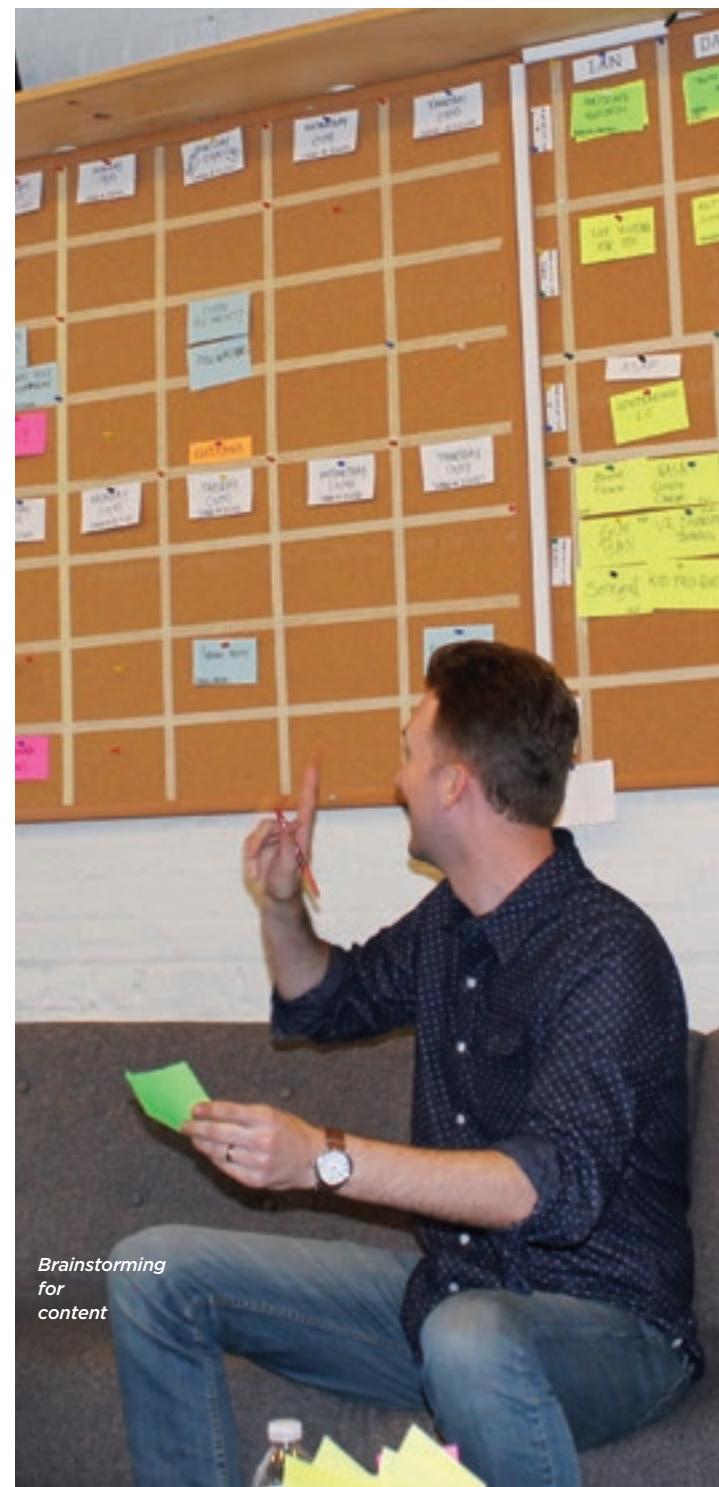
*Getting ready to go in front of the camera*



*Outside the studio*



*Feeding the office pet*



*Brainstorming for content*

# YADC RESHAPES PROBATION

BY PHYLLIS ROSE

Becoming a race car driver and working in his father's auto shop in Tennessee is where Nathan, 19, sees himself in five years.

Shaquan, 18, would like to be in the military or become a boxer. That, he hopes, will be his future.

Working with children is what Jazlyn, 20, dreams of doing someday.

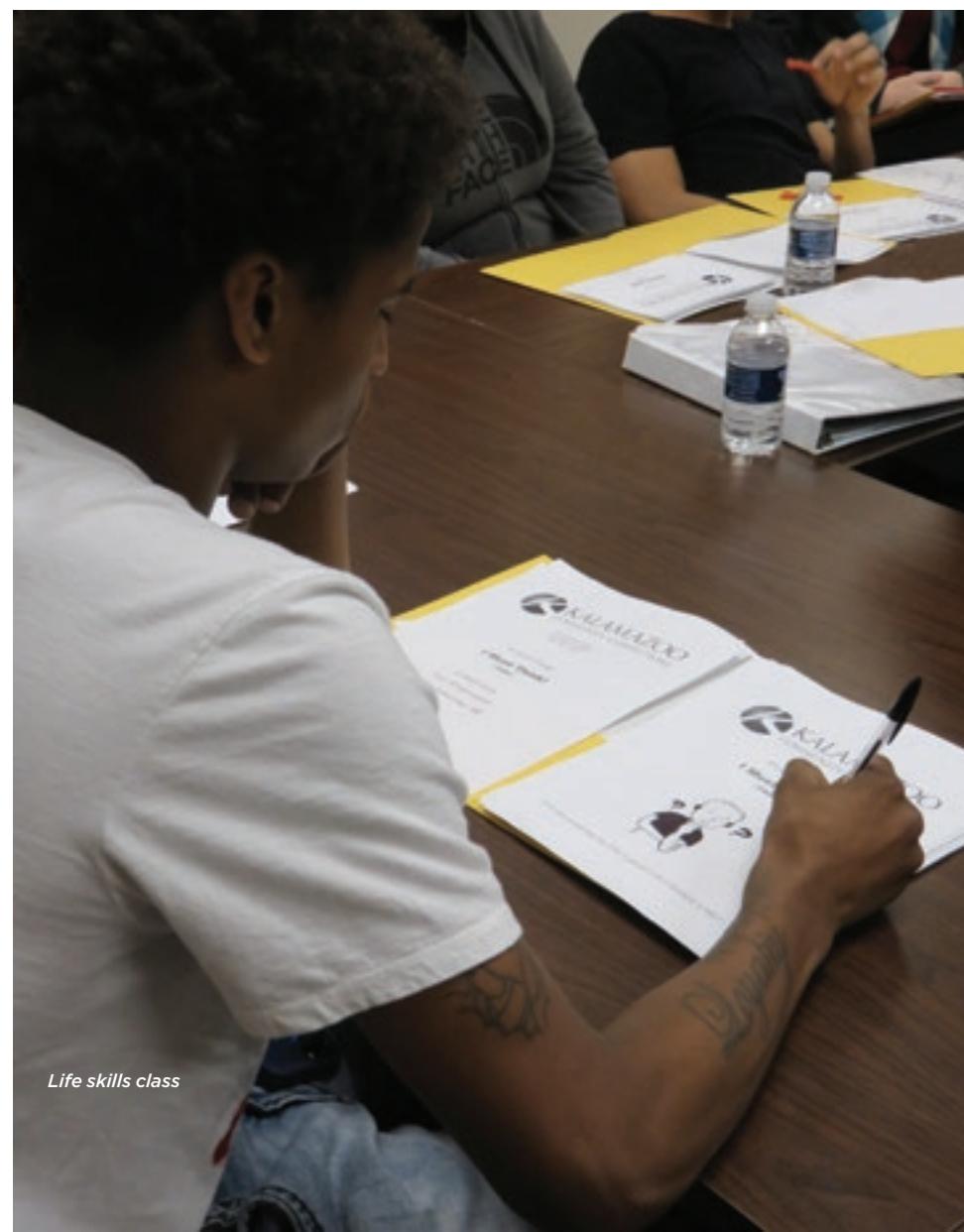
Before these dreams can come true, these young adults are working to make it through Young Adult Diversion Court (YADC) so their records can be sealed, allowing them to go forward in life without a criminal record affecting their futures.

The three-year-old Young Adult Diversion Court was conceived by 8th District Court Judge Anne Blatchford '82. She had watched young adults come through her court lacking strong support systems. Many times, they had not graduated from high school or earned a GED, had been kicked out of their homes, and had no means of support.

"They needed additional support to be successful and to not have a criminal record, and, in life generally, to move forward from childhood to young adulthood," she said. YADC is a probation program that provides additional structure and support.

In many ways the program's participants are still kids, scientifically speaking, in terms of brain development and emotional and behavioral maturation, Blatchford said. "Occasionally they have dealt with, or are dealing with, some type of trauma or abuse," she said.

Generally speaking, the young adult years are an important yet often difficult time for most. "If you take away any support that somebody has and then add stresses and trauma and negativity, there's a certain part of the population that will flounder no matter what," Blatchford explained. "We have to be able to catch those kids and be able to provide that support and get them to the next step."



Seeing the need for such support, Blatchford gathered people in the community who work with young adults, ages 17 to 20, to discuss what could be done. A year and a half later, in 2013, the Young Adult Diversion Court became a reality with initial financial support from the Kalamazoo Community Foundation and subsequent support from the Irving S. Gilmore Foundation and the Dorothy U. Dalton Foundation.

Today, the program is being overseen by Program Assistant Lauren Rosenthal '13, (see sidebar, page 13) who manages the individual cases and works with the participants one-on-one.

When young adults come into the program Rosenthal assesses their needs holistically, considering everything from housing to food to education to jobs.

"Education in particular is a key factor," said Rosenthal. "The majority of people have not completed high school when they come into our program, so it's important to get them enrolled in the best school situation for them.

"If it's a GED program or adult ed, we'll do that. Some people have finished high school, but they don't know what the college process is, so we'll talk about a variety of options in order to help them envision what they could do in the future."

In addition to meeting with Rosenthal and their probation officers weekly, participants also meet with the judge every other week to discuss their progress. They gather on Tuesdays for a group session during which they get help with life skills, such as decision making or how to change beliefs or alter behaviors.

The program also requires participants to complete 10 hours of community service. It takes most people about a year and a half to complete the diversion. If they don't follow through with the program's requirements according to the court's timelines, their probation can be extended to allow them additional time to comply.

"Everyone I've met who has come through the program wants to do things differently," said Rosenthal. "They want to better themselves. They just don't know how.

"Our goal is that they make adjustments in their lives that provide a stable framework for a foothold, so that when they're done with our program, they can use resources they've discovered and skills they've learned to

move forward."

Graduates of the program are feted in a ceremony during which they receive a certificate of completion and enjoy cookies and punch, Rosenthal said.

"The person graduating reads a reflection piece about their experiences with the program," she added. "I assist them with writing it, and we have them practice standing up in front of their peers. They may give advice to those who are struggling or talk about goals for themselves."

By one measure the program's success rate is not yet very high, Rosenthal said, noting that about one in four or five participants fully completes the diversion to the endpoint of having the criminal record sealed. But there are other endpoints related to success, she added.

"If we look at the number of people who've obtained their GED or achieved a new stable housing situation or finished a certification to be a nurse or carpenter or electrician—measures like that which are very valuable—then things look a bit different," she said. "This program does a lot of good."

Success can be defined differently for everyone, added Blatchford. While some may not complete the diversion, maybe they've achieved success in other ways, such as being enrolled in college or no longer using alcohol or drugs.

"If they are able to move forward in a positive way and gain hope, gain insightfulness, gain tools to cope, to not recidivate, then to me that is success," she added.

Their time in the program is short compared to the years of pain they may have endured in the past and which, without intervention, might continue into the future, according to Blatchford. "We have to help them learn how to get to the next immediate stage while they figure out the rest of their futures," she said.

Whether or not the participants successfully complete the program, they can return to get help or to thank those involved.

"We hear from participants because they know that we have an open door and we are here for them," said Blatchford. "Some of them, when they are really struggling, will contact us or pop into somebody's office. Sometimes they want to share a key milestone. We just got a call from a young man who was excited to let us know that he has a new baby, and he wouldn't be where he was if he didn't

have the care and support of the adults in this program."

Rosenthal also sees the program as having an impact on the community because it alters the way people view the court system. "Learning that there are options other than jail, and that there are people in the court committed to second chances, cultivates trust and changes the perception of the court system as solely adversarial," she said.

For its future Blatchford would like to see the program opened to persons beyond the YADC—people like 18-year-old Quantre, who volunteered for the program because he needed to change his mindset, he said. He has no criminal record but would like to change his life by accessing resources available through the program. For his future, he wants a career in the entertainment business and possibly in modeling.

"I'd like to start a nonprofit for the homeless and abandoned people," he said.

Blatchford would also like to explore the possibility of getting a post-probation dismissal of charges for those who have completed regular probation if they subsequently go through the program.

Current funding allows for up to 20 people in the program,

said Rosenthal. With additional funding and staff, they could probably serve about 50 people.

Those currently in the program say they are already seeing some success. The future race car driver, Nathan, who has been in the program for six months, said he's working on his GED and a job.

Shaquan, who says he "doesn't usually go to stuff," admits that he's learning to be responsible, going to school more and getting his grades up. Once he completes his online courses, he will graduate from high school.

A more positive mindset is one thing Jazlyn has gotten from the program. She's learned to manage stress and gotten help with budgeting. Her plan is to go back to Kalamazoo Valley Community College and to eventually work with kids.

"I want to work with kids who have gone through hardships," she said. "I love kids. They bring me so much joy."

These young adults have a way to go to achieve their goals, but with the help of the Young Adult Diversion Court those dreams can become a reality. ■



# CHANGE AGENT

BY PHYLLIS ROSE

Psychology major Lauren Rosenthal '13 considered going immediately to grad school after graduating from Kalamazoo College, figuring she would get a master's in counseling psychology and become a therapist.

Instead, Rosenthal finds herself on a very different career path, on her way to a postgraduate JD/MSW combining degrees in law and social work.

Soon after walking across the stage on the Quad to collect her diploma, Rosenthal started working with adults with developmental disabilities in group homes around Kalamazoo.

"I learned first-hand that a great many people rely on the fidelity of systems and programs for survival," she said. "I started developing a passion for working with marginalized groups."

An image from that work experience remains etched into her memory. She was kneeling on the floor putting anti-fungal cream on a 75-year-old autistic man's toes. He had to wear a helmet for protection from his self-inflicted head banging, she recalled.

She realized the importance of systems being in place to help people take care of their basic needs, things most people take for granted.

After that job, she did some legal transcription work. In that role she heard people describe their difficulties navigating the legal system. Then she worked with Residential Opportunities Incorporated (ROI), a nonprofit organization that provides residential and support services in southwest Michigan for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. After that experience she took a position at Communities in Schools, working with kids from impoverished families whose lack of resources adversely affects their educational opportunities.

"I fell in love with the kids," she said. "I still work with the Woods Lake Elementary School Kids In Tune after-school program, a collaboration of the Kalamazoo Symphony Orchestra and Communities in Schools. I'm a violinist so that's why I'm naturally drawn to music programs."



Lauren Rosenthal

Two years ago, she became the program assistant for the Young Adult Diversion Court (YADC). Her current work at YADC and her previous experiences convince her that many things need to be changed in the legal system, especially the adverse and racially disproportionate effect a criminal record has on educational, employment and housing opportunities; fetal infant mortality; and the likelihood of further involvement with the criminal justice system.

Rosenthal's pursuit of the JD/MSW, which she will begin this fall, is one way she intends to contribute to those changes.

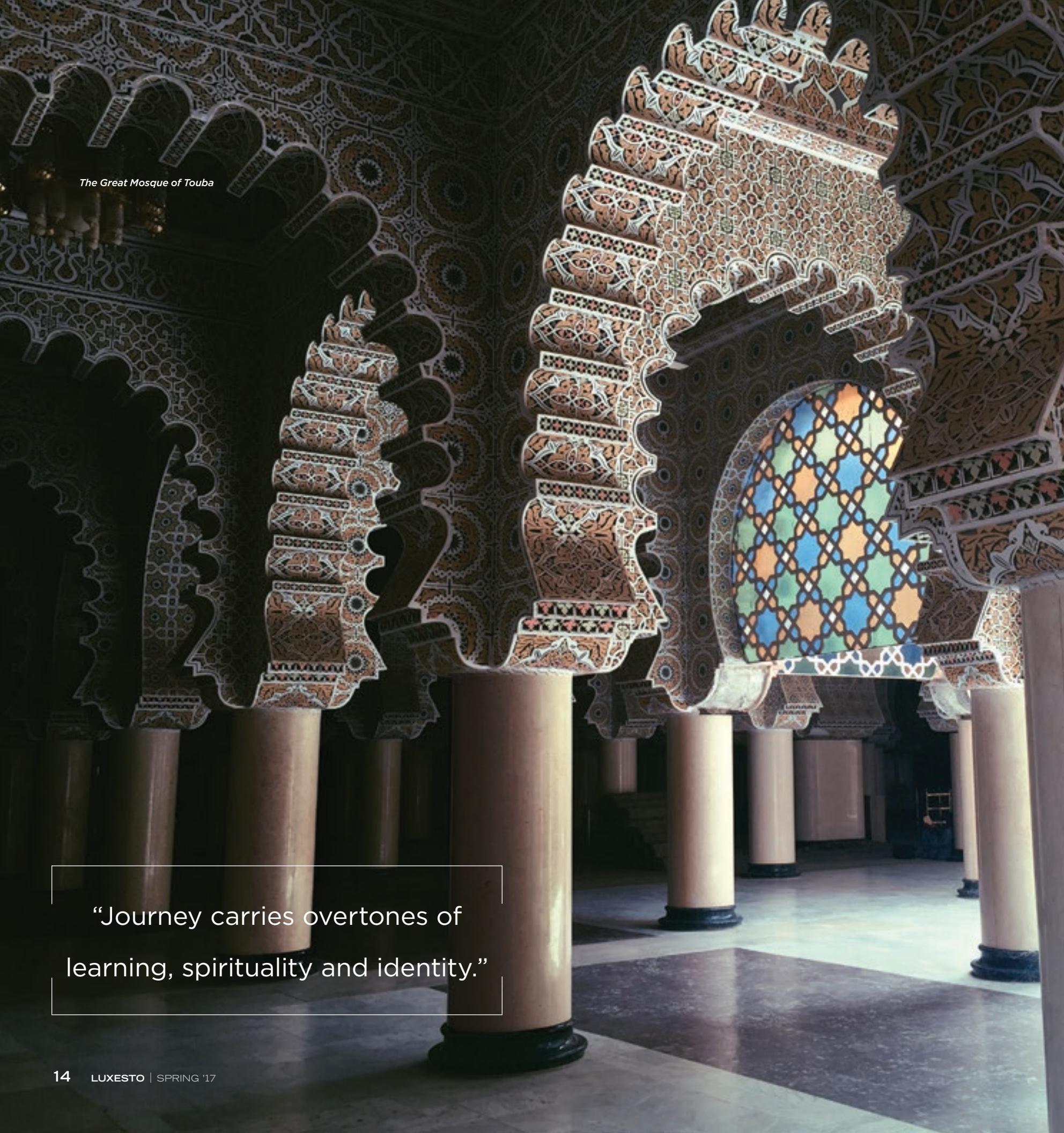
"My various jobs and experiences helped me discover what I am passionate about and how I could really use my background and skills to be of the most help," Rosenthal said. "I think that's so valuable. I'm glad I postponed grad school for a while."

She's also grateful to alumna and 8th District Court Judge Anne Blatchford '82, YADC's founder and a mentor to Rosenthal.

"Judge Blatchford has a great vision for the court's interface with the community and for incorporating therapeutic jurisprudence," said Rosenthal. "Therapeutic jurisprudence focuses more on recovery and rehabilitation and has the potential to reduce mass incarceration and recidivism rates."

Rosenthal also appreciates her K psychology degree for the valuable insights it has provided into working with people, she said.

"It's all about having conversations with people or being in the courtroom with them and seeing how they are experiencing the judge or interacting with their attorney," she said. "I can't imagine not having done this work first."



The Great Mosque of Touba

"Journey carries overtones of learning, spirituality and identity."

## "MAYBE YOU'LL MEET SOME COUSINS"

"Home" or "journey?" Which word resonates more?

A riddle (inspired by Tennyson's "Ulysses") for Malikah Mahone '17. She chose journey. "It's more multifaceted," she explained, "and for me it carries overtones of learning, spirituality and identity."

Before she came to Kalamazoo College, Malikah had lived in many places—New York City (twice), New Orleans (twice), Houston, Senegal (twice) and then, three years ago, Kalamazoo.

"You can make a home anywhere," she said. She'd had to, and she had. But her junior year study abroad experience fused the words—"home" and "journey"—in a startling way. Abroad she found, quite unexpectedly, a father she'd considered lost. And her family grew by scores.

Malikah was born in New Orleans. Her parents met there in the city's French Market, home to a vibrant Senegalese immigrant community. Her mother, Valerie Mahone, was from Chicago; her father, Boussou Mbake, was a naturalized U.S. citizen from Senegal. They were young and fell in love. Shortly after Malikah was born her father abandoned Valerie and the baby and returned to his family's ancestral home in Touba, a city in central Senegal about 99 miles from Dakar. Malikah would see him on just one occasion in the next 19 years—a one-hour meeting in a New Orleans playground when Malikah was in third grade, a meeting arranged by a Senegalese friend of the family.

Much had happened in the years prior to that meeting. Valerie had married when Malikah was 18 months old. Her husband—Malikah's stepfather—was a Senegalese national living in New Orleans until issues arose surrounding his work visa. He had to return to Senegal, and Malikah and Valerie moved to New York City, a location more efficient for her frequent travel to Senegal to visit her husband while his visa status was resolved.

On September 11, 2001, the Twin Towers were destroyed. A common human response was the urge to be with one's family, and Malikah and her mom moved to Senegal. Not long thereafter, with his visa issues settled, Valerie and her husband returned to New Orleans to re-establish a living. Malikah remained with her stepfather's family in the small town of Thies, 45 miles east of Dakar. Her "family" there included step siblings and cousins, about 10 kids in all.

"I cried for a week," said Malikah, and stayed for more than two years. Her stepfather's family spoke Wolof, and French was the language of the public schools. Malikah completed the country's equivalent

of the first and second grades in Thies.

"I was beginning to lose my English, which concerned my mom," said Malikah, "and she and my stepfather were doing well in New Orleans, so I moved back there."

For third grade she was accepted into and attended McDonald's Fifteen, a private magnet school for the fine arts. (At K Malikah majored in art history and completed an Intercultural Research Project comparing public mural art in Dakar and New York City.) But she wasn't at McDonald's very long when Hurricane Katrina devastated the coast.

"We evacuated to Houston," Malikah said, "hoping for a short absence and quick return." But temporary morphed to four months. In fact, Malikah completed an entire school term in a makeshift trailer park school attended by many Katrina evacuees. When the extent of the damage to New Orleans became clear—"We saw our house once, briefly, and all I remember is my mom crying"—and with little to hold them in the city, Malikah and her mom returned to Senegal to live with her husband's family. He remained in the U.S.

"I was in Thies for a year this time," said Malikah. "Same

school. Same friends. It was like I never left, except my mom added an English tutor, which was like having to go to school twice."

After a year in Senegal, her mom and stepfather's marriage fell apart. Valerie and Malikah returned to New York City (Valerie's sister lived there), and New York became home (again) until

Malikah matriculated to K for her first year.

During her sophomore year she began to consider study abroad options and narrowed the field to three—Nairobi, Varanasi, and Dakar.

"Dakar didn't top my list," said Malikah. "I'd already lived in Senegal. But eventually it became my first choice. It'd been years since I'd been there, and I thought it would be neat to return."

The summer before her departure, she and her mom quipped that she should carefully study the features of the people she encountered. She was half-Senegalese, after all, and she might see some cousins. "But it was just in jest," Malikah explained. "Neither of us knew the whereabouts of my biological father."

But "Uncle" Bamba did. A travel agent and longtime acquaintance of Valerie and Bousso, "Uncle" Bamba had managed

travel arrangements for both of his friends throughout the years. So, when Valerie called to make flight arrangements for a short visit with her daughter during her study abroad in Senegal, "Uncle" Bamba asked if he could forward Malikah's phone number to Bousso, whom he knew was living in Touba.

It had been more than 10 years since the playground meeting, and neither woman had heard anything from or about Malikah's father, so Valerie was cautious about providing her daughter's number, but did promise to give Malikah "Uncle" Bamba's, allowing her the choice of acquiring her father's number and making contact with him if she wished.

And thus was set in motion a tentative and gradual reunion.

"I called 'Uncle' Bamba and got my father's phone number in Touba," said Malikah. "Then I waited."

"It's hard to describe what I was feeling. I'd disassociated myself from my father or even the idea of him," Malikah added. "The memory of that one long-ago meeting was faded and distant."

While in turmoil about whether to call her father, she received a lot of support from classmates and fellow Dakar program participants Samantha Weaver '17 and Ellie Goldman '17.

"I finally called him with Sam in the room," said Malikah. "He said he was expecting my call—'Uncle' Bamba had called him when I asked him for my father's number. The call was strange

and somewhat strained, but we arranged to meet for coffee that weekend. I insisted on bringing Sam."

Malikah felt the first face-to-face meeting did not go well.

"He was an hour late," she said. "In fairness, that's typical in Senegalese culture. Still, I called my mom after about 40 minutes, and I probably was a little emotional." (Malikah later learned that Valerie immediately called Bousso—she had his number from the omnipresent "Uncle" Bamba—and warned him in no uncertain terms that he had better not forego this meeting with "her baby." Malikah smiles at the image of her mother on that call.)

When he arrived in a red sports car (a detail Malikah found off-putting) she recognized him immediately. "I look more like him than my mother," and he was an imposing presence—some 250 to 300 pounds on a six-foot, six-inch frame.

The conversation over coffee was cordial but stilted, small talk entirely. "By the end we knew about each other equally—Sam, my father and me. That was strange. I guess I expected something more. At times he seemed distracted, very busy, and several times he checked his phone. I didn't like that and was pretty sure I wouldn't reach out again."

But when she described the disappointing visit to her mom, Valerie told her that in the past her father would appear distracted and self-important when, actually, he was terrified. She



Malikah in Touba. Her newfound family members queued for a photo with their American relative.

cautioned her daughter to not read too much into her perceptions of that first meeting.

Indeed, her father called Malikah within a few days to suggest a second meeting—lunch with his sister (Malikah's aunt) who happened to live in Dakar.

This time Malikah came alone, by cab. She met her aunt and her children. And her father brought his wife.

"His wife was so welcoming," said Malikah. "She embraced me, considered me her daughter, and wanted to see pictures of my mom."

Polygamy is practiced in Senegal (though Malikah's father has one wife only) and little or no distinction is made between full-, half- and step-siblings. Ideally, love and extended family surround all.

This meeting went better, and Malikah invited her father to someday come and meet her host family in Dakar.

Why not now? Her father offered to drive her home, and when they arrived, Malikah introduced him to her host family. "I hadn't told them about my father, so they were mildly shocked," she said. "In Senegalese culture, wherever one has family it would be customary to reside with them, and, as it turns out, I had an aunt in Dakar."

Her father and her host family shared their family names, and the exchange confirmed the small details Malikah had learned over the years from her mother: that her father (and therefore she) was descended from one of the most prominent families of Touba, renowned even in Dakar, which explained the deference her host family showed her father.

Arrangements were made for dinner at her host family's home, and to that occasion some weeks later her father brought several of



Malikah's cousins—sons and daughters of his brother, who had four wives.

"They were about my age and also attended the University of Dakar," said Malikah. "So what my mom and I had joked about—running into cousins—had come to pass."

This dinner incubated plans for Malikah to meet the entire family, which would mean a trip to Touba. Sam and Ellie would come, and her father would pick them all up.

"The visit occurred late in our stay; we only had a few weeks before we left for home," said Malikah. The visit was planned for three days and because it was the weekend of a religious holiday, traffic was heavy and the car ride to Touba took 10 hours.

Ironically, a trip there had been planned as part of the study abroad program. "But it was cancelled," said Malikah.

"Turns out the three of us got to go after all."

When they arrived, Malikah met her family on her father's side—some four score in number, most living in the family compound. "People kept bringing me babies to hold for photos with the 'sister or niece or cousin or aunt' from America," she said. She met her three half-brothers, ages 11, 9 and 6, joyful to be united with their 21-year-old elder (and only) sister.

"After all these greetings, my father and I went alone to the room of a woman in her mid-90s resting quietly in her bed. She was

my grandmother, and she told me how fulfilled she felt now that she had at last met all of her children's children. It was very moving, and I was in tears."

Day two featured tours of Touba, including the Koran Library and the town's famous Great Mosque, the history of which is so closely entwined with that of Malikah's family. And because she was family she could enter places in the mosque off limits to all but family.

"I took Sam and Ellie's phones and got pictures for them," said Malikah.

Farewells and the long return trip to Dakar filled the third and final day. And not long after that came the long flight home, though the meaning of that word had certainly deepened.

Do Malikah and her dad keep in touch?

"He calls me every two weeks," she said. "And he and my mom



Malikah makes the K outside the University of Dakar

talk occasionally. He always calls me on a Sunday, and he speaks to me in Wolof. He doesn't want me to lose that language." She smiles. "I guess he and my mom share a concern about the erosion of my language skills."

And he always inquires about her next visit home.

When will it be?

"Maybe in the summer," said Malikah, who graduates in June.

"Maybe in the summer." ☺

Malikah with her mother and father



Samantha Weaver (right) and Ellie Goldman (left) flank their classmate, friend and fellow Senegal study abroad partner.



A close-up photograph of a man with light brown hair, wearing a white button-down shirt, standing in front of a chalkboard. He is looking upwards and to his right, holding a piece of chalk in his right hand and writing on the chalkboard. The chalkboard has some red and white markings on it.

Patrik Hultberg applies the art of teaching  
in his economics classes.

# TEACHING TEACHERS TO TEACH MORE EFFECTIVELY

BY RANDALL SCHAU

Kalamazoo College has more than 100 professors. All of them are extraordinarily learned in their fields. But can they teach? Can they engage students in ways that help them truly learn?

To ensure that the answer is an emphatic “yes!” K provides training and education for its faculty in pedagogy (the art and science of teaching). That effort is led by the school’s Teaching Commons. Its mission: keep teaching and learning at the heart of the College’s collective thinking.

“We require a different type of teaching at K,” says Patrik Hultberg, associate professor of economics, and the school’s coordinator of educational effectiveness.

The first step in ensuring that K instructors are skilled educators takes place during the hiring process. When the three finalists for a position are determined, they are required to come to K—for an interview, of course, and to actually teach a sample class.

“We want people who are excited about teaching and who want to engage students,” Hultberg notes. “If their focus is solely on research, K isn’t the place for them.”

“The expectation of scholarly output, in terms of quality, is the same at K as anywhere else, although we’re satisfied with a little less quantity,” explains Jan Solberg, professor of Romance languages and literature. “That’s because we’re expected to devote so much time and energy to what happens in the classroom.”

Before new hires (and visiting instructors) ever step in front of a classroom of students they are required to participate in a four-day Teaching and Learning Workshop. Hultberg, who was born and raised in Sweden, is in charge of the annual activity.

“I’ve been involved in the workshop for several years; 2016 was the first time I’d coordinated the event,” says Hultberg. “I replaced Paul Sotherland [professor emeritus of biology], who replaced Gail Griffin [professor emerita of English] and Jan Solberg. The workshop provides an opportunity for us to convey to our new people just how seriously we take teaching and learning here at K.”

“We can’t just assume new faculty have had any pedagogical training,” says Charlene Boyer Lewis, professor of history. “So we use the workshop to discuss teaching techniques. All schools have some sort of orientation for their new people; often they’re just a day or half-day. And most of that is about administrative details. They’re not about teaching and learning, which is where our focus is.”

The first of the workshop’s four days is mostly social, giving the new people a chance to get to know veteran faculty, including those who serve as facilitators.

On the second day small groups are formed, comprising first-year and more experienced faculty. The facilitators discuss their preferred pedagogical approaches, offer teaching tips and are asked to recall a recent classroom mistake.

These discussions are intended to invite the new instructors into what Boyer describes as the “culture of teaching at K.”

The small groups then engage in the workshop’s most valuable activity—microteaching sessions. With the rest of the group acting as students, all instructors, both new and experienced, teach a topic of their choosing for about ten minutes. Props and hands-on activities are encouraged. One chemistry instructor, for example, had the others make ice cream to illustrate a type of chemical reaction.

“We want our new colleagues to practice teaching in a safe, supportive environment,” Boyer Lewis observes. “We try to be welcoming and offer structured critiques. If an approach isn’t going to work, it’s better that happen in a microteaching session rather than in front of 25 students.”

Christina Carroll, a first-year history instructor, says, “The microteaching was really valuable to me. I’d taught a year at another school before I came here, but I’d never had any faculty observe me. The sessions gave us a chance to talk about techniques, such as how to get shy students engaged, how to get them talking.”

A key function of the workshop is to pair each new instructor with a veteran faculty member, who then serves as a mentor for the rest of the academic year. Twice per quarter the mentor observes the mentee in the classroom. After each visit the two meet and compare notes on how the classroom session went.

“We know that being observed can be uncomfortable,” acknowledges Solberg, “What really helps reduce the stress, though, is our policy that what mentors see and hear will never be part of the promotion and tenure process. We don’t discuss our visits with anyone. We’re very explicit about that. If the new person is having a problem, we want them to be comfortable talking to us about it. We want them to understand that we’re on their side, that we view them as colleagues, and that we’re all in this together.”

The interaction with the mentor can also help the first-year

instructor avoid a sense of isolation.

Carroll hasn’t felt that isolation during her first year at K. “The workshop and some other activities have really helped develop a sense of community and given me a better feel for the institution as a whole. K is more tightly knit than other places I’ve been.”

The emphasis on training new faculty reflects the reality that several factors may initially limit their ability to teach effectively.

Some new instructors tend to equate teaching with lecturing.

“That is a concept we want them to question right away,” says Solberg. “College students should be engaged, not simply talked at. Lectures can be a very good part of the learning process, but they work best when they are combined with opportunities for students to implement the concepts they’ve learned.”

Hultberg adds: “Cognitive sciences tell us that what’s being said isn’t always what’s being heard and understood. We encourage teaching strategies that promote long-term learning. We call it deep knowledge.”

Another limiting factor for first-year teaching success is insufficient teaching experience.

“I’d taught for a number of years before I came to K,” Hultberg recalls, “but that’s not the norm. Most of our people are coming from graduate school where they may only have had some limited experience as teaching assistants, or none at all.”

Even new instructors with teaching experience may arrive at K with a need for some additional training. For example,

teaching at a large university, with classes where students number in the hundreds, is very different from what they encounter at K.

“K is a unique place,” Boyer Lewis notes. “We have small classes with smart, demanding students. One complaint we’ll occasionally hear from them is that they’re not being challenged, that they’re bored.”

As a result, one of the topics of discussion during the workshop is the appropriate level of challenge, or, as Boyer Lewis says, “How high should we pitch things?”

K’s 10-week quarter system is

another topic that’s addressed during the workshop because most instructors have previously experienced 15-week semesters; reducing the duration of a class by a third can create challenges.

“It can be difficult to make the adjustment,” Boyer Lewis offers, “so pacing is something we talk about. For one thing, you’re grading almost all the time. There’s almost no downtime.”

Carroll’s prior year of teaching occurred in a semester system. “The 10 weeks we have here go by so much faster. I needed help determining how much reading to assign.”

The pacing of a class relates to two teaching and learning concepts presented at the workshop: spacing and retrieval. Spacing relates to the notion that an idea is better learned when presented over a period of time. Retrieval is a technique that requires students to periodically recall something they’ve learned in the past.

One teaching technique the Workshop encourages is having students present material to others.

“We’ve asked students,” says Hultberg, “when would they study harder: to get an A on a test or if they had to teach a topic to a class? Everyone always answers that it would be if they had to teach a class. Having to teach something is a great motivator.”

The workshop also stresses the importance and use of office hours. “Our new people might have been a T.A. for a class of 300,” Boyer Lewis says. “Just knowing someone’s name might have been enough in that setting. Our students want more than that. They want to get to know us, and they want us to get to know them. They want time to talk about things.”

K’s efforts to improve teaching quality aren’t limited to just first-year faculty. To help experienced faculty improve, K offers them the chance to participate in the Course Visit Cohort program.

“It’s voluntary,” Hultberg says, “but about a third of our instructors are involved.”

Colleagues pair off for classroom visits. “After the visit the two

sit down over coffee and talk about what happened in the class. Both benefit from that discussion.”

Such a visit sometimes results in the observing instructor seeing something that he or she decides to use in his or her classroom. Solberg says, “It’s very satisfying for the observed faculty member to hear the observer colleague say, ‘I love how you did that; I’m going to use it myself!’”

“Teaching can sometimes be a lonely activity,” Hultberg continues. “You go to your own classroom and do your own thing.”

“We want a sense of community and access to settings where we talk about teaching and learning. The Cohort program does that.”

Creating a setting for that sense of community explains the existence of the Teaching Commons, a large room in Dewing Hall, where K’s faculty are encouraged to gather to talk about how they teach and about which of their methods have, or have not, met with success.

The Teaching Commons provides the “Teaching Commons Blog,” a home for faculty submissions about teaching effectiveness.

Hultberg also plans the annual “Fall Colloquium,” a one-day series of presentations, all of which focus on improving instructor performance.

A long-standing tool to improve teaching is student evaluations, routinely done at the end of each quarter.

Solberg thinks there’s merit to receiving student input sooner than that. “What I do for most of my classes, after just three weeks, is have my students write suggestions for how I could do things differently in class. If they’re good ideas I’ll implement them. If they suggest something I don’t think I can do, I’ll tell them why not. If nothing else, they understand that they’ve been heard, that their opinions matter.”



# The Liberal Arts OF MUSIC, AND MORE

BY RANDALL SCHAU

Brandon Faber '07 always knew he had a passion for music; the question was which specific musical field he might pursue as a career: performer? conductor? instructor? administrator?

His decision? "All of the above." And yet as varied as his career has been, each variation shares a common chord of, in his words, "regrowth, innovation and creativity."

The variations combine in his current position—director of community engagement at the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, a non-profit that operates out of a large mansion built in 1910 on the shore of Lake St. Clair, located between Ontario and Michigan, near Detroit. Initially donated by its owner to be a place to honor those who died in World War II, it has for decades served as the site for scores of community activities, including aerobic dancing, Rotary Club lunches, and classes in fencing, bike repair, dog obedience and driver education.

The War Memorial is also a performing arts center, which is how Brandon can best apply his impressive musical background.



Brandon Faber

"We don't have our own orchestra or choir but we bring them in to perform. We present operas, plays, soloists, chamber music, even magic shows, anything we think the community would have an interest in."

The path that led Brandon from Walled Lake (Mich.) Central High School, where he played piano and violin, to the War Memorial has always been musical, but it has had its share of twists and turns.

Shortly after arriving at Kalamazoo College in the fall of 2003, Brandon confirmed his commitment to the world of music "as the way I wanted to go."

His initial thought was to pursue a career as a performing pianist. Consistent with that goal, his Senior Individualized Project was an hour-long recital, which he played on the College's Steinway. "It is an absolutely gorgeous piano. It's just wonderful to play."

He took private piano lessons from Professor Emeritus of Music Leslie Tung, who, Brandon recalls, "was just so committed to me. A lesson was only supposed to be 30 minutes, but he'd often give me an hour. He also encouraged me to study other forms of music, so I took voice lessons and joined the K choir. Those lessons were wildly helpful."

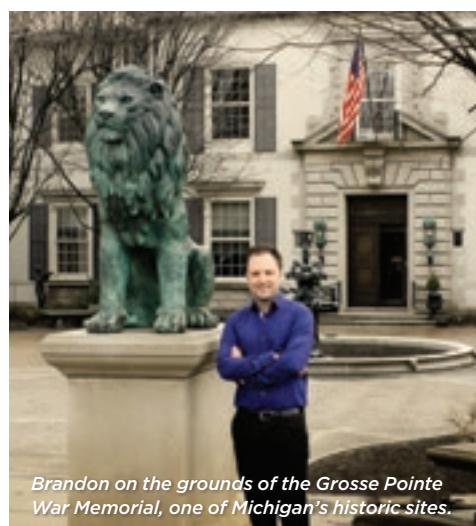
He also continued playing the violin, but doing so had a serious drawback—it caused persistent back pain, a problem dating back to high school that none of his instructors and teachers had been able to resolve.

At least not until he met Barry Ross, professor emeritus of music and a colleague of Leslie Tung.

"The pain was a real problem for me," says Brandon. "I talked about it with Professor Ross, and within three lessons

he'd figured why it was happening. He changed my technique, real subtle things, but they worked and the pain was gone. It's never come back. Playing the violin is a lot more fun when it doesn't hurt!"

At K Brandon also pursued nonmusical activities. One was giving swimming lessons to autistic children.



Brandon on the grounds of the Grosse Pointe War Memorial, one of Michigan's historic sites.

Looking back, Brandon feels that "K was exactly what I needed it to be. It drove me to perform. It allowed me to learn how to learn. I never wanted to be a teacher, but I wanted to know how to teach."

After he graduated, Brandon focused on a career as a pianist. That meant going to grad school to get a master's degree for that instrument. He spent months practicing, typically for six hours a day, so that he could play at the level required by a grad school. The work paid off when he was accepted into the University of Iowa's piano program.

But then he again heard the siren call of conducting, which caused him to change his plans. Obtaining a master's degree in conducting, he decided, would be his goal.

That set him back, however, because he needed time to make recordings of himself conducting an orchestra to submit to graduate schools. His connection with the Detroit Symphony and its then director of education, Charles Burke, led to the opportunity to conduct there.

"He gave me two scores and said 'Come back in two weeks. You'll have fifteen minutes.' So that's what I did. It was before the full youth orchestra. The sound was amazing."

He submitted the tape to the music department at California State University Long Beach, which was so impressed that it invited him to audition, conducting the school's orchestra performing Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5 in C minor*.

That required more preparation, and Brandon turned to Barry Ross for help.

"He walked me through the entire symphony, telling me what to do and what not to do. His help made it all click for me. Even so, I was never more nervous in my life than when I went to Long Beach to do

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that audition."

Nerves notwithstanding, Brandon obviously conducted very well because he was accepted into the program, a particularly impressive accomplishment because the school accepts only one orchestral conducting student per year.

Somehow, during the preparation for and execution of the audition, Brandon still found the time to teach piano and theatre in, of all places, Switzerland.

"My foreign study had been in France and that led, indirectly, to my getting the job in Switzerland the summers of 2008 and 2009. I worked at a youth camp that was part of an international school."

Brandon left for Long Beach in the fall of 2010. Two years later he was awarded his Master of Music in Instrumental Conducting degree. When he was unable to find employment on the West Coast, he decided to return to southeast Michigan.

Once home, in the fall of 2012, Brandon accepted a position with the Birmingham-Bloomfield Symphony Orchestra (BBSO). As its executive director he didn't do the actual conducting, but, as one of only two paid employees, he still worked closely with the performers.

Among the challenges he faced was the economics of the operation. "Money was always tight, so there was often a tension between what we wanted to play and what would bring in an audience. We needed to experiment and try new things. Some things were greatly successful, but I also learned that if we might fail, we needed to fail cheaply. You don't plan failure, but sometimes it happens. It's just part of the process of change."

"Cash flow affected many of our decisions, such as what venues we'd use, since some were more expensive than

others. It even dictated, at times, how many musicians we'd use. As far as revenues go, there was always a limit on how much we could charge for admission."

To increase the attractiveness of an event Brandon often brought in guest performers. On one occasion a local Volvo dealer donated a car for the performer to use.

Consistent with the notion that no act of kindness goes unpunished, the performer

"It's all about...  
the broad array  
of fascinating  
subjects."

then got into a serious accident. "She got T-boned at an intersection. She was shaken up but otherwise okay. The car was badly damaged. I had to call the dealership to tell them. That was not a fun telephone call to have to make. Thankfully, the car was a Volvo, one of the safest in an accident. If we hadn't gotten her a Volvo the call could have been a lot worse."

Before Brandon's arrival the symphony had fallen on difficult times. "We had to get our core membership to trust us again, to know that we would give them a quality performance. We were eventually able to provide a first-rate experience, something people couldn't get anywhere else."

Brandon booked the War Memorial for one BBSO concert. By that time Charles Burke had left the Detroit Symphony

Orchestra and become the president and CEO of the War Memorial. He remembered Brandon and was very impressed with his work at the BBSO. That led to a job offer. Brandon accepted and in April, 2015, made the move.

Brandon still puts his piano skills to use by giving private lessons and occasionally playing, "but just for a few friends or myself. That's it for performing." He also occasionally gives swim lessons.

Brandon says that his move to the War Memorial has provided him "with a new avenue of creative expression. Here I get to focus on big picture projects, with great partners and coworkers. I'm more deeply involved in activities than I was at the BBSO. But like the BBSO, I get to focus on serving a public need and chart new courses."

Just hearing Brandon describe the number and variety of those activities is exhausting.

"We have dozens of nonprofits that host at least some of their events here, and I work with many of them. I arrange for speakers for a lecture series we have. Two recent topics were on the opiate epidemic and preparing floral arrangements at the White House.

"I work with our executive chef on our cooking series, program the movies we show in our theatre, run our summer camps, arrange for concerts of all kinds, and help with our community access television station. I love this job because I'm allowed to be creative in what we do and what we present."

"The War Memorial is like a liberal arts college," adds Brandon. "It's all about exposing people to a broad array of fascinating subjects." ■

# A FAMILY AFFAIR

BY CLAUDIA GREENING '17



Beth and Mike '88 Greening show their K roots.



First steps toward K for Claudia.



The K Greenings (l-r): Claire '19, Mike '88, and the author, Claudia '17.

December in the Greening household is a time to reflect on, and relax from, Kalamazoo College. Three out of four members of the household are Hornets, so our conversations often circle around the breathless feeling (literally) you get from running up to the third floor of Dewing, or what week was our hardest during fall term (eighth week, I'm looking at you).

I'm a senior history major and religion minor who studied abroad in Varanasi, India. My dad, Michael, graduated in 1988 with a degree in political science. He played on the Hornet men's soccer team and studied abroad in Hannover, Germany. My younger sister, Claire, is a sophomore about to declare a major and apply for study abroad (the most exciting year at K, in my opinion).

I chose K for many reasons; the most important was the immediate sense of belonging (stronger at K than anywhere). As soon as I visited (accompanied by my dad), I knew I could thrive. I'd learned from my dad's experiences (from the group of college buddies who had become regular figures in my early life and from the stories of his time in Germany) that K was a space where people could become strong and decent members of society. My dad says K chose him. My sister, who watched me at K for two years before choosing to attend, says she felt instantly comfortable.

Kalamazoo College was home almost as soon as we stepped onto the bricks of Academy Street—maybe, in part, because of the home we were leaving behind. My parents had cultivated a home life that paralleled K—we were big readers, insatiably curious, and excited about finding answers to tough questions. K offered a space for Claire and me to continue such exploration and even dive deeper. We've been challenged as students and leaders, and as people. The College has given us a chance to engage deeply in social justice, to challenge ourselves abroad, and to find friendships that will last a lifetime. K is unique. My dad knew it 30 years ago. I know it now. And we both get to watch as my sister figures it out. ■

# COUNTRY BOY

BY RANDALL SCHAU

"I owe an awful lot to Kalamazoo College," says Mike Frazier '73. "Coming out of Dowagiac [Mich.] High School, I was just a big, naïve country kid. I'm grateful they decided to let me in. I couldn't have gone to a better place."

At that "better place" he played football, majored in German, met and married his wife, and generally had a great time.

He spent the next 39 years paying forward the value of his education by trying to make life better for other young people. That effort began with a four-year stint working at the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home, followed by three and a half decades as a teacher and administrator.

Frazier retired in 2012. He now lives in a rural home near Dowagiac with his wife of 44 years, Becky (Hassan) Frazier, class of 1971.

Now with the time to indulge what he calls the "bit of a ham" in his personality, Frazier has taken to acting. Most recently he played Bill Wilson in the play, *Dr. Bob and Bill W.*, about the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. A favorite role was Mr. Paravicini in Agatha Christie's play, *The Mousetrap*.

Long before his thespian endeavors, Frazier's career as a football Hornet was equally accidental, though a matter of extra weight instead of extra time.

"Ed Baker was K's football coach back then. He'd met me at a high school student-athlete day at K, but he didn't have much interest in me because I was tall and skinny—about six-foot-five and 175 pounds.

"So come August, after high school graduation, I was all set to go to K, but I



Becky and Mike in 1972.



Late bloomer as thespian.

wasn't going to play football. Then Baker called my mother and asked how much I weighed. I'd put on some pounds by then, so she told him I was 205. That was enough for him, so he invited me to join the team. The very next day I was in the car with my mom, headed for Kalamazoo.

"I guess he was starving for some freshman players."

Frazier met his future wife when the two of them took the same German class. Becky quickly dropped out, but not before she'd caught Mike's eye.

"At some point after that I was working in the bookstore," Frazier recalls. "Becky came in to buy a foreign stamp for a letter she was sending to her boyfriend. I told a friend I was going to ask her out. He dismissed the idea because I was just a sophomore while Becky was a tall, elegant senior."

But date they did, and the rest is history. They've been married since 1972 and have a daughter, Amelia.

Frazier did his foreign study in Muenster, Germany.

"Back then foreign study was a rare adventure that K made routine. That was a huge part of its attraction." To drive home that point Frazier adds, "The only other people I knew who had been to Asia or Europe were the ones fighting in a war."

As Frazier worked on his German major, he interacted with several professors about whom he still has fond memories.

"I loved Irmgard Kowatzke. She was just a great person, very attentive and personable. She'd walk into our 8 a.m. class so energetic and happy, which was just the opposite of us students. Unfortunately, she passed away my senior year."

"To this day I wish that I could have shared with her that I ended up teaching German."

Frazier also came to appreciate Joe Fugate (professor emeritus of German and director emeritus of foreign study). "He was intimidating at first, but I got to know him and came to enjoy him very much. He's very loyal to the school; I still see him at homecoming football games."

In his sophomore year Frazier began working at the juvenile home. "I'd get up early and ride my bike across town to get there. Then in the afternoon I'd ride back to get to football practice."

His work impressed his supervisors; they later offered him a

full-time job. He accepted and stayed for four years.

Early on there was little age difference between Frazier (19) and some of the residents (17).

Frazier recalls several occasions when his football conditioning was tested.

"Sometimes the kids would try to run away. Part of my job was to try to catch them. That happened about a half dozen times. I remember once I had to pull a boy off of a fence he was trying to climb. Another time a boy got across the street and into Riverside Cemetery. I'd just about caught up to him when he pulled a metal stake from a gravesite, on the end of it was a star, like from the American Legion. When I realized he was prepared to hit me with it, I decided maybe it wasn't worth pursuing him anymore. I let him go."

He later served as a probation officer at the juvenile home.

"I made sure the kids did what they were supposed to. Some of the other officers had their kids report to their office, but I usually went to their homes. That was eye-opening for me; some kids came from pretty difficult situations."

Frazier eventually rose to the position of director of the home's child care unit. "I enjoyed my time at the home. I spent a lot of time with those kids, so I bonded with more than a few. I hope I helped some of them."

By 1978, Becky had finished her M.B.A. and Mike, as he puts it, "was up for a new adventure." Fortunately, North Ridge High School in Middlebury, Indiana, needed someone to teach German. Even though Frazier had hardly spoken a word of it in four years, the school decided he was their top choice.

His experience at the juvenile home may have played a part in that call. "Perhaps they figured if I could handle the kids at the home I could handle their kids, too. The only downside to teaching was the 50 percent pay cut."

Mike and Becky decided they could afford that reduction because her earnings as an accountant kept increasing.

"She'd become the primary bread winner by that point, so we had a shift in roles," Frazier explains. "Since she had the longer, more defined work week, I did the after-school and summer daycare. It was unique to the rural, small town where we lived that I stayed home with our daughter in the summer while my wife worked."

"I couldn't  
have gone to  
a better place  
than K."

Once he started teaching, he realized that the juvenile home had provided him with a different perspective for what was—and was not—a real problem.

"Early on, someone at the school was really upset about some graffiti. I had to laugh because I was used to so much worse."

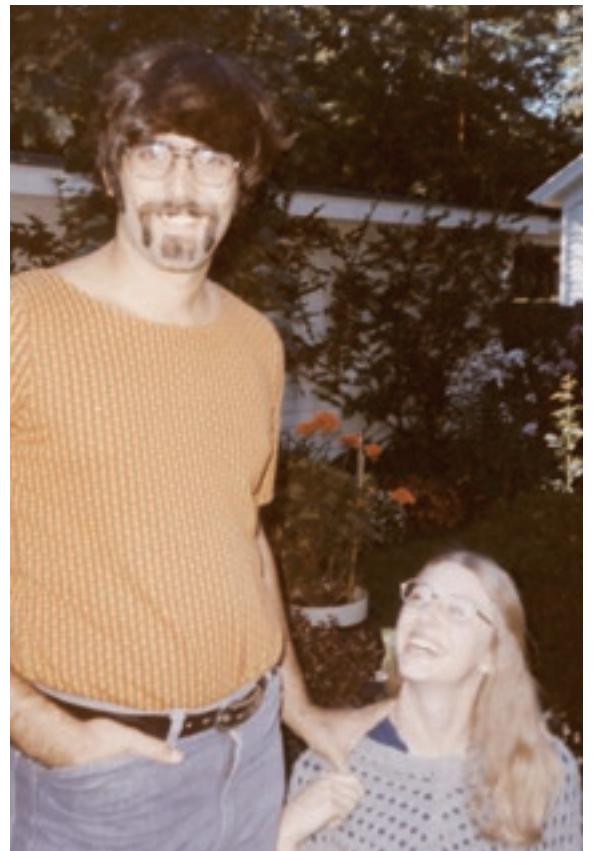
Frazier spent a decade teaching at Northridge, then another at nearby Mishawaka Middle School.

At both schools, the German classes were electives, which motivated Frazier to make his classes especially attractive.

"I tried to get the kids really engaged. The old style of 'drill and kill' wasn't going to work. And I didn't just teach the language, I also taught German culture, history, art and theatre."

He also arranged trips to Germany, Switzerland and Austria for his students. As educational as those 10-day excursions may have been, Frazier was concerned they lacked enough "depth." So he got his school involved in the German American Partnership Program (GAPP).

"The GAPP was funded by the German government. It connected our school with one in the German city of Elmshorn. Each year, in the fall, they'd send us some of their students for a month to live with our kids. Their teacher stayed with Becky and me. Then in June our students and I would go to Germany



Becky and Mike had their wedding on the Quad.

program for 10 years."

Frazier also found time to coach football, girls' track and girls' basketball.

After 20 years of teaching Frazier was ready for "another adventure"—a move from teaching to administration. He became the assistant principal at John Young Middle School in Mishawaka, where he stayed for two years. He then served as a principal for the next 13 years, first at Elkhart High School, then Dowagiac Middle School.

Looking back, Frazier admits to some regret about the switch. "I really much preferred being a teacher. I was good at that. I could entertain a room of 30 middle schoolers. It was fun. Being a principal had its rewards, but it got annoying dealing with regulations, doing reports and filling out forms."

Being a teacher, Frazier believes, helped prepare him for the stage. "When you teach an elective, where the kids have a choice, you have to sell the class. There's a bit of performing in that."

His first actual acting came during his years as a teacher. But those roles were few and far between, and minor when they did happen (he was once the unseen booming voice of the Wizard in a school play about Oz).

But that small taste awakened his appetite. "I never really lost the acting bug after that. It was mostly just a question of having the time. As a principal there were just too many meetings and other commitments to do any plays."

In recent years, though, he's performed in nearly a dozen, either at the Tin Shop Theatre in Buchanan or the Beckwith Theatre in Dowagiac.

Does he get nervous performing? Not really, he says. In fact, he admits to being a bit of a looker.

"Either just before the show or when I get a chance during the show, I'll check out who's in the crowd. If I see someone I know that gets me pumped up."

After graduating from Buchanan High School, Becky Hassan '71 chose to attend Kalamazoo College, but her real destination was far more distant.

"I very much wanted to go to France, and K's foreign study gave me that chance."

However, before she arrived for her first year and eventual international travel, she needed a more domestic question answered—would her dorm bed be long enough for her?

"I was tall, about six-foot-one, so I asked if they had any extra long beds." The College did, and Becky enjoyed her years at K sans any serious sleep deprivation.

One of her memories reflects how things were different in the late '60s.

"I was one of the very last female students at K to be 'campused.' That was the word they used when a student misbehaved and was grounded to her dorm. In my case it was for not signing out when I left my dorm after hours. My punishment was that I could only leave my dorm for classes and meals."

With a tone of satisfaction she adds, "They stopped the practice shortly afterwards."

While her husband worked at the Kalamazoo County Juvenile Home, Becky worked at Goodwill Industries. Some of her clients were people who had been released from the Kalamazoo Psychiatric Hospital.

"We furnished our apartment with stuff that had been donated by the public to Goodwill; I told the guys who worked in the store to keep an eye out for certain things for me. They took good care of me."

Becky smiles when remembering how she and Mike would walk around the downtown area and wonder what friend or acquaintance they might run into. "It might be someone who'd just gotten out of the juvenile home or maybe someone recently released from the psychiatric hospital. They were always nice people, so it wasn't a problem."

Mike adds, "Between the two of us we were making \$12,000. We thought we had it made."

Becky eventually became an accountant and a CPA. Her early years were well before computers, so "the skill employers wanted to see was how fast I could run a calculator. Not just run it, but carry it, because they could be heavy. We called them iron lungs."

Becky retired in 2010 after a 30-year accounting career. After "dabbling in several activities," she finally settled on weaving, which she now does as a small business.

She also continues to play the flute, a skill she honed when she played in K's band. She occasionally joins the student band at Southwest Community College, and she's part of a trio that performs at senior homes and other venues.

Although Becky isn't an actor, her skills as a flutist helped with one of Mike's plays. "We needed some scary music just before the play started," he says, "so Becky and some friends provided it with their flutes." Not exactly an instrument most might associate with fear, but Becky's versatility meant the couple could be part of the same performance. "That was nice," said Mike. 



# *"To Breathe Without Fear:"* RUSSIAN HISTORY ON K'S CAMPUS

BY NICOLAS ANDREADIS

This October will mark the centennial of the Russian Revolution, an event that continues to reverberate in world history. On the event's 50th anniversary a prominent figure of that tumultuous time, Alexander Kerensky, addressed students and faculty at Kalamazoo College's Stetson Chapel. Nicholas Andreadis, M.D., dean emeritus of Lee Honors College at Western Michigan University and a lifelong student of the Russian Revolution, wrote the following article about Kerensky's visit to K. Dr. Andreadis grew up during the cold war when the West considered Russia an existential threat. The first nine months of the Russian Revolution captured his imagination, as it was perhaps an opportunity, albeit fleeting, to bring some measure of democratic principles to a country that for centuries had lived under autocratic rule.



Alexander Kerensky speaks with a student during a visit to campus.

Alexander Kerensky, former prime minister of Russia, rose from his chair and addressed a standing-room-only audience in Stetson Chapel. It was October 1967, and the United States and Soviet Union were engaged in a two-decade cold war. No one in the chapel could know that this would be Kerensky's last public speech.

Alexander Feodorovich Kerensky was born in Simbirsk on the Volga River, May 7, 1881. He was the son of a public school principal, who, ironically, was a teacher and mentor of Kerensky's fiercest rival, Vladimir Illych Ulanov, known as Lenin. Kerensky's address was one of two events held at Kalamazoo College to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the Russian Revolution.

Kerensky was a lawyer. He began his legal career defending political prisoners oppressed by the autocratic rule of Czar Nicholas II. He described his role as an advocate for "the defense of the people who were accused by the old government and arrested because they tried for the liberation of a new democratic Russia." Red Sunday, the 1905 massacre of workers in St. Petersburg, was a pivotal moment in Kerensky's career and steered him toward politics. He was elected to the Duma, Russia's parliament, in 1912, and with Nicholas's abdication in 1917, became first a cabinet minister then prime minister of the fledgling Russian Provisional Government. Kerensky was a passionate orator and a firm believer in democratic government embedded in legislative processes and procedures. Under his leadership the Duma introduced the social, agrarian and political reforms considered to be essential to Russia's progress as a nation emerging from centuries of Romanov rule.

In his address at Kalamazoo College, Kerensky reminded the audience that in the early 1900s, monarchs governed most of Europe. He outlined the great reforms that took place in Russia in the 19th century under the reign of Emperor Alexander II, the grandfather of Nicholas II. Alexander liberated the peasants, introduced political reforms, and created free and autonomous universities and an excellent system of justice, which, Kerensky said, did not subsequently exist in Soviet Russia. Alexander's assassination in 1881 brought an abrupt end to the reform movement. The outbreak of World War I, Kerensky reminded the audience, brought a mix of tragedy but also enthusiastic hope for

the "restoration and installation in the whole world of a permanent peace based on justice and democracy."

The United States gave almost immediate recognition to the Provisional Government as a response to the overthrow of the monarchy, but primarily to keep Russia in the war. From February to October, 1917, Russia was in turmoil with conservatives, socialists and Bolsheviks engaged in a fierce struggle for control of the country. Lenin capitalized on this chaos and the weakness of Kerensky's Provisional Government. Ultimately the Bolsheviks gained the advantage and put an end to Kerensky's 100-day tenure as prime minister. Under duress Kerensky fled to the West.

Kerensky lived in exile for 52 years, unable to do anything more than criticize the Bolshevik-Soviet regime from a distance. He studied classified Russian documents at the Hoover Institution of War, Revolution and Peace in Palo Alto, California, and taught

at Stanford University while lecturing widely. He said he detected signs of a greater freedom in the Soviet Union and was optimistic that one day Russia would "breathe without fear."

"The real story:  
a club of  
conspirators  
against elementary  
human rights."

He felt he knew the heart of Russian people because of his extensive travels throughout Siberia, Turkestan, the Baltic, and other regions of Russia. He described himself "as a kind of leader of all democratic opposition inside the parliament and in the country" and dismissed the notion that all Russians were illiterate, assuring his audience that "freedom [and social justice] is personally known by all."

He said: "The result of the war created a new type of population...which was disillusioned with the so-called formal democracy and tried to find some new way of life." It was a milieu in which totalitarian ideas developed strongly and quickly, inspired by Marx's *Communist Manifesto*. He quoted that pamphlet's exhortation—"Your business is first to destroy all social and political structure of the existing world until the last stone"—and suggested such a viewpoint appealed to Lenin "because he was destructive not creative."

Throughout his speech, Kerensky was highly critical of Lenin and the Bolsheviks. He argued that the events of October 1917 did not constitute a true revolution for the people, nor was Lenin's conception of a dictatorship of the proletariat about freedom

because its intent was to suppress democracy. “The real story of the so-called Great October Social Revolution,” he added, was a “club of conspirators against the essentials, the most elementary rights of the normal population.” Strong words.

Despite 50 years of Soviet rule, Kerensky remained optimistic about the future of Russia. In a message written one month after his address at Stetson Chapel, Kerensky took a softer tone in summing up a half century of communist rule.

“The time has come to abandon our pessimism in our evaluation of trends in the Soviet Union. The basic trend is the thrust toward freedom, and this alone is sufficient for optimism. Five years ago it would have appeared beyond belief that the horrors, the blood and sacrifices imposed on the Russian people were but transient events in their history. Today it should be clear to all that Russia is not to be measured or judged by 50-year spans, but upon centuries of her national traditions and her enduring spiritual heritage. The time is still distant before the Russian people can begin to breathe without fear. But this time will come to pass. Of this there can be no doubt.”

Kerensky spent the last years of his life in New York City. After a lengthy hospitalization, he died at age 89 in June 1970. He bemoaned the fact that he never returned to his beloved Russia. On his life in the West, he reflected, “I am here physically; spiritually I am in Russia. This is the home of American friends. I have no home and no memories binding me here. I would return [to Russia] tomorrow if it were possible. On one condition—that I will not be silent, I will speak as before, that the future of Russia and the happiness of her people are impossible without accepting the principle of human freedom.” ■



# LIFE AND DEATH ACTION

BY PHYLLIS ROSE

Activism is woven into the fabric of Jax Lee Gardner’s everyday life. And it’s not just because Gardner, 34, is the center manager for the Arcus Center for Social Justice Leadership at Kalamazoo College (ACSJL).

“My mom was very politically interested,” Gardner said. “I went to a number of different events when I was a small child that were activist related. They were safer content areas, like environmental activism and animal rights kind of stuff. I remember marching in a PETA protest when I was in third grade; the cops were yelling at us that we had to be on the sidewalk and no more than one person to a square; I remember being separated from my mother.”

But coming out as queer at age 13 Gardner discovered was a different—and more controversial—content area for activism. “I hit adolescence and I realized I was attracted to women and not men,” Gardner said.

When Gardner came out, the family was living in southern Maryland in a military community because Gardner’s stepfather was a military contractor. There, Gardner began high school, described as an “awful experience,” due to terrible bullying and discrimination.

The administration essentially denied the bullying was happening because in their minds there weren’t any queer kids in the school, Gardner said.

That didn’t stop Gardner from participating in queer activism. The Gardner family lived about an hour from Washington, D.C., so Jax went into the city to work with the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), Capital Pride, Sexual Minority Youth Assistance League (SMYAL), Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG), and the National Queer and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF). Gardner campaigned, raised funds and participated in political action and pride days.

Gardner found a leadership role in LGBTQ activism when the Day of Silence Project expanded its silent protest to high schools in 1997. Established at the University of Virginia in 1996, the Day of Silence involved students taking an oath of silence to symbolize the silence that lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people were forced to endure.

High schools were invited to participate, and Gardner was tapped to be on the local high school’s advisory committee. It was the first action Gardner helped to organize.

“It did not go well because we were told that we would be kicked out of school,” Gardner said. “We did it anyway, and we ended up getting a lot of faculty support, which was really helpful. My parents allowed me to host at our house the debriefing after the day’s action.”

At age 15, Gardner was beginning to develop leadership skills through the experience of negotiating resistance.

“It was intimidating to be 14 or 15 years old, an underclassman in this rural high school, going up against the administration,” Gardner said. “They were very displeased. I was very fortunate to have a supportive family because I knew I would not be in trouble if I were kicked out of school for that.”

Then when Gardner was 16, two events created an overwhelming sense that queer activism was a matter of life and death.

First, there was the death of a friend, Bobby, whom Gardner had met through a PFLAG group. At the time, Bobby was trying to figure out how to talk to his mother and stepfather about his sexual orientation. When he finally came out to his mom, they got into a fight and she took his little brother and left, Gardner recalled. After Bobby went to bed, his stepdad killed him and

then killed himself.

A few months later, Matthew Shepard, a student from the University of Wyoming, was beaten and tortured, dying several days later in the hospital.

"This is not about my romantic life, my sexual life," Gardner realized at the time. "This is not about some piece of my identity. This is something that people are dying for. That could happen to me, too. It could happen to my family."

Gardner became more involved in radical activism not only in the queer community but also in foreign policy.

"I started doing a lot of civil disobedience actions such as intentionally trespassing, chaining myself to things, sit-ins, boycotts; it varied," Gardner said. "I got involved in the School of Americas Watch group which was an ongoing annual protest against a military installation at Fort Benning, Georgia, that does proxy training for Central and South American military operations."

During that time, Gardner was filled with anger and many overwhelming emotions.

"The flip side of that was I had a lot of amazing camaraderie," Gardner said. "I lived in these collective living situations. I met incredible people. I got to see a lot of the country going around doing these different actions."

After six years of intense radical activism, Gardner was burned out. While doing the activism, Gardner had also been going to school and working, finding jobs that allowed involvement in social actions and volunteerism, such as being a franchise manager for a Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream shop in Charleston, South Carolina. "Ben and Jerry's was a very politically active company," Gardner said. "There were a lot of supports put in place for employees' civic engagement."

"We got cash in our paychecks, community bucks, that we had to spend with philanthropic intent in the community. We all got to be on the clock to work for different nonprofit organizations."

Gardner finished a bachelor's degree in poetry from the College of Charleston, and after moving to Kalamazoo, obtained a master's degree from Western with a major in English literature and a concentration in the intersection of literature, political science and public policy.

"All of my work in the humanities was a byproduct of my activism," Gardner said. "A lot of my writing was very political in undergraduate and in graduate school. Most of my work was



in queer theory, postcolonial theory, feminism, women and gender studies. I did an independent study in public policy and the law."

Gardner's master's thesis was on the poet Marilyn Hacker's sonnet sequence, "Love, Death, and the Changing of the Seasons," which is about being a lesbian parent in the 1980s. Jax has two children.

"It's interesting because there is not a lot of artifact from the 20th century about queer parenting," Gardner said. "So this sonnet sequence that was very much a literary endeavor also proved to have this social science component to it as well." Ironically, according to Gardner, a lot of people saw themselves as silenced or disappeared because of the utter absence of any kind of cultural representation of themselves.

By this time, Gardner and partner, Renee, had moved to Kalamazoo where Renee was pursuing a doctorate in English literature. Gardner got a job in Western's business college. Later, Gardner received a fellowship and taught in WMU's English department and was assistant director of the first-year writing program.

Then, for about five years Gardner worked at Kalamazoo College as departmental coordinator for history and social sciences. One thing which drew Gardner to K was the social justice center. She got involved with its programs, and that involvement eventually led to the center manager position.

"My job is to oversee our events and our programming and the use of the building," Gardner said. "I also do a lot of work with our budget. I do a lot of work with our community engagement, our regional fellowships, our student fellows and our student research fellows. We do a lot of different kinds of work because we are trying to engage on campus with students, faculty and staff."

Employees of the Arcus Center are also expected to have their own social justice projects outside of work. Gardner has two projects, the St. Luke's Community Diaper Bank, and the Kalamazoo Infant Mortality Community Action Initiative (KIMCAI).

The Diaper Bank seeks to provide diapers to families who cannot afford them, Gardner said. Diapers cannot be purchased with Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) funds or with food stamps, so families are often left without any safety net.

About one in three families in Kalamazoo County can't afford

to adequately diaper their children, Gardner said.

"There are accounts of parents re-using disposable diapers, children with staph infections from not being adequately diapered, and children who have been removed from the home by Child Protective Services based on charges of neglect when really it's an issue of poverty and inadequate access to diapering," Gardner said. "Most childcare centers require that you send your child with diapers. Therefore, if you don't have diapers, you don't have childcare, so it has an economic impact. It's a large problem that has very little public voice. So we decided to take that on."

During the fall diaper drive in 2015, the Diaper Bank took in 26,000 diapers and by mid-year 2016, another 10,000 had been donated and distributed to partner agencies, Gardner said.

Related to the diaper project is Gardner's work with KIMCAI where the goal is to reduce the infant mortality rate in Kalamazoo among African-American infants to 6 per 1,000 births by 2020. "Black women in this community are losing their babies at rates disproportionate to their white peers," Gardner said. "And that trend is seen at every level of income and education."

Gardner, ACSJL's representative on KIMCAI's steering committee, also works with the home visitation team, the cultural competency objective group and the Fetal

Infant Mortality Review at Western Michigan University's Homer Stryker M.D. School of Medicine.

KIMCAI implemented various programs last fall including a Safe Sleep Awareness Month and the rollout of the Community Infant Mortality Initiative.

Outside of work, Gardner still participates in various actions as time and family life allow. "Even though this is a moment in life where I don't have a lot of discretionary time," Gardner said, "I give my heart and my support where I'm able with a lot of issues. I think my activism is much more daily than it used to be. I'm living into the things I believe in. That's what I mean by the daily-ness. My own liberation is tied up in the liberation of others. We have to be doing this work all the time."

Through activism, Gardner hopes to create a better world. "Sometimes the tide of negativity feels overwhelming," Gardner said. "I feel like I can fold and just feel overcome by it. Or I can do something."

"It's a large  
problem with little  
public voice"

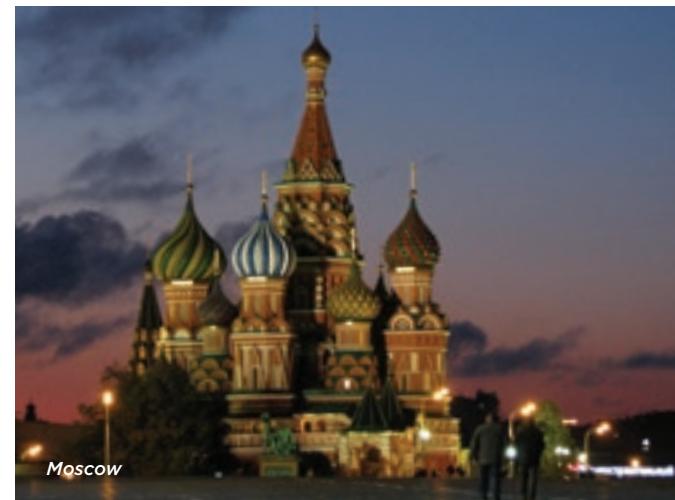
# LEAPER

BY OLGA BONFIGLIO

"Once I celebrated Halloween at the castle  
of Vlad the Impaler."



Istanbul, Turkey



Moscow



Iceland



Thailand

Jennifer Zeoli's foreign study has never stopped.

Fortunately, she has a great job for travel and the perfect avocation (photography) to freeze and savor its moments.

After the psychology major (class of 1996) graduated she returned home (Clinton Township, Mich.) and took a temporary job through Kelly Services. She was assigned a two-week gig at Tweddle, a publishing company that quite likely produced the owner's manual in your car. Well, for Zeoli, "temporary" turned to 20 years that, through work or play, have included 45 countries and 300 cities.

Quotidian and un-sexy as automobile owner manuals may seem, there are cars all over the world, making manuals a very cosmopolitan product. As Tweddle's account manager for Ford Europe and Ford Asia Pacific, Zeoli has worked in many countries,

including a three-and-a-half year posting in Turin, Italy. Last December she was in Melbourne, Australia, and February found her in India. Whenever she's on the road, she takes every opportunity to wander and see the sights.

"I like my job," said Zeoli. "Evolving technologies make it interesting. I also love traveling for the company and on my own." Travel means diving into different languages and cultures and meeting different people, with many of whom she continues to correspond.

"Foreign study at K cultivates confidence and an open mind," said Zeoli, who studied abroad during her junior year in Strasbourg, France. "K helped prepare me for work in other countries."

Work abroad has provided other, less material, value. "Travel allows you to see how other people live, which can deepen your awareness and appreciation of your

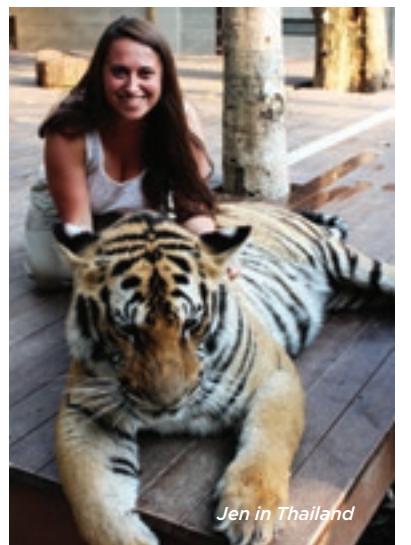
own home." (For all her travels, Zeoli still calls home the town where she grew up.) "When I was in Cambodia, I saw long lines of people with sick children waiting to see a doctor. In Tanzania I saw kids wearing shoes made from motorcycle tires. Travel has changed my perspective on what's important in life."

Her wanderings extend beyond work. She's seen (and photographed) wonders: the star-filled night sky outside her Bedouin tent in the Sahara desert, the muted gray beauty of beach ice in Iceland (see back cover), the grace and presence (both overwhelming and tenuous) of the animals—lions, elephants, giraffes and wildebeests—she saw during a safari in the Serengeti.

Zeoli has a knack of aligning the places she visits with her own life's moments, like



Florence, Italy



Jen in Thailand



Amman, Jordan

timing her 40th birthday celebration on Easter Island. One year in Europe, she celebrated Halloween by going to Transylvania and visiting the castle of Vlad the Impaler.

"He's considered a hero because he helped defend Romania against the Ottoman Empire," said Zeoli. "His brutality helped inspire the 1897 gothic horror novel, *Dracula*, by Irish author Bram Stoker."

In addition to her business travel, Zeoli has joined group tours and traveled alone. In 2012, she soloed in Jordan and Turkey and never had any problems. "I always show respect for people and don't take any unnecessary chances. I've been OK and expect that will continue."

In true liberal arts fashion, Zeoli preps for her trips by studying the history of a place. Before she saw the cathedral

in Florence she studied how construction commenced in 1294 without a plan for building the dome. Builders put up the walls, and the town held a contest that sought ideas on how to build the dome.

"Once you know a few things about a place, you gain another layer of appreciation for it," said Zeoli.

She definitely appreciates Tuscany and hopes to one day own a villa there. "My love of Tuscany grew when I worked in Italy. I spoke broken Italian but managed pretty well with my 50 Italian co-workers. They became my teachers and were patient and kind to me."

Zeoli studied French at K and relied on it when she spoke Italian.

"If I didn't know a word in Italian, I'd use the French word and add a

vowel at the end. You'd be surprised how often it worked," she said. The company also gave her a week-long language class in Florence. "I did pretty well," she said, "but the teacher did comment that I spoke Italian with a French accent."

Zeoli's position provides four weeks of vacation which (no surprise) she devotes to travel.

"I use the wallpaper on my computer for the next place I will visit," she said. Next on her agenda is Hawaii.

"One of the items on my bucket list is to ride in a helicopter over the big island," said Zeoli. "It will make for fantastic photos, and I can't wait!"

Her photography has morphed from

avocation to art. Zeoli is quite accomplished at recording the beautiful and intriguing places she has visited. She uses a Canon 70D camera, which has full manual settings. It's definitely not your point-and-shoot style camera, and it produces fabulous effects.

She takes her camera with her everywhere and loves to photograph landscapes, cityscapes, animals and flowers—or anything she finds interesting or unique. She is intent on capturing the moment.

"When you stand in front of the pyramids you're a part of them," she said. "When I am home and look at the photos on my wall, I think about how they represent different moments of my life."

Of those 45 countries and 300 cities, what's her favorite? "Florence. I love its history, its connection to cultural giants like Dante, Machievelli, Michangelo and DaVinci, its compactness and, of course, its fabulous food."

"I don't usually go back to a lot of places, but I go back to Florence as often as I can," adds Zeoli. "It's a great picture-taking place, too."

She posts her photos on Facebook to share moments with family and friends. Lately, she is selling her photos.

"I went to the Ann Arbor Art Fair one year and noticed all the amazing photos for sale," she said. "I decided to sell my photos, too."

She features her photographs through Fine Art America (<http://fineartamerica.com/artists/jennifer+zeoli>), which provides an online marketplace and fulfillment service as well as marketing services for artists and photographers.

Someday, she'd like to pursue the art market for her photography and write a coffee table book featuring her travels and photography.

Zeoli encourages others to travel but knows it's not for everyone. "Some people don't like the inconveniences, or they may be fearful of the foods they might have to eat. Others, like me, want to experience everything they can. If it's your passion, you have to go for it...like the old proverb, 'Leap before you look.'"



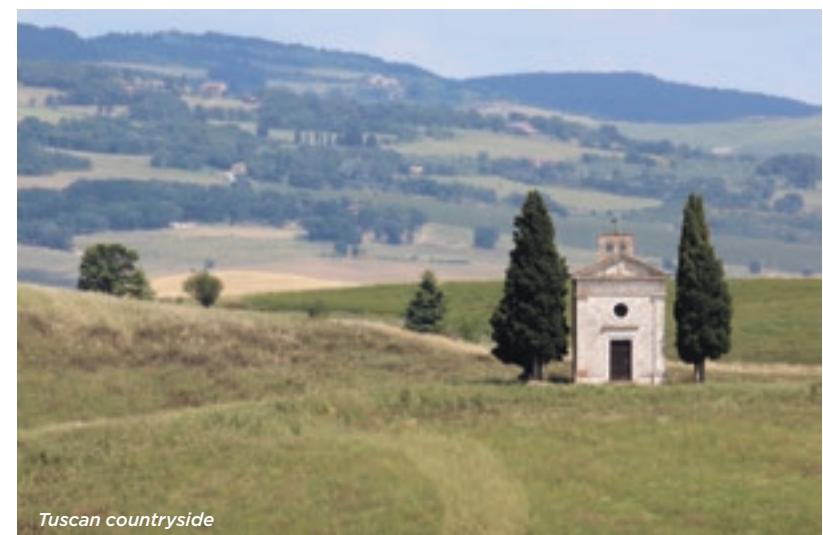
Milan, Italy  
Cappadocia, Turkey



The Galapagos



Cappadocia, Turkey



Tuscan countryside



Xian City Wall



Blue butterfly



Lioness in Tanzania

The Kalamazoo College Alumni Association cited five persons with Distinguished Alumni Awards and inducted three individuals and three teams into the Athletic Hall of Fame. A ceremony honoring the inductees took place on the Friday of homecoming weekend, 2016.

**Calvert Johnson '71** received the **Distinguished Achievement Award**. The world renowned organist earned his B.A. in music at K. He studied abroad in Madrid, Spain, served as a teacher aide in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, and rebuilt an organ for his Senior Individualized Project. Calvert earned master's and doctorate degrees in organ performance from Northwestern University. He then served as a professor of music at the college level until his retirement in 2014. Most of his teaching occurred at Agnes Scott College in Decatur, Georgia. Calvert's lifelong research interests include women composers and early keyboard music of Spain, England, Italy and the Netherlands. He has performed internationally, often focusing on the works of underrepresented groups, including women, blacks, Asians and Hispanics. He has published 11 books, 19 editions of music by women composers and 10 professional recordings. Calvert's civic activities are numerous and focus on the arts, social justice and wildlife welfare and preservation.



Calvert Johnson (right) received the Distinguished Achievement Award. Professor Emeritus of Music Lawrence Rackley Smith presented the honor.

The Alumni Association presented the **Distinguished Service Award** to **Kay Seaman Lewis '65** and **E. Turner Lewis '63**. Kay and Turner majored in Spanish and biology, respectively. Both were involved in the vocal music scene on campus. She participated in ski club; he played intramural sports. In 1965 they married and studied at Michigan State University, where Turner earned his Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree, and Kay completed a master's degree in Spanish. She taught Spanish at the college level for a short while. Eventually they worked together in a Chelsea (Massachusetts) veterinary clinic Turner purchased in 1971, and from which they retired in 2006. Both were and continue to be very active in civic affairs. And their service to Kalamazoo College has been extraordinary. They are longtime members of the 1833 Society, and they have served as class agents. Together they established an endowment for faculty development. During the 1980s and 1990s they led the Boston Area Alumni Association. Turner served for 18 years as a trustee of Kalamazoo College.



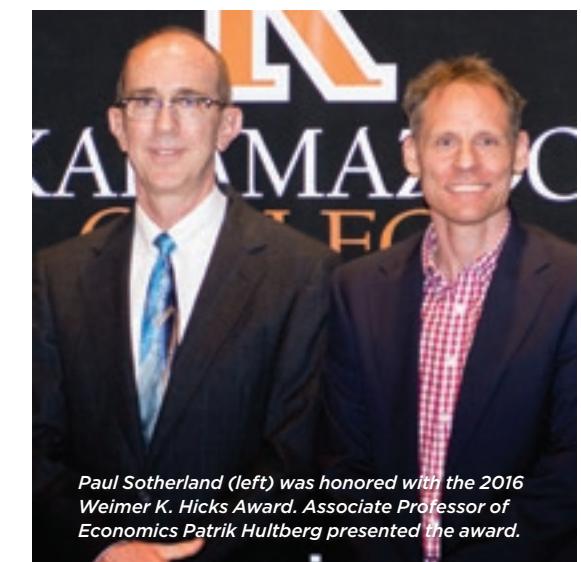
Turner and Kay Seaman Lewis flank Bonnie Wachter Swenby '69, who presented the couple with the 2016 Distinguished Service Award.

**Samantha Weaver '08** is a renewable energy strategist at Pacific Gas and Electric Company (San Francisco, Calif.). She also is the winner of the 2016 **Young Alumni Award**. At K she majored in political science with a concentration in environmental studies. Her interest in the role of institutions in climate change mitigation and environmental sustainability was reflected in her internship (researching campus sustainability best practices at the Sustainable Endowments Institute in Cambridge, Mass.) and her study abroad at the International Sustainable Studies Institute in Thailand. Her Senior Individualized Project was a National Wildlife Federation-supported carbon emissions inventory that became "The 'Green' K-Plan: Toward a Carbon Neutral Campus." Samantha earned a master's degree (Tufts University, Medford, Mass.) in urban and environmental policy and planning. She did research on renewable energy costs, technology and policy trends at the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory before joining PG&E two years ago. She is the author of more than 10 publications.



2016 Young Alumni Award winner Samantha Weaver (left) and her presenter, Joan Hawhurst, director of the Center for Career and Professional Development.

The Alumni Association named Professor Emeritus of Biology **Paul Sotherland** the winner of the 2016 **Weimer K. Hicks Award**. The award honors a current or retired employee who has provided exemplary service for the College in ways that advance the mission of the Alumni Association. Paul started at K in 1985 as an assistant professor of biology. He was soon promoted to associate professor and full professor. He has served the College in the roles of associate provost, coordinator of educational effectiveness and chair of the biology department and of the natural sciences and mathematics division. His awards are legion, including the Lux Esto Award of Excellence, the Outstanding First-year Student Advocate Award, and the Florence J. Lucasse Lectureship for Excellence in Teaching. On the occasion of his 20th work anniversary, his students and former students organized the first-and-only "Just for Grins" Alumni Symposium to honor his teaching. Paul is a student of the factors that affect student learning and of the ways to best assess the effectiveness of various pedagogies. He also served as the founding director of the Lillian Anderson Arboretum. His K career, he said, fulfilled his dream "of being like the professors I enjoyed as an undergraduate. It was a long, strange trip and a good one."



Paul Sotherland (left) was honored with the 2016 Weimer K. Hicks Award. Associate Professor of Economics Patrik Hultberg presented the award.

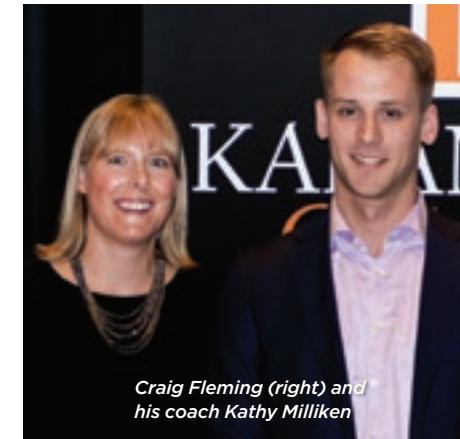
Three Hornet athletes—**Craig Fleming '11, Steven Nasson '98 and Katie Stefl '09**—are new Hall-of-Famers. Among other honors, Craig was the MIAA most valuable swimmer (2011), national champion in the 100 freestyle, an NCAA Postgraduate Scholarship winner and an Academic All-American. He holds Hornet records in seven events. Craig majored in economics and business and studied abroad in Madrid, Spain. He is a senior consultant in healthcare information technology at Accenture.

A prep tennis and basketball standout, Steve focused on the racquet rather than hoops at K. He was the MIAA most valuable player (1998) and nationally ranked in doubles (17) and singles (2). He was the NCAA singles runner-up in 1998. Steve majored in economics and business and studied abroad in Madrid, Spain. He is the CEO and founder of Drive Health, a national consulting company that helps ophthalmology practices grow and develop.

Katie set four records as a Hornet swimmer. She also broke two MIAA records and qualified three times for the NCAA championships, where she earned All-American honorable mention accolades twice and All-American recognition for her performance in the 400 IM in 2007. One of K's Academic All-Americans, Katie received the outstanding senior women's athlete award in her senior year. She majored in political science and religion and studied abroad in Bonn, Germany. After earning a master's degree in sport management (Springfield College) Katie began a college coaching career that continues today. She held coaching positions at Union College (Schenectady, New York) and Youngstown (Ohio) State University, and she currently coaches at George Washington University (Washington, D.C.).

Three teams—two tennis and one basketball—are 2016 inductees into the College's Athletic Hall of Fame. The **1982 Men's Tennis Team** posted a 16-10 dual match record, won the MIAA championship and finished second in the NCAA Division III championships. Eight letter winners returned the following year. The **1983 Men's Tennis Team** posted a 15-10 dual match record, won the MIAA championship and finished third in the national D-III championships.

The **1996 Men's Basketball Team**, a.k.a. the "Phoenix," rebounded from a slow start to finish 17-11 overall and 8-4 in the MIAA. The second place conference finish was the team's third in four seasons. The "Phoenix" also earned an at-large bid to the NCAA Division III basketball tournament, the only hoops team in school history so honored.



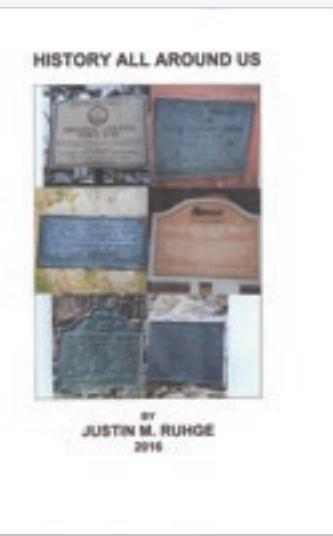
*Craig Fleming (right) and his coach Kathy Milliken*



*Steven Nasson (left) and presenter Bobby Pennington '01*



*Katie Stefl (right) and teammate Maegan Whalen*



**HISTORY ALL AROUND US**



BY JUSTIN M. RUHGE  
2016

## 1956

**Justin Ruhge** has written a book titled *History All Around Us*, a compilation of new subjects of interest in Santa Barbara, Goleta, Lompoc, Santa Maria, Santa Barbara County and California. Justin selected 65 articles from the hundreds he's published in the past 35 years. They describe the founding of Santa Barbara, its Spanish and Mexican heritage, English history, pioneer families, military bases, maritime events, railroads, archaeology discoveries and aeronautical training histories. The book emphasizes the "history all around us" with articles about the many history markers located around the county and state. The California resident has published 16 books that cover local, county and state history.

## 1963

**Don Schneider** shared the following recollection of an experience in the Jim Crow south of 1957. "As a kid growing up in the predominantly white west Michigan of the mid-1950s, I knew little of the severe discrimination that existed not only in Michigan but especially in the South. When I was just 16 (in 1957), I wrangled permission from my parents to bicycle with a buddy from New Orleans, along the Gulf coast, across the top of Florida, and along the Atlantic coast to New York City. I was stunned by the blatant segregation. One June evening in Florida crossing the Suwannee River, which was spread out over a broad swamp, the mosquitoes were so thick that we were afraid to stop for being eaten alive. It was getting dark; no way could we stop to pitch our pup tent, but cycling along the highway in the dark was dangerous. We finally came to a dimly lighted motel, but the sign out front said 'Colored Only.' Nonetheless, we went in and asked for a room. At great risk to himself, the kind operator of the place recognized our plight and said, 'You two go to the back cabin and do not come out. Stay out of sight.' We did so. The rate was \$1.50. Next morning, we left early and quietly, with grateful and heavy hearts."

## 1968

**Bill Garrow '68** noted that three generations of Kalamazoo College alumni were in attendance at the Chicago Athletic Association for a Thompson-Biggs family wedding one weekend last November. Pictured are (l-r): **Sam Arnold '00, Clyde Solomon '71, Shirley Thompson '70, Bill, Tom Thompson '68 and Kim Thompson '02.**



# A FIRST YEAR (NEARLY) REFLECTION

BY ERIN MAZZONI '07,  
PRESIDENT, AND  
ERIN BROWNLEE DELL '93,  
MEMBER,  
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION  
EXECUTIVE BOARD

The authors thank our new President, Jorge Gonzalez, for taking time with us to reflect upon his first year. And, thank you, alumni, for sending us your questions and for always being eager to share your K stories.

The nascent tenure of Kalamazoo College President Jorge Gonzalez approaches its first anniversary, and in our opinion it has been a grand year. President Gonzalez and his wife, Suzie (Martin) Gonzalez '83, have traveled to many cities across the country to meet alumni and allow us to share our K experiences and what makes K special. Their love and passion for the College and commitment to the liberal arts make them a perfect choice to lead K.

Last August we invited alumni to participate in a survey that would serve as framework for a two-part series of articles that welcomed the Gonzalezes to K and detailed his vision for the College. Part one published in the previous issue of *LuxEsto* and included welcome messages and questions from alumni. We asked those questions when we talked with President Gonzalez in December. This article is based on that conversation.

The president loves alumni because his interest in how K shaped who we are today is genuine. And he knows that we, in return, can help shape K's future. His listening tour, which is our opportunity to introduce our stories, experiences and commitment to our *alma mater*, is vital to him. He says, "In order to fully understand the character of the school I need to hear from all alumni—what was special about their education, what they remember most."

We spoke at length about how alumni can help make K more visible and desirable to prospective students. "Talk, talk and talk more about your experience," President Gonzalez says. "Share what K did for you, all of the different components of that experience." Finding ways to talk about K and share your K stories with co-workers, family and friends, he pointed out, builds awareness of the College. And what we say about our *alma mater* for some audiences will carry more credibility than what the College says about itself.

Many alumni have asked about opportunities (in addition to widely sharing the outcomes of our K experiences) to support and connect with the College. Alumni Relations, in partnership with the Alumni Association Executive Board, developed five points of alumni engagement (<http://www.kzoo.edu/alumni/get-engaged/>), and President Gonzalez says a more concise and effective guide for supporting K would be hard to imagine. Identifying and Recruiting a Prospective Student; Offering an Internship or Externship to a Student; Mentoring a Student or Recent Graduate; and Serving as a Volunteer add value to an undergraduate experience proven nearly peerless

in its capacity to develop critical thinking and problem solving. "Internships and externships, in particular," the president says, "are central to the K experience and make K special, in part because alumni are involved in a wide range of fields all over the world. Strengthening and extending that network would be very valuable to K students."

Accessibility to that network (and the overall educational experience of which it is a part) is addressed by the fifth point of alumni engagement—Making a Charitable Contribution to Kalamazoo College. President Gonzalez says, "Think of that student who's smart and wants to come to K. Regardless of the student's family's financial situation, it will be possible to come to K because we have alumni who believe that opportunity should be available." Those words should resonate with us, because most alumni

were able to come to K in part because of institutional financial aid available because alumni made financial gifts to their *alma mater*. We have the chance to pay forward that opportunity.

We can also broaden the notion of the returns that accrue from a liberal arts education. Today too many too narrowly consider the ROI of a college education

to be a high-paying job only. "A more valuable return," President Gonzalez says, "goes much deeper. It has to do with self-discovery combined with an awareness of and engagement with the world beyond oneself. It has to do with the wherewithal to adapt to change and to make changes that reflect our interdependence, the fact that our happiness is tied to that of others. That notion of return is deeper and more accurate than just a high paying job. For that kind of return you need the liberal arts."

We combined our last questions for President Gonzalez:

Why K? and what's surprised you so far? His answer to the former was threefold: "My family ties to K," he says, "the fact that K's values are a perfect match to mine, and how friendly and welcoming everyone has been.

"Suzie has told me about the College for years, and because a focus on liberal arts combined with strong experiential opportunities is at the heart of our college experiences, we know what a difference that combination has made in our lives, professionally and personally."

And surprises? The degree and duration of the warm reception from such a variety of constituencies—students, faculty, staff, alumni, retirees, neighbors, the city and more. "Everyone makes us feel so welcome," President Gonzalez says. "That has been absolutely amazing."

Are he and Suzie enjoying Hodge House? "I love the fact it's in the heart of campus. That allows me to engage with the campus community. Hodge House is a place that should be open to the campus, and we enjoy sharing it." 



# KALAMAZOO HOME COMING 2016...



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October 20-22, 2017  
[kzoo.edu/homecoming](http://kzoo.edu/homecoming)



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**LUXESTO IS BASED ON  
THE COLLEGE'S OFFICIAL MOTTO,  
LUX ESTO, "BE LIGHT."**

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## Persistent Peripatetic

To say that Jennifer Zeoli's study abroad became a never-ending adventure would be an understatement. Two decades of post-K journeys have taken her to 45 countries and 300 cities, including Iceland (below). Story on page 38.

