

Potash Hill

Marlboro College | Spring 2018



POTASH HILL

Published twice every year, *Potash Hill* shares highlights of what Marlboro College community members, in both undergraduate and graduate programs, are doing, creating, and thinking. The publication is named after the hill in Marlboro, Vermont, where the college was founded in 1946. "Potash," or potassium carbonate, was a locally important industry in the 18th and 19th centuries, obtained by leaching wood ash and evaporating the result in large iron pots. Students and faculty at Marlboro no longer make potash, but they are very industrious in their own way, as this publication amply demonstrates.

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Potash Hill welcomes letters to the editor. Mail them to: Editor, Potash Hill, Marlboro College, P.O. Box A, Marlboro, VT 05344, or send email to pjohansson@marlboro.edu. The editor reserves the right to edit for length letters that appear in *Potash Hill*.

Potash Hill is available online at Marlboro College's website: www.marlboro.edu.

FRONT COVER: Mushrooms growing on a mossy log are harbingers of forest health, being the fruiting bodies of long-lived and massive mycelia essential to soil structure and nutrient cycling. These mushrooms were found in what is now the Marlboro College Ecological Reserve, which promises to help protect the ecological functioning of this forest for decades to come. Read more on page 8. Photo by Pearse Pinch '14.

ABOUT MARLBORO COLLEGE

Marlboro College provides independent thinkers with exceptional opportunities to broaden their intellectual horizons, benefit from a small and close-knit learning community, establish a strong foundation for personal and career fulfillment, and make a positive difference in the world. At our campus in the town of Marlboro, Vermont, students engage in deep exploration of their interests—and discover new avenues for using their skills to improve their lives and benefit others—in an atmosphere that emphasizes critical and creative thinking, independence, an egalitarian spirit, and community.



"At Marlboro that tension is much more weighted in favor of democratic processes, which I think is distinctive," says senior Helen Pinch. "Especially right now, when people are trying to figure out how to do democracy better in this country." Hear more of the former head selectperson's thoughts on Town Meeting at youtu.be/TDtSaSuTw7k. Photo by David Teter



Photo by Ben Rybisky '18

CLEAR WRITING

Every Word Has a Natural Rhythm BY LINDSAY STEVENS '17

A *seanchai*, meaning bearer of "old lore," is a traditional storyteller and historian of Ireland. Today *seanchaithe* use oral stories that have been passed down to them in addition to written tales. But before written language, they were servants to the chiefs of the clans and were responsible for keeping track of and remembering important information. This information included the history and laws of their clans, long lyric poems, folktales, and mythology.

Seanchaithe were highly respected members of their clans, though not all served the clan chiefs. Some traveled from one community to another, exchanging their skill for food and shelter. Others were members of the community: village storytellers who told stories at ceremonies and community events.

A *seanchai* has a distinct style of storytelling that focuses on speech and gestures, similar to those found in conversation. The biggest indicator of the style is the use of words that are easily heard and understood. This is because the first responsibility of a storyteller is to their audience's ability to understand the story.

Most *seanchaithe* avoid using technical terms, or language used in specialized fields. Their words are often short and concise, but not lacking in texture or pattern. Storytellers recognize that every word has a natural rhythm and inflection that can either aid or harm a story, and that having a strong vocabulary will allow the storyteller to flow between phrases.

One way of heightening the natural flow of words is the use of multiple synonyms. This technique takes one word and attaches other words with a subtle difference: such as gleam, glisten, shine, and shimmer. Another technique is to use short sentences and words. Many *seanchaithe* use a wide selection of one-syllable words to tell their story. This prevents them from using overly flowery language and keeps the story moving.

Excerpted from Lindsay's paper on storytelling in Ireland, part of her Plan of Concentration in theater, photography, and writing that included a personal narrative performance titled "The Things I Never Said" (pictured). Lindsay's was one of several Plans from the class of 2017 added to Marlboro's online Virtual Plan Room. See more at marlboro.edu/vpr.



UP FRONT: FOREST TRADITIONS

"Have you yearned for a fantastical escape from the bustle of day-to-day life? Do you want to be the maker of your own home, and build a magical village in the woods of Marlboro? Join us as we create our own village in the woods. We will spend the week using the forest and our creativity to build a community that reflects our personalities and interests. Your input will sculpt our village culture; we will work together to name our village and create folktales, songs, and traditions. Our buildings will be inspired by traditional Cree designs, Hobbit holes, Earthships, and our own unique innovations. We hope to establish our village as a home away from home—something that can always be returned to, added upon, and shared with our friends and neighbors at Marlboro over time."

—From the description of the Bridges orientation trip last fall titled "Village in the Woods: Building Community from the Ground Up." As part of the trip students explored the majestic apple trees that are part of their new home on campus.

Photo by Sterling Trail '17



EDITOR'S NOTE

“Functioning ecosystems are the base upon which the entire human experience is built,” says Willson Gaul '10, who is in a doctoral program in ecological modeling at University College Dublin. “I find it very hopeful that the Marlboro community recognizes the importance of maintaining minimally-disturbed ecosystems in the landscape around us, and has designated a place for ecosystem processes to develop in their own way.” Willson is talking about Marlboro’s new ecological reserve, established by the trustees in November, and he is one of several community members who offer testimonials as a part of Jenny Ramstetter’s article on the reserve (see page 8).

Deciding on how to conserve ecological resources—and who benefits—is never easy, as recognized in Matt McIntosh’s personal narrative from Chile’s Patagonia (page 14). But we are fortunate at Marlboro College to have an engaged community and governance structure that allows voices to be heard, concerns to be raised, and progress to be made in the interest of the common good. If you have any doubt of this, I encourage you to see the recent video on Town Meeting highlighted on the inside front cover of this issue of *Potash Hill*.

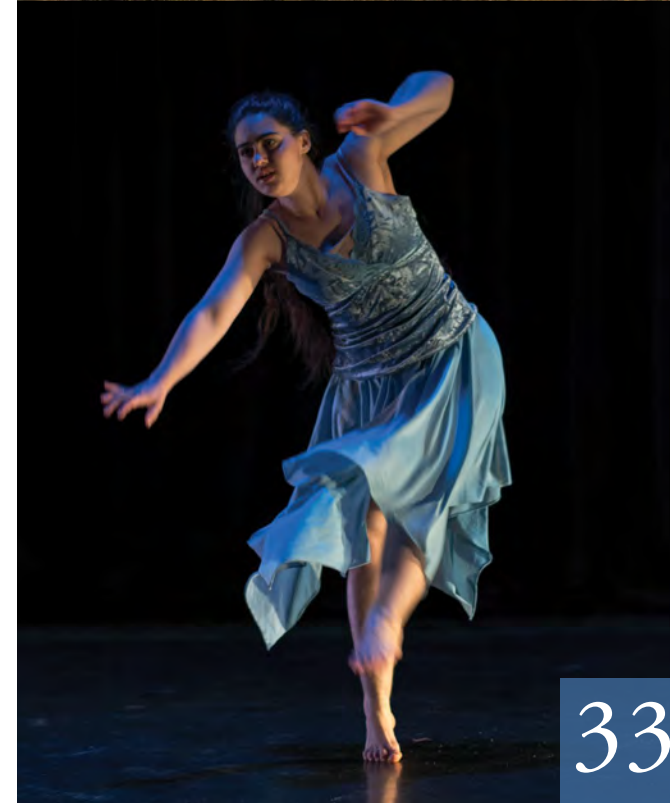
We are also fortunate at Marlboro to offer students a breadth of experience that stands to make them conscientious community members, as underscored by the new Center for Experiential Learning and Global Engagement (page 18). New faculty member Bronwen Tate’s pop-up class on daily practices exemplifies the responsiveness of the curriculum to the emerging interests of students (page 24). Even the ecological reserve itself has been the subject of several classes and Plans of Concentration in recent years, in response to student concern.

As always, this issue of *Potash Hill* contains a veritable ecosystem of exciting events, news from faculty, and of course class notes. Can you see the forest for the trees? I welcome your news, your views, your reactions to this issue, at pjohansson@marlboro.edu.

—Philip Johansson, editor



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Letters

POTASH LOVE

I find *Potash Hill* consistently interesting, which is a way of saying that I find the activities of current and past students at Marlboro to be consistently interesting. My years at Marlboro served as a time when I was able to introduce myself to...myself. I became engaged in, and engaged to, music, and a music marriage soon followed. The degree to which I was trusted by Marlboro faculty to pursue what was essentially my own “curriculum” was incredibly influential. I subsequently got degrees from the New England and Peabody conservatories, but Marlboro remains the place where I met myself. —Dick Riley FS77

As institutions in the world seem to get bigger and bigger, and individuals and their relationships less and less important, I realize how vital it is for me to support places like Marlboro, where truth, beauty, and caring for those around us is what we live for. —Shaylor Lindsay FS74

NO SLOUCH

I was a student of Audrey Gorton, an extraordinary teacher and person. She represented the best of the Marlboro tradition: critical thinking, brevity, and articulate speech. Audrey insisted on a student’s full attention and participation. There was no slouching in her class—neither in the chair nor in one’s decorum. I have applied the lessons learned in her classroom throughout my own professional career as a physician educator and corporate executive. —Tadd Lazarus ’78

REMEMBERING MILT

I would be remiss if I didn’t comment on the death of my good friend Milt Randolph (*Potash Hill*, Fall 2015). He was kind and easy-going, bright and well-liked by all the students and faculty. He was also the only black student in the college at the time when the school was in its infancy, when we were all called pioneers. One incident stands out when we went into Brattleboro to get haircuts. The barber refused to cut Milt’s hair so we walked out. When we told this story to our classmates, everyone at school, to their credit, pledged to boycott that barbershop. Milt died of cancer but when people called him he was his usual cheerful self, regardless of the pain he was in. He will be missed by all he came in contact with. —Irwin Rosen FS55

ERRATUM

Under class notes, Abby Jacobson ’82 was misspelled Abby Jackson. Sorry Abby!

ADVENTURE OF EXISTENCE

Life is indivisible, and a method of teaching which presumes the contrary by an arbitrary division of knowledge is not only ineffectual but even disastrous. The student grows by his own impulse toward self-development. This impulse can be helped and directed, or it can be virtually destroyed.

Each individual carries within himself the adventure of existence. The educator stands, as it were, amidst what is already in motion—and violently so in the young. Sensing the quality of this motion, its predisposition and its nature, the teacher can point out the likely paths, or he can stand there stolidly and command a halt, and then proceed to lecture the adventure well nigh into oblivion.

—Excerpted from the Marlboro College Bulletin, December 1949. Do you recognize the young adventurers on this bike, or have reflections or stories from your own adventure at Marlboro? Send your memories to pjohansson@marlboro.edu.



A FOREST FOR THE STEWARDING

BY PRESIDENT KEVIN QUIGLEY

The Abenaki people, who inhabited the rolling, forested lands of Vermont long before Marlboro College appeared, had numerous legends about the importance of being good stewards. One that we can continue to learn from is about Gluskabe, who was asked by the Creator to watch how the people used his gifts.

Gluskabe saw how the people were consuming so much maple syrup, which flowed directly from maple trees back then, that they grew fat and lazy. The Creator told Gluskabe to dilute the maple sap so that the people would have to work hard to enjoy his gift of maple syrup. The result is the annual tradition and beloved labor of boiling down maple sap each spring—40 gallons of sap or more for each hard-won gallon of syrup.

Like the Abenaki, we in the Marlboro community have to learn to be good stewards of the natural gifts we have, and work hard to use them appropriately. At the November board meeting, the trustees took an important step, by designating approximately 130 acres of the college’s land as an ecological reserve.

This was the culmination of a more than decade-long process (see page 8). While the property was initially enrolled in Vermont’s “current use” program, providing some educational and tax benefits, this required regular logging. Starting in 2004, community members objecting to the ecological impacts of repeated logging sparked the initiative to take this parcel out of the program.

Over the past two years, through tutorials, courses, and Plans of Concentration, as well as committee and Town Meeting discussions, the community laid the final groundwork for setting this land aside for posterity, allowing its natural development without human interference. Professors Jenny Ramstetter and Todd Smith, along with students Daniel Mederios, Ben Rybisky, and Kristin Thompson and staff Randy Knaggs, Tanner Jones, and KP Peterson, played key roles in this final stage of what has been a community-driven effort. Dan Cotter, director of plant and operations, and Dick Saudek, chair of the board of trustees, were also instrumental.

In establishing this ecological reserve contiguous to the main campus, Marlboro is making a clear and compelling commitment to being the best possible stewards of our natural environment, reflecting the values extolled by the Abenaki people. Although there will be no timber harvesting or development in the ecological reserve, Gluskabe would probably be pleased to see that local community members will continue the beloved labor of carefully harvesting maple sap there.

For our news article on the ecological reserve, go to marlboro.edu/reserve, or see WCAX’s coverage at goo.gl/93Agf2.

When snow fell silently on Marlboro this winter, the forest beyond campus seemed wilder—the white blanket covering some traces of our impacts on the land. In the years to come this forest may indeed grow wilder, now that approximately 130 acres north of campus are designated as the Marlboro College Ecological Reserve. These forested lands will be among the few in Vermont where, in the absence of timber harvest and development, ecological processes dominate. Our decision to eliminate these two significant human impacts has the potential to support a forest with old growth characteristics, one that may be more resilient to climate change. But such a profound decision by the trustees involved the active engagement, including compromise, of countless community members over more than a decade.

The new ecological reserve is directly accessible from campus, and is often the first entry point into our woods for students and other community members. It receives significant use for education, recreation, daily movement, spiritual renewal, and aesthetic appreciation. This forest also serves as an important connection, physical and figurative, to the Town of Marlboro via the Town Trail. With the designation of the reserve, the college is now the steward of this conservation land and of another, similar acreage that is enrolled in Vermont's Use Value Appraisal Program, in which timber harvest occurs according to a forest management plan.

The forest within the reserve is an ecological jewel for the Marlboro College community. It includes sections of rich northern hardwood forest, vernal pools, a west-facing hemlock ridge, patches of large maples and oaks, and ecological processes supported by this diversity. Forest communities provide many ecosystem services such as carbon sequestration, erosion control, clean air, and clean water. In particular, the forest north of campus is crucial to the water supply of Marlboro College. Older forests, with their larger trees, sequester greater amounts of carbon than younger forests, an important feature in this time of climate change.

Educational opportunities also abound for Marlboro students in the reserve, and it is central to our life sciences program. All students in courses from Plant Reproductive Ecology to Animal Behavior spend time

'04 Led by students Ashley Bies and Adam Katrick, Town Meeting recommends removing 136 acres of forest from Vermont's Use Value Appraisal (UVA) Program with the idea of a future ecological reserve.

'05 The college approves the recommendation, with input from an ad hoc Forest Management Committee chaired by consulting forester George Wier '71.

'06 Proposed land is taken out of the UVA program.

'08 The Environmental Advisory Committee (EAC), appointed by former president Ellen McCulloch-Lovell, establishes an Environmental Mission Statement for the college

'12 The EAC further researches the ecological reserve concept, including reserves at other colleges and universities, and submits a report on the rationale for establishing a reserve and how it might be managed.

'13 The concept of an ecological reserve laid out in the report is supported by the EAC. Several members research property boundaries, property tax implications of the reserve, and mechanisms for conservation.

'15 Students in two courses, Forest Ecology and Inhabitants: Introduction to Environmental Studies, research aspects of creating an ecological reserve and bring the concept to Town Meeting for input from community members.

'16 Town Meeting supports a resolution, spearheaded by Carin Allman-Wales as part of her Plan of Concentration, to designate the land removed from the UVA program as an ecological reserve and charge the EAC with drafting the details.

Spring '17 The issue of the ecological reserve is presented to trustees, who request that details be worked out further in a formal proposal. The Plan of Andrea Tirrell includes an outline of natural communities in the proposed reserve.

Summer '17 Meetings with President Kevin, board chair Dick Saudek, director of plant operations Dan Cotter, and science faculty Todd Smith and Jenny Ramstetter as representatives of the EAC define final language and a map for approval by trustees.

Fall '17 At their November meeting, the Marlboro College Board of Trustees approve the proposal establishing the Marlboro College Ecological Reserve. Allison Turner MA '99 teaches an Ecological Reserve Lab class focusing on studies in the forest, in conjunction with Jaime Tanner's Ecology Lab.

Forever Wild(er) Woods

BY JENNY RAMSTETTER '81

In his *Sand County Almanac*, pioneering conservationist Aldo Leopold espoused a land ethic where humans respect natural communities and change "from conqueror of the land-community to plain member and citizen of it." The establishment of a new ecological reserve right behind campus brings Marlboro College closer to that lofty ideal.

Above> Trees in the new ecological reserve will grow big and old, allowing the forest to exhibit unique qualities in its soil and species composition.

“The forest habitat of the college is what brought me to Marlboro and allowed me both to stay and to find a wondrous niche as a student and as a community member. This love and inspiration were my passionate motivations for putting lots of energy I didn’t have to spare into the forest management plan and forest protection process while I was on Plan.”

—Ashley Bies '05, who initiated the move to take college land out of timber management, and has served as a conservation biologist on projects across North and Central America.

“Having forests that are unmanaged is vital to our understanding of forest ecosystems generally, but it is especially important in the face of climate breakdown. To have this forest right here in our midst is invaluable. We know that diverse forest communities are more resilient, and that they may well have greater propensity to withstand climate change. Knowing that this piece of land is an ecological reserve is inspiring and encouraging, and it is forward-thinking on the part of Marlboro College to set aside this land.”

—Lisa Merton, Marlboro neighbor, who audited Jenny’s course on Forest Ecology and co-created the new documentary *Burned: Are Trees the New Coal?*

“To be in the woods is one of the reasons I chose to come here. I have spent a lot of time walking and skiing on the trails, and I’m glad that future community members will have the same opportunities that I’ve had to connect with this place. For me, it means that Marlboro is living up to its values and working hard to maintain the unique qualities that make it such a special place.”

—Chris Lamb '18, who was part of the Forest Ecology class that collaborated on the proposal for the ecological reserve.

“I find it very encouraging that the community cares deeply enough about ecological processes in the world around us to designate an area where those processes are given primary consideration and protection. This shows that people at Marlboro recognize the fundamental importance and uniqueness of ecological processes.”

—Willson Gaul '10, who did research on forest reserves as part of his role on the EAC, and is now pursuing a PhD in ecological modeling at University College Dublin.



Mara Eagle '12 learns about the local flora during a Plants of Vermont class, one of several courses that makes use of the ecological reserve. Photo by Jeff Woodward

learning in these particular woods, as do students studying in other areas of the curriculum. Plan students have conducted their research in Marlboro’s forests over the years, becoming experts in animal tracking, the distribution of clubmoss species, or the ecology of pileated woodpeckers, to name a few examples. Others who have traveled to forests around the world, from Belize to Madagascar, have been inspired by their experiences here.

I’ve been fortunate to benefit from the many values of this very forest myself, through the seasons. Forty years ago this fall I first ventured into these woods and began to learn about the local flora during biology professor emeritus Bob Engel’s Plants of Vermont class. This spring I look forward to reuniting with the eager and dynamic students of last fall’s Plants of Vermont class to look for the spring ephemerals of these woods: trout lilies, spring beauties, violets, trillium. Town Trail remains one of my favorites for cross-country skiing, and I often remember my first night ski there with Norman Paradis '79 and Tadd Lazarus '78.

A special highlight for me was the 2016 Alumni Days walk into the autumn forest with Bob Engel and many alumni—some who know these woods better than I ever

will and some who wished they had spent more time in them as students. Many were intrigued by the prospect of the ecological reserve.

While my love of this forest is rooted in its aesthetic and recreational values and educational wealth, the intrinsic value of the forest as a functioning ecosystem inspired the designation of the ecological reserve. Without the fragmentation caused by development and the impact of timber harvest practices that compact soils and remove biomass, nutrient cycling and energy flow through the forest will change as the forest ages. More decaying logs and downed branches will provide refuge for the germination and growth of new seedlings, the next generation of trees, and habitat for many species.

Rather than being harvested when they are 80 to 100 years old, some of our tree species—sugar maples, cherry, hemlock—may reach their full potential of 200 to 500 years old, with large diameter trunks reaching high into the lush, closed canopy. Under the soil, mycorrhizal fungi relationships will thrive as the soil leaf litter layer develops. The lack of further fragmentation will encourage movement of birds and mammals that use large, more mature tracts of forest, changing the species composition of the forest. While we cannot know the full consequences of our previous forest harvest practices, or the impacts that climate change will have on all forests, we can anticipate that the forest within the ecological reserve will develop into a more resilient system.



Matthew Czuba '16, Allison Turner, and Andrew Shough '14 explore a vernal pool, one of the many unique forest habitats that will benefit from protection.

“Now that it is in place, the reserve provides an opportunity for a rich conversation around the values and opportunity costs associated with activities pursued and forgone in the reserve. I hope it will result in a wide-ranging look at the entire property and how it can be utilized to expand educational opportunities and explore Marlboro’s place in various communities: local, regional, global, anthropological, and wild.”

—Pieter Van Loon '88, who wrote his *Plan of Concentration on forest management of college lands*, and is now a forester with Vermont Land Trust.

“The forests around the college were what first inspired me to study ecology. I grew to know these trails well, and I’m excited about the opportunity to visit this forest in years to come and see how much it grows and changes without the threat of timber harvest. Leaving this land to continue with its natural processes will maintain the biodiversity in this area and also create opportunities for the students to study natural processes.”

—Andrea Tirrell '17, who was part of the *Forest Ecology class that developed the reserve proposal*, and who included an assessment of community types in the proposed forest as part of her *Plan*.

“We now have the opportunity to observe wildlife populations right in our backyard without future threat of massive, local anthropogenic disturbances. The formation of the ecological reserve is a reminder that we have a responsibility to balance exploration and recreation with ecological protection—and that’s a conversation that could have impact far beyond Marlboro College.”

—Adam Katrick '06, who helped spur the original recommendation to set land aside from timber management, and is founder and president of Wolfgard Northeast.



Cross-country skiing is one of several recreational opportunities that will continue to take place in the forest reserve. Photo by Pearse Pinch

As is the way of Marlboro, students were at the heart of this community initiative to establish an ecological reserve (see timeline, page 9). When Town Meeting and the board of trustees provided their unanimous support for the establishment of the Marlboro College Ecological Reserve, I felt that Aldo Leopold would have applauded this demonstration of the college community’s land ethic. In Leopold’s words, “Examine each question in terms of what is ethically and aesthetically right, as well as what is economically expedient. A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community.”

My dream is that the designation of the ecological reserve will inspire us to think deeply about all of the college lands for which we are stewards. Perhaps in the decades and centuries to come—beyond our lifetimes—the fabric of land that is Marlboro College’s built environment, working forest, and more wild forest within the ecological reserve can become a model for Vermont and beyond. In this age of climate change and loss of biodiversity, I take solace in our action of designating the reserve. I believe that the ecological reserve exemplifies Leopold’s notion of a “right thing,” and that the values of this forest will grow as the forest grows.

Jenny Ramstetter is a biology professor at Marlboro, and has done fieldwork to conserve rare plant species in New England and reconnaissance for patches of old growth forest in Vermont.

“My courses all utilize the outdoors as our classroom, so this commitment to the reserve is invaluable. We practice tools used by ecologists to collect data and answer questions, we explore different habitats and identify the species within them, we learn to track and make observations of the subtle and not so subtle changes throughout the seasons.”

—Jaime Tanner, biology professor, whose *Ecology Lab course began collecting data this year for ecological monitoring in the reserve*.

“If I had been able to help protect even an acre of forested land, I would have been happy. Marlboro had this incredible chance to be a part of a movement to safeguard land by recognizing its value untouched or undeveloped. That we chose to seize that opportunity and protect 130 acres makes me incredibly proud of this community.”

—Carin Allman-Wales '17, who, as part of her *Plan of Concentration*, spearheaded the effort to present and pass the Town Meeting resolution to set aside the ecological reserve.

FOREST LOVE



“I seek to understand the multifaceted and contentious issues of land rights, especially from local perspectives,” says Sophie Ackerman, who is doing her Plan in forest ecology and has been involved in the ecological reserve proposal since she transferred to Marlboro. “The opportunity to speak with local people and understand the land issues that they are most concerned about has been extremely influential in my Plan work.” Sophie spent last summer as a volunteer coordinator in Wyoming’s Medicine Bow National Forest, gaining firsthand experience with key environmental issues such as wildfire and invasive species. “In spite of a presidential administration dedicated to rolling back land protections, many of the people who live closest to these places are not in favor of corporate extractive industries that harm those who have relied on public lands for generations.”



Seeking Common Ground IN PATAGONIA

BY MATT MCINTOSH '17

In the fall of 2015, Matt McIntosh was part of a field research team, run by Round River Conservation Studies, searching for endangered huemules deer in remote Chilean Patagonia. What he found was a steep divide between well-meaning ecological conservation and environmental justice.

Misael's land abutted Bernardo O'Higgins National Park, an 8.7 million-acre expanse of fjords, glaciers, and mountains with a population of roughly 100 people—most of them indigenous—spread across it. A tall, middle-aged man, Misael spoke with a Patagonian accent that was almost impenetrably thick for a Spanish learner like myself, but his hospitality needed no translation. He was immensely happy we were camping in his yard, paying a few Chilean pesos each night. He cooked *sopapillas*—fry bread—and welcomed us into his small kitchen for hours of *maté* and stories. I leaned all the way forward in my seat, hoping to learn more about his life and work in this particularly isolated corner of a region often characterized by its remoteness.

Typically, Misael's company was his eight horses, herd of cattle, and three dogs. Although he sympathized with a neighbor's anger at the dishonesty and lack of respect on the part of a government mapping team that had publicized a trail across their land, the work had created a slight uptick in backpackers and he welcomed the friendly company and commerce. The number of backpackers remained quite low—fewer than 50 annually, according to Misael.

During our data collection, some of our group members lamented the recently burned land that we hiked through near Misael's home.

"It's just a shame that he destroys habitat like this," they said. I was perplexed; trading a few acres of "habitat" for grazing and maintenance of a unique, endangered land-based culture seemed like a decent transaction. Misael's knowledge of and love for the land seemed like something we could learn from.

"What's a few dozen acres burned?" I thought.

I got to voice my reaction a couple days later, on a drive along the gravel lane called the *Carreterra Austral*—Southern Highway—as it contoured along cliffsides and through mist between the Rio Año Nuevo and Rio Cochrane watersheds. My friends offered me the shotgun seat, as I was the tallest in our group; I gladly took it, along with the chance to chat with Adam, one of the instructors.

Adam was in his late 20s, a multimedia journalist and passionate conservationist. We frustrated each other somewhat regularly, as I, along with my friend Robin, raised concerns about the eco-colonialism we felt we saw in the region. Adam, along with nearly everyone else in the program, justified trampling on the ranching culture, economy, and local autonomy by reminding us that we were rapidly losing biodiversity around the globe. I was, of course, sympathetic to the loss of life and species, but it seemed that conservationists from the most polluting countries were asking land-based communities with little fault for climate change to add nearly impossible standards of ecological purity to the growing strains of global markets and tourism.

"If we're so concerned about losing biodiversity," I had argued on several other occasions, "why not prioritize our own backyards? We're the nation that is most to blame for spreading capitalism, which is most responsible for environmental destruction! Why not fight to save our own wetlands from becoming strip malls? Why not worry about the rivers in our own towns back home? The weight of saving biodiversity shouldn't be exported!" I ranted, often coming up breathless.

"Think of it like this," Robin said in one particularly fiery debate. "The U.S. is eating this massive feast of development, of industrialism, of luxury, for more than a hundred years. And then Chile comes along, or China, or wherever. And then we turn away from the table and say, 'Oh, sorry, you don't want this delicious feast.' If folks here in Patagonia want to burn their land, or kill pumas, or dam their rivers, who are we to tell them they can't?"

Over time, Robin and I became broken records in a group full of tried-and-true environmentalists. It was as if any kind of cultural or economic loss could be justified if ecological gains were made. But I hoped this latest, extended time with Misael might sway some minds to reconsider placing the onus of biodiversity conservation on those who are least responsible for the crisis. As the



Opposite> Participants in Matt's field research team explore an alpine valley in Patagonia, part of their efforts to understand local resources and the conflicting demands on them.

Above> Matt takes time to ponder the impacts of eco-colonialism on the banks of a raging glacial river. Photos by Kelsey Hamm

rest of my friends in the car dozed, I spoke up to Adam, trying hard to balance my combative nature with respect for Adam's thoroughly considered convictions.

"Who are we to critique Misael's ranching practices? I mean, he has a kind of knowledge we don't have. And we flew all the way down here—that's a ton of carbon. Wouldn't our energy be more efficiently spent in our own home ecosystems in the States?"

Adam didn't miss a beat.

"Well, if we can convince Misael to stop burning his land, maybe some of that carbon will be worth it," Adam said, his voice matter of fact and calm. "We have to start somewhere. There's a lot of interest in funding biodiversity projects in Patagonia, and we need to protect every inch of habitat we have left wherever we can."

I had wanted to go to Patagonia with Round River because of an ongoing project by a wealthy American couple, Doug and Kris Tompkins. Doug had founded the popular clothing and outdoor gear company The North Face, after making a name for himself climbing in Patagonia in the 1960s. Kris, an avid outdoorswoman herself, had been the CEO of the progressive-minded clothing company Patagonia, Inc. in the 1980s and '90s. They had dedicated their millions to purchasing land in Patagonia for national parks. Their website spoke of "creating national parks in collaboration with neighboring communities and local, regional, and national governments."

Round River had partnered with the Tompkinses to provide free ecological research for the couple's most controversial



A pioneering rancher of the Pacua River valley, Hernán Guelet and a friend rowed up the river for 15 days with 10 sheep in 1967.



Juan Arriada Paro was born in a small farming community south of Coyhaique, where Matt's Team interviewed him about recent sightings of *huemules*.



Marcelo Reyes Rodriguez lives on a farm on the shore of Lago O'Higgins, where he hopes to combine ranching with rural tourism.



Misael Tiznado lives at Glacier Chico, and started his own guiding company to take tourists onto the Southern Patagonian Ice Field. Gaucho photos by Adam Spencer

project yet, “The Future Patagonia National Park.” Their website touted their goal of “fostering local economic progress as a consequence of conservation.” The Tompkinses had every intention of handing over these 174,000 acres to the Chilean public when they had finished various infrastructure projects. But, despite talk of “national parks as a cornerstone of democracy,” many locals felt there was nothing democratic about the way the Tompkinses had purchased a once productive *estancia* (ranch) that had anchored the commerce of a small town called Cochrane before globalization crippled small scale ranching and turned it into a tourist destination for the wealthy. The cheapest rooms in the hotel—“El Lodge”—cost \$350.

On a steep slope a thousand feet above the Rio Baker, a muscular young gaucho named Wilson pointed out which plants could be trusted to hold my weight in case of a fall. As we traversed the ridge in search of endangered *huemules*, a deer featured on Chile’s crest, I watched Wilson leap six feet across a 20-foot drop into a rocky creek. He turned, pointing to the branches he had grabbed to secure his landing.

“This,” he said, shaking a *ñirre* branch. “Not this,” he said, pointing to a less substantial bush downhill.

Trying to appear nonchalant, I nodded. A fall into the chasm below would be, in the best case scenario, a trip-ender. I took a few steps back and launched myself toward the opposite side. My boots squelched loudly into the muddy bank, and I began slipping backward.

“*La rama!*” Wilson said, beginning to reach toward me. “The branch!”

I gripped the *ñirre*’s rough bark and pulled myself back onto solid ground. I started laughing.

“*Muy cerca, no?*” I chuckled. “Very close!”

“Yes, yes,” Wilson smiled, looking relieved. “*Hay solamente una regla hoy. No sangre de gringo,*” he said, laughing. “There is only one rule today. No gringo blood.”

I laughed, embarrassed, and we continued our traverse. It had been fruitless thus far. The *huemules* were not doing well in this area near Cochrane. Locals blamed the *gatos de Tompkins* for the demise of their national symbol. The Tompkinses had been fostering habitat for pumas on their substantial acreage, in addition to putting tracking collars on the apex predators to monitor their activity and health. The former employees of the *estancia* behaved as most gauchos did toward pumas: shoot first, ask questions later. Pumas were notorious for killing livestock.

“For every puma that you see, one hundred have seen you,” Wilson told me in careful English as we stood above a barely decipherable paw print. “It is fresh,” Wilson said. I smiled and glanced around, a little nervous.

Many locals were unequivocally opposed to the outside influence the Tompkinses wielded in their community. Their status as Americans made their chances of ameliorating the situation even worse. Augusto Pinochet’s bloody dictatorship began in 1973 after the CIA helped “foster” a coup in response to the democratically-elected socialist president Salvador Allende’s leftist policies. This resulted in significant anti-American sentiment in Chile, all the way down to minuscule Cochrane.

One day, when we were camping in the sheep pasture of a gaucho named Gilberto, he invited Robin and me down by the Rio Cochrane to watch the slaughter of a lamb. The lamb would be roasted on a stake in front of a fire for the traditional Patagonian meal known as an *asado*. It was a beautiful Saturday in December. Patagonia’s spring was full of bright green *ñirre* leaves, chirping birds, and warm sunshine. Never having killed anything larger than a fish, I was excited and a bit nervous to witness the act. When Gilberto saw me turn my eyes from the lamb’s suffering, he assumed I could not handle the sight.

“These gringos,” he said with a derisive smile. “They cause more bloodshed than anyone else in the world, but they cannot watch a lamb die.”

We all chuckled. I had no interest in defending myself. His point spoke volumes about the immense gap between the views of some locals and those of Round River and the Tompkinses. Robin and I had tried to separate ourselves in Gilberto’s eyes by volunteering to help him with tasks on the *campo*. But we’d always be gringos, complicit and ripe for the teasing.

The Tompkinses viewed biodiversity as worthy of defense at all costs, including local cultures that do not pass their rigorous ecological standards. Patagonians defended their way of life fiercely and measured the land’s health in conjunction with its ability to support them. Their culture and regional pride, as well as a wealth of local knowledge and land-based traditions, were rooted in the land’s bounty and beauty.

Despite these differences, I wondered if a mutual love of the land could foster some kind of harmony between these conflicting ideologies. Cochrane (and Patagonia in general) needs to prepare for the onslaught of tourism, which all parties agreed was imminent. Who would profit from this? And who would control the narrative that tourists hear? The answer to these questions will have significant implications on how the land will be used in the future, and if the *gaucho* culture’s wisdom will survive. This wisdom, I thought, could be used to protect both land and culture in future fights for the region.

I could only conclude that the wounds of the past—those directly and indirectly caused by the Tompkinses—appeared to leave any common ground infertile. The day before I departed Cochrane to return home, Doug Tompkins died in a kayaking accident on Lago General Carrera, a few hours north of Cochrane. Gilberto had given me the news as we ate together in the *quincho*, or common area. His tone was calm, matter of fact, and dignified. There was no sadness.

“I will keep his family in my prayers,” he said, before walking out to tend to the sheep.

Matthew McIntosh graduated in 2017 with a Plan of Concentration in environmental studies and politics, including essays exploring place, history, and community in Memphis, northern Minnesota, and northern New Mexico. He is now working as a guide for Outward Bound California and organizing within the guiding community to protect endangered cultures, species, and ecosystems.



ON & OFF THE HILL

New Center Enhances Whole-Student Learning

The periodicals room has been a sleepy corner of the Rice-Aron Library recently, made relatively obsolete by online periodicals and indexes, but that all changed this fall. With a little consolidation and a good deal of renovation, that room has been transformed into a beehive of activity known as the Center for Experiential Learning and Global Engagement. The new resource combines the offices of international services and career development to provide both students and alumni access to dynamic and diverse experiences beyond the classroom.

“Although many of the services we provide are not new, the center better serves the academic needs of Marlboro students because they have a clearer path to information—a clearer path to success,” says Kate Trzaskos, director of experiential learning and career development. “We work closely together now to bridge the gap between theory and practice, providing students multiple pathways to design their learning in innovative ways.”

“Marlboro students have the option to study away in many different capacities, including through international exchange programs, World Studies Program internships, and domestic partnerships,” says Maggie Patari, director of international services. “It often wasn’t clear to students—and the faculty helping them—where to start, since these programs were housed across a few different offices here on campus. Now there is a single, clear resource for students to find study away options, internships, funding, professional development...it’s all right here.”

For years, the career director and the international director have co-taught a class called Finding an Internship, in which students learn networking, intercultural communication, how to discover their passion, and how to find an internship or job or post-graduate fellowship. Kate and Maggie felt that these are all things that should be offered to all students,



Opposite> Students explore a tropical forest on Guadeloupe, an example of the kind of expansive experience promoted by the new Center for Experiential Learning and Global Engagement. Photo by Clayton Clemetson

Above> Sophomore Moon Livingston takes a selfie with some new friends in Cambodia, during a service-learning trip there over winter break.

not just the ones enrolled in that class, so the new center is also the spot to come for all of that.

“It’s so crucial for students who go overseas for an academic experience—or any other experience outside the classroom—to be able to articulate that experience, and reflect on and use their own growth and learning to move forward with some exciting path after Marlboro,” says Maggie. “Whether it be for grad school, a job, an international position, or study abroad, the new combined office better prepares students to find that voice.”

The new center got off to a festive start in November with International Education Week, when colleges and universities across the country celebrated the benefits of worldwide international education and exchange. At Marlboro, this included movie nights, student-led poetry readings, discussions, theater performances, international lunches, trivia games, and a talk sponsored by the Windham World Affairs Council about China’s new approach to global development.



“I am interested in looking at how environmental policy changes when entities influence development and management of resources in a geopolitical or geographical setting that is different from their own,” says junior **Leni Charbonneau**. She spent last summer in

the Republic of Georgia to carry out her Plan research, while contributing her efforts to development groups in the former Soviet nation. “I worked with a number of government-supported groups and agencies to learn about the state of environmental policy in the country and how this interacts with the boom of foreign interest and activity. Georgia is at a fascinating stage in which to study questions related to that frame of interest.”



Reference and technology librarian **Amber Hunt** and technical services librarian **Stephanie Sopka** presented at the November meeting of the Vermont Library Association’s College and Special Libraries Program. They led a discussion titled “Weekly Team Meetings for Library Student Workers: A Not So Revolutionary Idea,” reflecting on their positive experiences working with student workers in the Rice-Aron Library. “We are fortunate to have such a responsive and responsible group of workers, and we all benefit from meeting together to review procedures, discuss new ideas, and just feel like we’re all in it together,” said Stephanie.



In October, senior **Chris Lamb** and philosophy professor **William Edelglass** presented at the International Association of Environmental Philosophy annual meeting in Memphis, Tennessee. Their paper “Rights, Culture, and Land: Theorizing Politics, Ecojustice, and Ceremony in Contemporary Native Environmental Activism” was based on collaborative research funded by an Aron Grant. “Among the 30 or so people in the audience was one of the contemporary scholars most influential in Chris’s thinking, Ed Casey, who agreed to read Chris’s paper and give him feedback,” said William. “It was a great experience for him and for me.”



Maggie Patari, left, leads students and staff in a rousing game of international trivia at the library “research bar” during International Education Week.

A highlight of the week was a performance by special guest and Afro-Caribbean artist Andrew Clarke, hosted by Living In Color in the new Center for Equity, Empowerment and Inclusion—formerly known as Marlboro Gardens. Andrew performed from the play *The Black That I Am*, a monologue that explores the journey of a Jamaican man moving to the U.S. and trying to fit into the cultural fabric of America.

“The Center for Experiential Learning and Global Engagement offers a broad range of services to help Marlboro students channel their passions into valuable off-campus experiences and meaningful work, starting with their first year and continuing after graduation,” says Kate. “From assessing interests to developing skills, we want to empower students and alumni to explore, define, and realize their post-graduate goals.”

Amy Beecher Brings Intellectual Freedom to Art

By Emmett Wood

“Marlboro’s belief that art is a process informed by craft, play, reflection, and contextual awareness echoes my own artistic and pedagogical views,” says Amy Beecher, who joined Marlboro as visual arts professor in the fall. “The college itself is attractive, but the idea that my intellectual freedom as an educator is honored as much as my artistic freedom is what drew me here.”

Amy’s academic history includes a BA from Brown University and an MFA from Yale, where she began using inkjet prints as a way to express herself. Amy cites pop culture as one of her biggest sources of inspiration.

“I’m trained as a painter—that’s what I studied in college and graduate school,” says Amy. “But while I was there I started making inkjet prints. When I began pushing that further, it led to making enormous inkjet prints. They were so big that they started to become installation-like... eventually I started to combine them with other types of work in poetry and sound.”

Although Amy’s career objective has always been to create art and teach, after college she began trying various vocations in order to continue her work, including being an adjunct professor, a personal assistant, and a photo researcher for *Teen Vogue*. Then she discovered the art community AS220, located in Providence, Rhode Island, where she spent the last two years before coming to Marlboro. AS220 maintains artist residencies, exhibition spaces, and other collective resources.



Freshman Emma Sheerin discusses her drawing with Amy Beecher. Photo by Kelly Fletcher

Outstanding in His Field



President Kevin joins students and other volunteers for the United Way Day of Caring in September, where they gained some “in-the-field” experience gleaning kale at Harlow Farm, Putney, to support the Vermont Foodbank. Photo by United Way of Windham County

Amy says that her transition to Marlboro proved to be rather smooth following her time at AS220, as the organization’s values “echoed the Marlboro ethos.” Her choice to make the move to Vermont was rooted in her desire to continue changing; “I felt like the type of teaching that I could do at Marlboro could shift and change with me as I evolved as an artist. I couldn’t find that anywhere else.”

One of Amy’s recent pop culture inspirations has been *Cathy*, the comic strip by Cathy Guisewite that ran from the 1970s to 2010, which gently poked fun at modern-day women through the protagonist’s struggles with work, weight gain, and interpersonal relationships. As a recent fellow in interdisciplinary art at the MacDowell Colony,

Debating Power



Students Charlie Mahoney, Riley Wicks, Amelia Fanelli, and Annalise Guidry debate whether the Supreme Court has too much power, in a celebration of Constitution Day presented by Meg Mott's Debating the Constitution class.

Amy worked on a project that offers critical revisions of the *Cathy* comic series in drawing, text, and sound.

“What I learned was that the *Cathy* I grew up with in the late '80s and early '90s had over the course of the last 20 years morphed from a conflicted feminist into a passive, apolitical subject, and I became interested in reinventing her and making up a new end to her story. I like to re-imagine *Cathy* as a more complex character than the one I think she evolved to be.”

As her art continues to grow and change, Amy looks forward to furthering her education with Marlboro students. In the fall she taught two courses, one centered around the concepts of color and one on drawing. This spring she is teaching a course called Accessorizing Painting and another on Alternative and Artist-run Spaces. She is excited to see more work from the students, whom she describes as “a true community of interdisciplinary intellectuals and artists.”

“A lot of students take art classes thinking about how art is going to fit into this much broader project of their Plan. And so when they come to your class it's not just to make art, it's to see if artistic methods will be useful to them as part of a broader inquiry. To me, that is quite advanced—to be thinking not only ‘what am I learning,’ but ‘what's the big picture here and how can I transfer this knowledge of making elsewhere?’”

Bronwen Tate Finds Permeability in Writing By Emmett Wood

“This is a place where I don't have to choose between the different interests that I have,” says Bronwen Tate, who joined Marlboro as writing professor in the fall. “Instead of feeling like I'm being pulled in too many directions or like I'm spreading myself too thin, I feel like I can do all this work and enjoy it.”

In keeping with the traditional flexibility and individuality that goes into classes at Marlboro, Bronwen plans on helping students hone their writing skills in the broadest of ways. In the fall she was already teaching several tutorials with seniors in their final semester, as well as a writing seminar on food and culture and a workshop course on narratology and narrative craft.

“I've been working with first-year students for the past three years,” says Bronwen, who came to Marlboro after teaching in Stanford's interdisciplinary critical-thinking program, Thinking Matters. “So to work with students who are at different points along the way and to see the progress of students who have been with a project for a while is really great. I have students who haven't done much creative writing at all, and others who are on Plan and have full novels under their belts. So I'm trying to bring everyone into the conversation, make it useful, not get anyone freaked out or make others bored.”



Bronwen Tate explains a close reading exercise during a writing class. Photo by Kelly Fletcher

Bronwen received an AB in comparative literature from Brown University, then spent time in Italy teaching English as a second language before returning to Brown to complete an MFA in literary arts. After a year teaching community college in New York City, she went on to earn her PhD in comparative literature from Stanford University, with a dissertation titled “Large as Life: The Scale of Post-1945 American Poetry.”

While her workshop course last fall focused on narrative prose, Bronwen is a published poet. Various selections from her current poetry manuscript, *Probable Garden*, a recent finalist or semifinalist for several book awards, have appeared in journals including *Denver Quarterly*, *Lit*, and the *Laurel Review*, as well as in chapbooks *Vesper Vigil* and *Like the Native Tongue the Vanquished*. At Marlboro, Bronwen takes an interest in many forms of writing and enjoys bringing them together in diverse ways.

“I'm here to teach writing in a lot of different ways, and I'm excited to be in a place where there is this kind of permeability of writing, where creative writing isn't over here and scholarly writing over there. I like to think across genres. I'm really interested in empowering students to write what they have a hard time putting language to, what feels urgent and real for them.”

Bronwen's future plans for classes include a poetry workshop as well as a multi-genre workshop with a focus on environmental crises. “In my upcoming classes I plan to include realistic fiction, fairy tale/fantasy fiction, personal essay, and poetry. I really just want to encourage students to try out a bunch of different genres and think about them. I'd like them to think about the audiences writers are attempting to reach, what different genres can achieve and what they can't, and then pick a genre that they feel excited about exploring in a longer project.”

Bronwen is enjoying the opportunities to learn and grow that come along with beginning at a new school, such as introducing a pop-up class on Cultivating a Daily Practice in response to student interest in National Novel Writing Month (see page 24). “My mantra is that in ‘beginner's mind’ there are many possibilities and to

the expert there are few. I am trying to embrace everything with a spirit of, ‘how can I contribute to things?’”

Graduate Teaching Programs Partner with the Peace Corps

In December, Marlboro College was pleased to announce that all of its graduate teaching programs have been approved to partner with the Peace Corps as part of the Paul D. Coverdell Fellows Program. The Coverdell program will offer significant financial assistance for returning Peace Corps Volunteers choosing to attend graduate teaching programs at Marlboro.

“As someone with a keen appreciation of the value of both Peace Corps service and a Marlboro education, I am especially pleased with this new partnership,” said President Kevin, speaking from his own experience as a Peace Corps Volunteer, country director in Thailand, and president and CEO of the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA). “This new partnership is a perfect way for Peace Corps Volunteers to build on their skills



Their diverse experiences overseas makes Peace Corps Volunteers ideal candidates for Marlboro's MAT programs. Photo by John Willis



World Studies Program senior **Amelia Fanelli** (pictured, in Marlboro sweatshirt) was enrolled in a course called Conflict and Identity at the School for International Training (SIT) last fall, when she was joined for one class by students in the World Studies Colloquium. Together they made human sculptures in an attempt to illustrate conflicts in different countries. “The Marlboro and SIT students collaborated in creating these ‘sculptures,’ discussing the conflicts, and sharing ideas on possible resolutions,” says **Jaime Tanner**, biology professor and director of world studies. “It was a truly rewarding experience, and we hope to facilitate more meaningful exchanges between the institutions.”



On behalf of Marlboro College, **President Kevin** signed a statement issued in September to the Vermont congressional delegation, decrying the decision to revoke the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program. Signed by all independent colleges in Vermont, the statement says the decision “threatens to disrupt the lives of students in our state and across the country who, through no fault of their own, have known no other home than the United States.” “Vermont has a long tradition of welcoming and embracing immigrants, and the state’s colleges are an important part of upholding that tradition,” said Kevin. See the full statement at goo.gl/KZbKKA.



In November, dance students and faculty from colleges all around Vermont gathered at Marlboro College for the fourth annual **Vermont College Dance Festival**. During the two-day festival, dancers participated in performances and workshops including Senegalese dance, Brazilian dance, improvisation, contemplative dance, and Skinner releasing, as well as student-centered discussions. The emphasis was on encouraging artistic sharing, exchange of ideas, and a close community among higher education dance programs in Vermont. A highlight was the premier of *Voice and Vessel*, a performance by Delaney McDonough and Hanna Satterlee, funded in part by the New England Foundation for the Arts.

and experience a Marlboro education that will prepare them well to shape a purpose-driven life.”

The Coverdell Fellows Program offers returned Peace Corps Volunteers the opportunity to earn a Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) through one of the three graduate teaching programs at Marlboro College: Teaching with Technology, Teaching for Social Justice, and TESOL. The program offers financial support to fellows, and allows returned volunteers to gain valuable professional experience through internships in underserved communities in the United States.

Learn more about the partnership at marlboro.edu/coverdell.

Pop-up Class Fosters Daily Practice

One of the key outcomes of last summer’s “action planning group” discussions on curriculum was the suggestion to offer pop-up classes on emerging issues or events that students want to learn more about. Marlboro’s new writing professor, Bronwen Tate (see page 22), rose to the challenge in November, responding to students interested in participating in National Novel Writing Month, known as NaNoWriMo.

“I was excited about the idea of supporting students taking on NaNoWriMo, but thought that it might be useful to open the course up to practices other than writing and to goals other than completing a full-length novel,” says Bronwen. She called the course Cultivating a Daily Practice, and invited participants to come up with clearly measurable daily goals for progress on any long-term project, from artwork to podcasts to math research. “Over the course of my own writing, I’ve become a big believer in the transformative power of gradual steady progress, and I wanted to share this with students.”

The class met weekly on Tuesday evenings, in the dining hall, with additional informal meetings hosted by several of the students throughout the week, all around campus.



Freshman Cedar Van Tassel, left, carves a wood block during breakfast as part of his daily practice.

Bronwen developed a series of discussion and reflection questions for each week that asked students to focus on their practice in different ways, including the behavioral, artisanal, social, and emotional habits that sustain them.

“A big goal of the course was just getting students to step back a bit from the work they’re doing and think about how they do it: what works, what doesn’t, and really, where they can find greater joy in it,” says Bronwen. “How they can stick with it through moments of frustration and not get derailed.”

“This month was wonderful,” says freshman Xander Porter, who wrote five pages in her journal each day. “I learned so much about myself as a writer, a student, and a person. I will take what I learned in regard to my habits and use it for the next time I sit down to write a paper.”

“This class gave me a justification for spending time on something I ultimately found very rewarding and meditative,” says freshman Cedar Van Tassel, who brought woodworking tools to breakfast each day and carved woodblock prints. “Whatever I was working on was usually well received too, and this outside positive reinforcement seemed to be an uncommon part of many other people’s routines.”

The format encouraged students to set their own goals, and Bronwen found that many students felt more ownership and agency in their education as a whole.

Students were consistently supportive and respectful of one another’s struggles, and the class had some valuable support and participation from other members of the community. President Kevin committed to a daily practice of reading poetry, “with a goal of reawakening the muse,” and math professor Matt Ollis sent weekly email updates with detailed charts of his math research progress.

“The invitation to observe and reflect on their own process has led to lots of little light-bulb moments,” says Bronwen. “At Marlboro, we’re small enough and nimble enough in our organizational structure that things can go from idea to course in just a few days. Pop-ups like this really let us take advantage of that.”

Illustrious Faculty Members Retire

“Working at Marlboro College has been a wonderful experience—one in which the learning environment is a shared adventure,” says Cathy Osman, visual arts professor. Like all great adventures, this one is sadly coming to an end for Cathy and three other esteemed and beloved colleagues—Tim Segar, Jay Craven, and Lynette Rummel—who will retire next year.

Cathy came to Marlboro in 1997, and has been instrumental in the evolution, expansion, and sustained



Cathy teaches painting early in her tenure at Marlboro. Photo from archives

strength of the visual arts within the Marlboro curriculum. She enjoyed the close collaboration between herself and students as well as the unique ability to know her students both personally and professionally.

“Cathy is the real deal as an artist and teacher,” says Mara Eagle ’12, an artist based in Montreal and pursuing an MFA at Concordia University. “She is rigorous, playful, serious, adventuresome, patient, and deeply caring. Her commitment to making, looking, and questioning in her own artistic practice is equaled by her commitment to her students.”

“I can honestly say my relationship with my students has been a partnership, built on mutual respect, curiosity, and trust,” says Cathy. “What could be more rewarding than this?”

“As an artist and a teacher, I still draw upon my time with Cathy in terms of how I approach critique and discourse around art,” says Rafael Kelman ’09, who received his MFA from Hunter College and is currently an artist working in New York City. “Whatever the nature of a given critique, she always made it clear that she respected me as an artist and she respected the work I was showing her...as long as I respected it myself.”

“Through each step of inquiry, action, and commitment, she taught me to make, take it apart, do and undo; she



Photo by Adam Keller '10

wanted me to be fluent in my own visual language and to find my own voice,” says Marta Willgoose ’01, a Marlboro trustee, artist, and consultant for non-profits. “I’ve used this practice in countless aspects of my work and life as an artist, a professional, a mother, and a citizen of humanity.”

Cathy especially enjoyed the sense of shared discovery on several international trips, beginning with a faculty-led trip to Cuba, two trips to Vietnam, and two trips to Mexico. Her deepest connection has been in Cambodia, where the art faculty has sustained a deep relationship and she has participated in four faculty-led trips over the years.

Despite the rigors of teaching, committee work, and other responsibilities of being a faculty member, Cathy was also able to actively maintain her own practice as an artist, and exhibited frequently in the region. In 2014 she was awarded a Vermont Arts Council “creation grant” to support a body of work addressing her experiences

in Cambodia and the multifaceted relationship between the U.S. and the Southeast Asian nation.

“Cathy has maintained a sense of being curious and open to the world even though she knows so much about art—that knowledge hasn’t stopped her from exploring new ideas,” says Nina Eslambolipour ’15, who did a body of artwork inspired by the immigrant identity for her Plan. “My favorite part of working with her was knowing the extent of how much care and respect she has for her students and community. Her style really allowed me to grow and sparkle.”

“Her contributions as a community member are thorough and discerning,” says Zoe Holland ’14, who did her Plan of Concentration on drawing, sculpture, and animation. “She doesn’t stop thinking. As her student, I always knew Cathy was being honest with me, with her critique and her friendship. She’s a treasure.”

Tim Segar, another treasure and Cathy’s husband, had been teaching for 14 years before coming to Marlboro in 1998, but was surprised at how different the experience of teaching here was. He found he had to re-invent himself as a teacher.

“Here it was not enough to teach to a given group of students—rather I found that I had to learn to engage

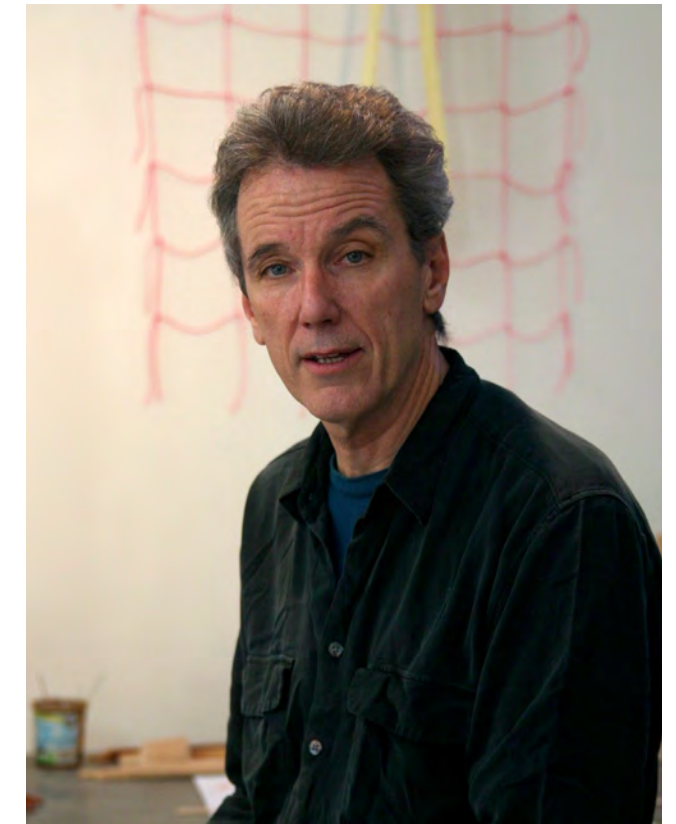


Photo by Adam Keller

each one,” says Tim, visual arts and environmental studies professor. “The scale and culture of Marlboro allow this to happen. Until coming here, I was unaware of how much of a difference that made, not just in the success of the students but in how much more I enjoyed the work.”

“It was a lucky coincidence that I was able to work with Tim, as he began teaching at Marlboro during my last semester,” says Chris Oliver ’99, who now helps run the studios at Cornell’s College of Architecture, Art, and Planning. “At the time I was one of the few students, if not the only one, focusing specifically on sculpture, and it was great to have Tim’s sculpture-specific—and Tim-specific—insights to cap off my work at Marlboro.”

Tim found it rewarding to help incorporate the arts into Marlboro’s liberal arts curriculum, something transformative for both himself and students. He enjoyed collaborating with colleagues—from working with other environmental studies faculty on an introductory course, to a summer arts semester in London with Stan Charkey



Tim shares techniques of figurative sculpture with junior Laura Wharton. Photo by Kelly Fletcher



Digging Autumn

Senior Helen Pinch cultivates the community garden in October before planting a winter cover crop, one of the activities performed by faculty, staff, and students in honor of Marlboro’s founder on Hendricks Community Service Day.



In September, Brooklyn-based dancer, choreographer, and current Marlboro student **Ricardo Valentine** led a free Afro-Cuban dance workshop to get community members' inner dancers moving to

the rhythm. Ricardo uses art as a vehicle for activism, and his education before studying dances at Marlboro includes Urban Bush Women's Summer Leadership Institute, the Bates Dance Festival, and Earl Mosely's Institute of the Arts. He has collaborated and worked with Christal Brown/INSPIRIT, Edisa Weeks/Delirious Dances, Paloma McGregor, Danté Brown/Warehouse Dance, and many others, and is the co-founder of Brother(hood) Dance!



"I really appreciated some of the more sustainability-minded norms and practices in Germany," says **Kristen Thompson**, who was the first Marlboro student to attend Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany, last fall, part of a new international exchange program. She was able to take some classes that were directly related to her Plan in environmental studies, particularly one on Restoration Ecology. "It was a seminar including a lot of fieldwork in a traditional orchard, and we had the opportunity to continue work that previous students had done," says Kristen. "I also met a lot of lovely students from Germany and all over the world."



Junior **Clayton Clemetson** spent most of the fall semester on tour with Northern Harmony, a Vermont-based world-music choir, while maintaining a full course load through long-distance tutorials. "On any given day we were either teaching one-to-three workshops for schools or local choirs, performing a concert, playing a *ceilidh*, or doing all three, not to mention driving to a new town each day. I could feel myself being shaped by this experience, pushing my limits in a way that nurtured personal and musical growth." The two-month tour brought the group through England, France, Switzerland, Italy, and the U.S., culminating with a performance in Ragle Hall (see page 33).

(music) and Paul Nelson (theater). He was also pleased to introduce architecture to the curriculum.

"Whether I was just starting a new idea or in the finishing stages of a sculpture, Tim always made me think about it a little deeper and a little smarter," says Erik Dennis '14, who did his Plan in biology and sculpture and is now working as a blacksmith. "In tutorials, I would bring up some vague idea for a project and Tim would show me five different artists or pieces that related to what I was talking about. I could never predict what path we would venture down, but it always led somewhere interesting."

"At too many other colleges, the cultivation of individual achievement, particularly in the visual arts, is attained passively by setting a problem and leaving students to find their own way towards solutions," Tim says. "At Marlboro, open inquiry, shared critique, search for subjects and solutions that matter, early introduction to history and theory, and emphasis on individual exhibition all add up to something quite powerful."

Tim was able to balance these individualized academic demands with his continued work in the studio, and he shared his sculptures at shows in Vermont, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. He was also instrumental in the planning and implementation of the new Snyder Center for the Visual Arts, which includes an attractive new exhibit space.



Jay directs his cast during the filming of *Peter and John*, part of the Movies from Marlboro program. Photo by Willow O'Feral



Photo by Aaron Morganstein '05

"I loved Tim's flexible teaching style, and his willingness to guide you down whatever path or project you wanted to pursue," says Kathryn Lyon '14, who did her Plan in both biology and visual arts, and is now applying to graduate architecture programs with support from Tim. "It's been exciting to talk to him about how my ideas have developed since graduating from Marlboro and to see his influence on my career goals today."

Jay Craven, professor of film and video studies, also started at Marlboro in 1998. He says of his time at the college, "I've most enjoyed my students, who have kept a lively conversation going for all of these years. Many of them have become second family for me."

In addition to working with students in class and tutorials, Jay worked with them on nine film projects, including three feature movies produced through the Movies from Marlboro program. This unique-in-the-nation film intensive program brought a hundred students to campus, from more than 20 colleges, to collaborate in the production of ambitious films, from the Vermont portrait *Northern Borders* to the futuristic noir thriller *Wetware*.

"The Movies from Marlboro program provided the kind of transformational, experiential learning that education pioneer John Dewey urged with his call for intensive learning that enlarges meaning through 'shared experience and joint action,'" says Jay. Students working with Jay also mentored high school kids during summer film intensives in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

"I apply the lessons I learned from Jay every day, both in the classroom and on the set," says Brad Heck '91, who is currently teaching film studies at Marlboro and producing documentaries with Willow O'Feral '07, such as their recent *Arming Sisters* (*Potash Hill*, Spring 2015). As a student, Brad worked with Jay as a camera operator and cinematographer, and after graduating he worked extensively on the Movies from Marlboro program. "Jay has always held me to the highest standard as both a student and collaborator."

"I think we raised the level of work in filmmaking and exposed students to opportunities to explore experimental, documentary, and narrative forms—and to learn more about film theory and the history of world cinema through film studies classes," says Jay. "Many students who have wanted to go on and work in film have done so, in various capacities. Each carried something valuable away from their experience at Marlboro."



Students ham it up with the goblet of fire during the annual Hogwarts dinner, where community members and local families enjoyed quidditch, wand-making, and chocolate frogs for all.



Photo by Devlo Media

“Part of what makes Jay a great teacher is his ability to propel students into meaningful experiences,” says Amanda Wilder ’07, who directed the award-winning documentary *Approaching the Elephant*, produced by Jay. “If there was one thing Jay wanted you to do, it was find your personal vision. Uninterested in commercial Hollywood thinking, he sees film as art, a medium for self-expression, and was excited if you did too, immediately or eventually.”

Jay enjoyed collaborating with faculty members over the years, from co-teaching a class with sociology professor Jerry Levy on 20th-century war films to working with Asian studies professor Seth Harter to produce an Asian Film Festival. Marlboro benefited greatly from a partnership with Jay’s nonprofit organization, Kingdom County Productions, to produce four seasons of campus and community performances.

“As a mentor, Jay always put me on an equal playing field,” says Mike Harrington ’03, director of the Wandering Reel Traveling Film Festival. “Jay inspires an appreciation of cinema that thinks outside of the mainstream box, and that’s the number one thing I look for when selecting films for my festival. He empowers his students to develop their own ideas, tell their own stories, and follow them through to the end.”

Politics professor Lynette Rummel joined Marlboro in 1993, following a three-year stint as a Fulbright-Hays lecturer in Tunisia. “The most rewarding part of teaching at Marlboro has been learning that education is a conversation,” says Lynette. “I started out thinking I had something to ‘teach’ my students. But small, non-required classes allowed my students to teach me—over and over and over again. I’ll miss being forced to be constantly learning.”

Lynette was an avid supporter of the World Studies Program (WSP), where she did a turn as director, and global learning in general. She collaborated on many Plans of WSP students and others with international components over the years, from global food institutions to changing economics and lifestyles in Vietnam.

“I’ve had so many interesting Plans,” says Lynette. “I’ve had a student who went to Albania, one who went to



Lynette teaches a course titled American Foreign Policy: In Their Own Words. Photo by Devlo Media



Sophomore Della Dolcino wins top prize in the King Arthur baking contest at the Marlboro Town Fair in September, wowing judges with her spectacular, braided chocolate yeast bread.

Senegal, another who went to Panama—all over the world. They become my eyes and my ears, another way for me to travel. And I love them all—I wouldn’t want anyone of them to think they are not my favorite.”

“Having Lynette as my Plan sponsor was a delight, an honor, and a great learning experience,” says Kelsa Summer ’13, assistant director for graduate and professional studies,

who did her Plan on international development and social change. “Lynette taught me to always look for the bigger system, the more complex picture, and to take the most empathetic viewpoint. I especially enjoyed our tutorials at Lynette’s house, improved even more by the participation of Razzle the dog.”

Lynette greatly enjoyed research trips abroad, including a trip to the fledgling nation of Macedonia to conduct research on ethnicity, identity, and nationalism, and to Mali to explore trends presented in her African Politics class. But the highlights were collaborative learning on faculty-led trips with colleagues: to China with Seth Harter (Asian studies), John Willis (photography), Amer Latif (religion), and Felicity Ratté (art history); to Kenya with Jaime Tanner (biology); and to Nepal with Catherine O’Callaghan (assistant dean of academic advising and support).

“Lynette was like a campus rockstar—drawing students in with her vibrant personality, sardonic wit, and perspicacity,” says Jonah Nonomaque ’17, who collaborated with her during the trip to Nepal on a research project about conversion to Protestantism. “Lynette encouraged ideological diversity and was respectful of all students’ points of view but had no problems picking apart fallacious arguments. She did this not to assert her own superior knowledge but to encourage us to become better critical thinkers and become comfortable with tackling hard questions.”

“When I think about my Marlboro experience, I mostly think of the people who made it such a formative one for me. Lynette is at the top of that list of amazing people,” says Sokol “Koli” Shtylla ’01, COO for Swanee Hunt Alternatives, a foundation advancing women’s inclusion in peace and security processes around the world. “She inspired me and others to always think of ourselves as citizens of the world, aware of history in order to learn from the past, but idealistic about the future and our ability to impact it.”

EVENTS

1 Director Fidel Moreno shares a portion of his documentary *Gathering Our Hearts at Standing Rock* in November, accompanied by other activists and musicians. **2** Delaney McDonough and Hanna Satterlee perform *Voice and Vessel*, a moving tableau of story, sound, and dance created with Caitlin Scholl. Photo by Andres Salas **3** A traditional wooden boat exemplifies the craft in Japan as described by master boat builder Douglas Brooks in a talk titled "Ways of Learning: An Apprentice Boatbuilder in Japan." **4** Senior Saron Zewdie and sophomore Karla-Julia Ramos ponder existence in November's production of *Didi & Gogo*, an adaptation of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. **5** In November, junior Clayton Clemetson performed in Ragle Hall with Northern Harmony, presenting a mix of world harmony traditions from South African songs to renaissance motets. **6** Senior Phoebe Okoomian shares a dance during December's *Dances in the Rough*, featuring solo, duo, and group performances created by student choreographers. **7** In July and August, Marlboro hosted a series of talks titled "Refugees in the USA Today: Gaining Some Perspective," including one by Ana Lawson, a local expert on the traumas experienced by dislocated students.





FACULTY Q&A

In September, junior Emmett Wood sat down with Rosario de Swanson, Spanish language and literature professor, to chat about language, diversity at Marlboro, and Mexican playwright Rosario Castellanos. You can read the full interview at potash.marlboro.edu/deswanson

EMMETT: What was your impression when you started here?

ROSARIO: I love the way in which the students are co-producers of the knowledge they acquire. It's very rewarding to work with students on their Plan. Plan is a beautiful project, it is more involved than just fulfilling a requirement.

E: Marlboro's the kind of place where students strive for independence, and language is something that is usually seen as very regimented. What is your approach to teaching Spanish?

R: Language is one of those disciplines in which the medium is the message—the words that you are learning are what you need to use to communicate, and you need to practice them daily. Languages are universes and ways of thinking. Because words, ideas, and stories shape the world, when you learn a foreign language, you see that different language perspectives make you look at the world differently.

E: How did you come to immigrate from Mexico?

R: My parents immigrated before I did, but later I joined them. I worked as a cashier for a fancy restaurant. I was able to avoid menial jobs because I had more education.

E: You do research as well as teach?

R: I have been very fortunate to be able to combine teaching, which I really love, with publishing. I like focusing on an idea and following it through, and I teach students that. I tell them that 80 percent of everything, in life and in academia, is just trying things and following through. And to give yourself the opportunity to do it.

Photo by David Teter

FOCUS on FACULTY

Visiting politics professor **CLARE GILLIS** presented a talk titled "Refugeehood from World War II until the Present" in July, part of the college's summer speaker series on Refugees in the USA Today (see page 33). Clare examined the current refugee crises within a historical and political framework, drawing on her five years as a journalist in the Middle East. "I began foreign reporting in Bethlehem in 2010, and went on to Egypt, Libya, Syria, Mali, Turkey, and Iraq," says Clare. "After years of studying history from a distant perspective, it was a new experience for me to report the anti-regime

protests and subsequent conflicts up close and in real time."

While still on leave to hold an endowed chair at Brooklyn College, theater professor **BRENDA FOLEY** was named to the Athena Theatre playwriting group for 2017 and one of her new plays, *Camouflage*, was performed at Symphony Space in New York City. *Fallen Wings* was chosen by the Bechdel Group for their spring reading series, and other plays performed around the country include *Loyalty* (The Theater Project, New Jersey), *The Code* (The Road Theatre Co., California), *Blood Pact* (Benchmark Theatre, Colorado), and *Protocol* (Boston Theater Marathon). *Protocol* has also been selected for publication in *The Best 10-Minute Plays of 2018* (Smith and Kraus).

■ ON & OFF THE HILL ■

Photography professor **JOHN WILLIS** was mentioned in a *Brattleboro Reformer* article about the local Rotary Club and their efforts to provide support for the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, in South Dakota. A Rotarian himself, John has many connections in the reservation and with his guidance the club has funded several initiatives over the past five years. These have included sending sewing machines and quilting materials for a culturally valuable cottage industry in quilts and providing equipment and solar panels for the community radio station. Learn more at goo.gl/RAzj3p.

"The practice of reading and exploring through conversation the great books in the Western tradition cultivated a sense of openness for other people's experience



Visual arts professor Tim Segar gets the edge on *Potash Hill* editor Philip Johansson during a "Riff Raff Regatta" sunfish race on South Pond last August, organized by Mark Littlehales FS82. Tim won the "golden sunfish," but did not gloat, reportedly. Photo by Suzy Deffeyes



Math professor Matt Ollis participates in November's Cultivating a Daily Practice class (see page 24), in which he methodically conducted math research five times a week and tracked his progress using a point system. "I'm very happy with how it played out," Matt says.

and other accounts of the world," says philosophy and environmental studies professor **WILLIAM EDELGLASS**. In August, William gave the commencement address for the Graduate Institute at St. John's College, in Santa Fe, where he is an alumnus, and in the fall he gave a talk on "Reason and Faith in Indian Buddhism" at the University of Ottawa. He was also recently elected to chair of the board of directors for the International Association of Environmental Philosophy. William was instrumental in garnering a National Endowment for the Humanities grant for the Words Project in Brattleboro, Vermont. Learn more at marlboro.edu/neh.

This fall, Asian studies and history professor **SETH HARTER** presented a series of lectures on Japanese history and culture at the Brattleboro Chapter of the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). His weekly lectures focused on Japanese ways of seeing, writing, painting, building, cooking, and pursuing other activities, with emphasis on five disciplines.

"DeVos' rewrite of the rules, published in late September, provides more flexibility in how institutions handle Title IX complaints," writes politics professor **MEG MOTT**, responding to the US Secretary of Education's new Title IX rules in an October *Times Higher Education* article. Meg argues that the new guidelines encourage more attention to fairness and impartiality, and that colleges are given greater latitude to address the

real problem of sexual assault on campuses. Teachers will no longer be compelled to report "anything that smacks of sexual impropriety," and can encourage students in self-reflection as an alternative to mandatory reporting. Learn more at goo.gl/Y8BGmL.

"Like his character, Quebec Bill in *Disappearances*, Howard Frank Mosher was an indefatigable optimist and adventurer," says film and video professor **JAY CRAVEN**, referring to the prolific Vermont novelist and Jay's longtime collaborator, who died in January 2017. "He wrote every day, in longhand on yellow legal pads, and lived his life, nonstop, with visions of character and story percolating in his imagination." In December, Jay shared his reflections on three decades of collaboration at a special 25th anniversary screening of his film



Film and video studies professor Jay Craven shoots the breeze with Vermont writer Howard Frank Mosher during the development of *Movies from Marlboro's film Northern Borders*, in this 2012 photo.



Chemistry professor Todd Smith designs and builds improvements to the compost system at the community farm during Work Day, with assistance by freshman Cedar Van Tassel and Asian studies professor Seth Harter. Photo by Kelly Fletcher

Where the Rivers Flow North, both at Marlboro College and at Brattleboro's Latchis Theatre.

"Rosario Castellanos is a Mexican feminist playwright whose plays have not been studied," says Spanish language and literature professor **ROSARIO DE SWANSON**, referring to the subject of her new book. "Her plays are very beautiful, and she's one of the very first Mexican women who talked about homosexuality, in the '50s and '60s, when this was not talked about. In one of her plays she talks about not just male homosexuality but female." You can find Rosario's book, "*¿Y cuál es mi lugar, señor,*

entre tus actos?": *el drama de Rosario Castellanos*, published by Peter Lang Publishing Group, at goo.gl/4qAvMC.

Religion professor **AMER LATIF** was a panelist in a discussion titled "Democracy in the Deep Divide," part of the October alumni weekend/open house/family day celebration. Politics professor **MEG MOTT** moderated this discussion about whether or not Americans can still work together, and other panelists included alumni Katherine Gypson '05 and Amber Schafer '10.

"The way that scientists use the word 'theory' is a little different

than how it is commonly used in the lay public," says biology professor **JAIME TANNER**, as quoted in a July reference article called "What Is a Scientific Theory?" on the website livescience.com. "Most people use the word 'theory' to mean an idea or hunch that someone has, but in science the word 'theory' refers to the way that we interpret facts." Jaime goes on to explain that a scientific theory is the framework for observations and facts—theories may change, or the way that they are interpreted may change, but the facts themselves don't change.

ALUMNI NEWS

Alexia Boggs '13 knew she wanted to go to law school since elementary school. But it was at Marlboro that she honed her oral advocacy skills and discovered she wanted to take her interest in studying law to "the final frontier."



Laws in Space

"Marlboro taught me how to write, but I think I also learned how to talk at Marlboro," says Alexia Boggs, who did her Plan in politics, with a focus on the role of deliberation. She spent untold hours in Town Meetings, faculty and committee meetings, on Community Court, and as a student representative to the board of trustees, learning and practicing the finer points of persuasive oral advocacy. "Marlboro's system of governance was a political gymnasium for me to learn how politics work."

Marlboro is also where Alexia first learned about space law, from Lynette Rummel's course on international law and from the Plan papers of her good friend Eric Toldi '11 on the history of the space race. "Over the course of discussing Eric's drafts, he taught me about space law and clued me in to how important space law would become with exploration of outer space in the 21st century." In May, Alexia graduated from the space law program at University of Mississippi Law School, one of two law schools in the U.S. that have such a program.

"Space law is exciting—how many lawyers get to talk about exploring outer space?" says Alexia. "I love that so many people are excited about space exploration right now, and I think that it has the potential to bring everyone to the table: if you are an activist, a physicist, a geologist, an artist, a military general, space has something for you." Did we mention Alexia's powers of persuasion?

The highlight of Alexia's law school years was participating in the Manfred Lachs Space Law Moot Court Competition, where teams of law students present oral arguments on issues of space law as if they are presenting to the International Court of Justice. Alexia's team swept all three awards in the North American regional semifinals—Best Team, Best Brief, and Best Oralist (Alexia, naturally)—but was beaten by the Indian team during the world finals in September, in Adelaide, Australia.

"If you make it to the finals, you actually present oral argument to three judges from the International Court

of Justice," says Alexia, who was awarded Best Oralist once again at the finals. "As an international law nerd, this was a dream come true. I was overwhelmed with excitement to present argument to these judges, who wrote decisions in many of the seminal international cases I was citing."

Alexia's experience as a persuasive oral advocate led to successes in other competitions as well while she was at Ole Miss. In addition to the Space Law Moot Court Competition, she also won the National Professional Football Contract Negotiation Competition at Tulane Law School and "The Closer" National Transactional Law Competition at Baylor Law School.

"All three competitions required me to know my audience, to solve legal problems by thinking on my feet, and to be persuasive," says Alexia. She passed the D.C. Bar Exam in October, and is currently working as an attorney for a telecommunications company in Alexandria, Virginia. She plans to land a gig practicing space law in D.C. soon, and to some day help shape U.S. space policy.

"Another hope would be to present oral argument at the International Court of Justice on behalf of a spacefaring nation in real life," she adds. "Or to sit on the other side of the dais—who knows? I tend to dream big."



Above> Alexia and her award-winning team for the Space Law Moot Court Competition.

Opposite> Alexia hangs out with her Newfoundland puppy, Doris. Photo by Elisabeth Joffe '14



Matt Levasseur '07: Mobile Apps for Mozambique

"Marlboro helped set me on a course to working abroad, especially by letting me do independent research in a developing country as the basis of my Plan," says Matt Levasseur. He completed his Plan in psychology and anthropology, specifically writing about post-structuralism, family systems, and Haitian migrants living in the Dominican Republic. Now he is continuing his interest in developing countries as a senior field manager at Dimagi.

Based in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Dimagi is a software social enterprise that creates technologies to improve service delivery in underserved communities. They have designed a software platform for mobile workforces, and most of their work is in developing countries.

"I work with clients to devise and implement custom mobile apps," says Matt, who has traveled frequently to Haiti, South Africa, Mozambique, Ghana, Senegal, and Uganda in his four years with Dimagi. "I'm always learning. I get to be creative and spend time with end users and beneficiaries. Architecting data systems is fun."

For example, Matt worked in Haiti on the implementation of a national-scale community health application combining maternal health, family planning, child vaccination, and HIV service delivery. He also worked to launch a hospital performance measurement in Ghana and implement an agricultural extension program in South Africa.

Matt's fondest memories of Marlboro are of the intellectual atmosphere, from challenging tutorials to the ritual Saturday afternoon post-lunch debates in the dining hall. "Marlboro taught me to think broadly, helped me develop my voice, and empowered me to take on challenging projects with confidence."

Class notes are listed by year and include both graduates and nongraduates; the latter are listed under the class with which they are associated.

'51

In September, **CHUCK STAPLES** was one of nine winners of a Driehaus Award for historic preservation. Most of the winners were architectural firms, but Chuck's award was for a lifetime of effort in historic preservation, particularly the building that became the Chicago Cultural Center. In August, Chuck was recognized for his 80-year membership in the Mount Washington Observatory, a membership his father signed him up for when he was 7 years old. "I have loved Mount Washington since I was very young, and climbed it many times," says Chuck. "I still walk a lot and climb stairs, but a recently reduced sense of balance has regrettably ended the rugged hiking I so enjoyed in mountain country."

'63

"Still teaching at University College at Rockland, currently a History of Theater class, and working on another Derek Steele radio play to be presented fairly soon at the college," says **JONATHAN POTTER**. "Got my little Typhoon sailboat out on the water before the hurricane residue arrived. Still rowing, though."

'69

In August, **JOHN DEVANEY** had a retrospective show of his paintings at Robert Foster Fine Art, on Nantucket. See John's work at goo.gl/xSjXMD.

'71

"The eighties were less eventful times for my breasts," writes **JEANNE HOLTZMANN** in an article titled "My Life with Breasts" published on Rag Queen Periodical. "They remained untethered but lost their defiance, made no political or social statements, and in general didn't cause any trouble." Read more at goo.gl/wFy3KX.

"It is hard not to be overly thankful for my Marlboro education and experience," writes **W.L. "ZEV" WEXLER**. "It opened up to me a new and different life that has since remained with me. My extended Marlboro family is in many ways closer to me than my blood relations. Working on crew, Town

Meeting, the intimacy of a small community, a volunteer firefighter, the habit of preferring to litter my vehicle rather than despoil the Vermont countryside, and so many more unique experiences gave me memories that pleasantly persist and have influenced my various careers and my life. Thank you Potash Hill."

'72

The Galaxy Bookshop in Hardwick hosted a reading and Q&A in December with **WILL WOOTTON**, author of *Good Fortune Next Time*, his memoir describing his experiences in the administration of Marlboro College, Sterling College, and Montserrat College of Art.

COLIN COCHRAN participated in Readsboro Arts 2017 Confluence painting invitational, September 6 to October 29. Colin's work on exhibit was titled *Three Sheep of the Apocalypse*.

'73

DANIEL HUDKINS writes, "Currently chief information officer for the Taipei American School in Taiwan."



In October, Ursula Roessiger '10 presented a talk in the Rice-Aron Library titled "The Absolution of Spirit: Forgiveness in Hegel's Philosophy of Religion." Ursula is a post-doctoral teaching fellow at Pennsylvania State University, where she received her PhD in philosophy in 2017.



Brooklyn-based artist Ryan Kish '07 exhibited his recent paintings at Drury Gallery during October, with an artist's talk in Appletree. Artist Owen Westberg has said of Ryan's work, "As a glass of water in different seasons, Kish's paintings are vessels for perception."

'75

"This winter I will spend much of my time skiing and training even though I am in my mid 60s," says **TOM DAVIES**. "I still race biathlon and was the 60+ age group US National Champion in the sprint and pursuit events in 2015. I hope XC skiing is still a healthy tradition at Marlboro."

'76

"I am very excited to have bought raffle tickets and won a pastel of Marlboro by Wolf Kahn," says **MELISSA METTLER ABRAMS** (see marlboro.edu/pastel). "All is well in Colorado though way too warm for December. I would love to hear from any friends who see this: missyabram@aol.com."

'79

In October, **DAN TOOMEY** presented a lecture at Landmark College titled "The Mentorships of Robert Frost." In it Dan explored Frost's friendships with younger scholars, showing his virtues of loyalty, kindness, and generosity, and specifically how his mentorship of one young man laid the groundwork for Frost's writing of the poem "The Most of It."

'77

LAURA LAWSON TUCKER writes, "14 years ago, I helped create and now continue to co-direct an inclusive theater program for youth and adults: Theatre Adventure in Brattleboro. Our program is part of New England Youth Theatre. Check us out at Neyt.org."

'82

KATE JUDD writes, "I renewed my contract as spiritual leader of the Brattleboro Area Jewish Community through June of 2019. My husband will be 94 in May, so who knows where my life will go..."

'83

REGINA GRABROVAC is the food programs manager for Healthy Acadia-Washington County, in Maine, running everything from farm-to-school programs to gleaning operations. In an August article in the *Portland Press Herald*, she talks about her life, farming, and food security, and last year's wild blueberry glut. Read more at goo.gl/qJqZim.

'85

MONIKA JEAN MACLEAN writes, "I volunteer at the Hartford Gay and Lesbian Health Collective on Mondays as a provider APRN. Graduated from UConn and am now working as a primary care provider in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Very excited and hope all is well on Potash Hill."

'90

In his latest book, "*Do You Have a Band?*" (Columbia University Press), **DANIEL KANE** reveals how the new sounds of proto-punk and punk music found their way into the poetry of the 1960s and '70s New York City scene, enabling writers to develop fresh ideas for their own poetics and performance styles. Learn more at goo.gl/4wheku.

'91

DUNCAN NEWBERRY writes, "Moved from Portland to Cottage Grove, Oregon, in 2012 with my wife and our four children. Bought 14 acres of scrubby pasture and accidentally started farming at 47: currently home to three adults, four children, seven goats, 12 sheep, and 15 or so chickens."

'92

"This fall, I am taking on a new position: professor of music at Baldwin Wallace University and editor of *BACH: Journal of the Riemenschneider Bach Institute*," says **CHRISTINA FUHRMANN**. "I know that Luis Batlle would have been proud, since he certainly fostered my love of Bach at Marlboro." Christina won the 2017 Diana McVeagh Prize for Best Book on British Music, a biennial prize given by the North American British Music Studies Association, for her book *Foreign Opera at the London Playhouses, from Mozart to Bellini* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).

'96

"For me it was more about finding intellectually engaging work to do that enriched the community and also my life," says **RICH BOULET** in a September article in the *Ellsworth American*. The director of the Blue Hill Public Library



Michael Harrist '10: Music as Spiritual Practice

"I've joked that I'm still basically on Plan, and honestly not much has changed," says Mike Harrist, who has worked as a professional musician and music teacher since graduating with a Plan in music and religion. "I'm just a few years deeper into sitting at the feet of these great traditions." Mike has performed and studied in a wide array of world traditions, from Hindustani raga to Turkish art music to Jazz, and toured with various ensembles. But his closest brush with Plan was returning to Marlboro last fall to collaborate with religion professor Amer Latif (pictured with Mike) in teaching a class titled Art as Spiritual Discipline: The Musical Traditions of North India and Turkey.

"This class comes from our mutual interest in the intersection of music and contemplative practice," says Mike. He and Amer received an Aron grant in 2010 for field research in Turkey, on the chanting practice in different schools of mystical Islam, and have continued their research and discussion since. "We ask, what does it look like when there is no distinction between the sacred and the mundane, between art and life?" Their goal is to ground these questions in music practice and the writings of great musicians and spiritual teachers, and to apply lessons learned to other arenas of life.

"It is such a joy to teach with my long-term teacher, mentor, and friend Amer. I've learned so much from him and through him. By becoming co-teachers, we are afforded a beautiful opportunity to further our relationship and deepen our work together."

since 2002, Rich was named Outstanding Librarian for 2017 by the Maine Library Association. Learn more at goo.gl/yh4QN7.

'00

"When I think about my work on the women's commission, I imagine creating a state where policy and resources and programs and lifestyles all converge for women to be able to live their lives with whatever dignity they want," says **EMILIE KORNHEISER** in an August article in the *Brattleboro Reformer*. Emilie was appointed to the Vermont Commission on Women last summer. She is an early childhood action plan director at Building Bright Futures and she works with Promise Communities for the state of Vermont. She previously served as an international development consultant, helping government agencies meet humanitarian and community development goals. "The Women's Commission seems like a natural outgrowth of this work," she says.

"Marlboro gave me a structure for thinking and processing information, and it gave me a framework for the critique of structures. I didn't have that before," says **CHRISTINE LINN** in a September article in *The Commons*. "It gave me access to academic works, to Paulo Freire, Marx, Freud"—an education that helped her understand "the structures that oppressed me." In this article, Christine reflects on her own experiences and their relevance to her role as director of youth development at Brattleboro Youth Services. Read more at goo.gl/s6AtPB.

'04

"I am finally settled in Rhode Island where I work with the Conservation Law Foundation," says **HEATHER GREENWOOD**. "All of it is great fun. It is nice to be around people with strong feelings about grammar again. Who knew Marlboro students and lawyers were so similar?"

'05

ALEX LEHMAN is a freelance actor and puppeteer in Denmark, specializing in Lecoq-based physical performance, devised theater, puppetry, stage combat, and motion capture for film and video games. He

studied at the London International School of Performing Arts, receiving a two-year professional certification.

"For the past decade I have been at the intersection of neuroscience and education," says **LISA MALIK**. "I use data to understand both how the brain changes when we learn and how to implement best teaching practices in the classroom. I have also dabbled in data analytics for business, wielding large databases of information into coherent and dynamic visualizations. Currently, I am the acting dean of Health Occupations, Physical Education, and Business at Shoreline Community College. Although I no longer conduct research studies, students and alumni can reach out to me about careers in research, pursuing graduate studies in the sciences, and life in academia."

'06

JULIE RANA joined the Lawrence University faculty this last fall as a tenure-track scholar in mathematics. A specialist in algebraic geometry, singular spaces, and deformation theory, Julie spent the past two years as an assistant professor at the University of Minnesota.

'08

BENNETT CARPENTER is thrilled to announce he'll be marrying his sweetie, Attila Nemez, this October. He's finishing up a PhD in literature at Duke University and hopes to stay on in North Carolina, where he's become deeply involved in community organizing. He also quit smoking and started playing the banjo. He misses you all and invites anyone passing through North Carolina to give him a holler.

'09

LYNN and **WILLIAM ROWAN** write, "Our band, Windborne, launched a highly successful project of protest songs called *Song on the Times*—an album and songbook of songs for social struggle. We are now touring around the US and the UK. Learn more at windbornesingers.com.

"I communicate and express myself best through music," says **HELEN HUMMEL**,

who released her first full-length album, *Many Waters*, in September. The eleven original tracks combine Helen's rural Vermont upbringing with her experiences living and playing music in Los Angeles; she pulls from her travels across the country and from her literature studies at Marlboro College. "Marlboro's courses helped me harness my writing; its open mics and community concerts taught me to share and perform my music." The album's title comes from James Joyce's collection of poems, *Chamber Music*. Helen examined Joyce's writing for her Plan of Concentration and, as part of her independent project, she set two of his poems to music. Water's influence and imagery run throughout Helen's music, as well as a Joycean eye for the extraordinary within the ordinary. Folks can preview and purchase the album, view Helen's original album artwork, and check out her live show schedule at HelenHummel.com. Find her on social media as [@helenhummelmusic](https://twitter.com/helenhummelmusic).

"I have been working for SUNY Morrisville since December 2016, creating video content for communications and marketing purposes," says **BEN MARTIN**. "I also do freelance video production in the local community, working with local nonprofits to encourage community involvement and promote local businesses. Before that I worked as a news video editor and photojournalist for stations in Syracuse, and prior to that **SARAH HOROWITZ '10** and I were living in the Burlington, Vermont, area. There I worked as a video

encoding technician for a small company that does DVD, Blu-Ray, and streaming video encoding for several major TV and film groups. If there are any current students and recent graduates interested in a career in video production, marketing and communications, video journalism, or related fields, I am happy to offer advice and answer questions."

'10

Brooklyn-based filmmaker **AMBER SCHAFER** was one of two alumni included—the other being **KATHERINE GYPSON '05** (see *Potash Hill*, Fall 2017)—in a panel discussion titled "Democracy in the Deep Divide," during Alumni Days in October. Amber, Katherine, and religion professor Amer Latif, moderated by politics professor Meg Mott, grappled with the issue of whether Americans can still work together in the current political and social atmosphere of divisiveness.

KENTON CARD published an article on the site of Johns Hopkins University's American Institute for Contemporary German Studies titled "Multi-Ethnic Tenant Movements in Los Angeles and Berlin." He says, "In a political era where news headlines are dominated by new forms of nationalist politics . . . communities are resisting exclusive politics and inventing new forms of radical inclusion and community empowerment." Read more at goo.gl/9rk5Jz.



In June, Jonathan Fryerwood '13 (nee Fryer) and Maggie Fryerwood '13 (nee Wood) were married in Dover, Massachusetts. The wedding was a veritable reunion of Marlboro folks. Jonathan is now going to Simmons for his master's in library science, and Maggie is going to Northeastern for her master's in public health. Photo by Lea LaRiccia Photography

"I am currently at University College Dublin in Ireland pursuing a PhD in analysis of citizen science biological records with Jon Yearsley," says **WILLSON GAUL**. "The great advantage of using this kind of citizen science data is that there are lots of people collecting data across large spatial areas and over long periods of time. We have datasets of observations of mosses in Ireland going back to 1663."

"This past summer, I completed my PhD in chemistry at Clark University, with research focused on the synthesis and characterization of organic-inorganic hybrid materials," says **JOSHUA BOYKIN**. "My wife and fellow Marlboro alumnus, **JODI SUSSEY '12**, and I moved to the Adirondacks in Upstate New York this past August, and are celebrating our second wedding anniversary. I am currently in my first semester as an assistant professor of chemistry at Paul Smith's College, a school with striking similarities to Marlboro."

GARTH SUTHERLAND enrolled in a master's degree program at the University of Siegen in Germany in October 2017, and should finish in 2019. "The program is called Roads to Democracies, and combines political science, history, and sociology in studying how different forms of democracy develop. The coursework is taught in English and students come from many different countries and backgrounds. I am enjoying the classes and picking up some German along the way."

'11

"I am now the pastor of two small-town churches in the thumb of Michigan, right on the coast of Lake Huron," says **SARI BROWN**. "At Port Hope United Methodist Church, I am supporting them in a ministry to welcome and be good neighbors to the Hispanic dairy farm workers, which they have been engaged in for six years now, and I am impressed with their dedication and openness. I am also the pastor of Harbor Beach UMC, a warm-hearted and authentic group that houses the local food pantry and serves a free community soup supper each month. They create beautiful visual displays for worship, and they appreciate my original music. Both churches welcomed my bicultural family with open arms (my husband and stepchildren are Colombian)."



Hannah Cummins MAT '17: Bringing Social Justice to Class

Hannah knew she wanted to go into education as an undergraduate at Marlboro, studying sociology and photography, when she attended an inspirational information session with Janaki Natarajan, program director for the MA in Teaching for Social Justice program. After three years at Marlboro she finished her bachelor's at Goddard College, but returned to the graduate program to continue her education.

"I was exploring the same things as an undergraduate," says Hannah, who earned her MAT-SJ in December. "I was looking at social justice issues and how to better understand the world around me, like the historical context around the current moment. Being able to go to a one-year program like Marlboro's was just incredible. I also found the passion for learning similar to the undergraduate program."

What attracted Hannah to the MAT program was the focus on praxis—applying knowledge to the real world. She was placed in an internship right away, in a social studies classroom at Four Rivers Charter Public School, in Greenfield, Massachusetts, and after one semester she was offered a position at the school.

"Four Rivers has a project-based model, and all of the learning has larger implications," says Hannah, who credits her Marlboro experience with teaching her about academic rigor and perseverance. Although she has not been practicing her own art as much, she is grateful for the art education she gained at Marlboro and frequently brings art into the classroom. "It continues to serve me in my everyday life, in terms of being a critical thinker."

'12

"I'm in Austin, Texas," says **ERIC JOYCE**. "I moved here last year to start a graduate program studying architecture at the University of Texas at Austin. The official degree type is an M.Arch I, which means it's a Master of Architecture without a previously obtained professional degree. School has really consumed my life since moving here."

'13

NIKKI HAUG has been working at Earthwatch Institute since April, first as a database administrator and now as executive assistant to the CEO and development director. "I appreciate how the citizen science mission of Earthwatch lines up well with my Plan, since Darwin was a citizen scientist himself, in a way," she says.

'14

MOLLY BOOTH's second book, *Nothing Happened*, a modern-day retelling of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, is coming out from Disney Hyperion in May 2018. "*Nothing Happened* is an unputdownable read that's both hilarious and heartfelt," says fellow YA author Stephanie Kate Strohm. "Shakespeare fans will be delighted by Booth's clever reworking of *Much Ado* and those new to the bard will find themselves hooked." Pre-order at mollybooth.com/nothing-happened.

"I just got accepted into the Medicinal Chemistry/Pharmacognosy doctorate program at University of Illinois at Chicago," says **DANIEL ZAGAL**. "I will be following the natural products drug discovery track. I'm relocating from Brattleboro, where I have lived since I graduated Marlboro, to Chicago for the beginning of the spring semester 2018."

'15

"In my time since Marlboro I have been a core member of the Brattleboro-based arts collective The Future Collective," says **HANNAH CUMMINS**. "I was the co-founder of Brattleboro Grrrls Camp and have worked at In-Sight Photography, Exposures, and Wildflowers Playschool in Putney, Vermont. January 2017 I began my time at Marlboro College Grad School in the MA in Teaching for Social Justice

program. It has been a truly transformative experience"(see profile, this page).

"I'm now working in London for a year as a communications assistant at the Anglican Communion Office," says **AMELIA BROWN**. "I've absolutely fallen in love with London, and I am enjoying my work very much. We have a news service and a quarterly magazine, so there's a fair amount of articles that we write. Since I grew up in the church, working for the Anglican Communion feels a bit like I've come to home-base, as it were. It's been such an incredible environment, both professionally and spiritually."

ERIKA KLEMPERER performed a dance piece at Brattleboro's SoBo Dance Studio in November, part of their Open House/Open Audience event.

NATALIE COHEN earned her master's in marriage and family therapy from Antioch University in Los Angeles. She is working with clients at the Relational Center in L.A. as she accumulates hours toward licensure as an MFT.

'16

FELIX JARRAR writes, "I kicked off 2018 with a performance of my song cycle *Songs of the Soul Beams* at (le) poisson rouge in the West Village in January. This work exploring the depths of loss and mourning was inspired by the death of my father almost two years ago. While the inspiration behind this song cycle comes from a place of darkness, the work features inspiration and uplifting music inspired by influences such as Handel's *Messiah* and Kanye West hip hop beats." Felix was the composer-in-residence with the Brooklyn College Jazz Ensemble last fall, and was commissioned by Cantanti Project for his third opera, *Tabula Rasa*. A jazz opera due to premier in New York in May, this work is about Kiki de Montparnasse and her romantic escapades in Paris through the 1920s.

REBECCA MEADE is currently working full time at Vice Media, assistant editing on *Vice News Tonight*, an HBO original series. She is in charge of ingesting footage, assistant editing, creating motion graphics, and delivering final cuts to New York for broadcasting. She landed this job after moving across country from Brattleboro to Los Angeles.

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André Pérez '10 (*Potash Hill*, Fall 2017) visited Marlboro in October to screen and discuss part of his *America in Transition* documentary series, exploring community, family, and social issues for trans people of color across the United States. Photo by David Teter

Graduate and Professional Studies

TEACHING

'09

The Master's in Teaching with Technology program welcomes new faculty member **SHANNON MILLER**, who received her MAT in the same program. Shannon is a fourth-grade teacher at Union Elementary School in Montpelier, Vermont, and has been a classroom teacher for 10 years. Since completing her MAT, Shannon has worked as a technology integrator in southern Vermont and at the American School in Switzerland. She has also served as a program manager for Vermont's Agency of Education in the area of teacher preparation programs.

'11

"My life has taken many twists and turns that brought me back here," says **MEL MOTEL**, who started as executive director of the Brattleboro Community Justice Center in August after having worked there more than 10 years ago. In a September article in *The Commons*, she says, "I bring a vision of a restorative community into

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schools, neighborhoods, and workplaces. I'm entering this organization at a time of enthusiasm for restorative justice." After receiving her MAT in Teaching for Social Justice, she founded the Just Schools Project to work directly with schools to rethink and change discipline practices. Read more at goo.gl/fDaia9.

'17

Teaching with Technology alumna **JASMIN COWIN** was appointed assistant professor of TESOL and bilingual certificate programs at Touro College's Graduate School of Education. Jasmin's first overseas engagement will be at the Plekhanov Russian University of Economics in Moscow, to give workshops in TESOL, e-learning, and methodologies in augmented reality.

FORMER FACULTY

"My fall 2012 Food and Culture class was really the key to completing *A Taste of Marlboro: Cooking and Eating in Our Community*, a community cookbook with a combination of recipes and stories, which had its debut at the Marlboro Fair in September," says **CAROL HENDRICKSON**, anthropology professor emerita. The new book, featuring recipes and memories by students in the class, favorite foods from the dining hall, cookie recipes from Rapid Reviews, and recipes from many alumni, is available at the Marlboro Town Office.

"**GERALDINE PITTMAN-BATLLE** is described by her nominators and her peers as a 'Master Teacher' among a faculty of great teachers, someone who poured her accumulated wisdom and energy into her teaching, advising, and mentoring students," said former president Ellen McCulloch-Lovell. "As such, she has been an 'essential teacher' in Marlboro's firmament, setting the highest standards and looked up to by her peers at the college and beyond." Geraldine, Marlboro's literature professor emerita, was elected as a fellow of the Vermont Academy of Arts and Sciences in November, and Ellen, a fellow fellow, read her citation.



Dhruv Jagasia MBA '17: Putting the "I" in eyewear

Dharma has many meanings in Hinduism and Buddhism, but to New York resident Dhruv Jagasia it means "duty" or "the path." Having grown up among the profit-driven eyewear industry, he launched Dharma Eyewear in 2014 to make a positive impact on both the industry and society.

"I wanted to start a company whose mission was centered around social and environmental good," said Dhruv, who got his MBA from Marlboro with a concentration in Conscious Business. "So my company's 'duty' is to honor the earth, our customers, and our employees, all the while creating high-quality products that last, using materials that don't damage the planet."

Dhruv was drawn to Marlboro for the sense of community, which made him feel welcome and engaged. "Marlboro felt like a place where I could foster better business skills, cultivate experiences with like-minded individuals, and figure out how I could change the world for the better." Along the way he enjoyed many "earth-shattering conversations" with fellow students and alumni about how to inspire positive change.

"I want Dharma to create a movement, to mobilize other companies to do the same and more," says Dhruv. "We all should aspire for excellence, but in the business world excellence has been translated into massive profits. Imagine if we lived in a world where business leaders acted more like nonprofit leaders and strived for greater net impact." Having stylish, beautifully designed, and well-crafted eyewear in that world would not hurt, either.

Learn more at dharmaco.com.

IN MEMORIAM

Corethia Qualls '66

A resident of Salt Lake City, Utah, Corethia Qualls died in October. She was born in 1942, in Sparta, Tennessee, and attended the University of Arkansas as a music major before completing her undergraduate work in history at Marlboro College. Following graduation, she worked at CBS in New York City while attending graduate school at Columbia University, where she received her doctorate in the art and archeology of the ancient Near East in 1981. Corethia participated in archeological excavations in Cypress, Syria, Kuwait, and Israel, and did survey work in Syria. As a Fulbright Fellow, she directed excavations in Bahrain. She moved to Salt Lake City in 2002, where she taught theology and art history at Judge Memorial Catholic High School for 16 years. In retirement, Corethia taught classes at the Utah Ministry Formation Program of the Episcopal Diocese of Utah and the OSHER Institute at the University of Utah.

Chris Abrams FS71

Martha's Vineyard resident Christine Hudson Abrams died peacefully in December, after a long struggle with brain cancer. She was 69. Chris was born in Queens, New York, but moved to Rockland County. She left high school when she was 16, spent time in France, came home and studied the piano intensively, and then went to Marlboro College, where she met John Abrams '72. They married in 1969 and began a six-year, back-to-the-land odyssey, from Vermont to California, Oregon, British Columbia, back to Vermont, and finally to Martha's Vineyard in 1975. She received her master's in early childhood education at Wheelock College, and began a teaching career that touched the lives of countless children and families. She taught preschoolers and teachers for 30 years, and was the founding director of the Chilmark Preschool until she retired in 2010. Chris is survived by her husband John, her son Pinto and daughter Sophie Abrams Mazza, as well as grandchildren, sisters, and a brother.



Dan Dudensing with father Peter at his graduation.

Peter Dudensing '79

My father, Peter Dudensing, passed away at peace in his home on November 23, at age 60. He graduated from Marlboro in 1979 as a music student with a focus in composition, with a Plan of Concentration titled "Ambiguity as an Aesthetic in Music." He also served as head selectperson during his time at Marlboro, and learned not only the craft of music, but the values of creativity, curiosity, tolerance, community, and patience. He was a music teacher for his entire professional career, and always kept these values in his heart. I am proud to say that he taught a lesson one week before he died of cancer. Our shared experience as students at Marlboro was a very special one that we both treasured; I will always be thankful that this wonderful place was a part of our lives. I hope that any old friends of my dad, or of mine, look back at Marlboro with the same fondness, and thankfulness for the many blessings we received in our time up on the hill.

Submitted by Dan Dudensing '09, MSM '14

Chris Mahoney '02

A firefighter and paramedic in Marin County, California, Chris Mahoney died unexpectedly in his San Francisco home in August. A Marin County native, he grew up in Fairfax and graduated from Sir Francis Drake High School. He studied music at Marlboro with a Plan of Concentration in music composition for

film and theater, resulting in compositions and sound design for the faculty theater production of *Ulysses*. As an alumnus he wrote that his favorite place on campus was the "music listening library." Chris began his fire service career as a volunteer with the Ross Valley Fire Department after college, and was hired as a full-time firefighter and paramedic in 2005. He once told the college he had delivered a baby on a bathroom floor at four in the morning—he loved his job, and the feeling from the local community was mutual. Chris is survived by his mother and father, stepmother, sister, brother, and three nieces.

Fran Nevins, former staff member

Fran Nevins, who ran the college bookstore through the 1970s and 80s, died peacefully at Thompson House in Brattleboro, in July 2017. She was 94. Fran attended The Putney School, in nearby Putney, Vermont, where she met her future husband, John P. Nevins. She went on to attend Bennington College, majoring in literature and poetry. Fran and John married in 1947 and enjoyed a 20-year career in the Foreign Service, with assignments in Casablanca, Beirut, and Tunis. In 1967, they returned to the Nevins homestead in Marlboro. John was employed as head librarian at Marlboro College, while Fran managed the bookstore. Over the next three decades Fran actively engaged the community with her many talents and interests, including the Marlboro Historical Society and choruses with Blanche Moyse and the Brattleboro Music Center. Fran is survived by her son John L. Nevins '76 and daughter-in-law Cherrie Corey '76, as well as grandchildren, a great-grandson, and nieces.

John Myer, architect

The architect of many of the campus buildings built in the 1960s and '70s, Jack Myer died of natural causes in February 2017. He was 89 years old. Jack was a prominent Boston architect, MIT professor, and department head of MIT's School of Architecture and Planning from 1982 to 1987. He teamed up with Fletcher Ashley in 1960 to start and build an architectural firm, which would become Arrowstreet.

In addition to Person's Auditorium and the original Rice Library, other acclaimed buildings created under Jack's direction include the international award-winning Boston Architectural Center, Cambridge Friends School, and the Massachusetts State Archives Building. Retired president Tom Ragle, an Exeter Academy classmate of Jack's, says, "If you look at their buildings in chronological order, you will find that elements introduced in the earliest buildings are all brought together in the Rice Library, an award winner and in my opinion their masterpiece, like a cathedral on a hill."

Dorothy Olson, friend

Wife of former trustee Paul Olson and longtime supporter, Dorothy Olson died peacefully in September in Tucson, Arizona. She was 99. Born in New York City, Dorothy graduated from Oberlin College, then worked as production supervisor for Time, Inc., and Columbia University Center for Mass Communications. In 1963 she married Paul, a Vermont lawyer, and moved to Brattleboro. Together they were deeply involved in the support of arts and education in Vermont, including the Marlboro Music School and Festival, Brattleboro Music Center, and Marlboro College, where they endowed a fund to provide educational materials to music students. Dorothy was elected to the board of the Vermont Arts Council, where she served as the first female chair. When Paul retired they moved to Tucson, where Dorothy remained active making pottery, taking courses at the university, and attending concerts. At a memorial commemoration held on December 10 in Ragle Hall, she was remembered for her curiosity, sense of humor, and capacity for friendship. Memorial gifts in her honor may be given to the Dorothy O. Olson and Paul N. Olson Music Fund at Marlboro College.

We heard the sad news of the death of Bob Engel, biology professor emeritus, as this issue of *Potash Hill* was in production. We will plan on a fuller In Memoriam in the next issue, and in the mean time you can refer to his online obituary at marlboro.edu/bob. Our hearts go out to Bob's family and deep community of friends, human and otherwise.

MAXIMUM JALF SPIRIT



After two “JALF” reunions in as many years, Jessica Taraski ’91 was inclined to take a year off. These gatherings of Marlboro alumni from the ’90s, honoring the memory of Jed Adam Leland Fels ’92, were more fun than a dorm room full of puppies, but they were also a lot of work. What could inspire Jessica to organize another reunion event last October?

“Peer pressure,” says Jessica. “Cate Marvin ’93, JALF’s esteemed founder, posted to our Facebook group to gauge interest, and that got the ball rolling. Then so many others pitched in. It really is a group effort. And thankfully, [alumni director] Kathy Waters always says ‘yes’ to everything we pitch.”

The third annual JALF reunion involved a total of 42 alumni taking part in various events over the weekend, with “maximum JALF” reached on Saturday night. Other community members that stopped in for events included President Kevin, retired professors Jim Tober and T. Wilson, and former staff members and alumni Hilly van Loon ’62 and Piet van Loon ’63.

“For the past two years, it was a Friday-night-to-Sunday-morning thing, but this year we added an extra day, because two nights just wasn’t enough,” says Jessica. “We were so lucky that Maia Segura ’91 and her husband Damian were generous enough to kick things off Thursday night with a cozy cocktail party at their place.”

Ceramist Diane Echlin ’91 led her fellow JALFers in a mug decorating activity, and Vermont Performance Lab’s Sara Coffey ’90 taught urban line dancing. Everyone enjoyed seeing alumni offspring play together and make bonds that reach beyond the JALF generation. But for Jessica the highlight was the meal her partner Adam Shepard FS91 and Randy George ’93 created for Saturday night.

“That dinner, with help in the kitchen from Randy’s wife Eliza and their two daughters, plus other alumni and their families, ranks as one of the best meals I’ve ever had,” says Jessica. “Something magical happens when they collaborate. Getting to be on the receiving end of their camaraderie, creativity, and craft is the best.”

Inset> Adam Shepard and Jessica Taraski in Brooklyn last summer.

Full Page> Kids of alumni work together on a community photo puzzle from the 1990s.



Potash Hill SOCIETY



Photo by Devlo Media

Marlboro’s philosophy of student independence and rigorous scholarship served me well in graduate school and through a successful career. We wrote Marlboro into our wills because I wanted to help to make sure those values continue. —Tom Davies ’75



Formally retired from Microsoft Corporation in 1996, Tom has continued to remain engaged as a race car driver, professional ski patroller, jazz musician, and board member for several non-profits. Marlboro’s most significant influence on his life came from the late science faculty member John MacArthur. He says, “John’s example as an analytical thinker and naturalist inspired me to earn my PhD from Yale in population biology.”

Learn more about how you can make a deferred gift to Marlboro, and other giving options, at marlboro.edu/giving/how.



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Students on a Bridges orientation trip get to know each other and the forest ecosystem around them. Read more on page 8. Photo by Clayton Clemetson