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*"What's the next big thing in AI?
Adding humanness on top of deep
learning."* p. 12

Northwestern

SPRING 2019

Caravans of Gold

Glimpse a world where Islam,
Christianity and African cultures met
at the crossroads of the Saharan trade
routes — at the Block Museum. p. 26

Great Spirit

In November members of the Chicago-area Native American community and representatives of Sand Creek Massacre descendants gathered on campus to share reflections at a bonfire and a panel discussion. U.S. Army cavalry soldiers slaughtered approximately 150 Cheyenne and Arapaho Native Americans on Nov. 29, 1864, at Sand Creek in Colorado. University founder John Evans was the governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs of the Colorado Territory at the time. Northwestern has made Native American research a priority in recent years.



Jump for Joy
Anthony Gaines celebrates an emphatic dunk during the Wildcats' exhibition opener in the debut of the new Welsh-Ryan Arena. The Northwestern facility received \$110 million in upgrades. Additions include new seating with chair-backs, new and expanded restrooms, concession areas with twice as many point-of-sale stations and new locker rooms for men's and women's basketball and women's volleyball.



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Caravans of Gold

A new exhibition at the Block Museum of Art assembles art and fragments to reveal the forgotten glory of Africa's medieval past.

By Stephanie Kulke

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Hope for Asylum Seekers

Law professor Uzoamaka Emeka Nzelibe represents young immigrants seeking a safe haven in the U.S.

By Barbara Mahany

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How I Spent My Summer

Grants funded a variety of student research projects, from lemurs in Madagascar to marionettes in Canada.



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← “This renovation gives us a top fan-friendly and athlete-enabling game venue. The new Welsh-Ryan will have the ambiance to create a distinct home-court advantage.”

—Trustee Patrick G. Ryan '59, '09 H,
at the dedication of the new Welsh-Ryan Arena

RING: RING EXCAVATED AT SUJLMASA, MOROCCO, 9TH–10TH CENTURY. GOLD, FONDATION NATIONALE DES MUSÉES DU ROYAUME DU MAROC; PHOTO BY ABDALLAH FILI AND HAFSA EL HASSANI

NAKAYA: MELISSA OSTROW; FACE ILLUSTRATION: TAMARA SHOPSIN; BEAKERS: LISA PREDKO



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What's Your Type?

Northwestern researchers outline four personality types based on new data.



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Fog Artist

Fujiko Nakaya presents her ethereal, shape-shifting installations to connect humans to nature.



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A Lawyer Makes All the Difference

In this issue you'll find an inspiring story [“A Beacon of Hope for Asylum Seekers, page 38] about clinical associate law professor Uzoamaka Nzelibe, who helps youth seeking asylum build new lives.

As a staff attorney with the Bluhm Legal Clinic's Children and Family Justice Center at the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law, Nzelibe '96 takes on the asylum cases of teens and young adults who've fled their homelands because of violence and threats on their lives, often from gangs.

“These youths cannot afford lawyers and, under our laws, are not entitled to a free lawyer. Yet having a lawyer makes all the difference in court,” says Nzelibe, who represents these young people in the U.S. Department of Justice's Chicago Immigration Court.

“What I love most about my clients is they're kids. I can joke around with them. They're resilient,” Nzelibe says. “I don't like to make them seem completely like victims because I admire them. I admire the fact that they can make a decision to leave their country, sometimes walk thousands of miles to get here, persevere and still do well.”

An immigrant herself from Nigeria, Nzelibe understands the sense of displacement and loss her clients have experienced.

Nzelibe juggles 15 to 18 cases at a time with the help of Northwestern law students, who investigate and gather the facts to corroborate the clients' stories. They often

must confirm information with clients' relatives back home and secondary sources, especially regarding the violent situations these youths faced in their country.

As the mother of an adopted Guatemalan teenager who fled kidnapping threats in his home country and who lost his parents to gang violence, I am grateful to Uzoamaka and all the immigration attorneys like her who are fighting for these young asylum seekers. Through their unwavering commitment to and compassion for these young adults, they are saving — and transforming — lives.

“My clients are in search of safety when they come to the United States,” says Nzelibe. “I've learned over the years that when children feel safe and supported, they can accomplish many things. My

clients have been able to leave behind horrific lives and move forward. Many have graduated from college or learned a trade, and most are now productive, contributing members in their communities.”

Just like my son. After gaining asylum he went to college, earned a degree in business and now works for Nestlé. He's enrolled his sister at a university in Guatemala, where she lives, and provides for his extended family.

“I wish more people could begin to understand that what makes the United States great are our founding ideals and values and the opportunities these values engender,” Nzelibe said to me after I told her my son's asylum story. “While it is not a perfect country, the U.S. remains one of the few places where people can start afresh and make better lives for themselves.”

Stephanie Russell
Executive Editor



ANJIE JAGER

Talk Back



NEW DESIGN

Kudos to all of you! Change is good. I LOVE Northwestern Magazine's design makeover. So sleek and easy to read. Vivid pictures and excellent articles. I'm on vacation now and just finished reading the magazine cover to cover. It makes me proud to say, “I'm an NU alum.”
Renee Pearl Sigler '85
Montreal

At 80 I am resigned to the scattering of my ashes. I am not resigned to having my memory placed in a jumble of small print in your In Memoriam [Alumni, fall 2018, page 74]. The old format was better. Probably more costly, but better.
Philip Cheney III '68
Asheville, N.C.

The new format of Northwestern Magazine reminds me of the old joke about Time and Life magazines. Time was for people who couldn't think, and Life was for people who couldn't read. In fact, this issue was more like Sesame Street, flitting from topic to topic in an attempt to entertain people with

short attention spans. I am ashamed to have it represent our intelligent Northwestern community. We deserve better.
Margaret Weatherly Hall '63
Prairie Village, Kan.

SOCIAL MEDIA
FEEDBACK

I wrote about Cecilia Vaisman for @Northwesternmag. In her last years of life, she essentially gave me my career. She was an exceptional mentor, and I find myself wishing on a weekly basis that I could ask her for advice. — @antoniacere

“If we had comparable screens for other types of #cancer, we could reduce cancer deaths tenfold,” says Vadim Backman, PhD, about a stunning new #earlydetection strategy. “When else have we seen such a discovery? Never.” — @LurieCancer



#NUstalgic - Fabulous show and, yes, the duet with Nick Lowe was great but, ironically, of all the selections @ElvisCostello failed to play was “Girls Talk” with his old Stiff Records buddy. So glad DMcM is in stronger health. — @BillFigel

Aren't you forgetting @DEVO? They played Cahn October 1979 I think. That concert inspired Nancy Levinger and me to wrap the rock in sheets for our #NewTraditionalists party in 83. who needs paint? #NUstalgic — @mimulisa

I love the redesign of Northwestern Magazine. In fact, when it arrived, I thought it was the Atlantic, one of my favorite magazines.
Elizabeth Canning Blackwell '90
Glenview, Ill.

“The old layout was text heavy, and there wasn't a lot of white space” [“The Story Behind Our New Look,” From the Editor, fall 2018, page 8]. This from one of the premier universities in the nation? Is this what you promise your students — not too much text to bother reading but lots of photos and white space? You want my donations for this vision?

Bob Basofin '68 MS
Palatine, Ill.

THREATS AGAINST A FREE PRESS

The new Northwestern Magazine is outstanding. From oak trees to Grammy Award winners to groundbreaking scientific collaborations, the magazine continues to amaze me with the accomplishments of Northwestern faculty and graduates. The new format is lively and inviting, and the writing is clear, even when explaining complex scientific theories.

But for me, the most powerful and timely story was Tim Franklin's commentary about the threats to a free press [“Threats Against a Free Press Harm Us All,” Voices, fall 2018, page 11]. How prescient that Franklin wrote about the attacks on journalists just before the horrific news about the murder of Saudi Arabian journalist Jamal Khashoggi became public.

These threats against the media are real, and Franklin is wise to remind all of us of

“No matter what tribe or filter bubble we belong to, we need to treasure the work that all journalists provide. Their work keeps us informed and connected.”

— Arlis McLean

the need to protect our free press. No matter what tribe or filter bubble we belong to, we need to treasure the work that all journalists provide. Their work keeps us informed and connected.
Arlis McLean
Tucson

I live in a modest-sized city. There is only one newspaper; once there were two or more. For every column-inch of actual news, the section is filled out with at least 10 inches of bylined op-ed pieces filled with author-biased adjectives and adverbs, in our case usually purchased from AP. False/fake/junk news! I don't like ultimately paying for it, have complained about it and don't read much of it. I find passing it off as news insulting.

But it certainly is not an excuse to physically attack journalists!
Edward D. Henze '50
Albany, Ore.

Congratulations on the newly designed Northwestern Magazine. It's modern and



↑ This vintage postcard of University Hall shows Northwestern's "Old Oak," with its outstretched branch, on the right.

engaging. Kudos also on Tim Franklin's essay about the dangers of Trump's toxic tirade against journalists and how it endangers them and threatens the very foundation of our democracy.
Marla Weingarten
Chicago

SOCIAL MEDIA FALL FAVES

I received my copy of your fall 2018 issue and read the tweet by @CLRosales under the Social Feeds banner ["Fall Faves," *Voices*, page 12]. The description of the homecoming parade in the fall at Northwestern given by a self-described "South Texas native" sounds exciting and picturesque, and she wrote that it "... was almost like being an extra on a cute TV show BUT REAL!"

Really? That's quite a description, considering the fact that there hasn't been a Northwestern homecoming parade on Sheridan Road for the past two years. Last year's was canceled due to heavy road construction, and this year's was canceled because the University had noted declining interest and attendance in the recent past. Hopefully the University will take note of this tweet and

restore the parade. Perhaps they need to look at ways to re-engage the students and alumni to either participate or watch and support it.
Stacey Silverman Singer '83
Englewood, Colo.

FAREWELL TO THE SANDWICHMAN

Our memories of Bill Froehlig, known as "the Sandwichman," go beyond the homemade sandwiches he brought to our residence halls every night in his two-wheeled cart, from the late 1940s to his retirement in 1988. Froehlig died Sept. 29 in Tallahassee, Fla., at the age of 92 [see In Memoriam, page 69].

The tracks of his cart in the North Campus snow are long gone, but generations



↑ In this July 1981 photo, Bill Froehlig delivers sandwiches to Northwestern journalism "cherubs" at McCulloch Hall.

of Northwestern graduates remember his generosity, kindness, tireless work ethic and that distinctive boatswain's whistle announcing his arrival.
Gabe Fuentes '86, '93 JD
Chicago

OAK ROOTS

Fascinating piece on the oaks on campus ["Roots: Northwestern's Oaks," fall 2018, page 36]. Just sorry that you didn't have a photo of the Garrett class of 1888 so we might have seen my wife's great-grandfather.

Over here in Oakland County, Michigan, we have been celebrating the 200th anniversary of the "discovery" of the county by Territorial Governor Lewis Cass and a group of leading Detroiters.

In October 1818 our "explorers" found that the land was excellent to good, there was plenty of clear water for transportation, drinking and mill power, stones for foundations — and there were plenty of oak openings.
Michael Carmichael '64
Bloomfield Hills, Mich.

AN AMBITIOUS ENDEAVOR

Back in the '50s and '60s the topic of work-family balance was big in psychology and social psychology circles, and many of my students and colleagues were doing interesting research on it. At that time I was also struggling with that issue as I completed my clinical psychology degree with a spouse and three wonderful kids waiting at home for me (mostly patiently, but not always) while I pursued big ambitions under great stress

and conflict. I would love to partner with Hana Schank and Elizabeth Wallace ["An Ambitious Endeavor," fall 2018, page 65] and interview the career women of my generation who, like me, made their decisions and now can look back and reflect on the wisdom, the rewards, the problems and the conclusions derived from those decisions! It's a fascinating issue that's not likely to go away and will have importance for every subsequent generation.
Lee Blum '58, '74 MA, '76 PhD
Former director of Northwestern's Counseling Psychology Program
Winnetka, Ill.

IT'S IN THE BAG

I was stunned to see that Allison Brown, Cara Maresca and Kristina Moore's Cariset bag ["It's in the Bag," *Innovation*, fall 2018, page 25] is made of leather, the use of which supports cruelty to animals. As successful fashion designer Stella McCartney told the *New York Times* in 2012, "Using ... leather to make a handbag is cruel. But it's also not modern; you're not pushing innovation." I am saddened that this is the best these women could do.

Natasha Sankovitch '86 MA, '98 JD
La Jolla, Calif.

CORRECTION

Due to a database error, we mistakenly listed Donald A. Rock '57 as deceased [In Memoriam, fall 2018, page 77]. He called to let us know he is very much alive and resides in Florida today!

Read more letters at magazine.northwestern.edu/talk-back.

GABE FUENTES

Voices

ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE

Health Equity is Next LGBTQ Priority

By Brian Mustanski

The day the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage nationwide — June 26, 2015 — marked a monumental victory in the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) movement's fight for recognition of our civil rights. In the words of former Justice Anthony Kennedy, it affirmed our hope for "equal dignity in the eyes of the law." Afterward, some asked, "What's next?" My answer? To continue fighting for that same dignity in one of the most important aspects of our lives — our health and health care.

It was also in 2015 that Northwestern founded the Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing (ISGMH), the nation's first universitywide institute to focus exclusively on research to improve sexual and gender minority health. As ISGMH's director, I lead a team that uses research to improve health equity for U.S. LGBTQ communities.

ISGMH's research reveals mounting evidence that our communities face higher disease burdens and less access to health care. For example, once every 45 minutes a young gay/bisexual man in the United States is diagnosed with HIV — a rate 20 times higher than for heterosexual young men. LGBTQ youth, especially those who identify as bisexual, are two to three times more likely to attempt suicide. Lesbian and bisexual-identified women are far less likely to receive cancer prevention services. Transgender people, especially of color, are subjected to alarmingly high rates of physical violence — including murder

— based on their gender identity and expression. The root of these disparities? Stigma, discrimination and institutional barriers to health care.

Over the past decade we've seen the federal government make important strides in advancing LGBTQ health. In 2010 LGBTQ populations were included for the first time in Healthy People 2020, a national health-disparities monitoring and elimination initiative of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Under President Obama's leadership, Health and Human Services-wide LGBTQ health goals and progress were reported annually, prioritizing increased data collection from LGBTQ populations in federal surveys. And in 2016 the National Institutes of Health formally recognized the LGBTQ community as a health disparity population for research purposes.

But this progress is under threat. Last October it was revealed that the Trump

administration is considering narrowly defining gender based on genitalia at birth — a change that is neither medically accurate nor backed by science. Policies have been proposed to erase LGBTQ questions from federal surveys that are critical to identifying the health needs of our community. Both of these erasures constitute a form of state violence, adding another layer to the discrimination and aggression that LGBTQ people face daily.

For my team at ISGMH, the representation of LGBTQ populations in federal surveys has made it possible to identify and report on health disparities — and identify ways to combat them. ISGMH has been at the forefront of using scientific evidence to argue against the validity of these proposed changes.

Now, perhaps more than ever, it is critical that we continue the LGBTQ movement's fight for recognition and representation. The health of our community depends on it.

Brian Mustanski '99, a psychologist, is director of Northwestern's Institute for Sexual and Gender Minority Health and Wellbeing, professor in the Feinberg School of Medicine and co-director of Third Coast Center for AIDS Research in Chicago.



↑ Brian Mustanski at the Center on Halsted in Chicago

SOUND OFF

China Today

What are the most important factors in the rise of China’s global influence, and what are the implications for the United States and its standing in the world?

Phil Levy, adjunct professor of strategy and member of former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice’s policy planning staff

China has skyrocketed to become the second-largest economy in the world. What led to this? First, they had a demographic boom. That’s important because it’s now subsiding. Second, there was a decision made in the 1980s that China should open up to the world. It had previously been hermetically sealed. And finally, the other thing that made a



difference for China was the development of a global supply chain. They were able to, essentially, take bite-sized pieces of global production. My own take is that China’s growth offered a number of direct economic benefits that played into U.S. well-being. Where China has actually challenged the U.S. is when it comes to setting rules for the global system at places like the World Trade Organization. China has also raised real security concerns. We are less than confident about what China’s ultimate political ambitions are.

Jiaxing Huang, professor of materials science and engineering

In the area of scientific research and education, China’s growth has been breathtaking. In the Chinese culture, people have always been convinced about the need to invest in education. China massively invests in its universities, leading to new knowledge that is broadly disseminated. So it is smart for U.S.

universities to collaborate with our Chinese counterparts.

This brings several new advantages in line with our mission: We can leverage such collaboration to



maximize the impact of our own research, to do something bigger and quicker for all humankind. For our students, they can have more chances to discover and define new research problems through such

engagement, because China itself is now a big testing ground for new ideas.

Bill Hurst, associate professor of political science

The first assumption, that China’s model is viable and sustainable is problematic, because if we look at how China developed its economy after the 1990s — monetary reform, currency liberalization and the rise of foreign direct investment — this model broke in 2008 or 2009. It’s never recovered. It’s not going to recover.

Politically, we have a situation in which President Xi Jinping has methodically eliminated all possible opponents. He’s centralized real authority and decision-making power in his own hands. And he’s also eliminated any formal check on his time in power. The minute he stumbles, you have serious political instability at the elite level.

From the U.S. point of view, we have either a very dangerous world of challengers, in which preserving hegemony has to be the No. 1 agenda, or an emerging multipolarity, in which the U.S. needs to accept that its position is in decline to the point of being one player among a number of players. The danger for the world is not so much in China rising to become one of those players as it is in the U.S. not wanting to come to grips with the reality of multipolarity.



Make your voice heard. Share your reaction with #VoicesNU on Twitter.

SOCIAL FEEDS

Woo-Rah

Did you live in @WillardRC? What are your favorite #Wooshack memories?

“Francis Willard Party with a water slide in the third floor hallway was ... MY idea!”

@KVHernacki



“Love @Wooshack aka @WillardRC! #PolkaParty best #Willard tradition.”

@JeromePandell

“Playing soccer in the Rat Trap. The 80s music parties. (before there were all-80s radio or a fully functioning internet).”

@Nuttle_Shuttle

“Is Sybil the Cow still around? If so, she originated with me.”

@gristnyc

Next question: What was your favorite @NorthwesternU spring tradition? #PrimalScream? @Dillo_Day? Share with #NUstalgi on Twitter.

HUANG: C. JASON BROWN/INSIGHT IMAGES; HURST: TONY RINALDO



MY NORTHWESTERN DIRECTION

On Becoming a Teacher — and a Poet

One of the most transformative experiences I had in the Master of Science in Education program was being asked to develop a personal philosophy of education — what I value most about teaching and learning. When professor Sophie Haroutunian-Gordon read an early draft, she pointed out its strengths but kindly noted how little it showcased my voice. She challenged me to focus on why I wanted to become a teacher and leave a career in journalism.

I told her about my parents and how they were my most important teachers, about my Pakistani heritage, my Muslim faith; I then opened up about my love of visual art and writing, how I also dreamed about becoming a poet.

Sophie emphasized the words I heard so often at Northwestern, that the most talented teachers possess a masterful sense of pedagogy but also a strong understanding of self.

That spring I enrolled in the Teaching of Writing course taught by Dagny Bloland ’69, ’70 MA. As a part of the class, we wrote constantly— narrative vignettes, analytic essays, short stories, even poems. To be an effective teacher of writing, Dagny taught us, you must yourself be engaged in writing.

When I sit down to write a poem, I am opening myself up to the magic of possibility, of something beautiful and profound taking shape on the page. I am never sure what will happen. So often nothing happens. But I have been writing for so long now that I know it’s about being present

By Faisal Mohyuddin '03 MS

High school English teacher, poet and visual artist

“The more I talked with Sophie about the magic of poetry — of how it captures in words what cannot be expressed in words — the more my philosophy became my own.”

and being still. Dagny would often say that a skilled teacher creates a space where students can be still enough to receive.

“Stillness to receive” became my mantra too and a guiding principle of my personal philosophy of education. It has helped me create a classroom culture where students have space to be creative and the opportunity to walk along the bright edge of discovery, while turning inward and outward at the same time.

The more I talked with Sophie about the magic of poetry — of how it captures in words what cannot be expressed in words — the more my philosophy became my own. And at the end of my practicum class with Peg Kritzler, when I found myself unable to write an essay about the observation experience, I turned to my philosophy. I turned to poetry.

I then wrote what would become my first published poem, “On the First Day of Student Teaching,” a three-part dream sequence imagining the upcoming journey through the challenges of student teaching.

The poem came out just as I was beginning my career at Highland Park High School in suburban Chicago; I am now in my 16th year there. I have been so fortunate to have colleagues, administrators and students who continue to reaffirm a philosophy of education rooted in being true to one’s own passions while guiding others to be true to theirs.

In April 2018 my first book of poems, *The Displaced Children of Displaced Children*, came out from Eyewear Publishing in London. Poet Kimiko Hahn selected it for the 2017 Sexton Prize for Poetry. That I wrote the book as a high school English teacher and included in it a number of poems about the joys and struggles of teaching fills me with special pride. I will be forever grateful to my professors and classmates at Northwestern who recognized that it was not only possible to be both a teacher and a writer, but that it was necessary that I do both.

WHAT INSPIRES ME

A Voice for Plants

Plant biologist finds inspiration in her colleagues’ passion for natural world.

Nyree Zerega, director of the Graduate Program in Plant Biology and Conservation

“A large part of plant biology and conservation is learning about the various species that make up ecosystems, both in disturbed and undisturbed environments. One important way to do this is to get up close and personal with all these species by doing fieldwork. I’m fortunate to work with a really great group of people — scientists, students, community members — who are passionate about getting outdoors to learn about ecosystems around the world. They understand how important species diversity

is to our survival, and they are passionate about how they can apply research findings to actually improve the environment through, for example, restoring habitats or conserving endangered species. To work with people who devote their time and attention to saving habitats and species that may not have a direct impact on our day-to-day life but fit into the overall fabric of nature is amazing. To be a voice for these plants with no voices, I find that very inspiring.”

Nyree Zerega is professor of instruction and director of the Graduate Program in Plant Biology and Conservation, a collaboration between Northwestern and the Chicago Botanic Garden. Her lab



↑ Nyree Zerega in the St. Vincent Botanical Garden, where she studied breadfruit

explores the evolution, genetic diversity, origins and pollination biology of plants. In addition to teaching and training students, Zerega continues an active research program on breadfruit, jackfruit and their wild relatives. Both are tropical, long-lived trees that produce nutritious fruits. In Oceania, it is said that planting a breadfruit tree when a child is born will feed that child for a lifetime.

FALL SPEAKERS

Heard on Campus

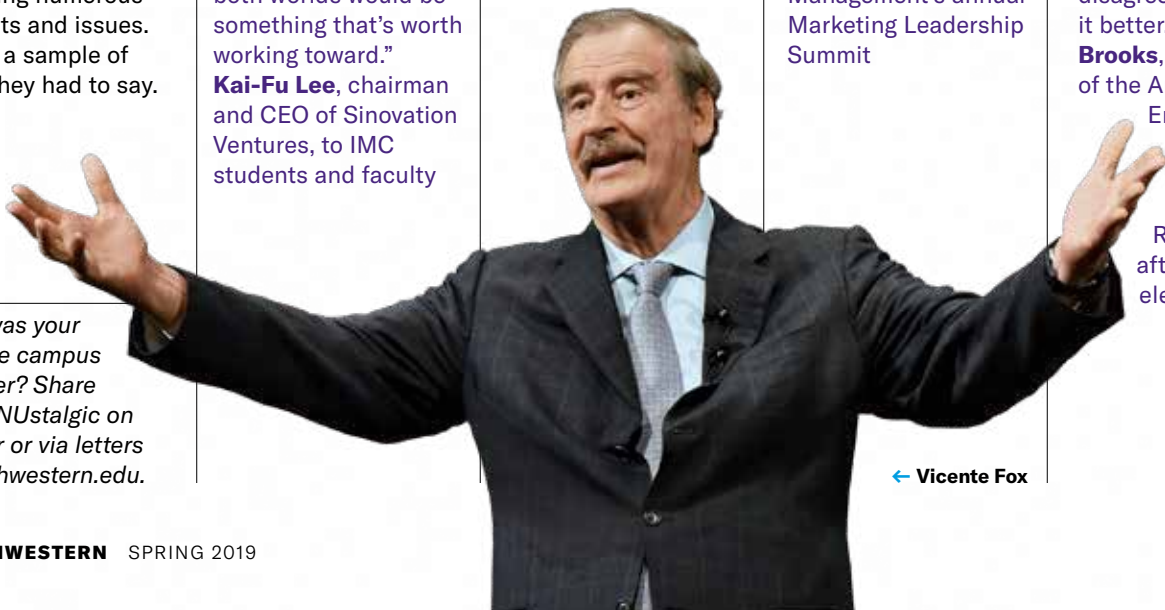
Last fall Northwestern hosted a bevy of speakers on campus, spanning numerous subjects and issues. Here’s a sample of what they had to say.

“There are some things AI simply cannot do. Storytelling, the creation of the brand, those require creative minds. When people ask, what’s the next big thing in AI, I think adding humanness on top of deep learning in a way that still preserves the best of both worlds would be something that’s worth working toward.” **Kai-Fu Lee**, chairman and CEO of Sinovation Ventures, to IMC students and faculty

“We don’t accept to be called rapists. We don’t accept to be called criminals. We don’t accept to be called bad *hombres*. We have pride. We have culture.” **Vicente Fox** (below), former president of Mexico, at the Richard W. Leopold Lecture

“If you don’t have trust with your agency or your employees, how will you have an honest conversation with them? Trust is the No. 1 thing to do anything great.” **Kevin Hochman**, president and chief concept officer for KFC U.S., at the Kellogg School of Management’s annual Marketing Leadership Summit

“Together I think we can be the beginning of a new movement in the country, a movement of unity and of harmony. Not a new country of agreement, because I don’t think agreement is even good. I believe in disagreement. But I believe we can disagree and do it better.” **Arthur Brooks**, president of the American Enterprise Institute, at an Institute for Policy Research event after the midterm election



← Vicente Fox

Who was your favorite campus speaker? Share with #NUstalgic on Twitter or via letters @northwestern.edu.

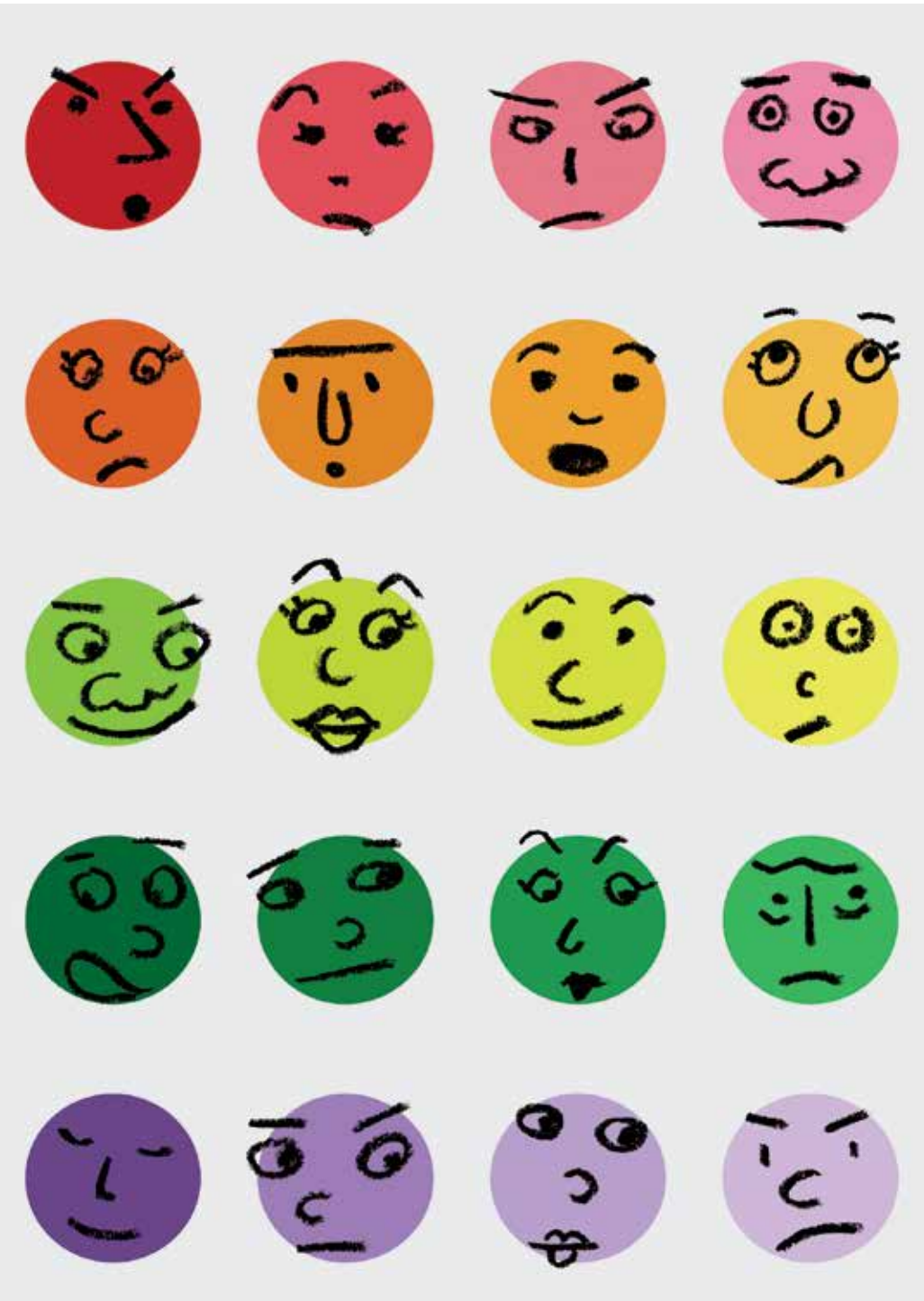
News

PSYCHOLOGY

What’s Your Type?

Northwestern researchers reveal four personality types based on new data.

“People have tried to classify personality types since Hippocrates’ time, but previous scientific literature has found that to be nonsense,” says William Revelle, professor of psychology and a self-proclaimed skeptic when it comes to personality types. So when his Northwestern colleagues Luís Amaral of the McCormick School of Engineering and Martin Gerlach, a postdoctoral fellow in Amaral’s lab, proposed a study to outline new personality types, Revelle, who specializes in personality measurement, theory and research, balked. The concept of personality types remains controversial in psychology, with hard scientific proof difficult to find. Previous attempts based on small research groups created results that often were not replicable. However, with access to several large datasets, the



The Alligator Tail is training wheels for wheelchairs p. 21



Professor Irv Rein’s 50-year reign p. 16

Sleep helps form lasting memories p. 18



From left, William Revelle, Martin Gerlach, Luis Amaral and Beatrice Farb

researchers combined an alternative computational approach, using an algorithm to sort personality data from four questionnaires completed by more than 1.5 million respondents around the world. The questionnaires, developed by the research community over the decades, have between 44 and 300 questions. People voluntarily take the online quizzes attracted by the opportunity to receive feedback about their own personality.

From those robust datasets, the team — which included summer intern Beatrice Farb, now

a sophomore at Harvard University — plotted the five widely accepted basic personality traits: neuroticism, extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness.

The researchers found at least four distinct clusters of personality types exist:

- Average — Average people are high in neuroticism and extraversion, while low in openness. “I would expect that the typical person would be in this cluster,” says Gerlach, first author of the study, which appeared in *Nature Human Behavior*. Females are more likely than males to fall into the Average type.

- Reserved — The Reserved type is emotionally stable, but not open or neurotic. The Reserved are not particularly extraverted but are somewhat agreeable and conscientious.

- Role Models — Role Models score low in neuroticism

and high in all the other traits. The likelihood that someone is a Role Model increases dramatically with age. “These are people who are dependable and open to new ideas,” Amaral says. “These are good people to be in charge of things. In fact, life is easier if you have more dealings with Role Models.” More women than men are likely to be Role Models.

- Self-Centered — Self-Centered people score very high in extraversion and below average in openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. “These are people you don’t want to hang out with,” Revelle says. There is a very dramatic decrease in the number of self-centered types as people age, both with women and men.

Along with serving as a tool that can help mental health service providers assess for personality types with extreme traits, Amaral says the study’s results could be helpful for hiring managers looking to ensure a potential candidate is a good fit or for people who are dating and looking for an appropriate partner.

“Personality types only existed in self-help literature and did not have a place in scientific journals,” says Amaral, the Erastus Otis Haven Professor of Chemical and Biological Engineering. “Now, we think this will change because of this study.”

Want to contribute to the research? Take the personality trait test at SAPA-Project.org.

“Life is easier if you have more dealings with Role Models.”



THE HOTEL CARRIÓN

Quito, Ecuador

American studies and Spanish double major Grant Everly traveled to the Hotel Carrión, an immigrant detention center in Ecuador, where he interviewed former government officials and legal experts working on behalf of those detained, while also collecting legal and government documents. He first learned about the detention center during a study abroad trip in fall 2017 and is continuing to explore the overlap between criminal justice and immigration law for his senior thesis in American studies. He hopes to use the research as the basis for a larger doctoral project.

GLOBAL REACH

Research Grants: How I Spent My Summer

MARIONETTE PERFORMANCE

Saskatoon, Canada

Senior Joshua Essex traveled to Saskatoon, Canada, to see the Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan festival and investigate an unusual theatrical form: Shakespeare puppet shows. Essex met with directors, designers and cast members working on a puppet adaptation of *Titus Andronicus*. To conclude his project, Essex created his own adaptation of *King Lear* using marionettes.



ASSESSING STRESS IN THE BOLIVIAN TSIMANÉ

Bolivia

After doing research using secondary data on the Tsimané, an Indigenous group in lowland Bolivia, Jennah Thompson-Vasquez had the opportunity to go in-country to do fieldwork of her own. A senior studying anthropology and Latina and Latino studies, she worked with adviser William Leonard and the Tsimané Amazonian Panel Study to collect data from three different communities. She visited one of the indigenous group’s remote communities, which required traveling by motorized canoe and camping — two things she had never done before.



EXPLORING ITALIAN FOOD CULTURE

Italy

For eight weeks, senior Ayla Langer researched food culture through the company Eataly, traveling across Italy to interview professors, cheese affineurs and those connected to the Slow Food organization. At the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Bra, she ate homemade focaccia and drank natural wine with students at their annual picnic and had dozens of conversations with locals about their food culture. Since returning to Evanston, she has continued to research the connection between food and culture. Langer, a Fulbright semifinalist, will attend the University of Gastronomic Sciences in Italy in the fall.

THE EFFECTS OF HABITAT DEGRADATION ON LEMUR HEALTH

Madagascar

Senior Nicolette McManus studied the critically endangered black-and-white ruffed lemur at three sites, including a coffee plantation. The environmental science major collected behavioral info, along with data on the lemurs’ gut microbiota and food sources to better understand the effects of habitat degradation.



The Ticker

● Statistics department chair **Larry Hedges** received the prestigious Yidan Prize for Education Research in Hong Kong.



● In its 10th year, **Northwestern University in Qatar** welcomed its largest and most diverse class to date. The Class of 2022 includes more than 100 students. Qataris make up more than 40 percent of the class, and 30 other nationalities are represented, with students from Ethiopia, Mexico and Moldova, among other countries.

● **Enable**, the University’s student-designed entry into the 2017 Solar Decathlon, was sold to Berthoud Habitat for Humanity in Colorado.

● Northwestern received the 2018 **Illinois Sustainability Award** in recognition of the institution’s extensive progress in reducing the University’s environmental footprint and advancing sustainability. Northwestern is working to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.



● The University launched the **Northwestern Prison Education Program**, a partnership with the Illinois Department of Corrections, at Stateville Correctional Center. The faculty-led program offers liberal arts courses for credit that can be applied toward undergraduate degrees through the School of Professional Studies.



FACULTY MILESTONES

Rein’s Reign

Popular professor celebrates a half-century.

The year Irving Rein first taught his now-famous course Persuasive Images: Rhetoric of Contemporary Culture, the nation was engrossed in Woodstock, the first moon landing and the first draft lottery for the Vietnam War. It was 1969.

Fifty years later, Rein is still teaching the course — though the cultural touchstones, images and mediums now used in persuasion couldn’t be more different. “Times have changed tremendously,” says Rein, who with two undergraduate assistants prepares extensively for each class with edited videos and visuals. “It’s a huge challenge because of that rate of change.”

Yet at age 81, Rein keeps up. Winter quarter 2019 marked the 50th anniversary of his joining the Northwestern faculty, and he has taught the class every one of those years (except the year he was on leave as the Van Zelst Research Chair in Communication, but even then he assisted with the

course). Rein recalls a bit of a fracas when he started it; taking over a semantics class, he changed it to reflect what he thought his students urgently needed to learn. “People were saying, ‘Students should be taking Beowulf and Shakespeare. What’s going on at the University?’” Yet Rein had the support of the dean’s office as well as the legions of students who flocked to the course every year thereafter.

Television producer Jeff Pinkner ’87, known for such series as *Fringe*, *Lost* and *Alias*, credits Rein with changing the way he looks at the world. “His unique genius is identifying the intersection between all modes of communication, psychology and emotion,” Pinkner says. “And like a magician who reveals the secret of the trick, he pulls back the veil to explore how that intersection can be exploited to manipulate our experiences. But more than that, he has the rarest of gifts: He makes deep learning, the kind that permanently expands your field of vision, not only thrilling but fun.”

SPORTS

In a stunning second-half turnaround, Northwestern football scored 28 third-quarter points to shock the University of Utah 31-20 at the Holiday Bowl on a rain-soaked New Year’s Eve in San Diego. The victory, the Wildcats’ third consecutive bowl win, capped a 9-5 season that included a trip to the 2018 Big Ten Championship.



Pat Fitzgerald '97 hoists the 2018 Holiday Bowl trophy.

S.J. CARRERA INC. 2018/COURTESY OF NORTHWESTERN ATHLETICS

'CAT TALES

Still Booming

It started off as just another hazy post-graduation idea: Two Northwestern alumni traveling in Amsterdam decided to quit their jobs in the U.S. and move to the Netherlands to start an improv group. Never mind that the Amsterdam board of tourism thought it was an awful idea that wouldn’t attract Dutch audiences or tourists. Pep Rosenfeld '90 and Andrew Moskos '90 were determined to bring comedy to the city.

The two alumni are still living out this dream. Their creation, Boom Chicago, has made more than 1 million audience members laugh over the last quarter-century. Rosenfeld and Moskos have transformed the comedy scene in Amsterdam — where comedy clubs did not really exist in the early '90s — while casting a few notable names along the way. Seth Meyers '96 began his improv career at Boom Chicago, as did Jordan Peele. Meyers, who invited Moskos and Rosenfeld to sit with him at the 2011 White House Correspondents' Association dinner, recently returned to the Netherlands to kick off the group's 25-year celebration with a stand-up routine at the 3,000-seat Royal Theatre Carré.

BOOM CHICAGO: COURTESY OF SASKIA MASS; COCOLOUPE: COURTESY OF COCOLOUPE



STUDENT LIFE

To New Heights

Doctoral students escape the lab, find community on the climbing wall.

As they near the completion of their doctorates, Jennifer Ferrer and Arianne Rodriguez have faced their fair share of challenges. Lab work is rarely glamorous, and responding to carefully planned experiments gone awry can be difficult.

But the duo has found solace inside Chicago's climbing gyms, which they started frequenting a few years back. Ferrer had just returned from her first climbing experience in Vietnam's Ha Long Bay, and she was looking for a partner back in the States. She asked Rodriguez, who had rock climbed during her days at

Notre Dame but had given up the sport.

They started documenting their successes and failures on the Instagram account @coconutandcantaloupe, a combination of their nicknames, Coconut (Ferrer) and Cantaloupe (Rodriguez). Beyond tracking their own progress, they hope to encourage others to get into the sport.

They say that climbing, with its focus on problem-solving and adaptability, has helped with their academic investigations. Ferrer works on nanoparticles for immune therapy in Chad Mirkin's lab, while Rodriguez explores

the mechanics of cellular metabolism and immunity with Navdeep Chandel. More important, Ferrer and Rodriguez say they've found something to pursue in their lives beyond research.

"We see a lot of students who work in the lab, sleep and eat," says Rodriguez. "That's not going to sustain you in the long term. You need something else to tether yourself to, to ground yourself when the science might not be working." They say seeing personal improvement and becoming more aware of the importance of seemingly small milestones have been beneficial too.



Jennifer Ferrer looks on as Arianne Rodriguez climbs in Tennessee.

HEALTH

Sleep to Remember

The brain works to consolidate memories during slumber. Researchers hope to amplify the effect, with possibilities for improving learning, creativity and recovery from injury.

Y our brain, says neuroscientist Ken Paller, is not like a laptop, shutting down when you close the lid. Instead, when you close *your lids* at night, your brain remains hard at work, consolidating information you’ve learned that day — and the days before.

Paller, a professor of psychology and director of Northwestern’s Cognitive Neuroscience Program, studies memory and other aspects of human cognition. In recent years his lab group has explored the connection between memory and sleep. Their goal is to understand fundamental mechanisms whereby memories are stored in the brain — and to reveal how the ability to remember gets a boost while you sleep.

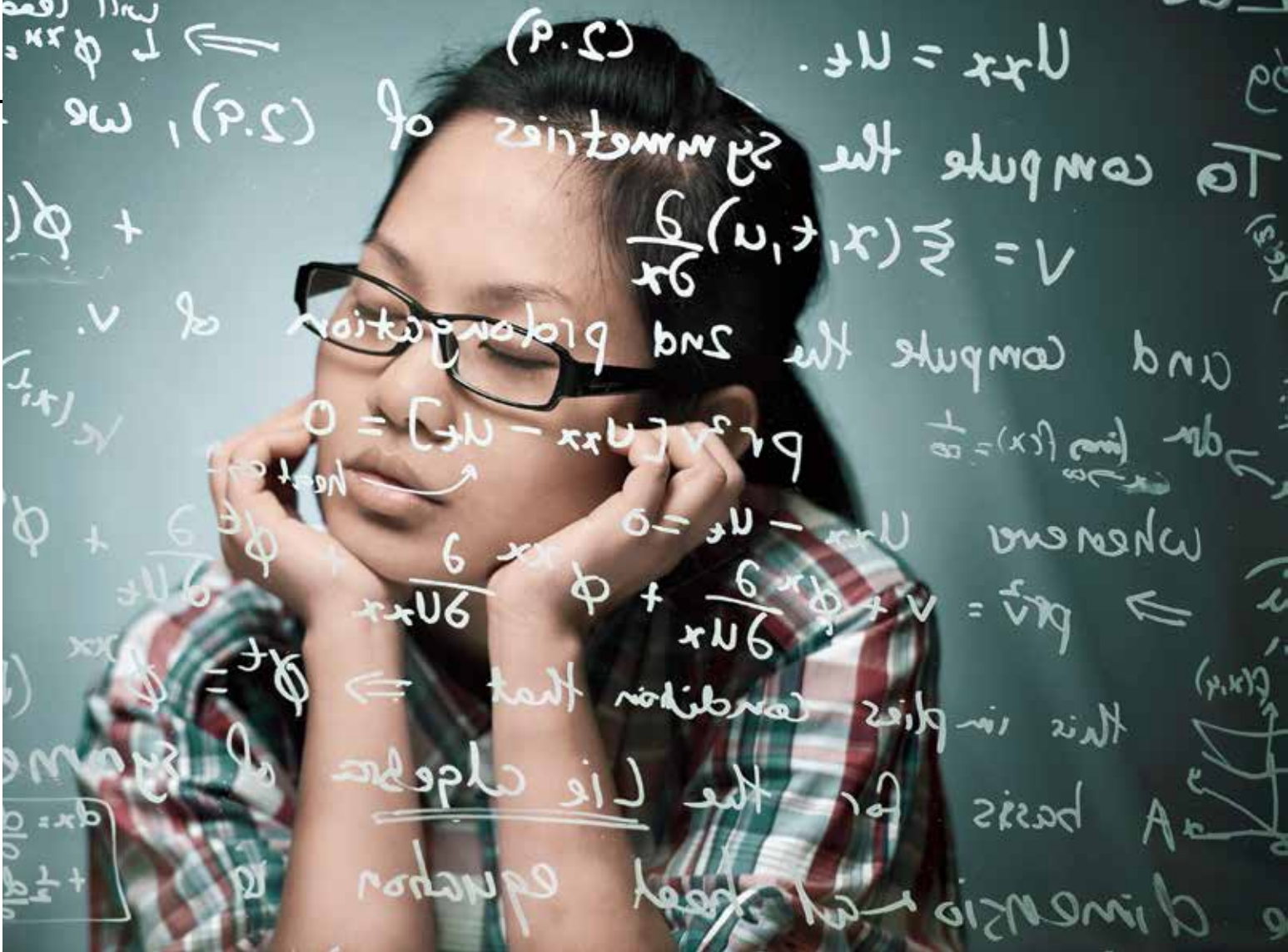
Paller’s lab is exploring various types of memory that can be reinforced during

sleep, and how memories are reactivated so that they can be consolidated.

He says that to memorize new information — perhaps the name of someone you just met — you can rehearse that information, which is effective whether you do so intentionally or unintentionally. “This rehearsal is part of the consolidation process,” he says, “and perhaps that’s what the brain is doing during sleep when it’s bringing up recent memories, even though we don’t know it’s happening.”

Paller and his students showed that sounds strategically presented during sleep could improve retention of recently learned information. “Sensory input can change how memories are stored,” he says. “When the sounds specifically connect to recent learning, they can change brain networks — and

“When we inhabit a dream, we’re in a hallucinatory world, even though it can feel every bit as real as any waking experience.”



because of these changes the ability to remember the next day is improved.”

Paller, who runs a sleep lab on the Evanston campus, is working with Marc Slutzky, an associate professor of neurology, who helps people regain fine motor control after a stroke by teaching them how to control individual muscles. “That rehab therapy could take advantage of what’s happening during sleep,” Paller says. “We use basically the same therapy except with special sounds linked to the particular movements people are learning to make. When those sounds are played during certain stages of sleep, learning might be reinforced so that the therapy works better.” Paller hopes that by

exercising the brain networks during sleep, participants can speed up recovery time.

Paller is also working with Phyllis Zee, professor of neurology and director of the Feinberg School of Medicine’s Center for Circadian and Sleep Medicine, to improve slow-wave sleep, which is an important time for memory processing. The researchers play sound stimulation — such as the rush of a waterfall — synchronized to the rhythm of brain waves at particular intervals that mimic the slow-wave intervals, enhancing these slow waves. Studies using this method have shown improvements for the young and old and for people in the early stages of Alzheimer’s disease. “We found that one

GETTY IMAGES

consequence of improving sleep is improved memory,” Paller says.

In a separate study, Paller and his team are also looking at ways to help people control their dreams. When you have the realization in the middle of a dream that you’re dreaming, “that’s termed a lucid dream,” he says. “And that’s a rare thing, but when people have that realization, they can master the ability to stay asleep and continue to explore the dream and then, in fact, control it.”

Paller and his team are exploring the ability to make study participants aware that they’re experiencing a dream and then help them change the content of the dream. “The dream is the original virtual

reality,” Paller says. “When we inhabit a dream, we’re in a hallucinatory world, even though it can feel every bit as real as any waking experience.”

Although the value of dreaming remains somewhat mysterious, Paller also noted that research has been steadily making progress in revealing the many benefits of sleep. With mounting evidence of the importance of sleep for memory and health, it’s essential to prioritize your sleep.

“There are various pressures that can make us devalue sleep. We may try to get more done by getting less sleep,” he says. “But to really optimize, it’s critical to understand the various ways that sleep is helpful for us.”

RESEARCH

Black Widows Inspire, Pets Tell Time



THE SECRET BEHIND SPIDER FIBER

A joint study by researchers at Northwestern and San Diego State University has unraveled how black widow spiders transform proteins into steel-strength fibers. Using this knowledge, materials scientists hope to create building materials for cable bridges, high-performance textiles for the military and athletes and environmentally friendly replacements for plastics. Lucas Parent and Nathan C. Gianneschi worked on the study for Northwestern.

INDUCING LABOR DECREASES CESAREAN DELIVERIES

A large national study led by William Grobman, the Arthur Hale Curtis, MD, Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, showed that inducing labor at 39 weeks reduces the rate of

cesarean deliveries and decreases maternal and fetal complications. In the U.S., approximately one-third of women give birth via cesarean delivery, which is associated with an increased risk of infection, hysterectomy, placenta implantation abnormalities in future pregnancies and respiratory illness in infants.

ANIMALS CAN TRACK TIME

A study from neurobiologist Daniel Dombeck found that animals can judge time. Using a virtual reality test with mice, researchers discovered a previously unknown set of neurons that turn on like a clock when an animal is waiting. The implications go beyond your impatient pooch. Researchers can now examine how neurodegenerative diseases might affect these cells, which could improve early-detection tests for Alzheimer’s.



STUDENT ENTREPRENEUR

People Power

Kristen Sanders’ digital marketing startup puts college students to work for local businesses.

During the summer after her sophomore year, Kristen Sanders was interested in exploring marketing but couldn’t find a paid opportunity. “And being a first-generation college student and financially independent, there was no way I could take an unpaid internship,” she says.

Feeling defeated, she stopped into the then-new Ovo Frito Café in Evanston and, on a whim, asked if they needed help developing an online presence. “They basically hired me on the spot,” says Sanders, a senior learning and organizational change major from Norco, Calif.

From that start Sanders built People6, a digital marketing agency that

employs college students to create and execute holistic marketing solutions and research for businesses and entrepreneurs. People6 has hired more than 30 students to complete nearly 20 projects, ranging from research for New Founders PAC to a new website design and branding plan for Roycemore School, near the Evanston campus. Since April 2018 the firm has earned about \$100,000 in revenue.

Sanders, who was one of four Northwestern students listed in Chicago Inno’s “25 Under 25” for 2018, has gotten support from the Farley Center for Entrepreneurship and Northwestern’s student startup incubator, The Garage. She developed the company



People6 founder
Kristen Sanders

primarily in The Garage’s 10-week summer incubator.

She also participates in the Propel Program, a collaboration between The Garage and Northwestern’s Innovation and New Ventures Office to empower women and minority students to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors. In the fall she was one of eight participants in the program’s New York experience, which included conversations with alumni business leaders, a tour of the

New York Stock Exchange and visits to the *New York Times* and Goldman Sachs.

“The best advice I heard was ‘No one really has it figured out,’” says Sanders. “Holding on to that principle is such a big peace-giving statement for so many people, especially at Northwestern.”

Sanders, for her part, has taken an active role in supporting young women of color by encouraging them to apply for Northwestern’s entrepreneurial resources.



EXPERT ADVICE

Steve Reed, assistant director of the Donald Pritzker Entrepreneurship Law Center, works with students to represent startups and social entrepreneurs in transactional matters. Here are his top tips for entrepreneurs: **1 Make sure you own your idea**; ensure that you have intellectual property rights to the idea behind your business. **2 Set up a business entity**. This will protect your personal assets from liability. **3 If you have a partner, put your agreement in writing**. A founders agreement will start your working relationship on the right foot.

REED: JASMIN SHAH; SANDERS: SHANE COLLINS

INVENTION

The Alligator Tail

When a person with paraplegia is adjusting to life with a wheelchair, they will begin physical therapy by learning how to do a stationary wheelie. A wheelchair user performs this skill by lifting the front wheels of the wheelchair up a few inches with their weight resting on the larger back wheels. This allows them to navigate obstacles like uneven ground and curbs. A team of McCormick School of Engineering sophomores created the Alligator Tail, a device that is placed on the axle of a wheelchair and is used prevent the user from falling while learning this technique. It allows users to practice wheelies with minimal assistance.

Lindsey Yingling, a physical therapist and wheelchair seating expert for Shirley Ryan AbilityLab, demonstrates the Alligator Tail. The device’s designers, sophomores Elizabeth Petersen, Melanie Galantino, Justin Navidzadeh and Jacob Wat, teamed up during their first-year Design Thinking and Communication class and created the Alligator Tail with the help from their mentor, Amy Huckstep, a Shirley Ryan AbilityLab physical therapist.

A CUSHIONED BED

A cushioned bed made from foam-covered plastic comes in direct contact with the chair after it reaches its tipping point. It is designed specifically to minimize any impact on the patient.

THE TOOTHED RAIL

The notched rail allows the therapist to adjust the angle of the bed, allowing patients of any shape, size or degree of comfort with the wheelchair the opportunity to practice a stationary wheelie as comfortably as possible.

FLEXIBLE WHEEL

The 360-degree ball-and-socket wheel minimizes drag, ensuring that the device doesn’t inhibit the user’s lateral movement.

WHEELCHAIR ATTACHMENT

To use the Alligator Tail, a physical therapist may hook the device around the wheelchair’s axle so that the aluminum-constructed frame extends behind the chair without affecting the chair’s balance.





ATHLETICS

New Home Court for the 'Cats

The new Welsh-Ryan Arena offers state-of-the-art amenities for student-athletes and fans alike and accessibility for all visitors.

Northwestern dedicated the striking new Welsh-Ryan Arena in November, opening the doors of a world-class facility built to be the most accessible in college athletics. The renovated facility is now a modern home for men’s and women’s basketball, volleyball and wrestling.

The transformation of one of the University’s most used

and versatile venues was made possible by the generosity of loyal Northwestern benefactors and alumni, most notably Trustee Patrick G. Ryan ’59, ’09 H and Shirley Welsh Ryan ’61.

“The new Welsh-Ryan Arena is a world-class venue that will host competitions, practices, graduations, concerts and community

events,” said Jim Phillips, the Combe Family Vice President for Athletics and Recreation, at the dedication. “We are so thankful to Pat and Shirley Ryan for the impact their generosity will make today and for generations to come.”

The arena floor is constructed of maple wood sourced from Menominee Tribal Enterprises. A four-

sided, center-hung scoreboard offers cutting-edge video, audio and lighting. New windows feature automatic translucent and blackout shades. New locker room facilities for men’s basketball, women’s basketball and volleyball each include a kitchen, “fueling station” and lounge, while lounges for wrestling and cheerleading feature the latest audio and visual technology.

“The new Welsh-Ryan Arena is stunning and will provide Northwestern scholar-athletes with state-of-the-art facilities that they deserve,” Pat Ryan said at the dedication. “This renovation gives us a top fan-friendly

and athlete-enabling game venue. The new Welsh-Ryan will have the ambiance to create a distinct home-court advantage. It will be a real pit.”

The arena is believed to be the most accessible anywhere in college athletics.

“The architectural design is very responsive to people with special and differing

← The new Welsh-Ryan Arena is the home for women’s basketball as well as men’s basketball, volleyball and wrestling.

needs,” Shirley Ryan said. “There are five strategically positioned elevators, and guardrails have been placed down the center of all aisles, with wider and deeper steps at a slightly lower rise. Also, all of the washrooms are at the very high end of ADA [Americans with Disabilities Act] compliance. We were very pleased to see family bathrooms, so that families can take their young children into a private washroom. Finally, wheelchair-accessible seating is distributed generously throughout the arena, rather than at just one location.”

Construction on McGaw Memorial Hall, in which Welsh-Ryan Arena is located, was started in 1951 and completed in 1953. In the early 1980s the basketball arena was renovated and named in honor of the Ryans’ parents, Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Welsh Sr. and Mr. and Mrs. Patrick G. Ryan Sr., in recognition of the Ryan family’s extraordinary leadership and support for Northwestern. Additional improvements have since been made, but this is the first top-to-bottom renovation of the entire structure.

Northwestern Athletics and Recreation also received lead gifts from Trustee Howard J. Trienens ’45, ’49 JD, ’95 H; Trustee Stephen R. Wilson ’70, ’74 MBA and Susan K. Wilson ’70; and Trustee Harreld N. “Kip” Kirkpatrick III ’94, ’97 MBA and Sara Kirkpatrick. Additional benefactors include Trustee Tim Sullivan and Sue Sullivan and alumnus Howard Witt ’63 and Marilyn Witt.



← Pat Ryan and Shirley Welsh Ryan

An Extraordinary Viewing Experience



Offering an outstanding sightline to the court and other first-class amenities, the Wilson Club is a private space within Welsh-Ryan Arena that is open to fans who have courtside, loge or club tickets.

The Wilson Club is named for the family of Trustee Stephen R. Wilson ’70, ’74 MBA and Susan K. Wilson ’70.

Fans with access to the Wilson Club experience:

A private seating area for 700 spectators (and private restrooms)

An all-inclusive food and beverage option, including a selection of locally brewed beers

Tables constructed from wood that was salvaged from the old Welsh-Ryan Arena basketball court

Exterior doors that open up onto a pedestrian bridge connecting Welsh-Ryan Arena and Ryan Field’s Randy Walker Terrace

FACULTY

Donor Challenge Creates New Professorships

Embracing opportunity, benefactors have helped to establish new faculty chairs across Northwestern.

Northwestern strives to attract and nurture faculty who are leaders in fields ranging from global health to the humanities. Enter the Ryan Family Chair Challenge, which is spurring the creation of new endowed professorships, or chairs, in strategic areas across the University.

Launched in 2015 by Trustee Patrick G. Ryan '59, '09 H and Shirley Welsh Ryan '61, the challenge matches gifts made by other University supporters and has helped to establish new professorships at Northwestern.

When a faculty member is named to an endowed professorship, the honor is more than symbolic. The position provides a permanent source of funding for the chairholder's scholarly activities, salary and research team, which may include students and postdoctoral fellows. Endowed chairs are critical tools for recruiting and retaining the best faculty, with the potential to advance research and teaching in diverse academic disciplines.

The Ryan Family Chair Challenge aims to inspire a wide circle of benefactors to endow a total of 25 endowed professorships in the coming year. Of the 71 new endowed professorships created since the start of **We Will. The Campaign for Northwestern**, 16 have resulted from the challenge. The newest professorships created by the

initiative — examples are highlighted below — will support faculty in computer science, chemistry and global health studies.

Members of the Northwestern Board of Trustees established the **Bill and Cathy Osborn Professorship** to honor former chair William A. Osborn '69, '73 MBA, '18 H and Cathleen Osborn '72. The inaugural Osborn Professor is artificial intelligence expert Kristian J. Hammond, who teaches computer science in the McCormick School of Engineering. Plans are underway to create a second Osborn chair in the Weinberg

College of Arts and Sciences for a scholar who looks at domestic or global issues relating to diversity and inclusion.

The **Mark and Nancy Ratner Endowed Professorship** was made possible through the generosity of Northwestern chemist Mark A. Ratner '69 PhD; his wife, Nancy;

Endowed chairs are critical tools for recruiting and retaining the best faculty.

and his brothers and sisters-in-law: Charles and Ilana Horowitz Ratner, James and Susan Ratner, and Ronald and Deborah Ratner. Emily Weiss '05 PhD, a former student of Mark Ratner and a faculty member in chemistry, is the inaugural chairholder.

“I can think of no greater honor than the distinction of being the Mark and Nancy Ratner Professor,” Weiss says. “And it’s even more special given that Mark is one of my primary influences as a scientist and as a person.”

The **Karr Family Professorship** was established in the McCormick School of Engineering by Trustee Adam Karr '93 and Tonia Gladney Karr. They created the professorship in response to the Ryan Family Chair Challenge and the school’s CS+X initiative, which seeks to hire faculty who combine computer science with work in other disciplines. In the case of the Karr Professorship, the “X” represents the humanities.



Adam Karr and Tonia Gladney Karr created the Karr Family Professorship through the Ryan Family Chair Challenge.

Giving Every Year

Members of Northwestern’s NU Loyal giving society — which recognizes alumni, parents and friends who make annual gifts of any size to the University for three or more consecutive years — hail from around the world and span generations. Since **We Will. The Campaign for Northwestern** began, there have been more than 50,000 NU Loyal members. In honor of the loyalty program’s fifth anniversary, here are five members who are making a difference in students’ lives through their annual support.

Four Levels of NU Loyal

Bronze:

3–4 consecutive years of giving

Silver:

5–9 consecutive years of giving

Gold:

10–19 consecutive years of giving

Platinum:

20+ consecutive years of giving



Cristy Garratt '10 Gold-level member: 10 years

Career: Garratt is the London-based head of digital video and social media for CNBC International.

Undergraduate Years:

This Medill School of Journalism, Media, Integrated Marketing Communications graduate was one of the first Latinx news directors of the Northwestern News Network.

“After my second year, giving annually became a habit. I donate to Medill and the Northwestern Annual Fund on Giving Tuesday — the week after Thanksgiving — so I don’t forget. I know those contributions are going toward students like me who desperately need grants and scholarships to be able to attend Northwestern. Any bit I can contribute toward that, I think I need to.”

— Cristy Garratt, president, NU Club of the United Kingdom



Melissa Dell’Aringa Brotz '90 and Don Brotz '91 Platinum-level members: 20 years

Career: Dell’Aringa Brotz is chief marketing and communications officer at Abbott Laboratories, a health care company in Lake Bluff, Ill. Brotz is a sales manager at AbbVie, a pharmaceuticals company in North Chicago.

Undergraduate Years:

Brotz, a graduate of the School of Education and Social Policy, received a full scholarship to play basketball at Northwestern. He and his wife, a Medill alumna, met at University Library in 1989 when he was a junior and she was a senior.

“Giving back every year feels like an ongoing recognition of the role that Northwestern plays in our lives, from our education and our job opportunities to our friendships. The University is part of our identity now.”

— Melissa Dell’Aringa Brotz, Medill Board of Advisers member



Steve Rubin '78 and Patricia Bloom '79 Platinum-level members: 40 years

Career: Rubin owns a real estate law firm, and Bloom teaches fourth grade. The couple lives in Boca Raton, Fla.

Undergraduate Years:

Rubin, an economics major, met Bloom, an education major, on the food service line at Sargent Hall. She was scooping the peas, and he was scooping the beans. Rubin credits his favorite instructor — Ronald Braeutigam, a Harvey Kapnick Professor of Business Institutions — as a major reason for the couple’s annual gifts to the Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences’ economics department.

“Each of us who graduated from the University has an obligation to give something back, whether it’s a small amount or a large amount, and to give it consistently. The University can plan on the funds that it gets, and this helps contribute to the education of the students who come after us. At the same time, giving increases the prestige of the University, supports its academic offerings and becomes a reflection of its graduates.”

— Steve Rubin

Have you or has someone you know been giving to Northwestern for more than 40 years? Share your story at wewill.northwestern.edu/nuloyal.

CARAVANS OF GOLD

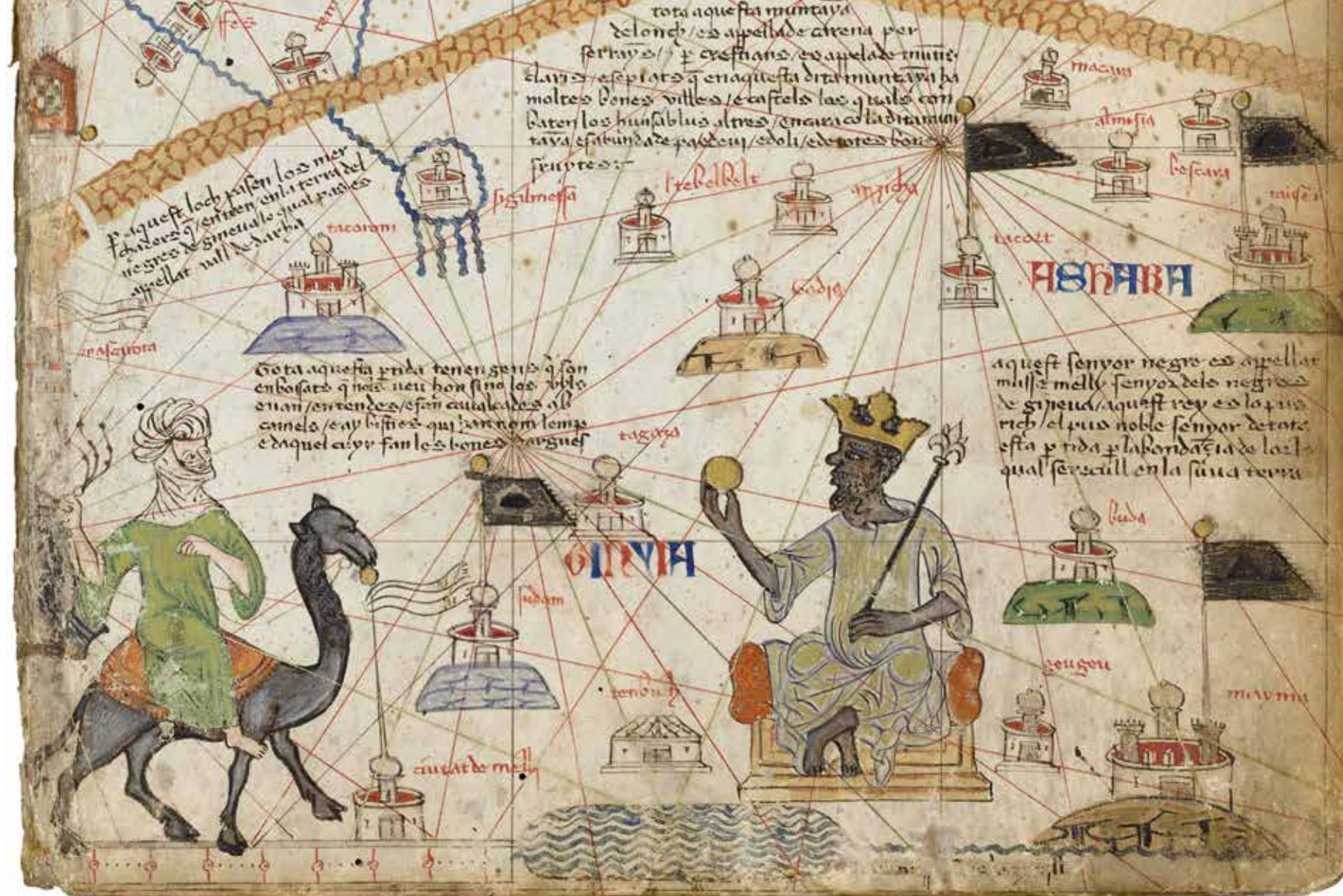
FRAGMENTS IN TIME

A new exhibition at Northwestern's **Block Museum of Art** assembles art and fragments from the Silk Road of Asia, the spice routes of the Middle East and the gold routes of Saharan Africa to reveal the forgotten glory of Africa's medieval past.

BY STEPHANIE KULKE

Crossing the Sahara Desert from the 8th to the 16th centuries, caravans with hundreds of camels carried gold, textiles, salt, jewelry and other precious goods across the desert. Through brutal heat, blinding sandstorms and the never-ending search for water, the caravans plodded thousands of miles across one of the most desolate regions in the world.

Despite its harsh terrain, the Sahara became a thriving crossroads of exchange for Africa, the Middle East, Europe and Asia in the medieval period. Fueling this exchange was West African gold, prized for its purity and used for minting currencies and adorning luxury and religious objects.



Major trade routes crossing the desert linked cities such as Timbuktu and Tadmekka on the southern fringes of the Sahara in present-day Mali and Sijilmasa on the desert's northern side in present-day Morocco. Southward, the routes connected with the Niger River, a major waterway to West Africa's forest region. Northward, they connected to the vast trade networks of the Mediterranean Sea.

The massive scale of medieval caravans diminished after the 16th century, but fragments of the goods they traded remain — and they tell a story of the remarkable role that the kingdoms of West and North Africa played in expanding trade and driving the movement of people, culture and beliefs throughout the medieval world. This was a world of globalization, where cultures and religions, including Islam and Christianity, met

“We are inviting visitors to ‘read’ fragments, as archeologists do, to imagine the past.” — Lisa Corrin

↑ Detail of the Catalan Atlas (1375). The prominent image of Mansa Musa, the emperor of the Mali Kingdom, attests to the importance of West African gold in the medieval global economy. The caption (in Catalan) explains: “This king is the richest and most distinguished ruler of this whole region on account of the great quantity of gold that is found in his lands.” Abraham Cresques (Majorcan, 1325–1387), illuminated parchment mounted on six wooden panels, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, in exhibition as reproduction

and circulated along Saharan trade routes.

To share this little-known story, the Block Museum of Art has put together a new exhibition: *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa* — a first-of-its-kind show that celebrates West Africa's historic and under-recognized global significance and showcases the objects and ideas that were exchanged at the crossroads of Africa, Europe, the Middle East and Asia.

“This exhibition takes us back to a period of time when West Africa played a hugely significant role in a global economy,” explains Kathleen Bickford Berzock, associate director of curatorial affairs at the Block Museum of Art and curator of the exhibition.

Caravans of Gold portrays the splendor and power of the

medieval kingdoms and commercial centers of Africa, using centuries-old artifacts from sites around the Sahara Desert and artwork from West and North Africa, Europe and the Middle East that reveal the reach of Saharan networks. The show runs through July 21 at the Block Museum of Art.

The exhibition presents more than 250 artworks and fragments, representing more than six centuries and a vast geographic expanse.

For the show, the Block Museum secured rare and important loans from partner institutions in Mali, Morocco and Nigeria. Some of these objects are among the greatest treasures of the medieval period in West Africa, including several rare manuscripts from libraries in Timbuktu, which emphasize the role that the shared language and culture of Islam played in the expansion of African exchange networks.

The loans from Nigeria include iconic artworks — such as a rope-entwined vessel from Igbo Ukwu — and an extraordinary cast sculpture of a seated man in the style of Ife (an ancient city in Nigeria famous for its naturalistic sculptures) but found at the town of Tada on the Niger River. This figure is wrought of copper likely sourced in Europe. Seen next to sculptures from France, finely carved from African elephant tusks, together these artworks raise questions about the interdependency of materials

that are ubiquitous to the medieval period.

However, many of the pieces in the exhibition are fragments — of lusterware, glass vessels, cast copperwork, terra cotta, porcelain and goldwork — remains of the Sahara's medieval past that were unearthed at sites around the desert by archaeologists.

Caravans of Gold draws on recent archaeological discoveries, including rare fragments from major medieval African trading centers like Sijilmasa in Morocco, and Gao and Tadmekka in Mali. These “fragments in time” are shown alongside works of art that invite audiences to imagine them as they once were.

“The fragments are time travelers that are simultaneously of the past and in the present,” says Berzock. “They evoke what has been called ‘the archeological imagination’ — our ability to imagine the past through its remains,” adds Berzock, who was the curator of African art at the Art Institute of Chicago for 18 years before joining the Block in 2015.

Fragments Plus Imagination

Organizing an exhibition based on fragments is an unorthodox approach for an art museum. Most museum exhibitions focus on displaying complete artworks from a specific time and geographic place.

But few intact works of art from the region exist.



A GOLDEN AGE: KING MANSA MUSA'S REIGN

One of the greatest caravans to ever cross the Sahara was led by Mansa Musa, the legendary ruler of the vast West African empire of Mali. In 1324 Musa embarked on a hajj, a religious pilgrimage to Mecca, traveling with an entourage that included 8,000 courtiers, 12,000 servants and 100 camel loads of pure gold.

“Each night when they stopped, it was like a whole town decamping in the desert,” said Gus Casely-Hayford, director of the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of African Art, who spoke at the *Caravans of Gold* opening in January. “They took with them everything they needed in the desert, including a mobile mosque they would construct so the emperor could pray.”

Fourteenth century Arab historian Shihab al-‘Umari wrote that Mansa Musa “flooded Cairo with his benefactions. He left no court emir nor holder of a royal office without the gift of a load of gold. ... They spent gold until they depressed its value in Egypt and caused its price to fall.”

Musa is believed to have been the richest person in history, even by today’s standards. His expansive kingdom included all or parts of modern-day Mauritania, Senegal, Gambia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Chad.

But “Musa didn’t just want wealth and power,” said Casely-Hayford. “He sought something more. He sought knowledge.”

When the emperor returned from Mecca to Timbuktu, he brought back scholars and an Andalusian architect from Cairo to build a great mosque — Djinguereber — an architectural masterpiece and one of most iconic buildings in Africa.

As the seat of Musa’s empire, Timbuktu drew scholars from all over the Islamic world to study in its libraries and universities. At its peak, the city could accommodate 25,000 students, and its archives held more than 800,000 manuscripts, according to Casely-Hayford. — S.K.

← Mansa Musa, ruler of the vast West African empire of Mali



↑ Medieval trade routes crisscrossed the Sahara Desert. The route in red traces King Mansa Musa's pilgrimage to Mecca from his home in the Kingdom of Mali in 1324.

“In order to do an exhibition about the history of the medieval period in West Africa we have to be willing to display fragments,” says Berzock.

“*Caravans of Gold* is an act of retrieval, bringing together far-flung links to the past in order to correct and enlarge previous scholarly interpretations of medieval Africa,” says Lisa Corrin, the Block’s Ellen Philips Katz Director.

“Fragments, probably the hardest materials for a museum to make visual sense of, hold pride of place here,” Corrin explains. “We are inviting visitors to ‘read’ fragments, as archaeologists do, to imagine the past.”

Caravans of Gold requires that museum visitors help piece together the story of the Saharan trade routes themselves.

“What if you walked in here, and all you saw was a bead,” says Chris Abani, Northwestern Board of Trustees Professor of English, a Nigerian-born novelist, poet and essayist, winner of a 2009 Guggenheim Award and contributor to the exhibition’s companion publication (*Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa*, Kathleen Bickford Berzock, ed., Princeton University Press, 2019). “What story would you tell of the bead? You need to insert yourself not from the position of privilege but from the position of a kind of curiosity. And so that’s all we can ask — that you come here curious.”

The Missing Narrative

The history of Africa as it’s told in museums and schools has traditionally focused on Africa during the colonial period and during the Atlantic slave trade.

Many stories are left untold, including that of Africa in the Middle Ages and six centuries of dazzling wealth and interconnection with the global exchange of materials, ideas and culture. In the early 14th century, much of that wealth belonged to Mansa Musa, king of the Mali Empire and perhaps the richest man who ever lived.

“The absence of West Africa in common perceptions about the Middle Ages is a serious shortcoming,” says Berzock. “Archaeologists’ site reports are full of enticing descriptions of material fragments uncovered in towns around the Sahara that were once thriving centers of trade.

“These materials are crucial to our study of the past, and for a curator they are also the starting point for making it tangible,” adds Berzock. “However, integrating them into an art museum exhibition is challenging because they fall outside of what is considered to be art.”

Berzock, who has grappled for nearly a decade with how best to represent the full scope of medieval West African history, believes there are several reasons for the historical omission, including the region’s nomadic traditions and desert environment. “Medieval period artifacts have been buried over centuries of time, and West Africa has not seen the same investment in archaeology as the Mediterranean region, where Greek architectural ruins are more valued in the West,” she says.

But the most significant reason is the West’s colonialization of Africa and the Atlantic slave trade. “The West constructed a history of Africa that allowed slavery and colonialization to persist,” Berzock says. “If you want to see people as lesser to support the ability to enslave them, it is convenient to forget the history of past greatness or label it as too distant to know. But it’s not OK for us to not know it.”

All that Glitters

Medieval gold is abundantly on display in *Caravans of Gold*. Exhibition treasures include a page from the celebrated Blue Qur’an, loaned by the Brooklyn Museum of Art, as well as clothing embroidered in gold-wrapped silk thread, golden jewelry, coins minted in North Africa and Europe and paintings and art objects embellished with gold.



↑ Folio from the Blue Qur’an. The celebrated Blue Qur’an makes extravagant use of gold and silver leaf for the script, which is laboriously applied to approximately 600 pages colored a deep, rich indigo blue. Iraq, Iran or Tunisia, 9th–10th century, gold and silver on indigo-colored parchment, Brooklyn Museum



↑ In planning the exhibition, Kathleen Bickford Berzock, center, curator of *Caravans of Gold*, met last October with staff from the National Commission for Museums and Monuments, Nigeria, including Omotayo Adebayo, left, curator of the Lagos Museum, and Edith Ochuole Ekunke, right, director of museums.

Throughout the exhibition, a range of everyday and luxury objects piece together the distant past.

Caravans of Gold also explores the theme of the circulation of Islam as a religion as well as of Arabic as a spoken and written language in the medieval period.

“There are materials at archaeological sites in Mali that help us understand that Arabic was already making inroads across regions just below the Sahara Desert in the 10th century,” says Esmeralda Kale, the George and Mary LeCron Foster Curator of Northwestern’s Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies. “We believe that books were also circulating. The exhibition includes Arabic manuscripts from Northwestern’s Herskovits Library that document this history of the development of an intellectual tradition in West Africa that contributed to and continues to contribute to Islamic intellectualism up to the present day.”

Only at Northwestern

When Berzock arrived at Northwestern, she was drawn by the museum’s integration within a research university and its collaborative approach with schools and departments across the campus, which further solidified the decision that Northwestern was the ideal place to further pursue her exhibition concept.

“*Caravans of Gold* is a project that arises organically from Northwestern’s multidisciplinary strengths and global reach,” Berzock says. In addition to the Herskovits Library, founded in 1954 and today the largest separate Africana collection in existence, the University is home to the nation’s first Program

JUSTICE NNANNA

“The richness of our collections has made us a very important resource for telling the story of Africa’s significant contribution toward civilization.” — Yusuf Usman

of African Studies. Northwestern is also home to the Center for Scientific Study in the Arts, a collaboration between the University and the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Roberta Buffett Institute for Global Affairs, which works to solve critical global problems through collaborative scholarship and education.

Collaboration with African Partners

From the very first stages of putting the exhibition together, it was critical that Africans’ perspectives helped shape the show, says Berzock, who worked closely with an interdisciplinary advisory team of art history, archaeology, history and comparative literature specialists working in sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa and Europe.

“This project has been committed to working directly with the nations of Mali, Morocco and Nigeria,” says Berzock. “The development of the exhibition has really been made possible by these partnerships with institutions and individuals in these countries. Together we begin to see a bigger story.”

The show includes works from 32 lending organizations. Notably, most of the medieval objects from Africa are on loan from African institutions, and these are juxtaposed with related objects on loan from North American museums. Many of the objects from Mali, Morocco and Nigeria have never traveled outside of their home countries. Through these rare loans the exhibition brings attention to the importance of cultural heritage protection in Africa.

Yusuf Usman, former director general of the National Commission for Museums and Monuments in Nigeria, a major exhibition partner, believes this collaboration is an essential opportunity for museumgoers and exhibition partners.

“The richness of our collections has made us a very important resource for telling the story of Africa’s significant contribution toward civilization,” Usman says.

Berzock believes that the exhibition will change museum-goers views on Africa. “We hope that *Caravans of Gold* will encourage people to question their assumptions about Africa and its place in history, upending the hierarchies of the dominant narratives we call ‘truth,’ and in so doing, to replace these stories with a more nuanced view of the world we share now.”

Editor’s note: *Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time: Art, Culture and Exchange Across Medieval Saharan Africa* runs through July 21 at the Block Museum of Art on the Evanston campus; at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, Sept. 21, 2019–Feb. 23, 2020; and at the National Museum of African Art at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., April 8–Nov. 29, 2020.

Stephanie Kulke is arts editor in the Office of Global Marketing and Communications.

EXHIBIT HIGHLIGHTS



CAP WITH STRIPED INSCRIBED SILK

Egypt or Syria, Mamluk period, probably sultanate of al-Nasir al-Din Muhammad, 14th century, lampas fabric, silk and gold, Cleveland Museum of Art



SEATED FIGURE,

Possibly Ife, Tada, Nigeria, late 13th–14th century, copper with traces of arsenic, lead and tin, Nigerian National Commission for Museums and Monuments



BOWL

Egypt, 11th century, fritware, lustre-painted, the Aga Khan Museum



IVORY CASKET

Italy (Sicily), 12th century, ivory, brass, tempera, gold leaf, Art Institute of Chicago/ Art Resource, NY



VIRGIN AND CHILD

ca. 1275–1300, France, ivory with paint, Metropolitan Museum of Art



FULANI BEAD

Senegal, 19th–20th century, gold filigree, Detroit Institute of Arts

WILDCAT STYLE NO FILTER

INTERVIEWS
AND PHOTOS
BY MARLA PAUL

Stylish students fashion their unique looks with everything from thrift store treasures to mom and dad hand-me-downs. 📷 For some, getting dressed is like painting a picture. They layer fishnets under jeans, don boldly patterned pants and aren't afraid of color. They adorn a coat lapel with colorful pins, create a necklace from a vintage Kodachrome slide or skillfully apply false eyelashes. 📷 Last fall we scouted the campus for people who wowed us. Here are their Insta photos and style stories.

"I dress to convey confidence."

SAUL OSORIO

"Whenever I meet someone new, they tell me I look like I have it all put together, even though I don't," admits Saul Osorio. "But I think that's what I'm trying to do. I dress to convey confidence."

Mission accomplished!

Osorio, a sophomore learning and organizational change and global health studies major, has a classy and quirky look curated with his sharp eye for bargains and a strong sense of his personal style. "I shop around and go to every store," heading straight to the clearance and sale section, he says. "I go for the cheapest but nicest clothes I can find. I get a lot at Goodwill, too."

His formula for composing an outfit: long-sleeve button-downs "no matter how hot it is," pins for pops of color, layering textures, fun pants, bright colors and dress shoes. "I hardly ever wear gym shoes," Osorio says. His only splurge: \$300 transitional glasses that darken and lighten according to the light.

For a long time, Osorio wanted to be a doctor, but his chemistry class made him rethink that plan. Now he wants to go into health care administration. He was raised in Mexico until age 8, when his family moved to Genoa, Ill., which he jokingly refers to as "Ge-nowhere."

With his ambition and style, Osorio is definitely heading somewhere.

COURTESY OF SAUL OSORIO



“I’m over city life.”

SERENA LEWIN

This past August, when Serena Lewin harvested kale, broccoli and leeks on a sustainable farm in Birkerød, Denmark, she realized she wanted to return to Europe after graduation — to eventually tend crops on her own small-scale farm.

“I want to have a full-cycle farm that has its own market that can provide to the whole community,” says Lewin, a sophomore who plans to major in environmental science. “If you can grow food in a sustainable way, you can reduce a lot of environmental degradation.” Farming practices in Denmark and Europe, she says, “are light years ahead of ours.”

STYLING 101

Tips from students who have mastered the art of getting dressed.

1 Layer different pieces you wouldn’t otherwise think to put together. It adds interest and texture. Chaotic is good. — Elizabeth Zhang

2 Always wear what makes you feel comfortable. If it is something you enjoy and you think it looks cool, go for it. — Sayeed Sanchez

3 I find secondhand clothes can be used in so many ways. A scarf can be used as a shirt or a headband. — Serena Lewin

4 Follow trends only if they resonate with your personality and taste. Classy is always trendy. — Liliia Voitenko

Marla Paul runs the Instagram feed @rebelwithmarla, where she shares photos of street fashion in Chicago. A former editor of Women’s Wear Daily and W Magazine, she is the health sciences editor for the Office of Global Marketing and Communications at Northwestern University.

On Northwestern soil, she’s the social media maven for Wild Roots, touting the student-run group that cultivates a sustainable garden behind Norris University Center.

Sustainability is a common thread, quite literally, in Lewin’s life. “I never buy anything new,” says the Los Angeles native. “I refuse to buy anything from a commercial store. I can have a lot more clothes for less money. And I know that when I’m walking around, no one is going to have the exact thing that I have, and I pride myself on that.”

She resells all of her clothes via the Depop app. “I never keep anything for too long. I buy it, post it and wear it until it sells,” she says.

Lewin scored her Dr. Martens boots from the Rose Bowl flea market in Pasadena. Her plaid pants are from a vintage store in Amsterdam, purchased with a check from British Airways after they lost her luggage. She found the multicolored necklace at a flea market in Sicily; the chain necklace was Lewin’s mom’s when she was growing up.

Eventually, though, she may be out of range of brick-and-mortar thrift stores. “I’m over city life and want to be somewhere very remote,” Lewin says. “I just want to be in nature.”

“My style is very eclectic.”

KRISTYNA GOČOVÁ

Kristyna Gočová dresses like someone who is going places. A second-year master of music student in voice and opera, she hopes that will be onstage at an opera house — maybe even to sing in *Carmen* or *Werther*, two of her favorites. There she’ll be adorned in elaborate costumes.

Offstage, she says, “My style is very eclectic but fun and fashionable. I do what I want. Sometimes it’s on trend, sometimes not, and I’m OK with that. I do a lot of pattern mixing. If you see me any day of the week, I’m probably mixing a pattern. Stripes and polka dots all the way.” Her tights for \$2 are from DSW, shoes are Steve Madden, and her coat is from Francesca’s. “The rest I don’t know because I’ve had it since middle school!”

She’s amassing her own personal vintage collection. As far as shopping, Gocová, who is from Prague, frequents Anthropologie and Kate Spade, “but I love a good Marshall’s or T.J. Maxx deal.”

We asked her to sing a bit of opera for us, but she begged off because her voice was hoarse. We’ll have to wait to buy tickets and see her in *Carmen*.

“I love wearing my parents’ clothes from a long time ago.”

KRISTEN GERDTS

Kristen Gerdts is never far from her parents, even though they live in Miami. That’s because she often wears something from their ’80s and ’90s wardrobes.

“I love wearing my parents’ clothes from such a long time ago,” says Gerdts, a sophomore journalism major. “It makes me feel very connected to them and reminds me that they are always with me.”

She unearthed a lot of the clothes in the back of dusty closets when her family was packing up her childhood home in Colombia.

“I got a huge, bomber-like jean jacket from my dad, which my mother wasn’t too happy about because apparently my dad would wear this all the time, and she thought he had gotten rid of it.

“I wear this jacket constantly. I can style it with anything, honestly, even overalls.”

A recent favorite find are her mother’s Guess jeans, which they discovered over the summer. “When I was sifting through my parents’ old photos for their 25th anniversary, I came across several pictures of her wearing the same jeans. She stopped wearing them because she accidentally stained them with bleach. There are now three small white dots on the front. I think they add character.

“It astonished my parents to know that most of their old clothes are back in fashion again,” Gerdts adds. “These clothes are nice reminders that my parents had these rich lives before me. I know that they have their own stories with each of these pieces, and I love knowing that I am creating my own stories with the same exact pieces.”



Serena Lewin



Kristyna Gočová



Kristen Gerdts



Jay Towns

“I like to dress a bit more formally.”

JAY TOWNS

In a campus landscape of T-shirts and jeans, Jay Towns stands out in his cream-colored blazer and floral button-down shirt. “I like to dress a bit more formally for classes, because I feel like it engages my mind better,” says Towns, a freshman theater major. “If I look like I’m supposed to be studying, I’ll be more inclined to focus in class. Formal clothes aren’t usually the most comfortable, so I can’t

lean back or hunch over. I have to pay attention.”

Formal doesn’t mean pricey, though. He snagged his jacket from Goodwill for \$3!

Thrifting is a recent discovery, and he’s expanded his wardrobe. “My closet has grown immensely, since I’ve been able to get more for my money.” He’s been so successful that he had to send bags of clothes back to Schaumburg, Ill., with his parents.

What’s left he assembles with care. Pin rolling his pant cuffs so they fit more snugly, he demonstrated how he pinches the inside seam before rolling them up. (We’ll try that!) He liked the H&M khaki

pants with the cream blazer and chose the print shirt “because the red matches the ring around the white Converse sneakers.”

Towns was accepted into the musical theater program. He already played his dream role — Shrek — during high school for a local theater company. Now he’d like to play Aladdin or the beast in *Beauty and the Beast*. We can confirm his excellent pipes. When we asked him to sing for us, he belted out a few impressive bars of “Fly Me to the Moon.”

Editor’s note: See more Wildcat Instagram fashion — plus videos — online at bit.ly/WildcatStyle.

Law professor and alumna **Uzoamaka Emeka Nzelibe** represents young immigrants seeking a safe haven in the United States.

BY BARBARA MAHANY

A Beacon of Hope for Asylum Seekers



Five floors up

from the cacophony that is Chicago’s West Loop, inside a stone-still hearing room at the U.S. Department of Justice’s Chicago Immigration Court, where the ratcheted-up nerves and quickened breaths make for the sort of place you do not want to be, Uzoamaka Emeka Nzelibe ’96 is there to get the job done. An immigration lawyer, she is fighting to right a litany of wrongs, fighting for youth who’ve fled hellholes all across the globe, trekked thousands of miles and hurdled untold obstacles, running for their lives.

The words Nzelibe chooses couldn’t be starker — nor the consequences more dire.

She locks eyes with the immigration judge. Her words at once pierce and amplify the chill in the room.

“What we’re deciding today is whether or not this kid is going to die,” begins the no-nonsense Nzelibe, a 43-year-old Nigerian-born clinical associate professor of law at the Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. As staff attorney with the Children and Family Justice Center of the Bluhm Legal Clinic, she represents unaccompanied minors seeking asylum, cases deemed the toughest legal challenges by agencies that turn their clients over to her. (Several organizations refer clients to the Bluhm Legal Clinic, including the National Immigration Justice Center in Chicago and children’s detention centers around the U.S.)

“You’ve got kids, 16, 17 or 18 years old, and they’re telling you they’re afraid, there’s this gang, and they’ll be killed if they’re sent home,” she says. “So if you send them back, you’re saying it’s OK. You’re saying there are right reasons to send them back, but we have to ask ourselves, ‘Are there right reasons to die?’ Because at the end of the day, that’s what we’re deciding here.”

It’s these questions — and these high stakes — that drive Nzelibe’s laser-focused quest.

In legal terms, what these young people seek — and what Nzelibe won’t give up on — is asylum.

ASYLUM — AN EXTRAORDINARY REMEDY of humanitarian relief for anyone fleeing persecution in countries that can’t or won’t protect them — is an incendiary flashpoint in this American political moment. (See “What Is Asylum?,” page 43.)

Legally it’s rooted in a matrix of laws inscribed in the wake of World War II, a code of high-minded protections to harbor the streams of post-Holocaust refugees — laws now at odds with the ongoing immigration crisis playing out primarily on the southern U.S. border, where xenophobia, shifting government policies and raw politics make for one tangled mess.

The immigration crisis has only gotten messier in recent years — and certainly since the summer of 2018 with asylum-seeking families separated as they crossed from Mexico into the United States. Infants and children have been housed in institutional or detention camps, and U.S. troops deployed to the border as Central America’s Northern Triangle countries — El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala — are increasingly under the siege of warring gangs that have hijacked the rule of law, inflicting codes of violence

on the citizens of those countries.

Homicide rates in the Northern Triangle are among the highest in the world. Even a walk to school might be deadly, especially for teens — boys recruited as gang lookouts and drug runners, and girls coerced to become “gang girlfriends,” often before they’re 12.

Nzelibe, once a child immigrant herself, is the front line — and the lifeline — for those asylum-seeking teens and young adults, anywhere from 12 to 24 years old, who’ve ended up in or near Chicago and somehow found themselves sitting face-to-face with one inexhaustible lawyer determined to keep them safely — and legally — in America.

Nzelibe’s legal acumen is amplified by the resources of Northwestern’s Children and Family Justice Center, where Nzelibe helps guide students, faculty and a team of social workers toward one shared goal: to give these young immigrants a chance at the American promise of security, stability and whatever each kid defines as success.

REPRESENTING **THESE IMMIGRANT YOUTHS** is at the heart of the mission of the center, founded at the law school in 1992 with the hope of

“bringing to Chicago the best practices in juvenile justice,” says Tom Geraghty ’69 JD, director emeritus of the Bluhm Legal Clinic and an internationally respected authority on juvenile justice.

Today Nzelibe and Amy Martin, the clinic’s immigration law fellow, work closely with second- and third-year law students, each of whom spends the semester taking on the nuts and bolts of building an immigration case, from client interviews to chasing down evidentiary documents to defending teens in court. A hallmark of the center’s immigration practice is its holistic attention paid to clients’ needs, whether a winter coat, a psychiatric evaluation or the birthday celebrations they’ve never had.

Immigration law — and asylum, in particular — has always been a complex corner of American jurisprudence, a labyrinth rooted in gradations of fear — “credible fear” versus “reasonable fear” — all calculated on degrees of violence, on persecution past or perceived. Its

complexities have been compounded recently with policy clarifications by the Trump administration that blocked gang or domestic violence as valid justifications for seeking asylum.

Lately, Nzelibe has been focusing on what she considers a particularly vulnerable asylum population: “emerging adults” between 18 and 24 who on the day of their 18th birthdays are transferred to adult detention centers — county jails — and mixed in with people accused of serious crimes.

“Those cases are hard, mostly because they move quickly,” in weeks and months instead of years, Nzelibe says. “It takes a while to work up an asylum case. And what you need to remember is that everything that happened, everything you’re trying to document, happened in another country. Interviewing the client, getting documents, learning about the home country, it all takes time. You need to build rapport. And there are all these rules about when you can talk to clients and whether you can bring an interpreter. You can imagine how difficult it is.”

Not once in 14 years — not yet, anyway — has one of Nzelibe’s “kids” — for that’s what she tends to call her young clients, “my kids” — been sent back to his or her home country.

In ways life altering and barely noticed, she takes these young people on as if her own, driving hours to get them to doctor’s appointments, to sit down with school officials, to attend graduations and quinceañeras. Nzelibe’s desk drawer is full of baby pictures from her former clients, a testament to her impact on their



↑ An immigrant youth waits to get into a shelter for the night.

lives. In fact, her benchmark for herself as an immigration lawyer, she says, is “to be the lawyer I would want for my own children [two boys, ages 6 and 10] if they were ever in trouble.”

She lies awake at night worrying, especially as deadlines and court hearings approach, ticking through her endless to-do lists, mentally reviewing her elaborate charts, with one unwavering goal: to give her clients their best imaginable day in court.

TO UNDERSTAND HOW AND WHY Nzelibe pushes to the lengths she does — routinely taking 1 a.m. Skype international calls, rising at 3 a.m. to connect with interpreters in one of the seven languages she’s had to navigate, devising end runs around bureaucracies that refuse to cough up necessary documents — you need

ASYLUM AND DEPORTATION CASES

American Immigration Council, “Asylum in the United States: Fact Sheet,” May 2018

318,000

The number of affirmative asylum applications pending with the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services as of March 2018.

690,000

The number of open deportation cases as of March 2018, when the backlog in U.S. immigration courts reached an all-time high. On average, these cases had been pending for 718 days and remained unresolved.

1,000

The average number of days people with an immigration court case who were ultimately granted relief — such as asylum — waited for that outcome. New Jersey and California had the longest wait times, averaging 1,300 days until relief was granted.

JOHN MOORE/GETTY IMAGES



ALEX GARCIA '89

← Uzoamaka Nzelibe

to look to the summer of 1994, in the bustling city of Lagos, Nigeria, where Nzelibe once thought she might forever be caught in immigration's inescapable stranglehold.

It was the summer after Nzelibe's sophomore year in the McCormick School of Engineering; she was not yet 19, and she'd been in the United States since 1982, when she was almost 7, adopted along with two other siblings by her eldest sister, Ngozi Emeka Nchekwube, who was 22 and had married a young Nigerian doctor practicing in Indiana. (When Nzelibe was 2, her mother, only 37, died from a blood infection.)

While she was raising Nzelibe and her two older sisters, Nchekwube had three children of her own and went to law school full time. Nzelibe stationed herself at the basement computer, typing up her sister's law school notes from stacks of yellow legal pads.

"In the same way I loved reading history as literature," says Nzelibe, "I would read constitutional law and be like, 'This is sooooo interesting.'"

She decided then and there that she'd become a lawyer but chose to study engineering at Northwestern because the preferred path in her immigrant family was a STEM field, where she'd always find a job. To this day, she says, it's her engineering background that makes her see law as problems to be solved, a matter of "breaking down complex things into simpler terms."

Her family's dream had been that someday they'd return to their West African homeland. But Nigeria's economic and political situation had begun to deteriorate in the '90s, and Nchekwube decided that Nzelibe and her sisters needed to apply for permanent U.S. residency. To do so, they had to "touch ground" in Nigeria, a stay they figured might last a couple weeks.

At the end of her sophomore year, Nzelibe traveled to Lagos to complete the process for applying for permanent resident status.

But once back in Lagos, the short trip turned into a "nightmare," according to Nchekwube — a monthslong drama during which a U.S. embassy employee

quipped that the story of their mother's dying and the older sister adopting her younger siblings was quite a tale, "one he'd never heard before." And, Nzelibe recalls him adding: "Wherever your mother's bones are, you need to go dig 'em up."

She remembers crying every day, worrying that her long-held plan to take the law school admission test and start law school right after graduation might get waylaid. She also remembers Nchekwube saying over and over, "You've just got to get up, get moving. You cry, and when you're done crying, you've just got to get up."

By December of 1994, having missed just one quarter of study at the start of her junior year, Nzelibe finally made it back to the United States. "I remember when I got out of the car back home in Merrillville (Ind.), I kissed the ground," she says. "I was like, 'God bless America.'"

Back at Northwestern with a green card and the goal of on-time graduation, Nzelibe holed herself up in her room with her books, took classes straight through summer and met her goal, graduating in 1996 with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering. She started at New York University School of Law in the fall of 1996, not yet 21.

What is Asylum?

According to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, the federal agency overseeing lawful immigration, asylum is an extraordinary remedy, a form of humanitarian relief available to people coming to the United States seeking protection because they have suffered persecution or fear that they will suffer persecution due to race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group or political opinion.

The United States is under a humanitarian obligation, under its own law as well as international law, to adhere to a fundamental principle called non-refoulement: It is not allowed to force someone fleeing persecution to return to a place where she or he is in danger.

The principle of granting asylum was laid out by the United Nations in the 1951 Refugee Convention and ratified permanently in

the 1967 Refugee Protocol (which the U.S. signed in 1968). The United States' own asylum system is governed by the 1980 Refugee Act, which was passed by Congress and signed by President Jimmy Carter.

In June 2018 former U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions issued a clarification in a domestic violence case involving a Salvadoran woman who had been raped and nearly killed by her husband, and who had been seeking asylum. Sessions' pronouncement and subsequent guidance from the Department of Homeland Security — instructing asylum officers to generally deny domestic violence and gang-related asylum claims at the initial screening or credible fear interview stage — seemed to establish a categorical ban on such claims for newly arrived immigrants seeking asylum close to the border or at ports of entry. — B.M.

Fast-forward to 2004, when Nzelibe found herself in Chicago, married to Jide Nzelibe, an American-born, Nigerian-raised professor of law at Northwestern. She'd been a litigation associate in Washington, D.C., and then Chicago, but the pull toward public-interest work prompted her to quit law firm practice.

A **BRAINSTORMING LUNCH** with the Bluhm Clinic's Geraghty, who'd done plenty of work in Africa, led to his mid-lunch realization that Nzelibe might be just the person to fill in for the clinic's immigration attorney, who was about to take maternity leave. Nzelibe was barely five years out of law school, and here was Geraghty asking if she'd ever thought of teaching.

"I didn't realize this is exactly what I should be doing, but it is *exactly* what I should be doing," Nzelibe recalls, in a recent interview.

That realization came as no surprise to Geraghty. "From the beginning, the work Uzo was focusing on was so compelling — children essentially trafficked to the U.S. and held in detention centers without access to counsel or, in many cases, family members. These were kids with no status, about to be deported."

He goes on: "Our students needed to know about these issues, and we knew they'd be immersed in this work because of the compelling nature of the cases. Most recently, with Trump's stands on immigration and children at the border, Uzo's work has come front and center in terms of the juvenile justice work we're doing at the center. She's taken on a leadership

role locally and nationally. Her work has afforded our students cutting-edge practice in the most compelling issues of the day."

Her students concur.

"She's an absolute game changer," in an immigration quest "where the rules are always changing and the goal posts always moving," says Lindsey Blum '18 JD, now a first-year associate at Kirkland & Ellis in Chicago, who spent a year in Nzelibe's immigration law clinic. "I'd walk into

"What they're afraid of, what they're fleeing is real: They will die. So our job is trying to figure out a way that the law would make it possible for them to stay safely in America."

her office all the time, saying, 'The world's ending. I don't know what we're going to do. This case is impossible.' And she'd say every time, 'Let's reframe it, because we're going to make it work.'

"It got to the point that none of the cases kept me awake at night, because Professor Nzelibe would always say, 'We're going to solve this. No time to wring your hands.'"

It's that same sense of unshakability that you hear echoed by Nzelibe's clients, some of whom she's worked with for more than a decade.

"She's the best, best, best," says Fredy, a Honduran-born former client, now 32, whose asylum case — Nzelibe's longest to date — took 11 years before he was granted asylum and his green card.

When Nzelibe and her students realized Fredy had never celebrated a birthday, they set out to fix that, with instructions to pick the restaurant of his dreams. He settled on a \$5 all-you-can-eat pizza joint in a far-flung suburb, and in classic Nzelibe fashion, professor and students drove an hour — with piñata and cake — to make for him an unforgettable first

birthday celebration, some 19 years after he was born.

"She treated me like a mother [would], not like I was just another number," says Fredy, who, since being detained at the southern border and coming to Chicago in 2004, has learned English, earned his GED, now drives a big rig and can't wait to become a U.S. citizen in 2020. "I was scared every time in court. My past is my past, Uzo always told me," he says of a history riddled with horrors he doesn't like to dwell on. "She never gave up on me."

The complexity of asylum cases and changing views on who should be able to apply present challenges to immigration lawyers like Nzelibe.

"I don't think anyone contemplated children and women, especially, getting asylum," she says. "I don't think these were the folks people were thinking of post-World War II who would be our asylum seekers. But they are now, and our asylum law doesn't fit."

"These women and children, fleeing persecution in the form of gang or domestic violence, don't fit neatly into the asylum box, so oftentimes it's trying to figure out a way to get them relief, trying to massage the law, to find a way the law can encapsulate their case. What they're afraid of, what they're fleeing is real: They will die. So our job is trying to figure out a way that the law would make it possible for them to stay safely in America."

Nzelibe, the long-ago child immigrant, frames it like this:

"When I read the Declaration of Independence, when I read the Constitution, I know my clients are the embodiment of those ideals. I see that in them. We need not fear that America is going to change because of immigrants. What I'm concerned with is that in our desperation to keep immigrants out, we actually change who we are. We lose the values, we become our worst nightmare. Our country can absorb these people, and the forefathers' experiment, started centuries ago, it's still working; we need not fear that it's not going to work."

Barbara Mahany '82 MS is a Chicago journalist and author.

Uzoamaka Emeka Nzelibe breaks down immigration myths on our website at bit.ly/NUMag_Uzoamaka_Nzelibe.

Alumni

**Reunion
Weekend
2019**
Oct. 24-27



PURPLE PRIDE

Wildcat spirit was in full force at the Northwestern Alumni Association's sold-out N Zone tailgate ahead of the 2018 San Diego County Credit Union Holiday Bowl. Northwestern rallied in the second half to top the University of Utah 31-20.

CHRISTOPHER DONEZ

Creation



OUTREACH

Five Questions with John Stroup '88

The CEO of Belden, a global manufacturing company, started a first-of-its-kind program to help job applicants break the cycle of substance abuse and find employment.

1

What is the Pathways to Employment program? It's

a personalized substance abuse treatment program we launched in February 2018. If the applicant agrees to successfully complete the program, he or she is guaranteed a job at Belden's manufacturing facility in Richmond, Ind. We also offer the program to existing employees who request help. They must commit to a substance-free lifestyle and agree to random drug tests. Our local health

2

How has the opioid crisis affected your business and your industry more broadly?

A lot of small Midwestern towns are dealing with the opioid crisis. At Belden, we created this program because we noticed that more people were failing their initial drug screenings. We gathered the board and managers at the Richmond, Ind., facility and tried to do something to make a difference. Experts say personal economics and drug abuse go together, and it is difficult to break the cycle of unemployment and substance abuse. One of the best things we can do is offer the applicants hope and focus through employment.

3

What was your approach to creating the program? Since

no program like this existed in the industry, we learned and adapted as we progressed. Following treatment, the participants enter safety-sensitive roles for a period of time and are randomly screened for drugs, which is important in our safety-conscious environment. Some companies stopped drug testing because they get more applicants that way and they

care program partners, Centerstone Indiana and Meridian Health Services, assess low-risk and high-risk individuals in terms of their ability to deal with their substance abuse problem and provide personalized treatment to the participant and guidance to Belden.

feel it's not their problem. We felt we couldn't do that.

4

What does creating this program mean to you? As

a business leader, you can convince yourself that things are not your responsibility. I'm proud of the fact that we decided to make a difference in the community where we operate. I have seen the unintended consequences of globalization. I recognize that it has had a negative effect on the middle of the U.S., where manufacturing has always been a big part of the economy. Jobs were moved out. So I see this as an opportunity for a global company that benefited from globalization to mend those issues within the community.

5

How did your experiences at Northwestern shape your career? I was a mechanical

engineering student, but there was a strong emphasis on the humanities. That really helped me become a more well-rounded person and allowed me to be more comfortable with ambiguity, to try to search for the things that feel right for me. If my curriculum hadn't included the humanities, I wonder if I would have approached the substance abuse issue the way I did. My Northwestern education shaped who I am.

Interview conducted by Daniel Rosenzweig-Ziff, a sophomore journalism and international studies major from Newton Centre, Mass.

STROUP: PFSMITHPHOTO.COM; ELIASON: COURTESY OF RENNY MASLOW; MASKS: COURTESY OF SHAWN DOUGLASS



DOCUMENTARY

When Matt Eliason '11, the all-time leading scorer for Northwestern men's soccer, buried a bicycle kick during a July 2013 charity match with soccer star Lionel Messi, the highlight earned the No. 1 spot on *SportsCenter's* "Top 10 Plays" and changed the trajectory of his life. Inspired by the goal, Eliason, who had been working as an analyst for GE Capital, rekindled his professional soccer career, earning a spot on Thróttur Reykjavík FC, a club in Iceland. His stint with the team was short-lived due to injury, and Eliason now lives in Chicago, working as a senior associate at TRC Advisory. His journey was chronicled in the documentary *Messi & Me*. Northwestern men's soccer coach Tim Lenahan executive produced the film, and the crew included executive producer Gregg Latterman '96 MBA, director Renny Maslow '96 and producer Jake Abraham '96.



THEATER

Masquerade Mall

After putting on a children's theater performance during his senior year, Jeff Semmerling '81 became fascinated with mask-making. He spent years honing his skills in the mask shop he started in

New Orleans in 1982 and for theater companies around the country before starting his Chicago Art Side Out Studio & MASK SHOP. Today he's one of the country's best-known mask makers. You can see his work on the faces of Mardi Gras attendees and Lyric Opera performers and on the Broadway stage — and now on Northwestern theater students, who experimented with masks during a fall quarter acting class on Greek playwrights. A grant from the Alumnae of Northwestern funded the purchase of 16 neoprene masks produced by Semmerling. He says that masks offer students the opportunity to "see the world through new eyes" and, as an ensemble, to become "the we instead of the me." Shawn Douglass, a theater lecturer, fostered the collaboration. He used masks during graduate school and believed his students would benefit from the experience. "Masks take us out of our heads and into our bodies," he says. "It requires a desperate, passionate commitment to character, because you have to use your physical body to occupy space, not just your facial expressions."



FOGSCAPES

For nearly five decades, fog artist Fujiko Nakaya '57 has presented her ethereal, shape-shifting installations of pure water vapor in an effort to connect humans to nature. Last summer she created a site-specific installation in the five parks of Boston's Emerald Necklace system. Nakaya, who considers fog "the most generous of mediums," presented her first fog sculpture at the Pepsi Pavilion during the Osaka Expo 1970. The daughter of physicist Ukichiro Nakaya, who created the world's first artificial snow crystals, Fujiko was born in Sapporo, Japan. She earned an art degree from Northwestern in 1957 and later studied at the Sorbonne in Paris. In 2018 she received the Praemium Imperiale, a global arts prize awarded by the Japan Art Association. (See photo of Fujiko Nakaya on page 4.)

INNOVATION

One Lucky Duck

Hannah Chung '12 hopes to make the treatment of childhood cancer a little more bearable. The co-founder of Sproutel, Chung works alongside CEO and co-founder Aaron Horowitz '12 to design products that make a meaningful health impact on the lives of patients. The latest innovation from the patient-centered research company is called My Special Aflac Duck, an innovation that was recognized by *Time* as one of the "Best Inventions" of 2018. The stuffed animal, created in collaboration with the insurance agency Aflac, engages child cancer patients in play through naturalistic movements and distinct



emotions to help them cope with cancer. By using emoji feeling cards to embody the patient's feelings in the duck, Sproutel's invention aims to give patients a friend with whom they can share their confusing and difficult emotions. "Kids are kids," says Chung, Sproutel's head of design. "They want to have fun, and sometimes being at the hospital can be very isolating." Sproutel worked closely with patients, doctors and experts at the Aflac Cancer Center during the 18-month design process. Aflac hopes to gift a My Special Aflac Duck to every child newly diagnosed with cancer and has reached 2,000 children at more than 100 hospitals. Chung and Horowitz launched Sproutel in 2012 with Jerry the Bear, a teaching tool for children with Type 1 diabetes.

FICTION

Flights translated by Jennifer Croft

Jennifer Croft's 2017 translation of Polish author Olga Tokarczuk's book *Flights*, originally published in 2007, received the 2018 Man Booker International Prize and was a finalist for the National Book Awards' inaugural honor for translated literature last year. The novel, which is told in 116 episodic fragments that critics often liken to a "cabinet of curiosities," is a rumination on many subjects, including Wikipedia, mobility and the human body. Croft '13 PhD, who studied comparative literature at Northwestern, says that she felt a deep kinship to Tokarczuk and the novel's themes and began the work of translating after meeting Tokarczuk in Krakow. In addition to translating Tokarczuk's newest novel, *The Books of Jacob*, Croft will publish her own debut memoir, *Homesick*, in September. Croft is currently a Cullman Center Fellow at the New York Public Library, where she is also translating *A Perfect Cemetery*, a collection of short stories by Argentine author Federico Falco, and working on an original novel titled *Fidelity*.



NAKAYA: MELISSA OSTROW



ENTREPRENEURS

Building an eBay for Scientific Research

As Garry Cooper '14 PhD prepared to throw out used equipment at a Feinberg School of Medicine lab in 2015, an idea hit him: Lightly used, expensive research equipment could be reused rather than trashed. "I kept seeing reports about the funding problems in scientific research — how really smart and innovative junior faculty members are leaving academia and going

into industry because of the job and funding prospects," says Cooper, who studied neuroscience. "If people who don't know each other are willing to let someone else ride in their car, just to lower the price of going from point A to point B, then professionals who probably know each other would definitely share resources to help reduce the cost of being innovative."

That idea launched Cooper's startup, Rheaply — a combination of the words research and cheaply. It is part asset management system, part online marketplace and part collaboration platform. Chicago-based Rheaply "empowers professionals to save money and save the environment," two ideas, Cooper notes, that aren't mutually exclusive. Prior to co-founding Rheaply, Cooper worked at Ernst & Young in Chicago, an experience that helped him become CEO of a company that he hopes will be the

next Amazon or eBay of the applied sciences market. Northwestern uses Rheaply's services, and the company recently signed a major tech firm as a client. Rheaply, which joined the startup accelerator Techstars and was named one of Built in Chicago's "50 Startups to Watch" in 2018, also promotes STEM education for all, allowing science- and technology-focused nonprofits to use its platform for free.

STARTUP SCENE

THE THINK TANK

Matt Miklius '07 MS, '11 PhD never would have imagined that the part-time tutoring gig he launched as a grad student would become his full-time career. His company has served more than 500 high school and college students in Chicago's suburbs with the goal of building their skills and confidence, helping them set goals and teaching them how to think, not just memorize.

POPPILU Melanie Kahn '99 was pregnant with her second child, Poppy, when she experienced an insatiable citrus craving. When she couldn't find the kind of mouth-puckering, low-sugar lemonade she wanted, she created Poppilu, a healthy alternative to traditional lemonades. Kahn, a former brand and marketing executive, has grown Poppilu throughout the Midwest since its mid-2017 start and is now part of Kraft Heinz Co.'s Springboard, a new incubator program for disruptive startups.

Secret Recipe

Gail Becker quit her corporate gig and cooked up a healthy new venture.



↑ Caulipower founder Gail Becker

Gail Becker '88 MS managed communications for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, worked as an executive at Warner Bros., and spent more than a decade as a president at the global communications juggernaut Edelman. But last year she decided to leave her career in corporate America to create Caulipower, an Encino, Calif.-based company that makes gluten-free pizza. Two events inspired Becker: the death of her father, who had built a successful salvage business as an immigrant in the United States, and a gluten-free dinner with her two teenage sons, who have celiac disease. In 2016 she decided to try making cauliflower pizza, a

healthy alternative that would appeal to her boys. They loved the pizza, but it was messy and took too long to make from scratch. She couldn't make it regularly during the workweek, so Becker, who lives in the Los Angeles area, started exploring options at her grocery store. When she couldn't find premade cauliflower-based pizza anywhere, she thought it might be a viable business. Her instincts were right — today the company sells one of its pizzas every three seconds, and the product can be found in more than 17,500 stores across the country. Caulipower now has 32 employees. In November Becker launched a sister

product, Sweet Potatoasts. Through the sales of both, Becker supports OneSun, which encourages and supports the health of children through gardens and nutritional education, primarily at underserved schools.

Someone told me when I left, "I have five business plans in my desk." And every day they would open their desk and see them. I know to this day they have never acted upon any of them. I didn't want to be like that person. When my dad died, something switched on. You realize this is not a dress rehearsal, so you better spend this time doing exactly what the hell you want to do or have a hell of a time trying, because life is fragile. It was my turn.

The day you stop learning is the day you have to leave. When you work in an industry, you're lucky if you keep learning, but you have to grow. I left because I wanted to keep challenging myself, and all of those things required major job shifts — but none as large as the one I made to Caulipower.

I knew that starting your own business was hard. I thought I was ready for it. But there's no possible way you can be ready for the onslaught of issues that arise when you start your own company.

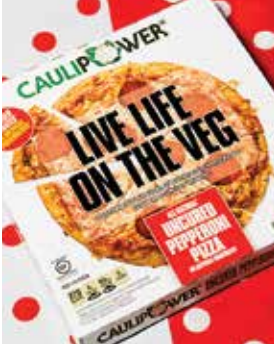
It's the most wonderful, difficult, remarkable journey I have ever been on. Giving birth and raising a child is 10 times easier than giving birth to a company and trying to grow it.

There's not a day that goes by that I regret what I did. I used to go to bed on Sunday night and not be excited about Monday. And now I think, "Oh, thank God it's Monday."

I think people were envious that I had taken the plunge. Look, the easiest thing to do in life is to stay, whether it's a job, a relationship or a city. The hardest thing is always to leave, and I think there are people who have their own ideas but are afraid to pursue them. So I'd like to think I'm giving them some inspiration or a little push, to say, "If she can make that work, maybe I can make that work too."

There's this pressure when you're in college that you need to know what you want to do in life. It's not like that, though. How are you supposed to know how you will feel when you're 30, 40 or 50?

I always tell my kids to always bet on themselves, because nobody else will. And I realized that if I made this move, I would show them firsthand that I was betting on myself.



Interview and text by Daniel Fernandez, a Medill senior from Saratoga, Calif.



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