Oregon QUARTERLY

Winter 2024

This issue of *Oregon Quarterly* celebrates **The Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon**: faculty, staff, students, and alumni who are leaders and legends in their fields.

Volume 103 Number 2 Illustration by David Gill

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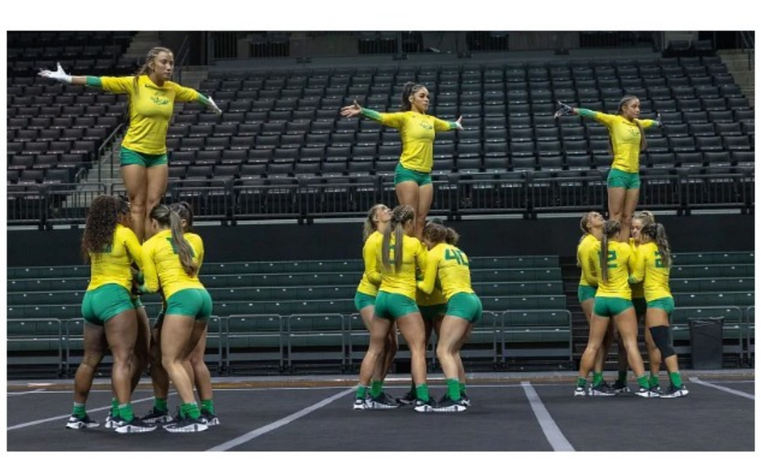

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OQ is Celebrating Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon. Who Do You Celebrate?

The winter '24 issue spotlights UO women of strength and grit and welcomes reader submissions

By George Evano • Illustration by David Gill • January 15, 2024

3 min read

The visage of Nellie Franklin, the University of Oregon's first Black woman graduate, looks out from the cover of the Winter '24 issue of *Oregon Quarterly.* She signifies how women of strength and courage have shaped the university—and looks to the future, with more to be done.

Coinciding with the fiftieth anniversary of the UO Center for the Study of Women in Society, the issue celebrates women who have overcome gender stereotypes and paved roads of equity for others to travel: the Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon.

As part of the celebration, we ask readers to share their stories of a Mighty Woman of Oregon—a teacher, mentor, friend, fellow student, or cultural icon. Use this form to submit your story. The

magazine will compile and publish the contributions for Women's History Month in March.

Celebrate a Mighty Woman of Oregon

At the issue's heart is a history of the **Center for the Study of Women in Society**, built on the tenacious work of faculty members who believed that the scholarly exploration of feminism could lead to groundbreaking research and societal change. Their determination was rewarded with fortuitous funding from an unexpected source—the estate of Jane Grant, a journalist and cofounder, with her first husband, Harold Ross, of the *New Yorker* magazine.

In conjunction with this feature, **five recipients** of CSWS research grants offer their thoughts on the "mighty women" who inspired them.

The *New Yorker* connection comes full circle in a Q&A with **Tina Brown**, the magazine's legendary editor in chief, once referred to as "Stalin in high heels," who comes to Eugene for a panel discussion for the CSWS fiftieth anniversary. Brown speaks plainly about the path to equality.

"You just have to win," she says.

Architecture student **Tayler Ervin**, president of the UO's Alpha Kappa Alpha Black sorority, considers Franklin's legacy. And **Masami Kawai**, a filmmaker and assistant professor in cinema studies, offers lessons learned from her fellowship at the Sundance Screenwriters Lab.

Also: **Marie Equi**, an alumna from the early 1900s, was a homesteader, frontier doctor, feminist, and no-nonsense advocate for union workers and healthcare. She stood firm for her beliefs, no matter the cost. Her story is illustrated in graphic novel style by another alumna, **Audra McNamee**, a graduate of the Clark Honors College and the College of Arts and Sciences' math and computer science and comic studies programs.

A new OQ video profiles **Nayantara Arora**, the UO's first Rhodes Scholar since 2007, who is studying global health and the relationship between the vascular system and Alzheimer's disease. A first-generation Indian American, Arora is fluent in Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, and English; she also is learning Arabic, Hebrew, and Spanish. "With a family history of storytelling," she says, "I am drawn towards empathy, open communication, and reconciliation as powerful keys to solving the nuanced issues we face in communities today."

Like Arora, **Dante' James** is in the Clark Honors College, studying global health, and is a recipient of the prestigious Stamps Scholarship. Her experiences have taught her powerful lessons about growing up at intersections—as a scientist, woman, and member of a minority population.

The issue reaches its heights on the sturdy shoulders of the UO's **acrobatics and tumbling** team. Through the eyes of the coach and athletes, we introduce the fine points of watching the sport and trace the phenomenal growth of the team and how it has been elevated by the philanthropy of the **Women in Flight** program.

George Evano is publisher of *Oregon Quarterly*.

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WINTER 2024

Sexism, the 'New Yorker,' and Making It as a Woman Journalist

Author and editor Tina Brown visits in February for the Center for the Study of Women in Society's fiftieth anniversary

By Matt Cooper • Photo by Brigitte Lacombe • January 17, 2024

5 min read

"Stalin in high heels." It's a nickname Tina Brown doesn't entirely reject. Between 1979 and 2001, she was the demanding editor in chief of *Tatler*, *Vanity Fair*, the *New Yorker*, and *Talk*. Brown also founded the live journalism platform Women in the World, which featured female leaders, CEOs, celebrities, and global activists during ten sold-out summits at New York's Lincoln Center through 2020. She was inducted into the Magazine Editors' Hall of Fame in 2007. Brown in 2023 founded the new investigative journalism summit Truth Tellers in London and she is guest curator of the 2024 Aspen Ideas Festival in Colorado.

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Oregon Quarterly caught up with Brown ahead of a February 27 panel discussion at the University of Oregon, free and open to the public. The event is hosted by the Center for the Study of Women in Society in celebration of its fiftieth anniversary, in partnership with the School of Journalism and Communication.

Oregon Quarterly: How did you handle the sexism you faced as a journalist starting out and once you were in leadership at Condé Nast media company?

Tina Brown: A lot of the sexism that I encountered, I actually sort of hardly registered it as that at the time. It was the water we swam in, if you like. [At Condé Nast] I learned that my male colleague, who was editor of *GQ* magazine, was getting paid almost half more than I was, when I was actually the number one rainmaker at the company. I had to hire an agent to go in and make my case.

A lot of the time I wasn't invited into the management meetings that actually impacted my destiny, while the male brass sat around making decisions that I didn't think were correct. And was proven on several occasions that my anxieties were real. I did experience that. I think women still do.

OQ: What's your advice to women facing sexism?

TB: My advice is to win. You just have to win, you have to prove that you were right, and in winning you have the leverage. Winning is power. If you want to reach the top, you have to work four times as hard, because you're not going to get the same easy passage, frankly, that very often men get. I don't think it's really changed. I have a thirty-two-year-old daughter and I hear her on Zooms and I hear those same voices slightly drowning her out and coming to her last and all of those things that one recognizes only too well. You've got to keep fighting.

OQ: You have some interesting similarities to Jane Grant, a no-nonsense journalist and feminist in the 1920s who cofounded the 'New Yorker' and in whose name her second husband made a massive gift that established the Center for the Study of Women in Society. What do you make of her?

TB: I knew very little about the history of this wife of [*New Yorker* cofounder] Harold Ross. She gets written out of the story, doesn't she, as the cofounder. I was a huge fan of Harold Ross in the sense that I felt my *New Yorker* was very much going back to the Harold Ross *New Yorker* [of the 1920s], but who knows how much of that DNA was Jane Grant's?

OQ: The UO has Grant's papers and she is, of course, celebrated by the center. Like you, Grant helped guide both content and business at the 'New Yorker.' And like you, she hired women—among them,

Janet Flanner, whose "Letter from Paris" column was a longtime staple of the magazine.

Grant in the 1930s or early 1940s (courtesy Special Collections and University Archives)

TB: I changed the culture of the *New Yorker* and made it sort of a matriarchy. I basically replaced so many of the male editors with women editors. My managing editor, my executive editor, the cartoon editor, the art director, they were all women I brought in.

The *New Yorker* became home to some really great women writers over the years, from Lillian Ross and Janet Malcolm to Edith Oliver—they were all there when I got there and they were wonderful ladies, I got on with them all so well, they were thrilled that a woman had come aboard.

But certainly when I had my very first meeting there, I came over to the magazine from *Vanity Fair* and I sat down at this long boardroom table and at the table were all . . . these . . . guys. Sitting there with Coke-bottle glasses all staring at me with an ill-concealed hostility. Particularly the cartoonists. Cartoonists are the most grumpy group of people you'll ever meet. The funnier the cartoon, the more grumpy the cartoonist. So they were all giving me these baleful looks and I remember thinking, "My god, I've just come out of *Vanity Fair,* where everyone was either a woman or gay, and suddenly I'm in this room with all of these really WASP-y guys." But we changed the blood and we got it running in a different direction. It was thrilling.

OQ: The theme of this issue is "Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon." Who is the mighty woman who inspired you?

TB: Certainly in editing, I was pretty fascinated with Clare Boothe Luce [an American writer, politician, US ambassador, and public conservative figure]. She was a terrific journalist—like Jane Grant, she had a rapier pen—she was the managing editor of *Vanity Fair*, very young.

When she married Henry Luce, publisher of *Time*, *Life*, and *Fortune*, she called herself Clare Boothe Luce and continued to use her maiden name. Rather like me—when I married my husband, Sir Harold Evans, he was editor of the *Sunday Times*—she left the paper. I didn't want to be "the girlfriend," nor did she. And of course she wrote her plays and she became so many other things. I liked her ability to reinvent. She was a woman of many facets at a time when multihyphenate women were not the norm.

OQ: What is the legacy of Women in the World?

TB: For ten years, we brought together the most remarkable global women, women people had never heard of. [Filipino journalist] Maria Ressa, who went on to get a Nobel Prize. Women like Liberian peace activist Leymah Gbowee, who also went on to get a Nobel Prize. We found these women and brought their voices to the stage and helped elevate their stories. I feel pretty good about the amazing community of global women with powerful voices that we were able to showcase.

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

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Matt Cooper is managing editor for *Oregon Quarterly*.

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Explore More

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Student's Vibrant Vision for the Future Coming into Focus

Annie Neal is on a fast track to graduate, the latest step on a journey to success for the advertising major and photographer from Portland

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

Sundance Lessons: Filmmaker Masami Kawai Rises

The cinema studies professor brings the inspiration of Robert Redford's movie institute to the classroom and the set

MEDIA & COMMUNICATIONS

New Master's Meets the Demand for Virtual Virtuosos

A new immersive media communication master's envisions an exciting reality for creative careers

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Looking Back on Fifty Years, and Ahead to a Feminist Future

With courage, determination, and a bit of good fortune, a group of University of Oregon scholars created a center to spotlight and confront gender inequality

By Alice Tallmadge • Images courtesy Center for the Study of Women in Society • January 17, 2024

8 min read

The Center for the Study of Women in Society at the University of Oregon has for decades been an academic powerhouse, generating groundbreaking, gender-focused research, incubating innovative projects, and launching cutting-edge ideas into the university and beyond. It has been a hub of intersectional and interdisciplinary collaboration, feminist activism, and scholarship, bringing people across the gender spectrum together to probe new ideas, perspectives, and possibilities.

This academic year, the center is celebrating its fiftieth anniversary. While marking its past, which includes a vital connection with the *New Yorker* magazine and a game-changing financial bequest,

the center is focusing on current and future issues regarding gender and its intersections with race, sexuality, the arts, politics, ecology, and technology. The program, says center director Sangita Gopal, "imagines the perils and promises of feminist futures."

Painting by Miriam Johnson featured in CSWS fortieth anniversary programming

Conceived in the early 1970s, a time of roiling cultural upheaval, the early center faced considerable peril—namely, institutional stonewalling and a majority male faculty dismissive of women as a research focus. The center could have remained an unrealized dream except for fortuitous intersections of timing, leadership, and vision.

What if sociology professor and feminist Joan Acker, PhD '67 (sociology), had backed down in 1971 when the university rejected her request to create an affirmative action program for women? Or when, the next year, every department in the College of Arts and Sciences except her own declined to support her proposal for an interdisciplinary research institute on women? What if she—and the women faculty who coalesced behind her—had been quieter, less focused, less determined?

"Feminism was in the air. And Joan was at the center of it. She was the mother of us all," says Professor Emerita Marilyn Farwell, who was drawn to Acker soon after arriving on campus in 1971 to teach in the English department.

After her idea for a research institute failed, Acker proposed a scaled-back center within sociology. In 1973, university president Robert Clark approved the Center for the Sociological Study of Women for three years, bestowing it with an annual budget of $5,244.

"She was indefatigable," says Kate Barry, MA '81 (sociology), then a graduate student and research assistant at the center. "She was feisty and would take on anybody. She wouldn't take no for an answer."

The seed was planted. All it needed was sustenance.

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Former UO president Dave Frohnmayer with Mazie Giustina, whose endowment helps fund the CSWS research initiative Women in the Northwest

Joan Acker, the center's first director. "She was feisty," says Kate Barry, a research assistant. "She wouldn't take no for an answer." (photo: Chris Mihulka)

An "obscure" western university

The nascent research center was housed in a small office on the sixth floor of Prince Lucien Campbell Hall, run by graduate assistants and a student secretary with one telephone. It might have remained the runt of university budgeting, underfunded and overloaded, save for another fortunate string of events.

In the late 1960s, Edward Kemp, a librarian with Special Collections and University Archives, had begun collecting manuscripts and materials from women leaders and artists. He found likely sources by reading obituaries in the *New York Times*.

In 1972 he spotted an obituary for Jane Grant, a feminist, *New York Times* journalist, and cofounder, with her first husband, Harold Ross, of the *New Yorker* magazine. Kemp wrote Grant's widower, William Harris, about acquiring some of Grant's papers. In their correspondence, Kemp learned that Harris, an editor at *Fortune* magazine, wanted to fund a women's studies center at a university but hadn't found takers who shared his vision. Even Harvard had turned him down.

Kemp met with Harris several times in New York, talking up the work being done at the university's fledgling women's research center. Harris agreed to meet with President Clark; before the meeting, Acker and her cohorts briefed Clark on the center's research and shared "fact sheets on women's studies at the University of Oregon," wrote Alletta Brenner, BA '06 (Clark Honors College, women's and gender studies), in a 2006 history of the center.

At their meeting, Harris and Clark quickly built rapport; both supported equal rights for women and enjoyed horticulture. They continued to correspond. In 1975, Harris notified Clark that, upon his death, his estate would go to the center.

Harris died in 1981, leaving the center $3.5 million, then the largest bequest the university had received from a single donor. But the funds were temporarily held up by a trustee for Harris's estate, Brenner wrote, who did not consider the study of women a "real and legitimate . . . form of scholarship," and was wary of the money going to an "obscure" university on the West Coast.

The endowment was formalized in 1983, assuring the center's financial independence. The Center for the Study of Women in Society, or CSWS, became one of just two such research centers in the US.

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Building research and community

In the ensuing decades, the center—now suitably situated in Hendricks Hall, a former women's dormitory—has funded hundreds of research projects by faculty, staff, and graduate students.

Some research has focused on local issues, such as a study of the statewide political assault on lesbians and gays in the early 1990s and case studies of women who joined Rajneeshpuram, the notorious religious commune that sprung up in northeast Oregon in the 1980s. Recent research has explored the burdens borne by women caretakers, and how gender and trans issues intersect with race, class, and sexuality. Internationally, the center has funded research on Balkan Romani immigrants, violence against women and girls in Guatemala, and use of social media as a protest tool in Iran.

Sandra Morgen

Among the most influential of center directors was feminist anthropologist Sandra Morgen, who served from 1991 until 2006.

Morgen came into the position with the vision of elevating the center's identity as a research institution and increasing its impact within the university, the local community, the state, and beyond. She organized signature research projects focusing on women in the Pacific Northwest, nurtured the concept of research interest groups, or RIGs, that bring scholars together to explore specific topics of interest, and forged connections with women's research centers nationally and internationally.

Morgen died in 2016. In a video presentation at her funeral, Margaret Hallock, former director of the university's Labor Education and Research Center and founder of the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics, reiterated Morgen's guiding principles for center research: interdisciplinary collaboration, intersectional analysis, attention to workers, and political reform and progress. "She wanted research to make a difference in women's lives, and that it be inclusive and relevant to social transformation," Hallock said. Morgen and Acker are honored with the annual CSWS Acker-Morgen lecture.

The center also supports performance projects, such as video documentaries, art exhibits, and indigenous theater. Every year, the center awards the Jane Grant Dissertation Fellowship, which provides a year of funding for doctoral candidates to complete their research and writing.

Jenée Wilde, PhD '15 (English), the center's information and media specialist, received the fellowship in 2014 for her dissertation on bisexuality in science fiction texts and fan communities. "It was incredible," she says. "It was the most privileged experience I've had to be able to focus on my intellectual work and do it justice."

Related: Five CSWS Grant Recipients and the Women Who Inspire Them

The center's embrace of input from across the university keeps it at the forefront of developing issues and administrative or academic gaps within the institution. As a result, several ideas nurtured by the center have evolved into formal programs.

In the mid-2000s, says Lynn Stephen, Philip H. Knight Chair and Distinguished Professor of Arts and Sciences, there was no focus on Latinx communities and research at the university. In 2008, under the center's umbrella, the anthropology professor and other faculty members organized a conference on Latinx issues in Oregon and began designing a program. The Center for Latino/a &

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Latin American Studies, or CLLAS, was approved in 2010 and today funds faculty and graduate student research, celebrates exceptional undergraduates, holds conferences, and curates collaborative projects such as Latino Roots, a two-class sequence in which students produce documentary films used statewide and in a traveling exhibit.

"I feel really grateful for the period in the center that helped incubate CLLAS," Stephen says. "It's hard to build something from nothing."

"These complex and entangled problems must be confronted again—as they have before—with passion, empathy, creativity, and compassion."

—Sangita Gopal

The center also became a gathering place, initially for women and later for minority faculty who experienced institutional and classroom challenges that cannot be understood by their White counterparts.

The Women of Color Project coalesced in 2008 and "centered around surviving academia and the university as women of color faculty," says Lynn Fujiwara, the project's cofounder and first coordinator, who later served as department head of Indigenous, Race, and Ethnic Studies for five years.

Fujiwara's decision to head the project while on sabbatical "was the most inspiring version of leadership I ever encountered," says center director Gopal, one of the initial members of the women of color effort. "It was an extraordinary model for feminist mentorship and leadership."

Today, the project has more than seventy members. It hosts professors and scholars, provides mentoring, and sponsors workshops on writing, research, and creative production. Collectively, the group has brought attention to issues such as the "invisible workloads" taken on by women of color faculty—from mentoring and advising undergraduate students of color to participating on university committees.

"We are called on to [participate in] every diversity mission the university is involved in," says Gopal. "Those are hours and hours of unaccounted work that don't come with a monetary reward or contribute to academic promotion."

Most importantly, says Fujiwara, who is codirecting the project this year, it allows women of color faculty to find each other, create connection, and lift each other up. "Just being able to talk and strategize about situations with people who understand the university and the challenges we face as women of color," she says. "That is really huge."

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Full of the world, feeling the urgency

Under the banner "Feminist Futures," the center's fiftieth anniversary celebration features women leaders in publishing, graphic arts, and avant-garde filmmaking. These cultural pioneers are asking many of the same questions asked by Joan Acker, Sandra Morgen, and the university's early feminists: who is being denied visibility and respect because of their gender, race, or social status? What perspectives are being overlooked? Whose voices aren't being heard?

The theme reverberates in upcoming events, including exhibits at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art, a panel discussion with former *New Yorker* editor Tina Brown, and the Lorwin Lecture on Civil Rights and Civil Liberties with Brandeis law professor Anita Hill, an icon of racial and gender equality.

In tune with the anniversary, supporters can give to a $50,000 "Duckfunder" campaign to boost undergraduate learning experiences in gender focused cross-disciplinary research and public-facing writing.

Whatever issues arise in coming years, those questions will be ongoing. The center, says media specialist Wilde, will continue to support research examining gender through a range of interdisciplinary and intersectional lenses. "We are finding ways to show connections that would not normally be obvious," she says.

Gopal seeks to extend the center's reach—and resources—into the broader community. She also wants the center to fund undergraduate research and internships. Younger students, she says, "are so full of the world. They feel the urgency of needing to engage with our mission. We need to pay attention."

Sangita Gopal

In a statement she reads before every anniversary event, Gopal details the challenges facing feminists worldwide: the war on people of color, migrants, refugees, and LGBTQ+ communities. The rise of masculinist nationalisms and the erosion of the rule of law. All against the backdrop of accelerated climate change.

"These complex and entangled problems must be confronted again—as they have before—with passion, empathy, creativity, and compassion," she says. "And in that spirit of collaboration that is a central tenet of the ethical project of feminism."

As it has for fifty years, the Center for the Study of Women in Society will continue to light the way—within the university, the local community, and far beyond.

"It is not as though the project of feminism is finished," says Gopal. "Its horizons are forever open."

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

Alice Tallmadge, MA ’87 (journalism), is contributing editor for *Oregon Quarterly*.

Top Photo: In 1983, campus, community, and noted guests celebrated the opening of the expanded and renamed Center for the Study of Women in Society. Pictured at the November 6 opening celebration, from left, are Barbara Pope, Mavis Mate, Jean Stockard, Marilyn Farwell, Mary Rothbart, Joan Acker, Miriam Johnson, Jessie Bernard, Donald Van Houten, Carol Silverman, Kay McDade, and Patricia Gwartney-Gibbs.

Editor's Note: An earlier version of this story incorrectly identified Edward Kemp as Brian Kemp.

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Explore More

POLITICS & SOCIETY

From Arafat to the Dalai Lama, Alum Shielded Leaders

Cam Burks, BS ’96, put himself in harm’s way as a special agent for the US and global dignitaries

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Anita Hill sees Peril and Promise for Feminism

Anita Hill visits May 9 to lecture in conjunction with fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Center for the Study of Women in Society

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Five Faculty Members on the Women Who Move Them

The Center for the Study of Women in Society supports inspiring faculty members. But who inspires them?

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WINTER 2024

Five on the Women Who Moved Them

The Center for the Study of Women in Society supports inspiring faculty members. But who inspires them?

By Alice Tallmadge • Photo Illustrations by Kyla Tom and Nic Walcott, University Communications • January 17, 2024

5 min read

For fifty years, faculty in the University of Oregon Center for the Study of Women in Society have researched the complexity of women's lives and the intersecting nature of gender identities and inequalities. In celebration of the center's fiftieth anniversary, *Oregon Quarterly*—which celebrates "the Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon" in the winter issue—asked five faculty members of the center for research project takeaways and the "mighty woman" who inspired them.

Joyce Cheng

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Associate Professor Department of the History of Art and Architecture

Faculty Research Grant "Hello Kitty's *Kunstwollen*: Style, Ornament, Allegory"

CSWS Project Takeaway The project is left field to my expertise as a scholar of modern and avant-garde art. My project takeaway is that most students respond more enthusiastically to objects of folklore or popular culture than those of "high" art. This is not necessarily bad. I believe culture and aesthetics are vital necessities rather than luxury.

Her Mighty Woman "Mighty Woman" reminds me of superheroes as well as commercial products; I hesitate to apply it to nonfiction women. Sangita Gopal, CSWS director, is a formidable scholar, valued friend, and mentor. Humans have always invented mythological "Mighty Women," like the sea goddess Mazu in my native Taiwan, or the Virgin Mary. In her film *Barbie*, Greta Gerwig tried to make the figure of Barbie into a kind of "Mighty Woman" that trumps all dolls.
I believe Hello Kitty is a mythic and transcultural "Mighty Woman." Like CSWS, Hello Kitty turns fifty this year!

Sangita Gopal

Director Center for the Study of Women in Society
Associate Professor Cinema studies and English; faculty in comparative literature

Faculty Research Grant "Feminism, Television and Gendered Media Work in India"

CSWS Project Takeaway My key takeaway from my research project on women filmmakers in India was that we need to see women's contributions and innovations not only through the framework of their identity as women, but in terms of how they transform the cultures of work by insisting on equity, diversity, and access.

Her Mighty Woman My "Mighty Woman" is every woman who labors and cares each day for their family and community, every woman who strives each day to make this unequal

world more just, every woman who makes time they do not have to bring laughter and beauty into our lives. I am so fortunate that I meet such Mighty Women every day and that they inspire me by example.

Dyana Mason

Associate Professor School of Planning, Public Policy and Management

Faculty Research Grant "Institutional Logics, Hybridity and Women's Empowerment in an International Development Program"

CSWS Project Takeaway That project was my first experience doing research across borders. My biggest takeaway was that working with nonprofit organizations internationally requires flexibility on all sides. The nonprofit leader needs to be adaptable regarding how their work will be implemented in a different culture, and the partner group needs to understand the expectations of the funding organization.

Her Mighty Woman I immediately think of a woman I worked with when I was executive director of a Virginia nonprofit. She was the best policy attorney I have ever worked with. She could see the big picture, but also what was needed in the moment, and helped build my knowledge and expertise. Last year she spoke via Zoom to one of my classes about her career in policy advocacy, including for underrepresented groups.

Theresa May

Professor Theater arts

Faculty Research Grant "WaterWays: Native Women's Story Circle"

CSWS Project Takeaway My most important takeaway from my CSWS-supported creative work and research: relationship. Ongoing, sustained, evolving. My creative relationship with Marta Lu Clifford (Chinook, Cree, Grand Ronde) has inspired and educated me, and from that many projects have been created. But it's the relationship, not the project, that is

central. Research without relationship is hollow; within relationship it is transformative.

Her Mighty Woman This question begs for fierce fighters and great minds like RBG, Jane Goodall, or bell hooks. But I'm gonna go with my mother—because she did not give up: she was deeply intellectual but did not have the opportunities, until late in life, to pursue that aspect of herself. My mother's experience has led me to demand that my women graduate students be given the platforms to speak and write. I don't give up—not on them, not on myself.

Lesley Jo Weaver

Associate Professor Global studies

Faculty Research Grant "A Multi-Stakeholder Analysis of Women's Houselessness in Eugene"

CSWS Project Takeaway The project illustrated to me how the problem of housing insecurity contributes to and pulls from every segment of society—from our health care system to parks, parking, business, policies, policing, and more. We consider those systems the building blocks of our society, but in varied ways, they have failed people with housing insecurity. Housing insecurity is a deeper, broader, and more complex issue than I realized when I began the project.

Her Mighty Woman I would say, number one, the women I worked with on this project who are actively experiencing houselessness and are feeling levels of deprivation and trauma that are unimaginable to most of the people I interact with daily in the US. These women's ability to persevere under such conditions is inspiring, and humbling.

Alice Tallmadge, MA '87 (journalism), is an editor for *Oregon Quarterly*.

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Cam Burks, BS ’96, put himself in harm’s way as a special agent for the US and global dignitaries

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Anita Hill sees Peril and Promise for Feminism

Anita Hill visits May 9 to lecture in conjunction with fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Center for the Study of Women in Society

POLITICS & SOCIETY

How a Group of Visionaries Forged a Feminist Future

The Center for the Study of Women in Society is celebrating fifty years of research on issues tied to gender—and setting its sights on the decades to come

University Communications

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Architecture student Tayler Ervin finds inspiration in the life of Nellie Franklin (left).

WINTER 2024

Striking a Chord for Change

The legacy of music major Nellie Franklin—the first Black woman to graduate from the UO—resonates today

By Kristen Hudgins • Photo illustration by David Gill and Nic Walcott • January 17, 2024

4 min read

Nothing could stand in the way of Nellie Louise Franklin and her right to an education.

When she stepped onto the University of Oregon campus in 1928, she faced discrimination, isolation, and hate. But in a feat of resiliency and determination, she graduated in 1932, becoming the first African American woman on record to do so from the university, paving the way for generations of Black women to come.

The racism she experienced at the UO was not unfamiliar to Franklin. It met her family as soon as they arrived in the Pacific Northwest. They moved to Washington in 1915 after Nellie's father, Sgt. Alfred Franklin, retired from an illustrious military career, according to Herman Brame, BS '68 (sociology), who has documented Black history at the university. In *Nellie L. Franklin: Pioneering Oregon Soror*, he writes, "they settled in Fort Vancouver until residential segregation forced their relocation to Northeast Portland where a vibrant African American community was concentrated."

Once settled, Franklin displayed her musical talents at Bethel African American Episcopal Church, her performances so impressive she garnered national media coverage when the *Pittsburgh Courier* wrote about her "notable solos" in 1925.

Following her graduation from Washington High School in Portland, she took her talents south to the UO to study music at what is today the School of Music and Dance. She was not permitted to stay in a dormitory and was forced to live off campus.

Despite the discrimination, she stayed.

Franklin joined several student organizations, including the Women's Athletic Association and the Cosmopolitan Club, which provided an interracial support system. She was also the only African American member of the Polyphonic Choir.

Franklin enjoyed the fruits of her perseverance on June 25, 1932, when she graduated with a bachelor of arts in music, a historic accomplishment that charted a path for thousands of women of color after her.

> *"Nellie Franklin ultimately demonstrated how, even against the odds, change is possible."*
>
> *—Kimberly Johnson*

"The one single factor that causes social change is people being determined that they're going to make it happen and not get discouraged, not get off the track," Brame says in *Racing to Change*, a documentary about Black student life at the UO.

The effects of Franklin's determination continue to ripple throughout campus. She helped shape a legacy that benefits today's underrepresented students, says Kimberly Johnson, BS '01 (ethnic studies), vice provost for Undergraduate Education and Student Success.

"Despite grappling with issues like no access to on-campus housing and facing isolation and discrimination, Nellie's triumphs stand as a testament to her resilience and determination in surmounting substantial barriers," says Johnson. "She ultimately demonstrated how, even against the odds, change is possible."

After college, Franklin and several other women in Oregon and Washington were the first to advocate and advance the formation of a Black sorority in the Pacific Northwest. This, after she was denied membership to sororities on campus due to her race. Today, students proudly join historically Black sororities at the UO, finding belonging and sisterhood.

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Ervin has found a welcoming place in Alpha Kappa Alpha (courtesy Tayler Ervin)

"Having somewhere I can go to and be surrounded by women who look like me and think like me is amazing," says Tayler Ervin, an architecture student and president of the historically Black sorority Alpha Kappa Alpha. "It's a space for me to go and have someone to relate to on campus since we go to a predominantly White institution, and especially since my major is also predominantly male dominated and I'm the only African American woman in my major at the moment."

Of the nearly 24,000 students on campus, 2.7 percent are African American and 33.9 percent represent ethnic minorities.

Alpha Kappa Alpha and Delta Sigma Theta, another historically Black sorority, are represented on campus. Their memberships include women from schools across the state.

Ervin finds inspiration in Franklin's story.

"She stuck with it and demonstrated resiliency in pursuing her education," Ervin says. "For her to make it through four years of school with some people who probably weren't very welcoming, but she still fought, is incredible. She knew it was going to be important for people like me to be able to have the opportunity to go to schools like the University of Oregon in the future."

"Nellie Franklin was a groundbreaker who laid the foundation for others to follow despite numerous challenges," Johnson says. "Her resilience during tough times serves as a powerful lesson for our students, showing that overcoming obstacles can lead to lasting change."

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

Kristen Hudgins is a public relations specialist in the **School of Music and Dance**.

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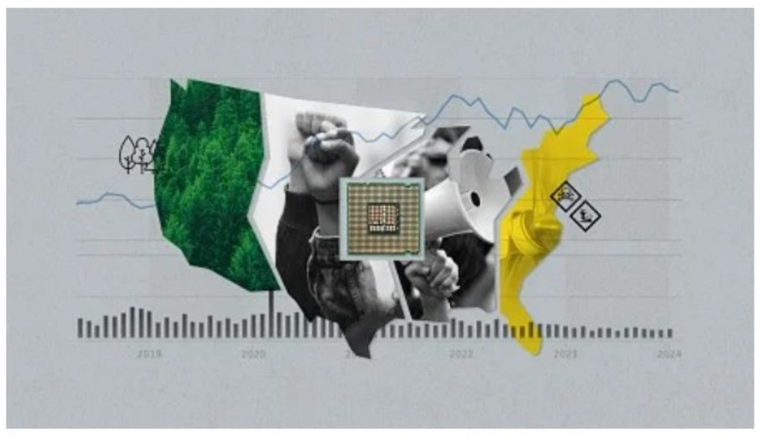

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

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University of Oregon Acrobatics & Tumbling team (photo: Molly McPherson)

Ducks Parlay Teamwork into Leadership of a Rising Sport

Individual athleticism and a strong team ethic draw women athletes to the fast-rising sport of acrobatics and tumbling

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The first thing you notice is the flurry of limbs.

Legs propel bodies in a dash across the mats before shooting skyward in daring leaps. Arms brace against the straining weight of bodies standing on shoulders, then radiate outward like triumphant rays of sunshine.

As iLoveMemphis’s “Hit the Quan” plays on speakers during practice, forty-five of the nation’s top former gymnasts, acrobats, and cheerleaders flip, twist, and tumble in the fluorescence of Matthew Knight Arena. Team members laugh, dance, and cheer each other on, sneakers squeaking on the polished floor. Women of different shapes, sizes, and ethnicities celebrate one another as they practice new stunts and pursue personal bests. On the sidelines, with their gym bags lined in a neat row, athletes with tired muscles and red faces receive treatment from teammates and friends using a Theragun massage gun.

This is acrobatics and tumbling, an emerging collegiate sport that demands both individual skill and the cohesion of a team. Among more than fifty schools nationwide that compete, the Ducks have excelled, due to daring leadership and their commitment to the sport’s evolution—and each other.

Take the Keogh twins, for example.

Seniors Emma and Katie Keogh helped the Ducks to their top scores of the 2022–23 season, including three victories that propelled Oregon to No. 2 in the nation. This, after the uncertainty of their first year, during which Katie was diagnosed with carcinoid cancer. Unable to compete, she instead had to relearn the foundations of her beloved sport.

“I was super lucky that I had good trainers and doctors specific to Oregon Athletics which allowed me to gain my strength back,” Katie says in a GoDucks.com video. “There was no script to follow, so it was working at my own pace, telling them what I thought I was capable of and bouncing off that. Your mind remembers everything that your body is able to do, so I

By Sage Kiernan-Sherrow • Photos courtesy Oregon Athletics • Video by Charlie Litchfield, UO Creative Media

January 17, 2024

6 min read

took that and ran with it and was able to get some of the basics back that I didn't think I'd potentially be able to."

For Emma, watching her twin fight to be back on the court was "a huge adjustment"—but worse was not being able to support her in person during periods of Katie's recovery. Luckily, she had the acrobatics and tumbling team by her side.

Says Emma: "Coming here and having forty-five people that I pretty much just met be able to listen to me and be there for me and be the people that I needed during such a hard time was such a great experience that I wouldn't trade for the world."

Leaping over obstacles

Acrobatics and tumbling almost didn't become the sport it is today. It started in 2003, driven by a desire to emphasize team dynamics and the strength and grit of women athletes.

Gymnastics lacked the benefits of team building and competitive cheerleading coaches faced barrier after barrier in gaining support for their sport at the university level. But change was coming: against a backdrop in which the vast majority of institutions have failed to meet Title Nine rules requiring equitable opportunities for women to participate in sports, founders of acrobatics and tumbling began brainstorming a sport for women with cheerleading or gymnastics backgrounds.

Renee Baumgartner, MS '89 (individualized program), PhD '96 (educational policy and management), and Felicia Mulkey were two of those founders. The duo—Baumgartner was UO's senior associate athletics director and Mulkey was Oregon's first acrobatics and tumbling coach—led the charge for the "team stunts and gymnastics" team in 2007, following the lead of the University of Maryland. In 2010, they collaborated with other universities to establish the official rules of acrobatics and tumbling, basing it on gymnastics scoring and six events, and stripping it of some of the glitz and glamour of the sport's predecessors.

photo: Eric Evans/UO Athletics

Mariah Tanner, 2019–22 team member. Photo: Eric Evans/UO Athletics

Cami Wilson, BS '23 (business administration), who is pursuing a master's in business, was impacted by the limitations of cheerleading as a sport. She was a four-time USA all-American in high school cheerleading who came to Oregon wanting to be a Division I athlete.

Learning that acrobatics and tumbling would give her the same opportunities as a football or basketball player empowered her, and she has competed for four years.

However, Wilson and teammate Emma Keogh say the sport's newness and lack of a male equivalent means they must keep working to reach the popularity enjoyed by other athletics.

Cami Wilson and Emma Keogh

"[Acrobatics and tumbling] might not seem as common or be as widely known but it's very demanding and hard," Keogh says. "It's just like other sports. It requires you to be at the best possible level and you're competing against the best people in your area of expertise. It's our passion and our lifestyle and it's what we pour our hearts into every single day."

Adds Wilson: "Our sport is brutal. You get one shot out there; you get one performance, you get one heat and that's it. Whereas in every other sport you may get multiple chances to recover from major mistakes, we do not. It creates a different level of pressure that some people don't necessarily understand."

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Do-it-for-each-other mindset

Luckily, Wilson has coach Taylor Susnara, BS '18 (social science), to guide her through the ups and downs—and twists and flips—of winning and losing as a team. Where Wilson feels pressure, Susnara sees an opportunity to improve oneself for the good of the sport. She was one of the first athletes recruited by Mulkey and drove Oregon's second place run last season.

Susnara began gymnastics training when she was three years old and progressed to the elite level before an injury halted her ascent at age twelve. In high school, she pivoted to competitive cheerleading, but always felt something was missing. When she was introduced to acrobatics and tumbling, everything clicked. After competing for the Ducks from 2015 to 2018, Susnara became the assistant under former coach Keenyn Won, BS '13 (sociology), taking over after Won's departure in 2021. With a love for strategy and athlete development, Susnara says the hardest—though most rewarding—parts of coaching are building a team culture and learning how to incorporate and develop new skills each season.

Taylor Susnara

"My philosophy is 'work hard, play hard,' so really putting in a lot of effort into how we prepare physically, mentally, and emotionally for the season," Susnara says. "I always say, 'it's not about the team, it's about the program,' so just diving into that and having a do-it-for-each-other mindset as we go through. I love developing relationships with the athletes, I love getting to know all their quirky sides in and out, just goofing around and helping them get better at what they love doing.

After recruiting seventeen new athletes in 2023, Susnara is preparing them for the season ahead. The team must first learn to trust one another. There's genuine fear on some of the women's faces as they're lifted into the air by a new teammate the first time, but Susnara talks them through every step until they're ready for national competition.

As for the Keogh sisters and Wilson, it's their last year together, each walking away with hard-earned lessons from their time on the team. The sport taught Emma Keogh not to doubt herself. Katie Keogh learned how to live every day to the fullest and overcome adversity. And Wilson found the team experience she was looking for.

"I can't wait for the day, whether it's this season or in the years and months to come, for everyone to know what acro is and want to be a part of it," Wilson says. "I want every single young female athlete to be able to grow up and say, 'I could do acro.'"

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Sage Kiernan-Sherrow, MA ’21 (journalism), is an editor and writer for Advancement Communications.

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WINTER 2024

Lessons from Sundance: Filmmaker Masami Kawai Finds Her Footing

The cinema studies professor brings the inspiration of Robert Redford's movie institute to the classroom

By Matt Cooper · Illustration by David Gill · January 17, 2024

3 min read

Like any movie director, Masami Kawai must manage her film crew's temperament during long hours on the set. A happy film crew is a productive film crew, after all.

But she recently received sage advice at a movie institute founded by the great Robert Redford: nothing—and no one—comes before the story itself, she was told—think of it like it's your baby. This prompted a review of her priorities as a filmmaker.

"As a mom of a toddler, putting my child first is instinctual. So prioritizing my story, like my baby, helps me better navigate the pressures of a set," says Kawai, an assistant cinema studies professor in the College of Arts and Sciences. "[The film crew] can have unpleasant looks on their faces while they're working. They're bored, they want to be on their phones. But it can't be my priority to make them feel better. My number one priority is the story and my actors."

Kawai gained the insight last spring at the Sundance Institute in Utah. She was among those selected for a two-week workshop during which, under the eye of talents such as actor Ed Harris, a four-time Academy Award nominee, filmmakers rehearsed, shot, and edited scenes from working projects. "You feel his charisma, you are drawn to look at him," Kawai says. "He's got so much energy and he's wonderful. He's just himself."

The Sundance experience is energizing both her work as an independent director-writer-producer and her instruction to University of Oregon undergraduates on the art of moviemaking.

Says Kawai: "I will always hold onto the generosity, creativity, and love of cinema that Sundance gave us."

A term's worth of work for two minutes

During Introduction to Narrative Production, a course Kawai teaches, cinema studies majors learn all aspects of film production and produce two-minute movies. Resources are limited so the films are typically shot in Knight Library or outside. But that hasn't hindered student creativity.

The movies are sometimes lighthearted and often imbued with the students' personalities. In one, a young woman is upset with her friend, prodding him for explanations, Kawai says, "why men always think about the Roman Empire, why they always think about war." He admits he thinks about the Roman Empire—but only togas.

"It's a critique of both war and masculinity in two minutes," Kawai says. "That's pretty impressive."

Vignettes that evoke emotions, starring mom

Kawai, a descendant of the Ryukyuan people who live on islands between Japan and Taiwan, has won "best narrative short" awards for films that capture life's evocative moments—struggle, connection, loss. In one, an old immigrant woman played by her mother, Kana, braves a drought-stricken Los Angeles in search of water for a neighbor in need.

"She's an actor, she's willing to take on anything and try things," Kawai says. "These are twelve-hour days, so to spend them with people you love is the best."

In 'Valley,' finding a gem worth giving her all

Kawai's next project is her first feature-length film: *Valley of the Tall Grass*, which depicts stories of working-class Indigenous people who come across a discarded TV/VCR set. Shooting begins next summer.

"It's all systems go," Kawai says. "You want to find a story that you're passionate about, that you're willing to work really hard for. I found the one."

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

Matt Cooper is managing editor for *Oregon Quarterly*.

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Q & A with former *New Yorker* editor Tina Brown, who visits in February for the Center for the Study of Women in Society's fiftieth anniversary

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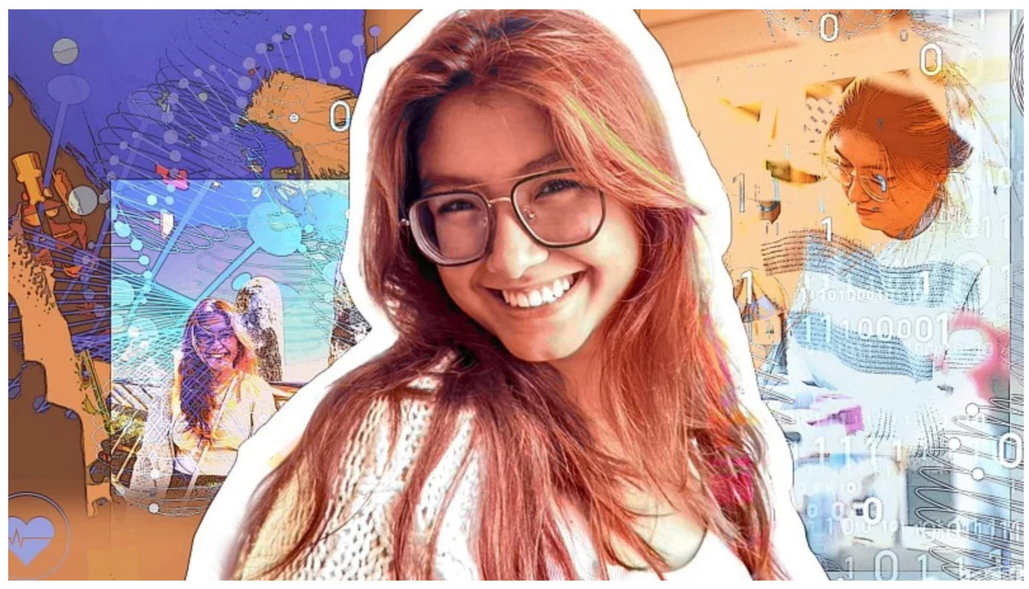

WINTER 2024

Finding Herself, Thousands of Miles from Home

From the classroom to the lab to a global health internship, Dante' James has excelled while exploring what it means to be mixed race

By Anna Glavash Miller • Photo illustration by David Gill • January 17, 2024

6 min read

The anxiety-filled questions were familiar to junior Dante' James as she led a tour last fall of the University of Oregon laboratory where she studies bacteria and fungi on the skin.

"What if I'm not enough to apply for this lab?" a student in the all-female group asked.

"I've also been in their shoes," says James, a Vietnamese American and multidisciplinary science major in the Clark Honors College. "It can be really intimidating to get into STEM, or research, or try anything new."

James reminded the group that, like research itself, finding belonging in the lab is a learning process. But regardless of the stumbles—a chemical spill, a rough grade on a test, a question of belonging—James has learned to believe in herself.

"I explained to them that when I joined the lab I had no clue what I was doing," James says. "With my mentors here, I've learned to be independent, and it's been great, but there's been embarrassing moments where I've spilled chemicals all over myself."

When confronted with life's ups and downs, James remembers her motto: "I'm not giving up on myself. Everything's gonna be OK."

"How does it feel to start a pandemic?"

The daughter of a Vietnamese mother and an American father, James grew up in Myrtle Creek, a community in rural Douglas County, the middle child of three.

James inside Vietnam's Phòng Nhà caves with her mother, Minh Hang James (courtesy Dante' James)

As a person of color in a predominantly White community, James was often the only Asian American in the room. At times, she says, the expectation to represent all Asians was "a lot."

"I remember being so disgusted with how Asian people, including myself, were treated during COVID-19," James says. She remembers being asked by a longtime friend how it felt to "start a pandemic."

James yearned to be part of a community in which she felt belonging.

Drawn to biology in high school, James enrolled at the UO to pursue undergraduate research in the Clark Honors College. She was awarded a Stamps Scholarship, which covers all expenses and offers additional academic enrichment. In her head, she was already spending the money: study abroad in Vietnam.

In her first term at UO, James was introduced to the field of global health through Malaria: Science, Ethics, History, Technology, an honors college 101 course. The mosquito-borne disease is prevalent in tropical areas, including Vietnam.

Another class, Students of Color Opportunities in Research Engagement or SCORE, helped James claim her space in research, literally. The year-long class introduces underrepresented students to lab research and data analysis and helped her find a position in the lab of Matt Barber, an associate professor in the Institute of Ecology and Evolution, in 2022.

Now, James is sending research papers to her mentor Caitlin Kowalski, a postdoctoral researcher in the lab, and suggesting the findings could be connected to what they are seeing in the lab regarding skin bacteria and fungi. She's also proposing new experiments.

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James in the lab with Caitlin Kowalski, her mentor and a postdoctoral researcher (photo: Ilka Sankari)

James is never one to shy away from new experiences. “I try to channel her myself,” says Kowalski, who calls James’s confident attitude “the Dante’ approach.” It goes like this: “I can do this. If something comes up, I’ll figure it out.”

Recently, James stepped up to give a lab tour after hours, when no one else was available.

“I thought, ‘this is amazing,’” Kowalski says. “I’m so proud that she feels she is a member of this lab, this community, that she can show people around it. That’s ownership, and that’s something I admire at that age and in that position.”

On the front line against hand, foot, and mouth disease

During the summer of 2023, UO’s GlobalWorks program connected James with an internship at Horus, a research contractor in Vietnam that conducts pharmaceutical studies. James worked on a clinical trial studying the efficacy of a vaccine for hand, foot, and mouth disease, and its effects on immunity.

The disease, one of the top contributors to morbidity in the country according to the World Health Organization, causes mouth sores and rashes, spreads through close personal contact, and primarily affects children. James studied disease protocols and visited a facility of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and rural clinics that treat the disease, where she met doctors and researchers.

James at the Linh Ung Pagoda in Da Nang, central Vietnam (courtesy Dante’ James)

“I took a lot away from the research,” James says, because it occupied the middle ground between her lab work and coursework. “It’s like, ‘OK, you’ve developed a drug, but you’re not going to disperse it widely yet—you're testing it.’”

Uyen Hong, CEO of Horus, guided James on a dawn-to-dusk field trip around Vietnam’s provinces. Between stops on their itinerary, they joked in the van and ate rambutan from roadside vendors. She and James discussed everything from provincial culture and customs to a professional path James could follow to work her way, step by step, to the top of the healthcare industry.

“As a woman,” James says, “she was very conscientious that it’s difficult to get into the healthcare industry sometimes.”

As a member of the Diverse Ducks program, in which students create content to share with the UO community that reflects how they experience intersectionality abroad, James wrote blog posts at the beginning, middle, and end of her experience in Vietnam.

She had hoped to blend in more. But being there showed her that even after experiencing racism in America, she could simultaneously be judged “not Asian enough.” She still stuck out as an American.

She also experienced racism from her fellow American interns. Because she speaks some Vietnamese, she was expected to make arrangements for them. She says they showed their bias through cultural prejudices, White saviorism, and a privileged ignorance of realities in the country where they were guests. For James, the experience was infuriating.

Though confusing and sometimes disappointing, James’s time in Vietnam helped her find her position at the intersection of race, culture, and experiences, she writes in the blog.

“In terms of my identity, I learned that I can belong to both cultures, American and Vietnamese, although perhaps not one entirely,” James writes. “As a mixed-race individual, that is just something I have to accept and understand.”

James has never been one to sweep issues under the rug. From a young age, she has made stepping forward a way of life. In high school, she trained as a firefighting cadet, served as a youth representative on a state behavioral health board, and competed in public speaking as part of Future Farmers of America.

“In terms of my identity, I learned that I can belong to both cultures, American and Vietnamese, although perhaps not one entirely.”

At UO, she joined student government as the first-year representative. In the Barber lab, she proposed a glove recycling program that will become part of a new campus-wide sustainable labs initiative. Last fall, she helped organize a basketball fundraiser to benefit three organizations that support wildfire resilience across the state.

She’s also thankful for the mentorship of others along the way, like faculty members Nadia Singh from SCORE and Melissa Graboyes in the honors college. “Being able to work with Dante’ makes me very hopeful about the future of the field of global health,” says Graboyes, who taught the first-year course on malaria and leads the Global Health Research Group, of which James is a member.

Now, James looks for chances to give back to the communities that have nurtured her—like giving lab tours to young female students. “If you’re going to take space,” she says, “you’ve gotta make space.”

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women’s History Month in March.

Anna Glavash Miller, MS ’18 (journalism), is a communications generalist in the Clark Honors College.

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Saghar Salehi fled her homeland and landed at the UO to study and fight for women in Afghanistan

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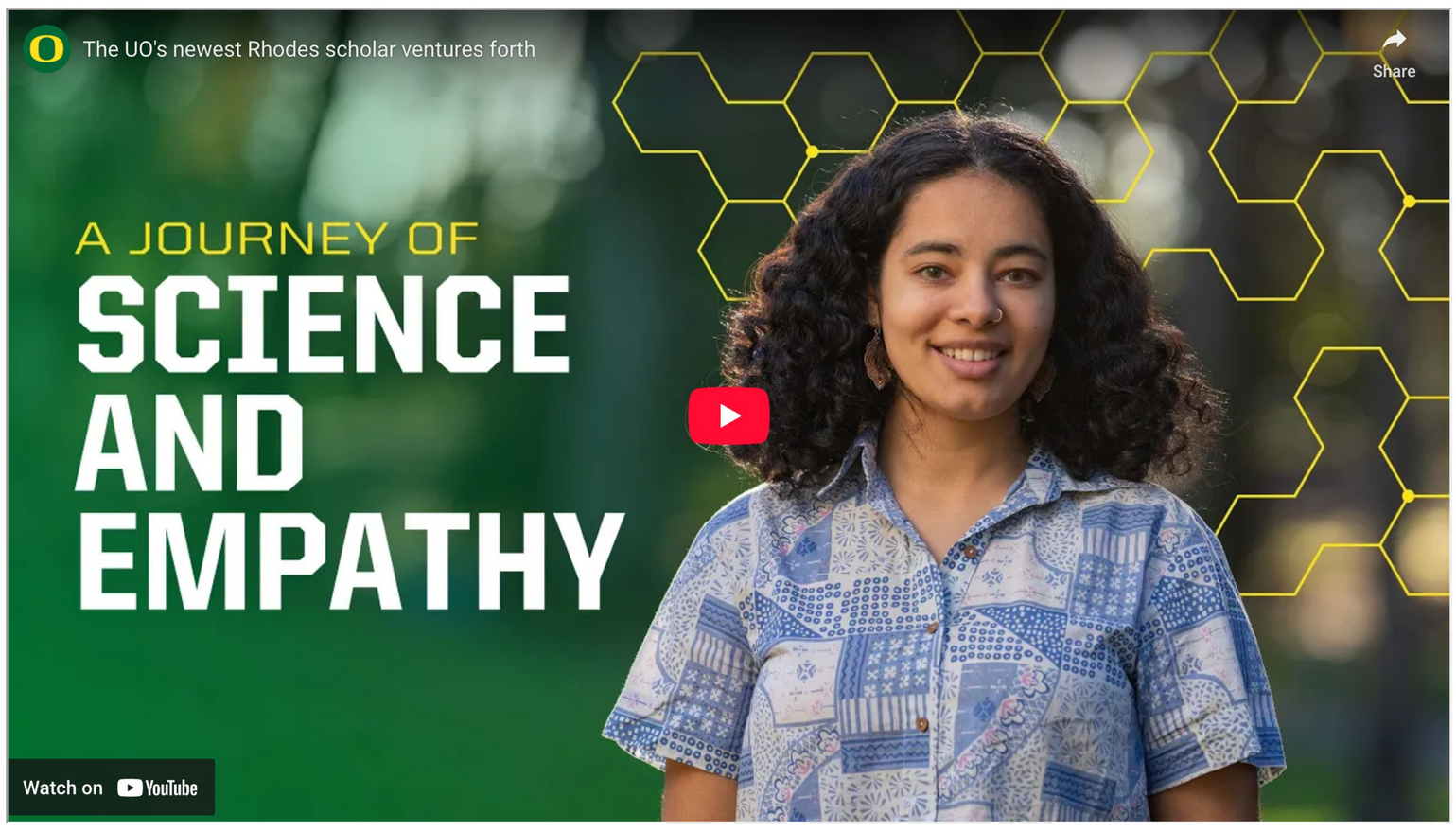

Rhodes Scholarship in Hand, Her Sights Are Set on Global Health

Nayantara Arora is the first UO woman to win the world's most prestigious international scholarship

By Nicole Krueger • Video by UO Creative Media • January 17, 2024

When University of Oregon senior Nayantara Arora learned she'd won the Rhodes Scholarship, she closed her eyes and time collapsed. In her mind's eye, she saw all the women in her family, going back generations.

She saw her mother, who traveled across the world at age twenty-two to conduct feminist research in the social sciences. She saw her grandmothers, both of whom lived through the partition of India in 1947, when the country was split in two. She even saw her great-grandmothers, who had no idea that the sacrifices they made would someday enable their great-granddaughter to step into a future of limitless possibilities.

In Hindi, Arora notes, the word for "yesterday" and "tomorrow" is the same.

"I thought about my family's history, having migrated all over south Asia and never settling in one country for more than a generation, and it made me think of how every single woman in my life is responsible for where I am now," says Arora, a first-generation Indian American.

Arora in November became the first Duck since 2007—and the first UO woman ever—to win what is perhaps the world's most prestigious international scholarship. One of three finalists this year from the university, she is the twentieth UO student to receive the award since its inception in 1902.

> *"She has interests in both basic science and global health, [which] will make her uniquely able to do the great things she wants to do."*
>
> *—Ashley Walker, assistant professor of human physiology*

"My mother had the courage to trailblaze a life of her own in a completely alien land, different from any context she had ever experienced," Arora says. "Both of my grandmothers had to pack up their entire lives and move to a new place full of uncertainties, and they ensured that their children would receive the best opportunities—sometimes at a cost to themselves. And it's because of their generosity and sacrifices that I'm here now."

Arora now stands on the brink of an adventure that begins in October at the University of Oxford, where she plans to pursue master's degrees in global health and international health and tropical medicine. She envisions a future in which she helps improve the health of whole communities—perhaps even an entire nation.

"I want to make a difference through prevention," says the Clark Honors College student, who is majoring in neuroscience and pursuing a double minor in global health and chemistry. "I would love to be the US Surgeon General."

It's a goal that will require knowledge from a variety of disciplines. But that's not a problem for Arora, a flexible thinker who grew up traveling between the US and India, is fluent in four languages (including Hindi, Punjabi, and Urdu) and studied in Jewish, Catholic, and secular schools in Portland.

"I think interdisciplinarity is the key to problem solving," she says. "There's not a single issue that was ever solved from just one field."

The prospect of interdisciplinary study is one of the reasons she was drawn to neuroscience, a major that encompasses a broad range of fields within the UO College of Arts and Sciences, from chemistry and biology to anthropology and psychology.

"I've always been fascinated with the brain," Arora says. "There are so many unknowns, countless unknowns, and the idea that science provides a way to tackle a problem from so many different angles was really appealing to me."

Coming from a culture where elders are highly valued, Arora is particularly interested in the factors that affect people's health as they age. She spent the past two years researching the relationship between blood vessel health and

Alzheimer's disease in the lab of Ashley Walker, an assistant professor of human physiology.

"What really impresses me about Nayantara is her drive and her passion," Walker says. "She's really passionate about health equity. She has interests in both basic science and global health, and the combination of that knowledge will make her uniquely able to do the great things she wants to do in public policy as well as health."

Josh Snodgrass, a professor of anthropology and food studies, met Arora during her first term, when she took a course in biological anthropology. Over the years, he has seen her broad range of interests coalesce around a laser-focused career goal.

"Nayantara is an integrative thinker," Snodgrass says. "She's very interdisciplinary, but she also has a depth of skill that you don't really find in many people who have that kind of approach. I have no doubt she's going to make a huge contribution."

Becoming a Rhodes scholar has only increased Arora's determination to make a difference.

"It means that opportunities I don't even know how to imagine yet are now open to me," she says. "I feel more driven than ever to leverage what's been given to me to accomplish my goals."

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

Nicole Krueger, BA '99 (Clark Honors College, news editorial), is a communications coordinator in the College of Arts and Sciences.

UO Creative Media is a unit within University Communications.

EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS

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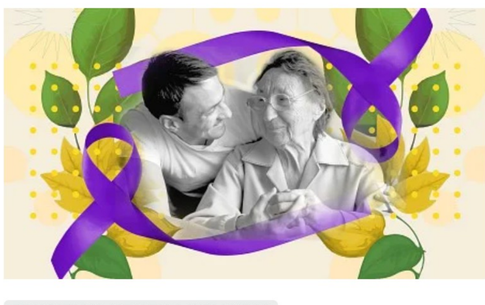
EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS

UO Scientists and Big Ten Peers Make Powerful Partners

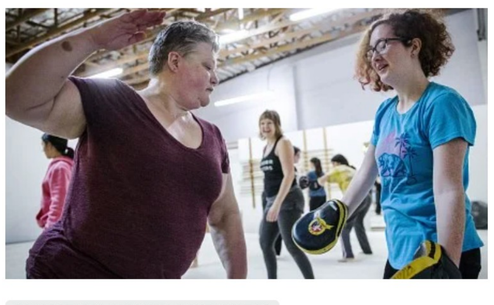
Teammates in research, they're advancing work in education, health, and child development



EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS

How to Care for Someone with Swallowing Problems

Samantha Shune, an expert on aging, troubleshoots this problem of dementia



EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS

How to Empower Yourself to Survive and Thrive

Former UO instructor authors book on self-defense and success in a sexist world

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She Risked Everything for Women, Workers, and Justice | Oregon Quarterly
https://oregonquarterly.uoregon.edu/she-risked-everything-women-workers-and-justice

WINTER 2024

She Risked Everything for Women, Workers, and Justice

Alumna Marie Equi was a homesteader, doctor, and activist in the early twentieth century

By Ed Dorsch • Illustrations by Audra McNamee • January 17, 2024

5 min read

Dr. Marie Equi
1872–1952

A "firebrand in the causes of suffrage, labor and peace."
—Oregonian, *July 15, 1952*

A graduate of the University of Oregon Medical School, Marie Equi was a homesteader, activist, lesbian, mother, and physician. Throughout her courageous life, she fought for labor reform, free speech, women's suffrage, family planning, fair wages, and peace.

Equi was born in 1872 to immigrant parents in New Bedford, Massachusetts, one of eleven children (three siblings died young). She began working in a textile mill after her first year of high school. Her partner Betsey Bell Holcomb paid for Equi to attend seminary, but the money ran out after one year.

At age twenty, she travelled three thousand miles to join Holcomb on an Oregon homestead. The couple collected water from a stream and tended a two-acre garden. Unlike many before them, they completed the requirements of the 1862 Homestead Act that allowed them to keep the land: cultivating five acres and living on their land for five years.

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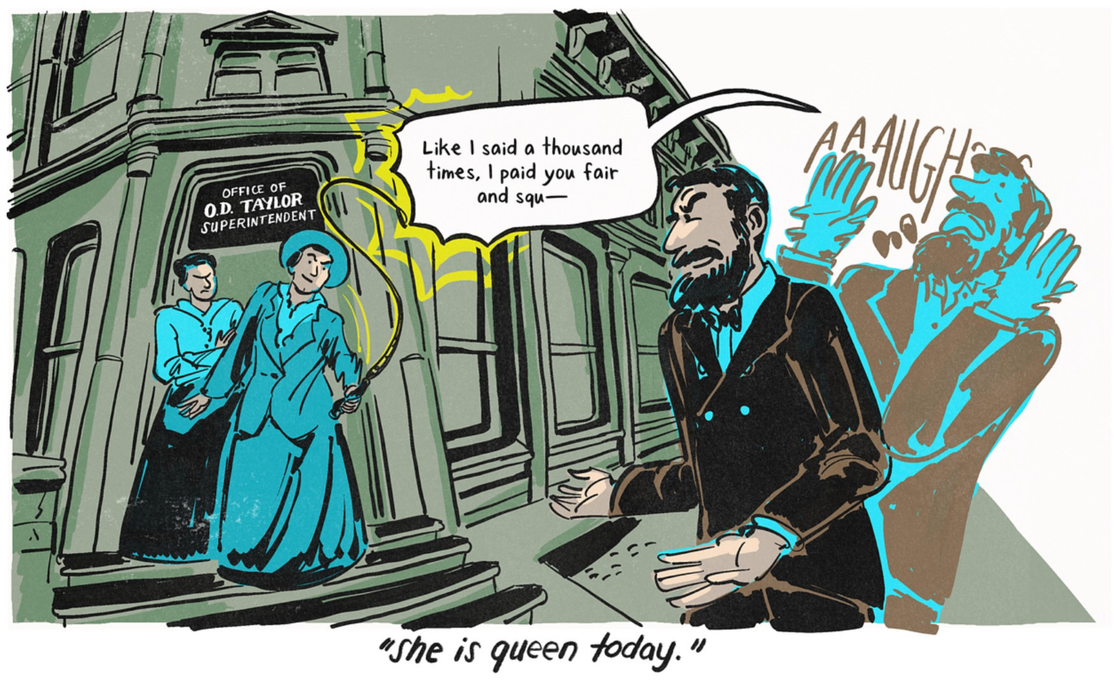
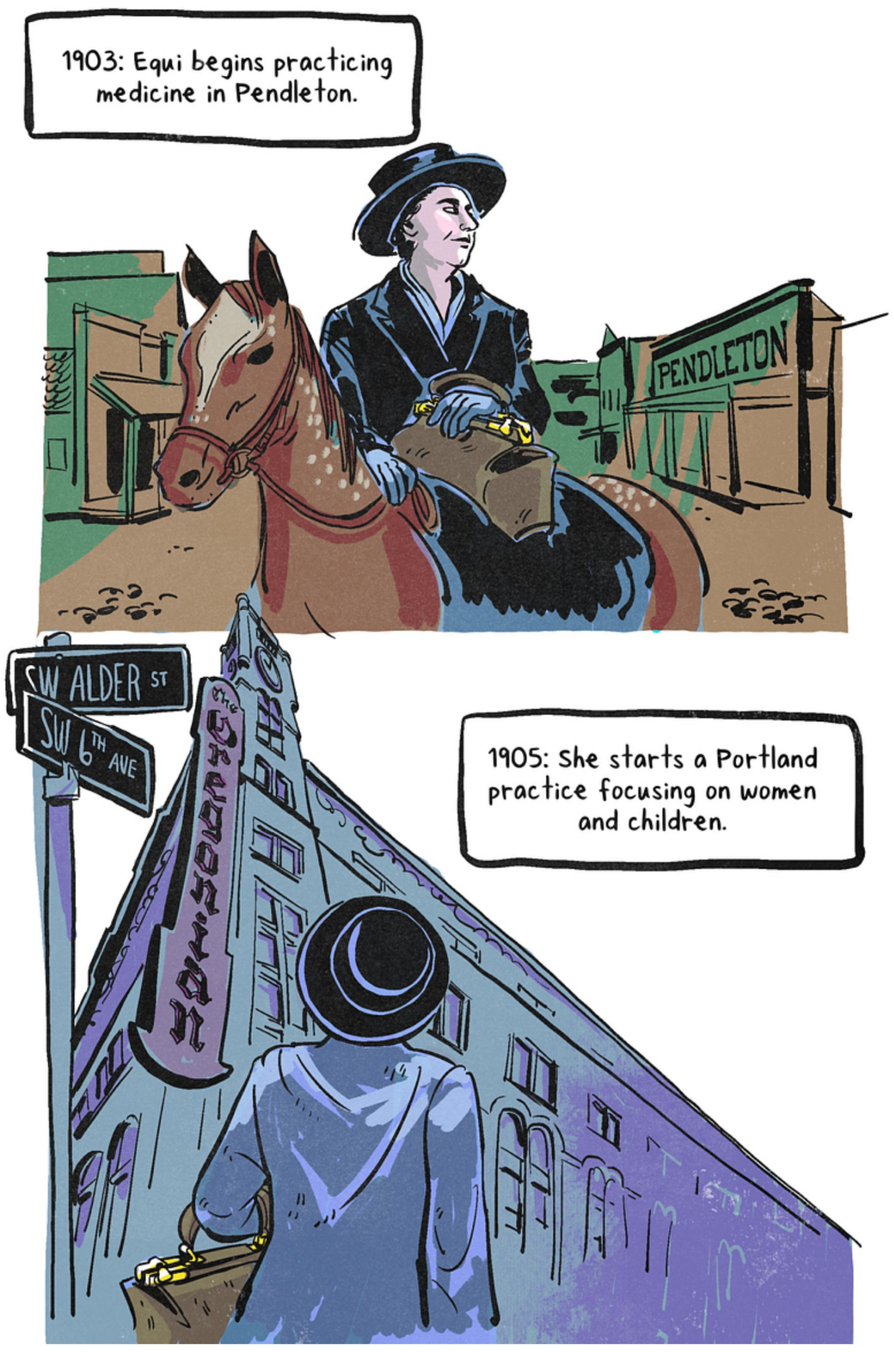


As two young, single women living together in the small community of The Dalles at the turn of the twentieth century, Equi and Holcomb drew considerable attention. But Holcomb's teaching position at a private school helped them gain acceptance.

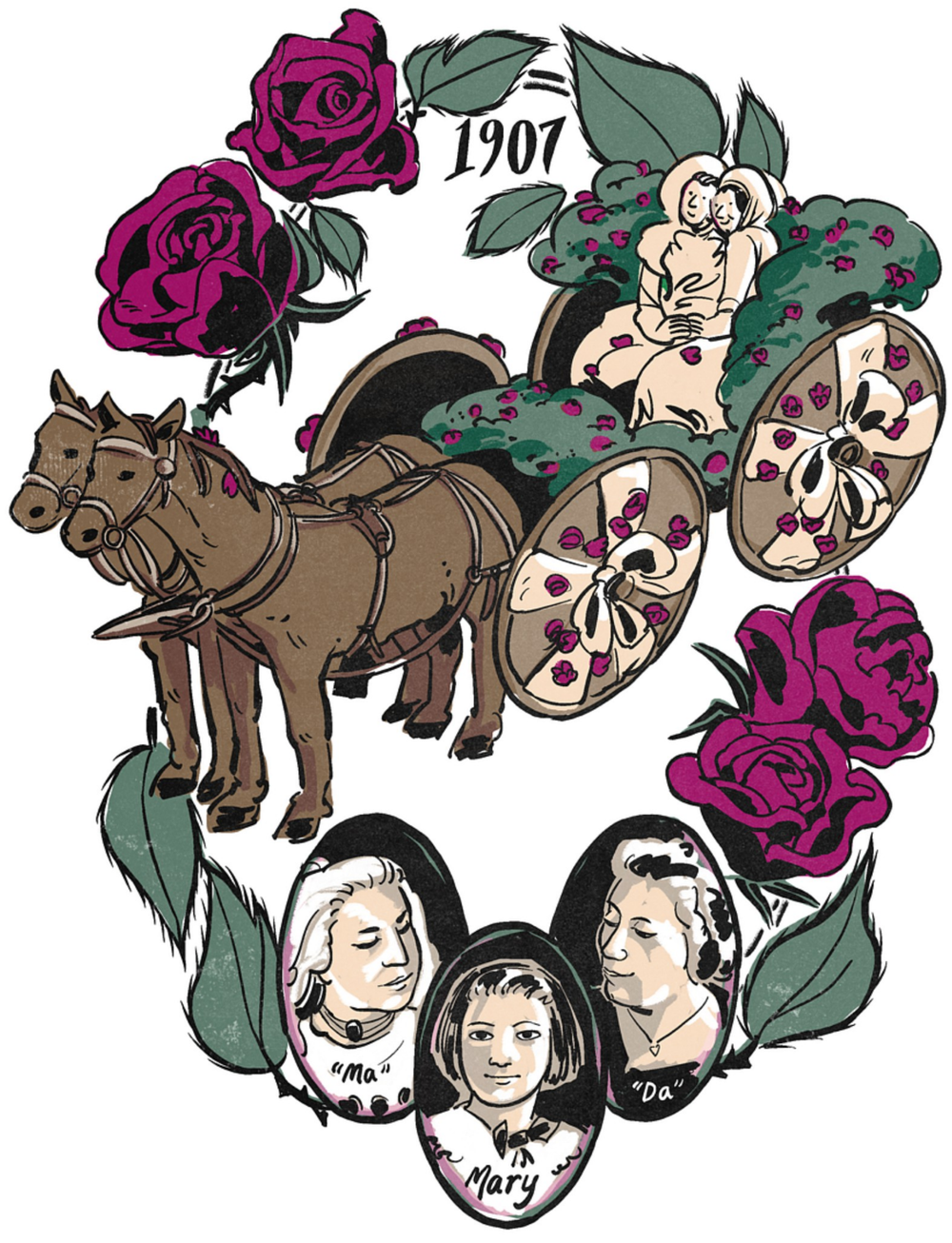
When superintendent O. D. Taylor repeatedly refused to pay Holcomb in full, Equi's fiery temper got the best of her—and him. Accounts of Equi threatening Taylor with a horsewhip, surrounded by curious onlookers, were published in newspapers as far away as Portland and San Francisco. One story declared, "She is queen today." Following the fracas, locals raffled off Equi's whip, giving the proceeds to Holcomb. Taylor was later arrested for crooked real estate dealings.



Sixteen years after dropping out of high school to work in a textile mill, Equi graduated from the UO medical school in 1903. She began practicing medicine in Pendleton, where she often travelled by hours on horseback to treat patients.

She later opened an office in Portland's first skyscraper, emphasizing obstetrics, gynecology, and maternal and childhood health. Because of her background, Equi had an excellent rapport with her working-class patients. But she was also comfortable in upper-class social circles. By charging full price for wealthier patients, she could offer free care or reduced rates to those who had less. Though it was illegal, she also provided abortions.

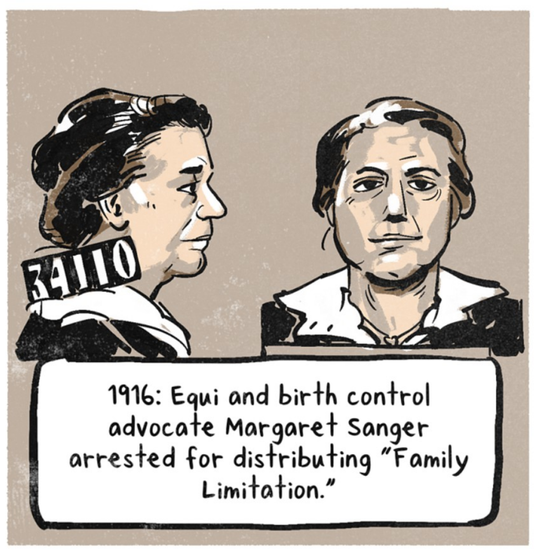
The great San Francisco earthquake and fire hit April 18, 1906, and the “Rose City” rushed to help. The day after the disaster struck, Portland doctors, nurses, and volunteers—and tons of donated medicine, food, clothing, and supplies—headed south on the so-called Doctor Train. Equi, the only woman physician in the group, was appointed head of obstetrics at the US Army General Hospital in the Presidio. Twenty-three children were born in what came to be called the “Oregon Ward,” and the army gave Equi a medal and commendation.



On June 22, 1907, Equi and her partner, Harriet Speckart, took second place in the carriage-and-pair category of the Grand Floral Parade, an event during Portland’s first Rose Carnival and Fiesta. In 1915, the couple adopted a three-week-old girl, Mary Jr., who called Equi “Da” (for “Doc”) and Speckart “Ma.” At sixteen, Mary became Oregon’s youngest woman pilot.

A leader for women’s suffrage, Equi was among the first women in the state to register to vote and to serve jury duty. Like many Portlanders of her era, she supported fair wages, family planning, education, and other progressive causes. However, Equi’s activism took a radical turn in 1913.

When she noticed former patients among striking women cannery workers on Portland’s east side, she heeded their pleas for help. Her speech calling workers to join the strike led Equi to join in picket lines and scuffles with police—and arrests. Equi went on to support more causes (and serve more jail time).



Portland celebrated National Preparedness Day with the largest parade in city history. In protest, Equi decorated her car with a US flag and an antiwar banner, snuck into the parade, and was attacked by participants—then arrested. Later that month, Equi and activist Margaret Sanger were arrested for selling copies of *Family Limitation,* a pamphlet about birth control that Equi helped edit. But it was her fervent antiwar speeches that landed Equi in prison for ten months under the 1918 Sedition Act. She was later pardoned by Franklin D. Roosevelt.

"I'm going to speak where and when I wish. No man will stop me."

—Marie Equi

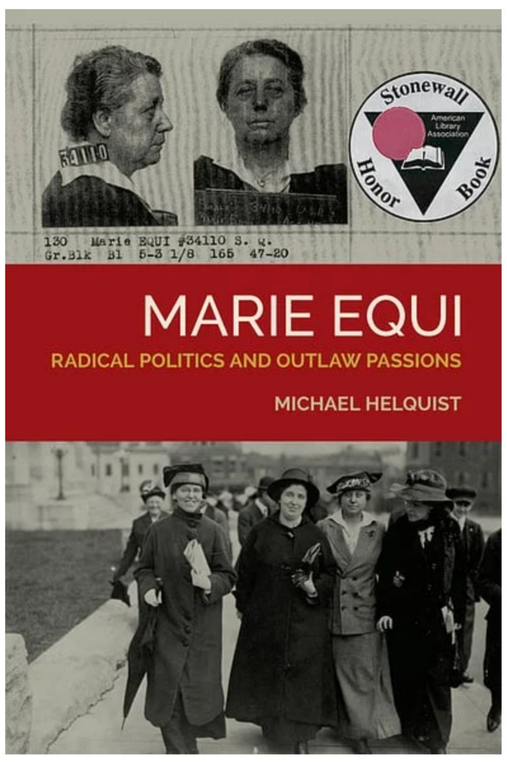
When Equi died in 1952, the Portland Longshoremen's Union passed a resolution declaring her an "outstanding fighter" who "braved personal danger and hardships to preserve peace, freedom of speech, and the right of labor to organize." In 2019, a bronze plaque celebrating Equi was added to San Francisco's Rainbow Honor Walk. A mural installed in the UO's Erb Memorial Union in 2023 features a portrait of Equi.

Want to celebrate a Mighty Woman of the University of Oregon? Send us your submission before Women's History Month in March.

Ed Dorsch, BA '94, MA, '99 is a staff writer for University Communications.

Audra McNamee, BS '22 (mathematics and computer science), is a nonfiction cartoonist living in Portland, Oregon. To learn more, visit audmcname.com.

Special thanks to Michael Helquist, a San Francisco author, historian, and journalist who generously provided consultation for this story. To learn more about Equi's extraordinary life and Portland's Progressive Era, read his book, *Marie Equi, Radical Politics and Outlaw Passions*.



POLITICS & SOCIETY

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From Arafat to the Dalai Lama, Alum Shielded Leaders

Cam Burks, BS ’96, put himself in harm’s way as a special agent for the US and global dignitaries

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Anita Hill sees Peril and Promise for Feminism

Anita Hill visits May 9 to lecture in conjunction with fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the Center for the Study of Women in Society

POLITICS & SOCIETY

Five Faculty Members on the Women Who Move Them

The Center for the Study of Women in Society supports inspiring faculty members. But who inspires them?

University Communications
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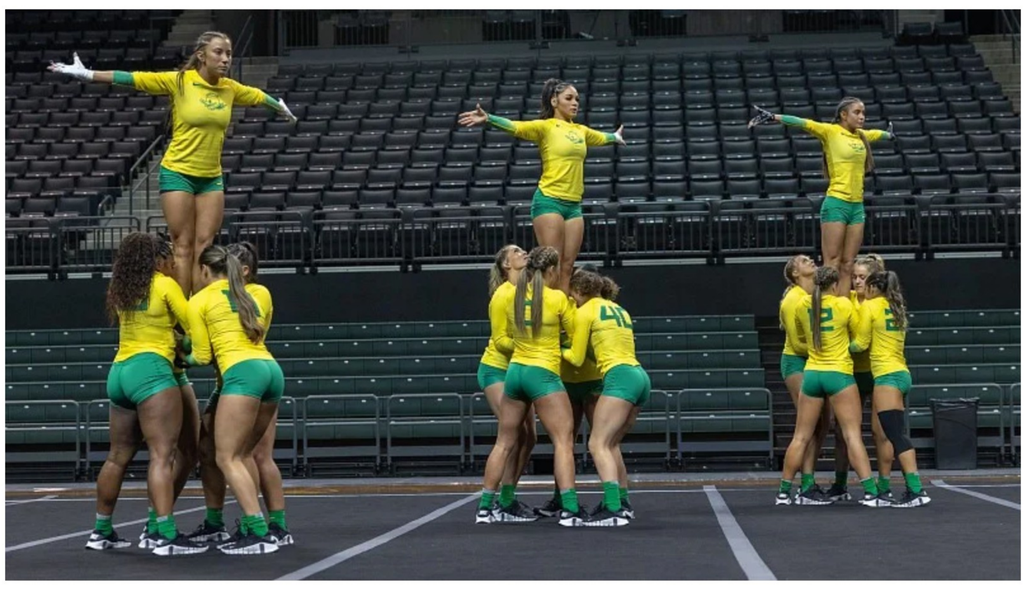


WINTER 2024

Readers Celebrate Mighty Women of Oregon

For the winter issue—Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon—readers answer the call for outstanding teachers, mentors, and icons

By *Oregon Quarterly* staff • Photo of UO Women's Acrobatics and Tumbling by Molly McPherson • February 2, 2024

The winter 2024 issue of *Oregon Quarterly* celebrates The Mighty Women of Mighty Oregon: faculty, staff, students, and alumni who are leaders and legends in their fields. OQ asked readers to share their stories of a Mighty Woman of Oregon—a teacher, mentor, friend, fellow student, or cultural icon. Submissions are compiled below and will be published with Women's History Month in March.

Celebrate a Mighty Woman of Oregon

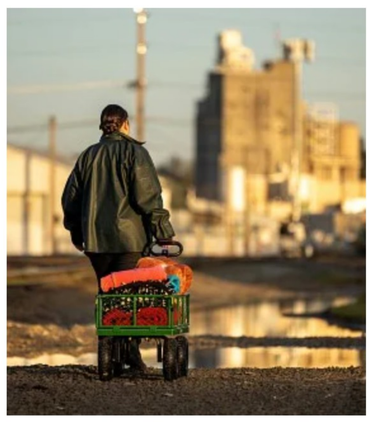
Joan Acker: sociologist was challenging but fun
Kirsten Agard: leading the way in business and equity
Simone Anter: clean water champion prioritizes indigenous peoples
Exine Bailey: a caring music mentor
Madison Beine: lifting students, pushing herself, strengthening the UO
Alaina Burgess: inspirational in TV and in dance
Bettina Cornwell: service to the university, excellence in the field
Ann Craig: museum expert prioritizes the public
Donna Davis: a leader in helping people through immersive media
Kerry Frazee: a tireless devotion to student well-being
Mabel Ruth Klockars Garner: museum leader embraced Asian art
Sally Garner: a steady force in the journalism school
Monika Graf: golfer tops leaderboard as consultant, mentor
Margaret Hallock: skilled in economics, negotiations . . . and softball
Megan Henry: an architecture student building up her peers
Teresa Hernández: educator and advocate inspires others to speak up for justice
Sabrina Ionescu: breaking records, setting trends, championing kids
Rayna Jackson: innovative leadership and service to Eugene
Sarah Koski: a hero for marginalized communities
Chandra LeGue: environmental advocate
Jasmine Lu: traveling the globe, improving lives
Denyse McGriff: Oregon City mayor breaks barriers
Deb Morrison: lifting the School of Journalism and Communication to the national stage
Maurine Neuberger: a trailblazer in Congress
Julianne Newton: wise counsel delivered with calm and inspiration
Ellen Peters: communicating science to the rest of us
Melynda Retallack: a champion for green building
Carol Scherer: Duck took flight with first women USAF pilots
Ellen Schmidt-Devlin: track star sets the pace in sports product industry
Ashley Schroeder: an inspiring beach volleyball trailblazer
Kathie Stanley: an exemplar for career women
Jean Babcock Stoess: feminist, author, mother, and county commissioner
Lauretta Padilla Stuart: immigrant's successes warrant headlines
Nadia Telsey: "Every woman who has embraced who they really are"
Guppy Uppal: a student leader in athletics
Golda Wickham: warm and caring, she made a difference for women students
Charity Woodrum: physics grad joins NASA's Webb Space Telescope team

Alaina Burgess: inspirational in TV and in dance

After graduating with a journalism degree from U of O in 2006, Alaina began her career in local television at KOBI-TV in Medford. Two years later, she returned to Eugene for an opportunity at KLSR-TV. Over the past fifteen years she's worked there in sales, marketing, programming, and then eventually as national sales manager. In 2022, KLSR was sold to Cox Enterprises, and she was promoted to station manager, overseeing all station operations. Alaina is also a fitness dance instructor in Eugene and is grateful for the chance to inspire other women to dance their way to better health and well-being.

Teresa Burgess
Bakersfield, California

Sarah Koski: a hero for marginalized communities



One of Koski's projects focuses on identity and how street advocacy is, she says, a "faceless position" (photo: Dominick Barbero Photography)

Sarah's experiences at the University of Oregon's Clark Honors College led to a subsequent career advocating for marginalized communities. Several female professors and mentors at the UO shaped Sarah's path, leading her to work in politics, fundraising, and nonprofit leadership. More recently, Sarah has focused on serving the unhoused community in Eugene through case management roles and new initiatives at Lane Transit District. She is the winner of the 2024 Oregon Commission for Women Emerging Leader award.

Megan McKinney
Eugene, Oregon

Teresa Hernández: educator and advocate inspires others to speak up for justice

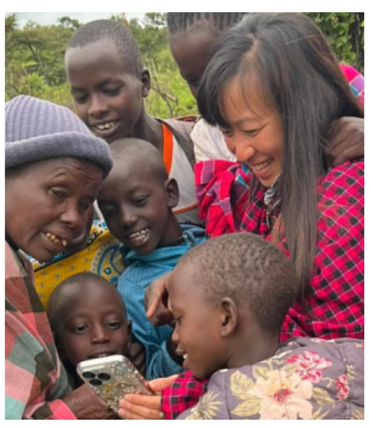
Dr. Hernández is an outstanding educator, advocate, mentor, mother, partner, and friend. She cares deeply about supporting her students, which is reflected by the memories the students share and cherish of their amazing time taking Dr. Hernández's class. Willamette University is extremely fortunate to have such an incredible professor.

Dr. Hernández has been not only an invaluable mentor for marginalized communities, but a role model in terms of advocating for equity, diversity, belonging, and inclusion. Many have found strength in speaking up for justice and equity by observing and having insightful conversations with Dr. Hernández. While it hasn't always been easy to navigate these efforts, especially in predominantly White institutions, Dr. Hernández has continued to push forward and find communities that work together with her to create safer spaces.

Vivian Schmolke, BA '16, MA '19 (English)
Eugene, Oregon

Jasmine Lu: traveling the globe, improving lives

Jasmine is a woman of the world. Before attending the UO, she lived abroad. While her current home is the San Francisco area, she continues to travel. Most recently, she has traveled to Kenya, where she was inspired to raise money to build washrooms for a Maasai village, completing fundraising and construction in less than 3 months. Jasmine inspires me for her love of world cultures, and now she inspires me with her work to improve the lives of others!



James Chang
Eugene, Oregon

Bettina Cornwell: service to the university, excellence in the field

Author, powerhouse researcher, and international sponsorship expert, Bettina Cornwell is also a thoughtful and caring colleague—always going the extra mile to make sure all voices at the table are heard. Bettina brings her absolute best to every project she is a part of, and there are many. She has served students and the Lundquist College of Business in multiple capacities, including the Faculty and Tenure Promotion Committee, search committees for our dean and provost, and work on the Senate University Library Committee. In July, she published a book with colleague Steffen Jahn, Concise Introduction to Sport Marketing, and regularly collaborates with current and former students, as well as academics around the world. On the personal side, Bettina has admirable relationships with her young adult children, students, and colleagues. She makes "Mom of Three" look very, very good. One of Bettina's areas of study is influence—and I must say hers has been profound on me.

AnneMarie Knepper-Sjoblom, BA '05 (news editorial)
Eugene, Oregon

Guppy Uppal: a student leader in athletics

Guppy is an exceptional leader in college athletics, particularly as a student leader in the UO athletics program. She helped the program post-COVID, dedicating significant time to ensure her peers gain valuable experiences. As a football operations intern and part-time director of operations for acrobatics and tumbling, she showcases determination and work ethic in a competitive field. What sets her apart is her ability to balance professional success with two part-time jobs on campus while excelling academically. Her role as a mentor reflects her generous spirit, actively creating opportunities for others. In essence, she is a true leader and inspiration, with grit, determination, and

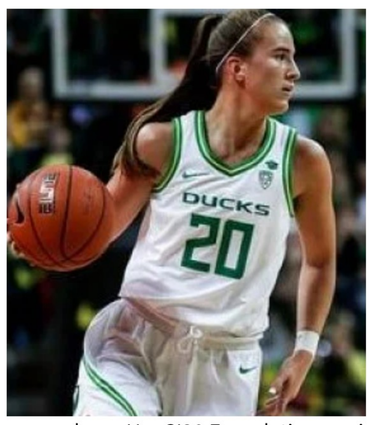
commitment to excellence, leaving a lasting impact on the college athletics community.

Cody Chase
Eugene, Oregon

Jean Babcock Stoess: feminist, author, mother, county commissioner

For many women in the 1950s and 1960s, facing the obstacles of financing a higher education with no family support would have been too much. But Jean Babcock Stoess did. She went on to be a writer, author, editor, publicist, elected public official, board member, election monitor, mother, and grandmother. Jean's husband of more than 60 years, Al, and one of their children, Caryn, described how. "She was an achiever," Caryn said. "Focused, service-oriented, and a proud feminist. She spent a lot of time proving to men she was their equal." It seemed Jean was destined for higher education, but she did not have the support of her family in that goal. She would have to pause her degree-seeking twice—both times to work full time—finishing in six years. "And she got her graduate degree—sometimes bringing me to class with a coloring book when childcare wasn't available," Caryn said. Al described how Jean also was the publicity chair for several schools and nonprofits, including the Sierra Club, Nevada Environmental Education Council, and Nevada humanities projects. In 1977, she was appointed as the first woman county commissioner in Washoe County and became the first elected female county commissioner shortly thereafter.

AnneMarie Knepper-Sjoblom, BA '05 (news editorial)
Eugene, Oregon



Sabrina Ionescu: breaking records, setting trends, championing kids

Of all the great UO athletes, man or woman, Sab may be the mightiest. Her records speak for themselves. As a collegiate athlete, she is the NCAA all-time leader in career triple-doubles and the only NCAA Division I basketball player to record 2,000 points, 1,000 assists, and 1,000 rebounds in a career. In the pros, she scored the first 30-point triple-double in WNBA history, and her 37 points in the 2023 WNBA three-point contest was the highest by a player in either top pro league. Her partnership with Nike has showcased her influence—Nike's Sabrina 1 shoe, which she helped design, is a hit among WNBA and NBA players. And she's become a champion for athletes everywhere. Her SI20 Foundation equips youth from all backgrounds and skill levels with equitable access to sports to create connections and communities that can enrich lives. As the late Kobe Bryant said, "she's not afraid of the moment. She embraces it."

Andrew Elliott
Cottage Grove, Oregon

Madison Beine: lifting students, pushing herself, strengthening the UO

Madison Beine is an incredible mentor and supervisor. As students who have worked under her in multiple leadership roles over the last year we are continuously amazed by and appreciative of her dedication, skills, expertise, and ability to uplift others. Madison pushes us to be better people and leaders while acknowledging our unique abilities and expertise which makes us more confident in ourselves. Furthermore she is very involved in the UO community as she is the coordinator for orientation and transition programs; her work and care impacts the entire incoming student body in some capacity. Madison also is continuously working to better herself, her staff, and the programs she supports by being involved in multiple committees and development programs both at the UO and within the field of orientation, transition, and retention. It is an honor to work with Madison and she deserves to be celebrated today and every day!

Hannah Shriver
Eugene, Oregon

Sally Garner: a steady force keeps the journalism school on track

Sally has played a pivotal role within the SOJC. She has been here for over 23 years now and has led the advising team to be an award-winning and admirable team on campus. She takes on challenging tasks to keep the SOJC functioning and progressing in a way that most people have no idea about. Sally approaches her work with a quiet love for the SOJC that she doesn't voice often or loudly, but it guides her to be this consistent force within the school to keep things running smoothly and effectively. Most importantly though, she advocates for her staff and for our students to give us the best possible experience.

Emily Henkelman
Eugene, Oregon

Donna Davis: a leader in helping people through immersive media

Donna has been ahead of the curve on the power of immersive media to help people form communities, communicate ideas, and invite empathy. She founded the Oregon Reality Lab at the School of Journalism & Communication in Portland—an innovative lab for teaching and research—and created the new Immersive Media Communication master's program, the first of its kind in the country.

Regina Lawrence
Portland, Oregon

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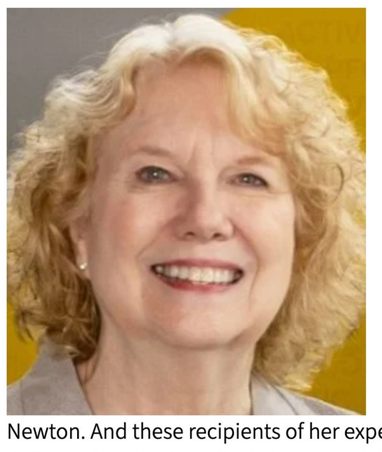

Julianne Newton: wise counsel delivered with calm and inspiration

Julianne Newton is a UO visual communication professor, doctoral program director, and past SOJC associate dean and interim dean. But much more than her motivational and efficient work in those vital roles is the extraordinary inspiration she brings to campus. With the soft lilt of her residual Southern accent, she exudes calm into the most stressful academe crises. That immediate tone is comforting, but of lasting value are the experiential-based solutions she inevitably brings to problems, both the trivial and the consequential. Time and again staff, students and faculty benefit substantively from the counsel they receive meeting with Professor Newton. And these recipients of her expertise invariably leave her office breathing easier and often even smiling. Julianne Newton is a Mighty Woman of Oregon.

Peter Laufer
Eugene, Oregon

Rayna Jackson: innovative leadership and service to Eugene

Rayna Jackson is proof positive that Mighty Oregon women start right here in Eugene. Growing up in a family of south Eugene activists and strong community voices, Jackson was destined to be a leader. After graduating from the University of Oregon in 2004 with a degree in Romance languages, she found her calling in communication and invested leadership. After a few years in Los Angeles, she reconnected with the university as a volunteer with the UO Black Alumni Network. Her engagement led to her return to Oregon, and now she's back in her hometown to lead and serve. Jackson is the senior director of Advancement communications for the university and has won the team Advancement Innovation Award twice in the last four years. Her colleagues acknowledge her vision, innovative approaches to team-building, and leadership in growing a new communications team. Her work in the community includes sitting on the City of Eugene Budget Committee, and previously on the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board. She's married to an active Ducks alum and their two kids are green-and-yellow fans in every way. Rayna's energy and enthusiasm are her hallmarks and I'm fortunate to call her my friend and coconspirator to make the world better.

Deb Morrison
Eugene, Oregon

Golda Wickham: she made a difference for women students

As dean of women, Golda looked very stern and severe, but there was a warm and caring woman underneath. She took time to listen to students who approached, and when trouble was apparent, Dean Wickham had a special fund to help—new books, recommending who to see, an appropriate suit for an interview, a dressy gown for something important. She made a difference.

Eleanor Marie Saunders Mueller, BA '64 (Clark Honors College, history), MA '65 (interdisciplinary studies)
Salem, Oregon

Nadia Telsey: "Every woman who has embraced who they really are"

"I admire all the unseen and unacknowledged women who have embraced who they really are despite messages everywhere about their lack of worth; every woman who has gone after her dreams. My heroes are the women who hold families together at great cost, who do the underappreciated work that keeps societies functioning; the women who have visions for bettering the world and then make those happen."

Nadia Telsey
Eugene, Oregon

Monika "Moni" Graf: golfer tops leaderboard as consultant, mentor

Monika "Moni" Graf attended the UO from 2007 to 2011. She played on the women's golf team and was heavily involved in the Student Athlete Advisory Council at UO and the Pac-12 while simultaneously earning degrees in business administration and applied mathematics. Since graduating from the UO, Moni has led a successful career in college athletics, consulting, and business management. She owns her own consulting practice and currently works to bring emerging technologies to market across a myriad of industries from fintech to healthcare. On top of all that Moni is an amazing partner, mother of two mighty young girls, and still finds time to mentor current UO student athletes as they embark on their professional and life journeys post-college.

Rich Breuner, BS '11 (business administration)
Bend, Oregon

Maurine Neuberger: a trailblazer in Congress

Only woman from Oregon elected to the US Senate. Feminist, consumer advocate, great human being. She advocated for consumer and health issues and sponsored one of the first bills requiring warning labels on cigarettes.

Kate Marquez
Klamath Falls, Oregon

Photo: Marion S. Trikosko

Deb Morrison: lifting the School of Journalism and Communication

Professor Morrison has been transformational in shaping the School of Journalism and Communication. As director of advertising, she built an all-star group of faculty and put the school on the national stage. In her current role as associate dean, she is completely reshaping the curriculum (a year-long process) to make the school as a whole one of the best and most innovative in the nation. It would be impossible to overstate her importance and the legacy she is building.

Steven Asbury, BS ’97 (news editorial)
Eugene, Oregon

Photo: Henry Amman, BA ’19 (journalism: advertising)

Charity Woodrum: physics grad joins NASA’s Webb Space Telescope team

I met Charity as an undergrad who had just returned from a NASA internship, and I was going to write about her experience. She was the first in her family to graduate high school. She’s also overcome unimaginable adversity—losing her son and husband in a terrible tragedy at the coast. She went on to grad school and recently landed a dream job with NASA working on the Webb Space Telescope. It would take 1,000 words to tell her inspiring story.

Jim Murez
Eugene, Oregon

Woodrum is the subject of a new documentary, *Space, Hope and Charity*. For more on her:

Stellar Student
UO Alumna Part of Webb Telescope Team

Simone Anter: clean water champion prioritizes indigenous peoples

As a Hanford program director and staff attorney at Columbia Riverkeeper, Simone Anter lends invaluable legal support to Columbia Riverkeeper’s Clean Water Act enforcement actions and campaigns. She leads our work with Yakama Nation to support increased public engagement in Hanford Nuclear Site cleanup. She also engages community members that care deeply about fighting climate change to support a just transition and avoid disproportionately burdening Indigenous people and Tribal Nations with the costs of renewable energy.

Liz Terhaar, BA ’07 (Spanish, magazine)
Hood River, Oregon

Kerry Frazee: a tireless devotion to student well-being

Kerry Frazee earned her PhD in prevention science from the UO College of Education in 2020 and has dedicated her career to the prevention of harm to students. Kerry previously served as the director of prevention services at the UO, where she designed programs for preventing sexual violence and the abuse of alcohol and other drugs. She currently works in Eugene School District 4J, supporting student mental health initiatives and leading the district’s efforts in suicide prevention. Her passion for the well-being of kids and their families has substantively improved the lives of those in the Eugene community during a time when it’s desperately needed. Kerry Frazee has left a legacy of care and support at the University of Oregon and she continues to make a mighty impact on the Eugene community.

Lauren Miller Stanfield
Eugene, Oregon

Denyse McGriff: Oregon City mayor breaks barriers

McGriff (right) with Governor Tina Kotek (courtesy Denyse McGriff)

Denyse has been a community activist for most of her life and career. Involvement in the community is important to her and she has worked tirelessly to enable a variety of voices to be heard. In 2019, Denyse was elected to the Oregon City Commission, the first person of color to serve in the city’s history. In August 2022, she was elected the first Black mayor of Oregon City to serve out an unexpired term & reelected to a 4-year term in November 2022. Denyse is currently one of three African American mayors—and the only African American mayor who is female—in the state of Oregon. During her time as mayor, she has worked to represent the community by attending Pride events, Indigenous Peoples Day, speaking at schools, greeting sister city dignitaries from Japan, visiting seniors, and participating in commemorative 9-11 events. This has prompted more than one resident to say, “Our mayor is everywhere!”

Julie Rawls
Portland, Oregon

Carol Scherer: Duck took flight with first women USAF pilots

Carol was a pioneer in US Air Force military aviation. At the U of O she was an active member of the WebFoot Sport Parachutists. A true pioneer, she was selected to be one of the first women to train to become a pilot in the USAF. The test program for pilots began with ten women on August 26, 1976, in San Antonio, Texas. They joined 39 male colleagues for the 48-week training course. Those 10 women are honored with their uniforms on display in the USAF museum in Dayton, Ohio. Carol went on to fly for the USAF for 12 Years and then to fly for American Airlines. There was a great deal of pressure on these first 10 women aviation candidates to succeed and Carol did just that.

Mike Stewart, BEd ’76 (elementary education), MEd ’78 (curriculum and instruction)
Oregon City, Oregon

Kathie Stanley: an exemplar for career women

Kathie Stanley earned her journalism degree from the School of Journalism and Communication. Kathie has dedicated her entire career to supporting UO students and mentoring the many professionals she has supervised or supported. Kathie has served as the associate vice president and chief of staff in the Division of Student Life for over a decade and does so much behind the scenes to ensure our students’ well-being and success is our top priority. Her work is done behind a curtain but the efforts are felt front stage. Kathie has left an undeniable impact and legacy, but most especially on the countless women she has mentored over the years. I know I speak for many of those women when I say she has changed the course of our lives for the better and supported us though finding our way as career women holding several identities. Kathie models what it means to be a strong mentor and could teach a master class on lifting up other women.

Lauren Miller Stanfield
Eugene, Oregon

Ellen Schmidt-Devlin: track star sets the pace in sports product industry

I recently met Ellen Schmidt-Devlin, cofounder and executive director of the UO Sports Product Management program in Portland. Her accomplishments at every stage of her life are truly impressive, yet she is approachable and down-to-earth. Schmidt-Devlin earned her bachelor’s degree and MBA from the UO. As an undergraduate, she ran cross country, met legendary coach Bill Bowerman, and worked in his innovation lab. That led to a 27-year career at Nike, where she served in leadership positions throughout Asia and the US. After retiring from Nike, she returned to the UO to complete her MBA. She also produced *We Grew Wings*, a documentary on the legacy of women’s track and field at the UO. Always striving to learn and do more, Schmidt-Devlin cofounded the UO Sports Product Management program in 2015, and she earned her PhD in building sustainable systems from Case Western Reserve University in 2020.

Sherri Buri McDonald
Eugene, Oregon

Melynda Retallack: a champion for green building

Melynda earned a bachelor of architecture with a minor in environmental studies at the University of Oregon and then moved to San Francisco to develop affordable housing and complete school renovations around the Bay Area. Mel is a principal and owner at Ink:built Architecture, a women-owned architecture and development company. She views each project as an opportunity to demonstrate how buildings can have a restorative effect on our environment and even start to alleviate issues of affordability and equity in housing. She is a licensed architect in Oregon and Washington and a LEED AP BD&C with over 25 years of experience in architecture and real estate development. She currently serves as chair of the board of directors for Camp Fire Columbia, a youth services organization, and board member for Camp Namanu, and is a past chair with the Green Building Interest Group, a subcommittee of the Cascadia Portland Collaborative of the US Green Building Council and International Living Futures Institute. Mel spends her free time backpacking and paddling in the northwest and tending her urban garden.

Anna McCormack, class of 1991
Enontekiö, Finland

Kirsten Agard: leading the way in business and equity

She is a first-generation college graduate who went to U of O for her undergrad with a baby in tow in 2008. During COVID-19 she adopted her sister's three boys and led her mortgage team at work through a very difficult time. She has reenrolled at the U of O for her executive MBA and is still killing it. She is the chair of the Beaverton Downtown Association and on the board of Adelante Mujeres. She recently created a new LGBTQIA2+ event called Beyond Labels in Beaverton to celebrate and increase visibility to the community. She is always pushing to be better, supporting others, and is an inspiration.

Monica Irvin, BS '07 (business administration)
Napa, California

Megan Henry: an architecture student building up her peers

Megan Henry is a dedicated third-year architecture student. She wants to design low-income housing for communities in the Willamette Valley. She has started a study group that meets weekly to help other architecture students with required classes. When not in class, she likes to attend football and women's basketball games, visit her family, and build Lego. Megan is an inspiration because of how she is committed to helping others and making sure her peers are successful.

Sarah Henry
Salem, Oregon

Joan Acker: sociologist was challenging but fun

I took a couple classes with Joan; she was an excellent teacher, her feminist classes were challenging, fun, original. I was in my thirties, and she took a particular interest in this "old" student and my life experiences. A true inspiration and a wonderful colleague to the other sociology faculty, who all admired her.

Katherine Black, BS '83 (sociology)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Ashley Schroeder: an inspiring beach volleyball trailblazer

Ashley Schroeder is currently a University of Oregon senior who has participated every year on the beach volleyball team. She has played in every game since her freshman year. She has a positive attitude and has been an inspiration to all of the younger women on the team. She has been a trailblazer, standing up for equitable conditions and always participating with a good attitude.

Lucy George
Huntington Beach, California

Julie Bayer
Dallas, Texas

Ann Craig: museum expert prioritizes the public

Ann Craig is associate director at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History. She earned two degrees from the University of Oregon: a BA in history and Asian studies (2000) and an MA in arts management with a focus on museum studies (2006). Ann leads a talented team of educators, artists, and storytellers who have helped develop the museum's dynamic model for community engagement and inclusivity. Ann is interested in increasing scientific literacy, telling more truthful historical narratives, and helping students connect to their passions. She is coauthor of *Exhibit Makeovers: A Do-It-Yourself Workbook for Small Museums, second edition*.

Lexie Briggs
Eugene, Oregon

Mabel Ruth Klockars Garner: museum leader embraced Asian art

She was acting director, circa 1949–54, of the University of Oregon Museum of Art [today, the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art] and traveled with founder Gertrude Bass Warner, the woman who developed the museum's Asian art collection, on several trips to Asia. As a woman in the field of art museum directors, she was a pioneer. She put Oregon on the map in the Asian art world.

Don Boileau, MA '65, PhD '72 (speech: rhetoric and communication)
Ashburn, Virginia

Lauretta Padilla Stuart: immigrant's successes warrant headlines

She is my lovely, beautiful wife and a former news editor, copy desk chief, and special projects editor at the Courier-Post of Cherry Hill, New Jersey. She is a 1969 graduate of the School of Journalism and Communication of the University of Oregon. She accomplished all of this while being a Philippines immigrant to the United States, where she became a naturalized United States citizen. My list can go on and on about her parents, her accomplishments, and her accomplished siblings. She is highly deserving of any recognition from the University of Oregon. And she loves and still follows the UO football team. Go Ducks!

Kenneth Stuart
Sewell, New Jersey

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Ellen Peters: communicating science to the rest of us

Ellen Peters is a double Duck who earned a master's and PhD in psychology from the UO before she came back to teach at her alma mater in 2019. She now serves as the director of the School of Journalism and Communication's (SOJC) Center for Science Communication Research and is Philip H. Knight Chair and professor in both the SOJC and the psychology department.

Peters has made—and continues to make—her mark as a top researcher. Since her arrival, she has authored the book, *Innumeracy in the Wild*, and helped bring in more than $5.1 million in grants. Over the course of her career, she has won numerous awards and held many notable titles, including chair of the FDA's risk communication advisory committee. Just as important, she has engaged hundreds of students (and counting) in the sciences of risk, decision-making, and science communication.

Andra Brichacek Roe
Eugene, Oregon

Chandra LeGue: environmental advocate

Chandra LeGue epitomizes the spirit of a Mighty Oregon Woman through her unwavering dedication to environmental conservation and advocacy. As the senior conservation advocate at Oregon Wild, Chandra has displayed exceptional leadership in protecting the state's precious natural resources. Her commitment extends beyond professional roles, evident in her influential book, *Oregon's Ancient Forests: A Hiking Guide*, showcasing a deep understanding of the region's ecosystems. An alumna of the University of Oregon, Chandra continues to inspire through education and activism.

Shannon Rose-Peterson
Eugene, Oregon

Photo: Gary Hale

Exine Bailey: a caring music mentor

A strong-minded but compassionate vocal music teacher in the School of Music. I had her as a vocal coach in 1974–75. As a transfer student I had lost my way in my chosen major of music. I was falling through the cracks and not receiving any guidance from faculty as to how to fit in. Exine took me under her wing, even though her schedule was full. She set me back on my feet and helped me navigate the culture and requirements of the School of Music. She rekindled my confidence that I could accomplish the things I was interested in. I heard the same story over and over again from her students at her memorial. She was a strong and compassionate woman who helped develop other women and men. She was devoted to her students and to the community at-large.

Cynthia Clague, BMus '75 (music education)
Eugene, Oregon

Margaret Hallock: skilled in economics, negotiations . . . and softball

She was brilliant, dedicated, so very helpful in negotiations and day-to-day functioning for the SEIU Local 503 staff. Economics was a man's world, yet she was a star in the field, completely dedicated to using economics to empower women and workers, and an inspiration to many of us somewhat younger women. She later founded the Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics. She was also a very good softball player, as I recall!

Katherine Black, BS '83 (sociology)
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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How to Empower Yourself to Survive and Thrive | Oregon Quarterly
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WINTER 2024

How to Empower Yourself to Survive and Thrive

Former UO instructor authors book on self-defense and success in a sexist world

By Julia Moore and Holly Pruett • Photo courtesy the *Register-Guard* • February 26, 2024

4 min read

When Nadia Telsey walked into a New York thrift store one day fifty years ago to buy a pair of jeans, she didn't expect it to change her life. But she left the store "filled with self-hate," she wrote years later. An employee had touched her inappropriately while she was trying on jeans. She felt it was her fault.

Telsey has shared that experience, and what she did about it, with generations of students during decades of teaching self-defense in New York and Oregon, as well as in places as far away as Mongolia and Siberia. That includes seventeen years at the University of Oregon from 1990 to 2007, when Telsey was a frequent speaker in women's and gender studies and served as faculty advisor to a student-run service learning program.

The story is at the heart of *Get Empowered: A Practical Guide to Thrive, Heal, and Embrace Your Confidence in a Sexist World*, recently published by Telsey and coauthor Lauren R. Taylor, an author, speaker, and self-defense teacher.

The book is based on Empowerment Self-Defense, an innovative form of taking back control that stemmed from Telsey's experience in the thrift store. Empowerment Self-Defense affirms the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ people to be safe and to speak up for themselves. "It was a fundamental change in self-defense," Telsey remembers, "to give women the tools without judgment and shift responsibility for the assaults to the assailants."

"It's a groundbreaking approach," says UO sociology professor Jocelyn Hollander, who has studied Telsey's work. "Research shows women who have taken Empowerment Self-Defense are about 50 percent less likely to experience violence in the year following. It changes people's understanding of themselves."

A focus on martial arts and innovative self-defense

Nadia Telsey

Telsey joined a martial arts class after the thrift store attack. Soon she and other female classmates started a school of their own, bringing a feminist and anti-racist focus to their founding of Brooklyn Women's Martial Arts in 1974.

In this milieu, Telsey reflected on the shame and humiliation that lingered from that assault. She shared the incident with friends and discovered that many of them had similar stories and similar feelings of shame and guilt. Together they confronted the attacker and the store owner.

The mindset of self-assertion and holding the perpetrator accountable is as important as physical training, Telsey and her friends learned. The martial arts school they founded has become the Center for Anti-Violence Education, which teaches skills to understand, prevent, and heal from harassment and violence in all aspects of life.

Telsey and her martial arts colleagues saw gender-based violence as connected to other forms of violently enforced bias, including racism, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and homophobia. Their classes helped women address and heal from the bias they faced due to their socioeconomic class, body size, citizenship status, and physical and developmental disabilities. They took a stand with women of color who were disproportionately incarcerated for fighting back against attackers. Telsey began antibias community education programs that continue to this day.

Says Telsey: "I often find myself in the role of seeing an unaddressed need and helping to generate a response in the community."

Self-defense tools and shifting blame to the attacker

After moving to Eugene in 1981, Telsey worked with the Rape Crisis Network, the Oregon attorney general's sexual assault task force, and the UO. It was in her university classes that she documented her approach in a workbook, *Self-Defense from the Inside Out*. It has been distributed to thousands of students, empowering them and women around the world to stand up for themselves, understand the roots of gender-based violence, release self-blame, and heal from traumas.

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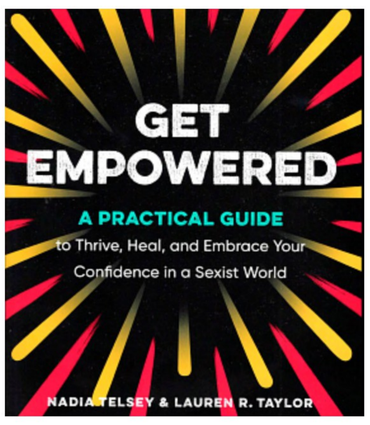

Now updated as *Get Empowered*, the stories, questions for reflection, and interactive exercises equip readers with skills to combat gender-based violence at work, home, and in social situations. The book gives the reader tools for dealing with a wide array of gender-based violence, impressing on victims that it's not their fault and that they can develop skills to stop verbal and physical attacks.

Get Empowered details the stages of assaults, the origin of gender-based violence, and how victims can shift blame from themselves to the perpetrator.

Telsey's teaching has reached those who witness attacks, as well. She developed "bystander upstander" intervention training to address the confusion and paralysis that keeps others from stepping in when witnessing harassment. A bystander who speaks up eliminates the misconception that they condone the harasser's actions, she says.

It's what Telsey learned to tell herself, as a young woman. Through finding her own voice, she has helped countless others experiencing gender-based violence to find theirs.

"We need to go to the person being hurt and acknowledge their pain and trauma," Telsey says. "Tell them, 'I saw that. You didn't deserve that.'"

Julia Moore, BA '90 (magazine), is a creative director, graphic designer, and copywriter in Eugene.

Holly Pruett was executive director of the Oregon Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence from 1988 to 1994.

Top photo Shaay Gallagher-Starr and her daughter, Ananda Gallagher-Starr, practice palm strikes and slapping at the Warrior Sisters self-defense class.

EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELLNESS

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Samantha Shune, an expert on aging, troubleshoots this problem of dementia

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Video: Nayantara Arora is the first UO woman to win the world's most prestigious international scholarship

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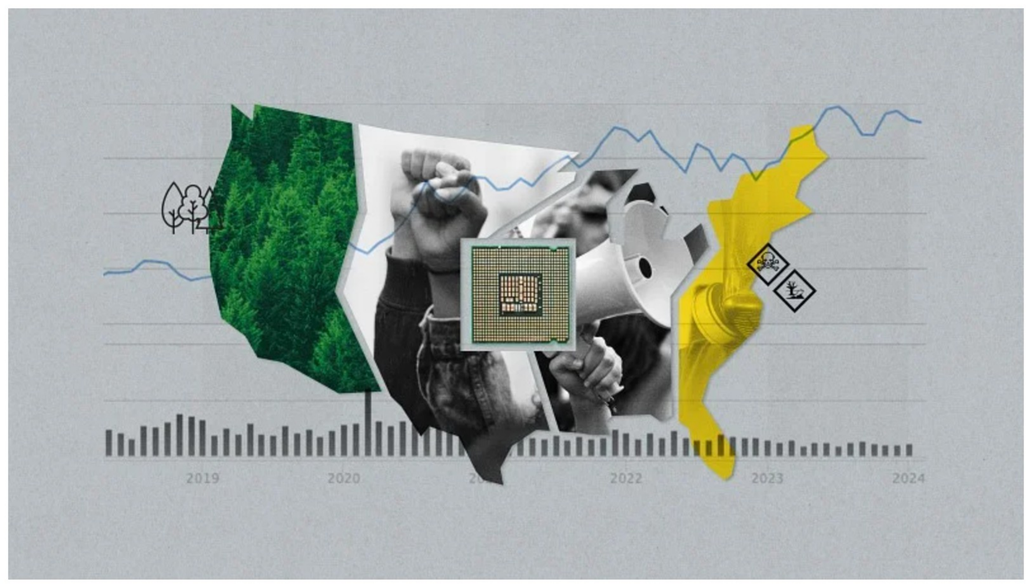

WINTER 2024

Four Ways US Chipmakers Can Learn from History

The past holds lessons regarding workplace conditions, labor rights, and the environment

By Adam Quinn • Illustration by Griffin Torrey, University Communications • February 26, 2024

4 min read

The federal government is ramping up domestic computer chip production, with roughly $106 billion in funding allocated by the Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors (CHIPS) and Science Act for semiconductor research and production. Meanwhile, states like Oregon are awarding land and hundreds of millions of dollars to chipmakers. According to Governor Kotek, these funds "lay the foundation for the next generation of innovation."

Adam Quinn

In an industry fixated on the next generation, are there lessons to be gleaned from *past* generations? In its late twentieth-century heyday, chip making in the US had its share of problems, including discrimination, pollution, and workplace injuries. Historical perspective may help avoid these issues in the future. Here are four lessons that history can teach us for making computer chips right this time:

1. Be proactive about chemical safety

Making computer chips requires intense chemicals. From the 1970s to '90s, US chip fabricators and surrounding communities saw scandals including toxic chemicals in chip factories injuring workers and eventually leaking into residential groundwater. Occupational health activists demanded the industry use only adequately researched chemicals, implement stringent waste handling and storage standards, and devote as much research to safety as efficiency. As a result of chemical pollution and activist pressure for federal oversight, Silicon Valley now has more EPA Superfund toxic cleanup sites than any other county in the US.

Activists helped pass safer regulations at the local and state levels by the 1990s. But then the industry started moving overseas in search of less regulated, cheaper labor. Now, alarm over chemical safety, carbon emissions, and water usage in chip making is coming back. As the industry returns—often to states without a long history of regulating chip chemicals—it will be important to pick up where twentieth-century activists left off and fight for greater transparency and safety.

2. Fight inequality

Chip making has a long history of racial and gender inequality. Women, immigrants, and people of color in the industry have experienced harassment and have often faced the most extreme chemical hazards for the lowest pay.

In 1984, Michael Eisenscher, an organizer with the United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America union, wrote a report on the state of Silicon Valley's rising electronics industry using state, federal, and industry data. The report noted unusually high workplace illness rates among electronics manufacturing workers, who were disproportionately people of color. Women tended to work in either these production roles or clerical positions that were similarly underpaid. Managers and engineers, who made more money for generally safer work, were disproportionately white and male.

This history of gender and racial inequality in the industry has not gone away. Compared to nationwide data from 1990, female, Black, and Hispanic workers today are even further underrepresented in the industry's workforce and overrepresented in its lowest-paying, most dangerous jobs, according to CHIPS Communities United, a new coalition of community organizations and labor unions seeking a more just chips industry.

3. Unionize

To the people experiencing these problems, unions were appealing. If workers had decision-making power over their working conditions, they could preempt chemical hazards and discrimination. But in the late twentieth century, unions were on the decline in the US and the chip industry was vehemently opposing workers' attempts to organize.

That may be changing. The labor movement is on the rise and union-busting is a harder sell these days. The time might be ripe for unionizing the chip industry, and workplace democracy might be essential for avoiding the problems of the past.

4. Prioritize people and the environment

The chip industry is driven by visions of infinite growth. Moore's Law, a famous standard for the industry, calls for persistent, exponential increases in the number of transistors on each chip. Meanwhile, our capitalist economy demands that semiconductor corporations' financial reports display ever-increasing profits.

Making computers equitably and sustainably will require a fundamental shift in these priorities. In 1999, the Trans-Atlantic Network for Clean Production reframed Moore's Law and called for exponentially increasing environmental and social justice benefits. At an international meeting, these computer activists agreed upon a new principle for the industry: "Each new generation of technical improvements in electronic products should include parallel and proportional improvements in environmental, health and safety as well as social justice attributes."

As the chip making industry is being revitalized in the US with hundreds of billions of dollars in public funding, it is time to start taking these ideas seriously and focus on the public good. Advancements in digital technology should not come at the cost of people and the environment.

Adam Quinn, a PhD candidate in history, is writing a dissertation on the environmental and labor history of computers. He is a dissertation fellow with the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Center for Environmental Futures, and the Just Futures Institute.

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

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Alum Ross West pens cli-fi collection with provocative questions but no easy answers

ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

The UO's First Black Woman Grad Brought Lasting Change

The legacy of Nellie Franklin—a Black student who was not permitted to live in a dorm—still resonates today

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