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AUTUMN 2017

QUARTERLY



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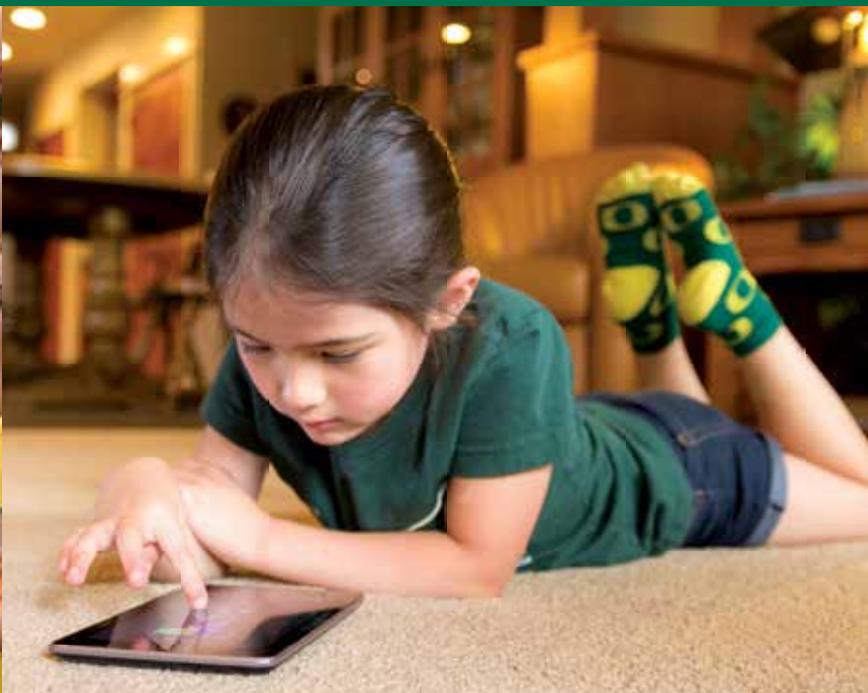
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lenges ranging from climate change to disease prevention. Also, the School of Journalism and Communication will be creating a media center for science and technology, with interdisciplinary faculty that will explore how scientific and technological solutions can be understood by broad audiences. We will also create endowed faculty positions, support programming for the future Black Cultural Center, and invest in an effort to embed faculty members from the College of Education into Oregon high schools to improve statewide educational outcomes.

If I am sure of one thing at this extraordinary time, it is that innovation and the power of big ideas can create new opportunities and turn seemingly intractable problems into lasting solutions. To that end, this edition of *Oregon Quarterly* celebrates faculty, alumni, and students who are blazing trails in research, innovation, and entrepreneurship. You'll meet five faculty leaders who share thought-provoking ideas for the future of autism research, obesity prevention, autonomous cars, the psychology of marketing, and the value of the liberal arts as preparation for the jobs of tomorrow.

We explore how the UO's earth sciences department is rising to leadership in the field, thanks in part to a \$10 million gift from Gwen and Chuck Lillis. You'll learn what new football coach Willie Taggart brings to the game and what motivated alumna Nancie Fadeley to fight political battles for women's equality in our state. After you read about computational chemist Chris Hendon's fascination with coffee, you may change the way you brew your morning joe. And we meet six Ducks from diverse backgrounds who demonstrate courage.

It is a wonderful time to be a Duck. I am ever-grateful to our alumni, supporters, friends, and campus community for their love of the University of Oregon. We are poised to make a significant impact together—leveraging to the maximum effect every gift, federal grant, tax dollar and tuition dollar—to make our campus, community, and world a better place.

Thank you, and Go, Ducks!

Michael H. Schill
President and Professor of Law

The Power of Big Ideas

The University of Oregon is once again bustling with students and the excitement of a new academic year. Every year holds promise, but this year there is a renewed sense of purpose and determination among members of our student body, faculty, and staff to take full advantage of our opportunity—as a public research university—to make a lasting impact on the world.

The social and political tensions of the last year stirred strong feelings throughout our campus community. People are concerned about the important issues that make headlines daily: immigration, racism, economic prosperity, climate change, health care, and world affairs. University campuses have long been the centers of debate over the society's thorniest issues and the places where solutions emerge. This is as it should be. I greatly value the UO's role in fostering vigorous discussion and solving pressing social issues through innovation and knowledge creation.

My job as president is to support, nourish, and invest in the most promising intellectual opportunities at the University of Oregon. That starts with ensuring every member of our

campus and alumni community understands they belong and have a place at the UO. Second, we have an unequivocal commitment to free expression—peaceful, nonviolent speech—that does not shut other speakers down. Robust discussion and debate is at the heart of higher education. Without the ability to say what we believe, even if those beliefs are upsetting or disagreeable to others, we might as well not have a university. Finally, my commitment is to ensure we pursue excellence in academics, research, and student experiences. This is how we will prepare our students to be problem solvers and leaders. This is how we will create innovations, discoveries, and solutions that make the world better.

* * *

Generous giving is helping us expand our impact. I recently announced that we have received a \$50 million gift from anonymous donors who have challenged me to use this funding to support excellence in our students, faculty, and researchers. I have identified for investment several interdisciplinary areas in which we have great potential for strength. This includes data science, a field that is essential to making sense of the vast amounts of information that can help us address chal-



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ILLUMINATING TOMORROW: FIVE BIG IDEAS

Faculty experts look into the future of urban design, collaborative science, optimizing experiences, obesity prevention, and careers.

BY CODY PINKSTON

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BEST FOOT FORWARD

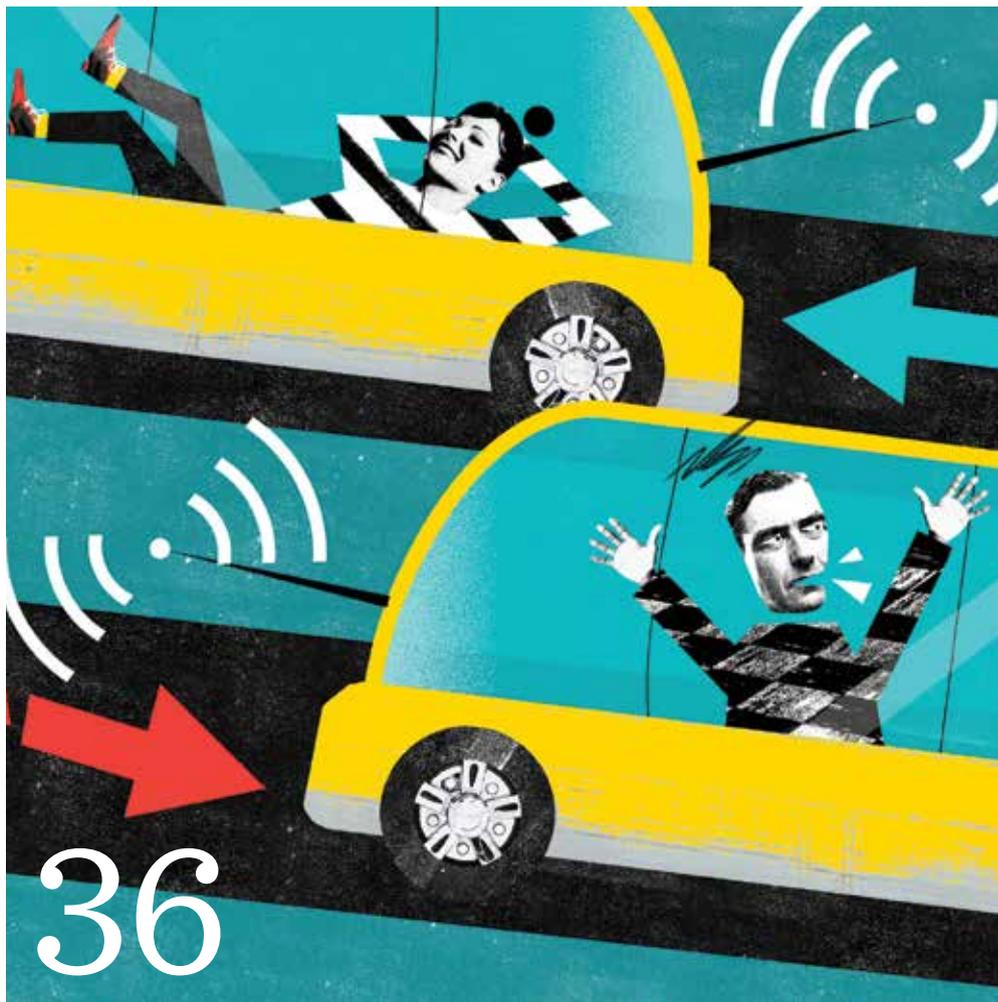
Alumnus rethinks the meaning of "canvas" at his artist-focused shoe company.

BY KELSEY SCHAGEMANN

ON THE COVER

Aaron Firestein, BA '08, turned doodles on a pair of canvas sneakers into an edgy footwear company with international reach. Photographed in his Chicago office, Firestein seeks boldness in his shoe designs—and he was more than happy to provide some artistic flourishes to our cover. Photograph by Anthony Tahlier.

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On the Duck Channels

From coach Willie Taggart to five faculty experts, from the “Vanport” graduate students delving into history to Nancie Fadeley, a woman who made it, this issue of *Oregon Quarterly* celebrates ideas and the Ducks with the determination to pursue them.

We’re proud to present to you the best of the UO in *Oregon Quarterly*. But if four times a year isn’t enough, you can learn more every day about the fascinating people, ideas, and discoveries coming out of Oregon on Around the O and the UO’s websites. Here are a few of our favorite recent stories. —GEORGE EVANO

HARD WORK AT THE SCHOOL OF FUNK

Audio and video sparks this story about students reconstructing Sly and the Family Stone’s “I Want to Take You Higher.” A new minor in audio production will take advantage of the top-notch facilities of the School of Music and Dance.

around.uoregon.edu/audio-production



around.uoregon.edu/content/schill-announces-interdisciplinary-data-science-initiative



NEW PROFESSORS HIRED FOR DATA SCIENCE INITIATIVE

How big is Big Data? Really big. In fact, eight new faculty members will be hired this year as part of the UO’s Presidential Initiative in Data Science, an interdisciplinary path to the future led by biology Professor Bill Cresko.



LATINO ROOTS, OREGON BRANCHES Follow a 56-year-old undergrad and his classmates as they create documentaries and discover different perspectives of the Latino experience in Oregon.

around.uoregon.edu/latino-roots

UO ACHIEVES \$695 MILLION IN FY 2017 FUNDRAISING

While the Knight family’s \$500 million gift for a new science campus made national headlines, 40,000 donors contributed gifts of every size to a record fundraising effort in fiscal year 2017. The contributions propelled the UO’s campaign past \$1.7 billion.

around.uoregon.edu/content/led-knight-gift-uo-achieves-record-695m-fundraising-year



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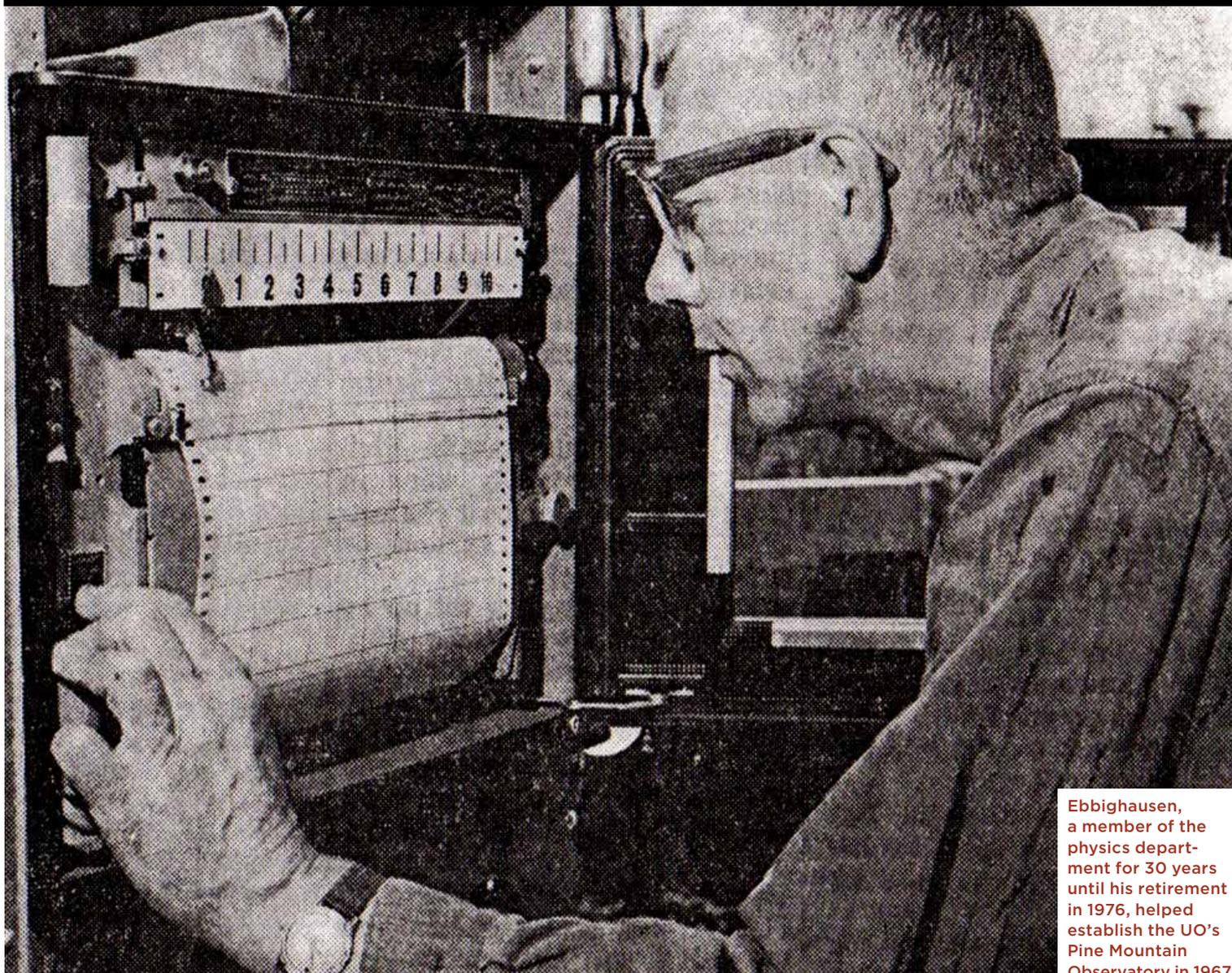
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Ebbighausen, a member of the physics department for 30 years until his retirement in 1976, helped establish the UO's Pine Mountain Observatory in 1967.



Caution: Physics Ahead

Page 57 of the Summer 2017 issue's "flashback" about the Pine Mountain Observatory reminded me of the late E. G. "Eb" Ebbighausen, who helped found the Pine Mountain site. A liberal-arts CSPA (community service and public affairs) major, I took his 100-sequence astronomy class my senior year on a lark. Besides a formidable research physicist, he was a wonderful teacher. "Your math in this course will be minimal," I recall him saying, "but watch out for the physics!" Wonderful fellow with great enthusiasm for the subject!

Greg Carlson, BA '71
Omaha, Nebraska

Freedom and the Facts

This is in response to the letter in the Summer 2017 issue from D. Rabjohn, BS '70, MS '71, titled "Freedom Fighters." I was at the UO in 1971 and never heard of any "scruffy malcontents" who were bused up from Berkeley and, according to Rabjohn, disrupted a classroom in economics, "shouting obscenities, throwing things, and creating absolute havoc."

Did the *Quarterly* do any fact-checking? Who was the professor? When did this incident occur? What did the campus police do after allegedly, according to Rabjohn, taking these malcontents into custody?

Rabjohn suggests that her classroom had "a number of Vietnam War veterans just back from defending our freedom and that of the South Vietnamese population abroad." Yes, there were many American troops fighting and dying, but they were not fighting for our freedom, or that of the South Vietnamese. For reference, read Stanley Karnow, who spoke at the UO, and wrote *Vietnam: A History*, published in 1983. In 1971 there was a lot going on in Southeast Asia, but to call our venture "fighting for our freedom" is not revisionist history, or alternate facts. It is quite simply not true.

Richard C. Cohan, JD '73
Seattle, Washington

Oregon Quarterly regrets that we did not fact-check the letter in question, which prompted several responses similar to the above.

Lessons from "Big Jim"

At the former Thomas A. Edison Grammar School in Bridgeport, Connecticut, my favorite text was a geography book that had a picture of Oregon in it. I can still see the McKenzie lava beds near the Sisters peaks. Imagine my surprise when I visited the beds with my best junior-high buddy and saw they were surrounded by beautiful Douglas fir trees. That sight led me eventually to "Big Jim" Stovall's geography class at the UO. At the time, the guys who had been in the war in Europe or the Pacific were still enrolled and sat in the front seats of his lecture hall in Condon. We kids sat in the back, absorbed by Jim's lectures that were largely a dialogue between him and the 25-year-old vets. The experience taught me that education itself was a participation in everyone else's lives.

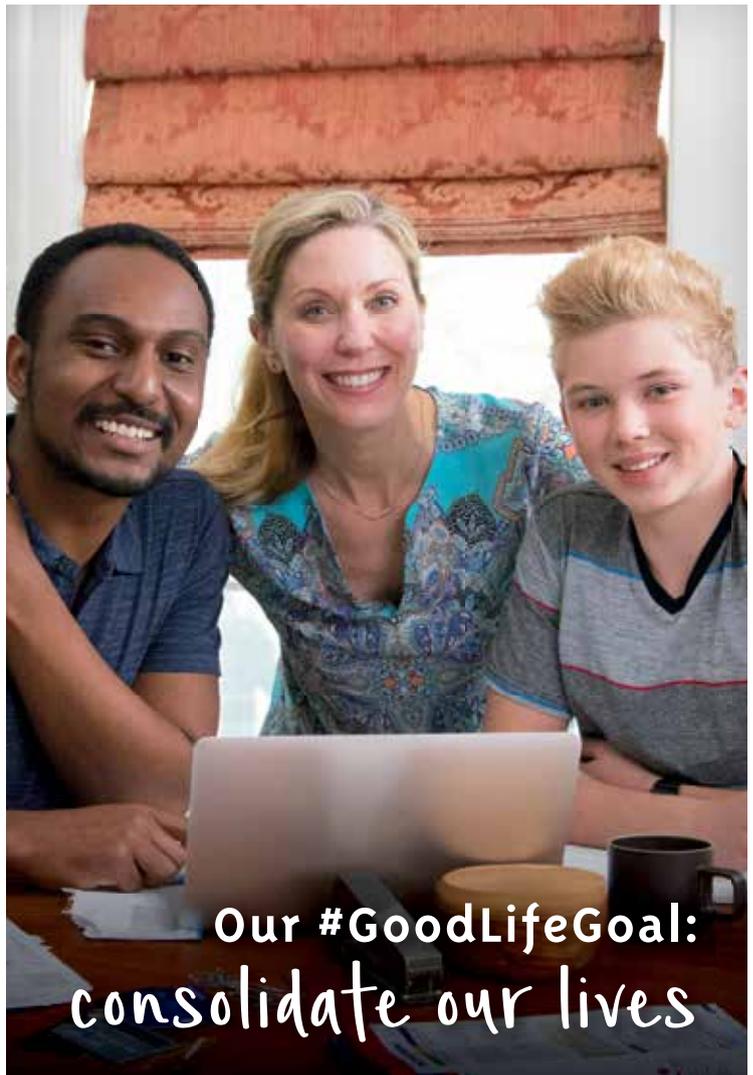
Jim Wilson, BS '52
Fairfield, California

Kudos to the Quarterly

I just want to compliment you on the look of *Oregon Quarterly*, as it looks amazing and fresh, new. I receive alumni magazines from Berkeley (so boring), Stanford, UCLA, San Francisco State and Oregon. I have always loved the design of UCLA magazines and now I am happy to add *Oregon Quarterly* to the list. Content, design are fantastic. Keep up the great work.

Michael P. Richards, BA '66
West Hollywood, California

We want to hear from you. Submit your letters at OregonQuarterly.com, by email to quarterly@uoregon.edu, or by mail to Editor, *Oregon Quarterly*, 5228 University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403-5228. You may also post comments online at OregonQuarterly.com. Published letters may be edited for brevity, clarity, and style.



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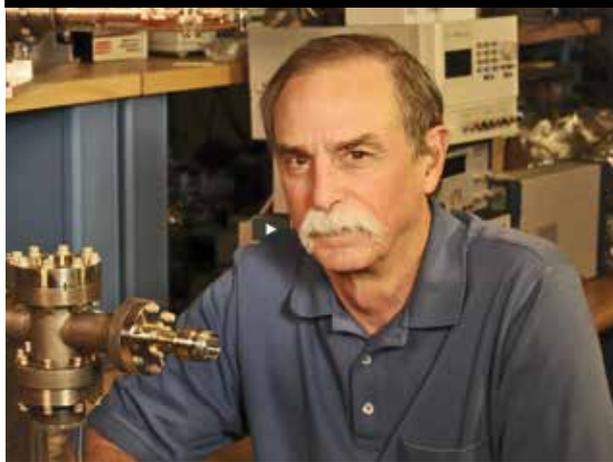
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intro



Classical Architecture

The Oregon Bach Festival just moved into its new home, but it's already a campus classic. Berwick Hall (just south of the MarAbel B. Frohnmayer Music Building) will serve the festival, the university, and the community. Featuring abundant natural wood and a performance hall with superb acoustics, the 10,000-square-foot building symbolizes architecture and music in perfect harmony. Longtime festival and university supporters Phyllis, BEd '56, and Andrew Berwick, BBA '55, gave \$6.5 million for the \$8.7 million project. Here, the Delgani String Quartet gives the hall a sound check.



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Nobelist Joins Faculty

Think that atomic clock on your bedside table is as accurate as anything can be? One of the UO's newest faculty members—a Nobel laureate—pioneered research that helped tweak the precision of timekeeping, and, as a result, has blazed a trail for revolutionizing computing.

A giant in the world of quantum physics, David Wineland joins the UO faculty in November. He shared the Nobel Prize in

Physics in 2012 for his role in capturing individual atoms in a vacuum, opening the possibility of turning them into quantum bits. These “qubits” can hold exponentially increased amounts of data, opening the way to quantum-based computers.

Wineland comes to the UO from the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, Colorado, and the University of Colorado at Boulder, where he worked since 1975.

While Wineland will have the opportunity to continue his research with the Oregon Center for Optical, Molecular, and Quantum Science (OMQ), his role will be more geared to mentoring students and young researchers in the UO's physics department.

“I'm very thrilled to have him among our physics faculty at the UO,” said Sofiane Merkouche, a graduate research fellow in the OMQ.

His group, which is led by Associate Professor Brian Smith, studies the fundamental properties of quantum states of light in the hope of using them to improve such things as communications and information security.

“We are setting up a new quantum optics lab, and I can't think of a more amazing opportunity than to have someone of David Wineland's caliber to offer his insight,” Merkouche said. “If anyone knows how to build a revolutionary experiment from the ground up, it's him.”

Wineland's presence also will mean the UO now may claim connections to three Nobel Prize winners: William P. Murphy, BS 1914 (biology), shared the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1934 for his research on liver therapies to treat anemia; and Walter Houser Brattain, BS '26 (physics), shared the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1956 for his work on semiconductors and transistors while a scientist for Bell Telephone Laboratories in New Jersey.

BUZZ ON THE BLOB

“Great reporting, period.” So said the judges of a short, investigative documentary by Zach Putnam, Richard Percy, and David MacKay—of the University of Oregon in Portland's multimedia journalism master's program—about lead poisoning in a Portland neighborhood. *The Kenton Lead Blob* won a national Edward R. Murrow Award for a comprehensive account that uses visual tools to tell a troubling tale.

LEGAL ASSIST

Two School of Law programs that serve the state are dreaming big, thanks to an anonymous donor's gift through the Oregon Community Foundation.

The philanthropist recently granted \$1.8 million to the Environmental and Natural Resources Law Center and the school's Nonprofit Clinic.

A \$1 million award supports expansion of research in the environmental law center, which informs and reshapes policy and legal issues in Oregon and nationwide on topics ranging from water resources to autonomous vehicles. Another \$800,000 fosters growth of the clinic, which brings students in law and conflict resolution together to develop working solutions for Oregon-based nonprofit clients.





Pictured, left to right: Chris Holloway, Kena Gomalo, Diamante Jamison, Ashley Campbell, Tristen Bellows, President Schill, Brianna Hayes, Dayja Curry, Interim Vice President for Student Life Kevin Marbury, and Joel Mbala-Nkanga.



COURTESY OF HARLEY EMERY

All the World's Her Stage

Senior Harley Emery didn't win the crown in last month's Miss America contest, but she's still going places.

Miss Oregon, an international studies and journalism major, has volunteered in Jordan and recently started a campus group to help Syrian refugees. She also boasts a 3.90 GPA.

"Competing in Miss America showed me that as polished as we may appear on that stage," Emery says, "all of us are still goofy, down-to-earth college students who are highly motivated leaders in our communities."

Sure CURE

For an undergraduate who wants to conduct research, one question is where to start.

Now there's an answer: the Center for Undergraduate Research and Engagement (CURE).

The new center is a clearinghouse for undergraduate research opportunities across campus, including lab work in the sciences, scholarship in the humanities, and creative efforts in art, design, or performance.

Students are matched with faculty mentors to ensure that they have a positive experience with inquiry and investigation, says Josh Snodgrass, center director. CURE supports undergraduate research grants and travel stipends, and rewards faculty members who build research requirements into their curriculums.

CURE will also showcase undergraduate research across campus and across the state. The center added new awards to the UO's 2017 Undergraduate Research Symposium and will display student work at the Allan Price Science Commons and Research Library and the Global Scholars Hall. The latter serves as CURE headquarters, with drop-in advising, workshops, and events.



High-Flying Ducks

Even by UO standards, 2016-17 was a special year for sports: three national titles for one team, runner-up for another, and deep runs into the post-season for a trio of others.

Those remarkable performances propelled Oregon to ninth place and its highest-ever finish in the Learfield Directors' Cup, an annual ranking of NCAA athletic departments.

The women's track-and-field program led the way, earning 300 of Oregon's 1,027 points after becoming the first women's program to claim indoor, outdoor, and cross-country national titles in an academic year.

The men's golf team finished second in the NCAA Championship, the softball team reached the semifinals of the Women's College World Series, and the men's and women's basketball teams made the Final Four and the Elite Eight, respectively, of their tournaments.

Oregon was 13th in the Directors' Cup in 2014-15 before climbing to 10th in 2015-16.

Makenzie Dunmore (left) and Raevyn Rogers celebrate after setting a new collegiate record in the 4 X 400 meter relay on June 10, 2017, at Hayward Field.

COMING TOGETHER

President Schill met recently with Black student leaders and members of the Black Student Task Force to share big news about plans for the Black Cultural Center—namely, that fundraising has cleared the halfway point, with more than \$1.5 million committed to the project. The university will now start construction plans for the center, a hub for scholarship, community, and cultural connections to be built on East 15th Avenue near Villard Street.

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Tapestry Exclusive at JSMA

Freshly cleaned and brightened, the Barberini *Life of Christ* tapestries, produced in Rome between 1644 and 1656, are on display at the Jordan Schnitzer Museum of Art (JSMA). The richly textured panels were designed by baroque master Giovanni Francesco Romanelli and woven by hand-picked weavers in the tapestry workshop of Francesco Barberini, the nephew of Pope Urban VIII. The JSMA is the only West Coast venue exhibiting the panels, on loan from the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine in New York City. An interactive feature enables users to tap on a tapestry image to learn details of the symbols, stories, and people depicted in the panels. Exhibit continues through January, 2018.

Innovation Festival Oct. 27

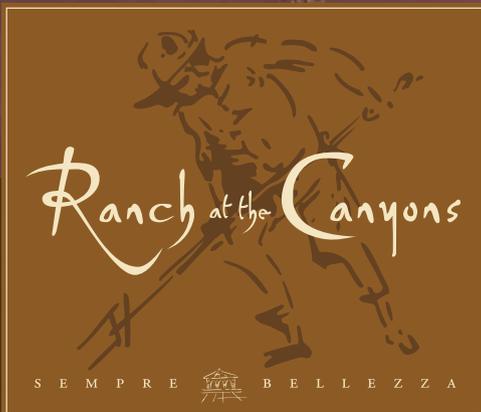
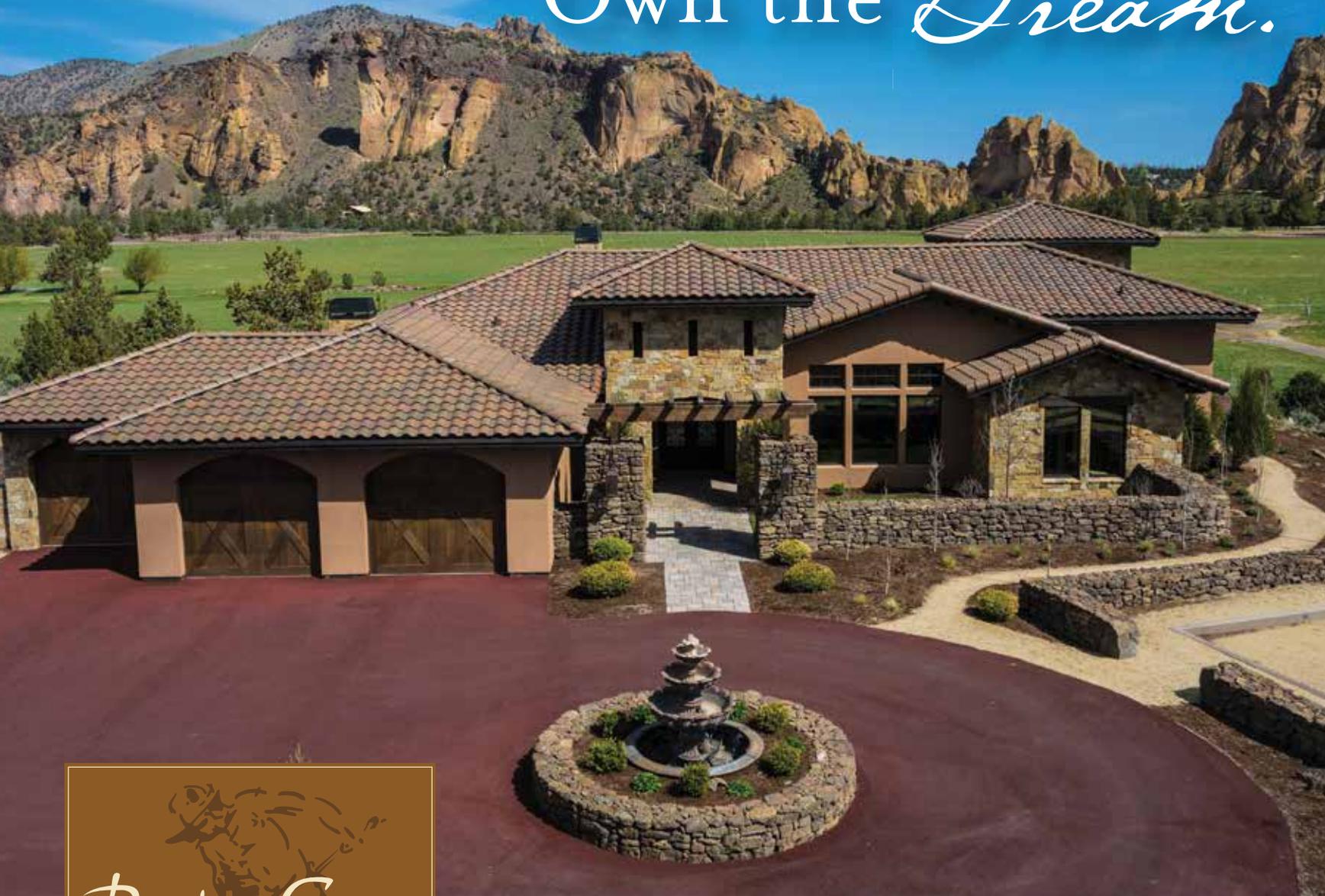
What do tomorrow's entrepreneurs see for the future? See for yourself Homecoming weekend. The UO Innovation Summit celebrates innovation and entrepreneurship across campus and beyond during a one-day, interdisciplinary festival October 27.

Cosponsored by the Lundquist Center for Entrepreneurship, the summit highlights innovation among students, faculty members, alumni, and members of the Eugene community. Activities include speaker presentations, interactive exhibits, skill-building workshops, pitch competitions, hackathons, performances, film showings, and art exhibitions.

The event highlights the latest trends and leadership in science, technology, media, social justice, global issues, arts and literature, sports, music, environment, gender and sexuality, and business.

"Everything falls under the theme of 'innovation,'" says Kate Harmon, undergraduate program manager with the center. "We want to connect participants and the public to ideas, resources, and one another to advance entrepreneurial knowledge, opportunities, and shared pursuits."

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Prediction Game

Faculty expansion aims to get ahead of the region's volatile volcanoes

BY JIM MUREZ



Almost smack-dab in the middle of Oregon, Newberry Volcano rises a comparatively modest 7,989 feet from the high desert plateau southeast of Bend. Any number of the region's peaks look down on Newberry. Even Mount Saint Helens, despite blowing its top in 1980, has a few hundred feet on the volcano named for geologist John Strong Newberry, who explored central Oregon in 1855.

But what Newberry lacks in height it more than accounts for in breadth. Covering an area equal to the size of Rhode Island, Newberry has a total volume of 120 cubic miles, making it the largest in Oregon and Washington. And Newberry is primed to let it go.

"To blow or flow, that is the question," says Thomas Giachetti, a recent addition to the UO's volcanology team and a specialist in the dynamics of magma, the subterranean molten rock that can fuel an explosion.

Newberry is one of four Oregon volcanoes with a high potential for a major eruption, and Giachetti is trying to determine whether that release will be of the flowing, oozing variety or the explosive, blow-the-lid-off-the-place kind.

He's in the prediction game—he will study past volcanic activity at Newberry in the hope of learning more about what makes a volcano blow. Forecasting an eruption is one of the great quests in volcanology, and it's an area in which the UO's Department of Earth Sciences is expanding its expertise.

Thanks to a \$10 million gift from UO benefactors Gwen and Charles Lillis, PhD '72, two additional faculty members are scheduled to join volcanology in 2018.

One hire will be an expert in using instruments that monitor subtle changes in land—such as the bulging of a volcano—that can precede volcanic activity. The other new faculty member will use high-powered computers to build models that explore what happens to the ash, superheated gases, and lava fragments that spew from eruptions. This information will be used to minimize volcanic impacts on people and planes, the latter being vulnerable to airborne ash plumes.

The last thing you want to do when a volcano becomes active, says Paul Wallace, head of earth sciences, is try to play catch-up.

"Many volcanoes are dormant and then rumble back to life. We need to be able to read the warning signs accurately," he says. "The Lillis gift will allow us to hire people whose work will be focused on using new kinds of technology to do that. We couldn't be more grateful for their generosity and support of our research."



Volcanologist Thomas Giachetti (lower left) has joined an expanding team that is trying to get ahead of the next major eruption. Here, he works with colleague Thomas Shea, a researcher at the University of Hawaii.



That technology includes drones, which can be flown over active volcanoes to provide the view from above, or sent through an ash cloud to measure temperature, humidity, and thermal data in real time.

The Lillis gift also provides for an experimental volcanology lab that will focus on the dangerous mix of hot gases, ash, pumice, and rock fragments that are ejected during an explosive eruption. The lab will include equipment that mimics the processes that occur as magma transforms into volcanic ash and pumice during major eruptions.

Wallace says the new research programs “will allow us to focus on processes occurring in explosive volcanic eruptions, including the transport of ash and pumice through the atmosphere.”

With Giachetti’s arrival last year, Wallace has seen the volcanology research team grow to six, a high point since volcanologist Alexander

McBirney established a major volcanology research program at Oregon in 1965. In addition to the new funded positions, two others are planned over the long-term—one will try to harness volcanoes’ intense heat to generate geothermal energy and the other will examine the effects of large eruptions on climate and biodiversity.

It makes sense to have a robust research portfolio in volcanology, Wallace says, given that

our region is home to nearly a dozen volcanoes that the US Geological Survey has deemed worthy of close monitoring for possible eruptions, including Mount Hood, the Three Sisters, and Crater Lake.

The state’s geological wonders made for a striking backdrop to a major conference of international volcanologists in August. Held in Portland and sponsored in part by the UO, the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth’s Interior brought 1,200 of the world’s top earth scientists to Oregon for a quadrennial gathering, last held in the US in 1989.

Attendees got up-close-and-personal with the state’s volcanic attractions during trips to sites such as Crater Lake and Mount Hood. The event also provided Wallace with the opportunity to do a bit of informal recruiting—he was able to discuss not just the research that his team is doing today, but what lies ahead.

“It was a great chance to show our research to the world,” Wallace says.

Giachetti, for example, studies the deposits of past eruptions to reconstruct the periods during which a volcano erupted violently or more benignly. He’ll soon do this work at Newberry—although, given his love of the outdoors and all its volcanic wonders, he hesitates to call it “work.”

“When you are a volcanologist, you love nature,” Giachetti says. “You want to understand things and be able to share them.”

The Newberry caldera covers part of the largest volcano in Oregon and Washington.

The last thing you want to do when a volcano becomes active is try to play catch-up.

Jim Murez is a writer for University Communications.



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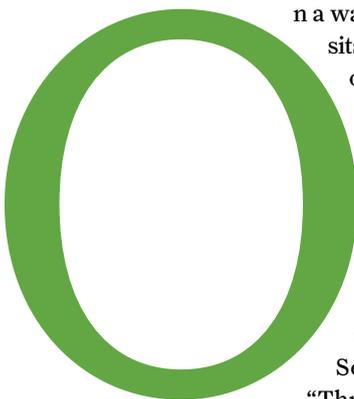
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Willie Taggart's 3,000-Mile Journey

BY CHARLES BUTLER



After the Ducks' season opener against Southern Utah, running back Royce Freeman gave his game ball back to coach Willie Taggart to commemorate his first Oregon victory.

On a warm July afternoon, Willie Taggart sits in his new office at the University of Oregon, smiling back at the memories from his days growing up in Palmetto, Florida. The memories are as fresh as if the games that produced them took place days ago, rather than decades. Maybe they're so vivid because they have to do with something Taggart loved as a kid: playing football with his neighborhood buddies.

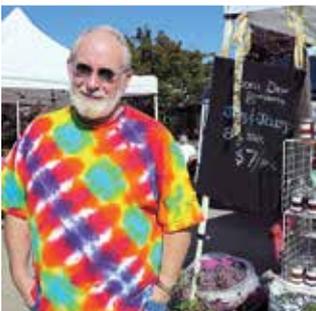
Willie and his friends played pickup football after school. No coaches, no parents, only fun. Sometimes, they improvised with a game called "Throw 'em Up, Bust 'em Up." The football got tossed, and whoever grabbed it had eight guys to outmaneuver to the end zone. No blockers, no rules, just hard hits and long laughs.

As they got older, they all wanted to take their game to powerful Manatee High School, including Taggart. He was a wispy 145 pounds—"as thin as the wind" was how some in Palmetto described him. But size didn't keep Taggart from going after the prized job on the field—quarterback—or putting the lessons of "Throw 'em Up, Bust 'em Up" to good use.

One play crystalized Taggart's tenacity. It came in his first-ever start as a high school quarterback on a fall night in 1991. After taking the snap from center, Taggart broke tackles. The goal line was in view, so he raced toward it . . . crossing it just as a defender collared him. As one teammate said later, "The guy threw Willie down like he was throwing a towel off his shoulder." The hit didn't faze Taggart—or at least he had learned not to show it. He bounced up and rushed to the sideline, where high-fives from teammates awaited him.

The years have passed, and Taggart, now 41 and the new head coach of the University of Oregon Ducks, is 3,000 miles from the fields he played on, the friends he collected, and the sometimes-unkind streets he walked. He's stockier, and specks of gray dot his hair and beard. But one thing is very much like 1991: Taggart has people believing in him—believing that he can make Oregon football a national power again.

And why not? His résumé says he can turn programs around. He took down-and-out South Florida to bowl-eligible in three seasons. Before that, in 2010, he inherited a team at Western Kentucky University—his alma



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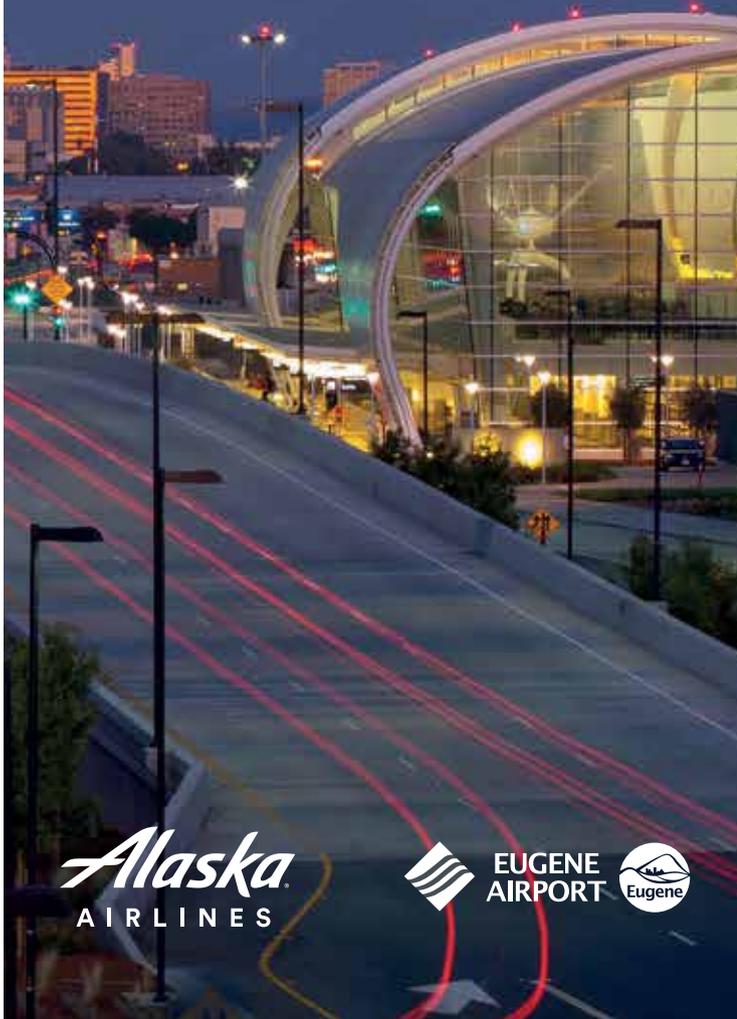


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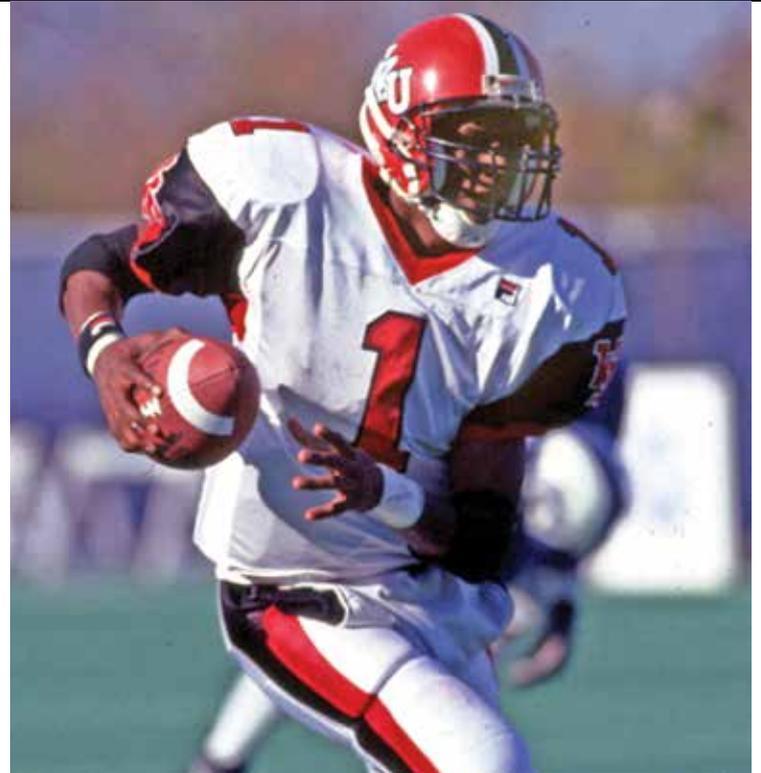
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mater—with a 26-game losing streak, and guided the Hilltoppers to a winning record in two seasons.

His secret? From his office in the Hatfield-Dowlin Complex, Taggart overlooks the practice field. Rimming it, large and bold, is signage with the motto he's brought to his team: Make No Excuses. Blame No One. Do Something. On this summer day, five weeks before the season's start, Taggart points to the slogan. "Winning is not complicated, people are complicated," he says. "If we don't complicate things, we can win."

Sounds easy, like "Throw 'em Up, Bust 'em Up."

No doubt, Taggart has brought some southern style to the Pacific Northwest. He enjoys ribbing his players. When he saw his starting quarterback, Justin Herbert, talking to a reporter this past summer, he snuck up, grabbed his shoulder, and said, "Man, look at those guns!" It's this amiability and enthusiasm that his players have come to expect. "That is Coach Willie," says Royce Freeman, senior running back and team captain. "He and his staff bring his energy every day, and they expect the same out of us." Taggart brings a similar good nature to his media briefings. While some coaches (see Belichick, Saban, Kelly) can make a press conference about as inviting as an organic chemistry exam, Taggart seems genuinely disappointed when one wraps up. "That's it? It's over?" he said when a preseason press meeting ended. "This is fun. Two more questions . . ."

Relocating to Eugene, Taggart brought more than a smile and *joie de vivre*. He packed the lessons of 941, shorthand for his hometown (it's Palmetto's area code). Sure, he grew up "playing football, football, football." But life in the town south of Tampa wasn't always the thrill of Friday night lights. He also talks about less dazzling days. About weekends picking oranges with his mom and dad, both sharecroppers, to make extra money for the family. About "Christmases when I didn't get anything. I woke up and I didn't have toys or bikes that other kids had. That was disappointing." And he talks about buddies he played with, some who would go on to big-time college careers and "to play on Sundays," and some who wouldn't.

"There were a lot of drugs," he says, "and a lot of my friends fell to it. I always count my blessings. I could easily have been like my friends."



He got a boost when he was recruited to WKU in 1994 to play for Jack Harbaugh, father of Jim and John Harbaugh of NFL fame. He spent freshman year on the bench; as a Proposition 48 recruit, he lacked the minimum high school GPA to play. But over the course of his college career, Taggart helped revive a dormant football team, his bust-'em-up style impressing his coach. “[Jack Harbaugh] was excited by how I was playing and competing and taking hits,” says Taggart, a two-time finalist for the Walter Payton Award, given annually to the most outstanding offensive player in college football. “I had some bumps and bruises, but they couldn’t keep me out.”

At Western Kentucky under coach Jack Harbaugh, Taggart showed his tenacity as a two-time finalist for college football’s Walter Payton Award.

A long-term relationship was sealed. After Taggart graduated but failed to latch on with an NFL team, he accepted a job on Jack Harbaugh’s staff that launched his coaching career.

Since taking over the Ducks, Taggart admits that there have been, well, more bumps and bruises, both professionally and personally. He dealt with turmoil brought on by coaches that he had hired (one of whom was later fired). He dismissed star receiver Darren Carrington for disciplinary reasons. And just three weeks before opening day, his father, John, died suddenly from cancer. The loss was immeasurable. A day hadn’t passed since Taggart’s arrival in Eugene that he hadn’t connected via a phone call or text with his parents. “My dad and mom are always together, so whenever I’m on the phone with her she will pass it to my dad,” he had said just weeks before his father’s death. “My mom and dad couldn’t tell me what college was like, but they taught me how to work.”

There is a focus to Taggart’s work today. When he left Palmetto in 1994 for college, his goals included becoming the first in his family to graduate college (check); finding a wife (check—he married Taneshia Crosson in 1998 and they have three children); and getting drafted by the NFL so that he could buy his parents a new house (unchecked). As he recalls this list, he smiles, saying, essentially, two out of three ain’t bad. Now, as a college coach, he simply wants to win a Division I national championship. For his best shot, he’s traveled 3,000 miles from home. He’s arrived loaded with lessons learned a long time ago, a long way away.

“I am always representing the 941 area code no matter where I’m at,” Taggart says. “Growing up there made me the person I am today. Working hard. Make no excuses for anything. It has always been something that is with me.”

Charles Butler, an instructor in the School of Journalism and Communication, has written for the *New York Times*, *Fortune*, and *Runner’s World*.



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Vanport Resurfaces

What happened when floodwaters ravaged one of Oregon's largest cities? Students uncover personal stories.

Hurtis Hadley, 74, told the story of his town's demise to UO graduate students (from left) Viktoria Haiboniuk, Caity Ewers, and Winnie Huang. The students were part of a community project to preserve the memory of Vanport through the collection of oral histories.

In 1948, six-year-old Hurtis Hadley was flying a kite on Memorial Day weekend when the water came and submerged his town of Vanport.

Hadley, now 74, recalls that day while sitting at a Formica table in the bow of a small '67 Airstream trailer. It is another Memorial Day weekend, 69 years later. The trailer has been converted into a recording studio, and three UO graduate students are seated near him, documenting his stories. Inside the trailer, the air is still, hot, and stagnant.

Winnie Huang, Whitney Gomes, and Viktoria Haiboniuk are among nine students from the School of Journalism and Communication (SOJC) who are preserving oral histories in what is called a "story harvest." Their project is in conjunction with Vanport Mosaic, a festival that celebrates the history of the ill-fated town once tucked between the

BY LAURIE NOTARO

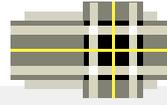
contemporary Portland city boundary and the Columbia River.

Vanport—named for Vancouver and Portland—was destroyed in 1948 when a 200-foot section of the dike holding back the river collapsed during a flood. By nightfall, the burg that was home to 17,000—about one-third of them Black—had completely disappeared, leaving 15 people dead and thousands homeless.

The students are about to delve firsthand into a kind of journalism that cannot be taught in a lecture, one involving live interviews and deeply personal stories.

The fan at the rear of the trailer is off. It must be as silent as possible; no collateral noise from any source is allowed to distract from the voices that are being recorded.

Hadley recalls the moment when the water began seeping in. It was the afternoon of Sunday, May 30, and once the deluge arrived in Vanport—the second-largest city in Oregon during World War II—it swallowed the town, not in a gulp but in a creeping, uniform sweep.



TARTAN DRUIM

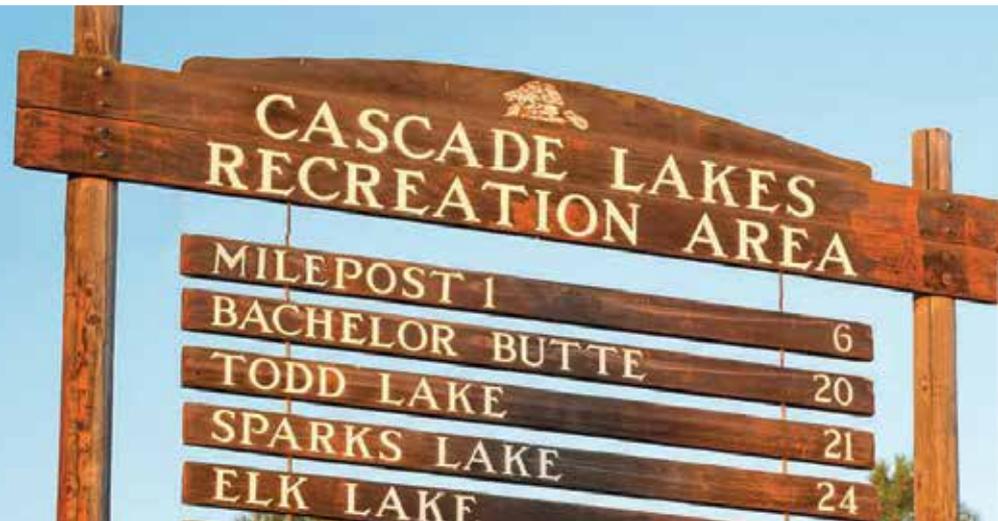
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He was playing in a field along the edge of town, right beneath the railroad embankment that served as a dike to restrain the Columbia River, which was swollen with an abundance of recent rain.

The Housing Authority of Portland had assured the community that the dikes would hold, issuing a statement:

**REMEMBER:
DIKES ARE SAFE AT PRESENT.
YOU WILL BE WARNED IF NECESSARY.
YOU WILL HAVE TIME TO LEAVE.
DON'T GET EXCITED.**

But that afternoon, Hadley says, a train thundered across the tracks above the dike with enough resonance to shift the embankment, allowing the Columbia River to rush in. Minutes later, the boy was running home to tell his mother that the water was on its way.

He nods, and waits a moment before he starts. "I ran into the house and I told my mother that the water's coming," he says. "My mother flagged down the first car going up the hill to get out of the way of the water. By the time we got up on top of the elevation, you could see the houses and stuff crumbling down."

The students capturing Hadley's narrative are in a class taught by Andrew DeVigal, chair of journalism innovation and civic engagement and the first professor of practice in the SOJC.

Graduate students from the Historic Preservation Program in the College of Design are also part of the project, getting experience in collecting data and researching historically significant areas.

Jim Buckley, venerable chair in historic preservation and associate professor, says, "Our students said, 'We don't know how to interview,' and the J-school students said, 'We don't know much about the neighborhood history.' They learned from each other in doing the project."

The history of Vanport and the Albina neighborhood—where most of the survivors relocated and which is also recognized in the annual festival—should be well-known, but it has settled in between folds of time, a lost tragedy barely remembered by those who weren't there.

When World War II created a never-ending appetite for ships, shipyard owner Henry J. Kaiser supplied the demand and built Vanport to house workers. After the war, 10,000 Black residents remained in Vanport, due largely to discriminatory housing practices in Portland.

Another Vanport survivor tells her story. Mariah Taylor adjusts her vibrantly colored blouse and leans into the microphone.

"I am one of 25 children," she begins. "My parents were sharecroppers in Atlanta, Texas. I came at the age of eight in 1947, lived on Denver Avenue. In Vanport."

The retired pediatric nurse practitioner, now 77, recalls bits and pieces of her Vanport childhood and the neighborhood of Albina, where her family relocated after the flood and where Taylor still resides.

"Now I see gentrification," Taylor says. "I don't see a thriving community or the sense of togetherness that we had. We had landmarks that are now gone. And I can't believe the people that have never heard of Vanport."

Gomes, a Portlander and multimedia graduate student, says of Taylor, "I had no idea what to expect. After hearing her story, I better understood that the gentrification of Portland—as a process—did not begin in the most recent couple decades, but rather its roots go much deeper and farther back than that."



After recording Hadley, Haiboniuk was thoughtful.

“Initially, I thought we would just be conducting interviews, as usual,” she says. “But this experience taught me to treat interviewees as narrators, listen closely to their story, rather than trying to find ‘the bite.’”

In the Vancouver Avenue church parking lot where the Airstream sits, volunteers wait to tell their histories, fanning themselves and sipping cold water. DeVigal assists them with forms and answers questions, as does his wife, Laura Lo Forti, who cofounded

Vanport, before and after the flood of May 30, 1948. A dike holding back the Columbia River failed at 4:00 p.m.; the city was underwater by nightfall, leaving 17,000 homeless.

Vanport Mosaic. Their seven-year-old daughter, Viola, plays around the Airstream, but stops when a breeze picks up and delivers a stream of puffs from a nearby cottonwood tree. The effect is startling; in the heat of the day, in the beaming sunshine, it looks as if it is snowing.

She points to the sudden and surprising influx in the air, floating and sweeping along, and smiles.

“Maybe those are the memories coming back,” she says, to the delight of all within earshot.

Laurie Notaro is a *New York Times* bestselling author. Her most recent book is *Crossing the Horizon*.

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DR. COFFEE

The *Atlantic* recently referred to Christopher Hendon as “specialty coffee’s resident scientist.” As of August, he’s our scientist—but his research focus isn’t coffee. The first of three new faculty hires for the UO’s Energy and Sustainable Materials Initiative, Hendon searches for innovative answers to vexing energy problems and cheaper, greener ways to make batteries, solar cells, and other products.

“There were many faculty positions out there,” says Hendon, who was chosen from nearly 500 applicants. “But few focused as much on creating a collaborative atmosphere. This cluster hire will unite scientists from diverse backgrounds to bring fresh ideas and new perspectives on today’s energy problems.”

You may think this sounds like a quantum leap from lattes—but he will convince you that it’s not.

For Hendon, coffee is a medium that demystifies the scientific method and demonstrates the impact of research. It’s part of everyday life, he says, and it fosters experimentation because (unlike wine, for example) the taste depends so much on the end user. “My motivation in coffee is to see somebody learn something. Whether I’m teaching them or they’re discovering it themselves and they teach me. That’s the same motivation I have in the lab.”

Christopher Hendon

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BY ED DORSCH, BA '94, MA '99

MATERIAL ISSUES

Hendon's research in porous materials and surfaces could lead to new designer materials or more sustainable manufacturing. For instance, an atomically thin coating of platinum (a precious metal used in catalytic converters) might work just as well as a larger piece. That means lower costs and less mining. Tiny holes in porous materials may hold clues to cheaper batteries or new ways to store hydrogen that may eventually fuel your car. He's already begun his innovative, cross-disciplinary research using computational chemistry—think experiments with supercomputers instead of chemicals. And he's eager to start teaching undergraduates.

GATEWAY BEVERAGE

How does a chemist become obsessed with lattes? It all started in 2012 at the University of Bath in Somerset, England, where Hendon was working on his PhD. His roommate's coffee was terrible, so Hendon Googled "good coffee" and found a café where he befriended co-owner Maxwell Colonna-Dashwood. The two started working toward better espresso through chemistry—a partnership that continued after Hendon left to do post-doctoral research at MIT. They went on to win national barista championships, coauthor a book about water chemistry and coffee, and advance the art and science of espresso worldwide. In Oregon, he's already made contact with local roasters and has no plans to kick the habit.

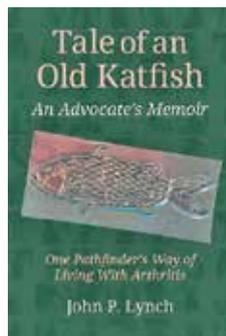
COFFEE 101

Want better coffee at home? Buy local beans, says Hendon. They're fresher—and roasted to harmonize with the chemistry of your local water. Ratios are also crucial. Start with 15 grams of freshly ground coffee (yes, use a scale) for every cup of water. Heat your water to 200 degrees Fahrenheit. Experiment by changing one variable at a time.

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHARLIE LITCHFIELD

BOOKMARKS

Recent books by alumni and faculty include a JRA advocate's memoir, a journey of the Long Tom River, a Joe Rush bio-thriller, and a study of school origins. Find more titles at oregonquarterly.com/bookmarks.

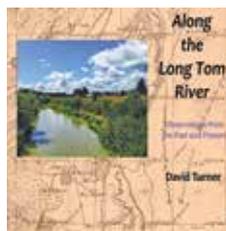


TALE OF AN OLD KATFISH

(RHEUMATOID ARTHRITIS PROJECT, 2016)

BY JOHN P. LYNCH, MBA '71

From sufferer to survivor, Lynch chronicles his fight with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis (JRA). Lynch has dedicated his life to helping others with JRA and to finding a cure. "Katfish" stands for "Kids and Teens' Families Investing Support and Hope," referring to those leading successful lives despite the pain of JRA. These tales inspire those with chronic illness—or anyone who has to overcome overwhelming obstacles in their life.



ALONG THE LONG TOM RIVER: OBSERVATIONS FROM THE PAST AND PRESENT

(PAW PRINT, 2017)

BY DAVID TURNER, MA '74

Turner, a faculty member in the College of Design, takes readers on a cultural and natural journey of the Long Tom River, highlighting its rare ecosystems and history as home to the Chelamela Kalapuya. Focusing on illustrative details, Turner includes old photos, historical maps of the Willamette Valley, and stories of the people who lived there for thousands of years.

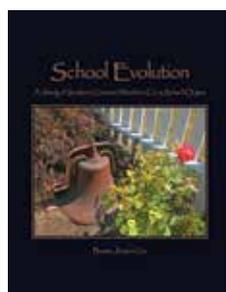


VECTOR

(BERKLEY, 2017)

BY JAMES ABEL (PEN NAME FOR BOB REISS), MFA '76

Vector is the latest Joe Rush bio-thriller, following the protagonist as he searches for his best friend, who has disappeared in an Amazon gold rush. Thousands of miles away, US cities across the Northeast fall victim to a mysterious epidemic. In a taut and tense race against time, Rush and his team must journey from one of the most remote spots on Earth to one of the busiest.



SCHOOL EVOLUTION: A STUDY OF SOUTHERN COOS AND NORTHERN CURRY SCHOOL ORIGINS

(SELF-PUBLISHED, 2015)

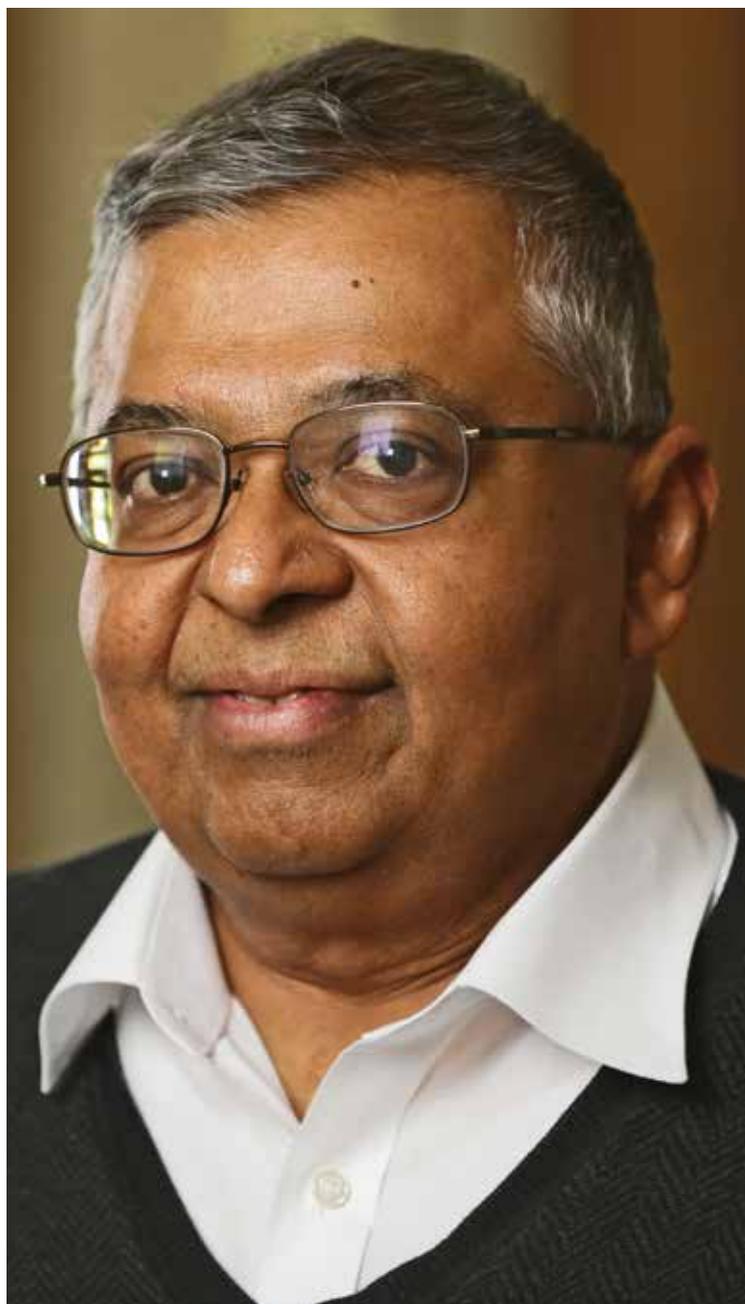
BY BONNIE JENSEN COX, BS '75

School Evolution is an in-depth study of school origins in Oregon's Southern Coos and Northern Curry counties. The examination of archived data and recounting of alumni stories creates a chain from past to present, chronicling the development of more than two dozen small school districts into the Port Orford-Langlois School District.

“Everything We Do Is For Our Students”

New provost raises bar for academic priorities

BY TOBIN KLINGER



Jayanth Banavar arrived at the University of Oregon as provost and senior vice president this summer. By the end of his first month, he had done something few provosts do over the course of their careers: he attracted a Nobel laureate to the faculty.

“I can’t wait to see what he does next month,” quipped Michael H. Schill, president and professor of law, at the time of the announcement of the Nobel hire.

A distinguished physicist himself, it is no surprise that Banavar, who served as dean of the College of Computer, Mathematical, and Natural Sciences at the University of Maryland, actively recruited David Wineland to serve as a Knight Distinguished Research Chair. Wineland was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physics in 2012 for his work in quantum physics.

“The fact that we were able to attract a researcher like David to the university speaks volumes about the excellence we currently have,” says Banavar. “The University of Oregon is well-positioned to attract more and more amazing intellectuals to campus, and I cannot wait to help bring them here.”

The provost and senior vice president works with people across campus to set academic priorities and manage the human and capital resources to carry them out.

In the coming years, Banavar will not only lead efforts to continue the institution’s recruitment of new faculty members and retain the talented faculty already here, he will also work on the UO’s student success goals and oversee the implementation of a new academic budget system.

“My philosophy is simple: everything we do is for our students,” says Banavar. “Teaching, research, program development, advising, faculty hiring—everything. They must all be done with our commitment to our students, front and center.”

Banavar knows a thing or two about student success. During his tenure at Maryland, his college enjoyed a 9 percent increase in its four-year graduation rate.

In addition, his personal life is proof-positive of his commitment to increasing participation by women in the sciences. His daughter, Samhita Banavar, is following in his footsteps as a graduate student in physics at the University of California at Santa Barbara. “My daughter has the same love for mathematics that brought me to this place in my life,” says Banavar. He adds that while science has greatly improved our quality of life, what makes life worth living are the arts, the humanities, and culture, significant strengths of the UO.

A native of Bangalore, India, Banavar, whose research frequently involves collaboration with the life sciences, has applied the techniques of statistical physics to solve interdisciplinary problems. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees in physics from Bangalore University and his PhD in physics from the University of Pittsburgh.

His experience in Eugene thus far has the new provost envisioning the UO as a “destination university” for anyone interested in academic excellence.

“The people here have been wonderful,” says Banavar. “Their warmth and kindness have made us feel right at home. It has been the kind of welcome that inspires collaboration, and collaboration inspires excellence. That will be very attractive as we recruit students and faculty members to study and work across all disciplines in the coming years. I could not be more excited to be a part of it all.”

Tobin Klinger is the UO’s senior director of public affairs communications.

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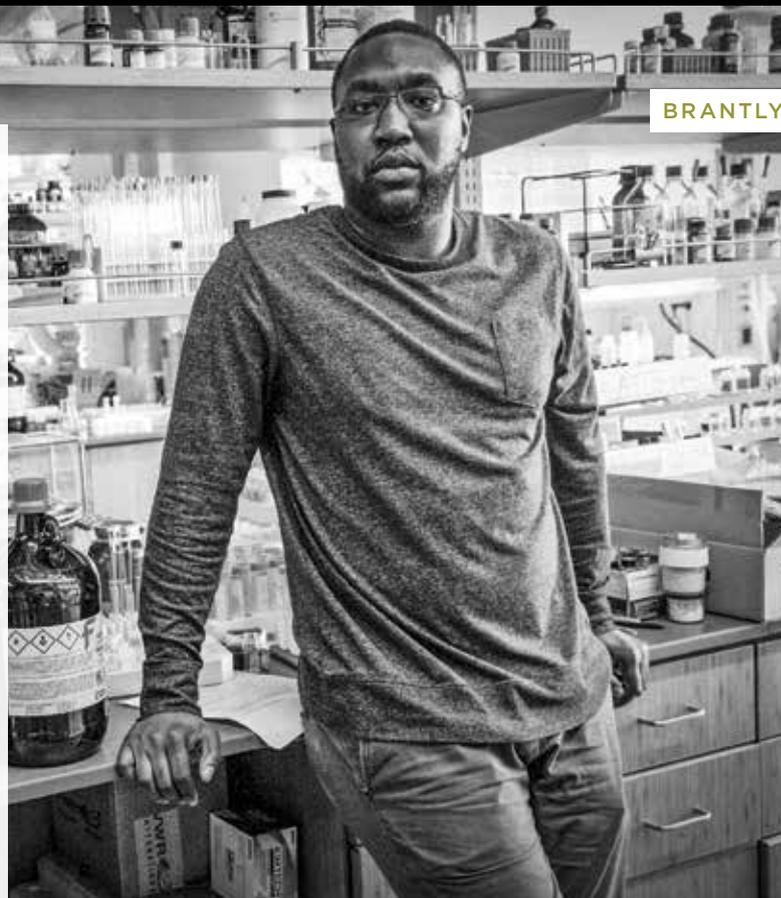
Stories of Diversity

“Our Stories, Our Communities: UO Diversity” is a continuing online exhibit that honors and affirms the strengths and the challenges of members of the multicultural University of Oregon community.

Yvette Alex-Assensoh, vice president for equity and inclusion, and Mickey Stellavato, a UO photographer and oral historian, initiated the project, which includes portraits of students, alumni, staff, and faculty members with personal statements about their experiences. The photos for this excerpt of the exhibit are of current students and recent graduates.

To see the full gallery, visit the Division of Equity and Inclusion’s website and Facebook page. New portraits will be posted throughout the year.

—tova stabin, University Communications



Brantly Fulton | PHD STUDENT chemistry and biochemistry HOME Pontiac, Michigan “The biggest challenge is always connecting my opportunities back to people who come from communities like the one I came from. I didn’t grow up in a nice place. I have plenty of friends who lost their lives to prison or violence at relatively young ages. The good people around me, including my parents, wanted something better for me. Hopefully, my life will give those who are struggling hope. When my life’s over, I want young kids to say, ‘Brantly did it, so I can do it, too!’”

Cailin Thompson | JUNIOR general social sciences HOME Eugene “As a disabled student, I’ve found the UO to be extremely accommodating, but I had a hard time at the start of spring when the disability access shuttle was down to just one bus. My brain injury has given me sensory input overload and the buses made me carsick on the bumpy roads. I let the school know the disability shuttle needed to be more accommodating, and the mention helped it to be altered. It’s a good start even though a permanent van should be bought. I’ll keep raising awareness until we get one.”

Perla Alvarez Lucia | BA ’17 ethnic studies MINORS Spanish, planning, public policy and management HOME Born in Mexico, settled in Oregon “My community at the UO supports me and we have fun together . . . we do not take education for granted because we acknowledge that our ancestors have struggled for us to have the right to be here . . . I have faced the challenge of being the only person of color in the classroom and feeling isolated. It has happened to me in at least one class every term. I have overcome this by creating community outside of classes . . . in the Multicultural Center, the Center for Multicultural Academic Excellence, and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán.”

Bethany Grace Howe | PHD STUDENT media studies HOME Colorado “My community at the UO is the School of Journalism and Communication; it’s been my community as long as I’ve identified as transgender. It’s a collection of people who are very much alike and different. We are different in that we come from different places and have different backgrounds, experiences, and, therefore, solutions to the problems and issues that lie in front of us. We are alike in that we’re all committed to a free and open press as a place for people to express and take in ideas. For me, personally, this is critical; I cannot imagine a more warm and welcoming place in which to come out and grow as a transgender woman.”

Lorraine Goggles | BA ’17 sociology MINORS Native American studies, nonprofit administration HOME Wind River Indian Reservation, Ethete, Wyoming “Since I’ve been at the UO I’ve been challenged financially, emotionally, mentally, and academically. One of the hardest things about being here is being away from home and family. I’ve overcome challenges by staying connected to the Native community in Eugene, going to campus events, and visiting family when I can.”

Jennifer Chain | MS ’13, PHD ’16 counseling psychology HOME China “Although the people in my community have fluctuated, they all share a passion for social justice, a desire for deeper dialogues, and an openness for genuine and authentic relationships . . . As a woman of color in academia, I have experienced my share of racism and sexism. I have been told subtly and directly that I do not belong here. I have been able to make it . . . because of mentors, colleagues, and friends who have supported me and cheered me on when I doubted that I could go on, and when I failed and could not get back up. It takes a rebellious, defiant, and courageous spirit to overcome these challenges.”



CAILIN



PERLA



BETHANY



JENNIFER



LORRAINE



Illuminating Tomorrow: Five Big Ideas

BY CODY PINKSTON

ILLUSTRATIONS BY NATE KITCH

TODAY'S AUDACIOUS IDEA is tomorrow's reality. It might start as a conversation in a café or a sketch on a piece of hotel stationery. Most die on the vine, but some burrow into the psyche like a grain of sand into an oyster, emerging later as something beautiful.

The UO has always been fertile ground for bold thinking, providing faculty members with the resources and inspiration they need to solve pressing problems. Like white light through a prism, these problems must often be separated into components we can understand before the solution becomes clear.

The UO is illuminated by bright thinkers. We spoke with five of them about problems and solutions in urban design, collaborative science, optimizing experiences, obesity prevention, and careers. Although their focal areas are all different, these leaders are united in their desire to use big ideas to improve lives. Let there be light.



NICO LARCO
Self-driving cars could leave cities in the dust

EVERY GENERATION DREAMS of someday. Tinkerers and futurists have always dangled these carrots in front of us, from Dick Tracy wristwatches to invisible fabric. Many have come to pass, many have not. In the 80s, a show called *Knight Rider* introduced to the masses the idea of a car that didn't need a driver. At the time, it seemed ludicrous.

Yet here we are. Autonomous vehicles (AVs) are coming, and soon; rideshare company Lyft just announced that it will launch AV rides by the end of this year. But before you fantasize about sending your car out to pick up a gallon of milk, bear in mind that life as we know it will never be the same.

What keeps Nico Larco up at night is the fact that most cities aren't remotely ready for the changes AVs will bring. Larco is a professor of architecture at the UO College of Design and codirector of the Sustainable Cities Initiative, which is exam-

Cities, as we know them, could be in dire straits with fairly disruptive—and potentially debilitating and destructive—effects.

ining how technology changes our cities. Dubbed “Urbanism Next,” the project focuses on the ramifications of those changes. Their August 2017 report goes into great detail about the impact of AVs on local government budgeting and finance.

“We need to understand these changes or we'll be in serious trouble,” he says. “Cities, as we know them, could be in dire straits with fairly disruptive—and potentially debilitating and destructive—effects.”

E-commerce has already changed suburban landscapes, where vacant strip malls and empty parking lots serve as warnings to any industry formed around the need for a physical presence. Larco says the rise of the sharing economy, increased sprawl, reduced need for parking, and other factors should compel municipalities to rethink how they spend their revenue.

These rapidly shifting technologies and preferences also get him up in the morning (which makes you wonder if he's always awake). He points out that cars are woefully inefficient machines that sit unused 95 percent of the time, so he's encouraged that Uber and Lyft are already looking at ways to use AVs and algorithms to create hyperefficient, improvised routes for multipassenger transportation, based on who needs a ride, when, and to where.

“If you start to think of mobility as a service, then all of a sudden you can specialize the car to be whatever it is that person needs at that time,” he says.

Few of the 90,000 local governments in the US have looked at this in earnest. Larco says the ones he's spoken to are “petrified,” which should give us pause. It's unlikely your minivan will be taking the kids to soccer practice next year, but all the technology you need to do it is here. In fact, it's just around the corner. And it's trying to park.

Read more about Larco's current research on AVs and how technology is changing cities at urbanismnext.uoregon.edu.



LAURA LEE MCINTYRE
Collaborations will shape the future of autism research and treatment

AUTISM IS TYPICALLY diagnosed during early childhood. There are telltale signs, like peculiar obsessions or avoiding eye contact. Researcher Laura Lee McIntyre and her colleagues at the UO College of Education develop early-childhood evaluations that test for autism and they explore the interventions, or individual treatments and supports, that follow.

The past 20 years have seen massive strides in our understanding of autism spectrum disorder (ASD). McIntyre says we know a great deal more about the role genes play, and that we now recognize autism as a brain—not behavioral—disorder. Collectively, these advances have moved the science forward and increased public awareness.

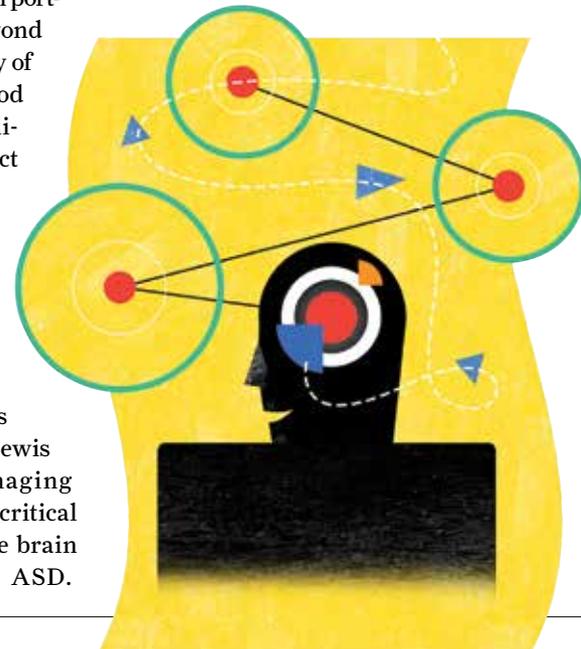
“Our knowledge as a community has really improved because autism has become more of a household name,” McIntyre says.

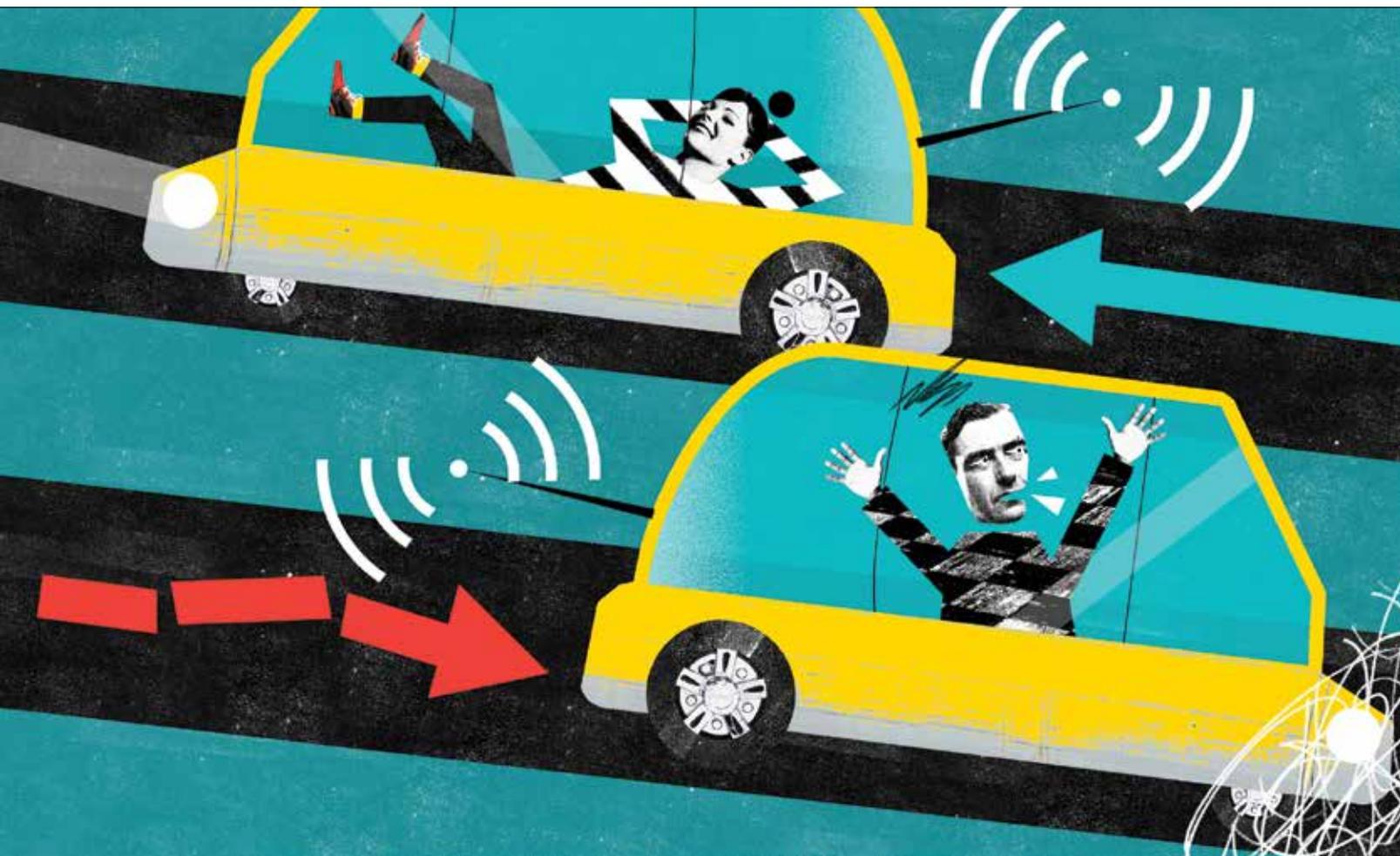
But autism is lifelong, so treatments are more like adaptations. It's not only parents who must learn how to raise a child with autism—it's siblings, grandparents, and the entire family system across the child's lifespan.

One of McIntyre's projects, for example, incorporates mindfulness-based stress reduction into her work with parents, hopefully easing the anxiety of having a child with challenging behaviors.

Her formidable research portfolio extends well beyond autism, including study of all manner of childhood disorders and disabilities and how they affect families, communities, schools, and society.

Although better interventions are one goal, McIntyre is equally invested in earlier detection. Diagnostic tools such as the MRI at the UO's Lewis Center for Neuroimaging (LCNI) are revealing critical information about the brain mechanisms behind ASD.





“Gone are the days where I do all the work myself. I partner with other colleagues who bring different areas of expertise, and that makes it fun.”

McIntyre works with LCNI director Fred Sabb and his team to understand whether autism can be identified sooner than is currently possible through simply observing behavior.

“It’s the opportunity to work with colleagues who bring something complementary,” she says. “Gone are the days where I do all the work myself. I partner with other colleagues who bring different areas of expertise, and that makes it fun.”

The UO’s \$1 billion Phil and Penny Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact is dedicated to the very cross-disciplinary collaboration McIntyre relishes. If that helps bring new intervention or prevention models forward more quickly, so much the better; she says it takes an average of 17 years to develop one, test it, and bring it to scale.

In other words, today’s models aren’t based on our current understanding. They’ve improved outcomes, though it’s hard to say how much, and they weren’t a product of these deep collaborations. Psychologists, neuroscientists, toxicologists, and geneticists are now working together to help unravel the mysteries of ASD, and for families coping with a diagnosis, that help can’t come quickly enough.

McIntyre will give a free lecture titled “A Spectrum of Promise: A Multidisciplinary Approach to Autism and Other Neurodevelopmental

Disorders” on Tuesday, November 14, at 7:00 p.m. in the Shedd Auditorium in Eugene as part of the Science Knight Out series, hosted by the Knight Campus. For more information, visit uoregon.edu/scienceknight.

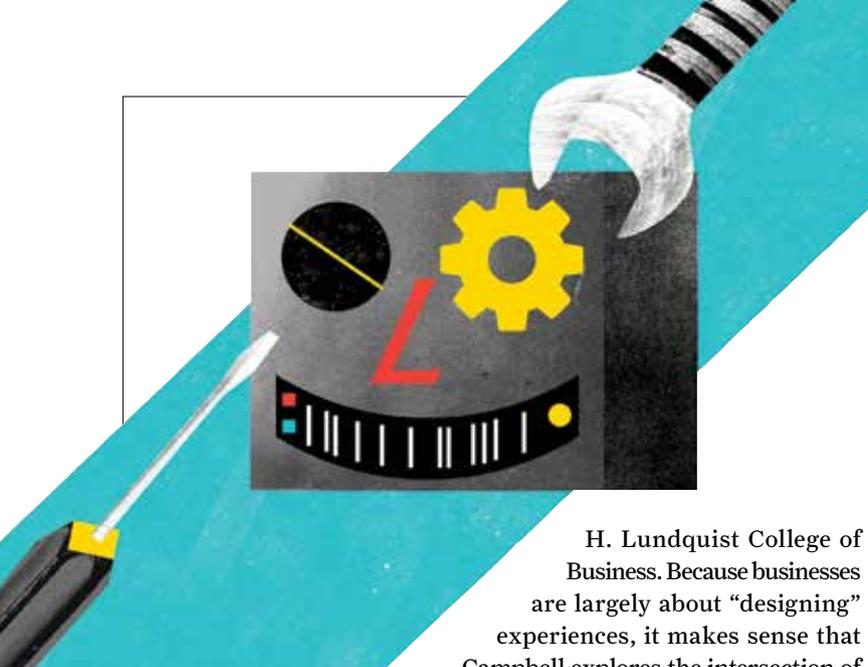


TROY CAMPBELL

Happiness is a product of awesome experiences

TROY CAMPBELL WANTS us to be happy. More to the point, he wants us to understand what will make us happy, and to use that knowledge to optimize experiences for ourselves and others.

Although his background is in psychology, Campbell is an assistant professor of marketing at the UO’s Charles



H. Lundquist College of Business. Because businesses are largely about “designing” experiences, it makes sense that Campbell explores the intersection of these disciplines.

We already know some of the secrets to happiness—a mix of excitement and comfort, friends and family, and the feeling that we are pursuing our passions, for example. What we don’t understand are the details necessary to create those positive experiences. Campbell is driven to learn those details.

“So much of business is just making people’s lives better and easier and more fun. Right? That’s a beautiful, wonderful place to work in,” he says.

There are two sides to any experience—the creator and the consumer. The creator is usually a business that designs an experience to attract consumers, who pay for what bestselling authors Chip and Dan Heath call “defining moments.” Campbell helps people on each side of the equation make it as awesome as possible—a “portal of magic,” as he puts it.

In a recent study, he examined restaurants, which generally encourage full commitment to healthy entrees or unhealthy ones. So we either order a salad or a plate of fries, not feeling happy about either because what we really wanted was both. Or what if we eat at, say, the Cheesecake Factory but deny ourselves their famous cheesecake

“So much of business is just making people’s lives better and easier and more fun.”

because the only option is to order a monstrous, 1,000-calorie slice? These scenarios frustrate Campbell because they ignore psychology.

“Many people can be happy or relatively happy by having mostly virtues,” Campbell says. “So, 80 percent salad and 20 percent French fries and they can be very happy. It allows them to meet both of their goals. In fact, they might

be more interested in going to a restaurant that offers them this ability to engage in what is called ‘multiple goal pursuit’ and they can leave happier and healthier.”

Campbell wants us to know that, as the patrons in this scenario, we have a lot of agency over choices and experiences. Unfortunately, we often aren’t attuned to what will make us the happiest and therefore can’t articulate it, so we cede that agency to others. He’d love to change that.

“Our everyday would be better if we understood ourselves better,” he says. “We put too much emphasis on expecting others to understand us rather than helping them to understand us.”

Dig deeper into Campbell’s work at troyhcampbell.weebly.com, or follow @troyhcampbell on Twitter.



TASIA SMITH

In the fight against childhood obesity, one size does not fit all

CHILDHOOD OBESITY is frequently called an epidemic. One in three kids is overweight or obese; one-third of the entire US population is in the same boat. And the numbers are going the wrong way.

There’s a lot to understand here. Asking why kids are overweight is like asking why we have poverty or inequality. It’s complicated. It’s not just about nutrition—it’s about making healthier choices, like regular trips to the doctor and getting enough exercise. Kids seldom make these choices themselves.

Tasia Smith works in the UO’s Health Promotion and Obesity Prevention (HPOP) cluster, a multidisciplinary research team made possible by a \$25 million gift from Connie, BS ’84, and Steve Ballmer. The cluster studies the causes that contribute to obesity, with an eye toward prevention. Smith’s piece of the puzzle concerns the cultural and community context behind individual choice within high-risk groups, particularly ethnic minorities and low-income communities.

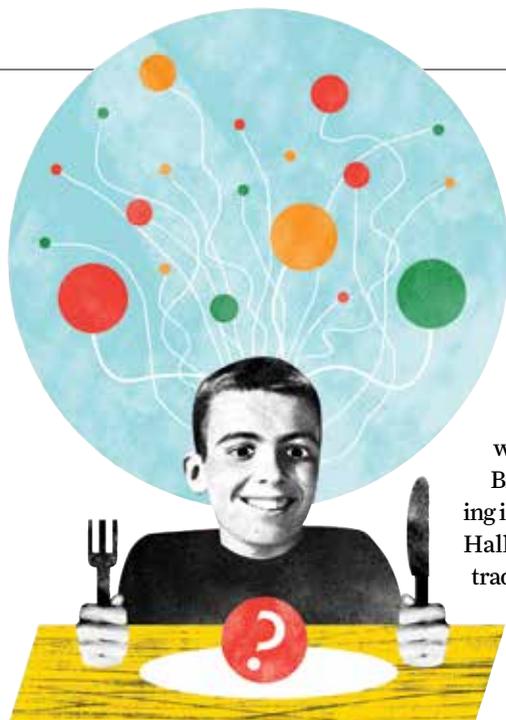
Rural communities are a particular focus of Smith’s, where 23.5 million Americans face artificially high prices and limited access to healthy food. Families trying to stretch a dollar often have few choices in these “food deserts,” but by examining communities like Oakridge, 60 miles southeast of Eugene, researchers are finding solutions. A community buying group there has partnered with grocer Whole Foods Market to buy food at near-wholesale rates, passing the savings on to participating families.

“We want to know whether this program is really working and what we can do to improve it, so we can focus on implementing something similar in other rural communities in Oregon,” Smith says.

The HPOP cluster focuses on improving the interventions and outreach programs that aren’t working for those at-risk groups. In the Oakridge example, a choice between a week’s worth of sloppy joes and tater tots or one meal of salmon, broccoli, and wild rice isn’t much of a choice at all. Low-income areas in cities face similar challenges. In the face of these seemingly intractable problems, small steps such as choosing cheaper frozen vegetables over more expensive fresh produce are important ones.

But prevention is a better weapon than intervention in this fight. Broad-based campaigns can increase general awareness, but a truly effective

Asking why kids are overweight is like asking why we have poverty or inequality. It's complicated.



approach to curbing childhood obesity must have good science behind it and be highly targeted.

Smith has learned that getting out and talking to people makes them far more receptive to change than simply telling them what they should and shouldn't eat. If we can treat people as individuals and communicate in a way that respects their circumstances, we stand a good chance of tipping the scales. Anything less is a recipe for failure.

To watch an interview in which Smith talks about her work within the Health Promotion and Obesity Prevention cluster, visit youtu.be/LET83G8-sLQ.



W. ANDREW MARCUS

Integrating academic and career advising under one roof

THIS IS NOT YOUR parents' job market. Jobs such as "user-experience designer" or "chief listening officer" didn't exist 10 years ago. As young entrepreneurs identify niche opportunities, jobs will evolve to suit the moment. In a 2013 *New York Times* article, Thomas Friedman said, "My generation had it easy. We got to 'find' a job. But, more than ever, our kids will have to 'invent' a job."

W. Andrew Marcus, Tykeson Dean of Arts and Sciences, says that UO graduates emerge with the critical reasoning and complex problem-solving skills that the vast majority of employers (93 percent) agree is more important than an undergraduate major. But that's only half the equation.

"What we want to provide for those students is the ability to articulate the specific skills they've acquired," Marcus says. "We need to give them the vocabulary, facts, and concrete evidence of their own performance that will help build their portfolios and make a good case to employers."

To that end, Marcus is presiding over the construction of Tykeson Hall, which will combine a headquarters for the College of Arts and Sciences—and its academic advisors—with the Career Center advisors. A physical and functional connection between the two areas is a pretty novel idea, but they will be tightly integrated and highly visible, with a central advising hub on the ground floor and focused, "themed" advising teams on the second floor. Students will take many of their general-education courses in Tykeson, constantly coming into contact with advisors who reinforce the connection between the liberal arts and gainful employment.

Institutions will be challenged to keep pace with the job market, whereas people can constantly adapt and reinvent themselves—as long as they know how. As Harvard education expert Tony Wagner says, "What you know matters far less than what you can do with what you know."

Broadening the UO's approach to advising is central to Marcus' vision for Tykeson Hall, which opens in 2019. Advisors are traditionally specific to a major or department, contributing over time to a narrow perspective.

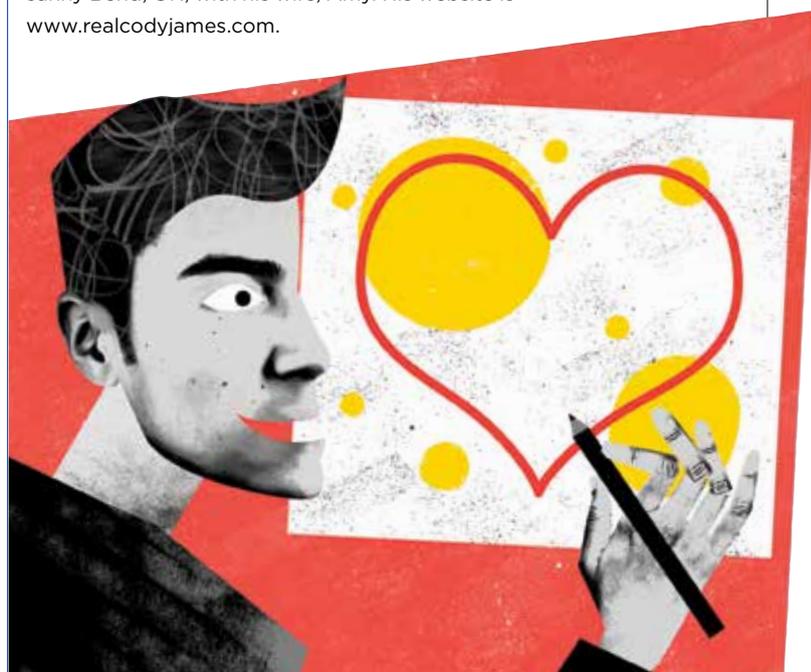
"We need to have advisors who can open the eyes of our students to all the possibilities that are out there to address their interests," he says.

Rather than choosing a major based solely on its perceived career prospects, Marcus believes that students should follow their passion. That's what keeps them engaged, open-minded, and inspired to build that all-important portfolio, he says—all of which will serve them in the years to come.

"Success is really tied to educating our students that they can, in fact, do what they want to do—not what they think they ought to do in order to have a successful life," he says.

The official groundbreaking for Tykeson Hall, just west of Johnson Hall, took place October 6. For more information about Tykeson Hall, visit tykeson.uoregon.edu.

Cody Pinkston is a writer and videographer who lives in sunny Bend, OR, with his wife, Amy. His website is www.realcodyjames.com.





Aaron Firestein,
BA '08, kicks back
at Bucketfeet
headquarters.

LIKE MANY CREATIVE IDEAS, it's not easy to trace the origins of Bucketfeet, a Chicago-based shoe company known for its wildly patterned kicks. But the founding story ultimately leads to a shaggy-haired UO senior in a house in Eugene, hunched over a simple pair of white canvas shoes. Armed with a pack of markers, this life-long doodler transformed the footwear with an explosion of colorful squiggles. "I just thought it would be fun to customize shoes for myself," Aaron Firestein, BA '08, remembers. "There was no bigger plan than that."

Satisfied with the result, Firestein snapped a photo and uploaded the image to Facebook, where it caught the attention of a high school friend from Berkeley, California. He wanted a pair of his own. Firestein obliged, and before long, he was selling embellished shoes to friends and acquaintances on campus and beyond.

While Firestein enjoyed the process for its expressive freedom and the extra cash it generated, he thought of shoe customization as a hobby, similar to his other artistic pursuits. A self-described "creative type," Firestein didn't discriminate among camera, pen, or musical instruments—they were all vehicles for interpreting the world. He chose the UO in part because Oregon's lush greenery and snow-capped mountains appealed to his aesthetic sensibilities. Also, Firestein knew he would find fellow musicians and artists among the UO's large and diverse student body.

Easygoing and quick to laugh, Firestein moves through life with an optimist's belief that things will always work out. This attitude served Firestein well when he entered a bleak economic landscape postgraduation. Undeterred, Firestein moved back home, worked at a restaurant, and saved money. A year later, he moved to Buenos Aires to learn Spanish and continue with his art projects.

In Buenos Aires, Firestein volunteered with an arts and athletics program for impoverished children. There, he befriended Raaja Nemani, a finance associate turned globetrotter. When Nemani departed for his next adventure, he was clad in a pair of Firestein's hand-decorated sneakers that were, fittingly, evocative of the urban landscape where they had met.

Those shoes took Nemani around the world, and wherever he went, people asked about his unusual kicks. Eventually, Nemani contacted Firestein and proposed turning his side shtick into a legitimate business. Firestein immediately agreed. The new venture would be different from Firestein's hobby, however, in one important regard. "It was never just going to be my art on the shoes," Firestein explains. "We wanted to give artists around the world an opportunity to showcase their work in a really unique way."

Bucketfeet launched in 2011 with seven shoe designs from seven artists. Today, as cofounder and chief artist, Firestein helps promote the work of emerging talent from more than 120 countries. Sometimes it all seems too good to be true.

BEST FOOT FORWARD

ALUMNUS
RETHINKS THE
MEANING OF
'CANVAS' AT HIS
ARTIST-FOCUSED
SHOE COMPANY

BY KELSEY SCHAGEMANN

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANTHONY TAHLIER



Firestein becomes visibly animated when he discusses artists who have partnered with Bucketfeet. Argentinian-Spanish artist Felipe Pantone, Firestein says, “was someone I found on Instagram years ago. I loved his work and thought it would look really great with our product.” A year or so after the successful launch of Pantone’s design, Firestein contacted him to discuss another collaboration. But this time, Pantone’s agent replied.

“He told me Felipe was booked for the next two years,” Firestein says, laughing. “His career had really taken off.” In 2016 alone, Pantone had solo exhibitions in Mexico, Italy, France, the United Kingdom, and the United States. “Today, he’s one of the most exciting,

sought-after artists anywhere,” Firestein says. “It’s really cool to be able to say we were one of the first to work with him.”

In addition to sourcing new talent himself, Firestein relies on the Bucketfeet design team to review online submissions from professional and amateur artists. With more than 7,600 designs submitted last year, it’s a monumental task. Each artist whose work is selected receives \$1 per each of the first 25 pairs sold; after that, the artist receives \$10 per pair in perpetuity. The artist also retains ownership of the work.

As of August, all Bucketfeet shoes are now made on demand for the consumer. This production shift effectively eliminated the company’s backlog of excess inventory—a common problem in the finicky world of retail. “It’s very difficult with art to know what’s going to be a hit,” Firestein says. “Now we don’t have shoes sitting in the warehouse, collecting dust.”

This on-demand model has enabled Bucketfeet to broaden its stable of artists. “I’m really excited that we can feature even more designs on the website now that we don’t have the inventory risk,” Firestein says.

The boldness of Bucketfeet designs doesn’t begin and end with the shoe—it permeates everything about the company. Indeed, the Bucketfeet tagline, “Create a Brighter World,” encompasses much more than the visual impact of the shoes. In addition to generating more than \$500,000 for artists so far, Bucketfeet has launched special-edition shoes to raise funding

for organizations focused on pediatric cancer, marine life, and other causes. The company’s community outreach efforts include an artist-speaker series and customer meet-ups.

“We practice what we preach,” Firestein says, emphatically. This commitment stems in part from Firestein’s time at the UO, where he majored in political science. “I’ve always been very interested in the ways of the world,” he says. “My political science courses were fascinating—they gave me a foundation for understanding how history, geography, and politics interact on a global scale.”

Firestein’s experience at the UO prepared him for his career in another important way. At the UO, he says, “I learned how to learn.” For an entrepreneur, especially one in an evolving industry, this skill can make or break a business.

As Bucketfeet adapts to the marketplace, Firestein remains vigilant. “When you think you’ve succeeded, that’s when it goes downhill,” he says. “There’s always more to be done.” Despite an ever-expanding list of to-do’s, one thing consistently makes him smile—hearing from friends around the world that they saw “his” shoes on the subway in Mexico, on the street in Paris, or at a restaurant in Kyoto.

“Those ‘pinch me’ moments will never get old,” Firestein says.

Kelsey Schagemann is a Chicago-based freelance writer and editor.

Taking Flight

The Duck spirit of innovation and creativity is alive and well—and shoes are only the beginning. Meet the entrepreneurs behind some of our favorite ventures.



BLISS NORTHWEST

BRIDAL lives in the sweet spot between wedding planners and DIY brides. The concierge-based model from **Jenn Albertson**, class of 2018, was developed with the coaching of faculty. “Their mentorship is undeniably the reason Bliss

Northwest is where it is today,” Albertson says.

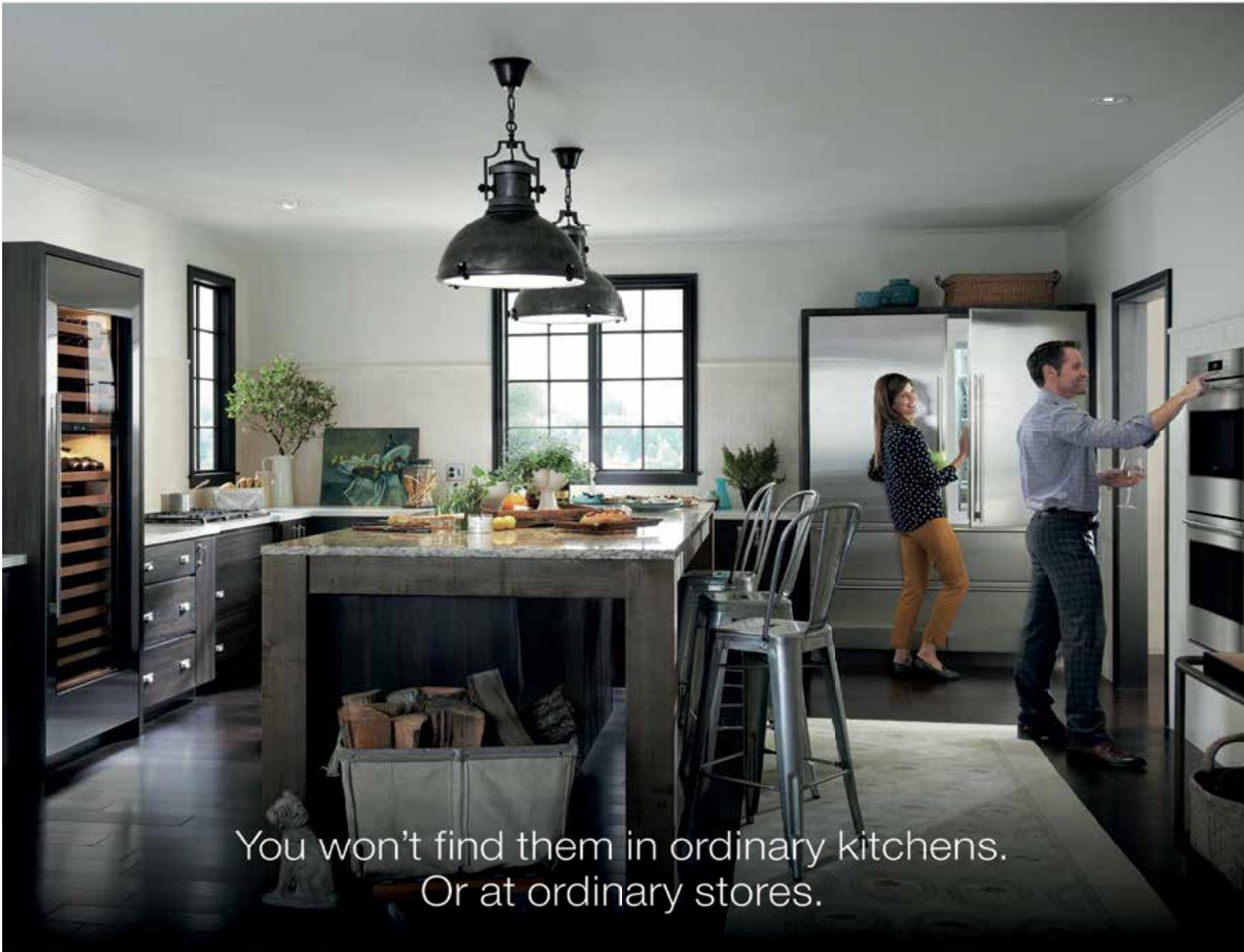
Members of **ROAM FITNESS**, the only postsecurity airport gym in the country, can thank the UO for their sweat sessions. “We had the flexibility to gear our class projects toward creating this company,” says **Cynthia Sandall**, MBA ’15, who cofounded Roam with **Ty Manegold**, MBA ’15.

Ian Moise, MS ’03, says the UO “refined my understanding of the complexities of environmental idealism,” a concept at the heart of **KUTTLEFISH**, an online marketplace for upcycled, recycled, and reclaimed materials. “We’re helping to build the circular economy.”

At **OREGON BREWLAB**, owner **Dana Garves**, BS ’10, serves breweries, home brewers, and the cider industry by analyzing the alcohol content and nutritional information in beer and other fermented beverages. “My chemistry degree got me into quality control, which propelled me into the beer world,” she says.

The Duck Store may soon carry the **LIGHTLOCK**, an elegant, high-security bike lock from Blueprint, Inc. As part of the Duck Store’s Oregon Incubator Program, **Thomas Blase**, BS ’16, says he and Blueprint cofounders **Alex Reinhart**, BS ’16, and **Siobhan Mead**, BArch ’16, received “tremendous support.”





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OLD Oregon



BAND ON THE RUN

For the UO's Green Garter Band, versatility is more than switching from "Louie, Louie" to Disney's "DuckTales" theme. It's maneuvering among the tailgate party throngs on Game Day, finding just enough open pavement to fuel Duck Nation for victory with "Mighty Oregon" and more before the march into Autzen. Student directors organize all song selections and the results speak for themselves—this September 9 gig was followed by Oregon's electrifying win over Nebraska.





The Right Stuff

Nancie Peacocke Fadeley, MA '74, has been an advocate for the environment and women's issues for 40 years—and she's still got game.

After 10 years in the legislature, Fadeley served as the director of public affairs for KWAX radio, which at the time was an NPR station, and assistant vice provost at the UO. Today, she lives with her watchful pooch, Dexter, in east Eugene.

In Nancie Peacocke Fadeley's first term in the Oregon House of Representatives, she cast her vote in favor of Oregon's historic bottle bill—the first in the nation to require a five-cent deposit on cans and bottles. Two years later, in 1973, as chair of the House Environment and Land Use Committee, she helped shepherd through Senate Bill 100, visionary land-use legislation that would leave its mark on the state for the next several decades.

Clearly, she was a woman in the right time, at the right place, and with the right political instincts.

“At the time, I didn't know that S. 100 would make the difference that it has,” says Fadeley, now 87, of Oregon's

BY ALICE TALLMADGE

pioneering land-use law. “I'm amazed and gratified at the effect it has had on

Oregon.” The law created the Land Use Conservation and Development Commission, and its zoning requirements have been instrumental in preserving agricultural and forest lands, containing sprawl, and regulating industrial development—or, in the words of Governor Tom McCall, in “keeping Oregon lovable and livable.” The law has been a model for states trying to develop land-use planning legislation.

Fadeley wasn't a political greenhorn when she took office. She was married to then Oregon senator Ed Fadeley, and for 10 years had worked as his aide. “I knew where the bodies were buried,” she says of the state's political players.

But even so, when the law was being hammered out, its passage wasn't a given, Fadeley remembers. The Senate Environment and Land Use Committee was “stacked”



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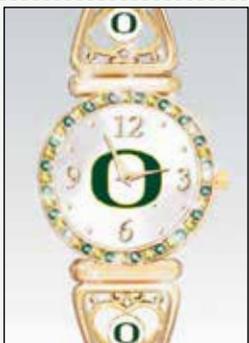
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with members hostile to land-use planning. The bill barely squeaked through the divided committee. When the Senate committee chair sent S. 100 to the House, he feared any proposed amendments would kill the bill. He raced to Fadeley's desk and warned her to not let her committee "change a comma, not a f-king period."

The committee did as they were instructed, and S. 100 passed with bipartisan support. In the House, the vote was 40 to 20, with 25 Democrats and 15 Republicans voting in favor. In the Senate, 11 Democrats and seven Republicans supported the bill. All 11 women in the legislature, regardless of party affiliation, supported the bill.

Women legislators supported environmental issues because of the impact on children's futures, Fadeley says. At the time, most male legislators didn't realize that the environment was about to become a lightning-rod issue statewide. "Men [in the legislature] didn't take environmental issues seriously," she says. "It was perfectly okay with them for women to be environmentalists—they thought that was the height of their ability."

Fadeley's support for S. 100 didn't end at its passage. "Nancie was an active part of community support for Senate Bill 100 for 45 years," says Janet McLennan, who was legal counsel to the House committee that Fadeley chaired. "She was very important to keeping S. 100 alive and vital."

Land-use advocate Henry Richmond came up with the idea of creating a statewide land-use support group, and enlisted Governor Tom McCall's support. Since 1974, 1,000 Friends of Oregon has pushed back against repeal efforts and brought legal cases against attempts to bypass land-use restrictions. Fadeley, he says, fought hard against each repeal effort, "and none of them were successful."

During her 10-year tenure as a legislator, Fadeley had her fingers on the pulse of more than one big idea. She became an outspoken advocate for women who found themselves on the fringes of society. She introduced her fellow legislators to the concept of "displaced homemakers"—divorced or widowed women who were faced with supporting themselves after years at home raising children.

Fadeley first heard the phrase "displaced homemaker" from two California women, Tish Sommers and Laurie Shields, who coined the term and were trying to raise awareness of this

Fadeley introduced her fellow legislators to the concept of "displaced homemakers"—divorced or widowed women who were faced with supporting themselves after years at home raising children.

growing, yet invisible, population. Fadeley hopped on their bandwagon. She sponsored legislation that provided financial support for displaced homemakers in the University of Oregon's Widowed Services Program, and for similar programs throughout the state.

The early 1980s had Fadeley coping with transition and challenges. In 1981, she lost her seat in the House. In 1984, she and Ed Fadeley, who later became an associate justice of the Oregon Supreme Court, divorced.

Fadeley persevered. "Optimism is genetic with me," she says. She joined the board of 1,000 Friends of Oregon and became a charter member and a national board member of the fledgling Older Women's League, or OWL, founded by Sommers and Shields. The league brought to the public's attention the fact that "growing older as a woman is not the same as growing older as a man," Fadeley says, and focused on issues this demographic faces, such as poverty, cultural stereotypes, health-care and wage inequities, mid-life career obstacles, and the dilemma of family caretaking. Those issues have higher visibility now, Fadeley says, but in the 1980s they weren't on the public's radar.

"People didn't know about caregivers who were suffering in silence and isolation," Fadeley says. "OWL was responsible for raising people's awareness of caregiving and long-term care issues." For several decades, OWL released a report on Mother's Day focused on one of the issues confronting older women. Each year, Fadeley wrote an op-ed column on those issues for the *Register-Guard*.

Fadeley says her activism is rooted in her upbringing in Methodist parsonages in small, rural towns across Missouri. Methodism has a tradition of moving ministers from community to community. "The minister's family knew everybody, and was aware where there were problems, or people who were hurting," she says. "We were supposed to do something about them. I didn't really have a choice."

Along with optimism and purpose, Fadeley is blessed with determination. Prior to her

career as a legislator, Fadeley took courses at the University of Oregon's School of Journalism, choosing only those scheduled when her youngest child, Shira, was in preschool. "I always thought I was a writer, but I couldn't get published," she says. During her first class with UO journalism professor Roy Paul Nelson, she realized why: she didn't know how to structure a journalism article. One class led to another. It took several years, but eventually she earned her master's in journalism.

Fadeley's postlegislature résumé includes service as the director of public affairs for KWAX radio, which at the time was an NPR station, and assistant vice provost at the UO.

Today, Fadeley lives with her watchful pooch, Dexter, in her house in east Eugene. OWL recently disbanded, and this past May was the first time in years she didn't write a column based on the group's annual report. But she has other demands on her time. She is a mentor for Sponsors, a local program for men and women released from prison. She schedules speakers for the League of Women Voters' monthly forums, and is still an enthusiastic member of 1,000 Friends of Oregon.

When motivated, she still speaks up. In a recent op-ed, she addressed the high-profile political shenanigans surrounding a 1932 ballot measure that would have merged the UO with Oregon State University—in Corvallis. Her story sketched the public takedown of the state's first chancellor of the Oregon State System of Higher Education—former OSU president William Jasper Kerr and mastermind behind the school consolidation effort—by a political upstart named Wayne Morse.

Fadeley learned early on that politics was a high-stakes game, and she learned to play her cards well. "My memories of political life are all good," she says. "Maybe it's like childbirth—you don't remember the pain."

Alice Tallmadge is *Oregon Quarterly's* contributing editor.

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October 27-28
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October 29
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FOOTBALL TAILGATE PARTY AT UW
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The Spy Who Taught Me

George Wickes taught thousands of UO students, but few knew about his early career.

G

George Wickes had a price on his head.

It was 1945 in Saigon, and Wickes had been there for four months, talking to French and Vietnamese people and gathering intelligence—some of it from leaders of the Vietnamese independence movement. Wickes, who ended up as a longtime English professor at Oregon, was on a mission with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), precursor to the CIA.

George Wickes was a spy.

“Well, yes, you could say I was a spy!” declares Wickes, not denying the charge.

“The great thing about the OSS was how imaginative it was,” Wickes recalls. “Instead of following military protocol, OSS had no hesitation about breaking rules and doing things no one else did. The Navy SEALs, for instance, were conceived when the OSS decided to send swimmers into enemy harbors to sink ships by attaching explosive devices, nicknamed ‘limpets,’ to their bottoms.”

BY LAURIE NOTARO

Because of his linguistic ability, the Army had sent

Wickes to the University of California at Berkeley in 1943 to study Vietnamese. While there, he passed a barrage of cryptology tests, which led to his being recruited by the OSS, trained as a cryptographer at their headquarters in Washington, DC, and sent overseas to Southeast Asia.

Wickes was in Rangoon when World War II ended and heard that the OSS was sending a small team to Saigon under the command of Colonel Peter Dewey. He looked up Dewey and asked if he could join the team, explaining that he had studied Vietnamese. Dewey was unimpressed, asking if he could speak French. When Wickes said that he had learned French at his Belgian mother’s knee, Dewey gave him a one-word exam. “What is the French word for street?” As soon as Wickes pronounced the word *rue* with a deep, distinct roll of the *r*—difficult for English speakers to enunciate—Dewey was convinced. “All right,” he told Wickes, “you can go.”

Seventy-one years later, it was Wickes’ involvement, and the fact that he is one of possibly two surviving members of the OSS mission, that caught the attention of producers Ken Burns and Lynn Novick when they were researching their 10-part, 18-hour documentary *The Vietnam*



Left: George Wickes at Camp David, Maryland, during training. Right: Wickes sitting on a balcony at the Palace Hotel in Saigon, during his OSS days.



War, which premiered on PBS in September.

Wickes is featured in the first episode, which documents OSS coverage of the early stages of the Vietnamese independence movement. He went to Saigon initially as a cryptographer, coding and decoding messages, but eventually began to collect information about current events in Saigon.

“We knew when we started on the project that it was essential to capture the early American involvement in Vietnam, post-Second World War,” said producer Sarah Botstein. “When we learned that George Wickes, one of the only surviving mem-

bers of his OSS team, was alive and well—and willing to meet with us—we knew it was urgent that we get on a plane. Not only was he one of a small number of Americans in Vietnam at the time, but the fact that he met with Ho Chi Minh, and had given a lot of thought to his experience in the country at that time, was hugely important.”

In 1945, Wickes’ close association to Dewey put him at risk of assassination. Both might have been intended targets of the French, because both had held clandestine meetings with Vietnamese leaders of the independence movement, which the French were attempting to suppress.

Tragically, Dewey was assassinated, but not by the French. He was mistaken for a French officer and killed by Vietnamese guerillas at a road block near the OSS residence on the day he was supposed to fly home. He was the first American soldier to be killed in Vietnam.

Wickes, who admired his commanding officer and found him a good friend, was charged with

Wickes’ life has been shaped by the excitement, creativity, and purpose of his time in Vietnam.

“the rather gruesome job” of searching for his body, but it was never found.

Months later Wickes and another member of the Saigon team proposed a mission to Hanoi to interview Ho Chi Minh, ostensibly to ask if he was a communist. An earlier OSS mission to Hanoi had been recalled, and there was no American representative in Hanoi. Wickes surmises that OSS and presumably the State Department authorized the mission because they wanted to find out more about what was going on in Northern Vietnam.

To Wickes’ surprise, the interview was conducted in English; Ho Chi Minh had spent time as a young man working in restaurants in Boston and New York. He described his respect for the principles of the Declaration of Independence.

“Ho expressed his admiration of this country,” Wickes says, “with which he wanted close ties and support for the independence movement.”

After World War II, the CIA wanted Wickes to join their ranks, but he didn’t particularly care for the new organization. “We weren’t at war any longer,” he explains, “and the spirit of the CIA was different from the spirit of

the OSS. The OSS was like a lark. The CIA sounded more sinister.”

Instead, Wickes went to graduate school on the GI Bill in 1946, earning a master’s degree at Columbia University and a PhD at the University of California, Berkeley. He taught for three years at Duke University, and then moved to Claremont, California, as one of the seven founding faculty members of Harvey Mudd College. After spending 12 years there, he came to the University of Oregon on a one-year visiting professorship in 1970. One year extended into decades, and Wickes officially retired in 1993, although he continued to teach a course or two a year until 2015.

At age 94, Wickes still embraces his love of academia—he will be teaching an Insight Seminar on F. Scott Fitzgerald and Ernest Hemingway beginning in January.

Wickes’ life has been shaped by the excitement, creativity, and purpose of his time in Vietnam. Like everyone who served, he saw horrific things, witnessed major moments in history, and experienced firsthand how extreme life as a soldier—and as a spy—could be.

But it wasn’t the spy life that was for him. It was always teaching, not passing along intelligence, secrets, or ground movements, but knowledge of a different sort.

“I loved teaching most of all,” he says with a smile, settling back in the chair in his living room. “I just had the most marvelous career.”

Laurie Notaro is a *New York Times* bestselling author. Her most recent book is *Crossing the Horizon*.

Luck and a Broadway Duck

John Sanders, BA '99, traces his success to the UO's Pocket Playhouse and Clark Honors College

BY MELODY WARD LESLIE



In September, as John Sanders took his final bow as Ned “Needlenose” Ryerson in *Groundhog Day: The Musical*, his thoughts spun like the show’s five revolving stages. Despite enthusiastic audiences and seven Tony nominations, it was over. The producers decided to end their \$18 million Broadway extravaganza after less than six months.

Heartbreaking? You bet. But the UO theater arts graduate says the thrill of starring in such an exciting show more than made up for it. “It’s been incredible,” he says. “I’m heartened that there will be a national tour and a remount in London.”

As a measure of Sanders’ success, he was learning the lines for his next show before *Groundhog Day* ended. He’s in the Public Theater’s October premiere of Richard Nelson’s new play *Illyria*, which is the story of the Public’s origins. Sanders plays Stuart Vaughan, who cofounded the theater with Joe Papp, the Pulitzer Prize-winning impresario whose credits include *Hair* and *A Chorus Line*. Vaughan, a champion of the American regional theater movement, went on to found the Seattle Repertory Theatre, the largest nonprofit resident theater in the Pacific Northwest.

Yes, Sanders is living the dream. He juggles back-to-back stints on and off Broadway with steady gigs in TV, films, commercials, and more.

“I just wanted to explore theater and find out what my place in it might be.”

He’s the voice of Mucinex (“Start the relief. Ditch the misery.”), as well as for several characters in the video games *Minecraft* and *Batman*, and he plays Donald Hooper in the Netflix Marvel series *Iron Fist*.

He wasn’t aiming for Broadway when he left his California home for the UO 20 years ago. “I just wanted to explore theater and find

out what my place in it might be,” he recalls, noting that he’s glad he chose a liberal arts approach over acting school.

“I loved the intellectual atmosphere of the Clark Honors College, especially the discussion classes,” he says. “I didn’t have to immerse myself in a conservatory-style theater program, so I could also take a course in quantum mechanics or in Russian history. I’m a big believer in the market value of a liberal arts education.”

Looking back, he says two keys to his development as an actor were the freedom to experiment in the UO’s Pocket Playhouse, and the encouragement of theater arts graduate student Jimmy Bickerstaff, PhD ’00. “I loved the way Jimmy worked, and he convinced me that Chicago was a place I should think about going if I wanted to be in plays,” he says.

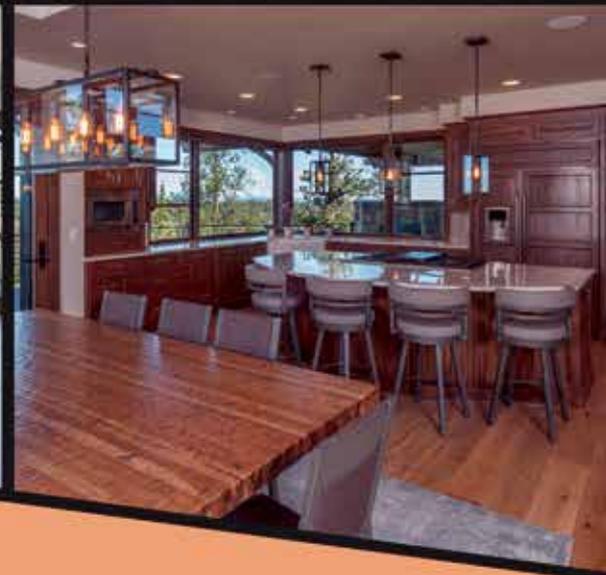
Like most actors, Sanders struggled during his dues-paying years in Chicago, and he appreciates the good fortune that came his way. “I was lucky enough to get tapped straight into the Broadway run of *Peter and the Starcatcher*, and lucky it was actually a hit,” he says. “We played for a year, and then I was incredibly lucky to receive a role in *Matilda: The Musical* at one of my first auditions in New York. Those two shows have formed the basis of a lot of the relationships that I continue to draw on.”

For many actors, all these achievements would be enough. But as much as he loves living and working in New York, Sanders’ dream job may surprise you. “My greatest aspiration was, and still is, working at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland,” he says. Who knows? He may get lucky.

Melody Ward Leslie, BA '79, is a staff writer for University Communications.

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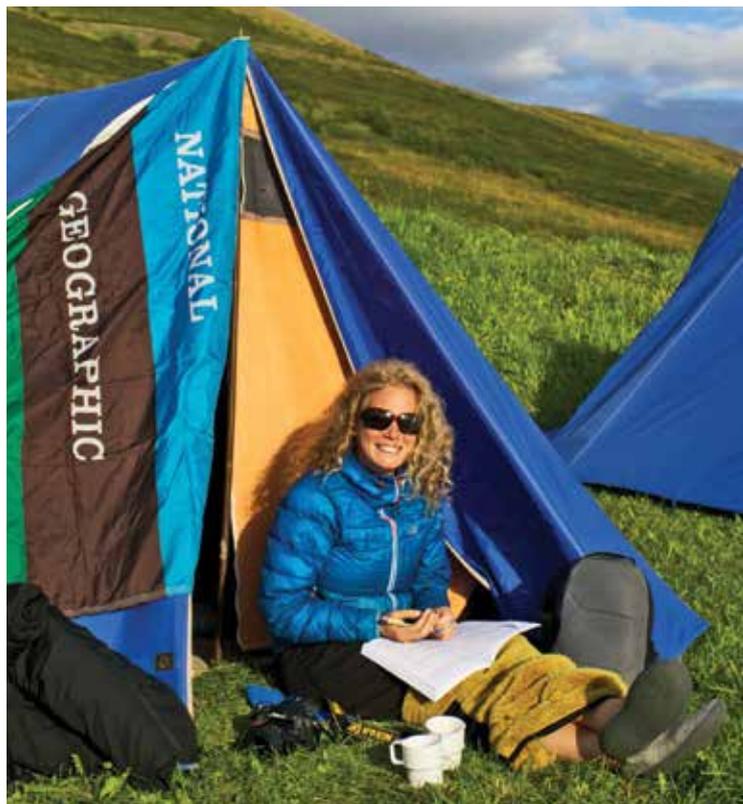
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Class Notes

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CLASS NOTABLE

M Jackson, Nat Geo Explorer

As one of 14 individuals recently named a 2017 “Emerging Explorer” by *National Geographic*, M Jackson, PhD '17, appreciates the significance of a title that has traditionally been reserved for men. “Having the title of ‘explorer’ bestowed upon me alongside a group of diverse people—including other women and indigenous peoples—suggests that the idea of who can be an explorer, and how exploration is defined, has changed significantly and upended traditional conceptualizations of ‘explore,’” she says. A geographer and glaciologist, Jackson is the recipient of US Fulbright fellowships in Iceland and Turkey, served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Zambia, and has led National Geographic Student Expeditions programs in Alaska and Iceland. Jackson, who was featured in “Breaking the Ice,” in the Autumn 2016 issue of *Oregon Quarterly*, continues to examine the diverse intersections of people and glaciers. Her book, *While Glaciers Slept: Being Human in a Time of Climate Change*, draws together family stories of loss and death with environmental narratives of climate change, mourning, courage, and hope.

INDICATES UOAA MEMBER

1960s

KAREN COOKSON, BS '61, MMus '66, was honored at the 2017 Otsego 2000 Historic Preservation Awards in New York for coediting *The Sharon Springs Community Cookbook: With Recipes from Beekman Farm and Their Neighbors*, which will be sold nationwide to benefit the local food pantry.

CLARK SANTEE, BS '63, retired after a 50-year career as an independent

producer and director of performing arts programs for television. He continues his television activities as a volunteer, producing programs on Portland's music scene and videos about the history of the UO track team.

Laura Bock, BA '67, published a memoir, *Red Diaper Daughter: Three Generations of Rebels and Revolutionaries*. Her parents were committed left-wing radical activists, and their political involvement was the inspiration for her participation in the civil rights and antiwar movements at the UO in the

1970s

DAVID LIPPOFF, BS '71, is coordinator for Solutions Journalism Network's Portland-based community of journalists, who report rigorously on responses to social problems.

KEN WOODY, BS '71, a lettered football player for Oregon from 1966 to 1970, recently published *After Further Review: A Fan's Guide to What's Really*

Happening on the Football Field. The book helps fans get more out of their experience viewing football games.

SUSAN SPECHT ORAM, BS '77, has published books on public relations, investor relations, and boating, as well as a whimsical series called *Boating with Buddy*, written from the viewpoint of the author's beagle mix rescue dog.

ALICE OLSEN, MMus '77, celebrated the 30th anniversary of the founding of Alice Olsen Publishing Company in Vancouver, Washington. The company has expanded

and assignment editor at newspapers in Northern California, **PAUL FEIST**, BA '82, now oversees communications and marketing for California Community Colleges.

1980s

JESSE BARTON, BA '80, edited the practitioner's manual *Still at War: A Guide for Defenders, Prosecutors, and Judges Dealing with Oregon's Veteran Defendant Crisis*. The manual is dedicated to Walter W. Waters, an Oregonian and World War I veteran.

After working for more than 20 years as a reporter

and assignment editor at newspapers in Northern California, **PAUL FEIST**, BA '82, now oversees communications and marketing for California Community Colleges.

DANE CLAUSSEN, BS '84, has been appointed editor of *Newspaper Research Journal*, the international scholarly journal published by the Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication.

1990s

First Sterling has named **CATHERINE SUCH**, BA

FLASHBACK

1957 The state notches a national first in modern education, as the facilities of the UO and three other Oregon colleges are linked through television. The UO broadcasts lectures out of its TV studios; students in groups of 25 or 30 watch on 24-inch screens and discuss the lectures afterward.



DUCKS AFIELD

From left to right: UO Foundation trustee **OYSTEIN HARSVIK, BS '88**, Ducks fan Daryl Lyman, **JIM FICK, BS '93**, and Tom Dugoni, father of UO student **MELISSA**—retake the Oregon Territory from the summit of Mount Rainier at 14,411 feet.

We love to track Duck migrations! Send us your favorite photos of yourself, classmates, family, and friends showing your Duck pride around the world. Attach a high resolution JPEG file to an email and send to quarterly@uoregon.edu, or submit them online at OregonQuarterly.com.

'91, head of distribution and investor services for Regions Affordable Housing LLC.

PAUL MORGAN, BA '92, received the Harry and Marion Royer Eberly Faculty Fellowship in Education at Penn State's College of Education. The fellowship will support his academic work on early risk factors for learning difficulties, and on

interventions that will help young children to greater academic success.

SARA (DODGE) HENSON, BA '93, is the new chair of the Department of Social Science at Central Oregon Community College in Bend.

LUKE PINGEL, BA '93, has been named chief legal officer for Agricultural

Cooperative Development International-Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (ACDI/VOCA), an international development nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC. He spent the 20 years prior helping provide legal guidance to organizations in developing international markets.

RICHARD APOLLO FUHRIMAN, MS '96,

joined the Department of Commerce as a special assistant to the secretary. He was the head of the US delegation for the G20 ministerial commission on the digital economy meeting in Dusseldorf, Germany, where he negotiated a roadmap for joint policies for a digital future.

Quinn Evans Architects has promoted **SHARIF** *continued on page 58*

FLASHBACK

1997 UO joins a 100-member consortium of universities developing the groundwork for "Internet 2"—a high-speed network that will allow researchers to develop the next round of internet innovations, including real-time, full-screen, multiuser video conferencing.



DUCKS AFIELD

TRACY OLSEN, BS '93, stands in front of the “floating” *torii* gate of the Itsukushima Shrine. His family came to Oregon from Japan three generations ago, and this was the first time in 60 years anyone from his family had visited the country.

ATTIA, BArch '96, to associate in their Washington, DC, office. Attia's projects include the modernization design of the city's National Air and Space Museum.

NIKI MENDOZA, BA '97, JD '97, has joined Seattle-based GCG as vice president of client strategy and development. She will identify development opportunities and design and execute a comprehensive proposal strategy to reinforce the company's strong market position.

2000s

MATTHEW FISHER, BS '03, is a biology instructor and the Department

of Science chair at Oregon Coast Community College. He is also the editor of *Environmental Biology*, a free, online textbook available from Open Oregon educational resources.

TONY ANDERSEN, BS '07, has taken the leap to work abroad. After living in Portland for 10 years, he accepted the position of marketing and public relations director for

an innovative real estate startup in Medellin, Colombia.

TED HALEY, BA '07, of Portland, Oregon, was named one of *Forbes'* Top 500 Next-Generation Wealth Advisors.

2010s

Pritchard Communications in Portland promoted

JENNA CERRUTI, BA '11, to managing director and vice president. She leads the agency's work with nonprofit and foundation clients and manages agency operations. Pritchard also hired **ERIN STUTESMAN**, BA '10, as account manager.

JONATHAN RUE, JD '11, became an associate for the Portland civil litigation firm Hart Wagner LLP. He is an experienced litigator

FLASHBACK

1947 A special program at this year's homecoming is dedicated to Bill Hayward, track coach emeritus. In recognition of his 44 years at Oregon, the celebration includes a fish fry where he is honored by friends, athletes, and the student body.

Will Power



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DUCKS AFIELD

JODY EISENLOHR STOKES, BIArch '79, spotted a group wearing USC gear while visiting Rome and decided to walk through them yelling, "Go, Ducks!" The group turned out to be the Trojans water polo team. They posed for a picture with Jody showing her Duck pride.

who focuses on complex employment, professional liability, commercial, and white-collar criminal defense cases.

NATHAN SCHMITT, BS '11, cofounded the HadaNōu Collective, which won Teach for America's national Social Innovation Award. The organization creates centers and schools for students to solve real-world problems.

JAKE WEBER, BArch '12, has recently been promoted to an associate and shareholder with Giulietti-Schouten Architects in Portland. He is currently

managing the design, development, and construction of various residential and commercial projects.

LUCAS RISINGER, BS '13, was chosen by the Knowles Science Teaching Foundation as a member of its 2017 Cohort of Teaching Fellows. He will begin his first year teaching biology and physical science at West Albany High School this fall.

NATHAN SNYDER, JD '13, started a position in July as an associate at the Taipei, Taiwan-based law firm Eiger. He recently published a chapter in the

International Association of Entertainment Lawyers' 2017 book on internet law.

Opsis Architecture has promoted project architects **ELIZABETH MANSER**, MArch '13, and **NATE WOOD**, MArch '13, to associates. Elizabeth's recent projects include Woodburn Alternative High School, the Mount Tabor Maintenance Facility, and Bag and Baggage Theater. Nate's projects include the Clackamas Community College Industrial Technical Center and the Jefferson Middle School renovation and addition.

JARED EBERT, BS '16, a former Oregon football player, is now leading hiking trips in the Southwest. His favorite experience was going on a group trip to the Grand Canyon, where his company assisted a young girl with a physical
continued on page 60

FLASHBACK

2007 The UO, the only school in the Pac-10 conference without baseball, reinstates the sport. Play will resume in the 2009 spring season.

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disability. Using a specialized mobility device, they helped her trek down 9.5 miles to the bottom of the canyon and back out the next day.

IN MEMORIAM

LYLE BRENNEMAN, who attended the UO, died July 26. He served as a teacher

and school administrator in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, taught foreign-area studies at American University, and worked in Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe as a rural business development specialist for the World Bank.

LUCILLE RUTH (BRYANT, NEEDHAM) REAGAN, BS

'45, MS '48, died May 27. She taught business administration, typing, and shorthand from 1948 to 1984 at Mount Vernon Junior College in Washington, at the University of Oregon, and at Chemeketa Community College in Salem. She was president of the Orides Club at the UO and a longtime member of the American Association of University Women.

DAVID WHELAN, BS '50, died May 8. A veteran of World War II, Whelan served in the US Navy and was awarded five Battle Stars. He was formerly chief of finance with the US Army Corps of Engineers in Anchorage, Alaska, and chief of finance with

FLASHBACK

1927 After a contest, "Webfoots" is chosen as the official name for Oregon teams. Lair Gregory, sports editor of the *Portland Oregonian*, submits the winning entry.

the Sixth US Army Stock Control Center, Presidio of San Francisco.

LEONA DeARMOND, BS '51, died September 5th at the age of 88. A music graduate from Tillamook, Leona studied voice and sang in the university choir. She and her husband Bob met as undergraduates and have given generously to the UO, supporting the School of Music and Dance, athletics, the Charles H. Lundquist College of Business, UO Libraries, the

Olum Child Development program, PathwayOregon, and other areas. Leona and Bob both received the UO's Presidential Medal in 2004.

MARILYN JEAN (COLEMAN) HILLIER, BS '52, died April 14. She was a member of Alpha Delta Pi at Oregon and graduated from the School of Nursing and Oregon Medical School. She was licensed as an RN in Oregon, Washington, Hawaii, California, and Colorado, and worked as a

surgical nurse in numerous hospitals.

MARGARET MCLEAN INGMANSON, BA '52, died May 18. She and her husband loved travelling, and they journeyed to Europe, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Central America. In later years, they traveled extensively in their RV around the United States.

PATRICIA CARMONY, BA '53, died July 14. For many years she worked at the Stewart Center Library

FLASHBACK

1967 The 41,000-seat Autzen Stadium, built specifically for Oregon football, becomes the new home of the Fighting Ducks in the fall. Oregon loses to Colorado in the opener, 17-13. Season tickets for the five home games are available for \$25.

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DUCKS AFIELD

BRAD ROBERTSON, BA '92, stands with his wife, Trina, and future Ducks Jack and Penny Robertson in front of the Taj Mahal. Brad visited India after his graduation, and wanted to return with his wife and kids for a family vacation.



and the Biochemistry Library at Purdue University, but each summer she drove across the country to visit her favorite spots in Oregon, including Anthony Lake, Cannon Beach, Manzanita, and any place with a view of Mount Hood or the Sisters.

DALE DENSON, BS '56, died July 8. He was vice president of Delta Tau Delta while a student at Oregon. Following college, he did two tours of Vietnam with the US Naval Reserve

and retired with the rank of commander. He loved his ranch in Halfway, and devoted his time to his family and ranching operations.

CHESTER L. F. PAULSON, BS '58, died August 27. He founded Paulson Investment Company, which became one of the largest independent investment banking firms in the Northwest. The Paulson Reading Room in Knight Library's Special Collections and University Archives is

named for Chester and Jacqueline Paulson.

MICHAEL JOSEPH WENZL, BA '61, MA '65, died June 17. He was an English instructor at California Polytechnic State University at San Luis Obispo for 37 years and was given a distinguished professor award in 1984. Keenly interested in intercollegiate sports, Wenzl served as the NCAA faculty athletics representative for 10 years.

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FLASHBACK
1937 The State Board of Higher Education announces Donald Milton Erb, PhD, as the unanimous choice for president of the UO. At age 37, Erb is the university's youngest president.

JAMES LOWELL, BA '64, died June 21. He spent five years in the US Army, and served in Vietnam, where he led a photographic team. He was a member of the Lambda Chi Alpha chapter at the UO and received his second lieutenant insignia bar upon graduation.

17. She had a successful journalism and web-design career in Portland, San Francisco, and Gaithersburg, Maryland. She was also a skilled athlete who loved skiing, tennis, racquetball, and ping-pong.

"The Wasted Potato" at KZEL-FM, one of the first rock stations in Oregon. He loved music of all genres, making mix CDs, and taking road trips at dawn on unvisited highways and byways.

LAUREL LEE DAVIS-COVIN, BS '69, died July

GARY PALMATIER, BA '72, died July 21. He was a radio DJ known as

THERALD F. TODD, PhD '73, died October 19, 2016. He served as chair of the *continued on page 64*

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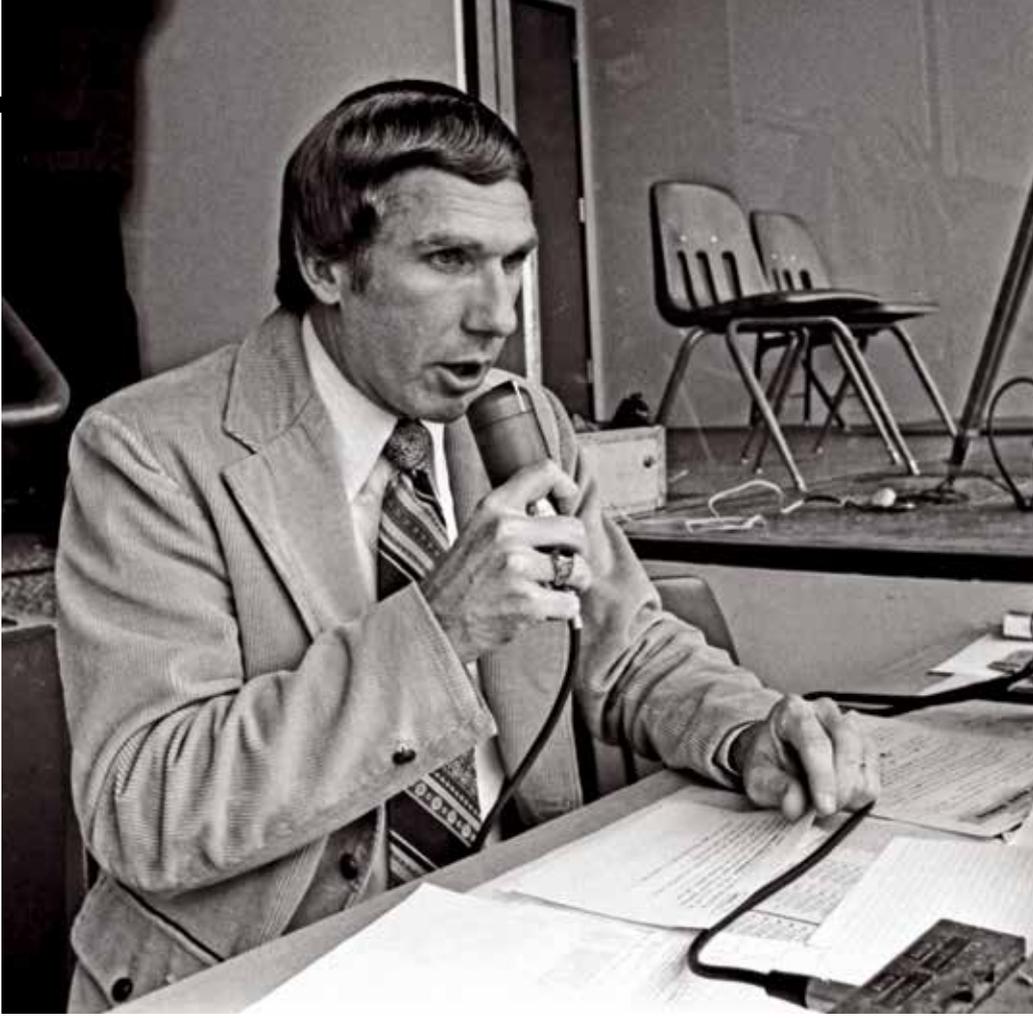
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DUCKS AFIELD
Former UOAA president **DR. RICHARD ALLEN** (left), BA '58, and **BILL JOHNSON**, DMD '69, throw their "O" in Gdansk, Poland, after spotting each other's Duck hats.

WARREN MORGAN/THE REGISTER-GUARD



CLASS NOTABLE

Don Essig

Through all the wins and losses, historic picks, and school records held at Autzen Stadium, there has always been Don Essig. The legendary PA announcer celebrated his 50th season with the UO on September 2, with the Ducks' 77-21 win over Southern Utah. Essig, MEd '64, PhD '71, has been in the booth since 1968, perfecting his art of making announcements within 12 seconds, thanks to the Ducks' trademark fast-tempo offense. During his half-century span of calling games, he has seen the UO rise into a national football powerhouse. Although the Ducks' program is always changing, there are some things that will remain the same—Essig will be in the announcing booth, and it will never rain in Autzen Stadium.

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IN MEMORIAM

DONALD TYKESON, BS '51 (1927-2017) *Philanthropist, communications pioneer, family man*

Don Tykeson converted a small Eugene television station into one of the country's largest cable systems, and his success allowed him to give boundlessly to education, health, and the arts. He and his wife, Willie, in addition to their generosity to many nonprofits, established a named professorship and deanship at the University of Oregon, endowed a fund for undergraduate teaching, and supported scholarships, athletics, and the Oregon Bach Festival. Their \$10 million donation was the lead gift to Tykeson Hall, which will unite the arts and sciences with career services.

Friends and colleagues described him as persistent, gracious, civil, thoughtful, and—perhaps above all else—tirelessly optimistic. He lived with multiple sclerosis—his “old friend”—but it never slowed him down. “You only travel this road one time,” Tykeson said, “so you owe it to yourself to give it your best.”



Department of Theater at Florida International University in Miami for nearly 20 years, and directed more than 60 plays. A highlight of his career was his performance as King Lear in 1998, his first time acting since college.

THOMAS ROY MADDEN, DMA '74, PhD '78, died June 27. He worked as a journalist for the *Helena Independent Record*, the *Associated Press*, and the *Oregonian*. He was also an instructor at the Army Information School at Fort Slocum, New York, at Carroll College in Helena, Montana, and at Eastern Oregon University in La Grande. He had a lifelong

passion for learning, becoming a published poet and playwright as well as an accomplished pianist and composer.

TIMOTHY JON WASSMUTH, MBA '77, died July 23. He was president of Carson Hall during his time at UO. He was also a member of the Hotshot fire crew in the Nez Perce National Forest during the summers of 1973 to 1977.

FACULTY IN MEMORIAM

ARNULF ZWEIG, professor emeritus of philosophy, died April 12, 2016. Zweig was a highly respected scholar and

translator of the works of the German philosopher Immanuel Kant. His lifelong passion for music led him to the Eugene Symphony Orchestra where he played bassoon. He also served as a music critic for the *Register-Guard*.

JAMES M. O'FALLON, professor emeritus of law, died July 11. He spent more than 30 years as a member of the Oregon law faculty and was well known as a leading scholar of the US Constitution. He spent 25 years as the university's faculty athletics representative and helped create graduate opportunities for student athletes of color to pursue law degrees.

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ROBERT IRVING HURWITZ, professor emeritus in the University of Oregon's School of Music and Dance, died July 12. He was a member of the music school faculty for 40 years and received the UO Ersted Award for Distinguished Teaching in 1979. He was a prominent figure in the local performing arts community as a violist with the Eugene Symphony and Oregon Bach Festival, an associate conductor of Eugene Opera, and founding member of the Oregon Mozart Players.

CHET BOWERS, an environmental studies professor from 1967 to 1992, died July 13. He wrote 27 books

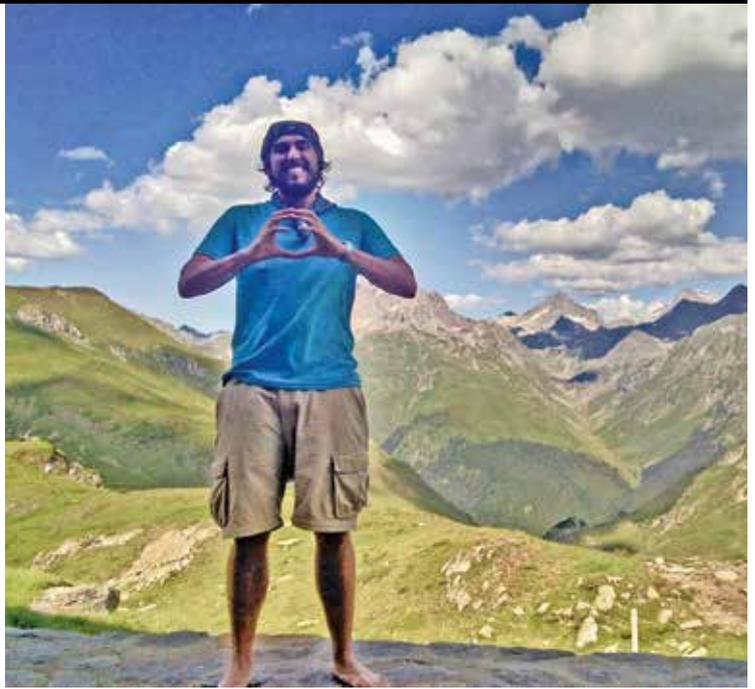
on the ecological crisis and the false promises of the digital revolution. He was also a devoted 505 sailor and helped, with his brother, build the early International 505 fleet in the Pacific Northwest.

STEADMAN UPHAM, former dean of the UO Graduate School, professor of anthropology, and vice provost for research, died July 30. He was most recently president emeritus at the University of Tulsa, where he was instrumental in developing many gains in campus growth, academic development, and fundraising.

DEAN MCKENZIE, a former art history professor,

died August 3. He taught art history at Oregon for 25 years and often traveled to Europe to photograph great works of art for his classes.

WALTHER L. HAHN died August 5 in Athens, Georgia. Born in Berlin, Hahn came to the US in 1953, eventually earning a doctorate in German literature in 1956 from the University of Texas at Austin. He took a faculty position at the UO in the Department of German and Russian. He retired in 1990 and, in travels with his wife, Caecilia, set foot on every continent.



DUCKS AFIELD

GRAY GARRISON, BArch '13, hiked the Pyrenean Haute Route trail along the French-Spanish border from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. He stopped for a moment just east of Candanchú, on the 13th day of the 45-day hike.

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“¡Hola! ¿Cómo fue su fin de semana?” Another Monday morning Spanish class begins. Some students are alert, ready to start. Others straggle in late, excuses tumbling from their mouths. A few students are reticent to engage, even though it’s the sixth week of class. I make a special effort to reach out to them.

“How was your weekend?”

“I had to work,” the standard reply.

But sometimes their eyes meet mine, and I confront a face clouded with grief.

“My grandma died.”

Students attending Umpqua Community College (UCC) aren’t your typical undergrads. They didn’t participate in the local rite of passage, the one-hour drive north to attend the University of Oregon. They are the sons and daughters of the working class of Douglas County, whose median poverty rate rests at 20 percent. They’ve watched the timber industry—the foundation of the region’s economy—be decimated. Their dads, after years in the woods, might sit beside them in class as part of job retraining.

Domestic violence, drug abuse, and teen pregnancy form the fabric of many of these students’ lives. But so does the strength of their faith, the joys of hunting and fishing among the exquisite forests and green-gold waters of the Umpqua, and the multi-generational ties of family, a web that remains resilient against all odds. A student who mourns her grandmother mourns someone who kept her safe, told her she was smart or, without needing words, that she was loved.

Coming from a long line of educators, I believe in the power of teaching to change lives. Upon receiving my master’s from the UO in Romance Languages in 2000, I felt a duty to bring the larger world to students whose exposure was limited. I used the mechanics of Spanish as the first step toward introducing them to a bigger perspective.

It began simply enough: reciting the ABCs or counting to 10. Learning the basic question words to the tune of “Jingle Bells” had students in

H. NÍ AÓDAGAÍN

stitches. *Maybe this Spanish stuff wasn’t so bad after all.*

Through the conjugation of verbs and teaching the difference between “el” and “la,” I communicated to each person that I believed in their innate ability to acquire knowledge.

“I can’t learn a language. I failed Spanish in high school,” they’d wail.

“You learned English. That’s a language. If you couldn’t speak English, then I’d agree. But you’ve already learned a language.”

My method of teaching—acknowledgment of each student’s inherent worth, and their right to be treated with dignity—grew from interacting with the distinctly unique individuals I taught: flawed, wounded, beaten down—yet still hopeful, alive, yearning.

My students taught me that encouragement, authentic caring, and respect are fundamental to the nurturing of a soul. In a classroom environment in which positive feedback—however small the achievement—was the underlying philosophy, students who were afraid to speak raised their hands, older women who had been told they “didn’t have the smarts to go to college” aced their tests, and eighteen-year-olds who hadn’t ever stepped onto a plane began to dream of visiting Paris.

From Mandy who couldn’t find Mexico on a map, to the former drug addict who gained entry into a highly competitive UO program, each student had a story worth telling. My job was to listen for it behind their self-deprecation and lack of confidence. Once I heard even a whisper of what a student wished for and was capable of, I drew out the most powerful tool I possessed and wielded it with fervor.

The subject was Spanish. The teaching tool was love.

On October 1, 2015, a UCC student shot and killed his professor and eight students. This essay is dedicated to the professor, and my colleague, Larry Levine; to the students who lost their lives while educating themselves; and to their families, for whom no words can ever console enough.

H. Ní Aódagáin, MA ’00, taught Spanish for 15 years at Umpqua Community College. To read her full essay, visit “Reaching through the Portal” at hauthor.com.

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