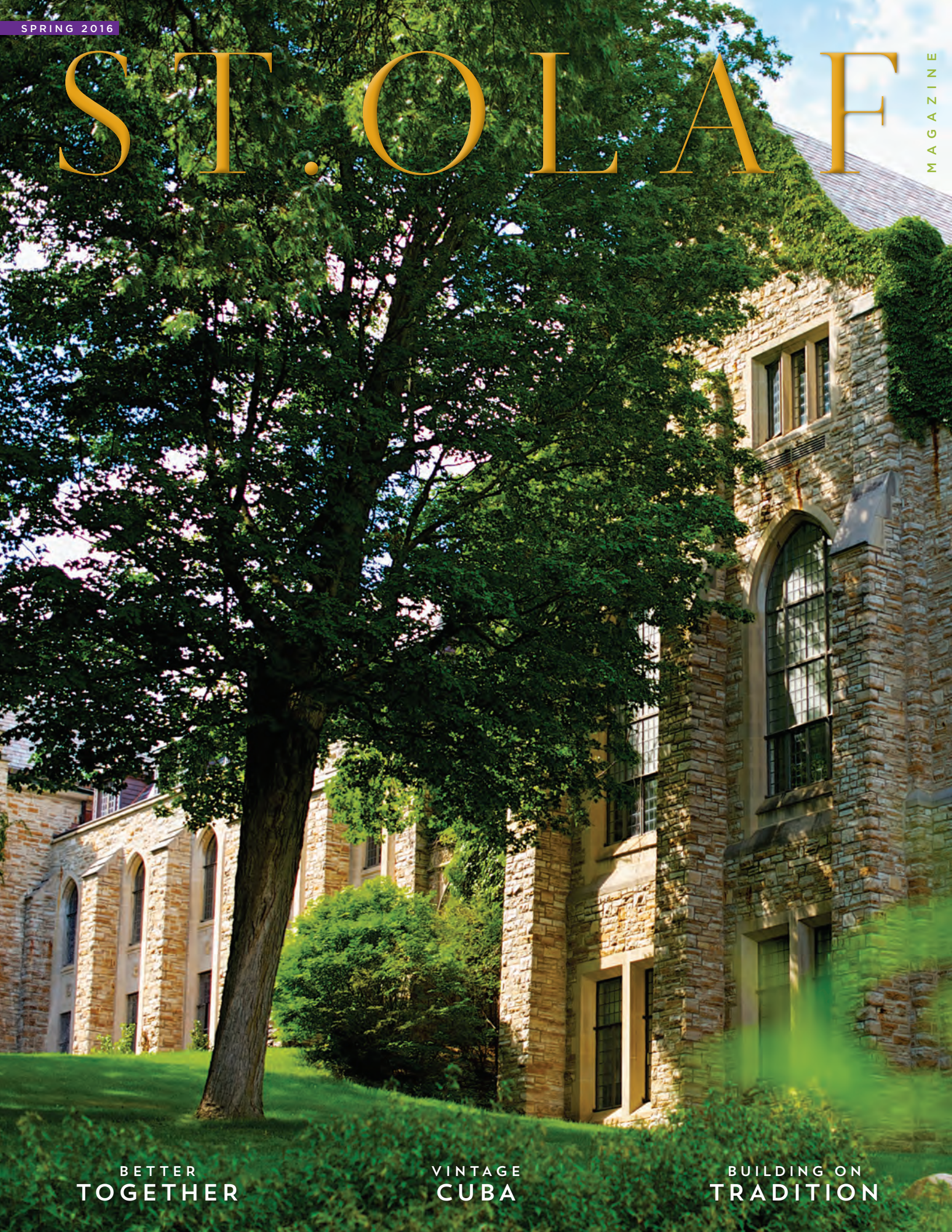


SPRING 2016

# ST. OLAF

MAGAZINE



BETTER  
TOGETHER

VINTAGE  
CUBA

BUILDING ON  
TRADITION





**ST. OLAF MAGAZINE**

Spring 2016 · Volume 63 · No. 2

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BY ERIN PETERSON

Living and learning in community is at the heart of what makes a St. Olaf education distinctive. From study groups, collaborative research, athletics, and club activities to rehearsals and concerts, awareness events, and service projects, St. Olaf's vibrant residential culture enhances achievement, creates lasting friendships, and prepares students for life as it's lived beyond college.

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FROM THE DESK OF  
PRESIDENT DAVID R. ANDERSON '74



Dear Oles:

Welcome to the Spring 2016 issue of *St. Olaf Magazine*.

Humans flourish in communities, not in isolation. That's why being able to find or to create community is important to our well-being. St. Olaf gives students the tools to fully engage in that experience. "Better Together" in this issue tells the story of how that happens. As the article rightly observes, "There is no question that at a place as big and diverse as St. Olaf, there is not a single community, but many." Moreover, we read that many students belong to more than one community, moving seamlessly between and among the ones formed by their residence hall corridors, their teams, their musical ensembles, their interest groups. But amidst this diversity of association, one constant remains: "In a healthy, vibrant community ... the group becomes more than the sum of its individual members." This is the source of a sense of belonging, the accelerant to positive action, the experience that can shape how you negotiate the world after college. It's part of the value added by a St. Olaf education.

"Building on Tradition" demonstrates once again how a liberal arts education can prepare you for anything and everything. The article reveals the paths taken by five St. Olaf alumni who built successful careers in the field of architecture, a major the College doesn't offer. Instead, these Oles majored in things like theater, philosophy, and art, learned to find their way in a broad range of disciplines and traditions, and honed their curiosity – in short, they learned how to learn. St. Olaf launched them on a trajectory to further education, experiential learning and, finally, to the bold step of starting their own businesses.

This didn't happen by accident. Their success stems from their own gifts and hard work, from their experience of an intentionally crafted liberal arts curriculum, and from the dedication of faculty like Mac Gimse, Walt Stromseth, and the late Steve Edwins and Ed Sovik.

St. Olaf's Jazz I ensemble toured in Cuba over Spring Break. It was the same week as President Obama's historic visit to the island, as well as a visit by another pretty decent musical ensemble – the Rolling Stones. I had the honor of hearing the concerts our Oles performed and seeing the extraordinary musical and personal connections they made with Cuban jazz artists. St. Olaf has made its musical presence known all over the world for many years through the artistry of our musical ensembles, and it became clear on this trip that our students have left a mark on, and been marked by, Cuban jazz.


The other news and profiles in this issue of the magazine remind us all how important the people are who work and dwell, who teach and learn, on Manitou Heights. I hope you find in the magazine evidence that the College is flourishing, encouragement about its future, and pride in its trajectory.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "David R. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



UM! YAH! YAH!





**BAILEY KENT '16**, who competes in women's tennis while studying pre-med and Spanish at St. Olaf, was one of only four athletes nationwide to receive the 2014-15 NCAA Student-Athlete Sportsmanship Award. The award recognizes athletes who, through their actions in the competitive arena, demonstrate the ideals of sportsmanship: fairness, civility, honesty, unselfishness, respect, and responsibility. During a doubles match against Carleton College, Kent's winning shot should have clinched a victory, except that, undetected by others, her racket touched the net. She unselfishly called a net penalty on herself, allowing her opponents to rally to win the match. Carleton head coach Luciano Battaglini observed after the match, "The fact that she had the courage to call that on herself was more important than winning the match."

Bailey Kent '16

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOM ROSTER



# Moving On

St. Olaf honors its 2016 faculty retirees.

By Sarah Gruidl '17, Alice Stevens '16, and Sophie Breen '17 PHOTOGRAPHED BY BILL KELLEY



**MIKE SWIFT**  
*Biology*



**STEVE SODERLIND**  
*Economics*



**JOHN OPHAUG**  
*Management Studies*





**SIX ST. OLAF FACULTY** members are retiring at the end of this academic year after having served the college for a combined total of 189 years. Their disciplines include biology, music, art and art history, dance, economics, and management studies. They have made important scholarly contributions, led study abroad programs, and served their departments with distinction. They have also, with their teaching and mentorship, inspired and encouraged countless students for decades.

**SHERRY  
SATERSTROM**

*Dance*



**PAUL  
NIEMISTO**

*Music*



**RON  
GALLAS**

*Art and Art  
History*







**Ron Gallas**  
Art and Art History

How full can a coffee cup be? Associate

Professor of Art and Art History Ron Gallas has made ceramic coffee mugs filled with meaning

and feeling — providing much more than a caffeine energy boost by infusing his work with a beauty and sustainability that disposable cups do not have.

Ceramics have always been a means through which Gallas communicates emotion, ranging from gratitude to regret. After almost three decades at St. Olaf, Gallas is retiring, leaving a legacy of beautiful, meaningful ceramics and pottery.

Gallas completed undergraduate work at the College of St. Thomas (now the University of St. Thomas) in St. Paul, Minnesota, and earned a master of fine arts degree from the University of Minnesota, where he worked with renowned sculptors Warren MacKenzie and Curt Hoard. He went on to teach at several colleges and universities before landing at St. Olaf in 1987.

Gallas capped his final year at the college with an exhibit at the Flaten Art Museum titled *My Heart in My Hands* that demonstrated the depth of meaning and emotion he puts into his ceramics. The exhibit also displayed the work of his mentors and students, illustrating the community Gallas was part of as a sculptor — a community engaged in learning, teaching, and sharing.

His legacy will also live on in the newly opened Ron Gallas Cup Library, which allows St. Olaf faculty, staff, and students to borrow a handmade ceramic mug for one week. Each of the 64 mugs in the Cup Library is a unique handmade work of art by a professional sculptor. Some are Gallas's own work, some were donated by his friends, and others were purchased from galleries. Every mug has a story and comes with a biography of the artist and user comments.

During his time at St. Olaf, Gallas enjoyed a successful career as an artist. He was awarded the National Endowment for the Arts Apprenticeship Grant, the National Endowment for the Arts Craftmen's Fellowship, and the Ford Foundation Matching Funds Grant. His work has been exhibited nationally and locally.

— ALICE STEVENS

*"The ceramics studio has long been the most distinctive of campus spaces — the best music, the best posters, the widest assortment of ceramic work by students, faculty, and other artists. Frankly, it has the best vibe, thanks to Ron."*

— MARY GRIEP  
PROFESSOR OF ART AND  
ART HISTORY, ASSOCIATE  
DEAN OF FINE ARTS



**Paul Niemisto**  
Music

Associate Professor of Music Paul Niemisto was

living with his wife and first child in Nova Scotia when they set their sights on the Midwest. As a

native of Michigan who earned his B.M. and M.M. from the University of Michigan and his Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota, Niemisto searched for opportunities to return to America's heartland.

At the time, St. Olaf was in search of a band director and trombone player. Niemisto fit the bill, and it didn't hurt that he's Scandinavian too!

After the long trek from Canada, Niemisto welcomed the sight of St. Olaf's well-kept and impressive campus. "I was taken in by the atmosphere when I first arrived. I still have those same feelings I had the first day I came to Northfield back in the summer of 1978," he says.

Niemisto served as director of the St. Olaf Norseman Band, Trombone Choir, and Tuba Euphonium Ensemble and taught low brass technique. All the while, he and his wife built a rich and rewarding life for their family in the Northfield community. For Niemisto, that included engaging with the larger music community.

"His work with the Vintage Band, the Cannon Valley Regional Orchestra, and the Ameriikan Pöijät have taken his visionary leadership and musicianship into the community-at-large in powerful and meaningful ways," says Professor of Music Timothy Mahr '78.

In 1999, when Buntrock Commons opened, Niemisto held the community's first Tuba Christmas concert. "The impact was far beyond my expectations," says Niemisto, who soon realized that the small venue wasn't large enough to accommodate the annual concert's avid fans. Today, the successful event is held in Boe Chapel.

Niemisto's desire to reach out to the Northfield community has been matched by his strong connections with St. Olaf students.

He has been touched by many Oles, whom he describes as the fuel for creative mind and soul.

In retirement, Niemisto plans to continue his work with the Northfield community and spend time with his family, which includes three grandchildren as well as his father. While he notes that retirement is much like a change of occupation, he is unsure of what that change will mean. It will be a surprise for everyone, including himself.

— SOPHIE BREEN

*"Beyond his faithful service to St. Olaf and the Music Department, Paul has distinguished himself within the Northfield community as the creative and administrative force behind the Vintage Band Festival, an event that has attracted bands from national and international venues to Northfield. In 2013, the Northfield Arts and Culture Commission acknowledged Paul's creative work for the city by naming him a Living Treasure."*

— DAN DRESSEN  
ASSOCIATE PROVOST AND  
PROFESSOR OF MUSIC



**John Ophaug**  
Management Studies

In 1982, Visiting Assistant Professor of Management Studies John Ophaug planted walnut tree seedlings at his home with his students. Over the years,

Ophaug has watched these trees flourish and grow, just as he has watched his students flourish and grow after graduation.

For the past 37 years, Ophaug has taught the *Legal Aspects of Business* course at St. Olaf in addition to practicing law in Northfield, Minnesota. His experience as a practicing lawyer enhanced his ability to help students understand the legal framework for business enterprises, from personal rights and duties to contracts and corporate obligations.

"John is one of those rare individuals who not only was a competent law professional, but someone who also understood liberal arts education and its importance as he taught students about business law," says Professor Emeritus of Economics William Carlson.

His students have gone on to pursue successful careers in business, accounting, and law, among other fields. Many also volunteer in their communities in leadership positions.

"The thing I've enjoyed most about teaching at St. Olaf has been working with students and with fellow faculty members," Ophaug says, noting that it's been rewarding to see his students lead successful lives and contribute to their communities.

After almost four decades of seeing seemingly small efforts in teaching yield great results over time, Ophaug is retiring from his teaching position at St. Olaf. He will continue his legal practice in real estate and estate planning at Schmitz, Ophaug, Dowd, and Blumhoefer, LLP, in Northfield.

Ophaug earned his baccalaureate degree from Carleton College and his law degree from the University of Minnesota. Throughout his career, he has been a member of the State Bar Association Board of Governors and the Continuing Legal Education Board. He has also served as president of the Minnesota State Bar Association Real Property Section. *Minnesota Law and Politics* magazine has named Ophaug a Super Lawyer for the past 15 years.

— ALICE STEVENS

*"John made a unique and considerable contribution to St. Olaf. He has very high standards as an educator and a mischievous sense of humor. For example, he regularly used the names of faculty colleagues as the 'bad guys' in his law cases. He liked to 'cold call' every single student in every single class and was always prepared with a quick quip, in and beyond the classroom. John was a favorite professor among many St. Olaf students and he has decades of alumni who will remember his legacy with a smile on their faces."*

— SIAN MUIR, DIRECTOR  
OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES





**Sheryl Saterstrom**  
Dance

From laying the groundwork for a dance program as a student to completing an extraordinary teaching career nearly 50 years later, Assistant Professor

of Dance Sheryl Saterstrom '70 has continually enlivened and inspired the St. Olaf community during her adventures here.

After graduating from St. Olaf and earning her M.A. in humanities and dance from Arizona State University, Saterstrom returned to the college in 1987 as a guest artist. Soon after, she was asked first to lead an Interim program and then fill in for a sabbatical — “And one thing led to another,” Saterstrom says. “An academic career was never my intention. I just kept falling into the next interesting possibility!”

Throughout her career as a dance artist and a professor, Saterstrom has been driven to reinvent what she finds uninspiring. Dissatisfied with her experience in dance training, she discovered an innovative method known

as Body-Mind Centering. This type of body-based learning has served as “the foundation for my approach to dance teaching, creative practice, and overall inquiry into all things physically expressive,” Saterstrom says.

A certified practitioner of Body-Mind Centering, Saterstrom created cutting-edge courses such as *The Body Moveable*, *Power Play*, and *Improvisation as Practice and Performance* — all inspired by the practice’s educational applications.

Saterstrom’s other creative projects have included the Improvisation Ensemble, re-imagined as the Rhythm Project, the Friday Night Lights performance series, and the new Creative Learning Communities. She also developed Dance in the Rainforest, a project funded by a Magnus the Good Award that culminated in the creation of a series of dance workshops in the Costa Rican rainforest.

Whatever she does, Saterstrom pursues it with energy and enthusiasm, as her time at St. Olaf shows. She says, “I come into each class, rehearsal, committee meeting, performance situation, or student conversation with a sense of possibility.”

And Saterstrom will certainly carry this attitude with her even as she closes the St. Olaf chapter of her life. She is not retiring, she insists: “I come from a long line of farmers, and we don’t retire — we die on our tractors!”

“I am graduating from St. Olaf for the second time,” Saterstrom says, “and just like 46 years ago, I am off on an adventure.”

— SARAH GRUIDL

*“Sherry truly embodies her values, and her enthusiasm for creativity and discovery is palpable. She is an inspiration to her students and faculty colleagues, always moving, asking questions, forever curious. I love that she insists that she isn’t retiring but ‘graduating.’”*

— HEATHER KLOPCHIN  
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR  
OF DANCE



**Steve Soderlind**  
Economics

Although Professor of Economics Steve Soderlind established a distinguished teaching career for more than 30 years at St. Olaf, he ultimately came here to learn.

“I have taught many courses over the years, and in that way I have attained a wide-ranging liberal arts education. One must never forget that teaching is a great way to learn,” says Soderlind, who joined the economics faculty in 1979.

Soderlind, who earned his B.A. in mathematics and economics from the University of Minnesota and his Ph.D. in economics from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, is recognized as a generalist by peers. Having published in the areas of regional economics, welfare economics, history of thought, and consumer economics, he also served as department chair and as the Husby-Johnson Endowed Chair of Business and Economics.

A self-described “journeyman,” Soderlind’s interests extend beyond economics. He has taught across disciplines — from Family Studies and Nordic Studies to the Great Conversation and the Science Conversation. He also served as the director of Urban Studies and as associate dean for Social and Applied Sciences.

The interdisciplinary nature of his career is something that Soderlind considers one of its most rewarding aspects. “Working among disciplines has been a great adventure, consolidating observations and allegories that often clash and groan rather than harmonize,” he says.

Soderlind taught not only across disciplinary boundaries, but also across national and cultural ones. He served as the field supervisor for Term in Asia and led multiple Interims abroad, including the *Mare Balticum* program, in which students travel through eight Baltic nations in northern Europe, studying the region’s political and economic history.

The two decades that Soderlind spent with the *Mare Balticum* program “opened my eyes to a region whose history is widely overlooked, even as it beckons with quiet urgency,” he says. “I will always thank my lucky stars for the years at St. Olaf with fine colleagues and myriad opportunities for travel and collaboration.”

Soderlind intends to stay active during retirement, with plans to continue traveling as well as to hike and bike, read and write, and do volunteer work.

— SARAH GRUIDL

*“Steve has been instrumental in building the economics program into one of the strongest at the college. His students, current and past, appreciate the energetic and thoughtful approach he always brings to his classes, particularly urban economics and the interdisciplinary off-campus Interim, Mare Balticum.”*

— ANTHONY BECKER  
PROFESSOR OF ECONOMICS

*The Economics Department and our students will miss Steve’s superior and engaging classroom contributions, his good counsel, and intellectual curiosity.”*



**Michael Swift**  
Biology

Although Assistant Professor of Biology Michael Swift taught at several colleges and universities throughout his career, St. Olaf College is the institution where he felt most rooted.

“Among all those places, St. Olaf is the closest to an academic ‘home’ that I’ve experienced,” says Swift, who joined the biology faculty in 1997. “It has been quite a ride!”

Swift, who earned his B.S. and M.A. from the University of California-Davis and his Ph.D. in zoology from the University of British Columbia, spent quite a bit of his tenure at St. Olaf conducting notable research. Since 1998, he and Gary Wagenbach, professor emeritus of biology at Carleton College, have been studying freshwater mussel growth in Dry Lake near Ely, Minnesota.

Swift, an active member of the Society for Freshwater Science, has also worked with students on a variety of research projects. He considers this collaboration to be among the most memorable experiences of his time at St. Olaf. “One of the highlights has been helping students conduct research and then watching them present their research at professional meetings,” he says.

The research projects, funded by the St. Olaf Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (CURI) and the National Science Foundation Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) programs, focused on topics such as zooplankton ecology, environmental contaminants in mussels, stoichiometry, damselfly larval predation, and pitcher plants.

Ultimately, it’s the little things that Swift will miss: “Coming up to campus every morning and getting an all-day coffee at the Cage, running into someone I know and catching up for a few minutes before continuing on to whatever was next.”

These interactions with faculty and students are what have made St. Olaf a home for Swift. “From teaching and preparing students for Biology in South India to serving on college committees to participating at cross country and track meets to watching our various arts performances to supervising student research,” he says, “I have had a chance to experience everything a small liberal arts college should provide.”

— SARAH GRUIDL

*“Mike’s diverse interests and talents have been a great asset to the Biology Department and to the college. Mike has taught courses from human biology to limnology, and he has been a champion of off-campus study, especially the Biology in South India program. Through his advising, teaching, and research he has made a real difference in the lives of so many of our students.”*

— KIM KANDL, ASSOCIATE  
PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY



# Better Together

LIVING AND LEARNING IN COMMUNITY IS AT THE HEART OF WHAT MAKES A ST. OLAF EDUCATION DISTINCTIVE. FROM STUDY GROUPS, COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH, ATHLETICS, AND CLUB ACTIVITIES TO REHEARSALS AND CONCERTS, AWARENESS EVENTS, AND SERVICE PROJECTS, THE COLLEGE'S VIBRANT RESIDENTIAL CULTURE ENHANCES ACHIEVEMENT, CREATES LASTING FRIENDSHIPS, AND PREPARES STUDENTS FOR LIFE AS IT IS LIVED BEYOND COLLEGE.

BY **Erin Peterson**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY **Tom Roster**









WHEN ADRIÁN CALDERÓN '16, A DUAL CITIZEN OF Costa Rica and the United States, arrived at St. Olaf from his hometown of Hawthorne, California, he admits it was a bit of a shock. There were the remarkably frigid Minnesota winters, of course. And there were also cultural differences. “My first language is Spanish,” he says. “And it wasn’t until I met another Costa Rican student halfway through my first year that I realized there was an International Student Organization, and people that I could find to speak Spanish with regularly.”



Adrián Calderón '16 (foreground) and John Kronlokken '16



If there were ways Calderón felt like an outsider during those first few months — a familiar feeling to any new college student — there were also ways he formed connections with others, connections that opened his eyes to the bigger possibilities that the St. Olaf community offered. His roommate, John Kronlokken '16, shared Calderón's deep love of music — from classical to jazz — and their friendship bloomed. "I really struck gold," he says of his friend, with whom he continues to collaborate on musical projects.

Calderón also formed close friendships with fellow residents in Ellingson Hall, staying up late into the night to discuss every topic imaginable. Over time, he found and even created the groups where he could grow and excel. He plays piano in the St. Olaf Jazz I ensemble that performed in Cuba this spring, and he's a regular on the intra-

mural soccer teams, where he's found an opportunity to stay active that reminds him of his varsity soccer days in high school. Calderón helped launch a popular campus band, Air is Air, which has been the opening act for pop musician Andy Grammer and has played successful gigs in the Twin Cities. And today, he has a go-to list of people he can converse with in Spanish whenever the urge strikes.

Kjersten Lukken '16 remembers how anxious she was to be dropped off at St. Olaf as a first-year student — she was alone in a sea of thousands of new faces, far from where she'd grown up in central Minnesota's lake country. But just a few months later, happily ensconced in English classes and musical groups, with dozens of new friends from her floor in Mohn Hall, she felt like she was exactly where she needed to be. "I was finally feeling comfortable with where I was," says Lukken.

In the span of a semester, St. Olaf had shifted from a brand-new place to a community that felt like home. Like Calderón, Lukken became deeply involved in groups and experiences that allowed her to grow academically, socially, and musically. Today, she's thoroughly woven into the fabric of the college: she works as a resident assistant, she's a member of the St. Olaf Cantorei, and she sings in the choir for the Friday morning prayer services in Boe Memorial Chapel.

At St. Olaf, Calderón and Lukken found places where they could take their unique skills and interests and multiply their impact with others who shared their passions. In other words, they created their own communities.

Building real — not virtual — communities is one of the college's greatest strengths. For St. Olaf students, great communities can turn the ground beneath them into a launching pad: the right people, connected, help students lift their sights, thinking and doing bigger things than they ever could have imagined on their own.

At a time when online learning is heralded as higher education's next big thing, and when staring at our smartphone screens to check Facebook, Twitter, and Snapchat is considered "social," St. Olaf still believes in the importance of students developing real, face-to-face relationships.

Helping them find and create these meaningful communities is no simple task, but



Kjersten Lukken '16

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IMAGINED ON THEIR OWN.





Norbert Abayisenga '17 (left)  
and Cameron Judge-Becker '17

for St. Olaf, that process is etched in its DNA. Through formal programs and informal connections, students learn the essential skills of living and working alongside others who are unlike them in many ways — but who share the desire to make the most of their St. Olaf experiences, contribute to something bigger than themselves, and ultimately make a difference in the world.

### The Foundation of Community

**A**t St. Olaf, being part of an intensely residential community is expected — and engineered right into the campus: in a given year, all first-year students and more than 95 percent of all sophomores, juniors, and seniors live on campus or in an adjacent college-owned honor house (excluding those students who are studying abroad). With just one major dining facility on campus, Stav Hall in Buntrock Commons, students who live on campus are required to have a board, or meal, plan, which means nearly the



entire campus has a chance to gather together multiple times each day. Residential and academic buildings also have multiple lounges for students to gather informally.

At the outset, of course, community starts small: with a roommate. Pamela McDowell, associate dean of students for residence life, hand-matches all first-year roommates through a process designed to find students who complement – not clone – each other. “An athlete and a musician might be really different in some ways, but how they live may be very similar. They both practice daily and are committed to the success of others. Roommate relationships can build on those values and bridge the gap between their different interests,” she says.

Cameron Judge-Becker '17, a Northfield, Minnesota, native, says that his worldview was transformed his sophomore year when he roomed with Norbert Abayisenga '17, a student from Rwanda. The two were initially paired up as junior counselors, but they developed a friendship that went well beyond their duties as JCs. Judge-Becker says he saw his hometown in a new way through his friend's eyes. “He told stories about his life in Rwanda, and we talked about the first time he saw snow,” says Judge-Becker. “These were the kinds of small things – combined with sharing a room – that allowed me to understand his home country in a deeper way.”

Corridor communities can bring together an even more diverse group. With the help of junior counselors, who smooth the way by planning events ranging from apple picking and Stav Hall lunches to Throwback nights, attending theater productions and sporting events, students get to know students from all over the world in profound ways.

“The conversations with people on your corridor might start out superficial, but they can get deep pretty fast,” says Rachel Dieter '17. “Sometimes we'd talk about wrestling with homesickness, or about how the thing someone thought they'd study – the thing they thought they'd do for their whole life – maybe isn't right for them. Now what?”

“ST. OLAF HAS A STUDENT BODY WITH PEOPLE OF DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, WHICH PRESENTS A CHALLENGE, BUT ALSO AN OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN AND GROW AS AN INDIVIDUAL. THROUGH DAILY INTERACTIONS WITH PEOPLE IN AND OUTSIDE CLASS, ST. OLAF HAS HELPED ME TO BE MORE AWARE AND MORE TOLERANT, GROWING STRONG IN MY FAITH AND BELIEFS YET ALSO ACCEPTING AND UNDERSTANDING THOSE WITH DIFFERENT VIEWS AND OPINIONS.”

– NORBERT ABAYISENGA '17



Rachel Dieter '17 (foreground) and Lily Myers '17



Those kinds of things could keep us up until 2 a.m. talking when we should have been doing homework. Those were conversations that connected us.”

## Communities in Pursuit of a Larger Goal

If St. Olaf’s initial draw for many students is its academic and music programs, a close second may be the diverse group of organizations that students can join, providing an avenue to pursue their interests at almost any level.

The Student Organizations Committee (SOC), a branch of the Student Government Association, is in charge of bringing in new organizations and clubs, which currently include not only diversity celebration programs and academic, religious, athletic, and multicultural groups, but also dozens of thriving special interest groups, from astronomy and animation to improvisation and music entertainment.

“SOC’s role is not to judge the value of a club, but rather to make sure that it matches with the college’s values, embraces our nondiscrimination policy, and is able to function in our community,” says Kris Vatter, director of student activities and Buntrock Commons. These social and cultural clubs and organizations bring together students who believe in something similar, want to learn something new together, network for future goals, or just play together. The groups are always evolving. Today, there are about 250 student organizations, a number that has roughly doubled during the past decade.

Such groups aren’t meant as a simple distraction from students’ studies; they have been proven to enhance the college experience. A 2002 study out of Indiana University, for example, found a strong association between student participation in extracurriculars and stronger cognitive abilities and leadership skills;

students who got involved were also more likely to voice satisfaction with their college experience as a whole.

When Don Williams ’18 arrived at St. Olaf from Chicago, he immediately signed up for dance classes. But when he realized he still didn’t have an outlet for the hip-hop and step-dancing he wanted to do, he launched his own group. Before he’d even finished his first semester at St. Olaf, he’d started the dance troupe Legacy Drill Co., and attracted a dozen other students to his group.

He couldn’t have been happier. “The dance troupe provides [its members with] the opportunity to express themselves with other dance genres,” he says. “I’m very open to non-dance people as well as dance people, so it really brings together a community that wouldn’t meet in terms of taking dance classes or being on an actual dance team.”

Since Williams founded Legacy Drill Co., the group has

“I CAN’T IMAGINE WHAT MY ST. OLAF EXPERIENCE WOULD BE LIKE WITHOUT THE SENSE OF COMMUNITY THAT HAS BEEN FOSTERED THROUGH MY EXPERIENCES WITH RESIDENCE LIFE.”

— RACHEL DIETER ’17



The Legacy Drill Company uses flags in its field shows and routines, says Don Williams ’18, pictured with Kristina Moua ’18, Samantha Sierakowski ’19, Jabri Whirl ’18, and Vang Thao ’18.













The St. Olaf Cycling Club teamed up with the Carleton Cycling Club in 2016, maintaining a shared commitment to training and racing.

performed at halftime shows for St. Olaf football and basketball games, as well as at other events around campus. Williams knows that community is not just what you can find around you, it's also what you can create.

Other students find homes in teams with histories that span a century or longer; they are groups that may have changed vastly over time, but still are as relevant as ever. St. Olaf offers 27 varsity sports — more than any other college in the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference — and dozens of intramural and club sports, which are enjoyed by more than 75 percent of the student body.

Athletic Director Ryan Bowles knows that every team sport encourages community building in specific and disciplined ways. It may be a well-worn cliché, but athletics have long taught students about the importance of working together effectively. The pursuit of a singular goal — a win, a conference championship, a national tournament — can propel teams to work together in ways that will always overshadow a single performance by an individual.

The connections team members build with one another often last beyond the final competition of the season, adds Bowles. “Not long ago, about 25 of the members of the 1970 football team were back on campus to celebrate their 1970 conference championship,” he says. “The bond started at St. Olaf, but it remains strong more than 45 years later.”

## Communities in Conversation

One of the hallmarks of a St. Olaf education is the opportunity that students have to live and work alongside people who are very different from themselves. These relationships can help students see new perspectives, gain greater empathy for others, and discover their shared values. Students also learn how to solve difficult challenges — instead of just walking away from them — which is important in many contexts. While this happens both formally and informally in student organizations and student government, social and cultural clubs, and residence halls and academic courses, students also join communities designed to foster this kind of interaction in intentional ways.

AT A TIME WHEN ONLINE LEARNING IS HERALDED AS HIGHER EDUCATION'S NEXT BIG THING, AND WHEN STARING AT OUR SMARTPHONE SCREENS IS CONSIDERED “SOCIAL,” ST. OLAF STILL BELIEVES IN THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDENTS DEVELOPING REAL, FACE-TO-FACE RELATIONSHIPS.



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Jabri Whirl '18, a native of Chicago, says she has particularly loved being part of Sustained Dialogue (SD), a faculty- and student-facilitated social change process created by Hal Saunders (former diplomat and key drafter of the Camp David Peace Accords) that focuses on issues of diversity, politics, public policy, and social issues. Multiple SD groups serve as catalysts for bringing people together and opening lines of communication in order to create positive change on campus.

Sustained Dialogue has given Whirl a safe place to be forthcoming about some of the complex challenges that exist for her as a woman of color at St. Olaf. The conversations she has in the SD groups have helped her find connections to others who, though they might not share her identity, nonetheless understand the profound ways that race and identity shape who we all are. These connections have helped her understand and define who *she* is. "People want to know about what makes you different [in Sustained Dialogue], and they really cherish that," she says.

Kiki Sykes '16, meanwhile, has found faith-based communities as a way to be both part of a community and expand on the best elements of it.

When she arrived at St. Olaf from Kansas as a transfer student in 2013, she knew she'd have to work a bit harder to find her place at the college, since she didn't have the typical first-year experience. "The most immediate thing [that helped me feel like a part of St. Olaf] was going to daily chapel," says Sykes, who is Presbyterian. "Having a space



Jabri Whirl '18





and community where I had some time during the day to look outside myself and be more grounded — that was the first step.”

St. Olaf’s historically robust faith tradition has long attracted students whose religious identity is central to their St. Olaf experience. But in an increasingly secular age, there are some who shy away from anything that relates to matters of faith. Yet because the Lutheran tradition — in which students critically examine all faiths — is part of the fabric of the institution, the college encourages both intellectual discussion and thoughtful reflection about personal belief.

In 2014, Sykes became a cofounder of St. Olaf’s Interfaith Coalition for Peace and Justice, which is affiliated with the national organization Interfaith Youth Core. When she saw a need for more connection among students of different faiths, she didn’t hesitate to launch the community she envisioned. “I realized that I can help create a community where anyone from any background or belief system can be known and celebrated, wherever they’re coming from.”

“BOE CHAPEL IS ONE OF THE ONLY PLACES ON CAMPUS IN WHICH I’VE NEVER STUDIED OR WORKED. IT IS A SAFE AND SACRED SPACE FOR ME. HERE I CAN BREATHE DEEPLY AND BE REMINDED THAT I AM NOT ALONE.”

— KIKI SYKES '16





## A Place Where Personal Connections Matter

In a healthy, vibrant community, there is often a way in which the group becomes more than the sum of its individual members; at its best, this experience can feel both humbling and powerful. And there is no question that at a place that is as big and diverse as St. Olaf, there is not a single community, but many.

St. Olaf allows students to be part of large communities and small ones, longstanding ones and ephemeral ones. They share great traditions that may span generations, such as music tours and Christmas Festival, or newer traditions, like Ole Spring Relief service projects, the President's Ball, and International Night. They blend in seamlessly with groups in which they fit like a missing puzzle piece. And they seek out other groups that challenge them to connect with people who come to St. Olaf from diverse environments and cultures and who bring with them different views and beliefs.


The best communities help students understand who they are as individuals, and who they can be if they think bigger than themselves.

"The word *community* is used so much around here that I think we can forget how important it is, and we can take it for granted," says Sykes. "But when we pour ourselves into something with people we respect, when we share our experiences, that's what helps us really come alive." 🦋

ERIN PETERSON is a Twin Cities writer and editor, and a regular contributor to *St. Olaf Magazine*.



# Amanda Bauer '16



**THE U.S. FEDERAL RESERVE** is in the news almost every day, but behind the scenes it's a sophisticated research organization. Being a successful research assistant or financial analyst for the Fed requires not only sharp math skills but also strong communication skills and a powerful curiosity about how the economy works.

Over the past few years, St. Olaf graduates have helped one another get a foot in the door at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors, the Fed's main governing body. The most recent beneficiary of this support is Amanda Bauer '16. While pursuing her passion for mathematics, economics, and business at St. Olaf, Bauer has kept busy as a member of Phi Beta Kappa and the international economics honor society, Omicron Delta Epsilon; a clarinetist in the St. Olaf Band; and a player on the college's women's rugby team.

Her advisor, economics professor Anthony Becker, bolstered her interests in business and research economics and connected her with two St. Olaf alumnae at the Federal Reserve Board of Governors. An interview in Washington, D.C., led to multiple offers from several sections of the Federal Reserve. Bauer chose a position as a research assistant in Household and Business Spending, the section of the Fed responsible for analysis, forecasting, and research regarding U.S. household and business spending. Ultimately, the aim of the section is to help monetary policymakers make the best policy decisions possible based on the Fed's state-of-the-art knowledge of economic theory and empirics.

"The prestige of the Federal Reserve Board of Governors — and the fact that they want me and believe I can be an asset to them — is amazing," says Bauer, who starts her new job in Washington, D.C., in June.



# Manitou Maple

AS WINTER ENDS and the first signs of spring appear, St. Olaf students who are committed to a small maple sugaring operation — Manitou Maple — begin tapping dozens of maple trees in the St. Olaf natural lands. The mission of the student-run organization parallels timeless values of sustainability, responsibility, and good stewardship. Founded in the fall of 2014 by Henry Raether '15 and Liam John '16, Manitou Maple fully acknowledges the interdependent relationship between human beings and the natural world.

"Through tapping, collecting, and boiling maple sap, we give students an opportunity to exercise respectful engagement with the landscape rather than simply admire it," says John, a native of Vermont. "Our goal is to help young people develop an appreciation for their surroundings. We can't divorce ourselves from nature; we have to have a relationship with it. Maple sugaring is a way to practice effective environmentalism."

The Manitou Maple team knows their trees. They know which ones produce well and which ones don't. Students look for "happy," healthy, undamaged trees that have a large root or a large limb, and place their taps about four feet off the ground. Using a drill, volunteers make a small hole about 5/16 of an inch wide and 2 inches deep. They gently insert a metal spout and hang a cover and bag over it.

"Tapping doesn't hurt the trees," says John. "People have been doing this for hundreds of years."

Once daytime temperatures rise above 32 degrees and dip below freezing at night, sap begins to flow and volunteers head out to the "sugarbush" to check the bags. As the bags fill up, the students collect them and take them to the cafeteria kitchen, where Randy Clay, Bon Appétit board manager, is waiting. Clay, who is on-call during maple sugaring season, comes in at night to help them boil the sap in large steam kettles.

"It is extremely time intensive," says John. "Sometimes we have to pack up and return the following day to finish the boiling process."

The sap contains anywhere between 1 and 6 percent sugar. The rest is water, which is why it takes as many as 40 gallons of sap to make just one gallon of syrup. That's a lot of work for very little syrup, says John, but "the fun is in the doing — the real value is getting outside and touching nature. Engaging it makes it real for students. This is the best way to learn."



Manitou Maple founders Henry Raether '15 (left) and Liam John '16  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOM ROSTER





A tree that is tapped according to time-honored methods will not suffer adverse health effects and will remain productive, says John. All proceeds from the sale of Manitou Maple syrup are donated to charitable organizations selected annually by the students. PHOTOS BY LIAM JOHN



“It’s a huge commitment for the students to volunteer with Manitou Maple. You can’t decide when the sap flows — it just happens, and you have to collect regardless of what’s going on in your life. You run on nature’s schedule.” — LIAM JOHN '16



# BUILDING .....ON..... TRADITION

FIVE OLE ARCHITECTS  
TAKE THE LEGACY OF  
THEIR FORMER ART  
PROFESSORS AND  
PAY IT FORWARD BY  
INTRODUCING STUDENTS  
TO ARCHITECTURE AS  
A UNIQUE LIBERAL  
ARTS DISCIPLINE.

BY **JOEL HOEKSTRA**  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY TOM ROSTER







Professor Emeritus of Art Mac Gimse '58 taught architects (L-R) Paul Neseth '83, Mark Larson '88, Kurt Gough '88, Nathan Knutson '89, and Chris Strom '95 as undergraduates at St. Olaf. For these five alumni "to teach from their vast experience in architecture was a real gift to the students," says Gimse.



**A** good liberal arts education almost always includes some exploration of architecture. Art history students learn about the principles and technologies that shaped Greek temples and Frank Lloyd Wright's houses. Religious studies majors develop an understanding of how cathedral spires differ from soaring minarets. At the very least, anyone who visits St. Olaf gains an appreciation for the beauty of limestone masonry, right?

Graduates with a passion for architecture often go on to seek a professional degree in the field. And those with an even deeper passion? They return to campus to inspire other Oles — as happened in January, when Twin Cities architects Paul Neseth '83, Kurt Gough '88, Mark Larson '88, Nathan Knutson '89, and Chris Strom '95 joined forces to teach the *Architectural Design I* Interim course.

A dozen students enrolled in the class, which examined not only aesthetics but also the business and practice of architecture. By month's end, they had a greater understanding for how complex and multifaceted the building process can be. But the students weren't the only beneficiaries of the class: the five participating architects say they came away with renewed appreciation for what St. Olaf had taught them. "The liberal arts is a great background for architecture," Larson says. "You're trained to think about all kinds of things. It's multidisciplinary by nature."

Much like the path a learner takes as he or she tackles a new topic, the architectural journey has multiple phases, moving from basic research to subject mastery. Here, a glimpse of how the Interim pre-architecture course was built and a look at the professionals who constructed it.



#### Phase 1: Pre-Design | **WHO NEEDS AN ARCHITECT ANYWAY?**

**E**very architectural project begins with a basic assessment: What is the purpose of the building? Where will it be sited? What is the budget? The schedule? These basic parameters are the foundation of any construction project.

But Nathan Knutson, a principal with the Minneapolis architecture firm VJAA, wanted his students to consider a more fundamental question as they immersed themselves in their month-long study of architecture: *Why hire an architect?* And to jumpstart the students' thinking on the issue, Knutson scheduled a field trip on the second day of the course to St. John's Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Finished in 1961, the St. John's Abbey church, designed by the Hungarian architect Marcel Breuer, is an unforgettable structure: its honeycombed, cast-concrete facade is upstaged only by the massive bell tower and wooden cross that front it. Inside, in the sanctuary, the high crenelated-cement ceiling and soft light filtering through an entire wall of stained glass creates an atmosphere of reverence and hushed tones. It's unlike most churches, yet very much a sacred space. Still, why go through the trouble? Knutson asked his students. Why not build a church like every other — with a pointed roof and steeple? "You could just have a train shed," Knutson observes.





Such queries, of course, were intended to provoke reflection and analysis among Knutson's students — but they were also the kind of deeper questions that have always intrigued the architect. A native of tiny Spring Grove in southern Minnesota, Knutson chose to major in philosophy at St. Olaf, studying with professors Walter Stromseth and Stephan Evans, before attending the University of Minnesota to learn architecture. In some ways, his work today for VJAA, a firm known for its high-minded conceptual designs, aligns with his long-standing interest in big ideas and overarching principles.

After touring the abbey church and asking the students to spend some time sketching, Knutson gathered the class to talk about the factors that had shaped the construction of the building: the client (a community of monks), the materials (steel-reinforced concrete, traditional leaded glass), and the design elements (including a large baptismal font and a priory). They also discussed the influences that shaped Breuer's design — Catholic traditions, new technologies, and the general liberalization that came with Vatican II.

Over the course of the Interim, Knutson pressed the students to consider all the elements that inform and influence architecture. When he was a St. Olaf student, Knutson says, a drafting course taught by Northfield architect Steve Edwins '65 taught him much about drawing and design.

"I remember getting my drawings back. There would be little red pencil marks all over the cotton paper. Steve was teaching us about detail and care. It wasn't just about architecture and design. It was about quality."

But it was what he learned in other classes at the college — on art, literature, and other topics — that would ultimately give him the perspective years later to sense how his clients lived, worked, and played. Knowing those things made him a better architect, he says.

**"ARCHITECTS HAVE TO DEAL WITH ISSUES OF DESIGN, PHYSICS, RESOURCE USE. CULTURE AND IDEAS COME INTO PLAY. IN SOME WAYS, ARCHITECTURE IS THE MOST LIBERAL OF THE LIBERAL ARTS."**

— NATHAN KNUTSON '89



“Architects have to deal with issues of design, physics, resource use,” Knutson says. “Culture and ideas come into play. In some ways, architecture is the most liberal of the liberal arts.”

Phase 2: Design | **WHAT NEEDS TO BE BUILT?**

**M**ost clients come to an architect with a fixed idea in mind: they need a kitchen remodel, want a sunporch addition, or believe a second story is the solution to their particular problem. It’s the job of an architect to carefully loosen the knot of their clients’ thinking and probe the nature of their needs and the foundation of their desires. More often than not, if the architect digs deep enough, the finished product is something richer, more efficient, and more satisfying than the solution the client originally envisioned.

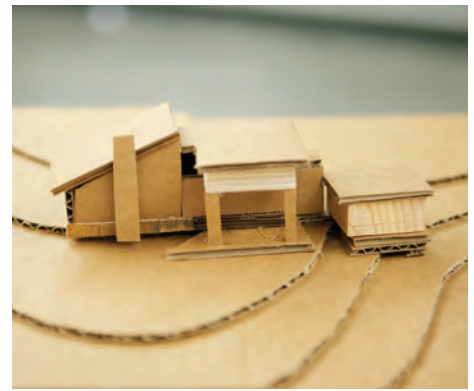
Mark Larson arrived on the Hill with little doubt that he was meant to be an Ole and someday would be a doctor. His parents had graduated from St. Olaf and married in Boe Memorial Chapel. His father worked as a radiologist in Minneapolis. But while Larson succeeded in many of his courses at St. Olaf, he struggled with chemistry. He began to rethink his goal of a career in medicine. Instead, he settled on an economics major.

Larson had always enjoyed drawing and making things, however. And one summer, while he was working as a counselor at a Lake of the Woods camp on the U.S.-Canadian border, a stranger made an offhanded remark that suddenly gave him clarity on how he should spend the rest of his life: “She said, ‘The way you think, the way you draw — you seem like an architect.’” Larson says. “It was like a light switch went on.”

Larson returned to St. Olaf and took several additional art classes and Edwin’s drafting class before applying to the School of Architecture at the University of Minnesota. He received a master of architecture degree in 1993 and eventually went on to work at HGA, a large Minneapolis firm, where he oversaw St. Olaf’s renovation and reopening of the Dittmann Center in 2002. Today, Larson and his wife, Jean Rehkamp, also an architect, own and operate Rehkamp Larson, a 14-person design firm in Minneapolis.

Larson’s specialty is residential design, so when he teamed up with Knutson and the three other St. Olaf alumni to teach *Architectural Design I*, it seemed only natural that he would focus on houses. Plus, “Everyone has been in a house — or lives in a house. So it seemed approachable and something that would be good to teach,” says Larson, who recently received the AIA Minnesota 2016 Architect of Distinction Award.

To give students practice with schematic design, Larson instructed them to design a house. The “client” could be anyone of their choosing: their parents, a best friend, a student group. They then had to choose a site in Northfield that they could visit, map, and document with photos. Larson showed them how to make a schematic design with a bubble diagram, which loosely represents each space with a circle on paper. After the class critiqued the designs, the students refined them, set up elevations, and made cardboard models.



“THE STUDENTS DID A GREAT JOB OF FOLLOWING THEIR MULTIPLE FACULTY ASSIGNMENTS AND LEARNING QUICKLY TO PRODUCE PROFESSIONAL RESULTS. THEIR CAMARADERIE GAVE THEM TEAMWORK TO FINISH EVERYTHING AND SURVIVE SOME SLEEPLESS NIGHTS.”

— MAC GIMSE '58





What did they learn from the exercise? “I think they discovered houses are really complicated,” Larson says. “Homes are often thought of as simple, but they have lots of functions, and they’re very personal.”

Many of the students enrolled in the Interim class indicated they were interested in pursuing architecture as a career. But even if they don’t, Larson says, the things they learned about design will benefit them. He believes the world would generally be a better, more beautiful, more environmentally friendly, and more functional place if everyone had some sort of schooling in design.

“We wander around our cities and wonder why they’re so ugly,” Larson says. “What if all our leaders and even everyday citizens knew something about design? I think our standards would be a lot higher.”

#### Phase 3: Development | **WHAT DO THE DETAILS LOOK LIKE?**

**R**efinement is essential to architecture. A photographer might occasionally get a perfect shot without retouching it. An artist can sometimes dash off a masterpiece doodle in seconds. But the initial designs of an architect are nothing but a sketch, intended to be evocative and ephemeral (imagine Frank Gehry scribbling on a paper napkin). Good buildings are the result of a process that involves the integration of inputs from an array of individuals, including clients, engineers, builders, interior designers, tradespeople, and even acousticians and financiers.

The design development process, says architect Kurt Gough, depends on collaboration to succeed — an idea he tried to impress upon students in the Interim class. At the center of the design process are a host of exchanges between the architect and client. The conversation is also informed by dialog with specialists who understand everything from load tolerances to soil composition to moisture barriers. But the boldest and most

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— MARK LARSON '88



creative ideas in architecture often emerge from an architect's interaction with colleagues within his or her own practice. "The studio is where design development occurs," says Gough, principal of Shelter Architecture in Minneapolis.

To help students understand the design process, Gough and his fellow instructors devised a number of exercises that would force students to listen to each other, communicate with each other, and work with each other. To give them a sense of how clients and architects work together, Gough asked his students to design wallets, based not on their own ideas but rather on the needs and desires of their classmates — with information gleaned from interviews in which the "designer" asked the "client" numerous questions. The client and the class then critiqued each design, based on how well the product met the client's requirements.

At the beginning of the class, Gough told students that they'd be expected to be working with and learning from each other, even when the instructors were away. "Being in the studio is a key part of being an architect — you can't just take the materials home and do it alone," Gough says. Over the course of the month, the students spent hundreds of hours together, meeting early and working late. The process, Gough says, "transformed them from complete strangers into blood brothers." By the end of January, it was clear that the group had become a community.

Just as building design changes over time, Gough's own career has evolved. He studied theater at St. Olaf, working tech. "I liked the design and craftsmanship that went with building sets," he says. But he also majored in art, taking primarily classes in sculpture. "That was my fallback if theater didn't work out — a job in art," Gough says with a chuckle.

After graduation, he worked at the Guthrie Theater, taught for a year at Luther College, and ran the props department at Center Stage in Baltimore. Eventually, however, he craved the chance to propose "grand ideas" — driving the overall design process rather than just contributing to it. He earned an architecture degree from the University of Minnesota, landed a drafting job at a Twin Cities firm, and launched his own practice 11 years ago. His studio, which does both residential and commercial work, employs seven people.

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— KURT GOUGH '88







His colleagues sometimes remark that Gough made a radical change in his career. But the architect sees it differently. His education prepared him to pivot, he says. “St. Olaf really teaches you to learn. That’s the wonderful thing about the school. No matter what your degree when you graduate, you understand the humanities, the sciences, and you have the ability to learn about anything you’re interested in.” Even theater. Even architecture. “It gives you a huge foundation to stand on,” Gough says.

#### Phase 4: Documents | **HOW DOES THE DESIGN GET BUILT?**

Once the architect and the client have agreed on the details of a building design, it’s the job of the architect to translate the plans into blueprints. Because such drawings are used by contractors, bankers, and others to estimate a building’s square footage, materials costs, completion times, and more, the architect must be precise in both the representation and the specifications.

Chris Strom now produces such drawings with the help of computer-assisted design software. But he remembers learning to draft the old-fashioned way – by hand – under Steve Edwin’s instruction. “It was by far the most difficult drafting class I ever took,” says Strom, an art major who went on to earn a degree in architecture at University of California–Berkeley and now runs his own fledgling firm, established in late 2014. “Steve had such high expectations.”

Strom didn’t ask the architecture Interim class to perfect their hand-drawing skills. But he did expect them to produce drawings as part of their education. In fact, he had a particular problem he wanted them to grapple with on paper: how could they redesign Skoglund Athletic Center to make it more contemporary? The building was built in 1966, before Title IX boosted the prominence of women’s sports. Adaptations over the years have included the addition of a women’s locker room and coaching facilities, but Strom wanted to see the kind of innovations today’s students would introduce.

Strom wasn’t disappointed. “Most of them found ways to make it more of a community space,” he says. “Millennials are worldly in a way that often surprises me. They’re quick to understand, translate, and integrate ideas.” Strom was particularly impressed by one student – a swimmer – who found a way to insert a diving well into the Skoglund lobby.

On a recent afternoon in his office, Strom unrolled blueprints for the remodel of an old Minneapolis home, a retreat on Minnesota’s North Shore, and a beach house near Duluth, Minnesota. You might say that architecture is in his blood: Strom grew up in a

“THE REASONS I’M INTERESTED IN ARCHITECTURE HAVE TO DO WITH CURIOSITY ABOUT DOING THINGS BETTER AND DIFFERENTLY. I THINK ST. OLAF HONED THAT SENSE OF CURIOSITY. IT’S THE SAME KIND OF CURIOSITY THAT DRIVES YOU TO PICK UP A NEW BOOK OR TAKE A CLASS OR TALK TO SOMEBODY YOU DON’T KNOW. THAT KIND OF CURIOSITY MAKES YOU A BETTER ARCHITECT.”

— CHRIS STROM '95



“IT’S IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO HOLD MATERIALS, TO STAND ON THEM, TO CHECK THEIR FLEXIBILITY. YOU LEARN SO MUCH BY PICKING UP A 16-FOOT BOARD AND SEEING THE QUALITIES IT HAS. YOU LEARN SO MUCH ABOUT MATERIALS BY HAVING DIRECT CONTACT.”

— PAUL NESETH '83

house his grandfather, a homebuilder, constructed. He studied sculpture at St. Olaf, majoring in art, but his intention was always to enter the field of architecture. Early in his career, working as an architect at Ellerbe Becket, he even got to serve his alma mater as the project architect for the construction of the Tostrud Center, which opened in 2002.

Strom credits St. Olaf with helping develop the sense of curiosity that ultimately fueled his ongoing exploration of architecture. “The reasons that I’m interested in architecture have to do with curiosity about doing things better and differently,” Strom says. “I think St. Olaf honed that sense of curiosity. It’s the same kind of curiosity that drives you to pick up a new book or take a class or talk to somebody you don’t know. That kind of curiosity makes you a better architect.”

#### Phase 5: Construction | **HOW DOES THE FINISHED PRODUCT FUNCTION?**

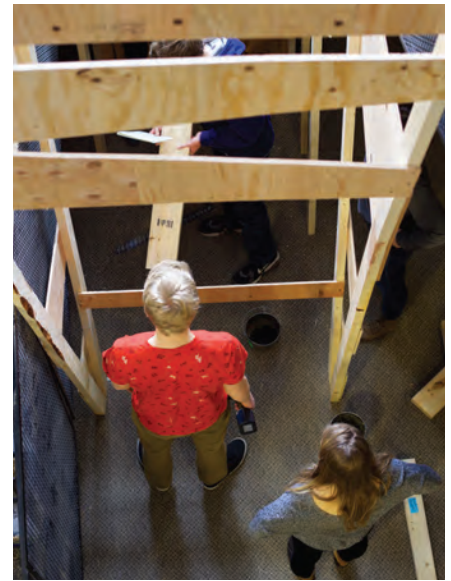
The final phase of any architecture project is, of course, construction. As cement is poured, steel beams hung, masonry added, and flooring laid, the architect recedes into the background, acting largely as a consultant as the builders transform his or her sketches into structures.

Architect Paul Neseth thinks that’s a shame. “You build intuition through experience,” says the co-founder of Locus, a Minneapolis architecture firm.

Neseth feels so strongly about the necessity of hands-on experience that a few years ago he and his wife, Barbara Hahn, founded the Real Architecture Workshop (RAW). The program gives architecture students the chance to test their design abilities and hone their carpentry skills while traveling overseas. RAW participants have structures in rural South Dakota, southern France, and Mexico.







As part of the St. Olaf Interim course, Neseth wanted his students to gain construction experience. “It’s important to be able to hold materials, to stand on them, to check their flexibility,” Neseth says. You learn so much by picking up a 16-foot board and seeing the qualities it has. You learn so much about materials by having direct contact.”

Given the constraints of time and budget, Neseth couldn’t expect his students to erect a large structure. So instead, he instructed them to transform a stairwell in the Dittmann Center into a sitting/study space. He provided the materials — beams, plywood, and screws — but the group as a whole would have to plan and build the environment. Neseth intervened only when he was concerned about safety: a critical error or two, and the structure might collapse under its own weight.

The vertical nature of the site was a challenge, but the students rose to the occasion, creating a tower-like structure that included flexible spaces for studying and gathering. “It wasn’t just about function. It was about emotion and had an impact,” Neseth says.

Neseth grew up in Owatonna, Minnesota, just south of Northfield, and arrived at St. Olaf intending to study music or go the pre-architecture route. He ended up being an art and art history major, but enrolled in a class on architecture taught by the Northfield architect Ed Sövik ’39. He still recalls the lessons he learned about how shadows and light move over the surface of a building, changing its appearance as well as our impressions of it. “It was a super enjoyable course,” Neseth says of the class. He adds with a laugh: “I don’t think I got a very good grade in it.”

Neseth spent five years working as a carpenter after graduating from St. Olaf. He worked and traveled his way around the world, visiting Europe, China, and New Zealand. In 1987, he enrolled at Harvard, earning a degree in architecture and meeting his future business partner, Wynne Yelland. In 1995, after several years of work at other firms, he and Yelland teamed up to form Locus, which caters to clients interested in sustainable development.

Neseth says he was impressed by the energy and intelligence of the students in his St. Olaf class. They were natural collaborators and good communicators — both assets for future architects. Even if the participants don’t become architects, Neseth says he sees value in their learning about design. “Whatever they go on to do, at some point they’ll be making decisions. And if those decisions involve design in some form, they’ll be better prepared,” he says. “They’ll understand things more deeply and broadly. They’ll be able to understand the impact of design decisions — large and small — on our lives.” 🐉

JOEL HOEKSTRA ’92 writes frequently for *St. Olaf Magazine*.





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**ST. OLAF JAZZ STUDENTS ARE IMMERSSED IN  
CUBA'S WORLD-FAMOUS MUSIC SCENE.**

*Vintage*

# CUBA

**PHOTOGRAPHS BY  
FERNANDO SEVILLA**





## AN INVITATION FROM THE CUBAN MINISTRY OF CULTURE

for the St. Olaf Jazz I ensemble to perform a series of concerts in Havana resulted in 20 undergraduate musicians working with Cuban jazz artists and playing alongside local ensembles during Spring Break. It was the first time a St. Olaf music ensemble has performed in Cuba, and it was an honor and a privilege, noted St. Olaf President David R. Anderson '74.

“The opportunity to perform in a country that has played such a significant role in the development of jazz, and for our students to experience the culture of Cuba, is exciting and meaningful,” says Anderson.

From the blare of trumpets in local venues to the sound of maracas on the streets, Cuba is a nation full of rhythm, color, and character. The students, warmly received by everyone they met, performed in Havana and Matanzas, participated in a drumming workshop led by one of Matanzas’s top percussion ensembles, and mentored Cuban high school students.

“Performing side by side in concert with the Banda Provincial of the city of Matanzas and La Joven Jazz Band in Havana were musical highlights that impacted both the St. Olaf students as well as the musicians of the two Cuban ensembles,” says Dave Hagedorn, St. Olaf jazz director and artist in residence. “We learned from each other in rehearsals, and the energy of the concerts with the combined groups performing together was incredible.”

Tour highlights also included historical and educational tours in locations ranging from Avenida de los Presidentes and Revolution Square to Ernest Hemingway’s home to Habana Vieja and Old Havana.











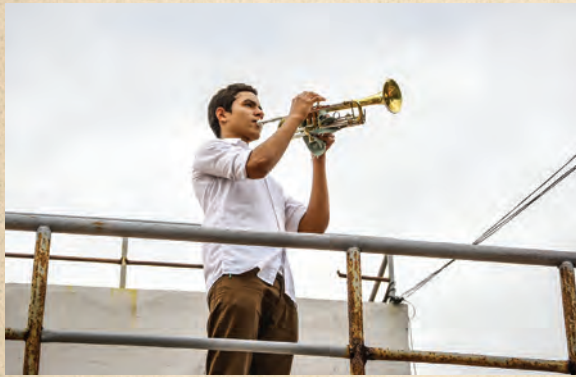
“The day we went to the Escuela Profesional de Artes de Matanzas and listened to and workshoped with the Reyes del Tambor (the top percussion ensemble in Matanzas) was one that will always stand out. It was our first exposure to what the tour would be like, and what Cuban music is truly like. The way they played and moved was so complex but so easy for them, and then when we played with them and danced with them, it became clear how completely foreign their rhythmic structure is to us. It was an eye-opening and beautiful experience that set the tone for the rest of the tour.” – SOPHIA DAHEDL '18



“This trip was a true cultural exchange, in every sense of the word. No interaction was set up or forced, and we were all able to freely share our cultures, ways of life, and music. After every performance, it seems a jam session would ensue – sometimes lasting hours.” – JOHN KRONLOKKEN '16







“Although we’ve grown up immersed in very different cultures, one quickly realizes that we aren’t all that different from the Cuban people. Especially through music, we all share a common bond.” – JOHN KRONLOKKEN '16







# Remembering President Emeritus Melvin D. George



In his last commencement address at St. Olaf, Mel George said he wanted the Class of 1994 to think about three issues: tolerating ambiguity and not becoming extremists; avoiding a kind of self-examination that “turns in on yourself, narrows your world, and often becomes a prelude to self-indulgence;” and taking advantage of the “information highway” but being skeptical about it as well, noting that “having more information is not sufficient to live a good life.”

**Editor’s Note:** As St. Olaf Magazine went to press, we learned that President Emeritus Mel George, St. Olaf College’s eighth president, died on April 25, 2016, at his home in Columbia, Missouri. He was 80 years old.

In 1985, Mel George began his presidency by living in Mohn Hall for a week on the invitation of the residents, enjoying (most of) their jokes and valuing their ideas. He listened to student concerns, applauded their achievements, and attended their rallies and pizza parties. He went to their athletic team practices, games, productions, and events. He loved to sing, and once sang with the St. Olaf Choir at Orchestra Hall in Minneapolis. He also sang in the annual spring oratorio performed by the Chapel Choir.

In his final interview before leaving St. Olaf for the University of Minnesota, St. Olaf Magazine (Summer/1994) asked George, “Why [did you do these things]?” He said, “I have always felt the college needs symbolically to affirm its students. I think it is important for students to feel that an administration is not just a faceless bureaucratic machine. I have enjoyed the contacts with students and I have learned a lot from them. [They] have provided a kind of R&R for me from the stresses and strains which go with being an administrator.”

Upon learning of George’s passing, President David R. Anderson ’74 acknowledged the former president’s affirmation of and love for the students of St. Olaf. Many of these students have shared their memories of Mel George on the St. Olaf College Facebook page, [facebook.com/stolafcollege](https://www.facebook.com/stolafcollege).

MELVIN D. GEORGE assumed the presidency at St. Olaf College in March 1985, becoming the first president in the college’s history who was not a member of the clergy.

During his tenure at St. Olaf, George led the college’s successful VISION campaign, which raised nearly \$73 million for the endowment and a number of major construction projects, including the construction of a new residence hall (Manitou Hall), an expanded and renovated library (the Ditmanson Addition), a new athletic field house, and an all-weather track that allowed track and field meets to be held at home for the first time in many years. During George’s presidency, the college also implemented a new curricular structure and significantly increased the diversity of the student body.

A native of Washington, D.C., George was a graduate of Northwestern University who went on to earn a doctorate in mathematics from Princeton University. He held a joint appointment in mathematics at St. Olaf.





Mel and Meta George on move-in day, 1985



Homecoming, 1987



When the Class of 1993 senior gift steering committee challenged Mel George to shave a "93" on the back of his head if the 709-member class met its gift pledge goal of \$55,057 (Northfield's zip code), George agreed. He thought the risk was low and the challenge less daunting than the committee's other options: bungee-jumping or Jello-wrestling. Thanks to the hair dare, the Class of '93 exceeded its goal, receiving more than \$65,245 in pledges. "I am proud to sacrifice the back of my head to honor such an outstanding effort," George said of the senior class. George spent the remainder of the spring sporting a haircut that enlivened his conversations not only with hundreds of alumni on campus for their class reunions, but also with King Harald of Norway, whom he met during the St. Olaf Choir's tour of Norway, as well as other dignitaries he met while traveling with the St. Olaf Orchestra to central Europe. (*St. Olaf Magazine*, Summer, 1993)

George came to St. Olaf from the University of Missouri, where he was vice president for academic affairs for 10 years. During his final year there, he served as interim president. He also served as dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Nebraska for five years and as a faculty member in mathematics at the University of Missouri for 10 years.

While serving as St. Olaf's president, George was active in state, regional, and national education organizations. He wrote a number of articles on mathematics, mathematical economics, and higher education,

and served as a consultant-evaluator for the North Central Association Commission on Institutions of Higher Education. He was knighted by King Harald V of Norway, receiving the Knight's Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit in honor of his efforts to strengthen and maintain the close relationship between the United States and Norway.

In 1989, the Minnesota Legislature asked George to head the Regent Candidate Advisory Council to review and recommend candidates for the University of Minnesota's Board of Regents. He became

the only private college president in the nation to chair a group that helped select the governing board for a state's major public university.

Shortly after retiring from St. Olaf in 1994, George was asked to serve as the University of Minnesota's vice president for institutional relations — a role he took on full time after first leading a National Science Foundation study on the status of undergraduate science, mathematics, engineering, and technology education in the United States. He held his post at the university for two years before returning to Columbia, Missouri, in 1996 to serve a second time as interim president of the University of Missouri.

George led several St. Olaf Study Travel programs in his retirement, including a Santa Fe Opera program in 1999 and an exploration of King Arthur's England in 2002.

A man of deep faith, he found great joy in his family and friends and in the students and fellow educators who touched his life, music, and the natural world. George is survived by his wife of 57 years, Meta; two daughters, Elizabeth (Paul Voytas) and Margaret (Tod Eggenberger); granddaughter, Hanna Eggenberger; and brother, Stephen George.

Mel and Meta George established church membership at Holden Lutheran Church in rural Kenyon, Minnesota, the same church St. Olaf's founder, Rev. Bernt Julius Muus, attended. Memorial donations may be made to the ELCA World Hunger & Disaster Fund, the Joseph Sittler Archives at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, or to an organization of the donor's choice. 🐾



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*“When Rølvaag Memorial Library agreed to accept my library on China and East Asia, Hongyuan and I revised our estate plans to provide financial support for cataloging and preservation. We are thrilled that students will now have more resources for doing research in Chinese, Japanese, and Western language materials from the 17th century onwards.”*

—ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF CHINESE AND ASIAN STUDIES  
RICHARD BODMAN AND HONGYUAN LANG · FARIBAULT, MINNESOTA

*“Our time at St. Olaf gave us wonderful memories of playing in the St. Olaf Band and traveling to Norway. It was through St. Olaf connections that we were able to recently travel back to Norway and bring our son, Leif, future class of 2037! With all the wonderful memories we created on and off the Hill, we hope to give future Oles those same opportunities, not only through our annual gifts to the St. Olaf Fund, but by including St. Olaf in our estate plans.”*

— BRIDGET DRAXLER '05 AND MATT WANKEN '05 · MONMOUTH, ILLINOIS

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## Recent graduates work with refugees

BY SOPHIE BREEN '17

**ON A SINGLE DAY LAST DECEMBER**, Esmé Marie '14 welcomed 17 Syrian refugees to Switzerland. These men and women represented a small sampling of those who have been selected for resettlement throughout the ongoing refugee crisis. Among such refugees are mothers who have lost children, victims of torture, and people in need of medical attention. For the next two years, Marie will help this group of refugees get the help they need and settle into their new

environment as part of her work with the Immigrant Services of Basel-land in Switzerland.

In neighboring Austria, Mirwais Wakil '15 is doing similar work as a humanitarian advisor with the Austrian Red Cross. Each day, he strives to help hundreds of refugees from Afghanistan, Somalia, Syria, Iran, and other countries with basic needs and legal problems.

The work is often overwhelming, the two recent graduates told an audience of current students and faculty members during a video chat organized earlier this year by Associate Professor of Political Science and Asian Studies Katherine Tegtmeyer Pak. Yet, they noted, it's also incredibly rewarding.

Marie's work with the Immigrant Services of Basel-land is through a governmental pilot project created in cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. So far, her efforts have focused on helping refugees with immediate needs. Moving forward, her work will focus on helping this group of refugees learn the local language and integrate into the workforce.

Although many of the people she is working with have lost everything — often including family members — they persevere. "I've seen refugees carry on with such great strength in a graceful way," Marie says.

For Wakil, the work he's doing in Austria reflects his personal experience. He fled from Afghanistan to Austria at age 15 after six years of living under the Taliban regime. Now he serves hundreds of refugees — many of whom also fled the Taliban — who are living in a temporary housing unit in Vienna.

"Most importantly, I ensure that it's safe in the house and that people receive the dignity they are entitled to as human beings. It is somewhat difficult to say exactly what my typical day looks like because there is no typical day," says Wakil.

### APPLYING KNOWLEDGE

A political science major at St. Olaf with a concentration in Middle East studies, Marie learned Arabic through the college's Alternative Language Study Option program. The skills she gained through her coursework were honed during her time abroad in Jordan through the U.S. State Department's Critical Language Scholarship Program. Marie now uses these skills on a daily basis to connect with refugees. She has found that language creates a sense of trust and familiarity between herself and the refugees she's working with.

Wakil, who majored in political science, studio art, and economics at St. Olaf, wrote an extensive paper for the *Immigration and Citizenship* course taught by Tegtmeyer Pak. In it, he explored the reception mechanisms of unaccompanied minors in Austria compared to those in the United States. With his knowledge of this topic, Wakil was able to find a number of jobs with nongovernmental organizations in Austria.

Wakil plans to continue his work with the Austrian Red Cross until this fall, when he will use a Rotary Global Grant Scholarship to pursue a master's degree in international relations at the London School of Economics. After completing his graduate program, he would like to work with the International Committee of the Red Cross or the United Nations Refugee Agency.

Marie will be working with the resettlement program in Switzerland until the end of 2017, after which she plans to resume her studies and complete a master's degree program in politics.

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### Fiction, Faith, and Beauty: Reading the Short Story (and Some Poetry) at Holden Village

October 1-10, 2016 | Led by David Wee '61, Professor Emeritus of English

### Holidays in Puerto Rico

December 27, 2016-January 2, 2017  
Led by Kristina Medina-Vilaríño, Assistant Professor of Spanish, and Sebastian Burset

### Portugal: Exploring Hilltop Cities by the Sea

May 14-28, 2017 | Led by Eric Lund, Professor of Religion, and Cynthia Lund, Retired Assistant Curator and Special Collections Librarian, Kierkegaard Library

### Hiking Scotland's Islands: On and Off the Beaten Path | May 17-31, 2017

Led by John Barbour, Professor of Religion, and Meg Ojala, Professor of Art and Art History

### Norway: Highlights of Oslo and Bergen

June 1-10, 2017 | Led by Margaret Hayford O'Leary, Professor of Norwegian

### Sacred Stones and Sacred Sites of Turkey

June 10-23, 2017 | Led by L. DeAne Lagerquist, Professor of Religion, and Richard Dunning, Instructor of Geology, Normandale Community College

### Buddhist Art and Architecture in Bhutan

June 16-29, 2017 | Led by Karil Kucera, Associate Professor of Art History and Asian Studies

View all the St. Olaf College Study Travel adventures and get details on all our international and domestic programs at

[stolaf.edu/studytravel](http://stolaf.edu/studytravel)

## O. Jay Tomson '58 and Patricia McCarthy Tomson '59 are honored for their philanthropy

**IN RECOGNITION OF THEIR CHARITABLE SUPPORT** to St. Olaf and other institutions, the Council of Independent Colleges recently honored St. Olaf Senior Regent O. Jay Tomson '58 and his wife, Patricia McCarthy Tomson '59, with its 2016 Award for Philanthropy. The award celebrates organizations and individuals whose gifts and service have strengthened independent higher education and provided opportunities and access for students.



The Tomsons have generously supported St. Olaf for more than 50 years. Their largest single gift, a \$5 million commitment announced in 2009, helped fund the renovation of St. Olaf's old science building into a new home for academic, administrative, and student support departments. Most recently, the Tomsons have provided \$1.6 million that will be used to endow the Tomson Family Professor in Law and Economics. With matching funds from St. Olaf's Strategic Initiative Match program authorized by its Board of Regents, this gift will yield more than \$3 million in support.

The endowed fund the Tomsons have established will permanently support a professorship within the St. Olaf Economics Department. Additionally, it will enable the college to establish a new law and economics course sequence and provide more faculty-mentored research opportunities for students. Economics is the third most-selected major at St. Olaf, and the department ranks in the top 20 baccalaureate institutions in the nation for the number of graduates who go on to earn Ph.D.s in the field.



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**1965 | Conrad Bergo**

lectured recently at four institutions in Thailand: Rangsit University, Panyapiwat Institute of Management, and Rajamangala Krung Thep in Bangkok, as well as Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai. His lectures were on green chemistry and engineering.



**1966 | Jon DeVries**, director of Roosevelt University's Marshall Bennett Institute of Real Estate and an advisor to Roosevelt student teams winning the Midwest Real Estate Challenge in 2013-15, received a 2015 teaching award from the Harold E. Eisenberg Foundation (HEEF). Jon is only the third real estate educator to receive an award from HEEF.



**1971 | Philip Yeagle** is the recipient of the 2016 Avanti Award in Lipids by the Biophysical Society, with the rank of AAAS Fellow.

**1972 | Rebecca Palm-Schroetter** has retired after more than 43 years of teaching English in a secondary school in Germany. She writes, "This [is] a momentous step for me and an opportunity to spend time travelling and doing more volunteer work for the wave of Syrian immigrants in Germany. We're especially looking forward to a family reunion in France and Germany with my siblings and their families."

**1976 | Kristin Pederson Thelander and Wayne Thelander** were married the same day they graduated from St. Olaf. Little did they know at the time that they were an ideal match in more ways than one. On Nov. 19, 2015, at the University of Iowa, Kristin and Wayne both underwent surgery in which Wayne donated one of his kidneys to Kristin, who in her 30s had been diagnosed with polycystic kidney disease. News of this successful husband-to-wife kidney transplant has been followed with interest in the media and has touched the hearts of many.



**1977 | Richard Sethre**

organized a professional outreach program with faculty members of the University of Havana Graduate Psychology Program. He and his group visited Cuba in February and met with faculty, students, and members of the Cuban Psychological Association (pictured). They brought textbooks donated by Minnesota authors and members of the Minnesota Psychological Association, and were invited to return to present at the First Cuban International Health Care Psychology Conference in 2017.



**1981 | Timothy Gundlach**, president of the North Carolina Society of Anesthesiologists, will receive his M.B.A. through Auburn University's Physician Executive M.B.A. program in May. He writes, "I am currently working in Charlotte, in a large, busy anesthesia group. Over the next few years, I am hoping to transition to a health care management position."

**1982 | Charles Bangert** has relocated to Washington, D.C., and taken the position of treasurer and director of finance for Bank-Fund Staff Federal Credit Union.

**1983 | Kristin Nelson Wobbe**, associate dean of undergraduate studies at Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI), is one of four WPI faculty honored by the National Academy of Engineering with the 2016 Bernard M. Gordon Prize for Innovation in Engineering and Technology Education for "The WPI Plan." ■ **John Norquist** has been delving into genealogy, using both traditional research and DNA technology, and he's discovered that his ancestral line goes back to Saint Olav, who is his 31st great-grandfather! John writes, "I recognize that records of this kind can be unreliable, and may not even be believable. However, I do believe it unless some conflicting evidence can be found." And so, John wonders, since he's a descendant of St. Olaf, "Can I get a tuition refund as a legacy?" When John is not doing genealogy, he's a civilian attorney with the Naval Sea Systems Command in Washington, D.C. ■ Five Oles appeared in the Minneapolis-based Gilbert & Sullivan Very Light Opera Company's recent production of *Iolanthe*.



They included **Scott Benson '83**, **Julia Butcher Knoll '05**, **Deb Haas '91**, **Lara Trujillo '91**, and **Stephen Hage '80**. **Jean Orbison Van Heel '80** (not pictured) was the production's assistant music director and rehearsal accompanist.

**1985 |** Several members of the Class of 1985 made their way to the Mississippi Delta in October to support fellow classmate **Chris Johnson** and his Deep Blues Festival. Blues musicians from around the world descended on Clarksdale, Mississippi, for four days of music. Chris created the Deep Blues Festival in 2007 to celebrate outsider and alternative blues and blues-influenced music that he felt deserved more attention. Chris notes on the Deep Blues website ([deepbluesfest.com](http://deepbluesfest.com)): "I'm no longer the driving force behind this event, but it's



never been about me. The musicians, fans, venues and promoters will continue to support this great music." Pictured (L-R) are: **John Buenneke**, **Steve Clark**, **Matt Johnson**, **Jay Olson**, **Chris Johnson**, **Wyatt Ritchie**, **Phil Ericksen**, **Joe Baremore**, and **John Breckenridge** (**Brooks Hybertson** also joined them, but is not pictured). ■ In January, **Sheila Smith** received the Sidney R. Yates Award for Outstanding Advocacy on Behalf of the Performing



Arts. The Association of Performing Arts Presenters honored Sheila (pictured with Ben Vereen) and other top performing arts leaders of 2015 at its annual awards

ceremony in New York City. Sheila has been executive director of Minnesota Citizens for the Arts since 1996, is chair of the Creative Minnesota project, is on the board and public policy cabinet of the Minnesota Council of Nonprofits, and she also teaches at the University of Minnesota.

**1986 | Kari Berit Gustafson**, who married her Spring Break sweetheart and moved to Norway, writes, "I continue to speak on family caregiving and aging in the U.S. and abroad." ■ **Michael Kondziolka** writes, "It seems that every-



thing I would ever have to report back to my St. Olaf class happened to me in one six-month period. I married my partner of 17 years, Mathias-Philippe Florent Badin, in July; in September I was honored, as artistic director, to represent the University

Musical Society of the University of Michigan at the White House, where we received the National Medal of Arts from President and Mrs. Obama; and in December I was humbled to learn that I have been named a Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters by the French government. What a year of blessings and good fortune!"





**The Class of '88 Lefse Ladies** enjoyed a lefse-making class at Ingebretsen's in Minneapolis. **Christi Hudec LeClair** won the class at the Black and Gold Gala live auction event. Pictured L-R: (front row): **Carol Roe Steiger, Kris Thein Miner, Sheryl Sanford Van Scoy, and Joelle Washburn Syverson**; (back row) **Lisa Suskovic-Gidlow, Kari Berge Kilbride, Christi Hudec LeClair, Julie Fedje-Johnston, Kristin Lagus, and Sheri Helmbrecht Dahlke.**

**1987** | **Susan O'Shaughnessy** recently retired from Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., and was named the Alwin C. Carus and M. Elisabeth Carus Professor Emeritus of Philosophy. She writes, "With an empty nest I have turned my attention to taking French at our community college and participating in three study groups: Maimonides at St. John's College and Proust and Merleau-Ponty at George Washington University. I am also reading *The Parthenon Enigma* in anticipation of the Phi Beta Kappa book awards dinner at the Library of Congress. It reminds me of my classes in Attic Greek at St. Olaf. Fram! Fram!"

**1988** | **Sarah Hawbecker** celebrated 20 years as organist and director of music for children and youth at Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in Atlanta, with a gala concert at the church in January. She recently was appointed as project consultant for Orgues Létourneau, a pipe organ company based in Québec. ■ **Amy Starz Niemann** is director of youth and young adult ministries at Beautiful Savior Lutheran Church in Plymouth, Minn.



**1992** | **Alexander McGuinness**, in his new role as director of production for Turner Latin America, now executive produces live transmissions for Turner Networks, including red carpet arrivals for the Latin Grammys, Screen Actors Guild Awards, and the Academy Awards. ■ **Rebecca Novotny Collins** has been appointed director of the student services/prevention wellness team at the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction in Madison. ■ **Elizabeth Swick Galpin** joined the North Valley Symphony Orchestra in Phoenix, Ariz., as principal cellist. Also in the cello section is **JoAnn Vayle Cleland '58**. Oles will be lobbying for a rousing performance of *Um! Yah! Yah!* at a future concert!



**1994** | **Michelle Janning**, a tenured professor at Whitman College in Washington, was featured on Minnesota Public Radio. Her talk, "Why Love Letters Matter, Even in the Digital Age," is archived at [MPRnews.org](http://MPRnews.org).

**1997** | **Elizabeth Musselman Palmer** is the books editor at *The Christian Century*.

**1998** | **Dorothy (Dot) Porter** is co-leading a project for the Philadelphia Area Consortium of Special Collections Libraries (PACSCL). The project, "Bibliotheca Philadelphensis: Toward a Comprehensive Online Library of Medieval and Early Modern Manuscripts in PACSCL Libraries in Eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware," will complete the digitization and online presentation of virtually all of the region's medieval manuscripts, almost 160,000 pages from more than 400 individual volumes. She writes, "We believe this will be the country's largest regional online collection of medieval manuscripts, and I couldn't be more thrilled to be involved in this project."

## University of Minnesota chemistry professor Erin Carlson '00 receives highest honor from U.S. government

University of Minnesota Department of Chemistry professor Erin Carlson '00 has been named by President Barack Obama as a recipient of the Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers (PECASE). The award is the highest honor bestowed by the U.S. Government on science and engineering professionals in the early stages of their independent research careers. Carlson is one of only 105 winners nationwide who received their awards at a Washington, D.C. ceremony this spring.

"These early-career scientists are leading the way in our efforts to confront and understand challenges from climate change to our health and wellness," President Obama said. "We congratulate these accomplished individuals and encourage them to continue to serve as an example of the incredible promise and ingenuity of the American people."

Carlson, who joined the faculty at the University of Minnesota in 2014, was nominated for the award by the National Science Foundation for her discovery of novel chemistry underlying a new approach to treat antibiotic-resistant infections, for leadership in the chemistry and women-chemists communities, and for developing new hands-on laboratory activities to engage K-12 students in natural product chemistry.

Carlson has received many other awards, including the Pew Biomedical Scholar Award, The National Institute of Health Director's New Innovator Award, a National Science Foundation CAREER Award, and the Cottrell Scholar Award. She was also named a Sloan Research Fellow.

The Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers, established by President Bill Clinton in 1996, are coordinated by the Office of Science and Technology Policy within the Executive Office of the President. Awardees are selected for their pursuit of innovative research at the frontiers of science and technology and their commitment to community service as demonstrated through scientific leadership, public education, or community outreach.

Read more at [discover.umn.edu/news/science-technology](http://discover.umn.edu/news/science-technology)





**2003** | **Josh Olsen**, who has always had a passion for Montana and the outdoors, has co-founded a wilderness school in that state. The Montana Wilderness School ([montanawildernessschool.org](http://montanawildernessschool.org)) is a nonprofit outdoor education organization based in Bozeman that provides multi-week wilderness expeditions for Montana youth. ■ After making a big move from New York City, **Jenelle Steele** began her violin-making journey in Salt Lake City, Utah, at the Violin Making School of America. In a story that appears in *Strings* magazine, she writes of "How I Learned Patience, Perseverance, and Gratitude (Whittle by Whittle) at Utah's Violin Making School of America" ([stringsmagazine.com/violin-making-school-a-lutherie-students-journal](http://stringsmagazine.com/violin-making-school-a-lutherie-students-journal)).

**2004** | **Mary Clementi** writes, "I ran into a group of Oles on J-Term while visiting the Acropolis



in Athens. It was a joy to speak with them, albeit briefly because it was clear I was interrupting their guided visit. I didn't get all their names, but they

were very friendly. They were so excited for this adventure, and I was thrilled to run into Oles [traveling] the world!" Pictured (L-R) are: **Helene Schneider '18**, **Lauren Harlow '18**, **Mary Clementi Jennifer Sticha '18**, and **Jennelle Allen '17**. ■ **Eleni Pinnow** received tenure and promotion to associate professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. ■ **Janelle Januschka Schrupp** has joined the wealth management team at Accredited Investors Inc. in Minneapolis.

**2005** | **Ben MacKenzie**, named Teacher Leader of the Year for 2014-15 by Educators4Excellence Minnesota, writes, "I helped to write a policy paper on best methods to improve teacher diversity in Minnesota, testified in front of the Minnesota Senate Education Committee, and met with Minnesota legislators in Washington, D.C., during the debate about the Every Student Succeeds Act."



**2006** | **Jake Erickson**, an instructor in religion and environmental studies at St. Olaf, was awarded the Wilbur Award for his piece *Falling in Love with the Earth: Francis' Faithful Ecology*, in which he analyzes the papal encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The Religion Communicators Council gives the Wilbur Award to excellent media pieces that connect religious issues, values, and themes to current public affairs and that reach a secular audience.

**2007** | **Brittany Shrimpton** is an associate producer with *MN Original*, the Twin Cities Public Television weekly art series. In addition to producing documentary stories about Twin Cities area artists, Brittany was part of a creative team that wrote and produced *Right, Wrong, or Bomb: A Dating Musical*, which premiered at The Illusion Theater in Minneapolis in January. Collaborators included her brother, set designer **Stuart Shrimpton '06**, and actor **C. Ryan Shipley '05**.

**2008** | **Jana Larson** is interim director of the Alleluia Ringers at Concordia University-Wisconsin. She writes, "This is the ensemble's 30th year, and the tradition of excellence continues



in the hands of an Ole! I am planning a tour in May and am excited for this opportunity and to be working with these talented students."

**2009** | **Amelia Shuster** earned her doctorate of audiology from Vanderbilt University and also received the Jay W. Sanders Award for outstanding clinical and academic achievements in audiology.

## From St. Olaf to Somalia

**Salah Mohamed '06**, who came to St. Olaf as a graduate of the Rochester (Minn.) STEM Academy and founded the St. Olaf Muslim Student Association (MSA), returned to the Hill in early April to share his journey and current experiences as minister of justice, religious affairs, and rehabilitation in the Puntland State of Somalia. Mohamed returned to Somalia in 2008 to teach at East African University, and continued to work in higher education until his appointment with the Puntland government in 2014.



**Mustafa Dualeh '06**, an academic advisor at Normandale Community College in the Twin Cities, facilitated Mohamed's talk at St. Olaf, which was sponsored by the MSA and the student-run organization Karibu.

"Here is a student from a Lutheran institution who is using his knowledge to help rebuild the justice system in his country. It's beautiful," says Dualeh. "We are proud of him, and hope his story inspires young Somali Muslims in Minnesota."



## Raffi Freedman-Gurspan '09 is now the White House's main point of contact for LGBT groups on all issues

President Barack Obama has appointed Raffi Freedman-Gurspan '09 as the White House's primary LGBT liaison, making her the first transgender person in the role. LGBT leaders applauded the announcement.

"Raffi is a great choice," said Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality. "President Obama has said he wants his administration to look like America, and they have moved to include trans Americans. Raffi's skills and personality make her the exact right person for this important job."

Freedman-Gurspan became the first transgender staffer appointed to the White House in 2015, working as the outreach and recruitment director in the presidential personnel office.



In her new role as the Outreach & Recruitment Director for Presidential Personnel and Associate Director for Public Engagement, Freedman-Gurspan becomes the White House's lead point of contact for LGBT groups on all issues.

Marsha Scott, a straight woman, was the first White House gay and lesbian liaison, named to the role by President [Bill] Clinton in 1995. Later, cisgender gays and lesbians held the role in the Clinton and Obama administrations. The position was held most recently by Aditi Hardikar, who left the post in January to join Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign.

Before joining the White House, Freedman-Gurspan was a policy adviser at the National Center for Transgender Equality and a legislative director in the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

The Obama administration has been a steady advocate for transgender rights, including the use of existing civil rights laws to protect the rights of transgender workers and students from discrimination.

"We believe it is a tremendous decision by the White House to recognize Raffi's leadership as well as the importance of having transgender leadership in an important role for the community," said JoDee Winterhof, the senior vice president of policy and political affairs for the Human Rights Campaign.

— Dominic Holden, national LGBT reporter for BuzzFeed News



NEW BOOKS BY ST. OLAF ALUMNI AND FACULTY



■ **Martha Stuckey** shares news of a recent collaboration with **Scotty Gunderson '10**, noting: "In 2015, my theater company was given funds to create a musical through Philadelphia's premier arts

organization, FringeArts, and the Independence Foundation's New Theater Works Initiative. Based on our work at St. Olaf, I invited Scotty to come from Minneapolis to Philadelphia to direct the piece. Using the skills and language we learned in classes in anthropology and shows in the Theater Department, we created the musical *The Best Songs You Ever Heard Show*. The creation of the piece will likely continue at development organizations based in California to New York and hopefully tour to Minnesota eventually!"

**2012** | **Sarah Edgerton** was selected by Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (RVUCOM) in Parker, Colo., as its 2015 Student D.O. of the Year (doctor of osteopathic medicine). This prestigious award is given to individuals from each college of

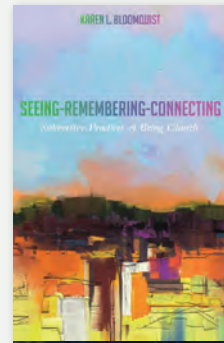


osteopathic medicine in the country who exemplify what it means to be an osteopathic medical student. Sarah is currently a second-year student at RVUCOM. ■ **Carl J. Numrich** is a Minneapolis associate in Fredrikson and Byron's Corporate Governance, Mergers and Acquisitions, and Securities Groups.

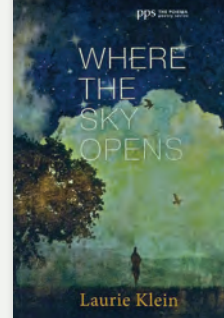
**2013** | **Lara Palmquist**, a student in the UCLA Extension Writer's Program, took second place in its annual James Kirkwood Literary Prize competition with her work *Kodaikanal*. "This award offers breathtaking validation rare to the writing life, steeped as it is in solitary hours, abandoned drafts, and self-doubt chimed by rejection letters. My selection as a finalist offers an abiding source of energy and encouragement, for which I am profoundly grateful," writes Lara of receiving her award.

**2014** | **Megan Campbell** participated in the Cancer Summer Student Research Program. This eight-week research experience is for first- and second-year students at Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, a graduate medical school of Rutgers University that is part of the division of Biomedical and Health Sciences.

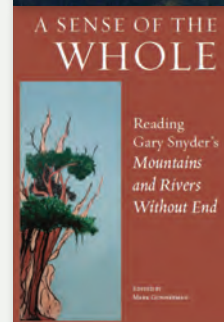
**2015** | **Chance Bonar**, who is working on a master's degree in religion at Yale Divinity School, won the 2016 Albert Clark Award for the best undergraduate paper submitted in this year's competition sponsored by Theta Alpha Kappa (TAK), the national honor society for the field of religion.



*Seeing-Remembering-Connecting: Subversive Practices of Being Church* (Wipf and Stock, 2016), by **Karen Bloomquist '70**

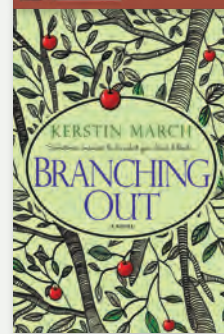


*Where the Sky Opens, a Partial Cosmography* (Wipf and Stock, The Poema Poetry Series, 2015), by **Laurie Brendemuehl Klein '72**



*A Sense of the Whole: Reading Gary Snyder's Mountains and Rivers Without End* (Counterpoint, 2015), by **Mark Gonnerman '80**

*Family Trees* (Kensington Publishing, June 2015) and *Branching Out* (Kensington Publishing, December 2015), by **Kerstin Carlson March '91**



*Tailoring Truth: Politicizing the Past and Negotiating Memory in East Germany, 1945-1990* (Berghahn Publishing, January 2015), by **Jon Berndt Olsen '93**

*The Geography of Madness: Penis Thieves, Voodoo Death, and the Search for the Meaning of the World's Strangest Syndromes* (Melville House, April 2016) by **Frank Bures '95**

*The Galileo Moment: How Global Market Leaders Differentiate from the Rest of the Pack* (Atsui Press, 2016), by **Elizabeth Bechtel Jayanti '04**



Oles in Cambodia

In mid-February, a group of ELCA donors and friends traveled to Cambodia to see and experience ministries to which the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is connected: Life With Dignity, supported by ELCA World Hunger; Lutheran Church in Cambodia; and the ELCA Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program.

The group of 11 included **Y. Franklin Ishida '82**, **O. Jay Tomson '58**, **Jenny Norris Peterson '80**, **Scott Peterson '79**, Nancy Baden, Randy Baden, Carlos Pena, Sarah Erickson, Adam Erickson, Dan Rift, and Andrew Steele. They met up with **Jessica Moes '14**, a full-time YAGM volunteer in Krus Village, where she is involved in congregational ministry and also is teaching English.



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**FUTURE OLE**  
Lena Hill '37

## Babies

Sarah and Byron Almén '90, a son, Theodore  
 Kristian and Lizbet Langseth Ronning '95, a son, Espen  
 Christopher and Melissa Rudd Nesbitt '98, a daughter, Alicia  
 Kelsey and Joe Haugo '99, a daughter, Wynn  
 Bethany Vasecka '99 and Ariel Brain, a son, Andreas  
 Joanna Hawkins Nannestad '00 and Josh Nannestad '99, a son, Moses  
 Samantha and Andrew Klein '02, a son, Hannes  
 Jonathan and Allison Pipal Parker '04, a daughter, Josephine  
 Caitlin Mosman Block '05 and Wes Mosman Block '05, a daughter, Minta  
 Alisa Jespersion Linne '05 and Brian Linne '05, a daughter, Ellie  
 Michael and Katie James Humeniuk '05, a daughter, Jane  
 Tom and Megan Harris Bigelow '06, a daughter, Nora  
 Melissa Riedesel Rolfes '06 and Chris Rolfes '06, a son, Dean  
 Kaj Thompson '06 and Katie Low, a son, Max  
 Carolyn Pearson Pierson '06 and Evan Pierson '06, a son, Henry  
 Lauren Cassat Evans '07 and Dylan Evans '08, a son, Gideon  
 Kirsten and Carlos Llanes '08, a daughter, Gabriela  
 Chrissy Ware Hill '09 and Peter Hill '08, a daughter, Lena  
 Joseph and Brenna Robinson Koehler '10, a son, Conrad

## Weddings

Nadine Sanders '86 and Huck Hensley, Aug. 29, 2015  
 Kari Berit Gustafson '86 and John Chamberlain '84, July 20, 2015  
 Becca Anderson '90 and Jeff Schmitz '88, Oct. 10, 2015  
 Bill Anderson '90 and Danielle Anderson, Jan. 16, 2016  
 Jude Tomac '97 and Justin Wolberg, Aug. 29, 2015  
 Lynn Wetzler '99 and Paul Dewald, June 13, 2015  
 Kyle DeLaHunt '00 and Kate O'Reilly, Jan. 30, 2016  
 Benjamin French '01 and Ireneo Bartolome, Aug. 28, 2015  
 Kristine Thomsen '05 and Andrew Hanson, July 18, 2015  
 Natalie Arndt '05 and Nick Schmitt, Aug. 8, 2015  
 Jennifer Kieffer '05 and David Silbaugh, Jan. 9, 2016  
 Jessica Edge '06 and Dustin Kremer, July 25, 2015  
 Kaj Thompson '06 and Katie Low, Dec. 12, 2015  
 Kelly Nail '07 and Jeff Foels '06, June 27, 2015  
 Denise Miller '08 and Jackson Williams '08, Oct. 10, 2015  
 Danielle Stoermer '08 and Alec Niedermaier '08, June 12, 2015

Megan Hays '10 and Andy Graves, Jan. 23, 2016  
 Kathryn Staver '10 and Olaf Samuelson '10, Sept. 27, 2014  
 Bridget Anderson '11 and Peter Heidorn '10, April 25, 2015  
 Clara Swanson '11 and Jason Mattucci, Oct. 10, 2015  
 Emily Quinnell '11 and Brian Tolly '10, Oct. 10, 2015  
 Christine Waldron '11 and Patrick Delahunt '11, Nov. 21, 2015  
 Amelia Stonesifer '12 and Evan Yingst, Sept. 26, 2015  
 Clara Johnson '14 and Nathan Idstein, Nov. 13, 2015  
 Katerina Middeldorp '15 and David Flynn, Jan. 9, 2016

## Deaths

\*Fritjof "Fritz" Lokensgard '33, Bloomington, Minn., Dec. 9, 2015  
 Thelma Hofengen Check '35, Wilmington, N.C., Jan. 22, 2016  
 Berdella Shegbeby Lien '35, Granite Falls, Minn., Dec. 14, 2015  
 Juanita Engebretson Carpenter '36, Rochester, Minn., Jan. 16, 2016  
 Lois Radtke Elstad '39, Salt Lake City, Nov. 29, 2015  
 Randolph "Randy" Rovelstad '40, Rochester, Minn., Dec. 11, 2015  
 \*Jay Alrick '42, Hutchinson, Minn., Jan. 13, 2016  
 \*Marvin Dale '42, Yankton, S.D., Jan. 8, 2016  
 Bernice Norby Hanson '43, Canby, Minn., Jan. 20, 2016  
 William Chapman '44, Freeport, Ill., Sept. 5, 2013  
 Elizabeth "Betty" Kalow Glaudin '45, Manzanita, Ore., Nov. 21, 2015  
 Shirley Williams Lee '45, Port Isabel, Texas, Feb. 8, 2016  
 Elma "Lorraine" Gunderson Bundy '46, Saint George, Utah, Jan. 2, 2016  
 Evelyn Bodien Hendricksen '46, Forest Lake, Minn., Nov. 28, 2015  
 Mary Hayano Koura '46, Bainbridge Island, Wash., Jan. 7, 2016  
 Paul Eid '47, Minneapolis, Dec. 26, 2015  
 Charlotte Hovick Loman '47, Minneapolis, Nov. 8, 2015  
 Amy Nielsen Wilson '47, Chisago City, Minn., March 9, 2013  
 \*Gerhard Cartford '48, Minneapolis, Feb. 8, 2016  
 Sylvia "Sally" Eng Erickson '48, Minnetonka, Minn., Nov. 29, 2015  
 \*Guy Pfeifer '48, Whitewater, Wis., Dec. 28, 2015  
 \*Delbert Chapman '49, Faribault, Minn., June 25, 2013  
 Marie Ruste Jerred '49, Middleton, Wis., Jan. 22, 2016  
 Gretchen Hansen Quie '49, Wayzata, Minn., Dec. 13, 2015  
 Elizabeth "Betty" Amundson Thomas '49, Chatfield, Minn., Oct. 29, 2015  
 \*Allan Wold '49, Rochester, Minn., Feb. 18, 2016  
 \*George Anderson '50, Burnsville, Minn., Jan. 12, 2016  
 Swanhild "Swannie" Hoidahl Carlson '50, Corvallis, Ore., Jan. 17, 2016  
 Mary Voyen Melheim '50, Chicago, Jan. 21, 2016  
 \*Warren Warwick '50, Minneapolis, Feb. 15, 2016  
 \*Herbert Alexander '51, Culbertson, Neb., Oct. 18, 2015  
 Walter Beck '51, Fort Collins, Colo., May 28, 2015  
 Eugene Bicknese '51, Flat Rock, Mich., Aug. 10, 2012  
 \*Clinton "Clint" Keay '51, Clive, Iowa, Jan. 30, 2016  
 \*Corwin Kindelberger '51, Montevideo, Minn., Jan. 16, 2016  
 Lenore "Joan" Johnson Seger '51, Woodstock, Ill., March 23, 2010  
 Anne Sather Strand '51, White Rock, B.C., May 7, 2010  
 LaVaun Wolstad Zimmer '51, Sacred Heart, Minn., Dec. 29, 2015  
 June "LaVonne" Gardner Braaten '52, Sun City West, Ariz., Dec. 6, 2015  
 Greta Schmidt Bummer '52, Billings, Mont., Feb. 5, 2016  
 Dorothy Belgum Knight '52, St. Paul, Minn., Nov. 4, 2015  
 Jane Homuth Thompson '52, Port Charlotte, Fla., Jan. 22, 2016



Lois Thompson '52, Bigfork, Mont., Jan. 17, 2016  
 Lois Anderson Undlin '52, Bozeman, Mont., Jan. 2, 2016  
 Robert Esse '54, Northfield, Minn., Dec. 8, 2015  
 Ruth Reinertson Peterson '54, Golden Valley, Minn., Feb. 2, 2016  
 Delores Hewlett Himle '55, Hayfield, Minn., Nov. 21, 2015  
 Bonnie Strand Burk '56, Stacy, Minn., Dec. 12, 2015  
 \*Edward Nelson '56, Punta Gorda, Fla., Jan. 20, 2016  
 Joel Edson '57, Oshkosh, Wis., Nov. 30, 2015  
 Kai Herbranson '57, Austin, Texas, Dec. 2, 2015  
 Richard Lowater '57, Winter, Wis., Jan. 2, 2016  
 Betteann Sathra Mamel '57, West End, N.C., Dec. 10, 2015  
 Craig Clausen '58, Ellendale, Minn., Nov. 19, 2015  
 James Drier '58, Brunswick, Maine, Dec. 10, 2015  
 Barbara Parent Olson '58, Omaha, Neb., March 29, 2015  
 Allen "Al" Rice '58, Moorhead, Minn., Dec. 25, 2015  
 Allan Heurman '59, Frederick, Md., July 2, 2015  
 Annette Gilbertson Jain '59, Salem, Ore., Dec. 15, 2015  
 Lyle Huso '61, Cottonwood, Minn., Jan. 19, 2016  
 Lyn Johnson '61, Burnsville, Minn., March 19, 2010  
 Ann Sander '62, Normal, Ill., Jan. 17, 2016  
 Stephanie Henriksen '63, Dundas, Minn., Dec. 15, 2015  
 Mary Lembke Penner '63, Williamston, Mich., Feb. 17, 2016  
 John Schweigert '63, Minneapolis, Dec. 20, 2015  
 Gerald "Jerry" Andengaard '64, Indio, Calif., Oct. 11, 2015  
 Richard Lien '64, Northfield, Minn., June 27, 2015  
 Bradley Nystrom '64, Danville, Ky., Jan. 22, 2016  
 Howard Olson '66, Prior Lake, Minn., Dec. 17, 2015  
 Jacquelyn Roberg Frerichs '67, Hutchinson, Minn., Jan. 21, 2016  
 Lynn Griebing '67, Green Bay, Wis., Jan. 10, 2016  
 \*Charles LeFevre '68, Dassel, Minn., Jan. 30, 2016  
 Julie Lundquist '68, Waukegan, Ill., Oct. 3, 2015  
 John Lawson '69, Denver, Jan. 13, 2014  
 Jane Serkland '69, State College, Pa., Dec. 24, 2015  
 Barbara Lien Zahn '69, Minneapolis, Jan. 17, 2016  
 Lorene Osberg Ritland '72, Lodi, Wis., Dec. 26, 2015  
 Ann Newhall '73, Maple Grove, Minn., Nov. 4, 2015  
 Robert "Bob" Shober '73, Los Angeles, Feb. 8, 2016  
 David P. Anderson '74, Hudson, Wis., March 11, 2015  
 Kristine "Kris" Dahlke Graven '74, Flagstaff, Ariz., Nov. 26, 2015  
 Sue Hilleren Warren '74, River Falls, Wis., Jan. 29, 2016  
 Rose Mary Anderson Gerlach '77, Austin, Minn., Jan. 26, 2016  
 Elizabeth "Beth" Gunelson McCauley '78, Detroit Lakes, Minn., Jan. 20, 2016  
 Ronald Dickmeyer '80, Plymouth, Minn., Dec. 19, 2015  
 Timothy Dockry '82, Saint Ignace, Mich., Jan. 5, 2016  
 Richard Olson '85, Dennison, Minn., Dec. 1, 2015  
 Daniel Johnson '86, Chanhassen, Minn., Feb. 7, 2016  
 Helga Salvesen '86, Bergen, Norway, Jan. 21, 2016  
 Diane Wudlick Brodigan '88, Northfield, Minn., Feb. 3, 2016  
 Kari Egge '89, Stillwater, Minn., Jan. 28, 2012  
 Lori Rieser More '96, Byron, Minn., Dec. 15, 2015  
 Todd Hansen '99, Minneapolis, Dec. 9, 2015  
 Christen Grorud '01, Fremont, Neb., Jan. 24, 2016  
 Sean Fleming '03, Cannon Falls, Minn., Feb. 26, 2016

\*VETERAN

## Charles Umbanhowar Sr.

Associate Professor Emeritus of Political Science Charles Umbanhowar Sr., who served as St. Olaf College's pre-law advisor for 25 years and helped establish the college's signature Great Conversation program before retiring in 2004, died January 5, 2016. He was 75 years old.

Umbanhowar earned a bachelor's degree from Cornell University and a master's degree and doctorate from the University of Chicago. He taught for four years at Syracuse University and seven years at Idaho State University before joining the St. Olaf faculty in 1978.

At St. Olaf, Umbanhowar specialized in constitutional



law, American government, and political philosophy, and was one of the founders (and first director) of the Great Conversation and "Ole Law." He engaged students with a range of academic interests, and his courses were known for being popular, demanding, and stimulating. In addition to his teaching,

Umbanhowar played a key role in developing new programs and courses, chaired key college committees, and served as an advisor to hundreds of students — including many who went on to pursue a career in law. Umbanhowar was known as a man of manifest integrity, humility, and contentment and as a consistent voice of reason and principle. He was a consummate teacher — curious, generous of spirit, patient, and committed — and always gracious and open to the ideas and lives of those around him.

In the 1980s, Umbanhowar collaborated with Carleton College faculty members Michael Zuckert and Ruth Weiner to write and produce a nationally syndicated radio program, "Mr. Adams and Mr. Jefferson," consisting of nine half-hour radio dramas based on the correspondence between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson, a specialty of Umbanhowar's. With the support of a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, these shows were distributed to public radio stations across the country.

Umbanhowar is survived by his wife, friend, and companion of 54 years, Hendrika; their five children, Charles Edward Jr., Paul, Elizabeth, John, and James; and seven grandchildren.



# The Bygone Big Game of BASKETBALL

BY JEFF SAUVE

“The rooters were frantic. It was a game for blood,” announced the April 1907 student newspaper, the *Manitou Messenger*. Those words described an epic battle between the St. Olaf men’s basketball team and its rival, the Vikings of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa. The Vikings had recently claimed their state collegiate basketball championship for the third consecutive year. Likewise, in only their third season, the Oles — with a record of 10–1 — reigned as the Minnesota collegiate champions.

With reputations at stake, the two leading Scandinavian colleges in the United States battled in their final season game on Wednesday afternoon, March 20, 1907, in St. Olaf’s old Ytterboe Hall gymnasium. Before the game, the *Messenger* had boasted, “It is now a practical certainty that we shall have a chance to humiliate our old time, keen, but friendly rivals. . . . All patriotic students should turn out to see this battle of the Oles which promises to be the best game of the season, especially since we feel sure of victory.”

The road to this showdown with Luther had begun several years earlier, soon after the unveiling of the new men’s dormitory, Ytterboe Hall. The college’s basketball court, clad in Georgia pine, was located in the basement gymnasium of the five-story building. With 18-foot ceilings, the gymnasium measured 40 by 80 feet but lacked bleachers of any kind.

In those days, basketball was all the rage, especially during the winter months. “As exercise, it is unexcelled and it drills the brain as well as the muscles,” exclaimed the *Manitou Messenger*. To hone their skills in the team’s early years, the Ole men scheduled their games on short notice with any organization or high school that could field a team, such as the St. Paul YMCA, University of Minnesota Law School, and Northfield High School.

Ida Rogne Farseth ’09 wrote about one such game in her diary: “In the afternoon we girls watched the game between Zumbrotta [High School] and St. Olaf. The game wasn’t played well at all, more like a football game than a basketball game, but we had a good laugh over it anyway. The score was 60–6 in our favor.”

JEFF SAUVE is associate archivist at the Shaw-Olson Center for College History at St. Olaf College. Share your own stories with him at [sauve@stolaf.edu](mailto:sauve@stolaf.edu).



Two memorable games took place with the Shads of Shattuck Military School in Faribault, Minnesota. In 1905, the Oles fell to the Shads 50–13. To excuse the loss, *Manitou Messenger* claimed that nearly every member of the St. Olaf team had participated in a recent band tour and had hardly any time for practice. The following year, when the Oles lost again to the Shads 51–11, the campus annual explained, “For some purpose the floor had been oiled. Slippery hardly expressed the condition; even powdered rosin didn’t stick. The Shads wore shoes provided with suction cups in the soles; the Oles wore plain tennis shoes.”

Now, in their last game of the 1907 season, the Oles were to face off with the formidable Vikings.

Under student-coach Conrad E. Tharaldson ’07, the Ole five were anchored by future hall of famer Captain Elmer G. Fardal ’07, with Alfred O. Anderson ’09, Minard L. Glarum ’07, Burton Hanson ’08, and Herman Roe ’08. The team had convincingly outscored their other opponents throughout the season 497 to 193. In one game for the books, the Oles had demolished Company D, Minnesota Militia, by a record-breaking margin of 84–8.

When the Luther College Vikings took the floor at 3:30 p.m. on that memorable day in March 1907, the basement gymnasium in Ytterboe Hall held the largest and most enthusiastic audience ever gathered to witness a basketball game at St. Olaf to date. Standing room was at a premium along the sidelines well before the game started, noted the *Northfield News*. Rooters offered yells such as The Bull Dog (Bow-wow! Bow-wow! Bow-wow-wow-wow! G-r-r-r-r-r — St. Olaf!) and Manitou (Manitou! Manitou! Bis! Boom! Bah! St. Olaf! St. Olaf! Hi! Hurrah!).

Both teams exhibited quick passing, teamwork, and shooting prowess, but the Oles fell to the Vikings 39–30 in a little over an hour of play. Only a few newspaper

clippings tell of what transpired in the clash between the two rivals. In fact, the official St. Olaf records contain no mention of the game.

But Oriet Fardal Thompson ’34, daughter of player Elmer Fardal, recalled seeing an artifact from that year of St. Olaf basketball. Of her childhood she wrote, “I can remember playing house in the attic and seeing all those old sweaters [and] blankets in a trunk with the letters on them [my father] had earned in athletics.” One of those letters, earned for basketball, holds the story of glory and defeat in a nearly forgotten, bygone Big Game. 🏀



# ST. OLAF FUND

Meet Jiayun, just one of the more than 3,000 Oles from almost 50 states and 80 countries that are a part of our life on the Hill.

Jiayun Hao wants to become a doctor, but her path at St. Olaf is as much music as it is science. When she is not practicing on an 1898 Steinway in Christiansen Hall or at rehearsal with the Manitou Singers, you can find her in the spot that attracted her to St. Olaf in the first place, Regents Hall. "Even as a first-year student you can approach faculty members about getting involved in their research programs."

■ Jiayun Hao  
Shenyang, China | Music and Chemistry Majors



You can help Jiayun and so many other students get the most out of their time at St. Olaf by supporting the St. Olaf Fund.

Every gift to the St. Olaf Fund is a part of building this life on the Hill.  
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Rainy spring days bring the Mallard ducks to campus. PHOTO BY TOM ROSTER