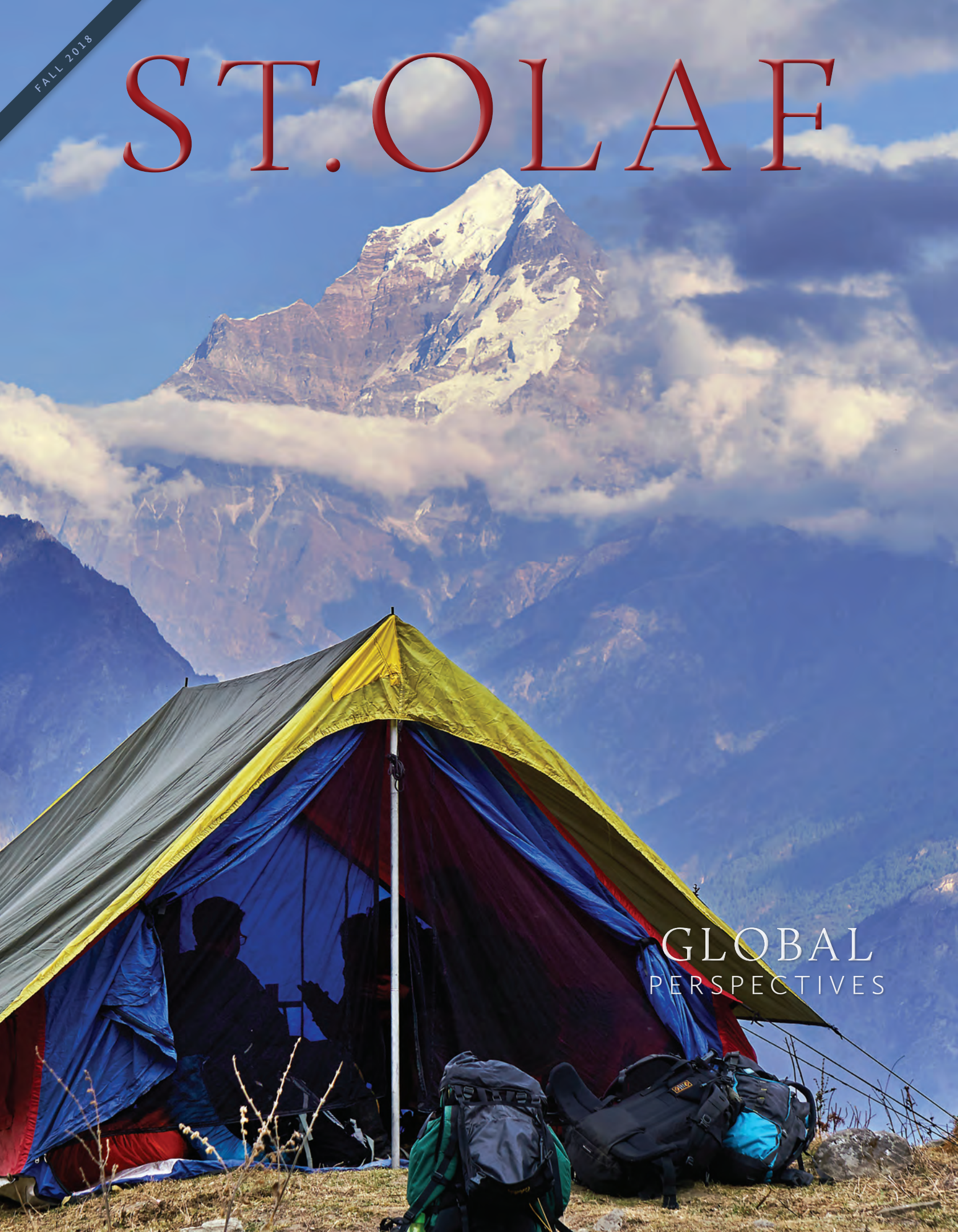


FALL 2018

ST. OLAF



GLOBAL
PERSPECTIVES

ON THE COVER

"Nanda Devi" by Keenan Ernste '19
Biology in South India

"During a short break from our studies in South India, we traveled to the state of Uttarakhand in North India to embark on a four-day trek in the Himalayas. Each evening as the sun set behind us, it would cast soft purple and orange light on Nanda Devi, the 23rd-highest mountain in the world."

ST. OLAF MAGAZINE

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16



6



FLORAL FALDA · Eileen Healy '20, *Collective Memory in Revolutionary Cuba Interim*, Santiago de Cuba, Cuba



ST. OLAF

M A G A Z I N E

F A L L 2 0 1 8

2 Letter to Oles

From President David R. Anderson '74

3 Ole Achiever

BY RENATA ERICKSON '19

Emily Carr '19, catcher for the St. Olaf softball team, not only created her own major but her own MIAC internship.

4 Oles Can. Oles Will.

BY RENATA ERICKSON '19

Summer research conducted by CURI students Bethany Tritz '20 and Diane Vargas '19 examined the importance of local milkweed varieties in monarch migration.

6 Global Engagement

PHOTO ESSAY

The 35th annual Gimse International and Off-Campus Studies Photo Contest features images from around the world.

16 Superior Sailing

BY KIM ODE

Ron '60 and Bonnie Schardin Dahl '61 sailed Lake Superior for 43 years, and while their sailing days have ended, their love of adventure is as strong as ever.

24 Eighty Years of Asia at St. Olaf

BY MARLA HILL HOLT '88

St. Olaf offered its first course about Asia in 1938. Eighty years later, the Department of Asian Studies is illuminating Asia's wealth of cultural, historical, religious, and political diversity for 21st-century students.

32 An Animated Life

BY MARLA HILL HOLT '88

Retired *Simpsons* animator Utit Choomuang '75 has traveled full circle. His curiosity and artistic talents catapulted him to opportunities thousands of miles from his Thai jungle village before bringing him back to his birthplace nearly 50 years later.

40 Beyond the Hill

Class Notes and Milestones

48 STORIES

BY JEFF SAUVE

Almost 140 years have passed since photographer Ira E. Sumner captured the moment depicting the earliest days of St. Olaf, aptly calling the college's inaugural class "The First Batch of Students on the Hill, 1878-79."



FROM THE DESK OF
PRESIDENT DAVID R. ANDERSON '74



Greetings, Oles, and welcome to the fall issue of *St. Olaf Magazine*.

This issue ranges from the college's athletic fields to Lake Superior to a jungle in southern Thailand to various points in Asia, and to places all over the world where St. Olaf students studied during 2017–18. Running through this wide variety of stories and locales is one theme: how St. Olaf influences lives.

Take, for instance, Utit Choomuong '75, who as a boy in southern Thailand lived naked off the land, eating rice, fish, and ants. A Peace Corps volunteer, Terry Fredrickson, son of a St. Olaf music professor, met Utit, a meeting which led to Utit becoming a Rotary exchange student in Northfield, which led to college and an art major at St. Olaf, which led to a distinguished career as an animation artist in California and South Korea.

Or take the case of Ron '60 and Bonnie Schardin Dahl '61, who spent 43 years sailing Lake Superior and documenting the navigation of that Great Lake. This was only one of a lifetime of travel experiences that have taken them around the world by land and by sea, all of which were marked by engagement with the people of the lands that the Dahls visited. "St. Olaf helped us know how to communicate with others, gave us the skills to do that — and the permission," says Ron.

This issue also celebrates 80 years of changing student's lives through engagement with Asian languages, history, and culture, beginning with the college's first course about Asia, offered in 1938.

For example, Nick Wallace '02, now the dean of Liberal Arts and STEM at Dakota County Technical College in Rosemount, Minnesota, was among the first cohort of students to participate in the Asian Conversation. "It was one of the most formative experiences I had at St. Olaf," he reports. Working on his Chinese in China made him a better listener because he had to focus so closely on what others were saying. (That's an excellent trait in a dean, by the way!)

Signe Knutson '11 majored in Asian studies, which "helped me develop a humble and curious global outlook — to be respectful, engaged, observant, and nonjudgmental — that has equipped me well for my work," she says.

Raina Young '93, a family medicine physician at HealthPartners, was also an Asian studies major. She says, "I believe my degree in Asian studies and having lived in China prepared me well to be a thoughtful, empathetic caregiver and to be curious and open-minded about my patients' cultural beliefs and practices."

Asian studies "changed the trajectory" of Steven Braun's life. Braun '11 came to St. Olaf expecting to follow the pre-med track. Today, after St. Olaf, a Fulbright Fellowship, and an M.S. degree in molecular biophysics and biochemistry from Yale, he is a data analytics and visualization specialist at Northeastern University in Boston.

And speaking of travel, in any given year, 800 or so of St. Olaf's 3,000 students study off-campus, the majority of them in destinations around the world. They take pictures, and those pictures document the "profound experiences of exploration and self-discovery" that our students experience on those travels. Be sure to check out the extraordinary photographs entered in the 2018 Gimse International and Off-Campus Studies Photo Contest.

You don't go to college to stay the same. You go to acquaint yourself with as much as you can of the infinite variety of the world you are about to enter as an independent adult. You go to seek change and to be changed in the ways chronicled by the Oles profiled in this issue. I hope that you find their stories inspiring and that they inspire you to reflect on how St. Olaf presented similar opportunities for change and growth during your time on the Hill.

David R. Anderson



UM! YAH! YAH!

Emily Carr '19 didn't apply for her summer internship with the Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) — she created it.

The driving force behind creating her own internship came from creating something equally as important on campus: her major. Through St. Olaf's Center for Integrative Studies, Carr invented a major titled "Athletic Administration and Management: Issues of Equity and Access." This experience emboldened her to think outside the box when it came to gaining hands-on experience for her major, leading to a collaboration with the MIAC.

Carr also collaborated with multiple departments at St. Olaf to craft a major that fit her like a glove. "Essentially, what I did when I built this major was bring in a bunch of little parts of other academic disciplines that I found interesting to create this cohesive study. There are classes from psychology, exercise science, management studies, women's and gender studies, and even theater (that one is for public speaking!), among others," Carr says.

As catcher for the St. Olaf softball team and chair of the MIAC Student Athlete Advisory Committee, Carr connected with MIAC Director Dan McKane to spend her summer researching the history and current status of female coaches in the athletic conference, as well as assisting with conference scheduling, strategic planning, budgeting, bylaw policy writing, a sportsmanship policy review, and academic year preparations.

"After graduation, I plan on pursuing a master's degree in sports management as well as a graduate assistantship position coaching collegiate softball," Carr says. "This will allow me to pursue two things I love — sports and relationships with others — and at the same time to continue to carve my own path ... which I guess is how it all started in the first place!" 🦄

— RENATA ERICKSON '19



Milkweed Matters

EACH YEAR, MILLIONS OF MONARCH BUTTERFLIES migrate from northern Minnesota to Mexico — and along their way back, they rely on milkweed for their food source.

Some evidence suggests that most monarchs overwintering in Mexico have fed on the same milkweed species that is common in Minnesota. This summer, St. Olaf College researchers looked at whether there is local adaptation in milkweed across the vast monarch migration route.

Bethany Tritz '20 and Diane (Dee Dee) Vargas '19 worked with St. Olaf Assistant Professor of Biology and Education Emily Mohl to determine patterns of local adaptation of common milkweed, *Asclepias syriaca*, from different locations. Tritz and Vargas conducted this research with the Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (CURI) program, which provides opportunities for St. Olaf students from all academic disciplines to gain an in-depth understanding of a particular subject by working closely with a St. Olaf faculty member in a research framework.

“People are planting lots of milkweed to support monarch butterflies,” Mohl says. “With all of these efforts, it would be really useful to know how important it is to use local varieties of milkweed.”

The St. Olaf team's work will help inform national conservation efforts like the Monarch Highway, which aims to develop a stretch of milkweed along the I-35 corridor from Minnesota to Texas to support monarch butterflies, which are declining in population, on their migration.

Vargas studied the different traits in milkweed, including the phenology — when the flowers and seed pods will come out — the number of flowers and pods on each plant, what chemicals are in the plants that protect them from herbivores, and what pollinators will be on the plants. Going forward, she

will see if any of these traits are consistent with patterns of local adaptation.

On the other side of the research, Tritz has been developing an authentic science curriculum on milkweed, aimed at hands-on data interpretation in place of textbook learning, for middle school to college students. Her curriculum will also be more accessible to teachers who don't have the resources to collect their own data.

“Being a part of a research lab is so valuable,” Mohl says. “Having students who are willing to spend dedicated time and energy thinking about the projects you want to be working on is a great opportunity.”

— RENATA ERICKSON '19

Biology major Dee Dee Vargas '19 (foreground) and biology and science education major Bethany Tritz '20 (right), pictured with Assistant Professor of Biology and Education Emily Mohl in a healthy patch of common milkweed growing on the St. Olaf natural lands. PHOTOGRAPHED BY FERNANDO SEVILLA





Global

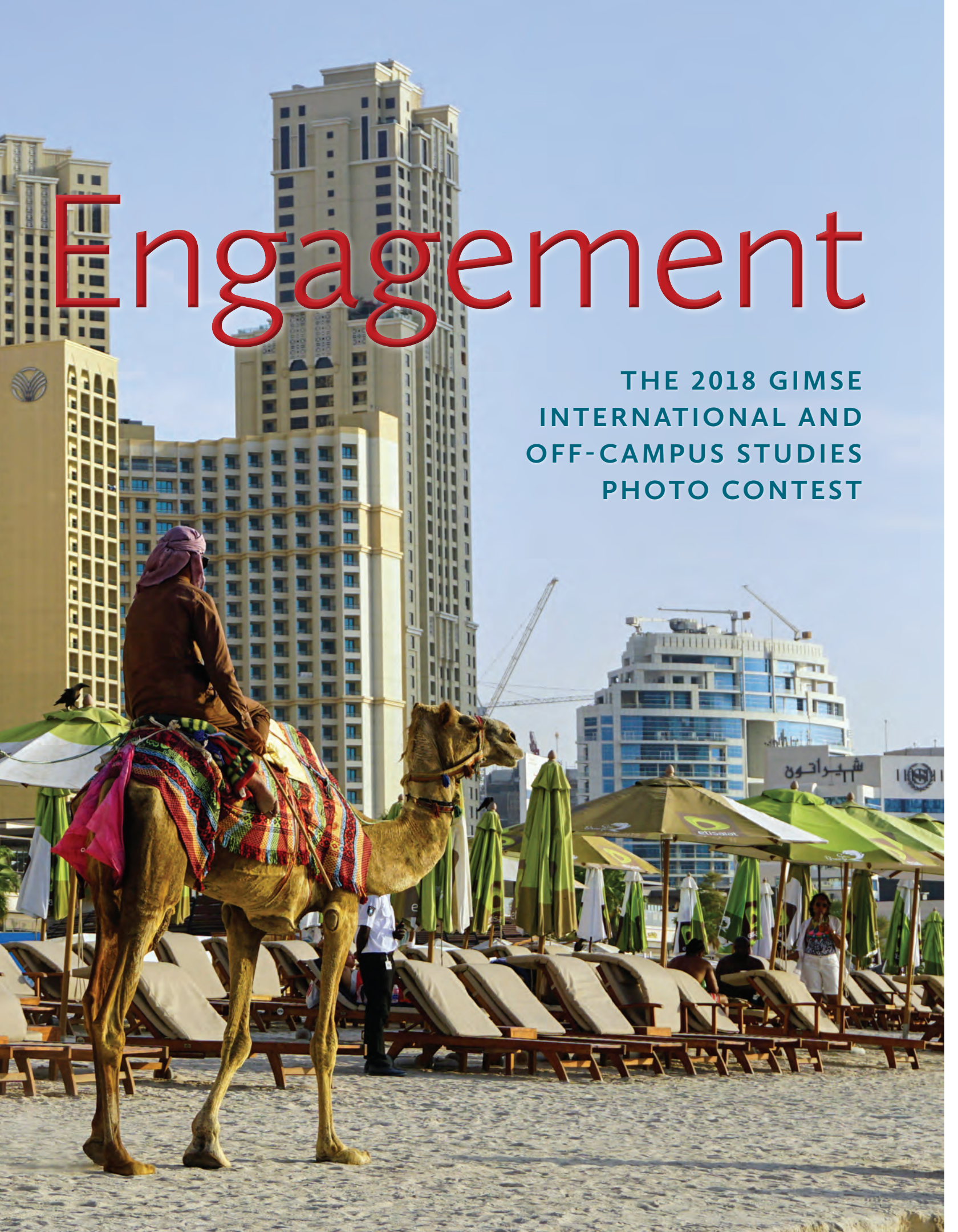
JUMEIRAH BEACH, DUBAI

Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Keenan Ernste '19

Biology in South India

Jumeirah Beach looks out over the artificial island Palm Jumeirah. This island is just one example of how Dubai has pushed the limits of human imagination. It was equally astonishing to see some of Dubai's other incredible architecture, such as the tallest building in the world, the Burj Khalifa, and an indoor ski park located in Mall of the Emirates. Seeing these camels walking by on the beach amidst everything else I had seen seemed like such a strange contrast.



Engagement

THE 2018 GIMSE
INTERNATIONAL AND
OFF-CAMPUS STUDIES
PHOTO CONTEST

St. Olaf students have taken advantage of the college's nationally renowned international and off-campus study programs for more than a half century. Living and studying abroad is fundamental to understanding other cultures and perspectives, and to becoming an educated citizen in a changing world. Each year, students document these profound experiences of exploration and self-discovery through the art of photography and through personal reflections.



GALÁPAGOS SEA LION

Española Island, Galápagos, Ecuador

Holly Westwood '18 | Equatorial Biology Interim

While there were many sleeping Galápagos sea lions along the beach on Española Island, there were a few that decided to strike a pose instead.



FLIGHT OVER THE VINEYARD | *Tunayán, Mendoza Province, Argentina*

Nathan Luttenegger '17 | Argentina and World Agricultural Trade Interim

This image was captured by my DJI Spark camera drone while flying over the vineyard where we stayed.

I stopped to rest during my bike ride from the local train station that took me to and from my classes in Copenhagen and my homestay in Hillerød. Frederiksborg Castle was located along my path and offers a beautiful view of the Danish sunset as it passes over the castle. My daily commute was one of those things that I never knew I would miss so much after returning to St. Olaf.



A DANISH COMMUTE
Frederiksborg Slot, Hillerød, Denmark
Shannon Moore '19 | DIS Copenhagen

EMPOWERMENT THROUGH ART

The Youth Home Cultural Group, Tamale, Ghana
Madeline Leh '18
History of Slavery and Development in Northern Ghana Interim



The Youth Home Cultural Group provides resources to young adults and teaches them skills such as dancing, tailoring, smock weaving, and drum making. It aims to empower young people by strengthening their participation in Ghanaian culture, educating them in conflict resolution through drama, and giving them knowledge in the production of handicrafts to reduce unemployment.

OLD DELHI | Delhi, India
Christian Avalos '19 | Exploring India: Human
Development in Cross-Cultural Context Interim

The busy streets of Old Delhi are congested with tiny shops, cycle rickshaws, spices, and culture. The ancient alleyways and streets capture the hectic daily lifestyle of the capital.



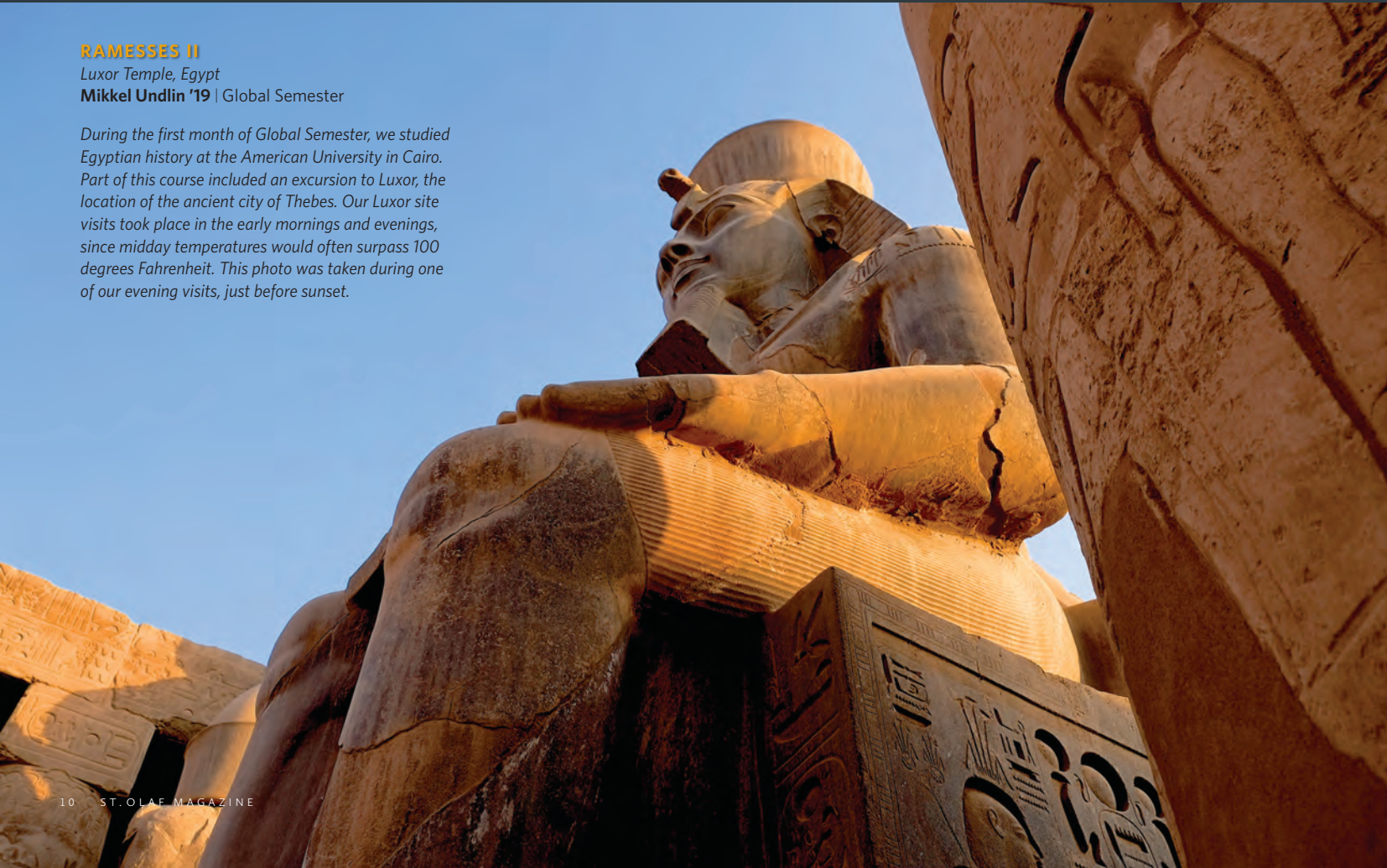
WOOD FUNGUS
Santa Lucía Ecolodge and Reserve, Nanegal, Ecuador
Caroline Urban '18 | Equatorial Biology Interim

I visited both cloud forest and rain forest ecosystems while in Ecuador, and one of the interesting differences I noticed between them was the presence of fungi. As the name suggests, the cloud forest is quite cloudy and has more moisture than the rain forest, making it a great home for many fungi.

"After a semester in India, I had barely scratched the surface of what it had to offer both culturally and in relation to my studies. It was one of the best experiences of my life, which is a testament to the value I now see in sending Oles abroad. The biologist in me was awed by the biodiversity that was so radically different from Minnesota's. Ultimately, my two independent research projects allowed me the unique opportunity to branch out as a scientist and discover an interest in infectious disease research that I hope to continue here in the United States." — KEENAN ERNSTE '19

RAMESSES II
Luxor Temple, Egypt
Mikkel Undlin '19 | Global Semester

During the first month of Global Semester, we studied Egyptian history at the American University in Cairo. Part of this course included an excursion to Luxor, the location of the ancient city of Thebes. Our Luxor site visits took place in the early mornings and evenings, since midday temperatures would often surpass 100 degrees Fahrenheit. This photo was taken during one of our evening visits, just before sunset.





BLACK PHILLIP

Skaftafell, Iceland
Johnny Goodson '20
Film 230: Media and
the Environment

The sheep-to-human ratio in Iceland is 3:1. The Icelandic sheep's wool and meat were crucial to the survival of the island's first settlers and remain an important part of the country's economy today.



FAIRY GLEN | *The Isle of Skye, Scotland*
Kristine Patzer '18 | University of Aberdeen

The Fairy Glen, located on the Isle of Skye, is well hidden. The natural rock formations of cone-shaped hills surrounding the area create ponds and scattered waterfalls. Some say faeries created the dramatic landscape and still live there.



HIKING BY FAIRY POOLS

The Isle of Skye, Scotland
Kristine Patzer '18 | University of Aberdeen

We hiked by one of the Isle of Skye's famous attractions: the fairy pools. We were even brave enough to swim in the crystal-clear water in 55-degree weather.



BREIÐAMERKURJÖKULL

Breiðamerkurjökull Glacier, Iceland

Johnny Goodson '20

Film 230: Media and the Environment

Breiðamerkurjökull, an outlet glacier of Europe's largest glacier, Vatnajökull, has retreated by three kilometers since 1945 due to the rising of the earth's temperature. As combating climate change continues to lack prioritization in the United States and other parts of the world, Breiðamerkurjökull and other glaciers around the world will continue to melt, the sea level will continue to rise, the ocean will continue to acidify, and natural disasters will continue to become both common and more extreme.



“In my time in Iceland studying the media and its role in portraying environmental issues, not only did I get to learn about the strength of the media in influencing public opinion, but I also got to be a part of it. Glaciers are a prime indicator of global warming, as they are one of the only ways individuals can physically see climate change taking place. In the film that I created while in Iceland, I was able to bring the reality of the state of the world’s glaciers to those who will never see them in person, making the abstract concept of global warming more quantifiable with visual representations of glacial melt. This trip taught me how to present information to an audience in a way that will make people care, and for that, I am grateful.” — JOHNNY GOODSON '20

AN ABANDONED DOORWAY IN KAVALA

Kavala, Greece | Isabel Istephanous '20
Sacred Sites in Greece Interim

Kavala is a beautiful city that lies on the water near the eastern side of Greece. Although the region is relatively small, it is filled with architecture that intersects its colorful vibrancy with unique housing structures that line the cobblestone roads. While spending the afternoon wandering around the city, I found many stunning houses and doorways, but none struck me like this one did.



"Not only do I think that Greek mythology is fascinating, but I also was raised within the Greek Orthodox religion, which exposed me from a very young age to the people and culture of Greece. I am also fully Egyptian, and due to the geographic proximity of the two countries I expected to experience many similarities and familiar feelings during my time in Greece. Because of this, I was able to dig into a much deeper level of self-exploration. I was able to see how I fit into the context of the history and culture in a way that seemed foreign to my classmates. I was able to connect with my religion in a very deep and visceral way that can only be done by visiting these religious and historic landmarks. This trip allowed me to sort of act as a religious pilgrim (one of the topics discussed in our readings), and I was able to dive into a rich history of the people and places that have fascinated me for so long." — ISABEL ISTEPHANOUS '20

FOCUS

Lolo Galeria-Taller,
Matanzas, Cuba
Eileen Healy '20
Collective Memory
in Revolutionary
Cuba Interim

"This building had been abandoned and filled with garbage before it was bought by a group of artists and turned into a gallery and studio. Cuba was a place of contrasts: taxi drivers driving old cars while talking on cell phones, tension between the Cuban government and my own. But I experienced nothing but kindness and hospitality."





TIME TRAVEL BY TROWEL

Montbrook Fossil Dig, Central Florida
Sophia Skoglund '18
 Field Paleontology Interim

Upon entering the Montbrook dig site, we were each assigned a single square. As we traveled back in time through layers of dirt, it was a thrill to come across some sign of past life. Every find we uncovered, from tiny gar scales to entire turtles that had been buried for millions of years, left us in awe and filled us with excitement.

SPRING MEANS SAKURA

Koganei Park, Tokyo | **Robert Hanson '18**
 ACM Waseda Japan Studies

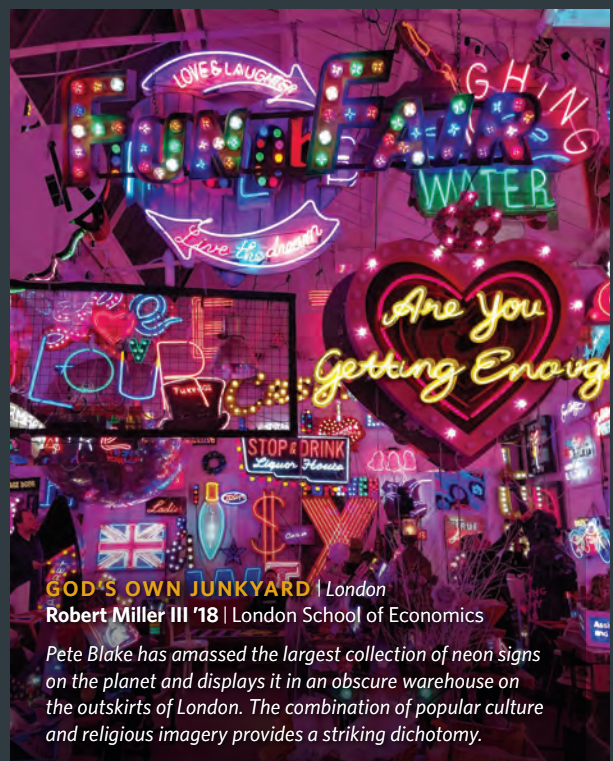
Sakura, or cherry blossoms, are one of my favorite parts of Japan. In the spring, groups of friends lay out tarps and eat snacks under the falling petals. We spent a warm afternoon relaxing under the sakura at Koganei Park, and I'm glad I was able to experience such an iconic part of Japanese culture.



CONTENT

Santa Cruz Island, Galápagos, Ecuador
Holly Westwood '18 | Equatorial Biology Interim

We saw many tortoises wandering around the Rancho Primicias, a giant tortoise reserve on Santa Cruz Island. This one looked truly content in its pond.



GOD'S OWN JUNKYARD | London
Robert Miller III '18 | London School of Economics

Pete Blake has amassed the largest collection of neon signs on the planet and displays it in an obscure warehouse on the outskirts of London. The combination of popular culture and religious imagery provides a striking dichotomy.




A photograph of a sailboat on Lake Superior at sunset. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, with soft clouds. The water is dark blue with gentle ripples. A portion of the sailboat's white sail is visible in the top left corner.

Superior SAILING

RON '60 AND BONNIE SCHARDIN DAHL '61 SAILED
LAKE SUPERIOR FOR 43 YEARS, AND WHILE THEIR
SAILING DAYS HAVE ENDED, THEIR LOVE OF
ADVENTURE IS AS STRONG AS EVER.

By Kim Ode

A photograph of a sailboat's deck, showing various pieces of equipment like ropes, a compass, and a person's hand resting on a blue bag. The background is a body of water.

THEY GREW UP IN LANDLOCKED Minnesota, met on St. Olaf's hilltop, and earned their livings in classrooms and at the occasional altar throughout Wisconsin. Yet Ron and Bonnie Schardin Dahl have achieved an international reputation on the great waters of the world.

Bonnie, in particular, has created a wide wake in the sailing community, writing for sailing publications for more than 20 years. Through two books, she translated the use of complex navigational systems into language that recreational sailors can grasp.

The Dahls' decades of sharing their knowledge of Lake Superior has in all likelihood saved lives — or at least enabled the heartbeats of beleaguered sailors to calm once they've anchored in the safe harbors Bonnie meticulously researched for *Bonnie Dahl's Superior Way: The Cruising Guide to Lake Superior*, now in its fourth edition.

Their sailing days finally have ended, though. They sold *Dahlfin II*, their Columbia 10.7, last year, although they spent a week last fall in an RV circling the lake, "just to be near it," Bonnie says.

Their home in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, is filled with art collected in their post-retirement years while traveling the world. At lunch on their deck overlooking the lake, the conversation ranges from Venezuela to South Africa to China to Norway.

For all their adventures at sea and on land, some of their most memorable moments are the products of chance interactions with a country's people. Bonnie, a striking woman with an insatiable curiosity, and Ron, one of the most affable people you'll ever meet, credit St. Olaf with instilling in them the willingness and the confidence to connect with others.

When you're traveling in a foreign country, "so many opportunities come from meeting people you don't know, from getting to know them," Ron says, then adds pointedly, "from trusting them."

They recall catching a tramp steamer — a cargo ship without a set schedule — while traveling through Chile in 1999. The other passengers were some shepherds and the 130 sheep they tended.



Bonnie and Ron Dahl, photographed
on *Dahlfyn II* by Brian Peterson
©2018 STAR TRIBUNE

“We were exposed to so much — to music, to art, to museums. We learned to appreciate these things, and so it was important to seek them out in all of our travels.”

Bonnie remembers the “clitter-clitter” of hooves as the sheep shifted with the boat’s motion and how the shepherds worked to soothe them. But when one sheep succumbed to the rigors of the trip, the shepherds promptly cleaned it and rigged a grill in what seemed mere minutes.

Together, they dined. “They made us feel we were a part of their community,” Ron says.

Adds Bonnie, “We were not tourists anymore.”

Whether hitchhiking on dirt roads or riding on chicken trucks, the Dahls found that they often were among a country’s poorer residents. Yet they say they felt a commonality that they might not have felt at home.

“Sometimes, when we talk about poor people in the U.S., sometimes poverty is not the problem,” Ron says. “It may be more a question of self-esteem, of confidence, of being acknowledged.

“St. Olaf helped us know how to communicate with others, gave us the skills to do that — and the permission to do that.”

Then he lightens the mood: “Travel enough, and you learn there are two simple, but important, phrases in life: ‘Where ya headed?’ and ‘What’s going on?’”



“**L**IFE IS WHAT HAPPENS while you are busy making other plans.” John Lennon is credited with saying that out loud, but the unspoken sentiment is familiar to so many young Oles, including a young Bonnie and Ron.



Bonnie Schardin arrived at St. Olaf to pursue a pre-med track, majoring in chemistry and biology, while Ron, a year older, favored a more classical education, majoring in philosophy. They had some ideas about careers, but it's fair to say that the future wasn't clear.

In fact, Bonnie says, upon becoming engaged to Ron in December of her senior year, she was "so head-over-heels in love with this guy" that she could barely bring herself to return to school for that final semester. "I just wanted to set up house with him."

Thankfully, she recalls, Ron insisted she get her college diploma first. "Ron said he wouldn't marry me unless I got that piece of paper — which is the best ultimatum I ever got." This past August, they celebrated their 57th wedding anniversary.

While Ron attended Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, Bonnie decided she didn't want to be a doctor. But she needed a job, and so took one at the University of Minnesota Medical School, assisting with research into microbial genetics.

"I know that coming from St. Olaf had everything to do with me getting that job, because I really didn't have that training," she says. Yet over the next four years, she went on to co-author several research papers.

That experience, she says now, crystallized a growing sense that one's destiny often involves following a force that some call fate, or perhaps faith.

"More than once, I know I have gotten a kick in the pants from somebody upstairs," she says, raising an eyebrow. "It's not always your idea."

After Ron was ordained, he was called to a Lutheran parish in Sloan, Iowa, southeast of Sioux City. They stayed there for four years before moving in 1969 to Bruce, Wisconsin, not far from Rice Lake, where Bonnie got a job teaching high school physics and chemistry.

They bought a cabin on Rice Lake, on land where they still live today. Amid their busy lives — by now they had two young children, Peter and Kristen — the couple sought a way to nurture their relationship.

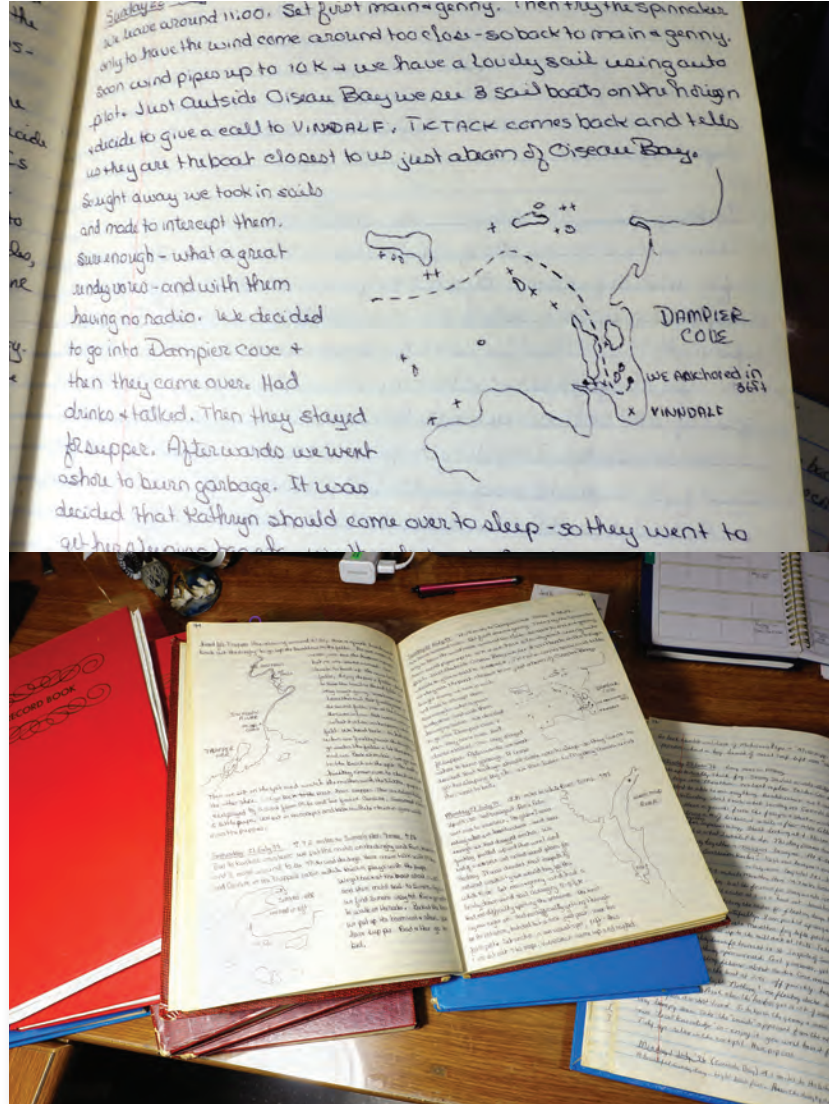
"We were looking for something that both of us could enter into on the same footing, that we could learn together," Ron says. Bonnie had briefly been exposed to sailing while working a summer as a nanny on Lake Minnetonka and liked it. At the Minneapolis Boat Show, they bought a 12-foot sailboat.

They loved that boat from the first moment, happily sailing on Rice Lake as its sails filled with the breeze. But Lake Superior, looming to the north, beckoned.

The Dahls upgraded to a 30-foot Coronado, which they cleverly christened *Dahlfin*, and in 1974, they untied from a dock for the greater lake.

It was a barebones boat. "All we had was a depth sounder, compass, and knot meter to show how fast we were going," Ron says. They navigated by dead reckoning, the traditional means of figuring where you are based on where you began, your speed, and how much time has passed.

Back then, recreational sailing on Superior was in its infancy. There were precious few charts, and most were related to commercial fishing or shipping.



In 1974, the Dahls began documenting Lake Superior's anchorages in terms of water depths, dangerous rocks and shoals, shoreline features, and anything else they felt sailors needed to know. Bonnie sketched each anchorage in her journals, creating routes for recreational boaters to follow.
PHOTOS BY JOHN DANICIC

“What Bonnie was actually doing was helping people find safe harbors. That’s the real point of Superior Way.”

So began the Dahls’ ritual of documenting various anchorages in terms of water depths, dangerous rocks and shoals, shoreline features, and anything else that sailors need to know. Bonnie began keeping fastidious journals, sketching each anchorage, and creating a track, or route, that boaters should follow. She also wrote about an area’s geography and history, about hikes and waterfalls, about properly equipping a boat.

“What Bonnie was actually doing was helping people find safe harbors,” Ron says. “That’s the real point of *Superior Way*.”

Her account of coming into the anchorage at Passage Island, east of Isle Royale, is typically detailed:

Approach must be made from the SW hugging close to the island shoreline in order to pass between the island and the shoal. Once past this outlying shoal, there are two more shoals extending into the entrance off each side of the opening, thus necessitating passing through exactly mid-channel. Here a bow lookout is helpful, and with care a minimum depth of 8 feet can be maintained when passing through.

Anyone who regularly sails on Lake Superior pays full heed to each of those directives.

Bonnie began sending these accounts to the Lake Superior Cruising Club as a means of sharing what she’d mapped, which led to submitting an article about her efforts to *Cruising World* magazine, which promptly requested more articles.

Her writing career was launched, resulting in thousands of articles for various sailing publications over the years.

By 1983, the Dahls had documented enough of Lake Superior to publish the first edition of *Superior Way*, now published by *Lake Superior Magazine*.

Bonnie followed that in 1986 with *The Loran-C Users Guide*, breaking down the complex Loran-C navigation system into language that an ordinary person could understand. “Sometimes, I look at that book now and think, ‘I wrote *that*?’ ”

After the Loran system was supplanted by other systems, she wrote *The Users Guide to GPS*, which has been used by the U.S. Coast Guard in its cadet training programs.



ONE REASON THE DAHLS were able to spend so much time on the water is a result of Ron’s decision to take a break from the ministry. An intended sabbatical of a few years stretched to 15 as Ron began teaching third graders in Rice Lake. This change carved out more flexible summers for sailing, yet Ron always made himself available when a parish needed an interim pastor — sometimes for a few Sundays, sometimes for many months.

After Bonnie and Ron retired, their voyages took on a worldwide scope. In 1999, they set off from Lake Superior to the Caribbean and then to Venezuela, where they docked the boat for three months.

The couple went backpacking and hitchhiking, clear down to the Straits of Magellan, the “inside passage” around Cape Horn. They saw the Sun Gate at Machu Picchu and watched whales off the Argentinian coast. When a government gas crisis put a crimp in land travel, they set off for the Galapagos Islands.

They didn’t know much of the native language, “but when you live with people, you learn it quick,” Ron says.

While in Trinidad, their publisher called, wanting an updated third edition of *Superior Way* for 2001. “So we returned,” Bonnie says with her trademark wryness, “because it’s really hard to do a Superior sailing guide from South America.”

That job completed, they resumed traveling, going on the first of several Semesters at Sea, a sort of floating school designed to nurture global perspectives. They boarded as passengers, but when others learned with whom they were sailing, the Dahls did impromptu presentations about their experiences. Such trips brought them to the Great Wall of China, the Taj Mahal, and other international landmarks.

The one part of the world they never sailed to was the South Pacific, although Bonnie says that was her dream “from day one.” Their son, Peter, however, also is an avid sailor and may realize that destination.



MEDICAL CHALLENGES PLAYED A ROLE in the Dahls’ ultimate decision to sell their boat, although they made their annual trip to Ontario’s Red Rock Folk Festival in August and are taking a second RV trip around Lake Superior this September.

As they reflect upon their lives, their travels, their unique contribution to sailing on Superior, and the connections made with people around the world, Bonnie and Ron begin to speak with passion about how a liberal arts education provided a firm foundation for their pursuits.

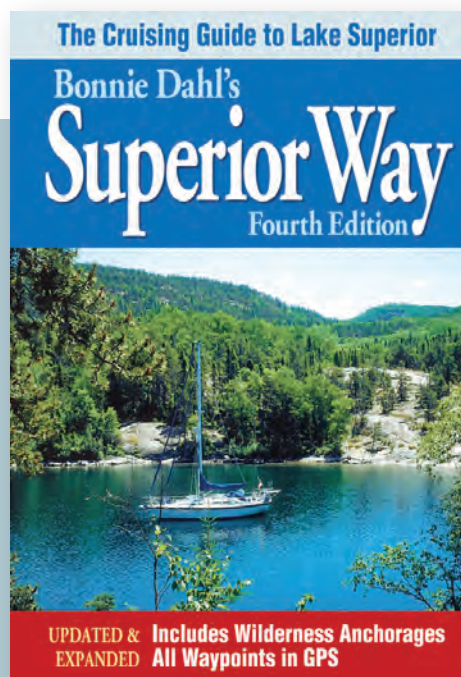
“We were exposed to so much — to music, to art, to museums,” Bonnie says. “We learned to appreciate these things, and so it was important to seek them out in all of our travels.”

This lively curiosity invariably led them into conversations with strangers, which helped them appreciate and delve deep into various cultures and their artistic accomplishments.

And this gained knowledge, in turn, has always led to the best of conversations: those between themselves.

“We have always talked, whether camping, hiking, traveling, looking down on Machu Picchu or the bluffs of Lake Superior, or sitting in the cockpit of our boat,” Bonnie says. “To this day, we still reserve a half-hour or more each day before supper, when we just sit and talk — about the day, our children and grandchild, future plans, politics. We are still solving the problems of the world.” 🦄

KIM ODE is a freelance Twin Cities writer.



Bonnie Dahl knows Lake Superior like no one else ... [and] her *Superior Way* is the “bible” for cruising Lake Superior. Aboard their Columbia 10.7 sailboat, Bonnie and her husband, Ron, spent more than 30 years exploring and testing every nook and cranny, documenting and charting every harbor and cove to bring boaters an exciting cruising experience anywhere and everywhere on Lake Superior. Power boaters, sailors and kayakers alike will find everything they need for safe and enjoyable travel throughout the lake’s channels.

— Google Books

EIGHTY YEARS OF

80TH

AT ST. OLAF

ST. OLAF IS CELEBRATING A TRIO OF ANNIVERSARIES THIS YEAR:
80 YEARS SINCE THE COLLEGE OFFERED ITS FIRST COURSE ABOUT ASIA,
50 YEARS SINCE ASIAN STUDIES BECAME AN ACADEMIC PROGRAM,
AND 20 YEARS SINCE IT EARNED ACADEMIC DEPARTMENT STATUS.

BY MARLA HILL HOLT '88



St. Olaf College offered its first course about Asia in 1938. Called *History of the Far East*, the class focused on what was then seen as an exotic region on the other side of the world. Today, of course, that region is no longer foreign, and St. Olaf's Department of Asian Studies illuminates Asia's wealth of cultural, historical, religious, and political diversity for 21st-century students who live in an interconnected, global society of which the continent plays an increasingly integral role.

St. Olaf has enjoyed a rich and lengthy history with Asia, from as early as the turn of the 20th century, when students did missionary work in China. Agnes Kittlesby of the Class of 1900 taught history, German, English, and Latin at St. Olaf before leaving for China in 1914 to organize a school for children of American missionaries. Clemens Granskou, Class of 1917 and St. Olaf president from 1943 to 1963, was a teacher and missionary in China in the 1920s. Over the years, numerous faculty members and administrators have had family and missionary ties with Asia or pursued academic interests in the region.

Courses with an Asian focus remained in the college's History Department until 1964, when the Religion Department offered its first Asia-related course. The college formally recognized Asian studies as an academic program in 1968. Thirty years later, the program was reorganized again, becoming its own academic department. Since then, the Asian Studies Department has offered an interdisciplinary program of study that draws on faculty expertise across the liberal arts. It now has six full-time equivalent faculty members and, in response to student demand, began offering majors in Japanese and Chinese language in 2017. The Class of 2018 included 17 Asian studies majors, seven Chinese majors, and nine Japanese majors. A total of 29 students earned concentrations in either Asian studies, China studies, or Japan studies.

"Our approach — with dedicated faculty and a broad curriculum — is often seen as the gold standard for Asian studies at liberal arts colleges," says Luce Professor of Asian Visual Culture Karil Kucera, who chairs the department and is a professor of art and art history as well as Asian studies.

St. Olaf also is known for receiving competitive grants in support of Asian studies, most recently a \$400,000 four-year grant from the Luce Foundation to explore connections between the environment and Asia that supported faculty and curriculum development as well as student research opportunities.

St. Olaf's unique Asian Conversations program, which is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, also bolsters St. Olaf's reputation as a leading college for the study of Asia. The program, which is a series of three linked courses taken by a single cohort of students, was revamped in 2008 to include an embedded January Interim spent studying in Shanghai and Tokyo, as well as a requirement to study Chinese or Japanese language. Asian Con has seen enrollment increases each year, with a cohort of 43 students registered for the program in 2018–19.

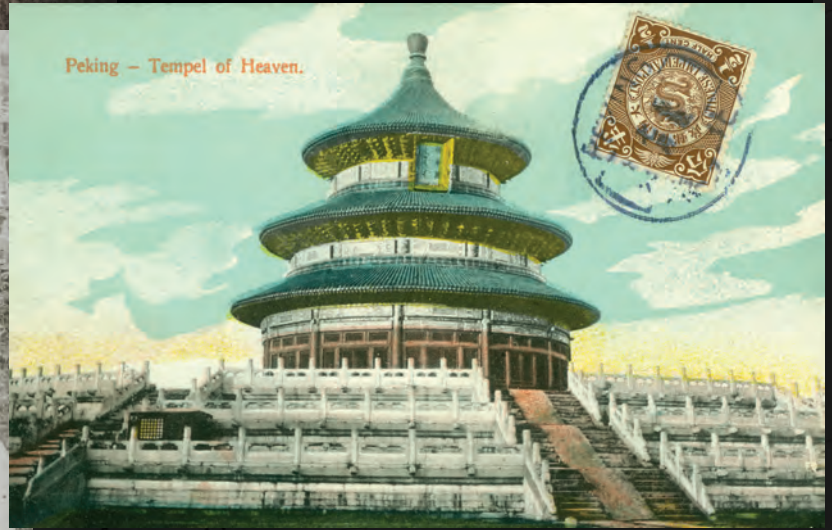
Off-campus study in Asia remains a core principle of the department, with students first traveling to the region in 1966 when the Term in Thailand was offered as the college's first international study option in Asia, followed by the Term in China in 1975. The college has since moved away from full-semester study abroad programs in Asia, focusing more on programs with intensive language study or opportunities for international, faculty-mentored student research in conjunction with St. Olaf's Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (CURI) program.

For students, and particularly those interested in more than just an American perspective, a major in Asian studies represents what the liberal arts is all about, says Barbara Reed, religion professor and former chair of the Asian Studies Department.

"Asian studies is complementary to study in so many other fields: public health, environmental studies, the arts, history, and so on," she says. "Asian studies is about studying a very dynamic region of the world from many different perspectives to help students make sense of the interconnectedness of cultures and economies in the context of globalization. That study equips them to be effective global citizens."

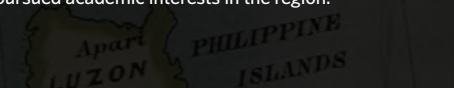
In honor of 80 years of Asia at St. Olaf, we talked with alumni about how the choice to major in Asian studies has impacted their lives.





Peking - Tempel of Heaven.

St. Olaf has enjoyed a rich and lengthy history with Asia since the turn of the 20th century, and countless faculty (including Gertrude Sovik '31, above right), administrators, students and alumni have resided, traveled, or pursued academic interests in the region.



Nick Wallace '02

Dean of Liberal Arts and STEM
Dakota County Technical College
Rosemount, Minnesota

NICK WALLACE'S UNDERSTANDING of the value of education is reflected not only in his professional life but also in the degrees he holds: a B.A. in Asian studies, political science, and religion from St. Olaf and three advanced degrees from the University of Minnesota, including a J.D., a master's of public policy from the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, and a Ph.D. in organizational leadership, policy, and development.

"I'm interested in how law and policy can be used together for social justice, particularly for educational equity," Wallace says.

Wallace studied Chinese at St. Olaf and was among the cohort of students who participated in Asian Conversations in its first year. Studying in Japan and China during Interim of his sophomore year changed his outlook on the world, he says. "It was one of the most formative experiences I had at St. Olaf." He notes that while in China, he became a better listener while attempting to understand an unfamiliar language, a skill he still uses today. "It's important to listen to others before trying to express myself," he says. "The cultural, religious, historical, and language learning I did in Asian studies illuminated the conversation that happens between cultures. It helped me understand how China developed in relation to the rest of the world and what that means for us today."

As dean of Liberal Arts and STEM at Dakota County Technical College, Wallace listens to the needs of his students as they navigate college, many as the first in their families to pursue a higher degree. "Our community and technical colleges are vital access points to higher education for large segments of society," he says.

Wallace has been preparing for his role as dean throughout his career in academia, including leadership stints in law school admissions at the University of Minnesota, Rutgers University, and Syracuse University.

"My work in educational equity goes back to the lessons I learned in China of understanding issues that are broader than my own experience," Wallace says. "Through my legal research and my advocacy work, I'm able to look at access in education not as a singular thing but as a collection of complex issues needing practical solutions."

PHOTOGRAPHED AT DCTC BY TOM ROSTER





Signe Knutson '11
Program Coordinator
International Education and
Resource Network (iEARN) USA
New York City

SIGNE KNUTSON'S FASCINATION with China began as a first-year student intent on preparing for a career in international business.

"Everyone told me to take Chinese as a career move," she says. "What surprised me was that, as I was studying the language, I also learned about Chinese culture, history, economy, and politics. The experience changed my perspective on China."

Six semesters of language courses and two study abroad experiences — the Asian Conversations program in Tokyo and Beijing and the study of language and culture at East China Normal University in Shanghai — turned Knutson's eye from international business to nonprofit work related to Asia.

Fresh out of St. Olaf with majors in Asian studies and political science and a concentration in Chinese studies, Knutson returned to China. There, she used connections with IES Abroad in Beijing that she had developed during Asian Con to become a resident advisor with the organization.

"I wore many hats as a resource for American college students studying abroad: cultural guide, interpreter, mentor, counselor, and mediator," Knutson says, including a stint as the point person for St. Olaf's Asian Conversations group at the time. Knutson

then taught English to middle and high school students in Hunan Province for a year before moving to New York City to work for InterExchange, where she supported international young professionals in the United States who were participating in internships and training programs.

Knutson currently is a program coordinator for International Education and Resource Network (iEARN) USA, where she oversees logistics for a scholarship program called the National Security Language Initiative for Youth. The program, which is funded by the U.S. State Department, offers language-immersive academic and homestay experiences in Korea, India, Morocco, and Taiwan for high school students. Knutson also has renewed her interest in international business as an M.B.A. degree candidate at Baruch College.

"I was drawn to St. Olaf because of how globally minded the college is and how it creates thoughtful and intentional travelers," Knutson says. "Asian studies helped me develop a humble and curious global outlook — to be respectful, engaged, observant, and nonjudgmental — that has equipped me well for my work."

PHOTOGRAPHED IN CHINATOWN, NEW YORK CITY, BY MICHAEL SOFRONSKI

WHEN RAINA YOUNG WAS STILL in high school, she received a recruitment postcard from St. Olaf showing an Asian studies faculty member holding a Chinese character flash card, and that was all it took to get her to sign up for a first-year Chinese language class.

"I thought it would be cool to be able to read that postcard," recalls Young, who says she just fell into Asian studies at St. Olaf. "I loved studying Chinese and really bonded with the friends in my classes. From there, I decided to study abroad on the Term in China in Shanghai and after that, a major in Asian studies just made sense."

Young was in China not long after the Tiananmen Square incident, when the country was very different than it is now, she says. "It was much more of a developing nation as opposed to a technological hub," she says, recalling the prevalence of bicycles for transportation, water that needed to be boiled, and cockroaches and rats in the dormitory. "We were two to a room, but the Chinese students were six to a room."

By far the most impactful experience for Young in China was

the death of a fellow Ole, Christin Mead '94, who developed pneumonia and passed away in a Chinese hospital of acute respiratory distress syndrome. The two Chinese doctors who treated Mead traveled to the United States to attend her funeral.

"That made an impression on me — witnessing the lifechanging person-to-person relationships that can develop between caregivers and their patients," says Young, who notes that Mead's death pushed her toward medicine. "I was intrigued by the whole idea of intercultural exchange through the practice of medicine." She returned to St. Olaf with a renewed commitment to Asian studies complemented with pre-med courses, eventually taking additional science courses at Iowa State University. She graduated from the University of Iowa School of Medicine and now practices family medicine at the HealthPartners Clinic in Eagan, Minnesota.


"I have patients from all over the world," Young says. "I believe my degree in Asian studies and having lived in China prepared me well to be a thoughtful, empathetic caregiver and to be curious and open-minded about my patients' cultural practices and beliefs."

PHOTOGRAPHED AT HEALTHPARTNERS CLINIC BY TOM ROSTER

Raina Young '93

*M.D., Family Medicine
HealthPartners Clinic
Eagan, Minnesota*





Steven Braun '11

*Data Analytics/Visualization Specialist
Northeastern University Libraries
Digital Scholarship Group
Boston, Massachusetts*

STEVEN BRAUN ENTERED ST. OLAF with interests in doing research in the natural sciences and following the pre-med track. While he did indeed earn a degree in chemistry, his experience in the Asian Studies Department impacted him the most, particularly interactions with its faculty members. He met Professor Emerita of Asian Studies Phyllis Larson as a first-year student taking third-level Japanese, and she changed the trajectory of his life, he says.

"She transformed me into an Asian studies major," Braun says. "She — and other faculty members — pushed me to think critically about questions of representation and how different perspectives, whether social, cultural, historical, or political, can frame an issue."

After graduating from St. Olaf, Braun was still convinced that he wanted to pursue a life of research as a biophysicist. He spent a year in Kyoto, Japan, as a Fulbright Fellow, conducting computational biophysics research before returning to earn an M.S. degree in molecular biophysics and biochemistry from Yale University.

But while in Kyoto, he'd reflected on his St. Olaf experiences and changed his mind about his career, eventually turning to the world of information design and visualization. As a data analytics and visualization specialist at Northeastern University, Braun helps faculty, staff, and students use graphics and visual modes of representation to communicate data more broadly. For example, a recent project looked at the differences in U.S. and Japanese high school history textbook depictions of the devastation at Hiroshima and Nagasaki during World War II.

"Design is a scholarly process, and it can be useful in visually communicating the data behind research," Braun says. "I'm able to integrate the very technical things I learned in the sciences with the critical thinking I learned in Asian studies."

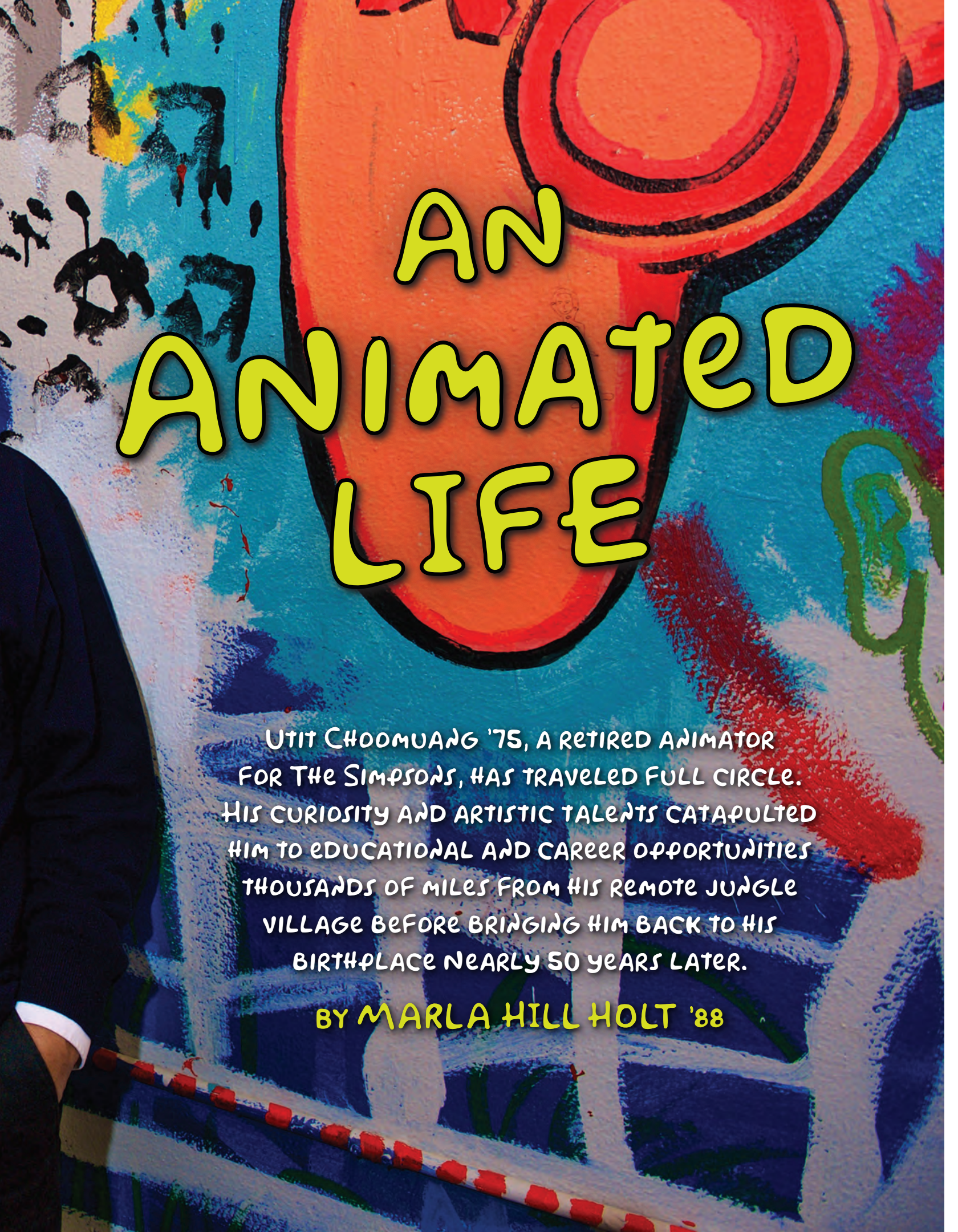
Braun is discovering that his background and expertise in science, data visualization, and Japanese are proving useful to others.

"I'm connecting with scholars around the country, particularly in Japanese or East Asian studies, who are interested in using digital tools to advance their research," he says. "It really brings into focus both my technical skill set and the academic experiences I had at St. Olaf in a concrete, tangible way."

PHOTOGRAPHED IN THE BOSTON PUBLIC GARDEN BY RICK FRIEDMAN/POLARIS



SIT TIME
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AN ANIMATED LIFE

UTIT CHOOMUANG '75, A RETIRED ANIMATOR FOR THE SIMPSONS, HAS TRAVELED FULL CIRCLE. HIS CURIOSITY AND ARTISTIC TALENTS CATAPULTED HIM TO EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER OPPORTUNITIES THOUSANDS OF MILES FROM HIS REMOTE JUNGLE VILLAGE BEFORE BRINGING HIM BACK TO HIS BIRTHPLACE NEARLY 50 YEARS LATER.

BY MARLA HILL HOLT '88

UTIT CHOOMUANG

is living a remarkable life. From the humblest of beginnings in a primitive Thai jungle to an early education by Buddhist monks to becoming an exchange student at Northfield High School and a graduate of St. Olaf College, Choomuang's curiosity about the world led him far from home. His artistic talent, work ethic, and easygoing personality has sustained Choomuang during a distinguished career as an animation artist in California and South Korea. And finally, his desire to give back to his childhood community has brought him home to Thailand, where he is continually seeking ways to build up the village of his ancestors.

HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

THE VILLAGE IN SOUTHERN THAILAND where Choomuang was born is known as Nongnokkai, or “the pond where the birds lay their eggs.” For the first several years of his life (without a paper record of his birth, he guesses he’s about 65 years old), Choomuang thought Nongnokkai was the whole universe, he says.

“We lived off the land, eating rice and fish and ants,” he says. His older siblings and parents moved about to work in various rice fields, so Choomuang was often left in the care of his grandparents. As a little boy, he waited on the nearby river’s edge, keeping an eye out for the tradesman who’d exchange a bucket of rice for a bucket of salt needed for preserving fish.

“I spent a lot of time on the river, floating, watching people,” Choomuang says. “One day, I saw a sailboat with people on it wearing clothes, so pretty and colorful, like the birds of the jungle. I was naked and I had never seen clothes before. I told my grandfather I wanted to wear those things.” So Choomuang and his grandfather went on a walk — naked still — to a school about 10 kilometers away, where the school-children wore colorful clothing.

That excursion only intensified Choomuang’s curiosity about clothes and prompted his grandfather to send him — at about age seven — to a Buddhist temple that took in children from poor families, providing a uniform and one meal a day while teaching basic reading and writing. “I didn’t really know what school was, but I liked the pageantry of it — raising the flag and singing, standing in rows,” Choomuang says. He didn’t like learning at first and would often disappear for days, scrounging for food in trees or ponds.

He lived and went to school at the temple for four years before returning to his village and enrolling in a school for older children near his home. Eventually, he made his way to a two-year teacher training school, where he met a Peace Corps volunteer with ties to Northfield, Minnesota, who offered him an experience that irrevocably changed his life.



SCENES FROM A REMARKABLE LIFE.

In 1971, Utit Choomaung left behind his small Thai village, Nongnökkai, to become a Rotary exchange student at Northfield High School (upper right). After spending many years in the entertainment industry as a successful animation artist, Choomaung returned to Nongnökkai where he is focusing on supporting housing and educational efforts in the area, as well as reforestation. After planting dozens of trees at the edge of the river near his home (center right) where he harvests crabs, Choomaung is currently "sculpting" the land around his rain water pond (far left) to accommodate the new mangroves he's been planting. "It's important to me to regenerate the jungle," he says, which was stripped of trees by the shrimp farmers. "I grow coconut, mango, and banana trees. I also grow trees that can house ant nests, because I love eating ants."

COMING TO AMERICA

IN 1969, TERRY FREDRICKSON, a Northfield native and recent graduate of Stanford University, was stationed with the Peace Corps in Choomuang's home province of Nakhon Si Thammarat. He taught English at the nearby teacher training school.

"A little kid knocked on my door one night," Fredrickson says. "He was about 18, but he was quite small." The kid was Choomuang, offering to do household chores. "I didn't want to say no, so he moved in," Fredrickson says.

Choomuang arrived at the door by way of the school's library. Curious about the books he couldn't yet read in English, he was told by the librarian he'd have to befriend Fredrickson if he wanted to learn to read them.

"I followed him around, trying to figure out how to sign up for his class, and then I spotted a sign saying he was looking for somebody to wash his clothes," Choomuang says. "I told him he didn't have to pay me if he would teach me how to read those English books."

Over the course of their lessons, Fredrickson discovered Choomuang's love of art — he'd made animals out of clay in the jungle and drew pictures on a slate board at the Buddhist temple. "He was very talented at drawing and especially good at cartooning," Fredrickson says. Before long, Choomuang was creating visual aids for Fredrickson's English classes, drawing hundreds of flashcards with images of such things as elephants and tigers or a man walking or jumping over a fence.

Fredrickson noticed other talents in Choomuang as well. When his class needed a projector to watch slides, Choomuang built one. "He got a lens from the astronomy teacher and tinkered with it until it worked," Fredrickson says. "His curiosity, coupled with his mechanical aptitude, led to all sorts of things. He was fascinated with Neil Armstrong's moon walk, so he found some instructions and built a small telescope, scrounging for materials."

Unbeknownst to Choomuang, Fredrickson was writing home to his parents, Margit and Sigurd Fredrickson, about this remarkable student he'd met. Fredrickson and his mother hatched a plan to bring Choomuang to Northfield for a year as a high school exchange student, and his father, a music professor at St. Olaf, agreed that the young man could live with their family.

"He was learning English very well, and it was pretty clear to me that he would make it in the States," Fredrickson says.

With the financial support of many Northfielders, the Fredricksons sponsored Choomuang as a Rotary Club exchange student, arranging for him to fly from Bangkok to Minneapolis to attend Northfield High School.

"I didn't know this was happening until the tickets were purchased," says Choomuang, who had never been to Bangkok and had only seen contrails from airplanes high in the sky. His family didn't think he should go, but

Choomuang insisted. "I thought it was really exciting! I was curious to fly like a bird and to go to the other side of the world. I planned to learn everything I could and then come home to be a teacher."

It was nearly nine years before Choomuang returned to Thailand.

WELCOME TO THE HILL

THE FREDRICKSON FAMILY fully embraced Choomuang. They celebrated his birthday for the first time and introduced him to many of their St. Olaf friends. Sigurd took him fishing and canoeing on the Cannon River and sledding down Old Main Hill. Margit read books like *Tom Sawyer* and *My Antonia* aloud to help with his English comprehension. She also encouraged Choomuang's love of drawing, taking him to galleries and setting him up with a booth at the Northfield art fair. "I did portraits with a Chinese brush in about 30 seconds for five dollars," he says. "That was the first time I made money."

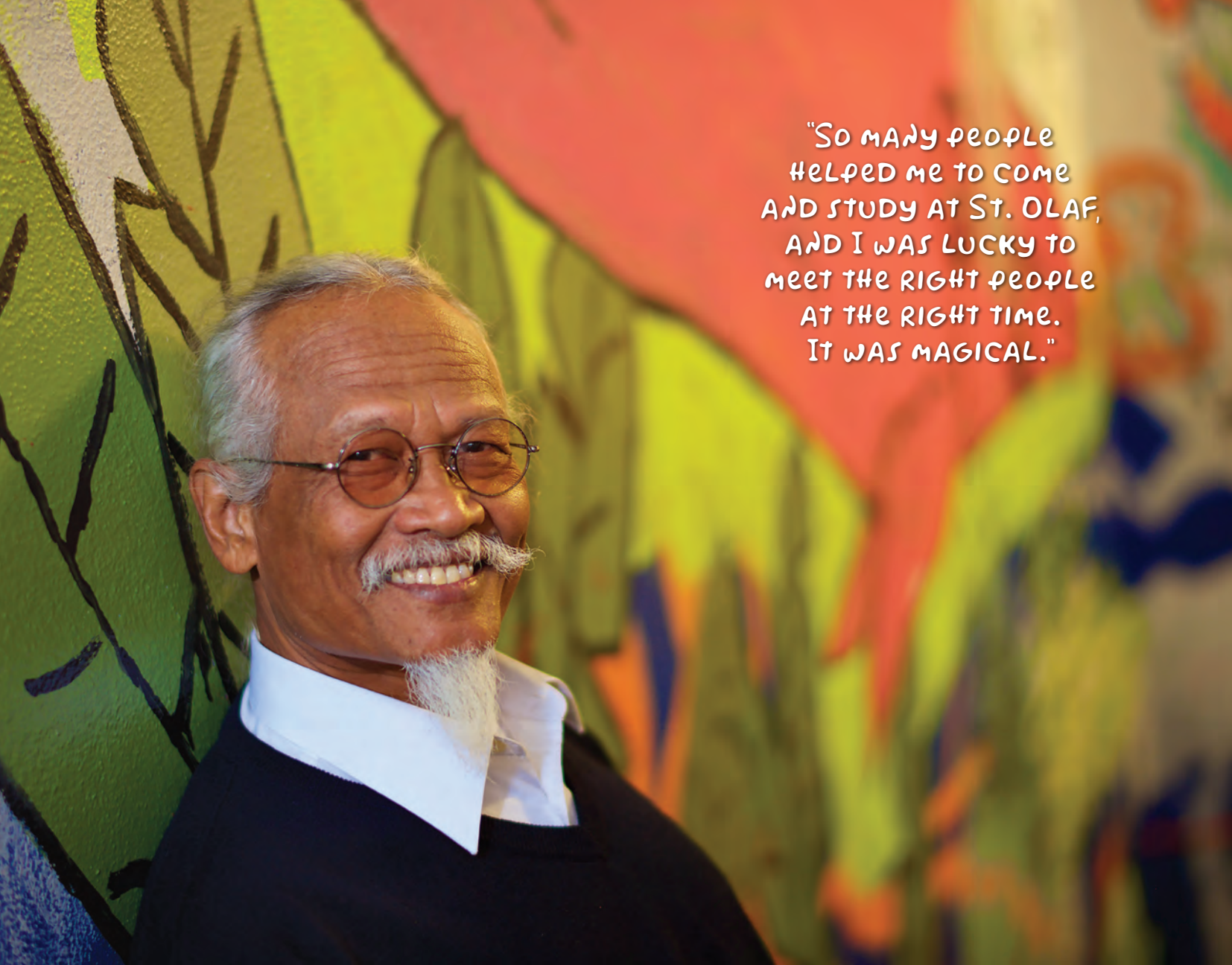
With the Fredricksons' help, Choomuang applied for and received a scholarship to attend St. Olaf in the fall of 1972. "Not in my wildest dreams did I think I could go to college," he says. He put his plan to return to Thailand on hold, turned his focus to learning animation so he could use his skills to develop educational materials for Thai schoolchildren, and graduated in three years. He was mentored by the late Professor Emeritus of Art Arch Leann, who'd previously worked in animation at Disney.

"I was fascinated that you could make a drawing walk and talk," Choomuang says. His senior project, a five-minute animated film called *By and Bye* about his experience of flying in an airplane, won first prize in a film competition sponsored by WCCO television, the Twin Cities CBS affiliate.

Professor Emeritus of Art Mac Gimse '58 says St. Olaf art faculty members were immediately taken with Choomuang's humility and outgoing personality. They also recognized his raw artistic talent and his knack for visually absorbing his environment. "He's astoundingly creative," Gimse says. "It seems as though he's always creating a composition out of his field of vision, constantly aware of details around him."

Charlie Grist, who attended St. Olaf from 1972 to 1974 before transferring to the University of Wisconsin, cemented his friendship with Choomuang in the art studios of the former Flaten Hall, where the two young men spent hours together working on art assignments.

"I liked Utit right away. He had an infectious inquisitiveness, a great sense of humor, and was helpful to other students in art class," says Grist, who is a conservation resources manager at the Northwest Power and Conservation Council in Portland, Oregon. After college, Choomuang and Grist lost touch, but their St. Olaf connection had been so strong that, in 1981, Grist and his wife visited Choomuang's Thai village, even though Choomuang was in California at the time.



"SO MANY PEOPLE HELPED ME TO COME AND STUDY AT ST. OLAF, AND I WAS LUCKY TO MEET THE RIGHT PEOPLE AT THE RIGHT TIME. IT WAS MAGICAL."

"We rode in a dugout canoe with an outboard motor down a muddy river, entering the jungle at full speed and sliding up onto a little wooden plank. The driver ordered us out," Grist says. "We walked deeper into the jungle, calling out. This little man emerged from a bamboo house about eight feet above the ground, and it was Utit's dad. I had a photo of Utit with me, and his dad welcomed us in. They prepared a duck feast for us and it was marvelous. It was remarkable to put Utit's life in context and, at the same time, picture him back in the States drawing cartoons for Disney."

Grist recently reconnected with Choomuang after nearly 40 years when Choomuang visited Portland for several days in March. They bonded over gardening like they first bonded over art at St. Olaf. "It was as if no time had passed," Grist says. "For a connection to be sustained over the course of decades — between two people from halfway around the planet, from different cultures, backgrounds, and upbringings — is incredible."

THE WORLD OF WORK

STILL HOLDING TIGHT TO HIS PLAN to return to Thailand, Choomuang accepted a job after graduation creating 30-second animated commercials at a small studio in Edina, Minnesota, to save money for his trip home to start a teaching career. He lived briefly with the family of Greg Buck '77, a St. Olaf friend, who recalls Choomuang arriving with a burlap bag of rice and a rice cooker. "Utit loved his Thai sticky rice," says Buck, who now serves as a St. Olaf Regent and is president of Productivity, Inc., a metalworking machine supplier.

When asked by Buck's father why he was always smiling, Choomuang replied, "Everything is wonderful after you have water that comes right into your house."

After four years at the studio in Edina, Choomuang went home to the jungle. "I returned to the grass roof house that we moved to a dryer spot every time it rained," he says. He used his savings to build his parents a new home with a bathroom and to help with his younger siblings' education.

“Then I flew back to America, with only 50 dollars in my pocket, to try my luck in Hollywood.”

Fortunately for him, luck and hard work was on his side.

Choomuang cold-called film studios and animation companies from the Los Angeles airport. He lucked out with independent filmmaker Barry Nelson, who’d just received a \$10,000 grant from the American Film Institute to create an animated short film. “He said he’d give the grant to me if I’d work alone and finish the film in six months,” says Choomuang, who drew a cartoon frame-by-frame in Prismacolor pencils — about an animated character directing an animated play — while living in Nelson’s guest house in Malibu Beach.

“He gave me my big break,” Choomuang says.

Choomuang’s next break came on the day he walked into Bill Melendez Productions in Hollywood, portfolio in hand. He was hired on the spot as an animator for the *Charlie Brown and Snoopy Show* that aired Saturday mornings on CBS-TV. He drew many of the Peanuts characters and painted background scenery for the cartoons, working for Melendez for 11 years.

Meanwhile, Hollywood was buzzing about a new show called *The Simpsons* — which would go on to become the longest running primetime animated show, beginning its 30th season — being produced by the Klasky Csupo animation studio. Choomuang thought it would be a cool show to work on, so he applied and was tested on his animation skills. “I had to make Bart Simpson walk into a room, pick up a remote control, turn on the TV, and sit on the couch,” he says.

He flunked the test.

“My Bart walked too much like Charlie Brown,” Choomuang says.

Again, luck intervened. Choomuang was invited to join the studio to practice, he says. “I practiced day and night, trying to get better at drawing the Simpsons.” Eventually he got paid working in character layout, drawing images from storyboards to define a scene’s action and perspective. For example, if the character Homer needed to crack a beer or Lisa was going to play the saxophone, Choomuang drew precisely how that would look on screen. Laid off from the show at the end of the season, Choomuang found work as a scene layout artist for Disney Television’s animated *Goof Troop*, a job he held for three and a half years.

While at Disney, Choomuang met comic book writer and producer Stan Lee, who offered him work on *Spiderman* in Japan, which propelled Choomuang into making his biggest gamble yet: go back to *The Simpsons* to see if that show’s producers would give him a better deal.

They did.

The Simpsons had begun outsourcing the final stage of animation to AKOM Production Company, an animation

studio in Seoul, South Korea, and Choomuang was offered the position of animation director for that overseas operation. He managed three subcontracted studios with hundreds of artists who were responsible for animating every frame of each episode of the show based on scripts, storyboards, and layouts sent from Los Angeles. The process took about two months for each episode, and the completed, full-color versions were shipped back to be edited in California.

“It was the perfect job for me,” Choomuang says. “I’m a problem solver. I knew camera work, sound work, background, ink and paint — every aspect of animation. I enjoyed using what I’d learned, and I’m proud of having worked on a famous show.”

Sixteen years and 200 to 300 episodes of *The Simpsons* later, Choomuang made his final move: returning home to Thailand.

FULL CIRCLE

TODAY, CHOOMUANG LIVES IN Nongnokkalai, his childhood home. It’s no longer as primitive as it was in the 1960s, having been overdeveloped and stripped of trees by the shrimp farming industry. Choomuang pursued sustainable shrimp farming himself for a while and is now focusing on reforestation and supporting housing and educational efforts in the area.

“It’s important to me to regenerate the jungle, so I grow coconut, mango, and banana trees,” he says. “I’m also growing trees that can house the ants’ nests, because I love eating ants.”

In 2008, Choomuang welcomed Greg Buck — his friend from St. Olaf — to his village for the opening celebration of an English-language school Choomuang built for local Thai people.

“It was really something,” Buck says. “They killed a cow for the feast, the Buddhist monks blessed the building, and there was much singing and dancing. I’m grateful I got to meet Utit’s family.”

At Buck’s request, Choomuang returned to Northfield this past March to share his life story with the students in Assistant Professor of Art Peter Nelson’s animation class. His visit coincided with the 100th birthday celebration for his American mom, Margit Fredrickson, and gave Choomuang the opportunity to reconnect with friends and reflect on how far he’s come from his days as a boy in the jungle.

“My life started as a naked kid who was curious about wearing clothes,” he says. “So many people helped me to come and study here, and I was lucky to meet the right people at the right time. It was magical, and I want to create that magic for others. I’m home again to help people have the same chances I did.” 🍌

MARLA HILL HOLT '89 is a regular contributor to *St. Olaf Magazine*.



Harrison Clark '21 with mentor Philip Moeller '63 in Washington, D.C.

 ST. OLAF COLLEGE

IMPACT THAT TRANSCENDS TIME

By including St. Olaf in his estate plans and mentoring Oles for the past nine years, Philip Moeller provides support that impacts the present and the future.

WHAT WILL YOU MAKE POSSIBLE?

Explore your planned giving options — contact Eric Tvedt '08 in the St. Olaf Development Office at 800-776-6523 or tvedt@stolaf.edu

Submit Your Class Notes Online!

stolaf.edu/alumni/share-your-news

We've made it easier for you to update your contact information and submit all of your latest news! Questions? Email alum-office@stolaf.edu or call 507-786-3028 or 888-865-6537.

1940s

Class of 1948 Golden Oles **Ruth Harange Flom**, **Geneva Stegner Eschweiler**, **Evelyn Jorstad Fosteson**, **Winnifred Greene Alberg**, and **Richard Ensrud** returned to the Hill in June to attend their 70th class reunion.

1950s

"Last year's move to the Northfield Retirement Community was a good one for us," write **Charles Anderson '56** and **Shirley Anderson '56**. "We love our cozy, independent living apartment and Northfield, especially St. John's Lutheran Church, where Shirley was confirmed and we were married 62 years ago. And being close to St. Olaf is handy because we are often on campus. In spite of health issues and reduced energy levels, we continue in our two hobbies: (1) Connecting with current Oles, a hobby that began 30 years ago. Last year, we had 37 adopted St. Olaf grandkids. (2) Riding trains. We've traveled by rail in 65 countries and have been in all 50 states and eight provinces plus one territory in Canada." On Jan. 28, Charles rode his millionth mile by train as the Empire Builder passed Tioga, N.D., enroute to the West Coast. That's an average ride of 32.6 miles for each day of his life. "Has anyone in the class of '56 surpassed that record? Not Shirley, because she has ridden only about 700,000 rail miles."



1960s

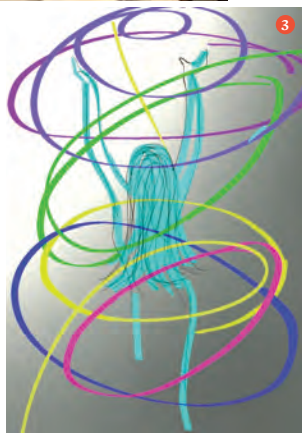
Steve Peterson '64 and his wife, **Linnea Rian Peterson '64**, attended Honors Day at St Olaf [in early May]. Steve writes, "we saw [Class of 1964] classmates **David** and **Karen Aaker Minge** and **Naurine Dierks Lennox**, watched the procession of the faculty in their colorful gowns and cowls, and were treated to some inspiring talks by a pair of graduating seniors. Our school is producing some smart, talented, and articulate young people; we can be proud. One theme of the day was the importance of alumni support and how it is employed; we are convinced [that] St Olaf is a good steward of our gifts." ■ **Ginger Hafner Primus '66** toured Norway in early summer, taking in Bergen, the fjords, and Oslo, with a former art history and architecture faculty member from Northern Virginia Community College. ■ **Martin Francis '69** writes, "Greetings, classmates. This is my first attempt to find out who is coming to the 50th next year! I'm planning on it, God willing of course. Teaching violin, playing a lot of musicals for high schools and community theater. Doing a lot of pulpit supply in the Southern Ohio Synod, ELCA. Enjoying a good single malt occasionally. God bless!"

1970s

Marie Grender Clark '70 writes that her cover art appears on the recently published medical textbook **Quality and Safety in Women's Health** (Cambridge University Press), edited by Thomas Ivester. ■ **Michael Poole '71** writes, "If you would have asked me in 2014, I would have sworn that my last project was the Campus Crossroads Project at the University of Notre Dame — a three-and-a-half-year build out of almost one million square feet of football, academic, and

student space. Now it looks as if the redevelopment of the old Hudson's department store site in downtown Detroit will be my last. It is truly exciting to be involved in the rebirth of a great American city." ■ **James Fremming '72** continues to work in evaluation research, with a focus on international development programs. "I consulted for World Bank and USAID for decades, and at the moment am on two assignments for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Would love to be in touch with more St. Olaf friends!"

■ **Janet Lund '73** is loving retirement life and is, she writes, "so grateful I'm still close to many of my Ole friends! I love having time for community theater ... just performed in *Steel Magnolias* as one of the (ahem) older ladies."



On the Shelf

BOOKS BY ST. OLAF COLLEGE ALUMNI AND FACULTY



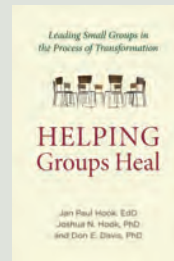
Nearing Hungry Horse (Dorrance Publishing Co.), by **Carol Woster '64**



Brother Beast (Bear Run Press, June 2018), by **A. (Amy) Griemann Carlson '79**

Fundamentals of Collection Development and Management, Fourth Edition (ALA Editions, 2018), by **Peggy Johnson '70**

The Spirit and the Sky: Lakota Visions of the Cosmos (University of Nebraska Press, June 2017), by **Mark Hollabaugh '71**



Helping Groups Heal (Templeton Press, 2017), by **Jan Hook '74**

Mississippi Misadventures (self-published, 2017), by **Anne Sherve-Ose '75**

The Last Adventure of the Blue Phantom (McSweeney's/Audible, 2017), by **Eric Hanson '77**



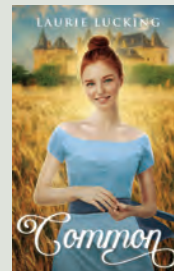
The Chenille Ultimatum (Russian Hill Press, 2018), by **Lani Longshore '78**

The Peterson Laws (self-published, CreateSpace, May 2016), by **David Peterson '80**



Cold Hard Truth (Albert Whitman Co., April 2018), by **Anne Smith Greenwood Brown '90**

Love Letters: Saving Romance in the Digital Age (Routledge, 2018), by **Michelle Janning '94**



Heart Land (Simon & Schuster, July 2018), by **Kimberly Stuart (Kimberly Ruisch Welge '98)**

Common (Tales of the Mystics, Book One) (Love2ReadLove2Write Publishing, February 2018), by **Laurie Bardenwerper Lucking '07**



Detective Luke Miller and Grendel's Ghostly Grandmother (Sic Semper Serpent, April 2018), by **D. (Danial) Zane Davis '11**

■ **Jim Smith '74** retired after serving for 33 years on the faculty at the University of Georgia School of Law, where he held the John Byrd Martin Chair of Law. He remains actively involved in scholarship, professional activities, and service. ❶ Jim will continue to teach courses periodically, and he will be a visiting professor at the University of Kentucky School



of Law for spring semester 2019. ■ **Gloria Jones Hum '76** returned to campus for the first time since graduation for Global Semester's 50th anniversary. Gloria and her husband, Steve, completed a two-month bike packing tour in New Zealand, riding 3,000 km from the north to the south, self supported. "It was a fabulous way to see the country." ■ After 20 years reporting in the business section at the *New York Times*, **Gretchen Morgenson '76** joined the *Wall Street Journal's* investigations unit in November 2017 as a senior special writer. ■ **David Lane '77** became the chief compliance officer for Providence St. Joseph Health, the third largest health system in the United States. ■ **Julie Nelson '78**, a professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts Boston, ❷ received her institution's 2018 Chancellor's Award for Distinguished Scholarship. ■ **Sally Anderson Paille '78** writes, "After working at L.L.Bean and Duluth Trading Company for several years, I am now the director of finance at the North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants." ❸ Sally and her husband, Ken, were photographed at Duke Gardens. ■ **Joanne Swenson '78** writes, "I serve as senior minister of Church in the Forest, in Pebble Beach, Calif., where the congregation includes Minnesotans, trading snow for putting greens and beaches. ❹ I am blessed to have Ole parishioners Joe Wandke and Sig Hadland. Even some Carls are soaking up faith, including my husband, John Thorbeck." ■ **Susan Crumb '79** and her husband, Terry Foy, have ventured into viticulture, establishing Cottonwood Farm Vineyard on their family farm n

Freeborn County, Minn. ❺ They expect their first full harvest of University of Minnesota-developed cold climate Marquette grapes this fall. ■ Music lovers in Oslo, Norway, were recently treated to a *Syttende Mai* recital featuring pianist **Scott Rogers '79** and baritone **Bruce Perkins '79**, at the home of Helle Nilsen.



ST. OLAF BAND

TIMOTHY MAHR '78 · CONDUCTOR

FALL TOUR 2018 October 13-20

The St. Olaf Band, under the direction of Timothy Mahr '78, embarks on its fall tour, with performances in:

- Plymouth, Wisconsin**
- Milwaukee, Wisconsin**
- Mishawaka, Indiana**
- Elgin, Illinois**
- Evanston, Illinois**
- DeKalb, Illinois**
- La Crosse, Wisconsin**
- Madison, Wisconsin**

An October 21 home concert in Skoglund Center Auditorium will be streamed live at stolaf.edu/multimedia

For performance details and ticket information, visit stolaf.edu/tickets

NOVEMBER 29, 30 & DECEMBER 1-2 · 2018

St. Olaf Christmas Festival

The 2018 St. Olaf Christmas Festival ticket presale will happen in late October again this year. We will send login information via email to all eligible Ole constituents — donors, parents, alumni, students, retired faculty and staff, and volunteers.

If you do not receive information by the middle of October, please contact us at christmas-festival@stolaf.edu.



1980s

David Midthun '80 was designated a master clinician by the American College of Physicians in 2017 and elected to serve as president of the staff of Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minn., for 2018. ■ **Mark Northrup '80** is the mayor of a sleepy Michigan farm city, Hudsonville, outside of Grand Rapids. He writes, "It is a city in transition in one of the fast-growing Michigan communities, now becoming a most desirable city to live and work in. In 2017, the city was selected from over 500 cities and villages in Michigan as a Community of Excellence by the Michigan Municipal League. That's me with a big scissors **1** cutting the ribbon of Terra Square, a city-purchased empty car dealership, now a community center-piece. So how is this relevant to my days at St. Olaf? In 1979, I went abroad on an Urban Studies program in Scandinavia with the University of Oslo. Not a day goes by where I don't recall or use some knowledge gained knowing the need for U.S. cities to be more European-like." ■ **Paul "Pablo" Brisance '81**, **Paul Magnuson '88**, and **Emily Verticchio '17** joined forces this past year at Leysin American School, **2** where Emily was the first participant of the school's student teacher program. ■ **Bonnie Campbell '81** writes, "After working at the National Park Service's Northern Colorado Plateau Inventory & Monitoring Network, serving on its National Long-Term Data Management Task Force, and completing an oral history relating to my time in Alaska, it was time for a shift from the Utah desert to D.C.! As data manager for the National Capital Region Network, I've moved from monitoring the big rivers, riparian areas, seeps, and vegetation of the west to the forests, birds, amphibians, and waters of the Potomac Watershed." ■ **Elizabeth Evans Sachs '84** continues teaching, writing, and publishing as a professor of English literature at Niagara County Community College. She's also chair of the Washington Island Literary Festival, on Washington Island, Wis., and would love to see Oles at the festival. ■ **Todd Biewen '85** has been appointed director of the Environmental Analysis and Outcome Division at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, where he has worked for 30 years. This division has lots of talented scientists who assess the condition of Minnesota's air and water. ■ **Stefanie Knutson '85** writes, "After 31 years in education, I have retired to 11 acres in Georgetown, Texas, where I am enjoying organic gardening, woodworking, and being an Airbnb host. I highly recommend retirement — the earlier the better." ■ **Kristin Nef Tanner '85** and **Phil Tanner '84** **3** write, "Number 10 will join the Tanner Tribe in October!" ■ **Ansis Viksnins '85** has joined the firm of Monroe Moxness Berg as a shareholder. Ansis focuses his law practice on business litigation matters. ■ **Anchalee Panigabutra-Roberts '86** has been



1

working at the University of Tennessee Libraries as head of cataloging and metadata for a year and a half. Anchalee writes, "I had the pleasure [of returning to] Minnesota briefly to present at the LibTech Conference in May, right after presenting at the Open Science Conference in Berlin, Germany." ■ At StokerCon in Providence, R.I., **Danel Olson '87** accepted this year's Bram Stoker Award on behalf of Abrams Books and the Estate of Octavia E. Butler for *Kindred: A Graphic Novel Adaptation* (featuring artist John Jennings and adapter Damian Duffy). Danel is a two-time Bram Stoker Award finalist himself, and was the recipient of a 2018 World Fantasy Award for *Writing Madness*, a collection of writing by Patrick McGrath. ■ Minnesota State Representative **Erik Paulsen '87** escorted a group of Oles around the nation's capitol in July, **4** taking them on an exclusive and informative tour of the Capitol building, which included the speaker's balcony overlooking the National Mall and the House floor, where the group learned about floor procedures from a House parliamentarian. "He was a great host and very generous with his time," writes **Evan Quinnell '14**, a senior advisor who works with Minnesota State Senator Amy Klobuchar, and who was among the 30 Oles from the Classes of 1953 to 2019 on the tour. ■ **Kristin Anderson Lagus '88** launched Spirited Adventures Travel, featuring active European sightseeing and hiking trips. **5** Several Oles were part of her most recent group, including (L-R): **Barb Ingwersen Heck '73**, **Jennifer Promen Nielsen '88**, **Amy Gillespie '88**, **Kristin Anderson Lagus '88**, **Jennifer Gillespie '87**, and **Christi Hudec LeClair '88**, who are pictured on Mount Rigi, overlooking Lake Lucerne, Switzerland.



2



3



4



5

Oles! Do we have your current email address? Please be sure to send it to us at update@stolaf.edu



1990s

Michael Brown '90, an architect with RSP Architects in Minneapolis, is currently working on a long-term assignment at the firm's office in Bangalore, India, ¹ where he provides project coordination between U.S. and Indian construction and design teams. ■ **Aaron Lehman '90** was recently elected president of the Iowa Farmers Union, a nonprofit organization dedicated to advocating for family farmers and sustainable agriculture in Iowa. ■ **Sarah Benson Wilkinson '90** writes, "I spent my 50th birthday in Paris in April! ² I met my Ole daughter, **Emma Wilkinson '19**, who is currently studying abroad at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. She met me for a week in Paris as well as a week in London. After all of her travels this year, she has declared that 'France is the most awesome country on earth,' which of course delights her mother! My 50th was epic and I hope everyone else's is too!" ■ **Chad Hellwinckel '91**, a permaculture expert and assistant professor at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, has decided to scythe the hay ³ and dry it the traditional Norwegian way. ■



Sonja Rhoten Bretschneider '95 writes, "After 16 years in Singapore and 22 years in Asia, this Asian studies major is moving back to Germany where I grew up. I will be teaching at Bonn International School, and hopefully my family can visit America more often, now that we'll be closer. If you want to visit the Rhine Valley with castles and wineries, stop by and say hi and we can have some *kaffee und kuchen*." ■ **Jenny Howenstine '98** writes, "I continue to be the director of international recruitment at St. Olaf. One thing that has changed a lot since we were on campus is the geographic diversity of the student body—this year students hold citizenships from over 90 countries around the world. If you are an international alum, living overseas, or know of an international student who would be a great match for St. Olaf, please let me know! I would love to connect with more alums living around the world as I travel and look for international connections for our students." ■ **Elizabeth Berard '99** is in Washington, D.C., working for the USAID Office of HIV/AIDS, where she manages and provides technical assistance to HIV/AIDS and youth development programs.

2000s

Ian Galeski '00 writes, "My husband and I just started our own farm business, Phoenix Dragon Farm, LLC. We're based in Meadowlands, Minn., and we're working toward our dream of living a sustainable life and supplying people with food they can trust. ⁴ We're hoping to expand, but right now our focus is eggs, poultry, and a CSA. Quite an exciting time for us as we work toward our lifelong dream!" ■ **Mark Dendinger '01** has been elected to the



an organization that works for full LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life, in recognition of her contributions to equality in the United States. Raffi was the LGBT Liaison at

partnership of Bracewell LLP, a leading law and government relations firm primarily serving the energy, finance, and technology industries throughout the world. ■ **Jennifer Smith Shaffer '01** has embarked on a new professional venture and has created The Formidable Genealogist, LLC. The company specializes in genealogy research and photo archiving and digital restoration, with a specialization in researching Norwegian ancestors and family farms. ■ **Allen Bateman '04** happily moved from Seattle to start a job as assistant director of communicable diseases at the Wisconsin public health laboratory in Madison, Wis. ■ **Brenda McKinney '04** is celebrating one year with the New York City Council, where she currently serves as counsel to the Committee on Women and also the Committee on Cultural Affairs, Libraries, and International-Intergroup Relations. Before moving to New York, Brenda worked on the Hillary Clinton campaign in Florida and was an Obama administration appointee at USAID in Washington, D.C. ■ **Eleni Pinnow '04**, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Superior, was recently elected to be a Fellow in the Midwestern Psychological Association (MPA). Fellow status is the highest honor an MPA member can earn. ■ **Bethany Jacobson Kok '06** has departed academia and accepted a position as lead data scientist at EmpowerTheUser in Dublin, Ireland. ■ **Adrian Vaagenes '07** became the new digital and archival services librarian at Georgetown University's Woodstock Theological Library. ■ **Anya Galli Robertson '08** received a Ph.D. in sociology from the University of Maryland-College Park and joined the faculty at the University of Dayton as an assistant professor of sociology. ■ **Raffi Freedman-Gurspan '09** ⁵ received the Hacham Lev award from Keshet,





ALUMNI & FAMILY TRAVEL

Whether you're an alum, the parent of a current or former student, or a friend of the college, you are part of the Ole community. That community stays strong when we learn, explore, and broaden our perspectives together. Please join us for Alumni & Family Travel in 2019 — registration is now open for the programs listed below and more!

Aloha, Hawaii | January 5-15, 2019
Led by Elizabeth Leer, Associate Professor of Education

Imperial Cities of Thailand and Laos
 February 6-22, 2019 | *Led by Mary Griep, Professor Emerita of Art and Art History, and Randolph Jennings, Communications Consultant*

Prague, Vienna, and Budapest: Music in the Heart of Europe | March 22-April 2, 2019
Led by Karen Wilkerson, Instructor in Music: Voice, and Gary Wilkerson, Retired Pastor

Visual Arts in New York | March 23-30, 2019
Led by John Saurer, Associate Professor of Art

Active Adventure in Croatia
 April 24-May 4, 2019 | *Hosted by Ed Langerak, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy, and Lois Langerak, Retired Dental Hygienist*

Music in Norway with the St. Olaf Choir and St. Olaf Orchestra | June 5-15, 2019
A companion tour for alumni, families, and friends

The Ballets Russes in Paris | June 9-23, 2019
Led by Louis Epstein, Assistant Professor of Music, and Maggie Epstein, Research and Instruction Librarian

Exploring Alaska's Coastal Wilderness
 August 17-24, 2019 | *Led by Ted Johnson, Professor Emeritus of Biology, and Michelle Johnson, Retired Medical Technologist*

See all of our destinations at stolaf.edu/travel

the White House during the Obama administration and has dedicated nearly 10 years to human rights advocacy since graduating from St. Olaf.

■ **Bettina Hager '09**, director of the Equal Rights Coalition and Fund for Women's Equality in Washington, D.C., was selected as one of *Women's eNews's* 21 Leaders for the 21st Century. Bettina also serves as co-chair of the Equal Rights for Women Task Force of the National Council of Women's Organizations.



C. Ryan Shipley '05 and Becca Hart '14

This fall, three Oles are headlining an upcoming Twin Cities production of *Mary Poppins*. **Becca Hart '14** will play Mary Poppins, **C. Ryan Shipley '05** will play Bert, and **Andrea Wollenberg '96** will play Winifred Banks. All three credit their training at St. Olaf with their success in the professional world. The three will be on stage together starting Oct. 5, when *Mary Poppins* opens at the Schneider Theater in the Bloomington Center for the Arts.



Eight Oles appeared in Mill City Summer Opera's production of *Carmen* this past July in Minneapolis. They included (Front, L to R): **Matt Abbas '06**, **Alma Neuhaus '18**, **Eric Broker '15**, (Back, L to R) **Stephen Hage '80**, **Lara Trujillo '91**, **Elizabeth Steffensen '08**, **Deborah Mattson Gilroy '82**, and **Phinehas Bynum '12**.

2010s

As part of Minnesota Women in Energy during Women's History Month, the Minnesota Clean Energy Resource Teams honored **Katherine Horvat Teiken '10** ¹ and 21 other influential women who are leading Minnesota's clean energy industries. ■ **Mari Valverde '10** has achieved third place in the American Prize in Composition, 2017-18, in the choral music division (professional composer), for her work *When Thunder Comes*. She was selected from applications reviewed recently from all across the United States. ■ **Mia Bahagry '11** completed a residency in internal medicine at University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Presbyterian Hospital in June and has stayed on to complete a sleep medicine fellowship in the same program. ■ **Sarah Minor '11** has just finished her first year as an assistant professor of creative writing at the Cleveland Institute of Art. In 2019, she will complete her doctorate in creative nonfiction at Ohio University. Her writing has recently been published in magazines like *The Atlantic*, *Creative Nonfiction*, *Passages North*, and *Diagram*. ■ **Nick Parker '11** completed his doctor of pharmacy degree at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Pharmacy and has begun a PGY-1 pharmacy residency. ■ **Kelsie Brust Schmit '11** received her M.B.A. from IESE, the graduate business school of the University of Navarra in

Barcelona, Spain, and has moved to Denmark, where she's begun a full-time position with the life science investment company Novo Holdings. ■ **Gwen Hoover Doran '12** is putting her St. Olaf education to use while living abroad in Trondheim, Norway, this year. ² "I'm working at an international school as their teacher-librarian. I think of my time at Olaf frequently." ■ **Maddi Frick '12** writes, "after two years in the music department at Universal Pictures in Los Angeles (working on the *Fifty Shades*, *Fast & Furious*, *Despicable Me*, *Pitch Perfect* and *Trolls* franchises), I now work at Starz television network at its Santa Monica office, licensing music for television shows and trailers." ■ **Michael Saas '12** ³ recently hiked the Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia. ■ **Richard Aviles '13** completed his master of social work degree with an emphasis on social innovation. Richard was one of 2018's TEDxUSC speakers, where he presented "Dance and the Intangible Heritage of the Body," a reconstruction of his 2012 STOTalks. ⁴ After leading a dance and social justice residency this summer in Minneapolis, he starts his second degree, master of planning with an emphasis in design. ■ **Kelsey Keegan '14** was recently promoted to travel manager at Travel Beyond, a luxury travel company in Wayzata, Minn., that specializes in

African safaris. Kelsey will embark on

a two-week "familiarization" trip to South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Kenya this November.

■ **Tamara Roque '14** ⁵ received her doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Oklahoma State University in May and is now an associate veterinarian at the Hastings Veterinary Clinic in Hastings, Minn. ■ **Leah Roth '14** joined the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) as a summer associate in IDA's Science and Technology Division. Leah is a graduate student at the University of Chicago working towards her doctoral degree in physics. ■ **Isabella Vergun '15** graduated from the John Wells Division of Writing for Screen & Television at University of Southern California in May, receiving her master of fine arts degree. ■ **Henry Burt '16** has finished his second year at Princeton University, taking courses in both the theological seminary and the university's Ph.D. program. This fall, Henry will be doing college ministry at Rutgers University-New Brunswick as he continues to pursue graduate studies and Lutheran ordination. ■ After winning first prize in the advanced division (ages 22-35) of the second annual Edvard Grieg Society of Minnesota Voice Competition, **Harrison Hintzsche '16** made his international solo debut at Wigmore Hall in London last January, where he was invited to collaborate in a recital on the songs of Franz Schubert with acclaimed pianist Graham Johnson. ⁶ Harrison is pursuing his master in music degree from the Institute of Sacred Music at Yale University in this fall. 🦁





FUTURE OLE
Lila Walton '39

Future Oles

Brian Torkkola '89 and Jill Stanton, a daughter, Sylvia
 Erik Esse '92 and Adair Rounthwaite Esse, a son, August
 Sarah Wilmesmeier Bergmann '94 and Aaron Bergmann '94, a daughter, Sophia
 Sandy Soelter '96 and Tim Soelter '93, a daughter, Emelia
 Paige Latham Schirone '98 and Alessandro Schirone, a son, Leonardo
 Sarah Gioe '99 and Robert Neel, a daughter, Marjorie
 Susan Renner '99 and David Hatz, a daughter, Emily
 Jennifer O'Neil Danielson '00 and Bob Danielson, a son, Anders
 Michelle Popp Rosenberger '00 and Aaron Rosenberger, a daughter, Greta
 Anna Miller Wicks '01 and Andrew Wicks '00, a daughter, Annika
 Nellie Rainwater '02 and Justin Uhr, a son, Alexander
 Andrew Hatch '03 and Elizabeth St. Germain, daughters, Olivia and Sophia
 Lauren Mirakian '03 and Thomas Barbé, a son, Benjamin
 Abigail Ryan '03 and Christopher Beaver, a son, Andrew
 Allen Bateman '04 and Jessica Bateman, a daughter, Evelyn
 Heather Bell Ackerson '04 and John Ackerson '04, a daughter, Annabelle
 Gretchen Riewe Burch '04 and Jonathan Burch '04, a daughter, Adeline
 Caitlin Harris '05 and Brandon Witters, a daughter, Helen
 Carrie Kern '05 and Conor Smyth, a son, Lucas
 Julia Butcher Knoll '05 and Nathan Knoll, a son, Owen
 Elizabeth White Fulton '05 and Kelly Fulton '05, a son, Everett
 Nathan Espiritu '06 and Bahar Espiritu, a son, Ethan
 Carly Dirlam '06 and Paul Morris '04, a daughter, Ada
 Matthew Peterson '06 and Sara Ekstrand, a daughter, Alma
 Sara Smith Walton '06 and David Walton, a daughter, Lila
 Molly Tuerk Zimmerman '06 and Dave Zimmerman, a daughter, Keira
 Susan Kamholz Majewski '07 and Mark Majewski, a daughter, Helen Virginia
 Ashley Poquette Harris '07 and David Harris '07, a son, Soren
 Heidi Youngren Lund '07 and Trevor Lund '04, a son, Lennon
 Kelsey Anderson McCarthy '08 and Dan McCarthy, a daughter, Lucy
 Jaclyn Erdahl Scholten '08 and Eric Scholten '08, a son, William Lewis
 Kelsey Gothier Johnson '08 and Benjamin Johnson, a daughter, Delaney
 Molly Nelson Sanford '08 and Eric Sanford, a son, Cedar
 Sarah Nelson Hoyt '08 and Nathan Hoyt, a daughter, Madeline
 Anna Nordstrom Arnold '08 and Seth Arnold, a daughter, Genevieve
 Elizabeth Stafford Cook '08 and Conor Cook '09, a son, George
 Caitlin Jones-Bamman '09 and Joshua Pittman, a daughter, Ronia
 Laura Haynssen '09 and Andrew Haynssen '11, a son, Elliot
 Tristen Anderson '09 and Landry Hourtienne, a son, Byron
 Margaret Barter Gipson '09 and Philip Gipson '09, a son, Peter
 Catherine Collins Erickson '09 and Benjamin Erickson, a son, Owen
 Alyssa Punke Vink '10 and Ryan Vink '10, a son, Owen
 Bridget Anderson Heidorn '11 and Peter Heidorn '10, a son, Anders
 Mathew Deram '11 and Nora Deram, a daughter, Ruth
 Annika Tohlen '11 and Colin Martin '12, a daughter, Freya

Michaela Kruger Eskew '11 and Will Eskew, a son, Lincoln
 Jackie Scheele '12 and Richard Scheele, a son, Nathanael
 Vanessa Kleckner Kronzer '12 and Alexander Kronzer '12, a daughter, Corynn
 Jenny Nygren McBurney '12 and Carl McBurney '12, a son, Gustaf
 Karla Krumenauer Wetley '13 and Ryan Wetley, a daughter, Snow

Weddings

Brian Moe Matthews '74 and Kathy Matthews, June 1, 2018
 Stephen Ryland '80 and Debbie Helman, July 1, 2017
 Rolf (Tad) Nymo '88 and Whitney Greene, Sept. 30, 2017
 Philip Lombardi '90 and Jill Sinaberg, Feb. 23, 2018
 Erik Johnson '93 and Maryanne Kumiega, April 29, 2017
 Kristine Giesen '94 and Patrick Tyler, April 17, 2017
 Thomas Beito '99 and Susan Heinmiller, Aug. 25, 2017
 Laura Schutt '03 and Garth Huskey, Oct. 15, 2017
 Amy Liesmaki '03 and Jeffrey Missling, June 10, 2017
 Jessica Plagens '04 and Jeffrey Cowan, Oct. 20, 2017
 Charles Krois '05 and Marley Habel, Oct. 7, 2017
 Eliza Larson '05 and Eric Cook, Aug. 26, 2017
 Jennifer Ho '06 and Paul Mulheran, Sept. 19, 2015
 Kathleen Kephart '07 and Travis Palme, March 14, 2015
 Michael Reading '07 and Bristol Huffman, Aug. 20, 2017
 Julia Rood '07 and Scott Poff, May 19, 2018
 Hannah Swanson '08 and Josh Foley, June 24, 2017
 Claire Rosenkvist '09 and Andrew Frisk Rosenfrisk, Aug. 14, 2017
 David Lindquist '10 and Katie De La Vega, March 24, 2018
 David Tonyan '10 and Brittany Spann, Oct. 13, 2017
 Anna Bakk '10 and Benjamin Andrews, Aug. 1, 2015
 Melanie Hornbeck '10 and Tyler Esp, April 16, 2016
 Mia Bahagry '11 and Adam Keefer, Sept. 8, 2018
 Sarah Kogler '11 and Aaron Taylor, July 23, 2018
 Lindsey Hickman '11 and Tad Johnson, Dec. 31, 2017
 Kelsey Solum '11 and Spenser Williamson, Aug. 4, 2017
 Cecilia Noecker '12 and Micah Buuck '12, Sept. 3, 2017
 Emily Cass '12 and Jackson Moore '12, Jan. 3, 2015
 Alexandra Burniece '13 and Lars Lee, Sept. 3, 2017
 Marie Bak '14 and Ramsey Walker '14, June 9, 2018
 Melissa Lowen '14 and Michael Yanckello '14, Aug. 11, 2018
 Mitchell Rennie '14 and Siri Olsen, July 8, 2017
 Bronwyn Vang '15 and Kyler Held, June 10, 2017
 Sarah Bauer '17 and Griffin Edwards '17, April 22, 2018
 Peter Smith '71 and Michelle Nadeau, May 20, 2016

Deaths

Luella Pfister Young '31, Decorah, Iowa, March 31, 2018
 Katherine "Kay" Enger Franklin '36, Luverne, Minn., June 8, 2018
 Bessie Nelson Engstrom '41, Worthing, S.D., May 14, 2018
 Clara Rasmussen Bjornnes '42, Edina, Minn., May 27, 2018
 Halvard Running '42, Minneapolis, March 16, 2018
 Melvin Sargeant '42, Los Olivos, Calif., March 21, 2018
 *Keith Textor '43, Palm Desert, Calif., Feb. 23, 2018
 Elizabeth Rossing Forell '44, Iowa City, Iowa, Feb. 26, 2018
 *Donald Jacobson '44, Hayward, Wis., June 11, 2018
 Lucille Knutson Medlang '44, Grafton, Iowa, May 16, 2018
 *Paul Montan '44, Wadena, Minn., March 10, 2018
 *Norval Morse '44, Chatfield, Minn., April 12, 2018
 Lois Johnson Bergsjo '45, Burnsville, Minn., Feb. 26, 2018
 Elaine Holst Kringen '45, Northfield, Minn., March 18, 2018
 *Bernice Carlson Branstiter '46, Urbana, Ohio, June 15, 2018
 Carolyn "lydell" LeFevere '46, Rochester, Minn., April 5, 2018
 Helen "Marjorie" Quie Vaiden '46, Wayne, N.J., Feb. 12, 2018
 Bonnie Bunnell Bolin '47, St. James, Minn., June 2, 2018
 Mary Donaldson Jones '47, Farmington, Conn., March 4, 2018
 Genevieve Simonson Lutzke '47, Rochester, Minn., April 28, 2018
 *Robert Charlson '48, Fort Collins, Colo., June 19, 2018
 Grace Eng Fenne '48, Kenyon, Minn., March 7, 2018
 Gwendolyn "Tippy" Thompson Schwabe '48, Haverford, Pa., March 29, 2018

Gene Kroening '49, Bella Vista, Ark., Feb. 22, 2017
 Arlene Johnson Krusemark '49, St. Peter, Minn., May 14, 2018
 *Jack Vosler '49, Spearfish, S.D., April 7, 2017
 Ruth "Marion" Voxland '49, Bismarck, N.D., May 12, 2018
 Dorothy Walledom Ackerwold '50, Austin, Minn., April 11, 2018
 Mary Ouellette Bly '50, Northfield, Minn., March 11, 2018
 Joann Fedje Heiss '50, Fort Gratiot, Mich., May 26, 2018
 *Harvey Hansen '50, Estacada, Ore., Feb. 20, 2018
 Betty Farber Kragthorpe '50, Sioux City, Iowa, June 25, 2018
 Irene Johnson Nelson '50, Stewart, Minn., Nov. 22, 2017
 Mary Elliot Olafson '50, Duluth, Minn., June 24, 2018
 *Thomas Savage '50, St. Paul, Minn., March 14, 2018
 Ruth Seleen Vaage '50, Walker, Minn., Dec. 15, 2017
 Nordis Evenson Christenson '51, Northfield, Minn., April 20, 2018
 Ethel Beaumont Johnson '51, Cass Lake, Minn., May 11, 2018
 Grace Jothan Olson '51, Minnetonka, Minn., April 21, 2018
 *Maurice Anderson '52, Edina, Minn., Feb. 10, 2018
 Jeanne Schulerberg Burgess '52, Reston, Va., May 16, 2018
 *Charles Gunderson '52, Burnsville, Minn., June 21, 2018
 Harriet Mueller Pennekamp '52, Oshkosh, Wis., May 14, 2018
 Shirley Blix Steckel '52, Winona, Minn., April 7, 2018
 Marjorie Casterton Bergsrud '53, Turtle Lake, Wis., March 8, 2018
 Anita Erickson Blake '53, Tucson, Ariz., March 18, 2018
 *Philip Jacobson '53, Edina, Minn., April 14, 2018
 Joanne Olson Johnson '53, Altoona, Wis., April 10, 2018
 Anna-Marie Burgess Klein '53, South St. Paul, Minn., Feb. 20, 2018
 Alice "Jone" Sager Anderson '54, Canton, S.D., March 1, 2018
 Georgia Midthun Clifton '54, Le Roy, Ill., March 28, 2018
 *John Eliassen '54, Grand Marais, Minn., Jan. 24, 2018
 *Kermeth Northwick '54, Austin, Minn., June 12, 2018
 *Truman Risa '54, Long Beach, Calif., April 9, 2018
 Helen Russell Suman '54, Oro Valley, Ariz., Feb. 20, 2018
 John "David" Dybvig '55, Minneapolis, Feb. 19, 2018
 Marlys Groff Knutson '55, Lake Elmo, Minn., April 4, 2018
 *Arthur Lind '55, Port St. Lucie, Fla., May 27, 2018
 Karen Roe Mulrine '55, Green Bay, Wis., May 14, 2018
 *James Thompson '55, Wenatchee, Wash., Feb. 7, 2018
 Richard Trudo '55, Falmouth, Maine, Feb. 23, 2018
 Elizabeth "Betty" Mueller Borgen '57, Richfield, Minn., Feb. 23, 2018
 David Odland '57, Minneapolis, Jan. 28, 2018
 Philip Pitsch '57, Chippewa Falls, Wis., April 23, 2018
 Ronald "Ron" Richardson '57, Ozona, Fla., Oct. 28, 2017
 Synneva "Sindy" Lier Tellekson '57, Minneapolis, June 18, 2018
 Mary Hanson Timmis '57, Northbrook, Ill., Feb. 17, 2018
 Peter Ansoerge '58, New Braunfels, Texas, Oct. 12, 2017
 John Hanson '58, Red Wing, Minn., May 1, 2018
 Sandra Schroeder Himle '58, Coon Rapids, Minn., March 17, 2018
 Waldo Larson '58, Plymouth, Minn., June 10, 2018
 *Alden Lerohl '58, Colorado Springs, Colo., May 27, 2018
 *Frank Anderson '59, St. Charles, Ill., May 27, 2018
 Virginia Larsen '59, Austin, Minn., May 5, 2018
 John Sharkey '62, Rapid City, S.D., April 30, 2018
 Bruce Halverson '63, Stillwater, Minn., April 15, 2018
 *Dale Liesch '64, Burnsville, Minn., March 1, 2018
 *Craig Nelson '64, Willmar, Minn., May 16, 2018
 *Wade Turner '66, St. Paul, Minn., March 31, 2018
 Andrea Barstad-Aase '67, Columbus, N.M., April 4, 2018
 David Wold '67, Arden Hills, Minn., April 12, 2018
 Lewis Dokmo '68, Amherst, N.H., May 5, 2018
 Gene Prescher '68, Reno, Nev., March 18, 2018
 Susan Stan '68, Minneapolis, March 21, 2018
 Mary Ann Close Fabel '69, Minnetonka, Minn., April 30, 2018
 Barbara Bothun Young '69, Mitchell, S.D., Feb. 22, 2018
 Jeanette "Jeannie" Helland Knutson '71, Northwoods, Iowa, May 6, 2018
 Paul Droher '72, Wayzata, Minn., May 12, 2018
 Ellen Juul '72, Hutchinson, Minn., April 10, 2018
 Karin Norby Mathews '74, Chardon, Ohio, May 2, 2018

George Deihls '76, West Dundee, Ill., March 9, 2018
 Vicki Bailey '77, Lake Elmo, Minn., Feb. 19, 2018
 Heidi Koos Shaughnessy '78, Rochester, Minn., June 9, 2018
 Norma Bergeson '79, Sauk Rapids, Minn., Feb. 25, 2018
 Scott Rockwood '79, Eagan, Minn., April 23, 2018
 Kathryn Bergquist Smith '79, Palm Springs, Calif., Feb. 16, 2017
 *Brian Oppegard '81, Minneapolis, April 1, 2018
 *Richard "Rick" Selvik '81, Cary, Ill., April 25, 2018
 Shannon Holz '85, Cumming, Iowa, March 4, 2018
 Susan Meehan Cook '88, Phoenix, April 26, 2018
 Erik Floan '91, Collegeville, Minn., May 30, 2018
 James Perry '92, Verona, Wis., May 20, 2018
 Sara Travelli '00, La Crosse, Wis., May 11, 2018
 Marshall Bruno '21, Maple Grove, Minn., April 26, 2018

Remembering Margaret Hayford O'Leary

Professor of Norwegian Margaret Hayford O'Leary, who taught generations of students over the last 40 years, died June 30 at the age of 67 after a two-year battle with cancer.

"In some ways, O'Leary lived her whole life with her feet planted in two lands," wrote Hannah Covington for the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*. "There was, of course, Minnesota, where she taught for more than 40 years at St. Olaf, often with her guitar in hand. And then there was Norway, her ancestral land across the sea. Her love for the country radiated across her music, her home design, her knitting patterns, her teaching. O'Leary often shared her love of Norwegian culture through song. She strummed her guitar and sang with her students to teach them vocabulary, imparting a sense of the language's musical quality."

O'Leary, the King Olav V Chair in Scandinavian-American Studies and associate dean for Humanities, began teaching at St. Olaf in 1977. She completed her M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Scandinavian studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and her B.A. degree at Concordia College (Moorhead) in German and education. She specialized in language pedagogy, particularly the use of technology in teaching Norwegian. She co-authored *Norsk i sammenheng*, an intermediate Norwegian textbook aiming to acquaint students with everyday communication in Norway. She went on to co-author a CD-ROM called *KlikkNorsk* and write the books *Colloquial Norwegian: The Complete Course for Beginners* and *Culture and Customs of Norway*.

O'Leary traveled to Norway as often as possible. She spent two sabbaticals at the University of Oslo and led several study tours to Norway and Scandinavia, including two for the Smithsonian Institution and four for St. Olaf. From 2007 to 2016, O'Leary taught Norwegian language and culture at the University of Oslo International Summer School.

In 2016, O'Leary was awarded the rank of Officer of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit. The award, which honors outstanding service in the interests of Norway, was conferred by Norwegian Ambassador to the United States Kåre R. Aas. In 2017, O'Leary was named the King Olav V Chair in Scandinavian-American Studies, and she also served on the board of directors of the Norwegian-American Historical Association housed at St. Olaf.

She is survived by her husband, Douglas; children, Kari, Erik, and Sean; grandchildren, Miriam and Reuben; her mother, Rachael Hayford (Skatrud); and sister, Andrea Nelson.



The First Batch of Students on the Hill

BY JEFF SAUVE

For Northfield photographer Ira E. Sumner, the idiom “the third time’s the charm” likely crossed his mind in the spring of 1879 as he prepared the camera yet again after two failed attempts to photograph the St. Olaf student body. These 64 students, who came from hardscrabble Norwegian immigrant families with surnames like Grose, Grue, Haaland, Hoverstad, Langemo, and Larson, had assembled on the west porch of the recently constructed Main Building.

A moment of solemnity was needed for this special photographic occasion, which marked the “First Batch of Students on the Hill.” Nearly all of the students, faculty, and staff lived under the Main’s roof that first year on the Hill. In all, 51 boys and 13 girls matriculated at an annual cost of \$110 for tuition, room, and board.

In the days of early photography, when the exposure time could take up to five minutes per image, some Oles could not maintain their composure for photographer Sumner. One classmate present for the 1879 photography session recalled nearly 30 years later, “when the time necessary for the exposure of the plate was only about half over, one of the boys would get the titters.” His infectious giggles soon spread to others, and nearly all the group were “writhing in convulsions of laughter, and the negative would be one big blur. This happened twice.”

On the third photograph attempt, the young man with the case of the giggles was at last able to restrain himself. To the relief of Sumner, who had gained national attention only two years earlier for his candid shots of the two dead — and *silent* — members of the infamous James-Younger Gang that attempted to rob Northfield’s First National Bank on September 7, 1876, a picture of merit was finally taken of the St. Olaf students.

A closer inspection of the image shows a boy in the front row with eyes downcast — perhaps an admonished giggler — while a few others suppressed their laughter with slight grins. Also noticeable are several poorly clad chaps in ill-fitted waistcoats and well-worn shoes, but each of the male pupils, from the fresh-faced 14-year-old boys to the mustachioed men in their mid-20s, wore Civil War-era military-style blue caps to signify their participation in one of the earliest known St. Olaf student organizations of record, the St. Olaf Guards.



“First Batch of St. Olaf Students on the Hill, 1878-79”

In addition to the 51 young men and 13 young women standing in front of the Main, the back row features the four early St. Olaf faculty: Lars Lynne and Aslak Teisberg (far left); Principal Thorbjørn N. Mohn (far right) with his wife, Anna, who held their infant son, Edward; and Miss Ella Fisk (on Mohn’s right). Mr. and Mrs. Ole Nelson, steward and matron, are also in the picture.

Formally organized on November 7, 1878, this student-led military company provided the young men with much-needed exercise on a campus that lacked both a gymnasium and formal physical exercise, save for chopping wood for dormitory room stoves. The company, which performed routine drills with wooden rifles, was later led by faculty members and remained a part of the campus scene for more than two decades. The company was disbanded in 1901 after the men’s dormitory (later named Ytterboe Hall) offered a well-equipped gymnasium.

Almost 140 years have passed since Sumner captured the moment depicting the earliest days of St. Olaf. When viewed closely, the few prints that remain in the College Archives still evoke a sense of togetherness. In time, the 64 students entered professions as politicians, teachers, clergy, lawyers, or farmers. They fondly recalled their schoolmates as a “cheerful lot” who “had all the work they could do and were willing to do it.” Professor Ingebrikt F. Grose, reflecting on his own student days, added, “We really felt as if we were a family.” Indeed, it was a St. Olaf family — the first to call the Hill “home” for many generations to follow. 🍀

JEFF SAUVE is a freelance writer and local historian.

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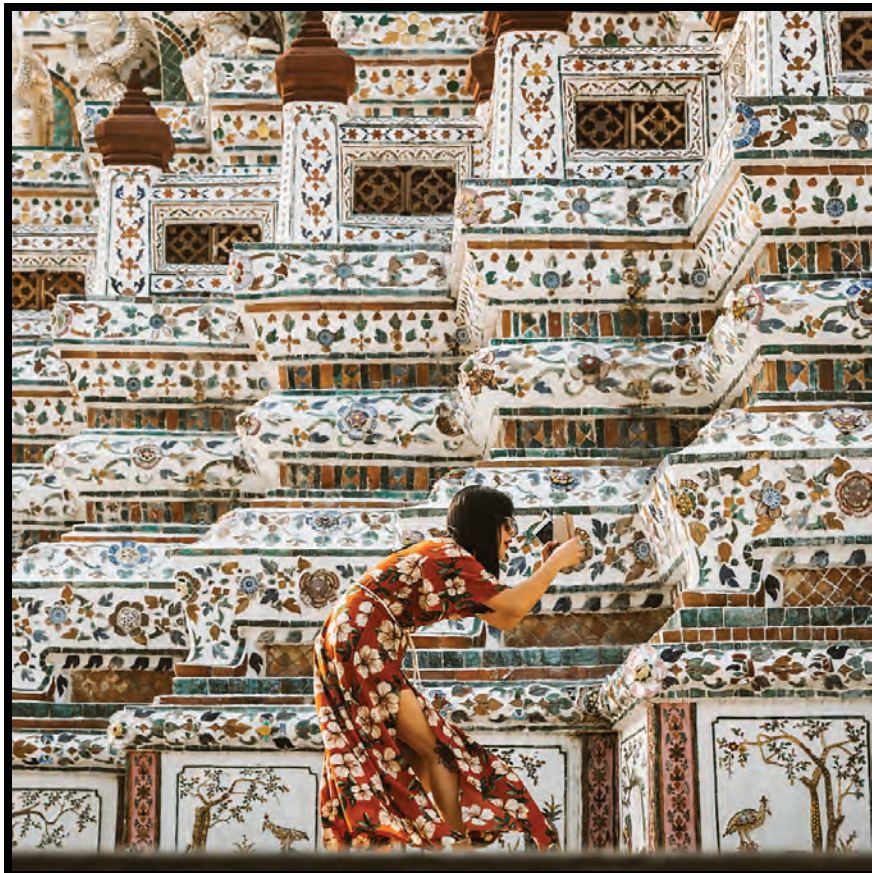
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PARTING SHOT



FLORAL COMBO · A striking combination of floral patterns, photographed at the Buddhist temple of Wat Arun in Bangkok, Thailand, by **William Cipos '20**, Global Semester.