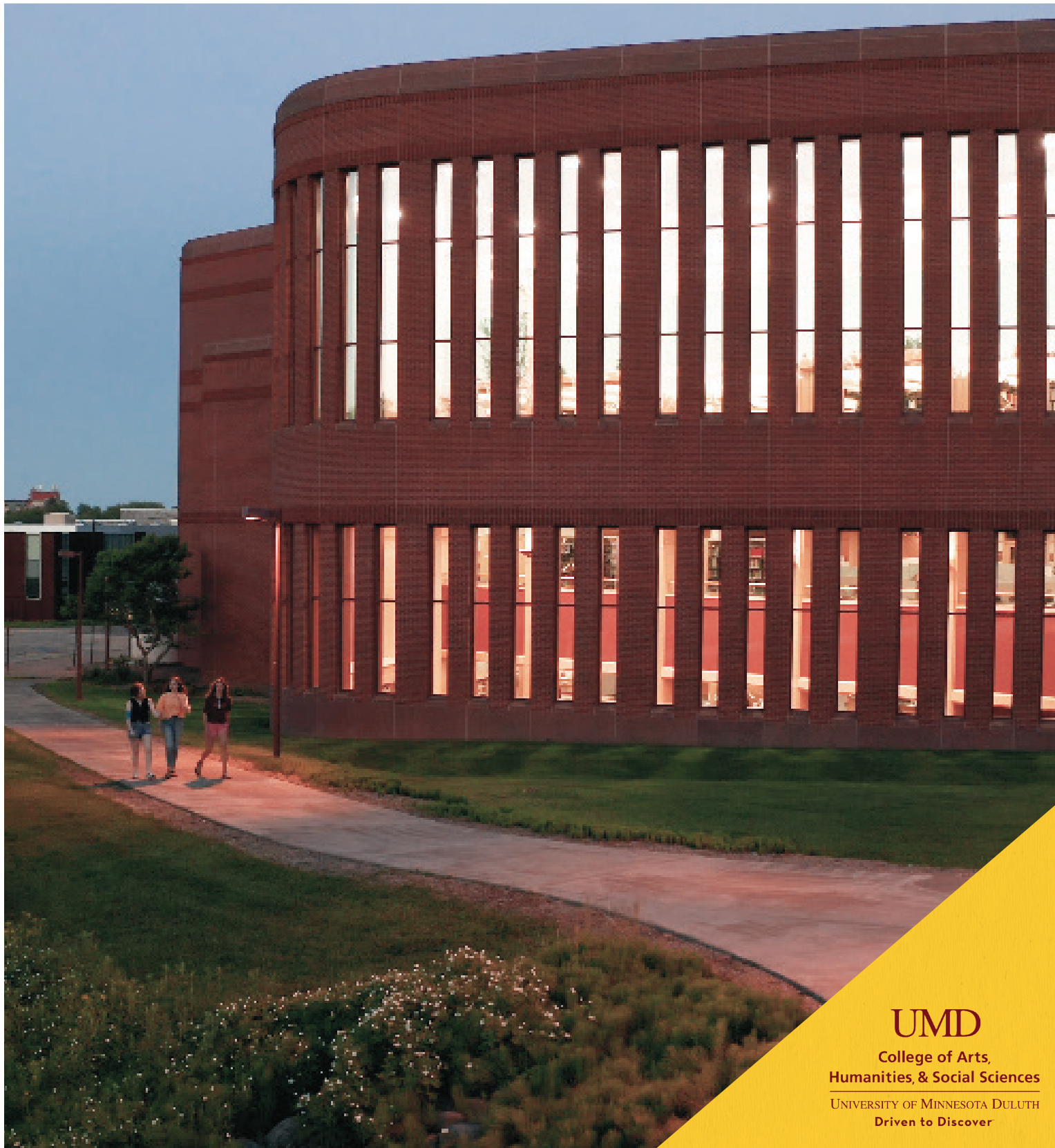


CONFLUENCE

2022-2023 FEATURES STUDENTS, FACULTY, DONORS, AND ALUMNI WHO ARE IMPACTING THEIR WORLD



UMD

College of Arts,
Humanities, & Social Sciences

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA DULUTH
Driven to Discover

CONFLUENCE

The Newsletter of the College of Arts,
Humanities, and Social Sciences at the
University of Minnesota Duluth

2022-2023

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DEAN'S CORNER

What does it take to shape the future? There is obviously no one-size-fits-all approach to it, but we can gather some important clues.

First things first, we need to understand and appreciate both the past and the present—what are the trends, what sorts of common themes repeat, and where do we see significant changes? We can't know where we might be headed without knowing where we have been and where we are now.

Second, we need to understand the world around us. We need to appreciate the world's rich diversity and find ways to bring all different groups to the table so we can harness our collective creativity.

Third, we need to have a sense of curiosity about what might be and how we can channel that for the greater good.

Finally, we need to be open to lots of different possibilities—thinking big, celebrating our cultural competencies, trying a variety of solutions, and engaging stakeholders.

In other words, it looks a lot like the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. One of the hallmarks of our college is how it serves as an incubator for the future. In the stories that you'll read in this issue of *Confluence*, you will see many examples of how the students, staff, and faculty are thinking big to shape the future. The skills that students develop over the course of their educational experience in the college give them the tools they need to change their communities for the better. It's not about replicating what has happened in the past; it's about using knowledge, communication skills, cultural understanding, and creativity to make something new that benefits society as a whole. That morale is a key part of UMD's legacy, and it is what will continue to inspire our college going forward.

A few years ago, Dell Technologies and the Institute for the Future brought together a number of leaders in business, technology, and academia to look into the future and how to prepare for it. One of their most surprising findings was that 85 percent of the jobs that will exist in 2030 do not even exist yet. That's a pretty mind boggling statistic—and even if they are off by half, we are looking at a future very different from our own.

Fortunately, CAHSS students are incredibly well-positioned to take on those yet-to-be-created roles—and create many of them themselves. With strong critical thinking skills, an ability to work in teams, excellent communication skills, a creative mindset, and experience applying what they have learned in the classroom to the wider world, CAHSS graduates have the sorts of backgrounds and skills that will allow them to thrive as we march into this future.

CAHSS' students, alumni, staff, and faculty are already shaping the future—and they will continue to do so in remarkable ways.



Jeremy Youde
Dean, CAHSS



EDITOR'S NOTE



Whitney Jacobson

Whitney Jacobson
Editor, *Confluence*

Welcome to the 2022-2023 edition of *Confluence: The Newsletter for the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences!*

While stories in this year's issue center on the theme of shaping the future, it may be equally or more accurate to say that our faculty, students, alumni, and staff refuse to be satisfied. The CAHSS community continuously analyzes what the past and present have conferred and looks for junctures to enhance that offering.

In my fifth year as editor of this publication, I remain inspired by the ways members of CAHSS are forging ahead and promoting lifelong learning, compassion, and connection, whether through music, physical art, or language. From new courses and living learning communities to collaborations and contributions, there is much to celebrate and be optimistic about. As you read this issue, I hope you'll consider ways you carry that momentum forward as well as opportunities for you to move past your comfort zone.

With our eyes on the horizon, if you have a story, accomplishment, publication, milestone, or comment to share, I hope you'll send an email to newsedit@d.umn.edu to let me know about it. I look forward to hearing from you!

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HONORING DIVERSE CULTURAL TRADITIONS THROUGH RESPECTFUL ART ENGAGEMENT

For over thirty years, Dr. Alison Aune (Art and Design) has been fostering collaborations that promote cultural awareness. Her longest running annual class project is a partnership with the Multicultural Center, the Tweed Museum of Art, and local elementary schools for Dia de los Muertos.

After joining the Department of Art and Design in 1999, Aune began including a study of Dia de los Muertos as a lesson on sculpture for Art in Elementary Education classes, which includes education majors and art education majors. During the unit, students create their own Mexican folk art inspired sculpture for a group ofrenda and they create lesson plans. The students then present their instructional work to elementary school children to gain practical experiences in the methods and techniques of meaningful and creative art education.

On the day of the event, area children come to UMD for a tour

and program at the Multicultural Center and Tweed Museum of Art. Some of the groups who have participated include Spanish classes at Lowell Elementary School, Myer-Wilkins Elementary School, Spirit of the Lake Community School, Chester Park Pre-School, and Summit School.

The event has grown significantly over time. Aune explained, “Many students are familiar with Disney’s *Coco* and have seen Dia de los Muertos artifacts in chains such as Target and Michaels, but they often do not know the ancient Pre-Columbian roots of this celebration.”

Susanna Pelayo Woodward in the Multicultural Center helps provide needed context about the celebration by gathering visuals about its history. In addition, each year she and her students create new ofrendas at the Multicultural Center. Large-scale ofrendas have been added to honor the memory

of George Floyd and murdered and missing Indigenous women. While the scheduling and logistics are challenging, Aune believes the event's success makes the work worth it. "It is such a beautiful and powerful annual event for my students and the children who we work with," reflected Aune.

UMD students agree. Mellisa Larson (Integrated Elementary and Special Education '25) noted, "The greatest success of this collaboration was in the thought-provoking conversations and idea-sharing between the college students and the elementary students. We were provided with a culture-rich environment that fostered in-depth conversations on the diversity shown in front of us; these conversations benefited both the elementary and college students. To me, this is what learning is all about, growing and expanding together to gain a better understanding of our world. I especially loved that students were able to make art inspired by things they saw in both the Tweed Museum and the Multicultural Center; this opportunity brought to life the ideas and showed children they are artists too."

Aune asserted, "It is my goal that by participating in this collaboration, the UMD elementary and art teacher education students will continue to honor the cultural traditions of Dia de los Muertos by creating and teaching respectful lessons to children. By connecting with community partners, these future teachers will help shape the futures of children by including and celebrating the wide diversity of cultural and artistic traditions in Minnesota."

Her aspirations already appear to be manifesting themselves as Larson reflected, "The collaboration taught me to have a more open view when thinking about art education. By this, I mean that students, even young students, can find value in going to a museum and visiting locations with culturally diverse artwork. As a future teacher, it also made me rethink how I want to incorporate art into my classroom. Specifically, this collaboration has shown me the importance of culturally diverse art and hands-on art experiences which I can provide to my future students."





Jose Huerta-Miranda carves a rutabaga to make a Swiss Räbelichtli lantern. Photo Credit Reece Hickman.

Dr. Maureen Tobin Stanley cooking paella for LANG 1000: World Cultures, Cinema, and Cuisine.

SHAPING GLOBALLY COMPETENT CITIZENS VIA MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS

This past fall, the first World Languages and Cultures (WLC) Living Learning Community (LLC) launched on UMD's campus. The community consists of first-year undergraduate students who are pursuing a range of majors across the campus. In their first year here at UMD, they live together in a wing of a residence hall, take some coursework together, and participate in a variety of co-curricular events, such as conversation hours, cooking together, celebrating holidays from across the globe, calligraphy writing, and more.

WLC faculty members were inspired to create the WLC LLC by the community-building they saw amongst current WLC students as well as by the innovative opportunity to link language learning and creative thinking with Cultural Entrepreneurship classes.

Dr. Jennifer Brady explained, "In our classes, we seek to facilitate meaningful interactions in our global languages. Learning a new language is a journey, and in order for all students to reach their proficiency goals, we recognize the need to create safe

spaces where students can learn together, make mistakes, ask questions, and share curiosities. The strong communities inside our classrooms drove us to consider how we can grow our communities of language learners outside of the classroom walls...in their dorms, at extracurricular events, at social activities, etc.”

Dr. Kristen Hylenski, director of the WLC LLC, elaborated, “UMD’s mission statement states that we prepare students to be lifelong learners and globally engaged citizens. But what does it mean to be a globally engaged citizen? According to many definitions, including the U.S. Department of Education, people who are globally and culturally competent are ‘proficient in at least two languages’; ‘aware of the differences that exist between cultures’; ‘critical and creative thinkers, who can apply understanding . . . to work effectively in cross-cultural settings’; and ‘able to operate at a professional level in intercultural and international contexts’ (“Global and Cultural Competency”). We wanted to create a community that would help students build a foundation towards becoming globally competent.”

With that goal, the LLC is not exclusive to students majoring or minoring in world languages - openness and curiosity are the only prerequisites. Required coursework taken together over the year includes a language class of their choice, a special section of UST 1000: Learning in Community (recently taught by Instructor Andrew Snustad), LANG 1000: World Cultures, Cinema and Cuisine (recently taught by Dr. Maureen Tobin Stanley), and CUE: 1001: Culture Industry and Creative Economy, which deals with the global creative economy. Students also have plenty of room in their schedule to pursue other courses for their major.

The department has already noted many successes. Hylenski reflected, “This first year has surpassed our expectations! One of our goals was to ease social transition to the university: to connect students to each other, to faculty, to UMD, and to the community of Duluth. Another one of our goals was to increase peer interactions related to academics in informal settings. It’s been gratifying to see how this group has formed a community and how in-class learning is deepened through living together and continuing conversations outside of class.”

Student surveys also show a positive response to the LLC. According to research done by the community’s resident advisor, Molly Williams (Spanish and International Studies ‘25),

- 80% of WLC LLC participants stated they plan to continue studying their world language at UMD.
- 90% of WLC LLC participants stated that faculty and staff in the WLC LLC support their academic success outside of the classroom.
- 94% agreed that our orientation helped ease their social transition to UMD.
- 94% agreed that the WLC LLC has given them the opportunity to learn about and/or interact with people who are different than they are.

Williams is completing the research and assessment on the community as part of her honors project and an independent study she was completing with Dr. Brady in the fall through her Spanish Studies major. Williams explained, “Since we were both heavily involved in the community, it seemed like the natural next step to collect data on its success and areas to improve. It was a great way for me to improve my language abilities by discussing and writing about the research in Spanish. We have some incredible findings, and I’m excited to see the positive effects the community has on this first group of residents going forward.”

In reflecting on her time with the LLC, Williams asserted, “Without hesitation, the greatest success of the WLC LLC is the community the residents have built. When they all got to move in early and had time to get to know each other, it was fun to see how instantly they connected and how those connections have continued through the year. Those who are a part of the LLC will be able to continue to seek out and create community in other aspects of their lives. Whether that be through school or work, they have developed positive social, academic, and leadership skills that will take them far.”

When considering future goals for the WLC LLC, Hylenski noted that in addition to securing sustainable funding, the biggest challenge has been getting the word out to recruit interested students. However, WLC hopes “to develop relationships among different WLC LLC cohorts, which includes perhaps adding a peer mentor opportunity so that the younger cohorts can connect with the previous cohorts, learn from each other, and eventually have a network of WLC LLC alumni.”

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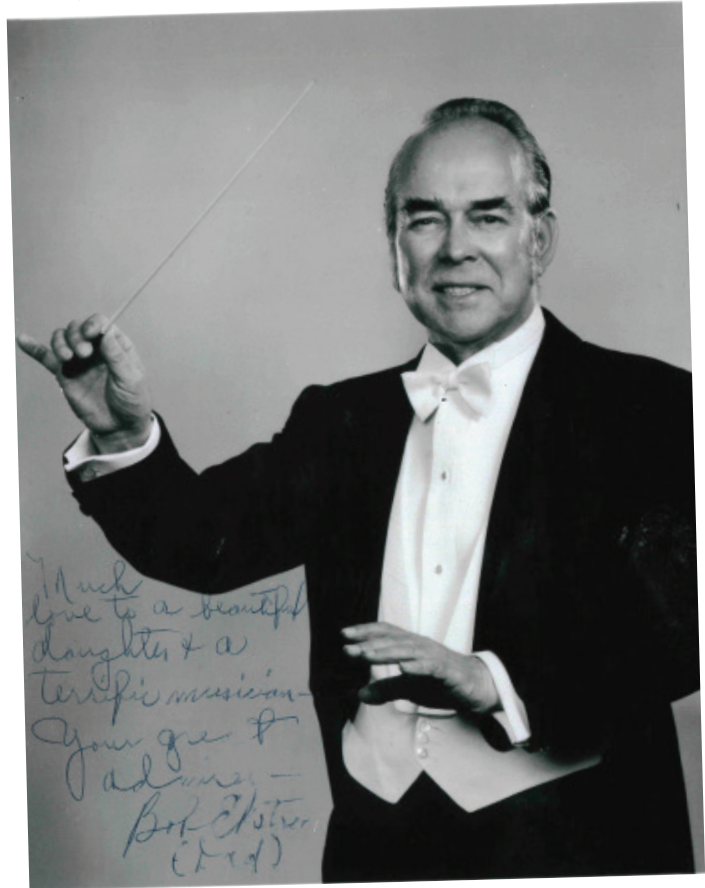


WLC LLC 2022 Orientation Group Photo

Photo of Dr. Robert C. Ekstrom courtesy of Virginia "Ginny" Grossman



Photo of Virginia Ekstrom from the 1963 UMD Chronicle yearbook



“MUSIC IS MY VEHICLE”: UMD Alumna Creates New Scholarship to Pay It Forward

The annual \$3000 Dr. Robert C. Ekstrom and Virginia D. Grossman Music Education / Choral Scholarship was first offered to a UMD student in 2021, but the root of the award was over half a century in the making.

A self-proclaimed humanitarian who uses “music [as her] vehicle,” alumna Virginia (Ginny) Grossman (Music Education '66) created the scholarship bearing both her name and her father’s name as a tribute to his work as well as her own in the field of music education.

Her father, Dr. Robert C. Ekstrom, taught Music Education in Duluth Public Schools while Grossman was growing up, and his classroom extended to their home. Various singing groups would visit the Ekstrom house to practice with her father, and she’d play piano for them. Those interactions led her to pursue a bachelor’s degree in music education with a piano emphasis at UMD.

Later, Dr. Ekstrom, after receiving his PhD, accepted a position with Chicago Public Schools, became national director of the American Union of Swedish Singers, directed other groups, and was appointed by the mayor of Chicago as director of music for the Chicago Civic Center. Various interactions subsequently created the opportunity for Grossman to travel to Europe with her dad, singing in concert choir tours of various countries.

When Grossman graduated from college, her father’s research went on to color her professional musical experiences. As an adult, Grossman attended a National Choral Directors Association conference, where she sat in on a clinic about boys’ changing voices. However, the information wasn’t new to her as it was based on her father’s research into how the male voice changes during adolescence. At the end of the clinic, she approached the teacher and conversed with them about the knowledge they shared.

In fact, Ekstrom's work continues to be taught and discussed, even on UMD's campus. Dr. Richard Robbins (Music) regularly includes a unit on the changing male voice and references Ekstrom's research. Grossman hopes to meet and converse with Robbins sometime when she returns to Duluth.

While Ekstrom made a quality impression on people and research, Grossman's individual experience is key to the scholarship as well. Although her father crafted a unique musical foundation for her to build from, Grossman still needed to do her part to fund her formal education.

To help pay for tuition while she attended college, Grossman worked in the cafeteria on UMD's campus, where she'd get a free meal each day. She also lived at home to save additional money. Nevertheless, even with a scholarship, she still had to take out loans.

Aware that students continue to be in a similar situation to hers, Grossman decided to pay forward the tuition assistance she'd received by creating a scholarship, which also serves as an extension of the genuine care Grossman exudes for students.

After graduation, Grossman made her career teaching music in Wisconsin public schools. However, she didn't want to simply teach music and hope it made an impact, so Grossman emphasized to her students: "Don't just get through school." She tried to make lessons engaging and enjoyable as she urged students to lead a rich life.

Like her father, she also made time to meet the students where they were. When students would need to be evaluated, she'd offer to first listen to whatever was on their mind. That empathy and respect for their thoughts, feelings, and time seems to have made an impression, as many students have maintained connections with her long after they left her classroom.

Grossman, now retired, continues to be involved with musical happenings. She regularly attends the various music festivals in Milwaukee and remains an active member of the Milwaukee Symphony Chorus.

It should not be a surprise, therefore, that she created this scholarship to help more students enter the field of music education with the hope that they will also be humanitarians and teachers and inspire others through music.

SIGMA ALPHA IOTA — ROW 1: LeAnne Johnson, Miriam Souley, Belle Gibbs, Charlotte Vujaesi, Mrs. Beverly Knoll, Aileen Melanie Roginski, Pres; ROW 2: Lois Noelle, Mary Wright, Virginia Ekstrom, Barbara Lish, Rosemarie Rasse, Pat Maher, Carolyn Lorge



Photo of Virginia Ekstrom from the 1963 UMD Chronicle yearbook

USING CONNECTION TO IMPROVE THE WORLD: Alumna Transfers Skills

When Caitlin Nielson (Anthropology '14) graduated from UMD, she stayed in Duluth. “To me it felt like a rare move—most of my friends moved away—but I was able to stay connected with the community I had built including professors, local business owners, and people who tended to be a couple years older than I was and who were generous and willing to teach me things or at least allow me to learn from them.”

The choice has paid dividends. Nielson now works for Google as a user experience researcher (UXR).

So, how did Nielson transition from studying anthropology in Duluth to performing research for Google in Silicon Valley? She may answer that she got lucky, but credit should also go to Nielson’s intuition and willingness to try new things, learn from her experiences, and adjust appropriately.

After her time at UMD ended, she didn’t want to go to graduate school and immediately burn out, but she also didn’t know about research jobs outside of academia. So, Nielson worked on a farm where she learned about systems thinking (“I still use that today,” she noted), at the Zinema Theatre, as well as at Vilkre Distillery where she worked in branding and sales.

She also embarked on the humbling opportunity to go to Ecuador to work as an assistant for Dr. David Syring (Anthropology). The trip was “life-changing” for Nielson who was “able to work as an ethnographer and see what research on the ground and in this case, collaborative, community focused, participatory, media-based research [looks like]. It has a lot of power and potential benefits for communities.”

The trip additionally motivated her to keep looking for research opportunities. A coffee shop conversation with (now retired) Professor Rob Wittig (English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies; Art & Design) was the spur she needed for her next career move. He recommended she “look into Silicon Valley; they hire anthropologists.”

“It blew my mind,” reflected Nielson, “and look at me. I actually do that. But if no one had told me that, I wouldn’t have known.”

As a UXR, Nielson focuses on products and how people use them. She explained: “[After] talking to a bunch of people who

use a product or potentially would use a product,...I inform product teams of what people really want and need and what their experiences are using those products so the team can make them better—often that means [making them] more usable, even more ethical.”

Nielson sees this work as a way of intentionally improving the world, which is a consistent goal of hers. She credits her knowledge of research methodologies, developed while at UMD, as a key feature of her daily efforts: “The consciousness of being aware of when, why, and how to apply a certain methodology and being aware of your own bias is critical to being good at my job.”

Nielson elaborated: “I want to keep doing and using research as a force for positive good....The most important and rewarding thing to me [is] changing technology processes or creating something that empowers people through understanding.... When I started working as a UXR, I thought doing a research project about something minor wasn’t important, but after a few years, I’ve realized that if I’m saving a million people one minute, that’s a good thing, because then they can get back to their lives.”

Conversely, it seems her work has also benefited her life. In reflecting on the best part of her career trajectory, Nielson was direct: the people she has met. “It’s a privilege to talk to them and have these corners of the universe unfolded and described to you through other sets of eyes. As a researcher, I remind myself everyday that it’s no small thing to be let into their lives. You need to honor it and do no harm.”

When asked what advice she would give to UMD students, Nielson stated, “When it comes to liberal and fine arts degrees, people don’t always know what you’re doing or why you’re doing it, but do what you think is right. Work hard and it will work out. And especially for the anthropology majors out there: Own it. The skills that you have are of value. You may need to translate those skills, but be stoked you have them. [They give] people the opportunity to understand one another while benefiting the communities or people that they’re working with. What the heck else do we have to work for here? Connectivity, collectivism, and collaboration: that’s how my major connects with the idea of shaping the future.”

“I want to keep doing and using research as a force for positive good....The most important and rewarding thing to me [is] changing technology processes or creating something that empowers people through understanding....”

– Caitlin Nielson

CAHSS NOTES

Instructor Kendra Carlson (Writing Studies) directed *A Doll's House: Part 2*, a modern follow up to Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*. Performances ran February 23–March 5, 2023 at the Zeitgeist Teatro Zuccone.

Alumnus Charlie Gardner (Graphic Design Studio '20) created a successful clothing line and is posting work to Instagram.

Alumna Robin Kaiser-Schatzlein (Studio Art '11) published two articles in the *New York Times*.

As part of an internship in Spanish Studies with **Dr. Jennifer Brady** in World Languages and Cultures, **Kaitlyn Koehler** (Art History and Spanish Studies '22) curated an exhibit at the Tweed Museum of Art titled *Divergence and Solidarity* in which she highlighted three visual artists from Spanish-speaking communities.

Alumnus Alicia Kozlowski (History '09) was elected to the Minnesota House of Representatives for the 8B district. When they assumed office, Kozlowski became the first non-binary member of the Minnesota Legislature.

Alumnus Gerry Kulzer (Art Education '91, Industrial Technical Education '93) became the Minnesota State Fair's new butter sculptor.

Dr. Scott Laderman (History) was awarded the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in American Studies at Sweden's Uppsala University for the 2022–2023 academic year. While there, he researched Sweden's place in the global antiwar movement—especially the Swedish government's infuriation of Washington through its outspoken public opposition to U.S. policy in Vietnam and the humanitarian sanctuary it offered to hundreds of American military deserters and draft evaders.

Instructor Brian Matuszak (Communication) and his wife, Sue, received an Arrowhead Regional Arts Council grant as well as a Minnesota State Arts Board grant to research artwork and artists in the Arrowhead Region of Minnesota that were part of the WPA's Federal Art Project (1935–1943). They are now working on a book presenting their research.

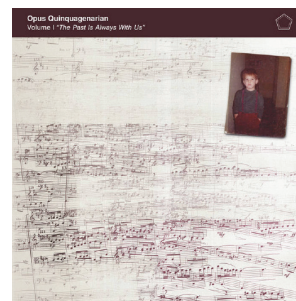
Alumnus David McMillan (History and Economics '83) returned to UMD as interim chancellor and is expected to head the University until summer 2024.

Dr. Dan Nolan (German Studies) was a 2022 recipient of the Award for Global Engagement. The award "is given to faculty and staff members in recognition of outstanding contributions to global education and international programs at the University or in their field or discipline."

Alumnus Samuel Orosz (Art '14) started a printmaking MFA program at Pacific Northwest College of Art in the fall of 2022.

Alumnus Tony Reamer (Studio Art '19) had a solo show, *Food for the Moon*, in New York City in the fall of 2022.

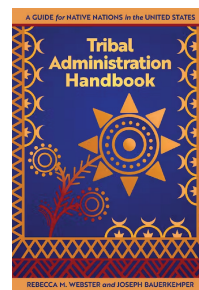
Master of Music in Music Education graduate ('22) Dylan Reed-Fuglestad co-published with **Dr. David Edmund** (Music) a paper titled "Music Teacher Burnout and Work-Life Balance: Perspectives from Minnesota" in the Minnesota Music Educators Association journal, *The Interval*.



Dr. Justin Henry Rubin (Music) was asked to be the first classical composer for Yuggoth Records, a recording label based in Rhode Island that mostly publishes heavy metal. He signed a two-album contract; both albums feature people who have been guest musicians at UMD.

Dr. Maureen Tobin Stanley (World Languages and Cultures) published *Francoist Repression and Incarceration in Contemporary Spanish Culture: Justice through Memory* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2022) as part of the Palgrave Studies in Cultural Heritage and Conflict series.

Department of American Indian Studies faculty Dr. Rebecca M. Webster and **Dr. Joseph Bauerkemper** recently



edited the *Tribal Administration Handbook: A Guide For Native Nations in the United States* (Michigan State University Press, 2022). The concept, structure, content, and editorial approach for this handbook emerged through extensive tribal consultation, a thorough review of existing literature, and a survey of over 100 scholars and practitioners in the field.

The handbook is designed as a readable, accessible volume focused on key areas of tribal administration and governance. It seeks to serve practitioners, students, researchers, and community members alike.

Dr. Janelle Wilson (Studies in Justice, Culture, and Social Change) was second author to Dr. Carmen M. Latterell (Mathematics) in an article published in the journal, *Irish Educational Studies*: "Mathematics, mindsets, and what it means to be do-ers of math." Additionally, Wilson was invited to write an essay for Zócalo Public Square on the topic of '90s nostalgia: "Party Like It's 1999, Again: What Gen Z's Displaced Nostalgia for the Decade of Mixtapes, Friends, and Ripped Jeans Says About Us."



SUPPORT OUR LEARNERS AS THEY BECOME LEADERS: A Message from the Development Team

A degree from the University of Minnesota Duluth has been the launching ground for a lifelong career trajectory for over 125 years. But for many promising students, financial and other barriers stand in the way. Alumni and friends who share our commitment to making a CAHSS education possible for students from all backgrounds and walks of life will enable more to take part in the transformational education experience offered here today. You can make a difference in a number of ways:

Attract the best and brightest. Merit scholarships help us recruit a diverse pool of Minnesota's top scholars.

Aid students from middle-income families. New scholarships will ease the path to graduate on time and with less debt for undergraduates who must fill in gaps in funding with loans and more work hours.

Make college possible for more. Support scholarships for students who otherwise would not have the financial resources to afford college, students who are underrepresented on campus, and students who are first in their family to attend college.

Create an enriching, rewarding student experience. Students need an environment in which they can thrive both in and out of the classroom. Funding study abroad experiences, fine arts performances off campus, scholarships for unpaid internships, and services that address both physical and mental health are just a few of the ways to support students outside of the classroom.

Thank you to all of you that are already supporting the College of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. If you are interested in learning more about how you can partner with us to support current and future students, please contact me.



Tricia G Buntten

Tricia Buntten
Chief Development Officer
218-726-6995 or tbuntten@d.umn.edu



AN ALL-AROUND HARMONIOUS ENDEAVOR: Music Education Students Engage With Local Classroom

When Dr. David Edmund (Music) saw a news clip about the work local educator Todd Garland (Congdon Elementary) was doing with his students during African American History month, Edmund saw an opportunity: “His project was thoughtful and musically relevant, so I kept him in mind when seeking a community partner for our elementary music field experience in fall 2022.”

Students in Edmund’s course, MU 3608: Teaching Elementary Music, observed Garland ten times during the semester as part of their requirement to spend 20 hours observing in a classroom. They were also able to practice planning a music lesson before delivering it to Garland’s students.

UMD students made the most of the opportunity; they were well-prepared when delivering their lessons and many “incorporated aspects of Garland’s curriculum (for example, they taught instrumental improvisation, which is something that Todd

is dedicated to) and did a fantastic job teaching,” said Edmund. Later they met with Garland at UMD to share their notes and ask additional questions about how and why he teaches things in certain ways.

“Todd was welcoming and giving of his teaching space and that enabled us to take in the experience together as a group,” Edmund stressed. “Field experiences are vital in the ways they influence the dispositions of pre-service teachers....I’m confident that this cohort of students will take the knowledge and experience gained here and translate it into successful educational experiences for their future students.”

Networking with current professionals is also a leg up for students. Edmund hypothesized, “Some of our students will perform gigs with area teachers and some will earn employment opportunities that result from those relationships.”

There was a great deal of planning and preparation involved with the facilitation of the quality clinical experience (for example, undergoing background checks and obtaining liability insurance), but “overall, this was the most seamless field experience our students have enjoyed during my eleven years at UMD,” reflected Edmund. “My wish has always been that UMD could have a laboratory school for pre-service teacher field experiences. Our partnership with Todd was the closest we could get to that model, where students and faculty visit the school together.”

Given the success of the experience, Edmund intends to maintain the partnership in hopes of repeating it in the future: “At UMD we continue to forge strong relationships with members in the music education community. Our students deserve opportunities to engage with the community’s best teachers” and “to connect with an artist-educator inclusively as a cohort. That provision can be great for the teacher practitioners and P-12 students, too.”





WAYS OF THINKING: New Course Category Addresses Race and Racism

UMD's Liberal Education Program is gaining a new category, Theorizing Race, Power, and Justice (TRPJ), effective fall 2023. Jennifer Mencl, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Effectiveness, recently answered questions about the addition and its goals.

What inspired the creation of the TRPJ category?

The category as a whole was inspired by the Anti-Racist Subcommittee of the Employees of Color and American Indian (EOCAI) Mentoring Group. In August 2020, the Subcommittee sent a letter to UMD and UMN-System leadership that called for a 3-credit academic course on social and racial justice to be taken by every undergraduate student at UMD. This requirement became a reality in fall 2021 when the Liberal Education Program framework was revised to include the new TRPJ category. During spring 2022, a task force was formed to develop the category's description, criteria, and student learning outcomes (SLOs).

How are courses being selected/crafted for the TRPJ category?

Specific courses for the TRPJ category are inspired by faculty across the campus who want to teach in the category. Dr. Jeanine Weekes Schroer (Philosophy) took the lead in creating a faculty development opportunity available to faculty with interest in teaching in the category. In August 2022, Dr. Schroer led the first cohorts of the program, with additional cohorts in fall and spring terms.

As of March 2023, the Liberal Education Subcommittee has approved the following courses:

- ARTH 2390 US Art and Visual Culture in the 20th Century (3 credits)
- BLAW 1001 Race and the Law (4 credits)
- CS 1033 Algorithms, Race & Computing (4 credits)
- ECON 2025 Economics of Discrimination (3 credits)
- ENGL 1586 Race and 21st Century Literature (4 credits)
- ENGL 1619 Race, Culture & Conflict in American Literature (4 credits)
- GEOG 2406 Race, Place, Identities & Territories (3 credits)
- PHIL 2025 Theorizing Black Horror (3 credits)
- PHIL 2075 Racial Cognition (3 credits)
- PHIL 3025 Philosophy of Race & Racism (4 credits)
- SW 1619 Race, Class and Gender in the United States (3 credits)
- WRIT 1206 Writing for Social Change (3 credits)

To be included in the TRPJ category, all courses must meet two criteria and involve measures (i.e., what students do to demonstrate their learning) to assess the category's student learning outcomes. Faculty who teach TRPJ courses will report on their course assessment on a regular basis.

Criteria:

Race and racial oppression will be the dominant focus of the course, integral to its content and objectives (whether the course focuses entirely on racial justice or on the structural inequalities facing other marginalized groups).

The course will focus primarily on enabling students to understand systemic analyses of discipline-specific race issues, including historical, socio-cultural, institutional, structural, and/or all of the aforementioned (i.e., systemic) analyses or ways of thinking.

How will the courses be assessed for effectiveness?

Last fall, several faculty came together to draft a category rubric for assessment of the SLOs that were developed spring 2022. In the process, they provided suggested revisions to add clarity to the original SLO statements. The faculty review process for the revised SLOs and rubric is completed, and the campus's Liberal Education Subcommittee will review them next. Once the Subcommittee's review is complete, the SLOs and the rubric will be posted on the campus assessment website.

What has been the hardest part of adding these courses to the curriculum at UMD?

One of the initial challenges was identifying where the new category would fit into the Liberal Education Program because our institutional accrediting agency requires a minimum of 30 credits for general education, and we want our program to be clear to students. We are confident the placement of the new category among the "skills" part of the curriculum was the best alternative to meet these objectives.

What has been the greatest success thus far of adding the TRPJ category to the curriculum at UMD?

Other than the fact that we will have the category requirement beginning fall 2023, I think one of the greatest successes is the course array. Although some people may have expected several race-related courses already in the Cultural Diversity in the U.S. category to apply for the new TRPJ category, almost all of the TRPJ courses thus far are new. Additionally, the courses are offered from all four colleges, which is a true testament to how issues of race and systemic racism are evident throughout disciplines.

How do you think these courses will be an asset to students' futures?

Students will benefit from the knowledge they acquire, which will be specific to the courses they take. They will also develop skills to look at the world and think about race, racism, and the impacts in ways - the "ways of thinking" as required by all courses in the category - they might not have been exposed to otherwise. Ultimately, I hope that our students apply what they learn and further develop their knowledge and skills to enrich their lives and their communities.



A WOOD REVOLUTION: A “Hot” Wood Product Blazes New Trails

By: Cheryl Reitan

Maxwell McGruder (Art and Design '10) recently worked as the marketing coordinator for Arbor Wood Co. This Northern Minnesota company is one of few companies in the U.S. to manufacture thermally modified wood siding, decking, and dimensional lumber. McGruder's route to this game-changing start-up included more than a few adventures.

McGruder's high energy propelled him. Even before he graduated, he freelanced as a photographer for local bands, eventually leading to shooting for Trampled By Turtles at Red Rocks & Rhymesayers' 20th anniversary show at the Target Center, among others. One photography stint included shooting over 100 different shows in a one-week timespan at the 2015 Homegrown Music Festival. After graduation, he embarked on a six-month exploration of the California Coast, where he took a long stop in a camper in the Redwood Forest.

In time, McGruder turned his attention to helping Duluth companies thrive. First, he worked with a few businesses, including two restaurants. Then, working as the multimedia developer for Bent Paddle Brewing, he rode the company's growth wave from start-up to established success. During his five years with that company, his social media and multimedia campaigns helped drive the development of the business.

In 2022, McGruder joined Arbor Wood Co. and the affiliated firm, Intectural. Arbor Wood is part of a growing industry in thermally modified timber. The process heat treats wood in a low-oxygen kiln to enhance water and rot resistance and dimensional stability. Rot resistance is key. The moisture is essentially 'baked' out of the wood on a molecular level, leaving an equilibrium moisture content of around 6-7%. The wood is then used for super-durable, all-natural siding, decking, and other construction opportunities.

Jon Heyesen, Arbor Wood Co CEO, and his team, worked closely with Duluth's Natural Resources Research Institute (NRRI) as they developed and tested the new technology. NRRI secured funding from the National Science Foundation and partnered with Washington State University. NRRI also obtained the required mechanical properties and accelerated aging tests for Arbor Wood to use in its processes. Heyesen is encouraged by the reception. "We now have over \$10 million worth of projects in our sales pipeline ranging from retail to hotels to national park projects," he says.

Heyesen, McGruder, and the rest of the company are working toward a broad acceptance of thermally modified wood. Along with NRRI, they are developing products that are alternatives to



top-grade lumber, chemically treated wood, and tropical hardwoods. One eventual goal is to use wood that poses forest fire hazards such as small-diameter ponderosa pine and lodgepole pine ash. Future experimentation includes using Minnesota's softer wood such as balsam fir.

"The company wants to be better stewards of our resources," McGruder says. "Using domestic forest land creates jobs and reduces the need for exotic hardwoods, and it's exciting to be a part of that."

McGruder, who hails from Eden Prairie, Minn., says he often

recalls his classes with UMD's graphic design faculty. He remembers, "Vicky Lehman was my first graphic design teacher, and she taught me all about typeface design." He recalls classes and adventures with art professors Rob Wittig, Joellen Rock, Jennifer Gordon, and others. One expedition was a milestone. "I studied graphic design in Istanbul with Robert Repinsky."

Making a difference has always been important to McGruder. He's used the skills he learned at UMD as his tools. "I truly feel that what I do has an impact on a local level. That drives me. I'm working to make a better place for my daughter and the area."

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STELLAR VIEWS: Creativity Conference Kindles Dynamic Conversations

As part of the 2023 Sieur du Lhut Creativity Conference, CAHSS hosted two internationally recognized speakers on April 19th. Jad Abumrad (Creator of Radiolab and MacArthur Fellow) and Brother Guy Consolmagno SJ (Director of the Vatican Observatory and winner of the Carl Sagan award) engaged in a dialogue about Communicating Science in Changing Times.

Beyond the conference event, Dr. Paula Gudmundson (Music) and Dr. Jennifer Moore (Communication) organized opportunities for Abumrad to meet with CAHSS students, and Consolmagno virtually presented in the Alworth Planetarium on campus from the Bell Museum Planetarium in St. Paul to

talk about his “Adventures of a Vatican Astronomer,” from the meteorite fields of East Antarctica to the United Nations on April 14th.

Serendipitously, the English, Linguistics, and Writing Studies Honor Society, Sigma Tau Delta, organized a star / cosmos-themed ekphrastic poetry exhibit in the Tweed timed to display during Consolmagno’s talk. Ekphrastic poetry vividly describes a work of art. Prior to the display’s opening, Sigma Tau Delta member Ty Pearson reported, “We have been working to organize the ekphrastic exhibit since the fall of 2022. It has been an immense joy to browse Tweed’s catalog of amazing art, select a theme, and promote the project among our peers. We hope to receive many poems and look forward to displaying them this April.”