

# University of Washington Magazine

A woman with short dark hair and red-rimmed glasses is holding a large, light-colored ceramic mask. The mask has a stylized, elongated face with a prominent nose and lips. The woman's face is partially visible behind the mask. The background is dark.

## The Wonder of Warashina

The Smithsonian's Visionary Artist Award honors Patti Warashina, whose humor and innovative perspectives on the human condition put a new face on ceramics.



## In Search of Sovereignty

Despite centuries of America's Indian nations' self-rule, the U.S. Supreme Court decided in 1978 that Native American officials could not arrest or prosecute non-native people on native land. The ruling, which involved a case of the Northwest's Suquamish Tribe, applied to every reservation in the country, undermining each tribe's abilities to enforce laws and manage its own affairs. In her book "Reclaiming the Reservation," Professor Emerita Alexandra Harmon says that despite this crushing court case, Northwest Indian tribes have found ways to expand their sovereignty in the decades since. One of the tribes Harmon writes about is the Quinault Indian Nation, whose reservation sits on the coast of the Olympic Peninsula.

The sovereign nation is led by Fawn Sharp, '95, who is also president of the National Congress of American Indians. To illustrate the themes of Harmon's book, we sent photographer Kiliiii Yuyan, a Siberian native who specializes in Indigenous issues, to the edge of the Quinault Reservation. Yuyan, known for his stunning spreads in National Geographic, took this picture by Lake Quinault near the eastern entrance of the reservation, inside one of the world's last remaining pieces of old-growth forest. He installed red-and-black fabrics to evoke the button blankets of the Northwest Coastal tribes. "The spruce stump has a huckleberry growing out of it," Yuyan notes, "a sign of renewal and revitalization after being cut down by settlers." *Photograph by Kiliiii Yuyan.*





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# University of Washington Magazine



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SCOTT ERBANO

**DIAMOND DAWGS**  
Husky softball opens the 2020 season as the nation's top-ranked team

**EMILE'S EYE**  
Our 2020 Odegaard winner, Emile Pitre, is also an ace photographer who has captured campus for decades.



KYLE PITRE

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An apartment building fire forced Grace Flott to leap from a fourth-floor window. Painting plays a major role as she creates a new life.

By Julie Davidow

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UW's startup culture nurtures a growing number of students, proving that an idea fed by energy and mentoring can bring business success.

By Hannelore Sudermann

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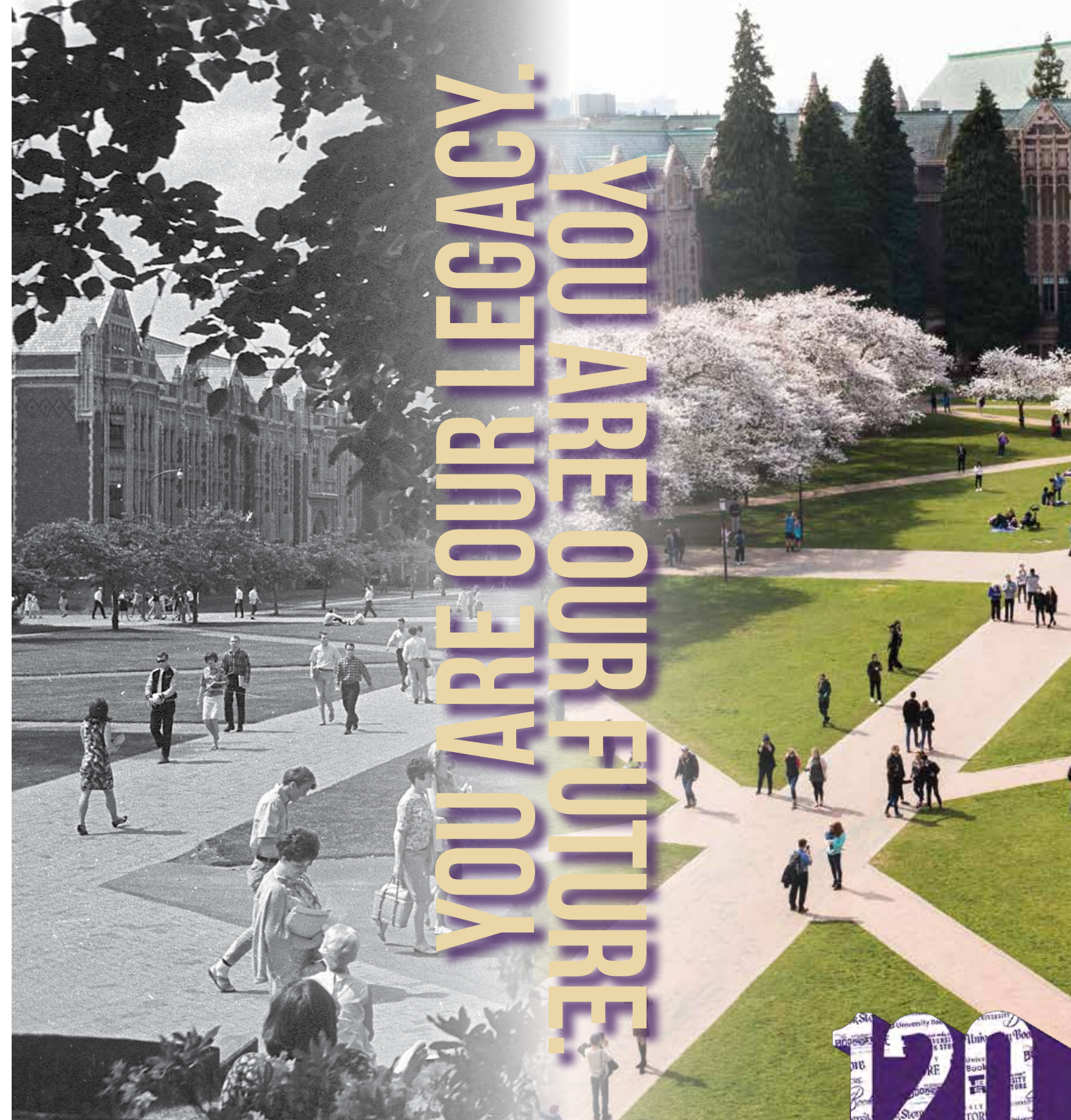
Scientists returning to Mount St. Helens after its cataclysmic eruption were blown away by how quickly life sprouted from the ruins.

By Eric Wagner

## 40 The Personification of Impact

Jim Ellis never held elected office. But that didn't stop him from creating a legacy of serving the public good that still touches us today.

By Julie Garner



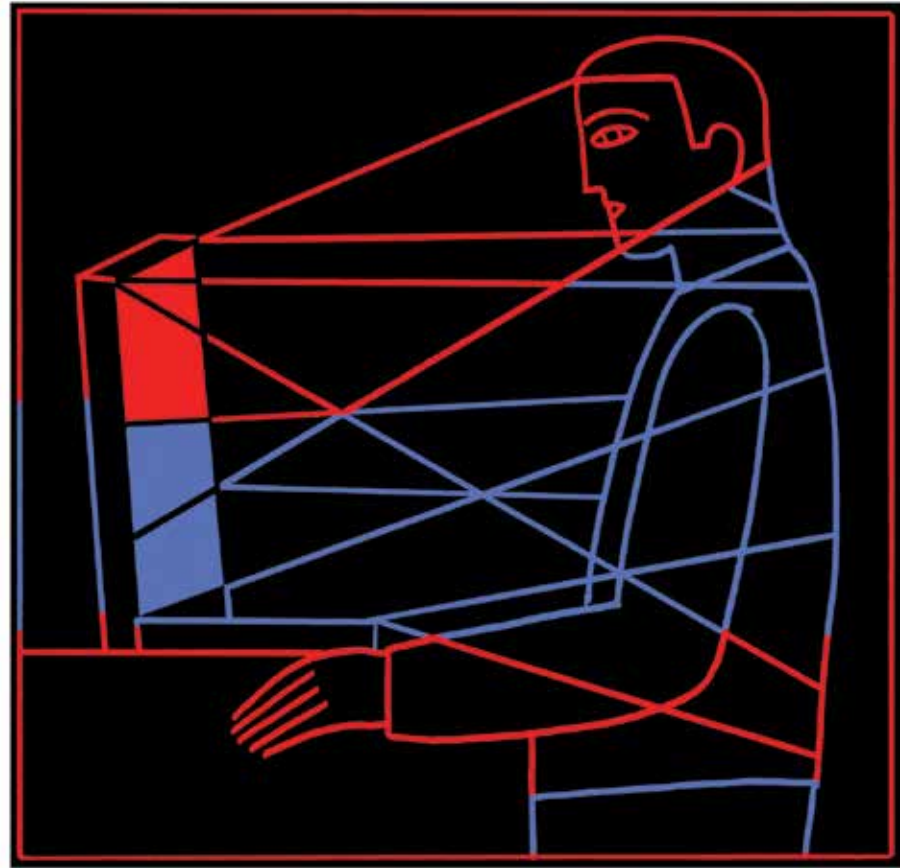
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# Forward

OPINION AND THOUGHT FROM THE UW FAMILY



MESSAGE FROM THE **FOUNDING DIRECTOR**

## A Center for an Informed Public

By Jevin West

On Dec. 3, we launched the new Center for an Informed Public (CIP) at UW—a response to the rise in disinformation and erosion of trust in our most basic societal institutions. More than 400 people packed the HUB South Ballroom, among them faculty, alumni, students, librarians, journalists, industry leaders, high school teachers, funders and policymakers. There was a sense of excitement mixed with concern—excitement that UW was leading the way; concern over the magnitude and reach of the problem.

In today's social web, falsehoods are created with ease and they spread at unfathomable rates. Sometimes these falsehoods are simply satire; other times they reflect strategic political intent. At times, we've seen them lead to mob-like behavior

and sword-rattling threats by government leaders. They can affect people's health decisions, for example, whether or not to vaccinate. Words someone never said can be put into their mouth using voice cloning, "deepfakes" (fabricated video and audio) and other forms of synthetic media. It is becoming harder and harder to identify the real from the unreal.

Fortunately, there are many reasons to be optimistic.

Universities are responding. The UW is one of five centers around the country that received seed funding from the Knight Foundation to create an interdisciplinary group to resist misinformation, promote an informed society and strengthen democratic discourse. We are joined by New York University, George Washington

University, the University of North Carolina and Carnegie Mellon University in a national consortium working to better understand and address the problems of disinformation.

Governments are also responding. Lawmakers are developing legal levers aimed at slowing the spread of intentional misinformation. In the first session of 2020, lawmakers in Olympia, and in many other states, are debating bills on deepfakes, data privacy, platform liability and facial recognition. Educators, librarians and journalists are responding. National leaders and organizations in the state of Washington are developing new programs in media literacy, data reasoning, digital citizenship and in-

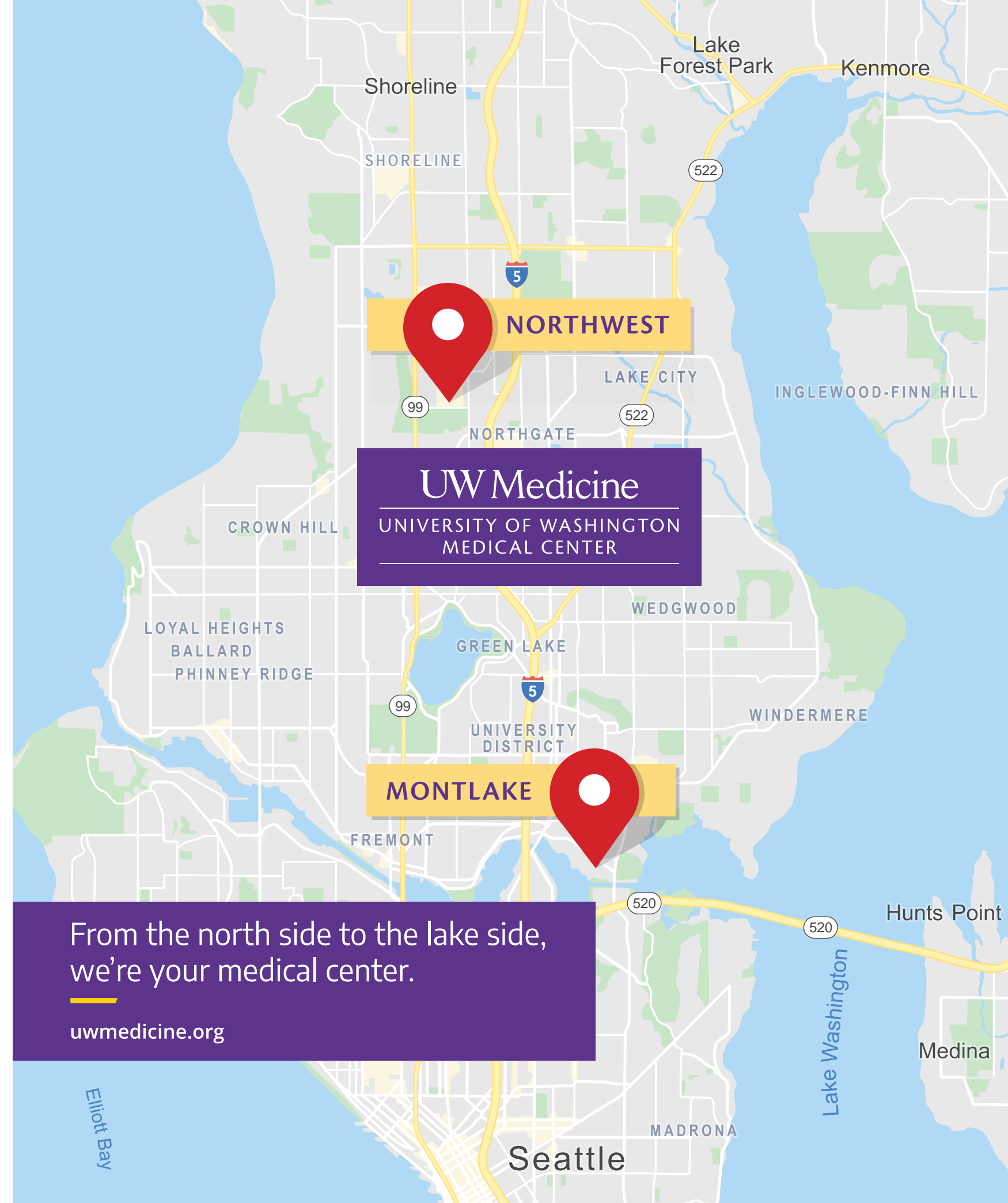
**Lawmakers are developing legal levers aimed at slowing the spread of intentional misinformation.**

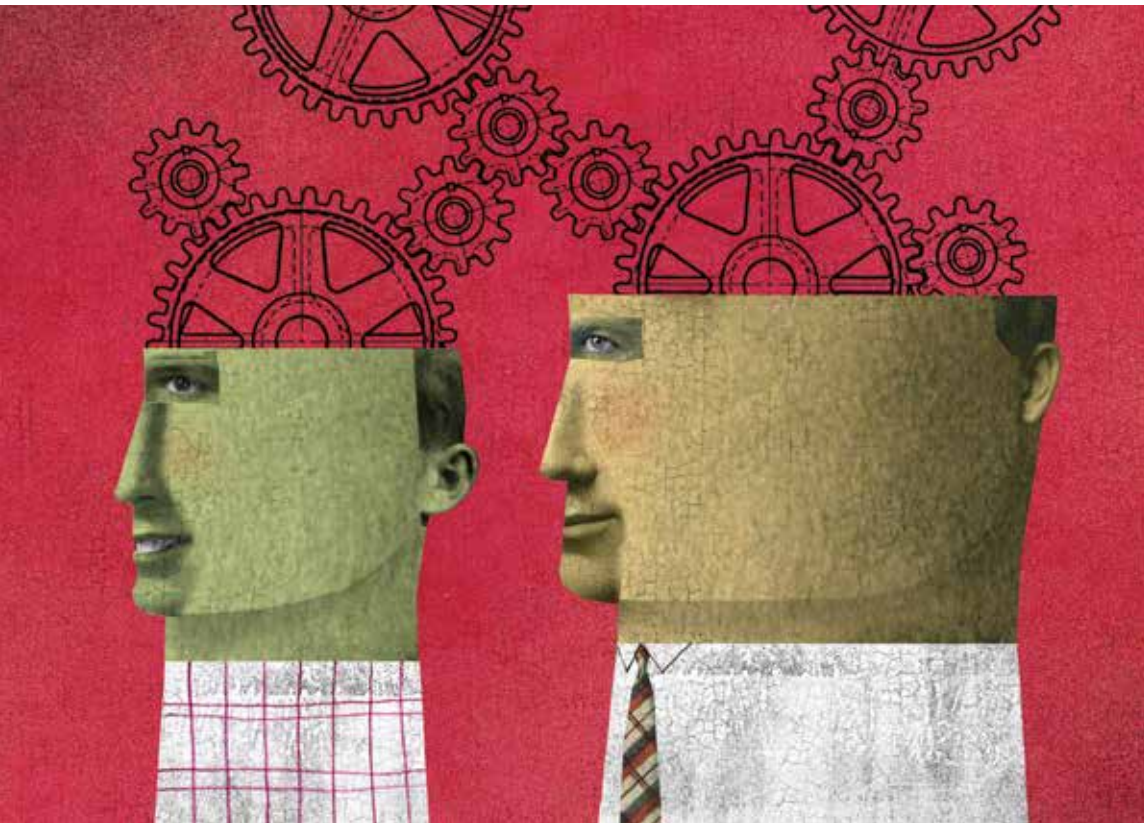
ternet safety. Technologists are responding. They are designing new interfaces and detectors of "fake news" and manipulated media. They are also opening conversations with researchers, journalists and policymakers.

Just as important, alumni are responding. We have one of the strongest, most active alumni networks in the country. You have risen to other big challenges, including the funding of and access to higher education. The UW CIP is a public institution with a public mission: to resist disinformation, promote an informed society and strengthen democratic discourse. We understand the gravity of this mission; the threats to democracy are real. We need to think big and lead on this important issue.

At our launch, Presidents Ana Mari Cauce and Kirk Schulz of WSU signed an agreement, committing to work together. The challenge we face spans the entirety of the state, across political and rural-urban divides. If there was ever a need for action, it is now. We need your help in restoring trust in our institutions, and each other.

*Jevin West is an associate professor in the Information School and coauthor of the forthcoming book "Calling Bullshit: The Art of Skepticism in a Data Driven World."*





## MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

### Creativity, innovation, collaboration are the special ingredients

By Jon Marmor

Reader response to the new University of Washington Magazine has been overwhelmingly positive. While our whole team deserves credit, two of the biggest reasons for the success are members of the magazine staff: Art Director Ken Shafer and photographer Quinn Russell Brown.

Ken is the longest-serving member of this publication, having been part of Columns magazine since 1990. He's an artist of rare talent who honed his skills over a 40-year career, creating many logos you know—the Seattle Sounders, Seattle Storm and Tiger Woods, as well as projects for National Geographic, Nordstrom and Microsoft. Quinn has been on the magazine staff for just three years. He is our digital editor and an incredibly adept portrait photographer. One of his photographs was recently accepted by the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery for an exhibition.

What is the basis for their award-winning work? Creativity and innovation. Ken and

Quinn have taken this magazine's storytelling to a whole new level, combining their abilities with the redesign to bolster our national reputation for scintillating images that connect deeply with readers.

They build and paint props and backdrops for photo shoots. They spend hours in the library of the UW School of Art + Art History + Design to find inspiration.

Their collective images are astounding; inside the robotics lab of the Bill & Melinda Gates Center for Computer Science & Engineering; portraits of student leaders who pushed the UW in the 1960s to create the first office of minority affairs and diversity in America; or the movie set they built to capture Greg Olson, '83, the legendary Seattle Art Museum film noir expert.

Their story is one of intergenerational mentorship that is a nod to the history of Columns magazine and a recognition of its rejuvenation as University of Washington Magazine. It's two minds working together in the art of storytelling. Lucky us.

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID PLUNKERT

## STAFF

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**PUBLISHER** Paul Rucker, '95, '02  
**ASSISTANT VICE PRESIDENT, UWAA MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS** Terri Hiroshima  
**EDITOR** Jon Marmor, '94  
**MANAGING EDITOR** Hannelore Sudermann, '96  
**ART DIRECTOR** Ken Shafer  
**DIGITAL EDITOR** Quinn Russell Brown, '13  
**STAFF WRITER** Julie Davidow

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**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS**  
Jim Caple, Rebekah Denn, Brooke Fisher, Julie Garner, Benjamin Gleisser, Manisha Jha, Nancy Joseph, Sarah McQuate, Graham Pruss, Eric Wagner, Jevin West

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
Daniel Berman, Scott Eklund, Brandon Hill, Meron Menghistab, David Oh, Emile Pitre, Mark Stone, Corinne Thrash, Dennis Wise, Ron Wurzer, Kiliii Yuyan

**CONTRIBUTING ILLUSTRATORS**  
Joe Anderson, Olivier Kugler, Philippe Lechien, David Plunkert, Anthony Russo

**EDITORIAL OFFICES**  
**Phone** 206-543-0540  
**Email** magazine@uw.edu  
**Fax** 206-685-0611  
4333 Brooklyn Ave. N.E.  
UW Tower 01, Box 359559  
Seattle, WA 98195-9559

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**Email** magazine@uw.edu  
**Online** magazine.washington.edu  
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University of Washington Magazine  
Box 359559, Seattle, WA 98195-9559  
Or: updates@uw.edu

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SagaCity Media, Inc.  
509 Olive Way, Suite 305, Seattle, WA 98101  
Jeff Adams, '83  
jadams@sagacitymedia.com, 206.454.3007  
Carol Cummins  
ccummins@sagacitymedia.com, 206.454.3058

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## U District memories

Thank you for your cover photo of the aging Varsity Theater (“Coming Attraction: The New U District,” December). Does anyone remember what preceded the Varsity at that location? The real surprise of your article was the two-page spread of the Four Corners Art & Frame Shop at 4305 University Way N.E. From 1940 until 1963, that was the location of the Yormark Jewelry store. One Christmas Eve, a sailor from Sand Point Naval Air Station came in. He took some folded money and change, plunked it on the counter and asked, “What can you give me for this?” By the way, an open-door grocery store was at the Varsity location.

**Ben Yormark, '48, '59, '64, Seattle**

I was pleased to see a UW official pledge to try “our hardest” to help make the U District a great neighborhood because past practices have not always been encouraging. At times, the UW was not the best neighbor. Changing the waterfront along Portage Bay with massive new buildings, pushing out maritime businesses and

blocking view corridors of the water are three examples of how the UW missed opportunities to do right. Let’s hope the UW truly steps up to help build a livable neighborhood for all residents.

**Casey Corr, Yakima**

## 5030 House Experiences

Your story about the UW students who shared a house on 17th Avenue N.E. in the early '80s (“The House at 5030,” December) brought back memories of the house at 5018 I shared with six grad students a decade earlier. Your article prompted me to look up those old housemates and find out who we became over the last half-century.

**Claudia Gorbman, '69, '72, '78, Poulsbo**

## Vietnam experiences

Your article “Veterans Visit Vietnam” was one to which I could sincerely relate. I graduated in June 1965 and served in Vietnam in 1966. In 2014, my wife, Gael,

and I revisited Vietnam. Taking in the War Museum exhibits, you witness the devastation of bombings and Agent Orange on the people, but at the end you witness exhibits hoping for peaceful communication and friendship with former enemies.

**Dale L. Schultz, '65, Seattle**

## No-No Boy

In 1999, I enrolled in “Asian American History and Literature,” a UW Tacoma course taught by Peter Bacho. On our reading list was “No-No Boy” (“Getting the Story Right,” December). That learning experience was one of the most compelling of my college adventures.

**Laurie Martin, '00, Vashon**

## Feeling out of place

Your article (“An Ecologist in the City,” December) made me more aware that racism often goes hand in hand with being “out of place.” I hope for more tolerance with this new awareness.

**Valerie Nordberg, UW Magazine Online**

## CORRECTION

We misspelled Roland Hjorth’s name in our December issue. A corrected obituary is on page 61. We regret the error.



John H., Member-owner



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## PRIDE AND JOY

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# The HUB

NEWS AND RESEARCH FROM THE UW



## Bonjour Paris

A professor shares her Paris apartments with UW scholars

By Nancy Joseph

Since graduate school, Meredith Clausen, an architectural historian, dreamt of owning her own apartment in Paris—where she could immerse herself in a city she loved.

“I’m not wealthy,” says the professor of art history and architecture. “But very early on, I decided this was something I wanted to do.”

She joined the UW faculty in 1979, and by the early 1990s had saved enough to buy her first apartment in a working-class neighborhood on the periphery of Paris. She rented it out, and watched its value skyrocket as the area gentrified. In 2005, she returned to Paris on a fellowship that provided housing in the heart of the city. Clausen relished living near the city’s museums, national archives and other scholarly resources, and decided to buy a second,

**I found an apartment that was old and falling apart, but perfectly located.**

more centrally located Paris apartment using income from her first.

“I found an apartment in the 5th arrondissement (the Latin Quarter) that was old and falling apart, but perfectly located,” says Clausen, “so I got it for a good price and later remodeled it with scholars in mind.”

Clausen’s interest in the City of Light

began with a summer abroad in high school. “It was my first taste of Paris, and boy, I remember it so well,” she says, recalling the pleasure of her first Parisian café and the aroma of fresh-baked baguettes. A decade later she returned through a Fulbright dissertation grant to research La Samaritaine, an iconic department store built in the Art Nouveau style in 1910.

“It was one of the first exposed steel-framed buildings in Paris, a radically new structural system inspired in part by the architect Louis Sullivan’s work in Chicago,” says Clausen. “It bore the impact of the industrial revolution in its materials and industrial processes, but was combined and softened by detailing that was fully Art Nouveau and all hand done.”

While her research includes 19th- and 20th-century architecture, particularly in the postwar United States, she has made good use of the second apartment. It’s available to other academics, including UW graduate students.

“The main reason for getting the apartment,” she says, “was to make it available for other people.”

## The Wonder of Warashina

Being an artist was not the career Patti Warashina’s parents had in mind for her when she was growing up in Spokane. Her father, a Japanese immigrant, and her second-generation Japanese American mother encouraged Patti and her two siblings to take their education seriously so they could find careers that would support them as adults. Warashina enrolled at the UW intent on becoming a dental hygienist. However, one day she took a required elective in beginning drawing. It captivated her and compelled her to take more art classes, which ultimately introduced her to the material of clay. That did it! Luckily, she switched majors and went on to become one of America’s foremost ceramic artists. Now 80, Warashina, ’62, ’64, continues to create satirical and

humorous figurative sculptures that explore the absurdity and foibles of human nature, as well as feminism and other political and social topics. The UW art professor emerita is revered by generations of ceramic artists and collectors. She will be honored in April in Washington, D.C., as the 2020 Smithsonian Visionary Artist. *Photograph by Daniel Berman*

This issue’s cover story, “The Wonder of Warashina,” is a digital-first package designed to be explored on our website, [magazine.uw.edu](http://magazine.uw.edu), with a desktop or a mobile device. Through video, audio and photography, you can see our Smithsonian sculptor at work in a way that the two-dimensional page could only dream of doing.



STATE OF THE ART PATTI WARASHINA





## We Need to Talk About Vehicle Residency

By Graham Pruss

The thousands of people across the United States who are living in their vehicles need legal spaces to park and live.

While we don't have an accurate count of vehicle residents because they often hide their homes, and are routinely pushed to "move along," we know this community is growing. According to annual King County reports, 3,372 people lived in vehicles in public parking spaces in 2018—nearly four times more than a decade earlier. Of the approximately 6,000 people reported as "unsheltered" in King County, roughly half live in a car, truck, van, bus or RV. And yet, many vehicle residents do not consider themselves homeless.

They reject the label "home-less" because they may have used their vehicles as housing for years, even decades. Insisting a vehicle resident is homeless denies their agency by defining their choice of "home" as inappropriate.

Vehicle shelters have always offered a

place for people unsettled by natural disasters, violence, urban displacement, limited access to housing, eviction or personal crisis. For nearly a century, car camping and RV living have been considered socially acceptable. What defines someone who lives in a mobile home as homeless seems to be less about their choice of shelter than that shelter's location.

The mobile home is immensely valuable to its occupant. Issuing a ticket, impounding a vehicle-home or banishing overnight public parking won't solve larger social and economic challenges. Criminalizing a form of shelter causes undue and disproportionate harm to vulnerable people, and often does not meet the greater needs of our communities.

Rather than a "punitive push" to "move along," a "positive pull" can include the thousands of neighbors who currently live in mobile shelters within our communities, along with those who use our emergency

or housing services and systems of care.

When I transferred to the UW from the Seattle community colleges, I had some experience with mobility, housing instability and the need for social support. As a child, I vacationed across the country with my parents and "snowbird" grandparents in RVs. I lived in a group home for minors, failed out of high school and was briefly homeless at 15. After reconnecting with my family at 18, I was dependent on medical and housing support for my own family as a teen parent.

When I conducted undergraduate honors research in anthropology, I wanted to incorporate my past experiences to understand contemporary Seattle.

Through my last decade of research, I learned that people who inhabit public parking often choose it as an alternative to cost-prohibitive housing or emergency shelter. The number of extreme low-income mobile home parks is shrinking, and without access to a private place, a life in public parking is the only option available to many. In response, cities have criminalized sleeping in vehicles and targeted "car ranchers" who rent "vehicle apartments" to people in need.

Cities can, and should, include vehicle residents in community planning. Fortunately, the number of "safe parking" programs across the West Coast is growing. For decades in the U.K., national networks of "halting sites" provided a model of making space for unsettled and excluded neighbors. These spaces, alongside extreme-low-income mobile home lots, require community support to nurture and stabilize existing homes.

### Criminalizing a form of shelter causes undue and disproportionate harm to vulnerable people.

You can help as an ally, supporting the inclusion of vehicle residents in public meetings, local media, neighborhood organizing and planning within social services and housing systems. Together we can shift the paradigm to include the thousands of neighbors who know a vehicle as home.

*Graham Pruss, '11, '16, '19, wrote his doctoral thesis on vehicle residency with the support of a grant from the National Science Foundation. He currently lectures in anthropology.*

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE ANDERSON

FROM WASHINGTON GRAHAM PRUSS

## NEWS

### ONE HOSPITAL, TWO CAMPUSES

In January, Northwest Hospital became a second campus of the UW Medical Center, creating one hospital on two campuses. The 281-bed community hospital about 5 miles north of the UW Seattle campus opened in 1960 to serve a growing area of the city that was underserved in medical care. In 1997, Northwest Hospital began collaborating with the UW and ultimately joined the UW system in 2009 while remaining a separate nonprofit. By dissolving the nonprofit and integrating the financial, clinical and administrative components of the two hospitals, the two facilities can operate under a single license. The integration allows them to expand access for patients, reduce administrative complexity, enhance quality and reduce costs.

### STAR PROFESSOR

At a time when issues of open science, intellectual property and national security are affecting international partnerships, astronomy professor Paula Szkody, an expert in binary stars, is taking the lead at the American Astronomical Society. Szkody earned her doctorate in astronomy at the UW in 1975 and joined the AAS while in graduate school. As the society's president, she will help fulfill its mission to enhance and to share our scientific understanding of the universe. Another big concern she faces in her term, which runs until 2022, is the need to regulate dark skies for the continued night operation of telescopes. "Satellite companies are sending up many satellites for high-speed internet," she says. The light reflected from that equipment prevents observations of objects in many areas of the sky. The AAS has about 7,700 members including physicists, mathematicians, geologists and engineers.

### HELPING GRAD STUDENTS OF COLOR

In 1970, the University created an office to help students of color thrive in graduate school at a time when nearly all the faculty and most of their classmates were white. Today, while the UW has made strides in diversifying its faculty, there is still a need to serve students from underrepresented minority groups. The Graduate Opportunities & Minority Achievement Program helps students find role models and provides financial and other kinds of support. Students first connect with GO-MAP as they consider a graduate program, and many cite the office as a reason they chose the UW over other top universities. GO-MAP teaches and supports students about topics such as addressing racial microaggressions, negotiating a salary, and organizing and completing a dissertation.

## Rise and Shine

The Foster School's Ascend program boosts small business nationwide

By Julie Davidow

A UW program to help Washington small businesses owned by people of color, women and veterans has expanded to 13 cities across the country, with three more cities slated to join this year.

The Consulting and Business Development Center's Ascend program is based on the research of William Bradford, a finance professor and the Foster School of Business's first African American dean. Bradford found that businesses owned by people of color are hindered by structural barriers to accessing money, markets and management education.

There's a reason tech hubs like Seattle and Silicon Valley are booming, says Michael Verchot, co-founder and director of the now 25-year-old center. Networks of venture capital, entrepreneurs and innovators feed off each other and fuel growth. Meanwhile, median revenues at white-owned companies are five times higher than at black-owned companies and 1 1/2 times more than Latinx-owned businesses.

Bradford's insight is the foundation of a program—called the Three-M model—to cultivate local ecosystems that correct the imbalance of funding, access to markets and management education by connecting women- and minority-owned businesses with universities, community development corporations and banks. "It's an amazingly simple structure,"

Verchot says. And it works.

The national program is funded by JPMorgan Chase with a three-year, \$2.5 million grant. An additional \$250,000 will help fund the center's ongoing efforts in Seattle. In the Puget Sound region, the center is already working with companies and agencies like Seattle City Light to boost their contracts with businesses owned by women and people of color.

Rather than parachuting into cities with initiatives that end when funding dries up, Ascend encourages connections that will outlast the grant period, Verchot says. As such, programs are taking shape based on local conditions and around institutions that already have deep connections to their communities. In Chicago, for example, the University of Chicago and Northwestern University are working with local businesses; in Atlanta, the participation of Morehouse, a historically black college, is key.

The Ascend model goes back to the center's roots providing management education and connecting businesses owners of color with financing. "We've been building toward this for 25 years," Verchot says. "Chase was trying to figure out how do they really move the needle. They were looking around the country asking who's got a good idea. They saw our work and said, 'That's something we want to invest in.'"



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## Baby's Breath

A new smart speaker can both soothe and monitor a sleeping baby

By Sarah McQuate

A team from UW Medicine and the Paul G. Allen School of Computer Science and Engineering has used hardware similar to an Amazon Echo to create BreathJunior, a smart speaker that plays white noise and records how the noise is reflected back to detect the breathing motions of an infant's chest. "We sought to develop a system that combines soothing white noise with the ability to unobtrusively measure an infant's motion and breathing," says Jacob Sunshine, assistant professor of anesthesiology and pain medicine. With National Science Foundation funding, the team developed a device to track both small motions (such as breathing), and large motions (such as moving around in a crib). It can also pick up the sound of crying. "In just a few years, we have come a long way from monitoring large motions in adults to extracting the tiny motion of a newborn infant's breathing," says Shyam Gollakota, associate professor of computer science and engineering who leads the UW Computing for Health group. What's next? Perhaps a medical tricorder (think "Star Trek") that can, without physical contact, monitor a variety of vital signs.



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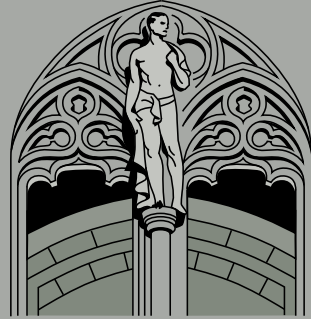


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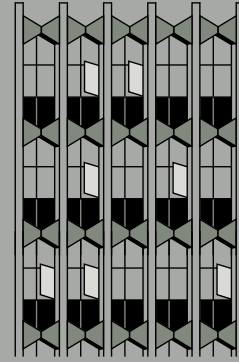
1

**1 Suzzallo Library**  
*Collegiate Gothic, 1926*  
This temple to books was designed by Carl Gould, the founding dean of the School of Architecture.



2

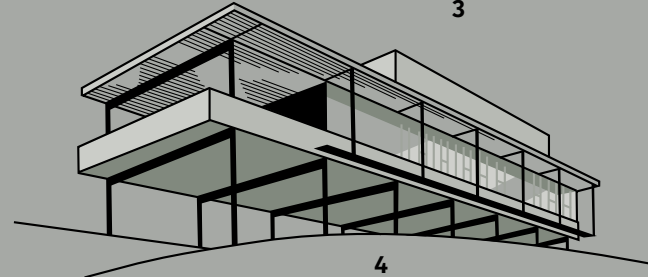
**2 Denny Hall**  
*Renaissance Revival, 1875*  
The first building on campus, Denny was built with brick and sandstone and inspired by a French chateau.



3

**3 Sieg Hall**  
*Modern, 1960*  
With its modern twist on Gothic elements, it is often considered the least-appealing building on campus.

**5 McMahon Hall**  
*Brutalist, 1965*  
The 11-story concrete dormitory boasts balconies and spectacular views to the east.



4

**6 Glenn Hughes Penthouse Theater**  
*Streamline Moderne, 1940*  
Designed by a drama faculty member, this was the first theater-in-the-round built in the U.S.



5

**7 PACCAR Hall**  
*Contextual, 2010*  
Home to the Foster School of Business, the award-winning building boasts a four-story atrium that captures a view of nearby Denny Hall.



6



7

## THE SPLENDOR OF A BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Originally, the regents planned to fill the University of Washington with collegiate Gothic-style buildings. But the Seattle campus now showcases shining examples of different styles and eras. In creating this graphic, we used details from Professor Norman Johnston's history "The Fountain and the Mountain." As he wrote: "From an acreage generous in scale and wonderfully endowed by nature with water and mountain vistas ... [the campus] has been nurtured into the splendor of a built environment unmatched in the league of university campuses."



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## Arsenic and Old Lakes

By Brooke Fisher



Graduate student Samantha Fung and Professor Alex Horner-Devine take samples from Lake Killarney.

Several times a month, Samantha Fung, a graduate student in civil and environmental engineering, heads to a small, shallow lake in Federal Way to follow up on recent, and surprising, arsenic-related discoveries.

"It's very rare to study a lake as small as Lake Killarney," says Fung, who has worked on a research project at the 31-acre lake for close to two years. "This project is aimed at determining which lakes are most susceptible to contaminants and have a higher chance of arsenic being transferred up the food web."

The source of Lake Killarney's arsenic lies about 15 miles away in Tacoma, where an ASARCO copper smelter operated for about a century. The smelter emitted air

pollution that carried heavy metals across the Puget Sound region. Although it was closed 35 years ago, the legacy of sediment contamination remains a long-term source of toxins in the ecosystem. And until now, the water-related hazards have been largely overlooked. Lake Killarney is surrounded by homes, and people fish there for rainbow trout, largemouth bass and yellow perch.

After a surprising discovery a couple of years ago that some shallow lakes have characteristics that facilitate the movement of arsenic from sediment at the bottom of a lake up into the food web, a team of UW researchers opened an investigation. They wanted to study the movement of water and the heavy metals' impact on aquatic life.

The project is supported by UW's Superfund Research Program and led by Rebecca Neumann, associate professor of environmental engineering, with UW Tacoma Associate Professor Jim Gawel. "Arsenic fortunately doesn't pose much of a contact risk, but the biggest concern is ingestion," Neumann says. "A possible exposure pathway is people eating snails, crayfish or fish, which may have high levels of arsenic."

For the past four years, the researchers have been investigating lakes in the Tacoma vicinity, with a special focus on Lake Killarney and Angle Lake. Although both are small lakes in urban settings, they have very different depths: At 52 feet, Angle Lake is about four times as deep as Lake Killarney. Both lakes have similar levels of arsenic in their lakebeds, but plankton in the shallow lake accumulated up to 10 times more arsenic than those in the deep lake.

## Adolescents Are Not Among the Sun Set

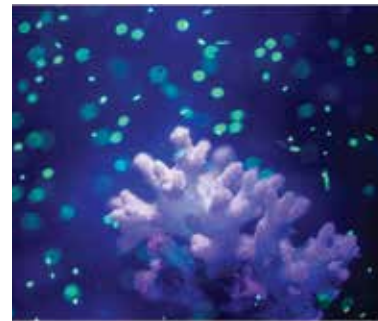
Cases of melanoma among teens and young adults declined markedly from 2006 to 2015—even as the incidence of skin cancers continued to increase among older adults and the general population. The decline may be the result of public health campaigns encouraging the use of sunscreen, hats and staying in the shade. The findings of the research team at the UW School of Medicine and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center were based on national cancer-registry data. "There seems to be a breakthrough happening

that might really reverse the trend for increasing melanoma incidence," says Margaret Madeleine, a co-senior author of the study and a Fred Hutch epidemiologist specializing in cancer-incidence trends. Melanoma, triggered by ultraviolet radiation from the sun, is the most common skin cancer and the fifth most common of all cancers in the country. If it is detected and treated early, patients have a better than 95% chance of surviving five years or more. If not caught early, though, it can spread to structures such as the lungs, brain, or liver and become lethal. The study was, in part, to determine whether public health programs to increase sun protection awareness have had an impact. The work was supported in part by National Institutes of Health grants. *Brian Donohue*

### RESEARCH ROUNDUP

#### CORAL CONSUMPTION

Microplastic particles—which come from synthetic clothing, bottles, plastic bags and cosmetics—are as common in our oceans as their sources are in our daily lives. And corals and other marine organisms are eating them. Now a UW team in the School of Aquatic and Fishery Sciences is running a study to determine what harm the microplastics may be causing. In the lab, they've found that some corals are more likely to eat microplastics when consuming other food. Corals use tentacle-like arms to sweep food into their mouths. They can rely on algae for energy, but most also consume drifting animals. Rising ocean temperatures can cause corals to lose their symbiotic algae partner. Some have adapted by shifting their diets to feed on zooplankton, tiny marine organisms about the size of microplastics. "Microplastics are not as simple as a life-or-death threat for corals," says Associate Professor Jacqueline Padilla-Gamiño, senior author of the study. "It's about total energy lost ... it might not kill them, but there will be less energy for them to grow and reproduce." The bigger concern



is waste management, she says. "We don't know where plastic goes, where it stays, who grabs it, and what are the mechanisms by which we get it back. We are just at the tip of understanding these implications."

#### COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Carnegie Foundation recently recognized the UW for its wide-ranging community engagement through research and teaching. The elective designation was conferred on all three campuses for different reasons. Programs like Urban@UW bring teaching and research into communities around our region to address issues like housing, pollution and public health. Community highlights from the Tacoma campus include work with Joint Base Lewis-McChord to help service members transition to civilian life. The Bothell campus engages with a Seattle Children's center to provide programs and classes for young adults with autism spectrum disorder. "While we don't do public service for accolades, we do care about how effective our work is," President Ana Mari Cauce said in an announcement of the classification.

### EXPERT PARENTAL INFLUENCE



## If You Got High as a Teen, Will Your Kids Do the Same?

By Julie Davidow

Children are more likely to use marijuana if their parents smoked during adolescence, according to new research from the UW School of Social Work. The greater risk—about 2.5 times higher than children whose parents abstained in their youth—holds true even if the parents no longer use pot. Now that recreational marijuana is legal in 11 states (including Washington), Marina Epstein, research scientist at the Social Development Research Group and lead author of the recent study, says we should be asking more questions to help parents and doctors better understand the generational impact of pot use.

#### Why would a parent's teenage habits impact their kids' marijuana use?

That's the trillion-dollar question. It could have something to do with how parents communicate about drug use with their children. Maybe they're more permissive because they think, "Oh, I did it and I turned out OK." Maybe it's a mental health issue. Maybe the parents who used marijuana in adolescence are heavier drinkers. There are many things that could be going on. It would be fascinating to dig into that.

#### If a parent never smokes around the kids, only uses edibles and locks away marijuana, are kids still more at risk?

Parents might not be as good at hiding their marijuana use as they think they are. Having been a kid, I would say that kids are very observant and curious. But I don't have an answer to that from this study. For this analysis, we just asked parents if they

used in the past year. We didn't ask whether they used in front of their kids.

#### Are your findings even more relevant now that marijuana is legal in some form in 33 states?

For a long time, we lumped marijuana together with other illegal drugs. Now we just have to be much more nuanced. We have to think about it more like alcohol. There's nothing illegal about parents or adults using marijuana, but more information about that use needs to be teased out. How frequently do people use? How long have they been using? All of these things play a role in determining risk for children's use. From this study we know that parents' history matters, so we need to account for that.

#### What can parents do (whether they've used marijuana in the past or not) to reduce the likelihood that their kids will use?

It's not like they can go back and change their history [with marijuana]. Even if they're using now, they can still be effective. We just need to empower parents to talk to their children and set clear guidelines about their expectations. With legalization, obviously the availability of marijuana has skyrocketed. Many of the parents [from an earlier study] we interviewed expressed confusion. They weren't sure how to talk to their kids about marijuana, how to craft a message. In my next study, I plan to test whether our existing tools—the kinds of parenting skills we know help keep kids from using drugs—still work if parents are using marijuana themselves.

# Off and Running

If you ask Darhian Mills how she got started in track and field, brace yourself for her answer: “I don’t like to run.” Funny, seeing how the fifth-year grad student from Bothell holds the school record in the 400-meter hurdles and earned first team All-America honors last year. Interview by Jim Caple.

## How did you get into running?

I started running my sophomore year of high school. I really did not like running. I did every other sport that didn’t have running. I really wasn’t an active kid. I liked being at home and staying inside. And then in ninth grade, my dad took me to one of his longtime friend’s daughter’s track meet. And I was like, ‘OK, this is kind of cool.’ ... I started because my parents didn’t want me to sit on the couch anymore.

## How did you get so good at it?

I think a lot of it was natural. Running for every great athlete is a natural thing. And constantly working at it—training my body, training my eating habits. It’s a huge mental game as well. Once I realized that I do kind of like running, I love the sport and I love hurdling, I just want to be better at it.

## How did you choose the UW?

I received letters from Michigan and schools on both coasts, but because it was so late in the game, I didn’t have a lot of colleges fighting over me. I initially wanted to move to California for the sun. But I realized then I wasn’t ready to leave my family yet. I just wanted to be as close as I could but far enough away to have my own independence. Washington just felt like a great fit.

## What is it like running the hurdles?

The short hurdles are so much fun, but they’re definitely like my Achilles heel because they are so quick. If you mess up, you don’t have any time to fix it. But I love the 400 hurdles, because if you mess up, it’s OK. You have however many meters left to fix it. You’re always focusing on the next hurdle, the next hurdle. Every time I tell somebody who doesn’t run track that I do the hurdles, they’re like, ‘Oh my god!’ You’re not supposed to run full speed at an object, but we do it. Mostly with grace.

## What has been your favorite race?

I guess it would be when I broke the school record. That was the second round of West Regional Preliminaries. Once I crossed the finish line and looked up, I had forgotten what the school record was, so it didn’t hit me. I was tired after the race, and was resting my hands on my knees. Then I looked up again and I realized, ‘That’s the school record, and that’s what I’ve been wanting since I came here.’ It was one of my biggest goals, and I reached it.

## What are you majoring in?

I’m a fifth-year graduate student. Last year, I received my bachelor’s degree in communication with a minor in diversity. Currently, I’m in a one-year master’s program in Intercollegiate Athletics Leadership. We focus on athlete administration and coaching.

## Are you aiming to participate in the 2020 Olympics?

The U.S. team is stacked with many amazing 400 hurdlers, so it is a difficult team to make. But I’m one-quarter Filipino, so I might be able to run for the Filipino national team.

## Do you want to be a coach?

Yes. Eventually I hope to run professionally after college, then become a coach. I really want to work in athletic administration, maybe become a Division I athletic director. Those are the goals.

PHOTOGRAPH BY RON WURZER



## SPORTS REPORT

### LAKE TO KEEP HUSKIES AT HIGH-WATER MARK

After leading the Huskies to a Rose Bowl, the College Football Playoff, two Pac-12 championships and six consecutive Apple Cup victories in his six years as head coach, Chris Petersen decided to step down in December. He will remain at the UW in a leadership advisory role for Husky athletics. Calling himself a “Husky for life,” Petersen said: “I’m excited for where this takes me, because I do have a lot of thoughts and ideas. And passion for helping others.”

Athletic Director Jen Cohen didn’t have to look very far to find a new head coach, naming defensive coordinator Jimmy Lake to take over. Lake, who played football for Eastern Washington in the ’90s, had been an assistant with several teams, including two in the NFL. He coached with Petersen



at Boise State and came to the UW with Petersen in 2014.

“I’ve been dreaming of this opportunity for as long as I can remember,” Lake said, “and I can’t think of a better place to do it than in the world-class city of Seattle and at such a prestigious university with a rich football tradition.”

Cohen said Lake has “crazy energy.” “He’s a fierce competitor,” she said. “He’s an incredibly great teacher of the game. And he has a unique ability to connect with his students. He cares about them both on and off the field. He also has a lot of confidence about his vision and future for this program.”

Besides being excited for the new opportunity, Lake is grateful for his relationship with Petersen. Said Lake: “He’s been a mentor and a friend to me, and he will continue to be a friend and mentor to me.”

# Kicks, Kills and Lots of Thrills

The Husky women’s volleyball and men’s soccer teams shared something in common this past fall—both made the Elite Eight round in their respective NCAA playoffs.

The men’s soccer team (17-4) recorded its second-highest win total ever to reach the NCAA quarterfinals for the second time in school history. Junior Blake Bodily and sophomore Ethan Bartlow earned first- and second-team All-American honors, respectively.

“It took the entire team to win the Pac-12 title, but two players really found a way to tip the balance back in our favor,” says head coach Jamie Clark, who has led the Huskies to seven NCAA tournament berths in the past eight seasons. “Blake created the big play time and time again, whether it be unlocking a defense off the dribble or playing a cross that needed to be tapped in. On the other end, Ethan put out so many fires for us. Any time we needed a big defensive play, or a sense of calm at the back, he provided it.”

Women’s volleyball (27-7) reached the Elite Eight and was ranked No. 6 in the season-ending poll. Outside hitter Kara Bajema broke the UW season record for kills with 597 and was a first-team All-American. Sophomore setter Ella May Powell, who recorded 1,395 assists, earned third-team All-America honors.

“Beating No. 1 Stanford at Stanford [during the regular season] was special because we accomplished something so many UW teams couldn’t do for years,” Bajema says. “Sports isn’t all about climbing to the top, it’s also about the growth and knowledge you attain along the way. I wouldn’t change any experience or relationship I have had at UW because they all got me to where I am today.”



The Huskies men’s soccer team enjoyed a season for the ages, going 17-4 and making it to the NCAA Elite Eight for the second time in school history.

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# A Life Study

A devastating fire makes Grace Flott struggle for control of her body—and her life

*By Julie Davidow*  
*Paintings by Grace Flott*

**G**race Flott has spent hours and days staring at her body—searching the ridges, gouges and lines in her skin for what it means to live with the scars.

With her body forever altered and her youth punctured by grief, she wondered who she would be and how would she become that person? How would her life take shape after surviving a deadly apartment fire as a UW undergraduate in Paris?

Nearly a decade later, Flott, now 29 and an artist, perches on a stool in her studio. The bright room with white walls

FORGED IN THE FLAMES  
(SELF PORTRAIT AT 28)  
*Oil on Panel, 2019*





EYE OF DAVID  
Charcoal on Paper, 2016

I care about  
visibility for all  
kinds of bodies.

and high ceilings is carved out of a former warehouse on Airport Way in SODO. She shares the space with another artist and is just settling in after finishing a master's program at Gage Academy of Art.

A few of her recent paintings lean against the wall. Most come from an autobiographical series she created for her thesis, which she based on the experience of surviving and rebuilding her body and her life after the fire.

Flott is trained as a representational painter. Realism is her goal. In a self-portrait, the artist holds her palette in one hand, a brush in the other. Her gaze is set straight on, looking for the balance of light and shadows that will capture what she sees. "I wanted the burns to be the focal point," Flott says. "I wanted the viewer to be confronted with that, and I wanted it to be a point of conversation.

"In our culture there's not a lot of room to talk about people who exist outside of the norm."

In April 2011, Flott was 20 years old and nine months into a study-abroad program at Sciences Po (the Paris Institute of Political Studies). She was speaking fluent French, writing 10-page papers in her second language and getting to know students from all over the world. For Flott, who grew up in Spokane, Paris was "very much a dream city."

Near the end of a late night out, she and her friends stopped at another friend's tiny apartment in Northeast Paris. Her group was preparing to leave when an explosion ripped through the building. Someone opened the door to the hallway. A backdraft created by an open window sucked in the smoke. "It happened so quickly," Flott remembers. She couldn't breathe. She felt unbearable heat on her skin. There was no obvious escape in the unfamiliar building.

"The only thing that was logical to me was to get to the window, but not to jump," Flott says. "It was to literally breathe one more time before I died."

She watched another person put their leg over the window sill and fall. She did the same thing, dropping four stories to the ground. "I blacked out on the way down."

Flott woke in shock and terrible pain with a compression fracture in her lower back, a broken ankle and 50% of her body burned. Her roommate and best friend, Jasmine Jahanshahi, lay dead nearby. Another friend, Louise Brown, also died





BLUE SHIRT, RED RIBBON  
*Oil on Panel, 2018*

that day, along with two Swedish students and a firefighter.

After a brief time in a Paris hospital, Flott was flown to Seattle, where she entered Harborview Medical Center for a seven-week stay. That was followed by months of painful recovery at home with her parents in Spokane. She used a walker, crutches and a cane while learning to walk again, and wore compression garments to mitigate scarring from her burns.

Still, she was determined to finish her final year of college as soon as possible. "I just wanted to get back to normal," Flott says. "I felt like this huge part of myself had been taken away from me and I was really fighting to get it back." She interned at a Spokane law firm once she could get around without a wheelchair and started classes again at the UW nine months after the fire. She graduated in 2013.

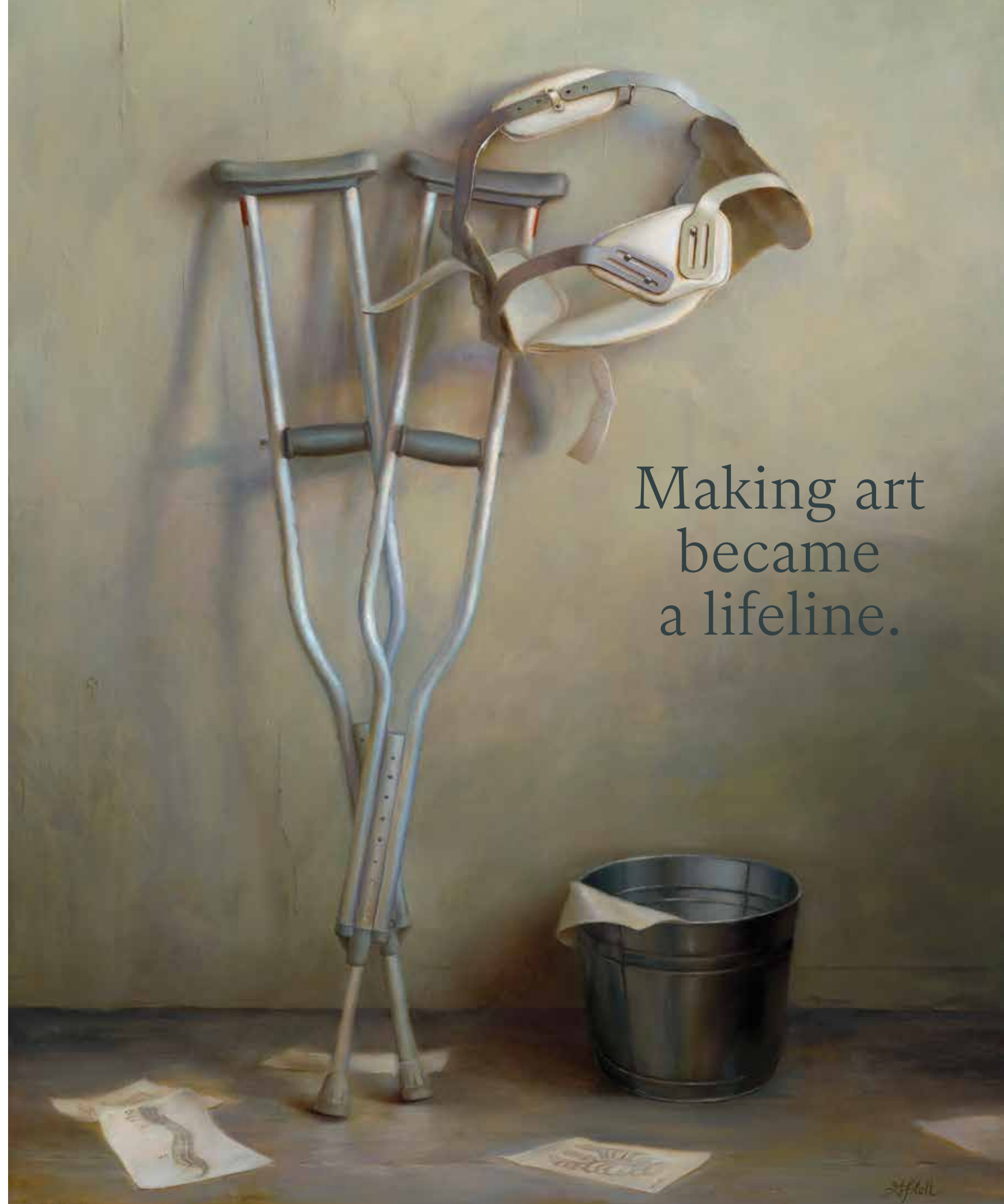
"I was just young enough that I managed to bounce back," she says. After graduation, Flott worked as a union organizer for health-care workers, continuing the activism she had taken up as a UW student.

While doing better physically, she struggled with depression, anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder. She felt distant from her peers—college students and recent grads who mostly agonized about dating, exams and finding jobs. She remembers thinking, "I almost died."

Making art, a hobby she'd always enjoyed but never seriously pursued, became a lifeline. Painting affirmed her social-justice commitments by offering a medium to elevate unheard voices. It also quieted the voice in her head that told her she would never be safe again. "I realized there was this whole other part of the experience of the fire that I couldn't put words to."

Soon she started sketching and taking art classes. At Gage, she learned to apply rigor and an analytical framework to her work. Rather than painting for therapy ("just getting out whatever I felt"), she began to consider what she wanted to say.

Several of her paintings depict medical objects similar to the ones she relied on during her recovery, including a back brace hanging with a pair of crutches, and a wheelchair as still life. Surrounded by these canvasses in her studio, she considers her next project. "I would love to do a longer series around non-normative beauty," she says. "One thing I really care about is greater visibility for all sorts of bodies."



Making art  
became  
a lifeline.

For more of Flott's work, see her website at [graceathenaflott.com](http://graceathenaflott.com).





Keisha Credit has started five companies so far. At 23, she left her job at Microsoft to focus full time on her custom wig company. In 2017, she returned to the UW to earn her master's degree in entrepreneurship and take her business to new heights.

# BIG WIG

**UW's startup culture nurtures a growing number of students, proving that an idea, some energy and valuable mentoring can bring business success**

By Hannelore Sudermann Photos by David Oh

LAST FALL, over cocktails in Cabo San Lucas, Keisha Credit, '11, '18, found herself talking about income disparity to a friendly stranger in the bar. The disparity gap makes things harder for entrepreneurs of color to prosper. It's a subject the Seattle-based business owner thinks a lot about.

"It was my birthday. I was there on vacation," she says. "But this is what I wanted to talk about." As she was unwinding over drinks and her conversation with the other woman turned to race and business, Credit started sharing the details of her startup experiences. The other woman, it turns out, was a senior contributor for *Forbes* magazine. And last November, *Forbes* highlighted Credit as a serial entrepreneur who, despite the disparity gap, has managed

to create several successful businesses, including a seven-figure custom wig company.

"People of color know hustle," says Credit. "But to know what it takes to have a business, we don't have that." Building a business is more complex, with relationships, politics, culture and many other things "we don't get exposed to on an everyday basis." But by self-starting her first business with only instinct and courage, and then pursuing a graduate program in entrepreneurship at the UW, Credit has charted her own path to success. In some ways, her story is rare. In others, it's another great tale of a Pacific Northwest startup.

Credit literally lives her work. The two-car garage of her South Seattle home is

made over into the warmly furnished headquarters of Lucke by Keisha. "You are in the Lucke studio," she says gesturing around the room. Mannequin heads adorned with thick, lustrous wigs line the back wall. In the far corner, one of Credit's employees styles a bob with a brush and a flat iron. Further to the left, another worker wraps up a few hairpieces that she will take away to color. And a third woman sits focused on a laptop, corresponding with customers. In all, Credit has six employees. "And I do all the other stuff," she says.

Credit didn't take a straight road to owning a business. She had planned on a Microsoft career, having interned at the company as a Garfield High School student. She enrolled at the UW to study

programming, but quickly realized it didn't suit her. "I took one class and I dropped it," she says. She had started college as a junior thanks to Running Start, and suddenly she needed a new major. She chose sociology. Then, feeling she was too young to graduate and jump right into work, she added a communication major and stayed another year.

While at the UW, Credit started her first business venture—a house-painting company. "I wanted to create opportunities for my friends. I didn't realize at the time I was acting like an entrepreneur." After graduating, she did what her family expected and went to work for Microsoft. As a program manager, she traveled the world and captured customer experiences to bring back to headquarters. "But I wasn't fulfilled," she says. "I didn't feel important. I felt like a number."

At the same time, a personal trip to Ghana provided a chance to explore her heritage. The experience of self-discovery prompted her to change her hair. "I decided to cut it off and grow this big Afro," she says. While the new style suited her personally, it wasn't going to fly in the corporate world, says Credit. "You should wear a wig," her hairdresser suggested. In fact, Credit could probably make her own wig, the hairdresser said. High-quality and made with human hair, it would be far better than the products generally found in wig shops.

Soon, Credit was not only making custom wigs for herself, she was making them for her Delta Sigma Theta sorority sisters. She was a corporate tech manager during the week and a wigmaker on the weekend. Nine months later, and three years after graduating from the UW, Credit quit Microsoft.

"I didn't tell my family what I was doing," she says, explaining that in her circle, and in the greater African American community, people worry when they see you leave a good-paying job. She just told her folks she was burned out and needed a break. She wasn't even sure what her big venture would be. "But the wig business was already going," she says with a shrug. "So I did that." Her first-year sales grossed more than \$60,000.

The next couple of years flew by. Word spread about Lucke, and an increasing number of customers from around the region—and a few from around the world—were eager for her high-quality custom wigs.

"I knew the company was growing, but I didn't know why," Credit says. "I didn't understand organic vs. strategic growth."

That need to know more drove her back to the UW where, in 2017, she enrolled in

the inaugural class for a master of science in entrepreneurship degree. The yearlong program was built for students to bring their startups to life. Credit was one of the few who already had a successful business. "Most of my classmates wanted to be tech entrepreneurs. They wanted to invent the next PayPal," she says. "But I had a great connect-the-dot, make-a-product business."

Thirty years ago, when the notion of creating a center for entrepreneurship at the UW was floating around campus, it was rare for students to start up their own businesses. Now the University has such a center, named for Arthur Buerk, '58, a serial entrepreneur who helped establish it, and the scene is quite different. Today students come to the UW with a great startup idea or a business already underway. They're hoping to find the tools and classmates to partner with to make it real, says Amy Sallin, director of the UW's Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship. "They find us because they already know what they want to do. It's in their DNA."

Maybe there's something in the water here. The Northwest is widely known for

its startup culture from the epic stories of companies like Costco, Microsoft, Amazon and Starbucks to the nearly \$4 billion in funding—according to GeekWire—directed to startups in our region last year. While much of the scene is software-oriented, retail should not be overlooked, says Suresh Kotha, professor of management and research director at the Buerk Center. "We're in the five top communities in terms of creating companies," he says, adding us to a list that includes the Bay Area, Austin, Boston and the research triangle in North Carolina.

The region has a vibrant community of small businesses, says Kotha. With two business accelerator programs, the UW can share in the credit for the startup energy. CoMotion, an accelerator started at the UW in 2009, helps researchers patent, license and launch startups for the technologies they create. Meanwhile, the Jones + Foster Accelerator at the Foster School of Business is strictly for students, designed to help them through the first six months of creating their own companies.

Of the 55 concepts that have gone through the Jones + Foster Accelerator, 48



*Lucke by Keisha, Credit's most successful business to date, specializes in crafting custom wigs with human hair.*



*Credit, seated, is pictured with her employees and some of the women she mentors in starting their own businesses.*

are still in business. Last year's awardees offer a sampling of the greater Seattle startup scene. Knitrino, for example, is an app created by two sisters for modern-day knitters who can access interactive patterns through their mobile devices. DopCuff's team is developing a device that allows certain end-stage heart-failure patients to measure their blood pressure from home.

For one group of students, the way to a startup is through technology. Amin Shaykho, '18, and his friends have developed a mobile platform where users can request services like tutoring, house cleaning or dog walking and providers can earn money by doing jobs on their own schedules. Shaykho and a friend came up with the idea when they were in high school, wishing they could hire people to help them with their chores at home.

"We developed that idea into something with wider appeal," says Shaykho. And to make it succeed, they wanted to ensure that it was fast, easy and affordable, he says. Students with complicated class schedules, for example, could find side jobs "as long as they were background-checked, they could just hop on

our app and find work," he says. The first iterations were rough, admits Shaykho. "We had to learn to write code, and I had to mock up the designs for the app. I'm embarrassed now because they were really terrible." But through their studies at the UW and by being admitted to the Jones + Foster Accelerator, they've had mentors, pro-bono legal advice and resources to smooth their way. Their hard work paid off in February when the team received \$25,000 in seed money.

The app, which they've named Kadama, is already in use by student tutors with expertise in subjects like math, history and music. Having officially launched the app in November, Shaykho and his team hope to soon expand the services to include errands, pets, housework and yardwork.

Shaykho, who graduated last year, is now a project lead at Apple in Cupertino, California. But he often travels back to Seattle to work with the rest of the team, including co-founder Marwan El-Rukby, who completed his degree in business administration in December.

Now a mentor to UW student startups, Lisa Hjorten wishes the Buerk Center and

the accelerator existed when she was a student in the early 1980s. "I would have been all over it," she says. "From age 7, I was trying to figure out what I could sell to my neighbors. My whole life, I was always working on something." Today she is a serial entrepreneur, having co-founded one tech company and solely founded another. She now runs another startup, Pacific Edge Properties, a real estate business. One thing Hjorten did learn to do as a student was play the student card to get into companies and talk to leaders and hiring managers. "I would just call and say I'm a student at the UW and I want to do an informational interview." Now she urges current students to do the same. "Go see them. Build a relationship. They want to help you," she says.

One of her favorite UW startups to mentor was Sugar + Spoon, a 2018 project in the accelerator founded by Ivana Orlovic and William Hubbell. The two met in a Foster School class called "Creating a Company" and hit upon the idea of developing a safe-to-eat raw cookie dough. "I love them," says Hjorten. "They were like sponges. If we made a suggestion, they just did it. Almost to a fault." They showed up

for each of their monthly meetings eager for more ideas “and so grateful for the help.” Today they have two food trucks, a storefront on the Ave and a team of employees.

The Buerk Center sees students from across campus, says Sallin. Students in environmental engineering and applied physics, for example, want to get a degree in their science and then create something themselves, she says. “It’s not because they want to make millions of dollars. It’s because they see a way to make a difference and want to do it sooner rather than later.” After the UW added a minor in entrepreneurship, the draw to the center deepened. “We now have 300 students from 40 different majors,” Sallin says. “They come from all across campus, take classes together and form truly interdisciplinary teams.”

And exciting things continue to happen at the undergraduate level. Because of demand, the “Creating a Company” class has expanded from one session to five. Students form teams to find ideas, write plans and pitch their businesses in the first quarter, and then get a bank account and the chance to start up in the second quarter. In 2015 students Sam Tanner and Peter Keckemet took their idea for caffeinated chocolate for hikers to a business plan competition and then to the Jones + Foster Accelerator. Six months later they had their first round of seed funding for Joe Chocolate Co. and moved into a production facility. Today they have a wholesale production facility in South Seattle, a factory and shop in Pike Place Market and products on store shelves (including REI and Whole Foods) across the country.

When it comes to startup ideas, “we see everything,” says Sallin. “I think it reflects the Seattle ecosystem. We’re not all tech. It’s very interesting and well-rounded.”

Keisha Credit is putting her experience and education to work again, connecting back to the UW this time as CEO of Paca y Paca, a scented candle company that “reinvents” the candle with refillable soy wax, phthalate-free inserts. The idea started with Zachary Dodds, an engineer currently enrolled in the UW master’s in entrepreneurship program who met Credit at a Foster School event. He asked her to co-found his company and help him apply to be in the latest Jones + Foster cohort. After praying on it, Credit agreed.

“I’m thankful that the entrepreneurial landscape is shifting,” says Credit. “Now it’s being celebrated that you are leaving your job to follow your dream. It’s the cool thing now.”

But, she’s quick to say, you have to be willing to sacrifice for your business, “willing to lose it all, willing to endure the stress and willing to have the fun to get there,” she says. “This is fun for me. But it’s not for everybody.”

## A Cornucopia of Companies

From socks to sweets, here’s a sampling of UW student startups



**A-Alpha Bio** This startup is about screening drugs before they go to clinical trials. Based on David Younger’s thesis work, the team developed AlphaSeq, a new high-through-put approach for testing the effect of a drug on thousands of protein interactions (and potential side effects) simultaneously. The screening could reduce the amount of time it takes to get a drug to market.

**Strideline** As high schoolers in 2009, Riley Goodman and Jake Director started their sock company in a garage with \$700. As college students at the UW, they sold socks out of the trunks of their cars. Their colorful footwear, which they want to be “the most comfortable socks on Earth,” have been worn by NFL players and celebrities, and are sold through major retailers such as Nordstrom.



**Discovery Health** This company provides medical support to remote worksites through tele-medical access to expert emergency and occupational medicine physicians. The business now has more than a dozen clients in the commercial fishing, towing, transportation, and cruise industries, including Trident Seafoods and Foss Maritime.

**Membrion** This clean-tech startup developed by Greg Newbloom, '14, and Professor Lilo Pozzo engineers flexible membranes using silica gel—the material in the small bags included with products to help them stay dry. Silica gel also can be used in water purification, batteries, fuel cells and gas separations. UW-trained engineers and chemists make up much of the team. The company now has \$1.5 million in National Science Foundation funding.



**Uphill Designs** After hiking the Pacific Crest Trail from Mexico to Canada, Dan Sedlacek, '14, decided to share his handmade hiking gear with others. At the UW, he started working with fellow engineering student Mounica Sonikar, '14, and MBA student David DeBey, '15, to design and build an environmentally friendly trekking pole. Today Uphill Designs makes sustainable bags and purses.

**Sugar + Spoon** Classmates Ivana Orlovic, '18, and William Hubbell, '18, created Seattle’s first safe-to-eat cookie dough. By eliminating eggs and using heat-treated flour in their recipe, the founders of Sugar + Spoon have been satisfying cravings across Seattle through their two food trucks and a storefront on the Ave.

**Seattle Strong Coffee** The “best cold brew coffee” maker in Seattle was founded friends Evan Oeflein, '18, Emileigh Thylin, '17, '18, and Brian Wipfler, '18. The company born out of a class assignment has two main products—Nitro Cold Brew and Nitro Dirty Chai—which are sold in over 100 locations across the Pacific Northwest.



**SciObo** This streetwear apparel brand was created for gamers by gamers: UW Bothell students Niko Richardson, '17, and Jonathan Augustus, '19. Each piece of clothing comes with a collectible card and bears art that is specific to the card. “Gamers are an underserved group in fashion,” says Richardson.

**TourniTek** The medical-device startup committed to fighting limb amputations through pre-hospital treatment was founded by MBA alum Logan Jacobs, '17, and Shahram Aarabi, a vascular and trauma surgeon. The technology behind TourniTek was developed by a group of UW medical researchers.



# HUSKY PICKS

IN THE OFFICE



**Varsity Jacket and Necktie**  
ubookstore.com

**Wireless USB Keyboard and Mouse**  
fanatics.com

**Tiffany Stained-Glass Table Lamp**  
memorycompany.com

**Diploma Frame**  
framingsuccess.com

**Counter Top Refrigerator**  
fansedge.com

**Picture Frames**  
huskyteamstore.com

**StadiumViews 3D Wall or Desk Art**  
youthefan.com

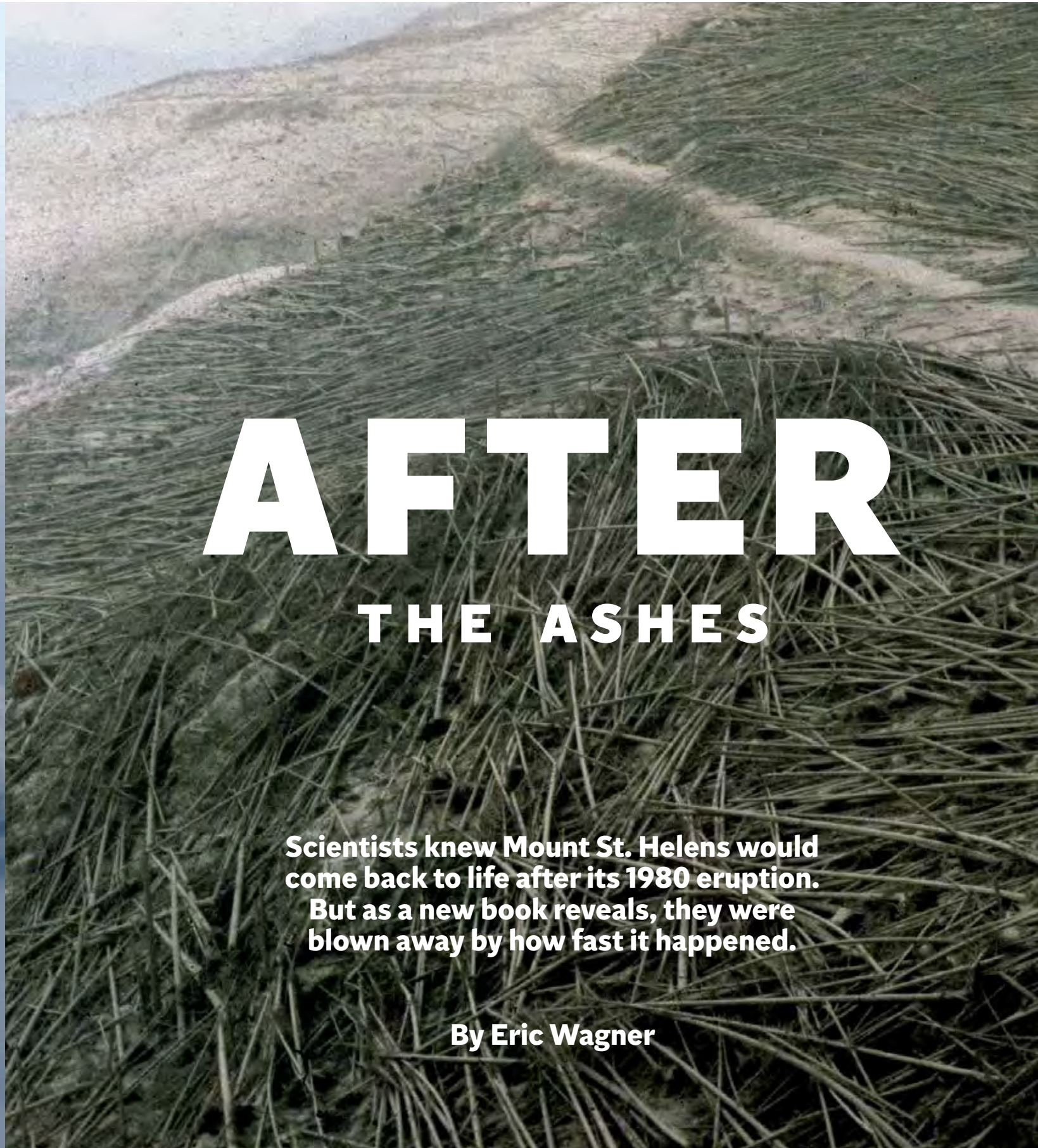
**Pennants**  
huskyteamstore.com

**Portfolio**  
ubookstore.com

**Schutt Mini Helmet**  
schuttsports.com



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JOHN BARRETT/PHOTONARCHIVE

# AFTER

## THE ASHES

**Scientists knew Mount St. Helens would come back to life after its 1980 eruption. But as a new book reveals, they were blown away by how fast it happened.**

**By Eric Wagner**

THE STORY OF THE eruption of Mount St. Helens as most of us know it begins with two prepositions, *at* and *on*, usually in that order and in quick succession: *At* 8:32 a.m., *on* Sunday, May 18, 1980, a powerful earthquake shook the mountain.

The summit rippled, churned and then collapsed as more than 2 billion tons of rock, snow and glacial ice fell away in the largest landslide ever recorded. The landslide took with it all the weight and pressure that had until then kept a bulging chamber of magma contained under the mountain's northern flank. With that release, superheated water and gas both in and surrounding the chamber flashed to steam and burst out in searing clouds. The clouds of steam and shattered stone raced over the land, obliterating the trees closest to the mountain and flattening others as they flew farther on. Mudflows followed as the mountain's glaciers and snowfields melted. Called lahars, these flows swept down drainages and river valleys, swallowing boulders, trees, logging equipment, cars, trucks, trains, bridges and houses. From the heart of the mountain, meanwhile, a column of ash from the exposed vent rose 15 miles into the sky.

The main eruption lasted nine hours and caused the deaths of 57 people. When it was over, Mount St. Helens was 1,314 feet shorter. Where the summit had been gaped a crater a mile wide and 2,000 feet deep. In a 180-degree arc to the north, 234 square miles of forest were buried, knocked flat or left standing but scorched. The landslide traveled more than 14 miles down the valley of the North Fork Toutle River. The lahars went farther still, destroying hundreds of miles of roads and railways, knocking out twenty-seven bridges, damaging more than two hundred homes and clogging commercial ship traffic 75 miles away on the Columbia River. As it was blown east, the towering plume of ash blocked out the sun for miles. Several inches of ash fell in the city of Yakima within an hour, and streetlights flickered on at noon. Two hours after that, the plume reached Spokane, more than three hundred miles away. The plume eventually climbed to the stratosphere and floated across the U.S., dusting 17 states. In 15 days it had circled the Earth.

Back in the blast area, the sense of desolation was greater than mere statistics could convey. Mount St. Helens had always been the most beautiful of the Cascade peaks, its summit the most symmetrical. Gone now was that perfect white cone, the dark forests that had cloaked it, the deep, clear lake that had reflected it. In their place was a hollow volcano in a wrecked landscape of black and gray. When

**This article is an excerpt from the book “After The Blast: The Ecological Recovery of Mount St. Helens” by Eric Wagner, '04, '11.**

**Eager to learn more about Mount St. Helens?** Author Eric Wagner will be speaking about his book “After the Blast” at Dawg Days in the Desert on March 19 at the Rancho Mirage Library and Observatory in California. UW Libraries will have an exhibit called “Blast!” in Special Collections from April 6-Aug. 14.

President Jimmy Carter toured the area by helicopter four days later, he could only marvel at the waste. “The moon looks like a golf course compared to what’s up there,” he said to a scrum of media when he returned. Local reporters were less glib. “Death is everywhere,” wrote one in *The Oregonian*. “The living are not welcome.”

• • •

A couple of weeks later, on a bright morning in June, another helicopter lifted off from Vancouver, Washington, albeit to considerably less fanfare. Riding in it were Jerry Franklin, Jim Sedell and Fred Swanson. Franklin and Sedell were ecologists with the U.S. Forest Service, and Swanson a geologist also with the agency. The helicopter rose and turned northeast above the city and its suburbs. From there it crossed into Cowlitz County and flew over the Lewis River, which was still running gray-brown and high. Here the pilot turned to angle more to the north. Tracts of forest appeared, with stands of tall old trees next to short young ones, and brown patches of fresh clear-cuts between them: the checkerboard grid characteristic of the Pacific Northwest. Roads noodled in and among the squares like veins, but no one was looking at them. Their thoughts were drawn east, to Mount St. Helens.

The misshapen hulk of the mountain lay in the distance, still shrouded in cloud. Franklin, Sedell and Swanson gazed at it. The *whup-whup* of the helicopter's rotors was so loud that it was impossible to hear anyone speak, but it did not matter, because no one had anything to say. The eruption had overwhelmed their professional vocabulary. They were flying toward something for which they did not yet have the language.

Franklin and Sedell were certain that nothing could have survived. The event seemed impossible, and in this way almost perversely exciting. In overwriting the landscape, Mount St. Helens had presented ecologists with what was in effect a huge natural experiment. It was as if the volcano itself had posed a question: What happens when every single living thing for hundreds of square miles, big and small, plant and animal, is burned away or buried, and nothing is left but rock and ash?

Franklin and Sedell had discussed the question at length in the weeks leading up to their flight, both between themselves and with their colleagues in Oregon, Washington and beyond. Their working hypothesis was that although it might take decades or even centuries, plants and animals were sure to return at some point. Here then was an unprecedented

opportunity to document how living things crept back in from the outside world, to test on the grandest of scales some of the oldest and most durable theories in ecology and evolution about how life responds to a massive disturbance, how it recovers from one, or how it does not.

The helicopter neared the mountain and flew past the still-steaming crater. The pilot scanned the ground for a safe place to land, eventually settling close to Ryan Lake, about 12 miles distant. Franklin, Sedell and Swanson prepared to disembark. The safety officer, who was 6' 4", weighed over 300 pounds and had introduced himself as Tiny, reminded them that they did not have long to stay and were not to walk far. They might have to get out of there in a hurry.

So it was that Franklin opened the helicopter's side door and hopped out. His boots sent up little puffs of ash when they hit the ground. He glanced down, but instead of the gray he expected, he saw a bit of green poking up next to him. He knelt. It was a plant shoot, maybe 2 or 3 inches tall. *I'll be damned*, Franklin thought. It was *Chamaenerion angustifolium*, a plant much more widely known by its common name, fireweed.

• • •

Fireweed is a common perennial plant in the evening primrose family. It ranges across much of the temperate Northern Hemisphere, from sea level to subalpine meadows to altitudes as high as 15 thousand feet in the Himalayas. Individual plants can grow up to 9 feet tall, but most are closer to 3 feet. Their leaves are long, narrow and pointed, like spearheads. Their small flowers grow in dense clusters, and the petals may be pink, red or purple, or sometimes all those colors at once, depending on the play of sunlight and wind.

Fireweed can spread through the soil by means of a system of roots that lie a few inches beneath the surface. If the stalk above the ground has been damaged, the plant can regrow from as little as an inch or two of remnant root. The stalk itself grows quickly, up to 1 inch per day. Mature plants can also produce tens of thousands of seeds. Each is topped with a cottony tuft of fine white hairs to help the wind carry it away, sometimes for miles. Fireweed thus can travel across long distances. Botanists describe the species as aggressive; to some gardeners, it is a pest.

Pest or not, fireweed gets its American common name from its habit of being one of the quickest plants to sprout in newly burned forests, clear-cuts and any place that has been suddenly and drastically denuded. It thrives in habitats with bare soil and a lot of light. In England, the species



MICHAEL GALTHER/GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCK

is called rosebay willowherb, but is also known informally as bombweed, since it was often the first flower to appear in blast craters after German air raids during World War II. “London, paradoxically, is the gayest where she has been most blitzed,” wrote one American journalist in 1944. “The wounds made this summer by flying bombs are, of course, still raw and bare, but cellars and courts shattered into rubble by the German raids of 1940–41 have been taken over by an army of weeds which have turned them into wild gardens.”

Now Franklin considered this fireweed sprout so close to Mount St. Helens. It could not have come from a seed; fireweed would not set seed for a couple of months yet, near the end of summer. It had to have

**All of us smart ecologists realized we didn't have the correct working hypothesis.**

come from a piece of root that had somehow survived under all the ash and debris. He imagined the new shoot emerging from the root fragment, pushing up through the ash once the ground had cooled. He imagined the probing spread of the slender tendrils below, the slow and tenacious unfurling of bud and leaf above, the eruption of the flowers, the establishment of the plant.

Franklin stood and took in the landscape again. He realized that this fireweed was one of tens, hundreds, maybe even thousands of little green shoots emerging from the ash. He saw the beginnings of pearly everlasting and thistles. More than plants, he noticed evidence of other forms of life. Beetles were scuttling over the downed

trees. Ants trooped along the ground, leaving trails of dimpled footprints. Dark mounds of dirt showed where a pocket gopher must have pushed up from its subterranean tunnels. Roving herds of ungulates—elk, probably, judging by the size of the hooves—had already planted prints in the ash as they picked their way through the tangle of trees.

Franklin clambered over the trunks—how hard it was to get around!—and stumbled toward a stream that was working its way through the ash to the old surface. The water was almost clear and a film of algae was starting to spread in it. He was astonished, elated. “Right off,” he said later, “all of us smart ecologists realized we didn't have the correct working hypothesis.” ■

DRIVEN TO SERVE THE PUBLIC GOOD,  
JIM ELLIS LEFT A LEGACY THAT  
CONTINUES TO IMPROVE OUR LIVES.

# THE PERSONIFICATION OF IMPACT

By Julie Garner

Freeway Park, a place of peace and green space  
in downtown Seattle, is a Puget Sound area showpiece.

One of his first efforts was cleaning up Lake Washington, which was nearly ruined because millions of gallons of sewage were dumped into it every year.

**F**olk singer Pete Seeger once posed the question, “Which side are you on boys, which side are you on?” When it came to Jim Ellis, the political right thought he was a card-carrying Communist. The left thought he was a flunky for developers and downtown business. After all, Ellis was the guy who drove the cleanup of polluted Lake Washington, ensured the Washington State Convention Center was located smack-dab in downtown Seattle and earned the moniker “Father of Metro.” The truth is Ellis, ’48, ’49, a bond lawyer who never held public office, fought for the public good. That was his side. In these highly partisan times, the life of Jim Ellis shows another way forward. Though Ellis died Oct. 22 in Seattle at the age of 98, his achievements continue to benefit everyone who lives in the Puget Sound region—and his legacy will live on.

His civic-mindedness included the UW, where Ellis received two degrees from law school in 1948 and 1949. He served on the Board of Regents from 1965 to 1977, wild years full of anti-war student activism. Emile Pitre, ’69, a founder of the UW’s Black Student Union who went on to serve in several positions in the Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity before retiring in 2015, is writing a book about OMA&D. He says Ellis’ role on the Board of Regents was absolutely pivotal in creating policies to provide educational opportunities to women and underrepresented minorities. “Fifty-one years later, we still have OMA&D, and the Instructional Center, which provides tutoring to 2,000 students each year, and the Ethnic Cultural Center. Jim Ellis was part of all that,” Pitre says. When angry students in 1968 demanded to meet with some regents, Ellis and fellow regent Robert Flenbaugh, ’64, a Seattle dentist, went to a room in the HUB where the meeting was to be held. Two chairs for them had been perched on a table overlooking the entire room. “It was like we were going to be kings presiding over everyone,” Ellis recalled in a 1999 interview with Jon Marmor, editor of UW Magazine. He immediately got rid of the chairs and sat on the floor with the students and listened. He did a lot of listening to students in those years. In 1999, for his lifetime of public service, the UW bestowed upon Ellis the highest

honor for an alumnus, the Alumnus Summa Laude Dignatus award.

Two events in his early life helped form Ellis’ character. Born in Oakland, California, in 1921, Ellis was 2 years old when his family moved to Washington. He was the eldest of three boys. The first event occurred when Ellis was 15. His father dropped him and his younger brother Bob off on 5 acres of woodland his dad had purchased along the Raging River near Preston. The boys had two dogs for company along with groceries. Their mission? Spend the summer building a log cabin for the family. They had no blueprints and no construction experience. In the first four days, a steady downpour soaked them and all their gear. But by the end of the summer, they had built the cabin, although they continued to work on it for three years after that. This experience cemented his close relationship with his brother.

The second event could have turned Ellis bitter and angry. Instead, on the advice of his beloved wife Mary Lou, he channeled loss into something positive—not only for himself but for the community. Ellis and his brother enlisted in the army on the same day after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Four years later, Bob was killed by an artillery shell in the Battle of the Bulge in 1945. Jim, who was stationed in Idaho, was devastated by the news and wanted to head to the front to avenge Bob’s death. However, Mary Lou, his wife of three months, offered her young husband wise counsel: Instead of revenge, why not do something to honor Bob? She said, “We could take part of our life and give something to others, for Bob.”

Because Bob loved nature, many of Ellis’ causes involved conservation. President Nixon even asked Ellis to serve as the nation’s first director of the Environmental Protection Agency, but Ellis turned him down because he thought he could do more good in Washington state.

Like many veterans returning from World War II, Ellis came home and pursued higher education, enrolling in the UW Law School. After graduation, he went to work for a top Seattle law firm. But he made time for public service, even as his family grew to include four children.

One of his first efforts was cleaning up

*Left: A poster encourages citizens to vote for the creation of Metro to clean up Lake Washington, which was polluted by sewage.*

*Right: At the future site of Freeway Park in downtown Seattle, Jim Ellis lobbies U.S. Transportation Secretary John Volpe for a lid over Interstate 5.*



On the advice of his wife, Mary Lou, Ellis dedicated his life to public service in honor of his brother Bob, who was killed during World War II.

Lake Washington, which was nearly ruined because millions of gallons of raw and partially treated sewage was dumped into it every year. It took more than five years and one defeat at the polls before voters approved the creation of Metro, a regional government agency that cleaned up the lake. Next was Forward Thrust, an initiative that resulted in the creation of the Kingdome, the Seattle Aquarium, more than two dozen county swimming pools and a bevy of parks, including Gas Works and Discovery parks, and the beginning of the Burke-Gilman Trail. Then he pushed to build a “lid” over Interstate 5 in downtown Seattle to serve as the home for the Convention Center and Freeway Park. He didn’t stop there. In the early 1990s, he chaired the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, which is dedicated to preserving a greenway along the I-90 corridor from Seattle to the foothills of Kittitas County. None of these projects was easy, and

they generated some vehement disagreements. But Ellis tried not to take anything too personally. He also didn’t care who got credit. He arranged meetings, brewed coffee and photocopied agendas himself. He became famous around town for his battered brown briefcase, from which he pulled every possible document or plan that often made him the best prepared person in the room. In an interview with Historylink.org, he said, “Life is interesting. If you just refuse to be cynical, it’s really quite fascinating. And in some degree, it’s inspiring to see all our differences and to see that the system—hopefully, hopefully—can still function.” We may not see the likes of Jim Ellis again. But we see his life as a living witness of what one person committed to the public good can accomplish. We’re the better for it.

*Julie Garner is a former UW Magazine staff writer who still contributes to the publication, much to our delight.*

# Columns

NEWS FROM THE UW COMMUNITY

## A Legacy of Caring

The UW honors Emile Pitre for his devotion to students of color

By Quinn Russell Brown

Growing up in small-town Louisiana, Emile Pitre always dreamed of moving to the city. City life just seemed different. His uncle had moved to Beaumont, Texas, to work for Texaco, and even though he was a janitor, he wore a fancy suit and smoked a big cigar when he came home to visit. "We thought he owned Texaco," Pitre recalls.

As a teenager, Pitre worked in the fields alongside his sharecropper father, showing up for the first week of school but then flunking the rest of the quarter during harvest season because he had gone back to work in the fields instead of going to class. When a teacher pointed out his academic potential, his father let him focus on school full time. Pitre went to a historically black college in Baton Rouge, majoring in chemistry, and came to the UW as a graduate student on Sept. 7, 1957.

Our University has never been the same since he arrived here that day. As a founding member of the Black Student Union, Pitre pressured administrators to confront racial equity and establish the Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity. As a graduate, he later joined the same office, tutoring thousands of students of color at the Instructional Center over 38 years. He later became the center's director and associate vice president of assessment.

For a life dedicated to underprivileged students, Pitre will receive the 2020 Charles E. Odegaard Award, the UW's highest achievement in diversity. The award is named for the former president who became a great proponent of diversity on campus. Pitre, '69, helped him build that legacy; as a student in 1968, he was part of a group that protested inside Odegaard's office—an event that directly led to the creation of this award.

### Emile's Eye

In addition to being one of the UW's most well-known leaders in the areas of diversity and racial equity, Emile Pitre, '69, is just as renowned for photographing just about everything and everyone on campus.

[magazine.washington.edu/feature/emiles-eye](http://magazine.washington.edu/feature/emiles-eye)



You can see this portrait on display as part of the show "Distinction" at the Photographic Center Northwest from March 26 to May 3, 2020.

QUINN RUSSELL BROWN

SKETCHES ALEJANDRO RICO-GUEVARA



## ALEJANDRO RICO-GUEVARA

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR AND CURATOR OF ORNITHOLOGY BURKE MUSEUM

MY INTEREST IN HUMMINGBIRDS STARTED ON A FIELD TRIP TO THE AMAZON AS AN UNDERGRAD.

"GARY STILES, WHO WAS MY PROFESSOR, IS ONE OF THE WORLD EXPERTS ON HUMMINGBIRDS! I WAS FASCINATED TO LEARN ABOUT HUMMERS, THE KIND OF QUESTIONS THAT I COULD START ASKING ABOUT THEM. THAT, COMBINED WITH THE FACT THAT HUMMINGBIRDS HAVE UNUSUAL PERSONALITIES AMONG ANIMALS, DID THE TRICK."

HUMMINGBIRDS ARE SO BOLD AND INQUISITIVE.

"WHEN WE WERE CROSSING ONE OF THEIR HABITATS, A HERMIT CAME AND HOVERED IN FRONT OF ALL OF THE FOUR OF US - PAUSING AND EXAMINING WHAT TO THE BIRD WERE THESE HUGE AND SLOW FOREIGN CREATURES."

THERE ARE OVER 350 SPECIES, ALL FEEDING ON NECTAR.

"EVEN MORE IMPRESSIVE THAN THEIR BEHAVIORS IS THE DIVERSITY IN ASPECTS LIKE BILL SHAPE. THE ANSWER TO WHY IS COEVOLUTION: PLANTS AND BIRDS HAVE BEEN NEGOTIATING THE TERMS OF THEIR PARTNERSHIP FOR MILLIONS OF YEARS."

GETTING THE NET READY TO CAPTURE WILD HUMMINGBIRDS.

"WE HAVE A RESEARCH STATION ON A COFFEE FARM IN COLUMBIA WHERE WE ARE TRAINING WILD BIRDS TO PARTICIPATE IN EXPERIMENTS. WE HAVE HIGH-SPEED CAMERAS, NECTAR-DELIVERY DEVICES AND RESPIROMETRY EQUIPMENT IN A ROOM FACING A BALCONY. WE ATTRACT HUMMINGBIRDS TO A FEEDER ON THE BALCONY AND THEN TRANSITION TO THE ARTIFICIAL FLOWER INSIDE THE ROOM. THEY COME AND GO AS THEY PLEASE; THEY GET THE YUMMY FOOD THEY LOVE, AND WE GET TO STUDY THEM."

ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVIER KUGLER



## From Campus Activist to City Council

Varisha Khan becomes one of the first Muslim women to hold public office in Washington

By Manisha Jha

On a February day in 2015, a crowd of students gathered in Red Square, just days after the murder of three Muslim students in Chapel Hill, North Carolina. They held signs that read “I’m a Muslim, too,” “I’m a college student, too,” and “Am I next?”

It was the beginning of an organized movement of Muslim students on campus, as well as the start of a career of activism and civic engagement for one young protester.

The students saw themselves in the students killed, says Varisha Khan, ’17, then a sophomore. She remembers thinking, “That could have happened to us.”

That was the moment Khan realized she was drawn to activism. Khan became a founding director of the Middle Eastern Student Commission the following year. She toyed with the idea of law school but one month into Khan’s senior year, Donald Trump was elected president and friends and classmates came forward to share their fears for the future.

In the time since that protest in 2015, Khan has worked as a political action committee chair for OneAmerica Votes and as a communications coordinator for the Washington Chapter of Council on American-Islamic Relations.

Now, at 24, she’s a member of Redmond’s City Council and has made history by being one of the first two Muslim women elected to public office in Washington.

“I think this is the time for young people to be in power. Whether you’re in college, whether you’ve just graduated, the perspective you bring” may lead to great solutions, Khan says. “We have the drive and the capability to change the status quo.”



CONNOR ROSS/LETTROW

## Read All About It: No More Newsstand in the Market

Lee Lauckhart is a quiet man who let the headlines do the shouting for four decades at his Pike Place Market newsstand, First & Pike News. On New Year’s Eve, the stand’s final day of business, longtime customers stopped by to say they will miss him, reporters scribbled in their notebooks and local television stations captured the final hours.

Now the only newsstand in the market is gone, another milestone in the decline of print media. Lauckhart graduated from the UW in 1968 with a degree in environmental health but had trouble finding work when the Boeing recession hit Seattle in the early 1970s.

He took a job at a newsstand in New

York before returning to Seattle, where he drove a cab and sold handmade jewelry. He comes from a publishing family—his grandfather owned small-town newspapers and his uncles were reporters and printers—and he thought running a newsstand would be his piece of a family tradition.

Once, First & Pike carried 180 newspapers from around the world. At the end, he sold only a handful. “People would say, “Oh, I’m so glad you’re still here and then walk on,” he remembers.

Lauckhart didn’t take a paycheck in recent years, while continuing to pay his employees more than minimum wage. “The newsstand,” he says “represents the way things were.”



## Telling Truth Through Fiction

By Hannelore Sudermann

Before Alejandro Varela, ’06, moved to New York and became a writer—with short stories appearing in Harper’s Magazine, The New Republic and the Southampton Review—he was a grad student at the UW pursuing a master’s degree in public health.

He wanted to improve the lives of others and he could write, but, Varela wondered, were the reports and studies he’d been producing making enough of a difference? “I realized I could do more with fiction,” he said in an interview last fall. Now he writes short stories using plot and characters to shine a light on health, poverty, inequity and culture, all against the backdrop of public health.

“Carlitos in Charge,” which appeared in Harper’s last October, is told from the point of view of a health researcher in the United Nations, and steeped in gay culture, public health research and global politics. The piece is, as Varela describes it, “An anti-imperialist tale of intrigue and cruising in the halls of global power.”



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## MEDIA



### Wild Elephants: Conservation in the Age of Extinction

By Samuel Wasser and Art Wolfe, ’75  
Simon and Schuster, Oct. 2019

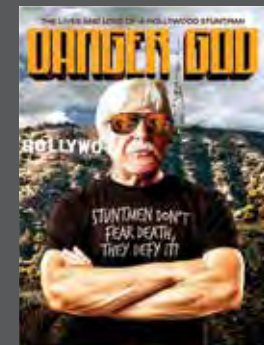
Wasser, a UW professor of conservation biology, and photographer Wolfe pair stunning scenic images with Wasser’s own work to combat elephant poaching and draw attention to the illegal trade of elephant ivory. The book celebrates the magnificent elephant and the promise of efforts to protect and support the species.



### Be an InventHer

By Mina Yoo and Hilary Meyerson, ’98  
Sasquatch Books, Oct. 2019

Law alumna Meyerson and Yoo, an inventor and former assistant professor at the Foster School, join forces in this handy guide to help women (and all readers) take their big ideas through prototypes, market research, funding and distribution. They fill the book with practical advice and stories of other successful women inventors, offering direction and encouragement “to creating the next big thing.”



### Danger God

Director Joe O’Connell, Featuring Gary Kent

After leaving the UW, where he studied journalism and played football before heading off to the Korean War, Gary Kent found a life in the movies, serving as a stuntman and actor in B movies and on TV. This documentary about his life shows us why the Walla Walla native was an inspiration for the Brad Pitt character in Quentin Tarantino’s 2019 film “Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood.”

# Columns

## To Infinity and Beyond. Maybe.

Finding elements to support life on planets outside our solar system is Giada Arney's quest

By Benjamin Gleisser



A planet orbiting Proxima Centauri, the star nearest our sun, receives about the same amount of energy from its star as Earth does from the sun. That has NASA research space scientist Giada Arney, '12, '16, wondering: can this nearby planet support life?

Arney, at left, studies exoplanets—planets outside of our solar system. “Most stars have orbiting planetary systems,” she says. “There are zillions of planets we don’t see. I’m fascinated by the idea of these other

worlds. Do any of them have the elements to support microbial life? That’s one of science’s most important questions.”

Her love of astronomy began when she was a youngster sitting on the back porch of her Denver home with her mother and gazing at the infinite pinpricks of glittering light in the night sky. She later read every book in the library about outer space and became fascinated by the idea of extraterrestrial life.

She earned a B.A. in astrophysics from the University of Colorado, then came to the UW for graduate school. Arney’s research centered on past phases of Earth history as analogs for “alien” environments we might someday encounter when turning our telescopes to exoplanet atmospheres.

She joined NASA after graduating from the UW and now works at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. She received the NASA Early Career Achievement Award in 2018 and the Presidential Early Career Award for Scientists and Engineers in 2019.

As for the planet orbiting Proxima Centauri, Arney says it orbits within its star’s “habitable zone”—the region around a star where liquid water, an essential ingredient for life, might be present on its surface. But just because a planet is in that zone doesn’t necessarily mean it’s habitable.

The jury is still out on the planet’s potential habitability—or lack thereof. The goal, she says, is to find a “Goldilocks” planet—one that, like the porridge in the children’s tale, is not too hot, not too cold and just right for life. To that end, Arney is helping develop NASA’s Large Ultraviolet Optical Infrared Surveyor, a next-generation spacecraft telescope that may someday replace the current Hubble telescope.

*Toronto-based freelance writer Benjamin Gleisser can’t wait to see his first UFO.*

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## A Serving of Support

Angela Dunleavy Stowell brings her expertise in social justice to the menu at Seattle's FareStart

By Rebekah Denn

In Seattle's halls of power, Angela Dunleavy Stowell is a familiar face and a force for change.

She might be seen testifying before the Seattle City Council, as on a recent hearing date. She might be chairing a \$41 million campaign, as she did for United Way in 2018, raising money for community programs.

For many years, she was best known for her role in the celebrity chef world, helping build one of Seattle's most successful restaurant groups with then-husband Ethan Stowell. Now her influence comes as CEO of FareStart, the James Beard Award-winning nonprofit that provides culinary job training to people who are homeless or otherwise living in poverty.

When people see Stowell in those high-profile roles, some assume she came from a place of status and privilege and took a traditional path to success. For most of her life, she didn't tell people those assumptions were wrong. "I'm getting used to telling my story now, because I tell it to our students a lot," she says. "I was really ashamed of it for a long time, well into my 30s. (But) it's not a shameful thing to not have the traditional path to college. It's not a shameful thing to not even finish college."

Stowell grew up in a rural town in Eastern Oregon—"a wonderful place and a beautiful place, but it was not for me," she says. Her own parents hadn't gone to college, and most of her neighbors didn't even think about it for their kids.

*Caring for others has fueled Angela Stowell's life, but she is quick to point out that "caring is not a strategy."*

From the time she could work, restaurants were her way out. By age 14, Stowell was scooping ice cream, then working at McDonald's.

With vague thoughts of being a paramedic, she briefly attended Central Washington University before moving to Seattle, where she worked for a catering company. "I was told, 'You seem impressive.' I had been catering at Bill Gates' house," she says.

Eventually she applied for a more advanced job as an event planner. "I'm sorry, you don't have a college degree," was the response. The words set her resolve. "I was never going back to this little town, and I was never going to be told again I wouldn't get a job because I didn't have a college degree."

The restaurant industry gave her a safety net once more, as she waited tables to work her way through school, starting at North Seattle College and finishing seven years later with a bachelor's degree from UW, studying political science and women's studies.

As an older student, "I was there 100% for school. It was such a different experience, and I loved every minute of it and every class I had. Except statistics."

Her interest in political science came from seeing the country's turmoil right after the election of George W. Bush in 2000. "I was at the age where I saw the urgency and the need to be civically and politically involved."

The pull toward women's studies, including an internship at Planned Parenthood, came from her small-town childhood where "gender roles were very clearly defined" and reproductive rights were not a given. "When you went to the health department for any kind of family planning process, your mom's best friend

probably worked there."

While working as a wine sales representative, she met Ethan Stowell, and their first risky steps to start their own business became a political and social education in itself. Policies around issues like minimum wage and family leave brought her into active debates about how to meet the needs of workers as well as businesses who depend on them. The stark needs exacerbated by Seattle's intense growth helped bring her to United Way's Board of Directors and to work with the Seattle Downtown Association. Even tragedy was channeled into positive action; she and Stowell created a marathon fundraiser for fetal health when their first children, twin sons, died before birth.

Caring for others has been a theme throughout all the twists and turns of her life—in a practical way, not a theoretical one. "It's not enough just to care. Caring is not a strategy," she says. "It's so easy for people to fall into the cracks. It's easy to assume the students coming through the doors of FareStart are really different from you or me."

Her own two children sometimes join her at FareStart dinners, understanding that the workers and diners there are all part of their community. At their best, restaurants can create a sense of hospitality and caring and service, and a way up in the world, says Stowell.

"Restaurants are what got me out," she says. "Now I'm maybe in the perfect place, because I work with people who are getting out of their own circumstances."

*Rebekah Denn is a James Beard Award-winning writer who authored the story of the Filipino restaurant Archipelago in our Fall 2019 issue.*

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# Impact

GENEROSITY AND OPPORTUNITY AT THE UW

## Representation Matters

From studying abroad in New Zealand to working at the Burke Museum, UW senior Racquel West is focused on how museums are accountable to the communities they represent

By Nancy Joseph

UW senior Racquel West has loved museums since childhood, but she hadn't considered working at one until she studied abroad in New Zealand through a UW Department of American Indian Studies program. With a focus on learning from and with New Zealand's Indigenous Maori people, the program included museum visits and discussions of how the Maori have been misrepresented in museum settings.



Racquel West works at the Burke Museum's Bill Holm Center, which furthers the study of Native arts of the Pacific Northwest.

"That was a big wake-up call," says West. "Museums and other institutions of knowledge hold so much power. I'd always believed everything I read in museums, but I learned that you should critique everything. I wasn't raised to do that, and I think most people are not. The study-abroad experience really sparked my interest in the institutional responsibility of museums."

West, who is African American, began to consider how what she learned in New Zealand applied to how Indigenous people were represented—or misrepresented—back home in the U.S. "I began to rethink everything I had assumed about museums, and I wanted to use my education to ensure that people were accurately represented," she says.

### A NEW PERSPECTIVE


Back on campus, West delved deeper into the issue as a double major in geography and history. "I tell people that I study space and time, but I'm not a physicist," she says. "If you're talking about a place, you need to understand the time, to have a context. Time influences how we look at a space."

Last year, West completed a history honors thesis focusing on the Suquamish Museum, created and run by the Suquamish tribe. "The Suquamish Museum and tribal museums in general hold the power of representing themselves, which is really different from other museums," says West. "I was interested in learning more about what that looks like. Since I was writing a history paper, I focused on the history

of the museum and how it has affected the reservation."

West has continued volunteering at the Suquamish Museum, helping organize and digitize the archives. She credits UW history professor Joshua Reid—her thesis adviser and a member of the Snohomish Indian Nation—with impressing upon her the importance of that commitment.

"Something I've learned in my classes with Dr. Reid is that you don't go into a different cultural space, do a project with someone and then leave," she says. "Because then you're using that community and that knowledge for your own benefit and not giving anything in return. As long as I'm in the area, I'll continue volunteering."

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PHOTOGRAPHS BY CORINNE THRASH

### RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE

West is also putting what she's learned into practice through her job at the Burke Museum's Bill Holm Center, where her duties range from administrative tasks to helping organize objects in the collection. The center offers support to Native artists, visiting researchers and others interested in access to the Burke's culture collection.

"What we call 'objects' in the collection aren't just objects," West says. "They are kin, and they hold knowledge. So a lot of the work of the Bill Holm Center is about making the collections accessible to those whose relations are in the collections. In this way, the museum is held accountable to the communities it represents."

West considers herself fortunate to be paid for doing work that she loves, which helps ease her financial burden as a student. Undergraduate honors and scholarships have also had an impact. She has been a McNair Scholar, received a Mary Gates Research Scholarship and has twice been awarded the Chester William Fritz Scholarship.

"It is a big boost in confidence. Essentially people are saying, 'We believe in you.' It meant the world to be nominated both times for the Chester Fritz Scholarship, that the department recognized how much I'm trying to do," West says. "Having scholarships has eased my mind and allowed me to focus on my academic work."

That focus has prepared West as both an academic and an advocate for strengthening learning and engagement in museums. She hopes to pursue a doctoral degree and a career of helping museums improve.

"Over the past 40 years there's been a big shift in museums," says West. "There's been a realization that things need to change. I want to continue to be a part of that."

*"What we call 'objects' in the collection aren't just objects," West says. "They are kin, and they hold knowledge."*



## Treating Mind and Body

**A Magnuson Scholarship enabled Jennifer Velloza to study the vital role of mental health in HIV prevention**

By Malavika Jagannathan

Crisscrossing the grass-covered plains and sloping hills of rural Swaziland, Jennifer Velloza spent a year visiting medical clinics in this small southern African country. Nearly one in four people here have HIV—and the rate is even higher among women.

As a study manager for Doctors Without Borders, Velloza saw pregnant and post-partum women struggle to get HIV testing and treatment because they were also suffering from sexual trauma, depression or anxiety.

“Women dealing with intimate partner violence may be afraid to come to the clinic or may not have the means or financial independence apart from their significant other,” Velloza says. “HIV and intimate

partner violence also often coincide with depression. If you’re depressed, you may lose the ability, foresight and desire to take care of yourself and your health.”

What Velloza saw in Swaziland (recently renamed eSwatini) would inspire her dissertation at the University of Washington School of Public Health, showing how depression and stigma hinder young women from using pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). The drug can prevent HIV when taken regularly—but many women don’t follow through on their daily treatment, even if they face a high risk of infection.

“We can’t force anyone to take the PrEP pill every day, so we need to support people in integrating HIV prevention into their

busy, complicated lives,” says Velloza, whose research was supported by a Magnuson Scholarship from the UW.

Public health professionals like Velloza look beyond individual patients and diagnoses to preventing and treating diseases across entire populations.

In choosing a Ph.D. program, Velloza was drawn to the UW School of Public Health’s emphasis on global collaboration and its long-standing relationships in sub-Saharan Africa, where she wanted to continue working.

**“I’m a first-generation college student, and I feel so grateful to have received such generous support from donors.”**

### SEEING A FULLER PICTURE

In 2018, Velloza was one of six UW health sciences graduate students to receive the Magnuson Scholarship, a prestigious award that recognizes academic performance and research potential.

“I’m a first-generation college student, and I feel so grateful to have received such generous support from donors,” Velloza says. “My education and where I am now just would not have been possible without that.”

Thanks to the scholarship, Velloza could travel more frequently to her clinical project sites, where she collected data on how stigma and depression affect young women’s use of PrEP.

One study included more than 500 participants across three urban clinics in Kenya, Zimbabwe and South Africa. From teenage girls to married women, what they had in common was their high risk for HIV—and

the stigma they faced in getting tested and taking PrEP.

“The drugs in the PrEP pill are also part of the medication used to treat HIV, so young women face HIV stigma if they’re seen taking PrEP,” Velloza says of the preventive measure. “And PrEP is a signal that you’re sexually active. In a lot of places, there are conservative gender norms about women’s sexuality and sexual health, which can also lead to stigma around the PrEP pill.”

Velloza took a leading role on the study’s qualitative team, helping design the interview questions that unpacked the effect of stigma and analyzing the transcripts.

“We learned a lot more about how stigma manifests in the communities, how young women talk about it and how it affects their lives,” Velloza says. “More important, the women gave us ideas about how to reduce stigma and address some of these issues.”

For example, they highlighted the role of TV ads and national campaigns in raising public awareness of PrEP.

### LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

The Magnuson Scholarship gave Velloza time to focus on completing her dissertation, publishing her research and applying for grants—laying the groundwork for a career in academia.

Beyond the generous financial support, the scholarship validated the importance of Velloza’s work toward our understanding of HIV prevention, a point underscored by the family and former staff of the late Senator Warren G. Magnuson at a lunch with the Magnuson Scholars.

“To have a moment to step back and think about larger implications of my work and the impact it could have in the future was quite meaningful to me,” Velloza says.

Velloza’s ultimate aim is a holistic approach to HIV treatment that could help save more lives—whether in sub-Saharan Africa or in the U.S. As a senior fellow at the UW’s International Clinical Research Center, investigating how counseling and peer support can help women stick with their PrEP regimen, she’s taking a first step toward that goal.


## LEDGER

### About the Magnuson Scholarship



Named for the late U.S. Senator Warren G. Magnuson, the Magnuson Scholars Program recognizes **one graduate student per year in each of the six UW health sciences schools** for their academic and research excellence.

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PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK STONE

## Chances Change Lives

By Korynne Wright Chair, UW Foundation Board

At the University of Washington, we're in the business of giving people a chance. And you help us create those chances every day.

You provide philanthropic support to our first-generation college students, helping them pursue academic and professional dreams that once seemed impossible. You power the groundbreaking work of our medical researchers, enabling patients to live healthier, more fulfilling lives. You give across our University: to world-class faculty, to bright students, to programs and facilities that elevate research and learning, and to causes and initiatives you care deeply about.

But in addition to your philanthropy, there are so many ways to help us create chances at the UW.

I recently met with a participant in the Huskies@Work mentorship program, which connects UW alumni with current students. This young man is a junior communications major at UW Bothell, where he writes for the Husky Herald; he also has a background

in sales and customer service. He's looking ahead to graduation, planning where to go and how to get there. Over coffee at the Suzzallo Library Starbucks, we talked about internships, which help our students learn about their future careers and prove themselves to potential employers. I can't wait to see what happens when a company gives this young man a chance—as an intern and, possibly, an employee.

Every year, thousands of you—our UW alumni, faculty, staff, retirees, parents and friends—create chances. You donate, volunteer, mentor and advocate for higher education. Our students, staff and faculty feel the impact of your generosity. So do the communities we serve, locally and around the world.

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- Embrace lifelong learning through on-campus lectures by our brilliant faculty.
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Thank you for the chances you help create—and the lives you change. No matter how you give, we are grateful.

*Learn more about upcoming events, opportunities to give your time and ways to connect with other alumni at [uw.edu/alumni](http://uw.edu/alumni).*

*After Michael McGroder, '88, retired from ExxonMobil, he found a way to give back beyond financial support by sharing his industry knowledge with UW geology students. (From left: Wylee Cleverley, '17; Madeline Hille, '18; McGroder.)*

## Down to Earth in Turkey

**Mentors and scholarships helped Ryan Robinson find his way to a field he loved—and an archeology site halfway across the world**

By Nancy Joseph

At his UW orientation, transfer student Ryan Robinson was just finding his footing, unsure of what he'd study. The next summer, he was uncovering 4,500-year-old artifacts at Çadır Höyük, an archaeological site in central Turkey.

It all began with a conversation. Robinson, who transferred to the UW from Bremerton's Olympic College, told an adviser about his fascination with the ancient Middle East. So the adviser introduced him to Stephanie Selover, assistant professor of Near Eastern languages and civilization (NELC) and adjunct assistant professor of anthropology.

"By the end of our conversation she had given me her card, signed me up for two of her classes and convinced me to come with her to Turkey the following summer," recalls Robinson, who graduated in June with degrees in anthropology and Near Eastern languages and civilization. "I had this idea of professors at a big university being intimidating, but Stephanie was really welcoming."

In addition to receiving Selover's encouragement, Robinson would go on to earn several scholarships that made his studies possible—both in the classroom and in the field. The Undergraduate Research Travel Award, a Foreign Language and Area Studies Fellowship, and the Irene Dickson MacFarlane Tuition Scholarship were "such a relief" financially, he says.

### CRASH COURSE

After spending his first UW year studying archaeology, Robinson joined Selover in Turkey, working alongside teams from several countries. The site's name, Çadır Höyük, translates to "tent mound," because settlers repeatedly tore down crumbling buildings and built on top of them, creating a hill that holds the remains of 6,000 years of human settlement. A walk up the slope is like traveling through time.

At one of the oldest areas of the site, where buried material is particularly brittle, Robinson and others used a small trowel and brush to painstakingly remove about five centimeters of dirt at a time. They looked for bits of pottery, bones and other artifacts in the soil. "It's tedious," Robinson says. "But it was the most fun I've ever had in my life. Despite taking archaeology courses, without actually being at a site you can't envision what it will be."

Stone tools, a common find at Çadır Höyük, must be identified and cataloged by a stone-tool expert. When that position became vacant, Selover vouched for Robinson and he was asked to step in, a prospect both flattering and terrifying—especially given the site's limited internet service and just one textbook for researching the tools.

Robinson recalls sneaking off to the on-site lab after dinner to look at the textbook and take notes. "The director of the lab would come in and be impressed that I was still working. She may have slightly misinterpreted it as being more enthusiastic than I actually was," Robinson says, laughing. "Really what I was doing was

panicking, because I was the specialist for stone tools and knew nothing about them. But over time I learned more, and it was cool to have all those tools pass through my hands."

### ON THE RIGHT TRACK

The next summer, Robinson continued in the role at Çadır Höyük. He created a database of information about the excavated tools, and that became a resource for his anthropology thesis project, exploring how digital technology can offer new perspectives on stone tools.

Robinson also completed a thesis for his NELC major, analyzing Persian coins from the third century B.C. He presented on stone tools at a Harvard conference and on Persian coins for a conference at New York University, and he also presented at this year's UW Undergraduate Research Symposium.

Robinson eventually plans to pursue a doctorate in archaeology. The scholarship awards he received "give me a lot of optimism going into grad school," he says, and were a welcome sign that he was on the right track. But first, he plans to take a year to decompress—and participate in more excavations. "I look forward to graduate school," Robinson says. "But I've been in school for a long time, so first I want to live without grades for a little bit."



PHOTOGRAPH BY CORINNE THRASH

*Ryan Robinson spent two summers identifying and cataloging stone tools at Çadır Höyük, an archaeological site in central Turkey.*

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## 'Whenever You Get, Give Back'

### Jim McCurdy's mantra spurred support of higher education

*Yakima's Jim McCurdy (above) was one of the UW's strongest advocates, supporting programs from art to dentistry to athletics.*

During World War II, James G. McCurdy was engaged in a rigorous naval science program at the University of Washington. His classes were so demanding that he decided to relinquish his starting spot on the Husky football team. He later reclaimed his spot, suiting up for the 1944 Rose Bowl against USC. The Trojans trounced UW, but McCurdy, an All-Pacific Coast guard, was presented with the Guy Flaherty Award as the team's most inspirational player. He also received an even more impressive accolade: The Seattle Post-Intelligencer named McCurdy its "Man of the Year."

A Franklin High School graduate, McCurdy started college at Stanford but moved home to attend UW. He graduated in 1945, served in the Navy, and went to work in the family business for Puget Sound Bridge and Dredging Co. He worked his way to the top and oversaw construction of the Hood Canal Floating Bridge.

McCurdy and his wife, Betty Barclay McCurdy, '49, were lifetime members of

the UW Alumni Association, as well as steadfast supporters of higher ed. They donated to a wide range of UW departments and causes: the Burke Museum, athletics and the Carlson Leadership & Public Service Center, as well as programs in art, dentistry, law, business and social work.

The McCurdy family is especially known for its support of maritime research and the renowned Husky rowing program. One example is the family's scholarship named for McCurdy's younger brother, Thomas, a UW rower who died while on active duty in the Korean War. In 1957, the scholarship was given to a young man named Ron Crockett, '62, who would go on to become a titan of engineering, sports and philanthropy. Crockett went to see McCurdy after being chosen for the life-changing honor. He says McCurdy's words from that day stuck with him for decades, guiding him for the rest of his life: "He looked me in the eyes and said, 'Whenever you get, give back.'"

## RECOGNITION



**WILLIAM RUCKELSHAUS** was the deputy attorney general during Watergate, where he had a firsthand view of a White House in turmoil.

He boldly resigned from office during the infamous "Saturday Night Massacre," but would later return to D.C. to head the Environmental Protection Agency in the 1980s. (He was the agency's founding director in 1970.) He also established the Ruckelshaus Center, a joint venture of UW and WSU that brings together diverse voices to solve policy issues. Ruckelshaus died Nov. 27 at the age of 87.



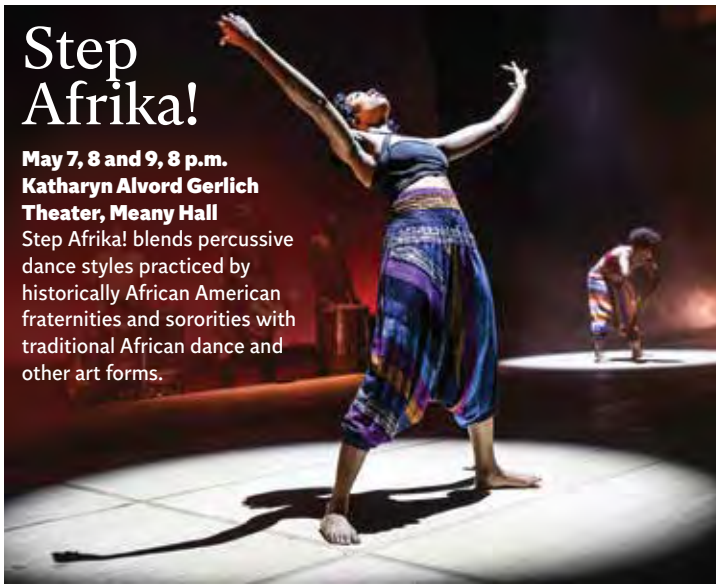
**ALBERT E. DEATLEY, '53,** ran one of America's largest family-owned asphalt and paving companies and always supported his Yakima Valley community. He also helped organize civil engineering scholarships for UW and WSU students. DeAtley and his wife, Patty, were members of the Tyee Club Champions Circle and the Henry Suzzallo Society. DeAtley died Oct. 21 at age 85.





## Step Afrika!

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 Step Afrika! blends percussive dance styles practiced by historically African American fraternities and sororities with traditional African dance and other art forms.



### MUSIC AND DANCE

**Jerusalem Quartet**  
 March 24, 7:30 p.m.  
 Kathryn Alvord Gerlich Theater, Meany Hall  
 For nearly a quarter century, the Jerusalem Quartet has toured the world earning rave reviews for its warm, full sound and precise balance of voices. It returns to Meany Center with a program of Mozart, Brahms and Korngold's Quartet No. 2 written in Viennese style.

**Los Angeles Master Chorale**  
 March 26, 7:30 p.m.  
 Kathryn Alvord Gerlich Theater, Meany Hall

From theater and opera director Peter Sellars comes a staging of Orlando di Lasso's "Lagrime di San Pietro (The Tears of Saint Peter)".

**George Li**  
 April 29, 7:30 p.m.  
 Kathryn Alvord Gerlich Theater, Meany Hall  
 A silver medalist at the 2015 International Tchaikovsky Competition, Li has garnered international attention with performances on the world's most prestigious stages.

### EXHIBIT

**Low Brow/High Culture**  
 Through April 24  
 Allen Library, South Basement, Special Collections  
 Low Brow/High Culture traces the evolution of lowbrow art from its

origins in hot rod and custom motorcycle culture to the art movement it is today. Showcasing materials from all areas of Special Collections, this exhibit focuses on zines, comics, flyers and other methods of DIY culture.

### DRAMA

**Cabaret**  
 April 25 - May 17  
 Floyd and Delores Jones Playhouse  
 UW Drama students perform "Cabaret." The show's memorable songs include "Cabaret," "Willkommen" and "Maybe This Time."

### LECTURES

**Revolution in Rhyme: Official Poets of the Islamic Republic**  
 March 10, 7 p.m.  
 Kane Hall  
 Fatemeh Shams, poet and scholar, will present the 2020 Afrassiabi Distinguished Lecture in Persian and Iranian Studies.

**Communication, Gender, and the Politics of Making the First Move With Online Dating**  
 April 16, 6:30 p.m.  
 Washington State History Museum in Tacoma  
 Associate Professor Riki Thompson presents her original research about online communication, gender, sexuality and the politics of matching, messaging and making the first move in digital dating spaces.

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## Bringing It Full Circle

Inspired by her job-shadowing experience while at UW, a recent grad returns to the Huskies@Work program as an alum

When Sandy Warynick-Ruiz, '19, was a student majoring in history with a minor in American Indian Studies, she had an idea of what she wanted to do after graduation: teach history. To explore her career path, she signed up for UWAA's Huskies@Work program, which matches students with alumni to learn about work and careers.

Warynick-Ruiz was paired with Juliette Kern, '13, Assistant Director of Student Activities at Bates Technical College. They both had attended UW Tacoma. That day,

Kern showed her around, invited her to sit in on a staff meeting and introduced her to a history teacher on staff.

"Huskies@Work opened up connections and gave me a real-world perspective ... It also stresses networking, and that is often overlooked by students," Warynick-Ruiz said.

Bates Technical College specializes in training for hands-on skills, and Kern leads student activities like clubs and student government. The match and setting weren't completely in line with what Warynick-Ruiz wanted to do. But Kern shared her story—how she didn't end up doing exactly what she had studied or what she had imagined as her career.

Warynick-Ruiz never forgot Kern's story, especially when she found herself in the same situation. The fall after graduation, she started working as the Indian Education and Migrant Liaison for the Hoquiam School District.

Months into the job, Warynick-Ruiz decided to pay it forward as a Huskies@Work alumni host. "Because I did it as a student, I was happy to provide the same opportunity for another student," she said. "It's nice to bring that experience full circle." She was matched with Faith Abeyta, a student at UW Tacoma who is interested

in K-12 social work. Distance wasn't a barrier; they were able to connect over the phone, as many Huskies@Work participants do.

She shared her experience as a new alum. Today's students are graduating into a competitive job market, where it's challenging to find an entry-level job. The cost of living in the area puts pressure on students to find a lucrative career fast.

**"Huskies@Work gave me real-world perspective."**

Just as she learned from Kern, Warynick-Ruiz encouraged Abeyta to be flexible and ready for chances to grow and learn at work, just as she did at school.

"You never know what doors might open up. Learn to work with what is available. Sometimes you might not go where you want to go, but you'll go where you're needed. You'll find opportunities and build relationships."



*Sandy Warynick-Ruiz, '19, participated as both a student and an alum in UWAA's Huskies@Work program.*

### WHAT ADVICE DO YOU WISH YOU'D BEEN GIVEN WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT?

Be a Huskies@Work alumni host. Sessions take place during May and November.

### UWALUM.COM/EVENTS



**HUSKIES@WORK**  
**MAY 1-31**  
**ALUMNI APPLICATIONS CLOSE MARCH 31**  
 Connect with a student about your career path. Host a student for day on site, an hour for coffee or online.



**509 DAY**  
**MAY 9 | EASTERN WASHINGTON**  
 It's the UW holiday for Huskies east of the Cascades! Look out for free events and other ways to celebrate purple pride.



**REUNION WEEKEND**  
**JUNE 5-6 | SEATTLE CAMPUS**  
 Return to campus for the Class of 1970 50-Year Reunion or the Golden Graduates Brunch for Huskies who graduated 50 or more years ago.

## Off the Rez

Native American food truck parks a new café at the Burke

By Julie Davidow

Off the Rez Café anchors the southeast corner of the new Burke, beckoning visitors with the scent of fry bread bubbling in hot canola oil.

Restaurant owners Cecilia Rikard and Mark McConnell met in 2005 as UW undergrads and returned to campus last fall to open the first brick-and-mortar location for their popular Native American food truck. A corporate lawyer in a previous life, Rikard is a natural host. “Let us feed you,” she implores a guest.

When the longtime couple launched their food truck in 2011, neither had training in food service or cooking.

McConnell, whose mother grew up on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana, worked as a paralegal and in tech support after graduation. Those jobs didn’t suit him, so the duo considered opening a business together instead. “Mark’s not an office guy. He likes to be up, moving around,” says Rikard, ’06. They both loved to cook, but didn’t want to sell something you could find anywhere.

It was McConnell’s craving for fry bread—a taste from his family’s gatherings in Montana—that set them on course. Rikard calls the decision to build their business around a reminder of McConnell’s culture and childhood a “no-brainer.” “It just occurred to him, ‘Hey! Nobody does this. We should do it.’”

With Rikard still practicing law full time, they started gathering, cooking, tasting and tweaking family recipes. Their fry bread dough, hand-shaped into palm-sized balls and fried to order, is made with olive oil rather than the more traditional lard. It’s the foundation of the truck’s menu—a pillowy, golden-brown symbol of both oppression and pride that dates to the nineteenth century when the U.S. government forced Native Americans onto reservations. With access cut off to traditional staples like corn, beans and fresh vegetables, Native communities used government rations of sugar, fat, flour and salt to create what has become a mainstay at celebrations and on kitchen tables.



Mark McConnell and Cecilia Rikard (right) launched their food truck in 2011 to capture the flavors of McConnell’s family meals on the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana.

Off the Rez serves a classic Indian taco on fry bread (far right) with beef chili, lettuce, house-made crema sauce and pickled red onion.

The dishes offered at the café meld pre- and post-colonial flavors and ingredients—braised bison for the wild rice bowls, quinoa mixed with sweet corn succotash and a potato salad featuring roasted sweet potatoes. “We have more ingredients available to us here than they would on a reservation,” says McConnell, ’07. Indian tacos topped with beef chili and served on fry bread capture a post-colonial classic. “We wanted to showcase both worlds,” Rikard says.

Offering Native American food is a perfect fit for the state’s new natural history museum, says Hally Swift, the Burke’s director of finance and operations. The café highlights the role of native history



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and communities at the Burke and gives visitors a singular alternative to standard museum fare.

Off the Rez’s Facebook following—food trucks rely on social media to help customers find them—also bolsters word-of-mouth buzz for the Burke, Swift adds. “We really wanted to draw people from outside the community on to the campus,” she says. The food truck still travels around the Seattle area most days, with regular stops at Optimism Brewing in Capitol Hill, the Barnes and Noble parking lot in Bellevue and, in recent months, outside the new Burke café.

This spring, the café’s retractable window wall will open so diners can sit on the patio outside. By then, new landscaping featuring camas—a purple flower with a starchy root central to Native diets throughout Washington—will be in bloom.

For now, the café is open for breakfast, lunch and early dinners (it closes at 6 p.m. on weekdays), but pop-up dinners could soon keep it open later. “We’re thinking about some fun things in the future,” Rikard says, glancing around at the bustling tables during an off-hours rush. “But we definitely want to get a little more settled first.”

## REAL DAWGS WEAR PURPLE

Since they met in 1972, this powerful duo has stuck together and committed their careers to education — Lea in the UW School of Law and Pat in the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance. Their combined service to the UW totals nearly 50 years, and they graciously continue in volunteer committee work on campus. Both professors emeritus agree that at the heart of the University, it’s the students who matter most. Lea Vaughn and Pat Dobel are proof that Husky passion never rests.

**Lea Vaughn & Pat Dobel**  
Retired UW faculty

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