

Muhlenberg

Magazine

SPRING 2023

Global Exploration

Students who study abroad develop skills that are critical to personal and professional success

The Liberal Arts Edge

Alumni share how their education has allowed them to thrive

The Fahy Commons

The community celebrates the opening of this new building

A WORLD OF **BOUNDLESS** POSSIBILITIES

The Muhlenberg Integrative Learning Abroad (MILA) Program allows students to partake in courses that include short-term travel components after the close of a semester. This past summer, there were faculty-led trips to Ireland, Costa Rica and along the Potomac River.



Experiences like these are being made possible thanks to numerous contributions to *Boundless: The Campaign for Muhlenberg*. A key campaign priority is integrative learning and high impact practices, which allow students to take what they've learned inside of the classroom and apply it to real-world settings. This priority also amplifies the efforts of faculty and students as they transcend academic boundaries, collaborate to conduct research, connect with community partners and build new knowledge to address the issues of our time.

BOUNDLESS
THE CAMPAIGN FOR MUHLENBERG

●●● Learn more about how you can help our students be boundless: boundless.muhlenberg.edu

FEATURES



Global Exploration 28

The College encourages students to pursue the transformative experience of studying abroad, and more than half of students do. While abroad, they build critical skills that help them thrive in an increasingly interconnected world.



This Is the Liberal Arts 36

At Muhlenberg, each student is exposed to a variety of ideas, ways of thinking and academic disciplines, regardless of what they end up declaring as a major. These stories demonstrate the power and potential of such an education.

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ON THE COVER Louis Cocco '23 took this photo of his flatmate from Dublin City University, Mia McDevitt, posing in the doorway of a historical abandoned church in Dun Lúiche, a small village in County Donegal, Ireland, during his semester abroad.

Making an Impact for 175 Years

In April, we will celebrate the 175th anniversary of the founding of Muhlenberg College with a three-day celebration of the scholarship, creativity and community that define life on our campus. For 175 years, we have been building an academic tradition grounded in rigor, in which students are challenged daily to reach higher and farther than they thought they could, with the coaching and support of faculty every step of the way.

As you'll read in this issue, the through line of our history has been our constant commitment to the liberal arts. The paths that our students choose are as varied as the students themselves, and it's the intersection of ideas, interests and inspiration that makes a liberal arts education so transformative.

The power of this intersection is apparent in the work of George Wheeler '72, who was a scientist at the Metropolitan Museum of Art when a sculpture from the 1400s, "Adam," crashed to the ground (page 40). Wheeler led a team that researched the optimal materials to reassemble it. Wheeler's Muhlenberg education, grounded in science and math and deepened through his pursuit of art, prepared him for a career he couldn't have imagined when he stepped onto campus.

The learning Wheeler and generations of students since have experienced at Muhlenberg is deeply interdisciplinary and steeped — across majors, courses and for all four years — in hands-on learning. Some of the most powerful of those experiences happen when our students study abroad, as more than 50 percent choose to do (page 28).

You'll read about Jessica Rosen '24, a sustainability studies major and innovation & entrepreneurship minor, who took advantage of Muhlenberg's short-term study abroad experience by immersing herself in the culture of South Africa. She says the experience exposed her to new perspectives and that she came home better prepared for her classes and beyond. As with so much of what happens at Muhlenberg, experiences like Jessica's provide students with transformative opportunities to grow as individuals, expand their understanding and learn to thrive in the future.

A centerpiece of our 175th anniversary will be the grand opening of the Fahy Commons for Public Engagement and Innovation, a remarkable building designed to some of the highest sustainability standards in the world and made possible through Gerald P. Fahy '79 and Cathleen A. Fahy's generous support of the *Boundless* campaign (page 5). Experience the Fahy Commons firsthand by joining our 175th celebration, April 28 to 30, either on campus or by tuning in virtually.

You, and your Muhlenberg story, are a key part of our dynamic history and our exciting future. I am so excited to write the next chapter with you.

Kathleen E. Harring
President

Magazine Staff

Meghan Kita
Editor in Chief

Bill Keller
Editor

Heather Mayer Irvine, Bill Keller, Mike Falk, Susan Falciani Maldonado, Sidney Milkis '72, Grace Oddo '22, Kristine Yahna Todaro '84
Contributing Writers

Katie Quinn
Design and Art Direction

Rachel Alexander '25, Marco Calderon, Louis Cocco '23, Ryan Hulvat, Megan Keller, Bill Keller, Ash Miller, Kristi Morris, Margo Reed, Penelope Rein '23, Joe Romano '23, Grace Sellinger '23, Brooke Slezak, Visioninja Photography, Evan Zimmerman
Contributing Photographers

Grafissimo, Charlie Powell
Contributing Illustrators

Administration

Kathleen E. Harring, *president*
Rebekkah L. Brown '99, *vice president for advancement*
Natalie Kulp Hand '78 P'07, *assistant vice president for alumni affairs and career services*

Contact
Editor in Chief, *Muhlenberg Magazine*
2400 Chew Street, Allentown, PA 18104-5564
magazine@muhlenberg.edu
484-664-3230

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Applause for Accounting

Be still my heart! Just got done reading *Muhlenberg Magazine* and loved seeing the fantastic Accounting Program get featured ("It All Adds Up," Fall 2022). It was fun and rewarding to read. Thank you!

Dave Jenkins '83



WE WANT
**TO HEAR
FROM YOU**

If you see a story you like (or don't like), put your thoughts into an email to magazine@muhlenberg.edu. If we publish your letter in a future issue, we'll send you a free Muhlenberg T-shirt.

ONLINE STORIES NOT TO MISS

Check out these features on the Muhlenberg website.

A Hands-On Internship Experience in Downtown Allentown

Working at the Allentown Art Museum last summer gave Yuyang (Hector) Chen '23, who graduated in January with a history major and studio art minor, valuable experience he is carrying into a master's program in art business this spring. Chen was a curatorial research intern, an opportunity he learned about through Professor of Art Margo Hobbs while working as her writing associate. To read his story, visit muhlenberg.edu/hectorchen.



A Mental Health Support Group for Student-Athletes

Juggling academics and athletics can be a challenge no matter which sport is your specialty. Head in the Game, a support group founded in 2021, recognizes that student-athletes from all sports face challenges with things like time management, perfectionism and performance anxiety. To discover how students in the group show up for themselves and one another, visit muhlenberg.edu/headinthegame.

Building a Strong Foundation for Veterinary School

Undergraduate research experiences, at Muhlenberg and abroad, rigorous coursework and close faculty mentorship helped Jess Sommer '21 on her way to the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. Learn about her research, the paper she published and how Muhlenberg prepared her for Penn at muhlenberg.edu/jessommer.





PHOTO BY RYAN HULVAT

Director of Career Coaching & Education Ryan Smolko speaks to students.

Muhlenberg Action Plan Aims to Connect All Students to Career Services, Early

The framework has allowed the Class of 2026 to think through career exploration and make contact with Career Center staff who visited a required course for new students.

When Executive Director of Career Services Sean Schofield started at Muhlenberg in 2021, he was impressed to learn that the Career Center reached about 70 percent of students each year.

“That’s a great number — we’re not a mandated stop on a student’s journey,” he says. “But what I wondered was: Are we missing the same 30 percent each time?”

The Career Center team looked at the data and discovered that the answer was yes. Certain students, including those who intended to go on to grad school and those in the performing arts, were less likely to engage with the Career Center than, say, business students. Schofield asked his team: “How can we adjust our strategy, our style and our language so people can start seeing [the Career Center] as an inclusive resource, so that every student can say, ‘The Career Center is for me’?”

One of the answers to that question is the Muhlenberg Action Plan, or MAP, a framework that’s rolling out beginning with this year’s first-year class. It sets the expectation that every student will go through four phases (explore careers, gain experience, demonstrate expertise and achieve excellence) during their Muhlenberg journey and that the Career

Center will be a resource throughout, regardless of a student’s areas of study or post-Muhlenberg goals.

The rollout began with members of the Career Center team visiting each section of Foundations for Student Success, a required course for new students, and helping students as they worked through a workbook of career exploration exercises: “MAP became the Career Center’s physical commitment to supporting each individual student,” Schofield says.

The Career Center has also been revising its website (to ensure that the language is broad enough for students from all disciplines to feel at home there) and collaborating with the Graduate School Preparatory Program (to reach students who aspire to continue their studies after Muhlenberg). The team is seeing results: Schofield says the Class of 2026 is making more appointments with career services staff than any previous first-year class.

“What we do with the Muhlenberg Action Plan in the first year is to help students understand that career is a process,” he says. “A career is not a destination — far, far from what most people think. A career is the process of every single day, developing skills, and understanding a little bit more about myself so that I can make informed decisions when I have to.” —*Meghan Kita*

Building Excitement

The new Fahy Commons, one of the most ambitious sustainable building projects in the world, opened on the south side of campus this semester. To learn more about the space and the programs it houses, visit muhlenberg.edu/fahycommons.

PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON



An Eclectic Academic

Professor of Psychology Jeff Rudski combines both his own and his students' interests to drive his research program, which has included studies on drugs, superstition and pop culture.



PHOTOS BY KRISTI MORRIS

*Professor of Psychology
Jeff Rudski in his office
with a collection of mugs
students have given him*

As an undergrad, Professor of Psychology Jeff Rudski was inspired by an introductory psych professor who researched pain. Rudski had always been fascinated with the philosophical aspects of psychology, like the connection between mind and body. When Rudski learned in his intro class that placebo effects are nullified by the drug naloxone — better known today as Narcan, a nasal spray that can reverse opioid overdoses — he was smitten with the discipline.

“Just like that, the placebo effect vanishes and all the pain comes back. Something that was all in the mind was mediated by a physiological process in the brain,” Rudski says. “That grabbed me. It was challenging to me. It turned my whole world upside down. I said, ‘I’ve got to learn more about this.’”

He went on to earn a bachelor’s in biological psychology and a doctorate in experimental psychology with a focus in behavioral pharmacology. One of his broad areas of interest continues to be the intersection between drugs, neuroscience and sociology. (The other interest is why smart people hold irrational beliefs, including superstitions.)

And this semester, Rudski is working on two drug-related research projects involving students. One aims to answer the question, who is the ‘real you’ when you take medication for depression? The other examines the role that scientific review plays in determining how drugs should be regulated.

Both projects are student-driven: A student wrote a paper related to the ‘real you’ project and Rudski suggested, “We should turn this into a study.” The second idea came from Rudski’s brainstorming notebook, which “has a couple hundred studies I would like to do if I had the time,” he says, and was tweaked to add questions of interest to his student collaborator.

Rudski describes his research program using a reference from the Pixar movie *Up*: Just as the film’s dogs are easily distracted by small animals (“SQUIRREL!”), Rudski tends to bounce from project to project depending on what’s most interesting to him — and his students — at that moment. (In 2007, for example, he worked with two *Harry Potter* superfans to study whether dedicated readers experienced withdrawal symptoms after the

release of the series' final installment.) He says that he is able to do this because he works at Muhlenberg, where close collaboration with students is valued just as much as a faculty member developing expertise in a specific area.

"Student questions challenge me to come up with new ideas and new ways of looking at things," Rudski says. "Some of the research I do comes from questions students asked me in class that I didn't necessarily know the answer to."

Muhlenberg's small, liberal arts environment is also a good match for Rudski's teaching style. He assesses understanding partly through robust classroom discussion. Students in his Introductory Psychology course read the textbook and learn the concepts on their own, and Rudski uses class time to explore why the concepts matter. For example, after reading the textbook's chapter on Pavlov's dogs, students discuss how similar mechanisms drive implicit racism (e.g. when the news is constantly showing mugshots of darker-skinned people, the viewer starts to associate darker-skinned people with crime, which results in the development of implicit biases).

He also tries to instill in his students a willingness to make mistakes and learn from them. He shares his own backstory as inspiration. When he was an undergrad in Canada, where students do two years of community college before beginning a bachelor's program, he did so poorly in the sciences during those first two years that he was rejected from the physiology major he hoped to pursue. He chose psychology instead, intending to raise his grades enough for the school to reconsider. After a year of being inspired by psychology, he was invited to switch majors, but he declined: His intro course hooked him, and he models his intro courses at Muhlenberg on the one he took.

As students progress in the psychology major, Rudski provides hands-on mistake-making opportunities. Students in Advanced Research, who work in teams to execute a study in a single semester, will sometimes design a study Rudski knows is unlikely to work out. Allowing the students to proceed ensures that they will learn from the experience.



“Student questions challenge me to come up with new ideas and new ways of looking at things.”

—JEFF RUDSKI (PSYCHOLOGY)

"Every study [students] ever did in high school worked. If they did it right, it worked. They're not used to failure. They take failure personally," he says. "I want them to learn that science isn't about proving your hypothesis. It's about testing your hypothesis."

This trial-and-error approach is pertinent to Rudski's own research. For the depression medication study that's underway now, he and one student initially gathered pilot data and presented it at a conference last May. Last summer, a second student collaborator continued the study with slightly altered methods. The group used both experiences to come up with the procedure they're using now.

"I'm learning how to best do the study, too. It's not just [the students] getting it wrong. It's me getting it wrong," Rudski says. "With all research, particularly when students are involved, it's fine if things don't initially go as planned. Mistakes can be identified. Plans can be changed. There's a lot of learning in that process, not just for that particular study, but for life in general." —MK



LIVING THE 'BERG LIFE

Clockwise from top left: Theatre and dance students make a scene on Sack Day; Mule-a-Thon benefits the Amber Louise Elchert '13 Foundation; students tackle the Udder Bar Challenge; campus celebrates Diwali



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON



Three Recent Bio Alumni Publish Papers on Bumblebee Research

Last year, biology alumni Natalie David '22, Jess Sommer '21 and Vijay Rao '22 all saw their undergraduate research published for the first time, in collaboration with Professor of Neuroscience and Biology and Chair of Neuroscience Jordanna Sprayberry.

David's paper, "Odor pollution from fungicides disrupts learning and recognition of a common floral odor in Bumblebees (*Bombus impatiens*)," was published in *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution*. Sommer and Rao's paper, "Deconstructing and contextualizing foraging behavior in bumble bees and other central place foragers," was published in *Apidologie*.

David's research, which she began conducting as a first-year student, explored how fungicides affected bumblebees' ability to recognize a familiar, floral scent. Sommer and Rao's publication was a review paper: They read hundreds of existing papers on bumblebee foraging, many of which used different terminology to mean the same things, and assembled the papers' findings into one place with a clear, universal set of definitions.

Both Sommer, now a student at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, and Rao, now a student at

the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine, had physically worked in Sprayberry's lab before COVID. They began working on this review during the pandemic shutdown, as a project that could continue without in-person access to the lab.

The experience of reading and interpreting all those papers is helping Rao in dental school: "If you Google something we're learning about, you're not going to find the answer on the internet," he says. "A lot of what we're learning is related to research our professors are doing. Having that skill set of being able to interpret data is really important and saves a lot of time while studying."

David, who is now attending the Emory University School of Medicine, says she developed a passion for research at Muhlenberg. She's hoping to get involved with a neuroscience lab at Emory, ideally working on Parkinson's research.

"Because of my time at Muhlenberg, I really think I have the tools to ask the right questions and use creative methods and work with others and collaborate and communicate to drive scientific progress," she says. —MK

Natalie David '22 conducts research in the summer of 2021.



Jess Sommer '21 conducts research in the summer of 2019.





PHOTO BY MEGAN KELLER

Chief Diversity Officer and Associate Provost for Equity & Inclusion Brooke Vick at the fall forum to discuss the statement

College Affirms Commitment to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging

Muhlenberg's statement on diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging (DEIB) has been updated following a community effort that engaged students, faculty, staff, trustees and alumni. The Board of Trustees approved the new DEIB statement in January.

"Muhlenberg's commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging is a vital component of both the community we are and the community we strive to be," President Kathleen Haring says. "This revised statement reflects the knowledge and understanding we've gained in recent years and charges each of us with being actively engaged in making Muhlenberg a place where everyone experiences a sense of belonging and connection."

Members of the campus community called for and contributed to the College's first diversity statement, which the board approved in 2014.

Work on the new DEIB statement began in 2020 with a charge from Haring to reflect and include experiences from across Muhlenberg's diverse community. In 2021, the President's Diversity Advisory Council (PDAC) launched conversations with students, faculty and staff as well as with trustees and the College's Alumni Board about how to better represent Muhlenberg community members and their sense of inclusion, equity and belonging in the statement. In November, PDAC hosted an open forum to solicit community feedback on the draft statement.

"When we asked the community to share their experiences of inclusion at Muhlenberg, it was clear that everyone felt most included when they were authentically connected within the community and had a sense of being part of something bigger than themselves," Associate Provost, Chief Diversity Officer and PDAC Chair Brooke Vick says. "At their core, these were stories about relationships and belonging. We knew then that our revised institutional statement had to include a focus on broadening and deepening experiences of belonging for everyone."

"So much of what we understand about inclusion, equity, diversity and anti-racism and how to build and sustain inclusive, diverse communities has evolved since the College's previous statement on diversity was approved. It was important that the revision process was inclusive and that the content of the new statement aligned with our contemporary understanding of the work ahead," Vick adds. "I am so proud of the collaborative efforts of so many across the College that helped develop a statement we can be proud of. I'm also grateful to all members of the Muhlenberg community, past and present, who laid the foundation for this work by developing the first statement on diversity for the College and setting us on this path with the first Diversity Strategic Plan in 2014."

Visit muhlenberg.edu/DEIBupdate to read the statement.

Senior Named Part of ProPublica's 2022 Class of Emerging Reporters



In September, Alex Caban-Echevarria '23 learned that she was selected as part of the 2022 class of ProPublica Emerging Reporters. The investigative journalism outlet selected eight promising college journalists from backgrounds that are underrepresented in the field for this mentorship and networking program. Her mentor is Brett Murphy, a ProPublica reporter, who joins the ranks of eight Muhlenberg faculty and staff Caban-Echevarria considers to be mentors.

"Everyone was joking with me, like, 'Oh, you have a ninth mentor now?'" she says. "But he's someone outside [Muhlenberg], doing the work in the field where I aspire to be ... They're all cheering me on. They want me to succeed."

Caban-Echevarria, a double major in media & communication and English, has faculty advisors from each of those departments, plus three mentors via the Graduate School Preparatory Program. She's remained close with the advisor she was assigned through the Emerging Leaders Program as a first-year student and, through her involvement in Greek life, has become close with the College's fraternity and sorority advisor.

Then there's Lecturer of Media & Communication Sara Vigneri, advisor to *The Muhlenberg Weekly* and the *Allentown Voice*, a "community-focused journalism lab," per its website, that "aims to tackle issues that affect the people of the city, particularly those who have seen a large investment in their city with tax-subsidized revitalization projects that haven't made much of an impact on their daily lives." Caban-Echevarria interned with the *Allentown Voice* last summer and learned of the ProPublica opportunity from Vigneri.

As part of the ProPublica program, Caban-Echevarria Zooms with Murphy monthly and will meet him, plus the other seven students in her cohort and their mentors, at the National Institute for Computer-Assisted Reporting conference in Nashville this March. Meanwhile, she is navigating the process of applying to graduate schools for journalism, with the help of her mentoring team. —MK

Five Faculty Granted Tenure

These faculty were recently promoted to associate professor by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of President Kathleen Harring.



Andrew Ardizzoia (music) helps young composers determine what they want to achieve, then provides the techniques, advice and models that move them toward that goal. Ardizzoia earned his B.M. from the University of the Pacific, his M.M. from Arizona State University and his D.M.A. from The Hartt School at University of Hartford.



Giancarlo Cuadra (biology) has teaching goals that include increasing retention of underrepresented groups in the sciences and making science as understandable and enjoyable as possible. His research focuses on the effects of electronic cigarettes on the oral environment. He earned his B.A. in biology and Ph.D. in microbiology from Binghamton University and completed a postdoctoral fellowship in host-bacteria interactions at the University of Florida.



Matthieu de Wit (neuroscience) teaches courses on cognitive and systems neuroscience. In his lab, he and his students ask questions about the role of the brain in the production of behavior and cognition in human beings. He received his Drs. (M.S.) from the University of Amsterdam and his Ph.D. from The University of Hong Kong and completed a postdoctoral fellowship at the Moss Rehabilitation Research Institute.



Tineke D'Haeseleer (history) is a historian of premodern China, with a particular interest in medieval China's foreign relations. Her current research project traces the development of the Sinosphere in the first millennium, when the foundations were laid for what we now know as "East Asia." She earned her Licentiate in Sinology from the KU Leuven in Belgium and her Ph.D. from the University of Cambridge.



Alexandra Frazer (psychology) teaches courses related to methodology and statistics and in cognitive psychology and cognitive science. Her interests include psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, the representation of conceptual knowledge, memory, attention and language use in society and by the media. Frazer received her B.A. and M.A. in psychology from Northern Arizona University and her Ph.D. in psychology from Lehigh University.



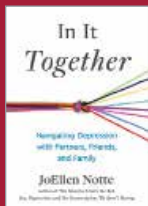
Tom Dunkel '72
White Knights in the Black Orchestra: The Extraordinary Story of the Germans Who Resisted Hitler
 Hachette Book Group,
 448 pages

In this narrative nonfiction book, Dunkel tells the story of some members of the Nazi resistance before and during World War II.



Paul McEwan
 (media & communication,
 film studies)
Cinema's Original Sin: D.W. Griffith, American Racism and the Rise of Film Culture
 University of Texas Press,
 272 pages

McEwan examines the long and shifting history of the reception of D. W. Griffith's profoundly racist epic, *The Birth of a Nation*.



JoEllen Nottle '01
In It Together: Navigating Depression with Partners, Friends and Family
 Thornapple Press,
 272 pages

This insightful guidebook was informed by interviews with more than 200 people coping with depression and features practical tips and real-life examples.



Allison Went '09
The Player Piano and Musical Labor: The Ghost in the Machine
 Routledge, 164 pages

Wente, an associate professor of music at Elon University, examines the rise and fall of the player piano in early 20th-century society and connects it to the digital technologies of today.

Turning Off-Broadway Upside Down

Nick Flatto '10, the co-lead producer and director of *Stranger Sings! The Parody Musical*, used to act. His last role, in 2019, was in *South Pacific* at Cape Cod's Cape Playhouse, where a castmate introduced him to Jonathan Hogue, the *Stranger Sings* writer. Flatto had assisted multiple Broadway directors and "it had become apparent to me that shaping the whole story, not just one role, was my true passion and skill set," he says. Flatto, a theatre and dance double major at Muhlenberg, and Hogue have now collaborated on the show, inspired by the Netflix series *Stranger Things*, through two off-Broadway runs. The latter run began last September and has now been extended twice (most recently through April 30) due to its popularity. Flatto also helped bring on board fellow Mules Zachary Spiegel '11, the show's casting director, and Kathleen Gallardo '19, its production stage manager.



Muhlenberg Magazine What have you learned from your work on *Stranger Sings*?

Nick Flatto '10 It's been a great example of the power of recognizing a truly magical project waiting to blossom and using all the skills I learned from Muhlenberg to help make it grow. Our first run was mid-pandemic 2021 and there wasn't much interest from established producers to take on the risk of new theatre, so a group of us got together and self-produced the show. The run was a success, won multiple awards and helped us secure our current co-lead producing team who have taken everything to a new level that we couldn't have imagined possible two years ago.

MM How did you choose to bring on fellow alumni?

NF One of the greatest aspects of being on the 'other side of the table' is that I can now help open doors for others. When we were looking for a casting director, I knew we needed alum Zachary Spiegel because he has created a name for himself by championing diversity and always putting actors first. With Kathleen Gallardo, I researched her resume on LinkedIn, and Muhlenberg College and all of our favorite professors appeared. Her



PHOTOS BY EVAN ZIMMERMAN AT MURPHYMADE

interview was amazing and I knew because of the joint history and skillset that she learned at Muhlenberg she would excel at the job. Both of them have been integral to the success of the show.

MM What did the extensions of the second run mean to the show's team?

NF Our show really started to take off with multiple sell-out shows in December, so it was really satisfying and exciting to be able to announce our extensions and more life for the production. At Playhouse 46, our immersive set is a space where fellow sci-fi nerds, musical theatre lovers and those longing for '80s nostalgia can come and laugh together and feel at home. The energy before the show even begins is palpable and every audience I experience during the extensions feels extra special because they almost didn't get the chance to see it.





MURAL BY SUMMER WHITLEY '24

Muhlenberg Receives Hunger-Free Campus+ Designation

The Pennsylvania Office of the First Lady and Department of Education granted Muhlenberg the Hunger-Free Campus+ designation, making it one of 26 institutions statewide in that category.

"I am exceptionally proud of the strategic efforts and investments we have made over the past several years to address financial hardship on our campus in a more holistic and systemic way," says Vice President for College Life and Dean of Students Allison Williams. "Receiving this new designation is an honor and is important to our work to bring visibility to food security issues on college campuses like Muhlenberg."

The Hunger-Free Campus initiative launched this year with the goal of advancing college students' food security efforts across the state. To earn the state's Hunger-Free Campus designation, an institution must meet certain criteria, including providing direct access to food to students and assisting students who are eligible for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program benefits. The Hunger-Free Campus+ designation is for "institutions that are implementing additional innovative solutions to address student hunger and other basic needs for their campus community," per its website.

Muhlenberg debuted the M.U.L.E. (Muhlenberg Useful Living Essentials) Community Cabinet, a food pantry that provides nonperishable food items as well as hygiene products, in August 2019. Additionally, Dining Services has implemented a meal-swipe donation program, allowing students to share unused meals with peers. And, the Berg Bites program allows students to opt in to receive push notifications when food is available after on-campus catered events, which reduces both hunger and food waste. —MK

Todd Lineburger Named Vice President for Communications and Marketing

Following a national search, President Kathleen Harring appointed seasoned higher education communications and marketing leader and strategist Todd Lineburger as vice president for communications and marketing. In the role, Lineburger will serve as the chief communication and marketing officer and will oversee internal and external communications strategy, branding, creative and digital strategy, media relations and crisis management for the College. He started at Muhlenberg on February 15.

Beginning in 2018, Lineburger served as associate vice president and special advisor

for strategic advancement communications at Rutgers University Foundation. In those roles, he drove integrated marketing and communications strategy, directed creative services and digital marketing efforts and helped lead public relations and crisis communications efforts. These included the branding and marketing of the university's Scarlet Promise Grants and the Rutgers Hall of Distinguished Alumni, among others. Lineburger previously served as director of advancement communications for Franklin & Marshall College, acting as a key leader on the college's communications team.



A Hands-On Experience With History



Trexler Library holds one of the masterpieces of 20th-century publishing: a complete set of *The North American Indian* by Edward Curtis. This 20-volume set, together with the accompanying 20 portfolios of additional photographic images, provides a matchless documentary record of the cultures of the Indigenous peoples of North America. The volumes were published from 1907 through 1930. Financial constraints resulted in fewer than 300 sets being printed. Muhlenberg's copy was originally owned by General Harry C. Trexler.

Assistant Professor of History Jacqueline Antonovich utilized the set in her History of the American West course last fall. In the course, students examine the experiences of Indigenous peoples under colonization, including the pressure for them to assimilate into Anglo-normative culture. At the same time, Native American culture was often romanticized and seen as something that needed to be "preserved," as exemplified by the Curtis collection.

Through more than 1,500 images, together with recounted folktales, legends, traditions and ways of life, students were able to analyze the depiction of the lives of the Indigenous peoples as captured by Curtis. They considered questions like: *Can we trust that Curtis is a reliable narrator? Can we find resistance to colonization (and to Curtis himself) from Indigenous peoples within the collection? What does it mean that this collection was only available to people of great wealth if the goal was to preserve culture?*

"One of the things I love about working at Muhlenberg is the opportunity to work with our talented librarians and our surprisingly rich archival collection," Antonovich says. "[Special Collections & Archives Librarian] Susan [Falciani Maldonado] is really fantastic at pinpointing how our collections might enrich the courses we teach."

Above left, Amina Beasley '23 works with the archives as part of Antonovich's class; above right, one of the set's 20 volumes

If you have any items of interest to the Muhlenberg archives, please contact susanfalciani@muhlenberg.edu.

Q&A

10 Questions With ... Ricki Askin '04

Senior manager of commercial music & creative licensing at TikTok, Brooklyn, New York

3

What three songs best describe you?

"Everything in Its Right Place" by Radiohead
"Everybody Wants to Rule the World" by Tears for Fears
"Learning to Fly" by Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers

1

Describe what you do in five words or less. Brands' music activations on TikTok

2

When did you know you wanted to work in music supervision and licensing?

Music supervision wasn't on my radar until a few years into my entertainment career. I have always been moved by music in content and remember specific songs in specific scenes from my childhood. I just didn't know it was an option!

4

What is your favorite place?

The Rockies on a sunny fall day

5

What are you secretly good at?

Name that tune.

6

What's the best piece of advice you have received and who said it?

"If everyone threw their problems out on the table, you'd want to take your own back." My grandmother told me that. It's a different way of saying everyone is battling their own battle, which also leads me to remember to lead with kindness.

7

What is your greatest fear?

Letting fear hold me back and not reaching my potential

8

What historical figure do you most admire?

Ruth Bader Ginsburg. I think of how much she was able to accomplish for women in this country in a cut-throat man's world. Her perseverance, sacrifice and being deeply rooted in good is a north star for me.

9

What question should we have asked you?

What non-living artist do you most wish you could've seen live?

10

What's the answer?

I should probably say Queen or the Beatles but really it's Nick Drake or Elliott Smith for me.



Learn more about Askin's career and her work at TikTok at muhlenberg.edu/rickiaskin.

Muhlenberg Launches Graduate Certificate in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion; Master's in Medical Leadership

The Muhlenberg College School of Graduate Studies has announced a graduate certificate in diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) and a master's in medical leadership. Both programs' first cohorts of students will begin taking classes in the 2023-2024 academic year.

The DEI certificate program will develop leaders who ensure diverse, equitable and inclusive values become fundamentally woven into an organizational culture. Students will encounter faculty and subject matter experts who will create learning experiences that will

deepen knowledge and application through case studies, scenarios, reflection, projects and discussion.

The master's in medical leadership, developed in consultation with leading health-care executives, is for physicians and clinicians in emerging executive and administrative roles. The program is designed to help health-care professionals develop their careers and identities as leaders and prepare them to succeed in executive positions that drive system-wide change in complex health-care organizations.

Why I Study ... the management of arts nonprofits

Professor of Business Roland Kushner



When I was a kid, there was always music in my home. My father and older brother were violinists; I played guitar and sang (and

still do). I had an interest in folk music. While I was dropping in and out of college at Carleton University in Ottawa, I had a show on the campus radio station. I started traveling to folk, bluegrass and old-time music festivals. The organizers were community nonprofits. I started to pay attention to them because that's where the music I was interested in was.

I moved to Bethlehem, my wife's hometown, in 1980, finished my bachelor's degree and immediately went on for an MBA at Lehigh University. As a student, I had the opportunity to work with dozens of local businesses through Lehigh's

Small Business Development Center. Some of those were arts nonprofits I've stayed involved with to this day.

As I was finishing my MBA, somebody told me, "There's a lawyer in Bethlehem who's trying to start a music festival." That led to me being hired at Musikfest [now the country's largest free music festival] as its director for the first four years. Then, I felt the call of scholarship. I returned to Lehigh for a Ph.D. part-time while working as director of development for the Bach Choir of Bethlehem.

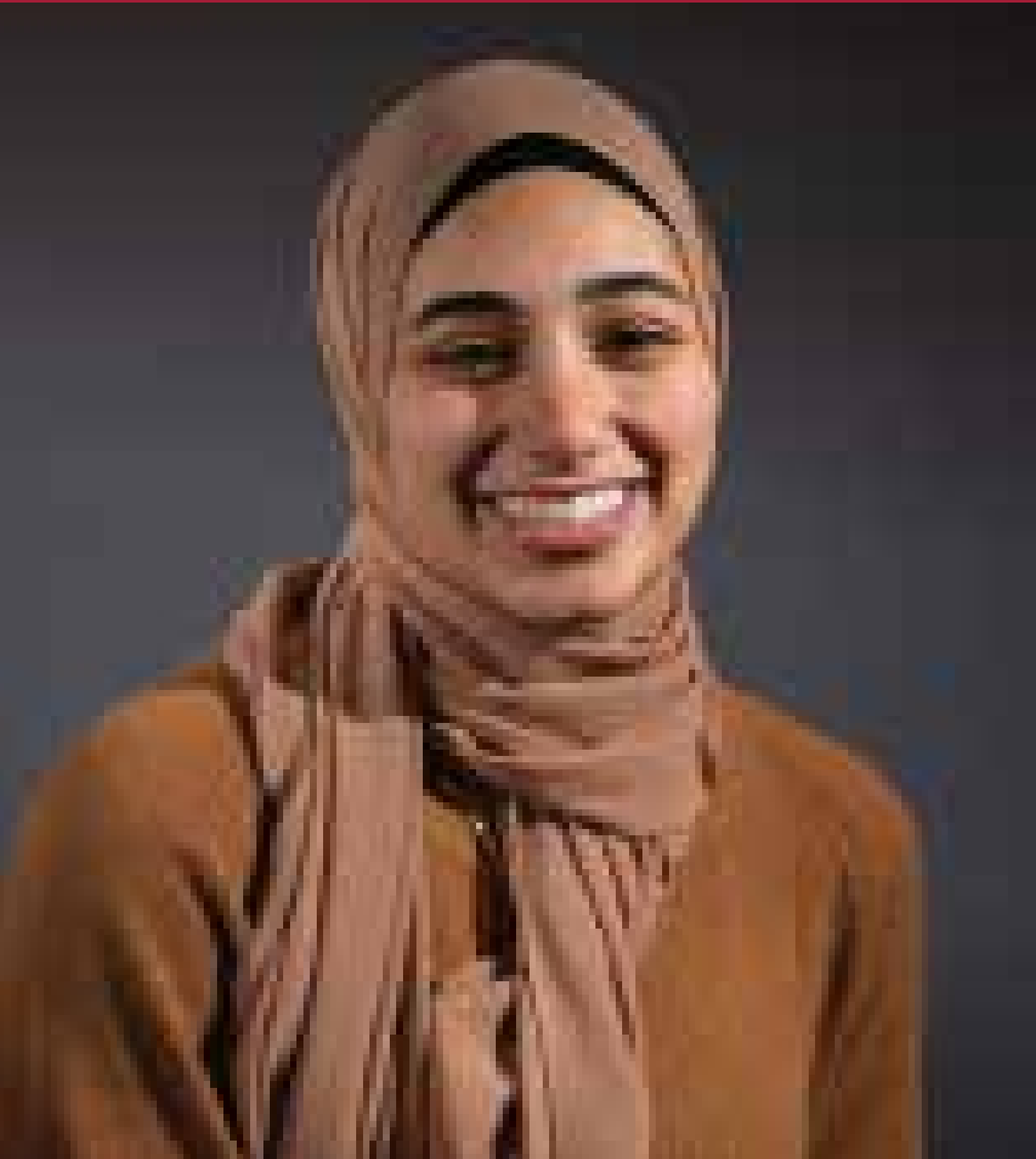
I focused my doctoral studies on nonprofit arts organizations, specifically on organizational effectiveness. One organization that I knew well did some things really well and some things that were just atrocious. I wondered, "How are both of these things happening at once?" I identified some characteristics that could be measured and did a deep dive into 19 organizations. The most effective organizations were structured really differently from

one another, but the people working in the best organizations believed in the structure.

After earning my Ph.D., I worked in academia and had my own consulting practice. I had a steady relationship with the research office at the nonprofit Americans for the Arts. That led to us creating the National Arts Index, which tracked the performance of the arts alongside the economy over the course of a decade. When I came to Muhlenberg, I was able to get students engaged with that research.

When the pandemic hit, my research pivoted to its impact on the arts. Some effects were transient; some were permanent. For example, the digitization of artistic media: I'm a fan of the live performing arts, of the in-person experience. But some of the supply of the arts is being provided digitally, so more people are sitting on their couches instead of out in front of the performers. Now, I'm thinking about what's next.

Personally Speaking...



Nour Yousry '23

Prehealth public health major and anthropology minor, Shankweiler Scholar, Watchung, New Jersey

She was interested in public health before it was cool ...

"I always like to say that I'm an 'OG' public health major. I knew throughout high school that I wanted to pursue public health in college, mainly because it's very interdisciplinary. I truly believe that public health is the study of life. It brings together aspects of medicine, epidemiology and biology, but also economics, anthropology and sociology, to tell the story of why we live the way we live and why health carries out in the way that it does in our communities. Obviously, the COVID-19 pandemic coming towards the end of my freshman year further solidified the importance of public health. The intersectionality of all of it just came to life."

... but she discovered anthropology as a Muhlenberg student.

"In the fall semester of my sophomore year, I was fulfilling a general academic requirement and I'd heard great things about a class called Cultural Anthropology. I took that course with [Assistant Professor of Anthropology Casey James] Miller online, when we were in Zoom University mode. It was phenomenal. It touched a lot on public health while also hosting conversations on the study of people and culture. I became very interested in anthropology. Shortly after, I took another course called Medicine and Culture. It gave me a deeper breadth of the importance of anthropology, so I decided to minor in it and pursue further courses."

She served as the Muhlenberg College Emergency Medical Services (MCEMS) captain in 2022.

"My journey with EMS began in the winter of 2017, when I wanted to give back to my home community and joined the Watchung Rescue Squad. At the time, I wasn't certified, but I was able to ride on an ambulance rig, get patient care experience and learn important skills. I later went on to get my certification as an emergency medical technician, an EMT. My first semester here, in the fall of 2019, I applied to join MCEMS and was accepted. I currently hold EMT licenses in New Jersey and Pennsylvania. With MCEMS, I was previously able to serve as treasurer and served as captain in 2022. As captain, I was able to get really close with my fellow executive board members and work to adopt more EMTs and trainees into the organization. I still also work shifts and serve as a crew chief. Being able to help students and staff at their most vulnerable times is a very, very rewarding experience."

She's a co-founder of HABIBI (Hebrew-Arabic Buddies Interfaith Berg Initiative) and a leader in the Interfaith Council.

"Throughout all my years of schooling prior to Muhlenberg, I was always in an Islamic school setting. When I became a student here, I felt a responsibility to share my experiences with people of other faiths. Through that, I came to learn a lot about other faiths and faith traditions as well. Last fall, with [Director of the Leffell Center for Jewish Student Life] Ira Blum '10 serving as our advisor, Hadas Seltzer '24, Eden Chanko '23 and I co-founded HABIBI. Habibi is an Arabic word that means 'beloved,' and it's also been adopted into the Hebrew language. The main mission of the club is to bridge-build between the Islamic and Judaic faiths, through linguistics as well as through cuisine and culture. Additionally, this past summer, Or-El Ankori '25, Aidan White '25 and I had the opportunity to attend Interfaith America, a national interfaith conference in Chicago, with our chaplain, Janelle Neubauer. We learned about how interfaith work can be carried out in a college setting. Through that experience, we formed the Interfaith Council. Interfaith work solidifies why I love my faith as much as I do, and it further strengthens my courage to speak about Islam, to wear a scarf on this campus more confidently and to be a representative for the Muslim community."

She's interested in pursuing a graduate degree in health policy after Muhlenberg.

"I came to really understand what health policy was and how it played out through taking different public health courses on campus. A lot of our health-care systems are designed to act a certain way based on various local, state and federal health policies. My thesis for my public health culminating undergraduate experience, Infectious Disease Epidemiology, is titled 'Microbes Moving Mountains: An Evaluation of How Politics Affected COVID-19 and Public Health.' There's no doubt in my mind that health care and medicine are becoming more politicized than they've ever been before. The field of health policy really gives me the opportunity to connect my passions for activism and social justice while also advocating for people's health at a broader community level. I see a lot of potential for impactful change in that field and am very excited to pursue public health policy in my graduate studies."

LATE FALL & EARLY SPRING SPEAKERS & EVENTS

Elisabeth Anker

Ugly Freedoms

Anker, associate professor of American studies and political science and director of the Film Studies Program at George Washington University, discussed the ugliness of freedom, from the history of slavery to the January 6 insurrection.

Black Women's Reproductive Rights Around the World Panel

This panel discussion was the first event in the Beyond Borders: Global Blackness and Current Events series, which focuses on expanding conversations around Blackness beyond the U.S. Five scholars and activists discussed Black women's reproductive rights in a global context before a discussion with the audience.



Ramu Damodaran

Hope, Opportunity and Despair: Speculating the Future of United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals

Damodaran, who was part of the United Nations Department of Global Communications until 2021, addressed how climate change, the pandemic, the global economic downturn, regional conflicts, migration and refugee crises are challenging the fulfillment of the SDGs.

Carolyn Forché

Forché, an award-winning poet, visited campus as part of the Living Writers course and series, which brings authors to campus for public readings and book signings plus visits to the Living Writers course.



Jen Fry

Fry is a social justice educator who discussed, through a lens of race, inclusion, intersectionality, diversity and equity, how far we have come and how far we have yet to go in regard to Title IX.

First Peak Film Festival

This inaugural event, held at Allentown's historic Civic Theatre, featured student films and included awards and talkbacks with the filmmakers.



First Peak Film Festival

Rangina Hamidi

Schools and Madrassas: The Battle for Education in Afghanistan

Hamidi is an Afghan American writer, educator, social activist and politician known for her tireless efforts to advocate for the rights of women, girls and education in Afghanistan.

Horsegirl Concert

The teenage rock trio performed on campus in December, just before their album *Versions of Modern Performance* made best-of-the-year lists from *Rolling Stone*, *Stereogum* and *The New York Times*.

(&Medea) Staged Reading

Sixteen student actors collaborated with Jess Shoemaker, an established playwright in residence, as she workshopped a new version of her play (&Medea). The process culminated in a staged reading on campus.



Nnedi Okorafor

Emanuela Kucik, assistant professor of English and Africana studies, spoke with author Okorafor about her novel *Noor*, an Africanfuturist solarpunk science fiction novel, as part of the Living Writers series.

Reset: New Dances Concert

Ten student choreographers and more than 60 dancers, working across genres (tap, hip-hop, jazz, contemporary, modern and improvisation), presented works that explored personal experiences and narratives through movement.



Jia Tolentino

Tolentino, a staff writer for *The New Yorker* and the author of the acclaimed essay collection *Trick Mirror*, was the sixth and final guest in the Fall 2022 Living Writers series.

Muhlenberg in the Media

President Kathleen Harring published an op-ed in *Higher Ed Dive*.

"President Speaks: How colleges can help turn out the student vote" highlighted Muhlenberg's successful team effort to boost student-voter rates, which are now among the highest in the country.

Chrysan Cronin (public health) appeared in *The Washington Post* and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*.

She was interviewed for the *Post* article "You're probably not cleaning these 11 very germey spots," which was picked up by numerous international news outlets, and for the *Inquirer* article "Sports bars can be great places for catching the Phillies and Eagles — and COVID-19."

Daniel Klem (biology) was honored for his research on bird-window collisions.

Klem is one of 51 nominees worldwide nominated for The Indianapolis Prize, a leading animal conservation award. The news was covered in *The Indianapolis Star*. Klem's research was also featured in the *Christian Science Monitor* article "Cities are killing birds. Activists and architects have solutions."

Kathleen Bachynski (public health) lent her expertise on concussions and sports-related brain injuries to several outlets.

She was interviewed for the TV segment "Women left out of concussion research," which ran on 40 news stations nationwide, and for the *Slate* article "The Cult of Bike Helmets." She wrote an op-ed for *STAT* titled "International concussion guidelines must protect all athletes' brains, not just professionals."

Emanuela Kucik (English, Africana studies) appeared on the *Empowered* podcast.

Kucik was a guest for the segment "The Arts Are Crucial."

Melissa Falk (admissions) was a guest on the *Unorthodox* podcast.

Falk discussed the long history of Jewish students at Muhlenberg in the segment "Bright Lights: Celebrating Hanukkah with eight inspiring stories from the Jewish world."

Two outlets interviewed Francesca Coppa (English, film studies) about fanfiction.

Coppa was a source for *The Daily Beast* article "Is It Time We Rethink the Rules of Fanfiction?" and *The Telegraph* (UK) article "How writing fanfiction can turn into movie-making gold."

A tweet by Jacqueline Antonovich (history) was featured in *Business Insider*.

The tweet appeared in the article "Cheating on your college essay with ChatGPT won't get you good grades, say professors — but AI could make education fairer."

Election Season Brought Significant Attention to Muhlenberg Polls



From September through November 2022, the expertise of Christopher Borick, professor of political science and director of the Muhlenberg College Institute of Public Opinion (MCIPO), as well as his polling data for the Pennsylvania midterm elections, was in big demand.

The numbers tell a compelling tale of how Borick spent much of his time last fall: nearly 100 interviews with reporters. More than 3,000 resulting digital and print articles as well as TV and radio broadcasts. An estimated audience reach of up to 16 billion people worldwide via broadcast news outlets (including ABC, CBS and NBC News), cable news outlets (including CNN, C-SPAN and Fox News), public news outlets (including NPR and PBS), national print and digital publications (including *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post* and *The Hill*) and international outlets in Europe, Asia and Australia.

Three 2022 Pennsylvania midterm election polls released last fall by the MCIPO — focused on Pennsylvania's high-profile gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races as well as the state's close 7th Congressional District race — were of intense interest locally, state-wide, nationally and around the globe.

"My job is to give an analytical framework to elections," says Borick. "There is a lot of partisan noise related to elections so I try to find some space in between, based on data and analysis."

Since 2016, the accuracy of political polls has been increasingly under the microscope. However, Borick says the traditional academic and media polls for the 2022 midterms were quite accurate — including his own.

"Ultimately, we had a very good cycle in the races we were polling," Borick says. "We're always going to have some errors built in; that's sampling. Sometimes it's a little bit of luck. But our results were fairly predictive of what happened in the races and some of them, like Governor Josh Shapiro and Congresswoman Susan Wild, we hit dead on."

—Kristine Yahna Todaro '84

How Sweet It Is

Emily Bain '15, a French and business administration double major, puts her Muhlenberg education to use every day in her role as the marketing manager for a French chocolatier.

When Emily Bain '15 was in high school in New Jersey, she had a passion for the French language. She dreamed of someday finding a job “that would send me to France for a little bit of time here and there.”

Now, as the marketing manager for the French chocolate company VALRHONA, she travels to Tain-l'Hermitage, France, where the company is headquartered, once a year. The rest of the time, she works remotely from Philadelphia, utilizing what she learned at Muhlenberg as a French and business administration double major every day.

“My boss is French. My COO is French. My coworkers are French. I’m speaking French all the time,” Bain says. “I’m valued for my French there, in addition to my marketing experience and skills.”

A seventh-grade French teacher inspired Bain’s interest in the language, and she studied French throughout high school. She knew she

express her enthusiasm. Bain then learned from her advisor that most French majors would be testing into 400-level classes.

“I came into Muhlenberg pretty naive, which worked to my benefit,” Bain says. “My high school didn’t have really great language programs. If I knew how far off-base I was, maybe it would’ve prevented me from trying to pursue [French].”

McEwan, who appreciated Bain’s passion and drive, became her advisor: “I owe my career and French fluency to her completely,” Bain says. Under McEwan’s direction, Bain doubled up on French classes every semester and took summer courses. She was also studying business with a concentration in marketing, playing on the soccer team as a student-athlete and holding down a work-study job. She built time management skills while juggling it all, with her love of French fueling the fire.

One summer, Bain accompanied McEwan to Montreal for four weeks. She took an immersion course at a local university by day and watched McEwan’s children at night: “She would require me to speak French at the dinner table, which was probably so painful for her, but it was my first immersion experience,” Bain says. “I worked my tail off trying to catch up to my peers who were already at a certain level. And I did.”

Bain also studied abroad in Nantes, France, the spring of her junior year. She chose that program over others because she’d be living with a French host family in a region with few English speakers and taking her classes in French. This experience made Bain fluent, and by the time she was a senior, she was working with her professors, in business and French, to try to determine how she could use French in a career in marketing, her concentration.

“Learning another language is like a bridge into another world. I’m able to communicate and create relationships with people I otherwise never would’ve been able to.”

—EMILY BAIN '15, MARKETING MANAGER FOR THE FRENCH CHOCOLATE COMPANY VALRHONA

wanted to continue in college and become fluent. When she took her placement exam for Muhlenberg, she tested out of the beginner class. She was so excited that she emailed her first-year instructor, Professor of French Eileen McEwan — “in very broken French,” Bain recalls — to

PHOTO BY MARGO REED



Again, it was McEwan who helped make the connection: She told her students about an internship Erin O'Connor '08 was offering at Robert Kacher Selections, an importer of French wines. Bain applied, was selected and spent the first few months after graduation interning with the company in New York City.

"I discovered the world of wine," Bain says. "It really was a perfect marriage of French and marketing. It was a complete dream come true. The entire portfolio was French. I learned a lot about wine and I learned a lot about marketing."

Bain spent the next nearly seven years in the wine industry at Frederick Wildman and Sons, a New York City-based importer and distributor. She began as a public relations and marketing coordinator and was a brand manager by the time she left. She "outgrew the company," she says, and was put on portfolios that weren't

French, limiting her use of the language. She worked with an agency in New York City that specifically caters to job seekers looking for French-speaking jobs, and that's how she found VALRHONA.

VALRHONA primarily sells its chocolate to pastry chefs, and Bain is responsible for communicating with headquarters in France, creating and executing brand strategy, creating marketing materials, organizing events and managing the company's customer loyalty program. Every day, she uses the skills she worked so hard to build during her time at Muhlenberg.

"Learning another language is like a bridge into another world," Bain says. "I'm able to communicate and create relationships with people I otherwise never would've been able to. I think that is so valuable." —MK

Emily Bain '15 is the marketing manager for the French chocolate company VALRHONA.

Feaster Parade

These three brothers, each of them an all-star player at a different position, helped elevate the Muhlenberg football program to national prominence.

Muhlenberg football players often refer to their team as a “brotherhood” because of the strong bonds and sense of togetherness team members enjoy. For three outstanding players in the last decade, it was an actual brotherhood.

When Michael Feaster '22 walked across the field to pick up his plaque as MVP of the Mules' bowl win against Lebanon Valley last November, it ended the “Feaster Era” of Muhlenberg football that began with John Feaster '17 and continued with Frankie Feaster '20.

The three Feaster brothers combined for 11 All-Centennial Conference selections and three All-America nods as Mules. More importantly, they led Muhlenberg to a sparkling 84-22 record, three Centennial Conference (CC) championships, nine postseason berths and nine postseason wins in nine seasons.

“The Feaster family impact has been immense on our program and College,” says Mule head coach Nate Milne.

It all began in late 2012 when John was a senior at Bergen Catholic High School in northern New Jersey. College coaches cycled through the school regularly, and one day Tom Perkovich, then the Mules' offensive coordinator, stopped by and introduced John to Muhlenberg.

“The overnight visit was the key,” recalls John, who currently works in the fashion industry. “After visiting a bunch of different campuses, Muhlenberg felt the most right. You know, you just get that gut feeling that this is the place that you're meant to go and meant to grow at.”

John entered preseason camp as a wide receiver but on the second day was converted to cornerback, a position at which he flourished. A four-year starter, he is the only Mule football player ever named to the All-CC team four straight seasons, finishing his career in the top five in program history in both interceptions (15) and pass breakups (22).

When it came time for Frankie to select a college, his experience attending games to watch his brother play was a big factor. “The Muhlenberg atmosphere engulfed you when you were there,” he says. “I fell in love with the culture, and it was the only school that I really visited.”

The culture, and the opportunity to play two sports, were the big selling points for Frankie. He set numerous school records as a faceoff specialist in lacrosse and reached incredible heights in football after switching from tight end to defensive end late in his freshman season. A two-time All-American and two-time CC defensive player of the year, he set a school record with 34 sacks.

“I guess you can say I didn't have a choice, right?” jokes Michael about his college decision. “No, I always had the opportunity to go wherever I wanted, but at the end of the day, I really didn't have a choice just because of what I'd seen [attending his brothers' games] and what these two guys did for me.”

Michael, who recently accepted a job in capital markets with Vitreous Loan Group, earned All-America honors as a wide receiver in 2021 and

*The Feaster brothers,
John '17, Michael '22
and Frankie '20*



finished his career with 176 receptions, the third-most in program history, including a school-record 104 in one season.

Three brothers, three all-stars at three different positions.

Had COVID not canceled his senior season, Frankie — a physical education teacher and assistant football coach at Bergen Catholic and head boys lacrosse coach at Cedar Grove High School — would have played all four of his college years with a brother as a teammate.

“It’s something I definitely don’t take for granted,” he says. “I cherish those moments every single day. I wish I could go back and play with both of them at the same time.”

As much as the brothers enjoyed playing with each other, there was the inevitable sibling rivalry. When Frankie played tight end, he would on occasion be covered by John in practice.

“It was always a spectacle when it would happen, and everyone’s eyes kind of gravitated there, especially if they knew that Frankie was going out for a pass,” says John. “I’ll be honest, he caught a few on me, but I also knocked most of them down.”

And although Frankie, as a defensive end, never covered Michael downfield, there were times when Michael was in motion and had to try to block Frankie at the line of scrimmage. “It didn’t end well for him, but he let me have it,” says Frankie. “He definitely gave it his all.”

But beyond the sibling rivalry is an incredible sense of pride the Feasters feel about each other, and about a Muhlenberg football program they helped elevate to national stature.

“If I had to do it all over again, I’d do it the exact same way because I truly think Muhlenberg shaped me to who I am today,” says John. “Having my brothers follow in those footsteps is just a really cool experience to know that we share so many of those memories together and we will always have that to fall back on.”

“But now I think I’m known as Frankie and Michael’s brother instead of as John.” —*Mike Falk*

Muhlenberg to Launch Women’s Wrestling Program

Women’s varsity wrestling will be the College’s 23rd varsity sport. A search for a head coach will begin immediately. The program will begin full dual meet competition in the fall of 2024.

“Muhlenberg College is excited to join the small number of colleges and universities across the nation who have added women’s wrestling to expand opportunities for our student-athletes to compete at the highest level,” President Kathleen Harring says. “As a College, we are focused on preparing our students to make their impact, and we’re thrilled that more of our student-athletes will now have the chance to do so in this dynamic sport.”

According to the National Wrestling Coaches Association, since 1994, the number of women who wrestle in high school has grown from 804 to more than 31,000. In 2022, the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics adopted women’s wrestling as a championship sport.

“The Mules have a rich history in the sport of wrestling. Muhlenberg aims to be a leader in the rapid growth of girls’ and women’s wrestling and to help blaze the path for women’s wrestling to be an NCAA championship sport,” Director of Athletics and Recreation Lynn Tubman says. “We are ready to begin welcoming women wrestlers from both our local community and nationwide to join our Mule family.”

With the addition of women’s wrestling, Muhlenberg will have 12 sports for women and 11 for men.

MULE ROUND-UP



MEN’S SOCCER (above) took an unprecedented road to a seventh Centennial Conference (CC) championship. Seeded fifth, the Mules went on the road three times in six days to knock off fourth seed Gettysburg, top seed Franklin & Marshall and third seed Johns Hopkins. Although the win against Hopkins was technically a tie (Muhlenberg won in penalty kicks after a scoreless draw, with Jake Mendelson ’25 delivering the winner), the Mules were the first CC team ever in any sport to “win” three road games in the playoffs.

Goalie Ben Mulford ’26 was named tournament MVP; he stopped 20 shots in three games without allowing a goal ... **FOOTBALL** played in the postseason for the 18th time in the last 22 seasons and earned a win for the fifth straight post-season, toppling Lebanon Valley, 48-21, in the Centennial/MAC Bowl Series ... **VOLLEYBALL** earned its first CC playoff berth since 2018 after improving from 3-7 to 5-5 in the CC ... Adrienne Ellison ’23 finished 34th at the NCAA Metro Regional, giving Muhlenberg at least one all-region honoree in **CROSS COUNTRY** for the 23rd consecutive season ... **WRESTLING** crowned three first-time champions at the CC Championships. Joey Lamparelli ’24 (125), Brandon Bowles ’25 (157) and Anson Dewar ’25 (174) all won their brackets to lead the Mules to a fourth-place finish ... **MEN’S BASKETBALL** clinched a CC playoff berth in the second-to-last week of the season. At press time, the **WOMEN’S BASKETBALL** team was in a strong position to earn a playoff spot as well.

Can Democracy and Capitalism Be Reconciled?

Contemporary developments may pose an unprecedented challenge to both, and hyperpolarization is fueling the fire.

By *Sidney Milkis '72*

This is the right moment to study what is and isn't going well in democratic capitalism, why and what should be done. There have been other important moments in American political history when we've gone through disruptive, transformative changes in the political economy. The last one was during the Great Depression, when Franklin Roosevelt, with support of a fledgling union movement, ushered in the New Deal, with its pioneering regulatory controls on business and social welfare programs. There is another major transformation underway now, which started in the 1990s and peaked in the last decade or so, caused by the disruption in the political economy due to globalization. Globalization and the rise of a service economy has resulted in a 23 percent decline in manufacturing jobs in the past three decades, contributing to the most serious inequality we've had since the late 1920s.

Indeed, contemporary developments may pose an unprecedented challenge to democracy and capitalism, both of which are under siege. For example, the commitment to democratic socialism, demanding a substantial role for the state in redressing inequality, seems to be seriously eroding the deeply rooted stigma against socialism in the United States (a September Pew poll showed that 57 percent of Democrats and Democratic-leaning voters had a positive view of socialism). On the right, we've seen a turn towards sectarian nationalism, where conservatives no longer believe in limited government. They're going after "woke corporations" in a way that seems to be a major departure from the kind of conservatism that blossomed in the 1980s.

Although all major transformations in American politics have been deeply contentious,

the current confluence of battles over American identity, rooted in the culture wars of the 1960s, and economic disruption marks the most combustible period of American history since the Civil War. Contemporary party wars, which scholars and pundits dub the "Cold Civil War," have gone so far that each side views the other as an existential threat to their way of life.

Globalization is the clearest economic determinant of our polarization. The major problem is the loss of jobs, particularly jobs that the working class had long depended on that allowed people without a college education to rise into the middle class. Some of those jobs were lost overseas while others were lost to automation. The decline has been place-based, largely in small towns and rural areas. It's devastated whole communities, and people in those areas often feel like all the attention has been paid to minorities and undocumented immigrants while their economic opportunities and the values of their hometowns have been ignored or treated with contempt.

These perceptions are not entirely accurate; because rural areas and small towns have a disproportionate number of seniors and poor, they get more social welfare benefits and pay less in taxes than do urban areas. Yet it has long been a cardinal creed of American democracy that jobs are a critical dimension of an individual's dignity and citizenship. Rural and small-town men in their prime working years are much more likely to be unemployed than their metropolitan counterparts.

Some progressives have expressed hope that President Joe Biden's economic program might help turn down the temperature on, if not resolve, what feeds hyperpolarization. He's been much

The current confluence of battles over American identity and economic disruption marks the most combustible period of American history since the Civil War.



ILLUSTRATION BY ISTOCK.COM/GRAFISSIMO

more sympathetic to the working class and to those areas that feel left behind than have recent Democratic presidents. Biden’s administration has enacted some intriguing “place-based” economic programs that have departed from the Democratic party’s commitment to globalization in a way that has not been sufficiently appreciated.

For example, a lot of jobs related to the semiconductor industry had previously been shipped out, particularly to China. Biden’s semiconductor legislation (the CHIPS and Science Act) puts a lot of money into enhancing the semiconductor industry in the United States, which would create a lot of good jobs that would require training but not a college degree. The Inflation Reduction Act, the first substantial climate change bill that the federal government has enacted, also provides government incentives for creating good jobs that would establish a stronger infrastructure for a green economy.

Another highlight of Biden’s policies has been the Child Tax Credit in the American Rescue Plan, which provided a lot of money for people up into the middle class to help them support their children. It cut children’s poverty in half in 2021, registering the lowest rate on record. The Build Back Better bill, had it passed, would have made

this effective antipoverty measure a more permanent program. A lot of Republicans, such as Utah Senator Mitt Romney, have expressed interest in the Child Tax Credit because it’s a family-oriented program. There may just be enough common ground for some convergence between the parties during the next two years.

The divisions between liberals and conservatives are too stark to expect an immediate healing of a fractured nation. However, if the federal government manages to combine the enhancement of the welfare state with some job programs that help restore the vitality of nonurban America, our crisis of democracy might become less dangerous. The battles over American identity are not only about economic matters, but they are fueled by economic deprivation and resentments, which populist demagogues are all too ready to exploit.

Sidney Milkis ’72 is the White Burkett Miller Professor in the Department of Politics at the University of Virginia; the co-author of What Happened to the Vital Center? Presidentialism, Populist Revolt and the Fracturing of America; and the co-director of the multidisciplinary UVA Project on Democracy and Capitalism.



GLOBAL EXPLORATION

By Meghan Kita

MUHLENBERG ENCOURAGES STUDENTS to pursue the transformative experience of studying abroad, and more than half of graduates do. Study abroad builds critical thinking skills and adaptability, says Provost Laura Furge, as well as an understanding of the location's language and culture: "This, in turn, builds empathy for others, the ability to ask questions and listen better and greater understanding of the self, as well."

Executive Director of Global Education Monija Amani can attest to the intellectual, social and personal growth students experience: "I see students when they go abroad and when they come back and I can tell the difference," she says. "Study abroad allows students to imagine the world outside of where they are and where they live. While students develop critical skills to help them succeed in today's interdependent world, they are also compelled to gain a deeper understanding of themselves and of cultures, customs and languages different from their own. Students return home ready to tackle the challenges that lie ahead of them."

Here, find a glimpse into global education at Muhlenberg.



MUHLENBERG OFFERS 137 APPROVED OFF-CAMPUS PROGRAMS OUTSIDE THE U.S.

Some of the locations where individual students are studying now include Bhutan, Jordan, Morocco, Switzerland and Taiwan. Italy is hosting the most students (35), followed by Ireland (nine) and the Czech Republic (eight). Students may choose immersive programs, where all courses are taught in the native language, or programs with courses taught in English. Some programs allow students to stay with local hosts, while others place students in apartments or residence halls. Certain programs have internship or research experiences built in. Students who receive financial aid, as the majority of Muhlenberg students do, may apply it toward semester-long programs.



SOUTH KOREA

GRACE SELLINGER '23, DANCE AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES DOUBLE MAJOR

"I chose to study abroad in South Korea because I wanted to experience a culture that was very different from the one I was raised in. I wanted to be exposed to new experiences and a new way of living my life and gain a new understanding of the world I live in. Studying abroad in South Korea definitely changed me for the better. I am much more confident in being independent, and my problem-solving skills have skyrocketed. I am secure in my own identity, and I am appreciative of the layers that make up a person's identity."



PHOTO BY GRACE SELLINGER '23



PHOTO BY PENELOPE REIN '23





PHOTO BY VISIONINJA PHOTOGRAPHY

MUHLENBERG OFFERS BOTH SEMESTER-LONG AND SHORT-TERM STUDY ABROAD OPPORTUNITIES

(AND SOME STUDENTS TAKE
ADVANTAGE OF BOTH)

Muhlenberg Integrative Learning Abroad (MILA) opportunities pair a semester-long course on campus with a travel experience related to the coursework at the semester's end. Five MILAs are taking place this semester, with travel to Bangladesh, Costa Rica, Ireland, Italy and Panama. Because faculty travel with students, these short-term programs offer more support than many semester-long ones. MILAs are an important option for students who may not be able or willing to spend a full semester abroad (including student-athletes, students with jobs and students with less travel experience). Some need-based scholarships are available to support students interested in MILAs.



SOUTH AFRICA

**JESSICA ROSEN '24, A SUSTAINABILITY
STUDIES MAJOR AND INNOVATION
& ENTREPRENEURSHIP MINOR**

"I chose to participate in a short-term study abroad experience because I am graduating in three years and am unable to do a semester abroad. [The Culture, Conflict and Community Development in South Africa MILA in Fall 2022] exposed me to perspectives and life experiences that I would have never been exposed to otherwise. It was extremely valuable to go to South Africa knowing the context and history of the country, to get education about the country and then visit with a group with local connections. We were really immersed into the culture and got to hear a variety of perspectives from people with various identities living in South Africa. I definitely feel better prepared for my classes at Muhlenberg and beyond."



PHOTO BY JOE ROMANO '23

MUHLENBERG OFFERS THREE FACULTY-LED, SEMESTER-LONG PROGRAMS ABROAD IN DUBLIN; FLORENCE, ITALY; AND MAASTRICHT, NETHERLANDS

The programs are each affiliated with a popular area of study: Dublin is for media & communication students, Florence is for theatre and dance students and Maastricht is for business students. These programs build in group cultural activities, and students travel and take some courses together, including one taught by a Muhlenberg faculty member. Dublin also offers for-credit internships for students. The advantage of these programs is the additional support and community for students who may be traveling abroad for the first time.



IRELAND

JOE ROMANO '23, A FILM
STUDIES AND MEDIA &
COMMUNICATION DOUBLE
MAJOR AND DOCUMENTARY
STORYMAKING MINOR

"Being with a faculty member [in Dublin] and having a Muhlenberg class while abroad made me a bit more comfortable about starting the abroad experience. Having the guidance, motivation and education from a Muhlenberg professor helped me get a better grasp on what it meant to be abroad and how to successfully navigate that experience. I learned a lot from people [in Ireland] and I think that is a big component of being abroad. It allowed me to experience something I had never gone through before, especially since I had never traveled much. It pushed me out of my comfort zone in a very good way." 



PHOTO BY RACHEL ALEXANDER '25

This IS THE **LIBERAL** *Arts*

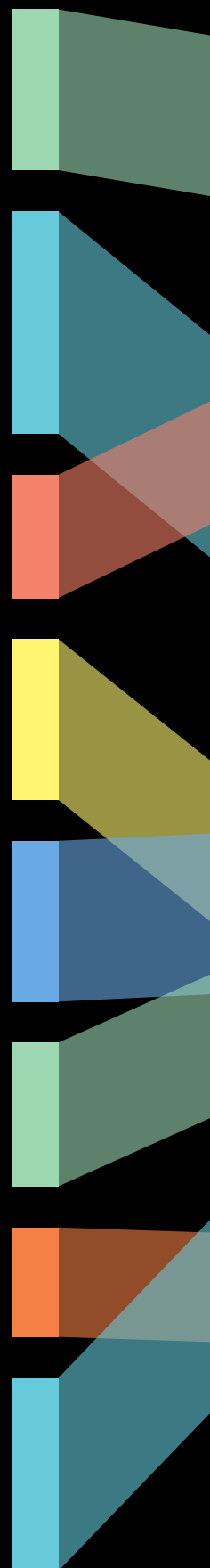
By Meghan Kita

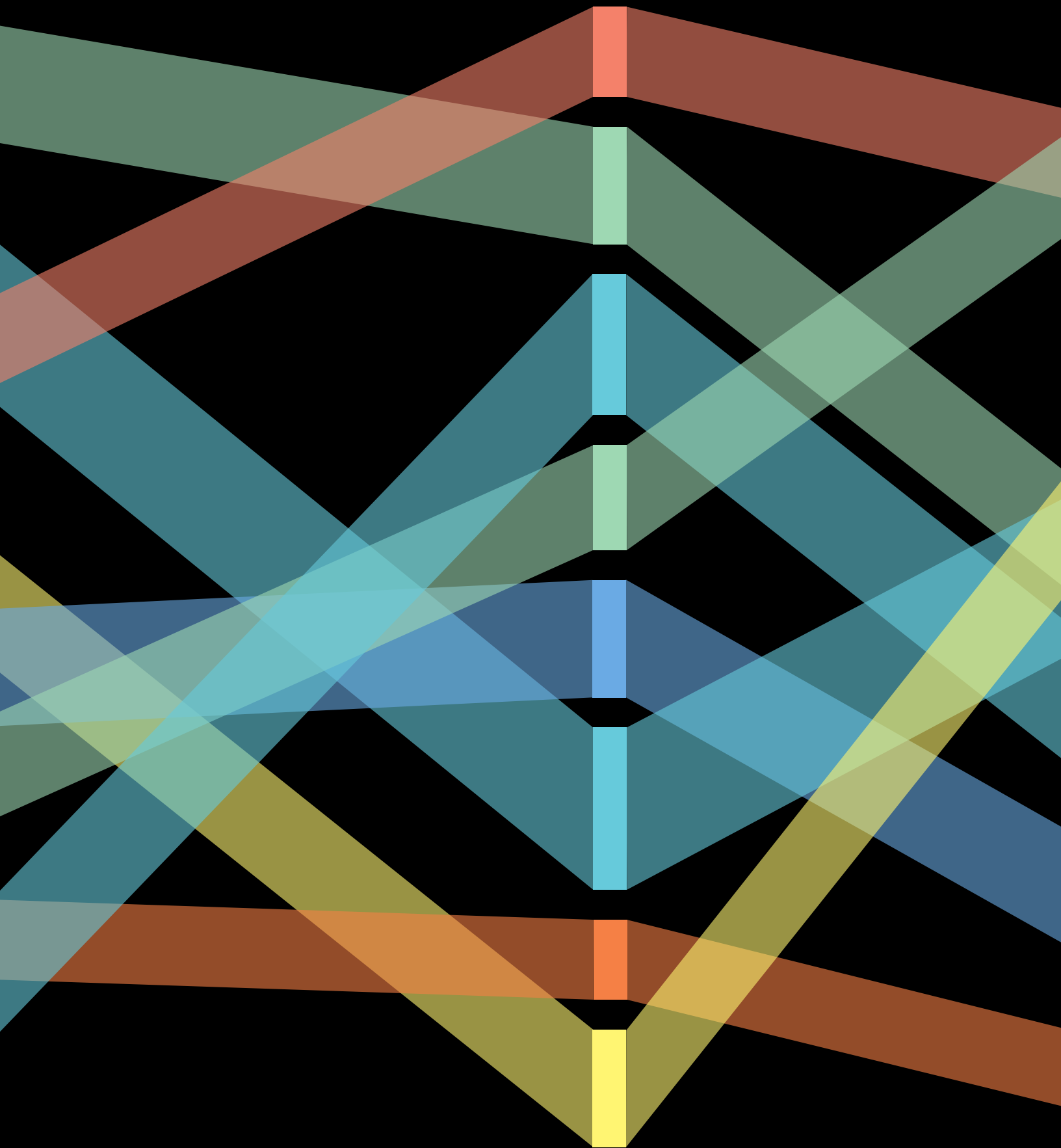
ONE OF THE PROMISES OF A LIBERAL ARTS EDUCATION is that it allows for exploration and well-roundedness. Each student will be exposed to a variety of ideas, ways of thinking and academic disciplines, regardless of what they end up declaring as a major.

How this translates into powerful outcomes is different for each student. Some will come to Muhlenberg unsure of what they want to study and discover a passion that sets their future trajectory. Others will be committed to a certain path — prehealth or prelaw, perhaps, or one within the arts — but will find a second, perhaps very different, field that interests them as much as (or more than) the first.

“At Muhlenberg, the opportunities to engage in this self-discovery process are truly boundless. From conducting research alongside our remarkable faculty to pursuing internships, studying abroad, leading a student organization or serving our broader community, students will gain the experiences they need to apply their knowledge to action,” says President Kathleen Harring. “The deeply interconnected liberal arts education we provide prepares our students to be the thoughtful, nimble and innovative problem solvers our world needs — to make their impact.”

What success looks like is as individual as each student’s experience of the liberal arts. The seven stories that follow are just a small sampling of the tens of thousands of examples of the transformative power of a Muhlenberg education.







When you talk about your own failures, people feel comfortable talking about their own failures and feel motivated to learn and grow from those failures.”

Kash **CALDERÓN '19** **PEDIATRIC NURSE**

In 2022, **Kash Calderón '19** landed his dream job as a pediatric nurse at the Morgan Stanley Children’s Hospital of NewYork-Presbyterian in New York City, where he has volunteered since age 12. There, he gets to connect with young patients not only as a registered nurse but as an acrobatic Spider-Man: He’s been visiting patients dressed as the superhero since 2019 and he has continued, backflips and all, even now that he works there (while off the clock, of course).

At Muhlenberg, Calderón was a public health major and a Latin American & Caribbean studies minor as well as a first-year resident assistant (RA) and later, a hall director. He went on to earn his Master of Science in Nursing from the Johns Hopkins University School of Nursing, the top graduate school nursing program in the country.

These are Calderón’s successes, but he’s equally open about his challenges. His GPA his first semester at Muhlenberg was a 2.7, and it took him four tries to pass his nursing board exam. He shares his story on social media (@mursekash on Instagram and TikTok) to reach aspiring health professionals who may be struggling.

“When you talk about your own failures, people feel comfortable talking about their own failures and feel motivated to learn and grow from those

failures,” Calderón says. “It goes back to my Muhlenberg experience of not being the best student in the beginning and then helping first-year students, as an RA and then a hall director, navigate their academics and extracurriculars.”

Calderón began flourishing at Muhlenberg after he found a passion for public health. He knew he was interested in the health sciences, and the Introduction to Public Health course with Associate Professor and Director of Public Health Chrysan Cronin is where he found his niche. Public health’s interdisciplinary nature and its direct effect on the community appealed to him. He spent three years conducting research with Cronin on radon, a colorless, odorless, carcinogenic gas commonly found in Lehigh Valley homes. Calderón interviewed Spanish-speaking Allentown residents in focus groups meant to gauge awareness of radon and educate on how to mitigate it in their homes.

Cronin helped Calderón identify that nursing would play to his strengths: “I really do connect with my patients on a more personal level than the doctors do,” he says. “They’re assigned to so many patients on the floor that it would be very challenging for them to give each patient the same amount of undivided attention for as long as nurses do.”

Cronin also encouraged Calderón to apply to Johns Hopkins, where she received her master’s and doctorate in public health.

“I didn’t think that I was good enough to even apply,” Calderón says. “The Muhlenberg faculty, they’re very encouraging and they’re very supportive. They see things in you when you can’t even see them in yourself yet.”

One of the ways **Kristina Stefanelli McMahon '96** connects advertisers to consumers is by putting on events. For example, during her time as a senior associate publisher at *Women's Health* magazine, she launched an annual 10K in New York City that built visibility for the brand as well as for the advertisers sponsoring the race. As an alum who was drawn to Muhlenberg partially for its vibrant arts culture, she sees plenty of parallels between her work and her lifelong passion for performance.

"Producing an event is like producing a show," says McMahon, who was a history major and dance minor at Muhlenberg. "All the preparation and the work leading up to it is identical. You do all this storyboarding of exactly what you're going to be doing and figuring out, what is the vision? What is the whole thing going to look like? And how do all these pieces fit together? ... It's not completely the same, but there's a very artistic approach to everything we do on the advertising and marketing side."

McMahon oversees marketing for Hearst's Youth + Wellness Group, which includes *Men's Health*, *Women's Health*, *Cosmopolitan*, *Seventeen* and *Clever*, a YouTube-based entertainment brand. Her team puts together ideas for advertisers that go beyond simply buying ad space. For example, she's worked on a branded streaming service for workouts, a variety of contests and sweepstakes, branded print and digital content developed in collaboration with editors, collaborations with social media influencers and more.

"An important piece of my job is understanding from the advertiser what it is they're looking to achieve," she says. "Then, I will go into my bag of tricks and see what I can deliver to them that will meet their objectives but also tap into the brand essence."

McMahon has spent her entire career in the magazine and publishing space, first as an advertising sales assistant at *New York*. Her second role, at *SELF*, introduced her to the marketing and event production side of the business, where she's remained ever since. She credits her liberal arts education for giving her a strong foundation as a communicator and a lifelong learner.

"Learning how to write and edit and how to formulate your thoughts in an organized way, and tell a story in an organized way, still helps me literally to this day," she says. "How I prepare for things, how I study for things, how I present my best work ... all of those skills, I learned at Muhlenberg, and I didn't even know I was learning them at the time. I was writing history papers — that doesn't sound like anything that would be related to what I'm doing today. I think that you don't even know what you're learning when you're learning it. It sometimes could be five years, 10 years or more later that you realize the lessons you learned and the skills you gained through something entirely different are now coming into play and helping you in your current situation."

Kristina **McMAHON '96**

**VICE PRESIDENT FOR MARKETING AT
HEARST'S YOUTH + WELLNESS GROUP**

“
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how I study for things, how
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“

[Art] influences the people around you into being receptive to different ways of thinking, different ways of doing things. That's what the liberal arts does.”

George WHEELER '72

ART AND ARCHITECTURE CONSERVATION SCIENTIST

In the late 1400s, Italian sculptor Tullio Lombardo created “Adam,” a life-sized, 770-pound marble statue of one of the stars of the Book of Genesis. In 2002, the platform on which “Adam” stood buckled. “Adam” fell to the floor and broke into 28 large pieces (and hundreds of smaller ones). Conservators at The Metropolitan Museum of Art cordoned off the area and mapped the locations of all the fragments.

At the time, **George Wheeler '72** worked at the Met as a scientist in its Department of Objects Conservation. Wheeler would go on to lead the research on what materials should be used to reassemble “Adam.”

“We generated some brand-new science in the process of studying how to put this thing back together,” says Wheeler, who was an art history major with minors in physics and mathematics at Muhlenberg. “Historically, we would use big, stainless steel pins [to attach the larger pieces] and glue it back together with epoxy. We were saying, ‘Do we really need to do that?’”

Wheeler’s team researched reversible adhesives, ones that could be dissolved if something better comes along in the future, as well as the viability of smaller, fiberglass pins. Both technologies were ultimately used in the sculpture’s restoration, which was completed in 2014. “Adam” is one of many high-profile projects he’s worked on; he has also

been involved in the preservation and/or restoration of Auschwitz, the Alamo and the sculptures of American artist Jeff Koons, whose work has set auction-price records for work by a living creator.

Wheeler, who has master’s degrees in art history, art conservation and chemistry as well as a Ph.D. in chemistry, worked at the Met for 25 years. Throughout that time, he also taught in the Conservation Center of the Institute of Fine Arts at New York University, his art conservation alma mater. He left the Met for a full-time faculty role, serving as director of conservation for the Historic Preservation Program at Columbia University’s Graduate School of Architecture Planning & Preservation from 2004 until 2017. He retired completely from teaching in December 2021.

“I’m more of an introvert than an extrovert, but that all seems to drop away when I’m teaching,” says Wheeler, who continues to do consulting work on the conservation of sculpture and architecture. “One of the things I do well is I teach scientific and mathematical concepts to students who are not necessarily strong in that area.”

He excelled at math and science from the start at Muhlenberg — he recalls helping classmates who were taking physics to fulfill a premed requirement — but what he discovered as an undergrad was the



power of art. One of his sophomore year roommates, Steve Martin '72, suggested they take an art history course on French painting together.

"It opened up a new world," Wheeler says. "It's not just [art's] beauty, but also, it challenges you ... New thoughts, new ideas come from having your foundations disturbed a little bit, and that's one of the things that art does."

The exposure Muhlenberg provided to both the arts and the sciences set Wheeler up for success in the world of art and architecture conservation, which requires both types of expertise. He also benefited more indirectly, from being at an institution with a commitment to exploration and well-roundedness.

"I think about the arts as disruptive to mental processes in a really good way. It makes you think differently, and that's what happened to me at Muhlenberg," Wheeler says. "It influences the people around you into being receptive to different ways of thinking, different ways of doing things. That's what the liberal arts does."



Dani Barlow '13 worked for the Woolly Mammoth Theatre Company in Washington, D.C. in the three years before she began pursuing a master's in theatre management from the David Geffen School of Drama at Yale University. She returned to the company for six months after earning that degree in the spring of 2020.

Before Yale, Barlow was an executive assistant supporting the company's managing and artistic directors. After, she was an interim associate producer, helping the company navigate the agreements and contracts with unions, actors and playwrights that would allow it to shift to digital programming due to the pandemic.

"It was kind of bizarre going back, and the world's completely different, many things are different about the organization ... but at its core, the thrilling theatrical work hasn't changed," says Barlow, who was a theatre and business administration double major at Muhlenberg. "Being able to join back at a completely different level was exciting to experience. It showed me that grad school helped me accomplish what I thought it

would: It allowed me to find myself in a higher position within three years, where I had a lot more knowledge about the industry and skills to be a more effective team member."

She went from that interim position to another, as interim foundation director at the Stage Directors and Choreographers Foundation. A lecturer from her Yale program reached out and asked her to consider the opportunity, which Barlow identified as a huge potential learning experience. After five months in the interim role, she applied and was selected to fill it permanently.

"I couldn't have fathomed a scenario in which I'd find myself in a director position this quickly," she says. "It speaks to the power of your network, whatever your network is. You never know who might have something to offer."

As foundation director, Barlow develops and produces the foundation's programming, which supports directors and choreographers, as well as its fundraising efforts. Over the course of the last two years, she's had time to reevaluate and relaunch some programs, including one meant to connect early-career directors and choreographers with education and mentorship opportunities with more experienced counterparts.

"We changed two big things about the program. One was just clarity on what the opportunities were. In the past, it was like, 'Aren't you lucky to be in this room?' 'Well, sure, but how am I set up to learn in this room?'" Barlow says, noting that she now has conversations in advance with the host directors and choreographers about exactly what their mentees can expect when they apply for a professional development opportunity. "We also increased the stipend amount significantly from what it had been in the past, because that was creating some inequities."

Barlow is flourishing in her leadership position — last year, she was named to *American Theatre's* "10 Rising Black Women+ to Watch in Theatre" list. She says that, at Muhlenberg, business courses that dealt with leadership and management were ultimately what drew her to declare her second major, and that her involvement with the Muhlenberg Theatre Association gave her an early look at what it might be like to combine her two fields of study.

"Being able to explore classes in theatre and business, having that flexibility, allowed me to start to explore what business looked like in theatre while I was in school," Barlow says. "And being the secretary, and then the treasurer, and then the president of the theatre association allowed me to explore the things I was learning in a practical way."

Dani **BARLOW '13**

**FOUNDATION DIRECTOR FOR
THE STAGE DIRECTORS AND
CHOREOGRAPHERS FOUNDATION**



“

You think about a lab report and it's similar to how you think about writing an English paper ... That process of thinking critically and analytically is not that different.”



Dr. Bob TARBY '06

ORTHODONTIST

To **Dr. Bob Tarby '06**, patients are people first. Their stories and personalities play an important part in his approach to patient care, and getting to know the kids and adults in his treatment chair — their interests, social lives and habits — is always part of Tarby's process as he develops a treatment plan. This ability to spend time with patients led Tarby to choose dental school over medical school, and this curiosity about other people and the world is what drew him to Muhlenberg's liberal arts curriculum.

He knew coming in that he would study biology. For his first-year seminar, a class meant to introduce new students to college-level writing, he took *Laughing to Death* with Professor Emeritus of English David Rosenwasser: “It was basically about how comedy deals with the things that tragedy can't handle,” Tarby recalls.

The class changed his life, in multiple ways. He registered for a spring semester class with Rosenwasser, whom he still considers a mentor, and eventually declared English as a second major. He got involved with the Writing Center, helping to workshop other students' assignments. He even met his wife (Betsy Woerner '06, also an English major) in that first-year seminar. Tarby soon discovered a lot of overlap between his two fields of study.

“You think about a lab report and it's similar to how you think about writing an English paper,” Tarby says. “You make observations. You have a thesis or a hypothesis. You gather evidence. You prove your point. That process of thinking critically and analytically is not that different.”

Tarby went on to the Harvard School of Dental Medicine and then completed a residency in orthodontics and earned a master's degree in oral biology at the Eastman Institute for Oral Health of the University of Rochester. Of his educational experiences, Tarby recalls his time at Muhlenberg most fondly: “It was the least ‘means to an end,’” he says. Muhlenberg taught him to be open to multiple viewpoints and to evolving information, which helps him stay up to date with new technologies and best practices in orthodontics. He practices near his home in southern New Jersey.

“Rosenwasser would always joke that you're in college to learn how to thrive at cocktail parties, which is kind of true: That's part of building patient relationships,” Tarby says. “I don't know that I want to think about getting to know someone as a business, but on the business side, that means a lot in terms of building community and referrals. I live where I practice. My kids go to soccer and everybody's a patient. That's a unique model, but I kind of live what I do, and I like that.”



“

There were all these different kinds of classes that explored lots of different art forms from lots of different cultural vantage points over lots of different periods of history that I was fortunate enough to sop up at Muhlenberg.”

John BENNETT '15

PH.D. STUDENT IN FILM AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MADISON

John Bennett '15 knew he wanted to major in film studies (and also pursue French and English, his minors) even before he started at Muhlenberg. What his undergraduate experience helped him discover was how he wanted to apply his knowledge: He's an aspiring academic, halfway through a draft of his dissertation on the Algerian film industry, enrolled in one of the top Ph.D. programs for film in the country.

“[Associate Professor of Media & Communications and Film Studies and Director of Film Studies] Amy Corbin did a lot of mentor work after I wrote one paper, early on, that she suggested I try to publish. She met with me one-on-one and taught me a lot about the academic publishing process,” Bennett says. “That paper wasn't published, but I did end up publishing a different paper I wrote for one of her classes: She taught African American Film and went on maternity leave halfway through the semester. [Professor of Media & Communication] Paul McEwan took over. This paper I workshoped with both of them ended up being published in an undergraduate film studies magazine. The attention that I got from those professors was something that really helped to shape subsequent career choices.”

Bennett also worked as a tutor in the Writing Center and was assigned to two first-year seminars as a writing assistant, where he collaborated with

the professors to help students as they learned how to write at the college level. This got him interested in teaching, so when Professor of French Eileen McEwan brought a speaker to class to share information about a postgraduate opportunity to teach English in France, Bennett applied. Not only was he accepted, he was placed in Cannes, home of the famous international film festival. He was able to stay after his contract ended to attend in 2016.

When he returned home, he knew he wanted to continue his film studies, and he knew he ultimately wanted to teach at the college level. He began applying to graduate programs in film, and the University of Wisconsin - Madison program was the best fit. He plans to do archival research in Turin, Italy, and Paris this summer (“though archival research in Algeria itself poses certain logistical challenges, I hope to conduct research there one day as well,” he says) and hopes to be on the job market next spring. He credits his Writing Center experiences and the variety of courses he took at Muhlenberg, in all his areas of study, with setting him up for success.

“There were all these different kinds of classes that explored lots of different art forms from lots of different cultural vantage points over lots of different periods of history that I was fortunate enough to sop up at Muhlenberg,” he says.

As part of the Community Sustainability in Costa Rica course, **Shu Tang '23** had the opportunity to conduct research in the small town of Las Juntas for two weeks after the semester ended. Her group interacted with 10 businesses to better understand the opportunities and challenges at the intersection of the local economy and the environment. For example, the gold mining industry anchors the town's economy — the workers' presence keeps other businesses in business. But the mining itself is detrimental to the health of the workers and the environment.

"From that experience I learned that, to be able to bring positive and sustainable change to the world, we really need interdisciplinary information and knowledge," says Tang, a philosophy and sustainability studies double major. "Everything is so interconnected. If you alter one variable, everything will change."

Tang, an international student from China, was drawn to Muhlenberg for the liberal arts promise of being able to explore different disciplines. She found philosophy first, in her first semester, taking Philosophy East and West with Professor of Philosophy Steven Coutinho. It appealed to her because it brought together so many different types of knowledge: cultural, historical, political. Her love of nature inspired her to take Environmental Philosophy next. It so interested her that she went to the course catalog to find other, similar offerings. Many of the courses that piqued her interest could be applied toward a sustainability studies major.

"I learned there is not only one way to approach environmental science," she says. "I don't have to master biology or chemistry in order to do sustainability. I could create a more sustainable and inclusive world through the humanities and social sciences."

Tang's senior thesis combines both her areas of study. It deals with the economic measurement and philosophical value framework in environmental decision making, and Associate Professor of Philosophy and Business Administration

Dan Doviak is serving as her advisor: "Because this is independent research, everything is driven by you. As a student, I have to be disciplined," Tang says. "One important lesson I learned from this research is proactivity and time management."

This skill will serve Tang well in the future, as she pursues graduate studies in sustainability management. In her applications, she talks about her experiences in Costa Rica, where she learned how sustainable business practices can differ from one place to another. For example, in the United States, grocery stores carry products with certification labels to tout those products' environmental friendliness. In Las Juntas, her group learned how local grocery stores source their products from local farmers.

"In developing countries, they don't have access to standard global developed countries' sustainability performance or practice models, but they can develop ways to make contributions to the local community and ecosystem," she says. "In the future, I want to contribute to sustainability in developing countries. That's where sustainability is really needed, especially in China. What I want to bring to the table is why we are doing this and how we can do it in a sustainable way." 

Shu TANG '23

SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES AND PHILOSOPHY DOUBLE MAJOR

“
From that experience I learned that, to be able to bring positive and sustainable change to the world, we really need interdisciplinary information and knowledge.”



PHOTO BY MARCO CALDERON



Cheers to 10 Years of THAW

On Thursday, January 19, alumni and friends of Muhlenberg across the globe raised a glass to celebrate the 10th annual Toast Heard Around the World (THAW). On this special day, alumni toasted to Muhlenberg both in person and virtually, some in large groups and some solo or with family. Fifty-four group events were organized by 94 dedicated volunteers who raised their hands to host THAW celebrations for Mules in their area or affinity group.

Two of these volunteers were Amy Venuto '11 and Michael Bonaddio '20, who teamed up to co-host a THAW in Philadelphia. “[Michael and I] had gotten to know each other through some fellow alumni on the Alumni Board,” says Venuto, who celebrated her 10th year hosting. “Since we are both local to Philly, we decided to team up. His help was invaluable.”

Although this was Bonaddio's first time hosting an alumni THAW, he was dedicated to planning student THAWs during his time at the College. “I absolutely fell in love with it,” he says. “I made the decision to help plan as many Muhlenberg events as I could, even after I graduated.”

The event (pictured above), held at the City Taphouse in Center City, was attended by 26 alumni, who spent the evening talking with one another, exchanging memories and, of course, toasting their alma mater.

“I think THAW is such an important event that Muhlenberg volunteers put together for all Mules,” Bonaddio says. “It is the perfect opportunity for the entire Muhlenberg community to be together to share stories about the place we all fell in love with. I look forward to this event every year.”

—Grace Oddo '22



The College would like to acknowledge and thank all THAW volunteers, with special recognition for those who've hosted all 10 years:

**Christina Coviello '02, Jason Finkelstein '06,
Matthew Menard '04 and Amy Venuto '11**

Working in Harmony

At Muhlenberg, I majored in computer science and music. Now, I'm a senior web developer at Carnegie Hall.

BY ZACHARY SCHUR '19, AS TOLD TO MEGHAN KITA

I grew up listening to music and playing music. When I was very little, I took piano lessons. In third or fourth grade, I started playing stand-up bass; for a while, it was way bigger than I was. In middle school, I was given a small electric bass. My younger brother played guitar and we started a band that we had throughout high school. My parents don't play instruments, but music is one of their passions. There was always music on in my house. I truly think music is the most important thing in the world. It's an amazing force.

Coming to Muhlenberg, I knew I wanted to study music, but I never wanted to feel like I was forced to make money from it. I'd always loved computers, too, so I took an intro level class in computer science and enjoyed it. The double major was a challenging mix, but it felt good for my brain to have the split. After playing music for a while and being in that kind of floaty space, being able to sit down and find the enjoyment out of solving an analytical problem was a great balance.

After graduation, I worked on a playground repair company's website and on an administrative application for financial services. A recruiter reached out on LinkedIn last year, and I knew I didn't want to make a change to the same type of job. I told him not to reach out until he found something to do with music, and that's how I ended up at Carnegie Hall.

One thing I was missing at my previous job was care for what I was doing. The product was only seen by a few people in the back offices of charities. It feels good to be making changes to a public-facing website, not to mention the fact that it also has to do with my other passion, music.

Carnegie Hall is the best-sounding room in our country, arguably, and some of the most important musicians from all different types of genres play there. The benefits there are incredible — they really value their employees. On top of that, I can request tickets to concerts. I saw the Philadelphia Orchestra there with a friend. My jaw was on the floor for the entire performance.

This is definitely not my final resting point in my career. Working in computer science at a music company is the best way to move laterally to be doing more and more with music, whatever that looks like. But for now, the fact that the stuff I'm working on is music-related and all of my coworkers have similar passions is really important to me.



PHOTO BY BROOKE SLEZAK

Zachary Schur '19 outside Carnegie Hall, where he's a web developer

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