A (Green) Footprint in Latin America

What do you do with your life if, as a boy growing up in South Minneapolis, you know you want to help people, and you have a strong interest in Spanish language and Latin American culture? If you’re Peter Greenwood (Intl Studies/Span ’06), you study hard, take the opportunity to travel to Latin America, and work at a job today that allows you to leave a positive footprint on the earth—in this case, the earth in Colombia, South America.

At UMD, Greenwood worked hard at his studies and benefited from the encouragement, he says, of Maureen Tobin Stanley, professor of Hispanic studies and head of the department of foreign languages and literatures. He had the chance to study abroad in Venezuela with U of MN and UMD students during a summer, and that experience further solidified his interests and his drive. And he credits his major in International Studies with allowing him

Peter Greenwood’s work for the Fondo Acción is primarily financial, but that doesn’t mean he’s never outside in the beautiful Colombian landscape.

Around the World with the UMD College of Liberal Arts

If, as William Shakespeare noted, all the world’s a stage, then CLA alumni, students, and faculty are playing leading roles in the global drama. And the scene changes every day. We lead this 2014 issue of CLArion with a look at a few of the people and programs that take us around the world.

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As I write this year’s column, deep snows blanket the UMD campus and a second blast of polar air has forced the canceling of classes two days in a row. The lengthening of days, however, is a good reminder that spring will arrive and in just a few more months the class of 2014 will celebrate commencement. Nothing is more exhilarating in my annual schedule than graduation day, when hundreds of CLA students walk across the stage to begin a new phase in their lives and careers. For most that means stepping into a new workplace and beginning their professional identities.

Despite news coverage that wrongly asserts that a liberal arts education leads to diminished career possibilities, many recent studies demonstrate that a degree in the Humanities or Social Sciences is excellent preparation for career and life. The United States Congress commissioned a study by the American Academy of Arts and Sciences to ascertain the long-term viability of liberal arts education. The resulting report, “The Heart of the Matter,” unequivocally argues that Humanities and Social Sciences majors are needed if our nation wants to strengthen and enhance its cultural, social, business, and educational achievements. The report, available at http://www.humanitiescommission.org, states that additional funding needs to bolster liberal arts education. Liberal Arts students enter into essential professions, but their college training also prepares them for the demands of civic life in a democracy.

At the start of 2014, two academic organizations—the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems and the Association of American Colleges and Universities—published a report, “How Liberal Arts and Sciences Majors Fare in Employment.” Their findings again strongly endorse the kind of education that CLA offers. During peak earning years, liberal arts majors earn, on average, more than peers who majored in professional or pre-professional programs. Looking at data from the Great Recession, this study found that liberal arts majors initially faced a 5.2% unemployment rate that quickly shrunk to 3.5% (only a little off the unemployment rate of STEM and business majors). Either way, their unemployment rate has been well below the national average. Moreover, with a graduate degree, these students will outpace their peers across most majors. Importantly, liberal arts graduates flock to professions that sustain our communities. Non-profit, NGO, governmental, and educational organizations depend upon the many talented Humanities and Social Sciences graduates who seek employment that holds the fabric of community together. For many CLA graduates, that work is far more meaningful than a six or seven figure salary.

Many of you who read this newsletter understand and value the experience of a liberal arts education. You are our most eloquent and generous advocates. Some of you give our students internship opportunities, and some of you hire our graduates. You are the choir. Your voices out in the larger community are CLA’s best argument to the uninformed naysayers who not only question the value of a liberal arts education, but question college education at all.

Susan N. Maher
Dean
to focus on the world’s social issues and to take a holistic approach to his studies.

Following graduation, Greenwood began a path of study, internships, and jobs that helped prepare him for the future. He earned a master’s degree at the University of Pittsburgh’s Graduate School of Public and International Affairs, and worked four years in Washington, D.C. for the Overseas Private Investment Corporation, where he focused on investments throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe. And he was joined by his wife Monica Salazar (Int'l Studies/Performance ’06), who graduated from the same University of Pittsburgh program and subsequently worked at the World Bank in Washington D.C.

In 2011, the couple made their most recent move: to Bogotá, Colombia, where today Greenwood’s office looks out on the mountains surrounding the city, and where he works with Fondo Acción, a conservation trust fund investing in sustainable development projects to create and manage protected areas. “These protected areas serve a similar conservation function as the national parks in the U.S.,” he points out, and his job is to create financial mechanisms for their long-term financial sustainability.

And he certainly hasn’t stopped studying. When he arrived in Bogotá, he enrolled in the Universidad de Los Andes, where he recently earned his Master’s of Business Administration. In Spanish. It seems as if Greenwood is fulfilling what he envisioned as a boy growing up in South Minneapolis, on another continent.

Waging Peace in Ukraine

Linda Hebenstreit (Interdisciplinary Studies ’94) is one of the eight percent of Peace Corps volunteers who are over 50, but the energy and creativity she brings to her job in Krivoy Rog, Ukraine shows no sign of aging. She and her husband are now in their second year of Peace Corps service there, and they’re involved in dozens of teaching activities in both classroom and informal settings.

Each week, the Hebenstreits host “English Club” in their apartment in Krivoy Rog. The group, according to Linda, is at the heart of the couple’s integration into the community. “The group is a little different all the time, but they are excellent friends and delightful conversationalists,” she says. “They come because we are native speakers, but these wonderful young people open the Ukrainian minds and hearts for us.”

The couple’s English Leadership Camp last summer served more than 100 students who spent five days speaking only English and discussing ideas about leadership. Even Duluth Mayor Don Ness participated: he answered Linda’s request to create a short video presentation on the components of leadership that could be shown at the camp.

“UMD really laid a good foundation for my success out in the world,” this CLA graduate says. Her opportunity to craft an interdisciplinary course of study that included, for example, American Sign Language courses, helped her become a more competent, focused communicator, she believes, even as she embarked on the task of learning a new language in Ukraine.

CLA Faculty on the International Stage

Stop in the Cina Hall office of Shannon Drysdale Walsh, assistant professor of political science, and you’ll leave with little doubt of her passion for tackling the worldwide problem of violence against women. Now she’s been awarded a McKnight Land-Grant Professorship from the University of Minnesota to complete her book, Engendering State Institutions: State Response to Violence Against Women in Latin America. The award will provide her with resources over the next two years to conduct research on “explaining variation in responsiveness to violence against women and state-building efforts for women in Latin America.” Over the past several years, Walsh has spent more than 18 months in Latin American countries to gather primary data on this topic.

Her engagement in international issues goes far beyond her scholarly work. Walsh was the founder of the Bisán Solidarity Project, which is aimed at fundraising and working in solidarity with an impoverished indigenous Ixil community. This endeavor promotes sustainable social and economic development in Bisán, Guatemala, a village of returned refugees in a country that was ravaged by a civil war from 1960 to 1996.

At UMD, Walsh teaches courses such as Comparative Politics, Central American Politics, and Women and Politics. Her office is sprinkled with fabrics and photographs that represent her interests in teaching, research, and service on the world’s stage.

Forging International Relationships: Effort That Reaps Rewards

CLA students, among the most numerous participants in study abroad programs at UMD, make a big commitment when they resolve to become international scholars and citizens. But the results are dramatic,
CLA alumna Dawn Mikkelson (Women’s Studies/Poli Sci ’98) has turned her childhood interests in storytelling into a career as an award-winning media producer and documentary film maker. Today her Twin Cities company, Emergence Pictures, often collaborates with non-profits to tell important stories through film and video. “The mission of my clients is important,” she says. “I like to work with people who are changing the world.”

Among Mikkelson’s list of clients are the Center for Victims of Torture, Springboard for the Arts, the Domestic Abuse Project, and many others whose messages Emergence Pictures has turned into powerful documentaries. One

Building relationships with universities worldwide and planning international opportunities for CLA students takes time and effort, but these programs change lives and futures. College of Liberal Arts alumni, students, faculty, and administrators are center stage all over the world today, thanks in large part to opportunities in CLA to study abroad and participate in the dramatic, ever-changing world. 

Traveling to another continent, Department of Communication faculty recently visited Erasmus University in Rotterdam, The Netherlands, to explore future program and research opportunities for CLA students and faculty.

Over the 2013-14 winter break, David Syring, associate professor of anthropology, co-led the first UMD cohort to Costa Rica. Goals for the nearly 3-week trip included increasing students’ understanding of Latin American cultures, exploring the concept and practice of sustainability in an international context, and providing an international service learning experience. While there, students studied language and culture, but also spent nine days on an agricultural cooperative, where they worked on a service learning project.

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A Philosophical Approach to Law Enforcement

As Deputy Chief of Police for the City of Duluth, Robin Roeser (Phil/Poli Sci ’93), wears a dozen hats—just not often the hat that goes with his police uniform. “As Deputy Chief of Police, I’m in charge of everything except our uniformed police force,” he reports. “That means I head up criminal investigation, support staff, technology, standards, training, and more for the Duluth Police Department.”

He didn’t begin college at UMD with law enforcement in mind, though. Roeser was a biology major—until he took PHIL 1001, an introductory course in philosophy. “That changed my mind,” he reports. “I was hooked, and switched to a philosophy and political science major.”

Destined, he thought, for law school or graduate school (he took the Graduate Record Exam), Roeser instead turned to a career in law enforcement, and recently marked 17 years with the Duluth Police Department.

He doesn’t see it as an anomaly, though. “My bachelor’s degree in liberal arts taught me to think critically and helped me improve my written communication skills. I did lots of reading and writing, and those skills help me every day.” And when young people ask Roeser for ideas on preparing for a career in law enforcement, he advises them to begin their journey as he did: with a 4-year degree in the liberal arts.

A Book Lover to the Max

Rachel Moeller (MA Eng ’05) has always loved books, and not just for what’s written in them. Today she’s the assistant production and design manager at University of Minnesota Press, where she shepherds 40 to 50 books a year through a process that starts when an author contracts with the Press, and ends only when the printed book is on the shelf.

“Critiquing the artwork for a book’s cover is just one step in the publishing process that Rachel Moeller manages at University of Minnesota Press.”

Moeller’s job starts when an author’s book is ready for production. She oversees the design and art direction, typesetting, and printing: every step of turning the author’s manuscript into a real thing. Her responsibilities include everything from budgeting for production of books to contact with the books’ authors to doing some of the design work herself.

Finally, you may find her on a “press check” as the book nears the end of its production cycle. By that time, she’s done about everything to get the book published except write it.

Hobnobbing with the Senator

One College of Liberal Arts alumna has already hung out briefly with a Minnesota senator—just a first few years after graduation. In October 2013, Leah Hapner (Crim ’08) was co-presenter of an award given to Sen. Amy Klobuchar at a gala held by The Washington Center for Internships and Academic Seminars in Washington D.C. That organization is a non-profit educational institution that pairs students with internships in Washington D.C.

Hapner, as an alumna of The Washington Center and of UMD, was selected for the honor and helped present the senator with the Pillar Award for Professional Achievement, recognizing her work in experience that piqued her interest in the publishing process. “It may sound funny,” she says, “because that’s a course about digital design, but it opened my eyes to all of the work that goes into publishing written materials, no matter how they appear.”

Leah Hapner poses with Sen. Amy Klobuchar in October.

CLA Alumni Change the World Every Day

CLA Alumni cont. on pg 10
Donor Anne S. Tsui and the New Dare to Care Scholarship: A Passion for Compassion

Anne Tsui and her adopted daughter Amelia, left, who graduated recently in liberal arts from Cornell University. While Anne Tsui’s career in academia has focused on business management, she believes strongly that undergraduates should follow the broadest possible course of study: the liberal arts.

Talk a few minutes to Anne S. Tsui (Psych ’73) and you’ll soon understand why she’s named the endowed scholarship fund she recently created in CLA the Anne and Amelia Tsui Dare to Care Scholarship Award. Tsui’s passion for care and compassion in her academic field of business management, and in all human endeavors, has driven her throughout her remarkable career. And she speaks often of the kindness, caring, and compassion shown to her during her undergraduate years at UMD.

Tsui arrived at UMD from Hong Kong in the fall of 1970 and reports that she had little confidence, imperfect skills in English, and “...enough money for about two quarters’ tuition.” But she worked hard both in her classes and in seeking employment on and off campus, and secured scholarships for every quarter after the first. Most of all, though, she says she benefited from the kindness and advice from many at UMD, and most especially the late Kamal Gindy, who taught in UMD’s Department of Psychology for many years and who was her adviser.

After graduating from UMD and earning a master’s degree in Industrial Relations at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, Tsui began a career in human resources at Control Data Corporation. “But I discovered that I wanted to be a better resource to managers, and I just didn’t think I knew enough. I was motivated to learn much more about business management.” She enrolled in a doctoral program at UCLA, and during her studies realized that staying in academia would give her the best opportunity to take her ideas to a wider audience. So began a career that took her to faculty positions in the business schools at Duke University, the University of California at Irvine, and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, where she founded the Management Department in the business school.

While in Hong Kong, she began to travel to mainland China and realized the need for management education and research. She founded the International Association for Chinese Management Research and a scholarly journal, Management and Organization Research, devoted to publishing research on Chinese firms. Since 2000, she has spent two to six months a year in China with visiting appointments at the three leading universities. In 2003, she returned to the U.S. and joined the business faculty of the Arizona State University (ASU), while still working on projects in China.

Throughout her career, Tsui’s belief in the importance of caring and compassion in business management and in all human endeavors grew. She constantly asked questions such as, “How can we apply scholarship to truly help society? How can we use what we research and study to solve problems? Do we dare to care?”

She retired from ASU in 2011—she’s now Professor Emeritus in Management at the W.P. Carey School of Business—but even before that, in 2009, Tsui had joined the leadership of the Academy of Management, the largest professional organization devoted to business management in the world. In 2010, the year she was program chair, she named the theme of the organization’s annual conference: “Dare to Care: Passion and Compassion in Management Practice and Research.” And in 2012, her presidential speech was entitled, “On Compassionate Scholarship—why should we care?” Now Anne Tsui challenges UMD students to Dare to Care.

Though Tsui’s academic career has been focused on business management, she considers herself to be in the liberal arts and believes strongly that undergraduate education should be focused on the liberal arts. “Education in the liberal arts gives one a breadth of understanding about the needs of society,” she says. Meeting those needs with caring and compassion is at the heart of the Anne and Amelia Tsui Dare to Care Scholarship Award.

Scholarship Recognizes Students Who Care About the World

UMD students eligible to apply for the Anne and Amelia Tsui Dare to Care Scholarship Award must be working toward a major in the College of Liberal Arts. They must demonstrate high academic achievement (minimum 3.5 GPA), and must submit an essay “demonstrating commitment to pursuing a career or future studies that will bring value to society, beyond providing good careers for themselves.” The essay should be able to demonstrate how students plan to integrate compassion and caring for society throughout their lives.

Anne Tsui believes that we should use our careers in a way that doesn’t produce harm on people. Everyone, she says, has the opportunity to have a successful career and at the same time to give back to society.

The Anne and Amelia Tsui Dare to Care Scholarship Award is a part of the Fast Start 4 Impact Program created at the University of Minnesota Foundation to increase the number of endowed scholarships offered to our students. The program works like this: during the first four years the Foundation provides the award money given to the student while the fund’s accrued interest is reinvested into the principal of the endowment. This gives us the opportunity to immediately award a scholarship in the first years of the endowment’s creation. Students will be able to apply for this scholarship this spring for an award in the 2014-2015 academic year.
A New Fund Celebrates Creativity

It's easy to understand why the name of a new English department fund includes the word “creative.” The fund honors Joseph Maiolo, professor of English, who retires this year, and his late wife Julie Maiolo. Joseph Maiolo has been teaching creative writing and literature at UMD for more than 35 years and is a published author of many works of fiction (www.overcoatbooks.com). His late wife Julie was an artist and art educator who inspired many with her paintings and her commitment to teaching.

Monies in the Joseph and Julie Maiolo Fund for Creative Endeavors, which is managed by the UMD English department, will be used to fund a wide variety of activities associated with the arts and humanities, according to Krista Twu, associate professor of English and head of the department. For example, students in creative writing may wish to attend a writers’ conference. Or students hoping to create a book arts project could apply for funds to purchase materials. A public reading of students’ poetry could be held at a venue in the Duluth community, giving the students’ work wide community exposure. Travel, materials, rental of facilities, and dozens of other creative ideas are on the list.

Donors to this fund can be assured that they will be helping students engage in creative activities that are often out of reach for them financially. To honor Joseph and Julie Maiolo and to contribute to this visionary fund, donors should contact College of Liberal Arts Director of Development Jennifer M. Berges, 218-726-6708.

Curiosity, compassion, and great journalism defined reporter and Duluthian Larry Oakes, who passed away in 2013, and his family wanted to create a lasting legacy in his name. The Larry Oakes Journalism Scholarship Fund will do just that for years to come, providing a stipend to students who take on an unpaid newspaper internship in Minnesota.

Oakes was a native Duluthian who was hired as a reporter for the Duluth News Tribune in the 1980s. He began reporting for the Minneapolis Star Tribune in 1985 and became that newspaper’s Northern Minnesota correspondent, and later a reporter covering all of Minnesota. He was an investigative reporter who was known for his careful and considerate treatment of people, especially those hit by tragedy, and for his belief that quality, in-depth stories needed to be told.

The first scholarship, which will allow a UMD journalism student to work at a Minnesota newspaper in summer 2014, has already been awarded. Kyle Farris, a journalism major who is currently news editor of The Statesman, will have the opportunity to benefit from real-world experience in journalism. Farris himself aspires to become, like the late Larry Oakes, a storyteller in words.
and Opportunity for the Justice System. People with mental illness are vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and, for a myriad of reasons, the criminal justice system has become the de facto mental health system. This book explores how and why this is the case. To a large degree, this is the result of the limitations of the mental health system – and ultimately the government, which fails to fund the mental health system adequately – rather than inherent criminality of people with mental illness.

Adam Pine, assistant professor of geography, and Olaf Kuhlke, associate professor of geography and associate dean of the College of Liberal Arts, have, in Geographies of Dance, edited a collection of ten case studies that examines the relationships, both theoretical and practical, between bodies, dance, and space. Geographers studying dance? Absolutely: The book shows a number of ways in which public and private spaces such as stages, buildings, town squares, and natural environments are transformed and made meaningful by dance. In addition, the book explores the meaning of dance as emotionally experienced by dancers, and examines how movement in certain spaces creates meaning without the use of words or symbols.

They Write Books

Jacqueline K. Buffington-Vollum, assistant professor of criminology, has co-authored an important new edition of Criminalization of Mental Illness: Crisis and Opportunity for the Justice System. People with mental illness are vastly overrepresented in the criminal justice system, and, for a myriad of reasons, the criminal justice system has become the de facto mental health system. This book explores how and why this is the case. To a large degree, this is the result of the limitations of the mental health system – and ultimately the government, which fails to fund the mental health system adequately – rather than inherent criminality of people with mental illness.

Dazzling isn’t too strong a word to describe the leadership that faculty in the Department of Geography, Urban, Environment and Sustainability Studies continue to play in our culture’s quest for using resources in better and more sustainable ways. During 2013 Randel Hanson, assistant professor of environment and sustainability, continued his work as coordinator of the Sustainable Agriculture Project (SAP) he founded in 2009, aimed at education and research in community food and agriculture systems in our region. In addition, Hanson wrote a successful proposal that suggested ways in which the Northeast Minnesota region could use grant monies from the Centers for Disease Control to “change the environments for food consumption.”

While these proposals and projects are complex and sometimes a little challenging for the rest of us to grasp, they’re all aimed at a goal that’s easy to understand: greater health and wellness for all of us. In fact, the website for the Sustainable Agriculture Project at UMD currently leads not with maps, charts, and statistics, but with a recipe for Farm Squash Bisque, developed by Tom Linderholm, UMD’s executive chef.

Talk about sustainability—Mike Mageau, assistant professor of environment and sustainability, is director of the Center for Sustainable Community Development, which has partnered with the City of Silver Bay, Minn. on a project that can create jobs, produce fuel and food, and improve the environment. The project has now created Victus Farms, a facility in Silver Bay that houses a self-contained food and energy-generating ecosystem made up of three components: a greenhouse, fish tanks, and algae production areas.

Tongxin Zhu, associate professor of geography and department head, published, along with collaborators and as a single author, no fewer than four papers in scholarly journals during 2013. Zhu’s research on hydrological and geomorphic subjects has been published in Journal of Hydrology, Journal of Archaeological Science, Environmental Modeling and Software, and Journal of Soils and Sediments.

More Publishing! More Papers!

Two books published by Qiang Fang, associate professor of history, were noted in last year’s CLArion, and he’s done it again: this time in Chinese. A Short History of Chinese Petition was published by China Youth Press in August 2013. In addition, Fang won the College of Liberal Arts Research Award in 2013.

Janine Weekes Schroer and Robert Schroer, assistant professors of philosophy, co-authored “Two Potential Problems with Philosophical Intuitions: Muddled Intuitions and Biased Intuitions,” which was published in Philosophy. The paper explores a recent trend in philosophy known as “experimental philosophy” that involves conducting polls among
undergraduates in an effort to determine whether certain philosophical claims are really “intuitive” or not. The authors raise and examine a number of issues concerning this new methodological approach to doing philosophy.

Jason Ford, associate professor of philosophy, traveled to India in March to present a paper entitled “Noë’s Enactivism Cannot Handle Phantom Limbs” at the twentieth annual Towards a Science of Consciousness Conference. While there, he was exposed to several papers on panpsychism, and his new paper related to that topic, “Panpsychism’s Quantum Burden,” has been accepted for presentation at the 2014 annual Towards a Science of Consciousness Conference. While there, he was exposed to several papers on panpsychism, and his new paper related to that topic, “Panpsychism’s Quantum Burden,” has been accepted for presentation at the 2014 conference of the same name, which will be held in Tucson, Ariz.

And Chongwon Park, associate professor of linguistics and head of the department of writing studies, had papers published in Linguistics and Functions of Language during 2013.

And This, More News-in-a-Flash from CLA

From the Department of Foreign Languages & Literatures: Kristin Hylenski was named associate professor of German studies and tenured in the department, and Maureen Tobin Stanley, department head, was promoted to professor of Hispanic studies.

A new major in Linguistics has been created in the Department of Writing Studies. The first class of linguistics majors will graduate in Spring 2016.

The Master of Tribal Administration and Governance (MTAG) program in the Department of American Indian Studies graduated its first class in May 2013. Twenty two students graduated, and the event and the MTAG program were covered by Indian Country Media Today Network.

Simon Kress, assistant professor of English, was awarded the College of Liberal Arts Teaching Award in May 2013. He teaches, among other courses, Irish Literary Revival, British Literature, and Readers and the History of Books.

The Department of Philosophy has announced a new minor in Cognitive Science, which is housed in the department but incorporates studies not only in philosophy, but also in linguistics, computer science, and psychology.

The Department of History is home to a new program that offers students a chance to earn a certificate in Museum Studies. Steve Matthews, associate professor of history and department head, explains: “Students who earn the certificate will be able to show a practical application of their studies. And there’s an international aspect to the certificate: there are opportunities to work in museums and archives all over the world.”

...and They Came Back, to COMM HOME

Communication department alumni Nahom Abegaze (’13) and Alex Lukoskie (’10) ham it up for the camera at COMM HOME.

The Department of Communication chose 2013 UMD Homecoming Weekend for the first-ever fall event for its alumni. And from the smiles on the faces of the alumni pictured here, a great time was had by all. They gathered in Duluth’s Greysolon Ballroom for brunch on Sunday, October 6, where they were greeted by Duluth Mayor Don Ness, got an update on their department’s activities, and, best of all, greeted former classmates.

These alumni know how to have a good time: From left, Anna Kocian (’07), Mike Buncher (’07), Bri DeAngelis (’09), Joe Hanson (’08), Kaylee (Randall) Stevens (’07), Ashley Hanna (’07), Joy Albrecht (UMD CEHSP).

>> They Write Books continued

Scott Laderman, associate professor of history, has co-edited and contributed to Four Decades On, a book that examines the legacies of the Vietnam War nearly forty years after the United States left Vietnam. Historians, anthropologists, and literary critics show how the war has continued to affect not only international relations but also the everyday lives of millions of people around the world. The contributors provide unexpected perspectives on Agent Orange, the POW/MIA controversies, the commercial trade relationship between the United States and Vietnam, and representations of the war and its aftermath produced by artists, particularly writers.

International politics and history are at the heart of Scott Laderman’s newest book, but the subject matter has little to do with war. Or does it? In Empire in Waves, this first international political history of the sport of surfing, Laderman shows that while wave riding is indeed capable of stimulating tremendous pleasure, its globalization went hand in hand with the blood and repression of the long twentieth century. The author argues that surfing, in fact, closely mirrored American foreign relations. Yet despite its less-than-golden past, the modern history of this cherished pastime is hardly an uncomplicated story of beachside bliss.
Dear Friends,

It was icy and snowing and I was driving slower than usual with a blanket in the backseat and extra gloves in the trunk. I felt prepared. If you had asked me a year ago what was needed to drive in the winter, a candle and a tin can would not have made the list. However, since moving to Duluth from Florida, I’ve learned to grab an extra sweater because you want to be prepared.

In the College of Liberal Arts, we make sure our students are prepared. We teach them the skills needed to not only pass the next mid-term, but to also handle life’s unexpected challenges. Our students graduate with tools in critical-thinking and creative problem solving, along with the ability to articulate it all.

The experiences gained through CLA at UMD don’t just happen in the classroom. Many of our students study abroad in Germany, England, Spain, or Russia. A growing number of students take on the challenge of an internship or an undergraduate research project with a faculty advisor. These hands-on learning opportunities prepare our students to be valuable members of society and excel in today’s diverse workplace.

We are passionate about the work we do in CLA and the role we play in the personal growth of each of our students. You play a part too. Your gift of financial support enhances the educational experience of our students; an experience of our students; an experience that will rely on for the rest of their lives. Knowing how to be prepared for anything the weather, or life, delivers.

Thank you for being part of the CLA family and thank you for your support.

Gratefully yours,

Jennifer M. Berges
Director of Development
College of Liberal Arts

extraordinary effort is the 2009 film “The Red Tail” that documents a laid-off Northwest Airlines employee’s trip to China to meet the worker to whom his job was outsourced.

Along the way, her films have won national awards from the filmmaking industry, and in 2010 Mikkelson was named a McKnight Fellow for Filmmaking by the McKnight Foundation.

Mikkelson arrived at UMD in the mid-1990s already interested in telling stories through film, thanks to an experience in high school. One memorable course she took was WS 3300: Women, Religion, and Spirituality, taught by Beth Bartlett, professor of women, gender and sexuality studies. Bartlett recalls her student: “Dawn was very excited to try doing a video for her final course project. Videography was

Editor’s Note

I believe that at its best, the CLArion tells great stories—about CLA alumni, students, and faculty. In gathering stories this year, especially those about CLA alumni, I was struck by two things: the enthusiasm that people I interviewed showed when they talked about their lives in the world, and the value they placed on their education in UMD’s College of Liberal Arts. I also believe that we’re at our best when we share our stories, so please consider contacting me at newscla@d.umn.edu. I’d love to hear from you.

Marty Sozansky
Editor, CLArion

a relatively new genre at the time, and I’d never had a student do a video project before, so this was an inspiring creative experience for both of us. ‘That’s what really caught her heart on fire.’ Later, Bartlett recalls, she discussed Mikkelson’s future plans with the student, and the idea of working in film seemed to capture her the most: “Film was a genre in which Dawn could communicate her passion for social justice and inform the public on social issues in ways that enlisted her creativity and artistic sensibilities.”

Following graduation, Mikkelson stayed in Duluth for a turn as a television reporter. “I loved the storytelling aspect of the news,” she says, “but I wanted to tell deeper stories.” Now, in her work—Emergence Pictures is headquartered in Red Wing, Minn.—she has the opportunity to tell personal, in-depth stories and build relationships that can change the world.

Reflecting on the value of her years in the UMD College of Liberal Arts, Mikkelson notes that the things she was exposed to in women’s studies and political science, her two majors, may have served her even better than had she focused on a film program. “My studies at UMD broadened and deepened my capacity for empathy for those whose lives are different from my own, which is a critical skill in documentary filmmaking.”

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Mikkelson, at left, responds to audience questions during a 2010 McKnight Filmmaking Fellow Panel. Moderator Christine Walker is at right.

Hapner’s journey in the few years since graduation is an interesting mix of new experiences and her drive to ultimately focus on her intense interest in transnational crime, a field of study she was introduced to by Mary Caprioli, associate professor of political science, in an introductory course in international relations. Yes, Hapner worked in a Chicago law office, and yes, she traveled to Spain to work as a nanny, but her passion for studying transnational criminal issues has her now in the Washington, D.C. area, and working for a contractor to the Department of Homeland Security. Stay tuned.

Bartlett adds, “Dawn was very excited to try doing a video for her final course project. Videography was

Mikkelson, at left, responds to audience questions during a 2010 McKnight Filmmaking Fellow Panel. Moderator Christine Walker is at right.
Where We Are Now

The CLA alumni on this page have told us where they are and what they're doing today. Want to see your name (and maybe some of your friends) in print? Want to honor a faculty member or another alum? Email us at newscla@d.umn.edu. CLArion would love to hear from you.

The 1980s
Michelle Gigliotti (Eng/Comm ’83) holds a master's degree in teaching from Florida Atlantic University and has taught both middle school and high school English for more than 25 years in Boca Raton, Florida. She is a published writer of two books—Soul Quest and Second Skin—and is currently writing an original children’s story.

The 1990s
Barbara Carr (Comm/Poli Sci ’90) is a State Farm agent in Duluth who has been with the company for 21 years. She’s also involved in Junior League of Duluth and serves on the City of Duluth’s Community Development Committee.

Kim Riordan (Crim ’91) is associate vice chancellor for outreach and online delivery and an associate professor of education at UMD.

Abby Flottemesch (Comm/Span ’99) is the chief development and engagement officer for Atlas Corps, a nonprofit that coordinates an overseas professional fellowship for global leaders. She served as a fellow with Atlas Corps in Colombia and now leads their fundraising and communication activities.

The 2000s
Hanna Erpestad (MA Eng ’00) is dean of liberal arts and sciences at Lake Superior College in Duluth, a position she has held since 2007. Prior to that, she was a tenured English faculty member at the same institution.

Jessica Lind Peterson (Eng ’03) is founder and associate artistic director of Yellow Tree Theatre in Minneapolis where she also oversees development. She also works as a playwright, actress, model, and freelance writer.

John M. Spartz (MA Eng ’04) is an assistant professor of professional writing and linguistics at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, where he serves as the director of the Professional Writing Certificate. In the fall of 2014, he’ll begin as an assistant professor of technical/ professional communication at the University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Brian Blakely (Cultural Anth ’06) teaches fifth grade at the Casablanca American School in Casablanca, Morocco, and is an alum of the New York City Teaching Fellows program.

Peter Greenwood (Intl/Span’06) is an international sustainable development finance consultant who has worked throughout Latin America with multilateral development institutions, regional conservation trust funds, and various social foundations. He is currently living in Bogotá, Colombia. Read more about Peter on Page 1.

Emily Mowchan Drevlow (Span ’06) completed a master’s degree in Global Public Policy at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, in 2011 and is currently teaching English in South Korea.

Elizabeth Harris Sutherland (Hist ’06) teaches history for an all-boys academy within the St. Paul Public Schools.

Dayna Landgrebe (Poli Sci ’09) is a producer at KSTP-TV in the Twin Cities, one of the “Top Twenty” television markets in the country. She produces morning shows on weekdays and weekends.

Courtney Renken (Hist ’08) completed her MA in Conflict Transformation and Sustainable Development from the School for International Training in Battelleboro, Vermont and has spent the last few years working around the world in human rights, education, and peace building.

The 2010s
David Spence (Phil ’11) is the student services specialist at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota Twin Cities, working with prospective, admitted, and current students throughout the student life cycle.
1998 College of Liberal Arts graduate Dawn Mikkelson turned her interests in telling stories and in the arts into a career as an award-winning documentary filmmaker. Read her story on page 4.