

# AtBuffalo

The magazine for alumni and friends of the State University of New York at Buffalo

Asperger's syndrome: A memoir **p28**

The class that changed my life **p34**

Fun in a photo booth **p57**

**Winter 2015**

## Moved by Words

UB's Dylan Thomas Collection goes home







Left to right: Lexi Sanguine's parents, Lexi, Marina Africa and Marina's sister, Olivia.

**FIRST LOOK** Photograph by Douglas Levere

## A Fresh Start

**Every year on Moving In Day, hundreds of freshmen converge on campus to start their college careers. We checked in with one of them.**

"Honestly, Moving In Day was very stressful," confesses Lexi Sanguine, a first-year student from Syracuse, N.Y., about that warm Thursday back in August.

At least she had help: Her brother (not pictured) and parents were on hand to haul and unpack sheets and towels, her computer and the oh-so-crucial Keurig machine.

After a few selfies, Sanguine and her new roomie, high school friend Marina Africa, set about decorating their space to "make it feel homey."

"My favorite part of the day was putting up my posters and other decorations," Sanguine says. "They were the finishing touches."

Asked what the upsides of living on campus will be, she reports: "Getting the full college experience—meeting new people and being independent."

And the downsides? "Not everyone is as clean as I'm used to."

For more pics, browse the [First Look photo gallery at www.buffalo.edu/atbuffalo](http://www.buffalo.edu/atbuffalo).



Winter Carnival antics on the South Campus in 1950

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**Editorial Director**

Laura Silverman

**Editor**

Ann Whitcher Gentzke

**Creative Director**

Rebecca Farnham

**Photographer**

Douglas Levere (BA '89)

**Director of Constituent Communications**

*Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement*

Barbara A. Byers

**Senior Director of Communications**

*Division of Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement*

Ann R. Brown

**Section Editors**

David J. Hill

Charlotte Hsu

Lauren Newkirk Maynard

**Class Notes Contributor**

Marcene Robinson (BA '13)

**Editorial Assistant**

Michael Flatt (BA '06)

**Design Assistant**

Richard Klingensmith (BFA '13)

**Photography Assistant**

Ariel Namoca

**Editorial Intern**

Kevin Stewart

**Production Coordinator**

Cynthia Todd

**Vice President for Communications**

Nancy E. Paton

**Vice President for Philanthropy and Alumni Engagement**

Nancy L. Wells

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**Moved?** Please send address or name changes to Alumni Office, University at Buffalo, 201 Harriman Hall, Buffalo, N.Y. 14214, or email ub-alumni@buffalo.edu.

## EDITOR'S ESSAY

# A Brave Bequest

I wasn't surprised, when I entered the cemetery, to feel the stir of emotions, the tightening of the throat, the start of tears threatening my composure. I was covering a solemn ceremony honoring the 165 individuals who had donated their bodies to the UB medical school for research in the past two years. I knew I'd be awestruck by their altruism and by the sight of hundreds of friends and family members who had come that June morning to honor their memory. (See "A Most Generous Gift" on p. 7.)

My emotions were already heightened because of a personal connection with the event. My uncle, Robert F. Perry, had donated his body to UB in 1971. I didn't think he could be physically represented in the cemetery, however, since he had died so long before the first Anatomical Gift Program memorial service was held in 1984. On a whim, as guests milled around after the ceremony at Skinnersville Cemetery adjoining the North Campus, I asked Ray Dannenhoffer (PhD '87, MA '82, BA '79), Anatomical Gift Program director, if I could possibly locate the internment site for my uncle. I was surprised to learn that remains from those early donors had been maintained until collectively interred in 1984. Dannenhoffer directed me to a headstone where others had already placed flowers. Although individual names weren't listed, I was excited to find the marker and took a photo to send to his daughters.



SANDBRA KICEMAN

My uncle's gift, though made so long ago, fit right in with the personal stories I heard at the service. He died at 51 of heart disease, and wanted his illness and experience to benefit others in a way that only medical science makes possible. I imagine that his gift also had something to do with his UB connections. He had once headed the university's food service operation and had worked for Clifford Furnas, the UB chancellor who continued on as president following the SUNY merger in 1962. My uncle was also an amateur sculptor; his bust of Furnas was long displayed in Capen Hall. When he died, my grandmother disagreed on religious grounds with her son's decision to donate his body, though she later came to terms with it.

Dannenhoffer, in his remarks, acknowledged that some family members might be uneasy with a donation of this magnitude—relinquishing one's physical remains without knowing whom precisely they will help. But, he said, the bold decisions made by the donors ensure legacies of staggering proportions. "The choice your family members made may not have been comfortable to you, but because it's what they wanted, they'll live forever—their donation will help people 50 years from now."

I will never know specifically how my uncle's generosity helped medical students of a past era. But as I learn more about this remarkable program, it seems likely that a number of cardiologists now at the peak of their careers—and by this time, physicians they have in turn influenced—might be better doctors than they would have been because of what they learned from my uncle's body, his disease and his selfless example.

Ann Whitcher Gentzke, Editor

**Question:** Given that UB is a major research university, how do you make sure students who are not interested in research receive equal attention and resources?

Actually, Maritina, I'm hard-pressed to think of any field of study, career path or creative pursuit that is *not* greatly enhanced by the research university environment! The exposure to world-class research facilities, the direct engagement with groundbreaking faculty, the opportunity to be part of an academic community with a global impact—those are life-changing experiences for every student. They will change the way you see the world every day of your life. And that's true whether you're an art major, a budding architect or elementary educator, or a future businessperson.

But you've touched on a question that many large research universities struggle with. That is how to keep students, especially undergrads, from feeling cut off from the research-intensive environment, and how to ensure they benefit from all that it has to offer.

Of course, I may be a little biased, but I think this is something we do especially well at UB. Take the Academies, for example. Each encourages undergraduates to explore timely, interdisciplinary topics in depth—in and out of the classroom—with leading faculty experts in the field. Each gives undergraduates hands-on research experience, even if they are not in STEM fields or other areas traditionally associated with research. The Sustainability Academy, for instance, examines our impact on the environment from a variety of perspectives, both scientific and societal, and is led by a philosophy professor. Entrepreneurship Academy students take an active leadership role as innovators, gaining the expertise and creativity they'll need to someday launch their own companies and business ventures.

As you've already experienced firsthand in your time at UB, our faculty are pioneers in their fields—and they bring that perspective directly into the classroom. That experience is incredibly valuable, whether you're a future guidance counselor taught by a national expert on school bullying or a media student working with an internationally decorated film director.

Our goal is to ensure that our students graduate ready to lead and contribute. Every day I see examples of students like you bringing their classroom learning to life through research and clinical experience, internships and experiential learning. They've applied that knowledge to respond to urgent societal needs, from improving literacy in our city to expanding access to safe drinking water in Africa.

Maritina, you are a wonderful example of this. During our photo shoot, you mentioned the valuable internship experiences you've had in sustainability, marketing and managing social media. I have no doubt you will draw heavily on this experience in the years ahead. And I think you'll find it has currency wherever you go—here in Buffalo, in the U.K., where I understand you are heading after graduation, or anywhere else on the globe.

Here's the really good news as you think about your next steps after graduation. Again and again, employers tell me they love hiring UB grads because they know they have the knowledge, expertise and global perspective that are critical to success in the 21st century. These assets spring from the basic tools of research: curiosity, critical thinking, a passion for discovery and exploration. Wherever you go, and whatever you do, those tools will make your life better. And they'll help you do the same for others. ♣

**OUR STUDENT**

**Maritina Tsembelis**

A senior psychology major with a management minor from Grand Island, N.Y., Maritina Tsembelis grew up speaking Greek with her grandparents and dreamed of living abroad. After earning her degree in December, she will make good on that dream—moving to London to pursue a career in analytics, with a specific focus on financial services, consulting or commercial research.



President Tripathi

Maritina Tsembelis

## We want to hear from you!

Send letters and comments to [atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu](mailto:atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu) with the subject heading "Letters." Or mail to Editor, At Buffalo, 330 Crofts Bldg., Buffalo, N.Y. 14260. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity. Please include a daytime phone number for verification.



## When veterans come home

The cover story regarding veteran challenges in assimilating to life in higher education ["Reporting to Class," Fall 2014] speaks to me on many levels. I am a U.S. Navy veteran and currently enrolled in the Executive MBA program in the UB School of Management. I truly believe one of the most overlooked aspects of military life is the "now what?" once our country's bravest reach the end of their service. While I feel I was lucky enough to have a support system in place to help me through the transition back to civilian life, so many need a helping hand, and I am glad that UB is doing its part to assist.

**Doug Stoll**  
East Amherst, N.Y.

Your article on returning soldiers brought back memories of a war years ago, and the men and women who returned to get on with their lives. I was privileged to work in the UB admissions office from 1964 to 1967. One of my first prospective student interviews was with a young man who struck me as somewhat tense. It turned out he was one of the first "in country" Vietnam green berets. My boss, John Walker, himself a Korean marine vet who came to UB on the GI Bill, filled me in on what that soldier might have experienced in battle and was likely to face as a student vet. The vets' stories in your article were strikingly similar to what he described then. The UB Veterans Association and Veterans Services are a great response to the question of how to ease the transition.

**Jim Vaillancourt (PhD '74, EdM '64, BA '63)**  
Franklin, Tenn.

I read the Fall 2014 cover story with rapt attention. While Nicole Peradotto's writing is uniformly excellent, I have to wonder where the school's attention to the special needs of combat veterans was 50-odd years ago when I came back from Vietnam and enrolled in UB's Millard Fillmore College. My enduring memory of my time at UB was the night I got my first creative writing assignment back, only to be called before the class. The professor advised me to drop his class, for he "could never give a passing grade to anyone who prosecuted that immoral war in Vietnam." I'm glad that today's veterans are getting a better shake than we did.

**Steve Banko (BA '73)**  
Buffalo, N.Y.

Wow! Excellent article. Well-written and conveys post-military transition others are not aware of—even noncombatants. Kudos to UB for its support in both traditional and creative ways! (USAF 69th Security Group 1961-1965)

**George Dirksen**  
St. Louis, Mo.

## Election envy

It was very encouraging to read about the vigor with which election officials in Ukraine apply for fair and free elections ["Seven Days in Ukraine," Fall 2014]. I can only hope that at some point Mr. Bejger can apply his experience and skills to help improve the quality of elections here at home.

**James Rowe (BA '71)**  
San Jose, Calif.

## Give departments their props

If I might offer a suggestion: While faculty are highlighted appropriately, you might consider an occasional treatment of departments that historically rose to national or international standing in their heyday. Having been fortunate enough to have done my graduate studies in philosophy during the late 1960s, when this department was in its "golden age," I well know the lasting significance of such a unique era.

**Ronald H. Epp (PhD '70)**  
Lebanon, Pa.



DOUGLAS LEVERE

## From the Editor's Desk

We counted at least 400 cups. That's a lot of joe!

## Coffeenomics

Every once in a while, a photo lands on my desk that's so charming I have to share it. In this one, engineering doctoral candidate Ehsan Dehghan Niri proudly shows off his coffee cup collection, which he explains is carefully arranged by vendor and reflective of his relative wealth from day to day: Starbucks when he's feeling flush, Tim Horton's when times are tough.



# On Campus

- » Figuring out FAFSA
- » Inside the chilled water plant
- » Was the panda faking it?



## A Most Generous Gift

Anatomical Gift Program honors those who gave their bodies so others might learn



Families release monarch butterflies to honor loved ones.

**NORTH CAMPUS**

By [Ann Whitcher Gentzke](#) » As hundreds of butterflies flew upward, 4-year-old Ian Kiefer of Hanover, N.H., looked up to the sky and called out to his grandmother, Beverly. “Good-bye, Grandma,” he said in a soft, clear voice, as his family—parents Ernest and Diana Kiefer and little brother, Evan, 2—stood nearby.

The Kiefers were among more than 500 attendees at a June 19 memorial service organized by UB’s Anatomical Gift Program to honor those who had donated their bodies to the medical school over the past couple of years. The university hires two licensed funeral directors to cremate each body once it has fulfilled its purpose for medical education and research. Then, every two years, a memorial service is held in Skinnersville Cemetery in Amherst, where donor remains are interred in a communal grave. (Families also have the option of having a loved one’s ashes returned for private interment.) At the ceremony this past June, after two students expressed their gratitude to the

165 donors, the audience moved from a large tent to a graveside service, where the monarch butterflies were released—mostly from the hands of children.

The Anatomical Gift Program, founded some 50 years ago by the late Harold Brody, chair of anatomy and a SUNY Distinguished Teaching Professor Emeritus, accepts whole body donations from thousands of people from all walks of life. Current director Ray Dannenhoffer (PhD ’87, MA ’82, BA ’79) says the program receives about 500 bodies a year; at this writing, 15,512 Western New Yorkers have signed up to make this gift when the time comes. Unlike some medical schools with anatomical gift programs, UB accepts all bodies donated, whatever their size or condition. The sole stipulations are that the donor be at least 18 when enrolling and that he or she cannot have donated individual organs, other than eyes. There’s no cost to the donor’s family, provided the body is located within 100 miles of campus.

At UB, all first-year medical and dental students are rigorously briefed on the importance of treating

SANDRA KICHAN

## On Campus

donors' remains respectfully, as are undergraduates in physical therapy, occupational therapy and exercise science who take anatomy courses in the summer. Giving voice to this sensitivity during the June memorial, second-year medical student Nikki Dodge described how her initial belief in dispassionate observation of the cadavers gave way to an emotional connection with one particular donor as she was studying her hand.

After noticing that the woman's nails were painted a bright metallic silver, Dodge began to wonder about the story behind this quirky shade. "I imagined a little girl, maybe a granddaughter, choosing the coolest, prettiest color she could find, and painting her grandmother's nails," Dodge said, her voice breaking. "Or maybe she liked painting her own nails with funky colors, like my own grandma. In my mind, I understood what an incredible gift your loved ones made and, in that moment, my heart did as well." ♣

### POLL POSITION

An unofficial survey of 100 UB students



MICHAEL GELEN, JD '88

### Do you own any vinyl records?

81

No

18

Yes

1

Huh?



DOUGLAS LEBNER

Nathan Daun-Barnett, pictured last year with UB student assistants and two Bennett High School students—both of whom got into the college of their choice.

## Putting the “Aid” in Financial Aid

**The FAFSA Completion Project is clearing a path to college for Buffalo students**

By Rebecca Rudell >> When Nathan J. Daun-Barnett (BA '95) was working as a residence hall director at Wisconsin's Marquette University in the late '90s, he noticed something troubling: The campus was surrounded by low-income students who didn't—or couldn't—attend the school. "It was at this point," he says, "that I realized I wanted to figure out how to expand opportunities to a population of students who hadn't had them historically."

Daun-Barnett went on to receive his doctorate from the University of Michigan, then returned to Buffalo in 2008 as an assistant professor of higher education administration in UB's Graduate School of Education. He never forgot his resolution, and in 2011, having by then determined that the complicated FAFSA form was a major obstacle to college for a significant number of low-income students, he launched the FAFSA Completion Project.

The FAFSA, or Free Application for Federal Student Aid, gives thousands of students access to college money every year. But first you have to fill it out—and for many low-income students, that's the rub. The form is long and complex. If a student's parents don't file taxes—and many low-income families don't, for legitimate reasons—it's even more complicated. Additionally, says Daun-Barnett, "a good

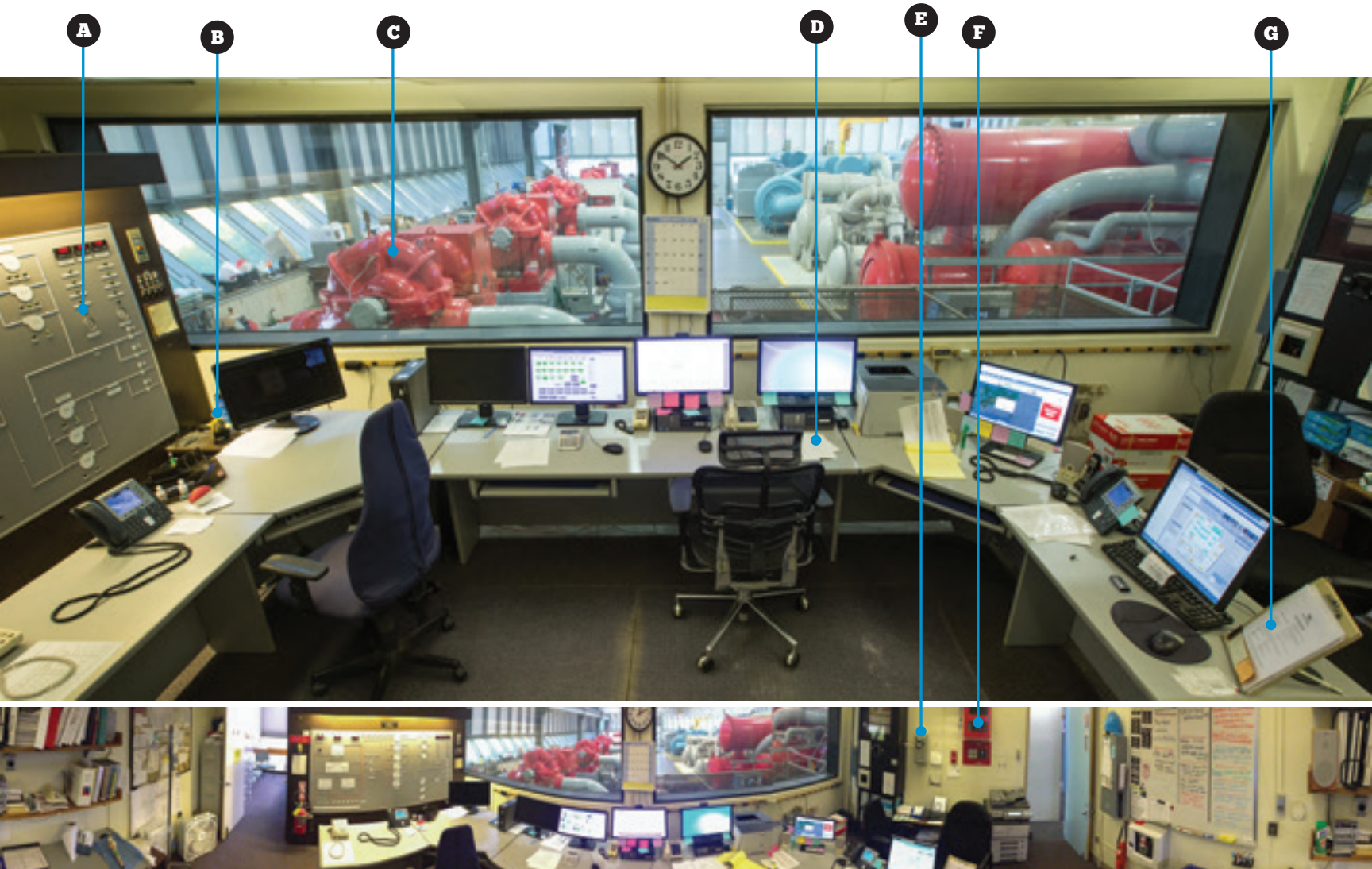
number of the students we work with are independent. They're adopted or under legal guardianship, have deceased parents, or are homeless."

Daun-Barnett's team of student and staff volunteers work individually with students and parents to complete the form. The project has been so successful, it has grown by leaps and bounds—from one school in 2011 to 14 public schools in 2012 (resulting in a 61 percent increase in the number of Buffalo Public School seniors completing the FAFSA on time) to 20 public and charter schools in 2013. This past year, Daun-Barnett and his team put in 2,600 service hours and touched two-thirds of the FAFSA forms filed in the district, leading to similar results as the prior year in the public schools and a surge in completed applications among charter school grads.

At BPS #198 International Prep School at Grover, six UB volunteers worked with students last year for more than three months. "Not only did the volunteers support students with the FAFSA," says guidance counselor Peter Merrick, "they helped students with their college applications and even had personal conversations about life at college." Those conversations will likely come in handy for many of those seniors, given that every single one of them completed the FAFSA on time. ♣



**Tweetable:** The archives of the late Gustin Reichbach (BA '67) were left to #UBuffalo, where the famously radical judge first showed an activist spark.



## Control Room, Baker Chilled Water Plant, North Campus

**Michael Forster, assistant director of utility operations**



Facilities workers are often the unsung heroes of campus life. Michael Forster, an engineer who works at the Baker Chilled Water Plant, a dark, mirrored building tucked away behind the Solar Strand, certainly fits that description. Providing the cold water for air conditioning and refrigeration across UB North is not only a big job but a complex one, Forster says. The plant engineers work in shifts 24/7 to manage the “chillers”—seven enormous water pumps. They guard against dangerous refrigerant leaks and maintain miles of cold water pipe, while also tracking hourly changes in electricity costs to keep UB’s energy expenses low.

**A Status indicator board:**

This board illustrates which chillers are running and the respective temperatures of the chilled and condensed (warm) water entering and leaving the plant.

**B Air monitor:** Engineers take this along when work-

ing in confined spaces. It indicates whether there is sufficient oxygen and whether any explosives or gases are present.

**C Chillers:** Through a process of evaporation, condensation, expansion and compression, the water is

cooled to about 40 degrees, then pumped through nine miles of piping around the North Campus.

**D Log book:** The engineers take notes of incoming calls and problems in an hour-by-hour log so that those on later shifts have a record of what took place.

**E Oxygen depletion alarm:**

If there were a big refrigerant leak on the plant floor, the refrigerant itself wouldn’t kill you—but it would displace all the oxygen (which, obviously, would).

**F Fire annunciator panel:**

If any smoke alarms or heat

detectors go off, it shows up on this panel.

**G Clipboard:** This is the cheat sheet—like the panel on a microwave that tells you how long to cook popcorn or a potato. It’s the information you reach for on a daily basis.



KEVIN BECHTOLD

## THE WEIGH-IN

Faculty experts shed light on news that makes us go, “wha?”

**The News:** A giant panda made headlines this summer when it was revealed she may have faked pregnancy to trick her Chinese caretakers into giving her better treatment. Is this possible?

**The Expert:** Mark B. Kristal, professor of psychology and animal behaviorist



The short answer is no, a panda can't do this deliberately. Pseudopregnancy is a condition caused by specific neuro-hormonal stimuli that are not under voluntary control. The system can be deceived into reacting as if the panda was pregnant, but this deception can't be done voluntarily. If specific behaviors are involved, the picture changes. For instance, if belly rubbing were hypothetically a sign of pregnancy in a panda, then the panda could learn to belly-rub in order to get rewards. But, although certain brain circuits can be trained by classical conditioning, the circuitry involved in pregnancy and pseudopregnancy cannot be.



# Grid-free and lovin' it

**Sustainable parking-lot lights draw no power, but lots of attention**

By David J. Hill >> They've been called whirlygigs, cellular towers and what-chamacallits. In reality, they're just a cluster of parking-lot lights, but they've been turning heads since they were installed on the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus (BNMC) in 2013 in partnership with National Grid and CIR Electric.

“The biggest thing we hear is, ‘What are they?’” says Mark McGovern (MUP '06), who leads BNMC's green initiative. Each 40-foot light post includes a wind turbine, one or two solar panels and a lithium ion battery. Looks aside, the lights—developed by Brooklyn-based Lumi Solair—are unique in their combination of green technology and battery backup, which takes the lot



entirely off the power grid.

Pat Whalen, BNMC's chief operating officer, explains that most solar and wind efforts are still somehow tied to the grid. “[These] prove that, at least on a small scale, we can use solar and wind without building a redundant generation source to back it up,” he says. ♣

## UB EMOJI

A look back on our recent past with a smile, a wink or a whatsits



### The miracles of Metro Rail

A study that gave more than 3,000 UB students, staff and faculty an unlimited Metro Rail pass for 20 months had some surprising results. Sixty-one percent of participants reported that they walked and bicycled more, and 69 percent said they used their metro pass to visit new places in and around Buffalo. Even the stubborn drivers benefitted—all that extra parking!



### Big Blue delivers

It's not Babe the Blue Ox, but it could feed Paul Bunyan. Meet Big Blue, UB's first food truck and, at 30 feet in length, Buffalo's largest. The behemoth sources ingredients from UB's campus garden and offers an eclectic menu, from grilled goat cheese and beet sandwiches for the health-conscious to pulled pork mac 'n' cheese for the rest of us.



### The heat is on

UB has installed its first heated bus shelter near O'Brien Hall, on the North Campus. Of the fundamental human needs, shelter from the cold is often the hardest to come by for Buffalo bus commuters. Student Association officers have reportedly made a push for warm shelters in recent years, with happy results for formerly chilly curbside travelers.



### One wheel at a time

UB has been designated a bronze-level bike-friendly campus by the League of American Bicyclists in recognition of the campus' more than 800 bicycle parking spaces, bike-share program and the new bicycle lane along Lee Rd. Now if we could just get Buffalo drivers to understand that bicycle lanes are not bonus turning lanes.

# Eureka!



- » **Traffic jams in the brain**
- » **Tuned-out taste cells**
- » **Futuristic furniture**

By Patricia Donovan » In her off hours, which must be few, Barbara Wejnert can be spotted jogging around her Amherst neighborhood, studying Italian (her sixth language), downhill skiing, preparing for a bike trek across eastern Europe or taking “short, slow walks” with her hypoallergenic guinea pig, Mimila, who is often outfitted in a little blue jacket.

None of this would suggest Wejnert’s status as an internationally known, multiple award-winning political sociologist with a passionate interest in, among other things, democratization, and the political and economic empowerment of women in the face of global development.

Tiny, funny and energetic, Wejnert, who has degrees from Poland’s Mickiewicz University and the University of Leiden in the Netherlands, has been an associate professor of sociology in the UB Department of Global Gender Studies (since folded into the Department of Transnational Studies) since 2004. She has written or edited 11 books, four within the “Research in Political Sociology” series, related to democratizing and globalizing processes and their consequences.

Her interests first developed when she was a student in the Polish People’s Republic, where she worked with Solidarity and the remarkable 1980s’ campaign for political change that began with trade union protests and ultimately resulted in the democratization of the country.

In fact, her 2013 book, “Diffusion and Democracy: The Past and Future of Global Democracy,” presents an innovative assessment of 187 sovereign countries that challenges established thinking about the diffusion of democracy over a 200-year period.

“It has long been assumed,” she says, “that democratic reform is provoked by a nation’s literacy rate, level of national development or billions in financial aid delivered to non-democratic regimes in the hope of provoking political modification. In fact, American foreign policy is grounded in those assumptions.

“I found, however, and was able to demonstrate statistically, that the most important and influential elements in this regard have been networks—economic, educational, geographical, cultural, agricultural, etc.—between non-democratic and democratic states. It indicates that people need to

TOM NICK GOODTOS

## The Path of Democracy

Barbara Wejnert challenges conventional thinking on why countries become democratic, and how they fare as a result

understand and be connected with what they want before they will fight to get it.”

Wejnert also has two edited books out this year: the second edition of “Safe Motherhood in a Globalized World” and “The Many Faces of Populism: Current Perspectives.”



The first includes her detailed and surprising 1970-2005 cross-world analysis of women’s health in the context of globalization, which supports the contention that the

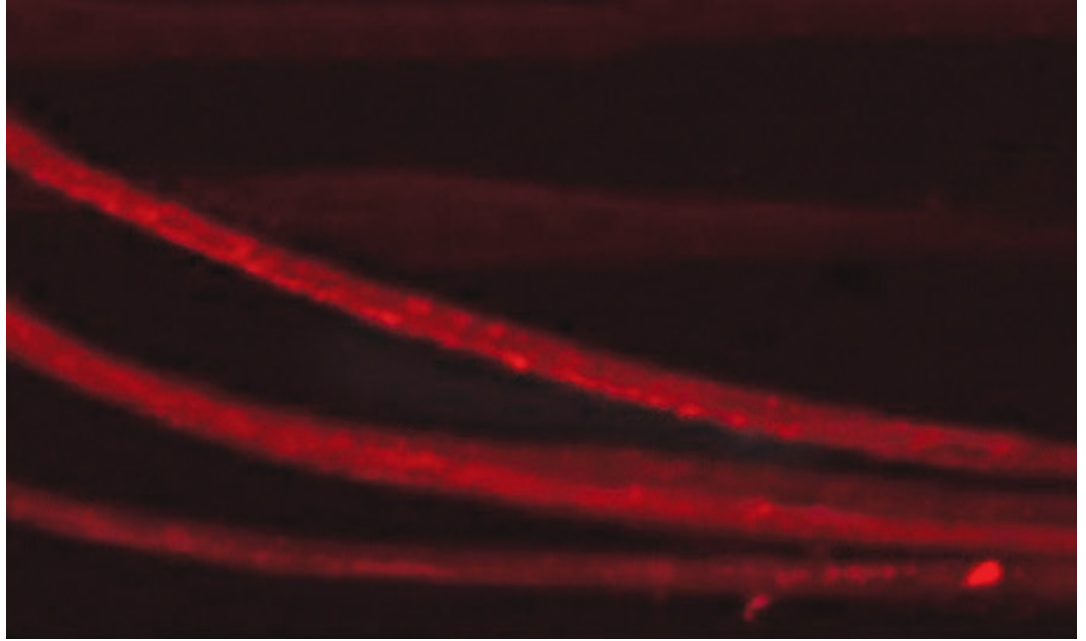
cost of transition to liberal democracy is much more substantial for women than for men in terms of both economic opportunities and health.

“While we might expect maternal health to improve in a newly democratizing state, it often declines if those states were previously well-developed but authoritarian,” she says. “Why and how this occurs are critical issues because healthy, safe motherhood is a prerequisite for a healthy, productive society. We ignore this at our peril.” ❖

## SMALL WONDER

### Taste and Weight

Like strokes of paint on canvas, taste cells glow against a dark backdrop. A recent UB study found that weight may affect how these cells react to different foods. The project compared 25 obese mice with 25 slimmer littermates and revealed that the heavier animals had fewer taste cells capable of detecting sweets. This means overweight mice may have to eat more to get satisfaction, says UB biologist Kathryn Medler, who led the research.



Nanoparticles—which may one day carry drugs to blockages—glow red along the axons of fruit fly neurons.



### 60 Seconds with

## Shermali Gunawardena



There is a complex highway system inside our minds. In each brain cell, thread-like roadways called microtubule tracks ferry proteins and other precious cargo from place to place. This highway system facilitates normal cell function. But what happens when traffic jams occur? Alzheimer’s disease may be one answer, says UB biologist Shermali Gunawardena.

### What do the highways in our brains look like?

The cells in our brain are called neurons, and each one has a long, cable-like projection called an axon. This is where the microtubule tracks are. When everything is functioning normally, proteins called motor proteins—which you can analogize to tiny trucks—move in two directions along the tracks, transporting materials from one end of the cell to the other.

### What materials travel along the microtubule roadways?

The cargo can include protein complexes, which are sometimes arranged inside a bubble called a vesicle. There are also cellular structures, such as mitochondria, which are like tiny power plants.

### Why is it so critical that traffic flow smoothly?

A functioning transport system is required for viability, that is, for cells to grow and sustain themselves. Without these pathways, cells die because components they need become unavailable.

### You study the blockages, or traffic jams. Why?

Transport problems may be an early event in the development of degenerative diseases, like Alzheimer’s. Blockages seem to occur well before problems like senile plaques and cell death are observed.

### Can you actually see the blockages?

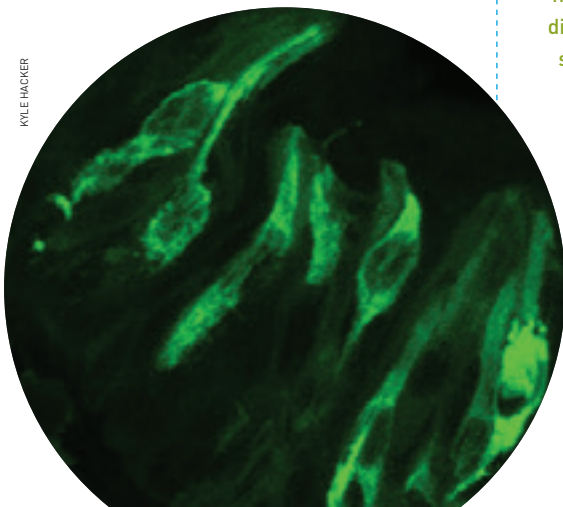
Yes. We have seen them using microscopy. When there is a defect, you have these huge blocks of accumulated vesicles or organelles.

### What are some of your specific research findings?

We are slowly building on the foundation of how motor proteins move and how problems in motor movements can lead to blockages. In one study, we found that a protein called presenilin helps keep motors moving properly. If you take it away, problems occur. Mutations in presenilin have long been linked to Alzheimer’s disease, and our work shows one possible reason for this.

### Where do you see this research leading in terms of future treatments?

If a traffic blockage can cause a lot of negative downstream effects, then the easiest way to solve the problems that blockage is causing is to make traffic move more smoothly. One thing we are exploring is how to use nanoparticles to cage drugs and release them at the blockage.



KYLE HACKER

# UB BORN & BRANDED

**Question:** How do research scientists express school pride?

**Answer:** Using high-tech tools to write their institution's name.

UB engineer Jonathan Lovell created super-tiny balloons, then used a laser to pop them open in the shape of the interlocking UB (IMAGE 1). Students of Albert Titus, chair of biomedical engineering, used a technique called electron beam lithography to draw a version of the UB seal smaller than the width of a human hair (IMAGE 2).

Inserting your institution's logo into your work isn't especially common, but it definitely happens, says UB chemist Jason Benedict. Before a recent scientific conference, he used ultraviolet light to scrawl the letters "U" and "B" on a color-changing crystal he synthesized (IMAGE 3).

When you've made something cool, says Benedict, "you want to write something on it." Scribbling your name seems a little self-promoting, he adds, but if you use your institution, fellow scientists at a conference might remember that—and you.

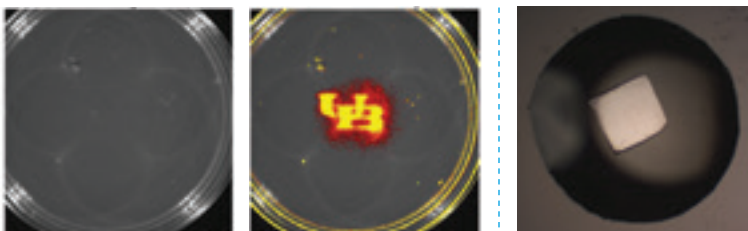
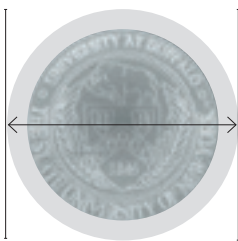


IMAGE 1

**UB SALVO:** Tiny capsules called nanoballoons "fire," releasing whatever's inside of them when they're hit by light. Here, a laser pops a bunch of them open, UB-style. In mice, these nanoballoons have been used to transport anti-cancer drugs to tumors and then release the drugs on demand.



The finest human hair measures 17  $\mu\text{m}$  across  
UB seal measures approximately 11.5  $\mu\text{m}$  across

IMAGE 2

**MINI WRITING, BIG PRIDE:** Students made this UB seal by using an intense beam of electrons like a pencil to draw on film. Called electron-beam lithography, the technique is ideal for fabricating microscopic structures. The seal is about 11.5 micrometers across.

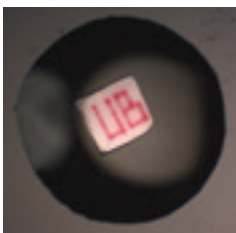


IMAGE 3

**HIGH-TECH COLORING:** Under ultraviolet light, this crystal blushes, going from colorless to red. Crystals like these could one day form the basis of sponges whose color, pore size and electronic properties shift on demand—qualities useful for sopping up spilled oil, greenhouse gases and other chemicals.



## Beaker Briefs

Research highlights from the desk, lab and field

WHAT THEY'RE WORKING ON	WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT, IN 50 WORDS OR LESS	WHO'S LEADING IT
<b>Underwater Speedometers</b>	Fifteen-year-old research on underwater swimming lights has resurfaced. Using a UB prototype, Texas-based LumaLanes LLC developed a system of smart-phone-controlled lights that, when placed at the bottom of a pool, show swimmers their ideal pace. In the original study, researchers used UB swimmers to test the system, with remarkable success.	Physiology and biophysics researcher David Pendergast
<b>Origins of Sleep</b>	Turns out a newly discovered "sleep node"—and not the Sandman—is responsible for helping us catch some much-needed z's. Researchers found the neuron, which controls half of the brain's sleep-promoting activity, in the brainstem. Their findings may translate into safer anesthetics and new medications for treating sleep disorders.	Pharmacology and toxicology researcher Caroline E. Bass
<b>Combating Superbugs</b>	Researchers are turning to an old remedy to fight new superbugs resistant to modern medicine. Developed 50-plus years ago, polymyxins are an effective antibiotic against bacteria, but are also toxic to the kidneys and nervous system. Investigators are searching for the optimal dosage to maximize bug eradication and minimize toxicity.	Pharmacy and CBLS researcher Brian Tsuji
<b>Cyber-empathic Design</b>	Instead of consumers learning how to use products, they may soon study us. Using embedded sensors, researchers are developing techniques to design individualized goods. Imagine an office chair that monitors your posture and automatically adjusts pressure to maximize comfort. The study could transform how everyday products look, feel and behave.	Mechanical and aerospace engineering researcher Andrew Olewnik



KELLY KENNEDY



**Tweetable:** Robots on construction sites! UB architects and engineers are building an automaton that can carry heavy bricks or stones to masons at work.

# A Woman, a Pipe and a Lot of Local History

**The outstanding collection of local artifacts at the Marian E. White Research Museum reflects the relentless dedication of its namesake**

Nestled inside the labyrinth-like Ellicott Complex on UB's North Campus is a museum that houses arguably more indigenous artifacts from Western New York than anyplace else in the world. Many of the ceramic, stone and bone items that make up the collection were acquired by the museum's namesake, UB anthropology professor Marian White (1921-1975).

White envisioned a museum dedicated to preserving objects reflecting local history and heritage. Since its opening in 1979, the Marian E. White Research Museum has come to possess approximately 1 million artifacts from more than 1,500 sites, with 95 percent of the collection coming from the Western New York region.

DOUGLAS LEVIERE



## **Smoke and the bear**

This 8-centimeter-high Iroquoian Bear Effigy pipe was found in a "refuse midden" (what we now call a trash pile) during a 1967 excavation in Chautauqua County. Carved from stone, it dates back to the prehistoric Late Woodland Village era (900-1550 AD) and is believed to be the end piece of a larger pipe made of clay or wood. Most often used in ceremonial and ritual smoking events, effigy pipes are typically zoomorphic (animal) or anthropomorphic (human). Zoomorphic pipes are thought to be representations of clan totems and spirit animals along with guardians that belong to Iroquoian myths and legends.

## **A pioneer**

*A World War II veteran, White established the highway salvage program at UB in 1969; the program works to record archaeological information before it's lost as a result of industrial progress or road expansion. Until the 1970s, White was the only professional archaeologist working to preserve Iroquoian history in Western New York.*

## **A fearless preservationist**

White's courage in protecting archaeological sites was legendary. When the building of UB's Amherst campus (now the North Campus) put several sites in jeopardy, she reportedly threatened to lie down in front of the bulldozers to stop the work. Whether or not she went that far, her protest led to her getting the permission she needed to conduct excavations before the sites were destroyed.



## **An educator**

*White was also devoted to public education and worked with Native American communities whose prehistory she wanted to preserve. If not for her extreme passion for Western New York archaeology, and her outreach with local indigenous communities, much of what is known about local history would have been lost.*

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES



# LockerRoom

» Hockey globetrotter » Swimming upstream » Estevez brings the funk

## Jonesin' for 70

Shot putter Jonathan Jones is striving to become UB's first NCAA champion

### Shootin' the shot

*A brief history of shot put*

- » Historians believe shot put grew from an ancient Celtic tradition, in which clan chieftains “put the stone” to identify their strongest men for battle. In its modern form, it can be traced to the Highland Games in Scotland.
- » The name “shot” derives from the 18th-century practice of using a cannon ball.
- » Today, the shot is made of iron or brass and weighs 16 pounds for men, 8.8 pounds for women.
- » Men’s shot put has been an Olympic sport since the first modern Olympics in 1896; women’s shot put entered the Olympics in 1948.
- » The technique of spinning to gain momentum was introduced by an American shot putter in 1976.
- » American Randy Barnes set the world record in 1990 with a throw of 75 feet, 10 1/4 inches.

By David J. Hill » Jonathan Jones is working on a 70-foot beard. Not literally, of course. He’s just planning not to shave his facial hair until he throws the shot put that far, a mark that would likely make him UB’s first-ever NCAA champion.

If his fourth-place finish at the USA Track & Field Outdoor Championships in Sacramento, Calif., this past summer is any indication, Jones will be clean-shaven by the start of the outdoor season in the spring—and probably sooner. He threw a personal best 68 feet, 1 inch to place fourth, despite injuring his throwing hand in warmups. The three competitors who finished ahead of him were all professional

athletes sponsored by Nike. Jones finished just short of his idol, Reese Hoffa, the 2012 Olympic bronze medalist.

“To throw an inch behind Reese Hoffa, the guy I’ve been watching since I started throwing, that’s just crazy,” says Jones. “I’m still in shock.”

A self-described “teddy bear” from the tiny Catteraugus County town of Portville, N.Y. (he stands 6 feet tall and weighs 280 pounds), Jones, a senior majoring in psychology, has already established himself as UB’s greatest thrower ever. In addition to the school record, he holds the MAC mark, which stood for 36 years. He currently ranks second in the

## Locker Room

NCAA, trailing only Ryan Crouser of the University of Texas, who threw 69 feet, 3 1/2 inches to win the NCAA title in June.

Astoundingly, this shot-putting phenom began throwing only five years ago. In high school Jones played football and baseball and wrestled. It was his football coach, who doubled as the track and field coach, who urged Jones to try shot put his junior year. Just one year later, he broke the school record held by his uncle, Jack Holcomb.

After seeing Jones' potential at a high school meet, veteran UB throws coach Jim Garnham wanted him to come to UB, but his grades came up short. Garnham suggested he start out at SUNY Buffalo State and work with then-Bengals coach Faith Thompson, who had been an Academic All-American under Garnham. Jones' grades improved and he transferred to UB in his sophomore year.

"My expectations now of what he can do are even greater than what I originally thought," Garnham says. "He's just one of those amazing athletes."

With his senior campaign underway, Jones feels his best efforts are yet to come. His goal is to win the NCAA title and place in the top three at U.S. nationals in June, which would qualify him for the world championships in August as a member of Team USA. He's also got his eye on the 2016 Olympics.

"It's unbelievable," Jones says, picturing himself competing on the world's greatest athletic stage. "I can't even explain it."

Next time you see Jones, he may not need to explain anything. The smooth face and wide grin will say it all. ❖



JEFF SCHER

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

## Paging Dr. Hockey

Med school grad Allyson Howe travels the world with USA Hockey

By Lyndsey D'Arcangelo >> By day, Allyson Howe (MD '00) is a teaching physician in family and sports medicine at Maine Medical Center in Portland. By night, and on weekends, she's the head team physician of the U.S. women's under-18 hockey team.

Six years ago, Howe sent her resume to USA Hockey at the recommendation of a colleague at the Maine Medical Center, who also worked for USA Hockey as a strength coach. "After a year or so, I was asked to go to Sweden for the under-18 World Championships," says Howe, a native of Batavia, N.Y. The team won gold that year, and Howe has been part of the staff ever since.

Of the many benefits of the gig, Howe mentions foremost the thrill of working with great athletes. "It is so satisfying to take care of people trying to be as physically and mentally healthy as they can be," she says. The travel isn't bad either. In addition to Sweden, Howe has traveled to the Czech Republic, Finland and Hungary with the under-18 team, and attended the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia,

through contacts she had made with the United States Olympic Committee.

Most events, though, are closer to home—and, for Howe, a family affair. Her stay-at-home husband and three kids are "super fans of the USA team and love the players," she says. "It's a mutual relationship—the players and staff members look for the kids when I'm at an event and can't wait to play rock/paper/scissors with my youngest, or talk hockey with my older son and daughter."

Howe is now looking forward to travel that's closer to home—and close to her heart—when the new HarborCenter in Buffalo hosts the International Ice Hockey Federation Under-18 Women's World Championship in January. "I love Buffalo," she says. "Being there for medical school was awesome. I can't wait to show the World players what a great hockey town it is.

"And of course," she adds, "I'm going to take them out for some real wings. They think they've had them before, but we know the truth." ❖

## The Clubhouse

Stats from right, center and left field

Compiled by Michael Flatt

### Is it a plane...?

The strongest bow used by a member of the UB Archery Club requires 60 to 70 pounds of draw strength and fires an arrow at an estimated 190 miles per hour.

190

### Going... Going... Goal!

At the kickoff of the second overtime in the Sept. 5 match against Bryant, sophomore Russell Cicerone of the men's soccer team scored from 58 yards out.

58

### Killer Bull

As of press time, women's volleyball junior outside hitter Tahleia Bishop ranked 21st in the nation with 4.33 kills per set.

21

### Choose your demo

Fun fact: 44 years separate the premier albums of Three Dog Night and Easton Corbin, two acts featured in this year's Tailgate Concert Series.

44

Pregame Rituals of UB's student-athletes

**Jason Estevez** Redshirt freshman wrestler Jason Estevez takes the maxim "A place for everything and everything in its place" literally—at least the night before a match. That's when Estevez folds and packs his wrestling gear with military precision, and places it in a particular spot on his bed.



"I just need to have everything neat so that I'm not thinking about anything," says Estevez, a 19-year-old Livingston, N.J., native who wrestles in the 141-pound weight class. "I know it's all in the same spot, so I don't have any second thoughts."

Although he's obsessive about neatness, cleanliness is another matter: Estevez will purposely let his gear get funky for the sake of a win streak. "I usually wear the same socks every match, same clothes. I can [wash my uniform] but sometimes I decide not to if I'm winning in it. If I'm winning in it, I'll keep it," he says.

A little advice for Estevez's opponents: If his duffle bag stinks to high heaven, you may want to think about forfeiting.



HAL MAFFORTH



PAUL HOKANSON

# Trailblazer

## Backstroker Melissa Trail turns injury into opportunity

By David J. Hill » Melissa Trail already has contributed to the UB record books as a swimmer, participating in a record-setting relay as a freshman. This year, as a redshirt junior, she hopes to leave another lasting impression—on the UB curriculum.

The backstroke specialist is taking an independent study for which she will co-author material for a training course and series of workshops for captains in all sports, not just swimming. "Being a captain on

a college team is a big deal, and I think it's important to learn how to interact with your teammates and coaches and build those relationships," says Trail, a photography major from Pound Ridge, N.Y.

Trail's work will eventually be folded into an existing course called UBE 102: Dynamics of Leadership in Sport, overseen by Michael McDowell, UB Athletics' student-athlete development coordinator. "We are looking to tie this training program into our

first-year experience course and the current UBE 102 leadership course, along with a few other initiatives," McDowell explains. "Melissa's work is essential to the big picture."

Trail was named a captain midway through last season following a period of discord on the team. After helping to set a new tone, she was elected captain again this season. Her inspiration to be a team leader came from an unlikely source: a shoulder injury that dried up her chances of competing during her sophomore year. As a freshman, Trail swam the backstroke leg of the school record-setting 400-meter medley relay. Sitting out the following season made her feel like she was letting down her team.

"I realized college only comes once and you only have so much of an opportunity to make an impact on a team."

**Melissa Trail**

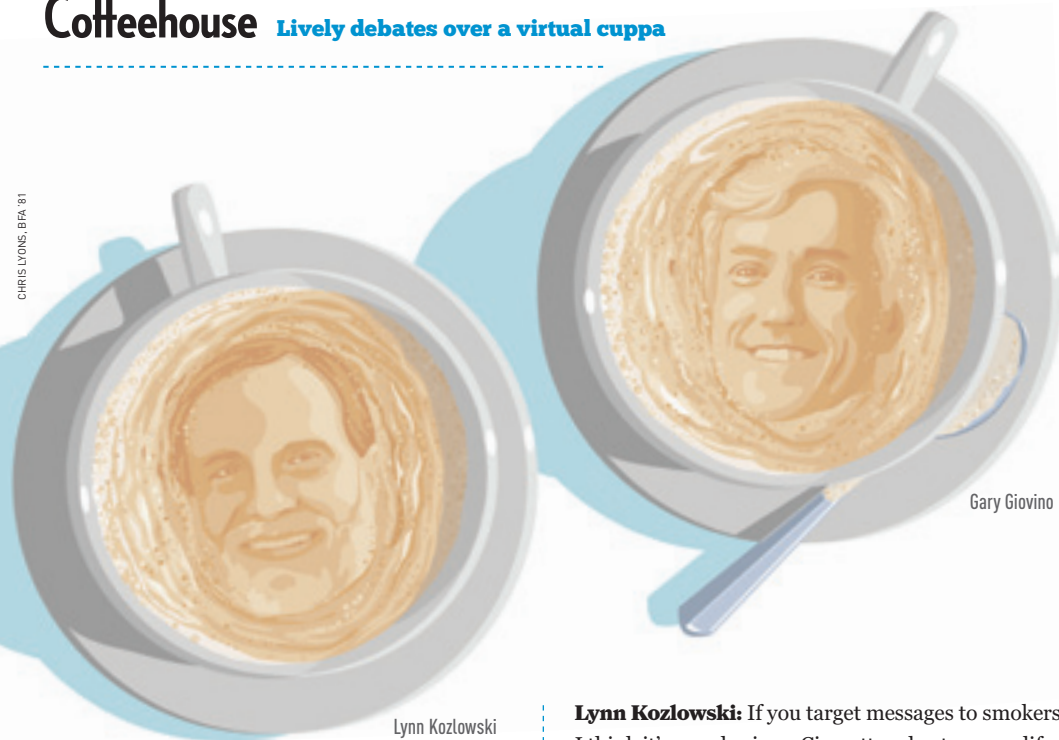
But then, that summer, she thought long and hard about her future. "I came back with a new attitude," she says. "I realized college only comes once and you only have so much of an opportunity to make an impact on a team."

This year, Trail has multiple goals. In the pool, she's aiming to break the school record in the 100- and 200-meter backstroke and qualify for NCAA nationals in March. Meanwhile, she's determined to see her training program through, and pass her lessons learned on to future student-athletes at UB.

"I want to come back as an alum and see the program continuing," she says. "The way your team meshes and the trust that you build are what really make a team successful." ♣

**TweetaBULL:** Women's soccer rode a 14-game win streak to capture the first MAC title in program history, heading to the NCAA Tournament at press time.

CHRIS LYONS, BEA '81



Lynn Kozlowski

Gary Giovino

## Clearing the air on e-cigarettes

**E**-cigarettes have become one of the most hotly debated public health issues in recent years. Some say they're saving lives; others say they're dangerous. We sat down with two noted researchers whose work focuses on cigarettes and health to get their take. **Lynn Kozlowski**, professor in the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior in the School of Public Health and Health Professions, has contributed to four U.S. Surgeon General reports on smoking and health. **Gary Giovino** (PhD '87, MS '79) is chair of the Department of Community Health and Health Behavior and authored the largest study on tobacco-use prevalence ever published.

**Lynn Kozlowski:** If you target messages to smokers, I think it's a no-brainer. Cigarettes shorten your life significantly, and quitting makes a big difference in how much your life is shortened. It's in the context of how dangerous cigarettes are that it becomes easy for me to say, "Smokers, if you can use [e-cigarettes] as a tool to quit, do it. Start today."

**Gary Giovino:** I have a nephew who smoked and he switched to e-cigarettes, and people would say to him, "Are you kidding yourself? These things are no better." I just find that ridiculous. There are a small number of chemicals at very low concentrations in e-cigs compared to the hundreds of toxic and carcinogenic chemicals concentrated in tobacco smoke.

**LK:** For somebody to say e-cigarettes are just as bad is a very harm-causing statement. The evidence base for that is nonexistent. Can you find things that would be of concern in them? Yes. Do they approach cigarettes in risk? Not even close.

**GG:** People oppose them partly because of the way they're marketed and partly because the big tobacco companies are getting involved in the business. In some ways, the marketing is similar to how they used to market tobacco cigarettes decades ago. That is off-putting to a lot of people, myself included. If I had my way, they would be marketed as a way for smokers to get off the extremely dangerous products—combusted cigarettes and cigars. The companies that are making e-cigarettes are not making it easy for people who really care about health to be supporters of them.

**LK:** There's a conflict in that one of the reasons the products have been so successful is that they *haven't* been marketed as a smoking-cessation device. They're a fun thing to do. If you market it as a product that's fun to use, you're likely to get more penetration in the

market, but you're also likely to attract some new users to the product rather than, "OK, you can only use this if you smoke cigarettes and we want you to quit."

**GG:** The youth issue is a bit of a game-changer for me. Part of the logic of people who oppose e-cigarettes is that if kids are using these products, then they must be bad. I don't have a problem if a kid who was going to smoke tobacco cigarettes instead uses an e-cigarette. I do have a problem if a kid who never would have started on tobacco cigarettes starts with e-cigarettes and then converts to smoking tobacco. That's the scenario that scares me. Another issue is flavorings. They put a lot of flavorings in e-cigarettes, and we know that younger people prefer flavored tobacco products.

**LK:** I agree that's a valid issue, but it doesn't take away from the bigger point. From a public health point of view, cigarettes are a gigantic challenge. If all cigarette use was converted to a well-regulated vaping product that minimized risk, the government wouldn't have an office focused on the health issues with these. They'd be more concerned with alcohol, for example—any number of things. In the public health business, you can't be thinking of living in an imaginary world where there's no risk. Take the risk of bicycle riding. Helmet wearing reduces it but it only reduces it. There's still a risk. It's not safe.

**GG:** Every prescription drug carries a risk. Nothing is risk-free.

**LK:** I've had colleagues in public health who would not make a public professional statement that you should switch to [e-cigarettes] because they would be better for you, but they would tell their loved ones to. I wrote a piece in the Huffington Post out of the conviction that smokers needed to know about e-cigarettes ASAP, and that to sit on what was, in a sense, clearly known would have been irresponsible. Based on the evidence I've seen, it would probably be desirable to have some restrictions on flavorings, but that doesn't make me want to say I'm going to withdraw my Huffington Post position until we get this flavor matter sorted out.

**GG:** Stay tuned. We're working on papers and the reality is, you've got to get them out fast, because as these products bloom, the research on them is also exploding. There's a ton of work being done on this right now. Hopefully, the research will help the government to get it right. ♣

### How do you take your coffee?

**Gary:** With almond milk

**Lynn:** Actually, with almond milk, too

# Mixed Media

- » **Leading man**
- » **All-nighter art**
- » **Tasty reads**



By **Rebecca Rudell** » “My art is all about changing people’s perception of scale and their place within a larger universe,” says visual artist Byron Rich (MFA ’13). Growing up in Alberta, Canada, he was inspired and humbled by his country’s massive mountains and infinite prairies. “It really puts you in your place,” he says.

Rich helps the rest of us understand our place in the world—and, in particular, how even our smallest actions affect the environment—through his latest project, “Protista Imperialis,” on display at the Castellani Art Museum at Niagara University until February 2015. The piece, a delicately balanced interplay of physical and digital microcosms, features a complex bioreactor complete with LEDs, air pump, microphone, webcam, computer and algae. It is named after the species of algae Rich ordered for the project. “Imperialis had certain connotations to corporate and nationalistic imperialism that I found compelling,” he says.

Whether they wish to or not, people interact with the work through special software that converts the sounds of footsteps or human voices in the exhibit space to light. If there is no sound (i.e., no human presence), there is no light, and the algae eventually dies. Meanwhile, whenever the computer logs an appearance of the hashtag “#climatechange” on Twitter or Instagram, the image of the world that is projected over a live view of the algae changes: The digital oceans encroach pixel by pixel into the continents. We experience global warming in both physical and digital realms.



Rich has two goals for “Protista Imperialis”: “I want viewers to reconsider their sense of cosmic scale, hopefully eliciting a sense of the deep interconnectedness of the universe and its systems,” he says. “I also wanted to question whether social media activism was effectual in any meaningful way, or merely empty gestures absolving individuals of becoming active in a cause in a more overtly physical way.”

IMAGES COURTESY BYRON RICH

## The Science of Art

Byron Rich blends physical and digital worlds

Detail from “Protista Imperialis” (v 2.1), 2014.

# Stepping into the Spotlight

## Stephen McKinley Henderson's first lead role on the New York stage

By Jennifer Kitses » During a particularly busy period this past spring, Stephen McKinley Henderson was spending his afternoons rehearsing for his first starring role in a New York play—"Between Riverside and Crazy" by Stephen Adly Guirgis—then hurrying off to the Ethel Barrymore Theatre at night to perform his second-act cameo in the revival of Lorraine Hansberry's "A Raisin in the Sun."

"It was hectic but a joy," he says. "I was very mindful of being part of a revival of this wonderful play in the theater where it had premiered in 1959. At the same time, I was preparing for this major role in which I'm onstage in every scene. It was incredible."

His effort paid off. Henderson got a rave review from The New York Times for his role in Guirgis' story of Pops, a widowed ex-cop who hangs on to the rent-controlled apartment he shares with his son, his son's girlfriend and one of his son's friends. Although



(L-R) Stephen McKinley Henderson, Rosal Colón and Victor Almaraz in the world premiere of "Between Riverside and Crazy."

Henderson, who is a professor in UB's Department of Theatre and Dance, has had supporting parts in dozens of productions—and the lead in many shows at Buffalo's former Studio Arena Theatre—starring in an off-Broadway play was a new experience for him. He finished the show with barely a moment to spare, returning to Buffalo for the fall semester the day after his last performance.

Much has been made of his first lead appearance in a high-profile play, but Henderson also has earned wide acclaim for his supporting roles, including a Tony nomination in 2010 for his part in August

Wilson's "Fences." "Every time you do a role, you do it all," he says. "Even characters that are onstage for only three or four scenes—they all think of themselves as the stars of their own lives."

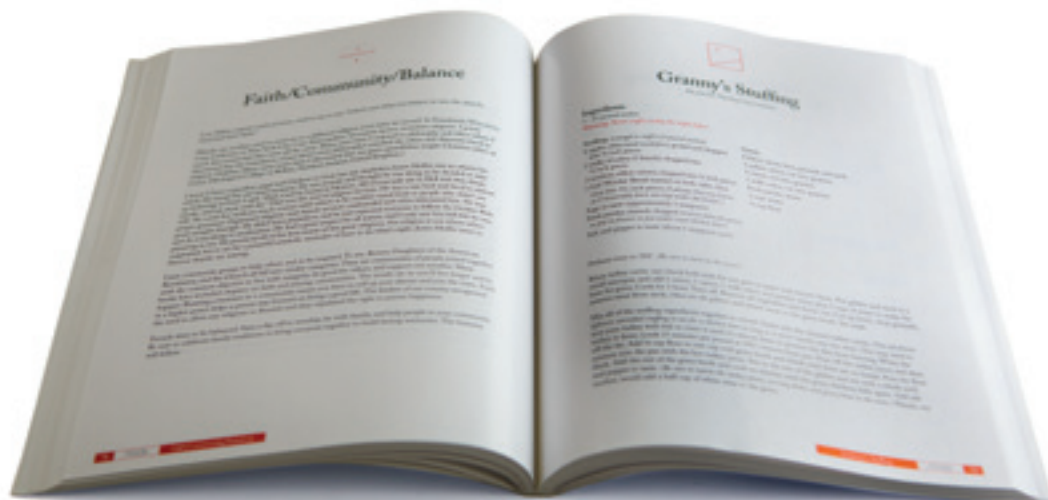
Yet "Riverside" gave him a chance to explore avenues he hadn't before, including performing what the Times described as "what may be the sexiest scene on a New York stage" last summer. "I never stop laughing about that, because it's not the kind of thing I've done over the years," Henderson says. "At the age of 64, to be in a show that has a sexy scene? Well, that's fun. The whole experience—it was magical." ❖

 **Tweetable:** [Ira Flatow, host of NPR's Science Friday and a #UBuffalo alum, has appeared twice \(once in voice only\) on @BigBang\\_CBS. #nerdtakeover](#)



## Performance Anxiety

On Oct. 4, hundreds of people flooded downtown Toronto for the city's annual all-night arts festival, Nuit Blanche. The ones wearing these Day-Glo helmets and marking people with invisible ink were part of "Half-life," an interactive art performance exploring themes of fear and connection, by Buffalo artist Shasti O'Leary Soudant (MFA '11). In one of the most buzzed-about performances of the evening, Soudant's volunteer army of "carriers" tested the public for the so-called Half-life virus. At midnight, the "infected" gathered for a group "quarantine" and "cure"—and the chance to take some unusual selfies. ❖



FEATURED AUTHOR

## Elbow Grease and Chicken Fat: Business Advice That Sticks to Your Ribs

Marilynn Deane Mendell (BA '95)

Mendell writes the book on becoming a self-made single mom. Divorced with three young boys, she started cooking, turning necessity into what she calls “the largest off-premise catering company” in Western New York. She went on to get a philosophy degree from UB, then discovered a passion for public relations and founded Win Spin CIC Inc., a business marketing and development firm based in Washington, D.C. Part cookbook, part memoir, “Elbow Grease” is a reflection of Mendell’s eclectic career, serving up how-to business advice along with her favorite scratch recipes: Each anecdote culled from her trove of hard-knock life lessons is paired with a dish from her catering days (example: “Trust Your Gut” and Tenderloin Pasta Salad). It’s chicken soup for the corporate soul. (Pretzelman, 2014)

## Nightstand

### WHAT WE'RE READING

Timothy Murphy, SUNY Distinguished Professor and Director, UB Clinical and Translational Research Center

“The Messiah Method: The Seven Disciplines of the Winningest College Soccer Program in America” by Michael Zigarelli

“Messiah College in Harrisburg, Pa., has had an astounding level of success, winning more NCAA national championships in men’s and women’s soccer in the last 10 years than any other school in history. I was drawn to the book because I like soccer; my son played college soccer and is now a coach. This is actually not as much a book about soccer as it is about creating a culture of success in an organization. It touched on things that I think about a lot and gave me ideas of changes that I can make.”



## Skin Picking: The Freedom to Finally Stop

Annette Pasternak (BA '92)  
with Tammy Fletcher

Also known as excoriation disorder, skin picking, or SPD, is a poorly understood but potentially serious and disfiguring condition. Pasternak, a health coach and yoga instructor who struggled for more than two decades with chronic SPD, offers sufferers hope through lifestyle changes and behavioral guidelines. (Self-published, 2014)

## Boneshaker

Jeff Schober (MA '99)

The sequel to Schober’s “Broken and Profane” whodunit, “Boneshaker” follows detective Mark Bennett and patrolmen George Pope and Bobby Bennett as they struggle with their respective cases: a missing Buffalo nurse and a domestic dispute involving a couple’s infant daughter. (No Frills Buffalo, 2013)

## Beyond Sustainability: A Thriving Environment

Tim Madigan (MA '98) and  
Tim Delaney

A study of the environment from a sociological perspective (Delaney) and a philosophical perspective (Madigan, who teaches philosophy at St. John Fisher College), “Beyond Sustainability” tackles such hot-button issues as fracking, food waste and what is known as the sixth mass extinction, which is sadly underway now. Each author also examines the differences between sustainability and “thrivability.” (McFarland, 2014)

## The Great Prostate Hoax: How Big Medicine Hijacked the PSA Test and Caused a Public Health Disaster

Richard J. Ablin (PhD '67)  
with Ronald Piana

More than a million men each year undergo unnecessary biopsies to test for prostate cancer, says Ablin in his exposé about the screening test that grew out of his 1970 discovery of the prostate-specific antigen (PSA). A pathologist at the University of Arizona College of Medicine, Ablin says the test was never meant to be used as a prostate cancer screening, but was patented anyway by the FDA, co-opted by the pharmaceutical industry and transformed into a multibillion-dollar business. (Palgrave Macmillan Trade, 2014)

## Calling alumni authors

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*Story by Lauren Newkirk Maynard :: Photographs by Lauren Newkirk Maynard & James Maynard*

# PRICELESS CARGO



A view of Swansea Bay from The Mumbles, one of Dylan Thomas' favorite haunts.



UB SENDS RARE MANUSCRIPTS TO WALES TO HONOR  
THE 100TH BIRTHDAY OF **DYLAN THOMAS**

DYLAN THOMAS COLLECTION, UB POETRY COLLECTION



*In February 2014*, after spending several snowy days in Buffalo, Jaimie Thomas began what would turn out to be a stressful 36-hour return trip to London. The polar vortex raged outside the plane, but Thomas had a bigger concern: the empty seat beside her.

As exhibitions officer for the National Library of Wales, Thomas was chaperoning a priceless shipment of childhood notebooks, handwritten poems, photos and letters of one of the world's most famous literary talents, Welsh poet Dylan Thomas (no relation). The extra seat was booked for the case designed to hold all the items, but the heavy, awkward container was too large to fit. So flight attendants helped clear out an overhead bin to accommodate it. Thomas, an experienced courier who was accustomed to keeping an eye on her precious packages at all times, worried about it the entire flight.

Fortunately, the rare materials, on loan from the UB Poetry Collection in the University Libraries, landed without incident in London, and then arrived safely in Wales, where they went on exhibit from May to December as part of Dylan 100, a yearlong centenary festival commemorating Dylan Thomas' 100th birthday.

"The curators at University at Buffalo are fiercely proud of the Dylan Thomas collection and have been so gracious in allowing us to borrow these items," Jaimie Thomas wrote in the National Library's blog.

This past June, six months after the collection traveled to Wales, those curators—Michael Basinski (PhD '95, BA '75) and my husband, James Maynard (PhD '07)—made the same trip across the pond to view the UB materials and give talks about their provenance. Mike's wife, Ginny O'Brien (curator of education for the UB Art Galleries), and I accompanied them. The four of us landed at Heathrow on June 28 after a long and delayed flight, jet-lagged but excited. We immediately took a five-hour train



A view of Aberystwyth, home to the National Library of Wales.

ride west through the Welsh countryside and drizzly rain to the coast, where we would spend the next seven days immersed in the works and legend of the country's favorite son.

### *Aberystwyth*

*"The town was not yet awake, and I walked through the streets like a stranger come out of the sea"*

— Dylan Thomas, "Quite Early One Morning"

The first stop on our Dylan Thomas tour was Aberystwyth (Ahber-IST-with), a tiny university town on the western coast of Cardigan Bay. It's home to the National Library of Wales, a handsome building perched on a hill with lofty, panoramic views. Charming and archetypal with its quaint pubs, Edwardian castle ruins and manicured flowerbeds,

Aberystwyth has become a popular weekend getaway spot. It was summer when we visited, so Aberystwyth University's students had been replaced by retired couples speaking Welsh. (The region is a stronghold of the country's bilingual culture.)

It was a fitting place for four weary Americans to begin our journey. We didn't have to go far; the highlight of our stay was up on that hill: a private tour of the National Library and its Dylan Thomas expo, where four separate exhibits had been set up in and around the library's sprawling main gallery. Jaimie was our docent, and she wowed us with her knowledge of the library's seemingly endless collection of Welsh culture, history and civic documents. Although the library houses Wales' largest collection of Dylan Thomas materials, a majority of the 150 works on display—some from UB, most from the



Associate Curator James Maynard tours the "Dylan" exhibition at the National Library of Wales with Jaimie Thomas.



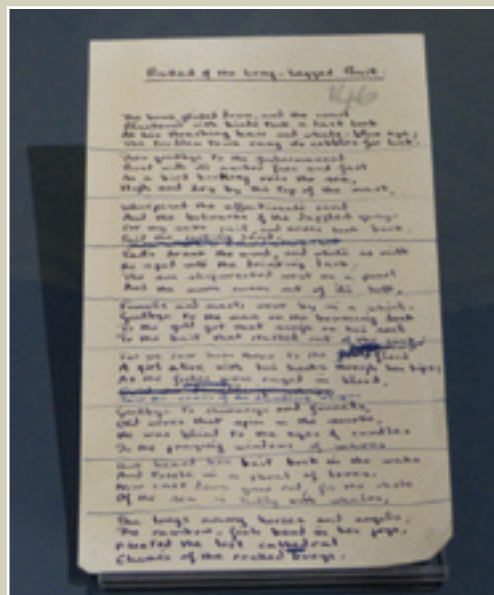
"Ach y fi," which loosely translates to "yuck" in Welsh, was the name of a multimedia art installation on Thomas at the library.



UB Poetry Collection Curator Michael Basinski views UB's photos of Dylan Thomas and his wife, Caitlin.



A photo of Thomas in New York City during his final U.S. reading tour in 1953.



A page from the manuscript of "Ballad of the Long-Legged Bait," 1940.

## THE UB DYLAN THOMAS COLLECTION

**D**ylan Marlais Thomas was born on Oct. 27, 1914, in Swansea. He died of pneumonia on Nov. 9, 1953, in New York City at the age of 39. From his teen years until his untimely death (see sidebar, p. 27), he wrote several highly influential and well-loved poems, plays and short stories, including "Fern Hill," "A Child's Christmas in Wales" and his "play for voices," "Under Milk Wood." Though best known for his poetry, Thomas also wrote films and an unfinished novel, and his radio broadcasts are credited with pioneering the audiobook genre.

The University at Buffalo holds a significant slice of the Dylan Thomas oeuvre. In 1937, poetry collector Charles D. Abbott was beginning to build the university's 20th-century poetry collection, then called the "Modern Poetry Project." Thomas

was one of the first poets he contacted to solicit manuscripts for the collection. In the fall of 1941, UB acquired five of Thomas' early notebooks from a London bookseller for the modest sum of \$140. Although at the time Abbott had a firm policy of taking only donations,

he recognized Thomas' talent and wanted the notebooks badly, so he persuaded a friend, Thomas B. Lockwood, to make the purchase. The notebooks, compiled by Thomas in his teens during the early 1930s, were one of the first acquisitions to mark UB's decision to accept paid as well as donated submissions of literary works, broadening the Poetry Collection's reach as it began more comprehensive collecting.

Additional Dylan Thomas materials made their way to Buffalo in the 1950s and '60s, including an original draft of his famous poem "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night" and two portraits of Thomas painted days before his death. According to Basinski, scholars from around the world come to Buffalo to see the UB collection, which also includes rare original fragments and corrected versions of Thomas' poetry, some typed and others put down on paper in his small, neat handwriting. There are photographs of Thomas, too, including 10 unattributed black and white photos of him wearing a disheveled tweed suit, a cigar hanging from his mouth, that were taken in New York during his final U.S. reading tour in 1953. There are also early photos with his wife, Caitlin, taken by photographer Nora Summers. ♣

MORE ABOUT  
THE UB POETRY  
COLLECTION:

[digital.lib.buffalo.edu/  
cdm/landingpage/  
collection/LIB-PC008](http://digital.lib.buffalo.edu/cdm/landingpage/collection/LIB-PC008)

Do not go gentle into that good night,  
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;  
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

The first three lines of Thomas' famous poem, "Do Not Go Gentle into that Good Night," in his own handwriting.

library's permanent collection—had never before been shown publicly.

The Thomas exhibits were highly interactive and engaging. Since, as Jaimie told us, “The best way to show the poet’s work is in his own voice,” placards were written in the first person, and the poet’s rich baritone boomed from strategically placed speakers. His quotes were strung from the walls, and visitors could “pull a poem” (instead of a pint of beer) from a miniature replica of one of his favorite pubs. A wall-length magnetic poetry board let children build their own verses, while adults could learn the real meaning of his radio play “Under Milk Wood,” whose setting is the fictional seaside town of Llareggub (read backwards: “Buggerall”).

Most exciting for our party, however, was “Dylan Comes Home,” the special exhibition of UB’s manuscripts and photos that was to eventually head to the Dylan Thomas Centre in Swansea. About the exhibit’s title, Jaimie told us, “It was tremendously exciting to see these manuscripts in person. We are honored and, in a way, content that Dylan’s poems have finally come back to Wales.” Aberystwyth and Swansea divided UB’s Thomas materials between them, swapping their collections in September to give more visitors access to some of Thomas’ most famous and seldom-seen works and letters. It was, my husband told me, the first time that these materials had been shared publicly outside of the Poetry Collection since they first landed at UB.

## Swansea

*“... an ugly, lovely town ... crawling, sprawling ... by the side of a long and splendid curving shore. This sea-town was my world.”*

— Dylan Thomas, “Reminiscences of Childhood”

Bidding Jaimie and the bucolic landscapes of Aberystwyth goodbye, we squeezed our luggage into a cab and sped past countless grazing sheep to reach our next and final destination: Swansea, a working-class shipping port about 70 miles to the southeast. Thomas grew up in a comfortable, middle-class neighborhood called the Uplands, where he began to write and to frequent local pubs. During his teen years there, he completed a good portion of his raw and energetic early poems—most of which are in notebooks owned by UB (see sidebar, p. 25). He often drew crude doodles and self-portraits alongside his drafts, which he read aloud to friends and fellow writers at Swansea’s Kardomah Café, a bohemian coffeehouse.

We spent the better part of the week exploring these and other haunts in Swansea, which was more cosmopolitan than Aberystwyth and abuzz with Dylan Thomas-related events. In fact, the entire south of Wales organized a regional “Dylan Thomas trail,” from the rural town of Laugharne, where Thomas wrote some of his best poems and lived in a boathouse during the last four years of his life, to secretive pubs along The Mumbles, a quaint strip of seaside towns south of the city.

At the Dylan Thomas Centre, housed a few blocks from our hotel in a handsome repurposed municipal building not far from Swansea’s marina, we met Jo Furber and Nick McDonald, the curators who had traveled to Buffalo a year earlier to select the Thomas items for the centenary. Jo is a Dylan Thomas expert, while Nick oversees Swansea’s citywide cultural programs. Both were deeply involved in curating, planning and organizing the city’s Dylan Thomas events, many of which were hosted at the center.

On our first visit there, Nick met us at the door and apologized for Jo’s absence; she was busy being interviewed by The Times of London about the centenary. As we toured the center’s extensive permanent collection of Dylan Thomas memorabilia and literary holdings, the exhibit rooms quickly filled with school groups and poetry lovers.

As at the National Library, a special exhibition space had been created at the center to display the UB materials, complete with a guard and climate-controlled room to protect the fragile items. I was impressed by the thoroughly researched, well-written displays inside the exhibit, which paid loving attention to how the young Thomas had absorbed his world. Through his notebooks and letters, we began to see his creative process unfold as he matured and, through prolific correspondence with wife Caitlin and others, how his Welsh upbringing, the countryside and city, and his friends, enemies and lovers, had all influenced his poetry.



Clockwise from far left: Maynard and Basinski commune with the poet over pints at the Uplands Tavern, Swansea; Swansea’s marina; the author and Maynard in Dylan Thomas Square, Swansea.

As I had first learned in Aberystwyth, Thomas was deliciously quotable, yet his reputation in his hometown was complicated by his youthful arrogance and, throughout his life, a certain ambivalence toward Welsh culture. One morning, we walked from our hotel across town to his childhood neighborhood, the Uplands, on our way to his birth house at 5 Cwmdonkin Drive. The hills were steep and the sun hot, so we decided to stop at the Uplands Tavern for a breather. A pub rumored to be one of Thomas' first watering holes, the Uplands was dark, cavernous and empty at 11 a.m., save for a few older gents nursing pints over a newspaper. One of them, in town to see his mother, saw our cameras and heard our American accents. He approached our table, which was tucked inside a touristy corner of the bar labeled the "Dylan Snug." As I snapped photos of Jim and Mike in front of a portrait of Thomas, the man related a tale we were warned locals are inclined to share: His father had supposedly gone to school with the poet. Before leaving he chuckled and shook his head, adding that his father never understood "what all the fuss was about."

### *Farewell—for now*

*"And now, gentlemen, like your manners,  
I must leave you."*

— Dylan Thomas, "Rebecca's Daughters"

However the Welsh feel about Dylan Thomas, his presence is everywhere. His words reverberated throughout our travels, from his bronze statue along Swansea's waterfront, to the murals on the outside of the Dylan Thomas Theatre and his famous lines "Though lovers be lost love shall not/And death shall know no dominion" painted on pub windows.

We experienced a lot in that week in Wales, but it was only a slice of the Dylan Thomas centenary and its extensive reach. During the past year, hundreds of local organizations and institutions, schools and art houses across the country held public performances, scholarly lectures and writing workshops. There were poetry competitions, visual art exhibits, theatrical interpretations of Thomas' life and times, social media buzz, even "Dylathon," a 36-hour marathon poetry reading.

Fortunately, this brief taste was enough to permanently connect the UB Poetry Collection to its new international friends and resources. "We'd love to keep this going. Let's keep collaborating," Mike told Jaimie, as we said farewell outside the National Library while sheep bleated on some distant farm. She nodded, smiling, and promised to keep that seat on the plane open. ❀

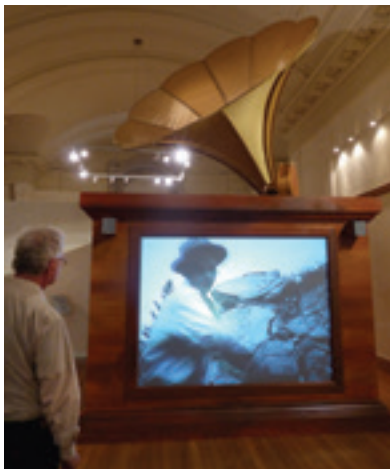
*Lauren Newkirk Maynard is a section editor for At Buffalo.*



## THE MAN AND HIS MYTHS

One of the intentions of the Dylan 100 centenary was to elevate the conversation surrounding Thomas' work beyond the poet's "rock star" reputation. Thomas' not undeserved rap as one of poetry's bad boys has unfortunately fed a variety of urban legends and gossip about the man and his life. Some of the stories are true (particularly those surrounding his alcoholism) while others are flagrant myths—for example, that he had a major influence on the young folk singer Bob Zimmerman, aka Bob Dylan. The story goes that Zimmerman took the name after reading Thomas' poems. The singer has denied doing either—reading much of Thomas or taking his name—in interviews.

It's not clear, or likely, that Thomas drank 18 shots of whiskey at New York's White Horse Tavern—one of his famous boasts shortly before his death, and the primary source of the myth that the bender is what killed him. It is now believed that Thomas' passing was brought on by a variety of factors, including misguided treatments of morphine (resulting from a misdiagnosis of chronic lung disease) days before he died.



## THE VOICE

In addition to his writing, Dylan Thomas was lauded for his rich baritone and theatrical poetry readings. He used those gifts for what were probably his most successful paid gigs, as a BBC broadcaster and later as a scriptwriter/narrator for British propaganda films during World War II. He also made some of the first known audiobook recordings, reading his own poetry. We listened to several stirring examples at the National Library of Wales' exhibit.



# The Life and Thoughts of an Aspie

BY ALEC BROWNIE

*The inner life of a person with Asperger's syndrome is all but impossible for someone who doesn't have the condition to understand. The following essay by Alec Brownie (MA '12, BA '09)—adapted from a piece he wrote in 2011 for an anthology celebrating the 20th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, while Alec was a master's student at UB—brings us non-aspies as close to comprehending his world as we could ever hope to be.*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DOUGLAS LEVERE

# M

Y NAME IS Alexander George Brownie (Alec), and I have Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism. Asperger's syndrome is a social disability; as is typical of Asperger's syndrome people, aka aspies, I am introverted, shy and have difficulty making connections with other people, and I have certain interests about which I can be encyclopedic.

Autistic spectrum disorders exist on a continuum. Autistic people are often labeled "high-functioning" and "low-functioning," but these definitions are not concrete. Some autistic people have severe difficulties speaking, understanding what other people are trying to communicate to them, or even noticing that people are communicating, and are all but unable to grasp another person's perspective or think metaphorically. They can become mentally disabled for all intents and purposes if someone cannot get through to them during early childhood.

Even with more "high-functioning" people such as myself, there is some barrier to picking up nonverbal social cues and knowing what is expected behavior. I also have some of the classic autistic problems with understanding or predicting the emotional states and perspectives of other people. For example, I remember an instance when I was extremely young and I hit Dad hard with my special blanket, thinking that he'd be pleased. In contrast, I find it very easy to imagine and analyze what television characters are thinking and feeling, to understand action and reaction, perhaps because acting and story progression are meant to lay it out. I am not restricted to only using or understanding literal language, but sometimes people, including my Dad, think I am being funny when I am being perfectly serious.

Overall, my parents are very understanding and supportive. Mom in particular is a bastion of support as well as love. She is the person I am closest to and has been my best friend over my lifetime. She is the one I talk to most regularly; the kind of talking that's called "small talk" and "life stuff."

Being a student is an important part of my personal identity. I have been a student at one school or another throughout all my life that I can remember. My family lived in Erie County while I was in kindergarten; then we moved to the city of Dundee in Scotland after my Dad, who is Scottish, retired from his position as a biochemistry professor at UB. I spent what would have been American elementary school years at Dundee High School. After four years, we decided to return to Buffalo. I began at Heim Middle School in 1997, progressed to Williamsville North High School in 2001 and then to UB in 2005.

We—that is, my family—were aware for some time that I was not a typical child. In Dundee High School, a professional evaluated me for Attention Deficit Disorder, given my "stimming" behaviors (rocking, humming) and the fact that my attention could wander to things completely unrelated to my environment; I would be distracted from what the teacher was saying by a thought that my brain was having, usually about either my favorite series of books or whatever my family and friends were planning. After a thorough evaluation, he decided I did

found that I had Asperger's syndrome. This diagnosis was obviously correct; it fit me like a glove, and it was a relief to my parents to have an explanation and sources of actual knowledge available. I have to praise the local school system for being "with it" in this way despite their having no prior experience with Asperger's. We were lucky, as just a few decades ago autism was all but unknown outside of certain professional discourse.

I soon started work with a speech therapist to help me converse better, along with two other special education children. One was autistic, but more severely; he could only make incoherent noises, and they believed he had intellectual problems and didn't remember things. I took it upon myself to disprove this part privately by asking him questions, to which I got correct responses (not in spoken words). The other boy was not autistic, instead severely mentally disabled. His behavior was sometimes annoying, but I understood it wasn't his fault. Mainly, I felt sorry for him and glad I was not in his shoes, that I could think about and understand things, as uncomfortable as that is to say.

I had aides in most of my classes at Heim Middle. They took notes during my classes, because that was a big difficulty for me—I could take precise notes, but not quickly enough to keep up with the teacher. Generally, it was the precision getting in the way. Summarizing important points instead of

As predicted by people I spoke to, the bullying did not continue into college. Not having to expect daily attacks on my self-esteem has certainly improved my confidence; I am now used to this reality and it seems bizarre that it was once otherwise. Thinking of the bullies now, I hope they did not realize all the harm they were doing and have grown up to be nicer people. I always get a special pleasant feeling when a villain is redeemed, but it seems to happen more in stories than in real life.

**D**ESPITE THE condition becoming more well-known over the years, many aspies go undiagnosed or misdiagnosed. In my senior year of high school I was in chess club and fantasy book club with another boy who demonstrated many characteristics of Asperger's syndrome, and I told him so, but he had not been diagnosed. We've found it hard to locate support groups for autistic children locally. One, during middle school, was more for severely autistic children who were absorbed in their own play and had violent stimming episodes.

Nowadays, my social disability most commonly manifests itself as awkwardness in conversation, except around my parents. At home, I find conversation easy. With others, I am prone to saying "um" and "uh," to pausing, and to second-guessing or qualifying what I say. I often do not come across as confident or decisive, which I would like to do.

Maintaining eye contact can also be a problem,

although I do not have the strong aversion to it that some other autistics have. Making eye contact with a group is intimidating. Combined, these factors make class presentations a challenge. However, I learned to overcome the challenge for a field project in my senior high school English class. I rehearsed my presentation over and over at home with notecards, and thus gained confidence in the words. Best of all, I did not merely repeat mechanically during my real presentation, but improvised word choice and projected to my audience. I caught their attention and spoke to them rather than at them.

However, it is still not easy to achieve this state of confidence. I recently presented in class but completely forgot how helpful it had been before to

**Asperger's syndrome is considered the most "high-functioning" form of autism, but that is far from saying I have not had a hard time. When I went to Dundee and Heim Middle, I was frequently bullied. I never seriously considered doing myself harm, but there were times when I was completely miserable.**

not have ADD, but nonetheless gave us some Ritalin. I took it twice, but its only effect was to give me a facial tic for a few days.

When we moved back to America, there were difficulties in class. Heim was different from Dundee, where students took all their subjects from one teacher throughout the year. I did not feel comfortable at Heim, and I would periodically get up and step out of the room to walk in circles in the hallway to relieve the tension. Needless to say, this was unusual and disruptive behavior for a classroom, and I was temporarily home-schooled by tutors until I could sit in class without stimming.

Around Christmas, we met with Heim's school psychologist, who hunted for a diagnosis for me and

exactly copying everything the teacher said did not come easily to me, and when I started trying the normal way of taking notes, not having a copy of every word made me feel angry and frustrated in a way that is hard for someone who is not autistic to understand.

Asperger's syndrome is considered the most "high-functioning" form of autism, but that is far from saying I have not had a hard time. When I went to Dundee and Heim Middle, I was frequently bullied. I never seriously considered doing myself harm, but there were times when I was completely miserable. It continued into Williamsville North, initially unabated. However, it diminished during later years of high school until, by graduation, it was rare.





rehearse. When presenting, it is often necessary to skip over less important things. The trick is to do this briskly, rather than going, “And um, uh ... nevermind, now here ....” There were more pauses in this recent presentation, and I gravitated toward the teacher rather than keeping up eye contact with the group.

One form of conversation I have always been excellent at is telling another person about something I have been reading. As a preteen and teenager, I would eagerly and animatedly get caught up in telling people all the facts and details I knew about Greek mythology and the science of genetics, those being my two greatest interests. I made a big family tree poster of the Greek gods for the wall of my homeroom in Heim Middle. I also would tell people all about my parents’ occupations, our countries of origin and movement between them. I even go over detailed explanations of current events or scientific facts to myself internally.

This is probably something neurotypical people do, but it’s exaggerated in my case. It’s hard for me to know, and it’s also hard to describe the pleasure I get from explaining things, similar to that I get from interesting someone else in my own interests. I not infrequently use long words or terms when I speak, in fact I just now referred to BC as a “calendric acronym” on a wiki site, but I do so because it’s what I thought of to say, not to be snooty or impressive.

I should describe the discomforting sensation I usually get when people initiate unexpected communication with me, especially by asking questions. I want to say it’s like an assault, except that sounds misleading because it’s not in any way painful. It’s more like when you’re in bed in the morning, only just qualifying as awake, and someone shouts your

times I am approached and withdraw, but other times people don’t approach me or seem quicker to interrupt me than they would others. I think the autistic problems with “invisible” social cues work both ways; there is something I am not putting out despite wanting to, and so I can fail to register in some way and can be glossed over.

On the physical side of autism, my stimming behaviors include pacing, running around and jumping, as well as straightening out my fingers, bringing them together and shaking them. People would ask me what this last one means, but it’s just my reflex. I sometimes wonder why other people don’t run, jump and walk in circles; how, for any human being, it could not be a natural urge. Not because it’s so great, but because it’s so natural.

I tend to hum loudly while doing these things and to go into my thoughts. I hum in correspondence with the sounds in my thoughts. It annoys my parents, especially Mom, when I run around and jump on the floor, and historically it has irritated me to be interrupted if I was thinking of something wonderful or exciting. I have uncharitably thought they were not being accommodating, and I have insisted that the floor is not weakened and has always creaked, but recently I have set aside my stubbornness and admitted to myself that they would not complain unless my behaviors were genuinely annoying, and they would not be mistaken about the floor. I’ve been accommodating them since then by doing it only in the basement or outdoors, though it’s a difficult thing to “schedule,” so to speak.

I have read that fine and precise motor control is common among autistics. Unfortunately, I am not so coordinated—if you look at my arms closely you will

watching. As you might imagine, the combination of feeling a need for control with collisions and a shaky grip can make me intensely frustrated. A worse frustration comes when machines don’t behave the way I want them to—sometimes I lose my calm and scream at them, repeating, “I hate you so much!”

While I like things organized and can spend hours sorting out a list, this applies only to things that really interest me and stick in my mind. I tend to make my lists over and over again, and play interesting TV scenes or bits of music with this same repetitiveness. Actually, my repetition of TV scenes stopped about a year ago, and of music greatly decreased several months ago; I have been making an effort and may have outgrown them. The urge to list when I have pencil and paper is waning, but still strong. On the positive side, when I am really invested in something I can keep at it until it is done, like writing a paper or pounding away on the treadmill. Dad used to call me a “trouper” when I was doing math problems into the night.

Although I can be comfortable with my own company, especially if I am keeping myself busy, I do not like the feeling of loneliness and do not think I would do well living alone. I don’t completely understand it, but I often imagine how a person I know of or a fictional character would react emotionally to something I see, hear or say, as though it’s not enough that it’s real life and it’s happening to me.

I have recently come to realize that I have obsessive-compulsive tendencies, which is why I have intrusive anxiety-provoking thoughts and the compulsion to address them by performing certain actions or obsessively figuring out exactly why they are unlikely. Relatedly, I get the feeling something is

off if I don’t step on certain spots or look at things a certain number of times or from a certain angle.

For a long time, I was clueless about this aspect of my life, and it caused me a great deal of stress. I recently did a Google search about unwanted thoughts and found

Wikipedia’s “Intrusive thoughts” article. This article told me that the treatment method of choice is exposure/response prevention. The “exposure” part is to actively do things that trigger you. There is less opportunity for me to seek that, but I try to do the “response prevention” part, desisting from rituals, because they only reinforce the false idea that there is a real danger. The idea is to let the thoughts come and go without feeding them. Sometimes I falter, but I recognize that this is human.

One of the most freeing realizations in the world: There are many other people who go through the same thing. This fact makes it so clear that the

## I sometimes wonder why other people don’t run, jump and walk in circles; how, for any human being, it could not be a natural urge. Not because it’s so great, but because it’s so natural.

name. My instinct is to withdraw, but I don’t truly want to be a social recluse, so I maintain the social contact, or “un-withdraw,” once I have had a second to think about it.

I have a good sense of humor, but it’s mostly my parents who get exposed to it. I find it more natural to say funny things around them than around others. Still, even my parents don’t hear the majority of jokes or hilarious dialogue and situations that enter my head. I have a very vivid imagination for pictures and sounds. I have been known to laugh aloud, long and hard, at something I was merely thinking about.

My difficulties in connecting are bilateral—some-

notice a light yet consistent tremor, and I frequently misjudge the distance between objects. I have a tendency to put things down too hard because the surface of the table is closer than it seemed, I often bump into things I thought I could just walk past, and although I am very good at making tea and coffee, a lot of spilling goes on. Occasionally, my hand flings out to the right or lets go of its grip and drops an object without my telling it to.

But, like other Asperger’s syndrome people, I have a deep need to feel in control of my environment. When I was younger, I resented someone else having the TV remote—when I cared about what we were

perceived dangers from intrusive thoughts are not real but instead the result of an understood glitch—serotonin is not getting through to give the message that a train of thought is over. It literally feels like something is stuck in there.

Intrusive thoughts and intense nostalgia are more of a problem for me during periods when I feel low. I just came off such a period, perhaps influenced by the winter climate and my place of work being below ground (I am a student Web editor at UBIT). Making and worrying about decisions, thinking about all the conceivable factors that could make them right or wrong, can still be painful for me. Happily, for all its challenges, it is Asperger's syndrome that is my main feature. I am not a true obsessive-compulsive and can only imagine how terrible it is for them.

**M**AKING NEW friends is hard for me. I did have small groups of friends in all my schools before college. In both Scotland and America, my small group of friends was mostly girls. They were more likely to be friendly. Despite the many plusses of the university environment, it's been harder to make friends in college and graduate school than it was in middle or high school. Before, I could count on lunchtime, Resource Room, Heim Time (a study period at Heim) or homeroom for seeing the same group of people on a daily basis.

I have always found it easy to make friends with teachers, and still do, perhaps because they are the central figure of the class, and perhaps because I ask many questions in class and many teachers like that. In Introduction to Anthropology, at one point I asked so many questions that other students expressed their annoyance. The teacher understood me and let me give a small presentation about Asperger's syndrome that greatly helped my standing with the class.

I still have a childlike expectation that adults will be indulgent with me, and they tend to do just that, perhaps picking up on cues from the way I present myself. I say "adults," even though I am nearly 24. I still think of myself as a teenager and it is hard for me to imagine myself as an adult. I have been told I look younger than I am as well.

I live at home, because our house is so close to UB that there seemed little point in taking up

campus living. We do have some apprehension about the prospect of my living independently, but I am sure I could adjust if it was necessary. The main new responsibilities I would have are cooking (I do make toasties, tea and coffee), laundry (I do carry it) and cleaning. I figure most people transitioning to independent living have to learn these things.

**The urge to list when I have pencil and paper is waning, but still strong. On the positive side, when I am really invested in something I can keep at it until it's done, like writing a paper or pounding away on the treadmill. Dad used to call me a "trouper" when I was doing math problems into the night.**

More intimidating is the matter of managing my own finances. If I were to take a step out of the nest while remaining in contact with home, I would prefer an apartment with a handful of friendly and reliable neighbors.

The prospect of apartment life is made less intimidating by recalling past times when I found picking up new skills to be surprisingly easy. We hadn't learned how to write in my American kindergarten, so I was behind in that respect when I started at Dundee High. But I very quickly picked writing up. For several years, I found it difficult to type quickly on the keyboard, but I took a summer class during high school and now know instinctively where all the keys are. I have, for a long time, been too afraid of potential traffic accidents to learn how to drive myself, but I now think I should take lessons. My primary skills are in reading, organizing (of some types) and writing. I always get my academic papers done on time and get good marks, but more importantly I enjoy writing.

I find it hard to narrow down a focus in academia because I find so many things interesting. To illustrate, my major when I graduated UB was anthropology and my minor was philosophy, and as a graduate student I am in the English MA program. Biology, history and astronomy also fascinate me. The one thing I'm sure of for my future job is that I want to write. I've considered the possibility of writing informative articles or opinion pieces for a publication or an online blog. Dad sometimes suggests a teaching job to me, and that could also be interesting. I have many idea fragments floating around in my head for creative writing, but they have yet to coalesce into a cohesive story.

Over the years, I have taken an active interest in Asperger's syndrome matters. For a recent course in the English program, Field Methodology, I chose for

my research project topic the use of storytelling in education. I surveyed teachers from Heim Middle, Williamsville North and an elementary school where a neighbor works, and observed the orientation program for new faculty at Summit, the local center for children with developmental disabilities of many types. With the Field course over, I have observed

Summit classes for my personal interest and enrichment. I spoke to the head of Disability Services at UB about forming a group for UB's Asperger's syndrome students that would meet semi-regularly. He agreed this was a good idea. I haven't actually met any of the others, and I look forward to seeing a group of people with whom I have something in common on a regular basis.

In the coming semester, I am taking a course taught by a new professor in the English department (Joe Valente) called "Personal Narrative: Autistry." We will be reading texts by autistic people and parents or professionals who work with autistic people. Temple Grandin is one famous Asperger's syndrome person who is an autobiographical author. I expect heartbreaking stories of struggle from the parents and caseworkers, punctuated by encouraging if incomplete progress. In many cases, the challenges of autism cannot be overcome. In others, they can, and the course asks the question of whether it can still be considered a defect then, or becomes merely a difference. I don't know yet if autistic studies could, beyond being interesting to me on a personal level, be a part of my future job, but the idea is certainly intriguing, and there is surely a wealth of options open to me in the future. ♣

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*Since writing this essay, Alec and his parents have moved out of their old house and now reside in neighboring apartments—he with two tuxedo cats named Asterix and Rumball. Alec is currently a freelance editor and proofreader whose clients have included various UB-affiliated individuals and entities. He is also enrolled in UB's new Certificate in Innovative Writing program, where he is studying short story and novel writing.*

# *The* CLASS



# CHANGED



ILLUSTRATION BY GAIL ANDERSON  
COMPILED BY MICHAEL FLATT

# LIFE



**I**t can be easy to think back on one's college days as a blur of late-night library sessions, adviser meetings and—shall we say—extracurricular activities. But for many of us, the outstanding college memory is more specific and more profound: It's a course. Not any course, but one that we toss around in our mind for years afterward, that comes to represent that ideal moment in the university experience when we felt a total shift in our perspective—on career, or life, or both.

With that in mind, we asked our alumni to tell us about that one class. We received many thoughtful and spirited responses, full of fond recollections of passionate professors, stimulating discussions and “aha” moments. Did you take any of these courses and have a similar reaction? Are we missing the one that blew your mind? Write to us and let us know!



**Two classes** had a major impression on me: Reginald Pegrum's Geology 101, in which he announced that mankind is too puny to affect the global climate, and A.P. Sine's English class, in which we studied the King James version of the Bible.

Professor Pegrum knew that the CO2 levels in our atmosphere had remained nearly constant for millennia. What he did not anticipate was the vast expansion of the human population and its ravenous exploitation of fossil fuels. In the 1950s, he envisioned the extensive use of atomic power, water and wind power. Not every family had a car, and hardly anybody had two. However, the science courses at UB did provide a foundation for my future.

Professor Sine led us through a historical review of the development of Jewish, Christian and English political structures, and then encouraged us to dig and delve for ourselves to come up with interpretations and understandings. Those skills served me well in my half-century career, and still prompt me to continue digging and delving as a jolly octogenarian.

**Kernan Davis BA '55**

Retired geologist and conservationist,  
New York State Department of  
Environmental Conservation  
GLENNVILLE, N.Y.



**Hands down,** the best course I ever took was the renowned literary critic Leslie Fiedler's *Introduction to Shakespeare*. His insights and psychoanalytic approach left us spellbound. The lecture hall in Capen was packed to the rafters. We didn't want to leave and could have listened to him for hours. Despite the political and cultural turmoil, UB was a center of tremendous intellectual inquiry and debate in the '70s. It was “a moveable feast” that has stayed with me my whole life.

**Mark Landesman BA '73**

Small-animal veterinarian, East Side  
Animal Hospital  
NEW YORK, N.Y.



**Statistical Mechanics.** Francis Gasparini taught how the behavior of molecules and atoms adopt both quantum and Newtonian properties. It was an eye-opening course on how the world behaves physically.

**Joseph W. Bodnarchuk BS '10**

Sustainability coordinator,  
Andrew's Estate Service  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

“**John C. Mohawk’s** *World Civilizations* class my very first semester. He taught world civilizations through the foods that different peoples ate. It was so eye-opening to learn that this topic could be taught in such a different and effective way. I loved it! It has allowed me to think about more creative ways to engage with students.

**Jillian Reading BA '07**

Senior academic adviser, School of Public Health and Health Professions, University at Buffalo  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

“**Robert Daly’s** class on the 20th-century American novel gave me not only a new approach to reading, but a fresh look at the world around me. Critical readings of Willa Cather’s “My Antonia” and Sherwood Anderson’s “Winesburg, Ohio” opened my mind to a whole new way of thinking about life. To this day, I pay closer attention to what I am reading and what can be learned from the text. I look back fondly at my time in that first-floor Clemens classroom.

**Geoff Nason BA '03**

Online editor, *The Buffalo News*  
HAMBURG, N.Y.

“**My favorite** was *American History 101*. John Milligan’s incredible lecturing style entranced me; I took every course of his that I could during my four years at UB. My least favorite was *Calculus 101* but it did provide me critical direction. I started as a math major, but calculus showed me that theorems, limits and derivatives replaced numbers in the study of math at the university level. So, it was not for me. I ended up being able to utilize my affinity for numbers in a successful career in supply chain management.

**Michael Bohon BA '67**

Founding principal,  
Health Care Solutions Bureau  
SHOW LOW, ARIZ.

“**In my final semester**, with more than enough graduation credits, I opted for Charles Olson’s class on Greek mythology as it relates to literature. Charles Olson was a major force in the new mid-century American poetry movement—his action-oriented, free verse poetry is akin to post-war jazz and abstract expressionism. Everyone said he was unorthodox, wild and far out.

Olson was the personification of energy. The Myth & Lit evening class started at 8 p.m., or whenever it was that Olson showed up. It ended at 11 p.m., or earlier or later—whenever he ran out of energy. He was extremely likable. He was also tall and muscular, although already gray-haired.

He arrived full of steam, usually with a brown sweater wrapped around his waist. The class was an eclectic mix of people—a straight-laced note-taker, a beatnik hanger-on, an older woman, a new-age mod-hipster, a Marlon Brando (“The Wild One”) motorcycle type in full black leather jacket and chains, a janitor who dropped in regularly to listen, and a couple against the rear wall who used the class for making out. Two non-humans attending included a dog that a middle-aged female student always brought and, soon thereafter, a scruffy stray dog that usually wandered in.

**Anthony Rudnicki BA '65**

Retired teacher and administrator  
LAKEVIEW, N.Y.

“**Graphics Programming with Dave Pape** was an underrated, hidden and life-changing course. For me it was one of two classes that actually made me feel like I went to college and learned something. Very few courses encourage creativity and deviation from the norm.

**Corey Schaf BS '10**

Web developer, *VertaSource*  
CHEEKTOWAGA, N.Y.

**“ Pathophysiology. Exams were formatted as hypothetical patient cases, where we had to diagnose a patient based on his or her clinical symptoms and lab results. This class was a phenomenal exercise in critical thinking.**

**Chani Becker BS, BA '10**

PhD/MBA candidate, University of Minnesota  
MINNEAPOLIS, MINN.

**“ Molecular Immunology.** *What possessed me to take that as an elective I will never know! What an eye-opener, especially at 8 a.m. I was a biochemical pharmacology major, and I had taken a pretty easy class with a particular professor. I saw that the same professor was teaching molecular immunology, so I signed up.*

*However, it turned out that he was on sabbatical, and had been replaced by Sandra Gollnick. I remember the first day she came in, she said, “I’m going to take it for granted, and I do mean granted, that you all have an advanced understanding of genetics and biochemistry.” I looked at my friend sitting next to me, and he was panicking because he knew genetics but not biochemistry, and I was panicking because I knew biochemistry and not genetics.*

*Dr. Gollnick, who has worked at Roswell Park for a long time, was a great professor and smart as hell, but that was a much harder class than I anticipated.*

**Mike Cioffi BS '95**

Vice president, PRA Health Sciences  
DURHAM, N.C.

**“ I was a double major at UB, in psychology and dance. Within each major there were classes that greatly influenced who I am today. My first ballet class with Jeanne Fornarola helped me gain confidence as a dancer and form lifelong friendships. Laura Park taught my social psychology class. I was so captivated by the topic that I took an upper-level course in self-esteem with her and helped with research in her lab. This paved the way to my graduate education and current career in human resources.**

**Nicole Weibel BA '07**

Education coordinator, Purdue University  
WEST LAFAYETTE, IND.

**“ Philosophy 101:** *Aristotelean Logic was a required course in the nursing program. The professor was wonderful in his approach and in the manner in which he encouraged each student to think past his or her preconceived notions and mental boundaries while providing a framework from which a logical approach to thoughtful inquiry could occur. Loved the class!*

**Gregory Castro BS '87**

Controller, HIPAA Corporate Compliance Office  
RHINEBECK, N.Y.

**“ Dr. Harold Burton’s Exercise Physiology class challenged you to participate, think outside the box and engage yourself in the science of how our bodies perform under different circumstances. It was a true launching pad from exercise science as an undergraduate to physical therapy as a graduate student.**

**James Maska DPT '14**

Physical therapist, Cariant Health Partners  
HERINGTON, KAN.



“ **I wasn't a history major** but ended up taking two of John Milligan's Civil War history classes just for the fun of it. He was, perhaps, the best and most engaging teacher I have ever encountered. Nonetheless, Narain Gehani was the most influential person on my academic career. If not for him, I would not have continued on in computer science and would have missed out on a 35-plus-year career. I think about his guidance to this day.

**Irv Robinson BS '79**

Senior director, Data Center Architecture  
MILPITAS, CALIF.

“ **The class** I take with me each day is **City Planning**, taught by **Al Price**. It follows me around everywhere I go. My first class at UB was **American Architecture** with **Jack Quinan**. I had never been to **Chicago** but when I did go, after this class, I was able to tell the locals all about the architectural history of their city.

**Douglas Levere BA '89**

Staff photographer,  
University Communications,  
University at Buffalo  
BUFFALO, N.Y.

“ **Developmental Psychology**, taught by **Stephanie Godleski** (who was a graduate student at the time I took the class), definitely set me off toward my current career path. After taking this class, I became very interested in conducting research with children. That led me to join **Jamie Ostrov's Social Development Lab**, which **Dr. Godleski** was a part of, the semester after I took her course. Because of this experience, I am now conducting school-based motivation research as a student in **Ohio State's educational psychology PhD program** and working toward my goal of becoming a professor.

**Marissa Green BA '11**

PhD student in education psychology,  
The Ohio State University  
COLUMBUS, OHIO

“ **Nathaniel Cantor's Introductory Sociology class** back in the '50s changed my life forever. He was someone who really got under your skin. I grew up in a very protected atmosphere. I had just joined a sorority, and one day he called on me and said, 'I suppose you're very comfortable now that you're in a sorority, and you can do all the things that sorority gals do.' The classes were relatively small, and he would go at each of us. He made me think about things I had never thought about before, and made me want to major in sociology.

When I took a job with the Navy, I had no idea what I was getting into. I was completely unfamiliar with how the military operates. In my 22-year career as a senior civilian, it took me probably ten years to win their trust. If I hadn't had the exposure to Cantor's teaching, I wouldn't have been able to handle the job at all. As it turned out, I ended up having a very successful career. I was inducted into the International Adult and Continuing Education Hall of Fame in the late '90s.

**Fran Hill Kelly PhD '68**

Retired director, U.S. Navy Education Plans and Policy  
ALTOONA, PA.

“ **In the spring of 2002**, I applied for the summer study abroad program to **Cuba**, which would ultimately lead me to **José Buscaglia's course** called **Cuba Today**. Being Puerto Rican and from **New York City**, I was sure I already knew everything about being both **American and Latino/Hispanic**. I was wrong. In fact, it was this course, and the many **Latin American and Caribbean studies** courses that followed, that ultimately led to me changing my major from **music performance to Latin American and Caribbean studies**. This classroom experience allowed me to apply for the graduate program in **Caribbean cultural studies**. After receiving a prestigious fellowship and graduate assistantship upon graduating the following spring, I knew I would be forever grateful about the decision I had made. That was the class that changed my life.

**Miguel Torres-Castro MA '05, BA '03**

Director of support programs, Mercy Home  
BROOKLYN, N.Y.



- » [Your first music album](#)
- » [Quiz for ski bums](#)
- » [Homecoming head shots](#)

## Advocating for All

Activist Yetta Kurland campaigns for inclusion

By Jennifer Kitses » Yetta Kurland (MA '94, BA '90), a civil rights attorney and activist, is used to waging battles on multiple fronts. She's a vice president of the New York City chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, and has been closely involved in the fight against the NYPD's policy of stop-and-frisk. She's the founder and senior partner of The Kurland Group, a boutique firm focused on LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) rights, through which she also represents a number of elected officials who were arrested during the Occupy Wall Street protests, as well as low-income tenants who have been sued by landlords. And she's on the board of a community group that fights street harassment.

Though Kurland is perhaps best known as an advocate for the LGBT community, what is most important to her is building bridges among underrepresented groups. "It's very easy to fight for your own interests," she says. "But what I think has been truly transformative for me is to get outside of myself and fight for others."

In fact, while Kurland founded her firm in 2001 to focus on such issues as marriage equality and domestic partner rights, one of her greatest victories is a settlement she won in 2013 on behalf of five ranking female members of the New York City Fire Department's Emergency Medical Service. "Some of these women were first responders at 9/11, and had worked for the FDNY for 20 or 30 years," she says. "They were unsung heroes and weren't being paid or promoted fairly. So it was great to win a victory for them, and to change the way that promotional practices happen within the FDNY."

Kurland credits her background in women's studies at UB with giving her an understanding of some of the broader questions she faces

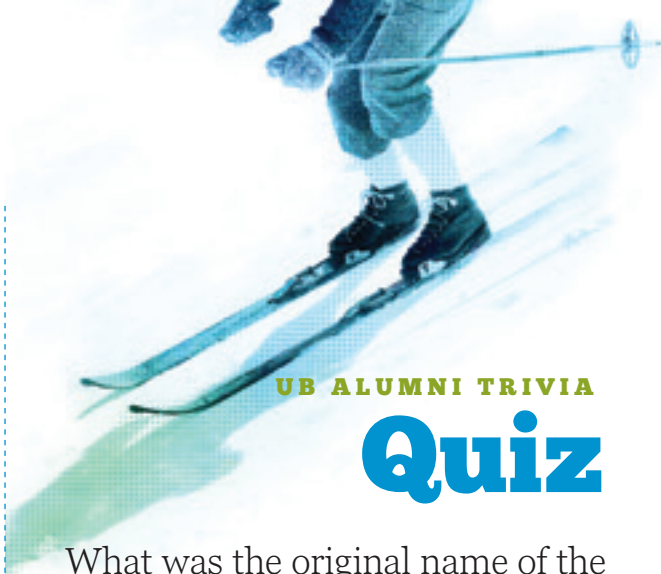
JOHN EMERSON



# Alumni Life

today. “When I was a women’s studies major, there weren’t a lot of queer-theory programs or the kinds of interdisciplinary programs that explore these issues,” she says. “Feminism was a vehicle that allowed these discussions to happen, and that connected dots between gender and race and sexual orientation. I think that was kind of the beginning of what we see today in terms of social advocacy. Ideas and politics have developed, but some core ideas have stayed the same.”

In 2013, Kurland competed in the Democratic primary for a seat on the New York City Council and lost. That followed an unsuccessful primary bid in 2009 for the seat held by then-City Council Speaker Christine Quinn. The defeats haven’t set her back. “I ran for office, and that was a great experience,” she says. Would she run again? She laughs; for now, at least, she’s concentrating on her legal work. “I’m happy to be doing social advocacy, both as an attorney and as a community organizer. But who knows what the future holds?” ❖



UB ALUMNI TRIVIA

## Quiz

What was the original name of the Schussmeisters Ski Club?

- A) Edelweiss Club
- B) Sitzmarkers
- C) Buffalo Snow Bunnies
- D) The Heffebisons
- E) Schadenfreuders
- F) Snowbulls

**Answer:** (B) In 1945, the UB ski club dubbed themselves the Sitzmarkers, from the German word "Sitzmarke," in reference to the depression a fallen skier leaves in the snow. Fifteen years later they changed their name to the considerably more inspiring Schussmeisters, which loosely translates to "masters of the straight downhill run."



### SHOW YOUR AGE Alumni proudly date themselves

What was the first album you ever purchased?



“An LP recording by the Pro Musica Antiqua, later renamed the New York Pro Musica. I think it was called “Music for Ancient Instruments and Soprano Voice.” I bought the record in 1953 as soon as I bought a record player on the installment plan: two dollars a week out of my twelve-dollar weekly wages as a clerk in the record department of the old J.N. Adams department store. I was an 18-year-old sophomore at UB.

“**Riva Berleant, BA '56  
Castine, Maine**

“Despite growing up in the '50s, my very first purchase of a record album was a 33 RPM of Beethoven’s work that I bought with money earned from baby-sitting. I did, and do, love the “Moonlight Sonata,” and even rock ‘n’ roll couldn’t dissuade me from this purchase!

“**June Crawford, EdM, BA, AA '77  
Grand Island, N.Y.**

“I remember buying “Tea for the Tillerman” by Cat Stevens. It was great to see him get into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame this year. And my most treasured was “Court and Spark” from Joni Mitchell. (Still love this one!)

“**Cindy Fofi, MEd '99  
Albany, N.Y.**

### And more oldies but goodies...

“Beatles ‘65,” the Beatles

**Ronald Balter, BA '80  
Brooklyn, N.Y.**

“Let’s Twist Again,” Chubby Checker

**Sally Cisek, MS '08  
Snyder, N.Y.**

Bob Dylan’s “Greatest Hits” and Ultimate Spinach [their title album].

**Clem Colucci, BA '76  
Bronx, N.Y.**

“Madman Across the Water,” Elton John

**Dan DiCenso, PharmD '02, BS '01  
Buffalo, N.Y.**

The Kingston Trio

**Ronald Zeck, BA '70  
New York, N.Y.**





SOLIDANT LIFESTYLE PHOTOGRAPHY

## Smile! You're in At Buffalo!

At Buffalo magazine joined the fun at Homecoming and Family Weekend on Sept. 27, setting up shop in Stampede Square with a pile of complimentary issues and a photo booth. As you can see, a good time was had by all.

Check out more pics online at <http://tinyurl.com/UBphotobooth>

# Oh, What a Night!

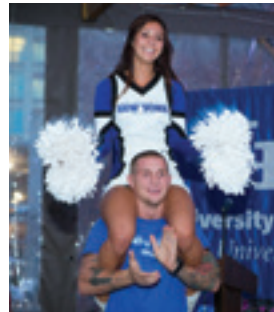
## Larkinville event unites friends at downtown hotspot

**O**n Sept. 19, nearly 500 UB alumni rubbed elbows with faculty, staff and students at “UB Night at Larkinville,” held at the popular outdoor pocket park that’s become one of Buffalo’s hottest destinations for family fun. Part of the Alumni Association’s Western New York event series, it featured remarks from President Tripathi, Larkin Development Group managing partner Howard Zemsky and Carol Gloff (BS ’75), UBAA president. Kids spun hula hoops as academic departments held meet-and-greets with their respective alumni, and everybody agreed it was a great way to reconnect. (For the record, At Buffalo had our first information table there, too!)



**Blue ribbon brigade:** More than 40 attendees signed up to become volunteers, either as alumni ambassadors to help recruit potential students or as “UB Connectors”—mentors to fellow alumni of their UB schools or departments who are exploring new careers.

**Go Bulls!** Cheerleaders lifted pom-poms and spirits to the sound of the UB fight song.



**Signature selfies:** Attendees who posted photos on the Alumni Association social media sites were eligible to win prizes of UB gear.



**Quality time:** Elaine Haase, research associate professor at the dental school, and her husband, Henry, kick back in Larkin’s colorful Adirondack chairs.

### EVENTS

Carol Gloff (BS ’75) is our Alumni Association president.

## Carol’s Winter Picks

A selection of campus events, open to all alumni

At Buffalo goes to press before many event dates are set, so please make sure to check [www.alumni.buffalo.edu/events](http://www.alumni.buffalo.edu/events) for updates.



### January

#### Career Conversations Rochester

**01.07.15**  
Genesee Valley Club

#### Women’s basketball vs. Western Michigan

**01.13.15**  
North Campus

#### Career Conversations NYC

**01.15.15**  
Union League Club

### February

#### Career Conversations Buffalo

**02.11.15**  
North Campus

#### UB Distinguished Speakers Series (DSS): Earvin “Magic” Johnson

**02.12.15**  
North Campus

#### National Symphony Orchestra of Mexico

**02.18.15**  
North Campus

### March

#### Tango Buenos Aires

**03.02.15**  
North Campus

#### Becca Stevens Band

**03.28.15**  
North Campus

### April

#### UB DSS: Robert Ballard

**04.01.15**  
North Campus



JOHN DYKES

Carol says:

“Don’t miss Ballard, the deep-sea explorer who discovered the Titanic!”

# Class Notes

- » Winter flowers
- » Tips from the "Car Coach"
- » '66: Félicitations, Aleksandra Gruzinska!

## Back in the Hunt

The host of 'America's Most Wanted' continues his crusade with a new show on CNN

By Lisa Grace Lednicer » Long before he became the telegenic host of "America's Most Wanted"—one of the longest-running prime-time series on network TV—John Walsh (honorary doctorate '04, BA '73) wanted to be a writer. And so he enrolled at the University at Buffalo. "They had internationally acclaimed writers in the English department," he explains. "People say, 'You must have been an actor; you must have been in the TV business.' UB is where I developed my creativity."

Despite his college aspirations, Walsh's first career was as a hotel developer. Then, in 1981, his 6-year-old son, Adam, was kidnapped and murdered. Walsh became a full-time activist on behalf of victims' rights, and his creative writing skills started coming into play. In addition to launching "America's Most Wanted" and writing segments for the show, he has authored three

books, hosted a daily talk show, created an Emmy-nominated children's program and almost single-handedly made missing children a national law-enforcement priority through his lobbying efforts.

"I will always be the father of a murdered child," says Walsh, who recently turned 69. "You just can't sit still. I'll do this as long as I physically can."

Indeed, shortly after the cancellation of "America's Most Wanted," Walsh launched his new show, "The Hunt with John Walsh," over the summer. The Hunt has big shoes to fill. In its 25 years on the air, says Walsh, "America's Most Wanted" helped capture 17 men from the FBI's Most Wanted list and recover 61 missing children. The highlight of the show's run, he says, was the recovery of Elizabeth Smart, the 14-year-old who was kidnapped from her Salt Lake City bedroom in 2002. Walsh had reached out to Ed Smart,

JOHN  
WALSH,  
BA '73

## CLASS NOTES BY DECADE

# Person to Person

Look for the little blue asterisk, which denotes an Alumni Association member!

Elizabeth's father, early in the search. "Ed and I never believed Elizabeth was dead," Walsh says.

When she was found, nine months after her abduction, the media camped out in front of the house. "The family snuck me in the back door," says Walsh. "I told them, 'Don't be seduced by Oprah or Good Morning America. She needs counseling.' Elizabeth walked down the stairs in terrible shape, and she said 'thank

you,' and I just broke into tears. I didn't know what to say. We've been friends ever since."

Despite the show's popularity, Walsh says he was comfortable with the decision to cancel it. "We were on for 25 years," he says. "I had traveled non-stop, and it just seemed time to end it."

"I will always be the father of a murdered child. I'll do this as long as I physically can."

John Walsh

Not long after, Jeff Zucker, president of CNN Worldwide and a longtime friend, asked Walsh if he'd consider doing a show for his network. "Over a long year, we talked back and forth," Walsh says. "CNN is in 45 countries. The head of Interpol is a good friend of mine. I talked to the FBI and they said, 'We'd be thrilled if you came back.'"

So he agreed to a new show with a different format—only one or two fugitives per episode instead of the three routinely featured on "America's Most Wanted," which leaves more time for storytelling. The Hunt debuted in July to favorable ratings. More importantly to Walsh, two of the men the show profiled have already been captured. ♣

**STAY CONNECTED!** Share your photos and tell us your story on the UB Alumni Association Facebook page, [facebook.com/buffalolumni](https://www.facebook.com/buffalolumni), or follow us on Twitter @UB\_Alumni.

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\* **Philip Morey, MD 1962**, received the Individual Supporter Award from the Town of Amherst Arts and Culture in Public Places Board. Morey is a retired cardiologist who served with the Buffalo Medical Group for 30 years. He resides in Williamsville, N.Y.

**Aleksandra Gruzinska, MA 1966**, professor of French at Arizona State University's School of International Letters and Cultures, was inducted by the French government into the Ordre des Palmes Académiques at the grade of Chevalier. She lives in Mesa, Ariz.

**Neil Grossman, BA 1969**, was awarded lifetime membership in the New Jersey Dental Association after practicing dentistry for more than 41 years. He resides in Cherry Hill, N.J.

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**Leonard Gaby, MBA 1971 & BS 1967**, co-founder and former chief executive officer of Sleep America, was appointed to O'Connor House's board of directors. He lives in Paradise Valley, Ariz.

\* **Alan More, MA 1971**, an adjunct professor of intelligence studies at George Mason University, was awarded the school's 2014 Teaching Excellence Award for Adjunct Faculty. He resides in McLean, Va.

**Alexander DuBrow, MBA 1973**, founded Avonis Inc., a boutique consulting firm in Orlando, Fla. He lives in Deland, Fla.

\* **Gary Jastrzab, BA 1976 & BA 1976**, executive director of the Philadelphia City Planning Commission, was awarded the Governor's Award for Local Government Excellence. He resides in Philadelphia, Pa.

**Barry Mukamal, MBA 1977 & BS 1976**, co-managing partner of KapilaMukamal, was designated a certified insolvency and restructuring advisor by the Association of Insolvency and Restructuring Advisors. He lives in Hollywood, Fla.

\* **Steven Ascher, PhD 1978, MS 1976, BA 1974 & BA 1974**, was elected president of the New Jersey chapter of the American Statistical Association. He resides in New Britain, Pa.

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**Siamak Moini, BS 1980**, joined ARCADIS as a program manager to support urban planning projects in Los Angeles, Calif. He lives in Los Angeles.

**Thomas Hill, BA 1981**, retired as a school psychologist after working for 30 years in various public schools. He resides in Elmira, N.Y.

**Michael McCall, BA 1981**, was named director of Michigan State University's School of Hospitality Business. He was previously a professor and chair of Ithaca College's Department of Marketing and Law. He lives in Holt, Mich.

**Robert Black, BS 1982**, a senior adviser for Boston Consulting Group, joined Annie's Homegrown's board of directors as chair of the nominating and corporate

governance committee. He resides in Dallas, Texas.

\* **Marilyn Ciancio, EdM 1982 & BA 1975**, was a 2014 Amherst Awards for the Arts recipient in the category of Behind the Scenes Individual. She lives in Amherst, N.Y.

**Eric Kramer, BS 1982**, an attorney for Farrell Fritz, was selected to the 2014 New York Super Lawyers list. He resides in Dix Hills, N.Y.

**Gerard Sentz, MS 1982 & BS 1981**, joined Foit-Albert Associates as vice president of engineering. He lives in Williamsville, N.Y.

**James Weidner, BA 1982**, partner and managing member of Oliver & Weidner, was reappointed to the Georgia Superior Court Clerks Cooperative Authority. He resides in Clarkesville, Ga.

**Mitchell Brew, BS 1985**, was named director of logistics for the U.S. Army Medical Command in the Office of the Surgeon General. He lives in Vienna, Va.

**Joseph Coulson, PhD 1985 & MA 1982**, was appointed president of the Great Books Foundation. He resides in Cambridge, Mass.

**James M. Daly, MBA 1985 & BS 1984**, executive vice president and chief commercial officer at Incyte Corporation, joined Chimerix's board of directors. He lives in Raleigh, N.C.

**Barbara Nevergold, PhD 1986 & EdM 1974**, former Buffalo School Board president, was appointed chairwoman of the state's Conference of Big 5 School Districts. She resides in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Margaret Gehring, BS 1987**, was named head coach of Macalester College's men's and women's track and field programs. She lives in Saint Paul, Minn.

**Thomas Ostrowski, BA 1989**, a banking and finance law attorney for Tucker Ellis, was selected to the Best Lawyers in America list for 2015. He resides in Strongsville, Ohio.

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**Gregory Jakubowicz, JD 1990**, was named college chaplain at Hilbert College. He previously served as college chaplain at Siena College. He lives in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Edward Zelmanow, BA 1991**, joined Clark & Howell as the attorney leading the creditor's rights department. He resides in Gorham, Maine.

**Joseph Bracci, PhD 1992, MS 1989 & BS 1987**, was appointed chair of the ACLI Foundation's Concrete Research Council. Bracci is the A.P. and Florence Wiley Professor II in the Zachry Department of Civil Engineering at Texas A&M University. He lives in The Woodlands, Texas.

**Sandra Cross, BA 1992**, was promoted to senior director of diversity and inclusion by the Professional Golfers Association of America. Before her promotion, Cross served as director of women's and new market initiatives. She resides in Pembroke Pines, Fla.

\* **Chad Goodwin, BA 1993**, joined AmeriHealth Caritas as vice president and chief procurement officer. He lives in West Chester, Pa.

**Denise Juron-Borgese, BA 1994 & BPS 1993**, was promoted from director to vice president of development and planning at Ciminelli Real Estate Corporation. She resides in Tonawanda, N.Y.

**John Ernst, PhD 1995 & MA 1993**, an adjunct professor of psychology at Thomas More College, was named director of the Thomas More College Success Center. He lives in Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Gwen Howard, MArch 1995**, was appointed vice president of architecture at Foit-Albert Associates. Howard, who has worked for Foit-Albert for 15 years, was previously senior project manager of architecture. She resides in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Kristen Murphy, BA 1996**, assistant director of membership and alumni engagement at the University at Buffalo, was named vice president of the Council of Alumni Marketing and Membership Professionals. She lives in East Amherst, N.Y.

**Shawn Farrell, MLS 1998**, joined the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County as an ILS analyst. Farrell previously worked at the New York Public Library as a circulation implementation coordinator. He resides in Park Hills, Ky.

**Bridget Niland, JD 1998, EdM 1998 & BA 1995**, was appointed athletic director of Daemen College, where she is also an associate professor of business administration. Niland previously served as Daemen's faculty athletic representative. She lives in Amherst, N.Y.

**Kelly Carrigg, MA 1999**, a French teacher at St. Francis High School in Athol Springs, N.Y., was named Veteran of the Month by New York State Sen. Mark Grisanti, a member of the New York State Senate's Veterans, Homeland Security and Military Affairs Committee. She resides in Hamburg, N.Y.

**Tracy Conhiser-Uy, MArch 1999 & BPS 1997**, joined Wendel's architectural group. She lives in Buffalo, N.Y.



**Nicholaus Baker, BA 2001**, was named assistant crew coach at Drexel University. Baker was previously head coach of the University of Pennsylvania's lightweight rowing program. He resides in Philadelphia, Pa.

**Albert Bitterman, MArch 2002**, was appointed associate professor of architecture and design at Alfred State College. He lives in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Brian Goldwater, BS 2002**, was promoted to administrative vice president and senior audit manager at M&T Bank. He resides in Orchard Park, N.Y.

**Jamie Karek, MA 2002**, partner at Commonwealth Law Group, was selected to the Super Lawyers' 2014 Rising Stars list. Karek was also named one of the top 100 injured workers' attorneys in the country by the Workers' Injury Law & Advocacy Group. She lives in Richmond, Va.

**Betty Lim, MD 2003**, joined Summit Medical Group Geriatric Services and Palliative Care as a physician. Lim is also assistant professor of geriatrics and palliative medicine at Mount Sinai School of Medicine. She resides in Edgewater, N.J.

**Joseph McCabe, MArch 2003 & BPS 2001**, was appointed vice president of The Woda Group. McCabe was previously employed at The NRP Group as a senior project manager. He lives in Columbus, Ohio.

**Michael Brogan, PhD 2005 & MS 1989**, Daemen College dean and vice president for academic affairs, was selected for the Fulbright Specialist Program. He resides in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Richard Taczowski, MUP 2006**, founder and president of Friends of Schoolhouse #8, accepted a Restoration

## Elizabeth Licata, BA '84

**Editor-in-chief, Buffalo Spree**



### HOW-TO

For the past 15 years, Elizabeth Licata has been the editor-in-chief of Buffalo Spree, an award-winning city magazine that keeps its finger on the pulse of Buffalo life and culture. An avid gardener, Licata also writes for two gardening blogs, including the highly acclaimed Garden Rant. In 2006, she published "Garden Walk Buffalo," a book about the country's oldest garden walk, which she also helps to run.

Recently, Licata has been using a method called "bulb-forcing" to make sure she's surrounded by blooming flowers year-round. We asked her for tips on how to use this method to keep some color around the house through the long, dark months ahead.

## How to make flowers grow in winter:

### Pick your bulbs

Personally, I like hyacinths and narcissus. They're easy to force and they give off a great smell, too.

### Make them comfy

Place your bulbs in a glass container lined with stones or beads. You can place multiple bulbs in one container—just make sure they don't touch. Fill with just enough water to touch the base of the bulbs. If you're more into the vintage look, there are tons of beautiful forcing vases available online or at local gardening centers.

### Let them chill

Narcissus can start to develop at room temperature, but most bulbs need to be stored between 35 and 45 degrees for around eight weeks. While root cellars or cold attics are ideal, a refrigerator will work just as well, as long as there is no produce nearby. Beer fridges are perfect.

### Thaw them out

Once you start to see roots and shoots emerging from your bulbs, move them to a dimly lit room where they can develop more quickly. This

in-between stage is a great time to give bulbs as gifts to friends and family.

### Give them some sun

After they've had about a week to develop, move your bulbs to a well-lit windowsill on the south or west end of your house. Soon you'll have beautiful, fragrant flowers to keep yourself in a spring-time state of mind all winter long.



RICHARD FAUST

CONTINUED

and Community Engagement Award from Preservation Buffalo Niagara. He lives in Buffalo, N.Y.

**James Maynard, PhD 2007**, associate curator of the Poetry Collection at UB, was awarded the inaugural Pegasus Award for Poetry Criticism from the Chicago-based Poetry Foundation for editing "Robert Duncan: Collected Essays and Other Prose" (University of California Press, 2014). He lives in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Sherri vonHahmann, EMBA 2007**, was appointed east coast sales executive at Bell Flavors and Fragrances. She resides in Medford, N.J.

\* **John Cope, MD 2008**, joined SVMC General Surgery and the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Putnam Physicians Group. He previously practiced as a surgical critical care fellow at Hartford Hospital. He lives in Bennington, Vt.

**Amy Zieziula, EdM 2008**, was appointed assistant dean of student integrity at Armstrong State University. Zieziula previously worked as interim associate dean for student conduct at Georgia Southern University. She resides in Statesboro, Ga.

**Jeremy Olson, PhD 2009**, was named head of the Chemistry Department at Judson College. Olson was previously an adjunct professor of chemistry at Essex County College. He lives in Marion, Ala.

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**Vinayak Kane, MS 2010**, was promoted to software development lead at Freeform Technologies. He resides in Ichalkaranji, India.

\* **Michael Cefalu, BS 2011**, joined Altria Group Distribution Company as a territory sales manager. He lives in Westbrook, Maine.

**Michael Zimmerman, MUP 2011 & BA 2008**, executive director of Lumber City Development Corporation, was named community development director for the City of North Tonawanda. He resides in Buffalo, N.Y.

**Edward Hutton, MS 2012**, an assistant professor of finance at Niagara University, received the school's 2014 Excellence in Teaching Award. He lives in East Aurora, N.Y.

**Madeleine Fincham, MUP 2014 & BA 2012**, joined Michael Baker International as a planning associate. She lives in Washington, Pa.

**Brooke Grant, PhD 2014 & EdM 2005**, was named an assistant professor of social studies education at the University of Wisconsin-Superior. She resides in Superior.



KENNY RECHIN

## Lauren Fix BS '86

"The Car Coach"



TOP FIVE

Thanks to her father, the owner of a brake refurbishing company in Detroit, Mich., Lauren Fix fell in love with cars as a little girl. She started working on automobiles at age 10. By 17, she was tearing up the track in a race car of her own.

Now you might recognize Fix by her moniker, "The Car Coach." In addition to being an ASE-certified technician, she's an educator, keynote speaker, TV show host, and author of three books and countless articles. She also has passed the wrench to her own daughter, Shelby Fix, who, at 22, is the youngest member in the history of the International Motor Press Association, and has been dubbed "Car Coach 2.0."

We chased down the original Car Coach and asked her how to tell when it's time to get rid of your ride.

## Five signs it's time to ditch your car:

### 1. You've hit the century mark

When you hit that 100,000-mile marker, take stock of what you have, especially if you bought the car used. Sometimes a car will run for 175,000 miles, so it's worth the investment, but if you buy a used car with a body that's starting to rust out, you can bet the complex components were neglected too.

### 2. Repairs become routine

Any time repair costs are getting to be more

than the value of the car, it's time to think about selling.

### 3. You're holding on for "love"

Lots of people, professing to love the inanimate object that is their car, continue to make payments or repairs they can't afford. Sometimes you just have to cut the cord and sell it.

### 4. It's snowing in your convertible

Not everyone can afford to have seasonal cars. If you recently moved up North, or made a

mid-life decision and find yourself driving a sports car in 6 inches of snow, it might be time to consider a car that better suits the weather and your lifestyle.

### 5. Your lease is leaving you high and dry

Leasing can be a good option for many people, but it's not cheap. If you start to feel trapped a year or two in, don't panic. Services like swaplease.com can help you get out of that costly contract.

Who am I?

### Win an At Buffalo coffee mug!

If you read the issue carefully, you'll know this little fella's name. First reader to submit the correct answer to [atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu](mailto:atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu) wins a mug.

And now that we've grabbed your attention, how about sending us your class note? Visit [alumni.buffalo.edu](http://alumni.buffalo.edu).







## Raise your hand for your alumni association!

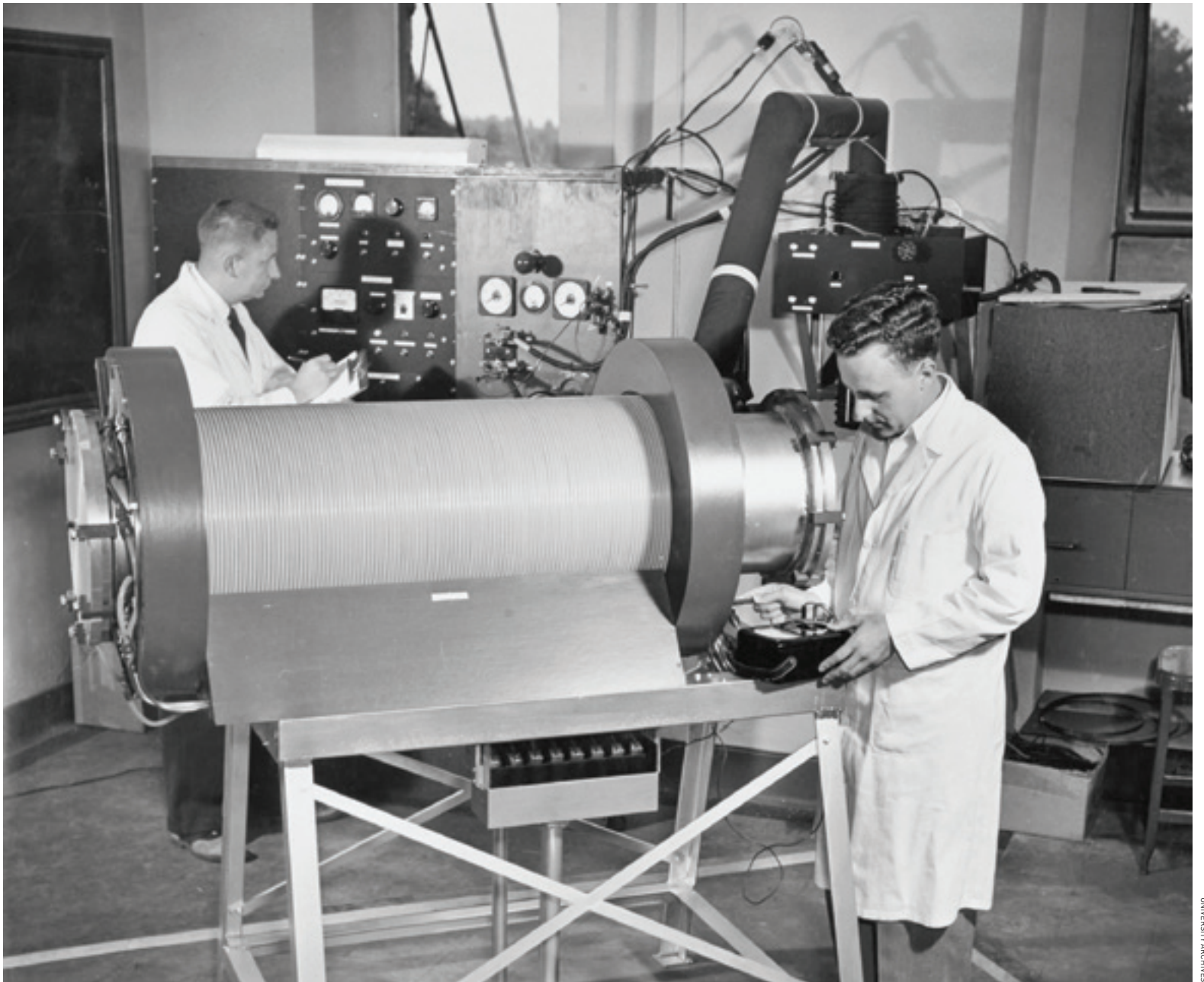
Volunteering is a wonderful way to meet current UB students and other great UB alumni, plus you'll feel really good giving back to your alma mater. No matter where you live, whether it's San Diego or Singapore, we can use your help.

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- › Work with UB schools or departments
- › Get involved with regional chapters
- ...and more!

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UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

**UB YESTERDAY**

## 1954 Beta Ray Spectrometer

While the machine front and center here looks like something out of Marvel Comics, it's not a shrinking ray, and it won't vaporize your enemies. According to alumnus Harold Box (PhD '55, MA '52), this is a beta ray spectrometer, used to examine properties of electrons emitted during nuclear decay. Although At Buffalo couldn't confirm the location (we think it might be what is now called Parker Hall), nor the identities of the two men pictured here, Box thinks the machine was built by the late Walter Wurster (PhD '57, BA '50) when the two were both getting their PhDs in physics at UB. Wurster went on to work for the Cornell Aeronautical Laboratory/Calspan in Cheektowaga, N.Y., where he conducted research instrumental to safe re-entry for NASA spaceships, and earned the nickname "Dr. Optics." Sounds like a superhero story after all!

» [Recognize these guys? If so, drop us a line at atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu.](mailto:atbuffalomagazine@buffalo.edu)



Did you know there are more than 1,000  
UB graduates in Singapore?

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DOUGLAS LEVERE

**LAST LOOK**

**Snow, Glorious Snow!** Wilson "Snowflake" Bentley shot the first picture of a snowflake back in the 1800s. Inspired by Bentley, "Snowflake" Levere, aka our staff photographer Douglas Levere (BA '89), has spent several years perfecting the art in the garage of his Snyder, N.Y., home. The image above is part of a stunning collection he shot last winter. Isn't snow party?