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Cover photo: Carlos Varela ’95
Inside front cover photo: Julian Leibaert ’15, Belgium
Inside back cover photo: Murat Orhun Bozkurt ’14
Back cover photo: Courtesy of Global Leadership Forum
When I walked across the UWC-USA graduation stage in 1989, I did not expect to be returning one day to lead this incredible institution. Truly, it is an honor and a privilege to come back as the school’s fourth president.

It is also a very different experience to be here as an adult. I have a new, and much deeper, appreciation for this place and this community. My wife Cassandra, my son Arjun, and I have enjoyed the warm embrace we’ve received from students, faculty, staff, and new friends in this beautiful corner of northern New Mexico.

While I look out at the campus, the students feel as familiar to me now as they did 25 years ago. The diversity that I was so grateful for as a young man is ever-present today. The thirst for knowledge and the passion for change are very much alive and well, as I discovered recently at the first “fireside chat” I hosted at my house.

It was on a Sunday night, and economics professor Klaus Desmet ’88 joined me for a talk with students and faculty about global economics. (Klaus was also in town to see his daughter Nathalie ’16 perform in the Caribbean and Latin American Day cultural show.) We had about 30 people gathered by the fireplace in my living room. One of them was Stella Serger ’16, Germany, who sat very quietly, listening and knitting a cap. The conversation—which was a pretty heady discourse about the challenges of the world—had gone on for about 90 minutes when suddenly Stella raised her hand.

“How are we going to incorporate all these challenges into the UWC-USA dialogue?” she asked in an impassioned manner. “How are we going to think about solutions?”

And then the kicker: “Are we going to talk, or are we going to do?”

For my part, I’m ready to do. As you read this, I will have completed my first 100 days as UWC-USA’s president. We have tremendous opportunities for innovation and impact. The key areas I plan to place my focus are:

- Innovative programming and experiences to challenge our students while building their skills and capabilities to lead in the 21st century
- Integration across all elements of our curriculum to help students and teachers expand their perspectives and connect new and different ideas
- Improve engagement with our alumni so we can enhance a framework that encourages lifelong impact in their communities and beyond
- Initiate partnerships with like-minded global organizations to expand our impact
- Increased transparency and communication with you, our constituents, so that we may have proactive conversations about our collective future as UWC-USA family members.

I will be sharing more with you about each of these areas throughout the year in a variety of formats. Please know that I seek a two-way conversation, and I am eager to hear from you. I look forward to many more fireside chats and gatherings throughout the coming year.

Warmly,

Mukul Kumar ’89
President
Dr. Mukul Kumar '89 returns to UWC-USA as the school’s fourth president and the first alumnus to lead a UWC campus.

ASK MUKUL’S UWC-USA classmates what they recall upon meeting him for the first time 27 years ago, and they’ll talk about a studious young man with a quiet tenacity. Are they surprised that this alumnus from 1989 is now UWC-USA’s fourth president? Not at all.

“The role of president requires a variety of skills,” says David Robinson ’89, Mukul’s former roommate. “It’s not just academic background but strategic vision for the school. I think he has the ability to be very good at it.”

The fact that Mukul has lived through the UWC-USA experience certainly helps.

“The late teen years are stressful enough in a normal situation, but to be completely separated from your family and your culture, to know absolutely no one when you arrive, and then to add those extremely challenging academics—it’s a pretty difficult transition,” says Ben Fishman ’89, another former roomie. “Mukul will have great sympathy for the growing pains of students. And he also knows the tremendous personal growth and changes that we all went through at UWC-USA. For him to come back and head the operation is an amazing thing.”

CRITICAL THINKER

Mukul came to UWC-USA from Mumbai, India—“a tall, skinny, quiet young man who never caused any trouble, studied hard, and was very kind and well-mannered,” recalls Linda Curtis, former dean of students, who was his resident tutor in the Curtis House (now known as the Denali Dorm).

Today, Mukul is a leader in international education with a background in economics and business management. He holds a doctorate from Princeton University, and he completed his undergraduate studies at Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Mukul has come a long way from the wide-eyed teenager who landed in New Mexico to find himself in a whole new world.

“I think back to my first days at UWC-USA, getting on my first international flight at age 16. Four days after I arrived, I was confronted with overwhelming diversity across nationalities, languages, and even the geographic landscape,” he recalls. “I had never been in a sleeping bag and had never slept in a tent. Four months later, I was climbing volcanoes in Mexico.”

Whether it was a wilderness trip or mathematics class, Mukul embraced the UWC-USA experience. Day-room conversations were especially important, and he recalls one in particular with a Pakistani student that left a deep impression. “We were talking about the three wars that India and Pakistan fought, and we both said, ‘My country won each of the three,’” he recalls. “We recognized then that we had fallen for the propaganda we had grown up with. The world is complicated, and we learned to be critical in our understanding.”

Critical thinking has served Mukul well throughout his career, and he is using that skill to take a serious look at UWC-USA. His vision for the school is clear: “We want to be pioneers at the frontier of innovation in education.”

PREPARING A NEW GENERATION

Innovation is something of a specialty for Mukul. Before returning to UWC-USA, he spent four years as provost at Hult International Business School, where he led strategy and delivery of all programs across its seven international campuses. He pioneered a globalization strategy, led a curriculum redesign focusing on whole-person skills and behaviors, and deployed technology to support new ideas in pedagogy.

He now looks forward to building on the UWC’s founding legacy of international education, which an increasingly competitive cohort of schools has sought to embrace and replicate.
“UWC has been a leader in the International Baccalaureate for many years. Now we have to ask how we can innovate for tomorrow,” Mukul says. “The challenges of the 21st century will require collaborative change agents—facile in diverse environments and resilient in the face of setbacks—to enable social impact. We need to focus their unique UWC experience on the three Ps for lifelong success: passion, perseverance, and productivity. Further, we need to build partnerships and share our innovations to achieve broad impact.”

For Mukul, education, innovation, and relevance are intricately woven together. Coming to UWC-USA, he is asking the same questions he posed at Hult: How can we develop the skills and behaviors that students will need in five years, or in 10? How can we help those students build for a future that no one could fully conceive yet?

Finding His Path

The UWC-USA students Mukul encounters today aren’t too different from his classmates in 1987. “We spent a lot of time discussing how we could solve the problems of the world,” recalls Mukul’s former roommate David. Similar conversations pervade the day rooms and lunch tables, and students are just as engrossed in their studies.

When he was a student, Mukul excelled at math and science. Michael Stern ’89, who is a UWC-USA distinguished trustee, remembers going to the State Science Olympiad with Mukul. In one of the chemistry events, students had to identify vials of powder by evaluating density, solubility in different fluids, melting points, and more. “In the moment the clock started, Mukul won the event for our team with a maneuver that would have never occurred to me,” Michael says. “He picked up the vials, dusted a fingertip with each mystery powder, tasted them, and confidently identified every one. He’ll do just fine as president.”

Although science was his strength, Mukul realized after his first year at MIT that he had different passions. “I fell in love with economics,” he says. “That began the journey I took for the next decade.”
His first job out of Princeton, where he received a Ph.D. in economics, was with McKinsey & Co., a global management consultancy. “It was a chance to sharpen my skills in managing teams, inventing new products and models, leading through influence, and building a shared vision,” he says. His years at McKinsey prepared him for his next job at Corporate Executive Board, a consultancy that advises firms around the world.

But something didn’t feel right. When Mukul was growing up in Mumbai, there was a Sanskrit phrase from the Upanishads his family often repeated: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam—“all the world is one family.” It was a reminder and a challenge for him—what would he do to make the community better?

Despite professional accolades and a rewarding consulting career, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam gnawed away. “I found myself restless. I questioned how I could act on my family values and the values that UWC had helped define. What would be the right place to have a positive impact?”

The answer, he decided, was education. “It was a field that I was passionate about and that I felt needed enormous change.” He accepted a teaching position at the University of Maryland and led executive education programs. In short order, the experience led Mukul to his next role at Hult.

Hult was the perfect setting for a UWC-USA alumnus who wanted to create change. The school has a culture of innovation and quick decision-making, two elements that fuel Mukul. “The pace of change in our world is exponential,” he says. “We have to think about giving students an education so that they can have success for the next 80 years. We need them to learn to be curious, to explore, and to take ownership of their own learning.”

**SOME ADVICE**

As Mukul embarks on this new venture, his UWC-USA schoolmates have a few bits of advice:

“Hold on tight and embrace the excitement,” Ben says.

“Trust in the same ideals you loved as a student,” David says. “Follow your intuition and your heart, which have guided you very well throughout your life.”

And finally, from his friend Sandro Trosso ’89: “Be the same Mukul you were when you first arrived in Montezuma.” 🌱

“I FOUND MYSELF RESTLESS. I QUESTIONED HOW I COULD ACT ON MY FAMILY VALUES AND THE VALUES THAT UWC HAD HELPED DEFINE. WHAT WOULD BE THE RIGHT PLACE TO HAVE A POSITIVE IMPACT?”
A revolution is brewing at the crossroads of education and technology. Over the past five years, a rising number of forward-thinking scholars, entrepreneurs, and tech mavericks—supported by an influx of venture capital—have joined forces to ask critical questions about the educational system and transform the way it works.

What are the most effective ways to learn? How can more people gain access to an education? How can education foster real-world solutions to the increasingly complex issues of our time? Sugata Mitra, professor of educational technology at Newcastle University in England, caused a stir in 2013 with a TED talk that garnered a $1 million TED prize to help him build his visionary School in the Cloud, whose self-organized, peer-shared online learning platforms seek to transform the way children learn worldwide.

Also creating a buzz on the education technology frontier are a growing number of MOOCs (massive open online courses), which are offered free of charge by platforms such as Coursera, edX, and Udacity, which, in partnership with top universities like Stanford, Harvard, MIT, and the University of Pennsylvania, aim to spread higher education far and wide. Outside the university system, Khan Academy, founded in 2006 by computer scientist and entrepreneur Salman Khan, offers thousands of free online video tutorials mainly in pre-college math and science.

ONLINE UWC

Several UWC alumni are also at the forefront of the revolution in education technology. When Hanna (Sankowska) Celina ‘03, an analyst at an Internet tech firm in London, heard about Mitra’s experiments with exposing groups of children in the slums of India to computers, she was inspired to launch her own self-guided, collaborative learning initiative.

Hanna connected with Sahra-Josephine Hjorth ‘04 and Robin Tyne AC’ 12, both of whom shared her passion for education. Together, they created Online UWC, an innovative online extension of UWC’s short programs that aims to expose the UWC mission and experience to a wider audience. “We want to reach as many people as possible and bring UWC to those who may never have the opportunity to attend one of the brick-and-mortar UWC schools,” Hanna says.

Launched last summer, Online UWC emphasizes online collaborative interaction between students as well as real-time contact with teachers and mentors. Geared to students between 15 and 20 years old anywhere in the world, the new venture began with a five-week course in sustainability designed to help participants find solutions to sustainability issues in their local communities.

What sets Online UWC apart from other types of online education, according to Hanna, is its use of social media to exchange information and connect students in a conversation and feedback loop. Despite their broad reach and convenience, most MOOCs are about absorbing information in a lecture format, earning a grade, and passing an exam, which is not so different from the traditional institutional framework. Grades and tests are not part of the Online UWC courses, though student participation and assignments are tracked and certificates of completion are awarded.

“A lot of online courses neglect the crucial social component of education,” Hanna says. “At Online UWC, students around the world share their insights and interests through Google Hangouts and Facebook. When students take active responsibility for how and what they learn, it keeps them engaged and excited and greatly enhances the learning process.”
In keeping with the UWC mission, Online UWC courses also include a final project that encourages students to apply what they’ve learned to improve the world. The sustainability course enrolled 169 students from 40 countries in three geographical regions. The co-founders plan to hold online courses three to five times each year in each of these regions. In addition to the ongoing course on sustainability, courses on entrepreneurship and contemporary issues in human rights will be offered in 2015.

The courses work like this: Experts volunteer their time to deliver lectures live on YouTube via Google Hangouts. Students vote on the subtopics they want to cover, and the lectures are recorded for viewing again later. There are also weekly online discussions on Google Hangouts with small groups of five to 10 students who are overseen by volunteer mentors, most of whom are UWC graduates.

Enrollment costs are kept low (currently at $20) in an effort to make the courses available to as many as possible. The only admission requirement is having access to a computer and the Internet.

Co-founder Sahra-Josephine, a professor of migration and social media who also heads a management company in Denmark, became involved with Online UWC to expand the UWC mission of using education as a unifying force to create a more peaceful, sustainable future. “I made a commitment as a student at UWC-USA to values that define me as a person, and through Online UWC, I’m reconnecting with that,” Sahra-Josephine says. “A large part of a UWC education happens outside the classroom when students from different cultures connect with each other. Those interactions really empowered me to want to make a difference in the world. With Online UWC, we’re creating a new space of belonging and shared visions and values so students can learn from and inspire each other.”

For co-founder Robin, who has worked with the digital team at Newcastle University involved in enhancing School in the Cloud, Online UWC is not meant to replace the UWC campus experience but to complement it. “The great thing about Internet technology is that we can use it to make education a lifelong process and passion for more people,” he says.

What is so revolutionary about Online UWC is its activist underpinning, according to professor Patrick Olivier, head of the Digital Interaction Group at Newcastle University’s cutting-edge Culture Lab. “Online UWC is encouraging self-organized, grass-roots activism and empowering people to believe that they can make a difference,” Olivier says. “Unlike most MOOCs, it’s an active versus passive model of education that is linked to creating real change in the world.”

PERSONALIZED LEARNING

Mohannad Arbaji ’07 has taken a similar activist approach to education with his new enterprise Chalk Talk Solutions—cloud-based, adaptive-learning software that helps students prepare for standardized college admission tests, such as the SAT, by tailoring test preparation materials to individual learning needs.

Boston-based Chalk Talk Solutions is an outgrowth of Mohannad’s brick-and-mortar test preparation company Chalk Talk International, which provides in-person SAT training adapted to the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of students in Jordan, Egypt, and Bahrain. His new venture aims to personalize education for students worldwide by mapping the brain’s learning capacity to improve academic performance.

“At Chalk Talk International, I noticed that some students still struggled in the classroom,” says Mohannad, a native of Jordan. “Typically, teachers only present one
version of the lecture material, leaving academically challenged students frustrated and overachieving students bored. That’s when I made it my mission to use technology to personalize learning for students around the world, helping them to learn better at their own pace.”

Working with a team of engineers, Mohannad designed the Chalk Talk Solutions Web application to identify students’ strengths and weaknesses and create personalized content and practice questions specifically for each student. Mohannad hopes to integrate this software seamlessly across all cultures and languages, and in all school subjects, to empower students through education. He credits his experience at UWC for inspiring him to pursue his dream so other students can pursue theirs.

NEW VISIONS, NEW LEADERS

UWC is contributing in a different way to another revolutionary experiment in education. At the San Francisco-based Minerva Project, the first degree-granting university to combine online learning and real-time student interaction, UWC students make up 10 percent of its inaugural class. “We’re not dispensing information; we’re teaching students how to think critically and become leaders of consequence in the world,” says Ben Nelson, Minerva’s founder and CEO, echoing the activist, give-back quality of the UWC mission.

“I came to Minerva because it has similar values to UWC,” says first-year student Guillaume Picard MC’ 12. “Both offer a purpose-driven education that’s not just about getting a diploma but how to apply what you learn in the real world. I’m excited to be part of this new initiative, which is transforming the way we perceive education and how it’s delivered.”

If Minerva can use online technology to offer a liberal arts degree, why not make it possible for anyone to study for the International Baccalaureate (IB) online? That is the bold vision of Sir John Daniel, chair of UWC, who, like these other pioneers, believes the future of education lies in making it more accessible to more people in a nonexclusive way. At present, some IB courses are offered online through the nonprofit social enterprise Pamoja Education but are open only to those attending IB schools.

“Right now, the most exciting developments in online education are being led by grass-roots private initiatives outside of mainstream academia, which is still largely resistant to conferring degrees online,” says Daniel, former head of education at UNESCO. “But hopefully, this will change, as more schools realize that online, collaborative education is no longer inferior and that to resist the tide of technology is to be left behind.”

Dana Micucci is a widely published journalist and author. Her books include Sojourns of the Soul: One Woman’s Journey Around the World and Into Her Truth, a Gold winner in the 2013 Nautilus Book Awards, and a new novel, The Third Muse.

At the San Francisco-based Minerva Project, the first degree-granting university to combine online learning and real-time student interaction, UWC students make up 10 percent of its inaugural class.
Voices From the Front Lines

Alumni educators share their insights on teaching.

The UWC mission asks us to use education as a force to unite people and cultures for peace and a sustainable future. But in today’s world, the very concept of education is changing. Educators at every level—from preschool to university—are grappling to understand how we learn. And it seems there isn’t a single “right” answer. We asked alumni who work in education to share their views on the challenges that are taking place and also on what inspires them to pursue work in this field.

If there is a common theme to the changes taking place in education, it’s technology. “From my perspective, we are undergoing a profound change in the way we think, work, and study that is linked to the move to the digital (the development of the Internet and of big data) in education and research,” says ANNA LEANDER ’84, a professor at the Copenhagen Business School. “This change is having very far-reaching effects on every aspect of knowledge production and communication, because it is altering the way students learn. My students—whether they are in Copenhagen, Rio de Janeiro or elsewhere—live, think, read, and study through their computers.”

“My students—whether they are in Copenhagen, Rio de Janeiro or elsewhere—live, think, read, and study through their computers.”

ANNA LEANDER ’84

AHTZIRI E. MOLINA ROLDÁN ’91 is equally concerned about students from disadvantaged communities, but it’s not technology that has him worried. As a high school teacher at an inner-city school in Florida, he has experienced shocking attitudes about the abilities of the students he serves. “Traditionally, an idea has existed that if a child comes from a low-income home, they are not going to be able to succeed in level of disadvantage. “Technological advances, together with the global ambitions of the contemporary market, have reached all levels of academia. However, it has yet to reach every classroom,” she says. “Many classrooms, due to the extreme levels of inequality that exist in today’s world, haven’t the means to make the most of these advantages, even knowing of their existence.

While it is common to think that social and technological innovation will bring benefits to the community and that such benefits will permeate in the same way within all types of communities, there are many who are barely dreaming of such things. Moreover, socioeconomically, there is an ever-growing difference between those who have access to such products and those who do not. With this, social differences, and resentments provoked by such circumstances, increase. These differences are proven to cause social unrest.”

AARON BOS LUN ’07 is equally concerned about students from disadvantaged communities, but it’s not technology that has him worried. As a high school teacher at an inner-city school in Florida, he has experienced shocking attitudes about the abilities of the students he serves. “Traditionally, an idea has existed that if a child comes from a low-income home, they are not going to be able to succeed in
“I worked in Spain for 15 years, and it is not always easy to tell students they should study hard in a country where youth unemployment is above 50 percent.”

KLAUS DESMET ’88

school,” he says. “This ranges from somewhat understandable but ultimately incorrect concerns—that if you have a tough home life, for example, you will not be able to meet the demands of school because you have more immediate concerns involving your safety, your neighborhood, and so on. It goes beyond, however, into a mentality that kids who live in low-income communities are not capable of learning.”

Social skills and motivation are two areas that concern KLAUS DESMET ’88, an economics professor at the Universidad Carlos III in Madrid. “First, life is becoming increasingly competitive. The challenge students face is how to excel academically without forgetting that at the end of the day, life is about being with other people, so cooperating, socializing, caring about others, etc., should be an integral part of anyone’s education,” he says. “Second, in a world of greater uncertainty, it is easy to lose motivation. I worked in Spain for 15 years, and it is not always easy to tell students they should study hard in a country where youth unemployment is above 50 percent.”

CRYSTAL LEMKE ’99, an adult educator for the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections, is more optimistic. “I think that this revolution will allow educators the flexibility to address the needs of all learners through differentiated instruction,” she says. “Previously, if a student did not respond to the typical drill and practice of the classroom setting, they were unable to meet their full potential.”

On Becoming a Teacher

Physician, author, and peace activist Helen Caldicott once said, “Teachers, I believe, are the most responsible and important members of society because their professional efforts affect the fate of the earth.” Yet in many places, teachers are among the most poorly paid professionals. Clearly, it’s not the money that motivates educators.

“The work I do now is full of nature and children, it is hopeful, and it is deeply connected to my community.”

AMANDA RIEUX ’87
“I think a lot of UWCers are passionate about ideas and issues—not just making money,” says JOSÉE JOHNSTON ’91, an associate professor of sociology at the University of Toronto. “I felt like teaching students about important issues related to globalization and inequality was one way that I could make a small difference.”

JOSÉE JOHNSTON ’91

“I felt like teaching students about important issues related to globalization and inequality was one way that I could make a small difference.”

JOSÉE JOHNSTON ’91

RASHA HUSNI ’05, development director at School Development Consultants in Lebanon, echoed similar sentiments. “In the part of the world I come from and practice my career in, I feel education may be the only possible way to help individuals build a future for themselves and be able to resist oppression of all forms, poverty, and isolation from the rest of the world,” Rasha says.

The satisfaction of seeing real growth in students is another powerful reason to teach. “There is nothing more rewarding than helping people develop their skills and competencies and then move on to succeed in life,” says STEPHAN KLASEN ’85, an economics professor at the University of Göttingen in Germany.

Inspiration

Often, teachers are inspired by those who taught them. Ivan Mustain, who taught history at UWC-USA from 1983 to 2009, was that inspirational influence for many alumni. “Ivan was important to me both personally and as a model,” Anna says. “He was interesting, inspiring, and always ready to pull students along by engaging them personally. He insisted on the importance of working and thinking independently.”

FLANNERY BURKE ’91, a history professor at St. Louis University, is another Ivan fan. “Because I teach now, I try to tap the student I was when he was my teacher, and I try to remember what it was like to begin to understand the field of history,” she says.

“I try to tap the student I was.”

FLANNERY BURKE ’91

Amanda named English teacher Hannah Tyson as her inspiration. “Hannah is fierce on many levels,” she says. “She is witty and gracious and honest, and was straightforward enough to tell me things I didn’t want to hear. I have a deep respect for her, and as a student, I was also a little afraid of her, which was good for me.”

TONY PURVIS ’94, a visiting assistant professor and academic advisor at Florida State University, cites economics teacher Ravi Parashar as a role model. “Ravi made sure to know not only my first name but also something personal and unique about me,” Tony says.

“Ravi made sure to know not only my first name but also something personal and unique about me.”

TONY PURVIS ’94

“He frequently inquired into those aspects of my student life and demonstrated that he saw me as more than a student but rather a whole person who was interesting and vital. I strive to do the same with my students today.”

FLANNERY BURKE ’91
That story resonates with Jingjing Zhou ’03. In 2011, Jingjing sat with a Chinese family from the Hebei province and held their smiling daughter, Tongtong. The little girl had been born with congenital heart disease and needed surgery, which her family could not afford. Jingjing was part of a small group that joined together to raise funds for the successful procedure.

“When I held the 9-month-old in my arms, I felt my heart was so warm because this was a child I helped save,” Jingjing says.

In the process of fundraising, Jingjing learned that there are thousands of Chinese families that are not adequately insured for heart surgery—and desperately need help.

Sea Star Children’s Foundation, based in Hong Kong and on mainland China, was born in that moment. Jingjing and her friends realized they had the expertise and funds to help another child with congenital heart disease. And another. And then another.

In just over three years, Sea Star has helped 43 families—almost 20 in the last year alone. Sea Star is staffed completely by volunteers, and it has grown quickly. But the need is endless. “China is presently estimated to have over 2,000,000 children suffering from congenital heart disease,” Jingjing says. “It is one of the top causes of childhood mortality below the age of 5.”

Jingjing says Sea Star’s cause is easy to promote; donors are always moved by the sponsored families. “The parents’ love and hope for their children is really touching,” Jingjing says of the recipient families. For Jingjing, Sea Star’s executive director, impact can’t be measured through concepts of investment and return. A successful campaign, she says, is about helping a family in need, but it’s also about working together and getting other charities involved. And that’s where Jingjing is proving to be a revolutionary in her home country.

“We wanted to try a new model where everyone shares their knowledge and expertise from their professional fields, and we aim to run the charity very professionally—transparent and efficient, with a scalable structure,” she says.

Jingjing is humble about her role in the foundation, despite the innumerable hours she has devoted to building it. Creating a sense of democracy and ownership have been her greatest priorities. The loving, generous environment at UWC-USA, she says, “taught me how I can connect with others, how to build bridges, and made me able to be the bridge.” Jingjing and her team are at the forefront of showing how charities can achieve great impact in China.

Through conscientious transparency, donors are repeatedly assured that all medical cases are real, the need is valid, and costs are legitimate. Also, they create personal connections for donors through poignant personal accounts and lots of photos. For a country that hasn’t had a culture of formal philanthropy, this kind of exemplary work may help charitable giving find a place in the lives of the growing Chinese middle class.

Jingjing has experienced generosity from friends and teachers far away from home. But she maintains that Chinese people are the most generous people she knows. As formal philanthropy evolves in China, she hopes that she has helped create a model for how people can “channel their goodness.” And as each child is helped, she sees the “ripple effect” she has hoped for. Jingjing says her own friends and family now show more interest in engaging with charities that speak to their passions. And she has been asked to assist another children’s charity, using her knowledge and vast network of “experts.” Step by step, Jingjing is showing that helping one person at a time can actually benefit many, many more.
UWC BENEFACtor SHELBY M.C. DAVIS IS COMMITTED

to international education—whether it takes place in a 
classroom or on a ship. Toward that end, he has created 
scholarships for students to participate in the Semester at Sea 
program, offered through the University of Virginia. Each year, 
two UWC-USA students are selected to participate on a five-
month expedition that takes them to 12 countries around the 
world. It’s not a pleasure cruise; students take classes, attend 
lectures, and devote a good portion of their trip to studying the 
countries and cultures featured on the itinerary.

Grecia De La o Abarca ’13, Mexico, and Claudia Ebensperger 
León ’13, Chile, were selected for the 2014 trip. Here, they report 
on their journey.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO APPLY?
[Both]: After spending two years in a multicultural environment, 
learning from each other and appreciating each other’s 
customs and values, the Semester at Sea program offered the 
opportunity to immerse ourselves in some of the places that 
we only knew because of the stories that our friends from those 
countries told us.

WHERE DID YOU GO?
Grecia: We left on Jan. 10, 2014 from Ensenada, Mexico, and 
ended on May 2 in Southampton, England. In total, we spent 64 
days at sea and 48 days on land.

It was a journey of 112 days, 16 cities, and 12 countries:  
• Ensenada, Mexico  
• Hilo, Hawaii, U.S.  
• Yokohama and Kobe, Japan  
• Shanghai, China  
• Hong Kong  
• Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
• Singapore  
• Rangoon, Burma  
• Cochin, India  
• Port Louis, Mauritius  
• Cape Town, South Africa  
• Tema (Accra) and Takoradi, Ghana  
• Casablanca, Morocco  
• Southampton, England

HOW MANY PEOPLE WERE ON THE BOAT?
Claudia: There were approximately 550 students from the 
U.S.; 10 percent were international. Most were in their junior or 
senior year of college. We, the gap semester students, were 
only 15.

WHAT WAS THE FACULTY LIKE?
Grecia: Faculty members came from different colleges and 
universities throughout the U.S. They were very adaptable to 
the circumstances of living on a ship, from giving help to
seasick students and having extra astronomy classes at night to see the stars to directing us to check out dolphins from the ship window.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TO LIVE ON A BOAT?

**Claudia:** Living on a ship was like being in another country. Grecia and I shared a tight but cozy room. By the end of the trip, we felt the room was our home. There was a vibrant community with traditions, rituals, and social networking. Mealtimes, student clubs, outdoor recreational activities, and trip planning were great opportunities to socialize and create lifelong friendships.

**Grecia:** It was quite an experience to live on a boat for five months. I would celebrate the days when I didn’t feel seasick. It was horrible but totally worth it. After those eternal and rough 11 days crossing the Pacific Ocean, I was completely sure that I wanted to get off the boat; I didn’t want to feel seasick anymore. But after making our first long stop in Japan and being amazed by how different the world is, I just wanted to keep on going and learn as much as I could from all these wonderful places, cultures, and people.

WHAT WAS THE MOST INTERESTING THING YOU LEARNED?

**Claudia:** The most interesting was to experience firsthand how interconnected and integrated the world is at an economic and social level. It is very different to learn it from books, which is still necessary, versus learning it by experience. By traveling, interacting with local people, walking through each country’s streets, and participating in their customs, I learned at a much deeper level.

**Grecia:** This experience opened my mind and all my senses. I was able to see, taste, touch, smell, and feel the environment that each different country provided us. I loved how the academic program was focused on a little bit of history, economy, social structure and culture, and then we could see it ourselves when we got there. This voyage woke my curiosity up and encouraged me to learn more about the world and its current situation.

WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO SHELBY DAVIS ABOUT THIS EXPERIENCE?

**Claudia:** I would like to express my sincere gratefulness for giving this opportunity not only to me but also to my peers. It is still hard to process everything we saw, learned, and lived because it was so intense, long, and powerful. I think this experience carved more clearly and deeply the path for UWC’s mission. At UWC-USA, I got to see the different pieces of the world’s puzzle. With Semester at Sea, I saw the ones surrounding each.
“Here, in a nutshell, is what you can do about blisters when you plan on running 90 more miles: nothing. One thing you can count on in an ultra[marathon] is some sort of nagging pain—a sour stomach, an irritable tendon, a recalcitrant knee. Pain’s a given. It’s all about how you handle it.”

—Michael Finkel, Runner’s World, August 2014

“You run the first 50 miles with your body. Then your head has to take over.”

—Katrin Silva, UWC-USA German and English teacher and ultramarathon runner.
New Mexico Highlands University, and a private school in Santa Fe. They moved to Las Vegas, New Mexico, in 2001 when David took a job in town. A year later, Katrin joined UWC-USA’s faculty.

“UWC-USA is special and different,” she says. “The students are so motivated and diverse. I learn a ton all the time.”

Katrin has also found a community of runners among the students, and this year she launched the school’s running club. In October, they held a 24-hour Halloween run on the school soccer field to raise money for the local animal shelter and Samaritan House. More than 100 students and faculty participated, and they raised nearly $900.

“Running is great for stress management, which is important in this environment,” Katrin says.

—Jennifer Rowland

1. At the 2013 Western States 100 in Northern California, where temperatures reached 103 degrees Fahrenheit
2. After finishing—and winning—the inaugural Monument Valley Ultra in Arizona in 2014
3. The descent into the Twin Lakes aid station, at mile 40 of the Leadville 100 in Colorado
Las Vegas is a city of nearly 14,000 people; 80 percent identify as Hispanic. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, half the town’s population earns $24,000 per year or less, which is at the poverty line. Tony Serna Jr. Elementary has a student population of 156 second- through fifth-graders, and while many come from Spanish-speaking households, Spanish is a foreign language for many of them. And that’s where UWC-USA’s tutors come in. UWC-USA has offered Spanish tutoring in local elementary schools for at least eight years as part of the community engagement program. UWC-USA students who come from Spanish-speaking countries or have become proficient in the language share their skills and knowledge with the elementary school children and in turn gain valuable experience as teachers and mentors.

“It is fun to be with little kids, and we try to do things that they will find fun,” says Rohan Sheth ’15, USA-Illinois. “We ask them what they want to be when they grow up. I want them to think big and believe they can be anything they want to be.”

The tutors spend Mondays creating lesson plans that cover topics such as geography, history, cultural traditions, and world events. On Wednesdays, they pair up to teach in four different classrooms; each classroom has between 25 and 30 students.

“I have third-graders, a class of 29 students,” says Nathalie Desmet Villar ’16, Spain. “It was a bit scary at first, but I’m comfortable now. We teach them songs and use worksheets. They like coloring and drawing.”

On a recent afternoon, one classroom was learning about Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Another group was reviewing countries on a giant map. A third was singing a Spanish song. In each classroom, the children sat attentively, giving their full attention to the UWC-USA tutors.

Raquel Maldonado Moron ’16, Spain, uses games and songs to teach her group of second-graders. “They don’t always remember everything from week to week, but we have learned the colors, about holidays in our countries, numbers, and geography,” she says.

Principal Margarita Larranaga is thrilled to host the UWCers, and she says she’s heard nothing but high praise for their work. “The kids love the interaction,” Larranaga says. “The UWC-USA students bring authenticity to the language and also teach our students the value of learning a second language. Our kids don’t always see the value of speaking Spanish outside their own homes.”

Nathalie confirms an increased interest in language among her young pupils. “I definitely think it makes kids more interested in Spanish,” she says. “Many of their parents and grandparents speak Spanish, so learning the language connects them to their past.”

Of course, the UWC-USA students learn plenty in the process. “I’ve learned how to be patient and how to interact with different types of people,” Nathalie says. “The environment is very different from where I come from.”

The program also provides a tangible connection to the local town. “I am really learning about Las Vegas,” Nathalie says. “It is fun to see the community from their perspective.”

—Jennifer Rowland and Naomi Swinton ’89
Regional affinity is important at UWC-USA. Because of our unique national committee selection process, students’ countries of origin determine much of their experience at UWC-USA. They are assigned a roommate from a different region, they are represented in Student Council by someone from their region, and they participate in a cultural day that celebrates their region’s culture. We talk about “region-mates” and sometimes even stereotype each other based on continent of origin, like when statements such as “Asians are good at math” and “Europeans are more liberal” are made.

Our region system assumes a simple response to the question, “Where are you from?” However, this question is difficult to answer for many students as globalization brings increased migration, mobility, and cross-cultural marriages. Eashwar Ramesh ’16, for example, represents Botswana at UWC-USA, but his family is from India. Michael-Patrick Azar ’15 holds Canadian and Lebanese passports.

What is a region? Geographers define it as an area that shares similar characteristics, which can be physical, environmental, social, or cultural. Regions don’t have set boundaries, can change over time, and can vary in size, from a portion of a district to multiple countries. UWC-USA regions arbitrarily divide the student body into areas based on continents and assume some sort of cultural continuity within each region.

Pressure has mounted for UWC-USA to consider ways to modify its regions as the composition of the student body has shifted. In the mid-2000s, student representation from different regions was roughly even. This year, however, Europeans make up 29 percent of the student population and Asians are 28 percent, while the Caribbean/Lat American and African regions each represent 10 percent.

In 2013-2014, European and Middle East/Asian Cultural Day groups each involved more than 35 percent of the student body because so many additional students were affiliated with these regions through parentage, place of birth, or residency. More than 25 percent of the student body now identifies as multicultural and affiliates with more than one region. At a recent Diwali celebration, the 18 “subconti” students came from Australia, Belgium, Botswana, Kenya, Mauritius, Nepal, the United Arab Emirates, the U.S., Singapore, and Tibet. They share observance of this holiday but represent four of the five current UWC-USA regions.

UWC-USA is the perfect environment to rethink identity and classification beyond simply which passport one holds. Using nationalities and continents as labels enables us to segment our student body based on one field in the database: nationality. We could just as easily use other characteristics to assign roommates and elect Student Council representatives. Cultural shows could be based on shared cultural traits such as language, religion, or historical ties.

UWC-USA’s regional divisions are fraught with questions of identity and affinity as well as more practical questions of equal representation. For now, the Student Council has decided to break the Asian region (formerly Middle East/Asia/ Australasia National Day, or MAAD) into Middle East/Indian Subcontinent National Day (MIND) and Far East Asia National Day (FEND).

“To some extent, regions are obsolete, since many students here have ties to several different cultures and regions,” says Juulia Surronen ’15, Finland, one of the Student Council members involved in the new region creation. “In the end, we need to have a system that works. Our new regions recognize some cultural patterns within the regions that can then be applied to create more cultural sharing, in terms of roomie selections and cultural day shows, for example. This is the main idea behind the division.”
Ayal Kantz ’00 represented Israel as a student at UWC-USA. Today, he is back in his homeland working in research and advocacy at the Injaz Center for Professional Arab Local Governance. The center was founded in 2008 to provide professional assistance to local Arab authorities in Israel as a means of addressing the economic issues and lack of resources faced by many Arab towns in Israel. Kaleidoscope writer Aaron Kagan recently spoke with Ayal via Skype.

AARON: Can you tell me a little bit about the Injaz Center?

AYAL: Ninety percent of what the center does is help Arab municipalities constantly evolve to better manage their systems. We’re strengthening the relations and the connection between the Arab local municipalities and the Israeli state. It’s been an obvious need for a long time.
AARON: How did you become involved with the center?

AYAL: Before I had a family, I worked for an activist organization in Israel. Then my son was born, and there was financial pressure to get a more “substantial” job. I thought, “OK, I gave enough to my ideology and now it’s time to work for my own family.” I worked for five months in a very competitive sales-oriented job, but I just couldn’t stay there. I met really wonderful people, but it wasn’t “it.” After three months, I started wondering how I could go back to a place where I felt fulfilled and where I could achieve something bigger than myself. When I found this job, it was perfect.

AARON: What is a typical day at the Injaz Center like for you?

AYAL: Every morning, I start the day reading the newspaper to make sure that I haven’t missed anything that’s happening in terms of economics. After that, I check the government website and go over the next week’s official government meetings. I’m mainly looking for meetings on interior, economic, and financial issues.

Usually, I have about two meetings a day. Most of our relationships are with mayors. I sit with the mayor, and we talk about economic development. I might hear that he has some problem with the river going into his city. Because of my job, I know that the Ministry of the Environment has some funds to help municipalities with issues like this, so being in this kind of meeting can very much help the mayor understand that he can go to the Ministry of the Environment and tell them: “Listen, this project that you have, you need to change it so it will suit our municipality.”

AARON: What kind of an impact do you think your experience at UWC-USA had on your decision to follow this profession?

AYAL: I’ve been thinking about this since I graduated. It’s a big question: Would I be the same person if I didn’t go to UWC-USA? What was it that UWC-USA changed for me? What most stays with me is the feeling that I got the biggest gift that someone can get and that I ought to give back. Another thing is the ability to feel comfortable around people who you don’t really understand and to respect different cultures. A lot of what I do today involves using my culture and being a mediator between two different discourses. It even feels strange to talk about “different” cultures. At UWC-USA, I felt we were all living one culture: the culture of the world.

AARON: Do you have a message for your fellow alumni from UWC?

AYAL: I miss them so much. I’m really happy where I am, but I would go back 16 years just to experience everything again.

This interview has been edited and condensed. Thanks to marketing intern Bryan Diaz ’15, USA-TX, for transcription.

Photo: Ayal Kantz ’00, center, with son Yhel (left) and daughter Ofer
CLASS OF 1984

The pioneers of 1984 and 1985 celebrated their 29th/30th reunion this summer in Montezuma. To see the slide show, visit www.uwc-usa.org/Recap-Reunion 2014.

In the spirit of “UWC for Life,” Los Angeles–area alumni gathered for brunch at the home of Jennifer Gould Lidar and Daniel Hamburger Lidar ’86 on Nov. 2 to reconnect, make new connections, enjoy good food, and engage in lively conversation on wide-ranging topics. Joining the gathering was Susan Mullins, UWC Costa Rica Board chair, who shared updates about recent and planned developments.

The gathering included 19 alumni from 10 of the UWC schools. They spanned more than 30 class years, hailed from many different countries, and represented a broad spectrum of areas of expertise. Common to all was the desire to create impact in meaningful ways in their post-UWC lives. As well as carrying out projects and vocations in line with UWC ideals, Jennifer says they wish to be “ambassadors for UWC” wherever they go.

The Los Angeles alumni gatherings began in earnest in July 2014 with a large kickoff event organized by Richard Chamberlain AC ’76. This get-together inspired frequent meet-ups in the months since then. They continue to strengthen their Southern California (“SoCal”) alumni network through additional spirited gatherings.

CLASS OF 1986

Marcelo Domingos Marchesin ’86 is now a proud parent! His wife Vânia recently gave birth to a healthy baby girl, Luísa.

CLASS OF 1993

Tala de los Santos ’93 was selected by the Washington Global Health Alliance (WGHA) for its 2014 Pioneers of Global Health “Rising Leader” award, which recognizes the inspirational achievements and collaborative efforts of a rising leader in the field.

“I am honored to receive this award,” Tala says. “It is a privilege to work in a field as rewarding as global health. It is also a privilege to be at an organization like PATH where I get to work alongside talented and driven professionals committed to making an impact with their work.”

PATH was formerly known as Program for Appropriate Technology in Health. Tala leads PATH’s diagnostics group, which is at the forefront of advancing solutions to diagnose and treat disease at the point of care for people living in low-resource settings.

CLASS OF 1994

Jeremiah Stevens says, “As you all know from my endless Facebook posts and chatting at the reunion, my big news of the last few years is that I have met the man of my dreams, and due to weird legal things, we are actually married before we had a ceremony. Don’t worry, we are still going to have a party.”

Jeremiah’s other big news was his softball team’s participation in the Gay Games IX in Cleveland/

Los Angeles UWC alumni gather at the home of Jennifer Gould Lidar ’84 and Daniel Hamburger Lidar ’86.
Akron, Ohio, in August. “While our team didn’t win, we had a great time, and it was really empowering and fulfilling to see so many people from around the world competing and celebrating together and to see the local community get behind us. Entering into the welcoming ceremonies was one of the highlights of my life thus far,” he says.

“I am eternally grateful for Katie Romich and Amy Holtzman for coming out to support my team at the Games. ... It is amazing to have a best friend for more than 20 years,” Jeremiah says. He reports that Amy is happy in her childhood home in Ohio, where she is raising her daughter Celeste, working with her local farmers market, and building her own business as a farmer.

CLASS OF 1995

Rashna Ginwalla is an assistant professor of surgery at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in New Hampshire.

CLASS OF 1996

Gert Ceville-Danielsen is still with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) at the Oslo Governance Centre, where he has been since 2011, after having worked in Johannesburg (2006-2008), Panama (2008-2011), and Yemen (2011-2012). He spent nearly five months at UNDP Honduras, on “loan,” earlier this year.

On the side, he has been working to recruit more candidates from underrepresented countries into the Rotary World Peace Fellowship, of which he was a beneficiary when he did his master’s degree in international relations, peace and conflict resolution at the Universidad del Salvador in Argentina from 2004 to 2005. “There are at least two UWC-USA graduates who have benefited from this fellowship (Willan Mendoza ‘95 and myself), and probably many more UWCers worldwide, as it links very closely with the UWC ideals,” Gert says.

Gert is writing a chapter in a book by Rotary International on becoming “peace builders”—likely to be published next year. And he was vice president of the board of UN-GLOBE (U.N.’s gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and intersex staff) at a time when the organization managed to get Ban Ki-moon to recognize all same-sex unions of U.N. staff earlier this year, a historic step toward full rights for LGBTI staff at the U.N.

CLASS OF 1997

Eleanor Beaton was recently appointed the vice chair of the Black Business Initiative, a nonprofit that is dedicated to fostering a dynamic black presence within Nova Scotia’s business community, where she works as a women’s leadership coach.

Carrie (Mollat) Brooke-Sumner is working on a doctorate in public mental health with the Discipline of Psychology at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. She lives in Cape Town with her husband Pete and their young son Jack.

Brad Chisolm and his wife Taryn welcomed their son Lochlan Stuart into the world on Oct. 31.

After 10 years in New York, Mary Alice (Malice) Grant, her husband Duncan, and their two cats moved to the mountains of Western North Carolina, where they own their own marketing and IT firm. She was recently appointed president-elect of the Cashiers Area Chamber of Commerce.

Sebastian Ocampo sends much love from Argentina, where he lives with his wife and two beautiful children, Estefanía and Mateo. He is the published author of two books, both collections of short stories, and is studying psychiatry. In all his spare time, he has been organizing public forums to discuss the role of literature and mental health. He’s also working on a new book for next year.

Afua Sanders Kim and her husband Steve welcomed their first child, Olivia Sun, to the family in September. They visited with Dawn Sikorski and Eman Fouda in New York this past October.

Dan Wilkins, his wife Zoe, and their 5-year-old son Luka recently moved from Hobart, Tasmania, to the World Heritage–listed Kakadu National Park in the Northern Territory of Australia. He says it is quite the sea change for them, moving from the cool, coastal midlatitudes to the hot inland tropics, but they are adjusting well. In October, he had breakfast with Bart Klem and his partner Rachel van der Kolk, who just moved to Melbourne, where Bart has taken up a position as lecturer at the University of Melbourne.
CLASS OF 1998

Hilde Restad married Nadim Khoury in Bethlehem, Palestine, on Aug. 9. The wedding took place during the horrific bombing of Gaza, which she says provided a rather stark backdrop of life, death, politics, and love.

CLASS OF 2000

Naa Aku Addo recently married her sweetheart from Oxford University, Mihkel Jäätma, and lives in London, where she works in finance.

Natalie Bergman lives in the Czech Republic and teaches English at the local university.

Yngvild Blaker is a doctor at Oslo University Hospital in Norway. In addition to spending time with her husband and two daughters, she is working on a doctorate in oncology.

Cameron Burch lives in San Francisco and works as a youth program director.

Guinevere Casey-Ford lives in Portland, Oregon, and is a family physician at a community health center. She married Pablo Barbecho Mendoza in 2006, and they have a 1-year-old daughter.

Emilie Gruchow lives in New York City and works as an archivist at Morris-Jumel Mansion.

Megan Hansen recently became the program manager for HOURCAR, a car-sharing program that operates in Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota.

Ayal Kantz, his wife, and son recently welcomed a baby girl to their family. They live in a small community in the Galilee region of Israel, and Ayal works as a policy analyst in an organization promoting the Arab local governance. (See story on page 18.)

Andres Mogollan and his wife recently welcomed their first baby. A few months before the new addition to their family, they bought their first home and Andres began a Master of Architecture program at the University of Florida’s CityLab-Orlando.

Karin Neira is doing well in Chile. She has two daughters, ages 3 and 1. She is looking forward to going to Linthal, France, to become the godmother of Jennifer Lewis ’01’s youngest son.

Anais (Borg-Marks) Pellegrini lives with her husband and their two children in Santa Barbara, California, where Anais is the annual fund manager at The Granada Theatre.

Tamara Pinos moved to the Netherlands almost three years ago to pursue a master’s degree in media technology at Leiden University. She graduated in January and immediately started work at MediaLAB Amsterdam, where she works with a group of students on the use of new technology in diverse fields like fashion, construction, Internet of Things (IoT), and interactive cinema, among other things.

Rick Slettenhaar and his wife were recently blessed with a baby boy. They enjoy every moment of getting to know him—even the sleepless nights. They moved from the Democratic Republic of Congo to Pakistan, where Rick is the head of the economic section at the Netherlands embassy in Islamabad.

Madiha Tariq lives in Detroit and has a 1-year-old daughter. She works as a public health manager at Access Community and has been involved in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in Michigan. Because of her work, she has gotten the chance to dine twice with President Obama.

CLASS OF 2001

Marco Antonio Alfau de la Oz keeps busy with his own business, which implements Business Alliance for Secure Commerce (BASC) certification to export companies, and raising his two children in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic.

Liza Anderson is a doctoral student in religious studies at Yale University in Connecticut, studying Middle Eastern Christianity. She also serves on the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church and the board of the North American Ecumenists. She is seriously discerning a vocation as an Anglican nun.

Izona Bock recently moved to Stratford, Connecticut, with her husband after graduating from an Infectious Diseases Fellowship from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. She works in a community health clinic treating mostly HIV and hepatitis C patients.

Gareth Carter lives with his wife in New York City. He left the world of corporate law a year ago and is now with a communications company working mainly with nonprofits.
Jasmin Fischer has been living in Langenthal, Switzerland, for the past three years with her 9-year-old son Fabio. She works for Lantal Textiles AG, doing customer service for Boeing.

Juan Camilo Gonzalez finished his MBA at Yale University last year with Adani Ilo and lives in Sydney, where he works as an investment manager for a financial services group.

Ida Norheim Hagtun is back in Norway after more than 12 years abroad post-UWC-USA. She is the brand and communications manager for Yara International, an agricultural firm focused on food security, resource management, and environmental solutions.

Anne (Jurkowski) Johnson is in North Carolina working as a self-employed freelance science writer (www.annefjohnson.com) and is a proud mother of two children, ages 1 and 3.

Lucas Josten lives in London and works for the CEO of Millicom, a telecom and digital communications/entertainment company.

Susan Keppelman Harcourt lives in Washington, D.C., and works in international infrastructure finance. She got married last year to a non-UWCer who is quickly becoming indoctrinated in the UWC ways, or cult, as she calls it.

Yana (Krasteva) Keresteliev lives in New York City and works in finance at OppenheimerFunds.

Alberto Lopez Garcia-Basteiro lives in Mozambique, coordinating the tuberculosis research area at the Manhiça Health Research Centre. He works with two other UWC alumni: Quique Bassat AC ’93 and Dr. Pedro Alonso AC ’77.

The Rev. Sarah Gettie (Burks) McNeill is a Unitarian Universalist minister. She recently moved to Manassas, Virginia, with her husband Scott and son, age 4, to work as a director of spiritual development with the Accotink Unitarian Universalist Church.

Susanne Mueller and Bobby Redwood live on the Madison lakes and do a lot of hiking, sailing, and canoeing. Bobby just finished his residency in emergency medicine, and Susanne is in the fourth year of her Ph.D. in political science. Bobby and Susanne had a baby girl on Aug. 1.

Said Nashashibi lives in New York City and has worked at Alinda Capital, an infrastructure-focused private equity fund, for almost seven years. He keeps in close touch with the UWC crew in NYC and is looking forward to running in this year’s NYC Marathon.

Brad Pennington and his wife welcomed their son, Neeraj, to their family in December 2013. Brad works as director of analysis for Prosper Marketplace.

Ben Rice-Townsend lives in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and works in the family business of Rice Fruit Co. Last summer, he and his wife had a little boy.

Life is good with Axel Rosenberg. He is an assistant professor in outdoor education at the Norwegian School of Sport Science, and he and his wife recently became the parents of a beautiful little girl.

San Francisco alumni gather for lunch and a chance to meet new President Mukul Kumar ’89.
On June 5, Yonatan Sela married his lovely wife, Goni Light, at a beautiful wedding in Israel attended by Noam Ginossar, Kirils Jegorovs, Moritz Waldstein, Lucas Josten, Gadi Maayan ’02 and Dafna Herzberg ’02.

Aim Sinpeng recently completed her Ph.D. in political science from the University of British Columbia. She will begin her new position as an assistant professor at the Department of Government and International Relations at the University of Sydney. She researches and teaches in the areas of Southeast Asian politics and digital politics.

Lina Stenlund works for the European Parliament in Brussels and has two children.

Lani (Visaisouk) Engheim and her husband live in Oslo, Norway, with their two sons, ages 6 and 2. Norwegian is her fifth language (seventh if you count Middle English and Latin). She works as a freelance knitting designer.

Moritz Waldstein-Wartenberg has been in Ethiopia since October 2013 working with TechnoServe, a U.S.-based nongovernmental organization focusing on business solutions to poverty. He focuses on the coffee sector.

CLASS OF 2002

Dr. Ugo Gragnolati has just started his new position as a senior lecturer at the Centre d’Economie de la Sorbonne in France.

After spending a year and a half as a program officer with UNICEF in Yemen, Nono Louise Harhoff is moving to UNICEF Mozambique as a program specialist. Her role will be to support the planning, coordination, and implementation of UNICEF’s partnerships with the government and nongovernmental organizations.

On June 21, Justine MacWilliam married Saurabh Prasad. It was their third wedding! In November 2013, they held a wedding in Ranchi, India. Then they got married in a city hall ceremony on New Year’s Eve. This most recent affair took place in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and was attended by Nono Louise Harhoff, Pablo Escotto ’03, Ninya Loeppky, Jessica Mowles ’03, Emma Tilquin, and Dafna Herzberg.

Elian Maritz and Jonathan Taylor got married on June 28 in Mercer Island, Washington, in a beautiful wedding attended by family and friends from all over the world and the U.S. The wedding was attended by Charlotte Meyer ’03, Nono Louise Harhoff, Justine MacWilliam, Bruce Armstrong, Aleksa Jorga, Jessica Mowles ’03, and Dafna Herzberg.

On Aug. 9, Ingrid Stige married Yngve-Thomas Bliksrud in the town of Fauske in northern Norway. The wedding was attended by Ida Norheim Hagten ’01, Ugo Gragnolati, Emma Tilquin, Alessandro Carini ’03, Nono Louise Harhoff, and Dafna Herzberg. Nono and Dafna must have a lot of frequent-flier miles from all those weddings!

CLASS OF 2003

Perseo Quiroz was appointed as the executive director of Amnesty International Mexico. Perseo also got married this October in Mexico. His wedding guests included Araceli Munoz-Reyes, Shawn Pankratz, Flavio Priore, Gilberto Cuadra Hernandez, Ivan Flores Cecena ’02, and Emilia Ramirez Valenzuela ’02.
CLASS OF 2005

Brais Louro is celebrating a one-year anniversary as an economist on the strategy team of the U.K. Department of Energy and Climate Change. He currently manages a project that will bring together the evidence base required to understand what the current departmental policy landscape will deliver over the next five years and what options need to be considered as the government reviews its spending plan. “It is quite exciting to deploy your skills to inform government decisions and devote yourself to do so as best you can to objectives that you are passionate about, for example, contributing to tackling climate change!”

Brais is also very passionate about diversity and equality. Previously at Deloitte and now with the U.K. government, he was and is part of the leadership team for their lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender networks. “I even write about it in my boring and low-tech blog,” he says, “which I mostly use as an outlet to share some debating thoughts that are randomly triggered as I go about my life in London.”

“I just came home from a diversity and inclusion event in which Ruth Hunt, chief executive of Stonewall, gave an inspiring speech about all of us working together to stop bullying and discrimination by not being a bystander! I recommend looking into Stonewall and this idea; it is very much in sync with our UWC spirit. I did also get to stand by Stephen Hawking whilst listening to Ruth’s speech! Yes, it was a pretty good Friday evening.”

CLASS OF 2006

Leonor Añó married Drew Stevens! She already had a private ceremony in Chicago to seal the deal a few months ago, but the big celebration took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December.

Tara Kelton is the lead editor at Brave New Films, a nonprofit documentary film company that focuses on social justice issues. They just finished a three-part series called Overcriminalized. “The cool part about this series is that they are solution-based pieces, meaning we aren’t just complaining about problems but presenting solutions that have worked in cities and are way cheaper than incarceration,” Tara says. The films just got picked up by Upworthy, and if they do well, Brave New Films will continue doing pieces like this. “If you have eight minutes, check them out, and if you like them, please consider sharing them,” she says. Tara also sent a collection of documentaries with conversation facilitation guides to UWC-USA for students and faculty to use.

CLASS OF 2007

Arianna Heiderer just started a Master of Science program at Stanford University in Northern California. Her focus is on sustainable design and construction.

A London meet-up at The Star of Kings pub brought together an interesting group of folks. Lubomir Malo and his wife Sylvia announced they are expecting a baby. Lubo still works for an online shoe retailer and is thinking about launching his own company.
London alumni meet at the Star of Kings Pub in October.

Sylvia didn’t go to UWC but is doing graduate work in London and interned for the UWC International Office on an alumni impact study. Jay Merchant works for a hedge fund, and Razan Khabour ’06 works for Deutsche Bank. Julene Aguirre ’04 is a product designer and is trying to launch a company that will feature insects as sustainable food—they are readily available and provide lots of good protein. Julene credits art teacher Colin Lanham for setting her on the product design path. Suvi Rehell ’06 was getting ready for a trip to Kenya to work with a Finnish nonprofit organization. Wahome Muchiri ’96 works in the startup sphere. He was asked to attend a UWC International Office meeting in Oxford to talk about ways to engage African alumni.

**CLASS OF 2008**

**Shirley Leung** graduated from Virginia’s University of Richmond in May 2012 and returned to Hong Kong to work as a mentor for a local charity called Teach Unlimited Foundation. Being placed at a secondary school for two years, her goal was to raise the self-esteem and improve learning attitudes of disadvantaged students through mentoring. After completing her role as a mentor, she is now pursuing a Diploma of Education in Guidance Studies at the University of British Columbia to better prepare herself to apply for graduate programs in counseling psychology.

**Tatenda Uta** recently joined LCG Advisors as an analyst intern. He will graduate in May 2015 with his master’s degree in finance from the University of Tampa in Florida.

**CLASS OF 2009**

**Wesam Manassra** received his master’s degree in computer science from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and is now working as a software engineer for Microsoft.

**CLASS OF 2010**

After graduating from Jacobs University Bremen in Germany, Luisa Gonçalves went back to Portugal to work with her parents in their small boutique, focusing mainly on social media and public relations. At the same time, she got more involved with the Portuguese UWC National Committee and helped candidates through the application process. In 2014, she actively participated in the selection weekend. (It was the first time she was in Portugal during the selection weekend.) “It was an amazing experience,” she says. “Meeting the young new candidates reminded me of how excited I was when I applied to UWC.”

In April, she moved to Berlin to start an internship at iversity GmbH, a platform for online courses. “I have successfully finished my internship, and now I’ve been hired as a trainee and will work here for a little while longer,” Luisa says. “It’s been a very enriching experience to work at a startup that has such a strong focus on education. Things are changing—quickly—and it’s exhilarating to be part of the movement!”

**CLASS OF 2014**

**Michelle Fonda** was chosen to be one of 100 students at the University of Rochester in New York to receive its Renaissance & Global Scholarship. There were 16,000 applicants for this scholarship, which will cover her tuition for four years.
With Skype, Snapchat, email, Facebook, cellphones, and a mind-boggling array of other communication tools available, students today have no excuse for being out of touch. In fact, sometimes they can seem too connected to the “outside world.” Such are the problems of modern times.

In the school’s early years, students made phone calls from a dorm phone or from the resident tutor’s house. Shirleen Lanham, who has been an RT since 1988, remembers the midnight knocks on her front door from students who needed to call faraway time zones. She then had the unenviable job of tracking down those students to extract payment when the monthly phone bill arrived.

“The good thing about having the phone in my house was that if there was an upsetting phone call, we could talk about it right away,” Shirleen recalls.

For a long time, students lived and breathed by the postal delivery schedule, since letters were a lifeline home. “The midmorning break was very exciting as we ran to check mailboxes, or pigeon holes, as our South African teacher called them,” Filipa Cunha Lima ’93 recalls.

Metin Orsel ’88 also remembers the “pigeon holes.”

“Once, I put the ice cream I had taken from the cafeteria into the pigeon hole and then forgot about it,” he says. “I rushed to get it when I remembered, but it had already melted and dripped onto the letters in the pigeon holes below. I tried to clean them up as best as I could. So class of 1988, if you ever received a strawberry-smelling letter in a pinkish envelope, that was me!”

Of course, there were the dorm phones, but those didn’t offer much in the way of privacy. “Actually, one of the most interesting/cool/awkward things was hearing people talk on the day-room phones,” Victoria Alleyne ’06 says. “People sound so different when they talk in their native language to their parents.”

Julia Airey ’12 was a frequent user of the Aconcagua Dorm phone. “I remember many nights talking to my parents on that phone with my feet on the windowsill looking out over campus. Sometimes when I got homesick, my mum would put the phone out the window so I could hear the crickets and frogs that live outside my house in New England,” she says. “It was so strange to hear the sounds of home and see the sights of Montezuma at the same time.”

Back in the days when “Skype was science fiction,” Adam Kirk ’90 says he figured out a way to save money on phone calls. “After almost driving my Australian parents bankrupt with reverse calls in my first year, we hatched a cunning plan,” he says. “I would call my parents reverse charge from my dorm pay phone (then in the Meredith House), but they would refuse to take the call. Instead, they would call me straight back on the dorm pay-phone number knowing that I was there waiting. … I don’t recall ever answering anyone else’s call while waiting for my parents to call back, so the system worked well. We had to use all our ingenuity before the telecommunications revolution.”

By the mid-1990s, ICQ—the first stand-alone instant-messaging system service—had arrived on campus. “I can always tell how old someone is by asking them if they ever used ICQ,” Jimena Blanco ’00 says. “MSN Messenger was revolutionary by the end of our second year. Email was just starting, too.”

Today, it’s not uncommon to find a student tucked into a corner of the Castle lobby chatting into a computer screen with friends and family back home. For Shirleen, the easy access to virtual communication has taken students away from the kind of interaction she remembers from the low-tech days.

“Before, when I would do checks at night, I’d find roommates hanging out with each other and chatting,” she says. “Now when I go see them, they aren’t interacting with each other. They are on their cellphones or laptops.”

But Shirleen admits Skype has its place in the communication landscape. She Skypes her 2-year-old grandson, who lives in California, and enjoys the fact that he likes her to sing “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star” to him via the computer.

“I guess I can see where it’s great for our students,” she says, resignedly.

“People sound so different when they talk in their native language to their parents.”

—Jennifer Rowland
These are all critical needs, but a few enterprising volunteers for the Annual Fund wanted something different. They asked, “Why can’t our classes raise money for individual students?” The idea for alumni class scholarships was born.

Many of the young women and men who come to Montezuma—especially those from developing countries or rural areas—arrive without scholarship support. That means UWC-USA must cover the cost of their education out of the school’s operating budget in order to remain committed to accepting a diverse student population.

Alumni volunteers saw an opportunity. If their classes could raise those scholarship funds, they could make an impact directly for individual students while enhancing the school’s fiscal health. The idea seemed like a winner.

The classes of 1985 and 1986 brought the concept to life in February 2014 with an effort to raise a two-year $80,000 scholarship for a future student who will matriculate after the funds for his or her first year have been raised. These scholarships, which will honor ’85 and ’86 for their 30th reunions, will be earmarked for a deserving student chosen by members of each class. Classes may choose a young person who comes from a minority in their home country, someone who hails from a country that has suffered from economic or social disruption, a student who comes from a rural area, or a student with another attribute.

“Personally, working with my class to raise a scholarship gives fundraising a new and meaningful context,” says Annual Fund volunteer Melanie Weston ’86, who is also a member of UWC-USA’s Board of Trustees. “Our classmates have responded very excitedly and seem energized at directly impacting another student’s life and allowing him or her a chance to have a similar experience to the one we had in Montezuma.”

So far, the class of 1986 has raised more than $27,000 and the class of 1985 has raised more than $47,000 for their scholarships.

This autumn, six more classes joined the effort with another innovative fundraising concept: the Adopt-a-Student program. Now in the pilot phase, the Adopt-a-Student program builds on the desire of alumni to connect with current students. Board member Michael Taylor ’91, an architect of the program, says, “I know I’m energized any time I get to know current students. They astonish me as articulate, optimistic, curious, and empathetic toward the world. And of course, they remind me of my classmates.”

The pilot began in October with six alumni classes forming three fundraising pairs. Each pair has “adopted” a current first-year student in need of scholarship support. The three class pairs have adopted students from Syria, Mexico, and Slovakia. Throughout the year, these alumni classes will connect with their adopted students personally via Skype and social media, and they will track their class’ fundraising progress on the UWC-USA website.

The returns of these innovative new programs don’t end at the monetary: Engaging our alumni with the UWC-USA experience as currently lived by our students is extremely powerful. By forging a personal connection with young men and women in Montezuma, our alumni can offer their support and experience to guide students through these two intense years and beyond.

So far, the class of 1986 has raised more than $27,000 and the class of 1985 has raised more than $47,000 for their scholarships.
when two violins are placed in a room
if a chord on one violin is struck
the other violin will sound the note
if this is your definition of hope
this is for you
the ones who know how powerful we are
who know we can sound the music in the people around us
simply by playing our own strings
for the ones who sing life into broken wings
open their chests and offer their breath
as wind on a still day when nothing seems to be moving
spare those intent on proving god is dead
for you when your fingers are red
from clutching your heart
so it will beat faster
for the time you mastered the art of giving yourself for the sake of
someone else
for the ones who have felt what it is to crush the lies
and lift truth so high the steeples bow to the sky
this is for you

—EXCERPT FROM SAY YES
BY AMERICAN POET AND ACTIVIST ANDREA GIBSON
DO YOU KNOW A HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WHO IS HUNGRY for a UWC-USA experience? Our summer youth programs might be a perfect opportunity!

- The Global Leadership Forum (GLF) teaches participants the leadership and project implementation skills they need to become change agents in an ever-changing world.
- Summer Wilderness Trips help teens develop self-confidence and self-reliance as they become proficient in trail navigation, risk assessment, basic wilderness first aid, and, of course, cross-cultural teamwork and campcraft.
- Language and Culture is an intensive English language for non-English speakers program that includes field trips to cultural destinations in the Southwest.
- UWC-USA Farm Camp lets students get their hands dirty while they learn about agriculture, environmental science, and more.

Registration is now open. Visit www.summer.uwc-usa.org to learn more.