

CORNELL'S QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FALL 2010

# EZRA



## PLAYING THE ODDS IN A DOWN ECONOMY

STUDENTS CONQUER  
TOUGH JOB MARKET  
WITH PASSION, RISKS

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# EZRA

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Down economy? For students, view is only up

BY LAUREN GOLD



Two years after the financial crisis of 2008, and with the recession's recovery faltering, college graduates across the country continue to feel the effects of a high unemployment rate, and competition for jobs is fierce. But for many Cornell graduates, new vistas are opening up, and with them an unanticipated readjustment of expectations.

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EZRA: Cornell's quarterly magazine  
Vol. III, Issue 1, Fall 2010

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Produced by the Cornell Chronicle  
All photography by Cornell University Photography unless otherwise indicated.

Cornell University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action educator and employer.  
Subscription information: ezramagazine@cornell.edu or call 607-255-3630.

<http://ezramagazine.cornell.edu>

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**ON THE COVER**

Stephanie Evans '10 in her New York City office at Macy's/macys.com. Evans originally planned on a job in management, but then focused on the fashion industry and now works in purchasing at Macy's and macys.com in the men's shoes division.

Cover photo: Photo by Lindsay France/University Photography; digital post-production by Matthew Fondeur/University Photography

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## From the publisher

When the economy and job market are good, it's easy to boast how many graduates get their jobs of choice, many fielding multiple offers months before graduation. It's more revealing, though, to look at how well an institution prepares its students for life after college in the toughest economic environment since the Depression.

In our cover story we look at life after Cornell in the current climate: Our students are leveraging their top-tier education and campus experience to succeed in the tightest job market in generations. How? Through resourcefulness and determination, employing their passions and connections and not being afraid to take risks.

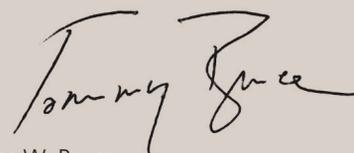
For many recent graduates who had to face a suddenly barren job market as the Great Recession hit, the job paths they have taken may not be what they had initially expected or planned, but in many cases these students have found a serendipitous challenge in the career paths they are taking.

There is, for example, Caitlin Strandberg '10, who had planned for a career in management consulting. The tough job market forced her to confront the reality that this wasn't what she really wanted. Instead, she followed her passion, took a risk and now has a quite different job that, as Caitlin puts it, "is exactly what I wanted."

So our theme is all about new beginnings. When our new students arrive on campus they are facing a beginning fertile with opportunities that, they assume, will put them on expected paths. Four years later they discover that their Cornell education has prepared them as well for dealing with unexpected beginnings.

The cover story isn't the only place in this issue to read about birth and rebirth: Read about the early life of philanthropist Charles Dyson; about a Cornell art historian who is restoring and preserving a long-hidden art collection; and about the early arrival of the first child of Ryan McClay and wife Laura (both Class of '03) while Ryan was playing in the world lacrosse championships this summer.

Just a few weeks ago, we welcomed the incoming Class of 2014 (and several hundred transfer students) – nearly 3,800 of them. Energized with their optimism and determination, this edition of Ezra offers you a spirit of beginning we can all share.



Thomas W. Bruce

Vice President, University Communications

## FIELD TRIP

**Coast to coast for a cause**

Just three days after her graduation from the College of Human Ecology, Julieclaire "JC" Sheppard '10 began pedaling across America to raise awareness and money to support osteoporosis research.

Sheppard, her mother and a friend embarked on the 3,000-mile journey June 3 in San Francisco. On Aug. 4, they arrived in New York City, following stops at five national parks, seven cities and countless small towns. They made grueling climbs through the Sierra Nevada Mountains, encountered wheat threshers and hay trucks on tiny two-lane roads in the Midwest, and faced steamy weather and teeming insects.

The team blogged about their trek at Bond Girls Bike America, [bondgirlsbikeamerica.com/blog](http://bondgirlsbikeamerica.com/blog). They planned to raise \$1 or more for each mile logged to benefit the National Osteoporosis Foundation.

Sheppard, a policy analysis and management major at Cornell, is attending the University of San Diego Law School.



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## SEEN &amp; HEARD

**Obama takes note**

In a speech Aug. 9 at the University of Texas-Austin, President Barack Obama discussed higher education and the economy. He mentioned Cornell among institutions taking a proactive approach to containing costs:

"... Part of the responsibility for controlling these costs falls on our colleges and universities. Some of them are stepping up. Public institutions like the University of Maryland, University of North Carolina, some private institutions like Cornell, they're all finding ways to combat rising tuition without compromising on quality ... I want to challenge every university and college president to get a handle on spiraling costs."

President David Skorton mentioned Obama's call-out in his welcome back e-mail message Aug. 25:

"... President Obama singled out Cornell for taking decisive action to contain costs - and keep the university affordable for students from all backgrounds. Despite our financial challenges, we have reaffirmed our commitment to need-blind admissions and need-based financial aid. [The Class of 2014] and our new transfer, graduate and professional students continue to reflect the diversity that is so essential to the character of our university."

## SNAPSHOT

**Cornell family tree: Extended clan has 56 Cornellians**

Among the alumni attending Reunion 2010 in June were a subset of an extended family that boasts 56 Cornellians. Twelve of them are pictured at right in Barton Hall.

"All of this started with Byron B. Robb, Class of 1911 (of Riley-Robb Hall) and Wilburn H. Potter, D.V.M. '18 (my grandfather)," Robert Potter '69 said. "They then each sent children to Cornell who often married Cornellians, and now both families include a fourth generation of Cornellians."

Carleton Potter, D.V.M. '40, was on hand for his 70th reunion.

"Dad remembers seeing members of Cornell's first graduating class while he was in the Vet School. If my math is correct, they could have been back for their 70th reunion as well," Robert Potter said.

Byron Robb's grandson, Larry Newman '65, married Susan Potter '66, Robert's sister; their three children all attended Cornell, as fourth-generation Cornellians through both parents.

The latest Potter descendants at Cornell are Adrienne Masler '10, Erica Masler '13 and Parry Cadwallader '13. A Potter family picnic held July 4 in Homer included 30 Cornellians.



## CORNELL PEOPLE

### Pick up the pieces

When artist Andrea Strongwater '70 decided to transform her original painting of Cornell into a jigsaw puzzle for a Reunion 2010 gift, she turned to Adam Silver '02 and Sarah Dickinson '02, co-founders of the New York Puzzle Co.

Silver has been obsessed with puzzles since childhood. He found a kindred spirit in fellow history alum Dickinson when they reconnected a few years after graduation. Their company specializes in custom puzzles and licensed images, such as the New York City subway (their first product) and New Yorker magazine covers.

Silver and Dickinson turned Strongwater's painting of Cornell into a 500-piece jigsaw puzzle. For more information, visit [www.astrongwater.com](http://www.astrongwater.com).

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## CREATED@CORNELL

### Robot Ranger sets walking record

A Cornell robot named Ranger traveled 14.3 miles in about 11 hours in July, setting an unofficial world record at Cornell's Barton Hall. A human – using a standard toy remote control – steered the untethered robot (at left, graduate student Pranav Bhounsule).

Ranger navigated 108.5 times around the Barton Hall indoor track – about 212 meters per lap – and made about 70,000 steps before it had to stop and recharge. The 14.3-mile record beats the former world record set by Boston Dynamics' BigDog, which had claimed the record at 12.8 miles.

A group of engineering students led by Andy Ruina, Cornell professor of theoretical and applied mechanics, announced the record a few days later at the Dynamic Walking 2010 meeting in Cambridge, Mass. Ruina leads the Biorobotics and Locomotion Laboratory at Cornell. The research is funded by the National Science Foundation.

One goal for robotic research is to show off the machine's energy efficiency. Unlike other walking robots that use motors to control every movement, the Ranger appears more relaxed and emulates human walking, using gravity and momentum to help swing its legs forward. Ruina says that this record not only advances robotics, but also helps undergraduates learn about the mechanics of walking. The information could be applied to rehabilitation, prosthetics for humans and improving athletic performance.



## AROUND CAMPUS

### Dairy Bar scoop

Fear not, ice cream fans! Even though the Cornell Dairy Bar closed for renovations at Stocking Hall June 18, Cornell Dairy's premium ice cream was still served as a summertime treat and will remain available throughout the year at Trillium Express in Kennedy Hall.

In 2013, the new glass-fronted Dairy Bar will invite the public to learn about food and dairy processing. From a balcony above the Dairy Plant, visitors will be able to see Cornell ice cream, milk, pudding and yogurt move through production – from processing to pasteurization and packaging.



# Down economy? For students, view is only up

Tough job market pushes them to follow their passions and take risks

**W**hen she started her job search in the fall of her senior year, Caitlin Strandberg '10 knew it wouldn't be easy. A history major from Orlando, Fla., she wasn't sure where she wanted to take her career. "I picked my major very, very late in the game," she says. At Cornell she had focused on classes and activities – particularly Slope Media, a student radio, TV and print organization she helped launch and run. When she did start looking for jobs, she set her sights on management consulting; but she quickly found that companies were hiring far fewer new graduates than they had in previous years.





Caitlin Strandberg '10 at Slope Media on campus this past spring.

“I never could have anticipated ... how significantly the [economic] downturn had impacted the availability of entry-level jobs,” she says. “You hear about it, but you think it can’t be that bad – and then you go onto the [Cornell] Career Services website and you see all these companies that came last year and the year before, and it seems like it was slashed in half. Anything I was interested in was just not happening.”

Two years after the financial crisis of 2008, and with the recovery from the Great Recession faltering, college graduates across the country are continuing to feel the effects of the 9.6 percent unemployment rate. Entry-level positions are scarce, and competition is fierce. With fewer companies actively recruiting, applicants have less opportunity to meet or talk to potential employers – and it’s hard to make a strong impression through an online application. “It’s really emotionally exhausting,” Strandberg says.

But for Strandberg and many of her classmates, new vistas are opening up, and with them an unanticipated readjustment of expectations. With perseverance, creativity and a willingness to take calculated risks, the students are heading off on paths that are very different from – and, in many cases, much better than – the ones they had imagined for themselves just a few years ago. Some are finding themselves thrust into unexpected professional challenges, some are heading off to graduate school and yet others are finding inspiration in vocations, from Teach For America to the United Nations.

### An ‘excuse to take a risk’

The economic climate is changing job searching in a positive way, says Rebecca Sparrow, director of Cornell Career Services. The new employment landscape is encouraging some graduates to take interesting side roads and explore areas that are less obvious, but that could ultimately turn out to be even more fulfilling.

“I think we’re seeing a shift in the notion that you’ve got to be launching your ideal career leaving college,” Sparrow says. “People are understanding that that’s not the case. ... In a way, the tough economy has opened students’ eyes to reality a little bit earlier” in their lives.

Or as the now-employed Strandberg puts it: “The [economic] downturn kind of gives you an excuse to take a risk. And high risks reap high rewards. So why would you not use the excuse?”

The numbers reflect many of the changes



RENNA WILPUS/PROVIDED

## One student's journey, from balance sheets to the Baltic

BY LAUREN GOLD

The medieval Estonian village of Padise is not quite where Karl von Ramm thought he would end up after graduating from Cornell this year.

He had worked for a large hotel in Philadelphia before entering the hotel school's Master of Management in Hospitality program in 2009. His concentration was on operations and revenue management, one of the few areas of high growth in an industry that has been battered by the recession.

The job offers were there – a surprising number of them – but for the ambitious von Ramm, they were less than enticing. “You sit in front of an Excel spreadsheet all day long. It’s actually quite awful,” he says.

What he really wanted was to move into development.

With high-level hospitality development

jobs at a premium, he considered another option: an ancient family manor house in Estonia, one of several that have been in his family since 1622. The properties were seized after World War II, but following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the family (who now live in Durham, N.C., where von Ramm was born) bought the Padise manor house in 1997.

“We really didn’t know what to do with it,” von Ramm says. At his suggestion, his family began the slow, expensive process of renovation and turning it into a hotel. At first he rejected the idea of managing the hotel himself, but as his time at Cornell drew to a close, the idea began to sound more and more appealing – particularly after a conversation with a prominent resort operator.

“She said, ‘You have an incredible business opportunity. I don’t know why you would be doing anything else,’” he recalls.

And the lure of history, and of family connections, was compelling.

“I was the first one to sleep in [the house] from my entire family for 83 years,” he says. “So when you attach that to it, it has 10 times the meaning. It really is a motivating factor.”

Certainly, there are drawbacks. To save money on living expenses, the hotel is his home as well as his workplace. When it’s booked full, he sleeps in the basement. And with less-than-perfect Estonian language skills, he has to manage a team of Estonians, few of whom speak English.

On the positive side there is Padise itself. “It’s an ancient medieval town, completely untouched,” he says. “There’s a lot to offer there, and people just don’t know.”

Next to the manor house hotel are 13th-century castle ruins. “You just wander around and climb all through it – climb to the top of the tallest tower built in the 12th century,” he says. “It’s a real experience.”

Getting the word out to the rest of the tourism world is just one of many giant tasks ahead of him. But his classes at Cornell – particularly a hospitality innovation practicum course that took him to Zambia last spring – taught him, he believes, how to tackle giant projects, one element at a time.

“I thought I was coming to Cornell to get technical knowledge,” he says. “What really has come out of the program is leadership skills. Now I know how to structure a project, prioritize tasks, write an actual strategy plan out.

“It was completely invaluable.”

**Karl von Ramm (above left, on campus) moved to Estonia after finishing a master's degree in the hotel school to live in, renovate and run a hotel in a manor house owned by his family (left). The hotel sits next to castle ruins that date to the 13th century (above right).**



RENNA WILPUS/PROVIDED

affecting graduates' search for their first long-term jobs. Statistics show shifts that seem small when taken individually, but may be more significant from a big-picture perspective. Based on surveys of graduating seniors, 50 percent of the Class of 2009 (data from the Class of 2010 is still being collected) had found jobs by graduation or up to seven months afterward. That's down from 55.2 percent in 2008 and 56.4 percent in 2007. (Response rates are around 75 percent.) The lower figures in 2009 are partly because more graduates are staying in school for advanced degrees: 34.3 percent of the Class of 2009 went straight to grad school, compared with 32 percent in 2008 and 30.1 percent in 2007. And there is a small rise (15.7 percent, up from 12.8 percent in 2008) in the number of students who fall into the catch-all category "other endeavors," which includes short-term service jobs, volunteer positions, internships and fellowships; so-called "gap year" pursuits (ventures that allow graduates to explore new places or vocations for a year or so before entering either graduate school or a more permanent position, as well as those still looking for work.

"More students are looking at gap year opportunities – things like AmeriCorps or short-term fellowships that will help them build really excellent job skills but are not intended to be a long-term solution to the job puzzle," Sparrow says. "We are seeing a lot more flexibility."

The surveys also show that fewer seniors are relying on on-campus recruiting, which is greatly diminished. Instead, more are using networking and alumni connections. And colleges are reaching out to alumni more than ever. "We've had wonderful responses from alumni," says Mark Savage, director of the Office of Cooperative Education and Career Services in the College of Engineering. "There are jobs out there; they're just not going to be in your face like they were three years ago. You have to turn over some stones."

And harrowing as the uncertainty can sometimes be, it puts this year's graduates at an advantage in the long run, Sparrow adds. "When they have learned as undergrads about all these things – having a multipronged job search and doing networking – they're better able to manage their careers down the road. These students really are developing skills that will last. That's sort of a bitter lesson to learn, but down the road they'll be in better shape for taking the next steps in their careers."

In Strandberg's case, months of job searching led to some thorough soul searching. So when entrepreneur Scott Belsky '02 spoke about his New York City startup in one of her classes, something clicked.

She stuck around after the lecture and chatted with Belsky. The more she learned about his



**Stephanie Evans '10 originally planned on a job in management, but then focused on the fashion industry and is now a merchandise assistant at Macy's in New York City, working for macys.com in the men's shoes division.**

**'I think we're seeing a shift in the notion that you've got to be launching your ideal career leaving college. People are understanding that that's not the case. ... In a way, the tough economy has opened students' eyes to reality a little bit earlier' in their lives.**

— Rebecca Sparrow, director of Cornell Career Services



Larry Stevens '10, right, spent the summer training as a Teach For America recruit in a Philadelphia high school (pictured with student Anthony Davis, 17); Stevens is now teaching in Washington, D.C.

'In some ways, the recession prevented me from jumping into a role that wouldn't have fit my personality or been the best opportunity for me. This is exactly what I wanted, and in some cases I didn't even know that I wanted it.'

— Caitlin Strandberg '10

new company, which offers tools, products and information to help creative professionals organize their work online, the more she realized it was exactly the kind of job she was looking for.

On July 26 of this year, Strandberg joined the company as associate director of business development.

"In some ways, the recession prevented me from jumping into a role that wouldn't have fit my personality or been the best opportunity for me," she says. "This is exactly what I wanted, and in some cases I didn't even know that I wanted it."

She admits she is taking a risk by joining a startup company. But taking risks, job counselors say, can lead to valuable experiences at a time of life when job seekers are unencumbered by family responsibilities.

### Following their passions

Stephanie Evans '10 has taken the lesson to heart. An applied economics and management major, she started her job search broadly, applying to various kinds of management training positions. She would have preferred employers to be attracted by her good grades and strong internship experiences, but as a peer adviser at the career center, she also knew that connections, persistence and creativity are what really count in this economy.

So she narrowed her focus to the industry she loves most: fashion. By early May, she was whisper-close to an offer that never came. But she persevered, and by June she was starting her first job as a merchandise assistant at Macy's. "People who are truly passionate about the work they do are the ones that are the most successful in their careers. And I want to be really successful," she says. "This is something I really want to do. I'm going to make something happen; it's just about staying persistent."

She notes the irony: Had the economy been better, "there would have been other opportunities in other industries ... and I would not have really looked into the fashion industry. I would not be following my passion."

Often that passion involves community service.



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## Get Connected!

CornellConnect is exactly what its name suggests – a way for Cornellians to connect with the university and with each other.

Part online directory, part social network, CornellConnect allows alumni to update their personal information in Cornell's database (and to choose how much of it is displayed to other people), sign up and pay for events with credit cards, send messages to each other, access class and club websites and even post a photo of themselves. Discussion groups and career networking services are coming soon.

With more than 215,000 alumni living and working all over the world, an interactive, virtual space to connect is a natural extension of the face-to-face work done in Alumni Affairs and Development, says Andrew Gossen, senior director of social media strategy for the Office of Alumni Affairs.

"Only Cornellians are granted access, so unlike Facebook and LinkedIn, you can be sure that you are dealing with actual alumni," Gossen says. "We know from the extensive beta testing we did that this exclusivity is a very appealing reason to use CornellConnect."

The university just recently began promoting the network and has already seen 6,500 alumni register.

"Based on conversations with peer institutions that have launched similar initiatives, we're right on track with the quantity and the quality of interactions we've seen so far," Gossen says. "Once word starts to spread organically and people begin to see the benefits of tapping into one of the world's most impressive and helpful alumni networks, I'm betting we'll see even stronger numbers."

Use of the Cornell directory and other premium features requires members to sign in with a Cornell-issued NetID. Any graduate of Cornell who does not already have a NetID can obtain one in about 10 minutes by calling the Office of Alumni Affairs at 607-254-2288.

To access CornellConnect:  
Go to <http://cornellconnect.cornell.edu>

To obtain a netID:  
Call 607-254-2288, Monday through  
Friday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



## Career counselors, student service staff predict improved job market for 2011 grads

*Ezra asked several career counselors, assistant deans and other administrators who work with students on career planning about their predictions for the job market for Cornell graduates in the coming year.*

### **Christa Downey, assistant dean and director of career services, College of Arts and Sciences:**

Class of 2010 graduates from the College of Arts and Sciences were more successful at finding jobs by the time they graduated than Class of 2009 graduates. We are seeing more opportunities open up for our students this year, and I predict next year will be even better.

In career services, we encourage all students to follow their passions, and we try to provide them with the tools to get started in the right direction. We encourage every student to participate in the FRESH and EXTERN programs, [www.career.cornell.edu/externProgram/](http://www.career.cornell.edu/externProgram/), to gain firsthand knowledge of specific fields.

### **Thomas O'Toole, executive director for professional development, Cornell Institute for Public Affairs:**

Despite promising forecasts in public sector hiring in down economies, these opportunities become more competitive as graduates seek the security of federal employment. Further, the prospect of a new midterm Congress can dramatically shift

federal priorities, which will subsequently affect hiring.

Students interested in landing a federal job by graduation should begin researching and, in some cases, applying for opportunities between six and nine months prior to graduation.

Though all federal jobs are posted on [www.usajobs.gov](http://www.usajobs.gov), by far the best resource for students and alumni to explore when considering a federal career is the Partnership for Public Service's website at [www.makingthedifference.org](http://www.makingthedifference.org).

### **Mark Savage, director, Engineering Cooperative Education and Career Services, College of Engineering:**

I expect to see the job market continue to slowly improve. I base that expectation in part on having five employers host gatherings at their sites this summer to show career advisers what they do – and most paid all expenses. Employers represented the financial services, energy services, electronics and chemicals industries, and all expected to increase hiring for the coming year (though we will not be on par with the strong job market that was in place prior to the economic downturn).

As employers struggle with how to pay for health care and with potentially higher taxes, that could put a damper on how quickly things recover. But overall, I predict that opportunities will increase [this coming]

year by 10 to 20 percent, but employers will use a variety of means to connect with students – so we may see only minor gains in on-campus recruiting interview numbers.

### **Molly deRoos, associate director, career management, Office of Student Services, School of Hotel Administration:**

In this economic downturn, School of Hotel Administration students have broadened their view of the types of opportunities they consider as a launch pad to their careers. Within hospitality, they are exploring segments that have traditionally been less in demand, but that offer great opportunities, such as senior living. Additionally, "Hotelies" have found that their degrees have prepared them well for opportunities outside hospitality in business and education – for example, General Electric and Teach For America. We are still collecting information, but we can already see that the Class of 2010 fared better in the job market than the previous year. I'm optimistic that we will continue to see an upswing in opportunities for the Class of 2011.

### **Regina Duffey Moravek, director, Office of Career Services, ILR School:**

Employers in contact with us are anticipating a moderate recovery and increases in hiring in the coming year. However, I believe that students will continue to consider multiple strategies in their job pursuits and will continue to pursue sectors they may not have considered previously, such as the government sector, which will continue to have jobs.

I also believe students will continue to give due consideration to gap year experiences that will enable them to pursue interests as they further decide their career focus and availability of job prospects within that focus. But it's a delicate balance between freedom to pursue interests in an uncertain economy where career paths aren't as defined as they may have been, and the ability to still support yourself economically. For some students, one may trump the other, and opportunities and interests may not entwine as they would prefer.

### **Brenda Wickes, assistant dean for student life, Graduate School:**

My prediction, based on a multitude of op-eds in the popular press and the Chronicle of Higher Education, would be that greater numbers of our Ph.D. and master's degree recipients will look to careers outside academia, in business, industry and not-for-profit sectors.

Recently Larry Stevens '10 stepped back into the classroom – this time as a high school Spanish teacher in Washington, D.C., through Teach For America, a not-for-profit that trains recent college graduates and places them in teaching positions in underserved public schools.

Cornell is a major source of TFA recruits: Between 10 and 11 percent of graduating seniors apply to the program every year. Teaching wasn't what Stevens always imagined he would be doing after college. With a bachelor's degree in Africana studies, he had a long list of potential employment pursuits, including running his own company.

"But back in '08 when the economy got really bad, I started seeing the headlines. ... I thought, teaching is something that I definitely should be doing now," he says.

That view was shaped by his early experience. Before winning a scholarship to a private high school, he attended public school in Jersey City, N.J. – one of the state's most troubled school systems. He remembers classes of 40 to 50 students and "an atmosphere of hopelessness."

"Teachers are there disciplining, not really investing personal time. You feel not loved; you feel unwanted. That sticks with you," he says.

He hopes to help change that mindset for the next generation, first as a teacher and eventually as a principal and administrator. "I want to go to D.C. and have black male students look at me and say, 'You did it; I know I can.'"

Beyond the chance to make a difference, TFA also offered something crucial for a family in which a grandmother and siblings count on Stevens for support. "Everything was definitely gearing me toward staying focused and making sure that I had a job, because I can't afford to not [have a job]," he says.

Helping to improve underperforming schools is appealing even for students who have a financial safety net, says Ian Hillis, director of recruiting for TFA at Cornell. The economy leads students to reflect on others who are not as lucky as themselves, he says, and to look for ways to help.

Ideals about helping fix society have a long tradition at Cornell. Between 25 and 35 Cornell graduates enter the Peace Corps every year, and this year many more students are seeking jobs with the federal government, both domestically and abroad.

"Since the financial crisis hit, I've seen a huge upswing in the number of graduate students interested in federal employment opportunities ... and in working within the United Nations," says Thomas O'Toole, assistant director for professional development at the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs.

O'Toole attributes this to the decrease in private-sector hiring, to more projected government vacancies, as well as to a renewed

**'People who are truly passionate about the work they do are the ones that are the most successful in their careers. And I want to be really successful. This is something I really want to do. I'm going to make something happen; it's just about staying persistent.'**

— Stephanie Evans '10

JOHN SAMPLES/WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE QATAR



Jack Cao, left, and Jonathan Soh, both Class of 2010, are spending a gap year at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar as teaching assistants; they chose the jobs for the cultural and teaching experience.

**'Cornell is well positioned to become an attractive target institution for federal employers,' which is only fitting for one of the original land-grant universities.**

— Thomas O'Toole, assistant director for professional development at the Cornell Institute for Public Affairs

optimism among young people about the power of government to effect positive change. "Cornell is well positioned to become an attractive target institution for federal employers," he says, which is only fitting for one of the original land-grant universities.

The Peace Corps isn't the only draw for Cornell students with wanderlust. Jonathan Soh and Jack Cao, both '10, headed overseas after graduation, but without leaving Cornell. The two are teaching assistants at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar – a gap year job they chose for the cultural and teaching experience.

Cao is a teaching assistant for Psychology 101 – a job he had held as an undergraduate and calls "the defining experience" of his college career.

"The one big regret I have during college is not studying abroad," he says. "I see going to Qatar as a way to fulfill that [goal] – to have that abroad experience while doing something I love."

And the paycheck helps, too, he says. "After my parents spending so much money for an undergraduate education at Cornell, it's hard to ask them to shell out more money for graduate school. I'd like to take on as much of that financial burden on my own as possible."

Soh agrees. "Given the dismal financial landscape, it was especially important that my time off from schooling wouldn't create an additional financial burden for me and my family."

### Delayed reaction

For graduating law students, the landscape has changed dramatically just over the last year. Most large law firms have cut their hiring by half or more in the last two years, even as the number of new law graduates is rising. And because law students are usually offered jobs by the summer before their third year based on interviews that start a year earlier, the Class of 2009 was the first to feel the effects of the 2008 crash.

Last spring, the Law School added a staff member to its career office to help. "If you compare the number of law students in the United States generally to the number of jobs that are predictably available from one year to the next, there's a supply and demand problem," says John DeRosa, assistant dean for student and career services. "To say that this market is brutal, and will probably continue to be – if anything, that's an understatement. So we need to do everything we can possibly do to uncover every quality opportunity there is."

And the school is reaching out to alumni more than ever before, he adds. "The bad news is, the market requires us to do that. The good news is, the alumni have been incredibly helpful."

They have also expanded and redesigned an externship course to offer credit to students for summer internships, a step that allows employers



Rebecca Vernon, J.D. '10, on campus this spring; she saw the position she landed at a law firm deferred due to the economy and took the extra time to work with law professor Cynthia Farina on designing a website to make federal rulemaking more accessible to the public.

not traditionally in a position to offer paid summer positions (such as judges, government agencies, nonprofits and corporations) to increase their use of law student talent during the summer.

“Historically, most of the students in [the externship course] worked for federal judges. This is the first year in which we’ve really tried to generate a private sector component,” DeRosa says. By granting course credit, the program allows firms and companies to take on students as volunteers – a practice otherwise restricted by labor laws.

Overall, he says, the tough market is likely to affect graduates from schools with less prestige much more than those from Cornell.

“I’m biased, but I think the benefit of going to a very good, very highly regarded law school – as difficult as the market is, [it’s] going to become more pronounced,” he says.

### Major cases, major impact

And as with other Cornell students, members of the Law School’s Classes of 2009 and 2010 are finding a few golden opportunities in the recession.

Like many of their classmates, Silvia Babikian, J.D. ’09, and Rebecca Vernon, J.D. ’10, secured positions with law firms in New York well before they graduated only to find their starting dates deferred for six months or more. In the meantime, their firms are paying them a stipend to work for a nonprofit or community service organization.

Babikian started work at the American Civil Liberties Union in Los Angeles last fall, gaining an opportunity to work on major cases that very few first-year associates get.

The first case she worked on, *Salazar v. Buono*, challenged the constitutionality of a religious symbol on federal land and was recently heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. “I honestly didn’t expect that I would get this kind of experience,” she says. “I like the sense that I really have an impact on someone’s life with the work that I do.”

Vernon’s interim work also has national significance. Working with law professor Cynthia Farina, she’s designing and testing a website to make the federal rulemaking process more transparent and accessible to the public.

Federal rulemaking is “an incredibly participatory part of our federal government’s work,” Vernon says. “Federal agencies are actually required by the courts to respond to citizens’ comments. I’d like to make people more aware of that.”

In the spring, the website project, which partners with the U.S. Department of Transportation, used the site to explain a proposed federal ban on texting while driving by commercial truck and bus drivers.

“This isn’t where I thought I would end up,” she says, “but I’m so happy to be where I am.” ♦

## The inspired path after Cornell: Changing lives

BY RHONDA STEWART

I have fond memories of great teachers from nursery school through graduate school. Years before sitting in Bailey Hall with hundreds of other students in Psych 101 my interest in psychology had been sparked by a high school teacher who hated the textbook, using instead the plots of operas – casting students in various roles – to make lessons more vivid.

The chance to work with great teachers and share their stories prompted me to join Teach For America, where I now work as a regional communications director.

Although a Cornell education can open many doors, the paths that students travel to get here in the first place are an important part of that journey. None of us would have made it here without great teachers along the way.

Cornell seniors are answering this call with a growing interest in Teach For America, which recruits top college graduates to teach for two years in underserved urban and rural schools. Their interest is not due solely to the economy. A larger call to public service is just one of the things that define a Cornell education. Cornell graduates are not just well educated but well prepared to excel in challenging situations and to create their own opportunities.

Nearly 11 percent of Cornell’s Class of 2010 applied to Teach For America. This fall, 60 Cornell graduates are among the 4,500 new incoming teachers, ranking Cornell third among the top 20 large colleges and universities that have sent graduating seniors into its teaching corps.

Working in a challenging environment, a Teach For America corps member must be resourceful and resilient. Students in low-income communities are often multiple grade levels behind their wealthier peers, and yet their capacity to learn and their desire to succeed is just as great.

Teachers continue to inspire me as they change lives. Take as two great examples in Teach For America Larry Stevens ’10 and Kwame Griffith ’02.

Sitting in Stevens’ 12th-grade English summer school class at Martin Luther King High School in Philadelphia you would never know he hadn’t always planned to be a teacher. Each day he wrote a phrase on the blackboard to inspire his students (he refers to them as “scholars”). On one day, that phrase was “Scholars play the hand they’re dealt.”

On the last day before exams, he kicked the class off with a powerful reading of a poem he wrote about growing up as a young African-American man in a tough neighborhood in Newark, N.J. He later earned a scholarship to a private school and from there came to Cornell. This fall Stevens is teaching in Washington, D.C., and he plans to remain in education as a school leader.

While Stevens is just beginning his journey as a teacher, Griffith, now executive director of Teach For America in Atlanta, continues to draw on his past experiences teaching fourth- and fifth-grade students in Houston.

Griffith, who is also African-American, grew up in Buffalo, N.Y., and learned the importance of education early as his single mother sacrificed to send him to a public magnet school. While he can’t remember having any black male teachers until he came to Cornell, it was at Cornell that he was drawn to the idea of becoming a teacher.

Cornell set both of these educators on different paths with the same result: It allowed them to dream big and inspire their students to do the same.

*Rhonda Stewart ’95, Arts and Sciences, is a regional communications director at Teach For America.*



BY JOE WILENSKY

# Pining for Ezra: The other Cornell



**C**ornell, Wisconsin: It's a small city on the banks of the Chippewa River and, seemingly inexplicably, bears the name of Cornell University's founder. This community, 755 miles from Ithaca, N.Y., boasts the Cornell Theatre, a newspaper named the Cornell Courier and a portrait of Ezra Cornell hanging prominently in City Hall.

Dan Mansoor '79, MBA '80, a Wisconsin native, took a road trip to this Cornell earlier this year, convinced there was an unexplored story to tell about this small municipality's connection and significance to Cornell University, separated by hundreds of miles and 150 years. What he has been uncovering has led to a blog, "In Search of Ezra's Pines" <http://www.cornellpines.blogspot.com>, and an ongoing, unfolding project.

"Every online query, every e-mail, every phone call seems to open a new door and tells a new story," Mansoor says. "I'm having so much fun."

## Creating land-grant universities

The story begins in the seemingly unexciting world of legislation and land "scrip" certificates, starting with New York state's 1863 acceptance of the conditions of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862.

The Morrill Act, passed by Congress and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln, created land-grant colleges – eventually at least one in each U.S. state – that would teach agriculture and the mechanic arts (engineering). Each eligible state received 30,000 acres of federal land for each member of Congress the state had as of 1860. This land, or proceeds from its sale, was to be used to establish and fund these educational institutions.

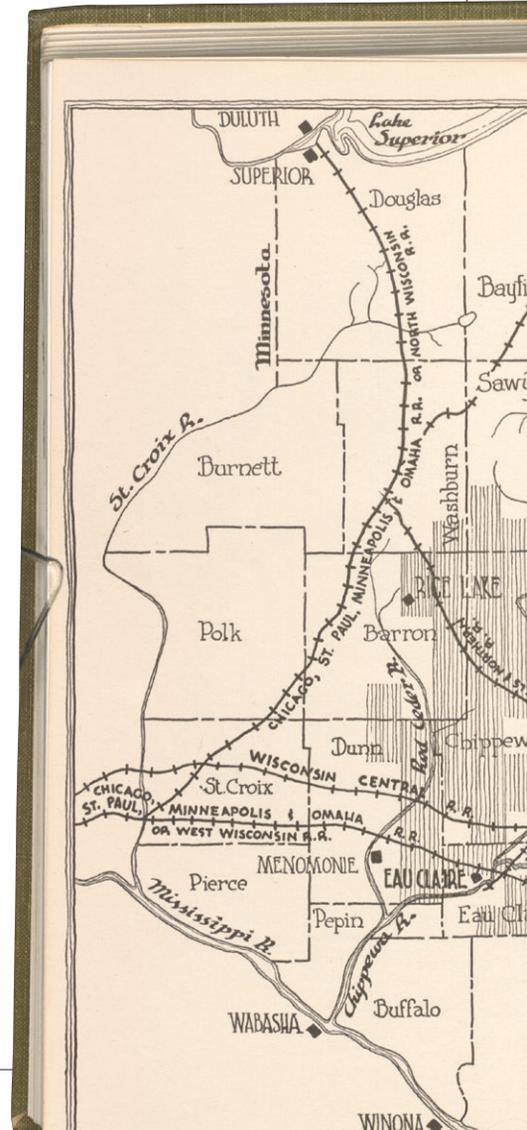
If there was not enough federal land within a state to meet that state's land-grant allocation, the state was issued scrip – essentially paper – that authorized the state to select available lands in other states to fund its land-grant institution.

For New York, then the most populous

state in the country, the Morrill Act called for 990,000 acres of federal land (as New York had 33 members of Congress) – this amounted to more than 1,500 square miles, an area larger than Rhode Island.

Meanwhile, Ezra Cornell had offered his farmland on Ithaca's East Hill as a site and \$500,000 of his personal fortune as an initial endowment for Cornell University, which was officially founded in 1865 by a New York State Senate bill that named the university as the state's land-grant institution.

As the federal government owned no federal land within the state's borders, and since states were prohibited from owning land within another state, Ezra Cornell agreed to purchase scrip for 500,000 acres at





ALL CORNELL WISCONSIN IMAGES PROVIDED

its fair market value (60 cents per acre) and selected valuable timberland in northern Wisconsin. Henry Sage, who succeeded Cornell as chairman of the board of trustees following Cornell's death in 1874, convinced the university's first president, Andrew Dickson White, and the restless trustees to refrain from selling the land for decades and to allow it to appreciate. When the books were closed on most of the sales by the early 1900s, the land and trees added more than \$5 million to the university's endowment fund. While most other states had sold their federal land allocation immediately for as little as 42 cents an acre, the peak price paid for Ezra's pines reached \$82 an acre. Some have described this as the most successful

land speculation deal in U.S. history. And, in an unusual footnote, Cornell University kept – and still owns – the mineral rights to much of this land.

### Enter Dan Mansoor

Mansoor, who runs a philanthropy advisory and nonprofit consulting firm in Cleveland, Ohio, married a Cornellian, Joyce Rothschild '80. His sister, Yarden, is a Class of 1974 alumna.

The Wisconsin connection is "a story that should be told," Mansoor says.

Mansoor initially learned about this part of the Cornell story when he read a paper on Cornell's land-grant origins by retired budget director Michael Whalen

(then in the university's Division of Planning and Budget), on Cornell's website. Mansoor's curiosity was piqued; he then discovered there was a city named Cornell.

Mansoor's blog begins with his first evening this past June in the remote town of 1,466, famous for being home to the world's only surviving pulpwood stacker, which ceased operations in 1972 but was key to Wisconsin's timber industry for decades beginning in the late 1800s. The town was originally named Brunet Falls but was later named in Ezra Cornell's honor (Ezra Cornell himself sketched out the first planned city map for this community, established on 2,000 acres of the original pineland investment).

"I think there is a remarkable amount of drama in the tale," Mansoor says of the many unfolding storylines he is following on his blog. "A young university near bankruptcy; a devastating fire (1871) that counts as a near miss; and mineral rights to the acreage still owned by Cornell University and, as of yet, unexplored."

As Mansoor states in his blog: "Like relatives aware of each other's existence but separated by [nearly] 1,000 miles and 150 years I'm asking, 'Is a meaningful reunion possible? Will we have anything in common? Will there be beer tents?'"

Mansoor hopes that the university and alumni will take an interest in this unfolding story especially considering several upcoming milestones: the city of Cornell's 100th birthday (2013) and the upcoming land-grant (2013) and university (2015) sesquicentennials.

Check out the blog, Mansoor says, and share your thoughts and questions. Then there's Cornell, Michigan ...

**Inset at left: Dan Mansoor '79, MBA '80. Left: The location of the tiny city of Cornell, Wis. labeled on a historical map depicting Cornell's land-grant acreage in that state in the late 1800s. The map appeared in the second edition (1964) of "The Wisconsin Pine Lands of Cornell University" (Cornell University Press, State Historical Society of Wisconsin) by Paul Gates.**



BY JENNIFER WHOLEY AND LINDA GLASER

# Art historian strives to rescue historic plaster cast collection

**S**troll through Goldwin Smith Hall and you will see the remnants of a once-proud plaster cast collection on the walls, in the halls and tucked away in classrooms. But while the Charioteer of Delphi graces a niche at the building's entrance and statues from Olympia's Temple of Zeus loom over visitors to advising, most of the collection has been haphazardly stored in a cramped warehouse near the Ithaca airport, relatively unknown and neglected for 30 years.

Now art historian Annetta Alexandridis is working to restore the cast collection, with help from a team of graduate and undergraduate students, the Department of Classics, community volunteers and the Cornell University Library.

"It is high time to return to this precious resource the attention and care it deserves," said Alexandridis, assistant professor of art history, during a March colloquium. "The primary goal of our project is to document the remains and to collect all relevant information into a database. We want to rescue what can be saved and put on display as much as possible."

The collection of 19th-century casts of ancient Grecian, Roman, Egyptian and medieval pieces was compiled in the 1890s with funds from trustee Henry Sage. Originally displayed as the Museum of Casts in McGraw Hall, the pieces were moved into Goldwin Smith's basement in 1906. In 1953 the collection was squeezed into the A.D. White House, and when the Johnson Museum opened, only a single cast – Selene's horse from the Parthenon pediment – was put on display.

Yet this collection had once been trumpeted by The New York Times as unparalleled in university museums, excelled only by Boston's Museum of Fine Arts.

But times and attitudes changed. Instead of being viewed as accessible models of classical sculpture and the human form, by the middle of the 20th century the casts were considered "fakes," secondhand copies of first-rate originals.

However, unlike Harvard, Yale and Princeton's collections, all of which were destroyed or given away, about half of Cornell's 613 casts remain.

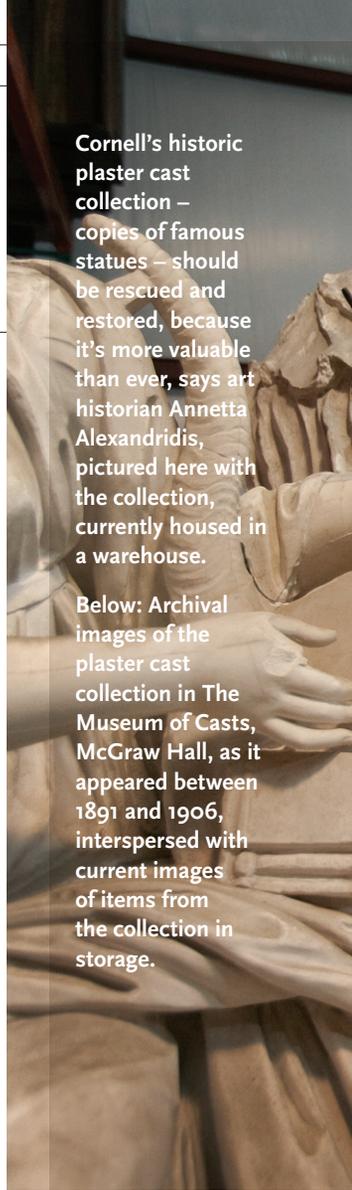
The pieces have once again become valuable, explained Alexandridis, because in the 120 years since the casts were created, many of the originals have been lost or substantially altered due to pollution, weather and sometimes misguided efforts at renovation. As a result, some of the casts now bear more information than the original, making the cast collection an invaluable tool for researchers.

The plaster cast restoration is part of a larger project that aims to re-evaluate several of Cornell's collections that "reproduce" antiquity, such as paper impressions of inscriptions, old photographs, lantern slides and casts of gems. Alexandridis will hold a workshop about classics collections during Homecoming Weekend, Sept. 24-25, called "Destroy the Copy." Funded by Cornell's Institute for European Studies, the conference will include participants from the United States, Japan, Australia and Europe.

And this year, students in Alexandridis' seminar "Reproducing Antiquity" will do more than study reproductions – they'll have hands-on opportunities to restore the plaster casts, and they'll help to develop an online guide to the casts on display. Conservator Kasia Maroney, who began

Cornell's historic plaster cast collection – copies of famous statues – should be rescued and restored, because it's more valuable than ever, says art historian Annetta Alexandridis, pictured here with the collection, currently housed in a warehouse.

Below: Archival images of the plaster cast collection in The Museum of Casts, McGraw Hall, as it appeared between 1891 and 1906, interspersed with current images of items from the collection in storage.



CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY/RAE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS





‘IT IS HIGH TIME TO RETURN TO THIS PRECIOUS RESOURCE THE ATTENTION AND CARE IT DESERVES.’

— ANNETTA ALEXANDRIDIS

restoration of the Delphi charioteer this past summer, will work with the students. They have been given space in the archaeology building on University Avenue for their work with the collection.

Alexandridis’ efforts with the collection will be partially supported this year by the Grants Program for Digital Collections in Arts and Sciences, which has provided more than \$12,000 in funding for digital collection development services and systems from the Cornell University Library.

Catalina Lupu ’10, who attended the March colloquium, said she was shocked to hear about the underutilized potential of the casts. “Discovering that [the collection] was so underused made me incensed,” Lupu said. “It would be nice if the cast collection could be restored and displayed somewhere.”

*Jennifer Wholey ’10 is a former writer intern for the Cornell Chronicle; Linda Glaser is a staff writer for the College of Arts and Sciences.*



CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY/RARE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS



CORNELL UNIVERSITY LIBRARY/RARE AND MANUSCRIPT COLLECTIONS

BY LINDA GLASER

# Linguist Harbert appears to have a trapdoor to Tolkien's Middle Earth



**N**ot many linguists go hunting with flintlock rifle and powder horn or know how to weave a throw rug. Fewer still can translate Old English kennings about swords from first-hand experience with blacksmithing.

In the 32 years he has been at Cornell, Wayne Harbert, professor of linguistics and director of undergraduate studies for the department, has published numerous works on Germanic and Celtic languages, as well as articles on Arabic and Arawak. He has also learned to repair fiddles and make hunting bows.

“What brought me to linguistics – and really the only connection between my profession and my hobbies – is an obsession with old, useless things,” says Harbert, who received his Ph.D. in Germanic studies in 1978 from the University of Illinois.

Harbert’s enthusiasm for his hobbies spills over as he displays his work: a forged metal spoon with a dramatically twisted handle; hand-crafted powder horns in two-color horn and polished wood; finely edged arrowheads made by flint knapping. Bunches of wool become thread as he demonstrates the hand-spindle he’s made, pointing out that it’s “perhaps the most universal of all inventions, being found in Neolithic excavations everywhere.”

In defense of his hobbies, Harbert says, “The more things you are involved in intellectually, the less precarious your sense of success. If I teach a class I’m not happy with or get a bad review for an article I’ve written, I have all these other things I can retreat to. I’m not so invested in my profession that my whole sense of self resides in it.”

Yet Harbert climbs up and down on a chair to fetch samples of his academic writing with the same enthusiasm he shows for his hobbies.

And he talks about language extinction with equal fervor. “You can’t work with Celtic languages for long without coming to

the realization that these languages are in deadly peril,” he says. In 2005 Harbert organized a conference, “Language and Poverty,” which brought together scholars from different disciplines studying minority language extinction and the relationship between language and economics. “These issues are not problems for which one discipline has all the answers,” explains Harbert.

Though Harbert insists that his hobbies and his academic world are distinct, examples abound of their interconnections. At the recent Ithaca Scottish Games and Celtic Festival, Harbert demonstrated his spinning wheel – while passing out what he calls “Gaelic propaganda,” cards listing basic Gaelic phrases.

And Harbert published a challenge to a translation of a term in the medieval German poem “Parzival” based on his knowledge of blacksmithing; he won a Welsh bard contest using “cynganedd,” the distinctive sound patterns of Welsh strict meter poetry; and as an active member of the Black Sheep Handspinners Guild, he has written about Gaulish inscriptions on spindle whorls.

(These spindles were given by boys to their sweethearts, and bear messages such as “pretty girl, give me beer!”)

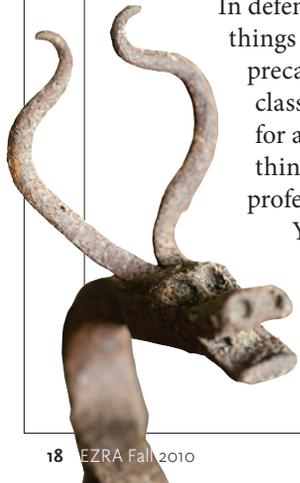
Harbert describes his class on the history of the English language as a celebration of language as a whole, including the culture in which it’s embedded. He encourages students to go far afield with their final projects and indulge the kind of insatiable curiosity Harbert himself demonstrates. He says the students are ingenious at coming up with topics, such as a translation of Lewis Carroll’s “Jabberwocky” into Old English.

With medieval studies graduate student Aaron Ralby ’10, Harbert recently experimented with building a medieval Scandinavian warp-weighted loom. Their authentic approach extended to using the loom in subfreezing temperature, as the Vikings would have done when weaving sails worth more than the ships themselves.

“I’m interested in primitive technologies of all sorts,” says Harbert, who also has his own forge and grows his own dye plants.



Wayne Harbert, professor of linguistics





BY GARY E. FRANK

## Donor's \$10 million gift will unleash canine genomics program in Vet College

**T**he College of Veterinary Medicine will soon become home to the world's first endowed canine genomics program, thanks to a gift of \$10 million from an anonymous donor.

As the largest single gift in the college's history, it will support investments in three areas: endowed professorships and faculty startups, DNA sequencing, and the DNA Bank, which is an archive of DNA and medical information that defines inherited diseases in dogs.

"To have a university leader step forward with a gift of such magnitude and purpose is an extraordinary statement of support," President David Skorton said in announcing the gift. "At Cornell and throughout higher education, resources to invest in faculty and new programs are scarce, which makes this gift all the more meaningful."

Research conducted through the program will further scientists' understanding of and ability to fight cancer and other diseases that attack animals and humans.

"The intersection of human and animal health is central to the fundamental understanding of the biological basis of disease," said Michael I. Kotlikoff, the Austin O. Hooey Dean of Veterinary Medicine. "This inspiring gift will have an enormous impact on both canine and human health, particularly through advancing the understanding of the way that our genetic makeup controls cancer susceptibility."

"Canine genomics involves the use of any genetic tool such as markers, mutation or tissue expression data at the molecular level," explained Professor Rory Todhunter, head of the medical genetics program and founder of the DNA Bank. "In our case, it means using all of those tools to uncover the basis of inherited diseases in dogs, and using genetics to diagnose and predict a dog's susceptibility to disease."

Faculty, alumni and stakeholders of the College of Veterinary Medicine identified the advancement of translational research – translating scientific discoveries into practical applications – as a strategic priority for the college in 2009. The initial investment from the gift will be used to conduct a national search for a tenure-track senior faculty member in statistical genomics to propel the canine genomics effort.

"Many of the diseases dogs are carrying are multigenic, meaning multiple genes are affected. We have the tools ... to look at their genomes, to look at the genetic differences between dogs," said John Schimenti, professor of genetics. "The big challenge comes from looking at all that genetic information and asking, 'Where in this huge genome are the specific genes and alterations that are responsible for the disease?' The answer is not straightforward; this requires a lot of statistical analysis."

Once the search for a biostatistician is complete, the college will begin recruiting for a second faculty position in cancer biology.

"With this gift, we will leverage the

information embedded in canine genetics – available after hundreds of years of selective breeding – for the benefit of animals and humans," said Kotlikoff. "We know that each breed possesses a unique and highly similar collection of genes, which confer susceptibility to certain diseases and constitute a stunning opportunity for gene association studies that cannot be performed in people. These investigations can be done noninvasively in dogs and will inform our understanding of the specific genes that result in susceptibility to some of our most serious diseases."



**Professor Rory Todhunter, head of the medical genetics program and founder of the DNA Bank, and Natalia Andrade '10 perform an orthopedic exam on Ben.**

PAULA PLATT/PROVIDED



RENDERING BY ESQO/PROVIDED

## CORNELL MOURNS BUSINESSMAN, PHILANTHROPIST PAUL MILSTEIN; BUILDING BEARING HIS NAME ON TRACK TO OPEN IN 2011

Real estate developer, philanthropist and Cornell benefactor Paul Milstein died Aug. 8 at his home in Manhattan at the age of 88.

Paul and his wife, Irma Milstein, made possible the new building on campus that will bear his name; Paul Milstein Hall is under construction for the College of Architecture, Art and Planning.

"Our hearts and thoughts are with the Milstein family during this very difficult time," President David Skorton said. "The Milsteins are among the university's most dedicated leaders and generous benefactors. Cornell would not be the same institution it is today without their engagement and support."

Read more at Chronicle Online at [www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Aug10/MilsteinObit.html](http://www.news.cornell.edu/stories/Aug10/MilsteinObit.html).

Milstein Hall will open next summer, connecting Sibley and Rand halls (artist's renderings pictured above and below). All the steel framing and the concrete roof are in place on the cantilevered, 47,000-square-foot building designed by Rem Koolhaas and the Office for Metropolitan Architecture. Concrete was scheduled to be poured in mid-September for the interior dome, part of a planned 275-seat auditorium/lecture hall. View the construction in progress at [aap.cornell.edu/milstein/multimedia/webcam.cfm](http://aap.cornell.edu/milstein/multimedia/webcam.cfm).



BY EMILY SANDERS HOPKINS

# Charles Dyson: Financier, philanthropist

**T**his spring, Cornell announced that its undergraduate business school would be named for Charles Dyson in honor of a \$25 million gift from the Dyson family. Who was Charles Dyson?

Born in New York City in 1909 to an English carpenter and his Irish wife, Dyson once noted that he'd inherited his father's English steadiness and his mother's Irish drive. That drive led him to work through high school as a caddy in Englewood, N.J., where he rubbed shoulders with doctors, lawyers and accountants, including the man who would give him his first real job as an accounting clerk for General Motors.

Dyson attended night school at what is now Pace University, studying accounting and business law, working days to help support his family. The experience, he later said, was "one long siege of working."

After college, Dyson shot up the ranks at Price Waterhouse, but in 1939, was recruited by the federal government to help organize the Lend-Lease program, which distributed more than \$50 billion in war material to allied nations. He was commissioned into the U.S. Army Air Corps and married his sweetheart, Margaret Macgregor, in 1941.

Without World War II, Dyson might have stayed in accounting. Instead, he served as a special consultant to the secretary of war, an architect of the International Monetary Fund for the treasury, and an Air Corps colonel who provided supply chain oversight in the European and African theaters during the war (although he was always stationed in Washington, D.C.). For his exemplary and varied wartime service, some of which was responsible for shaping monetary policy still in effect today, Dyson received a Distinguished Service Medal and was made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire.

The military, Dyson once said, "left the accounting profession as a second choice. I made up my mind I was going to go into business and do something else."

In 1954, after trying for many months to secure funding for what he thought was a simple concept, Charles Dyson finally garnered support – in the amount of \$4.6 million – from the First National Bank of Boston to undertake what became known as the leveraged buyout. This ingenious deal – the purchase of another company with borrowed funds and only \$8,000 of his own money – marked the launch of the Dyson Corp., one of the first holding corporations of its kind.

Around that same time, the Dysons found that they "were making more money than we expected," and thus founded the Dyson Foundation to organize and increase their already significant charitable giving. Asked why he started so early on a path of philanthropy, Dyson explained that he believed in tithing, and that he'd gotten the charity bug from his generous mother, who would "give the shirt off my father's back."



RENDERING BY ESQO/PROVIDED



At right, Dyson at his desk at Dyson-Kissner-Moran Corp., about 1994. Other images, clockwise from top left: A 6-month-old Charlie Dyson in early 1910 with his parents (Lawrence, left, and Lillian) and an uncle; Dyson in 1940 in the Air Corps; a late 1930s family photo picturing Dyson, at right, with his parents and sisters.

In 1957, Frank Kissner, a friend who'd served with Dyson in World War II, joined him as a business partner, followed 10 years later by John Moran.

"My father freely acknowledged that if Frank had not joined him or Margaret had not been coaching in the background, he would have gone broke," Charles and Margaret's youngest son, Peter Dyson, told Ezra. "His success is tied to Frank and Margaret."

The Dyson-Kissner-Moran Corp. would go on to become one of the largest private corporations in the United States and a pioneer in leveraged buyouts of businesses internationally. In 1996, *Forbes* called Dyson the "father of leveraged buyouts."

Dyson's service on various boards was legendary. At one time in the 1960s, he headed his corporation while serving on six boards. "I don't know how I did it, when I look back on it," he later mused. He served on the Rockefeller University Council and as a trustee of the Hospital for Special Surgery, Common Cause, Greer Children's Services, the Center for Defense Information, New York Law School, the American Ballet Theater and Metropolitan Opera. Speaking about a trustee's duty, Dyson once said: "I think a lot of people said they'd lend their name. I just think that you can't lend [only] your name; you lend your pocketbook."

As chairman of Pace's board, Dyson donated tens of millions of dollars (the university's college of arts and sciences bears his name) and contributed considerable organizational leadership, acting as a primary fundraiser and helping to guide the school's transition from a technical institute into a college and then a university.

In 1969 he delivered a lightning-rod speech at Pace titled "Who's in Charge Here?" about America's involvement in the Vietnam War and what he viewed as the unseemly power of the "military-industrial complex."

Dyson's outspoken anti-war stance may have helped to place him, a lifelong Republican, at No. 5 on Richard Nixon's infamous "enemies list," which was leaked to the press and the U.S. Senate in 1973. Joining Dyson on the list were reporter Daniel Schorr and actor Paul Newman.

"I think it was an endorsement for good standards to be on the enemies list," Dyson quipped at the time.

A supremely confident man whose rise in American life, business and philanthropy was marked by relentless hard work, steadiness and a no-nonsense demeanor, Dyson died at age 87 in 1997. Today, the corporation he founded is headed by his son Robert. And his charitable foundation grants millions each year, primarily to safety net programs for people living in the Hudson Valley of New York state.

## THE DYSON FAMILY AND CORNELL

This June, the Dyson family and Charles Dyson's former business partner John Moran announced a gift of \$25 million to create the Charles S. Dyson School of Applied Economics and Management in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

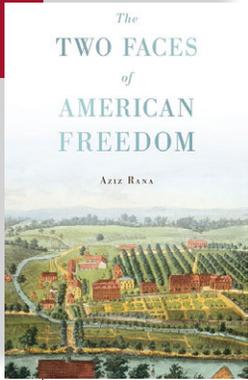
The gift is just the latest in three decades of generous funding from the Dysons, who include Cornell trustee emeritus Robert Dyson, MBA '74; Peter

Dyson, a member of the AEM Advisory Council; John Dyson '65, a Cornell trustee emeritus, and their sister, the late Anne Dyson, who died in 2000. Their gifts and commitments to Cornell total nearly \$65 million, including gifts to create professorships at the Johnson School, CALS and Weill Cornell Medical College, as well as funding for building construction and numerous scholarships.



# Reviving colonial ideals, wisdom of bees and a notorious New York murder

## Freedom on two sides of a coin



“The Two Faces of American Freedom” (Harvard University Press, 2010) by Aziz Rana, assistant professor of law, reinterprets the American political tradition from the colonial period to modern times, placing issues of race relations, immigration and presidentialism in the context of shifting notions of empire and citizenship.

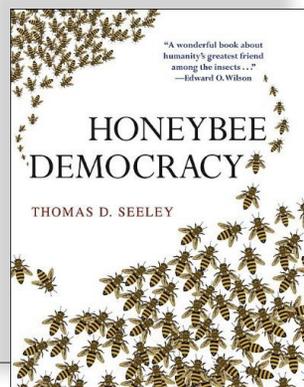
U.S. citizens today are increasingly insulated from everyday decision-making, Rana says – even while the United States enjoys tremendous military and economic power. This was not always the case.

America, Rana argues, began as a settler society grounded in an ideal of freedom as the exercise of continuous self-rule – one that joined direct political participation with economic independence. However, this vision of freedom was politically bound to the subordination of marginalized groups, especially slaves, Native Americans and women. These practices of liberty and exclusion were not separate currents, but rather two sides of the same coin, he argues.

By the mid-20th century, a new framework presented national and economic security as society’s guiding commitments and nurtured a continual extension of America’s global reach. In the book, Rana envisions a democratic society that revives settler ideals, but combines them with meaningful inclusion for those at the margins of American life.

## A lesson from the bees: Rely on collective wisdom

Honeybees make decisions collectively – and democratically. Every year, faced with the life-or-death problem of choosing and traveling to a new home, honeybees engage in collective fact-finding, vigorous debate and consensus building. In fact, as animal behaviorist and neurobiology and behavior professor Thomas Seeley reveals in “Honeybee Democracy” (Princeton University Press, 2010), these incredible insects have much to teach us when it comes to collective wisdom and effective decision-making.



Each year, as a bee colony becomes overcrowded, a third of the hive rears a new queen, while the rest departs with the old queen to produce a daughter colony. Seeley describes how honeybees evaluate potential nest sites, advertise their discoveries to one another, engage in open deliberation, choose a final site and navigate together – as a swirling cloud of bees – to their new home. Seeley ponders how evolution has honed the decision-making methods of honeybees over millions of years, and points out similarities between how bee swarms and primate brains process information.

## Gilded age is backdrop of sordid true-crime tale

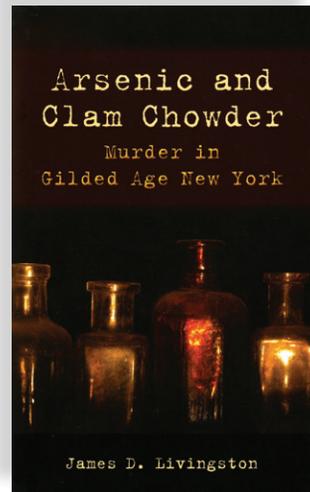
In “Arsenic and Clam Chowder: Murder in Gilded Age New York” (State University of New York Press, Albany, 2010),

James D. Livingston ’52 recounts the sensational 1896 murder trial of Mary Alice Livingston, a member of one of the most prestigious families in New York (and a distant cousin of the author), who was accused of murdering her mother.

The bizarre instrument of death, an arsenic-laced pail of clam chowder, had been delivered to the victim by her 10-year-old granddaughter, and Livingston was arrested in her mourning clothes immediately after her mother’s funeral. In addition to being the mother of four

out-of-wedlock children, the last born in prison while she was awaiting trial, Livingston faced the possibility of being the first woman to be executed in New York’s newfangled electric chair, and all these lurid details made her arrest and trial the central focus of an all-out circulation war then under way between Joseph Pulitzer’s World and Randolph Hearst’s Journal.

The story is set in Manhattan in the 1890s, with the arrival of skyscrapers, automobiles, motion pictures and other modern marvels which transformed urban life with breathtaking speed, amid the political battles of reformers against vice, police corruption and Tammany Hall. The story also addresses a number of social and legal issues, including capital punishment, equal rights for women, sexual mores, inheritance laws in regard to murder, gender bias of juries and the meaning of “beyond a reasonable doubt.”



## Animals as literary stand-ins for humanity's questions

In 18th-century England, the encounter between humans and other animals took a singular turn with the discovery of the great apes and the rise of bourgeois pet keeping. These historical changes created a new cultural and intellectual context to better understand animals, and the role of nonhuman animals in imaginative literature from that period to the present day.

In "Homeless Dogs and Melancholy Apes: Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination" (Cornell University Press, 2010), Laura Brown, the John Wendell Anderson Professor of English and vice provost for undergraduate education, examines how the literary works of the 18th century use animal-kind to bring abstract

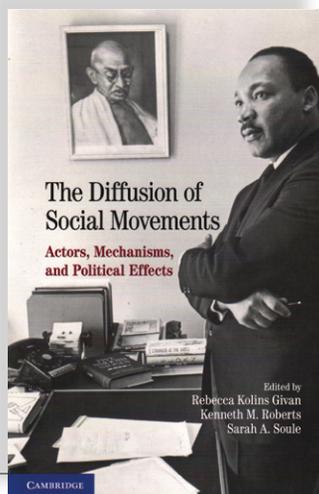
philosophical, ontological and metaphysical questions into the realm of everyday experience, affording a uniquely flexible perspective on difference, hierarchy, intimacy, diversity and transcendence. Among the authors whose work she discusses are: Frances Burney, Jonathan Swift, Mary Shelley, Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Paul Auster, who brings her analysis up to the present day.

## Examination of how social movements spread

It is widely recognized that social movements may spread – or "diffuse" – from one site to another. This diffusion, however, is a complex and multidimensional process that involves different actors, networks and mechanisms.

This complexity has spawned a large body of literature on the diffusion process. The new book, "The Diffusion of Social Movements: Actors, Mechanisms, and Political Effects" (Cambridge University Press, 2010) edited by ILR School assistant professor Rebecca Givan, government professor Kenneth Roberts and former Cornell professor Sarah Soule, however, is one of the most comprehensive looks at the big picture.

Roberts, the Robert S. Harrison Director of the Institute for the Social Sciences, brings together Cornell social scientists from various disciplines who might not otherwise meet. Givan is a former ISS fellow.



### HOMELESS DOGS AND MELANCHOLY APES

Humans and Other Animals in the Modern Literary Imagination



LAURA BROWN

WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

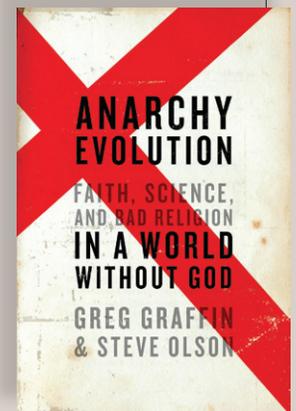


## Punk singer Graffin, with a Cornell Ph.D., examines evolution, faith

Many people know Greg Graffin as the lead singer and songwriter of the punk band Bad Religion (above) but not as many know that he also received a Ph.D. from Cornell (2003, zoology) and that he teaches evolution at the University of California-Los Angeles. In "Anarchy Evolution: Faith, Science and Bad Religion in a World Without God" (HarperCollins, 2010), Graffin and co-author science writer Steve Olson argue that art and science have a deep connection. As an adolescent growing up when "drugs, sex and trouble could be had on any given night," Graffin discovered that the study of evolution provided a framework through which he could make sense of the world.

He describes his coming of age as an artist and the development of his worldview on questions involving God, science and human existence, including a discussion on the long-standing debate about atheism and the human condition.

As part of research for his Ph.D. dissertation, "Monism, Atheism and the Naturalist Worldview: Perspectives From Evolutionary Biology," Graffin asked 149 prominent evolutionary biologists whether they believed in God; 130 answered no, but only a handful responded that they considered science and religion to be incompatible.



BY SUSAN S. LANG

# Climbers scale redwoods in the name of seed science

**F**ive instructors from the Cornell Tree Climbing Institute scaled some of the largest trees in the world in

June to gather seed cones for the University of California-Berkeley's Center for Forestry.

These skilled instructors ascended into the treetops of four giant sequoia trees in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains that date back more than 2,000 years.

The crew's primary objective was to collaborate with the seed collection program at the University of California-Berkeley. The seeds are stored in state-sponsored seed banks that harbor the genetic legacy of California's old-growth forests.

The Cornell group, which also included three Cornell students, gathered 20 bushels of seed cones from the canopy of the massive trees to contribute to the collection.

Giant sequoias grow between the elevations of 4,000 to 7,000 feet on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and can grow up to 310 feet tall and have trunks some 30 feet in diameter. The Cornell instructors climbed into a specimen that measured 297 feet tall and featured an excellent view over the San Joaquin Valley, said senior climbing instructor Dave Katz.

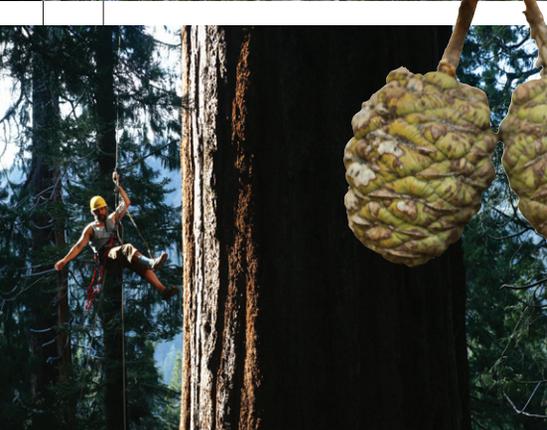
Cornell's tree climbers are no strangers to heights. "Hanging from ropes in a tree is second nature to me now," says Katz, who helped found the Cornell Tree Climbing Institute in 2005. Since then, Cornell Outdoor Education has been teaching university students and community members to scale the local trees of Tompkins County. "After spending countless days in the canopies of central New York, I did some field research in Costa Rica and thought, 'We have to run a course here!'" says Katz. This past January, he led the fifth annual Costa Rica tree climbing course for Cornell, which offered expedition-style learning experiences, the challenge of large trees, unique wildlife and an opportunity for cultural immersion.



**Above and at left:** In June, instructors from the Cornell Tree Climbing Institute scaled giant sequoia trees in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains that date to before the birth of Christ to gather seed cones for the University of California-Berkeley's Center for Forestry.



PHOTOS BY JAKE RUDIN AND MARK HOLTON/PROVIDED



**Inset, above right:** A closer look at the seed cones the climbers collected.

After climbing the trees of temperate and tropical forests, Katz was excited to have the opportunity to climb some of the tallest trees in the world.

"Everything here is massive," Katz says, noting that the crew brought 2,000 feet of rope for the job. "We were all just left in awe by the magnitude of these sequoias."

The Cornell Tree Climbing Institute is part of Cornell Outdoor Education. Its mission is to promote safe and environmentally responsible tree climbing techniques for recreation, education and research. It offers tree-climbing courses for ages 8 and up (younger children may be taught via private instruction).

The institute also publishes a tree climbing manual and offers instruction videos on recreational tree climbing gear and techniques online at [www.coe.cornell.edu](http://www.coe.cornell.edu) under "Tree Climbing."

# Living and learning for the long haul

**K**lyer Wilkins '11 considers himself both a religious person and an analytical thinker. The two characteristics haven't always mixed. "One of the biggest challenges for me has been reconciling religion and science," says the human development major.

A book club at Alice Cook House, where Wilkins lives, changed that.

Undergraduates, professors and graduate students had gathered last year to discuss the book "Your Inner Fish: A Journey Into the 3.5-Billion-Year History of the Human Body." Naturally the evolution-creationism debate came up.

Wilkins remembers a professor pointing out that the two approaches attempt to answer different questions. Evolution tries to explain how we got here; religion explores why. "I thought, 'Wow, I never considered that,'" Wilkins says. "For me, it made perfect sense."

It's one example of how the impact of the West Campus experience may reverberate long after graduation. "[The students] are stretched, expanded and formed in ways that they wouldn't be otherwise," says Scott MacDonald, new professor-dean of Hans Bethe House, professor and chair of philosophy and the Norma K. Regan Professor in Christian Studies.

Each of the five West Campus houses expose sophomores, juniors and seniors to a variety of people, from 360 fellow students to six graduate resident fellows and visitors – often public figures like Janet Reno '60 and John Cleese – who occupy the guest suite. "All these experiences make students much more ready for the real world when they leave," says André Dhondt, new professor-dean of Alice Cook House and the Edwin H. Morgens Professor of Ornithology.

He and MacDonald both have plans to foster more of those experiences. Dhondt will invite nonresident house fellows (primarily faculty members) to come to weekly house dinners 30 minutes early, so that students can get to know them over a meal, he says. MacDonald wants to better integrate students into the Ithaca community, perhaps through a house project that will aid a local nonprofit.

These interactions can have an academic benefit. Wilkins diverged then returned to his goal of becoming a doctor thanks to talks with graduate students living at Alice Cook House, he says. "You're more confident in your decision because you've explored."

Other interactions can have a more practical component, MacDonald says. "If you have a general staying [in the guest suite], there will be discussions about politics, the nation and international relations, so we make our students better citizens by exposing them to that."



Wilkins learned to compromise by participating in the Alice Cook House council, which organized activities from Haiti relief projects to day trips to New York City and a semester-long West Campus Olympics. "It forces you to consider other people's perspectives, especially since you interact with these people on a daily basis," he says. That skill easily translates to many aspects of post collegiate life, Dhondt says. "[House council] trains people to be leaders – how to get things done, organize others, have different ideas and still find a solution."

Just as important are what MacDonald calls "life-building moments" that can change a young person's path for many years to come. "For me, it was discovering jazz music, seeing Monet's 'Water Lilies' for the first time," he says. "I tell my advisees, life is a long haul and you should be gathering the tools that are going to make you interesting over time. Those aren't necessarily the things that are going to get you the first job or the first paycheck."

Kayla Wilcox '12, an ILR major, has found one of those moments in ballroom dance. It's an expensive passion, so she was gratified last year when Alice Cook House funded the Cornell team's participation in a competition. "The support of your dreams, however cliché that sounds, is something that the West Campus system does for you. They're really open to helping you get personal fulfillment," Wilcox says.



**Professor André Dhondt, right, is the new house professor-dean of Alice Cook House; Professor Scott MacDonald is the house professor-dean of Hans Bethe House.**



Ryan McClay '03 carries the U.S. flag onto the field as part of Team USA at the 2010 Federation of International Lacrosse World Championships in July in Manchester, England. McClay was chosen to carry the flag because his daughter, Lily, had just been born (McClay missed the birth due to the championships; his wife is Laura Barndt McClay '03).

BY JULIE GRECO

## Four generations of Cornell lacrosse represented at world championships

**T**his summer, most sports fans worldwide were focused on one event – the FIFA World Cup – an international event held once every four years and considered to be the largest and most viewed sporting event in the world.

But it was a quadrennial world championship of a different kind with much less fanfare and very little television coverage that held the interest of many Cornell Big Red fans: the 2010 Federation of International Lacrosse (FIL) World Championships, held July 16-24 in Manchester, England. There, the Big Red was well represented, with nine individuals with Cornell ties.

Brad Kamedulski '10, Scott Lee '02, Ryan McClay '03 and Max Seibald '10, as well as incoming freshman Sten Jernudd, all participated. Joining them in England were John Phillips '58, Mike French '76 and Howie Borkan '81, as well as former Big Red men's lacrosse coach Richie Moran.

With so many Cornellians in one place, the world championships served as a mini-reunion of sorts, as well as an opportunity to welcome Jernudd to the Cornell lacrosse family.

Jernudd, whose father is a Swedish immigrant, holds dual citizenship and finished the tournament as Sweden's leading scorer with 20 goals and six

assists. For his efforts, he was named to the All-Presidents Team as one of the top players in the tournament from a team that did not advance to the medal round.

"The tournament was a great opportunity to meet some Cornell alumni and members of the Cornell lacrosse family whom I hadn't met before," says Jernudd. "I spent a lot of time with Brad [Kamedulski], and I also met his family. I also met Mr. French, who was hilarious, and Coach Moran was also very kind to me, even as his Irish team beat us very soundly."

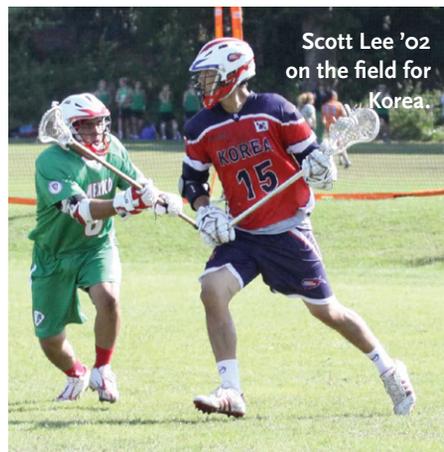
While Jernudd had a breakout performance and got to enjoy the company of many Big Red faithful, he



Sten Jernudd '14 on the field for Sweden.



Brad Kamedulski '10 (No. 25) playing for Team Poland.



Scott Lee '02 on the field for Korea.

was not the only Cornellian to enjoy great success there.

McClay and Seibald won the gold medal with Team USA and were both named to the all-world team following the tournament. The gold medal was the second for McClay, who missed the birth of his first child, Lily, to participate in the 2010 games, while the championship was the first one ever for Seibald.

“My wife and I were in denial that the baby would come while I was away,” says McClay. “Lily came 10 days early, and when she did, it was a rollercoaster of emotions. From the lowest of lows – realizing I was going to miss the birth – to the highest of highs – when she came and my wife, Laura [Barndt '03], and she were both healthy.

“After she was delivered, the thought of not coming home with the gold medal never crossed my mind. I had full confidence that we would get it done and bring back the gold.”

French, who serves as a consultant to the Canadian Lacrosse Association, watched his team earn the silver medal at the championships, while Moran, president of the Irish Lacrosse Association, saw his squad finish ninth.

Lee, whose parents are from Korea, participate in his second World Championships as one of three non-passport holders on the South Korean team.

“I don’t know the exact international rules, but our team is allowed a few players who are not native passport holders but are of Korean descent,” explains Lee. “In Korea, the only way to get a passport is to serve in the military.”

On the other hand, Kamedulski, whose grandfather, Eugene, was a Polish war hero fighting for the Allies

‘MY WIFE AND I WERE IN DENIAL THAT THE BABY WOULD COME WHILE I WAS AWAY.’

— RYAN McCLAY '03, WHOSE DAUGHTER WAS BORN DURING THE CHAMPIONSHIPS

in World War II before immigrating to the United States in 1954, acquired dual citizenship this spring and was one of nine Americans on Poland’s first-ever national lacrosse team.

Finally, Phillips, whose sons Andy

'84 and J.D. '83 both played lacrosse for Cornell, and his wife, Sallie '59, were presented with the Federation of International Lacrosse Development Committee Award. Phillips serves as the financial secretary of the FIL and as chairman of the Tournament Awards Committee.

“It was a tremendous experience with four decades of Cornell lacrosse represented in Manchester,” says Borkan, who is chairman of the U.S. Men’s National Teams Committee. “Watching 30 countries play lacrosse over the course of 10 days was extremely exciting, and sharing the experience with so many Cornellians, not to mention the U.S.A. recapturing the title, made the trip extra special.”



From left: Jernudd and Kamedulski pose with former Big Red lacrosse coach Richie Moran, Mike French '76 and John Phillips '58.



## CAMPUS-TO-CAMPUS BUS HAS A NEW LOOK

The luxury coaches that make up Cornell's Campus-to-Campus Executive Coach Service are sporting a new look – four of the buses are illustrated with a photographic montage of the Ithaca campus and the Brooklyn Bridge, the Cornell insignia, Campus-to-Campus logo branding and Cornell's Web address. The illustration was designed by University

Photography and Cornell's Office of Online Solutions and Publications.

"There has been a very positive response to the [illustrations] – the drivers have noticed a lot of heads turning, a lot of positive comments," says David Lieb '89, MPS '06, associate director for transportation. "They did a great job."

The express route, which makes 14

round trips a week, has three stops on the Ithaca campus, with stops at The Cornell Club- New York and Weill Cornell Medical College in Manhattan. The service has carried more than 90,000 passengers in its first six years – 30,000 in just the last fiscal year alone.

Visit [www.c2cbus.com](http://www.c2cbus.com) for schedules and more information.



ALEX KUDRAVTSEV/PROVIDED

## SCAVENGERS HUNT IN NOOKS AND CRANNIES ON GOVERNORS ISLAND

On July 24, more than 260 people, representing 94 teams, scrambled around Governors Island nooks and crannies in a Cornell University Cooperative Extension-New York City (CUCE-NYC)-organized outdoor educational scavenger hunt.

The activity was designed to give the participants an appreciation of the island's natural beauty and history and its historic district, which remains relatively unchanged from its rich past of 19th-century military forts, stately homes and a parade ground.

The scavenger hunt, now in its fourth year, was organized by CUCE-NYC's Urban Environment Program, in conjunction with the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance's City of Water Day festival.

In addition to CUCE-NYC staff, several Cornell graduate students (including Ryan De Souza and Christine Maskell, in red shirts, at right) and alumni volunteered at the events.

## A BUSY FALL FOR THE CORNELL CLUB-NEW YORK

The Cornell Club-New York is finalizing a busy fall calendar, with more than 30 events scheduled for members and their guests.

Highlights include a young alumni dinner series, a Cornell-themed book club, a guest chef dinner, tours of the Brooklyn Bridge and Gracie Mansion, 17 networking events, the Sy Katz '31 Parade and Cornell/Columbia post-football game party, and the club's annual Thanksgiving dinner.

The Cornell Club is celebrating its 20th anniversary in its current location at 6 E. 44th St. in Manhattan. The 14-story clubhouse features guest rooms, dining rooms, banquet facilities, a business center, library, lounge, a health and fitness center, and more.

For more information about club-related events or the club itself, go to [www.cornellclubnyc.com](http://www.cornellclubnyc.com).



# How I succeeded in not becoming a meteorologist

On Graduation Day 2008, earth and atmospheric sciences graduates chose recipients for “superlative” awards. Class genius Alli Wing got “Most Likely to Succeed.” Current University of Miami graduate student Pat Meyers won “Most Likely to End Up in a Hurricane-Hunting Plane.” My buddy Nick Bannin, today a TV weatherman, was, simply, “Funniest.”

I was voted “Most Likely to Succeed ... in Something Other Than Meteorology.”

At first, I was kind of insulted. But eventually, I became more proud of that award than any other I received during my time at Cornell. Since that day, I’ve come to realize that throwing your major out the window at the last minute may not be easy, but sometimes it ends up being the best course of action.

I came to Cornell as an earth and atmospheric sciences major knowing I’d get a great education. My goal was simple: I wanted to be a weatherman who actually understood the weather. But more important, I also knew Cornell would give me “real world” connections I could use to gain experience as an undergraduate and lay the groundwork for life after graduation.

So during my time as an undergrad, I relentlessly e-mailed weathercasters around the Northeast and asked them if they had any work I could help them out with. Most didn’t respond. Some were happy to give career advice. One of them, Jeff Berardelli ’97, offered me an internship at CBS-2 in New York City. That internship, along with on-air work at a TV station in Binghamton, showed me that I was on to something important: I liked broadcasting and could see myself working in the field for a long time.

But while all that off-campus experience allowed me to realize that broadcasting was my field, what turned out to be the most meaningful practice for post-college life happened *on* campus.

Cornell’s radio station, WVBR-FM, is different from most other college radio stations because it’s commercial and independent from the university yet run completely by college students. So as program director for the station, I was responsible for creating a music format that our salespeople could package and sell to local businesses. I had to train and evaluate DJs, including evaluating two professionals who had been on the air in Ithaca for a combined 40 years. It gave me the experience of running a real station, but with the social benefits of being in a college organization.

Now, usually the “job search” part of this story starts out with, “In these tough times ...” But come on. I chose to work in media. All times are tough in a field where people are routinely fired because of their hair color. So my senior year, when it came time to apply for a job, I applied to everything. *Morning*

MARC HAGOPIAN/PROVIDED



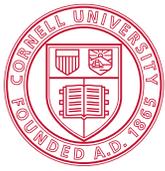
Jordan Gremlı '08 at Sirius XM Satellite Radio in Manhattan, where he now works as a music programmer.

*weatherman in Walla Walla, Washington. I hear they have great wine there! Weekend night producer in Greenville, North Carolina. Isn’t that kind of near a beach? Sure!*

The important thing, I learned, was to be flexible. Maybe my first job wasn’t going to be in a perfect location, or bring me tremendous wealth, or set me off on a tracked career path that I’d still be following 40 years from now. Because I’d had so much experience during my time as an undergrad, I knew that my field just didn’t work that way. But I also knew that working at a tiny radio station in Ithaca was just as much fun as working at a huge TV station in New York City. And arming myself with knowledge from all corners of my field allowed me to search for a job without worrying whether or not it was exactly what I set out to do when I first arrived at Cornell.

It was in that mindset that I was introduced to Steve Blatter, senior vice president and general manager for music programming at Sirius XM Satellite Radio and a former WVBR program director. He knew firsthand how the experience of running WVBR prepares you for a career in media. So when he offered me a job as a music programmer at Sirius XM on my last day of classes at Cornell, he knew I was ready for the job. And because of my work at WVBR, I was prepared to take a job that was completely different from what I had studied as an undergrad. Now, I schedule the music for two music channels and have a three-hour weekly on-air show, and I use what I learned at WVBR every single day.

So far my classmates have been dead on. I’m succeeding – in something other than meteorology.



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