

# the grinnell magazine

fall 2024



Celebrating **Edith Renfrow Smith** and some of the many Black women who walk in her footsteps



## FEATURES



### 6 Leading by Inspiration

Edith Renfrow Smith's indomitable spirit helped her to become Grinnell's first Black woman graduate, breaking new ground for the almost 650 Black women who have followed in her footsteps. Meet a few of the individuals who exemplify Renfrow Smith's commitment to succeed despite the odds.

by Jacqueline Hartling Stolze



### 12 Falling into Place

Professors Albert Lacson and Cori Jakubiak envisioned a course that would help students engage with place. What they and their students found were connections with people from the town through a shared history and place.

by Jacqueline Hartling Stolze

### 20 Pioneer Capital Investments

Some of Grinnell's financially savvy students surveyed their classmates to find out what they knew about the College's endowment. The results challenged a few assumptions and shed light on what today's students think about the endowment's operation and purpose.

by Ellen de Graffenreid



## DEPARTMENTS

- 2** President's Message
- 3** Campus News
- 26** Then and Now
- 28** Authors and Artists
- 30** Giving
- 33** Classnotes
- 42** In Memoriam
- 49** Quintessential Grinnell

### FEATURED PHOTOS

**Justin Hayworth: Cover (top image), pages 2, 3, 5-6, 12-16, 20, 25-26, 49, back cover**

**Contributed: Cover (bottom images), pages 8-11**

**Grinnell Archives: Page 27**

## The Grinnell Magazine

Fall 2024  
Volume 57 Number 1

### **Managing Editor**

Linda Hirsch

### **Senior Designer**

LeaAnn Henry

### **Classnotes Editor**

Erica Hoth  
classnotes@grinnell.edu

### **Contributors**

Ellen de Graffenreid, Melanie Drake '92, Joe Engleman '14, Justin Hayworth, Jeremy Shapiro, Anne Stein '84, Jacqueline Hartling Stolze, Mattia Wells, Bruce Yang

### **Office of Communications and Marketing**

Ellen de Graffenreid  
Vice President of Communications and Marketing

magazine@grinnell.edu

© Grinnell College, 2024

### **Mission Statement**

*Grinnell Magazine* is published three times a year by the Office of Communications and Marketing. Contents are selected to demonstrate a range of opinions and activities on campus and provide news about the College and its alumni. Views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official Grinnell College policy.

### **POSTMASTER**

Send address changes to:  
*Grinnell Magazine*  
821 – 5th Ave., Suite 300  
Grinnell, IA 50112-1690

**To update your address or other information, email [update@grinnell.edu](mailto:update@grinnell.edu)**

## A Message from President Anne F. Harris

# Legacy, Inspiration, and Celebration

The weekend of September 28 brought enduring joy in the heartfelt celebration honoring **Edith Renfrow Smith '37, DHL '19**, the first Black alumna of Grinnell College and an inspirational leader in education and civic engagement. Students, faculty, staff, community members, dignitaries, and family members gathered to dedicate Renfrow Hall, including the Katherine Howell Weingart '61 Civic Innovation Pavilion, on a warm and sunny Saturday, following two days of events.

It was a profound honor to host Mrs. Renfrow Smith, who celebrated her 110th birthday this past summer, and her extended family in Grinnell, along with Katherine Weingart's brother, **Steve Howell '63**. Team Renfrow, a group of students and researchers led by **Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant**, the Louise R. Noun Chair in Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies, shared a rich history of the Renfrow family through multiple exhibitions and events.

So many moments in the weekend were meaningful, but my memories will always center on our guest of honor's joy in the weekend, as she was celebrated by a community parade that lined the streets of Grinnell for two miles with schoolchildren cheering her return, by a grand dinner with speeches in her honor, and a celebratory family lunch that became a reunion gathering generations from all over the country. Many live in the light of Mrs. Renfrow Smith's legacy. In this issue, you'll read about the legacy of some of the other Black alumnae whose Grinnell education launched them into careers and lives of meaning that follow on Mrs. Edith Renfrow Smith's example as the first.

Mrs. Renfrow Smith is a true Grinnellian, both in her love of the town and the College, despite imperfections and struggles. This history is further explored in the article about a class called Historical Landscapes of Grinnell, where students researched and explored places in Grinnell and completed digital



storytelling projects that delve deeper into our experiences of this place, whether for four years or over a lifetime.

In another exploration of legacy, Pioneer Capital Investments, a student organization for those interested in the world of financial markets, have expanded their scope beyond investing to peer education. Their curiosity drove them to explore current students' understanding and thoughts about the Grinnell College endowment. The goal of the endowment is to financially support Grinnell's mission by preserving and prudently growing its value across generations. The gap between students' perceptions of the endowment and its actuality warrants further exploration and discussion among Grinnellians.

**Karmi Mattson '97** honors exploration and discussion among alumni and involvement in the life of the College through a generous gift to name the Mattson Garden at the Hannah Alumni House for alumni and volunteers to gather while in Grinnell. Her long history of volunteer service has brought her to campus frequently, and she notes that an outdoor gathering space for alumni will foster connection and joy. As a former class agent and member of Alumni Council who has provided ongoing philanthropic support to Grinnell, Karmi's gift demonstrates how giving can directly impact how others experience the College.

At Grinnell, we truly stand in the light of the legacy of alumni like Mrs. Edith Renfrow Smith and of every alum or donor whose support has empowered their belief that this College in the middle of Iowa matters greatly and is a worthwhile endeavor always. Year after year, students come here to learn, achieve, explore, discover, collaborate, be joyous, and grow, and finally "Go Forth Grinnellian" to make a positive impact on the world. That's a legacy to be proud of. 🍷



CELEBRATION

**Renfrow Hall Dedication**

Renfrow Hall was dedicated in honor of **Edith Renfrow Smith '37, DHL '19**, during a weekend of events in late September, which celebrated her inspiring life of achievement, service, and generosity. Renfrow Hall, located at 1033 Broad Street in downtown Grinnell, will serve as a home for students committed to building a stronger, more engaged community.

During the dedication ceremony, **President Anne F. Harris** said, "The idea for Renfrow Hall came to life by aiming to create spaces where College and community connect, where coalition can be built, where individuals can come to find a place of agency and belonging."

Renfrow Smith, who celebrated her 110th birthday in July, is Grinnell College's first Black woman graduate, its oldest living

alum, an Iowa African American Hall of Fame member, and a Grinnell High School Hall of Fame inductee.

Visitors were able to explore Renfrow Hall as well as the Civic Innovation Pavilion within the hall, which is named in honor of **Katherine Howell Weingart '61**. Katherine's brother, **Steve Howell '63**, helped to designate a gift to Grinnell to help fund the pavilion on her behalf. The public pavilion on the first floor of the south tower is dedicated to providing space for dialogue, exchange, problem-solving, and collaborative brainstorming with the community.

Another highlight of the ceremonies was the display of a series of banners honoring 25 Black alumnae, which lined the the dedication area as a tribute to the legacy Renfrow Smith has forged at Grinnell. Several of the women featured on the banners attended the dedication.





PHILANTHROPY

**\$200,000 Grant Award from the Carver Trust**

Grinnell College has been awarded a generous grant of \$200,000 from the Roy J. Carver Charitable Trust that will significantly bolster infrastructure improvements at the Conard Environmental Research Area (CERA). The funding will support several key projects at CERA, including renovation of residential space attached to CERA’s Graham Lab (pictured above), which will enable the College to host visiting scholars, writers, and artists, fostering collaborative research and creative exchange in an inspiring natural setting. The Carver Trust supports biomedical and scientific research, scholarships, and programs addressing the educational and recreational needs of youth.



ENDOWMENT EDUCATION

**Phonecast Sheds Light on the College’s Endowment**

President **Anne F. Harris** and Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer **Germaine Gross** joined more than 1,300 alumni on a Sept. 9 phonecast, moderated by Alumni Council member **Grisel Hernandez ’17**, to discuss the ins and outs of Grinnell College’s endowment.

The conversation began with an overview of the College’s annual budget, defined how the endowment works, sought to address misconceptions about the endowment, and concluded with a wide-ranging question and answer period open to everyone on the call. A recording of the phonecast is available at [alumni.grinnell.edu/endowmentcall](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/endowmentcall).

HONOREES

**Athletic Hall of Fame Inductees**

A new class of 10 alums have been inducted into the Grinnell College Athletic Hall of Fame, which was created in 1995 to recognize the achievements of the College’s most accomplished student-athletes, coaches, and administrators. This year marked the 10th induction ceremony. There are now 126 Hall-of-Famers.

Seven of the new inductees took part in ceremonies on campus (pictured l-r): **Kayla Morrissey ’18**, **Graham Fisher ’16**, **JP Prouty ’10**, **Hannah Wolf Schmidt ’08**, **Rachel Moskowitz ’06**, **Jeff Pedersen ’02**, and **Felipe Bautista ’02**. **Norris Stubbs ’72**, who passed away in 2014, was inducted posthumously. **Vidushi Sinha ’19** and **Vrishali Sinha ’19** were unable to travel to campus for the ceremony. Read more about the 2024 inductees at [alumni.grinnell.edu/hof2024](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/hof2024).



## MILESTONE

### Grinnell College Museum of Art Celebrates 25th Anniversary

The Grinnell College Museum of Art (GCMoA) is celebrating 25 years of bringing the joy and excitement of art to Grinnell College and the wider community. Opened in 1999 under the name Faulconer Gallery, GCMoA promotes the arts, features various major exhibitions of national and international arts and artists, and conducts outreach initiatives. This fall, GCMoA celebrated how the museum's art collection serves as a catalyst for dialogue and teaching. GCMoA also has a history of hosting free programs and sharing the museum's resources with individuals, families, and community organizations, extending the reach of GCMoA and its resources to the larger Grinnell community.

## MAGAZINE

### Changes to Grinnell Magazine's Online Presence

This fall, the College's magazine website hosting provider discontinued support for the software that had run the magazine website since about 2016. Magazine content will now be posted as part of the College's News site. Visit the magazine publication page at [grinnell.edu/magazine](http://grinnell.edu/magazine) to find a link to articles from past issues. Concurrent with the website transition, Office of Communications and Marketing staff are exploring a partnership with Grinnell Archives and Digital Grinnell staff to create a new and more comprehensive *Grinnell Magazine* digital collection that can be built over time.

# LEADING BY INSPIRATION

---

*by* Jacqueline Hartling Stolze



Edith Renfrow Smith

---





Although she would never make a fuss about it, **Edith Renfrow Smith '37, DHL '19**, is an exceptional woman.

Even as a girl, Renfrow Smith knew she wanted to attend Grinnell College. She persevered, and in 1937, became Grinnell's first Black woman graduate.

Renfrow Smith, who recently turned 110, has an abiding love for Grinnell — both College and town. In a *Grinnell Magazine* interview for a story about her life that ran nearly 20 years ago, she said “Grinnell is still home.” She used those words again when she visited campus in September.

But neither age nor sentimentality cloud her vision. She chooses to focus on what's good in the world, though she clearly sees the flaws.

For instance, she sees the racism that persists in our society. But Renfrow Smith has never allowed the attitudes of others to deter or define her. They are, as she says, “not mine to carry.”

In comments during the September celebrations for the dedication of Renfrow Hall — the College's new downtown student residence hall named in honor of Renfrow Smith — Professor **Tamara Beauboeuf-Lafontant** remarked on what a powerful

inspiration Renfrow Smith has been for so many Grinnellians who came after her.

“They sit under the shade of your tree,” she said of Renfrow Smith, who was in the audience. “We are all guided by your steadiness, your irrepensible joy in living, and your care. You have spent a century guided by the light of your mother's motto — ‘No one is better than you’ — and your example emboldens all of us to walk straighter, with our chins up, and with our chests opened to all the power that exists inside of us.”

Beauboeuf-Lafontant, who holds the Louise R. Noun '29 Chair of Gender, Women's, and Sexuality Studies, also leads “Team Renfrow,” a student-faculty research collaboration focusing on the lives of Black Grinnellians at the College and in the town.

With her indomitable spirit, Renfrow Smith broke new ground for other Black women at Grinnell. The *Grinnell Magazine* is proud to celebrate the lives and careers of a few of the almost 650 Black women who have followed in Renfrow Smith's footsteps at the College. Collectively, these women are the embodiment of Renfrow Smith's legacy. They exemplify her bold daring, her love of community, and her enduring commitment to succeed in spite of the odds.

---

Editor's Note: Special thanks to **Valeriya Woodard '25**, Team Renfrow student researcher who provided helpful facts and information for this story.



Carson Peters

## INSPIRED TO IMPROVE PUBLIC HEALTH

When **Carson Peters** '20 graduated from Grinnell, the world was facing a global pandemic that would claim at least 3 million lives worldwide, according to the World Health Organization.

Living, working, and studying during a pandemic inspired Peters to rededicate herself to a career in public health.

As a high school student, she had already interned at the National Institutes of Health in Washington, D.C. This experience — besides giving her the occasional glimpse of Dr. Anthony Fauci (“a superhero,” she says) — ignited her passion for public health.

It helped launch Peters on her post-high school academic journey, which began at Grinnell, where she created an independent

major focusing on the biology of global health — biology, sociology, and global development. Through an undergrad-to-grad program with the University of Iowa, Peters also earned a master’s degree in public health with a specialization in epidemiology.

While transitioning to her Ph.D. program in global public health at the University of Maryland, Peters worked to increase acceptance of the COVID vaccine through a program called Shots at the Shop, a White House initiative that used barbershops and hair salons as community spaces to vaccinate communities of color.

Shots at the Shop is just one example of Peters’ commitment to partnering with the community to achieve public health goals. These efforts can advance health equity and improve health outcomes among historically underrepresented, underserved communities, she explains.

Peters says that Grinnell holds a special place in her life. Her Grinnell mentors encouraged her to grow and thrive, while also supporting her development as a scholarly activist.

“I’m continuously grateful for the foundation that Grinnell instilled in me, which has shaped my academic and professional pursuits,” she says.

Peters feels a deep connection to Edith Renfrow Smith as a creator of transformative change and for her strong presence as a Black woman, Grinnell groundbreaker, educator, and advocate.

“Her personal drive and motivation, and her commitment to advancing and driving social change, is something that I seek to embody also in my personal and professional life,” Peters says.

# INSPIRED TO SERVE OTHERS

When Chicago native **Veronique Porter '08** visited Grinnell as a prospective student, it was her first time on a plane.

It didn't go well. She got a headache. Her ears popped for two days. The airline lost her luggage.

But when she stepped onto the Grinnell campus, all that fell away. "Honestly, I had the most amazing time," she says. "I just felt so comfortable and at home."

Porter chose to enroll at Grinnell and arrived ready for whatever the experience would be. She ended up majoring in English and still loves viewing the world through a literary lens.

A sociology class and many chats with Professor **Kesho Scott, DSS '21**, offered a role model for how to be a Black woman in America, Porter says. Other Grinnell influencers included **Doug Cutchins '93**, who helped her explore her dream of serving in the Peace Corps, and **Michael Sims** in student affairs, who nurtured her capacity for leadership in student organizations such as Concerned Black Students.

But it was the Grinnell community that shaped her the most. "Everything that I learned and experienced and honed at Grinnell plays an active part in who I am today," Porter explains.

After graduation, Porter began a career focused on serving others. She spent two years in Mali as a Peace Corps volunteer. Porter

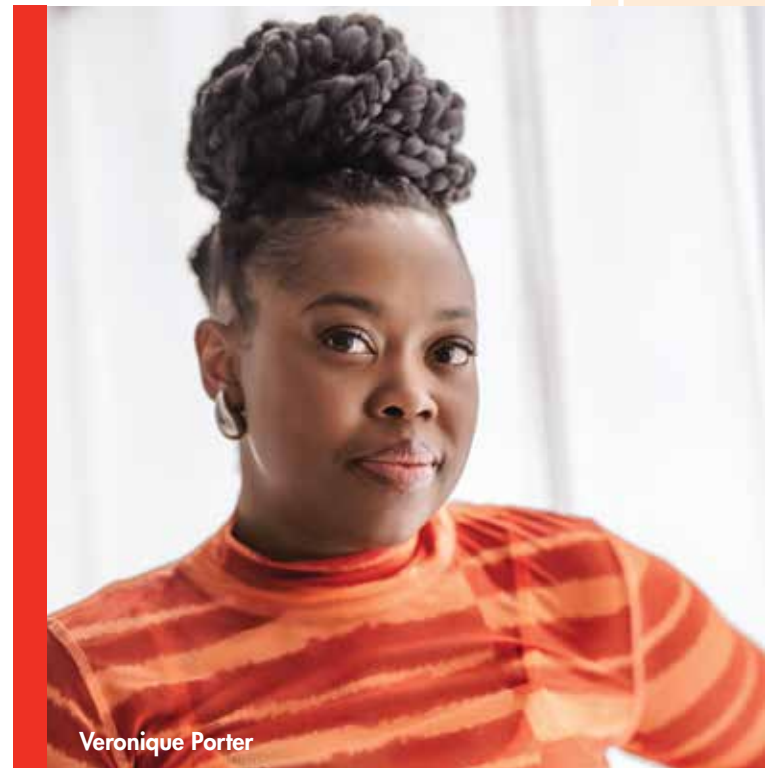
returned home planning to go to law school and spent some years working in international development. Then the universe sent her in a new direction — entrepreneurship.

In 2021, she launched her own business, Ampersand Workspace, which provides clients with expert guidance on race and gender issues to create a more inclusive, open, productive workplace culture.

Porter says many aspects of Edith Renfrow Smith's story are meaningful to her.

"She absolutely led the way for Black folks on campus, especially Black women — for us to be able to see ourselves in her story and know that it is achievable."

Porter adds, "If she could do it back then, we definitely can do it now."



Veronique Porter



## INSPIRED TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO JUSTICE

**Patricia Swansey '74** was one of three children born to parents who had migrated from Mississippi to Chicago. Her father died when she was 6 years old, but she remembers him urging her to think for herself and to chart her own path.

“We were taught early to be self-sufficient. We were taught to have pride and respect for ourselves,” Swansey says.

Coming to Grinnell from inner-city Chicago was a major culture shock, but she didn't let it deter her. With the foundation her parents had given her, Swansey survived and thrived at Grinnell.

She credits Grinnell with teaching her skills she still uses every day, even decades later — critical thinking and good communication, both verbal and written.

After graduation, Swansey moved to Massachusetts, where she held several jobs in state government and community development. While writing her “umpteenth” grant application, Swansey had an epiphany — wouldn't it be great to have a say in where the money goes?

With that in mind, she switched gears and eventually landed her current role with the Massachusetts Legal Assistance Corporation, which empowers justice by providing funding to civil legal aid programs statewide. Swansey has served as director of program monitoring and evaluation at MLAC for 27 years.

Using a peer review model, Swansey identifies legal aid program strengths and challenges and makes recommendations for improvement. She also administers a fellowship program that recruits recent law school graduates to public-interest law, where they improve access to justice for people who face barriers to obtaining legal assistance. Another fellowship supports seasoned attorneys who address racial injustice and the high rate of poverty and unmet legal needs of communities of color.

The story of Edith Renfrow Smith resonates with Swansey. “It's the story of yet another Black person who has overcome or survived the challenges of being Black in America,” Swansey says.

“It's a story of love. It's a story of perseverance, courage, and strength.”

## INSPIRED TO DO GOOD

Gathering on Saturdays for choir rehearsals with the Young, Gifted, and Black Gospel Choir felt like coming home for **Alanna Tyler '90**.

When she needed to feel a sense of belonging and welcome as a Black woman at Grinnell, she turned to YGB. “Those Saturday choir rehearsals connected to the way I had grown up,” Tyler says.

She came to Grinnell from Chicago, where she grew up in a wonderful, nurturing community on the South Side. When she visited Grinnell, she immediately felt a connection with the College. “I had this immediate sense of just being able to see myself there,” Tyler says.

“I just felt like this could be my place — and I was right.”

At Grinnell, Tyler experienced many “glad surprises” (a nod to a quote from Black theologian Howard Thurman), such as connecting with people who came from all over the world, including **Eva Gakonyo '90** from Kenya and **Dina Shah '91** from Pakistan. With them and many others, Tyler found kinship and connection.

Tyler came to Grinnell “wired to be curious.” She let her curiosity run wild and discovered a keen interest in political science, which became her major. Although she wasn’t thinking that way at the time, it would serve her well in her “first career” working in state and local government — including 18 years with Hennepin County in Minnesota.



Alanna Tyler

After graduating with a Master of Divinity from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, Tyler was installed in 2018 as associate pastor for justice and mission at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis.

Her two careers are more connected than you might think. “Everything I’ve done professionally, I get to bring forward into my current role as clergy,” she says.

“I just get to do a lot of really wonderful, wonderful things,” Tyler continues. Speaking about the congregation’s role in building a loving, sustainable, and just community, she says, “Some days I’m overwhelmed, but most days I’m grateful that I have this really dynamic role where I seek to do good and invite others to do good.”

Tyler says Edith Renfrow Smith inspires her every day, thanks to a newspaper clipping posted in her office. It features a smiling photo of Renfrow Smith under the headline “At 109 and a Half, Master of Resilience.”

“Having learned her story, I am inspired to be resilient, too. I look at her and say, ‘Okay, here’s your example. Here’s your standard bearer.’”

She adds, “It literally is a help and an encouragement to see her smiling face.”



---

*by* Jacqueline  
Hartling Stolze

F A



# LLING INTO PLACE

Understanding Grinnell's place in the world

# You can learn a lot by looking at what people throw out — history might just be lying on the ground, waiting for someone to notice.



**Evan Albaugh '25** always notices.

When he saw construction workers tearing out some old pavement, he couldn't wait to sift through the exposed dirt, searching for artifacts of long-ago Grinnell.

Albaugh, a senior history major from Ankeny, Iowa, looks for artifacts — shards of antique glass, old coins, etc. — wherever he goes. He says Grinnell has been a treasure trove of these cast-off everyday objects.

“People throw away really interesting things sometimes that I think do kind of reveal information about the society,” he adds.

## POPPING THE GRINNELL BUBBLE

In spring 2024, Albaugh found a course that encouraged his interest in local history — Historical Landscapes of Grinnell.

Professors **Albert Lacson** (history) and **Cori Jakubiak** (education) developed and team-taught the course. Lacson says recent racist incidents and vandalism in Grinnell inspired them.

“One of the surprising things was to hear the

frustration and anger that this sort of thing happened here, as if Grinnell was somehow immune from national and international patterns,” Lacson says. Lacson and Jakubiak wanted to demonstrate that the College and town have been and still are connected to the larger world.

Lacson cites Grinnell's founding in the mid-19th century as an example. The College and the town of Grinnell were enmeshed in the issues that led up to the Civil War. Anti-abolitionist sentiment in Davenport, Iowa, compelled then-Iowa College to move to Grinnell, a stop on the Underground Railroad, which helped enslaved people escape to freedom.

“That's the starting point for this town,” Lacson says.

## CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

Jakubiak and Lacson envisioned a course that would help students engage with place. As director of the Center for Prairie Studies, Jakubiak thinks a lot about place, sustainability, and community.

Why is place so important? “I think for many



**Dream Team, Faculty Edition: Professors Cori Jakubiak (left, education) and Albert Lacson (history) team-taught Historical Landscapes of Grinnell, creating a partnership that tapped into a rich vein of knowledge and diverse perspectives.**





**Grinnell is not “the middle of nowhere.” Jakubiak wants students to engage with the campus and the town — and even the surrounding countryside — to better understand this place and the people who call it home.**

students, Grinnell feels placeless,” Jakubiak says. “I want students to engage with why Grinnell is the way it is, rather than writing it off as nothing.” She hopes students will think about not only what’s here now, but also what was here in the past.

Jakubiak wants students to consider Grinnell as a place in its own right. She hopes they will learn to see not only what the College can do for them, but also how can they learn to see the place, to see different kinds of people, and to ask different questions.

“It’s a way to build community,” Jakubiak explains.

Lacson agrees. “We thought it could be really useful for both the College and the town to have students connect with people from the town through a shared history,” he says.

## HISTORIES MATTER

History isn’t just made by the famous people, the leaders whose names are in every history textbook. Everyone plays a part, and understanding that truth offers a way for students to make meaningful connections with townspeople, Lacson explains.

“Hopefully, we can play a role in convincing people that their personal histories matter,” he says. “I like to think that we succeeded in helping students realize that not just in Grinnell, but hopefully in every place they go to, they’ll begin to see connections that they may not have seen before taking the class.”

Students in the class heard from a diverse list of guest speakers, including representatives of the Poweshiek History Preservation Project, the Iowa



Geological Survey, the Neal Smith Wildlife Refuge, the nearby Meskwaki Nation, and others.

Lacson particularly wanted students to hear from the Indigenous people upon whose land Grinnell College stands. “We did think it was very important for our students to connect with those for whom this history matters, whose lives revolve around preserving and understanding the history of this region,” he explains.

“That’s one of the biggest things we wanted students to be able to grapple with — that what they see here right now hasn’t always been here,” Lacson says.

But some things endure.

## EXPERIENCING GRINNELL

The sky, the wind, the grass, the trees — these have always been here.

**Jayson Kunkel ’26** wandered through Summer

Street Park, looking up at the cloudless blue sky. A breeze ruffled the maple leaves overhead, where masses of helicopters waited to spin to the ground. A woman walked by with two dogs. On the banks of a small creek, Kunkel heard a frog splash into the water.

Kunkel, a computer science and anthropology double major from Des Moines, chose the park for his “Sit-Spot” assignment, one of the ways students explored the concept of place. They were asked to choose a place on campus or in the community and visit it 10 times during the semester, observing and experiencing it. Their reflections became blog posts for the class website.

By the end of the semester, Kunkel had ventured to every corner of the park. He even participated in a community clean-up project at the park.

“His project was a fabulous example of how he came to care about a spot by returning to it over and over,” Jakubiak says.

## GRINNELL IN THE WILD

Another assignment, “Grinnell in the Wild,” asked students to seek out smaller, more hidden places to research and explore. Albaugh’s project focused on some of the artifacts he’s found around Grinnell.

“Anywhere there was exposed soil, there were things that were just sitting there that nobody else looked at or picked up,” Albaugh says.

He especially likes antique bottles and glass shards, but he also found coins and other metal artifacts. His posts provided detailed information on the objects, illustrated by close-up photographs.

## DIGITAL STORYTELLING

The final project, “Histories of Grinnell,” called upon students to tell a compelling story based on research.

A key part of the project was a required interview with someone familiar with their chosen topic. These interviews bring history to life, Jakubiak says. “History is not something old and dusty in a textbook to be fought over,” she says, “but something alive in the present that we can all contest and weigh in on.”



(Opposite page) Jayson Kunkel explored the concept of place through repeated visits to Summer Street Park in Grinnell. (This page, lower left) Evan Albaugh holds some of the artifacts he’s unearthed in Grinnell. His favorites? The antique glass shards and bottles. (Below) Local resident Frank Shults Jr. models a gauntlet glove manufactured in Grinnell by the Morrison-Shults Manufacturing Company.



## VIVERO DIGITAL FELLOWS PROGRAM

The Historical Landscapes of Grinnell class was supported by **Ohana Sarvotham '25** and **Kailee Shermak '25**, who are part of Grinnell's Vivero Digital Fellows training and mentorship program, which combines technology and scholarship to create a digital liberal arts community.

Since 2017, Vivero has expanded the reach and bounds of academic study and research. "At the heart of Vivero is a goal of diversifying the field of digital scholarship and digital liberal arts scholarship," says **Tierney Steelberg**, Vivero co-leader.

Sponsored by the Grinnell Libraries, the Digital Liberal Arts Collaborative, and the Center for the Humanities, Vivero embodies the College's commitment to social justice, diversity, and excellence in the liberal arts.

The class also received support from a Mellon Humanities in Action grant.

### Goodnow Hall 1925



**Evelyn Dziekan '24** (left) and Kunkel both chose to research the Old Glove Factory — home to one of Grinnell's first manufacturing companies, Morrison-Shults Manufacturing. After the company closed, the building stood empty until the College bought it and

renovated it in 1999.

Kunkel says he has always had an interest in local history, and this class amped up his enthusiasm. "It just opened my eyes to so many things I didn't know," he says.

Together, he and Dziekan interviewed Frank Shults Jr., whose father had worked at the Morrison-Shults Manufacturing Company when it was active. "He was able to tell us a lot about the inner workings of the factory," says Kunkel.





He believes the Old Glove Factory helps bridge the town-gown divide. “I think it really ties both entities together,” Kunkel says.

### ONE MAN’S GARBAGE

Lacson and Jakubiak might not have expected anyone to choose garbage for their final project, but they were thrilled when Albaugh proposed it.

“I thought it was a super creative, brilliant way to try to understand the changing history of this place,” Lacson says.

Albaugh says that the untold histories of the things that are left behind always intrigue him. He believes garbage deserves to be studied as a part of the community’s larger history — albeit often a hidden one.

Albaugh says that the class gave him a new appreciation for the town of Grinnell. “I think we addressed some really systemic issues of this disconnect between the town and the College,” he

says. “Learning more about the town and learning to appreciate it for what it can offer has been really nice.”

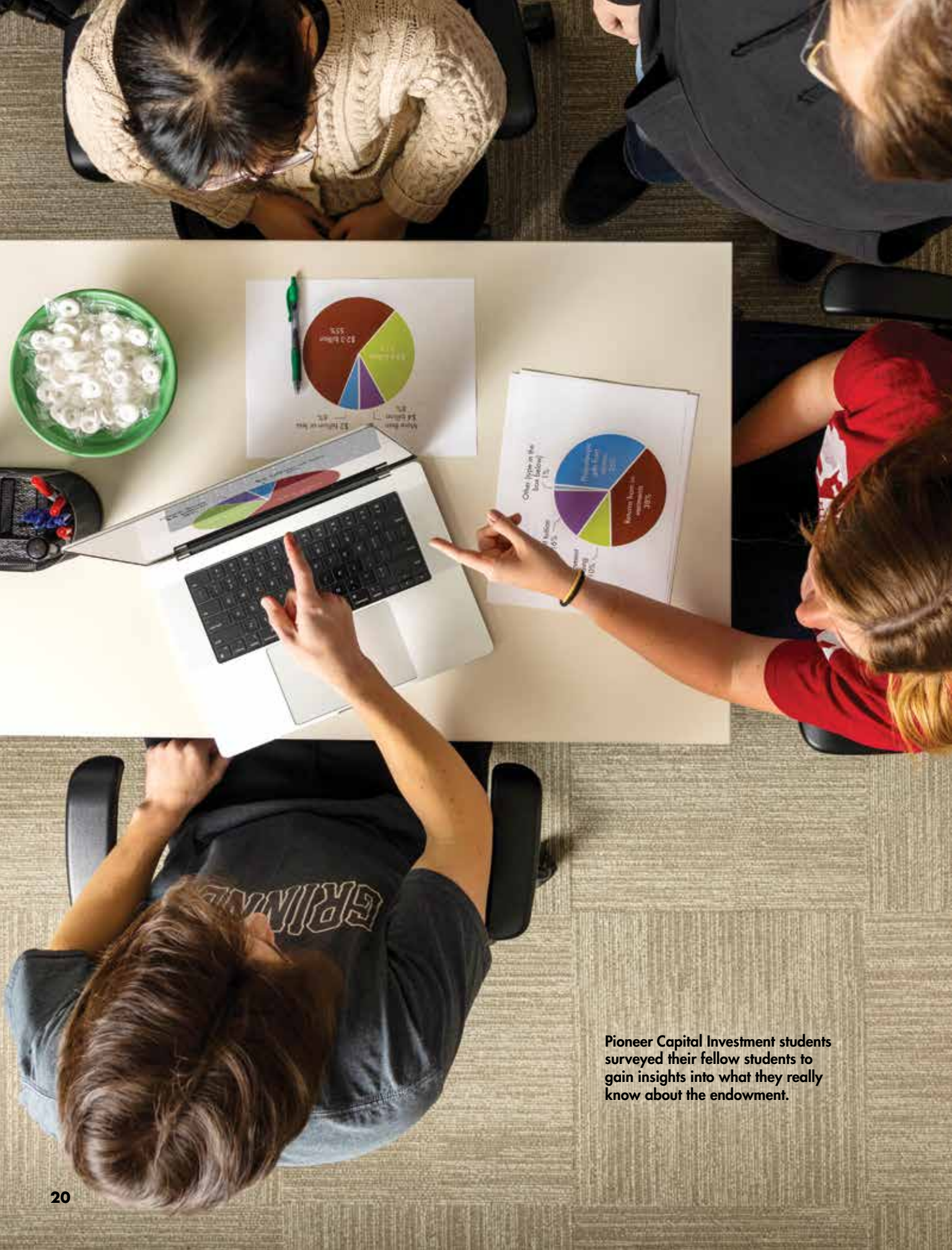
### A DEEPER CONNECTION

Lacson calls this iteration the course’s “first draft.” He and Jakubiak are already planning the next offering, which will explore even more aspects of place and local history.


Building a partnership between a historian and an educator to team-teach this course taps into a rich vein of knowledge and diverse perspectives, Lacson says.

Jakubiak agrees. “Team teaching is a great area for faculty growth and professional development,” she says. “We’ve been colleagues and friends for a long time, but to see someone teach is really different.”

They also share a personal interest in the subject matter. “We’ve both had an interest in place, and specifically this place,” Lacson explains. “We wanted to use this as an opportunity for us to deepen our connections to this place.” 📖



Pioneer Capital Investment students surveyed their fellow students to gain insights into what they really know about the endowment.



# PIONEER CAPITAL INVESTMENTS TEACHES INVESTMENT SKILLS, TESTS STUDENT KNOWLEDGE OF THE GRINNELL COLLEGE ENDOWMENT

---

by Ellen de Graffenreid

Every Monday evening during the academic year, a group of Grinnell students gathers in a classroom in the Humanities and Social Studies Center. They're not studying for a specific class, watching movies, gaming, or simply socializing. Instead, they engage with the serious topics of investments and financial analysis.

Founded in 2000 as the Student Endowment Investment Group, Pioneer Capital Investments (PCI) strives to educate students about financial markets and investing. "We teach people about financial modeling, informed investing, and we work together to make pitch decks at the end of each semester — giving people the skills to make a pitch that will be applicable to everything in their careers," says **Sophia Ford '25**, one of the club's leaders.

The PCI pitches are made to the business and finance career community staff at the Center for

Careers, Life, and Service along with staff from Grinnell College's investment office. Based upon those pitches, PCI makes real investments, using a pool of funds that were given to the club when it was founded. Their trades are executed through the Grinnell College Investment Office.

PCI also hosts guest speakers, shares resources on investing, and provides investment education for students at all levels.

## LEADERSHIP AND PEER EDUCATION

This year, PCI has so many students participating that they have split their Monday evening sessions into two groups, with an hour session for students with less experience and a second hour for those with more experience. According to **Michael Lawrence**, director of the business and finance career community, "Over

the last few years, PCI has really made efforts to ensure that there is leadership continuity and planning. This leadership team has done a fantastic job creating educational modules and thinking very strategically about how they structure the organization. I think it's a great experience for students."

"We do a lot of education student-to-student," says Ford. "A lot of us are really engaged in the investing world and we want to share that. We teach financial modeling, informed investing, and other topics, and we collaborate with the investment office, which makes trades on PCI's behalf."

The leadership team meets weekly to plan out what they want to accomplish over the course of the semester. "I think we're very focused on making decisions as a club, not just leadership making decisions, but really making a democratic decision," adds **Mahiro Noda '26**.

Early in the spring semester of 2024, the club leadership — Ford, Noda, **Cole Beattie '25**, and **David Eason '24** (who graduated in May) — were seeing a lot

of news about how colleges and universities use their endowments and the role of social responsibility in investing. "There was a lot of conversation about what Grinnell students think about the endowment. We had a lot of preconceived notions, so we decided, with input from the investment office, to do a survey," says Ford. "What we found challenged those assumptions and brought to light what students are thinking now," she notes.

## THE SURVEY

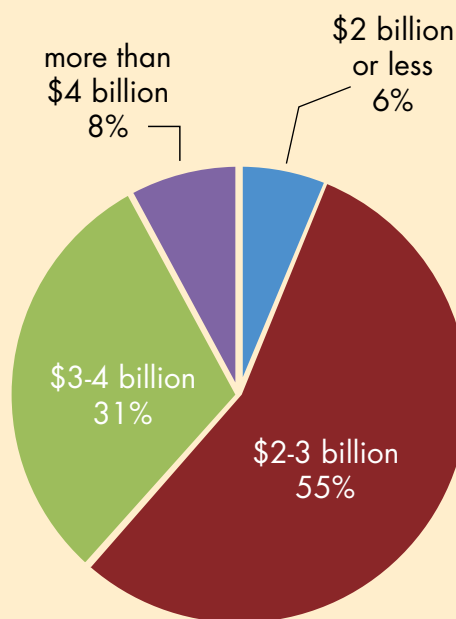
The team worked together to create a survey. They asked **Jainen Thayer**, chief investment officer, and **Graham Miller**, director of strategic research, to review the questions and structure. "We were blown away by how thoughtful and careful PCI was in constructing the survey," says Thayer. The survey sent to students was open for about five weeks, and 177 students filled it out.

Starting with the basics, PCI asked about the size of the endowment. Fifty-five percent of respondents

## 2024 PCI ENDOWMENT STUDENT SURVEY: PERCEPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVE

**QUESTION:**  
How large is the Grinnell College endowment?

**INSIGHT:**  
The endowment's value was \$2.67 billion (as of June 30, 2024).



**QUESTION:** Which of the following contributes to the growth of the endowment?

**INSIGHT:**  
73% of students responding correctly identified philanthropic gifts and returns on investment as components of endowment growth. Government funding and student tuition do NOT contribute to the endowment.

government funding  
10%



correctly identified that the endowment market value is between \$2 billion and \$3 billion. “But 39% were estimating significantly more, which shows that current information isn’t reaching the students,” says Ford. While 38% correctly identified investment returns and 35% philanthropy as a source of endowment growth, 16% believed that student tuition and 10% that government funding played a role.

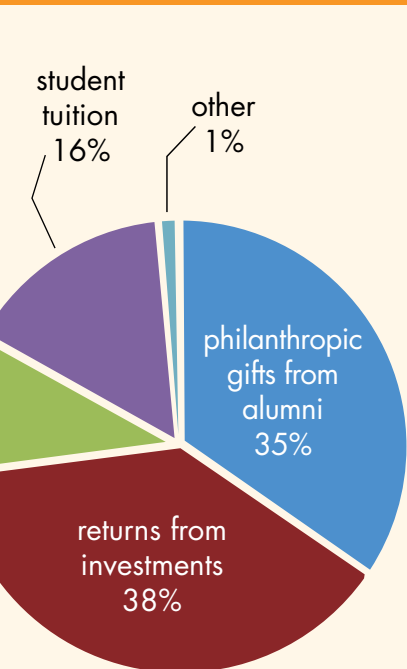
“That 35% speaks to the ways that philanthropy is visible to students,” says Noda. However, they noted, Pioneer Fund and Scarlet & Give Back Day are both part of annual giving programs, where funds are used right away. Grinnell’s cost to educate each student is about \$20,000 more than tuition, so tuition funds are used up about halfway through the fall semester.

### WHO’S THE DECIDER?

When asked about who makes investment decisions for the College, almost three quarters of respondents correctly identified that the Investment Office and the Board of Trustees (through the Investment

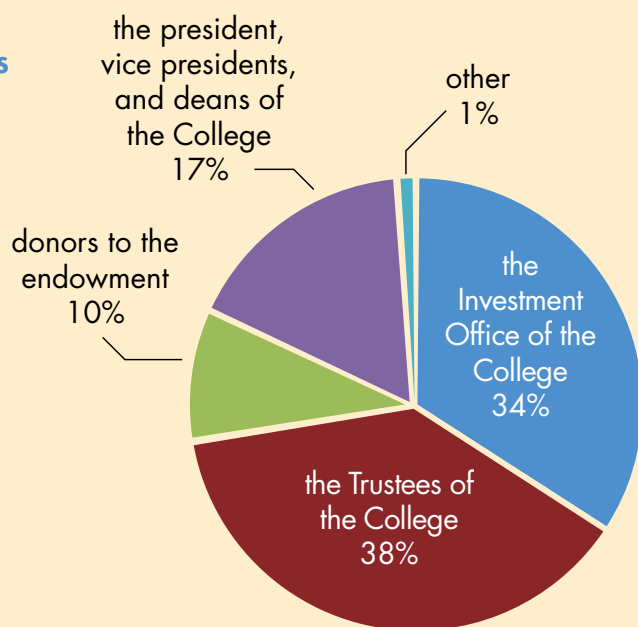
Committee) are the only parts of Grinnell that oversee investment decisions. “The investment office was kind of mysterious. We were asking, who’s the Boston team and what’s that about? The office has made a big effort to connect with us,” says Ford. “The events of last fall brought up a lot of conversation about, ‘OK, how does Grinnell actually work? How does Grinnell fund things?’ Students really want to know.”

That’s why they asked what students thought the endowment funds support, with most respondents correctly identifying financial aid, faculty and staff, and facilities. But 16% believe that it funds student organization budgets. “That’s really unexpected,” says **Brad Lindberg**, associate vice president of institutional initiatives and enrollment who sits on the committee that sets the student activity fee each year. “Because 100% of the dollars collected from the student activity fee go directly to the Student Government Association and the Student Publications and Radio Committee (SPARC) for distribution through the student organization budget process. It’s the only source of funds for student organizations.”



**QUESTION:** I believe the investment decisions for the endowment are made by...

**INSIGHT:** Almost 3/4 of students responding correctly identified that the Investment Office works with the Board of Trustees to make investment policy and decisions.



## WHO BENEFITS?

Next, PCI asked whether students believe the endowment should support current or future students. Fifty-three percent believed that support should go all or mostly to current students, while 46% believed support should go to current and future students equally. “This was fascinating to me,” says Thayer, “The purpose of having an endowment is to provide support for the institutional mission in perpetuity, and that message has been internalized by almost half of students.”

## SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND BEYOND

The team wrapped up with a question that asked students whether Grinnell’s endowment should focus on social responsibility or financial returns. “The term social responsibility can be interpreted in many different ways, but financial returns are very concrete and measurable, so we wanted to have that contrast,” says Noda. Slightly over half of respondents prioritized social responsibility over investment returns.

According to Thayer, Grinnell’s endowment managers and the investment committee remain very committed to reflecting both ESG (environmental, social, and governance) factors and DEI (diversity, equity, and inclusion) principles in investment decision-making processes.

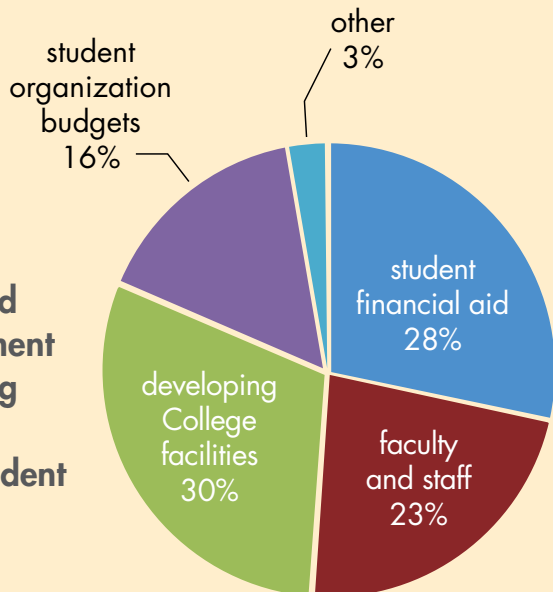
To close the survey, PCI asked students what they want to learn more about, which covered all of the topics in the survey. “The results show that the endowment is still a very mysterious topic to many. Coming back to the misconception that student tuition goes into the endowment, that’s a narrative we heard quite often,” says Noda.

“The biggest thing I took away was why would students think about investing from an institutional standpoint. Higher ed is such a weird form of institution. Students are comfortable with thinking of how a business thinks because that’s what’s out in the media. The College is a business in its own way, but it’s not for profit,” says Ford. “There’s a lack of knowledge of how institutions finance themselves and how institutions work. Some of the comments encouraged

## 2024 PCI ENDOWMENT STUDENT SURVEY: PERCEPTIONS AND PERSPECTIVE

**QUESTION:** I believe the endowment funds...

**INSIGHT:** Student organizations are NOT funded by the endowment or the operating budget, but through the student activity fee.



**QUESTION:** I believe that the College’s endowment should be used to support...

**INSIGHT:** Slightly less than half of students responding agree with the endowment's mission of balancing immediate institutional needs with those of future Grinnellians.

both current and future students equally 46%

us to think towards what we might do in the future to provide more education and encourage dialogues,” added Noda. “The endowment isn’t there by itself; it’s part of the whole decision-making of how the College functions. Specifically, how the College tries to ensure funding for current students but also tries to think about the future.”

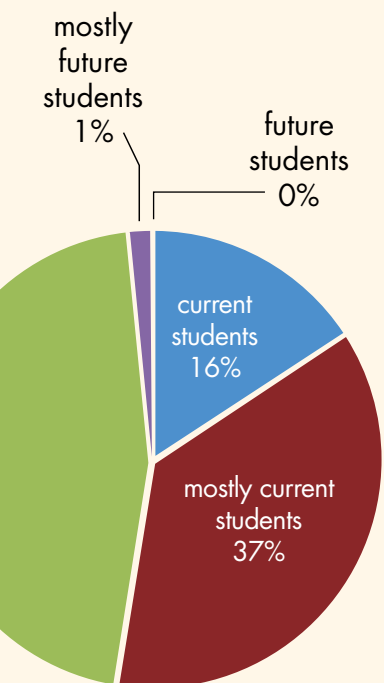
“I think the overwhelming response is a level of curiosity about how the College works, and I think it would be interesting to have more dialogue and shine a light on a lot of the resources and things that are done here that take funding,” says Ford.

### ONGOING FINANCIAL EDUCATION

The College is already taking steps to provide more regular updates about the endowment, the budget, financial aid, enrollment, and other topics. This fall, President **Anne F. Harris** and Vice President of Finance and Chief Financial Officer **Germaine Gross** participated in a live Q&A session moderated by Alumni Council member **Grisel Hernandez '17** to answer questions about the endowment. A recording can be

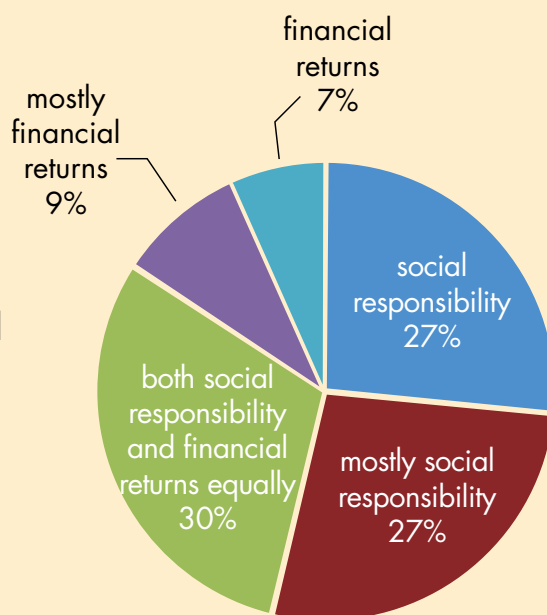


found online at [alumni.grinnell.edu/endowmentcall](https://alumni.grinnell.edu/endowmentcall). PCI’s leadership is planning an on-campus presentation of their data, including a Q&A with Thayer, for later in the academic year. 📖



**QUESTION:** When the endowments funds are invested, I believe the focus should be on...

**INSIGHT:** The Grinnell College investment policy reflects environmental, social, and governance ethics as well as diversity, inclusion, and equity in selecting investments.





**Student residence spaces in Renfrow Hall are more akin to apartment-style living — with kitchens and gathering areas — than the arrangements students typically experienced in the '70s.**

THEN AND NOW

1977 vs. 2024





*The Catalyst: RNA and the Quest to Unlock Life's Deepest Secrets*

**Thomas R. Cech '70, DS '87**, W.W. Norton, June 2024

With *The Catalyst*, Cech aims to share the wonders of RNA with non-scientists. While the double helix of DNA became common knowledge, RNA long remained in the shadows — until the mRNA vaccines for COVID-19 put it in the spotlight. The many exploits of RNA include its acting as a biocatalyst, a discovery for which Cech was awarded a Nobel Prize in 1989, and its role in guiding CRISPR gene editing. Those stories, and many more, give the reader an insider's view of this versatile biological molecule and its medical applications.

*Performing Arguments: Debate in Early English Poetry and Drama*

**Maura Giles-Watson '80**, Brill, February 2024

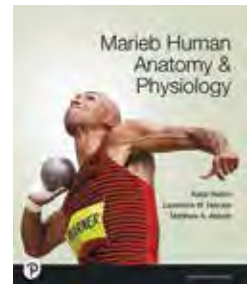
*Performing Arguments* proposes a novel performance-centered view of rhetoric as a mode of performance across several early genres, such as Middle English debate poetry and Shakespearean works. Giles-Watson distinguishes between instrumental argumentation for persuasion and performative argumentation, which prioritizes aesthetic display over persuasion while also considering contemporary rhetorical and performance theories and recent critical perspectives on audience response.



*Marieb Human Anatomy & Physiology, 12th Edition*

**Matthew Abbott '96** (co-author), **Serina Beauparlant '82** (Director, Project Management for Applied Science), Pearson Publishing, 2024

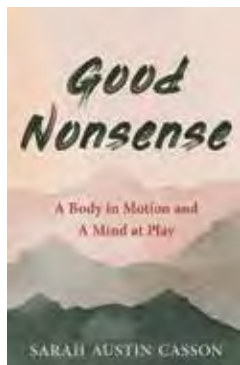
This latest edition of *Marieb* uses new and innovative ways to help students visualize connections between various concepts in human anatomy and physiology. Beauparlant has been the force behind this book since the sixth edition. For many years, Abbott has contributed to ancillary materials for this book as a reviewer and author. He notes, “It is truly a dream come true to join the team as a co-author and teach A&P this fall at Des Moines Area Community College using my textbook.”



*Good Nonsense: A Body in Motion and A Mind at Play*

**Sarah Austin Casson '11**, Dair Press, February 2024

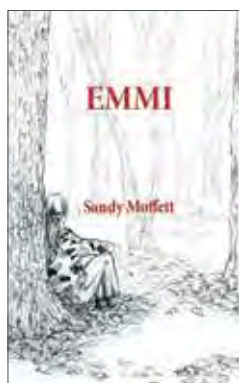
*Good Nonsense* explores how we move our bodies and brains through hard questions such as, “What should we do about our world’s problems, and what is my individual and collective role in these problems?” Casson is a wilderness conservationist and environmental anthropologist whose job has taken her all over the world. She brings readers on her adventures, from Nepal and Thailand to her backyard in Los Angeles, to share her realization that the best way to play with tough problems is outdoors while sweating — physically and mentally.



*Emmi*

**Sandy Moffett**, Ice Cube Press, June 2024

Professor Emeritus of Theatre Sandy Moffett’s second novel tells the story of four main characters, including 11-year-old Emily Reese, who come together in a small rural town on the border of a state forest with the largest remnant of wilderness in Iowa. They enter into a battle against corporate greed, political ambition, and maniacal trophy addiction to save this wild place and a magnificent snow-white stag rumored to live there.



*Divine-Human Encounter: The Path to God in the Thought of Abraham Joshua Heschel*

**Harold Kasimow**, Wipf and Stock, May 2024

Harold Kasimow, the George Drake Professor Emeritus of Religious Studies, delved into Heschel’s three paths to God in *God in Search of Man*, his seminal work. In this book, Kasimow clarifies the meaning of Heschel’s “path to God” by devoting one chapter to each of the three aspects of this path. *Divine-Human Encounter* illustrates how Heschel’s thought presents a balance between the rational and mystical poles of the Jewish tradition.



*You Are a Star*, Malala Yousafzai, Scholastic Press, January 2024; *The Fastest Drummer: Clap Your Hands for Viola Smith!*, Candlewick Press, March 2024; *The Shape of Things: How Mapmakers Picture Our World*, Knopf, August 2024; **Dean Robbins '80**

Robbins has published 12 children’s books about his personal heroes in past years, and he added three more nonfiction children’s picture books to that collection in 2024. *The Fastest Drummer* was recognized as a Junior Library Guild Gold Standard Selection and an Amazon Editors’ Pick.



# Bringing Grinnell Alumni Together

*A passion for Karmi Mattson*

by Jeremy Shapiro

“I guess alumni is sort of my brand, right?”

**Karmi Mattson '97** is describing why she pledged a \$150,000 gift to name the exterior garden event space behind Grinnell College’s new Alumni House.

Bringing alumni together has been a forte of Mattson’s since she graduated 27 years ago. It began when she was a class agent and continued as an Alumni Council member and longtime coordinator of the Grinnell-in-the-Twin Cities Regional Community.

Once renovations are complete to a historic home at 1527 Broad St., the Hannah Alumni House will be home to many future alumni gatherings. Interior construction began in November.

is booked. So, it will be nice to have a place that’s really dedicated for alums where they can stay or hang out. I think of my time on the Alumni Council, when we spent a lot of time just hanging out at the Comfort Inn or the Country Inn because that’s where we all stayed. It’s more fun to be closer to campus, though, and be a part of the College experience.”

The Mattson Garden will be a gathering place for alums during formal events and informal get-togethers.

“Generally, when I’ve been back for Reunion, there has been gorgeous weather,” Mattson says. “People want to hang out outside, so an outdoor space where alums can gather appealed to me.”

Award during the class of 1997’s 25th reunion.

“As a former member of the Alumni Council, I was on the award selection committee for many years, so I know the debates and the discussions that go into that and how hard those decisions are to make,” Mattson said. “It was definitely an honor to receive the award and good to be recognized for the work that I do for the College.”

In 2002, Mattson joined the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis as an administrative assistant and rose through the ranks over the last two decades. She is now the assistant vice president of regional outreach and public programs. Mattson and her team have sought to increase the Fed’s reach and diversify its audience with public-facing programming.

In addition, Mattson has a side career as a wellness coach, workshop facilitator, and adjunct trainer for Weight Watchers. She just celebrated 15 years in this role.

Since 2008, Mattson has planned around 150 alumni events in the Twin Cities, ranging from summer picnics and Minnesota Twins games to outings that support fellow Grinnellians.

“Early in his career, when **Kumail Nanjiani '01** was in town to do an episode of National Public Radio’s *Wits*, we organized an event to see him,” she says. “We did this even before he was super well known because of that loyalty to other Grinnell alums. Even if you’ve never met this person, you think ‘oh, he’s one of us, so I want to go cheer for him.’”



“When Director of Planned Giving **Buddy Boulton** told me about this opportunity for Alumni House, I thought about how people always talk about coming back to campus and trying to stay at Grinnell House,” Mattson says. “But sometimes Grinnell House

During her time on the Alumni Council, she began the tradition of photo montages of Alumni Award winners at Alumni Assembly. Little did she know that Mattson herself would become the subject of a slideshow at Reunion 2022, when she was bestowed with an Alumni





## Karmi Mattson's Grinnell Volunteer Resume

Karmi Mattson has volunteered in several capacities over the years. Here are some of her volunteer roles:

- ▶ Reunion Class Committees (1997-present)
- ▶ Class Agent (1997-2013)
- ▶ Regional Coordinator for the Grinnell Office of Admission (1998-2014)
- ▶ Alumni Council (2006-2012), president in 2010-11
- ▶ Regional Coordinator, Grinnell-in-the-Twin Cities (2008-present)

It's not just famous alums that Twin Cities Grinnellians turn out to see, however. "Grinnellians are lifelong learners, so some of our most popular events are when we hear from fellow alums about their areas of expertise," Mattson says. Examples have included an art history lecture by Carleton College Professor of Art History **Ross Elfline '95**; a walking architecture tour led by architect **Bob Mack '66**; film discussions of *Bonnie and Clyde* and *Die Hard* with Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology Professor Emeritus of Film and Literature **Pete Parshall '58**; and a Grinnellians in government forum with Minnesota's Commissioner of Human Rights **Rebecca Lucero '03** and Minnesota's Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources **Sarah Strommen '95**.

Mattson has played a role in alumni making connections in other locales as well. In 2016, she set up the Karmi Anna J. Mattson Endowed Fund for the Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR).

"Event planning is an overlooked part of charitable giving," Mattson says. "A lot of people want to give to students and to scholarships, and maybe to buildings, and that's all very important and valid. But I think people don't necessarily think about how it

costs money to have alumni events. It's great to bring alums together, but there's a cost to that, and those things don't necessarily get funded by alums. So that's why I started my original fund for DAR."

During the past two years, the fund was used for student-alumni gatherings in Chicago and New Orleans. In 2023, the Student Government Association (SGA) co-sponsored a weekend trip for students to Chicago. The Alumni Relations team arranged a luncheon for the students to meet with local alums, and what better way to bring people together than over Chicago pizza?

During spring break this year, a group of students and faculty traveled to New Orleans as part of the Institute for Global Engagement's (IGE) course titled Sugar, Science, and Slavery. With support from the Mattson Fund, the traveling group met alums for an afternoon reception at a local Haitian restaurant (pictured below).



Mattson credits her relationship with Boulton for giving her the idea for the DAR endowed fund as well as Mattson Garden. "The development staff in DAR are really committed to working with donors to help them find meaningful ways to invest in the College. One year, the fund financed the Grinnell-in-London alumni picnic, which was special to me because I was in the Grinnell-in-London study abroad program when I was a student."

Mattson has stayed involved with Grinnell because her time at the College was a formative part of her life.

"I met people at Grinnell that are still my closest friends, and even after college there were lots of new people that I continued to meet," she said. "When I was involved with the Alumni Council, I got to meet people of different eras and in different parts of the country. And being in the Twin Cities, we have a high alumni concentration here. I've enjoyed getting to know all of them. Grinnellians are great people, so I like to stay connected, and I like to do things that help connect other Grinnellians to each other." 📖

---

*There are numerous opportunities for alums to get involved with Grinnell College. Visit [alumni.grinnell.edu/volunteering](https://alumni.grinnell.edu/volunteering) for details about volunteer opportunities that create a lasting impact on the Grinnell community.*

# Alumni Reunion 2025: May 29 – June 1

# SAVE THE DATE!

*We look forward to  
seeing you on campus.*

For all alums as GRA/EY (Grinnell Reunion Any/Every Year)  
and the following celebrating classes and clusters:

70th Reunion: 1955

50th Reunion: 1975

35th Reunion: 1989–90–91

15th Reunion: 2009–10–11

60th Reunion: 1965–66

40th Reunion: 1984–85

25th Reunion: 2000

10th Reunion: 2015



Visit [alumni.grinnell.edu/reunion](https://alumni.grinnell.edu/reunion) or  
scan QR code for more information.

## 1940s

**1945**

**Marjorie Welsh Dole** celebrated her 100th birthday on Aug. 9.

**1946**

**Gladys Nordquist Pike** celebrated her 100th birthday on April 11.

**Marcia Reed Todd** celebrated her 100th birthday on July 24.

**1949**

**John Carlson** celebrated his 100th birthday on April 18.

---

**Don Snook** celebrated his 101st birthday in March. He is now living with his daughter, **Laura Snook '74**, in Oxfordshire, England. During WWII, he was posted in nearby Bedfordshire as the pilot of a B-17 "Flying Fortress." He returned to Grinnell as a veteran, completing his degree thanks to funding from the GI Bill.



**Don Snook and his daughter, Laura Snook.**

## 1950s

**1956**

Retired Maj. Gen. **Roger Sandler** has been inducted into the ROA (Reserve Organization of America) Minute Man Hall of Fame. Sandler is a former chief of the U.S. Army Reserve.

## 1960s

**1964**

**Penny Bender Sebring, DL '15**, and her husband, **Charles Lewis, DL '15**, traveled to Athens, Greece, with the Chicago Council on Global Affairs in May. During such trips, council members meet with government officials, journalists, and think tanks and try to learn about the critical issues facing different parts of the world. Sebring notes that, "Greece has become more important due to its success in overcoming the 2008 financial crisis and the strategic role it is playing in the Middle East. At a session hosted by the Greek Minister of Migration and Asylum, a young man came asking for me because he noticed that I had attended Grinnell. He is **George Giannakoulas '23**, and he works for the Minister. George is a Greek citizen who came to Grinnell for his education and then returned home."

## 1970s

**1970**

The National Endowment for the Arts selected **Gary Giddins, DFA '88**, as the recipient of the 2025 A.B. Spellman NEA Jazz Masters Award for Jazz Advocacy, in recognition of his work as "one of the leading critics in the field of jazz for more than 50 years." Giddins received an award of \$25,000 and was honored during a concert held in



**George Giannakoulas and Penny Bender Sebring.**

**1966**

**James Holbrook, DL '18**, received an Outstanding Alumni of the Year Award from the University of Utah College of Law.

collaboration with the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

**1971**

**Phillip Mears** has been selling plants from his home on Fairview Avenue in Iowa City and donating the proceeds to local food banks for the past five years. His garden is open to the public for walkthrough 24 hours a day.

1971

**Marti Wiedman** and two of her colleagues were selected as Fellows of the American College of Radiology during the annual ACR meeting in Washington, D.C. in April. She was recognized for her services to the radiology community, including advocacy for access to mammography for earlier diagnosis of breast cancer for the women of Hawaii, where she has worked as a body imaging radiologist remotely on the Big Island in Kamuela since 2019. She also spoke with aides to Hawaii representatives and senators while in the Capitol.



**ALUMNI PROFILE JUSTIN LEA '01**

In the small Colombian village of Mongui, some 10,000 feet above sea level in the Andes, sits a workshop where three men and two women stitch soccer balls by hand.

At \$135 each, the balls are at the top of the mass consumer market in price and quality. They are built to specifications set by the sport's governing body, FIFA, for meeting standards ranging from weight and spirality to passing a bounce test, among other things. But what's most unusual is that the workers, who are employed by Austin, Texas-based Hayworth Athletic, are paid a middle-class wage. It's four times more than they'd been paid in the past to hand-stitch soccer balls.



Hayworth Athletic is the brainchild of former attorney **Justin Lea**. A two-sport athlete at Grinnell — in addition to soccer, he played baseball and was an economics major — Lea first became interested in manufacturing soccer balls when he learned that 70% of them come from a single town in Pakistan.

Lea researched the industry and town, discovering sweatshop issues were rife in the manufacturing process. "So, I put my radical Grinnell hat on and thought, 'What if I started a company and paid a high wage to a select group of stitchers?' I thought I could do more than complain about sweatshop labor."

by Anne Stein '84

## 1972

**Celia Millington-Wyckoff's** band, Cast Iron Bluegrass, dropped its first album, *Flicker of Love*, which is available for download from Amazon.

## 1973

**Irma McClaurin, DSS '23**, has shared news about some of her recent work and recognition: The Irma McClaurin Black Feminist Archive, housed in the University of Massachusetts-Amherst Libraries, was featured in *Bookmarks Magazine* (2024, Issue 19), and was highlighted during the annual UM Friends of the Library event held in October. The 25th anniversary edition of McClaurin's award-winning *Black Feminist Anthropology: Theory, Politics, Praxis and Poetics*, is available for pre-order from Rutgers University Press (use RUP30 for 30% off and free shipping). Her



iconic photograph of James Baldwin (part of the Black Feminist Archive) is the cover image for a new memoir, *Walking*

*in the Dark: James Baldwin, My Father, and Me*, by Douglas Field, from Manchester University Press. MUP also publishes the *James Baldwin Review*, where her essay, "Remembering James Baldwin Through a Black Photographic Lens," is part of a centennial issue. And in August, McClaurin's commentary, "Why Black Grassroots Museums Matter," was published in a special issue about Black museums in the journal *Museum Anthropology*.

## ALUMNI PROFILE KATIE BLOOME '05

**Katie Bloome** has fond memories of playing in the woods near her childhood house in Minnesota.

"My outdoor play was unstructured," Bloome recalls. "Now we have studies showing the benefit of this, which I try to instill in my own kids. When we go out in nature, it's not just a means to an end, it's an exploration. It only takes a question or two, and they are off on their journey of discovery."



Bloome is the executive director of the Belwin Conservancy, just outside the Twin Cities. The vision of the conservancy is to make the space more accessible to the whole community they serve.

"At Belwin, the organic formation of partnerships is where the real change takes root," Bloome explains. Some of the partnerships that have been

particularly meaningful for her connect Belwin to the area's Indigenous communities, specifically individuals who live in urban spaces that often create unique barriers to connecting with cultural identity. Through collaboration with these communities, Belwin is discovering new opportunities to support their reclamation of cultural practices.

One such project partners with the American Indian Family Center, which was seeking land to use for a sweat lodge. After much conversation and planning, the lodge was installed at the conservancy and is now used by people of all ages for healing through group gatherings and ceremonies.

by Melanie Drake '92

**1974**

**David Mura, DHL '97**, received a 2024 Guggenheim Fellowship for General Nonfiction for his most recent book, *The Stories Whiteness Tells Itself: Racial Myths and Our American Narratives*.

In June, **Michael J. Kump** was among five attorneys recognized by *The Hollywood Reporter* as a Legal Legend; honoring “entertainment attorneys whose careers have had enduring impact on both the entertainment industry and the law.” *THR* noted that Kump has represented celebrities from the Duchess of Sussex to the Kardashians, handling everything from trademark disputes to defamation lawsuits.



**1976**

**Judy Hoffman's** ceramic sculptures were displayed this spring at Sculpture Space NYC in New York.

**1978**

**David Kathan** gave a presentation for the Naugatuck Valley Genealogy Club, “No Longer a Dead-End Kid: Discovering the Ancestry of the Gorceys,” in May at the Prospect Public Library in Prospect, Connecticut, and via Zoom.

**1979**

**Mark Bailey** was recognized as an “Amazing Educator” by Pamplin Media Group. He teaches at Pacific University’s Forest Grove campus in Oregon.

**1980s**

**1981**

**Jim Gilbert** presented a two-part program, “Lewis & Clark, The Great Expedition,” in April at Central College about the explorers’ voyage.

**Lance Isen** spent December 2023 and January 2024 doing logistics work on a volunteer basis at an Israeli Air Force base near Be’er Sheva in Israel. He returned in May 2024 to continue his volunteer work at a different base.

**1988**

**E. Shelley Reid** published a college writing textbook, *Rethinking Your Writing: Rhetoric for Reflective Writers*, as an open-access, free online resource with Writing Across the Curriculum Clearinghouse Press.

**1989**

**Neva Specht** was named acting provost of Appalachian State University.

**Luc Hatlestad** is the director of media relations and internal communications at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, Minnesota.

**1990s**

**1990**

**Tony Harris** is director of business development at Linical, a Japanese contract research organization. He is responsible for helping grow the company’s business in Europe.

**Jenny Jones** was elected to city council for North Bend, Oregon, in November 2023. She is a part of a council that is majority women for the first time in its history.

**SHARE YOUR NEWS**

Tell us about awards, promotions, family milestones, and more, so we can share your news in future Classnotes. Submissions may be edited for length, content, and style.

WEB: [alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes](http://alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes)

EMAIL: [classnotes@grinnell.edu](mailto:classnotes@grinnell.edu)

PHONE: 866-850-1846

MAIL: Classnotes, Office of Development and Alumni Relations, 733 Broad St., Grinnell, IA, 50112

Classnotes are published on a rolling basis in the next available issue. The magazine is published three times a year: fall (November/December), spring (March/April), and summer (July/August). Classnotes production for each issue closes approximately eight weeks prior to publication.

**Need to update your address or contact information?**

EMAIL: [update@grinnell.edu](mailto:update@grinnell.edu)

**John Elmore** is the new head of school for Wakefield Country Day School, a pre-K-12 independent school in Huntly, Virginia.

### 1991

**David Casey** has been appointed to serve as secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

### 1992

**Christian Hardigree** was selected as a Fulbright Scholar to participate in the Fulbright International Education Administrators (IEA) program in France in fall 2024. The IEA program selected a dozen higher education leaders from across the U.S. to participate in an intensive two-week seminar, learn more about the French education system, and establish networks of U.S. and international colleagues.

### 1993

**Laura Blackwell** was awarded the 2023 Shirley Jackson Award for Short Fiction for “The First Mrs. Edward Rochester Would Like a Word,” during the Readercon 33 awards ceremony held in Massachusetts in July. The short story appears in *Aseptic and Faintly Sadistic: An Anthology of Hysteria Fiction*.



**Laura Blackwell** accepting the Shirley Jackson Award for Short Fiction.

### 1996

**Sally Campbell Pirie** launched the Comics Based Research (CBR) Lab at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, in December 2023. CBR is a subgenre of arts-based research that can be applied to virtually any academic discipline. Pirie, who is a professor of child and family studies at the university, was one of the first scholars to publish about comics-based research and is an award-winning newspaper cartoonist.

**Joseph Ko** was featured in the *New York Post's* “Scholars Contest” where a pupil of his, Sarah Sun, submitted an article about Ko and his journey in education. The article won an honorable mention.

### 1997

**Adam Kempenaar** is a professor of practice at the University of Iowa with a joint appointment in journalism and mass communication, and sport and recreation management. His family also recently welcomed two new additions via adoption: Olivia Veronica Kempenaar (May 2023) and brother Adrien Joseph “AJ” Kempenaar (November 2023).

In May, **Alice Kloker** was elected to serve as a labour council member representative for the Shirley Ward on the Southampton (United Kingdom) City Council.

**Heather Desaire** was awarded the designation of university distinguished professor in the department of chemistry at the University of Kansas.

### 1998

**Amy Saari** is the new director of the Henry Ford College Chorus.

### 1999

**Courtney Birkett** is the cultural resources manager at Fort Eustis, Virginia.

**Misty Huacuja-LaPointe** was awarded the inaugural National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP) Rising Star Award for Emerging Leaders in Pre-Health Advising. The award is designed to spotlight the next generation of pre-health advising professionals who have demonstrated exceptional drive, initiative, and potential, setting them apart as future luminaries in the field.

## 2000s

### 2001

**Robyn Lingo** is 826DC’s new executive director. 826DC is a nonprofit arts education organization that helps Washington, D.C., students build their writing skills, share what matters to them, and forge a lifelong relationship with writing.

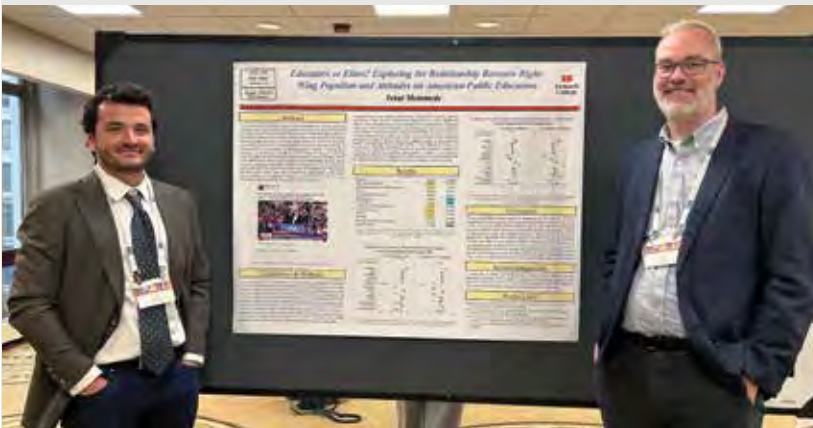
### 2004

**Lorraine Gaynor** has been appointed to the faculty of the University of Iowa College of Law as an assistant professor of legal analysis, writing, and research.

**ALUMNI PROFILE** ISHAI MELAMEDE '23

**Ishai Melamede** says he was never particularly taken with the natural sciences as subjects, but he enjoyed the processes and methods associated with them. “You have a question, you think of a systematic way to answer that question, you test it, you evaluate your test, and then you try again,” he says.

Melamede found the Grinnell College National Poll to be the happy medium between the subject matter that interested him and the scientific method. “That’s the conceit that drew me into polling initially, and I kept going from there.” Melamede began working on the College poll, eventually serving as one of the poll’s board members, working closely with Poll Director **Peter Hanson** and legendary Iowa pollster J. Ann Selzer.



Ishai Melamede (left) and Peter Hanson, associate professor of political science, presented their research findings at the 2023 Midwest Political Science Association conference in Chicago.

Hanson and Melamede went on to have “a productive partnership” that included a teaching assistantship, a Mentored Advanced Project, and articles that have zeroed in on people’s attitudes about public education.

A year after graduation, Melamede works as a research assistant at Langer Research Associates and has the opportunity to learn “why people think the way they do” through polling. When Melamede joined Langer last fall, one of the first projects he worked on was the Pew Research Center’s Global Attitudes project.

“There are relatively few methodologically rigorous studies that ask the same questions at the same time to people in so many different contexts,” he says.

by Joe Engleman '14

**2005**

**Molly Beth (Obsatz) Griffin’s** children’s book, *Ten Beautiful Things*, was chosen to represent Iowa at the Library of Congress National Book Festival held in Washington, D.C., in August. Griffin’s book follows a young child and her grandmother searching for 10 beautiful things during a long car ride to Iowa.

**Paul Duffin** was selected as an inaugural Bingham Endowed Chair for Teaching Excellence faculty member at Transylvania University, where he is an associate professor of biology and currently serves as the presiding faculty officer.

**2006**

**Matthew Pflaum** passed his dissertation defense in geography at the University of Florida and earned a Ph.D. He plans to move to France as he continues to apply for jobs.

**2007**

**Daren Daniels** and Elliot Proebstel married under the chuppah in April 2024, in the company of family and friends. Daniels is a senior attorney-advisor at the Social Security Administration, and Proebstel is a computer engineer at a private equity firm. They live in Washington, D.C.



Elliot Proebstel and Daren Daniels.



## 2008

**Hannah Garden-Monheit**, who was the special assistant to the president for economic policy with the White House, is now the director of the Office of Policy Planning at the Federal Trade Commission.

**Becca Weiner Green** is the executive director of the Charlotte Jewish Preschool and is working to implement innovative programs and build strong relationships within the preschool and the larger community. This new position marks a significant milestone in Green's nonprofit education career, reflecting a dedicated pursuit of educational excellence and leadership.

## 2010s

### 2011

**Graciela Guzmán** won her primary race for the Illinois State Senate, District 20 in March 2024.

**Christine Stoddard** co-hosted the third episode of the comedy TV show *Don't Mind If I Don't*, airing on YouTube @dontmindtheshow and the Manhattan Neighborhood Network. The edutainment episode about painting featured a roundtable discussion with host/creator Aaron Gold and two painting experts, as well as amusing demos.

### 2012

**Kristen Mumaw** and **Michael Nodzinski** welcomed their second child, a son, Arthur Daniel Mumaw, March 30, 2024.

### 2014

**Eric Mistry** was the featured guest on the *Customer Educated* podcast. He spoke about his work in automation and operations in SaaS (Software as a Service) companies.

**Andrea Nemecek** is the National Organizing Director of the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in Washington, D.C.

### 2015

**Natalie Duncombe** graduated with a Ph.D. in economics from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She will be joining the Government Accountability Office as an economist.

**Miriam Clayton Erickson** and her husband, Jake Erickson, welcomed their first child, Sabrina, on March 23, 2024, in Madison, Wisconsin.

### 2016

**Paige-Erin Wheeler** graduated with her Ph.D. in linguistics from the University of Texas-Austin in May 2024. After graduating, she hiked the Camino de Santiago (the French route) before moving back to the Midwest in August.

**Paige-Erin Wheeler** (second from left) with members of her dissertation committee.



### 2017

**Jack Thornton** completed his Ph.D. in sociology at the University of Pennsylvania in July and began teaching at Bryn Mawr College in the fall. His dissertation, "Generous: The Labor of Philanthropy in U.S. Higher Education," was inspired by his time working in the Development and Alumni Relations office during his four years at Grinnell.

**Olivia Fromm's** first book was recently published under her pen name, Olivia Bylove. *Saving Breitenbush* is

a nonfiction story about a renowned Oregon retreat center that suffered a devastating wildfire and nearly burned to the ground in 2020, but for the bravery of a few individuals that stayed and fought the fire.



2018



**Anastasiia Morozova and Pratik Karki '20** were married in a ceremony at the Malibu Hindu Temple, followed by a reception at the Santa Barbara Sailing Club on May 3. Morozova is a Ph.D. candidate in economics at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and Karki is a cloud architect at Google.

Grinnellians in attendance for the wedding celebrations included (l-r): **Aabid Shamji '20, Luo Yang '20, Sahil Hooda '21, Nacho Mateo '20, Aditya Ohrie '20, Rohan Gandotra '20, Sesili Koberidze '21, James Msekela '20, Ali Admair '21, Dev Nalwa '20, and Anaan Ramay '20.**

2020s

2020

**Taryn Washburn** was recently featured in an article on Washington and Lee University's "The Columns" website. She discussed her experience working with clients in the Trusts and Estates Practicum.

2022

**Anika Jane Beamer** is one of seven talented writers pursuing careers in science journalism to have been awarded a prestigious Taylor/Blakeslee University Fellowship for the 2024-25 academic year by the Council for the Advancement of Science Writing. The award supports graduate training in

science writing, thanks to funding from the Brinson Foundation. Beamer, who spent the last two years as the science writing fellow for Grinnell College, was admitted to the science writing program at MIT this fall.

ERRATA

**Dave Werntz '86** contacted the Alumni Office about the Summer 2024 issue of *The Grinnell Magazine* to note, "You misgendered my buddy ... I don't think he cares. I'm sure it's not the first time. ... Still, Les is a solid Grinnellian, has accomplished a lot and deserves a correction." We apologize for the mistake; a corrected note follows:

1985

**Leslie Ragan** is senior civil group manager of EV/Clean Transportation at NV5. Working out of the San Diego regional office, he oversees various design teams constructing hardscape improvements and stormwater runoff quality management infrastructure in support of the electric power delivery grid and electric vehicle charging stations in the western United States.

## Alumni Events

### President Harris Travels to Asia

President **Anne F. Harris** ventured to Asia this summer to connect with Grinnell alumni and friends in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Seoul. During several events, she discussed how the College continues to live out its mission of preparing Grinnellians to serve the common good. The first event in Shanghai served as a welcome for incoming first-years from the class of 2028 and their families, while subsequent events focused on connecting alumni, students, parents, and friends.



Hong Kong



Singapore



Shanghai

Top: Phoebe Leung '09, left, Phoebe Zhang '10, President Harris, Gary Ngan, Alex Ngan (front), Tai Ping Lee '09 and Yue Hou '09 pose for a picture at the Hong Kong event hosted by Lee and Ngan.

Middle: Hosts Brenda Horrigan '88 and Eric Johnson '88 welcomed alumni, parents, and current students for a brunch with President Harris at their home.

Left: Alumni Council member Maggie Bian '09 hosted a reception at YF Capital in Shanghai, China where alums took a photo with President Harris.

**Some alumni and friends inquire about making a memorial gift. If you would like to do so, please call 866-850-1846 and ask for Jayn Bailey Chaney '05.**

**Natalie “Nan” Kenyon Livergood '45**, May 13, 2024, Sidney, Ohio. Nan married Arthur Livergood in 1947. She was a speech pathologist for over 30 years. An active member of First Congregational United Church of Christ, she sang in the choir and served as a volunteer. She also was a member of a book club, couples bridge club, and a dance club. She was preceded in death by her husband and two daughters. Survivors include a daughter; four grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

**Rene (Grinnell) Wilson '45**, Nov. 6, 2023, Arcadia, California. After graduation, Rene married H. Thomas Wilson in Washington, D.C., and later became the office manager for his architecture firm. She was active in various NGOs and volunteer organizations, including the United Nations Association, where she received a lifetime achievement award. She also dedicated time to the League of Women Voters and the Commission on Aging. She was a member of the Pasadena Presbyterian Church, where she sang in the choir for many years.

**Kenneth D. Barringer '46**, Nov. 7, 2023, Sun City Center, Florida. Kenneth served in the U.S. Navy during World War II. After returning home, he became a United Methodist minister and

was a professor at Morningside College. He earned a doctorate in psychology, then went into private practice as a clinical psychologist and also provided marriage counseling. He did volunteer counseling at a prison for women. Survivors include his wife of 56 years, Joan (Freeman) Barringer, and six of their seven children.

**Edward L. Rissien '46**, April 8, 2023, Los Angeles. Edward attended Grinnell and then served in the U.S. Army Air Force. After the war he studied at Stanford, graduating with a degree in political science. In 1954, he moved to Hollywood and went on to a successful career in entertainment as a production company executive and producer. He produced the war film *Castle Keep* and served as an executive at ABC, Bing Crosby Productions, Filmways, and Playboy Productions.

**Mae Ruttger Heglund '48**, March 4, 2024, Ironton, Minnesota. After earning her degree in business and economics, Mae went on to manage her family's business in Minnesota. In 1956, she married John Heglund at Ruttger's Bay Lake Resort. She worked at Ruttger's as a bookkeeper and payroll administrator for many years. She was a lifelong member of the United Methodist Church and a dedicated member of the church choir. She was preceded in death by her husband.

**William H. Lowden '50**, Nov. 22, 2023, Wilmington, North Carolina. After graduating from Grinnell, Bill earned a doctorate in biochemistry and an MBA. He worked in the

pharmaceutical and oil industries as a chemist, then became a Wall Street chemicals analyst covering a variety of industries. In retirement he enjoyed playing golf, became a Mason and a Shriner, and put his financial skills to work as a volunteer. He was ordained as a deacon in the Presbyterian Church. Bill was preceded in death by his wife, Grace. Survivors include his two daughters.

**Carolyn Swartz Bucksbaum '51, DL '12**, Oct. 22, 2024, Chicago. See *tribute on p. 48*.

**Emily “Ann” (Good) Lord '52**, Feb. 24, 2024, Aurora, Illinois. After graduating from Grinnell, Ann worked at KGLO television and radio in Mason City, Iowa, first as an ad copywriter, then as an on-air personality. She then was a speech teacher for 20 years at Naperville North High School. She was the Naperville Municipal Band moderator for 66 years. She also was a singer and actress, appearing in local theater productions and performing one-woman shows and shows with her daughter. Her husband of 54 years, John Lord, died in 2008. Survivors include her three children.

**Merle Fischlowitz '53**, Jan. 31, 2024, Honolulu. Merle remembered his friendships with students from abroad as one of the most rewarding aspects of his time at Grinnell. Following graduation, he received a master's from Washington University in St. Louis and his doctorate from St. Louis University. Merle's long career had many stages, including as a

school counselor and director of psychological services in public schools and at a community college, then as a psychologist in private practice in Honolulu. Upon retirement, he moved to California, where he served on the boards of his synagogue and Jewish community groups as well as classical music groups. He also published three poetry books, a book of short stories, and a memoir. In 2021, he returned to Honolulu. Merle was a very engaged and active alum — he was a class fund director (1998-2001), Alumni in the Classroom volunteer, and frequent event attendee. He also was a generous benefactor of the College. Among other initiatives he supported, Merle established the Merle Fischlowitz International Student Travel Fellowship, which provides a unique opportunity for international students to learn more about the United States through independent travel. Merle was honored with a Grinnell College Alumni Award in 2003.

**Portia McNally Halsey '54**, May 26, 2024, Saint Johns, Florida. Portia and *Kent Halsey '54* met on the train to Grinnell in 1950, and they married in 1955. Her brightest legacy is the tight-knit family she made with Kent. Portia, who taught elementary school, went on to receive her master's in teaching from Montclair State University. She was an avid reader, excelled at bridge, and loved spending time with her family. She is survived by Kent, her husband of nearly 69 years; their son and daughter; four grandchildren; and several great-grandchildren.

**Frederic "Fritz" L. Goreham '56**, May 8, 2024, Scottsdale, Arizona. Fritz loved his time at Grinnell. Some of his favorite memories involved his participation as a member of the cross-country, golf, and basketball teams, and a semester spent in Washington, D.C. Fritz married Sandra Hutchins in 1958. They had four children and enjoyed 63 years of marriage. He graduated from the University of Iowa College of Law in 1959. In 1963, he took a position with the U.S. Department of the Interior in Arizona, where he worked until his retirement. He was a founding member of the Arizona Road Racers and ran at least 15 marathons, including the Boston Marathon. He officiated basketball and football at the youth, high school, and college levels, and was admitted to the Arizona Football Officials Association Hall of Fame. He is survived by three children and nine grandchildren, including granddaughter *Abby Goreham '15*.

**Mary Ann "Molly" Walsh '56**, June 20, 2024, Montréal, Canada. Molly, who enjoyed a lifelong love for travel, worked as a flight attendant after college. She married David Miller in 1959, and they had two sons. In 1970, the family moved to Montréal, where Molly worked as a children's librarian. Molly and David divorced in 1974. She earned a master's in library science and became a pillar in Montréal's library community. She also was a social activist committed to peace, women's rights, and the environment. Survivors include a son; four grandchildren; and her identical twin sister, *Jane Walsh Gralen '56*.

**Nancy Booth Hagstrom '57**, March 16, 2024, Oakland, California. A music education major, Nancy enjoyed choral directing, piano, pipe organ, and voice. After her children were born, she went back to school and earned a master's in teaching reading. She spent five years teaching music and 20+ years teaching first-graders to read and love learning. She traveled extensively to pursue genealogical connections in Norway and for adventures with her children. She was a camper, Norwegian dancer, cancer survivor, and active church member. Nancy deeply believed in volunteering, teaching tolerance, and advocating for justice.

**John S. Odiorne '57**, Oct. 13, 2023, Geneva, Illinois. John worked for Kemper Insurance for over 30 years. He enjoyed playing tennis and golf, stamp collecting, traveling, playing cards, and spending time with family. John's survivors include his wife, Sally, and two children.

**Norman K. Cook '58**, June 18, 2024, Charlotte, North Carolina. Norm attended the University of Chicago before he transferred to Grinnell and earned his degree in chemistry. He went on to graduate studies at Purdue, where he met June Ann Smith. During Norm's career as a chemist, he worked at Armor Pharmaceuticals, Fiber Industries, and Celanese Corporation. He then spent 23 years with Texasgulf in a more people-based role. In retirement, Norm found joy in his grandsons and the simple pleasures of life. Survivors include his wife of 59 years, June; a son; and two grandsons.

**Robert G. Connor '58**, June 20, 2024, Clive, Iowa. Bob graduated from Grinnell with a major in economics. He was a member of the U.S. Army Reserve from 1958 to 1963, and married Shirley Stevens in 1964. Bob worked for Consumer Lumber Company for 50 years, 44 of them as owner and manager. He was a member of Plymouth Congregational Church, where he served as a deacon. Bob and Shirley enjoyed many tours of the U.S., Canada, Europe, and the Caribbean. Bob was preceded in death by his wife. Survivors include his two daughters.

**Anne Moore Dooley '59**, July 25, 2024, Saskatoon, Canada. Anne met her late husband, *Peter C. Dooley '59*, at Grinnell, and they immigrated to Canada in 1966. She became a commercial pilot, flight instructor, and an aerial traffic reporter. She was one of the first commanders in Saskatchewan's Civil Air Search and Rescue. When arthritis ended her career as a pilot, she became active as a patient advocate, playing many roles with the Canadian Arthritis Society. She was appointed to the Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics and also served on the University of Saskatchewan's Biomedical Ethics Review Board. Anne received Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee Medal in 2002 and the Diamond Jubilee Medal in 2012. Survivors include four children and eight grandchildren.

**Janet Johnson Murray '60**, Jan. 6, 2024, Tucson, Arizona. Janet married her college sweetheart, *William Murray '60*, two days before graduation. She went on to

earn a master's in psychology and obtained certification as a school psychologist. Janet was a strong advocate for children with special needs. Following retirement, she continued her service to the community and pursued her hobby of jewelry design and fabrication. Janet's survivors include Bill, her husband of 64 years; a daughter; a son, *Robert Murray '88*; and four grandchildren.

**Judith Kent Whipple '60**, June 1, 2024, Madison, Wisconsin. After Grinnell, Judy earned a master's from the University of Iowa. In 1961, she married *Carlyle "Hank" Whipple '60*. They had two daughters and a son. Judy taught school in Wisconsin, New York, and Michigan, and supervised student teachers for several years for the University of Wisconsin. A longtime hospice volunteer, Judy was a board member of the West Madison Coalition of Older Adults and an active member of First Congregational Church. Some of her family's happiest moments were spent at their Door County cabin. Survivors include Hank, her husband of almost 63 years.

**David L. White '60**, Dec. 22, 2023, Fort Worth, Texas. David and his late sister, *Priscilla White Foster '63*, both graduated from Grinnell. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps for 13 years, with assignments in Korea, Thailand, Germany, Vietnam, and stateside. He retired from active duty as a lieutenant colonel. David obtained a master's in hospital administration in 1976 and went on to work as a hospital administrator

in Ann Arbor, Omaha, Atlanta, and Fort Worth. He retired in 1989. Survivors include two daughters and three grandchildren.

**Frances O'Reilly '63**, July 23, 2024, Vashon, Washington. After Grinnell, Fran pursued a doctorate in comparative literature at the University of Michigan, where she met her husband, Michael Parkis. Her love of horses led to a lifetime of owning and caring for horses, teaching others to ride, and judging equestrian competitions across the U.S. She was an alternate on the U.S. Olympic Dressage Team in the 1970s. Fran and Michael moved to Vashon Island in 2004 and established Glendalough Horse Farm. She is remembered as a lover of books, horses, and golden retrievers, and a world traveler. Fran also served as a GRASP volunteer (1998-2017).

**R. James Roberts '63**, March 20, 2024, Hingham, Massachusetts. Jim joined the U.S. Army in 1967 and attended Officer Candidate School. He served two years in Vietnam and was honorably discharged as a first lieutenant. After his return home, he met Eleanor, and they were married for 51 years. With Eleanor, Jim ran Nantucket Sound, a high-end, custom-installation electronics business, for 49 years. Jim was an avid reader who loved science fiction and travel. He was a devoted father to his four children, including his daughter, *Julie Roberts '97*; and a cherished grandfather to his eight grandchildren.

**Jean Voluckas Lincoln '64**, June 24, 2023, Williston, Vermont. Jean graduated with Phi Beta Kappa

honors and went on to get a master's in social administration from Case Western Reserve. She worked serving others until she was sidelined by illness. Despite her struggles, she put extraordinary effort into multiple volunteer and paid positions, serving others through Steps to End Domestic Violence, VT Legal Aid, and Fletcher Free Library. She was an active member at both College Street Congregational Church and the Unitarian Universalist Society of Burlington.

**John D. Sutton '64**, March 2, 2024, Arlington, Virginia. John's favorite times centered on family, nature, travel, and community. An amateur genealogist, he enjoyed exploring family history and stories. He was most content when camping, hiking, biking, gardening, birding, and driving the family camper along back roads with his wife, *Christine "Chris" Peterson Sutton '66*. John's commitment to promoting justice and equal opportunity was first sparked during his years as a Peace Corps volunteer in the 1960s, and it continued throughout his life. He also was a generous supporter of Grinnell College. Survivors include his wife, Chris; their two daughters; and four grandchildren.

**Donald D. Dietrich '65**, Nov. 26, 2023, Fenton, Missouri.

**James W. Hughes '66**, July 16, 2024, Des Moines, Iowa. After Grinnell, James went on to studies at Drake University Law School. He specialized in general practice. James greatly enjoyed playing acoustic and electric guitar. He belonged to a blues society and had an extensive record album collection.

**Edward E. Steele '66**, March 23, 2024, St. Louis. After majoring in physics at Grinnell and earning an MBA from Cornell University, Ted embarked on a career in information technology management. He was a passionate genealogist and wrote numerous genealogy articles and published several books, including a Steele family history. Ted found happiness in the beauty of nature through travel and, particularly later in life, at a cabin in Maine. He was an active member of the local contra dance community as both a dancer and caller. Survivors include his wife, Judy; two sons; and four grandchildren.

**Judith Johnson Halama '68**, June 10, 2024, Whitefish, Montana. After Grinnell, Judy earned a doctorate in psychology at UCLA. She served as a clinical psychologist treating substance abuse patients in the Los Angeles VA Hospital system for about 25 years, helping countless veterans before retiring in 2000. Judy was very involved in the design and development of her family's homes and loved spending time gazing at mountain, lake, and beach views. She was an avid reader and had a passion for cooking. Judy was an active alum, serving on her 40th and 45th Reunion committees and as a GRASP volunteer (1998-2017). Survivors include her husband of 55 years, *William Halama '62*; two children; and five grandchildren.

**John R. Wiles '68**, Feb. 24, 2024, Corona, California. John lived in Philadelphia until 1997, then returned to Corona. He resided with his mother in her last years, serving as her principal caregiver

until her death in 2017. He was very active in a project that provided Corona elementary school students with free, personal dictionaries. He helped organize a scholarship fund in support of young women pursuing post-graduation educational goals, which became an annual award at Corona High School and served as a tribute to his mother's life of teaching and public service. John was a member of his 50th Reunion Committee and a Class Committee member (2017-21).

**Jennifer "Mernie" Smith '70**, May 1, 2024, Eugene, Oregon. Mernie, who graduated with Phi Beta Kappa honors, received a master's in education from Brown University, spent a year teaching English in Mexico, then taught high school Spanish in California. In 1976, she earned a master's in Spanish from the University of Oregon and taught junior high school Spanish in Eugene. She received a graduate degree in library science and worked as a librarian at the Eugene Public Library from 1980 until her retirement in 2003. She sang in the church choir and a women's choral group, played violin in the Eugene Community Orchestra, and performed in a flute choir. She also painted and wrote poetry, plays, and a children's novel.

**James G. Spell '71**, April 5, 2024, Eagle, Colorado. After college, Jim had jobs in television, as a touring musician, as a dog catcher, and as a singing waiter. Eventually, he went on to 33-year career as a firefighter with Vail Fire and Emergency Services, spending the last 20 years as a captain. He earned a degree in fire science from Colorado

Mountain College and created a first responder scholarship there. After retiring, he was a safety consultant and authored two books about firefighting. His hobbies included playing guitar and drums, fly fishing, carpentry, and model aviation. Survivors include his wife of almost 40 years, Pam Spell; and a son.

**John D. Boyden '72**, Feb. 26, 2024, Lovington, New Mexico. John taught elementary and secondary school and was a counselor and special education teacher. He loved to read and was the author of two self-published novels. He enjoyed acting at Hobbs Community Playhouse and portraying St. Nicholas for the children at St. Christopher's Episcopal Church. He also enjoyed playing chess. Survivors include his wife of 40 years, Melanie; four children; and three grandchildren.

**Mark A. Krause '78**, June 18, 2024, Cedar Falls, Iowa. Mark, who earned a doctorate in agricultural economics from Michigan State, spent the last two decades of his career with John Deere. Mark met his wife, Joyce, in graduate school. They married in 1992 and were members of the Lutheran Church of Hope. Mark loved being a father. With his family grown, his favorite activity was to visit them to celebrate holidays and life milestones. He had many interests: travel, biking, running, reading, music, and keeping up with old friends, especially from his college and Peace Corps days. Survivors include his wife and the couple's five children.

**Lisa Adkins '80**, April 17, 2024, Grinnell, Iowa. Lisa was born and raised in Grinnell. She attended Grinnell College and then Iowa State University, where she received a degree in interior design. She returned to Grinnell and worked for the Grinnell College Libraries for more than 30 years. Lisa enjoyed animals, traveling, and the arts. Christmas was her favorite time of year; she enjoyed the traditions and togetherness the season brought. Lisa especially loved socializing at dinners and galas with coworkers, friends, and family.

**Craig W. Montgomery '84**, March 1, 2024, Española, New Mexico. Craig was an outstanding scholar, track and cross-country athlete, and choir member in high school. After he graduated from Grinnell, Craig went on to earn a master's and a doctorate in chemistry from

Iowa State University. Throughout his life, he was a conservationist and loved the outdoors.

**Christopher F. Schlicht '97**, July 14, 2024, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Christopher, who was born in Cedar Rapids, was a graduate of Regis High School. He studied religion and philosophy at Grinnell. Christopher enjoyed classical music and was known for his great sense of humor. He passed away after a long battle with kidney disease. Survivors include his seven siblings and many extended family members.

**David P. Minnix '05**, Jan. 4, 2024, Avondale Estates, Georgia. David is remembered for his beautiful family, business success built on ethics and compassion, philanthropic spirit, and sense of humor. David and his business partner founded a specialized tech company, which they sold in 2021, created an office development, and invested in a restaurant group. David and his wife, Elizabeth Hagan, also invested in historic preservation by helping to restore an historic house in Madison, Georgia. David's philanthropy included children's education, elderly individuals without family, and the people of rural Honduras. David died from complications of pneumonia. Survivors include his wife, Elizabeth; and three little girls who were the delight of his life.

**Cody J. Parrott '05**, June 24, 2024, Iowa City, Iowa. Cody loved writing, churning out three novels when he was 16, and continuing to write through college as an

### Submit an Obituary

*The Grinnell Magazine* publishes brief obituaries of alumni and other Grinnellians but does not attempt to write definitive obituaries. Submissions are welcome and may be edited for clarity, length, and style. Please share a link to online obituary, if available. Submit to [classnotes@grinnell.edu](mailto:classnotes@grinnell.edu) or [alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes](mailto:alumni.grinnell.edu/community/classnotes).



English major. He loved writing fantasy novels, and his imagination was endless. He also loved video games, movies, and spending time with friends. Cody was able to have three good college years, but his mental health broke down his senior year. Diagnosed with generalized anxiety disorder, he had many different treatments over 20 years. Cody succumbed to severe depression and died by suicide. Survivors include his mother and a brother.

**Graham D. Conlon '14**, July 8, 2024, Las Cruces, New Mexico. Graham's time at Grinnell changed his life. He was a religious studies major and became especially interested in world history and

international politics. He was a proud member of the Grinnell baseball team, playing catcher and later first base. Graham loved his Grinnell teammates, classmates, coaches, professors, and friends, and it was because of them that he decided to devote his life to public service. After college, he interned at the International Center for Religion and Diplomacy. He graduated from the University of Nebraska College of Law in 2017 and became a prosecutor. Most recently, he worked as an assistant district attorney in New Mexico, where he advocated for victims of sexual abuse. Survivors include his father; and his sister, *Alexandra Conlon '09*.

## STAFF

**Marsha Maschmann**, May 24, 2024, Malcom, Iowa. Marsha worked for the College as a senior staff accountant from 1987 until she retired in January 2024. She was dedicated to her job and the College, and colleagues knew they could always call on her for help. Marsha had a huge heart and was willing to help anyone who needed it. She loved her cats and took care of any strays she came across.

## FACULTY

**D.A. Smith**, Aug. 10, 2024, Grinnell, Iowa. A beloved mentor and teacher who joined the faculty in 1970, Professor Emeritus of History D.A. Smith leaves a half-century legacy of service to Grinnell College. He offered courses in British history and partnered to teach interdisciplinary courses, such as a celebrated class on the Enlightenment. In 2000, he was named L.F. Parker Professor of History. He considered his tutorial and seminar on Alexis de Tocqueville, designed and taught as a senior faculty member, among the highlights of his teaching career. His service to the academic mission of the College was



extraordinary. He was on the initial faculty planning group that established the College's institutional partnership with Nanjing University in China. Over more than two decades, he taught courses and delivered lectures there and was revered by his Chinese colleagues. From 1970 to 2001, he was the

College's adviser for Rhodes and Marshall scholarships. His network of colleagues, former students, and friends extends across the world. A gathering to celebrate Professor Smith's life will be held at a later date, possibly to coincide with Reunion 2025.

## CAROLYN SWARTZ BUCKSBAUM

*First woman chair of the Grinnell College Board of Trustees*

Life Trustee **Carolyn “Kay” Swartz Bucksbaum ’51, DL ’12**, died Oct. 22 at her home in Chicago at the age of 95. Kay, who was the first woman chair of the Board of Trustees, led a long and full life as a wife, mother, community leader, and philanthropist.

Kay worked tirelessly to support and improve education, arts, and healthcare, and was a keen advocate for women’s rights and justice. She served on numerous regional and national boards and was a champion of many charitable causes. She had a strong interest in helping young people achieve their dreams, and she befriended and encouraged many talented young people to pursue their goals in academia and the arts.

Kay was born and raised in Des Moines, Iowa. She self-published an autobiography of growing up during the World War II years in Des Moines, called *A Place to Grow: Memories of an Iowa Childhood*.

As a Grinnell student, Kay participated in drama, Spanish club, and was Student Council treasurer and president of the synchronized swim club. She also was active in journalism, being named the first woman editor of the Grinnell campus newspaper. She was recruited for an executive training program at Meredith Publishing, and later served on the board of the *Des Moines Register*. Kay graduated with honors.

After a blind date set up by a future in-law, she married Matthew Bucksbaum from Marshalltown, Iowa, where they lived until moving to Cedar Rapids and eventually to Bettendorf and Des Moines, as her husband and brother-in-law’s shopping center development business, General Growth Properties, rapidly expanded, first throughout the Midwest and then nationally.

Kay joined the Board of Trustees in 1970, served as chair of the board from 1974 to 1978, and

became a Life Member in 1998. She received an honorary doctor of laws degree from Grinnell College in 2012.

Kay and Matthew were generous benefactors of the College. Kay’s father was a 1917 Grinnell graduate, and she established the Mose E. Swartz scholarship in his honor. Kay and Matthew supported

the construction of the Bucksbaum Center for the Arts, built in 1999, to consolidate Grinnell’s art, music, and theatre departments under one roof. The center serves as an enduring legacy to the Bucksbaums’ appreciation for and support of the performing arts. Matthew passed away in November 2013.

Kay served as chair of the Des Moines Symphony and the Aspen Music Festival and School. She served on the boards of the Art Institute of

Chicago, the Museum of Art and Design in New York, and the National Public Radio Foundation. She was a co-founder of the Bucksbaum-Siegler Institute for Clinical Excellence at the University of Chicago Pritzker School of Medicine, with a special interest in advancing patient-centered care. She recently announced a major gift to establish the Bucksbaum Photography Center at the Art Institute of Chicago.

Kay was active in the League of Women Voters, parading for reproductive rights even from a wheelchair, and demonstrating the importance of tolerance and understanding as shown by her wide circle of friends from every nationality and background.

Kay is lovingly survived by her family; her daughter, Ann (Thomas L. Friedman) of Bethesda; her son, John Bucksbaum (Jacolyn Baker Bucksbaum) of Chicago; four grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.



QUINTESSENTIAL GRINNELL



 **Grinnell College**

The Grinnell Magazine  
821 5th Ave., Suite 300  
Grinnell, Iowa 50112

NONPROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
GRINNELL  
COLLEGE

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

