

# Milton

Jane Bihldorff '65  
(See p. 26)



## THE FOOD ISSUE

IN GOOD TIMES AND  
BAD, FOOD HELPS BRING  
US TOGETHER

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**“There is a lot of content in the social media world that can be very polarizing and controversial. I’d like to think that what I do is the complete opposite. I’m all about food, and everybody loves food.”**

NICK DIGIOVANNI '15

## On the Cover



When photographer Matt Kalinowski first arrived at Pakeen Farm he thought it might help **JANE (LYMAN) BIHLDORFF '65** feel more comfortable in front of the camera if she were asked to hold one of the chickens. Turns out, he says, it wasn't necessary. "Jane is comfortable in any spot. She has a real connection and love for her chickens and seemed to really enjoy interacting with them. The image reflects her personality and that comfort level."

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**Milton**

**DARE TO BE TRUE**  
FALL 2021

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## Quad



On Friday nights throughout the school year, science teacher Jim Kernohan opens Ayer Observatory (above) to the School and the town. The building's 12-foot dome houses a 12-inch Meade telescope and a smaller dome houses a 9-inch Takahashi reflector.



# Breaking Bread

HEAD OF SCHOOL TODD BLAND TREASURES HIS TIME SHARING MEALS WITH MEMBERS OF THE MILTON COMMUNITY



BY TODD B. BLAND, HEAD OF SCHOOL

I RECENTLY SHARED with the Milton community my plan to step down as head of school at the end of the 2022–23 academic year. Although this is far from a farewell message—there are almost two years and much work to be done—I have already begun to reflect on the many gifts Milton Academy has given to my family and me. ■ By far, the greatest of these gifts are the connections with thousands of students, colleagues, alumni, families, and friends who have enriched our lives. I hold their stories close—be they funny, moving, tragic, epic, or small—as touchpoints that color personalities and biographies, as conversations that have expanded my understanding of the world. ■ In this issue, we focus on food and the many ways it fosters and strengthens these connections. The stories shared over meals are more personal, more familiar, because of the intimate nature of dining together. Even if you start as relative strangers, good conversation and sharing a wonderful meal create lasting impressions and memories. Food is something to celebrate on its own, of course, but sharing a meal together is about so much more; it's about stories, connection, and the love that goes into preparing—or receiving—the meal. ■ Food itself tells the story of the people who prepared it: Food holds our history and our culture, individual dishes demonstrate human evolution and our movement around the globe, meals together highlight our customs of sharing, and cooking centers our families and friends. Centuries-old faith traditions call for holy fasts and feasts that are still celebrated today. The way a culture prioritizes meals and mealtimes can shed some light on the priorities of its people. ■ I have treasured the privilege of traveling on behalf of our School, whether I've visited families and alumni as far away as Hong Kong and Seoul, or our sister school, El Pilar, in Ma-

drid. Whenever someone opens their home to me or hosts a meal to welcome me, I feel both humbled and honored.

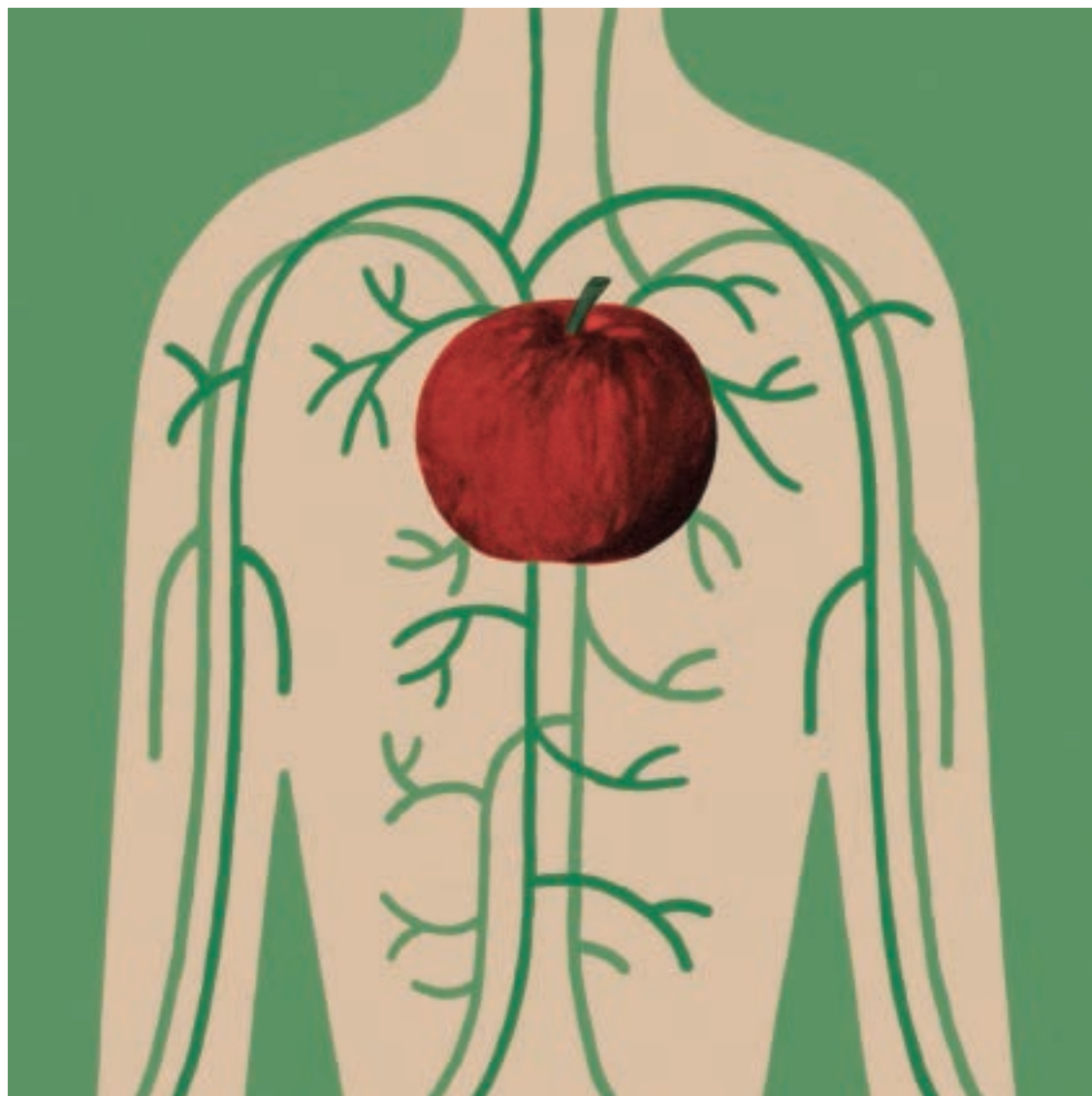
When my wife, Nancy, and I lived in Spain, we acclimated to slower meals and developed a feeling of near-reverence toward good food, and—more importantly—a respect for time spent together. From Milton’s international students, I’ve learned about culinary customs that have helped me navigate visits to their home countries and avoid etiquette gaffes. From those who have invited me to their table, I have felt at home around the world.

Americans are busy people, and our meals reflect that: We eat in our cars and over our keyboards, we eat while we scroll social media and respond to texts and emails. In a society that pioneered the “working lunch” and drive-through dinner, food sometimes serves only as fuel that powers us from one responsibility, one meeting, one appointment, one activity to the next. Eating becomes another task.

What we lose when we eat in such a rush are those critical moments of rest and community that mealtimes offer—moments to slow down and be grateful, to press pause on work, to quiet our minds, to enjoy food, and to learn more about ourselves and each other.

Throughout the school year, I eat lunch as frequently as possible in the dining hall with my colleagues on the faculty and staff. Sometimes the talk veers toward Milton business: someone will let me know about an issue or concern, or share news of something exciting happening in their classroom. More often, though, this informal setting turns

**“Good food is something to celebrate on its own, of course, but sharing a meal is about so much more.”**



conversations toward our non-work lives—we talk about our families or debrief episodes of favorite TV shows, joke about past misadventures, or celebrate life milestones. We let our guard down.

The pandemic has robbed us of many mealtime traditions. On campus, physical distancing requirements mean we can’t cram around tables indoors and enjoy those informal moments of community. This put a temporary stop to the din of laughter and chatting so familiar to our dining halls. In our personal lives, the risks of contracting the virus kept many families apart during important holiday meals and routine Sunday dinners.

The pandemic continues, of course, but the availability of COVID-19 vaccines brings the

promise of future gatherings—returning to our favorite dining traditions and creating new ones—after a long, difficult, isolating year and a half.

I’m an optimist, as you may have noticed in this space. I’m also a realist. I have no doubt that many of us will continue to squeeze eating into the rare empty spots on our calendars, and yet I hope one enduring lesson of the pandemic is how precious time spent with family and friends truly is. My wish is that we will dedicate more energy to seek out moments—however occasionally they may be in our busy schedules—to share meals and stories together; to pause a moment, to pull up a chair and put down our phones, to tell stories, to listen, and to dig in. ■

# Thursday Night Cooking: From Gaza to Milton

SCIENCE TEACHER MAHMOUD ABDALRAHMAN SHARES WITH STUDENTS  
SOME OF HIS FAVORITE FOODS FROM HIS HOMELAND



Preparing the dishes of his Palestinian homeland is a source of great enjoyment and comfort for Mahmoud Abdalrahman.

STARTING AS A NEW teacher at Milton Academy during a very unusual academic year, I did not know how things would go. It was only my third year of teaching at a high school level, and I was still learning how to navigate this world. When my faculty mentor, Jessica Bond, asked me to share some information about myself that she could use to introduce me at the first faculty meeting, I wasn't sure what to say. The only thing I could think of was my love for food and cooking international cuisines. This soon became the topic that other faculty members used to start conversations with me whenever we met on campus or in a Zoom breakout room.

Not long after, Kelly Reiser, the director of student activities, reached out to me and asked if I would be interested in hosting virtual Thursday night cooking sessions with Milton students. I appreciated the opportunity because I was already trying to think of ways to connect with the students and interact with them outside the classroom. I also thought it could offer the students some sense of community and normalcy during this particularly odd year. Cooking has long been a passion of mine, so I was enthusiastic to share that with the students. It is also an important part of my culture and identity—and a delicious way to represent it!

Moving to Italy from Palestine to attend high school at the United World College of the Adriatic at the age of 17, and being a practicing Muslim, brought some challenges. Food was one of them. It turns out that Italians love to cook with pork and wine! While my school made an effort to have appropriate meals

available for those with food restrictions like me, our options became quite repetitive. With the help of my mother (and Skype), I started teaching myself to cook all the dishes I was missing. Ever since—for the entire 15 years I have lived abroad—making the food of my homeland has been a source of enjoyment and comfort. It has helped me feel connected to my heritage. It was also a great way to share my culture with friends at my high school and later on in college at Clark University.

When eating at Arabic restaurants in the United States, I noticed that they generally feature meat-heavy dishes (kabab, shawarma, etc.). Many people are familiar with Levantine side dishes such as hummus, falafel, and taboule, but many of our main dishes are vegan or plant-based. I believe this is partly because meat is a luxury that the majority can't afford on a regular basis, and also farming is a historically common profession in that region. My Palestinian refugee grandparents, who settled in Gaza, came from farming villages where they ate what they planted. Such dishes focus heavily on fresh, high-quality, seasonal local produce. This inspired me to share less-known vegetable-heavy dishes such as stews based on spinach, chickpeas, black-eyed beans, okra, and green beans.

If the vegetable is not the focus of the dish, it becomes the spice or the herb used. In general, Levantine cuisines deviate from other more famous Mediterranean cuisines in our use of spices, which is influenced by ancient Indian trade routes. However, unlike many South Asian cuisines, ours tends to



focus on only one or a couple of spices or herbs per dish, emphasizing those specific flavors. Whenever I'm asked to give an example, I recall dill seeds. I seldom see a recipe from other cuisines that uses them, even though dill seeds can add a beautiful and unique aroma to carbs such as breads, rice, couscous, and especially when coupled with onion and olive oil.

To kick off Thursday cooking nights, I decided to start with simpler and well-known recipes the students are already familiar with before exploring more-foreign ones. We made shakshuka, hummus, shawarma (chicken or tofu), and split-lentil soup. I selected these dishes for their overall simplicity and wholesome flavors and for having easy vegetarian/vegan substitutions. The sessions always had a great turnout, and the students were enthusiastic about them. I greatly enjoyed watching them cook and hearing about their experiences sharing the fruits of their labor with their families. Those students who were not able to cook along took careful notes, made the dishes later on, and shared photos of them with me. I was pleased when some parents reached out to me and expressed their appreciation and enjoyment of the dishes their children cooked.

While it felt odd at first to cook while giving instructions as we see on TV, it did not seem all that different from performing a chemistry experiment with my students in the lab. In fact, I found myself giving the students some chemical rationales for some of the steps we performed (such as, order of addition, choosing heat level, mixing certain spices,



**“Levantine cuisines deviate from other, more famous Mediterranean cuisines in our use of spices, which is influenced by ancient Indian trade routes.”**

marinating, and particular ways of cutting). It turned out that the food science course I took online at the beginning of the pandemic wasn't a waste of time after all.

I am looking forward to hosting more cooking nights this coming year. Several times already the students have specifically requested a session on flat bread, and I am planning to share more Palestinian farmer dishes, such as soups and vegetable stews. I also hope to offer dessert sessions, featuring popular treats such as knafeh (a syrup-soaked-layered sweet with

cheese or other fillings, see page 13), ka'ak (date-stuffed butter cookies), and namoura (a semolina and cinnamon cake). Cooking and eating, for my family at least, has always been an event that brought us together. Being a part of this kind community at Milton Academy makes me want to share this passion. I hope future cooking nights can be done in person so that the students can help and we can enjoy the meal together.

**MAHMOUD ABDALRAHMAN IS A MEMBER OF THE MILTON SCIENCE DEPARTMENT.**

# Seminars to Feed the Soul

IN A YEAR OF MANY CHALLENGES, TWO SENIOR SEMINARS FOCUS ON THE RELEVANCE AND PLEASURE OF FOOD AND COOKING



Pamela Pleasants, associate dean of admission (left) and Rod Skinner '72, dean of college counseling, took part in this year's senior project, a time-honored Milton tradition.

AS THE COVID-19 pandemic stretched on and its economic destruction put independent restaurants and food-insecure individuals in danger, **IRENE LI '08**, chef and owner of Mei Mei in Boston, mobilized with another chef and labor organizers to provide some relief, she told Milton seniors last spring.

"We have always thought of Mei Mei as a business that's pretty grounded in the community," she said. "We get requests all the time to participate in different events and fundraisers, to give donations. When the pandemic happened, I thought we could do more than just agree to the things that are asked of us—we can proactively participate and look for the opportunities to serve our neighbors and our community." Li had been invited to speak to students taking a senior seminar taught by **ROD SKINNER '72**, dean of college counseling, about the intersections of activism, culture, and food. Senior seminars are part of a new program that allowed the Class of 2021 to explore various topics in their final weeks of school.

The Senior Project is a time-honored Milton tradition. During the month of May, seniors go "on project," working on independent studies that range from creative pursuits to scientific research. In regular years, many students opt for internships in fields that interest them or shadow professionals. This year, because of COVID-19 restrictions, many off-campus projects could not happen. Upper School leaders expanded project options with senior seminars: four weeks of learning from adults in the community about a variety of subjects, includ-

ing 2020 prize fiction, psychology in film and media, race and the War on Drugs, Latin epigraphy, the history of COINTELPRO and the civil rights movement, and magic.

Skinner's course, *Cooking as Activism: How What We Cook Protects and Sustains Culture*, was one of two food-centric seminars. Pamela Pleasants, associate dean of admission, taught *Feeding Your Soul*, a seminar focused on appreciating food and learning to cook. Each seminar was taught virtually and available to both on-campus students and those learning remotely.

Pleasant's focused on giving students foundations for cooking well: basic soups and breads (both sweet and savory) they could assemble with easily accessible ingredients. The students were asked to replicate and try the recipes she shared in virtual cooking classes from the Robbins House kitchen. She also asked them to focus on mindful consumption and develop an understanding and love of food. They read excerpts from Thich Nhat Hanh's *How to Eat* and watched clips from films such as *Babette's Feast*, *Chef*, *Big Night*, and *Eat, Drink, Man, Woman*.

"The class is called *Feeding Your Soul*, so I want them to think about what nourishes and comforts them and where their food comes from—to develop a deeper appreciation for food," Pleasants says. "I shared recipes from different cultures and talked about how the different components worked in each dish."

Skinner's seminar evolved over the course of its run, as discussion branched into intriguing topics. His students read articles and watched documentaries about food authen-

ticity, anthropology, culture, dishes with a history in oppression or migration, agriculture—including the film *King Corn*, which was directed by **IAN CHENEY '98**—and food activism, like that of chef José Andrés, founder of World Central Kitchen, and Li, who shared how she turned her skills and resources into community action.

“The genesis of the seminar is that I heard an interview with [Ethiopian-Swedish chef] Marcus Samuelsson about how the preservation of different dishes, kitchens, and restaurants was also the preservation of culture, of identity, family, and community,” Skinner says. “The course has outgrown its title at this point. Yes, there’s cooking, but we’re really looking at food as a core piece of life, culture, and history.”

During her virtual visit, Li told the students about initiatives launched during the pandemic that enabled her to use her knowledge of food and the Boston service industry to help others: a campaign called *Unsung Restaurants* (@UnsungRestaurants on Instagram), to promote and fundraise for small local restaurants; and *Project Restore Us*, a joint venture with fellow chef Tracy Pang and organizers Lily Huang and Marena Lin, which raises money to buy food from local restaurants and deliver it to families in need.

“Food—and our rituals around it—is so full of meaning,” Skinner says. “Food can be a metaphor for just about everything you could think about. I’m having so much fun that I’m trying to develop a full-blown course around these topics, or at least a very comprehensive reading and viewing list.”

**“There is a story behind every item of food we eat and every recipe we use.”**

ISHANA RODRIGUEZ '21



In addition to Li, Skinner’s seminar welcomed Lincoln Fishman of Sawyer Farm, in western Massachusetts. Fishman runs one of just two horse-powered farms in the state.

“There is a story behind every item of food we eat and every recipe we use,” Ishana Rodriguez ’21 reflected at the end of Skinner’s seminar. “We should be more aware of where our food comes from and its significance to people across different cultures.”

In her last session with students, Pleasants demonstrated how to cook ramen—real ramen, not the sodium-dense kind from a plastic pouch—and an all-purpose muffin, to which students could add their favorite extras, such as blueberries or chocolate chips.

Throughout the seminar, the stu-

dents cooked each recipe on their own, using a shared Google Drive folder to show off pictures of their homemade gazpacho, minted pea soup, gougères, and scones. Pleasants asked them to share reflections on each dish.

Many expressed surprise at how much they enjoyed trying new flavors as well as the act of cooking itself.

Using a sometimes-temperamental General Electric hand mixer she inherited from her grandmother, Pleasants encouraged the students to explore while they’re cooking, to adjust flavors and be patient.

“I want you all to know that anyone can cook from scratch and make a decent meal,” she said. “Cooking is an expression of who you are and how you share with others.” ■

# Milton

FALL 2021





## Food for Thought

In this issue we celebrate the world of food. In preparing, we visited alumni at farms as close as Mattapan and as far away as Downeast Maine. We spoke to chefs who've chosen diverse culinary paths and to alumni who, during challenging times, created a platform for sharing recipes and memories that are keeping them closer together. These stories help remind us that food nourishes not only the body but also the soul. As the renowned food writer MFK Fisher wrote: "I think our three basic needs for food and security and love are so mixed and mingled and entwined that we cannot straightly think of one without the others."

The buffet of foods shown here (provided by some of the alumni and faculty members featured in this issue) represent a bounty of cultures and flavors.

► Recipes can be found at [miltonmagazine.org](http://miltonmagazine.org). Food and prop styling by Sheila Jarnes





# *Yes, Chef!*

THREE CHEFS TOOK VERY DIFFERENT  
PATHS TO RUNNING A KITCHEN, BUT ALL  
HAVE A LOVE FOR THE PROFESSION

**Story by**  
Sarah Abrams

**Photographs by**  
Tony Luong

In the kitchen at David's, one of  
three restaurants chef David Turin  
'76 owns in Portland, Maine.







“For me, cooking is freeing. More than anything, it’s about the act of taking raw ingredients and turning them into something that I put on the plate. To me, that process is amazing.”

ABIODUN (OLA) AWOGBORO '93 (LEFT, WITH DAUGHTERS ADENIKE, LEFT, AND ADESEWA, RIGHT), SOUS CHEF AT COMFORT KITCHEN. THE RESTAURANT WILL OPEN IN DORCHESTER IN 2022.

As far back as he can recall, **DAVID TURIN '76** loved reading about the lives of chefs—how they would spend their days at outdoor markets carefully choosing the freshest produce for the dishes they would prepare later that evening.

“I remember reading about a chef who spent his afternoon riding his bicycle up into the Pyrenees on his way to his restaurant,” Turin says. “I’d read these life stories about chefs, and I knew it was for me.” Today, Turin owns three of the most popular restaurants in Portland, Maine: David’s, Opus Ten, and David’s 388.

The chefs **ABIODUN (OLA) AWOGBORO '93** and **NICK DIGIOVANNI '15** may differ from Turin in their culinary paths and practices, but they all share a love for food and cooking. And for all three, that appreciation began when they were young.

“I was the kid who hung around while the parents and aunts were cooking,” says Awogboro, sous chef at Comfort Kitchen, a restaurant dedicated to and inspired by the African and Asian diasporas, which is scheduled to open in its permanent location in Dorchester in early 2022.

“For me, cooking is freeing,” Awogboro says. “More than anything, it’s about the act of taking raw ingredients and turning them into something that I put on the plate. To me, that process is amazing.”

DiGiovanni, the youngest-ever finalist on *Master Chef*, who today shares recipes with his millions of followers on social media, was also surrounded as a child by a family of cooks. His Persian grandfather taught him how to make tahdig, a crispy rice, and he loved watching his Italian grandmother prepare

meals of pasta and other popular Italian dishes.

“I started falling in love with the art of cooking and seeing how exciting it was to be able to make food and feed it to people and watch them light up as they ate.”

All three chefs also share a willingness to take risks to do what they love. For Turin, it was opening his own restaurant. After graduating from Cornell’s School of Hotel Administration, he spent a few years honing his skills as a charter boat cook; apprenticing with Michel Fitoussi, one of New York City’s most respected chefs; and cooking at several Boston-area restaurants.

At just 25, Turin decided to open *Santé*, a French restaurant in North Plymouth, Massachusetts—the first of 12 restaurants he would own and operate over the years. Looking back, he describes his young self as having “not a teaspoon full of sense.” He recalls: “I had this little French restaurant on the South Shore in the middle of nowhere.” It wasn’t long, however, before *Santé* was discovered, earning high praise from the *Boston Globe*, and Turin’s career took off.

For Awogboro, choosing to become a chef meant starting over after a 20-year career in education. After graduating from Tufts, he rose through the education ranks—from teaching assistant at the Benjamin Banneker charter school in Cambridge, Massachusetts, to dean of students at the Edward Brooke Charter School in Boston—before deciding to switch careers (see sidebar “Sound Advice”).

Nine months after enrolling at the New England Center for Arts and Technology, Awogboro gradu-



A Comfort Kitchen Favorite: Curry Potato Cakes, served over Spicy Tomato Jam and Masala Yogurt

## SOUND ADVICE

Feeling burned out after 20 years in education, Ola Awogboro turned to his Nigerian-born father, Olalekan Awogboro, for advice about what might come next. “You’ve spent all these years in a career that you loved,” his father said, “but it was hard. What you should do now is find something that will make you happy and turn it into a career.”

Today, Awogboro is the sous chef at **Comfort Kitchen**, a restaurant dedicated to and inspired by the comfort foods of the African and Asian diasporas. Plans are for it to also be a gathering place that offers a variety of educational opportunities. One such enterprise in the works is a cooking series called *Dining with Daddy*, which features Awogboro in the kitchen with his two young daughters, eight-year-old Adenike and four-year-old Adesewa. A single father with limited time, Awogboro wants to inspire other fathers to cook with their children as a way of both staying close and teaching them an important life skill. It’s also a way of passing along sound fatherly advice from one generation to the next.



### “LET’S MAKE SALMON!”

Dropping the salmon onto a cutting board and flipping his chef’s knife into the air, Nick DiGiovanni ‘15 exclaims to his millions of TikTok followers, “Let’s make salmon!” In under a minute, he effortlessly filets the salmon. Spooning butter over the fish sizzling in the pan, he tops it off with a squeeze of finger lime—or “lime caviar.” Taking a bite, he says, enraptured, “That is the best salmon ever.” DiGiovanni’s social media fame brings him unforeseen opportunities almost daily. “Every day right now for me is so different,” he says. “I wake up literally not knowing what’s going to happen next.”

sidebar “Let’s Make Salmon!”), 3.2 million on YouTube, and more than 820,000 on Instagram.

For those in the food industry, the past 18 months have been singularly challenging. Turin, Awogboro, and DiGiovanni were no exception. Turin had to close David’s for two months and both Opus Ten and David’s 388 for more than a year.

The pandemic forced Comfort Kitchen to delay its grand opening by almost 18 months. In the meantime, the restaurant has been operating as a pop-up in various Boston-area locations. Since April, it has been operating out of Little Dipper in Jamaica Plain.

DiGiovanni, who is regularly asked to collaborate on projects around the world, had to dramatically curtail his travel schedule. Purchasing a high-end camera, he ramped up his social media presence, teaching himself to film and edit. “It was a lot of work,” he says, but his efforts paid off. At the height of the pandemic last winter, he was getting close to 425 million views a month on TikTok.

As life begins to allow for a routine, all three chefs are looking forward to the next chapter. Turin has resumed his prepandemic schedule, dividing his time among his three restaurants, all now open, and his work in the community. A well-known figure in the area, he is frequently invited to lecture, sit on boards, and, through his work with the Portland Education Foundation, nurture the next generation of chefs.

COREY TEMPLETON PHOTOGRAPHY



### DAVID’S ON MONUMENT SQUARE

On weekends in the summer and fall, restaurant owner and chef David Turin ‘76 gets to do what he loves best: sample the food at the farmers market located near his restaurants in Monument Square—David’s and Opus Ten. “We go out there and walk through the market and get a basket full of groceries that are from the farms we know,” he says. “We bring it in and say, ‘Well, what are we gonna make with this today?’ How does it get more fun than that?” For the past two years, Opus Ten has earned the highest star ratings on Open Table in all of Maine.

ated as valedictorian. Today he is part of a creative new venture that is bringing the food of the African and Asian diasporas—in Africa, Asia, and India—to the table.

“These are foods that would have been your typical house food,” Awogboro says, “but we’re elevating it in the way that it’s plated, in the way the seasonings are blended, in the different types of ingredients that we put together.”

Immigrant-, woman-, and Black-owned, Comfort Kitchen will be both a restaurant and a community hub, with space for pop-ups and numerous educational programs.

For DiGiovanni, the turning point came when he was a freshman at Harvard and uninspired by any of the concentrations offered. He decided to take a chance and propose one centered on food. After his first proposal was rejected, he refined his submission, and on the second try, his concentration in Food and Climate was accepted.

In a second leap of faith, in the second semester of his senior year, DiGiovanni auditioned for FOX’s hit show *Master Chef*. Requesting a three-month leave from school, he moved to Los Angeles and became the youngest finalist in the show’s history. He also became a social media sensation who today has 7.2 million followers on TikTok (see the

Despite the many years of hard work, Turin remains enamored with his profession (see sidebar “David’s on Monument Square”). “To this day, I’m passionate about food,” he says. “The most interesting history of the world is the history of the food that is served. If you go to northern Spain, there’s a historical element to how the food has evolved and how it’s served. And it’s not a violent history. There are no wars, no religion, it’s just people eating, and I love it.”

Awogboro is looking forward to the role Comfort Kitchen will soon play in the community. “A lot of businesses exist in a community, but all some do is take from the community; they don’t really give back to it,” he says. “We want to be involved and use the space we have for more than just selling food to people.”

Next year, DiGiovanni will enter Harvard Business School to gain a more solid business foundation. And he plans to continue his presence on social media, where he loves reaching people of all ages and from many parts of the world.

Unlike what is so often available on social media, he says, his contribution to the medium is a positive force: “There is a lot of content in the social media world that can be very polarizing and controversial. I’d like to think that what I do is the complete opposite. I’m all about food, and everybody loves food.” ■

Social media sensation **Nick DiGiovanni ‘15** at home where he shoots cooking demonstrations that are viewed around the world.





Katie Chow '12 cofounder of the Asian Inclusion Project, in Boston's Chinatown. Chow poses in front of a mural painted by artist and landscape architect Ponnapa Prakkamakul.



# A Cultural Connection

SEEKING TO CELEBRATE AND  
AMPLIFY ASIAN AMERICAN STORIES,  
ASHLEY BAE '12 AND KATIE CHOW '12  
SHARE THE WIDE WORLD  
OF ASIAN AMERICAN CUISINE.

**Story by**  
Marisa Donelan

**Photographs by**  
Josh Andrus  
& Winni  
Wintermeyer

When **KATIE CHOW '12** was growing up, her parents would come home from Boston's Chinatown with white boxes wrapped in red string and containing favorite treats for her and her siblings: pastries such as dan tat (egg tarts) or bolo bao (pineapple buns).

"For us, love is a surprise box of buns, even though your fridge is packed; dad giving you the last helping of fish when you know it's his favorite, too; and spending Sundays helping mom fold wontons that will live in the freezer for months," Chow writes on the Instagram page for the Asian Inclusion Project, a joint venture with **ASHLEY BAE '12**.

For Bae, a Los Angeles native and daughter of Korean immigrants, food connects across generations. As a child, Bae peppered her paternal grandmother with questions as the older woman experimented with fermentation for kimchi and cooked a spicy seafood stew from her youth in Guryongpohang, a port city at the southeastern tip of South Korea.

"When I cook comfort foods that remind me of my childhood, I'm really cooking food from my grandma's childhood, because I grew up watching her," Bae says. "There's something beautiful about how a routine activity like cooking can mean so much for a culture."

Bae and Chow formed the Asian Inclusion Project (on Instagram at @asianinclusionproject) out of their mutual desire to amplify Asian American voices and invite others into the Asian American experience. Food is a natural medium: In many cultures, sharing food is an expression of love, celebration, and community. The project shares submissions from chefs and amateurs

alike—people with diverse stories and Asian American identities in common.

Bae and Chow hadn't kept in touch beyond a social media connection since their graduation from Milton, but news reports about a recent increase in hate crimes against Asian and Asian American people sparked a conversation between them. It eventually led to their creation of the Asian Inclusion Project.

They both felt helpless and angry about the violence. Several of the victims were elderly people, creating an additional layer of horror because reverence for elders and ancestors is central to many Asian cultures.

"AIP is our way of celebrating and starting a productive conversation about the diverse ways to be Asian American," Bae says. "We chose to tell stories of food because food has the power to unify."

Chow, a marketing specialist who now lives in Bucharest, Romania, continues: "I find myself asking my parents mainly for Chinese recipes as a way to feel connected to them. Though their food is always better, cooking their recipes makes me feel a bit closer to home."

Bae spent countless childhood hours in LA's Koreatown at the New Seoul Restaurant, which her maternal grandparents have owned since the mid-1980s. Today she is a graduate student at the University of California-Santa Cruz, working toward her Ph.D. in sustainable aquaculture.

"I live and breathe books about food, articles about food, and I love to cook," she says. "I'm always food-forward, whether it's intentional or not.



For Asian Inclusion Project cofounder Ashley Bae '12, food is a connection with generations of her family and her own identity as a Korean American.





“AIP is our way of celebrating and starting a productive conversation about the diverse ways to be Asian American. We chose to tell stories of food because food has the power to unify.”

ASHLEY BAE '12, COFOUNDER OF THE  
ASIAN INCLUSION PROJECT

My parents used to laugh at me, because whenever I learned a Korean word, like *gyerhon* (marriage), I'd always remember it in the context of a food word, like *gyeran* (egg)."

Chow craves the flavors of home daily: steamed fish with ginger, cilantro, and soy sauce with steamed egg and rice. She has lived abroad for years, but when she's home in Boston, takeout from Peach Farm in Chinatown, is a must. When Bae feels homesick for the flavors of her family, she whips up Korean staples, including doenjang jjigae, a stew that uses savory fermented soybean paste (doenjang) as a base and is full of soft zucchini, onions, radishes, mushrooms, scallions,

and tofu. It's eaten with rice and, of course, banchan, the numerous side dishes that accompany any Korean meal.

No singular "Asian American" cuisine, culture, or experience exists. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders claim heritage from places as far east as Japan and the Polynesian islands and as far west as Lebanon and Turkey. The seafood stew Bae considered a Korean staple as a child was informed by her grandmother's access to Japanese food in Guryongpohang. Variations in climate, availability of ingredients, religious traditions, and family and cultural norms are among the many factors that influence the cuisine of

a place. Cultural intersections combined with American palates result in the broad and extremely diverse range of Asian American food.

"The Asian Inclusion Project is a medium for people to explore foods that are meaningful to them, and part of how they grew up or live now," Chow says. "We want to support traditions as well as Asian American restaurants and chefs that are experimenting with flavors and doing exciting new things."

**IRENE LI '08**, the six-time James Beard-nominated chef and owner of Mei Mei in Boston, for example, contributed to the project with her twist on scallion pancakes. Vietnamese American chef Tu David Phu, a *Top Chef* alumnus, shared his recipe for pho ga, a chicken soup that combines elements from northern and southern Vietnamese pho traditions. Kristine Sydney, a Milton English teacher, sent in a recipe for halo-halo, a Filipino dessert drink made with evaporated milk, sweet beans, fruit, tapioca pearls, and ice cream.

Sydney writes in her post, "There's a Filipino quality that I love so much—that even if someone wasn't expecting you, they'll pull up a chair and make room for you. This dessert, which I have only when I'm in the Philippines, symbolizes that openness and vibrancy, that *bahala na* attitude, which translates not to resignation but trust that even if it looks risky, it will turn out OK at the end."

COVID-19 hit Asian American communities particularly hard. Closures of restaurants and other service- and hospitality-industry businesses created devastating unemployment among Asian Americans

and in the country's Chinatowns. Anti-Asian racism was stoked by government leaders using anti-Asian catchphrases and blaming China for the virus.

Chow turned to her father for guidance. Born in Hong Kong, her dad moved to Mississippi during the civil rights movement and later to the Boston area where, at Brandeis in the 1970s, he was active in the Asian American community and with organizations in Boston. Today, both her parents are involved in Boston's Chinatown, where her mom is on the board of the Boston Chinatown Neighborhood Center.

"These systemic and racial issues have been present in America for a long time—from the Chinese Exclusion Act to Japanese internment and beyond—and you can't separate the Asian American experience from these types of hostilities," Chow says. "The best thing you can do is be cognizant of how you're feeling, share those feelings, and channel them toward something better."

In highlighting Asian American food traditions and innovations, Bae says, they hope the Asian Inclusion Project will connect people with their own identities and raise awareness about issues currently facing Asian Americans. It can also help to expand understanding of the diversity, complexity, and richness of the Asian American experience.

"It speaks to people's resilience," she says. "My own relationship with being Korean American has really strengthened in the past few years. My identity is ever-evolving, the more I learn about and celebrate my heritage." ■

Dishes shared on the @asianinclusionproject Instagram account include recipes and personal stories representing a broad range of Asian American life.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ASHLEY BAE, SHAUNA YUAN, IRENE LI, KATIE CHOW



# Farming a Family Legacy

THROUGH PERSISTENCE AND A LOT OF HARD WORK, SMALL-SCALE FARMERS CLARA COLEMAN '94, IN RURAL MAINE, AND MOTHER AND SON JANE (LYMAN) BIHLTORFF '65 AND DAVE BIHLTORFF '97, IN CANTON, MASSACHUSETTS, ARE FINDING WAYS TO CARRY ON A FAMILY TRADITION.

Story by  
Liz Matson

Photographs by  
Matt Kalinowski



**WINTER IN MAINE IS** just wrapping up in April, and the land is muddy and barren. But step inside one of the greenhouses at the Four Season Farm, in the village of Harborside, and you are surrounded by rows of bursting green leaves. **CLARA COLEMAN '94** pulls a beautiful bunch of carrots out of the soil, washes them, and hands one to her visitor to taste the sweetness.

Her parents, part of a “hippie back-to-the-lander scene,” moved to the middle of a spruce forest on a peninsula jutting out into Penobscot Bay in 1968. They built a small farmhouse with no running water or electricity. They slowly carved out gardens. In 1976, Coleman was born at home, the youngest child in the family.

“Being born on this farm, I absorbed everything about the land, the surrounding nature, and the work my parents were doing. I like to say I grew up learning farming through osmosis, absorbing all of that information and knowledge,” she says.

Farming in New England is challenging. There is the unpredictable weather, the short growing season, the physical isolation, and the rocks—so many rocks. But for many small family farm owners, including the three alumni featured here, it’s a way of life—one they didn’t at first consider, but came back to. And as the younger generation learns from older family members, they are also thinking about and introducing new

ways to keep these farms sustainable for future generations.

“I have so much respect for farmers who grow vegetables and make it their living,” says **DAVE BIHLTORFF '97**, business manager of his family’s farm in Canton, Massachusetts. “Most of them are sacrificing a lot to do that. Because how can a small farmer compete with Wegmans or Whole Foods? It’s a massive food system structure that makes good food seem cheap. It doesn’t reward smaller farmers doing things on smaller scales or that are not monocultures.”

Pakeen Farm is a rolling field and forest oasis in a busy suburb 10 miles outside Boston. **JANE (LYMAN) BIHLTORFF '65**, Dave’s mother and owner of Pakeen with her sister **ELIZABETH LYMAN '74**, grew up on the now 120-acre farm that her great-grandfather established in 1899 on roughly 450 acres. Until 1993, it was run as a hobby, or “gentleman’s” farm. Jane’s father, Charles, was a Harvard professor and research biologist during the week, but weekends were all about the whole family working the farm. They had horses, pigs, dairy cows, chickens, and gardens.

After Jane graduated from the Girls’ School, she married **JOHN BIHLTORFF '63** while in college at Tufts University. For many years, they moved around with their three children in both Canada and the United States for John’s career as a hospital administrator. But in the early ’90s, when her husband’s job moved closer, Jane returned to the farm with her family to help her parents out.

“It was very clear, to me at least, that the farm was no longer sustainable,” she says. “It was under con-



“I have so much respect for farmers who grow vegetables and make it their living. Most of them are sacrificing a lot to do that.”

DAVE BIHLTORFF '97 (ABOVE), OF PAKEEN FARM, IN CANTON, MASS.

Clara Coleman '94 walks the fields of her family's Four Season Farm.







Another busy day  
at Pakeen Farm.  
Opposite: Jane (Lyman)  
Bihldorff '65

stant threat from development. It needed to change. So the first thing I worked to do was to put a conservation restriction on it. It was a very thoughtful and long process in which I involved my whole family.”

They partnered with the Trustees of Reservations and established a privately held conservation restriction on the property, ensuring that the land would remain natural, scenic, and undeveloped. Jane’s other significant change was planting Christmas trees, a more forgiving and hardy crop than, say, lettuce.

Meanwhile, Dave was attending Milton, starting in Grade 7. When he went off to Wesleyan University, he was not thinking about living life as a farmer. He pursued a career in sound design for film.

Coleman, too, sought a different life after Milton. Her parents had divorced when she was young and left the Four Season Farm for a time. Her father, Eliot Coleman, worked at Milton Academy’s Mountain School in Vermont, where Coleman spent the majority of her childhood years, with the outdoors as her playground, before coming to Milton.

“I never thought that I wanted to farm,” she says. “I loved nature and plants. My interests were based more around botany. When I went to Milton, I loved the learning experience there—the curiosity and the motivation. It was this whole new environment from where I’d come from, which was incredible for me.”

Coleman says she didn’t feel the call to immediately go to college, so she “wwoofed” (worked on farms) around Australia and New Zealand. Then, after starting college in Maine, she felt the pull of adventure out West, eventually landing

in Aspen. She met her then-partner, and they took over his family property and started a farm. Meanwhile, her father and his second wife, Barbara Damrosch, had returned to Four Season Farm, where they produced vegetables year-round. The farm became a nationally recognized model of small-scale sustainable agriculture.

The farm that Coleman started in Silt, Colorado, “emulated and replicated everything that my dad was working on at his farm,” she says. “We had movable greenhouses and we grew year-round. We were pioneers of winter farming out there.”

After she and her partner parted ways, she started farm consulting back in Portland, Maine, in 2012. She also worked on a project to support small-scale farmers, envisioning a collaborative farming model in which farmers could share the costly infrastructure.

“Farming as a profession is very expensive and difficult in the start-up phase,” Coleman says. “Plus there is excessive work and demand on your time and resources that sometimes feels like the whole family farm model is flawed.”

After she lost out on her project’s bid for a piece of land, she realized that “great ideas can always wait, but great people can’t,” which spurred her to move back to Four Season Farm. “Here I was, trying to focus on this outside thing, when I hadn’t even looked at my own family farm and legacy.”

Dave was married when he started thinking about returning to his family farm. But first he earned his MBA at Boston University, because he wanted a solid business back-





## FARMERS NEED TENDING TOO

Clara Coleman '94 (above) is passionate about supporting farmers' self-care needs and also working on racial justice within agriculture. She created a crowdfunding project called Real Farmer Care ([fourseasonfarm.com/real-farmer-care/](http://fourseasonfarm.com/real-farmer-care/)) in which people donate funds and Coleman redistributes them to farmers for self-care activities.

"I was informed both by my own farming experiences and that of others," she says. "I know how incredibly hard farmers work to feed people. It's hard to prioritize self-care as a farmer, both financially and time-wise. There's also a stigma where farmers are supposed to be stoic—you don't complain, you just do it—but then you run the risk of burning out."

Donations result in about \$100 per farmer, and farmers choose to spend the money however they want. Recipients share photos and their experiences—what farming means to them and what care and support they need. Coleman then posts their information on social media. The recipients also recommend other farmers to receive funds.

After George Floyd's murder, Coleman pivoted Real Farmer Care to focus on sharing the stories of BIPOC farmers. So far, the project has had more than 130 participants, more than 50 percent of whom are BIPOC.

"In every industry, racial injustice is something that typically is not talked about enough," she says. "Then, when you try to talk about it, you get pushback. I've been trying to lean into that discomfort and make sure that my generation and the next generation can change that."

**Four Season Farm produces vegetables year-round, including its famous carrots, and is a nationally recognized model of small-scale sustainable agriculture.**

"I spent time while doing the MBA," he says, "thinking about what else can we do that not only represents a business profit that's going to help the farm, but is in balance with what we want this farm to be for ourselves? What sort of things don't just completely take away our special place and make it a golf course or an amusement park, but can be consistent with our values. And that's pretty hard to do, honestly."

He and his wife, Carolyn, moved to the farm in 2008. "The mission was to find a way to make the farm more sustainable in a business sense. We had the sustainable goals of how we practiced farming, of course, but the sustainable part that was more urgent was financial. How do we make it so that I can raise my kids here and have grandkids here too, and not just have to let it go because we can't afford it?"

Today Pakeen Farm is part of a multi-farm CSA that runs June through November. The Bihldorffs have high tunnels, a winter greenhouse, and vegetable and fruit gardens, and collaborate with Vermont farmers who have more acreage devoted to vegetables. When Pakeen customers show up for their shares, it's in a beautiful barn built in 1902, with corn piled high in a vintage clawfoot tub and a donut wagon stationed out front. Before Christmas, customers pick out their trees in the fields. Dave has helped Jane transform Pakeen into an experience where people can enjoy the towering pines and fresh air. He planted an apple orchard, still in its early stages, which he hopes will become part of that experience someday. He is also working on a

kitchen in a trailer that is parked next to the barn.

Coleman returned to Four Season Farm in 2016. "It was a slow transition of first trying to be really humble and respectful in observing everything that my dad and Barbara had done here," she says. "And then finding what I thought needed improvement and change. I also felt it was important to figure out a way to create better work-life balance, and to make more of a traditional work-week with limited hours."


Today, Four Season's farmstand runs for only two hours on Saturdays, and local and summer residents come from all over the peninsula to buy the fresh vegetables. The farm also sells to a local food co-op and a few restaurants.

"Farming with your family—or any business with your family—is definitely hard," says Coleman. "There's been a lot of learning on my part and on my parents' part. It's not all sunshine and roses. But it's completely worth it."

Jane says that she and Dave have similar dispositions, which helps as they navigate the difficult work and changes the farm must make. Despite all the challenges, all three farmers' faces light up when they talk about their land, their crops, and their way of life.

"When the season starts to change, you're suddenly out of time and way behind on things," says Dave. "But when I plant seedlings, whether it's a pot or the ground, every year, I don't think they're going to come up. Like there's just no way this is going to work. And then they start to emerge and they start to grow. And that's just a really good feeling." ■





PATRICIA SPENCE '76, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND  
CEO OF THE URBAN FARMING INSTITUTE,  
BELIEVES THAT THE ALMOST DECADE-OLD ENTERPRISE  
IS HELPING CHANGE LIVES THROUGH FOOD.

**“We Don’t Just  
Grow Food. We  
Grow *People*.”**

Story by  
Sarah Abrams

Photographs by  
Michael Prince



Patricia Spence '76, founding president and CEO of the Urban Farming Institute.

**ON NORFOLK STREET**, just a block from Blue Hill Avenue in the heart of Mattapan, sits the headquarters of the Urban Farming Institute (UFI), an almost decade-old enterprise operating five farms in Boston's southern neighborhoods. Its mission: to develop and promote urban agriculture, engage residents of Mattapan, Dorchester, and Roxbury in growing food, and build a healthier community.

The person overseeing this ambitious undertaking is **PATRICIA SPENCE '76**, UFI's founding president and CEO. Spence recalls how UFI's founders first approached her in 2014 about heading up the fledgling nonprofit. She had held numerous senior-level positions throughout her career, both in the corporate sector—in marketing and sales for Xerox and Digital Equipment Corporation—and in the nonprofit sector, at WGBH and the Boston Public Schools.

Spence smiles as she describes the founders' pitch to her about the position. Having recently orchestrated the passage of legislation that allowed for commercial zoning for urban agriculture, "they were looking for someone who could kind of juggle it all," she says. "I'm the person you bring in when you're trying to do something different. That's kind of where I sit in the world, so here I am."

Spence is proud of what UFI's small, dedicated staff has been able to accomplish since she arrived. "It's been amazing what we've managed to do, and it's not me, it's the people," she says.

Among its many endeavors, the 10-person staff runs a farmers training program, a volunteer pro-





Held in trust by the Boston Farms Community Land Trust, UFI's five farms are located on Norfolk Street and at the Astoria Quarter Acre farm in Mattapan and at the Sportsmen's Tennis Club farm, the Glenway Street farm, and the Garrison-Trotter Neighborhood farm in Dorchester. The 14,000-square-foot-farms produce an abundance of vegetables, from many varieties of tomatoes and mixed greens to eggplants and herbs.

gram that attracted 750 participants yearly pre-COVID; a weekly farmers market; three CSAs; Fit Around the Farm, a program for seniors; and a wide variety of community workshops and programs.

Although the past year has seen many of its activities curtailed, UFI is slowly returning to a normal schedule. Its annual urban farming conference, which usually draws participants from across the region, this year drew 400 virtual attendees and speakers from Chicago to North Carolina. A strong advocate for urban farming—both regionally and nationally—UFI sits on numerous committees helping to promote urban farming initiatives.

At the crux of the institute's mission, Spence says, is its Urban Farmers Training Program. A nine-week course teaches participants how to become urban farming entrepreneurs. Course topics range from soil and crop planting to securing funding. A 20-week in-field program, which has trained more than 230 participants, runs five mornings a week from June to October. "They are hands-in-the-dirt, learning everything about farming," she says.

Ranging in age from 20 to 70, the farmers-in-training come from a variety of backgrounds. "One of our participants was reentering society after a stint of incarceration," Spence says, "which means he had little work history. For someone with that kind of background, this program is a wonderful experience. This is a gentleman who had never tasted a real tomato before he came to UFI and who lost 100 pounds during his time with the program. We were

Dating back to 1786, the original building, now UFI headquarters (far right), once sat on 330 acres of farmland. Over the centuries the house has been owned by three families. Purchased in 2014 by Historic Boston, the property has expanded to include a wing on the back of the house, where UFI's offices are located; a barn (at left) where cooking workshops are held; and a greenhouse (behind headquarters) where seedlings are grown for purchase.



able to put him right into a job. In a survey submitted at the end of the program, he wrote, 'If it weren't for UFI, I don't know what I'd be doing. It saved my life.'

An attorney from the Class of 2015, who had always wanted to grow food, now runs Oasis on Bal-lou, a farm for the Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation. "He's very happy," Spence says. "He's living his lifelong passion to grow food, and he's an integral part of urban farming locally and regionally."

While some graduates become farmers, others find work in food-related businesses.

"We're training people to become farmers," Spence says, "but it's the experience, the team leadership, and all the little things that they're learning in the process. Many folks are coming in because they don't have a trajectory. Now they have this core body of knowledge where they are marketable to people in food-related businesses."

Spence loves seeing how UFI has become a positive force in the life of the community. At one Friday afternoon farmers market, where a guest community chef was demonstrating how to cook spicy green beans, she noticed two young boys enthusiastically eating the samples being offered. "They were shoveling in the green beans," she says, "so I asked, 'Are they good?' They replied, 'Oh, these are awesome.' Now, how many kids say string beans are awesome? They don't! And that's what I live for."

As pandemic restraints continue to lift, Spence wants to expand the farmers market to include not only cooking demonstrations but

live music and the arts. "Suppose the chef is doing callaloo [a Jamaican green] that day," she says. "Picture a Jamaican steel band playing and it's kickin. We'll get there; we would have done it last year had COVID not hit."

Spence is gratified by UFI's success, but, she says, the organization faces many challenges. "We're thriving but limited financially. If we're to continue to do what we're doing, we need to add staff so that we're not all doing five jobs." Corporate, foundation, and individual donors will always be critical to the program, but Spence wants to place UFI on firmer financial footing. Toward that end, the institute launched a \$1.6 million capital campaign.

It's also time, Spence says, to step back and reflect on how they want to move forward. "Between the board and the staff, we're all doers," she says, laughing. "Now, that can be a good thing, or maybe not, because we always say 'yes' and we all keep doing more and more. Now we are slowing ourselves down and being a bit more reflective about our focus for the future. We are currently completing a two-year strategic plan to build capacity and strengthen our foundation."

What is likely never to change is Spence's passion for what UFI has to offer. "When I first joined the organization," she says, "I thought, 'OK, I'm here to grow food,' but within that first year, I realized that food is the medium, but UFI is more than that; it's about growing people. That's what excites me: how you can change lives. And it's all happening through fresh, healthy food. ■







Sabrina-Pilet Jones (right), a Class of 2017 Urban Farmer Training Program graduate, with a UFI customer. "A big question for us has been how to get more people to grow their own food," Spence says. In May 2020, UFI launched Build 100 Grow Boxes, a campaign to build and install plant boxes in residents' backyards. Last year, it built 35 boxes, and recently received funding to build 65 more. The goal: "We want to see multi-generational families growing food."

# On Centre

—  
Student Life  
at Milton  
—





# Food Makes Learning Fun

TEACHING LANGUAGE THROUGH FOOD BY LIZ MATSON

IN THE 20-MINUTE video, **GIANNA GALLAGHER '21** stands in her home kitchen, naming the measured ingredients laid out before her in fluent French. She then begins to make the batter for madeleines, the classic French tea cakes famously referred to in Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time*. It's a project for French 6, the highest level of French class at Milton, and just one of the many moments when food is used as a tool to learn a language in the classroom.

"The basic component of learning a language is to learn the culture—they go together," says Severine Carpenter, an Upper School French teacher. "Food is a natural component of this and it is fun to use in class, because everyone loves food!"

French teacher Cédric Morlot says the beginner textbooks for the French and Spanish classes always have chapters focused on vocabulary for food and eating. Food topics, he says, are good icebreakers and get the students talking.

"They want to speak about food, such as their favorite snack," he says. "It's a subject that is passionate to them, so in beginner classes we can have a conversation about pizza that turns into a debate about whether you should

put pineapple on pizza."

Food topics also work well when students perform skits in class, such as pretending to be at a restaurant or shopping at a market. As the students advance in the language and order food in an actual restaurant, Morlot says, whether locally or on an exchange program, "they are very proud of that moment, which is the goal for us language teachers beyond grades."

However, introducing words for specific foods or discussing food is "trickier" in Milton's beginner Chinese classes, according to recently retired Chinese teacher Shimin Zhou. The U.S. State Department's Foreign Service Institute classifies Chinese as one of five "super-hard languages"—those that are exceptionally difficult for native English-speakers.

The English language is Germanic with some words also derived from Latin roots. French and Spanish are Romance languages, which evolved from Latin. The word "pastry" in English is "pâtisserie" in French, with both originating in the Medieval Latin *pasteria* from the Latin *pasta*. No such related derivations exist between English and Chinese words. And beginner Chinese-language learners are also learning tones and the

characters for writing.

In Chinese classes, Zhou says, students may discuss food in "compare and contrast" formats, such as an American breakfast versus a Chinese breakfast, because food choices and ingredients can be quite different.

"In the higher levels of Chinese, we talk about how the names of certain dishes come from a famous dynasty or poet," says Zhou. "So it brings in the cultural and historical roots of Chinese food. Just like the language, Chinese food can be very complicated and not so easy to translate to English equivalents."

Carpenter says she has taught recipes—such as crepes and galettes—that reflect her background in the Brittany region of France. In the higher-level classes, food topics lead to lessons on the economy and the natural resources of a Francophone country. Lessons on cultural norms and food habits, such as why people in France eat something sweet late in the afternoon, are also taught.

Outside the classroom, student culture clubs often share food special to them during certain events and holidays, such as Zhou's dumplings on Lunar New Year or latkes at the Jewish Student Union's Hanukkah celebration. ■

**"The basic component of learning a language is to learn the culture—they go together. Food is a natural component of this."**

SEVERINE CARPENTER

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Poire



# Tomato Tuesdays

LESSONS IN GRATITUDE AND SERVICE BY MARISA DONELAN



**“We want the students to understand that small acts of kindness can change the world.”**

MARIA ELISA  
CIAMPA

## “GOTTA BE GRATEFUL.”

These three words became something of a mantra for the Lower School kindergarten this past spring, as teachers overheard one student remind another about the importance of gratitude at lunchtime. It was a sign that the message of a division-wide effort involving food and community engagement was taking hold.

“It’s a way to make them aware that while we’re a community within kindergarten, there’s the community of Milton Academy, and there’s a much larger community outside of that,” says kindergarten teacher Vanessa Phifer. “We want them to always be aware of the people who surround us and that we’re fortunate to have what we have.”

On a mission of gratitude and service, students in the Lower School’s grades K–5 jumped into Tomato Tuesdays—a project to grow tomatoes and other produce to be donated to the Milton Community Food Pantry—with enthusiasm. Throughout the spring, classes planted and grew tomatoes, worked in the Lower School’s garden, read books about food insecurity and community gardening, and completed projects on the theme.

Tomato Tuesdays arose from a number of sources, says Monica

Furtado, who guided the division’s community engagement programs during the school year. In second grade, teachers Maria Elisa Ciampa and Sandy Butler had been teaching about food insecurity throughout the fall, and Jane McGuinness, a fifth-grade teacher who also leads the School’s sustainability and gardening efforts, had the garden ready for planting. In all, the students and teachers grew more than 500 tomato plants in the spring, and McGuinness planned to continue working in the garden to donate more produce throughout the summer.

“It was a great way to get the community together in a way that we could all be outside,” says Furtado. “Each student could participate and know they’ve given back.”

Every Tuesday, Furtado sent out a newsletter giving guidance on growing the plants and sharing resources about food and food insecurity. At each grade level, students read the book *Farmer Will Allen and the Growing Table*, by Jacqueline Briggs Martin, the true story of a former basketball player who turned vacant lots in Milwaukee into farms where volunteers could grow fresh food for underserved people in the city. Allen became an inspiration for urban agriculture efforts nationally.

“We want the students to un-

derstand that small acts of kindness can change the world,” Ciampa says. “The kids were responsible for their plants, and they took to that extremely well. They were totally invested.”

During the run of the project, teachers built lessons about food into different elements of the curriculum, including math, science, language arts, and social studies. As they prepared to donate the plants, they decorated reusable market totes for the recipients. Students learned about food deserts—areas without easy access to fresh food—and were surprised to hear that there are some nearby in Massachusetts.

In kindergarten, sensitive topics like food insecurity and inequality were approached through stories that helped students understand the issues, says teacher Kiana Gibson.

“We talk a lot about commonalities and differences,” she says. “We talk about how kids in other parts of the world have different ways of getting their food, and how food and water are not as accessible everywhere as they are for us. At this age, they want to help out, and the project has shown them that they can make an impact, even though they’re little. This is a nice way to start their learning about giving to others.” ■



LEFT TO RIGHT, CONNER HARTMAN '21, HENRY WILDE '21, AND DASH EVETT '21

## EXTRACURRICULAR

### From Beatnik to YouTube, Student Singers are a Hit

Three students casually singing together their freshman year have turned into an established trio with more than 43,000 subscribers on their YouTube channel. **HENRY WILDE '21** and **CONNER HARTMAN '21** became friends in math class and often discussed their common interest in music. Although Wilde and Hartman did not consider themselves singers, both knew that **DASH EVETT '21** was one, and the three decided to perform together at that spring's Beatnik, an open-mic event run by students.

In the beginning, they focused on singing covers. "After our first Beatnik, we basically would meet during all our free periods, singing in a room in Kellner," says Wilde. "Over time, we developed a style. We would spend about two months arranging a song, improvising on it."

When the pandemic forced everyone to stay home, the trio decided to start a YouTube channel as a way to share their music. Hartman says that when he loaded up the first video, a cover of "The Misty Mountains Cold" from the Hobbit movie, he typed in their group name as misty., all lowercase with a period at the end, and their official name was born. The video was recorded in a tunnel, which amplified their acoustic voices. Viewership took off after that.

Songs by Ed Sheeran, Simon and Garfunkel, Billie Eilish (one of their favorites), and even a sea chantey followed. They also started writing original songs. "The challenge for us is to write music that retains meaning for all of us, not just the individual, and still resonates with the listeners," says Hartman.

By recording during the pandemic, they learned how to expedite their process working remotely; what once took two months can now take a few days. Usually, they worked together late into the night when they were finished with homework. The three wrote an original album for their Senior Project. They hope to continue their collaboration even though they are now at different colleges.

## WORKSHOP

### Youth Summit Highlights Climate Issues

From sharing first-person testimony and creative work to advocating before legislators, students from Boston-area private and public schools explored how the humanities can influence action on issues of climate change and climate justice.

"We do not all suffer the same climate injustices," read a Milton student from Melissa Figueroa's Performing Literature class, which created a "found poem" curated from the words of Boston climate leaders and other community members. "We sacrifice aspirations to implement actions we know aren't right, to the detriment of the state's poorest and most vulnerable residents. We have let low-income communities, communities of color, bear disproportionate burdens while excluding them from the decision-making process."

The Humanities Workshop's Youth Summit was a virtual event during which students from participating schools shared their work from the past year. The Humanities Workshop, cofounded and codirected by Milton English teachers Alisa Braithwaite and Lisa Baker, is a consortium of educators and students from seven local schools who tackle major social issues through the lens of the humanities.

Following morning sessions during which students demonstrated their work, participants received training in advocating for climate legislation from the advocacy group Our Climate.





## Vanessa Cohen Gibbons: New Chief Equity and Inclusion Officer



A leading figure in helping establish a more equitable and just culture at Milton Academy, Vanessa Cohen Gibbons became the School's first chief equity and inclusion officer in July.

Since arriving in 2016 as an Upper School math teacher and dorm faculty member, Cohen Gibbons has played an integral role in diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) initiatives at Milton. Since August 2020, she has served as Upper School

director of equity; as a member of Milton's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Commission; and as head of Hathaway House. She has also provided support to Onyx, a student organization that offers social, cultural, and political support for Black students and their peers through meetings and activities, and LGBTQ+ affinity spaces.

Cohen Gibbons is grateful to be stepping into a role she believes already has a lot of sup-

port. "My understanding is that people choose Milton because they want to be in a diverse environment," she says. "They already value the opportunity to do this work and that's a great starting position."

Cohen Gibbons earned her doctoral degree in astronomy at the University of Maryland in 2009. Prior to coming to Milton, she taught math and science and supported DEIJ efforts at Garrison Forest School, in Maryland. Over the years, Cohen Gibbons has participated in numerous DEIJ-related professional development opportunities, including at the National Association of Independent Schools Diversity Leadership Institute, the People of Color Conference, and the Klingenstein Summer Institute at Columbia University.

One of her first goals, says Cohen Gibbons, is to develop a greater sense of alignment throughout the institution. "Because there is already so much buy-in, many of our students and employees see themselves as active participants in DEIJ work," she says. "One of my goals is to bring all these folks together and help make this work an integrated experience. I want to help develop an ecosystem, a web of DEIJ work, that brings K-12 faculty and staff, families, and alumni together, connecting and communicating with one another."

Over the next year, Cohen Gibbons will be working with VISIONS, Inc., a nonprofit organization supporting DEIJ work across educational institutions,

to administer a DEIJ training program for all Milton employees. The multi-day program, she says, offers employees an opportunity to think about "their own identities and experiences and to process both interpersonal and institutional dialogues around diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice and to think about how to make change within their sphere of influence."

Cohen Gibbons is looking forward to developing more formal opportunities for people to get involved in DEIJ initiatives. "I am really grateful for the engagement that I've already had with parents, trustees, alumni, and students, and I look forward to formalizing some of those relationships. This isn't an effort of one person or one office. I want to make this an integrated effort across all of our stakeholders."

Cohen Gibbons's appointment follows an extensive nationwide search for someone to lead the School in bringing about important institutional change. In announcing the appointment last spring, Head of School Todd Bland said, "Vanessa has consistently demonstrated a passion for building a more just, anti-racist, and equitable learning, living, and working environment at Milton.... I look forward to working closely with Vanessa as she transitions into her new position and to partnering with her as she continues the development and implementation of a long-term vision for diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice at Milton Academy."

SPEAKERS

# Math is the “Most Interesting Subject in the Whole World,” Omayra Ortega '96 Tells Students

Students in the GAINS (Girls Advancing in STEM) Club welcomed **OMAYRA ORTEGA '96** for a virtual visit, during which she discussed her work in statistics and mathematical epidemiology and what led to her career as a college math professor.

Ortega's route to applied mathematics and epidemiological research was “nonlinear,” she told the students. Now an assistant professor at Sonoma State College, where she teaches statistics, Ortega majored in math and music at Pomona College. A bad experience in a general chemistry class made her rethink the idea of a pre-med track.

“I wasn't focused on science, specifically,” she said. “I was a pure mathematician; I was interested in theory. Math was this complex, intricate game, and I wanted to play.... Math is the most interesting subject in the whole world. It's just puzzles all day.”

Studying math at a high level does not just prepare theoreticians; it opens a world of possibility for different careers, Ortega learned. It wasn't until she participated in a summer research experiment at Cornell's Mathematical and Theoretical Biology Institute that she realized she could combine her love of math with science without becoming a medical practitioner. Mathematical models could help in the development of medical treatments, predicting the spread of infectious disease and much more.

“I realized I could still be a

healer,” Ortega said. “I could still work in medicine, through mathematical epidemiology and mathematical biology.”

After learning that fewer than one percent of all mathematics doctorates were awarded to Latina women, Ortega became determined to get her Ph.D. in math. She did so at the University of Iowa, where she also got her master's in public health. Today, a focus of her work in academia is mentoring and encouraging students of color in STEM. She also directs the Mathematical Epidemiological Research Group (MERG) at Sonoma State and is the president of the National Association of Mathematicians Inc., a nonprofit promoting excellence in mathematics and supporting the development of underrepresented scholars in the field.



Milton Magazine

MUSIC

# Pianist Aaron Goldberg '91 was a Gold Fund Visiting Artist



The difference between a good jazz musician and a great one comes down to one thing, award-winning jazz pianist **AARON GOLDBERG '91** told students: “It's the ability to play and listen at the same time at a really high level.”

“It's an experience you can only have by playing with other people,” he said during a webinar supported by the Melissa Dilworth Gold Visiting Artists Fund. “The best jazz musicians can hear everything that's going on around them and react and interact in the moment. The most important thing you can do to develop that skill is to play with your friends and concentrate more on what they're doing than what you're doing.”

Goldberg fell in love with jazz as a Milton freshman. As a classically trained pianist, he had never explored improvisation before he enrolled in Music Department faculty member Bob Sinicrope's jazz class. The summer “reading” was an introductory cassette of jazz, which Goldberg listened to incessantly.

“I never imagined when I

started at Milton that I would become a professional musician,” he said. “As far as I was concerned, I was more interested in sports than music; playing piano was just one of the things I did. Mr. Sinicrope's first-year jazz class changed my life.”

Learning to listen to jazz was like learning language as a baby, Goldberg said. “It was all that listening that actually turned me into a jazz musician without realizing I was becoming a jazz musician. By falling in love with jazz and listening to it over and over again, I was learning this new language by ear.”

Following his talk, which he opened by playing the John Coltrane ballad “Lonnie's Lament” live, Goldberg answered questions from students about developing a style, improvising melodies, his path to becoming a professional musician, and why he still pushes himself.

The **MELISSA DILWORTH GOLD '61** Visiting Artists Fund was established in 1992 to support the arts department bringing a nationally recognized artist to the campus each year.

## Spanish Language Students Connect with “Moms” in Guatemala

Students in Mark Connolly’s Spanish 4 class finished the academic year working with Project Olas, an organization cofounded by a group at Georgetown University that includes alumna Chloe Morris ’19. Project Olas works to provide relationship-centered language education by connecting students with Guatemalan mothers known as “Olas moms” to practice their Spanish. The Olas moms live in the community surrounding the Guatemala City garbage dump.

Connolly says his students were “super excited” to do this work together. Their first Zoom session with their Olas mom, Leslie Hernández, “started slow but ended up with a ping-pong conversation about everything from pets to travel plans to cultural calendars and practices.”

**GRACE ALBRIGHT ’21** worked with Project Olas last fall and wrote about her experience connecting with her Olas mom, Sindy. “I would like to thank Sindy for introducing me to the splendor of Guatemala. I am in awe of her resilience and intelligence—she taught me that I can overcome any circumstance, and that human connection can transcend all limits.”

Connolly says, “Olas moms do this work to support their families and spread understanding of their communities through their language. This was a unique opportunity to connect our work in the classroom to real-world communities.”

## Students’ Bio Research Is Published

During their last semester at Milton, **THEA CHUNG ’21** and **OLIVER WEISSELER ’21** became published scientists, when their research into how water acidity levels affect organisms’ feeding patterns was featured in the *Journal of Emerging Investigators*.

Chung and Weissleder completed an experiment as juniors in their Honors Biology class in which they observed the consumption of food by the single-celled protozoans *Tetrahymena pyriformis* under varied pH levels. The organisms, which live in ponds, lakes, and streams, exist at the bottom of the food chain.

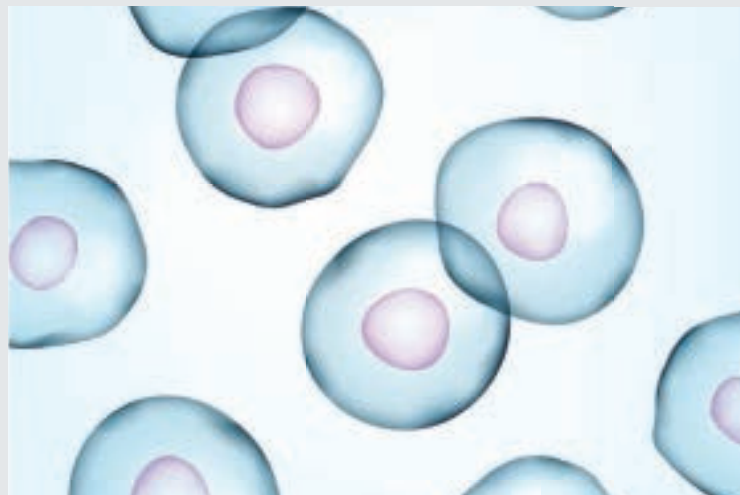
“The results were really clear,” Chung says. “We saw an interesting trend that revealed that the tetrahymena ate less and less as the acidity increased, which is valuable information because this small organism functions as a model in a lot of biological research. Although it’s so simplistic, it can mimic the biological functions of other, larger organisms.”

The students also observed that the tetrahymena would move less if the acid level in-

creased, and that decline in mobility prevented it from reaching its food. “If more-acidic environments prevent the tetrahymena from completing its biological processes, it could have implications for the food chain within ponds and streams,” Chung adds. “If it doesn’t do its part, then organisms larger than it can’t do their part.”

It’s important to understand the effect of acidity on water supplies, Weissleder says, because as more carbon dioxide enters the atmosphere, water acidity levels are on the rise. “It’s happening now,” he says. “It’s particularly relevant in the oceans, because they absorb so much of the CO<sub>2</sub> being pumped into the atmosphere.”

Science Department faculty member Elizabeth Lillis served as the students’ faculty sponsor as they submitted and edited their article, “Low environmental pH inhibits phagosome formation and motility of *Tetrahymena pyriformis*,” for the *Journal of Emerging Investigators*. The journal reviews and publishes research by students at the middle school, high school, and college levels.



## Stang Stories: Student Podcast Features Alumni



As a freshman, **TEDDY ELLIS ’22** enjoyed guest speakers who came to campus, some of whom were alumni. Ellis wanted more opportunities for students to connect with them, so he launched Stang Stories, a podcast featuring interviews with alumni who share their stories.

Stang Stories expanded into an official student club, so other students could participate. So far they have interviewed nine alumni: **JIM MEEKS ’97**, **KENZIE BOK ’07**, **TAD HILLS ’81**, **REV. DR. CHLOE BREYER ’87**, **FRED MELO ’84**, **SID RAJU ’12**, **AMY KAUFMAN ’04**, **EDWARD CUNNINGHAM ’94**, and **FARAH PANDITH ’86**.

Although there were some challenges when the pandemic hit, the students were able to manage their meetings and interviews over Zoom and continued to interview alumni throughout the year.

Ellis says that overall it’s been the best experience talking to alumni, because “everyone has an interesting story, whether they are a known name or not, and the advice they give is great. We’ve enjoyed the conversations.”

ARTS

# Nesto Gallery Exhibited Work by Mikel Glass '81

The Nesto Gallery exhibited work by alumnus **MIKEL GLASS '81**. The show included several life-size full-length portraits and was titled "Parity." It was "a show of contrasts within traditional portraiture—once an honor primarily bestowed upon those of power and privilege," the gallery program noted. "Glass focuses equal attention on those without status to reveal their inner dignity to those who might otherwise choose to ignore them."



# MILTON PAYS TRIBUTE TO RETIREEES

## Cathy Fitzpatrick

UPPER SCHOOL DEAN'S OFFICE,  
1992-2021



We know that comforting rhythm that emanates from her office, the steady, gentle beat that eases us along, and we sing the same refrain: Thank you, Cathy. Those words reverberate, day after day, year after year, for we in the Upper School enjoy a priceless gift: the calm that comes from the confidence that at our core, at our very center, lies a person of dedication, of knowledge, of kindness, and of soul.

Cathy, of course, often deflects the attention that such traits so rightly attract. Still, we notice. We notice the weekends cut short to finish a project, the emails written and rewritten to get the meaning just right, the attention to detail whether crafting a schedule or balancing a budget. With a deep sense of responsibility, she demands much of herself, not out of some compulsion for perfection but out of respect, even out of love,

for this place and its people. She gives her best because she wants us to be our best. And she has the deep, experiential knowledge that allows us to do just that.

Time and again, we experience an event—Family Weekend, perhaps, or Prize Assembly—and we wonder how an event of such complexity can go so smoothly. We soon recognize the reason: Cathy. Indeed, there's hardly a question that Cathy herself cannot answer, and at the moment when we think that we might have her stumped, she knows just whom to turn to—a colleague, no doubt, with whom she has nurtured a longstanding, trusting relationship. That knowledge and that network—they silently, invisibly propel the Upper School forward, returning us to that reassuring rhythm. Yes, we will miss all that Cathy knows—some of which, to be fair, Cathy, always discreet, will never, ever reveal. She is a vault.

Yet it is not what is in Cathy's head that we value most but what is in her heart. With limitless patience, Cathy listens to every visitor and each caller, each believing that their crisis, real or imagined, is the one that demands her utmost attention. She brings them calm; she takes on their burden. Then, when emotion overflows—sorrow or fear, or the anger that such sadness and anxiety beget—Cathy offers compassion, a gentle kindness, a quiet space, to colleagues and strangers alike. More than we know, she holds us all, honoring our experience, sustaining us in times of uncertainty. She finds goodness in us, too, and she maintains, even in the hardest times, faith in the future. Cathy does this work, like all her work, with the greatest humility and with the greatest strength. Cathy's resolve is unshakeable.

Now, as we celebrate Cathy and her much deserved and long overdue next adventure, we hold

fast to all that Cathy has taught us. Cathy will soon depart Warren Hall; her gifts and goodness will long endure. And so once more we sing our beloved refrain for our beloved friend: Thank you, Cathy. —DAVID BALL

## Jackie Bonenfant

DEAN OF ACADEMIC INITIATIVES, ACADEMIC DEAN, HOUSE HEAD, MATH DEPARTMENT CHAIR, 1981-2021



In speaking about Jackie's tenure as academic dean, a colleague noted: "You never felt that you were dealing with an administrator with a title; you felt that you were dealing with a real person." Indeed, this statement holds true for the many titles Jackie held: math teacher, advisor, house head, department chair, academic dean, and, most recently, dean of academic initiatives. In all that she did, Jackie carried herself with unflappable authenticity and clarity of purpose.

To uphold the highest standards for the Milton community, she tended to the needs of individuals in her care with compassion, respect, and integrity. To lead an equitable academic program, she challenged faculty to rethink grading, particularly for students in Class IV. To honor the learning needs of all students, she led the way to the first new Upper School daily schedule in decades. As another colleague described, "She believed in innovation, not for the sake of newness but for the ways that change could help our institu-

tion better serve its students." Indeed, Jackie ensured that Milton responded to calls for a more inclusive academic program. She questioned practices that no longer felt relevant, engaged with research that challenged our assumptions, and ultimately refused to allow Milton's past to define its future.

And for all that she expected of others, she held an even higher standard for herself—one that she used to examine her own practices deliberately and with humility. Responsive, reflective, and adaptive, Jackie honored the thinking of those around her, whether with colleagues or with students. She modeled consistency without rigidity and believed in genuine collaboration, wherein multiple voices shaped an outcome that was greater than what might otherwise have been achieved. Ultimately, she made visible her own desire to grow as a teacher and school leader along with the School itself—for a school's growth is only as dynamic as that of its leaders.

While Jackie may have garnered the respect of the Math Department in her early years at the School, she ended her career as a mentor for all. Penn fellows often identified Jackie as the person whom they most admired or wanted to emulate. Department chairs sought out her counsel in times of need, as did countless numbers of students, parents, and colleagues through the years. And each time, Jackie's door was open. If her classroom teaching is defined by her skillful support of students through the learning process, as described by a recent observer, then so too is the kind of teaching she did for all of us: She sought to understand each of us, each situation in which we may have found ourselves, until we, too, found ourselves learning in the care of this exceptional educator. Jackie will be retiring to Wilmington, North Carolina, with her husband, Mi-

chael, who lived with Jackie on campus for the four decades in which she served the school.

—INDU CHUGANI SINGH

## Larry Fitzpatrick

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT, 1980-2021



It was August, 1980. Gasoline prices were \$1.19 a gallon; the number one song in the country was "Magic," by Olivia Newton John, and Larry Fitzpatrick, who had just recently married his college sweetheart and best friend, Cathy, received a "magical" phone call from his brother Richard. On that day, Richard, a recent Milton Academy grad, called and told Larry he'd heard about a job opportunity at Milton teaching physical education and coaching.

Larry immediately applied for the position, and after meeting with Neil Kelleher, the School's athletic director, Larry got the word that he would be working with the Mustangs. So Larry and Cathy loaded up their U-Haul and started their trek to Milton. Neither of them ever thought that Milton would become their home for the next 41 years.

They soon settled into Robbins House, and Larry dove head first into the Milton community, coaching football, hockey, and baseball; teaching Middle School physical education courses; and being a dorm parent. While he was immersing himself in the Milton Academy world, he was working outside school to become a certified athletic trainer. In 1982, when longtime athletic trainer Mike

Dennault retired, Larry stepped in and led the Athletic Training Services for the next 39 years. He has set a standard of excellence in treating student athletes. He has also supported the athletic training staff members immeasurably: pushing us out of our comfort zones, encouraging us to be deeply involved in the Milton community, to take pride in our work, to respect and listen to others, and to find balance between work and family.

Larry has given this community as much as he has received and more. Throughout his time at Milton, Larry worked to enhance every aspect of the community that he has been a part of, with one guiding principle leading him in all things: Students First. It was this principle that inspired Larry to grow as an educator, a medical professional, a mentor, and an innovator. After taking a course outside Milton that focused on team building, personal accountability, and fostering mutual trust and respect, Larry decided that Milton students would benefit greatly from such a program. With his ideal of Students First, Larry brought Project Adventure to Milton, changing the way students learn and grow as individuals and in groups. As Ben Simpson, one of the recent class valedictorians, said in his speech just a few days ago, "Project Adventure matters." It may not be visible in the moment, but what it offers and builds in students is a game changer and highly impactful.

In 1998, Larry joined Jane Brewer as Class IV dean to help provide important support to first-year students in the Upper School. After working together over a length of time, Jane and Larry suggested to the administration the importance of having a consistent team of Class deans for this important transition year to Milton, instead of a yearly changeover. The administration agreed,

and after Jane retired, Mickey Stiemle stepped in. The Class IV "Dynamic Dean Duo" was born! Over the next 10 years, Larry and Mickey dedicated themselves to creating an environment and programming that would support Class IV students during this critical year. Their ideas and efforts have become staples and fixtures in the Class IV support systems used today.

As one can see, Larry has always devoted himself to the Milton Academy community in many different ways. He has never taken shortcuts or shied away from challenges. He has been a leader in so many settings for a variety of departments and faculty groups.

His leadership, vision, energy, passion, courage, and empathy are only a few of his contributions to our community.

And now that you have spent so many years putting Students First, it's time to move on to the next adventure. I would say instead of putting Students First, it's time to put Larry First, but I know you won't. So I'll just say this in closing: To quote the four famous words that you tell your Class IV students as they exit your class each day: Larry...Be Happy, Be Safe!

—STEVE DARLING

## Jeanne Jacobs

MATH DEPARTMENT, 1996-2021



For Jeanne, faith, family, and community are at the heart of everything that she does. Jeanne began her relationship with Milton as a parent (of Nia

and Daniel). While attending a presentation to Lower School parents by then Director of Multicultural Affairs Christine Savini, Jeanne met Christine at the coffee station, where a professional relationship began. Soon after, Christine encouraged Jeanne to apply for an opening in the Math Department. Jeanne declined, stating that she wanted to continue giving back to her public school upbringing at Cambridge Rindge and Latin, which had prepared her for a B.A. at Harvard, an M. Ed. at Washington University, and then to Harvard Graduate School of Education to pivot toward the teaching of mathematics.

However, two years later, in 1996, an economic crunch in Cambridge changed Jeanne's circumstances. So, Jeanne called Christine back to inquire about teaching positions. There were two! Long story short, Jeanne accepted the offer (Terri HerrNeckar accepted the other) and the start of her 25 years and countless contributions to our community began. As a teacher, Jeanne had faith in her students, and in each class she worked to build a learning community. Jeanne has constantly reflected on her practice with her focus squarely on the needs of her students. Jeanne took the time to find out each student's "politics of location" as she tried to get to know each one's interests, activities, and concerns so that she could find the best way to support their good work. Whether it was getting precocious Class IV student trained in creating durable artifacts of their learning or coaxing a Class I student already mired in the ever-expanding "college process" to think deeply about the concepts of calculus, Jeanne was clear in setting expectations and unwavering in supporting her students in meeting them.

As one who has taught many courses with Jeanne over the

years, from Algebra thru Calculus, I know that I was always a better teacher when teaching with Jeanne because of her ability to center the conversation around the student experience while understanding the scaffold of mathematics at the core. And as a colleague, Jeanne has blurred the lines between community and family. Jeanne has made positive connections with so many of us over her time here. For me, I have enjoyed the many laughs that we have shared over the years as we have worked hand in hand to do the work we both love—whether donning *Star Trek* uniforms on Twin Day (no, not the red ones!); or attending a Red Sox game with Terri, Elaine, Jackie, and/or Anne; exchanging knitting ideas with Anne and Asher et al.; or sharing her latest “good read” or “good watch”; attending the latest sci-fi opening with Sue and others; or even taking a cross-country trip with Terri during a sabbatical in 2005. Jeanne has made Milton her home long enough to become the first African American on “the wall.”

As Jeanne often reminded us in SEED, “We are all in different places in our journey.” Jeanne has reached the conclusion of one journey and the start of a new one in retirement. Jeanne is, unapologetically, a teacher/mom at heart, sharing “tough mom love” in a “cool mom” way. It was fitting that she had two performances dedicated to her at Baccalaureate, and was called out for her loving guidance in a valedictory speech. Jeanne’s students, advisees, and colleagues always knew that she was in their corner (and sometimes in their business). It’s what good parents do and what great teachers do. Jeanne is both, which is one reason why both of her children have followed in similar footsteps. Jeanne will be missed, but not forgotten, and I trust that she will remain connected to us through her

daughter-in-law Sarah, who is joining the science department next year. Thank you! —GREGG REILLY

## Martha Jacobsen

MATH DEPARTMENT, 1985-2021



Martha is a devoted teacher, colleague, mother, daughter, and spouse with an unrelenting desire to create inclusive environments based on mutual understanding and exploration. Martha also has a penchant for taking care of any and all business quietly, effectively, and creatively.

Martha is a model educator because she is the epitome of a lifelong learner. Her son Erik recalls: “One thing that I will always remember about my mom in regards to teaching was how freaking early she would wake up in the morning before school. For my entire life, she woke up between 3 am and 5 am and would quietly and diligently prepare for her classes. This was a time that very few people saw, and her sheer effort, attention, and consistency was something I always found to be awe inspiring. Day after day, week after week, year after year, she would show up at the kitchen table to prepare her lessons and to make sure she was prepared to give her best to her students.”

To provide context, a former chair commented, “Martha began at Milton, in 1985, surrounded by a department of men, where she was always trying to rise to the challenges of being on par with that group,

and that Martha reported being motivated “by fear at first and as a matter of survival as she knew that [she] had to be on top of [her] game.”

She worked incessantly to learn, grow, and build an extremely deep knowledge of math across the curriculum, with a goal of teaching the more advanced classes. Martha writes about the moment when she “just stopped being afraid.... what a relief to discover I knew enough.”

Even still, Martha continues to push the boundaries of her knowledge through both initiating discussions with colleagues and researching myriad topics to inform her teaching and provide a compelling classroom environment. This includes designing a new course in mathematical statistics to help align our curriculum with the demands of the 21st century. As one former colleague says, “Martha is one of the best teachers and community builders I have ever encountered, but she does it all in a way that does not draw attention to herself.”

You see, Martha seeks to know her mathematical topics so well that she could help her students uncover some of their infinite beauty. Martha had a particular love of geometry and its connections to both nature and art, and her classrooms were always decorated with beautiful intersections of all three, created by her students as projects in her classes. The tessellations, the 27-cubic-foot Menger Sponge (whose theoretical volume is zero, of course!), and the Beehive mobile created for the Math Expo in 2019 are just a few examples. Martha was known by her colleagues to be both thoughtful and supportive.

In her early years, she and Kurt co-led a group of teachers in learning the practice of active listening and trust building to discuss whatever concerns were at the top of their minds, which sounds like an early

rendition of Circle Practice. And in more recent years, Martha was “all in” in her work with the Teaching and Learning Team as she sought to cultivate an even healthier learning culture among the faculty.

For me, I will always cherish the trust and support that she gave me when I first came to Milton as chair, and mostly as a driver of discussions centered around the teaching and learning of statistics. Every conversation with Martha involves a hearty dose of learning and laughing. You see, Martha has a wonderful sense of humor, and a tolerance for mine. I am lucky to have worked with her for the past 20 years.

Martha has been a devoted family member, an avid gardener, and always on the lookout for some new rabbit hole to dive into. And so we hope that in retirement Martha has more time for all. She will be missed in so many ways. Thank you! —GREGG REILLY

## Michael Duseau

SCIENCE DEPARTMENT, 2004-2021



Michael joined the Science Department in 2004, back when it was in the current Arts and Media Center. He has taught primarily the class Conceptual Physics, which most new-to-Milton sophomores and juniors take. It is no exaggeration to say that he has taught just about all the incoming students who are not freshmen. I was always happy when I had a chance to teach one of

Michael's former students, for I knew they would have a strong foundation upon which I could build. Bob Tyler echoes this sentiment: "His students knew how to think, how to process data, and how to do science."

He taught students how to write clearly, to say something only if they could support it with experimental evidence, and to think before speaking. In his classroom are many such quotations for Michael. "Science is about attention to details," "Being proactive is better than reactive," and "Be complete but concise." His former students spoke of him with reverence. He was hard, yes, but fair. He made sure you knew what you were talking about and not just enough to slide by. He also put high stock in being prompt, and his door was often closed once class began. His classroom had clear boundaries and expectations that allow his students to thrive. Michael challenged his students to reach higher, and supported them whenever they needed help.

I had the opportunity to teach one of his classes when he was on sabbatical, and it could not have been easier. He was so organized and well-prepared: quizzes, tests, and labs already written before the semester started, a Schoology folder for each discrete unit and for every student. He knew exactly what he wanted each student to know by the end of each class period and several ways for students to reach that understanding.

He showed his students how to do science through his own example. Instead of learning things from a book, he insisted that they learn through experimentally verifying hypotheses. In each of his classes, one of the first experiments done was to determine the acceleration due to gravity when things fall on Earth. He used this exercise to talk about

precision and accuracy, how to take data and replicate tests. Whatever value the class found was the value they used for the rest of the year. It did not matter that the text or website said  $g=9.81 \text{ m/s}^2$ . If the class found  $g=9.91 \text{ m/s}^2$  then it was  $9.91 \text{ m/s}^2$ .

He was also a great resource for his colleagues. When you needed a demonstration or some equipment that you just could not find, you asked Mike. His cabinets were well stocked and organized. He was generous with his "toys"—as long as you returned them promptly and in good condition. In our weekly physics teachers' meetings, Mike was a calm voice of reason, always bringing the conversation back to the students: "What do we want them to get out of this" exercise, lecture, demonstration? Whenever I needed a reality check, someone to bounce ideas off of, Mike was the go-to person.

This is not to say that Mike did not have his lighter side. Every Halloween, he dressed as Isaac Newton complete with powdered wig and ruffles. To help students understand motion as a constant velocity, he put on his rollerblades and coasted down the hall.

Mike's classroom extended beyond Pritzker. In his time at Milton, he coached soccer and tennis for many years, tirelessly helping his players improve their skills. He was able to combine his love of sports and physics by designing his popular mini-unit on "the physics of sports" to end the year in the freshman class.

Mike's contribution to the Milton Science Department and Physics curricula are wide and varied. His dedication to his craft serves as an example to us all, and his presence will be sorely missed next year and in the years to come.

—JIM KERNOHAN

## Sally Dey '69

HISTORY AND SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT, 1981-2021



First, I offer two images that kept returning to me as I worked on this tribute:

► rocks: smooth, grey, solid; structured; our bones; our essential selves, fixed and clear.

► rivers: open to the sky, constantly moving, changing; open to change.

It is hard to tell a story of your 40-year career at Milton, Sally, without first emphasizing your dedication as a teacher, from 1981 to this turbulent COVID year, guiding Class IV students through the varied cultures, texts, and turning points in the history of ancient worlds, and training juniors and seniors to analyze, with greater complexity and scholarly rigor, the rich, contested history of the United States. Generous with your time, thorough—very thorough—and meticulous in your feedback, you have been equally supportive of your colleagues. Larry Pollans, formerly of Milton's History and Art Departments, remembers Sally's generous support in his early days as a teacher at Milton.

"I had no foundation in the Ancient World—not a single course in college!" he exclaimed in a recent conversation. "Sally, collaborative and concentrated, willingly shared

her expertise. I wouldn't have survived that first year without her support!"

Sally brought that same focus and attention to commitments outside the classroom as well, from her long tenure leading the Senior Project Committee to her sustained support of civic life through Public Issues Board, supporting student leaders in organizing Straus Desserts, and shepherding them through the more monumental undertaking of planning and running Seminar Day. Former colleague Nan Lee also shared a vivid glimpse of Mustang Sally's commitment as an advisor and dorm parent, recounting the snow days in Hathaway when Sally would "set up shop" in the small dining area just beyond the large dining room. As a teacher, colleague, dorm faculty, and sponsor, Sally made a commitment to Milton both steady and deep.

Sally's connection to Milton has also been lifelong. She was a daughter of headmaster David Wickes, a graduating member of the class of 1969, and a parent to Milton graduates Russell and Alex Dey. Maybe some of those grandchildren will find their way to Milton in the years ahead, Sally.

We celebrate your long connection and contributions to this place: to learning, to nurturing informed and engaged civic life, to supporting students and colleagues in joyful, serious, searching, and sustained pursuit of both. May this summer be a restful, restorative one, with celebratory and reflective walks along the shore collecting those heavy, grey, oval rocks smoothed by ocean tides, taking photographs of changing river sunsets. Congratulations on your long and rich career at Milton, and best wishes for your next set of adventures.

—ANN FOSTER



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## Shimin Zhou

MODERN LANGUAGES  
DEPARTMENT, 1994-2021



Shimin came to Milton the first time as a visiting teacher in the Beijing exchange (well before my time) and developed a friendship with Bill Moore, which led to bringing her back as a full-time faculty member and dorm parent in Hollowell. In Hollowell, Shimin was truly a caregiver and a caring giver to all her girls. Since her arrival, she has been the epitome of self-discipline, dedication, and loyalty to her students, colleagues, and friends. Her mothering love and good humor has graced the lives of her students in and out of the classroom as well as the lives of her colleagues and faculty children.

One colleague commented, "We could always count on Zhou Laoshi's expertise and tireless wrapping of countless delicious dumplings at Lunar New Year celebrations." In my estimation, she must have made thousands of those delectable dumplings during her time here, nourishing not just the bodies but also the souls of anyone and everyone who chose to celebrate with Shimin.

Another colleague commented on Shimin Zhou's generous and loving work in the dorms, her high academic standards, and her unrelenting support of her students' learning: "Shimin is one of the brightest spirits and most effective teachers I've had the honor to know; I learned from her example in every en-

counter and conversation. How much we have been enriched by her presence here; I miss her already!"

I have seen firsthand how Shimin has seamlessly woven a wonderful tapestry of the traditional and the modern, old-school pencil-and-paper daily homework assignments that Shimin painstakingly corrected each night for each and every student alongside technology with smartboards and multimedia to grace her instruction. Considering how difficult it is to learn Mandarin with English as one's starting point, what Shimin has achieved this past almost 30 years is nothing short of miraculous. To clarify, according to the U.S. Department of State's Foreign Service Institute, to achieve professional proficiency in Mandarin with English as your starting language, you need 2,200 hours, as compared with learning, say, French or Spanish, which only requires 600 hours to achieve comparable proficiency. So it takes more than three times as long to achieve proficiency in Mandarin.

From Shimin's colleagues at the library: "I think we can all agree that Shimin is literally the hardest worker at Milton, and arguably the kindest. In addition to her classroom, dorm, and advising duties, for the past 20 years she was part of the Cox Library team—an integral part. For the past six years, Shimin was the real boss in the department, tending to the library staff as carefully as she did to the plants she kept thriving in an environment as inhospitable as Cox. (The fear of disappointing her by killing one over the long, excruciatingly hot Cox summer was real!) She not only shelved, made sure that bills were paid on time, and made sure that students were using the space appropriately, but also insisted that the librarians ate, didn't overdo things, and went home when

not feeling well. And she always did whatever she could to make things just a little bit better in the librarians' lives. Students and faculty frequently came in during the afternoons, looking for Ms. Zhou—usually to say hello and touch base with someone they knew cared deeply about them. Just seeing her walk into Cox at the end of the school day made us perk up, and while we wish her all the best in retirement, we will miss her more than she will ever know.

There is some bitter irony here I am sure in having to bid farewell to someone who has become so synonymous in her time with the idea of welcoming others. Shimin, we miss you already and in your imminent absence, you are someone whom we have come to count on and depend on for so long, it is only that much more obvious how much you will be missed as we think about your departure. May you know that you are always in our hearts. Best wishes for this exciting new phase of your life's journey in Colorado. All the best from your friends and colleagues at Milton Academy!

Special thanks to the Modern Language Department, Laura Pearle, Andrea Geysling-Moore, and Ann Foster for their contributions to the crafting of this encomium. —BILL HAMEL

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## Mike Niland

FACILITIES SERVICES, 1991-2021

Mike has been at Milton for 30 years this year, as part of the Facilities Services team. I would like to take a few minutes to acknowledge Mike and his well-earned retirement.

I first met Mike 12 years ago when I came to Milton, and even then, he already had 18 years of service here at Milton. I knew as soon as I met him that Mike is your salt-of-the-earth kind of person. He is as genuine and honest as they come. He gets done what needs to be done,

independently, and does so with care and dedication. No job was too big or too small for Mike. His work included everything from preparing the dorms and dorm rooms for students to addressing general maintenance needs and work orders across campus. He took on everything, from screens to mechanical issues in academic buildings and faculty apartments. He also prepared the pool every year and tended it every morning in the summer.

Mike has been well-known in Facilities for his snowplowing skills and his dedication to ensuring that as much snow as possible could be removed before school started. At times, Mike slept on campus overnight to make sure that a plow could keep running during off hours and that someone would be here in the very early morning.

Mike has always been well-known on this campus, because he took the time to know all of you. He would connect with the rest of the trades team members over lunch in the shop, at which he always enjoyed a Hostess or a Little Debbie snack. He would always take the time to check in with any faculty or staff member he encountered throughout the day. If he was in a space that was occupied, he'd also make sure to address other items that might not be on his to-do list. It is for this reason and many others that Mike won the staff service award in prior years.

Although Mike could not be with us today, we celebrated him over at Facilities with many other staff colleagues a couple of weeks ago. And while all of us here in the Facilities Services Department and the greater Milton community are sad to see him hang up the tool belt and park the plow, we know it is time for him to enjoy a long, happy, and healthy retirement.

Please join me in congratulating Mike Niland and thanking him for his many contributions to Milton. —JIMMY BENOIT

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# Alumni Life

News & Notes  
from Our Alumni  
Community

*In May, **SYDNEY PARK '14** was crowned Miss New York, running on a community service platform advocating for girls' participation in sports. A 2018 graduate of Columbia University and a third-year law student at Fordham University, Park will compete in December in the 100th Anniversary Miss America Pageant.*



1948

▲ **JOHN BELASH** and Judy have just finished up their 20th year living on Nantucket. In Nantucket parlance, that makes them “newbie, washashores.” They have participated in municipal government and with nonprofit organizations that are central to community life on Nantucket. The past 14 months have emphasized the reality of living 30 miles out to sea. “Other than for medical appointments on the Cape, we have only ventured off the island for two trips of three days each since March a year ago.” John would love to catch up with anyone who makes it to Nantucket. He is in the phone book or reach him through the alumni office.

1950

**RICHARD PRICE** sends his warmest greetings to you all. “My memories of my World War II life as a young English evacuee at Milton and the happiness I had in the community both in Milton and in Cape Cod are still with me 80 years on.” Richard worked in international TV and film and recently renewed contact with the former president of WGBH, which brought back another flood of memories. Richard was responsible for the distribution, and in some cases the production, of many hours of television that originated in the U.S from WGBH, including *Upstairs, Downstairs*. “I owe a lot to Frank Millett, who taught me in the 6th Grade, which was my last year at Milton before I went back to England. We kept up contact for over 40 years.”

1951

**ANDY WARD** writes that his granddaughters (above) were both recently admitted to Milton.

1954

► *Loaded with Dynamite: Unintended Consequences of Woodrow Wilson’s Idealism*, by **DAVID GREENWAY**, is the riveting story of three very different liberators—Gabriele d’Annunzio, Abd el-Krim, and Sun Yat-sen—whose nationalist aspirations were catalyzed by Wilson’s progressive declaration. The book enriches contemporary questions about globalization and the trade-offs between engagement and isolation that are as perplexing today as they were a century ago. Greenway, whose assignments have included Saigon, Jerusalem, and Baghdad, has witnessed first-



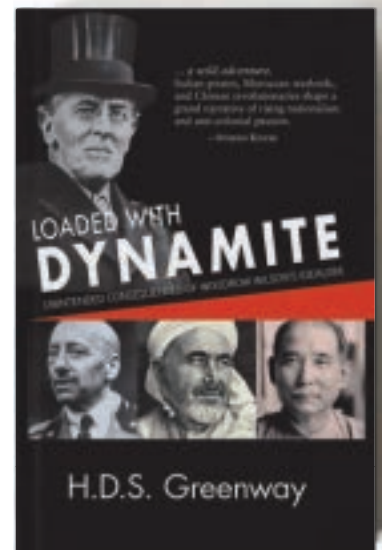
hand the confounding legacy of Wilson’s idealism in American foreign policy.

1955

**KATHARINE “TINKA” BAKER’S** youngest grandchild, **COLIN BAKER ’21**, graduated from Milton in June and is following his older sister, **ELOISE ’18**, to Brown in the fall.

1956

**VCEVY STREKALOVSKY** enjoyed a heartwarming 65th Reunion meeting, a co-ed sharing of experiences. Vcevy recently visited with Jack and **JANE REARDON** and had a chance to tell Mrs. **TARE NEWBURY (SUE)** of a special Zoom moment when **RUPERT HITZIG** asked for a moment of





*The granddaughters of Andy Ward '51 entered Milton in the fall.*

silence for his former Harvard roommates, Tare and Phil Robertson. Vcevy welcomes the chance to stay in touch.

**BETSY REECE HALL** says life as an octogenarian is not as unusual as she thought it would be. She is happily surrounded by friends and family. Her son has eschewed life in Los Angeles for a more settled one in Portland, Maine, and her daughter is in Bar Harbor with her jewelry and gift studio in Northeast Harbor. Betsy's granddaughter is headed to the Anglo-American University in Prague to study Eastern European languages and filmmaking after an anxious pandemic year. "Our recent 65th Reunion was wonderful and reconnecting with so many classmates at class meetings was truly rewarding."

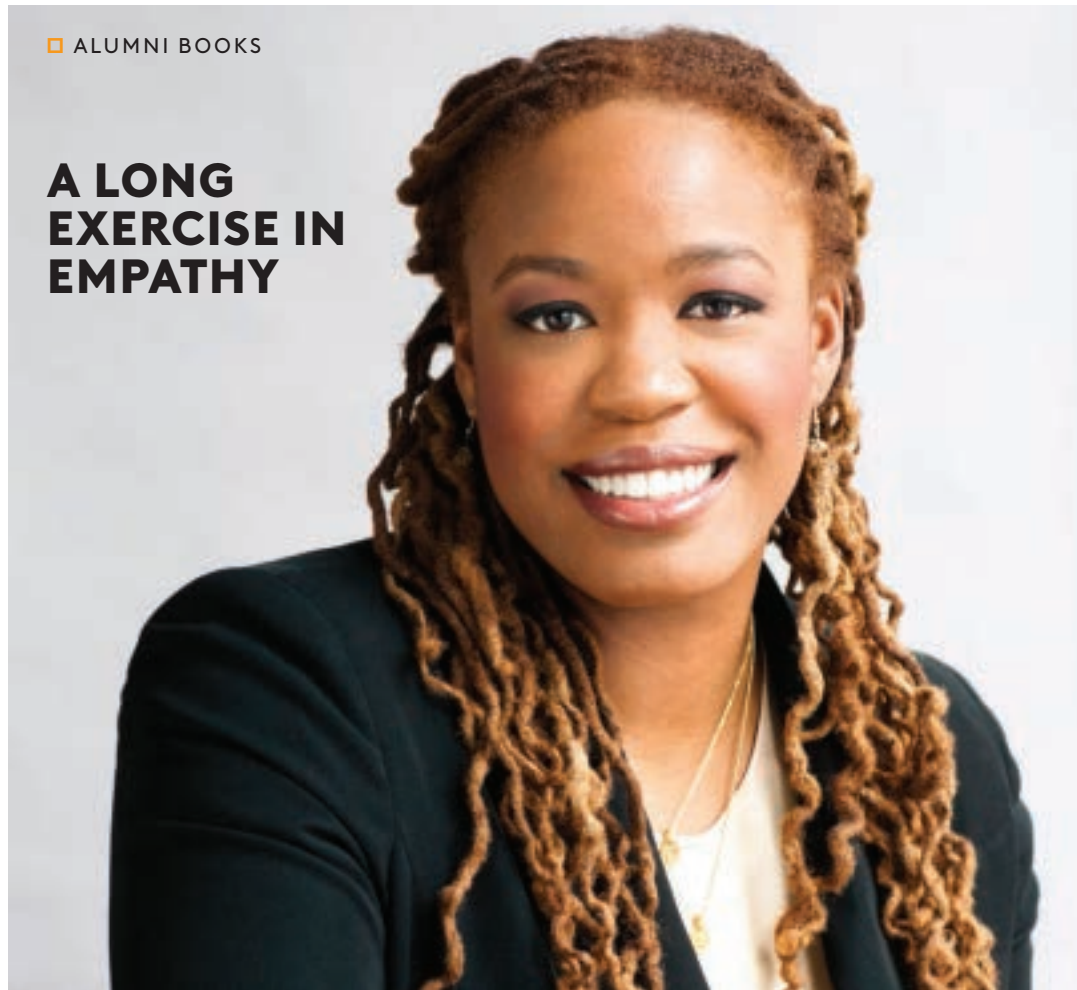
**1957**

**JAMES (JIM) BOWDITCH** and Felicity will be moving to a retirement community cottage in Camden, Maine, in October.

**HELEN WILMERDING's** hometown of Rye, New York, has awakened from COVID-19. Helen credits her daughter, Jane, with keeping her safe, and reports that she loves painting her friends' pets "whimsically, not realistically." The price is free—except for postage—so she says she is popular. "Send color photos if you want to see Fido in oil," she says, and invites everyone to keep well.

ALUMNI BOOKS

## A LONG EXERCISE IN EMPATHY



Discussing the impetus for writing her best-selling book, *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together*, **HEATHER MCGHEE '97** said she saw that too many needs of society were being unmet. McGhee spoke with alumni, parents, and friends of Milton on a webinar in the spring.

Driven by "frustration with nearly 20 years of working to bring more nice things to more people in this country," McGhee explained, she left her dream job and set off on a journey around the country to explore racism and inequality and write a book about it. "By nice things," she said, "I mean universal health care; childcare; paid family leave; reliable, modern infrastructure; a real, robust public health system; and well-funded schools in every neighborhood."

The lack of support for many of a society's most basic needs, she explained, "was impacting all of us, not just people of color, who are disproportionately among the impoverished and the uninsured, but also white people, who are the largest share of the impoverished and uninsured. But, many white people," she added, "continue to support policies or politics that go against their best interests because of racism and the fear of a rising demographic that is not white."

"Generally, the book is a long exercise in empathy and trying to project myself into the shoes of other people and groups and find a common thread, this link that connects our fates," McGhee said. "And yet, there are some things so principally evil about the way that this system has continuously found ways to steal from Black people and then blame them for it."

COURTESY OF HEATHER MCGHEE

*Phil Kinnicutt '59 and Anne Brewer '66 both write of Danube River cruises.*



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**1959**

● Grandma **BONNIE AKINS** is thrilled to send you this photo (see NKOTQ, p. 78) of **JONAS PETER AKINS '97**, Sarah Stapleton, and Celie welcoming Caroline Evelyn (Evie) on April 24, 2021.

**DEBORAH WEBSTER ROGERS** suffered some health issues after colliding with another dancer in the fall of 2019. Aided by her daughters, she has since moved into an excellent retirement community.

▲ **PHIL KINNICUTT** loved reading

about the class of '59 in the spring issue of *Milton Magazine* and hopes the class can keep the momentum for future issues. "By the time these notes appear in print, Marcia and I hope to have completed our COVID-delayed 'Grand Danube Passage' river cruise in early September...a 10-day trip through eight countries that was originally scheduled for last year." Following the cruise, they will visit New England before returning to Vero Beach. Phil and **STEVE JONES** have gotten together in Florida and are in agreement that **TONY GAENSLER**'s recent book, *A Hard Road to Justice ... My Life as a*

*Renegade Lawyer*, should be on your must-read list. "Tony's life before and after Milton is truly remarkable, and it is chronicled in fascinating detail in his memoir of a life lived in service to others."

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**1960**

**BARBARA RUSSELL WILLIAMS** shares that the past year and a half has been a game changer for so many. She and Steve canceled their annual trip to Arizona to visit their daughter's family and welcomed them to Bellevue instead. They celebrat-

ed her granddaughter's (17) and grandson's (14) birthdays during the visit. They feel fortunate to be in a place where they can visit at a distance with neighbors, shop, hike wonderful trails, garden, and write. With a team of 10, Barbara and Steve researched, wrote, and edited articles for a new book, *The Coals of Newcastle: A Hundred Years of Hidden History*, about the history of the coal mining town near them. Zoom has connected them with family and friends in Oregon, Washington, Switzerland, North Carolina, and Massachusetts. Barbara has also been in touch with classmates **ELEANOR JONES WENDELL**, **SALLY HULL DOUGHERTY**, and **LIZ COOMBS MILLAR**. "I hope, dear classmates, that you have found ways to stay connected, too. It is a new world and certainly a far cry from the old days at Milton when we were just learning to type on a manual typewriter. May this be a healthy and happy year for all of us!"

**CHAS FREEMAN** is now a visiting scholar at Brown University's Watson Institute and remains active on the lecture circuit.

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**1964**

► **LIZA KETCHUM** has recently authored two books. *Begin with a Bee*, a picture book coauthored with Jacqueline Briggs Martin and Phyllis Root, relates the life cycle of the rusty-patched bumblebee, the only bee on the U.S.

Fish and Wildlife's endangered species list. The book includes tips at the end for the protection of bees. In her memoir, *The Last Garden*, Liza invites the reader on a gardener's personal journey that begins and ends in Vermont. In settings as varied as the Adirondacks, a New York suburb, coastal Florida, and Oxfordshire, England, she profiles the gardeners—mostly women—whose techniques and wisdom influenced her life in the garden. These early relationships shaped the gardens Liza created in a high mountain town; in a pocket-sized city yard surrounded by concrete; and finally, in *The Last Garden* of this memoir.

**1965**

**SCOTT L. PARKIN** saw a **JAMES TAYLOR** post on Facebook back in February, when everyone was confined at home, in which Taylor played "Jerusalem" on guitar and mentioned chapel hymns as a source of inspiration.

In sharing the post with his 1965 classmates, Scott started a mini reunion of sorts, with classmates sharing stories that sparked even more interest in the class's Zoom Reunion. "Thanks to JT for the initial inspiration and to school staff for enabling us to gather online and see how much we've aged!"

**1966**

◀ **ANNE BREWER** has enjoyed taking cruises and has traveled to Havana, Cuba (April 2017), the Danube (November 2017), and the Rhine (November 2018) with family and friends. A cruise on the Douro River in Portugal, postponed because of COVID-19, is now scheduled for March 2022. She hopes the class of 1966 can gather in person for its next Reunion!



*Ed Pellegrini '69 submitted a photo (top) of his son Brendan Carry Pellegrini of Troop 223 putting flags out on Veterans Day to honor fallen soldiers. Of a more recent photo of Brendan, Ed writes, "He now towers over me, has more hair, and is a hundred times smarter! Oh well... you can't stop time...."*





*Top: Members of the Girls' School Class of 1971 enjoy a Zoom get-together, and, right, Sylvie Peron '71 (at right) and her classmate, Holly Smith Reynolds '71, in France.*

**1967**

**RODNEY (RUSTY) BROWN** hopes everyone is properly vaccinated and can again hug outside your households. He is inching out of seclusion and will be out and about visiting long-unhugged family this summer. Other than that, Rusty continues to teach at Ventura College part time to keep himself out of trouble and to keep the household running like a well-oiled machine. His



family also got a new dog to replace a dear-departed friend. "I still can't grasp actually being

the older generation yet, but I'm working on it. I hope all of you are fat and happy."

**1969**

**EDWARD PELLEGRINI** is working away on a Young Adult novel and a stealth STEM project that is an adventure with educational puzzles and topics that can be referenced in a Wiki. He is also working on his YouTube show, *The Leonardo Show*, which he describes as entertaining and funny. Ed's daughter works at Google, and his son in fintech and neo-banking. Both have left the big city for the mountains, and he plans to follow.

**1971**

▲ **SYLVIE PERON** writes that some of the highlights of this particular year have been the Zoom meetings with the Reunion Committee. The "girls" monthly



Zoom meetings, and most specifically the well-attended class virtual Reunion in May, also proved invaluable. Some 50 years later, and thanks to technology, Sylvie says, they rekindled old friendships, exchanged ideas, and shared some laughs. “The class of ’71 is truly amazing! In one way or another, we’ve all Dared to be True!”

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#### 1975

**ELAINE APTHORP** and Terri are still living and working with the boys of Goodwin House (from their basement lair) and still teaching full-time at Milton after all these years. Elaine still “totters around the bases” in the local women’s softball league in Northampton during the summer. “I wish I could have popped into more of the wonderful Zoom sessions at Reunion time this May. I saw many dear faces on the screen during the Milton Classroom session (see page 65) and wished fervently for the time and opportunity to hang out and catch up. Eventually I will stop teaching quite so much and do some proper partying!”

**JULIA RABKIN** retired from commercial banking in the fall of 2019 and was starting to explore various in-person volunteer opportunities when the world went into COVID lockdown. Anxious about the upcoming election, she dipped a toe into political activism—helping to encourage vote-

by-mail in Florida and then in Georgia. Her current focus is voting rights—but that still leaves plenty of time for fun, including spending time with their almost three-and-a-half-year-old granddaughter. Julia can’t wait to travel again—they are looking forward to more far-flung adventures soon.

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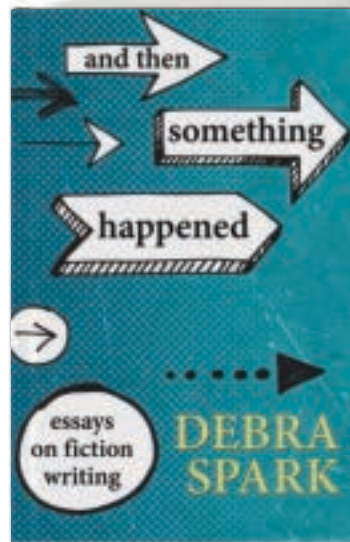
#### 1976

**PETER MCKILLOP** left BlackRock in 2019 to help mobilize the business and financial community on the opportunities of climate change. He founded Climate & Capital Media, a news and networking site to share news, ideas, and build professional relationships, all aimed at driving climate action. Peter hopes this is a capstone to careers in journalism, banking, and communications.

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#### 1980

**BETSY GARSIDE** and her husband, Steph, moved to Santa Fe, New Mexico, in April 2020 after decades in D.C. Betsy is continuing to guide nonprofits on strategy through her firm, Garside Group, and at the same time exploring the “What’s next?” options a new city offers. One positive of the pandemic: Zoom art classes allowed Betsy and **KATE PINGEON** to take a series of cross-country painting classes. “Any classmates who find themselves in Santa Fe, come visit!”



▲ **DEBRA SPARK** is teaching at Colby College, in Maine, and lives closer to Portland. She published a book last summer on the craft of writing fiction titled *And Then Something Happened*. Among writers discussed in the book is **SARAH SHUN-LIEN BYNUM '90**. “Sarah’s also a Milton grad, though a few years behind us. Check out her new book, *Likes*. Great stories!”

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#### 1982

**FRANCIS MCLEAN** retired from the U.S. Navy in July 2020 with the rank of captain after serving 26 years as a Medical Service Corps officer. His final assignment was as officer-in-charge of more than 1,600 navy personnel at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland.

During his career, he deployed to the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan. He now resides in Tipp City, Ohio, with his wife, Robin.

**BEN JESUP** is trying to make lemonade from the pandemic lemons by participating in Zoom calls with **JEREMY CRIGLER, MIKE WOOLSEY, FRED NANGLE, JOHN SLEDGE, ALEX MOOT, and SAM ATKINSON**, all Robbins House Class of ’82. He hopes to see all of them and many others at Reunion next year. Ben and his wife, Pam, are sometimes empty nesters in their mid-century modern house in Alexandria, Virginia. Their daughter, Sarah, graduated from Haverford College during the pandemic and has spent much of that time at home while telecommuting to an AmeriCorps Vista job in the communications office at a D.C. public charter school. Ben spent much of the pandemic playing tennis, biking, and birding locally. At the “office,” he is still a wildlife lawyer, but 4.5 years ago he joined management. He is now the assistant solicitor for fish and wildlife at the Department of the Interior, supervising 11 lawyers who provide legal advice to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the department. Much of their work involves the Endangered Species Act, including controversial legal issues involving gray wolves, polar bears, northern spotted owls, and more-obscure species, such as the Bone Cave harvestman (an endangered daddy longlegs).

## Classmates Stay Connected

Despite COVID-19 safety precautions that prevented graduates from celebrating Reunion in person, Milton hosted its biggest virtual event yet, with 3,000 graduates invited to participate in 28 class meetings and nine signature programs over six days. Below are just a few of the featured events.



### For the Love of Farming

The “Family & Farming” reunion webinar featured **JANE LYMAN BIHLDORFF '65** and her son **DAVE BIHLDORFF '97** from Pakeen Farm in Canton, Massachusetts (see story on page 26), and siblings **LYH-HSIN LAM '03** and **GRACE LAM '05** from Five Fork Farms, in Upton, Massachusetts (featured in the Fall 2019 issue of *Milton Magazine*). The discussion was moderated by **PATRICIA SPENCE '76**, president/CEO of the Urban Farming Institute in Mattapan, Massachusetts (see story on page 34).

“Farming is critical, as we’ve all witnessed the total disruption of our food chain over the last year,” said Spence during her introduction. “And there’s been a surge in the number of people who want to grow fresh food or have access to local or healthy products.”

For almost a decade, the Lams have been growing flowers with their three other siblings, who also graduated from Milton. “We all grew up with different interests and went off in different directions after Milton, but all our interests and strengths now meld together on the farm,” said Lyh-Hsin.

Almost 80 percent of cut

flowers in the United States are imported, so the Lams focus on high-quality flowers grown using organic and sustainable practices. Dahlias are one of their top sellers.

The Bihldorffs sell vegetables and fruits through a CSA cooperative that runs June through November, and Christmas trees during the holiday season. Their 120-acre farm was established by Jane’s great-grandfather in 1899. The preservation of the land is one of their top priorities.

All the farmers talked about their love of the land and the adjustments they had to make during the pandemic. For the Lams, it meant their father had to help out with the farm after a few of their workers became ill. For the Bihldorffs, it meant completely changing how the CSA operated, prepacking the food instead of letting customers browse and pick out their own. But the panelists from both farms weathered the difficulties of the past year and look forward to sunnier days.



### A Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Milton

During “Building a Diverse, Equitable, and Inclusive Milton,” alumni heard updates from the

School’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee (DEIC).

**KURT COLLINS '97** moderated a discussion with Vanessa Cohen Gibbons, Milton’s chief equity and inclusion officer (see page 47), and Trustee **ELEANOR TABI HALLER-JORDEN '75 P'09** (all three serve on the DEIC) about the work done in the 2020–2021 school year in Milton’s pursuit of antiracism and equity.

“I say ‘pursuit’ because there is no end to this work,” Cohen Gibbons said. “We are going to have to make and learn from our mistakes, and we’re going to have to push ourselves to make our values of diversity, equity, and inclusion both tangible and measurable. It will take all of us.”

Engagement opportunities for all employees, including affinity spaces for white employees to discuss and explore white identity and white supremacy, are ongoing. Last spring, co-head monitors **ELIZA DUNN '21** and **GARVIN MCLAUGHLIN '21** initiated a Community Day, during which students, faculty, and alumni led sessions about identity and culture.

The webinar detailed a climate assessment conducted by the consulting group Diversity Directions, which gathered qualitative and quantitative information in research and interviews with students, alumni, faculty, staff, and parents. Reporting from the group along with other feedback and data will guide the DEIC in its recommendations to the School.

Antiracism incorporates more than racial equity, Cohen Gibbons said; it includes intersec-

tions of other identities. Factors such as socioeconomic background, gender identity, sexual identity, nation of origin, ability, religion, and more all contribute to how people experience Milton.



### Art as Metaphor

Describing the artist’s role in society, sculptor **MURRAY “MAC” DEWART '66** said, “We give the world metaphors and we give the world mythologies.” Dewart and sculptor **MIKEL GLASS '81**—both of whom exhibit in museums and in public and private spaces around the world—shared images of their art and discussed their work at “The Arts and the Student Experience” Reunion webinar.

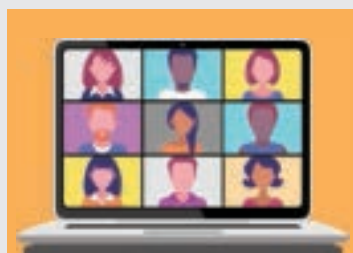
Glass described his work as being divided between painting and sculpture. “Painting is something I got into after college and for the practical means of having some skills to make a living, but just finding stuff and repurposing it into sculptures and installations is really where my heart is.”

Both artists, whose work was on display on campus during the spring semester (see page 50), talked about Milton’s role in shaping their careers. When people ask how his career got

started, Dewart tells them that it began at Milton: “The great privilege at Milton were the teachers who awoke you to that truth about yourself. I was awakened and I haven’t gone back to sleep.”

Reestablishing ties with Milton during the past year, Glass said, helped him to “draw a straight line between where I was way back then and where I am now. It’s made me appreciate the opportunity I had all those years back then and has brought Milton close to my heart again.”

Visual Arts Chair **IAN TORNEY ’82** led the discussion, describing the impressive growth of Milton’s arts program over the past several decades. “Our facilities are tremendous,” Torney said. “Our faculty are practicing artists who are dedicated and knowledgeable, our resources are abundant, and our kids are just absolutely fantastic to work with. Our program is distinct in the comprehensiveness of our curriculum and the ambition of the artwork our students are able to produce.”



► **GUESTS ENJOYED: 28**  
Zoom class meetings and  
9 signature programs.



► **MOST HEARTFELT GIFT MADE IN A REUNION YEAR:** the establishment of the Griffin Family Memorial Scholarship. When the legendary wrestling coach and history teacher Dick Griffin passed away, on September 14, 2020, it prompted his son, **MATT GRIFFIN ’86**, to create a scholarship in tribute to his father, his late brother, Cub, and his late mother, Ellie, a pioneering director of health and counseling at Milton. Matt made the gift to carry on his parents’ goal of helping those in need reach their full potential through financial aid. (Above: Cub with his parents at graduation, 1988.)



## Nurturing Empathy

BY **ELAINE APTHORP ’75**, AN UPPER SCHOOL FACULTY MEMBER, WHO OFFERED A ZOOM CLASSROOM DURING THE CELEBRATION

I wanted to share as best I could, in a few minutes’ interaction with other Milton graduates, some thoughts about empathy,

how desperately crucial it is, and some tools I’ve found useful in trying to nurture it in myself and in the young people with whom I’ve been learning these past 40-plus years in my English and U.S. history courses. It was so dear to see all those faces on the Zoom screen, some of them new to me, others my own Milton classmates, still others my former students; I wanted to meet each one of them and just HANG OUT. But all we had to work with was 45 minutes—the span of a single Milton class period—and two whole worlds of learning to talk about.

It’s impossible to make all of that real in half an hour for

several dozen alums from many walks of life and accrued experience on the planet, but such an audience is also marvelous for the project, so we gave it a shot with a couple of activities. First, we looked at a series of sentences drawn from fiction I teach in American Literature, examples of the power narrative language can exert either to stimulate empathy or to shock us with its absence. Then we did an exercise I ask my U.S. history students to do each year as we’re studying the theory underlying the design of the Constitution. We galloped through some slides on Madison’s *Federalist #10*, parsing his reasoning that, in a large and heterogeneous society, if one was to empower and protect oneself, one would have to build a structure that empowered and protected a number of others whose interests chronically conflicted with one’s own. With all that theory floating about in the air, we turned inward to interrogate the components of our own identity, each listing on a page first, those aspects of our identity that make us feel empowered, then those that make us feel vulnerable. We identified the single element on our page that has impacted our life opportunities the most; then we identified the element that we think about most often. And finally we had a conversation—in small breakout groups, and then all together—about what those two discoveries mean.

Full text can be found at [miltonmagazine.org](http://miltonmagazine.org).



Nick Clark '65 (left) with noted illustrator Ashley Bryan



► **LONGEST CLASS MEETING:** 1991 8 p.m.–1 a.m., with a number of guests including Senior CNN Political Analyst John Avlon, Visiting Fellow at the Hoover Institute at Stanford Matt Pottinger, and award-winning jazz pianist Aaron Goldberg, all dialing in from New York City with Mr. Dunbar.

## Reunion Goes in Their Own Words

### What Milton Taught Me

BILL MARKS '71

No one was more surprised than I to be working in the latter hours of my career with—of all people—civil rights attorney Ben Crump. I became the chief marketing officer and advisor to Ben, his firm, and his cause some two years ago—after decades in a career flogging consumer packaged goods at a number of advertising agencies. While that *Mad Men* experience has been marginally helpful in my current endeavor, I look back to my years at Milton as those that truly prepared me for this moment.

The moment has involved ad-

vocacy in behalf of the families of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and too many other hashtag names cut down in the prime of their lives. My job necessarily involves sadness and inexplicability, but also—thankfully—great measures of hope for a better world.

Milton taught me many lessons, but I point to three areas in particular that got me here.

First, courage. Milton taught me that when I come to a door that says “Do not enter,” that’s the one to go through. That was you, Miles Gersh and Joe Kanon.

Second, communication. Whatever ability I have to speak and write clearly and persuasively came courtesy of Milton. That was you, A.O. Smith, John

Zilliax, Guy Hughes, and especially Paul Monette.

Third, the obligation to help others. What a privilege it was to be at Milton, a fact not lost on me for even a day, which compelled me to tutor kids in Mattapan, volunteer in Dorchester, and always look up to others and never down. That was you, Tom Cleveland.

I look forward to my 50th reunion with gratitude and thanks.

### A Rare Privilege

NICK CLARK '65

Ashley Bryan would not be a role model for estate planning. In the early 2000s, approaching 80, he announced to a group of friends and family that when he died people could just come and take what they wanted. They showed restraint, and eventually the Ashley Bryan Center was founded in 2013. I retired from the Eric Carle Museum in December of 2014 and immediately started working with the center. My mandate was to assess this substantial archive, comprising youthful work, WWII drawings and correspondence, other correspondence, and a significant body of preliminary and finished work for his more than 70 books, and then research appropriate potential repositories.

A child of the Depression, Ashley threw nothing away, and this behavior offers a rich insight into the life and workings of an artist. Denied acceptance at art schools in New York because of his race, he attended Coo-

per Union because they judged you on merit, not the color of your skin. Beginning in the early 1970s, Ashley emerged as a pioneer in bringing characters of color into the genre of children’s books—not long after Milton accepted its first student of color, **JOHN SUSSEWELL '69**, whom I had the pleasure of knowing in Forbes House. What Ashley did and what John did were truly pivotal in broadening points of view.

Ashley’s archive will go to The University of Pennsylvania where it will join, *inter alia*, the Marian Anderson Papers. Ashley heard Anderson perform in 1939. It will provide a wide spectrum of resources for students and scholars for years to come. I was incredibly privileged to work closely with Eric Carle, and I can say the same about Ashley. Both possessed a generosity of spirit matched by genius.

### Milton Conversations: Teenagers Approaching 50

ALEXIS GREEVES '90

In 2015, our Milton 25th Reunion was approaching. I had joined the Reunion Committee and we developed a Moth-inspired storytelling event to mark the milestone. In Ruth King Theatre, we watched as our classmates told stories from our time together at Milton and from our years discovering who we were becoming. The stories made us laugh and had us weeping (sometimes both). They caused



► **CLASS WITH THE MOST MUSICAL GUEST APPEARANCES: 1995 & 1996:** SANDY SCHMID '95 picked up the guitar and LOREN EARLE-CRUIICKSHANKS '96 took to the saxophone to get the party started.

us to reflect on our own experiences and how we see ourselves now. Reunions can feel like a raw and vulnerable experience, and we may want to go into them with shields of our successes and protecting our failures. However,

in telling stories, we tell others that we want to know and be known.

As we approached our 30th Reunion, I mentioned how I wish I could do a podcast, having a conversation with members of

our class. A strong response from my classmates showed many of us were indeed hungry for community and connection with one another.

While I didn't believe I had the time, energy, or ingenuity to figure out a podcast, after a year of offering mental health services over telehealth, I knew how to create a Zoom call and hit "record." I invited members of my class to join me for an hour-long conversation. The first interview was with **COLIN ROWAN**. Colin, as I remembered him, was handsome (did we use that word at 16? Maybe "hottie"), an athlete, friendly but a bit reserved. I was nervous. I have been a therapist for the past 22 years, listening to people and asking questions to provide insight and healing. And yet, I was also aware of my 16-year-old self bubbling with anxiety about "saying the wrong thing." Thankfully, Colin was a joy to talk with. He reflected on his time at Milton and how he connects now, as an adult, with those experiences from 30 years ago. After we hung up, I realized how much I was going to love this project.

I had 25 more conversations with various classmates. I didn't have an agenda; I was far more interested in how my peers were reflecting on their adolescent experience and how they nurtured relationships with classmates than in asking about their résumés. I felt deeply connected to each person I spoke with and was amazed by their kindness, generosity of spirit, and insights on their younger selves.

I'm also struck by how each person is the same person I knew in high school, only better. I recognize mannerisms from more than 30 years ago, laughter, interests, and I can see a warmth that develops through the experiences, pain, and healing that aging requires of us.

Many of us had had similar experiences at Milton—at times feeling "I don't fit in." And because we were teenagers, we kept many hard things to ourselves. I was amazed at how gratified I felt hearing these stories at the age of 48! As if my younger self was aching to know that I wasn't the only one.

I feel grateful I spent those tender years at Milton, being cared for and nurtured by my teachers and dorm parents, and also by incredible other adolescents as we were all trying to figure out who we were and how we fit into the world around us.

To mark our 30th Reunion, our class of '90 captured the spirit of these conversations through a Zoom gathering with a panel of our peers. After hearing their reflections and memories, we opened it up to the rest of the class. I especially loved hearing **JIM LIN** talk about his love of fishing, a reminder to me to pursue the joys in life rather than the "successes" dictated by the world around me. This is one of the reasons I have found great satisfaction with these Milton Conversations.

And although the pace of the conversations has slowed, I know they will continue. ■

## In Memoriam

### 1930–1939

Eleanor Mackenzie Mudge '33  
Holbrook R. Davis '39

### 1940–1949

Susan Byers Plant '42  
Matthew W. Wallace '42  
Katharine Little Heigham '46  
Max W. Kempner '47  
Evelyn Gurney Miller '47

### 1950–1959

Karl Decker '50  
Judith M. Phillips '50  
Joanna Koehler Fischer '51  
George O. Jenkins '52  
David H. Morse '52  
Jean Valentine '52  
Martha Weil de Bourgknecht '56  
Georgia Bradley Zaborowski '58

### 1960–1969

Hugh W. Bigelow, Jr. '65  
John D. Cushing '66  
Peter G. Whittemore '68

### 1970–1979

Charles S. Nierman '78

### Faculty & Staff

Ethan W. Bisbee  
Margo B. Gubser  
Alice Perry  
Theodore I. Reese III

ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND STAFF WHO PASSED DECEMBER 16, 2020, TO JUNE 25, 2021. TO NOTIFY US OF A DEATH, PLEASE CONTACT THE DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS OFFICE AT ALUMNI@MILTON.EDU OR 617-898-2447.

## 1983

**MICHELLE R. PEIRCE** has been named co-chair of the Government Enforcement and White Collar Defense group, joining Michael J. Connolly and Michael L. Koenig as leaders of the group, which represents individual and corporate clients in criminal, civil, and regulatory enforcement matters at every stage—from proactively advising on compliance programs in health care, public procurement, and construction to defending against government investigation and/or indictment. Michelle joined Hinckley Allen in January of 2021 after 17 years at Barrett & Singal, where she served as co-chair of the firm's litigation group. She is also a former special assistant district attorney for Middlesex County. Her practice focuses on white-collar criminal defense and complex civil litigation matters, including health care fraud and consumer protection investigations. Michelle has tried numerous jury and bench trials. She is currently serving as president of the Women's Bar Foundation and is a past president of the Women's Bar Association of Massachusetts. She has also been recognized for her achievements by *Best Lawyers*, *Super Lawyers*, and *Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly* on numerous occasions.

**MATTHEW FALLON** lives in Indianapolis again after a recent divorce. He continues to coach



wrestling and is the director of religious education for his parish.

## 1984

▲ **RICHARD PERKINS HSUNG's** mother published her first book in a two-volume memoir. In *Spring Flower, A Tale of Two Rivers*, Jean Tren-Hwa Perkins, M.D., describes returning to the States with Richard in 1980 after being left behind in Communist China for nearly 30 years. Because many Perkins children had attended Milton, Richard's aunt, Evelyn Perkins Ames, insisted that he would too, and he started school knowing very little English.

## 1985

**DAN TANGHERLINI** and his wife,

Theresa, have spent the early part of this summer in Wellfleet on Cape Cod, where Theresa is helping out on an organic farm after finishing up 22 years with her pediatric practice. Their two children, Cassie (24) and Francesca (21), are working for a tech start-up and heading into senior year at Reed College, respectively. Their pandemic puppy, Clover, is still roughly two weeks away from being a good dog. Their other dog, Duck, is perfect. Dan works as a managing director for the Emerson Collective with a focus on equitable community development. His podcast, *Gov Actually*, has several loyal listeners.

## 1988

**ELIZABETH BREWER REDWINE, PH.D.**, has recently published *Gender, Performance, and Authorship at the Abbey Theatre* through Oxford University Press. "With all my years of school, my seventh-grade English class with Ms. Simon started me wanting to be a writer, researcher, and educator!" The main argument of her book is that the actresses who performed in the plays of W. B. Yeats and J. M. Synge, working-class women supporting large families, helped write and revise the plays. "I'm trying to recover the story of the contributions of these actresses to the canonical plays of the Abbey Theatre."

**MOLLY DE RAMEL** writes, "I am missing you all!" Molly is living

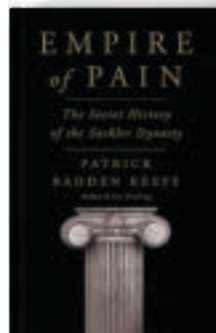


in Newport, Rhode Island, and commuting to New York City “to essentially teach speech team tips to Wall Street top guns. Amazing how that makes for a profession!” She is married (19 years) to an amazing pilot and French adventurer. They have two children; their oldest, **CHARLIE**, is now a sophomore at Milton.

**1992**

**TIM DEMPSEY** lives in Hingham, Massachusetts, with his husband and children. He has been a history teacher/counselor in a public therapeutic high school for the past 20 years, and was just elected to Hingham’s School Committee.

**DAISY (WADEMAN) DOWLING** recently published *Workparent: The Complete Guide to Succeeding on the Job, Staying True to Yourself, and Raising Happy Kids*. As a longtime executive coach and full-time working parent, Daisy was frustrated when she couldn’t find that one covers-it-all, nonjudgmental handbook on managing kids and career, so she decided to write it. *Workparent* includes all working parents, moms and dads, gay and straight, biological and adoptive, in all careers, and with kids of differing ages. Daisy also shared that in the spring of 1991, she was proud to win two of Milton’s Persky awards for excellent writing; she hopes that her book “does Milton’s incredible writing program proud!”



Since 1999, more than half a million Americans have died of opioid-related overdoses. In *Empire of Pain: The Secret History of the Sackler Family*, **PATRICK RADDEN KEEFE '94** traces the role played by the Sackler family and its company, Purdue Pharma, maker of the painkiller OxyContin, in this crisis. A staff writer at *The New Yorker* and the author of several books, including *Say Nothing*, for which he won the 2019 National Book Critics Circle Award, Keefe recently spoke to *Milton Magazine*.

**You have written on a range of subjects, from the electronic intelligence gathering of U.S. agencies to the sectarian strife in Ireland. What made you decide to take on this particular topic?**

Having grown up in Boston and lived in New York, I was very aware of the Sackler name, and associated it with philanthropy—the Sackler Museum at Harvard, the Sackler Wing at the Met—so I was startled to learn that some members of the family had made a vast fortune from the sale of OxyContin. I wanted to take the full measure of the family’s legacy and the mark that they left on the world.

**You’ve provided readers with a very thorough account of how this national tragedy unfolded. How difficult was it to put the pieces together?**

Suffice to say it is not easy to write a book about a family when the family won’t talk to you and is threatening to sue you at every turn. But I did a lot of legwork, drawing on interviews with more than 200 people, many of whom have known the family, and on tens of thousands of pages of internal documents, including many private family letters and emails. As a consequence, even though they did not cooperate, I was able to tell the story in their own words.

**Was there anything about this story that most surprised you?**

I was most struck by the level of collective denial in the family. One hazard of being very wealthy is that you surround yourself with people who reinforce your most blinkered notions.

**What’s next? Are you working on another book?**

I’m working with Doubleday on a collection of my stories from *The New Yorker*, which should be out next summer.

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1993

▼ **ORIO LALSINA** is now the head of fundraising, communication, and marketing at IRB Barcelona.

● **ARYEH STERNBERG** shares that the past 18 months have been a whirlwind for him in Sydney, Australia. His daughter, Isabella, was born on February 28, right before they went into lockdown (see NKOTQ, p. 78). He also is involved in a new area of business using a language platform called KUDO. “Working with organizations like the United Nations and the World Bank has been eye-opening, and it’s amazing to see people connect and engage despite speaking completely different languages.”

**TINA ASPIALA** is still living in Finland with her family. Let her know if you end up in that part of the world! She also published



PiCal, a calendar app, in the iOS app store.

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1994

**JONATHAN KOHLER** has moved from Wisconsin to become associate professor of surgery and pediatric trauma medical director at the University of California-Davis. He joins fellow pediatric surgeon **SHINJIRO HIROSE '86**, who is a professor, division chief, and vice chair. They enjoy spending downtime in clinic reminiscing about mutual friends on Centre Street.

**NOAH FREEMAN** writes that his daughter, Ella, finished her first year at Milton Academy as a fourth grader, and his son, Julian, is in third grade at Kingsley Montessori. He split up with his now ex-wife, Hannah, in a cordial process and is building a stepfamily with his girlfriend, Jennifer, and her son, Jed (also at Kingsley). Noah and Jennifer have started building a house in Maine, a combination summer home and remote work location. In the meantime, they live in Boston’s South End. On the work front, he spent the past eight years building and then selling his software firm, Social Fulcrum, and recently joined Google’s AI division.

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1996

**B CHATFIELD** and family have moved back to Roslindale as of June 2020, and she’s been

Milton Magazine



working for Boston Parks and Recreation on some exciting new park renovation projects. She’s looking forward to getting back in touch!

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1999

**DAVE JENKINS** spent 2020 launching a new nonprofit, the Resource Organizing Project, aimed at increasing funding and sustainability for grassroots groups focused on social and racial justice in New England.

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2001

**ALDA BALTHROP-LEWIS** published her first book, *Thoreau’s Religion: Walden Woods, Social*

*Justice, and the Politics of Asceticism* (Cambridge, 2021). She lives in Melbourne, Australia, with her partner, David Newheiser, and welcomes visits from Milton friends traveling in the antipodes.

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2002

**KEN NAKAMURA** shared that he and his husband, Saul, have been living in Shanghai for the past eight years while he worked at an advertising agency developing campaigns for Apple. They moved back to the U.S. mid-pandemic after getting split up at the border in March 2020. After taking eight months off and consulting with many Milton and



*Louise Place '04 married Ryan Oliver in July 2019 in Carmel by the Sea, Calif.*

Mountain School friends, Ken recently started freelancing at a production house in LA, working on Adidas, and helping the company grow its content studio while continuing to contemplate his career path.

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#### 2004

**ALEX SEITZ-WALD** and his wife, Lucia Graves, welcomed the birth of their first daughter, Phoebe, on May 4, 2020 and adopted a spunky lab-mix puppy named Homer.

◀ **LOUISE PLACE** married Ryan Oliver in July 2019 in Carmel by the Sea, with maid of honor Jessica Croll and brother **ALEX PLACE '07** by her side. In September of 2020, Louise and Ryan welcomed a daughter—Arabella Wilde Oliver (see NKOTQ, p. 78), named for the seaworthy vessel that stole the heart of Louise's father (**DAVID E. PLACE '39**). After nearly a decade of teaching, Louise transitioned to her private practice full-time. She serves as a learning consultant, helping students navigate the admissions process, strengthen their writing, and master executive functioning (www.LouisePlace.com). Also in education, Ryan empowers underserved youth through BUILD with **AYELE SHAKUR '83**. Based in California, Louise and Ryan love hiking and swimming along the craggy coastline, while scanning the horizon for dorsal fins.

▶ **CATHERINE WEISS** published her debut poetry collection, *Wolf Girls vs. Horse Girls*. Find it at [www.gameoverbooks.com](http://www.gameoverbooks.com).

● **JEFF MARR** and **ALEX RODMAN '06** welcomed their daughter, Layla, on May 13, 2021 (see NKOTQ, p. 78). They will reside in Milton less than a mile from the Academy.

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#### 2005

**JASON YEAGER** married his long-time girlfriend, **JULIE BENKO**, in Washingtonville, New York, on June 5. They were joined by dear friends and family, both in person and streaming on YouTube Live, including several Milton '05 alumni with whom the couple remains close to this day.

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#### 2006

**ANNIE JEAN-BAPTISTE** and **ALEX-ANDRA ALVES '07** are celebrating one year of Equitably Designed, a consulting service that empowers businesses in the fashion space to design products and deliver services with equity at the center of all that they create. As the world becomes more aware of systemic inequities, it's important to understand both the challenges and the opportunities in bringing practical strategies to organizations. The pair offer concrete and actionable interventions to drive growth for their clients. If you're interested in learning more about Alex and Annie's new venture, visit [equitablydesigned.com](http://equitablydesigned.com) or email [equitablydesigned@gmail.com](mailto:equitablydesigned@gmail.com).



signed.com or email [equitablydesigned@gmail.com](mailto:equitablydesigned@gmail.com).

● **MADELEINE (MACMILLAN) WINROW** and her husband, Scott, welcomed their daughter, Hailey, on August 13, 2020, in New York City (see NKOTQ, p. 78). After 11 years in New York, Maddie and her family relocated to the Boston area and are now living on the South Shore.

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#### 2008

**IRENE LI** has spent the past year turning her restaurant, Mei Mei, into a packaged-dumpling company, hopefully the last move in a series of pandemic pivots. Her COVID-19 hunger relief initiative, Project Restore Us, now in its second year, recently surpassed \$900K of fundraising to support restaurants and feed immi-

grant families. She also piloted Commonwealth Kitchen's first Restaurant Resiliency Initiative, supporting eight Black and Latinx-owned restaurants in the City of Boston. She also has a lot of houseplants.

**ANDREW HRESKO** married Angela Farmer on May 1, 2020, in Boston. They had a small ceremony and reception with close family and friends.

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#### 2011

**ISABELLA FRONTADO** graduated from the Harvard University Graduate School of Design (GSD) with a master's in landscape architecture and a master's in design studies in May 2020 and was awarded the Irving Innovation Fellowship at the GSD for the 2020-2021 academic year. She is excited to start her next chapter as a landscape designer at Reed Hilderbrand, a landscape architecture firm in Cambridge, MA. She loved her five years at the GSD and is happy to chat with any current Milton students or alumni interested in or curious about studying design.

**YULEISSY RAMIREZ's** Senior Project was shadowing doctors and nurses, some of whom were obstetricians. She saw a birth in the middle of the night on one of those shifts, and soon decided to pursue a career in midwifery. Yuleissy became a registered nurse and is currently working as an OB/GYN RN at Mass General Hospital. She is enjoying learn-

## Milton Welcomes Its Newest Trustees

Milton's Board of Trustees provides essential support to the School in promoting its mission, vision, and goals. Milton is grateful to this year's retiring board members: Charles A. Cheever '86, Dorothy Altman Weber '60 P '04, and Caterina Papoulias-Sakellaris P '17 '19. We thank them for their service. In September, the Board welcomed the following new members:

### ① Shadi Farokhzad

**SHADI ARYANPOUR FAROKHZAD P '23 '25** has been in private practice endodontics since 2004. She also served since 2015 as a member of the Admission Committee at Harvard School of Dental Medicine, where she also completed her D.M.D. and Certificate of Advanced Graduate Study in Endodontics. She received her M.P.H. in health care and public policy from the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and her B.A. in human biology from Stanford University. Farokhzad previously served on the Newton Community Education Board from 2014 to 2020 and as chair of the board from 2016 to 2020. Since 2015, she has served as the Massachusetts chapter chair of Stanford's Outreach Volunteer Alumni Link program. She was also active in Milton's Lower and Middle School Parents Association. Farokhzad is a member of the American Association of Endodontists, the American Dental Association, and the Mas-

sachusetts Dental Society. She is married to Omid Farokhzad and they have two children at Milton: **NIKA ARYANPOUR FAROKHZAD '23** and **RYAN ARYANPOUR FAROKHZAD '25**.

### ② Ravi Mallela

**RAVI MALLELA P '22 '24** was appointed CFO of First Hawaiian Bank (NASDAQ:FHB) in July 2018 and is a member of the bank's Senior Management Committee. Prior to joining First Hawaiian Bank, he served as senior vice president, finance for First Republic Bank in San Francisco. He also worked in the corporate finance and treasury group at Wells Fargo in San Francisco. He earned an M.B.A. from the UCLA Anderson School of Management and completed the Stanford Executive Program. He has served as town commissioner of the Moraga Parks and Recreation Commission, a member of the Town of Moraga Revenue Enhancement Committee, and

planning commissioner for the Town of Moraga. He is currently a member of the CFO Advisory Board for the Argyle Executive Forum and serves on the boards of the Blood Bank of Hawaii and the Bishop Street Capital Management Corporation. Mallela is married to Yvonne Kong Mallela and they have two children at Milton: **CLAIRE MALLELA '22** and **TARA MALLELA '24**.

### ③ Meika Tylese Neblett

**MEIKA NEBLETT '90** is the chief medical officer of the Community Medical Center, an RWJ Barnabas Health Facility in Toms River, New Jersey. She also serves as the organization's chief academic officer and system lead for equity in clinical care. Previously, she worked at Hoboken University Medical Center, CarePointHealth System, and Mt. Sinai Hospital. She has practiced medicine in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Japan, and Ghana. She is a past director of Medi-

cal Services at Amazing Grace Children's Hospital in Ghana. Neblett earned a B.S. in biology and Spanish at Emory University, an M.D. at Howard University College of Medicine, and an M.A. in health care management at New York University. She is a member of the American College of Emergency Physicians, the American College of Healthcare Executives, and the American College of Physician Executives. Neblett has also served on the board of GEMS (Girls Educational and Mentoring Services). She is married to Richard Francis Cronin.

### ④ Hendrick Sin

**HENDRICK SIN P '23 '25** is the founding and managing partner at China Prosperity Capital Fund (CPC Fund), a leading venture capital firm with a primary focus on technology investment in Greater China. He is also a co-founder and the vice chairman of CMGE Technology Group Limited



(CMGE), a Hong Kong listed leading mobile game company in China. Prior to starting up CMGE and CPC Fund, he had 12 years of experience as an investment banker and advised on a wide range of notable IPOs and mergers & acquisitions transactions involving projects in China/Hong Kong and throughout Asia. He has more than 24 years of experience in enterprise management, finance, and investment banking. Sin is a graduate of Cushing Academy and earned a B.S. in mathematics and computer science, industrial engineering, and economics from Carnegie Mellon University (triple degrees earned in four years and graduated with college honors), and an M.S. in engineering-economic systems and operations research from Stanford University. He has served on the advisory board of the dean of the School of Computer Science at Carnegie Mellon University; as director at Suning.com Co., Ltd (one of the largest Chinese electronic retailers listed in China); as a director at Hong Kong Cyberport Management Co, Ltd, which is wholly owned by the Government of Hong Kong to manage a community with more than 1,650 start-up companies; independent non-executive director at 36Kr Holdings (a U.S.-listed leading technology news platform in China); and an advisor at Our Hong Kong Foundation. Sin was awarded a Medal of Honour by the Government of Hong Kong in 2021. He is married to Sylvia Lo and they have three children: **ALEISHA SIN '23**, **OLIVER SIN '25**, and Sabrina Sin.



ing about prenatal and women’s health, and will be applying to midwifery school at the end of the year. “I hope to contribute to a world where the maternal mortality rate and neonatal mortality rate isn’t about four times higher for Black women and babies. I’m very grateful Milton helped plant that seed so many years ago.”

**SHAN LIN** and his mother are working as a team in a traditional Chinese food establishment in Suffolk County, Queens. He completed his year of service with City Year AmeriCorps, and next up is working at a New York City public school as a substitute teacher.

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**2012**

**BRIGHT OSAJIE** graduated in May from the Boston University School of Public Health with a master of public health certificate in health care management.

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**2014**

**SYDNEY PARK** has been awarded the title of Miss New York and will compete at the 100th Miss

America anniversary competition this year at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Connecticut.

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**2015**

**LILY SLOCUM** married Paul Jeffries in October 2020. “We were so lucky to have the wedding we imagined and are so grateful we could celebrate with family and friends. The past eight months have been a lovely adventure as we explore northern Virginia together.”

**SEAN DEERY** graduated from Tulane with a B.S. in environmental biology and an M.S. in ecology and evolutionary biology. Recently, his graduate research on lizard thermal plasticity was published in a high-impact peer-reviewed journal, the *Journal of Experimental Biology*. He now works as a fisheries biologist in Texas for an environmental consulting firm. “I credit the Milton Academy science department with cultivating my love of science, and would be happy to be a resource for any students looking to get their research published, to go into a STEM career, or anything along those lines.”

# Meet the Milton Class of 2021





MICHAEL DWYER

**Graduates celebrated together at this year's Commencement exercises on June 11. Thea Chung and Benjamin Simpson were chosen by their classmates to deliver the graduation remarks. Meika Neblett '90 gave the commencement address.**

- Stephanie Abrego Diez
- Ellie Casner Ackerman
- Manuella Mia Wangari Adriko
- Buket Aktas
- Chiemerie Somgolie Akunyili
- Grace Elizabeth Albright
- Devon Reese Alperin
- Carlos Roberto Alvarado Jr.
- Jana Amin
- Max Jordan Andrade
- Ajay Krishna Aniseti
- Chloe Palmer Atkinson
- Lydia Meryem Atkinson
- Emmanuel Aweke
- Cameron Jordan Babio
- Colin Davis Baker
- Samuel Hayes Barrett
- Jack Ryan Beauchesne
- Samantha Hoit Bevins
- Jack Henry Blais
- Jehan Crowther Boer
- Benjamin Amory Botvinick
- Phoebe Jean Ann Boyce
- Caroline Bliss Bragg
- Jasper d'Ablemont Burnes
- Oscar Finlay Burnes
- Diego Omondi Buyu
- Kate Cabrera
- Yingdong Cai
- Jonathan Pengcheng Cao
- Mitchell Alexander Cassella
- Bernard James Cassidy IV
- Madeleine Elenore Cesaretti
- Victoria Nicole Choo
- Kenza Chraibi
- Thea Ellis Chung
- Oliver Paul Clarke

**"Milton and the chaotic events of this world have asked us to adjust in the face of change and the unpredictable—have taught us, if we embrace the lesson, how to be better to each other."**

**THEA CHUNG '21**



- Timothy Michael Colledge
- John Preston Crawford
- Alexander Wilder Crosier
- Jack Steven Darling
- Grace Trynin Denneen
- Rosemary Natalie Di Troia
- Fatou Binetou Diaw
- William Henry DiGiovanni
- Mikhail Alexeevich Dmitrienko
- Garrett Franklin Doherty
- Kate Madison Donovan-Maher
- Ava Lucinda Parmele DuBois
- Olivia Fairweather Dumont
- Tanisha Jud-Yannie Dunac
- Eliza Phillips Dunn
- Isabelle Claudia Dupré
- Oliver John Eielson
- Erica Erdenesanaa
- Kiley O'Connor Erickson
- Bill Damas Eugene
- Dashiell Lyle Evett
- Youssef Asser Ezzo
- Joseph Philip Fadule
- Yutian Fan
- Weihu Fang
- Aidan Charles Farwell
- Richard Bates Fearey
- Kathryn Choi Fernandopulle

- Madeline Claire Fitzgibbon
- Clare Margaret Foster
- James Peter Fox
- Jace Roger Fuller
- Gianna Rose Gallagher
- Nathaniel Robert Garrett
- Charlotte Faye Gilson
- Brian Patrick Glennon
- Carson Noble Glew
- Ian Elliott Clarkson Glick
- Danielle Jeanne Golden
- Clara Rodrigues Gonsalves
- Colby Parks Gonser
- Sophia Lloy Vijayarani Hack
- Norman Walker Harris
- Conner Michael Hartman
- Elizabeth Pendleton Hartnick
- Perry Catarina Heredia
- Devin Jane Hill
- Ethan Michael Hillenberg
- Lucy Ames Hirschfeld
- Benjamin Morris Hitt
- Jeanette Bell Hitt
- Emily Chuan Hong
- Yee June Hwang
- Aydin Nawfel Jay
- Nicholas Van Johnson
- Ablai Kabash

## Where They're Headed

GEORGETOWN, HARVARD, BOSTON COLLEGE, AND TRINITY COLLEGE  
TOP THE 87 DESTINATIONS FOR MILTON'S '21 GRADS

University of Aberdeen .....	1	University of Massachusetts, Amherst .....	1
American University .....	1	University of Massachusetts, Lowell .....	1
Amherst College .....	3	McGill University .....	1
Babson College .....	3	Morehouse College .....	1
Barnard College .....	2	Mount Holyoke College .....	3
Bates College .....	3	New York University .....	5
Bath Spa University .....	1	Northeastern University .....	3
Bentley University .....	1	Northwestern University .....	2
Boston College .....	6	Oberlin College .....	1
Boston University .....	2	Occidental College .....	3
Bowdoin College .....	4	Pennsylvania State University .....	1
Brandeis University .....	2	University of Pennsylvania .....	1
Brown University .....	3	University of Pittsburgh .....	1
Bucknell University .....	1	Pratt Institute .....	1
Univ. of California, Berkeley .....	1	Princeton University .....	1
Carnegie Mellon University .....	4	Reed College .....	1
University of Chicago .....	5	Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute .....	1
Clark University .....	1	Rice University .....	1
Colby College .....	1	Santa Clara University .....	1
Colorado College .....	2	Savannah College of Art & Design .....	1
Columbia University .....	5	Skidmore College .....	1
Connecticut College .....	1	University of Southern California .....	2
Cornell University .....	5	Stanford University .....	2
Dartmouth College .....	5	Suffolk University .....	1
Denison University .....	1	Swarthmore College .....	1
Drexel University .....	1	Syracuse University .....	2
Duke University .....	2	University of Toronto .....	1
University of Edinburgh .....	2	Trinity College .....	6
Elon University .....	1	Trinity College Dublin/Columbia Dual BA .....	1
Emerson College .....	1	Tufts University .....	5
Emory University .....	1	Tulane University .....	1
George Washington University .....	1	United States Air Force Academy .....	1
Georgetown University .....	9	University of St Andrews .....	2
Hamilton College .....	1	University of the Arts London .....	1
Harvard College .....	7	Vanderbilt University .....	2
Harvey Mudd College .....	1	Vassar College .....	2
Haverford College .....	1	University of Vermont .....	4
College of the Holy Cross .....	2	University of Virginia .....	1
Johns Hopkins University .....	1	Washington University in St Louis .....	3
Kenyon College .....	3	Wesleyan University .....	3
Lake Forest College .....	1	Wheaton College .....	1
Lawrence University .....	1	University of Wisconsin .....	1
Lehigh University .....	1	Yale University .....	1
Massachusetts Institute of Technology .....	1		



- Nina Pal Kathiresan
- Henry Christie Keohan
- Lawrence Sungwon Kim
- Shannon Na-yun Kim
- Hubert Patton King
- Anne On Kiu Kwok
- Kai Louis Lannon
- Alyssa Lao
- Jason Lee
- Jeffrey J. Lee
- Constance Scholastique Marie Yulin Legrand
- Jae Yoon Lim
- Veronika Claire Lin
- Aaron Lin Lockhart
- Isabella Rae'Nell Lora
- Madelyn Ann MacDonald
- Zoe Jacqueline Malouf
- Pedro Mateo Mateo
- Kayla Ashley Mathieu
- Eloïse Annis Spencer Maybank
- Eleni Grace Mazareas
- Garvin John McLaughlin
- Samuel Lawrence McNulty
- Elizabeth Scott Meeks
- Maya Metri
- Kimia Naraka Mohyeddin
- Luke Henry Monnich
- Anthony Mora
- Alexandra Ryan Morse
- Luca Benjamin Mostofi
- Elina Nicole Mraz
- Phoebe Thompson Mugford
- Eleanor Martignetti Murphy
- Zachariah David Neri
- Jalen Ethan Muiruri Nixon
- Ella Marie O'Hanlon
- Michael Farnsworth O'Keefe
- Oghenerukevwe Joel Omusi
- Jonathan Osarumwense Oriakhi
- Matthew Edward O'Rourke
- Maximiliano Ortiz
- Miranda Grace Paiz
- Nikhil Ashvin Pande
- Sebastian Hyun Park
- Alejandro Paulino Jr.
- Sadie Lynn Pearlstein

"Milton has the power to connect generations of people from all across the globe. These connections can be intentional or out of the blue...the support we have received from, and given, Milton Academy does not stop after today."

**BENJAMIN SIMPSON '21**

- James Sayre Perreault
- Grace Whitney Perryman
- Alexa Kimberly Pil
- August Mansfield Powers
- Patrick Joseph Quinlivan
- Zachary Naseem Rahaman
- Eleanor Clara Powell Raine
- Alexandra Belle Raper
- Eric Joseph Reilly
- Sofia Alejandra Reynolds
- Ishana Rodriguez
- George Alexander Rose
- Blessie Herradura Ruelo
- Herbert Anthony Sanders II
- Austin Benjamin Pelosi Scott
- Tapti Sen
- Nathan Daniel Sicard
- Casey Ellis Simmons
- Benjamin Robert Simpson
- Charles Sanford Morgan Sloane
- Anna Smirnova
- Tanner Timothy Smith
- William Armstrong Spencer
- Nathaniel More Stewart
- Annabelle Fleming Stoker
- Elisenne Jacqueline Stoller
- Jiawei Sun
- Brandon Yao Tang
- Emily Parsons Taylor
- William Martin van der Veen
- Josephine Moon Vogel
- Lauren Grace Walker
- Merrick Wallace
- Zixiao Wang
- Madeleine Scott Weiler
- Oliver Ralph Weissleder
- Christian David Westphal
- Katherine Davies Wiemeyer
- Henry Osgood Wilde
- Caroline Radford Wilson
- Emma Virginia Wright
- Florance Yiling Wu
- Ezekiel Kobina Yarboi
- Lynn Yuan
- Liliana Lanning Day Zavolas
- Dmitriy Zinoviy Zayaruzny
- Cecilia Witherspoon Zinny

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# NKOTQ\*

ALUMNI SHARE PHOTOS OF  
ADDITIONS TO THEIR FAMILIES



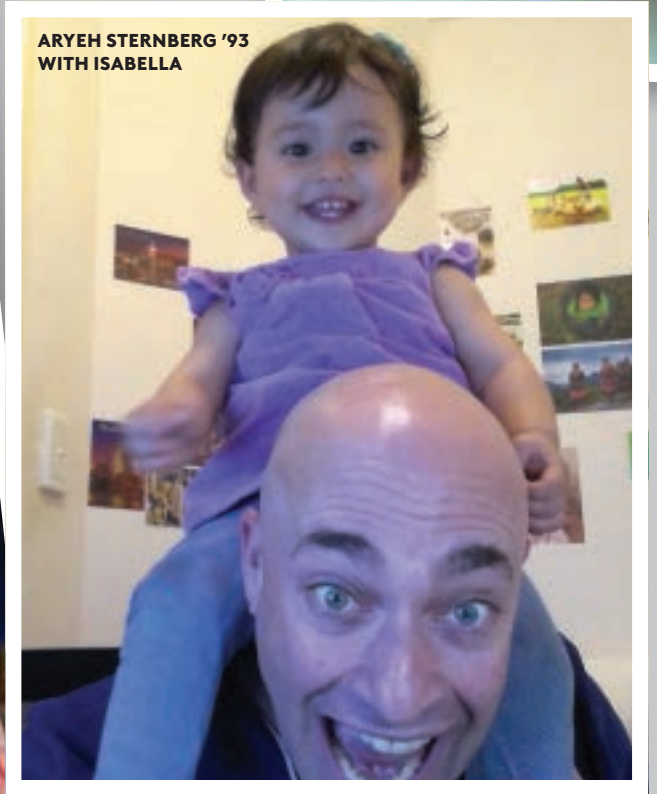
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HUSBAND, SCOTT, WELCOMED  
THEIR DAUGHTER, HAILEY



JONAS PETER AKINS '97,  
SARAH STAPLETON, AND CELIE WITH  
CAROLINE EVELYN (EVIE)



LOUISE PLACE '04 AND  
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ARABELLA WILDE OLIVER



ARYEH STERNBERG '93  
WITH ISABELLA





LAYLA, DAUGHTER  
OF JEFF MARR '04 AND  
ALEX RODMAN '06

## Postscript

CONTINUED FROM P. 80

always eloquent.

The books that helped my cooking the most in the early 1970s were not vegetarian, even though I was. But there was one exception: Anna Thomas's *The Vegetarian Epicure*. Thomas's cooking was European at heart, though she lived in California. There was nothing hair-shirt about it; she clearly had fun, which is what I was all about too. Later, I would savor the work of Deborah Madison, one of the great cooks of all times, who is also a wonderful writer.

Many of my favorite cookbooks are written by lesser-known cooks such as the English author Patience Gray. To miss out on Gray's *Honey From a Weed* is to suffer a loss. It is one of the most poetic cookbooks in my library. The late Judy Rogers's *The Zuni Café Cookbook* is thick with prose but not weighty. You begin to thumb through looking for a recipe for your upcoming dinner party, but you end up reading. Like the salt she uses to season her meats at just the right time, Rogers's prose is purposeful. It tells a story.

Sometimes it's just a memorable phrase, a laugh, a one-liner, that I'm grateful for. I am forever quoting this line from Russ Parsons's *How to Pick a Peach*: "Let's get one thing straight: most eggplants are not bitter (even though they have every right to be after everything that has been said about them)." Amuse me in the course of explaining why it's not necessary to salt eggplant and I'll be your book buddy forever.

MARTHA ROSE SHULMAN '68 IS A COOKBOOK AUTHOR AND A FOOD COLUMNIST FOR THE *NEW YORK TIMES*.

# Delicious Words

FOR **MARTHA ROSE SHULMAN '68**  
AN EARLY LOVE OF FOOD WRITING HELPED  
TO LAUNCH A CAREER

SOMETIMES, WHEN I SEE the limitless online choices for food-oriented programming, I think wistfully about all the pleasure I derive from reading cookbook authors who are also great writers, and all that I would have missed over the years if cooking videos had supplanted their books.

My stepmother taught me how to cook the good food we ate at home, often by pointing me to a recipe in a cookbook. I am largely self-taught when it comes to most of the cooking I did after I left home and all of the vegetarian cooking I did after I embraced my passion for it and decided to turn that into a career. I lived in Austin, Texas, then, and started teaching vegetarian cooking classes and cooking once a week for 35 paying guests at my at-home “supper club.” Eventually I had a vegetarian catering service. It was inevitable that I would write a cookbook. Selling the book to a publisher took another two years (vegetarian cooking was far from mainstream in the 1970s), and the book came out two years after that, during which time I learned a lot about food writing, both from my extraordinary editor, Frances McCullough, and from reading other food writers.

When I met Fran, she gave me a couple of cookbooks she thought I'd like. One was Paula Wolfert's iconic *Couscous and Other Good Food from Morocco*; the other was Mireille Johnston's evocative *Cuisine of the Sun: Classical French Cooking from Nice and Provence*. Both books had a profound impact. The recipes were deeply researched, authentic dishes that the authors had learned to make at the source. Reading them

gave you a sense of what the dishes would taste like and put ideas into your head about going to the source yourself to experience those flavors firsthand.

I had only just discovered food writing when Fran gave me those books. Over the previous year, when I wasn't cooking or teaching or catering or throwing parties, I'd been putting a lot of time into reading cookbooks, not just for recipes, as I'd always done, but for the prose. I sat at my big oak dining table and pored through Julia Child, and all of Elizabeth David's books, and James Beard. I read Waverly Root's writings about the food of France, Italy, and America, and savored *The Alice*

*B. Toklas Cookbook*. I discovered Calvin Trillin's funny food pieces in *The New Yorker* and read them all. The biggest revelation was food as memoir. This happened big time when I discovered MFK Fisher.

Two iconoclasts, John and Karen Hess, published *The Taste of America* in 1975. “We write with trepidation,” their intro titled “The Rape of the Palate,” began. “How shall we tell our fellow Americans that our palates have been ravaged, that our food is awful, and that our most respected authorities on cookery are poseurs? Can most Americans be wrong? Considering our recent political and social history, the answer is evidently yes. But that is the wis-

dom of hindsight, imposed upon us by Vietnam and Watergate....” Food writing, I discovered, could also be political.

Before I had my first computer, I had the Time Life Good Cook Series. Richard Olney, the “chief series consultant,” was the talent behind this groundbreaking series of 28 illustrated one-subject cookbooks. But the Olney cookbook that I still read in bed is *Simple French Food*. I learned much about French country cooking, and specifically the cooking of Provence, from Olney's book. I also learned a lot about Olney, who was opinionated and very thoughtful, often passionate,

CONTINUED ON P. 79



# Leaving a Lasting Legacy

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The daughter of two artists, Dune Thorne '94 describes Milton as the place where she fell in love with math and science. "I was always intimidated by math and lacked confidence, but my teachers at Milton made it fun. They opened my eyes to the idea that I can be good at math and use it as a foundation to explore a wide range of other interest areas like science and finance." At Milton, Dune excelled in math, became president of the Arts Council, and picked up a lacrosse stick for the first time to become an All-American player. Milton pushed her to stand by her values and ask tough questions. Working in finance after graduating from Dartmouth, Dune did just that by asking how her career could better align with her values. At Harvard Business School, she noticed that few women were specializing in finance and investing classes, which led to her commitment to change this trend. Since then and as a member of Brown Advisory's executive team, Dune advocates for racial and gender diversity in the investment industry and actively engages women investors. She gives back to Milton in many ways, including through a planned gift. "When you think about your will, you're using the resources you didn't need in your lifetime to reflect what's important to you. That's my children and my family, but it is also the organizations I love and the impact I want to create in the world. I owe a lot to Milton, and this is my chance to pay it forward."

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Milton  
PLANNED GIVING

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**“Now, how many  
kids say string beans are  
awesome? They don’t! And  
that’s what I live for.”**

**PATRICIA SPENCE '76, FOUNDING PRESIDENT AND  
CEO OF THE URBAN FARMING INSTITUTE  
(SEE P. 34)**

