

The magazine of George Fox University | SUMMER 2026

George Fox

JOURNAL



Dr. Luke Fletcher pursues his calling to bring hope and healing to cancer patients.



Luke Fletcher, MD
Medical Oncology

believe
THE VALLEY
PHOTO AND

EDITOR

Jeremy Lloyd

ART DIRECTOR

Darryl Brown

ASSISTANT EDITOR

Sean Patterson

PHOTOGRAPHER

Chris Low

CONTRIBUTORS

Tristan An
Antonio Arredondo
Rachel Brumfield
Brooklyn Chillemi
Kimberly Felton
Jaime Handley
Barry Hubbell
Victoria Payne
Sophie Roberts

EDITORIAL INTERN

Grace EnYart

PHOTOGRAPHY INTERN

CJ Smith

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PRESIDENT

Robin Baker

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT FOR ENROLLMENT, ADVANCEMENT AND MARKETING

Lindsay Knox

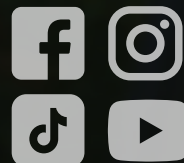
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF MARKETING COMMUNICATIONS

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OUR VISION

To be the Christian university of choice known for empowering students to achieve exceptional life outcomes.

OUR VALUES

- Students First
- Christ in Everything
- Innovation to Improve Outcomes

Cover photo by Chris Low

George Fox Journal

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About the cover:
A double exposure effect was created by combining a portrait of oncologist Luke Fletcher ('09) with a fluorescent image of DNA from cancer cells, provided by the Schmitt Lab at George Fox.



FROM THE PRESIDENT

'A Place of Light'

In this issue of the *George Fox Journal* you will find stories of alumni pursuing their vocational calling, thanks in no small part to the faculty and staff who guided them toward lives infused with the Spirit of God. This mission was personified by Pam Fifer, our beloved dean of the College of Nursing, who this spring finished her battle with cancer and is now at rest with our Lord.



During our celebration of her life, we were reminded of how Pam exemplified walking with Christ in the workplace. She was a leader who demanded professional excellence while reflecting the heart of Jesus in every interaction. Even in the midst of her illness, she formed a profound connection with her physical therapist, Peter Weiss. Peter, an alumnus of our nursing and Doctor of Physical Therapy programs, shared this note with me:

"Working with Pam and her family was life-giving for me and quickly became the highlight of my day... Pam lived these words of Paul: 'Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.' – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Despite the heaviness of Pam's diagnosis and the physical and emotional toll that came with it, her hospital room was not a place of darkness. Quite the opposite, actually. It was a place of light and healing for anyone who stepped foot inside. It was a 'heaven meets earth' kind of place. Pam's circumstances and pain didn't change her calling. She leaned into Christ even more, living with a boldness in faith that could not be ignored. While her body fought the cancer with every fiber of her being, she took the time to have meaningful conversations with everyone who walked through the door. She wanted to genuinely hear people's stories and talk about Christ every moment she had.

Pam was living out the Be Known promise from her hospital bed. She used her pain as an act of worship, glorifying God and lifting others up rather than dwelling on her circumstances. The trust, peace and joy that Pam continued to experience in the midst of such a challenging season was not happenstance – it was the overflow from a lifetime of abiding."

Pam's example gets to the heart of what we do at George Fox: preparing students for the workplace while anchoring them in their faith. On the pages that follow, you will find stories of alumni who are now bringing that same light into the world, inspired by Pam and many others who are equally dedicated to this mission. I hope you enjoy reading about them.

Robin Baker
President



Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner Program to Launch in 2027

In response to a growing mental health crisis in the Pacific Northwest – particularly in rural areas – George Fox will launch a Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner (PMHNP) program in 2027.

The Doctor of Nursing Practice degree will prepare practitioners to prescribe psychiatric medications and offer therapy and counseling services, with an emphasis placed on doing so where access to mental health treatment is limited.

Program Director April Phillips says the need for trained psychiatric providers is urgent.

“There is a critical need across the U.S. – we really don’t have any fully at-capacity areas in our country in regard to psychiatry,” she says. “Our rural areas are particularly underserved, with people waiting upwards of nine months to see a psychiatrist.”

Regional data underscores the challenge. Federal workforce projections show Oregon and Washington will need more than 220

additional mental health practitioners to meet demand, while Oregon is last in the nation in balancing youth mental illness and access to care, according to advocacy and monitoring nonprofit Mental Health America.

Phillips believes PMHNPs are uniquely positioned to respond. “We will be training our graduates to really treat the whole person, so that means not just medication management – it means treating the mental health issues of the individual. It means providing that valuable care and counseling, and providing for the spiritual care of the patient as well.”

As Phillips sees it, George Fox is positioned to make an impact locally, and ultimately, nationally.

“We’re looking at Portland as the epicenter, and I see us making a huge impact across the United States,” she says. “My goal is to make us one of the top-five programs in the country in this discipline.”



Back-to-Back: University Sets Second Straight Enrollment Record



George Fox established another enrollment record in 2025-26, reinforcing its position as Oregon’s largest private university for a sixth straight year. A total of 4,339 students were enrolled last fall, including a record 2,488 undergraduates, surpassing the all-time mark of 4,327 set in 2024-25.

In addition to traditional undergraduates, the university enrolled 290 students in its Accelerated Online Degree program for adults completing bachelor’s degrees and 1,561 graduate students across 21 master’s and doctoral programs.

University leaders attributed the growth to the institution’s Christ-centered mission, its long-standing Be Known promise, and a vibrant student life experience.

Recent expansion into healthcare education has also fueled growth. George Fox launched a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist program in 2025 – the first of three Doctor of Nursing Practice degrees it plans to introduce in the coming years. The university also welcomed its first occupational therapy doctorate cohort in 2024-25, helping address Oregon’s shortage of healthcare professionals, particularly in rural communities.

Engineering Ranked Best Christian Program in the West by U.S. News



George Fox is home to the top Christian engineering program in the West, according to *U.S. News & World Report*.

Overall, the publication ranked the university No. 82 out of 292 institutions nationally in its “Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs” list – placing it as the top program among West Coast-based institutions in the Council for Christian Colleges & Universities.

George Fox also placed No. 1 among Christian colleges in the Northwest in the “Top Performers on Social Mobility” category, which includes schools that enroll and graduate a large proportion of low-income students.

The 2026 rankings mark the 38th year the institution has been recognized in the publication’s annual “Best Colleges” list.

In other rankings news, the university was included in *The Wall Street Journal*’s “America’s Best Colleges” list for 2026. And for the 21st consecutive year, *The Princeton Review* recognized George Fox as a “Best Regional College” in its annual rankings.

New Partnership Gives Undergraduate Students Clear Path to Medical School

A new partnership between George Fox and A.T. Still University’s School of Osteopathic Medicine (ATSU-SOMA) – ranked No. 2 in the nation for graduates practicing in primary care fields (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2026) – will give undergraduate students access to a preferred admissions pathway into medical school.

Gaining admission into medical school is highly competitive, requiring exceptional grades, strong MCAT scores and meaningful clinical experience. Through the partnership, set to launch this fall, eligible George Fox students will be given preferential consideration for an admissions interview with ATSU-SOMA.

“At George Fox, we believe medicine is a calling, not just a career,” says Daniel Kang, associate provost of the Division of Health and Behavioral Sciences. “Through this partnership, we are cultivating a new generation of physicians through a rigorous curriculum, equipping them with a Christ-centered foundation, and providing a clear path to medical excellence – all so they can

return home to serve their communities with integrity and passion.”

The pathway calls for students admitted to ATSU to complete their first two years of medical school in Arizona before returning to Oregon for clinical rotations in years three and four, with placements in Newberg and around the state. It’s open to students in all majors provided they complete specified pre-med prerequisites and meet GPA and MCAT score requirements.

The partnership is ideal, as it combines George Fox’s strong faculty mentorship with ATSU’s emphasis on holistic, whole-person medicine – a commitment to train doctors who consider the mind, body and spirit of their patients. A Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO) is a fully licensed physician in the U.S. who, like an MD, can prescribe



medication, perform surgery, and practice in any specialty in all 50 states.

In addition to the new partnership, George Fox is expanding outreach to high school students interested in medicine through a developing pre-med initiative, helping future physicians envision and prepare for their calling even before college.



University to Offer Oregon's First 90-Credit Bachelor's Degree

In a move designed to reduce tuition costs and provide working adults with a faster path to graduation, George Fox will become the first university in Oregon to offer a 90-credit online bachelor's degree.

Seven such degrees have been approved by the region's accrediting body, the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, starting in the fall of 2026.

Delivered through George Fox Digital, the degrees are designed specifically to meet the needs of online learners and working adults. The innovative accelerated model provides a more efficient, student-centered pathway by cutting 30 credits of elective requirements while maintaining the full general education core and all major coursework.

The change will save students 25% on tuition and allow them to graduate three semesters early. Students who transfer to George Fox with an associate degree can complete their bachelor's degree in as few as 16 months, while those with no college credit can graduate in as few as 24 months.

"For decades, the 120-credit-hour requirement has been the immovable standard of the American bachelor's degree," says Brian Doak, vice president of digital programs and academic innovation. "However, for many working parents, first-generation students and financially strapped learners, a bachelor's degree's final 30 credits of electives represent a significant barrier of thousands of dollars and an extra year of debt. We want

these programs to attract students who might not otherwise be able to afford the time or tuition required to attain a George Fox education."

While the majority of the university's undergraduate students are in the traditional 18-to-22-year-old age range and will still earn a 120-credit bachelor's degree, George Fox has four decades of experience providing education programs that meet the needs of working adults. The university offered Oregon's first degree-completion program for adults in 1986.



More Than \$265,000 Raised on Give Day

More than 1,000 individual donors came together to support students during the university's second annual Give Day on April 9, giving a total of \$265,749 to the academic programs, teams and causes they are passionate about.

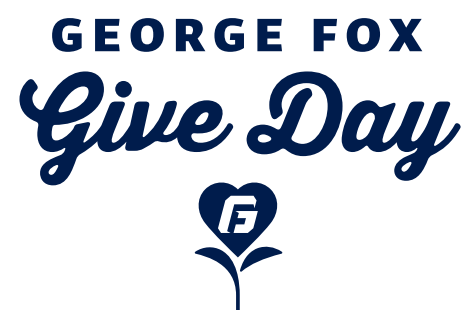
Far from a high-net-worth donor event, the average gift came in at just over \$179, as everyday alumni, parents and community members gave generously to the things they cared about most – among them an engineering scholarship, the women's soccer team and the Bruin Community Pantry.

To celebrate all the ways donors impact the lives of George Fox students, the uni-

versity held a party on the quad, with a free coffee cart, a photo booth, and the opportunity for students to vote for their favorite cause, which triggered a \$1,000 bonus for residence life. The cross

country team also earned a \$1,000 bonus for the most individual donations, while the College of Education received the most donations among academic programs.

Give Day 2026 may be over, but it's not too late to give to your passion at George Fox. Visit giving.georgefox.edu or call 503-554-2115 to find out how you can impact the lives of students.



SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

STUNT Defends National Title

For a second straight season, the university's STUNT team is the best in the nation at the Division III level.

Led by program director Reba McLennan and head coach Beth Sanchez, the squad successfully defended its crown with a dramatic final-day performance at the national championships in Nashville, Tennessee, in late April. Entering from the losers' bracket, the Bruins first defeated the No. 3-ranked Saint Mary's Belles, 24-16, rallying from a halftime deficit, before facing top-ranked Muskingum – the same school George Fox defeated in the 2025 finals – and scoring a wire-to-wire 25-20 victory.

With the win, STUNT became the first Bruin team to claim back-to-back championships in the university's NCAA era. It was the athletic program's sixth Division III team championship since 2000, joining baseball (2004), women's basketball (2009), women's track and field (2018), women's golf (2023) and last year's STUNT team.



McCloskey Earns Induction into National Hall of Fame



With a track record that includes a national NCAA title, 14 straight top-10 national finishes and two individual NCAA champions, women's golf coach MaryJo McCloskey joined elite company with her induction

into the Women's Golf Coaches Association's Hall of Fame in December.

McCloskey, hired as head coach in the program's inaugural season in 2006, has turned the Bruins into a perennial national contender and a dominant force in the Northwest Conference. Through the 2026 season, George Fox has won 16 consecutive NWC titles, made 16 NCAA appearances, produced 33 All-Americans and earned four PING WGCA Players of the Year.

Perhaps most impressively, the Bruins have earned a national trophy in nine of the past 14 seasons by virtue of a top-four finish at the NCAA Championships. In addition to her team's success, McCloskey is an eight-time Division III Golf Pride WGCA West Region Coach of the Year.

Freshman Swimmer Competes in NCAA Nationals

Freshman phenom swimmer Gabbie Patti capped a historic season by becoming the first Bruin to qualify for three events at the 2026 NCAA Division III Men's and Women's Swimming and Diving Championships.

Competing on the national stage in Indianapolis, Patti qualified for the 50-yard freestyle, 100-yard backstroke and 200-yard backstroke. Her strongest finish came in the 200 backstroke, where she placed 20th with a time of 2:02.05, the sixth-fastest mark among all freshmen in the field.

For Patti, simply reaching nationals was historic: She became just the second Bruin to compete at the big event, after Aspen Monkhouse in 2019. En route to qualifying for nationals, Patti set six individual women's program records.

Perhaps most impressively, she finished first in every regular-season individual event she competed in, including all three races she swam at the Northwest Conference Championships. For her efforts, Patti earned both NWC Rookie of the Year and Swimmer of the Year honors.



A Legacy of Leadership and Compassion: Nursing Dean Pam Fifer Dies at 55

Pam Fifer, a transformative leader in nursing education and the beloved dean of the George Fox College of Nursing, died March 27 following a courageous battle with cancer. She was 55 years old.

Fifer served as the dean of the College of Nursing since 2017. Under her leadership, the college experienced historic growth, doubling in size and becoming one of the university's top three majors. She also played an instrumental role in developing the graduate Doctor of Nursing Practice programs, ensuring a future of high-level clinical leadership for the region.

A nationally recognized voice, Fifer served as board president for the Oregon Center for Nursing and as a member of the National Advisory Council on Nursing Education and Practice.

Her nursing career began in the early 1990s as a registered nurse at Salem Hospital. Inspired by observing the various stages of health and illness within her own large extended family, Fifer developed a lifelong passion for acute care, long-term care and hospital administration. Her extensive clinical background eventually led her to transition into nursing education, where she sought to mentor students to serve as the hands and feet of Christ.

An alumna of the University of Portland and George Fox University, she was a devoted wife to her husband, David, and found immense joy in her role as a mother and grandmother.

Fifer leaves behind a legacy of compassion, excellence, and an unwavering belief in the power of nursing to change lives. Her family has established the Pamela J. Fifer Memorial Endowed Nursing Scholarship at George Fox University (georgefox.edu/FiferScholarship), ensuring her passion for nursing education continues to inspire future generations.



University Certified as a Best Christian Workplace

In February, George Fox was named a "Best Christian Workplace," one of just 10 higher education institutions in the last two years to receive that designation.

The recognition, awarded by the nonprofit Best Christian Workplaces, honors organizations that demonstrate intentional leadership and a commitment to cultivating a healthy, flourishing workplace culture marked by high employee engagement. In 2025, just nine higher education institutions received certification. Of the 62 institutions that participated in the review process in the last five years, just 34% received certification.



The recognition places George Fox within a worldwide movement of churches, schools and Christian-owned businesses that set a higher standard for workplace excellence.

"We are humbled and energized to be certified as a Best Christian Workplace," says Nichole Drew, vice president of the university's Office of People and Culture. "Our greatest asset has always been our people, and this achievement reflects the intentional care we invest in our employees so they are equipped and inspired to impact our Christ-centered culture and the students we serve."

////////// IN PRINT //////////

Paul Anderson (theology) published an annotated, modernized edition of *Margaret Fell's Women's Speaking Justified* (Barclay Press), a 17th-century defense of women in ministry written while Fell was imprisoned in Lancaster Castle. Copies were distributed in March at the installation of Sarah Mullally, the Church of England's first female Archbishop of Canterbury.



Neil Cantrall (education) is lead author of the chapter "Transformative Care Through Silent Centering" in *Transformative Care: Challenging Educational Practice for Meaningful Change* (EdTech Books), a volume exploring care-centered approaches to teaching and learning. Coauthored with Professor Emeritus **Scot Headley** and EdD alumni Katie Parry and Jim Wilkins-Luton, the chapter examines how the Quaker practice of "waiting worship" can inform educational leadership through reflection, silence and attentive listening. The book also features contributions from George Fox faculty **Maranda Turner** (education) and **Tiffany Hokanson** (art and design).



Jasmine Gnanadurai (engineering) contributed a chapter, "Deep Learning Models for Intelligent IoT Ecosystems," to the forthcoming book *Intelligent Mobile and IoT Ecosystems* (Taylor & Francis). The chapter explores how deep learning can enhance the scalability, efficiency and real-time decision-making of Internet of



Things systems, while addressing challenges such as data complexity, latency and computational constraints.

Nahanni Freeman (PsyD) published a chapter, "The Beloved Community as Aesthetic Theory: Intimations from Josiah Royce, Martin Luther King Jr., and Erich Fromm," in *Aesthetic Ethics: Towards a Moral Imagination* (Routledge, 2026). The chapter explores how King's vision of the beloved community intersects with philosophical and psychological ideas of human flourishing, offering an aesthetic framework for imagining a more just and connected social life.



Brooks Lampe (English) will release his debut poetry collection, *Sesquipedalian Rain Chant*, in June with Ink & Ribbon Press, where it was selected as the publisher's inaugural title. The collection draws on Oregon's rainy seasons and explores themes of spirituality, mystery and transformation.

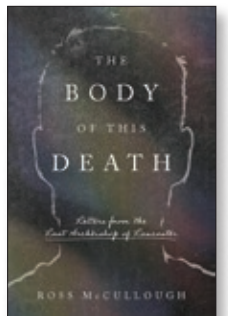


Joel Mayward (theology) published two academic monographs last October: *Sufjan Stevens' Carrie & Lowell*, part of Bloomsbury Academic's 33 1/3 series, and *Theology and the Films of Christopher Nolan: Cinematic Transcendence* (Fortress Academic). He also contributed a chapter, "Genuflecting Ghost: Sufjan Stevens' Javelin as Metamodern Mystical Memento

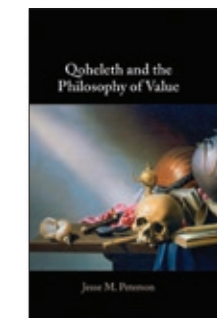


Mori," to the edited collection *My Impossible Soul: The Metamodern Music of Sufjan Stevens* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2026).

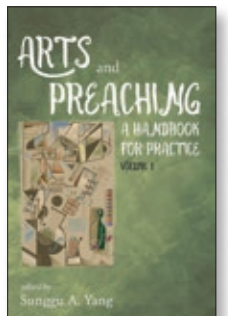
Ross McCullough (honors) published a novel, *The Body of This Death: Letters from the Last Archbishop of Lancaster* (Word on Fire Academic). Set against the backdrop of a dystopian, techno-driven future, it follows the life of an archbishop-op as he awaits his execution. Uniquely structured as a collection of letters, the fictional work recounts the events leading up to his current predicament and features his meditations on embodiment, death and the nature of reality.



Jesse Peterson (theology) published his first book, *Qoheleth and the Philosophy of Value* (Cambridge University Press). The book examines Ecclesiastes through a philosophical lens, drawing on contemporary discussions of meaning, death, well-being and enjoyment to present a coherent interpretation of the biblical text and its vision of life's value.



Sunggu Yang (theology) edited *Arts and Preaching: A Handbook for Practice, Vol. 1* (Wipf and Stock), which invites preachers to move beyond traditional sermon delivery by engaging the imagination, senses and embodied experience. He and his team are currently at work on a second volume with support from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship.





Building a Living Equation

Groundbreaking research performed on campus could one day improve the treatment of neurological diseases and deepen our understanding of the brain

By Jaime Handley

Nature follows a certain pattern known as symmetry – a set of fundamental physical laws. And the world of engineering doesn’t just notice and define the laws of symmetry; it depends on them.

Through his groundbreaking work with the assistance of junior engineering major Daniel Blue, professor Robert Melendy has used the language of mathematics and symmetry to describe and model something that most of us take for granted every day: how our neurons – the cells in the brain and nervous system that function as our body’s communication grid – actually work.

“Using the elegant language of mathematics, we can perfectly describe the pattern that is deeply embedded in nature,” Melendy explains. “God is the creator of order and beauty, not chaos and confusion. Mathematics is neither chaotic nor confusing. It is a complex and beautiful language to describe what’s going on in our world.”

An Equation for Building Artificial Neurons

In 2015, while working at Liberty University, Melendy attended a joint engineering and medical school seminar that reignited an interest in research he’d pursued in graduate school: engineering applications in medicine, neuroscience and biology.

The question on the table: Can we build artificial neurons?

As an engineer, Melendy was grounded in the idea that if you understand how something works, you should be able to build a copy of it.

Though others were working on similar models, he wasn’t sat-

isfied with the research precisely because of that grounding idea: proving the how. How were these other researchers developing their circuits and models?

“When you’re an engineer, you want to see a blueprint,” he explains. “You are asking, ‘What is the design? How did you come up with that, and by what method? How did you do the calculations to show that you used certain components?’ That’s what was missing.”

Though the incredibly complicated 1952 Hodgkin-Huxley equations – which describe how neurons fire and won the Nobel Prize in 1963 – model various aspects of brain function, the question of “why” was still not sufficiently answered.

And so Melendy began working on his own model rooted in cable theory.

“I started from scratch using my knowledge of electrical engineering, control theory and mathematics to develop a model that had never been developed,” he says. “I used my model as the basis for a circuit design because the outcome of my model matches very closely to what you see with the Hodgkin-Huxley equations; it’s just that it’s much simpler.”

Melendy published his first model in the *Journal of Applied Physics* in 2015 and a more refined, rigorous model in the *Journal of Electrical Bioimpedance* in 2018.

He then began to re-examine an area of mathematics called Lie groups (pronounced “lee”), named after Marius Sophus Lie, a

Norwegian mathematician from the mid-1800s, on which discoveries in particle physics and quantum mechanics are based.

While Lie’s mathematical equations were intended to solve problems in classical dynamics, they turned out 100 years later to be exactly what was needed for subatomic particles in physics. And as Melendy and Blue have now discovered, this same mathematics bridges electrical engineering, mathematical physics and neuroscience, further proving that nature has a mathematical description, even neurons.

As Melendy puts it, “There isn’t anything in mathematics yet that hasn’t found a physical application.” The one exception, he notes, may be the Riemann Hypothesis – mathematics’ greatest unsolved mystery – though science has long suspected a deep connection to quantum mechanics that remains to be proven.

After more than a decade working on this problem, he became convinced that hidden within these Lie group symmetries were the patterns he was looking for all along.

The Final Breakthrough

Returning to George Fox in 2023 after a previous stint at the university from 2006 to 2014, Melendy continued to iterate and work on his model, often wondering who he might find to help him.

“There really are not too many people on the globe who have these areas of knowledge that they could bring together,” he explains.

So when he met Daniel Blue in a freshman Engineering Principles class in the spring of 2024, he wondered if Blue might be the right person to help move the project forward.

“I was watching him as the semester unfolded, thinking, ‘This young man is really sharp!’” he remembers.

Melendy noticed that Blue had a unique depth of competence in coding and wondered whether, with a bit more engineering training, he might be able to help with more advanced coding work.

Over a year later, Melendy asked Blue to join him to reorganize and consolidate code.

“Daniel was able to fix the code right away,” he recalls. “It was incredible. And he hadn’t even seen the problem yet.”

This partnership was instrumental to the success of Melendy’s discovery.

Together, they wrote a paper on control theory, published in the journal *Computational Mathematics and Biophysics*, describing a mechanism that controls switching within a neuron.

Though Blue came on board primarily for computational work – writing and debugging MATLAB code to simulate membrane behaviors – it was through teaching him control theory and watching him code that Melendy began thinking about Lie group theory and its application to his original circuit design model from 10 years prior.

This exploration of the Lie group approach led to a 37-page paper on systematic circuit design using Lie algebras, which is currently under review at the *Journal of Computational and Mathematical Biophysics*.

Additionally, their work with Lie group symmetries revealed the “why” that Melendy had been drawn to discover – specifically, why the Hodgkin-Huxley equations must have their particular form. The breakthrough answer to that question was published in the journal *Membranes* in 2026.

Practical Implications

In the future, Melendy and Blue hope to build their neuron circuit based on the model currently under review.

But this research is far more than just a personal academic victory. It’s a clear example of what collaboration, innovation and creative thinking can achieve.

Understanding the fundamental rules governing how a neuron fires has implications for diseases such as epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, ALS and multiple sclerosis. Most notably, knowing why neurons fire in a particular way allows medical researchers to better predict how certain drugs targeting ion channels may behave.

The research may also help in designing brain-like circuits based on physical principles, providing a rigorous theoretical foundation for building systems central to the future of AI.

Melendy has even seen his earlier work on membrane electrical properties, published in the *Journal of Electrical Bioimpedance*, cited by researchers developing real-world medical applications. Yunwei

Zhang of Tianjin University cited it in an Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers study on spinal cord stimulation therapies to help manage chronic, severe nerve-related pain and improve patients’ daily function and quality of life. Prominent biophysicist Bradley J. Roth of Oakland University also cited the work in his Springer Nature book chapter exploring the effects of electromagnetic fields

on the human body and their potential for pain treatment, further underscoring the international reach of this foundational research.

For Blue, the research has been a living example of his classroom learning.

“You get in the lab with all these equations and you problem-solve a bit,” he explains. “Then you realize that what you’ve produced matches what you did in Excel or hand calculations or MATLAB, and you see how the things you’ve learned actually work.”

Blue also credits the unique classroom environment at George Fox for the opportunity to work on such a groundbreaking project.

“All of the professors have worked on really unique research. And because of class size, there aren’t 100 of us in a room listening to a lecture; it’s more like a conversation in the classroom,” he says. “Taking advantage of that kind of small class size and relational atmosphere is incredible.”

Melendy seconds the notion. “Undergraduate research is highly valuable. It’s healthy for the university. It’s healthy for the students. It’s healthy for everyone.”

And one day, that research could help scientists improve countless lives by understanding how the brain works at its most fundamental level.

Courts for Kids

Bruin basketball players swap air-conditioned courts for sunbaked concrete in the Dominican Republic

By Victoria Payne

Photos by Antonio Arredondo

In 104-degree heat, George Fox basketball players had every reason to collapse in the shade during their breaks. Instead, they were giving piggyback rides.

Local children gathered to watch the work, and during rest periods students hoisted kids onto their backs, running circles around the worksite, laughing despite exhaustion. No one said no.

Athletic Director Adam Puckett watched his students and thought, “This is what it looks like to be the hands and feet of Jesus.”

This past summer, 24 students from the men’s and women’s basketball teams spent 10 days in La Grua, Dominican Republic, building a regulation basketball court through Courts for Kids, a nonprofit that partners with communities worldwide to build sports courts and create safe places to play.

The days were long and hot. Puckett had been nervous going into the trip. How would the students – accustomed to air conditioning, hot showers and Wi-Fi – handle these conditions?

“I truly didn’t hear one complaint one time,” Puckett reflects. “I was genuinely amazed. They never quit.”

The trip wasn’t all construction. Each team played two competitive games against local semipro teams. These regionally based squads included athletes of all ages – some with serious skills.

For the men’s team, one game became unforgettable. The Bruins fell behind, then mounted a comeback led by Noah Marte, a George Fox student of Dominican heritage who had never visited his father’s homeland. Marte hit four three-pointers in a row as the crowd roared. Then he hit a buzzer-beater to tie the game and push it to overtime.

After the game, the entire community rushed the court and embraced him.

The women’s team, meanwhile, won both of their games to be crowned the women’s tournament champion. Tara Ushiro was named tournament MVP.

When the teams flew home, they left behind a regulation basketball court in La Grua. What they brought back is harder to measure – the kind of bonds that can only be forged in hard work, shared joy and piggyback rides in the heat.



The Healing Power of Design

A one-day trip to the fire-ravaged area of Altadena, California, gave 19 interior design students a firsthand look at the devastation of a community – and the hope they can offer families and businesses displaced by the flames

By Sean Patterson

Their eyes still weary from an early start and a two-hour flight, students pulled up to a burned-out residence and encountered a scene frozen in time. It was now late September, but at this particular house a Christmas wreath on a metal fence that somehow escaped the flames served as a reminder of happier times.

Down one street, homes stood as if nothing had happened. Down another, the entire block was completely gone, with nothing but charred remains.

Casey Martin wanted her students to be here – to witness this scene for themselves. “I just felt like you couldn’t understand it without being there to see it,” she says.

For that reason, Martin, an associate professor of interior design, organized a one-day trip for 19 of her students to visit the Altadena, California, area ravaged by wildfires in January of 2025. Though it had been nine months since the tragedy, many area residents remained burned out or smoked out of their homes, businesses remained shuttered, and the landscape still bore blackened scars.

By the time they returned home that night, tired and quiet on the flight and the bus ride back to campus, the trip had become much more than a class excursion. It had become a lesson in empathy, resilience and the quiet power of design to help restore lives.

“It’s one thing to read about and view it from afar, but having the chance to hear from people who were directly impacted by the fire created more of a personal and emotional impact,” says Caleb Parker, a senior interior design major on the trip. “I have compassion for those who experience such tragedy, yet continue to have faith and strive for a better future. It was inspirational seeing how much the community



Interior design students tour a burned-out commercial building in Altadena, California. Professor Casey Martin tasked them with envisioning how to rebuild the space in a way that is safer and more resilient while still honoring the culture and identity of the community.

supported and cared for each other.”

For Martin, the trip was never simply about taking students to see burned-out buildings. It was about helping them understand that interior design is not just about design. It’s about problem-solving, care and service. And as she sees it, it’s one way to live out the university’s mission to serve with passion.

Even today, more than a year and a half since the fire, Martin and her students continue to work with six Altadena families to varying degrees, ranging from the overwhelming to the seemingly small: They offer help reviewing floor plans, selecting finishes, understanding contractor drawings, furnishing rental homes, or simply choosing paint colors and cabinet hardware. Some of the victims lost everything. Others were displaced from smoke-damaged homes and are trying to rebuild a sense of normalcy one room at a time.

“Basically anything they need that their contractor is not actually doing for them we’re doing totally for free,” Martin says.

As Martin and her team discovered, the project comes with emotional weight. “I actually had a mom reach out to me before Christmas, and she told me the only thing her daughters wanted as a present was their own furniture to sit on,” she says. “And so within a week we helped them order a sofa and some side tables and chairs to get there in time for Christmas.”

“Walking through the wreckage, I was struck repeatedly by how, as interior designers, we have a unique role in preventing tragedies like the one in Altadena. By changing the way we design, through building layouts, safety features and material selection, we can create buildings that can better withstand natural disasters and other accidents.”

Martin (right) connected with families affected by the fires, offering free interior design services. “We’ve told them we’ll be with you as long as you need us,” she says.



An Idea is Born

The idea for the trip began with Martin’s personal connection to the area. Her parents live in nearby Pasadena, where her father serves as president of a school. The fire came within a quarter-mile of their home. Martin watched events unfold in real time, even viewing the blaze through her father’s school security cameras as flames climbed the hills.

She knew then she needed to be there. Martin visited the area several times in the months that followed, and as she drove through Altadena, she became convinced that students could not fully grasp the scale of the devastation – or the healing and restorative role designers can play in the wake of it – from a classroom in Oregon. That conviction blossomed into an idea.

Over the summer, Martin talked with her father about ways she and her students could help families affected by the fires. He sent an email to his school community explaining that his daughter – an interior designer and professor at George Fox – and her students wanted to assist in any way they could. Martin then connected with her students over the summer to coordinate a visit date in late September.

Upon their arrival, the first stop was the school itself, where students met with people whose homes had burned. One woman described the trauma of the fire and the long, uneven recovery that followed. Suddenly, what had been a project became a face. “Interior design is so much more than creating beautiful spaces,” says junior Ava Mueller of the trip. “It’s about understanding the people we’re designing for and the experiences that shaped who they are today.”

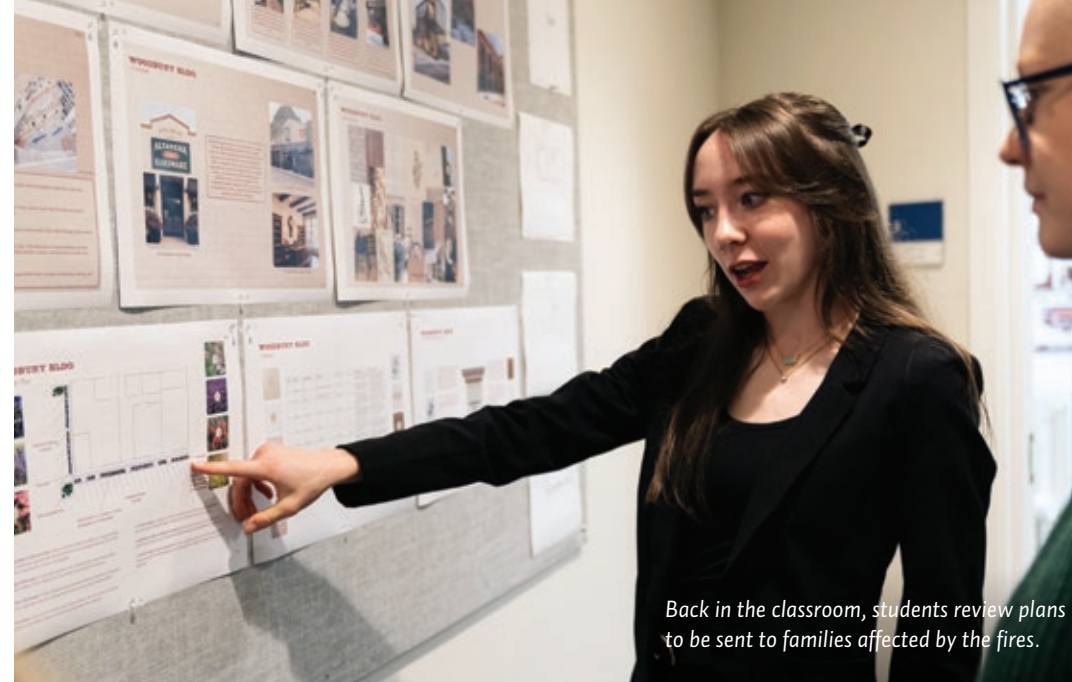
A commitment was made.

“We’ve told them we’ll be with you as long as you need us,” Martin says of the families her team is working with. “In some cases, it may be another year before the work is done, but we’re committed to seeing this through.”

Rebuilding a Community

Beyond assisting individual families, Martin also wanted students to consider what happens when an entire community loses its gathering spaces – the coffee shop, the hardware store, the neighborhood bike shop, the places that make a town feel like home.

With that in mind, Martin included a visit to downtown Altadena as part of the trip. Leading up to it, she asked students to reimagine a burned commercial building in town that had housed several tenants, including a beloved bike shop. The project was conceptual but rooted in real conditions and questions: How do you rebuild in a wildfire-prone area? How do you create spaces that are safer, more resilient and more responsive to trauma? How do you honor the culture and identity of a community while helping it move forward?



Back in the classroom, students review plans to be sent to families affected by the fires.

“I want students to leave the classroom not only with stronger portfolios, but with a deeper understanding of how their talents can be tools for transformation.”

features contribute to healing? How could flexible tenant spaces serve businesses over time while still reinforcing a sense of place?

Many students began incorporating community art, multipurpose gathering spaces and design features inspired by

Altadena’s creative culture. They thought more deeply about resilience, code, fire-resistant materials and the role interior designers can play in addressing disasters before they happen.

That, Martin believes, is one of the project’s most important lessons.

“Too often, people misunderstand interior design as the selection of ‘pretty things,’” she says. “In reality, interior designers shape how people experience space, how buildings function, how communities gather and, in some cases, how trauma is processed.”

At George Fox, Martin wants students to leave not only job-ready but mission-ready – prepared to use their skills in meaningful ways.

That vision has helped define a program that requires students to work on real projects, often in a studio environment that mirrors professional practice. They collaborate with manufacturers, learn how budgets and insurance affect design decisions, and gain the kind of hands-on experience that makes them confident entering the field. That commitment to excellence has produced results, as 100 percent of 2026 interior design graduates received job offers before graduation.

The Altadena effort humanized the work, showing students that their training can meet urgent needs. It also brought the cohort closer together. Martin recalls looking around the bus at the end of the day and seeing students silently scrolling through the photos they had taken, still processing what they had seen. The day had been exhausting, but it accomplished exactly what she hoped it would do: make the work real.

That is why the project continues to resonate. Students still talk about it on a regular basis, and many describe it as one of the most meaningful experiences of their lives.

For Martin, that response confirms something she has long believed: Design can change lives.

“It can help families rebuild after loss, it can restore dignity in uncertain seasons, and it can strengthen communities and prepare them for the future,” she says. “And when it is grounded in empathy, humility and action, it becomes a powerful expression of our faith in practice.”

One downtown building offered a lesson. Much of it had burned, but its historic brick frame was still standing. For Martin, it served as a model to illustrate that choices in design and construction are not abstract. They can influence what survives.

“Walking through the wreckage, I was struck repeatedly by how, as interior designers, we have a unique role in preventing tragedies like the one in Altadena,” Mueller says. “By changing the way we design, through building layouts, safety features and material selection, we can create buildings that can better withstand natural disasters and other accidents. Visiting Altadena and seeing everything that was lost to the fires made me passionate about designing with the purpose of preventing similar tragedies.”

It was, Martin says, as if the fire had just happened. Charred office chairs still sat outside. Along Altadena’s main corridor, block after block of commercial buildings remained damaged or empty. The students were not only seeing architectural loss. They were witnessing the erasure of communal memory.

“I wanted students to understand that rebuilding is never only about structures,” Martin says. “It’s about people and identity. Altadena has a rich cultural and historical heritage, and we wanted to be there to take it all in and offer help however we could.”

That help came in the form of ideation, as Martin charged her students with coming up with renderings of what downtown buildings could look like – designs they freely shared with the businesses impacted.

A Renewed Focus

The experience has informed the interior design program’s focus moving forward. The program emphasizes empathy-driven design, and Martin regularly teaches students to think about trauma-informed spaces – environments that help people feel calm, safe and supported. But in Altadena, those ideas moved from theory to reality.

Students returned to Newberg asking new questions. If people were to walk back into a rebuilt space after experiencing profound trauma, what would help them feel secure? How could material choices, color palettes, spatial layouts and community-centered



A Place to Create

This fall, George Fox students were introduced to a new space designed to foster creativity, collaboration and innovation.

The 12,000-square-foot Art & Cinematic Arts Building, located east of Pennington Hall and south of the Klages Center, replaces Brougner Hall and North Street Annex – both of which were removed last summer. It now serves as the hub for the School of Art & Design and the cinematic arts program, housing an impressive array of technology and facilities:

- A 66-seat theater and screening room
- Spacious ceramics, glass and 3D sculpture studios
- Dedicated gallery space to exhibit student artwork
- Video editing labs with the latest industry-grade tools
- Audio recording studios and a soundstage
- The MIA Cinema Robot, valued at \$125,000, donated by production company Mystery Box
- An outdoor courtyard dedicated to expanded production work



Audio recording studio



Mark Terry Ceramic Studio



Soundstage



Screening room



Sam Poukish (center) with housemates (from left to right) Mason McBride, Gage Gibson and Stewart Johnson.

A Different Brand of Courage

Two percent of people with Apert syndrome attend college, but Sam Poukish isn't one to be defined by the odds

By Kimberly Felton

The key wasn't anywhere. Sam Poukish double-checked his backpack, then sat on the worn front porch of the old craftsman house he shares with 12 other students at George Fox. Eventually someone would come along and let him in. He could text a housemate but didn't want to be a bother. He could be patient.

Sam is forced, more than most people, into patience. He can't tie his shoes, knot his tie, fix his collar or button his buttons. Keys are difficult to maneuver. Damaged optic nerves and eyes not aligned mar his depth perception. He will never drive a car.

This is Apert syndrome, where the skull fuses too soon before birth, affecting the eyes, ears, teeth and brain. Fingers are webbed. Sam was 3 months old during his first surgery, which released pres-

sure on his brain. That was followed by two more cranial surgeries, six surgeries to separate his fingers, and spinal surgery. He logged 13 surgeries total, not counting adenoid, ear and dental procedures.

Building Bridges

But the guys in his house aren't letting his story stop there. And Sam is determined to live his story to the fullest – while increasing his housemates' vocabulary.

"Whenever he asks how workouts are, I usually say, 'Fine,'" says his roommate, sophomore Gage Gibson. "I don't like communicating. He's like, 'All right, we're going to try and use a different word than 'fine' this time.'"

The house is part of The Bridge Network, an on-campus mentoring and training program for student leaders. Community and accountability are part of the deal, and personal growth is non-negotiable.

"He's always the first person to ask us about our day and how we feel," says housemate Sam Astor, a junior. "Or he'll ask us a question, and I'm like, 'I've never been asked that before.'"

Sam thrives in community, whether through Bible studies, meals together or weeks-long stealth water gun wars. But personal growth is painful for everyone.

"Sam loves to share everything he's gone through," says housemate Mason McBride, a senior. "But it was to a point where I said, 'You are not Apert syndrome. That is a struggle you have, but how is God going to use that to bring him glory, and how are you going to walk into that?'"

Sam is leaning further into the identity his housemates insist on for themselves and for him. "You're defined as a child of God," Gage says, "and that identity is not based on anything of this world, but it's based on the mercy given to us."

What Sam wanted was to be like everyone else, or maybe even like the celebrated few.

"Growing up, I really wanted to be a superstar athlete," he says. "I watched YouTube videos of locker rooms and thought it was the coolest thing ever. I wanted to be a basketball player, a football player."

But in the ninth grade, Sam wasn't trying out for football – he was pushing against tremendous pain after spinal surgery, walking again in record time. He became a skilled tennis player in high school. In college, he is a worthy opponent in pickleball and golf.

His housemates say he runs like the wind. He also giggles like a 10-year-old when he pulls out his water gun, preparing to eliminate one more person from the secret water battle that rages between classes.

Living the 2 Percent

Physical limitations will always influence Sam's life. He needs rides to the store. He doesn't see that the pot he's scrubbing isn't clean. While Sam has dialed back his defensiveness over housekeeping corrections, the guys have allowed his story to influence theirs.

"Sam is inspiring because he presents a lot of unique challenges physically. People with far fewer challenges crumble. Sam doesn't crumble. He just puts a smile on and goes about his day. He's taught us so much about servanthood, brotherhood and love for each other."

"Walking with him teaches us to serve, to put ourselves in others' shoes," Mason says. "Sam is inspiring because he presents a lot of unique challenges physically. People with far fewer challenges crumble. Sam doesn't crumble. He just puts a smile on and goes about his day. He's taught us so much about servanthood, brotherhood and love for each other."

Craig Inglesby, director of The Bridge Network, sees Apert syndrome as an access point, not an excuse. "I have limitations, you just can't see them," he says. "Sam's are visible. I say to Sam, 'You're a qualified guide in this arena of people where your voice is 1,000 times more effective than mine. Are you going to use it?'"

While he's figuring out the long-term, Sam is speaking into his friends' lives every morning. In 30-second video clips, he is a coach, cheerleader and pastor. He may pray for his friends or just say it's going to be a good day. A new video each day, sent to everyone's phones.

One morning, after studying most of the night at the library, Mason got his video. "I'm stressed out of my mind," he recalls. "The exam could literally fail my class. Sam sends his little morning video: 'Let's go! Great morning to be a Bruin!' That felt pretty good. And I sent a text back, 'Thank God – I almost thought it was going to be a bad day today.' It's a fun little back-and-forth we get to have."

One study shows that 2 percent of people with Apert syndrome attend college. Sam, now a senior, is ignoring the odds and forging his own path.

"When I was young, it was hard," he admits. "A lot of rocky roads with the surgeries, name-calling, bullying. But there's a light at the end of the tunnel. There's just a lot of people who are there for you, and they're in your corner."

Patience, teamwork and ingenuity are qualities most people aspire to. For Sam, they are a necessity. Sometimes, though, he gets tired of asking for help. That's when he chooses to wait – perhaps on the worn porch of his own house – and notice the good around him. "When you can't find the sunshine, be the sunshine," he says. And then he tries to live it.



Sam and his housemates engage in one of his favorite activities: a water gun fight.

‘Just Grace’

Emily Manzo had never even dreamt of college. Now that she was here, would she survive?

By Kimberly Felton

Imposter. How long before everyone knew she didn’t belong here? She wasn’t rich. She wasn’t white. She didn’t know those Bible stories that came up multiple times a day.

Did everyone know it already, just looking at her? Did they see straight through her?

Emily Manzo was used to being an imposter – used to hiding. She was 17 when she finally told the police the truth: “My sister isn’t lying.”

Confronting a Hard Truth

Her sister wasn’t lying about their parents’ drug addiction or physical abuse. She was the only kid telling the truth. Police had shown up before, and every time Emily said what her parents told her to say: “My sister has mental issues. She’s lying.”

But something shifted in her that day. “I just knew that in order to support my siblings, my mental health and our safety, something needed to happen.” Standing in the yard with the police, she looked at an officer and told the truth for the first time.

They believed her and they believed her sister. And then Emily, at 17, was a foster kid.

The police dropped her off at her foster home around midnight. Emily remembers little: a kind woman offering food; a teenage girl with an extra bed in her room.

Slowly, she learned to trust the safety of Brigett and Mike Eisele’s home, shifting from surviving the present to dreaming of the future.

“My foster mom asked, ‘So, what do you want to do?’” Emily recalls. “And I said, ‘I don’t know, probably work at Subway.’ And she’s like, ‘Ohh.’”

Emily laughs now, but says it took time to realize that her strengths of compassion and responsibility fit one career field particularly well: nursing. In addition to school, she had worked full time at Subway the previous couple years to support her four younger siblings.

Dreaming didn’t come naturally. Yet dozens of scholarship applications later, the Ford Family Foundation recognized her potential and gave her a scholarship good for any Oregon school.



That was four years ago. Today, after graduating in May, Emily is the proud recipient of a nursing degree from George Fox University.

Be Known? No Thanks.

As much as Emily wanted to be on campus, she was also scared. “You’ve done harder things in life, you know,” Brigett teased when Emily balked at living on campus.

“These people don’t care about me. They wouldn’t understand the things I’ve been through. They are privileged,” she told herself as she trekked between her dorm, classes and the cafeteria her freshman year. The isolation of secrecy that began in childhood was amplified by the serenity of a creek running through a canyon, fir trees and a bell tower – all evidence of a life that wasn’t really hers.

“Near the end of freshman year my therapist was like, ‘You’re a big girl now and it’s time to do big-girl things,’” Emily recalls. “She said things I needed to hear. Sophomore year, I came back kind of different.”

Over the next three years, Emily took a job in admissions, purposefully overcoming her fear of judgment from strangers. She shared an on-campus apartment with five women, creating some of her favorite college memories around potlucks and late-night movies. She joined the Women of Color Collective as treasurer, mentoring younger students and building the kind of community she’d run from her freshman year.

During a Juniors Abroad trip to Thailand and Cambodia, Emily learned she was not alone, even in those parts of her life she wanted to hide. “I learned that my classmates also had experienced brokenness in their lives,” she says. “This was pivotal; it forced me to see how I view others, and that I am not the only one who has struggled in life.”

Invasive Grace

When Emily was 10, her aunt accidentally ran over a rabbit. “I was like, ‘Ohh, we’re going to hell!’” she says. “God was this entity up there somewhere; you have to do good or he’s going to punish you.”

So when she arrived at George Fox, she avoided God – or tried.



Emily and her friends play their favorite card game, Taco Cat Goat Cheese Pizza.

“I felt I wasn’t deserving of his grace, and never felt he was close because of all of the terrible things I endured,” she says. “But the great thing about Fox is it’s hard to deny faith when it’s in front of you. There are so many testaments to the work of God here. And when something’s in front of you so much, you can’t escape it, you know?”

The trouble was, how would she get to know God better? “I thought, ‘OK, I need to come up with a study guide,’” she says. She got a Bible, used Bible app reading plans and watched Bible Project videos.

“I stopped looking at God as someone who punishes and instead as someone who gives all these opportunities and areas to grow.”

During Emily’s senior year, Pam Fifer, dean of the College of Nursing, was hospitalized with cancer at the same hospital where Emily worked as a CNA. More than once, Emily visited her. “She said she wanted to learn a bit about who I was as a person because she knew I had a story to tell.”

As Emily shared her story during visits, Pam prayed for her and urged her to share her story with others. “She said she knew I would

be a great nurse who would consider these experiences when caring for patients,” Emily recalls. “She told me she could see God working in me. That was the first time someone told me that. It meant others could see God’s work shining through me, which meant I was making a difference – the difference I want to make in the world.”

In the months before she died, Pam helped solidify in Emily a sense of hope and purpose.

“I am unashamed of who I am or the things I have been through in life,” she says. “I am thankful for every hardship I have faced; it’s part of my testimony. God changes people’s lives, and we need to lean into that and, in return, change our lives for him as well.

“There’s a word for that – grace. Just grace.”

“I am unashamed of who I am or the things I have been through in life. I am thankful for every hardship I have faced; it’s part of my testimony.”

Coming Home

Bruins of all ages converged on campus last October for homecoming, featuring class reunions, a family-friendly party on the quad, a football game, and a dedication ceremony for the new Art & Cinematic Arts Building!



Pennington hypes up the student section before kickoff.

↑ “Even though campus has changed a lot since I graduated in 2015, it brings back so many fond memories from my time as an undergrad. It was so much fun to walk around campus and see all of the new buildings and additions. I don’t think I stopped talking about the new chapel for weeks!”
 – Katy (Gerondale) Lemos (B15, M19, D23) with husband Zeke and son Ellis



Alumni celebrate the dedication of the new Art & Cinematic Arts Building.



↑ “We came back to campus for the joyful environment and homecoming atmosphere. My wife and I are both first-generation college students, and it captured our hearts to see the joy and belief in our daughter’s eyes that she has the potential to be a future Bruin.”
 – Daniel (B24) and Angela (Grenier) Rodriguez (D17) with daughter Lilliana



Senior Taylor Saben breaks free down the sideline during the homecoming football game vs. Linfield.



A future Bruin gets his face painted at Bruinpalooza on the quad.



Save the Date

Get ready for a new tradition
 Oct. 9-11: Homecoming and Family Weekend combined! Visit georgefox.edu/homecoming for more details.

→ 'The Calling Comes First'



For oncologist and cancer researcher Luke Fletcher, each day begins with a simple question: 'OK, God, what do you have for me?'

By Jeremy Lloyd

Dr. Luke Fletcher grinds beans, boils water, pours and waits. As the mixture slowly drips through the filter and fills the pot, the rich aroma of fresh coffee fills his office and escapes into the third-floor hallway.

It's a morning routine for Fletcher, a medical oncologist, hematologist and lab director at Willamette Valley Cancer Institute and Research Center in Eugene, Oregon. But the coffee isn't just for him. He always makes extra to fill the cups of the nurses, PAs and support staff who work side by side with him each day to care for patients in a community oncology setting.

Perhaps if Fletcher served in a large academic hospital, his office might overlook the city skyline and his assistant might bring him a latte from the Starbucks in the lobby – and there would be nothing wrong with that.

But then who would treat patients in the surrounding rural communities of Cottage Grove, Junction City, or Fletcher's hometown of Corvallis? Who would speak in Spanish to the family accompanying their mother as she receives treatment? Who would keep the staff caffeinated and their moods elevated with a well-timed joke on a hard day?

No, this is where Fletcher wants to be. It's where he's called to be.

"God has blessed us by entrenching us here," says Fletcher, a 2009 George Fox graduate who lives in Eugene with his wife, George Fox alumna Andrea (Dooley) Fletcher, and their two children. "Being able

Just What the Doctor Ordered: Each morning, Fletcher brews a fresh pot of coffee and shares it with his team – a simple act of care to start the day.



The Best Medicine:
Fletcher lifts the spirits of a patient as she receives treatment. “Humor is a big part of my practice,” he says.

to provide something that’s not available in a lot of community settings, and to provide care to people in my local community where I grew up, it’s a huge part of my calling.”

A Christian Physician

For Fletcher, every move he’s made along his career journey – from majoring in biology at George Fox to medical school at the Keck School of Medicine at USC, a residency at the Baylor College of Medicine, and a fellowship at Oregon Health & Science University – has begun with a simple question: “OK, God, what do you have for me?”

“I am not a physician who’s a Christian. I am a Christian physician,” he says. “The difference between those is that my core identity is not as a doctor – my core identity is in Christ. The calling comes first and then the career.”

In the career that has followed the calling, Fletcher specializes in blood cancers – including acute leukemias – that affect white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets.

“Acute leukemia care tends to be something that’s relatively specialized and done in large academic settings or large hospital systems,” he explains.

But for the past five years, patients in Eugene, his second practice in Corvallis and the surrounding areas have been able to forgo the long drive to Portland and go to Fletcher and his team instead. Connecting with those patients on a personal level is one of his great joys.

“I always want to get to know my patients deeply so I can understand what matters to them,” he says. “I think that allows you to be able to select the best treatments – that’s where the art and the science of medicine really interact. The science of medicine is there’s this treatment for this cancer. The art is how you apply it to your patient.”

To get to the art requires trust – something Fletcher works every day, with every patient, to build.

“I tell my patients, ‘Hey, I’m going to wade into this fight with you. I’m not going anywhere. I care about you and want the best for you, to walk through this with you,’” he says. “Earning that trust – and I’m not saying it’s given – but earning that trust is a huge part of my practice.”

So too, surprisingly, is humor. “I joke with my patients,” Fletcher says. “When it’s serious, it’s serious, but humor is a big part of my practice. It’s a big part of dealing with the gamut of emotions that are natural to cancer care.”

And as he continues to mature as a physician, Fletcher has also learned to listen for God’s voice in each moment. “One way I’ve

“Being able to provide something that’s not available in a lot of community settings, and to provide care to people in my local community where I grew up, it’s a huge part of my calling.”

really grown in my role is I’m always looking for opportunities now to not just be a healer in the physical sense, but also in the spiritual sense,” he says. “So if there’s an open door where I feel like God is saying, ‘Hey, pray with that person,’ I’ll do it. It’s something that’s a part of my daily practice and something I’ve grown a lot in, knowing when those opportunities come along.”

Each day, Fletcher comes back to the same question: “Hey God, you’ve called me to this. What do you have for me today?”

Research-Driven

Fletcher’s practice begins with patient care, but it doesn’t end there – far from it. From 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. he sees patients. In between and after, his time is devoted to research.

As chair of the leukemia executive committee for a nationwide network of community oncology practices that represent about 15-20% of all cancer patients, Fletcher reviews and helps select clinical trials, monitors patients enrolled in studies, and works to make emerging therapies more accessible to patients just like his.

“We’re starting to better understand cancers,” he says. “Specifically with blood cancers, what are the specific things that are driving those and how best can we target them? Instead of just killing everything, can we target the direct thing that’s causing the cancer cells to grow and then kill it off that way? Especially within the acute myeloid leukemia (AML) world, there are more targeted therapies that continue to come down the pipeline. I think there’s a lot of hope growing.”

As an oncologist, Fletcher can impact the lives of patients in his local community. As a lab director, his impact is nationwide. In 2025, he coauthored American Society of Hematology guidelines for treating AML in older adults. Published in the journal *Blood Advances*, those guidelines have been used to shape national standards for patient care.

Fletcher’s love for research began in another small town, Newberg, as a biology student at George Fox. His first year on campus in 2005 coincided with the arrival of biology professor John Schmitt, a noted cancer researcher himself. For more than 20 years, Schmitt has dedicated his summers to researching breast, prostate and bone cancers, utilizing the help of biology and biochemistry majors – a rare opportunity for undergrads. Fletcher was among his first lab assistants.

“My time in the lab with Dr. Schmitt really sparked my interest in research,” he says. “As a freshman, I knew I wanted to do something in the scientific world, and I knew I was pretty interested in the medical world as well. Dr. Schmitt became a mentor and asked,

‘What do you think about research?’ That was my first step from classroom work into research.”

A ‘Hammer Moment’

The journey from college student to oncologist wasn’t always an easy one. After his freshman year, Fletcher, who has Crohn’s disease, developed a serious infection that required emergency surgery.

“I had this surgery, I’m in the hospital for three days, and I remember thinking, ‘God, is this really what you have for me – do you really want me to be a doctor? Maybe I heard wrong. Maybe I need to change my plan, because if this is what my health is going to be, I can’t move forward.’”

It was the first of many times Fletcher would ask this same question: “OK, God, what do you have for me?” Each time, the answer was clear.

“I was blessed that my surgeon was an amazing Christian man,” he recalls. “He said to me, ‘Luke, if you’re called to be a doctor, you need to go for it. This shouldn’t stop you.’ God often speaks in quiet voices, but this was one of those hammer moments.”

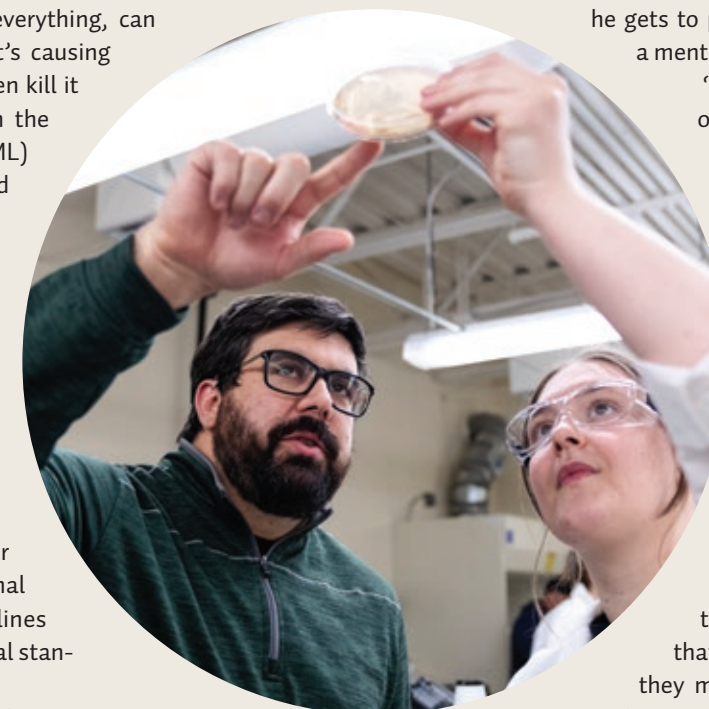
Today, Fletcher’s career has come full circle, and he gets to provide the “hammer moments” as a mentor for George Fox pre-med students.

“I left George Fox with fond memories, I left with relationships that were really important to me, but I also left with a desire to give back,” he says.

For Fletcher, who funds a scholarship for pre-med students at George Fox, that means more than just a financial commitment – it means giving of himself, from one-on-one mentoring to opportunities to shadow him at his clinic.

“I tell students, ‘Hey, your journey is going to look different than mine, but these are the things that helped me along the journey, and they may help you,’” he says. “These are the important things that sustained my faith when things were hard. This is what I learned about how to rely on my support group better, how to let my wife and kids into my career.”

And it’s a good bet that Fletcher will share with these students the simple question that has shaped his calling and career for the past 20 years, and will no doubt shape theirs as well: “OK, God, what do you have for me?”



Giving Back: Fletcher mentors senior biology major Paige Hill on a recent visit to campus.



Watch a video with more of Luke’s story at georgefox.edu/LukeFletcher



→ *A Way Out, A Way Forward*



After years of homelessness and addiction, Tia Renner found sobriety, purpose and an unexpected path to law school, pursuing her dream to become a voice for others

By Rachel Brumfield

It was a dark night on the Willamette River, just days after her 30th birthday. Tia Renner lay awake on the small sailboat that was her home and sobbed. She was a long way from believing in anything, but in that moment, she cried out to God, the universe or whatever higher power might be listening.

"I need a way out. Please help me find a way out. I cannot do this on my own."

She had seen other people get sober and leave the streets, but her every attempt fell short. She was not enough of a priority demographic to land housing, and she could not piece together the stability to even think about long-term sobriety.

There was no answer to her desperate prayer that night, just the gentle lapping of water against the boat. But two months later when she learned she was pregnant, Renner knew she had her answer. This would be her way out.

'I couldn't name what was missing'

Renner's college career had a promising start. A lifelong dancer specializing in contemporary ballet, she was accepted to CalArts, one of the top art schools in the nation, as a choreography and dance major. But in her very first semester she sustained a series of injuries. She pushed through for months until the toll proved more than her body could take.

And just like that, her future in dance was over.

"I spent my whole life preparing for this, and no matter how hard I tried, it just wasn't going to work out," she says. "It just felt like this piece of me was gone. I couldn't even move the same way I used to."

An underlying sense of depression took hold, and she could not shake it. She quit school and started working full time, juggling three jobs to keep her apartment.

"I couldn't name what was missing, but there was a void in my life," Renner says. "It was definitely the start of a downward spiral."

What started as a temporary alleviation of depression through drugs and alcohol turned into over a decade of addiction. In the spring of 2012, she was arrested for the first time on a felony narcotics charge – an offense that would today be considered a misdemeanor for negligent possession, but at the time came at a steep cost.

“That is what really solidified my journey into drugs,” she says. “I lost my apartment. I lost everything.”

For nearly the next decade, Renner struggled with homelessness and drug addiction.

“I was so depressed, so lost and aimless. I had no desire to continue living, so everything I did was reckless,” she says. “It didn’t matter. *I didn’t matter.* That’s how drugs work. They make you think that you are isolated and alone and that’s what you deserve.”

Renner alternated between living on her sailboat and under the I-5 Bridge in Portland, deeply involved in the lifestyle of drugs and utterly without hope.

“I thought I had hit the point of no return, that there was no coming back from the life I was living,” she says.

‘Here’s a life that depends on you’

And then she found out she was pregnant.

Looking back, Renner can see clearly it was God’s answer to her prayer on the boat that night.

To her ears, he was saying, “Here’s a way out. You wanted something that’s more than you? Here’s a life that depends on you. Everything you do will affect it.”

Change didn’t come overnight, but she began to make choices to benefit the life she carried: attending doctor’s appointments, taking prenatal, stringing together days of sobriety. Her parents took her in, and with a roof over her head, sobriety finally stuck.

“My daughter, Isadora, was born, and it was the most life-changing experience I’ve ever had,” she says. “I’ve never looked back.”

Having a newborn and being in the early days of sobriety was challenging, but Renner knew she was

on the right path. After living for herself alone for 31 years, it felt good to live her life for someone else. “She is the driving force in everything that I do,” she says. “I wouldn’t be here if it wasn’t for her existence.”

‘The person I used to be is not me any longer’

Just before her daughter turned 2, Renner decided to try going to church. She was living the life of recovery, but she felt unfulfilled and isolated.

“I didn’t really have a lot of goals,” she recalls. “I didn’t know what I was going to do with my life. All I could talk about were traumatic experiences and I was afraid people would judge me.”

She told herself that her daughter needed socialization, so they visited Evergreen Christian Center in Hillsboro, Oregon, where Renner had gone to middle school youth group. The first Sunday she attended, the church was promoting Alpha courses, which are discussion-based sessions that help people explore the basics of Christian faith.

“I went to Alpha with the intention to give people a run for their money,” she says. “I was not ready to be a believer. I still had some anger about what had happened in my life.”

She asked hard questions and the people there shared honest answers about their faith and experiences. They were open about their moments of truth and how they came to God. And for the first time, Renner connected her dark night, crying for a way out, with God’s answer of pregnancy and a path to a new life.

“I cried hard in front of these people I barely knew,” she recalls. “I knew right then that as much as I thought I was walking alone, God had always been there. I made it through these experiences and times I should have died because God was there. The divine timing and protection was always there.”

She was asked to help facilitate the next round of Alpha, and began to build connections and feel at home at the church. A few months later, she chose to be baptized, a physical reminder that the shame and guilt she carried were forgiven and that, in Christ, she had been released of that weight.

“The person I used to be is not me any longer,” she says. “Not that those things haven’t made me who I am, but I don’t have to live there anymore.”

“I have this complete sense of peace that God is going to use every aspect of my life for his will, and I’m totally OK with that. If there’s anything I know about my life, it’s that I’m not good at making the decisions. I try to leave them up to God and let him open the doors that he wants me to walk through.”

‘You should think about going to law school’

Renner started taking community college courses. She didn’t have much confidence starting school, but she found she liked learning and earned good grades. Instructors in both her political science and paralegal courses took notice of her work and encouraged her to consider law school.

She knew she wanted to make an impact on public policy and help bridge the gaps she experienced living on the streets. The more she researched, the more it became clear that she needed to become a lawyer to affect broader systems.

“I want to make an impact and inform policy,” she says. “I want people to ask me about my experience and for that to play a part in how we look at things. But I need the credentials to back that up.”

That’s when she heard about George Fox’s Accelerated Online Degree program. She needed a bachelor’s degree to apply for law

school, so she enrolled in the online psychology and mental health studies program.

“I could have chosen a different degree for law, but I’m really glad I chose psychology,” she says. “It built me in a way that I wasn’t prepared for, but I absolutely needed. It helped me understand my trauma and the roots of my shame and to create a coherent narrative of my life events.”

In December, Renner received two important pieces of paper: a diploma from George Fox University and an acceptance letter to Willamette University School of Law.

‘We do recover, and that’s something I live by’

A few weeks after graduation, Renner went back to visit her old camp under the I-5 Bridge. She walked through the places that were once familiar and marveled at how much has changed for her. She lives inside with running water and a refrigerator. She has a healthy, thriving 4-year-old and a college degree. And yet, the reality for so many remains the same.

“It’s sad to see people that you know and care about still out there,” she says. “I can see there are two times as many tents as there were when I lived there five years ago, and that’s scary.”

For the past couple of years, Renner has volunteered with Washington County’s Project Homeless Connect. She helped develop its peer support program and works at the access center, where she helps people fill out job applications, find primary care physicians and sign up for medical assistance.

“A huge part of what I do is just building connections with people so that they’re more consistent in coming back to check in with us,” she says. “If they know a face and that someone is going to be

there who is interested and cares about their existence, it makes their behavior repeatable, which helps us serve them better.”

Renner knows that housing is key to recovery. She saw firsthand how a lack of housing and rehabilitation support contribute to cycles of addiction and recidivism.

“When you combine lived experience with education, it puts you in a unique position of empowerment,” she says. “We need to rehumanize people who make mistakes.”

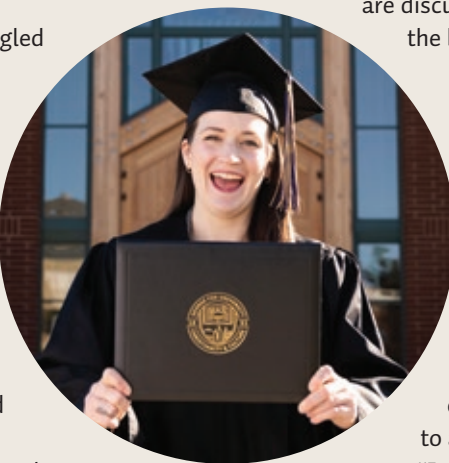
Renner hopes that, with a law degree, she can serve people directly as a public defense attorney, while using her education and experience to advocate for broader changes – like better rehabilitation support within the justice system – that will help others find their way out.

“We do recover, and that’s something I live by,” she says. “If people are given the right support systems, they can recover. It takes people who care about the outcome, and that’s my goal.”



Watch a video with more of Tia’s story at georgefox.edu/TiaRenner

Renner hopes that, with a law degree, she can serve people directly as a public defense attorney, while using her education and experience to advocate for broader changes that will help others find their way out.



Renner visits campus with her daughter Isadora.



What started as a volunteer shift at the Special Olympics became his life's work – and David Marvin isn't done yet

By Victoria Payne

As callings go, David Marvin's came as a surprise. A pastor's kid, he was halfway through college expecting to become a youth pastor when a casual invitation altered his plans. "Would you like to volunteer at the Special Olympics?" asked a friend.

"I wasn't so sure about the idea, but I figured I'd give it a try," he recalls. "I volunteered and really hit it off with the guy I was working with. Then his mom asked if I wanted to continue working with him, and that was it."

Almost 20 years later, those youth pastor instincts – believing that the right investment in the right person makes a difference – have shaped a career fueled by his belief in human potential.

'The World Would Not Be the Same Without Them'

Today, Marvin is the founder of APEX Partner Group (apex-pg.org), where he partners with purpose-driven entrepreneurs to serve people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. While his mission has remained the same, his career began in a very different place than where it is today as an impact investor.

After college, Marvin worked as a life skills coach in Yamhill County, spending 60-hour work weeks – no sick leave, no vacation – caring for clients living with autism, Down syndrome, schizophrenia, and other types of special needs. More



A Look Back: In 2015, Marvin and Tim Siler – one of his first clients with Alliance Services – work on the finer points of grocery shopping.

→ 'One More Person'



than a decade later, he still remembers the special moments that made the long days worth it.

One of his first clients really wanted to learn to swim, but he was afraid. Marvin spent two years taking him to the pool, encouraging him to go a little deeper each visit, and then one day, success. The man who'd been afraid to swim was now diving to the bottom of the deep end.

"There is so much joy in helping people with special needs accomplish their goals and to just live life," Marvin says. "Most

people look at someone with a disability and see what they can't do. They see the person's disability and not what they're capable of. But the world would not be the same without them."

Marvin's career took another turn when, at 27, he received a second surprise invitation. This time, it was a case-worker asking if he had employees – she could use his help. Unfortunately, he was alone and he couldn't manage another client. He'd already hung up the

phone when he felt a quiet nudge. *What if I found someone to help them?* A week later, he found someone at his church to support the family. His phone kept ringing.

There was plenty of need in the region, and Marvin grew his first company, Alliance Services, to approximately 200 employees. The work expanded to address the full range of customers' needs, with grocery runs and bus routes for some, feeding tubes and full-time care for others, and job coaching for those who needed someone in their corner.

Seven years later, after years of building a business and all it demanded of him, he made the decision most entrepreneurs dream about: He decided to sell.

Multiplying His Impact

Marvin expected happiness, but instead he felt lost. "When I sold my first company, I thought I would have tremendous joy, but it was really a lot of grief. I didn't realize how much of my identity was in what I was doing."

He describes it as an "ego death" – the collapse of an identity he hadn't realized he'd created. "You are chasing worldly success, things you think will make you happy," he says. "And then when you get there, you realize the only thing that's going to bring true joy, true peace and true happiness is Christ."

He came out of that season knowing two things: His identity was in Christ and his calling hadn't changed. He thought back to what had drawn him to this work in the first place. "As I spent more time with people with special needs, I just realized that they are my people and they are always going to be," he says. Plus, his type-A personality didn't allow him to sit still for very long. So he went back to work.

This time, Marvin decided to grow three new companies, and

a leadership team, in Central, Eastern and Southern Oregon – all devoted to serving those the world often forgets. In the years that followed, the three companies grew to over 2,300 employees, a testament to what happens when serving others becomes a business model.

When Marvin once again sold all three companies in January 2026, he already knew what came next. If anything, the 38-year-old father of three was ready to go faster. "I want to do the most I can with the time I have left," he says. His current work at APEX is allowing him to do just that.

Marvin's new mission is to identify 50 purpose-driven entrepreneurs who are ready to transform their talents and heart for service into thriving businesses dedicated to helping others. "I'm just trying to find people who want to serve well and give them a platform to make the biggest impact they can," he says.

Recently, Marvin funded his first entrepreneur – Jared Thomas, a special education teacher focused on work-based learning – who had the heart and vision he was looking for. In just six weeks, Thomas' company You Are Seen (you-are-seen.org) is already serving 13 customers. Recently, as a guest on a podcast, Thomas was asked what success looked like. He didn't blink. "One more person," he replied.

"It just makes me smile when I think about it," Marvin says. "He gets it."

Giving Back

Last fall, back at George Fox to serve on the President's Advisory Council, Marvin met someone else who got it. He was introduced to

Craig Inglesby, director of The Bridge Network – George Fox's mentorship program pairing athletes with upperclassmen and Christian leaders in the community. Marvin recognized the model immediately.

"The program really resonated with me. I wouldn't be where I am at right now without people pouring into me," he says. "I just felt that tugging on my heart from God that I was supposed to give." When he called home, as he always does before any big decision, his wife Mary Beth agreed.

Harnessing his latent youth pastor energy, Marvin thought the gift would mean a lot more if students were excited too. So he offered President Robin Baker a deal: Do the Polar Plunge with students, and he'd make a significant gift to The Bridge Network. President Baker, willing to do anything for students, said yes without hesitation.

A few months later, Marvin returned to watch the Polar Plunge with his 7-year-old son Carter. The two stood on the bank of Hess Creek cheering on over 600 students – and one committed college president – as they waded through the frigid and muddy water. Moved by what he witnessed, Marvin decided to double his original gift to The Bridge Network. "I am all in," he says.

Marvin doesn't consider himself a philanthropist. He considers himself a steward. "There are a lot of people out there who work harder than I do and have a lot less," he says. "I just feel very blessed and believe that God is in what we're doing."



Watch a video featuring Marvin and President Baker at the Polar Plunge at georgefox.edu/PolarPlunge



Marvin cheers from the bank of Hess Creek as President Baker braves the cold waters and mud. The moment inspired Marvin to double his initial gift. "I'm all in," he says.

→ Deep Roots

Raised on the Warm Springs Reservation, Kayla Kneeland-Jaimes has returned home to help expand the possibilities for students in her community and beyond

By Rachel Brumfield

It's 2:30 p.m. on a Wednesday. Kayla Kneeland-Jaimes unlocks a set of double doors and steps into a noisy cafeteria, teeming with kids arriving for the after-school program at Bridges High School. She makes her way around crowded tables, greeting kids and staff as the room continues to fill. Two girls call her name and wave excitedly.

Every day after school, nearly 125 kids gather for this grant-funded program in Madras, Oregon – and it's clear they know Ms. Kneeland-Jaimes.

'Schools are the hubs of the community'

"In our community, we have high poverty rates and a lot of working families," she says. "After-school programming was hard to come by. There were not that many options available."

As director of Jefferson County's 21st Century Afterschool Program, Kneeland-Jaimes oversees four sites that serve more than 600 students over the course of the year, including during the summer. The program is free for families and provides a safe place for kids to spend time outside of school in addition to academic and enrichment activities that encourage growth in key areas like literacy, math and science.

"We're building this ecosystem of support around our kids," she says. "We want them to thrive, because they are the future of our communities."

The program provides wraparound support for students and families in Jefferson County – offering meals, transportation, summer programs and a variety of classes for families.

"Our schools are the hubs of the community," she says. "Especially in rural communities like ours, we help provide the connection, openness and ongoing communication that keeps families informed and connected to what's going on."

Serving Native American Students

For Kneeland-Jaimes, schools are where she found her calling – though her own educational journey was not without its bumps. Her high school experience was not positive. Eager to be done, she dropped out her sophomore year, earned her GED and began taking community college classes. At 19, she became a mom and eventually landed a job as an educational assistant on the Warm Springs Reservation, where she grew up.

It was there that Kneeland-Jaimes recognized the need for

educators like her who reflected the community.

"What drew me into teaching was wanting to work closer with Native students," she says. "I feel really connected to the students and the families in this community – it's my home. Seeing the need for more Native educators really propelled my efforts."

Although around one third of students in the Jefferson County School District are from Native American families, Kneeland-Jaimes did not have a single Native American educator throughout her K-12 experience. That fact, along with her struggle to connect in high school, have given her deep empathy for her students.

"It's really important for our Native students to have a strong sense of belonging at school and to be able to connect with the adults who are teaching them," she says. "It's also important to have an understanding of how historical trauma impacts generations and how different experiences like growing up on the reservation might impact a student's educational experience."

With a young child at home, taking a couple years off to pursue a teaching degree wasn't an option for Kneeland-Jaimes. But through George Fox's accelerated teaching program, she finished her bachelor's degree in just 20 months and became a fifth-grade teacher at Warm Springs K-8 Academy.

"Having the teaching program accessible in our community made it absolutely doable to move forward with my education as a mom working full time," she says. "We have a lot of people who were born and raised in Jefferson County who are graduating from these George Fox programs and are now teachers in our schools. That's everything for our community because for a long time we struggled to have our own people in our schools."

'My Doctor Era'

Kneeland-Jaimes continued keeping a pulse on the needs of the



"What drew me into teaching was wanting to work closer with Native students. I feel really connected to the students and the families in this community – it's my home."

community, eventually earning a master's degree in special education. Then in 2023, she enrolled in George Fox's Doctor of Education (EdD) program.

"I really wanted to find ways to be able to lead more, mentor others and grow the number of students that I'm able to serve in our district," she says. "I joke about entering my 'doctor era' – pouring myself more into this community and thinking bigger about what we can do next to build this ecosystem of support to surround our kids."

She gives credit to the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde, of which she is an enrolled tribal member, for supporting her educational journey. With fewer than 1% of doctoral degrees held by Native Americans, graduating with her EdD this spring has set a new precedent for the students in her community.

"I'm super passionate about continuing to inspire other Natives to continue on a journey of higher education," she says. "I want

them to say, 'If she can do it, I can do it.'"

Now, at age 38 and a mother of four, Kneeland-Jaimes hopes to spread this sense of possibility beyond Jefferson County. One of her next goals is to partner with tribes across Oregon to expand support for students and bring more diverse educators into schools throughout the state.

"What drives me is being able to support students to obtain their dreams and instill in them the gift of lifelong learning," she says. "Just because we've finished with high school doesn't mean learning stops there. We're going to continue on. What can we do next?"



Watch a video with more of Kayla's story at georgefox.edu/KaylaKneeland

→ *The Gold Standard*



After four years in high finance, Lane Kimbro stepped away from Goldman Sachs to pursue a calling of faith and risk, leading to the cofounding of his own creative agency and a spot on Forbes' 30 Under 30 list

By Jaime Handley

Type “investment banking firms” into your browser and your AI overview will quickly generate a list of global giants. At the top of that list is a name most of us are familiar with: Goldman Sachs, a leading global investment management firm headquartered in New York that is among the most influential financial institutions in the world.

It was into that high-finance world that George Fox alumnus Lane Kimbro found himself as a new graduate in 2020. By 2024, he had embarked on a different adventure, bringing his business acuity to a field he never expected: high-end media production.

An Entrepreneurial Spirit

From a young age, Kimbro was surrounded by the spirit of entrepreneurial life.

“Growing up, I’d always done entrepreneurial things,” he recalls. “I was fortunate to have a mom who owned a couple of small businesses. She literally did manufacturing in our garage. The running joke was that I was the ‘chief bottle officer’ because I would bottle and package everything.”

The opportunities leveled up when Kimbro’s grandfather, an antiques collector, became interested in online sales during the eBay boom of the early 2010s. “My grandpa said, ‘I’ll buy it, you put it up for sale, we’ll split whatever we make.’ It was super generous,” he says.

That partnership led Kimbro to flex his own entrepreneurial muscles, dabbling in everything from selling real estate and medical equipment to pottery

Photos by Tristan An

and jewelry. “I was blessed because those experiences sparked my entrepreneurial desire to create value and have autonomy and agency,” he says.

Journey to George Fox

As Kimbro approached high school graduation, he received an invitation to play baseball at George Fox. Though raised Catholic, he didn’t have faith at the top of his list when looking at colleges.

But a visit to Newberg on a sunny spring day sealed the deal. Between the school’s intimate feel and the opportunity to experience something beyond his home state of Colorado, Kimbro decided to move to Oregon and study finance in the business department.

“What I loved about Fox was that I was able to choose my own adventure, and the professors were so supportive,” he says.

Kimbro even started an investment club on campus and secured donor funding, foreshadowing the work he would eventually step into after graduation.

The Power of Mentorship

Along with the tailored educational support he received at George Fox, Kimbro also found exceptional mentors. One of them, Craig Inglesby, had been hired by the university’s athletic department to cultivate spiritual formation in student-athletes.

“I remember him meeting me where I was and asking about my faith,” Kimbro recalls. “God used Craig to highlight the gift of having a personal relationship and walking with Jesus.”

During his senior year, Kimbro even lived with Inglesby and his wife, helping out with what is now The Bridge Network, a mentorship program run by the university’s athletic department that fosters one-on-one relationships among students and mentors from the professional world.

“I moved to New York out of ambition and career success, to make a name for myself. What I found on the other side is that none of those things fully satisfy – only the Lord does.”

He also found opportunities to connect with people who inspired him. It was common for the business department to host high-profile guest lecturers, and Kimbro took advantage, asking several of them out for coffee. “Every single person I asked said yes, which was incredible,” he says.

One such guest was George Fox alumnus Drew Van der Werff, who had carved his own path to Goldman Sachs – an uncommon

career trajectory for a graduate from a small West Coast school. He served as inspiration for Kimbro’s journey to the Manhattan super firm.

“Drew carved that path first and then was really instrumental in paving the way for me,” he says. “He even helped me prepare for my internship interview, thinking through what to ask and what they might ask me. I ended up getting the internship after my junior year.”

That opportunity would open the door to Kimbro’s first full-time role on Wall Street.

Graduating to Goldman Sachs

Though Kimbro’s long-term goal was success in finance – specifically investment banking – he landed an accounting internship at Goldman Sachs the summer before his senior year. Once there, he leaned into his personal formula for success: intentional networking. “In that accounting internship, I did the same thing – networked and met a ton of people,” he recalls.

Before long, he was brought on full time with an investment banking team, eventually landing a role helping private companies raise capital before they transitioned to public ownership – a role that helped raise billions of dollars for businesses such as Canva, Figma and Stripe.

Though Kimbro was at the top of his game, he realized that the pinnacle of success can be a litmus test for where hope and identity actually lie.

“I moved to New York out of ambition and career success, to make a name for myself,” he says. “What I found on the other side is that none of those things fully satisfy – only the Lord does. It took me four years to realize that.”

Finding His Calling

While Kimbro found success at Goldman Sachs, he also found God calling him into a season of redefining. It opened up new avenues for what his future might hold as he let go of a singular vision of success in the financial world – namely, working on Wall Street.

“What the Lord taught me was that my greatest purpose and calling is in him and what he has for me,” he says.

For Kimbro, this redefining meant not only trusting God with his future but also surrendering his present. “The Lord took me through a season of being very hidden,” he says. “In his kindness, he completely reformed my vision.”

This reforming of Kimbro’s spiritual calling coincided with a rekindling of his entrepreneurial dreams, leading to opportunities to create in ways and spaces he had not yet explored.

The resulting move was the cofounding of a new business, PRIV.Y, along with his business partner Noah Berghammer. Together, they launched an art gallery, a creative agency and a production company that, today, works with some of the biggest names in the fashion and tech world. “In this season, the Lord is showing me how to use my gifts and inclinations for what he wants to do through me in these unique creative spaces,” Kimbro says.

The Path to PRIV.Y

When Kimbro met Berghammer, a multi-passionate creative with a career in high-fashion production – working on campaigns for brands like Louis Vuitton, Prada and Dior – the connection fanned a flame.

With Kimbro’s business and financial savvy and Berghammer’s creative vision, PRIV.Y was eventually born. “Noah is the visionary. He has an incredible network and is so talented on the creative side,” he says. “I come from the business side, the sales side. In the creative space, it’s pretty rare to have both.”

Berghammer leads the creative side, directing, shooting and building the visual worlds for their clients, as well as building relationships with potential new partners. Kimbro runs the business

side, from project execution – scoping, budgeting and contracting – to building business systems and processes to scale, as well as growing the business through outreach, pitching and account management.

The PRIV.Y partnership has been a huge success – one that Kimbro didn’t anticipate when he came to New York in 2020. “Being in the creative space was never part of my 10-year plan,” he reflects.

Together, Kimbro and Berghammer found their focus as a boutique agency serving some of the top brands in the world of fashion, hospitality and technology with high-end media production. Berghammer also has a heart for fostering in-person spaces for the creative community. With these two aligned values, they launched PRIV.Y Agency and PRIV.Y Art Gallery.

While PRIV.Y surpassed \$1 million in revenue in its first year, there were moments of uncertainty. “At the end of 2024, we weren’t making much from production yet and didn’t think we had enough to pay the gallery rent,” Kimbro reflects. “We just prayed, ‘God, we need your help. If you want us to keep going, we need you.’”

Help came that same day in the form of two separate calls to rent the PRIV.Y Art Gallery space. It was just enough to get through December.

In February, they received a call from Whoop, one of the largest fitness wearable companies – their biggest campaign yet. Soon after, they were contacted and eventually hired by a \$10 billion tech company. Since then, PRIV.Y has worked with brands that include Vogue, Rosewood Hotels and Levi’s.

Kimbro accepts each moment with a posture of open-handed surrender and alignment. “Instead of going into these spaces of success to feel worth, I get to now come from the place of the worth I have in God,” he says.

Forbes’ 30 Under 30

In August 2025, *Forbes* magazine reached out to Kimbro and Berghammer, inviting them to apply for its “30 Under 30” list.

Kimbro saw the invitation as another God-opened door and a celebration of the collaboration behind PRIV.Y.

“Getting to do business with someone who also looks to the Lord in this space is incredible,” he says. “We are very complementary while being very different. We would both say we could not have done it without each other.”

In December 2025, the two business partners were named to *Forbes*’ “30 Under 30” list in the “Art and Style” category.

New Avenues of Creativity

As PRIV.Y approaches its second anniversary, Kimbro and Berghammer are identifying opportunities to create and iterate in new directions.

“We’re coming into the creative and media ecosystems and feeling the Lord say, ‘I’ve given you inclinations to build things, to build solutions.’ We keep asking, ‘How do we grow and become better at production? But also, is there anything else you want us to build?’” Kimbro says.

And that’s exactly what PRIV.Y is doing as it launches two new business trajectories: producing its own social media shows and potentially launching a consumer product Kimbro and Berghammer are ecstatic about, doing all of the creative and media in-house to scale it.

Through the excitement of this season of building and growing, Kimbro has stayed grounded in his first calling: following Jesus.

“The times I have chosen Jesus and the gospel, he has been so faithful,” he says. “Doors have opened that I never thought could.”

For Kimbro, it’s a faith-aligned metric of success that has become the gold standard.

“The times I have chosen Jesus and the gospel, he has been so faithful. Doors have opened that I never thought could.”



Choose Joy



Artist Christine Joy Swanson has built a career capturing beauty on canvas – and now she’s bringing it to the page, pursuing her calling to inspire joy and healing in others

By Victoria Payne

Inside a yellow cottage in Newberg, Oregon, Violet the Vole is writing a letter. Carefully, she slips the paper into a small envelope, along with a packet of wild carrot seeds, a clipping from the *Critter Chronicles* and a snail sticker. The goodies are destined for fans curious about her new house. Somewhere between the closing of the mailbox and the donning of her painter’s apron, Violet transforms back into Christine – full-time artist and, most recently, the author of *The Yellow Cottage: A Critter’s Tale*.

For over a decade, professional plein air painter Christine Joy Swanson has been living her dream life, one that once felt impossible. She started college planning to become a social worker, but after two years identified a problem: She was too sensitive for the career. “I cried all the time,” she remembers. She considered giving up college altogether. “I was either going to drop out or look into art because that’s what I’d always been good at.”

At a crossroads, she visited George Fox. “By what feels to me like a miracle, I was connected with Mark Terry, who was the head of the art department at the time,” she recalls. “He had me come in and bring some paintings.”

Terry’s reaction offered more than encouragement – he gave her belief. “I went from ‘I don’t know what I’m doing with my life’ to hearing someone say, ‘Your art is good enough and you could do this as a job,’” Swanson says. After her first week of classes, she drove home and cried, but this time it was happy tears. She was going to be an artist.

Since graduating with a BFA in fine arts in 2014, Swanson has studied under award-winning painter Jennifer Diehl and



trained at the Scottsdale Artists' School. Her work was recently part of the "Women of the West" exhibition at the Dana Gallery in Missoula, Montana. Art has taken her all over the world, as she's painted her way across Europe, Israel, Nicaragua and Haiti. But it's Newberg – and the yellow cottage that inspired her book – that she calls home.

Newberg is not just where Swanson paints – it's also a great place to see her work. This October, she will be the featured artist at ART Elements Gallery. Her sought-after commissions hang in places like the Allison Inn & Spa and on the top floor of Providence Medical Center, where one of her landscapes brings calm to cancer patients undergoing treatment. The large-scale painting, called "Radiance," depicts a scene with light streaming through trees. "It's kind of an obsession of mine," Swanson says, "that light coming through."



Swanson's new book, *The Yellow Cottage*, features scenes taken directly from her home, like this cat painting by the fireplace.

The Calling of a Happy Artist

That ability to see – and talk about what she sees – is something Swanson credits to George Fox. "They squeezed it out of me," she says, recalling professors who always asked, "Why did you do that?" She's stayed connected with those faculty ever since, joining professor Tim Timmerman and fellow alumni for en plein air outings each summer. She's also become a financial supporter of the program, donating original paintings to fund art scholarships and the naming of the Mark Terry Ceramics Studio.

"I remember being that student who relied on the generosity of people I didn't even know to get through school," she says. "To be able to donate a painting and know that it's helping another student find their way – that's the kind of legacy I want to leave."

Swanson's joyful student experience has inspired her in another way – to become a teacher. Her classes at the Chehalem Cultural Center are notorious for their noise, which she doesn't mind one bit. "We're known for being loud and happy, and I insist it be just that," she says.

Happiness is one of Swanson's success metrics. Recently, she was a last-minute addition to a high school career panel, after someone dropped out. One student asked if being an artist was "worth it." She replied as one would expect of Norma's granddaughter. "It depends on what you consider success," she said. "For me, success looks different. I'm not in the arts to get rich. I do it because I love it, and I get to choose my hours. I get to teach. I get to paint. I get to travel."

But the teenager wasn't satisfied. "But do you consider yourself



a success?" he insisted.

"I'd never been asked that with a mic in front of people, and I thought, 'Yes, I'm doing what I set out to do, and I love the life it's provided. God has been good to me.'"

For Swanson, art and faith are seamlessly intertwined. "Painting has always been spiritual," she says. "God's the creator. I'm partaking in his beauty by attempting to paint like him, the master. I don't think I would find much meaning with painting if it wasn't connected to God."

The Art of Story

Finding meaning, choosing joy – these were the same instincts that drew Swanson to write *The Yellow Cottage*. "Writing is something I had always done for fun and never shown anyone. I was too insecure. I just considered myself not allowed to do that," she says.

But when she and her best friend Sarah Joy Silva moved into the yellow cottage and found they were not the only creatures present, she started writing the animals' side of the story. She gave the critter tales to Silva as a fun present, who then asked to illustrate it. "This book wanted to happen," Swanson says. "I told Sarah, 'If it's not fun, we're quitting.'"

A book made by two artists was bound to become what Swanson calls a "beautiful object." The green linen hardcover and gold lettering feel timeless, and Silva's hand-painted watercolor illustra-

tions pay homage to the likes of Beatrice Potter and Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows*.

The collaborators raised funds for their first printing, buoyed by six donors who preordered 500 copies to give to children at Randall, Doernbecher, and Shriners children's hospitals. It warms Swanson's heart knowing sick children will hear the stories of Father Owl, Professor Albert and Violet the Vole, and that she's extending Norma's legacy of sprinkling a little sunshine into a darkened room.

Since publishing the book, Swanson has added an additional identity – pen pal. Fans of *The Yellow Cottage* can join the Critter Club and receive mail and goodies from the book's characters. Any reader can also write in – and some do. Recently, Violet received a letter from a little girl named Elodie. The letter begins with "Darling Violet," and asks what it's like to live inside a pumpkin. It closes with a wish: "I hope your next house doesn't squish."

The notes make Swanson, who is already working on a sequel, giddy with delight. Bringing joy to children, laughter to her students, and purpose to her art – yes, Christine Joy Swanson is a success.



Watch a video with more of Christine's story at georgefox.edu/ChristineSwanson



"Painting has always been spiritual. God's the creator. I'm partaking in his beauty by attempting to paint like him, the master. I don't think I would find much meaning with painting if it wasn't connected to God."

"She would rub my feet in the morning, look me in the eyes and say, 'What are we going to do today? Are we going to sit around and feel sorry for ourselves? Or are we going to choose joy – and make something with what we've got?'"

Finding joy in life is what Swanson does as an artist. "En plein air" is a French expression that translates to "in the open air." To watch Swanson paint is to witness a small miracle. In a few hours, a blank canvas becomes the surrounding landscape – a field of lavender or a Venetian vista. "The way our eye encounters color is so much more complex than a camera lens," she says. "When we mix our paints to match the colors, we're actually seeing real life."

→ Driven By Purpose

Six alumni apply the skills they acquired at George Fox to fuel innovation, build teamwork and demonstrate integrity at Daimler Truck North America

By Sean Patterson

Six professionals. Six distinct roles. One common link. Such is the case for George Fox alumni William Burton, James Pena, Alex Bush, Vicente Torres, Kelsey Ferry and Tony Long, each of whom has found meaningful work at Daimler Truck North America, a Portland-based company that's one of the world's largest commercial vehicle manufacturers.

Their roles vary – from engineering and product leadership to human resources and talent acquisition. What connects them is a conviction that their work matters and an alma mater that prepared them for the rigors of the professional working world.

Here are their stories.

William Burton, Mechanical Design Engineer

For as long as he can remember, William Burton has always been a tinkerer. His self-confessed hobby as a child was taking things apart and putting them back together again – usually correctly, he insists. A natural curiosity over how things work developed into a love of problem-solving.

It's no wonder, then, that he finds himself at Daimler as a mechanical design engineer, responsible for new product development. Specifically, he designs fuel tank systems for a wide range of vehicles, from long-haul semitrucks to medium-duty delivery trucks and specialized vocational equipment.

His arrival at Daimler in 2021 fulfilled his dream of working in the automotive space – without the need to relocate to the traditional industry hub of Detroit. Portland's Daimler plant offered that opportunity and gave him the chance to take his innate love of puzzle-solving and apply it to his daily work. His latest focus: strategically planning the streamlining of the company's fuel tank options across product lines.

"The real joy of this job is seeing my designs come to life, out of CAD [Computer-Assisted Design] and into the physical world," he says. "First in validation, then in production, and finally on the road, seeing my design work manifest into a physical part never



gets old, although my wife might get tired of me pointing out components I've designed on trucks we pass on the highway."

Burton, who earned a bachelor's degree in engineering from George Fox in 2016, says it was the hands-on experience embedded in the program that paved the way for a successful career at Daimler.

"The small classes we had at Fox really lent itself to a strong engineering program," Burton says. "Particularly, we got a lot of shop time. We got a lot more hands-on work that I don't necessarily think you could get at some of the larger schools. From day one, in the first class, you're in the shop working on things with your hands. I think that's really critical for an engineer."

Alex Bush, Senior Engineer

Even before he graduated with an engineering degree from George Fox in 2011, Alex Bush seemed destined for a career at Daimler. In his final year, he was part of a Senior Design course team that worked on equipping the company's wind tunnel with a turntable, allowing the vehicle to rotate for crosswinds testing. Two months after graduating, he was hired full time.

Today, he's a senior engineer, responsible for collaborating with third-party engineers to configure vehicles for specialized uses, from dump trucks to sewer and hydrovac systems.

"Unlike passenger cars, which are very cookie cutter and can be built robotically, all our trucks are hand-built and hand-assembled because every one of them is unique," he says. "We're able to customize and configure trucks specifically to the needs of those upfitters that are going to be adding equipment."

It's the culmination of more than a decade growing into a leadership role that blends technical expertise with mentorship. In addition to ensuring designs meet both customer needs and production efficiency, as the senior



member of his team he trains young engineers and contributes to long-term strategy.

Bush comes about his love of vehicles honestly. His parents owned an auto repair shop, instilling in him a love of cars and a desire to work on them. Later, when it was time to consider colleges, he discovered a George Fox engineering program that offered small, personalized classes and integrated faith into the curriculum.

“I considered other schools, but once I checked out Fox I knew that is where I was supposed to go,” he says. “Once there, we really felt like a family, working together late into the night in the labs. The small class sizes lent itself to a lot of personal relationships with all the professors. I remember going to one of their houses for a potluck – not the kind of thing you’d experience at a larger school.”

Even today, his George Fox experience – and his church upbringing – speak into his work.

“The lessons I learned from my parents and that were emphasized at Fox – things like integrity and being someone who is true to their word – are things I try to practice every day,” he says. “That’s how I see my work connecting to my faith – being someone who can be trusted to do a good job and do right by those around me.”

Vicente Torres, Product Line Manager

Vicente Torres knows what it means to pursue a passion – and the resilience it takes to pivot when life takes you in a different direction. Before building a career at Daimler, where he now works as a product line manager, he spent nearly eight years competing on Mexico’s national fencing team, with aspirations of qualifying for the 2012 Summer Olympics in London.

“I fell short of that goal,” he reflects. “But that pushed me to say, ‘OK, it’s time to go back to university, back to complete my degree.’”

He completed undergraduate studies in his native Mexico, earning a degree in economics, when his fencing past led him to Oregon – a hotbed for the sport and a place where he had attended several camps. “I began looking at the graduate programs in the area, and George Fox’s full-time MBA was the right fit,” he says. “It was just what I needed.”

The program helped him transition from a technical background in economics to a broader leadership mindset, while also helping him acclimate to U.S. workplace culture. It also offered a tight cohort community he still relies upon. “It’s been 10 years since we graduated together, yet we still hang out – and some of them work here. It’s nice to still have that supportive community.”

In his role, Torres leads a portfolio of eight digital products focused on remote updates, compliance and regulatory topics – tech-



nology that keeps modern trucks connected, efficient and up to date. He thrives on solving complex problems, but what drives him most is developing people – coaching teams, building trust and helping others grow.

To that end, his faith plays a role in how he conducts himself. Guided by values like integrity, humility and respect, Torres is intentional about how he leads, especially when navigating difficult decisions. “I definitely have a commitment to be a leader who treats people fairly and thoughtfully, striving to be consistent, trustworthy and grounded,” he says.

Kelsey Ferry, Project Manager

Kelsey Ferry has built a career on bringing order to complexity. A project manager at Daimler, she plays a key role in the company’s HR operations, supporting benefits programs for more than 30,000 employees across the U.S. and Canada.

Ferry joined Daimler in 2017 after completing her MBA at George Fox, getting her foot in the door as a contractor thanks to an opportunity she heard about through the university. Today, her work centers on project and vendor management – translating strategy into execution, coordinating teams and ensuring projects stay on track. “I joke that I’m a cat herder,” she says, describing her role in keeping moving parts aligned.

What Ferry loves most is the impact her work has on people.

Though she operates behind the scenes, her projects directly support employees’ well-being, and she often helps colleagues navigate complex benefits questions. Recently, she’s been especially engaged in understanding how emerging technologies like AI affect employee data and organizational processes.

“We’re not trying to gatekeep or anything like that,” she says of her HR team. “We’re more just keeping a pulse on making sure that we understand how AI is being used and how our employees’ data is being used within the systems.”

Ferry’s path to Daimler wasn’t what she originally imagined – she first planned for a career in healthcare – but she now embraces the flexibility of a nonlinear journey. George Fox played a role in helping her make that pivot, as she developed the collaborative skills that define her work today, including learning to manage group dynamics, balance priorities and lean on others’ strengths.

“It was very collaborative within your cohort, which transfers directly into being a project manager at a large company,” Ferry says of her MBA experience. “I mean, when you look at team dynamics, the different personalities, the different ways people work, time management, competing priorities, the different expectations you have from team members – all of those were great skills that I honed at George Fox, then transferred directly into project management at Daimler.”

While she keeps a low profile online, Ferry stays connected to



her alma mater by engaging with students during campus visits to Daimler, offering guidance and insight.

Tony Long, Talent Acquisition Manager

Tony Long’s path to Daimler wasn’t linear, but that’s exactly what makes his work meaningful. A former Navy servicemember, Long arrived at George Fox after eight years in the military, earning his MBA in 2016 while helping launch the university’s football program as a member of its early-year teams.

Today, as manager of talent acquisition, Long leads recruiting efforts for about 5,000 office employees across the U.S. and Canada. His team oversees full-time hiring, internships and contingent staffing – often serving as a candidate’s first impression of the company. For Long, that responsibility is what makes the work rewarding. “We’re often the first interaction someone has with the company,” he says. “For many, it’s their first big opportunity, and a lot of times it’s their first full-time job or first internship. The excitement around that is the fun part of my job.”

Long was drawn to Daimler by its people and culture, initially joining as a contractor before working his way into leadership. He values the company’s emphasis on relationships and sees his role as both strategic and personal – guiding candidates, mentoring team members and helping shape the organization’s future workforce.

As preparation, he enrolled in George Fox’s MBA program and played collegiate football, where he honed his teamwork skills and learned to trust and lean on others’ strengths – principles he still applies daily. His connection to the university continues in the form of mentoring students, speaking in classes and supporting fellow alumni. “I just feel it’s important to invest in the community that helped shape my journey,” he says.

Ultimately, he sees his work as both a calling and a platform for impact, shaped by his faith and a deep sense of purpose. He takes pride not only in hiring great talent, but in developing his own team and preparing them for future success across the organization.

James Pena, Project Engineer

James Pena never envisioned working for a truck manufacturing company when he graduated from George Fox with a degree in biology in 2014. Back then he figured he’d wind up with a role in the healthcare indus-



try, but life has proven to, as he puts it, “be filled with a lot of unexpected twists and turns.”

Today, after working for nearly eight years in the higher education sector, he’s a project engineer at Daimler, responsible for a strategic initiative to reduce product complexity across the company’s portfolio. Collaborating with teams across engineering, sales, marketing and purchasing, he helps identify efficiencies that not only streamline operations but also contribute to an ambitious financial savings goal.

The work is demanding, but that’s the reason he loves it. He describes it as the most challenging role he’s held – and also one of the most rewarding, thanks to the collaborative team environment and the opportunity to solve complex problems.

“I think, initially, I had a narrow view of what it meant to do meaningful and impactful work,” says Pena, who began at Daimler in 2023 and transitioned to his current role in November of last year. “Obviously, if you’re a doctor or teacher, that ‘career calling’ aspect of the job is obvious. But I’d like to think that we can find that sort of meaning in all our work, and I’ve been able to find that here. I’m doing my part to help this company succeed and, in the bigger picture, help out our economy.”

All the while, his experiences at George Fox – through academics and his role as a resident advisor and assistant area coordinator – have helped shape and prepare him for the job at hand, regardless of the fact he graduated with a degree that doesn’t directly apply to his role. His biology coursework built critical thinking skills, while his experience in residence life developed his ability to work with people.

“Don’t be discouraged if you aren’t 100 percent sure of what you want to do while you’re in college, because you never know where the road will take you,” is his advice to college students.

As for his role, Pena’s broadened understanding of what “meaningful work” is has helped him recognize his job has a greater purpose.

“The way I think about calling and career has been very much informed by my faith and my understanding of how God wants me to serve the world – how he wants me to think about work as more than just making money,” he says. “There’s that idea of vocation that we talked a lot about at Fox – that intersection of your needs, what you’re good at, and what the world needs, and I see those pieces at play here.”



“The way I think about calling and career has been very much informed by my faith and my understanding of how God wants me to serve the world. There’s that idea of vocation that we talked a lot about at Fox – that intersection of your needs, what you’re good at, and what the world needs, and I see those pieces at play here.”

How to Stay Known

Activities and events to keep you connected to George Fox

Find Your People on FoxLink

FoxLink is George Fox's free, private alumni network built for Bruins. Reconnect with classmates, mentor students, find career connections, join groups tied to your major or region, and explore a job board built for the community you already belong to. It's free for life and takes two minutes to join.

Visit foxlink.georgefox.edu to sign up.



Save the Date: Oct. 9-11, 2026



Come Home for a New Tradition

This year, we're bringing the entire George Fox family together in one place for a new tradition: **Homecoming & Family Weekend** combined! Join students, families and alumni as we gather to celebrate what connects us across generations. Catch up with former classmates at a reunion social, enjoy family-friendly activities at Bruinpalooza, worship together in the chapel, and cheer your Bruins on to victory on the football field.

Visit georgefox.edu/homecoming for more details.

Champion Your Reunion

This fall at homecoming, we're hosting reunions for the classes of 1986, 1996, 2006 and 2016, plus theatre, kinesiology, psychology, honors and more. Rally your crew and come back to campus!

Email alumni@georgefox.edu for help planning your group's reunion.



Follow @georgefoxuniversity

Follow us on social media to stay up to date on all the latest campus happenings.



Schedule a Family Campus Tour

Coming through Newberg? Show your family the place behind all your George Fox stories. Book a guided tour through the alumni office and let your guests see campus through your eyes.

Email alumni@georgefox.edu to schedule your campus tour.



March with Your Bruins

On Saturday, July 25, put on your old gold and navy blue gear and head downtown to the Newberg Old Fashioned Festival Grand Parade. Watch from the sidelines or march in the parade with your fellow Bruins!

Visit georgefox.edu/parade to sign up.

News and Life Events | By Barry Hubbell

ALUMNI KEY

A	Associate degree
B	Bachelor's degree
M	Master's degree
D	Doctoral degree
L	Licensure
n	non-degree

1950–59

Phyllis Kirkwood (B59) in October was recognized and awarded for her lifetime commitment to excellence in education at the Oregon Substitute Teachers Association's annual conference. She is the founding president of the organization, started 50 years ago. After 10 years of full-time teaching, she was an elementary substitute teacher in the Beaverton (Oregon) School District for 35 years. She is credited with getting Oregon's minimum substitute teacher pay scale into law and for continuing to make strategic observations and contributions to the OSTA.

1980–89

Jonathan Fodge (B82, M92) in February celebrated his 40th anniversary as pastor of the Peninsula Evangelical Friends Church in Port Angeles, Washington. He may be better known as a coach at nearby Sequim High School, where he's been an assistant track

and field coach for 20 years and a boys' basketball JV coach for 10 years. In addition, he is a PE teacher who offers classes once a week to local home-schooled students.

Phil Waite (B86) is starting his second year as a transitional pastor at Willow Springs Mennonite Church in Tiskilwa, Illinois. He's in his 27th year as a Mennonite pastor, serving the previous 14 years as the pastoral team lead at College Mennonite Church in Goshen, Indiana.

1990–99

Tim Graham (B90, M98) announced in December he was retiring after three decades as school principal at Tuality Plains High School in Forest Grove, Oregon. Previously, for five years, he was principal of Newberg Catalyst High School. Replacing Graham at Tuality Plains is **Doyle Huelsman** (D25), currently assistant principal at Sam Barlow High School in Gresham, Oregon, who previously served as a Student-Centered Achievement Program instructor at Catalyst High School with Graham.

Warren Simpson (B90, M96) has retired from the U.S. Department of Transportation Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration after 35 years as a federal program specialist in the Oregon division in Salem, Oregon. He continues to teach, recently completing his 29th year at Chemeketa Community College in Salem, where he teaches accounting, business and computer science courses. He also taught accounting at Linn-Benton Community College last fall, and teaches in all three state prisons in Salem.

Kristal Watts (B90) started last summer as a pediatric therapy aide at the Providence Portland Medical Center. For nearly 30 years, until 2025, she was a self-employed substitute teacher as a secondary science educator.

David Wilson (B92) is the newest city council member in Clarkston, Washington, appointed in February to help lead the city of 7,200. He was previously chair of the planning commission. Last September, he started with Grifols as a specialty sales representative for the Spokane, Washington-based

healthcare company, specializing in plasma-derived medicines for transfusions.

Yuzuru Yamaji (B92) has returned to his native Tokyo to serve as head of the academic affairs department at Musashino Academia Musicae, his alma mater. This change in the fall of 2024 followed his 32-year career as chair of the music department at Sheng-te Christian College in Taiwan.

Kevin Dougherty (B93) was named a master teacher by Baylor University, its highest honor for teaching excellence, awarded just nine times since 1982. He's in his 21st year as a sociology professor with the Waco, Texas, university, where he was named a full professor in 2022. A former George Fox student body president (1993), he earned a doctoral degree in 2023 from Purdue University.

Christine Drazan (B93) is a Republican candidate for governor of Oregon in the fall election. She was appointed last fall to represent Oregon District 26 in the Oregon State Senate, representing four counties. The Canby, Oregon, resident previously served as minority leader in the Oregon House of Representatives before stepping down to run for governor in the 2022 election.

Fritz Liedtke (n93) is a professional photographer and videographer, now in his 29th year as owner of Fritz Photography in Portland. He specializes in commercial, lifestyle and editorial subjects. He's had photos published in *National Geographic* and featured in museums worldwide. Last summer, his work was featured in five exhibitions across the U.S., and last fall he traveled to Prague to photograph Ukrainian refugee youth.

Jennifer Hricik (B94) is the director of development for the Traverse City (Michigan) Philharmonic, in her second year. She moved from Northwestern Michigan College, also in Traverse City, where she was a major gifts officer for the NMC Foundation for more than eight years. From 1994 to 2003, she was George Fox's associate director of undergraduate admissions.

Cindy Johnson (B94) was a candidate for Yamhill County (Oregon) clerk in the May election, competing against the appointed incumbent. Previously, until 2024, she used her computer information systems and

mathematics degree for more than 17 years at Intel, most recently as a software program manager.

Cherie (Bulkley) Bolton (B95) was promoted to executive director and principal of FourteenSix Christian Academy in Surprise, Arizona. Founded by Calvary Chapel in 2014, it has 100 students.

Natalie (Schumacher) Goff (B95) is a missionary teacher in Nicaragua, now teaching English as a Second Language at Keiser University in San Marcos, while her husband teaches at the seminary. Together, they help with the physical and spiritual needs of their home community of Masatepe.

Zachary Hansen (M95) is head of the upper school at Memphis University School in Tennessee, a 630-student private college prep school for boys. He's been with the school for nine years, named to his current position in 2024. Previously, for 17 years,

he was at Annie Wright School in Tacoma, Washington, the last nine serving as the director of college counseling and as an English teacher.

Amy Karjala (B96) is a senior consultant with The Focus Group in Beaverton, Oregon, in her second year. She worked the previous six years as vice president of learning programs with RevJen Group, a Keller, Texas-based social enterprise for the empowerment of nonprofit leaders. From 1997 to 2007, she was executive director of development at George Fox.

Jamie Ridley Klucken (B98) is in Washington D.C., as team lead at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research, in the Office of Surveillance and Epidemiology. Promoted to the position in 2024, she leads a team of medical officers and safety evaluators that conducts post-marketing safety surveillance

of FDA-approved drugs and recommends appropriate regulatory action.

Matthew Lacy (B98) is principal of Plymouth High School in the St. Helens (Oregon) School District. He's in his second year leading the alternative school of 100 students. Previously, he was a principal of the online Oregon Charter Academy school for four years.

Donovan Mattole (B98) is a chief human resources officer with Langan Engineering Environmental Services, based in Parsippany, New Jersey. In January, he was recognized by Marquis Who's Who for his leadership in human resources and talent management. He's in his third year after working in Philadelphia for 12 years as vice president of human resources with Brenntag North America, an industrial chemicals distributor.

Continued on page 58



Professor John Johnson and his wife Cindy chose George Fox more than 40 years ago. Later, their sons chose it — and their wives too. And this year, their grandson.

Their son Jamie is now one of the most recognizable faces on campus as dean for spiritual life.

"People don't even call us John and Cindy anymore — we're Jamie's parents now. That's fine with us. The legacy we care about is the students who were shaped here and the work they go on to do in the world."

To ensure that legacy continues, the Johnsons joined the 20 Bequests for 20 Years campaign by including George Fox in their will. Will you join them?



Learn how you can leave a legacy that impacts generations of students. Contact Tracy Fabel at tfabel@georgefox.edu or 503-554-2130.

Scott Spurlock (B98) is a professor of Scottish and early modern Christianities, now in his seventh year in that position at the University of Glasgow in Scotland. He's been with the university since 2013, starting as a lecturer in religious studies. In December 2025, he was awarded an honorary doctorate from Lund University's Faculty of Theology, recognizing his contributions to church history and scholarship. He earned a master's degree and a doctoral degree in ecclesiastical history from the University of Edinburgh, and previously was a lecturer in church history and historical theology at both Belfast Bible College and the Institute of Theology at Queen's University in Belfast.

Stephanie Teahn (B98) this spring became a co-pastor with her husband at Awaken Church in McMinnville, Oregon. She began serving as an administrative pastor in 2024 on an interim basis and was affirmed in March. She owns her own mental health clinic, Hope for the Journey, started in McMinnville in 2021.

David Jordan (B99), together with his wife Kathy, in September published a 210-page book, *French Flambé Cooking at Home*. He retired in 2012 after a career in food distribution and management consulting, at one time serving as a North America sales manager consultant to major food manufacturers. They live in Manteca, California.

2000-09

If you visit the new Cultivate Wellness Center in Trout Lake, Washington, you're 100 percent certain of being treated by a George Fox University graduate. Opened last year, its three primary team members are alumni, now in osteopathic medicine practice together.

For founder **Seth Lambert** (Boo), it's a career change from being a surgeon for more than 20 years at nearby White Salmon (Washington) Skyline Health Medical Clinic. Previously a board-certified general surgeon, he now works to help his patients avoid the operating room.

Joining Lambert is **Tobin Rummel** (Bo4), an osteopathic physician who returns to his hometown of Trout Lake after completing an internship and family practice residency

through Samaritan Health Services in Corvallis, Oregon.

The third team member is Tobin's wife, **Christy (Miller) Rummel** (Bo4), a family nurse practitioner. She earned a master's degree in nursing in 2006 from Vanderbilt University and has been practicing functional medicine approaches since 2010.

A fourth member of the two-family venture is Seth's wife, **Janelle (Davis) Lambert** (Bo1), who is the only female in a house with her husband and six sons. She creates organic goat milk soap and other health and beauty products under the name Healthy by Nature.

Rachel Neuman (Boo) is starting her second year as associate director of resources and operations at Moss Landing Marine Laboratories, a multicampus marine research consortium of the California State University System, based in Moss Landing, California. She had been at the University of California Santa Cruz for nearly 17 years, the last 12 as director of graduate student life.

Karen Benson (Mo2) is completing her second year as a health and education research project manager at the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Needs, Oregon's Title V public health agency, part of Oregon Health & Science University in Portland. Previously, for three years, she was a learning specialist with the Estacada (Oregon) School District.

Julie Lockwood (Bo2) is associate director for military personnel and healthcare in the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), serving in the Senior Executive Service. She started in September at the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Earlier, for nearly 10 years, she worked for the Institute for Defense Analyses in Alexandria, Virginia, a nonpartisan think tank focused on national and international security.

Tim Williams (Bo2) is now an assistant professor of global social work practice at Boston College School of Social Work, starting last July after serving as a field placement supervisor since 2022. He continues as an



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Students in the late 1980s pose with Bruin Jr. after winning the Bruin Brawl. One of the university's oldest traditions, it dates back to the 1890s when seniors stole a taxidermied bear skin from the campus museum and "flashed" it on their class day. Soon, other classes began competing for possession of the bear.



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Steve Wilhite and Dave Cammack, both 1963 grads, mix solutions by hand in the George Fox chemistry lab.

affiliate with Humanitarian Development Partnerships Inc., a child protection working group, in his second year. He's also in his ninth year as a senior associate with the Protelnon Consulting Group, serving as a consultant on child protection and education research projects. In addition, he's a research consultant for the Disrupting Harm Project, leading country-level research in Ethiopia, Uganda and Tanzania.

Pamela Russell Bejerano (Mo3) is in her first year as an associate professor at the Chico, California, campus of Butte Community College, teaching English as a Second Language. She started last summer after more than eight years as a senior content developer with Curriculum Associates, for which she wrote and developed professional learning content to support multilingual learners.

Evan Dickens (Bo3) in January became co-managing partner of Jones & Roth CPAs in Bend, Oregon. With the firm since his graduation, he works with high-net-worth individuals and midsize family businesses. He's also active in Bend's government, community college and chamber of commerce.

Jeffrey Nelson (Bo4) in April became medical director at the onsite Premis Health team/care clinic for employees and their families at Universal Orlando Resort in Florida. He moved from Lake Buena Vista, Florida, where he was a family physician with Premis starting in 2016. He's also a member of the executive board of the Florida Society of the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians, in his ninth year.

Thaddeus Tsohantaris (Bo4) is starting his second year in the Pittsburgh area as director of training for Phoenix Global, a metals

and mining services corporation. He previously worked as a learning and development content developer with United States Steel, also in Pittsburgh, after seven years in Newberg with A-dec as a sales curriculum developer.

Michael Chapman (Bo5) is in his first year with ClimateWorks Foundation in Portland, working as a strategist for climate-related displacement and migration. The nonprofit's mission is to slow global warming by funding other organizations in their effort to cut down on CO2 emissions. In the previous seven years, he was with Medical Teams International in Portland, his last position as senior director of global programs.

Elisabeth (Mehl) Greene (Bo5) is the author of *Tobit Detours*, a 140-page poetry book released in 2024 and a two-hour audiobook released last September. It retells the story

of Tobit from the Protestant Apocrypha and Catholic Canon. Greene is living in Myersville, Maryland, where she's self-employed as a composer, arranger, orchestrator and film scorer for opera, orchestra, choral, chamber and electronic music in a variety of languages.

Ayla Hofler (Mo5) is a self-employed spiritual director based in Banks, Oregon, where she lives on a 24-acre farm and welcomes visitors to rest in the garden, walk among the trees, and connect with both domestic and wild animals. She also works with Worldwide Wisewomen, now in its 23rd year, helping develop a website and rituals – including croning ceremonies that honor older women and celebrate a lifetime of experience. This spring, she ran for a Washington County Commission seat representing her area.

Melissa (Chapman) Magee (Bo5) has transitioned from being a middle school Spanish teacher in West Linn and Hillsboro, Oregon, to being a project and portfolio manager with Chaucer Foods in Forest Grove, Oregon. She started last year with the business that produces freeze-dried fruit and vegetable products. She also recently co-created Project Manager Accelerator, a program helping workers transition into project management.

Holly (VanBrockling) Neill (Bo6) is principal of Concord Christian School in Knoxville, Tennessee, completing her first year at the school of 650 students. She has a principal licensure from George Fox and is completing an EdD at the university. Previously, for nearly nine years, she was with Valor Christian School International in Beaverton, Oregon, the last five as principal.

Renne Hancock (Mo7) has launched a new nonprofit, The Parker Foundation Reentry Empowerment Program, based in Salem, Oregon, with the goal of empowering incarcerated individuals returning to society. She is a cofounder, setting the strategic vision, guiding program development and fostering partnerships. The foundation plans to provide housing, vocational training and behavioral health services. She's also owner of Thrive Consulting, started in 2025 to empower organizations for growth and transformation. The new positions follow nearly nine years with Bridgeway Recovery

Services in Salem, where she was chief operating officer for the last seven years.

Caitlyn Bennett (Bo8) is in her first year in a new role at John Brown University, serving as the associate director of visits and campus experience. Previously, for two years, she was the associate director of the honors scholars program for the Christian university of 2,250 in Siloam Springs, Arkansas.

Cherie (Beck) Foote (Bo8) and **Jesse Foote** (Bo8) have moved from Washington state to South Carolina after he received a promotion. Since August, he's been the head of quality, health, safety and environment for Swissport Cargo, North America. Now in his 19th year with the company, he previously served as a general manager in Seattle for nine years.

Bryson Reynolds (Bo8) is a principal cloud devOps engineer with Halcyon in Austin, Texas, completing his second year with the AI-powered cybersecurity startup that offers a platform to stop ransomware attacks. Previously, for more than 10 years, he was with uShip in Austin, the last five as principal engineer with the online transportation marketplace.

Jonathan Shepherd (Mo8) started last August as director of strategic engagement with Delve Research, a competitive intelligence firm in Washington, D.C. He's been with the company for four years and moved up after two years working as a learning and development manager. He works remotely while living in Coral Springs, Florida, where he was a history and economics teacher at North Broward Preparatory School in Coconut Creek.

Tabitha Smith (no8) is in her first year as a driver education coordinator with the Idaho Department of Education in Boise. This is her 14th year with the department, serving the last six as a grants/contracts officer.

Travis Wesley (Bo8) is completing his second year with the Financial Investment Team (FIT) in Portland, where he's a certified financial planner, focusing on comprehensive planning, business retirement plans and tax-efficient strategies. He received a master of science degree in 2025 in personal financial planning from the College for Financial Planning.

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A Naval Aviator's Journey

From George Fox engineering major to Navy pilot, Allison Moss has found purpose – and community – in serving others By Jaime Handley

Allison Moss's (B15) path to the Navy started in the seventh grade when she watched a YouTube video showing fighter pilots landing on an aircraft carrier in rough seas. She turned to her parents and exclaimed, "I want to do that!"

Years later, after completing a degree in engineering from George Fox, that dream of becoming a naval aviator would start to become a reality. But it wouldn't be easy.

A New Mission

From the time Moss saw that YouTube video to her eventual training at the Naval Air Station in Pensacola, Florida, she felt certain that flying fighter jets was her path – all of her energy and resources were focused on that goal.

"I had been so scope-locked on being a Navy jet pilot that I never paid attention to anything else around me," she says. "Based on that career trajectory, I had made most of my decisions – from education and lifestyle to my very personality. That was the only option."

Then, in an instant, her plans had to change. Moss missed the minimum score required to qualify for jet flight training by less than a point and was instead assigned to flying helicopters. She was devastated.

In that heartache, she began to see how God had been weaving her story from the beginning. "I remember driving my Jeep home and having an epiphany: This opens up new doors I thought were closed to me," she says.



One of those newly opened doors was the opportunity to start a family. As a jet pilot, Moss knew that her career options might be limited if she wanted to have children. At the time, pregnant women faced significant restrictions in ejection seat aircraft, but there were fewer restrictions on helicopter pilots.

"I was on this drive, backpedaling years of who I had made myself into for this role that was now unavailable to me," she recalls. "That was a huge realization. I began to see my future differently."

Being Known

In that moment of reorientation, Moss's community showed up for her in tangible ways. Her best friend, a fellow helicopter pilot, hyped the amazing things she could do with this new aircraft assignment. Meanwhile, classmates in the George Fox engineering program shared stories of their own career changes – one who even made the transition from an engineering career to working with a seminary in Ukraine.

The support was nothing new to Moss, who experienced the Be Known promise throughout her time at George Fox. "It sounds like a cliché, but it was true," she says. "My professors knew me by name. They would ask me questions like, 'How was that exam?' or 'How was your time at home with the sheep this weekend?' knowing that I grew up in a ranching family in Tumalo, Oregon."

The experience left a lasting impression. "I even find myself using that tagline now as a department head, leading people and mentoring junior sailors," she says.

Throughout the ups and downs of her career trajectory, staying

connected with her George Fox classmates has helped keep this pilot's feet planted firmly on the ground.

"We're such a mixed bag of people, but we support each other," she says. "When I'm home for Christmas, they drive over the mountain just to have lunch. Or I'll get a random text for my mailing address or to update me on life events."

Life After Service

Today, Moss is working on her shore tour in Maryland – a period of duty in which sailors work at a non-deploying command – serving as the safety officer at the rotary-wing developmental test squadron. She is part of the aviation test community, working with various engineers to ensure the helicopter squadron is mission-ready.

"Every single test team has a project officer who's often a pilot and then a project engineer, which is a fusion of my skill sets," she explains.

As Moss considers life after the Navy, she desires to continue serving others. "Post-Navy, I want to go home and fly firefighting and search and rescue aircraft in my Oregon community," she says. "I want to take these skills and this passion back to my home state."

That call to know and serve others has been a constant theme in Moss's life.

"The concept I live by is that God knows us at our best and worst, and if we can simply love the people around us like God loves us, then we are doing something right," she says. "That's the base goal. That's the mission."



→ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



Ministry Without Borders

From the decks of Mercy Ships to the halls of Portland Seminary, Joff Williams lives out his conviction that serving others with the love of Christ is a global calling By Sean Patterson

For **Joff Williams** (D27), ministry has never been confined to a church building – nor restricted to those considered “ministers.” As senior director for spiritual formation with Mercy Ships – an international Christian charity that operates the largest non-governmental hospital ships in the world – he lives out a calling centered on serving the global church.

That call came into sharp focus years ago at a friend’s wedding in northern Idaho. There, Williams and his wife Kari, a nurse, spent hours talking with Dr. Gary Parker, emeritus chief medical officer for Mercy Ships. Hearing about the organization’s work abroad stirred something within them.

“We realized we didn’t need to wait until later in life to do this work,” Williams says. “We could give the best, most energetic parts

of our lives to this mission now and take our family with us.”

That conversation changed the trajectory of their lives. Soon after, he and Kari joined Mercy Ships, where her nursing background and his leadership experience aligned with the organization’s mission. After six years at the ministry’s Texas headquarters, Williams stepped into a major leadership role as managing director of the Global Mercy, the world’s largest civilian hospital ship, serving communities in Senegal, The Gambia and Sierra Leone.

Today, the Williams family is back in the states, where he now serves in his senior director role with the organization while earning his doctorate. Even as his responsibilities expand, Williams’ motivation remains rooted in calling rather than title.

“I have always wanted to be in ministry, but not necessarily what

might first come to mind when people think of that,” he says. “I’ve been called to understand and help others understand how to work Jesus’ way. It’s important that we consider our whole selves, as followers of Jesus, to be engaged in ministry to the world, whether others call it that or not.”

That philosophy shapes the way he approaches leadership. Rather than see ministry and organizational work as separate, Williams believes leadership itself can be pastoral – guiding teams, nurturing faith and helping people flourish in challenging global contexts.

That sense of purpose has been deepened through his studies in Portland Seminary’s Doctor of Leadership in Global Perspectives program. Rather than pursue another credential for its own sake, Williams sought a learning community that would strengthen his ability to lead faithfully in cross-cultural ministry settings.

“When I discovered what Portland Seminary was offering, my heart just leaped,” he says. “These are my people.”

The program has connected him with leaders from diverse traditions and professions who share a common commitment to God’s mission in the world. For Williams, who will complete the program next year, that environment is helping sharpen both his leadership practice and his vision for the future.

His hope is to continue investing his life in the global church, helping leaders and communities thrive across cultures and contexts. Raised as the son of missionaries in Zimbabwe and the United Kingdom, Williams has long carried a love for the worldwide body of Christ, and that passion continues to drive his work.

“I love the global church. It’s my passion,” he says. “When I think about my calling, I get this image from Scripture where people from the north, south, east and west – every tribe and tongue – are together at the table, on earth as it is in heaven.”

That vision of a united global church remains the heart of his ministry: helping people follow Jesus together, wherever in the world they are called to serve.

Linsey (Wages) Bjorklund (B09) is a community engagement coordinator with Every Child Lane County, a nonprofit helping children and families impacted by foster care. Previously, she was a recruitment specialist with the University of Oregon and a stay-at-home mom.

Rick Dormer (L09), after 16 years in Alaska, is back in Oregon as principal of Central High School in Independence. He started last fall at the 1,000-student school after 13 years in Petersburg, Alaska, and three in Ketchikan, Alaska. In his last two years in Alaska, he was president of the Alaska Association of Secondary School Principals.

Amy McClung (M09) is owner of Two Sparrows Counseling, a group mental health therapy practice in Beaverton, Oregon. It was started in 2024 after she was in a private therapy practice for 10 years, also in Beaverton. Previously, she was a mental health therapist for students in the Oregon Trail School District in Clackamas County, Oregon.

Shanna Middaugh (B09) is back at the Willamette Valley Medical Center in McMinnville, Oregon, where she started in September as an infection prevention director. She worked there previously, for more than 13 years, ending as manager of patient safety/infection prevention. She most recently was with Salem (Oregon) Health for four years as an infection preventionist, then manager of sterile processing.

2010–19

Todd Bloomquist (D10) last June became senior executive director of the 13,000-student Medford (Oregon) School District, overseeing teaching and learning programs. He previously worked as a senior program officer with the Ford Family Foundation in Roseburg, Oregon.

Kari Braun (B10) in January became a nurse supervisor in the Saint Alphonsus Health System in Boise, Idaho, after eight months as a registered nurse lead.

Rodney Danskin (B10) in February reached 25 years as an employee of Lam Research in Tualatin, Oregon, a manufacturer of wafer fabrication equipment for the semiconductor industry. He started as a lab supervisor, became a senior engineering technician,

then a technical program manager. He’s now in his third year as a tool install engineer/project manager.

Preston Devine (B11) was promoted in October from senior production artist to production art manager for Nike Basketball Apparel. He’s been with Nike, at their headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon, since 2017. Previously, he worked as a manager with Impact Printing in Beaverton.

Nicholas Ogle (B11) is an assistant professor of moral theology at Saint Charles Borromeo Seminary, a Roman Catholic seminary in Ambler, Pennsylvania. He started last July after two years as a postdoctoral research fellow with the program for research on religion and urban civil society at the University of Pennsylvania.

Cliff Rhoten (B11) is a global portfolio manager with the 3M Company in Maplewood, Minnesota, in his second year in that role after he started with the company in 2021 as an internal consultant. He previously served nearly seven years in the U.S. Navy as a surface warfare officer, before he earned an MBA from Northwestern University in 2021.

Ashley Brown (B12) started in November as a registered nurse with St. Luke’s Health System in Boise, Idaho, where she’s a registered nurse working with heart patients as a telemetry nurse. Previously, she was with the Center for Lifetime Health in Boise, working as a chronic care manager, care coordinator and clinic nurse.

Amanda Fink (B12) is a pediatric and fetal cardiac sonographer with OHSU Doernbecher Children’s Hospital in Portland. She previously was a pediatric and fetal cardiac sonographer with Northwest Congenital Heart Care in Tacoma, Washington, for nearly nine years.

Jordan Fatke (B13) is a content development lead with Dolby Laboratories in San Francisco. In his position, he’s interviewed well-known celebrities that include Martin Scorsese, Greta Gerwig and Tom Cruise. He meets with content partners to understand their vision, business and marketing objectives, translating those meetings into content strategy. As a former National Geographic Young Explorer, he is still involved, now in his 12th year, working on a campaign to encourage exploration and conservation with kids across the nation.

William Gibson (D12) is president and chief executive officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Triad in North Carolina. He started in June, heading an expansion project to reestablish clubs in Greensboro, Winston-Salem and High Point. He earlier was in a similar leadership position for more than two years with Helping Education in Raleigh, a nonprofit improving outcomes for children in under-resourced communities and schools.

Daniel Rodriguez (B13, D19) is a licensed clinical psychologist providing behavioral

healthcare to active Army soldiers in the 8th Theater Sustainment Command Clinic at Desmond Doss Health Clinic at Schofield Barracks in Wahiawa, Hawaii. He is completing his second year. Previously, for three years, he was an assistant professor of clinical psychology at George Fox while also a clinical psychologist with Cornerstone Clinical Services in Tigard, Oregon.

Kristina (Borges) Bragg (B14) is a nursing professional development practitioner with Kaweah Health in Visalia, California, in her fourth year in that position and now in her

12th year with the hospital. Last August, she was awarded professional certification by the American Nursing Professional Development Practitioners organization. She was a critical care nurse and hospice nurse before her current position.

J.D. Mowery (B14) is president of the global contract development and manufacturing organization division of Bora Pharmaceuticals in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina. He started in October 2024, returning to the area after a 16-month position in Tokyo as an officer with the JSR Corporation, another pharmaceutical company. In his 19-year career he's been in nine locations in the U.S., Denmark and Japan.

Seth Brent (B15) is in his first year as a senior manager, paid media, with Intentional Marketing, a multifamily marketing agency in Bend, Oregon. Previously, for nearly four years, he was with RealPage, Inc., a provider of commercial revenue management software and services for the conventional multifamily rental housing industry.

Ellie Higbee (B15) is an engagement director with Traders Point Christian Church in Carmel, Indiana, completing her first year. She previously was at George Fox for three years as an event coordinator, then assistant director of event operations.

Ana (Fakkema) Kidder (B15) is back home on Whidbey Island in Washington, where she is a veterinarian and owner of Heritage Veterinary in Oak Harbor. She received a doctor of veterinary medicine degree from Washington State College of Veterinary Medicine in 2019, purchased the existing practice in 2022, and oversaw the completion of a new clinic. Her specialty is large animals and equine preventative care.

Luke Rines (B15) is in Tokyo with the U.S. Air Force. He completed residency in internal medicine at the Wright Patterson Medical Center near Dayton, Ohio, last year after graduating from the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences F. Edward Hebert School of Medicine and receiving his Ohio medical license in 2024.

Seth Thomas (M15) in September was named vice president of global planning with Nike, advancing after one year as senior director of global planning. He joined the company in 2011 and has advanced through a dozen

corporate positions, starting as an assistant marketing manager and including roles in marketing and planning in the Asia-Pacific and Latin America regions. He is based in Beaverton, Oregon.

Caleb Turner (B15) started last summer as the athletic director at Westside Christian High School in Tigard, Oregon. This follows eight years in Kandern, Germany, with Black Forest Academy, where he was an athletic director.

Julie Dodge (D16) started in August as a service director with LifeWorks Northwest in Portland, a nonprofit mental health and addiction services agency. She also is founder/consultant with ReThink Resilience, helping organizations help people live well. In addition, she is founder/principal consultant with Resilient LLC, now in its 20th year equipping people to make a difference in the lives of others.

Cambria Herrera (B16) in December was promoted to program coordinator for Latin American Studies at the University of California San Diego, after more than two years as a community and outreach coordinator. In February, she also began teaching at multiple colleges across Southern California, including San Diego Mesa College and Fullerton College.

Malia Rosenlund (B16) in December became a doctor of nurse anesthesia practice, receiving a degree from the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. She started a new position in February with Providence Hood River (Oregon) Memorial Hospital. After receiving her nursing degree from George Fox, she was a registered nurse for six years in Boise, Idaho.

Ulysus Torres (B16) is with the El Paso Locomotives professional soccer team, serving as director of youth soccer for the United Soccer League squad. He's in his second year after moving from FC Westlake in Austin, Texas, where he was a head coach for two seasons.

Kelsey (Lane) Tripp (B16) received a master's degree in engineering (user experience technology) last spring from Arizona State University. She's now a technical training professional with Trimble Inc., a software, hardware and services technology company in Westminster, Colorado.



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Students ride through Newberg in an elaborately decorated car during the 1930 May Day parade, part of a long-running spring tradition that included a May Day court and campus festivities.

Travis Biglow (M17) last fall started as a building and construction trades instructor at Palo Verde College in Blythe, California. He also works as a construction technology adjunct faculty member at Victor Valley College in Victorville, California, where he lives, and is the owner/general contractor of Go Big Development Enterprises in Victorville, in his 38th year building custom homes and remodeling.

Michaela Conley (B17) is in Dublin, Ireland, where she's an actor, stage manager, producer and freelance writer. She earned a master's degree in theatre performance in 2023 from American College Dublin, where she was named master's student of the year. In April of last year, her debut book, *Poems for the Starving Artist*, was released by Dark Thirty Publishing in the United Kingdom.

Ryan Elder (B17) lives in New York City and works as a security engineer with Thalamus, starting last July. Previously, in 2023, he cofounded Mediocratic, which later merged with Thalamus, a platform that helps manage residency and fellowship recruitment, including interview scheduling and application review.

Josiah Esper (B17) started in January as an account executive with Babylon Micro-Farms in Spokane, Washington, a supplier of hydroponic indoor technology to grow fresh produce. He previously was in sales development and a helicopter flight instructor.

Benjamin Saks (B17, M18) started in December as an accounts payable specialist with the city of Arcadia, California. He previously was an accounts receivable specialist for 15

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In the 1940s, two students share a goodbye kiss outside of Wood-Mar Hall. Students pictured, from left to right, are Everill Brolliar, Glenn Everest, Gloria (Hoffman) Kendall, Orla Kendall and Verlyn Thornsberry.



→ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

The Heart of an Advocate

Inspired by his sister and a drive to help others, Adrian Cortes takes on the dual role of high school special education teacher and Washington State senator By Sean Patterson

Whether he's greeting students in his classroom at Camas High School or interacting with fellow lawmakers in the state capital, **Adrian Cortes** (D23) is fulfilling a lifelong ambition – to be a man who both advocates for and works for a better world.

Voters elected him to represent the 18th Legislative District in the Washington State Senate in 2024, and since taking office he's balanced two demanding callings: serving as a state legislator while continuing to teach special education. He admits it isn't your "typical combination of jobs" – in fact, he's the only active public school teacher currently serving in the Washington State Senate. But as he sees it, the two roles are connected.

"Being in the classroom gives me a lens that I carry with me into policymaking," says Cortes, a 2023 graduate of George Fox's Doctor of Education program. "I see what's working in education and I see where we need to improve. That perspective helps me advocate for policies that actually make a difference for students and families."

The Inspiration of a Sister

His passion for education – and, specifically, special education – is inspired by his sister, Marisol, who has autism. Growing up with her instilled in Cortes a belief that we should all be advocates for those around us.

"Most special education teachers have a personal story that led them to that career field and motivates them to serve the populations that they do, and I'm no different," he says. "For me, it was my sister. Being with her, supporting her, ultimately pushed me into the direction of becoming a special education teacher and wanting to support other students in their life journeys."

That desire has resulted in a decade-long commitment at Camas High School, where he helps special education students navigate academic challenges while building the skills and confidence they need for life after graduation.

Beyond that, his position allows him the opportunity to get an insider's view of the education system – a perspective that informs his work as a state senator.

In fact, his experience in the classroom inspired Cortes to prime-sponsor a bill that required the state of Washington to comply with federal law and provide Free

Appropriate Public Education services through age 22, ensuring special education and related services are provided at public expense during a critical transition period.

"I remember being in the classroom and thinking, 'Wow, this is going to have a significant impact in our district,' he says. "Just think of what this will do in terms of programming."

The bill reached the governor's desk and passed. "It was really a profound moment seeing something I observed in the classroom translate into driving policy, and having that policy become law," Cortes reflects. "There really is quite a bit of overlap in my dual roles. In one I'm on the ground floor of the system, seeing what does and doesn't work. In the other, I'm able to take action and do what I can to make improvements where needed."

From Community Volunteer to State Senator

It was a love of community that inspired Cortes to pursue public service. It began in his hometown of Battle Ground, Washington, where he's lived since age 6. In 2009, he began volunteering on local boards and community initiatives. That civic involvement eventually led him to run for public office and he was elected to the Battle Ground City Council, on which he served for three terms. He also served for one term as the city's mayor.

After years in city government, Cortes was approached about running for a Washington State Senate seat.

"At first I was a bit hesitant because I thought, 'I don't know, it's a big jump from being a local city council member,'" he recalls. "But after talking with my family and friends, I decided to go ahead and run, and I was successful."

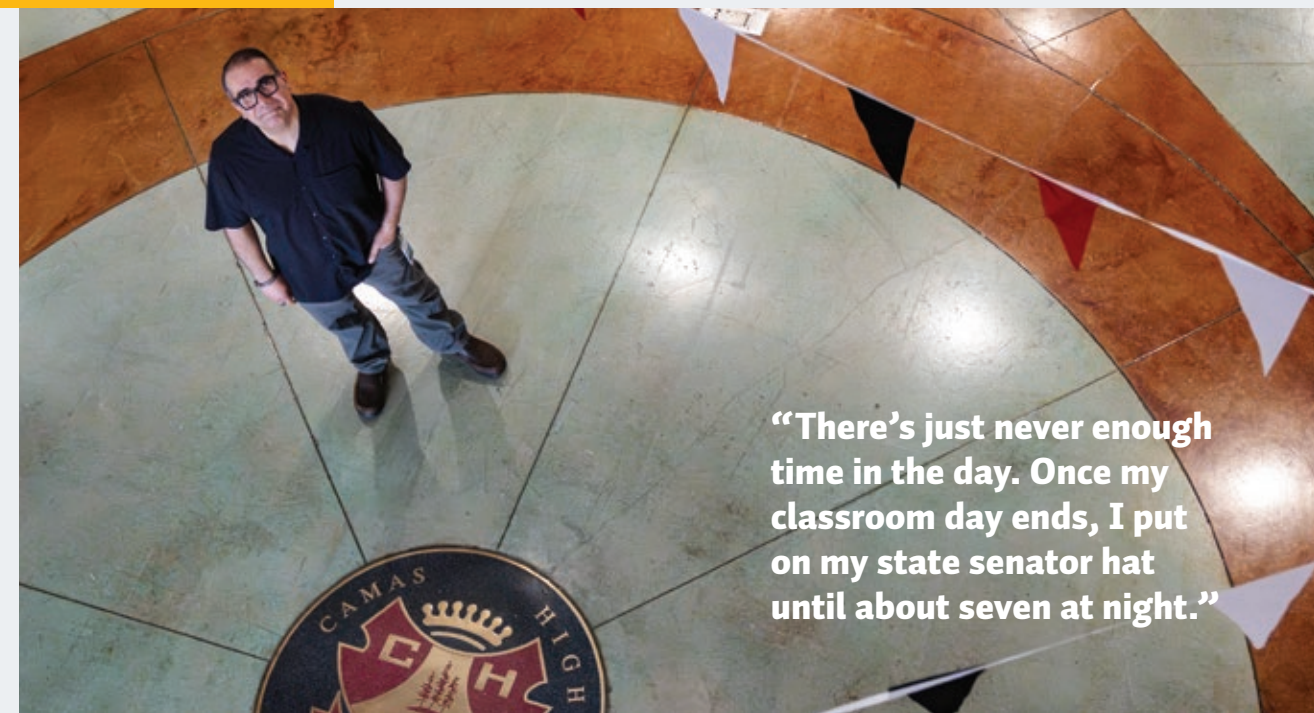
In November 2024, voters elected him to the senate. His victory was historic in two ways: He flipped a seat that had been held by the same party for 30 years, and he became the first Latino state senator to represent his region.

Balancing Two Demanding Roles

Holding two demanding jobs comes with challenges. "There's just never enough time in the day," Cortes says with a laugh. When the legislature is not in session, he spends his days teaching and his evenings working on legislative responsibilities. "Once my classroom day ends, I put on my state senator hat until about seven at night."



Cortes interacts with colleagues on the floor of the Washington State Senate.



"There's just never enough time in the day. Once my classroom day ends, I put on my state senator hat until about seven at night."

During legislative sessions in Olympia, the challenge shifts. Washington alternates between long 120-day sessions in odd-numbered years and shorter 60-day sessions in even-numbered years. During those periods, Cortes temporarily steps away from the classroom while a substitute supports his students. His school district has been accommodating of the arrangement.

"They've been incredibly flexible and supportive," he says. "Once the session is over, I go right back into the classroom."

Navigating a Polarized Environment

Beyond finding time to do both jobs, one of the greatest challenges Cortes faces is the increasingly polarized nature of politics. "I remember growing up and hearing adults talk about policy disagreements," he says. "People could debate ideas and sometimes persuade each other."

Today, he says, the environment feels more partisan and tribal. "It's disappointing, because families in our communities are focused on everyday challenges – raising kids, paying bills, building a future. They want solutions."

Cortes believes his role is to cut through the noise and focus on practical outcomes. "At the end of the day, we're all human beings trying to make our communities better," he says.

The Role of Faith

What informs his decisions is his faith, although Cortes is hesitant to "push his beliefs on people," as he puts it. "My faith gives

me inspiration and motivation to bring a message of hope and healing to the people I serve," he says.

In fact, when he returned to school to earn his doctorate, he deliberately chose a Christian institution, George Fox, for his Doctor of Education degree. In a word, Cortes describes his experience in the program as "transformational."

"The faculty were incredible," he says. "My dissertation chair, Dane Joseph, played a huge role in my journey. We still stay in contact today."

His doctoral research focused on improving teacher preparation through real-time video observation and peer feedback to strengthen culturally responsive teaching. It led to national recognition. Cortes presented his research at the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education conference in both New Orleans and Denver, and his work was highlighted by the education technology company Edthena.

"It sharpened my focus both in the classroom and in my work as a civic leader," he says of his George Fox education.

Looking ahead, Cortes hopes to continue bridging the worlds of education and public policy. For him, the dual roles have the same mission: helping people thrive.

In the classroom, that means advocating for students and building their confidence. In the senate, it means crafting policies that improve the lives of families across his district and the state. "I'm incredibly grateful for the opportunity to do both," he says.



The One-Hundred Year Effect

A new documentary follows George Fox alumnus Kent Thornburg on a mission to end chronic disease before it starts

By Victoria Payne

Kent Thornburg (B67) never wanted to be a movie star. But the founding director of Oregon Health & Science University's Moore Institute for Nutrition and Wellness would do almost anything to get his life's work into the public discourse – including starring in *The One-Hundred Year Effect*, a new documentary that tells the story of his research.

Now retired, Thornburg has spent over 50 years researching the developmental origins of health and disease, and the news is not good. “For the first time in history, young people today are on track to be the first generation ever in the U.S. to live shorter lives than their parents,” Thornburg says.

The culprit, it turns out, is processed food. Thornburg's research shows that a person's risk for chronic disease goes back three generations. “The egg that made me was made in my mother's ovary when she was a fetus in my grandmother,” Thornburg says. In other words, it's not just what your mother ate when she was pregnant – it's what your grandmother ate too.

The 100-Year Effect – directed by Andrew Hinton, the award-winning director of *Tashi and the Monk* – chronicles Thornburg's collaboration with Hollywood producer Bill Stuart as Stuart pitched the looming health crisis to film execs. As it turns out, Hollywood wasn't interested in the thrilling science of epigenetics. As doors closed, the unlikely duo realized they needed more than a movie – they needed a movement.

In part two, Stuart and Thornburg find an eclectic group of helpers. Joining with artists, activists and scientists, they work hard to get the word out. The results vary. Comic Imani Denae tries and fails to make audiences laugh at punchlines reliant on the origins of chronic disease. Children's folk singer Red Yarn has more luck with a heartfelt, science-backed tune called *The Child Within*:

“It's the egg inside the egg inside the egg inside the bird / Or the seed inside the seed inside the seed inside the dirt / All the generations held inside like stacking dolls / So we must nurture every child within the child within us all.”

Momentum moves from grassroots singalongs to world stages. Youth in the United Kingdom present Thornburg's findings to major food corporations. Even the United Nations gets a call, as Dutch collaborator Dr. Tessa Roseboom brings their cause before the council and sparks international conversation.

Perhaps most significantly, Stuart and Thornburg applied

→ ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT



and received approval to establish Future Generations Day. The nationally recognized observance, celebrated every third Friday of March, comes with a platform. Think Earth Day, but for the health of young people and their offspring.

When the film premiered at OHSU on Future Generations Day 2026, Thornburg reluctantly strode the red carpet with his wife Jeanie, smiling for the camera. The documentary spanned three years of his life – and if anything, the film's completion means he now has more time for his research.

Filmmakers have more showings planned, including its acceptance into the Julien Dubuque International Film Festival and additional screenings in Amsterdam, London and Atlanta in partnership with the CDC Foundation, along with a showing this fall at George Fox.

A longtime George Fox donor, Thornburg has never stopped investing in his alma mater – including establishing a program, funded by the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust, that places George Fox science students in top research labs at OHSU for the summer. When asked what he hoped George Fox students would take away from his breakout performance, Thornburg offered a correction. “The film is not about me,” he says. “But I do want them to see it – to see that a graduate of George Fox can help change the world, and I want them to know that they can too.”

teaching a graduate-level course exploring the impact of biological, social and environmental risk factors on personal wellness and academic achievement.

Maria Gomez Martinez (B20) is continuing in government work as a public affairs and communications coordinator - bilingual (Spanish/English) with Oregon's Washington County. She started in 2024 after more than two years as a legislative aide with two representatives in the Oregon House of Representatives in Salem, Oregon.

Jordan Planck (B20) is with HepQuant in Denver as a lab scientist 2, promoted in March 2025 after starting in 2024. Previously, she was a quality assurance data analyst with National Water Quality Lab in Lakewood, Colorado.

Emily (Hudgens) Raines (B20) started in February as an executive assistant with Dvorak, an industrial electrical construction contracting company in Baltimore, after two years as an executive office manager with Comprehensive Housing Assistance, Inc., a nonprofit serving the underserved in Baltimore.

Jalyn Rutledge-Bazen (B20) started last June as the ministry assistant for pastoral care and engaged aging at First Baptist Church in Greenville, South Carolina. A resident of the city, she's worked the last five years as an athletic trainer for nearby Clemson University.

Becca Wezensky (D20) is now an assistant clinical director with Evolution Physical Therapy in Denver, a role she started in July after joining the firm in 2023 as a physical therapist.

David Demaree (B21) started in August as a systems engineer with the Peterbilt Motors Company in Denton, Texas. He moved from the Kenworth Truck Company in Kirkland, Washington, where he was a vehicle controls engineer starting in 2024.

Suhail Khan (B21, M23) in April was honored as one of Portland's top young executives when he was named by the *Portland Business Journal* to its “2026 40 Under 40” list. The list recognizes “dynamic leaders cultivating change and impact,” and is based on career influence, leadership and community involvement. He started in September as senior vice president for commercial insurance with Marsh in Portland. He previously was a vice president at USI Insurance Services in Portland.

Hannah Peterson (B21) in September joined the Davey Tree Expert Company in Redmond, Washington, as its client experience coordinator. She landed the job after earning a master's degree in leadership in April from Northwest University in Kirkland, Washington.

Megan Reamy (B21) is research lead and project manager for the Women's Circle Project,

living in Portland while developing research protocols for projects in Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar, periodically traveling to each location. She is supported by a Fulbright research grant awarded at graduation in May 2025, when she completed a master of global affairs degree from the Keough School of Global Affairs at Notre Dame. She cofounded the project in Kuwait in 2022 with an initiative advocating for better working conditions for female migrant domestic workers.

Andrea Saccoccio (D21) started in January as executive presbyter with the Presbytery of Los Angeles, involved in leadership development, visioning and change, and conflict management. Until July, she was director of congregational education and outreach with Sojourners in Washington, D.C. She continues with her own company, Lefko Consulting, coaching and facilitating organizations as they explore ways to strengthen multicultural relationships.

Mark Simon (D21) started last July as principal of Stoneybrook Intermediate and Middle School, part of the Warren Township Public Schools system in Indianapolis. He has been a coach, dean, assistant principal and principal in Indianapolis since 2021.

Marlon Ware (D21) started last fall as an assistant professor in the School of Business and Management at Azusa Pacific University in California. He's been at the university since



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This panoramic photo from the 1920s shows Wood-Mar Hall in the background, and to the right, a structure simply referred to as “College Building.” It was later renamed Hoover Hall in honor of Herbert Hoover, the 31st president of the United States, who attended Friends Pacific Academy in the building in the 1880s.

2019, starting as director of business programs and as an assistant professor, then becoming director of regional campuses in the School of Business and Management. Previously, he was in the U.S. Marine Corps for nearly 27 years as an operations professional.

John Hynes (D22) is now director of Christian educator services at George Fox, starting in December 2024 following four years as head of school at Westside Christian High School in Tigard, Oregon. He leads a new master's program launching this year that offers a two-year, tuition-free path to a teaching license while placing students in nearby private Christian schools.

Grace Martin (B23, M25) is supervisor of clinical operations, medical forensic services, at

Providence Portland Medical Center, in her second year treating survivors of violence and abuse. She's also in her fourth year working part time as a teaching associate at Oregon Health & Science University in Portland, providing continuing education instruction to medical students.

Stephanie McLain (M22) is a marriage and family therapist who combines nature and mental health by walking and talking in outside and wilderness settings and via telehealth. She founded Felt Sense Nature Therapy in Silverton, Oregon, in October 2025.

Tim Montgomery (L22) is a program administrator with the Northwest Regional Education Service District, based in Hillsboro, Oregon, which coordinates and delivers services to

20 school districts in four northwest Oregon counties. He's in his second year after 10 years in Woodburn, Oregon, area schools, most recently as an assistant principal at Woodburn High School.

Kylie Ronning (D22) in February started as a physical therapist at Ronning Physical Therapy and Sports Rehabilitation in Aptos, California, founded by her father in 1993. She joins seven other physical therapists at the practice, following a residency in proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation at Kaiser Permanente and then three years at Dominion Hospital in Santa Cruz, California.

Aaron Stusser (M22, D25) is a psychology resident at Big Sky Psychological Consortium in Bozeman, Montana. He started in July after nearly two years with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs in Helena, where he was in several positions, the last as a psychological assessment intern.

Reagan Fernandez (n23) started in September as a strategic project manager with Alturas Ventures, a venture capital and private equity company in Eagle, Idaho. This follows two years with Boise State University athletics, the last year as an on-campus player relations coordinator.

Maxwell Hanson (n23) is in his second year as a software engineer with USchedule in Mukilteo, Washington, a tech company involved in scheduling solutions for businesses and organizations, specializing in golf.

Elizabeth Holbrook (D23) is now vice dean of the Fermanian School of Business at Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. She was promoted last June after working at the school since 2014, most recently as associate dean of operations and quality assurance for two years, as well as associate professor of accounting.

Tim Johnson (D23) started last fall as a secondary principal at John Adams Academy, a charter high school of 260 students in Roseville, California. He formerly served as a district music instructor with the Visalia (California) Unified School District for a year. He continues, in his sixth year, as a virtual adjunct guitar instructor with Arizona State University Prep School in Tempe.

Paige Lindstrom (M23) is the head volleyball coach and head track and field coach at North Marion High School in Aurora,

Oregon, completing her first year at the school after one year as a grade school physical education teacher.

Gabriela (Rodas Meda) Nord (B23) earned a master's degree in music from Texas Tech University in 2025 and now is teaching voice at Hoffman School of Music in Beaverton, Oregon. She's also a Spanish medical interpreter with Linguava in Portland.

Dwayne Jones (D24) is a chaplain with Three Oaks Hospice in Austin, Texas, in his second year. He also has started his own business, A Better You, a pastoral care and coaching enterprise.

Justin Panaitescu (B24), starting in October, is a medical assistant with Dermatology Associates in Lake Oswego, Oregon, after being in a similar role with Clear Choice Dermatology for more than two years.

Sara Smith (M24) started in January as a licensed mental health counselor with Vancouver (Washington) Counseling Associates. She lives in Washougal, Washington, and also works as a mental health therapist with Sea Mar Community Health in Vancouver.

Trace Tucker (n24) is a client services associate with R/W Investment Management in Eagle, Idaho, where he started a full-time role in December after working as an intern since April 2025. He's also a varsity baseball assistant coach at Emmett High School in Emmett, Idaho.

John Fehlen (D25) is in his 18th year as lead pastor of the West Salem (Oregon) Foursquare Church. He is using his doctoral degree in leadership as a project faculty member with Portland Seminary. In January, he published his book *More Than Fine: The Pastoral Journey from Languishing to Flourishing*, his doctoral project.

Julia Fisher (B25) is using her new mechanical engineering degree as an engineering technician 1 with Janicki, based in Sedro-Woolley, Washington. The privately owned engineering and manufacturing company designs and builds tools, parts and prototypes for aerospace, defense, space, marine and architecture. She lives in Olalia, Washington.

Emmy King (B25) received a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant award and is in Kutna Hora, Czech Republic, a small tourist town

located about an hour from Prague. She is at the Gymnasium of Jiri Orten, a prominent college-preparatory high school, teaching English to students ages 11-19.

Jodi Lopez (M25) has secured her first position as an eating disorder therapist associate with Center for Discovery in Portland, an outpatient eating disorder treatment center.

Michael Lund (B25) is a tax accountant with Novogradac and Company in Portland. He joined the accounting and consulting firm in January 2025 after passing Oregon's Uniform CPA exam.

Joy (Foster) Lusby (B25) passed the National Council Licensure Examination and started in February as a nurse with McKenzie Willamette Medical Center in Springfield, Oregon.

Nelson Weaver (D25) joined a private practice on the island of Oahu, Hawaii, while seeking licensure in the state to become a licensed psychologist. He lives on the North Shore while working with GoVa Hawaii, a counseling center in Honolulu.

Connor Werner (B25) has secured his first position as a registered nurse with Good Samaritan Hospital in Portland. He also received two new certifications from the American Heart Association for pediatric advanced life support and advanced cardiovascular life support.

IN MEMORY

Eleanore (Armstrong) Frazier (n51), Nov. 17, 2025.

Marvin Hampton (B57), Aug. 12, 2025.

Melvin Hadley (n62), Feb. 26, 2026.

Dan Nolta (B63), Feb. 15, 2026.

Bud Greene (n64), Dec. 27, 2025.

Dorlan Bales (B69), March 31, 2026.

Ron Staples (B69), May 31, 2025.

Ernie Martin (B70), Dec. 12, 2025.

Craig Hayes (B71), June 10, 2025.

Bill Jackson (B71), May 29, 2025. Food Service Director, 1981-1999.

Teresa (Sherman) Senz (B71), May 13, 2025.

Ray Garner (B73), Jan. 15, 2026.

David Krupp (B73), Dec. 31, 2025.

DeeAnne (Friesen) Henke (B75), Oct. 20, 2025.

Denise (Field) Robinson (n76), Oct. 18, 2025.

Susan (Allen) Ankeny (B77), March 7, 2026.

Mark Adamson (n78), March 9, 2026.

Wes Porter (B80), Jan. 8, 2026.

Connie (Olson) Ward (B82), June 8, 2025.

Merilou Kronschnabel (B83), May 30, 2025.

Donald Crawford (B89), Sept. 13, 2025.

Denise Borchert (B90), Oct. 7, 2025.

Janice (Gran) Fuller (B90), June 8, 2025.

Micki Knight (M90), Jan. 17, 2026.

Marion (Perry) Brown (B94), April 2, 2026.

Jerry Clarkson (M94), May 19, 2025.

Kristi Erickson (n94), Dec. 1, 2025.

Scott Bernards (B98), Dec. 1, 2025.

Steven Cyphers (M98), May 28, 2025.

Cheryl Haskell (M98), July 19, 2025.

David Leastman (B99), March 30, 2026.

Justus Mills (B99), June 26, 2025.

Darlene Babin (M06), June 18, 2025.

Janelle Adrian (M08), June 6, 2025.

Christopher Schuller (M10), April 3, 2026.

La'Shawanta Spears-Hardy (M13), April 15, 2026.

Savannah Hamilton (B16, M18, D21), Oct. 14, 2025.

Brenda VanderZanden (M17), Dec. 25, 2025.

Pam Fifer (D18), March 27, 2026. Dean, College of Nursing, 2017-2026.

Tim Johnson (D23), Nov. 28, 2025.

Becca Hald (D24), July 10, 2025.

Michael Hayes (A26), January 10, 2026.

Gloria Attrell, June 13, 2025. George Fox Board of Trustees, 1989-2006; honorary trustee, 2007-2025.

Linda Sartwell, March 4, 2026. Director, Mail and Print Services, 1991-2016.



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Students in 1984 participate in their own version of a group chat, years before texts, FaceTime and smartphones. Packing as many people as possible into a phone booth was a common college challenge in the 1980s.

Meeting Students at the *Finish Line*

Support
students
facing financial
hardship



For some students, the final stretch is the hardest. A family emergency, a lost job, a sudden crisis – and a junior or senior faces an impossible choice between their degree and their circumstances.

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A Living Laboratory

Senior biology majors Madison Fuller (left) and Shelby Green collect samples from Hess Creek, an activity often performed by George Fox students to study macroinvertebrates and microorganisms present in the water.

It's just one of many ways that Hess Creek Canyon – 15 acres of greenspace that runs through the center of campus – has served as an outdoor classroom for students in the natural sciences. Recent projects in the canyon include biodiversity surveys of creek insects, estimating aquatic snail populations using mark-and-recapture methods, and analyzing tree cores from bigleaf maples to better understand the effects of rainfall on growth.