Social distancing, remote learning, virtual graduation. In an instant, everything changed for the Class of 2020.
By the waters of Babylon, we sat down and wept, remembering Zion. [Psalm 137:1–2]

As you probably know, the Psalms were written in the context of the Israelite exile in Babylon. Jerusalem had been sacked and a remnant of the people of God were taken to a foreign land. The Psalm speaks of them gathering for worship along a river and their captors mocking them by demanding that they sing a song of their God. In the midst of their lament, the psalmist demands that they do remember Jerusalem, the place where they gathered as one in worship of the one true God.

Perhaps you are wondering what an old Psalm and Godspell have to do with COVID-19 and our current challenges. Well, many of us have felt like exiles and aliens over the past 60 days. At times, I too identified with the psalmist’s words. Our houses of worship have been closed (and the university as well). Although we have been able to “attend” worship virtually, we know that God made us as relational beings, and that human touch and presence are essential for worship and for life itself. In a real sense, the virus has forced us to “hang up our lyres” as we isolate ourselves to prevent the spread of the pandemic. We can listen to the music online and hear the words of the sermon, but we long for something more: presence in the house of the Lord.

There were two things that drew our community together: high school sports and church. The rhythm of our lives centered on those communal gatherings. Both served essential purposes: Sports reinforced the bonds that held the community together against the “outsiders,” and church worship provided us with a sense of purpose in life. Whatever problems arose, there was a sense of God’s presence and purpose in the midst of the challenge.

While the culture was struggling with Watergate and the end of the Vietnam War, the 1970s were also a time of Christian revival for many people in the American West. The Jesus People movement emerged in California and a new generation claimed the Gospel of Jesus and presented it in new ways. Chuck Smith and Calvary Chapel (Maranatha Music) introduced the rock band and praise music as new worship forms in church gatherings. At the same time, the culture tried to come to grips with “Jesus” in new musical forms with the launch of Jesus Christ Superstar, A Rock Opera (1970) and Godspell (1972). As a high school student in this era, it was considered cool to talk about Jesus.

The songs from those two musicals, although considered by some heretical at the time, still come back to my memory. The one that has been running through my mind over the past two months is from Godspell, and it has a haunting melody. “On the willows there we hung up our lyres …” The lyrics are drawn from Psalm 137:

By the waters of Babylon, there we sat down and wept, when we remembered Zion. On the willows there we hung up our lyres. For there our captors required of us songs, and our tormentors, mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion.”

George Fox Journal

Be Known ... Virtually
Professor Ashley Lippard conducts her Print and Digital Layout class in an empty lecture hall, connecting with art and design students via Zoom. George Fox moved exclusively to remote learning in late March, creating a unique challenge for professors: teach and care for students, all without being in the same room.

FROM THE PRESIDENT
Robin Baker
President

George Fox Journal
Summer 2020

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Maintaining Our Faith Community in a Time of Isolation

It was 1973 and I was in my first year in high school in a small town in Arizona. We did not have a movie theater, the internet was decades away from development, and on our best weather days we could get one television station out of Phoenix. It was a different time that students today would barely recognize.

There were two things that drew our community together: high school sports and church. The rhythm of our lives centered on those communal gatherings. Both served essential purposes: Sports reinforced the bonds that held the community together against the “outsiders,” and church worship provided us with a sense of purpose in life. Whatever problems arose, there was a sense of God’s presence and purpose in the midst of the challenge.

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We are living in a time of rapid change, and it is certain that the digital world will continue to impact both the church and the university in the future. Nevertheless, whatever the future may hold, two things continue to bring me hope. First, even in difficult times we learn that God is present in our midst and at work making his will known. Second, the mission of George Fox University, expressed in the Be Known promise, will always be lived out in personal and communal form. We will have more digital course offerings in the future, but the essential nature of our spiritual formation work with students of all ages will always be personal, communal and centered on Christ.

Robin Baker
President

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

Our Values
• Student First
• Christ in Everything
• Innovation to Improve Outcomes

Cover Illustration by Darryl Brown

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This issue of the George Fox Journal is printed on 30 percent post-consumer recycled paper.
COVID-19 Pandemic Leads to Spring Semester Unlike Any Other

What started as a little-known coronavirus in December emerged as a worldwide threat by March, triggering economic unrest, necessitating the cancelation of sporting events, activities and large gatherings, and introducing the world to the concept of “social distancing.”

For George Fox students and people around the world, life had changed overnight. With Oregon Gov. Kate Brown’s March 23 order to “Stay Home, Save Lives,” the state mandated that citizens stay home except for essential work, outdoor exercise, or to purchase necessary food and supplies. Organizations that relied on in-person interaction either had to close or find a new way to conduct business.

At George Fox, the mandate required a shift in the way education was delivered. Remote learning became the new reality in late March, as students were asked to vacate campus as a precaution after the spring break holiday.

Beyond academics, Juniors Abroad trips were postponed, NCAA competition at all levels was canceled, and large gatherings, and introducing the world to the concept of “social distancing.”

As university leadership worked to navigate an ever-changing landscape, it focused on innovation to meet the needs of students and deliver the institution’s promise in new ways. Students without computers were loaned Chromebooks. Professors, career coaches, campus pastors, tutors, librarians, counselors and others created new ways to connect with students remotely. The Bruin Community Pantry food bank remained open with enhanced safety protocols. Online Bible studies and activities were organized. And, in April, the George Fox Goes campaign raised more than $139,000 to meet the needs of financially vulnerable students affected by the coronavirus.

In the community, the university’s engineering department 3D-printed face shields to distribute to local healthcare workers; the nursing department donated personal protective equipment to Friendsview Retirement Community; and a group of students created a website where busy doctors and nurses could sign-up for free services like grocery shopping, dog walking and yard work.

“I’ve been very proud of our faculty and staff – and our entire university community – for how they responded to this crisis, the likes of which we had not seen in our lifetime,” George Fox President Robin Baker says. “So many in our community stepped up in very tangible ways to demonstrate the love of Christ to our students and those impacted by this event.”

At semester’s end, the university announced that it will be ready to welcome students back in the fall, if allowed to do so by government officials, resuming in-person classes with enhanced safety measures. “We are not blind to the dangers of the COVID-19 pandemic,” Baker says, “but we are committed to finding a safe way to provide the in-person undergraduate campus experience that is so valuable to transformative education we provide.”

Honors Student Earns Full-Ride Scholarship to Oxford

When Cayla Bleoaja spent a semester studying abroad in Oxford, England to pursue a master’s degree in sociology, she probably didn’t expect to return so soon – let alone with a full-ride scholarship.

Bleoaja, an honors student at George Fox who double-majored in psychology and organizational communication before graduating this spring, will now do just that, leading across the pond to England to pursue a master’s degree in sociology.

The recipient of a highly competitive Barry Scholarship, designated for American students attending the storied institution, Bleoaja will call the university’s Cantley Institute home for the next two years, beginning this fall.

“For fox gave me a space to wrestle with hard questions and to get to know myself in a more intimate and passionate way than ever before,” says Bleoaja of her undergraduate experience. “I am leaving better equipped, challenged and deepened to keep pursuing the hard and holy things.”

More than $139,000 Raised for Students Affected by Coronavirus

In the month of April, the university launched the George Fox Gives campaign, raising $19,396 for financially vulnerable students affected by the coronavirus.

Nearly 500 donors helped the university meet its goal of $125,000 at the end of the month-long campaign, with funds directly distributed to students experiencing financial hardship due to unexpected travel, distance learning and other expenses, and those who lost on-campus federal work-study jobs. And while the number of donors and total dollars raised are impressive, the true success of the campaign can only be measured by its impact on the lives of individual students.

“You have changed my life,” wrote one student in a thank you message to donors. “It may seem like a simple donation, but it is something that brought me to tears.”

“Your kindness is humbling and fills me with so much hope for what we can accomplish as a society and the church when we help each other,” wrote another.

“I look forward to repaying this kindness in the future to other students in need!”

Rankings Roundup: George Fox Earns Top Spot Among Christian Colleges in Oregon

For the 32nd year, George Fox landed on U.S. News & World Report’s “America’s Best Colleges” list – but this time at a higher level. The university was elevated from a regional university to the “Best National Universities” category, putting the institution in the same class as big-name schools like Stanford, Harvard and Princeton.

George Fox was the top-ranked school among Christian universities in Oregon (No. 3 overall) and also was recognized for “Best Undergraduate Teaching” (No. 6), “Best Undergraduate Engineering Programs” (No. 75) and “Top Performers in Social Mobility” (No. 80), which includes schools that enroll and graduate large proportions of “economically disadvantaged” students.

The university also made Forbes’ “America’s Top Colleges” list, ranking No. 1 among Christian colleges in Oregon. For the third year, George Fox was included in Forbes magazine’s “Best Colleges for Your Money” list, placing the institution No. 1 among Christian colleges in Oregon and No. 20 among all Christian colleges in the country. Money magazine, meanwhile, included George Fox in its “Best Colleges for Your Money” list, placing the institution No. 1 among Christian colleges in Oregon and in the top 20 nationally among Council for Christian Colleges & Universities governing members based on quality of education, affordability and career outcomes.
Physician Assistant Program Set to Launch in 2021

In keeping with a commitment to expand its healthcare offerings, George Fox is adding a Physician Assistant (PA) program. The six-semester, 10-credit-hour course of study will launch in January of 2021, pending provisional accreditation by regional and national commissions. Upon completion, students will be awarded a master of medical science (MMSc) degree.

The program will be housed in a new $3,000-square-foot, three-story building on Werth Boulevard in Newberg, near the Providence Medical Center. The building, tentatively scheduled for a May 2021 opening, will also house the university’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

PA students will attend classes full time and work with outside clinics as part of their training. Upon graduation, they will be prepared to diagnose illnesses, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and potentially serve as a patient’s principal healthcare provider.

Not only does the program align with the university’s Christ-centered mission, it addresses a glaring nationwide shortage of primary-care health professionals – an issue even before the COVID-19 pandemic placed a tremendous burden on healthcare facilities across the nation. Prior to the spread of the coronavirus, the Health Resources and Services Administration outlined the shortage in a recent study, which designated more than 6,000 primary-care areas where a physician-to-population ratio of 1:3,500 or more existed. The HRSA estimated it would take 6,000 primary-care areas where a physician-to-population ratio of 1:3,500 or more existed. The HRSA estimated it would take more than 10 years for the 6,000 primary-care areas.

“In order for us to be successful in the future, the introduction of new healthcare programs is vital as we seek to consistently accomplish the mission of the university,” says university president Robin Baker. “Introducing the PA program is the latest step in that direction. Not only does it align with our mission to produce graduates who will go on to do work in the world, it positions us well to help meet a great need in our community and the nation as a whole.”

The PA program is the most recent healthcare addition to the university’s offerings, including programs in nursing, physical therapy (2013) and an RN-to-BSN degree-completion program (2017). The university is also exploring the possibility of participating as a significant partner in an allied and mental health college in Roseburg, Oregon.

George Fox Digital to Deliver Be Known Promise in Online Format

This fall, George Fox will launch an undergraduate online education program, George Fox Digital, which offers general education courses to students who need a remote learning option for their first year of college.

Though eager to enroll, some students are unable to participate in the university’s residential experience because of pre-existing health conditions and financial considerations due to the coronavirus. Consequently, faculty and staff mobilized to create George Fox Digital as a rigorous online academic experience that will allow students to graduate in four consecutive years.

Students will spend one year taking general education courses online from award-winning faculty before seamlessly transitioning to on-campus learning the following year. Each of the 22 courses offered is specifically designed to be online and conforms to a prescribed format. For instance, students will never have to log into an online class at a specific time for a lecture. Instead, they can engage with the coursework during the hours they choose following a weekly rhythm of activities, which may include engaging videos, reading, assignments, and meetings with a mentor.

George Fox Digital will offer something students won’t find in other online programs: the Be Known promise. Students will have the opportunity to build relationships with professors who intentionally walk with them through the freshmen experience, forming mind and spirit alike as they reflect on their calling and begin to discover who God has created them to be. Students will also have the opportunity to connect with classmates in a variety of ways.

“There’s a misconception that in an online course you can’t connect with other students in the class, but that’s just not true,” says Brian Doak, longtime professor and newly appointed director of George Fox Digital. “Our experience shows us that, in fact, students get to know each other, they get to know their professors and they get to know their readings much in the same way that they do in person.”

Because George Fox Digital is fully online and does not have a residential component, students in the program will save on room and board costs, lessening the financial impact of their first year.

Scott Selected as New Provost

University’s Graziadio School of Business and Management for 10 years. Her business resume includes advertising agency experience with national clients such as General Mills and Wrigley at DDB and BBDO in Chicago, with NBC during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, and working as a business analyst for Honeywell, Inc. Scott has a bachelor’s degree from Wheaton College, an MBA from Emory University and a PhD in marketing from the University of South Florida. She replaces Linda Samek, who served as provost since 2013 and will remain at George Fox as a full-time faculty member in the Doctor of Education program.

Andrea Scott, an academic leader with extensive experience in the business world, joins the university this summer to serve as provost. She arrives from California Baptist University, where she was dean and professor of marketing in the Jabs School of Business the past four years.

Scott, a former Fullbright Scholar and a native of Kingston, Jamaica, says she was drawn to George Fox’s promise that each student will be known personally, academically and spiritually. “It is a powerful commitment that has the whole student at the heart of the institution,” she says. “This pursuit, in conjunction with Christ in everything, is deeply compelling and aligns seamlessly with my own commitment to doing justice, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.”

During her tenure at California Baptist, the Jabs School of Business experienced 40 percent annual growth, with program expansion including undergraduate majors, a master of science degree in information technology, and an MBA business analytics concentration. Previously, Scott was a marketing faculty member in Pepperdine University’s Graziadio School of Business and Management for 10 years. Her business resume includes advertising agency experience with national clients such as General Mills and Wrigley at DDB and BBDO in Chicago, with NBC during the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, and working as a business analyst for Honeywell, Inc.

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Visit georgefox.edu/digital to learn more.
Development of Patient-Centered Care Model Puts DPT Program in National Spotlight

The adoption of a person-centered model for treatment has given the university’s Doctor of Physical Therapy program national exposure and opened up opportunities for George Fox faculty members to train DPT educators nationwide.

George Fox was among the early adopters of the PROMIS (Patient Reported Outcome Measurement System) measures for clinical care, which take into account a patient’s biopsychosocial state — a consideration of the interconnection between biological, psychological and socio-environmental factors — in treatment planning. Traditionally, care typically doesn’t focus on psychosocial factors and, as a result, graduates will be better prepared to integrate psychological approaches when caring for patients who have experienced acute injury and those living with chronic pain or other chronic health conditions.

“Evidence suggests psychosocial factors are equally or more important than biomedical factors, yet providers typically don’t measure psychosocial outcomes,” Houck says. “PROMIS measures assist providers in recognizing when psychosocial factors are impeding a person’s progress, and deter providers from seeing the patient as a ‘disease’ or ‘a set of medical problems.’”

On a higher level, the emphasis on person-centered care reflects the university’s Be Known promise.

“What’s happening in the last few years is a paradigm shift from simply considering the biomedical and biomechanical to understanding the whole person, taking into consideration the fact their physical pain is often connected to things like fear, anxiety or depression,” says Daniel Kang, an associate professor of physical therapy at George Fox. “PROMIS gives us a more complete picture of what the patient is going through in the disease process, and allows us to more holistically address their treatment plan.”

The adoption of PROMIS measures also positions the physical therapy department to collaborate with faculty in the Doctor of Psychology program to offer state-of-the-art training and develop specialty certificates.

George Fox faculty developed a series of online modules, as well as a one-day training seminar, for medical teams at the Cleveland Clinic.

George Fox would induct six individuals and one team at its annual Sports Hall of Fame ceremony, tentatively scheduled for this fall.

Three of the inductees — head coach Marty Hunter and players Bo Thomas and Matt Wyczolkowski — helped the Bruins win a Northwest Conference baseball championship in 2009. They will be inducted together, along with the entire 1982-83 winning team, as part of the 2020 Hall of Fame class.

Joining them will be fellow inductee Dean (Staghe) Smith, a 1996 graduate who starred in cross country and track.

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Faculty Members Honored as Top Teachers, Researchers for 2019-20

George Fox honored four of its own this spring with the presentation of teaching and research awards for the 2019-20 academic year. Jillian Sokko and Debbie Thomas were recognized as the top researchers at the undergraduate and graduate levels, respectively, while Todd Curtis and Jenny Harrop won the corresponding awards for teaching.

Jillian Sokko
Undergraduate Researcher of the Year

Sokko, a professor of art and design and chair of the art department, says she was “terrifically honored and humbled” by her selection, which honored her work with two associations – Accessible Hope International and the Artist Mother Podcast Community. For the former, she has traveled twice with students to Sierra Leone to train locals in the art of processing native plants into paper, which are then made into stationery and journals and sold for a living wage. “I’ve been a papermaker for 16 years, so being in the classroom and working with students is a dream come true,” she says. With the podcast project, started in 2018 by alumna Kaylan Reynolds Butson, Sokko has served as a guest speaker and online mentor to budding artists around the world. “I’m extremely proud of that association, because it began out of a real need for supporting a demographic lacking support and resources,” she says.

Debbie Thomas
Graduate Researcher of the Year

Business professor Thomas was recognized for her multifaceted research projects, including a series of articles she’s written on biblical studies and leadership, in which she applies exegetical research from the Bible that applies to current leadership theories and situations. Her most recent work revolves around an experimental way of teaching business classes, Classroom as Organization, in which the classroom essentially becomes an organization. “It’s a powerful teaching methodology, particularly well-suited for teaching business topics, that can enhance students’ learning experience while giving them the opportunity to practice and develop workplace-related skills,” she says. The model gives students the authority to teach in an active learning style, provide meaningful feedback, encourage and monitor team development, and essentially run a fictional organization. Her present research agenda is furthering the topic as she is in finding ways to apply it to the university’s Doctor of Business Administration dissertation process and its MBA program, including online options during the COVID-19 crisis.

Todd Curtis
Undergraduate Teacher of the Year

Physics professor Curtis needs just one word to describe what he enjoys most about teaching at George Fox: “Everything.” He requires a few more to express his love of teaching. “I think the transformation I’ve been able to be a part of what stands out,” he says. “I’ve had many students who were afraid of science, thought they were bad at science, and those who feared science was at odds with faith. Encouraging and empowering them to overcome these fears – to work through and persevere through their failures and come out not only better at scientific problem solving, but with a new view of their own abilities as learners and workers for the kingdom of God – is what I am most proud of.” His subject matter, students, colleagues and the university’s mission fuel his commitment. “I love students, my colleagues and being at a place where I get to integrate my love for God with my love for physics,” he says.

Jenny Harrop
Graduate Teacher of the Year

Harrop, chair of the Department of Professional Studies, could easily take pride in her resume. In 2019, she authored the university’s first open textbook, The Simple Math of Writing Well: Writing for the 21st Century, and in 2019 she published a ministry book, The Jesus Quotient: EQ to EQ in AQ. With numerous degrees in creative writing, English and ministry, she is knowledgeable in a wide range of disciplines. And yet, her greatest sense of fulfillment comes not from her accomplishments but in seeing her students overcome doubt and ultimately thrive. “Negativity and a lack of confidence are common in the adult classroom, where our students frequently have shouldered years and even decades of failed attempts at school before joining our department,” she says. “Students at all levels come to us broken by the world and certain about their own abilities. The greatest gift we can give them is the assurance that they will be seen and heard for who they truly are – God’s perfect creations.” Harrop has built and taught a number of new courses, ranging from Writing for Adults to The American West in Film and Fiction, and says she “enjoys the challenge of creating a safe place for students to think deeply, critically and creatively.”

In Print

Jenny Harrop (Adult Degree Program) published a book, the Jesus Quotient: EQ to EQ in AQ (Wipf & Stock), last summer. In it, she addresses the idea that, as leaders, our capacity to hear is often muted by an inability to acknowledge our own insufficiencies and emotions. Terry Ruffin (education) published An Appalachian School in Small Country: Facing the Challenges of a Changing Region (Lexington Books) last fall. The book examines the struggles and triumphs of Creekside Elementary School, which, despite being one of the poorest counties in the United States, is achieving unprecedented academic success.

Paul Otto (History) published this spring Permeable Boundaries: History, Theory, Policy, and Practice in the United States (Berghahn Books), capping the volume with Susanne Berthier-Foglar and Sunyoung Yoon’s “Unraveling Reparative Repes.” The essays in the book explore the ways that historical and contemporary actors in the U.S. have crossed borders, whether national, cultural, ethnic, racial or conceptual. Mark David Hall (politics) published the book Did America Have a Founding? (Thomas Nelson Books) last fall. In it, he debunks the assertions that America’s founders were deists who despised the strict separation of church and state and instead shows that their political ideas were profoundly influenced by their Christian convictions. Also last fall, Hall coauthored, with Daniel L. Dresbach, the book Great Christian Artists in American History (Cambridge University Press), which profiles 15 of America’s most influential Christian jurists from the early colonial era to the present day.

Javier Garcia (Christian studies) published a book, Facing the Challenges of a Christian School in Coal Country: Classroom as Organization, in which the classroom essentially becomes a Christian community. In it, he argues that God intends flourishing and wholeness for his human creation rather than “perfection.”

Brenda Morton (education) and Anna Berardi (education) released last fall an open access textbook, Trauma-Informed School Practices: Building Experiential to Transform Schools. The text identifies trauma-informed educator competencies and how these advancements invite systemic change involving all who are committed to K-12 education.

Paul Otter (history) coauthored a book,突破通过的障碍：美国的墨西哥（从内部至外部）（Orbis Books）, the volume features insights from four experienced missionologists, who draw upon biblical narratives to highlight key roles played by these outside established Jewish/Christian religious traditions in the service of God’s mission.

Ingy Gupta (seminary) collaborate with eight master’s level students to publish a free book, Shall Be Bilingual or Last. Reflections on Suffering and Hope in the Letters of Paul, on the university’s Digital Campanus network, last winter. The publication featured a series of sermon-style reflections on suffering and hope in Paul. In addition, this year he published a book, A Beginner’s Guide to New Testament Studies: Understanding Key Debates (Baker Academic), in which he helps readers sort out key issues on the most important debates across New Testament studies. A third Gupta book, Critical Introductions to the New Testament, 1 and 2 Thessalonians (Zondervan Academic), was released last summer, serving as an up-to-date guide on academic discussions and debates surrounding these biblical texts.

Kent Yorg (seminary) released a book, God and Asian Whiteness: Perfection in Biblical and Theological Tradition (Cascade), last October. In it, he argues that God intends flourishing and wholeness for his human creation rather than "perfection."
“I was mind-blown. I didn’t know how to respond.”

It was August of 2019, and Lydia Taw had just completed a summer internship at Amazon.

“My manager sat me down in a conference room on my last day and said, ‘Here’s your performance review, here’s your evaluation, and by the way, we’d like to offer you a job.’”

It’s rare enough to receive a job offer before your senior year of college, let alone a highly coveted software development engineer position at one of the largest technology companies in the world.

For Taw, it was the culmination of a journey she almost didn’t begin. As a sophomore with no coding experience, she decided to change her major after struggling with a Data Structures course, known by computer science students as the “weed-out class.”

“I got about halfway through that class and I was like, ‘Everybody knows more than I do. I have no coding experience whatsoever. I’m obviously not smart enough to be in this field,’” Taw recalls.

She dropped the class and the major, but her professors wouldn’t have it.

“They encouraged me to look beyond what I thought I was capable of,” she says. “They literally took me from ground zero to Amazon. My professors made it happen. They literally took me from ground zero to Amazon. My professors made it happen.”

Now, after graduating in May, Taw begins a new chapter this summer as a full-time employee at Amazon’s headquarters in Seattle, bringing with her both the confidence and the unique Christian perspective on career and calling that she learned at George Fox.

“I think it’s such a unique opportunity for a Christian to be in a place where they can influence a major corporation,” Taw says. “I’m interested in someday leading teams and being able to influence the direction the company takes. I know that’s a pretty big dream considering that it’s Amazon, but all I’ve ever learned at Fox was to dream big.”

Advice for Future Bruins
1. Connect with your professors. They want to get to know you!
2. Be well-rounded in your interests. Don’t just focus on your major.
3. Be confident. Reach out for what you want.
4. Do little things that push you out of your comfort zone.

What she’ll remember most about George Fox

“It’s the people. It’s the friendships that I’ve made. It’s the connections that I never thought were possible. George Fox creates an environment where it seems normal to ask a question like, ‘How is your soul?’ That doesn’t happen in most places.”

I just love learning,” he says. "I think I can do a lot of learning at Microsoft and apply what I learn to my role in the outside world. That’s the biggest thing I’m looking forward to: using the platform that I have to affect my community in a positive way.”

Kevin Tshilombo excelled as a business student at George Fox, earning his diploma this spring with a double major in management and marketing. But that wasn’t the only reason he was swooped up by Microsoft more than eight months prior to graduation.

Tshilombo, who at the time had just completed a summer internship at the software giant’s Redmond, Washington, headquarters, thinks it was his ability to connect with a wide range of people that ultimately got him the job.

“If I feel I might have separated myself from some of my peers by actively trying to engage with people who are different than me,” he says. “Whether it be culturally, different walks of life, different backgrounds, I really tried to make those true connections, and then I always made sure to stay true to myself in whatever I did.”

It’s something Tshilombo got a lot of practice at during his time at George Fox. Whether it was participating in student government, cohosting the annual lip sync competition, representing the university on a billboard, or painting his chest and cheering on the women’s basketball team, Tshilombo squeaked every last drop out of his George Fox experience, connecting with people from all walks of life along the way.

The ability to connect with others and a diverse set of interests will serve him well in his new position as a product marketing manager, where Tshilombo will work with a variety of teams and people to create a positive and seamless experience for end users.

“It’s a little bit of writing, a little bit of design, a little bit of coding. Just knowing enough about everything to communicate with everybody,” he says. While the varied roles of his new job appeal to Tshilombo, it’s not what he’s most excited about.

“I just love learning,” he says. “I think I can do a lot of learning at Microsoft and apply what I learn to my role in the outside world. That’s the biggest thing I’m looking forward to: using the platform that I have to affect my community in a positive way.”

Taw says. “I’m interested in someday leading teams and being able to influence the direction the company takes. I know that’s a pretty big dream considering that it’s Amazon, but all I’ve ever learned at Fox was to dream big.”

Advice for Future Bruins
1. Play the ukulele
2. Loves grilled cheese sandwiches
3. Tie fanatic
4. Action movie fan

Fun Facts
I t all began with bread-baking, two years ago.

Six ingredients: water, flour, salt, yeast, olive oil and honey. It’s a recipe passed down from student leader to student leader of Shalom, a student-led chapel at George Fox University.

Four women: two with disabilities that make it impossible for them to live on their own, and two freshmen, their curiosity piqued both about the bread and the women baking it.

The space was a little tight, which can bother Emily Young sometimes. They met in a tiny on-campus dorm kitchen – more of a kitchenette with barely enough room for four adults to squeeze past each other – where they mixed and kneaded dough before running it to the second-floor kitchenette to bake.

Now 31, Young was born with a complicated combination of challenges that impact her hearing, cognitive development and her musculoskeletal system. She calls it simply “an intellectual disability.”

“It has a lot to do with the brain,” she says. Because her hearing is impaired, Young wears hearing aids when she leaves her house – “The environment is always the problem,” she says. “The space was a little tight, which can bother.”

By Kimberly Felton

But the bread-baking is right up her alley. She enjoys the camaraderie and is happy to mix ingredients, but dislikes the feel of dough under her polished nails.

Katy Strong, on the other hand, delights in the feel of kneading that dough, working in more flour until the stickiness gives way to springy firmness. Strong, 33, was born with Rett syndrome. She hears and understands everything but struggles to make her mouth speak her thoughts. Friends sitting on the couch with her may use pillows to help prop her up when her body starts to slump. Yet she takes care of herself, makes her meals, vacuums and dusts. Those who listen learn to understand her words.

Meghan Donohue, one of the freshman in that kitchenette two years ago, has come to know and love – and live with – Young and Strong, in a place called Friendship House, located a few blocks from campus.

Baking Bread, Building Community

Baking bread for the Tuesday evening chapel on campus, Shalom, has been a ritual since it began. The women of Friendship House joined the tradition three years ago when the home was established in Newberg, and their presence at the chapel now is as expected as the bread itself.

After two years of baking bread together each week, Donohue, a junior social work major, applied to live in the house in the fall of 2019. “I just have a harder time understanding things,” she says. “I love these ladies I get to live with and wanted to be part of that. The mission of this house … it really strives to help and integrate these ladies into the Fox community.”

Friendship houses have begun appearing on or near school campuses across the country. Inspired by L’Arche communities, they partner with academic institutions that welcome the residents to live and serve with them. Duke Divinity School hosts a friendship house, as do Vanderbilt Divinity School and others. The house connected to George Fox University is an easy walk from campus.

Dani Hillenbrand, a nursing major, was the fourth member of the house in the fall 2019 semester. “I had met Katy and Emily at Shalom, so I already knew them, and then I came to make bread with them one time last year and was like, ‘I really like this community,’” she says.

She has two nephews on the autism spectrum but had not lived with adults with special needs. “That was a learning curve for me, learning how to communicate and knowing each other’s needs without offending each other, because the communication aspect is really important,” she says.

Communication is usually the most challenging part, and one of the many ways Mark 2 Ministries supports the residents of Friendship House.

The students are not there as caregivers, but friends. The success of the home is in their complicated yet simple strategy of making space for each other.

No One is in This Alone

Mark 2 Ministries is the nonprofit that established Friendship House in Newberg, connecting with George Fox to help provide the resources necessary to make the house a success. Licensed by the state to work with adults with developmental disabilities, Mark 2 bought and renovated the house to accommodate the needs of two adults with disabilities, plus three students.

They knocked out internal walls to create open gathering spaces – spaces that facilitate the house mission: “Eat together. Pray together. Celebrate together.” Contractors donated labor and others donated supplies, painting the walls in coordinating magnolia colors. And in this space of clean floors, live plants, comfortable furniture and a sign on the wall that reads simply “thankful,” brief interactions become points of connection.

“One thing I really love about Friendship House is it is just that: a house,” says Mandy Lofdahl, on staff with Mark 2. “It is a place where people are living together in friendship, not in a dichotomy of those giving care and those receiving care.

“Most individuals with disabilities don’t get the opportunity to have those kinds of relationships and to work through them and to understand two-
way relationships and communication. That’s one of the greatest gifts.”

The students are not there as caregivers, but friends. The success of the home is in their complicat-ed yet simple strategy of making space for each other.

Young and Strong thrive with set schedules, which have altered little in their three years at the house. Strong exercises at the pool weekly and has a regular appointment to walk around the neighborhood. Mark 2 staff, on duty every day from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. – often later on chapel nights – accompany both women on these events, and take Young shopping or to have her nails done. Donohue and Hillenbrand have their own full schedules of school, work and commitments.

Yet as friends and housemates, they make space for relationship.

“When we’re a lot more intentional with what we ask, because small talk isn’t really going to get us anywhere,” Hillenbrand, a junior, says. “It’s not, ‘I’m asking you about your day because I care and I need to ask a question; I’m asking you because I feel like I need to ask that question.’”

As in any home, tension happens.

“It’s not always happy and easy, but it’s just part of life,” Young says. “You have ups and downs, and sometimes you have a hard time with someone.”

“Your communities, I believe, need people with special needs in them, rubbing shoulders with the rest of us, because they make us better. They encourage us, they inspire us, they show us the heart of God.”

“One unforeseen challenge was understanding communication patterns in a house with people who all communicate differently, have different speeds, different levels of communication,” Donohue says. As house resident assistant, Donohue carries her school load while also leading house discussions and planning roommate outings. “It’s hard to navigate sometimes through communication, making sure everybody is included and heard and able to share. But it’s a good thing to learn about living with people and working with people who are maybe not on the same pace as you.”

“Maybe sometimes I just want to go slam my door and just be done,” Young says. But she doesn’t go. She doesn’t slam the door. She sticks with the conversation because she is committed to these relationships.

Strong will pull aside a roommate and ask, “Can we chat?” And once a misunderstanding or hurt feel-ings are cleared, will say that the problem is now “out the window” or “down the drain” or “given to Jesus.”

While Mark 2 staff are available to help resolve differences – primarily through helping Strong and Young find the words to express their thoughts and emotions – usually the housemates work through challenges on their own.

“We just talk through it as you would with a friend, through something that is a struggle,” Donohue says. “We work on com-municating better, sharing feelings with each other and being honest.”

The friendships made at Shalom and other gatherings help the women of Friendship House the same way any friend expects friends to help. The students of George Fox are a community sup-porting them – friends who listen and validate the challenges of life together.

“I don’t think you really understand the life they’ve gone through until you’ve lived with them,” says Donohue, who serves as student chaplain of Shalom. “Everybody has a challenging life, and they have different struggles than you do. Understanding that everyone has a different perspective helps in general in how you act with all people. It’s not necessarily just people with disabilities.”

House of Friends

So for three years, the women of Friendship House, along with students they meet at Shalom, have baked bread for chapel every Tuesday evening, playing Spicy Uno while the dough rises. Once baked, they take the bread and go set up for chapel, greeting stu-dents as they come, handing out song sheets, smiles and hugs. Friends are rooted and grow. They attend another evening chapel on Wednesdays, host a pizza and movie night every Friday, often inviting friends, and reserve Sunday afternoons for the roommates to share a meal and afternoon together. They go to football games, dances and other campus events, and are regulars at trivia night at the store Social Goods in downtown Newberg, where they are known by name.

Young and Strong, sometimes with their housemates and some-times on their own, have found a number of ways to serve in the community they call their own. They work alongside students on the university’s Serve Day, helping throughout Newberg. They’ve joined James Project, a George Fox group that volunteers every weekend in the community. And they attend dinners on campus, helping set tables beforehand and clearing them after.

Mark 2 hopes to partner with George Fox for three more houses: two for men and one more for women. But first, they’re working to get it right with this one.

“Our communities, I believe, need people with special needs in them, rubbing shoulders with the rest of us, because they make us better,” Lofdahl says. “They encourage us, they inspire us, they show us the heart of God. “I see people like Meghan who are getting a chance to live with them, and their lives change. Sometimes it isn’t comfortable, but sometimes that’s the place where we’re given opportunity to choose to grow. For Katy and Emily, they’ve developed real rela-tionships. They know that Meghan and Dani genuinely like them, not just want to help them. People at Shalom know their names and ask how they’re doing. Their lives are enriched by relationship. You wouldn’t trade that for anything.”

Like many George Fox students, Donohue and Hillenbrand first learned about Friendship House at a Shalom worship service.
Going for Gold

Adin Williams’ persistence in the pool has resulted in five American para-swim records and put him in position to achieve his ultimate dream – the 2021 Paralympic Games in Tokyo.

Adin Williams can’t pinpoint the day he knew swimming would transform his life. He simply recalls moments of watching the Olympics with his family and thinking, like so many young dreamers, how cool it would be to be on that television screen representing your country.

There was only one problem: Williams couldn’t swim more than 25 yards before tiring out. Born with a type of dwarfism known as hypochondroplasia – a condition that affects the conversion of cartilage to bone – he had both mental and physical challenges to overcome. It appeared his dream of being an Olympic athlete had little chance of becoming a reality.

But Williams wasn’t your typical kid. Giving in or making excuses weren’t in his nature. Even as he struggled to make it from one end of the pool to the other, an inner voice encouraged him to press on and chase the impossible.

Today, the 19-year-old George Fox freshman is reaping the benefits of all that persistence and hard work. He is the recipient of 11 national gold medals and owns five American records for his classification. And, after a five-gold-medal performance at the U.S. Paralympic Swimming Championships in Dallas in December, he was named to the 2020 U.S. Paralympics National Team.

Next summer, Williams hopes to compete at the Paralympic Games in Tokyo, an event originally scheduled for August, an event originally scheduled for the Paralympic Swimming Championships in Dallas in December, he won five events and set American para-swim records in the 100- and 400-meter freestyle. More recently, he set three more national records – in the 50-yard freestyle, the 100-yard freestyle, and his own mark in the 100-yard butterfly – at the Northwest Conference Championships in February. As it stands, he currently holds the American Paralympic records for his classification in the 50- and 100-yard freestyle, the 100-yard butterfly, and the 100- and 400-meter freestyle.

“To walk away with five golds was satisfying enough, but to set two American records on top of that was totally unbelievable,” he says of his nationals performance.

Williams competes at the S6 level. Para-swimmers are divided into 14 classes, from Class S1 to Class S14, based on their degree of functional disability, with the most severely affected being Class S1.

And while he admits hypochondroplasia has brought challenges into his life, he also recognizes the opportunities it has afforded him.

Williams has reason to be grateful. Though he began swim lessons at age 3, he didn’t pick up competitive swimming until age 12 – and even then it was a struggle, as he tired quickly and could only master freestyle and backstroke events. Williams found his stride in high school, winning eight state titles in his classification over the course of his Gladstone High School career. He followed that up by winning three golds each at the U.S. Paralympic Swimming Championship meets in 2017 and 2018.

An intensified training regimen – he went from swimming four hours a week in high school to training 20 or more hours a week in college – has built his stamina, strength and confidence since entering college. He has added the butterfly to his arsenal of strokes, and though his primary strengths are the 50 and 100 races, he excels at longer distances as well.

“It’s just like anything else – you have to be willing to put in the time and effort to be successful,” Williams says. “I didn’t suddenly become a successful swimmer. I gradually got better and better as I spent more and more time in the pool on a weekly basis. I have to admit, though, I was surprised at how well I did at nationals in Dallas. I didn’t see that coming.”

It was there Williams won five events and set American para-swim records in the 100- and 400-meter freestyle. More recently, he set three more national records – in the 50-yard freestyle, the 100-yard freestyle, and his own mark in the 100-yard butterfly – at the Northwest Conference Championships in February. As it stands, he currently holds the American Paralympic records for his classification in the 50- and 100-yard freestyle, the 100-yard butterfly, and the 100- and 400-meter freestyle.

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“This is my dream, and if it doesn’t happen next year, that’s fine.” Williams says matter-of-factly. “Either way, I’ll definitely try making the Paralympic team as long as my career lasts.”

“I’ve made friends who have the same condition as me and gotten to travel all over the country and the world,” says Williams, who traveled to Ireland in 2018 for a competition. “So, yes, it’s a challenge to live with. But I choose to focus on the positives it has brought into my life.”

Williams is quick to credit his George Fox swim coach, Natalie Turner, for inspiring and motivating him. “She has definitely been a big part of my success,” he says. “Before the season even started, she made a commitment to be my coach for the national meet, which meant taking time away from the team while the season was going on. That was a huge thing to do and showed me that she genuinely cares about me and wants me to become a better swimmer.”

Turner’s interest in his career – and the university’s friendly and accommodating environment – convinced Williams that George Fox was the best fit for him. “As I started to break down colleges, I decided a Division III school in Oregon would be best for me,” he says. “That way, not only could I compete for the collegiate team but also be someplace where I could make friends and navigate my way around campus easily. Of all the options we looked at, we found George Fox to be the best.”

Turner has been impressed with his continued improvement. “A lot of athletes will have ups and downs,” she says. “Adin just kept going up and up and up. Every meet we see improvement in his times and technique. I am incredibly proud of the work he’s done this year. He is such a great addition to our team, and I know he will go on to do great things.”

Williams hopes one of those “great things” will be traveling to Tokyo next summer. Unlike the Olympics, for which athletes qualify based on times and placements at the national meet, the Paralympic swimming team is selected by committee based on overall historical performance, taking into account swimmers’ efforts at nationals, the U.S. trials and other competitions.

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In September, a group of George Fox students got to experience Smith Rock, well known for its challenging climbing routes and spectacular views.

Students learn advanced climbing techniques from Assistant Director of Campus Recreation Keith Schneider.

In the Northwest, there’s adventure to be had year-round. In January, students and staff went snowshoeing in the Willamette National Forest, stopping at the Mountain View Shelter to warm up before heading back down.

Students enjoy a 14-mile round-trip hike in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness area, led by Director of Campus Recreation Rob Simpson.

In addition to learning knot-tying techniques and camp stove basics, students get a chance to relax, unplug, and connect with one another without distractions.

A student takes in the rugged natural beauty of the Mount Jefferson Wilderness area.
By Jeremy Lloyd

It happened in what felt like an instant. One day campus is buzzing with activity; the next, an eerie silence. One day students pass each other on the quad, smile, say hello and make plans for the weekend; the next, they are confined to their homes. One day professors and students meet face-to-face after class, discuss an upcoming assignment and talk about life; the next, it’s a pixilated video call over Zoom. One day seniors make plans to start jobs, get married, travel and celebrate graduation with family; the next, those plans are canceled. But still, life goes on. Classes must continue. Assignments must be completed. Seniors must graduate. Essential personnel like nurses must finish course requirements and clinical training so they can enter the field when they are needed most. Above all, students must be cared for. Resources like counseling, tutoring and academic coaching must be made available remotely. Financially vulnerable students must be helped with unexpected living expenses. The local community must be served in new and innovative ways. Bruins must stand together like never before. It’s a messy story. A story in which the final chapters have yet to be written. But also, it’s a story of hope. A story of rising up together to meet a challenge we never imagined. This is the story of the Class of COVID-19.
Home/work: English professor Jessica Ann Hughes leads class from a makeshift home office.

Deep cleaning: A Jani-King employee disinfects one of the residence hall bathrooms.

Virtual classroom: Biblical studies professor Brian Doak finds a creative way to engage with students.

Social distancing: A student sits alone in the university’s outdoor amphitheater. As students moved home to begin remote learning, sights like this around campus became much more common.

Meeting of the minds: The university leadership team, including President Robin Baker, connects via Zoom to discuss how best to care for students in a remote learning environment.

Signs of hope: George Fox alumna Jessica (Lavarias) Brittell ’06, co-owner of MOB Signs, created this display outside the Providence Newberg Medical Center to show appreciation for doctors and nurses on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The university that prays together… Jake Thiessen and Moses Hooper from the marketing communications department pray before a virtual meeting.

Meeting of the minds: The university leadership team, including President Robin Baker, connects via Zoom to discuss how best to care for students in a remote learning environment.
While the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the flow of nursing education, it did little to diminish the resolve of students to finish strong and enter a field where they are desperately needed.

By Sean Patterson

This wasn’t the way it was supposed to end. With seven weeks left in the semester, there were critical exams to prepare for and clinical placements to complete. And, for those graduating, there was the highly anticipated pinning ceremony to look forward to — the culmination of four years of toil, when family and friends would gather round, cameras in hand, to celebrate this most impressive of accomplishments.

Then, almost without warning, plans changed. The threat of COVID-19 triggered an international call to stay home. Businesses closed. Sporting events and social gatherings were canceled. And students across the nation, including those in George Fox’s highly hands-on nursing major — were asked to give up in-person instruction and master remote learning.

For senior nursing students, the urgency to graduate and enter the field was greater than ever. “Student nurses are considered essential personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic,” says Pam Fifer, director of the university’s School of Nursing. “Our goal all along was to continue providing a high-quality nursing education in a remote format for the majority of the semester. It was vitally important that nursing students continue to progress so we could supply new nurses for the workforce.”

It wasn’t easy. “Alternative instruction plans were made, then more restrictions came, so plans had to be altered again,” Fifer says. The first priority was to ensure senior nursing students could complete their final clinical placements, the decision was made to move all remaining sophomore and junior clinical rotations to a virtual format. Students had virtual access to their instructors via phone, email and Zoom, and if a student wished to meet with an instructor, they kept coming to campus, extensive safety measures were taken. Beyond that, faculty arranged opportunities for student nurses to serve the community. Nursing staff and students went through their labs to collect PPE and donate it to the Friendsview Retirement Community, the Willamette Valley Medical Center and the Yamhill County Public Health Department.

Two senior students in particular, Dawn Miller and Annalise Carrillo, went above and beyond for the cause. “When everything was in transition and being moved to remote and virtual education, they were willing to do whatever was needed, from photocopying, to cleaning labs, to moving equipment,” Fifer says. “They kept coming back to the office and asking, ‘What next?’ They could have been anxious about the changes that were coming, but instead they demonstrated flexibility, calm, resiliency, initiative and a willingness to serve.”

Through it all, George Fox found a way to make it work. This spring, 43 nursing students were permitted to complete their required assignments, but in a restricted capacity. The School of Nursing did not allow them to directly care for COVID-19 patients or those suspected of having the virus, nor were they permitted to care for patients requiring personal protective equipment (PPE).

In order to ensure enough senior capstone placements, the decision was made to move all remaining sophomore and junior clinical rotations to a virtual format. Students had virtual access to their instructors via phone, email and Zoom, and if a student wished to meet with an instructor on campus, extensive safety measures were taken. Beyond that, faculty arranged to provide alternate clinical experiences for these students by incorporating virtual simulations, case studies, and instructor-led clinical judgment seminars.

A Heart for Service

Beyond changing the dynamics of nursing education, the pandemic resulted in a new reality. Senior Taylor Oswald grew up for her clinical rotation at the Providence Newberg Birth Center.

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Sophomore Emily Ross helps deliver personal protective equipment from the nursing department to Friendsview Retirement Community.

A pinning ceremony is a significant milestone in the life of any nursing student. Because students couldn’t celebrate their achievement in person, the nursing department sent graduates a personalized pinning box.
In March, as students headed home for the remainder of the school year, the College of Engineering took up a new, if temporary, vocation: creating plastic face shields for healthcare workers – eight hours a day, sometimes more.

As the COVID-19 pandemic took hold in Oregon, all manner of personal protective equipment became scarce. From disposable cloth painter’s masks to medical-grade N95 respirators, the store shelves – both virtual and brick-and-mortar – were empty.

In a world strapped for PPE, this was one of the pieces of PPE we had some of the least of,” says Paul Myatt, public health emergency preparedness coordinator for Yamhill County. “When you’re taking airborne precautions, they’re just as important as the N95. The fact that we could come in with PPE that was in such a shortage, they were very grateful to receive that.”

The group began to brainstorm how they might help. They had at their disposal the engineering department has 3D-printed more than 1,000 face shields so far, distributed to 16 organizations in Yamhill County and beyond, not to mention several individuals in the healthcare industry who requested them.

“Eventually, we had other duties we had to get back to,” Sullivan says. “Thankfully, the demand started to lessen a little bit.

“The engineering department has 3D-printed more than 1,000 face shields so far, distributed to 16 organizations in Yamhill County and beyond, not to mention several individuals in the healthcare industry who requested them.

After considering several alternatives, the engineering team settled on a design created halfway across the globe in Sweden.

Engineering staff prototyped and adapted a 3D-printed frame that clasps just above the ears. Six pegs along the frame hold a plastic sheet in place – none other than the transparencies common in classrooms. A three-hole paper punch, punched twice on each transparency, made the necessary holes. After rounding off the plastic corners so they weren’t sharp, the shield was ready to go. The process was tedious, but quick.

“Typically eight-hour day, a crew of seven could assemble 70 to 150 shields, increasing output as they gained efficiency. Other volunteers came in weeknights and weekends to continue the work.”

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Local schools and university departments donated transparencies, online donations climbed above $5,000, and Harder approved the budget to purchase eight new 3D printers to increase production.

“for a solid four to five weeks, we pretty much did nothing but churn out face shields,” Sullivan says.

In a typical eight-hour day, a crew of seven could assemble 70 to 150 shields, increasing output as they gained efficiency. Other volunteers came in weeknights and weekends to continue the work.

To date, 1,090 face shields have been produced, almost all of them distributed to healthcare workers who desperately need them.

“Eventually, we had other duties we had to get back to,” Sullivan says. “Thankfully, the demand started to lessen a little bit. It’s been an honor to know our face shields have been able to help.”
All students were affected by the closure of campus, but none more so than graduating seniors, who had to finish their final weeks at George Fox without the milestones, goodbyes and celebrations that mark the transition from college to the next step in life. Through it all, they remained resilient and finished strong. Before they graduated in May, we asked the Class of 2020 to describe their transition to remote learning and reflect on their time at George Fox.

“Remote learning is a struggle. Keeping my inbox straight is a daily battle. Emails are like a binder with all your syllabi, except all the pages are out of order and half of them are out of date. But I’m so grateful to my professors for coming alongside and seeking to support me however they can. I’ll never forget how much empathy and grace they held for their students during this time, while simultaneously working tirelessly to come up with a plan to finish strong and keep teaching.”

“This transition is hard, to say the least. I miss my community. As a theatre major, our whole world is built around face-to-face, genuine interactions. I can’t wait for the possibility to see all my friends again. I miss them deeply.”

“I miss walking across the quad with my photography class while on break, visiting Bill Jolliff during office hours, my short but sweet interactions with the Bruin Den staff, and the cinematic arts department faculty and facilities. I miss being in the presence of each other – the fellowship. My closest professors have sent check-in texts. They have been gracious and understanding if I am falling behind on assignments. When I receive calls from any of the offices in Stevens, we talk more about how I am doing than actual business stuff. Hi Student Accounts – you all rock!”

“This year has been a challenge for sure. With my senior season being canceled and having to transition to remote learning, the hardest part has been scheduling and finding ways to fill my time that isn’t sports. I have been really supported, especially by those in the communication department. Professors Courtney Anderegg, Shannon Scott and Kevin Jones especially have been amazing in terms of being there for me and considerate of the challenges that our world faces right now.”

“I miss studying with friends and the community that campus offers. The thing I miss most about campus is the feeling of belonging to a community and knowing that I am truly known here. Not to be cliché and use the tagline, but it’s true. You can’t duplicate what Fox does. From professors, classmates and student life, I miss the people and the sweet, sweet time I had being a part of that community.”

“My transition to remote learning has been challenging. Motivation is hard. Life feels unreal. But in the strangest way, I have felt God’s presence so prominently. I have felt a peace that is so blatantly beyond me. Life feels unreal. But in the strangest way, I have felt God’s presence so prominently. I have felt a peace that is so blatantly beyond me. I am still disappointed in the loss of celebration, the milestones and markers to acknowledge our four years here. It aches to think of ending such a monumental time this way. However, through the care of others, I have seen and felt his love. It does not erase the sadness, but it does provide a lightness and hope to carry through.”

“The transition to remote learning has honestly been tough, but it’s also made me appreciate little things so much more. Right now for one of my Zoom lectures, the first few minutes of class are taken to do a student check-in just to have some normal non-school conversations. I’ve felt very supported by professors emotionally and academically through email or prayers at the end of a lecture. I definitely miss being able to walk across campus and experience the community that is George Fox.”

“I greatly miss being able to go to class and see my friends, peers and professors, and to be able to work together with others in person. Remote learning has left me feeling … remote. Distant. I may be an introvert at heart, but I still miss the people and experiences that attending school on campus provided. One positive, though, is getting to get up a few minutes before morning classes begin and attending Zoom sessions in bed. It’s cozy.”

“The transition to remote learning has been bizarre to say the least. It has caused me to appreciate my community of faculty and peers so much more. It’s difficult not being able to make silly jokes, ask tough questions, or access crucial facilities. However, it has provided a lot of opportunity for intentionality. Little texts, cards in the mail, and care packages mean so much more to people.”

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Serving with Passion

By Jeremy Lloyd
Photos by Moses Hooper

Each summer, a group of George Fox Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) students, faculty and alumni travels to Uganda, treating hundreds with injuries and disabilities.

Last summer marked the sixth year the DPT team has made the journey to the capital city of Kampala, where they served in two boarding schools for children with special needs, then made the eight-hour journey to a medical center in the remote town of Paidha to work alongside Ugandan physicians and medical technicians.

The results have been life-changing: Children who were once wheelchair-bound can now walk. Adults with painful injuries from years of hard work receive relief. And the George Fox students who take part in the experience grow exponentially as clinicians and people.

By Jeremy Lloyd
Photos by Moses Hooper
On the day that Cara Bell* walked through the doors of the Providence Medical Group building in Newberg, she was at the end of her rope. Plagued by a history of trauma, abuse and methamphetamine, Bell was homeless, in and out of jail, and addicted to heroin. For a long while, she simply accepted this as her reality – just the cards that life had dealt her.

But when Bell discovered that she was pregnant, it turned her world upside down.

“She came in immediately,” says Dr. Jeri Turgesen, a primary care psychologist at Providence Newberg and a graduate of the George Fox Doctor of Clinical Psychology (PsyD) program. “She had so much guilt and shame around the fact that she was using heroin. That was a line she told herself that she would never cross. And the fact that she was now pregnant and harming another life was something that she really struggled with.”

Right away, Turgesen worked with the director of family medicine at Providence Newberg to get Bell started on Suboxone, a drug used to treat opioid addiction. But that was only the beginning of a long journey of recovery. Turgesen worked with Bell for three years, providing a constant, stable source of support and human connection. For years, drugs had served as Bell’s primary coping mechanism – her way of dealing with anger, fear and pain. Without the heroin, she had to learn to navigate her emotions in a healthier way.

“We did a lot of work,” Turgesen says. Today, Bell’s life has completely changed.

“She’s been sober for all of his life, plus eight months of his pregnancy. She’s working full time … and is no longer homeless.”

Turgesen still sees Bell about once a month, helping her work through her history of trauma and set long-term goals. “Watching her with her baby boy is incredible,” Turgesen says. “She’s an amazing mom and so devoted to her kids.”

Since graduating from George Fox in 2012, Turgesen has dedicated herself to providing holistic psychological help in a primary care setting. Working side-by-side with her colleagues at Providence Medical Group, she cares for countless people just like Bell.

“Most of our patients don’t know how to call a psychologist,” Turgesen explains. “Many times, I’m their first face of mental health. I love having the opportunity to be in a space where people go when they’re in crisis – to be able to respond in that moment is such a meaningful opportunity. It can sometimes be dirty and messy and hard, but the wins are incredible.”

Turgesen got her start at Providence a decade ago as a practicum student in George Fox’s PsyD program. Today, she trains students in that very same program – equipping the next generation to care for the hurting and vulnerable.

It’s meaningful work, and makes a real, tangible impact on people’s lives. Yet, in high-need communities like Newberg, there is a shortage of primary care psychologists equipped for the task at hand: trauma-informed, culturally competent care for people with opioid or substance abuse disorders. Just as troubling, local residents often lack the resources to access the help they need.

Now, armed with federal funding, George Fox and Providence

Empowered by a $1.2 million federal grant, George Fox doctor of psychology students provide grace-driven care to vulnerable communities in Oregon

By Andrew Shaughnessy

* The name and some identifying information about this patient have been changed.
Medical Group are tackling the opioid crisis head on, training the next generation of clinical psychology professionals and bringing free treatment to underserved populations. And Turgesen is right in the thick of it.

A Very Particular Set of Skills
It’s no stretch to say that the multidisciplinary work that the Oregon Health Authority, an average of five Oregonians die from opioid overdose every week.

In October of 2019, George Fox received a $2.3 million federal grant aimed at combating Oregon’s opioid crisis. The grant provides stipends for eight students in the university’s PsyD program over the next three years, allowing them to provide free care for people with opioid and substance abuse disorders. Four provide care at the Providence Medical Group facility in Newberg, where Turgesen supervises and trains the students—and four more serve at the Chemawa Indian School primary care clinic in Salem, Oregon.

“This is an emerging field,” says Mary Peterson, director of the university’s PsyD program. “We already had substance abuse training in our doctoral program, but not specific training for opioid use disorder. Working alongside other providers in a medically assisted treatment model requires specific skills.”

Through the grant, George Fox students receive specialized training and experience in trauma-informed care for opioid and substance abuse as well as telebehavioral health—key for expanding access to mental health care services in underserved populations.

“The vast majority of our patients come in in the middle of addiction and active use, and then our plan is to help them safely withdraw from substances and then start on medication and treatment,” Turgesen explains. “Our goal is to get them comfortable as they’re sitting in that waiting room, so it reduces stigma. Oftentimes they don’t have to arrange childcare, because they can come in for a half-an-hour appointment during the day and can bring their children with them. That’s huge!”

One of the eight graduate students benefiting from the grant is Joanna Harberts. Before going back to school to earn her doctorate in clinical psychology from George Fox, Harberts spent a decade as a licensed marriage and family therapist.

“One of the things that was important to me when I started at Fox was that I wanted a new and different experience,” Harberts says. “I got plugged into women’s health care, and I found that there were all these women who had no idea there were services available to them. They would be so overwhelmed, but they were able to come see their doctor. Many times the doctor would pull me aside and say, ‘Hey, you want to come meet this client right there?’”

“That warm handoff is probably one of my favorite things,” Harberts adds. “When someone is in a moment of crisis, and you’re able to go in and be that safe space for them right then and there.”

Four weeks into her time at Providence Newberg, Harberts is getting her fill of experience. She shadows Turgesen, taking patient histories, helping them sort through stressors and triggers, and works with them to manage mental health issues. Over the next three years, she will work at Providence Newberg two full days a week and work with a minimum of 32 patients per week.

“Before my training here, I didn’t have much experience working with addiction,” Harberts says. “This has been all brand new for me, but I’ve found that my training has prepared me to handle anything that comes into my office.”

Cultivating Empathy
Of all the skills these budding clinical psychology professionals learn, the most important may be empathy—seeing and treating patients as human beings made in the image of God, each with a unique story.

“No body asks for substance abuse disorder,” Peterson says. “Nobody starts a prescription thinking, ‘I want to get hooked.’”

When our entire experience of opioid abuse comes from the news—stories and statures about rising rates of addiction, wrecked lives, and drug-fueled crimes—it can all be too easy to lose sight of the human beings behind the numbers. Peterson hopes that George Fox’s program will cultivate empathy among students, helping them see the person behind the addiction and learn to look for and value their story and perspectives.

“The vast majority—I would say 100 percent—of our patients have a significant history of trauma,” Turgesen says. “Either adverse childhood experiences, recent trauma, or some combination of the two.”

When it comes to helping patients overcome addiction, tapering off a chemical dependency with a drug like Suboxone is merely the beginning. The bulk of the work done by Turgesen, her Providence colleagues, and the George Fox graduate students is more focused on helping patients learn to identify and manage their emotions in a healthy way through practical tools and strategies. Just as important is the time spent on making meaning out of trauma, addiction and chemical dependency—reclaiming addiction as part of a patient’s experience rather than as the thing that defines them.

“So much of the language that we use when we talk about chemical dependency is very stigmatizing and pejorative,” Turgesen says. “Society asks: ‘Are you clean or are you using? Are you dirty?’ That can be so impactful and dehumanizing for patients—as if it be an addict is to be a bad person. But they have a life and a story, a whole narrative on how they got to this space.”

For patients suffering from chemical dependency, it is not an easy call. Yes, there are stories like Bell’s, stories of beating the odds and turning a life around. But there are also stories of struggle and pain and failure, of mothers and fathers, sons and daughters, relapsing over and over again, letting down the people they love, tearing themselves apart at the seams. Their stories are messy, and they don’t all have happy endings.

And yet, even amidst the brokenness and the heartbeat, there is the potential for incredible transformation.

“Some students find that it’s a healing process, this meeting between practitioner and patient, this beautiful entering into the messiest parts of a person’s life. As America continues to reel under the weight of a nationwide opioid crisis, our communities need more people like Turgesen and Harberts—highly trained individuals, equipped with a unique combination of head and heart, dedicated to caring for the vulnerable and hurting, people with the grace to look for hope in the cracks of broken lives.”

George Fox and Providence are building those people.
Even as he found hope in salvation, Wirta was adrift. He enlisted in the U.S. National Guard, prolonging his college stay, and found work on campus as a custodian. But as graduation day approached, he had no clue what he wanted to do. “I enjoyed being here so much I didn’t want to leave,” he says. As fate would have it, a chance offer meant he wouldn’t have to.

‘A Clean and Tidy Guy’

Wirta has always been good with numbers, so when the opportunity to stay on campus as a custodian – and why Everett Crecelius, the college’s chaplain in 1968, took the young Wirta under his wing, as did the dean of students, Harold Ankeny. “Those two men shared their testimony with me and prayed for me,” he says. “The Lord was working on me long before I accepted him, putting these great Christian people in my life. I finally accepted Christ in 1970.”

He has also volunteered on scoreboard and scoreboard for the baseball team since 1966. In fact, his other most indelible sports moment came in 2004, when, in a dugout in Appleton, Wisconsin, Wirta watched as the Bruins won a NCAA Division III World Series title. “I was practically in tears because I was thinking about 1968, when The Oregonian wrote that we just might be the worst college baseball team in the country. We lost 30-0 to Pacific that year and went 0-19. That was on my mind as I watched us win a national championship.”

For his dedication and commitment to athletics, Wirta was inducted into the university’s Sports Hall of Fame in 1998.

‘Biggs’

Spent time with Wirta and you will inevitably hear it: “Biggs!” It’s a nickname he inherited from a buddy in the early 1970s after Wirta shaved his head. “I was working custodial at A-dec in 1972 and heard that some of their conservative employees didn’t like my long hair, so I took it all off.”

The result? A bald head that, according to his friend, made him look like the “Biggie Rat” character from The King and Odie 1960s cartoon series. The name eventually morphed into “Biggs.” To this day, some people mistakenly believe it’s his last name.

‘A Nice, Warm Sunset’

Wirta gets a bit emotional as he watches the sun lower over the trees outside Wheeler – a sight he’s taken in for more than half a century. All this reminiscing has evoked some sentiment, and the moment inspires a poignant observation.

“This is my home,” he says, his voice cracking. “I’m entering the sunset of my life, and it’s going to be a nice long, warm sunset.”
A Century of Mentorship

Professors Paul Chamberlain, Steve Grant and Tim Tsohantaridis retire this summer after teaching at George Fox a combined 113 years

By Sean Patterson

When asked what kept him at George Fox for nearly four decades, Steve Grant is quick to offer a quip: “The opportunity to become filthy rich,” he laughs. But “rich,” by his definition, has little to do with monetary gain.

Rather, it has more to do with the wealth that comes from memorable experiences and friendships – the kind of things money can’t buy. “I got ‘rich’ by being surrounded by amazing faculty who value their ministry and by being around wonderful students, many of whom have become great friends,” says Grant, who retires this summer after 38 years as a George Fox faculty member. “I was blessed to have spent 38 of my 38 years as a coach working with not only great athletes, but more importantly, great people – and being inspired by seeing so many of them living as a testament to the grace of Jesus in their lives.”

Grant arrived at George Fox in 1985 and served as an assistant men’s basketball coach – a position he held until 1995 – and coach the women’s volleyball team. His 1984 and 1987 women’s squads won National Christian College Athletic Association titles, and he retired from the program in 2002 after teaching at George Fox a combined 113 years – the first 37 as an organic chemist, the next 23 years as a college athletic association titles, and he retired from the program in 2002 after teaching at George Fox for more than 40 years. Chamberlain provides three: the interactions he had with students both inside and outside the classroom, the close relationships he developed with colleagues, and the freedom he had to share his Christian faith in the classroom.

Looking ahead, Chamberlain says he’s looking forward to four activities: “travel, backpacking, woodworking and, of course, naps,” he laughs.

Chamberlain’s favorite class to teach was organic chemistry, “because I enjoyed helping students come to grips with very conceptually difficult material, seeing most of them survive, and watching some actually come to love the subject,” he says.

His reasons for remaining at George Fox for more than 40 years? “Unbeknownst to me, they had some interesting plans for their trip to Africa,” Chamberlain recalls. “They ended up graduating on Saturday, getting married on Sunday, and leaving for their honeymoon on Monday to East Africa with 19 other students, spending much of their time in tents. When I asked them about this very unusual honeymoon, they reminded me that George Fox was paying for half of the cost.”

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1960–69

Cap Hensley (G6a) is in the Ukraine as a volunteer educator, primarily teaching English at public schools and a university. After 24 trips since 2001, he now plans to make it his permanent residence. He works independently in ministry with Servants of Christ International. Holding a PhD from the University of Liverpool, he previously was a college professor in Colorado.

Edgar Amiclar Madrid (G6j) in January reached 25 years with Radio Verdad in Chiquimula, Guatemala, now serving as general manager. For 12 years, until 1992, he was a professor of a variety of subjects at the University of Antioquia.

Thomas Norton (G6h) authored South Korea: My Adventures and Sermons, published by Fromen Verlag in Germany, in which he writes of his 15 years on the mission field. In June he moved from Switzerland, which had been his home since 1973, to McMinnville, Oregon.

Pete McIlhag (G6z) is a new member of the Scappoose (Oregon) City Council, appointed in December as one of six members guiding the city of 2,000. A former school administrator in Beavercreek and Scappoose, Oregon, he is the former Northwest Oregon Elementary Principal of the Year in 1989 and selected Citizen of the Year by the Scappoose-Scappoose Chamber of Commerce in 2001.

Kent Thorton (G6p), in Australia in November, is the director of development for Focus on the Family’s Scapoose Gateway Center.

1970–79

Stuart Willics (G1v), as president and CEO of Air Serv International, based in Warrenton, Virginia, is highly involved in the response to the Ebola pandemic in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The humanitarian organization is providing air transport to outlying areas for the World Health Organization, Doctors Without Borders and other organizations.

Michael Lindsey (G3z) is in his 44th year with Missions Door, serving as director of ULibadz Prenting and Distribution for the last two years. Last summer he moved back to Portland from upstate New York, where he was directing a program that provided interactive training tools for local churches to disciple new believers and train promising church leaders.

Randy Wisinton (G4u) is a national director of scholar recruitment with SCS Noonan Scholars, a Los Angeles-based program that helps high-achieving, low-income underrepresented students get into and graduate from top colleges. He started in 2018 after previously serving as educational adviser for 15 years with Volunteers of America, guiding a Think College Program that provides assistance to low-income and first-generation students in inner-city Los Angeles.

Dan Holl (G5r) is in Arizona, where he started in July as chaplain/benevolence coordinator with Prime Hospice in Phoenix. For 43 years, until 2018, he was in California as a Church of the Nazarene local pastor.

Paul Fogle (G5y), professor of mathematics at George Fox for the last 19 years, was featured in Recount and Tendent Rider magazine in the fall. The article details how George Fox’s servant engineering program undertook a project to build a custom wheelchair tandem bicycle to allow him and his granddaughter to go for rides together.

Kathleen (Norton) Carroll (G5y) in early 2007 became assistant director/head teacher at Growing Green Panda, a Portland childcare center. She previously served as a preschool teacher.

Steven Hockett (G6y) was selected as the 2016 Employee of the Year by his peers at Integrated Services Inc. He is in his 31st year with the company. He worked on the sales staff. Based in Portland, ISI has 85 employees and is the nation’s leading fast food software supplier.

Chris Steger (G6o) works as a financial planner for pastors and missionaries and is a retreat speaker following his retirement from pastoral ministry after 40 years, the last 20 of which he spent at Rose Drive Friends Church in Yorba Linda, California, where he was associate pastor and later pastor of operations and congregational care.

1980–89

Christine (Hockett) Stanbro (G6b), after 30 years as missionaries in Africa with World Gospel Mission, is working at its headquarters in Marion, Indiana, assisting and equipping missionaries through care, encouraging and training in their role as area member health leaders for Africa. They began in July 2019 after eight years in Uganda and 23 years in Kenya.

Ken Schumann (G6p), after 36 years with Pacific Forest in Grove, Oregon, has announced his retirement effective June 28. He has served as an assistant men’s basketball coach and sports information director before being promoted to associate coach about 17 years ago and assistant head coach in 1995. He served 13 years in that capacity before becoming AD for 16 years.

David Case (G6s), P59b, is now the lead pastor of the church he co-founded and has served on the sales staff. Based in Portland, ISI has 85 employees and is the nation’s leading fast food software supplier.

Doug Petersen (G6q) and Lari (Willics) Petersen (G6k) have turned a personal tragedy into a means to help others. They instigated a plan to honor and remember their son, Page, who took his own life in January 2015. In a ceremony at Albright High School in August, a new Albright-Dundie Police Department memorial was established in honor of the high school resource officer. It has a unique paint job, stickers and multicolored flashing lights. The sides include messages of hope and encouragement to reach out for help, including the National Suicide Prevention Hotline. The rear deck lid features a short tribute to Page. The project follows an earlier program to honor Page in the form of college scholarships for Albright High School students.

Dixie (Schonover) Downey (G6w) is now assistant to the director and office manager in George Fox’s plant services department, now in her 17th year at the university. Her husband, Gary, is in his 26th year as program manager with Mentor Graphics, an electronics design automation firm in Wilsonville, Oregon. They live in Aurora, Oregon.

Robin (Merchant) Varig (G6q) is completing her three-year term with the National Guard at Riley Behavioral & Educational Center in Huntsville, Alabama, where she is chief of substance abuse on the autism spectrum. She left a 28-year career at Crestline Elementary School in Hartselle, Alabama, where she was principal for 13 years after 11 years as assistant principal.

John Votaw (G6t) is a sales and marketing professional with Wacom, a group composed of 10 publishing companies. He reported his publishing company that produce trade books and gifts. He is in his eighth year, being in Folsom, California, where serving California, Oregon, Arizona and other positions with the company, 27 of which he’s worked in sales operations and congregational care.

Lori (Willcuts) (G72) is now principal planner for pastors and missionaries and is a retreat speaker following his retirement from pastoral ministry after 40 years, the last 20 of which he spent at Rose Drive Friends Church in Yorba Linda, California, where he was associate pastor and later pastor of operations and congregational care.

1990–99

Bradley Clark (G6p) is now principal planner of the city of Grants Pass, Oregon, and assists in his role in June after serving as a subarea planner with the county, for which he worked in Snieadville for nearly five years after 12 years in planning positions in Idaho.

Nancy (Edmison) Swarat (G6t) is president of the Oregon Council of Teachers of Mathematics. In the middle of a two-year term, she endeavors to bring a sense of community to state teachers. She teaches mathematics at Umatilla (Oregon) High School.

Randall Fultz (AD8), after retiring from positions with the Oregon Employment Department and in human resources with Rainbow Optics in Eugene, Oregon, is in Oregon, where he is completing the recertification of an hour-long CD of original Christian music, titled Wake Up!

Glanda (Cabrera) Baker (P59a) and Stan Baker (MD3d) in 2007 became new pastors at Crossroads Christian Fellowship in Corvallis, Oregon, where he is senior pastor and she is executive and Christian Education specialist in the Free Methodist Church.

Caroline Burch (PG98) and Colleen Butcher (PG90) are now in Idaho, where they have become chefs and Christian pastors. She is a project manager at Gooding University in Fallbrook, California, where prior 11 years as assistant principal.

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2000–09

Doug Hays (G6t) is now an Emmy award winner. He is the producer for the Portland Trail Blazer basketball organization’spregame, postgame and halftime shows. Last June in Seattle, his production team won the 2019 award for Best Sports Program – Live Event or Game, given by the Northwest Chapter of the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences. Now in his seventh season, Hays watches TV monitors during the games, showing the views of seven to 12 cameras as he coordinates a dozen editors.

Wayne Hutt (G6t) is a cardiologist specialist with the new Williamette Heart and Family Wellness in Carlston, Oregon. He previously opened a practice in Newport, Oregon, and has been affiliated with Williamette Valley Medical Center and Providence Newberg Medical Center.

2010–19

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When George Fox art alumni Greg [Go5, MATV] and Kirsten [Go5] Johnson approached their alma mater with a proposal to create custom-made backpacks for Bruin student-athletes, it represented a big win for both parties. Kauton, the couple’s startup outdoor gear and apparel company, would add a big client and an order for hundreds of bags, while student-athletes would benefit from a superior product that was tailor-made to meet their needs.

“We hosted a focus group with one athlete per sport,” Kirsten says. “They brought all of their backpacks in, and we gave them a survey where they had the opportunity to tell us what they hated about their current backpack.”

“The artists loved it, giving extensive feedback that helped Greg and Kirsten design a tough pack with just the right features: straps for baseball bats, pockets for wet swim gear, and clips to hang cleats or goggles. A few prototypes later, Bruin athletes had a backpack that met all their needs – one they had helped design.

“People see these final products tied up in a pretty little bow,” Kirsten says. “They don’t see all the failures along the way.”

The first iteration of what has become Kauton’s signature Lazarus dry bag was only slightly superior to other products offered by competitors. But each new design took the product a step farther, and slowly, the company grew.

**From Starving Artists to Creative Entrepreneurs**

These days, Greg and Kirsten are living their dream. In addition to growing Kauton, Greg teaches ceramics in Tigard, Oregon, while Kirsten runs her own creative agency, Reverse. But their road to success wasn’t a quick or smooth one. They’ve done their time as struggling artists.

“We’re 37 and 33,” Kirsten says. “We graduated so long ago and we’re just now in this place. I just started Reverse two years ago. I would never have been able to do that right out of college. I spent three and a half years teaching preschool for $10 an hour. You have to figure out why you’re willing to sacrifice and if you really want it … and at the beginning of all this, what we wanted wasn’t starting Kauton, it wasn’t starting Reverse. It was to be debt free.”

They spent their first three years out of school paying off their debts. Greg went to grad school to earn a master of arts in teaching degree while continuing to work, and Kirsten worked two jobs. They moved into a trailer for three years, sold everything they had, and “Crowdfunded” their Christmas gifts to make ends meet. Eventually, they were able to off their debts, build their own house, and develop the space, experience and client base to start their own creative companies.

“It took about 10 years of very, very hard work,” Greg says. “That’s the artist’s path. But it’s all possible. It’s all worth doing.”

**Solving Problems**

Like so many great ideas, Kauton was born out of a healthy sense of creative dissatisfaction. Greg always had a love for the outdoors – surfing and wakeboarding were his particular passions – but he was frustrated with how hard it was to find a bag tough enough for his adventures.

“What do I want in a bag?” Greg asked himself. “What would I make for myself?”

Among the items on his wish list: a bag that was waterproof but wouldn’t mold, hardy enough that it could stand being tossed around and wouldn’t blow out, thick enough that his gear wouldn’t punch holes in the fabric. No one seemed to have quite what he was looking for.

Despite having zero experience in the apparel or outdoor gear industries, Greg set out to design his own bag. In 2015, he and Kirsten cofounded Kauton.

The process of designing a viable product took years – a slow burn of incremental progress and figuring things out as they went. Greg spent 10 years teaching preschool for $10 an hour. He has to figure out why you’re willing to sacrifice and if you really want it … and at the beginning of all this, what we wanted wasn’t starting Kauton, it wasn’t starting Reverse. It was to be debt free.”

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Kauton’s partnership with George Fox marked a turning point for the company, helping establish credibility and opening up opportunities for similar custom projects with other organizations.

“The fact that they could be part of designing something, he face-to-face with the people making their bag, that’s something that really excites people,” Kirsten explained. “Especially when you come in with a competitive price.”

Now, Greg and Kirsten are working on updating Kauton’s products – always honing, improving and perfecting. Seeing their businesses succeed is satisfying, to be sure. But for the Johnsons, it’s the process – the act of creation and the building of relationships along the way – that they love the most.

“For me, art is worship,” Greg says. “It just flows out of me … It feels like that’s why I’ve been put on this earth – to make this business is just a way to perpetuate that.”

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Continued on page 50
Working in Small Infinities

Recent graduates Quinlan Morrow and Brittany Smith seek and serve God in the microscopic territory of human cancer cells

By Kimberly Felton

It hasn’t gotten old. Not yet. Every day is different. Same goal, different virus. Always hope.

And if she tires, if she begins to forget why, Quinlan Morrow (G19) remembers when she steps onto the tram at Oregon Health & Science University. Because as she rides, it isn’t the grand vista of God’s work – the Willamette River and a snowy Mt. Hood rising in the distance – nor the work of man evidenced in the sleek buildings below that reminds her. It’s what she sees in the faces of patients wheeled into the tram with her. She sees weariness reflected there, sometimes hope, always God. In their faces she sees evidence of the Creator, and this reminds her.

“These are people with lives and families,” Morrow says. “I eventually work with the blood of those patients. It’s a reminder that there’s a bigger purpose. We’re here to love them, however we can, through creating drugs to help save their lives.”

Mad Scientist at Work

Morrow, who graduated with a biology degree, has plans to attend medical school. First, she’s taking a year or two to work as a research assistant in the Knight Cancer Institute’s Tyner Lab at OHSU, fighting leukemia every day.

“There’s not really an average day in the lab. Every day is different,” Morrow says. “A lot of the protocols you do are the same, but what happens with them is different each time. In science, nothing works correctly, so mistakes happen a lot. Troubleshooting in science is actually really fun.”

Research in the Tyner Lab identifies how leukemia cells develop resistance to drugs. “One of the things I do a lot in the lab is make viruses,” she says. “I feel like a mad scientist.”

Morrow uses viruses to create mutations that knock out specific genes and cause drug resistance. Every time they figure out which mutations occur and resist leukemia drugs, they move a step closer to discovering drug combinations that prevent resistance – and they prolong or save lives.

Far from being a mad scientist, Morrow remembers losing both grandmas to cancer when she was a little girl, and seeing what that did to her parents. “Then in high school, my step-grandma died of cancer,” she says. “That time I was old enough to really remember her and watch the process of cancer. It’s a terrible, terrible thing to see.”

God in the Microscopic

Fellow George Fox alumna Brittany (Curtiss) Smith (G19) is a research assistant in the Druker Lab at the Knight Cancer Institute, close to the Tyner Lab in vicinity as well as purpose: fighting leukemia. She didn’t always plan to work in cancer research. During school, Smith researched neurodevelopment. “I found that fascinating,” she says, “but it wasn’t directly helping people.”

Then George Fox biology professor John Schmitt connected Smith with doctors at the Druker Lab. “I realized it’s really exciting being in a field where there’s so much innovation, so much happening and a real push to make discoveries to help treat people – to not just stand by and say we have some treatments that work, but really try to improve things,” Smith says. “I wasn’t expecting to be in cancer research, but I am here now and I really enjoy it.”

Smith’s breast cancer research at George Fox set the foundation for Morrow’s approach to science. “John has three main goals for working in his lab,” she says. “The first one is to make discoveries about God’s creation. The second is to make advances for human healthcare. And the third is to discover about yourself.”

“I definitely did all of those things working in his lab, and I discovered I really like raw science. I love molecular biology. I think it’s so amazing to see how God works in these small infinities that are cells.”

Every cell, Morrow explains, contains the complete human genome (over 3 billion base pairs). Each cell chooses which genes to express, creating different types of cells and sometimes causing diseases. “Cellular pathways and intercellular signaling is so complex that the more we learn, the more questions scientists have,” she says. “Cells are a vast, albeit microscopic, territory of discovery.” For Morrow, there’s no better reflection of God.

Smith couldn’t agree more. “I’m in wonder of God’s creation,” she says. “That’s a big reason why I wanted to go into research and science – because I’m fascinated by the intricacy and detail that we are created with and the endless mysteries. Even when we think we have something figured out, 10 years later, they’re like, ‘Oh, that’s not how it works.’ I don’t always understand it, but it speaks to the mystery and the magnitude of God’s person.”

A Christian, a Scientist

Morrow has always known – from when she was too young to understand the battle, but old enough to absorb the pain of loss – that she would grow up to fight cancer. She is considering pediatric oncology. Smith is now an established author, with data she collected used in two published papers. She plans to submit her own project for review later this year, all of the papers relate specifically to battling leukemia.

Yet while Smith is fully engaged in research, she is interested in becoming a surgical oncologist. “I’m fascinated with surgery, and I like the physical aspect of being able to bring healing to people,” she says. “And not just giving them drugs, but being able to physically go in and remove something.”

Morrow and Smith know they’re an anomaly: scientists who believe in God.

“A coworker asked me how I can be a Christian and a scientist,” Morrow says. “I was kind of fun to be able to answer that with training from my science professors at Fox, who are very open about their faith in class and talk about what they believe about subjects like evolution.”

“By studying creation, you’re ultimately studying the creator of that thing. And so science is a really beautiful way to get insight into God, to look at the things he made, and from understanding those, under- standing God better. So, at a basic level, my faith connects with my cancer research. By studying these cancer cells and learning how cells work and how signaling works inside of cells, I’m learning about God.”

With faith as their shared baseline, Smith and Morrow meet every Monday morning before researchers fill the lab, to talk, pray, support and encourage each other.

“As a person in the sciences, it’s really easy to forget everything else and not really think about anything other than getting your work done,” Morrow says. “It gets very competitive, especially among pre- meds. At Fox I was continually reminded not to do that, and to look around. You’re in a field of study because you feel called to do it. And so your goal and the ultimate purpose of what you’re doing isn’t for yourself. It’s for God. It’s not a competition; it’s supporting each other for one common goal, and that’s to see the glory of God on earth.”

Visit georgefox.edu/what to see Morrow at work in the lab.

Brittany Smith is a research assistant in the Druker Lab at the Knight Cancer Institute. The author of two published papers, she hopes to someday become a surgical oncologist.
ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Kevin Kopple (G05, DBA14) is now an associate director, starting in July 2019, with the FOCUS Group, a fundraising consulting firm, leaving a position as associate director of development at Central Washington University in Ellensburg, Washington.

Avery Smith (BBA09, DBA18) with 25 years’ experience in technology management, in August became clinical assistant professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, where he started as an adjunct professor in 2017. While still working a technology program manager at HP in Vancouver, Washington, in 2017 after holding a similar position at Oregon Health & Science University.

Dane Coppini (G07) in the U.S. Air Force for 13 years and now a Q5-2820 Evaluation Pilot, Air Force Special Operations Command, in November was promoted to major. In New Mexico, he served for four years as an enlisted security forces member under the Air Force Special Operations Command, in Washington, D.C., assigned to the 216th Special Operations Support Squadron.

Brandon Rupp (G08) is in government as a full-time baseball assistant coach after two years as an assistant coach at Lewis & Clark College in Portland, where he started in 2013 as an Assistant Pitching Instructor, teaching to players and young baseball athletes, especially coaching for young children.

Solomon Wang (G10) is a research and teaching assistant at Loma Linda, where he started in January 2019, with the FOCUS Group, a fundraising consulting firm, with 10 years as an enlisted security forces member under the Air Force Special Operations Command, in Portland, Oregon.

Ellen Lee (G08) has been for three years.

Waimanalo Beach, Hawaii. He was featured for nearly three years as reef life supervisor at Sea Life Park in Honolulu, Hawaii. He was featured for completing his fourth year after nearly four years as a para-educator in the Glendora School District, finishing his seventh year. He was featured for clients to reach customers. This follows nearly five years in a similar position at CTS LanguageLink in Vancouver, Washington.

Ann Lacy (G11) is a registered dietitian who started in 2008 as a registered dietitian at the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Kansas City.

Joshua Graves (G08, MBA09), with Catholic Charities and the McMinnville (Oregon) Police Department, leaving in September 2016. He served as a publicist for Americana, folk and roots artists with Hearth Music in Seattle. He left a four-year position as a policy and communications associate for Maple Park Church in Lynnwood, Washington.

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Not a Spectator
Nike Greene’s lifelong quest for community transformation leads to new role with Portland’s Office of Youth Violence Prevention
By Andrew Shaughnessy

Nike Greene (MA10) has worn many hats over the years: basketball coach, pastor, graduate student, therapist. As a family- and youth-engagement specialist with Portland Public Schools, she worked to bring free mental health services to students and families at Roosevelt High School. Working with Portland’s Center for the Arts, she was able to bring access to arts programming for students in Title I schools statewide. Now, she has accepted a new role as director of Portland’s Office of Youth Violence Prevention.

At first glance, it sounds like a wildly diverse résumé, but those roles all have in common is Greene’s big heart, uncommon drive, and unwavering commitment to making a positive impact on her community — a commitment rooted in experience.

Greene still remembers the day that two of her neighbors were shot and killed. She was just a kid then, growing up in a north Portland neighborhood that was fast becoming the city’s gang violence epicenter. She faced other challenges, too: racism, sexism on the basketball court, a high school suicide attempt. Her mother, a Danish immigrant, struggled to help her daughter navigate her new country’s complicated education system.

Well-intentioned ministries and organizations would parachute in on occasion, looking to connect with kids like Greene, taking them away to Trail Blazers games or the movies. “It was like there was this weird, euphoric world that I was missing out,” Greene recalls. “The messaging, purposeful or not, was always ‘get better and get out’.

Greene stayed. Cultivating change where her roots were planted.

Greene and her husband, Herman, still live in that same neighborhood. As co-pastors of a local church, they have actively ministered to the community for years, organizing summer program and support groups for mothers, helping residents in need with food and rental assistance, and doing prison ministry. They did a lot of good work over the years, Greene realized that, all too often, her community’s mental health needs were being overlooked.

“My many in my community have an old-school belief that therapy is for white people who have money, not for us people of color,” she says. “I wanted people to remember: There was a place. There was this program that said, ‘Enough. We’re going to be part of the solution, not spectators.’”

She was recruited from the basketball court to Portland’s public schools to the hardest challenges of her neighborhood, Greene has never been a spectator.

“I don’t have to be seen,” she says, “but I definitely have to be in the game.”

started last June as assistant project manager at Veistas, a wind turbine manufacturer, taking that position after three years as a senior mechanical engineer with JHS Engineering in Portland. In January, she saw the opportunity to return to Portland as a community engagement specialist at Forest Hills Elementary School, part of the Lake Oswego (Oregon) School District, leaving Dayton (Oregon) Grade School after nearly five years as a first-grade teacher.

Joshua Garcia (GU, MA10) and Keri (Moore) Garcia (GU, MA10), native to Hillsboro, Oregon, but work in different cities. In December, he became a senior search engine marketer with Vascade, an internet marketing management company. In May, she started an as executive assistant for the first coordinator with Mission Covenant in Beaverton, a nonprofit that connects local churches and individuals to help children and families in the city of Hillsboro for eight years, the last five as a police training program specialist.

Heather (Dfr) Lee (MAT10), a teacher in her sixth year with the Kitsap (Washington) School District, was given a 2019 Outstanding Education Award presented by the Alaska Sigma Kappa chapter. Recipients are nominated by administrators, fellow teachers, parents and students and are selected on the basis of exemplary teaching, student success in the classroom and leadership in education.

Nick Luchterhand (GU, MAT10) and his Canby (Oregon) High School marching band were the center of attention at the 2019 Portland Rose Festival when the band encountered a problem that gave them media coverage — and an even bigger opportunity to perform. Prepared to march in the Starlight Parade the week before the main Grand Floral Parade, the band’s bus did not arrive to take them to the first parade, leaving the group dressed for the second event. The situation drew major regional attention and had a happy ending when Rose Festival officials heard of the plight and invited Luchterhand and his band to march in the big event the next weekend. He has been with the Canby School District since 2014 as a middle school music teacher and is now director of the band at his hometown high school.

Alicia (Van Dyke) Bard (PS11) is an Albu-

A.J. Mendoza (G13) in November became a communication specialist with Portland Jobs With Justice after more than two years with the organization as a campaign organizer. In October, he was elected president of Communications Workers of America Local 7901, after serving as the 650-member organization’s legislative chair.

Heather (Smith-Cleffin) Peirce (GU10) is a franchise owner of Dunlop in Tigard, Oregon, which offers private and public paint parties with artists who teach painting skills.

Josh TenHaken-Riedel (GU10), after receiving a master’s degree in leadership and student development from Taylor University in 2015, joined the staff of Belmont University as an assistant director of spiritual formation. The Christian college in Nashville, Tennessee, has 8,000 students.

Brittany Bechtel (GU10) is an assistant team leader and event coordinator with Aveda Corporate Experience Center, a cosmetics and beauty training firm in Portland.

Mark Condo (PS10) is the new pastor of the Redeemed Friends Church in Portland. A recorded Friends minister, he has served Friends meetings in Virginia and Ohio, including West Park Friends in Cleveland.

Abigail Cordova (GU10) in 2019 joined Jules in New York City as an electronic data exchange and business intelligence specialist with the British clothing and lifestyle company.

Reid Davidson (GU10) has become the first chiropractic doctor to open an office in St. Paul, Oregon, his hometown of origin. He is one of two chiropractic doctors that the Performance and Spine Chiropractic Center in Tualatin, Oregon, after receiving a second bachelor’s degree and a doctorate in chiropractic medicine from the University of Western States in Portland.
Scott Debringe (MAE) has been deployed to Iraq, Kuwait and Qatar – twice – and has been a church pastor – twice – but says his current position is the most meaningful. He is the in the National Guard, as Oregon state chaplain, and also is a counselor for the department National Guard, as Oregon state chaplain, as well as a chaplain for the Salem Police Department. He plans to retire in 2021. With an MDiv from Northwest University, an employee-owned corporation that provides facilities management, he is the chairman of the board for the Rocky Mountain Health Network.

Casey Dudek (G15) is now a music therapist for children with autism spectrum disorder. He is a former member of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the National Symphony Orchestra, and he continues to fundraise for a two-year root canal after being diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. He is now working as a music therapist at Knox County School for the Deaf in Austin.

Hunter Bomar (G18) is a policy analyst at the National Federation of Independent Business. She has been a campaign development specialist with the American Conservative Union, a registered nurse, starting in 2019. He is an instructor at the Portland Community College's Graduate School of Education and also is an adjunct professor with Lewis & Clark College’s Graduate School of Education and Counseling in Portland.

Eric Lehti (EdD16) was the subject of a book published by Wipf and Stock, telling the story of his life and his journey to becoming a monk. He is now working as a mission director at the University of California's Institute for Work and Higher Education, and he is also working on a new book project.

Bryan Fosmire (G18) is the new president of the Portland State University Alumni Association. He is also a designer for AlexandraKDesign, started in 2016, and continues to work with Soma Games in Newberg.

Emily (Mavrakis) Schwichtenberg (G17) is a software design engineer with Tektronix. She has been working on projects for architects, engineers and construction workers. She started in 2018, and she is a registered nurse, starting in 2019. She is also the director of an alternative high school after earning an MAT in education. She is now working as a software design engineer with Tektronix.

Erich Thomas (2020) is an attorney for the Oregon Air National Guard, in that role for six years. He is the citizen-soldier of the Oregon Air National Guard's 123rd Wing, and he continues to serve as a reserve officer in the Air Force Reserve. He is also the founder of a new business, Thomas Law, which merged with Randall in January of 2020. He is now working as a software design engineer with Tektronix.
is a registered nurse on the surgical floor at Providence Medical Center in Portland, starting in February after more than a year as an RN with Avana Healthcare. He is a manager of fastcas, a company in Chico, in his second year at a vendor last year at the Salem Saturday Market and farmers markets in McMinnville and Newberg.

Mary Wenrich (G19) was featured in a March 9 article in the Salem, Oregon, Statesman Journal, as she launched her new gluten-free and allergen-friendly bakery, Flour & Fern. She is now located in the new Mac Market in McMinnville, after starting as a vendor last year at the Salem Saturday Market and farmers markets in McMinnville and Newberg.

Brittney Bain (G19), working with Nike since graduation, in October became a global marketplace management analyst after starting as an HR data management specialist with the Beaverton (Oregon)-based firm.

Carter Bedsole (G19) is now a software architect for the new George Fox University Catalysted College. He started in the fall after working as a software design engineer for Tektrom in Beaverton, Oregon.

Corey Brooks (G19) started last July as a business development manager with Digital Current, a Portland firm specializing in digital marketing return on investment. He moved from a position as account executive with Hibu, another digital marketing company in Portland.

Hannah Bosch (G19) started in June as a rehabilitation technician with ATI Physical Therapy in Salem, Oregon, while enrolled online to earn a master’s degree in kinesiology through A.T. Still University of Health Science.

Misty Downs (G19) started as a marketing intern and artistic designer in George Fox’s marketing communications office, has accepted a full-time role in the department as a marketing campaign and event manager.

Clarissa Evans (ADP19) in March was named operations manager at U.S. Bank in Portland, moving up from her position as equipment finance specialist, a position held for nearly two years. She started with the bank in 2019.

Sarah Fankhauser (G19) is now a software manager at Hibu, another digital marketing company in Portland.

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ALUMNI CONNECTIONS

Gerald Lemmons (G52), Dec. 29, 2019, in Newberg.
William Mardock (G52), Feb. 6, 2020, in McMinnville, Oregon.
Margaret (Weber) Winters (G53), July 2, 2019, in Newberg.
Florene (Price) Nordyke (G55), April 20, 2020, in Portland.
Bill Hoppe (G58), Oct. 12, 2019, in Newberg.
Eugene Morse (G58), Nov. 10, 2019, in Portland.
Jack Hamilton (G58), Dec. 1, 2019, in Central Point, Oregon.
Lloyd Roberts (G60), June 12, 2019, in Umatilla, Oregon.
Martin Matheny (G60), May 29, 2019, in Tehachapi, California.
Dennis Ankeny (G67), Oct. 22, 2019, in Caldwell, Idaho.
Clover Stewart (MDiv77), Jan. 29, 2020, in Santa Cruz, California.
Jim Frisen (G91), March 20, 2019, in Vancover, Washington.
Janice (Goop) Strutz (G99), Oct. 23, 2019, in Billings, Montana.
Lori (Beobie) Tuning (G99), Jan. 15, 2020, in Oregon.
Twila (Reeser) McIntosh (G99), Oct. 23, 2019, in Albany, Oregon.
Belinda Garrettson (MEd97), Feb. 5, 2020, in McMinnville, Oregon.
Scott Wade (G97), July 15, 2019, in Hawaii.
Robert Waisel (MAF73), March 26, 2020, in West Linn, Oregon.
Julianne Kilmer (G99), Sept. 11, 2019, in Salem, Oregon.
Stephanie Keeler (MEd97), May 26, 2019, in Newberg.
Brian Stall (MDiv15), Jan. 28, 2020, in Portland.
Maurice Chandler (G60), April 19, 2020, in Newberg. Director of development and vice president for advancement, 1966-1985. Alumnus of the Year (Heritage Award), 2016.

LOOKING FOR MARRIAGE AND BABY NEWS?
Visit georgefox.edu/marriage-baby for alumni family updates!

Homecoming

Thank You to our generous donors! Your gifts to the George Fox Gives campaign helped support more than 500 students who experienced the loss of a job, unexpected living expenses and other financial hardships due to the coronavirus.

Total Donors: 496
Total Gifts: 593
Goal: $125,000
Total Raised: $139,386

“Your kindness is humbling and fills me with so much hope for what we can accomplish as a society and the church when we help each other. I look forward to repaying this kindness in the future to other students in need!” — Hannah

“Thank you so much for your generous donation in these times of need. I will now be able to live in my apartment for another month without any financial stress.” — Andrea

168 Emergency Fund Awards
354 Federal Work-Study Students Funded

As we move forward to equip the next generation of George Fox students, we know one thing for certain: The world needs Christian leaders now more than ever. Your gifts to the Student Fund ensure that every student has access to a George Fox education, no matter their background or financial means. Together, we can make a difference. Together, we can open students’ eyes to possibilities they never imagined. Together, we can transform lives. Will you join us?

Give today using the envelope on page 32 or at giving.georgefox.edu

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STILL STANDING TALL

Even Mama Bear donned a face mask as the COVID-19 pandemic swept across the country, the message inscribed in stone next to her encouraging students to be “ready, fearless, strong” more relevant now than ever before.

It was in this same spirit of strength and courage that university leaders made a bold promise to students: We’ll be ready for you this fall. Precautions will be taken, things will be different, but we will be ready. The world needs Christian nurses, engineers, scientists and social workers, and George Fox stands ready to equip the next generation of leaders for whatever God calls them to do.