WE ARE
THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

FOR WASHINGTON
FOR THE WORLD
Our impact reaches around the world, from Seattle to El Salvador, Yakima to Myanmar. We share our expertise and enthusiasm to expose injustice, advance health care, and inspire the next generation of students. We tackle big, audacious questions about life, death, and the Universe. All this while providing an education of tremendous breadth and depth to more than 25,000 students each year.

The following pages highlight the remarkable work of College of Arts & Sciences faculty, staff, students, and alumni at the University of Washington, whose tireless efforts locally and globally are helping to shape a brighter future while honoring the past.

Together we are making a difference for Washington, and for the world.
From newborns to the elderly, the College is tackling health issues at every stage of life. Thanks to A&S research and outreach, babies can now be screened for life-threatening diseases, early learning and autism are better understood, and stroke survivors have greater success in regaining communication skills.

Health-related research takes place across the College in chemistry labs, psychology clinics, interdisciplinary centers for statistics and demography, and more. Our faculty work with numerous community and government partners, from the Somali community in Seattle to the World Health Organization. When it comes to improving health, we’re all in this together.
It starts with a mosquito. Specifically a female Anopheles mosquito, infected with a malaria parasite. When the mosquito bites a person, it transmits the parasite and leaves malaria in its wake. Each year the disease kills more than 500,000 people worldwide and sickens many more. A&S scientists in chemistry and biology are at the cutting edge of research to prevent this devastating disease.

Chemistry professor Pradipsinh Rathod is part of an international research team that has developed a chemical compound that cripples a critical protein in the malaria parasite, thwarting its ability to replicate. The team is now conducting human trials to test the compound’s efficacy on natural parasite infections in South America.

“A&S scientists in chemistry and biology are at the cutting edge of research to prevent this devastating disease,” says Rathod, one of the founders and leaders of the endeavor. “Until now, everything else in humans has been variations of drugs that have been developed in the distant past.”

The study is just one of several malaria-related projects that Rathod and colleagues are pursuing using chemical and genomic tools. Their research also has identified factors that may predict more severe manifestations of the disease in infected adults, novel molecular mechanisms by which parasite populations mutate and avoid therapeutics, and involvement of new mosquito species in parasite transmission.

Another focus of malaria research is mosquito behavior—specifically, how the pesky bloodsuckers find their next meal. Past experiments suggest that mosquitoes’ razor-sharp sense of smell might activate other senses in the quest for a warm-blooded meal. UW biology professor Jeff Riffell and colleagues at the California Institute of Biology want to understand how that activation happens and which sensory pathways are most critical. Studying mosquitoes in an enclosed environment, the researchers are learning how the insects integrate and interpret different signals from their environment and use them to make decisions.

“What our research shows is that it’s not one kind of odor or stimulus that’s attracting mosquitoes, it’s a real combination of cues,” says Riffell.

Understanding mosquito behavior, and learning what repels them, could someday make a serious dent in malaria, dengue, West Nile virus, Zika virus, and other diseases transmitted by the insects. And it could make summer camping trips more pleasant too.
The changes we experience from birth to adulthood are remarkable, from language learning to emotional development to puberty. A&S scientists are at the forefront of research into children’s health, improving the lives of countless youth and their families.

WHAT’S ON YOUR MIND, BABY?
How do babies learn? That is the central question for researchers at the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS). Their findings have revolutionized theories of human development, changed how people parent their children, and influenced early learning policies.

By measuring babies’ brain responses, I-LABS scientists have gained new insights into the role of music, touch, bilingual surroundings, and other factors in human brain development. They also study the role of genetics in language learning and the influence of race, gender, and other cultural stereotypes.

Based on their findings, I-LABS researchers are helping shape early childhood education policies by working with policymakers around the country. And as a partner in the new National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning, I-LABS will develop resources for early childhood educators and those working with children in poverty. I-LABS research and outreach efforts are supported by the Bezos Family Foundation, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and other sources. //

EARLY DETECTION, IMPROVED HEALTH
Using a panel of tests developed by chemistry professors Michael Gelb and František Tureček, newborn babies can now be screened for debilitating, often-fatal conditions that show up early in life. Early detection means earlier treatment and the potential for improved outcomes.

The nine diseases detected by the screening—including Pompe, Niemann-Pick, Gaucher, Fabry and Hurler syndromes—are associated with enzyme deficiencies within lysosomes, structures that break down large molecules and eliminate waste in most cells. Using tandem mass spectrometry, a means of determining a substance’s chemical makeup and quantity, health providers are now able to screen for these serious conditions using a tiny drop of blood from the baby.

Gelb and Tureček’s screening method has been adopted by newborn screening centers in the U.S. and abroad. “In the sense of making it to the real world, the technique is very far along, including an FDA-approved kit,” says Gelb. “Boris and Barbara L. Weinstein Endowed Chair in Chemistry, though in terms of worldwide use, it’s still very early.” //

HELPING PARENTS HELP THEIR KIDS
Life is full of challenges, requiring us to adapt to situations throughout the day. We learn to do this from an early age, developing the skills of self-regulation and effortful control—which in turn support other life skills. But children in families experiencing economic disadvantage or adversity often lag in developing self-regulation and effortful control. Delays, sometimes continuing into adulthood, can adversely affect all areas of their lives.

Psychology professor Liliana Lengua, director of the Center for Child and Family Well-Being (CCFW), has identified specific parent behaviors that help children develop effortful control. She recently launched a pilot program to help parents experiencing disadvantage or adversity develop these behaviors. They also learn mindfulness practices to cope with stress and difficult emotions.

“This is all the more reason why this study hopes to follow participants into adulthood to determine whether early support influences their development and leads to a happier, healthier adulthood.”

“People know the word autism, but I think they’re still scared of interacting with a parent of a kid with autism, or inviting the child for a play date,” she says. “This will provide an in-depth explanation in Sesame Street way, which is very positive and accepting.” //

AUTISM VISITS SESAME STREET
For families affected by autism spectrum disorders, the READi (Research in Early Autism Detection and Intervention) Lab is a vital resource, providing training for caregivers and research into early detection and intervention. Now Sesame Street fans will also benefit from the Lab’s work.

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READi Lab director Wendy Stone, professor of psychology, recently helped develop a new character with autism spectrum disorder for Sesame Street’s See Amazing in All Children Initiative, which provides resources for parents and caregivers of children with autism. Stone hopes the initiative will help reduce the stigma and isolation that affect many children with autism and their families.

“We have absolutely no idea what their lives will look like, because there are very few transgender adults today who lived as young kids expressing their gender identity,” says psychology professor Kristina Olson. “That’s all the more reason why this particular generation is important to study. They’re the pioneers.” //

YOUNG & TRANSGENDER
How early do children identify as transgender? Do they have greater emotional resilience if family and friends support their gender identification? Researchers are exploring these and other questions through the Department of Psychology’s TransYouth Project, which recently launched the first large-scale nationwide study of transgender children in the U.S. with support from the Arcus Foundation and other sources.

Given that an alarming 41 percent of transgender people attempt suicide, the study hopes to identify what drives them into adulthood to determine whether early support influences their development and leads to a happier, healthier adulthood.

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DETERRING A TROUBLING TRADITION

It’s a tradition that’s hard to discuss and even harder to change. Female genital cutting (FGC) is culturally valued in many parts of Africa despite the potential for severe physical problems and psychological trauma. Bettina Shell-Duncan, professor of anthropology, is part of a five-year, $12 million research project aimed at reducing FGC by at least 30 percent in 10 target countries. Working with African organizations, she is investigating where and why the practice exists, what role social norms play, and the impact on the lives of girls and women.

“Nobody wants to be the first to change, because there is too much at stake,” says Shell-Duncan of the persistence of FGC. “It’s changing something that has significant cultural meaning and ramifications for people’s lives in many, many ways. [But] we also know that in a handful of places FGC has been abandoned—even in some communities that have not had intervention programs. What makes people ready to change a deeply held cultural practice? That is the puzzle we are trying to figure out.”

INNOVATORS FOR HEALTH

PLANNING FOR A CROWDED PLANET

Adrian Raftery is the closest thing to a crystal ball. When the United Nations and other global organizations need methods for projecting life expectancy and population growth into the next century, they look to Raftery, professor of statistics and sociology, and his colleagues at the UW Center for Statistics and the Social Sciences. The statisticians made big news recently when they projected that the world population could reach between 9 and 13 billion by the end of the 21st century—about 8 percent higher than previous forecasts.

Why should we care? Because population projections influence policy decisions on everything from health care and family planning to climate change and urban development. Raftery’s findings have received considerable media attention, including an article in Science that metrics show to be among the journal’s top 0.1% most impactful articles ever published.

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TOP: Shawn Wong leads a storytelling class for soldiers in Joint Base Lewis-McChord’s Warrior Transition Battalion. ABOVE: Soldiers write during a Red Badge Project class. Photos by Johnny Bivera.

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THERAPY THROUGH STORYTELLING

When actor Tom Skerritt learned that more American soldiers were committing suicide than being killed in Afghanistan, he was determined to help. Soldiers said they felt no one was listening to their stories, so Skerritt called his friend Shawn Wong, professor of English and comparative literature. “We know how to tell a story and how to teach people to tell a story,” he told Wong, an accomplished writer. “We should do something.”

That ‘something’ became the Red Badge Project, which provides soldiers with the tools to tell their own stories in their own way. Air Force veteran Skerritt co-founded the nonprofit with a former Army captain five years ago, recruiting Wong and two other talented storytellers to lead classes and workshops.

Red Badge Project students come from the Warrior Transition Battalion at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, a battalion of injured soldiers transitioning to civilian life. “We are basically part of their medical therapy,” says Wong. “It’s writing therapy. I often say that I’m practicing medicine without a license.”

Wong, a non-veteran, initially worried how he would be received by the soldiers. To his surprise, they like the fact that he is a civilian, particularly since they are transitioning to civilian life. And because nothing from class ends up in their Army record, they feel comfortable speaking freely.

“The thing that impresses me is how honest everybody is in what they put down on paper,” says Wong. “Once they realize they can say and write whatever they want, they really make some progress.”

That progress presents in surprising ways. Wong recalls a National Guard soldier—“the angriest of all the students,” he says—who had suffered more than half a dozen concussions from roadside bombs and lost motor function in his fingers. A middle school teacher before deployment, the soldier was now unable to type and had trouble writing by hand. Doctors told him the injuries were likely permanent, but after taking the Red Badge Project class multiple times, he regained the ability to type and write—and got his old teaching job back.

“Before he left, the soldier told us, ‘I don’t know how to say this, but you saved my life,’” recalls Wong. “There are moments like that when you realize the importance of what you’re doing.”
What does it take to change the world? Persistence. Creativity. A willingness to take a stand. Arts & Sciences faculty and students demonstrate these qualities every day. Whether pushing for prison reform or demanding fair labor in the production of Husky apparel, they are on the front lines in the pursuit of justice close to home and across the globe. The UW Center for Human Rights is a leader in the field, and many other A&S units also work for social justice.
During El Salvador’s brutal civil war, more than 75,000 civilians were killed, mostly at the hands of the government and its paramilitary adjuncts. Two decades later, no government officials have been convicted for ordering these crimes and no systematic inquiry has been made into the fate of the disappeared. The UW Center for Human Rights (UWCHR) is hoping to change that through Unfinished Sentences: History, Memory, and Justice in El Salvador, a project made possible through support from the Puffin Foundation and other sources.

UWCHR director Angelina Godoy launched the project in 2011, after friends at a Salvadoran human rights organization—the Instituto de Derechos Humanos de la Universidad Centroamericana—invited her to join their efforts. Godoy saw an opportunity to involve students in a meaningful way.

“There’s no better way to learn about human rights than by immersing oneself in concrete cases and learn by doing rather than reading about it in a textbook,” says Godoy, Helen H. Jackson Endowed Chair in Human Rights and professor of international studies and law, societies, and justice. “Through this project, students are not just learning what happened in El Salvador, but actually offering their services to victims and their families and supporting their push for justice.”

Students have traveled to El Salvador to speak with individuals and communities about what justice might look like to them, but most UWCHR work happens closer to home. Team members request U.S. government declassified documents pertaining to El Salvador and search them for information of use to Salvadoran victims and human rights attorneys. To date, UWCHR has filed more than 200 requests for declassified documents through the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

“There is a huge need for research, so that has been our role,” says Godoy. “We have explored every possible avenue to get information.” In October 2015, UWCHR sued the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) for withholding documents requested through FOIA; although the litigation is still pending, the CIA recently released 85 declassified documents to UWCHR in this case.

Poring over those documents will keep UWCHR’s research team busy for a very long time. It’s decidedly unglamorous work, but they do it willingly in hopes of uncovering valuable information.

“Sometimes people ask me, ‘Why should we care about this? It’s decades old. It’s in the past,’” says Godoy. “But when you sit down with somebody who lost their loved one, it doesn’t matter that years have passed. They still feel that pain. The issues are still very real and present.”
PARTNERING FOR PRISON REFORM

The U.S. has the largest prison population in the world, with more than 16,000 inmates in Washington state alone. Faculty and students across the College are supporting prison reform through policy research, social services, and prison education programs.

HELP FOR NEW MOMS BEHIND BARS
In Washington state, incarcerated mothers and their babies can be together for up to 30 months—a critical period for language development. To help new mothers make the most of that precious time, students and faculty in the Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences (SPHSC) visit the Washington Corrections Center for Women at Monroe, where students meet with offenders and prison staff through interactive workshops.

“The need there is so great, and the response has been overwhelmingly positive,” says SPHSC clinical instructor Kate Kring, director of the prison project. “I always leave in awe of the depth of the mother-infant bond. When it is allowed to form, it flourishes, regardless of where they call home.”

BRINGING MELVILLE TO MONROE
To reach their classrooms, most A&S faculty stroll across the quad. But once a week, English professor Gillian Harkins drives an hour and passes through security checkpoints to enter a classroom at the Washington State Reformatory at Monroe, where she teaches literature classes to prisoners. Harkins and several other A&S faculty and graduate students volunteer regularly at Monroe, teaching non-credit courses through the nonprofit University Beyond Bars (UBB) program.

“If we don’t provide better educational opportunities for people while they are in prison, it will be harder for them to succeed when they get out,” says Harkins, who led a three-year working group on prison education through the UW’s Simpson Center for the Humanities. “It’s been really inspiring to see people at the UW getting involved in this growing national movement.”

INMATES, CLASSMATES
Each week, about a dozen A&S students head to prison. They trek up to the Monroe Correctional Complex for a 400-level course about criminal justice, with prison inmates as their classmates. Professor Steve Herbert, director of the Law, Societies, and Justice (LSJ) program, teaches the mixed-enrollment class, which is made possible through LSJ’s Timothy Richard Wettack Fund.

“The experience allowed us to break down preconceived notions of prisons and prison inmates....”

“Working together helps humanize people who may well have done a horrible thing but are still struggling to not let that one act define who they are,” says one participant. Adds another: “The inmates are eager and willing to do the significant amount of work that this class demands. For the UW students, the course provides a rare opportunity to learn how criminal justice issues play out in real life. “The experience allowed us to break down preconceived notions of prisons and prison inmates and get to know them as intelligent peers,” says one participant. Adds a pre-law classmate, “It’s really beneficial to learn about these issues from a perspective that’s different from what we’re usually exposed to. This is not something you can get anywhere else.”

AFTER CRIME AND PUNISHMENT, MORE PUNISHMENT
Criminals are meant to pay their debts to society through sentencing, but a different type of court-imposed debt can tie them to the criminal justice system for life. The problem, says sociology professor Alexes Harris, is that defendants are charged for everything from DNA samples to electronic monitoring devices, jury trials, and even room and board while incarcerated—fines and fees that few prisoners have the resources to pay. Harris has conducted extensive research on court-imposed fines in Washington state.

“Fines have always been imposed in the U.S. criminal justice system, but states began ratcheting up fines and fees in the 1990s and 2000s to help pay the costs of a swelling incarceration system. Fees can now add up to thousands of dollars, and those who fail to pay are routinely jailed. “This system marks poor individuals for life,” says Harris. “They become prisoners of debt.”

Building on her research in Washington state, Harris is now leading a five-year research project on monetary sanctions in eight states, funded by the Laura and John Arnold Foundation. As a key player in efforts to develop a national agenda policy around this issue, Harris also recently chaired a panel at a Department of Justice convening on fines and fees, and spoke at the White House about poverty and the criminal justice system.
STRAIGHT TALK ABOUT DIFFICULT ISSUES

Emotions around issues of race and equity have reached a fever pitch in the U.S. as stories of police brutality toward African American men and other racial injustices fill the news. Recognizing the need for dialogue around these difficult issues, the Center for Communication, Difference, and Equity (CCDE) presents panels, teach-ins, and forums that connect the campus and community. Past events have focused on Ferguson, the Black Lives Matter movement, and health disparities impacting Black women. CCDE, based in the Department of Communication, also sponsors workshops, speakers series, conferences, weekly lunch conversations, and undergraduate and graduate fellowships to explore issues of difference and equity within the field of communication. //

FIGHTING TRAFFICKING, BY DESIGN

To combat human trafficking, graduate students in the School of Art + Art History + Design used what they know best: design. Through the Pivot Project, they learned about human trafficking in Washington state and identified intervention points where design could be of use, with guidance from the Washington Anti-Trafficking Response Network. Their ingenious idea: specially designed packaging for feminine products, with a trafficking hotline phone number tucked inside and all explanatory information flushable. The packaging allows at-risk women to learn about available help in privacy.

With funding from design awards, partner organizations, and a crowdfunding campaign, the team produced and shipped about 10,000 units of the final product to organizations working with the target audience in Washington and Missouri.

"Design, at its root, is creative problem solving," explains Tad Hirsch, assistant professor of interaction design and adviser for the project. "The goal is to look at an entire system of interactions and experiences, and then locate intervention points where design can have an impact." //

RACIAL BIAS REVEALED

Think you have no hidden biases? The Implicit Association Test will likely prove you wrong. Developed by psychology professor Anthony Greenwald and colleagues, the test measures unconscious attitudes and beliefs that humans bring to their social interactions. Its most controversial finding: about 70 percent of people who took a version of the test that measures racial attitudes had an unconscious, or implicit, preference for White people compared to Black people.

"Many people believe that racial bias is largely a thing of the past," says Greenwald. "The test’s finding of a widespread, automatic form of race preference violates people’s image of tolerance and is hard for them to accept. When you are unaware of attitudes or stereotypes, they can unintentionally affect your behavior. Awareness can help to overcome this unwanted influence."

The test has been used in more than 1,000 research studies and has been completed through an online demonstration site more than 17 million times. //

TRACKING TUSKS

As many as 50,000 African elephants—about 10 percent of the elephant population—are killed each year for their ivory, driving the iconic animals toward extinction. Sam Wasser, research professor of biology and director of the UW Center for Conservation Biology, is a pioneer in using DNA evidence to trace the origins of illegal ivory. Analyzing 28 large ivory seizures, his team learned that most ivory has come from just two areas in Africa over the past decade.

"Hopefully our results will force the primary source countries to accept more responsibility for their part in this illegal trade and encourage the international community to work closely with these countries to contain the poaching," says Wasser, whose work is supported by the Paul G. Allen Family Foundation, the Woodtiger Fund, the Wildcat Foundation, and other sources. //
Some questions endure. Some arise unexpectedly. People have wondered about the creation of the Universe for millennia; we began questioning global warming just decades ago. Arts & Sciences researchers are exploring both questions, as well as many others that impact us all, from how our brains function to how we can more efficiently harness the sun's energy. Some questions may be answered during our lifetime, but most we chip away at, with each generation gaining more clarity.

What we know for sure: Big questions will always fascinate us, and the College of Arts & Sciences will always be at the forefront in the search for answers.
ASKING THE BIG QUESTIONS

ANYBODY ELSE OUT THERE?

Is there life elsewhere in the Universe? Are there other planets that resemble ours? Scientists are looking for answers by identifying characteristics of potentially habitable planets and searching for exoplanets—planets outside our solar system—with those features.

Most planets discovered outside our solar system are "gassy things you wouldn't be able to stand on," says Victoria Meadows, professor of astronomy and principal investigator for the Virtual Planetary Laboratory (VPL), funded by the NASA Astrobiology Institute. But as more planets with rocky surfaces are identified, it raises a huge question. "If we find an Earth-like planet in orbit around another star," asks Meadows, "how will we tell if it can support life?"

Using innovative computer models, VPL scientists generate plausible planetary environments, looking for qualities like a solid surface and an orbit around the host star that would potentially allow liquid surface water and a benign environment. They also look at how host stars and neighbor planets might interact to support life, and how planetary processes may mimic signs of life.

Think there's a short list of candidates for life beyond Earth? Hardly. So many exoplanets show promise that the VPL team recently created a habitability index to help prioritize which of the thousands that have been discovered warrant closer inspection.

HOW DID IT ALL BEGIN?

The origin of the Universe remains a mystery, inspiring creation stories and scientific theories. Soon astrophysicists will have a new tool in their search for answers: the Large Synoptic Survey Telescope (LSST), featuring the world’s largest and most powerful digital camera.

The camera will take pictures of the sky every 20 seconds, completing a survey of the visible sky every three nights. Over ten years, it will capture an almost unimaginable trove of data that will alert scientists to changes in the sky over time. "It's these changes that allow us to build our models for our universe, to predict its future and to explain its past," says Andrew Connolly, professor of astronomy.

As a founding member of the LSST project, Department of Astronomy faculty and staff are involved in all aspects of the telescope, scheduled for completion in 2019. The captured data will be open source, accessible to anyone in the U.S. or Chile, but devising the software and algorithms to analyze all that data is a major aspect of the project. Researchers at the UW’s Center for Data-intensive Research in Astrophysics and Cosmology, established through a gift from Charles Simonyi, will develop the tools needed to work with the mountains of data. The Center is seeking matching gifts to expand its capabilities.

"When the LSST comes online at the end of this decade it will address big questions, from measuring the nature of the dark energy that drives the expansion of our universe to finding asteroids that may one day impact the Earth, providing enough warning that those asteroids’ trajectories can be modified," says Connolly. "LSST could completely transform our knowledge of our universe."
Scientists have spent decades searching for more efficient ways to harvest sunlight for energy. While costs are coming down, UW researchers are working on even more affordable alternatives that may speed the widespread adoption of clean energy technologies.

One option being explored by Brandi Cossairt, assistant professor of chemistry, is quantum dots—nanometer-sized crystalline semiconductor particles that can be spray-painted on a surface in layers. The chemistry used to make quantum dots is inherently self-purifying, translating to much lower costs than conventional solar cells, and because quantum dots can be tuned to absorb all colors of light, they are more efficient in harvesting energy from the sun. Quantum dots can be used in applications ranging from solar cells to light-emitting diodes (LEDs) found in televisions and computer monitors. Though only recently implemented in photovoltaics, their efficiencies are rapidly approaching those of more expensive silicon-based devices.

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Both Ginger and Cossairt are members of the UW’s Clean Energy Institute, a state-funded campus-wide initiative. Ginger was awarded a Packard Fellowship and a UW Innovation Award for his research. Cossairt, who was of chemistry, is quantum dots—nanometer-sized crystalline semiconductor particles that can be spray-painted on a surface in layers. The chemistry used to make quantum dots is inherently self-purifying, translating to much lower costs than conventional solar cells, and because quantum dots can be tuned to absorb all colors of light, they are more efficient in harvesting energy from the sun.

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WHAT IS OUR OBLIGATION TO FUTURE GENERATIONS?

We know that our actions today may negatively impact the environment tomorrow. Overfishing can endanger the supply of seafood. Excessive construction can lead to flooding. Carbon emissions from our SUVs will almost certainly speed global warming. Yet we continue to drive and fish and build mega-mansions. Are we ignoring our moral obligation to future generations? How much of a sacrifice should we be expected to make to ensure a healthy planet down the road?

Stephen Gardiner, professor of philosophy and the Ben Rabinowitz Endowed Professor of the Human Dimensions of the Environment, has spent more than a decade grappling with thorny ethical issues related to the environment, particularly climate change. He describes climate change as a perfect moral storm because it is "genuinely global, seriously intergenerational, and takes place in a setting where our institutions and theories are weak." As a result, people tend to take modest benefits for themselves now while passing on potentially catastrophic costs to the future.

"This is a severe moral problem," says Gardiner. "Yet most of the time we avoid even talking about climate change in ethical terms."

Through his books and articles, including a recent op-ed piece in The Washington Post, Gardiner challenges individuals and institutions to consider the future cost of their actions. "The real climate challenge is ethical," he says. "Future generations are not here to hold us to account, so we have to speak up on their behalf." //

HOW SHOULD WE TALK ABOUT DEATH?

Everyone dies. But rather than sharing our end-of-life preferences with loved ones, most of us prefer to avoid the subject. A web resource developed by Arts & Sciences faculty and students aims to change that, encouraging people to host dinners with friends and family to discuss end-of-life issues.

The website, Death over Dinner, was developed in a graduate course in the Department of Communication’s Communication Leadership program, in partnership with Michael Hebb and the design firm Civilization. After digging into the topic with experts, students created prompts for dinner discussions about end-of-life issues and posted suggested readings, videos, exercises, and information about living wills and other directives. They also strategized how to drive people to the website, leading to coverage in The New York Times, The Huffington Post, and other media outlets.

To date, the Death over Dinner website (deathoverdinner.org) has inspired more than 10,000 dinners in 17 countries. //

WHAT WILL HAPPEN WITH GLOBAL WARMING?

Ocean levels are rising. Changes in habitat are threatening sensitive flora and fauna. Climate change is upon us, and Arts & Sciences researchers are immersed in this pressing issue.

Janneke Hille Ris Lambers, professor of biology and Walker Endowed Professor of Natural History, explores the potential impact of climate change by extracting thin core samples from living trees and analyzing the annual growth rings. By comparing trees’ growth histories to climate records over the same period, her research team is learning how species have fared in warmer years and might respond to future climate change.

“We can take information on how trees grow and survive and reproduce under different climatic conditions, from tree cores and our other studies, to build a virtual forest on a computer,” says Hille Ris Lambers. “Then we play that model forward to tell us how these trees will respond to climate change.”

While Hille Ris Lambers studies trees, Chris Bretherton aims for the clouds. Bretherton, professor of applied mathematics and atmospheric sciences, studies cloud formation and turbulence, creating computer simulations to predict how clouds may impact and respond to climate change. He was lead author of a chapter on clouds and aerosols in the most recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change assessment report, a massive 900-page document.

“Clouds and aerosols are the single largest source of uncertainty in simulating the climate change of the next 50 to 100 years,” Bretherton says, explaining that the interaction between clouds and human-produced aerosols is not well understood, but that a consensus is emerging that changes in both over the next century will probably amplify global warming. “Research and observations of further climate change over the next decade or two should greatly sharpen our understanding of these issues.” //

Class sessions for the Death Over Dinner project often involved—fittingly—a communal meal.

Class sessions for the Death Over Dinner project often involved—fittingly—a communal meal.
By the time children in Washington state reach college age, there’s a good chance they’ve been inspired by the College of Arts & Sciences. Maybe they were motivated to study violin after a UW visiting artist performed at their school. Or they discovered a passion for mathematics or creative writing through a program led by A&S students. Maybe their favorite physics teacher honed her teaching methods in a UW Physics workshop for K-12 educators. Or they never imagined applying to college until A&S mentors convinced them they could succeed.

The College offers dozens of K-12 outreach programs across the state, recognizing that when it comes to fostering curiosity, it’s never too early to start.
It’s 10 p.m. on a Thursday night. Outside the UW Women’s Center, all is quiet. But inside the building, high school girls crowd around a computer and cheer each other on as they do something memorable: submit their college applications.

The application party is an annual tradition for Making Connections (MC), a Women’s Center program that helps low-income, first-generation, underrepresented girls graduate from high school on time and enroll in college. In recent years, 100 percent of the students who participated in the program—about 100 girls at any given time—have gone on to college, with 60 percent choosing the UW.

The Women’s Center launched the Making Connections program after discovering that programs existed for stellar students and at-risk students, but not for students in the middle of the pack. “We don’t have a minimum GPA for participants,” says MC program manager Senait Habte, “but we are targeting that middle-level child.” Support for the program includes leadership gifts from Mikey Herring and Jim Phelps, Berthe and Stanley Habib, the Fordham Street Foundation, The Boeing Company, The Glaser Foundation, Safeco Insurance Company, and Wells Fargo & Company.

MC participants receive comprehensive services that include tutoring, a personal mentor, college tours, and assistance with college and financial aid applications. Field trips to local companies introduce the girls to science, technology, engineering, and mathematics careers. “We want them to see that this is something they could do,” says Habte. “We want to plant the seed.”

The girls’ mentors range from college undergraduates to graduate students to professionals—and include many former MC students. “The mentors talk about how they got to where they are now,” says Women’s Center director Sutapa Basu. “It’s good for the girls to hear from a mentor that they had some trouble areas in high school too, and what they had to do to get past that.”

The spirit of camaraderie that develops among the girls, and all the support from peers, staff, tutors, and mentors, has made the Making Connections program among the most successful of its type in the country.

“Most programs have a 60 percent success rate,” says Basu, reflecting on MC’s 100 percent rate for college admission. “Our program is so comprehensive. We go the extra step.”

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THE K-12 CLASSROOM

Go where the students are. That’s the thinking behind many Arts & Sciences K-12 outreach programs. The Burkenmobil brings fossils and cultural artifacts to public schools across the state, renowned musicians perform in local classrooms through Meany Center for the Performing Arts, and grade schoolers discover their inner philosopher thanks to Philosophy Department volunteers. Here’s some of the magic that happens during school visits.

PARTNERS IN TEACHING
Stepping into K-12 classrooms, UW undergraduates in the Community Literacy Program (CLP) experience a flood of memories. But they also see public education with fresh eyes. The program, offered by the Department of English in partnership with the College of Education and Seattle and Shoreline public schools, links coursework and internship experience. Students take a writing course focused on challenges and opportunities in public education while volunteering as tutors in high-needs classrooms.

“The experience of working in the schools is powerful,” says CLP director Elizabeth Simmons-O’Neill, principal lecturer in the Department of English, “One of the things that makes this program so effective is that it brings together experiential and academic learning in a serious way.”

Many CLP students—about half of whom are English majors—considering teaching careers—continue tutoring on their own or mentor new CLP students after the quarter ends. It’s a pleasure to see how insightful they are, and how dedicated to the educational process they become,” says the principal of a participating elementary school. “Our faculty has hooked on math teaching. Well, it’s okay too.

“The in-school residencies provide a learning experience to take place.”

Small kids, big questions
When her son began asking “deeply philosophical” questions at age four, Jana Mohr Lone set up a program at his preschool to initiate philosophical discussions. The program soon expanded to K-12 schools and led to the establishment of the UW Center for Philosophy for Children, which has introduced philosophy to thousands of elementary through high school students in more than 50 Washington schools, exploring questions about the self, justice, knowledge, beauty, and more.

“People sometimes think that what we do in elementary schools is baby philosophy—not the same as real philosophy,” says Mohr Lone (PhD, Philosophy, 1996), director of the Center for Philosophy for Children. “But in fact children are capable of way more than we think they are.” Private support makes possible weekly philosophy classes in K-12 schools, as well as an annual High School Ethics Bowl and graduate fellowship.

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Music to their ears
A drumbeat fills the halls of a Seattle elementary school. Young violinists gather around a talented string quartet at another school. All around the city, students meet world-class artists thanks to Community Connections, an artist residency program offered by Meany Center for the Performing Arts (formerly UW World Series) in partnership with Ladies Musical Club, Seattle Public Schools, and Seattle Music Partners.

Most of the participating musicians are the same renowned visiting artists that perform at Meany Hall. Others are students studying music and music education at the UW School of Music. Their school visits, which reach about 5,000 children each year, involve performances, lecture/demonstrations, and hands-on workshops.

“The in-school residencies provide opportunities for students to learn about other cultures through the language of music,” says Elizabeth Cole Duffell, Meany Center’s director of campus and community engagement. “We are developing future global citizens, and this arts are an amazing vehicle for that type of learning experience to take place.”

“Small opportunities can make a big difference.”

To reach motivated students prior to college, Connors, professor and chair of the Department of Classics, recently created a college-level course, Latin in the High School, through the UW in the High School program. (A dozen Arts & Sciences departments offer UW in the High School courses. See page 35.) The fall course is now taught at five Washington high schools, with students eligible to earn UW college credit.

UW undergraduate and graduate students also spread the Latin love, leading after-school Latin clubs in local middle schools, using games and activities to help club members learn Latin.

Connors knows firsthand the importance of such outreach programs, in high school, she was inspired by a teacher who spent hours teaching me and activities to help club members learn language. I care for the future,” could be Catherine Connors’ motto. It reflects both her love of Latin and her commitment to sharing it with future generations.

“Small opportunities can make a big difference.”

“Middle school is an important age to show students math can be fun and that there’s a lot you can do with it!” explains Julia Perlovsky, associate professor of mathematics and faculty coordinator for the outreach program. “The goal of these programs is not to bring up a generation of mathematicians per se, but rather to help students develop a love, appreciation, and understanding for mathematics that can be used anywhere.”

And if students become permanently hooked on math? Well, that’s okay too.

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LOOK WHO’S COMING TO CAMPUS

It’s not unusual to see elementary, middle, or high school students traipsing across the UW Quad or Red Square. Campus-based K-12 programs—from planetarium shows to museum tours to academic competitions—make the University a popular destination during the school year. Summer offerings include specialized camps and in-service programs for educators.

The Astronomy Department offers planetarium shows for K-12 classes, reaching nearly 100 school groups each year.

The Biology Department offers tours of the Biology Greenhouse to K-12 classes, often as part of their science curriculum. The program is in hiatus until the department’s new Life Sciences Complex is completed.

The Burke Museum hosts more than 30,000 pre-K–12 student experiences at the museum each year, including guided tours and interactive programs. It also offers themed camps during school breaks, and a year-round Girl in Science program for middle and high school students.

The Classics Department offers an annual conference for K-12 teachers, featuring faculty and teacher presentations and discussions.

The Communication Department hosts the Washington Journalism Education Association’s Journalism Day each year, and the UW Debate Union, housed in the department, hosts the annual Becky Galentine Memorial debate tournament.

The Dance Program hosts an annual visit for fourth and fifth grade dancers from Tacoma, with tours, dance classes, and sharing of choreography.

Henry Art Gallery offers tailored visits for K-12 classes, ranging from self-guided tours to workshops.

The Jackson School of International Studies offers dozens of professional development opportunities for K-12 educators, including workshops, seminars, and conferences.

The Language Learning Center sponsors STARTALK, a four-week summer program for Russian heritage high school students that combines immersion language study and STEM content, especially related to space exploration and aviation.

The Linguistics Department hosts the North American Computational Linguistics Olympiad, an international contest for middle school and high school students.

The Mathematics Department’s programs include Mathday, which attracts more than 1,400 high school students annually; the Summer Institute for Mathematics at the University of Washington, an immersive program for high school students; and Math Circle and Monthly Math Hour, a weekly program and monthly lecture series for middle school students.

Meany Center offers free matinees for students in grades 3–12, with half of its seats reserved for low-income or underserved schools.

The School of Music hosts non-competitive festivals for middle and high school students featuring master classes, lessons, and performances; middle and high school ensemble classes also visit campus to work with advanced music students and faculty.

Native Voices and the Communication Department, working with Pacific Northwest Native American teachers and community/tribal groups, offer digital storytelling workshops and programs in Native youth media.

The Philosophy Department’s Center for Philosophy for Children hosts the annual Washington State High School Ethics Bowl.

The Physics Department’s Physics Education Group offers programs for high school physics teachers during the summer and academic year.

Slavic Languages & Literatures hosts the American Council of Teachers of Russian’s annual Olympiada of Spoken Russian for Washington state high school students.

The Statistics Department offers tutoring, mentoring, and other support to high school girls to prepare them for college.

A dozen Arts & Sciences departments provide on-campus orientation for high school teachers offering college-level courses through UW in the High School. Some departments also invite UW in the High School students to attend a session of an equivalent UW course during the school year. Participating departments include Asian Languages & Literatures; Astronomy; Biology; Comparative Literature; Cinema & Media; Chemistry; Classics; English; French & Italian; Germanics; Mathematics; Psychology; and Spanish & Portuguese.

PARTNERS FOR EDUCATION
Though they appreciate the University’s inviting campus, Arts & Sciences faculty, staff, and students also look outward, seeking collaborations with community partners locally and internationally. Current projects include volunteering at K-12 schools, sharing encyclopedic knowledge of native plants with the public, developing solutions for nonprofit organizations, nurturing ties to heritage communities, and more.

As the University’s front porch, the College also welcomes visitors to campus to explore its many lectures, workshops, arts events, and clinic services. Because the College of Arts & Sciences isn’t just for enrolled students—it’s for everyone.
On any given day, visitors to the UW’s Seattle campus can view art at the Henry Art Gallery or Jacob Lawrence Gallery, spend time with dinosaur bones and cultural artifacts at the Burke Museum, and attend a music, theater, or dance performance. There’s so much happening it would be impossible to experience it all—but it’s worth a try.

The University’s thriving arts community benefits the entire region, with most offerings open to the public. Meany Center for the Performing Arts presents world-class artists from Yo-Yo Ma to Mark Morris Dance Company, while the Dance Program offers concerts featuring talented students, including former professional dancers enrolled in its MFA program. Digital Arts and Experimental Media (DXARTS) presents experimental music both on and off campus. The School of Music hosts more than 100 concerts annually—from classical piano to improvisational jazz to world music—with free admission to concerts in Brechemin Auditorium and Kane Hall’s Walker-Ames Room through June 2020, thanks to the generosity of donor Mina B. Person, a member of the Brechemin family.

The School of Drama presents plays, readings, and workshops in four campus venues, and collaborates with local theaters on additional productions, reflecting the School’s long-standing role in the Puget Sound theater community. (Many local theaters have been founded or led by Drama alumni.) And a recently launched interdisciplinary Musical Theater program combines music, drama, and dance for its annual production.

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The visual arts are celebrated through provocative exhibitions at the Henry Art Gallery—including a recent museum-wide installation by Ann Hamilton, described as “wondrous” by The Seattle Times—and engaging, often thematic shows of student and professional work at the School of Art + Art History + Design’s Jacob Lawrence Gallery.

All of these vibrant arts units are part of the College of Arts & Sciences. “Because they are grounded in our educational mission, there is an emphasis on experimentation and innovation,” says Robert Stacey, dean of Arts & Sciences. “Audiences can experience exciting, engaging work at reasonable prices, and—in the case of student performances—be among the first to celebrate emerging talent.”

Wondering what’s coming up? Check out ArtsUW.org, where you can find detailed event and ticket information. //
COMMUNITY COLLABORATORS

A CLINIC, A CLASSROOM, A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

Children with speech delays. People with hearing loss. Stroke survivors with communication challenges. The UW Speech and Hearing Clinic serves up to 100 people each week with these and other communication challenges. The clinic—part of the Department of Speech & Hearing Sciences (SPHSC)—provides a valuable service to the community and unparalleled hands-on experience for students training to become audiologists and speech-language pathologists.

Clients are seen by SPHSC graduate students, with experienced speech-language pathologists and audiologists supervising the sessions. Diagnostic and treatment rooms sport one-way mirrors so that faculty, students, and patients’ families can observe the sessions from a neighboring room.

“When clients come in, we assure them that they will receive excellent service while working with our students and that they will also play a unique role in preparing the next generation of clinical providers,” says clinic director Nancy Alarcon, who notes that clinic sessions cost a fraction of what patients would pay elsewhere. Every case is different, with clients ranging from adults who struggle to put words together after a traumatic brain injury, to preschoolers who require fun activities to stay engaged, to individuals who are dealing with hearing loss. Helping clients of all ages overcome a wide range of communication issues, SPHSC students become skilled and confident by the time they graduate. It’s a win-win situation, and one reason that clinic sessions cost a fraction of what patients would pay elsewhere.

An AIS spring quarter course, Powwow: Tradition and Innovation, dives into the history and significance of powwow, including how it has adapted and resisted eradication by the U.S. government. The course attracts up to 150 students from diverse backgrounds, many of whom volunteer for the campus event.

“This class may be the only chance for some students to interact with Native peoples,” says Jim LaRoche, who teaches the course. “We hope they will understand us a little more as a result.” //

STRANGE COUPLING FOR INSPIRED ART

When artists collaborate, they inspire each other. When one is a student and the other is established, there can be mentorship along with creativity. That’s the idea behind Strange Coupling, which bridges the gap between the UW and the greater Seattle art community by pairing about a dozen students with professional artists for a collaborative project. The program, an annual tradition since 2002, is entirely student run.

True to Strange Coupling’s name, students tend to be paired with an artist in a different field. Early on, most participants were visual artists, but performing artists are now in the mix as well, with a jury choosing the pairings. The project culminates in an off-campus exhibition of the resulting work—an exciting first for many students. //

MORE THAN A MAP

For most people, mountains of raw data are meaningless. But with analysis and mapping, the same data can be a powerful tool, as local organizations have learned while partnering with undergrads for the Geographic Information System (GIS) Workshop, a course offered by the Department of Geography.

“They come for the traditions, the community, the dancing, and the drum circles. And of course the scrumptious fry bread. Each year the UW Spring Powwow draws thousands of participants and spectators to campus. The multi-day affair is hosted by the student group First Nations@UW, with assistance from the Department of American Indian Studies (AIS) and the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity.

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“This class may be the only chance for some students to interact with Native peoples,” says Jim LaRoche (BA, Anthropology, 2006), a UW admissions counselor for multicultural outreach and recruitment and a former teaching assistant for the course. “We hope they will understand us a little more as a result.” //

Graduate students work with children (above) and older clients (left) in the UW Speech and Hearing Clinic. A neighboring room, outfitted with a one-way mirror (far left), allows for observation of sessions.

“IT’S A very consultant-like—experience for the students, as well as a way for under-resourced nonprofits to maximize what’s possible for them.” In the hands-on course, students learn to capture, analyze, and map various types of spatial and geographic data to meet the needs of real-world clients, from nonprofits to public agencies.

Students have examined how public space is used around Pioneer Square, analyzed data for local food banks to determine areas of greatest need, and worked with the nonprofit Real Change to identify untapped “hot spots” for selling weekly newspapers that provide a source of income for low-income and homeless people. The course benefits both the students and their community partners. “It’s a very consultant-like, community organizer-like experience for the students,” says geography professor Sarah Elwood, who teaches the course, “as well as a way for under-resourced nonprofits to maximize what’s possible for them.” //

A dancer performs at a UW Spring Powwow. Photo by Karen Orders.
Think you know Seattle’s University District? The neighborhood has its share of surprises, as School of Drama students learned while working on a year-long theater project, Skies Over Seattle, with community partners.

The project connected the campus and community through volunteerism and artistic creation. About two dozen students volunteered regularly for three social services organizations in the U District—Elizabeth Gregory Home, PearlDamour and engagement strategist Ashley Sparks wanted the community to know that we’re not giving them a voice,” says Friday. “They already have a voice.

“Our feeling was that we really had to have partners in Myanmar who would lead and help drive the project,” says Curran.

“Myanmar mid-career professionals, trained in the curriculum, began leading workshops through the country’s large network of libraries. The program has since prepared 300 master trainers, who have trained thousands of librarians and citizens.

“Myanmar was left behind during the digital revolution. No internet access, no smartphones, and a repressive military government monopolizing all communication—until a reformist government recently sped the transition to democracy.

“The increase in access to information has been breathtaking. Five years ago, just four percent of the population had mobile phones; now the figure is closer to eighty percent. But navigating the flood of online information can be problematic for new users with no experience assessing the trustworthiness of sites and sources.

To address Myanmar’s need for digital literacy, Jackson School of International Studies professors Mary Callahan and Sara Curran and colleagues in the Information School launched the Information Strategies for Societies in Transition initiative. Curriculum modules cover the basics of the internet, online etiquette, privacy and security, and other topics. The team developed the project in collaboration with local groups in Myanmar, with support from USAID, Microsoft, and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. “Our feeling was that we really had to have partners in Myanmar who would lead and help drive the project,” says Curran.

“A COMMUNITY ADDRESSES PTSD

Many Somali refugees, haunted by their war-torn past, suffer from posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and related problems. A new PTSD program developed by psychology professor Lori Zoellner and Somali Reconciliation Institute director Duniya Lang provides a trauma-focused intervention tailored for the Somali community in Seattle.

“We felt that having a program embedded in the faith would be critical for success.”

The six-week program, embedded in the Muslim faith, combines prayer, prophet narratives, and guided discussion. The sessions are held at a Seattle mosque, led by community members trained as lay leaders. “With a good portion of the Somali community identifying as Muslim, we felt that having a program embedded in the faith would be critical for success,” explains Zoellner.

Having completed a successful small pilot of the program with support from The Seattle Foundation and the Catherine Holmes Wilkins Foundation, Zoellner and Lang are eager to expand the pilot and run a randomized control trial to demonstrate the program’s effectiveness.

“What has been most encouraging has been how enthusiastic the group members and lay leaders have been,” says Zoellner. “They see it as a way that they can make change. It’s exciting to see how well it seems to fit their needs.”

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“"We wanted the community to know that we’re not giving them a voice. They already have a voice." People’s Harm Reduction Alliance, and ROOTS Young Adult Shelter—and then devised theater pieces inspired by the people they’d met as volunteers. The OBIE-winning duo PearlDamour and engagement strategist Ashley Sparks guided the creative process, with support from drama funds, including the Floyd U. Jones Family Endowed Chair in Drama and the School of Drama Innovation Fund.

“"As volunteers, we were all in learning mode, establishing bonds with people where we were volunteering,” says AJ Friday, a graduate student in the Professional Actor Training Program. “We wanted to establish a relationship on their terms.”

ROOTS executive director Kristine Cunningham appreciated that attitude, having seen her fair share of student projects. “Some have been wonderful, some have left us feeling like lab rats,” she says. “But the students from the School of Drama were different from the start. They arrived with a palpable openness to the experience that is our shelter.”

In spring 2016, the students performed the individual pieces for the community organizations they had come to know, then combined them into a single work for the public. “We wanted the community to know that we’re not giving them a voice,” says Friday. “They already have a voice." //

""Myanmar is currently going through a period of rapid transition, with a new constitution that aims to address past injustices and provide a foundation for future stability." We felt that having a program embedded in the faith would be critical for success.""
Advancing knowledge is at the heart of our work. While that often involves imagining the future, we also learn from the past.

In fields from music to American ethnic studies, Arts & Sciences faculty and students study what’s come before, discovering something new in the process. They capture stories that need to be told, breathe new life into past choreography, research cultural artifacts, and preserve endangered languages. As we barrel into the future, they remind us where we came from and why it matters.
When Burke Museum executive director Julie Stein wants to relax, she strolls through the museum’s storage areas, where drawers and shelves are filled to the brim with carved Haida masks and reptile fossils and mammal specimens and Palauan story boards. Her favorite? The aisle with woven baskets. “You’re surrounded by hundreds of them and they smell like grass and cedar,” says Stein.

The Burke’s collection includes more than 16 million objects, including collections of fossils, birds, fish, and Northwest Native art that are among the largest of their kind. Most items are hidden away in storage due to lack of exhibition space, but that will soon change. A new building is in the works, which will provide 66 percent more space as well as climate controls to protect the Burke’s irreplaceable collections.

“We want them to know about the research and magic that is happening behind the scenes.”

That magic includes research projects like the recent headline-grabbing discovery of the first dinosaur bone found in Washington state, now on display in the Burke’s lobby. Not all Burke research makes the news, but the museum’s curators—who hold joint appointments in the College’s academic units—are constantly advancing our knowledge of the natural world and diverse cultures by studying and adding to the Burke’s collections. The world-class collections are also used by visiting researchers, students, and the community.

Northwest tribes and Pacific Islander groups have particularly close ties with the museum. In recent years, the Burke has sponsored an exchange linking Washington’s Suquamish Museum with a new museum in the Philippines, and worked with Alutiiq community members from Kodiak Island to build a traditional Angyaaq boat—the first in more than 150 years—using techniques relearned through study of objects in the Burke collection. The Burke also coordinated a year-long exchange between the indigenous Ainu community of Japan and Washington state tribal groups, culminating with the Ainu participating in the Northwest coast tribes’ annual Tribal Canoe Journey.

Such collaborations will continue and the museum will remain open during construction of the New Burke, which is expected to open its doors in 2019.
In 1895, modern dance pioneer Lole Fuller thrilled audiences with a performance in a flowing gown that transformed into a butterfly and then a stunning flower as she gestured and twirled. Thanks to the Chamber Dance Company (CDC), contemporary audiences have the rare opportunity to see Fuller’s choreography and other seminal works of modern dance performed live.

“What I didn’t fully appreciate was how much dancing historic dances would teach the students about themselves. It made a lot of them feel more confident teaching dance history, and it expanded their stylistic range.”

The Dance Program has recorded every CDC performance dating back to the days of VHS tape and converted all of the recordings to digital format, creating an archive—housed in Suzallo Library—that includes more than 100 works from the modern dance canon, with choreography dating back to Fuller’s work in the 1890s. “It’s probably the largest self-generated modern dance archive in the world,” says Wiley. //

DANCES REBORN

Established in 1990, CDC has presented more than 100 works by pioneering choreographers from Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey to Twyla Tharp. The dances are performed by graduate students in the Dance Program’s MFA program—all former professional dancers.

When a dance dates back more than 70 years, it often needs to be reconstructed using notation or film footage, but it’s far more effective to have someone who performed the work teach it to the next generation. The Dance Program invites dancers from the original production—or who learned the dance from an original performer—to teach historic dances to UW students whenever possible.

“When we started, I thought the Chamber Dance Company was the graduate program’s gift back to the University,” says CDC director Hannah Wiley, professor of dance. “What I didn’t fully appreciate was how much dancing historic dances would teach the students about themselves. It made a lot of them feel more confident teaching dance history, and it expanded their stylistic range.”

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Buddhist Beginnings on Birch Bark

After acquiring 29 fragments of ancient manuscripts on birch bark scrolls, the British Library turned to experts in the UW College of Arts & Sciences to decode and study them. The manuscripts, which date from around the first century BCE, are the oldest surviving Buddhist manuscripts as well as the oldest manuscripts from South Asia.

“The significance of these manuscripts for Buddhist studies is potentially comparable to that of the Dead Sea Scrolls for Judaism.”

The UW established the Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project in 1996, with Asian languages and literature professor Richard Salomon and Collett Cox leading a team that has studied the manuscripts ever since, with support from the Henry Moore Foundation, the Dhammachai International Research Institute, and other sources. While some of the manuscripts are related to texts in other languages, many have no parallels in previously known Buddhist literatures. More recently discovered manuscripts have expanded the project’s scope to more than 75 scrolls and hundreds of smaller fragments.

“The significance of these manuscripts for Buddhist studies is potentially comparable to that of the Dead Sea Scrolls for Judaism,” says Salomon, the William P. and Ruth Gerberding University Professor. “These texts represent a substantial portion of the long-lost Gandhari Buddhist canon.” //

A Teen’s Epic Journey Goes Digital

When 19-year-old Alexander Svoboda wrote a diary about his travels during the Ottoman Empire, he could not have imagined his words inspiring a multi-year, international research project more than a century later. But the diary, written in colloquial Arabic, provides the unique perspective of a European raised in Baghdad who encountered Bedouins, political figures, and clergyman as he traveled to Paris by way of Damascus, Cairo, and Brindisi.

In an unusual collaboration, Iraqi researcher Nowfi Allawi and a team of UW faculty, staff, and students—led by Walter Andrews, professor of Near Eastern languages and civilization—digitized and enhanced the diary, adding interactive resources and visuals including a map of Svoboda’s journey, background information on his family, and historical implications of the text. The enhanced journal is available online and at the University Book Store through print-on-demand.

The Svoboda Diaries Project recently joined three similar projects in a digital publishing collaboration under the title Newbook Digital Texts, which is publishing digitized and enhanced versions of texts including 45 diaries written by Alexander’s father, Joseph Mathia Svoboda. As many as 35 undergraduates intern with the project each quarter. //

Yakima Valley’s Latino Legacy

If buildings could talk, historic migrant cabins in Washington state’s Lower Yakima Valley would have plenty to say. That’s the idea behind a historic preservation and oral history project launched by American ethnic studies professor Eranmo Gamboa, with grant support from the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Gamboa and his Chicano studies students are creating an electronic map that inventories more than 40 sites of historical significance throughout the diverse communities of the Lower Yakima Valley, and collecting oral histories of current and former residents to preserve the rich history of Latinos in the region. The maps and interviews—and a migrant labor cabin that Gamboa salvaged and restored—will form an exhibit in the Sea Mar Latino Museum and Cultural Center being constructed in South Seattle. Partners in the project include Heritage University, the preservation firm Artifacts, and Radio KDNA. //

Above: Catherine Cabeen in Lole Fuller’s Night. Photo by Steve Korn.
“Beyond my personal excitement about the collection, I feel a duty to this music,” says Richard Karpen, director of the School of Music and Aura Morrison Endowed Professor, who regularly teaches Partch’s compositions. “Artists, like scientists, owe what we do to previous generations. Imagine if a whole set of knowledge on which modern physics is based was in danger of disappearing. It’s that important to us to preserve Harry Partch’s music.” //

Percussion student Declan Sullivan plays Boo II, one of Harry Partch’s instruments. Photo by Isaiah Brookshire.

A WEB OF HISTORY
Type a phrase in a web search engine, and detailed information magically appears. But behind that magic is the vision and dedication of people like history professors James Gregory and Quintard Taylor, who have created robust websites with a historical focus.

The Civil Rights and Labor History Project includes nearly a dozen websites built by UW students under Gregory’s supervision. The sites focus on an array of interconnected topics, from labor history to antiwar activism to the Black Panther Party, told through text, photos, videos, oral histories, databases, and media compilations. They have garnered more than six million page views, ranging from K-12 teachers to author Toni Morrison, who reportedly used the online resources while researching a novel.

BlackPast.org, a site launched by Taylor in 2008, is an online resource for African American history. Hundreds of volunteer contributors create content for the dedicated site—now the largest free and unrestricted website on African American history, with nearly five million page views annually. The site includes entries about people, places, and events, as well as the complete texts of noteworthy speeches, a list of African American firsts, eyewitness accounts of key moments in African American history, and more.

“We needed to share this information, to challenge the notion that Black people are good at X but never Y,” says Taylor, the Scott and Dorothy Bullitt Professor of American History. “After working on this site, I’m hard pressed to find an area in which people of African ancestry have not been involved.” //

Thousands of languages are spoken in the world today, but up to 90 percent may be lost within a century. Arts & Sciences faculty are doing their part to breathe new life into endangered languages, from Ladino—historically spoken by Sephardic Jews in the Mediterranean region—to Native American and First Nations languages of the Pacific Northwest.

Devin Naar, associate professor of history and Isaac Alhadeff Professor in Sephardic Studies, became interested in Ladino through a set of letters written in that language after the Holocaust. The letters concerned the fate of his relatives from Salonica, Greece, once the largest Ladino-speaking community in the world. By the time Naar encountered the letters, written Ladino had been all but forgotten. Determined to read them, he taught himself Ladino in the traditional script.

As word of Naar’s ability to read Ladino spread, members of Seattle’s thriving Sephardic community sought him out to translate family documents and other materials dating back to the 1600s. With the help of a research assistant and support from donors to the Founders Circle, Naar began digitizing and cataloguing the documents. The resulting archive of Sephardic materials, among the largest in the U.S., is part of the Sephardic Studies Program in the Jackson School of International Studies’ Stroum Center for Jewish Studies.

Sharon Hargus, professor of linguistics, has no such written materials to work with. Hargus has spent more than 25 years studying Pacific Northwest languages that historically had no written form. “Oral language systems have provided a stable form of communication for generations,” says Hargus, “but now in many of the communities there just aren’t enough speakers to ensure survival of the native speech community.”

As a specialist in phonology, Hargus works with the few remaining speakers of endangered languages to study the patterning of speech sounds. Through that research, she identifies the language’s rules and creates a written form. She created a written system for Kwadacha Tse:k’ene languages, and suggested revisions to the writing system for Witsuwit’en.

“It is important for linguists to document the diversity of languages as much as possible while they still exist,” says Hargus. “A lot of information about human intellectual diversity has been lost forever because the languages have died out.” //

ABOVE: Devin Naar holds one of many Sephardic Jewish materials archived by the Sephardic Studies Program. Photo by Mary Gevin.
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