

st.ed's

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

Summer 2018

**Enzymes, soil
microbes and
other research**

Page 28



the **Connect Effect**

**BUILDING EACH STUDENT'S
NETWORK ONE YEAR AT A TIME**

Page 12

first look





Let the Sun Shine In

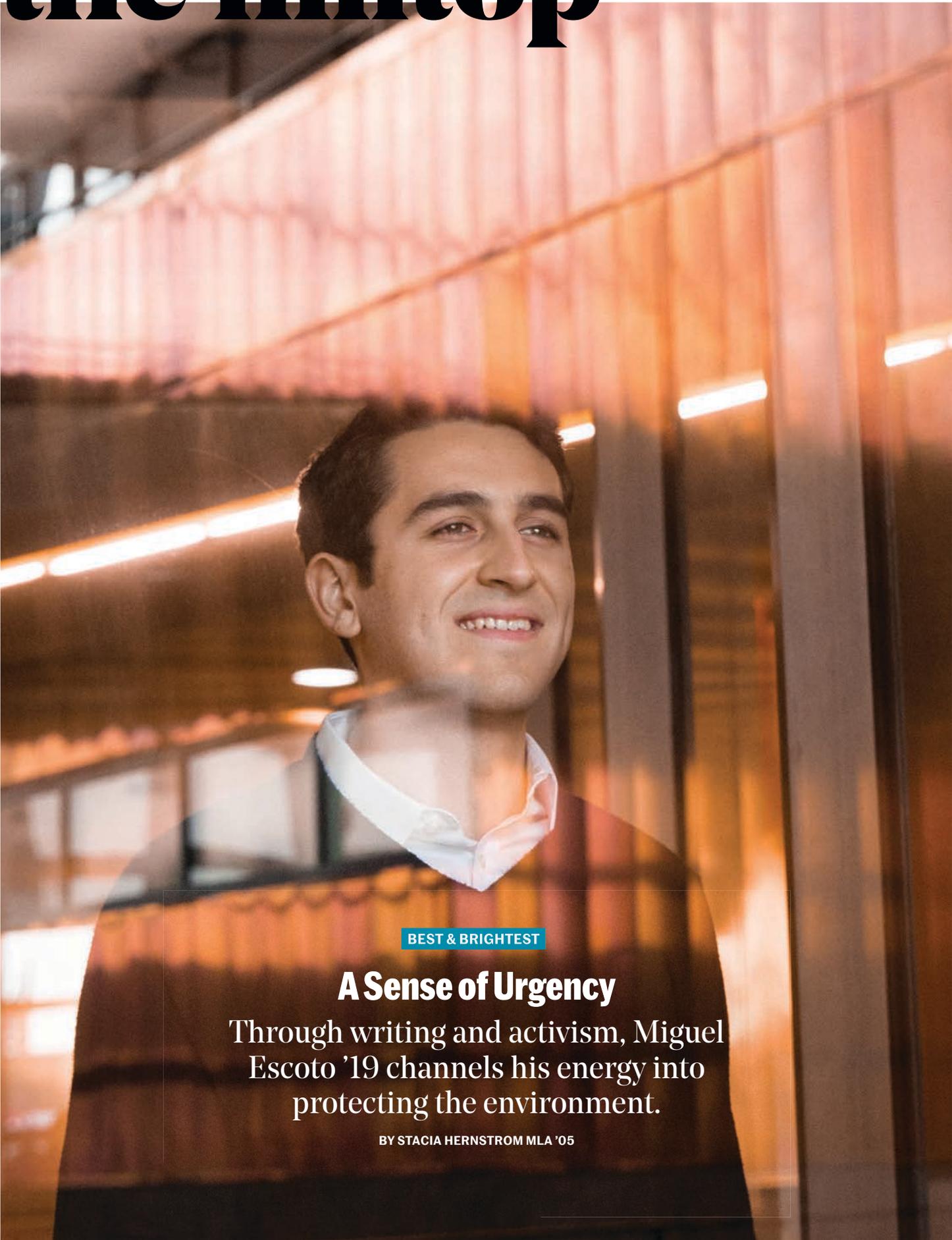
After a 16-month renovation and restoration, Holy Cross Hall reopened in January as the new home for the School of Arts and Humanities.

“More than anything, Holy Cross Hall needed to get natural light in it,” said architect Burton Baldridge. “We took that as the central direction for everything we did.” The team opened up the stairwell by removing the doors that separated it from the hallways. Closets on the landings — which had blocked the windows — became bright, inviting seating areas. And the team added a skylight in the roof. Now, sunlight pours into the stairwell and spreads into the hallways. Natural light even brightens a new

ground-level work space for faculty, where a ceiling skylight opens into the stairwell.

In addition to offices for the School of Arts and Humanities, the building now houses an Honors classroom on the top floor. Sunlit reading nooks are tucked into the ends of the hallways, and built-in seating in the entry spaces offers students space to rest between classes. Throughout the structure, which was built in 1903, carpet has been replaced with longleaf pine — the building’s existing subfloor that the architects removed, remilled and repurposed for a clean, modern look. The result is a Holy Cross Hall that’s restored to its 1903 glory, while serving the needs of St. Edward’s today.

the hilltop



BEST & BRIGHTEST

A Sense of Urgency

Through writing and activism, Miguel Escoto '19 channels his energy into protecting the environment.

BY STACIA HERNSTROM MLA '05

WHEN MIGUEL ESCOTO '19 walks into the dining hall for his all-time-favorite falafel and rice, the words in the mural painted inside South Congress Market stop him in his tracks. Every time. "The mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart." The iconic quotation from Blessed Basil Moreau, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, has permeated the culture of St. Edward's University since its very founding. Some 130 years later, his words still resonate.

"For me, that quote is the ethos of St. Edward's," says Escoto. "It reminds me every day that I can work for change in my world."

A vegan and environmental activist, Escoto has channeled his energy into green causes as president of Students for Sustainability. When representatives from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management came to town in February seeking input on the Department of the Interior's plan to open coastal waters to oil and gas leases, Escoto planned a poster-making session and organized student volunteers to protest at the meeting. "Oceans over Profit\$!" one sign read. "Stop CO2lonialism!" read another.

"It's calming and empowering to work with students who care about the same causes as I do," says Escoto, who has also organized park cleanups, neighborhood canvassing and a sustainability-focused writing contest. "There's a sense of urgency we have that older generations seem to lack. Working to preserve the environment feels like a distant goal to them, like something that can be put off until later. But, to my generation, not enough is being done. Putting it off means it will be too late."

A Political Science major and Writing and Rhetoric minor, Escoto is taking advantage of opportunities to combine his activism with academics. Last summer, he honed his social-justice writing skills at the New York State Writers Institute at Skidmore College, a monthlong program he attended thanks to a Summer Academic Excellence Award from St. Edward's. Through workshops and readings with the likes of author Adam Braver and poet Robert Pinsky, Escoto completed a chapter of a dystopian novel that explores the consequences of climate change.

"I see writing as a way to help others grasp tough issues," he says. "Learning how some of the country's best writers approach the creative process helped me see what might advance my own craft."

Escoto, a Student Government Association senator, is now putting those tools to work as an intern in Austin Mayor Steve Adler's office. Last fall, as a member of the communications team, Escoto filmed the mayor's speeches and edited them for social media platforms. He saw firsthand how the written word could "jump off the page and inspire people. Hearing Mayor Adler speak so passionately about renewable energy and Austin's future gave me real hope," he says.

In the spring, Escoto moved over to the mayor's policy team. He reviewed research for Austin's 100-year water conservation plan and solar power initiatives, in addition to reporting to the mayor about the City Council's Austin Energy Utility Oversight Committee meetings and recommendations.

"We think Miguel is fantastic — his commitment to sustainable energy and his interest in local government have added depth and capacity to our office," says policy aide Janine Clark, who is Escoto's internship supervisor. "We are excited to see what his future holds."

Ultimately, Escoto hopes to turn his passions for writing and activism into a political career. He plans to go to law school after he graduates next year and is considering running for office one day. He might also find time to finish that dystopian novel. "I'm a big believer that creative writing and political changes go hand in hand — think Orwell and Sinclair," he says. "I'm grateful for all the support St. Edward's has given me in achieving my goals in both areas. I'm positive I wouldn't be the same person without these experiences."

"For me, that quote [from Moreau] is the ethos of St. Edward's," says Escoto. "It reminds me every day that I can work for change in my world."

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On the Cover

The iconic Main Building at St. Edward's serves as a symbol for the strong connections students make while on the hilltop. Illustration by Gwen Keraval.

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Real-World Impact

Writing and Rhetoric major Geneva Kanu '19 applied for — and won — a \$20,000 grant to support Six Square, a nonprofit that preserves the cultural history of the six-square-mile “Negro district” created by Austin’s segregationist 1928 city plan. “I thought the Grant Writing class would give me real-world experience,” Kanu says. “But I never expected to win.”

AUSTIN CONNECTION

Winning Words

A Writing and Rhetoric major brings in \$20,000 for an Austin nonprofit.

BY ROBYN ROSS

ON A TUESDAY AFTERNOON in October, **Genevia Kanu '19** was studying in the library when her phone buzzed with an incoming text. The message was from Micah Evans, the fund development manager at the Austin nonprofit Six Square — Austin’s Black Cultural District.

“Put this on your résumé: You just won \$20,000!” Evans wrote. “We’ll celebrate in the office tomorrow.”

A giant grin spread across Kanu’s face. Her grant application to local foundation A Glimmer of Hope had been an assignment for her Grant Writing course. But it was also a real proposal that, if successful, would fund a summer program that matched emerging artists with experienced mentors. Now that program would become a reality, thanks to her hard work.

In the Grant Writing course, Instructor of Writing and Rhetoric **Beth Eakman** teaches her students how to write every part of a grant proposal, from the introduction to the line-item budget. Students use their skills on a grant application for an Austin nonprofit whose mission motivates them. For Kanu, it was Six Square, which preserves the cultural history of the six-square-mile “Negro district” created by Austin’s segregationist 1928 city plan.

Good persuasive writing is crucial to winning grants, Eakman says. “There’s \$20,000 on the table, and you get it, or you don’t,” she says. “The fact that our students are trained in rhetoric, argumentation and writing makes them really well suited to this kind of challenge. The class puts their training to

work to make the world a better place.”

Kanu’s dedication and meticulousness were integral to the application, Evans says. “She’s more detail oriented than I am, so I would send the draft to her and be like, ‘What did I miss?’ The amount of work she’s put in for us has been outstanding.”

Kanu enrolled in the course to get practical professional experience, partly because she hopes to establish her own nonprofit one day. When she read Evans’ text, Kanu says, “It felt like a success. It felt like my hard work had come to fruition.

“I thought, ‘Wow, I know what I’m doing. I feel equipped to go into the real world.’”

Class of 2018

Here's how three students are using their St. Edward's experience to propel themselves into the world.

BY BARBARA JOHNSON AND KATIE FINNEY



▲ Anthony Fragapane '18 Accounting Information Technology

How he set himself up for success: When Fragapane graduated, he had interned with hedge-fund Vida Capital, big-four accounting firm KPMG and the Austin tech company OpenStack. He spent a summer studying abroad in Japan, Malaysia and Thailand and traveled to Australia for his OpenStack internship. On the hilltop, he played club

lacrosse, was in the Accounting Club and was part of the Honors Program.

The hilltop network: Fragapane was introduced to KPMG senior associate **Alex Patterson '14** by Professor of Accounting **Louise Single**. Patterson had played club lacrosse at St. Edward's, too, and the pair quickly became friends. "We had mutual experiences and friends to bond over, which is what makes a small school like St. Edward's so special," he says. "Alex got me my first interview, helped me go the extra mile and pitched to the partners that I should be offered a full-time position."

What's next: That full-time position came through: Fragapane moved to Houston after graduation and started as an IT advisory associate at KPMG. He is also a candidate for the Certified Public Accountant exam and plans to finish his certification before the end of the year.



▲ Emiliana Uzcátegui '18 Education

How she's shaping future generations: Uzcátegui worked with students in an after-school program at St. Elmo Elementary School in Austin to use technology to create personal histories. The project helped her understand her role as an educator. "Students need more interactive learning and hands-on activities," she says. Uzcátegui plans to integrate songs and movement into her own classroom.

Her story: She created a personal history to share with the second-graders: Highlights included her theatrical debut in a preschool play, the day she moved to the United States from Venezuela, the moment she got a puppy and the discovery of an acceptance packet in her mailbox from St. Edward's. "That was one of the happiest days ever," she says.

"Many of my professors have turned into mentors and provided me with opportunities to grow professionally."

ANTHONY FRAGAPANE '18



◀ Grace Martine Akomezogho '18 Math

How science and math collide: Akomezogho completed an internship with Assistant Professor of Physics **Paul Walter**, during which she calculated the weight and drag flow of weather balloon-launching equipment.

The weather balloons were used to collect critical meteorological data, and Akomezogho's role helped ensure that the scientists were getting accurate results.

But she really loves math: As a student, Akomezogho

worked in the Math Lab on campus and served as a supplemental instructor for Calculus I. "Working as a math tutor helped me gain patience, organization, communication and leadership skills," she says.

What's next: The international student from Gabon, Africa, is applying to positions at actuarial firms, where she can put her math skills to use, as well as considering becoming a math teacher.

MY HILLTOP

The Artist and the Scientist

Joshua Rios '20 packs both of his loves — biology and photography — into a full day.

BY ERICA QUIROZ



Rios' day starts at 8 a.m. with class. During a break, he stops by Meadows Coffeehouse.



"Seeing all the green lets me know the plants are healthy," Rios says.



Rios says he is interested in the genetic aspects of plants and how that affects their production of essential oils.



"I want to get a master's degree and a PhD, which is something I never saw people do growing up," he says.



Rios says that the St. Edward's campus has felt like home since the moment he visited the university.



Rios spends a few hours in the greenhouse on the top floor of the John Brooks Williams Natural Sciences Center-North.



The Biology major is studying essential oil production in peppermint plants.



Rios combines his two passions when he can, taking photos of his progress in the research lab.



Rios says Professor **Bill Quinn** has pushed him to think more broadly about his post-graduation options.



Rios co-founded MUSE, a student organization that gives artists a place to express themselves and present their work to other students.



"I love science just as much as photography, and not many people get the opportunity to do both," says Rios, as he reflects on his day.

THINKING BIG

BEYOND PTSD

Associate Professor of Psychology Tomas Yufik counsels vets with PTSD — and researches how successful treatments can be applied everywhere from the ballot box to the dentist's chair.

BY STACIA HERNSTROM MLA '05



▼ Behavioral Neuroscience major **Libby Fish '18** is conducting research with Associate Professor of Psychology **Tomas Yufik** in a nitrous oxide study. “I plan to be a dentist, but I love learning about the brain and how different chemicals can alter behavior,” she says. “If we find that nitrous oxide is effective in treating depressive symptoms in people with PTSD, we could help improve so many lives — including those who put their lives on the line for this country.”

AS MANY AS 20 percent of veterans who fought in Iraq and Afghanistan have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). For Vietnam vets, that number is 30 percent.

Even more troubling than these statistics from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is the difficulty in diagnosing and treating PTSD, says Associate Professor of Psychology **Tomas Yufik**. Based on his clinical expertise counseling veterans (and nonveterans) coping with PTSD, anxiety, depression and a host of other psychological concerns, Yufik advocates a diagnosis framework that incorporates adaptable and comprehensive tools like empirically based personality assessments and personal interviews. “When veterans come in, it’s often because they’re required to,” he says. “They’ve experienced trauma, but they don’t want to talk about it. The more time you can spend with someone and the more assessments you can give, the stronger and more accurate your diagnosis is going to be.”

It’s time well spent, says Yufik, because rigorous evaluation leads to more effective treatment.

It also helps normalize what vets often see as a stigma attached to PTSD. “They may regard their struggles as personal weakness,” he says. “But the more we talk about it, the more they come to understand that their symptoms are totally normal — and treatable. They are not alone, and they can recover.”

Yufik relies on a variety of techniques, including cognitive behavioral therapies like replacing irrational thought patterns; increased exposure to triggering stimuli like crowded places; and relaxation and mindfulness training. He also researches how those techniques may help other populations cope with PTSD, as well as the effectiveness of new techniques that show promise.

That’s where his students come in. Currently, he is collaborating with students to study the prevalence of PTSD symptoms among Austin entrepreneurs, the efficacy of treating PTSD with dentistry mainstay nitrous oxide, and how elections can trigger PTSD. “A student will come to me and say, ‘Hey, I have this idea ...’” he says. “I help them explore every facet of it until, together, we make a decision about how we’re going to pursue it.”

Beyond the publications and presentations students inevitably add to their résumés, Yufik makes sure they connect the dots between research and practice. “Research informs and improves our ability to diagnose clients and identify promising new treatment methods,” he says. “Once students see how their work connects to people’s lives, their view of the field — and how they can contribute to it — broadens exponentially.”

Around Campus



MINOR MATTERS

The new Teacher Education minor provides students with a powerful career option: teaching in a K-12 setting. With the 24-credit minor, students in academic fields such as science and mathematics can now work toward becoming a certified teacher. “Our goal is to equip students at St. Edward’s with a career path that allows them to incorporate the values of academic excellence, diversity, collaboration and service to others,” says Dean of the School of Education **Glenda Ballard**.

11

student
research
projects

WINNING AT RESEARCH

The “winner effect” elevates an individual’s testosterone levels, which increases the likelihood of further victories. A yearlong research study by three students mentored by Assistant Professor of Psychology and Behavioral Neuroscience **Katherine Goldey** sought to find out if that effect could be simulated by mental imagery. The research was funded by the Dr. Emma Lou Linn Student/Faculty Research Endowment, which supports collaborative research in the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences. Since 2014, the grants have funded 11 student research projects, awarding \$33,000 to students and their faculty mentors.



VIVE LA FRANCE!

For the ninth year, faculty members from St. Edward’s are spending the semester in Angers, France, where the university has a flagship partnership. Associate Professor of Communication **Lori Peterson** and Associate Professor of Art **Hollis Hammonds** are each teaching three courses to the St. Edward’s students. “The students arrive jet-lagged and in various stages of culture shock,” says Peterson. “But throughout the semester, they mature into competent individuals. Angers is our laboratory where we get to practice our intercultural skills.”

16
months

DIGITAL DEGREE

Perhaps it’s only fitting that an MS in Digital Marketing and Analytics be delivered, well, digitally. This fall, The Bill Munday School of Business will launch the university’s first online degree. The program, designed by Professor of Marketing **Debra Zahay-Blatz**, was created with working professionals in mind and can be completed in 16 months. For more information on the program, visit online.stedwards.edu.



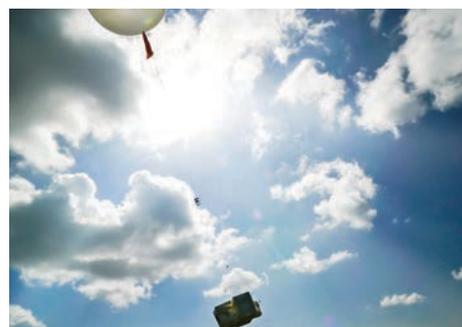
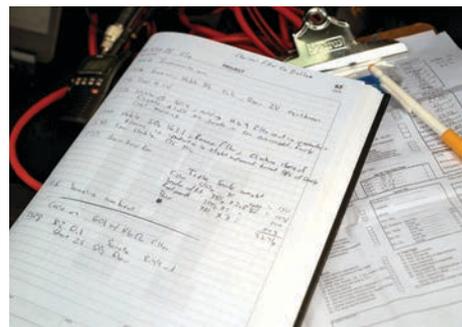
SUMMER FUN

Over the past two years, more than 150 students have been supported by more than \$600,000 in grants that fund summer research. Our favorite project? Pinpointing the minimum concentration of antimicrobial plant extract needed to treat cancer. Biology major **Katherine San Miguel ’18** and Professor of Biology **Trish Baynham** analyzed African plant specimens sent by the National Cancer Institute to determine their medicinal use.

“No other career provides a better opportunity to impact young lives in the classroom. Change a life — be a teacher!”

GLEND A BALLARD

Dean, School of Education



HAWAII DISPATCH

Fiery Volcanoes, Cooling Planet?

The solution to climate change could be found in a volcano.

BY STACIA HERNSTROM MLA '05
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LINDSAY NANCE

WITH MORE THAN 60 recorded eruptions since 1983 and intense activity this year, Hawaii's Mount Kilauea may hold solutions to one of humankind's most pressing problems — global warming. St. Edward's University Research Assistant **Mark Spychala** and atmospheric scientists from the University of Houston spent a week traversing the volcano in February, gathering data that could help scientists solve this existential mystery.

When Kilauea and similar volcanoes erupt, the sulfur dioxide they emit cools the atmosphere and temporarily reduces global temperatures by as much as 1 degree — a statistically significant amount, says Spychala. This cooling effect could potentially be leveraged by geoengineering projects to stop or slow Earth's unprecedented temperature rise. But first, scientists need to fully understand the phenomenon.

Enter the research scientists, who, along with School of Natural Sciences Dean **Gary Morris**, are part of a five-year, \$255,000 Universities Space Research Association grant. Morris has historically relied on a

two-instrument system to measure ozone and sulfur dioxide. But to meet the desired sensitivity for sulfur dioxide measurements in the lower stratosphere, he needed to improve the approach. Morris' innovation is now able to achieve the desired sensitivity for measuring sulfur dioxide with a single instrument.

Over eight days, Spychala and his colleagues launched two balloons and three tethered blimps that measured 10 atmospheric parameters. After some on-the-spot recalculations to account for elevation and density changes, Spychala got what he was looking for — accurate data from the experimental single-balloon technology.

"Weather balloons are a wonderfully old-school, relatively inexpensive and amazingly effective tool," says Spychala. Scientists don't have to put valuable satellites, drones, planes or pilots at risk to gather data, especially during a large-scale volcanic eruption. "Other than calibrating the sensor and running a trajectory projection, you just let a balloon go, wish it well and watch the data come back."



▼
Beyond Politics

“When individuals invoke Catholic values like dignity in their personal encounters, they act as neighbors rather than strangers regardless of legal status.”

THE HISTORY OF SANCTUARY

Visiting Assistant Professor of Religious and Philosophical Studies Gary Slater argues why an ethics of sanctuary cities is needed.

▼
Every year, the university chooses a Common Theme that creates conversation and fosters critical thinking. For 2017–2018, all incoming freshman read and discussed *Detained and Deported: Stories of Immigrant Families Under Fire* by Margaret Regan and explored the topic of Immigrant Voices by listening to speakers, exploring issues and considering multiple perspectives.

SANCTUARY CITIES ARE currently under pressure. This comes at a time in which questions of migration and identity are particularly fraught. But for undocumented immigrants, there is obvious suffering involved — suffering that, quite simply, must be heard, and which demands a response.

That response goes beyond politics, however. A robust ethics of sanctuary cities needs to account for the history of sanctuary, the meaning of neighborliness and the experiences of migrants within our communities.

In developing such an ethics, Catholic tradition stands out as uniquely promising. The tradition provides, among many other examples, the values of solidarity and dignity. Catholic bishops including Bishop Joe Vásquez of Austin have strongly defended sanctuary cities against federal authorities. Yet an ethics of sanctuary cities derived from Catholic teachings creates friction between two general principles: the right of migrants to relocate, and the right of nations to secure their borders.

My research addresses this contradiction by tracing the history of the term “sanctuary” back to its roots in Roman Latin. The word “sanctuary” derives from the Latin *sanctus*. Yet the word also has roots in another Latin term: *sacer*.

There is an ancient split between the terms *sacer* and *sanctus*. These terms have a common root in the meaning of “sacred,” yet historically, their etymologies diverged into an almost diametric opposition. Whereas *sacer* described persons set apart and given over to the gods in a manner that implied possession, *sanctus* described persons set apart with the gods in a manner

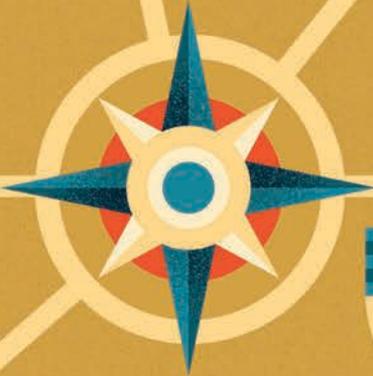
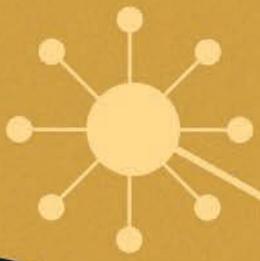
that implied protection. Linguistically, *sacer* and *sanctus* merge together in the word “sacrosanct,” conveying both isolation and empathy, joy and suffering.

The modern counterparts to these terms exist in an opposition between sanctuary and camp. The migrant camp is a place of lawlessness and danger, while the sanctuary city is — or at least aspires to be — a place of protection and shelter. Yet both places are ambiguous territory, and both imply exemptions from civil law.

As to what this means for an ethics of sanctuary cities, sanctuary policies should be judged against the meaning of the sacred, in all its contradictions. This means employing principles derived from civil law and politics to point beyond civil law and politics, treating immigrants as community members, neighbors and friends.

In light of this, Catholic values connected to natural law — a Catholic tradition that certain principles are naturally and universally true — can and should be summoned. Indeed, sanctuary policies represent a limit of civil law, so a more profound natural law must be upheld: When individuals invoke Catholic values like dignity in their personal encounters, they act as neighbors rather than strangers regardless of legal status. The *homo sacer* — that is, the undocumented migrant — can then be brought into a framework that extends beyond civil law and politics.

With *sacer* and *sanctus* so linked, a situation in which the migrant is devoid of legal status and community recognition becomes one of protection, security, belonging and participation.



* ANGERS *





WHO YOU KNOW

St. Edward's emphasizes the power of its community and the strength of its network. But what does that look like in the real world? We asked students to show us how they turn connections into opportunities.

BY ERIN PETERSON
ILLUSTRATIONS BY GWEN KERAVAL

W

WHEN **NICOLE SELIGMAN '12** was a student, she knew that Visiting Instructor of Writing and Rhetoric **Beth Eakman** wanted students to thrive in her classes — and beyond them. Eakman spent hours teaching students the nuts-and-bolts tactics that would help them land jobs in the publishing world. She brought young professionals into her classroom who could share their experiences transitioning from students to working writers and editors. When Seligman asked for help sharpening her résumé and cover letter for an internship, Eakman spent more than an hour helping her make it perfect. And Eakman was a champion of Seligman's blog, *Feel Good, Dress Better*. Such support cemented a genuine relationship between the two that continues today.

Seligman attributes Eakman's teaching and support as a key reason she is now executive editor at Junebug Weddings, an online wedding planning site known for its strong editorial work. "Beth was just such a huge resource and advocate for me," Seligman recalls.

Now Seligman is paying it forward. She is a regular visitor to Eakman's classes, where she shares her best advice about landing publishing jobs and mines the classes to find talented interns for her team at Junebug. "I know [students from St. Edward's] are going to be capable," she says of the university's deep talent pool. "Hiring other [Hilltoppers] has been really fun."

Seligman and Eakman represent just one tiny piece of the power of networks and community at St. Edward's. The small but mighty campus helps students truly get to know faculty and staff members. These deep and genuine relationships allow Hilltoppers to make the connections they need to find the perfect club, tackle interesting research, land great internships and get meaningful jobs after graduation.

In a world that values who you know almost as much as what you know, St. Edward's is making sure that students graduate with both the knowledge and the network to succeed.

WHY BIGGER ISN'T BETTER

DEVELOPING A MEANINGFUL network of people willing to help advance your career takes more than clicking a button to accept a LinkedIn request or sending a generic application to a general email address. Instead, it starts with a real human connection.

Just ask **Jack Musselman**, director of the Center for Ethics and Leadership and associate professor of Philosophy. Earlier this year, for example, Musselman was working in his office when an admission representative, a mom and her prospective-student daughter stopped by. They had a few questions about majors and law school.

Musselman, who teaches a popular philosophy of law class and frequently works with current students who plan to attend law school, was happy to help. He spent nearly 20 minutes with the trio, walking them through important considerations and printing out a few documents he'd developed for the most common questions he answered.

"I could multiply that story by 100," he says of the frequency of such interactions, both with current students and prospective ones. And it's in those conversations — illuminating, vulnerable and real — that Musselman gets to know the students, their dreams and their goals.

That genuine connection makes it easier for Musselman to make recommendations and assist a student who is ready to take the next step, which might include connecting the student to one of the dozens of lawyers he knows personally. "You've got to believe in teaching and talking to the whole person," says Musselman of his philosophy about working with students. "On the practical end, that means putting in the time." Such work is possible, he says, because St. Edward's is a small university that emphasizes the value of personal interactions. Class sizes often hover around a dozen, and "close-knit" is one of the most frequently applied descriptions of the community.

Even more than that, there is an ethos of advocacy, mentoring and compassion among professors and administrators who see themselves as doing more than simply filling a professional role. They see students as more than a number or a grade.

Associate Dean of Students **Connie Rey Rodriguez '04, MAHS '06** knows the truth of that statement both as an alumna and as an administrator. As a student, she appreciated how often she saw administrators and professors outside their offices and classrooms and engaged in the many facets of the St. Edward's community. Today, she models that in her own work. "I play intramural basketball with the dean of students [**Steven Pinkenburg**], and I'm often in one of the dining halls for lunch," she says.

Her deep familiarity with campus means that she can provide the kind of support that really helps. For example, when a transfer student recently came to her office with questions, she was quickly able to find him an intramural sport he was interested in joining — along with the name of someone who could connect him to a comic book club. "It's not just that we want students to see us out [on campus]," she says. "It helps us to understand what's happening," says Rodriguez.

Amy Adams, an adjunct instructor of Rhetoric and Composition, agrees that there is real value in integrating herself into the community. Students find her in her classroom, but they're also just as likely to find her conducting office hours at Jo's Coffee, sitting in the bleachers at softball games, and even doing a fashion shoot for *Cabra*, the school's digital fashion magazine. When it comes time to write one of countless recommendation letters for her students, she draws on these experiences to paint a fuller and more vibrant picture of each student she's endorsing. "I'm a champion of these students," she says.

TIMING MATTERS

MARY KATHRYN COOK '17 felt adrift when she sank into the red leather chair in **Steve Rodenborn's** office in the spring of 2016. Cook, a double major in English Literature and Catholic Studies, had no idea what she was going to do after graduation — and she felt like all her peers had figured it out. She hoped that Rodenborn, whose charisma in the classroom had helped persuade her to add Catholic Studies as a second major, might be able to guide her.

Rodenborn, who is an associate professor of Religious Studies, didn't have answers, but he did have questions. After 30 minutes of gently prodding her about what excited her, what she'd done so far and what she didn't want to do, Rodenborn helped her see clearly that grad school — a common path for students like her — was not in her future. "I wanted to go and serve in the world," she wrote in a blog post about that conversation. "I didn't want to resign myself to writing papers about serving the world."

Rodenborn suggested that she look into Jesuit Volunteer Corps (JVC), a year-long service program she'd never considered. For Cook, it was a life-changing moment — she was later accepted into both the 2017–2018 and the 2018–2019 JVC program.

For Rodenborn, it was all part of his role

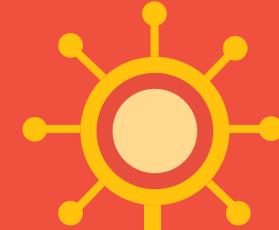
FRESHMAN CONNECTIONS

Relationships with peers, professors and alumni set Hilltoppers up for success.

Nybro joined the St. Edward's jazz ensemble shortly after arriving on campus. It was there that Nybro, a trumpeter, met senior baritone saxophone and bass guitar player Daniel Gallarda '18.

Gallarda introduced Nybro to the St. Edward's chapter of the American Marketing Association (AMA), a club designed to help students hone their skills for jobs in marketing and communications.

At an AMA meeting, Nybro learned about an internship opportunity with Nathalie Phan '16, founder and CEO of On Vinyl Media. He worked with Phan as a content curator, helping connect businesses with the local music scene.



Nybro excelled in a first-year writing course, and Visiting Instructor of Writing and Rhetoric Manuel Piña asked him to team up with Associate Professor Moriah McCracken, who directs the First-Year Writing Program, to help improve it. Next year, Nybro plans to complete an internship abroad in Angers, France.



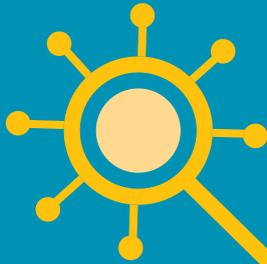
ALEK NYBRO '21
MAJOR: Marketing
HOMETOWN: Cedar Park



“What I’m doing freshman year is going to impact the internship I might get senior year or the jobs I’ll apply to after graduation.”

SOPHOMORE IN CHARGE

Coveted opportunities take shape as students find their home.



A course in rhetoric and composition Patel's freshman year connected her to Adjunct Instructor Amy Adams, whom Patel met frequently for her office hours at Jo's Coffee. Patel credits Adams for boosting her confidence as a writer and communicator.

Patel spent a semester as a member of the St. Edward's dance team, the Topperettes, where she met Marlaina Widmann '19. Widmann encouraged Patel to join the Dean's Leadership Council for the School of Behavioral and Social Sciences, a group that organizes campus events on an array of topics.

MONICA PATEL '20
MAJOR: Social Work
HOMETOWN: Katy

"I remember being on a campus tour. It felt so welcoming, and I knew I would fit in here."



While on the Dean's Leadership Council, Patel reached out to Yufik, who agreed to give a talk called "Relationships and Serial Killers." The talk, says Patel, was the most well-attended event that the committee hosted.

Patel took a Freshman Studies course for the social sciences called Family and Fantasy that was co-taught by Associate Professor of Psychology Tomas Yufik, who told captivating stories in class.

at St. Edward's. "Oftentimes, you get to a point [in conversations like these] where a student's face lights up," he says. "When that happens, my job is to be a mirror for students, and to help them see where they need to go. If it's an area that's in my discipline, I can help identify options, and if it's not, I can suggest another professor who can."

Rodenborn says such moments can feel magical — and they're one of the essential ways that St. Edward's faculty members serve their students. "If [students] don't have the experience yet, they can't know what opportunities are out there," he says. "Faculty can say, 'You don't know about this yet, but look into it. You might find that it's what you've always wanted to do, you just didn't know it existed.'"

Asking for help isn't always an intuitive idea for students, who arrive at St. Edward's with intelligence and drive that has often allowed them to succeed in their previous endeavors through sheer force of will. Vice President for Student Affairs **Lisa Kirkpatrick** says there's often an "unlearning" process that students go through as they transition from trying to do everything themselves to building meaningful and powerful alliances with faculty, staff and other students. "When I talk to freshmen, I say, 'You think you came to college to learn how to do everything independently,'" she says. "But eventually, students realize that it's not about learning to do everything alone and by themselves. It's about realizing that they need other people along the way," she says.

Kirkpatrick, for example, has done extensive preparation with high-achieving students seeking jobs. She's done mock interviews with them, helping them tweak their answers and their delivery so they can make the best possible impression. She's advised others on professional dress, leading with self-confidence and respectfully engaging with people in higher-level roles.

There is no exact template for these kinds of teaching moments, says Kirkpatrick, nor should there be. Instead she tries to deeply understand where a given student is at, how she can help and what that support might look like. "It takes all of us here at St. Edward's to make sure that students get what they need in the right place at the right time," she says. "The overarching goal

is to understand what each person brings to campus, and provide the personalized education that prepares them for doing good in the world."

Sometimes, the support that students need is not seeing an array of new options or learning the technical skills to achieve a goal. They just need the reassurance from others that what they're aiming for — the fellowship, the internship, the name-brand graduate school, the job — is well within their capabilities.

"Students can be quite humble," says Rodenborn. "Sometimes they need for us to confirm that these world-class opportunities are the ones they should be shooting for," he says. "We can tell them: 'We know what it means to go to these programs and who they will accept. You are that student. You are ready for this.' When they hear that, they really go for it. They just need a few people to say that they can do it."

BUILT FOR A LIFETIME OF SUPPORT

ST. EDWARD'S IS purpose-built to foster the kind of meaningful connections that help students make the most of every minute on campus, and those relationships rarely end when students toss their caps at graduation.

Eakman, for example, invites all of her students to friend her on Facebook once they graduate. They frequently share job opportunities with her that she passes along. "Our alumni often actively recruit our grads because they know how rigorous the writing major is and how well it prepares them for professional writing jobs," she says, noting that companies including National Instruments, Junebug Weddings and War Games Video Games have hired a series of St. Edward's alumni. "There are entire lines of Hilltoppers who've been recruited and hired by Hilltoppers. Often, alumni learn to take on that helpful role themselves. In 2012, a student from one of Eakman's classes created an Eakman Alumni Association Facebook group. Now boasting more than 100 members, it's a hub for alumni seeking and offering jobs in publications and communications.

Eakman is delighted by all of it — and she loves that it's all part of being a Hilltopper. "There's a real sense of community here," she says. "Helping one another is part of the soul of this university."

BUILDING A BETTER NETWORK AT ANY AGE

Maybe you want a new job. Maybe you want a new career. Maybe you just want to investigate a new field.

Whatever the need, your network can help. Director of Career and Professional Development **Ray Rogers** offers a few pointers for developing a killer network that's ready when you need it.

Start where you are. Everyone has a network, even if you don't realize it. If you're looking for a job in the tech industry, for example, you may not have friends or family directly involved in the field — but that doesn't mean you've hit a dead end. "You can always ask people if they know someone who could help," says Rogers. "And there are professional organizations for every field in the world. Join, volunteer and get involved."

At networking events, focus on quality. Just because a room is buzzing with hundreds of potential clients, customers or employers doesn't mean you need to connect with all of them. In fact, you shouldn't. "If you can make just one or two meaningful contacts, then that's a success," says Rogers. "Take small, consistent steps."

Stay connected. When you meet someone interesting, don't just nab a business card and let the relationship go cold. Every so often, send an article that person might find valuable, let the person know what you're up to or meet up at an event. "Be more than just a connection on LinkedIn," he says. "Stay on their radar."

Play the long game. There's no question that your need for a network is most acute when you're looking for a new job, but those who stay focused on their network for the long term are poised to reap the most significant dividends. "Even if someone you meet can't be of assistance to you right now, you don't know where you — or they — are going to be a year from now," he says.

Do you have a story about a connection at St. Edward's that helped you land your dream job, a long-term volunteer gig, a powerful mentorship or other meaningful activity? Email the editor, Frannie Schneider, at frannies@stedwards.edu, and we'll share some of the best responses.

JUNIOR RESULTS

Teams of experienced and smart pros help students reach their goals.

He has gotten to know a huge swath of campus thanks to his job in the scheduling office with **Monica Hernandez**, an event coordinator at the Robert and Pearle Ragsdale Center. De Col loves talking to people who are in charge of things so he can help them get the results they want.

During his first week at St. Edward's — and in America — de Col learned the ropes from his tennis coach (and fellow Brazilian) **Estevam Strecker**.



He chatted with **Genaro Lopez**, his instructor for a Science in Perspective course, and asked about internships. Lopez helped him look for internships in his area, and he's hoping one of these connections leads to an internship this summer.



MATEUS DE COL '19

MAJORS: Economics and Political Science

HOMETOWN: Caxias do Sul, Brazil



He landed a Faculty Scholarship with the help of Associate Professor **Jennifer Veninga**, who taught an Introduction to Religion class that inspired de Col.



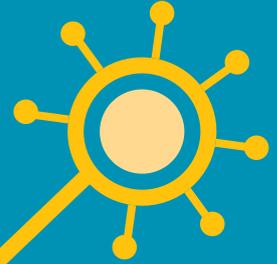
“Once people know who you are ... I think they can be more open to helping you achieve those ambitions.”

SENIOR SUPPORT

Four years of connections come together to launch students into the world.

“I really love Dr. [Wesley] Pollitte. His classes got me interested in the mathematics behind marketing. I was surprised how much I enjoyed it.”

Guevara loved marketing classes with Wesley Pollitte, Juli James and Debra Zahay-Blatz, which led her to join the university's American Marketing Association chapter.



She learned about a music marketing internship with Visit Austin at an AMA meeting and landed the position. She works on the website, databases and artist itineraries.



Guevara worked on the Hilltop Welcome Team as a family orientation leader, where she coordinated the parent portion of orientation.

With the help of Justine Hernandez, an associate professor of University Studies, Guevara launched the St. Edward's chapter of the League of United Latin American Citizens.

ASHLEY GUEVARA '18
MAJOR: Marketing
HOMETOWN: Dallas







How Stories Change Lives For Samantha Mendoza '15, listening to powerful voices is how social change begins.

BY SAMANTHA MENDOZA '15
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALESSANDRA ARGENTI



It was seventh period, and I was growing exasperated. The midday September sun was beating down on Orkeeswa Village in Monduli, Tanzania. Small beads of perspiration ran down the arch of my back as thick rays of sunlight pushed their way through the open windows of Orkeeswa Secondary School. On most days, I basked in this time of day: the view of Mount Meru peeking over the horizon, the sound of our youngest students singing songs about long vowels, the smell of lunchtime rice and beans still lingering in the air. But on this particular day, I felt defeated, and it was because of the girl, hunched over with her head on her desk, in the very back of the 12th-grade classroom.

Naserian was a notoriously inattentive high-school senior. If her class was given extra study time, she dozed off. If you passed her during morning teatime, she rarely offered you a smile. And if you attempted to talk with her, she sometimes feigned interest. Her sixth-grade teacher once told me that she was surprised Naserian had made it to her final year of studies; less than 7 percent of girls in rural Tanzania continue their education past 10th grade.

Yet here she was, in her blue-skirt-and-red-sweater Orkeeswa School uniform. She handed me her exercise book as she stared disinterestedly at its scribbled pages. I was leading a writing workshop on personal statements with her class, asking them to answer the prompt, “What experience in your life has been the most meaningful to you and why?” Most students gave thoughtful responses: how losing an entire herd of grazing cattle during a rainy-season storm taught the value of persistence, or how helping treat a young boy who had been bitten by a snake in the village inspired one to become a doctor. Naserian finished her essay before most of the class even began.

As I reviewed her story, which was about her teaching experience at a local primary school as part of Orkeeswa School’s community service program, the scrawled handwriting amounted to no more than 300 words.

“OK, Naserian,” I began gently, searching carefully for the right words. “This is a good start, but, well, is this really what you wanted to write about?”

“Yeah, I guess,” she responded. I tried to think of ways to get her to dig deeper and actually want to write this paper. I asked her what she wanted to be when she grew up, and she said she hoped to become a lawyer. When I asked her why, she paused for a few moments before answering.

“Because my aunt was forced to get married when she was 15, and I want to protect women in my community from the practice of

child marriage so that no one else will have to go through what she went through.”

I stood in stunned silence for a moment. I had just arrived in the country a few weeks before as a Princeton in Africa fellow. I knew that child marriage is common in Tanzania. Government statistics show that at least one in 10 Tanzanian women will marry before the age of 18. But hearing Naserian so boldly and confidently articulate how committed she was to improving the lives of women in her community — women just like her aunt — made me realize exactly what this young woman was fighting for each and every day that she sat in the back of sunlit classrooms.

“That sounds like it really means a lot to you,” I said. “I think that would make a great essay.”

“So ... do I have to do it again?” she asked.

“I won’t make you do anything,” I responded. “But I think if that’s what you’re passionate about, it would make you feel better if you expressed it.”

I didn’t expect to hear from Naserian about her paper again. But on the second day of the writing workshop, she called me over to her desk, eager to show me the first line of her new essay. It was as if a spark within her had been ignited.

“One day, when I was in 2nd grade, my aunt was forced to get married just before she could finish primary school,” it began. She went on to explain to me in detail how her aunt was at the top of her class, how she had dreams and goals and the opportunity to have a better life by completing her education. But all of that was taken from her, when her father’s friend took her away to become his third wife.

I asked her questions about how she felt and what words she would use to describe her aunt. Naserian wrote down the answers on a blank page in her exercise book, and the words didn’t stop.

Throughout the rest of the class, she raised her hand every few minutes to ask for feedback as she fleshed out the narrative, paragraph by paragraph, ultimately writing a powerful story that described her vision for a safer community for girls and women.

“I want to help Maasai girls who are affected by this bad custom,” she wrote. “That is why I work so

**Gradually,
the stories
communities
tell themselves
about women
and girls get
rewritten.**



Naserian poses with her handwritten book, "Let Us Have One Voice," about gender inequality. She graduates in June, something less than 1 percent of girls in Tanzania have the opportunity to do.



Ansila, an 11th grader, gives a speech to her peers to become the student body president.



Tumaini, a 7th grader, is one of 150 girls pursuing an education at Orkweesa School in a rural Maasai area, where young girls often face gender discrimination and the risk of early marriage.

hard in school, and that is why I will fulfill my dream of becoming a lawyer in my community.”

THE POWER OF STORYTELLING

I have always believed in the infinite power of storytelling: in the idea that sustainable social change begins when everyday citizens have the courage, strength and resilience to share their stories with the world.

When I was a child, I would confidently tell anyone who would listen that I knew what I wanted to be when I grew up: a reporter. For my middle-school career day, I shadowed a local television news anchor. For a high-school biography project, I wrote an essay about Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, the investigative reporters who broke the Watergate scandal. And in any spare moment I had, I devoured literary nonfiction. I still remember sitting in a high-school history class, reading harrowing firsthand accounts of unfathomable devastation from survivors of the Rwandan genocide, wondering if future tragedies might be prevented now that we have heard their stories.

My interest in journalism continued to build at St. Edward’s. As one of the co-founders of the university’s chapter of It’s On Us, an Obama-era initiative to end campus sexual assault, I witnessed how assault survivors were fighting to make campuses a safer place for women by changing the narrative about campus misconduct. As a reporter for the university’s student-run newspaper, *Hilltop Views*, I covered a keynote address by Texas State Sen. Wendy Davis, who had gained national attention months earlier for her 11-hour filibuster of abortion legislation. And in an Honors course called Justice, Injustice and Faith, I examined how individuals who spoke

openly about injustice contributed to post-conflict reconciliation movements like the Gacaca courts in Rwanda, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa. Through all of these experiences, I saw that people coming together to listen to previously unheard voices might be the most powerful form of justice there is.

I started to see cracks in my theory when I began working on my Honors thesis on problematic practices in international development. I questioned whether nongovernmental organizations that claim to help developing countries take the time to listen to and understand the communities they enter.

It wasn’t until two years after graduating from St. Edward’s that I finally found answers in a small blue-and-white school tucked at the end of bumpy dirt roads and behind sprawling fields of maize and beans in rural Tanzania.

The Orkeeswa School is a co-ed, community-collaborative secondary school operated by the Indigenous Education Foundation of Tanzania (IEFT). Founded in 2008, the organization provides affordable, holistic education to an underserved Maasai community that has graduation rates of less than 1 percent and one of the highest child marriage rates in the world. IEFT works directly with community leaders and parents to develop strategic goals for the organization. It provides a safe space for students to question and critically analyze issues they identify in their communities. It empowers students to become voices for change by giving them the tools and support to facilitate meaningful conversations about these issues with family members. And most importantly, it recognizes, nurtures and harnesses the potential of young girls so that they can express their goals and dreams while remaining proud and



Orkeeswa School's life-skills program breaks students into small group, where girls discuss topics like sexual and reproductive health, identity, culture, and nutrition.



In addition to her communications role, Mendoza facilitates the all-girls life-skills groups, teaches English to 6th graders, and manages a student reporting staff.

deeply invested in the preservation of their culture.

As girls at Orkeeswa conduct science experiments, coach basketball at neighboring primary schools, start small businesses, write original screenplays, perform in school dramas, create art projects and learn photography, they grow and develop as scholars and leaders in their communities. They pursue interests and passions that they may not otherwise have cultivated. And with each achievement, each three-pointer on the basketball court or high mark on an exam, these students challenge the community's perception of what girls can and should accomplish.

REWRITING THE NARRATIVE

It's now my job as IEFT's communications fellow to share our students' stories — their journeys, their challenges, their successes and their dreams — with the world, amplifying their voices for a global audience. I interview young women about what it's like to be the first person in their family to complete primary school. I have conversations with aspiring doctors and future presidents. I photograph students who are mentoring young girls in their community so that they, too, can defy statistics and continue their education past 6th grade. I speak to so many girls who tell me, "I am the first in my family of seven to make it this far in my studies, and I won't stop until I prove to other girls in my village that they can achieve their dreams, too."

I recognize that social transformation does not happen overnight, or within the span of a one-year fellowship. But it does begin when a young Maasai girl becomes the student body president at her school. It continues when a small group of students write, direct and produce an original short film about early marriage,

▼ Samantha Mendoza '15

MAJOR:
English Writing and Rhetoric

HOMETOWN:
China Grove, Texas

GLOBAL EXPERIENCES AT ST. EDWARD'S:
Uganda, Rwanda, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, India and South Africa

GRADUATE SCHOOL:
Master of Arts in Journalism from Syracuse University

DREAM JOB:
International reporter and magazine writer

FAVORITE REPORTER:
Ellen Barry, chief international correspondent for *The New York Times*



Many students walk a total of 9 miles to and from school each day. They are encouraged to bring what they learn to their communities, parents and siblings.

and use it to facilitate dialogues with community leaders by hosting screenings around their villages. It continues still when girls write original screenplays in their Screenwriting Club about the effects of gender discrimination. And gradually, the stories communities tell themselves about women and girls get rewritten.

Having the privilege to learn from these incredible young role models has reminded me of how important it is to listen rather than speak and has made me even more committed to pursuing a career that provides a platform for young women around the world to share their voices and be heard.

Months after my initial interaction with Naserian, she grabbed my arm excitedly as I was walking to lunch. “Madam,” she said, her face beaming as she pulled me into her classroom. “I want to show you the book I wrote.” She ran to her desk, reached into her backpack, and pulled out a handwritten manuscript, scrawled across 50 pages of a yellow exercise book that she had labeled, “Let Us Have One Voice.” I opened it to the first page.

“Most people think a woman is a person who should only stay home to cook and take care of the children,” it began. “But that is not true: A woman is the most powerful person in the world.”

Months into my fellowship, I marvel at how much this community has become home. The beans I eat for every meal remind me of the families who manage small subsistence farms to pay for their children’s school fees. The books on my shelf prompt me to imagine among them the novels my students will one day write. The thin layer of dirt on my feet that never completely washes off makes me think of the two-hour walk to and from school my students endure each morning and evening.

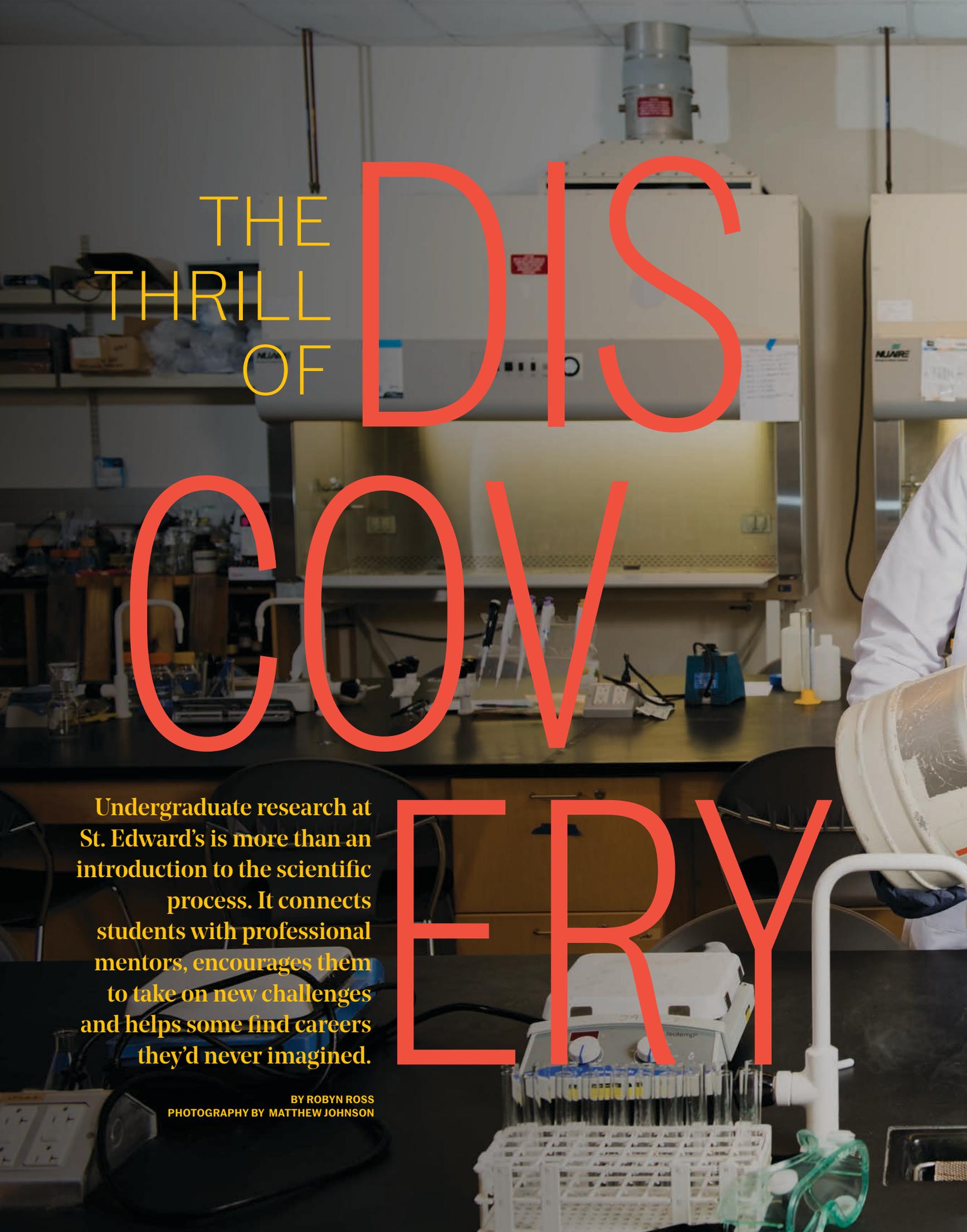
Yet each day I am greeted by new surprises — moments that remind me I am exactly where I need to be. There was the time I sat in a student’s boma for more than two hours chatting about Tanzanian politics with her father. And the time I got lost by myself in Lendikinya Village until five very kind women offered me milk and chai before walking beside me, arm in arm, to point me in the right direction. And there are those times when I have conversations with my students that remind me of how much more I have to learn from them than they do from me.

The most rewarding part of my job remains asking questions, not answering them. When my Princeton in Africa fellowship concludes in September, I plan to continue asking questions and finding answers through multimedia storytelling by reporting on women’s rights and social justice issues domestically and abroad.

FABULOUS FULBRIGHTERS

60 students from St. Edward's (including Samantha Mendoza '15) have won Fulbrights since 2008. Here's how the award has shaped seven of them.

	Fulbright, in 3 words	What you're doing now	A professor to thank	Bucket list item
 Jenna Jaco '15	Solitary, not alone	Staff technical writer at National Instruments in Austin and pursuing a master's degree at the University of North Texas	This is a trap! But Drew Loewe and Brian Sheerin for helping me not be complacent	Translate a book of contemporary Korean poetry
 Caitlin Maples '15	Enlightening, unforgettable, challenging	Enterprise user success specialist at ShipStation in Austin	The late Harald Becker for inspiring me to apply for a Fulbright and Mark Cherry for his patience	See the northern lights in Norway
 Samantha Mendoza '15	Dosa, laughter, Bollywood	Communications fellow at the Indigenous Education Foundation of Tanzania	Mary Rist and Steve Rodenborn	Climb Mount Kilimanjaro
 Katie Protano '15	Growth, connection, pretzels	Recruitment manager at foodora GmbH in Berlin, Germany, and earning a master's degree at the University of Leipzig	This is impossible! But Mity Myhr and Christie Sample Wilson for helping me process information	Traverse India
 Danielle Rivera '15	Bor pen yang ("no problem" in Lao)	Medical student at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque	Bill Quinn , Beth Eakman and Drew Loewe	Travel to every continent
 Jana Soares '15	Enriching, fulfilling, memorable	Associate product marketing manager at Google in Mountain View, Calif.	Patricia Baynham for her support and encouragement	Visit all 50 states
 Hannah Thornby '15	Humidity, rice, priceless	English teacher in Hanoi, Vietnam	Caroline Morris!	Go to Kumano Kodō in Japan

A photograph of a laboratory. In the background, there is a biosafety cabinet with a large red 'DANGER' sign on top. The cabinet is filled with various pieces of equipment, including pipettes and test tubes. In the foreground, there is a white rack filled with test tubes, some of which are labeled. A person wearing a white lab coat is partially visible on the right side of the frame. The overall scene is dimly lit, with the primary light source coming from the biosafety cabinet's interior lights.

THE
THRILL
OF

DIS
COV

Undergraduate research at St. Edward's is more than an introduction to the scientific process. It connects students with professional mentors, encourages them to take on new challenges and helps some find careers they'd never imagined.

ERY

BY ROBYN ROSS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW JOHNSON



1

A Mentor Leads the Way

Diego Saldaña '19, a Biochemistry major, chose St. Edward's because he knew he could build relationships with professors, an opportunity he seized last summer when he joined Assistant Professor of Chemistry **Santiago Toledo Carrion's** research team. The team focused on synthesizing replicas of the reaction site of an enzyme associated with hepatitis C, stomach cancer and prostate cancer.

"I'm grateful that I was able to get on Toledo's research group and connect with him in that way," Saldaña says. "I've established a good relationship with him as a mentor, a research supervisor, a professor and a friend."

2

FAILURE LEADS TO GROWTH

Jacquelyn Turcinovic '18 frowned at her bean plants. They were supposed to be showing signs of phosphate stress: stunted growth and dying, purple leaves. Instead, they looked green and healthy. It was good news for the plants, but bad news for Turcinovic.

Her mentor, Associate Professor of Bioinformatics **Charles Hauser**, was downstairs in his office, but she knew he'd want her to think through the problem before asking for help.

Turcinovic was studying the fungal microbiome of bean plants, which takes in nutrients, like phosphate, from the soil. If scientists understood how the microbiomes work, they could breed crops to better utilize the phosphate in soil, reducing the need for fertilizers.

Turcinovic grew two sets of bean plants: one deprived of phosphate, and a healthy control group. But after four weeks, the groups looked the same — because, it turned out, the soil had too much phosphate. Turcinovic started over, this time using synthetic soil in a nutrient solution. After a month, the phosphate-free group showed symptoms of stress.

"It was a learning experience for all of us, but she worked through it and changed the research design," Hauser says. "The notion of 'formative failure' suggests that if a student fails and has to work through why an experiment didn't work, she learns more."

Turcinovic, a Bioinformatics major, says her mentor's hands-off approach was unnerving at first. But it ultimately prepared her for the 10 weeks she spent at a research program at Boston University the summer before her senior year. "Dr. Hauser helped me be more independent," she says.



3



A Trip That Changes a Future

McNair Scholar **Sarahi Enriquez '19** was thrilled when Assistant Professor of Forensic Science **Casie Parish Fisher** invited her to help test a rapid DNA profiling machine on burned biological samples. Enriquez and Fisher traveled to Boston, where they met with the scientist and CEO of the company that makes the machine and ran tests of mock fire-scene samples. The trip was a turning point for Enriquez, who's now planning to earn a PhD. "Seeing what people can do with this education has motivated me to pursue that as well," she says.



4

PUTTING NEW IDEAS INTO THE WORLD

Questions about relationships have always intrigued Behavioral Neuroscience major **Ciara Crochet '18**, and St. Edward's has given her ample opportunity to search for answers. She's investigated the

relationship among testosterone levels, sexual desire and jealousy at different stages of relationships, and she's studied predictors of infidelity. She has raised fish for two behavioral experiments in biology,

and she's even taken on a project researching crypto currency with a business professor. Crochet's experiences helped her realize she wants to pursue a career in research, partly because "with research I get to do

science *and* write," she says. Plus, research offers the thrill of discovery. "I like finding out new information and putting something in the world that wasn't there before."

5



"My relationship with Dr. Bilinski has shifted, from her showing me how to analyze data, to her being a real mentor."

JUSTIN STEWART '18

A Taste of Life as a Scientist

The presentations at the Ecological Society of America (ESA) annual meeting were over, and a cool breeze blew across the Willamette River as the daylight faded. **Justin Stewart '18** stood at an outdoor table at a tapas restaurant in Portland, staving off the evening chill with spicy Spanish food. Assistant Professor of Biology **Teresa Bilinski** chatted with scientists from around the world who'd shown interest in Stewart's research. Looking around the table, Stewart smiled: He was getting a glimpse of life in the scientific community, and he liked what he saw.

A Biology major, Stewart had arrived at St. Edward's intending to become a dermatologist. But he decided to pursue microbial ecology after accompanying Bilinski on a trip to Blunn Creek Preserve, near campus, to study the bacteria in water samples from the creek. He joined Bilinski's research group, which studies how urbanization influences relationships between soil microbes and plant communities. Together with Bilinski, he collected soil samples on long hikes at Wild Basin Creative Research Center.

In August, he accompanied Bilinski to

the ESA meeting to present his research and network with the world's top ecologists. Those conversations — like the one over dinner — confirmed his desire to continue his education and work in a government or industry lab, or become a professor like Bilinski.

"My relationship with Dr. Bilinski has shifted, from her showing me how to analyze data, to her being a real mentor," Stewart says. "I've learned so much more collaborating with her than I have in any class about how research science actually works."

red doors



TOP OF THE GAME

Pay It Forward

Paul Tramonte '91 has found that mentoring a student is a great investment.

BY LISA THIEGS
PHOTOGRAPHY BY LAUREN MAREK

Much has changed since **Paul Tramonte '91** made the transition from college to career. When he sent off his first résumé, hardly anyone was communicating via email, he couldn't hop on the internet to research a company, and only birds

were tweeting. Since then, digital technology has transformed the job-search landscape. But it hasn't negated the importance of networking.

When his former professor **Catherine MacDermott** asked if he

would mentor a student from her business communication class, Tramonte agreed. After a winding journey to get to his current position as executive director of compliance at J.P. Morgan's Global Commodities Group in Houston, he knows that sometimes life takes you places you never imagined going. "If you had asked me when I was a student at St. Edward's if this would be my career path, there's no way I could have given you this answer," says the Accounting major. "It was a matter of figuring out what interested me, combined with opportunity and luck, to get to where I am. The key to that was networking."

There may have been

a bit of luck involved when Tramonte was paired with **Josh De Freitas '18**. When De Freitas contacted his mentor, he said he'd rather meet in person than simply talk over the phone. So De Freitas drove to Houston to see Tramonte, who was impressed with his initiative. "Josh was very eager and had a lot of good questions," Tramonte says. "I stay in touch to see how his job search is going."

In addition to providing De Freitas with career advice, Tramonte reminds him of the core skills that will help him stand out when pursuing a job. "St. Edward's really prepared me to communicate and use critical thinking in my writing,"

he says. "No matter what major you have coming out of school, if you drop that in your toolbox, you're off to a good start."

De Freitas is not the only one to benefit from this relationship. "The ability to give back and hopefully give somebody a leg up is very fulfilling," Tramonte says. "And all it takes is your time. At the end of the day, helping somebody out is a good feeling."



To become a career network advisor for students and alumni, visit bit.ly/SEUcareernetwork.

HONING HIS CRAFT

BY LISA THIEGS

Ben Sabin '09 graduated in the midst of the Great Recession. While many of his friends went to Houston to seek jobs in the oil industry, Sabin was at home in Austin. He worked at various jobs in the service industry, including bartending at a local craft brewery. He made beer on the side for friends but didn't really think about it as a career until his friend (and now business partner) Devon Ponds suggested the two start a brewery.

Sabin knew how much work it would take to

develop a product and build a brand. He started by enlisting a professional brewer to create their first draft beer, then used the skills he developed in his Communication major to work on the sales, marketing and distribution. Sabin was familiar with delivering kegs from previous jobs and had connections in bars and restaurants throughout Austin, which he used to promote their beer. Friends and Allies (a nod to the meaning of the Caddoan word *Tejas*, the origin of the state name)

was officially born.

Building the brand was a labor of love, says Sabin. He started by taking advantage of a 2013 Texas law about alternating proprietorship, which allowed them to make beer at another local brewery until their facility was built. "I woke up for four years to 120 kegs, which take four to five hours to roll and stack. Then I would clean kegs and tanks and go sell beer in the middle of the day," Sabin says. "It's not glamorous, but you fall in love with it.

I still love delivering kegs. It's cool to go in and meet the people that are selling my product. They know I'm not above anything, and I always want to be available to anybody as far as the brand is concerned."

Now Friends and Allies Brewing has 15 employees, a 10,000-square-foot facility, a tasting room that is open seven days a week and cans of beer for retail sale. Sabin sees his company expanding its offerings, but not its locations. He knows that a craft beer brand gains

strength from its loyal local supporters. "We're not in a hurry to jump to new markets," Sabin says. "We want to dig deep in Austin."

Happy Hour

Sabin is one of three alumni with successful craft beers who support alumni association events. Zilker Brewing Co. and 3 Nations Brewing Co. were created by **Patrick Clark '03** and **Gavin Secchi '05**, respectively.



Austin-area alumni were treated to Friends and Allies beer when Ben Sabin '09 hosted a happy hour for the Austin chapter of the alumni association on Jan. 25.

Hilltopper Connection



COMING HOME

In February, more than 3,100 friends celebrated Homecoming & Family Weekend with tailgating, reunions, a casino night and more. Hilltopper Athletics inducted four champions into the Athletics Hall of Fame, too. Congrats to **David Fuentes '09, Nicholas Cristea '07, Kristen Gascoyne-Robbins '08 and Bradley Goldsmith '08** and previously highlighted Alumni Award winners.

Read more at stedwards.edu/homecoming.

400

Clicks on Ragland's social posts during #LoveBlueGiveGold participation campaign (more than any other alum)



TRENDING TOPPERS

Is your social network a mini-directory of your St. Edward's connections? That's a yes for **Chris Ragland '05, MBA '10**, who's become an online ambassador extraordinaire.

"When I need to advertise an open position at my work, get feedback on a civic engagement or just look for something that brings me back to the hilltop, I go to social media," Ragland says. "It's amazing how connected St. Edward's alums are. I often see meetups and interviews resulting from our connections online."

700

Posts Ragland has shared, commented on or liked from pages like Hilltopper Athletics, SEU Rugby Football Club and the Alumni Association

VISIT CAMPUS

FOLLOW US

➔ Keep your St. Edward's experience going after graduation. Stay up on the latest news from the alumni association and your favorite St. Edward's groups at stedwards.edu/socialmedia.



PLAY BALL

Cheer on the Round Rock Express in a private suite.



HILLFEST

Celebrate the academic year with students and our newest freshmen: the Class of 2022.



HOME AGAIN

Mark your calendars (early) for an unforgettable 2019 Homecoming & Family Weekend.

HOW TO JOIN THE HILLTOPPER HERD

Members of this new group sign up online (see below) and complete one of the five activities listed. Join the Herd!



News Knowledge

See posts from the St. Edward's family and share or comment on them to join the conversation.

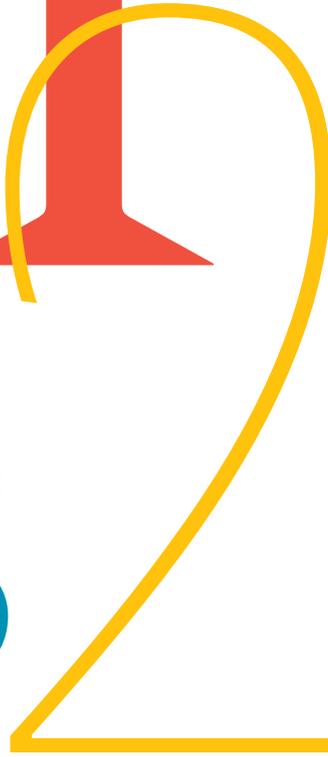
#LoveBlueGiveGold

Get a media kit with suggested photos and text, and earn incentives when your posts resonate during this annual, two-day alumni giving campaign in February.



Managers Wanted

Manage official pages and groups. You'll also build your social media experience, share your ideas and learn best practices from our in-office experts.



WHAT'S HAPPENING

➤ Visit stedwards.edu/alumni and choose "Hilltopper Herd" under "Get Involved" to let us know you're interested.



Take it Over

Give alumni and future grads a glimpse of what life is like using #afterStEds when you take over our social channels.



Hilltaggers

Tag photos, posts and other relevant content you find online with established hashtags, like #seualumni.

moments

OF MENTORSHIP

"I tutor middle-school students in math. My girlfriend and I are both first-generation college students, and I know there are a lot of kids who struggle to get there academically. Being a role model is my way to give back because math can be challenging, but the personal relationships I've developed with the students make it easier for me to teach and for them to learn."



◀ **Matthew Villarreal '19**
Math major
Teacher Extraordinaire



Kelly Aparicio '19 ▶
Kinesiology major
Running the World

OF PERSEVERANCE

“Last summer, I interned with Bel Inizio, an organization based out of Houston that works with disadvantaged women to develop self-confidence and life skills through fitness and nutrition. Training these women to run their first 5K was inspiring and led me to train to run my first half marathon. I found that if they could reach their goal of racing for a better life, then I could reach my goal of running a half marathon. I am proud to say that I ran for Team Bel Inizio in the Austin Half Marathon on February 18. In training, I was able to apply knowledge from both Bel Inizio and my kinesiology courses. I learned so much about my body, both mentally and physically.”

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Change Starts with Her

In Monduli, Tanzania,
Samantha Mendoza '15
discovers how giving
young girls a voice
can rewrite what their
communities think they
are capable of achieving.

page 20

"I have always believed in the infinite power of storytelling; in the idea that sustainable social change begins when everyday citizens have the courage, strength and resilience to share their stories with the world."

SAMANTHA MENDOZA '15

