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NOVELIST
ALKA JOSHI

CAMPUS DURING
McCarthyism

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The President
and the Communist

J.E. Wallace Sterling, PhD ’38, who led Stanford from 1949 to 1968, is the university’s least documented leader. In a new book, biographers assess his imprint on campus land and life, including what happened when the Red Scare came to colleges.

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Planes, Trains, and Visas

International students come to Stanford from 129 countries, often negotiating a thicket of political, logistical, and cultural hurdles to do so. Five of them share stories about what it took to get here and the perspectives they brought with them.

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Begin Again

Alka Joshi, ’80, was in her 50s when she started her first novel, The Henna Artist, an homage to her mother. It took 10 years and 30 drafts to get published. Today, she’s the author of a trio of bestsellers.

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Playing lacrosse, working on cars, fighting fires—this mechanical engineering student might seem to be in constant motion. But he’s also found ways to slow down.

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CARMEL VALLEY MANOR
The More, the Merrier

In March, Joel Stein, ’93, MA ’94, wrote about attending Stanford’s Distinguished Careers Institute, which is designed for midlife professionals looking to find their next step. We asked how many careers you’ve had. Here’s what 264 of you, ages 24 to 93, said:

- 1 career
  We have many talents. Some you can use in ways that do not involve an occupation.
  *Charlaine Berry, ’75, MS ’79*

- 2 careers
  Having several very different careers or a career that evolves in new directions can be invigorating and life-enhancing.
  *Shira Neuberger, MA ’96*

- 3 careers
  You aren’t “hopping around” or “confused.” You are talented and multifaceted.
  *Ashley Woodruff, MBA ’19*

- 4 careers
  It isn’t always about following your bliss, but do insist on doing honorable work.
  *Chris Hables Gray, ’75*

- 5 careers
  You don’t need to know what you want to do for the rest of your life. You only need to know what you want to do next.
  *Sue Anderson, ’93*

- 6+ careers
  This dynamic world is constantly birthing new career opportunities.
  *William Kinney, ’70*

The median number of careers you’ve held by ages 36–50

4th

The career that you, by age 65, were most likely to say was your favorite

5th

Percentage of you over age 80 who’ve had just one career

Even while making a switch to a career that would be more meaningful and impactful, the roller coaster of emotions was still hard.

*Roger Feigelson, ’90
Belmont, California*

(Feigelson started his favorite career at 55.)

I’d always thought I had to work in a field related to my industrial engineering degrees, and I successfully did so, but didn’t realize what a thrill it is to get up each day and go to work in a job you love, even if the job involves shoveling horse manure. Yes, I became a stable hand. At Disneyland.

*Patty Riley, MS ’91
Summerland, California*

(Riley thought she was applying for a job in warehouse management.)

General Motors tended to promote people to managers, usually removing them from their area of expertise. In my early years, I asked a co-worker how he managed to stay on the boards, stroking lines and laying out car dimensions, for over 30 years. He said that every time they approached him to “promote” him, he told them, “I’m really good at packaging cars and I love packaging them. I’m not that good at managing people and really don’t like it. Please give me the money that goes with the promotion, promote someone else, and leave me to do my job.”

GM was filled with managers who were no longer doing the jobs they loved. This man had 30 years of doing exactly what he wanted to do. From his positive example and way too
many negative ones, I learned that the promotions filled the ego, but they didn’t necessarily fill the soul. And the latter is more important.

*Clinton McDade, ’85*  
Charlotte, North Carolina  
(McDade studied engineering and product design at Stanford.)

When I was at Stanford, I didn’t really know what careers existed or what they were like. My favorite career did not exist until three decades after my graduation.

*Alexander Nicholson, ’70, JD ’74*  
Nashville, Tennessee  
(Nicholson became an online derivatives trader at 62.)

It’s hard to be a beginner again. But I have learned that nothing is wasted. All my experiences inform each new career and usually become directly applicable at some point.

*Monica Romig Green, ’92*  
Hamilton, Ontario  
(Green’s favorite career is her current—as an ordained clergy member.)

My [favorite] job was to pack houses for moving. That job had two great points that no other job did. First, it began and ended completely every day, leaving me with a sense of perfect completion. Second, it was like a sports team. Everyone had their part, and if we worked well together, the job went well. In my usual job, everyone is trying to be No. 1, which is frankly tiring.

*Jill Emma Strothman, ’86*  
Kofu, Japan  
(Strothman takes on short-term jobs during vacations from her full-time work. Most recently, she worked on a production line making cookies.)

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(Strothman takes on short-term jobs during vacations from her full-time work. Most recently, she worked on a production line making cookies.)

Lightning in a Bottle  
In a March essay, Allan Lopez, ’23, imagined how his father would have taken advantage of the opportunities at Stanford.

My eyes welled up reading this. The deep well that builds in my chest when I think about Stanford will never allow me to forget how lucky I am: how my references might have shone; how my essay might have inspired a reader; how the demographics of the other 390 already admitted might have swayed decisions in my favor; how the mighty stars aligned. That sliding-door moment took me from a farm in Outback New South Wales, Australia, to the Farm and changed my trajectory forever. Allan, bottle the gratitude you feel today. And on your hardest days along the road ahead, take it down and hold it. For every day, it will hold you.

*Jillian Kilby, MBA ’16, MPP ’16*  
Dubbo, New South Wales, Australia

Making a Leap  
A March story covered the impact of the Stanford men’s gymnastics team on the national stage at a time when the sport is in decline at the collegiate level.

It is nice to hear about these amazing athletes, their successful coach, and admirable teamwork. The pairing of gender-equality concerns and “wake of Title IX” with “budget cuts” and “waning grassroots support” unfortunately suggests a negative quality to the former items. I want to believe the intent was to point out the forces objectively. However, without more discussion about Stanford’s, the team’s, the magazine’s, or the author’s general view of the policies, goals, and realized benefits, readers will be left to wonder.

*Nirav Bhakta, MD/PhD ’06*  
San Francisco, California

Women’s Will  
The March issue’s Dialogue section was dominated by letters concerning our December cover story on free will.

Did you notice that all the letters and comments were from men? Perhaps women find themselves constrained by gender roles and discrimination, and thus lacking agency? Is free will thus another well-educated (white) male prerogative? Or was there selection bias by the editors?

*Susan Hansen, MA ’68, PhD ’72*  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

Editor’s Note: Most of the letters we receive are from male readers. In the case of the free will story, as far as we can tell, the ratio of male to female correspondents was 90 to 2.
Of Presidencies and Pizza Parties
What’s on the menu at Hoover House—then, now, and next.

WHEN HOLLY BRADY, ’69, had dinner at Hoover House with President J.E. Wallace Sterling, PhD ’38, in 1965, she was served by waitstaff who placed Limoges pots de crème from the left and took them from the right (page 38).

When Stanford interns Kalissa Greene, ’25, and Annie Reller, ’24, went to Hoover House in March, they made pizza with President Richard Saller and ate it on nondescript white plates.

The latter dinner came about because last September, we published an introductory interview with President Saller in which he described how cooking helps him relax. “One of my therapies is to go home and chop onions or grill something,” he said. “Through COVID, what I really came to like is making my own pizza.”

Which led a reader to quip that he’d like to know Saller’s pizza recipe.

Which led us to invite ourselves to Hoover House with six cameras in tow.

In our video, which you can view using the QR code on this page, Kalissa, Annie, and Saller talk about garlic and spinach, introductory seminars and campus protests. They debate whether the weather at Stanford is warm or cold. (Annie, from Seattle, is sporting a sundress. Kalissa, from Alpharetta, Ga., is bundled up in a turtleneck sweater.) The students ask Saller, an expert on the economic and social history of Rome, whether the Romans had pizza. (Spoiler alert: Its pizza is good but does not measure up to the one you have made with your own hands.)

In the coming months, we’ll have the opportunity to introduce you to Stanford’s next president, Jonathan Levin, ’94, who takes office in August (page 16). And we’ll be sure to let you know what’s on the menu.

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Congratulations on earning a place in Stanford University’s Class of 2028! This is a moment to celebrate the hard work and determination that have brought you to this moment, and also to reflect on the next stage of your education. Amid all the challenging and polarizing issues being discussed in the world right now, you may be wondering what kind of intellectual community you would be joining at Stanford. And we think this is important to address directly.

Stanford strives to provide its students with a liberal education, which means one that broadens your mind and horizons by exposing you to different fields of study and different ways of thinking. A rigorous liberal education depends on questioning your assumptions and seeing if they hold up. As a member of the Stanford community, you will quickly learn that freedom of thought, inquiry, and expression are core values at Stanford. They animate our central missions of teaching and research. Stanford is also a place that values diversity in its broadest sense—which includes diversity of thought.

This means that every member of the Stanford community is accepted and valued for their unique characteristics and ideals. It is precisely the distinct attributes each community member brings to Stanford that, when openly and constructively shared, create a vibrant educational environment where the search for truth is advanced.

Our Founding Grant commits the university to “teach the blessings of liberty regulated by law, and . . . the great principles of government as derived from the inalienable rights of man to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” The “blessings of liberty” are a middle point between mere license (doing whatever you want) and conformity (doing what others want you to do). Liberty to think and say what you believe involves taking responsibility as well. It requires recognizing the freedom and rights of others and helping to create the conditions that make everyone’s freedom possible here on campus and in our broader society.

Freedom of expression does not include the right to threaten or harass others and prevent them from engaging as equal participants in campus life. But the freedom of expression necessary for fulfilling the mission of a university—and for a democracy—does require allowing speech that some may find offensive or wrong. Many of humanity’s greatest advances have come from ideas that offended conventional wisdom and seemed heretical at first. In a university, the remedy for ideas that you think are wrong is not to seek to silence them but to counter them with better ideas, evidence, and arguments.

As a part of your education you should expect, and indeed welcome, disagreement. As a part of your education you should expect, and indeed welcome, disagreement. We aim for an environment where we are tough on ideas, but generous and respectful to one another.

‘As a part of your education you should expect, and indeed welcome, disagreement. We aim for an environment where we are tough on ideas, but generous and respectful to one another.’

Your education at Stanford is designed to prepare you for life as a citizen. Whether it is your dormitory, your town, or your workplace, and regardless of what career path you eventually choose, you should have the skills to critically and constructively engage with those who are different from you.
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Walking on Sunshine

The Dish trail at dawn
Gazing east over campus
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Meet Caeden Greene
How one student connects mechanics, meat, and mentorship.

“If I got a 4.0 at Stanford, I wouldn’t have done it right. You’ll miss out on everything else that makes Stanford so special.”
“We’ve raced four times now. After the second car race, a couple of people came up to me and said, ‘Thank you for taking the time to teach us and make us feel included in the process.’ They didn’t know a lot about working on cars but still said this has been one of the best things they’ve ever done at Stanford. Forget the fact that we successfully built and raced a car, or that we won awards. The most meaningful part of the whole experience was people coming up to me and saying: ‘I felt included, I learned a lot, thanks for taking the time to teach me.’

“when I worked as a firefighter, fire didn’t scare me. I’ve been in a house that’s burning down—there were tendrils of flame across the ceiling—but that fear just didn’t register. The fear of walking into a room with 100 people that I don’t know is scarier than walking into a room that is on fire.

“the impetus behind Street Meat was: Who hasn’t had the idea to serve food on the Row? It started out as us buying a flat-top grill and going out on the road, cooking food—anything from hot dogs with fajita onions and peppers to Indian street food, naan tacos with rice and fresh curries with pickled veggies on top. The team of us is so collectively bought into the same goal—building [the business] and working on it together. It’s so fun.

“My dream is to go to Officer Candidate School and become a naval aviator. There’s some sense of service—that I want to give. [It’s] a noble cause for securing independence and freedom. It’s an adventure. Another big part for me is the leadership.”

CAEDEN GREENE ENJOYED free rein as a kid growing up in Chapel Hill, N.C. He would explore the woods behind his house or help out a neighbor who worked on old cars in the cul-de-sac. By age 14, he’d already bought his first car—albeit one without an engine. After soccer practice, he’d tinker late into the night, trying to understand how things worked beneath the hood.

Now a co-terminal junior and master’s student in mechanical engineering, Greene has brought his childhood passions into more than his major. He’s spent the past four summers working as a wildland firefighter in the western United States, and he co-captains Stanford’s club lacrosse team. He also builds and drives race cars for the Stanford Highly Incompetent Team of Racing, a group he co-founded that has an obvious acronym and that modifies cheap cars for endurance racing.

But he’s also found purpose in slower pursuits. He opted to live in a campus co-op, Hammarskjöld, and he co-founded Street Meat, a catering service that offers hot food at student events. “Cooking is a big reason why I joined the co-op,” says Greene. “It’s meditative, chopping vegetables for 50 people. It allows you to explore and create, and I love serving people.”

—Annie C. Reller, ’24

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• Former Wilson Sonsini Attorney
• Graduate degrees from:

Alex Wilbur DeLeon
DRE #01926475
• Over a decade as a broker
• 2nd generation broker/4th generation Silicon Valley resident
• Degrees from:
When Jonathan Levin, ’94, settles into Building 10 as Stanford’s 13th president on August 1, he’ll bring one of the longest personal connections to the university of anyone to assume the role. The first alum president since Wallace Sterling, PhD ’38—and the only with alumni parents—Levin has been on the faculty since returning to the Farm in 2000 as an assistant professor of economics, a department he later led. He’s been dean of the Graduate School of Business since 2016.

“When I was an undergraduate, Stanford opened my mind, nurtured my love for math and literature, and inspired me to pursue an academic career,” Levin told Stanford Report. “In the years since, it has given me opportunities to pursue ideas in collaboration with brilliant colleagues, teach exceptional students, and bring people together to achieve ambitious collective goals around the university.”

Jerry Yang, ’90, MS ’90, chair of the Board of Trustees, complimented Levin’s “analytical prowess” and “collaborative and optimistic working style” in a letter announcing the news. “He is consistently described by those who know him as principled, humble, authentic, thoughtful, and inspiring.”

Celebrated Scholar
Levin is known for his work in industrial organization and market design. In 2011, he won the John Bates Clark medal, which recognizes the top economist under 40 working in the United States. Levin helped design the Federal Communications Commission’s $20 billion incentive auction to convert broadcast television spectrum to broadband wireless licenses. He also helped design the first advance market commitment to accelerate the adoption of pneumococcal vaccines, which brought together governments, NGOs, and vaccine manufacturers to subsidize and produce the vaccine for distribution. In 2021, Levin became a member of President Biden’s Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

‘Dean of the Year’
As leader of the GSB, Levin is credited with helping rethink how business intersects with society in realms such as sustainability, technology, democratic institutions, and global politics. His efforts have led to new partnerships between the GSB and Stanford’s other schools and institutes. In 2022, the publication Poets & Quants, which covers business education, named Levin its “Dean of the Year,” citing his stabilizing influence, recruitment of top-tier faculty, and optimistic leadership style. The publication also noted that, under his leadership, the GSB became the first major business school to publish an annual report on its diversity progress.

Role Models
Levin’s parents, Jane (Aries) and Richard Levin, both ’68, met in a frosh English class and got better acquainted during Stanford’s study-abroad program in Florence. They married a week after graduation. Jane, who has a doctorate in English from Yale, was a stay-at-home mom and, later, taught English at Yale and led its Directed Studies frosh humanities program. Richard was a Yale economics professor and the university’s president from 1993 to 2013.

Math Lessons
Levin double-majored in English and math. In a 2022 interview with a GSB podcast, he recalled an honors math course he took as a frosh that changed his life. The first two days, Levin said, the professor did nothing but write math on the board. By the third day, the class size had dropped by two-thirds, and the professor finally turned around to face the students. Levin described himself as “totally energized” by the process of pushing himself to make sense of the course. “I would go home and I would work so hard to try to figure stuff out.” He credited the experience with instilling in him a sense of joy about solving interesting and novel problems through research.

Mountaineer
The eldest of four siblings, Levin has three children with his wife, Amy Levin, a physician, whom he met in high school. He enjoys running in the Foothills and climbing, hiking, and skiing with his kids. In 2021, he and his 14-year-old son trekked Mount Whitney—the country’s highest peak outside Alaska—starting at 2 a.m. and reaching the ridge just after sunrise. Two decades prior, Levin scaled Whitney with a kayak on his back and paddled his way down the Kern River. Sounds harder than that math course.
The Shortest Way Home
Matt Jachowski puts his algorithmic skills to work on behalf of Maui residents displaced by fire.

AFTER A DEVASTATING FIRE killed 100 people and destroyed the West Maui town of Lahaina in Hawaii last August, Maui residents Matt Jachowski, MS ’08, and his wife, Veronica Mendoza Jachowski, offered their second home to a displaced family with three young children, and moved a cousin into their son’s bedroom so an older couple could live in their property’s accessory dwelling unit. “We were compressed for a while,” he says, laughing.

But Jachowski—who had previously worked in algorithmic trading—took more than the air out of his bed. His sister, Holly Badr-El-Din, ’15, his mom, Maile Apau Jachowski, ’81, MD ’87, and Veronica were all assisting survivors, and when it became clear that housing needs far surpassed supply, Jachowski put his computer science skills to work. In October, he launched the website Maui Hale Match, a platform that helps connect people looking for housing with potential landlords (hale means house in Hawaiian). Within a week, hundreds of requests had been submitted, and Jachowski found he had something no one else had: comprehensive data on what survivors needed, how much they could afford to pay, and where they hoped to live.

Jachowski—who by then had been recruited to help fire relief efforts at the Council for Native Hawaiian Advancement—began sharing that data with anyone who would listen, including nonprofits and county, state, and federal officials. He quickly discovered that in order to meet the needs of the town’s remaining displaced people, assistance programs would have to incentivize owners who had lucrative—but vacant—short-term rentals and second homes. His organization is collaborating with the state, Maui County, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Hawaii Community Foundation, and the American Red Cross on programs to guarantee rent payments, provide financial support to those who are hosting survivors, and build temporary housing units.

“The people who are going to do this out of the goodness of their hearts already have,” he explains. “If we are going to convert more housing, we need to face the economic reality of how much money [homeowners] are making.”

Jachowski calls himself an “accidental expert” in housing and says he wants to continue to use his skills to benefit the community. “This whole experience has fed my soul in a way that my previous work didn’t.”

Orange Theory

Earlier this year, life-size, 3D-printed acrylic gel sculptures of modern Stanford women in STEM added vibrant punctuation to the Science and Engineering Quad. The statues were a satellite of #IfThenSheCan–The Exhibit, a collection of 120 female figures designed to open the eyes of girls around the country to STEM careers. The campus pop-up included fire scientist Jenny Briggs, ’94; roboticist and dancer Catie Cuan, MS ’20, PhD ’23; mechanical engineer and toy-maker Debbie Sterling, ’05; microbiologist Dorothy Tovar, PhD ’22; and molecular architect and polymer chemist Helen Tran, a former Stanford postdoc. “I hope it sends a message to all students,” Sterling told Stanford Report, “especially the young women on campus who may be second-guessing themselves like I did, that they do belong at Stanford and they do belong in STEM.”

—Rebecca Beyer
THE TICKER

Jonathan Mayer, JD ’13, PhD ’18, has his eye on AI. The U.S. Department of Justice has named Mayer its first chief artificial intelligence officer and chief science and technology adviser.

DOJ veteran Roscoe Jones Jr., ’00, is making history in Iowa. In July, Jones will become dean of Drake University Law School and the first Black dean of any of Drake’s colleges or schools. Perhaps Jones will cross paths with George Triantis, JSD ’89, the incoming dean of Stanford Law School and an expert in the fields of contracts, commercial law, and bankruptcy. Since 2020, Triantis has served as the Law School’s senior associate vice provost for research. We’re over the moon for NASA’s newest Cardinal astronauts. Marcos Berrios, MS ’08, PhD ’19, Anil Menon, MS ’04, MD ’06, and Chris Williams, ’05, are now eligible for spaceflight. And speaking of stars, women’s basketball head coach Tara VanDerveer has retired after 38 seasons at Stanford. She led the Card to three national championships and 14 Final Fours, and is the winningest NCAA basketball coach in history. At press time, Stanford was in negotiations with her expected successor, associate head coach Kate Paye, ’95, JD/MBA ’03. The men’s team will also have a new head coach, Kyle Smith.

For Whom the Band Played

Art Barnes was instrumental in transforming LSJUMB into the world’s largest rock ‘n’ roll band.

AFTER HER FATHER DIED in February at age 94, Jennifer Barnes-Wolfeld, MA ’76, discovered two piles of paper—one of love letters, the other of hate mail for the Leland Stanford Junior University Marching Band. The Band’s director of 34 years, Arthur Barnes, DMA ’65, was never fazed by the dichotomy in alumni sentiment. “He recognized how intelligent those kids were,” Barnes-Wolfeld says, “and their halftime shows were incredibly creative.”

It may have helped that Barnes was more responsible for LSJUMB’s music than for its manners. Anyone who has jumped to the “woo!” in “All Right Now” or felt their heart swell during the long drumroll that begins the Band’s unique “Star-Spangled Banner” owes a debt to Barnes.

When he inherited its directorship as a first-year doctoral student in 1963, the Band was a student-run organization that “bordered on being a collection of social miscreants,” Barnes said in a 1996 article in the Stanford Daily. “I never thought I’d stay here this long,” he added. “I was supposed to start an indoor concert band and do the Band on the side.” By the time he retired in 1997, he had arranged more than 300 pieces for the group. “They wanted to be the world’s largest rock ‘n’ roll band. But they had no one to write their music for them. So that’s what I did,” Barnes continued. “After all, that’s the point of getting together, isn’t it? Playing music.”

The professor of music cut a recognizable figure on campus, enhanced by his yellow 1966 Dodge convertible and his antic grin. He was a jazz pianist and composer, studied brass band music in York, England, and directed the university’s wind ensembles and symphonic bands as well as community philharmonics and a Unitarian church choir.

Although he was always game to transcribe a Grateful Dead or Beatles tune, Barnes most loved complex music. When she was 6, Barnes-Wolfeld found her father sitting in their darkened living room, with tears on his face, listening to Igor Stravinsky’s The Rite of Spring (a ballet score so convoluted and discordant that at its 1913 debut, it caused audience members to riot). Barnes-Wolfeld asked her father what was wrong. “He said, ‘Nothing’s wrong. This is just so beautiful.’”

Read our 1997 story on Barnes ALUMS/ARTBARNES

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Read our 1997 story on Barnes ALUMS/ARTBARNES

For Whom the Band Played

Art Barnes was instrumental in transforming LSJUMB into the world’s largest rock ‘n’ roll band.
All That Jazz
Using music to teach civics.

SIXTEEN YEARS AGO, Wesley Watkins, ’97, was teaching Oakland fifth graders how playing jazz is like participating in a democracy, when he came to a realization.

“We had learned that the musicians are trying to swing, which is a kind of buoyant effect in the music,” Watkins recalls. It’s achieved from a balance—of timing, of dynamics, of voice—across a musical ensemble. He asked the students what musicians might do that ruins the swing. They answered: rushing, dragging, playing too loud.

“I said, ‘Give me an example in society of someone playing too loud.’ “ One girl said, “‘Oh, that’s like monarchy—it’s always the king’s voice that matters more.’ It was in that moment I decided: I’m doing this for the rest of my life.”

Since then, Watkins has brought the Jazz & Democracy Project—a curriculum that uses jazz to help students understand history, government, and civics—to students and teachers in places such as the Bay Area; Sydney, Australia, where he now lives; and New Orleans, the birthplace of the art form.

As an undergrad in African and African American studies, Watkins got to thinking about how to solve the problem of why, the further he went in education, the fewer Black students there were. And if music is central to African American culture, “what would happen if you centered a curriculum around music?”

He explored that idea for his undergraduate thesis, then earned his PhD in education from the University of Reading, in England.

Watkins often gives students long, colorful tubes called Boomwhackers to demonstrate the effects of contributing a single note in a chord progression—usually the 12-bar blues—and how it’s like playing your role in government. “If this chord is out of place, then we have discord and dissonance in music, just as in society,” says Zack Pitt-Smith, music director at Edna Brewer Middle School in Oakland, who has collaborated on Jazz & Democracy with Watkins.

Carol Lee Tolbert used the Jazz & Democracy curriculum a few years ago to teach middle schoolers in Hayward, Calif., about the writing of the Declaration of Independence. They discussed overlapping concepts: improvisation, listening, visioning, and negotiating. But the value, Tolbert recalls, was more than conceptual. “It connects with their soul, with their spirit,” she says. “It resonates with them on multiple levels.”

The three student models were among 100 who walked the red carpet in the event of the season: the FashionX runway, which drew a sold-out crowd of 1,200 to Memorial Church on February 22. For one night only, MemChu was host to bouncers and paparazzi, pulsating music, and models showing varying amounts of skin. The Marriage of Mischief and Maximalism (a wedding of “the art of subverting expectation” to “the embrace of too much”) showcased the work of 50 student designers.

FashionX, a student club now in its fifth year, draws more than 250 students who study, design, model, and market fashion. One of this year’s co-presidents, Cole Crichton, ’24, says he has abandoned his old habit of wearing workout shorts way too often. “I think about what I want to feel like during the day,” he says. “Some days I’ll wear a suit if I want to look professional, or colors if I want to attract attention, or black if I want to lay low,” Sigalit Perelson, ’20, MBA ’23, MPP ’23, and Savannah Murphy, ’20, MS ’21, co-founded FashionX in 2019 with the goal—like many preprofessional clubs—of hosting speakers and putting on a conference. One of their pivotal recruits that fall was then-freshman Timi Adeniyi, ’23. “Coming to Stanford and hearing about FashionX—it wasn’t ‘Let’s get dressed up and talk about our clothes,’” Adeniyi recalls. “Fashion is actually quite intellectual and complex.”

Adeniyi and Kali Hough, ’22, MA ’23, ferried the club through its Zoom-only pandemic era and back onto campus, where they realized their members were tired of being talked at. They chose to make the club more project- and skills-based. These days, FashionX has nine subgroups ranging from marketing and business operations to design and merchandising, which collaborate on projects for industry partners, such as digital clothing design and fashion trend analysis, and on marquee events, including an annual flea market and the highly hyped runway.

“Our belief is that if you have the passion and desire to design, you should have a platform to do so,” says Montanna Riggs, ’23, a master’s student in management science and engineering who co-directed this year’s runway event. And the interdisciplinary opportunities for students studying design, computer science, data science, and sustainability are palpable. “We’re not a fashion school,” says FashionX co-president Olivia Wang, ’24, “but nonetheless we have a lot to offer to the industry.”

The benefits are clearly two-way. Crichton says he’s pondering integrating fashion into his future—maybe as CFO of a fashion company someday. “And I might wear crazy things to the office in my finance job—I did that last summer.” Vincent Hao, ’22, whose designs appeared at the 2023 runway event, works as an assistant merchant at Gap Inc. and is about to start an MBA in fashion and luxury at NYU. And Adeniyi, now a private equity analyst at Alpine Investors, says she doesn’t rule out a future in fashion. “FashionX helped me understand that I can’t really live without art in my life.”

Fashion Forward
A popular student club transforms MemChu into a runway.
What was in fashion when you were on the Farm?

ALU.MS/TREND
ON THE JOB

The Hospital Teacher

Kathy Ho never knows exactly what—or who—the day will bring. But she can’t imagine being at any other school.

K ATHY HO TRIES TO SEE every new teen on her list within 72 hours of their arrival. For some, it’s too soon, or they’re too sick. But for others, she is a beacon of normalcy. Ho teaches high school inside Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford (LPCH). “Sometimes I don’t like saying that I’m a teacher,” says Ho, MA ’94. “People get in their minds an idea of what teachers do, and I’m like, ‘That is not what I do. That’s not really what it is here.’”

“Here” is room 386, where each year, about 500 LPCH patients also become students. The hospital school is hallowed ground, free of parents, doctors, and medical procedures. “The only time we’re allowed to go in there is to get a beeping IV,” says Wajma Talib, a longtime nurse at LPCH. “It’s a place of learning, and that is it. No medical activity is supposed to happen in there.”

About half of Ho’s students stay for a week or less; others are there for more than a year. LPCH serves some of the nation’s most critically ill patients and performs more open-heart surgeries and kidney transplants than any other children’s hospital in the country. Since 1924, when the hospital school opened—and even in the 27 years that Ho has been at LPCH—patient outcomes have significantly improved. Put simply, the vast majority of even her sickest students will survive. Which means that preparing very ill children to return to school is an increasingly important component of care.

Still, in room 386, academics don’t come first. Physical health and mental health are the priority. “If you’re super scared about something and thinking only about that, there’s no way you’re going to be able to learn,” Ho says. She tosses textbooks aside when a student gets bad news from their doctor, loses a friend in the hospital, or becomes preoccupied by an upcoming procedure. “Sometimes we just talk through that,” she says. “I’m a coach, I’m a counselor, and I’m a mentor. I play all these different roles, and that’s what it means to be a hospital teacher.”
SCHOOL RULES

Ho began volunteering at the hospital school while earning her master’s in education from the Stanford Teacher Education Program. Now she can’t imagine teaching in a traditional classroom. “They would eat me alive,” she says. “The kids who are here, because of what they’re going through, they have a wisdom that a lot of young people don’t necessarily get.” They are seasoned souls who receive lessons (and even homework) with a deep appreciation for learning and living a typical life. That doesn’t mean they aren’t in the throes of adolescence. Ho keeps corny jokes, banter, and sarcasm in her back pocket. “She’s sassy sometimes,” says David Llano, a former student who was treated at LPCH for acute myeloid leukemia. “And so am I.”

Accredited children’s hospitals are required to offer educational services. LPCH exceeds the standard, employing elementary, middle, and high school teachers and operating as a public school within the Palo Alto Unified School District. Any child being treated at LPCH is eligible to attend the hospital school. Parents can dual enroll them in their home school—whether that’s in Palo Alto or elsewhere—and the hospital school. If a lengthy stay at LPCH results in withdrawal from their home school, they remain students at LPCH for the duration, with official transcripts and anything else they need to stay on track.

Ho, who has up to 30 students at any given time, generally coordinates with their regular teachers to get lessons and tests being used at their home schools. Which means that every student has a different curriculum—not to mention the need for, say, science experiments that won’t interfere with treatment. (Hospital gowns, IV tubes, and Bunsen burners don’t mesh well.) On her summer breaks, Ho travels and is active as a National Geographic Explorer. During the 2020 International Education Symposium and Awards, Ho shared the outcome of a grant she’d secured—a video of one of her students trying out a virtual reality hike she’d helped make in the canyons of southern Utah. “I’m there,” the girl says in disbelief, sitting in her wheelchair in room 386, VR goggles pressed against her face. When she takes the goggles off, she’s crying. “That’s the closest thing I’ve been to hiking in forever. I’ve missed it.”

Ho says that creating those experiences and getting granular about everything from physics to poetry gives her the freedom to indulge her many intellectual interests. But it’s still a lot to stay on top of each day. “If you don’t know the answer, you just say, ‘I don’t know, but let’s find out together,’” she says.
Some students come to room 386, which is open Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 1 p.m. to 3 p.m., but most work from their rooms, which means Ho logs about 10,000 steps per day walking between them. Even patients in isolation are often cleared to receive visits from their teachers, who gown up and wear masks. Some kids—due to a short stay or fragile health—don’t do any schoolwork while in the hospital. But for others, education emerges as something they can understand and control in the wake of an overwhelming diagnosis.

“A kid’s job is to go to school, right?” says Ho. “Now all of a sudden you can’t go to school, and perhaps your credits are going to get threatened so that you may not be able to graduate. That’s devastating to them.” Earlier this year, a LPCH patient and high school freshman named Ella visited the classroom for the first time. Before her heart transplant 10 days prior, Ella had been enrolled in multiple honors classes. Now, despite emails back and forth, Ella’s teachers still hadn’t sent Ho or Ella any assignments, instead expressing sympathy and lenience. “They don’t care about my schoolwork,” Ella said in a moment of frustration.

“I feel like it’s a disservice [to] the kid if the teacher is too nice, and they just say, ‘Oh, they’re in the hospital. Tell them not to worry about anything,’” Ho says. It’s not uncommon for transplant recipients to be out of school for some time before their surgeries and for months after, while their bodies and immune systems recover. In the months since Ella’s transplant, Ho has helped her catch up on schoolwork. Ella pushes herself hard. “She’s working every day for hours with me,” Ho says. “I keep saying to her, ‘They understand that you fell behind.’” Ho is there to relieve stress—not to cause it, she says. But she also recognizes the psychological benefit of helping kids keep up with their peers outside the hospital.

“I actually think the medicine is only a small piece for some problems, like chronic pain,” says Julie Good, the director of pain management services at LPCH and a clinical associate professor of anesthesiology, perioperative and pain medicine. “It’s about problem-solving around what it means to have a full life. When you talk to kids, they have dreams, they want to be things.” School, Good says, can keep those dreams alive by giving kids a way to learn and grow.

**LEARNING BY HEART**

When Ho explains her job, she’s often asked about the emotional challenges of working with critically ill children. But negative thoughts don’t weigh heavily on her mind. “I think of our school as being a really positive, supportive, happy place. It’s not sad and depressing.” There are many serious things happening at LPCH. “But it’s a children’s hospital, you know what I mean?” she says. “You should try to make people smile.”

Still, Ho isn’t impervious to the setting she’s chosen. When a child gets bad news, they grieve together. Her students have seen her cry. But most of the time school is one of the few chances for these kids to express a part of their identity that’s not tied to being sick. Good says that when Ho visits a student who can’t leave their room, “it’s magic.” She’s watched a child’s vital signs improve when a teacher or aide starts reading to them, and she sees the joy in those who attend graduation—an elaborate production organized by Ho—or apply to college while in the hospital. One patient, she says, “did his SATs while on a ventilator in the ICU.”

Llano was treated at LPCH during his senior year of high school. “Normalcy is important,” he says. “I think that’s what a sick person grieves the most.” While he was still a patient, Llano had the chance to return to his home school, but he went back to LPCH’s after one day. “There was a lot of pity associated with having a cancer diagnosis,” he says. His old classmates weren’t sure how to interact with him, so they asked him about his illness and commented on his changed appearance. He chose to stay in room 386 until graduation, with kids he could relate to. “That’s one of the things everyone likes about hospital school,” he says. “Everyone has faced their own battles. You’re just going to treat them like a regular human being. I don’t think I would have graduated without hospital school.”

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Zipline’s original drone, Platform 1, is loaded with blood or other medical supplies at a Zipline facility, then placed on a metal ramp with a slingshot-like catapult launcher that takes it from zero to 65 miles per hour in a third of a second. Using proprietary tools to detect and avoid other aircraft, the drone flies autonomously, even in inclement weather. When it arrives at the receiving hospital or clinic, it drops the package, attached to a small paper parachute, and returns to a Zipline facility to be reloaded.

Capabilities
• Service range: 120 miles round-trip
• Cruising speed: 60 mph
• Delivery area size: 2 parking spaces
• Payload capacity: 4 pounds

Since first launch
• Operational in 8 countries
• More than 15 million vaccine doses delivered globally
• 67 percent reduction in blood waste in Rwanda
P2 GOES HOME

The second-generation drone system, Platform 2, is expected to launch this year and will start out in Dallas. Platform 2 drones can dock, for example, at pharmacies and hospitals, where nurses and pharmacists load them on-site before sending them on to patients’ homes or to other clinics. Designed for short-range home deliveries, the drones can hover more than 300 feet above their destination while a “droid” delivery vessel quietly descends via retractable wire and deposits its contents on a doorstep or patio table. Like their forebear, Platform 2 drones are all-electric and zero-emission.

Capabilities
- Service range: 10-mile radius
- Cruising speed: 70 mph
- Delivery area size: 2-foot radius
- Payload capacity: 6 to 8 pounds

In the works
- Will deliver all manner of medical supplies, including prescriptions and lab samples, for Cleveland Clinic and Michigan Medicine
- Expanding food and retail delivery services with such partners as Sweetgreen and Walmart
IT WAS TWO IN THE MORNING when Paul Wise got the call: An 8-year-old girl from Panama had died in U.S. Border Patrol custody in Harlingen, Texas. Wise was on vacation in Portugal when his extra cell phone rang, the one he always keeps with him in case of emergencies concerning the care and treatment of migrant children detained at the U.S. border. This was the type of call he most feared.

“I was on the next plane to the Rio Grande Valley,” says Wise, a Stanford professor of pediatrics and of health policy who was serving as the juvenile care monitor for the Border Patrol facilities there. He arrived 48 hours later to participate in the investigation of the death of Anadith Danay Reyes Alvarez on May 17, 2023, her ninth day in custody.

Wise is soft-spoken, a good listener, perhaps from more than 50 years of leaning in to hear the voices of sick children. But on the U.S. border with Mexico—a subject of constant policy debate, where the major-party candidates for president made dueling visits on the same day in February—his voice has broken through. For more than four years, he has served as a court-appointed medical expert in two Border Patrol sectors in Texas, where he has monitored conditions, written reports, and made recommendations to ensure appropriate
care and safety for migrant children in U.S. custody. “He has probably saved more children’s lives at the southern border than anybody,” says Nancy Ewen Wang, a Stanford professor of emergency medicine and the medical adviser to the new juvenile care monitor. (Wise, who is on sabbatical, has stepped down as monitor and returned to an advisory role.)

When Wise issued a report about two months after Anadith’s death, he wrote that it was a preventable tragedy. That the system failed. That he’d already explained, in his previous report, how that could happen. “When he issued his report that her death was clearly preventable, it made a difference,” says Neha Desai, a lawyer with the National Center for Youth Law. The media reported his findings, quoted his reports, and no one disputed them. Not the courts, not the human rights advocates, not the Border Patrol. “We will do better to ensure that this does not happen again,” said Troy Miller, the acting head of Customs and Border Protection (CBP).

“It’s complicated because of the political polarization that’s taken place around immigration policy,” Wise says. “There are groups that dehumanize migrants. I’ll fight that. There are groups that dehumanize Border Patrol agents. I’ll fight that too. I try to be fair and pragmatic. But I’m an advocate for the kids and their families. And the Border Patrol knows that. They chose to see me as a court-appointed consultant that can help them improve and reform their systems so that no kid ever dies again in custody.”

‘IT WAS THE SYSTEM THAT WAS BROKEN’

Wise first began working to improve the health of vulnerable children in Guatemala, where, on a summer break from Cornell in 1970, he traveled to volunteer in a children’s hospital during a civil war. “I was on a ward with kids dying of malnutrition,” he says. “I was 18 years old. It was a very quick, profound education.” He majored in Latin American studies, then earned his MD at Cornell and MPH at Harvard before beginning his career in Boston. Since 2004, he’s been on the faculty at Stanford, where he bridges the fields of child health equity, public policy, and international security studies. His research and humanitarian efforts, often hands-on, have taken him back to Guatemala many times to work on community and child health programs, to Iraq to evaluate systems of treating injured civilians during the Battle of Mosul, and to the Poland-Ukraine border to advise on the evacuation of children with cancer from Ukraine in the wake of the Russian invasion.

So, it’s not surprising that when news reports about the children at the U.S.-Mexico border—including a series of deaths as well as kids being separated from their families and kept in cages—propelled public outrage to new heights, Wise began outreach to lawyers and visits to the border to offer his assistance. Since 1999, he’s worked to monitor and ensure compliance with the landmark 1997 Flores agreement, a class action settlement between migrant children in custody and the U.S. government that, with input from Wise, reached a further settlement in 2022.

The current crisis concerning the care of children at the U.S. border traces its roots back to 2013–14, when the Border Patrol apprehended or expelled nearly 70,000 unaccompanied children—a 77 percent increase compared with the prior federal fiscal year. Children and families, many from Honduras, Guatemala, and El Salvador, poured in, seeking relief from violence and devastating economic conditions. Those numbers surged again in 2018–19 and then again in fiscal year 2021, when the number of unaccompanied children reached a new annual high: 144,834.

“When I first got to the border, people in Kevlar vests were holding the hands of 7-year-olds,” Wise says. “The focus of attention was on individual failures of the Border Patrol at that point. And there may have been individual failures, but to me it was the system that was broken. The system was incapable of caring for children in custody. I thought I could help.”

Wang, who also began traveling to the border at that time, agrees. “The pediatric
community and society in general were upset about the child separation policy," she says. “There was huge overcrowding, too many deaths, huge delays in processing. Kids not meant to be detained for more than 72 hours were kept for weeks. We needed some kind of system to keep unaccompanied children—and all the children—safe, and adhere to the fact that they’re kids. That was clear.”

Attorneys for the children went back to court to request enforcement of the Flores agreement, which remains under judicial supervision. The judge appointed attorney Andrea Ordin as the special master in the case. With Wise as her medical adviser, she would work for nearly three years to mediate the next, more detailed settlement.

“When Paul came on board, we had thousands of children across nine different facilities in South Texas, from McAllen to the Gulf,” says Ramiro Garza, who served as an assistant chief for Border Patrol in charge of overseeing the Rio Grande Valley sector before he retired. “It was madness. I was teaching my 25-year-old agents how to change diapers. They signed up to be jumping out of airplanes and riding ATVs in the desert, chasing smugglers. These children were arriving often in bad health, traveling for months, already dehydrated. There were no medical personnel. Border Patrol was ill-equipped for this.

“Paul came right after the agency had several children die in our custody. His primary goal was ‘Let’s make sure they are safe,’” Garza says. “He was the first person who understood the operational issues. I said, ‘Tell me what to do, and I’ll tell you whether it’s feasible.’ No one wants kids to die.”

The 2022 Flores settlement obligates Customs and Border Protection to make improvements in nutrition, medical care, and housing for children and families in the Rio Grande Valley and El Paso sectors. It also requires the hiring of caregivers focused on children under 5 and prohibits unnecessary separation between children and adult family members. “Paul was absolutely crucial in getting a settlement made because of the seriousness of his advice, the credibility that he developed with the government and the plaintiff and the court,” Ordin says.

With that settlement came a new role for Wise: that of juvenile care monitor. He made announced and unannounced visits to the detention facilities in the two sectors, monitoring conditions and interviewing everyone from CBP employees and contractors to families and children. Sometimes Ordin joined him.

“We ask the children, ‘How are you? Where is your country?’” Ordin says. “Paul loves it when it’s Guatemala. We ask them about the food, and ‘Did you get to see your mom?’ We sit on the floor with them and chat about how things are going. I’m always impressed by the resilience and the openness of the children and the amount of smiles. They’ve made harrowing journeys, especially those who didn’t make them with their families.”

**‘THE EXTREMES OF VULNERABILITY’**

The death of Anadith in May 2023 was the first death of a child in Border Patrol custody since 2019.

According to government reports, Anadith and her family were taken into Border Patrol custody near Brownsville, Texas, on May 9 at 9:34 p.m. as part of a larger group of 47 migrants. Early the next morning, during medical intake at a processing facility in Donna, Texas, the family reported that Anadith had chronic conditions: sickle cell anemia and congenital heart disease. Those were documented in the electronic medical record, but there’s no evidence they were shared with the on-call physician or the appropriate Border Patrol agents. On the fifth day at the facility, Anadith complained of abdominal pain, nasal congestion, and a cough. She had a fever of 101.8 and tested positive for influenza, which meant the family was transferred to Harlingen Station.

“She was positive for the flu, which is not uncommon,” Wise says. “It happens. They moved her. At that time, they were holding all the flu and COVID cases in a Border Patrol station about a half-hour away. And that’s basically a jail setup. They keep the doors open, but it’s basically a cell.”

Over the next three days, Anadith was treated for the flu, but “[i]t appears that the medical monitoring of [her] condition was not augmented in response to her elevated medical risk,” Wise wrote in his report. On May 17, her mother repeatedly took her to the medical desk, begging that she be taken to a hospital. Twice, they were sent back to their holding pod. The third time, her mother was carrying Anadith, who appeared to be having seizures. By the time emergency services arrived, the child was unconscious. She was declared dead at the hospital.

“The mom kept saying, ‘My kid’s sick,’ and the medical people did not respond appropriately,” Wise says. “They should have called the pediatrician on call. They should have transferred her to the local children’s hospital, which wasn’t far away. It’s just astoundingly bad medical judgment. But it was the system that ultimately failed, because the pediatricians on call should have known about this case, and they should have said to the nurse practitioner, ‘Call an ambulance, get this kid immediately to a hospital.’” A child with sickle cell and a fever is in danger, he says.

“What got people particularly upset was that I had written about these weaknesses in the system in my prior report. It was a terrible tragedy.”

In his next report, Wise recommended “immediate actions that address the systemic failures that could lead to additional instances of significant harm to children in CBP custody,” including consults with pediatricians for high-risk children, “disciplined conveyance” of medical information, and faster transfer of medically fragile children out of custody. In his last report in November, he indicated that CBP had made improvements in some areas but not all.

“Anadith’s death focused the world’s attention on the extremes of vulnerability,” Wise says. “A child seeking asylum who has sickle cell anemia—you don’t get more vulnerable than that. My report said there was horrendously bad judgment by some medical personnel, but how does the system permit that to end in a child’s death?”

When he went on sabbatical, Wise stepped down as juvenile care monitor and returned to an advisory role. He is at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, in Florence, Italy, studying the origins and future of child protection in areas of political instability and conflict, including Gaza and Ukraine. The U.S. border is never far from his mind. At any time, he knows exactly how many children are in detention. He just hopes his phone never rings in the middle of the night again.

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FROM THE TIME HE TOOK THE HELM AT STANFORD, J.E. WALLACE STERLING FIELDDED HYPOTHETICAL QUESTIONS ABOUT WHETHER A MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY COULD SERVE ON THE FACULTY. THEN CAME THE REAL TEST.
WHEN

HISTORIAN J.E. WALLACE STERLING became Stanford’s fifth president, in 1949, motorists could still drive alongside the Main Quad. The Medical School was headquartered in San Francisco. Highway 280 did not yet bisect the Foothills.

During Sterling’s 19-year presidency, Stanford transformed from a regional university to a national one. The professoriate tripled in size, the student body grew by 40 percent, and the operating budget exploded from $13 million to $115 million. Sterling, PhD ’38, rode into office buoyed by a booming economy and postwar investment in university research. He left it as a new generation of students were questioning the administration on racial and gender issues and beginning to demonstrate against the Vietnam War.

In lieu of annual reports, Sterling had persuaded the Board of Trustees to accept a review at the end of his tenure of the major national issues in higher education and how to evaluate developments at Stanford in that context. Two months before he stepped down, the draft of that report, along with its supporting materials, went up in flames after an arsonist set fire to his office. The Sterling era remained comparatively undocumented; no one would write a biography of Stanford’s longest-serving president until last year, when the Stanford Historical Society published *Stanford’s Wallace Sterling: Portrait of a Presidency, 1949–1968*, by Roxanne Nilan, MA ’92, PhD ’99, and the late Cassius Kirk Jr., ’51, with contributing editor Karen Bartholomew, ’71.

Like university presidents before and since, Sterling sometimes had to navigate a collision course between political concerns of the day and principles of higher education. In the excerpts that follow, he grapples with the prospect—and, later, the reality—of a faculty member who is a member of the Communist Party.
During Sterling’s first month in office, the California loyalty-oath crisis became a public controversy. Fearing a loss of the University of California’s traditional autonomy from political battles, UC President Robert Gordon Sproul had recently proposed a compromise: that UC employees take a newly worded loyalty oath that would replace the traditional affirmation of allegiance to the United States and state constitutions (as taken routinely by state employees since 1942) with one adding that the signatory was not a member of the Communist Party. The Board of Regents, in turn, would insist that the oath be taken yearly as a requirement for employment, disregarding university procedures on tenure, due process, and contractual obligations.

A proposed debate at UCLA on whether Communists could act as free and impartial scholars had caused a highly publicized uproar when it became known that one of the participants would be Herbert Phillips, an acknowledged Communist Party member recently fired by the University of Washington. Less well known was Stanford Dean of Students Lawrence Kimpton’s [’31, MA ’32] denial of permission to a student organization hoping to host Phillips at a smaller debate. Instead, Phillips spoke to a small public gathering in a Palo Alto park.

Public interest was intense, if narrow: How would Sterling, an expert on international affairs, navigate the question: Were there Communists at Stanford? As a private university, Stanford could dodge the issue of loyalty oaths for public officials. Its faculty, administrators, and many trustees remained protective, however, of the role of higher education in understanding controversial political views and world affairs. The limitation of discussion and debate touched on academic freedom, faculty integrity, trustee authority, contractual obligations, and constitutional protections of personal freedom.

Stanford University was, by reputation and voting behavior, a significantly more conservative community than the UC campuses in Berkeley and Los Angeles. The influence of former U.S. President Herbert Hoover, Class of 1895, as a prominent alumnus, trustee, and donor, was well known. The residential community of faculty and students had always leaned Republican in elections and political debates, consistently giving notable majorities to the opponents of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the man who beat Hoover. Stanford’s Republicans, however, included many who still considered themselves Progressives from an earlier era, and the Board of Trustees, like the faculty, included many who considered themselves both Republican and liberal, or at least moderate—leaning more toward Governor Earl Warren than rising California Republican star U.S. Sen. Richard Nixon.

At Sterling’s introductory press conference that April, reporters wasted little time in questioning the new president’s stand on communism as a field of study. Did he think that basic facts about communism should be discussed in schools? “Certainly,” replied the scholar of international relations. “How can you learn about Darwin if you don’t read his books? Or understand Lenin if you don’t read him? Wasn’t it Job who said ‘Oh, that mine enemy had written a book’?” Sterling also pointed out that Stanford had one of the finest Russian and Slavic collections in the world at the Hoover Library. “Mr. Hoover would not have brought the collection to its
point of distinction if he had not intended it to be studied."

Sterling stated that communism posed a real menace to the world, but added, “I hope the people who are responsible for combating it understand it…. I also hope that those who seem to be hysterical about it, understand it as well. Understanding tends to deflate hysteria.” The Western world must “demonstrate that the Western system can do more for the individual…. It is obvious that education must share this responsibility.”

Pressed further about Communists at American universities, Sterling stated firmly that an active Communist should not teach on campus. “I doubt very much if a member of the Communist Party is a free agent,” Sterling said. “If he is not a free agent, then it would seem to follow that he cannot be objective. If he cannot be objective, he is precluded from teaching.”

Sterling may have been amused at the variety of news headlines that ensued, ranging from “President’s Assault on Reds” to “Teaching of Red Principles Urged.” But despite Sterling’s efforts to place education above fear, the “free agent” question alone would be at the heart of upcoming debates on the implications of state and federal investigations into alleged subversive behavior on college campuses and the authority of politicians, rather than academics, to determine the boundaries of academic freedom.

[Raising the Roof: Sterling inherited a yearlong kerfuffle over the midcentury modern design of Stern Hall (below). His administration would harmonize new buildings with the original campus aesthetic.]

>>[Sterling’s] views were put to a test in the mid-1950s in the case of Victor Mikhail Arnautoff of the Art Department.

The Russian-born Arnautoff, a former Czarist army officer who had escaped Bolshevik Russia, had arrived in the United States in 1925 to study art after years of exile in China. He became a naturalized citizen in 1937. Arnautoff was a talented sculptor,
printmaker, and muralist. He was well known for his *City Life* fresco mural, decorating the interior of San Francisco’s Coit Tower, and for several murals at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. (His work, like that of many other Depression-era muralists, was underwritten by the Public Works of Art Project of the Works Progress Administration.) Arnautoff taught at the California School of Fine Arts from 1932 until 1938. In 1936, he also began teaching part-time at Stanford; he became a full-time assistant professor in 1942.

In September 1955, Arnautoff’s name hit the headlines. After many citizen complaints, lithographs by Arnautoff were removed from public art exhibitions in Los Angeles and San Francisco. The image in question was one Arnautoff called “a composite and symbolic characterization of McCarthyism.” Titled *DIX McSmear*, it was a caricature of Vice President Richard Nixon wearing a black mask, holding a pumpkin in one hand, and a paintbrush and bucket labeled “smear” in the other.

The caricature decorated the cover of The Nation shortly thereafter. As Arnautoff’s employer, Stanford was quickly drawn into the controversy. A Southern California alumnus wrote Sterling:

> I simply want to make known to you that my wife and I as members of the Life Alumni and givers to the Stanford Fund, find that we and many of our friends are MOST concerned about the laxity of the Stanford faculty administration that either does not investigate nor care if a Communist such as Victor Arnautoff is allowed on the Stanford staff. . . .

Sterling replied, as he would to many such letters, defending free speech:

> The first issues involved relate to the right of free expression. You have no doubt read the statement by Vice President Nixon in which he defended the right of a person to use this means of criticizing people in public life. . . .

> Another issue revolves around the question of good taste or judgment. Opinion as to what constitutes good taste differs widely—more so in a free society than in others. It is our hope here that the freedom which makes possible differing opinions and the exercise of differing judgment will not be abused. This would be the ideal. It is not always attained, here or elsewhere.

In connection with Stanford’s position on the question of Communists on the faculty, I believe you should know that it is University policy that no proven Communist should hold a position on our faculty.

Arnautoff resided in San Francisco, home to a large Russian émigré population. He headed the Russian-American Society and played a central role in the Russian War Relief organization, both located in the City. Toward the end of World War II, he also began teaching painting and printmaking at the California Labor School. After the war, both the Society and the Labor School were labeled “subversive” by the U.S. attorney general.

When Arnautoff met with Sterling, he answered in detail the president’s questions about his public activities and his university work but declined to answer any questions about his political views. Sterling, following procedure, referred the matter to the Advisory Board, elected by the Academic Council to handle faculty appointments and discipline. The Advisory Board also questioned Arnautoff, and concluded that it would not recommend termination, nor would it go on record as wishing to do so when Arnautoff’s contract expired.

When he learned the result, Robert Minge Brown [‘31], Stanford trustees’ general counsel, had an extended telephone conversation with presidential assistant Fred Glover [‘33]. Brown, Glover reported to Sterling, was “very disturbed.”

> The 1954 Communist Control Act, Brown noted, stated that although membership in the Party was not a crime, the Communist Party itself was illegal and membership in the Party subjected the member to certain penalties, such as not being able to run for public office or work for the government. Since it had been judicially determined that the Communist Party advocated the overthrow of the government by force and violence, Brown argued, this gave the faculty and the university the right to ask whether Arnautoff was a member of the Communist Party. Arnautoff’s refusal to answer “relates not to a criminal act, but to his moral fitness to teach, for otherwise we are putting the faculty opinion over the law of the land,” Brown said.
WHEN I ENTERED STANFORD as a newly minted 18-year-old, Wally Sterling was president. It was the mid-’60s, and he had a reputation of walking around campus greeting students with a warm and unforgettable handshake: His hands, it was said, were the size of baseball mitts.

For some reason, that lore gave me a sense that he might be approachable when, during dinner at Branner that first fall quarter, I found a dead palmetto bug in my Swiss chard. In those days, we were handed a plate of food by the kitchen staff and expected to eat what we were given. There were no choices, and nobody expected the food to be very good.

But a bug the size of my thumb? That was too much. I took my plate to the kitchen and showed it to the matron in charge. She simply took the plate from my hand and placed another in it. No shock. No apology. No comment.

Outraged, I stomped back to the table and suggested to my roommates that we invite President Sterling to dinner at Branner so he could see how bad the food was. It was a bit of bravado I didn’t truly plan to put into action, but they thought it was a terrific idea, and soon we’d penned an invitation on Crane stationery and sent it off in the mail.

We were astonished when, a week later, we got a response—not from President Sterling, but from his wife, Ann: “The President will be traveling next week, but if you’ll accept half a loaf, I would be pleased to have you girls to dinner at Hoover House next Thursday.”

Wow. Yikes. OK. We’re adults (barely), we can do this. Two of us—Sue and I—had been groomed in manners in preparation for debut summers (OK, it was a long time ago), but our third roommate, Cyndi, was freaked out by the idea of an intimate, formal dinner at the home of her university’s president. I told her what my mother told me: Watch the hostess and do what she does.

We borrowed a car from a grad student—a beat-up sedan with two doors and a back seat accessed by folding the front seat down—and drove the short distance to Hoover House. Sue and I got out first. Then Cyndi—who was in the back seat—punched the front seat a bit too hard, forcing it into the steering wheel. The horn let out a friendly blast.

A butler, with a tiny smile, opened the front door and showed us in.

Mrs. Sterling greeted us warmly and put us at ease with a little chit-chat. Then she said, “I have a surprise for you girls. The president’s trip was canceled, and he’ll be joining us for dinner tonight.” Stunned, we all turned to see President Sterling’s imposing figure filling the doorway. Cyndi looked like she wanted to bolt.

The president seemed to be genuinely pleased, and maybe a little amused. He shook hands with each of us (that’s how I verified the baseball mitt story) and led us to the dining room.

Dinner was a formal affair, with waitstaff serving from the left and taking from the right. I still remember the menu: chicken on the bone, which we ate with knife and fork (Cyndi having some difficulty with a skittish drumstick), and for dessert, pots de crème. With lids. When a tiny Limoges pot was set down in front of Cyndi, she looked up at me in panic. I glanced at Ann. Cyndi took the hint.

I don’t remember much about our conversation over dinner. The president asked us about our backgrounds, our plans for going to overseas campuses, our prospective majors. I do know the palmetto bug never came up.

After dinner, Ann invited us into the living room for coffee. The room was dominated by a grand piano, and when Sue remarked on it, Ann asked whether she played. Sue admitted that she did, but she was reluctant to show off her skills. Finally, Ann persuaded her: “Oh, Sue, we’d love to hear you. Just play something you know.”

Sue was not prepared, and it showed. The more she played, the more flustered she got, until Ann, with no small amount of compassion, interrupted: “No, no, Sue, play something you know.” We all cracked up—and Sue steered clear of the piano for the rest of the evening.

Even as a brand-new freshman, I knew that evening had been extraordinary. We were so naive, so goofy, so obtuse in the president’s house, and the Sterlings were so gracious, so full of good humor. It taught me that despite our youth and our awkwardness, we could count on being welcomed in this widening adult world.

Over the next year, whenever I saw the president crossing campus, he’d acknowledge me with a wave or a smile. But I doubt he remembered that evening for its provocative conversation. More likely, it was our departure, and the horn that Cyndi blasted, again, as she got into the back seat of that car for the return trip to Branner.

HOLLY WHEELER BRADY, ’69, is a publishing strategist and the former director of Stanford Publishing Courses. She lives in Palo Alto. Email her at stanford.magazine@stanford.edu.
Brown contended, according to Glover, that if an organization has been legally established as dedicated to the overthrow of the government by force and violence, “it is not a question of political views that are at stake when a man is questioned as to his membership in the party.” When word of the faculty’s refusal to act to expel Arnautoff became known to those interested in the welfare of the university, he argued, this case “is going to be a very damaging one.”

The Arnautoff matter was quiescent until December 1956, when he was subpoenaed to appear before a three-man subcommittee of the U.S. House Un-American Activities Committee, then meeting in San Francisco. When asked by subcommittee counsel Richard Arens if he was a Communist Party member, eligible to attend cell meetings, Arnautoff refused to answer, invoking the Fifth Amendment. The subcommittee, in turn, labeled him a Communist Party member, not by his own testimony but by the accusations of others. The subcommittee recommended that the Department of Justice begin denaturalization action against him.

Stanford issued the following news release:

When a member of the Stanford academic personnel is called for questioning before a congressional or state investigating committee and chooses to stand on his constitutional right to refuse to testify on grounds of possible self-incrimination, he is not subject for this reason alone to dismissal or other disciplinary action. . . .

Dr. Sterling [who was on the East Coast at the time] has stated many times that in his opinion a card-carrying Communist has foresworn [sic] any objectivity in learning and thus has no place on a college campus. At the same time he has said that in cases of this kind, the University will hold to the traditional view that an American is innocent until proven guilty.

Arnautoff maintained his silence; the strategy paid off. Most academics who invoked the Fifth Amendment when testifying during HUAC proceedings lost their jobs. The label of “Fifth Amendment Communist” was grounds enough at most colleges for dismissal. Arnautoff retained his position at Stanford.

He apparently never admitted to his Stanford faculty colleagues who supported him that he had, indeed, joined the Communist Party in 1937, the same year he became a naturalized citizen. In 1955, he and his wife, Leda, had been granted permission (after repeated petitions) by the Supreme Soviet to return to Russia and become Soviet citizens. Arnautoff retired in 1962, following the death of his wife, in San Francisco, and the next year he returned to his hometown of Zhdanov, Russia. ■

Bongeka Zuma grew up in a small village in South Africa with no running water or electricity. She’s traveled thousands of miles to be where she is: on the verge of graduating from the Medical School in June. It’s been an incredible journey, she says, but not one without hurdles.

“I was not prepared in any shape or form for where I am,” Zuma says. Like many of the 4,126 international students at Stanford, she has faced down challenges. She’s been home only twice since arriving at Stanford in 2017, because of the high cost of travel and her demanding schedule. Language differences have been a struggle. And daily, she deals with an intense need to succeed, not only for herself but also for her relatives back home, who sometimes don’t have enough to eat.

“There’s so much pressure,” she says. “If I fail, I have the feeling that I am letting an entire continent down.”

Stanford’s international students hail from 129 different countries. Some must navigate not only a new educational system and culture but also international politics, finding themselves under heightened scrutiny because of friction between the United States and China, or because they’re from one of the four United Nations member-countries with which the United States maintains no diplomatic relations. Take, for example, Majd Nasra, ’25, a computer science major from Aleppo, Syria, who traveled home this past winter to see his family for the first time since he left for Stanford three years ago. Because there is no American embassy in Syria, Nasra had to travel to Jordan to renew the visa that would allow him to reenter the United States. He wasn’t sure whether he would make it back to campus before classes began in January. Other experiences are more universal, like missing the food back home. When Juan Bautista Romaniuk, ’26, describes Argentinian milanesas, his eyes roll back with longing. “They’re like schnitzel, with a thinly sliced cut of meat,” he says dreamily.

International students at Stanford comprise 33 percent of the graduate and 11 percent of the undergraduate population. Most travel on an F-1 visa, which allows entry into the United States for full-time study over a defined period, typically four to five years. In 2022–23, a majority—54 percent—came to Stanford from Asia, where roughly 60 percent of the world’s population resides.

“When I think of the challenges they face—navigating complex visa processes, handling culture shock and homesickness, dealing with byzantine immigration regulations, and adapting and thriving in a new academic culture, I am in awe,” says Shalini Bhutani, executive director of Bechtel International Center, which provides support and administrative help to international students. Here are a few of their stories.
and Visas
Bongeka Zuma

On family, medicine, and “good problems”

Zuma is from a small village—Nkwezela—in eastern South Africa. She received a scholarship to an all-girls boarding school set up in South Africa by Oprah Winfrey and left home at 13. In 2016, she graduated summa cum laude from Spelman College, in Atlanta, and then earned a master’s degree in medical anthropology from Oxford. Now at Stanford School of Medicine, she expects to graduate in June. Next, she’s heading to an internal medicine residency program at the University of Pennsylvania and hopes doing rotations in Africa will enable her one day to put her skills to use back in her home community. “For so many people, I am like their only hope,” she says.

“I grew up in what’s probably considered here as a stereotypical small African village. I honestly didn’t realize I was living in poverty until we got our first TV when I was 7 and started watching, but still it was ‘Oh, that’s just in other countries.’ In primary school, we shared a desk between three students. None of the students could afford to buy textbooks. Maybe 100 students were cramped into one classroom. We cleaned our own classrooms. All the students would go to the river to get water to scrub the floor, and then the boys would wash the windows. We liked it because it was a break.

“I didn’t know people read books for leisure until I left home [at 13]. I haven’t been able to spend more than a month with my parents since then. So much of my world, well, my friends here just don’t understand.

“I was accepted into a medical residency program with global health rotations in Africa. There’s no question of me giving back after everything that I’ve been blessed with. My extended family back home, we’re all still very much connected—cousins and grandparents and siblings of grandparents. You feel the weight of all those people waiting for you to finish and succeed so that you can help them. There’s always the question ‘When are you graduating?’ What if my parents die before they’re able to see me achieve this milestone? Life expectancy isn’t that high back home.

“But what I’m meant to do in this life is become a physician, and I love it. It’s a privilege and a blessing to be able to do something that I love, no matter how hard it is. These are good life problems.”
Majd Nasra
On war, sacrifice, and fountain hopping

Nasra, ’25, a resident assistant in the frosh dorm Potter, was 9 years old when civil war broke out in his home country of Syria. He recalls how he and his family, who live in Aleppo, had to dodge snipers and beware of blasts. “My parents are the real heroes,” he says. They worked—his mom as a civil engineer and his dad as a dealer of spare parts for trucks—to support Nasra and his brother, who’s now a physician. Meanwhile, Nasra studied, played, and won science competitions. “For me, I was seeing my friends and having fun. Imagine being a parent. Your children go off to school each day and they might not come back.”

Nasra’s visa is good for only three months at a time. He can stay in the United States as long as he’s a Stanford student, but if he returns home after the three-month period is up, he has to apply for renewal in order to reenter. “I risk getting stuck in processing or getting rejected. There’s always the little probability that I might not be able to finish my education at Stanford.” Nasra did finally make it back to campus after winter break this year—two weeks after classes had started.

“Living through a war—well, it just meant that you could die any second. If you were on the street or if you’re at home, something somewhere will go boom. I ran many times, but my mom, she used to walk to work where there was this intersection that was covered by a sniper. So, my mom had to run across the street every day to go to work and come back from work. There was no driving because the roads were filled with sandbags put there to prevent bullets and stuff. People lost their cars, their homes. Friends got kidnapped. But nothing happened to any of my family members. I’m grateful for that. I didn’t really know what was going on. I felt like it was a dream. I don’t know if I have PTSD. I don’t want to know.

“I chose Stanford because of the fountain hopping—and academics. I’m studying computational biology [within CS] and would like to research cancer from the genomic or AI approach.

“When I traveled home, it was so stressful. There’s no fighting, no bombing there now, but traveling to and from the U.S. gets complicated. The logistics that we have to go through to see our families—book a hotel; get to Jordan, where there’s a U.S. embassy; get a flight; get a taxi; apply for the visa; pay for the visa using only the currency available in the location of the embassy. Normally we would go through Lebanon, which is closer to home, but the U.S. Embassy in Lebanon was temporarily closed due to the war in Gaza when I went. I had to change flights and pay a lot extra to change destinations. I was so relieved to make it back.

“Another thing about being from Syria—we tend to get more generalized as bad people. Like, some people think, ‘This person is dangerous because he’s Syrian.’ That hurts. I was asked once here if I’ve ever killed someone. I was like, ‘Bro, are you for real?’

“I learned [from the war] to appreciate things like water and electricity and food. It taught me to live gratefully. I’m in the best place that a person can ever be in, so I better be grateful. I’m an RA in the dorm and at, like, 3 a.m. I’ll see the lounge lights on, and I turn them off. It’s force of habit. Last summer, we lost power here on campus because of fires and everyone was, like, freaked out. I was like, ‘Bro, come on. It’s chill. Hey, it’s OK, everything will be OK.’"
Juan Bautista Romaniuk

On transportation, time management, and calling your mom

Romaniuk, a sophomore, grew up in the city of Mendoza at the base of the Argentine Andes, where he developed a fascination with the ancient irrigation system that turns the arid land fertile and helps the vineyards surrounding the city grow.

“Mendoza’s got these water channels flowing in the middle of the street that keep the city green,” he says. “They transport the water down from the mountains.” This, and his fascination with the subways when he moved to Buenos Aires at 16, spurred him to study civil engineering and architectural design at Stanford, where he says he’s found a wealth of courses and research possibilities.

“Coming here, it’s truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” he says. “There are just so many amazing students with really brilliant minds coming together in one environment. Just getting to know everyone truly is inspiring.”

“When I was living in Buenos Aires, I recall always asking my mom if we could go on a subway ride. And she was, ‘But where do you want to go?’ And I was, ‘I really just want to take the subway.’ The destination didn’t matter. I just liked seeing how dense a city like that is, and thinking about all the factors that keep it functioning, and how, really, transportation is the backbone of everything. In my college application, I wrote about the irrigation system in my hometown of Mendoza that was developed during precolonial times by Indigenous groups. As international students, we bring new ideas like these with us.

I’m an only child, so my mom and I are close. She has a very rare autoimmune disease. It affects her arms and legs and causes a burning sensation. Even if she walks a little bit, she gets fatigued. Calling her is part of my everyday routine. I like having a routine, ticking items off a list.

“I think the hardest part of being an international student for me is uncertainty for the future. You feel like you’re always battling against time. I am on a student visa that lasts four years, so I can’t just say, ‘Oh, I think I want to take five years to graduate.’ And I think that makes you want to maximize every single opportunity.

“I think everything is just so globalized these days that there hasn’t been a lot of culture shock for me. Small things for sure, like eating dinner earlier here. People in Argentina eat around 9:30 p.m. I think on a day-to-day basis, it’s hard to get too homesick because you’re always focused on the things that you need to do in the day. But I do miss my family.

“I’m always thinking about how everything I’m doing will affect my future. It sort of restricts that ability to just enjoy my time here. Which sounds almost contradictory because you really don’t get an opportunity like this all the time.”

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Number of countries represented in the undergraduate Class of 2027
Xianghao Zhan

On trade wars, cultural exchange, and American football

Zhan, MS ’21, MS ’23—who grew up in Zhengzhou, China—is in his final year as a PhD student in bioengineering. He’s researching the use of sensors to help assess concussions to determine the extent of damage from head trauma. He has master’s degrees in bioengineering and in statistics, both from Stanford. Zhan hopes to stay on at Stanford as a postdoctoral scholar, but he still needs to obtain the visa that will allow that. Since 2018, when the U.S. imposed tariffs on China, citing IP theft, and the trade wars began between the two countries, visa requests from Chinese students have undergone more intense scrutiny, Zhan says.

“When I was born in China, they had the single-child policy, so I’m an only child. People are allowed more children now. I haven’t been able to visit China since I came to Stanford. The visa situation is too complicated, the cost is too high, and I’m worried about not getting back to finish my studies. But my mom has come to visit. I’m planning to graduate in spring; I can invite my parents from China to attend my commencement. This is really the biggest moment in my life.

“I’m finishing my thesis on the computational modeling of traumatic brain injury. Our lab uses mouthguards with sensors to measure brain movements in athletes. We’ve tested them in thousands of football players, but I still don’t understand a thing about U.S. football.

“I cannot easily leave [and then reenter] the U.S., because my area of studies is in STEM and there is technology competition between our two countries. The U.S. worries about [Chinese students] stealing tech. Most Chinese students, of course, they are not spying. But this kind of thing makes it much harder for us to enter the U.S. or apply for a U.S. visa. Nowadays, lots of Chinese students just stay in China or travel to Europe to study. Coming to the U.S. is so hard.

“I’m planning to stay in the U.S. after I graduate under the OPT [Optional Practical Training] program, which allows me to stay for three years of postdoctoral work. But after that, if I want to stay in the U.S., I have to apply for a [different kind of] visa. I have a lot of Chinese friends who wanted to stay in the U.S., but they cannot. They have to go back. I’m not thinking too much about that yet.

“This summer, after graduation, I’m planning to go back to China to visit. If I have to renew my visa, then that could be a little bit risky. Politics make things really hard. I miss that time when there were good relations between the two countries—the freedom and people communicating. I think there is so much benefit to have international students coming and going. You learn from people from other countries, and it makes peace easier when you understand each other, right? I play volleyball at Stanford with lots of international students, some from Ukraine, others from India, Europe. We learn from each other.”

International students from China

1979: 2
1990: 209
2023: 1,111
(996 graduate, 115 undergrad)
Khwaish Billore
On physics, exploration, and very long flights

Billore, ’26, is a physics major with a love of poetry whose parents—an engineer and a surgeon—encouraged her interests in science and the arts as she was growing up in Mumbai, India. She recalls falling in love with physics in the sixth grade.

“I had this teacher who said, ‘If you’re interested in a topic, you should read everything about it,’” she says. “We would discuss things like surface tension, and he’d say, ‘Now tell me how many droplets of water you can put on a coin without it falling over.’ He really helped me explore physics, and things just clicked in place, like this is an actual thing that happens in the world and I can explain why.” Billore chose Stanford in part because of the flexibility to explore a wide variety of courses. It’s not like that for undergraduates in India, she says. She’s able to make regular trips home, which helps with homesickness. But the flights are so long—at least 17 hours, not including layovers. “And I can’t sleep on planes,” she says mournfully.

“Sure, I miss some things. The Indian food here isn’t spicy enough for me. I really miss Mumbai’s chaat. It’s spicy and full of flavor, and I love it both when we go out and eat street food and when we make it at home. Also, it’s cold here. Mumbai doesn’t get cold at all. But I’m getting used to it. I guess I speak what could be called Indian-English—just little differences, like I refer to Z as zed. So sometimes people don’t understand me. But they’re usually willing to explain things to me. And when that happens, it’s a good opportunity to exchange information about our differences. I will tell them what I’m used to, and they’ll tell me how things are done here.

“The reason I love physics is because it helps explain the world. It’s so much fun. I try to share that when I tutor other students here. To me, it’s really logical. Like, if you start with three equations, you can describe a whole system. That’s extraordinary to me. There are attempts to describe big systems, like entire galaxies, with just a series of equations. And we can do that reasonably well. Everything that happens is, at its most fundamental level, physics. So, if you can understand physics, you can basically understand the world. It just makes sense.

“I’ve made friends from all over the world at Stanford. It makes you think in different ways. We all learned different things in school to some extent, especially in the humanities—things like history and stuff. One of the first friends I made at Stanford was from Malaysia. I didn’t know anything about Malaysian history and my friend didn’t know much about Indian history. So, we can sit and exchange information and learn from each other.

“In theory, you may be like, ‘I want all of humanity to be friends,’ but it’s not something you really feel until you meet people from different cultures. Things feel less abstract. In terms of making your ideals concrete, it’s important to interact with people from different backgrounds. That’s one of the wonderful things about universities. I’ve learned how much we all have in common.”

Keinosuke Otaku, from Tokyo, graduated in zoology in 1894, becoming the first international student to earn a Stanford degree.
New horizons

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Alka Joshi was too busy prepping for her big day to anticipate how the dire news from around the world was about to come careening into her own life. A decade earlier, at 52, she’d put her marketing business on pause to start an MFA program in creative writing. Now, the book she’d begun as a grad student was about to be released by one of the world’s largest publishing houses. It was the realization of a deeply personal project: a reimagining of the life her mother might have had if she hadn’t been pushed into an arranged marriage and motherhood as a teenager in 1950s India. To celebrate, Joshi was planning a launch party near her home in Pacific Grove, Calif., complete with sitar, tabla, and classical Indian dance, and based on a scene in her book. The countdown had begun on her Instagram page. *The Henna Artist*—the 30th and final draft of her novel—would hit bookstore shelves on March 3, 2020.

Then came a call. The event space she’d rented was closing. And so, too, she realized as she scrambled for alternatives, was everywhere else. Her launch party, her book tour, her panel discussions were falling apart in the face of the not-yet-official pandemic. The excitement vanished. She was an unknown, first-time author with fewer and fewer ways to get a distracted world’s attention. “I said to my husband, ‘Why did you think I could do this?’” Joshi, ’80, says. “Obviously I was never meant to do this. Obviously this is a total sham.’ I just thought...
Begin Again

Joshi has an energy and charisma that helped her transcend the limits of lock down by popping off the screen in Zoom calls.

all the cards were stacked against me.” It was a pity party, complete with crying under the covers. She began putting out appeals on social media. “You guys, I wrote this book and nobody’s going to get a chance to read it,” she recalls. “Would you please call me if you have a book club?”

As it turned out, somebody did, and a week later she called. Reese Witherspoon wanted The Henna Artist as the next pick for her book club, whose cover stickers have become one of publishing’s sought-after seals of approval. “Witherspoon—of Legally Blonde and Big Little Lies and Wild and Cruel Intentions—has become, like Oprah Winfrey before her, one of a select few tastemakers who can launch a book into the stratosphere,” Vox journalist Constance Grady wrote in 2019.

Witherspoon revealed her decision via Instagram on May 1, 2020. “It just took me to another land and another place and really opened my eyes to a whole other way of life,” she told an online audience largely locked down and craving just such an escape. By the end of the month, The Henna Artist was No. 14 on the New York Times bestseller list for hardcover fiction. In June, the e-book and audiobook versions made similar appearances. In August, Joshi sold the film rights to Miramax Television, which promised to emulate the most iconic of historical dramas. “We’re going to make The Henna Artist into an Indian Downton Abbey,” she recalls them saying. “Wow, I thought, ‘I don’t think it gets better than that.’”

Protagonist

At an age when many are contemplating retirement, Joshi had stepped up to the plate in a whole new game and hit a home run, maybe a grand slam. Her only other published piece of literary writing was an essay in a community college magazine. The Henna Artist would sell more than 800,000 copies and spawn two sequels, The Secret Keeper of Jaipur, in 2021, and The Perfumist of Paris, in 2023. (The television adaptation of The Henna Artist remains in production, she says.) A recently completed fourth book, part of a seven-figure, two-book deal with HarperCollins, moves beyond the characters in her debut.

Joshi has been embraced by many as a symbol of the potential for growth, reinvention, and success in later life. In October, Forbes invited her to its Fifth Avenue headquarters in New York as part of her inclusion on its Over 50 list of women, an honor that placed Joshi alongside names such as Judy Blume, Katie Couric, and Viola Davis. “I just sometimes feel like my world sort of exploded,” Joshi says. “What happened? Like, how did I get on a list like that with all these other women? I’m constantly pinching myself.”

Witherspoon is an obvious answer. Joshi says she still wonders almost daily what would have happened without her help. And, certainly, Joshi did everything she could to maximize that boost. An effusive speaker with an eye-catching style, from her asymmetrical silver bob to her statement jewelry, Joshi has an energy and charisma that helped her transcend the limits of lock down by popping off the screen in Zoom calls, which she has been all too willing to do. Since the debut of The Henna Artist, she has spoken to more than 900 book clubs and discussion groups, only recently limiting herself to one such event per day. “She has got to be in the top three hardest-working authors I’ve ever worked with in terms of promoting herself and putting herself out there, and just being open to everything and anything,” says Ashley MacDonald, who handles Joshi’s marketing at HarperCollins.

But none of those factors would have mattered if she hadn’t persevered to write a book that spoke to people—especially women, whom Joshi says make up the bulk of her audience. The Henna Artist is the page-turning tale of Lakshmi Shastri, who escapes an abusive marriage in a small Rajasthani village in the...
1950s and remakes herself, becoming an independent woman in Jaipur by tending to the city’s elite, painting them in exquisite henna, moonlighting as a matchmaker, and providing more secretive services. As a traditional healer, she is in demand for herbal remedies to prevent pregnancies, or to end them. It’s a niche she maintains only by staying in the good graces of her patrons, a balance that becomes impossible when the life she ran away from catches up with her.

Kathy Sagan, the editor who acquired the book for HarperCollins in 2018, says she generally reads the first 75 pages of a manuscript to gauge interest. She started reading Joshi’s manuscript on the train home, then stayed up late that night finishing it. “I was just drawn into this novel, the world she creates, the sense of place and time,” she says, but amid the particulars Sagan saw themes as familiar now as ever. “The challenges that Lakshmi faces are relatable to any woman trying to be empowered.”

Prologue

When Joshi graduated from Stanford in 1980 with an art history degree, she had a firmer sense of what she didn’t want to do than what she did. All her peers seemed to be heading to graduate school, a path she had no interest in. Instead, she heeded her father’s advice and did something even less fitting: She joined a management training program with Prudential in Los Angeles. “I knew from day one I did not want to be doing what I was doing,” she says. “I said, ‘Alka, you always wanted to be in a creative field—what are you doing pushing paper and learning about insurance? Who cares?’” She soon landed on advertising as her way out.

She lived off peanut butter sandwiches and cashed in her 401(k) after four years in L.A. to pay for a move back to the Bay Area, where she took illustration, graphic design, and advertising classes at local colleges. Eventually she began sending out her portfolio with a winking cover letter, purportedly from a brother. “It said, ‘This is my sister Alka. She’s 28 years old. She has forgotten to have children and forgotten to get married, and if you don’t give her an interview to see if she can get a job, then we will have to take care of her as a family for the rest of her life,’” she says. “It was a bold move, but, you know, I had nothing to lose.” In 1988, she got a bite from global advertising giant McCann Erickson in San Francisco. But the people interviewing her didn’t see her as Joshi saw herself. She wanted to be an art director, in charge of illustrations and photo shoots. They offered her a tryout as a copywriter. “Immediately, they put me on radio ads and TV ads,” she says. “And at the end of 30 days, I realized I really liked this thing called copywriting.”

In 1995, she founded Alka Joshi Marketing, the company she would run until The Henna Artist took off. Advertising taught her to create mini-stories, bursts of comedy or drama tucked within a 30- to 60-second time frame, but even as she prospered in the field, she didn’t consider herself a real writer. That, she says, was an exalted term far from the reality of crafting copy for the likes of the Milk Board and Safeway. But the year she started her business, she married someone who urged her to think differently of herself. Bradley Jay Owens, MA ’89, who had graduated from and taught in Stanford’s creative writing program. Not long after their wedding, the two were driving from the Bay Area to Sun Valley, Idaho, where Owens would attend a writers conference. To while away the hours on the road, Joshi began telling stories of her childhood in India. When she was 9, her family moved to Ames, Iowa, where her father was getting a doctorate in civil engineering at Iowa State. It was a stark transition from Rajasthan, where the family had a comfortable if peripatetic existence as her father helped realize public works projects, like dams and roads. In Iowa, they had undreamed-of extravagances—a television and a refrigerator. And yet they were scraping by, living in a two-bedroom Quonset hut for grad students, with corrugated iron sides and an oil heater. To make ends meet, her mother would sew and sell neckties piece-meal, a skill for needlework she’d also use in her attempts to satisfy her rapidly Americanizing children’s desire for denim. Joshi and her two brothers were teased at school for wearing homemade jeans, just as they were avoided on the school bus for smelling of curry. In the late 1960s, people from India were so rare in the Midwest they were often mistaken for Mexican.

“I told her, ‘You have great stories—you should tell them,’” Owens says. “She would say, ‘No, I’m just an advertising hack. I couldn’t do that.’ I just kept pushing her that these stories were worth telling and she should tell them.” Around 2007, Joshi began taking evening classes at the Writers’ Grotto in San Francisco. She lacked many of the nuts and bolts of fiction—pacing, plot, and character development—but from the start, ideas flowed. “It was this weird thing where [the teacher] gave us a prompt and I could just write,” Joshi says. “Like, I didn’t even have to think about it.”

Plot Twist

Lakshmi, the titular henna artist, is modeled on Joshi’s mother. Her green eyes are her mother’s green eyes, and her courage is the courage of her mother, who eventually reinvented herself in America soldering
Ever since she was a teenager, she had wondered what kind of life her mother could have had if she’d been able to make her own choices instead of marrying at 18, bearing three children, and moving to a country far from her family, friends, and culture in a traditional marriage that gave her little power.

Growing up in the Midwest, where it seemed like the only thing people knew about India was its poverty, Joshi had learned to feel embarrassed about her heritage. The trips enabled her to see India though her mother’s eyes. “She loved India,” Joshi says. “She never wanted to come to the United States.” And it was a chance for Joshi to ponder an old question. Ever since she was a teenager, she had wondered what kind of life her mother could have had if she’d been able to make her own choices instead of marrying at 18, bearing three children, and moving to a country far from her family, friends, and culture in a traditional marriage that gave her little power.

The query evolved into Joshi’s MFA thesis. “When I started to write, I thought, you know, ‘What if I could turn it around for her in fiction?’” During their stays in Jaipur, Joshi would take notes during the day and write at night, often reading passages to her mother. “She was just like, ‘Oh, OK, that’s nice, honey,’” she says. “I don’t really think she thought, ‘Oh, this is going to be some big novel.’”

Her mother was in attendance when Joshi presented an early draft of The Henna Artist as her MFA thesis in 2011, but she died shortly after. Bereft, Joshi stopped writing. The book was meant to be a gift to her mother, and there was no point to that now. But a year later, Joshi got a call from her thesis adviser, author Anita Amirrezvani, asking how the manuscript was coming along. When Joshi told her what had happened, Amirrezvani suggested that returning to the book could be therapeutic. “She said, ‘That story has so much promise,’” Joshi says.

The two began working together. Eventually, Amirrezvani connected Joshi to her agent, who liked what she saw but wanted more character development and a focus on a single point of view, among a raft of other changes. It was the beginning of a multiyear back-and-forth that Joshi says pushed her to the point of quitting several times. Seven years in, after receiving a 15-page letter from a developmental editor advising still more major revisions, Joshi—again busy with her
marketing company—threw the manuscript into a drawer and gave up. “Why am I putting myself through this torture?” she recalls thinking. “Maybe I can write, but I’m not publishable.” A year later, she chanced upon the draft, and resumed writing. With a cooler head, she could appreciate both her own work and the feedback, and she resumed writing. And this time, the book sold.

She started her second novel, The Secret Keeper of Jaipur, before The Henna Artist was published, and found the sequels less arduous to write. They’re just as beloved. Each of her titles has a 4.5-star overall rating on Amazon, but The Henna Artist is the biggest seller of the three. Joshi likens the relative ease of her subsequent writing experiences to parents who fuss over every little moment in their first child’s life, then relax with the next. “The second one becomes so much easier because you’re like, ‘OK, I know what not to do, and I know what to do,’” she says.

Success has led to some material changes. She splashed out on a Porsche, and she and Owens remodeled their house in Pacific Grove down to the studs, but mostly, she says, her life as a literary star is not very different from before. She’s been happy to accept the mantle of role model for those who want to embark on writing later in life or to write about their culture. She doesn’t have time to read manuscripts, but she loves to give advice and make connections. Her one sadness is that her mother wasn’t alive to witness the success she inspired. The topic still brings tears to Joshi’s eyes. “I know she would be inordinately proud of it—I feel it,” she says. But she also knows The Henna Artist is an homage that could not have come much earlier. “In my 20s, 30s, and 40s, I could not have written this book,” she says. “I didn’t understand enough about life.”

Sam Scott is a senior writer at Stanford. Email him at sscott3@stanford.edu.
DON'T BE SUCH A PESSIMIST!

Democracy is not dead. Not yet, anyway. But in the United States, it is begging for our recommitment.

Josiah Ober, a Stanford professor of political science and of classics, and co-author Brook Manville make that hopeful point in *The Civic Bargain: How Democracy Survives*, in what turns out to be a riveting romp—no, actually—through thousands of years of Western political history. (Honestly, slogging through 1,500 years of British history boiled down to 50 pages felt tough, but the gripping Athenian and Roman sections more than made up for the sacrifice. Consider it a civic compromise.)

They start with a spare definition of democracy: “when extensive, socially diverse bodies of citizens govern themselves, accepting no ruler except for one another.” Such an arrangement is possible only when people decide they’re better off bargaining with each other than fighting and enter into a win-win deal, giving something to get something, in what the authors define as a civic bargain.

Through four examples—ancient Athenian democracy, republican Rome, British parliamentarianism, and American constitutionalism—the authors show why and how democracies came about and where they failed, at times or ultimately. Some takeaways:

• Everything in moderation. Too much wealth—and the inequality that inevitably follows—can be corrosive to civic friendship. Even personal freedom must be checked in favor of compromise.

• Scale is hard, but it can be good. As a democracy grows in size and diversity, citizens must update the civic bargain to include the new additions. Then come the ability to harness a wide range of knowledge in solving complex problems, and a more robust workforce for economic growth and security.

• Democracy takes work. You have to show up to vote, volunteer, serve in the military, and engage with others about complex issues. It’s worrisome that military recruitment is down, as is participation in civic organizations. It’s worrisome that political parties have a stranglehold on the civic narrative.

But America has already confronted one of the greatest threats to the system: scaling up its citizenship, a challenge that doomed Athenian democracy. Now it must deal with rising inequality and the precarious state of civic friendship, two conditions that led to the downfall of Rome in the late first century BCE.

“When Romans began treating fellow citizens as enemies to be defeated rather than as friends with whom one might fruitfully negotiate,” Ober and Manville write, “the democratic republic collapsed and was replaced by a form of monarchy.” Luckily, the solution to this threat is entirely in our hands.

My civic friends may not like what I have to say, but they grant me the space in which to say it. And for my part, I grant them a similar space.

WE RECOMMEND

The Journey Within

Learning to Love Midlife: 12 Reasons Why Life Gets Better with Age
Chip Conley, '82, MBA '84; Little, Brown Spark. Happiness lies just over the hill—no crisis necessary.

Let Us Descend
Jesmyn Ward, '99, MA '00; Scribner. An enslaved teenage girl taps into a secret source of strength as she’s forced to walk from North Carolina to New Orleans.

North Woods
Daniel Mason, assistant professor of psychiatry; Random House. A cabin and its surrounding forest bear witness to centuries of change, catalyzed by those who pass through.

Turning Pages: The Adventures and Misadventures of a Publisher
John Sargent, '79; Skyhorse Publishing. Tales from the book industry’s heyday—glamorous, influential, and unaware of the digital precipice ahead.

Day
Michael Cunningham, '75; Random House. Stress fractures form in a family fighting pandemic panic, malaise, and lost dreams.

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**HONORING STANFORD LEADERS**

**Gold Spike**

In 1969 the Stanford Cabinet designated the Gold Spike award as the highest annual honor for leadership service to Stanford. The original gold spike was driven by Leland Stanford in Utah in May 1869 to mark the final link in the nation’s first transcontinental railroad.

**Stanford Medal**

Introduced in 2006 by Stanford Associates, the Stanford Medal recognizes select alumni leaders who have provided decades of distinguished and significant service to Stanford.

### 2024 Gold Spike Recipients

**Angela Nomellini,’75** has brought unparalleled dedication to Stanford for twenty-five years. Legendary for her remarkable commitment to the Graduate School of Education, she has served on the GSE Advisory Board since 2005 (seven years as chair), proving herself an indispensable strategic partner to deans and an influential voice in designing the new GSE campus. A ten-year member of the Stanford Athletics Board, Angela has also been an ardent supporter of women’s athletics. Revered for her generosity and enthusiasm, Angela is a tremendous Stanford volunteer leader, fundraiser, advisor, ambassador, and fan.

**Ram Shriram, P ’10, P ’13** is an intellectually curious changemaker whose far-reaching impact reflects his extraordinary generosity of spirit. In addition to his two terms on the Board of Trustees (including serving as vice chair) and seven years on the Stanford Seed Advisory Board, he is a member of the Stanford Health Care Board of Directors and the Stanford Institute for Human-Centered Artificial Intelligence Advisory Council. Ram has been a staunch advocate and catalytic fundraiser for new efforts including bioengineering and AI, and a visionary leader across the university.

### 2024 Stanford Medal Recipients

**Michelle Landrey Cline, ’93, MBA ’98** is a dynamic and versatile leader who has energetically shepherded an array of university programs. While faithfully supporting class, regional, and admissions efforts, Michelle has also served as chair of both the Alumni Committee on Trustee Nominations and the Stanford Associates Board of Governors, president of the Graduate School of Business’s alumni board, and a member of the Office of Development’s LEAD Council—bring wisdom, innovation, humor, and empathy to every endeavor.

**Phil Pompa, ’78, MBA ’82** is an inspirational volunteer with a passion for mentoring Stanford’s next generation, particularly Latinx students and future entrepreneurs. A devoted community builder, he has been a pivotal member of SAA’s Board of Directors, the Stanford Associates Board of Governors, and the GSB’s alumni board, as well as a stalwart OVAL and regional ambassador. With his signature combination of authenticity and acumen, Phil is a proven alumni leader for Stanford across generations and miles.

**Dana Weeks Ugwonali, ’94** is a singularly talented communicator and connector dedicated to advancing Stanford’s priorities for three decades. Her wide-ranging service includes the Humanities and Sciences Council, the Office of Development’s LEAD Council (as co-chair), the campaign leadership team, the Stanford Associates Board of Governors, the Alumni Committee on Trustee Nominations, and the provost’s IDEAL Cabinet. She is also a guiding force in Stanford’s Black community, her local Georgia alumni club, her class, and beyond.

*Stanford Associates is a program of the Stanford Alumni Association*

associates.alumni.stanford.edu
KYLE AMES OWEN, '10

On November 30, 2022, after a heart attack. He was a professor, recognized by students and colleagues for his dedication and his service to the university. He was a mentor at Stanford's Native American program, the Hopi Tribal Court, and the Hopi Tribe. He was a member of Sigma Chi and the National Science Foundation.

Helen Louise West-Rodriguez, '48, died on January 24, 2023. She was a psychologist and professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. She was predeceased by her husband of more than 30 years, Reynaldo. Survivors: her children, Sara Bellamy and John West; stepchildren, Nancy Lynch, Denise Fedon, and Michael Rodriguez; two granddaughters; and stepgrandchildren.

Mary Elizabeth "Betty" White Andrews, '49 (international relations). She was a psychologist and professor at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. She was predeceased by her husband of more than 30 years, Reynaldo. Survivors: her children, Sara Bellamy and John West; stepchildren, Nancy Lynch, Denise Fedon, and Michael Rodriguez; two granddaughters; and stepgrandchildren.

John Michael Davis, '49 (biological sciences), died on May 3, 2023. He was a professor of immunology at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center. He was predeceased by his wife, Patricia Kraemer, '52, MA '54; children, Sarah Snider, Kathy, and Rob; and six grandchildren.

Farewells

The online Healthy Body Image Program. He wrote books. Survivors: his wife, Suesan; daughter, Lauren, Kimberly, '78, Christopher, and Matthew; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Robert John Calvert Jr., '49 (undergraduate law), died on May 3, 2023. He was a professor of law at Stanford University. He was predeceased by his wife of 70 years, Carol Kraemer, '52, MA '54; children, Sarah Snider, Kathy, and Rob; and six grandchildren.

Chief Judge of the Hopi Tribal Court

In high school, Bob Ames knew nothing about Stanford. But a teacher's suggestion that he look into it led to a future of leadership and unwavering loyalty to his alma mater.

Robert H. Piestewa Ames, '51, JD '54, the first Native American graduate of Stanford Law School, a former chief judge of the Hopi Tribal Court, and the first member of the Hopi Tribe to become a lawyer, died December 5, 2023. He was 94.

Ames was born on February 26, 1929, in Winslow, Ariz., adjacent to Hopi and Navajo tribal lands. Although Ames had his step-father's surname, the townpeople knew he was Hopi. Some of them looked down on him, says his daughter Lauren Ames, '83. "Growing up, his life was not easy."

At Stanford, he played shortstop on the baseball team and joined Theta Chi, finding acceptance in a sea of World War II veterans who had served alongside men of varying ethnicities. "They looked at this guy, and it didn't matter," says Lauren. "He was a good athlete. He was a funny guy. [They said] 'I want him on my team. I want him in my fraternity.' "

He met his future wife, Emmy (Badger, '57, MA '58), during law school; they married in 1958 and settled in Salinas, Calif.

In 1963, in a trial that made international news, Ames successfully defended the driver of a bus that had collided with a train in the Salinas Valley. The accident killed 32 agricultural workers who had come from Mexico under the Bracero Program, established by the U.S. government in 1942 to address labor shortages during World War II.

For 20 years, starting in the 1970s, Ames regularly traveled from Salinas to northeastern Arizona to serve as chief judge of the Hopi Tribal Court, after the tribe’s elders asked for his help. He led with a reverence for Hopi culture and customs, and, says Emmy, "that was very important to him—that, if possible, something could be solved using their traditional ways."

Ames loved Stanford sports and for many years had season tickets to men’s and women’s basketball, women’s volleyball, and baseball. He was a mentor at Stanford’s Native American Cultural Center and was inducted into the Multicultural Alumni Hall of Fame in 2004. He served on the Stanford Athletic Board, the Stanford Alumni Association’s Board of Directors, and the Stanford Associates Board of Governors. In 2011, Ames was awarded the Stanford Medal—only the 16th ever bestowed—for his decades of leadership and volunteer service to the university.

In addition to Emmy and Lauren, Ames’s survivors include daughters Leslie Owen and Kristen; three grandchildren, including Kyle Owen, ’10; and two great-grandchildren.

—Christine Foster
Farewells

Reno’s community hospitals and taught medical students at the University of Nevada, Reno. He loved fly-fishing and helped found the Lahontan Audubon Society, dedicated to the preservation of native birds and their habitats. Survivors: his first wife, Patricia (Penny), '53, and sons, Randy, ’77, Curt, Mike, and Rod.

John Wilmar Jensen, ’49 (political science), JD ’51, of Modesto, Calif., January 6, at 96. He served in the Army. He practiced law for 72 years, and his son Mark joined him as a partner in Jensen & Jensen for 36 of those years. He represented multiple generations of many local families and helped form the West Side Community Hospital District and the Oak Valley Hospital District. He loved farming and worked at the family ranch into his late 80s. Survivors: his wife of 66 years, Judith; children, Karen Jensen Petruikakis, JD ’93, Mark, Kristine, and Kirk; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Richard Knoles Merchant, ’50 (biological sciences), MD ’54, of Mill Valley, Calif., November 4, at 95. He was on the crew board. He was a psychologist, an Armenian-American who practiced internal medicine in San Francisco, in both private practice and corporate settings. He built an off-grid house in Calistoga and a Snipe sailboat. An ardent amateur forester and naturalist, he devoted his retirement to planting redwood trees and olive groves in the hills of Napa Valley. Survivors: his six children, Karen Merchant-Yates, Victoria Merchant Walker, Philip, Albert, Nathaniel, and Elizabeth; and six grandchildren.

Lloyd M. White, ’50, MS ’51 (electrical engineering), of Fullerton, Calif., January 12, at 95. He contributed to the KZSU radio station and was a campus tour guide. He worked at Autonetics, a division of what was then called North American Rockwell. He was a longtime member of the Fullerton First United Methodist Church and active in the North Orange County YMCA and its service organization, the Y’s Men’s Club. He loved trains, reading, and puzzles. Survivors: his wife, Virginia; children, Sandra, ’75, Paul, and Russell; five grandchildren; and a great-grandfather.

Rowland K. "Reb" Rebele, ’51 (communication), of Santa Cruz, Calif., November 25, at 93. He was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi and contributed to the Stanford Daily. A pioneer of local journalism, he bought many small newspapers and helped them grow, selling them once they’d become important publications. He established the Rebele Journalism Internship Program at Stanford, which has given financial support to over 100 aspiring journalists. He was a philanthropist, committed to helping Santa Cruz’s artists, educators, scientists, and homeless population. Survivors: his wife of nearly 70 years, Patricia; and children, Marianne, Andrew, ’87, and Chris.

David Lee Shane, ’51 (political science), of Camarillo, Calif., September 4, at 93. He was a member of Delta Tau Delta and played baseball. He graduated second in his class at USC’s law school, then joined the Marine Corps’ Naval Justice School. He remained in the Marine Corps Reserve and eventually became a colonel. He was a judge advocate and then entered private practice, serving clients that included the country’s largest board of reators. He was predeceased by two children. Survivors include: his wife of 73 years, Ann; and son Emery.

Ynez Whiting Lynch Kaplan, ’52 (music), of Randolph Center, VT, November 27, 2022, at 93. She earned a master’s in music from Yale, then became a violin and viola instructor at Connecticut College. She and her husband helped form the New York Chamber Soloists, a professional classical music group, and she was the principal viola player for the New York Philharmonic orchestra at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. A longtime horse lover, she established Vermont’s Fox Horn Farm, a venue for horse shows and riding lessons. She was predeceased by her husband, Melvin. Survivors: her children, Christina Kaplan Rohan and Jonathan; and six grandchildren.

Charles Alexander Legge, ’52 (undergraduate law), JD ’54, of Orinda, Calif., December 8, at 93. He was a member of Delta Chi and was on the Stan ford Law Review. He served in the Army. He was a trial lawyer at Bronson, Bronson & McKinnon for over 30 years and became managing partner. In 1984, President Reagan appointed him to be a judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. He was later an arbitrator and a grand juror. Survivors: his wife of 71 years, Janice; and children, Jeffrey, ’76, Nancy, and Laura.

Marjorie Ann Krueger Mader, ’52 (communication), of Ladera, Calif., December 31, at 93. She contributed to the Stanford Daily. She was a Coro Fellow and a reporter for the Independent Journal in Marin County. In 1970, she joined Menlo Park’s The Country Almanac (now The Almanac) and served as its education reporter for 40 years, connecting to readers through her deep knowledge of the community and local schools. She was predeceased by her husband, George. Survivors: her children, Steve, Ann Stillman, and Phil; and five grandchildren.

William F. McColl Jr., ’52 (basic medical sciences), of La Jolla, Calif., December 28, at 93. He was a member of Zeta Psi and played football and rugby. He was a third-round draft pick in the NFL, played for the Chicago Bears while attending medical school, and eventually became an orthopedic surgeon. Survivors: his wife of 70 years, Barbara (Bird), ’53; children, Duncan, ’77, Bonnie Platt, ’78, Carrie O’Brien, ’78, John, ’80, Milton, ’81, MD, ’88, and Jennifer Genske, ’83; 20 grandchildren, including Meridith McColl Perry, ’07, Danielle Platt, ’08, MS ’09, Connor, ’09, MS ’11, MBA ’17, Christine McColl Platt, ’10, Kellen, ’11, Lauren Platt, ’12, Sean O’Brien, ’13, MS ’14, Ian, ’17, Daniel, ’21, David, ’17, MS ’19, and William, ’06, MS ’07, and 13 great-grandchildren.

Elisabeth Louise ‘Betty Lou’ Edson Nordman, ’52 (social science/social thought), of Palo Alto, December 4, at 93. She was a reporter writer for city planning consultants in Menlo Park and Los Angeles. She served on the Pasadena Library Board and volunteered for the Parent Teacher Association in Palo Alto and the Associates of the Stanford University Libraries. She was a member of the Democratic Party and the Garden Club of Palo Alto. She was predeceased by her husband, Robert, MS ’73. Survivors: her sons, Eric, Keith, and Bruce; and six grandchildren.

Dorothy Louise Manes Pierce, ’52 (philosophy), of Dallas, November 24, at 91. She earned a master’s degree in painting from UC Berkeley, volunteered overseas with the U.S. government, and completed a PhD in art education from the University of North Texas. She taught art at numerous institutions, including SMU, where she directed a program for talented young artists. After moving to Valley of the Moon in Sonoma County, she painted, wrote, and with her husband of 56 years, Alan Whitman, completed a 10-year music project, titled “The Office and Industry Tour” in San Francisco. She also served as a realtor, administrator at J. Magnin’s, parking control at the Webster CPMC, and at the San Francisco EPA Administration. She was a talented and accomplished watercolorist, as well as a devoted wife and mother. Survivors: her husband, Phelps; children, Warren, Leslie, Diane, and Carol; and three grandchildren.

George Lewis Gilrude, ’55 (political science), of San Diego, June 9, at 90. He was a member of Sigma Nu/Beta Chi. He was an intelligence officer in the Navy, then joined the family’s property development and management business, Gilrude Development Company, ultimately serving as president. A generous community leader, he devoted time to San Diego’s zoo and public research universities, and was named Mr. San Diego by the Rotary Club for service to the city. Survivors: his wife of 56 years, Alison Frost, ’54; children, Julie Gilrude Connolly and G. Lewis; two grandchildren; and brother.

Arnold Henry Gold, ’53 (undergraduate law), JD ’55, of Studio City, Calif., June 25, at 91. He was on the Stanford Law Review. He joined Loeb & Loeb as an associate, worked as a solo practitioner, and became a name partner in Pachter, Gold & Schaeffer. He received the National College of Probate Judges. Frances Marie “Barney” Barnett Olmsted, ’53 (history), of Berkeley, December 18, at 92. In 1972, she co-founded New Ways to Work, a nonprofit working with governments and large employers to devise policies offering employees a better work-life balance. She co-authored three books, including The Job Sharing Handbook and Creating a Flexible Workspace. She was an anti-war activist, and she loved the arts and her Yuba River cabin. She was predeceased by her husband of 59 years, Jerry, ’52, and daughter, Suzanne. Survivors: her sons, David and Ann; and three grandchildren.

Frank Brooks Cowgill, ’54 (political science), MBA ’56, of Concord, Mass., December 22, at 91, of leukemia. He was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi. He served in the Army. He worked at the corporate headquarters for Standard Oil of New Jersey (now ExxonMobile), then spent 30 years at New England Mutual Life Insurance Company, retiring as treasurer and vice president. He was later a major gifts officer at Harvard. Survivors: his wife of 69 years, Mary Lu (Hanna), ’54; children, David and Ann, ’82; and three grandsons.

Barbara Ann Newman Witter, ’54 (geography), of San Francisco, December 22, at 91. She contributed to the Stanford Daily. She worked as an associate producer at KPIX and KOVR, then joined the faculty at San Francis State University, where he taught for over 40 years in the broadcast and electronic communication arts department. He authored several textbooks on television production and media aesthetics and received an Emmy for lifetime achievement. He loved the outdoors, painting, and playing music. Survivors: his wife of 70 years, Erika; children, Renee and Alex; five grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

58 M A Y 2 0 2 4
Robert Bunsen Heyn, ’55 (undeclassed), of Lihue, Hawaii, September 7, at 91. He earned a master’s degree in business and journalism and directed marketing for several international corporations. An adventure traveler, he was on the first major trip that hiked the Na Pali coast of Kauai landscapes, was a longtime tour guide at local museums and gardens, and served as president of the Kauai Orchid Society. He was predeceased by his wife, Ulla. Survivors: his daughters, Shelby Rigg and Cynthia Hart; stepchildren, Greg Tayor, Karen Turner-Bishop, and Carla McElroy; eight grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Danford Eric Hand, ’56 (economic), of Carlsbad, Calif., November 21, at 89. He was a member of Sigma Nu/Beta Chi. With an MBA from UC Berkeley, he worked in the investment business for 42 years, most recently at Northern Trust. He was a chartered financial analyst and served as president of the Los Angeles Society of Financial Analysts. His true loves were his family, golf, wine, and traveling. He was predeceased by his son Danford. Survivors: his wife of 63 years, Nancy; son Scott; four grandchildren; and one great-grandson.

Richard Ernest Hand, ’56 (geology), of Los Altos, September 12, at 89. He was on the crew team and a member of the ski club. He worked in the oil industry, first at Marathon Oil in California, then with the Army Corps of Engineers in Louisiana and for other companies in Libya. After earning a master’s degree in environmental geology, he worked for himself before joining geotechnical company Terrasource. He enjoyed skiing, hiking, traveling, and volunteering. He was predeceased by his wife, Alice. Survivors include his son, Jeffrey. William Herber Leney, ’57 (industrial engineering), MBA ’63, of Danville, Calif., November 7, at 88. He was a member of Alpha Delta Phi and in the Naval ROTC. He was a former Chevron business executive. He loved to travel, and while living in Belgium took his family on a safari in East Africa. He was a fan of football and a gourmet cook. He was predeceased by his wife of 65 years, Jacqueline (Greene, ’58). Survivors: his sons, James, ’85, and Thomas; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren; and two siblings.

Charles Edward Tamagni, ’57 (physics), of Boulder Creek, Calif., September 9, at 88. Growing up, he helped his dad, a mechanic and milkman who encouraged his incredible mind and mechanical talent. He started and ended his career at Lockheed as a rocket scientist. He loved commuting through the redwood trees to the Bonny Doon campus on his motorcycle. He also loved music, tennis, his Siamese cats, and solving computer challenges. Survivors: His wife of 64 years, Kay; children, Sue, Chip, and Jane; and two granddaughters.

Hugh Neal Wells III, ’58 (political science), JD ’61, of Villa Park, Calif., November 20, at 87. He was a member of Delta Chi. A trust and estate lawyer, he was president of the probate section of the State Bar of California and an author of the State Bar of California and an author of the estates and trusts specialty exam, and he helped completely revise the California Probate Code. His clients ranged from CEOs to movie stars, and he represented some families for generations. Survivors: his wife of 64 years, Teddy; children, Neal IV and Cynthia; two grandchildren; and two stepgrandchildren; and sister.

Joseph Well Hooker, ’59 (English), MA ’60 (education), of Studio City, Calif., October 26, at 86, was a successful career as a human resources executive and an educational assistant at Indian Valley Elementary School. She was the Redwood Trees to the Bonny Doon campus on his motorcycle. He also loved music, tennis, his Siamese cats, and solving computer challenges. Survivors: His wife of 64 years, Kay; children, Sue, Chip, and Jane; and two granddaughters.

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Barbara Knoll Madison Sturges, ’60 (sociology), of Walnut Creek, Calif., December 25, at 84, of shingles and rheumatoid arthritis. When her children were young, she was an active volunteer in school-related activities. Later, she spent 20 years as a school counseling assistant at Indian Valley Elementary School. She and her husband had season tickets for the Oakland A’s and San Francisco Giants and visited every Major League Baseball stadium in the country. She collected baseball cards and memorabilia and played bridge with a local women’s club. Survivors: his wife, Nancy; children, Rachel and Aaron; grandson; and three sisters.

Josephine Allegria “Niki” Record Schraub, ’59 (speech and drama), of Reno, Nev., June 7, 2022, at 85, of cancer. She participated in student drama. She worked for a Bay Area architecture firm and then in human resources for a manufacturing company. She and her sister later took over their father’s commercial hardware business. She was extraordinarily active and always got in her 10,000 steps per day, playing tennis and pickleball, ballroom dancing, or doing Pilates. She was predeceased by her partner of 30 years, Leo Hartmann. Survivors: her children, Kim Quinney and Rick; and five grandchildren.

Kenneth McCoy Graham, ’60 (mechanical engineering), of Fullerton, Calif., November 9, at 85, of kidney failure. He was a member of Sigma Nu/Beta Chi. He served in the Navy as a commissary officer on the USS Kearseage. He joined Southern California Gas Company and then Sempra Energy, producing total energy systems and negotiating contracts for building liquefied natural gas ships. After retiring, he sailed his boat everywhere, down the Pacific coast to Mexico, Costa Rica, through the Panama Canal and the Caribbean, and back and forth to Hawaii. Survivors: his wife, Deanna; children, Matthew and Michael; and four grandchildren.

Richard Anthony Olnes, ’60 (economics), of Sonoma, Calif., December 17, at 84. With a passion for business, architecture, and helping people, he started Richard Olnes Real Estate and became a trusted residential and commercial real estate broker in San Francisco. He loved gardening, history, world travel, and chocolate ice cream. A fourth-generation Californian, he was a member of The Society of California Pioneers. Survivors: his wife of 52 years, Susan; sons, Christopher and Charlie; two grandchildren; and sister.

Barbara Knoll Madison Sturges, ’60 (sociology), of Walnut Creek, Calif., December 25, at 84, of shingles and rheumatoid arthritis. When her children were young, she was an active volunteer in school-related activities. Later, she spent 20 years as a school counseling assistant at Indian Valley Elementary School. She was the Redwood Trees to the Bonny Doon campus on his motorcycle. He also loved music, tennis, his Siamese cats, and solving computer challenges. Survivors: His wife of 64 years, Kay; children, Sue, Chip, and Jane; and two granddaughters.

Sarah Edith Hall Cowan, ’63 (English), of Vancovuer, Wash., March 26, 2023, at 81, of respiratory failure. She participated in student drama. Survivors include her husband, Glen, ’62.

Judy Ellen McKanna Tisdale, ’63 (English), of San Rafael, October 19, at 82. She enjoyed a successful career as a human resources executive, working at ROLM, Career Services for Women in Palo Alto, and Levi Strauss, where she held overseas postings in Florence and Berlin. A passionate San Franciscan, she loved attending the symphony and finding new restaurants, going to events at the Commonwealth Club, and encouraging her friends to use public
transportation. Survivors: her children, Jessica and Tony; four grandchildren; and sister, Carol McKanna Mitchell, ‘60.

**Steven Nelson Carter**, ‘64 (political science), of Portland, Ore., December 1, 2020, at 78, of ALS. He was a member of Phi Kappa Psi. After graduation, he spent two years in Ecuador with the Peace Corps. With a graduate degree in journalism, he worked for the *United Press International* in San Francisco and Brussels. Later, he joined *The Oregonian* as a reporter and editor, covering everything from environmental issues and law enforcement to finance. Survivors: his wife of 25 years, Madeleine Denko; son, Leland; and two siblings, including Crystal Carter Sims, ‘61.

**John Thomas Binkley IV**, ‘65 (philosophy), of San Antonio, October 27, at 80, of pulmonary fibrosis. In 1966, he wrote and directed his first play, *No Man’s Child*, broadcasted on PBS KQED. He was an activist and a teacher before being appointed executive director of Foothill Clinic in Pasadena, Calif., the country’s first free clinic. He produced *Man’s Child*, a play inspired by his work written and directed his first play, *No Man’s Child*, broadcasted on PBS KQED. He was an activist and a teacher before being appointed executive director of Foothill Clinic in Pasadena, Calif., the country’s first free clinic. He produced *Man’s Child*, a play inspired by his work.

**Robert Frederick Ruth Jr.**, ‘66 (mathematics), MS ‘81 (operations research), of Elizabeth, Colo., November 6, at 78. He was a fighter pilot in the Air Force for 20 years, with 14 duty station assignments. His favorite fighter aircraft was the F-15 Eagle, and his final assignment was as an F-15 squadron commander in the Philippines. After retiring, he piloted jumbo jets for United Airlines and became an alpaca farmer. He was a prolific reader of all genres with a thirst for knowledge he instilled in his children. Survivors: his wife, Vicki; children, Kelli Landrum and Brent; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

**Peter Morgan Williams**, ‘66 (economics), of Fullerton, Calif., May 8, 2022, at 77, of ALS. He was a member of Phi Gamma Delta and played golf. He was a trial lawyer and head deputy in the Los Angeles County Public Defenders’ Office for 19 years before becoming a partner at Taubman, Simon, Young and Sullivan. He owned two popular nightclubs in Southern California. He was an excellent golfer throughout his life. Survivors: his wife of 40 years, Susan; children, Katherine O’Connor and Bradley; three grandchildren; and two siblings, William Williams, ‘66, and Steven, ‘62.

**Jane Tyrrell Albert Willens**, ‘67 (psychology), of Los Angeles, December 1, at 77. She played tennis. She was the youngest-ever California State triple crown holder, debuted at Wimbledon at age 16, and won two gold medals at the 1967 Pan American Games. She was the first woman inducted into the Stanford Athletic Hall of Fame. She later became a therapist, working at a rape treatment center and in the NICU at Stanford Hospital. Survivors: her children, Heather, ‘93, JD ‘97, Sara, and Jake, ‘99, MA ’00; five grandchildren; and sister, Nancy Albert James, ‘65.

**Kathleen Louise Marriott Williams**, ‘69 (English), of Menlo Park, January 17, 2020, at 72, of ovarian cancer. She was in the chorus and the Ram’s Head Theatrical Society. She worked for American Institutes for Research, was a technical writer at Apple Computer Inc., and finished her career at Sun Microsystems. She loved the Sierra Nevada mountain range, sang in a classic-rock garage band, studied opera, and wrote and acted in theater productions. Survivors: her husband of over 30 years, Dan Putman; daughter, Gwyneth Casazza; two grandsons; and two sisters.

**1970s**

**George Patterson Crandall III**, ’73 (psychology), of Jacksonville, Fla., November 15, at 72. He was a flight officer in the Navy for 20 years, teaching English at the U.S. Naval Academy for three of those years. With a master’s degree in English and education, he taught English and psychology at the Episcopal School of Jacksonville, where he also coached the boys’ varsity soccer team for 10 years and the track team for 20 years. Survivors: his wife of 48 years, Jackie; children, Cameron, Carrie, McLeod, and Colton; 11 grandchildren; and sister, Kay Virginia Gustafson Webster, ’73 (communication), JD ’77, of Agoura Hills, Calif., March 11, 2023, at 70, of cancer. She worked for Latham & Watkins and Columbia Savings before partnering with her husband at Gustafson & Webster. When he entered the ministry, she became a solo practitioner specializing in ecclesiastical law. She played the oboe, piano, and organ, sang in church choirs, and instilled a love of music in her children. Survivors: her husband, Curtis; and children, Andrew Narver, ’03, Katie Narver Thompson, ’06, Trang Guerra Orozco, Alex, and Maly.

**Jonathan Mark Dann**, ’74 (history), of Mill Valley, Calif., December 11, at 71. He played lacrosse. An
investigative reporter, Peabody Award-winning documentary film producer, and 12-time regional Emmy winner; he devoted his career to producing programming focused on social justice. His documentaries about post-traumatic stress disorder among Vietnam War veterans and about Iraq War veterans won duPont-Columbia Awards. He loved cycling, skiing, and walking his dogs in the hills of Marin County. Survivors: his partner, Julie Khada-
mally; stepdaughters, Courtney Khademi, ’10, JD ’16, and Casey Khademi, ’14, MA ’15; and two sisters.

John Richard Hall, ’74 (chemistry and biological sciences), of Hilton Head Island, S.C., December 27, at 71. He was a member of Alpha Phi Omega and was in the marching band. A distinguished trauma surgeon and academic, his pioneering work in pediatric trauma care earned him an invitation to the White House to brief then-President George H. W. Bush. In 2006, he was made an honorary colonel in the Tennessee State Guard for saving countless lives as a trauma surgeon in East Tennessee. Survivors: his daughters, Corey, Mary, and Katherine; ex-wife, Mary; and sister, Beverly Hall, ’71, MD ’75.

Cor a Ann Presley, ’74, MA ’76, PhD ’86 (history), of Stone Mountain, Ga., September 19, at 72, after a long illness. She played field hockey. The author of numerous books and scholar of African and African American history, she taught at schools including California State Polytechnic University, Tulane University, and Loyola University before joining the faculty at Georgia State University, where she was an associate professor of African American studies. She also developed seminars and summer programs for secondary and elementary school teachers and served on the board of the Amistad Research Center. Survivors include her sister, Frances Presley Rice.

Rolly Robert Steen II, ’74 (biological sciences), of San Antonio, March 15, 2023, at 70, of prostate cancer. He was a member of Alpha Sigma Phi. He was a board-certified anesthesiologist for 34 years who focused predominantly on neurosurgery and spinal reconstruction surgery and served as chief of anesthesiology at the HCA Medical Center of Plano. He was named a diplomate by the American Board of Anesthesiology. He was an avid and competitive bridge player.

Survivors: his siblings, Susan Fainter and John; and seven nieces and nephews.

William Henry Johnson Jr., ’76 (biological sciences), of Pleasant Hill, Calif., January 13, at 69, of cancer. He was on the sailing team and trumpet player for the marching band, and he contributed to the Stanford Daily. He was an internist and hospice medical director serving patients across Contra Costa and Alameda counties. Soon after graduating from medical school at Howard University, he and his wife opened a private practice in Pitts- burg, Calif. Dedicated to his community, he worked to fund scholarships for college-bound Black youth with Diablo Black Men’s Group. Survivors: his wife of 43 years, Gretchen Graves; two daughters, Erica and Adrienne, ’14, MS ’16; and three sisters.

Bruce Craig Barker, ’78 (biological sciences), of San Francisco, January 7, at 67, of cancer. He played football. He was proud to be one of the first African American men to finish a surgery residency at UCSF. He was a surrogate for Kaiser in San Francisco for 18 years, and on weekends he volunteered with Operation Access, providing free surgery to those with limited resources. He was later a surgeon and hospitalist at Mad River Community Hospital in Arcata, Calif. Survivors: his wife, Melissa Welch; and children, Cicely, Kevin, and Celeste.

Jacob Troy Young Jr., ’78 (history), of Mill Valley, Calif., January 12, at 67, of Lewy body dementia. He worked for the Stanford Daily. His career in magazines included roles as a reporter at Newsweek, development editor at Time Inc., assistant managing editor at People, managing editor at Wired, and executive editor at Reader’s Digest. He helped launch several new magazines and at one point moved to Sydney to become the founding editor of Who Weekly. He was predeceased by his wife, Marsha Robertson, ’76. Survivors include his brother, Jeff; and loving, devoted companion, Kyle Gibson.

Ann W. Crambil Olson, ’79 (communication), of Menlo Park, November 1, at 66, of cancer. She was a member of Cap and Gown and contributed to the KZSU radio station. With a master’s degree in broadcast communications from USC, she worked as a television reporter and newscaster in Casper, Wyo., and Palm Springs, Calif. She later provided public relations services to the 1984 Olympics and was the Olympic torchbearer in the torch relay. She loved playing tennis and travel-

Survivors: her children, Bill, ’13, Bradford, and Brooke; mother, Geraldine Crambil; and sister, Amy Crambil Magnussen, ’80.

1980s

Karl William Bricker, ’80 (music), of Lenexa, Kan., October 20, at 65, of glioblastoma. He participated in student drama and was a member of the Mendicants. He earned a music degree from the University of Kansas and, after working in the commercial real estate business for a few years, obtained a master’s of music/conducting at the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He was known for his intelligence, gifts as a singer and musician, and tremendous sense of humor. Survivors: his wife, Debbie; children, Kyle, Tess, Émilé, Kuran, John, Joseph, and Samuel; eight grandchildren; and three siblings.

2010s

Blake Hewitt Parkinson, ’20 (philosophy), of Seattle, November 15, at 36. He earned an MFA in creative writing from Eastern Washington Uni-

versity and an MSW in clinical social work from the University of Washington. He worked as an outdoor education instructor and wilderness guide, an admissions counselor at Stanford, a Spanish interpreter for a pro bono legal services organization, and most recently he completed several residencies in clinical social work in Seat-

tle. He also volunteered with Seattle Homeless Outreach. He was an avid hiker, a gifted musician, and an accomplished poet. Survivors: his parents, Greta Hewitt, ’75, and Thomas; stepmother, Lisa; and brother David.

BUSINESS

David G. Coen, MBA ’46, of Burlingame, Calif., December 9, at 102, of heart failure. He served in the Army. He was a teenage test rider on the Giant Dipper roller coaster in Santa Cruz, Calif. He spent 40 years as a diamond broker at Pacific Diamond Company and 30 years—until age 98—as a volun-

teer traveler’s aide at the San Francisco Airport. He was predeceased by his wife of 72 years, Ruth.

Survivors: his children, Lynne, ’75, and Gary; grand-

daughter; and two great-granddaughters.

Robert R. Champion, MBA ’63, of Carmel, Calif., November 23, at 89, as a result of a stroke. He was in the Navy. He worked for McKinsey & Com-

pany and served in the Navy before attending Stanford and getting a PhD in law from Catholic University. He defended clients for over 40 years and was an adjunct professor at the law schools of George Mason, Georgetown, and William & Mary. He was a member of the American Association of Trial Lawyers. He created the Gaelic Amer-

ican Soccer Club in Northern Virginia. Survivors include his daughter, Sarah.

Jerald Wilton Mason, MBA ’67, of Holladay, Utah, October 31, at 82, of vascular Parkinson’s disease. He earned a PhD in financial planning from the University of Missouri, then began a 35-year career at numerous schools across the country. At both Brigham Young University and Texas Tech University, he helped build nationally recognized financial planning programs and helped hundreds of students find internships and jobs. Survivors: his wife of 55 years, Joyce; children, Matthew, Amanda, Amy Ethington, Belinda Frost, Laurie Mason Kenziori, ’01, and Julie Brunner; 11 grand-

children; and two brothers.

Paul Grover Bennett, MBA ’68, of Honolulu, March 9, 2023, at 82, of a stroke. He served in the Navy as a supply officer in Vietnam. He spent 40 years in international agribusiness, a career that took him to six different countries. He started as a financial analyst with Castle & Cooke, then worked as president of Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corp. and CEO of Sakata Seed America. He loved to share his deep knowledge of broccoli, bananas, macadamia nuts, and seeds at parties. Survivors: his wife of 55 years, Diane; children, Courtney, Kim Younger, Chris, and Mike; 11 grand-

children; and four siblings.

Fernando Cuellar-Alvarez, MBA ’72, of San Pedro Garza García, Mexico, November 26, at 80. He pursued a career as a CPA until his retirement. He was a leader at the Universidad de Monterrey, and later worked in the private sector at Vitro S.A. where he helped become a publicly traded company on the NYSE. He was a board member of ICPLN from 2004 to 2006. Survivors: his wife, Elia Mendiola; and children, Fernando, Ofelia, and Gabriel Cuellar.

John Huntington “Hunt” Harris II, MS ’79 (busi-

ness research), of Naperville, Ill., December 20, at 74, after an illness. He was the president of Star Forms Inc. and of Isabel Bloom LLC. He helped found the Hunt and Diane Harris Family Founda-

tion and the John H. Harris III Memorial Founda-

tion, which together have donated over $3 million to nonprofits. He was on the boards of numerous charitable organizations. He was predeceased by his son John. Survivors: his wife, Diane; children, Alex and Jennifer; four grandchildren; and three siblings.

John Patrick Burns Jr., MBA ’72, of Williamsburg, Va., November 13, at 82. He earned a degree in electrical engineering from the U.S. Naval Academy and served in the Navy before attending Stanford and getting a PhD in law from Catholic University. He defended clients for over 40 years and was an adjunct professor at the law schools of George Mason, Georgetown, and William & Mary. He was a member of the American Associa-

tion of Trial Lawyers. He created the Gaelic Amer-

ican Soccer Club in Northern Virginia. Survivors include his daughter, Sarah.

Farewells
EDUCATION
Ulysses Van Spiva, PhD ’71, of Virginia Beach, Va., March 29, 2016, at 84. He was a professor emeritus of educational leadership and counseling at Old Dominion University, and dean emeritus of its Darden College of Education. When he was appointed dean in 1979, he was the first minority to reach that rank at the university. He had previously been a math teacher, department chair, and adult-school principal. He published three books and was a devoted member of the Bank Street Memorial Baptist Church. Survivors: his wife of 56 years, Olivia; children, Vanessa Spiva Jones, Valerie Spiva-Collins, and Bruce; and three grandsons.

ENGINEERING
David Chau-Kwong Chu, MS ’62, PhD ’74 (electrical engineering), of Menlo Park, January 2, at 84, of cancer. He worked for 45 years at Hewlett-Packard and its spinoff, Agilent, designing instruments that measured distance or time in nano-unit intervals. He took a leave of absence to teach calculus and differential equations at Cuttington College in Liberia, West Africa. He loved racing his El Toro sailboat, windsurfing, skiing, and traveling. He was predeceased by his daughter, Lisa Chiu Biakana. Survivors: his wife, Irene Lawrence, ’64; son, Kevin; stepdaughter, Elizabeth Lawrence; two grandchildren; and brother.

Philip Yoh, MS ’62, PhD ’66 (electrical engineering), of Carmel, Ind., July 30, at 91. He served in the Army. He worked for MIT, NASA, and the U.S. Department of Transportation, which he guided through the Y2K transition, earning the nickname “Y2K Man.” He and his wife funded scholarships in honor of his parents at Ningbo University in China, and endowed two undergraduate scholarships at Stanford. He was a voracious reader and an avid tennis player. Survivors include his wife of 53 years, Louise, and sister-in-law.

Jon Arthur Jenny, MS ’66, PhD ’69 (electrical engineering), of Menlo Park, May 13, 2023, at 83. He completed four years in the naval reserves and actively served for two years, becoming a quartermaster on a World War II destroyer in the Mediterranean. In his thesis, he designed a satellite station for Antarctica. It worked and was a prototype for the severe requirements of space. He loved to laugh, dance, read, and go whitewater rafting. Survivors: his wife, Virginia; daughters, Lisa Jenny Puccetti and Sara Jenny Valkonen; and four grandchildren.

Bernard Michael “Mike” Wilber, MS ’66 (computer science), of Palo Alto, December 14, at 80, of complications from Parkinson’s disease. He worked at SRI International in Menlo Park for 17 years and helped develop Shakesy, the world’s first autonomous robot that used both artificial intelligence and navigation to perform tasks. He worked with Steve Jobs at Apple on the first Macintosh computer and then enjoyed a long career working in artificial intelligence and expert systems at corporations and startups. Survivors: his partner of 28 years, Dianne Ellsworth; and siblings, Kathryn Leland, David Leland, and Carol Lu Zischke.

Jerry Bernardini, MS ’70 (electrical engineering), of Warwick, R.I., August 31, at 80. He spent his career as an electrical engineer with Bell Labs/AT&T. After retiring, he opened a number of coffee shops called Peaberry’s in Providence, R.I. Later, he became a consultant and then an adjunct professor at URI. He was a member of the Appalachian Mountain Club and loved wood-working, the RI Woodturners, kayaking, building kayaks, hiking, and camping. He was instrumental in introducing WindWinRI to schools. Survivors include his sister, Linda Grotenstein, and fiancée, Michele Perrault.

HUMANITIES AND SCIENCES
Anthony Vincent Nero Jr., PhD ’71 (physics), of Rehoboth Beach, Del., October 13, at 81, of dementia. He attended Fordham, Stanford, and Princeton while teaching physics full time. After graduating, he joined Lawrence Berkeley Laboratories, retiring as co-director. His groundbreaking work on nuclear energy and the effects of radon on humans were the driving force behind many of the EPA standards used today. He was awarded the Leo Szilard Award in 1989. He was an enthusiastic mountain climber, sailor, host, and harmonica player. Survivors include his siblings, Annette Nero Stellhorn and Daniel.

Michael James Chavez Reilly, MA ’90 (Latin American studies), of New York, November 27, at 56, of ALS. He was on the track and field team. In addition to his master’s degree, he received a bachelor’s degree from the University of Chicago and a PhD from NYU. Diagnosed with ALS in 2019, he bore his disease with grace and a determination to live the remainder of his life as fully as possible. Survivors include his mother, Priscilla, and sister, Alicia Reilly Larson.

LAW
Richard David De Luce, JD ’55, of Palo Alto, January 22, 2023, at 94. He was on the Stanford Law Review. He served in the Army during the Korean War. After clerking for the California Supreme Court, he became a corporate lawyer at Lawler, Felix and Hall, rising to senior partner and representing clients including General Motors, Pacific Telephone, and Standard Oil of California. He was predeceased by his wife, Joanne (Strang, ’55, MA ’56); and daughter, Amy Eigner, ’82. Survivors: his sons, David and Dan, ’87; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

MEDICINE
Kevin Richard Shoemaker, PhD ’88 (biochemistry), of Lexington, Ky., December 6, at 62, of Parkinson’s disease. He worked as a project lead in AAAS and a PhD from NYU. Diagnosed with ALS in 2018, he reached that rank at the university. He had previously appointed dean in 1979, he was the first minority to reach that rank at the university. He had previously been a math teacher, department chair, and adult-school principal. He published three books and was a devoted member of the Bank Street Memorial Baptist Church. Survivors: his wife of 56 years, Louise; children, Cameron and four grandchildren; and brother.

SUSTAINABILITY
William Crane Bradley, MS ’53, PhD ’56 (geology), of Boulder, Colo., September 9, at 98. He was in the Army, fought in the Battle of the Bulge, and received a Silver Star for bravery. He worked as a geology professor at the University of Colorado Boulder, for 34 years, and chaired his department from 1968 to 1972. Upon retirement, the Geological Society of America named him a recipient of the Distinguished Career Award for his contributions to geomorphology. He was predeceased by his daughter Meredith. Survivors: his wife, Louise; children, Cameron Ray, Melanie Rohrbach, and Mark; five grandchildren; and brother.
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“YOU’RE REALLY USING your Stanford degree,” said my neighbor with a sarcastic chuckle.

We were sitting around a patio table, a group of moms sharing wine and unburdening our hearts. It was the fall of 2021, more than a year into the pandemic’s pressure-cooker effect on parenting. I had just mentioned how much time I spend at our kitchen sink, washing dishes from one meal, preparing food for the next, then cleaning up again. And how my education hadn’t really prepared me for the intense daily work of being a mom.

Her comment still stings. Although I work part time, I haven’t made my career a priority since 2013, when I became a parent. Instead, I’ve focused on being a mom—a decision that, despite the joy it brings, feels like a necessity, considering the cost of childcare versus my income, the demands of my husband’s job, the health status of my parents, and the needs of my daughter.

Yes, I was complaining about the dishes. Yes, I have a loving, engaged husband who does his fair share of household chores. But I felt angry that caregiving is so undervalued that it is seen as inappropriate work for a Stanford grad. For many families, there is no clear way for both parents to work full time and maintain a work-life balance; others don’t have the luxury of that choice. Parenting can be a catch-22.

Still, it’s true that my degree in English didn’t prep me for motherhood. How could it? The all-nighters I pulled at Stanford in Oxford trying to finish 12-page papers on Wuthering Heights were just a teeny taste of those I would spend comforting my newborn. And the stress of getting along with a messy roommate at Roble was nothing compared with living with a tantrum-throwing toddler.

But when you get down to it, no degree comes with a free pass to avoid the realities of parenting in a society that offers little support to caregivers of any type, from moms and dads to day care workers and dementia care providers.

If I could go back and restructure my Stanford education to align with my current life, I’d study how certain policies perpetuate inequity, and I’d learn how to fight them. I’d seek lessons on building community, and I’d work toward creating the change necessary to give all parents agency and respect, regardless of whether they participate in the paid labor force.

For now, I’m determined to educate myself while nurturing the traits in my bright, spirited daughter that have also sustained me as a mom: compassion, creativity, and grit. I’ll celebrate not just her accomplishments but also her acts of kindness, love, and friendship. I’ll champion her strong inner compass, her way of questioning the world, and her resilience. I won’t expect her to simply “use her degree” but to follow her heart and connect with others.

And perhaps she and I can work together to shift people’s perspective on caregiving and help them recognize the work for what it is: a pursuit worthy of a Stanford grad.

Jennica Peterson, ’99, lives in Louisville, Colo. Email her at stanford.magazine@stanford.edu.
Creating an estate plan allows you to build your legacy upon what matters most to you.

Shaping your legacy can take many forms. Marie, ’78, and Alex Shipman, pictured above, included Stanford as a beneficiary in their estate plans so they could support future breakthroughs in neurological research.

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