

## pathways

In our last issue of PRISM we highlighted a CISLA couple with fascinating international careers. It just so happens that we have another, equally impressive CISLA couple. Hagen Maroney '98 and Doreen Vaillancourt '99 were both CISLA scholars who knew each other at Connecticut College but only after graduation did they begin the romantic part of their journey.

By Doreen Vaillancourt '99

### WITCHCRAFT AND TRADITIONAL

medicine versus the rapid spread of HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa. Identity and race politics in the Dominican Republic and Haiti. A Western-gazing Baltic populace struggling with its still-fresh Soviet past. Democracy and human rights versus stability and energy security in the Caucasus. These are just a few of the challenges faced by U.S. diplomats, challenges we've had the privilege of engaging during our 11-year journey with the U.S. Department of State.

As a "tandem couple" (the State Department's term for spouses who both serve as Foreign Service Officers), we've had the benefit of facing these challenges as a family, together with our two young boys. Yet Hagen and I took very different paths to the Foreign Service; his was fairly direct, while mine was more meandering. But there's no doubt in our minds that CISLA prepared us for the challenge.

Hagen always knew he was destined for a career in international affairs. Growing up in the highly diverse Boerum Hill neighborhood of Brooklyn, N.Y., was like living in a mini United Nations in the heart of America's brimming cultural melting pot. With a double major in international relations and Hispanic studies, he pursued any path that brought him closer to his goal — including

study abroad in Santiago, Chile, and a CISLA internship at Citibank in Caracas, Venezuela. After graduating from Conn



THE FAMILY AT YANAR DA (BURNING MOUNTAIN) IN AZERBAIJAN. "SO MUCH NATURAL GAS LEAKS OUT FROM THE STONES HERE THAT IT IS PERPETUALLY ON FIRE," DOREEN WRITES.

in 1998, Hagen traveled the Caribbean on a Watson Fellowship for a year before returning to work in New York City and state politics. Hagen quickly went back to international affairs, pursuing a master's degree in foreign service at Georgetown University, while working stints at the U.S. Treasury Department's Office of International Debt Policy and writing foreign policy analyses for the Intellibrige Corp. Entry to the Foreign Service in 2003 seemed like the natural next step in his mission to

lead a life on the international stage.

My path to the Foreign Service also began at Conn College. I still remember the sunny spring day in 1994 when I visited the campus for the first time. In the mid-1990s, "study abroad" was still a fairly new idea, and Conn was in the vanguard of making it available to all of its students by allowing low-income kids like me to accept financial aid for time spent at a university overseas. I itched to experience what lay beyond the bubble of my safe seaside upbringing in small-town New England, and now Conn offered me that opportunity. But on that spring day in 1994, my Conn College tour guide mentioned that she participated in a program that not only provided her with a stipend for a summer internship abroad, but

also offered a prism through which to view her major that a traditional degree did not — the prism of "globalization," a relatively new buzzword at the time. I entered Conn in 1995, majored in art history, studied for a semester in Paris, did my CISLA internship at the Musée Rolin in Autun, France, and my SIP on "otherness" and the depiction of Jews in medieval manuscript art in France.

I graduated in 1999 with no clear idea of what I wanted to do, or where

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## PRISM

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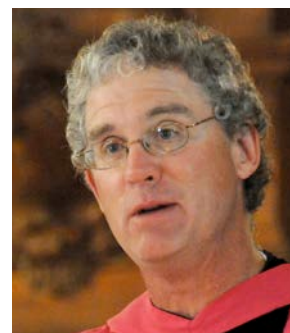
# director's column

## OVER THE LAST SEVERAL YEARS

Connecticut College has developed and approved a new general education program, called Connections. Connections owes much to the curriculum model created by the academic centers on campus, including CISLA, particularly the idea that students should identify an “integrated pathway” of courses that meshes with their broad intellectual interests. Aspects of CISLA’s integrated curriculum, in which students bring together language study, an interdisciplinary mix of courses, an international internship and a research project in their major, will now be part of every Connecticut College student’s education. But never fear, the special features of the CISLA program — the funded international internship, the senior integrative project and the individualized support of the CISLA staff — will continue to make the program special at the College.

Other aspects of Connections will strengthen global education at Connecticut College in significant ways, reinforcing the central place of international education in the College’s mission statement. The language requirement has been strengthened and it should encourage more students to pursue advanced language study with our excellent faculty. Students are also explicitly encouraged to use their language abilities to help them deepen their understanding of global connections, for example in study away, internships and research opportunities. All Connecticut College students should learn that language proficiency provides many opportunities in and beyond the classroom, something CISLA students have always done.

The GE program has generated all kinds of fruitful curricular discussions at the College. These discussions include the Mellon Global Initiative, where faculty and staff have engaged with new ways of thinking about “international education,” with a focus on the idea that all our students need to understand a globalized world, where what happens “here” and “over there” are closely linked. The CISLA curriculum has moved from an older concept of “international studies” to the idea of “global studies,” which emphasizes the interconnections that characterize our world, and indeed the world historically. Student interests reflect these new directions. Our current CISLA students are doing projects on migration/immigration, human trafficking, global queer studies, global feminism and climate change, as well as more traditional projects in international relations and economic development. CISLA students are more than ever taking into account global interactions, but our program also insists that they develop deep local knowledge and a historical perspective, and engage people in their own language. We want our students to develop a knowledge of and empathy for another place and other people, while also understanding global connections. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, our students need to understand their own place in the contemporary world, including their privileged position and status as students at an elite American college. With this sophisticated and nuanced grasp of the world, CISLA graduates can go out and work to make it a better place.



MARC FORSTER, CISLA DIRECTOR

Marc R. Forster

*Henry B. Plant Professor of History*

*Director of Toor Cummings Center for International Studies and the Liberal Arts*

## pathways

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I wanted to do it. Like many people in this position, I moved to New York City, vaguely hoping to land a job in the art world. Instead, I found Hagen Maroney. Though we were acquainted through mutual friends from Conn, we hardly knew each other at first, but quickly became inseparable. When he entered grad school at Georgetown in 2001, I accompanied him to D.C.

Professionally, I continued to meander, entering the world of nonprofit management. But without the international angle, it never felt like the right fit. Hagen and I married in 2003 and when he was offered a spot in the Foreign Service shortly after, it was me who decided he should accept. It was the beginning of an adventure that can be lonely, thrilling and often frustrating. Nonetheless it is undeniably intoxicating to have a front seat to American history in the making, and witness the results of our foreign policy decisions firsthand. After eight years of observing the work of Hagen and his colleagues in the field, I joined the Foreign Service in 2011, feeling like I had finally found my way.

At the heart of CISLA's program of inquiry are three basic questions. The second of these questions is: what is the relevance of the past in understanding the present and the possibilities of the future? It is a question at the core of everything we do as diplomats. And in our experiences in each of our first three assignments (Botswana, Dominican Republic and Latvia), we witnessed how each country's government and society struggled with how much their history meshed with their developmental aspirations and daily policy debates.

In 2004, for example, we found ourselves in Botswana, a beautiful and vast African country the size of France with a population of only about 2 million. Botswana was among the poorest countries in the world prior to the discovery of diamonds in the late 1960s. Since most of its diamond reserves lie on lands settled by the indigenous San, or Kalahari bushmen (made famous in the movie "The Gods Must Be Crazy"), the country has struggled to reconcile its desire to use its diamond wealth to

modernize the economy while preserving its traditional cultures and ecosystems. The government's efforts to develop the tourism industry and manage wildlife, exploit diamond resources, and provide services (e.g., schools and hospitals) sometimes clashed with longstanding hunter-gatherer lifestyles. Meanwhile, the Dominican Republic, a country familiar to most Americans as a tourism destination, where we lived between 2006 and 2008, still struggles with the historical tribulations of the colonial division of the island of Hispaniola that created Haiti and the D.R. This division led to numerous wars and an extremely complicated relationship between these two emerging countries involving race, culture and class distinctions. As U.S. diplomats, we also deal with the historical

**"... we are confident that the foundation CISLA provides will serve as a useful prism through which to interpret the events that shape our world."**

legacy of two U.S. military interventions in the D.R. (1916-1924 and 1965-1966).

The best illustration of CISLA's question from our experiences, however, may be from our last tour in Latvia, a country conquered and occupied by nearly every major regional European power in the last few hundred years. In Riga, these legacies are still a subject — and a sore spot — of everyday conversation and debate. With the recent annexation of the Crimea by Russia and the ongoing troubles in eastern Ukraine, Latvia's historical debates have taken on a new urgency. How can this tiny Baltic country, so often a crossing ground for larger regional powers, maintain its cultural and linguistic identity while reconciling the need to develop an advanced, inclusive society that represents the interests of all its citizens, including its Russian-speaking minority? The elderly Russian-speaking population often bemoans the loss of the Soviet

era, where everyone was guaranteed a job and a livable pension, albeit conveniently forgetting the difficulties of life under Soviet rule. Ethnic Latvians decry the Soviet occupation, which the United States never recognized, and some still commemorate the service of Latvian soldiers who fought on the side of the Nazis against the Soviets during World War II. More recently, Latvia secured membership in both NATO and the European Union to help preserve its independence, but the historical debates and fears of a repeat of the past occupy everyday life.

We write this from our fourth overseas post, in Baku, Azerbaijan, a post-Soviet country whose language is a perfect reflection of its position on the Silk Road, with its mixture of Turkish, Persian, Arabic and Russian-influenced vocabulary and grammar. This oil-rich country finds itself geopolitically situated in a complex neighborhood, sandwiched between Iran and Russia, and still at war with neighboring Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh; ethnic and national boundaries shift and change. Once again, we find ourselves asking about the relevance of the past in understanding the present and the possibilities for the future. What we've learned is that societies always seek a balance in charting their courses toward the future, so there's probably no single answer to the CISLA question, but the answer isn't the point. Rather, the point is to remember to stop and ask ourselves the question itself at every crossroad.

We encourage all CISLA students to view this question as more than an academic exercise — it's a vital question you will struggle with throughout your lives as you branch out in our increasingly interdependent world. Regardless of what path you choose for your future, we are confident that the foundation CISLA provides will serve as a useful prism through which to interpret the events that shape our world. For our part, we love that our Foreign Service lifestyle allows us to revisit the question each time we move to a new diplomatic posting and we get to feel like new CISLA students all over again.

*Update: Doreen and Hagen have since completed their posting in Azerbaijan. The diplomatic family is now in South Africa.*

# Making Connections Across the Globe

By Katherine Bergeron, President, Connecticut College

**ONE OF THE FIRST** emails I received from Connecticut College after the announcement of my presidency in August 2013 came from a CISLA scholar. Aaron Davis '14, a rising senior who was majoring in dance and classics and working toward the certificate in the Toor Cummings Center for International Study in the Liberal Arts, sent his greetings from the village of El Carmen, Peru. He was spending the summer there pursuing research on Afro-Peruvian dance while also interning at the Museo Afroperuano, leading tours, planning events and teaching dance classes to a group of elementary school children. The photo he attached of himself huddled on a bench with his rambunctious and smiling students was evidence to me that he was already becoming adept at one of the central “arts” of the liberal arts: the art of making connections. Forging new relationships across disciplines, across institutions, across languages and cultures, he was putting his liberal arts education into action in a unique and special way.



itself should be adapted for the 21st century. What has emerged from this nearly two-year-long conversation is the new general curriculum that we are calling “Connections.”

The new curriculum encourages students to advance their higher-order thinking by broadening their worldview while also deepening the connections between disparate aspects of their work over four years. In addition to completing a

major, students will sharpen their ability to write and to speak; they will identify a critical question and explore it through several modes of inquiry; they will deepen their knowledge of another language and develop intercultural competence through experiences both here and abroad; they will acquire practical knowledge through internships, research and work in the community; and finally, they will complete a piece of signature

work in their senior year that makes a meaningful contribution to their chosen field and to the liberal arts. The result is a more coherent four-year narrative that will allow students to achieve even greater success in their lives beyond Conn.

Those familiar with CISLA will immediately recognize its influence on the Connections curriculum. And this is no accident. Serious international study will play an increasingly important role in the liberal arts education of the 21st century. But such study also brings the purpose of the liberal arts into sharper relief. It requires students to develop their curiosity, to learn how to ask questions, to appreciate different worldviews, and to understand people whose life experiences are different from their own. It requires them to learn, like Aaron Davis, the art of making connections — across disciplines, institutions, languages and cultures, and by doing so, to acquire one of the most valuable assets of all: the ability to reckon with the unknown.

## The New Curriculum at Connecticut College

By Mary Devins

**WE HAVE MENTIONED** the new curriculum at Connecticut College a few times in this edition. Here are some highlights of that program. There will be *Enhanced First-year Seminars* for all freshmen. These are small, discussion-based, writing-intensive courses designed to give students the opportunity to learn about their professors’ expertise in the context of the liberal arts. *Team Advising* will support first-year students with a team of advisers including a first-year seminar instructor, a staff member and a peer adviser. Through *ConnCourses* students will explore different modes of thinking in an atmosphere of full participation that will create a learning environment where students from all back-

grounds come together, thrive and realize their capabilities. The new *World Languages and Cultures* initiative will encourage students to explore the relevance of intercultural communication skills by requiring two full semesters of language study. *Integrative Pathways* are faculty-designed and student-activated itineraries through a chosen journey. Every Pathway will be organized around a central theme and expose students to at least four different modes of intellectual inquiry, including creative expression; critical interpretation and analysis; quantitative and formal reasoning; scientific inquiry and analysis; and social and historical inquiry. The pathways in many respects imitate the structure of the centers.

# What was a chemist doing directing CISLA?

By Marc Zimmer, former interim director of CISLA, Jean C. Tempel '65 Professor of Chemistry

## MY YEAR AS INTERIM CISLA

director was one of the most intellectually rewarding and fun experiences I have had. Having to write a short column about the year is a small price I am willing to pay.

Going back through the files named “CISLA” I found my initial indication of interest, which I sent to Abby Van Slyck, the associate dean of faculty at the time. It read: “I spoke to Marc Forster and Mary Devins and would like to apply for the Interim Director of the Toor-Cummings Center for International Studies in the Liberal Arts (CISLA). Here are some reasons why I wouldn't be the worst choice. I

- Would work well with Mary Devins and Linda Camelio
- Have been on the CISLA selection

committee numerous times

- Sometime in my distant past I have taught IS 201: Perspectives on Modern Global Society
- Although I am a science geek I am an internationalized one. I am fluent in German and Afrikaans (yes, I know it's useless), have done Semester at Sea and taught in both Germany and South Africa
- Have advised many CISLA students
- Know my way around a budget.”

Fortunately for me, Abby was willing to take the risk and she appointed a rather flippant chemist as the interim CISLA director. Working in CISLA is an extremely stimulating experience. The students are bright, enthusiastic,

and have a wide array of ideas and opinions. In just a year I could see the development of the whole CISLA student by getting to choose a new class of CISLA students and coordinating/teaching in the sophomore and senior classes.

I am particularly fond of the following two CISLA questions:

1. What is the relevance of the past in understanding the present and the possibilities of the future?
2. What are the material, spiritual and ethical challenges of modernity?

For me it was stimulating to have these questions guide our discussions about my youth growing up in apartheid South Africa and my research that is very closely linked to many big ethically and

material questions, e.g., do we release genetically modified mosquitoes to combat dengue fever, should human embryos be genetically modified to prevent disease, or how do you place boundaries that apply to all scientists on Earth, which govern certain experiments that are too dangerous or unethical to undertake?

Being the interim CISLA director gave me an opportunity to do something I often dream of, which is to take science, enthusiastic non-science students, ethics and a modern international society and mix it all up.

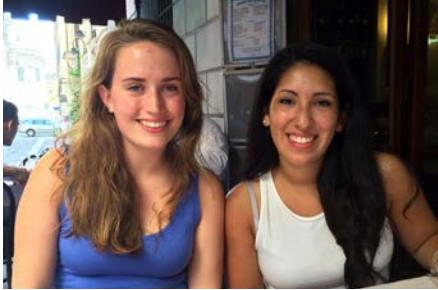
**Working in CISLA is an extremely stimulating experience. The students are bright, enthusiastic, and have a wide array of ideas and opinions.**



MARC ZIMMER, FORMER CISLA INTERIM DIRECTOR, IN ACTION

# notes from the field

## class of 2015



MELANIE ARGUETA '15 COMES FROM BARCELONA TO SPEND THE WEEKEND WITH CAELI SMITH '15 IN ROME

### Caeli Smith

Kino Cinema Organization  
Rome, Italy

I'm surprised by the work environment: things are done at a much slower pace, and it's not as strict or regimented as what I've experienced in the U.S. I've also learned to work and "live a lot slower," as an apartment-mate put it. I have certainly learned a lot working through disorganization and through having to come up with my own work to do when Kino does not have projects for me.

### Neal Tan

MATRADE

Frankfurt am Main, Germany

I have accomplished a great deal of business language proficiency thus far. It has been an exciting semester in Germany, and I am truly enjoying this freedom and independence. The most challenging aspect is meeting new friends, but once you establish connections here, life becomes exciting. The most rewarding experience is to be in Germany during the World Cup, and to be in the midst of all this football excitement.

### Mike Picard

Kav LaOved (worker's hotline)  
Tel Aviv, Israel

The most challenging aspect of summer has been managing a budget and controlling spending in Tel Aviv — a city with a very high cost of living, and housing rates comparable to New York City. The most rewarding aspect has been developing a sense of familiarity with this city, where there is no exaggeration in calling it a thriving metropolis of youthful and eclectic culture.

### Claire Von Loesecke

Consortium for Social and  
Economic Research  
Dakar, Senegal

The most valuable skill I have acquired thus far is learning to conduct a meta-analysis and systematic review of selected documents. The most challenging aspect of living and working here is the cultural difference in business norms. In the United States, we are used to a very regulated and strict work environment, but in Senegal, the work environment is far from regulated and strict. Foremost, the notion of time is fairly non-existent.



CLAIRE VON LOESECKE '15 WITH HER COLLEAGUES AT A CONFERENCE IN SENEGAL

Tardiness is a norm and even missing meetings altogether isn't always frowned upon the way it is in the U.S. In this way, it can be frustrating working tirelessly to meet a certain deadline or to prepare for a scheduled meeting, only to find that the deadline is actually rather flexible or that the meeting has been postponed. In addition, the frequent power outages in Senegal pose a particular challenge to working here, especially given how important Internet access is in the field of research. Yet the flip side of these challenges is that it feels incredibly rewarding to successfully get through a difficult document, meet an ambiguous deadline or finally carry out a rescheduled meeting in spite of these obstacles. Analyzing economic papers can be difficult as it is, let alone completing the same type of analysis in a second language or without Internet access to consult other resources when necessary.

### Sophia Delevie-Orey

Ministry of Education, Sexual  
Education Program  
Santiago, Chile

I'm definitely developing a lot more independence. My abroad program held my hand much more and this has been a really great opportunity to have no choice but to figure things out on my own, which I have found incredibly satisfying and rewarding. As I only speak Spanish at work and my roommate only speaks Spanish, I definitely feel my language ability improving, which is also satisfying, although I tend to end my days totally wiped out, but in a good way.



DANIELLE CYR

### Danielle Cyr

KADAV Women's Solidarity Foundation  
Istanbul, Turkey

I think I have acquired the ability to lead conversations in a rather "diplomatic" manner, and have improved my research skills immensely. I have also improved my Turkish-speaking skills, and have learned the importance of dealing with sensitive issues with respect and integrity. Life skills I have been learning and using have definitely been patience, adaptability and versatility. I think the most rewarding aspect has been the ability to have a little community — a community where we all share one common goal of helping women.



STARLA COFFEE

**Starla Coffee**  
Südtiroler Schützenbund  
Südtirol, Italy

I have grown more confident in myself. I

feel more comfortable living on my own and taking care of myself. I have become more open-minded and more willing to take risks/chances. I have actually also learned to appreciate time to relax and just to take time off for myself.

**Rachel Newman**  
Museum of Pre-Columbian  
and Indigenous Art  
Montevideo, Uruguay

The language and cultural barrier means that I have to be very patient and accept

that I have to try a little harder every day. Don't be embarrassed. You are new at this, in a foreign place, trying your best.

**Ashling O'Donnell**  
High Atlas Foundation  
Marrakesh, Morocco

The internship has been a terrific match. Since High Atlas Foundation is understaffed, the interns have quite a lot of responsibilities and it has been incredible to be able to write grant proposals for them.

## topical comments from notes from the field

**WE ANXIOUSLY AWAIT** the interim internship reports from the field to get a sense of how our students are managing professionally, socially and personally. The variety of experiences, reactions and lessons learned are profound, funny at times and fascinating. Here are a few excerpts from these reports by topic.

### Loneliness

"I think it is extremely exciting to live and work alone in a new place. I have had a lot of time to reflect on myself, my life and the things around me."

"My most challenging aspect was being alone, but it rekindled a piece of me and I now have the ability to reflect on things, I read more, listen to news more and just relax."

"The most challenging aspect has been living alone, but I have learned to enjoy alone time, cook (a little) and be relatively independent."

"I have learned to be happy alone."

"I have learned to cope with living on my own, but I really dislike living alone."

### Life skills

"I was living on my own, cleaning on my own, cooking on my own and most of all paying my own bills. ... It is annoying and awful."

"Living off my CISLA stipend without the help of my parents was very rewarding."

"The most challenging, though it seems mundane and trivial, is the 8:30 to 5 p.m. schedule. You forget how flexible a school schedule is."

"I have learned the importance of being flexible and adaptable, especially

moving in with roommates you do not know very well."

"I have acquired the ability to adjust and to be happy in a short time."

"Ndnk, ndank ... little by little in Wolof — Senegalese time requires patience and politeness that I simply did not have when I first arrived."

"Budgeting and managing my money — I have never been in a situation before where housing and food were things I had complete control over and responsibility for."

"I have learned not to take things so seriously. I enjoy being abroad more and it makes for more interesting experiences."

"I am not stuck in my American mind."

"I love being able to completely control my own life."

"I've learned how to push people into subway cars and cross the street with large groups of women and children."

"I have learned tolerance and patience."

### Language

"I hated answering the phone in German. It is impossible to understand names, the question and the person they wanted was never there. Now it is not a problem. I have greatly improved my German."

"I have been traveling on my own for work, spending about 11 days in each place. I actually enjoy being unfamiliar with my surroundings and being forced to use my Spanish and be resourceful to find my way around."

"My Japanese has skyrocketed."

"I must speak entirely in German and I can say 100% that I accomplished this. I have learned a sense of communication."

### Work

"When working with superiors who are difficult or very picky, I have learned it is best to just do what they demand no matter my opinion on the topic."

"Once I realized I was responsible for finding my own work to do, things got a lot easier."

"I have learned an enormous amount about doing business in China and about the economic system so different from that in the U.S."

### Challenges

"The hardest part is the physical conditions: the heat, the dust, the cockroaches, the bedbugs and the mice. The family is lovely however, and it is incredibly rewarding for me to realize that I can function in situations that might be less than ideal."

"The most challenging aspect that still remains is living and working as women in an Arab society. I now know I can survive independently and be completely responsible for myself. I am now very proud of my cooking skills."

### Praise and awe

"Having this opportunity is priceless. I never realized how fantastic and cool it really is. It gets students out into the world and is one of the best choices I have made."

"I LOVE my internship and living in Japan. I've learned so much since I've been here; I am just worried about reverse culture shock."

# TEDx at Connecticut College

By Mary Devins

**IN 2012**, two CISLA students, Manuel Jimenez '13 and Aditya Harnal '12, came to me and asked about the possibility of starting a Connecticut College TEDx event. They would need funding to go to Los Angeles for a required two-week training course. We thought it was a great idea and funded them. Connecticut College has hosted a TEDx every year since then. In 2012, with the leadership of Aditya and Manuel, Connecticut College piloted the first TEDx, "Rethinking Progress." In 2013 the theme was "On the Shoulders of Giants"; in 2014, "Not All Who Wander Are Lost"; and in 2015, "Genius Loves Company."

Priyanka Gupta '06 was invited to participate in the 2014 TEDx event. She had recently been named one of the India's top five female entrepreneurs — she is No. 3 — by ET Now, the television channel of India's Economic Times. In February, her company won additional awards for manufacturing and green enterprises at a ceremony in Delhi. Pri's success doesn't surprise those who knew her at Connecticut College. During her talk she spoke about learning how to find inclusive solutions for problems and how to do more with less. She told the audience how in order to effect change in a male-dominated family business, she had to patiently call forth her management soft skills that she had learned in her Western education. At the College, Pri completed three majors — economics, international relations, and gender and women's studies — spent a semester studying at Oxford University, graduated summa cum laude, and completed an honors thesis on economic liberalization and the empowerment of gays and lesbians in India. After graduation, she enrolled in a master's degree program in public policy at New York University.

Pri credits her education with teaching her to look at problems and people from multiple perspectives. Her major in gender and women's studies, in particular, "lets me think of the various forces at play when I'm dealing with people," she says. "Behavior is such a part of your personal



PRIYANKA GUPTA '06 AT TEDx 2014, TELLS THE AUDIENCE ABOUT HER EXPERIENCE CHANGING THE WORK CULTURE OF HER FAMILY BUSINESS.

identity, based on so many power differentials that you have to understand when you're working with different people." She is also interested in the impact of development policies on women and minorities in the Indian workplace. Priyanka says her father broke new ground by hiring rural women and training them to operate heavy logistics and mining equipment at a time when women did not hold such jobs.

Mia Hass-Goldberg '16 was also a speaker at the 2014 event. Her topic was "The Infinite Possibilities of Fear and Anxiety." Mia is a CISLA scholar and an international relations and history major. She is a member of the women's varsity rowing team, a solo cellist and ukulelist. With a strong interest in human rights, immigration and security studies, Mia completed a summer internship at the Centre de Documentation Historique sur L'Algérie. She is conducting research on how the French national media's portrayal of the Algerian war has influenced present-day immigration policy and treatment of immigrants.

[www.tedxconnecticutcollege.com](http://www.tedxconnecticutcollege.com)

[www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-32197103](http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-32197103)



BEN BALLARD '16 PROMOTES THE 2015 TEDx



# Parent Perspective

Mary Devins asked Stephanie Arvey P'12, '14 to write the parent piece for PRISM last year. Stephanie knows well the CISLA story as both of her daughters were in CISLA: Savitri graduated in 2012 and Jyoti in 2014. As much as Stephanie worried early on about their globetrotting, they cured her of that by just continuing to globetrot. Savitri majored in international relations and completed a senior thesis, "A Comparative Study of the Privatization of Higher Public Education in Chile and Argentina." She received a Fulbright to go to Mexico as a teaching assistant at La Universidad Pedagógica Nacional. Jyoti completed her senior integrative project in the Slavic studies department on "Gender in Everyday Practices and Narratives of the Russian Home." She received the Oakes and Louise Ames Prize for the most outstanding honors thesis. Jyoti also received a Fulbright, to return to Russia to teach English. "I feel very much at home in Russia," Jyoti said. "The amazingly warm and welcoming people I have found there is what keeps bringing me back."

**IT ALL STARTED** when my daughters, Savitri Arvey '12 and Jyoti Arvey '14, fulfilled their high school graduation requirement by participating in a service trip to Nicaragua. Both girls returned with an expanded view of the world, and were forever changed. In this spirit they both decided to apply to Connecticut College, specifically for its CISLA program, which offered the opportunity to live and work in a foreign country.

I'll never forget the first meeting that CISLA held to familiarize the parents with the program. I was a bit on edge listening to stories of students, barely into their 20s, living on their own in countries such as Honduras and Vietnam. At the time, I thought that there was just no way I was going to go along with this program. I had lots of concerns and lots of questions, and wasn't shy about expressing any of them. It came as a bit of a surprise to receive such

warmth and understanding in return, and I could tell that I wasn't the first parent to voice such concerns. In time, I became comfortable with the concept of Savitri living abroad, knowing that she would have the full support of the CISLA program.

Savitri completed her internship in La Plata, Argentina, at the research division of the Ministry of Education and Culture. While studying in Buenos Aires the previous semester, a new friend invited Savitri to stay with her during



SAVITRI '12 AND JYOTI '14 AVERY IN ST. PETERSBURG, MAY 2015.

that summer in La Plata. Much to our delight the family completely embraced her, and to our surprise our very picky, vegetarian daughter was sharing in the delights of Argentinean barbecue. It was a trying time for me as I missed Savitri very much, but at the same time I was proud of her growing independence.

Having been through it with her sister, I was better prepared for Jyoti's plans. Just before beginning her first year at Connecticut College, Jyoti announced that she was going to pursue Slavic studies and wanted to travel to Russia. This came as a complete shock to all of us. By Christmas break of her freshman year she was progressing well in her language skills and it was quite clear to us that this was not a phase. In the summer of 2013, Jyoti was to begin her CISLA internship, at an interior design studio in Ufa, Russia, and by that time had been to the country three times — for a Slavic studies class trip, for the Critical Language Studies program, and for the Bard/Smolny study abroad program in St. Petersburg. It was

interesting to note that during these times Jyoti and I were more in touch via Skype than we ever were when she was at college, and being connected in this way helped her get through a few tough moments.

Through the CISLA program, living and working in these environments challenged Savitri and Jyoti by honing their problem-solving skills in a new environment, strengthening their independence, and fostering confidence in their own abilities. As parents we got to see the full scope

of our daughters' abilities, and were introduced to cultures that weren't familiar to us. Traveling to Russia last year to visit Jyoti opened my eyes to the warmth of the Russian people, expanding my view and opening me up to new possibilities in life. Everywhere you go there are caring people wanting to make friends and be helpful, and this has helped me to be more at ease with my daughters' endeavors.

As a result of their CISLA experience, both of my daughters applied for Fulbright English Teaching Assistantships directly after graduating from Connecticut College, to further continue their exploration of foreign cultures and languages. Savitri completed her Fulbright scholarship in Mexico City, and has established herself in the thriving metropolis. She is working at an NGO. In the fall, Jyoti will embark on her Fulbright experience in Novosibirsk, Siberia. She is very excited about this new adventure, and we look forward to visiting her next year. We are forever grateful to Connecticut College and the CISLA program for giving Savitri and Jyoti the life skills to fulfill their dreams of living abroad, and for enhancing our lives through fostering international relations.

*Update: The sisters have moved on to new pursuits. Savitri is working as a program officer for Mexican graduate students at the Fulbright Commission in Mexico City. Jyoti completed her Fulbright in June, and taught literature and public art at a summer program, Explo, at Yale University.*

# What's New?

By Mary Devins

**SADLY**, we did not put out an issue of PRISM last year. There were a lot of changes in the CISLA staff and we were not able to get it organized. But we are back, and with this issue will fill you in on two years of CISLA activities. For the academic year 2013-14, Marc Zimmer, the Jean C. Tempel '65 Professor of Chemistry, was the interim director, while Marc Forster was on sabbatical. Linda Camelio, our beloved administrative assistant, left after seven years to take a full-time job, and our internship coordinator left to take another job. We hired two new staff members and we had a wonderful 2014-15 academic year with Marc Forster back at the helm. Marybeth Sydor is our internship coordinator and publications specialist. She brings a wealth of experience in procuring international internships as well as wisdom and great enthusiasm dealing with our students. Anissa Cantone is our administrative assistant. She had previously worked at the College, in the advancement office, so was quickly able to get up to speed and assures us that she has thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to work at CISLA — especially because of the fun interaction with students.

What's new? Connecticut College has a new president, Katherine Bergeron, who came into office in January 2014. You can read her column on page 4. Over the past years the College and many committees have diligently been revising the general education requirements. This is an exceedingly onerous and time-consuming undertaking. At the onset of the process, the College started by asking what was working really well, and the answer was the centers. The new general education requirements have been modeled to a great extent on the centers' format of a major complemented by a series of core courses outside of the major but related to the senior integrative project. These will be called integrative pathways. Also in the new curriculum, the importance of foreign language learning has been validated by the new requirement that all Connecticut College students must take two semesters of foreign language.



HOLLY DRANGINIS '06 RECEIVES THE DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD

This year we began a new tradition of honoring a CISLA graduate with the CISLA Distinguished Alumni Award. The Center graduated its first class of 13 scholars 26 years ago, in 1992. There are now more than 600 CISLA alumni all around the world doing impressive and meaningful work. At our spring banquet honoring the new sophomore class, we recognized our first honoree for the CISLA Distinguished Alumni Award, Holly Dranginis '06. Holly accepted her award and then she dazzled the audience with her remarks, which were powerful and poignant.

Holly earned her B.A. in international relations and history. For her CISLA internship she worked in Lima, Peru, at Coordinadora Nacional de los Derechos Humanos. We like to claim that her career today is partially the result of a pathway that started with CISLA. Holly also holds a J.D. from the UC Berkeley School of Law. She was a Fulbright scholar in Guatemala, where she was a legal consultant to victims of that country's femicide crisis. As an attorney specializing in war crimes trials and transitional justice, she makes frequent trips to the African Great Lakes region, publishes policy reports, and directly advises policymakers in Washington and abroad. She has worked on numerous high-profile cases, including the case against former Liberian President Charles

Taylor and the genocide case against former Guatemalan President Efraín Ríos Montt. In a trial before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights in 2012, Holly helped successfully litigate a case against the government of Guatemala on behalf of victims of sexual violence, forced disappearances and torture. In 2008, she was a consultant to the then-ICC chief prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo, and later led a program in northern Uganda supporting conflict-affected communities. In 2005, she worked as a consultant to truth commission efforts in Peru and Paraguay, gathering testimony from victims of civil war and dictatorship. Today Holly is a policy analyst at the Enough Project in Washington, D.C. The Enough Project aims to end genocide and crimes against humanity. We respect and admire Holly's outstanding dedication and devotion to improving the human condition worldwide. You can listen to her talk at: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_JMbQDHhg0A](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_JMbQDHhg0A)

## Reunion



CLASS OF '10 JOHANNA GREGORY, MIKE GARDNER, ALEX FELFLE AND EMMETT MARKIN GET TOGETHER AT REUNION

Each year in early June the College holds its Reunion and welcomes classes that are five, 10, 15, 20, etc. years out. I checked which CISLA students would be in attendance and invited them for a little reception in the CISLA office. About 15 to 20 former students dropped by last year and this year. What a pleasant surprise to see familiar faces walk in the door, some with spouses or partners, some with children. They introduced



THE SOPHOMORE CLASS VISITS THE FRENCH CONSULATE IN NEW YORK CITY

themselves and told stories of their experiences with CISLA. They all agreed that it would be fun to have a networking gathering in some of the bigger cities. We want to plan to do something this year in New York, Washington and Boston. Feel free to contact me with any ideas.

### The UN Trip: Tradition Continues

Each spring we bring the new sophomore class to New York City for a busy, exciting day. We meet with different delegations at the United Nations, take a tour and have an elegant lunch in the Delegates Dining Room. Before the trip, the students meet in groups to prepare thoughtful and provocative questions for the diplomats. The interchange of ideas and different worldviews is exciting for all. This year we met with the Iranian and French delegations. At the end of the day, an alumnus of the College treated the students and staff to dinner at Bistro Jules, a lovely little French restaurant in the East Village.

### Fulbright Scholarships

Over the years many CISLA graduates have been chosen for Fulbright Scholarships. Our students are culturally savvy and knowledgeable, and passionate about international travel and learning. Two CISLA scholars received Fulbrights



CISLA SCHOLARS RICK HOGOBOOM '15 (LEFT) AND LEE SIDLE '15 RECEIVE FULBRIGHT SCHOLARSHIPS

in 2014: Jyoti Arvey returned to Russia to teach English, and Ellen Heartlein returned to Germany to teach German. In 2015 the only two Conn College students to receive Fulbrights were CISLA scholars: Rich Hogoboom is in Taiwan teaching English, and Leland Sidle is in Russia teaching English.

### CISLA Alumni Survey

Earlier this year we sent out a questionnaire to all CISLA alumni for whom we had correct email addresses. We want to create a database that we can use for a variety of reasons, including assessment, career networking, brainstorming, internships and housing help. Many recent graduates ask me if I know someone in a particular field or a specific city and it would be helpful to be able to make these connections. If you have not answered this questionnaire, go to: <https://goo.gl/IQb2Jr>.

## Noteworthy Alumni on Campus



JENN DE LEON '01 TALKS ABOUT HER BOOK, "WISE LATINAS," AT UNITY HOUSE

**Jenn De Leon '01** came to campus to give a presentation to a packed audience at Unity House about her book, "Wise Latinas." As a first-generation college student, Jenn could easily talk about the issues young Latinas experience in higher education, where they are underrepresented. Jenn pointed out that for many it is the first time they are immersed in American culture outside their homes — and where the values of two cultures often clash. "Wise Latinas" is in part a response to this widening gap.



JESSICA SOFFER '07 AND COLUM MCCANN DISCUSS THE ART OF WRITING

**Jessica Soffer '07** ("Tomorrow There Will be Apricots") was able to bring her mentor, Colum McCann, distinguished author and winner of numerous prestigious literary awards, to campus as the featured speaker in the Klagsbrun Symposium. McCann and Soffer had an open dialogue about the art and the pain of writing and answered questions about their work.

**Yoko Shimada '99** was awarded the Mach Arom '89 Young Alumni Award  
*continued on page 14*

# CISLA alumni updates

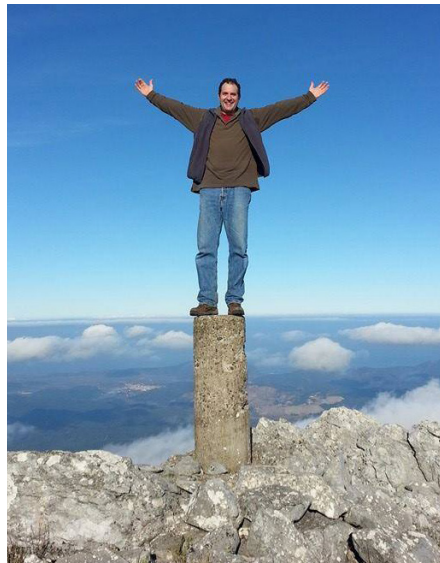
## Niki Clayton 1994

“It doesn’t seem all that long ago that we were starting out as the first crop of CISLA guinea pigs, although I realize it’s been 20 years! I am working at Acumen Solutions as managing director of our Public Sector practice. It’s a far cry from majoring in botany and Chinese, but my CISLA past comes back in strange and unexpected ways. Five years ago, the director of Public Sector encouraged me to work with a young and upcoming star in our company. We discovered that we have an unexpected bond. I learned that she is from Wuhan, where I did my CISLA internship. Her parents worked at Tongji Medical University hospital, where I lived and did my CISLA internship. The world really is a small place. Acumen Solutions has an office in the U.K. If anyone is interested in an internship with a computer software firm, I’d be happy to look into opportunities. Occasionally we do work across Europe and Asia through our U.K. office.”

## Symeon Tsalicoglou 1994

Symeon is the business development director for Adriatic Crewing, a privately held company in Greece, which is dedicated to the careful selection of Ukrainian seafarers. “Since I am in Greece and in the shipping industry, if you are a CISLA student who has an interest in shipping (spending time on a ship for four months can be great schooling), please feel free to ask me. There are many companies I am close to where I would feel comfortable assisting a CISLA student to get an internship. As we are still in Greece, the interest may not be in shipping but in archaeology, fine arts, politics, agro-tourism, wine — the list could go on. One good thing about the financial crisis is that businesses that are still alive and operational have an evolved sense of civic responsibility in which internships with foreigners are deemed favorable within the company culture.

“I would not mind helping out with organizing a CISLA reunion in Greece



SYMEON TSALICOGLOU '94 ON THE TOP OF THE WORLD IN GREECE

for alums in Europe. We could aim for 2016 — I leave it up to you. I would suggest two locations: Athens, or the Byzantine castle of Monemvasia, where I have full access. Maybe we could even extend it to CC alums in the area ... there are quite a few in Greece!”

## Gayle Baker 1996

Gayle and her husband, a Foreign Service officer, have lived in Brazil and Tel Aviv and are now back in D.C. Gail has completed a nursing degree and works at the Lombardi Cancer Center at Georgetown University. “I am not doing international relations directly, but I definitely encounter a number of cultures and perspectives and CISLA gave me the appreciation of that and the skill to navigate in tricky situations.”

## Anna Snider 1997

“I am heading up Global Equity Manager Research for Merrill Lynch. My team is responsible for choosing all of the equity funds our asset management clients can invest in. I also continue to do a lot of work in the microfinance space through a foundation called High Water Women, of which I’m on the board. We’re doing what amounts to pro bono consulting for smaller microfinance institutions on how to grow and make their business sustainable as well as attract capital. Last August I went to Ghana for this purpose, and am continuing work with a Haitian organization; another member of our team was in Colombia, so we’re having great experiences.”

## Nate Heller 1998

Nate is the co-founder and chief operating officer at Persistent Energy Ghana Ltd. PEG is an asset financing company selling pay-as-you-go solar energy products to off-grid customers in Ghana. The systems give off-grid customers access to better quality light,



NATE HELLER '98 IN GHANA

mobile phone charging and appliances like radios. Persistent Energy Ghana is leading the movement to bring green energy, installing solar-powered micro-grids for the 1 million Ghanaian households that earn between \$1 and \$6 a day.

## Amélie Baudot 2000

“My career took a CISLA-esque turn last year into international development. I am the associate general counsel for a social impact investor, AgDevCo, in London. AgDevCo uses grant funding to invest in small- and medium-sized agribusiness in various sub-Saharan African countries with the aim of improving livelihoods. It is very close to my CISLA project.”

## Larysa Gumowskyj Kautz 2000

Larysa has been named general counsel for Melwood, a leading nonprofit organization based in Upper Marlboro, Md., that is dedicated to empowering people of differing abilities to transform their lives through employment, job training, and supportive and recreational services.

## Alexandra Fiorillo 2003

Alex continues to work in international development and recently started a new company called GRID Impact, a design consulting firm that specializes in behavioral science and human-centered design. She spends much of her time in East Africa and South Asia working on financial inclusion and sanitation projects. She’d love to catch up with CISLA alums across the globe!



EFFIE KATSANTONIS '03 (FAR RIGHT) WORKING IN PARIS, MEETS UP WITH MEETS UP WITH CLASS OF 2016 CISLA SCHOLARS ALEXIS CHENEY, KUI MURAGE, JOEY BLAIR AND MELISSA MANGUM ALL OF WHOM WERE IN PARIS FOR THEIR INTERNSHIPS

### Effie Katsantonis 2003

Effie works at Longchamps in Paris as a retail trainer. Last year she was able to procure an internship for CISLA scholar Norah Hannel '14. This year through our alumni buddy connection, she shared an evening with four CISLA scholars who were in Paris for internships.

### Katherine Avgerinos 2006

“My decision to study Russian at Conn so significantly affected the course of my academic, personal and professional life that I have basically developed a second identity — my Russian alter ego, you might say. As a result I have gained a wealth of new experiences, and made Russian-related friends around the world.” Kathy has two master’s



KATHY AVGERINOS '06 MARRIES IVAN DOCAMPO IN A BIG GREEK WEDDING

degrees, in international relations and public relations, and is responsible for Eurasian business engagement at the World Economic Forum in Geneva. “Leveraging my regional expertise, I am tasked with driving the Forum’s strategy for partners/members from across Russia, Ukraine and Central Asia, which requires understanding the business landscape and developing a compelling value proposition for company leadership, in line with the

forum’s mission.” Kathy got married to Ivan DoCampo on July 6 in Greece.

### Priyanka Gupta 2006

and Kathy Avgerinos reunited last August at the World Economic Forum headquarters in Geneva. Kathy is a manager on the Forum’s energy team, while Pri, who is executive director of MPIL Steel Structures, is active in the Mumbai “hub” of the Forum’s Global Shapers network ([www.globalshapers.org](http://www.globalshapers.org)).

Kathy says, “I have been with the World Economic Forum now for three years, which is a very CISLA-esque job, and I introduced Pri to the Forum’s community of Global Shapers, which is for ‘superstar’ people under 30 who have the ability to really bring impact and positive change to



PRIYANKA GUPTA '06 AND KATHY AVGERINOS DOCAMPO '06 MEET AT THE WORLD ECONOMIC FORM IN GENEVA, SWITZERLAND

their communities at a local level.”

### Andrew Maki 2006

“One small bit of news from me is that as of January of this year, I’ve launched a new NGO, Justice & Empowerment Initiatives, based in Nigeria, where I’ve been working and living for the past three years. We primarily work with urban and rural poor communities, providing free legal aid and other advocacy-related support to community struggles.” Read more about his work, and see pictures, at [www.justempower.org](http://www.justempower.org).

### David Urbaneja Fuerlos 2009

“Marcela and I are now living in the Philippines, as I was recruited as one of the six young professionals (out of 4,700 applicants) to join the Asian Development Bank. It’s been an amazing experience, not only working with China, but also expanding my experience to

other parts of Asia, such as India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Marcela works in Manila for executive search, specializing in financial services. Really happy!”

### Rie Tai 2011

Rie is the project manager and consultant at Rakuten Research in Shinagawa-Ku, Japan, where she provides Japanese clients with international market-researched data centered toward marketing needs.

### Alyssa Grabfield 2011

Alyssa worked for four years in the public health sector for Mercer in NYC. She claims she got her job there because of her CISLA internship. Alyssa is heading off to Emory to pursue a dual MBA and Master of Public Health.

### Meredith Boyle 2013

After graduation Meredith worked for the Center for Strategic and International Studies. She says, “I sent in my letter of acceptance to Georgetown School of International Service to Bruce Hoffman (the director and Conn alum, Class of ’76) this morning! I’m so looking forward to getting back to the themes of my CISLA research and continuing to explore them at the master’s level. I know the CISLA perspective helped my application stand out!”



MERRY BYRNE '13 AND HILLARY LINDSAY '13 MEET UP IN ITALY

### Meredith Byrne and Hillary Lindsay 2013

After graduation Meredith worked for the United Nations Information Center in Washington, D.C. Now she is at Oxford in London, where she is completing a

*continued on page 14*

## alumni updates

*continued from page 13*

master's in development studies. Merry visited Hillary in Lago di Alice Superiore, Italy. Hillary is pursuing a master's at the University of Gastronomic Science near Torino.

### Claire Wellbeloved-Stone 2014

"I want to give you some exciting news. As part of my Master of Public Health I have to complete a short internship, which is traditionally done domestically, but I was able to find an internship in Peru. CISLA definitely helped me prepare for this process and gave me the determination to make this happen, even though it is not the traditional way students in the program go about internships."

### noteworthy alumni

*continued from page 11*

during Reunion Weekend 2014. The award recognizes young alumni for their contributions to society. Yoko was



YOKO SHIMADA '99 RECEIVES THE MACH AROM '89 AWARD

honored for her work on the CISLA advisory board and her service as an admissions representative, in addition to her professional work in research and development of HIV/AIDS prevention and care. Until recently Yoko worked for the World Bank, where her focus was strengthening health systems in Africa and building partnerships between governments, private sector organizations, NGOs, and major donors and foundations. Because of her passionate interest in maternal and child health and her belief in breastfeeding, Yoko

has started a fashion line for pregnant and nursing mothers. With the fashionable, elegant and functional Mitera line Yoko endeavors to empower women to be independent, inspired and confident

Two CISLA alumnae teach at Connecticut College. **Daniela Melo '04** is a visiting professor in the government department and **Jessica Soffer '07** teaches creative writing in the English department.

Various CISLA alumni were invited by the Office of Alumni Relations to be on panels for career presentations. **Anya Romanet '10**, who is consulting manager at FactSet Research Systems, and **Alex Krotinger '08**, who is senior enterprise account manager at HubSpot, were on the alumni professional panel. **Chris Bothur '07** and **Alexandra Felfle '10** were both speakers on the panel "Changes and Domestic and Global Strategies since 2008." Chris told the audience that he would not be where he is professionally if he hadn't studied Chinese language and culture.

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