

# St. Edward's

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

FALL 2015 VOLUME 15 ISSUE 3



## FULBRIGHT RISING

10 scholars share what it takes to win the prestigious award

## TEENAGERS TODAY

A psychology professor has the inside scoop

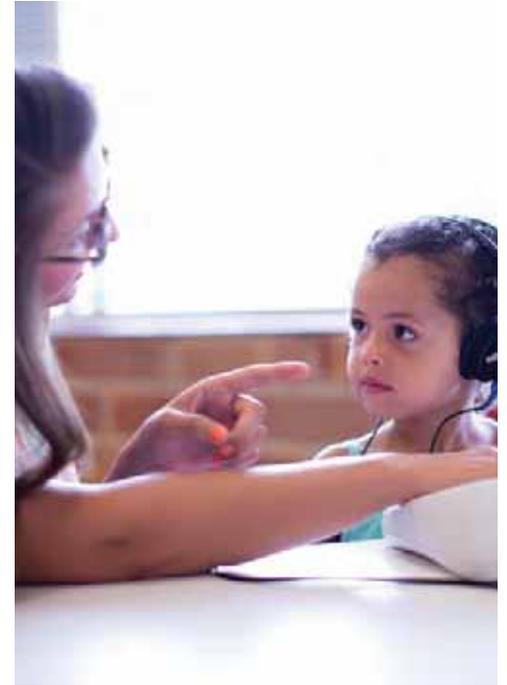
## CAN POP CULTURE MAKE US SMARTER?

*Breaking Bad* introduces freshmen to the liberal arts



## 10 CAN POP CULTURE + HIGHER EDUCATION COEXIST?

If playing a Bugs Bunny cartoon can pique a student's interest in Wagnerian opera or if making a reference to *The Avengers* can kindle an interest in Joseph Campbell's theories on the power of myths, then ... well, why not?



## 16 SETTING HER SIGHTS

**Chelsea Elliott '12** has been blind in one eye and deaf in one ear since childhood. Now, she is helping revolutionize the vision screening process that could have prevented her own impairment through her nonprofit, the Half-Helen Foundation.

### LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

A few months ago, my phone rang as I sat down for dinner. I answered, expecting to hear the long pause that signals an automated solicitation call. Instead, a bright, bubbly voice, full of excitement and anticipation came across the miles. On the other end of the line was one of the nine young women profiled for winning a Fulbright award.

We talked through a few points in the article, making sure all of the details were correct. Then the conversation moved to how she was spending the summer before going abroad. I was struck by the opportunity and possibility that awaited her — first a Fulbright, then graduate school at the university of her choosing, followed by a career.

One of the great joys of editing this magazine is talking with new graduates who are looking out at the rest of their lives. We capture that moment in time when every door is open; all they have to choose is which one to walk through.

In this issue, we bring you two such stories: On page 16, we catch up with **Chelsea Elliott**, a 2012 graduate who established a nonprofit that detects vision and hearing problems in children. As a result of her

work, she was named a 2015 CNN Hero. We share the stories of nine of the university's 10 Fulbright winners, revealing a bit about what it takes to win such a prestigious award.

As much as we enjoy telling the stories of these students, the professors who shape them are equally remarkable. Our cover story looks at how faculty members smartly use pop culture in the classroom to deepen connections with material in ways that are relevant to their Generation Z students. And on page 20, Associate Professor of Psychology **Sara Villanueva** shares years of teaching and research expertise on the teenage mind.

We hope you enjoy this issue!

Frannie Schneider  
Editor

3001 SOUTH CONGRESS AVENUE  
AUSTIN, TEXAS 78704-6489  
512-448-8400 | STEDWARDS.EDU

**FOR THE EDITOR:**

512-448-8775

FRANNIES@STEDWARDS.EDU



## 20 THE INSIDER'S GUIDE TO THE 17-YEAR-OLD MIND

Experts from St. Edward's University shed light on the nuances of adolescent thinking and the important role that parents play in teens' lives.



## 26 THE PATHS OF EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

In late spring, a record 10 students from St. Edward's were named winners of Fulbright awards. Their passions are as varied as their destinations: poetry, public health, environmental education, antibiotic resistance; South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Germany.

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### A BRAND NEW WAY TO EXPERIENCE ST. EDWARD'S

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### About the Cover

Photographer Morgan Printy asked professors **Russell Frohardt** and **Todd Onderdonk** to recreate scenes from *Breaking Bad* and **Jooyoun Lee** to invoke her inner Korean pop star for the good of *St. Edward's University Magazine*.



# St. Edward's

UNIVERSITY MAGAZINE

EDITOR	Frannie Schneider
CREATIVE DIRECTOR	Rick Ramos
DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS	Mischelle Diaz
DESIGNERS	Nicki Clark Joanna King Betsabe Rodríguez '11
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER	Morgan Printy
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS	Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05 Joel Hoekstra Lauren Liebowitz Erin Peterson Robyn Ross Lisa Thiegs
PRESIDENT	George E. Martin, PhD
VICE PRESIDENT FOR MARKETING AND ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT	Paige Booth

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# A Year on the Hilltop

From traditional favorites to top trends, here's a month-by-month highlight of what's happening on campus this year. We'll see you on the hilltop soon!



- OCTOBER** St. Edward's celebrates Founders Week with service projects, twilight Mass and an epic fitness challenge hosted by the Holy Cross Brothers.
- NOVEMBER** Visit Mexico without leaving campus at the eighth annual Noche Folklórica, a celebration of traditional dance and song hosted by the St. Edward's University Ballet Folklórico troupe.
- DECEMBER** Grab a scarf and hot chocolate for the annual Festival of Lights on Main Building's front lawn.
- JANUARY** Feed your brain with a sack-lunch discussion hosted by the Center for Ethics and Leadership on the pope's encyclical on the environment. Served with a side of carbon neutrality.
- FEBRUARY** Homecoming! Save the date — Feb. 19–21, 2016 — for perennial favorites like Casino Night, Hilltopper basketball and Sunday Mass with the Holy Cross Brothers.
- MARCH** South by Southwest takes over Austin, and you'll find faculty, alumni and students speaking, performing, interning and volunteering across town.
- APRIL** Some 25 top students present their work — from comic books to treatises on architecture — at the biannual Honors Thesis Symposium.
- MAY** More than 1,000 Hilltoppers will get their hard-earned degrees at the 130th commencement ceremony. Congrats (in advance), grads!

—Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05

# The Return of the Fountain

The fountain behind Main Building is running again, after several years of being turned off to conserve water due to the Texas drought. The university's Facilities office developed a way to get the water flowing, while complying with City of Austin water restrictions. The water is reclaimed from the campus swimming pool discharge. Every two weeks, about 300 gallons of water is harvested from the discharge that's produced when the pool filter is cleaned. This water, which otherwise would have gone into the sanitary sewer, is transported to the fountain by university groundskeepers to be reused.





# A Pope and His People

**On May 13, two professors and 25 students** from St. Edward's University had a papal audience in Vatican City (to be fair, there were approximately 7,000 others present). For the students, the event triggered lots of questions to Associate Professor of Religious and Theological Studies **Steve Rodenborn**. *Why did the pope kiss so many babies? Is he doing this for political reasons, or are his actions authentic?*

Rodenborn, a Catholic theologian who co-led the study-abroad trip with Associate Professor of Philosophy **Jack Green Musselman**, says that the idea of smelling like your sheep has been central to Pope Francis' papacy, and it may help explain his approach that afternoon. "He's offering a model of what pastoring looks like," says Rodenborn. "But for Pope Francis, this isn't just for our priests. We're all called to minister."

We asked Rodenborn to reflect on the papal audience and shed some light on how Pope Francis has Catholics and non-Catholics thinking about the church in new ways. —*Frannie Schneider*

## The style is the substance.

"There's a sense of openness in the way Pope Francis speaks of the Catholic Church. He is framing the church not in terms of who's excluded but who's included. He's opening the doors as widely as he can and letting people know that, whoever they are, this is a place they still belong."

## He's self-critical.

"When Pope Francis was interviewed by *America* magazine and was asked, 'Who is Jorge Mario Bergoglio?' his answer was, 'I am a sinner.' He's also aware that the church has problems. He talks about how the church should be like the moon, in that it reflects light rather than shining its own light. It reflects the light of Christ. He's pushing for the church to be about much more than itself."

## He's focused on mercy.

"On Dec. 8, Pope Francis will begin the Holy Year of Mercy when he opens the Holy Door at St. Peter's Basilica. The Holy Door is generally opened in Jubilee years and otherwise remains locked and closed. Passing through the door symbolizes forgiveness and a new start. Mercy is the idea of giving something unearned over freely. It's a liberating concept, and he's fostering the idea of unconditional love and accepting those who have been excluded."

## He's a pastor first.

"This guy is a nightmare for his security team. He will walk into a crowd of people after Mass. He has this habit of calling up people on the phone — a group of sisters in Spain, someone who is feeling guilty over something. When your people are struggling, you reach out, even if it's a risk to you. How you pastor models what you believe."



## 25 Minutes with an Urban Sociologist

Walking through East Austin, **Rachael Neal** points out the boutiques, coffee shops and upscale markets that have sprung up in recent decades. There are freshly painted bike lanes and bright streetlamps that illuminate the roads at night. Some observers would herald such changes as improvements — sure signs that the neighborhood is on the upswing in a fast-growing city.

But Neal, an assistant professor of Sociology, sees a neighborhood sown with tensions. As young affluent white people move into the area, the mostly low-income African American and Latino residents who have inhabited the neighborhood for decades must grapple with the transformation. Under the surface, Neal says, are race and class issues similar to those that have recently boiled over in cities like Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore, Maryland.

“For longtime residents, the new shops are pricey, and the property taxes are going up,” Neal says. A neighborhood that was essentially designated as Austin’s segregated area for African Americans in the 1920s and then neglected for years — city officials largely ignored the need for upgrades in neighborhood parks, and sewage problems periodically plague the area — is now undergoing rapid demographic,

// The vibrant, tight-knit communities that developed over the decades are slowly dispersing. //

social and even physical change. “People whose grandparents were forced to move into the neighborhood in the 1920s now feel betrayed [by the changes],” Neal says. “The vibrant, tight-knit communities that developed over the decades are slowly dispersing.”

In an effort to highlight the broader effects of gentrification, Neal has begun to study the area and document the stories of its residents. Her research efforts have been aided by sociology, social work and criminal justice students who interview longtime residents, asking them about their experiences with new residents, city officials and law enforcement. “Students get to see how social ties are affected and how the idea of community is impacted,” Neal says. “They see firsthand how people are impacted by racial, social and economic change.”

Neal, who hopes to start preliminary analysis of the collected stories next spring, says she’s particularly interested in how community dynamics affect individuals’ lives. “Overall, I’m intrigued by how diversity at times presents an obstacle to people connecting with one another, but at other times, it can bring people closer.” —*Joel Hoekstra*

–*Rachael Neal*

# Things We Love *Student Standout Edition*



## Going Green

**Aaron Waters MSEM '15** enjoyed teaching high-school physics but wanted to delve into environmental causes, which is how he landed in the Professional Science Master's in Environmental Management and Sustainability at St. Edward's. As an intern with the Facilities office, he helped implement the campus environmental management system; for his master's research, he worked with Austin Resource Recovery to evaluate the city's single-use bag ordinance, which went into effect in 2013. He also serves on the board of Solar Austin. In January, the Presidential Management Fellows Program selected him as a finalist, and in July, he began work at the Environmental Protection Agency.

## TV Time

# 2

Once **Brianna Chacon '16** discovered the Digital Media Management major at St. Edward's, she knew it was the perfect way to make a career out of her passion for entertainment. A class assignment connected her with an ABC Television Network employee. She mock-interviewed for a posted ABC internship and was floored when her contact put her in touch with the person who was hiring. Chacon made a good impression, and she scored an internship. Over the summer, she helped with the entertainment marketing and promotions for ABC's comedy and alternative TV shows in Los Angeles.

## Taking Care of Business

When **Rami Pechacek MACT '14** finished her time as an Army officer, she knew she wanted to transition into a government-focused job. After graduation from St. Edward's, she was selected as a Presidential Management Fellows Program finalist, then landed a highly sought-after appointment with the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Washington, D.C.

# 3

## 4 Plugging In

**Sophie Gairo '17**, a Computer Science major, points out that most people don't think about the creative side of computer science. She tapped into that creativity, as well as her technical and problem-solving skills, as one of 11 undergraduates chosen for a research internship at Carnegie Mellon University's Institute for Software Research. She was tasked with designing a plug-in to help make software development easier and more intuitive for programmers.

## Working Toward Change

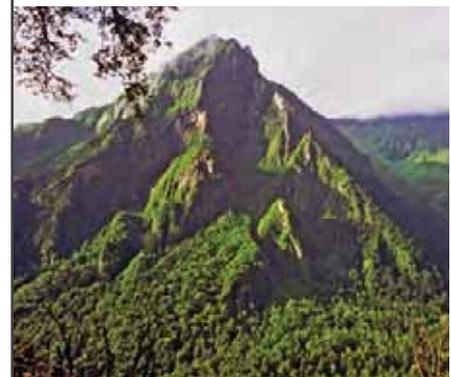
**Loren Kelly '15** started volunteering with GENaustin, a nonprofit that works to increase the academic and social success of girls, as part of a volleyball team-member requirement, but that's not what kept her there. When she started mentoring students through Communities In Schools, her eyes were opened to many of the challenges that low-income students face. Both those experiences led her to apply for (and ultimately be accepted to) Teach For America in San Antonio, where she's making a difference for even more students.

# 5

## World Views

**Pamela Millan MSEM '16** understands the need for thoughtful consumption habits. She recognizes the delicate ecosystems of the oceans. She wants to learn more about China's tropical forests. Her concern for the environment made her the ideal candidate for a summer fellowship with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), and she helped create content for the careers section of the NWF's EcoLeaders website, which will help guide those interested in an eco-based career. —*Lisa Thiels*

# 6



# What Does The Research Say?

Professors across St. Edward's University spent the summer tackling some pretty big questions. In many cases, their research ties back to what they're teaching on campus this fall. And perhaps even more importantly, their work is contributing to how society views and solves some of our most significant challenges.



## How is international adoption changing?

Associate Professor of Journalism **Jena Heath** searches for the stories behind the adoption papers.

Heath's personal experience of adopting a daughter from China filled her with questions about the media's portrayal of international adoption, as well as the narratives of other adoptive families. After interviewing adoptees and their families, Heath intends to write about her experiences. She also wants to create an online resource to enable adoptees and their families to tell their stories. "I think it's important to let people speak for themselves," Heath says.



## How did the residents of Austin view the Civil War?

Associate Professor of History **Mity Myhr** directs students to local archives to dig up the past.

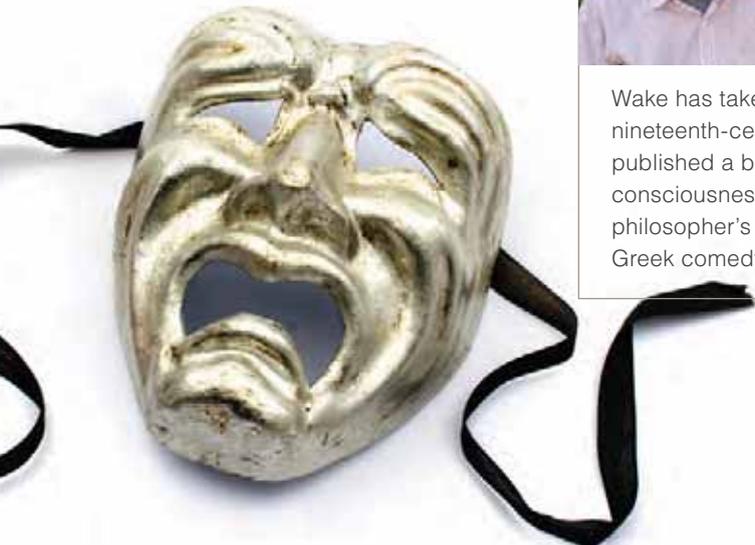
Myhr has a twofold purpose for her freshman history course: to encourage students to explore the historical local perspectives on the Civil War, and to get those students comfortable using local archives for their research. Myhr spent her summer laying the groundwork for students to gain access to local church archives, as well as the archives at the Austin History Center. Then they'll use secondary sources to put it all into context. "I think it's important for students to hear that even within the South, there was debate," Myhr says.



## How does a 19th-century German philosopher intersect with the ancient Greeks?

Associate Professor of Philosophy **Peter Wake**'s research on Hegel shows the connection between art and religion.

Wake has taken the time to explore ancient Greek tragedy and comedy through the lens of nineteenth-century German philosopher Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. Wake has already published a book that discusses Hegel's early writings and evolutionary view of religious consciousness as it relates to the art of Greek tragedy. Wake's current research focuses on the philosopher's later writings and how Hegel viewed the philosophical significance of ancient Greek comedy.





## What do primate diets tell us about human diets?

Assistant Professor of Environmental Science and Policy **Michael Wasserman** is studying both nonhuman primates and traditional human foragers to learn more about their consumption of natural plant hormones.

Wasserman has already studied nonhuman primates' consumption of phytoestrogens, which naturally occur in plants and correlate with changes in hormones and behaviors in monkeys. Now Wasserman is studying whether these phytoestrogens are present in hunter-gatherer diets. "If humans began eating phytoestrogens after the rise of modern agriculture, then the effects of these plant chemicals are likely to be more dramatic than if there's a long evolutionary history between our ancestors and these types of plants," Wasserman says.



## How can we better understand nano-sized confined systems?

Professor of Chemistry **Tricia Shepherd** uses technology to investigate dynamics at the atomic level.

Shepherd is a computational physical chemist who uses the computer to model and simulate the dynamics of physical systems at the nanoscale. Her current research examines interactions between water and ions under confinement at the hydrophobic nanopore surface. Using coarse-grained models to study the transport of water and ions in confined environments, she hopes to provide insight about the function of complex biological ion channels.



## Can Norway move beyond the attacks of 2011?

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies **Jennifer Veninga** analyzes how trauma and theology intersect.

For the fourth anniversary of the attacks that killed 77 people, Veninga traveled to Norway to delve into the complex national grief that still remains, especially as plans for a public memorial are debated. She'll use her interviews and interactions with Norwegians to support her study of trauma theory. "I believe that my scholarship on these events can contribute to constructive discourse on social trauma and collective memory in Norway and beyond," Veninga says.



## How is *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* relevant in business classes?

Assistant Professor of Accounting **Katherine Lopez** wants to combine video clips with memory-cue research to make an impression on students.

Lopez realized earlier iterations of *Star Trek* revolve around an idealistic world where there is no money. But in *Deep Space Nine*, viewers start to see a common currency being used for the first time. This leads to business exchanges, in particular among the Ferengi. Although Lopez doesn't know if the writers of the show had MBAs, she does know that they were paying attention to business concepts, or at least were watching closely what big companies had been doing. Lopez is also studying memory-cue research, which will be key in incorporating the material into her teaching.



—Lisa Thiels



## HOW TO PLAN A New York City Showcase

For four years, they spent long hours perfecting their performances: delivering the perfect line, getting at the emotional heart of a scene or bringing a melody to life. The 10 BFA in Acting students who graduated in May were ready to make their mark on the theater world.

Acting programs traditionally organize a “senior showcase,” a rite of passage that introduces these actors to the professional world. The Class of 2014 presented their work for Austin-area professionals through a showcase at the Mary Moody Northen Theatre on campus. This year’s students had even bigger dreams: a showcase in the Big Apple. And they were determined to make it happen, no matter how much work it took.

- 1 Get started early, at the beginning of the fall semester. Meet every week for an hour after your last Friday class for the next eight months.
- 2 Delegate tasks. Budget. Take notes. Use social media. Set up an extra bank account to store the money for your trip. Work together, and don’t hesitate to step up.
- 3 Realize you’ll need approximately \$8,000 to bring 10 people to New York and make the showcase happen. Raise money. Hold a bake sale outside of the Robert and Pearle Ragsdale Center every month (these bring in an average of \$200 each). Start a GoFundMe account. Take donations during theater performances. Coordinate two “spirit nights” with a local Chick-fil-A.
- 4 Assemble your showcase as a team, under the guidance of Visiting Assistant Professor of Acting **Nathanael Johnson**. Start with a stack of potential scenes. Read through them all and discard the ones that don’t fit. Think of the showcase as a unified performance instead of disparate scenes, and put it together accordingly.

# Citizen Science

Trying to identify that red bird on your backyard feeder? All you need is your smartphone. Students, professors and visitors at the university's Wild Basin Creative Research Center are using two apps to document biodiversity on the center's 227 acres. With their help (and yours), scientists around the world can better monitor endangered species, keep track of predator populations, identify migratory patterns and much more.

These tools are part of a growing movement called citizen science, says **Amy Belaire**, Wild Basin's education and research coordinator. "The concept is about drawing people into the scientific process," she says. "Whether it's a Saturday bird-walking group or Bioinformatics students conducting research, we get a lot more eyes on the trees and feet on the ground."

Here are two digital resources Belaire says can make us all citizen scientists.

—*Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05*

## iNaturalist

Upload pictures of an animal, insect or plant; check a box for help identifying it and connect with a global community of nature enthusiasts with more than a million observations among them — including 250 from Hilltoppers at Wild Basin last summer. Join specific groups like the Wild Basin Biodiversity Project or St. Edward's University, or start a project for your own neighborhood.

*Available for Android and iPhone | Free*

## eBird.org

Started by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, this website helps you create a personal bird record — a checklist of all the species you've seen and heard. Local experts review your list, which is then connected with national and international databases.

*Related app: Merlin Bird ID by Cornell Lab  
Available for Android and iPhone | Free*



The cedar waxwing is one of the species found at Wild Basin.

- 5 Present your plan and your progress to **Sharon Nell**, dean of the School of Humanities, who is so impressed with your accomplishments and dedication that she budgets \$600 for each of you to go toward your flights and lodging.
- 6 Research who you want to invite, then put out the word. Use every connection you have through your professors and alumni. Reach out to casting directors, agents and managers. Contact more than 200 people. Cold call. Follow up again. And again. Hear back and confirm RSVPs.
- 7 Book the John DeSotelle Studio, a block from Broadway and Times Square. Book your hotel. Find a pianist to accompany your musical numbers. Ask alumni and friends to house-manage the show. Order flowers and refreshments so you can host a reception after every performance. Design and print an "Actor Bingo" card with everyone's headshots and contact information.
- 8 Wake up early and catch a shuttle bus together to the airport. Arrive in New York. Split up to explore the city — catch a performance of the production *Sleep No More*, stop by a street festival and let your inner tourist out to play.
- 9 On the day of the showcase, meet at the studio to rehearse with your accompanist. Get the space ready. Take a moment before the show to hold hands and reflect on this experience together.
- 10 Return home with experience, contacts, and, hopefully, at least two formal requests for headshots or résumés from agents or casting directors for each member of the class.

—*Lauren Liebowitz*





# CAN POP CULTURE + HIGHER EDUCATION COEXIST?

**If playing a Bugs Bunny cartoon can pique a student's interest in Wagnerian opera or if making a reference to *The Avengers* can kindle an interest in Joseph Campbell's theories on the power of myths, then ... well, why not?**

By Joel Hoekstra  
Photography by Morgan Printy

**A**s a teaching assistant for the Religion and Philosophy Freshman Studies course, **Caitlin Maples '15** had the job of playing music before class. "It sounds odd, but it's based on the idea of tying in popular culture or familiar things to what's going on in the classroom," she says. "If you can show the students that what they're learning in the classroom is relevant to what's going on outside it, they won't think that this is some obscure corner of academia that doesn't matter. [The late] Associate Professor of German **Harald Becker** used to play songs that had to do with the book we were reading."

Professors who use pop culture to connect with students are doing more than simply demonstrating their skill at reading *Entertainment Weekly*. Those who bind key concepts to pop-culture references are capitalizing on "deep processing," says Professor of Psychology **Alan Swinkels**. By meshing new ideas with familiar concepts, the instructors are setting the stage for better retention by their students. "The learning is much more vivid and lasting," Swinkels says.

To grasp how professors at St. Edward's integrate pop culture into their courses — and what effect it has on learning — we talked with eight professors across a range of disciplines who use rock music,

television shows, mainstream films and video games as a springboard about psychology, international relations, literature, visual arts and even math. None of them use pop references as a replacement for the wisdom of the ages, of course. But sometimes, they agreed, a contemporary reference can spark curiosity and further learning.

## JOHNNY CASH + LINEAR REGRESSION

Statistics requires discipline. Process is paramount since bad data can lead to mistaken conclusions. So when Professor of Mathematics **Cynthia Naples** lays out the concept of linear regression — a basic test that statisticians use to predict one variable from another — she tries to impress upon her students the importance of checking assumptions. It's required before all else. It's a fundamental process.

But, still, students forget. So Naples has taken to prompting them with — surprise! — a song. "I spend a lot of time thinking about my teaching when I'm driving back and forth to school," Naples says. "And one day while I was thinking about how to teach linear regression, one of my favorite Johnny Cash songs came on the radio." Now, whenever Naples wants students to do a linear-regression test, she breaks into Cash's classic, "Walk the Line," adding a few twists.

It's not the only tune Naples employs, either. She's been known to channel Maria in *The Sound of Music* to explain the confidence interval, another basic element of statistics ("I have hum-hm-hummmm in sunshine," she trills), and to whistle the theme song from *Patton* to remind her pupils about generalizations — get it? (Increasingly, that's a dated reference, she admits.) It may all seem corny, but Naples doesn't mind. It just adds to the fun.

Do Naples' colleagues in math also use music to engage students? "I know there are some songs for calculus out there. But I don't know of any others for statistics," she says. "It's not, um, a real fertile area for songwriting." Taylor Swift, are you listening?

## K-POP + GLOBAL POWER

Americans not only consume lots of pop culture. We're also responsible for creating much of it. Other countries have taken notice in recent decades, and some of those nations have begun to focus on developing pop culture as an economic engine and international export.

Take South Korea, for instance. Popular music from South Korea — or in its short form, K-pop — has taken the world by storm in recent years, streaming on devices, dominating YouTube and even birthing the international dance craze Gangnam Style.

What most people don't know, however, is that South Korea was a fairly poor country until the 1970s, says Assistant Professor of Global Studies **Jooyoun Lee**. When the South Korean government realized in the 1990s "that the Hollywood blockbuster *Jurassic Park* was equivalent to the value of foreign sales of 1.5 million Hyundai cars, it shifted its national export strategy from manufacturing goods like cars to popular cultural products" — like movies and music, Lee says. This shift ultimately paid off: The Chinese are huge fans of Korean television dramas and movies, and South Korea's focus on pop culture has done considerably more for the country recently than its support of companies like Hyundai.

In the classroom, Lee points to K-pop and other cultural exports as signs of the "soft power" that South Korea has begun to accumulate in international relations.

Passing familiarity with any nation's culture translates into easier governmental and commercial relationships around the world, rather than adversarial "foreign" ties characterized by distrust.

"Talking about pop culture in Korea allows me to expose students to how the world works and teach them about how people interact," Lee says. "It's a great way for them to understand connections that they may not know about."

## GRAPHIC NOVELS + LITERATURE

What does it mean to be an American? The definition has grown with each generation to include not only Dutch merchants and British colonists, but also the descendants of African slaves, Jewish refugees, Chinese railroad workers, Mexican farmworkers and numerous other groups. The American identity owes its unique flavor to a complex swirl of influences that can only be understood by sampling the stew of its combined cultures.

Jooyoun Lee and students



So it's hardly surprising that American literature courses have grown to encompass authors such as Zora Neale Hurston and Sandra Cisneros, alongside Washington Irving and Ralph Waldo Emerson. And it's not just the multicultural accents that stand out on the reading lists for Literature of the American Experience courses, like the one taught by Associate Professor of University Studies **Cory Lock**. It's the formats, too: Lock recently added graphic novels to her syllabus.

The graphic-novel format might cause traditionalists to raise eyebrows: Is *Fun Home*, a graphic novel about author Alison Bechdel's fraught relationship with her father, truly literature? Does Gene Luen Yang's comic book about a Chinese American boy grappling with his cultural heritage deserve a place alongside such esteemed texts as *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*, *An American Slave*? Lock asks students to consider those questions as they assess the plot, characters and literary references in the graphic novels. Does the addition of pictures detract from the message or seriousness of these works? Can they be considered literary?

There's an added bonus: Lock says several students have developed a broader interest in literature as a result of their entry via graphic novels. "I find that for some students it makes literature come alive for them in a way that it might not otherwise," Lock says.

## SCHINDLER'S LIST, INSTAGRAM + ART

College students love posting pictures on Instagram. But do they really understand why coloring or cropping a photo on the social media application has aesthetic and emotional power?

To heighten students' awareness of how photographers and other artists make creative choices — and why they impact audiences — Assistant Professor of Art **Alexandra Robinson** screens the film *Schindler's List* in her freshman Visual Studies I course. She asks students to contemplate why the Academy Award-winning film was shot almost entirely in black and white. And she assigns "The Photograph" from *Towards a Philosophy of Photography* by Vilém Flusser, who claims colorless images are more emotionally impactful.

Inevitably, the conversation spurs students to play with black-and-white images on their personal blogs (which Robinson encourages and monitors), Instagram and Facebook. She points out that social media is a place where anyone can nurture creativity — that creativity is not just something for genius artists like Michelangelo or Jasper Johns or Frida Kahlo. "Students often have assumptions.



Cory Lock



Alexandra Robinson and students

**SOCIAL MEDIA IS A PLACE WHERE ANYONE CAN NURTURE CREATIVITY.**

They don't realize art doesn't come from an isolated single space called creativity," Robinson says.

"They don't realize that their life

experiences are deeply important. You can get inspiration from a short story, or from music, or from looking at an Instagram feed."

In some sense, curating photos on Instagram is not unlike putting together a body of work, Robinson observes. It requires focus, time and discipline. "It's easy to think that van Gogh was just crazy and that was the source of his genius," Robinson says. "But he had this long-standing body of work because he did art every day. I try to impress that upon students: Creativity requires cultivation."



Russell Frohardt and Todd Onderdonk

## **BREAKING BAD + LIBERAL ARTS**

The cable series *Breaking Bad* ran for five seasons before ending in 2013, garnering numerous awards and amassing a huge audience for its plot line about a chemistry teacher with incurable cancer who starts to sell methamphetamine to support his family after he dies.

The show was “wildly popular,” observes Professor of Psychology **Russell Frohardt**. And that popularity, especially among millennials, spurred Frohardt and Associate Professor of University Studies **Todd Onderdonk** to incorporate a pair of episodes from the series into a seminar they recently taught introducing freshmen to the liberal arts. “We had them do an analysis of *Breaking Bad* because it lay at the intersection of what I was talking about regarding drugs and addiction and what Todd was talking about regarding culture and the close reading of texts,” Frohardt says.

Prior to showing the episodes, Frohardt talked about the science and psychology behind drug addiction. Onderdonk explored how shows like *Breaking Bad* offer antisocial forms of masculinity for viewer pleasure but also criticize those behaviors. After watching the episodes, students reflected in class journals on how the situations mirrored the behaviors and science they had learned about. “The goal,” says Onderdonk, “is to help our students bring a critical focus to the things they actually watch and listen to in their own lives.”

*Breaking Bad* wasn’t the only pop-culture reference the professors incorporated into their freshman seminar: films, television shows, music and even video games all served as starting points for vivid discussions about culture, science and human behavior in the class.

“The liberal arts are not about studying each discipline in a vacuum. It’s about examining how it all comes together in real life,” says Frohardt.

## **LOVERBOY + LABOR ISSUES**

Americans love to work. We forgo vacations. We immerse ourselves in our jobs. Economists point to our productivity and our place in the world economy as signs of our willingness to roll up our sleeves and go to work.

But approaching work from an academic or sociological perspective yields a slightly different view. Last year, when Assistant Professor of University Studies **Laura Hernandez-Ehrisman** taught an American Studies class on how attitudes about labor and leisure have changed over time, she asked her students to bring music into the classroom as a means of making contemporary connections.

Hernandez-Ehrisman wanted her students to explore how Americans have historically thought about their jobs. Was work meaningful or something more mundane? Did jobs provide people with identity or merely income? What values had they developed about working life? What was the difference between a job and a profession? Rather than asking students to lurk around the edges of professional chat rooms or listen to a litany of guest speakers talk about their work, she asked each student to find a pop song that centered on work.

It wasn’t hard. “When I started this, I didn’t know how many songs there were about work,” Hernandez-Ehrisman says.

Students produced the makings of a lengthy playlist: Dolly Parton’s “9 to 5,” Loverboy’s “Working for the Weekend,” Iggy Azalea’s “Work” — the list went on and on. But the music provided plenty of insight into the nuances of working lives and shed light on how labor and leisure were interrelated as well.

## THE XX + CONTENT STRATEGY

Business schools have long relied on real-world examples to illustrate how ventures succeed or fail. But identifying solid examples of digital-marketing success among digital corporations can be challenging, given how quickly the world has changed in recent years. It can also be somewhat dull and abstract.

That's why **Jason Rosenblum**, assistant professor of Visual Studies, likes to point students in his Social Networking and Digital Analytics class to the British band The xx. For starters, most of his students are familiar with the group — and even those who aren't are intrigued when he starts talking about them. What's more, there's solid literature documenting the group's content strategy for promoting itself on Facebook, Twitter, Google+ and other social networks.

Early on, The xx followed a principle in social media called the 70-20-10 rule: 70 percent of the content posted by the band was related to the band or to its music but wasn't sales oriented; 20 percent of the content was shared by or with other artists; and, finally, 10 percent of the content was aimed at promoting album releases, concert-ticket sales and the like. The sliver of content focused on actual sales often surprises people, but following the 70-20-10 rule has meant big success for The xx and other entities.

Based on what they've learned about The xx, Rosenblum asks students to develop a content strategy for a band of their choosing. The results often impress him. "I find that students absorb more and connect to content when you have them apply what they're learning to real-world examples. And sometimes — not always, but sometimes — that means digging into pop culture."



Jason Rosenblum



Laura Hernandez-Ehrisman

## WHY POP CULTURE REFERENCES WORK

Professors use pop culture references in the classroom because they're effective, says Professor of Psychology **Alan Swinkels**. Relating knowledge to an episode of *Modern Family* or the lyrics in a Maroon 5 song almost always improves comprehension of a concept — it's simple cognitive processing at work.

Humans process information at varying levels, Swinkels notes, which causes them to remember some things and forget other things. The durability of the recall depends on the level of processing that happens when the information is first encountered. Suppose you watch a trailer for an unfamiliar film on a topic that doesn't interest you: You'd observe the scene, see the action and hear the dialogue — but the processing would be fairly shallow, causing you to remember little a week later. On the other hand, if the trailer was related to a book you'd read or mirrored an experience you'd had, you'd process the information more deeply as it was entering your memory system. Because of this deeper processing, you'd probably remember the trailer later.

Pop culture references help students learn things because they often lie within their realm of experience, offering greater opportunities for deep processing. "When you talk to an 18- or 19-year-old about something you've encountered on Facebook, Twitter or YouTube," Swinkels says, "chances are you're talking to an audience that says, 'Yeah, I've experienced that' or 'My roommate has done that' or 'I saw that online.'"

So the information sticks in the memory. "Any commonly shared experience will do, but the more vivid it is, the better," Swinkels says. "That's why pop culture references work so well."



SETTING  
HER SIGHTS

**Chelsea Elliott '12** has been blind in one eye and deaf in one ear since childhood. Now, she is helping revolutionize the vision screening process that could have prevented her own impairment through her nonprofit, the Half-Helen Foundation.

By Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05  
Photography by Morgan Printy

**A** 7-year-old named Hector stands on the purple stripe of the rainbow rug in his second-grade classroom in Austin. He grins, two teeth missing, as **Chelsea Elliott '12** tells him she's about to take his picture. She clicks a button, and he looks into the camera's laser-like swirl of red, green and blue lights. "Cool!" he says. "It's like a video game!" In two seconds, it's done, and Hector is back in circle time listening to his teacher read a chapter from one of the Magic Tree House books.

But in those two seconds, Elliott has captured a detailed picture of Hector's eyes and screened him for signs of five of the most common eye disorders, including near- and farsightedness, astigmatism, pupil size difference, and strabismus. The data come from a special technology called a Spot Vision Screener, which looks like a hybrid of an iPad and a Polaroid.

The Spot camera snaps one shot of both eyes simultaneously, and 97 percent of the time, one shot is all it takes to get the critical information. Elliott can be up to 3 feet away and still get an accurate reading. Decreased time and increased distance are essential benefits for screening kids, who wiggle, wander, get distracted easily and often have stranger anxiety. Even more important, the camera can take readings in children as young as six months — well before they can articulate a physical problem and before they can identify letters on a traditional eye chart.

In Hector's case, the camera identifies astigmatism and nearsightedness, easily correctable conditions he has likely had for years but wasn't bothered by because of adaptations made by his young brain. Over the next two weeks, Elliott will send a letter home to Hector's parents explaining what the Spot camera found. A mobile vision clinic will come to his elementary school, where a pediatric optometrist will give him a complete eye exam and fit him for his first pair of glasses. All for free.

The high-tech screenings and follow-up eye care are provided by the Half-Helen Foundation, the nonprofit Elliott founded when she graduated from St. Edward's University.

## DARKNESS AND LIGHT

Even after 21 years, Teresa Elliott still remembers getting the call from the preschool. Texas had just passed a law requiring vision screenings for 4-year-olds, and Chelsea had failed hers. "The woman who did the exam told me something was wrong with Chelsea's eyes.

'I'm not a nurse,' she said, 'but I've been doing this a long time, and I've never seen eyes like your child's. She needs to see a doctor.'"

Teresa got an appointment the next day with an optometrist who was a family friend. Within five minutes of starting the exam, he asked Chelsea if she wanted to play with the blocks in his waiting room. Then he delivered the news to Teresa: Her 4-year-old daughter was completely blind in her left eye. A bevy of tests later they were able to rule out cancer, but not much else.

After consultations with six doctors, they finally got a diagnosis: Coats' disease, which causes the blood vessels in the back of the eye to leak. In the early stages, the leaked fluid leads to blurred vision and floaters. As the disease advances, the retina eventually detaches and causes permanent blindness. Chelsea's eye, the specialist explained, was in the very latest stages and too late to reverse. It would eventually atrophy and need to be removed.

Just as they came to terms with that news, Chelsea started kindergarten and failed a routine hearing test. More doctors, more tests, and she learned she was deaf in her right ear. Unrelated to the Coats' disease that had taken her eye, her hearing loss was attributed to three tiny but crucial bones missing in her inner ear, most likely destroyed by infections when she was a baby.

"We could have shut down. It was devastating, on top of everything else we'd been dealing with," says Teresa. "But I remember holding her and thinking that, somehow, something good had to come from this."

They coped. They adapted. They learned as they went. Chelsea figured out where she needed to sit at school to be able to hear the teacher and see the chalkboard. She learned to play volleyball and basketball with just a 90-degree field of vision. And her body slowly began to compensate for the lack of depth perception that unilateral blindness causes.

In fourth grade, she did a research project on Helen Keller — and coined a nickname for herself. "Helen Keller was completely blind and deaf," she told Teresa, "and I'm half that. I'm Half Helen!" The name stuck.

## LOST AND FOUND

The summer before her sophomore year in high school, Elliott and her family decided to have her eye removed. The tissue had atrophied, a cataract had developed on her lens, and her blind eye was visibly smaller than her other eye. After the surgery, she wore an eye patch for six weeks and then spent two weeks getting fitted with a prosthetic. The physical recovery was "a piece of cake," she says, "compared to the emotional one."

She started having nightmares. She withdrew from her friends and from the sports and clubs she had once loved. "To everyone else, I was still the long-legged, curly haired, 15-year-old girl known for my wild spirit and infectious enthusiasm," she says. "But it felt as if the doctors had removed that part of me, along with my eye, during the surgery."

Teresa remembers the first time Chelsea looked in the mirror after leaving the hospital recovery room. “She asked me, ‘Mom, what have I done?’ and she just lost herself,” says Teresa. “I sat there and watched my vivacious 15-year-old lose her identity.”

But Teresa, the founder of the NYOS Charter School that Chelsea attended, also challenged her daughter. “As a parent, it was a humbling experience. You just try to protect your child as best you can,” she says. “But as an educator, I was hard-wired to push her into finding her purpose, into living a life without fear and regret.”

Teresa had some help along the way. Chelsea’s AP World History teacher, **Matt Abbott ’03**, introduced her to St. Edward’s, where she enrolled in the fall of 2009. During the spring semester of her sophomore year, she decided to study abroad with Associate Professor of Communication **Lori Peterson**. “Going to Angers, France, was the first major risk I had taken since getting my eye removed,” Chelsea says. “I really think that experience saved my life. I had spent years avoiding anything that might be painful or hard — but also things that might bring me joy. In Angers, I finally began to let myself feel happy again.”

And when she got back to campus, it was time to face — and tell — her own story. In a class with Associate Professor of Communication **Stephanie Martinez**, she had to craft an autoethnography, a type of self-reflection that connects to wider social, political and cultural themes.

“Part of autoethnography is finding your story and figuring out your way. Chelsea had been carrying all of that around inside, and

she was finally ready to articulate and share it,” Martinez says. “At the time, we both thought the next step would be for her to publish her story so that other people could draw strength from it. Yes, she had this terrible thing happen to her, but she was beginning to see it as a positive, as a reason to move forward instead of an excuse not to.”

## SPOT ON

Chelsea had known about the Spot camera since the year after she got her prosthetic eye. A family friend and member of the West Austin Lions Club (an organization her parents had been involved with since before her diagnosis with Coats’ disease) told her about the technology at a club meeting.

Around the same time, the American Academy of Pediatrics began recommending vision screenings in children as young as age 3. Had the camera and the recommendations been in place during Chelsea’s childhood, she realized, her doctors could have caught the Coats’ disease in its earlier stages — and likely saved her sight.

“That didn’t happen, obviously,” she says, “and it really got me thinking. I don’t remember what it’s like to see with both of my eyes and hear with both of my ears, but other kids don’t have to go through what my family and I did. We have the technology now to identify potentially serious problems like Coats’ disease. So why don’t we use it?”

“I don’t remember what it’s like to see with both of my eyes and hear with both of my ears, but other kids don’t have to go through what my family and I did. We have the technology now to identify potentially serious problems like Coats’ disease. So why don’t we use it?”

—Chelsea Elliott ’12



When she completed her bachelor's in Communication at St. Edward's, she took the money she'd gotten as graduation gifts and filed the paperwork for a nonprofit that would provide free vision and hearing screenings to children in need. She called it the Half-Helen Foundation.

Chelsea then presented the idea to the West Austin Lions Club, which agreed to purchase the \$8,000 Spot camera for Half-Helen. She also talked with Abbott, her old high-school teacher, about using an office at Wayside Schools, which he directs, in exchange for free screenings for its students. And with general donations, she purchased two audiometers to conduct traditional hearing screenings when schools needed them.

"That purpose I had been waiting for her to find for 20 years," says Teresa, "was finally happening!"

## ALOHA, HAWAII

With the technology, the space and the students all lined up, Elliott hit a roadblock. The state of Texas had not yet approved the Spot camera for use in school screenings. While she waited for the bureaucratic red tape to get cut through, Elliott began researching other communities with children in need of screenings. She landed in Hawaii.

Hawaii had discontinued mandatory school vision and hearing tests in 1995 because of budget shortages. The state also ranked below the national average on most Department of Education assessment metrics, statistics that can sometimes reflect students' inability to see or hear test instructions and questions. Elliott began emailing Lions Clubs and schools on the state's eight main islands about the possibility of Half-Helen conducting screenings there.

She contacted the Maui Lions Club and one local school and flew out to make a pitch. A week later, she was back in Austin writing a business plan to screen every student in each of the public schools on Maui and neighboring Lanai. The result was Maui 528, named for the number of hours it would take to screen each of the 21,119 students in Maui schools at 90 seconds each — the time it takes to carry out a comprehensive vision and hearing assessment with the Spot camera and audiometer.

Maui 528 began in June 2013. Later that year, Elliott began commuting between Maui and Austin to conduct screenings at several Austin charter schools. In the two years since, she has screened nearly 10,000 children in the two states. When the Maui 528 project went more slowly than she anticipated because parents had to opt in for their children to participate, Elliott began talks with the county about changing to an opt-out system. She also joined a state task force to lobby the departments of Health and Education to reestablish mandatory in-school screenings in Hawaii.

And with the Austin-area program growing to include three more charter schools, Elliott has partnered with Kids Vision for Life Central Texas, the mobile vision clinic that treats students with problems identified by the Spot camera, like 7-year-old Hector.



## A HERO'S JOURNEY

These days, Elliott divides her time between Austin and Kahului on Maui. She screens the students at Wayside Schools during the fall, travels to Hawaii in the winter and spring, and returns to Austin in the summer to fundraise and develop partnerships with other local schools and nonprofits. She has also hired a full-time data analyst and acquired a second Spot camera through an Atherton Family Foundation grant.

Though she's used to being behind the camera, she's getting a lot of attention in front of it. Earlier this year, she was nominated for the national CNN Heroes program by the West Austin Lions Club and selected as one of 25 individuals to be honored. Later this year, 10 of those heroes will be selected as finalists by the network. One winner will be chosen through online voting and will receive \$100,000.

Although the spotlight is nice, her sights are "absolutely" set on expansion. Besides Hawaii, seven states still do not require vision screenings (and no state completes them with Spot camera technology). Internationally, Elliott is likely to find a built-in support system and network of volunteers at any of the 46,000 Lions Club chapters across the globe — the organization has long advocated for vision care in poor communities and has been one of Half-Helen's biggest supporters in Maui and Central Texas.

Living with partial blindness and deafness has, ironically, given her perspective. "Vision screenings aren't sexy or edgy," says Elliott. "People think, 'Oh, you can't see? Well, get a pair of glasses.' But it's much more than that. We can prevent so many things, and what we can't prevent, we can catch early and treat. It's high-impact and low-cost."

For Teresa, the organization has brought Chelsea full circle. "Everything she's been through has motivated her and given her the strength to get on a plane, go to a strange place, and talk to people she doesn't know day in and day out," says Teresa. "My strong, creative girl who was always the center of attention when she was 4 has finally fought her way back."



# *The Insider's Guide to the 17-Year-Old Mind*



By Erin Peterson | Photography by Morgan Printy



A new book by Associate Professor of Psychology **Sara Villanueva** – along with hard-won insights from St. Edward’s University admission and counseling pros – sheds light on the nuances of adolescent thinking and the important role that parents play in teens’ lives.

**T**here are few people on the planet who are as well-versed in adolescent psychology as **Sara Villanueva**. A psychologist and author of the book *The Angst of Adolescence: How to Parent Your Teen and Live to Laugh About It*, she’s also got plenty of on-the-ground training as a mother of four children. Despite her vast expertise, she says she is still sometimes upended by the interactions she has with the teens in her own life.

Take this past spring, for example, when she casually texted her college-bound daughter. Villanueva suggested that they take a family vacation to spend some concentrated time together before her daughter started the next phase of her life this fall.

“Mom, no,” came the immediate reply. “I don’t want to spend time with you. I want to spend time with my friends because I’m about to be gone.”

It knocked the wind out of Villanueva. “Wow,” she responded by text. “That’s harsh.”

Later, when she saw her daughter, Villanueva shared how hurt she was by the text. After all, her daughter’s friends weren’t the only ones who would be saying goodbye at the end of the summer. Her daughter, astonished, hugged Villanueva and gave her a kiss. She had no idea that she’d hurt her mom’s feelings.

In retrospect, Villanueva says it perhaps shouldn’t have been a surprise. Teens text differently from their parents, and they’re not always adept at communicating in empathetic ways. “The whole package of adolescence, along with the technology they have that our generation didn’t — well, we’re all just adjusting,” says Villanueva.

Adolescents occupy a unique space in development. They look like adults. They have the capacity, at times, to act like adults. But their brains are still developing, and as a result, their reasoning skills and decision-making processes are decidedly different from the ones they’ll end up with just a few years later.

For the parents and other adults in teens’ lives trying to navigate these relationships, the terrain can seem as explosive as a minefield. Here, St. Edward’s University experts share key principles that explain how adolescents think, and how the adults in their lives can harness that knowledge to maintain strong relationships and encourage their kids to make sound decisions for the long run.



We recruited current St. Edward’s University students for our photo shoot. We took them to six different locations — and let them take it from there.

## When Smart Kids Do Dumb Things

Teenagers have long believed themselves to be smarter than the adults around them. And thanks to the Internet, social networks and an incessant stream of media, sometimes they really do seem to know it all, says Visiting Assistant Professor of Counseling **Pamela Malone**. “They’re digital natives, and they have so much information at their fingertips,” she says. “We see a certain level of pseudosophistication in adolescents.”

But that worldly façade hides a less-refined process for decision-making skills, says Villanueva. Neurologically, adolescents are still developing, particularly in the prefrontal cortex of the brain — the part that guides reasoning, planning and moderating social behavior.

For example, says Villanueva, adolescents can seem all too adept at debating every last household rule with parents, citing logical loopholes and inconsistent application. Yet when it comes to applying the same rules to their own behaviors and actions, they often prove to be surprisingly inept.

Teens might engage in risky behaviors — say, dangerous driving and unprotected sex — because they feel they are immune to the consequences that others have faced. Similarly, they may have heightened feelings of sadness and loneliness because they can’t fathom that anyone could possibly feel the emotions that they’re experiencing.

This “personal fable” — teens’ beliefs that their thoughts, and the consequences of their actions, are different from everyone else’s — is both confounding and even destructive. But it’s also part of the development process, says Villanueva. “By the time they reach puberty, teens have achieved several significant cognitive advances and are able to think in ways that are more efficient and effective,

but because their brains are not fully developed, they can’t think everything all the way through,” she says. “It’s like you’ve turned on the engine of a powerful race car without having a fully trained driver at the wheel.”

That’s why it’s so critical to give teens a safety net for the moment that comes after the bragging and the risk-taking — the moment that teens realize they’re in over their head. Whether it’s drugs, sex, alcohol or something else they know at a gut level they’re not quite ready for, teens need to realize they have a no-judgment way out of the situation they’ve gotten themselves into. “I tell [my kids] that they can call a timeout,” explains Villanueva. “My kids can just say ‘Mom, timeout, I need you to come get me.’ If they give that signal, they won’t be in trouble. No screaming, no yelling, I won’t make them feel bad. I just want them home safe and in one piece. Or, if they ever feel pressured into a situation, they can say, ‘Dude, I would do it, but my mom is a psycho, she’d kill me.’”

The bigger lesson, she says, is that teens want some room to experiment, but they also want, and need, that safety net. Villanueva is clear to her own kids that this leeway is earned — but also that she wants to trust them as much as she can.

## You Think You’re Going to School Wearing That?

For parents who pride themselves on the rock-solid values they’ve tried to instill in their children, it can come as a shock when their once-compliant children seem to find every opportunity to rebel. Their teens’ eyebrow-raising outfits, exasperating musical tastes and ill-advised relationships can drive parents to the edge of despair. That’s not really who their sweet kid has become, is it?

Perhaps even more surprising to parents is the emphasis teens put on their online social interactions. They seem to spend every spare moment glued to their phones, posting carefully edited selfies to Instagram and angling for “likes,” or hanging out with friends on Snapchat. “Teens desperately care what other people think of them,” says Associate Vice President of Admission **Tracy Manier**. “There’s a huge need for affirmation.”

Part of the reason for this seemingly extreme emphasis on friends’ approval, says Villanueva, is the very different way that teens and their parents calculate social costs and benefits. Teens’ social lives can feel all-consuming and important in a way that adults may not recognize, and their peers’ judgments weigh more heavily on the minds of teens than adults. Teens are eager to find a place where they can fit in, feel appreciated and be heard. They’re testing out who they really are and looking for social guidance and approval.

But placing so much emphasis on getting approval from friends can have major consequences. For instance, an adult who hosts a party that begins to go awry — rowdy guests breaking household items or having too much to drink — will likely pull the plug on



*Teens often have an intuitive sense of what's best for them that parents can unearth through honest and open conversations about their goals and passions.*



the event to prevent serious damage and unsafe behavior, even if that means some of the guests will be disappointed. But a teen hosting a party while his mom and dad are out of town may be more than willing to risk those stains on the carpet, broken coffee tables and even the consequences of getting caught if it means he'll be held in higher esteem at school afterward. "The social benefit — the teenager gets to be the hero the next day — is worth it to most teens," says Villanueva. "As an adult, I might still care about the social benefits and consequences of a party, but am I going to allow someone to rip up my house? Probably not. That equation shifts as we get older."

There may be no amount of parental haranguing that will convince teens to tamp down their outrageous taste in clothes, bands or pals, says Villanueva, but that doesn't mean that parents still don't have a huge impact on their kids' choices. In fact, says Villanueva, parents can be comforted in knowing that when it comes to the really big things, like career goals, educational attainment, and core political and social values, teens pay attention to their parents' views.

"Teens may say 'Give me a break, get out of my face,' but they're listening. Parents who are firm and have high expectations — but who are also caring and supportive — tend to have teens who have the best outcomes when it comes to the transition between high school and college," Villanueva says, noting that multiple research studies have shown that kids with supportive parents are happier, healthier and more successful in college. "Contrary to every message you may feel like you're getting from them, both verbal and nonverbal, they want and need guidance and boundaries."

At the same time, says Villanueva, it's important for parents to truly listen to their teens and not project their own dreams onto their kids. This can be especially tough during the search for a college, when parents hope a child will attend the university they did or perhaps an elite university. "Parents need to accept that the ideal college of the parents' choice is not necessarily the right thing for the child," explains Villanueva.

Teens often have an intuitive sense of what's best for them that parents can unearth through honest and open conversations about their goals and passions. The more that parents work to truly understand their teen, the more they can help her move into the rest of her life — even if it doesn't look exactly like the one they'd envisioned for their child.





## Meeting Teens Halfway, Then Finding the Strength to Let Them Go

In 2011, Villanueva did a study that examined changing communication styles: She interviewed college students about how they'd like to break off a relationship with a significant other and discovered an overwhelming majority said they'd vastly prefer to break up via text, rather than face to face. Whether or not the change is good or bad, it illustrates how deeply technology is embedded in teens' lives. Technology tethers them to the world and to each other, while simultaneously distancing them from both. Villanueva says it's fruitless to try to change it. "This is the train, and you can't stop it," she says.

For that reason, parents, too, need to adapt to the changing world. Parents can refuse to communicate with a teen via text, but the consequences might not be worth the cost. "I can call out five times to my daughter's teenage lair — I mean, her room — to tell her that dinner's ready, but nothing will happen," says Villanueva. "So I text and she comes out. It's about picking your battles."

But there are lots of areas where Villanueva recommends parents draw the line. She's made the dinner table a technology-free zone, a rule she'll always enforce, even as her kids push the limits. "It's a balance, and it's a struggle," she says. "But if it's worth fighting for, then do it."

In the end, of course, no matter how endless or frustrating the process, teens do become adults. They make big mistakes and small mistakes in that process — as do their parents and the other adults who guide them. "It's hard, as a parent, to see your kid go off to college, to allow them to be independent even when you want them to go out and succeed and explore," says Villanueva. "Teens are often so excited about all the new things they get to do, but they're also anxious and stressed and even a little sad."

But throughout the process, she says, clear and consistent communication makes a difference. Teens and their parents need to keep talking, keep stumbling, and keep moving forward. "As a parent, you've got to know that you've done a good job, and that now is the time to trust your child. And also, to let your child go."

## The Birth of Adolescence

When **Sara Villanueva** first contemplated writing about parenting teens in *The Angst of Adolescence*, she was familiar with the research-based books that made adolescent parenting sound — generously — like a slog. "The titles were things like 'How to Survive Your Teen,'" she says.

Villanueva was eager to humanize the experience. "I wanted it to feel like I was with my readers, and that we were all sitting at a big table, drinking coffee or margaritas, sharing experiences, understanding that we were normal. I wanted to help people embrace this part of their — and their teens' — lives."

In *The Angst of Adolescence*, Villanueva merges the strength of her research with an honest and relatable voice that she ultimately hopes will resonate with the millions of parents struggling to understand and connect with their teens.

"When I do my work, it's research conducted by and published for PhDs and clinicians," she says. "Researchers put out great findings, and what I hope this book can do is to get them to the people who need it most: all of the parents out there. I hope, when people read *The Angst of Adolescence*, they will heave a sigh of relief. They will know that what they and their teen are experiencing is normal, and they *will* live to laugh about it."



# THE PATHS OF EXTRAORDINARY PEOPLE

Eight of the university's 10 Fulbright winners gathered at the Munday Library shortly before graduation. Not pictured are Katie Protano '15, who was in Vietnam at the time, and Sergio Glajar '15, who is heading to Germany on an English teaching assistantship.



By Robyn Ross

Photos by Jessica Attie '04  
and Morgan Printy

## IN LATE SPRING,

a record 10 students from St. Edward's were named winners of Fulbright awards, a highly selective scholarship and grant program sponsored by the U.S. Department of State. Nine of the winners are teaching English abroad and one is conducting research in Australia. Their passions are as varied as their destinations: poetry, public health, environmental education, antibiotic resistance; South Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Germany. Here, nine of this year's winners explain their path to the Fulbright and, perhaps unintentionally, what sets them apart as scholars.



# CALI CHIDESTER '15

MAJOR Environmental Science and Policy  
DESTINATION Malaysia

**CALI:** When I was younger, I was inspired by a book called *Ishmael: An Adventure of the Mind and Spirit* by Daniel Quinn, which has an environmental focus. My interest in policy started when I did Eco-Lead Costa Rica, a St. Edward's University program that involves spending a semester learning about environmental science and policy and then traveling to Costa Rica in the summer to conduct a research project. I liked that a whole country was able to have an environmental focus and make that a priority in a way the United States doesn't.

» Several experiences have taken me to new environments, including Capstone in Chile and a Service Break Experience in Montreal. I also lived in the Frank Church–River of No Return Wilderness in Idaho on a research station as part of Semester in the Wild, a program through the University of Idaho. I took courses on river ecology and wilderness management, where I learned about the tension that comes from people's conflicting ideas of what a wilderness area should be. Some people want public access to be a priority, and then you have environmental groups that are worried the number of visitors is degrading the area.

» When I interned at the Wild Basin Creative Research Center during the fall of my senior year, I worked on estimating the total deer population using wildlife cameras. The pictures showed more bobcats and coyotes than deer, so we guessed that the deer might like the gardens at the houses nearby and use Wild Basin to travel between them. I also helped with a graduate student's project counting blue jays, which are a predator for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler.

» I went on two trips to build houses with Habitat for Humanity, one to the Dominican Republic and one to the Mississippi Gulf Coast. I like the simple lifestyle of waking up, doing work that feels meaningful and physically exhausting, coming back home, and being around people I care about.

» I'm a zip line and challenge course eco-guide at Cypress Valley Canopy Tours outside Austin. Our zip lines follow the creek, which is lined by bald cypress trees that turn terrific orange and red colors in fall and lose their leaves in winter. The property had a fire in 2011 that burned the back half of the course, so it's interesting to watch the changing ecology as you progress along the zip lines.



# CAITLIN MAPLES '15

MAJOR Philosophy  
DESTINATION Germany

**JENNA.** Every form of writing is from and of a certain place, and my senior thesis ended up being an experiment in how I could capture place in my poetry. It was called *Red World*, which is an inversion of the concept of the Green World in Shakespeare criticism. The Green World is a dreamlike, liminal world where the rules don't really apply, like the fairy world in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* — an otherworldly, mystical place. When I was writing the 22 poems for my thesis, I realized that the weird, surreal feeling in my poems was embodied in the heat of midday in Texas, like 3 p.m. in the summer, so I chose *Red World* for the title of my manuscript.

- » On the other end of the spectrum from poetry, I'm interested in technical writing. They both try to articulate difficult things, just in very different ways. I hope to get a job in technical writing and, through using the skills I'd learn in that field, be able to contribute to the global literary community. I'm really interested in encouraging people to read more outside their own culture and generally understand other people better.
- » When I started as copy chief at *Hilltop Views*, our student newspaper, there wasn't

**CAITLIN.** I started college as a Photocommunications major, but then I took Literature and Philosophy, which was co-taught by [the late] Associate Professor of German **Harald Becker** and Professor of Philosophy **Mark Cherry**, my first semester. Both of them gave me the confidence to go beyond what I thought I was capable of. I first wanted to learn German when Dr. Becker was talking about how hard it is to translate Kafka because his phrasing is so specific to the German language, and I liked Kafka, so I decided to learn German. And Dr. Cherry encouraged me to take my first History of Philosophy class, where I learned about the idea of an intellectual geography — being able to trace where people got their ideas and what influenced them.

- » Philosophy won't give you all the answers, but it will give you the tools you need to try to find them. If you're going to major in Philosophy, that's something you have to realize. You have to look at each philosopher critically, not expecting one to contain all the answers, and allow yourself to see the merits and the drawbacks of each.
- » For my senior Honors thesis, I translated Jürgen Habermas, who's a contemporary German philosopher and sociologist. When I was

## JENNA JACO '15

MAJOR English Writing and Rhetoric

DESTINATION South Korea

a set of instructions for how to coordinate all the copy editors and make sure everything was in top shape for print. It was a fun puzzle to figure out the logistics of who copy-edits when and how, when to look at the copy, and what the headline should be — getting the workflow right.

- » As editor-in-chief of *Sorin Oak Review*, I had to figure out a lot, too. I had to determine the voting system for submissions, organize meetings, collect and read submissions, compile and distribute them to everyone who needed to read them, and tabulate the votes. Every step was on

me. And it was interesting seeing how it took shape and was different from previous issues, when I'd worked as a poetry editor. It's like a creative and literary yearbook for the school.

- » If I find an interesting container, I want to flip it on its end and make it into a diorama. I have a lot of art history textbooks and prints, so I cut up paintings to make the backdrop. The dioramas aren't habitats or little winter villages to scale — they're surreal, like different worlds made with whatever I have lying around, and usually with a strange creature in the middle.

in Koblenz, Germany, for study abroad, I studied with one of his students. Habermas is so recent that his work hasn't gone through multiple translations, and I think there are areas where translators could have done better. They make him appear more snarky than he actually does in German.

- » You don't really know what it's like to be an American until you live somewhere else. For example, I had to figure out why we value freedom of speech so much here. Germans tend to emphasize privacy over freedom.
- » In my valedictory address, I quoted one of my favorite points made in *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke. The advice he gives to young people is phenomenal. He says that at this point in life, you have a lot of uncertainty and all these questions that haven't been answered. Maybe you expected them to be answered at this point, but they're not — and that's OK. You can actually enjoy the fact that you have unanswered questions. The first time I read that book, it was my freshman year, and I was sitting under Sorin Oak. I was so dazed that I had to take a walk and almost started crying. I read it again at the end of my senior year, and it made a lot more sense.



# KATIE PROTANO '15

MAJOR Global Studies  
DESTINATION Germany



# REBEKAH MORTON '15

MAJOR English Writing  
and Rhetoric  
DESTINATION South Korea

assistant, tutoring at a girls' school, and staying with a family. Then, using funding from a Summer Academic Excellence Award, I went to Santiago and lived in a hostel for a few weeks and wrote. I also read a lot of [Chilean poet] Pablo Neruda's work and visited two of his old houses, which are museums now.

»I had read *Don Quixote* in Spanish before college, and when I reread it recently, I was amazed by its ability to walk the line between the real and the unreal. It makes you question the structures and the constructs in your own life — the things you subscribe to just for stability — and it makes you much more critical of your surroundings.

»A lot of my writing is influenced by growing up in Texas near the U.S.–Mexico border, and I think I'll be able to transfer that into Korea, where they're really influenced by the border between North and South Korea. It's obviously a different context, but in both places, people are being constricted by a border that's an intellectual construct and also very real. Maybe that's why I'm so fascinated by *Don Quixote*, with its blending of the unreal and the real. There's a contemporary Korean writer named Young-ha Kim whose work I consider influential. He wrote a book called *I Have the Right to Destroy Myself*, which is about how people who live in South Korea have been shaped by those borders.

**REBEKAH:** I've done fiction and poetry, mainly really short prose, like prose-poetry. I recently finished a collection of six pieces of very short fiction. I've had a few publications in literary journals, including the *Burrow Press Review* and *Map Literary*. While I was at St. Edward's, I was the editor-in-chief for *Arete*, our academic journal, for two years, and I was the prose editor for *Sorin Oak Review*, our literary journal.

»LettersAt3amPress, where I work as editor-at-large, is a small, relatively new book publisher based in Lubbock and co-founded by Michael Ventura, who used to write for the *Austin Chronicle*, and

Jazmin Aminian, another writer. I had met Michael at the Texas Book Festival, which is how I ended up getting the job. I edit all their manuscripts, which at this point is a few novels and a book of poetry. It's taught me about the writing life and the habit and discipline of writing. You have to have the same discipline, professionalism and dedication if you're editing a whole novel. The main skill is breaking big tasks into a bunch of small tasks.

»Traveling and broadening your worldview are important parts of writing, so last summer I spent six weeks in Chile. Part of the time, I was in Viña del Mar, working on my Capstone and as a professor's

**KATIE.** My first semester at St. Edward's, I took Global Issues taught by **Kay Firth-Butterfield (Burrough)**. I realized that simply by being born in the United States, I was more likely to be guaranteed certain rights and freedoms than people of other nations. I decided that I wanted to make a positive difference in the lives of those who don't have the same rights as me.

» I served as president of our Amnesty International chapter and was a 2014 fellow with the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. In this position, I helped create the statewide para-transit survey and wrote guidelines for how legislators should interact with people with disabilities during the legislative session.

» I've been to Germany five times, starting with a three-week program in high school, and including an intensive German course at the Goethe-Institut in Berlin last summer. I hope my Fulbright experience will help me understand the complexities of the German-American relationship. Each country's education system teaches a version of history that frames it in a positive light and portrays its partners and enemies in particular ways. By experiencing this phenomenon in a German classroom, I hope to better understand stereotypes so I can encourage my students to think more critically about their nation's position on the geopolitical spectrum and their relationship to the rest of the world.

» I was placed with a fantastic host family in Germany last summer. During my last week there, I finally met my host-brother

when he visited from Vietnam, where he lives and works. That fall, I reached out to him to see if he had contacts in Berlin so I could relocate there after graduation. Instead, he offered me a six-month contract in Hanoi with the Hanns Seidel Foundation, a German political organization.

» In Vietnam, my focus is on projects related to sustainable social and environmental development, particularly in the realms of climate change, social security and workers' rights. I have written press releases for our website, organized events, and translated between German and English. I also developed a presentation for my boss to give at an international conference in Hanoi on the impending adoption of our sustainable development goals and their effect on the Greater Mekong region.

**SAMANTHA.** I love writing, investigating, researching and finding out more about the world, and journalism is a great way to blend that curiosity with my writing skills. Through my international experiences, I realized there are so many assumptions about developing countries. International journalism can bridge that gap and provide accurate, human stories about those places.

» I went to Bangalore, India, to work at an orphanage for two weeks with a Campus Ministry International Immersion, and it changed my life. It showed me that engaging with people and immersing yourself in a different culture can help you grow as a person and establish relationships. My Fulbright teaching assistantship will be in Chennai, which is only three hours from Bangalore, so I'm hoping to go back and see the boys I met at the orphanage.

» Last summer, I spent six weeks in Uganda and Rwanda studying peace and conflict, international development, and philanthropy. We were taught to rethink every assumption we'd ever had about development or how to work for social change. Often people do things with good intentions but without the appropriate knowledge about the culture they are entering. You can't just look at reconciliation through a theological lens; you have to look at it through political, economic and development lenses as well. I left the program thinking that a lot of things we were studying seemed like great things to do but were actually very problematic. The program also empowered me to go back to a context that I really fell in love with and immerse myself in a culture to learn more now and create change later.

» When I was in Rwanda, we read a book about the genocide called *We Wish to Inform You that Tomorrow We Will Be Killed with Our Families: Stories from Rwanda* by Philip Gourevitch. He was in Rwanda at the absolute climax of the violence. He takes an issue that was of unbelievable importance, but that a lot of Americans didn't fully understand, and humanizes it by telling the Rwandans' stories. It was powerful to see that something so important could be done in a way that was also beautifully written. That's the kind of reporting I want to do.

» As president of the Student Government Association, I worked with **Victoria Ochoa '16**, the university's first Truman Scholar, to implement "It's On Us," which is a national campaign to end sexual assault on college campuses. It's really opened a dialogue about things that are important to our campus community and our nation.



## SAMANTHA MENDOZA '15

MAJOR English Writing  
and Rhetoric

DESTINATION India

Since 2008, students from St. Edward's have won

**33 Fulbright student awards** and 25 other prestigious scholarships

and fellowships, including the Truman Scholarship, Pickering Foreign Affairs Fellowship, Boren Scholarship and Udall Undergraduate Scholarship.



## HANNAH THORNBY '15

MAJOR English Writing and Rhetoric with a Journalism specialization

DESTINATION Malaysia

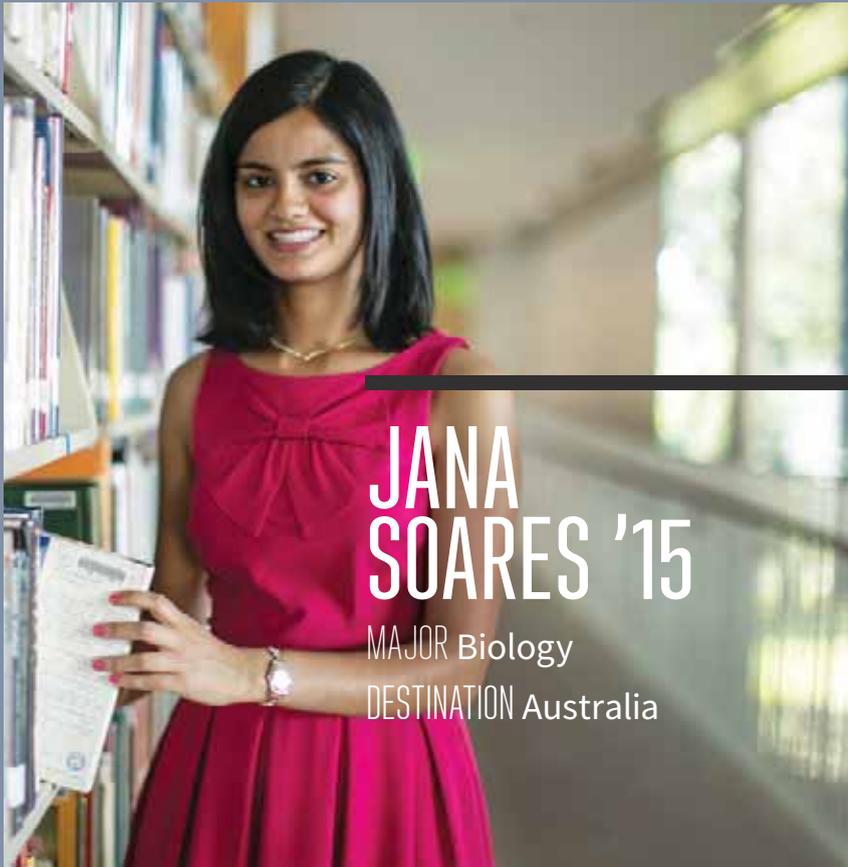
**JANA.** The summer after my freshman year, I was doing research with Associate Professor of Biology **Peter King**. We were looking at atherosclerosis — hardening of the arteries, or cardiovascular disease — using macrophage cells as a model organism. I had to learn a lot of lab skills, like cell culture, which is basically growing cells on nutrient media in flasks. For the first two weeks, we were waiting for the cells to grow, and there was not a lot of lab-based work, so I started using that time to study the literature and learn how to read scientific journal articles.

»Going into my junior year, I had acquired more laboratory skills and was conducting research with Associate Professor of Biology **Trish Baynham**. I was working with a model organism called *C. elegans*. They're these little nematode worms that are about a millimeter in length, so I had to learn how they reproduce and how to get enough of them to run experiments. I was treating *C. elegans* with probiotics to see if that can inhibit salmonella infection.

»The summer before my senior year, I was an undergraduate summer trainee at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston. I had two separate projects, one working with nematodes again, and the other looking at biofilm formation.

»They say research never goes as planned, and sometimes you have a lot of negative results before you get a positive result. This past summer in Houston, there were steps I wanted to take in the project, but I wasn't getting the results that would let me do that. When you're met with that problem, you have to figure out how to troubleshoot and think of other ways to solve the problem. Something will click eventually, or you can talk to your mentor or someone else in the lab. I've learned that science is a collaborative and creative process. You can't do scientific research in isolation, and when faced with challenges, you can always ask questions or find avenues of new discovery.

»Broadly speaking, my Fulbright research project at the University of Technology in Sydney is about antibiotic resistance. I'll be researching antimicrobial strategies to combat *P. aeruginosa* infection using the nematode model *C. elegans*, which builds on my previous research experiences. The scientist I'll be working with is the director of an imaging facility with high-powered microscopes, and I thought it would be incredible to learn how to use those.



## JANA SOARES '15

MAJOR Biology

DESTINATION Australia

**HANNAH**, Starting my sophomore year, I was going to be a copy editor at *Hilltop Views*, but I told Associate Professor of Journalism **Jena Heath**, “Even though I’m just going to be a sophomore, I think I can be the online editor-in-chief.” And she took a chance on me. I did that for two years, and it’s given me so much confidence and put me in a leadership position. It’s rewarding to help people figure out their voice and what they want to say.

»My last job was at the *Austin American-Statesman* as a content producer for the newspaper’s digital products. I did a lot of media roundups, taking a really big

national issue and trying to put it into bite-sized pieces for readers. I’ve also worked for Emmis Communications’ radio stations and the online magazine *CultureMap*.

»I’d had five internships by the end of my junior year, and I needed a summer where I was doing something different. So I hiked the 800-kilometer El Camino de Santiago across northern Spain. I needed to discover myself in a new setting: not as a student, a sister or a daughter, but as a pilgrim.

»I studied in Angers, France, and also tutored French students in English literature there. As someone who moved to college from Portland, Oregon, I’ve always been fascinated with the idea of how you

get to know a place and stop feeling like a stranger. At first I was homesick, but then I started walking or running around town until I knew every part of Angers. Exploring a place by getting your own two feet on it has always been important to me.

»One of the reasons I like journalism is that, at the root of it, stories are about making a connection with the community. The more stories you hear, the more human you feel, and the more connected you are to everyone around you. Working for the Austin media is my equivalent of through-hiking the city.

**DANIELLE**, I plan to go to medical school, which is why I took all the science classes for a pre-med emphasis in addition to the classes for my English Writing and Rhetoric major. I’d like to study public health because of my interest in global medicine. A big factor when medicine fails is lack of communication and the ability to get information out properly, so effective communication, including writing, is important.

»Most of my experience abroad has been related to medicine and health. I’ve done medical missions and leadership trips in Mexico, Laos, Panama and China with Operation Smile (OS), an organization I got involved with beginning in high school that corrects cleft palates in children in developing areas. I founded the St. Edward’s chapter of OS my freshman year, and I was a member of the national college council for OS, which included planning a leadership conference in China for 800 student members from all over the world. Understanding other cultures is important for being a compassionate, open-minded doctor and for grasping how medicine is handled differently around the world.

»The summer before my senior year, I taught fourth-grade and pre-kindergarten students at a girls’ school in Kibera, a



slum in Nairobi, Kenya. It serves a high-risk population — many of the girls had HIV or had been abused or raped. The organization I worked with, Shining Hope for Communities, not only runs the school but also provides a health clinic, clean water, an emergency shelter and latrines that are safe to use at night (since women are at risk of being assaulted when they use slum toilets after dark). It was a very challenging experience but also an environment that was full of love.

»My thesis on using preventive healthcare to reduce emergency room costs was inspired by an article Atul Gawande wrote about reversing the trend of growing healthcare costs. Theoretically, a lot of our primary care in the United States is focused on

preventive care, but in reality, people aren’t as proactive as they should be about their own health. I got interested in what Texas hospitals were doing to emphasize prevention and healthy behaviors. Then I started volunteering at a St. David’s hospital in Austin, so I interviewed people there about it.

»Working at St. David’s HealthCare was a really different dynamic from my Operation Smile experiences in hospitals because I was with an older population, there was more regulation and, for once, there was no language barrier. I made checkout packets and paged nurses when patients needed them, but a lot of what I did was just giving my time to patients who needed someone to pay attention to them.

# Honor Roll of **GIVING**

Fiscal Year 2014–2015

## A CALLING AND AN HONOR: THE BILL QUINN, PH.D., ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP



“He supports students and allows them to find their inner strengths, to excel beyond what they might have without his subtle influence.”

Invest in what you love most about St. Edward's University by contacting the Office of University Advancement at [advancement.stedwards.edu](http://advancement.stedwards.edu) or 512-464-8826.

“He supports students and allows them to find their inner strengths, to excel beyond what they might have without his subtle influence.”

Similar praises are often spoken of Professor of Biology **William “Bill” Quinn**, a 32-year fixture on the hilltop who teaches biology and computer science courses. But this particular praise, spoken by **Regina Lewis**, a member of the university board of trustees, is helping to inspire groundbreaking gifts in his honor.

Lewis and husband **Joseph Chen** have spearheaded the creation of The Bill Quinn, Ph.D., Endowed Professorship, the university's first professorship of its scale. Lewis and Chen are motivated by Quinn's impact on their children, **Stephen Chen '07**, **Elizabeth Chen '09** and **Marian Chen '14**, as well as on their nephew, **Austin Lewis '11**.

“All the kids love him, especially his amiable personality, his support, his demand for excellence and his collegiality,” says Lewis.

His legacy reflects Holy Cross traditions. “There are people in our midst who are deeply committed to ensuring the continued work of the Holy Cross Brothers manifests through St. Edward's,” says Quinn, who embodies the congregation's mission to improve lives through individualized, values-based learning.

The Quinn Professor will also embrace this calling and elevate academic inquiry at St. Edward's. **Gary Morris**, dean of the School of Natural Sciences, says the professorship will support a Biology professor who shares Quinn's interest in ecology. The Quinn Professor may use the endowment's annual spending allowance for equipment and supplies, professional travel, and research stipends.

The Lewis-Chen family has already committed \$125,000; a family match from the GE Foundation boosts their gift to \$250,000. “The endeavors we support have purpose,” says Lewis. “We hope our children and others will see that purpose beyond its monetary value and also choose to support the next generation.” In fact, **David Sprague '95**, a former student of Quinn's, was so impressed by the fund's potential impact that he will make his own \$100,000 gift.

“Their generosity is overwhelming and humbling,” Quinn says. “I am incredibly grateful to our benefactors and the people who have made my work so rewarding and meaningful.” With \$350,000 committed, the university expects to raise the remaining \$150,000 by 2017. Success now depends on the advocacy and generosity of parents, alumni and others influenced by Quinn.

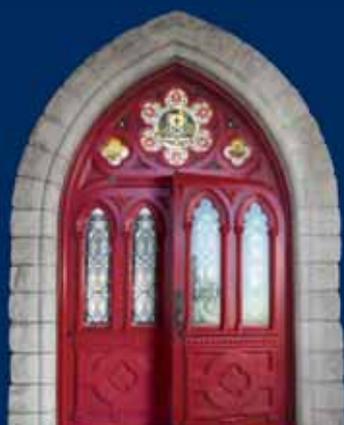
# The Campaign *for* St. Edward's University

Hilltoppers are gaining knowledge and developing skills that will help improve the world. They work diligently and hopefully — and every donation to the university supports their dreams. Last year, more than **2,000** donors opened exciting new doors of opportunity through commitments totaling more than **\$6 million**. They gave resources to fund scholarships, daily operations needs, top-notch facilities, and an endowment that can forever shape hearts and minds. The entire St. Edward's community extends heartfelt thanks.

—Joe DeMedeiros, Vice President for University Advancement

**\$100**  
million  
goal

**\$80**  
million  
raised



The J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation will give **\$500,000** to restore and preserve historic Main Building — but only if the university raises an additional **\$1.2 million** by April 15, 2016.

Plans for the hilltop's most cherished building include roof and window repairs, refurbishment of exterior limestone, removal and replacement of the existing mechanical system, and more. It has been nearly **30 years** since the building's last major renovation.

The Mabee Foundation's challenge came on the heels of **\$1.3 million** in commitments from The Fondren Foundation (**\$800,000**), the Cullen Trust for Higher Education (**\$250,000**), the Brown Foundation (**\$200,000**), and the Austin Convention and Visitors Bureau Heritage Grants Program (**\$30,000**).



The university's College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) provides financial and academic support for students whose household income comes primarily from migrant farm work. CAMP typically receives a federal grant for incoming freshmen, but in 2014–2015, the U.S. Department of Education did not renew its grant.

Donors and friends rallied to meet the \$425,000 shortfall. **Hughes Abell**, vice chair of the board of trustees, and his wife, **Betsy Abell MAC '08**, pledged \$75,000 as a challenge to CAMP alumni; they provided \$3 for every \$1 contributed or leveraged by CAMP alumni through June 30, 2015. A grant of \$100,000 from long-time university partner TG also helped. And an anonymous donor gave \$10,000. The rest was given through many donations from many people.

The DOE grant has been renewed for the next five years, and its one-year absence highlights the critical importance of continuing donor support of a program that changes lives.

The Bill Munday School of Business

The university's largest donors, **Bill and Pat Munday**, continue to open doors of opportunity for Hilltoppers. After 14 years of tremendous support, their latest gift of \$500,000 establishes **The Bill Munday Outstanding Business Student Scholarship**. It's reserved for supremely talented business students with financial need, especially those from Austin.

The Munday name is already familiar on the hilltop. Pat serves on the board of trustees, and she and Bill have donated almost \$37 million. This includes \$13 million to build the incredible library facility on the west side of campus and more than \$22 million for their first endowed scholarship. That fund currently helps up to 150 Munday Scholars each year by covering about 25% of their tuition expenses. The Munday's support has also been recognized through the naming of The Bill Munday School of Business.

# Campaign Volunteer Leadership 2014–2015

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† = deceased, hs = high school, P = parent(s) or grandparent(s) of student or alumnus, F = faculty or staff member of St. Edward's

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*G.O.L.D. Associates are Graduates of the Last Decade who give annually at a level designated for their graduation year, culminating in a \$1,000 President's Associate gift by their tenth year.*

Brentlee Boswell '13  
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Noah Corn '12, MASD '14  
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Jenny Eakin '13  
Colin Elmore '12  
Francisco Garcia '13  
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Jared Reinhardt '12

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Elias Sandoval '07  
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Margaret and Arnold '57 Landry  
Sandra '89 and Terry '85 Lawell  
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Michael Lucksinger '74  
Jean and Austin '57 Maley  
Marie Martine  
Jane and Patrick '62 McDonald  
Evelyn McNair  
Larry Meyers '67  
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Mary Kay and Kenneth '61 Reimer  
Shirley and Thomas '52 Rheinberger  
Joe Roberts '90  
Steve Shadowen '80  
Marie Shaw  
Anna Skinner  
Charles Slavik Jr.  
Emma Slavik  
Angela and Charles Smith  
Stephanie Sobotik  
Martha St. Romain-Avery '84, MBA '93  
Martin Tenney III '55  
Rosa Valencia '84

Mary Walker '94  
Nela and Bob '63 Wilems  
Jackie and Frank '69 Woodruff  
William Zanardi  
Mary and Robert '62 Zapalac

### **In Memoriam Members**

Larry Armijo '58  
Allan Asseo  
Harald Becker  
Paul Brock '50  
Robert Brune '52  
Bonnelle and J.L. Callaway  
Elvira Christerson '84  
Henry Curran  
Nancy Oatman Davis  
Catherine Dunlap  
E.J. Dunigan Jr.  
Richard Early '55  
Charlotte Flynn  
Francine and Edward Fries  
Margaretha and Jac Gubbels  
Alma Hanson  
Margaret and Louis '30 Hertenberger  
Ada "Tay" Birt Hodges  
Floy and Frank Holloway  
James Ikard hs '49, '53  
Josephine and Odas Jung  
Alfreda Klimitchek  
Charles Kolodzey '36  
Richard Kowalkowski '58  
David Landry '65

Louis Landry  
Cecil Lawson '76  
Millie Leonard  
Brother Daniel Lynch, CSC  
Veniece and Tony Marrone  
Nancy and Alex '63 Marusak  
Nancy Turner McCoy '97  
Irma McFadden  
M. Jean McKemie  
John McKenna  
Fred McNair hs '63, '67  
Gloria Neale  
La Fern O'Hanlon '31  
Brother Malcolm O'Neil, CSC '50  
Eileen and Richard Orton  
William Penn Sr.  
Donald Penner '60  
Pearle and Robert Ragsdale  
Frank Ribelin  
Sally and Harold Robinson  
Catherine and Charles '33 Schulze  
Jack Shaw '43  
Charles Slavik Sr. '35  
LeRoy Spangler Jr. '57  
John Brooks Williams

† = deceased, hs = high school, P = parent(s) or grandparent(s) of student or alumnus, F = faculty or staff member of St. Edward's

# ALUMNI NOTES

## ALUMNI SUCCESS

### After the Storm: Linus Akanoh Jr. '06



When torrential rains hit large swaths of the Gulf Coast in 2012, it was like an underwater ghost town.

**Linus Akanoh Jr. '06** arrived shortly after the floods to help state agencies that were his clients at Deloitte, a national consulting firm where he is an advisory manager in the Strategic Risk practice. He and his team helped coordinate efforts to disburse federal relief funds and develop and implement processes to manage the recovery program. “The accompanying floods resulted in significant financial and operational discomfort,” he says.

It took much, much longer than the two to three weeks the disaster stayed in the headlines. “The magnitude of the recovery, which takes months, even years, is extraordinary,” he says. “Going back now and seeing businesses finally reopening and children returning to their new schools, it feels like we played a part in that.”

Akanoh has been part of teams at crisis sites in Colorado, Louisiana, Georgia and Arizona since he joined Deloitte in 2007 after finishing his master’s in Professional Accounting at University of Texas–Austin.

He became a manager in 2012, leading teams as small as four and as large as 60.

“There are very few typical days,” he says, “because the world we live in is volatile and always changing. Tomorrow is a different reality.”

Akanoh knows that firsthand. As a 16-year-old from Lagos, Nigeria, he found himself in a completely new reality when he arrived on the hilltop to begin his freshman year. His parents, Nigerian natives who met studying in Germany, had always aspired for their six children to attend college abroad. (Three are now in the United States, two in the United Kingdom, and one in Denmark.) His uncle, **Albert Akano '87**, also attended St. Edward’s.

“I had visited the United States before [attending St. Edward’s] and always had an affinity for it — its boundless opportunities and promises,” he says. “You can become whoever and whatever you want.”

And he did. He studied in the dual-degree Accounting Information Technology program, earning a BBA in Accounting and BA in Computer Information Technology. He conducted fraud detection research under Professor of Accounting **Mike Harris**, presented on campus and at the Texas Academy of Science, and won a state ethics competition. These days, he is an adjunct instructor in The Bill Munday School of Business.

“My professors really invested in me. They cared about my learning, and they were always challenging me. They told me, ‘You can do this, and here’s why,’” he says. “I try to honor their legacy by teaching as they did — taking the theoretical and making it experiential.”

Plus, he says, “I am absolutely convinced that St. Edward’s University is a world-class institution. It may not be as big as some of the universities in the area, but it’s big in the right places — great people, close community, hands-on instruction and a focus on service,” he says. “And the best part is, none of that is a one-time thing. It’s part of who we are; it’s in our DNA.”

—*Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05*

## Stay Connected

### Email:

seualumni@stedwards.edu

### Web:

stedwards.edu/alumni

### Phone:

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800-964-7833

### Mail:

St. Edward’s University

Campus Mail Box 1028

Attn: Data Specialist

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Austin, Texas 78704-6489



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## CHAPTER EVENTS

### National Happy Hour: June 25

More than 180 alumni in eight locations across the country — Austin; Dallas–Fort Worth; Houston; the Rio Grande Valley; San Antonio; the Bay Area; Denver; and Washington, D.C. — gathered for the first-ever St. Edward's University Alumni Association National Happy Hour on Thursday, June 25. Alumni networked with one another and welcomed new graduates into the association.

Get involved with the alumni chapter near you. Visit [bit.ly/SEUAlumniCal](http://bit.ly/SEUAlumniCal) for information on upcoming events.



### Summer Sendoff

Alumni, current students, parents and friends gathered in six locations across the country to send the Class of 2019 to the hilltop in style.



# Class Notes

## SEND IN YOUR CLASS NOTES

Send your Class Notes and wedding or birth announcements to the Alumni Office at [bit.ly/AlumniUpdateForm](http://bit.ly/AlumniUpdateForm) (address is case sensitive).

### 1960s

**Jon Hilsabeck hs '60, '64, MBA '72**, of Austin, is a life member of the American College of Healthcare Executives and received the Regent's Award for his service and commitment to advancing colleagues in his professional field.

### 1970s

**Ken Tedesco '71**, of Metairie, Louisiana, is executive vice president at Our Lady of Holy Cross College.

**Danny Lawson '79**, of Arlington, retired from the Dallas Police Department as a sergeant after a 33-year career.

### 1980s

**Ray Cabrera '89**, of Austin, was appointed election judge by the Travis County Democratic Party for the 2014–2016 term.

### 1990s

**Carmela Epright '90**, of Greenville, South Carolina, is a professor of Philosophy at Furman University and has been named a clinical professor of Neuropsychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of South Carolina School of Medicine.

**Marie Mendoza '90**, of San Antonio, is Spring Independent School District's multilingual director.

**Michael O'Brien '90**, of Dumfries, Virginia, is an executive advisor with Gartner.

**James Shurtleff '93**, of Kingwood, was recently appointed market sector manager of refining and petrochemicals for Air Liquide America Specialty Gases.

**Clayton Christopher '95**, of Austin, is co-founder of Deep Eddy Vodka, which was honored with a 2014 Hot Brand Award from *Impact* magazine.

**Patrick Copley '96, MBA '00**, of Kyle, made partner at Industrial Valuation Services, a tax consulting firm that specializes in the energy industry.

**Rogelio Chapa '97**, of Oakland, California, is the professional development education director at InSpire Education.

**Michael Lucas '97**, of Atlanta, Georgia, was presented with the SOAR Award (Serving Others and Achieving Results) from the Public Interest Law Association of Georgia State University's School of Law. Lucas currently serves as deputy director of the Atlanta Volunteer Lawyers Foundation.

**Karen Williams '97**, of San Antonio, is a major gifts officer at Trinity University.

**Duncan McGee MBA '98**, of Austin, runs the Veteran Entrepreneur Program for the Texas Veterans Commission.

### 2000s

**Barry Harding '02**, of Boston, Massachusetts, was awarded a master's degree in Financial Economics from Boston University.

**Brian Stork '02**, of Flower Mound, is a partner at the law firm Kane Russell Coleman & Logan PC.

**Patrick Clark '03**, of Austin, is co-founder of Zilker Brewing Company, which opened an urban brewery on East 6th Street in Spring 2015.

**Andre Ford '03**, of New York City, manages an education program at Covenant House New York, a homeless shelter and youth development center. He earned a master's degree in Social Work from Hunter College of the City University of New York.

**Jonathan Turner '04**, of Cedar Park, opened a life insurance and estate-planning business, Centex Financial Group, with his father.

**Michael Weller '04**, of Austin, is the owner and manager of Weller Solutions, a professional IT and telecommunications company.

**Michael Barrera '05**, of Austin, is the director of photography for *High Profits*, a CNN documentary series dealing with the economic impact of the legalization of marijuana in Colorado.

**Peter Mena MLA '05**, of Los Angeles, California, earned a doctorate in the History of Christianity from Drew University and is teaching as a postdoctoral fellow in the Religious Studies department of Occidental College.

**Yolanda Lins '06**, of Cedar Park, is a district parole officer with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice.

**Jake McCook '06**, of Washington, D.C., is a senior account executive at the strategic political communications firm GMMB.

**Marie Bunch '07**, of San Antonio, launched the home-decor online store GotFip.com.

**Andrew Campbell '08**, of Houston, is an associate with the national law firm Baker & Hostetler LLP in its Business group.

**Brian Carroll MLA '09**, of Fort Worth, earned a doctorate in English from the University of Texas at Arlington.

**Kristen Dempsey '09**, of Chicago, Illinois, completed a master's degree in Justice Ministry at the Catholic Theological Union.

**Stevie Fitzgerald '09**, of New York City, is an attorney at the Authors Guild and co-authored the book *Business and Legal Forms for Authors and Self-Publishers*.

### 2010s

**Krystal Shaw '10**, of Austin, is a Realtor with Roots Real Estate.

**Thao Votang MLA '11**, of Austin, is the director of communications for the department of Art and Art History at the University of Texas at Austin.

**Jacob Mooney '13**, of Fairfax, California, is a solar energy consultant with Star Energy Partners.

**Darron Spohn '14**, of Castle Rock, Colorado, owns his own photography business, Light Craftsman.

## BIRTHS

To **Amanii Luper MBA '00** and Anthony Lewis, daughter Irie Monet Lewis on Oct. 26, 2014

To **Jose Barajas '05** and **Monique Contreras Barajas '07**, son Aiden Joseph Barajas on Sept. 21, 2014

To **Brian Carroll MLA '09** and Leah Carroll, daughter Fiona Elise Carroll on Feb. 12, 2015

To **Elizabeth Ragland '10** and **Nicolas Ragland '07**, daughter Riley Katharine Ragland on June 27, 2014

## MARRIAGES

**Margaret Elliston-Belker '79**, of Altadena, California, to Kevin Chatman on Feb. 1

**Rogelio Chapa '97**, of San Antonio, to Mark Reisman on Aug. 3, 2014

**Katherine Smith '02**, of Houston, to **James Brian Caperton '08**, of Houston, on Aug. 9, 2014

**Stephanie Bridwell '06**, of Austin, to Jake LeBlanc on July 20, 2014

**Araminta Everton MSOLE '09**, of Austin, to Tom Sellers on Sept. 27, 2014

**Linda Armstrong '13**, of Portland, Oregon, to Adolfo Cuevas on Aug. 23, 2014

## IN MEMORIAM

**Maurice Hafernik Sr. '45**, of Houston, on April 6

**Warren Clemens '52**, of Williamsburg, Virginia, on April 14, 2014

**Edward Scholl '52**, of Helotes, on Sept. 29, 2014

**Robert Gurka '54**, of Barkhamsted, Connecticut, on Oct. 4, 2014

**Charles Staples hs '54**, of Spokane, Washington, on April 20

**Francis Warth '60**, of Canton, Ohio, on April 18

**James Adams hs '62**, of Elgin, on March 23

**Raul Bautista hs '62**, of Austin, on Jan. 9

**Gregory Sweeney hs '63**, of Katy, on March 25

**Larry Fealy '77**, of Georgetown, on March 16

**Mark Kleypas '78**, of El Lago, on May 3

## ALUMNI TIPS

# How to Communicate Confidently

**Emily Roberts '05, MAC '07** gives great advice in her book, *Express Yourself: A Teen Girl's Guide to Speaking Up and Being Who You Are*. But it's not just for teen girls; we can all benefit from it. Here, she recommends how to handle professional communication when you're making the case for something. —Joel Hoekstra



### Assess Your Objective

What's the goal of the communication? If you're reaching out to a former colleague, a friend of a friend, or a perfect stranger, what's your aim? What do you want them to do — other than respond?

### Ask with Ease

When I contact someone out of the blue, I think of the communication as a three-part sandwich: I start with something positive ("Hope you've been having a good week"), state what I want as clearly as possible and wrap it up with something positive again ("I'm really looking forward to meeting you").

### Create Your Script

Before you walk into the meeting, jot down what you plan to say. If you want to be effective and get what you desire, you'll need to convey your point quickly and efficiently, right? Rehearse a bit. You'll have much more confidence walking into the meeting if you know exactly what you're going to say. Finish with an open-ended question that will invite the other person into the conversation.

### Be Mindful

Before you say a word, assess your mood. Are you anxious or worried? If so, try to relax before communicating. Then assess the situation. Is it a busy time of day? Does the person you're talking with appear stressed? If so, find another time of day that's less busy. You don't have to be a therapist to know that you're more likely to get what you want when the other person is in a good mood. When the conversation does start, make eye contact. Don't talk too fast or skip over important points — remember your script.

### Highlight Benefits

Avoid making the conversation all about you: Express your gratitude or what you think the common benefits will be. Talk about how your proposal will help the person you're talking to. What mutual benefits exist? You might point out how some additional vacation days will reinvigorate you for a future project. You might note that a new bonus structure would motivate you and others in the office to work harder. Put yourself in the other person's shoes for a minute. Ask for ideas or thoughts so that it's clear you're seeking collaboration.

## ASK THE EXPERT

# Not Just an Accountant

**Chris Schwarz '00** joined a Dallas accounting firm fresh out of his undergraduate days at St. Edward's. Within nine years, his name was on the letterhead. And by the time the firm was acquired by a national one, he was a partner. But he didn't like having less one-on-one time with the clients he had spent years getting to know.

So he quit, leaving behind a steady income, health benefits and a retirement plan for the promise of working on his own terms. Three years later, he has no regrets. He's built a successful accounting practice and is volunteer CFO for Snowball Express (snowballexpress.org), a charity for children whose parent has died serving in the military. Here, he tells *St. Edward's University Magazine* how he manages working, volunteering, parenting two kids with wife Shanna and finding time to keep that classic '57 Chevy all tuned up.

—Stacia Hernstrom MLA '05

## Entrepreneurship on the Fly

If you need a contract CFO or someone to do your company's taxes, I'm your guy. But when I started my firm, I had to be my own IT support, HR manager and personal assistant all at the same time. I'm lucky that most of my work comes through referrals, so the time I might otherwise spend recruiting clients I can spend on the logistics of my business.

## Hilltop Flashback

My professors at St. Edward's were practicing CPAs. They put us in real-world situations and taught us what to do and what not to do. I still follow that advice today — and give much of it to my clients, too, some 15 years later.

## Snowball Effect

Every year, Snowball Express brings kids from all over who've lost a parent on active military duty to Fort Worth. And every year, I have moms and dads tell me that those five days have done more



**Chris Schwarz '00 (sixth from left) stands with members of the Air Traffic Controllers Union and Snowball Express, including actor Gary Sinise (center), the national spokesperson for Snowball Express, on Sept. 11, 2014.**

for their children than months in therapy. They're finally able to heal because they see other kids who are going through the same thing. The happiness on their faces keeps me coming back.

## The Value of Service

When you find that one cause that grabs your heart, commit to it. You won't regret it. Making time to volunteer is a juggling act, but it's possible. I set my work hours. Then, when I get home, my phone shuts off, and it's family time. I fit my responsibilities to Snowball Express in the spaces between. I'm passionate about it, so I make it happen.

## A Tale of Two Chevys

My father and I built a 1957 Chevy two-door hardtop from the ground up when I was a teenager. Over the years I've had a few classics come and go, but I still have that Chevy sitting in the garage next to a later-model classic 2003 Corvette Z06. If I have time (which lately hasn't been much), I still love to wrench on them.

## CHAPTER EVENTS

### Austin Night at the Ballpark: Aug. 1

More than 140 alumni, friends and family gathered at the Dell Diamond for the 15th-annual Austin Alumni Night at the Ballpark. The Round Rock Express beat the Memphis Redbirds in extra innings for a great night at the ol' ballgame.





## Off the Beaten Path

In Bangkok and Chiang Mai, tourists pony up big money for elephant rides. In the jungle of the Thai province of Nakhon Si Thammarat, there are far fewer tourists, and the elephants are doing a very different kind of work: logging.

“It’s really impressive seeing this almost mind-reading between the people and elephants,” says Professor of Photocommunications

“Elephants Cooling Down,”  
by Professor of Photocommunications Joe Vitone, Avenue C Studio

**Joe Vitone**, who spent part of his summer photographing elephants removing rubber trees from low jungle mountains. “When I take a picture of something, I understand it in a better way.”

Next summer, Vitone and **Raelynn Deaton Haynes**, assistant professor of Biology, will take a group of students from St. Edward’s to Walailak University for an inter-disciplinary study-abroad program.

—Frannie Schneider



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