From Cabbages
to Cauliflowers
Sam Clemens (a.k.a. Mark Twain) for whom our Clemens Hall is named on the North Campus and patron saint of our English Department, always had a pithy remark on nearly everything. We use his lead here to comment on one of our favorite subjects - education - to which we pay homage in this issue of Honors Today. After all, UB is all about education, inside and outside of the classroom.

UB started as a medical school in 1846 shortly before the American Civil War with a handful of hopeful students. Today, UB is the most comprehensive institution in the State University of New York system and the home for 27,000 students, 9,500 graduate students and 17,500 undergraduates, 1,000 of whom are in the Honors Program. The Honors Program is directly involved in the education process in some obvious and some not so obvious ways. For example, we mount about 20 Honors seminars each semester with intriguing titles such as “What They Died From”, “Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse,” and “Digging up Dirt”. In order to do this we rely upon the generosity of departments to release their outstanding faculty to engage Honors Scholars in a small classroom atmosphere. We don’t pay them a single cent and no promises are made except that we tell them they are about to have one of the best teaching experiences in their life. And after the semester is finished the proof is there. It should be no surprise: when outstanding teachers get together with outstanding and motivated students, the subject matter is secondary because we believe outstanding things will happen. Students think so too! On many occasions, students will change their majors into the discipline of the instructor. That is what we believe education is about - providing life changing experiences.

Often the most important experiences occur outside of the classroom, according to Sandy Austin of UCLA in his outstanding survey of colleges and universities in the country, “What Matters in College.” We agree and so from day one in the freshman year we strive to get students into community service work (as in our team projects in colloquium), and into research, internships, study abroad programs and campus involvement. It is not surprising that about three fourths of our Honors students go onto graduate and professional schools across the world. After all, they are outstanding at this learning business. And a significant number go on to become teachers themselves.

So in this issue we celebrate all the purveyors and receivers of wisdom wherever they are found - inside classrooms or out.

We don’t like to quibble with Mark Twain, a sometime Buffalonian - but…

Training isn’t quite everything. Genes have something to do with success too. We can’t do much about them. But the training part is right down our alley. Read on...

KIPP HERREID & JOSIE CAPUANA
Academic Director and Administrative Director
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I'm not the only recent graduate in the St. George family! Our dog, Parker, recently graduated from puppy school!

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Illustration by Lisa Haney, Honors Scholar, Class of 1988

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Alumni Updates
What They’re Doing Now
I arrived at the University at Buffalo at the age of seventeen, somewhat embittered that neither my parents nor I had the finances to pay for an education at Princeton or Oberlin, where I most wanted to attend. UB was clearly my fallback school in the spring of 1987.

A little too close to my parents’ home in Amherst, New York, it obviously lacked the cachet and name recognition of these more prestigious schools with vastly better write-ups in the college guides. For a sulking teenager, the valedictorian of his high school class, it was a comedown to admit to staying put at home while classmates were off to Harvard, Yale and the University of Chicago. There wasn’t even any ivy on the walls of the North Campus. The architecture of the Ellicott Complex, had been described as “goofy” by no less a person than the president of UB at the time, Steven Sample, whose daughter had also recently graduated from my high school. Even the prospect of enrolling in the Honors Program, then a fairly recent creation, was little consolation. Its prospectus, which promised “all the benefits of a large university with the intimacy of a small college,” seemed utterly cliché-ridden. And so I reluctantly showed up for orientation, planning to transfer as soon as I had more money to do so.

Seventeen years or half a lifetime later, I routinely and proudly tell others what I was grudgingly beginning to admit to myself already by the close of my first year at UB: the Honors Program provided me with a first-rate education the equal of and even the envy of the Ivy League. This became clear to me especially once I began my graduate studies in Modern European History at Brown University and met many undergraduates as a teaching assistant. I discovered that Lockwood Library was vastly superior to the John D. Rockefeller Library in Providence. I recognized, more importantly, that my opportunities at UB would not have been possible at Brown, whose faculty rarely made time for undergraduates.

As a junior, I had the privilege of working with Claude Welch, Professor of Political Science, on a project funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities writing an 86 page paper on the drafting of the United National Charter. Ann Whitcher, my editor at The Reporter who is now with UB Today, taught this young staff writer more about good writing than any professor during my graduate work. Stephen Manes opened his piano studio to me and helped arrange for me to play the piano for many university concerts and functions.

Josie Capuana took care of my fears that UB’s lack of name recognition might jeopardize my hopes of a successful academic career. She met with those of us who were willing and helped us devise plans to succeed after graduation. She lined up internships, study abroad programs, and provided us with faculty mentors. Her astute guidance clearly paid off in spite of my lingering doubts. During my senior year, I was stunned to receive full fellowships at Yale, the University of Chicago, and Brown, in addition to a four year Jacob Javits Fellowship from the U.S. Department of Education. After graduating from Brown in 1999 and taking a Visiting Professor position at Wellesley College, I landed a job at Concordia University in Portland, Oregon, a small Lutheran college with a focus on undergraduate teaching. The excellent teaching in the Honors seminars at UB served as a model for my own, and last spring, I received Concordia’s equivalent of the Teacher of the Year award.

I have remained friends with him ever since, visiting him during my junior year abroad and as recently as three years ago in Göttingen, Germany. He continues to be kind enough to write letters of recommendation for me, sending the most recent one off this week. While giving a paper recently at a conference in The Hague, I by chance encountered and had breakfast with David Gerber, a professor from the History Department, one of whose books I had profiled for The Reporter.

Last summer, we moved to St. Louis University, a Jesuit research university, where I am doing the things academics are supposed to be doing - publishing books, writing articles and giving papers at conferences. I published a book this year with the University of North Carolina Press on secularization in West Germany and co-edited a book in German on Christian Worker’s Movements in Europe. I am currently working on two book projects, an undergraduate reader entitled, “The European Churches and National Socialism” and a more ambitious monograph which will ask why so many debates and controversies have broken out in Germany from the late 1950s onwards over the relationship between the Catholic Church and National Socialism.

When I reflect on the Honors Program today, I think mostly of enduring relationships and friendships. Georg Iiggers, world renowned German historian and pioneer in the field of historiography, let me take both his undergraduate and graduate seminars in Modern European Intellectual history. I have remained friends with him ever since, visiting him during my junior year abroad and as recently as three years ago in Göttingen, Germany. He continues to be kind enough to write letters of recommendation for me, sending the most recent one off this week. While giving a paper recently at a conference in The Hague, I by chance encountered and had breakfast with David Gerber, a professor from the History Department, one of whose books I had profiled for The Reporter.

It is a truism, but the Honors Program provided an education and opportunities to last a lifetime.
In Honors, we are dedicated not only to supporting intellectual endeavors, but to encouraging students to share these activities with others. To facilitate such an exchange, we decided to organize an annual Honors Poster Session. This event gave Honors Scholars an opportunity to share their research work with the larger UB community and brought together students of diverse backgrounds and interests.

Held in conjunction with the university-wide Preview Day in April, it allowed prospective Honors Scholars and their families to get a taste of the diverse range of opportunities available at the university. It was an overwhelming success! Twenty students were on hand to showcase their work, including students from a variety of areas including anthropology, engineering, theatre and dance and many others.


Throughout the poster session students were available to answer questions and share details about their research.

Four of the participating students were Jeremy M. Jacobs Study Abroad Scholarship recipients and had recently returned from studying abroad in Cuba, England, Costa Rica, and Italy. They shared photos, stories, and mementoes highlighting their experiences.

Students with exceptional poster presentations were selected to receive special awards of distinction, which included cash prizes. We plan to continue this annual event in an effort to recognize current Honors Scholars and to recruit new ones!

Karyn St. George, Ph.D.
Assistant Administrative Director, Honors Program

Matthew A. Watkins
Distinguished and Advanced Honors Program Scholar, Class of 2005

We are pleased to announce that Matthew A. Watkins was awarded a 2005 National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship! This Graduate Research Fellowship provides three years of support ($30,000 per year plus tuition waivers and fees) for graduate study leading to research-based masters or doctoral degrees in mathematical, physical, biological, engineering and behavioral and social sciences, including the history of science. Matthew is currently working on a Master’s Degree in Electrical and Computer Engineering at Cornell University.

Danelle Schrader
Honors Scholar, Class of 2006

Kudos to Danelle Schrader - winner of the prestigious 2005 Barry M. Goldwater Scholarship! This scholarship is awarded to sophomores and juniors who have outstanding potential and intend to pursue advanced degrees in mathematics, the natural sciences and engineering. This scholarship provides up to two years of support (tuition, fees, books, and room and board up to $7,500 annually). Danelle is completing a double major in Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at UB.
Working in Dr. Gail Mauner’s psycholinguistics laboratory, I came to realize that even though psychology was my major, medicine was my vocation. Having a great deal of respect for Dr. Mauner as a professor and researcher, I asked her for advice to find out how I could get involved in ‘more medically oriented’ research. In a matter of minutes, I was at the door of Dr. Alexis Thompson, a Research Scientist at the Research Institute on Addictions and Research Associate Professor of Psychology at the University at Buffalo.

“How do you feel about animal research?” - was the first question Dr. Thompson asked me as I entered her office. It was at that point I knew I was where I belonged. This started the most driving and enriching experiences that the University at Buffalo could offer me as an undergraduate.

After earning my certification to handle mice and rats as well as intensive training in stereotaxic surgery, histology and behavioral testing in rodents, I was ready for my very own research project. I applied for and received a generous grant from the Honors Program Research & Creative Activities Fund to perform a study to test if the neurotransmitter, neuropeptide Y (NPY), plays a role in the response to stress. More specifically, I wanted to determine if NPY plays a protective role against the development of persistent anxiety and fearfulness that sometimes manifests itself after a traumatic stressor (i.e., posttraumatic stress disorder [PTSD]).

The study tested this idea experimentally by increasing brain levels of NPY during exposure to a stress in an animal model of PTSD. In this case we tested rats responding to the scent of a predator - a cat. Rats exposed to the scent of cat for 15 minutes exhibit a strong stress response and remain at a heightened level of anxiety and fearfulness for many weeks thereafter. Our hypothesis was that increasing brain NPY levels would reduce predator-stress-induced fearfulness as measured by the rats’ propensity to engage in risk-taking behaviors both immediately and several weeks after the stress.

In addition to gaining valuable experience, this opportunity allowed me to contribute to the field of Behavioral Neuroscience. It is no secret to both physicians and psychologists that anxiety disorders are prevalent in the U.S. Approximately 19.1 million, or 13.3%, of adults suffer from some type of anxiety disorder (as cited by National Institute of Mental Health, 6/10/2005, http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/numbers.cfm). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is one type of anxiety disorder. One theory regarding the etiology of PTSD suggests that it lies in the initial physiological and neurobiological response to the trauma, and that NPY increases during stress. In one study with humans, the magnitude of NPY’s increase was negatively correlated with symptoms associated with the development of PTSD. Therefore, NPY may have a protective role. In order to determine whether NPY plays a causal role in PTSD, the levels of NPY had to be manipulated in the brain and the subsequent effect of this manipulation on PTSD symptoms (i.e. persistent anxiety) had to be measured. This type of manipulation in humans may be too invasive to be ethical. Therefore, we performed a study that increased NPY levels in the brain of an animal model of PTSD.

I am very grateful to everyone who made this experience a reality, including the Honors Program, my mentors Dr. Thompson and, more recently, Dr. Mark Kristal (UB, Dept of Psychology) and Dr. Jean DiPirro (BSU, Dept of Psychology). Each one played a crucial role in my development as a researcher as well as a future physician. An important aspect of any medical career is the need to understand the process by which the discovery of new therapeutic and prevention strategies is accomplished. In medicine, this is increasingly important in light of the new emphasis on ‘evidence based treatment,’ which involves the coupling of current scientific knowledge with a particular physician’s expertise to diagnose and provide the best treatment options.

We are proud to announce that the Honors Today alumni magazine won first prize in the 2005 National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) newsletter contest! This is our second 1st place finish — we were also winners in 2002.

The theme for the spring 2006 edition of Honors Today is entrepreneurship. If you have started your own business or company and would like to contribute to this award-winning publication by sharing your story, please contact Karyn St. George at kcs9@buffalo.edu as soon as possible.
Along with laptops and cell phones, more than 4,000 University at Buffalo students this fall are packing a piece of gear into their backpacks that may make them feel like they’re on “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?”

Slender, handheld devices, sold as “Audience Response Systems” (but everyone calls them “clickers”) are making large-lecture-hall classes at UB less impersonal and more effective for students and professors alike.

The clickers, which students use to answer questions posed by a professor during a lecture, help give the instructor instant feedback on whether the class is comprehending the topic at hand and whether he or she should make appropriate adjustments. They make classes more interactive and, some professors are finding, improve student attendance. “Students love them,” notes Troy Wood, Ph.D., chemistry professor in the UB College of Arts and Sciences, who saw attendance in his chemistry class last semester jump by 30 percent once he started using clickers.

“They said in their evaluations that they came to class more often because they knew we’d be using it,” he said. “And students in other sections said they were upset that they weren’t using it.”

Wood says he was sold on using the clickers because he immediately saw the analogy with the TV game show, “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” where audience members use clickers if asked by players for assistance in answering questions.

“In the show, sometimes the audience is really sure, but sometimes it’s evenly split,” says Wood. “When my students are split in how they’re answering my questions, then I have to step back and think about it. If fewer than half the students can answer the question correctly, then they’re not getting it.”

Wood’s pilot project with the clickers was funded by UB’s Educational Technology Center, part of the university’s library system, which, along with UB’s Instructional Technology Services of the Computing and Information Technology division, will make a recommendation on whether they should be used more widely on campus.

To date, clickers are being used at UB in introductory courses in the departments of chemistry, biological sciences, physics, political science and psychology that typically have a large number of students.

The clickers are packaged with the textbooks for a particular class and students are instructed to bring them to lectures. A wireless receiver installed in the classroom instantly records students’ responses to multiple-choice questions posed by their instructor and provides a summary of results to the professor indicating how many students responded correctly or incorrectly. The sum of these responses also allows the instructor to determine how many students did not respond.

“Now I’ve got instant feedback,” says Wood, “I know whether they’re grasping the material or not, and it gives the students an opportunity to interact in the classroom because they can answer questions related to the material.” Wood says he wanted to use the clickers because he’s always looking for ways to make the large lecture setting friendlier.

The data that the clickers help provide are particularly helpful when Wood prepares exams.

“I can go back and review what percentage of students got which concepts right,” he says. “The data correlate with a given lesson. So if I can see that they’ve got a particular concept mastered, I won’t ask a question about it on the exam. But if there’s evidence that they were struggling with something, I’m going to ask a question just like it.”

TROY WOOD, Ph.D.

UB professors such as Kipp Herreid in biological sciences and Academic Director of the Honors Program are using clickers to make large-lecture-hall classes less impersonal and more effective for students.
Sitting in Park Hall Cafe with Jeannette Ludwig and Claude Welch is proof that UB is, in Welch’s words, “their community.” Even on a quiet summer afternoon, the husband and wife exchange friendly greetings and brief conversations with most of the passersby. There is a pause for a mutual student who walks over, beaming, to share the news that she has just become a US citizen. Ludwig, Associate Professor of Romance Languages, notes, “One of the things that I really like is walking into a class and seeing people from all around the world. That is why I am so pleased to be at UB….the world is here.’ Welch, SUNY Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science, agrees, adding that the well-traveled couple (they took a sabbatical together in 2000-1 to India and to two important European human rights centers, Geneva and Utrecht) relishes contributing to that dynamic interchange.

Both Ludwig and Welch have always had interest in the world around them. As a self-described starry-eyed undergraduate at Harvard University, Welch majored in government and hoped to make his mark as an international diplomat. At that time, in the early 1960’s, many African nations were gaining their independence and Welch recognized that the continent would be an emerging area in diplomacy. He began taking classes in African politics, and during his graduate years at Oxford University he focused on relations between French and English speaking states in West Africa. After earning his Ph.D. he faced a pivotal choice between entering the US Foreign Service and accepting a faculty position at the University at Buffalo. For Welch, who had young children, the decision to have stationary job near family was a relatively easy one. “Who wants to spend the early years of marriage having to uproot yourself every two or three years?” he asked. Forty years later, Welch reflects, “I have never regretted it. In fact, I have been just delighted to be here ever since.”

For her own part, Ludwig grew up in a household where many languages were spoken and says that “There has never been a time that I wasn’t interested in languages. I really wanted to know about languages, how they worked, how they feel in your mouth, to know that when you speak a different language you actually do see the world in a different way. I was just possessed to know more about how languages function, and how they both govern and assist human interaction.” A French and secondary education major at Drake University, she earned her teaching certificate only to realize that what she really wanted to do was study linguistics. So Ludwig attended the University of Michigan for a doctorate in romance linguistics. Like her husband, Ludwig’s first position was at UB. “The job description was virtually identical to what I had trained to be,” she says, “so when UB offered me the job there was just no question that I would come here.”

Currently, along with teaching undergraduate classes Ludwig coordinates the French Language Program and is Director of Undergraduate Studies for French. An interest in feminism and gender roles led her in 1983 to design a course (which she once co-taught as an honors seminar with Welch) called Men’s and Women’s Language. “Twenty years ago the fact that men and women speak differently was a very radical notion,” Ludwig says. “Then there was the paradigm of exclusion, and of women somehow being less than men in the interactive scene. Now I think that we understand that there are differences and...
that we come to the conversation with different sets of expectations.”

Some of Ludwig’s more recent course offerings include Comparative Religions and Asian Religions; both classes have also been offered as honors seminars. These courses stemmed from a new direction in Ludwig’s career. Seven years ago she earned her MA in Theology from Christ the King Seminary, partly because of her own interest in the subject and also because she felt “that it would be useful to be able to give the students at the university the opportunity to look at things from that perspective as well.” The study and practice of Zen Buddhism has become an important part of Ludwig’s life, and in November she became a member of the Mountains and Rivers Order of Zen Mountain Monastery. To achieve membership, Ludwig, over the course of three years, studied texts, did meditative sitting, and worked with scholars of Zen to learn its theory and practice.

Ludwig’s involvement with Buddhism has also influenced her research. Presently she is developing an article about the caste system in India and the differing impacts when Dalits (formerly known as Untouchables) convert to Buddhism or Christianity. Of her multi-faceted interests Ludwig says, “I think it is important that a lot of faculty members alter, over the course of time, what they are interested in. One of the things about working at a university is that we are still always able to give back with these new interests. They all find a place in the university.”

Ludwig points out that “not all of one’s research ever finds its way into print, but it certainly finds its way into one’s teaching and advising.” Ludwig has supervised many honors theses for students in the program, including one this past year exploring Judaism and Anti-Semitism in France. Ludwig encourages students to pursue research and says that is potentially a life-altering experience. “It can change how you see the world,” she says. “Our job is to provide a framework in which people can lift or learn themselves up and get to the fundamentals of issues that they have been questioning all along.”

Honors students who have taken classes with Ludwig praise her ability to engage them in the learning process. Kelly Miller, a sophomore student in Ludwig’s World Religions class, says Ludwig is “easily my favorite professor. In class she discussed the religion that we were studying in a way that really grasped our attention. She related stories of various countries that she had visited where that religion was practiced, the experts to whom she had posed difficult questions, and the research she had conducted.”

This past summer both Ludwig and Welch offered courses at the renowned Chautauqua Institution, a non-profit cultural organization in southwestern New York that offers arts, educational programming and recreational activities. Ludwig taught Buddhism, Islam and Mysticism, while Welch taught courses in human rights and issues of development. “It has been an excellent opportunity to represent UB in a unique intellectual setting,” observes Ludwig. Welch’s many publications, presentations, awards, and affiliations in the area of human rights speak to his prominence in the field. He is a member of the Advisory Committee of the Africa Division of Human Rights Watch, an international human rights monitoring group, as well as the co-director of the Human Rights Center at UB. He has presented invited lectures, both nationally and internationally, at institutions such as Harvard University, Oxford University, the International Institute of Human Rights in Strasbourg, Beijing University, the Sun Yat-sen Institute in Taiwan, and the Centre for Democratic Studies in Nigeria.

Because of his long-term specialization in the political roles of armed forces, he edited a prominent journal, Armed Forces & Society, and has served on the academic advisory committee of the US Army Command and Staff College. He is the author of numerous books, has contributed chapters to more than 35 others and has published nearly 40 articles in academic journals.

His latest book is tentatively titled, Protecting Human Rights Globally, and it focuses on the history and roles of smaller, lesser known, international human rights non-governmental organizations (INGOs). Welch explains, “I am looking at issues that are still with us today: racism, although changes were made in apartheid; contemporary forms of slavery, which would involve things like debt bondage or discrimination based on descent (for example, through caste) or work; and, how do you judge people who have broken the big laws
one-on-one makes his passion for world cultures and history very clear.”

During their time at UB, both Ludwig and Welch have served the university in various administrative capacities. Both professors served on the Honors Council for many years, and were instrumental in shaping the Program as it exists today. They have hosted Evenings with Faculty programs, opening their home to groups of honors students for food and conversation. Often students who have had both of them as an instructor are surprised to find that the two professors are married. The couple agrees that the best part about working at UB has been their resulting marriage. They met over 25 years ago at a luncheon where Ludwig was honored with the Chancellor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching. Welch, then a widower with four children, happened to be in attendance and the two started talking. Not long after that first meeting Welch traveled to Korea for a few weeks, but the relationship continued. Ludwig says, “When I got married, I married the man, the four kids, the house, the yard. You have to take the whole package, and it has been just a joy ever since.” The family now proudly boasts six grandchildren, which Welch says has added a new dimension. “It is really lovely to see this side of human development, especially since Jeannette didn’t see this side of the kids when they were younger.”

Interestingly enough, when asked separately what they enjoy most about academia, Ludwig and Welch unknowingly echo similar sentiments. Welch says that he appreciates the academic freedom and “the opportunity to be with people whose ideas are still being formed, to bring to their attention the interpretations of the past and help to point them towards the future. And it is possible to stay a little younger. Who wants to retire if you can have the chance for continuing renewal?” Ludwig agrees, saying, “There is a constant renewal that goes on—new school year, new semester, new faces, but also new ideas that you have to incorporate and old things that you have to throw out. There is constant change and renewal and the opportunity to be challenged every step of way.”

As world travelers, professors, mentors, researchers, volunteers, members of religious organizations, parents and grandparents, Ludwig and Welch embrace and encompass many overlapping communities. That message was certainly not lost on junior English major Balbir Singh, who took World Civilizations with Welch and World Religions with Ludwig as a freshman. Singh calls the two “insightful educators and compassionate human beings. Their lectures go beyond the textbooks, and into the realm of real world application. They inspire students to become citizens of the world.”

“Our job is to help people see, and to provide the opportunity to take up what it means to be a citizen of the world.”

Claude and Jeannette at Sanchi, one of the most important Buddhist sites in the world.
This is a question I am asked with some regularity, and I am never quite certain how to answer. “We don’t always get things wrapped up in one hour, we don’t usually do CPR on moving gurneys down the hall, and I’ve never been stabbed with a cake knife.” The TV show being alluded to is, of course, ER and I am a real life Emergency Department (ED) physician. When the Honors Program asked me to write about a typical day in my life, I erroneously assumed it would be among the easiest assignments I’ve ever completed. No group work, an article entirely about me, what could be simpler, right? Wrong!

There is no such thing as a typical day in the Emergency Department. There are good days, bad days, and days that just don’t end. So I thought I might write about my last shift in the ED where I now work, a suburban Level 2 Trauma Center.

The day started peacefully enough, at 7:00 a.m. on a Thursday morning. I sat drinking tea while talking with a colleague about my upcoming vacation to Napa Valley. The charge nurse handed me a chart. “He was here last week, kidney stone, still hurts.” After a quick urine test and a computed tomography (CT) scan, I sat down to explain the diagnosis to him and his wife. This is the key to a successful patient experience, since an educated patient who understands what is wrong is more likely to take the prescribed medicine and follow up as directed. I gave them a brief anatomy lesson, pointing out the path of a kidney stone and the three locations where it was most likely to cause pain. I explained the likelihood of passing the stone without complication, as well as the possible complications for which he should return to the ED. Finally, I made certain he had a physician with whom to follow up. This was an ideal and satisfactory interaction, made possible by the confirmed diagnosis, the patient’s interest in his own healthcare and the luxury of time. These are three things which are not a part of every patient interaction, but which go a long way towards providing me with job satisfaction.

The ED quickly became much busier. The next gentleman, with sudden onset of crushing pain after exercising and showering, came by ambulance. He was having a myocardial infarction. The room was ready when he arrived and we had a confirmatory electrocardiogram (EKG) done while administering a cocktail of medications (aspirin, nitroglycerin, beta blockers, morphine) proven to reduce morbidity. As his pain resolved with the morphine, he told us his cardiologist was at another hospital across town, about 20 minutes away, and asked if he might need to go there. No chance! Not enough time! I thought to myself. While we raced the clock, we kept the patient’s room very calm, so that he and his wife could have a few minutes of peace. Within four minutes of his arrival, I had paged cardiology. I wrote up the ever-present paperwork while the nurses sent off blood work and obtained consent for the patient to go directly to interventional cardiology. As he was wheeled down the hall to his angiogram, I looked at the clock… 7:55 a.m., 15 minutes had elapsed. I had certainly not broken the ED record for ‘door to cath lab’ (seven minutes) but it was pretty respectable.

I saw a few kids with colds, a person who needed a refill of their blood pressure pills, and an older woman who had slipped at the local Walmart and sprained her ankle. There was also a young man with a history of Bipolar Depression who seemed very comfortable but complained of abdominal pain. While I was examining him, I asked why he had come in after four days of unchanged and fairly mild pain when he was still eating, pooping, and working without difficulty. The patient confessed that he had Hepatitis C and worried about his liver. With this little bit of honesty, I was able to decide on a course of treatment. Simply reassuring the man that he was fine would not have resolved his underlying fear about his hepatitis worsening, so I did some comprehensive blood work to convince us both that he was not imbalanced in his electrolytes, not suffering worsening hepatic function, and otherwise doing well.

I thought about grabbing five minutes to eat the leftover pizza I’d brought for lunch. Then I got a call from the radiology department. “Hey Dr. Jones, I have a young man here with a collapsed lung. Will you take care of it?” No problem, I thought facetiously, send him over. He was a 28 year old special needs patient, with learning disabilities, Attention Deficit Disorder and Tourette’s Syndrome. I explained calmly to the patient and his mother that the reason his chest was hurting is because his lung collapsed, “like a balloon that has popped.” He agreed that we ought to blow up the balloon again. I explained how sedation would make him sleepy and that he might not remember everything afterwards. Then my nurses got him prepared with an IV and monitors while I gave myself a pep talk regarding placing a chest tube under these conditions. When the patient was finally sedated, mom asked whether she could stay to observe, and I decided that the calming influence for the patient was more important than my desire to do the procedure observed. As we scrubbed him with iodine to disinfect the area, she came and took pictures with her cell phone camera! As I made the incision in his chest wall, she snapped away, saying “he loves watching ER on TV, this is just great.” I am not kidding, this is exactly what happened. I pushed the clamp up over his ribs, punched it into his pleural space and there was a whoosh of air escaping as his lung re-expanded. As I advanced the chest tube and secured it with sutures, mom casually mentioned that “he comes out of anesthesia really badly - when he was five he almost kicked out the car window after having a procedure done.” This would have been wonderful information BEFORE we sedated him, but at that point, it was just too late. I assigned one nurse to guard the chest tube while we physically held onto the patient as he kicked, spit and tried to bite us. Although we did calmly yell for security, they just didn’t get there in time. After several minutes of fighting with him, he suddenly settled down, held onto my hand and asked “is the balloon blown up yet?” Security arrived only to be dismissed, the crisis had passed.

“Is it just like the TV show?” Sometimes, it really is.}
Every once in a while a person has a day that changes their life. March 16, 2004, was one of those days. It was on that day that my younger sister, Katlyn Elise Gosch was killed in a car accident, a victim to the winter’s last storm. I will never forget the moment that I heard from my mother that Katie had died. It was as if someone had drawn a line through the timeline of my life; things from that point on would never be the same.

It is true Katlyn was my younger sister, but she was so much more than that to me. She was my confidant, my first playmate, my best friend. People marveled at our relationship; friends told me that they had never seen two sisters that were so close. On the day she died, I felt that a part of me died as well. I didn’t know what to do, or where to turn or who to go to, because she was no longer an option. It was at that point that I realized that I needed to focus all of my energy on a positive purpose. Katie was always positive, always optimistic, and was, without a doubt, one of the hardest working individuals that I have ever known. I knew that I needed to do something to keep her legacy alive.

One night, shortly after the fall 2004 semester began I realized that it was plausible for me to combine my desire to carry on Katlyn’s legacy in a tangible way with my senior thesis project for the Advanced Honors Program. It was on that night that the idea for The Great Kate 5K was born. From there, this project took on a life of its own, eventually expressing from a single 5K race into the creation of a non-profit organization with long term implications. It was a labor of love, and one that I will never forget. The purpose of my thesis was to form a non-profit organization called “The Great Kate”. The mission of this organization is to promote a legacy of giving, and its foremost initiative, The Great Kate 5K - a fully sanctioned and certified 5K race - took place on Sunday, April 10, 2005. The event was designed to accommodate upwards of 500 runners and walkers, with the final number of participants being 521. All of the money raised at this event went directly to the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Northtowns of Western New York to establish additional athletic programs for underprivileged youth. Using academic skills in marketing, public relations, mass media campaigns, and event planning, major local media and business organizations were solicited as sponsors. As race director, I was responsible for writing all press releases and website updates, creating brochures and handling all mailings, contacting local government officials, entering all the data, handling all accounting and designing of a tee shirt for the event.

The immediate goal of The Great Kate 5K was to raise at least $5,000 for The Boys and Girls Clubs - we surpassed our goal by over $2,000. The monies raised from the event totaled over $16,000! Our long term goal to make The Great Kate its own free-standing non-profit organization that would do its own charity work.

Being able to create The Great Kate as part of my senior thesis project meant more to me than I will ever be able to express. The Advanced Honors Program gave me the tools and the freedom to explore my thesis in the way that I wanted to; it was an experience that most undergraduates only dream of, and I was able to make it a reality.

Currently I am working as an Account Executive and Media Assistant at an advertising agency called The Partnership Ltd. One of the main factors in my hiring was the considerable promotional experience I had gained because of the race. It’s amazing for me to think that the race was a defining factor in my new career, and I couldn’t be more pleased.

Katlyn’s high school senior quote read, “Kid, you’ll move mountains!” It is my dream to move mountains for her, to make her proud everyday. Nothing will ever be able to take the place of my sister, but The Great Kate is the first step to keeping Katlyn’s legacy alive.
The promise of an American education. Is it to guarantee that each young person can work and contribute to the American economy? Is it to maintain the United States’ position as a super power in the world order? Is it to define and sustain a distinct American culture? Is it to produce informed and insightful civic-minded citizens? Is it to develop self-realized individuals with morals, cultural appreciation, skills for problem solving, and the ability for creative expression? Is it all of the above?

Public school in the United States has many promises to fulfill - political and economic, as well as civic and cultural. How schools work - and how well they work - to fulfill their promises to American society provided the focus of Sociology of Education, an Honors seminar I introduced in Fall 2004 and am now teaching again. Students across disciplines gather in this class to read, analyze, and discuss the complex issues surrounding our education system. I thought it might be interesting to pose here a series of questions that we wrestle with in the seminar as we examine the dynamic relationship between school and society.

The needs of a society at any given moment in time determine the roles schools play in developing children into full-functioning citizens. During the late 19th century, as our nation’s livelihood shifted from agriculture to industry, a universal system of mandatory education was designed to create a literate populace of workers. The recent trend of deindustrialization has launched our society into new terrain, making a fresh analysis of the purposes of our schools necessary. In our new knowledge-based economy (or information economy), linked to ever-advancing technology and rapid globalization, do the function, goals, and overall look of our schools need to change? And does the achievement in high school correlate with the ability to succeed in this new economy? Of course, these questions lead to others.

To what extent are opportunities for achievement and success available? Equal access to education is a tenet of democratic society. In a place such as the United States with a vast disparity between schools in the richest areas and the poorest areas of the country, can the schools be the great equalizer? Can students, regardless of their environments, realize the promises of an American education? Do we really have a meritocracy - a system in which status and success are based solely on achievement, rather than ascription - or is success more directly related to the concept of “cultural capital” - a metaphoric set of maps that individuals acquire from their social environments and use to navigate through life? Access to resources and high-quality education seems related not only to social class, but also to race, as exemplified by the 1954 Brown v. The Board of Education decision. How far, really, has our country come in terms of desegregation?

The changing racial and ethnic diversity in the United States has profound implications for school policies and practices. For example, we see the tensions between schools teaching the standard, great works of literature along with the European perspective on the settlement of the United States, and schools incorporating multicultural voices in literature and diverse perspectives on U.S. history.

How we think about the concepts of equality, opportunity, and meritocracy affects our views on the purposes and processes of schooling and thus our ideas about fairness and how students should be treated in school. Ideology clearly affects the ways in which schools function. The school’s role in maintaining an ideological system occurs in subtle ways via the “hidden curriculum” - the teaching of societal values, norms, meanings, and beliefs. These teachings are especially important today, as schools are responsible for many of the duties that families once carried out in the lives of children.

To whom, or to what, are schools held accountable? Inclinations of local communities may be at odds with the preferences of the state or nation. How much pressure and control can localities exert on schools when much of the country may be opposed to specific beliefs on the grounds that they do not serve the greater good? Hot button values issues such as religion, sexuality, and sex education, in addition to other topics on students’ curriculums, are serious concerns to public school districts. Can prayer be a part of the school day? Should a group of Arab-American students be allowed to start their own club at school? Is it appropriate for a gay teacher to come out to her students and colleagues? Should abstinence-only education be mandated, or should schools distribute condoms?

The federal government has become a player, too, with its current reform plan, No Child Left Behind. Testing and accountability are the continued on page 13

Students often work in small groups in Michelle’s seminar.
Studying abroad with Rachel Bernstein, recipient of a Jeremy M. Jacobs Study Abroad Scholarship, that took her to Spain where she learned “shrimp have heads,” and much, much more!

The college years are a time to develop yourself into an active and informed member of society. They provide a rich opportunity to learn about the current issues being faced by humanity and decide where you stand. Of equal importance in our ever-shrinking global community, the college years are about learning how to meet people in the middle, people who may be different from you. In this way, the beauty of every unique individual has the opportunity to shine forward, allowing our combined intellect to accomplish feats no one of us could have accomplished alone.

Many of the conflicts that develop between individuals, groups, and nations are a result of ignorance and ethnocentrism. One of the best ways to combat this occurrence is to strive to become more open-minded and well rounded. This is one reason why it is so important to take advantage of this time we have as college students, to (re)invent ourselves while exploring first-hand the diverse and ever-changing world we live in. This exploration could be as simple as getting involved in your local community or as adventurous as studying abroad. I started first at home.

I began as the community service coordinator for Clarence High School. Throughout my senior year, I worked diligently to organize student volunteer groups who would help local organizations with projects in the Buffalo area. Although many students chose to do their service in the suburbs where we lived, I felt that the hours would be better spent doing work in the city. One of the main organizations I chose to work with was Habitat for Humanity. I spent many Saturday mornings working along side other students on the revitalization of multiple Buffalo city homes and I can still remember each home we helped to complete. Not only did I enjoy the leadership role of organizing events, I also treasured the experience of working hand-in-hand with families in need. One of the families I assisted during the Spring of 2003 was a Spanish speaking family. I knew only a minimal amount of Spanish at the time but what I knew, I used to communicate with them. The family seemed so appreciative that I would go out of my way to speak Spanish. That stayed with me. I continued to volunteer my time throughout college and soon decided I would someday hold a job that allowed me to bridge my love of working with students with my love of being involved in the community. I began meeting with the leaders of not-for-profit organizations in Buffalo to discuss the types of experiences that would make me a valuable employee to a not-for-profit organization. Several times it was recommended that I learn a second language and each time, I would think back to the Spanish speaking family I met through my work with Habitat. This prompted me to study abroad and upon my return, I can confidently say it was one of the best decisions I have ever made.

I learned so much during my four-month stay in beautiful Salamanca, Spain. I learned that shrimp have heads, that the weather in northern-Spain is not like the weather in Mexico, that embarassada doesn’t mean embarrassed but pregnant, and that trying to communicate in a foreign language is really challenging at first. You temporarily surrender your rights to intelligent, insightful, or even humorous dialogue of any kind.

Conversations can no longer consist of what you care to express, rather of what you are able to express with the limited vocabulary of a polite five-year-old. After about a weeks’
American Education

Continued

“...to implement the increased testing requirements and to meet higher standards. But testing has itself an influence on classroom culture, the definitions of learning and intelligence, the profession of teaching, the relevancy and meaning of tested knowledge to students’ lives, and on the public perception of school success. The related issues of school choice, vouchers, and privatization are part of the mix and need to be scrutinized from opposing “consumer” viewpoints - the individual and the collective.

Questions and ever more questions are interlaced together into the future of our educational system. Where do we go from here? We grappled with these dilemmas in the seminar but more importantly, how will they be resolved by the country as a whole? The answers will be a true test of the American character.”

SARA PENDERGAST, Honors Scholar, Class of 2007

Rachel volunteers with Spanish students while in Salamanca.
I believe that the best teachers are the ones who actively pursue obsolescence — but in the best possible sense of the word. Teachers should help students develop the ability to become their own teachers, so they are prepared to continue their education even after formal schooling has ended. The best teachers I’ve ever had were the ones who made it clear that they valued the ideas of students, who encouraged students to contribute to, and help shape the directions of the classroom, and who challenged students to take charge of their education. I had several such professors at UB, especially within the English Department and best epitomized by Dr. James Holstun. He always made me feel my ideas about a text (usually a poem by John Milton) were important, while simultaneously pushing me to challenge and widen my perspectives. He responded to my work as serious scholarship, and thus helped me envision myself as a budding literary scholar. His pedagogical style became a model for me when I became a teacher myself.

In truth, however, when I began my undergraduate studies at UB, I thought studying literature was a waste of time. Up through the end of high school, no one had shown me the value of discussing the meanings of books. I did not understand what it could open up for a person. Almost by chance, I decided in the Spring Semester of my Freshman Year to take an Honor’s Seminar on European Fiction offered by Professor Henry Sussman. Dr. Sussman’s energetic and fascinating readings of texts by authors including Kafka, Proust and Woolf showed me that literary analysis could provide the means to understand human nature and an individual’s place in the world. Thinking hard about texts proved fun, difficult, and led to moments of insight that I found exhilarating. By the end of the course I was hooked and soon became an English Major.

After graduation, I spent a transitional year interning in Washington D.C. and then moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan to begin Ph.D. studies in English Literature at the University of Michigan. Unexpectedly, my passion for thinking hard about literature and searching personally for “deeper truths” changed after I became a Graduate Student Instructor of first-year composition courses. Instead, I found much more excitement in helping students learn to nurture their own abilities to think critically, not only regarding literature and their own writing, but also in planning their futures. My passion became thinking about what the purpose and goals of education are and should be, and what makes a good teacher.

Subsequently, I switched into the Joint Program in English and Education in order to focus my dissertation work on theorizing a pedagogy that would seek to maximize cooperation between teachers and students in classrooms. In the meantime, I wanted to explore educational systems within different cultural contexts and work for an organization committed to community development. As a result, I decided to postpone completion of my dissertation and join the Peace Corps, where I was placed in the Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan. I left for Uzbekistan in August, 2003 as a University Teacher of English as a Foreign Language. After three months of cross-cultural training, a teaching practicum, and intensive instruction in Russian, I went off to my site in Nukus, the capital of Karakalpakstan, a semi-autonomous republic in the desert of western Uzbekistan.

A person reading a travel book introduction to Nukus will invariably be discouraged from going there at all, finding horror stories of an arid region that has been devastated by the recession and virtual disappearance of the Aral Sea. In truth, however, the stories of misery in Nukus proved overblown (quite literally, in the case of the constant dust storms about which I’d been warned), and life there proved surprisingly comfortable. The local bazaar, for example, contained plenty of food and other items, and the Karakalpak people were mostly laidback and friendly. However, my primary job was to teach English to future English teachers at the Pedagogical Institute of Karakalpakstan, and on this level, my life in Nukus proved very frustrating.

The educational system in Uzbekistan is in dire straits. Among a host of other problems, teachers are paid the equivalent of $30 a month, and consequently feel compelled to demand bribes from their students for high grades. A large percentage of students become very passive, choosing to pay for grades rather than work for them. Students are also forced to harvest cotton every fall, missing two...
Alumni
Updates

Marriages
TARA REIMER ('96) married Keith Stanczewski on May 7, 2005.


CARNIE ABAJIAN ('00) and ERIC FAULRING ('00) were married September 18, 2004.

DAVID CIPOLLA ('00) married Sheila Hennessey.

HAROLD HOTCHKISS ('01) married GILLIAN JULIUS ('02) on August 6, 2005.

VERONICA LaMOTHE ('01) was married on September 18, 2004.

KATHARINE SNYDER ('04) married Peter Tarkulich on September 18, 2004.

HEATHER SPANBAUER ('04) was married April Hayes.

RAYMOND SROKA ('05) married Sheila Hennessey.

NICOLAS ALBICELLI ('96) welcomed a girl, Gabriella Antoinette, to his family.

Births
JEANNIE (KAO) KOENIG ('93) and her husband Benjamin welcomed a daughter, Lauren, born on June 22, 2005.

months of classes. Additionally, resources are unbelievably limited in comparison to what we are used to in the U.S. This institutionally-enforced idleness leaves graduates, most of whom scarcely understand the basics of English, going off to primary and second schools to “teach” this same subject. Their own students, in turn, learn very little, and the cycle whereby teachers pretend to teach and students pretend to learn continues.

As a Peace Corps Volunteer, I obviously had no authority to change this system. But I did offer a “bribe-free” haven for students in their regular classes, created an English club, and instituted office hours. I also tried to raise morale in the department with teaching seminars that often turned out to be pep talks rather than discussions about education. But there was little else I could do. Many volunteers throughout the country expressed frustrations similar to my own. It seemed we were waging a battle we had already lost before it began.

Increasingly I focused my energy on working with those few students who had refused to let the system destroy their dreams of mastering English and pursuing further education abroad. In cooperation with some of these active students, I wrote a grant for an English Language Resource Center for which we obtained a TV, VCR, stereo system, audio tapes, movies, and 500 books and magazines. This center gave everyone involved an important sense of accomplishment.

The great irony of my Peace Corps experience is that while I faced regular disappointment professionally, the desert proved serendipitous for my personal life. I did not expect to encounter romance living in an ecological disaster zone, but the strangest things can happen in life. At a Peace Corps Thanksgiving party early in my service I met a Kazakh woman finishing her study in the Russian Philology department at Karakalpak State University. I asked her to be my Russian tutor and, a couple of months later, to be my wife. To my great fortune, both times she said yes. Bayan Izimbetova and I were married in June, 2004 in a wonderful quasi-Eastern, quasi-Western set of ceremonies. Then on the day of our first wedding anniversary (she having obtained her U.S. Immigration Visa just in time) we left for the States as heightening security concerns forced the closing of Peace Corps Uzbekistan.

My Peace Corps experiences enhanced my interest in educational systems in the developing world, and I’m returning to the University of Michigan to incorporate this interest into my dissertation. I imagine the problems endemic to the Uzbek educational system are mirrored in many developing countries throughout the world, particularly within the territories of the former U.S.S.R. I want to understand better how corrupt, inefficient pedagogical systems produce downward spirals of non-education, and how to intervene and stop the cycles. In the meantime, generations of students, having been victimized by processes over which they had no control, will reach maturity lacking the proper cognitive and technical skills necessary to achieve their own dreams and advance as a people. So, even if my theory about the best teachers is true, those teachers turning their attention to this part of the world need not worry about becoming obsolete anytime soon.

The “Ship Graveyard” in Moynaq, which used to be on the shore of the Aral Sea, but is now 100 miles away.
What they’re doing now…

1985

HELEN CAPPUCCINO
Here are Helen’s five children—Jacqueline, Mac, Jake, Nick, and Lizzy, her husband Andy, their son-in-law, Jason, and family friend, Andrew.

1988

JOAN CARLETTA
Joan is an Associate Professor in the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering at the University of Akron in Akron, OH. She and her husband Jinho Lee have two children: Michael (8yrs.) and Helen (2 yrs.).

1989

GEORGE McKEE
George is living in San Diego with his wife, Mayumi, and two daughters, Michelle (7yrs.) and Kristina (5yrs.). He is a scientist working for the University of Wisconsin on plasma physics research to develop fusion energy.

TRACY (FERRARA) NIXON & WILLIAM NIXON
Tracey and William have two girls, Hope (born 2001) and Molly (born 2005).

1990

ANN FOX
This spring, Ann was granted tenure and promoted to Associate Professor of English at Davidson College where she continues to teach courses in drama and disability studies. She also oversees the Gender Studies concentration.

HANIF KHALAK
Hanif is currently a Senior Bioinformatics Scientist at Avalon Pharmaceuticals. He and his wife Sevda have two girls, Marwah (8yrs.) and Bushra (6yrs.).

1991

KEVIN CHUGH
Kevin was honored to be chosen as co-inventor of the year for Western New York! He started a company, called Tactus Technologies, that develops virtual reality and simulation products and services for business and government.

1992

ELVIN CHAN
Elvin is working as the Assistant to the Director at the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Asian American Resource and Cultural Center.

DENISE DegARMO

1993

KRISTAN L. CORWIN
Kristan is an Assistant Professor Department of Physics at Kansas State University and was recently awarded a 5-year grant from NSF.

JEANNIE (KAO) Koenig
Jeannie is practicing medicine at Buffalo Spine & Sports Institute as a physician board certified in Physical Medicine & Rehabilitation. She and her husband, Benjamin Koenig have a 5 year old son.

ROBYN (STEINER) ROGERS
Robyn is engaged to be married to Jimmy Pecchioni. She is beginning the final phase of her post Master’s certification in social studies as she begins her student teaching in the Blind Brook School District. She plans to graduate from Manhattanville College in December 2005.

1994

KELLY J. ASHER
Kelly is the Educational Services Manager at The Buffalo News.

PETER Jakubowski
Peter is moving to Las Vegas to take a full time tenure track position at UNLV to head and build a design for a Dance Training Program. He also plans to continue work as a designer.

1995

NICOLE GASPARINI
Nicole was recently named a Congressional fellow for 2005-2006.

1996

NICHOLAS J. ALBICELLI
Nicholas recently began a new position as VP at Bear Stearns’ risk management department.

HEATHER A. DYE
Heather completed a Ph.D. in mathematics at the University of Illinois at Chicago and is currently starting her 3rd year as a post-doc at the United States Military Academy (West Point). She is involved in research in the areas of virtual knot theory and diagrammatic reasoning and teaches mathematics to the cadets. She has published several mathematics articles and the most recent article was published in Algebraic and Geometric Topology, Vol 5.

KAREN SCHUPP
Karen is currently a Senior Lecturer in Arizona State University’s Department of Dance where she teaches technique and theory courses in both the BFA and MFA programs. This past year, Karen was named a Walcopse Teaching Fellow, an award that recognizes excellence and inspiration in college teaching. This coming year, Karen will be returning to UB to present a paper and teach a master class at NDEO’s annual conference. She has also performed her solo work “Not Yet” and an interactive dance technology piece “Bodysense” in New York.

SCOTT WAGAR
Scott is currently a lecturer in English at North Carolina State University in Raleigh. He presented two papers at the “Glory Days” scholarly symposium on Bruce Springsteen, held at Monmouth University in New Jersey in September.

1997

JASON BELLows
Jason recently finished his residency in Emergency Medicine at The George Washington University where he also served as Chief Resident for 2004-2005. He has accepted an associate faculty position at Georgetown University and will be working in their emergency department as well as at Washington Hospital Center, the largest trauma center in Washington, DC and the regional burn center. Jason and Jennifer Whitfield plan to marry in May 2006.

RUSTIE DIMITRIADIS
Rustie was recently accepted to an internship at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Missouri. Her plans include participating in a three month internship and then continuing on at the Forerunner School of Ministry to complete a two or three-year diploma program. Rustie and her husband Steve live in Lockport, NY and are actively involved in their church.

TRACY MANNING
Tracy and her partner just bought a farm together!

KIMBERLY (GRZANKOWSKI) WEST
Kimberly has been named Director of Advancement for the University of Texas at San Antonio College of Business.

1998

ANTHONY SCIINTA
Tony received his Ph.D. in social psychology from UCLA last year and is working as an Assistant Professor at Williams College.

Sandeesh “Sandy” Singh
After completing his residency in Emergency medicine in Philadelphia, Sandy is now an attending physician for Fremont Emergency Services at Southern Hills and Mountain View Hospitals in Nevada.

BOB WONG
Bob currently lives in Baltimore, MD and is one of the chief residents in the department of anesthesiology at Johns Hopkins.
1999

SARAH PHILLIPS
Sarah received her MSW from University of Michigan. She and her husband, Jeff Swift, are currently serving in the Peace Corps in the Village of Tiro in Guinea, Africa.

STEPHANIE PLANITKO
Stephanie has returned to her hometown and is the new owner of the dance studio where she grew up taking lessons, The Dance Company Inc. (www.thedancecompanyindy.com)

CYNTHIA RUDIN
Cynthia is currently a postdoctoral research fellow in the Center for Neural Science at New York University.

2000

KURT MARTIN
Kurt is an Assistant District Attorney in Coffee County, Georgia. He prosecutes felony offenses in the Superior Courts and the Court of Appeals.

JESSICA SPIELBERGER
Jessica recently graduated from Teachers College at Columbia University with a Master’s Degree in Education Leadership and is serving as Interim Upper School Director at the Village Community School in Greenwich Village.

2001

SETH BARLAM
Seth Barlam has been promoted to Audit Manager, General Electric Corporate Audit Staff (CAS).

KEVIN GREEN
Kevin is pursuing his Ph.D. at the University of Oregon in the Department of Geography.

HAROLD J. HOTCHKISS
Harold received his MFA in Theatre this past May from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is currently working as a freelance lighting design consultant.

VERONICA (LAMOTHE) HUNTER
Veronica is continuing to work in chemistry research and development in New Jersey.

SEAN NEALSON
Sean is working as a reporter at the Riverside Press-Enterprise, a newspaper in Riverside, CA.

ANDREW SOKOLOW
Andrew moved to Cleveland, OH to start his pediatric residency at Case Western.

2002

SAMUELA FRANCESCHINI
Samuela is finishing her Ph.D. at UB on a National Science Foundation Fellowship. She and her husband, Robert Bisantz, have an 18 month old son, Matteo.

NICHOLAS GILL
Nicholas is still working at Fisher-Price and has been playing Tuba with the Point Abino Stompers, a Dixieland band that plays in Canada.

SANDRA GOODRICH
Sandra recently became engaged to Garret Lau ('02).

GILLIAN JULIUS
Gillian is a software analyst for G.E. Transportation Systems in Erie, PA.

SHOSHANA TOBIAS
Shoshana is living in Long Island, NY and is a Pediatric Physical Therapist working with at risk and developmentally delayed infants as well as disabled children in the school systems. She is currently working with others to create opportunities for adaptive sports/sports teams in her district.

2003

KRISTIN M. HUNGER
Kristin is pursuing a Master’s Degree in Student Affairs, Higher Education at Ohio State University. This summer she completed an internship at Lancaster University in Lancaster, England working with the Dean of Biological Sciences on a research project looking into the British Research Assessment Exercise. Her project’s findings were published and the results are being used to restructure Lancaster’s science departments to better serve students and faculty.

2004

FRANKIE LAVERNWAY
Frankie is a doctoral student in the History Department at UB.

SOPHIA BALDERMAN
Sophia is currently a medical student at Syracuse Upstate Medical. She traveled to Israel this summer through the Taglit-birthright Israel (BRI) program which offers free, 10 day, no-strings-attached trips to Israel to acquaint young people between the ages of 18 and 26 to their Jewish heritage.

HEATHER (SPANBAUER) BISSELL
Heather recently accepted a faculty position at Albany College of Pharmacy with a focus on Ambulatory Care.

ERICA CARLOS
Erica is enrolled in the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. Program at UB.

CASSIE DURAWA
Cassie and John Taylor ('04) are both beginning their 2nd year at the University at Buffalo School of Medicine.

SARA HARRINGTON
Sara is in a Writing and Publishing Master’s Program at Emerson College in Boston, MA.

JULIE MANN
Julie recently returned from Madrid, Spain where she earned a Master’s in Hispanic Literature from NYU. She’s returning to Madrid to spend another year there as a research assistant for NYU and to teach English to Spanish businesspeople.

BROOKE MENTKOWSKI
Brooke was promoted to Relationship Manager, WNY Commercial Banking with M&T Bank.

KATHARINE (SNYDER) TAKULICH
Katharine has been accepted into California State University at Long Beach in the MFA program with an assistantship for costume design.

AMY WOJCIECHOWSKIA
Amy is currently a second year graduate student in a Ph.D. Program in the Department of Chemistry and Chemical Biology at Harvard University.

2005

SURBHI BANSAL
Surbhi is starting her first year at UB Medical School.

KATHLEEN HENNESSEY
Kathleen is currently living in Alexandria, VA and working on Capitol Hill for Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart of Florida. She joined his staff after interning and then working for the National Republican Congressional Committee.

DOUGLAS MUTH
Doug recently started work as a staff auditor with KPMG.

JONATHAN PANCERMAN
Jon is working in the Buffalo, NY area for Pricewaterhouse Coopers as an auditor.

MICHAEL W. PFETSCH
Michael is currently pursuing a Master's Degree in Electrical Engineering at UB, under the Presidential Fellowship award and plans to continue for a Ph.D. His research interest is in multuser wireless communications systems.

SUYATA SOFAT
Suyata is attending UB medical school.

DAVID TURNBULL
David is starting a graduate program in economics at George Washington University and is involved in an internship with Congressman Maurice Hinchey.

MELISSA WARD
Melissa recently received her Doctorate of Pharmacy from UB and is currently completing a pharmacy practice residency with Aurora Healthcare in Milwaukee, WI.

We would like to include a photo of you with your update in the next magazine! Photos will be returned after printing. They can be mailed to: The Honors Program, c/o Karyn St. George or e-mailed to: kcs9@buffalo.edu

SAVE THE DATE!
AUGUST 4-6, 2006
will be the 25th Anniversary Honors Alumni Reunion in Buffalo, New York.

More details to follow...
Each fall we welcome new students to UB and Honors by gathering together for a boat cruise down the Niagara River. In addition to the beautiful scenery students enjoy games, refreshments, and the opportunity to make new friends! This year the Buffalo Chips, UB's all-male a capella group treated everyone to a concert aboard the boat.