

# HARPUR Perspective

## HARPUR EMBRACES MIDDLE EAST STUDIES



**Behind the scenes**  
of "Orpheus"

**Summer Scholars**  
and Harpur Fellows

**Faculty members**  
celebrate 50 years



## New faculty hires and centers are part of the Harpur journey

It is a pleasure to introduce you to the 2015 issue of *Harpur Perspective*. The pages that follow showcase a selection of recent accomplishments in our dynamic and ambitious community. These successes come from decades of efforts across our college. These achievements are leading us to embrace new goals with the same drive and creativity that have made Harpur College a magnet for outstanding students, faculty and staff members since our founding.

You may have heard over the last few years that we are hiring a considerable number of new faculty. The transition is significant: Harpur College now has approximately 100 tenure-track faculty who were not here four years ago! All areas have benefited from this renewal, from the health sciences to philosophy and economics to studio art. We boast new centers for biofilms, complex systems and affective disorders. Our students can now study Turkish, learn about Indian agriculture and minor in Israel studies. We are forging partnerships with strong universities around the world.



At the heart of our success is our commitment to our liberal arts mission. Knowledge about the natural world, human expression and societies is critical to understanding and solving the challenges of our times. The skills that our students learn as part of their process enable them to fulfill their potential and participate successfully in a society governed by change. I hope that you will take pride as you learn more of our journey as a college.

You are vital to the success of Harpur College. We welcome your participation and financial support. And I look forward to seeing you back on campus or at an alumni event sometime soon.

**Anne E. McCall**

Dean, Harpur College of Arts and Sciences

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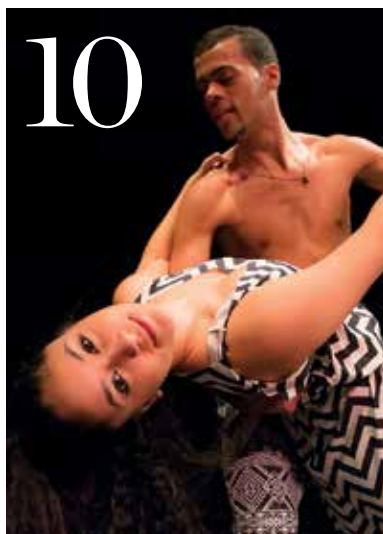
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On the cover: Harpur College junior Magdalena Espinoza, left, junior Andrew Genussa, senior Rebecca Loring and junior Tyler Rock look at a map of the Middle East. Photo: Jonathan Cohen

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### Go “beyond the classroom”

and discover the hobbies and interests of some of Harpur College’s faculty. The video series features faculty members such as Louis Piper, Nicole Hassoun, Carmen Carrión-Flores and Robert Holahan.

See [bit.ly/beyondvideos](http://bit.ly/beyondvideos).

Harpur College alumna Asuncion (Sunny) Hostin '90, a CNN legal analyst and attorney, spoke at the fifth TEDxBinghamton University conference in March. In a talk called "A Possibility Model," Hostin said that there are three "life-defining" days and urged audience members not to let "day one" define them.

The conference, which had a "Walk the Talk" theme, also featured the first Binghamton University undergraduate student speaker: Mathematics and computer science major Jack Fischer discussed "Porn: The New Tobacco."



## Gibb's study helps predict depression risk in children

How much a child's pupil dilates in response to seeing an emotional image can predict his or her risk of depression over the next two years.

According to Brandon Gibb, professor of psychology in Harpur College and director of the Mood Disorders Institute and Center for Affective Science, the new findings suggest that physiological reactivity to sad stimuli, assessed using pupillometry, serves as one potential biomarker of depression risk among children of depressed mothers. Notably, pupillometry is an inexpensive tool that could be administered in clinical settings, such as pediatricians' offices, to help identify which children of depressed mothers are at highest risk for developing depression themselves.

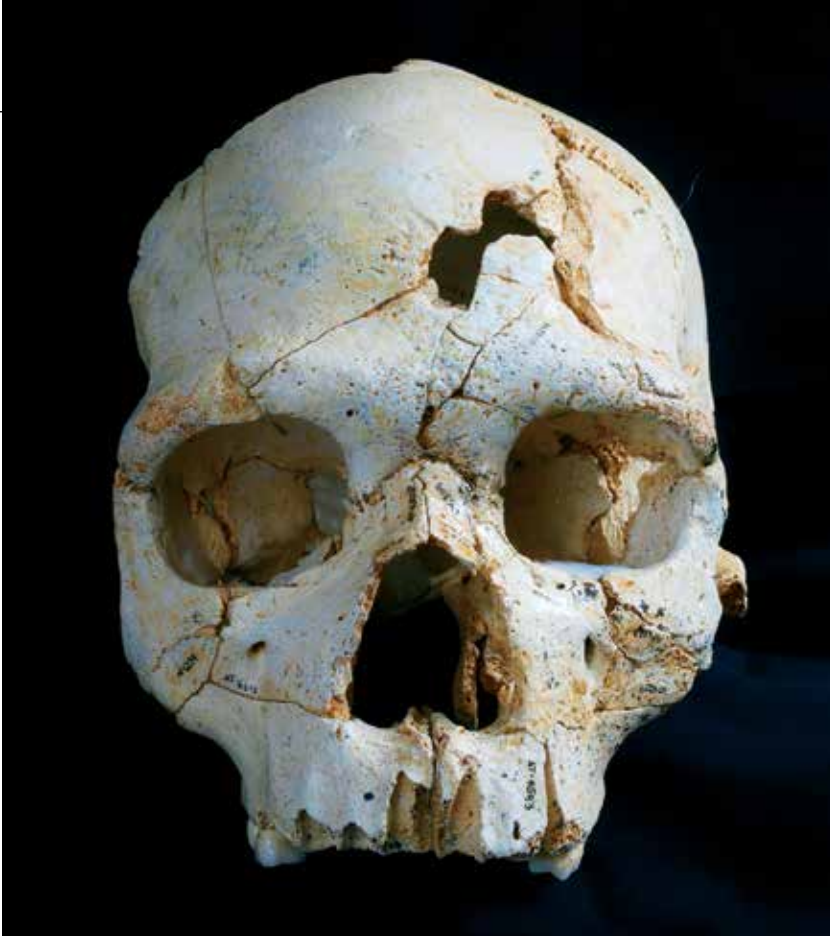


"We think this line of research could eventually lead to universal screenings in pediatricians' offices to assess future depression risk in kids," Gibb says.

Gibb recruited children whose mothers had a history of major depressive disorder and measured their pupil dilation as they viewed angry, happy and sad faces. Follow-up assessments occurred over the next two years, during which structured interviews were used to assess for the children's level of depressive symptoms, as well as the onset of depressive diagnoses.

The study was published in July in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology*.





## Quam discovers evidence of 430,000-year-old murder

Research into lethal wounds found on a human skull may indicate one of the first cases of murder in human history — some 430,000 years ago — and offers evidence of the earliest funerary practices in the archaeological record.

The study, conducted by an international team of collaborators including Binghamton University anthropologist Rolf Quam and published in May in the noted research journal *PLOS ONE*, was carried out at the archeological site of the Sima de los Huesos in northern Spain. The site is located deep within an underground cave system and contains the skeletal remains of at least 28 individuals that date to around 430,000 years ago, during the Middle Pleistocene period. The only access to the site is through a 13-meter deep vertical shaft, and how the human bodies arrived there remains a mystery.

A nearly complete skull, Cranium 17, from the Sima de los Huesos is comprised of 52 cranial fragments recovered during excavations at the site over the last 20 years. This skull shows two penetrating lesions on the frontal bone, above the left eye.

“Evidence for interpersonal violence in the human fossil record is relatively scarce, and this would appear to represent the coldest cold case on record,” Quam says.



## Zu-yan Chen promoted to distinguished teaching professor

Zu-yan Chen, professor in the Asian and Asian American Studies Department and director of the Confucius Institute of Chinese Opera, has been promoted to distinguished teaching professor for his contributions to the educational mission of Binghamton University over the past 28 years. Promotion to the distinguished teaching rank recognizes the mastery of

teaching at the graduate, undergraduate or professional levels.



The Chinese program has grown from the few introductory courses offered when Chen arrived in 1987 into what is now a large and

comprehensive program offering a major, minor and graduate concentration in the new Master of Arts program of the Department of Asian and Asian American Studies. The department also offers majors and minors in Japanese studies and Korean studies, in addition to Asian and Asian American Studies.

## HARPUR BY THE NUMBERS ACADEMIC YEAR 2014-15

**359** Tenure track faculty

**200** Other faculty

**126** Staff

**25** Distinguished faculty

**16** Research professors

## In Memoriam

**Barbara Abou-el-Haj**, 71, former associate professor of art history — Abou-el-Haj joined the Harpur College faculty in 1985. She was active in the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies and the Fernand Braudel Center until her retirement in 2014.

**Peter Browne**, 69, adjunct in the Music Department — Browne earned his master's in organ performance from Binghamton University in 1980. Organist and choir director at Trinity Memorial Episcopal Church in Binghamton, he served as conductor, accompanist and recitalist throughout the eastern United States and Canada, as well as in England and Wales.

**Jacob "Jack" Fischthal**, 98, former professor of biology — Fischthal taught at Binghamton for 38 years before retiring to North Carolina. While at Binghamton, Fischthal traveled to Africa where he taught and continued his research in parasitology. He received much acclaim for his discoveries of new species of parasites.

**Paul Jordan**, 75, former professor of music — Jordan joined the Binghamton faculty in 1973 and directed the Collegium Musicum, conducted the University Orchestra and designed the organ at the Anderson Center for the Performing Arts. He left Binghamton in 1995 and toured the world, performing at churches and cathedrals.

**Wolfgang Paul Kappe**, 84, professor emeritus of mathematics — Kappe joined the mathematics faculty at Binghamton University in 1968 and was instrumental in developing the PhD program. He retired in 2000, but kept in contact with the department by attending algebra seminars.

**Ezra Laderman**, 90, former professor of music — Laderman was a Binghamton faculty member from 1971 to 1982, and went on to the Yale School of Music as a composer-in-residence and later dean, retiring in 2013. His works included 12 string quartets, 11 concertos, eight symphonies, six dramatic oratorios, seven operas and music for two Academy Award-winning films.



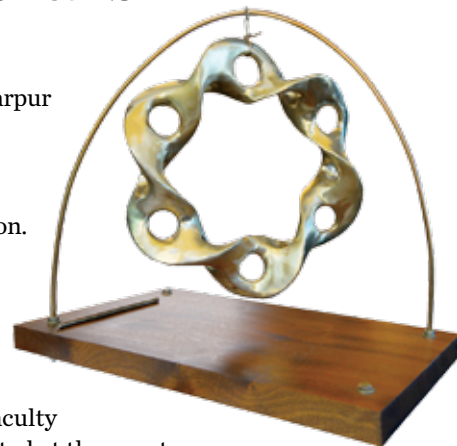
**Stuart O. Landry Jr.**, 90, professor emeritus of biological sciences — Landry taught at the University of Missouri and Louisiana State University before joining the faculty at Binghamton in 1963 and retiring in 1992. His field of interest was the study of hystricomorph rodents.

**Bernard (Bernie) Levy**, 87, professor emeritus of English — Levy joined the faculty in 1961 and retired in 1992. He was active in organizations and causes dedicated to civil rights and social advocacy for which he won the Citizen Action Phoenix Award, served on local boards and wrote frequently for local editorial pages and popular magazines.

## Reception honors faculty authors, scholars

One of the many ways Harpur College faculty fosters innovation is through vigorous research, creativity and publication.

Faculty authors and scholars were honored at a reception in March as part of the Harpur College Culture of Accomplishment. Nicole Hassoun, Isidore Okpewho and Alex Feingold are just a few examples of faculty members whose works were highlighted at the event.



Along with several papers, Hassoun, an associate professor of philosophy, developed an index ranking the world's largest pharmaceutical companies according to their impact on global diseases. The Global Health Impact Index measures: the need for tuberculosis, HIV/AIDS and malaria drugs; the effectiveness of available treatments; and the number of people with access to those drugs. The rankings estimate the number of deaths and disabilities the drugs are alleviating.

Okpewho, a distinguished professor of Africana studies, English and comparative literature, wrote a book titled *Blood on the Tides: The Ozidi Saga and Oral Epic Narratology*. The Ozidi Saga is one of Africa's best-known epics. Okpewho, an award-winning novelist, examines this epic in his book with the tale of a warrior and his sorcerer grandmother's revenge upon the assassins who kill her son. His book serves as an example of oral literature as well as a reflection of specific social and political concerns of the Nigerian Delta and the country as a whole.

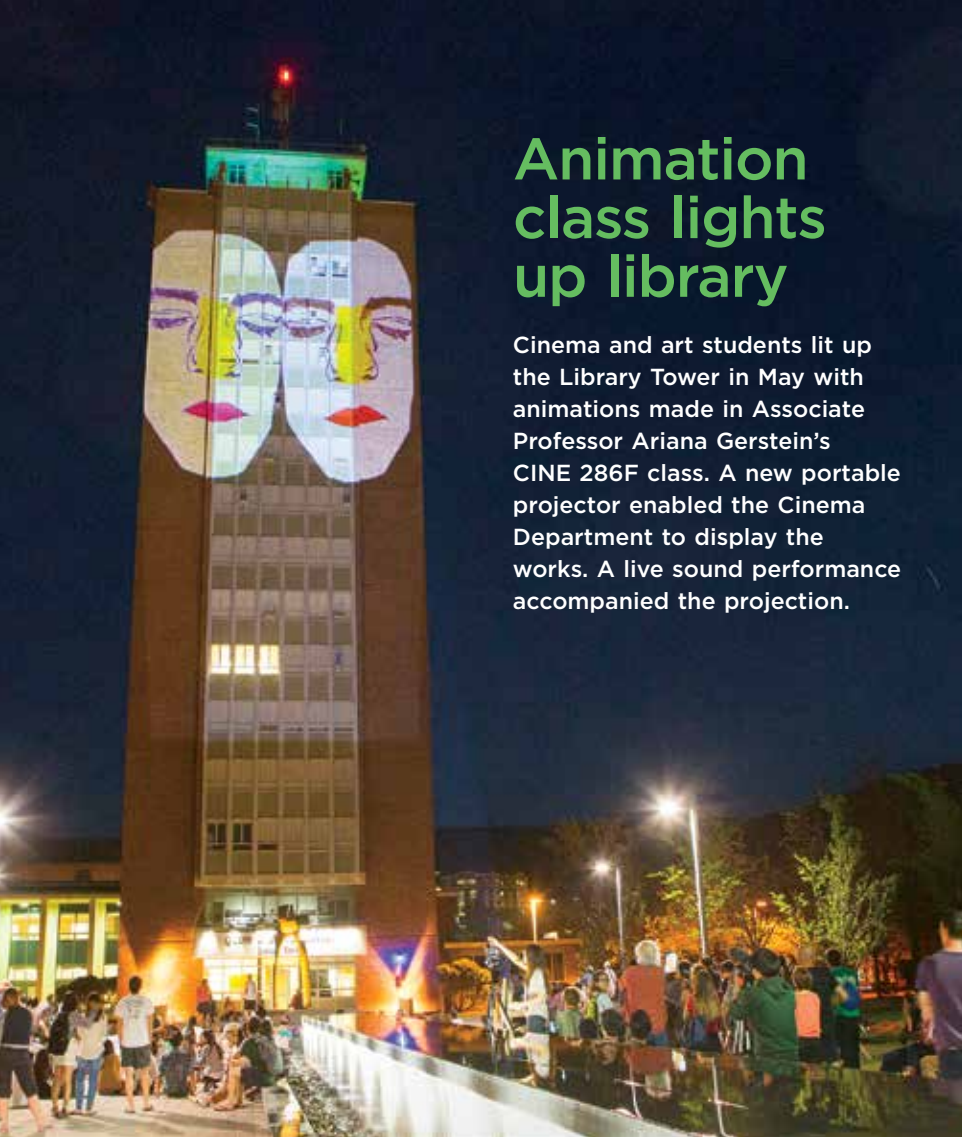
Feingold, a professor of mathematics, makes art — stone, bronze and wood sculptures — using math. Recently, his sculptures have been displayed at the Art Mission in downtown Binghamton and the Broome County Public

Library. Feingold makes his knot sculptures out of rods, with the first rod leading into the second, the second into the third and the third into the first to form a single rod going around the knot three times before closing the loop. This idea is based on the mathematical concept of a fiber bundle, used in differential geometry.



## Animation class lights up library

Cinema and art students lit up the Library Tower in May with animations made in Associate Professor Ariana Gerstein's CINE 286F class. A new portable projector enabled the Cinema Department to display the works. A live sound performance accompanied the projection.



## Poetry and the Children

Tara Betts PhD '14 listens to Harshdeep Singh, 11, recite his poem "The Gentle Wind" during the 38th annual Poetry and the Children Day. More than 400 students from 35 schools took part in the May event.

## In Memoriam

**Florence Margai**, 52, associate dean of Harpur College, interim director of The Institute of Global Cultural Studies and professor of geography — Margai's research focus included food insecurity and childhood health outcomes, malaria morbidity and treatment in West Africa, toxic exposures and adverse health consequences. Memorial gifts may be made to the Binghamton University Foundation Memorial Account #10351. Note "in memory of Florence Margai."



Margai

**Ali Mazrui**, 81, Albert Schweitzer Professor in the Humanities and director of the Institute of Global Cultural Studies — Mazrui was recognized as one of the world's top 100 public intellectuals by *Foreign Policy* magazine and the British journal *Prospect* in 2005. Mazrui was also named one of the world's top 500 most influential Muslims in 2012 and 2013. Prior to joining the faculty at Binghamton in 1989, he taught and served as dean at Makerere University in Uganda, taught at the University of Michigan and was a visiting scholar at countless institutions. He was also the Andrew D. White Professor-at-Large Emeritus and senior scholar in Africana Studies at Cornell University.

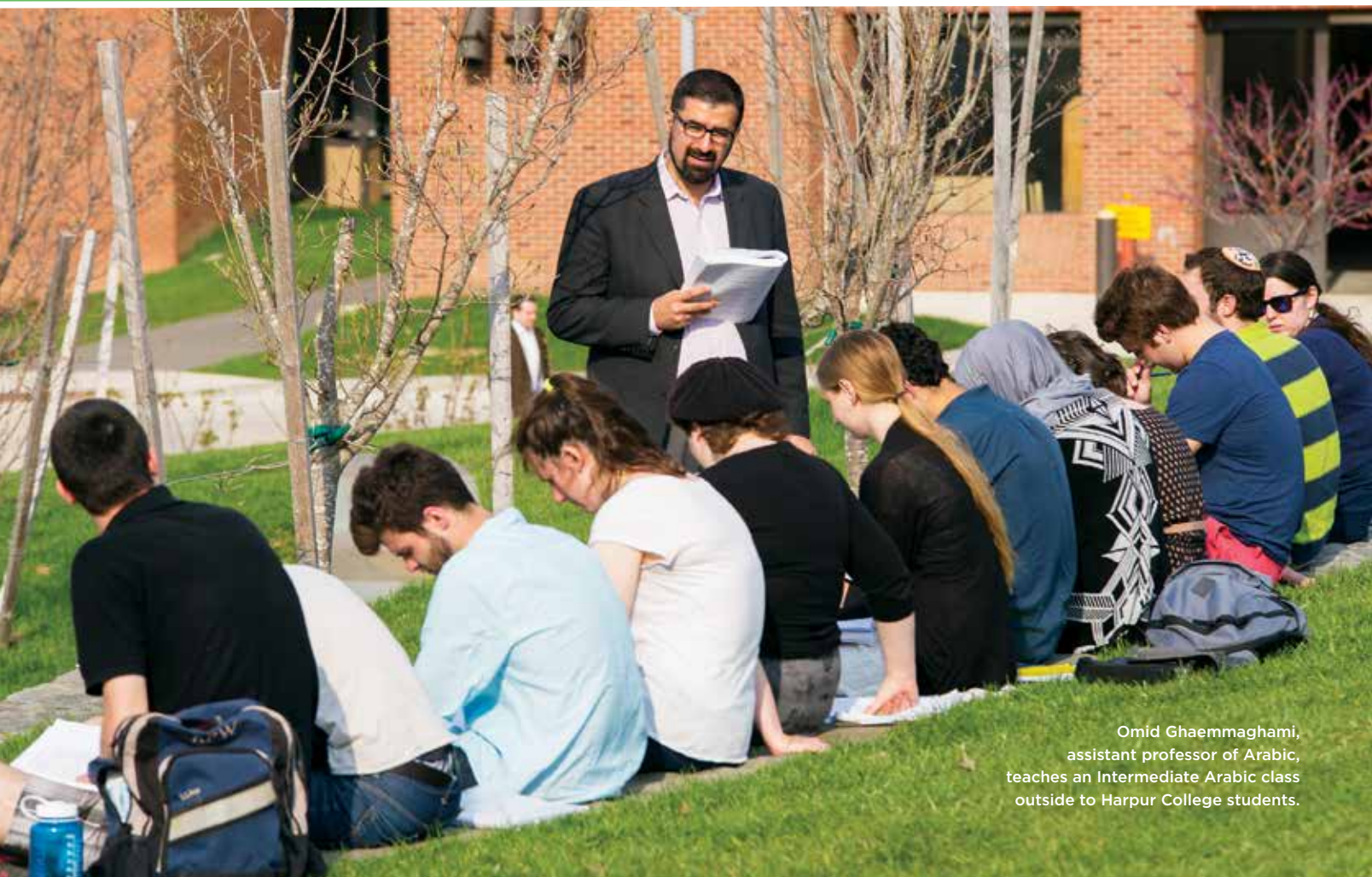


**Bruce McDuffie**, 93, former professor of chemistry — McDuffie joined the faculty at Binghamton University in 1958. McDuffie made international headlines in 1970 when, testing canned tuna, he discovered high levels of methyl mercury in tuna fish and, subsequently, in swordfish. He remained active in environmental studies and chemistry until his retirement in 1988.

**Jean Schmittau**, Bartle professor of mathematics education in the Graduate School of Education — Schmittau came to Binghamton University in 1987 and became a Bartle professor in 2014. She won the Award for Outstanding Service from the Research Council on Mathematics Learning in 1999 and 2007.

**John David Walker**, 83, former associate professor of English — Walker joined the faculty at Binghamton in 1964. After retiring in 1995, he participated in six of the University's London semester-abroad programs.

# A World of Knowledge



Omid Ghaemmaghami, assistant professor of Arabic, teaches an Intermediate Arabic class outside to Harpur College students.

**Harpur takes multidisciplinary approach to Middle East studies**

**H**arpur College's recent investments in Middle East studies will enable students and scholars alike to benefit from a unique blend of linguistic, cultural and political perspectives.

The study of the region is one of Harpur College's greatest strengths, Dean Anne McCall says.

"Harpur College has long had faculty working on the Middle East," she says. "From political science and art history to economics, sociology and history, colleagues bring rare expertise to bear on cultures and issues that are both long-standing and timely.

"Courses across our departments challenge students to incorporate multiple systems and cultures into thinking that accounts for complexity. I am proud of the contributions that our faculty make to knowledge, and I am eager to see how our students will incorporate their learning into their careers and personal commitments."

The foundation for Harpur College's emphasis on the Middle East was laid through the 1980s and 1990s by professors such as Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj in history, Richard Hofferbert in political science and Caglar Keyder in sociology.

"Binghamton University has a long-standing and well-deserved reputation in Middle East studies," says Nancy Um, associate professor of art history and co-director of the Middle East North African (MENA) program. "Long before I joined the faculty here, I considered Binghamton to be an important center for this area of scholarship. Colleagues such as Richard Antoun in anthropology and Donald Quataert in history trained a generation of famous and well-respected Middle East scholars."

The University's partnership with Turkey has been especially strong: a dual-diploma program began in 2004-05 and more than 350 students take part each year.

Besides being the only SUNY school to present an Arabic studies major, Binghamton now offers languages such as Turkish and Hebrew, and Middle East-related courses in several departments in Harpur's divisions of social sciences and fine arts/humanities. Study-abroad opportunities are also available for Turkey and Morocco.

Mary Youssef, an assistant professor of Arabic who joined the faculty in 2012, says she has noticed how students in areas ranging from pre-health and pre-law to engineering and business have taken a greater interest in Middle East studies.

"Studying the languages and cultures of the Middle East demonstrates their global orientation and appreciation of the diversity within our world, which are desirable qualifications for their respective professional titles," says Youssef, who specializes in Arabic literature.

## ARABIC AND TURKISH

Youssef is one of several faculty additions in recent years to the Department of Classical and Near Eastern Studies. A SUNY grant to support the ongoing development of Turkish studies enabled the University to bring Gregory Key aboard in 2014.

Key, who spent nine years in Ankara, Turkey, teaching English and working for the Scientific and Research Technical Council of Turkey, has taught courses such as Elementary Modern Turkish, Ottoman Turkish and Turkish Media and Pop Culture.



**"Binghamton University has a long-standing and well-deserved reputation in Middle East studies."**

—Nancy Um

"I got the impression that Binghamton was looking to develop Turkish and Ottoman studies," Key says of his attraction to Harpur College. "That was appealing to me. I liked the idea of getting in on the ground floor of such an initiative and to be able to set up the language program."

The department also welcomed Omid Ghaemmaghami, who specializes in Islamic intellectual

**“The rich history of the Middle East and its many cultures provides fertile ground for helping students interrogate essential questions regarding how cultural, ethnic and religious differences have been imagined and negotiated over time.”**

—Dina Danon

history and Arabic language and literature, in 2014. Ghaemmaghami is now teaching a course on Koranic Arabic and serving as the undergraduate director of Arabic.

Andrew Scholtz, an associate professor of classics who was formerly the Classical and Near Eastern Studies chair, says the department’s Middle East offerings “allow for a broader and deeper consideration of the linguistic, literary, cultural and religious background to a great deal of what is happening today in several important parts of the world.”

“Arabic remains a language that can open doors professionally, whether one seeks to work in government or business,” says Scholtz, who praises Associate Professor of Arabic Kevin Lacey for bringing Turkish and Persian instruction to the department. “It’s not simply that the Middle East remains a critical part of the world; it’s crucially an area of tremendous growth economically. To have Arabic as a language that one speaks and understands makes one more employable, but no less important is the fact that it broadens one’s outlook culturally, intellectually . . . and the list goes on.”



## CENTER FOR ISRAEL STUDIES

Binghamton University and Harpur College will soon be a leading location for students interested in examining Israel, thanks to the recent approval of the Center for Israel Studies.

The center is directed by Randy Friedman, an associate professor of Judaic studies and comparative literature, and will offer research, programming, study-abroad and learning opportunities for



undergraduate students, graduate students and faculty members. A minor and courses in Israel studies that focus on undergraduate education began in the 2015-16 academic year.

“This is unique — not just to Binghamton University, but to higher education,” Friedman says. “It’s a fantastic benefit to students here to be able to study the complexities of Israeli society.”

The University has also received a multi-year grant from the independent, nonpartisan Israel Institute in Washington, D.C., that is supporting the center by enabling the hiring of three tenure-track professors in the Judaic Studies Department.

Israel-studies courses will examine areas such as culture, religion, politics, literature, human rights and Israel-Palestine, Friedman says.

“There is a lot of undergraduate interest in courses that examine ethnic democracy or human rights or religious conflict,” he says. “Israel studies is so broad that it encompasses a wide range of questions and issues that we think students are hungry to learn about. Students studying history, political science, sociology or Judaic studies can get up to their elbows in fascinating and relevant case studies.”

## MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICAN (MENA) PROGRAM

MENA is an interdisciplinary program that allows students to combine courses in Middle Eastern languages (Arabic, Turkish and Hebrew) with courses in areas such as history, political science, art history and sociology.

The program is now led by two Harpur professors: Um and Kent Schull, an associate professor of history.

“The MENA program has not had a director for over a decade,” Um says. “And it has been precisely during this time that interest in the Middle East and learning Middle Eastern languages has grown among our student body. Professor Schull and I realized that there was a crucial need for an active and responsive MENA program on campus and we also happily noted that many colleagues who teach or conduct research in this area have recently joined the campus. So the time was right to call everyone together in efforts to reinvigorate this long-standing program.”

Future goals for MENA include hosting campus events and developing programming such as a lecture series or an interdisciplinary conference, Um says. A MENA minor is also being developed.

“The minor, once approved, will be useful for those who wish to continue Middle East studies in graduate school or follow a career path related to the Middle East,” Um says.

## HARPUR'S EXPERTISE

The faculty expertise in Middle East studies extends from Ricardo Larémont and Ekrem Karakoc in political science to Moulay-Ali Bouânani in Africana studies to Bat-Ami Bar On in philosophy and Mark Blumler in geography and biological sciences.

In Judaic studies, Dina Danon's research focuses on Sephardi communities on the eastern Mediterranean during the modern period. Danon, an assistant professor in Judaic studies and history who joined the faculty in 2013, teaches courses on medieval and modern Jewish history and Muslim-Jewish relations.

"The study of the Middle East across many disciplines is a vital component of Harpur's curriculum," Danon says. "The importance of this area of study extends far beyond giving students the tools to engage the contemporary global arena in an informed and critical fashion. The rich history of the Middle East and its many cultures provides fertile ground for helping students interrogate essential questions regarding how cultural, ethnic and religious differences have been imagined and negotiated over time."

Um's travels to Yemen, Egypt and Morocco have proven crucial to her scholarly and teaching development. Her courses examine Islamic art, architecture and material culture.

"Recently, so much popular media attention has been devoted to Middle East politics, international relations and current events," she says. "As a counterpoint, it is important to provide students with perspectives from the past and also cultural history. It is my hope that my courses will help students to understand the historic Middle East and adjacent areas with more dimension and complexity. Art can be a useful lens to understand cultures that may seem distant and different from one's own."

Harpur College continues to add expertise to its faculty lineup. Sevinç Türkkan joined the Comparative Literature Department in August after serving as an assistant professor at SUNY Brockport. Türkkan, born in Bulgaria and raised in Turkey, specializes in Turkish literature, cross-cultural studies and translation studies. Besides comparative literature, she also will teach for the department's Translation Research and Instruction Program (TRIP).

For Türkkan, Harpur College was the ideal fit.

"As an educator, I am committed to research. I cannot fathom one without the other," she says. "Binghamton and Harpur offer an ideal place for a person like me. The University's research profile is exciting and stimulating. My position in comparative literature and TRIP fits nicely with my research interests in Turkish and Middle Eastern literatures, transnational comparative studies and translation research. When the fit is there, you feel at home." ■

## THE STUDENT AND THE MIDDLE EAST

# Junior examines influence of Western oil companies



In the last 70 years, oil has made the Middle East one of the most prosperous regions in the world. Development didn't happen on its own though, and Jon Mermelstein spent the summer researching the agents of change based in the United States.

"I'm investigating how American — as well as British — oil companies helped shape the modern Middle East ... in order to demonstrate the impact of private enterprise outside of government intervention," says Mermelstein, a junior majoring in history and minoring in Arabic who also is a 2015 Summer Scholars and Artists Fellowship recipient (see Page 16).

Mermelstein's desire to study the oil industry comes from being a student of Middle Eastern history and a concern for the environment.

"I'm fascinated to peek behind the fossil fuel curtain to see how Western businessmen were able to impact the development of the region," says Mermelstein, who is from Scarsdale, N.Y.

Kent Schull, associate professor of history, has guided Mermelstein during the research. Mermelstein's project is an important and timely one, Schull says.

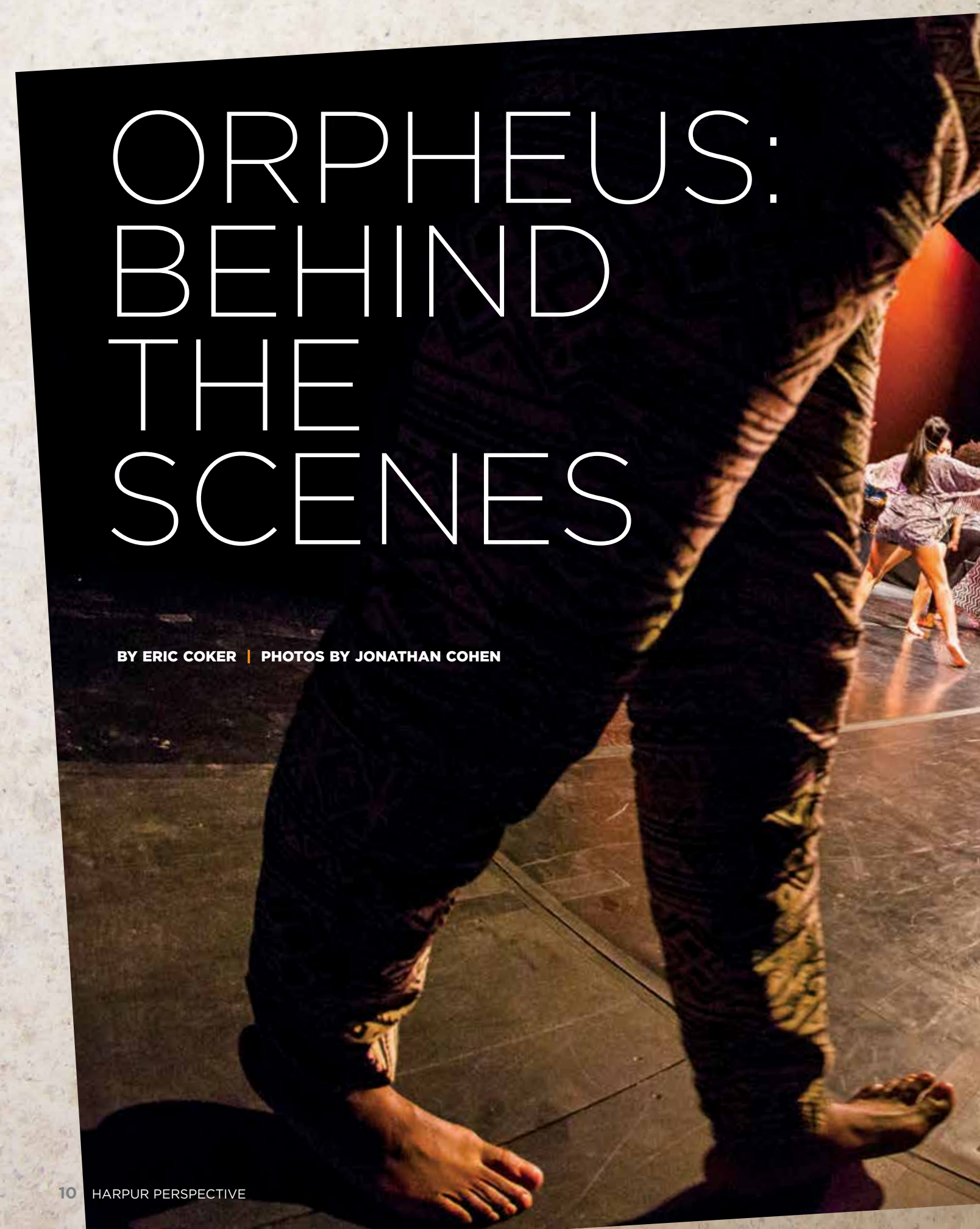
"U.S. social, commercial, missionary, political and oil interests in the region pre-date World War II, but have not been closely investigated," Schull says. "This is what Jon wishes to research in order to find deeper roots of U.S. involvement in the Middle East."

Although his research formally started in late June, Mermelstein spent last spring in Great Britain and got a head start on the project.

"I had the opportunity to travel to London and visit the British National Archives to find government records from when oil operations began in Iraq," he says.

Mermelstein wants people to be aware that large-scale industry can exert enormous influence over the development of history.

"Oil epitomizes this trend because the companies that refine petroleum are both remarkably powerful and overlooked," Mermelstein says. —*Christian Macaluso*

A large, artistic photograph of a person's legs in patterned pants, with a blurred figure in the background.

# ORPHEUS: BEHIND THE SCENES

BY ERIC COKER | PHOTOS BY JONATHAN COHEN



**With four faculty choreographers, 25 student dancers and a live band onstage that featured students, alumni, faculty and community members, the Theatre Department's production of "Orpheus" was not the typical spring dance show.**



Choreographers Andy Horowitz, JoEllen Kuhlman, Samuel Elikem Kwame Nyamuame and Stephanie Surowka-Sanders set the tragic love story of Orpheus and Eurydice in an African village. The show, which took place March 27-29 and starred students Marcol Rodriguez and Taire Herasme, blended jazz, modern, hip-hop, step, tap, ballet and African dance.

"It's unique in the history of the University," Horowitz said. "We set out to choreograph as four equals. This is a real, pure collaboration."

The show featured songs composed and arranged by James Burns, associate professor and chair of the Music Department who specializes in ethnomusicology and leads the Nukporfe African Dance-Drumming Ensemble at Binghamton University. Burns also led the live band during "Orpheus."

"Orpheus" is a showcase for the collaborations that are taking place across Binghamton University, Burns said.

"This fits right in with the Transdisciplinary Areas of Excellence that the University is emphasizing," he said. "You have departments working together on this production. And this is representative of the fine arts in general being more inclusive of the types of things that are of interest to our students, which includes a lot of non-western art." ■





# Harpur Edge: Year one

## ABOUT HARPUR EDGE

**L**aunched in the fall of 2014, Harpur Edge helps students prepare for graduate school and careers while providing them with the resources to enrich their college experience.

Harpur Edge, supported by the donations of its founding donors, welcomes students into the academic community and assists them in taking advantage of opportunities in Harpur College and beyond by:

- Connecting students with key resources on and off campus, including Harpur alumni;
- Sponsoring programs and events to enrich the education of students;
- Providing support for student initiatives.

The Edge office, located in Library North next to Jazzman's Library Tower Cafe, opened in October 2014. It includes a reception area, a workshop room for small meetings and presentations, a collaboration room and an administrative office. Hours are 10 a.m. – 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## MEET THE DIRECTORS

Harpur Edge Director Wendy Neuberger '81, MBA '84, and new Assistant Director Danielle Britton '06, MAT '08, oversee a student staff that aids Harpur students. Last year's staff included six student associates, a graduate assistant and an academic intern.



## 2014-15 AT A GLANCE

Key accomplishments included:

- Alumni initiatives that highlighted mentoring/network opportunities, such as “Lunch and Learn” sessions; a week-long “Liberal Arts to Careers” discussion series; and physician-alumni lectures (the latter two were co-sponsored with Harpur Advising);
- Student initiatives such as guided tours of the Anderson Center for the Performing Arts, the Binghamton University Art Museum and the Nature Preserve; lunches with Dean Anne McCall; and two “student success” panels;
- Support for signature programs such as the Liberal Arts to Careers Externship (LACE), the Summer Physician Mentoring Program and the Harpur Law Council Public Interest Law Summer Internship;
- Creation of the Harpur Edge Student Support Fund to provide Harpur undergraduates with financial assistance to pursue experiential educational opportunities.

## FOR 2015-16

Harpur Edge plans to build on its foundation in 2015–16 by expanding programming for Harpur students and creating a student/alumni mentoring program. The Harpur Edge office was renovated this summer to give a fresh look and improve access for students.



**1 LUNCH AND LEARN WITH ALUMNI** Harpur Edge hosted several “lunch and learn” sessions during the 2014–15 academic year. One session featured Owen Pell ’80, a partner in the New York office of the international law firm White & Case and an Auschwitz Institute for Peace and Reconciliation (AIPR) board member.

**2 GUIDED TOURS OF CAMPUS** Harpur Edge also presented guided tours of campus locations such as the E.W. Heier Teaching and Research Greenhouse, left, and the Nature Preserve, along with backstage tours of Theatre Department productions.

**3 CONNECTING WITH CAMPUS** The Harpur Edge office, located on the first floor of the Library Tower, serves as a hub for Harpur students. Besides serving as a home for programming, the office is an area where students can receive answers to Harpur-related questions and acquire information about signature programs, such as the Liberal Arts to Careers Externship.

**4 IN THE COMMUNITY** The Edge staff also assisted in the community, taking part in the Alumni Global Day of Service at The Discovery Center of the Southern Tier garden project in Binghamton on April 18.





# Personal experiences drive research projects

By Olivia Cuccaro

History major Sara Hobler's research examines gender construction in Russia in the early 20th century.

**O**n the surface, the 2015 Summer Scholars and Artists Program provides funding for the research and development of original projects by 20 undergraduate students, 18 of whom hail from Harpur College. Mentored by a Binghamton University faculty member, students are awarded \$3,000 to complete their work, with an additional stipend of \$1,000 to the mentor.

Delving deeper, the selected Harpur scholars participated for reasons exceeding academia alone. For many, personal experiences paved the way for the pursuit of not a subject, but a passion.

the alterations in the brain that give rise to behavioral disabilities with the hopes of eventually creating some treatment specific for that disorder,” Diaz says.

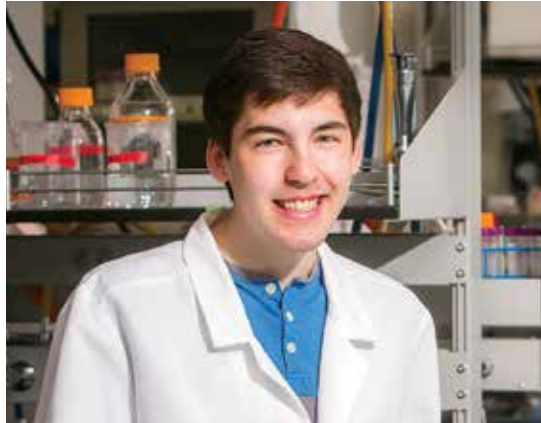
With his sights set on medical school, Cole says he strives to “be that doctor for someone else’s parent in the future.”

A similar devotion to reaching others through science inspired junior Kyle Loftus to conceive his summer study of the nuclear pore complex.

Loftus previously helped organize a Science Olympiad and science day for children at the Roberson Museum and Science Center in downtown Binghamton.

“People say that it’s impressive that I’m a (sophomore) doing this, but I’m just following my passion.”

—Sara Hobler



Jesse Cole, an integrative neuroscience major, spent his summer studying Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD).



Jaineba Chang, an English major, is developing a novel about growing up in Jamaica.

To junior Jesse Cole, integrative neuroscience is more than just a major. As a child, Cole witnessed his father undergo numerous surgeries after he was diagnosed with a benign brain tumor.

“Seeing what these fantastic surgeons were doing to save my dad’s life motivated me to go into neuroscience,” Cole says.

Cole furthered his education over the summer by using a rat model to discern a link between early prenatal alcohol exposure and anxiety disorders during a child’s adolescence.

Marvin Diaz, assistant professor of psychology and mentor to Cole, describes the project as “very transitional.”

“The umbrella term Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is a new field of research, and important to study in order to understand

“Being able to expose them to science at a young age, develop their interest in it so they have a drive to pursue it in the future, I think it’s a really cool experience,” he says.

Alongside Sozanne Solmaz, assistant professor of biological chemistry, Loftus centered on the interactions of two proteins, identifying their interacting domains and their recruitment of motor proteins to the cell during the cell cycle.

For English major Jaineba Chang, personal experience was best translated from pen to paper.

“I always wanted to be a writer,” the senior says. “I had been wanting to write a novel for a while and I thought that this was the perfect opportunity.”

Titled *Tallawah*, Chang’s project was a partially fictionalized autobiography about growing up in Jamaica from the perspective of someone born

in America. Chang moved from Brooklyn, N.Y., to Manchester, Jamaica, at the age of 7. Her book will explore feelings of alienation and concepts of race in the country.

“It’s about having to learn a culture that is technically already mine,” she says. “I want people to be able to relate to a culture that isn’t their own through shared experiences.”

“People say that it’s impressive that I’m a (sophomore) doing this,” Hobler says. “But I’m just following my passion.”

A self-proclaimed feminist, Hobler’s own curiosities about gender and femininity were amplified by a Russian Culture and Civilization class taught by faculty mentor Sidney Dement, assistant professor of Russian, leading Hobler to her topic of analysis.

“I came across feminism as a way to feel secure about myself as a young woman and feel strong,” she says. “I’m so used to hearing about women’s struggles from a western perspective and I wanted to look at it from a different point of view. . . . I was really fascinated by that period because of massive changes that were going on in Russia.



Theatre major Danielle Nigro spent her summer at the William Esper Studio in Manhattan.



Art history major Colin Roth’s research focuses on the sociological aspects of stadium architecture.

**“I [have] more of an understanding of myself as an actor. And I have a taste of the real world.”**

—Danielle Nigro

A book played a vital role in junior Colin Roth’s project as well. Childhood favorite *Roberto the Insect Architect* laid the foundation for Roth’s summer research on how the architecture of stadiums built for sporting events demonstrates unique cultural and sociological effects.

Visiting stadiums across the Northeast United States and soccer-specific stadiums in London, Roth says he was “passionately excited” to focus on the differences between soccer stadiums in the United States versus those in the United Kingdom in terms of fan experience and labor.

“Stadiums in general are architectural marvels,” Roth says. “How countries put people to work to build them says a lot about them.”

Exploring a different culture was also key to history major Sara Hobler’s summer work. Hobler’s research centered on gender construction in early 20th century Russia through the eyes of two different groups of Russian women: Marxist revolutionaries and literary authors.

. . . I knew I didn’t want to hear what men had to say about what it was like to be a woman in Russia.”

Whether their personal passions are in fine arts and humanities, social sciences, or science and mathematics, the Harpur scholars expressed a deep appreciation for the program and the experiences it facilitated.

“This is something that I never would have been able to do without the scholarship and something that’s going to really push me along in my career,” says theatre major Danielle Nigro of time spent studying the Meisner technique at the William Esper Studio in Manhattan.

The first theatre student to participate in the summer program, Nigro returned to Binghamton University after six weeks of training to devise a solo performance show at the Theatre Department’s Fall Open House.

“I [have] more of an understanding of myself as an actor,” Nigro says. “And I have a taste of the real world.” ■

Anna Brooks, Eleanor Krasner, Christian Macaluso, Maureen Mullarkey and Haley Silverstein contributed to this story.



For more on the projects of Kyle Loftus (a biochemistry and economics double major), above, Jaïneba Chang, Jesse Cole, Sara Hobler, Danielle Nigro and Colin Roth, go to [binghamton.edu/harpur/perspective](http://binghamton.edu/harpur/perspective).

## Harpur's other Summer Scholars

### IAN ANDERSON

**MAJOR:** Chemistry

**PROJECT:** Enhanced Cellular Uptake of PNA Using New Monomer O

**MENTOR:** Professor Eriks Rozners

### ANTHONY APRILE

**MAJOR:** Creative writing

**PROJECT:** *Leonine: A Novel*

**MENTOR:** Professor Liz Rosenberg

### JACQUELINE CLARK

**MAJOR:** Biology

**PROJECT:** Neural Origin of Chewing Inhibition in *Manduca sexta*

**MENTOR:** Associate Professor Carol Miles

### THOMAS COSTELLO

**MAJORS:** Psychology and philosophy

**PROJECT:** Determinism, Free Will, and Depression: How philosophical systems of belief may change the way we process emotions

**MENTOR:** Distinguished Professor Steven Lynn

### TIMOTHY CRUMP

**MAJOR:** Cell and molecular biology

**PROJECT:** Detection of Viable *Mycobacterium Avium* Paratuberculosis in Commercially Pasteurized Whole Milk by Culture Methods and qPCR with Propidium Monoazide Treatment

**MENTOR:** Assistant Professor Jeffrey Schertzer

### ELODIE EID

**MAJOR:** Environmental studies

**PROJECT:** Effects of Deer Overpopulation at Binghamton University

**MENTOR:** Associate Professor John Titus

### TARA JACKSON

**MAJOR:** Integrative neuroscience

**PROJECT:** Auditory Illusions

**MENTOR:** Assistant Professor Monteith McCollum

### JINGWEI (ANNA) LI

**MAJORS:** Cinema and math

**PROJECT:** From the Stars — Documentary about Autistic People in China

**MENTOR:** Assistant Professor Tomonari Nishikawa

### JON MERMELSTEIN

**MAJOR:** History

**PROJECT:** American Oil Companies in the Middle East: A Predecessor to US Imperialism?

**MENTOR:** Associate Professor Kent Schull

### ANITA RAYCHAWDHURI

**MAJOR:** English

**PROJECT:** Defining Ourselves and Outlining Our Lives

**MENTOR:** Lecturer Barrett Bowlin

### MICHAEL RULLI

**MAJOR:** English

**PROJECT:** The Creation and Development of a Superstar: On Stage and On the Page

**MENTOR:** Lecturer Joe Weil

### CHRISTIAN SALAZAR

**MAJOR:** Biology

**PROJECT:** Assembly of Gold Nanoparticles with Protein and Antibody

**MENTOR:** Professor Chuan-Jian (CJ) Zhong

# Graduate students earn prestigious research awards

**“I knew that Binghamton was one of the best universities for me to conduct my research project.”**

—Delal Aydin

**G**raduate students are flourishing in a variety of research interests, from administering studies on campus, conducting research abroad, working with faculty and serving as mentors to undergraduates. Graduate students are preparing to make a difference in the world.

Here are two award-winning students and their stories:

## **ALIONA TSYPES**

A surprising amount is known about suicide and self-injurious thoughts.

- People likely to injure or kill themselves have a certain cognitive inflexibility: They get in a rut of thinking that they can't break out of.
- They process visual inputs differently and may have difficulty disengaging their attention from emotionally salient cues.
- They frequently deal with some form of clinical depression and have difficulty regulating emotions.
- They often have difficulty sleeping.

What is not known is how all those factors relate, says Aliona Tsypes, a doctoral student in clinical psychology. Tsypes' mission for the three years of her National Science Foundation graduate research fellowship will be to explore that in a way that could re-write suicide treatment protocols within a decade.

What she learns could help to reduce some staggeringly large figures: More than 38,000 people in America will kill themselves this year. About 485,000 will be treated in hospitals for self-inflicted injuries. Another 2 million non-hospitalized cases of self-injury will be reported.

“It's such complex behavior, it's like we're looking at different sides of an elephant,” Tsypes says. “A person with one disorder tends to have multiple disorders; there's a lot of overlap.”

Does one disorder cause the other? Do they develop independently or in tandem? Do they combine to create a self-injurious or suicidal behavior or is one element alone the key factor?

To find answers, Tsypes plans a study of 60 people: 20 people with depression who have made a suicide attempt; 20 with depression who have not attempted suicide; and a 20-person control group.

After a clinical interview, participants will complete a series of tasks during which their neural and physiological responses are recorded, including an eye-tracking study showing the subjects two photos simultaneously: one sad and one neutral face. Subjects will then be fitted with portable monitors for seven days, recording activity levels, light, sleep efficiency, emotional distress and other factors.

Studies of cognition, behavior, psychophysiology and brain activity have been done before, but never so many elements on the same study group at the same time. Tsypes says she hopes to get a far more complete picture of what's going on inside a suicidal person and what may put a person at risk.

“We think of this project as a first step,” she says. —*Todd McAdam*

## DELAL AYDIN

For Delal Aydin, struggling to be recognized is not a challenge. As a recipient of the SSRC Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship (IDRF) award, Aydin plans to use her research opportunity to help answer questions of cultural struggles for recognition, despite high costs.

Aydin, a doctoral student working with Professor Shelley Feldman, is using her IDRF award to conduct independent research in sociology.

“I was truly proud and happy,” she says. “I had worked on the application very hard because this fellowship was critical for me to be able to conduct an independent research project in Diyarbakir, Turkey.”

Aydin’s research focuses on the formation of the *yurtsever*, or patriot, subjecthood in a high school setting when Kurdish youth were invited to participate in the building of the Turkish nation. Her research investigates the processes that constitute *yurtsever* subjecthood as a historical process of subject formation that rejected assimilation, and instead chose to be a part of the struggle for recognition, despite potentially risking their lives.

Currently in Diyarbakir, Aydin is conducting interviews with graduates and faculty members of high schools in the 1990s, when the Kurdish mobilization took place. Aydin hopes that her research will contribute to the literature on the Kurdish question and a durable solution for it.

“I think that an understanding of Kurdish movement from this angle might provide us another window to look at the other struggles of recognition in other parts of the world, including the United States,” Aydin says.

“I knew that Binghamton was one of the best universities for me to conduct my research project,” Aydin says. “I had high expectations and my professors in the Sociology Department at Binghamton University exceeded my expectations.” —*Anna Brooks*

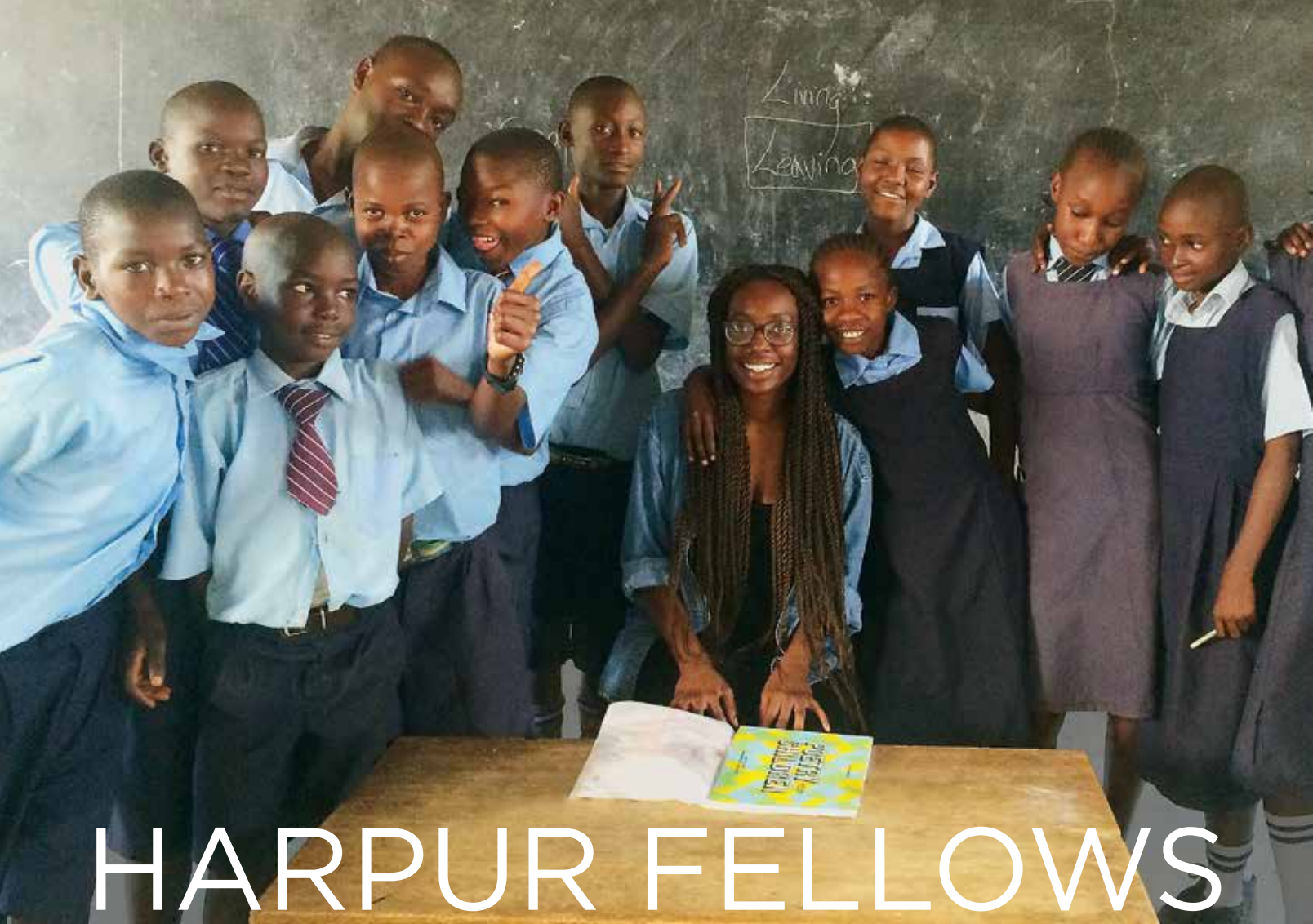
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Delal Aydin, left, a doctoral student in the Sociology Department, stands with a woman she interviewed for her research in Derik, Turkey, a small town near the Syrian border.



Tsypes





# HARPUR FELLOWS

## reach out to Kenya, Haiti, Egypt

By Haley Silverstein, Eleanor Krasner and Maureen Mullarkey

**H**arpur Fellows do more than design a project that serves the community: They change the lives of people of all ages.

“The Harpur Fellows program gives our students the opportunity to explore their academic and cultural interests through sustained engagement with communities nationally and internationally,” says Doug Jones, an assistant dean of undergraduate studies who oversees the program. “The program attracts some of our best and most motivated undergraduates in the natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities.”

The program, made possible by the support of Harpur alumni, provides students with the means

to pursue an interest that is not possible through an on-campus academic program. Fellowship recipients receive up to \$4,000 to pursue their project, which usually takes place over the summer. Past recipients have worked in areas of New York such as Brooklyn and Skaneateles, and overseas in countries such as China, Belarus, Tajikistan and Nigeria.

“This year’s fellows hold a range of interests, from children’s education to breast-cancer research, and will apply their skills to the betterment of communities as far afield as Haiti and Kenya,” Jones says. “Harpur Fellows return to Binghamton having gained first-hand experience and prepared to contribute in integral ways to the intellectual life of our University.”

PROVIDED



## LYNN MUGODO

**Project:** Lending a Hand to the St. Jude Education Centre

**Year/majors:** Spring 2015 graduate/political science and philosophy, politics and law

**Hometown:** Nairobi, Kenya

Lynn Mugodo '15 spent her summer in rural Kenya, teaching poetry and working with children at the St. Jude Education Centre.

Lynn Mugodo was 14 years old and living in Nairobi, Kenya, when flames engulfed the cities, violence soared and bloodshed swept the country after the contested 2007 presidential elections.

“On my birthday, they announced [the election results] and havoc broke loose,” Mugodo says. “You could not leave the house. It was really bad. That was the experience that made me think, ‘I want to focus on human rights. I want to be able to help people.’”

Over the summer, Mugodo returned to Western Kenya — to her mother’s rural village of Chakol — as a Harpur Fellow. There she taught an after-school poetry class to children at the local school.

“I chose a poetry program because I wanted to help the kids improve on their English, but not in an academic way because Kenya’s education system is very intensive in terms of academics,” she says.

Mugodo, now pursuing her master’s degree in public administration, used some of the funding she

received as a fellow to build an additional classroom.

“The village where my mom is from still needs a lot of development,” Mugodo says. “There’s a women’s group there called the Daughters of St. Jude and (it) basically started the school for underprivileged children.”

Only a handful of the school’s 200 children can afford to pay the tuition. As a result, many of the building projects have remained unfinished.

Mugodo says being a Harpur Fellow “feels like the first major step in the right direction with humanitarian work.”

“What I want to do in the future is help women and children in rural areas with sustainability,” she says. “That’s why I chose this project. I also strongly believe in being a positive role model for children. I think all children need that, especially if they’re going through tough times in life or they’re not from a privileged background. So for me to be able to do that for children, I think that’s one of the best things you can give back as an older person.”

**“What I want to do in the future is help women and children in rural areas with sustainability.”**

—Lynn Mugodo

## BRIANA RENOIS

**Project:** Project K

**Year/major:** Junior/sociology

**Hometown:** Brooklyn, N.Y.



**“Binghamton (has given) me an opportunity to return as an adult with money, resources and the ability to have a direct impact.”**

—Briana Renois

**A** lone and gripping a basket of oranges, a little girl approached Briana Renois outside the gates of a Haitian hospital begging for money. At that moment, Renois knew she wanted to make a change.

“She was no older than 8, and needed money for medical fees,” Renois says. The Haitian native says that she regularly encountered these upsetting situations as a child.

Nine years and countless life experiences later, Renois, a junior who spent the second half of her youth in Brooklyn, N.Y., returned to her native country to make the difference she has dreamed of.

Renois, a sociology major and Africana studies minor, has been recognized as a Harpur Fellow.

As a result, she will receive the support to pursue a meaningful interest through a self-designed project.

Titled “Project K” (The “K” standing for “kids”), Renois’ mission involved organizing a summer educational program for children in Mariani, an extremely poor and densely populated area of Haiti.

“In Mariani, there’s a local community center for children unable to afford school, but its low budget prevents it from remaining open in the summer,” Renois says. “With the center closed, no one’s feeding these kids and they’ll forget what they’re learning!”

Renois, with the help of local volunteer teachers, devoted her summer to teaching children several academic subjects, including English, geography and mathematics. As a licensed practical nurse passionate about health and wellness, Renois also led sessions focusing on healthy living and coping with anxiety.

“I’ve always envisioned having a non-profit

organization, and Project K will kind of function like that,” she says.

Not only did Renois provide school supplies and hygiene kits, but also daily lunches and snacks to the more than 50 children registered for the program.

“Project K” does not represent Renois’

first endeavor to advocate for healthy living or reach out to impoverished groups. On campus, she serves on the Health Advisory Committee and the Poverty Awareness Coalition.

To Renois, being a Harpur Fellow means giving back to her community.

“When I lived in Haiti, I was too young to do anything beneficial,” Renois says. “Now, Binghamton (has given) me an opportunity to return as an adult with money, resources and the ability to have a direct impact.”



Briana Renois organized a summer educational program for children in Mariani, Haiti. Renois and other volunteers taught English and math.

## WALAA AHMED

**Project:** Hindrance of Early Detection Breast Cancer

**Year/major:** Spring 2015 graduate/biology

**Hometown:** Queens, N.Y.



**B**reast cancer has had an impact on Walaa Ahmed's life.

Ahmed's grandmother, aunt and most recently, her mother, have all been diagnosed with breast cancer. Her aunt lost the battle.

"My grandma knew what she had to do and saw doctors for treatment, whereas my aunt didn't know what to do," Ahmed says. "I've seen both sides of it and I've seen how much education can really make a difference."

Ahmed, from Queens, N.Y., was born in Alexandria, Egypt. The Harpur Fellow recipient returned to Alexandria over the summer as part of her project: "Hindrances of Early Detection Breast Cancer." While working with oncologist Dr. Alaa Kandil at the University Hospital of the Alexandria School of Medicine, Ahmed conducted breast cancer prevention workshops for women who either had a breast exam or were recently diagnosed with breast cancer.

"Breast cancer is the most prevalent cancer in Egyptian women," Ahmed says. "Sixty-five to 75 percent of cases are advanced stages. I thought: If it's so prevalent, why aren't the percentages of advanced stage cases much lower?"

To answer this question, Ahmed conducted

questionnaires at the end of her workshops. She will present her findings in the fall at Binghamton University.

"I don't want this to be just a summer thing," she says about her Harpur Fellows project. "I talked to other health centers and hospitals in Alexandria to see if they'd want to keep my workshop after I leave. Women (in Egypt) don't have

a place where they can talk openly about issues or talk about something they feel insecure about. It will be a safe zone, and I feel like all women need that."

After Binghamton University, Ahmed plans to attend medical school. She served as a research assistant for two years under biology

Professor Karin Sauer and worked as an intern at UHS Wilson Medical Center in Johnson City.

"There's a much bigger component to being a doctor than just knowing what you have to do," she says. "When you become a doctor you take an oath to help people no matter what, to be there for them and support them." ■



Walaa Ahmed '15 returned to Alexandria, Egypt, and helped conduct breast-cancer prevention workshops for women in the city.

**"Women (in Egypt) don't have a place where they can talk openly about issues or talk about something they feel insecure about."**

—Walaa Ahmed

# A half century of teaching:

## ANTHONY PREUS

**DISTINGUISHED TEACHING PROFESSOR OF  
PHILOSOPHY AND MASTER OF COLLEGE-IN-THE-WOODS**

**Q: WHAT ARE YOUR AREAS OF SPECIALTY OR EXPERTISE?**

A: "Ancient Greek philosophy, primarily. I have also taught Medical Ethics and a number of other courses. I'm teaching two courses in the fall, HARP 101: How to Be a Professional and CDCI 395: Feeding a Hungry World, which is a service-learning course."

**Q: WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS?**

A: "For many years I did a lot of hiking. Years ago I played string bass — for example, in the University Orchestra and at one time with the Binghamton Symphony. Recently my life has centered pretty much entirely on work and family."

**Q: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION OF HARPUR COLLEGE?**

A: "When I first came, the impression was that it was a small liberal arts college. It was really direct in it being high-quality liberal arts. There had been a serious effort to get high-quality faculty in a wide range of liberal-arts subjects; therefore we attracted a lot of really good students. Ralph Rishel was the director of admissions and he made a serious attempt to go to all the top-notch high schools and recruit like crazy, and it had an effect on the school that lasted until today. Here we are, 50 years later and it has continued."

**Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO THE UNIVERSITY OVER THESE 50 YEARS?**

A: "Obviously the growth in numbers of students, but also the increasing emphasis on graduate study, and on professional schools. When I was a graduate student, people used to ask whether I wanted to teach at a small liberal arts college or a big university. As it turns out, I started at one and finished at the other, without moving."

**Q: WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU?**

A: "Stewart Gordon, the first dean of Harpur College. He was hard-nosed but fair and he had a lot to do with creating and preserving the liberal-arts character of Harpur."

**Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COURSE THAT YOU'VE TAUGHT?**

A: "In some sense, my favorite course is whichever I'm teaching at the moment. I think in some ways my teaching is driven by my own curiosity about the subjects I'm dealing with. The relationship with students is a very different one from the curiosity of the subject matter though. Plato says: 'The problem with books is they keep telling you the same thing all the time and then you ask them a question and they can't answer it.' Teaching really does require personal contact."

**Q: WHAT IS YOUR IMPRESSION OF HARPUR COLLEGE STUDENTS?**

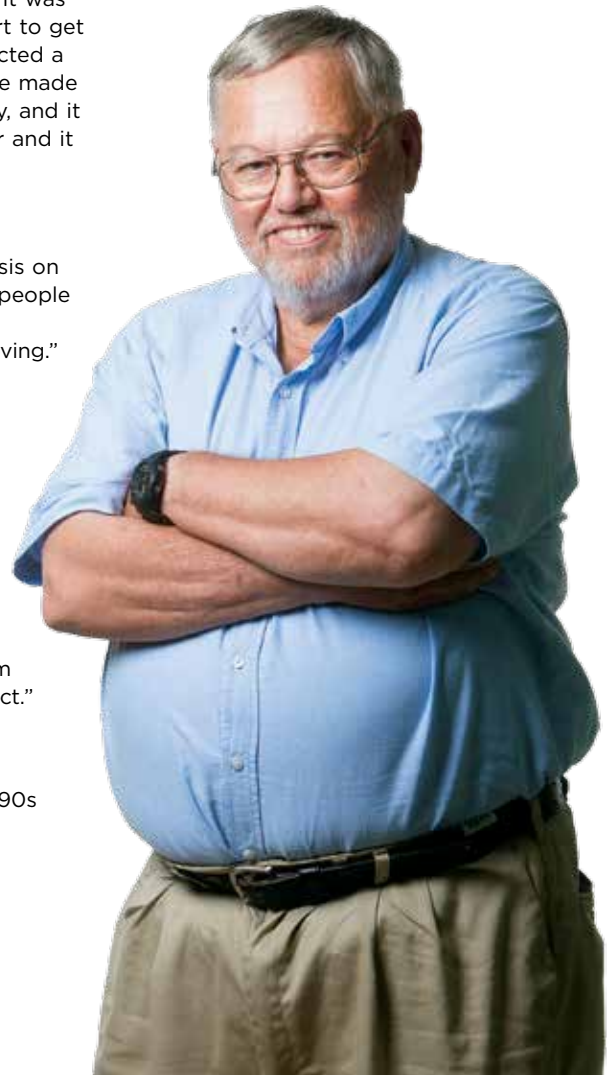
A: "It has always been the case that Harpur College students were very smart and prepared. These are students who have high school averages in the high 90s and super SATs, but they don't have the means to go to [private schools]. They're motivated and it's nice to teach motivated students."

**Q: CAN YOU SUM UP YOUR 50 YEARS IN ONE SENTENCE?**

A: "You're kidding, right?"



Anthony Preus has served as a faculty master, department chair and Personal Safety Advisory Committee chair.



# Professors mark 50 years

## SANDRO STICCA

PROFESSOR OF FRENCH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE

**Q: WHAT ARE YOUR AREAS OF SPECIALTY OR EXPERTISE?**

**A:** "Romance philology, French and Italian medieval and renaissance literature, classical and medieval Latin literature, and 20th-century French literature, especially theater. My hometown is Tocco da Casauria, Italy. In the United States, I decided to study English because I fell in love with the English language and its writers."

**Q: WHAT ARE YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS?**

**A:** "I started playing soccer when I was 4 or 5. Even at this age, I play soccer with a group of friends, all running desperately after our youth. I earned a green belt in karate years ago with Mr. Hidy Ochiai. At the scholarly level, I have written eight monographs and 24 books. Two were just published. I also founded three journals: *Mediaevalia*, *Studies in Christian Thought and Tradition*, and *Studia Italica*."

**Q: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST IMPRESSION OF HARPUR COLLEGE?**

**A:** "I was awed by the academic strength of the college and also by the preparedness of the students, and the intellectual caliber of the faculty. At that time, we were on a trimesters system. The first course I taught was literature and composition. We started with the classics and then Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Shakespeare and others within the major European languages — Italian, French, English and Spanish."

**Q: WHAT HAS BEEN THE BIGGEST CHANGE TO THE UNIVERSITY OVER THESE 50 YEARS?**

**A:** "The physical and intellectual dimension, but most of all, the national and international reputation it acquired, attracting many students both from our nation and from abroad."

**Q: WHO HAS INSPIRED YOU?**

**A:** "Former Vice President of Academic Affairs Norman Cantor, former Dean Sheldon Grebstein, and Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost Donald Nieman because of their ability both to administer and to relate to faculty. Also, I met John F. Kennedy in Syracuse at my graduation. He was a senator at the time but everybody said he would be president. Having graduated with highest honors, I was chosen to give him a short tour of the library. He addressed me in a gracious manner, telling me to persevere in my chosen profession and to write him. I still have the original letter from him. He invited me to breakfast at the White House, but he never returned from Dallas..."

**Q: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE COURSE THAT YOU'VE TAUGHT?**

**A:** "Romance philology, which is the transformation of Latin into six romance languages; Middle Ages and Renaissance, and 20th-century French literature."

**Q: WHAT IS YOUR IMPRESSION OF HARPUR COLLEGE STUDENTS?**

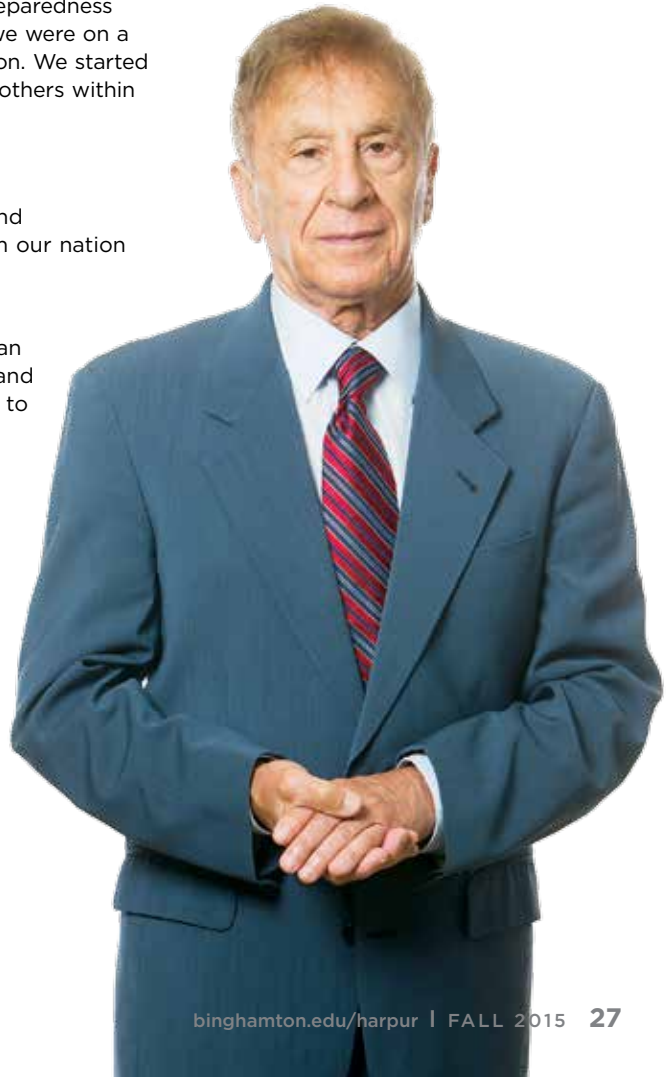
**A:** "Unquestionably enormously gifted and well-prepared since high school. They are a delight to teach. Many of my books have been the result of exciting discussions [with students] in my graduate courses."

**Q: CAN YOU SUM UP YOUR 50 YEARS IN ONE SENTENCE?**

**A:** "An intellectual journey in which I have both taught and learned."



Sandro Sticca with John F. Kennedy at Syracuse University commencement in 1957.



# International enrichment

Faculty members learn while leading students on study abroad programs

By Audrey Sapunarich



**K**athleen Sterling and Sébastien Lacombe, a husband-and-wife team, direct an archaeological project and field school for Binghamton University's summer program in France. He's French; she did doctoral research in France. Still, there's something special about returning with undergraduates.

"It's almost like experiencing it all over again for the first time when you see it through a student's eyes," Sterling says.

The archaeologists work at an open-air hunting and gathering site south of Toulouse that dates to about 17,000 years ago.

"Open-air sites are very rare for this time period," Sterling says. "It's great to see someone going into a painted cave for the first time and realizing that these are images created over 10,000 years ago by people like them. It creates this connection to the past."

Sterling, an assistant professor of anthropology and Lacombe, a research assistant professor of anthropology, are two of many Harpur College faculty members leading study abroad programs at Binghamton University. The University's Office of International Programs (OIP) manages all study abroad program development, recruitment and advising, working with faculty members to establish and lead programs. Including the over 40 Binghamton-sponsored programs, SUNY provides 600 study abroad programs throughout every continent of the world. France, London, Spain and Germany are just a few destinations of Binghamton faculty-led programs. About 350 Harpur College students take part in study abroad programs each year.

While abroad, Harpur College participants — even faculty members — learn lifelong lessons.

Mary Haupt, lecturer and co-director of the London program alongside Joseph Keith, associate professor of English, was taken aback

by London. She had never been to London before teaching abroad in 2001, and returned in 2014.

For one assignment, Haupt sent students in pairs to interview street performers and they produced colorful articles.

“One of the best things is watching students blossom. I had the opportunity to make London itself part of my courses,” Haupt says. “London has become a home away from home.”

Aja Martinez, assistant professor of English, was among the faculty leading the spring 2015 program to London.

“We found ways to make writing — especially through the social media travel-writing course — something the students were already doing. That was the medium and the city was the site,” Martinez says. “I was learning just as much from the students as I was teaching them.”

Martinez is interested in working with OIP to build an internship-based program — which she says would offset the cost of studying abroad — focused on low-income, underrepresented students.

Antonio Sobejano-Moran, chair of the Romance Languages and Literatures Department, says he attributes the growth of the initially small Spain summer program to its affordability.

Sobejano-Moran hails from a small village in Zamora, Spain, and while he has not been teaching abroad lately, he continues to travel with the program every summer.

“I attend the program for approximately 10 to 15 days. These are the most difficult days for our students. Some of them have difficulties adjusting to a new culture, a new environment and a new system,” Sobejano-Moran says. “The most gratifying part of my participation is to see students enjoy not only an academic experience but a cultural one. Traveling abroad is an experience that will allow them to see how fortunate they are.”

Rosmarie Morewedge, associate professor of German studies, says students who study abroad grow into global citizens concerned with larger communities.

Morewedge and Wayne Jones, chair of the Chemistry Department, co-lead a program bringing STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) students to a number of research institutes.

“It is important for students and faculty alike to see first-hand how research is done in different parts of the world,” Jones says.

Morewedge is helping meld the need for knowledge of German with the internationalized research goal of the program. Participants are trained in basic German language and culture before departure. Students work with researchers at the University of Leipzig, which has been an exchange partner with Binghamton University for more than 20 years.

“The transformation students have experienced abroad has made the greatest impression on me,” Morewedge says. “I’ve particularly enjoyed the insight students have gained through understanding and managing critical situations.”

For example, Morewedge says one of the students accidentally dropped a flower pot onto a Mercedes parked a story below.

“When our student learned to empathize with the owner’s pride and express that empathy to the owner, the situation was diffused. I love the emotional and intellectual growth that comes to students as a result of experiences that take them out of their comfort zone and require them to expand their abilities to respond,” Morewedge says.

“Working with students abroad has made me more discerning in observing behavior intuitively and analytically, and in attempting to help students become more observant. In this sense, I believe that my work with students has helped me develop new teaching skills.” ■

**“The most gratifying part of my participation is to see students enjoy not only an academic experience but a cultural one.”**

—Antonio Sobejano-Moran





# A HOMECOMING SONG

## Ira Antelis, Lee Musiker return to release CD collaboration

By Olivia Cuccaro

It has been said that the bonds formed in college can last a lifetime. Many pairs of friends make memories long after their undergraduate days are done. Others make an album.

In March 2015, Ira Antelis and Lee Musiker returned to campus to release *Gone But Not*, a CD of piano compositions composed by Antelis and performed by Musiker. But four decades earlier, the duo was just meeting as Harpur College undergraduates with musical aspirations.

For Musiker, Binghamton University circa 1975 “offered a strong Music Department as well as a robust liberal arts education.”

“I was a music major from the first moment I set foot on campus,” he says. “The exposure to jazz, music theory and composition had a profound and lifelong impact on me as a student, professional and now as an educator.”

While Antelis admits he was not as certain of his career path as a freshman, music was always the “priority.”

A member of fraternity Tau Alpha Upsilon, (where he was nicknamed “Tiger” by Musiker, as Antelis carried a tiger while pledging) Antelis’

on-campus involvement also included music — directing shows, playing backup piano in the jazz band and working in the theater for class credit.

“The passion that I always felt for music blossomed at Binghamton,” Antelis says. “It’s where I first started composing, which later became the way in which I was able to establish myself in music. It became obvious to me after hearing Lee play that jazz piano wasn’t going to work out for me. So being at Binghamton set me on the course for my future, though it was the first of many steps.”

One of those steps was starting Shafer Antelis Music in 1987. It became one of the top music houses for jingles in the United States. Antelis was later instrumental in starting Music Dealers, a music licensing company with offices in Chicago, Los Angeles, New York, Atlanta and London. Since its 2008 inception, Music Dealers has worked with major brands such as MTV, The Coca-Cola Company and Disney, and has earned emerging artists and composers more than \$15 million.

Antelis’ catalog includes jingles that ring more than a few bells. He is credited with “Be Like Mike” for Gatorade as well as “I’m Lovin’ It” for

McDonald's. Antelis also co-wrote "No One," which was featured on singer Marc Anthony's self-titled, triple-platinum 1999 album.

"As far as music, I've had an amazing career," Antelis says. "[I've] written some of the most memorable jingles of our time, worked with many major recording artists, and have gotten up every day for the last 30 years and worked in this industry creating, producing and consulting on music projects. I've been blessed."

After spending his own time at Binghamton playing piano in the jazz ensemble, acting as a pianist and music director for a local dinner theater and "lots of jam sessions," Musiker too followed a musical path.

He describes his current occupation as "pianist, arranger/orchestrator, music director, conductor, producer and educator in the jazz, Broadway, pop and classical genres."

Under this large umbrella, Musiker has performed and recorded with artists such as Michael Bublé, Andrea Bocelli and Josh Groban, and guest-conducted numerous orchestras across the country including the New York Philharmonic. Since 2001, he has toured with Tony Bennett. Musiker served as music director and pianist for the Grammy Award-winning album *Tony Bennett: Duets — An American Classic*, *Duets 2*, and most recently was music director/vocal arranger for the Bennett/Lady Gaga collaboration, *Cheek to Cheek*.

Despite an expansive list of accomplishments, Musiker said his greatest is a different kind of legacy. His daughter, Rachel Musiker, is a member of Binghamton University's Class of 2016.

With a collective 80 years of achievements in tow, Antelis and Musiker went back to the start in the spring and gave a free concert at Casadesus Recital Hall for the launch of their joint album.

A few months earlier, Antelis found himself in the Binghamton area and decided to take a walk down memory lane — also known as Vestal Parkway East.

"Not remembering my way around, I somehow ended up in the practice rooms in the Fine Arts Building where I spent so much time," he says. "Nothing had really changed there in 40 years, so it was somewhat surreal."

Antelis says it was after this visit that the idea to host a recital on campus came to him.

"It dawned on me that this piano jazz album I was working on with Lee Musiker

should have its release at the school where we met," Antelis says. "What better place?"

"We were thrilled to be back performing in Casadesus Hall for students, friends, our daughters, and former teachers Al Hamme and Doug Beardsley," Musiker adds. "Ira and I also had the opportunity to teach in the Music Department — thrilling to be at the front of the classroom."

"[Binghamton] was a great choice to explore what made sense for me," says Antelis, who returned to Harpur College this semester to teach a Music Department course about how music projects evolve. "By the end of my first year . . . it started to feel like home. [The album launch] was a weekend I'll always remember." ■



**"The passion that I always felt for music blossomed at Binghamton. It's where I first started composing, which later became the way in which I was able to establish myself in music."**

—Ira Antelis

# Alumni Award winners offer advice to Class of 2015



Courtney



Caruana



Hurd

By Eric Coker

Success requires graduates to “be bold” and to “dare to be imperfect,” Harpur College Alumni Award recipients told the Class of 2015 during Commencement ceremonies May 15.

“We’re in a culture and a country that’s obsessed with winners and, moreover, sees winning as a skill,” said actress/comedian Stephanie Courtney ’92, an Alumni Award recipient who portrays “Flo” in the Progressive Insurance commercials. “If you succeed, you were smart, not lucky. If you fail, well, it’s your fault. Success, failure. Win, lose. Right way, wrong way. I just want to tell you that it is all a lie. All the setbacks? The dry spells? The times when you feel all alone with the results of your life decisions? That’s a sign that you dared to go outside of your comfort zone and try.”

Salvatore Caruana ’73, founder and CEO of Foster Capital Corporation, and Yasmin Hurd ’82, professor of psychiatry, neuroscience, and pharmacology and systems therapeutics as well as the Ward-Coleman Chair in Translational Neuroscience and director of the Center for Addictive Disorders at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, also received Alumni Awards and spoke to the graduates.

The three Commencement ceremonies, held in the Events Center, included remarks from Dean Anne McCall and students Stephon Braithwaite-Martin, Christopher Zamlout and Jared Gordon.

Hurd, who was featured in *TIME* magazine the week of Commencement, also urged students to leave their comfort zones.

“You will never figure out who you are, what role you’re meant to play on this planet or what really makes you happy if you never venture outside that comfort zone and find your own path,” Hurd said. “Of course it is scary. It is supposed to be!”

Caruana, who was the youngest-ever senior vice president at Merrill Lynch’s securities division, agreed with Hurd.

“If you are not taking risks, you are not trying,” he said. “If you are afraid to fail, you may not have the courage to succeed. And whenever you need advice, ask your parents and trust them the way they trust you.”

The three alumni all stressed the importance of the Harpur College liberal arts education. Caruana said he received a job interview at Merrill Lynch because he attended Harpur College.

“I didn’t have a business degree, but I did have what each of you has here today: the critical-thinking skills and personal tools that a liberal arts education gives you to compete and succeed anywhere in our economy,” said Caruana, whose endowed scholarship has awarded more than \$50,000 to Harpur students. “Some of my proudest days on Wall Street are when I get to say I was a history major at Harpur College.” ■

# Meet the student writers

**2014-15** marked the fourth year that Harpur College students contributed to *Harpur Perspective*.

The students, ranging from sophomores to graduating seniors, participated in a semester-long internship with the college's magazine. The student interns wrote about Harpur College's students, new faculty members and alumni for the print publication and quarterly online editions ([binghamton.edu/harpur/perspective](http://binghamton.edu/harpur/perspective)).

Students worked with Eric Coker, editor and writer for *Inside Binghamton University*, and Lori Fuller, communications manager for Harpur College, while receiving credit through the English Department.

Harpur student writers also took the journalism skills they gained during the internship and wrote for other campus publications. Fall 2014 interns Rebecca Bowyer '15 and Terasa Yu contributed to the Thomas J. Watson School of Engineering and Applied Science's magazine (*Watson Review*) and the College of Community and Public Affairs' magazine (*Confluence*), respectively.

Another unique aspect of the program allows former interns to return as *Harpur Perspective* "student editors."

These students work as mentors to interns, offering writing advice and guidance.

Christine Murray '15, a fall 2014 intern, and Tania Rahman '15, who participated in the internship in spring 2014, served as student editors. Both Murray and Rahman describe the semester as "a rewarding experience."

"It was great to work closely with the student interns and help them to develop their skills as well as build on my own editing and writing skills," Murray says. "I enjoyed watching all of the interns become stronger writers as the semester progressed and felt that I improved my editing skills along with them."

"My position handed me responsibilities that enabled me to learn about and interact with each individual involved, such that my leadership and communication skills increased tenfold," Rahman says. "I was able to relay certain expectations to the writers regarding their stories and in turn learned a thing or two about how to improve my own writing performance, exemplifying how leadership is a two-way street." ■



At top: Spring 2015 interns, from left: Haley Silverstein, Olivia Cuccaro, Eleanor Krasner, Christian Macaluso, Anna Brooks and Maureen Mullarkey.

Above: Fall 2014 interns, from left: Terasa Yu, Christine Murray, Audrey Sapunarich, Rebecca Bowyer, Audrey Russo and Evelyn Pitt-Stoller.

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## Support Harpur College

Harpur College thrives from the generosity of donors like you, allowing Binghamton University to continue to stay in the top 100 colleges nationwide, shaping Harpur College for the future.

**Culture of Accomplishment** houses important faculty development programs that enable us to recruit, retain and support the work of our outstanding faculty. Programs include grant-writing circles, support to organize conferences and our **Mileur Faculty Development Fund**, through which we provide up to 10 competitive awards per year for faculty research.

**Harpur Edge** welcomes students into our academic community and helps students take charge of their liberal arts and sciences education. Harpur Edge supports the University's faculty mentorship program and hosts events such as lunch-and-learn meetings with alumni, tours of specialized facilities on campus, lunches with administrators and book club meetings, as well as research and career-focused events. Signature programs for Harpur College majors include **Harpur Fellows**, **Liberal Arts to Careers Externship (LACE)**, the **Harpur Law Council Public Interest Law Internship Program** and the **Summer Physician Alumni Mentor Program**.

**Harpur Equipped** is an initiative to ensure that students learn using modern, industry-standard equipment. Needs include musical instruments, lab equipment, technology enhancements, staging materials and studio upgrades. You can give to this general fund to be used throughout our college, or you can earmark your gift to the department of your choice.

You can help our students and faculty create, discover and transmit knowledge by establishing a named fund for research. For more information, contact John Koch at 607-777-6844 or [jkoch@binghamton.edu](mailto:jkoch@binghamton.edu).



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