

# AUP MAGAZINE

ALUMNI EDITION - FALL 2019

A MEANINGFUL

CAREER





# PRESIDENT'S LETTER

AUP MAGAZINE | ALUMNI EDITION - FALL 2019

ALUMNI WORKING IN

145

COUNTRIES

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Dear AUP Worldwide Community,

I have always believed that the evidence of a university's greatness is not in the "inputs" - the number of books in the library, the lavishness of the wellness center or the rate of faculty publications - but in the "outputs": the achievements of a university's alumni out in the world. Our mission at AUP is to produce graduates who are lifelong global explorers, who feel at home in a complex world where technology is ensuring that cultural borders are being broken down, even as nationalisms appear to be on the rise. To that end, our curriculum has been designed to provide both deep liberal arts learning and hands-on real-world applications of that learning; at the same time, it provides opportunities for exploration and discovery both inside and outside the classroom. Our new Quai

d'Orsay Learning Commons emblemizes this idea in its glass atrium bridging the gap between student life and student learning. This issue of the *AUP Magazine* is evidence that AUP is delivering on its mission: the stories gathered here are a celebration of what our alumni are accomplishing in a world that is in such need of them.

As you will discover in these pages, AUP alumni living in 145 countries across the globe work in a wide array of fields and industries. You will read about alumni working in fashion, real estate, the arts, politics, the nongovernmental sector, pharmaceuticals, renewable energy and the military. You will read accounts of lives being productively led in Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Kenya, Tunisia, Burkina Faso, Italy, the Netherlands and France. The

extraordinary diversity of the global explorers in our alumni community - each embedded in complex, intersecting communities of their own - is a great asset to our global network.

At AUP we steadfastly believe that a university experience should enable you to become your best self while delivering you to the door of a meaningful career. This requires both a hybrid and holistic approach to learning. We have recently renovated our core educational requirements to create a new Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, embedding within it experiential learning and digital literacies, along with disciplinary competencies. Alongside the academic core and the majors, students are invited to pursue multiple opportunities for exploration beyond the classroom, much of it linked to their academic studies. Our Global

Professional Skills Program yields a transcript of co-curricular activities and workshops designed to develop students' personal narratives. The Cultural Program and student participation in clubs, student government, student media and professional internships develop a variety of skills valued in the workplace after college or graduate school. Needless to say, our Paris location amplifies these opportunities still further.

Reading this wealth of stories about our alumni's career paths, life choices and ways of making a difference across the planet fills me with pride, because I know that this is abundant evidence of the value of our kind of education. Each alumnus or alumna who has shared a story here is a shining exemplar of what we work to cultivate in our students every day: a way of being in the world,

both professionally and personally, that has impact on our cities, our communities and our countries. These alumni all show us what it means - in the words of our founder, Dr. Lloyd DeLamater - to "transcend the bounds of narrow nationalisms."



Dr. Celeste Schenck, President



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Feature Article

A MEANINGFUL CAREER

Darcee Caron G'13  
Paris

Darcee holds an MA in Public Policy and International Law from AUP. After graduation, she worked as a tour guide, a lobbyist and, during a stint at a Paris-based startup, a product development and sales professional. In 2015, she returned to the fold as AUP's Internship Coordinator and Corporate Liaison, before becoming AUP's first Director of Experiential Learning. It's a role that sees her working closely with global explorers as they prepare to embark on international careers.



BUILDING THE BLOCK ISLAND WIND FARM

Craig Brown G'11  
United States

Following an MA in International Affairs at AUP, Craig pursued a career in energy market analysis and research. He was later involved in setting up the first offshore wind farm in the United States.

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AFRICAN HERITAGE MEETS AFRICAN RAW MATERIALS

Wanja Laiboni '07  
Kenya

After a decade managing international development projects, Wanja founded SIWWAA, a luxury fashion brand inspired by Africa's cultural heritage and using 100% African raw materials.

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PROVIDING SAFE, AFFORDABLE MEDICINE IN KARACHI

Hamza Usman G'09  
Pakistan

Following roles in the nonprofit sector and as a documentary filmmaker, Hamza founded Karachi's first retail pharmacy chain dedicated to tackling the issue of counterfeit medicine in the city.

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WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN IN VERONA

Mary Elizabeth Wieder G'09  
Italy

Mary followed up an MA in Global Communications with a career in marketing for the life sciences and pharmaceutical sectors. In 2016, she founded a professional women's network in Verona, Italy.

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EQUESTRIANS FOR A JUST WORLD

Jessica Newman '01  
Guatemala

Following a successful career as an equestrian athlete, Jessica founded JustWorld International - a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping children in poverty across the globe.

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Melissa Novotny '14  
Netherlands

Melissa worked on international assignments in diverse fields after graduating from AUP. She now works for an ocean conservation startup promoting sustainable, ecological tourism worldwide.

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HONORING AMERICA'S OVERSEAS WAR DEAD

Ryan Blum '16  
Tunisia

After graduation, Ryan was hired by the American Battle Monuments Commission. He now works as superintendent of the North Africa American Cemetery in Carthage, Tunisia.

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THE GLOBAL RESEARCHER

Carla Maria Issa G'15  
United Arab Emirates

Alongside her MA in International Affairs, Carla holds a second master's from the American University of Beirut. She now conducts research for a real-estate advertising company in Dubai.

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LESSONS IN DIPLOMACY

Clint Branam '03  
Honduras

Clint went from AUP to the US Peace Corps, before joining a management consulting firm. Nine years ago, he started working for USAID, where today he oversees operations for a mission in Honduras.

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EMPOWERING FUTURE AFRICAN POLITICAL LEADERS

Julie Tran '09  
Burkina Faso

After graduation, Julie followed a career in Swedish politics. As part of the Swedish Centre Party's International Foundation, she worked for a program training young political leaders in West Africa.

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AUP alumni around the world lead meaningful careers in a wide range of industries. Here, global explorers share their stories of life after graduation.

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GIFTS TO AUP

Thank you for your loyal support. We proudly acknowledge our contributors, each of whom made generous gifts above €500 to AUP between August 2012 and July 2019.

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# ALUMNI PROJECTS





UNITED STATES | Craig Brown G'11



## BUILDING THE BLOCK ISLAND WIND FARM

*As more and more states embrace sustainable energy targets, the US is increasingly turning to alternative energy options to pursue its green transition. As part of this push, Craig Brown G'11 helped pioneer the first-ever offshore wind farm along the American coastline.*

In 2015, five massive custom-engineered steel platforms weighing over a million pounds each were loaded onto ocean barges in southern Louisiana. The structures were being sea-fastened for a 1,000-mile journey via the US Gulf of Mexico to the northeastern seaboard, where they were destined to be installed in the Atlantic Ocean three miles off the coast of Rhode Island in waters over 100 feet deep. They were specially designed to support offshore wind turbines standing more than 600 feet tall

The Block Island Wind Farm off the coast of Rhode Island, USA  
Photo: Ørsted US Offshore Wind

and were engineered to withstand hurricane-force wind and waves. The turbines would comprise a 30-megawatt offshore wind farm – the Block Island Wind Farm – the first in US history. In many ways, the event was, for me, the culmination of a change in life-course that had occurred unexpectedly more than six years earlier – a change that brought me to AUP.

Despite being told my bachelor's in economics was a safe bet with good career prospects, it was clear back in 2008 that the floor was falling out from under me. I often recall the moment when, sitting at my work desk, I observed the stock ticker at the bottom of my computer screen start flashing red. It was signaling what was at the time the largest stock point drop in US history. I was in the undesirable position of being employed by a major banking and insurance company. Fresh out of my undergraduate degree and working in

my first role, I had barely re-signed the lease on my apartment before it was clear that I would most likely lose my job.

After my experience of the financial crisis, it was a good time to re-evaluate and change course away from my undergraduate studies. I was drawn to AUP's MA in International Affairs, having made an honest evaluation of my core interests: I wanted to work in an international environment, live in and experience different cultures, and build bridges – be they political, social, commercial or economic – between countries. It was fortunate that I became intrigued by the complexities of global energy early in my first semester. Flexible courses allowed me to analyze major energy issues such as Russian-European gas relations, the social aspects of resource conflicts in Africa or the politics of climate treaties. The energy

sector is the perfect industry for a student of international affairs. Following this path led me to a career in an industry I find dynamic, interesting and global in scale and impact. What's more, I had the pleasure of working on an innovative project with the potential to usher in long-term change.

Developed by a company called Deepwater Wind and now owned and operated by Danish energy company Ørsted, the Block Island Wind Farm provides carbon-free electricity to nearly 17,000 households. I was fortunate enough to work on this pioneering project as part of a small team at Keystone Engineering Inc. I was on the commercial side of the company, helping to build bridges between European and US service companies and dealing with businesses all along the supply chain to ensure the efficient execution of the project's engineering and construction

elements. Although Block Island is just a fraction of the size of the offshore wind farms constructed in Europe since the 1990s, its significance is enormous. Its development heralded the dawn of a promising new US renewable energy industry. Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey and Maryland will all see offshore wind farms installed within the next five years. Policy makers have touted these projects as vital to meeting states' renewable energy targets.

The path has been anything but smooth sailing. There have been several high-profile setbacks over the course of nearly a decade, attributed to a myriad of factors: uneven policy support from state and federal policy makers, contracts going awry, and cost overruns burying projects, to name just a few. Launching the industry has been an ongoing exercise in navigating state and federal regulations, as well as solving unprecedented

technical, economic, environmental and logistical challenges. The US lacks sufficient port infrastructure to effectively manage the transport of larger offshore wind components effectively, and investors have been reluctant to fund new port facilities at the early stages of the industry. It has required several international partnerships and sustained knowledge transfer to get us to where we are today.

Despite these initial setbacks, the success of the Block Island Wind Farm, coupled with aggressive state renewable energy targets, has recently attracted the attention of some of the world's largest energy companies. Major European oil and gas companies such as Shell and Equinor, as well as utilities such as Électricité de France and Ørsted, are now key participants in the US market, seeking to work with the emerging US industry and policy makers.

The future of offshore wind power in the United States is looking brighter than ever. It's one of the reasons why I return to AUP each fall to teach a graduate module on the UNFCCC Paris Agreement and sustainable energy policy. It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to meet other graduate students with an interest in renewable energy; it is fascinating to hear what brought them to where they are today and to hear about their post-AUP ambitions. As I continue in my career, I hope to publish more research analyses and papers on global renewable energy markets and technologies. I am also excited to work on new renewable energy projects in small-sized and emerging markets; currently, I am working on pioneering technical and economic feasibility studies to bring the first round of offshore wind farms to the Caribbean region. ■



17,000  
HOUSEHOLDS POWERED  
Photo: Ørsted US Offshore Wind



Wanja Laiboni '07 | KENYA



## AFRICAN HERITAGE MEETS AFRICAN RAW MATERIALS

*Wanja Laiboni '07 left a successful career in international development to found a sustainable luxury fashion brand that is 100% African. She explains how, by harnessing Africa's rich cultural heritage and raw materials, she has built a global brand.*

Questions without satisfactory answers will sometimes precede our most daring endeavors as we search for convincing answers. My long-term interest in the Global South and the humanities led me into a career in international development. Close to ten years in, I increasingly grappled with questions about whether my work was contributing to sustainable solutions. Did existing systems grant true sovereignty to the Global South and foster an environment of equal exchange? Was aid the best way to achieve sustainable development?

While contemplating these questions, I traveled extensively around Africa, during which time I witnessed the abundance of the continent's

cultural assets and valuable raw materials. Additional questions took root: why had Africa not fully tapped the enormous economic potential of its cultural riches and raw materials to create global brands purveying high-value cultural goods made with Africa-sourced materials? This was especially curious considering Africa's critical role in the raw material supply chains of global manufacturing.

Ultimately, I came to the personal conclusion that, while humanitarian assistance is essential in times of war and natural disasters, creating equitable businesses that also generate social, environmental and cultural gains was the Global South's fastest route to sustainable economic

development. In my search for answers, I went from being an international development and humanitarian assistance professional to founding SIWWAA, a luxury fashion company whose mission is to harness the true value of Africa's cultural heritage and raw materials.

A 2015 Ernst & Young-UNESCO joint report on the world's creative and cultural industries, which generated \$2.25 trillion that year, ranked Africa as the continent with the least economic contribution to these industries - despite possessing rich cultural assets that consistently inspire creative projects around the world. The factors curtailing the continent's ability to create economically viable creative and cultural industries are





The Chanzo bag, SIWWAA's first official product

multifaceted and complex. They include a lack of the necessary business and government structures to add value to, distribute and protect the sector's intellectual property. A widespread perception of cultural heritage as economically inconsequential – despite creative and cultural industries making up 3% of global GDP – reduced the likelihood of investment from African governments and financial institutions. Furthermore, African cultural products lacked proper branding and narratives that relayed their true value.

These challenges, though colossal, represented a great opportunity. SIWWAA's solution was to combine heritage with boundary-pushing design and first-rate craftsmanship to create high-value products with quantifiable impact created throughout the value chain. We incorporated a triple-bottom-line approach – maximizing socioeconomic, cultural and environmental gains – while working towards a long-term production model that used 100% Africa-based production and Africa-sourced raw materials. We wanted the raw material supply chain to be completely transparent and traceable, in terms of both provenance and impact.

Working toward this goal has required rigorous preparation, a commitment to research, the drive to push creative boundaries and an emphasis on production excellence – achieved by working with

the best partners. In the absence of an African blueprint for our venture, we learned from countries with mature design industries. I trained alongside leading designers and industrialists in Milan, Italy, gaining mastery of product design and development and expertise in the business models and value chains of heritage-based design enterprises. Additionally, we embarked on a Kenya-wide research project, *Crafting Kenya*, to master the materials and techniques used in Kenyan craftsmanship. The project became a knowledge resource and visual archive of these practices and is expanding in scope to connect Kenyan artisans to the global market.

Our inaugural collection, the Chanzo Collection, seeks to tell a story of beginnings through the lens of African heritage. *Chanzo* is a classic Swahili word meaning "beginnings" or, in some contexts, "the source." In our research we noted the powerful recurrence of soil as a symbol of origins – a "mother element" or "feminine source" respected and revered across many cultures. Soil represented those who came before us, who paved the way and who, in so doing, secured our beginnings. Linked to the soil were ceramics, which in the past were gifted at the onset of important relationships. Ceramics also represented abundance and a safe place to keep one's precious belongings during life's journey. These concepts became the inspiration for our first product, the Chanzo bag, which drew its design

inspiration from traditional African ceremonial pots: their curvilinear forms and their embellishments, from floral etchings to symmetrical lines. We envisioned the entire collection in black and white, to represent SIWWAA's position at the intersection of the old and the new.

In July 2018, we unveiled SIWWAA and the Chanzo bag, garnering media acclaim from the likes of *Forbes US*, who called us "Africa's best-kept secret." As we prepare to roll out the full Chanzo Collection in 2020, we look back on our many lessons and achievements. Firstly, we can celebrate being 100% Kenyan-funded, despite the gargantuan financing hurdles faced by creative and cultural enterprises in Africa. Over the past three years, we have secured collaborations with best-in-class partners and established SIWWAA Footprint, our impact arm that tracks the impact of our work. Our goal of 100% supply-chain transparency is already well underway; we've partnered with the Keough School of Global Affairs at Notre Dame University to build the tools for implementing this mission.

Alongside answering important questions about African sustainable development, SIWWAA has prioritized creativity as a powerful storytelling tool in order to build bridges between cultures and enrich people's lives with beauty. We are investing in the leading lights of Africa's artistic

and cultural communities, consciously and jointly capitalizing on their talent in acknowledgement of the custodial role they play and the fact that they inspire and nourish us as a brand. In 2017, we launched the SIWWAA Private Art Collection, made up of artwork commissioned from African artists, whom we connect to global art markets. When constructing our product narratives, we collaborate with African storytellers using various media to tell African stories from fresh perspectives.

By creating high-value cultural goods that meet global benchmarks, we have challenged the prevailing perception of African creative industries and of the value of African cultural goods. Our investment in the skills transfer necessary to achieve the high degree of technical specialization involved in crafting our products will, over time, increase the economic benefit accrued by our partners and develop a new ecosystem of knowledge exchange. Our innovative design languages contribute to the diversity of voices in the global design conversation, showing the countless creative possibilities that Africa can inspire; this allows SIWWAA to act as a cultural diplomat, telling a progressive story of African innovation. As the Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe said, "until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter." It is time for the lions to speak. ■



Hamza Usman G'09



## PROVIDING SAFE, AFFORDABLE MEDICINE IN KARACHI

*Hamza Usman G'09 turned a gap in the pharmaceutical market into a force for social good, laying the foundations for safer, more professional pharmacies in Pakistan's biggest city.*

In my six years as an entrepreneur, I've learned that marketing matters; not only does it determine if your company sinks or swims, but, if done right, it can also have a positive impact on society. After graduating from AUP in 2009, I pursued a career working with Pakistan's largest marketing services group, which eventually led down the road of entrepreneurship with my own retail brand: Pharmacie Plus. Not only have we grown into a successful chain-store business, but we've also had a marked impact on good business practice across the Pakistani pharmaceutical industry.

Setting up my own company would not have been possible without the education I received at AUP. In August 2008, I arrived in Paris for my MA in Global Communications (MAGC); it was exhilarating to be around so many people from different nationalities and backgrounds. There was a world of experiences and opportunities to discover in the City of Light. The following months would lead to eye-opening coursework, lifelong friendships and memorable experiences. The MAGC program catalyzed my career, introducing me to the philosophies and psychologies of consumption, media studies and media relations - with a



PAKISTAN

A Pharmacie Plus store in Karachi, Pakistan

strong foundation in theory and application, strengthened by real world case studies. Much of the theoretical work in the Branding course with Professor Peter Barnet or Material Culture and Values course with Professor Julie Thomas taught me about consumer perception and how it influences people's lives and consumption habits. Once the program ended, I used the connections I had built at AUP to land an internship with Young & Rubicam in Paris before heading back home to Pakistan after many years abroad, unsure of what lay in store.

Three years later, an opportunity found me. Karachi is Pakistan's largest city, yet at the time it had no chain-store pharmacy and no brand dedicated to patient healthcare at a retail level. I learned that over 30% of medicines sold in Pakistan were counterfeit; in a city of over 20 million people, only a handful of medical retailers were considered "genuine." Doctors would often advise that medicines only be purchased from a place that was considered credible. Further study revealed that less than 22% of so-called pharmacies had a refrigerator to store medicines properly - and even fewer employed a full-time pharmacist.

I realized things needed to change. Karachi deserved a dependable pharmacy chain that would prioritize consumer health and counter the

misconceptions fueling the counterfeit medicine industry. Inspired by my experiences in France, Pharmacie Plus was born. We began as a single brick-and-mortar pharmacy that emphasized consumer health and well-being, centering on transparent procurement, climate-controlled medicine storage and top-notch service. In order to do this, we followed appropriate cold-storage methods, tracking batch numbers and expiration dates, and communicated the importance of genuine medicines and proper storage methods to our consumers. To provide better service, we even had an in-house nurse with a custom-built consultation room to conduct diagnostic tests and provide vaccination services, which later evolved into a small clinic for medical practitioners.

Our goal was to start a dialogue with consumers about their health needs and educate them about the many problems in the Pakistani pharmaceutical industry. Our priority was not to focus solely on sales but to develop long-term relationships with loyal customers and brands. We were the first business to reach out to many local organic cottage industries in order to retail their products in areas like health and beauty, homeopathy or diet. We brought the issues of genuine medicines and medicine storage to the public and highlighted some of the corrupt practices prevalent in the industry,

differentiating ourselves from our competitors by promoting health and well-being.

Today, our biggest challenge continues to be consumer behavior regarding discounts. Medicine prices have been artificially restricted by the government, meaning there have been no price increases in line with inflation since 2001. As most consumers are accustomed to purchasing medicines at stores that offer large discounts, a terrible "discount culture" has saturated the market; it is common to see recommended retail prices slashed by as much as 20%. At Pharmacie Plus, we only purchase medicines from licensed distributors, which means our margins are limited; other retailers purchase low-quality, fake, expired or repackaged medicines at a cheaper rate and turn those savings into "discounts" for consumers. The expectation of a discount is a challenge that plagues us daily, but it's not possible to cut prices without compromising our business integrity. That's simply not something we are willing to do.

Our strategy has therefore been to challenge these expectations as much as possible, creating a brand that reflects our legitimacy. We have invested in comfortable shops that are climate-controlled, thereby displaying our seriousness toward storing medicines appropriately in a clean environment. We ensure customers can

browse an additional inventory of health and lifestyle goods, cosmetics and specialized items to increase the value of the in-store experience. By focusing on good customer service, we ensure brand loyalty and keep up with our lower-priced competitors. Though we have faced resistance, over time customers have begun to tell us how

Competition has increased now that other pharmacy chains have entered the market. It is satisfying to see how much of their brand positioning is "borrowed" from ours (often verbatim). This is an immense source of pride for us as we were the ones to raise the issue of genuine medicines in a country where a

Launching a company from scratch forced me to consider how I wanted my brand to be perceived by consumers - it enabled me to prioritize the values I wanted to represent and how I wanted customers to appreciate that ethos. The best advice I can give to other AUP students is not to be daunted when entering a new space;



much they appreciate what we do; they often emphasize how the medication they've purchased from us is an improvement over what they were buying before. It is gratifying when friends and family commend me on our work or laud their latest shopping experiences in our stores.

lack of knowledge and information had led to unhealthy practices. Similarly, we were also able to bring the issue of medicine storage to the forefront in a city mired by heat and humidity - an aspect our competitors are starting to embrace more and more.

oftentimes, challenging market norms and daring to be different is enough of an edge to create consumer awareness. I am exceptionally thankful to my family, my friends and, ultimately, my team for pulling through these past years, which haven't been easy, but have definitely been fulfilling. ■



Mary Elizabeth Wieder G'09

## WOMEN SUPPORTING WOMEN IN VERONA

When Mary Elizabeth Wieder G'09 moved to Verona, Italy, she was looking for a professional women's network that would support her in her goal of making a career in international marketing. When she couldn't find what she needed, she built it herself from the ground up.

Gender equality in the workplace is an international issue, but in Italy the gender gap is particularly stark: less than 50% of women are part of the workforce at all. Progress has been slow, with a negligible increase over the last decade mostly confined to the country's industrial north. Local and national policies that support professional women - and in particular working mothers - have lagged behind those of other EU countries. Culture and religion play a role in maintaining traditional gender roles; many people still believe that women need to choose between work or having a family. When

I first arrived in the country, I was looking to connect with other women who were facing the same challenges I would be. At the time, the nearest network was in Milan - nearly 100 miles from where I lived in Verona. One day, it just clicked: I could build a local network myself. Verona Professional Women Networking (VPWN) was born.

As an American, the networking ethos has long been ingrained in my professional approach, but I quickly learned that it wasn't as prevalent in Italian culture. My experience as a professional

woman in the US and Europe had cemented my view that networking plays a vital role in advancing the cause of gender equality in the workplace. When I established VPWN, its main aim was to unite professional women across Verona to help them begin to have open dialogue on gender equality. The underlying question was, "How do we create opportunities for women?" My answer: by bringing them together.

In order to reach this conclusion, I drew on my own personal and professional experiences. I was born and raised in Allentown, Pennsylvania. In

2008, I came to Paris to pursue the MA in Global Communications at AUP. After graduation, I moved to Verona to pursue a marketing career in the life sciences and pharmaceutical industries; I now work as Director of Marketing for a group of multinational companies and run a freelance consultancy business. Most importantly, I have a family here, including my two-year-old son, Jayson. As a working mother, I have come to learn just how important a solid support network can be. I want to show other women that it is possible to have both a career and a family; the network is a great way to help me spread this message.

When I first had the idea to set up VPWN, I started by inviting professional women in the Verona area to a private LinkedIn group. I merely wanted to "test the waters," but within a week I had over 500 women join, many of whom were asking when the first event would be held. With the help of some friends, I organized a networking cocktail hour, which over 80 women attended. Today, VPWN is an officially registered not-for-profit organization with over 100 members and over 2,000 followers online. Since February 2016, we've hosted at least one networking event per month. These events serve to draw attention to gender equality issues in order to disrupt the status quo by bringing women who are facing similar challenges together, giving them an outlet to discuss potential solutions. For

example, we recently collaborated with Max Mara Fashion Group to host an in-store event during which we discussed the importance of style and first impressions for today's professional women. Other events have focused on skills that help professional women overcome workplace obstacles: in the last two years, we've launched a mentoring program and a foreign language program, with events in both English and French.

While we've had great success at the local level bringing women together for these events, there has unfortunately been little progress at the institutional level; if anything, policies seem to be moving backward. This year the government ended paternity leave programs and revoked policies that reimbursed families a percentage of their childcare fees. Italy still ranks among the lowest in Europe when it comes to gender equality, including metrics related to the gender pay gap, female managers and women on company boards. In 2011, the government did approve the so-called *quota rosa*, which mandated a certain percentage of women in boardrooms, but in practice this forced people into boardrooms who weren't qualified to be there. All this makes it that much more vital to give women opportunities to help each other.

Where I have seen change is in professional women starting to rise up and make noise; it is truly inspiring to witness more and more women

coming together to overcome these challenges. VPWN has struck a chord by providing an alternative outlet for voicing women's opposition to gender inequality. This year, we became part of a national initiative called Inclusione Donna - a group of over 45 female-led associations throughout Italy pushing for change at an institutional level. Women supporting women is a powerful tool: in the past three years, I've seen women find jobs through the network; women entrepreneurs find clients and form business partnerships with other women; and, most importantly, women become friends and share stories, experiences and advice. It's cooperation like this that gives me hope for the future.

The path to VPWN has not always been smooth or easy; there were many obstacles along the way, and the lack of institutional progress can be demoralizing when you have dedicated so much of your time to the cause. But the benefits to local professional women are real: we draw attention to the daily struggles facing women in the workplace and help them feel less alone in finding solutions to these problems. That's something that is so valuable; despite the ongoing challenges, it brings me satisfaction every single day. ■





Jessica Newman '01 | GUATEMALA



All photos: JustWorld International

# EQUESTRIANS FOR A JUST WORLD

Jessica Newman '01 balanced her AUP education with a career in competitive show jumping. She went on to combine her passion for the equestrian and her desire to tackle poverty by creating JustWorld International - and, in the process, she brought a community together.

How can we build a just world? It's an enormous question that can't be answered by one person - to make headway, it takes a huge community working together. Luckily, I've never been alone in tackling this mission: as founder and president of JustWorld International, I have a whole team working with me to improve the lives of disadvantaged children around the world. The charity, which draws support from the international equestrian community, supports more than 7,000 children in Guatemala, Honduras, Cambodia and the United States by providing access to life-changing programs across four main fields:

education, nutrition, health and hygiene, and cultural development. We've recently announced an exciting new partnership with the Fédération Équestre Internationale (FEI), the international body that governs equestrian competitions worldwide. It's a fantastic opportunity to grow our community and help even more children across the globe.

The equestrian community has long been an important part of my life; I started competing in top-level show jumping at a young age. It was for this reason that my AUP experience was unique: I did Fall semester eight years

running as I was balancing my studies with my sporting career. I cherished my time at the University both because it allowed me to develop my intellectual side and because of the independence it offered. When you're an athlete, you need to develop independence quickly, and a standard American college degree wasn't going to give me the freedom to accomplish that. I also wanted to study in a place that had a diverse, international community that would make me feel at home. That place was AUP.

Jessica at the Los Patojos project in Guatemala with the project's founder, Juan Pablo Romero Fuentes (far left)





Jessica Newman with Ingmar De Vos,  
President of the FEI

It was during my studies that my interest in the nonprofit sector was first fostered: in 1998, I volunteered in Honduras in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. That was the first time I came face to face with real poverty; it changed my life, both profoundly shocking me and motivating me to give back through my work. After graduating - by that time I'd largely finished competing - I took an internship in Washington DC with Oxfam America, before turning my desire to help disadvantaged children into the beginnings of JustWorld International. The organization was originally set up in 2003 as a subsidiary of AUP. There weren't really any charities working within the equestrian community at that point, so I thought, why not make good use of that network?

The passion and generosity of equestrians around the world continues to move and inspire me to this day. Our partnership with the FEI is expanding our reach within the community even further so we can better raise both funds and awareness. We are the FEI's first charitable partner; it's a natural fit as, even though we haven't had an official relationship with the FEI until recently, we've always worked closely together. They thought we would be well positioned to filter charitable proposals and find out which projects would make best use of their funds. For us, the relationship also

provides a valuable opportunity to work more closely with other equestrian disciplines; up until this point we'd tended to focus on show jumping - in large part because of my own competitive background. I'm thrilled to be bringing people from across the sport into the JustWorld family.

Along with my fellow riders, the AUP community was instrumental in getting JustWorld off the ground: in the beginning, we had AUP students heading out to scout projects and vet potential partners to make sure that funds would not be misused. The idea was to support local initiatives that were already doing fantastic work in our four chosen fields - people who were already leaders in their own communities. Nowadays, two of our partners - Los Patojos in Guatemala and the People Improvement Organization in Cambodia - have appeared on a list on CNN Top 10 Heroes. Los Patojos has been a partner for over ten years now. Juan Pablo Romero Fuentes started his community center in part of his family home in Jocotenango, Guatemala; since then, with our support, the project has grown into an accredited education program for local kids. Los Patojos now helps over 375 students by providing daily nutritious meals, an arts program and access to an on-site doctor. If we hadn't started small, and hadn't had members of the AUP community seeking out great projects like this one, we wouldn't be where we are today.

In fact, AUP alumni and faculty have been a constant source of support, involved at nearly every level of the JustWorld team. I cofounded JustWorld International with another alumna, Hilary Betaille '00 - she was valedictorian in her year. Our first Projects Manager, Astrid Corvin-Brittin '04, was also an alumna. Professor Waddick Doyle was closely involved in our early days; at one point, he came on a visit to our Cambodian project partner. Most recently, Mia Marzotto '14, an AUP graduate and keen equestrian, has acted as a ride ambassador - one of over 350 active ambassadors worldwide who are committed to "riding for a cause."

These ambassadors come from all levels of the sport; the only criteria to become one are that you be dedicated and motivated. They are such an important part of the work we do as an organization: raising awareness among young people leads to socially responsible adults down the road, so it's very important to me to create pathways to giving back from an early age. I'm keen to make participation as accessible as possible, so that young athletes can get involved without having to sacrifice their training. This is something we will be able to greatly expand thanks to our FEI partnership, as we now have links to every equestrian federation in the world. We don't only work with riders in Europe and the

US; we have ambassadors across the planet, including in countries where we have projects, like Honduras and Guatemala. By drawing on the generosity of local equestrians, we ensure that not all the money that goes toward supporting our partner projects comes from overseas. Having the FEI network opens up avenues to new countries in which we haven't yet had partners. I couldn't be more excited about the new opportunities this partnership represents.

Improving the lives of disadvantaged children around the globe is a mammoth task, but the way to achieve it is to start small and push ever higher by inspiring more and more people to commit to the cause. Through our partnership with the FEI, we are building sustainable projects that respect a community's past, that understand how a community works in the present and that contribute to a community's future. I am proud to help more and more people from my own sporting community engage with this mission. I also hope to work ever more closely with AUP graduates, via internship opportunities and other collaborations, to spread this engagement to another community that is close to my heart. Together, we can work to make life better for disadvantaged children around the globe - and achieve our mission of making a more just world. ■





# A MEANINGFUL CAREER

*Darcee Caron G'13 came to Paris the long way around - in doing so she followed a broad career path fit for any global explorer. Now, as Director for Experiential Learning at AUP, she knows just how valuable AUP's global liberal arts education is to students seeking a meaningful career.*



At The American University of Paris, we strive to provide a career-enabling education. That doesn't just mean any old career; it means a career that allows graduates to reach their full potential, to have a positive impact on the world stage and, ultimately, to feel fulfilled. We often say how proud we are of the diversity of our student body - over 100 nationalities are represented on our campus - but this diversity extends beyond demographics into the professional fields with which our alumni engage. We set up our graduates to find work that harnesses their specific skill sets, motivates them to make a difference in their communities and allows them to live up to their greatest ambitions. Although there is a wide range of careers on offer to our global explorers, one important factor ties these opportunities together: an AUP graduate, whatever his or her major, winds up in a meaningful career.

## THE LONG ROAD TO PARIS

It took me almost ten years to make it to AUP. I first heard about the University in 2004,

during my junior year of high school. That summer, I had embarked upon a whirlwind European tour covering four cities in nine days. The trip included a two-day stay in Paris - two days was all it took. I returned to my small town in northwest Florida with Paris engraved in the forefront of my mind. I had developed a plan for life after high school: I was going to learn French in six months, then apply to a French university. Thankfully, my International Baccalaureate Program Director received some promotional materials from AUP that fall. Mrs. Kane knew I was intent on getting to Paris, and she shared the news that I wouldn't have to speak French fluently to make it happen.

In 2005 I applied to AUP and was accepted. Ultimately, I decided to stay closer to home; I attended Eckerd College in Saint Petersburg, Florida, where I read anthropology and philosophy. Though I did not attend AUP for undergraduate, I still adopted a global explorer's mind-set. Part of what makes AUP special is the breadth of study that its global

liberal arts curriculum offers. Having a broad education allows students not only to succeed academically, but also to be interesting, well-rounded individuals. It's one of the reasons why IB students like me get on so well here, whether they apply for a bachelor's or a master's: they will have likely encountered such thinking before.

After my undergraduate degree, I studied law for a year, then traditional Chinese medicine. By this time, it was 2012, and though I hadn't yet found the perfect opportunity, I certainly had broad experience. I remembered that, back in 2004, AUP had been talking about offering master's degrees. One internet search later and, to my pleasure, I discovered a suite of AUP master's programs now up and running. I soon arrived in Paris to complete the MA in Public Policy and International Law. My one year in France has since become seven (and counting). I've recovered my Luxembourgish nationality; met the man who has since become my husband (and given birth to Augustine, our first daughter); worked as a



FRANCE | Darcee Caron G'13





Students taking the Paris Through Its Museums class on a trip to the Petit Palais

tour guide, a lobbyist, and a startup sales and product development junky; and finally joined the ranks of AUP employees in 2015, first as Internship Coordinator and Corporate Liaison, and now as Director of Experiential Learning.

AUP alumni are flourishing in meaningful careers in every corner of the globe, in every industry and at every level. Just like the other alumni featured in this magazine, I am sharing my story because my path through education has been one of intense exploration and self-discovery that has cultivated in me a diverse set of skills and competencies. It's a journey that has ultimately led me to a career that nourishes my spirit and continually inspires me – at the very university that presented me with those opportunities to explore.

### THE LIBERAL ARTS: CAREER-CRITICAL SOFT-SKILLS

The liberal arts tradition is long-standing – the concept dates back to 12th-century Greece. Ideas about a liberal arts education have, of course, evolved over nine centuries, but the central concept, the one that underpins an AUP education, remains more or less the same: the liberal arts aim to develop broadly educated individuals who are well prepared

to engage actively and meaningfully in civic life. Students are trained to be inquisitive and to contemplate big-picture questions about what it means to be human and the place of ethics in society. They learn to consider which problems need solving, alongside how to work toward solving them.

The liberal arts nourish the development of “soft skills”: those intellectual and social capacities that include critical thinking, the ability to work well with others, communication, adaptability, emotional intelligence and reasoning. Whereas “hard skills” (such as computer literacy or financial management) are often teachable on the job, soft skills make young professionals stand out because they can be very difficult for employers to teach. It's easy to train a new hire on how to use Photoshop; it's less straightforward to train them how to think for themselves.

AUP's approach to the liberal arts produces graduates who possess career-critical soft skills in abundance. As part of our Global Liberal Arts Core Curriculum, students are required to take courses in a variety of subjects – including math, science, French and English – in addition to their chosen major(s). This ensures they have a well-balanced exposure to the humanities, arts, and natural and social sciences. When I spoke to Linda Martz, AUP's

Director of Academic Advising, she said that helping students find the right balance in a personalized program was both a pleasure and a challenge. "There are so many ways to do this through a diverse curricular offering like ours," she explained.

Inside the classroom, faculty push students to interact critically with course material; students learn to question what they read, analyze academic concepts and develop their own lines of enquiry. At the end of each semester, I enjoy hearing students discuss their assignments. The topic of a term paper is often open-ended: students are encouraged to define their own question. While it is easy to lament this open-endedness - "Why can't Professor so-and-so just give us a question?" - it is incredibly valuable for students to develop the confidence to decide for themselves what to write about. Employers genuinely value our graduates' ability to think critically and independently without the need for constant direction.

Outside the classroom, students are confronted with a wide variety of experiential learning opportunities that explore what happens when theory becomes practice. Ranging from student government to study trips, these co-curricular initiatives are further opportunities for exploration - and "co-curricular" does

not preclude faculty involvement! In Spring 2019, Professor Marie Regan and colleagues organized a two-day masterclass on film production using real materials and budgets. Professor Jonathan Shimony routinely collaborates with fine arts students on the curation of the AUP Fine Arts Gallery. As students move beyond the classroom, they develop self-knowledge that will prove extremely valuable in their future careers.

### THE GPS PROGRAM: ENGAGED STUDENTS, SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES

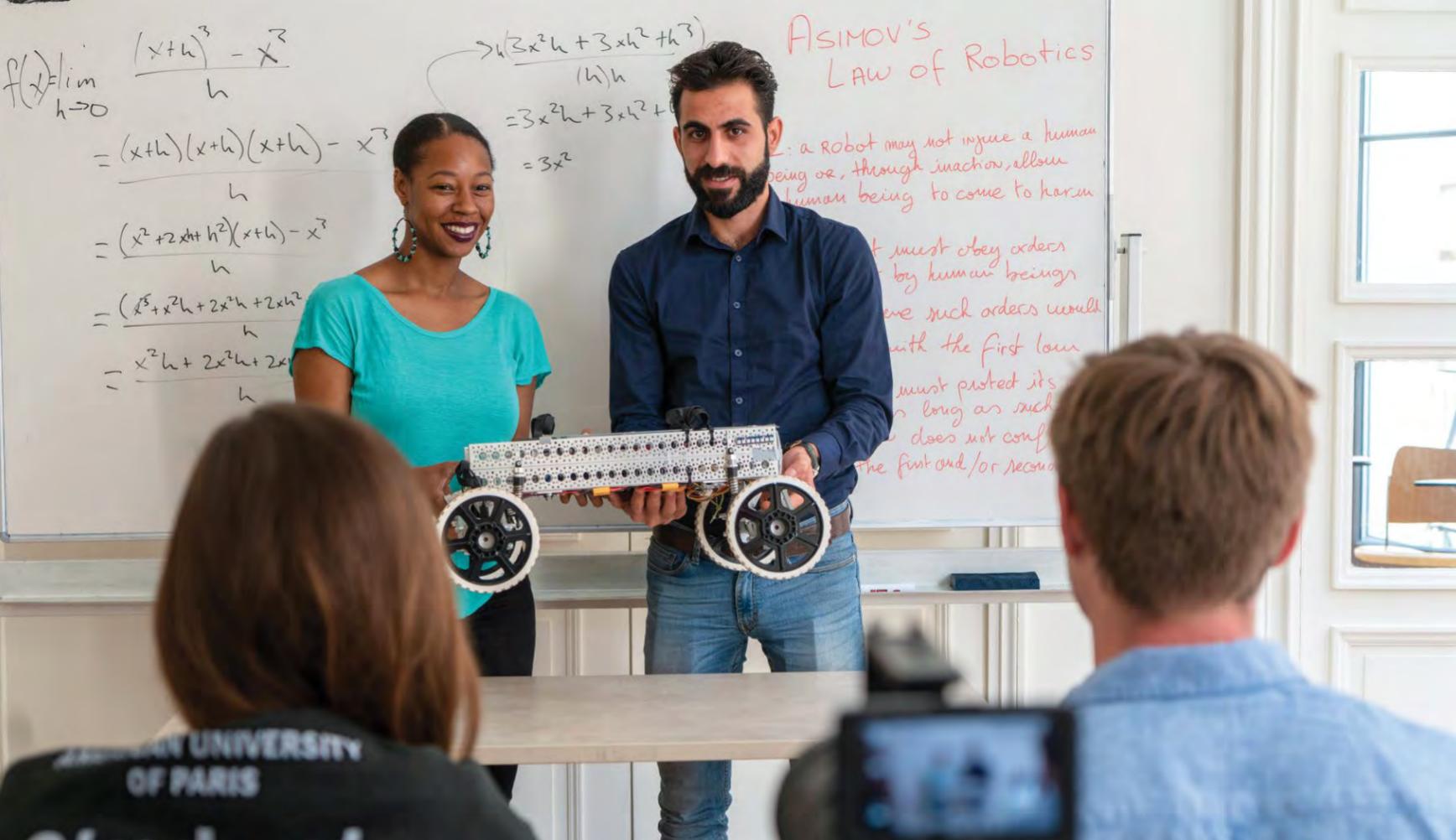
As Director of Experiential Learning, I oversee several of the University's co-curricular initiatives. It's a great position because it pulls together so many aspects of what makes AUP unique. This is keenly expressed through the Global Professional Skills (GPS) Program, a four-year undergraduate student-development initiative that provides students with a holistic view of their university experience from the moment they arrive in Paris, helping them view the curricular and co-curricular elements of their studies as two parts of the same journey. It supports students right up until graduation as they prepare to tackle their next steps head on. Upon completion of the program, students receive an official co-curricular record as a companion to their academic transcript - proof

of the full range of skills they have fostered during their time at AUP.

By connecting the dots between their curricular and co-curricular experiences in this way, students can articulate their professional goals and competencies more clearly. Participation in the program entails three main components. Firstly, students complete a series of minimum involvement requirements built around AUP's four core capabilities: these are categorized under the headings Professional (internships or CV workshops), Personal (athletics, art clubs and wellness activities), Leadership (club management and student government) and Cultural Fluency (study trips, study abroad, language clubs and culture clubs). Secondly, seniors attend a Designing Your Narrative (DYN) workshop during which they think about their post-graduation plans - a job, an internship, graduate school or an entrepreneurial venture - and begin constructing a coherent story that weaves their undergraduate experiences together for a specified audience, such as an employer or a graduate admissions counselor. Thirdly, students submit their narrative for examination, defining a clear objective and presenting themselves accordingly.



Darcee Caron speaking to students at the 2019 GPS awards





For many students the narrative is not at all hypothetical: they are actually applying for the job or graduate program they use as an example. In any case, the objective is to equip students with the tools they need to market themselves effectively. It can be hard for students to know exactly what they want to do in life; through GPS, we want to make sure that, whatever their choice of career, they are equipped to make those choices a reality – and to find a job that gets them excited to head into work every day.

### INTERNSHIPS: EXPLORE, EXPERIMENT, KNOW YOURSELF

The definition of experiential learning can vary, but in my opinion, it happens when students experiment. For anyone seeking a meaningful career, answering the question “What matters

to me?” is an absolute prerequisite. Self-knowledge requires exploration and trial and error. In my experience, experiential learning opportunities are the best sandbox for students to learn about what they enjoy doing and what feels right to them.

Internships are a great way to accomplish this. AUP students register more than 200 internships a year, making internships one of the most common co-curricular experiences at AUP. I tell students that internships are a great low-risk way to test out possible careers, because they are relatively short, they do not have to count for academic credit and students are not relying on the income from an internship to support themselves. Sure, internships look great on a CV, but more importantly internships are a chance for students to test-drive a job they think they’ll love.

Here’s a great example: Paris is one of the fashion capitals of the world, so of course we have a fair number of students who aspire to careers in the fashion industry. AUP has a network of brands that recruit Fashion Week interns twice a year. I encourage every student interested in fashion to apply. Every season, the majority of these interns adore the experience and are keen to move on to a more substantial role. There are, however,

always a few who realize the industry isn’t for them. These *in situ* experiences can drastically change a person’s perception of a job, of an industry and even of themselves. Even if the experience is, in some ways, negative, it is an enormously valuable insight.

Those of us who work in career advising know that young graduates often struggle with transitioning to the professional sphere. Internships are a fantastic way to ease this transition, and AUP’s co-curricular emphasis sets students up to prosper in these roles. One repeat internship employer I spoke to said she felt that, compared to students from a traditional French university, AUP interns were more flexible, more creative and more independent – all traits she valued highly. This was not an isolated conversation; it’s the sort of thing I hear time and again. It’s why AUP has such a healthy employer network feeding job and internship opportunities to our community year-round.

AUP’s Internship Coordinator, Kortney Nosakowski, speaks to students





A student crosses a rope bridge on a Cultural Program study trip to Ghana

### THE CULTURAL PROGRAM: ALWAYS EXPLORING, ALWAYS LEARNING

The Cultural Program is another fine example of experiential learning in action, providing students with an opportunity to get out of the classroom and explore the world. The focus is on learning by doing; students take part in hands-on scenarios all across the planet. Dozens of study trips are organized every year to destinations as varied as Warsaw in Poland and Accra in Ghana. Students travel with faculty, learning from new cultures and applying academic theory to practical examples out in the field.

One amazing example of the impact these study trips can have happened in 2018 on the Sustainable Development Practicum in Auroville, India. Auroville is an experimental township - a hub of innovative social enterprises, known for its emphasis on sustainable living. On the trip, a senior was paired with a nonprofit that had created a search engine, the use of which funded electricity for rural towns in impoverished areas of the country. The student created an animated explainer video to help the company communicate this mission in a concise manner.

It wasn't something she had done before, but she rolled-up her sleeves and, just ten days later, produced a video that the company now uses for all its promotional activities.

### CLUBS AND SOCIETIES: CAREER-RELEVANT SELF- KNOWLEDGE

There are also great co-curricular opportunities on campus. The Student Government Association (SGA) is a great way for students to test out and develop their leadership skills. Depending on the role, SGA positions allow students to learn new practical skills. I recently spoke with a student who served for a year as the SGA's Communications Director. She talked about learning to design promotional materials, running a social media account and event planning. She enjoyed the experience so much that she later opted for an internship in event planning, with the view of choosing it as a career.

Students can also access four competitive athletics teams and a variety of recreational clubs. Marie Anselmi '19 started the AUP Running Club in her senior year. Marie aspired to join the US Marine Corps, and so physical



Open mic night at the AMEX Café during Fall Orientation 2019

fitness was a big priority for her. She also thought the club would be a good way to build a community. It was a huge success, not only because it helped Marie improve her fitness, but also because it developed her leadership capacities. Through organizing events and managing club communications, she learned skills that will benefit her in any future career.

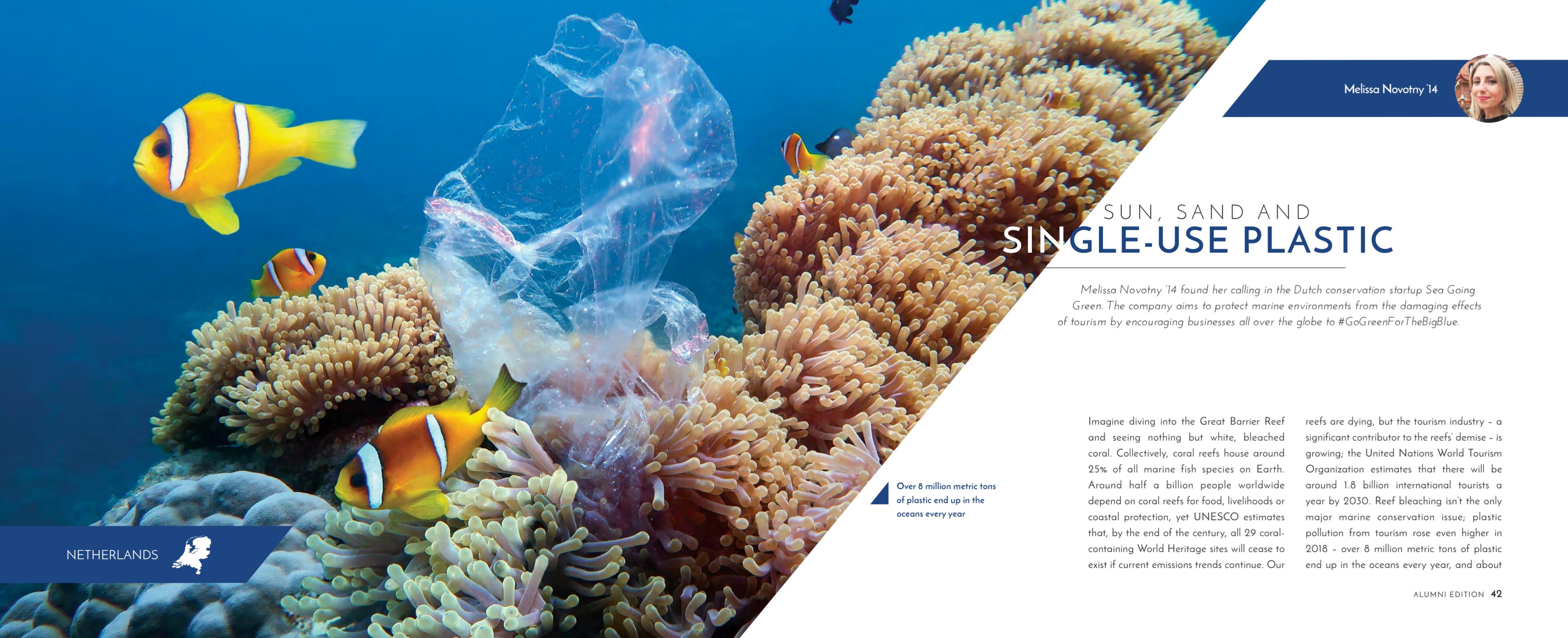
Though clubs are largely student-run, AUP encourages faculty to provide relevant expertise in order to increase the potential for student leaders to learn career-critical skills. Professor Hannah Westley from the Department of Global Communications is faculty mentor for AUP Student Media. Students are responsible for a print publication, a website and a YouTube channel. Professor Westley has significant journalistic experience and incorporates professional advice into the co-curricular experience. She told me that learning to write for digital media is useful in an increasingly wide range of careers: "I like to think that ASM workshops give all students the space and the opportunity to work on their skill set for future employment," she explained.

## FINDING MEANING

Together, these co-curricular experiential learning opportunities tell the story of what makes AUP unique. It's a pleasure for me to help students get involved with so many enriching experiences on a daily basis. Ultimately, it was experiences like these that brought me to Paris and inspired me to pass on my global explorer's mindset to new generations of students. The evidence that AUP's approach to a liberal arts education is effective is in our alumni community: the pages of this magazine are chock-full of alumni sharing their inspiring stories. I hope that current and prospective students reading the magazine will be inspired to seek out equally fulfilling work. Because at AUP, that's what all our efforts are about: helping students find the path to a meaningful career. ■



The Paris Through Its Museums class takes learning outside of the classroom



Melissa Novotny '14



## SUN, SAND AND SINGLE-USE PLASTIC

*Melissa Novotny '14 found her calling in the Dutch conservation startup Sea Going Green. The company aims to protect marine environments from the damaging effects of tourism by encouraging businesses all over the globe to #GoGreenForTheBigBlue.*

Over 8 million metric tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year

Imagine diving into the Great Barrier Reef and seeing nothing but white, bleached coral. Collectively, coral reefs house around 25% of all marine fish species on Earth. Around half a billion people worldwide depend on coral reefs for food, livelihoods or coastal protection, yet UNESCO estimates that, by the end of the century, all 29 coral-containing World Heritage sites will cease to exist if current emissions trends continue. Our

reefs are dying, but the tourism industry - a significant contributor to the reefs' demise - is growing; the United Nations World Tourism Organization estimates that there will be around 1.8 billion international tourists a year by 2030. Reef bleaching isn't the only major marine conservation issue; plastic pollution from tourism rose even higher in 2018 - over 8 million metric tons of plastic end up in the oceans every year, and about

NETHERLANDS





40% of it is single-use. Tourism can cause harm, but it doesn't have to: we can alleviate the negative impacts of the industry on marine environments, especially in coastal communities and underwater ecosystems. That is the mission of my current startup, Sea Going Green.

I found my way to this startup the long way around. After graduating from AUP with a BA in History and International and Comparative Politics in 2015, I completed a master's in political science at the University of Amsterdam. After my studies, I worked on assignments at the International Centre for Counter Terrorism (ICCT - The Hague) and later at the International Labour Organization in Vietnam. While in Asia, I noticed a paradox between the high plastic pollution and the efforts of many young locals to refuse single-use plastic bags and to participate in cleanups. Tourism was a key reason for this disconnect; to help overcome the paradox, someone needed to convince tourism companies to take steps toward sustainability.

I returned to Europe where I started volunteering full-time for a Netherlands-based NGO focusing on the sociocultural

integration of refugees; being at such a small startup was eye-opening as it showed me an alternative to sitting behind a desk, working on red-tape-covered projects under a hierarchy of superiors. A few months later, and quite out of the blue, I met the founder of a brand-new startup called Sea Going Green, which was working on marine conservation through ethical tourism. I felt energized by the mission and ready to dive into something more innovative. I pitched myself, explaining what I could offer the company, and then took on the role of Business and Partnership Development Manager.

I joined Sea Going Green at a very exciting time, just weeks after our first client was signed: The Yacht Week, the biggest yachting tourism company in Europe. When we work with a new client, we start by creating a tailor-made Green Transition Strategy. This is a three-stage process that includes an environmental impact assessment, a customized responsible tourism policy and a best-practices report - as well as green branding suggestions to help companies communicate their transition to staff and customers. As part of The Yacht Week's transition strategy, we took part in a collaborative dive in Croatia with ex-military divers during which we collected one metric ton of waste. The video of the cleanup went

viral with over 100,000 views. We also calculated the company's carbon footprint and established a baseline on their usage of fuel, water and single-use plastic. After clients complete a transition strategy, we encourage them to lead the way as ocean champions in the tourism industry; with this new data and our strategies in mind, The Yacht Week held a "Revive Week" this year in Greece, which included beach cleanups, reef dives and "ghost-net fishing" - the removal of abandoned fishing nets from marine environments.

When crunching the numbers for The Yacht Week's environmental impact assessment, I encountered several methods I'd used before in AUP's Energy and the Environment course. Having a liberal-arts background has equipped me with a competitive edge and has opened doors to jobs outside the usual fields available to a politics graduate. When I started at Sea Going Green, a lot of the scientific and business aspects of my work were new to me; I'd spent much of my time up to that point drawing up project proposals and conducting research. I felt inspired by the fight against unsustainable tourism, pollution and climate change to take on these extra challenges; taking the risk to try something new in a demanding

*“Having a liberal-arts background has equipped me with a competitive edge.”*

scientific field has been the most rewarding project I've ever worked on.

That risk has certainly paid off. One of the most exciting achievements of my career has been having a blog piece that I co-wrote - along with Sea Going Green's founder, Ally Dragozet, and Jemi Lacle of the World Bank - published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) in both English and Spanish. It was titled "Tourism Is Damaging the Ocean. Here's What We Can Do to Protect It." A video

Green, I conduct interviews and produce blog posts, presentations and our Summer Guide for Sustainable Travel - a downloadable guide with tips to help tourists enjoy a more sustainable vacation. Weekly blogs serve as a key part of our awareness-building platform; they focus on the biggest issues facing the marine and tourism industries today. Topics range from advice to yacht crews on how to act sustainably to best-practice ideas for river cruise operators. Being an editor and content advisor is one of the most fulfilling aspects of my work.

*"By spreading the message of marine conservation and sustainable tourism, we are opening the door for other businesses in the tourism and hospitality industries to take steps toward sustainability."*

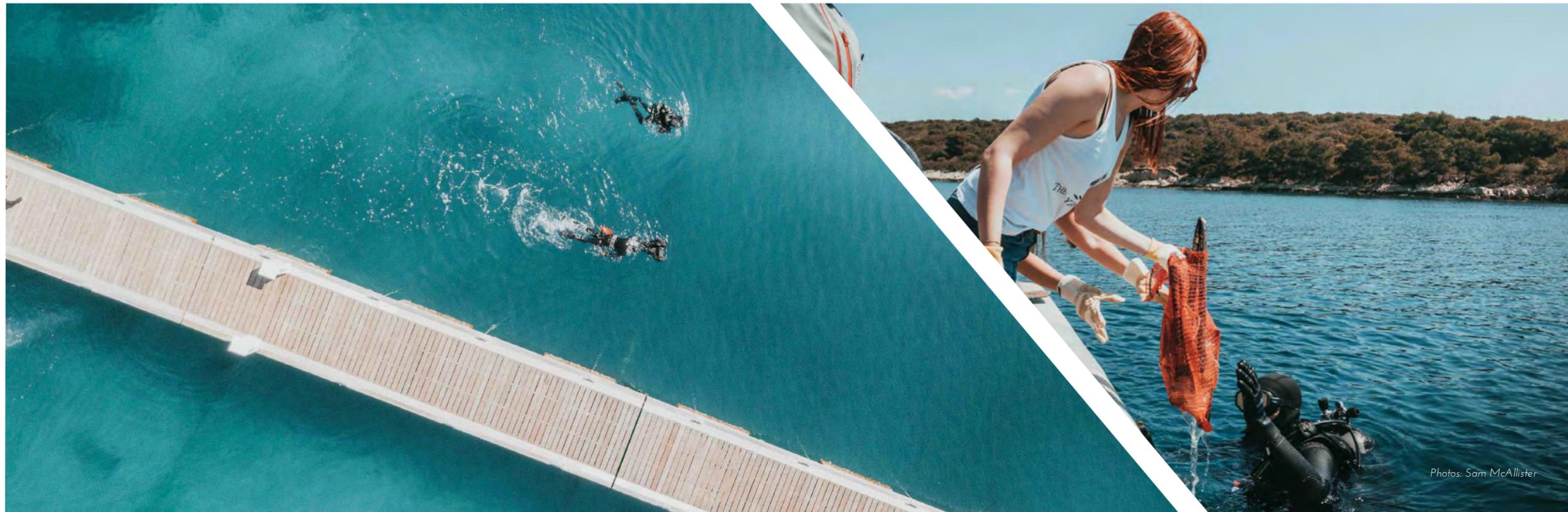
presenting the article reached over 4.5 million views! Seeing people react to our content in this way was inspiring, and it validated our conviction that tourists prefer destinations that operate sustainably.

Since joining the company, I have enjoyed the opportunity to improve my impact writing: I had been so used to dry, formal political writing that I had to go back and rework my style to reflect my creative personality and bring my writing to life with my own voice. At Sea Going

It has absolutely been worth the struggle to find work that intersects with my own interests in this way. Working on a project with such an important mission makes this all the more fulfilling. By spreading the message of marine conservation and sustainable tourism, we are opening the door for other businesses in the tourism and hospitality industries to take steps toward sustainability - and making it that much more likely that the coral reefs and coastlines we all enjoy will still be there for generations to come. ■



## CROATIA OCEAN CLEANUP





## HONORING AMERICA'S OVERSEAS WAR DEAD

*The North Africa American Cemetery, situated on the Tunisian coastline, honors US soldiers killed in combat in the region during the Second World War. Here, Ryan Blum '16, the cemetery's superintendent, discusses the importance of giving meaning to their memory.*

The North Africa American Cemetery  
in Carthage, Tunisia



TUNISIA | Ryan Blum '16



When most people think of Carthage, they think of Hannibal, his elephants and the 100-year war with Rome that left the city in ruins; when I think of Carthage, I picture the nearly 3,000 bone-white Latin crosses and Stars of David symmetrically set among immaculately manicured gardens and hand-raked gravel pathways. Welcome to the North Africa American Cemetery, one of 26 American military cemeteries and memorials located overseas and the only one located on the African continent. Each headstone bears the name of a young man or woman who lost his or her life in one of the most overlooked campaigns of the Second World War.

As the cemetery's superintendent, it's my job to try to teach visitors the importance of what took place here. I never imagined five years ago, when I was just starting my AUP experience, that my life would eventually lead me to direct an American military cemetery on the North African coastline. Cemeteries, after all, are not generally where people think or want to work, and, to be perfectly honest, not

too long ago I probably would have struggled to locate Tunisia on an unmarked map. After two years, however, it's difficult to imagine myself wanting to do anything else. These cemeteries are so much more than dignified burial grounds: they stand as reminders to the world of the sacrifice of American youth. The American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC) - the tiny federal agency tasked with designing, constructing and preserving these cemeteries - has ensured the sites remain the most beautiful and meticulously maintained shrines of their nature in the world.

The North Africa American Cemetery, located in the present town of Carthage about ten miles from Tunis, is no exception. The North African campaign turned the tide against the Axis forces that had swept nearly all of Europe. It was in the hills, passes and valleys of central and northern Tunisia that America first gained her confidence. This confidence would lead her to eventually storm the beaches in Italy and later in Normandy, but, more importantly, it signaled the dawn of the American century: never before had

the United States acted as a leader and world power in this way.

Three quarters of a century have passed since those buried here lost their lives, but those lives are no less sacred than the lives lost today. The ABMC's mission, summed up in the words of General of the Armies John "Blackjack" Pershing, who was also the commission's first Chairman, is to ensure that "time will not dim the glory of their deeds." To combat this ever-present threat, the cemetery welcomes thousands of visitors from around the world, hosts annual ceremonies and invites numerous distinguished guests to come pay their respects. Most important, however, are the organized school visits; these hallowed grounds must serve a new purpose, which is to educate the next generation about the sacrifices it took to make the world safe for democracy. Democracy is the idea that all men are created equal and have the right to participate in their government's decision-making. It's an idea that's more fragile than we would like to admit; we need places like

this cemetery to ensure that idea is upheld and that we never forget what's at stake.

It's difficult to fully describe how powerful walking the grounds of one of America's overseas cemeteries can be. Unlike the national veterans' cemeteries, or Arlington Cemetery, these sites only contain the remains of those who lost their lives overseas, primarily during the First and Second World War. There are no veterans buried at my cemetery, no family members; only those who lost their lives here are allowed to be buried here. This restriction forces visitors to confront the reality of war; the true cost, evident when gazing upon row after row of headstones, brings many to tears. Communicating that cost is a vital task.

The need to create such places arose after the Great War, when the American government gave the families of the fallen a unique option to either repatriate their deceased loved ones to the United States or to inter them in a permanent military cemetery overseas. The majority of the families, understandably, took the decision to bring their loved ones back. However, nearly 40% of the American war dead remained permanently overseas at the request of their families. The percentages were similar after the Second World War.

Every day I reflect on what an extraordinary decision the families of those buried at my cemetery made, deciding that not only should their loved ones lie forever with their comrades-in-arms, but more importantly that they should serve as a perennial reminder to us, the living, of the sacrifice their families endured so that the ideals for which they lived and died would never be forgotten. As one next-of-kin wrote to the government, "We have given you our dead, now give them meaning." I pray the weight of that responsibility and duty will never be lost on me.

I encourage all of you to visit at least one of the cemeteries in your lifetime. Truly look at each headstone and take the time to read the person's name out loud. Try to imagine the future each person sacrificed for us. I promise you will be strengthened by the courage of the fallen, heartened by their valor and inspired by their memory. It will, more importantly, ensure that General Pershing's words do not ring hollow and that, indeed, time has not dimmed the glory of their deeds. ■



Ryan Blum, Superintendent of the North Africa American Cemetery



Carla Maria Issa G'15



## THE GLOBAL RESEARCHER

*Carla Maria Issa G'15 has a passion for research that has taken her across continents. In Dubai, she worked on a first-of-its-kind study linking the city's real estate and education sectors - and in the process laid the groundwork for stronger communities in the city.*

Throughout my academic career, I've thrived in an atmosphere where thoughts and ideas are constantly debated. I am driven by the desire to start conversations, to educate people about societal problems and to provide the data necessary to work toward resolving those issues. For a policy or industry to have a meaningful social impact, it needs to be built on extensive research. In my current role with Dubai-based real-estate advertising company Property Finder, I spearheaded a first-of-its-kind qualitative and quantitative research project - the 2019 Knowledge Economy Report - that looked at the city's housing and education sectors in order to assess how closely house prices correlated with annual tuition costs at nearby schools. The project's aim was to help both industries make informed decisions about the creation of new developments, though my personal investment was in the hope that our findings would start a larger conversation about enhancing the community aspects within Dubai.

My interest in research dates back to my undergraduate degree in Chicago. I truly enjoyed the process that came each semester of researching and writing term papers. My research questions sometimes led to me conducting independent studies with professors - ultimately, I pursued an MA in

International Affairs at AUP to continue this process of research collaboration. I was passionate about studying an international subject somewhere far from home, and a respected American institution with an engaging faculty was the perfect place to do that. It was such a rewarding experience that I stayed in academia upon graduation: with the indispensable help of AUP's Professor Ziad Majed, I was accepted for a second master's program at the American University of Beirut. Throughout my academic career I have presented independent research at international conferences at the London School of Economics and at the American University of Cairo. Spending years studying the Middle East region in particular left me with a compelling interest in its future, which eventually led me to Dubai, a city that offers unprecedented opportunities as the government's UAE Vision 2021 emphasizes a knowledge-based economy as the cornerstone of the country's success in the digital age.

The company I now work for is involved in real estate, but I found that many of the skills I acquired from studying politics and economics were easily transferable to my role as a senior research analyst - in particular, my familiarity with qualitative and quantitative research methods. My international experience studying

across three continents was another key asset. The United Arab Emirates is unique in its demographic makeup as it is the country with the highest ratio of expats to nationals (9:1). Dubai is home to many international and regional corporations and has a growing housing sector that is competitive for both local and international investment. As the emirate grows, it is looking at long-term residency programs to encourage expats to live in the country for longer. The concept of creating stronger local communities has therefore peaked the interests of property developers and residents alike.

We hypothesized that housing developments and schools in Dubai were being built without considering the prices for either or whether a family who could afford to live in a property was interested in the curriculum, and could afford the tuition, at nearby schools. The real estate and education industries are closely linked under any circumstances, but for Dubai - which, as a city, is just 48 years old - this interplay takes on a deeper meaning.



UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Dubai's expatriate population is more mobile and more able to pick and choose amenities that match their budget than elsewhere. In the United States, for example, housing developments are part of a zone attached to a particular public school, one that is often within walking distance or serviced by bus. That picture looks different in Dubai as expats are schooled in private institutions, which parents select based on a curriculum and budget rather than choosing a property linked to a particular school district.

Alongside the education consultant, I worked on analyzing information provided by the Education Intelligence Group on Dubai's education sector. The final report covered everything from the average property prices and annual tuition of nearly 200 local schools to advice for investors and school operators as to available school plots in Dubai. We included recommendations of the curriculum and price point at which to construct schools based on surrounding property prices in order to encourage suitable facilities within local communities. The study also included data from multiple focus groups and surveys of Dubai residents, as well as a statistical analysis of the responses to help stakeholders build schools that correspond to the needs of neighboring communities.

I am proud to have produced research that is having an impact on an exciting developing economy: the report has already been purchased by the world's leading education provider as well as by a global banking conglomerate, and Dubai's Knowledge and Human Development Authority is expected to review the report's findings during its annual conference. I have now lived outside the United States for five years, all the while engaging with people from a multitude of backgrounds and navigating the intricacies of being an expatriate in multiple countries. With no plans to return to the United States anytime soon, I continue to conduct meaningful research because of the positive experiences I have had working with academics from all over the world. While I find my current role challenging and fulfilling, I look forward to pursuing a doctorate degree in the future with a view to leading research for an international organization or working as a university professor. No matter the destination, I'm committed to furthering that atmosphere of debate that has so inspired me throughout my career. ■

A property development  
in Dubai, UAE





Clint Branam '03 | HONDURAS



## LESSONS IN DIPLOMACY

*Clint Branam '03 oversees operations for a USAID mission focusing on improving living standards in Honduras, a country with one of the highest murder rates in the world. He explains how his time at AUP has influenced his diplomatic approach.*

If I had to choose one main takeaway from my time at AUP, it would be that the world is a complex, interconnected place: events that happen in one country reverberate in far-off corners of the globe. For me, this lesson emphasizes the importance of diplomacy and, in particular, of foreign-aid programs; by investing time and resources in unstable areas of the world, we not only improve the lives of people living in those regions, but we also create a safer environment for our citizens at home. Since I graduated from AUP in 2003, my career has taken me to more than 80 countries. I currently work

as Director of the Executive Office for the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Honduras. The organization reports to the Secretary of State and is charged with improving living standards in the developing world in a way that simultaneously promotes US interests. We do this by aligning foreign aid programming in areas like health, economic development, education, crisis response, democracy and governance with the overarching goal of promoting a safe, stable, free and prosperous world. In my view, it's a real win-win.





Looking back now, as a mid-career diplomat, it's clear to me that my interest in international affairs began at AUP. In 1999, I arrived in Paris from Washington DC to begin my undergraduate studies, during which I majored in international business administration. Upon arrival, I spoke no French and, having never been to France, my impression of the country was, regrettably, largely limited to images of baguettes and berets. Nevertheless, I was excited to be part of a diverse student body. AUP was, to me, a tapestry of rich perspectives from across the world. One course in particular – The World Since 1945 by Professor von Bawey – brought history to life, changed the way I looked at the news and helped me develop a structure I would continue to use when operating within diverse cultures. As one of relatively few Americans studying at AUP full-time, I also took pride in representing the US to my peers – though it taught me some important lessons. I'll never forget speaking to students from the Balkans who had lived through the Kosovo War and subsequent NATO bombing of Yugoslavia; these conversations shaped my perspective of the firsthand impact of American global influence.

Upon graduation, the drive I had developed from my AUP experience – the spirit of adventure, the potential to make a positive impact – led me to

join the United States Peace Corps. I served as a volunteer in Nicaragua, living on a stipend of \$220 a month for two years. I then landed a job with the consulting firm now known as Booz Allen, where I applied management consulting principles to government problems. I later earned my master's at the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana, before returning to the firm to consult on strategy and policy matters related to maritime intelligence for the Chief of Naval Operations in the Pentagon. These roles provided me with valuable and varied experience; however, ever since the Peace Corps, my sights had been set on the Foreign Service.

Nine years ago, I was invited to work for USAID. I cut my teeth in the Foreign Service in Guinea and Sierra Leone during the Ebola outbreak of 2013–16, the most widespread to date. I worked in South Sudan; in the Balkans, where I was based out of Kosovo; and in Germany, as part of a regional hub for Middle Eastern operations. I am currently halfway through my four-year post in Honduras. As Director of the Executive Office, I serve as a *de facto* Chief Operating Officer for our mission, which consists of roughly 120 people and \$500 million in foreign assistance programming. I manage our Human Resources, IT, facilities, security, logistics and operating budgets and seek to broaden our development impact by serving as a management consultant

to the mission, our partners and USAID headquarters. I'm proud to be supporting US foreign policy objectives in Honduras by promoting citizen safety, transparent democracy and economic development.

Honduras is known as one of the most violent countries in the world; at the time I took up my role, the murder rate per capita was higher than that of any other country not currently at war. Though that rate has fallen by more than 30% since its peak in 2012 – thanks in part to the success of US foreign aid programming – continued gang violence, political tensions and a lack of economic opportunity have led to record numbers of migrants fleeing the country toward the US. Though the issue is now, more than ever, a political hot topic, the overarching strategy of our mission remains the same. Development is a long-term game, and we have sought to carry out this strategy with a variety of programs supporting at-risk youth and community safety; providing technical training for high-potential economic sectors, like coffee; strengthening national-level public administration; and enhancing civil society's influence on government decision-making.

One of the most fulfilling aspects of my work is seeing these programs translate into concrete change. Our three-pronged approach to

interventions has helped keep more than 1.5 million Hondurans from leaving the country: (1) Citizen-security programs have provided assistance to more than 825,000 Hondurans in high-violence neighborhoods, which saw, on average, a 79% reduction in homicides between 2013 and 2018, compared to a 42% reduction nationally. (2) Economic growth programs have improved the lives of more than 665,000 Hondurans in the west of the country, where incomes have doubled for more than 30,000 families. (3) Governance initiatives have provided support to anti-corruption institutions – resulting in 108 corruption investigations and the discovery of \$160 million in embezzled funds – while civil media, judges and prosecutors have been trained across the country to detect and prevent corruption.

Personally, I have found working on USAID programs to be an interesting intersection of purpose, diplomacy and my background in strategy and management expertise – all with the hope of doing worthwhile work across the globe. I have AUP to thank for opening my eyes to the world, providing a solid framework with which to view it, and stoking that spirit of adventure that has led me along my pilgrim way. Wherever my next tour may take me, I can be certain that the experience will be all the more fruitful thanks to my time at AUP. ■



Julie Tran '09

Portrait: Rikard Isacson

# EMPOWERING FUTURE AFRICAN POLITICAL LEADERS

*In her day job, Julie Tran '09 is a local councilor for the Swedish Centre Party. But her career took on an international bent when she was invited to work for a program training the next generation of political leaders in French-speaking West Africa.*

There are many ways to change the world. In high school, what I wanted to do more than anything was to change the world by working for the UN. Looking back, I could have ended up with any organization that took for its mission improving people's living standards, working toward peace and creating a better world. What was important to me was finding a platform that enabled me to make a difference. I could have joined an NGO, worked as a civil servant in a municipality or acted as a lobbyist for an environmental organization; in fact, I went into politics.

This year marks my tenth anniversary in politics since graduating from AUP. Today, I am an elected regional councilor in Sweden - though that hasn't stopped my work taking on an international element. Out of all my political achievements so far, the one that has had the greatest impact on my life is the Program for Young Politicians in Africa (PYPA). It consists of a multiparty political academy that aims to build the capacity of young political leaders, strengthening their participation and influence in politics, so that they too can change the world.

It is PYPA's international aspects that most inspire me. Since it started in 2012, it has come to be active in 16 countries across Africa. It is a groundbreaking program that responds to the real needs of young people, and in particular young women, who have limited opportunities to influence social development across the continent, largely due to age and gender discrimination and the distribution of power within political parties and across society.

I started working with PYPA during my two years on the board of the Swedish Centre

Party's International Foundation (CIS); it was at this time that I felt my passion for international politics come alive. CIS works in regions where democracy needs to be supported. Together with local partners, they implement programs to empower women and youth to be key agents of change in order to improve national conditions for peace and prosperity. Their work is built on a human rights-based approach, which seeks to ensure transparency, accountability, participation and nondiscrimination at all levels. This approach is particularly evident in PYPA, as

the program engages in multiparty capacity building for young political leaders. CIS and their local partners implement PYPA in seven countries in French-speaking West Africa, in close collaboration with political parties and organizations.

My first contact with PYPA was through the CIS program manager, Malena Liedholm Ndounou. She had heard about a young politician in the Centre Party who spoke French; being a French speaker was apparently rare in my party. I was soon invited to speak on the

youth perspective in Swedish politics at a PYPA training session in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso. PYPA works with the youth perspective in several ways: it includes it as a specific training topic; it encourages participants to promote youth rights in mini-projects and alumni activities; and it strives to communicate to



View of Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso





Julie Tran with PYPA participants and Chérif Sy (in white),  
President of the national transitional council of Burkina Faso

participating youth that they are the bearers of both rights and duties.

During 2014, I returned to Burkina Faso twice, once with PYPA and once by my own initiative as a board member for CIS. There had been unrest in the country because the President at the time, Blaise Compaoré, wanted to prolong his mandate in power. He ended up fleeing the country. I had come to Ouagadougou a second time because I wanted to meet with PYPA participants and hear their stories about this historic event. While in Ouagadougou, I witnessed increased political participation from PYPA alumni: Celine Ouedraogo, from the PYPA class of 2014, facilitated a meeting with the country's current president, Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, for whom she works. She confirmed that PYPA helped increase her political and analytical capacity. She is determined to bring change to her country by focusing on the political education of women and young people.

In 2015, PYPA led me to Cotonou in Benin, where I held a workshop on dealing with master suppression techniques (also called domination techniques) - a Norwegian framework for understanding strategies for social manipulation and coercion - for

young female Beninese politicians. The aim was to equip participants with skills to help them tackle discriminatory practices that were preventing them from accessing political spaces. I held another workshop, about political campaigns, for former PYPA participants. Sainthia Lassissi, a young Beninese woman from the PYPA class of 2014, told me afterward that PYPA had allowed her to regain confidence in herself, permitted her to evolve politically and taught her to speak in public - she has since accepted a position as assistant to Sacca Lafia, the president of the Union for Democracy and National Solidarity.

Working with PYPA has been an effective way for me to contribute to more democratic, representative and nondiscriminatory political systems across West Africa. PYPA creates networks between young politicians both among African nations and within them; this is crucial since it binds members of opposing parties together in the fight for a common goal - that of a better future for the continent. In the spirit of AUP, the project showcases the benefits of countries exchanging knowledge and experiences and transcending cultural differences and national boundaries. If that's not a great way to change the world, I don't know what is. ■



Julie Tran at a New Year's celebration with PYPA alumni Celine (left)  
and President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré of Burkina Faso (center)

# CAREER NOTES

*AUP alumni around the world lead meaningful careers in a wide range of industries. Here, global explorers share their stories of life after graduation.*



**JOHN MEYERS '86**

I received my BA in International Relations from AUP and with it experiences and an AUP network that helped make possible a career in international development. I am currently Private Sector Engagement - Team Leader, Planet Partnerships, supporting USAID's focus on private sector development.

Prior to this appointment, I established Meyers Global + Associates - a strategic advisory and consulting firm working globally in impact investing, blended finance, agriculture and inclusive finance. Previously, I served as Managing Director - North America for Swisscontact, a Swiss NGO. I am also Board President at Impact Capital Forum, a 3,000-person global network in the impact sector. These opportunities allowed me to shape policy and speak at UN convenings. I am grateful for the vision of AUP, whose scholarship funding made possible an improbable but incredible journey rooted in an inspirational liberal arts education.



**ELAINE MERCEDES MENDOZA '95**

I am an author and inspirational speaker who helps people overcome the labels that control their lives, helping them to heal so that they can obtain the life they both want and deserve. The Gandhi Foundation called me a "changemaker" after I co-authored *Time to Rise*, a compendium of essays compiled by Dr. Andrea Pennington. My next book, *Our World: Free from Labels*, will launch in March 2020.

I enjoy adventure, foodie experiences, traveling the world and getting to know people from many countries and with many beliefs. As an avid traveler, I have written inspirational articles for brands and magazines. After a successful career as a freelance writer and educator, I now share my expertise through my writing and speaking engagements, allowing me to continue spreading my message of inclusion, compassion and love for the world.



**SARAH-JANE ENNIS '03**

Since leaving AUP in 2003, I have had two distinct career paths. After I graduated, I went into advertising - working first for Ogilvy, then for McCann Erickson handling clients such as Dove, Perrier, Opel and Nespresso. After a few years, I changed track and joined ShineFrance, a TV production company. I was in charge of producing digital content for The Voice, MasterChef and other TV hits.

Eventually, I realized that my personal values didn't correspond to the media industry. I took a six-month break, studied yoga and meditation, and took some time to focus on myself and what I wanted out of life. Now, I work as a sophrologist, helping people breathe more easily, reconnect to their bodies and lead happier lives. I'm proud of my shift from a hectic career under the spotlight to a peaceful role in which I help people every day.



**KONSTANTIN HEMMELRATH '06**

After completing a BA in International Business Administration at AUP with a minor in international economics, I began a career in the fields of finance and mergers and acquisitions advisory in Frankfurt and London. I complemented my professional experience with an MBA from Bocconi University in Milan, before going on to implement my enhanced strategic know-how in the sporting goods industry while working for adidas AG.

Through all of these experiences, I realized that I was primarily passionate about working with people and so, in Summer 2018, I decided to launch my own consulting company. Focusing on family businesses, I cover succession management, strategy, change management and mergers and acquisitions advice. After living in a number of different countries, I found that starting my own company is almost like coming home after a 15-year journey - one that started at age 18 when I moved to Paris to study at AUP.



**PEREGRINE WHITE OLANDER '06 | G'08**

I am a digital storyteller, filmmaker and photographer who specialises in collaborative, multicultural projects and strategic content creation. After leaving AUP I worked on a PEPFAR-funded Behavior Change Communications platform in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and on the Webby-nominated GE Show, a series that used video to explore brand and identity for General Electric.

I am now based in Paris working as AUP's Multimedia Producer and Photographer; I provide visual context to the life and mission of the University for its diverse constituencies across the globe while reinforcing its sense of community.

I am a conference leader and trainer for the US State Department through the African Regional Services speaker program and the Bureau of International Information Programs TechCamp.



**MARTINA DIMITROVA ROUSSEAU G'07**

I came to AUP in March 2006 and within three months I started working with a boutique financial services firm led by AUP trustee Grenville Craig. Upon graduating, I built a successful career as a grains and soft commodities strategist, working between Paris, Miami and Monaco.

Since 2015, I have been active in the technology sector, consulting for remote financial structures, FinTech digital mechanisms and process-driven organizations. I have been running my own consulting practice since 2016, which I have just made public with a remote team.

AUP has been part of life for more than ten years in an educational, professional and personal manner; I am still in touch with people from AUP for board meetings and fundraisers.



**MAX NOKHRIN '08**

After graduating from AUP, I spent a year working at a French bank that was in the process of acquiring a Ukrainian bank. I saw out the process on the ground in Kyiv. Returning to Canada, I jumped to a technology consulting role spanning several firms. I ended up at PwC, where I worked with clients across Canada, the US and the UK.

After a stint at a telecom startup, I was hired to lead a new cross-bank anti-fraud alliance in Canada. In the role, I lead the drafting of data-sharing constructs that consider privacy laws and agreements, I engage major banks to become alliance members, and I operationalize the alliance as a driver of preventing financial fraud in Canada.



**RÉBAR JAFF G'09**

After a six-month internship in 2008 at the UN Secretariat in New York, I joined the OECD as a policy analyst with the MENA-OECD Governance Programme, which aims to improve public administration and public service delivery in the MENA region.

In 2010, I returned to the UN and held various posts with UNFPA, the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. I was deployed in Iraq during the ISIL crisis and in Haiti during Hurricane Matthew. My most recent post was as Secretary of the Disarmament Advisory Board of UN Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres at UNHQ in New York.

In January 2019, I joined a Canadian not-for-profit organization, Artisanal Gold Council, as Director of International Programs, overseeing development projects to improve and professionalize the artisanal gold mining sector as per international standards.



**CODY DAMON G'09**

Following an MA in Global Communications, my first job out of AUP was ghostwriting blogs for a prominent democratic political consultant. I soon decided to start my own digital agency. I focused on the nonprofit sector, within which digital tools were becoming more commonplace and social good organizations were looking to increase their reach and impact.

In 2011, my agency merged with Media Cause, a social impact marketing agency. Last year, INC Magazine honored us with placement on their INC5000 list of fastest-growing private companies in the United States. We currently have offices in San Francisco, Boston, Washington DC and Atlanta.

AUP has opened many doors for me in my career, but more importantly it has given me a constant group of peers to count on for advice and camaraderie in the years since graduation.



**ANNE DITMEYER G'10**

During my MA in Global Communications I used the Branding Practicum to rebrand my blog, *Prêt à Voyager*, into a creative consultancy and explored tourism and new media in my thesis. Upon completing my degree, I started my own business. In 2016, I was granted French citizenship.

I use many of the ideas that I explored during my studies in my latest endeavor, *Navigate Paris Online*. The platform is an alternative approach to the travel guide, which encourages people to make the most of their time in Paris through practical insider information. When not exploring Paris, I coach individuals and small business owners, and offer creative workshops for companies.



**GAETANE JOSEPH G'10**

I am a fashion-industry veteran and the founder of p9nstyle. What started as a blog while I was a graduate student living in Paris has since evolved into a style community, serving individual clients and corporate accounts alike.

I have more than 17 years' experience in the fashion industry between Paris and New York City, working with various luxury brands including Salvatore Ferragamo, Ralph Lauren, Donna Karan and Stella McCartney. I honed my skills as a writer in Paris and remain passionate about fashion-industry trends. I enjoy sharing my affection for the fashion business and aspire to cultivate a worldwide style community.



**JAVIER L. FRANCO A. G'10**

For the past ten years I have been working as a global media producer in collaboration with the Global Media Desk, a company based in California. In that capacity, I have been lucky enough to plan, develop and manage over a thousand media projects while living in four different countries - France, Colombia, Argentina and New Zealand.

My work encompasses photography - including product, corporate event and architecture photography - as well as video production, which varies from client testimonials and product profiles to current affairs coverage and recruitment videos. I have also worked on language services, including interpretation packages for conferences and high-end meetings.



**SEENA M. HADDAD G'12**

After graduating from AUP, I moved home to Portland, Oregon, to figure out what I needed to do next. While in the Pacific Northwest, I wrote and directed a web series, X-Ray, before eventually moving to Los Angeles.

I found myself in the right place at the right time; I fell into the world of TV writing, and I have spent the last three years working as a writers' PA and writers' assistant on the shows STAR (on Fox) and The Dropout (on Hulu). I also spent a good portion of the last year and a half as the creative assistant to the showrunner of the new Fox drama Deputy. I am currently working on my own pilots, as well as directing short films and music videos.



**DAVINA DURGAN G'12**

Since graduating from AUP with an MA in International Affairs, Conflict Resolution and Civil Society Development, I've gone on to work for Vice President Joe Biden at the White House, complete a PhD program with distinction at American University, be named a Forbes Top 30 Under 30 in Science for my work on modern slavery and become the American Statistical Association's Statistical Advocate of the Year.

The combination of my language skills and international affairs training has helped me flourish in my career, particularly as an author of the Global Slavery Index and when working with the UN on the Global Estimates of Modern Slavery. It has also provided a strong platform for outreach and advocacy for science for women and girls worldwide.

I have recently been selected for an Ambassador role with the American Association for the Advancement of Science and will be featured in a book on female scientists called Wonder Women of Science in 2021.



**CODI FERRARI G'14**

After graduating from AUP with honors, I turned an internship at Ogilvy Public Relations into a full-time contract. I was in charge of international public relations for major tech brands like Alcatel and was also the main point of contact for international journalists at tech shows. After Ogilvy, I moved on to BBDO Paris where I managed three beauty brand accounts under Coty Inc.

In 2018, I left to start my own projects. I opened up a company and blog called SO SEIZE, specializing in digital communications and PR. I love having the opportunity to share my love of Paris with other people through my work! I am proud to be my own CEO, and I have just obtained French citizenship.



**SARAH GHANDOUR '15**

Since my semester abroad at AUP, I have graduated from Bard College-Conservatory in New York, with bachelor's degrees in maths and cello performance. I was the honored recipient of the Harriet Hale Woolley Scholarship, largely thanks to Professor Jonathan Shimony's recommendation.

After graduation, I moved to France to work at the Fondation des États-Unis. I collaborated with the Ensemble Calliopée and ended my year with a recital of French music from the Belle Époque. I then went back to New York to study at Stony Brook University Graduate School of Music.

I returned to France this summer to participate in the Rencontres Musicales de Saint-Cézaire-sur-Siagne and the Casals Festival in Prades, an event created by renowned cellist and conductor Pablo Casals. After winning the festival's competition, I had the pleasure of performing solo in the Abbey of Saint Michel de Cuxa, where Casals himself performed many times.



**RUBY VERIDIANO G'15**

After graduating from AUP, I got a role at LVMH Paris working as a Communications Project Manager for their corporate social responsibility team. I then became a freelance journalist focusing on fashion and social impact topics for outlets like NBC News and Euronews. Today I work for a US-based organization called Social Venture Circle, where I am the Communications and Marketing Manager, working remotely from Paris.

After writing articles and working on communications strategies full-time, I decided to return to my roots in creative writing and published a book entitled *Coronation* in July 2019. It is a poetry collection for young women written from the perspective of an immigrant woman of color discovering herself and self-love while navigating her dreams around the world.



**ALESSANDRA TRIFERO G'15**

While completing my MA in Global Communications at AUP, I specialized in visual merchandising in the fashion industry. I was previously working in fashion wholesale in NYC and being in Paris allowed me to secure an internship with an international high fashion brand, Elie Saab, working in their Visual Merchandising department. After graduation, they offered me a full-time position and I spent the next two years working on their display and window concepts and developing the visual image for their two flagship stores and global presence.

In 2016, I joined Burberry's Visual Merchandising team at their Paris headquarters. In 2017, I was promoted to Senior Visual Merchandiser, where I gained valuable leadership experience managing a team of visual merchandisers across the EU. In the future, I hope to parlay my fashion and visual merchandising experience to more diverse and creative roles across categories and sectors.



**ABLA MARZAK '16**

Choosing an AUP undergraduate education was one of the best decisions I ever made. English is not my first language, but I did not let that stop me from graduating with a dual bachelor's degree in international finance and entrepreneurship, with honors.

After graduating from AUP, I went back home to Morocco. I took a year off from school during which I interned as an auditor in risk management at La Marocaine des Jeux et des Sports, the company that operates lotteries and sport bets in Morocco. I also took the GRE exam. After, I was accepted by Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where I attended the School of Engineering for a year - and what a year! I graduated in 2018 from the Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship Engineering program.



**SARAH ELIZABETH AYACHE G'16**

Throughout my career, I've worked in global communications consulting, representing governments, Fortune 500 companies and NGO's across the EMEA region and the US. I provide strategic counsel on fully integrated communications programs, corporate reputation and competitive identity for countries. I also advise on capacity-building efforts, issues management and media relations.

Currently, I work in the Middle East advising Gulf countries on national economic diversification plans, communicating progress around initiatives that support new sources of growth.

After AUP, I worked at Ogilvy in New York City, primarily on nation-branding projects and high-level media relations for corporate clients and the United Nations. I also worked on the corporate team at MSL-Publicis focusing on issues and crisis management and internal communications.



**ELIN PETRONELLA '17**

The day after classes ended, I started a full-time venture as a professional artist and creative entrepreneur. I built the foundation for this work during my last year at AUP, during which my art-focused Instagram account gained more and more attention.

Together with my husband Charles-Henry, I built up our Charles and Elin website, through which we've taken part in exhibitions, sold artwork, worked with big-name brands and taught hand embroidery to more than a thousand students worldwide.

In addition to our social media following, we run a podcast, Charles and Elin, which serves to support other young creatives by explaining how they can turn their passion into a living. With new episodes arriving weekly, the show serves as a real-time case study of the ups and downs of creative entrepreneurship in the modern era of social media.

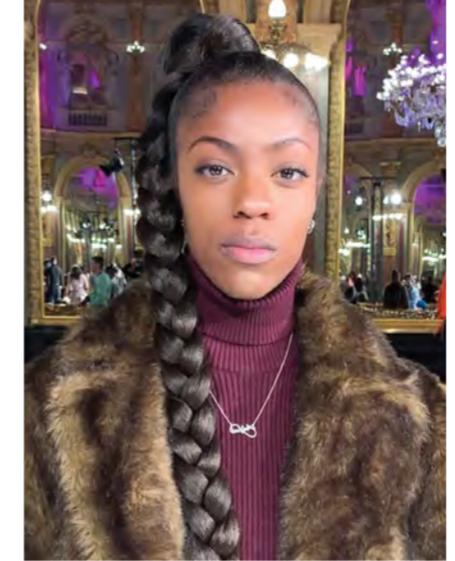


**LORY MARTINEZ G'17**

Since finishing my MA in Global Communications, I have been working as an independent podcast producer and consultant, helping brands and influencers launch successful podcasts.

This year I set up my own production company, Studio Ochenta, which offers consulting and production services in English, French and Spanish.

Our flagship podcast is Mija Podcast, a fictional serialization of one Colombian American family's immigration journey to the United States across generations. Like all of our programming, it is available in three languages.



**AALYIAH HEATH G'18**

I am currently a freelance entrepreneur. I focus on content creation, digital media marketing and journalism. I consult with small businesses on how to leverage their brand identity through social media. In addition to consulting, I create magazines focused on lifestyle and culture through the millennial lens.

I created POPOUT zine at AUP with the guidance of professors, and with the support of the AUP community. The magazine talks about unconventional ways of life, those that many people think are impossible due to societal constructs. The misconception about life is that there is only one way to success, yet we each define that term in our own way. Instead of going with the flow and being passive about life, I want to encourage my readers to take life by the reigns and move with purpose - on purpose!

# GIFTS TO AUP

## AUP ASCENDING

Campaign Goal € 26,000,000

Thank you for your loyal support. We proudly acknowledge the following contributors, each of whom made gifts above €500 to AUP between August 2012 and July 2019. All gifts, whatever their size, are transformative for our small institution. Although we were unable to include every gift on these pages, we remain grateful for the steadfast support of all alumni, parents and friends.

The money we have already raised has supported the consolidation of our campus, our multidisciplinary research centers and our diverse community of faculty and students. These investments will allow us to increase the relevance and depth of our academic offerings and to support the needs and aspirations of our global explorers.

## PROGRESS AND NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

While we are more than halfway to our goal of €26 million for our AUP Ascending capital campaign, we need €10.5 million in new commitments to meet our ambitious target. There are still many opportunities to support our campus, centers and community; lead donors will be recognized in spaces across the campus and named funds. In addition, exciting new initiatives are underway to raise funds for The Monttessuy Center for the Arts.

Please join us to assure our success and contribute to the lasting impact of AUP's global community. For more information, visit [aup.edu/campaign](http://aup.edu/campaign) or contact Mary McLean Evans, Vice President for Presidential Initiatives, at [mevans@aup.edu](mailto:mevans@aup.edu).

## THANK YOU!

TO RAISE  
€ 10,500,000

RAISED  
€ 15,500,000

### 1,000,000 & above

Anonymous Trustee  
Omid & Gisel Kordestani '96  
The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation  
The George & Irina Schaeffer Foundation

### 500,000 - 999,999

Anonymous Trustee  
Anonymous Parent  
Gil Kemp

### 100,000 - 499,999

Anonymous Alumnus in Memory of Thamer Salman '98  
Anonymous Trustee  
Anonymous Trustee  
Euan & Angelica Baird  
Elizabeth Ballantine & Paul Leavitt  
Andrew Batinovich '80  
Elliott Burdette '70  
Nabil & Samantha Chartouni P'18

Franklin Craig '81  
Doris & Edward Daughney  
Peter R. de Castro '68  
Christina Sandel de Labouchere '86  
Joseph Dickerson '00  
The Edward and Joy Frieman Family Trust  
Marc Groothaert '68  
Mr. & Mrs. John E. Klein  
Achim P. Kluber '77  
Michael Dickey Morgan '85  
The Alfred & Jane Ross Foundation  
Craig R. & Dorothy Stapleton  
Barbara M. Reno & E. Ray Stewart

### 50,000 - 99,000

Anonymous Estate Gift  
Kostia H. Belkin '86  
Marsha Chandler  
Lee & Berna Huebner  
The Danny Kaye and Sylvia Fine Kaye Foundation  
David T. McGovern

### PRIPARE

Judith Hermanson-Ogilvie '65  
Mahvash & Farrok Yazdi

### 25,000 - 49,999

The Center for the Study of International Communications  
The Charles Delmar Foundation  
Marie Donnelly  
The Florence Gould Foundation  
Russell V. Lee '63  
Chas A. Miller III '82  
Susan H. & Josef K. Ruth '65  
Andrew Seid '71  
Angela Vallot & James Basker P'17  
Philippe Tartavull  
Hon. Jeanne Phillips  
Silver Miller '68

### 15,000 - 24,999

Tania & Stephane Connery  
Gretchen M Handwerger

This spiral staircase is a unique feature of the Quai d'Orsay Learning Commons

Joey Horn  
Kathy & Al Hubbard  
Mary Jo & Hank Kreuzman  
Jean-Marc Quach '82  
Kurt & Lynette Rasmussen P'19  
Pierre Sauvagnat '83, P'21  
Celeste M. Schenck P'09, '15  
Jacques Setton '66  
Mimi White Swensen '63  
Laurence Vagassky '95 & Thomas Prey '95  
Roxanne Vanderbilt '95

**10,000 - 14,999**

Hind H. Albahar P'16  
Martin S. Avidan '80  
Lillian Greene-Chamberlain & John Chamberlain '81  
Jorn '95 & Alexandra '94 Cloppenburg  
George Elder & Jo Ann Engelhardt P'14  
Madeleine Fabre  
The Arent Charitable Foundation  
Ronald Freeman  
Elan D. Garonzik '70  
Lancôme International  
Cynthia Dembrow Junkin P'11  
Leslie Lishon '79  
The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation  
Boris Nedev '97  
Shaunna Prissert '96  
Anna Sandel P'86, '89  
Mark Sandel '89  
Lizbeth Schiff '66  
Valerie Shea P'13  
Miriam Twaalfhoven '81  
Eddie White Wiltsee '67

**5,000 - 9,999**

Faris AlSaady '07

D. Grant G. Calder '92  
James D. Carey  
Sean Casey '04  
Elizabeth Craig  
Ian Edwards P'19  
Sharon Faccinto '87  
The San Francisco Foundation

Tides Foundation  
Philippe Ginestie  
Capital Group  
Bassel S. Haidar '92  
Austin Hills  
Ken Hubbard  
William G. Jacobi  
Perla Karney '65  
Nancy Lassalle  
Alice Maguire G'10  
Jeffrey '64 & Mary Durgie  
Eamonn McConnell '81  
Peggy Montgomery '75  
Stephen Mosko  
Karen Newman '68 & Thomas Brooks  
The Pamela J. Newman Foundation  
Edward Beale Plaisance '64  
Leslie Reed '80  
The Jerome Robbins Foundation, Inc.  
Rita F. Salzamn  
Sin-ming Shaw '65  
Bryan Cave LLP & Joseph Smallhover  
Peggy Porter Tierney '92  
Susan Tolson  
Susan Rushing & Jim Windolf  
Herbert S Winokur

**1,000 - 4,999**

Anonymous Alumnus  
Anonymous Alumnus  
Academia

John M. Adler '88  
Amr Al-Yafeai '04  
Arnie Arifin  
George Aucoin '80  
Emmanuel Barat  
Will and Paula Bathke P'21  
Manuel & Anne Benetreau  
Ron Bissell  
James Bittermann  
Robin Nettles Black '64  
Mary Robins Black '64  
Constance & Dominique Borde  
Richard H Bott  
Slim Bouker '94  
Rabih Bourji  
Jerome and Fari Breguet P'19  
Bodie N. Bristol  
Linda Hale Bucklin  
Andy Budgell  
Janice Y Burnham  
Jennifer V. Campbell P'22  
Château Pichon Longueville Comtesse de Lalande  
Melanie Cissone '81  
Allison Coleon '10  
Christopher Corbett '86  
Gabriella Biello Coroneos '64  
Kate Cowles Nichols  
Carol J Dabbs '68  
Susan E. Sterne Day '66  
Edward Delany '91  
Gail DeNicola  
Kristin Hawley Dossetti '95  
Barry L. Douglass '64  
Christophe Durand-Ruel '81  
Fred Einbinder  
Gina Elardo  
Mary McLean Evans  
Sarah Finnigan '11

Peter Christenson Flade '80 & Renée Satterfield-Flade '80  
French-American Foundation  
Douglas Giese '80  
Capital Guidance  
Jean K. Gunnell '66  
Paul & Dagmar Hannon  
John B Haseltine  
Dennis James Healey '63  
Barbara Hollis  
Thomas Horgan '79  
Stephanie Razzieri Hughes '02  
Trevor Iles  
Katherine & Thomas Ingold  
Patricia Day Jamison  
John Jassy '68  
Wesley Johnson  
Amaury Jordan '82  
Elizabeth Karcher '84  
Kristina J. Keenan '08  
Brian Kelly '80  
Karen and Kevin Kennedy  
Carey Kluttz G'11  
Monteser (Tessa) Wardle Kohn '64  
Jennifer Landry '77  
Luke Laumann '05  
IGF & Maxime Laurent  
David & Theresa Layman  
Amy Leeds-Brag  
Christine Leeuwis-Chahbasi '81 & Frederick Leeuwis '82  
Marie & Harley Lippman  
Jonas Ljunggren '98  
Jill Royce Loomis '82  
Jane B. MacKinnon  
Seana McGee '74  
Juliane Lenzner Melgaard '99  
Sandra Van Mell '63  
John Meyers '86 & Kristen Wisnewski '86

Livingston Miller  
Laura Mitgang & David Goodman P'22  
Julieta Moran  
Marion Morrison '85  
Chuck Muckenfuss  
Château de Myrat  
Barbara Nance '85  
Connie Nicholson  
Cyrille Niedzielski  
Marek Nowakowski '82  
Claudia O'Hale  
Samuel H. Okoshken  
Leader Opticom  
Joumana '04 & Sebastian Ordelheide '07  
Maria Jose Fernandez Osburn  
Cemal Parla '81  
William Pearl '68  
Alphaprim & Hélène Pellerin  
Alan M. Peterson '89  
Jane Lychenheim Pitts '66  
Edward Beale Plaisance '64  
Michael Plaut '79 & Terrence Corbie '80  
Grant Plemons '64  
Plimpton-Shattuck Fund  
Domaine Ponsot  
Château Pontet-Canet  
Dirk Poschl '93  
Château Prieuré-Lichine  
Quimdis & Jean-François Quarré  
AL Reception  
Christian Reddon  
Ole Rollag '95  
Jacqueline Routier '94  
Benjamin H. Rowbotham '00  
Lois A. Rudy '68  
Michael Sandler '68  
Jill Powell Sargent '67  
Kyle '90 and Kenneth '93 Saunders  
Samar Sayegh G'08

Gyneth Schenck  
Eric & Elizabeth Schwartz  
Kendal Segre '80  
Leon M. Selig  
Lane '72 & Randi Sharman  
Daniel Sherry '79  
Helen Shreves '65  
Hong-Tsun Simon '88  
Michael K. & Carol Simpson  
Robert & Susan Sloan  
Arne Sondhi '83  
Douglas Sonntag '74  
Speaking Agency / Baby Speaking  
Karim Teymourache '83  
Eric Thoemmes '82  
Ashley '98 & Yasushi Tomita '98  
Joël Vallat  
Association des Amis de Vaux-le-Vicomte  
Anabela Voi-You '01  
Sally Candiss Waldram '65  
Latanya Waweru '09  
Victor De Witt '05  
Graeme Wright '82

**500 - 999**

Anonymous Alumna  
Anonymous Alumna  
Anonymous Alumna  
Anonymous Alumna  
Arian Alikhani '92  
Christine Allen '96  
Jeffrey Ascherman '83  
Eleanor Ashford G'10  
Andriveau Thomas Associates  
Inwood Hotels & Jérémy Auzanneau  
Eric & Cheryl Baranes  
Meryem Benghalem '10  
Ms. Brenda Bertholf  
Janice Y. Burnham

Sarah H. Burns '05  
Dianne Cheseldine '66  
Patrick Clevenger '93  
Lucas Coleon '09  
HAR Contract  
Emmanuel Di Donna '92  
Elizabeth Dudley '66  
Haldun Ersanli '82  
Anne Marie Farache '82  
Reid Feldman  
Howard S. Fisher '71  
Bonnie Freedman '85  
Jennifer Friar '02  
Odila Galer-Noel '82  
Sabrina Guttman '95  
Suzanne Halasz '85  
Jorge Helft  
William Jackson Humphreys '66  
Sonia Huyghe G'09  
Arthur '64 & Tamea '64 Isham  
Crews Johnston  
Jill Jordan  
Ward Just  
Tommy Karlsson  
Robert Kaye  
Thomas A. Kennedy '90  
Ghassan & Gisele Khoory  
Jena King  
James H Landon  
Annalee Langham '01  
Phillippe & Patricia Lemoine  
Mark Linvill '81  
Takara Natalie Lubner '14  
Suzanne H. Barker G'11  
Nancy Machiah  
Sheila McCormick '65  
Peregrine McCroskey-Olander '06 / G'08  
Patrick McGrath  
Malinda Mitchell '64

Ms. Alice Mullins  
Connie Nicholson  
Kim Okkola '04  
Richard Peyster  
Berine Pharaon '97  
Karuna Phillips '07  
Liam Purdon '70  
Mr. Jonathan Randal  
Sanna Rasmussen '17, G'19  
Johnathan Rodgers  
David Rubin  
Anna Sandel  
Shelley S. Saxton '81  
Dr. Stephen K. Scher  
Naiade Services  
Jet Airways & Michel Simiaut '86  
Amanda Crider Sykes  
Helen Tange  
Hilda Santo Tomas  
Anabela Voi-You  
Natalija Vysniauskaite '98  
Karen Lancaster Wellford '64  
Shane Wright

*Your gift is very important to us. If your name has been inadvertently omitted or incorrectly spelled please contact [advancement@aup.edu](mailto:advancement@aup.edu).*



# SUPPORTING THE ARTS AT AUP

AUP has a rich history of artistic endeavor on campus, and our fine arts and art history majors have seen unprecedented growth in recent years. To support these programs and to put the finishing touches on our campus redevelopment plan, we're renovating the library's former home on the rue de Monttessuy to create a dedicated building for the Department of Art History and Fine Arts.

This exciting development will bring students and faculty together through creative pursuits in a state-of-the-art teaching facility - complete with the University's first auditorium. We're committed to implementing this vision in full, and so the project will only get the go-ahead once it has been fully funded thanks to the generous support of our AUP community. We invite you to contribute to this special moment in AUP history with a gift to The Monttessuy Center for the Arts.

[aup.edu/monttessuy2020](http://aup.edu/monttessuy2020)

