Dear Simon’s Rock family and friends,

It is startling to realize as I write this letter that the first semester of the academic year is nearly half over. Only a few weeks ago we were anticipating the arrival of the class of 2014. Now, just less than two months later, the new students we greeted on Opening Days have taken their place as full members of the Simon’s Rock community and are virtually indistinguishable from those who have been here for years.

The rapidity with which first-year students acculturate to the Rock is a source of fascination to me. So is the ease with which alums from a wide range of years, even decades, socialize at alumni events and reunions. Despite the spectrum of talents and interests among current and former students, something in the DNA of those who attend Simon’s Rock seems to link them across the generations: an eagerness to engage deeply with people and ideas, openness to unconventional possibilities, and a capacity to embrace challenges that others find daunting. The faculty here help students use their talents to best advantage, but something about being a Rocker is almost bred in the bone. Perhaps the reason first-year students adjust so quickly to life on campus is that, in coming to Simon’s Rock, they simply are becoming more fully themselves.

As you will learn in this issue of the Magazine, the College is working hard to make the experience of this generation of Rockers as broad and rich as we can. Under Maryann Tebben’s guidance, the newly created Center for Food Studies integrates long-standing faculty and student interests in ecology and agriculture with questions of public policy and nutrition. It also marks our contribution to the vigorous discussion about food and food production that is taking place now in the Berkshires and the Hudson Valley.

Our new interterm program in Montserrat led by Tom Coote provides a terrific fieldwork opportunity for students in ecology and other area of environmental science. In fact, the original research conducted by Simon’s Rock students has already resulted in presentations, publications, and the identification of a new species of snail!

Finally, we’re pleased to announce new agreements that allow current students to achieve joint degrees with other institutions. Rockers can now earn in four years a BA from Simon’s Rock along with a master’s of environmental and legal policy at Vermont Law School. And we anticipate the conclusion very shortly of a 3/2 agreement with John Jay College in Forensic Science and a 3/2 program with Munich Business School that will provide students not only a bachelor’s degree from Simon’s Rock but also a master’s in international business from MBS.

Even as we are creating new opportunities for current students, we are busy planning for a whole new generation of Rockers with the opening of Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock. A program for 9th and 10th grade students, the Academy will allow us to create a two-year high school experience that is both intrinsically engaging and fully preparatory for the early college. It also will help us to reach students who ought to know about Simon’s Rock at a natural transition point in our educational system. Under the leadership of Ian Bickford ’95, the Academy’s first dean, faculty are engaged in creating the Academy’s curriculum, and staff—served by student and alumni advisory groups—are developing the school’s extracurricular and residential programs. We look forward to welcoming our first Academy class in the fall of 2015.

My prediction is that the Academy students, like those who come to the College, will be natural Rockers. They will bring the same curiosity, eagerness to learn, and proud individualism that has been the hallmark of students here since Simon’s Rock began—and that, after nearly 50 years, remains its enduring legacy.

Peter Laipson
Hannahlee Ferus ’13, spent the past summer working on a Berkshire farm and, thanks to a new Simon’s Rock initiative, her experience is an integral part of her education.

As an intern with geography professor Dr. Chris Coggins, Hannahlee learned about the science behind farming and developed a deep appreciation for the work involved in bringing fresh food to the table. “My entire life, I’ve been doing some form of farming and gardening, and that past experience made it so I was able to stay here over the summer and do what I love,” says the sophomore from New Mexico. “Being trusted with something so big at such a young age is freeing.”

Hannahlee is not alone. She’s like dozens of other students participating in the Simon’s Rock Center for Food Studies (the Center), a new initiative designed to inspire Simon’s Rock students, the local community, and society at large to pay greater attention to food and what food means today—and to act based on this new understanding. Launched in the fall of 2013, the Center aims to connect everyone pursuing food studies on and around campus.

French professor Dr. Maryann Tebben is the head of the new center. Long interested in the connections between food and other disciplines
(she recently published the book Sauces: A Global History), Maryann sees the Center as a way to cultivate students' rising interest in food and leverage the location of Simon's Rock.

“There is growing interest in food around the country and especially in our local community, where new farm-to-table cafés and family farms are sprouting up every day. Our students are interested in what they eat and where their food comes from, not because of food preference but for the impact that food has on the world. And with the Center for Food Studies, we are cultivating that interest,” Maryann says.

Food-focused courses are now being taught in biology, geography, anthropology, and French at Simon’s Rock, with multiple courses in economics, physics, environmental, and urban studies open to students at Bard-Annandale. So a computer science major can be enrolled in the biology course All About Food: Current Issues in the Western Food Culture at Simon’s Rock and the physics course Planetary Consequences of Food Production taught on the Bard-Annandale campus.

Chris Coggins, who teaches the school’s geography course The Agricultural World, is one of a number of faculty members excited by the chance to study and teach food across disciplines. “I can think of no other material thing that connects human beings with one another and with the nonhuman world so deeply and complexity as food,” Chris says. “It is the source of daily pleasure; the subject of both desire and anxiety; an offering, a sacrifice, and a symbol; the product of vast ecological transformations that cross millennia and continents; and the life-stuff of a thousand commodity chains, coercive labor relations, and political conflicts.”

Beyond the classroom, students can learn about food through the Center’s partnerships with local and statewide organizations including The Nutrition Center, which provides nutrition and cooking education to local schools and community centers, and Berkshire Grown, an advocacy group for local agriculture. In addition to attending various events cosponsored by the Center and its partners, students can intern for college credit on campus at the Community Garden, or venture into the community to work with The Nutrition Center, Berkshire Grown, or Farm Girl Farm in Sheffield.

And when not in class or interning, all students will see the Center’s influence on their plates. Hannahlee and other food studies students are experiencing firsthand what this means, working together with faculty, staff, and alumni to cultivate and revitalize the Community Garden, the on-campus organic farm, as well as deliver their harvests to the Simon’s Rock Dining Hall. Throughout the summer the produce supplied by the farm was incorporated into dishes at the Dining Hall, and this fall diners will be able to select from a variety of new seasonal offerings grown and picked on campus.

Meriweather Clark-Connors, Chartwells’ director of dining services at Simon’s Rock, is enthusiastic about bringing an added focus on food to what her staff creates for its patrons. “There is nothing like cooking with vegetables from your own farm. It feels better, it tastes better, and the freshness and quality are amazing,” she says. “And by serving and endorsing local, organic farm-to-table food, we’re contributing to a movement that is changing the world. We are looking at food differently, in terms of our own health, the health of the earth, and the health of our society.”

The mission of the Center goes beyond educating current students—the Center aspires to become the epicenter for food studies across the Berkshires. On April 11, 2015, the school will host the second annual ThinkFOOD Conference that unites alumni, parents, school officials, educators, students, grocery store representatives, scientists, farmers, food writers, restaurateurs, and others for a series of panel discussions such as “Perceptions and Perspectives: Our Regional Food Culture.”

“This conference is the Center’s culminating event for the year,” says Maryann. “As with the Center itself, the hope is that the conference creates greater awareness of food issues, but we also use the conference to speak directly and clearly to a specific, timely theme.”

This year, Maryann is particularly eager to feature students as panelists as well as audience members. Although the specific students have not yet been chosen, Isabella Goldman, a 20-year-old senior from the Berkshires, says she thinks it’s “a great idea” to allow students to become the teachers and has volunteered to speak about her experience with food studies. Specifically, she would share what she learned during her time working organic farms in southern Spain and eastern Greece for a Simon’s Rock travel abroad program through World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms (WWOOF).

“Simon’s Rock allowed me to create my own curriculum when I made the decision to travel abroad through the WWOOF program. I was given the opportunity to develop my own classes with my professors and then ultimately gain the greatest educational experience of my life,” Isabella says. “Working with the land everyday not only helped to strengthen my connection to the Earth, it gave me a greater appreciation and perspective on all aspects of life.”
A sophomore at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, Nathan Sadowsky ’12 was fairly sure he wanted to study biology, but he wanted to test out his interest with a real-world experience. So during the 2013–14 winter break, he signed up for an intensive science course on the Caribbean island of Montserrat, one of several new Simon’s Rock initiatives aimed at helping students expand their academic horizons.

“I figured the trip would be a good way to get exposed to biology fieldwork and see whether it was what I wanted to do,” says Sadowsky, of Portland, Oregon. He and seven other Simon’s Rock students spent four weeks on Montserrat, a tiny volcanic island near Antigua. The class focused on tropical ecology, conservation biology, and sustainability. The students’ days were filled with hiking, preparing their own meals, and studying freshwater fish, snails, and birds. They watched a volcano vent and saw firsthand what happens to human habitats when covered in volcanic ash.

And some of them got hooked.

“Being in the field every day, and seeing new things I’d never seen and other scientists had never seen was really exciting,” Sadowsky says. Upon his return to campus for the spring semester, he signed up for a class with environmental science professor Thomas Coote, who directs the Montserrat program. Sadowsky also decided to concentrate in biology and mathematics.

Opportunities for Joint Degrees

The Montserrat trip offers a short intensive experience in scientific fieldwork, but several other new initiatives make it possible for students to dig more deeply, over time, into an area of interest and earn an additional degree. Following on the success of the Simon’s Rock/ Columbia University Engineering Program—in which students spend three years at Simon’s Rock and two at Columbia and earn both a BA and a BS—Simon’s Rock is in the process of launching new partnerships with the Vermont Law School, the Munich Business School, and the John Jay College of Criminal Justice.

Dean of Academic Affairs Anne O’Dwyer says student interest in science and business sparked the creation of the new partnerships. “We are a small school, so there’s only so much we can offer in terms of the number of faculty,” she says. “By partnering with other institutions, we broaden what students can explore.”

Through the partnership with Vermont Law, talented students with an interest in the environment will soon be able to earn both a bachelor’s degree and either a master’s of environmental law and policy or a master of energy regulation and law in four years, rather than the customary five. The agreement with the Munich Business School will allow students to earn a master’s degree in international business as well as a bachelor’s degree in five years, rather than six. And an agreement with John Jay, in New York City, will allow Rockers to earn both a BA from Simon’s Rock and a BS in forensic science from John Jay in five years.

According to O’Dwyer, the programs both expand the college’s offerings and help students see how the study of the liberal arts can serve them well in a range of professions. “Increasingly, we have students in business,” she says. The Munich program, in particular, is a way to “help students see that the liberal arts are relevant for lots of career paths including business.”

James Jeffries, the director of Career Services at Simon’s Rock, agrees the range of new programs can help students incorporate career exposure into their liberal arts education. Whether a short-term intersession class or one of the partnership programs, Jeffries thinks these outside experiences help students make a connection between their studies and possible career paths. “Students do the best, professionally, coming out of a liberal arts environment when all along they are making connections between the classroom and the world,” he says.

Greig Fields ’12, a junior from Katonah, NY, also went on the Montserrat trip last winter. He says he loved the hiking and the chance to see the terrain of a volcanic island up close. But he also appreciated seeing the realities of scientific fieldwork firsthand and thinks it gave him a better understanding of what careers in the sciences may entail.

“As fun and as interesting as fieldwork can be, you have to understand that a lot of it is just sitting and looking at a tree for a few hours,” says Fields. “You have to be willing to do that.”
New Staff

Cindy Efinger, Director of Residence Life. Cindy has served in a variety of residential life and student activities roles in her career including at Phillips Academy, the Swift River School, and most recently as the operations director at Newport Academy in Bethlehem, Connecticut.

Sharon Hartunian, Director of Counseling. Sharon is a licensed clinical social worker with extensive experience in training, clinical supervision, management, and consultation in the counseling field. She brings expertise in direct service with adolescents and emerging adults at colleges, secondary schools, therapeutic boarding schools, and outpatient treatment settings.

James Jeffries, Director of Career Services. James comes to us from Wabash College where he worked as the assistant director of the Schroeder Center for Career Development. He has extensive experience counseling students and alumni through professional development including personal/career assessment, graduate school exploration, networking, and interviewing techniques.

Chandra Joos deKoven, Director of Admission. Chandra brings a valuable combination of experience in both college admission and college counseling. She has worked in admission at Brandeis University, Cornell University, and Miami University of Ohio. For the past five years Chandra has served as the associate director of college counseling at the Breck School in Minneapolis.

John Musall, Lighting Designer and Technical Director. John brings many years of experience in technical theater, including at Bard College in Annandale, the Merce Cunningham Dance Foundation, and Temple University.

Jackie Pierce, Major Gift Officer. Jackie comes to us from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where she served as a major gifts officer for six years. She also served as major gifts officer for seven years at WMHT. Jackie was instrumental in building and growing the major gifts program in both positions.

Kimberly Rock, Director of Communications. Kimberly brings over twenty years of experience in marketing and communications, including over a decade in NYC at Grey Advertising and as a partner in a boutique advertising agency. In her previous role as Marketing Director for Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation, Kimberly led the re-branding of the Foundation and launched their new website.

New Faculty

Li-Mei Lim, Faculty in Mathematics. Li-Mei earned a BS from Massachusetts Institute of Technology and ScM and PhD from Brown University. Before joining the faculty at Simon’s Rock, Dr. Lim was a visiting assistant professor at Boston College. Her research is in analytic number theory, which she likes to think of as the perfect blend of algebra and analysis.

Sarah J. Snyder, Faculty in Biology. Sarah holds a BS, Unity College; PhD, University of Nevada, Reno. Dr. Snyder is a National Academies Education Fellow in the Life Sciences and has previously taught at the University of Nevada, Reno. Her work has been presented at many national and international conferences including the World Congress of Herpetology, the Joint Meeting of Herpetologists and Ichthyologists.

Aaron Williams, Faculty in Computer Science. Aaron’s main research interest is the intersection of theoretical computer science and discrete mathematics, with a special emphasis on combinatorial algorithms. He holds a Double BMath, Computer Science (CS) and Combinatorics & Optimization (C&O) a well as a MMath, C&O from the University of Waterloo and a PhD, CS, University of Victoria.

Tai Young-Taft, Faculty in Economics. Tai received his BA, political science from Reed College, his MA, statistics from Yale University and a MPhil, PhD, economics from The New School for Social Research. He has taught in the Department of Economics at NYU and St. Francis College, in New York, and the Department of Economics and Finance at the Gulf University for Science and Technology, in Kuwait. His research interests include financial market dynamics and their linkage to the real economy, particularly in developing countries.
“You are more prepared than you think you are, but not in the way you are expecting. It’s not possible to anticipate what you are going to be called upon to do. Although you will have partners in the effort, and they will sustain you, no one other than you can perform your role. And when it comes, rise to the occasion completely. The results will be amazing.”

—Nina Perales ’82

Commencement Speaker Nina Perales ’82

BA Class Speaker Heather Meehan ’10

AA Class Speaker Pearl Weggler ’12

Michael Jay Depp ’10 presents Ruth B. Ide “Good Sport Award” to Ken Geremia, Director of Security
Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock: The Educational Innovation Continues

Nearly fifty years after becoming America’s first early college, Simon’s Rock will be home to the country’s first two-year college preparatory program.

Next fall, a select group of ninth graders from across the country will come to campus and make history as the charter class of Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock, the only program in the country preparing boarding and day students for college in just two years. After completing the tenth grade, Bard Academy students will begin full-time college study at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, earning their associate’s degree in two years and, if they choose, their bachelor’s degree in two more.

Bard Academy students will be taught by many of Simon’s Rock’s faculty and enjoy all the other resources of the college, whose students will serve as mentors and role models. However, the Academy’s ninth graders, and, starting in 2016, its tenth graders, will live apart in their own dormitory with a dedicated residential staff and will learn from a liberal arts and sciences curriculum modeled in part after those at Bard High School Early College (BHSECs) in New York City, Newark, and Cleveland.

Simon’s Rock Alumnus to Spearhead New Initiative

The dean of Bard Academy will be Ian Bickford, who earned an AA at the Rock in 1997 and then set off to earn his BA at Cal Berkeley, his MA at Stanford, and his doctorate at the City University of New York. Ian, the son of two career educators and the brother of alumni Lincoln ’93 and Tyler ’97, returned to Simon’s Rock to teach English for two years and then became an English professor at BHSEC in New York City.

Ian’s excited about his mission. “For many students, the last two years of high school can be drawn out and wasteful, devoted to standardized testing, college applications, and taking courses that look good on their college resume,” he says. “Now we can educate students who will be anticipating college starting the first day of ninth grade. And who better to help students prepare for college than their future college professors?”

Help Us Find Them

Bard Academy is seeking younger versions of Simon’s Rock students past and present: eighth graders who are bright, motivated, and ready for any academic challenge that comes their way. If you know of a student who fits the bill, please ask their parents to contact Admission at bardacademy@simons-rock.edu or 800-235-7186. And remember, there’s a discount for children of all Rock graduates! ✨
Forest Through the Trees: Finding Fengshuilin

When Dr. Chris Coggins, professor of geography and Asian studies, first learned of the fengshui forests (fengshuilin) of China's rural mountain villages, he was taken aback. Chris was conducting research on the history of human–wildlife interactions and contemporary conservation efforts in Fujian province when a Chinese colleague pointed to a broad-leaf forest on a mountain next to a small village, and said (in Mandarin), “That’s a fengshui forest; you may want to learn more about those.” Before long, Chris’s field research project included systematic surveys of the sociocultural and ecological significance of these sacred groves that appear only intermittently in Chinese and Western records.

The word “fengshui,” more often associated with a type of divination, actually just translates simply to “wind” (feng) and “water” (shui). For centuries, southern Chinese villages used this concept of fengshui to manage the forests to protect their settlements from the elements and to provide the ideal location for water conservation and crop cultivation. But where are the fengshui forests? And what can we learn from them?

“In the literature there were a number of references to village ‘burial forests,’ earth god shrines, and lineage temples, all of which suggest a deep concern and long-term engagement with both ecological and cosmological principles of landscape design and management,” Chris says. “But the geographic extent, cultural history, and ecological value of these forests have not been systematically surveyed. We don’t even know where all of the forests are.”

He worries about taking students into certain areas to conduct research and then discovering that there aren’t any fengshui forests there.

But he and his students have found them, and now Chris Coggins, along with Bard, Bard High School Early College (BHSEC), and other Simon’s Rock faculty and students, have been given the chance of a lifetime by the Henry Luce Foundation that awarded Bard College a four-year $400,000 Luce Initiative on Asian Studies and the Environment (LIASE) grant to increase and enhance the interdisciplinary study of environmental and sustainability issues in Asia.

The grant will fund Bard’s Environment and Community in East Asia Initiative to develop new courses and enhance existing ones with a focus on the environment in Asia. The initiative will also expand research opportunities for undergraduate students to study environmental issues in China, Japan, and Korea.

Chris, along with a team of three Simon’s Rock and Bard students, and other colleagues—including an aquatic ecologist, a dendrochronologist, and a cultural studies expert—just finished their first (of three) summer research treks to Fujian and Jiangxi Provinces to study the area around Lake Poyang, China’s largest freshwater lake. What they found was exactly what they had hoped for, and much more, thanks mostly to the diversity and tenacity of the team—a ceramics major; an Asian studies major, and a potential environmental science major—many of whom had never conducted rigorous fieldwork before.

“We learned a lot and got a tremendous amount done,” he says. “We would get to a village, always with a liaison, either with the Forestry Bureau or some other local authority—as a foreigner, don’t just show up in villages in China. And then we would break up into teams and spend countless hours doing research. I would be interviewing older villagers, sort of getting the taxonomy of fengshui forests and how they fit into the scheme of village life. Others would be testing/taking water samples or getting ancestral records or bushwhacking through tropical forest to find streams. We also had three students doing documentary film work.”

Jade Mermini ’11 seems to have been taken in by the magic that the ancients referenced when writing about the fengshuilin. Jade, who was born in Fujian but later adopted and taken to the United States, studies Asian studies and religion, and she was drawn toward the storytelling element of the adventure to surrounding lands of Lake Poyang. In addition to centuries-old untouched forests, Jade found something else as well.

“Visiting and connecting in Fujian and Jiangxi gave me the chance to experience elements of myself I had never been in touch with. I sucked in the elements of change that clung heavy to the air. The opportunities that came out of this journey were the most intimate of blessings and freedom that a Chinese-born girl in my shoes could have dreamt of.”

Engaging students like Jade as well as faculty in a three-year multidisciplinary project will not only provide them with an opportunity to study the many facets—human, ecological, aquatic, political—of fengshui forests but will also shed light on the potential that the forests provide as seed banks for reforestation and as biologically diverse areas.

“These forests are very important to people in China and to the government where, contrary to our popular cultural belief, there is a huge push toward nature conservation,” Chris says. “And there is a lot that we in North America can learn from these forests, especially about water quality, agriculture, and fundamental relationships between people, places and nature. Now that the team and I have made the first trek, we know where we need to go and what we need to do once we get there.”
Greetings, Rockers!

The past six months have been a great adventure for your Alumni Leadership Council.

First, leadership has changed. Jochai Ben-Avie ’06 and I are now the co-chairs of your 19-member ALC. We thank the most recent former co-chairs, Paul Goldschmidt ’84 and Harry Marker ’05, for their hard work last year.

At 19 members, your ALC is larger than ever. The group has expanded both geographically (extending from the West Coast to London) and in terms of years of entry at the Rock (1977–2010). In the midst of this growth, we have created many more opportunities for alumni to connect with each other and collaborate with Simon’s Rock on student recruiting, career development, fundraising, regional socials, and annual reunions.

I recently helped host a Chicago social with fellow ALC member Mike Lawrence ’98. At that event, I really appreciated being reminded of the importance of community that we must continue to develop in an organic way. The bonds we created at the Rock carry on for a lifetime and even grow as we meet new people from the Rocker community.

The ALC is an easy point of access to help everyone in our alumni community support each other and Simon’s Rock. If there is something the ALC or the College can do to serve you, do let us know. In turn, please consider volunteering and/or making gifts to Simon’s Rock every year. Our efforts to strengthen and enrich this community make a direct and observable impact.

The College has put into play many of the ideas that alumni have suggested over the past five years including an Office of Career Development, annual alumni reunions on campus, opening a JSTOR digital library subscription for all alumni, changing the logo of the College to preserve inclusion of the hemlock/sapling/tree of knowledge, and the return of this Simon’s Rock Magazine. Now it is our turn as alumni to ask what we can do to further support Simon’s Rock.

Please think about how you can give back to the Simon’s Rock community, financially and/or physically (for example, volunteering for Career Development, regional socials, Admission, or the reunion committee). Think about what you would enjoy doing, and then make it happen! Anyone on the ALC can help you get started, as can Cathy and Rich in the alumni affairs office at the College.

I am always open to hear about ideas, but I am even more excited to see proactive members of the community taking their ideas and running with them. So please share your thoughts!

Sincerely,
Nicole A. Fitting ’93JA

Your 2014-2015 Alumni Leadership Council: Charlotte Anderholt ’01, Jochai Ben-Avie ’06 (Co-chair), Keith Brierley-Bowers ’80 (representative to the Board of Overseers), Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez ’78, Brian Conley ’96, Christopher Derhammer-Hill ’86, Cordella Derhammer-Hill ’86, Jody Emmer ’86, Nicole Fitting ’93JA (Co-chair), Hillary Gardner ’02, Bethany Geiger ’10, Audrey Kalman ’77, Kristopher Kapinos ’92, Michael Lawrence ’98, Ajay Madiwale ’01, Harry Marker ’05, Kathleen (Kaki) Notestine Kasdorf ’93, Evelina Shmukler ’93, Brian Smith ’04

You can check us out online at simons-rock.edu/alumni/alc. You can e-mail us at sralc@simons-rock.edu.

2014 Alumni Leadership Council Outstanding Alumni Award Winners:
Each year the Alumni Leadership Council (ALC) bestows the Simon’s Rock Outstanding Alumni Award on one to three alumni. Winners bring the spirit of Simon’s Rock to their profession or volunteer service in the world, and they have done something in a way that is different from the norm —just as you did when you chose to attend Simon’s Rock. The winners for 2014 are . . .

Mark Leiter ’81, Chief Strategy Officer, Nielsen
For high achievement in global markets, serving both policymakers and business leaders

Minna Bromberg ’88, Rabbi, Educator, Singer, Songwriter
For transformative social justice and spiritual leadership within the Simon’s Rock community and beyond

Shazia A. Khan ’93, Executive Director, EcoEnergyFinance
For achievement in human rights, energy development, and delivery of solar power in rural Pakistan

Congratulations to Mark, Minna, and Shazia. Thank you for representing Simon’s Rock so well in all you do!
thank you, donors

From 2009 through 2013, the collective amount of gifts to Simon’s Rock from parents doubled and contributions from alumni tripled. Yet in this past year—Fiscal Year 2014—Simon’s Rock supporters at-large did even better, besting the previous record-breaking fundraising year by 2%.

This achievement was due in large part to the hundreds of alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, and even students who contributed generously to the Spring 2014 100 Days for Simon’s Rock fundraising drive. 100 Days produced $597,967 in support for the College, surpassing its half-million-dollar goal. The drive also increased springtime fundraising revenue to the College by 26% compared to the previous year.

Also significant was a special fundraising endeavor among the Simon’s Rock Board of Overseers to hone the College’s marketing and recruitment strategies for today’s option-rich, international, and extensively mobile prospective students. This timely effort provided $485,000 to ensure that Simon’s Rock has every opportunity to find special students for our early college—students who are driven to make every moment matter.

In total, during Fiscal Year 2014, supporters donated $2,225,477 to Simon’s Rock.

Over the last five years, thanks to greater participation in the Sapling Society, Provost Circle, and Annual Fund Scholars Program (see callouts in the accompanying report), the average gift from an alumna or alumnus has increased from $400 to $600, and the average gift from a Simon’s Rock parent has increased from $750 to $1,000.

Thank you for this extraordinary support and for making Simon’s Rock all it can be! We can’t do it without you. If you haven’t been on campus in a while, please come take a look. It is remarkable to witness what your gifts do.

Together, in the coming year, we will change lives forever—and change the world—again.

In the following report, the College gratefully acknowledges the alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, and students who made a gift to Simon’s Rock during the 2014 fiscal year, which began on July 1, 2013, and ended on June 30, 2014.

Matthew '04 and Joseph '07
Sandrinkert and Lynn Brown P’08
Robert and Hester Brooks P’77
Cherrylyn and Ethan Burns P’78
In memory of Noah White Burns '97
David Byrd '78 and Ella Brice P’00
Abe ‘00 and Amellie Chu
Debbie Cibelli ‘71
In memory of M. Peter Burns ‘71
Merieweather Clark-Connors ’76
and Cathy Ingram
In memory of Fay Poile '76
and in honor of Emily H. Fisher
Charles and Sara Cee P’97
Christopher ‘92 and Rhonda ‘94
Colombo
Barbara Fatt Costikyan
Lisa David and Ernest Berger P’08
M. Leslie Davidson
In honor of Emily H. Fisher
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Dr. Thomas Hall and
Elizabeth Mcloughlin
Ethan and Beth Haskel P’03
Kyle S. Haver ‘73 and
Susan Goetz Haver
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The Hendrix Fund
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Joan and Jim Hunter P’04
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Rachel B. Kaufmann ‘80
In memory of Myron Kaufmann
Lauren and Jeff King P’12

Thanks to a generous gift from the Blodgett Family Foundation, the Alumni Library was renovated over the summer.
$500-$999

- Mark and Katie Levine
- Maggie Leonard ’78 and John Humphrey
- Steve Baskin ’84
- John and Lynn Melnick ’80
- Microsoft Matching Gifts Program
- Joe and Jack Pisciotta
- Robert Belanger and Sandy Belanger
- Maryan and Sunny Kang
- Margot and Sunny Kang
- Hannah and Sunny Kang
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Lauren Brandt ’70
David Braslow ’02
Jackie and Lee Breisacher P’08
Paige Breisacher ’08
Theresa and Taylor Breifeldt P’01
Morgan Brilliant Smith ’79
Bristol-Myers Squibb Foundation
Tahira Brooks ’94
Michael Broselow and Debra Schwartz P’09
In honor of Isaac Broselow ’09
Jennifer Brodwy de Hernandez ’78 and Octavio Hernandez ’08
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Kelly A. Brown ’79
Wesley Brown
Matthew Burch ’87
Mr. & Mrs. L.J. Burke
Michelle Burpee Major ’68
Evelina Shnukirow Burnett ’93
In honor of Pat Sharpe
Christopher P. Bush ’85
In memory of Naucuñán Sáez
Chris and Dorothee Callanan
In honor of Emily H. Fisher
Timothy Chayes ’04
Lucie Campbell Gubbins ’77
Millie Cannon P’90
In memory of Galen Gibson ’90 and Naucuñán Sáez
Glen Cantor and Inge Eriks P’01
Margaret Carl ’70
Mary and Robert Carswell
David and Anna Carvalho P’05
In honor of Anna Christina Carvalho ’05
Mario Chamorro ’86
In memory of Naucuñán Sáez
Megan Chaney ’91
In honor of Barbara Resnik and In memory of Sol Resnik
Kyle Chao ’06
Mary ’68 and Keith Chase-Ziekel
In honor of Catherine B. Miller
Marty Checchi
Gihla Chelmersky ’99
Irina ’98 and Alexey Chernyakov
Laura Wing Ye Cheung ’05 and John Reardon ’04
Alexandra Chisholm ’79
Ashley Christensen ’00
Rodney Christopher ‘86
In honor of Wendy Shlifin
Wendy Clarissa Geiger ’80
In memory of Caleb Roosevelt ’79
Jennifer Clark ’06
Lucy Evelth Clark ’74 and Stephen Sompor P’06
In honor of an excellent education
Peggy A. Clark ’80
In memory of Scott Hendekor ’80
Philip and Meredith Clark P’75
Lucy Clippinger ’04
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Nancy and Ted Cobden
Barbara and Rodgin Cohen P’98
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David and Kim Colopy
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Paul A. Cox ’86
Paul Craig
Elizabeth Cronenwett ’93
Caro Crowley ’91 and Eric McLennahan
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Jeffrey Cua ’00
Dana Curreri ’95
In honor of worthy young scholars
Emily A. Daniels ’99
Lie Danisch-Wheeler ’75
Linda M. Darling P’96
In honor of Aaron Darling, Ph.D., ’96
Jane Powery Colglcy ’06
Philip Deely ’01
Matthew DeGennaro ’90
Amer Delec ’00
Joan DePietro
Chloe Demovsky ’01
In memory of Todd Gero ’03
Evon Didler ’05
Debbie and Bob Dillon P’09
Joan Dix Blair P’98
Richard and Diane Donaher P’07
John C. Dovel
In memory of Noah White Burris ’97
Patrick Doyle P’12
Jonathan Dutreix ’09
Deanna Dufaut
Bill Dunbar
Margaret Dunlap ’95
Thomas Dunlap and Susan Miller P’95
Jeremy Dunn ’81
Jonathan Durfee ’09
Curtan Dwyer ’06
In honor of Bernie Rodgers
Judith ’80 and Russell Ehrman-Saprio P’08
Jan Eisenman ’68
In memory of Vanda Sendtmar ’88
Kari Elsila ’80 and Michael Buescher
Peggen Wyline Essami ’77
In memory of Harold W. Wylie, Jr.
Joshua ’92 and Shevah Faber
Julie Faggan
Andrey Fakhr ’05
Catherine Felgar ’82 and David Stevens
Leland and Aline Ferguson P’06
In honor of Sam Ferguson ’06
Shani R. Ferguson ’85 and Lionel Antom-Ginzburg ’88
In honor of Bernie Rodgers and Gary Affeldt
Fidelity Matching Gifts to Education
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Christopher M. Fink P’07
In honor of Charles Fink ’07
Rozy Finn ’00
Gabriel Fishman ’03
Rebecca Fiske and Deane Zarvis P’98 & ’07
Nicole E. Fitting ’92
In memory of Lorin A. Ellsworth Roger and Lorri Fitting P’92
Lee-Anne Gunn Flamand ’88
Katherine Fleming ’94
Jean Flood ’88 and Paul Nemeth
Carole Forbes
In memory of Nathaniel Forbes Gage ’09
Abigail Foulds ’96 and Ivan Perez Frances Franco
In memory of Donald Gangemi
Katie Fournier P’08
Alison Gaudbo ’95
El ’01 and Rochelle Grandour-Rood
Angelina Gangemi
In memory of Donald Gangemi Marie Gangemi
In memory of Donald Gangemi Marie Martin Gant ’99
In honor of Jason Martin Snell ’99, on his 31st birthday
Michele Gara Grady and Robert Grady
Judah Garber and Rebecca Eisenberg P’07
Courtney-Marie Gardner ’13
Georgan Garber
Hillery Gardner ’02
Janet Gardner
In honor of Courtney M. Gardner ’13
Ana-Maria Conley ’75
Bill and Kate Geiger P’10
In honor of Bethany Geiger ’10
Lisa Gelfand P’00
The Gendler Family Foundation
Jacob Gerstein ’01
Janice Gildawie
Beri Giffs P’88
Dragan Gill ’02
Robin Girard ’03
Julie and John Gittins P’83
In honor of Christopher Gittins ’83
Adam Glassgal ’01
Leonard and Nansi Glick P’89
In honor of Leutia Mahood’s 1st birthday
Al and Geodes Co P’13
Susan Golden ’75
Jason Goldstein
David Goldstein ’86
Valerie Gono ’05
Diva Goodfriend-Koven P’11
Lisa Federico and Michael Goodman
Ashleigh ’01 and Colin Gough
Reisa Gould-Dana P’90
Lori Grace and Emerald Starr P’05
Andrea Grayson ’80
In honor of the Art Department
Jonathan and Siggy Green P’05
Zachary Green ’99
Molly Greene ’09
Linda Smathers and Richard Gregg P’11
Sharon Gregory
The Groebe Family
Martha Groot
David Grossman ’98
Chris and Diane Gruber P’99
Ginny Gunette
Cara E. Haas ’92
Sandra Rowland-Hack
and Steven Hack P’01
Kim Hager ’00
Jane and Chris Haig P’03
Kerry Hamilton
Maude Hampden Shah ’99 and Sumul Shah ’99
In honor of Barbara & Ed Hampden and Mahendra & Shobhana Hardin’s birthday
Lily L. Han ’99
Hannah Hanani
Allycurs ’88
Grace W. Harde P’76
Mary Harrison
Kathy and Joe Hatfield P’89
Gary and Linda Hauze P’00
Paul and Mary Hazleton P’94
Joanne Hebert ’87
In memory of Daniel M. Hebert
Anthony Mark Hecht P’10
In memory of Sidney Robert Hecht and Sanetta Hecht
Lesley Heilig and Lou Davis
Janelle Helms P’99
Mimi Henderson ’68
Joel Herda ‘84 and Renee Becker
Rubi Herrera ’07
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hickey
Louise and Arthur Hillman
In honor of Emly H. Fisher
Thomas Hitchings and Shelly Shapiro P’07
Cuong Ho and Manh Nguyen P’09
Jamie and Elizabeth Hobba
De Aaon Hoggins Miller ’75
Hal L. Holladay
In honor of James Rodgers
C. Linda Howitz P’96
In honor of Molly Howitz de St. Andre ’96
Caroline Hu ’02
Nanette Hucknall
Meg Humes-Barbo ’72
Marilyn and Eugene Hunger
Aaron Hurwitz ’99 and
Laura Selkirk ’98
Jamie Hutchinson P’89, ’95 & ’97
Mary Jo Hutchinson P’88 and Emmette R. Hutchinson ’96
IBM Matching Grants Program
Julia A. Insinger ’77
Julie Ann and Anthony Introcaso P’13
Wendy and Marc Jaccard P’14
Matt ’95 and Abbie Jackson
Donna Jaffe Fishbein ’71
Johanna Jansen
Jill and Alex Johnson P’96
Paula Jurn ’02
Karen Juster Hecht P’10
In honor of Zak Hecht ’10
Donna Kallback
Benjamin Kalish ’98
Vera and Chet Kalt
Brynna Knelson Blaine P’90
In memory of Darren S. Blaine ’90
Abbe Kanner ’68
In memory of Joanne and Carole Korda
Kristopher Kapinos ‘92
Kaki Notestine Kasdorff ’93 and Jason F. Kasdorff
Kim Kastens and Dale Chayes P’08
In memory of Holly Chayes ’08
Sara Kastoff ’97 and Peter Wise
In honor of Karen Beaumont-Biggs
John and Katherine Keenun
Lori Kenepp ’81
Rosanna and Kevin Kenny
Edward and Elaine Kent P’00
Laura Kessel ’05
Jennifer Ackerman Kettell ’82
Judith Kiefer
Yoosook and Youngki Kim P’00
Steven Kimball ’80
David and Carolyn Kingen
In honor of Nancy Burris
Hardin’s birthday
Marie (Mimi) Kittredge ’75
Richard Kittredge and
Tanya Korelsky P’00
Eve Klotz ’67
Peter Knapp ’80 and Rob Gates
Michael P. Koch ’74
Sharone and Stephen Koons P’08
Lucy Kosters Young and
Allan Young P’01
KPMG Peat Marwick Foundation
Eric Kramer
Janice Kulig
Lisa Kuller ’78 P’13
Adam La Faci ’01
Michael Leahy and
M. B. Maughan P’04
April Lee ’01
Youngro Lee ’00
Evian Leib ’99
In honor of Virginia A. Brush
Amelia Lepore Sessions ’01
In honor of Gabriel Asfar
Alice Lerner and Robert Goldberg P’13

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In honor of the Simon’s Rock student who is recognized on campus at the annual Fund Scholars Program. The program enables donors to make a gift of $5,000 or more to the Fund for Simon’s Rock in a given year are eligible to participate in the Annual Fund Scholars Program. The program enables donors to make a gift of $5,000 or more to the Fund for Simon’s Rock in a given year are eligible to participate in the Annual Fund Scholars Program.
How do you explain Simon's Rock to people who've never heard of the College?
That’s sort of a tricky question because I think iconoclasm and an unwillingness to belong to any club that would have them as a member is one of the traits of a Rocker. It’s a group that’s defined by being exceptional in all senses of the word. I think the thread that runs through everyone I met there was a kind of willingness to reject conventional or received wisdom and to chart their own lives in school and everywhere.

So is being a Rocker nature or nurture?
Good question! I think you have to be a certain kind of person to be game for bundling up in the New England winter and getting together on a hill with three hundred other people and studying really hard. It definitely selects for a certain crew. But I think Simon's Rock is a supportive place for people to unfurl their creativity and intellectual acuity that might have been latent. I think Simon’s Rock offers a great set of conditions for people to express themselves.

How did studying at Simon's Rock change you?
When I arrived, I did not have a lot of confidence about my own voice or take on what should happen in the world and what I wanted to say. It’s such a gift to have a lot of people who wanted to help me figure out what the point was and also call bullshit on me when I was adopting a voice that wasn’t mine.

And how does that translate into your work at MoveOn.org and Upworthy?
One thing Simon’s Rock taught me was it’s not the grade that you get that’s important but the actual experience you have—doing the project or writing the brief or whatever is what’s valuable, and I have definitely carried that forward. I’m really happy growing upworthy and figuring out how to take something like climate change and making it something people are as excited to share and talk about as the latest celebrity scandal. If I spend the next few years figuring that out, I’ll be pretty happy.

Do you feel a bond with other alumni?
Whenever I run into someone who went to Simon’s Rock, they are always doing something interesting. That’s one of the fun things about being part of this diaspora: You can pretty much guarantee that they are not doing something boring and that they are instead studying monkey behavior or figuring out how ice crystals form or working on a graphic novel. And that’s a group I am proud to be part of.

What does it feel like to have had so much success so quickly?
What are your goals going forward?
I always resist the temptation to chalk up victories or wins because there are still so many problems in the world to fix, and it’s very hard to know whether what I did or what anyone did was the thing that made the difference. But at both MoveOn and at Upworthy, my focus has been on how to leverage this amazing new set of tools and these amazing new ways of communicating through the Internet to make society and democracy hopefully a little bit better. I feel good that I get to wake up and do that every day.

Eli received his BA from Simon’s Rock and has remained involved in the College since; he is a former member of the Simon’s Rock Board of Overseers and gave the commencement speech in 2005.
1960s and 1970s

Belinda Rathbone ’66 is on a book tour for her latest novel, The Boston Raphael: A Mysterious Painting, an Embattled Museum in an Era of Change, and a Daughter’s Search for the Truth. Mary Chase-Ziolek ’68 is professor of health ministries and nursing at North Park University and Theological Seminary. Dan Lipson ’74 was a member of the 2014 Family Weekend alumni panel on campus, and he is collaborating with the College’s Career Development office on entrepreneurial education for students.

Marie Kittredge ’75 is a project director for Cleveland’s Opportunity Corridor, an endeavor to improve the transportation system and support planned economic development in the Central and Fairfax neighborhoods of Cleveland. Lisa B. Martin ’76 completed her third annual 1.5-mile open water swim in Puget Sound in August 2014. She reached a personal best in finishing the course in 1:30:33, shaving 21 minutes off her previous time and reducing the number of strokes from 3,175 to 2,125. Lisa has also begun premarketing of two nonfiction book projects: The Zihua Diaries: Two Women, Two Cultures, One Dream, chronicling her decade-long cross-cultural school-building and travel adventures in Zihuatanejo, Mexico, and 13 Cabins, Cottages & Tiny Houses: A Writer’s Journey Home through Living Small, a collection of short stories and essays written in the many places she’s called home.

Alison Bechdel ’77 is a 2014 MacArthur Fellow, also known as the “MacArthur Genius Grant,” in support and recognition of her remarkable talent as a cartoonist and graphic memoirist. Fun home, New York City’s hit 2013 off-Broadway musical, based on Alison’s book of graphic memoir, is Dogs of Peace. 2013 is the first film of David Felix Sutcliff ’98, the first film of David Felix Sutcliff ’98, which debuted in 2013; the soundtrack and a DVD of the material. “Reading Lucretius in the Renaissance,” was published in the Journal of the History of Ideas in 2012, and she won the 2013 I Tatti Prize for best essay by a junior scholar. Her first academic monograph, also entitled “Reading Lucretius in the Renaissance,” was published by Harvard University Press in September. Ada wrote a Viking mythology-themed a cappella musical stage play, Sundown: Whispers of Ragnarok, which debuted in May 2013; the soundtrack and a DVD of the performance are coming out this fall, funded through Kickstarter. Also, Ada has sold a series of four science fiction novels to Tor books that will be published starting in 2016; the title of the first novel in the series is Dogs of Peace. ADAMA, the first film of David Felix Sutcliff ’98, was broadcast on PBS in 2011. It is a documentary about a 16-year-old Muslim girl arrested by the FBI under suspicion of being a “potential” suicide bomber. In 2012 David began working on a second film, tentatively titled (TERROR. The film follows an ex-Black Panther turned counterterrorism informant for the FBI and captures the unraveling of his 20-year career with the Bureau. The film is nearly

1990s

Jay Sauerbrei ’91 and Alumni Leadership Council member Kris Kapinos ’92 hosted the first official alumni social in London in October. Lucas Berrini ’92 is an adjunct faculty member at Craven Community College in Bern, North Carolina, where he teaches expository writing and American literature. Congrats to Morgan Zeimer ’92 on the birth of his daughter Marlene in April! Ambika Leigh ’93 is the owner of On Purpose Pictures, a full-service Los Angeles video production company that develops promotional, narrative, live, web, and fitness content. Ambika’s team—including alumni Pooja Ru ’99 and Zev Vel ’12—is currently working with the Office of Communications at Simon’s Rock on video assets for the College’s new website and other promotional material. Abby Kinchy ’93, associate professor of science and technology studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and author of Seeds, Science, and Struggle (MIT Press), worked with the Simon’s Rock Center for Food Studies to present “The Future of Seeds: GMO and Heirloom Seeds” as part of the center’s innovative series on the politics and economics of food. Shazia Khan ’93 was awarded the Alumni Leadership Council’s 2014 Outstanding Alumna Award for achievement in human rights, energy development, and delivery of solar power in rural Pakistan. Kirsten Barrett ’94 teaches geographic information science and remote sensing at the University of Leicester in England. In addition to her own research on landscape-scale effects of anthropogenic and natural disturbances, Kirsten reviews articles for a number of journals in the field. Ian Bickford ’95, who has been a professor at both Simon’s Rock and Bard High School Early College Queens, has been appointed dean of the Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock, a new 9th- and 10th-grade academy scheduled to start in 2015, to prepare students for early college. Alumni Leadership Council member Brian Conley ’96 recently hosted a social for Simon’s Rockers in Portland, Oregon. Brian continues his work with Small World News to develop the capacity of citizens in crisis areas and conflict zones to engage with the international community.

1980s

Peter Knapp ’80 and his husband Rob Gates celebrated two anniversaries on July 28: the fourteenth anniversary of their civil union and the sixth anniversary of their wedding. They met in 1992 at the World Science Fiction Convention in Orlando, Florida. Mark Leiter ’81 was awarded the Alumni Leadership Council’s 2014 Outstanding Alumna Award, for high achievement in global markets, serving both policymakers and business leaders. Rodney Christopher ’86 is now director of capital deployment at the F.B. Heron Foundation that invests capital to expand reliable employment and economic opportunity for those on the margins. Rodney was also a member of the 2014 Family Weekend alumni panel on campus. Stellar Motel, the new alternative/hip-hop-influenced album from Mike Doughty ’86, was released in September on Snack Bar/Megaforce Records. Gwendolyn Hampton Van Sant ’87 is the Berkshire County commissioner on the status of women and is founder and executive director of Berkshire Resources for the Integration of Diverse Groups in Education (BRIDGE, Inc.). Amy Sutton Stemdale ’87 recently earned her MBA at the University of New Hampshire where she is the director of strategic communication for the Casey School of Public Policy. Minna Bromberg ’88 was awarded the Alumni Leadership Council’s 2014 Outstanding Alumna Award for transformative social justice and spiritual leadership within the Simon’s Rock community and beyond.
complete and has received funding from the BBC, PBS, Sundance, and the Tribeca Film Institute. David was also recently married in July 2014 at a ceremony that just missed getting clobbered by Hurricane Arthur. Rockers at the ceremony included Ruth Ballenzweig ‘99, Aaron Spector ‘98, Chris Lindstrom ‘98, Anna Bario ‘99, and Heather Fisch ‘00. Katie Kreifels ‘98 is vice president for operations at UP Development, LLC, a mission-driven affordable housing developer specializing in permanent supportive housing.

Peter Addy ‘99 is a postdoctoral associate in psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine. Kim Kaminsky ‘99 welcomed daughter Penelope Mae in April; Gabrielle Glemann ‘99 and Paul Reintz are the proud parents of Jolie, born last May; and Jake Trevick ‘99 and Laura Meltzer are the new parents of Naomi, born in June.

2000s
Saket Navlakha ‘00 is assistant professor at the Center for Integrative Biology at the Salk Institute in La Jolla, California. He develops new algorithms to understand the interactions, dynamics, and evolution of large, noisy, and complex biological networks to reveal how molecular and cellular networks are organized and have evolved. Ally Shandell ‘00 was named 2014 Best LGBT Lawyers under 40 by the LGBt Law Association. Todd Farrell ‘00 is now working in corporate strategy and development for Dropbox, and he married Aimee Hartono Farrell last March. Tiffany Thomas ‘00 is a foreign affairs specialist at the U.S. Department of State in Washington, D.C. Chloe Demrovsky ‘01 recently appeared on Bloomberg TV to discuss the new normal of extreme weather; Chloe is executive director at Disaster Recovery Institute International. Emma Silverman ‘01 published her first book in August, The Joy of Yoga: Fifty Sequences for Your Home and Studio Practice. Jacob Bek ‘01 is the founder and architect at JBA Collective in New York City. Eli Gandour-Rood ‘01 recently hosted a social for Simon’s Rockers in the Seattle area at the Bookstore Bar and Café. Mike Nash ‘01 earned his MA in psychology at NYU and married Darcy McCusker ‘06 on campus this past summer. (Darcy also married Mike.) Erika Lundgrin ‘02 recently earned her MD at Case Western Reserve University and is working as a resident in pediatrics at the University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland, Ohio. Vanessa Barg ‘03 is founder and CEO of Gnosis Chocolate that produces functional and nutritious vegan and kosher chocolate free of soy, gluten, and dairy. Matthew Greenless ‘03 is an electronics department attentive at 4Wall Entertainment, a company that provides entertainment lighting systems. Mac Dobbins ‘05 is a biochemist at Siemens Healthcare and plays in an indie rock band called Dear Comrade. Mac was also recently on campus as a member of the 2014 Family Weekend alumni panel. Dylan Neely ‘06 earned an MFA in electronic music and recording media from Mills College. Andrea Barron ‘07 is CEO of her new company SlideChef that helps generate presentations faster and hones the impact value of a presenter’s slide deck. Gabriella Spitz ‘07 started her PhD in biology at Rockefeller University in September 2014. Eric Hernandez ‘08 worked at the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries this past summer and is studying marine conservation and policy at SUNY Stony Brook School of Marine and Atmospheric Sciences. William Deng ‘09 is founder and CEO at Armaments Research Company LLC, working on a device that will be the black box for firearms—geo-locating and time-stamping firearm discharges. Haley Oller ‘09 is a research associate at Blend Therapeutics, a biopharmaceutical company discovering new classes of medicines to treat debilitating diseases. She married Avi Kurlantzick this past June.

2010s
Eliot Lutrell-Williams ‘10 is a graduate student of pharmacology, toxicology, and neuroscience at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center.

Resources for Simon’s Rock alumni

Web: simons-rock.edu/alumni
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LinkedIn: Join the Simon’s Rock Alumni to search for and connect directly with other alumni
Join Rocker Connect to work with the Simon’s Rock Office of Career Development
JSTOR: Access the alumni digital library subscription at simons-rock.edu/alumni/jstor
Discussion: Discuss new initiatives at Simon’s Rock with other alumni at groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/simonsrockalumni

Contact the Alumni Leadership Council! What can we do for you?
E-mail us at sralc@simons-rock.edu.
The Road from Montserrat

When he first made his way to Simon’s Rock from his hometown of Westfield, NJ, Nate Shoobs (’12) was convinced his love of science could only lead down one path. “I was genuinely interested in medicine and had a very specific academic plan to go to medical school,” the 18-year-old says. “I thought medicine was the most interesting area of science and the best, most secure job path I could take.” But after discussing medicine, science, and his academic interests with friends and acquaintances in medical school or already practicing physicians, Nate became disillusioned with medicine as an area of study. “I realized that the scientific interest I had in medicine was not realistically compatible with being a doctor,” he explains. “Around the same time I took [an EMT] class [and] had the realization that I just didn’t have a passion for health care or medicine outside some specific aspects of the science.”

Nate’s enthusiasm, he discovered, was the natural world. And the opportunity to do an in-depth field study arose almost immediately when his advisor, environmental studies and ecology professor Thomas Coote, offered to lead a four-week intersession journey—with seven other Simon’s Rock students and two colleagues—to the volcanic island of Montserrat to conduct serious hands-on research on one of the Caribbean’s least studied lands. “I actually worried that I was going to be bored with the ecology work,” Nate laughs. “But there is some interesting stuff going on in Montserrat. You go out into these beautiful woodlands and see things that people may have never found before.”

Among other things, Nate studied several species of neotropical snails, and for the next six months after his return, with the unfailing support and encouragement of Prof. Coote, he continued his research, diving into malacology and reaching out to major researchers in the field. His efforts were rewarded at this summer’s 2014 Molluska conference held in Mexico City, where Nate and Tom presented a poster on their gastropod findings. Now Nate is actively corresponding with the Harvard Museum of Comparative Zoology, the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia, and the Smithsonian to determine whether or not he may have found a novel species in Montserrat. According to Tom Coote, his advisee’s enthusiasm is matched only by his prodigious ability to learn. “In terms of our work together Nate has contributed a great deal, going way beyond in conducting background research and analysis,” Tom says. “He is a very focused and committed student. His knowledge base is substantial and broad, and he brings a lot to classroom discussion both in content and energy.”

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Simon’s Rock Bookshelf


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Get Ready to Celebrate the Golden Anniversary of Simon’s Rock!

The 50th anniversary celebration will kick off at Reunion 2016 in July 2016. Join us for the year-long celebration. Closing celebration will take place at Reunion 2017.

Stay tuned for more info.
Want to get involved in planning the celebration? Contact Cathy Ingram, Alumni and Parent Relations Officer, at cingram@simons-rock.edu or 413-528-7266.

Alumni, faculty and staff are invited to the Annual Simon’s Rock Reunion as we celebrate the Anniversary Classes


For more info: simons-rock.edu/reunion