Dear Simon’s Rock family and friends,

My predecessor Bernie Rodgers began the tradition some years ago of reading and commenting on the thesis of every graduating senior. When I became provost, I inaugurated a new tradition: meeting with every prospective graduate for a half hour at some point during the year to discuss her or his project.

These meetings are not presentations but conversations, and I am often astonished by the ability of students to respond and speak clearly and cogently about a complex project. Simon’s Rock seniors are both passionate and perspicacious, whether they are explaining the nuances of translating a novel from German, the challenges of building a ladder to assist eels in climbing over dams, or the implications of a philosopher’s distinction between “modal statements” and “alternate future scenarios.”

The senior project is the capstone of the Simon’s Rock BA program, whose 40th anniversary we are delighted to celebrate this year. The popularity of the BA has grown enormously since its inception in 1974. In the early days, just a small cohort stayed at Simon’s Rock to complete their undergraduate degree. Now, the BA program attracts nearly 50 percent of those who finish the sophomore year—with almost three-quarters of those complementing their studies at the Rock with study abroad or away and a significant number earning multiple degrees in five-year programs with other institutions.

With the growth in the number of BA students, Simon’s Rock has become more attentive to preparing students for life after graduation. Career Services has been an important focus at the College, and the report in this issue describes both the wide-ranging post-graduate plans of our BA graduates and the College’s efforts to help them succeed.

As I write, the brutality of this winter’s polar vortex is receding slowly into memory; flowers are even competing with the last remnants of the snowbanks! All of us are looking forward with great anticipation to spring, especially the upcoming commencement ceremonies. We invite you to join us on campus to celebrate this year’s graduates, AA and BA alike, and to reacquaint yourselves with the extraordinary institution that is Simon’s Rock.

With thanks for your ongoing support,

Peter

Provost and Vice President
Why wait any longer than you have to? That’s been a premise—if not the unofficial motto—of Simon’s Rock since its inception almost 50 years ago. In 1972, when Baird Whitlock became the college’s second president, he had a bold vision: that the 15 and 16 year olds entering Simon’s Rock, then on a path to an associate’s degree, could instead stay at the Rock and earn their Bachelor of Arts degrees within four years.

In 1974, Whitlock and the Simon’s Rock faculty put the idea into action and launched a BA degree program consisting of seven broad interdisciplinary majors. Like College founder Elizabeth Blodgett Hall, Whitlock believed some students were ready for advanced work at a young age. He also saw a historical precedent for offering the full, four-year college experience to 16 year olds. In his book Don’t Hold Them Back, he argues that until the turn of 20th century, students typically graduated from high school at age 16. Not until 1906, when the Carnegie Foundation helped establish the model of the four-year high school, did it become the norm for American students to start college at 18.

Whitlock credits the Simon’s Rock faculty for their willingness to dive in to his new proposition. “They jumped right in, and deeply,” he recalls. “It was and is a remarkable faculty.”

To give credibility to the fledgling program, professors from other colleges came to audit oral examinations and vouch that Simon’s Rock offered a genuine BA college education. The faculty also instituted the requirement of a year-long senior thesis—an experience that would, for many alumni, come to define their time at the college.

The BA Program Today

Since the first BA degrees were awarded in 1976, the program has blossomed to allow for greater exploration and more individualization while retaining the signature thesis experience. In 1996, under the leadership of deans Bernie Rodgers and Pat Sharpe, the BA program’s handful of broad-based interdisciplinary majors was replaced by concentrations, which require fewer courses and credits than a full major and let students explore related coursework across subject areas. The Simon’s Rock concentrations today consist of both traditional disciplinary subject areas and interdisciplinary ones.

Anne O’Dwyer, the dean of Academic Affairs and a professor of psychology, notes that the current mix of concentrations serves students well. She says that today students need exposure to both focused study within a discipline as well as connections across fields. “It’s advantageous for students who plan to go on to grad school to have completed a sequence of coursework in a discipline of study,” she observes. “But it is also valuable to be able to make connections between and across disciplines—and graduate programs are increasingly valuing students who have had strong interdisciplinary study and exposure.”
O’Dwyer adds that students are encouraged to go the interdisciplinary route via two concentrations that have a “coherent connection.” She recalls one recent example of a student with concentrations in psychology and music who wrote a thesis on performance anxiety. The senior thesis remains the capstone of the Simon’s Rock BA program. It is an undertaking that O’Dwyer describes as “personally meaningful to students, a demonstration that they are capable of very high level academic work, and an accomplishment that doesn’t go unnoticed by graduate schools and potential employers.”

Even as the BA senior thesis has become a core component of the Simon’s Rock identity, the College remains committed to supporting

... until the turn of the 20th century, students typically graduated from high school at age 16.

An environmental studies major at the Rock—her thesis was on the environmental consequences of different agricultural policies in China—Ann went on to earn a master’s degree in international relations at Johns Hopkins University. After 20 years at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and another decade at the National Academies Board on Life Sciences, the mother of three is now executive director of the National Center for Science Education in Oakland, California, an organization that defends the teaching of evolution and climate control in America’s public schools.

“Keep your options open,” she says. “That’s been a guiding principle of mine ever since.”

Ann Hutchinson Reid ‘75 says she never once considered transferring after arriving on campus in 1975 from Cincinnati, Ohio, at age 15. A close relationship with the faculty was a major reason why.

“You really got to know your teachers, and most of them treated you like a junior colleague rather than some other species of human being,” she says. “They made it feel like they were learning from you as well. It was magical.”

She cited, in particular, Don Roeder (see p. 8). “Don was very enthusiastic and really got across the joy of science rather than memorize, memorize, memorize. He made you see how creative science can be, that it’s really about solving puzzles.”

Ann describes her response to the Simon’s Rock educational experience: “I loved everything: science, math, literature, political science, piano. You were really able to explore all your interests, in the classic liberal arts way.”

Ann Hutchinson Reid recently in Stinson Beach, CA, with friends Keith Yamamoto and Wally.
As a 10-year-old in Marysville, PA, a blue-collar town across the Susquehanna River from Harrisburg, Todd Maugans knew that he wanted to be a doctor. Five years later, in 1977, he entered Simon’s Rock, becoming the first member of his family to go to college.

“I had been trapped in a poor school system, and my first semester at Simon’s Rock was hell,” he says. “It was such a different way of learning, and the level of expectation was so much higher. But after that, I was hooked. I didn’t want to go anywhere else.”

Todd says the Rock’s small size and intimacy was another reason to stay. “I looked at larger places like Cornell and Dartmouth, but they seemed too overwhelmingly big. I said, ‘No, I’m very happy here.’”

He recalls that he was the Rock’s third premed major and third graduate to go to med school. After attending Temple University of Medicine, he spent his residency in neurosurgery at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles, and then served on the faculties of the University of Vermont Medical Center and Cincinnati Children’s Hospital.

Married and the father of a 14-year old daughter, Todd today is division head of pediatric neurosurgery at Nemours Children’s Hospital in Orlando, FL, where his major focus is sports-related concussions among children and how they affect blood flow to the brain.

“That’s what Simon’s Rock students do,” he says. “We’re not necessarily Nobel Prize winners, but I’ll bet you that in almost any industry or sector of life you’re going to find a Simon’s Rocker who’s making a small but very significant contribution to the world we live in.”
A Rising BA Graduate: Headed for Harvard

Senior Marcel Garbos just learned he was accepted into Harvard’s Graduate School of Arts and Sciences doctoral program in history.

His original plan was to transfer out as sophomore. But that was before he took Nancy Yanoshak’s course on French critical theorist Michel Foucault. “We decided to develop a course of study that interested me,” he says. The result was a concentration in historical studies with an interdisciplinary focus on political studies and critical theory.

Fast forward: Marcel’s senior thesis is on the reconstruction of east-central Europe, with an emphasis on Polish-Ukrainian relations. It’s a subject dear to Marcel’s heart. Every year he and his parents visit his father’s native city of Wroclaw, Poland, the former Breslau, Germany.

“It took me a while to find my tempo,” he says of his first days at the Rock. “The caliber of work was greater here and I needed to adjust.”

Now he recommends the BA experience. “It’s a challenging undertaking,” says Marcel, who hopes to teach Central European history at the university level. “But if you’re serious about the work, it’s also a prime opportunity.”

Wallach and Hutchinson on the BA Program

Music professor Larry Wallach, hired in the spring of 1972, recalls the “sense of excitement” at faculty meetings the summer of 1974, with the launching of the BA program.

“All of us in the arts division wanted to be part of the arts and aesthetics major,” he said, adding that many faculty chose majors out of their own disciplines. Larry himself joined American studies, a particular interest of his especially since his dissertation had been on American composer Charles Ives.

Was there any objection to the idea among senior faculty? “Nobody was really entrenched,” he says. “A lot of the faculty was new—I was one of four new faculty of about 25—and the school was only six years old.”

English professor Jamie Hutchinson arrived at Simon’s Rock the autumn of 1976, just months after the school awarded its first BA degrees. He would come to see the program’s effects not only as a teacher, but as a parent of Sarah (dance and women’s studies), Meg (creative writing) and Tessa (Asian studies).

“My children got a real chance to do things they cared about,” he says, “and to work with teachers they liked and respected.”

Jamie was asked how the Rock’s BA program compares with that of his alma mater, the vaunted Stanford University.

“It’s much more intimate and personal here. There’s a much stronger sense of collaboration among students and faculty, and students can bring together multiple interests in a creative way.”
Dear Friends,

For four years in a row, Simon’s Rock supporters have been increasing their contributions to the College, its students, and alumni, at a remarkable rate. Thank you for this support.

This generosity has created an opportunity for us to fundamentally change the scale of philanthropic support of our one-of-a-kind college. We can begin to envision how to meet the financial need of every student who belongs at Simon’s Rock.

The 100 Days for Simon’s Rock campaign is the first step into this new realm of ambitious expectations. From March 22 through June 30, we’re looking to raise $500,000 for the Fund for Simon’s Rock from supporters at large. This is roughly double what has recently become the norm for spring donations from alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, and even students. But we are ready for it.

Raising half a million dollars in these 100 Days will prepare us, and show other interested donors outside of the traditional Simon’s Rock community, that we are ready for a larger campaign for support. It will forever alter access to a Simon’s Rock education and enhance the opportunities it offers—both through academics to students and in lifelong services to its alumni, parents, friends, faculty, and staff.

During 100 Days for Simon’s Rock, we will appeal for your support by mail, e-mail, and on social media. Peter, Katie, alumni and parent volunteers, Cathy, or Rich, may be in touch with you about making a gift. You’ll be able to indicate that you’ve joined the effort on Facebook and Twitter. And we’ll celebrate your generosity by counting you in the Annual Fund Scholars Program or Provost Circle for your level of contribution, in the Sapling Society for your commitment to giving a gift of any amount year after year, or as a social media Donor of the Day for getting involved in this crucial 100-day drive.

Please give, and please give as much as you can—perhaps by starting a monthly contribution that adds up over time. We need you.

Once again, let’s do something at the Rock that hasn’t happened before.

Rich Montone  
Annual Fund and Alumni Affairs Manager

Cathy Ingram  
Alumni and Parent Relations Officer

100 DAYS for Simon’s Rock

Make a gift. Spread the word. Spring forward!
Finding Home: Hazemach ’12

Hazemach ’12 (yes, he goes by only one name) spent a good portion of his youth buried in math books. In fact, by the time the 18-year-old wunderkind reached his freshman year of high school, he had already taught himself calculus, just from reading a textbook. That’s when he found himself at an academic and social impasse. Unlike his more privileged peers at the prestigious Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley, Hazemach was living a somewhat chaotic life. His parents had separated, and he and his mother moved from motels to apartments all over California trying to get by. It was during this difficult transition that Hazemach received a brochure from Simon’s Rock.

“I applied since I was feeling ready for more advanced academic challenges and a new social setting,” he says. “After I was accepted, I reasoned that either it could be an amazing experience or a not-so-amazing one. Either way, I was desiring anything new. Most importantly, the small class sizes and the reputation of the teachers made me excited about potential courses and connections.”

Of course, making connections in the math department was inevitable; Hazemach’s reputation had preceded him. But surprisingly, thanks to a philosophy class and the College’s rich student life, Hazemach’s world has become bigger than even he, a man of numbers, could have imagined.

“Taking that class really intrigued me. We talked about Marx and Nietzsche. And then I went to an on-campus symposium about the Trayvon Martin case, and it made me really angry,” he recalls. “But I was able, suddenly, to apply the political philosophy I had learned to what was happening in the world. Now, I am truly a political person. And for me, that’s a good thing.”

Being “political” may be an understatement for the shy student and second-generation Filipino who is just now getting to know his roots and himself. The once isolated young man who sought out the consolation of mathematical topology over socializing is now an outspoken humanist. He has loaded his coursework with “Aesthetics and Poetics of Politics,” “The Feminine and the Political,” “Walter Benjamin and the Frankfurt School,” and even piano lessons. Yet this full plate has not stopped him from other pursuits, particularly books of all kinds and seeking out a community that has welcomed him with no strings attached. In fact, Hazemach says he has adjunct professor Monshin Paul Naamon, an ordained Buddhist monk, to thank for that.

“He told me about the three jewels of Buddhism: the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. The last one, the sangha, is all about community,” he says. “Western society and especially America pressures us to be individualistic. It got me thinking about how important it is to just have a conversation with someone. It doesn’t have to be academic. It’s the community. I feel like I know where I belong now.”

The Provost Circle celebrates supporters who make a gift between $1,000 and $4,999 in a given year. Provost Circle members will receive a copy of the Book One selection, the book that all first-year students read over the summer, as well as an invitation to the Book One author reading in late summer.

Supporters who make a gift of $5,000 or more to the Fund for Simon’s Rock in a given year may participate in the Annual Fund Scholars Program. The program enables donors to name a one-year scholarship for a particular student who is recognized on campus at the annual Honors Convocation and shares news of his or her journey at the College with the scholarship sponsor.

The new Sapling Society recognizes donors who have made a gift for five consecutive years or more! All members receive a different collectible lapel pin each year.

Donor of the Day, featured on Simon’s Rock social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter, will highlight the many different kinds of supporters who contribute to 2014’s special 100 Days for Simon’s Rock fund-raising drive. For more information, please contact Katie Reid Levine, director of development, at 413-528-7257 or klevine@simons-rock.edu
Asked about his first impression of Simon’s Rock, he laughed and said, “Come on, man, that was back in 1984!”

Simon’s Rock was one of the first colleges in the United States to offer an environmental studies program. Upon his arrival, Don proposed requiring all program majors to take a two-semester rather than a one-semester introduction to environmental studies course. He’s been teaching it ever since, covering global issues the first semester and management options the second. He has also taught general botany, limnology—the study of lakes and rivers—microbiology, and topics in environmental management.

Don adds that for the past decade one of his most popular courses has been mycology, or the study of fungi. One former student and Fulbright scholar and botanist, Robert Smiley, now teaches mycology at Simon’s Rock. Smiley earned his PhD from the University of Arizona and has been teaching at Simon’s Rock since 2010.

The two Simon’s Rock science guys, who have served the College for a combined 67 years, will start their next chapter when they retire at the end of this year.

Don describes his departure from the Rock with his usual sense of humor. “There’s a saying: lead, follow, or get out of the way,” he said. “Well, I used to lead and I’m a lousy follower, so I’m going to get out of the way.”

And what was Bob doing before he came to campus? “Unemployment, mostly,” he says, adding that he opted for “a steady paycheck” after three years at Hudsonia Ltd., a nonprofit environmental research organization he cofounded in 1981.

The two Simon’s Rock science guys, who have served the College for a combined 67 years, will start their next chapter when they retire at the end of this year.
A Fond Farewell

scholar, BA grad Lindsey Longway ’08, is now earning her PhD in mycology at Oregon State University’s College of Forestry.

Hired to teach zoology, Bob has since also taught evolution, animal behavior, vertebrate and invertebrate zoology, ecology, paleontology, research methods, and general biology. Several of his former students have gone on to become zoologists including Simon’s Rock graduate Amanda Rosenberger ’90, a PhD in zoology who is now assistant unit leader at the Missouri Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit and on the faculty at the Missouri School of Natural Resources. (Bob’s son Alec ’05 graduated from the Rock with a dual concentration in biology and chemistry and today is studying conservation medicine in a graduate program at Tufts University.)

Don and Bob both agree on what the biggest change has been over their time at the Rock: students have gotten more ambitious.

“I think Simon’s Rock is much more conservative today. Not politically more conservative—it’s still a liberal place,” Don says. “But students now are much more interested in career and grad school. I didn’t detect that when I first came. It was much more free-wheeling.”

Bob echoes Don’s assessment. “When I first got here a lot of students came in saying, ‘I don’t know what I really want to do, so I’ll try this and the other thing out.’ Now we’re getting a lot of people walking in the door saying, ‘I want to be in medical school in four years’ or ‘I want to be in the engineering program at Columbia in three years.’”

No one regrets the pair’s impending departure more than their former student and current colleague Tom Coote, who says his relationship with Don and Bob has been very collaborative dating back to his own time here as an environmental studies major from 1986 to 1990.

Simon’s Rock was one the first colleges in the United States to offer an environmental studies program.

“I’ve been all over the map, and Don and Bob have been there all along in some capacity,” says Tom, who teaches environmental studies and supervises the Rock’s sustainability initiatives. “They’ve had a huge impact on what I’ve been doing in my life.”

For starters, Don was the advisor for Tom’s senior thesis on climate change, and both Don and Bob served on the thesis committee. The two served in the same capacity for Tom’s master’s thesis at Bard College and again for his PhD thesis at UMass Amherst. The three of them have taught together full time for the past five years. Tom is director and Don and Bob are senior researchers for the Berkshire Environmental Research Center, the nonprofit research and consulting firm Don and Tom cofounded in 1985.

Tom says he hopes to keep the two involved in the College’s overseas research program. Don and Bob have led ten expeditions to Guyana over the years, and Bob and nine students recently returned from exploring the Caribbean island of Montserrat.

Meanwhile, retirement plans for Don include work with the Berkshire Mycological Society, “a mushroom club I helped form in the early 1990s,” and, for Bob, more time with Hudsonia Ltd., studying eel migrations in the Hudson and identifying a fish in the river “we’ve probably been calling the wrong name for a few hundred years.”

The two senior occupants of the Fisher Science and Academic Center have a deep respect for each other, as well as an easy friendship.

“Don was always willing to extend himself well beyond his comfort zone to teach new courses,” Bob says. “And he taught them very well.”

Don returns the favor. “Bob’s an incredibly good scientist and very popular with students. He’s also the worst dresser on campus. And I’m the second worst.”

MORE FOND FAREWELLS

Congratulations to Gabriel Asfar, Faculty in Languages and Literature, for 30 years of service and to Emmanuel Dongala, Richard B. Fisher Chair in Natural Sciences, for 15 years of service. You will be missed.
Dear Rockers,

The Simon’s Rock Alumni Leadership Council (ALC) is excited to sponsor a new resource available for alums. JSTOR, a major digital library of academic journals, books, and primary sources, is now available to all Simon’s Rock alumni. For login information, e-mail alumni@simons-rock.edu. You can also visit simons-rock.edu/alumni/JSTOR for a list of information and topics available. Given Rockers’ penchant for lifelong learning and intellectual curiosity, the ALC is pleased to provide this useful resource for our community. Please let us know what you think of it.

The ALC is looking for new representatives, in particular from the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 2000s. Please make nominations or express your interest at simons-rock.edu/alumni/alc. We’re looking for goodwill ambassadors for Simon’s Rock with interests in career services, fund-raising, peer outreach for regional events, and the reunion. Ambassadors serve as a liaisons between the alumni and staff at the College. We need involvement from a wider circle of alumni to maintain a great ALC, so please spread the word to increase the pool of volunteers!

On the topic of getting alumni involved, don’t forget to save the date for Reunion, which is happening on campus July 11–13. The Reunion Committee presently includes Meriweather Clark-Connors ’76, Peggy Clark ’80, Cordelia Derhammer Hill ’86, Valerie Ferrier ’94, and David Collins ’99. Keep an eye out for notices about online registration, scheduled to open in mid-May, or check simons-rock.edu/alumni for updates.

Also, please contribute as generously as you can to 100 Days for Simon’s Rock (see details about this special fund-raising drive on page 6). Every gift and every dollar will matter.

Sincerely,

Paul Goldschmidt ’84
Middleton, WI
goldschp@tds.net

Harry Marker ’05
New York, NY
harrygmarker@gmail.com

The 2013–2014 Alumni Leadership Council: Charlotte Anderholt ‘01, Jochai Ben-Avie ’06, Keith Brierley-Bowers ’80 (ALC representative to the Board of Overseers), Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez ’78, Brian Conley ’96, Christopher Derhammer-Hill ’86, Cordelia Derhammer-Hill ’86, Nicole Fitting ’93, Hillary Gardner ’02, Paul Goldschmidt ’84, Audrey Kaiman ’77, Kaki Notestine Kasdorf ’93, Harry Marker ’95, and Evelina Shmukler ’93.

Alumni currently on the Board of Overseers: Lorel AliKhan ’99, Jamie Clark ’76, Christopher Derhammer-Hill ’86, Jennifer Fan ’99, Mark Leiter ’81, Alvin Loshak ’92, John McWhorter ’81, and Sally Unger ’73.

Alumni Leadership Council 2013 Outstanding Alumni Award Winners
Each year the ALC bestows the Simon’s Rock Outstanding Alumni Award on one to three alumni. Winners have brought the spirit of Simon’s Rock to their profession or volunteer service in the world. This often means the award winners 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 2013 winners are:

**Tara Taylor Floyd ’93**
For achievement and service in neonatal and pediatric nursing

**Glenn M. Peacock ’84**
For decades of unwavering support of alumni, students, and the College

**Carlton L. Rounds ’83**
For achievement in HIV and human rights service and activism
Career Services Update

During its second year of operation, Career Services continued to grow, adding new programs and initiatives to its roster and expanding the existing alumni-student connections program. Students today have more opportunities than ever to network and learn about career paths and internships from professionals active in their fields.

Back by popular demand, the “Rocker Office Hours” program is now a regular semester event. Last fall 11 alumni met individually with 15 students in-person, over Skype, and on telephone calls, completing 34 sessions during the half-day event. Students rated the event a 4.9 of a possible 5 points for satisfaction, with alumni giving it a 4.5.

For the spring Rocker Office Hours, alumni volunteers suggested holding sessions in New York City. Eight students traveled to Manhattan to meet Rockers in a variety of career fields. Alumni and parents hosted site visits for students to learn more about professions in social work, the nonprofit sector, business, journalism, and advertising. In the evening, students attended sessions with alumni and parents working in fields including law, finance, nonprofits, and international NGOs. Rockers expressed their appreciation for the program in a follow up survey, citing as particularly helpful: learning about career paths, hearing firsthand accounts about life after Simon’s Rock, and the personal nature of the meetings. One student summed it up, saying, “The information I received was extremely helpful in expanding my horizon of interests.”

Over the past six months Career Services has been collecting data on postgraduate destinations for 2013 associate of arts and bachelor of arts degree recipients. The office gathered information on 92% of AA graduates and 86% of BA graduates, providing outcomes and a valuable baseline for collecting data on the destinations of future graduates. Detailed results from the survey will soon be available on the college’s website.

In June 2013 Bard’s Career Development Office and Simon’s Rock Career Services were admitted to the Nationwide Internship Consortium (NIC), giving students access to seven thousand internships. The office also partnered with Bard’s Career Development Office to provide Simon’s Rock students with access to Going Global, an online resource for students considering work or internships abroad and information for international students seeking postgraduate employment in the United States.

ALC, Alumni, And Career Services

Members of the ALC have been working closely with Career Services to create opportunities for alumni and students to collaborate as they plan professional life transitions. Thanks to the following alumni and parents for working with the ALC and Career Services to make Rocker Office Hours, Advise & Connect, and the Alumni-Parent Speaker Series a success:

Sameer Agrawal ’00  
Brittany Aicher ’06  
Sachit Bakshi ’02  
Jochai Ben-Avie ’06  
Alison Berge ’00  
Keith Brierley-Bowers ’80  
Abel Buko ’02  
Kevin Callanan ’03  
Alida Cantor ’01  
Kyle Chao ’06  
Rodney Christopher ’86  
Christopher Colombo ’92  
Rhonda Colombo ’94  
Paul Cox ’86  

Lauren Dahlin ’08  
Phillip Deely ’01  
Megan DiFurio ’90  
David Ernst ’10  
Valerie Ferrier ’94  
Hillary Gardner ’02  
Dragan Gill ’02  
Bean Gilsdorf ’90  
Heidi Glickman ’89  
Valerie Gono ’05  
Ashleigh Gough ’01  
Nida Intarapanich ’04  
John Jacobs ’70  
Heather Jeng ’99  

Toni Johnson ’89  
Jenn Kettlel ’82  
Kate Knapp ’66  
Matt Kramer ’00  
Angela Labrador ’96  
Yasho Lahiri P’13  
Ajay Madiwale ’01  
Kate Millington ’03  
Sarah Parady ’99  
Nina Perales ’82  
Kathryn Richards ’93  
Eric Rogers ’01  
Bruce Schoenberg ’81  
Henry Selzter ’02  

Sumul Shah ’99  
Jennifer Singleton ’80  
Nikki Tennermann ’05  
Karen Toulon P’10  
Miriam Welzenbaum ’76  
Chris Werter ’03  
Matthew Winkler ’88
Sally Unger: Entering Class of ’73

Sally Unger ’73 grew up in a socially conscious family in the ethnically diverse Long Island community of Westbury, NY. Unger remembers how her parents Bob, a dentist, and Beverly, a psychiatric social worker, strove to instill their children with respect for the rights of others and a sense of civil activism that upholds self-respect and embraces diversity. It’s a philosophy she’s carried with her, through her youth, studying political science at Simon’s Rock, into her successful legal career and it now serves as an intrinsic part of Unger family history.

When Bob returned to New York after serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, the Ungers moved to Levittown. They rented a house from Levitt and Sons (the development’s namesake) and were shocked to find the lease had a “Caucasians-only” clause. “My parents were upset by this discriminatory term and went to Constance Baker Motley, counsel to the NAACP (later the first African American female State Senator and then the first African American female federal court judge),” Sally recalled. “Motley pressed the matter directly with William Levitt and got the clause removed. Levitt then refused to renew my parents’ lease, and they moved to Westbury.”

As Sally grew up on Long Island and entered her teen years, she discovered her talent. “I enjoyed the art of argument, to the dismay of my parents, and figured I might as well turn that ability into a career path,” Sally said, when recalling her decision to attend Simon’s Rock. Sally moved from Long Island to the Berkshires in her sophomore year of high school. When she arrived at the Rock in 1973, Sally was a precocious teenager, labeled an “underachiever” in public school, where she never felt challenged.

“I was a bit daunted when I got to Simon’s Rock because I didn’t know whether I could meet the challenge of college, since I had been unchallenged for so long. I had no intention or expectation of suddenly conforming and changing my behaviors. However, the first night I was there I had an eye-opening experience. I saw one kid more interested in having a good time than studying, and he was exhibiting its effects. I realized then that I didn’t want to waste my opportunity for an education. It was an eye opener for me.”

Sally eagerly studied political science. “Art was not my forte,” she quips, “but I remember studying with [faculty member] George Beebe and getting perspective on law and potential career paths.” The smaller seminar classes forced Sally to be on her toes. “The classroom setting gave me the comfort level I needed to articulate my ideas in a thoughtful, coherent manner. This prepared me to be comfortable in the courtroom,” she says.

Raised with a strong sense of social justice, Sally found herself drawn to the law. In 1981 Sally became an attorney and practiced for over 30 years before running for New York City Civil Court Judge in Queens in November 2013. She won without opposition and has been presiding for the last few months. “As a litigator, as well as a litigant, I have had the opportunity to see many different sides of the law. In the last few decades, I have definitely seen a greater effort made to bring the law to the people, and this is something I am hugely passionate about. The law should know no race, gender, or creed.”

Judge Unger currently resides in Queens County, allowing her to serve her community and actively participate in the legal system. She has been called fierce but fair, and her reverence for balance and equality permeates her work. “Your work life is going to be where you spend a majority of your time, so you’d better enjoy it and be sure the work is worthwhile,” she says, quoting advice from her parents.

Her current role on the Board of Trustees for the Queens County Women’s Bar Association (QCWBA)—and former role as president—has been inspirational work for Sally as she’s been able to see women’s place in the world of justice evolve. “When I went to law school, women were perceived as taking jobs away from men,” Sally said, “We were chastised. Things are very different today. Organizations like the QCWBA provide community and camaraderie for women lawyers and judges. This gives us the chance to network and support one another. This is important work.”

As a longtime member of the Board of Overseers at Bard College at Simon’s Rock, Sally has the opportunity to support the school and participate in its evolution. “Strides have been made, but my hope is to continue to open possibilities for minorities, both at the school and on the board. We have a growing minority population at Simon’s Rock, but there is always room for growth.”

Sally’s strong relationship with the College has also influenced her personal ties. In 2001, Sally met her future godson, Alpha Diallo (whom Sally affectionately refers to as “The Artist formerly known as Mamadou”), through U Ba Win, a long time administrator and caring member of the Simon’s Rock community.

Alpha, along with dozens of other family and friends were on hand last December to cheer as Sally was sworn in as Judge of the Civil Court of the City of New York. Simon’s Rock alumni, faculty, and staff joined the group in the city at the courthouse where she now presides to celebrate Sally’s achievement—a small gesture of appreciation for all her work on the Board, Alumni Leadership Council, and her generosity as a donor to Simon’s Rock and the College’s W.E.B. Du Bois Scholarship. Sally’s dedication and consistent support continue to make the Simon’s Rock community proud to call her an alumna and a part of the family.
A Toast to New Board Chair, Stuart Breslow

The Simon’s Rock community gathered at the New York Public Library on January 23, 2014 to celebrate

1. Robert Miller, Stuart Breslow ’07  
2. Amanda Harris ’93, Georgia Nugent  
3. Miriam Breier, Sally Unger ’73  
4. John Uglum, Alvin Loshak ’92, Chelsey Loshak, H.L. Van Arnum  
5. Arden Pickoff-Raftery ’11, Dian Pickoff P’11  
6. David Brown, Erika Franke  
7. Peter Laipson, Elise Kent Bernanke ’00, Emily Fisher P’83, Anna Bernanke P’00, Leon Botstein  
8. Martha Sparks McWhorter, John McWhorter ’81  

Photography by Derek Goodwin
This year, Arden Pickoff-Rafferty ’11 has had the best of all possible worlds: the beauty of the Berkshires during her first semester and the excitement of New York City during her second. A junior in the Rock’s BA program, Arden is by day interning for the law and compliance department of a French investment bank and by night taking classes at the Bard Globalization International Affairs Program.

Even better, she gets to sleep at home. The 18-year-old grew up in Manhattan, where she danced for the New York City Ballet until an injury ended that dream.

“I had a miserable high school experience, hopping around from school to school, trying to find one that fit my dance schedule,” she says. “When I came to interview at Simon’s Rock, I felt it was a warm environment. I’d never had that before.”

But during her first year, she says she “was antsy. It took me a while to find out what I was interested in. But once you figure out what you want, everything falls into place.”

That moment came in the second semester of her sophomore year when she took a course in political global ecology. “It turned me on to this idea that the way it views the world isn’t limited to one sort of field, not specifically science or economics or political studies. It sort of pushed everything together into one lens.”

Arden’s concentration is a combination of critical geography, political ecology, and global studies. She hopes to put all three disciplines into action during an upcoming trip to China, where geography and Asian studies professor Chris Coggins will lead students on a three-week expedition to feng shui forests along the border of Tibet. (View Professor Coggins’s short video on simons-rock.edu/academics/meet-the-faculty/christopher-coggins)

Arden says the secret to Simon’s Rock is “finding classes and teachers you’re passionate about. The faculty is amazing, very warm and open to being people and not just members of a food chain. At large schools, teachers don’t necessarily want to interact with you outside of class. That’s definitely not the case at Simon’s Rock.”


Did we miss your latest publication?
Please be sure to share your news with us at editors@simons-rock.edu.
Inside Llewyn Davis, 2014. Their latest film, The new show is expected to premiere spring will be executive producers of a ’74 Coen and Ethan Joel Coen ’71 in New York City. Fargo fans are rejoicing to Alison Bechdel ’77 graphic novel by, had its Fun Home director of the National Center for Science Hutcheson Reid ’75 Ann hand to celebrate her special achievement. Civil Court in December 2013. A number of New York City last December. Sally Unger ’73 premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in which explores leadership, migration, beliefs, and Heel Performance Group. The work, choreographer Reggie Wilson and his Fist Moses(es) through June 1, 2014. Susan Manning ’72 served as dramaturge for, a new full-length dance performance by renowned choreographer Reggie Wilson and his Fist and Heel Performance Group. The work, which explores leadership, migration, beliefs, and cultural practices, enjoyed its New York premiere at the Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York City last December. Sally Unger ’73 was inducted as a judge of the Queens County Civil Court in December 2013. A number of Simon’s Rock community members were on hand to celebrate her special achievement. Ann Hutcheson Reid ’75 was named executive director of the National Center for Science Education and has relocated to the West Coast. Fun Home, the new musical based on the graphic novel by Alison Bechdel ’77, had its world premiere this fall at the Public Theater in New York City. Fargo fans are rejoicing to learn creators Joel Coen ’71 and Ethan ’74 Coen will be executive producers of a 10-episode series based on their 1996 film. The new show is expected to premiere spring 2014. Their latest film, Inside Llewyn Davis, was nominated for many awards including the Golden Globes Best Motion Picture (Comedy or Musical) and two Academy Awards. It won the 2013 Cannes Film Festival Grand Prize of the Jury and the 2014 AFI award for Movie of the Year. David Byrd ’78, who works in research and development at Bloomberg LP, was part of the 2013 Family Weekend Alumni Panel on campus. Jennifer Browdy de Hernandez ’78 is a new board member at Berkshire Creative and includes video of “DOSH weaving sounds” spotlights the music of Martin Dosh ’89 and includes video of “DOSH weaving sounds in this 2012 radio session.” Martin and former Fog band members have reunited as Cloak Ox and are preparing for a national tour. After 18 years, William Eric Sauerhoefer-Thompson ’89 married his partner Marcus Sauerhoefer-Thompson in a small ceremony in Manhattan in November 2013. Although their wedding was immediate family only, they were fortunate to catch up recently with alumni Shani Ferguson ’85, Rodney Christopher ’86, Rich Baker ’88, Candace Ammer Baker ’90, and Sara Monsonis ’92. Benjamin Bogin ’91 published The Illuminated Life of The Great Yolmowa, a translation of the autobiography of Yolmowa Tenzin Norbu, one of the most fascinating figures of seventeenth-century Tibet and a Buddhist master. A private gallery viewing and discussion was held to celebrate the book’s release at the Rubin Museum of Art in New York City. Benji is assistant professor of Buddhist studies in the Theology Department at Georgetown University. Garth Reese ’91 earned his PhD in religion from Claremont and is working as the head of Special Collections and Archives at the University of Idaho. Nick Ring ’91 is director of Media Technologies at Amherst Media. Christopher Colombo ’92 and Rhonda Colombo ’94 visited campus to take part in the first installment of the Alumni Parent Speaker Series. Chris and Rhonda spoke with 17 students who are interested in pursuing careers in medicine. Professor David Myers
moderated the panel. Corey Di Biase ’92 published a novel, These Can’t Be Choices, and is principal at the Aperio Consulting Group in Montana. Shilo McCabe ’92 recently had her photography featured at San Francisco’s Center for Sex and Culture. The photo-a-day project stemmed from her ongoing Sex Positive Photo Project, which showcases photos and interviews with the Bay Area community. Abby Kinchy ’93JA is a tenured associate professor in science and technology studies at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute. She recently published her second book, Seeds, Science, and Struggle: The Global Politics of Transgenic Crops, and will speak on campus as part of the THINK FOOD program sponsored by the new Center for Food Studies at Simon’s Rock. Tara Taylor Ford ’93 and her husband welcomed their new son into the world in September 2013. Tara was also a recipient of the Alumni Leadership Council’s 2013 Outstanding Alumni Award for achievement and service in neonatal and pediatric nursing. Jennifer Gilmore recently earned her master’s degree in architecture at the Ohio State University. Wendy Howell ’95 is lead organizer at SEIU-UHW in Oakland, California. Emily Hazelton ’94 was recently promoted to nurse case manager at People’s Health and Wellness Clinic in Montpelier, Vermont. Susanne Grabowski ’94 and Jim Poe ’94 welcomed daughter Neel in March 2013. Margaret Dunlap ’95 was intimately involved in the Emmy-winning Lizzie Bennet Diaries. Margaret served as co-executive producer, consulting producer, writer, and director on the series that just won the Creative Arts Emmy for Original Interactive Program. David Epstein ’95 was the featured reader at the March 2014 alumni book series event in Washington, DC. David read from his book Left, Right, Out: The History of Third Parties in America at the cultural hot spot Busboys and Poets. Meg Hutchinson ’95 released a new music video Only Just Begun. The song is part of her new album Beyond That, which is available now. The Broadway Buzz highlighted Daisy Eagan ’96 for her adult-themed, laugh-filled play Reindeer in its article “Shares a Santa Scandal.” Brian Conley ’96 created the media company Small World News in 2005 to help citizen journalists tell their stories. Now he’s launching the app StoryMaker that helps individual citizens tell their own stories without the interpretation of reporters. Lakita Edwards ’97 is working for the National Endowment for the Arts as a grants specialist for visual arts and media arts in K–12 programs. Lea Anne Kaiser ’97 is owner of Birch Body Care and has been helping people feel better through therapeutic massage for just over a year now. Find her at birchkingston.com. Ben Webster ’98 is teaching mathematics at the University of Virginia. Estelle Bajou ’98 is part of the first Broadway tour of the Tony-winning musical ONCE. She also appears in the film Chaplin of the Mountains, which was filmed in Kurdistan and had its U.S. release in February 2014. Dana Smith ’98 is now a graduate student in the master of arts applied theater program at CUNY School of Professional Studies. Gina Chelimsky ’99 is a librarian at JFK Middle School in Northampton, Massachusetts. Ronan Farrow ’99 can be seen weekdays on MSNBC as host of Ronan Farrow Daily, a show that discusses politics and news of the day. Gabrielle Gleeman ’99 and Elise Kent Bernanke ’00 organized a wonderful evening social for alumni in New York City last December. Over two dozen Rockers came by to catch up with old friends and see who else was around the Big Apple. Elise also served as emcee at the January 2014 Board of Overseers reception for new Simon’s Rock chairperson Stuart Breslow P’07 of Morgan Stanley. Sarah Parady ’99 cofounded her own law firm, Lowrey & Parady LLC, in Denver, Colorado. Both partners are employment specialists, representing employees, primarily in discrimination and wage matters. Sarah also works on civil rights cases.

00s

Stephanie Green ’00 and Justin Sorensen ’00 live in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and welcomed their baby Callum Simon in November 2013. Sameer Agrawal ’00 and wife Sally welcomed their son Felix Arthur in September 2013. Ally Shandell ’00 is now a trial attorney at the U.S. Department of Justice. Amanda Chwalek ’01 earned her MSW from the University of Southern California and is working as a school social worker for grades 6–9. Caroline Mayhew ’02, an attorney with Hobbs Straus Dean & Walker, visited campus to speak with students and families during Family Weekend 2013. Christopher Werter ’03 visited campus to take part in the first installment of the Alumni Parent Speaker Series. Chris spoke with 17 students who are interested in pursuing careers in medicine. Professor David Myers moderated the panel. Jake Rudolph ’04 is chief technology officer at BaseTrace in Raleigh, an environmental monitoring start-up. Saiya Miller ’05 was on the road last fall to promote her new book, Not Your Mother’s Meatloaf: A Sex Education Comic Book. Saiya and her coeditor, Liza Bley, have collected comics by different artists that explore sex and sexuality in chapters like “Firsts,” “Bodies,” “Health,” and “Age.” Brittany Aicher ’06 is studying for her MD at New York Medical College. Sophie Clark ’07 has started medical school at Washington State University Spokane. Applied Research in Acoustics LLC announced that Tom Meyer ’07 joined the company as a software engineer. Tom completed a dual degree in the 3-2 program, graduating with a BS in applied mathematics from Columbia University and a BA in mathematics and computer science from Simon’s Rock. Chloe Piazza ’08 is a deckhand at the New York Theatre Workshop and served as stagehand for the American premiere of Caryl Churchill’s Love and Information at the Minetta Lane Theatre. Ben Tobin ’08 works at Mount Holyoke College as a videographer and digital media content specialist. His latest film, The Journey of Alden Wakefield, won first prize at the Ashfield Film Festival. Zak Brekenridge ’09 is a student in the University of Chicago MA program in the humanities, studying nineteenth- and twentieth-century writing in English. He is also a Food Circle Program Assistant at the MGR Foundation. Lauren Payne-Riley ’09 has been working hard at City Lights Network in Philadelphia as an AmeriCorps VISTA Greening Initiatives coordinator. Mike Rogove ’09 is working as a technical consultant at Arcadia Solutions.

10s

David Ernst ’10 joined his brother and another partner at the service start-up urBin Storage as chief technology officer. With a handful of employees and help from friends, the company officially opened for business in May 2013. A stream of positive reviews from area residents is fueling growth. Desiree Joy Frias ’10 is president of Start Media Relations and writes the blog at Boogiedowner.net. She is a student in the Baruch School of Public Affairs and serves on Bronx Community Board 4.
As a professor of computer science at the University of California at Berkeley,Scott Shenker knows a thing or two about academic institutions. And as the parent (with wife Mary Ruth Quinn, a pastoral counselor) of two Simon’s Rock alums, Jacob ’09 and Noah ’11, he also knows a thing or two about Simon’s Rock – so much, in fact, that he enthusiastically joined the Board of Overseers last July.

“Sam challenged Jacob intellectually in a way he had never been challenged before,” Scott says. Today, Jacob is a senior at the California Institute of Technology.

As for Noah, Scott says Simon’s Rock gave his younger son “an education that was broader and deeper than he could get in any high school, and exposed him to political philosophy, a subject that continues to fascinate him. He loved his time at the school, and his courses with Brian [Wynne], Mike [Bergmann], Sam [Ruhmkorff] and Asma [Abbas] were particular high points.” Noah earned his associate’s degree at the Rock and now is a freshman at the University of Chicago.

Scott’s professional accomplishments (which include an honorary doctorate from the University of Chicago, election to the National Academy of Engineering, and founding a successful networking startup) make clear that he has found his own passions as well. He adds, however, that success hasn’t always come easily.

“I’ve fallen flat on my face professionally many, many times,” he says. “That’s why I challenge my students not to fear failure, but to find something hard and important and to fully devote their energies to that cause. Once you do that, the distinction between failure and success is largely irrelevant.”

Scott was asked how he unwinds after a hard day in the classroom and the research lab.

“I don’t,” he said, then paused. “Well, actually, I’m now taking table tennis lessons. I am the world’s worst table tennis player, an utter neophyte who plays in a room filled with five-year-olds who could kick my butt. But in spite of the pain and humiliation, I love it. For the first time in my life, I understand the allure of masochism.”

Nina Perales ’82, Nationally-Recognized Civil Rights Attorney to Speak at Commencement

Nina Perales, vice president of litigation for MALDEF, the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, will deliver the 45th commencement address on May 26, 2014. Best known for her work in voting rights, her litigation has included successful statewide redistricting cases in Texas and Arizona. “We’re delighted to welcome Nina back to Simon’s Rock,” says Provost Peter Laipson. “As an accomplished alumna who has devoted her career to issues of equity and equality, she represents the highest values of the College.”

Nina earned her associate of arts degree from Bard College at Simon’s Rock, a bachelor’s degree from Brown University, and a J.D. from Columbia University School of Law.
All alumni are invited to the

Annual Simon’s Rock Reunion

as we celebrate the Anniversary Classes


Reunion Committee
Cordelia Derhammer-Hill ‘86 • David Collins ‘99 • Meriweather Clark-Connors ’76 • Valerie Ferrier ’94 • Peggy Clark ‘80

Register to attend at simons-rock.edu/reunion
For more info contact Cathy Ingram at (413) 528-7266 or cingram@simons-rock.edu

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