IN THIS ISSUE

2 The Most Innovative Educational Path in America (Right Now)
4 Commencement 2015
5 Faculty Spotlight: Katie Boswell
6 Simon’s Rock News
7 Donor Spotlight: Zachary Julius ’85
8 Event Spotlight
9 Student Spotlight: Andre Santana ’13
10 Donor Report
14 Around Bard
15 Class Notes
16 Simon’s Rock Bookshelf
17 Alumni Spotlight: Alison Bechdel ’77

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Cover: Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock students, Aasha Cofield-Rowe (left) and Leila Gillings (right)
Dear Simon’s Rock family and friends,

I write this letter early November 1st, the first morning back on eastern standard time, and as I gaze into the rising sun, I am struck by the analogies between early college and the semiannual ritual of changing our clocks.

First, both daylight saving time and early college represent a change to the customary calendar—and in each case that change requires a bit more thought and effort to accomplish than maintaining the status quo. Second, the reasoning behind both early college and seasonal time changes, though uncomplicated, nevertheless takes time to explain to anyone unfamiliar with the idea. Finally, in both instances, the reward is illumination when people are most prepared to make use of it. Changing our clocks twice a year allows us to enjoy the benefit of light during the hours when we are most active. And Simon’s Rock, of course, offers talented adolescents intellectual challenge at the point when they are most eager for and ready to engage with new ideas.

Early college and daylight saving time even share a surprisingly similar history, marked in both cases by a complicated relationship with the regulation of American life. From the colonial era through the early twentieth-century, college readiness, rather than a prescribed number of years in secondary school, dictated the decision to matriculate. But the standardization of K-12 education defined entry into college before the end of 12th grade as “early”—and therefore unusual. Similarly, daylight saving time only became controversial after time zones were standardized in 1883. Prior to the late nineteenth-century, time, like schooling, was a matter of local convenience. In fact, it was only in 1966—coincidentally, the year that Simon’s Rock was founded—that the Uniform Time Act decreed daylight savings time as a national practice.

In the coming years, early college may well enjoy the status that daylight saving time does now, as a minor deviation from the ordinary calendar whose benefits fully repay any inconvenience. Thanks in part to Simon’s Rock and the Bard High School Early Colleges it inspired, the concept of early college is gaining both recognition and popularity.

At Simon’s Rock, the addition of Bard Academy (described in these pages) is an important step in that process. The Academy allows us to forge the ideal two-year high school program, one created and taught by the same faculty with whom students will study when they enter the College. Moreover, it allows us to introduce the prospect of early college, and of Simon’s Rock, to students at a natural point of transition in American education when they are most open to new possibilities.

We look forward to the day when early college becomes as common a part of American life as daylight saving time and we ask your help in making that vision a reality. A personal referral is the most compelling form of recruitment, and the way that so many students whose lives are transformed by Simon’s Rock find their way here. If you know someone who ought to be a Rocker, please tell them and tell us. We look forward to meeting them—and adding their lights to our own.

Peter Laipson
Provost and Vice President
The Most Innovative Educational Path in America (Right Now)

Hannah Barth, one of the 22 members of the inaugural class of Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock, marvels at how the Academy has pushed her far beyond her comfort zone—into a whole new zone of comfort: “I was like: I can’t do this, it’s way too hard! Because in all reality, it is hard. But then I realized, wait—I actually can do this.”

In a way, Hannah might have been speaking for the entire Simon’s Rock community, for whom the announcement of the new Academy program sparked widespread dialogue and reassessment across campus, even as it pushed Simon’s Rock to new levels of institutional excellence.

Academy Dean Ian Bickford, himself a Rocker alum ’95, embraces this characteristically “rockerish” response to institutional evolution, saying, “I think what Bard Academy reflects, and what Simon’s Rock has always been about, is complicating what college is, and not insisting on a new ideological clarity.”

For Bickford, constant dialogue and reassessment is critical to keeping educational institutions fresh, innovative, and responsive to changing student and societal needs. Not surprisingly, given its philosophical DNA, Simon’s Rock has risen to the challenge. “It’s been exciting to see the students and faculty regroup around the idea that organizes us in the first place,” he says. “And in exactly the best way: with skepticism, and critical awareness. Nobody’s approached the Bard Academy idea with complacent acceptance.”

Bard College at Simon’s Rock has a unique 50-year history of bringing the benefits of a serious, wide-ranging liberal arts college education to younger students. With the introduction of Bard Academy, for the first time on the Simon’s Rock campus, 9th and 10th graders can pursue an intensive two-year high school curriculum specially designed to prepare them to enter college at Simon’s Rock after the second year. This is the same path offered by the successful Bard High School Early College (abbreviated BHSEC)—pronounced BEE-SEC—programs in the New York City public school system, and elsewhere—programs that were founded in 2001 by Simon’s Rock faculty following a directive from Bard College (and Simon’s Rock) President Leon Botstein.

The pioneering BHSEC programs leveraged much of Simon’s Rock’s experience and expertise in teaching younger students, and Simon’s Rock continues its close involvement in the Bard Early College Network through the exchange of faculty and administrators (e.g., Bard Academy Dean Bickford taught in the Queens-based BHSEC program, and Newark...
Bard Early College Network continues to expand, with newer programs in Cleveland, Baltimore, Newark, and New Orleans, it has begun to accrue all the strengths and advantages of a true network, sharing talent, resources, and a growing body of unique insights on the practice of engaging younger students in a serious academic curriculum. In a way, the opening of the Bard Academy program marks the return of an idea originally born at Simon’s Rock, bringing the cycle of innovation full circle.

Bickford is not shy in his own assessment of the new program, both as an alternative to the increasingly stultifying conventional high school environment and as an enhancement to Simon’s Rock. “I think,” he says, “that an institution that invites a student in at the 9th grade point, and promises to carry that student all the way through to the end of college, is offering what is probably the most interesting educational innovation going in America right now.”

For Simon’s Rock Provost Peter Laipson, this kind of integrated six-year educational model—a contiguous three-part program running from the beginning of high school, through the lower college AA degree, to the awarding of the BA—forms a much-needed bridge across the often treacherous chasm between secondary and higher education. And that bridge serves both faculty and students. For faculty, says Laipson, “it acts as a kind of refresher on our own professional practice,” giving college professors a welcome opportunity for pedagogical self-examination. In turn, 9th and 10th graders have the opportunity to study with “college faculty who are expert in working with younger students. We’re bringing people not only with pedagogical mastery but also with deep content knowledge in their fields into the 9th and 10th grade. Because we believe that kind of depth is important not just for the early college but also for the high school program.”

Laipson mentions there were many more strong applications for the inaugural Academy class than anticipated, and the program, initially geared to handle 16 students, was forced to turn away some worthy candidates. As Laipson puts it with a smile, “This suggests that the proposition is attractive.”

A big part of that attraction is simply the unparalleled quality of the Academy program itself, and the myriad opportunities it offers. Says Laipson, “If you’re a smart kid out there you get to come here”—he gestures towards the window, indicating the natural beauty of the campus on a fall afternoon. “You have all the intimacy of a relatively small program, with all the resources of a much larger campus. You have the intellectual depth of a college. And you have the opportunity to decide after four years whether this remains the right place for you. You can stay and get your BA here, maybe complementing it with a semester or a year abroad. Or you can leave with an AA degree that provides some very competitive transfer opportunities. It is a program that creates lots of options for high school students and their families.”

Now that the program is under way, students like Hannah, seem to be flourishing—happy, engaged, and maybe even slightly relieved to be part of a learning community where everyone takes genuine pleasure in academic and creative pursuits. Steven Nguyen, from the Bay Area, finds the depth and passion of his new teachers to be striking: “You can tell how much they love their subjects—it radiates off of them. It makes you want to learn more, because they know so much.” And his classmates? “They’re all listening and actually consider themselves participants in something larger than themselves. You can literally see the passion in their eyes. And for me, it’s like: Wow. I found my place.”

Dakota Paul, who grew up in the Bronx, tells a story about an Academy teacher who refused to let him coast to an easy A, and persuaded him to choose a more difficult topic for a paper on The Odyssey. Dakota smiles broadly as he tells me, “I got my first B+ on a paper!” It’s an odd thing to be so happy about, getting a lower grade than one is accustomed to. But Dakota explains, “It felt good, because I finally received some feedback as to how I was doing. This was the first time someone said, ‘This is crappy. Do it again.’ I really wanted that!”

The excitement is palpable, and it has reenergized the entire Simon’s Rock campus. Says Bickford, “We’re in this enviable position of having a really interesting new model, which is also a path to thriving enrollment, pedagogical innovation, and ongoing invention into the future. That’s a really nice place to stand.”

While schools such as Bard Academy currently occupy only a small specialty niche in the contemporary educational landscape, it seems clear that the niche is growing steadily, and becoming both more familiar and more appealing to a wider and more diverse population. Leading the way is the ever-expanding Bard Early College Network, including the BHSECs, with Simon’s Rock as the network’s cornerstone and inspirational engine. Bickford believes that demand for these kinds of programs will continue to rise—something that can only be good news for Simon’s Rock. “I think this model is for more people than it’s currently available to,” says Bickford, sipping his coffee with a Cheshire-cat smile, as if there’s more to the thought. “A lot more.”

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“... an institution that invites a student in at the 9th grade point, and promises to carry that student all the way through to the end of college, is offering what is probably the most interesting educational innovation going in America right now.”

—Academy Dean Ian Bickford
Meet the Parents!

Rebecca Selleck and Brian Barth ’77 are the proud parents of Hannah Barth, one of the trailblazers of Bard Academy’s inaugural class.

Until enrolling in the Academy, Hannah attended public schools. Despite earning high honors, Hannah wasn’t challenged through her last four years. Her social life, in contrast, was blooming. But the family realized that to prepare Hannah for success in college, and beyond, she needed an intellectually stimulating program—one that emphasized critical thinking and pushed her in the best possible ways. For the Barth’s, founders of the tech company Entrepid in nearby Lee, Massachusetts, that program was Bard Academy.

Rebecca had reservations about exposing her 14-year-old daughter to a college campus, but after comparing other schools to the Academy’s curriculum, structure, level of supervision, and academic access, the decision became easier. Rebecca recently said, “They’ve done a really good job of making sure that the kids are not spending a ton of time with the college students, that they’re really in classes by themselves, that they’ve got their own dorm. Simon’s Rock is handling it very well . . . I’ve been very happy with that.”

A month into the first semester, Brian’s perspective was equally positive: “The kids are getting enough support [from each other and the Academy] that they don’t feel overwhelmed.” Brian continued, “So far, what I’ve seen has been very impressive. I think a lot of that is due to Ian’s [Bickford] leadership. I’m very impressed with his ability to conceptualize things and actually execute on the conceptualization, a true Rocker.” As an alumnus and longtime advocate of Simon’s Rock, Brian had confidence that the Academy would offer his highly motivated daughter a distinctive opportunity to explore her potential in the company of a nurturing and dedicated faculty. “I still regard it as probably the one thing that made me successful after college,” he says.

Like other students in her class, Hannah’s invested in helping shape the future of the Academy, and feels validated that the community take her thoughts and ideas seriously. Academically, it’s paying off. Once intimidated by the idea of learning from professors, Hannah’s tackling projects she didn’t think possible—like interpreting The Odyssey—and reveling in the process of expressing her newly formed observations.

Before it’s lights out back at the Barth’s, Hannah spends school nights in the Study Hall—which doubles as the social in-spot for Academy students—until 9:45 p.m. It gives Hannah—who resides off-campus—and her fellow iconoclasts a chance to end their day with lighthearted banter and camaraderie—a panacea to the Academy’s formidable workload. Rebecca said, “I think the fact that they’re all finding their way together is really amazing to watch.” For the Barth’s, it confirms what they’ve known all along: Hannah’s always had the building blocks to excel. She just needed a dynamic, opportunity-rich landscape to thrive.

Professor Peter Filkins and daughter Isabel Filkins ’11

Valerie Fanarjian receiving the Ruth B. Ide “Good Sport” Award from Demi DeRiggs ’11 and Julian Garcia-Kwan ’11

BA Commencement Class Speakers; Marisa Benitez ’11 and Zara Anwarzai ’11

Provost Peter Laipsen, Commencement Speaker

Henry Alford ’80, and President Leon Botstein
Katie’s Calling

Imagining professor Katie Boswell as a traveling salesperson is...well...just wrong. But according to a career aptitude test she completed in high school, “traveling salesperson” was the top contender. Fortunately, for all, “anthropologist”—tucked deeper into the results queue—resonated with Katie. The occupation aligned with her passion for travel, meeting people, and intellectual curiosity. After taking her first anthropology class at Drew University, she was hooked. The field’s cross-disciplinary expansiveness, which includes storytelling, history, philosophy, art, and more, captivated Katie and informed her coursework.

After completing her undergraduate work and PhD, Katie’s search for a liberal arts teaching post led her to Simon’s Rock in 2008. After the daylong interview, Katie knew teaching at Simon’s Rock would be a challenging and rewarding experience.

Last year, at the introduction of Bard Academy at Simon’s Rock, Katie chose to teach the inaugural class. “The newness and energy surrounding the Academy piqued my interest,” she says. “Both the College and the Academy curriculum share principles that are fundamental to the institution.”

She describes the Academy curriculum as “academic rigor, an emphasis on writing clearly, discussion-based classrooms, accountability, community amongst peers and faculty, and intellectual curiosity. Learning as FUN.”

The social studies course, Global Slavery, she teaches at the Academy, is a perfect example. It’s a class that explores slavery from an historic and contemporary perspective. What Katie finds interesting about the course is “the way it further complicates an already complex institution and encourages messy, hard, and yet wonderful conversations in the classroom.”

“Simon’s Rock helps to fill a gap in these new students’ academic or social life in some way. It appears to be the same for many Academy students, too,” she continues. “We are a different place for those who are different in all the right and most interesting ways.”

For students hoping to follow in her footsteps, Katie suggests, “Take advantage of opportunities that only college provides, like travel and the time to explore interests widely, and do difficult things because there are lessons to be learned from hard work and possible failure.”

During break, you might find Katie in a number of interesting places: the Kilpatrick pool perfecting her butterfly stroke for “Pacemakers,” Simon’s Rock’s Masters Swim Team; at the airport returning from a research project in West Africa; or sitting at a sidewalk café in Europe, taking it all in. On that subject, Katie sums it up best, “Maintaining an interest in anthropology entails nothing more than living in and being awake to the world around me.”
Welcome New Faculty and Staff

Artist Anastasia Samoylova, Faculty in the Arts, specializes in photography and related media. Her work investigates the medium of photography in the context of contemporary visual culture. Her current project, Landscape Sublime, explores the connection between the natural environment and its representation through photography. Anastasia has an MFA from Bradley University, and an MA from Russian State University of Humanities.

KellyAnne McGuire, Instructional Technology and Collection Development Librarian, comes to us from SUNY Ulster, where she worked closely with students and faculty around technology and taught information literacy courses. She received her master’s in library and information science at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign and is an alumna of Mt. Holyoke College, where she studied English and art history.

Anjali Sundaram, Faculty in the Arts, is a media artist and cinematographer. Before coming to Simon’s Rock, she taught film at the San Francisco Art Institute, San Francisco State University, and Montana State University. Using narrative, stop-motion animation, installation, and mock-documentary, Anjali explores culture, identity, and globalization in relation to memory, autobiography, imagined futures, and pseudoscience.

Kathleen Biddick, Visiting Faculty in History, has taught undergraduate and graduate level medieval history and critical theory at the University of Notre Dame and Temple University for three decades. As a visiting professor, Kathleen teaches her award-winning course, Global Slavery, at the Academy, and medieval Christian, Jewish, and Muslim relations at the College.

Bryant Morgan, Dean of Finance and Administration, Bryant possesses broad experience administering financial and operational functions in educational institutions. Principally in higher education, Bryant’s experience also extends to the independent and public school sectors. Beginning his career at Vassar College, for the past 15 years Bryant has held senior leadership positions within multiple institutions.

Maeve Dillon ’09, an alumna of Simon’s Rock and Bard College, joins the Admission team as an Admission Assistant. Maeve’s experience, technical savvy, and professionalism will be imperative as she oversees application processing and supports the overall needs of the Operations team.

Kirin Liquori Terni, Associate Director of Admission, brings ten years of Admission experience identifying, recruiting, admitting, yielding, and supporting international students. Kirin will also lend support, leadership, and guidance to the Admission team. Kirin’s previous experience includes admission roles at Union College and Columbia University.

Meet the New Student Life Team

Join us in welcoming the most recent additions to the Student Life team. Under the new direction of Ali Gonzalez, Director of Residence Life, six members joined the team for the 2015–2016 academic year—including Valencia Washington, Michelle Spaulding, Quintin Cross, Tori Bryant, Nick Clements, and Mairead Fogarty. The Student Life group is currently engaged in a self-study, which utilizes the ACUHO-I Standards and Ethical Principles for the purposes of adopting best practices and increasing proficiencies.

Simon’s Rock Launches New Website

The new Simon’s Rock website launched last July—the result of a year’s worth of research, strategic branding, content ideation, and web development. We hope you find the site a more dynamic reflection of the community, and a better representation of the Simon’s Rock mission. Know a rocker-in-the-making? Help put Simon’s Rock on the virtual map by sharing our new website www.simons-rock.edu.
New Members of the Board of Overseers

Andrea Barrica ’06—At 20, Andrea Barrica joined inDinero and helped the organization grow to over fifty employees and $2M in sales. Andrea is currently an entrepreneur-in-residence at 500 Startups in San Francisco, CA, where she coaches startups on pitches, storytelling, and sales. Andrea, an alumna of Simon’s Rock, earned her AA in linguistics and law, politics and society in 2008. She received her BA in linguistics from UC Berkeley, and also studied at Nanjing Normal University.

Rodney Christopher ’86—Rodney Christopher is a director on the capital deployment team at the F.B. Heron Foundation, where he contributes to Heron’s efforts to invest 100% of its endowment to help nonprofits achieve greater impact while building and maintaining a healthy enterprise. Rodney earned his BA (summa cum laude) in social sciences from Simon’s Rock. He also holds an MS in urban policy analysis and management from The New School. In 2006, BCSR established a scholarship fund in Rodney’s name to help make study abroad programs more affordable to students.

Greg Greifeld ’05—Greg Greifeld began his career at J.P. Morgan, working briefly in Equity Capital Markets before rotating into the Technology, Media & Telecom Investment Banking Group. Greg has since been with Highbridge Principal Strategies, the credit-focused division of Highbridge Capital Management. Greg is an alumnus of Simon’s Rock’s class of 2005 and of Bard College’s class of 2009.

Donald Heller P’14—Donald Heller is the dean of the College of Education at Michigan State University, and a professor of higher adult and lifelong education. Dr. Heller’s research has been published in many scholarly journals—including the Journal of Higher Education, Review of Higher Education, Educational Policy, and The Journal of Student Financial Aid. Donald is the father of Simon’s Rock student Lena Isabelle Heller ’14.

Thomas G. Rafferty P’11—After graduating from Harvard Law School in 1988, Thomas G. Rafferty joined Cravath, Swaine & Moore LLP, where he’s been a partner since 1994. Tom has represented the firm’s clients in a number of high profile cases. Tom’s practice includes bench and jury trials as well as appellate work. Tom and his wife, Dian Pickoff, are the parents of Arden Pickoff-Rafferty ’11—who graduated from Simon’s Rock with a BA in 2015.

CTY Simon’s Rock Scholarship

Do you know a Center for Talented Youth (CTY) alum who is also a born Rocker? Nominate them for the CTY Simon’s Rock Scholarship. This scholarship is awarded to students who have completed two CTY residential summer courses after the completion of grade nine or ten, or two CTY online courses in grade nine, ten, or eleven. To be eligible, students must have earned a minimum of a B in the courses, and must submit all CTY transcripts and comments at the time of application. Nominate someone at simons-rock.edu/referrals.

Zachary Julius ’85 Talks Scholarships and Annual Gifts

We recently caught up with alum Zachary Julius ’85, chief executive officer of Professional Disposables International, to talk about his gifts to the Simon’s Rock Annual Fund Scholars Program, the rewards of philanthropy, and his time at the Rock.

Over the last three decades, Zachary transformed his fourth-generation family-owned business into one of the leading disposable towelettes companies on the map. Quick to credit others, he revealed two catalysts that provided the groundwork for his success—a remarkable family legacy and his experiences at Simon’s Rock.

In discussions around the latter, he recognized the College community for inspiring and shaping his ideas around philanthropy, and explained why he’s giving back. “As an alum, I can tell you that, for so many of us, our experience was life-changing . . . and more than an education. I wanted to help make sure that others who could benefit from the College were able to.”

Good to his word, Zachary is challenging alums to donate to the Annual Fund Scholars Program. In 2015, he’s matching donations (up to $70,000) to the Leslie Sander Scholarship Fund.

As for his involvement, Zachary says it best, “Attending Simon’s Rock made me a better human being.” He names several role models from the Rock: David Barg, head of Advancement and Zachary’s advisor; taught him important lessons about giving back. Emily Fisher, the long-time board chair opened his eyes to the deep impact of focused giving. And in Leslie Sander ’83, he found a true friend and one of the most selfless individuals he ever encountered. “Watching her interact with other students and faculty, you could see the way she made people all around her better. I believe she meaningfully touched more people in her 22 years than 99% of people do in their lifetime,” recalled Zachary. “I have chosen to support the Leslie Sander Scholarship to honor her legacy and I encourage others to join me in supporting scholarships at Simon’s Rock.”

Each time a Simon’s Rock alumnus gives to the Annual Fund Scholars Program, Zachary will make a corresponding gift to the Leslie Sander Scholarship. “I want to make sure that other bright adolescents who don’t quite fit in the mainstream, whether they are under- or overachieving in high school, can attend this amazing place,” he said. “Simon’s Rock is so much more than just world-class academics, it is a place where students can truly find themselves, realize their potential, and have a meaningful impact in the world.”

www.simons-rock.edu
**EVENT SPOTLIGHT**

Jon Lothrop ’82, P’13 and Katy Miller ’84, P’13. Jon is proudly wearing his vintage Reunion t-shirt!

Reunion 2015 Awards Brunch honored Meriweather Clark-Connors ’76 seated here next to Doug Seidel ’78 Back row: Maggie Leonard ’78, David Byrd ’78, Jenny Browdy ’78 and Peggy Clark ’80

Matt Strassler ’81, Jody Emmer ’86, Jennifer Rivers-Cole ’86 and her children enjoy the Farewell Awards Brunch at Reunion ’15

Meg Hutchinson ’95 speaks after her film *Pack Up Your Sorrow* premieres at Simon’s Rock in September

Professors Chris Coggins and Maryann Tebben at the Center for Food Studies Cider Tasting and Apple Press demo at Family Weekend

Hilana Siegal ’97 (left), Harrison Gregg ’11 (right), and Hillary (far right) shared their experiences on the Family Weekend Alumni Career Panel

Hillary Saviello ’09, the alumna speaker at Honors Convocation on October 31st

Mira Tesla ’14 and Sophia Constantine ’14 and their families enjoying Blodgett lawn during Family Weekend

Anne O’Dwyer, Dean of Academic Affairs and Professor Ben Harris flank Ethan Ackelsberg ’12, Nathan Sadowsky ’12 and parent at the Senior Thesis Poster Display Reception at Family Weekend
Beyond All Expectation: Andre Santana ’13

Nine words stretched across a Simon’s Rock banner at a Seattle college fair—You could start college after 10th or 11th grade—jumped out at 9th grader Andre Santana. Intrigued by the possibility of shaving one or two years off high school, but a bit skeptical of the promise, Andre began a yearlong correspondence with Admission before deciding to attend. In 2013, Andre headed 3,000 miles east to become a Rocker.

The Simon’s Rock banner was the first of many signs—literally—that raised the ceiling of expectation Andre had about his academic future. When he thinks back to the 9th grade version of himself, Andre confided, “Before I left high school, the highest degree that interested me was an associate of arts. I didn’t see myself going very far beyond undergraduate studies if I finished them at all.”

But life had other plans. As it turned out, Andre’s AA graduation ceremony signaled the beginning of his academic career. What’s more, the milestone was especially poignant because he had the honor of giving his class speech, and sharing the moment with his family. Now, with a BA degree just months within reach, and a big-picture plan that includes a PhD and academia, Andre points out that, if it weren’t for Simon’s Rock, he never would have thought these options were possible. “Every couple of months, I stop and look around, and tally up all the things I’m doing and the opportunities that have been opened up to me. And I think to myself, ‘Wow, I would have only just graduated high school right now.’ Andre credits the strong community at Simon’s Rock, and Anne O’Dwyer and Eden-Renée Hayes, specifically, for helping direct his passion for psychology into formidable opportunities, and providing friendship and support within the classroom and beyond.

Last summer, Andre had the opportunity to intern as a teacher’s assistant/tutor in an Introductory Psychology course at Bard High School Early College Newark (BHSEC). “Not only did I learn about teaching, I was also able to study the Simon’s Rock/BHSEC connection, and how the early college pedagogy was adapted for these models,” Andre said.

When asked what thoughts he’d share with the incoming freshman class, Andre says, “If you’re looking for a challenging education—and you’ll get it here—there will be times when you’re genuinely stumped, frustrated, and sometimes you’ll blatantly fail! And that’s okay. Without my mistakes, I wouldn’t have grown as much as I have.”

Spend a little time with Andre and you’ll get the sense that he takes nothing for granted. From his volunteer performances at Fairview Commons—a nearby nursing home—to hitting the lab to study correlations between personality type and academic decisions, he’s as excited about what’s directly in front of him—which at the moment happens to be a group project on bullying among elementary schoolchildren—as what lies ahead.

Ten years from now, Andre hopes to be a professor, teaching around the country, building on the experiences he’s had here. “Eventually, I might be interested in returning to teach at the Rock and settling in the Berkshires.”
During fiscal year 2015, Simon’s Rock supporters donated $2,864,904 in new gifts and pledges. Many hearts were involved in this remarkable achievement. Thousands of stories are represented in these millions of dollars: Giving Tuesday—the holiday season counterpart to Black Friday and Cyber Monday—is quickly gaining steam. In 2014, the number of Giving Tuesday contributors to Simon’s Rock doubled compared to 2013, and the collective total of gifts quadrupled, launching Simon’s Rock toward a calendar-year-end fundraising total of $1.3 million.

Overall alumni contributions continued to increase as well. Over the course of the entire year, alumni contributions were 25% higher than the previous year. Giving by parents at-large increased by 8%, and 64 faculty and staff members gave a gift to Simon’s Rock during fiscal year 2015.

A remarkable number of donors will see their names in the following report in recognition of their first-ever contribution to Simon’s Rock: 186. This is a 46% increase from the previous year and an exciting bellwether for the future of the College.

As more donors continue to utilize automatic monthly and quarterly giving, the average number of gifts per donor is on the rise, too. Alumni donors are now averaging two gifts per year to The Early College.

An energized Board of Overseers, representative of the Simon’s Rock community, has also been key to recent success. Of the current 17 regular members of the Board of Overseers, nine began their service in 2013, and over 50% of the entire group is composed of alumni. This group, along with the Alumni and Parent Leadership Councils, have donated generously to the enrichment of the College, the founding of the Academy, and the enhancement of Simon’s Rock recruitment and marketing instruments—including a 21st century website that incorporates alumna-created video of Simon’s Rock students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and marketing instruments—including a 21st century website that incorporates alumna-created video of Simon’s Rock students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents, and friends telling the unique story of our students to the world.

Most importantly, your gifts enable students who belong at Simon’s Rock to be transfigured by an educational experience that was built specifically for them. Uniquely rewarding lives, abiding friendships, and great accomplishments are made possible by your donations.

Thank you for your extraordinary support and for making Simon’s Rock all it can be. We can’t do it without you. If you have not been to campus in a while—or even if you have recently visited—please come back to witness your gifts at work, changing lives forever, for the better.

In the following report, Bard College at Simon’s Rock gratefully acknowledges the alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, and students who made a gift to Simon’s Rock during the 2015 fiscal year, which began on July 1, 2014 and ended on June 30, 2015.

**KEY:**
- The Sapling Society identifies those loyal donors who have given consecutively in the previous five or more years.
- Member of the Board of Overseers or an overseer-affiliated foundation
- Member of the Alumni Leadership Council
- Member of the Parent Leadership Council
- Supporter of the Berkshire Festival of Women Writers
Jeffrey Resnick ‘80
In honor of Randy Sharp ‘79
and in memory of Stan Jay
Elizabeth Richardson
Linda and Mike Rivkin P’10
Matthew and Jennifer Rowland P’14
Neal Saccon ‘79 and
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The Santa Catalina Fund for Higher Education of
The San Diego Foundation
Schwab Fund for Charitable Giving
Ally Shandell ‘00
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
David and Patricia Sharpe
In honor of Wendy E. Fisher and
in memory of Wendy Shifrin
Adam Shostack ‘88 and
Teresa Barcus
Cindy J. Speaker ‘81
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Judith Gubiner Terry ‘66 and
Patrick Terry
John ‘76 and Sonya Thompson
John and Narcissa Titman
In honor of Emily H. Fisher’s birthday.
Chris and Margaret Veno P’14
In memory of Shane Veno ‘14
Arthur Watson ‘98
Charles A. Webb, III ‘82 and
Carol Webb
Nora & Robert Williams P’95 and
Jennifer Cowher Williams and Kella Williams
In memory of Felder Williams ‘95, on his birthday.
Jacqueline A. Wilson P’83
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Henry Alford ‘80
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Scott S. Blake ‘88 and
Liz Rettenmaier
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In memory of Sheila King ‘71
Lizz Cannon ‘90
In memory of Galen Gibson and
Nacufan Saez
Megan Case ‘92
Joan and Stanley Chang P’13
In honor of Mila Maignama
Lucy P. Clark ‘66
Brian Conley ‘96, Ewyn Rieke and
Layla Conley
Stephanie and John Crossman P’09
Sherry L. DeCelle
Joan DePilato
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Dan Dinkin ‘80 and
Meg Bahlike Dinkin ‘82 P’10
Scarlet LaRue Ether and
Harvey Ether P’06
Andrew Falko ‘95
Deirdre M. Farley ‘69
Laura and Bill Glass P’01
Arla Gould ‘80 and
Richard Snyder
Kaye and Bob Graves
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Nancy S. Harbin P’97
Ed Herrington, Inc.
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Christine Hobbie and
Neil Brandier
Rebecca Hughson Leise ‘71
John ‘70 and Ann Jacobs
Dr. Andrew Toulsson Jeffress ‘86
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In memory of Taylor ‘09, Mia ‘10 and
Eliot ‘12 Kang
Susan ‘79 and Alan Klimek
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Murray Lebowitz
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Maggie Leonard ‘78 and
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Colleen and James Patell P’03
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City of Pittsfield
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Kathleen Corn ‘11
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Ann Reid ‘75
In memory of Martin Naumann
and Natalie Harper
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upon his graduation, and to all the excellent faculty members
that encouraged and enriched
Jake’s educational experience during his time at Bard College
at Simon’s Rock
Maria Sedova ‘02
Robert and Andrea Solomon P’08
Dr. Judith Strong and
Dr. Paul Bowen P’02
In honor of Alex Bowen ‘02
Mary Thompson and
Christopher Campbell P’08
Alison F. Till ‘94
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In honor of John B. Weinstein
Baird and Joan Whittlock P’72
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Wilbur Williams, Jr. and
Gail Lew-Williams P’13
Nancy Yanooshak and
Sandra Smith
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
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in memory of Wendy Shifrin
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Gabriel Bach ‘93 and
Susanne Cole
Maakea Ballart ‘13
Benny and Barbara Barak P’04
Cathy Belfer ‘88
Jochai Ben-Avie ‘06
Mike Bergman
In memory of Peter Cocks
Paul Bergstedt ‘13
Robert Bernbach ‘81
Andrew Blane and
Jaehn Rehnstrom P’14
Steve Bohrer
Shirley and Martin Bresler
Bob and Karyn ‘82
(Ritchie) Brundige
Mary Blaine Campbell ‘71
Kyle Chao ‘06
Alexandra Chisholm ‘79
Peter and Joan Cocks
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Shevah Faber
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Kristina Fliegel ‘90
In honor of Ba Win
Susan D. Franck ‘89
Hilllary Gardner ‘02
Robert and Joy Gess P’10
Adam Gambal ‘01
The Groebel Family
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Lou Davis P’99
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in memory of Natalie Harper
Mary Jo Hutchison P’88 and
Emmette R. Hutchins ‘98
Heather Godwin Jones ‘81
In memory of Lorin A. Ewellworth
Kale Notestine Kasdor ‘93 and
Jason F. Kasdor
Collin and Gloria Kei P’13
In honor of Spencer Kee ‘13
Michael Lawrence ‘95
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Karen and John Loeser P’02
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Provost Circle celebrates supporters who make a gift between
$1,000 and $4,999 in a given year. Provost Circle members receive a
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In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Katherine Richard P’13
Jaceque Pierce
Emily Rechnitz and John Paladino
Amanda Reiner Rosenberg ‘82 and
Bill Hodges
In memory of Kevin M Hodges
and Frederick Reynolds ‘82
Carl Richards ‘93 and
Robert Richards ‘80
Giselle Rose-Burroughs
Ron Rostow ‘77
Baruc ‘86 and Laura Saez
Lance Salins ‘00
Jennifer Schobler ‘93
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Patricia M. and H. William Smith, Jr.
Foundation
Sara Smollket ‘96 and
Karl Krueger ‘94
Elizabeth St. John Villard P’01
Maryann Telfen
In honor of Gabriel Astaf on
his retirement and in memory of
Wendy Shifrin
San L. Tunstall ‘84
Rashad Ullah ‘95
In memory of Dr. Abul Hasnat
Jaffar Ullah
Catherine Kerkowood
Caitlin Hazen von Graf ‘90
In honor of the class of ‘90 and
in memory of Wendy Shifrin
Abbie von Schlegell
Town of Washington
Harriet Westtone
Janalynn Wong P’09
Robert Young ‘96
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In memory of Natalie Harper
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Larry and Elaine Lynworth P ’80
In memory of
Marianne Lynworth
Jodie Dejo Masiestoff ’00
Daniel J. Malakoff ’96
Michael Malefakis and
Kathleen Morgan P ’14
Tanya Marcuse ’81 and
James Romm
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Peter L. Marulis P ’82
Colleen Marshall ’07
In honor of being employed!
Lawrence Masland and
Pamela Talbot
Bryan and Irene Mason P ’14
Maya Mathies ’03
Brenda Mathiesen ’03
Maryanne Mathison P ’14
Nang Haing Tin Maung ’01
Jack and Betsy Mayhew P ’02
In honor of Caroline Mayhew ’02 and
Daniel Johnson ’02
Daphne Maziz ’02
Arthur A. McClelland ’97
Caro Crowley ’91 and
Arthur A. McClelland ’97
Daphne Maziz ’02
Michael and Sue Nelson P ’02
In honor of
Bernie Rodgers
In honor of Professor
Beverly and Peter Munsing P ’04
Ellen Meeropol
H Kalie McGuirl ’14
Michael Nash ’01
Nang Hlaing Tin Maung ’01
Maryanne Mattson P ’14
In memory of Greg Rhoades
Ranga and Suku Palaniswamy P ′96
Kate Owen ’97
Mark Lazer and Mary Spalding
Diane Rhoades-Warner
Sandy and Norman Reisman
John and Lynn Rathgeber P ’09
Howard and Ellen Pritham P ’86
Carly White Price ’91
In honor of Avery Maev ’10
Allison Moore P ’10
In honor of Avery Maev ’10
Allison Moore P ’10
In memory of Lauren Webster ’02
Sharon Webster P ’02
Sierra Warren ’12
Barbara Welshberg
Jared Weiss ’10
David and Sandra Welsh P ’98
Town of West Stockbridge
Frances Whiteless ’04
Polly Whitaker ’71
Michael Xu ’08
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Alice and Dr. John Myers
Bernie Rodgers
In honor of Professor
Beverly and Peter Munsing P ’04
In memory of Professor
Beverly and Peter Munsing P ’04
Katharine Shanahan Kennedy
Dennis Norman and
Carol Taylor P ’02
Helene Tegner and Paul Ciancanelli P ’14
In honor of Rachel Tegner ’83
Rachel Tegner ’80
In memory of Bernard Tegner
Timpane Construction, Inc.
Bill Tipper ’73
Rachel Tobał ’92
Towers Watson
Marshall Tracht and
Joel Brenner P ’13
Craig and Sue Trouwborst P ’91
Kate Tuggey P ’02
In honor of Elizabeth Tuggey Lynch ’02
Elizabeth Tuggey Lynch ’02 and
Ryan Lynch
In honor of Anne Uglum
United Technologies
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Louise Vasilakos and
Daniel Gouë P ’02
Anastasia Vassouli ’14
Tracy Verrier ’04
Kate St. John Villard-Howe ’01
Marvin Wasserman and
Barbara von Bulow ’02
Hannelore Voness
Norah Walsh
Sierra Warren ’12
Sharon Webster P ’02
In memory of Lauren Webster ’02
Francine Weinfarg ’13
Barbara Welshberg
Jared Weiss ’10
David and Sandra Welsh P ’98
Town of West Stockbridge
Frances Whiteless ’04
Polly Whitaker ’71
Michael Xu ’08
In memory of Wendy Shifrin
Jacqueline Wilder
Jay and Hermine Williams P ’84
Samantha Wilson ’13
Zaw Win ’92
Laurie Winfrey
Dick Trewin ’89
Patricia Wolf P ’76
David and Robin Wood P ’92
In honor of the Simon’s Rock faculty.
Your efforts give us
hope for the future, Thank you!
Sarah Wright ’80
In honor of Morteweather
Clark-Connors ’76
Michael Xu ’08
Quing Yee P ’94
Kenneth G. Young ’90
Bettlinn Young-Taft
Rob Zeeber
Jeff and Jeremy ’08
In honor of Sarah, Zachary and
Zoe Klein
Barbara Zheutlin
Kenneth Zimmerman and
Jacqueline Baillargeon P13
Gifts In Kind
Karen Anderson and Cliff Weiss
Gabriel Asfar
Jeremy Brody de Hernandez ’78
P ’08
Mark Clifford ’74
Ted Colaron
Emmanuel and
Pauline ’06 Dongala P98 & ’01
Patty Dooley
Ethan Dufault
Caroline ’79 and
Brian ’73 Hopewell P08
Katharine Hapgood ’92
Murray Liebowitz
The Mount
Bernard F. Rodger, Jr.
Ken and Fran Rubenstein
In memory of Professor
Rubenstein
Sandra Smith and
Nancy Yanoshak
Judith and Ba Win P ’90, ’91 & ’92

The Betty Hall Legacy Society recognizes those who have chosen to leave a legacy to Simon’s Rock by planning a tax-saving gift or by making a life income gift to sustain the College. Did you know that you could support the future of Simon’s Rock while receiving fixed payments for life? Did you know that you can ensure the continuation of Simon’s Rock for generations to come without ever touching your bank account today? To share your plans and learn more about how we can help you achieve financial security and your philanthropic goals, please contact Jacqueline Pierce at j.pierce@simons-rock.edu or 413-528-7253.
Bard College Professor and Clemente Course Academic Director Marina van Zuylen Accepts the National Humanities Medal from President Obama at a White House ceremony September 10th.

Clemente Course in the Humanities Receives 2014 National Humanities Medal
President Obama awarded the 2014 National Humanities Medal to the Clemente Course in the Humanities. The award honors individuals and organizations whose work deepens the nation’s understanding of the human experience, broadening citizens’ engagement with history, literature, and cultural resources. Through a 20-year partnership with Bard College and other leading colleges, the Clemente Course offers a tuition-free, college-level course to low-income adults throughout the U.S.

U.S. News & World Report Ranks Bard #1 Most Innovative Liberal Arts College
In spring 2015, U.S. News distinguished Bard College in their Best Colleges ranking category for making promising changes on campus in terms of curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology, or facilities.

Bard Champions Federal Policy in Support of Public Early Colleges
In summer 2015, Bard helped organize two successful briefings in Washington, DC and on Bard’s Annandale campus to support The Go to High School, Go to College Act of 2015. The Act was sponsored by Senator Portman (R-OH), Senator Warner (D-VA), Representative Fudge (D-OH), and Representative Gibson (R-NY).

Stephen Tremaine, Vice President for Early Colleges, Bard College, says, “Bard is at the forefront of efforts to advance federal policies supportive of early college high schools. Bard’s goal is to help sustain and scale proven early college models, helping more students access, afford, and complete college.”

Bard Prison Initiative Making News
The Bard Prison Initiative (BPI) made news recently for winning the Richard Cornuelle Award for Social Entrepreneurship and a $1 million grant from the Ford Foundation. The two-year grant supports BPI’s groundbreaking work in higher education and provides an opportunity to expand and support core operations.

On September 18th, a group of BPI inmates in the Eastern New York Correctional Facility challenged Harvard University’s national championship-winning debate team—and won. Bard alumnus Max Kenner ’01, Executive Director of Bard College Prison Initiative, said, “Obviously it was exciting. We’ve done this a number of times . . . and we’ve done very well.”

Leon Botstein Leads a New Generation of Musicians
The Orchestra Now (TON), conducted by Dr. Leon Botstein, made its debut performance at Simon’s Rock in late September.

Founded in 2015 by Bard College, TON is a unique three-year graduate orchestral training program. Botstein, the music director, said, “The young musicians of TON are forward-thinking artists who intend to redefine what it means to be an orchestra. They will learn from a renowned faculty how to curate repertoire that engages concertgoers, sparks new ideas and attracts new audiences.” TON is supported by a grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

Seventh Bard High School Early College (BHSEC) Opens
Last August, BHSEC Baltimore welcomed its inaugural class of 165 ninth and 11th-graders—bringing the total number of students enrolled in Bard’s tuition-free early college high schools to over 2,000.

The partnership between Bard College and Baltimore City Public Schools, falls on the 15th Anniversary of BHSEC.
Class Notes

60s

The Class of ’66 will be the first class to celebrate their 50th Anniversary at Reunion Weekend to be held July 8-10, 2016. The fifth annual Made in the Berkshires Festival, curated by Hilary Somers Deely ’68, took place October 23-25 and featured a play written by Almeire Michel, theatre department chairperson. The cast for Hurricane Hotel included faculty, Karen Beaumont and Kale Brown, alumni Sara Katzoff ’97 and Taylor Horn ’09, and current students Irene Shalmas ’12 and Ihor Shuhan ’13.

70s

The portfolio Yard Sale by Adam Bartos ’70 was short-listed in the consumption category for the Prix Pictet, the global award in photography and sustainability. Lithio Camera features two portfolios of Jan Stalller’s ’70 photography.

Joel Coen ’71 and Ethan Coen ’74 worked as screenwriters on Bridge of Spies, the new film starring Tom Hanks. The Class of ’71 will celebrate their 45th Anniversary at Reunion Weekend to be held July 8-10, 2016. The Alumni Leadership Council bestowed the Outstanding Alumni Award on Meriwether Clark-Connors ’76 at Reunion Weekend for her unsurpassed generosity and care for Simon’s Rock alumni, students, staff, faculty, and friends. She currently serves as director of dining services (Chartwells/Compass Group) at Simon’s Rock. Miriam Weizenbaum ’76 is a founding partner of the civil litigation firm DeLuca & Weizenbaum, Ltd. in Providence, Rhode Island. In the spring of 2015, she and her law partner, Anato DeLuca, cofounded, the Rhode Island Center for Justice, the state’s only public interest law center.

The center provides legal representation through partnerships with community groups to protect the rights of vulnerable individuals, families, and communities in Rhode Island, while advancing social and economic justice through strategic advocacy. Committed to its promise to expand the practice of public interest law in Rhode Island, all this work is done while training new lawyers, and in cooperation with the state and federal judiciary, the private bar, and Roger Williams University School of Law, the state’s only law school. The Class of ’76 will celebrate their 40th Anniversary at Reunion to be held July 8-10, 2016. The Berkshire Festival of Women Writers continues to broaden its programming under the leadership of Jenny Browdy de Hernandez ’76, who led a memoir-writing retreat for women in September at the Rockwood Inn in Lenox. Jenny also co-led a weekend, writing intensive Leadership Institute for Teen Girls and Young Women in July with current senior Grace Rossman ’11. Baird Garrett ’78 is now senior vice president of legal for Elasticsearch, Inc. Marvin Birnbaum ’79 and his family spent three weeks in a camper touring the Badlands and Grand Teton this summer.

80s

John Wyche ’80 recently ran in the Berlin and Chicago Marathon. When not running marathons, he is running Global Talent Management for Halyard Health. Keith Brierley-Bowers ’80 and Penny Brierley-Bowers ’81 attended a number of World Cup games in Montreal this summer, where Josh Cowan ’81 joined them. The USA won over Germany was particularly exciting. The Class of ’81 will celebrate their 35th Anniversary at Reunion Weekend to be held July 8-10, 2016. Margaret Lazer ’82 is cochair of the programming at the 1919 Peoples Bank Theatre in Marietta, Ohio. In December, Kimberley Coppage Rivero ’83 and her husband, Arturo, moved back home to Boulder, Colorado after spending 11 years living in Mexico. They’ve bought a house and have settled back in happily. Robert Crighton ’83 and Tricia Arlnt Crighton ’88 attended reunion 2015 with their charismatic son, Timothy. Timothy had a great time, and he has several times informed his parents that they must drive to the airport so they could fly back there immediately. Timothy has started kindergarten and is doing very well. Jon Lothrop ’82 has served 12 years on the city council in Pittsfield and is not running for reelection. He will miss politics, but will enjoy spending time with his family. Katy Miller ’84 is now in her third year of teaching in the BSU program at Western New England University in Springfield, Massachusetts. Their daughter, Christina Lothrop ’13, received her AA in May and is now a junior at the Rock, where she is a double major in theatre and history. Wendy Millar Müller ’85 and her husband, Todd, celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary earlier this year. They recently moved to San Antonio, Texas, with their children, Riley, 12, and Katy, 10. Wendy is enjoying her 18th year of teaching and currently works with gifted middle school students. She is active with the Epilepsy Foundation. Her son is featured in the Faces of Cannabis art photography project by Nicole Montanez. Sabrena Silver ’85 is listed as a Ranked Lawyer in Banking and Finance-Latin America-wide in the 2016 edition of Chambers Latin America, honored as a “Rising Star” in Banking and Finance IFLR1000 2015 and 2016 editions, One of Latin America’s Top Female Lawyers. Latinvene 2014 and 2015 and “Up and Coming” in Banking and Finance-Latin America-wide 2015 edition of Chambers Latin America. Denise Lundin ’86 writes, “I got divorced through a long and nasty process, moved back to my hometown in the midst of family and enrolled my kids in public school. I still work for the Bureau of Indian Affairs, so I keep a nervous eye on potential government shutdowns. My 12-year-old daughter dove headfirst into the whole middle school experience, but my 9-year-old son wants to know how long he has to wait to go to Simon’s Rock.” Lynn Mulheron ’86 just moved back to Great Barrington and is working at Fairview Hospital as a nurse practitioner in the emergency room and volunteering in town. The Class of ’86 will celebrate their 30th Anniversary at Reunion Weekend to be held July 8-10, 2016. Gwendolyn Hampton van Sant ’87 published and authored an anthology, Berkshire Mosaic: A Multicultural BRIDGE Living History Project. She is chief executive officer and founder of the organization Multicultural BRIDGE, which received the 2015 Berkshire Trendssetter Award for Nonprofit Impact. Etana Jacobson ’87 was named among? LinkedIn’s Top 25 grant finalists a few months ago. She is the Director of 2016 Sundance Sloan Screenwriting Grant & Fellowship finalist, NextGen. She is also an Alfred P. Sloan Directing Fellow and serves as UCLA FTV Sloan Director. She is currently finishing a promo in London for a friend’s project featuring Martin Freeman (Sherlock).

Minna Bromberg ’88 and her husband, Rabbi Alan Abrams, live in Jerusalem where Minna continues to sing and teach voice and work with rabbinical students. Alan is pioneering anAmerican-Israeli partnership for teaching chaplaincy and spiritual care. Lolli (Weaver) Edinger ’88 and David Edinger ’87 still live in their slice of heaven in the Catskills. She works just under full-time at the Ashokan Center and David works at SUNY Ulster. Their kids are growing like crazy. Milla is 14 years old now and creating her own educational path by starting a college class at SUNY Ulster this fall as well as writing fanfic, which occupies most of her day. Donovan is 11 years old and busy with soccer and football and all things Pokemon. Ken Epstein ’88 lives in Columbus, Ohio with his wife, Kate, and dog, Minnie. He is the lead writer and publisher of Nix Comics. Tara Abrams Jacobs ’88 lives in North Adams, Massachusetts and is running for school committee this year. Now that Piper is a bit older, Tara is job hunting for something in brand management. Tara, Ross and Piper all attended reunion in 2015, and Tara assisted on the reunion committee. Timur Snekoe JA89 just celebrated his 10th anniversary with his “wonderful partner in crime, Jenn, and our three accomplishments Madeleine, 8, Isaac, 6, and Natalie, 3. We have lived in Pittsburgh for the last five years while I work at CERT and try to brew beer.”

90s

The Alumni Leadership Council awarded Roman Mars ’90 with the Outstanding Alumni Award for innovation and achievement in radio production, enriching the lives of countless listeners. Roman is program director and host at Public Radio Remix and creator of the show .99% Invisible. The Class of ’91 will celebrate their 25th Anniversary at Reunion Weekend to be held July 8-10, 2016. Rachel Tobal ’92 is now clinical supervisor at Premier Home Health Agency, Ophelia Jane Austin Small ’93 writes, “This year has been quite exciting for me. I am now an independently licensed psychologist in New York and a member of the American Academy of Experts in Traumatic Stress and the National Association of Disability Examiners. I am in private practice in...”
Ben Bernanke P’00  
The Courage to Act: A Memoir of a Crisis and its Aftermath  
(W.W. Norton & Company, 2015).

Kathleen Biddick  
Visiting Faculty in History, Make and Let Die: Untimely Sovereignties  
(Punctum Books, 2015).

Gwendolyn Hampton Van Sant ’87  
Berkshire Mosaic: A Multicultural Bridge Living History Project  
(Multicultural Bridge, 2015).

Veronica Chambers ’87  
Wake Up Happy: The Dream Big, Win Big Guide to Transforming Your Life  
(Atria/37 INK, 2015).

Did we miss your latest publication? Please be sure to share your news with us at editors@simons-rock.edu.
Simon’s Rock alum Alison Bechdel ’77 was already a critically lauded groundbreaking cartoonist (via the hilarious/heartbreaking syndicated comic strip *Dykes To Watch Out For*), when in 2006 she published *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic*, a painstakingly intricate examination of family dynamics in her childhood home (focusing on her closeted bisexual father’s suicide and her own simultaneous coming-out as a lesbian), which was named *Time* magazine’s Best Book of 2006, and was a finalist for the National Book Award.

*Fun Home* brought Bechdel a higher level of cultural recognition (including Guggenheim and MacArthur fellowships), and was adapted into a Broadway musical that opened this past April and won five Tony Awards, including “Best Musical.” We caught up with the Vermont resident somewhere on the road where, despite her busy schedule, she was kind enough to make time to answer a few of our questions about her days as a Simon’s Rock student.

**What was your experience at Simon’s Rock?**

**Did you have favorite professors or classes?**

I had a deeply enriching experience at Simon’s Rock. I had some amazing teachers. Doreen Young got me all excited about art history in her Art Epochs class. John Paskus taught me how to write in my freshman English class, Mythology and Archetypal Experience. He mostly gave me C’s, and I was often baffled in class, but by the end of the year I wrote a semi-coherent paper for him and managed a B+/A-. I did surprisingly well in physics, for an art major, under Eileen Handelman’s bracing tutelage. But my most favorite classes were the ones I took with Arthur Hillman and Bill Jackson. I studied printmaking and book art with Arthur—those classes laid a very strong foundation for the work I went on to do. With Bill I studied figure drawing—also great groundwork—and aesthetic focus. The latter was not a studio class, but taught me a lot about how to think and talk about art.

**How did the things you learned/experienced at Simon’s Rock affect/inform your life or work?**

Arthur’s book art class taught me a LOT about cartooning, as it happens. Comics are basically artist’s books—books that are, on some level, handmade, thoughtfully crafted, engineered so that certain things appear on certain pages. Learning to not just illustrate a book but to make it—to fold and stitch and glue the physical book together—was revolutionary for me.

**The detail in *Fun Home* is unnervingly accurate, like going back in time. What is your research process for recapturing the past?**

My research process is extensive, and probably a little obsessive-compulsive. Google Image Search has altered my creative DNA, enabling me to look up visual references for anything in the universe—including the Chumley’s doorway. So I do. I’d like to become a little less dependent on this constantly accessible picture file. But it’s so seductive.

**How did you find your way to Simon’s Rock? Why was early college for you? What did your parents think of that choice?**

My parents were very glad to send me off to early college. We found out about Simon’s Rock because my uncle, Ed Misch, had just started teaching there in the mid-1970s. I was in high school at the time. My parents brought me for a visit, and we were all pretty ecstatic.
Save the Date: July 8th - 10th, 2016

50th Anniversary Celebration Kick-off at Reunion 2016

Honoring the Class of 1966, Simon’s Rock First 50th Anniversary Class


All alumni, former and current faculty and staff are invited!

For more info, please contact Cathy Ingram, Director of Alumni & Parent Engagement at (413) 528-7266 or cingram@simons-rock.edu.