

FALL 2023

ST. OLAF

M A G A Z I N E



ON THE COVER

Susan Rundell Singer, the newly inaugurated 12th president of St. Olaf, in front of Old Main. Read more about her vision for the future of the college on page 4. PHOTO BY FERNANDO SEVILLA

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Fenton Krupp '24 is famous for his dog, who was featured on the St. Olaf website even though she is not a good dog. Krupp is a lover of words, the college's public relations fellow, and the first Ole to serve three terms as the student observer to the St. Olaf Board of Regents.

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Kiera O'Higgins '25 is a writer with a passion for storytelling and communications. An English major with concentrations



GRAHAM ROBERT



In September President Susan Rundell Singer marched with members of the Manitou Singers and the Viking Chorus in Northfield's annual Defeat of Jesse James Days parade. PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20

in business and management studies and race and ethnic studies, you can always find her nose-deep in a book. Outside of her work in the St. Olaf Marketing and Communications Office, she serves as business coordinator for Ole Thrift Shop, is interning at a marketing agency, and works as a barista on the weekends. After graduation she plans to pursue a career in marketing and communications.

Evan Pak '19 is a freelance photographer and full-time environmentalist whose work has taken him from the Superior National Forest to the St. Olaf Natural Lands, and enabled him to capture stunning photos along the way. Learn more about his work at evanjpak.com.



ST. OLAF

M A G A Z I N E

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FROM THE DESK OF
PRESIDENT SUSAN RUNDELL SINGER



Dear Oles,

Greetings from the Hill! I'm honored to join our vibrant, welcoming community. Returning to Northfield with the opportunity to serve St. Olaf is exhilarating.

Over the past few months, I've begun weaving a rich tapestry of reflections from my early experiences. Colorful threads emerge from welcoming new students on move-in weekend, marching with the Viking Chorus and Manitou Singers in the Defeat of Jesse James Day parade, hosting a first day of class garden party at the new St. Olaf House, enjoying conversations with students on my morning trek to the Cage in search of pumpkin bread, celebrating Homecoming and Family Weekend, making s'mores on the Campus Green with my sister while students danced in the silent disco, biking 12 miles with 40 hearty souls who braved freezing weather to be rewarded with scones from Martha's Treats in Dundas, traveling to Denver with our Connections Program students to meet alumni, and relishing beautiful music everywhere. At the core of every thread are the people who make up our remarkable community. My reflections tapestry is nascent. I look forward to meeting more of you, learning about your experiences and reflections, and creating new memories together.

Shifts in leadership are a pivotal moment in a college's history. We reflect on a rich past and strong foundation while boldly stepping into the future. St. Olaf is rooted in almost 150 years of clarity about our values, vision, and mission that provide an enduring true north. We have always been solution seekers. Our commitment to developing solution seekers gives us the path forward as we co-create the next chapter in St. Olaf's history.

In 1874 a growing population of Norwegian immigrants sought further education. Creating St. Olaf was the solution. Classes were offered in Norwegian and English. St. Olaf continues to welcome immigrants, now from all nations, and seeks solutions to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse student body. Now more than ever, St. Olaf is deepening our commitment to being a truly equitable and inclusive community, where everyone belongs and thrives. Inclusion is a never-ending journey filled with new beginnings.

We are a community that works hard at inclusion, is committed to academic excellence, makes beautiful music, gives it all in athletic competitions, engages in collaborative research, and experiences learning both on campus and around the globe. We are also a community that can seek solutions and have fun simultaneously.

When I think about the phrase "Oles Can, Oles Will," I see students, faculty, staff, and alumni as innovators who seek solutions and have the courage and energy to bring those solutions into being.

At this moment in time, our true north points us to prepare solution seekers empowered to contribute to solving the pressing issues of our times. Addressing economic, racial, and gender inequities; the needs of civil society; global health challenges; disparities in education, air quality, and water availability; climate change; and feeding a hungry world will require all the courage and wisdom we can muster. These are complex problems that our students want to help solve.

I underscore wisdom, which is more than knowledge and skills. Addressing these challenges requires comfort with ambiguity because a solution to one issue might negatively impact another. The way forward is to partner in solution seeking. St. Olaf is built for this type of education. Stay tuned for our collaborative work this year to uplift the value of a holistic St. Olaf education, in the classroom and the residences, on the Hill and in the community, and around the globe to prepare solution seekers.

Fram! Fram! St. Olaf's future is bold and bright.

Susan Rundell Singer



UMI YAH! YAH!

Joseph Jefferson took the reins of the St. Olaf Jazz ensembles at the start of the 2023-24 academic year.
PHOTO: WES LANGSTON



Joseph Jefferson named new St. Olaf Jazz conductor

By Kari VanDerVeen

AWARD-WINNING MUSIC EDUCATOR Joseph Jefferson has been named the new director of the St. Olaf Jazz ensembles. As the college's first tenure-track jazz conductor, he also will serve as an associate professor of music at St. Olaf.

Trained in both classical and jazz traditions, Jefferson has performed as a soloist and chamber musician around the world as a trombonist. He is regularly invited to serve as a guest artist, clinician, and adjudicator for both high schools and collegiate music programs throughout the United States, and he has published research on the shout band tradition.

Jefferson was selected as one of 40 music educators throughout the country to be featured in the Yamaha 40 Under 40 Class of 2023, and he was named the 2022 Ellis Marsalis Jr. Jazz Educator of the Year by the Jazz Education Network. He is eager to build on a St. Olaf Jazz Program that has won several music awards over the years, including being honored by *DownBeat Magazine* for "Outstanding Performance by Large Undergraduate Ensemble" in 2019.

"I hope to increase the visibility of jazz at St. Olaf nationally, making it a destination for students interested in the study and performance of this American art form," Jefferson says. "It is my hope that students leave jazz ensembles and classes with a solid jazz foundation and a sense of musical fulfillment and understanding of this music, its culture, and its tradition."

Jefferson began his own music career at the age of 14 as a self-taught trombonist. His first music performance "stage" was singing and playing behind his mother in the church choir. "Being around so many vocalists during the early stages of my development really informed my musical and lyrical sensibilities and strengthened my aural skills," he says. "My gospel upbringing is the foundation of my approach as a jazz musician and improviser."

After earning a bachelor's degree from Norfolk State University, a master's degree from Shenandoah Conservatory, and a doctorate from West Virginia University, Jefferson has developed a performance career that is impressive in its depth and breadth.

"It is my hope that students leave jazz ensembles and classes with a solid jazz foundation and a sense of musical fulfillment and understanding of this music, its culture, and its tradition."

— JOSEPH JEFFERSON

In the classical genre, he has performed with world-renowned artists and groups such as Zoltan Kiss, The Irish Tenors, Paducah Symphony Orchestra, Rose City Trombones, and the Colour of Music Orchestra. As a jazz musician, he leads the JLJ Jazz Quartet and has performed with noted musicians like Vanessa Williams, Sean Jones, Jen Wharton, John Fedchock, The Cab Calloway Orchestra, and international R&B artists Dwele, Jon Bibbs, and Raheem Devaughn. As a collaborative artist, he has also worked with renowned Japanese poet Lawson Inada for an evening of jazz and poetry.

Jefferson comes to St. Olaf from a faculty position at Southeast Missouri State University, where in 2022 he received the Provost Award for Experiential Teaching and in 2019 he was selected as the recipient of the Holland College of Arts and Media Outstanding Teaching Award.

"My favorite part of being a musician and educator is meeting people from all backgrounds and walks of life. Music is truly a universal language," Jefferson says. "It brings me joy to reach students where they are and provide valuable experiential learning opportunities." 🎺

President Susan Rundell Singer,
photographed at the United
Nations in New York City
during the Higher Education
Sustainability Initiative
2023 Global Forum.

PHOTO BY WILLIAM CIPOS '19



Solution SEEKER

As Susan Rundell Singer steps into her role as St. Olaf College's 12th president, she is eager to sharpen the college's focus on preparing students to be leaders in solving a new era of global challenges.

By Kari VanDerVeen

IN HER FIRST FEW MONTHS as St. Olaf College's 12th president, Susan Rundell Singer traveled to the United Nations Headquarters in New York City to participate in a summit exploring how colleges and universities can support sustainable development.

She welcomed Norwegian Prime Minister Jonas Gahr Støre to campus, where he celebrated the college's longstanding ties to Norway and spoke to students in political science, economics, and Norwegian classes about pressing global issues.

She joined presidents from other Lutheran colleges and universities across the country for a seminar focused on academic excellence, innovative leadership, and the shared values of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) community.

And she threw out the first pitch at a Minnesota Twins baseball game dedicated to celebrating St. Olaf.

Yet when Rundell Singer reflects on some of the most meaningful interactions from these early days of her presidency, she points to much simpler moments: welcoming hundreds of new students and their families to campus on a warm September weekend, chatting with colleagues while waiting for a slice of pumpkin bread at the campus coffee shop, and meeting dozens of St. Olaf alumni in Denver who volunteered to share their insight with current students as part of a career center program. These interactions, she says, underscore the key strength of St. Olaf — its people.

"I was drawn to St. Olaf not only by a deep admiration for the college's academic excellence and global engagement, but also by its exceptional sense of community," Rundell Singer says.

“St. Olaf is rooted in almost 150 years of clarity about our values, vision, and mission that, together, provide an enduring true north. We have always been solution seekers. Our commitment to developing solution seekers gives us the path forward as we co-create the next chapter in St. Olaf’s history.”

— PRESIDENT SUSAN RUNDELL SINGER
DURING HER INAUGURATION SPEECH

The experiences she has leaned into during these first few months on the Hill highlight the power of that intersection where the strength of the St. Olaf community meets the world’s most pressing needs. A leader in study abroad, St. Olaf challenges students to examine global issues from a wide range of disciplines and perspectives. The college’s career center is among the best in the nation

in helping students discern their vocation. St. Olaf is one of the few colleges in the country that meets the full demonstrated financial need of every student it admits, ensuring that students from a diverse range of backgrounds have access to a powerful liberal arts education. And the college is guided by a set of contemporary Lutheran values — inclusivity, pluralism, living life on purpose for the common good, and caring for each other and the Earth — that Rundell Singer says serve as its north star.

“We have an amazing foundation and 150 years of momentum behind us. We know who we are. We know that we can be committed to academic freedom, we can be committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and we can be a place where deep conversations about all faith traditions take place — and we know that all of those elements are mutually reinforcing,” Rundell Singer says. “That’s a combination that many institutions don’t have.”

As her work gets underway as St. Olaf’s first new president in 17 years and the first woman to lead the college, Rundell Singer is eager to build on that foundation and sharpen the college’s focus on preparing students to be leaders in contributing to solutions in a new era of global challenges.



President Susan Rundell Singer received a standing ovation at her inauguration ceremony, where speakers also included Associate Professor of Religion Anthony Bateza (left) and Board of Regents Chair Susan Gunderson '79 (center).

PHOTO BY ENRICO TAMAYO '25



“We face pressing issues — racial and economic inequities, health disparities, energy needs, food insecurity, a climate crisis, and threats to civil society. It will take all the wisdom and courage we can muster to create a better tomorrow,” Rundell Singer says. “These issues can’t be solved by one discipline. The solutions have to be coordinated across disciplines, incorporating a diverse range of viewpoints. And that’s exactly what we teach students to do here, which is amazing. St. Olaf is positioned to prepare students to be the solution seekers for the pressing issues of our time.”

And Rundell Singer is built for the type of leadership needed to take St. Olaf into the future, Rollins College President Grant Cornwell told the hundreds of students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community leaders who filled Skoglund Auditorium for her presidential inauguration ceremony on October 11. Rundell Singer came to St. Olaf after serving as provost at Rollins for seven years, where Cornwell said she was one of the best leaders he has ever seen occupy that role. He highlighted her commitment to equity, which he noted was bolstered as she earned her bachelor’s degree, master’s degree, and doctoral degree in biology from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute during a time when she was often the only woman in her courses and labs. He praised her commitment to outstanding teaching and research, noting that she was a prolific scholar during her 30-year career at Carleton College. And he

emphasized the power of her collaborative leadership style, which was on full display when she directed the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation, where she led and integrated the work of 14 federal agencies.

“Susan is the epitome of a servant leader who enters every space, every situation, every relationship fostering authentic collaboration,” Cornwell says. “Everything Susan does, everything Susan is, is motivated by her commitment to student learning.”

That commitment is something that Lee Zia saw firsthand in his role as the deputy division director for the Division of Undergraduate Education at the National Science Foundation — a role that Rundell Singer was instrumental in helping him obtain when she became the director of the division.

“Susan already had a national reputation as a leader in undergraduate science education by that time, but she was very encouraging to me and was truly a thought partner,” Zia says. Together they worked to advance innovative programming and partnerships at NSF that are still in place today. “Whether it’s working with students, or leading a policy discussion at NSF, or partnering with the National Academies to create a study, she’s a very, very fast synthesizer of information. She has this unique ability to connect people and priorities.”



President Rundell Singer joined hundreds of Oles at Target Field on September 12 to celebrate “St. Olaf Night” with the Minnesota Twins. PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20



President Rundell Singer spoke about sustainable development goals at the 2023 United Nations International Day of Peace event in Northfield on September 21. PHOTO BY VICTORIA CAMPBELL



The college's two-day inauguration celebration began on October 10 with the ceremonial planting of a Bur Oak tree at St. Olaf House (the president's residence). PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20



To kick off Inauguration Day, President Rundell Singer — an active cyclist — led scores of community members on an early morning 12-mile bike ride in honor of her role as the college's 12th president. PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20

Following the inauguration ceremony, President Rundell Singer walked to the Campus Green through a celebratory tunnel of students, faculty, staff, alumni, community members, and colleagues from across the country.

PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20



Rollins College Vice President for Institutional Advancement Laurie Houck says Rundell Singer's ability to think in terms of networks is one of her strongest leadership qualities.

"She has this kind of magical ability to think broadly and connect people with ideas, but then delve deeply into the idea itself and think about how to create something that ultimately benefits the student," Houck says, noting that this ability played a key role in developing relationships with foundations and friends of the college at Rollins. "Whether it's public scholarship or community engagement with a curricular component, she knows how to think outside the box, but then bring the idea back to the box that is the institution."

Heidi Schweingruber, the director of the Board on Science Education at the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, has known and worked with Rundell Singer for nearly two decades. She says Rundell Singer is both deeply collaborative and someone willing to take decisive action and own her decisions.

"She has great ideas and also openly invites ideas from other people and will integrate them into her thinking," Schweingruber says. "She's genuinely excited about the world and the work, and she cares about people's well-being."

All of these skills and strengths are the reason the St. Olaf Board of Regents unanimously selected Rundell Singer to serve as St. Olaf's 12th president this May.

"She is insatiably curious, and her leadership style combines that with deep intelligence, empathy, and an awareness of how to create something where the whole is bigger and more successful than the parts."

— ROLLINS COLLEGE VICE PRESIDENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT LAURIE HOUCK

"Her dedication to fostering an environment where collaboration and critical thinking flourish aligns precisely with our commitment to develop and prepare students of character to lead lives of substance," Board Chair Susan Gunderson '79 said as she welcomed attendees to the inauguration ceremony and led the formal installation of Rundell Singer as president. "Dr. Singer is known for her approachability, her genuine concern for the well-being of students, faculty, and staff, and her commitment to diversity and inclusion. She believes in the power of education to transform lives. We are excited to work alongside her to build on our strong success to shape an even brighter future for St. Olaf College." 🦁



Watch highlights from President Susan Rundell Singer's inauguration ceremony by scanning this QR code or visiting stolaf.edu/magazine.



The inauguration ceremony featured remarks from Student Government Association President Sophia Pletcher '24, Associate Professor of Religion Anthony Bateza, Piper Center for Vocation and Career Director Kirsten Cahoon '98, Alumni Board Member Mazen Abusharkh '18, Carleton College President Alison Byerly, St. Olaf Board of Regents Chair Susan Gunderson '79, and Rollins College President Grant Cornwell. Delegates from 33 colleges and universities across the country, including presidents of peer institutions and many of Susan Rundell Singer's former colleagues, processed in the ceremony alongside St. Olaf faculty. PHOTO BY STEVEN GARCIA '20

THIS OR THAT?

THE SUSAN RUNDELL SINGER EDITION



THIS OR THAT?

WINTER OR **SUMMER**¹

BIKE² OR DRIVE

OLD MAIN OR **REGENTS HALL**³

TEA⁴ OR COFFEE

INSTAGRAM OR **LINKEDIN**⁵

CATS OR **DOGS**⁶

SCIENCE MUSEUM OR **ART MUSEUM**⁷

TREES⁸ OR FLOWERS

DUCK, DUCK, GOOSE OR **DUCK, DUCK, GRAY DUCK**⁹

SMALL TOWNS¹⁰ OR BIG CITIES

Allow me to explain...

- 1 | I love Minnesota winters, but my garden and bike tip the scales in favor of summer.
- 2 | When I lived in Florida, I didn't own a car — I biked everywhere. That will be harder to do in Minnesota, but I'm still looking forward to biking as much as possible.
- 3 | My inner scientist made me choose Regents Hall, but Old Main is a favorite spot of mine.
- 4 | I really like English breakfast tea to start the day. In fact, it's how I started my very first day as St. Olaf College's 12th president.
- 5 | I love supporting colleagues and celebrating accomplishments on LinkedIn. Please feel welcome to connect with me there.
- 6 | I have a new puppy, Emmy, and two cats, Nikolai and Dmitri (Russian Blue mixes rescued after Hurricane Matthew). They would never forgive me for choosing between them!
- 7 | I went with art museum, but I also love science museums. I served on the Orlando Science Center Board when I lived in Florida.
- 8 | This was a tough call for someone who spent decades studying flowering as a plant biologist!
- 9 | Duck, Duck, Gray Duck, obviously. My Minnesota roots are showing.
- 10 | I love Northfield. I am so eager to be part of a campus that is centered in a community I have long called home.

Read more about Rundell Singer, who took office in June and is the first woman to serve as president of St. Olaf, at stolaf.edu/president.

THE 40TH ANNUAL GIMSE GLOBAL PHOTO

For more than a half century, St. Olaf students have learned around the world as part of the college's renowned study abroad and study away programs. And for nearly that entire time, they have shared the stunning images they've captured during their travels as part of the annual Gimse Global Engagement Photo Contest.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the contest, which encourages students to document their experiences of exploration and self-discovery through photography.

The photo contest is named in honor of Professor Emeritus of Art A. Malcolm (Mac) Gimse '58 and his wife, Jackie. Together they planned, led, and taught 35 study-abroad programs and a dozen international January term programs, helping hundreds of Oles achieve an informed global perspective. Gimse chronicled their international travel through photography, and he encouraged students to do the same.

Advisors in what is now the Smith Center for Global Engagement launched the contest in 1983. When Helene Stellmaker MacCallum '73 joined the office several years later, she took on the role of facilitating the contest — and continued for nearly three decades, working with Gimse to shape it into what it is today. The goal was to encourage students to share a glimpse of their travels with the St. Olaf community. Oles responded in force.

"Some years there would be as many as 400 photos to choose from," says Gimse, who still serves on the panel of judges that reviews the submissions and selects the winning photos.

While travel slowed in the wake of the pandemic, the demand for study abroad/away today is as strong as ever,

says Smith Center Director Jodi Malmgren '92. In 2022–23 694 St. Olaf students studied abroad or away in 33 countries, including the United States. And despite the travel restrictions imposed by the pandemic over the past few years, 51 percent of the Class of 2023 still participated in at least one study abroad/away program during their time as a student.

At St. Olaf, the options for studying abroad and away are robust. The college offers programs in nearly 40 countries, including more than 70 semester or year-long programs and nearly 30 courses each January term. Faculty-led semester programs include Global Semester, Semester in Jerusalem and Athens, and Environmental Science in Australia and New Zealand. The team in the Smith Center for Global Engagement works with students to find a program that fits their goals, and the college provides more than \$1 million in study abroad/away scholarships each year.

Malmgren says the enduring power of the Gimse Global Engagement Photo Contest is the way it engages not only the students who are participating, but also the broader St. Olaf community.

"Selecting an image to submit for the Gimse photo contest is one way to reflect on the learning and community building that occurs during study abroad/away," Malmgren says. "Sharing the images offers the entire community a window into the programs and partnerships offered by the Smith Center as they change over time. Alumni can think back to their own study abroad experiences as well as connect with current students."

Enjoy this year's Gimse Global Engagement Photo Contest winners on the following pages.

TOP AWARD

SEATED IN THE SKY

Lars Askegaard '23 | Global Semester
Pichincha Volcano · Quito, Ecuador

ENGAGEMENT CONTEST



"While on a hike up Pichincha Volcano on the outskirts of Quito, I stopped to admire the view from the comfort of a large mountaintop swing. My childhood self had always dreamed of finding a playground in the sky! This photo highlights the interconnectedness between Ecuadorian peoples and their vibrant natural surroundings — a theme that endured throughout our stay in the country."



HONORABLE MENTION
THE FCC (FUNKY CARROT COLLECTION)
Cassidy Schnell '23 | Environmental Sustainability in Japan
Asian Rural Institute · Tochigi, Nasushiobara, Japan

"When our class stayed at an organic farm in Nasushiobara, we had competitions when sorting the vegetables for who could find the quirkiest-looking carrots. Often these types of foods get thrown away, but they're still perfectly delicious and nutritious. This is a great reminder to opt toward 'imperfect' produce when you shop!"

TOP AWARD

BEEN THERE, DUNE THAT

Mattea Gines '24 | Global Semester
Dune 7 · Walvis Bay, Namibia



"Dune 7 is the highest dune in Namibia and has been measured at over 1,256 feet. Our group took an excursion to the Namib Desert to climb it and had the most spectacular time and enjoyed the views from above."



HONORABLE MENTION

TRINITY ALPS WILDERNESS

Ruby Hoeschen '25 | Oregon Extension
Snowslide Lake · Trinity Alps Wilderness, Northern California

"This image was taken on my first-ever backpacking trip. After our first three-week long segment focused on nature, our professors took us out into the wilderness for a six-day backpacking trip to relax, reflect, and experience amazing sights such as this rock formation reflecting on the lake water."

WE DIDN'T START THE FIRE | Gretchen Ellis '23

The General Course at the London School of Economics and Political Science | Pyrgos · Santorini, Greece

"On the island of Santorini, Orthodox Easter is one of the most sacred holidays. On Good Friday, every town starts at the top of their village with the 'epitaph' or the 'Jesus Coffin' and has a funeral procession. In Pyrgos, they also light up the entire town with thousands of small bonfires or candles following the procession."



SOMEWHERE IN NORWAY

Greta Nackerud '23
Gender Equality in Norway

"This photo was taken during the train ride taking us from Oslo to Bergen. The entire seven-hour trip had me awestruck, my camera practically glued to the window the whole time. I remember holding hands with my friends and trying to take it all in as every corner we turned showed us something more and more beautiful."



HONORABLE MENTION

SYMMETRY | Gretchen Ellis '23

The General Course at the London School of Economics and Political Science
Giant's Causeway · Northern Ireland, U.K.

"In Northern Ireland, 40,000 interlocking basalt columns create a beautiful pathway to the sea, known as the Giant's Causeway. It is named from a legend where the Gaelic Irish giant Fionn Mac Cumhaill challenges a Scottish giant to fight and builds the causeway for protection. Now it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site."



HONORABLE MENTION

LIFTA | Manal Zaman '24

The Bible in Context: History, Geography, and Culture in Israel and Palestine



"Our group visited Lifta, an abandoned Palestinian village on the outskirts of Jerusalem. We were led through the village by Yacoub, a Palestinian refugee who was forced to flee from Lifta. Yacoub reminisced about the time he spent as a child in this beautiful village, and described the sense of love, hospitality, and volunteerism of his community while he was growing up."



SOWETO TOWERS | Luanga Kasanga '25

Global Semester | Orlando Power Station · Soweto, South Africa

"This photo was taken at the Orlando Power Station, with the decommissioned Cooling Towers in the background. They form an iconic part of the Soweto skyline, and after seeing them featured in various South African TV shows and movies, I am glad I got to see them in person for the first time!"

"This temple is home to one of the four emperor gods of Taoism. The green roof is a striking and unique characteristic I hadn't seen before on any other temples in Taiwan."

TIANDI TEMPLE 寶湖宮天地堂地母廟

Miriam Clapp '24

Term in Taiwan, National Taiwan University
Puli Township, Nantou County, Taiwan



"The salinity of the Dead Sea has continually increased as mineral deposits upstream pour in while it releases water into the air through evaporation. The abundance of salt in the sea provides an unfamiliar feeling of support and floatation. I found the Dead Sea symbolic of the community I had the opportunity to be a part of in Jordan as they continually gave to me in the way the Dead Sea continually gives up its water. I was continually welcomed, supported, and offered meaningful insight throughout my exploration of Jordan."

INFINITE VOYAGE OF DREAMS | Alliance Umutoni Ishema '25

Engaging Asia: San Francisco | Umbrella Alley - San Francisco, California

"This tourist attraction is a place full of so much creativity and warmth."



THE SEA THAT CONTINUALLY GIVES

Freya Gordon '24

Global Semester
The Dead Sea, Jordan





A HELPING HAND IN THE CLOUD FOREST
Ian Derauf '23 | Global Semester
Santa Lucia Cloud Forest - Ecuador

"Emma gets a helping hand from our guide, Noé, on a rainy hike in the cloud forest."

HONORABLE MENTION

A SCOTTISH HIGHLAND SUMMIT
Kaitlin Johnson '23 | University of Dundee
Peak of Beinn Mhùrlaig Mountain - Arrochar Alps
Argyll, Scotland, United Kingdom

"This was the best hike I have ever been on! The weather was clear and sunny, which is extremely rare in Scotland. What meant the most to me on this day was connecting with my new study-abroad friends. Everyone on this hike was from a different country, yet we were all together, bonding over our love for the outdoors and the Highlands. I will always remember this day!"



WHITE RHINO | Carter Schafer '24
Global Semester | Etosha National Park - Namibia

"I shot this photo on a game drive in Etosha National Park in northern Namibia. Up close, these 3,000-7,000 pound beasts are absolutely breathtaking. Once thought to be extinct, white rhinos are no longer endangered, thanks to conservation efforts. Not many white rhinos live in Etosha, however, making this a rare and exciting sighting."



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

Olivia Beach '25 | The Bible in Context: History, Geography, and Culture in Israel and Palestine | Old City of Jerusalem

"After a 5:30 a.m. Latin mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the magnificence of the shrine built over the traditional site of Jesus's crucifixion, burial, and resurrection towers over the heads of worshippers. Inside the temple-like structure, visitors can stop to pray by fragments of the stone that was rolled away from the tomb and kneel before the stone slab upon which Jesus's body was laid. The church itself is a place of indescribable reverence, and the smell of incense mingles with monastic chants in the vast sanctuary."



AGUA FRESCA | Andrew Mendez '25
Puerto Rican Politics and the Environment
Crash Boat Beach - Aguadilla, Puerto Rico

"A day of snorkeling, bridge jumping, and sea fishing."

KLOTILD PALOTÁK | Celia Olson '23

Discrete Mathematical Reasoning in Budapest
Klotild Paloták (Klotild Palaces) · Budapest, Hungary

"On our last night in Budapest, we walked out of the coffee shop after doing our end-of-class presentations, and it was snowing these beautiful, fluffy snowflakes. It felt like a very fitting end to our program."



WADI AL-MAYYA | Noah Elbaor '23

The American University in Cairo
Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), Wadi El-Rayan Protected Area
Fayoum Governorate, Egypt

"These beautiful shapes are created as clay and other fine sediments are bound together by water before curling as the water dries. The essential element, water, is scarcely found in a desert, yet a recent two inches of rainfall proved more than sufficient. While I admired the pottery it crafted, more frequent rainfall can bring drastic change to the desert environment as well as erode the hundreds of whale fossils left uncovered nearby in open air for public viewing. When initially designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005, rainfall was originally not considered typical enough to be a serious threat to the fossils. Wadi al-Mayya, meaning 'Water Valley,' refers to the valley's prehistoric past as well as its potential future."



FRIEND, FOOD, POLLUTION?

Helen Olson '24

Andean Field Studies in Ecuador
Isabela Island · Galápagos Islands, Ecuador

"A small cigarette becomes a huge obstacle for a tiny lizard. Leave no trace and pick up after yourself, as animals do not know the difference."





A LOOK BACK AT MY SEMESTER IN PARIS

Kylie Sieben '23 | French Studies in Paris (IES)
Palais-Royal · Paris, France



DAY TRIP | **Ella Stremler '24**

Webster University in Vienna | Hallstatt, Austria

"A photo of the beautiful mountains that surround the small town of Hallstatt, Austria."



COPENHAGEN WITH OLAF FRIENDS | **SooHyun Kim '23**

IES Milan — Italy Today | Nyhavn · Copenhagen, Denmark

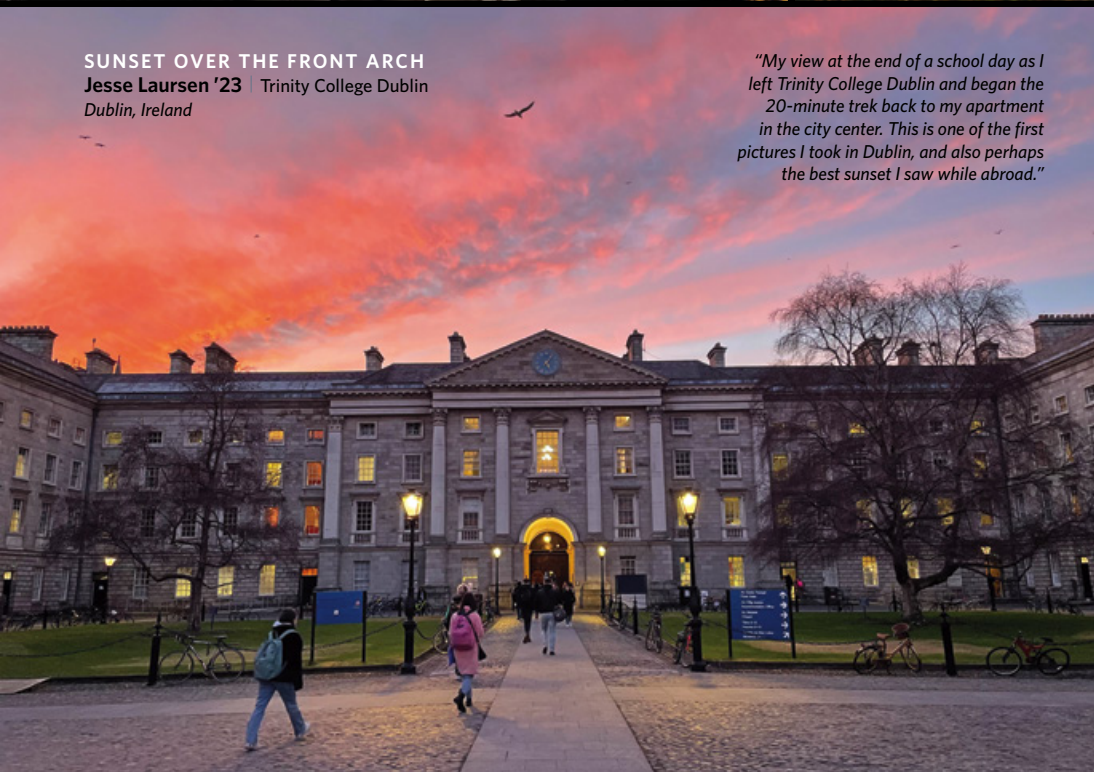
"We walked through the canal while drinking hot wine. Even though the weather was cold, the light and the wine made us feel warm."



LOST IN THE HIGHLANDS

Lakaia Thornton '23 | University of Aberdeen
The Great Glen Way · Scotland, United Kingdom

"While driving west from Aberdeen we saw a trail where we could climb into the Highlands. We went up and the views were breathtaking. The wind was also breathtaking, but it didn't stop me from taking a few photos!"



SUNSET OVER THE FRONT ARCH

Jesse Laursen '23 | Trinity College Dublin
Dublin, Ireland

"My view at the end of a school day as I left Trinity College Dublin and began the 20-minute trek back to my apartment in the city center. This is one of the first pictures I took in Dublin, and also perhaps the best sunset I saw while abroad."

Share Your Winning Photo!

Are you one of the thousands of Oles who participated in the Gimse Global Engagement Photo Contest in the last 40 years? Share your photo with us! We will highlight previous winners on the college's social media channels. Scan this QR code or visit stolaf.edu/magazine to submit your photo.



A MUSICAL JOURNEY THROUGH

JAPAN

St. Olaf student musicians (L-R) Aryaman Joshi '23, Selma Artang '26, Rel Edwards '26, and MaKenzie Kuckkan '26 pass through a tunnel of torii gates at Fushimi Inari Taisha, Kyoto, during the St. Olaf Band's summer 2023 tour of Japan.



Two weeks. Six cities. Five concerts.
An unforgettable experience.
All completely cost-free to students.

By Connor Boritzke Smith
Photographed by Evan Pak '19
and Fernando Sevilla

It's one thing to perform *Gloriosa* by Japanese composer Yasuhide Ito. It's another thing to perform the piece, one of the world's most well-known concert band masterworks, in Japan in front of the man who composed it.

So when Ito strode onto the stage during a rehearsal before the St. Olaf Band's performance in Tokorozawa, it was a moment that clarinetist Anna Schmidt '25 knew she would never forget.

"After he said a few words about the section we were working on, he jumped up on the podium to conduct. The passion of his conducting communicated so much more than

words could capture. The message was crystal clear, and we understood exactly what he wanted from us as an ensemble," Schmidt says.

Japanese composer Satoshi Yagisawa also spoke with St. Olaf Band members about his piece *Hymn to the Sun – with the Beat of Mother Earth*. "Having composers in attendance to explain what they hoped to convey with their pieces honed our focus and inspired us to put our all into the music," Schmidt adds. "Our best performances certainly came when we were playing for these composers."

Those onstage experiences were just a few of the many unforgettable moments on a tour that melded the magic of music with the power of global engagement.





Audience members review the concert program before the St. Olaf Band's performance at the Okayama Civic Hall in Okayama, Japan.



Composer Yasuhide Ito conducts the St. Olaf Band — in a piece featuring piccolo soloist Greta Hallberg '23 — during a rehearsal before a concert at the Tokorozawa Muse Concert Hall in Saitama, west of Tokyo.



"As this tour was to be my last as the conductor of the St. Olaf Band, I had high hopes that it would be special and meaningful for our student musicians. Everything exceeded expectations," says Timothy Mahr '78, pictured here conducting the St. Olaf Band during a concert in Tokorozawa. "The generosity of the Smiths, along with keen and visionary management from our Music Organizations Office and tour company, created an amazing set of learning experiences and memories. What a way to finish!"



Percussionists Megan Hoffhines '23, Benjamin Gusdal '25, and Josh Cameron '23 perform on the claves at the Hirakata Performing & Visual Arts Center in Osaka.



“Music is able to connect different cultures in a way that is so unique and special. It was amazing to be part of an experience that was incredibly impactful, both for the Japanese students and for all of us.” — LAURA MAEDA '25

As members of the St. Olaf Band toured throughout Japan for two weeks in June, they performed in concert halls in cities from Hiroshima to Tokyo, collaborated with local Japanese concert bands and wind ensembles, and had a variety of sightseeing and cultural learning opportunities. And it was all completely cost-free for St. Olaf student musicians.

Thanks to a \$4.2 million gift from Louis and Mary Kay Smith and an endowed fund established by anonymous donors, all international tours by the St. Olaf Band, St. Olaf Choir, and St. Olaf Orchestra will be cost-free for students moving forward. Given that these music ensembles tour internationally three out of every four years, the band’s tour of Japan is just the beginning of the significant impact the new fund will have. The choir is set to tour South Africa in June 2024, followed a year later by the orchestra, which will embark on a tour of Norway in 2025.

Grayson Chan '26, a studio art and German major who plays euphonium in the St. Olaf Band, says he never expected to have an experience like the Japan tour in his lifetime. He marveled at the experience of collaborating with local bands, and says the level of diligence that Japanese students demonstrated through their performances has led him to re-think his definition of a successful musician.

“The music they make is absolutely eye-opening, and I enjoyed the cultural exchange between the bands so much,”

Chan says, noting that the opportunity he had as one of seven Bandies to introduce one of the St. Olaf Band’s pieces in Japanese during a concert was a highlight of the tour for him. “I am a firm believer that one must completely immerse in the culture to fully learn about it. The St. Olaf Band tour has brought me closer to understanding Japanese culture.”

Schmidt, a chemistry and mathematics major, says touring internationally with fellow musicians provides a depth to the travel experience unlike any other.

“Being a traveler and a tourist is often a self-centered experience. We take in the sites and experiences for our own enjoyment and education. Touring with the St. Olaf Band in Japan, however, was a unique opportunity to give as well as receive,” Schmidt says. “We shared our music and the sound of the St. Olaf Band with Japanese audiences, while also immersing ourselves in a new culture and space. The experience of sharing music with students similar to our own age created an inherently deeper experience than simply ‘traveling’ in Japan. Whether it was having conversations before and after rehearsals, exchanging gifts, or simply enjoying the power of making music together, connecting with fellow students and musicians taught me so much more about music, Japanese culture, and the world as a whole than I could ever have learned from a guidebook or a famous landmark.” 🍷



Scan this QR code to enjoy a behind-the-scenes look at the St. Olaf Band’s Japan tour, featuring a 3D video of the ensemble’s performance of “The Stars and Stripes Forever” with the Saitama Sakae Wind Orchestra and the Inagakuen Sogo High School Wind Orchestra.

And in case you missed it on TikTok, here’s a bonus clip featuring St. Olaf percussionists Megan Hoffhines '23, Benjamin Gusdal '25, and Josh Cameron '23 rehearsing an excerpt from “Click” by Mary Ellen Childs on the claves at the Arashiyama Bamboo Grove in Kyoto, Japan.





On a trip that marked the ensemble's first international tour since 2018, Timothy Mahr '78 and the St. Olaf Band performed with members and conductors of the Saitama Sakae Wind Orchestra and the Inagakuen Sogo High School Wind Orchestra in Tokorozawa.



Anna Rothfusz '25 and Simon Miller '23 discovered that origami, like music, helped to overcome language barriers with Japanese student musicians.



Oles (L-R) Olivia Simonson '23, Greta Hallberg '23, Mackenzie Farrell '23, Lissi Reid '25 and Arich Fruehling '23 stroll with the group along the edge of the Katsura-gawa River in Arashiyama, Kyoto.



Group dinners provided unique opportunities to enjoy a rich cultural experience while bonding with fellow Bandies.



St. Olaf Japanese professors helped students prepare the public introductions they presented in Japanese.



St. Olaf Band members are greeted by a cheering gauntlet of students after their concert at the Okayama Civic Hall.



Jack Schabert '24, Devonte Merrick '23, Evelyn Miller '25, and friends strike a pose at Fushimi Inari Taisha in Kyoto.

90 PERCENT OF OLES PARTICIPATE IN INTERNSHIPS, RESEARCH,
AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO PREPARE FOR THEIR
FUTURE — WITH ROBUST SUPPORT FROM A ST. OLAF NETWORK
DESIGNED TO MAKE THESE CAREER PATHWAYS POSSIBLE.

CAREER BUILDERS

BY KARI VANDERVEEN

Maia Maras '24 (left) and
Harry Olander '24 (right)
with Erik St. Louis '87 at the
historic Plummer Building
on the Mayo Clinic campus
in Rochester, Minnesota

THERE'S A REASON that the newest issue of the *Princeton Review* ranks St. Olaf College's career services among the top 25 in the nation — No. 21, to be exact.

St. Olaf advisors and career coaches connect students to a menu of more than 5,000 internships, undergraduate research experiences, and other hands-on opportunities at a breadth of organizations ranging from nonprofits to Fortune 500 companies.

These opportunities are supercharged by the power of the Ole network: thousands of St. Olaf alumni who are eager to support current students by sponsoring opportunities, supervising interns, and sharing openings at their organization. Several alumni have funded signature St. Olaf internship programs that give cohorts of students hands-on experience each year in fields like medicine, law, social impact, and business. Even more have shared their expertise and talent through the St. Olaf Connections Program, Ole Career Launcher, and Alumni Career Panels. More than 400 alumni served as career volunteers over the 2022–23 academic year alone.

“Internships are not just opportunities to gain work experience, but invaluable stepping stones toward professional success. They bridge the gap between theory and practice, giving students the

chance to apply what they've learned in the classroom to meaningful projects and challenges,” says Piper Center for Vocation and Career Director Kirsten Cahoon '98. “By integrating internships into the college experience, we empower students to test out potential pathways,

develop essential skills, and build valuable networks that will shape their future careers.”

St. Olaf makes these career pathways possible for all Oles with \$710,000 of funds provided every year through the Piper Center to support unpaid or underpaid internships, as well as funding for on-campus research experiences. The St. Olaf Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (CURI) program gives scores of talented students each summer the opportunity to work alongside faculty members on significant research and creative projects in a wide array of fields.

“By integrating internships into the college experience, we empower students to test out potential pathways, develop essential skills, and build valuable networks that will shape their future careers.”

— PIPER CENTER FOR VOCATION AND CAREER
DIRECTOR KIRSTEN CAHOON '98

“St. Olaf is a leader in ensuring that all students have access to opportunities by building internships and other forms of experiential learning into the general education curriculum,” Cahoon adds.

All of this support is designed to help St. Olaf students develop their four-year path and achieve their future career goals — and Oles are taking advantage of these opportunities in a big way. On average, 90 percent of St. Olaf graduates participated in an internship, research or field experience, community service, or similar experiential learning opportunity while on campus.

In the following pages, current St. Olaf students share where their research experiences and internships are taking them.

Maia Maras '24

PSYCHOLOGY AND NEUROSCIENCE MAJOR

Harry Olander '24

BIOLOGY AND CHEMISTRY MAJOR

Interns in the Mayo Clinic Sleep Behavior and Neurophysiology Research Laboratory founded and directed by Erik St. Louis '87, Professor of Neurology and Medicine in the Mayo Clinic College of Medicine and Science in Rochester, Minnesota, and Research Chair for Mayo Clinic Southwest Wisconsin

“We were able to meet so many amazing physicians and surgeons who showed us incredible things and enabled us to participate in the work, too,” says Maras. “It was truly the experience of a lifetime being able to study REM sleep behavior disorder, sleep science, and polysomnography with Dr. St. Louis at the best hospital in the country — something not everyone can say!”



Rahaf Qarabsa '26

BIOLOGY MAJOR

Collaborative Undergraduate Research and Inquiry (CURI) Program Participant in the Lee Lab of Neural Systems and Behavior at St. Olaf College

“One of the most significant takeaways from this experience is the confidence to accept that we do not know everything. We are constantly in this cycle of questions, trying to find appropriate answers. I have had the opportunity to broaden my understanding of neuroscience research, specifically animal communication. I seek to engage in informal conversations to share and learn biology and neuroscience on a daily basis. This opportunity inspired me to take leadership positions on campus, like becoming the biology representative on the Natural Sciences and Math Student Action Team and an executive member of the Neuro Club, since I believe that being a leader is one step, of many, to becoming an impactful researcher in the future.”



Sardar Qaidi '26 | PSYCHOLOGY MAJOR

Community Development Coordinator Intern for the House of Coexistence in Sinjar, Iraq

“In 2014 ISIS committed a genocide against the people of Sinjar in northern Iraq. Since then, I have dreamed of becoming a psychologist because there were few or none to help people who experienced PTSD. During this internship, we provided victims of ISIS with activities and open discussions where they had the chance to share their experiences in ISIS captivity. This experience helped me develop ideas and incorporate real-life stories into the book I am writing about the 2014 Yazidi Genocide. I'm focused on the stories behind the news — the unheard stories of the Yazidi women survivors.”



Bailey Larson '24

BIOLOGY AND HISTORY MAJOR

Field Paleontology Intern at Ashfall Fossil Beds State Historical Park in northeastern Nebraska

“I hope to go into paleontology in the future, and this opportunity gave me my first hands-on dig experience. My absolute favorite part of this summer was digging up fossils that haven't seen the light of day for 12 million years. I also loved the experience I got with science communication. I had to learn to explain the history and complicated paleontological context of the Ashfall site in a succinct way that was understandable by everyone I spoke with, including the kids visiting the site.”

Bella Marek '25 | MUSIC EDUCATION MAJOR

Artist Planning Intern at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C., working directly with the National Symphony Orchestra

“I am interested in connecting arts administration and music education to help create a stronger future for the arts. Getting this hands-on experience allowed me to see the ins and outs of what it takes to run an orchestra up close. It's been amazing to listen to such a high level of music-making each day!”





Clara Droessler '24

CHEMISTRY MAJOR

Intern in the Medical Oncology Laboratory of Mark Murakami '02 (winner of the 2022 St. Olaf Alumni Achievement Award) at the Dana-Farber Cancer Institute in Boston, Massachusetts

"My internship provided me with the opportunity to experience hematology research and also broadened my understanding of what cancer research looks like. The development of biomarkers, discovery of therapeutic drug molecules, and investigation of human genomics are examples of areas of research that I could pursue in graduate school. I also had opportunities to network with other interns, postdoctoral fellows, and renowned scientists."



Alejandro Ashby '25

POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR

Intern with the Permanent Mission of Barbados to the United Nations in Manhattan, New York

"The United Nations as a multilateral inter-governmental organization is a living, breathing instrument for international relations. This opportunity allowed me to contextualize my studies, and it provided me with a greater understanding of how international systems and international law function. This will be applicable knowledge for any career I pursue in the political space as the world is continually globalizing."



Rinchen Sakya '24 | BIOLOGY MAJOR

North Star STEM Alliance Biological Research and Environmental Conservation Fellowship at La Selva Biological Station in Sarapiquí, Costa Rica

"Costa Rica has lots of biodiversity, which makes it a great place for studying different species of animals and how they interact with each other in their natural environments. My career goal is to be able to become a successful pathologist assistant. Learning more about the skills and the different approaches to biological research has helped me gain a deeper understanding of the biology field and will make me a more competitive candidate when applying for jobs or graduate programs."



Autumn Pozniak '24 | BIOLOGY AND CREATIVE WRITING MAJOR

Forest Technician for the U.S. Forest Service in Walden, Colorado

"I am extremely passionate about environmental conservation, policy, and sustainability. While my ultimate goal is to pursue a graduate degree in wildlife biology/ecology, working for the Forest Service in the recreation and trails department gave me valuable experience with hands-on field work and team leadership, while also opening up a network full of professionals with varied interests and expertise in the field of environmental management."



Charlotte Thomson '24

BIOLOGY AND POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR

Fund for American Studies International Affairs
Summer Academic Internship in Washington, D.C.

"At the NGO Bank Information Center, I was able to attend, network, and contribute policy analysis to various World Bank-related meetings, including one at the U.S. Institute of Peace. Through the connections I made during my internship this summer, I was able to successfully get into a yearlong Civic Leaders Fellowship at the Ronald Reagan Institute that I'm doing this year while taking my usual array of classes at St. Olaf!"

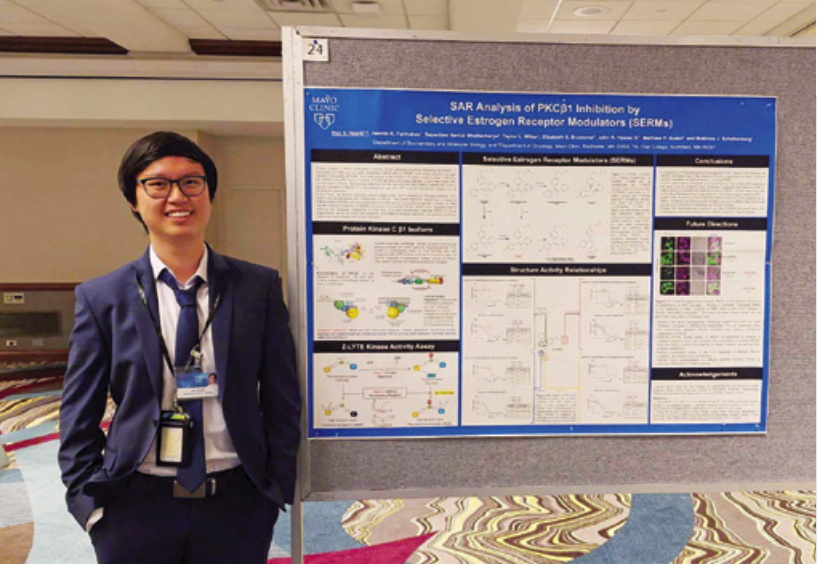


Andrew Mazariegos-Ovalle '24

STUDIO ART AND ENVIRONMENTAL
STUDIES MAJOR

Ryan Learning Center Summer Intern
at the Art Institute of Chicago

"I am interested in the power of studio art to connect audiences — and especially youth — with important topics such as climate change. Through this opportunity, I learned the necessary skills to start my own organization for promoting accessibility to the arts and providing resources to neighborhoods that lack an influence of art."



Huy Vo Huynh '25 | CHEMISTRY AND BIOLOGY MAJOR

Summer Undergraduate Research Fellowship (SURF) in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology at Mayo Clinic, a position supported by SURF Program Director Bruce Horazdovsky '81, in Rochester, Minnesota

"I got to work on my own project independently and study how a specific enzyme could contribute to different cellular pathways, of which alteration can lead to cancer. I also did practical work on medication and was actively shown by my mentor how they function in metabolism. The Mayo Clinic SURF Program also held a weekly seminar series describing professors' research projects and current students' graduate school experiences, which I found very fascinating and helpful. This research experience helped me present and communicate my scientific results with top experts and professors in public and professional settings."



Lily Moreschi '24

DANCE AND QUANTITATIVE ECONOMICS MAJOR

Philanthropy Intern at Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival in Becket, Massachusetts

"I learned so much about cultivating individual support, writing grants, and executing capital campaigns. I hope to work in fundraising for a dance organization after graduation, and my internship made me feel connected and prepared to do so. The most incredible part of this summer was the opportunity to be constantly surrounded by dancers and artists from all parts of the world."



Clemente Arcuch Puig '24

QUANTITATIVE ECONOMICS MAJOR

Business Development and Mergers and Acquisitions Intern at Refresh Mental Health/United Health Group, a position supported by Chris Winge '17, a CFO within UnitedHealth, in Jacksonville Beach, Florida

"Getting exposure to multiple aspects of the corporate world, from developing skills in Excel and Salesforce to learning from fellow interns and supervisors, was very exciting. This internship helped me shape my career interests and granted me more clarity for my job search this fall."



Anna Secor '24 | NURSING MAJOR

Mayo Clinic Nursing Internship in Rochester, Minnesota

"Through this internship I gained over 370 hours of direct patient care experience with a registered nurse at Mayo Clinic. I was able to work with my preceptor to provide pulmonary care, promote independence in activities of daily living, and give patients emotional support along with education and discharge planning. As a nursing major, this internship gave me confidence in all the skills I will be performing as a nurse post-grad!"

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ST. OLAF INTERNSHIP AND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES, OR TO SHARE YOUR OWN EXPERIENCE, SCAN THIS QR CODE OR VISIT stolaf.edu/admissions/ole-career-building



Chau Truong '24 often heard her classmates at St. Olaf complain, "Why do we have to drive 40 minutes for bubble tea?" So she took matters into her own hands in 2021 and opened Tin Tea in Northfield.

Photo by Alex Kormann
STAR TRIBUNE/GETTY IMAGES



CHAU TRUONG '24 BALANCES HER WORK AS A FULL-TIME ST. OLAF STUDENT WITH OPERATING THE AREA'S PREMIER BUBBLE TEA SHOP.

Tea Time

By Fenton Krupp '24



Chau Truong '24 knows the power of putting entrepreneurial skills into action.

As a sophomore at St. Olaf, she opened Tin Tea, a Northfield bubble tea shop that serves milk and fruit teas, boba teas with tapioca pearls, spring rolls, and bánh mì sandwiches.

"The brightly colored, Instagram-friendly shop was an instant hit," noted a recent *Minneapolis Star Tribune* profile of Truong's success.

Truong says she didn't initially plan to open the shop while she was a college student, but then she found the perfect space. With the support of her family, she rolled up her sleeves and began to make her dream a reality. It wasn't easy. During Tin Tea's first year, Truong worked every hour the store was open — 70 hours a week — while maintaining a 3.88 GPA as a full-time student at St. Olaf.

For Truong, Tin Tea isn't just a business — it's a platform to celebrate her Vietnamese culture and inspire others, especially young girls and BIPOC children. "Growing up in Faribault and Northfield, I didn't have a lot of role models who looked like me, so it was really hard for me to believe I could become a successful business-woman of color," she told the *Star Tribune*. "I not only look at my younger self for motivation to work hard, but I hope just to inspire all the little girls to be able to have the confidence in themselves to do something like this."

In addition to her entrepreneurial journey, Truong has been an active and engaged leader on the St. Olaf campus. She has served on the Student Senate, the college's Presidential Transition Team, and is now serving as vice president of the Student Government Association. Her dedication to making a positive impact also extends to the wider community. Truong serves on the Board of Directors for the Northfield Chamber of Commerce, where she helps to cultivate a better business environment in Northfield.

"Waking up every morning and remembering that I am extremely privileged to pursue my education and run a business simultaneously reminds me that I have a special place in this community and in the greater world," Truong says. "Those reminders drive me to work at full capacity, each and every day." 🍵

IF YOU GO: Tin Tea is located at 2010 Jefferson Road in Northfield. More information at tinteamn.com or [@tintea_mn](https://www.instagram.com/tintea_mn) on Instagram.

The Neurophysiology Lab

REGENTS HALL OF NATURAL AND MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES



FARADAY CAGES
Above each vibration isolation table is a faraday cage used to isolate electrical noise from neural recordings.

MICROMANIPULATORS
Mechanical devices that allow students to finely control the positioning of recording electrodes with micrometer accuracy.

STEREO MICROSCOPES
Each station is equipped with a stereo microscope for viewing stimulating locations and recording locations in experimental preparations.

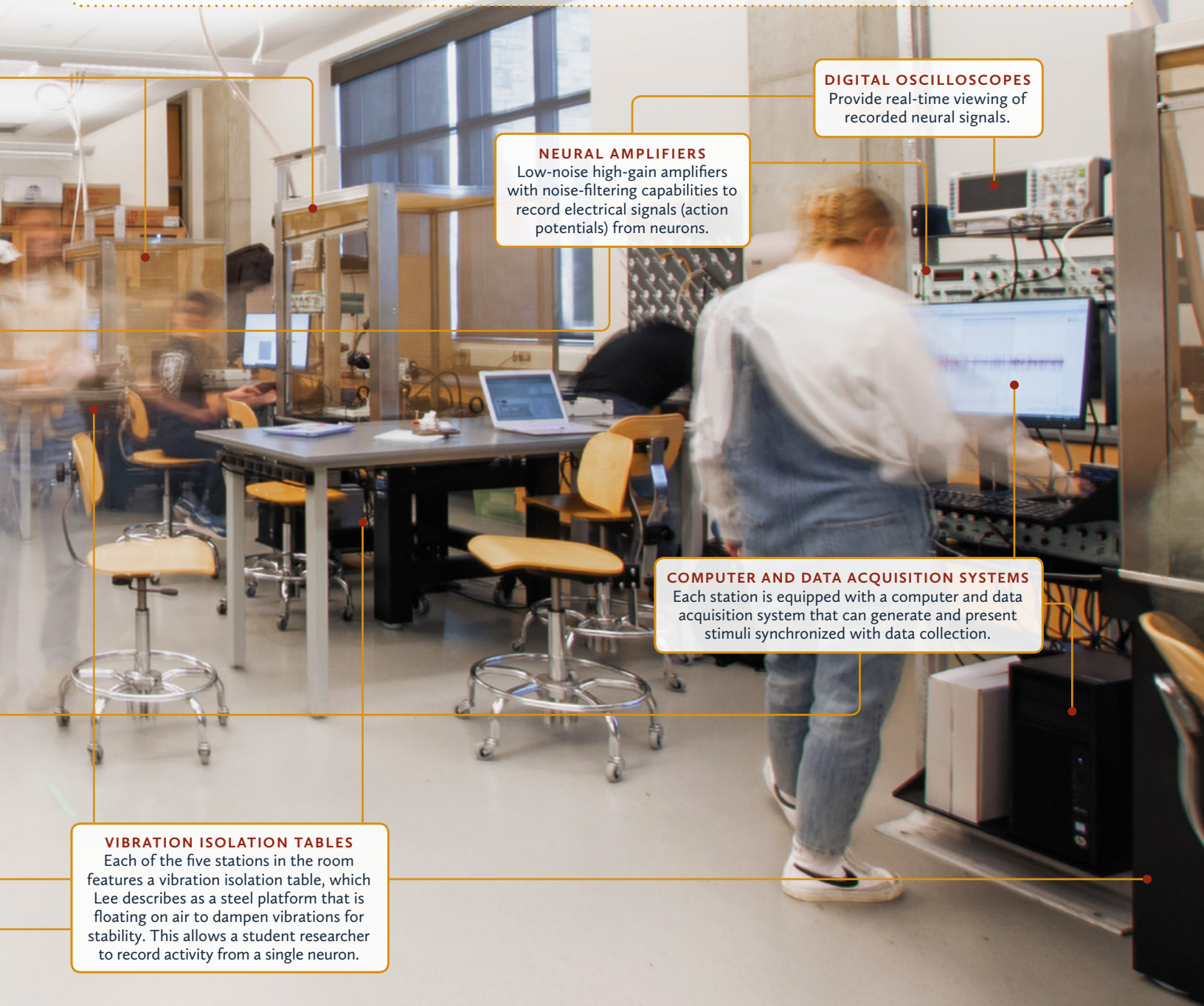
KEY FEATURES OF THE NEUROPHYSIOLOGY LAB

WHEN ST. OLAF ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR of Biology Norman Lee received a nearly \$1 million National Science Foundation (NSF) CAREER award last year, he began collaborating with Associate Professor of Biology and Physics James Demas and other faculty affiliated with the Neuroscience Program to design a high-tech space for hands-on learning and research.

“With the grant funding and additional support from the college, we were able to acquire very sophisticated hardware for data collection and experiments,” Lee says.

The result is a highly advanced electrophysiology and molecular neuroscience lab in Regents Hall of Natural and Mathematical Sciences. St. Olaf students not only have the opportunity to take courses like *Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience* in the space, but they can also gain high-impact research experiences while working alongside faculty members like Lee, whose work has gained international recognition.

Lee’s research focuses on how the acoustic parasitoid fly *Ormia ochracea* can recognize and locate the calling songs of its host, the field cricket. Host crickets on the Hawaiian Islands have recently evolved novel cricket songs to avoid being heard by the flies, which is now a textbook example of rapid evolution in an animal communication system. In the Lee Lab of Neural Systems and Behavior, student researchers are investigating how *Ormia ochracea* are adapting and responding to these novel cricket songs. “This new space will help the Lee Lab achieve research goals outlined in our CAREER grant, and it will help train students for the STEM workforce,” Lee says.



DIGITAL OSCILLOSCOPES
Provide real-time viewing of recorded neural signals.

NEURAL AMPLIFIERS
Low-noise high-gain amplifiers with noise-filtering capabilities to record electrical signals (action potentials) from neurons.

COMPUTER AND DATA ACQUISITION SYSTEMS
Each station is equipped with a computer and data acquisition system that can generate and present stimuli synchronized with data collection.

VIBRATION ISOLATION TABLES
Each of the five stations in the room features a vibration isolation table, which Lee describes as a steel platform that is floating on air to dampen vibrations for stability. This allows a student researcher to record activity from a single neuron.

In addition to the features shown in the photo, the Neurophysiology Lab also includes **microelectrode pullers**, used to fabricate glass microelectrodes to record from populations of neurons or individual neurons; a **fume hood**, used for immunohistochemistry experiments and histology work to visualize neurons; and a **technical demonstration station**, equipped with a microscope and camera imaging system that allows students to view demonstrations of procedures on a large digital display.

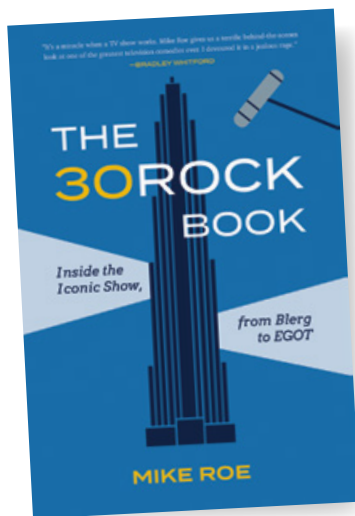
'There's never been a better time to tell a story that's unique'

Mike Roe '03 shares how he developed a career covering arts and entertainment in Hollywood and ended up writing the definitive book on the iconic show *30 Rock*. | By Fenton Krupp '24

IN SCREENWRITING, THEY ALWAYS SAY 'Write what you know,'" says Mike Roe '03, who has spent decades covering arts and entertainment in Hollywood. "But what's really behind that is 'Write what you're fascinated by.' Know your work, know it really well, and just follow that fascination."

Roe has followed his fascination all the way to writing the definitive book on a television program that fascinated the country: *30 Rock*. Fifteen years after the show premiered, Roe published *The 30 Rock Book: Inside the Iconic Show, from Blerg to EGOT*. Through more than 50 original interviews with cast, crew, and critics, Roe tells the story of how *30 Rock* broke boundaries and became a cult classic.

Bradley Whitford, an actor known for his own roles in powerful shows like *The West Wing* and *The Handmaid's Tale*, said in his praise for *The 30 Rock Book*, "It's a miracle when a TV show works. Mike Roe gives us a terrific behind-the-scenes look at one of the greatest television comedies ever."



Roe is no newcomer to the Los Angeles arts and entertainment scene. He's written sketches, monologues, columns, and news articles, and he's been a journalist, an author, and a screenwriter. He recently shifted from covering arts and entertainment at a National Public Radio affiliate to become a lead editor at *TheWrap*, a Hollywood trade journal covering the entertainment industry and the media. In all of his pursuits, including those that won him an L.A. Press Club Award, Roe is driven by telling stories that he — and only he — can tell.

"Now is a really great time to be creative and tell unique stories. A lot of folks in journalism and other industries are worried about artificial intelligence journalism being written by robots. I think that is making the importance of unique perspectives and creative, unique stories even more important," Roe says. "There's never been a better time to tell a story that's unique and that only you can tell."

Roe shares how his time on the Hill helped shape his journey and how he's melded his passion for writing with his interests in telling fascinating (and inimitable) stories.

What stands out to you from your time at St. Olaf?

I was a history major, but it was almost by default — I love history, but changed my major several times. I got involved in a lot of student activities. I think I was involved in too many of them — I counted up once, and I had like 19 meetings a week outside of classes, which is too many.

Wow.

But I was very involved and it was a good chance to figure out what really meant something to me. The organization that I always think about and I still use in my daily life was Care Student Ministry. We would answer prayer requests people put in. It really taught me how much we all just want somebody to listen to us.

I think that's really served me as a journalist, just to listen to people and not try to interject too much of myself when I'm connecting with them.

What did you do after graduation?

My original plan was to be a pastor. I had applied to some seminaries, and a pastor who wrote my recommendation forgot to send it in on time. The seminary I most wanted to go to told me that they couldn't consider me for the next school year.

That led to a lot of reconsideration and the proverbial path not taken. The thing that really changed me was this student film I volunteered on back when I was living in Seattle. It taught me how great it was to work really hard at something you care about, and how meaningful that can be. It got me out of being depressed and sad about my life not going perfectly. I found a job within a few months after that and moved to Los Angeles.

What made you want to write the definitive book about *30 Rock*?

I love the show. I did a lot of comedy writing in L.A. when I first moved out here. I was involved with the local improv scene. I always thought *30 Rock* was genius. Tina Fey is a writing genius.

Now is specifically the time for this book. There are a number of things that do not hold up; our society has changed. The show uses blackface on multiple occasions. It's a show that has a number of problematic elements.

I spoke with *30 Rock*'s stars, guest stars, writers, directors, crew, and more. I could hear the struggle that a lot of them felt when I asked about areas where the show fell short.

What in those interviews stuck out to you?

The prop master, Kevin Ladson — a Black man — shared with me his complex feelings around the way the show used blackface. He thought some of it worked in the context of making a greater social point, but he also shared the moment that sent him going back to his office to cry and wondering how it could have made it to being filmed. But he felt that he didn't have anyone to talk to, because the people in power weren't people of color, and they were the ones making the choice to write and feature moments like that.

That was true with a lot of folks I talked with — the show was so well made and the writing was great, but it was pushing boundaries. With some of those jokes, we probably should have known better at the time that the comedy was hurtful, but a lot of people didn't feel comfortable sharing that.

Those interviews showed me how complicated making creative work can be. It's also part of why it's important to keep making new art — work that speaks to where we're at today. So much is available to us on streaming services, on YouTube, etc., but we're always going to need work that speaks to our current moment and that evolves with us.

What about your time at St. Olaf helped prepare you to write this book?

I think the thing that I really took away from St. Olaf was developing my character, and that really did help with this book. I'm not trying to take anyone down with this book, but I'm trying to offer a real guide to the show. It's a guide, it's cultural criticism, and it's a sort of exploration. I brought my own perspective to it and that wouldn't have happened without St. Olaf.

What else are you working on these days?

I'm working at *TheWrap*, which covers the entertainment industry. I love having conversations with smart people about their work. It's one of the things I really loved doing at *NPR*. I love telling stories. I love sharing information with people. Reaching people now is harder than ever, but it's also a fun challenge. Especially right now,

with all the strikes in Hollywood and their aftermath, it's a fascinating time to be covering all of that.

As you look to the future, what are you hoping to do next?

I hope that my work in journalism continues to make a positive impact. I want to help make Hollywood a better place to work by covering the issues that are going on, spreading more ideas about diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility.

I'm Hawaiian and Puerto Rican on my mom's side, and I saw the struggles she went through in her life. That had a big impact on me. As part of both my general ethics and a matter of faith, I think it's all of our responsibility to help make things better for each other.

As a journalist, I've always wanted to spread information and help people see the truth by putting the facts in front of them. Part of my work as a journalist is doing stories where I help surface facts that people don't want surfaced. I always think about the journalistic aphorism that we're supposed to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable. Doing journalism that speaks truth to power is vital.

Ultimately, I just want to have a positive influence on the world and on the people I'm close to. And I would love to continue to have more peace and confidence in my own life.

Do you have any advice for Oles who are inspired by your story?

You shouldn't be afraid to try something new. I started college as a music major, thought I was going to be a pastor, wound up in journalism, and might make more of a pivot to screenwriting in the future — so who knows? 🦁



Mike Roe '03 on the steps of the St. Olaf Theater Building while visiting campus for his 20th class reunion in June.

PHOTO BY MARCEL HONES '22

Oles, submit your class news online!

stolaf.edu/alumni/share-your-news

It's easier than ever to share your latest news, photos, and updated contact information! Questions? Email alum_office@stolaf.edu or call 507-786-3028 or 888-865-6537.

1950s

Herbert Stellner '50, former senior vice president of Marquette Bank and development officer for Mayo Foundation, has passed away. Stellner received a Distinguished Alumni Award in 2001 for his professional accomplishments, volunteer service, and involvement with St. Olaf College. ■

Ellen Syrdal Erdahl '57 passed away on June 6, 2023, three and a half months prior to the death of her husband of 65 years, **Arlen Erdahl '53**. A gifted pianist and singer who sang in the St. Olaf Choir, service was her way of life. She drove the elderly to appointments, taught citizenship classes, helped refugees, and gave her time and talent to the Lutheran church, all the while raising six children and preparing her husband's campaign materials during his years in politics, from positions in the Minnesota state legislature to the U.S. Congress.

1960s

The Minnesota Dental Association (MDA) was honored to present **Jerome (Jerry) Appeldoorn '67** with its 2023 Humanitarian Service Award.

Appeldoorn received the St. Olaf Distinguished Service Award in 2019 along with his colleagues **Douglas Tate '70 P'06**, **Robert Gehringer '71**, and **John Mittelsteadt '81 P'10, '12, '15** for developing and sustaining since 2005 the St. Olaf Peruvian Medical Experience. The MDA noted that during his 50-plus years of dentistry, "Appeldoorn has been a generous volunteer of his time and talents, providing humanitarian care locally and abroad. He has been valuable, too, in providing mentorship to pre-dental and dental students through his efforts at St. Olaf and Carleton colleges, and as a clinical assistant professor at the University of Minnesota School of Dentistry. In addition, he served as an officer in the U.S. Air Force Dental Corps." More recently, Appeldoorn has been instrumental in initiating and volunteering in a program for free local dental care through Health Finders, a nonprofit health program in Rice County.

■ Educator, writer, and 1995 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient **Kathryn Wilker Megyeri '65** writes: "I was deeply saddened to learn about the passing of **Albert Quie '50**. He was such a gentleman. He welcomed me so warmly when I arrived in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1963 while still a student at St. Olaf. ❷ This picture of us still hangs in my office." ■ **Beth Shoulberg Johnson '68** writes, "Our entire family enjoyed 10 days in Norway this summer, traveling from Bergen to Oslo. As I looked at this family picture, I was once again reminded that we adults are ALL Oles!" ❸

Pictured (L-R): **Kambria Shroder Johnson '99**, Shepard Johnson, **Ben Johnson '00**, Rainer Johnson, **Chuck Ohm '97**, Cora Ohm, **Sarah Johnson Ohm '98**, Preston Ohm, Hudson Ohm, **Kristin Johnson Weight '94**, **Beth Shoulberg Johnson '68**, Martha Weight, Otto Weight, **Scott Johnson '67**, August Weight, and **Chris Weight '94**.

Norman Van Vector '79 and **Scott Hed '90** were invited to the White House Rose Garden in May for an event celebrating the Biden administration's conservation achievements, including protecting the world's most productive and valuable wild salmon fishery in Bristol Bay, Alaska.

It's an effort that both Van Vector and Hed have been deeply involved in. Hed founded the Sportsman's Alliance for Alaska and has spent decades talking to hunters, anglers, and sporting-goods companies across the United States about the dangers the proposed Pebble Mine posed to one of America's last wilderness frontiers. Van Vector, a longtime Bristol Bay fisherman who served as CEO of the Bristol Bay Economic Development Corporation, has been vocal about the potential risks the mine posed to Bristol Bay's salmon runs and the fishing industry they support.

"Scott and I came at this from different perspectives and backgrounds but with a common passion to protect one of the greatest natural wonders and amazing natural resources on our planet," Van Vector says.

The Rose Garden celebration was "surreal," Hed says. "To finally reach the finish line and have the Environmental Protection Agency use the Clean Water Act to stop the Pebble Mine was an incredible team achievement and one of the biggest fishery conservation victories of our lifetimes. I am quite certain that this is the most meaningful and impactful thing that I have ever been a part of. It feels pretty good."

Read more about this work in "Call of the Wild" at stolaf.edu/magazine/spring2012.



1970s

Rev. Cynthia Gano Lindner '78 received the Distinguished Alumna Award of the Disciples Divinity House of the University of Chicago in August. Having spent 21 years as the director of ministry studies and clinical faculty for preaching and pastoral care in the Divinity School of the University of Chicago, Lindner has nurtured, trained, and inspired generations of emerging religious leaders. ■ **Glen Jacobsen '79** writes, "After 35 years as a prosecuting attorney for various jurisdictions in Minnesota, most recently 20 years in Renville County, I have retired. My wife, Donna, and I have purchased land in Belize, where we are building a home." ■ Class of 1979 roommates and lifelong friends (L-R) **Robin Schultz Madsen**, **Nancy Buell Reasland**, **Eileen Daley**, and **Nan Haugen Hoerr** ❹

reunited recently at Robin's daughter's wedding. "Our rigorous undergrad preparation led to all four of us enjoying four-plus-decades-long nursing careers," Reasland says. "Thank you, St. Olaf, and the excellent nursing faculty. Um! Yah! Yah!"

1980s

Bradley Ellingboe '80 has a new dramatic cantata, "A Place Called Home," that premiered at Carnegie Hall on April 29, 2023. With a newly written libretto by Charles Anthony Silvestri, the 45-minute work is scored for mixed chorus, solo quartet, and chamber ensemble and is a plea to care for Earth in a time of climate uncertainty. ❺ Oles singing in the premiere included **Karen Ellingboe '80** and **Larry Rasmussen '61**. ■ **Jeffrey Hayman '82** was appointed in March 2023 as the first non-executive



chairman of R&Q Insurance Holdings Ltd, a global specialty insurance company with operations in Bermuda, London, Continental Europe, and the U.S.

■ **Randall Cirkseña Jr. '83** received his Doctor of Ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky. His dissertation topic was "The Best Practices of Attracting and Ministering to Non-European Immigrants in Minnesota." ■

■ **Kim Hoggatt Krumwiede '84** was appointed to the position of dean for the School of Health Professions at the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. ■ **William Hudson '87** was elected chair of the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate Department at St. Cloud State University. ■ **David G. Anderson '89** writes, "A recent highlight of my career occurred when I gave a speech at the United Nations in Geneva ❶ on the important topic of sustainability/antitrust in developing economies. I have advised the UN, in particular the UN Conference on Trade and Development, on international law and policy aimed at emerging and developing economies/ states, and my speech in July was the highest honor they can give a private sector person appearing on the main stage to deliver a speech."

1990s

■ **Jeff Wehling '90** writes, "I am humbled and honored to announce that in May 2023, I was elected to the board of directors of CROSS Services, a nonprofit social services organization based in Rogers, Minn., serving individuals and families in need in the northwestern Twin Cities metro area. I have been volunteering at the organization since April 2022." ■ **Mary LaGarde '91** shares that this June, three Native women leading tribal organizations in Indian Country had the opportunity to gather for lunch. ❷ LaGarde (right) is the executive director of the American Indian Center in Minneapolis, **Louise Matson '89** (left) is the executive director of the Division of Indian Work in Minneapolis, and **Wendy Helgemo '91** (center) is a policy advocate who has dedicated her career to serving American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians in the public, nonprofit, and tribal sectors and protecting tribal sovereignty. Both Matson and Helgemo are the recipients of St. Olaf alumni awards — in 2022 and 2018, respectively. ■ **Kimberly Meinecke '92** writes, "I was awarded a Partners in Justice award in June from Lutheran Community Services Northwest as a volunteer with Sexual Assault Crisis Advocacy. I serve one shift a week answering the crisis hotline and being with survivors of sexual assault when they are at the hospital for a sexual assault exam." ■ **Bob Kuehl '94** joined friends from around the world in Oxford, England, in July to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the semester they spent together as part of a study-abroad program at the Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies



A New Landscape for Student Housing

In crafting the outdoor space for the Ole Avenue Project, St. Olaf turned to landscape architect Melissa Erikson '89 | By Kiera O'Higgins '25

WHEN THE OLE AVENUE PROJECT OPENED last fall, a lot of the focus was on the interior of the new residence hall and townhouses along St. Olaf Avenue. But this spring and summer, another aspect of the project began to take root thanks to the work of landscape architect Melissa Erikson '89.

The principal and director of community design services at MIG, a firm based in California, Erikson led the design of the outdoor space around the Ole Avenue Project. Her work helped not only create a beautiful new gateway to St. Olaf on the eastern edge of campus, but also ensured that students looking out of the building's floor-to-ceiling windows can feel the restorative energy of the surrounding greenery.

"The power of the outdoor environment to shape what you're doing indoors is really critical," Erikson says. "The benefits of a well-designed space on people's ability to take in information, learn, and have critical thought cannot be underplayed."

In designing the Ole Avenue Project landscaping, Erikson prioritized creating outdoor spaces for students to gather and soak up the sun, even in the winter. She also paid special attention to the sight lines out of windows, ensuring greenery was always visible, and pushed for a higher level of planting than is typical for the rest of campus.

"For you to be your most productive self, you have to have some ability to realize you're connected and part of something bigger," says Erikson. "I hope when the Gingkos are leafing out, everyone is just filled with some lovely joy."

After majoring in studio art and psychology at St. Olaf, Erikson earned a master's degree in landscape architecture from the University of California, Berkeley in 2001. She says her St. Olaf education provided the perfect preparation for a career that requires analysis of everything from the sociology of how groups interact with spaces, to the psychology of individuals, to geology, geometry, biology, and design.

"I am a quintessential liberal arts person," she says. "And I think landscape architecture is the quintessential liberal arts career." 🍷

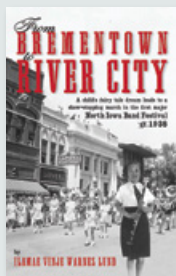
affiliated with Keble College. ❸ "My experience recently, as well as 30 years ago, highlights the genuine benefits of participating in St. Olaf study-abroad programs." ■ **Jane Prine Rydholm '95**

recently accepted a position as executive director of the Northfield-based nonprofit Believet Canine Service Partners. Believet provides custom-trained service dogs, free of charge, to disabled veterans.



On the Shelf

BOOKS BY ST. OLAF COLLEGE ALUMNI, FACULTY, AND STAFF



From Brementown to River City (Cream & Bread Press, 2023), by **Ilmae Vinje Lund '49**

Oh No! Where Do Kites Go? (Amazon, 2022), by **Kendel Ohlrogge '69**

A Bomber Pilot's Story: The George H. Neilson World War II Memoirs (AuthorHouse, 2016), by **Bob Neilson '72**

These Are the Plundersers: How Private Equity Runs — and Wrecks — America (Simon & Schuster, 2023), by **Gretchen Morgenson '76** and Joshua Rosner

The Cloud Story: A Bedtime Meditation for Children (Halo Publishing International, 2023), by **Elliot Herland '80**

Racing the Great White Way: Black Performance, Eugene O'Neill, and the Transformation of Broadway (University of Michigan Press, 2023), by **Katie Johnson '85**

Learning to Cross Divides: Examining Critical Multicultural and Bilingual Schools (Routledge, 2023), by **Matthew Knoester '96** and Assaf Meshulam

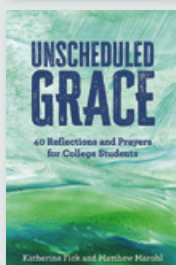
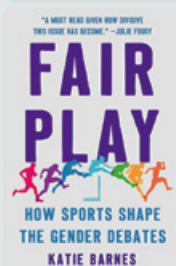
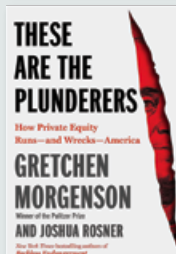
College Sophomore Ready: Expert Advice for Parents to Navigate the Sophomore Year of College (Parent Ready, 2023), by **Chelsea Petree '05**

Parsing the Echoes (Main Street Rag Publishing, 2023), by **Dane Hamann '06**

Fair Play: How Sports Shape the Gender Debates (St. Martin's Press, 2023), by **Katie Barnes '13**

Unscheduled Grace: 40 Reflections and Prayers for College Students (Sparkhouse Congregational, 2023), by **St. Olaf College Pastor Matthew Marohl** and **Associate College Pastor Katie Fick**

Rick's Adventures in Paris (By All Means Graphics, 2023), by **St. Olaf Professor Emeritus of English Eric Nelson**



■ **Mary Rosenbloom '97** writes, "In September of 2022 I was diagnosed with acute promyelocytic leukemia after a rapid onset of symptoms. I was hospitalized at City of Hope for seven weeks. ❶ During my time in the hospital we were encouraged to walk, and I used that time to train for the Los Angeles Marathon. I am now cancer-free, and was able to complete the Los Angeles Marathon this past March! I couldn't have done it, and I wouldn't be here today, without the lifesaving gift of blood and platelet donations." ■ **Daniel Schwandt '99** writes, "I completed my Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ performance from the University of Notre Dame in May. My doctoral research focused on the life and organ works of David N. Johnson, St. Olaf College organist and Music Department chair from 1960–67."

2000S

Joshua Silva '01 was recently promoted to vice president of marketing at Middleby Outdoor, a leading outdoor cooking company. ■ **Jen Smith Shaffer '01** ❷ has accepted a position as both

coordinator for the Association of Professional Genealogists, the largest network of genealogy professionals in the world. She will be the organization representative at events. Shaffer continues to be a full-time professional genealogist and owner of The Formidable Genealogist, LLC. ■ **Sarah Schuurman '02**, who lives in Jerusalem with her son, Noah, was visited by longtime friends **Autumn Schreiber Hubbell '02**, **Nathan Hubbell '02**, and their sons, Wilder and Micah, as well as **Leslie Nechville Schmitt '02**, **Lionel Schmitt**, and their children, William and Olivia. ❸ The group traveled together to Petra, Jordan. ■ **Mikkel Hong '04** is involved in a project that is aiming for a new approach to land use and is also cleaning up over two tons of garbage from a central location in Bellingham, Wash. This transformation of vacant land into an 18-hole disc golf course is part of a public/private partnership and has been featured in the *Bellingham Herald* and the *Cascadia Daily News*. ■ **April Wright '09** was promoted to assistant dean of biology at Southeastern Louisiana University, where she is a tenured associate professor.

Buay Tut '14 spoke alongside world leaders at the United Nations General Assembly in New York City this September. He shared his work as the head of exploration at the United Nations Development Programme Accelerator Lab, an agency that helps countries eliminate poverty and achieve sustainable economic growth and human development. While there he had the opportunity to connect with **Mary Maker '23**, who is using her role as a United Nations Goodwill Ambassador to raise awareness about the refugee crisis and ensure refugees have access to education. "As a former refugee and first-generation college graduate, this was a full-circle moment from refugee camp to the United Nations General Assembly," Tut says. "I'll forever champion bottom-up, grassroots, everyday innovation, and the wisdom of the many, not the few. I believe when we support the lowest and most underserved in our communities, society as a whole rises. This bottom-up approach results in community-owned, durable, and sustainable development. Innovation, creativity, and tech coupled with localized insights and data can help us accelerate development gains and efficiently use development funds!"





2010S

Joseph Kemper '11 has joined the choral faculty at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., as the new assistant professor of choral music and conductor of the Concordia Chapel Choir and Kantorei. **1** Kemper was previously a visiting professor of music and director of choirs at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. ■ **April Ryun Kim '11**, **2** an assistant professor of music at St. Olaf, held a Korean Composers Festival on campus in September to raise awareness and build more interest in music by Korean and Korean Diaspora composers and their works. ■ **Noah Mitchell '12** will join the faculty at the University of Chicago in spring 2024, noting, "My lab will study morphogenesis, bridging approaches from physics and developmental biology." ■ **Justina Stern '14** has been accepted to the Masters of Speech Pathology program at the University of Oregon. ■ **Noelle McCabe '15** has been promoted to patron communications director at Seattle Repertory Theatre. **3** She is in her eighth year at the theatrical nonprofit. ■ **Henry Burt '16** is entering his fourth of five years as a Ph.D. student in pastoral theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. **4** Burt published his first independent article in the *Journal of Pastoral Psychology* in December 2022 titled, "Running and Righteousness: Fitness as a Variety of Religious Experience," and also is a few chapters into his dissertation, which focuses on pastoral care of those suffering from "clinical perfectionism." ■ "Holy Moly! That's a lot of Oles," writes **Hannah Brown '17**, who gathered at the 2023 Academy for Diagnostics and Laboratory Medicine Annual Meeting with **Stanley Lo '85**, **Anna Merrill '10**, and **Ian Gunsolus '11**. **5**

2020S

Gretchen Ellis '23 completed an internship with the Washington, D.C. Office of U.S. Senator Amy Klobuchar this summer that she says was "amazing, interesting, and a wonderful learning experience." **6** I worked on agriculture policy, something completely out of my comfort zone, but I learned so much (especially about sugar beets). I saw every senator, rode on an elevator with Sen. Sanders, and talked briefly with Sen. Kaine and Sen. Booker." Following her time working with Minnesota's senior senator, she began a two-year Master of Philosophy program in Comparative Social Policy at the University of Oxford. 🍷



Portraits of America

After developing a career in professional photography that has taken him around the globe, William Taufic '77 returned to his hometown to showcase the power of diversity. | By Luanga Junior Kasanga '25

WILLIAM TAUFIC '77 GREW UP in Austin, Minnesota, a small meat-packing town best known for being the birthplace of SPAM. Yet when he returned to his hometown in 2017 after spending decades developing a career as a professional photographer that took him around the world, he was struck by how much the community had changed. A substantial number of immigrants, refugees, and other newcomers have made Austin their home, hailing from countries such as South Sudan, Mexico, Benin, Myanmar, and numerous others. Together they have created a community rich with diversity, where more than 40 languages are spoken.

"What's more, the town has welcomed the newcomers from all over the world with open arms, helping them to become part of the community and eventually new Americans," Taufic writes on his photography site. "I am the son of an immigrant, who was the son of immigrants. Most of us here in our beloved United States of America, unless you have Native American roots, are immigrants. Unfortunately, in recent years we have become not so united."

What he saw in the way that Austin has embraced its diversity inspired him to create a photography project titled *Our Austin, Our America* that features portraits of community members paired with personal narratives. The Minnesota State Capitol Art Gallery displayed his exhibit through this fall, and Taufic published a book highlighting the project that is available for purchase online at Sweet Reads, a locally owned bookstore in Austin, and at the Minnesota Historical Society.



Read more about Taufic's time at St. Olaf and his career path at stolaf.edu/magazine or by scanning this QR code.

"I am hopeful that what I have done will help other communities understand that there is nothing to fear," he says. "The more you welcome people regardless of the color of their skin, the more likely that your community will be successful and diverse and have a richer culture." 🍷



Future Oles

Erik Hadland '80 and Natsuko Hadland, a son, Ragnar Matthew Blackburn '95 and Mary Blackburn, a daughter, Abigail ¹ Andrew Bernard '04 and Stacy Bernard, a daughter, Quinley ² Ryan Drewitz '05 and Lauren Drewitz, a daughter, Sophia ³ Jennie Hedberg Fleurant '08 and Will Fleurant, a son, Jack ⁴ Martina Link Richardson '09 and James Richardson, a daughter, Annabelle ⁵ Rachael Price Seddighzadeh '10 and Kevin Seddighzadeh, a daughter, Eloise ⁶ Claire Shannon Knoploh '12 and Grant Knoploh '12, a son, Charles ⁷ Julie Rouse Coffman '13 and Kristofer Coffman '13, a son, Herbert Julia Ellis Rodd '13 and AJ Rodd '11, a son, Anthony ⁸ Amy Lohmann Hahn '14 and David Hahn '14, a son, Leif Mitch Rennie '14 and Siri Rennie, a daughter, Sofia ⁹ Alyssa Hare Bentsen '15 and Geoffrey Bentsen '15, a son, Oliver Michaela Liesenberg '15 and Alec Holen, a son, Henrik Emily Een Varley '16 and Eric Varley '15, a son, Maxwell Sarah Bauer Edwards '17 and Griffin Edwards '17, a daughter, Eliza

Weddings

Dorothy Ambroz Parker '88 and William Parker, Aug. 20, 2022 ¹ Peter Schulz '95 and Elise Cleva, June 18, 2023 Jacob Burkman '02 and Sarah Lofgren, May 28, 2022 Ben Clifford '08 and Julia Cai, Jan. 21, 2022 ² Krista Bryz-Gornia '15 and Dain Brademan '15, Oct. 8, 2022 Lauren McDevitt '15 and Raffi Triggiano '15, June 18, 2022 Maddy Meyer Borchardt '20 and Alex Borchardt '20, Aug. 13, 2022 ³ Hayley Mans Morkeberg '20 and Olaf Morkeberg '21, May 12, 2023 ⁴ Jenna Kallestad Weber '20 and Oscar Weber '20, Aug. 12, 2023 ⁵

Deaths

LaVonne "Bonnie" Sherwood Emmons '40, Rushford, Minn., June 26, 2023 June Erickson Gornitzka '40, Minneapolis, Aug. 28, 2022 Leonard "Dave" Alne '41, Falmouth, Maine, May 8, 2023 Jean MacMillan Ross '43, Sauk Rapids, Minn., Aug. 11, 2022 Anita Bredow Bergh '45, Oviedo, Fla., Sept. 7, 2022 Evelyn Heinrich Mamaloff '45, Anchorage, Alaska, April 15, 2023 Millicent "Millie" Berge Mohr '45, Appleton, Wis., June 23, 2022 Harriet Johnson Brown '46, Grand Rapids, Minn., April 2, 2023 Arla Jacobson Bakken '47, Luverne, Minn., July 8, 2023 Kathryn "Kay" Tweeten Fraser '47, San Juan Capistrano, Calif., June 7, 2023 Elaine Baker Isherwood '47, Spokane, Wash., March 30, 2023 *Kenneth "Ken" Carlson '48, Winston Salem, N.C., June 7, 2023 Evelyn "Ev" Jorstad Fosteson '48, Farmington, Minn., July 19, 2022 John Johnson '48, Duluth, Minn., Jan. 19, 2022 Eldre Leslie Larsen '48, Santa Ana, Calif., March 31, 2023 Hildur Oliver Chapman '49, Davis, Calif., Feb. 18, 2023 Alice Derscheid Jolivette '49, Story City, Iowa, April 14, 2023 Zona Larson Mathison '49, Moorhead, Minn., May 10, 2023 *Bernt "B.J." Muus '49, Grand Marais, Minn., March 1, 2023 Alyson Rieke '49, Seattle, Feb. 9, 2023 *Harold Rorem '49, Brooklyn Center, Minn., March 11, 2023 Bette Olevson Schuldt '49, Eau Claire, Wis., April 26, 2023 Marion Hanson Sorenson '49, Burnsville, Minn., April 24, 2023 Gladys Nelson Thostenson '49, Montevideo, Minn., July 15, 2023 *Robert Frank '50, Rock Island, Ill., March 2, 2023 Philip "Phil" Maus '50, Dawson, Minn., March 23, 2023 Elinor Huggenvik McGrew '50, Newhall, Calif., Feb. 24, 2023 John Monson '50, La Crosse, Wis., March 14, 2023 *Albert "Al" Quie '50, Wayzata, Minn., Aug. 18, 2023 Herbert "Herb" Stellner '50, Rochester, Minn., June 29, 2023 *John Tweeten '50, Boise, Idaho, July 19, 2023 Franklin "Keith" Burmeister '51, Lanesboro, Minn., March 20, 2022 Lillian Osterhus Cole '51, West Fargo, N.D., July 5, 2023 John Ellingboe '51, Gualala, Calif., Dec. 31, 2022 Jerry Evenrud '51, Minneapolis, March 27, 2022 Joyce Anderson Halver '51, Adams, Minn., July 22, 2023 Lawrence "Larry" Holst '51, Savannah, Ga., Feb. 18, 2022 LaDonna Eckstrom Levik '51, Fairmont, Minn., April 14, 2023 *Robert "Bob" Lysgaard '51, Las Vegas, Feb. 6, 2023 *Robert "Bob" Mickelson '51, Worthington, Ohio, April 2, 2023 *Reuben "Ribs" Mikelson '51, Billings, Mont., June 27, 2023 Audrey Anderson Monicken '51, Duluth, Minn., Feb. 20, 2023

- Jean Radt Schrader '51, Minneapolis, June 23, 2023
 Solveig Alsaker Westby '51, Hopkins, Minn., Feb. 26, 2023
 Marilyn "Lynn" Hillman Anderson '52, Elk River, Minn., June 16, 2023
 *Oliver "Larry" Anderson '52, Sioux Falls, S.D., Oct. 25, 2022
 Joann Justin Brunzell '52, Stoughton, Wis., March 10, 2023
 Vona Larson Burbank '52, Urbandale, Iowa, May 24, 2023
 Carl Campbell '52, St. Louis, March 29, 2022
 *William "Bill" Elbert '52, Rice Lake, Wis., July 10, 2023
 Eugene Floistad '52, Staples, Minn., Oct. 28, 2022
 *Walter Laughlin '52, Tulsa, Okla., Jan. 7, 2023
 *Roger Tenney '52, Minneapolis, Aug. 13, 2023
 Louise Hofstad Varberg '52, Minneapolis, March 16, 2023
 Ila "Jean" Loy Velleu '52, St. Paul, Minn., May 12, 2023
 Suzanne Iverson Whitby '52, San Clemente, Calif., May 10, 2023
 *Gene Anonsen '53, Plymouth, Minn., March 26, 2023
 Maryls Hoyt Botz '53, Palm Desert, Calif., Feb. 8, 2023
 Margaret "Peggy" Boardman Henriksen '53, Maple Grove, Minn., April 10, 2023
 Gerhard "Gary" Knutson '53, Oakdale, Minn., March 3, 2023
 Arthur "Kenneth" Koskela '53, Gastonia, N.C., Jan. 31, 2022
 Lucille "Arlene" Bongsto Miletich '53, Sammamish, Wash., Jan. 23, 2023
 Marcus Mork '53, Roseville, Minn., March 20, 2023
 Oradell "Inky" Nordness '53, Madison, Wis., June 27, 2023
 Martha "Ann" Rossing Robert '53, Gloucester, Ma, Jan. 26, 2023
 Jane Heimark Sunde '53, Davenport, Fla., May 8, 2023
 Marlene Thompson Amundson '54, Raleigh, N.C., Feb. 16, 2023
 Shirley Pederson Angen '54, Hibbing, Minn., May 18, 2023
 Norma Andersen Dahlke '54, Mesa, Ariz., Nov. 28, 2022
 Dorothy Froyum Everson '54, Billings, Mont., Feb. 27, 2023
 Janet Moede '54, Austin, Texas, April 30, 2023
 Beverly "Bev" Rundquist Satre '54, Fergus Falls, Minn., July 16, 2023
 Harry Thompson '54, Clayton, Calif., April 2, 2023
 Betty Aasgaard '55, Bloomington, Minn., March 10, 2023
 Beverly Jackson Bader '55, Sioux Falls, S.D., April 14, 2023
 Carol Brekken '55, Minneapolis, Jan. 17, 2023
 Luther Erickson '55, Grinnell, Iowa, July 4, 2023
 Lois Cooper Farness '55, Flower Mound, Texas, July 15, 2023
 Phyllis Ristuben Kloster '55, Hudson, Wis., May 3, 2023
 *Glenn Nelson '55, Decorah, Iowa, July 3, 2023
 Ruby Kroon Starr '55, Roseville, Minn., May 30, 2023
 Marilyn Solberg Wigdahl '55, North Branch, Minn., Nov. 4, 2022
 David Anderson '56, Tucson, Ariz., Sept. 28, 2022
 Elnathan "Nate" Anderson '56, Irvine, Calif., June 18, 2023
 Jean Olson Anderson '56, Grand Marais, Minn., June 20, 2023
 *Robert "Bob" Emerson '56, Carlton, Minn., July 4, 2023
 Larry Klapmeier '56, Green Valley, Ariz., Feb. 24, 2023
 David Liu '56, Sunnysvale, Calif., April 28, 2023
 *Mark Reinertson '56, Robbinsdale, Minn., Aug. 2, 2023
 Ellen Syrdal Erdahl '57, Prior Lake, Minn., June 6, 2023
 Joan Iverson Koch '57, El Paso, Ill., July 2, 2023
 Charlotte Roe '57, St. Paul, Minn., Aug. 21, 2023
 Allan Townsend '57, La Crosse, Wis., May 18, 2023
 Robert "Bob" Zemke '57, Fernandina Beach, Fla., June 16, 2023
 Robert "Bill" Ingvaldstad '58, Pequot Lakes, Minn., June 30, 2023
 Gordon "Gordy" Koehn '58, Stewartville, Minn., March 8, 2023
 *Victor Lee '58, St. Charles, Ill., Aug. 26, 2023
 *Severt "Sev" Legred '58, Victoria, Minn., Feb. 20, 2023
 Nancy Koons Pederson '58, Minneapolis, May 14, 2023
 *Paul Ramsay '58, Edmond, Okla., March 12, 2023
 Danele Cole '59, Atlanta, Jan. 23, 2023
 Courtney "Court" Nystuen '59, Northfield, Minn., Aug. 15, 2023
 George Torjussen '59, Roy, Utah, May 27, 2023
 Darleen "Dar" Taylor Ellingson '60, Bozeman, Mont., June 26, 2023
 Beverly Strand Evensen '60, New Canaan, Conn., June 7, 2022
 Kenneth "Ken" Falk '60, Ainsworth, Neb., Dec. 10, 2022
 Anne Gray '60, Minneapolis, April 16, 2023
 Howard Larsen '60, La Crescent, Minn., June 2, 2023
 Karl Overby '60, Bozeman, Mont., Dec. 25, 2022
 *Norman "Norm" Peterson '60, Colorado Springs, Colo., Aug. 17, 2023
 Marlys Hansen Riedesel '60, Minneapolis, May 3, 2023
 *Warren Wangen '60, Eau Claire, Wis., May 12, 2023
 Robert "Bob" Ahlstrom '61, Story City, Iowa, March 18, 2023
 Barbara Beatty '61, St. Paul, Minn., March 28, 2023
 Lauritz "Larry" Christensen '61, Dallas, July 31, 2023
 Dwight Gustafson '61, Red Wing, Minn., June 30, 2023
 Cleo Gillund Mayfield '61, Columbia, Tenn., June 13, 2023
 Ellen Longan Rozehnal '61, Oro Valley, Ariz., Aug. 10, 2023
 Patricia Hawley '62, Rosemount, Minn., April 8, 2023
 *Warren Lee '62, Los Angeles, March 23, 2023
 Lewis "Lew" Lennon '62, East Amherst, N.Y., Feb. 28, 2023
 Bonnie Larson Lindquist '62, Webster, Minn., April 27, 2023
 Dexter Northrop '62, Fitchburg, Wisc., Feb. 21, 2023
 Donald "Don" Olson '62, Gray, Maine, July 30, 2023
 *Truman Solverud '62, St. Louis, Jan. 22, 2023
 Ellen Iverson Arnsdorf '63, Lambertton, Minn., March 16, 2023
 Paul Blom '63, Georgetown, Texas, June 5, 2023
 Jeffrey "Jeff" Mason '63, Maple Grove, Minn., Dec. 5, 2022
 Peggy Leadaman McMullen '63, Galveston, Texas, May 28, 2023
 Eric Petersen '63, Midland, Mich., Sept. 3, 2023
 Mary Hesla Skretteberg '63, Sheridan, Wyo., April 14, 2023
 Karen Dokken Voss '63, Oakland, Calif., Dec. 10, 2022
 Bonnie Christiansen Wallace '63, Holstein, Iowa, May 12, 2023
 *Peter Carlson '64, Phoenix, March 29, 2023
 *Herbert "Herb" Gust '64, Hudson, Wis., Aug. 21, 2023
 *Bruce Ohland '64, Pequot Lakes, Minn., July 24, 2023
 Ronald "Ron" Braun '65, Brodhead, Wis., May 25, 2023
 *Susan Eastman '65, Gray, Maine, Aug. 14, 2023
 Ann Fundanet Hawkins '65, Oronoco, Minn., March 13, 2023
 Sam Pederson '65, Seattle, June 20, 2023
 Nancy Hensvik Epanchin '66, Kingstom, Wash., March 15, 2023
 Donald "Don" Forseth '66, Vermillion, S.D., Aug. 17, 2023
 *Kathryn "Kathy" Koski Lundquist '66, San Francisco, May 22, 2023
 Jerry Regan '66, Sierra Vista, Ariz., April 6, 2023
 Richard "Dick" Alberts '67, Mantorville, Minn., March 6, 2023
 Meribeth Howard Cooper '67, Marietta, Ga., April 8, 2023
 Maren Peterson Harrison '67, Crystal, Minn., April 19, 2023
 Laura Linn '67, Minneapolis, March 26, 2023
 Ann Stanghelle Ness '67, Northfield, Minn., June 30, 2023
 Sharon Rinal Francis '68, Lebanon, Ohio, June 25, 2023
 Deborah "Debby" Garland Johnson '68, Juneau, Alaska, May 21, 2023
 Ann Tracy Kleman '68, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, May 17, 2023
 Mary Mroszak Kocho '68, Surprise, Ariz., July 22, 2023
 Mary Peacock Nelson '68, Northfield, Minn., April 6, 2023
 Constance "Connie" Kiroff Bovee '69, Macungie, Pa., June 4, 2023
 Judith "Judy" Nielsen Refsell '69, Decorah, Iowa, March 16, 2023
 Carolyn Sowles Struve '69, Minneapolis, April 23, 2023
 Mary "Carolyn" Schwenneker Cobb '70, Mulberry, Fla., Aug. 13, 2023
 Christine Cornell '70, Appleton, Wis., Aug. 8, 2023
 Richard Hokenson '70, San Antonio, May 19, 2023
 Kay Johnson Parrish '70, Charlotte, N.C., Jan. 11, 2023
 *John Wall '71, Greenville, N.C., Feb. 8, 2023
 Charles "Chuck" Gibbel '72, Plymouth, Minn., July 18, 2023
 Charles Harder '72, Mountain Lake, Minn., Aug. 22, 2023
 Douglas "Doug" Ingvalson '72, Charlottesville, Va., March 15, 2023
 Keith Martin '72, Eau Claire, Wis., July 17, 2023
 Kristy Hughes Neubert '72, Minneapolis, June 21, 2023
 Ronald "Ron" Kolstad '74, Cincinnati, March 23, 2023
 Helge Smebye '75, Oslo, Norway, June 2022
 Jill Warner Fuller '76, Garrison, N.D., July 2, 2023
 Barbara "Barb" Schafer Voll '76, Watford City, N.D., April 9, 2023
 Lillian "Lil" Gulbrandsen Seim '79, Victoria, Minn., Aug. 1, 2023
 Julie Dison Waskewicz '80, Virginia Beach, Va., March 16, 2023
 David Berg '81, Minneapolis, March 21, 2023
 Vicki Sanders Doble '81, Winter Garden, Fla., March 24, 2023
 Michael "Mike" Braun '83, Minneapolis, Aug. 1, 2023
 Brad Freiberg '84, Minneapolis, Nov. 28, 2022
 David Peterson '84, Rosemount, Minn., April 7, 2023
 Rebecca "Becky" Satre Vaage '84, Orofino, Idaho, July 9, 2023
 Elizabeth "Lisa" Hanners '85, Brookfield, Wis., Aug. 15, 2023
 Chris Johnson '85, Hudson, Wis., April 19, 2023
 Ann Schultz Grant '89, Waukegan, Iowa, March 2, 2023
 Kathleen "Kathy" Hirscher Zalusky '91, Forest Lake, Minn., April 10, 2023
 Brian Oppeneer '93, Appleton, Wis., July 29, 2023
 Mera Okerlund Colling '96, Northfield, Minn., Aug. 9, 2023
 Andrew Hvatum '11, St. Louis, May 23, 2023

*VETERAN

Remembering Albert "Al" Quie '50

Former Minnesota Governor **Albert "Al" Quie '50**, who received St. Olaf College's Distinguished Alumni Award in 1963, died on August 18, 2023, at his home in Wayzata, Minn. He passed away a month shy of his 100th birthday.

"His stature and his energy and his enthusiasm for life was there right to the end," his son, **Joel Quie '78**, a retired Lutheran pastor, told the *Associated Press*. "God blessed him with incredible resilience and stamina, and he embraced it and lived life to the fullest."

A third-generation dairy farmer, Albert Harold Quie was born on Sept. 18, 1923, in Wheeling Township, Minn. During World War II, Quie served in the U.S. Navy as a fighter pilot, returning home when the war ended to the family farm near Dennison in southeast Minnesota. Following his military service, he took over the farm and attended St. Olaf College where he met his wife, **Gretchen Hansen '49**. They married in 1948. Majoring in political science, Quie graduated in 1950 and began married life with Gretchen on the farm, where they started raising four children. During that time, Quie served in the Minnesota Senate from 1955 to 1958 before he was elected to Congress, representing southeastern Minnesota's First District in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1958 to 1979. Their fifth child was born after Quie moved his family to a



Maryland suburb of Washington, D.C.

After serving in Congress for two decades and becoming known for his expertise in education and agriculture, Quie built a reputation as a moderate Republican known for working across the aisle. Quie ran for Minnesota governor in 1978, unseating Rudy Perpich, and served

for one term, from 1979 to 1983. According to the *Minneapolis Star Tribune*, after retiring from elected office, Quie continued to be active in public policy areas such as education and judicial reform. He was also active in Prison Fellowship. A lifelong Lutheran, all his endeavors were guided by his deep Christian faith.

Current Minnesota Governor Tim Walz, a Democrat who held Quie's congressional seat for 12 years before becoming governor, paid tribute to Quie in 2022, noting that he found him "caring, funny, and generous as ever" when he attended his predecessor's 99th birthday celebration. In a statement following Quie's death, Walz noted: "A veteran, a man of faith, and a lifelong public servant, Governor Quie had a deep commitment to the betterment of our state and a legacy that extends beyond his time in office. His advocacy for education, eliminating discrimination, and rural development demonstrated his unwavering dedication to creating a better life for all Minnesotans."

Quie is survived by his brother, Paul (Betty) Quie; his five children, **Fredric (Melinda) Quivik '71**, Jennifer (David) Coffin, Daniel (Luanne) Quie, **Joel (Sarah) Quie '78**, and Ben (Ginny) Quie; 14 grandchildren; and 22 great-grandchildren. Gretchen, his wife of 67 years, died in 2015.

Remembering Arlen Erdahl '53

Arlen Erdahl '53, a farmer and dedicated public servant who held roles as a legislator, Minnesota Secretary of State, and United States congressman and was the recipient of the 1972 St. Olaf Distinguished Alumni Award, died on Sept. 21, 2023, at 92 after a long journey with Alzheimer's. His death came just three months after his wife and partner in all things, **Ellen Syrdal Erdahl '57**, died on June 6, 2023, after a marriage of almost 65 years.



Erdahl and his twin, **Lowell Erdahl '53**, were born Feb. 27, 1931, and raised on a farm near Blue Earth, Minn. He majored in speech at St. Olaf, where he excelled as a three-season athlete and was captain of the track and field team. Following graduation, he served in the U.S. Army at Ft. Riley, Kansas, and at Tachikawa Air Base in Japan. At the conclusion of his military service, he returned to work the family farm and married Ellen Syrdal '57. Together they raised six children. While Lowell Erdahl's vocation was the ministry, ultimately serving as Bishop of the St. Paul Area Synod (ELCA), Arlen Erdahl chose to serve through politics, where he prioritized foreign affairs, the environment, agriculture, helping individual constituents, and leveling playing fields, especially for the disabled.

In 1965 Erdahl was in the first Bush Foundation Fellowship cohort. He earned an M.A. in Public Administration from Harvard and 1968 Congressional Fellowships with Michigan Representative Gerald Ford and Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield. His years of public service included eight years as Faribault County State Representative and four years as Minnesota Secretary of State, followed by an appointment to the Minnesota Public Service Commission. Erdahl then served four years as U.S. Representative for Minnesota's 1st Congressional District, including Northfield, Minnesota.

As a Minnesota legislator, Erdahl authored the Equal Pay for Equal Work Act, advancing women's rights. In Congress he joined the "Gypsy Moths," an influential coalition of moderate Republicans who advanced social justice issues and curbed military excesses. Erdahl also held presidential appointments as Jamaica Peace Corps country director, associate director of the U.S. Peace Corps, and principal deputy assistant secretary in the U.S. Department of Energy.

The Erdahls returned to Minnesota in 1994, where Erdahl served as executive director of Minnesota International Health Volunteers and was active in the United Nations Association of Minnesota, the Nobel Peace Prize Forum, Growth & Justice, and Sons of Norway. In 2004 he served as election observer of historic elections in Ukraine. Erdahl was recognized for his public service with a 1999 Twin Cities International Citizens Award and a 2011 Hubert H. Humphrey Public Leadership Award.

He was preceded in death by his brother, Lowell, in 2021, and his wife, **Ellen Syrdal Erdahl '57**, in 2023. He is survived by his children, **Rolf Erdahl '82** and Carrie Vecchione, **Eric Erdahl '83**, **John Erdahl '84**, **Lars '87** and **Molly Erdahl '91**, **Laura '90** and Scott Weinberg, **Kari '98** and Eric Hagen; 14 grandchildren, Ada, Ella, Inga, **Anders '24**, **Haakon '26**, Tor, Bonnie (Jake Lewis), Solveig, Gemma, Jack, David, Elin, Leif, and Annika; in-laws Fred and Jan Syrdal, and **Carol Syvertsen Erdahl '54**; and nieces and nephews.

Remembering Michael “Mike” Swift

Assistant Professor Emeritus of Biology Mike Swift passed away on July 19, 2023. He was 78 years old and will be deeply missed by those whose lives he touched as a teacher, mentor, colleague, and friend.

Born on Aug. 21, 1944, in Berkeley, Calif., he was the eldest of six children, and grew up in Westwood, Santa Rosa, El Cerrito, and Pleasanton, California. He earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees at the University of California, Davis, and his Ph.D. at the University of British Columbia, where he studied energetics and vertical migration of *Chaoborus* larvae, followed by a postdoctoral fellowship in Saskatoon on alkaline lakes. He married Anne Walter in 1977 and they eventually made their way to Minnesota and St. Olaf College as biology professors.



Swift brought his love of biological diversity to all his teaching, from his foundational biology courses to his passions, limnology and invertebrates. His enthusiasm for his research organism was infectious, as was his overall enthusiasm to explore life broadly. Anne Walter says, “If you close your eyes, you can hear him ask, ‘And what are the world’s most beautiful insect larvae?’ Almost all St. Olaf biology alums know the answer is, of course, *Chaoborus*, the long, transparent tiny predator that uses its air sacs to vertically migrate in lakes across the globe.”

Alumni will remember his enthusiasm for vertebrate anatomy, especially the skeletons that are adapted to different needs and can tell a story about the evolution and lifestyle of the animal. Still others will remember him from the Summer Bridge program or summers conducting aquatic biology research at the Wilderness Field Station in the Boundary Waters, one of his favorite places on earth. He also initiated a long-term monitoring program for endangered freshwater mussels that required an annual sampling trip with his collaborator into the Boundary Waters.

He loved teaching in the field, including the St. Olaf Natural Lands, as well as co-leading with Anne St. Olaf’s Biology in South India program and traveling with students to study biodiversity and ecology in Australia, India, Ecuador, and Morocco. They also shared sabbaticals in Charlottesville at the University of Virginia and, in 2009, were awarded a Fulbright Scholar grant to serve as visiting lecturers in the Zoology Department at Madras Christian College in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. They received the 2023 TRIO SSS Stewardship Award last spring, “something that totally overwhelmed him,” says Anne, “because he just had so much fun teaching Summer Bridge and knowing that group of students.”

Swift was kind and generous to all, especially to those in need, never calling attention to himself. He had a lifelong concern for the environment and was an early adopter of solar panels, rain barrels, and composting at home, where he designed a native plant rain garden and milkweed plantings to attract Monarch butterflies. He donated more than 21 gallons of blood during his lifetime. He loved art, especially batik and fabric arts, and enjoyed baking sourdough bread and processing black walnuts. He was a consistent all-weather long-distance runner and supported younger runners by working the finish line at cross country meets, where he took photos of every runner and sent the photos to them via their coaches. It was, says Anne, one of the quiet ways he honored students. He also supported students in other ways, attending their concerts, poster presentations, and art exhibits, helping them find the right graduate program or job, or teaching them how to master portages in their canoes, paddle straight, and use binoculars.

He is survived by Anne, to whom he was devoted; his siblings, Brian (Karen) Swift, Mary (John) Ljung, Dennis Swift, and Peter Swift; sister-in-law Doreen Irby Swift; and nine nieces and nephews.

ALUMNI & FAMILY TRAVEL

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Peru: Land of the Inca | April 13–20, 2024

Led by *Kris Cropsey*

Greece: The Cradle of Democracy and of Western Civilization | May 6–23, 2024

Led by *Jim and Donna May*

Oles in Norway: A Companion Tour to the St. Olaf Football Trip | May 27–June 3, 2024 | Led by *Eric Pulley*

South Africa: A Companion Tour to the St. Olaf Choir Trip | June 1–15, 2024 | Led by *Bryan Shealer*

A Literary and Arts Tour of Gay Paris | June 22–30, 2024
Led by *Juliet Patterson and Rachel Moritz*

Wilderness Adventure in the Boundary Waters
July 14–20, 2024 | Led by *Judy Tegtmeier and Wesley Braker*

Theater in London | September 6–15, 2024
Led by *Diana Postlethwaite and Paul Thiboutot*

Past Meets Present: South Korea and Taiwan
Nov. 6–20, 2024 | Led by *Karil Kucera and Daniel Jones*



Alumni from the Class of 1998 (from left) Rebecca Sauer, Jenny Howenstine, and Jill Lynch Sauber celebrated their 25th reunion on the Hill this spring.



Oles (from left) Sara Ryman Anderson, Matt McGibson, and Wade Anderson enjoy their 25th reunion dinner.

A Reflection Upon Reunion By Steve Marsh '98

This spring Steve Marsh '98 gathered with scores of his St. Olaf classmates as they celebrated their 25th reunion on the Hill. An accomplished journalist and senior writer at Mpls. St. Paul Magazine, he delivered a speech reflecting on what a St. Olaf education looks like in hindsight. He shares an excerpt here.

IN PREPARING THIS SPEECH, I tapped my own text chain of St. Olaf buddies. I asked what I should talk about and what they thought about this place 25 years later. I was moved when one of them texted: “When I was 19 years old, I don’t think I was mature enough to realize what this institution could do for me.” I recognized in his words my own immaturity, and how that manifested itself back then in feelings of rebellion toward St. Olaf itself. It was and is a small liberal arts school, informed by the Lutheran, Norwegian immigrant values of southern Minnesota. A 19-year-old could feel stifled by those kinds of rules, even if you had agreed to follow them.

And those adolescent frustrations were contrasted against what we came here to do. Yes, St. Olaf could be protective, but it brought us into the midst of very worldly, modern, challenging ideas — ideas taught in every classroom, ideas found all over the library. I remember my guidance counselor at the time, Professor Jim Farrell — God rest his soul — gave me advice that’s informed my entire life. I was worried about how I could get all of my electives taken care of, and he said, “Just follow your curiosity and you’ll be fine.”

St. Olaf brought me to huge ideas like how we build meaning through narrative, and how we construct ideas like time and gender and love from language. It gave me tools I could use to critically think about my life. These ideas were brought to me on this little hill in southern Minnesota. And then the college encouraged me to study abroad. It pushed us out the door to search the places where many of these huge ideas originated.

I wondered if you guys shared this push and pull relationship with St. Olaf — if you felt any kind of rebellious feelings toward it, but also these feelings of gratitude. The same guy who told me that he maybe wasn’t mature enough to take advantage of all that was offered at the time said “But I met you guys — I made friends that became lifelong friends.”

After texting my classmates, I reached out to my mentor, Professor Gordon Marino. Doc retired as curator of the Kierkegaard Library

last August after 30 years. I only had one J-term Freud class with him at St. Olaf, but Doc is also a boxing coach and a journalist, and for years after graduation, I continued to learn from him through our conversations about existentialism, about boxing, about dealing with your childhood trauma, and about growing up. (If you haven’t read Doc’s *The Existentialist’s Survival Guide*, you probably should.) As much as I instinctually rebel against the term “mentor,” yeah, I have a mentor. I told him what I was thinking of talking about, and he sent me this passage from Kierkegaard’s *Works of Love*:

“Expectancy and possibility develop in the young like precious myrrh, exuding from the trees of Arabia. But when a man has grown older, his life usually remains what it already has become, a dull repetition and re-writing of the same, and no possibility arouses one to wakefulness, and no possibility exhilarates the renewal of youth, hope becomes something which nowhere has a home, and possibility a rarity like greenness in winter.”


Kierkegaard reminds us that as we age, the dreams we once dreamt on this hill can fade in the face of disappointment and grief. Maybe your talents aren’t matched to your circumstances, or you made a mistake that you can’t recover from. And I wonder sometimes if that rebellious attitude of my youth was more of a generational attitude toward authority and institutions, an attitude that’s maybe calcified into something else now. Maybe you’ve felt irritated when confronted with the nomenclature of a younger co-worker or friend, or even your own child’s. But there has to be a way to maintain a tenderness and curiosity of thought, a way to stay humble and to keep moving toward curiosity, instead of giving in to cynicism. Because to give in, to lose your curiosity, that’s what makes you old.

So as Doc would say, it’s a fight. Maybe those rebellious instincts can be repurposed. Maybe being a rebel at this age means sticking together, and staying organized, and keeping in good mental shape, and being willing to reach out, and to ask questions, and to actually listen when somebody answers. 🍌



Steve Marsh '98 (left) with his close friend and classmate Thor Nelson '98 in their old dorm room in Melby Hall.

A PASSION FOR SUPPORTING STUDENTS

A portrait of Kristen Anderson '94, a woman with blonde hair and glasses, smiling. She is wearing a purple cardigan over a black and white patterned top. The background is a blurred indoor setting.

As a higher education administrator at Harvard Divinity School, Kristen Anderson '94 understands how financial foresight helps colleges sustain their impact. That is why she included St. Olaf in her will — to help the college provide opportunities for Oles long into the future.

"It's very important to make a commitment to an institution that you value. I want to pass on a bit of what I've earned so that others can have a life-changing experience at St. Olaf."

— KRISTEN ANDERSON '94



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Lars Askegaard '23 | Global Semester
Wadi Rum Protected Area, Jordan



"During Global Semester's visit to Jordan, we stayed in Wadi Rum, a UNESCO World Heritage Site that is home to numerous Bedouin and nomad communities in the southern region of the country. The desert's rich red sand and rock formations remind its visitors of the Martian landscapes pictured in movies, as Hollywood directors have filmed numerous space odyssey films in Jordan's 'Valley of the Moon.' While on a hike up to the top of a plateau, Freya Gordon '24 and I performed a dancing lift that we had practiced in salsa class during our previous stay in Quito, Ecuador. We clearly have room for improvement, but are happy to have captured this moment!" See more [Global Engagement photos](#) on pages 12-21.