World Minded

A PUBLICATION OF THE REVES CENTER FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDIES AT WILLIAM & MARY

VOL. 17, NO. 2 , SUMMER 2025

OPTIMISM FOR THE FUTURE













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The Reves Center for International Studies advances the internationalization of teaching, learning and research at William & Mary, ensuring an international dimension is present in the university's priorities. Global education, support for international students and scholars, and the enrichment of our global community are at the heart of the Reves Center's work. Established in 1989, the Reves Center is today one of the premier international centers in higher education.

William & Mary is the number one public university for undergraduate study abroad participation, with more than half of the university's undergraduates studying outside the U.S. before graduation. Approximately 500 international students, scholars, and their families from 65 places of origin come to William & Mary. The Reves global engagement team builds and supports international initiatives across the university.

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FROM THE DIRECTOR

At William & Mary, we cultivate creative thinkers, principled leaders, and compassionate global citizens equipped for lives of meaning and distinction. The Summer 2025 edition of World Minded brings to life the stories of William & Mary people who are at once creative, principled, compassionate and distinctive. They are also globally minded.

In this edition you will find an interview that features Adriano Marinazzo, Designer in Residence at William & Mary. Marinazzo says that by coming to William & Mary from his home in Brindisi Italy, he found something he had long been pursuing as a researcher: the intersection of art and science. It is an intersection that we value every day at William & Mary, a marker of our identity. Marinazzo not only curated the Michelangelo exhibit at the Muscarelle, he also teaches applied science.



Teresa Longo

Associate Provost for International Affairs, Senior International Officer and Executive Director, Reves Center for International Studies

William & Mary's Muscarelle Museum figures among the Reves Center's trusted collaborators on campus. Our connection isn't new. In the spring of 2020 Arts & Science faculty planned to host the renowned Guatemalan photographer, Daniel Hernández- Salazar. Although the visit was canceled as result of the Covid19 pandemic, the museum purchased four of the photographer's most celebrated pieces. In 2025 Hernández-Salazar accepted a new invitation, this time from the Reves Center for International Studies. He spent a week with our students making art at the Reves Center and the Muscarelle Museum, where his work is on display.

Throughout the previous thirty-three World Minded publications stories of distinguished leaders in our community have surfaced often. This edition is just a bit different, a bit weightier. In the pages that follow, you will meet the recipient of the prestigious Hixon scholarship; young alumni who are already distinguished public servants; a Fulbright recipient posted in South Korea; the U.S. Ambassador to Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu; the Reves and Drapers' Faculty Fellows working with students in Hong Kong, Naxos, Taiwan and London; the 2025 recipients of the international student achievement awards; and many more with tight connections to the Reves Center.

As you read, I hope you also notice the coupling of distinction with meaning. Ambassador Marie Damour '87 says that the joy of her job rests in learning something new every day, learning for example how different all the countries of the Pacific Islands are from each other. Andrew Martin, Assistant Director at the Cohen Career Center, says public service means working for the greater good and making a positive impact on the people he serves. On the path to a life of distinction "first abroad" student from St Andrews finds meaning—and also peace—in William & Mary's Sunken Garden.

Please read on. Please stay in touch.



WORLD MINDED STAFF

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Contributing Writers: Anita Hagy-Ferguson, Institute for Integrative Conservation; Ewan Gilbert '27, St Andrews; Molly Martin '27; Karena Richmond '26

ON THE COVER

A montage of photos depicting stories in this edition.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

Is an international career in public service still viable?



ANDREW MARTIN

Assistant Director, Public Service Careers

Andrew holds a Bachelor of Science in Social Work from Georgia State University, and a Master of Science in Social Work from Virginia Commonwealth University. Andrew is also certified as a Career Services Professional through the National Career Development Association. Before transitioning into higher education, Andrew worked as a Career Coach (and other roles as assigned) for a local nonprofit organization. Andrew spent the first 13 years of his career working with children and families in the child welfare system, such as a Child Protective Services Social Worker, Foster Care Social Worker, Independent Living Consultant, Family Services Supervisor, Regional Consultant, and Director of Family Services with various County Government, Non-Profit, and For-Profit employers.



KATHERINE PERRIELLO '25

Katherine is a recent graduate of William & Mary with a B.A. in International Relations. During her time in college, she interned with the Army War College and the Air Force Civilian service as a Premier College Intern for the security department. As a member of the International and Political Affairs in the Caucasus Lab at William & Mary she researched the elections in Georgia and the impact of potential fraud, as well as the impact of Georgian veterans in the election and their involvement in Iraq, Afghanistan and Ukraine.



CARTER TROUSDALE '20

Carter Trousdale '20 grew up in a working-class area in Illinois. He earned his way to William & Mary on a Pell Grant and scholarships, and has since worked in foreign policy across the U.S. Government in diplomacy, defense, and development. Most recently, he served as a Lead Program Officer at the Millennium Challenge Corporation reducing poverty in West Africa. Carter studied abroad in Morocco and was featured on the cover of the spring 2019 issue of World Minded. A few of his honors and awards:

- Millennium Challenge Corporation Performance Award (Substantial Impact)
- Booz Allen Commercial Rising Star
- Robert M. and Rebecca W. Gates Scholar
- Benjamin A. Gilman Scholar (with Critical Language Supplement), issued by the U.S. Department of State

Kate Hoving: To start, please tell us a little about yourselves.

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: I'm a senior, so a little less than two weeks until graduation, which is a bit scary but exciting. I'm originally from Charlottesville, Virginia. I'm an international relations (IR) major here at William & Mary. While at William & Mary, I've been able to be introduced to the public service sector through opportunities such as working for the Air Force Civilian Service and for the Army War College. I have also had the chance to do research through the International Political Affairs in the Caucasus Lab, studying the country of Georgia. In terms of international experience, I have had the chance to study abroad twice. The summer after my sophomore year, I went on the Reves Center's W&M Faculty-led summer program to Florence. Last spring I spent a semester in Barcelona.

I'm very excited that after graduation I will be joining the Peace Corps. I will be leaving in October and I'm going to Vietnam to teach English to 11th and 12th graders.

CARTER TROUSDALE: I graduated from William & Mary in 2020 with a degree in international relations. Today I'm a Lead Program Officer at the Millennium Challenge Corporation, a small federal agency where I put American tax dollars to work building roads, schools, and power in West Africa, and where every project competes head-to-head with a well-financed strategic competitor. Before that I worked for the State Department at NATO in Brussels, in the Office of the Secretary of Defense at the Pentagon, and in strategy consulting. This fall I start my MBA at Harvard..

KH: Andrew, although Katherine and Carter know you in your current role, I think they might find your path to W&M's Career Center interesting, Would you mind sharing a little of your background?

ANDREW MARTIN: Sure! I earned a bachelor's degree in social work in 2003 and then spent four years working for local departments of social services in Fredericksburg and Richmond, Virginia. After that, I took a year off to pursue my master's in social work at VCU.

After completing my degree, I spent another six years working in a variety of public and private settings with youth in foster care. In 2016, I found a career coaching position at William & Mary with a nonprofit organization housed in the School of Education, called Literacy for Life. There, I worked with hundreds of refugees, immigrants, and citizens of Williamsburg—helping them explore different careers in the Greater Peninsula, improve their résumés, and strategize their job searches and next steps.

Public service means working for the greater good and making a positive impact on the people you serve. It's forward-looking—always evolving and changing—because there's still so much important work to be done.

Then, in 2020, the Assistant Director of Public Service Careers position opened in the Office of Career Development & Professional Engagement (formerly known as the Cohen Career Center). I stepped into the role and have loved working with students and alumni ever since. I lead initiatives that connect students to impactful careers in government, nonprofits, human services, education, and international work. I've also built strong relationships across campus to collaborate and support students interested in public service careers.

KH: And I'm grateful, Andrew, for your partnering with Reves on promoting international careers for the last three years. I think it would be helpful to start our discussion of public service today by defining what public service encompasses and what a career in public service means to each of you.

ANDREW MARTIN: To me, public service means working for the greater good and making a positive impact on the people you serve. It's forward-looking—always evolving and changing—because there's still so much important work to be done. Public service is also deeply collaborative; it's not something one person can do alone. It often takes a team—and sometimes large teams—working together toward a shared mission. Public servants are often driven by that mission, aligning themselves with a shared sense of purpose and commitment to making a difference.

KH: Katherine and Carter, as you were getting ready to go out into the working world after graduation, did you say to yourselves, "I know that my career is going to be in some public service area," or was it more a case of your exploring some options and landing on public service somewhat serendipitously?

CARTER TROUSDALE: Well, I was named after Jimmy Carter, our 39th president, so you could say, I was destined for public service at some point.

Carter Trousdale: But truly, when I was approaching graduation, I was looking at a variety of fields, but I knew I wanted to do some kind of public service eventually, because mission is really important to me. I come from a working-class area and I worked as a janitor in high school. That's a big part of why mission matters to me. People invested in me along the way, and I want to do that for others. I knew I wanted to do something that felt meaningful to me,

had a significant positive impact on others, and that was also interesting to me. A lot of people feel drawn to public service. Some people serve by joining the military. Some by joining the Peace Corps or becoming a teacher. I wanted to have the greatest positive impact that I could, given my knowledge, skills, and abilities, and so working to reduce poverty through economic growth in West Africa made total sense to me. It also advances core American national security interests, and it's some of the smartest work our government does. Our competitors are moving fast to win influence across Africa. When the United States shows up and delivers, roads that move goods, power that keeps the lights on, we build partnerships that protect our security and our economy for decades, and we do it at a fraction of what a crisis would cost us later.

And I would agree with Andrew that public service is all about the mission. I've worked next to public servants who put in 16-hour days, no bonus, no overtime, because a family in a village they'll never move to is counting on them getting it right. That's the standard. You don't find it everywhere, but when you do, you'd run through a wall for those people.

KH: Katherine, what drew you to the Peace Corps?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: I have been interested throughout college in working internationally and in the government sector, both things that align with the Peace Corps. I have always wanted to work in the public service sector. Growing up I was surrounded by the political world, both through political family members and the wider community in Charlottesville. Through this exposure, I always thought I would pursue public service, but I thought it would be in the political sector, such as doing campaign work. This is still an area that I am very passionate about, but not necessarily the only path I see towards working in public service anymore.

Later, when I was coming to William & Mary, I originally was going to be a government major, and then I took intro to international relations freshman year and knew I wanted to work in the international sector and with international politics and government. I know that obviously a lot of people from William & Mary do go to the Peace Corps, and so it was something that was always in the back of my mind. But it wasn't as if I always knew that was the path for me until I actually went to one of the career fairs that Andrew hosted where I was able to speak to some returned Peace Corps Volunteers. The chance to just hear the way that how much passion they had about their job, and how much meaning and fulfillment they got, made me know that I wanted to pursue it. Also, the fact that I'm going to be teaching was definitely a draw for me, because both my parents are middle school teachers so I know it's an area where I can make such a difference in someone's life.

KH: Did you consider the foreign service?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: I think just about every International Relations major at William & Mary has at least thought about the foreign service. One of the draws for the Peace Corps for me is that I know that a lot of people do go from that to the foreign service or that type of work, which sets me up on a good path for what I want to pursue in the future. Obviously right now, graduating with a degree in international relations is not the most stable time to be going into government work. And so a lot of the government agency work seems to be on hold or on shaky ground. The Peace Corps seems to be, at least for now, still continuing on.

KH: Carter, you've decided to switch gears a bit by going to business school this fall. What was your thinking in doing that – and maybe it's not that big of a shift?

CARTER TROUSDALE: So, at William & Mary, I studied international relations because I wanted to understand the world. Academically, I wanted to experience it all: political science, government, economics, history, sociology, security, and foreign languages. Coming out of William & Mary, I wanted to work across the three Ds of foreign policy: diplomacy, defense, and development. And so I did. I've had incredible experiences from the sands of the Sahara to the skyscrapers of Singapore, from rural villages in Senegal to the halls of NATO Headquarters and the Pentagon.

> Mission is really important to me. I knew I wanted to do something that felt meaningful to me, had a significant positive impact on others, and that was also interesting.

What I kept hitting was the limit of my own toolkit. The best idea in the room still dies without someone who can turn it into a school that opens or a road that gets built. That's why I'm at business school, to get sharper at the part that actually reaches people. Same mission, better tools.

What makes me tick is that I have an absolutelya voracious appetite to learn, grow, and contribute. So, for-For me, pursuing a Harvard MBA is an chance to accelerate that, so that

I can give more back to the communities that shaped me.

KH: Speaking of interests and skills, Katherine, was the fact that you'd be teaching during your Peace Corps assignment the aspect that appealed most?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: Teaching is not something I see ultimately doing long term. It is a sector where you can obviously very directly see the impact of the work your doing, which is something that appeals to me. As I mentioned, both my parents are teachers, so growing up I was able to see the kind of direct impact that you can have. In terms of the Peace Corps, a larger draw is more for the public diplomacy sector work and being able to make a difference as a volunteer abroad. But I am excited about the teaching aspect as well.

KH: Carter and Katherine, do you feel you're outliers among your classmates going into some kind of public service, or do you think your peers are similar to you?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: In terms of my graduating class, I do think I'm similar to a lot of my classmates. I know at least a couple of people going into the Peace Corps, so I think that is definitely something that's popular among IR majors.

But those of us graduating are also in a unique situation. I know people that have wanted to go into public service, but either their job offers were rescinded, or agencies aren't accepting applications anymore. It's a tough job market. I know a lot of people who are now choosing to go to grad school, even if that wasn't their original plan, because of that job market. But I still think that public service is definitely popular among IR and government graduates.

CARTER TROUSDALE: I'll echo that because I also graduated at a time of tumult in May 2020. I know a lot of people who really wanted to do public service. They wanted it more than anything, but government agencies weren't hiring. It was very, very difficult to find jobs for recent graduates at that time. I'd love to see the data, but it seems very, very rare. I think I knew a couple of people in my class who went directly into government public service. And so over the years, the ones that didn't go right into public service have taken the jobs they can get to try to build their skills and one day pivot into government.

KH: Andrew, are you finding interest among students in public service has been consistent?

ANDREW MARTIN: Yes, students continue to show strong interest in public service, especially given William & Mary's long history of alumni pursuing impactful careers—from U.S. presidents and members of Congress to leaders in major government institutions like the FBI and CIA. Our alumni are truly unique, and I'm grateful to be in a role where I can support students who are inspired to follow similar paths.

At William & Mary, we often say we're the Alma Mater of the Nation, and I believe we'll always attract students who are committed to serving the public good.

That said, this year has presented some challenges. There's a degree of uncertainty in certain areas of public service, which can make career planning feel more complex. Still, state and local governments continue to offer consistent opportunities, and I'm seeing growing student interest in these areas.

Nonprofits remain a strong area of focus as well, and I expect that interest will only increase. International careers are another exciting area where students are eager to contribute. Since our collaboration with the Reves Center shifted from a one-week International Careers initiative to a yearlong focus, I've noticed students are exploring more ways to serve abroad—whether through scholarships, internships, or full-time positions.

KH: In spite of the uncertainty in the world, you both seem very optimistic. Am I picking up on that correctly?

CARTER TROUSDALE: So, my goal has always been to pursue, first, what is meaningful, and second, what I find interesting. And if it's international, great, I'll take that, too. But those are my guiding north stars.

I learned early on that it's not particularly useful to make a five-year plan and expect to rigidly stick to it. That's not how life works. Like Eisenhower said, "plans are useless, planning is indispensable."

What I found to be useful and true is that if you focus on learning and put yourself in environments, you'll be in positions where you can take advantage of opportunities that arise.

Instead of rigid long-term planning, you want to put yourself in a position where, when the time comes, when the call comes, you're ready, you can do it. So, when someone says, "Hey, I need someone to do data visualization for this thing," you can say, "Oh, yeah, I've done that. I can do that."

And so if you have a mindset focused on learning and contributing, it gives me a lot more optimism that you'll be able to do something meaningful and interesting and useful. I've found that my heart's not going to be broken if I don't get a particular job because there's plenty of opportunity out there, and I just need to discover it. I feel like that mindset is very helpful.

I know a lot of folks who are really focused on only one job and nothing

else, like being a diplomat at the State Department. They repeatedly say, "I want to be a diplomat." And when they don't become a diplomat after three, four, or five years of trying, they're kind of broken. They don't know what to do. They can't refocus or pivot, and so I think you have to have a flexible attitude and focus on skills and experiences, and just generally figure out what you really care about.

So, it's not exactly optimism. I believe that with tons and tons of hard work, you can generally achieve what you desire. You may just need to spend a lot of time and effort and make a lot of pivots to become the person you need to be to achieve what you want.

KH: Katherine, although graduation can be a stressful and uncertain time, you, too, seem to be approaching your next phase with confidence.

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: I'm glad I sound optimistic. I can't say that all year it's been a super optimistic time or that I have been hearing optimistic news. I mean, I had some backup plans in place if the Peace Corps didn't work out, but I also probably applied to 60 or 70 jobs throughout the course of the year. And I know a lot of people have been applying to ten jobs a day and still aren't finding anything just due to the hiring freezes and how many companies are having to lay off workers, so I can't say I've been super optimistic the entire time. But I agree with what Carter's saying about having your options open, being willing to apply to everything and being open to anything. I certainly think that you're right, that a lot of freshmen or sophomores can have the attitude that they only want to be a foreign service officer. But I think they figure out that not every single IR grad is going to be a foreign service officer the year after they graduate. So yes, just trying to be open to whatever ends up happening is the mindset I've also been trying to be in.

Public service is obviously very broad. I think that a lot of people are introduced to it from one point of view, and so I would advise understanding that there are many different ways to pursue public service.

KH: You haven't been to Asia before, so was that your motivation?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: That was the rationale. I've always wanted to travel to Southeast Asia, it's such an interesting area. I was also drawn to how new the Vietnam Peace Corps program is, with this only being the fourth year they are sending volunteers. I am excited to be able to help build the foundation of the program.

CARTER TROUSDALE: Katherine, are you going to be living in a city in or in a more rural village or area?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: It's going to be a rural location, but I start in Hanoi for training. I'll be there for the first two months and then I will go to a village that is close to Hanoi.

CARTER TROUSDALE: Very nice. A lot of coworkers were Peace Corps volunteers or directors and they have just such incredible life stories. I'm excited for you because their life experiences have been so enriched by serving in the Peace Corps. They say it's as if they got ten years of rich life experiences in two years of service, and it was just an incredible time.

ANDREW MARTIN: I've got two questions for you.

Katherine, what advice would you give to students who are graduating now, wanting to pursue a career in the public sector? What would you say to them?

KATHERINE PERRIELLO: I don't know if I'm completely in the place to give advice. Obviously, I haven't started work in Public Service yet.

But as you said, public service is obviously very broad. I think that a lot of people are introduced to it from one point of view, and so I would advise understanding that there are many different ways to pursue public service. As I mentioned, I've been involved in political campaigns since I was little, and I think that public service through that is something that I'm still very interested in, and there are different ways to pursue that. But also, when I was little I definitely had the idea that that was what public service work was, and now I can see that it is so much broader and there are so many ways I can pursue that work.

And then I would echo what Carter was saying about understanding your driving force and out what really interests you, and what you really want to do. I think a lot of public service careers from what I've seen and heard are the ones that require you to care enough to be staying at work super late, caring enough to endure those super long hours. So find out what makes you want to do that and be able to hold onto that and know your goals to get through those tougher times.

ANDREW MARTIN: And Carter, going back to when you graduated

in 2020, that was right at the start of the pandemic, how did you navigate your job search, the start of a new career or new job right during that time? Because I think it's similar to this moment. We're not in the middle of a pandemic, but I think we are at the start of maybe a slowdown of hiring which we definitely experienced during Covid. How did you navigate all that?

CARTER TROUSDALE: Networking and the Cohen Career Center! I didn't have family to help me, so I built my network from scratch, one conversation at a time. I started about a year before graduation and did around fifty coffee chats with recent alumni from a range of firms, plus a lot of time with the Career Center.

All the coffee chats were extremely helpful for learning about the work the firms did, what they were looking for, what their expectations were, and how the recruiting process worked, so when they came to campus for fall recruiting, I saw so many familiar faces. So I had a bunch of offers by the end of September and had my job lined up.

So, if you're a junior, you're in a great position. Start putting in the work. Figure out what you want and start talking to people in those fields. If you're a senior, my advice is, since you can't go back in time and do the groundwork, today is the best day to start."







Clockwise from top: Carter Carter Trousdale leads a Congressional oversight visit of the Koumassi Flyover in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, a U.S.-funded project he helped keep on time and on budget. Work like this delivers real value for American taxpayers and gives partner nations a democratic alternative to a strategic competitor's financing. (Courtesy photo); Andrew Martin with Rocio Bresnahan, administrative coordinator and building manager of the Reves Center, at a reception in the Reves Room for international students and scholars, their families and campus partners. Martin and Bresnahan were colleagues at Literacy for Life. (Photo credit: Kate Hoving); Katherine Perriello in front of Nyhavn in Copenhagen (Courtesy photo)



Kirubel Mulatu '26 at the NAFSA Advocacy Day reception in the Russell Senate Office Building (Photo credit: Kate Hoving)

A life of meaning and distinction

W&M Mission: We cultivate creative thinkers, principled leaders, and compassionate global citizens equipped for lives of meaning and distinction.

BY KATE HOVING

It's always interesting to ask a student what was the deciding factor that led them to William & Mary. It might be the lure of a faculty member whose publication they read, or the safety and beauty of the campus; perhaps they explored the website or had a personal connection with an alumnus.

For Kirubel (Kira) Mulatu '26, who left Addis Ababa to attend William & Mary, it began with the clear directive that will ring true to anyone who has an older sibling.

"My sister was studying at the University of Richmond, and she said, 'You can apply anywhere else, but you're not going to apply here.'"

William & Mary owes Kira's sister thanks (and she graduated this May, so congratulations are also due), because Kira abided by his sister's wish and discovered William & Mary.

"It was prestigious and was the second oldest institution of higher learning in the U.S.," Kira explains. But there was more. "I liked that they offered government and business but also data and computer science, which are forward looking. It also had a good sense of community, which I liked, and when I was applying, I was communicating with Dr. Eva Wong [director of the Office of International Students, Scholars & Programs (ISSP) at the Reves Center], and she mentioned the Hixon Scholarship."

In 2017, Jim Hixon J.D. '79, M.L.T. '80 and daughter, Kate Hixon '08, gave $1.8 million to support international scholarships at William & Mary — the first gift to fully fund the education of international students at the university. The scholarships cover tuition, board, room, fees, and travel for undergraduate students who are residents of African countries. The gift also includes an enrichment endowment to support participation in opportunities such as summer courses, study abroad, W&M Washington Center programs, etc. for international students.

Wong has been involved with the scholarship from its beginning. Through this endowment, she has thus far welcomed four exceptional undergraduate students from Africa to William & Mary.

"I get to know the students from application through graduation, and it's been gratifying to connect with them at every stage of their academic journey. I meet with each student at least once a semester. I check in to see how they are doing. They share their successes, challenges, and goals with me. It's a privilege to be a part of these students' lives, before they arrive at W&M, during their time at the university and post-graduation."

After Wong suggested that he consider the Hixon Scholarship, Kira did his own research and found even more value in the scholarship than the outstanding financial support. "I read about the things that inspired them to create the scholarship, that they saw people that were struggling and had the thirst for knowledge but couldn't afford it. It was a great thing to hear, so with Dr. Wong's encouragement, I applied."

Kira is the third of four scholarship recipients so far.

"Kira is a typical scholarship recipient in the sense that he represents the high caliber of students who attend W&M," says Wong. "However, every Hixon scholarship recipient is unique. The scholarship recipients are from different countries, coming to the university with their own unique experiences and aspirations."

And that was the intention when the Hixons established the scholarship.

"I don't think either myself or my father had any

vision of the typical kind of Hixon scholar," Kate Hixon says. "I knew through my own career that there were students across the continent all eager for the opportunity to study in the U.S. and that so many students would do incredibly well if just given the opportunity. There has yet to be a typical student - everyone has had different lived experiences and career paths. The thing they all have in common is their bravery for deciding to move away from their family and friends to pursue further education and their incredibly hard work to get to where they are."

BELONGING AT W&M

The Hixon Scholarship opened the door to William & Mary for Kira, who has chosen to major in government and business analytics with a focus on data science. But the impression he has made and the impact he has had are all due to his unique abilities and drive.

It was also helpful, that although it was daunting to come to the U.S. for the first time, he felt accepted from the start. "The campus was very welcoming. Everyone was very nice and trying to help."

It also helped that Kira's roommate, Nebiyou Samuel '26, is Ethiopian, He's an American citizen, but he grew up in Ethiopia, I mean he's Ethiopian as well, but he mostly came here during high school, so we speak the same language do the same thing. So we became friends instantly.

"He walked me through the process [of registering and getting acclimated.] There's a good Ethiopian community here as well – around fifteen of us freshmen year -- so it was a great opportunity to meet them, and being with them made adapting to the States easier."

"When I first met Kira, I could see that he was a very curious and open person. He seemed to share a new interest or experience every time we met," Wong recalls. "But over the semesters, I saw his interests deepen as he homed in on his academics and co-curricular pursuits. He's interested in student leadership and is active in several student groups such as the Black Male Collective, the African Culture Society, and the International Student Advisory Board. It's been wonderful to see Kira excel both in and out of the classroom."

ACADEMIC, PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL GROWTH

Kira has taken advantage of a broad range of opportunities to build his work skills, even during the school year on campus.

"Last fall, I worked as a consultant for the Hacking for Defense (H4D) program, where my team developed a clean energy strategy for the Philippines. We focused on aligning the plan with the country's economic revitalization and national security goals and had the opportunity to present our work to Former Secretary of Defense Robert Gates and other senior DoD officials. I also participated in Deloitte's Consulting Simulation, where I worked on infrastructure and human capital strategies for major U.S. cities."

Kira has also been a financial assistant for William & Mary Athletics. "It allows me to combine my interest in finance with my appreciation for sports. It's been a great opportunity to support student-athletes while gaining hands-on experience with budgeting and operations behind the scenes."

Instead of taking a break over the summers, he has continued to explore opportunities to gain experience and skills.

The summer after his freshman year, Kira (who was by then a business analytics major) and Nebiyou got internships together in Ethiopia. "We wanted to go to Ethiopia very much. Nebiyou told me about a great internship at Ethio Agri, but it, like most internships there, was unpaid. So we applied for FUSE funding and got the scholarship to fund our experience."

The thing [Hixon Scholars] all have in common is their bravery for deciding to move away from their family and friends to pursue further education and their incredibly hard work to get to where they are.

Ethio Agri-CEFT PLC, located in Addis Ababa, and is one of the largest import-export companies in Ethiopia. The company has thirteen farms, one tea processing & packaging factory and Agro-Processing factory. Its products are fair-trade certified and range from flowers to tea and coffee to essential oils and more. Kira worked as a data analyst for the coffee industry. "It was pretty amazing."

INTERNSHIP IN WASHINGTON, D.C..

It was an Ethiopian friend, Woodie Tirfie '23, who encouraged Kira to apply to the DC Summer Institute the summer, between his sophomore and junior years. "She had done it, and she really liked it, so she encouraged me to apply as well. So, I talked to Dr. Wong about it and applied."

The D.C. Summer Institute (DCSI) is a program run through the W&M Washington Center. Fellows earn credits through this academic program, composed of an accelerated course that involves networking with experts and alums through guest lectures and site visits—and working in an internship in the D.C. area. The two-week intensive courses balance time between the classroom, guest

speakers, and site visits at relevant locations to the coursework being taught in class. These experiences give fellows practical meaning to the theories and readings taught in class.

Kira was a Digital Citizenship Fellow in 2024 with William & Mary's D.C. Summer Institute at the Washington Center. Although he could stay with relatives in Alexandria to save in costs, the Hixon Scholarship covered any additional expenses.

Kira's course focused on digital identity and was taught by Elizabeth Losh, Duane A. and Virginia S. Dittman Professor of English & American Studies. "We met different people in the digital identity sphere, learning about privacy and Internet rights. And during the program you can get credit for an internship as well, and I found an internship that was perfect." For the summer, Kira was a Strategic Intelligence Analyst at Rhombus Power Inc., a defense and national security firm with headquarters in D.C. and Palo Alto. Rhombus describes its work as "purposefully transforming the nation's defense and national security enterprises with Guardian, its Artificial Intelligence platform for strategic, operational, and tactical decisions at the Speed of Relevance." Or, in layman's terms, "Rhombus helps leaders turn overwhelming data into decisive action."

For this government and business analytics major, work with data and analysis really was a perfect opportunity. The internship included more than analytical skills, though.

"It just ten minutes away from the D.C. Center, and we met with industry professionals and policymakers, and we had the chance to visit the Capitol as well, and it was such a great opportunity to meet people. We were interacting with different people -- those who worked with us as well as those who worked with Congress."

These interactions provided invaluable experience in learning how to navigate confidently, not only in the academic world, but also in the U.S. business world. "I was very shy freshman and sophomore year. But the DC internship was mostly client based. You had to talk to people and be more extroverted. You had to be good at communication. So I trained myself to be better."

He paid close attention and implemented what he saw and learned. "They taught us how to speak in a professional manner, which is concise and direct, and I implemented it during my junior year, and I saw improvement."

> I am a huge fan of Kira. As you would expect, I have seen many examples, both in and out of class, where his courage and character have stood out. There is a maturity and a clear-headedness to Kira that sets him apart.

A good indication of the impact Kira made at Rhombus Power that summer is that his internship this summer is with It's going to be with them again, but this time at the Palo Alto office, which promises to provide even more broadening experiences.

STUDY ABROAD IN SPAIN

The Hixon Scholarship will also enable Kira to study abroad his fall, and he was determined to take advantage of the opportunity.

"When I interact with different people in the professional world, whether through jobs or networking events, they always say to study abroad, that it's an experience you can't get any other way. You will meet different people and learn to adapt to different situations, and that will help you in the future. Students who study abroad are more successful."

And so, Kira will follow his internship in Palo Alto with a semester in Barcelona. He is going with his suite mates, including his roommate Nebiyou.

"It is going to be great. We were all motivated to explore Europe. Even though for me it's a study abroad experience at William & Mary, it will be different in Spain, and getting the opportunity for that different experience in life was something not to miss."

PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP & COMPASSIONATE GLOBAL CITIZEN

Although Kira's track record of success and hard work and accomplishments are all reasons to earn notice, much less accolades, the biggest impact Kira makes is not as easily listed on LinkedIn, but no less essential to success in life.

And anyone who meets him senses this.

One thing that stands out on his resume is that he was a U.S. Army ROTC Cadet his freshman year. That is not something that one would expect from an international student. But hearing Kira's reasoning, it makes perfect sense. "I joined because I wanted to develop discipline and leadership skills, and I was also interested in military training as a way to help others. Even though I'm an international student, I saw it as a unique opportunity to grow and contribute in a meaningful way.

"ROTC opened up opportunities I wouldn't have had otherwise, like getting involved in the Hacking for Defense program. That experience ended up tying in really well with my internship, and the team there really appreciated the background and perspective I brought because of it.


NAFSA: ASSOCIATION OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATORS
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ROTC challenged me, taught me a lot about myself, and gave me tools I still use today."

Kira took ECON 150 his freshman year with Peter Atwater Adjunct Professor of Economics, and says it had a great impact as a class – "It was great!" -- but that he has also appreciated staying in touch with Atwater to update him each semester on what he's doing. Kira's impact on Atwater has been just as powerful.

"I am a huge fan of Kira. As you would expect, I have seen many examples, both in and out of class, where his courage and character have stood out. There is a maturity and a clear-headedness to Kira that sets him apart."

Although meeting the Hixons is not part of the scholarship application process or experience, Kira took the opportunity while he was in D.C. for the Summer Institute to reach out to Kate Hixon on LinkedIn and invited her for breakfast. He wanted to learn more about her work and her experiences in Africa.

"I was incredibly impressed with Kira when I met him," Hixon recalls. "He is involved in so much on campus I don't know how he manages to balance it all. I really admire his drive and ambition and determination to make the most of his time at W&M. I also really appreciate his willingness to make sure other people in his life benefit from this opportunity."

And maybe that is the surest sign of Kira's potential. Even more than the skills he is acquiring and the people he is meeting, he always has at his core that determination 'to make sure other people in his life benefit from this opportunity.'

Whatever his sister's motivation, she pointed him toward the perfect university and launchpad.

As for where that launchpad leads in the future, as Kate Hixon says: "I'm super excited to see what Kira does next!"





Top: Kira and his roommate, Nebiyou Samuel, at the Raymond A. Mason School of Business. (Courtesy photo)

Bottom: French actress and author, Stephanie Szostak '94 , with Kira in the Reves Room. Szostak came to William & Mary in October '24 to deliver a talk -- "Playbook for Success" -- co-sponsored by W&M Libraries and the Reves Center. A former international student herself, she met with a small group of faculty, staff and students, to discuss the challenges and opportunities of being an international student. Kira introduced Szostak at her talk that evening in the Studio Theatre in PBK. (Photo credit: Kate Hoving

Opposite page: NAFSA: Association of International Educators serves the needs of more than 11,000 members and international educators worldwide and is the leading organization committed to international education and exchange,. In April 2025, NAFSA held its Advocacy Day for members across the U.S. In total, 145 attendees from 37 states and Canada--advisors, leaders, students, mentors, and many others--came to D.C. to make sure international education stayed at the forefront of national policy conversations. Participants met with their members of Congress and staffs to communicate how international education contributes to their state, economy, and U.S. competitiveness as a whole. Members of Reves staff and Kira, joined by colleagues from Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU), the Association of International Enrollment Management, and Institute for International Education (IIE), net with staff of Senators Kaine and Warner and Representatives Rob Wittman and Jennifer McClellan.

Top: Fanta Aw, PhD, NAFSA Executive Director and CEO, had an animated discussion with Kira at the reception at the Senate Russell Office Building the evening before Advocay Day. (Photo credit: Kate Hoving);

Bottom: The team from Virginia paused in their day of meetings on the Hill to pose in front of the Capitol. L-R: Stephanie Tignor, Director of Global Learning at VCU; Savannah Morris, VCU student; Lauren Devan, International Programs Coordinator & Advisor, Reves Center; Mona Starman, Community Programs Assistant, Reves Center; and Kira. (Photo credit: Kate Hoving)



Here's to the ones who dream

BY KATE HOVING

Livia Martinez '25 had a clear vision for her future when she was a child: "I told my parents I wanted to be Santa's elf."

As often happens with childhood wishes, that vision faded to the background as Livia followed an educational and professional path in communications and marketing.

And yet, fast forward to November 2022. She found herself wearing an elf costume. "I somehow found this job as a holiday seasonal photographer while I was at home. It was a 3-week job, because it was during winter break." Livia photographed more than three hundred families daily, so she added to her skillset and confidence behind the camera as well as gaining invaluable customer service experience. But most importantly, at long last, "I was Santa's elf, and that had been my dream since I was a little girl."

This anecdote tells us a couple of things that make Livia so special. First, she has a remarkable ability to track down and secure all sorts of opportunities -- online, on- or off-campus. As we shall learn, Livia doesn't wait for opportunities to come to her. She seeks them out and takes her best shot and usually scores.

Second, Livia is able to maintain focus over long periods of time. She doesn't obsess, but if something is important, she won't forget.

And third, applied learning is fully integrated into everything Livia does – every educational, work and avocational activity applies and utilizes what she's learned before and will in turn amplify the next class or job that follows. An elf that hands out candy would be a fun position and result in lots of anecdotes (just ask David Sedaris), but an elf that builds relevant career skills... that's a strategic choice. And it's one of many strategic choices Livia has been making to great success.

COMBINING TWO PASSIONS

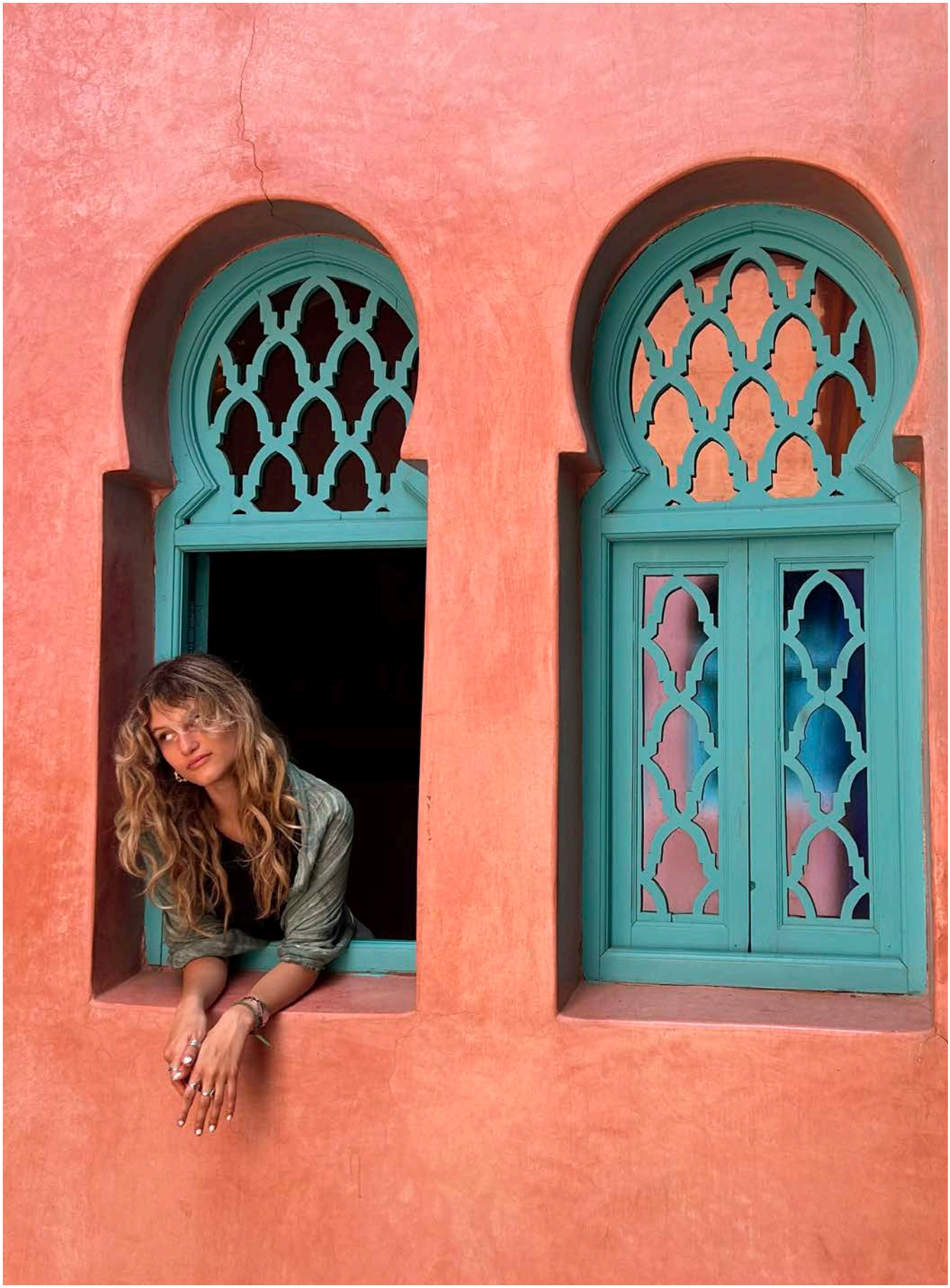
Livia left her hometown of Frisco, Texas, for Williamsburg, Virginia, because that's where she needed to be. "I wanted to study abroad in college, and I knew William & Mary had really good programs for that."

That box was checked, but she also knew what she wanted to major in, and that was going to take a little creativity. "I got to William & Mary, but there wasn't a communications program. I was torn between marketing or film studies. I didn't want to do business school --I didn't want to take accounting, and I still don't want to take accounting -- so I made my own major in communications and digital media management with a minor in psychology."

Livia then set out to carve out a college experience that would fulfill her desire to study abroad and explore the field of communications.

In fact, Livia's first overseas program was specifically designed to combine international experience with career exploration. Freeman Foundation grants,

Opposite: Livia Martinez in Morocco. (Courtesy photo)



administered through the Reves Center, enable a cohort of William & Mary undergraduates to conduct unpaid internships in Asia in the summer. The purpose of this program is to provide students with a range of professional opportunities in structured, real-world settings that will allow them to clarify their career goals, enhance their career preparation, and develop their cultural competencies. The application process is very competitive, as no more than 24 students are selected each year. In summer 2023, after Livia's sophomore year, she was awarded a Freeman Intern Fellowship at the Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC) in Quezon City, Philippines. In addition to traveling to Asia for the first time, she created a digital outreach and marketing plan and conducted market research analyzing similar Southeast Asian nonprofits. She also consulted on the PSSC's website.

Livia had a more traditional study abroad experience in spring 2024, studying for a semester in Europe on a CIEE program, dividing the time between Berlin and Madrid. It can be challenging to get oriented in another country, with language and cultural differences. She was fine with those issues. Livia's biggest challenge turned out to be public transportation. "I'm horrible with directions. It was so embarrassing! I would go on the wrong subway at least once every week. I would end up far out in the wrong direction."

Not having a lot of experience with public transportation, confusion is understandable. It's her response to it that speaks so well to Livia's flexibility and curiosity. "Whenever I would get lost, I would just get off the subway and start walking around. Madrid is huge, so I would end up seeing a part of Madrid I'd never seen in my life. Of course, it would then it would take forty-five minutes to get back, so that'd be annoying, but it was really cool."

EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES BACK IN THE U.S.: ON CAMPUS

Throughout her undergraduate years Livia has consistently worked and interned in communications and marketing roles both on and off campus, getting hands-on experience and training. "Marketing is in my skillset. I ran my school's Instagram account in high school. So when I was looking for internships and saw these marketing-focused internships, that's what I did."

On campus, she was a digital marketing intern at Swem Library and for Tribe Athletics, as well as a programming coordinator for the Ampersand International Arts Festival.

She has also taken on opportunities that build on interpersonal skills, such as being a Resident Advisor.

Her talents and international travel experience came together when the Reves Center hired Livia her senior year as a peer advisor. As students who have previously studied abroad, peer advisors guide fellow students through the study abroad process and are often the first contact students have when they begin to explore options. Applicants undergo a rigorous interview and selection process, and staff look for the following qualities: diversity of background and experiences; strong written and verbal communication; positive attitude and demeanor and ability to make people feel welcome; being a team player and strong collaborator; and the ability to take initiative.

"I was surprised I got hired, because I was a senior. I think they thought I was a junior when they hired me," she laughs.

Well, the Reves Center knew exactly who she was and what she could bring to the position when they hired her. Maria Jay, global education advisor, supervises the peer advisors.

"Working with Livia has been the utmost honor. Her enthusiasm, drive, reliability and genuine passion for helping others navigate study abroad has made a lasting impact on our team and the students that she has supported. She is one of the humblest people I have met. I'm so thankful to be a small part of this chapter for Livia and excited to see all the incredible things she will accomplish!"

Jay has been impressed with the way Livia has managed her time and focus. "Livia excels in the classroom while balancing her role as a Peer Advisor and Resident Assistant on top of an internship with the prestigious film company and other campus clubs and organizations."

Also, in her senior year, Livia was accepted into the Sharp Seminar, a joint initiative between the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting and William & Mary, established with a generous gift from Anne and Barry Sharp, and administered by the Charles Center. The program pairs Pulitzer Center-sponsored journalists with William & Mary students. During the fall students learn the basics of journalism, home in on a topic of interest, and begin the groundwork of their reporting. The spring semester focuses on developing and writing the story for a public audience. At the end of the spring, student stories are eligible to be published on the Pulitzer Center's website. Livia's article will be posted this spring. "My piece is about AI in the film restoration world, and how that's affecting things good and bad. It's making things a lot more efficient, but it's also hurting some artists."

The Sharp Seminar experience has helped Livia refine her career goals. "I don't think I love [journalism], and it's good that I know that. Both my parents are journalists, and they never really wanted me to be a journalist, because it's a hard life. I'm glad I tried it, and I'm glad I had that opportunity. But I think there







are people in my cohort who are much more skilled."

As she has at Reves, Livia has made a lasting impact on the staff at the Charles Center, Ted Maris-Wolf, PhD, associate director of the Charles Center: "Livia is fearless and her curiosity knows no bounds. She approaches everyone and everything with empathy, thought, and an artist's eye, making connections among people, ideas, and disciplines in ways that inspire. Whether writing, taking pictures, or shooting a film, Livia embodies the liberal arts approach to learning—and life—we nurture at W&M."

Livia left a powerful impression at W&M, but she is very much focused on what comes next and has earned an excellent reputation outside of Williamsburg.

OFF-CAMPUS EXPERIENCE

Livia has held several positions in media and marketing for various film production companies and non-profits. She has worked as a production and development intern

Top: Livia with her supervisor Vern Sison at PSCC; Bottom left: During her Freeman Fellowship, Livia and Sophie Kim '24, a Freeman Fellow in Singapore, explored Indonesia and visited the Sacred Monkey Forest Sanctuary in Ubud, Bali. (Courtesy photos). Bottom right: Livia at the Peer Advisors' desk at the Reves Center (Photo credit: Rocio Bresnahan)

analyzing screenplays and is the creator and host of a podcast of movie reviews that she manages with her parents (strangeloveofmovies.com).

Livia worked for two winters at the Sundance Institute® and Sundance Film Festival®. First, in 2024 she was a press office associate. She was then assigned a more responsible role in 2025 as an artist relations associate, assisting in coordinating ten filmmaker panels and working with A-list talent and their management as well as staff and volunteers.

For the past year, while being a full-time student and holding down campus jobs and doing special projects, Livia has been an intern with New York City-based A24, an independent entertainment company that encompasses television and film production and distribution. It is a young company, small but dynamic, and known for its marketing and branding as well as their award-winning films, such as "Everything Everywhere All at Once," "Sing Sing," "Babygirl," and "The Brutalist."

"I think they're a great studio. And after COVID, they made their internships remote, which gives people like me who are not from L.A. or New York, a chance to get into the film industry."

From May 2024 until this past January, Livia was a film & publicity intern. "I was doing domestic publicity for their films and TV products. It was behind-the-scenes publicity like scheduling film screenings for press people or scheduling makeup and hair and transportation for celebrities who are going to do interviews. I was helping with the logistics and making sure that things during premiere days would go well. Another big part of the job was to conduct daily media sweeps and take detailed notes during agency meetings."

Although the film industry is inherently international, Livia is now officially in an internationally focused role. In February Livia was selected for the international publicity internship. She monitors and tracks international media coverage, compiling detailed reports and insights to support global publicity efforts.

In addition to working on a much broader scale in this new position, she has the advantage of being in a smaller department, which means more opportunities can come her way. "I'm doing a lot more varied and random tasks that come up and need to get done, so I'm learning even more. Recently, I've been contacting international theaters to make sure that things are going to run on time and helping with the Cannes Film Festival in France."

LESSONS LEARNED AND APPLIED

And when asked how she landed that initial internship with A24, she responds: "I make the joke that my dad is the CEO. He's not the CEO. We have no connections. But I honestly don't know. I mean, it was on their website. I don't know how I got it, because, looking back and knowing now who the other interns are, they are so much more qualified for that position than I am. I don't know. I'm lucky, though." She also thinks the Sundance Institute® internship on her resume might have helped.

How did she get the much-coveted internship? "I just applied. They need people because it's an unpaid position."

She often chalks up a success to chance – "I'm just lucky" – but through hard work and imagination, Livia has been making her own luck. She is not drifting through life, reacting to things. Livia knows who she is, what her talents and interests are and how to keep moving forward with--and through--every opportunity.

And most important, perhaps – she puts herself out there.

Her study abroad experience has also helped, as interviewers noticed and asked about it. "In most of the job interviews I've had they've mentioned, 'Oh, we see you lived in Berlin,' or 'You lived in the Philippines?' I think it helped me get these jobs because I could say I actually did something like that when I was living and working in the Philippines."

FOLLOWING HER NEXT DREAM

Now that she has graduated, Livia is thinking about what comes after her A24 internship. "For my ideal job, I have two ideas. One is film marketing or publicity, just because that's what I'm used to and good at. But I'm also interested in film acquisitions."

She hopes to find a job in New York or Washington, D.C., because that's where so many of her classmates are going.

Whatever Livia's vision is for her future, she is one her way to making it happen. She will continue to seek out opportunities to learn, to travel, to apply what she's learned, and make the most of the journey on the way to her destination. Luckily we can find her and follow along through her website, liviamartinez.com.







Clockwise from above: Livia with her parents, Emily and Oscar Martinez, in Berlin when she was studying abroad there; Livia the Christmas Elf and photographer; Livia as W&M graduate on the steps of the Wren Building. (Courtesy photos)

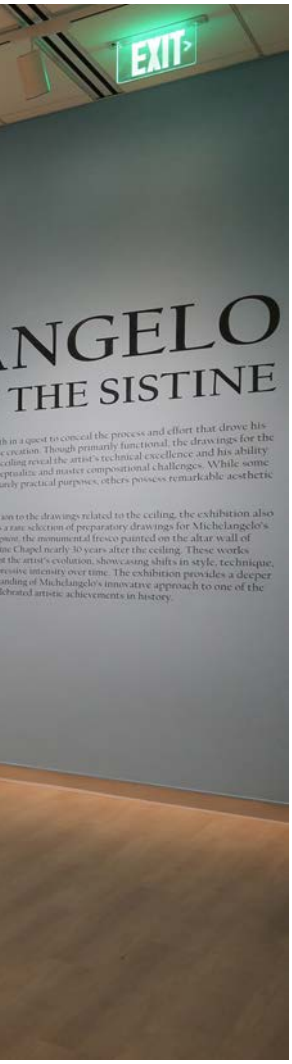
An exploration in form & space



This spring, the Muscarelle Museum of Art brought 25 rarely-displayed masterpiece drawings by Michelangelo to the United States. Michelangelo: The Genesis of the Sistine (March 6 - June 1) offered American viewers an unprecedented opportunity to experience first-hand the genius of the famed artist. Displaying Michelangelo's initial studies and early drawings of the famous frescoes of the Sistine Chapel, the exhibition explored the rich story of the origin of these works, arguably some of the most famous in the world. Curated by Adriano Marinazzo, Muscarelle Curator of Special Projects, and based on his extensive scholarship, the exhibition highlighted new and compelling theories about Michelangelo's work, including a comparison between The Creation of Adam and a self-portrait, which suggests that the artist may have envisioned himself as the Creator.

We asked Marinazzo about his journey from Italy to William & Mary.

Above: Marinazzo poses at the beginning of the exhibition. Opposite page: Marinazzo in the Swem Library and examining drawing at the Adriano Casa Buonarroti in 2012. (Courtesy photos)



You came to William & Mary from the University of Florence. What were you teaching there?

I don't come from a family of academics or professionals — I was born in Brindisi, in Puglia, just across the sea from Greece. After high school, I moved to what felt like "foreign" territory: Florence. At the time, the academic and museum worlds there were largely reserved for Florentine scholars, but with a lot of hard work, I was fortunate enough to break through that wall.

At the University of Florence, I taught courses on Renaissance architecture, with a particular focus on the intersection of art and technology during that period. Over time, my research — especially on the Pitti Palace and Michelangelo — began to gain recognition, even across the ocean.

What inspired you to leave Italy and come to the U.S? Was it to come to the U.S. in general, or did you have W&M in mind? Were there other options you considered?

I was drawn to the U.S. by the opportunity to engage with my work in an international context. William & Mary, along with the Muscarelle Museum's commitment to both scholarship and teaching, made it feel like a natural fit.

While there were certainly other opportunities, and now more universities and museums are showing interest in my work, W&M is truly a special place, full of kind people. My wife, Verdiana, works for the university, and her first job here was at the Reves Center. Furthermore, our 3-year-old daughter, Azzurra, was born here in Williamsburg, which makes this place even more meaningful for us. So, we feel it was the right choice and might stay here longer than we initially thought.

You came to W&M in 2012 at the Muscarelle Museum of Art, and you have since (in 2022) been named the inaugural designer in residence and adjunct professor (2023) in the Department of Applied Science. Is that how you anticipated your path would be? Was it a natural progression or what you had envisioned early on?

When I arrived at W&M, I didn't foresee this exact path — but in hindsight, it feels like a natural evolution. Becoming Designer-in-Residence gave form to something I had long been pursuing: the intersection of art and science. To me, the most fascinating aspect of life is research, because it leads to discovery and brings us closer to the mystery of existence and creation.

But teaching is, without a doubt, the most meaningful way I know to make a lasting impact. In addition to my role in Applied Science, I'll also be teaching in the Art History department next academic year. I see this as a powerful way to inspire students — and perhaps even help shape the course of a young scholar's, scientist's, or artist's life.

The diversity of perspectives in my classroom, with students from all over the world, makes the experience especially rewarding.



Your research focuses so much on works in Italy. Although some might think that would mean to continue your work, you should be in Italy. What does it say about art and international collaborations that makes your residency not a hindrance, but maybe an asset? Or maybe in the 21st century it isn't even an issue?

In today's world, geographic boundaries are far less limiting than they once were. Being based in the U.S. has, in fact, expanded the scope of my collaborations. I



work regularly with institutions in Italy — including Casa Buonarroti, the Uffizi Gallery, and the Vatican Museums — and digital platforms allow us to share resources, ideas, and discoveries instantly.

In your exhibit. You tell a multi-level story. A person can visit it and see it as an exhibition of great visual art; or they can explore the way an artist conceives of and executes 2-dimensional designs that are placed in 3-dimensional space, on complex structures, resulting in the challenges that arise using plaster and creating a work of art exposed to the environmental factors of any structure – in a way the challenges for a sculptor having to create as a painter; and third, the viewer can follow your forensic investigation. Was that your intention? What do you think the structure of the show tells us about your approach to art and education?

What's most important to me is clarity. Whether I'm curating, writing, or teaching, I want people to clearly understand what I'm trying to convey. I don't like being arcane — clarity reflects confidence in what you believe. Yes, the multi-level storytelling in Michelangelo: The Genesis of the Sistine was absolutely intentional. I see exhibitions not just as displays of objects, but as opportunities to invite viewers into a visual, intellectual, and emotional experience.

You have an almost visceral connection with Michelangelo – I'm wondering if your skills in 3-dimensional visualization, architecture and communication make you kindred souls in a way. Is that too strange a thought?

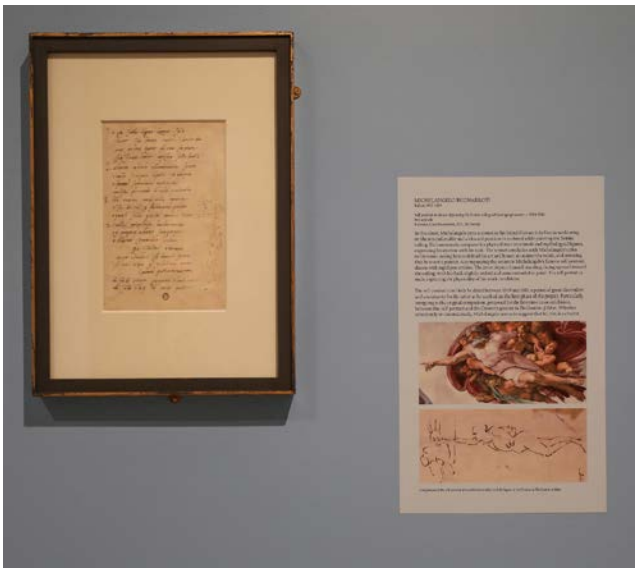
Not strange at all. I often feel a certain connection to Michelangelo — not just to his art, but to the way he thought and worked, especially his way of thinking in terms of form and space. What I admire about him most is his courage. That's something that inspires me. Whenever I face a project that feels too difficult, too ambitious, or full of obstacles, I draw strength from thinking of Michelangelo — of his Herculean efforts to accomplish what often seemed like superhuman tasks. Then, by comparison, my own work suddenly feels much easier.

In addition to Italy and the U.S., do you have colleagues in other countries you work with closely?

Yes, I collaborate regularly with scholars and institutions in countries including the UK, Spain, France, and many others. Art is inherently international, and many of the most exciting projects come from conversations that cross cultural and disciplinary lines.

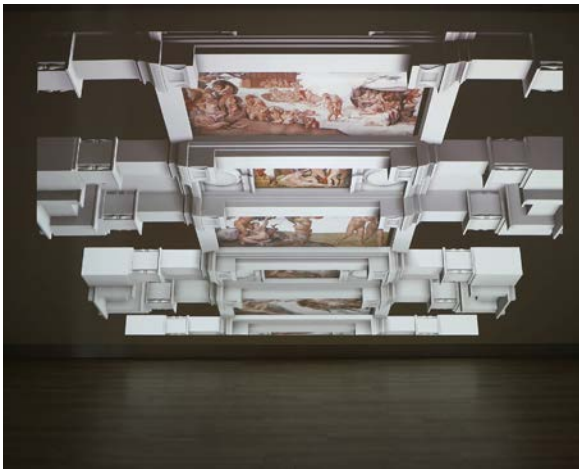
Is there another country you would like to visit as a scholar?

I'm not sure. But if interstellar travel were possible, I'd be curious to see — assuming other forms of intelligent life exist — how they create art, or if they even feel the need to create art at all. Perhaps art is something uniquely human, a way for us to confront and explore the questions we cannot answer.











A selection of photos of the exhibition at the Muscarelle, including two stills from the video Marinazzo created for the exhibi, exploring the structural and architectural components of the ceiling's design. (Courtesy photos)

For more information about the exhibition visit muscarelle.wm.edu

In the field: Q&A with Mika Taylor '23, Fulbright Teaching Assistant in South Korea

At her graduation, Michaela-Katherine Gabrielle Taylor '23 (also known as Mika) received the Sullivan Award "in recognition of influence for good, taking into consideration such characteristics of heart, mind, conduct and demonstrating a spirit of love and helpfulness to others. Here's how she was described at commencement when the award was announced:

Taylor graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in global studies with a concentration in Asian and Middle Eastern studies further focused on East Asian studies. Raised across England, Germany, Korea and Japan, she has a unique perspective on the world and a desire to share it with others, according to the award citation.

Taylor served in the Global Education Office as a peer advisor, guiding students through the study abroad process, conducting workshops and promoting study abroad opportunities on campus. She was selected as an International Student Advisory Board member and International Peer Leader, assisting international students as they transitioned to W&M.

Taylor worked as a resident advisor, peer advisor and served on advisory boards for the dean of students and the provost. She has also supported her department, volunteering to help with communications and social media and actively working to create feelings of comradery among students. During study abroad, Taylor sought ways to uplift others, including volunteering to help South Korean children learn English. She was recently awarded a Fulbright Scholarship.

One nominator described a phenomenon at the Reves Center as the "Mika Effect." The simple mention of Taylor's nickname elicits a smile, a tiny pause of shared recognition and appreciation and the conversation continues. Her colleagues appreciated her for her empathy, caring and dependability — qualities that "make her a superb writer and a wonderful human being," according to a nominator.

"Her heart, mind and conduct have marked campus and the world-at-large for the better," a mentor wrote.

Q: You received a Fulbright to South Korea after you graduated in 2023. What was your assignment? Where did you live?

My first assignment was in Mokpo in Jeollanam-do on the southern coast. This year I am in Asan (close to Pyeongtaek) which is in Chungcheongnam-do, about an hour and a half south of Seoul.

Q: I understand you were invited to continue for a second year. Is that true? Was it to continue in the same role or was it to be something different?

With the Fulbright program, (the Korea ETA one specifically), we have to apply annually to renew for a potential total of three years. Each year the application to extend a year has to be approved, and I am grateful to have been accepted for a second year.

Q: So, all told, how long have you been in South Korea for this/these fellowships – when did you arrive? Do you have an end date or is it open-ended?

I arrived in January last year for the nearly two-month orientation that had us become familiar with the program itself, Korean culture, and expectations for us as an ETA. This year, since I am a renewee, I joined for the later half of orientation in February. The Fulbright contract for us ends in December, but we aren't required to leave for another month.

Some people use this opportunity to go traveling or to stay in their city, but once the contract is over we are expected to move out, so it's financially on the ETA as to what they decide to do post-grant until the visa expires (around end of January). I went home a few days after since I wanted to spend Christmas with my family and intend to do so again this year!

Q: What ages are your students?

I am an English teaching assistant, so I work on my own classes and lesson plans as well as leading extracurriculars and getting involved in the local community. Last year I was assigned to an elementary school but this year I am at a middle school. Middle schools in Korea are the U.S. equivalent of 7th to 9th grade.

Q: Have there been any surprises?

It was very interesting getting to learn about Korean workplace culture with this opportunity. I learned about events such as 회식 (hweshik) which are regular teacher get-togethers, I get to lead talking classes with some of the administrative staff, and despite having no prior teaching experience I was able to adapt and learn a lot in this field. My staff is patient and kind and my students are simply delightful; I feel very lucky.

Q: You studied abroad in South Korea. Was it different this time, living as a working professional?



I studied in 2021 at Korea University so my studies were relatively intensive. With teaching my focus is on creating lesson plans that students can understand and connect with as well as forming relations with them and my staff, so my central focus is both work and interpersonal relations. I am also in a different area that is more rural, so I get to have a more intensive language learning/practice experience without English as a crutch.

Q: I understand you have tutored a North Korean defector. What were your impressions?

I spent a year tutoring four North Korean Defectors (NKD), and was able to learn a lot about what that community looks like in Seoul. Of course, my main job was teaching and I never wished to pry about their life experiences, I got to learn why learning English was so important to them. From wanting to attend college to wanting to become a journalist to write on the NKD experience, I was grateful for my time with my students and think we both learned a lot from each other and grew together.

Q: Would you recommend applying for a Fulbright?

I would 1000% recommend applying. As someone who is a third culture kid who has lived in multiple countries throughout my life, I can't express how enlightening the Fulbright experience is. Getting to become part of a community, practice cultural ambassadorship and learning about other cultures and languages is such an incredibly valuable experience that is life changing. No matter your background it is a transformative experience that everyone can learn and grow from.

Q: What have been the highlights of the experience for you?

I am very grateful to be able to say I have had a multitude of highlights. Building connections within my community, from cafe owners to students has been a pleasure. Events like going on a field trip to Jeju, participating in students' Sports Day and touring a folk village. Trips such as doing cultural tours in places like Gyeongju, going to concerts in Seoul and planning my first solo trip to Japan. Moments I share with people such as my birthday picnic with my Fulbrighter friends, a temple stay with my counselor, and road trips across the country with friends. I have been incredibly lucky to experience such amazing events and create such profound memories.

Q: What have been the challenges?

Top: Mika with some of her students. Their faces are obscured to protect their privacy. (Courtesy photos)

The initial part of my first year was a bit difficult. After the month-long intensive orientation we were brought to our new city and I started work the next day. Adjustment periods are difficult in general, but having it be my first time on my own overseas with many expectations outside of college, I was overwhelmed. Most, if not all, ETAs had this experience, and I was very drained at the beginning. But I gave myself time and space to adjust as I needed. I made sure to make time for myself and to slowly make efforts to connect with my local community. A few months later I was fully comfortable and had a routine, and even figured out how to travel cross-country. Thanks to my local community's support, as well as connecting with other ETAs that I befriended during orientation, I was able to make a slow but healthy transition.

Q: Have you given any thought to your next step?

This fall I will be applying to master's programs and grants. I have always wanted to work in the realm of cultural diplomacy, with intercultural programs that are transformative and impactful, so I intend to continue my studies to do just that! I am casting a wide net and will choose my path from whatever opportunities I am offered.

Q: Is there anything you'd like to share that I haven't addressed in these questions?

I would love to highlight Fulbright extracurriculars. Outside of the Fulbright ETA experience, there are some clubs that provide ETAs to be active and to connect to their local community and South Korea at large.

There are organizations such as KBI (Korea Bridge Initiative) that provides classes with volunteer teachers to students who can't typically afford 학원 (hagwons, Korean cram schools/academies). KAMP (Korean Adolescents Mentoring Program) is a program where ETAs become mentors to students who require extra support. Infusion is a literary magazine run by ETAs, KKOOM is an organization supporting orphaned Korean youth, and there is the NKD tutoring program.

I am grateful to be a part of all of them this year, Directing KAMP and director of KBI, and think it's wonderful that ETAs are provided with these experiences to learn about Korean issues and be able to make positive contributions to their community and Korea as a whole.

Additionally, If anyone would like to ask about my Fulbright experience or the South Korea ETA Fulbright program, they can reach out to michaelakat.taylor@gmail.com. I would be more than happy to help.





Top: Mika and a friend in her program traveled to Busan and explored that part of the coast.

Bottom: Mika outisde a small café. She befriended the owner and his wife, who hosted classical performers every month. They asked Mika to perform a set (singing in Korean and English). The sign is detailing her performance before the owner and his friend (a guitar duo) perform. (Courtesy photos)



W&M students Jana Smith-Perry '26 (center right) and Corinne Boyd '26 (right) meet with SORALO researcher Cynthia Kileken (left) and SORALO ranger in training, Rose Dapana (center left). (Photo by Erica Garroutte)

Life, Leadership, and Conservation: Maasai Women Rangers Share Wisdom with Students

BY ANITA HAGY-FERGUSON, INSTITUTE FOR INTEGRATIVE CONSERVATION

"I would like to think that women have the added advantage of a great ability to trust their intuition, which is a great attribute to have in ranger work. This coupled with our ability to bring our cultural knowledge to conservation efforts helps us cultivate a deep and meaningful connection with nature." — SORALO woman ranger

Globally, women rangers play a unique and important role in wildlife conservation. In the South Rift Valley of Kenya, rangers monitor wildlife and ecosystems in protected areas and communal lands to balance human activity and safety with environmental protection. Here, a team of women rangers is applying perspective and expertise distinctive to Maasai women, and their insightful approach to conservation is helping wildlife and communities of the valley thrive. In summer 2024 a team of William & Mary and Kenyan students garnered conservation and life lessons from these strong women role models.

A COLLABORATIVE, INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP

The South Rift Association of Land Owners (SORALO), with the support of Conservation Nation's "People and Pachyderms" Collective, is expanding a long-standing ranger program to be shaped by and inclusive of women. To ensure a successful ranger program that maximizes positive impact on conservation, communities, and the lives of the women rangers and their families, SORALO and Conservation Nation teamed up with the William & Mary Institute for Integrative Conservation (IIC) to research perspectives of women rangers on how to best structure ranger programs to achieve these goals.

The idea to explore this critical research topic surfaced out of an innovative Institute for Integrative Conservation and Conservation Nation adult education certificate program

"SORALO strongly believes that successful conservation efforts are community-led. We combine a great mix of science, Maa culture and traditional knowledge to support communities in protecting their land, ensuring a future where people, their livestock, and wildlife coexist." - John Kamanga, SORALO Executive Director





for women leaders connected to the People & Pachyderms Collective. The research came together through a highly collaborative process that involved input, support, and mentorship of the three organizations through all stages of the research, from design to analysis, with each organization uniquely contributing to the research success.

William & Mary students Corinne Boyd '26 and Jana Smith-Perry '26 joined Kenyan student and SORALO Research Assistant Ketito "Cynthia" Kileken in the South Rift Valley to design and conduct a study to inform how ranger programs can be inclusive and responsive to the multifaceted contributions and corresponding needs of rangers and trainees who are women.

The research is part of the IIC Conservation Research Program (CRP), a flagship William & Mary undergraduate program in which students conduct applied, integrative research in collaboration with conservation partners. Over the course of the year-long project, the student researchers were mentored by William & Mary's Dr. Mara Dicenta, an Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Integrative Conservation, and Erica Garroutte, Director of the CRP. The students received essential research and cultural guidance from SORALO's team, including Mercy Waithira (Information Training & Communications lead), Helen Kayiaa (Inclusion and Gender lead), and Pheona Meneto (Data Analyst). Conservation Nation's co-CEO's Lynn Mento and Tricia Reilly, Collectives Director, Jamie Palumbo, Communications Director, Susan Winslow, and the People & Pachyderms Collective Champions and certificate program participants all contributed mentorship on the project.

SORALO, a non-governmental organization with a mission to maintain a healthy and connected landscape for people and wildlife, supports Maasai communities with implementation of local conservation models that promote co-existence of people and wildlife, integrate Indigenous culture and conservation, and empower communities in the South Rift Valley.

The students became an integral part of the SORALO research team, which took a mixed methods approach to the research, which included semi-structured interviews, focus groups, visual reflections, and environmental and organizational participant observation. Working with SORALO, the students identified patterns gleaned from participant observation and themes that emerged in the interview responses from community leaders and both women and men rangers.

Perhaps most importantly, the students left feeling empowered by the mentorship of Massai women in

About left: R (Photo by Erica Garroutte); Above right: John Kamanga, SORALO Executive Director, awards the "Best-all-around" ranger assessment award to Precious Kotonto. (Photo credit: SORALO); Opposite page: SORALO rangers train on first aid. (Photo credit: SORALO)



leadership roles, learning paradoxically that in conservation there is no need to qualify positions by gender, but that conservation thrives from the unique contributions of women.

FORGING NEW PATHS FOR WOMEN CONSERVATION LEADERS

"Having stayed with them and learned from them about changing women's roles, I am reminded that the world is changing and that as a woman I can create change and increase opportunities for other women in the world." – Cynthia Kileken

Culture and tradition strongly influence the definition of specific roles for men and women, guiding what they may do at home and in society. In the South Rift Valley, Maasai women are forging new roles and carving out new places for women as cultural and conservation leaders.

Maasai women play a unique and vital role in environmental conservation, but they have historically been excluded from decision-making processes and implementation of conservation actions, management strategies, and policies. Though gender roles have been diversifying, opportunities for women to serve as rangers or game scouts have been limited. The SORALO rangers program positions women as equals in a job traditionally reserved for men.

SORALO rangers collect information on wildlife through field observations and sightings. They attend community meetings to create awareness of wildlife and conservation, help communities needing help with wildlife control and human-wildlife conflict, and when needed, provide first aid to humans injured by wildlife.

All rangers undergo training in ecology and conservation techniques, gaining valuable knowledge and skills that allow them to make meaningful contributions to environmental efforts. The program provides formal employment in conservation and grants professional and leadership recognition, which strengthens the acceptance of Maasai women's roles in the conservation field and enables their conservation contributions.

WOMEN AND MEN WORKING TOGETHER AS RANGER TEAMS

"A ranger is a ranger. Both men and women rangers undertake the same role and the same training in their ranger positions. Both men and women also value their community roles and their duties and positions as parents." - Silvia Nashipae, SORALO ranger

A key takeaway from the SORALO program is that there is no distinction between men and women rangers when it comes to defining and implementing the work of a ranger. Women rangers acquire the same skills, perform the same duties, and meet the same expectations as men rangers. In the SORALO program all rangers are located on a single ranger base. Women rangers have the same voice and authority as male rangers. Men and women train together and work together to achieve common ranger goals, and this strengthens the teamwork of the rangers.

The students shadowed men and women rangers on scouts, patrols, school visits, and community outreach trips. They also participated in the rangers' rigorous physical training program in which men and women work out side-by-side.

Training with the rangers gave the students critical insight on the level of skill, fitness, and commitment the women rangers have. "The workouts! We got up before sunrise to train with the women and men and ended up running like five kilometers and we were doing pushups and everything in between", stated student Corinne Boyd, "Working out with them was like a rite of passage. I felt that we connected, and gaining that trust was such an honor."

MAASAI WOMEN BRING A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE TO CONSERVATION

"Maasai people believe they cannot tell a story of their savannah without the wildlife and this really motivates women to take care of wildlife. In the identity of Maasai people, there is no existence without coexistence." – Cynthia Kileken

A major research finding was that the perspectives of women rangers are distinctly women's perspectives, and this distinction positions women to contribute to the field of conservation in novel ways. The Maasai are pastoral people who live close to the land and wildlife. Because of





this, they acutely experience environmental change and conflict. Maasai women are closely in touch with their families, their communities, their livestock, and the environment, so they are often the first to notice when something is wrong. As caretakers of livestock and communities, they apply the same nurturing mindset to conservation, with remarkable results.

Rangers are recognized for having expertise in wildlife law and policy. The ranger uniform validates the knowledge and expertise of a ranger and increases the level of respect for them. Maasai women are highly trusted and recognized as peacemakers, capable of facilitating environmental mediation and conflict resolution without being seen as enforcers. A Maasai woman in a ranger uniform garners respect from the community as both a ranger and a woman.

"Women rangers are recognized and involved in decision making, and as positive influencers in conservation, women rangers in uniform are respected more and listened to by the community." – SORALO ranger Corporal Silvia Nashipae

One important takeaway for students was that a woman ranger does not shed her identity as a woman or the significant roles she plays outside of her ranger duties. In fact, maintaining these multiple identities is a strength for both the woman and the community, as well as for conservation efforts. This highlights the importance of having practices and support systems in place that accommodate women, which are essential for the success of both conservation and the community.

"At W&M, we often introduce ourselves by explaining our major or what clubs/positions we hold, and that can sort of box us in. The women we interviewed in Kenya emphasized the importance of their identity as Maasai women with important societal roles. This was truly impactful because it served as a powerful reminder that we all embody multiple identities—whether as women, students, scientists, or in other roles—and that these identities come together to shape who we are." – Corinne Boyd

WOMAN TO WOMAN MENTORSHIP

"I am a mother of two and I am also a woman ranger. I feel proud to be breaking barriers and showing other women that we can excel in roles traditionally dominated by men." – Esther Salaite, SORALO ranger

For many women, entering ranger training at SORALO is an important starting point for a career in conservation or other sectors. Women rangers also see the empowering ripple effect of the ranger program, which is both lateral and generational. Ranger work strengthens women's leadership and their roles in communities, and creates a promising path for their children, particularly for their daughters. As one woman ranger stated: "If [she grows her] family will also grow."

This ripple of empowerment extends to the students who were able to learn professional and life lessons from the Maasai women rangers. W&M students had a multicultural experience learning firsthand from Maasai women in Kenya, which gave them beyond-the-classroom exposure to different types of leadership, the important role of community in conservation, and what it means to be a woman conservation leader, spawning reflection on their roles as women, scientists, and conservation practitioners. As emerging women in conservation, the mentoring experience with the rangers had a personal impact on the students, best expressed in their own words:

"Maasai roots are in communalism and collaboration. They wake up every day and do stuff in the community. and they do it because they love

Left: Silvia Nashipae, First Lady Ranger,Corporal, and Ranger Instructor. (Photo credit: SORALO); Right: SORALO rangers in training. (Photo credit: Corinne Boyd))

it, not necessarily because they're being championed for it. It inspired me to better myself and better what is around me. Everyone there was so connected and appreciative of who and what was around them, and this changed me. In Kenya it is never you against the world." – Corinne Boyd

"It was such an amazing and unique experience. It was really exciting for me as an economics major to be able to contribute to conservation, and I have learned so much from the rangers about what women's leadership can be in any field." – Jana Smith-Perry

"My experience has really helped me understand that it is possible to work and conserve the land with some very important parts of culture that we cannot do without. It is possible to make a positive change in the society if we work together with people and wildlife, with good role models and positive decisions influencing our communities." – Cynthia Kileken



From left: Jana Smith-Perry '25, Corinne Boyd '26 Cynthia Kileken out on their first patrol with three SORALO woman rangers. (Photo courtesy of SORALO)

CONSERVATION IS "WOMEN'S WORK"

Perspectives, approaches, and skill sets unique to women are influential in communities and are critically needed in conservation globally. Women are moving professionally into the conservation sector without abandoning their roles as mothers, daughters, sisters, wives, and partners because they value those roles, and it is those roles that imbue their unique perspectives on conservation.

Maasai women rangers have demonstrated the importance of elevating the important lessons of women conservation leaders. These vanguards are reshaping conservation on the ground and changing how women are conceived as leaders in conservation and other fields. Through the support and partnership of SORALO, Conservation Nation, and the Institute for Integrative Conservation, Kenyan and W&M students learned that the diverse identities of women are a tremendous strength, enhancing the knowledge and skill behind any practice.

"Conservation Nation was proud to support this critical research in best practices in female ranger programs through our People & Pachyderms Collective, a program dedicated to protecting elephants and rhinos while empowering young women in East Africa" stated Jamie Palumbo, Collectives Director of Conservation Nation, "In working with the William & Mary and SORALO students, we were impressed with how the team approached this research with thoughtfulness, cultural sensitivity, and a commitment to collaboration and flexibility. We look forward to seeing the impact of this research as it supports SORALO's expansion of, and commitment to, the female ranger program. Outside of the direct impacts on this program, we see this research as a means of inspiring future programs and greater opportunities for women in conservation."

Empowering women in conservation is a multifaceted process that involves integrating women into conservation framing, decision-making, implementation, and leadership while also transforming the field to embrace the unique knowledge and perspectives that women contribute. The SORALO women rangers are inspiring women worldwide with the promise that an inclusive, empowering, women-focused, women-mentored, women-benefiting conservation is a conservation that serves all. Strong women ranger programs set strong examples for women in Kenya and beyond. This research helps to ensure that as women ranger programs grow, they be as dynamic and adaptable as the women rangers themselves.

"The work is challenging but rewarding, as I actively contribute to the preservation of our environment and the protection of wildlife. It gives me a sense of empowerment to know that my efforts help support both the community and the natural world around us." - Esther Salaite, SORALO ranger

Convening great minds on campus

Throughout the year, the Reves Center hosts visits of scholars, experts and leaders in various fields from across the world. These are some of the recent connections that were made on campus.

George Tayloe Ross Address On International Peace

The annual George Tayloe Ross Address on International Peace was established by George Tayloe Ross to promote peace by exploring and investigating topics of current interest that affect relations among nations, ranging from international political matters to environmental questions. The 2025 George Tayloe Ross lecturer was Guatemalan photographer Daniel Hernández Salazar, who spoke at Ewell Hall on April 10.

Hernández-Salazar worked as a photojournalist for AFP, Reuters and the Associated Press during the Guatemalan Civil War. He is currently Official Photographer of Guatemala's President Bernardo Arévalo De León. He also works as a freelance photographer, interested in human subjects and historical memory. He is proficient in both digital and film photography. He has shown his work in more than 35 solo exhibitions and 40 group exhibitions in the United States, Europe, Japan, and South Korea. He received the Jonathan Mann Prize in the Humanities (1998) and was named Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et Lettres by the French Ministry of Culture (2005), leading to his promotion to Officer (2017).

The talk also served as the keynote address of the spring 2025 Series on Arts & Democracy, co-sponsored by Arts & Sciences and the Reves Center. The series featured four artists whose practice aims to impact democratic processes. While on campus, Hernández-Salazar conducted workshops with students where they recreated and then installed reproductions of his work, " Death's Pieta,"at the Muscarelle Museum and other locations on campus.





Left: Hernández-Salazar directs the installation outside the Muscarelle Museum (Photo credit: Tyler Lawrence);
Right: Hernández-Salazar photographing the installation at Martha Wren Briggs Amphitheatre at Lake Matoaka (Photo credit: Tyler Lawrence)











Clockwise from top: Hernández-Salazar delivers his public lecture (Photo credit: Tyler Lawrence); The installation at James Blair Hall (Photo credit: David Hernández-Salazar); Students created one of the installations in the Reves Room. (Photo credit: David Hernández-Salazar); The finished installation inside the Muscarelle Museum (Photo credit: David Hernández-Salazar); David Hernández-Salazar conducted a workshop with students of Eliot Dudik, associate teaching professor of Art (on left), (Photo credit: Tyler Lawrence)

Reves Center's 2025 International Student Achievement Awards

Each year, the Reves Center bestows International Student Achievement Awards of $700 each on W&M and W&M's Batten School & VIMS international students who have been nominated by faculty or staff as having distinguished themselves as exemplary in their academics, leadership, and service to the community.

Sarthak Aggarwal, MBA '25 (India)
Field of Study: Business



Sarthak's dedication to academic excellence is evidenced by earning a perfect 100% in my Financial Management class, a rare distinction. His performance combined with his contributions to class discussions led me to select him as my Graduate Assistant for the two consecutive semesters. In this role, Sarthak has gone beyond administrative tasks, actively engaging with first-year MBA students to help them navigate coursework, understand complex financial concepts, and prepare for examinations.

Recognizing Sarthak's strong analytical skills and ability to synthesize complex financial data, Professor Vladimir Atanasov and I invited him to collaborate on a high-impact research project analyzing over 700 mining companies. This research is not just academic—it has the potential to drive real change by identifying companies committed to environmental sustainability and helping them secure funding from ethical investors. By leveraging data-driven financial analysis, Sarthak's contributions are helping shape a research paper that bridges the gap between sustainable mining practices and investment opportunities, filling a critical void in the financial and environmental landscape.

Sarthak has taken a proactive approach in guiding students who aspire to build careers in finance, offering insights into potential career paths, skill-building, and networking strategies.

Sarthak's commitment to mentorship extends beyond his official academic roles—he has been actively involved in W&M's Peer Mentorship Program, where he has played a pivotal role in guiding students through critical academic and career decisions.

Sarthak also integrated himself quickly into the local community, making exemplary service and leadership contributions in the areas of social impact, environmental sustainability, and community service.

As a volunteer with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Sarthak has actively worked on oyster restoration projects in the Virginia Beach area, helping improve marine biodiversity and raise awareness about environmental conservation.

Sarthak has also been involved with educational and social advocacy. In Williamsburg, he has volunteered his time to support special-needs students at local churches, helping them in their education and personal development. In India, Sarthak has worked pro bono to provide free education for underprivileged students, not only teaching but also helping schools streamline their cost structures and manage accounts more efficiently.

Understanding the challenges that international students face, Sarthak worked with Baptist Collegiate Ministry and Agape Ministries to ensure that they feel welcomed, supported, and integrated into the W&M community.

Sarthak experienced a severe medical accident, where he suffered a clean break in his arm and underwent a complex surgery to get a metal plate and multiple screws in his arm. Yet he remained steadfast in his commitment to his education. While many would have opted to withdraw from courses or reduce their workload, Sarthak chose to push through and completed all his classes, projects and Peer Mentorship responsibilities with an exemplary record. This resilience not only reflects his personal determination but also underscores his ability to overcome adversity and maintain excellence in the most challenging circumstances.

—Scott Gibson, K. Dane Brooksher Professor of Finance, Raymond A. Mason School of Business

Sang Hwan Lee J.D. '25 (South Korea)
Field of study: Law



Sang Hwan Lee has demonstrated outstanding academic ability, particularly given the challenges of studying law in a second language. Law school coursework is rigorous, and the mandatory grading curve makes academic success especially competitive. Despite this, he has excelled, earning top grades and producing thoughtful, well-reasoned legal analyses.

What sets Sang Hwan apart is not only his academic excellence but also his dedication to the learning experience of his peers. I saw him support others in mastering difficult concepts and enriching class discussions to explore broader legal and policy implications. His ability to grasp intricate legal doctrines, articulate nuanced arguments, and excel in legal writing in a non-native language is reflected in his success in the Moot Court Competition, where he was a finalist and won the Best Brief Award.

Serving in student governance, particularly in an enforcement role, is never easy, and Sang Hwan has acted as the Chair of the Honor Council with integrity, resilience, and an unwavering commitment to fairness and honesty. He has worked tirelessly to uphold the Law School's Honor Code in challenging and even hostile settings. He has navigated difficult situations with professionalism and sound judgment, ensuring that the Council operates with accountability and transparency. Under his leadership, the Council has significantly strengthened its capacity to handle complex cases. He has also improved the Council's outreach to international students, helping them have a clearer understanding of William & Mary's academic integrity standards.

As President of the International Law Student Alliance, Sang Hwan has advocated for international students and created a sense of community and belonging among JD and LLM students, organizing social events and offering guidance on CPT, OPT, orientation, and externships.

Sang Hwan has demonstrated resilience under pressure, maintaining composure and professionalism even in the most challenging situations. Through his leadership, service, and dedication to ethical lawyering, Sang Hwan exemplifies the principle of the Citizen Lawyer that our Law School seeks to instill in its students. His ability to balance rigorous academic work, demanding leadership roles, and meaningful contributions to the broader community makes him an outstanding candidate for this award.

—Iria Giuffrida, Assistant Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs and Professor of the Practice of Law

We have worked together in his capacity as Honor Council Justice and Honor Council Chief Justice, and I have also worked with him through his own individual academic journey. Sang Hwan is a deep thinker and a skilled advocate. He has excelled in the classroom and in legal practice through work placements and internships and has secured employment at a good law firm where he will work following graduation. Sang Hwan is a leader at the Law School. He was selected as Chief Justice of the Law School Honor Council by his peers and has done an exemplary job of modeling the tenets of the Honor Code to his classmates and leading the Honor Council through the academic year.

—Brian Wall, Associate Dean for Student Affairs & Academic Support, William & Mary Law School

Sang Hwan has done a remarkable job as the chair of the Law School Honor Council. In addition to dealing with some difficult cases, he demonstrated a real desire to do something lasting for the community by improving the process, so future honor councils will have an easier time with difficult cases. Sang Hwan has really poured his heart and soul into the Law School Honor Council, but on top of that, he has worked as a research assistant for two professors, competed for William & Mary on our moot court team, and worked for veterans in our Veterans' Benefits Clinic. He is a truly impressive student who has given a lot to our community.

—Thomas McSweeney, Professor of Law

Antu Saha, Ph.D. '26 (Bangladesh)
Field of study: Computer Science



Antu's exceptional academic record, research contributions, leadership, and commitment to excellence make Antu a truly exemplary student.

Antu's research addresses a significant problem in software engineering. Antu's research goal is to design and evaluate techniques and tools to assist software developers and end-users in reporting and managing defect reports more effectively so that developers can efficiently identify and correct the defects in the software's source code. As it is impossible to create defect-free software systems, software developers rely on defect reports submitted by end-users to manage and correct all the defects. Defect resolution is important for delivering and maintaining high-quality software systems, ultimately benefiting society, yet it is a challenging process for developers, and research is needed to assist them in overcoming the challenges. Antu's research goes in this direction.

Antu's research results have been peer-reviewed and published in the most prestigious conferences in software engineering. In his doctoral research, Antu has proposed technical solutions and conducted studies to evaluate such solutions. He has also conducted studies to understand how to improve defect resolution workflows performed by developers. This research has been published in four peer-reviewed publications at the most distinguished and rigorous software engineering conferences. Antu's research on assisting developers in localizing mobile app defective user interfaces using AI methods was published at the ACM International Symposium on Software Testing and Analysis (ISSTA 2024). His research on evaluating the defect resolution process at Mozilla Firefox, which involved data mining and surveys with Firefox's developers, was published at the IEEE/ACM International Conference on Software Engineering (ICSE 2025). His research on assessing the quality of end-user defect reports using AI methods was accepted for publication at the IEEE International Conference on Program Comprehension (ICPC 2025). He also developed and evaluated an open-source software tool for GitHub to assist developers in defect management – this tool is easy to use and useful for bug resolution, as found by the user study he conducted with professional developers. This tool is reported in a paper published at the IEEE/ACM International Conference on Mining Software Repositories (MSR 2025).

Antu has demonstrated strong research leadership. He has been able to plan the projects and engage lab peers and colleagues outside the lab to produce research results and report them in papers. His teamwork and cooperative skills are truly commendable, and I rate Antu's teamwork and collaborative skills on the highest terms.

Antu has demonstrated academic excellence in terms of grades, awards, and dissemination of his research. He has completed his coursework with a high GPA of 3.96. He won the Best Poster Award at the W&M Computer Science Graduate Symposium in the 2023 and 2024 editions, where he presented partial research results that later became publications. This demonstrates his ability to prepare quality posters and communicate complex research projects to a wider audience. Inside and outside the classroom, he demonstrates exceptional control of the English language (considering he is a non-English native speaker), not only in written reports but also in oral presentations, meetings, and discussions. In addition, Antu served as a teaching assistant for my undergraduate Algorithms course, where his

dedication, support, and feedback were highly appreciated by the students.

Antu is currently leading two research projects within our lab, where multiple students collaborate under his guidance. In these and previous projects, he has shown strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills, fostering a productive research environment. Additionally, he has mentored five junior graduate students and one undergraduate student, guiding both coursework and research projects, helping them navigate challenges, and supporting their academic and professional development.

His commitment to service extends to volunteering. Antu has been selected as a student volunteer to support the organization of several premier international conferences. He has also served as a student volunteer to support event logistics at William & Mary, including the W&M Computer Science Graduate Symposium in 2022 and 2023, ESSEC 2024, and WM Grad Bash 2023 and 2024. He was also the web chair of the 2023 W&M CS Graduate Symposium.

As a Reves Center's International Peer Leader, Antu has played a key role in assisting incoming graduate students in adapting to life at William & Mary and in the United States. Beyond his institutional contributions, he actively supports students from his home country as the administrator of the Facebook group "Let's Touch the Dream." Through this platform, he provides valuable guidance on career development, research opportunities, and higher education in the U.S., helping undergraduate and prospective students in Bangladesh navigate their academic and professional journeys.

At W&M, Antu was awarded the CS Department Graduate Research Fellowship in the summers of 2022 and 2023. (Typically, all Ph.D. students receive one summer research fellowship, and only in exceptional cases when students demonstrate excellence in their academics, they are awarded a second fellowship — Antu was one of these students). In 2024, he secured the Research Seed Grant from Arts & Sciences to support his research on understanding issue resolution workflows. Additionally, he received multiple travel grants to attend and/or present his research at conferences.

—Oscar Chaparro, Assistant Professor, Computer Science

Alisa Yang '25 (China)
Field of study: Double major in Data Science with a focus on Artificial Intelligence, and Business Analytics with a concentration in Finance



Alisa Yang is brilliant, hardworking, compassionate, and fun! I feel so fortunate to have known and worked with her for the last year and a half, even though she never took a course with me officially as a student. I have taught over 1000 students at William & Mary and rarely do I get to develop such a deep relationship with a student whom I just continue to admire more every day!

Alisa's academic excellence is evident in her exceptional performance, maintaining a 3.96 GPA with a perfect 4.0 in her major coursework while undertaking an ambitious double major. Her interests extend far beyond her primary fields of study, encompassing subjects such as philosophy, government, international relations, history, biology, chemistry, computer science, computer animation, marketing, mathematics, studio art, and education. She is also only one course away from completing both a Studio Art minor and a Marketing concentration, demonstrating her deep appetite for both technical and creative disciplines.

Her academic accomplishments are not limited to coursework, but are also reflected in the research she has undertaken. The Charles Center Summer Research Grant she received was inspired by her hurricane disaster relief volunteer experiences. During her summer research at VIMS, she led a research team in developing a hurricane damage detection machine learning model, which improved accuracy by 40% compared to the existing model

Among her many academic and research contributions, one of the most notable is her work on the AI The Magic Box (https://a.co/d/cIu5JHm) book project, which she undertook with me and my Data Scientist Junior team at Artificial and Natural Intelligence Education (AANIE: https://www.aanie.org/), a non-profit organization I founded. Alisa was not just an integral part of the team; she was the driving force behind the success of this initiative. Her exceptional contributions to this project were recognized with the F.U.S.E. scholarship. She co-authored the book, ensuring that complex AI and machine learning concepts were communicated in an engaging and digestible manner for young learners and all readers. What makes her truly remarkable, however, is not just her technical expertise but her insights, creativity, attention to detail, and ability to execute tasks under time pressure. She understood the nuances of AI education and how to translate abstract concepts into an accessible format—often with just a hint or minimal direction, demonstrating an unparalleled level of perceptiveness and intelligence.

As the marketing chair and co-president of TEDx William & Mary, she played a key role in directing two large-scale TEDx events. The last event attracted over 300 attendees, and I've been observing how she organizes this year's upcoming TEDx event with deep admiration. She manages everything from speaker selection to event promotion, logistics, and social media outreach, ensuring these events are executed with professionalism and impact. See here for the 2025 TEDx

William & Mary event Alisa organized: https://mason.wm.edu/news/2025/tedx-william-and-mary-2025-accelerating-innovation-a-night-of-inspiration-and-reflection.php

Additionally, she serves as a co-organizer for the Hampton Roads Tech Meetup (https://www.meetup.com/williamsburg-tech-meetup-group/), where she actively engages with professionals, secures sponsorships, and co-hosts networking and speaker panel events. Through these roles, she has demonstrated an exceptional ability to build and engage communities, bridging the gap between students and professionals in both educational and technological spaces.

While her academic and leadership achievements are extraordinary, what truly defines Alisa is her deep passion for community engagement and service. She does not engage in service for accolades or recognition; she genuinely finds joy, growth, and value in the process—connecting with people, understanding real social issues, and immersing herself in communities that are often overlooked. Throughout college, she has been on six domestic and international volunteer service trips. Through her extensive volunteer work, whether it be hurricane disaster relief efforts in Puerto Rico, Florida, and North Carolina, environmental protection and sustainability work in Maryland, or economic development field research in Nicaragua, she has gained a profound sense of compassion and responsibility for the world around her. These experiences have shaped her into someone who deeply values the interconnectedness of humanity, recognizing that even the smallest contributions can create a ripple effect in a larger, global community.

She is not just an exceptional student - she is a visionary, a problem-solver and a changemaker. Her ability to blend academic excellence with social impact is truly rare, and I can say with full confidence that Alisa embodies everything the International Student Achievement Award represents.

—Tingting (Rachel) Chung, Clinical Associate Professor of Operations and Information Systems Management, Raymond A. Mason School of Business

Yi-Yun (Minnie) Tsai Ph.D. (Taiwan)
Field of study: Counselor Education and Supervision



I have known Minnie for 1.5 years as her professor in her Ph.D. program. I have taught Minnie in two research-focused classes, as well as directing an independent study course with her this semester. We also co-presented together at the W&M STLI symposium in May 2024, and at the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling Conference in September 2024 on the use of photovoice as a teaching tool in counselor education.

Minnie has consistently demonstrated outstanding academic achievement throughout the doctoral program. Her commitment to intellectual growth, research and scholarly contributions sets her apart as a leader in their field. She brings a strong work ethic, innovative thinking and academic curiosity to the classroom. Two of the most impressive qualities about Minnie are her humility and curiosity; to me, these qualities propel her academic excellence, as she is open to new learning experiences and willing to seek and apply feedback. She has established working relationships with multiple counselor education faculty outside of her courses, with multiple presentations and publications in progress with her professors. This also speaks to her ability to collaborate effectively with others towards scholarly success.

In addition to excelling academically in her classes, Minnie has made significant strides in scholarly endeavors, presenting as the first author at seven conferences, including the AARC, ACES, Virginia School Counseling Conference, and Virginia Counseling Association Convention. Her research continues to impact the field, with two manuscripts already submitted to the Professional School Counseling Journal, focused on advancing the well-being of school counselors. She is currently co-authoring two other manuscripts, with expected submission dates for peer review this year, along with serving as the PI on a qualitative research project exploring the experiences of school counseling-focused counselor educators in their doctoral training programs.

At the national level, Minnie has demonstrated a remarkable commitment to professional development and mentorship. As a Mentee Manuscript Reviewer for the Journal of Counselor Leadership & Advocacy (JCLA) Reviewer Mentorship Program (January 2025–present), she has contributed significantly to the field of counseling. Minnie's role as Division E Graduate Junior Student Representative for the American Educational Research Association's Graduate Student Council and as Publicity Coordinator for the Asian American Psychological Association Division on Students exemplifies her leadership in advancing diversity and inclusion within the fields of education and counseling. Furthermore, her role as Mentorship Committee Co-Chair for the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision's School Counseling Interest Network showcases her dedication to supporting emerging leaders.

On a state level, Minnie serves as the Social Media Specialist for the Virginia Alliance for School Counseling's Board of Directors, effectively promoting initiatives that support school counselors. At the university level, she holds significant leadership roles as the Vice Chair of the Honor Council in the School of Education, an International Peer Leader for the Reves Center for International Studies, and a Student Ambassador for the School of Education. Additionally, Minnie serves as a Student Mentor for a first-year Ph.D. student, helping to guide and support the next generation of scholars.

In addition to these roles, Minnie has actively participated in conference proposal reviewing for organizations such as the Virginia Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (VACES), the Association for Assessment and Research in Counseling (AARC), and the Southern Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (SACES).

Minnie is trustworthy, kind, dependable, respectful and resilient. I am honored to nominate her for this award and hope her contributions to both our doctoral program and the counseling profession are recognized by William & Mary.

—Amber Pope, Assistant Professor in Counselor Education, William & Mary School of Education

Nina Appicello ’26 awarded prestigious language scholarship and will spend the summer in Tajikistan

BY MOLLY MARTIN ‘27

This article originally appeared in THE FLAT HAT.



Nina Appicello ’26 recently became the first student from the William & Mary to be awarded the prestigious Critical Language Scholarship for Persian/Farsi. Through this program run by the State Department, Appicello will spend her summer in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, learning Farsi alongside thirty other American students in her cohort. At the end of her time overseas, she will complete a test proving her proficiency to receive a job offer at the State Department.

This will not be Appicello’s first experience living abroad. In fact, she was drawn to the College because of its extraordinary study abroad opportunities. As someone who grew up in rural Virginia and did not travel much as a child, Appicello knew that when she went to college, she wanted to take advantage of every opportunity to explore new places and cultures.

“I had only been to like two states at that point before I came here, and I knew that William & Mary has one of the best study abroad programs ever in the country so obviously I’m going to do everything I can to like get the scholarships to get on a plane to go somewhere else,” she said.

Appicello spent the entirety of her sophomore year in Rome, learning Italian and exploring the historic city, falling in love with its architecture in the process.

“There’s a phrase in Italian that basically translates to, ‘Rome is made to the measure of men,’” she said. “Truly, the streets were made without even thinking about cars or parking. The streets are the size of you, the doors are the size of you, and the buildings are the size of you. It’s such a different way of life than we have here in the United States.”

While in Rome, Appicello worked at the European Union Gulf Cooperation Council, an organization that facilitates relations between the EU and the Arabian Gulf. During her time there, she met the former minister of Afghanistan, who was residing in Rome. She noted that her conversations with him sparked her interest in learning Farsi.

“When I was in Rome, I was working at a EUGCC center, the European Union Gulf Cooperation Council, which is like the EU for the Arabic Gulf. And when I was there, I had met the former minister of Afghanistan…But essentially, he had just talked up Persian so much,” she said.

Those conversations, along with her broader experiences working at the EUGCC, deepened her interest in foreign relations and diplomacy. When she returned to college, Appicello felt inspired to explore these topics further, joining the College’s NukeLab undergraduate research group. Alongside her research partner, Appicello is investigating how the use of technology impacts women’s abilities to negotiate effectively in diplomatic contexts.

“[My partner and I] are doing our independent research project in the NukeLab on women in diplomacy, specifically the use of technology as a result of outcomes,” she said. “How does technology in negotiation affect the outcomes for women?”

Appicello’s research through the NukeLab deepened her interest in Middle Eastern foreign relations, reinforcing her commitment to firsthand global experience.

Driven by her passion for immersive learning, she pursued the Critical Language Scholarship for Farsi. She believes true language learning happens through full immersion—an approach she will embrace during her time in Tajikistan.

"It's so much easier to learn languages when you're actually there, and that is what drove me to this program because it's seriously fully immersive, especially the cities that they have offered. They are not quite tourist cities in the sense that you will be accommodated as an American," Appicello said.

Unlike her previous study abroad experience in Rome, where it was common to find people who spoke English, this program demands a full adaptation to a non-Westernized setting. She explained that she will be surrounded by people who do not speak any English, like the host family she will live with. Appicello expects that she will be forced to adapt quickly to the language around her. Although she anticipates this will be challenging at first, she sees the experience as essential to her advancement in the language.

"This is not a place where they're accommodating to Americans, and so it really is buckle down time to learn this language, no matter what," she said.

For Appicello, Tajikistan is not a common travel destination for many Americans. When she received her acceptance, the State Department told Applicello her work was not done – she still needs to go through rounds of intensive interviews at the Tajikistan consulate in Washington, D.C., to obtain her student visa to live in Tajikistan this summer.

"You have to have everything, like proof of enrollment, like proof of undergraduate education, just everything. They do a whole background check on you just to make sure that you're a good person to go abroad. Certainly, I did not have to do all that when I went to Rome," she said.

Appicello will spend two days traveling to Dushanbe, as its airport only has a few flights arriving each week. While Appicello admitted it is intimidating to leave all the familiarity and comfort of the life she leads in America, she is overall excited for this unique opportunity.

"I told my mom, if I call you crying saying 'I wanna come home,' you have to say 'you wanted this' and 'do not let me come home,'" she said.

She anticipates that the first few days will be an adjustment, but in the end, she hopes she will enjoy her time in Dushanbe.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Studying abroad in Rwanda

BY KARENA RICHMOND '26

The program in Rwanda is one of eleven W&M faculty directed short-term study abroad programs the Reves Center administers during the winter term. Programs and destinations may vary each year. - Editor



In January 2024, a dozen William & Mary undergraduates embarked on a winter study abroad program that promised to be unlike any other. We hailed from diverse backgrounds, academic disciplines, and hometowns, but were united by a shared destination: Rwanda, the "Land of a Thousand Hills." Our classroom extended across the nation, offering us an education steeped in the firsthand testimonies of the 1994 genocide against the Tutsis and the monumental reconciliation process that followed.

Rwanda's history is marked by one of the most appalling genocides known to humanity, where hundreds of thousands of lives were brutally extinguished in a span of just a hundred days. This atrocity was fueled by deep-seated ethnic tensions, worsened by colonial legacies and political manipulations, creating a legacy of unimaginable horror. Yet, since those dark days, Rwanda has shown an astonishing resilience and progress. Memorials and judicial systems, such as the Gacaca courts, stand as testaments to the nation's unwavering commitment to healing and justice, alongside significant strides in education, technology, and community welfare.

Under the management by the Reves Center and the guidance of Professor Spencer Niles from the School of Education, our partnership with Aegis Trust immersed us in a transformative two-week experience. We explored historical and contemporary locations, listened at genocide memorials, and engaged in volunteer efforts and classroom dialogues that deeply shaped our understanding and empathy.

Our educational odyssey began in Kigali, at the poignant Kigali Genocide Memorial. Walking through its hallowed halls, absorbing the narratives and photographic depictions, was a sobering initiation. It was here that we began to grasp the size of the atrocities committed in 1994 and the incredible resilience of the Rwandan people. One student aptly noted, "I valued the group's support and the shared journey with peers facing similar emotions." This camaraderie sustained us through poignant bus rides and late-night discussions by the hotel pool, where reflections deepened

Rwandan countryside. They farm rice in these paddies. (Photo credit:Karena Richmond)



our appreciation for Rwanda's narrative of tragedy and triumph.

Our itinerary brimmed with profound encounters. We visited the Ntarama and Nyamata Memorials, once sanctuaries turned into scenes of horror, where the air still whispered the anguished cries of the past. The Reconciliation Village in Batima, where perpetrators and survivors live side by side, presented a profound testament to the power of forgiveness and community healing. Hearing stories of victimhood led me to a deeper understanding of the ethnic tension propagated by the 1994 government, and how perpetrators were themselves victims of hatred born out of ignorance. We listened to firsthand accounts from residents, their stories of reconciliation and forgiveness leaving an indelible impact on our hearts and minds.

Peace education was a central theme throughout our trip. We attended lectures and workshops that emphasized the importance of empathy, critical thinking, and personal responsibility in fostering peace. The concept of ubumuntu, which means "humanity," was a recurring theme. It's about showing compassion and kindness towards others, something we all pledged to incorporate into our lives. A highlight for many of us was the Community Service Day. We joined personnel from One Hope One Direction, a youth project started by Aegis Trust, and spent time with vulnerable children, playing (and losing) games and appreciating their incredible dance skills.

Our final days in Rwanda were spent in reflection and preparation for our Ubumuntu Projects, where we contemplated how we could contribute to peace and reconciliation in our own communities. We shared our personal reflections, culminating in a dinner honoring our Rwandan teachers and guides. Special thanks to Cynthia, Arnold, and Isaie, for their companionship and willingness to educate without judgment; Glen, for his ability to listen and composure; Eric, for his photography skills and ability to sleep through our chatter; Mark, for his humor and storytelling; and finally, Egidia, for her guidance, organizational prowess, and kindness. Without any of you, the trip would not have been the same. Thank you.

Returning home, we carried not just memories but a renewed purpose and profound insights into forgiveness and resilience. Rwanda was more than a destination; it was a transformative encounter that continues to shape our lives and aspirations. This journey to Rwanda was more than a study abroad program; it was a life-changing experience that has left an indelible mark on each of us, reminding us of the power of humanity, the importance of peace, and the enduring strength of the human spirit.

Above: The W&M cohort, L-R: Dr. Richard Balkin; Anya Ruzicka '25; Dr. Spencer Niles; Abigail Taylor '24, Ben Neverov '25, MPP '26; Alec Conley '26; Rolf Hsu '25; Campbell Roberts '25; Amaiya Mauney '24; Karena Richmond '26; Bridget Collins '25; Isaie Muragijimana, Executive Director of Youth for Youth Rwanda Founder and Chairperson of Rwanda Mental Health in Practice; Gracie Gundlach '26; Anastasia Dubrovina '25; Cynthia Iradukunda; David Novak; Egidia Uwera (Photo credit: Glen Ford).

On cover, bottom row, center: Ben Neverov pets one of Rwanda's Inyambo cows at the Kings Palace Museum. (Photo Credit: Karena Richmond)

First Abroad: A unique exchange

First Abroad provides W&M first-year students with a funded introduction to study abroad by visiting the University of St Andrews over spring break. The non-credit program gives students who have not previously studied abroad and never left the United States a chance to experience international travel and gain first-hand knowledge of the benefits of study abroad in a supportive environment. W&M student experience life in Scotland, live in student dorms and meet W&M students studying at St Andrews during the spring semester. In addition, the initiative includes a scholarship for a subsequent semester or summer study abroad program for the participating students through the Reves Center.

Similarly First Abroad enables two first year St Andrews undergraduate students —one from Science and one from Arts and Divinity—to spend up to a week visiting William & Mary to experience academic life, extra-curricular activities and learn about the benefits of study abroad. Students are required to write a blog about their experiences when they return to Scotland. This reflection by Ewan Gilbert originally appeared on the St Andrews Global Office blog. It is reprinted with their permission and with photos we have added.

University of St Andrews

A St Andrews First Abroad student shares his favourite spots at William & Mary

BY EWAN GILBERT, ST ANDREWS '27

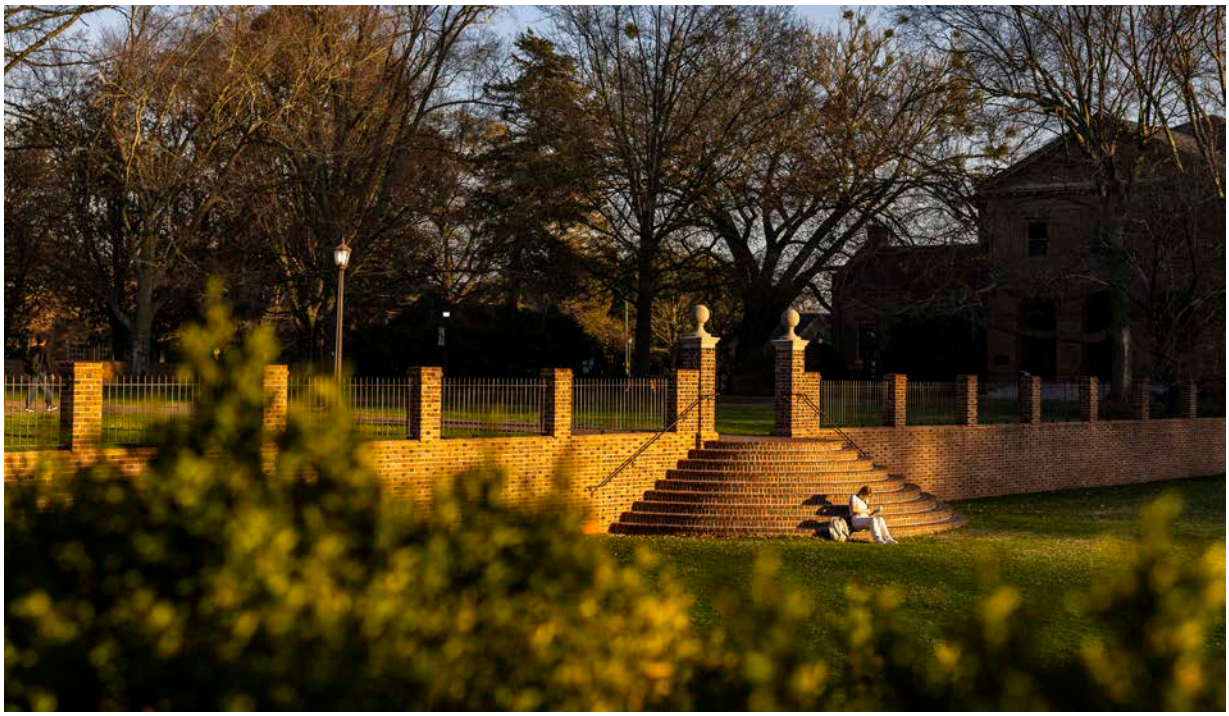
Reprinted from St Andrews Global Office Blog

Spending a week at William & Mary was more than just an academic opportunity, it was a full cultural and historical immersion. As one of the oldest higher education institutions in the United States, William & Mary offers a unique blend of academic prestige, colonial charm and vibrant student life. Coming from St Andrews, a university rich in tradition and history, I was curious to see how another centuries-old institution across the Atlantic compared. What I found was a warm, welcoming environment that offered both comfort and a deep sense of place. From living in Chandler Hall and wandering the Sunken Garden to stepping into the past in Colonial Williamsburg, my time at William & Mary was filled with new experiences, thoughtful moments, and a surprising sense of connection.

MY WEEK AT CHANDLER HALL

During my week-long exchange, I was placed in Chandler Hall, one of the university's residence halls located near the heart of campus. As someone who commutes to St Andrews, the concept of living on campus, even just for a week, was new and exciting. I wasn't quite sure what to expect from American dorm life, but Chandler quickly made me feel at home.

The hall had a suite-style layout, where two rooms shared a connecting bathroom. Though I had the room to myself, it was easy to imagine how the setup would create a natural sense of camaraderie among students. My room was simple but comfortable, with a large window that let in plenty of Virginia sunlight. The soft hum of conversation and movement in the hallway gave the space a sense of life, even during quiet hours.



What truly stood out were the common spaces. On the main floor, there was a lounge with cozy chairs and a TV where students would gather to watch movies, chat, or catch a break from studying. The kitchen was modest but well-used, there was a kind of rhythm to it, with the scent of reheated leftovers or baked cookies occasionally drifting into the corridor. One evening, I ended up chatting with a few students while waiting for the microwave, and we ended up comparing British and American campus life. It was one of those spontaneous moments that you only really get in shared living spaces and of course, there was the vending machine room, strangely iconic in its own way. Chandler felt like a microcosm of university life, equal parts independence, routine, and unexpected connection.

EXPERIENCING THE SUNKEN GARDEN

If Chandler was where I rested and connected, the Sunken Garden were where I found peace. Located in the middle of campus, this open rectangular lawn is bordered by red-brick academic buildings and shaded by old trees that seem to hum with history. It quickly became my favourite spot, not just for its beauty, but for how it encapsulated the pace and personality of student life at William & Mary.

During the day, the garden was alive with quiet activity. Students walked briskly to classes, others sat under trees or on benches, reading or chatting. Some lounged directly on the grass, laptops out or simply soaking in the sun. There was something calming about the way people used the space so naturally, like an outdoor living room. It reminded me a lot of St Andrews' Quad, though the Sunken Garden had a softer, more laid-back atmosphere – maybe it was the warm Virginia breeze, or the sound of birds kinder than seagulls.

I spent several afternoons just sitting there, taking it all in. On one of my last evenings, I walked through as the sun was setting and the campus was bathed in golden light. It was that quiet hour when everything slows down for a moment before evening activities begin. It struck me how students here weren't rushing or glued to their phones. They were just... present. It's something I want to carry with me back home, the art of simply existing in a beautiful space.

A VISIT TO COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG

Of all the places I explored during my week at William & Mary, none left quite the impression that Colonial Williamsburg did. Located just beyond the edge of campus, it's not merely a tourist attraction, it's a living, breathing part of the town and by extension, student life. You can quite literally walk out of a lecture hall and find yourself in the 18th century.

Walking through Colonial Williamsburg feels like stepping onto a film set, but one that's been running continuously for hundreds of years. The streets are lined with preserved buildings, taverns, workshops, government buildings, all restored or rebuilt to

The sunshine warms the Sunken Garden on an early March day. (Photo credit:Jim Agnew)



reflect their original state from the 1700s. Costumed interpreters stroll along the cobbled paths, engaging in conversations as if the American Revolution were just around the corner. It's immersive in the best way, educational, theatrical, and oddly grounding.

We visited several places during our tour: a blacksmith's forge where iron sparked as it had for centuries, a printing press shop still operating in the traditional style, and the Governor's Palace with its manicured gardens and rich furnishings. Each space had its own story, and the interpreters were passionate about sharing them, not just the major historical events, but also the daily lives of ordinary people, including enslaved individuals and women whose stories often go untold.

What struck me most was how integrated Colonial Williamsburg is into everyday life. Locals walk through the area as a shortcut. Students head there for coffee, or even just to get off campus for a bit. History isn't sectioned off here, it's part of the daily rhythm, which makes it even more powerful. The presence of the past doesn't weigh down the community; it enriches it.

CONCLUSION

My week at William & Mary was short, but it felt remarkably full. Living on campus at Chandler Hall gave me a taste of student community life in a way I don't usually get as a commuter. The Sunken Garden became a personal retreat, a place of calm and reflection in the middle of the day. Visiting Colonial Williamsburg was a reminder that history isn't just something we study, it's something we live alongside.

What stood out to me most wasn't just the individual places or experiences; it was how they all fit together. William & Mary isn't just a university in a historic town; it's a university of its town, shaped by its surroundings and its past. I left feeling more connected, to people, to place, and to a broader story that stretches back centuries. It's a rare thing to feel both comforted and challenged by a place, but William & Mary managed to do both. I'll carry that feeling with me, and I hope to return one day, not just as a visitor, but as someone who briefly, and gratefully, belonged.

Daffodils brighten the Wren Yard. In the background are the Wren Building and the W&M President's House. (Photo credit:Jim Agnew)

2025 Reves Faculty Fellows

Leading innovative faculty-student research around the world

Each year, a committee of faculty and Reves staff awards Reves and Drapers' Faculty Fellowships to support faculty-student research and collaboration on internationally-focused, engaged scholarship. The initiative is open to full-time William & Mary faculty in all academic units. Proposals are invited from faculty with significant experience in the international arena as well as those seeking to expand the focus of their work to include international, global, and/or trans-national approaches.



CALVIN HUI
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF CHINESE STUDIES; CHINESE STUDIES PROGRAM DIRECTOR; FREEMAN INTERNSHIPS IN EAST ASIA FACULTY DIRECTOR

Project: Project: The People's Republic of Copycats: Shanzhai Cultures in Globalizing China

A key phenomenon of contemporary Chinese culture is the production, circulation, and consumption of shanzhai (copycat) western commodities. From imitations of European towns to reproductions of Van Gogh's paintings, and from knockoff Louis Vuitton handbags to counterfeit Apple iPhones, contemporary China's copycat cultures have drawn attention from the world. While western business corporations condemn the copycat as a violation of intellectual property rights, the Chinese government is worried that China can only copy but not innovate. While some journalists consider the copycat as expressing popular resistance to official power, other critics regard it as epitomizing the confusion of Chinese people's values. In this project, Professor Hui and his students will engage with 21st century China's copycat cultures – architecture, digital technologies, art, and fashion – in the "Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area" in southern China. Their aim is to produce a concept of the shanzhai that captures the complexity of China's copycat cultures within a cross-cultural setting. They argue the intellectual property rights discourse (copyright, trademark, and patent) is insufficient to investigate China's copycat cultures. Instead, this legal discourse should be supplemented with the cultural studies discussions of imitation and representation. Also, they contend the debates of mimesis —original versus copy and real versus fake—in postcolonial/transnational theory is unequipped to examine China's copycat cultures. To update this theory, Professor Hui and his students will engage with political-economic analysis, social critique, new media theory, and China's revolutionary history. Engaging with the rapid development of the city of Shenzhen, the project will also survey how China is upgrading its economy from copycat to innovation.

The team will travel to different research sites in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macau Greater Bay Area (formerly called the Pearl River Delta) in southern China. To research architectural mimicry, they will conduct ethnography in Huawei's European-themed Ox Horn Campus in Dongguan, the Austrian-themed Hallstatt in Huizhou, the Swiss-themed "Interlaken" in Shenzhen, and "Windows of the World" park in Shenzhen. To research copycat digital technologies (e.g., cell phones, computers), they will visit the electronics market Huaqiangbei and its official museum in Shenzhen. To research copycat art, they will visit the Dafen Oil Painting Village in Shenzhen.



JESS PAGA, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, CLASSICAL STUDIES

Project: Naxos Quarry Project: Monolith Study

Naxos, the largest island in the interconnected Cycladic archipelago in Greece, was famous in antiquity for its exceptionally brilliant white marble. The sculptural products from its ancient quarries have been the subject of intensive examination, but the quarries themselves remain understudied. The principal goal of the Naxos Quarry Project (NQP), on which Paga serves as Architecture and Quarry Specialist, is to bring greater focus to the quarries as areas of manufacture, in order to illuminate the processes of ancient quarrying and consider the long-lasting impact of extractive technologies on the landscape.

For summer 2025, the international and multidisciplinary NQP team will prioritize analysis of "the monolith" - a large-scale abandoned architectural block in the island's Melanes quarry, situating it within the greater dialogue of Naxian marble facture, quarry processes, and transport of massive stone blocks. This study aims to present the first full publication of this block through the use of traditional scale drawing and on-site autopsy, alongside newer technologies and methods, including photogrammetric imaging and digital modeling, while situating the block within its rich historical contextualization. We will spend 10-12 days on Naxos, followed by data processing and archival research in Athens for an additional 7-10 days.

Students will be involved in all aspects of the project and will be exposed to a wide variety of field methodologies, thus gaining hands-on experience and fulfilling applied learning goals within an international environment. Students will also assist in preparing the materials for publication and will be credited as co-authors and co-illustrators.

The project is inherently international: it involves on-site analysis and documentation of archaeological remains and will entail travel to a foreign country and hands-on experience working with an international team of researchers (drawn from the US, UK, Belgium, and Denmark) alongside direct collaboration with the Greek archaeological service and local community of the island. Students will additionally experience the international scholarly community of Athens by working at the American School for Classical Studies and the German Archaeological Institute. Such cross-cultural interactions will create networking opportunities with scholars from across the world, as well as expose students to high-level international research.



KEVIN WENG, ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, W&M'S BATTEN SCHOOL & VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (VIMS)

Project: The Endangered Dragon Shark: Building US-Taiwan Partnerships in Conservation

This project studies critically endangered "Dragon Sharks," the Taiwanese vernacular name for wedgefishes (Rhinopristiformes), and is a collaboration between William & Mary and multiple Taiwan institutions. Wedgefishes are among the most threatened vertebrates globally and are vulnerable to bycatch in commercial fisheries. This work has already yielded the first-ever behavioral data for the bowmouth guitarfish (Rhina ancylostoma), revealing unexpected vertical movement patterns that inform conservation strategies. The established partnerships with Taiwan's Fisheries Research Institute, National Taiwan Ocean University and commercial fishing industry enable access to live specimens of these rare species. Weng and his team work closely with fishers who provide specimens and with aquaculture facilities that enable temporary holding for research. These partnerships create opportunities for cultural exchange while advancing conservation science. Reves support will allow W&M students to travel to Taiwan and engage in international marine conservation research alongside Taiwanese students and faculty. Building on two years of electronic tagging and genetic sampling, this project will expand student involvement in both field and laboratory components to understand movement patterns and habitat use. The hands-on exposure to international collaborative research will prepare them for careers in marine science and conservation.

This project strengthens US-Taiwan scientific partnerships at a critical time in Indo-Pacific relations. Taiwan, despite its complex international status and exclusion from many global frameworks including CITES, maintains world-class marine science capabilities and is a key partner for understanding western Pacific marine ecosystems. The research brings together scientists, students, fishers, and aquaculture specialists, building relationships that extend beyond science. These collaborations demonstrate the value of maintaining strong US-Taiwan academic and research partnerships in an increasingly contested region.

2025 Drapers' Faculty Fellows

A limited number of fellowships are provided through the generosity of the Drapers' Company. Founded over 600 years ago, the Drapers' Company is incorporated by Royal Charter and is one of the Twelve Great Livery Companies in the City of London. Supporting education has been one of the primary aims of The Drapers' Company for centuries and continues to be the main focus of the Company's grant making today. The Drapers' Faculty Fellowship, administered by the Reves Center, provides support for archival research by the fellows, with the potential involvement of W&M graduate and/or undergraduate students at institutions in the United Kingdom.



FERNANDO GALEANA RODRIGUEZ, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, SOCIOLOGY & INTEGRATIVE CONSERVATION

Project: Indigenous Diplomacy in Britain's Shadow: The 1843 Honduras-Miskitu Treaty and State Formation in Post-Independence Central America

Treaty-making between European powers and Indigenous nations in the Americas was a transformative process that shaped fundamental concepts of sovereignty and political authority. Through diplomatic encounters, different traditions of conceiving and practicing political power merged and evolved. While diplomatic historians have extensively examined these dynamics in North America, far less attention has been paid to similar processes in Latin America in the post-independence period, where treaty-making between Indigenous polities and emerging states can offer crucial insights into state formation.

The Mosquito Kingdom, an Indigenous political entity active in the Caribbean Coast of Central America from the 17th to the 19th centuries, developed diplomatic practices through engagement with the British and Spanish, producing distinct protocols for negotiating political relationships. When Honduras sought to annex the western half of the kingdom after independence in 1838, it had to navigate this established diplomatic culture. The Honduran government pursued a treaty with the Miskitu general who controlled the Black River region, aiming to create an alliance against both British interests and the British-backed Miskitu King.

The little-known 1843 Treaty between General Robinson and Honduras illuminates diplomatic practices with Indigenous nations in postcolonial Latin America, opening new perspectives on the role of Indigenous peoples in processes of state formation. Fellowship support will go towards archival research in the UK to reconstruct the British perspective on these diplomatic negotiations, particularly examining how British observers interpreted and responded to this attempt to establish direct relations between their Indigenous allies and a newly independent Latin American state.

This project examines nineteenth-century diplomatic relations between British colonial officials, Miskitu leaders, and Honduran officials. Drawing on Indigenous studies and new diplomacy studies, the research applies a historical sociological approach that centers cultural traditions of treaty-making. The project requires a visit to the UK to examine diplomatic correspondence (1838-1845) at the National Archives during the summer of 2025, particularly the papers of Alexander MacDonald, British Superintendent in Belize, who closely monitored relations with the Mosquito Kingdom. Galeana Rodriguez will present findings at academic conference during 2025-26, engaging with other scholars studying Indigenous diplomacy within the British Empire.



ERIC J. HILTON, CHAIR, NATURAL RESOURCES; AND PROFESSOR, W&M'S BATTEN SCHOOL & VIRGINIA INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE (VIMS)

Project: Study of type specimens housed at the Natural History Museum, London

Natural history museums provide a global network for biodiversity research. In addition to maintaining a rich specimen base for study, historically important collections such as the Natural History Museum (NHM), London house type specimens – those specimens that were used in the original scientific description of species. Historical descriptions (i.e., those from the 18th and 19th centuries) often lack sufficient detail for modern comparative studies and therefore examination of the actual specimens is necessary to confirm the proper identity of a species. Requested funds will support the examination of type specimens at the NHM by myself and two graduate students, representing a critical step in their research and their academic growth.

At the NHM, Miguel Montalvo (PhD student), whose research is focused on the evolution of fossil and living billfishes (swordfish and marlins), will examine specimens of the fossil family Palaeorhynchidae. NHM's collection includes many of the originally described specimens from that family and therefore are critical for him to examine for his comprehensive study of the billfishes. Anya Roopa Gajanur (PhD student) is studying the biodiversity of cephalopods (squids and octopuses) of southeast Asia. She has identified specimens of an octopus from Singapore as Octopus favonian. However, due to the lack of detailed descriptions the true identity of these specimens is unclear; examination of the type specimens of O. favonia and the closely related O. vulgaris and O. rugosus (all of which are at the NHM) is required to provide an accurate understanding of the cephalopod diversity from this region.

This study is based at the Natural History Museum in London. The specimens to be examined are unique in that they are the original specimens that were used to describe the species being studied and therefore exist nowhere else in the world. Because of their unique nature it is not possible to receive them on loan, necessitating international travel. This project will provide the opportunity for two students to examine specimens that are critical to their research in an international institution. I have established contacts in the zoological and paleontological departments at the NHM, thereby facilitating access to the collections.

For a list of previous faculty fellows and ways to support the program, visit
www.wm.edu/offices/revescenter/globalengagement/revesfacultyfellows

2024 Reves Faculty Fellow: Update



JONATHAN ALLEN, CLASS OF 2025
ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF BIOLOGY

2024 Project: Testing the role of larval cloning in outbreaks of Crown of Thorns Starfish on the Great Barrier Reef





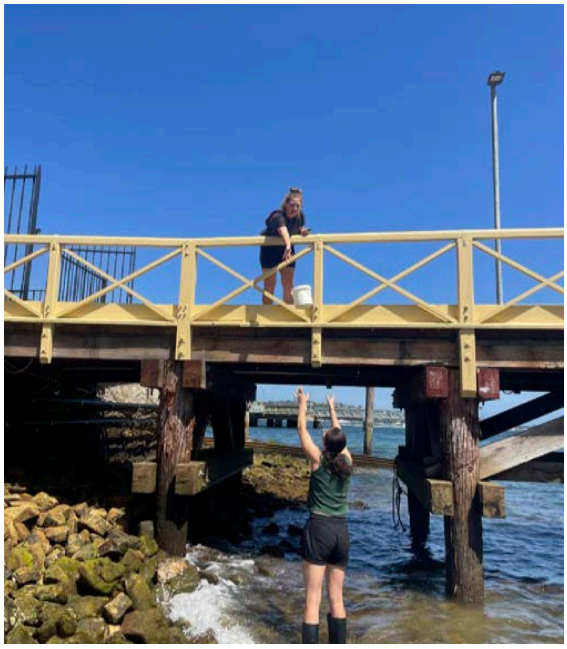


Clockwise from top left: Dr. Jonathan Allen with one of his essential tools: a camera (Courtesy photo); The photo under Allen's title and project description is a view of a recently collected Crown of Thorns Starfish (Acanthaster sp.) in its holding tank at the Sydney Institute of Marine Science; (Photo credit: Jonathan Allen); The microscopic larval stage of the New Zealand seastar, Patiriella regularis. The yellow oval on the bottom of the image is its stomach filled with algal food. The small bumps to the left of the stomach are the tube feet that a future juvenile starfish will use to navigate the seafloor. But, for now, the larva swims through the water column using thousands of beating cilia. (Photo credit: Dr. Jonathan Allen); A view of the Sydney Institute of Marine Science, which is nestled on the shores of Chowder Bay in a unique multi-use complex that includes world-class scientific research labs but also restaurants and a camp for school-age students to learn about marine biology. (Photo credit: Dr. Jonathan Allen); Dr. Jonathan Allen, Dr. Maria Byrne, Katie Beth Jones and Maclaren Johnson take a break from research to enjoy a sunset walk at Dr. Byrne's home on the edge of Sydney Harbor.





Left: WM Masters student Katie Beth Jones (foreground, WM '25) and University of Sydney Ph.D. Student Matt Clements biopsy a large female Crown of Thorns Starfish to obtain ovaries and gametes for experimentation. Right: Maclaren Johnson (WM '26) reaches in between the spines of a Crown of Thorns Starfish to (very carefully!) remove the ovaries of the animal to use in experiments studying the effects of food levels on larval cloning. The Crown of Thorns is a highly venomous species and so must be handled with great care. (Photos credit: Dr. Jonathan Allen)





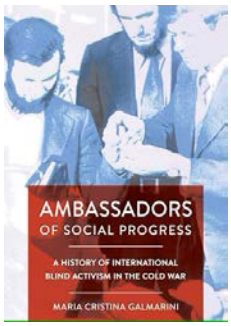






Clockwise from above: Katie Beth Jones passes a bucket down to Maclaren Johnson during an intertidal expedition; Maclaren Johnson (WM '26) holding up a brittlestar that she collected from the intertidal in front of the Sydney Institute of Marine Science; A cluster of purple sea urchins, Heliocidaris erythrogramma, collected from underneath rocks in the intertidal at SIMS. A group of developmental biologists from Duke University were working on this species while the Allen Lab from WM was studying the local starfish fauna. The students from Duke University are part of the research lab of Greg Wray, who graduated from WM in 1981!; WM masters student Katie Beth Jones holding a large sea hare (Aplysia sydneyensis) that she collected in the intertidal. Katie Beth is studying the California version of this animal for her thesis work at WM; Katie Beth Jones, Maclaren Johnson and Dr. Maria Byrne celebrating an exciting afternoon of collecting small-bodied starfish in the intertidal in Chowder Bay. (All photos by Dr. Jonathan Allen)

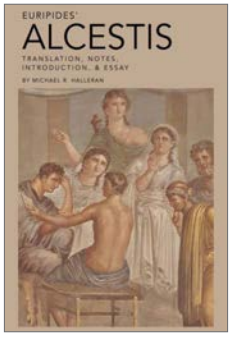
Recently Published Books by W&M Faculty



AMBASSADORS OF SOCIAL PROGRESS: A HISTORY OF INTERNATIONAL BLIND ACTIVISM IN THE COLD WAR

By Maria Cristina Galmarini, Associate Professor of History

The book discusses the ways in which blind activists from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe entered the postwar international blind movement. It analyzes the intersectionality of disability and politics during the Cold War and the ways in which socialist disability activism was rooted in the socialist system of welfare. Published by Northern Illinois University Press.



EURIPIDES' ALCESTIS: INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION, NOTES, AND ESSAY

By Michael R. Halleran, Provost Emeritus and Professor of Classical Studies Emeritus

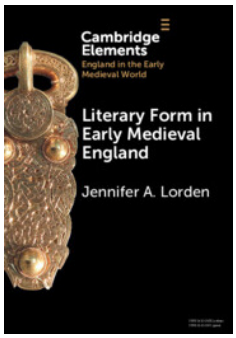
The book provides a new translation of Euripides' drama Alcestis, with introduction, notes and interpretative essay. Published by William & Mary Press



EVANGELIST OF CINEMA: YODOGAWA NAGAHARU AND MODERN JAPAN

By Hiroshi Kitamura, Associate Professor of History/Director of International Relations

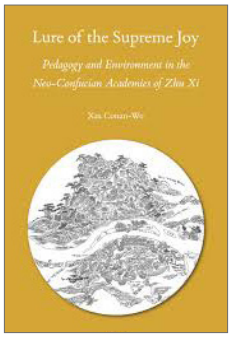
An in-depth study of Yodogawa Nagaharu, an "evangelist of cinema" who achieved nationwide fame as a writer, critic, editor, publicity agent and TV host in Japan. Tracing his life from birth to death, the book explores the critical role he played in the making of "modern Japan" through his active engagement with the movies. Published by Nagoya University Press



LITERARY FORM IN EARLY MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

By Jennifer Lorden, Assistant Professor of English

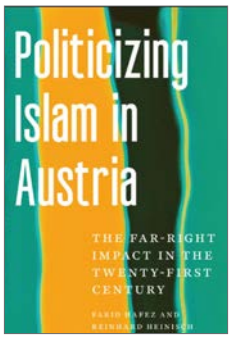
Although early medieval English writing offers only sparse contemporaneous self-commentary, Old English and Latin literature had lively and evolving practices of literary form and formal innovation. This new volume examines both more and lesser known literary forms, considering the multilingual landscape of early medieval England and how its forms continue into later eras in surprising ways. The book offers a concise tour of the first six centuries of English literature. Published by Cambridge University Press.



LURE OF THE SUPREME JOY: PEDAGOGY AND ENVIRONMENT IN THE NEO-CONFUCIAN ACADEMIES OF ZHU XI

By Xin Conan-Wu, Associate Professor of Art & Art History

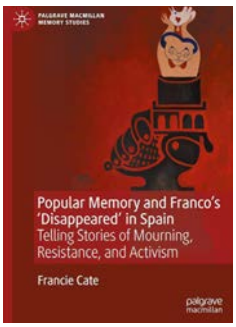
Focusing on landscape and environment, visuality and spatiality, in three 12th-century academies of philosopher Zhu Xi (1130–1200), this book introduces a reorientation of our understanding of the educational underpinnings of Neo-Confucianism — China's most important cultural system of the past thousand years. It cross-examines the textual traces and their innate vision, the physical sites and their transhistorical milieux, the Eight Views and Nine Bends and their afterlives in China and Korea. It unfurls an academy education, mutually reinforced by classical learning and self-cultivation, and sustained by a lure of the Supreme Joy of Confucian sagehood. Published by Brill



POLITICIZING ISLAM IN AUSTRIA: THE FAR-RIGHT IMPACT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

By Farid Hafez, Assistant Teaching Professor of International Relations at W&M, and Reinhard Heinisch, University of Salzburg

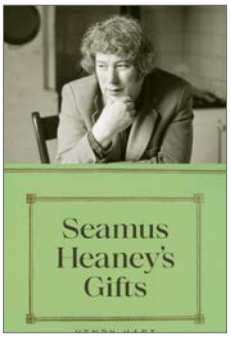
"Politicizing Islam in Austria" examines this anti-Muslim swerve in Austrian politics through a comprehensive analysis of government policies and regulations, as well as party and public discourses. In their innovative study, Hafez and Heinisch show how the far-right Austrian Freedom Party (FPÖ) adapted anti-Muslim discourse to their political purposes and how that discourse was then appropriated by the conservative center-right Austrian People's Party (ÖVP). This reconfiguration of the political landscape prepared the way for a right-wing coalition government between conservatives and far-right actors that would subsequently institutionalize anti-Muslim political demands and change the shape of the civic conditions and public perceptions of Islam and the Muslim community in the republic. Published by Rutgers University Press



POPULAR MEMORY AND FRANCO'S 'DISAPPEARED' IN SPAIN: TELLING STORIES OF MOURNING, RESISTANCE, AND ACTIVISM

By Francie Cate, Chair, Department of Modern Languages & Literatures, and William R. Kenan, Jr. Professor of Modern Languages & Literatures

This book examines a "people's history of the Spanish Civil War's anti-fascists who lost their 1936-1939 fight against far right military insurgents. The book argues that the regime's 150,000 "disappeared" civilians have in fact since 1936 been the most visible protagonists safeguarded in the shared collective memory of the war's losers. Narratives about the murdered victims — stories told in the form of memoirs, political speeches, visual art, film, novels, and the author's recorded oral testimonies with family members in the province of Cádiz — form the centerpiece of this study. Published by Palgrave Macmillan



SEAMUS HEANEY'S GIFTS

By Henry Hart, Mildred and J.B. Hickman Professor of Humanities

Throughout his career, the Irish poet Seamus Heaney, who received the 1995 Nobel Prize in Literature, maintained that poems came to him as gifts from a mysterious source. He also maintained that the recipient of gifts had an ethical obligation to share them with others. "Seamus Heaney's Gifts" offers the first comprehensive examination of Heaney's preoccupation with gifts, gift-giving, and gift-exchange rituals. Drawing on extensive research in Heaney archives, as well as three decades of correspondence with the poet, Hart presents a detailed study of Heaney's life and work that foregrounds his commitment to the reception and distribution of gifts. Published by Louisiana State University Press



THE SPECTER OF THE ARCHIVE: POLITICAL PRACTICE AND THE INFORMATION STATE IN EARLY MODERN BRITAIN

By Nicholas S. Popper, Professor of History and Interim Editor of Books, Omohundro Institute

The book argues that the expanded collection of political records and writings fueled political transformations from the Elizabethan era to the early 18th century. A wide range of early modern Britons – from elite counselors to aspiring clerks to ordinary subjects – eagerly acquired manuscripts and print works generated by the maelstrom of recording and preservation accelerating in this period. Their archives, the book shows, became sites of knowledge production analogous to the cabinets of curiosities, gardens, and museums that have drawn so much attention from early modern European historians. And the rampant circulation of political papers out of such collections, it argues, drove early modern Britain's transformation into a complex media society, in which individuals' political and epistemological attachments were conditioned by their information networks and communication practices. Published by University of Chicago Press |



UNRULY LABOR: A HISTORY OF OIL IN THE ARABIAN SEA

By Andrea Wright, Class of 1952 Distinguished Associate Professor of Anthropology and Asian & Middle Eastern Studies

In the mid-20th century, the Arabian Peninsula emerged as a key site of oil production. International companies recruited workers from across the Middle East and Asia to staff their expanding oil projects. "Unruly Labor" considers the working conditions, hiring practices and, most important, worker actions and strikes at these oil projects. It illuminates the multiple ways workers built transnational solidarities to agitate for better working conditions, and how worker actions informed shifting understandings of rights, citizenship and national security.
Published by Stanford University Press

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Alumna Abroad

A Q&A WITH **AMBASSADOR MARIE DAMOUR '87**



Q: Where were you born? What do you consider your hometown?

I was born in Ft. Knox, KY when my father was stationed there as an officer in the U.S. Army. We lived in four States before I was four, so I consider Pittsburgh, PA my hometown as that's where I lived the longest. Go Steelers!

Q: Why did you choose to attend William & Mary?

For a few reasons, really. We moved to Virginia when I was a junior in high school, so it was in-State for me and only about an hour from home. But the main reason was my love of history and the knowledge that W&M had a terrific liberal arts program. I didn't have a clear idea of what I wanted to focus on in university, so the program there was perfect for helping me discover what I was passionate about.

Q: What was your major? Any particular reasons you chose it?

I double-majored in history and government – there was no International Relations program when I attended – and I chose those because they interested me. I loved the courses. I discovered subjects I'd never thought about before, like foreign policy and international law. I loved both disciplines and couldn't choose between them, so I pursued both.

Q: Did you have a favorite course while you were at W&M?

There were so many courses that I loved and remember very fondly, but if you force me to pick one, I'd say Professor Ward's U.S. Foreign Policy course. I think I was initially waitlisted for it as a sophomore, and I'm so glad I was able to get in. I didn't know at the time that I would make diplomacy my career, but that course probably set me on the path.

Q: Did you study abroad while you were a student?

I did not, and it's one of the few things in life that I will always regret – that I didn't take advantage of that opportunity.

Q: Do you have a favorite memory or memories of your time at W&M?

So many. From freshman year in Dupont Hall, to two years living in the Creative Arts House, to all the terrific courses that I took. But if there is an iconic memory for me, it was going to the Cheese Shop to get bread ends and sauce for a picnic in Crim Dell. And avoiding the attack ducks who liked those too.

Q: Why did you pursue a career in the foreign service?

After W&M, I went to American University in Washington, DC to pursue a Masters in International Relations because those were the courses I enjoyed the most. I didn't have a career goal in mind at that time either, but I knew I wanted to learn more. While living, working, and studying in DC, I met people who were in the Foreign Service. Through talking to them about what they did, I became convinced that was what I wanted to do with my life. It's thanks to those people who probably never knew the influence they had on my decision.

Q: In your confirmation hearing in the Senate for your current position, you said that public service was an important value in your family. Would you like to share a little about that?

I have numerous family members who served in the armed forces, including my father. Several others are in federal service, and my mother was an occupational therapist for a school system in Virginia. It just seemed that public service was a way of making a living while contributing meaningfully to the community.



Q: To many Americans, Fiji evokes an "island paradise" or vacation destination. You are in a unique role, in that the U.S. Embassy in Suva – which is accredited to Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tonga, and Tuvalu – represents and works with many Pacific Island countries and territories and governments. What is the embassy's role – and it is unique in interfacing with multiple entities? That seems to be especially challenging. Has it been?

At its core, the Foreign Service serves two basic functions – to represent the Government and people of the U.S. to foreign governments, people, and international organizations; and to share information and perspectives we garner on those governments and organizations with decision makers in Washington so they can formulate policy with the best data available. Because Embassy Suva covers numerous countries as well as the Pacific Islands Forum, our job is a little more complex, but those core responsibilities remain the same.

Q: What would you like our readers to know about Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga, Nauru and Tuvalu – its people and culture and challenges as well as opportunities – a fuller picture of the region.

The real joy of my job is that I learn something new every day. Probably the most interesting thing I've learned here is how different all the countries of the Pacific Islands are from each other. We have a bad habit of talking about "the Pacific Islands" as if they are all the same. Living here, you quickly learn they all have unique histories, cultures, languages, challenges and opportunities. It's one of the unexpected beauties of the region.

Q: This year is the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. You served in Ho Chi Minh City, and your father served in the Army in Vietnam. Has the anniversary evoked any thoughts or memories or your time in Vietnam or what the role of the U.S. is in that region today?
So many good memories of Vietnam. Because of my father's service there, it was a special privilege to live and work in HCMC for about five years over the course of my two tours. My greatest realization was probably understanding the remarkable things we can accomplish if we acknowledge the shared tragedy of the past while being committed to building a positive future together. It's always shocking for me to realize that I've been in the Foreign Service longer [32 years] than we've had bilateral relations with Vietnam [30 years].

Q: You have worked five different regions of the world in a variety of leadership and policy-making roles – from London to Iraq; Paris to Mauritania; Brazil to New Zealand. Did you expect that's where your career would take you? Has there been a common thread to your postings? Does any region have special meaning or connection for you?
I had exactly zero idea of where I would be going when I first started! The common thread of my career is picking interesting jobs in interesting places. Each posting becomes my favorite, which means I'm either very adaptable or very fickle.

Q: How do you think your experience at W&M has affected your life and decisions you have made?
I attribute a great deal of my success to what W&M gave me. The single most useful thing I learned for my FS career came out of the first words spoken by the professor in my History 101 class – "there is no such thing as the history of anything; only a history depending on who recounts it." That has been so useful for analyzing events during my postings overseas. And the liberal arts, multidisciplinary approach that W&M encourages informed my wider choices in life. I like to think I've had a wide-ranging interest in the world around me that enriches my life.

Q: Do you have any advice for current students?
Enjoy everything that your W&M experience has to offer. Don't worry so much about what comes after.

Q: Is there any advice you wish you had received?
Be more ambitious for yourself. Not necessarily in the sense of career goals, but in pursuing possibilities. I

Above: In Vietnam in 2020. (Courtesy photos)

wasn't very creative in my approach to what I imagined my life would be. Certainly, anything I envisioned for my future when I was between the ages of 17 and 21 is absolutely not where I find myself now. And I couldn't be happier that's the case.

Q: Do you think international experience as a student is helpful in future life and career?
Absolutely. The broader your experience, the more resources you can draw from when those curveballs come your way.

Q: Anything else you would like to add?
W&M has a long history of preparing students for the Foreign Service. I feel confident speaking for my FS colleagues that we'd be happy to talk to anyone interested in learning more about the career. Don't hesitate to reach out.

The liberal arts, disciplinary approach that W&M encourages, informed my wider choices in life.

I like to think I've had a wide-ranging interest in the world around me that enriches my life.





Left: In Kiribati in Dec 2022. Ambassador Damour is seated with her back to the camera and wearing a floral covered head with my back to the camera. The dancer is Miss Kiriabti, 2022. Right: At a waterfall in Taveuni, Fiji, October 2024. (Courtesy photos)

For us, it's personal.









At the Reves Center for International Studies we develop, promote and sustain global initiatives involving students, alumni, faculty and staff at William & Mary, by:

- Sponsoring and funding internationally-themed lectures, conferences, and forums;
- Forging robust international partnerships and financing faculty-student research around the world; and,
- Awarding scholarships to help alleviate financial need, make educational opportunities possible, recognize achievement and attract and engage top students from around the world.

Our work is personal and life-changing — but we can't do it without your help.

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STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS offered by the REVES CENTER

Anticipated Summer Faculty-Led Programs

(Summer '26 unless noted otherwise)

Australia: Adelaide
China: Beijing
Czech Republic: Prague
England: Cambridge
France: Montpellier
Germany: Berlin
Greece: Athens/Nafplio (Summer 2027)
Iceland: Reykjavik and Westfjords
India: Bengaluru/Goa
Italy: Florence
Italy: Rome/Pompeii (Summer 2026)
Lithuania: Vilnius
Scotland: St Andrews
South Africa: Cape Town
Spain: Cádiz
Spain: Santiago de Compostela

Winter Break Programs (2025-26)

Argentina: La Plata
Brazil: Salvador
England: London
Germany: Heidelberg
Japan: Osaka
New Zealand: Auckland
South Korea: Incheon
Switzerland: Geneva
Rwanda: Kigali
Southeast Asia Business: Cambodia, Thailand, Vietnam

Embedded Programs (2025-26)

Belgium & France: Brussels and Paris (Spring '26)
India: Delhi (Winter 2025=26)

W&M-Sponsored Semester Programs

Argentina: La Plata
England: Oxford
France: Montpellier
Spain: Sevilla

Undergraduate Exchange Programs

Austria: Vienna University of Economics & Business
China: Tsinghua University
England: University of Exeter
England: University of Nottingham
France: L'institut d'Études Politiques de Lille
France: Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier III
Japan: Akita International University
Japan: Keio University
Netherlands: Leiden University
Scotland: University of St Andrews
Singapore: National University of Singapore
South Korea: Yonsei University
Wales: Cardiff University

Assisted Enrollment Program

Réunion Island (France): Universite de la Réunion

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