

Taft

BULLETIN

Rusty
DAVIS &

Linda
SAARNIJOKI
Retire

SPRING 2016

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ON THE COVER

Rusty Davis and Linda Saarnijoki, who will retire at the end of the school year after more than 40 years of serving and leading Taft in their many roles. ROBERT FALCETTI

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COMMENTS? TELL US!

We'd love to hear what you think about the stories in this *Bulletin*.

We may edit your letters for length, clarity and content, but please write.

Linda Hedman Beyus, editor

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On Main Hall

A WORD FROM HEADMASTER WILLY MACMULLEN '78

ON ART, TAFT, AND THE MAIN HALL

I've always thought of our Main Hall as sacred real estate on this campus. No school has anything like this, and we will always owe an enormous debt to architects Bertram Goodhue and James Gamble Rogers, who created HDT and CPT, and envisioned a hall that would define the school. It's not just that the human traffic of each day courses through the hall, from Bingham to the dining halls of Moorhead—though the fact that all of us walk the tiled floor each day surely helps explain the sense of community here. What's most important is that the central *values* of Taft are visibly and explicitly stated on the Main Hall. Think about what we say about ourselves as a school—about character, leadership, scholarship, and service—given that you walk by the Honor Roll board, past Cum Laude and Aurelian Award winners, the Head Monitor plaque, quotations by the school's four headmasters, and the school's motto engraved in wood and stone. To walk the hallway is to experience all we are, all we hope to be.

And you also experience something else that defines Taft: a belief that *art matters greatly*. Whether you are the five-year-old faculty child skipping down the hall, the distinguished visiting speaker about to give an address, a nervous visiting applicant, a 40-year faculty member, an alumnus back for the 50th Reunion, or a senior about to graduate, you cannot help but conclude that art is everywhere in the Taft education. The Main Hall is a kind of gallery, with hundreds of docents.

I like taking the walk from Bingham to the dining halls. You start near the doors to the auditorium: two display cases with posters for upcoming theatrical productions; award plaques for achievement in music, dance, art, technical theater, acting, and singing; and a massive student recreation of Andrew Wyeth's *Christina's World*. When you walk past the Choral Room, you hear the Collegium Musicum, our advanced choir, singing a spiritual, a hymn, a folk song. There's art everywhere you look, with sculptures of Abraham Lincoln and a western cowboy scene, or paintings like *The Pilgrimage to Canterbury*, the huge work given to Horace Taft in 1931, or the many portraits, from Lance Odden to Don Oscarson '47 to Al Reiff and Winnie Taft.

Perhaps most important, you see the Mark W. Potter '48 Gallery, its precast stone arch and glass doors inviting you in. It's a lovely sun-drenched space, open every day. In this year alone

“The central values of Taft are visibly and explicitly stated on the Main Hall.”



“Art is everywhere: thriving, vibrant, creative, inspiring, unsettling. But it is on the Main Hall, where the essence of this school is experienced, where we make a profound claim on who we are, that we are reminded most intensely and consistently that art and education cannot be separated.”


we have opened exhibits by Rockwell Visiting Artist Jessica Wynne '90, a show exploring the motif of the window in *Beyond the Window* by Zeuxis, a peace mandala executed by the monks of Drepung Gomang Monastery, a Community Service Day collection of community quilts by Taft and Waterbury students and parents, the pencil drawings of Rockwell artist Geoffrey Detrani, and the images of advanced photography students Emma Howie '16 and Maggie McNeill '16. It's a beautiful space. Your eye is drawn in every time you walk by. I've seen it crowded with students nibbling on hors d'oeuvres and talking art during a Friday night opening, and also with a sole visitor standing silently before a painting.

And when you walk further, you see paintings everywhere, on the walls and in the offices. Art was even part of the discussion with our architect Graham Gund when we built the Moorhead Wing and renovated the dining halls. A simple and elegant display system was installed, and so we continually hang student art: oils, watercolors, charcoal sketches. There's extraordinary talent here.

To walk the Main Hall is to be surrounded by art in all of its forms, to be told that we cannot think of the human experience, much less an education of the whole student, without contemplating and celebrating our aesthetic selves. Of the many great legacies Lance Odden left Taft, the elevation of arts is surely one of his proudest accomplishments. It's why our students have won juried exhibits, sung in the Vatican, and performed at Lincoln Center. It's why we have outside professionals offer training in strings and woodwinds, choreographers instructing dancers, resident artists working alongside students.

Today you see the Collegium led by Bruce Fifer, plays directed by Helena Fifer and David Kievit, dance choreographed by Sarah Surber, visual art and studio art instructed by Lou Chickadaunce and Claudia Black, photography taught by Yee-Fun Yin, orchestra and Jazz Band conducted by T.J. Thompson, and videography led by Scott Serafine.

Art is everywhere: thriving, vibrant, creative, inspiring, unsettling. But it is on the Main Hall, where the essence of this school is experienced, where we make a profound claim of who we are, that we are reminded most intensely and consistently that art and education cannot be separated.


Willy MacMullen '78



LETTERS

Grateful

Thank you for your article [on Ted Heavenrich]. I loved Mr. Heavenrich and Mr. Thomas and Ms. Chickadaunce so much. I was so lucky I got to attend Taft.

—Cliona Durham Gunter '80

As usual, in all respects a splendid *Bulletin*. Many thanks for all your very fine work.

—George Camp '56

Ted H

I've just been catching up with the winter *Bulletin*: what a lovely tribute to Ted Heavenrich! As always, it's a beautifully done issue.

—Alexandra Kelly '05,
former Taft teaching fellow 2009–10


Unsettled Science

Despite all the efforts of worthies like Al Gore, many of us benighted mugwumps don't see man-made global warming as "settled science." I note on page 20 of the winter *Bulletin* that some highly photogenic Tafties support "international climate change policy." Since the article is superficial, I can only guess that there might, just might, be an alternative point of view allowed or perhaps even encouraged in the name of open debate at Taft.

—McKim Symington '66

Taft
TRIVIA?

► What is the formal name of the performance space at Taft known as the Black Box? And when was it dedicated?
Send your guess to the editor (beyusl@taftschool.org). The winner, whose name will be randomly chosen, will win a surprise Taft gift.

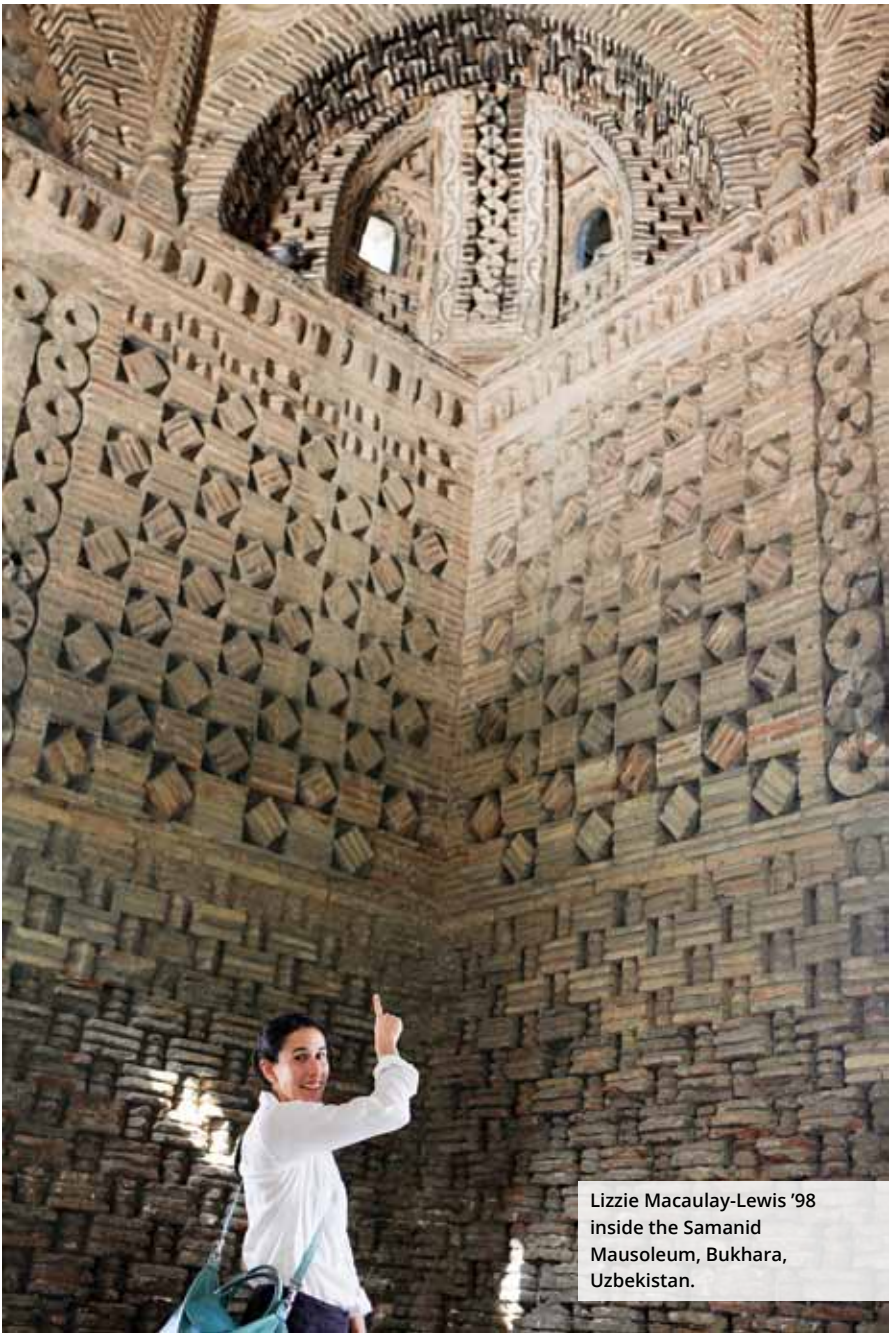




◄ Our winter issue Trivia question didn't prompt any correct guesses. The painting *Slate Rooftops, The Taft School* hangs in the Choral Room above the fireplace and was donated by artist Jenny Glenn Wuerker '83.

Alumni SPOTLIGHT

Going to Ruins



Lizzie Macaulay-Lewis '98 inside the Samanid Mausoleum, Bukhara, Uzbekistan.



The courtyard of the renovated House of Farhi in Damascus, in 2011.

WHEN LIZZIE MACAULAY-LEWIS '98 was a student at Cornell she went on an archaeological dig, a Roman garden excavation in Italy. "It was really just digging in the dirt, but there I was, on the day of the solar eclipse, and I found a Roman planting pot." She was hooked. These types of pots were not much studied at the time, but they help scholars understand trade.

Macaulay-Lewis completed a doctorate in classical archaeology at Oxford and now teaches at City University of New York's Liberal Studies Master's Program at The Graduate Center. While still interested in gardens, her research focuses on the material culture of the Roman, Late Antique, and Islamic worlds, and Islamic architecture. She has conducted research as a field archaeologist and ceramist in Italy, Jordan, Greece, Syria, and Egypt. Recently, she has been helping document sites that are endangered due to conflicts, especially in Syria.

"Gardens were a unifying factor across

the vast Roman empire," she explains. The Romans designed their gardens with pots embedded in the ground, so by studying the soils in those pots, it is possible to tell where a plant might have originated. Leaders like Alexander the Great collected plants and paraded them with other acquisitions as testament to their recent conquests.

One of her current projects, begun in 2010, is a book on Sephardic houses from Ottoman-era Damascus to be published

later this year. The House of Farhi was home to a family of Jewish financial advisers to several Ottoman governors of Sidon and Damascus in the 19th century. Its current owner asked Macaulay-Lewis to study it. After civil war broke out in Syria, however, subsequent trips to Damascus would not have been safe. She was able to continue through archival work in Germany, back in New York at the Metropolitan Museum* and getting to know the city's Sephardic Jewish community.

"In 2010 there had been so much progress in Syria," she says, "but the pace of change was slow. We didn't think it would get this bad, but we took lots of photos just in case. People in Syria were always wonderfully helpful, welcoming, and kind, and I was walking around asking about a Jewish family!"

The Umayyad Mosque in Damascus is

one of her favorite sites, with its layering of Islam, Christianity, and pagan forms of worship, and glorious mosaics. Originally the site housed an ancient Aramaean temple to the storm god Hadad; the Romans built the Temple of Jupiter on the same site. The mosque and a church dedicated to John the Baptist shared the space until 706 C.E, when the Christians were given a new space for a church and the Muslims took over the complex.

"When I entered the mosque for the



Lizzie Macaulay-Lewis '98 with local women in Bukhara, Uzbekistan, while visiting sites she covers in her classes.

first time, it was terribly moving, how buildings have these whole lives that you can be blessed to experience," she says. "There is this sense of communal life, whole families catching up with friends and neighbors. It's not only a place of worship, it is like a community center. I think that can be hard to comprehend for those of us who live in a more secularized way. I felt very welcomed in that space."

She has two more publications in the works: *Housing New Romans: Architectural Reception and the Classical Style in the Modern World* and *Classical New York: Greece and Rome in New York City's Art and Architecture, 1830–1940*. (See a complete list of her published work at <http://emacaulaylewis.com>.)

Above all Macaulay-Lewis believes academics can't live in an ivory tower. "We have an important job to play in

disseminating knowledge to people who are curious, to engage with the public, to break down barriers, to be accessible to more than graduate students. If we can do that, everyone benefits," she says.

Toward that end, she is involved in two digital projects that complement each other. The first is a series of lectures and essays for Smarthistory.org (part of the online Khan Academy), which are free and available to the public.

The other is a free multimedia,

dual-language (Arabic/English) resource for the study of the Middle East: the Manar al-Athar website (www.manar-al-athar.ox.ac.uk). Based at the University of Oxford, the site provides high-resolution images of archaeological sites across the areas of the former Roman empire that later came under Islamic rule, including Syro-Palestine/the Levant, Arabia, Egypt, and North Africa.

"I believe that knowledge for the sake of knowledge has unforeseeable benefits," says Macaulay-Lewis. "We don't always know what will be useful in the future. But when conflicts end, when people come back together, it is often through architecture, through art; they have an important role, as they have after wars throughout history." ■

—Julie S. Reiff

*Watch her video about a room from a similar home now at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York: www.khanacademy.org/humanities/art-islam/islamic-art-late-period/v/damascus-room



A Persistent and Rewarding Call

Andy Taylor '72 to Receive Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal

ANDY TAYLOR '72 has spent almost his entire career as an educator. He taught history at the Horace Mann and Spence Schools in New York City, and in Botswana and South Africa. Today, he is the principal of the Maru-a-Pula School in Gabarone, Botswana. And his connection to Taft has never been stronger.

"I was brought up in a family where we constantly hosted international students through AFS [American Field Service]," Taylor told the *Taft Bulletin*. "I thought it would be a spectacular opportunity if Maru-a-Pula students could go overseas and have a similar experience at Taft."

And, thanks to Taylor, they have: In almost every year since 1981, Maru-a-Pula students have traveled from Botswana to Watertown, in a partnership that powerfully and inextricably entwines the values of his youth and the lessons of service learned at Taft with his commitment to education and opportunity. These are the same values and commitment that have earned Taylor Taft's highest alumni

award: In May, Taylor will be honored with the Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal.

"We are delighted to recognize Andy's work with the Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal," said Holcombe T. Green III '87, trustee and chair of the Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal Committee. "Andy's selfless service to students in Botswana reflects the very essence of our school's motto. I know that Mr. Taft would be enormously proud of Andy's efforts and achievements, and he is a terrific recipient of this year's award."

The Horace D. Taft Alumni Medal is given each year to a person whose life work best typifies the school motto Not to be served but to serve. Awardees are celebrated for their humanitarian efforts—for going beyond the call of duty to serve others. The award is bestowed at the Old Guard Dinner on Alumni Weekend and memorialized with a citation hung in Main Hall. The Medal is a reminder of Taft's commitment to serve others.

After graduating from Taft, Taylor spent a year at the Aldenham School in the U.K.

as an English Speaking Union Exchange Scholar before returning to Connecticut to continue his education at Wesleyan University. Answering a persistent and rewarding call into global service, Taylor packed his bags for Natal, South Africa, where he spent his first year out of college teaching history at the Michaelhouse School. Soon after, he was in Botswana for his first stint at Maru-a-Pula. Taylor returned to Maru-a-Pula in 2004, where he has made an indelible mark as principal.

Maru-a-Pula is widely considered to be one of the top independent schools in Africa, and the best in Botswana. Its mission is to serve the nation of Botswana, the continent of Africa, and the world, by preparing leaders who will serve their communities. Nearly two-thirds of Maru-a-Pula's 765 students are citizens of Botswana. As principal, Taylor oversees a staff of 150 and an annual budget of over \$5 million.

"Top colleges from around the globe visit the school," says Taylor.



▲ Andy Taylor '72, principal of Botswana's Maru-a-Pula School, with students.

"The ultimate expectation for many of our students is to study overseas."

Maru-a-Pula students have gone on to attend schools like Stanford, Princeton, Columbia, MIT, Williams, the London School of Economics, and Oxford, where two former students were Rhodes Scholars; there are currently four Maru-a-Pula students attending Cambridge University. Taylor also pioneered the Harvard Intern and Princeton in Africa Fellows programs, and built a partnership with Juilliard. And while Maru-a-Pula's first exchange program was with Taft, students now spend time at more than 25 high schools worldwide, including Brooks, Deerfield, Emma Willard, Catlin Gabel in Portland, Oregon, and

Keystone Academy in Beijing, China.

Under Taylor's leadership, enrollment at Maru-a-Pula has increased by 200 students in 10 years. His development initiatives have allowed facilities growth that includes a new library media center and seminar room, two new language classrooms, and three new science labs, as well as more than \$200,000 each year for orphan scholarships.

Taylor helped mentor senior staff for the African Leadership Academy in Johannesburg, South Africa; addressed Botswana's Ministry of Education officials and school leaders on Maru-a-Pula's community service program; addressed southern Africa's independent school headmasters' conference on building the Orphan & Vulnerable Children Scholarship

program; and hosted a Global Connections Conference of school leaders from Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, India, Jordan, Kenya, New Zealand, Romania, Singapore, Slovakia, South Africa, Swaziland, Switzerland, Thailand, and the U.S. He has spoken to audiences throughout the world about Africa's AIDS orphans and the continent's educational challenges. Taylor also pioneered a Democracy Training curriculum, engaging South African high school students in service projects with nongovernmental organizations.

An avid skier, tennis and squash player, reader, traveler, and hiker, Taylor has also served on the boards of SOS Children's Village Botswana and Lebone II College of the Royal Bafokeng.

"Andy's life is inspiring—our motto writ large," notes Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78. "He is a visionary educator and leader, and his work at Maru-a-Pula has changed lives, brought amazing students to Taft, and furthered a remarkable partnership between two great schools. What a great, great Taftie he is!" ■

—Debra Meyers



TAYLOR HOOPER PHOTOGRAPHY

BEHIND THE HOTTEST SHOWS

on Broadway are two distinct types of "company": the cast and crew of a show (the definition most of us are familiar with), and the individual corporations formed for each show. While she hasn't appeared on stage since elementary school, Sarah Galbraith '85 is a star of the second type of company.

"Show me a business other than a Broadway show that grosses \$50 million

A Passion for Theater Adds Up

or more a year, employs an average of 100 people, and generates income reports *weekly*," Galbraith says. She knows her figures well considering she handles the bookkeeping and payroll services for the majority of the shows now playing on Broadway (including the runaway hit *Hamilton*) in an industry with annual revenues of \$1.3 billion.

So how did she get there?

After appearing onstage for the last time, in her early years, as Mrs. Claus, Galbraith transitioned to behind-the-scenes roles in the stage crew during her time at Taft, where she received the Bill Waldron Memorial Prize, given to "the student who has contributed most to the technical aspects of drama at Taft as

exemplified by the late Bill Waldron '72."

Along with some work in New York as an off-Broadway stagehand during her undergraduate years at Columbia—"you got paid that night, and it was great money," she says—Galbraith spent a summer working for the Goodspeed Opera House in East Haddam, Connecticut, as the institution was building a second outlet, the Norma Terris Theater, in nearby Chester. She did everything from installing seats to running the spotlight during evening shows.

Following a stint as a stagehand in Philadelphia after college, Galbraith decided she wanted to move into theater management and went back to Columbia to complete

an MFA at the School of the Arts.

Most of her adjunct professors were involved in Broadway or top regional theater productions, which gave her a direct line to producer Richard Frankel (known especially for *Stomp* and *The Producers*).

She went to an accounting firm after that and worked as a freelance bookkeeper, and in 2006 went off on her own to launch Galbraith & Company, an accounting and bookkeeping firm for shows on and off-Broadway, tours, and events. In 2011, Galbraith founded Checks and Balances, her payroll company. She felt there was a need to fill the gap of payroll companies failing to keep up with the times and, as a result, making it more difficult for accountants.

"Sarah actually asked the theater industry how payroll systems can be

better and implemented our feedback," Andy Jones, general manager for *Hamilton*, says. "Checks and Balances is unique because it's the only payroll service that caters to theater, and Sarah and her team are unique because they go above and beyond to get the job done."

Essentially, Galbraith is the reason the stars of *Hamilton* and so many other Broadway hits (she's working on 38 shows now) get their checks on time. In her 18 years in the business, she's provided the accounting for more than 150 productions on six continents. That figure is especially impressive considering that each show is considered a brand new business complete with a unique tax ID number and special tax considerations if it's touring throughout multiple states.

Ken Davenport, the Tony

Award-winning producer of *Kinky Boots*, *The Visit*, and *Spring Awakening*, says, "Sarah can literally remind you which unions get holiday pay and which don't." (There are 14 different unions in the industry.)

"Sarah also has the ability to navigate the complicated accounting and payroll issues that exist as a result of Obamacare [the Affordable Care Act] and ever-changing tax regulations, and marry that knowledge with her passion for theater," Davenport says.

"Theater is an art form that I have always connected to," Galbraith says. "For me, loving what we do and being part of the theater community is key to providing the best service possible to our clients."

Broadway is lucky to have her. ■

—Sam Dangremond '05



Brothers Jonny Adler '97 and Benjy Adler '99, cofounders and owners of The Skinny Pancake restaurants in Vermont. BRAD PETTENGILL

Infusing Social Mission into Local Food

ASK BENJY ADLER '99 about how he got his Vermont local food empire off the ground, and you're likely to get an impassioned response.

The 35-year-old, who'd been a music major at Middlebury College, says he never saw his business path coming despite having five siblings—including his brother and business partner Jonny Adler '97—who are all entrepreneurs.

A *Burlington Free Press* story declared that "it's been a long, strange trip from Middlebury to Burlington" for the Adler brothers, who launched their operation with a crepe cart that a Middlebury friend had suggested adding to Church Street in downtown Burlington.

With the help of a builder friend, the Adlers built a food cart using wood reclaimed from their parents' basement after it was damaged in a flood. They poured their \$4,000 savings into the project, which they dubbed The Skinny Pancake, and committed to staffing the cart (mostly by themselves) six days a week, from lunchtime to 2:30 a.m., after the bars closed.

"The interesting thing," Benjy says,

looking back on the experience, "is that businesses aren't necessarily easier because they're smaller. All the hats have to be worn in any business no matter what size. When we weren't working someone had to go shopping, had to go prep batter, had to do the accounting."

He estimates that his and his partner's hourly wage came out to about 50 cents an hour that first summer.

The following summer Benjy rented the cart out to two friends in exchange for their agreeing to replace the top-heavy original trailer (sure enough, it had rolled over at the end of the previous year).

After a season ski patrolling in Montana and a "short" trip to New Orleans that turned into nine months volunteering with the group Common Ground Relief after Hurricane Katrina—he'd bought a school bus, driven it south, picking people up along the way to volunteer with him—Benjy returned to Vermont for the third summer of the Pancake.

The Adlers started to think more broadly about their food business: "We started to have crepe dreams—a

restaurant, live music. We looked around at our friends like the Ben and Jerry's of the world and [local Vermont favorite] American Flatbread....The idea of infusing social mission into the work really started to emerge in that third summer."

After having learned from his New Orleans experience that "if you really want to make a deep impact, it has to be an enduring effort," Benjy found a restaurant space with a commercial kitchen on the Burlington waterfront. In 2007, they opened the first brick-and-mortar location of The Skinny Pancake. A second location followed in 2009, in downtown Montpelier, Vermont's capital.

"We said if we're going to step it up economically, we really need to step up our social mission and be innovative and push the envelope around local food," Benjy says.

And that's just what they've done. While The Skinny Pancake was the first food cart to become a member of the Vermont Fresh Network, it wasn't until the second location opened that the brand devoted itself to using 100 percent local proteins.

Now its commitment to local food is even more pronounced. In 2009, The Skinny Pancake began conducting an audit of the amount of local food its locations use, and the number has increased every year. As of last year the figure was 71.1 percent.

Through arrangements with local farms—such as buying enough basil to be frozen to produce pesto all winter for the restaurants—the Adlers have been able to honor their commitment to "keep the money local."

Annually, they pump about \$1 million into the local economy, and as members of One Percent for the Planet Arabic they donate 1 percent of their revenues to environmental nonprofits. Plus, with an average plate price of about \$10, the restaurant group tries to make its food affordable and accessible to all for everyday consumption.

The Skinny Pancake also provides all the food service at Burlington International Airport, after competing against Dunkin' Donuts and Bruegger's Bagels in 2013 to secure a contract as the new vendor. The Chubby Muffin, the Adlers' coffee shop spin-off in the North End of the city, serves as a commissary to prep much of the food for the airport. "We believe we are the most locally sourced airport eatery in the country," says Benjy.

The school bus Benjy bought has been converted to run on vegetable oil and is named Sueño ("dream" in Spanish), and it still travels to festivals throughout New England. Jonny joined Benjy full time last year after working since 2002 with their older brother, Ted, at a web development business.

While the duo considered Boston for their next location, they ultimately chose somewhere closer to home. In April The Skinny Pancake opened its first foray outside Vermont, in Hanover, New Hampshire. So Dartmouth students might be eating some of the best college town food in the country—and helping the local economy. ■

—Sam Dangremond '05

Taft Lacrosse Redux

AFTER COMING BACK from the Taft dining hall on a Friday afternoon in March, you happen to turn on ESPNU and put your feet up for a few minutes before prepping for your Saturday classes but this game on Friday, March 4, is a little different if you're a Taftie.

On this Friday, you would have watched a night game between #14 ranked Virginia and #3 ranked Syracuse, and, if you watched really closely, you would have seen some names on the white Virginia uniforms that sound awfully familiar. You squint at your TV and you notice #19 for the Cavaliers: Jeff Kratky '13. Kratky came to Taft as a lower mid and quickly established himself as a contributor on the varsity team. He was All-Western New England three times, amassed 101 career points, and has taken more than 200 career face-offs in Charlottesville.

Down the line you notice #11 in white is Tyler Breen '14. Breen ended his career at Taft with 113 points and was an Under Armour All-American his senior year.

Just a few guys down is #31, Will Sipperly '14. "Sipp" came to Taft as a new upper mid and quickly enamored his classmates with his unique personality and his legendary 2 a.m. weight-lifting sessions in CPT. Sipperly graduated as an All-League running back in football and an All-American in lacrosse.

The last person that you will likely see darting around your TV screen is #45, Zach Ambrosino '15. "Ambro," as he was known to everyone on campus, graduated as the Western New England

defensive player of the year in 2015 and has been playing significant minutes as a freshman defenseman. If you want to know how he's doing in Charlottesville, just watch five minutes of a game, and you might hear the announcer repeat what he said in the Syracuse game after Ambro landed a debilitating check: "Ambrosino is not a typical freshman."

In the spring of 2017, the Cavaliers will add one more Taftie—Michael Kraus '16, an All-American from New Canaan, Connecticut—to their roster, bringing the Big Red total to five.

But what is it like to have a group of your high school teammates on your college team? Do you still think about Taft?

"The best part about playing with my high school teammates is that every day I get to step on the field with guys I have known and played with for years, and for whatever reason that brings a kind of special feel to practice," Ambrosino says.

Kratky, the veteran of the group, adds, "The best part is that it makes it way easier to stay in the loop with all of my Taft friends. It's pretty easy to fall off the map when you graduate, and I'm bad at staying in touch in general, so having Tyler, Sipp, and Ambro here is great because it helps me keep track of what's going on with our Taft people." So, next time you turn on the TV and flip to ESPNU for some college lacrosse, if you're cheering for UVa, don't feel bad if you substitute "Go Big Red" for "Wahoowa!"

—Casey D'Annolfo,
Taft lacrosse coach and English teacher

▼ Taft alums playing lacrosse together at UVa this year: from left, Jeff Kratky '13, Will Sipperly '14, Zach Ambrosino '15, and Tyler Breen '14.



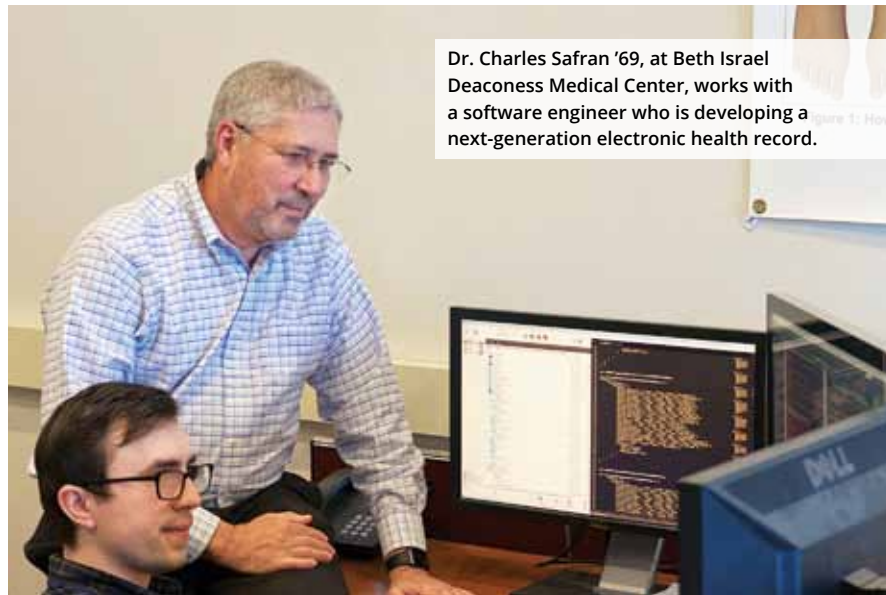
Bridging Technology and Health Care

“EVERYONE WANTS TO BUILD an iPhone app. But to me it’s not about the equipment, it’s about solving a problem,” says Dr. Charles Safran ’69, chief of the Division of Clinical Informatics at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston and a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School. Safran has spent most of his career devoted to solving one overarching problem: how to integrate rapidly evolving technology into clinical practice to improve patient care and health care in general.

While “clinical informatics” may not yet be a household term, the field has evolved from its infancy (on rudimentary computers) over 40 years ago to now encompass electronic health records, telemedicine, and other communication and information technologies. Technology has made exponential leaps and bounds in sophistication, but Safran’s mission has remained steadfast: “We can produce a lot of data,” he says. “But how does that information get incorporated and integrated into care and into your own health?”

Beth Israel was a trailblazer in this field, being among the first in the world to exploit the use of computers to improve the quality of medical care and teaching, augment the patient-doctor relationship, and facilitate research. Safran humbly says he was “in the right place at the right time,” having come to the hospital in 1983 during the early years of clinical informatics, yet was truly instrumental in the development of the field, and specifically of the electronic health record.

Safran arrived at Beth Israel after a somewhat unplanned “seven-year detour” to Tufts University School of Medicine. Prior to medical school, Safran had been working at MIT, applying artificial intelligence to the field of medical decision-making. With bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mathematical logic from Tufts, his career trajectory was initially not headed toward medicine. He says he decided working alongside doctors might



Dr. Charles Safran '69, at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, works with a software engineer who is developing a next-generation electronic health record.

be a better bet than working for doctors, and followed the medical school path.

While part of medicine’s appeal was working with patients and families, Safran seized a greater challenge. “I thought to myself, There are 500 people in this building, but 300 million on the other side of these walls. I could be helping hundreds of thousands of patients at the same time,” he explains.

Safran was instrumental in developing and deploying clinical computing systems at not only Beth Israel but also Brigham & Women’s Hospital, designing and organizing the interface between clinicians and users. In the mid-1990s, he helped to develop a system to enable parents to see their prematurely born babies in real time in the neonatal unit, something that seems easy nowadays with a smartphone. His leading role in helping to develop these technologies along with the electronic health record earned him the 2014 Morris F. Collen Award for Excellence in Biomedical Informatics, the highest honor given by the American College of Medical Informatics.

The focus of Safran’s recent work is on improving family participation in the care of elders, an area of health care that is rapidly expanding due to the

significant rise in the senior population. But ultimately Safran sees his work in a pragmatic framework: “We have about 200,000 practicing doctors and about 300 million Americans. How can people get all the care they need, when they need it? And how can we use technology to improve how we care for folks?” he posits.

Recognizing the major role that clinical informatics plays in health care today, the American Board of Medical Specialties recently created a medical sub-specialty for the field, under preventive medicine. Safran explains that the field is rapidly growing—medical schools are introducing informatics into the curriculum, upwards of 1,000 people have passed their boards in clinical informatics, and about 20 hospitals nationwide have clinical informatics training.

To Safran, the use of computers in medical decision-making is a powerful tool. That technology can truly change health care, however, is transformative: “It’s about enabling people to be participants in their own care,” he says. “The world has democratized knowledge, and we now have tools to help people that we didn’t have before.” ■

—Phoebe Vaughn Outerbridge '84

IN Print



TEACHING FOR THE LIFESPAN: SUCCESSFULLY TRANSITIONING STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DIFFERENCES TO ADULTHOOD
Corwin, A SAGE Company
Henry B. Reiff '71 and Nicole S. Ofiesh

Reiff and Ofiesh offer a practical guide that makes transition planning easier so that educators can prepare students with learning differences to successfully navigate adulthood. Backed by the latest research in learning and development, this book provides the best practices needed to promote students’ strengths and abilities for lifelong success.

Readers will benefit from an understanding of the educational, vocational, social, and emotional dimensions of adulthood for students with learning differences.

Reiff is a faculty member in special education at McDaniel College and has served as dean of student academic life and dean of graduate and professional studies.

BEER MONEY: A MEMOIR OF PRIVILEGE AND LOSS
HarperCollins
Frances Stroh '85

In *Beer Money*, Stroh reveals the complexities of coming of age as a member of Detroit’s Stroh’s beer family, once in possession of the largest private beer fortune in America.

Founded in 1850, Stroh Brewing Co. grew to produce 45 brands including

Stroh’s, Schlitz, and Old Milwaukee and was named in the Forbes 400 list from 1984 to 1992. The Stroh family fortune was worth \$700 million in 1985, and they enjoyed an extravagant lifestyle until the business declined.

Beer Money is a recollection of a city, an industry, and a dynasty in decline, and the story of a young artist who finds her way out of the ruins during the unraveling of her nuclear family.

Stroh received a B.A. from Duke University and an M.A. from Chelsea College of Art in London as a Fulbright Scholar. She practiced as an installation artist, exhibiting in Los Angeles, San Francisco, and London, before turning to writing.

SELLING THE SERENGETI: THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF SAFARI TOURISM
University of Georgia Press
Benjamin Gardner '88

Selling the Serengeti examines the relationship between the Maasai people of northern Tanzania and the influence of foreign-owned ecotourism and big game-hunting companies.

It looks at policies and conversations such as the championing of community-based conservation and the neoliberal focus on private investment in tourism, and their profound effect on Maasai culture and livelihoods.

Gardner’s experiences in Tanzania began during a 1991 study-abroad trip, which led to a relationship with the

nation and the Maasai people and marked the beginning of his research into social movements, market-led conservation, and development around the Serengeti.

Gardner is an associate professor in the School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences at the University of Washington Bothell, where he teaches global studies, cultural studies, and environmental studies. He is also the chair of the African Studies Program at the university’s Henry M. Jackson School of International Studies.

CLEAR: HOW TO SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE & LIVE MORE FEARLESSLY
Annick Magac '95

When developing a plan or goal to achieve, personally or professionally, people often look to the typical tasks designed to make that happen. Entrepreneur, health coach, and design expert Annick Magac knows firsthand that an often overlooked aspect of our lives may contribute to an inability to succeed.

In *Clear*, Magac explains how our physical environment—from the office cubicle to the home—is a reflection of one’s inner self. *Clear* seeks to transform the way we think about our habitats and how they may help or hinder personal and professional success.

Magac is an author, Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN) certified holistic health coach, National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) certified personal trainer, motivational speaker, and designer. ■

If you would like your work added to the Hulbert Taft Library’s Alumni Authors Collection and considered for this column, please send a copy to:
Taft Bulletin | The Taft School | 110 Woodbury Road | Watertown, CT 06795-2100

For more information, visit
www.taftschool.org/news

Around the POND

BY DEBRA MEYERS

Learning from an Election Like No Other



Former Ohio Congressman and two-time candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination Dennis Kucinich visited Taft in March to both inspire students and weigh in on the current state of politics in the United States.

“THE FIRST DUTY OF A MAN,” opined Cuban philosopher and political theorist José Martí, “is to think for himself.” In the midst of a particularly contentious campaign season punctuated by ubiquitous social media, the rise of nontraditional media outlets, and a 24-hour news cycle now firmly fixed in our culture, separating the wheat from the chaff has become especially difficult.

“This is an election like no other,” History Teacher Megan Valenti told Taft students during a recent Morning Meeting. “We elect candidates based on characteristics like honesty, likeability,

and relatability. While this is all nice and clean, it is not the best way to make a decision about who to vote for. It is important to understand the platforms and beliefs of a candidate.”

To that end, Taft students are engaged in political discourse on and off campus, through both theoretical and experiential learning. They have engaged in academic debate in the dorms, screened political debates preceding caucuses and primaries, considered fact and opinion on candidate platforms, and even hit the campaign trail.

In November, with 15 Republicans

still in the race and Ben Carson leading the pack, History Teacher Rachael Ryan and her AP Government students presented the Taft community with profiles of each candidate, comparing their positions on the economy, climate change, the Affordable Care Act, same-sex marriage, abortion, ISIS, immigration, and taxes. In February, History Teacher Greg Hawes ’85 and AP Economics teacher Jeremy Clifford walked Taft students through the foreign relations and economic issues the next president will likely face, including their proposed strategies and positions on each of those issues.

Taft students also gained insight into the campaign process when two-time candidate for the Democratic presidential nomination Dennis Kucinich (D-Ohio) came to campus in March.

“The thing that surprised me most [during my campaigns] was how united America really is,” Kucinich told Taft students. “There is an underlying unity in the country. That is what I tried to call forth and build from.”

Which is not the understanding or approach of the current batch of candidates, who, Kucinich said, are engaged in “one of the wildest presidential campaigns” he has seen since 1968.

“Driving a wedge is antithetical to the solution,” Kucinich explained. “If the election fractionates the country, how do you put it back together again? The past, present, and future all exist at the same time—if you have a bad campaign now, you will have a bad government in the future. We must elevate the conversation and move away from rhetoric and polarized talk. Disparagement

debases our nation spiritually.”

Taft students had an opportunity to see our nation’s political process up close when Ryan took her AP Government students north for the New Hampshire primary.

“The New Hampshire primary is arguably the most important event of the presidential election season,” notes Ryan. “The state of New Hampshire plays a pivotal role in our political process.”

Ryan invited students to weigh in on which New Hampshire events would be most interesting and educational to attend, not necessarily those tied to candidates they support; the majority opted for rallies featuring then-Republican front-runner Donald Trump and Democrat Bernie Sanders, both of whom ultimately won in the New Hampshire primary.

Students prepped for the event by watching video and reading news accounts of earlier Trump rallies and political gatherings. Many were surprised by the tone, the rhetoric, and the perceived lack of substance.

“The few things we did hear about his policies,” notes Ryan “reflected a rather liberal stance.”

Tyler Dullinger ’16 agrees. “Donald gave a very rambling but engaging speech calling for campaign finance reform, saving Social Security, lowering military spending, and removing U.S. troops from Syria—all very liberal positions that mirror that of Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders.”

The event was well attended by press from around the world; many news outlets took a particular interest in the Taft contingent. They were interviewed by CNN, *Time* magazine, and some international news organizations, and rubbed elbows quite memorably with Jordan Klepper of *The Daily Show*. Their thoughts were also captured on a video produced by “Now This Election,” a web-based news outlet.

In the end, says Ryan, the “unfortunate downgrading of the political discourse in this country,” was not lost on Taft students. ■

Taft Students Mount *The Laramie Project* A Masque and Dagger Production

IN 1998, UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING student Matthew Shepard was brutally murdered in Laramie, Wyoming. Shepard was gay, and his murder was denounced as a hate crime. In the aftermath, the absence of state and federal hate crime laws came into clearer focus. The case drew international attention; public reaction was widespread and often contentious.

In 2000, the Tectonic Theater Project produced a three-act play that probes that reaction. The play draws on hundreds of interviews conducted by the theater company with residents of Laramie, company members’ journal entries, and published news reports. *The Laramie Project*, as the three-act play is known, came to Taft’s Black Box stage in March.

“A few seniors approached me saying

that they longed to do a show that really said something,” says the show’s producer, Maggie Luddy ’16. “They wanted their last performances at Taft to truly speak, and to do so powerfully.”

Under the guidance of advisor and Taft’s Performing Arts Technical Director David Kievit, Luddy and *The Laramie Project* director Emily Axelberg ’16 have given new life to one of Taft’s most storied traditions, Masque and Dagger.

“Masque and Dagger has probably been around almost as long as the school has,” says Luddy. “When you look at the images in the stained glass in the dining hall you see Masque and Dagger represented. But it has not really been active since the ’80s. We wanted to bring it back, and to bring it back as a forum for discussing issues through art.”



▲ Masque and Dagger staged a raw and powerful production of the highly regarded social justice piece, *The Laramie Project*.

Which, Luddy notes, made *The Laramie Project* a natural choice: “It is such a relevant topic, and one that needs to be discussed not only on our campus, but throughout the greater community.” ■

student SPOTLIGHT

Rhythm and Muse

CIARA CONNOLLY '17 was relatively new to the art of drumming when she arrived at Taft as a lower mid.

"I started playing drums in sixth grade, when a lot of schools first have students choose an instrument. I chose drums," Ciara says, "and so did about 20 other kids. By the time I got to eighth grade, there were only two drummers left, and my playing had evolved from a pad to a snare to a full kit."

Today, Ciara is a highly regarded and versatile drummer at Taft. She plays in the Jazz Ensemble, is in the orchestra pit at many of Taft's shows, and travels whenever and wherever the beat takes her, which, on Sunday afternoons is Columbus Circle in New York City: Ciara is a member of the prestigious Jazz at Lincoln Center (JALC) Youth Orchestra.

As a lower mid, Ciara traveled with Taft musicians to Portugal. It was there that her passion for jazz was first ignited.

"The students at the Lisbon Music School are just insanely talented—super tight," Ciara says. "Their music was hugely influenced by Miles Davis—that made an impact on me. Later, at a jazz club, there was a band playing called the Wild Bunch. I was so amazed by their drummer—he was



▲ Ciara Connolly '17

fantastic and inspirational. I bought their CD because I wanted to replicate his sound. I had played all kinds of music before, but decided then that I wanted to move deeper into jazz."

And opportunity followed. In the spring of her mid year, Ciara traveled to Memphis and New Orleans with Taft's Jazz Ensemble. The group visited venues like Preservation Hall, a well-known spot in the French Quarter dedicated to preserving traditional New Orleans jazz. Taft music teacher T.J. Thompson also arranged for them to play a variety of popular and historic music venues, including Buffa's.

"We had been playing 'Sing, Sing, Sing' throughout our tour," said Ciara. "It's such a classic. That night at Buffa's everything came together; I felt it was the best I had played it."

Buffa's owner agreed: She offered Ciara a scholarship to a traditional jazz

camp in New Orleans. Says Ciara: "It is really a camp for adults, people older than myself just doing what they love."

At the camp Ciara worked and played with drummer Gerald French, leader of the famed Tuxedo Jazz Band. In its more than 100-year history, the band has only had five leaders; French took the helm in 2011. It was the first jazz band to play at the White House in 1953 and produced some of the best-known musicians of the past century, including Bob French, Octave Crosby, and Louis Armstrong. The camp also got her on stage at Preservation Hall.

Ciara left for Memphis and New Orleans the same day she auditioned for the Jazz at Lincoln Center Youth Orchestra. The rest, as they say, is history. Each Sunday she spends one hour in "jazz language" classes, followed by three hours of rehearsal—two with her big band group, one with combo. Ciara, along with the other members of her JALC Specialized Big Band ensemble, recently took top honors in the 8th Annual Charles Mingus Competition.

"One of the staples of Mingus's music is abrupt changes in feel, style, and meter," notes Ciara. "We really built on that in our performance of 'Moanin'—we flowed in and out of mambo and jazz in kind of a different

◀ Ciara Connolly '17 competing in the 8th Annual Charles Mingus Festival with her Jazz at Lincoln Center Youth Orchestra.



and exciting way. I think it embodied all that Mingus tried to do in all of his arrangements, and that the judges felt that was a really pleasant surprise."

Mingus is widely regarded as one of the most important figures in 20th-century American music; his legacy is showcased each year during the three-day festival. Mingus's widow, Sue, coproduces the annual high school competition at the Manhattan School of Music (MSM).

"Jazz bands from all over the country submit recorded auditions," Ciara explains. "Those auditions are used to make the first round of cuts. Only three or four groups in each of the four categories are actually called to MSM to compete."

Ciara's JALC ensembles were invited to compete as finalists in both the Specialized Big Band and Specialized Combo categories, where they placed first and second, respectively. The festival included rehearsal time, jam sessions, films, and a performance by Mingus Dynasty, a jazz ensemble made up of Mingus's one-time bandmates, colleagues, and contemporaries. Ciara also participated in a clinic with Mingus Dynasty drummer Adam Cruz.

"It was an amazing experience. He's just incredible. That is how I want my music to sound," says Ciara.

It is that—that finding inspiration and working to fulfill it—which has driven Ciara to the top of her game. And, beginning with the jazz revelation in Portugal and continuing with lessons on campus and exposure in New Orleans, seizing on the many opportunities created by Thompson.

"All of these opportunities have been about learning. The camp in New Orleans, the Berklee summer program, JALC—it has all been about working with these amazing, inspiring people who give me so much direction and so much to work on. For me, that's what it's all about," she says. ■



▲ Juan González

Juan González: The Media and Race Relations Paley Family Lecture Series

PROGRESSIVE BROADCAST journalist, investigative reporter, *Daily News* columnist, and author Juan González visited Taft as part of the Paley Family Lecture Series.

Born in Puerto Rico and raised in Harlem, González has enjoyed a 37-year career in journalism. He has twice won the prestigious George Polk Award and is a former president of the National Association of Hispanic Journalists. González continues to chronicle daily events in urban politics, education, and race relations, the latter serving as a springboard for his Morning Meeting talk at Taft.

"Newspapers were for centuries regarded as the first draft of history—the incidents the media chose to report, their framing of events, inevitably served as the raw material that was then mined by scholars who came decades or centuries later to chisel more comprehensive historical accounts," González explained.

But from the start, that first draft of history (and the later, more chiseled accounts) favored "what happened in

Europe, or among the European settlers' descendants," said González. "The stirring immigrant saga of settlers conquering the West to create the world's greatest democratic experiment somehow excluded those of us who had not come from Europe. Most importantly, the news media we grew up with kept depicting us as threats to society, rather than contributors."

Starting with the first issue of *Publick Occurrences*, the first newspaper published in the U.S. and featuring five stories about the danger posed by Native Americans, González walked students through a publishing history that "shed[s] more heat than light to public discourse when it comes to race.... This issue of racial profiling and oppression by authorities in non-white communities is not a new phenomenon."

González encouraged members of the Taft community to bring a "critical eye to the consumption of media. Consume as much news from different sources as you can—consider who is presenting, what their aim is, and then make your own independent decisions." ■

The Paley Family Endowment, established in 2006 by Valerie and Jeffrey Paley '56 and their son Austin Paley '09, supports the Paley Lectures, an annual program of visiting speakers. Invited speakers address the school community on current issues of major significance, such as government, journalism, foreign affairs, environment, and civil liberties, in order to provide Taft students with the opportunity to be inspired by the value and dignity of lives filled with purpose and commitment.

To watch videos of Morning Meeting speakers (including Juan González) visit
www.vimeo.com/taftschooll

Competitive Edge

Tafties on Top in Model UN and Debate Competitions

TAFT STUDENTS CONTINUE TO bring their A game to high-level academic competitions, taking home top honors in recent Model UN and Debate Team events.

Tafties traveled to Boston for the 63rd session of Harvard's Model United Nations (HMUN), a four-day international relations simulation. HMUN delegates assume the roles of UN representatives and members of other international bodies and national cabinets. This year, Taft students represented Uzbekistan. The simulation encourages an in-depth examination and resolution of critical world issues. Students balance national interests with the needs of the international community, while managing the powers and limitations of international negotiation. Moderators

guide debates in accordance with the formal rules of parliamentary procedure.

The event attracted 3,000 high school delegates from over 35 countries, with Taft's delegates rising to the top field. Leon Vortmeyer '16 was named Best Delegate, a first-place award, for his work with the Special Summit on Biotechnology committee. His work included position papers on genetic testing and privacy and on international standards for research ethics and access.

"Leon led a fierce committee in negotiating resolutions on the topics in front of his committee," said Jamella Lee, Taft's dean of global and diversity education. "His diplomacy, poise, self-confidence, scholarly acumen, political astuteness, emotional intelligence, mastery of the rules of procedure, mental toughness,

and negotiating skills were second to none—impeccable to say the least."

Tawanda Mulalu '16 garnered verbal commendations for his work on the HMUN General Assembly's World Health Organization committee; Tawanda and Zygmantas Jievaltas '17 were also among the top 10 finalists in the Harvard Impact Initiative Essay Contest.

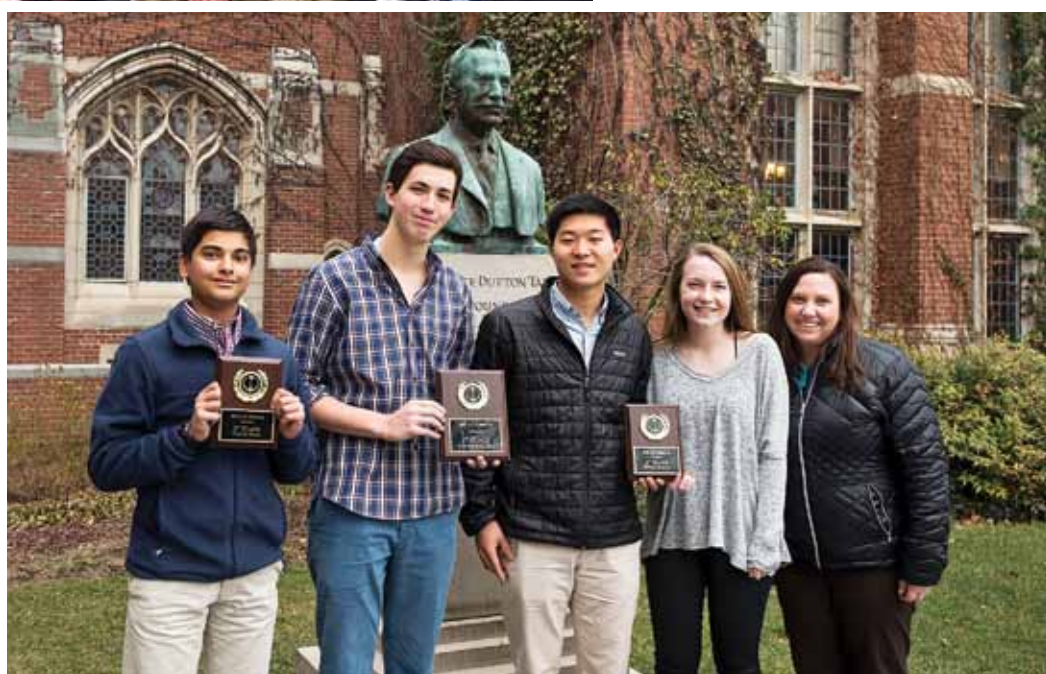
Taft's novice debate team took home three prizes in Loomis Chaffee's 34th Annual Debate Tournament, including a first-place award in the individual speaker category for Robert Garcia '18. The debate was a switch-side, cross-ex, policy resolution debate. This year's resolution was built around the December 2015 Climate Change Conference in Paris. Teams had one hour to work together to prepare their cases before the rounds of debate began. Competitors were judged on their ability to produce and defend cogent, persuasive arguments on both sides of the issue.

In addition to his first-place individual award, Robert Garcia earned a second-place finish in the two-person team category with Aditya Balsekar '18. Peter Oh '17 and Leigh Sharpless '18 joined the pair for the four-person team competition, in which they finished third. ■



▲ Taft students rose to the top of a very large field at the 63rd session of Harvard's Model UN.

► Taft's Debate Team members, from left: Aditya Balsekar '18, Robert Garcia '18, Peter Oh '17, Leigh Sharpless '18, and Advisor, History, and Economics Teacher Brianne Foley.



STUDENT ART FILLED POTTER GALLERY this winter, with photographic exhibitions by seniors Emma Howie and Maggie McNeill.

CHRIS SNOW '97 was among the alumni hockey players who returned to campus in February to compete in the annual Alumni Hockey Game.



SAXOPHONIST KEN NIGRO led his eponymous band during an evening of jazz and big band sounds at Taft. Nigro's performance was part of Taft's Music for a While Performance series.

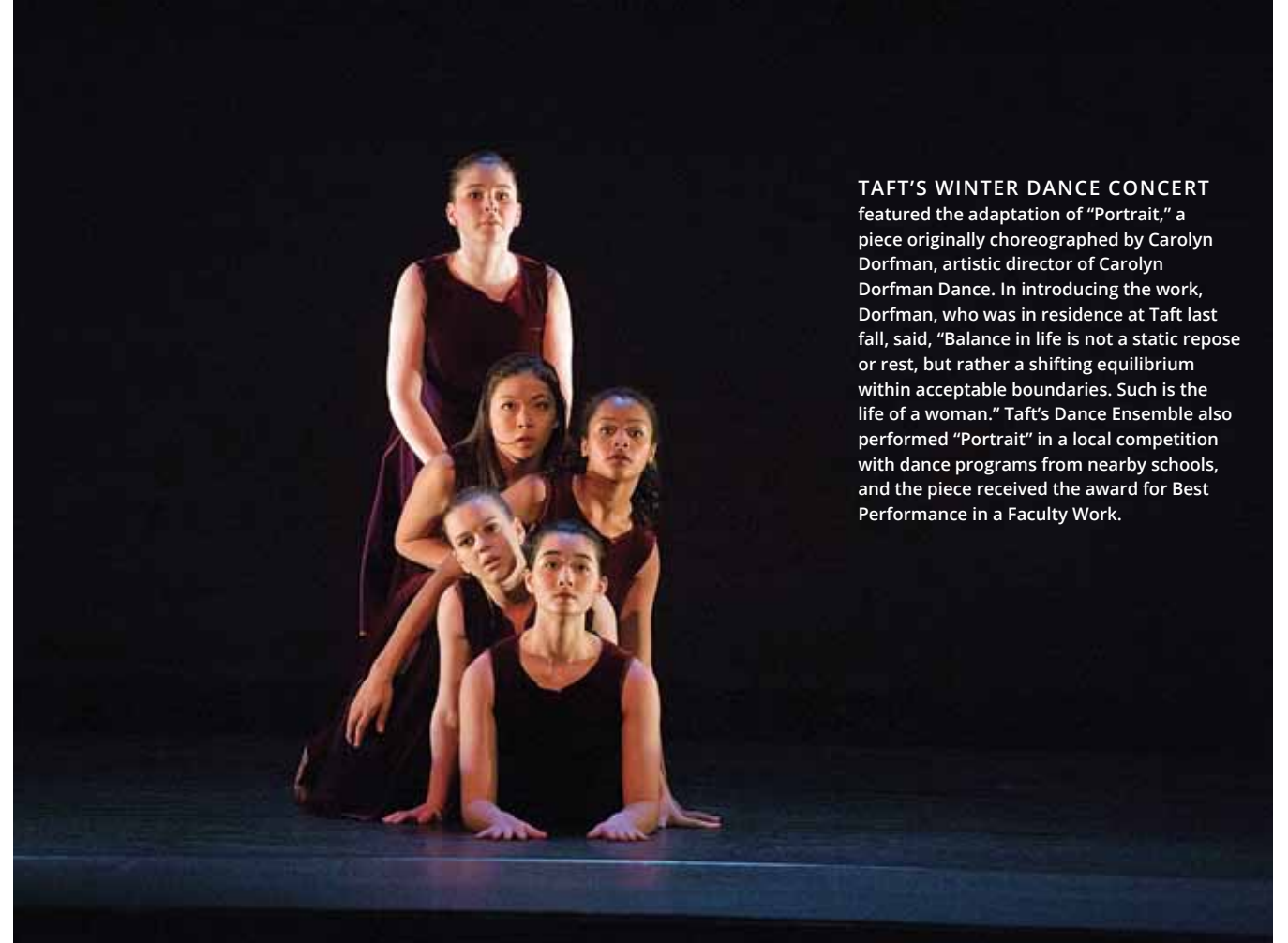


MORE THAN 80 ALUMNI gathered in Hong Kong for the first of three overseas events in February. The reception honored Taft's 125th anniversary, and was followed by gatherings in Beijing and Shanghai.



THE GREAT TAFT TRADITION

of winters with Shakespeare continued with the annual lower mid *Macbeth* and mid sonnet recitations, as well as a Black Box production of *Romeo and Juliet*, featuring Gerry Calles '18 as Romeo. Taft welcomed professional actress and former high school English teacher Blythe Coons to campus to help students prepare for all of these events, by reinterpreting the Bard's text using his cues to his actors. "I'm asking [students] to look for physical clues—information—that Shakespeare gave to his actors, and to use it to perform," says Coon. "I'm asking them to expand their thinking and to look at it and to reinterpret in a different way."



TAFT'S WINTER DANCE CONCERT featured the adaptation of "Portrait," a piece originally choreographed by Carolyn Dorfman, artistic director of Carolyn Dorfman Dance. In introducing the work, Dorfman, who was in residence at Taft last fall, said, "Balance in life is not a static repose or rest, but rather a shifting equilibrium within acceptable boundaries. Such is the life of a woman." Taft's Dance Ensemble also performed "Portrait" in a local competition with dance programs from nearby schools, and the piece received the award for Best Performance in a Faculty Work.



JOHN KILBOURNE '58 traveled to Taft to hear from this year's group of Kilbourne Fellows; from left, seniors Natasha Cheung, Kayla Kim, Maggie Luddy, and Carey Cannata. Kilbourne grants fund summer programs in arts.

ESTABLISHED IN 2007 to provide Taft students with an introduction to philanthropy, the Red Rhino Fund works to create positive change in the local community through the promotion and support of education for underprivileged children.

The Red Rhino Fund is an endowed fund through which financial grants are made to community organizations. In February, the nine student trustees awarded grants to three Waterbury-based agencies serving underprivileged children and families: PAL, Girls Inc., and the United Way. Congratulations to the award recipients and to Taft students for their important work.





MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY keynote speaker Ambassador James A. Joseph (right), who worked with Dr. King when he was leading the civil rights movement in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, shared with the Taft audience a concept of community that he came to know while living and working in South Africa: the concept called *ubuntu*. "People are people through other people," Joseph explained. "Which is to say, my humanity is bound up in yours. What dehumanizes you, dehumanizes me. I belong to a greater whole, so I am diminished when others are diminished by oppression or treated as though they are less than they are. It is not 'I think, therefore I am,' it is 'I am because you are.'"

Taft's multi-day, multifaceted Martin Luther King Day, Jr. events also featured WorldFest 2016 and concluded with the annual Multicultural Arts Celebration.



For more on the winter season, please visit www.taftsports.com

Winter Sports **WRAP-UP**

BY STEVE PALMER
Photography by Robert Falcetti

Skiing NEW ENGLAND CLASS B CHAMPIONSHIP (GIRLS)

In spite of limited snow this winter, the Rhinos got on the hill consistently and did great work. The young team, led by tri-captains Kim Amelsberg '16, Cashen Keeler '16, and Michael Wasserstein '17, had great success at the New Englands, with the girls winning the Class B New England title. Taft dominated the event, with four of the five racers earning All New England honors as a result of finishing in the top 10 in both slalom and giant slalom. The boys finished in 5th place. The entire team skied to a 2nd-place finish in the Berkshire Ski League, Taft's highest finish in several years. The team looks to continue at a high level next year with MacGregor Peterson '19, Abby Ford '19, Max Fosslund '19, Collin Amelsberg '19, Taylor Jacobs '18, Maddie Savage '18 (captain-elect), and Natalie Waldram '18 returning.

Girls' Basketball 14-8 NEW ENGLAND EIGHT TOURNAMENT FINALISTS

Taft went 3-5 over the first eight games of the season, including some well-played losses at the highly competitive Rivers Christmas Tournament, but the Rhinos came together and finished the season winning 9 of their final 11 games. With their style of tenacious team defense and crisp passing at the offensive end, Taft swept league rivals Choate and Hotchkiss to enter



Kayla Robinson '19 looks toward the hoop against Kent School during a game on February 3.

the New England Eight tournament as the third seed. In their best game of the season, Taft blitzed Hotchkiss (61-34) behind tri-captain Jalissa Rodriguez '17's 29 points. The Rhinos then defeated St. Paul's (58-44) in another great game before falling in the finals to Northfield Mount Hermon. Throughout the season, tri-captain Helen Hofelt '16 did a lot of the hard work inside, while versatile two-way players Kayla Robinson '19 (team leader in points and rebounds), tri-captain Karalyn Baird '17, and Lauren Pelosi '18 were critical in the team's success.

Boys' Basketball 14-8

For the second straight year the Rhinos missed the New England Class A playoffs by just one game. The Rhinos played at a fierce tempo, pressing their opponents and pushing the ball on offense. Point guard and captain Xavier Rucker '17 set the pace and led the team in assists and steals (81 and 36, respectively). The bulk of the transition scoring came from Darius Chester '17 and Shamir Johnson '18, the team's leading scorers, behind their cunning ability to attack the basket

Abby Ford '19 navigates the Gunbarrel giant slalom course at Ski Sundown (in Connecticut) during a February race.



Kyle Salvatore '17 plays a great match against Westminster School.

and shoot from behind the arc. Senior Karlens Joas '16 led the team in rebounds with 7.4 RPG and brought much-needed toughness inside. A compliment to Joas' grit was Ludvig Swanstrom '16, the team's most dynamic player, as he was top three in rebounds, assists, and blocks. Key wins came against Choate for the second straight year (55–45), and rival Hotchkiss (62–61) at home in an exciting overtime thriller. Taft also beat tournament-bound Canterbury twice. All five Taft starters were selected honorable mention on 2016 NEPSAC Class A All-New England team.

Girls' Squash 9–11
U.S. HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL CHAMPIONS, DIVISION II

Led this season by co-captains and joint recipients of the 1986 Girls' Squash Award, Eliza Dunham '16 (#1) and Elle Carroll '16 (#2), the Rhinos turned around a tough start to the season with fantastic play in the major tournaments. Alongside the co-captains, the impressive team effort to win the Division II title at the High School Nationals came from captain-elect and Founders League All-Star Maddie Chiulli '17 (#3), Zoe Eberstadt-Beattie '18 (#4), Maria Serrano '17 (#5), Founders League All-Star Paige

Whittemore '16 (#6), Emily Weaver '17 (#7), and Gaby Gura '17 (#8). After a tight win over the previous year's champions, Roland Park Country School (4–3) in the quarterfinals, the Rhinos defeated Andover (5–2) in the semifinals, overturning an earlier loss to this perennial rival. The Rhinos' tight victory over Hopkins (4–3) in the finals, which they played in front of a packed house at the Philly Cricket Club, will be a memory to cherish. Two weekends later the Rhinos competed in the A Division of the New Englands, and, led by Chiulli, who placed 5th, Taft finished a tough weekend by winning 13 of their 14 second-day matches and placing 9th overall.

Boys' Squash 11–7

The team this year was led by five seniors, including co-captains Brandon Salvatore '16 and Tristan Chaix '16. The Rhinos finished with a record of 11–7 and an 8th-place finish at the New Englands. Highlights of the New England tournament include #2 Kyle Salvatore '17 finishing 3rd, #3 Tristan Chaix finishing 6th, #4 Brandon Salvatore finishing 3rd, and #6 James Darling '17 finishing 6th in their respective divisions. At the High School Nationals, the boys lost their first-round match, but won the next

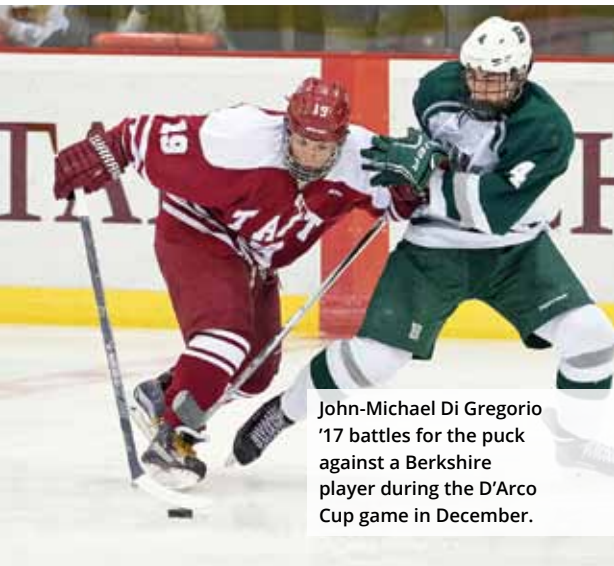
three matches to win the consolations and finish 9th in their division. The two impressive individual matches of the season were #1 Ahmed Kiwan '16 defeating Westminster's very talented No. 1 player 3–0, as well as #2 Kyle Salvatore defeating Avon's #2, 3–1. Next year, the team will be led by rising seniors Kyle Salvatore, Billy Fleurima, and James Darling.

Girls' Hockey 10–8–3

Taft continued its positive growth, capturing the first winning season in several years with a 10–8–3 overall record. Five of the losses were within a goal, and the team barely missed a playoff bid for the New England Tournament after winning six of its final seven games. Led by senior co-captains Madie Leidt (16 goals, 9 assists) and Becky Dutton (Founders League All-Star in goal), the Rhinos worked well together both on and off the ice to become a successful unit. Season highlights included a nighttime home game against Kent, where, in front of a packed house, Taft outplayed their stronger opponent, capturing a commendable 2–2 tie; a sound 5–2 victory over Choate; and downing Hotchkiss both at home and away. The team will look to build on its success next season with a solid returning squad,



Lexi Cafiero '18 keeps the puck moving up ice during a game against Kent School.



John-Michael Di Gregorio '17 battles for the puck against a Berkshire player during the D'Arco Cup game in December.

under the guidance of captains-elect Sasha Bridger '17 and Natalie Lima '17, and assistant captain-elect Anna Rasmussen '17. The squad bids farewell to a very strong group of seven seniors: forward Mikayla Carhart, goalie Becky Dutton, forward Madie Leidt, forward Jill Pappas, goalie Lexi Long, forward Ellie Smith, and defenseman Kate Tewksbury (Founders League All-Star).

Boys' Hockey 9–15–1

This year's team was led by the strong play of captains Andrew Farrier '17 in goal and Drew Hickey '16, both Founders League All-Stars. Highlights included a 2nd-place finish at the 68th annual Lawrenceville School Christmas Hockey Tournament, and a three-game win streak in early February with victories over rivals Hotchkiss, Deerfield, and Choate. Coaches Award recipients and dedicated team players who kept Taft competitive in many games were Will Dittrich '16 and Carter Taft '16. The Rhinos' most valuable player was Farrier, who started in goal for 24 of the 25 games and posted a .923 save percentage, placing him among the top 10 goaltenders in New England prep school ice hockey. Matteo Mangiardi '17 led the team in scoring (24 points) with 19 goals and 5 assists, while newcomer



Zoe Eberstadt-Beattie '18 attacks a volley against a Greenwich Academy player.

Jay Lavallee '17 led the team with 14 assists. Next year's varsity hockey team will be led by second-year captain Farrier.

Wrestling 12–5

Taft wrestling enjoyed another winning season and took home the 4th-place trophy at the Western New England tournament. Led by a strong and deep group of seniors, Taft notched convincing dual-meet wins over Loomis (48–30), Hotchkiss (48–30), Suffield (60–24), and Hopkins (41–28). The team showed great endurance and toughness at the league tournament, with eight medalists and the 4th-place trophy. Chase Harper '19 took 6th at 106 pounds; co-captain Locke McGee '16 took 5th at 120; Nikhil Wadhwa '16 also took 5th at 126. Drew Dye '18 battled his way to 4th at 145; and rising captain Michael Hennessy '17 took 3rd at 152, after nearly upsetting the No. 1 seed. Cousins Fred Robertshaw '16 and co-captain Tennant Maxey '16 took 3rd and 5th, respectively, at 170 and 182. Co-captain Sean Sullivan '16 produced Taft's first league champion in quite a few years at the 160-pound weight class. He would go on to take 5th at the New England tournament. While this group of seniors will be hard to replace, Taft has some strong JV wrestlers ready to step in next year. ■

2015–16 WINTER ATHLETIC AWARD WINNERS

Boys' Ski Racing Award
Cashen J. Keeler '16

1978 Girls' Varsity Basketball Cup
Helen R. Hofelt '16

Boys' Squash Award
Tristan W. Chaix '16

1986 Girls' Squash Award
Eleanor S. Carroll '16
Eliza K. Dunham '16

Patsy Odden Hockey Award
Madeline R. Leidt '16

James Painter Logan Memorial Basketball
Karlens A. Joas '16

Coach's Hockey Award
William J. Dittrich '16
Carter M. Taft '16

Angier Hockey Trophy
Andrew M. Farrier '17

Harry F. Hitch Wrestling Award
Tennant B. Maxey '16
Sean F. Sullivan '16

John L. Wynne Wrestling Award
Royal Lockett McGee '16
Frederick O. Robertshaw '16

Girls' Ski Racing Award
Kimberly V. Amelsberg '16



A LASTING IMPRINT ON *Taft*



Rusty Davis



Linda Saarnijoki Retire

This is, at its heart, a love story. It's a love story between two people, yes, but also between these two people and the school they served for four decades. It's a love story that has left an imprint on Taft that will last long after those who inspired it have left the halls for the new adventures that lie ahead.

The two people—Rusty Davis and Linda Saarnijoki—are retiring at the end of the spring term after more than 40 years leading Taft in a wide variety of roles. These two are truly more than the sum of their parts.

Davis was Lance Odden's very first hire as headmaster, back in 1972, when Davis was considered by some to be too "radical" a choice. He was a member of the Princeton class of 1970, which had gone on strike to protest the escalation of the Vietnam War into Cambodia. He was a Choate graduate, and his hair was perhaps a trifle long, as well, but he came with stellar recommendations and a history of leading adolescents at a summer camp known as Camp

Dudley in the Adirondacks in New York state. And he had a master's degree in aerospace engineering, the result of a lifelong fascination with physics.

"I was literally 12 hours from getting into the car to drive to Florida when I got a call from Lance," Davis recalls now. "I called some friends [who] said, 'You should at least go interview there.'"

The two clicked, and Odden hired Davis as a physics instructor for the fall of 1972. He began teaching four classes of physics, and he lived on the fifth floor of HDT, with just three students on the floor to oversee. He was "shown the ropes" by former teacher Toby Baker, and noted that back in those early days, faculty preparations

were "a sink-or-swim kind of thing."

Because of his work at Camp Dudley, Davis knew how to get the best out of teenage boys. He taught physics and astronomy (which Davis says was not in his wheelhouse: "In those days, they plopped you into things," because someone higher up than he thought that aerospace engineering and astronomy went hand-in-hand), and for several years generally worked to improve the equipment available for experiments in the old Science Building.

Fast forward to the fall of 1976. It's time for the fall faculty party, where new faculty and old mingle at the headmaster's house to get to know each other before the students start arriving. A new young



teacher with long, long dark hair caught Davis's eye. She was Linda Saarnijoki, fresh out of a master's degree program at Teachers College at Columbia University, and she'd been hired by Odden to teach in the English Department. After the faculty party was over, Davis and former faculty member John Sadowsky invited the new faculty members out to the Gildersleeves bar up the road in Litchfield, and Davis spent the evening talking with Saarnijoki.

"I liked her right away," Davis says. "She's a wonderful, amazing woman."

The two began spending time together, spending Sunday afternoons doing *The New York Times* crossword puzzle and taking it slow. Saarnijoki says now that people were surprised that Davis was actually

showing interested in anyone, as he'd seemed to be a "staunch bachelor." "Other young women had been interested in him, but he'd sort of pushed them off," she says.

Their courtship unfolded slowly, but after six years together, the couple got married in August 1982 in Lake Placid, New York. Davis was dean of students by then, a position he held for 13 years.

"Life at Taft is not a 40-hour job," Saarnijoki says. "It's very hard to maintain a relationship with someone who isn't in that sort of time schedule. You're always working at night, you've got weekend duty. It's very hard. Any number of young people leave because they can't maintain a relationship. Similarly, lots of people have stayed at Taft because

they found their spouses here. A boarding school is particularly unique."

Odden remembers the couple as two very principled people who cared for the students and the school. "I think they are both by nature true enthusiasts for kids. They like them, they've spent their lives with them," Odden says. "They see the better side of them—they see hope and promise in all [students], and kids respond to that naturally. They are so honest in the way they do business. They rise to the challenge. They're nice people—really nice people."

The couple threw themselves into life at Taft, where Davis served as a class dean, coach, and dean of students. He coached golf and basketball during his



I was very homesick freshman year. Many people didn't think that I could make it through, but Mr. D helped me through it, and I couldn't be happier than I am here at Taft. It is 100 percent thanks to Mr. Davis."

—CHARLIE HIMMELRICH '17



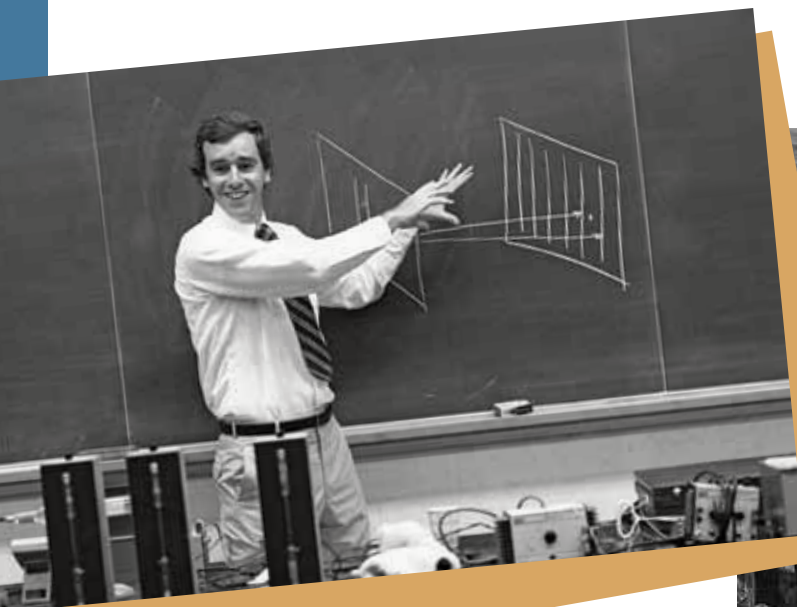
Together, Rusty and Linda have worked tirelessly for the betterment of the Taft community. [They] have steadfastly maintained a positive and inclusive outlook, always striving to identify aspects that need change and then implementing those improvements. Their impact has been wide-ranging, and they will be missed sorely."

—TED HEAVENRICH, faculty



From all the years...spent giving selflessly to Taft, [Linda and Rusty] each developed a highly trained sixth sense of what was best for the school and its corresponding values. I would also witness Rusty, in response to the latest potential saga or pending crisis facing Taft, place the weight of the school on his shoulders and carry it to shore; putting out fire after fire, he would quietly but assuredly make many of the crucial, often delicate decisions that, in my opinion, made Taft "Taft." And he would do this without as much as batting an eye. Together, Linda and Rusty are as integral to Taft's DNA as any two educators, two souls, I ever met."

—ANDREW EISEN '04



early years at Taft, and started the girls' soccer program in 1974, guiding the team to four consecutive New England Championships from 1988 to 1991. Saarnijoki took on any number of assignments, including coaching field hockey and volleyball, class dean, and dorm head, in addition to her teaching loads.

"I had wanted to be a teacher from the time I was in second grade," Saarnijoki says, "and when I got to high school and college, I admired many of my teachers....My physical education teachers were young, vibrant, smart women, and that's what I wanted to be like."

Torn between wanting to teach academically or teach physical education, Saarnijoki fell upon the perfect match

in the boarding school world. One trouble: she did not even really know what boarding schools were when she interviewed at Taft. "I thought they were for delinquents," Saarnijoki says now. But she, too, had been a counselor at a summer camp, and liked the concept of being able to both teach and coach.

"My sport was swimming," she says. "I had done some field hockey [and] I had played some volleyball, so they put me there."

As the pair grew in their teaching and coaching ability, their dedication to the school swelled, as did the quality of the students and the quality of the educational opportunities Taft offered.

"The expectation of teachers at Taft

has grown," Saarnijoki says. "I think the pressure on careful prep and planning on a day-to-day and semester and year-long basis is absolutely expected now in a way that it wasn't when I began.

"There's been so much more research into educational methods, and that has only made all of us much better teachers at Taft," she says.

They each took on increasingly difficult administrative assignments, with Davis eventually being named assistant headmaster and Saarnijoki as dean of faculty. And in 1994, their daughter Eliza was born.

All was not well, however. Davis began feeling some weakness in his legs, but the feeling would go away after a while.

It came back. His mother passed away from cancer, and the stress of dealing with that illness and loss, plus a new baby, led to more episodes of weakness. By 1996, he was finally diagnosed with relapsing-remitting multiple sclerosis. The disease developed slowly at first, but in recent years, Davis has needed to use a wheelchair to get around campus.

"The effect on us as a family [was difficult]," Saarnijoki says, "but I think actually that Rusty's strength as a person to just grit through this terrible event in his life has made it much easier for me and for us as a family and us as a couple to just continue with life as normally as we can.

"We're both pretty strong, resilient

people, and for the most part, we don't get emotionally debilitated," she adds. "We have this saying, 'It is what it is.' This is what we've been handed, and we deal with it, and we go on."

The school rallied around the couple and installed assistive devices to help Davis navigate many of the stairs in the Main Building.

"I learned how enormously generous people can be," Saarnijoki says. "The school has been phenomenally generous in providing the things we've needed, in making accommodations.

People offered to do things or were doing things without our even asking. I think the other thing that came out of that illness is just a sense of gratitude to be in such a wonderful place."

Though they had to make some changes, both Davis and Saarnijoki continued to teach. When Odden retired and Willy MacMullen '78 took over as headmaster, he relied on veteran teachers like Davis and Saarnijoki to continue and expand on Odden's legacy.

"It is hard for me to think of how any couple can give more to a school than

“

RD and Linda were the great school masters they have been precisely because they could and were willing to do it all. They never begged off a responsibility, and carried them off with deep commitment and passion. Their love of young people was evident from the first time I interviewed them and has never waned, only growing wiser. They have found joy in every aspect of students' lives and their achievements. When things went wrong, they were both masters of the art of listening, not judging, and of helping the student involved begin to understand what they had done, why it was unfortunate, and what to do about it. Only faculty who see the full dimensions of student life can do this. And few can do it as well as they."

—LANCE ODDEN, headmaster emeritus

“

Linda and I arrived at Taft at the same time, she right out of graduate school, me in mid-career. From the start, she was poised, capable, calm, dependable. Linda was the consummate schoolmaster, taking on every duty, every job that needed to be filled. And she did them all with grace and competence."

—ROBIN OSBORN, faculty emerita

“

Before he became a "proper administrator" (just my joke), Rusty's more mischievous nature was quite evident in the '70s. Along with two other faculty members, Rusty was involved in creating and mailing invitations to my fake wedding, while I was on sabbatical in California. Rusty and Linda are two very intelligent individuals, and caring and dedicated professionals. [It's] hard to imagine Taft without them."

—DICK COBB, faculty emeritus



Rusty and Linda,” MacMullen says, “or who have [served] with more compassion and commitment and love and expertise than they have. They are dear friends and daily inspirations to me.”

Davis and Saarnijoki have served in a wide variety of positions in the 40-plus years they have been at Taft, including assistant headmaster, dean of students, dean of faculty, head of the residential life program, head of the English Department, director of the library, and class dean. Davis recently began teaching lower mids after 25 years of

teaching AP Physics, while Saarnijoki returned to the classroom full time after 15 years in administrative roles.

“One way to understand them is to know that each of them could have gone on to head schools, but they chose not to do so,” Odden says. “Each, individually, elected to devote themselves to the students and to building the faculty. They are the moral center of the school. [They are] two very principled [people] with a good sense of humor and not judgmental.”

But their roles weren’t limited to what happens inside a classroom or an office,

MacMullen says. The couple hosted jazz parties, and Davis will be remembered for the end-of-school faculty parties and for giving out the “Rookie of the Year” award for the most entertaining flub of the year made by a faculty member.

“Here’s another little thing Rusty does: For years, he’s had a table in the Wu [science] building. He puts puzzles on it, literal or figurative. He just leaves it there. That is amazing teaching. There will be kids there trying to figure it out. His love of physics is so pervasive that it can’t be contained by his classes. This is a guy who never stopped getting better. To me and to many others, he’s just a source of incredible wisdom and perspective, and he’s the most humble guy,” MacMullen says.



And Saarnijoki modeled commitment for new faculty members, he says.

“It’s hard for me to think of a woman who has shaped the course of this school more profoundly than Linda has,” MacMullen says. “There is an entire generation of younger teachers... [who] when you [ask] what’s the model for commitment, professionalism, and leadership, they would say Linda. Over the years, there’s no one on the campus who has stepped forward to take more challenging roles [than she].

“Linda has a generosity of spirit and a belief in serving something larger than herself that is profound,” MacMullen continues. “It’s incredibly inspiring. There’s four decades of what excellence

and commitment look like. [Faculty and students] look to Linda and say that’s what leadership, excellence, expertise, and passion look like. Linda’s depth of caring, it’s palpable. Linda has a way of listening to you and looking at you that makes you feel so blessed by the moment. She’s really wise, she always gives good counsel, and she has impeccable integrity. If you put Linda in charge of a challenge, you could be guaranteed it would be done perfectly and with total integrity.”

Davis says that over the course of his time as assistant headmaster, he’s interviewed every prospective faculty member who has applied to teach at Taft. The most common question those prospective faculty members would ask

him is why he has stayed at Taft so long.

“When I first came here and Lance had just taken over,” Davis says, “I could see myself working for Lance. He seemed like a great guy with a real vision. When I came, the endowment was [only] \$3 million, and we had debt left over from building the library. It was an exciting place, but it was kind of grungy—the maintenance was not great. As I stayed here, I always had the feeling every year things were getting better. I’ve just felt we’re on the right track. We’re doing sensible things to make the school better. Being a part of that is exciting. Taft is not a radically innovative place, but they let you do what you want to do. That’s why it’s been fun to stay here. Every year, you look forward to what is next.”



“

I don’t think I ever saw either of them have a bad day. I can’t remember hearing Linda or RD complain about something, or talk about being exhausted or frustrated. Both of them had, and demonstrated, such great composure every day through the years. RD always [had] an upbeat comment about the game yesterday, a joke [or] something about music. Some of my best memories as a faculty [member] come from their jazz parties in June.”

—STEVE PALMER, faculty

“

RD was a good coach because he instilled confidence in each player as a person and as player. He also understood to be successful you had to have a ‘team,’ a group of players that works together as a unit. His teams were successful for a long time because they knew how to play for each other, and we needed to develop the respect of each other and their abilities.”

—LIZA GRANT ’82

“

Their unshakable faith in students, teachers, and the mission of the school was inspiring, and this generosity of belief afforded them a patience that was well tried by never-to-be-underestimated adolescent behavior, collegial challenges, and institutional disorders. The more turbulent the times, the more steady and true their characters and conduct showed....Linda sought the best in children and adults, bringing it out often when it might have remained undiscovered....Rusty’s acuteness and agility of mind was so well tempered by his sense of humor that students and faculty felt at ease in his company and forgetful of their inferiority.”

—STEVE SCHIEFFELIN, former faculty



For her part, Saarnijoki looks back at being able to nurture faculty members and students as being the most rewarding part of her tenure at Taft.

"I love being in the classroom," she says. "I love being able to come into a classroom and talk with my students about literature. It's incredibly rewarding to share ideas. What students say again and again [about my teaching] is they enjoy my passion and enthusiasm [for] what we're talking about."

"I think my work with the faculty as dean was enormously rewarding as well. I was able to help people do their best work and be their best selves at Taft. I loved problem solving. I loved being handed a problem and being able to help that person work through their issues. That was

enormously rewarding. You have to figure out what faculty you're going to hire, how to frame their job so they can do their best work, resolve issues between faculty. [That has] a significant impact on the way the school works. It's a behind-the-scenes thing, but it's vitally important."

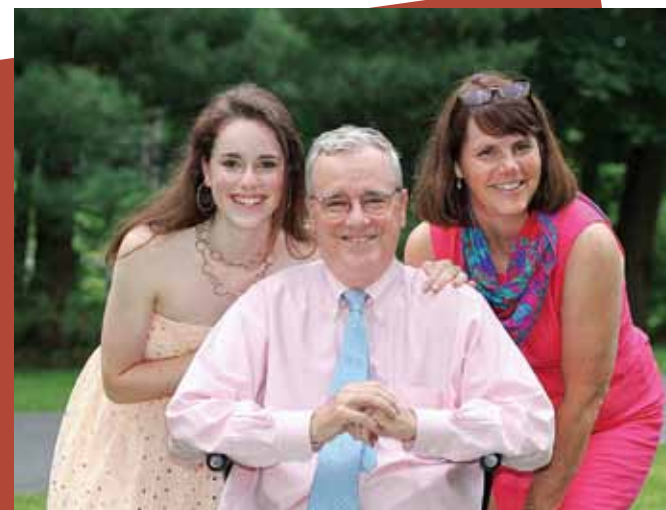
Saarnijoki returned to the classroom full time for a while, but returned to the dean of faculty position in 2013 after a number of top-level administrators left the school for positions elsewhere.

MacMullen "asked me to come back in to be dean of faculty to lend some stability, a job I was happy to do, and I was reminded again about what a great job it is because you get to know faculty and appreciate their strengths and their

contributions to the school, and you have a profound sense of what a strong community this is. That job taught me how important community is and what a great place this is," she says.

The couple decided several years ago that it was time to retire when their daughter, Eliza, graduated from Taft in 2012, but stayed on during the administrative transition.

"Even though there are always new things to learn and new and interesting wrinkles to old issues, after a time you find yourself thinking about the same issues again and again," Saarnijoki says. "While I still have energy and excitement about new ways of doing things and working with new people, I can feel



it beginning to wane. I feel like I've done what I can do at Taft, and I feel the pull toward doing something entirely different. It's just time to move on, and there are really good people who will step up to take on whatever I've left undone."

The couple will be moving to their Weston, Vermont home, which is undergoing renovations to make it more accessible for Davis's wheelchair.

And while it will be difficult for Taft to replace two such dedicated teachers and administrators, Davis and Saarnijoki are looking forward to a well-deserved rest. The community in Weston, where they bought a summer home many years ago, has a number of service opportunities, Saarnijoki says.

"It's a very vibrant community," she says. "For now, we want to make it a real 'shifting gears' kind of thing. We're going to settle in and see what life brings us."

That said, it is a bittersweet parting from Taft.

"I'm certainly going to miss the kids because they're really great," Davis says. "It's fun to develop relationships with the kids. And I'm certainly going to miss my colleagues—it's fun to have bright people around me. I'm just going to miss the action. It's nice to know every Saturday and Wednesday there's games going on, there's concerts. There's always something happening. Taft is such a vibrant place. There's more to do than there is time to do it." ■

AND FOR MORE NON UT SIBI...

RUSTY

- ◆ Two five-year terms on the Camp Dudley board of managers; awarded the Man of the Year award in 2012 for a life lived in the spirit of the camp motto, The Other Fellow First.
- ◆ Head of the Ekwanok Country Club Scholarship Fund (Vermont), which annually provides tens of thousands of dollars in college scholarships for young people who work at the club as caddies, grounds crew, and staff.

LINDA

- ◆ Early 1990s, led a small group that opened the Child Development Program at Taft (day care) and served for several years as president of the board of directors.
- ◆ Twenty years on the Litchfield Montessori School board of trustees.
- ◆ One term on the Camp Dudley board of managers and leader of the effort to start a successful girls' camp, Camp Dudley at Kiniya, as a complement to the 100-year-old program for boys.

“

Linda's calm demeanor and gentle humor... and the magical sense of having unlimited time to listen to whatever you said yet still getting everything done still inspires me. Some days, I need to channel my inner Linda Saarnijoki when impatience and fatigue threaten. But it's really as a friend that I revere Linda....She is intensely loyal and genuinely caring."

—DEBBIE PHIPPS, former faculty

“

I don't think teaching looks any better and commitment looks any better than what [Rusty and Linda] have done. I am only one of many who would say that to look at those two is to be absolutely inspired in the best way. They've become the measuring stick. It doesn't get any better than what they've done."

—WILLY MACMULLEN '78, headmaster





JOHN Taft '72

Advocating Capitalism for the Greater Good

By Neil Vigdor '95

THE Family business is politics.

But John G. Taft '72 doesn't need a bully pulpit—like his great-grandfather William Howard Taft possessed—to be a catalyst for reform. He doesn't need a mandate from voters or the backing of a political party.

When Taft says Wall Street has lost its moral compass, CNBC, *The Wall Street Journal*, and his wealth management peers listen. When Taft advocates for the protection of LGBT rights in the workplace, it speaks volumes. And when Taft helped pay for a full-page ad in his hometown newspaper rebuking intolerance toward Muslims in Minnesota, it made headlines.

Each is part of a values system that comes from nature, nurture, and a transcendent motto for Taft: *Non ut sibi ministretur sed ut ministret*, Not to be served, but to serve.

"I think my beliefs are consistent with Taft DNA, reinforced through my Taft School experience," he says. "They're certainly a fundamental part of my family's legacy."

Taft, 61, is the maverick at the intersection of Wall Street and Main Street, an unlikely voice of shared prosperity and restraint in an industry that's taken its lumps since the 2008 financial crisis and housing-bubble collapse.

He's authored two groundbreaking books on the need for financial reform, starting in 2012 with *Stewardship: Lessons Learned from the Lost Culture of Wall Street*, and following that up in 2015 with *A Force for Good: How Enlightened Finance Can Restore Faith in Capitalism*. They are touchstones of a 35-year career in the sector that is culminating for Taft, the Minneapolis-based chief executive officer of RBC Wealth Management.

"The financial services sector exists not as an end unto itself, but as a means to greater ends," Taft says. "Its goal is to facilitate greater economic growth. We lost touch with that. We lost touch with the fact that we should

be about achieving social goods that improve everybody's standards and quality of life."

In a presidential election year, Taft's message has proved to be prescient, with the disconnect between bailout recipients and taxpayers shaping the narrative of the historic battle for the White House. But unlike Democratic socialist Bernie Sanders, Taft doesn't want to blow up the system. Nor does Taft subscribe to Sanders' claim that the business model of Wall Street is one of fraud.

"That is not true. It is not helpful," Taft says. "It will not lead to the right kind of regulatory and financial policy, but, unfortunately, it's an indication that the wounds from the financial crisis are far from healed."

A New Haven native and son of a Yale educator, Taft's late father, Horace '43, was a dean and a physics professor. Taft fits the well-rounded archetype set by his high school alma mater. He's worked on deadline as a newspaper reporter in Lowell, Massachusetts. He understands the inner workings of city government, having served as an assistant to the mayor of St. Paul, Minnesota. He knows his way around the pitch, having briefly played for the North American Soccer League after captaining the Yale squad.

The third generation in his family to attend Taft, the married father of five serves as a

"The financial services sector exists not as an end unto itself, but as a means to greater ends. Its goal is to facilitate greater economic growth. We lost touch with that. We lost touch with the fact that we should be about achieving social goods that improve everybody's standards and quality of life."

“I had always heard of his leadership in the corporate world, and he is one of the most principled, ethical, thoughtful leaders I know. His commitment to equity and justice, to corporate stewardship, to doing the right thing, is deep.”

—Willy MacMullen '78

trustee and frequently credits the school in his writings for teaching him lessons in character. The proceeds from the sales of his books, which include essays from some of the sharpest minds in the world of finance, go to charity.

“I had always heard of his leadership in the corporate world, and he is one of the most principled, ethical, thoughtful leaders I know,” Headmaster Willy MacMullen '78 says. “His commitment to equity and justice, to corporate stewardship, to doing the right thing, is deep.”

Righting the wrongs that brought the U.S. economy to the brink in 2008 is where Taft found a renewed purpose. From unsustainable home ownership quotas to antiquated regulations, he was troubled by what he saw.

The packaging and sale of securities backed by risky subprime mortgages had become commonplace, with banks keeping them off their balance sheets. At the same time, some of the endangered banks lacked adequate capital to withstand the financial maelstrom.

“Financial markets were falling apart,” Taft says. “The people who worked for me were confused. Clients were frightened. Personally, I was experiencing things I had never experienced before. What happened leading up to the financial crisis was a wholesale breach of contract between the financial services sector and society.”

In 2011, Taft served as chairman of the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association, a major trade group that took him to the halls of Congress. It was there, on Capitol Hill, that the scion of one of America’s most influential political families—the grandson of the late Senator Robert A. Taft, Class of 1906—testified

in support of a federal standard of fiduciary care.

“We’re in the middle of a healthy debate about what we want from our economic system,” Taft says. “We thought we wanted growth at any and all costs, and it turns out we don’t want that. We don’t want growth that blows the system up every 10 years.”

For all of his criticism of the government’s oversight role leading up to the crisis, Taft says there have been encouraging strides. He supported the \$700 billion bank bailout of 2008, which Taft says prevented the U.S. from plunging into a 1930s-era Great Depression. The faith of the world economy, he says, was hanging in the balance.

“I think of all the conversations you have today about ‘too big to fail’—about never again using public money to shore up the financial system—my feeling would be, never say never,” Taft says. “Government intervention is a last resort, but it is a resort that should be used in extreme cases and was appropriately done so.”

Equally nuanced is Taft’s assessment of the signature piece of Wall Street reform legislation, the Dodd-Frank Act, which was named for then-Connecticut Senator Christopher Dodd, who was chairman of the Senate Banking Committee.

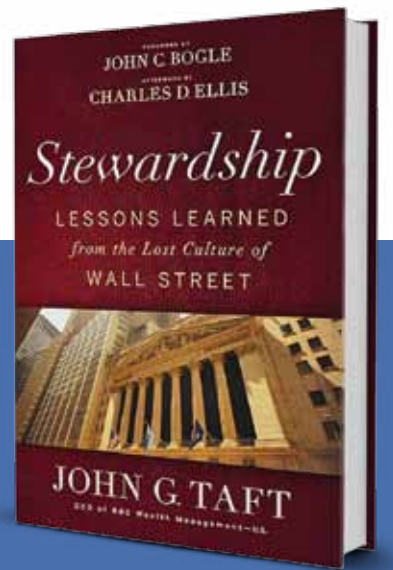
“There is no question financial regulation was hopelessly out of date and ineffective. But the problem with Dodd-Frank is that there were a lot of unnecessary provisions and harmful provisions put in the bill because of the intense political environment in which it was drafted,” Taft says. “We’re now well into the punitive phase of regulatory overreach. The policy pendulum, as it always does, is in the process of swinging too far.”

In 2013, *Investment Advisor* magazine

“Financial markets were falling apart. The people who worked for me were confused. Clients were frightened. Personally, I was experiencing things I had never experienced before. What happened leading up to the financial crisis was a wholesale breach of contract between the financial services sector and society.”

Stewardship

**An excerpt from
Stewardship: Lessons Learned from the Lost Culture of Wall Street
(author John G. Taft '72)**



I attended the Taft School, in Watertown, Connecticut, for four years in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Almost every day I walked past a black and white photograph of my grandfather taken in 1953 as he walked across the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol on crutches after his last day on the floor of the U.S. Senate, where he had just transferred his duties as Senate Majority Leader. He was suffering at the time from cancer, diagnosed after a golf outing earlier that year with President Dwight Eisenhower. He died shortly after the photograph was taken.

The Taft School motto [which roughly translates as, “To serve...not to be served”] is a fitting expression of the core principle of stewardship. The school’s Citations of Merit recognize the same “commitment to serve others” that Stewardship is all about.

When I was a student, those words themselves didn’t fully resonate with me as they do today, after 30 years of the vocation and demands of the financial services industry. But even then, as now, the photograph of Robert Taft looking into the distance, as if saying goodbye to a lifetime of public service, evokes for me what C.S. Lewis once described as God’s ideal—“a man who, having worked all day for the good of posterity..., washes his mind of the whole subject, commits the issue to Heaven, and returns at once to the patience or gratitude demanded by the moment that is passing over him.”

◀ Senator Robert A. Taft, Class of 1906, grandfather of John Taft '72, at The Taft School in 1935.

“Government intervention is a last resort, but it is a resort that should be used in extreme cases and was appropriately done so.”

recognized Taft as one of the 25 most influential people in the financial industry. He has also been a mainstay in recent years in the top 100 Thought Leaders in Trustworthy Business by Trust Across America, a business ethics group.

But Taft’s tireless advocacy isn’t limited to liquid capital. It extends to human capital and fostering a tolerant workplace. The cause of LGBT employment rights is deeply personal to Taft, whose stepdaughter, Gabrielle Fabre ’13, and oldest daughter, Mary Taft-McPhee, are gay.

For five years running, RBC has received a 100 percent rating on the Human Rights Campaign’s Corporate Equality Index. Taft’s efforts to fight discrimination based on sexual orientation and to help legalize same-sex marriage in Minnesota have earned him acclaim from the National Gay & Lesbian Chamber of Commerce.

“My personal experience with my children has obviously informed my views on a broad range of LGBT issues and has inspired

me to be involved and make a difference,” Taft says. “I’m gratified to say I have.”

Taft credits his stepdaughter with reconnecting him to the school when she enrolled. Like her stepfather, uncle, grandfather, and great-grandfather, Fabre was presented with the Aurelian Award when she graduated. The honor is given to the senior who best exemplifies sterling character, high scholarship, and forceful leadership. “It was one of the proudest moments of my life,” Taft says. “I always felt Gaby completed the circle for me.”

Fighting bigotry is not a single-front conflict for Taft. In February, he helped spearhead a group of prominent Minnesotans that took out a full-page ad in the *Minneapolis Star Tribune* decrying religious intolerance toward Muslims. Taft was one of the only Republicans among them.

“Though we may be a soft-spoken bunch, we know better than to be silent or still in the face of bigotry shown to Muslims. Our Minnesotans,” the ad read.

Taft with Jack Whitten, a preeminent African-American painter, next to his work *Garden in Bessemer*. One of Taft’s passions is collecting contemporary art, such as this work which he owns, and he serves on the Andy Warhol Foundation board.

GENE PITTMAN ▼



John Taft '72 and his brother, Hugh Taft-Morales '75 at Nationals Stadium in Washington, D.C., where they presented the Nationals William Howard Taft “racing president” with a Taft sweatshirt for the Presidents Race.

Among those behind the \$20,000 ad was U.S. Representative Keith Ellison, a Democrat and the first Muslim elected to Congress. Another backer of the effort? U.S. Senator Al Franken, hardly a conservative. Not that Republicans have held up their end of the bargain, says Taft, who wrote a 2013 *New York Times* op-ed titled “Cry of the True Republican.”

If his great-grandfather and father were alive today, Taft says they wouldn’t recognize what the GOP has become. His principles, he says, are closer to bedrocks of conservatism.

“Republicans used to be the responsible adults in the room,” Taft says. “We’re a long way from that today.”

Taft has wrapped himself up in the lore of his family, including his great-grandfather’s connection to the national pastime. In 2013, he took part in Taft Night at a Washington Nationals game and Presidents Race, where he shook hands with the William Howard Taft “racing president” during its debut. (William Howard Taft was the first sitting president to throw out a ceremonial first pitch at a baseball game.)

While Taft is eager to preserve and build on his family’s legacy in deeds and diplomas, don’t count on him trading on his name at the ballot box, not even as he retires from his successful financial services career. Taft says he already has a platform, whether it’s the books or opinion pieces he’s written or issue ads.

“Being civically engaged—that’s the kind of thing I seem to be able to do effectively and want to do, as opposed to running for office,” Taft says.

Taft doesn’t need an “R” after his name to show what he stands for. He doesn’t need a focus group or slick slogan.

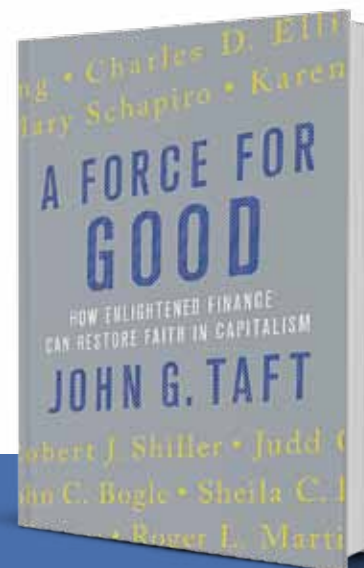
He’s living the motto.

“Responsibility, integrity, respect for others—those were all family values. They still are,” says Taft. “They’re school values, too, and they’re alive and well at Taft today, which is incredibly gratifying to me personally.” ■

For more about William Howard Taft, see this issue’s From the Archives column on page 88.

Neil Vigdor '95 is the statewide political writer for Hearst Connecticut Media, which includes *Greenwich Time*, *The (Stamford) Advocate*, *Connecticut Post*, *Danbury News-Times*, and five weekly newspapers.

“My personal experience with my children has obviously informed my views on a broad range of LGBT issues and has inspired me to be involved and make a difference. I’m gratified to say I have.”



Tales of a **TAFTIE**

BY CHRISTOPHER S. BROWNER '12

David P. Hamilton, Class of 1952

A MUSIC EDITOR, WRITER, CRITIC, AND TEACHER IN THE FIELD OF CONCERT MUSIC AND OPERA

For writer, editor, producer, and educator David P. Hamilton, music was more than a mere hobby. It lay at the heart of a life that was “very satisfying, emotionally as well as professionally.”

Early on, Hamilton’s quality education and great love of the arts gave him the tools with which he would eventually build an extraordinary career in the music industry. After graduating from Taft in 1952, he went on to receive bachelor of arts and master of fine arts degrees from Princeton as well as a master of arts from

Harvard. At both institutions Hamilton studied with some of the leading names in avant-garde composition and music education of the day—from composers Milton Babbitt, Edward T. Cone, and Walter Piston, to scholars Arthur Mendel, Oliver Strunk, John Ward, and Gustave Reese.

His first job after college found him still at Princeton, where he served for almost six years as librarian for the university’s music and record library. But the lure of his beloved New York and the city’s bustling arts scene was too strong, and Hamilton ultimately relocated to Manhattan, where he began an association with the firm of W.W. Norton & Co., from 1968 until 1974. He served first as Norton’s assistant editor of music books, but was ultimately appointed chief music editor.

Throughout his career, Hamilton contributed to a host of publications as author and critic. In addition to his work for Norton, he served as music critic for *The Nation* for nearly three decades, was a contributing editor for the music magazine *High Fidelity* from 1967 to 1983, and commented on the city’s arts scene as New York music correspondent for the *Financial Times* of London for six years. His writing regularly appeared in *Opera Quarterly* and *The New York Times*, and he received recognition by the ASCAP/Deems Taylor Awards in 1975 and 1998.

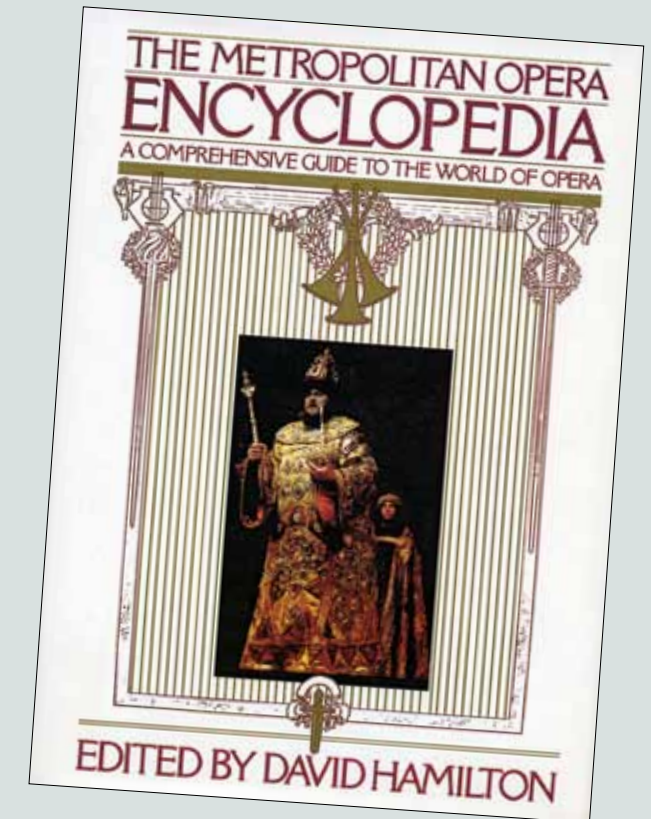
When his two-part series “Tristan in the Thirties” appeared in the 1976 and 1977 issues of *Musical Newsletter*, Hamilton reached a turning point of his career. The writing displayed an

extensive knowledge of historic opera broadcasts and piqued the interest of the Metropolitan Opera, America’s leading opera company. The Met soon hired him to produce its Historical Broadcast Recording Series, and Hamilton held this position until 2008, when the series ended.

This was just the first in a number of projects that Hamilton produced for the Met. Between 1985 and 1986, he created the eight-volume series *One-Hundred Years of Great Artists at the Met*, and in 1987 he led the efforts to release *The Mapleson Cyinders*, a collection of early opera recordings.

An Association for Recorded Sound Collections (ARSC) 2013 obituary of Hamilton stated, “[This] was a six-LP collection of the complete extant recordings made by Metropolitan Opera librarian Lionel Mapleson between 1900 and 1904, issued by the Rodgers and Hammerstein Archives of Recorded Sound division of the New York Public Library in 1985. Working with [two colleagues, Hamilton...identified] each cylinder recording....documenting the composer, title, date, cast, conductor, and the specific contents of each cylinder, as well as determining the correct playback speeds, a monumental undertaking given the barely-audible nature of many of these recordings. The meticulously-produced booklet prepared by [Hamilton] included the specific text for each operatic excerpt, along with an English translation.” It was for this recording that Hamilton was nominated for two Grammy awards in 1987, one for Best Historical Album and another for Best Program Notes.

Hamilton also used his great talent for writing while working with the Met, penning program notes and sitting on the advisory board of and contributing to *Opera News*, a monthly magazine published by the Metropolitan Opera Guild. He even wrote questions for the Metropolitan Opera Radio Quiz that was presented during



intermissions of the Met’s weekly Saturday matinee broadcasts. This work culminated in his editing of *The Metropolitan Opera Encyclopedia*, a self-proclaimed “guide to the world of opera” for aficionados and newcomers alike. A 1988 review of the *Encyclopedia* by Arthur Jacobs praised “the informative content and urbane style of the entries on operas and people” that were a trademark of Hamilton’s prose.

Throughout his life, Hamilton shared his passion for music and writing as a teacher at the Juilliard School, the Manhattan School, Aspen Music School, Salzburg Seminar, and the NYU School of Continuing Education. At Juilliard he helped inspire, he said, “a marvelously bright and committed lot” of future music critics through his doctoral course on advanced writing on music. Surely Hamilton’s legacy will be felt for decades to come, not only in the work of these former students but also in the enduring catalog of recordings and writings that bear his expert mark. ■

What successful Taftie, no longer living, would you like to see profiled in this space? Send your suggestions to beyusl@taftschoool.org.



FROM THE Archives



A Moment on Campus with a President and Future Chief Justice

Following his term in the White House, and while living in New Haven and teaching at the Yale Law School, President William Howard Taft (1857–1930) visited the Taft School campus frequently to lecture and say hello to his headmaster brother Horace, of whom he was very fond.

“Will” Taft is still the only person in United States history who has served as both chief justice of the Supreme Court and president. With the excitement now swirling around the 2016

presidential race and sudden Supreme Court vacancy, it seems fitting to run these images, some of the very few depicting this man’s presence on campus.

These undated images are from around the time of Will Taft’s Presidency (1909–13). They show a Taft commencement, possibly that of his son, Charles Phelps, in 1913. In that year, the ceremonies took place on the east side of the Warren House, the former hotel that then housed the school. Out of sight on the other side

was the massive construction project of Horace Dutton Taft Hall.

In 1921, Will Taft was appointed chief justice by President Warren Harding. It was that position—not the presidency—that he had wished for all his life.

William Howard Taft

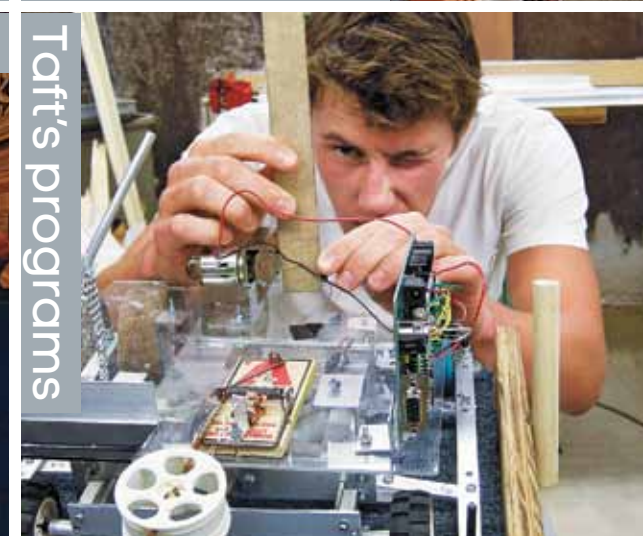
President	1909–13
Chief Justice	1921–30

—Alison Gilchrist,
The Leslie D. Manning Archives, Taft School

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