Small World, Big Impact

The Emory Global Health Institute celebrates a decade of concrete contributions that reach every corner of the world.

NEW FRONTIERS

Where Nursing Meets Research

Alumni Curators Find the Heartbeat of African American History
Every day in my work with debate, nonviolence, and community outreach for the university, I am able to draw upon my legal education at Emory Law. I have another tool in my toolbox.

—James Roland, Senior Director for Civic and Community Engagement, Executive Director for Atlanta Urban Debate League, Director for Emory Center for Advancing Nonviolence
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Building Solutions

The Emory Global Health Institute connects projects, partners, and funding in their mission to create lasting change, not quick fixes.

By Sylvia Wrobel

Doctor Nurse

Emory’s Deborah Bruner is building a bridge between nursing and funded research—and beckoning young nurses to follow her across.

By Maria M. Lameiras

Shared Story

A century in the making, the National Museum of African American History and Culture opens its doors with two Emory alumni in lead roles.

By Maria M. Lameiras

MORE ONLINE AT EMORY.EDU/MAGAZINE

VIDEO: EMERGING GLOBAL HEALTH THREATS
“What We Don’t Know Can Hurt Us”

VIDEO: DEBORAH BRUNER
“Defining Mentorship”

SLIDESHOWS: AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY
Explore the collections of the Smithsonian NMAAHC

ON THE COVER A little girl smiles despite the poor conditions in Goma, Capital of North Kivu Province, Democratic Republic of the Congo. Photo by Kyle Compaan, School of Nursing, EGHI Global Health Student Photography Contest.
POINTS OF INTEREST

6 COYOTES IN THE CITY
8 SHORT LIST
9 LIPSTADT TRIAL IN THE FILM DENIAL
10 STUDENTS INTEGRITY PROJECT TAKES OFF
12 IN CLASS TURNING ART INTO ACTION
14 FACULTY BOOK LISA DILLMAN 93G
16 OFFICE HOURS THE NEW MUST-SEE TV
17 DOOLEY NOTED HIDDEN HARDMAN CEMETERY
20 RESEARCH STOPPING SEIZURES

EMORY EVERYWHERE

41 ALUMNI PROFILE ALEX SCHULTZ 15AH
47 2016 EMORY MEDALISTS
48 ALUMNI INK
51 TRIBUTE DAVID POYTHRESS 62OX 64C 67L
52 CODA LEARNING FROM LINCOLN
A few nights ago, I happened to catch a TV commercial that poses an interesting question: What if scientists were treated like celebrities?

The ad for General Electric (GE) casts Mildred Dresselhaus, the first woman to win the National Medal of Science in Engineering in 2015, as an international star—a status signaled by flashy newsstand covers, crowds of fans and paparazzi, glitzy events, talk show appearances, “Millie” dolls, and her very own Emoji.

Although the spot was created to publicize GE’s impressive goal of having twenty thousand women in STEM roles by 2020, it also serves as a reminder that in the public popularity contest, even the brightest minds in science are all too easily outshone by limelight lovers in entertainment, sports, politics, social media, and Saturday Night Live.

But at research universities like this one, that ad comes to life every day. Emory scientists and scholars across academic disciplines are our own celebrities—appearing on the university’s magazine covers and websites, in the mainstream news, and at landmark events and conferences around the world. Many are widely recognized, published, photographed, and quoted; students stop them on the Quad to shake hands and maybe snap a selfie.

In this issue, we spotlight a few of those local stars—including public health champions like Jeffrey Koplan and Robert Breiman, who have brought decades of combined CDC experience to help the Emory Global Health Institute achieve sweeping impact in just ten years.

Deborah Bruner of the School of Nursing and Winship Cancer Institute is breaking new ground as one of the top-funded researchers in the country, never losing sight of the cancer patients who inspire her and the young nurses who follow in her footsteps.

And two alumni of Emory’s Institute for the Liberal Arts are shaping the public conversation about race as curators at the recently opened African American history museum in Washington, D.C.

Of course, one of the most recognizable figures on the Emory campus is our new president, Claire E. Sterk, who was formally inaugurated on February 8. Following the colorful procession of university leaders and scholars in academic regalia, guests including Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed packed Glenn Memorial Auditorium as assistant professor of neurosurgery and CNN chief medical correspondent Sanjay Gupta delivered the keynote address, pointing out that Sterk is Emory’s first female president. “Kind of has a nice ring to it,” he added.

When President Sterk accepted the university mace, she received a thunderous standing ovation as reporters scribbled notes and cameras flashed. Like Millie Dresselhaus, she is a highly accomplished scientist, and should be treated accordingly, like a star.
Emory celebrates a new chapter in its history with the inauguration of President Claire E. Sterk, the first woman and first social scientist to lead the university. Three days of events culminated with her formal inauguration ceremony on February 8. As Sterk received the university mace, guests rose in a standing ovation to welcome Emory’s new president. Sterk took office on September 1.
Driving along the busy Clifton corridor, with the Atlanta skyline visible just a few miles to the west, you’re more likely to encounter Cliff shuttles than wildlife. It’s easy to forget that Emory shares its six-hundred-acre main campus with all manner of creatures—including, it seems increasingly likely, coyotes.

The canny cousins of dogs, wolves, foxes, and jackals, coyotes crossed the Mississippi River about a century ago and started showing up in Georgia in the 1970s. Thanks to the gradual elimination of the red wolf across the Southeast, they’re now the top predator in the region, according to the Atlanta Coyote Project, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the scientific study of the animals in the metro area.

The Atlanta Coyote Project was founded by Larry Wilson 75C 92PhD, an adjunct professor in Emory’s Departments of Biology and Environmental Science, and Chris Mowry 93G 94PhD, an ecologist and associate professor of biology at Berry College. Wilson spent thirty years working for Fernbank Science Center as manager of Fernbank Forest, a sixty-five-acre, old-growth Piedmont forest situated just across Clifton Road from Emory.

“We used to see lots of evidence that there were coyotes,” Wilson says. “We’d get calls from people who had spotted them at the Druid Hills Golf Club and the surrounding area. We realized there was a need for education and scientific information.”

Mowry began researching coyotes with a couple of his students at Berry College, setting camera traps and using radio collars to follow their activity. Mowry also reached out to Wilson, whom he knew from Emory. “Larry had been talking about urban coyotes for years,” he says.

In 2009, Mowry and Wilson gave a presentation at Fernbank Science Center, and the surrounding community’s curiosity was palpable. So was the distrust.

“Coyotes can be very controversial,” Mowry says. “They are predators, and people have a natural fear of predators.”

“People think coyotes live in packs, but that’s actually a myth,” explains Wilson. “In most of the areas around here, it’s typically a breeding pair and their offspring. When you get rid of an adult, you’re probably going to have young males that don’t know how to hunt, and they’re more likely to go after easy targets. They are amazingly
The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation has awarded the Task Force for Global Health the 2016 Hilton Humanitarian Prize—the world’s largest humanitarian award. Only one recipient is selected each year.

The Task Force, an Emory-affiliated, international organization dedicated to addressing large-scale health problems affecting people living in extreme poverty, has been a pioneer in global health since its founding thirty-three years ago. It now reaches hundreds of millions of people in 154 countries through programs focusing on neglected tropical diseases, vaccines, field epidemiology, public health informatics, and health workforce development.

With the prize, the organization received $2 million in unrestricted funding, which will be used for a capital campaign to purchase a larger headquarters in downtown Decatur.

“Our hope is to educate people and help them overcome their fears so they’re able to coexist with all wildlife,” Mowry says. “As an ecologist trained at Emory, I understand the interrelatedness of the natural world, and coyotes are just a part of that fabric.”—Paige Parvin 96G

adaptable, so as long as there is habitat and food supply, there will be coyotes. That’s why it’s really better to learn to coexist.”

As predators go, coyotes are on the small side, so they rarely go after large pets, Wilson adds. The mainstays of their diet are vegetation and berries, rodents, and the occasional tasty bit of road kill—call it fast food. Coyotes are furtive, stealthy, and smart, and usually they can live alongside humans undetected.

One of the Atlanta Coyote Project’s most ambitious efforts was a survey undertaken in 2014 to assess Atlanta residents’ experience, attitudes, and perceptions surrounding coyotes. The survey generated more than two thousand responses, the basis for conclusions that have in turn shaped the project’s work. Mowry and Wilson continue to give public lectures and presentations, such as at a recent meeting of the Wildlife Society.

“Our hope is to educate people and help them overcome their fears so they’re able to coexist with all wildlife,” Mowry says. “As an ecologist trained at Emory, I understand the interrelatedness of the natural world, and coyotes are just a part of that fabric.”—Paige Parvin 96G
New rankings put Emory at No. 17 In a new ranking of top colleges and universities in the United States by the Wall Street Journal and Times Higher Education, Emory ranked 17th out of 500 national public and private universities. Emory was the only Georgia institution included in the top 20 on the inaugural ranking.

Emory joins Global Virus Network Emory has joined the Global Virus Network as the newest Center of Excellence, joining 37 Centers of Excellence and six affiliates in 25 countries. Comprised of experts in every class of virus causing disease in humans, the network’s mission is to combat current and emerging pandemic viral threats.

Student honored for bravery Faraaz Hossain, an Emory junior who died during a terror attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh, has been awarded the 2016 Mother Teresa Memorial International Award for Social Justice. Hossain was recognized for his bravery in choosing to stay with his friends rather than leave when given the chance.

Emory chemist wins prestigious medal Francesco Evangelista, assistant professor of chemistry in Emory College of Arts and Sciences, won the 2017 Dirac Medal, one of the world’s most honored awards for theoretical and computational chemists under 40 from the World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists.

Carlos reception hall named to honor donor Real estate businessman and entrepreneur Charles S. Ackerman fulfilled a pledge to gift $1 million to Emory’s Michael C. Carlos Museum to name the museum’s reception hall, the Charles S. Ackerman Hall (Ackerman Hall), which was dedicated at a ceremony in the fall.

Five new nursing fellows named Professors Sharon Close, Jennifer Foster, Suzanne Staebler, Kathryn Wood, and Kate Yeager of the Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing were inducted into the American Academy of Nursing Fellowship in October.

Sustainability efforts earn ’top performer’ status Emory has been recognized as a top performer in the 2016 Sustainable Campus Index, achieving the ninth spot overall among research institutions, by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.

Program to study business, government The Robson Foundation, named for former dean John E. Robson, pledged $2.1 million to establish the John Robson Endowment for the Study of Business, Public Policy, and Government at Goizueta Business School.

Modeling global health solutions Nearly 200 college students from as far away as Afghanistan visited Emory in October for the third-annual American Mock World Health Organization. Students acted as members of the United Nations public health body to think differently about antimicrobial resistance.
It’s always fun to wonder: If your life were made into a movie, what star would play you?

Most of us will probably never know, but for Deborah Lipstadt, Emory’s Dorot Professor of Modern Jewish History and Holocaust Studies, that question is answered. Academy Award–winning actor Rachel Weisz fully and brilliantly embraces Lipstadt’s character in the film Denial, which opened in Atlanta in October with a special premiere screening hosted by Emory College.

The film is based on Lipstadt’s acclaimed 2005 book, History on Trial: My Day in Court with a Holocaust Denier, chronicling her experience as the defendant in a British libel suit brought against her by David Irving, whom she had identified as a Holocaust denier in her 1993 book, Denying the Holocaust: The Growing Assault on Truth and Memory. It also stars two-time Academy Award–nominee Tom Wilkinson as her British barrister and Timothy Spall as Irving.

“It’s a very rare treat when a film captures the work of a scholar as scholar, as this one does,” said Michael Elliott, interim dean of Emory College. “The importance of that cannot be overestimated.”

Written by David Hare, the script draws heavily on the transcripts of the London trial, during which the burden was on Lipstadt’s legal team to prove that she was correct in her assertion that Irving is a Holocaust denier.

The story’s central themes include the value of facts and evidence in the pursuit of truth, the power in the Jewish tradition of care and respect for the dead, and the unexpected impact of remaining silent—even when it is difficult—to allow other voices and truths to emerge. Neither Lipstadt nor survivors of the Holocaust were called on to speak during the trial, which Lipstadt acknowledges was challenging, but she came to see the wisdom of the legal team’s strategy.

At the premiere screening, Lipstadt recalled her first phone conversation with Weisz, which lasted forty-five minutes.

“At the end of that, Rachel said, ‘I don’t think this has happened by chance. Justice demands troublemakers, and it has found one in you.’ ”—Paige Parvin 96G
Last summer, every Emory freshman received a copy of *I Am Malala*, the autobiography of girls’ education activist Malala Yousafzai. From a young age, Yousafzai dared to speak out for girls’ rights to an education in Pakistan, becoming a target for Islamic extremists. At age fifteen, she was shot by the Taliban. She survived and continued to advocate for girls’ education on an international scale, becoming the youngest winner of the Nobel Peace Prize.

The shared experience of reading Yousafzai’s story was part of the inaugural programming launched by the Emory Integrity Project (EIP) during the fall semester. The five-year project is a comprehensive effort to promote and develop a culture of ethics and integrity throughout Emory’s undergraduate experience through a program of cocurricular activities designed to challenge perspectives, encourage ethical reflection, and promote moral courage and principled action.

The project, initiated by a three-year, $2.6 million grant from the John Templeton Foundation and expanded to five years through university funding, invites students to engage with fundamental questions: What is integrity? What does it look like? How do we build a true culture of integrity at Emory?

In October, Shiza Shahid, cofounder of the Malala Fund, gave a lecture as part of the EIP about her experiences as a mentor to Yousafzai and how it led her to pursue social entrepreneurship.

“When I started a program to mentor young girls in Pakistan, I never could have imagined that one of those little girls would become one of the most powerful activists for women’s rights in the world,” she says. “It demonstrates how much power we have to create change in our own lives and the lives around us.”

Senior Neil Bhatia joined the EIP’s Student Integrity Ambassadors Council because he was intrigued with the idea of transforming Emory’s culture through concepts of integrity and ethics. “There is no precedent for this type of organization and effort, so we are able to generate completely original ideas,” he says. “We have an opportunity to create something that is really influential in terms of conversations and dialogue and culture at Emory.”

Becka Shetty, assistant director for the EIP in Campus Life, says the curriculum focuses heavily on values identification, critical thinking about conflicts of integrity, and ethical decision making.

“Our goals have been to assist students in thinking more intentionally about who they are and who they want to be and how to align their actions with their values,” she says.—Maria M. Lameiras
Well Suited

EMORY LAW STUDENT FEATURED IN HBO DOCUMENTARY

Sometimes you just need to dress the part.

When Everett Arthur stepped boldly out as a transgender man during his first year at Emory’s School of Law, there were a lot of boxes to check. He told his family and his girlfriend, rebooted his Facebook identity, and contacted law school staff and faculty. All were supportive. Check.

But then there was the problem of what to wear. Arthur had job interviews to consider, and as an African American transgender man pursuing positions in the relatively conservative legal profession, finding the right suit began to seem impossible. He contacted Bindle & Keep, a New York City fashion design company that specializes in bespoke clothing—without getting hung up on gender.

That’s how Arthur wound up as a principal figure in the HBO documentary Suited, which follows a handful of Bindle & Keep clients through the process of having suits custom made. For many, it’s an emotional experience to don the first suit that truly fits them, inside and out.

Emory Law hosted a special screening of the film in October, along with a panel discussion starring Arthur, Professor Timothy Holbrook, Suited director Jason Benjamin, and Bindle & Keep partner Rea Tutera. Now a third-year law student, Arthur described his gender transition as an uphill climb.

“Emory is working really hard to create a better space for everyone, and in a lot of ways it’s gotten better,” he said. “To watch this movie in here creates a lot of feelings. I think you can see in the film that at first, I seem really sad, but I’m much happier now.”

Arthur was named a 2016 Victory Empowerment Fellow for the Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund and was a legal intern at the Transgender Law Center at Southerners on New Ground. While he is considering a career in civil rights law, he has not ruled out a future in politics. He also hopes to continue to inspire others like him.

Asked what he would say to young people considering gender transition, he said, “You have the right to be handsome, and you have the right to love yourself.”—Kenyatta Greer

TOP HONORS

MARSHALL SCHOLARS Two of Emory’s Woodruff Scholars are winners of the prestigious Marshall Scholarship.

Noam Kantor (2), who will earn dual bachelor’s and master’s degrees in mathematics from Emory College this spring, plans to earn a second master’s degree in math, studying number theory, from Oxford University. He was named a Goldwater Scholar during his sophomore year.

Emilia Truluck 16C (1) is now in Jordan on a Fulbright grant. She plans to earn a master’s degree in refugee and migration studies at Oxford, then pursue a master’s degree at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

SCHWARZMAN SCHOLARS Emory senior Caiwei Huang (4) and alumnus Zihao Zhang 16B (3) have won the 2017 Schwarzman Scholarships for graduate study in China.

Huang, an Emory Scholar on track to earn dual bachelor’s and master’s degrees in political science in 2017, and Zhang, who graduated with highest honors with a bachelor’s degree in business administration and a bachelor’s degree in mathematics and economics, are Emory’s first Schwarzman Scholars. They are among 129 students from across the globe chosen for the program, designed to bridge the academic and professional worlds to educate students in leadership and China’s expanding global role.
Turning Art into Action

COURSE TITLE
ARTVIS 333: Multidiscipline Design Studio

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this class, students work with selected Atlanta-area artists to plan, research, develop, and produce an art project highlighting the mission of a local nonprofit working in human services, the environment, or arts and culture. Cotaught by Carlton Mackey, assistant director of the Ethics and Servant Leadership (EASL) program and director of the Ethics and the Arts program at Emory’s Center for Ethics, and Edward Queen, director of EASL, class sessions unpack and examine the role of art in social change. Initially funded by a grant from Southwest Airlines, Mackey developed the class as a way to engage students in work that challenges them “to use their work to influence the issues that plague our society.” Last semester, the class worked with nonprofits Global Growers, the Alliance Theatre, and Emory’s Urban Health Initiative. The artists for the semester were photographer Ross Oscar Knight and filmmakers Laura Asherman 10OX 12C and William Feagins.

TODAY’S CLASS
In a discussion class examining W. E. B. DuBois’s 1926 lecture before the NAACP, Queen challenges students to explore how the perspectives they bring to their work can influence its messages.

QUOTES TO NOTE
“We are in the height of the intersection of media and activism. Social media and activism led to a literal revolution in the Middle East. The role of an artist and an activist is to translate the longing of the hearts of the people, and that is what we hope our students and artists are able to do, to make that translation and to make it universal. Even if it is not your story or experience, you are able to identify and align with it.” —Carlton Mackey

STUDENTS SAY
“I am really interested in this concept for environmental science. There is a big gap between scientists and making change happen through policy and community action. It is difficult for people to understand biodiversity and climate change, and I am interested in the concept of using art as a medium to inspire social change especially through environmental action.” —Aspen Ono, junior environmental science and international studies major

“I am really interested in this concept for environmental science. There is a big gap between scientists and making change happen through policy and community action. It is difficult for people to understand biodiversity and climate change, and I am interested in the concept of using art as a medium to inspire social change especially through environmental action.” —Aspen Ono, junior environmental science and international studies major

“True art, good art, sends a message. That is relevant to what we are doing because art as social activism always has to send a message. Bringing awareness to something is the first step, then you can go on to influence people to take part in the change you are trying to achieve.” —Sarah Loftus, junior media studies and sociology major —Maria M. Lameiras
Going Global

New internship program lets students stretch their wings and fly coach

Yasmeen Wermers 16OX was a sophomore at Oxford College when she learned about an unexpected international internship opportunity. A math and economics major interested in a career with global impact, Wermers jumped at the chance to gain work experience in another country, and was eventually placed with a start-up incubator in the heart of the tech district in Singapore.

Established in fall 2015 by the Office of International and Summer Programs (OISP) in Emory College, the Global Internship program places students with companies in Toronto, Hong Kong, and Singapore for a summer of intense work and learning.

The OISP received far more applications than expected for the pilot program. Due to the independent nature of the experience, administrators set high academic standards and considered evidence of the students’ maturity. After a lengthy application process on the Emory end, accepted students had to be interviewed and hired by the companies themselves.

Last summer, the first twenty students scattered to internship placements in the pilot program cities. They all shared the experience of taking an online course focused on analyzing workplace structures and leadership styles, how to accommodate different generational expectations around professionalism, and how to interact appropriately with their bosses or deal with conflicts that might arise.

“We talk about teaching students to be adaptable and flexible, and what a liberal arts education empowers you to do,” says Dana Tottenham, who manages the program. “But what’s really evident, when you talk to the students and hear their experiences of navigating the global workplace, is that these liberal arts skills come alive.

“One of our goals is to help create a bridge between the academic experience on campus and industry sectors in global cities,” Tottenham adds. “Through the online course, we are connecting the curriculum to the longer term goals that the students have of applying their education in an experiential way.”

Wermers says it was thanks to the online course that she was able to strike the right tone with her company’s CEO. “I was able to interact really well with both generations in my workplace,” she says. —Shannan Palma

JUST TAP FOR HELP

NEW APP OFFERS ANOTHER TOOL FOR PERSONAL SAFETY

Emory is placing a new mode of personal safety support directly into the hands of the campus community with the launch of LiveSafe, a free mobile app.

Developed for smartphones and tablets, LiveSafe provides a fast, convenient, and discreet way for students, faculty, and staff to communicate directly with Emory public safety officials. Key features allow members of the campus community to call or text message Emory University Police—or 911—quickly, with a location-tracking feature; report safety concerns, accidents, or crime tips in real time to Emory police; navigate campus using a “SafeWalk” feature; connect with SafeRide, a free shuttle service; receive safety notifications and emergency alerts from Emory police; and rapidly access a list of safety resources.

The mobile security system is overseen by Emory’s Office of Critical Event Preparedness and Response.
Finally, and fittingly, a translator has achieved a measure of fame.

Last year, Lisa Dillman 93G, senior lecturer in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese, won the Best Translated Book Award for her work on Yuri Herrera’s Signs Preceding the End of the World. The Best Translated Book Awards are sponsored by the literary site Three Percent—so named as a lament, since only about 3 percent of all works published in the US are translations.

Carrying a $5,000 prize for both author and translator, the award is the most prestigious of its kind in the US, and it had been within striking distance for Dillman twice before.

That interest took root during a year in Barcelona, where Dillman fell in love with the city as well as with Spanish and Catalan. Back home, she felt a sense of loss for what she had experienced there; worse, her jokes were bombing. It was about then, she says, that “I realized that it’s not just language that is different; everything is embedded, including sense of humor. It’s not just words.”

After completing a master’s degree in Spanish literature at Emory, Dillman went on to pursue a master’s degree in literary translation from Middlesex University in London in the early days of that program.

Translation theory holds in tension the opposing ideas of domestication and foreignization. With domestication, the translator leaves the reader in peace and brings the text to the reader. Foreignization is the opposite. Dillman ascribes to the latter, saying, “I am far more in favor of bringing the reader to the text. When you read, you want to discover something new. You want to know how people live and breathe and speak.”

Herrera’s book, which she describes as a “prescient tale of immigration,” is the story of a girl from Mexico coming to the US to search for her brother. Herrera “mixes a lot of registers,” says Dillman. “There is a lot of rural language and shifts where it becomes incredibly lyrical and poetic.”

Dillman describes two themes as foremost in her field: the rights of translators and their fight for visibility. Ironically, the more fluidly a book is translated, the more the reader seems to be having an unmediated experience. “This issue gets talked about all the time,” says Dillman. “There are as many stances about it as there are translators.”

Dillman loves her work, although the financial rewards could stand to improve. She’s received one royalty check in her life—for a penny. She framed it rather than cash it. —Susan Carini 04G
EMORY IN THE NEWS

EMORY POLITICAL EXPERTS DOMINATE ELECTION COVERAGE
If an expert was needed to help explain some aspect of the unprecedented presidential election, Emory political scientists Alan Abramowitz and Andra Gillespie were the “go-to” professors for analysis. Their comments and interviews were featured frequently (and sometimes multiple times in one day) leading up to and after the election in national outlets such as the New York Times, CBS News, NBC News, the Wall Street Journal, the Washington Post, CNN, and Fox News. Gillespie was also a featured commentator on election night for PBS NewsHour, sharing the main desk with PBS NewsHour’s Judy Woodruff and the New York Times’ David Brooks.

THE BEAUTY OF PI
Emory mathematician Ken Ono was a guest on StarTalk with Neil DeGrasse Tyson in November to discuss everything from serial killers to the beauty in hidden patterns and how the Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan tamed Pi. The episode, which was devoted to Ramanujan, also featured actor Jeremy Irons discussing his role as the mathematician G. H. Hardy, Ramanujan’s mentor, in the film The Man Who Knew Infinity. Ono served as an associate producer and the mathematical consultant for the film. Ono and Irons also paid a visit to the White House to participate in a panel discussion about math’s role in education and Ono’s outreach to identify extraordinary young math minds. The discussion was covered by USA Today.

WORLD’S MOST FAMOUS BOOK COMES TO EMORY
Emory’s hosting of The First Folio, the first collected edition of Shakespeare’s plays and one of the most famous books in the world, was a big production on campus and covered extensively, including by the Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Atlanta Magazine, and WABE FM. There was separate coverage in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution of an event during the exhibit’s final weeks that included Shakespeare readings from Emory faculty members Natasha Trethewey, former US Poet Laureate and Pulitzer Prize winner; Kevin Young, National Book Award finalist and Guggenheim Fellow; and Jericho Brown, American Book Award winner.

Professor Brought Atlanta History to Life
Longtime Emory educator and acclaimed Atlanta historian Dana F. White, Goodrich C. White Professor Emeritus in the Institute for the Liberal Arts (ILA), died November 24, 2016, following a pedestrian-automobile accident.

An urban historian and professor of American studies, White, eighty-two, worked at Emory for nearly fifty years as a teacher, scholar, and administrator. Though he retired from the classroom in 2011, he continued to serve as consulting curator with the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library.

Much of his scholarship focused on Atlanta’s cultural and civic evolution throughout the twentieth century. White was widely known for his work as cocreator—along with Tim Grimmins—of the award-winning eight-part documentary series The Making of Modern Atlanta, which examined the city from 1940 to 1990.

White is remembered as a caring and influential teacher and mentor and an impassioned interdisciplinary scholar.

A New York City native, White earned a bachelor’s degree from Fordham University, a master’s degree from the University of Wyoming, and a doctorate from George Washington University.

He became recognized as a leading authority on Atlanta history, writing extensively about the city and often using it as a laboratory for his graduate and undergraduate courses.

While at Emory, White twice served as director of the Graduate Institute for the Liberal Arts, now the ILA. At the time of his death, he was working with Emory film historian and professor Matthew H. Bernstein on the history of movie culture and cinema in segregated Atlanta.

“Dana was an extraordinarily unique person. He was keenly interested in everything and everyone,” says Bernstein, adding that White was always concerned with how students were doing both academically and personally. “Dana wanted to know their stories and their struggles. And he was always very generous with them, very understanding.”

After retiring from the classroom, White remained involved with the Rose Library. “Dana helped us understand that Atlanta has a deep, rich, and diverse history, that there were stories behind every neighborhood, every gathering,” says Director Rosemary M. Magee 82PhD. “He brought those stories to a new level of visibility to us, which is the mission of the archive—to take historic documents and moments and give them meaning and texture in our lives.”—Kimber Williams
Emory Experts on
The New Must-See TV

Television has been the center of home entertainment for more than half a century, beckoning families to gather around its flickering light with reliable lineups of popular sitcoms and procedural dramas. But in the past few years, the medium has undergone a sea change, rivaling the bigger screen for industry-wide talent and cultural relevance. “Re-runs” have gone the way of the VCR as major networks compete with direct-to-consumer platforms such as Netflix and Hulu, and major Hollywood stars, directors, and producers are stepping up for—to quote the theme song from The Jeffersons—their piece of the pie.

As both scholars and fans, Emory’s Department of Film and Media Studies faculty—including Amy Aidman, Tanine Allison, Rob Barracano, Matthew H. Bernstein, Marc Bousquet, Michele Schreiber, and Beretta Smith-Shomade—offer some of their recent favorites. This is a partial list; find a link to all twenty at emory.edu/magazine.

The Affair (Showtime)
The multi-perspective narrative of The Affair—centering on the titular affair between characters Noah (Dominic West) and Alison (Ruth Wilson)—has managed to evolve gracefully beyond its original premise to become a richly layered and nuanced glimpse into how subjectivity colors our perspective on the nature of the ties that bind us to friends, lovers, and family.

Atlanta (FX)
Earn, a fast-talking, conflicted Princeton dropout, returns to his hometown of Atlanta. Hearing that his cousin has scored a minor rap hit, Earn seeks to capitalize by becoming his manager. Surreal and unpredictable, Atlanta expands outward from this premise, becoming more surprising as the season progresses.

Crazy Ex-Girlfriend (CW)
Written by Rachel Bloom and Aline Brosh McKenna, Crazy Ex-Girlfriend is a zany comedy of errors with a side of Glee. Rachel Bloom plays a successful New York attorney who moves to small-town California set on rekindling love with her long lost summer-camp crush. Frequent bursts into bizarre song and dance numbers add to the hilarity.

The Fall (BBC2/Netflix)
The third and most recent season of this BBC production is less action-driven than previous seasons, but the brilliance of the performances of Jamie Dornan as seductive serial killer Paul Spector and Gillian Anderson as inscrutable detective Stella Gibson has never been on fuller display. Gibson is one of the smartest, sexiest, and most complicated female characters in television history.

Insecure (HBO)
Issa Rae’s hit web series, Mis-Adventures of Awkward Black Girl, comes to television cocreated by Rae and writer-producer Larry Wilmore. The dramedy follows millennials Rae as a thirty-something dealing with millennial-inflicted issues: career uncertainty, girlfriends, and relationship drama in South Los Angeles.

Full Frontal with Samantha Bee (TBS)
The best new comedy news show features the host simply standing in front of a digital screen while she delivers hilarious rapid-fire critiques, especially of sexist American politicians and groups.

Greenleaf (OWN)
God is back and living in Memphis, Tennessee! Greenleaf, the second dramatic series hosted on Oprah Winfrey’s network, chronicles the trials and tribulations of the Greenleaf family, the Greenleaves. Starring actor Lynn Whitfield as matriarch and church first lady, the story captures television’s continued foray into religious dramatic programming including series like Big Love, Mary, Mary, and The Preachers of LA franchise.
Every campus should have its ghosts—or at least its ghost stories.

Some Emory students claim to have “felt” the spirit of President Atticus Haygood in Old Church at Oxford. One former staff member of the alumni association tells a hair-raising story of encountering a man in an old-fashioned suit and a bowler hat while working on the second floor of the Houston Mill House—a man there one moment and gone the next. And heaven (or hell!) only knows what goes on at the Briarcliff Mansion.

For those in search of more mundane encounters with “spirits” from the past, two cemeteries at Emory beckon. One is on the Oxford campus and harbors the graves of Confederate soldiers who died while being cared for in Oxford after the Battle of Atlanta. And a second cemetery lies tucked away, half hidden, on the Clairmont Campus in Atlanta. Shuttle-bus riders and pedestrians, as well as parents picking up children at the Clifton School, often pass by the Hardman Cemetery without realizing that some fifty bodies lie buried nearby.

The cemetery on Emory’s Clairmont Campus harbors the remains of some of DeKalb County’s early settlers. The earliest is from 1825, and the most recent from 1909.

Richard Houston Sams 57C has written the fullest history of this hallowed ground, and he has good reason for his interest in it—some of his ancestors are buried there.

The earliest grave is that of Rody Harriet Hardman, just a year and a half old when she died in 1825. She was the daughter of John Hardman, who was laid to rest near her more than half a century later. Not far from the Hardman plot lie Chapmon Powell and his wife, Elizabeth Hardman Powell, parents of Amanda Powell. In 1854, Amanda married Washington Jackson Houston—the builder of Houston Mill and great-grandfather of Richard Sams.

Somewhat farther away, near the edge of the cemetery, lie the foundation stones on which, sometime around 1830, Naman Hardman built a church known as the Primitive Baptist Church in Christ at Hardman’s. This building, according to Sams, was still standing when a wing of General Sherman’s army marched down the Shallowford Trail—now Clairmont Road—toward Decatur in July 1864. Sams says the structure was left in ashes by the time the army left.

Much more history haunts these two acres, which are owned not by Emory but by the DeKalb Historical Society. The spirits inhabiting the place include the land’s original inhabitants, the Creek Indians, who lived along the South Fork of Peachtree Creek, near where the VA Hospital stands on Clairmont Road.

Meanwhile, the tranquility of the graveyard belies the bustle of the parking deck, apartment building, and shuttle road that surround it.—Gary Hauk 91PhD
Attention, Atlanta Shoppers

HELPING LOCAL COMMUNITIES MAKE HEALTHIER CHOICES

A team made up of Emory faculty, staff, and students; a local grocery chain; and a health care clinic has received a $25,000 award from General Electric to collaboratively fight obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related disease.

Called the Southwest Atlanta Coalition for Healthy Living, the team includes representatives from Wayfield Foods, the HEALing Community Center, Emory’s Office of the President, Emory Continuing Education, the Emory Urban Health Initiative, Goizueta Business School, and Rollins School of Public Health (RSPH).

A winner of the HealthyCities Leadership Academy’s Open Innovation Challenge, the coalition received $25,000 to create a program to engage members of the community in healthy eating and provide assistance in food preparation and preventative care.

The Atlanta coalition aims to improve health outcomes by linking services at the HEALing Community Center, founded by Emory Professor of Otolaryngology Charles Moore, with nutrition and healthy eating programs at the Wayfield Foods store on MLK Drive in southwest Atlanta—one of the city’s most under-resourced areas.

At Wayfield, these trained “health ambassadors” will assist shoppers with making healthier food purchases, link them with other in-store programs, and provide information on services at the HEALing Community Center. Representatives from Emory will support the process through marketing, food labeling, training health ambassadors at the store and clinic, and program monitoring.

“This is a tremendous opportunity to build upon the work that we have started collectively in our community,” Moore says.

“In creating a supportive environment within the community, we aim to make the healthier option the easier option,” adds Amy Webb Girard, assistant professor at Rollins.

Emory Research Received Record Funding in 2016

Researchers at Emory received $574.6 million from external funding agencies in fiscal year 2016, marking the seventh-consecutive year that research funding has exceeded $500 million. With an increase from $572.4 in FY15, it is the largest amount of research funding in Emory’s history.

Federal agencies awarded $389.7 million, or nearly 68 percent of the total, led by the National Institutes of Health with $333 million in awards, representing 85 percent of total federal dollars awarded to Emory.

“We have outstanding faculty throughout the Health Sciences Center who are dedicated and passionate about conducting research that can advance discovery, improve health, and save lives,” says David Stephens, vice president for research in Emory’s Woodruff Health Sciences Center and chair of the Department of Medicine in Emory School of Medicine. “We are proud of our continuing ability to attract research funding to continue this critical work, despite national economic challenges.”

EXPANDING EFFORTS Emory’s Charles Moore founded the HEALing Community Center to help inner-city residents improve their diet and nutrition for better health. The center will link its services with the new coalition.
Briarcliff Mansion to get a new lease on life

It's been nearly a century since Coca-Cola heir Asa Griggs “Buddie” Candler Jr. created a stately mansion on a forty-two-acre estate about a mile from Emory’s leafy Druid Hills campus.

Long abandoned as a private residence, Briarcliff Mansion would see decades of wear—through various incarnations—before Emory purchased the property in 1998. Now in decline, the grand manor that sits along Briarcliff Road has been effectively mothballed, primarily used as a colorful backdrop for film and television projects.

But a proposal by an Atlanta developer is poised to breathe new life into the historic mansion, noted as much for its eccentric past as its wood-paneled walls, vaulted ceilings, and carved marble fireplaces.

Republic Property Company plans to rehabilitate the fading property into an upscale fifty-four-room boutique hotel and event venue. Under the proposal, Emory would enter into a long-term ground lease with Republic Property Company. The Georgia State Properties Commission approved the proposal in December, clearing the way for the project to begin.

The proposal calls for restoring the mansion, a large greenhouse, and a carriage house, as well as building seven new structures to support the property. They include separate guest cottages, an outdoor swimming pool and pool house, a full-scale restaurant and lounge, and indoor and outdoor event spaces—all inspired by the mansion’s original architecture, according to Rawson Daws, vice president of Republic Property Company.

“In Atlanta, you see a tendency to tear things down and build new,” Daws says. “But we think the Briarcliff Mansion has character and a great backstory, with the connections of the Candler family to Emory and Atlanta, to support a community-driven boutique hotel. Architecturally speaking, the bones are there.”—Kimber Williams

COVERING THE BASES

New clinic specializes in primary care for patients with dementia

The Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing, in partnership with the Departments of Neurology and Psychiatry, has launched Emory’s first nurse-led medical clinic.

The brainchild of Carolyn Clevenger, assistant dean for MSN Education, and Janet Cellar, clinical nurse specialist and administrator for the Alzheimer’s Disease Research Center (ADRC), the Integrated Memory Care Clinic is the nation’s only practice specializing in primary care for people living with dementia.

The idea for the clinic developed through Clevenger’s work with Cellar at the ADRC, where a collaborative, team-based approach helps patients and families form close bonds with their physicians and advanced-practice nurses as they undergo disease treatment and management. But patients also came to the center with more basic primary care needs.

“What families told us they needed was dementia-sensitive primary care,” says Clevenger. “Everything from pneumonia vaccines, mammograms, or diabetes management needs to be addressed through the lens of the fact that the person has a degenerative illness.”

The Integrated Memory Care Clinic is designed to offer a nurse-led model that gives consumers better access to high-quality primary care, emphasizing core components including availability, patient and family relationships with a consistent practitioner, comprehensive care, and coordination among specialists and community providers.
When it comes to his epilepsy treatment research, “good is the enemy of best,” says Robert Gross, transposing Voltaire’s aphorism. “Once you’ve developed a good therapy, sometimes there’s a tendency toward complacency.”

The Emory neurosurgeon, MBNA Bowman chair, and professor is not one to rest on his past accomplishments. With a $5 million, five-year grant from the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—part of the Brain Research through Advancing Innovative Neurotechnologies (BRAIN) Initiative—Gross, who also serves as director of the Emory Neuromodulation Technology Innovation Center, is studying ways to improve the performance of a new neurostimulator to prevent epilepsy seizures.

An epileptic seizure typically presents as a loss of control or function, suggesting disorganized cellular signaling in a particular part of the brain. In fact, the neurons are too organized and are firing all at the same time, in effect overloading the nerve pathways, explains Gross.

“Think about it this way,” he continues. “If you go into a theater and some people are whispering in a low voice, there’s no problem. If everyone whispers the same thing at the same time, the sound would be deafening.”

Gross specializes in the treatment of “medically intractable” epilepsy, meaning the condition does not respond to medication. For these individuals, who comprise about a third of the estimated four million epilepsy patients in the US, there are two options. One is to surgically remove the section of brain determined to be the source of the seizures—most commonly situated in the mesial temporal lobe within a structure called the hippocampus, which is responsible for memory. This approach carries a high risk that the patient will also lose some degree of brain function, depending on what part of the brain is ablated.

The other option is a “responsive” neurostimulator in which two electrodes are implanted in the area of the brain where the seizures originate. Wires connect the electrodes to a battery-powered electric stimulator implanted into the skull.

“When the algorithm running on the computer in the device detects epileptic activity, then and only then, it stimulates the brain electrically and can block progression of the seizures,” Gross says.

The device was introduced three years ago after a successful clinical trial that involved the participation of Gross and the Emory team. One of the Emory patients even testified before the Food and Drug Administration about the device.

Aside from the surgical aspect, the procedure poses little risk and few
adverse effects, and for that reason this year Emory has performed more of the neurostimulator implants than any other hospital in the country, Gross notes. But the implant does have one major drawback: It prevents only 50 to 65 percent of a patient’s seizures, and rarely stops seizures altogether.

Here is where the NIH BRAIN award—and Voltaire—come into play.

“It’s a good device, but not a great device,” says Gross. “How do we move to 100 percent seizure reduction with no adverse effects? We have to figure out how to advance from here.”

Gross is pioneering a new approach to neurostimulation for epilepsy. The basic concept was discovered a number of years ago by his collaborator, Steve Potter of the Wallace H. Coulter Department of Biomedical Engineering at Georgia Tech and Emory. Potter was growing brain cells in culture over an array of sixty-four electrodes and recording their activity. He saw that the cells had begun to act in unison.

“Steve recognized that this pattern of activity was reminiscent of epileptic neurons—so-called epileptiform activity,” Gross says.

Further experimentation revealed that stimulating the neuron culture via the electrodes all at once intensified the epileptiform activity, but firing the electrodes in an asynchronous manner, where each one didn’t fire at the same time as any of its neighbors, completely suppressed the excessive synchronous signal bursting because it had disrupted its rhythm. This technique of asynchronous bursting is a critical aspect of the neurostimulator’s function.

It took several years to take these results out of the cell culture, but last year Gross’s lab demonstrated in rodents that the asynchronous neurostimulation technique was significantly more effective in suppressing seizures than the standard approach used by the responsive neurostimulator.

The way forward includes ongoing research into the causes and mechanisms of epilepsy with the hope of figuring out ways to use its mechanisms against it, according to Gross. In translating the new approach into patient clinical trials, however, studies involving nonhuman primate models will be key.

“We’ll pioneer the new technology in nonhuman primates and, if things work out, we’ll do an early feasibility study in patients with a new type of device where, instead of having to measure the seizures themselves, we measure the signals in the brain—biomarkers—that go hand in hand with seizures so that we can tune our device very quickly.”

Seizure-Free Means New Freedom

When everything else has failed, and a promising but unproved treatment comes along, “you go for it,” says Janie Norman.

Diagnosed with epilepsy thirty-four years ago when she was eleven, Norman experienced seizures every single day—sometimes several times a day. She was able to attend college, get married, and have children, but her quality of life was severely curtailed in other ways: She couldn’t participate in sports, go to the movies, or go shopping by herself. She had no way of getting around on her own because the threat of seizures made driving too risky.

After years of trying, no drug or combination of drugs worked.

When Norman moved from south Georgia to metro Atlanta a few years ago, her neurologist referred her to Emory, where Gross performed several weeks of intracranial monitoring and determined that surgery wasn’t an option. He then tried something new: In 2008, as part of a clinical study, he implanted the NeuroPace RNS (responsive neurostimulator) system. After months of fine-tuning the system, it was fully activated in January 2009. She has been free of seizures ever since.

“I don’t really think about it,” she says. “Everything happens internally, so I don’t feel anything different when the device is activated.”

Norman’s experience, while promising for others with epilepsy, is uncommon. Subsequent implants on additional patients have yielded success rates more typically of 50 percent to 65 percent. Gross’s ongoing research aims to improve these numbers.

In early 2013 Norman testified before the Food and Drug Administration’s (FDA) Neurological Devices Panel as it was considering approval of the NeuroPace RNS. She summarized the device’s most profound benefit for her:

“The most obvious aspect of my life affected by my seizures was the fact that I could not drive. I could not be independent and go places on my own. Not just for myself, but for my kids also,” she told the group.

The RNS device, added Norman, “enabled me to have the freedom that I had wanted for a very long time.”

The RNS received FDA approval later that year.—Gary Goettling
GETTING PERSPECTIVE  The Emory Global Health Institute has provided funding to several programs in Haiti, including an effort to identify and offer help for depression in communities that have been ravaged by natural disaster and social conflict, but have almost no resources for mental illness. This photo by Emory medical student Jesse Rappaport, taken outside the town of Hinche, was one of the 2016 winners of the EGHI Global Health Student Photography Contest.
The little boy died at home, without medical attention, before his fifth birthday. It happens to as many as one in five children in poor African and South Asian countries. The boy was deeply mourned, but never counted. His death was not noted in any registry. Except for a fever, no one had any idea why he died—information that might have been lifesaving for family members, or helped health officials recognize and address a widespread problem, or been the earliest indication of a smoldering epidemic.

In 2015, when the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation wanted to learn why so many die young, they turned to the Emory Global Health Institute (EGHI) to lead the Child Health and Mortality Prevention and Surveillance Network (CHAMPS), designed to help high-child-mortality countries strengthen their capability to collect, analyze, interpret, and share data. Innovative methods include training local teams to visit families soon after a child dies, gathering information on symptoms and, with permission, taking small needle tissue biopsies, which when examined with specialized tools developed at the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) can identify the specific organisms causing illness and death.

“While we would think we have a pretty good idea of why children are dying—respiratory disease, enteric infections, fevers, and sepsis from different microorganisms—we don’t know those specific causes,” says Jeffrey Koplan, former director of the CDC and now Emory Vice President for Global Health and EGHI’s founding director.

“There are a lot of different things that can cause respiratory failure. A lot of illnesses can lead to gastroenteritis and then death. The objective of this grant is to identify the specific causes of death so that we can develop programs to address them and save lives.”
CHAMPS is big: A $75 million investment for the first three years of a projected twenty-year study, involving hundreds of partners at field sites and programmatic support from Emory, the CDC, and other Atlanta-based and international partners. But EGHI was created to serve as the mainframe for just such large-scale, long-term efforts—whether addressing high rates of maternal and childhood morbidity, understanding the spike of diabetes in developing nations, or increasing access to safe water.

Borders don’t mean much to infectious diseases, from shape-shifters like HIV and drug-resistant tuberculosis to sudden outbreaks like Ebola, SARS, or Zika. Chronic problems like diabetes and cardiovascular disease no longer belong primarily to richer, fatter nations but take an increasingly heavy toll on the economic stability, development, and even national security of developing nations, all with global impact.

Founded ten years ago as the flagship program to expand Emory’s commitment to global health, EGHI is its own entity, university-wide, not part of any individual school. The organization is deliberately compact—a staff of ten, a cluster of offices, no big signs on the door. But its design—pragmatic, strategic, multidisciplinary, partner focused—gives it maximum flexibility in how to identify and tackle problems.

EGHI’s framework may be lean, but its ambition is big and its reach is wide, starting right on campus. When philanthropists invest in EGHI, the institute invests in faculty with the expertise to create lasting change. Currently some two hundred highly multidisciplinary faculty members, representing every college across campus, are involved in EGHI projects in more than a hundred countries, working, by policy, with global and local health partners.

Sometimes that investment means providing early support to Emory faculty with innovative ideas and to pilot projects ready to prove their value and earn the attention of funding agencies or foundations.

When Emory’s Center for Global Safe Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) was just getting off the ground in 2006, EGHI gave it a $600,000 grant from its own start-up money. WASH Director Christine Moe says the funding was timely and critical, allowing her to hire people and develop programs that expanded rapidly, garnering external support. For example, an early, small-budget project looked at how parasite-destroying solar latrines and easily assembled “toilets in a box” would be accepted in Bolivia, the country with the lowest sanitation coverage in Latin America. That gave faculty and students valuable experience and impressed the Gates Foundation. Today, with forty-five faculty and staff, WASH is one of the few global health groups in many highly populated, low-income cities where most people in the developing world now live.

“That EGHI seed funding has really allowed us to become global leaders in sanitation research,” Moe says. “There’s nothing more fundamental to public health than water sanitation and hygiene. It touches almost every aspect of quality of life and health. If people have water for agriculture, for drinking, for business, and if it’s convenient so that they can spend their time doing economic activities and caring for their children rather than spending hours every day fetching water, it’s fundamental.”

Sometimes EGHI stakes an individual faculty member, with resources not bound to any single idea. That vote of confidence persuaded Saad Omer, now William H. Foege Professor of Global Health, to join Emory. Omer says the unrestricted nature of the opportunity allowed him to “go after ideas a little ahead of their time,” such as looking at whooping cough rates among Pakistani children too young to be vaccinated and evaluating whether women vaccinated while pregnant transferred protective antibodies to their babies. The project won national honors, and today his work in vaccine effectiveness and safety operates with the support of external grants many times larger than EGHI’s initial investment.

Seed money also made a difference to Thomas Gillespie, associate professor and director of graduate studies in
Emory’s Department of Environmental Sciences, and a Global Health Institute Faculty Distinction Fund Awardee. When Gillespie joined the department, people were starting to recognize the importance of the interface between animal health, human disease, and changes in the environment, but research on these issues fell through the gap between the usual funding sources. EGHI stepped into that gap. One study showed how changing forest structure through logging in a region of Madagascar altered mosquito-breeding habitats, increasing malaria among local peoples. It was the first empirical data in the new field now called One Health. External funding suddenly got easier, and donors helped Gillespie set up a nongovernmental organization to provide effective health care in Madagascar.

EGHI has a track record of small, strategic investments winning big support from deep-pocket visionaries like the Gates Foundation, governmental agencies, and private donors. The institute has a $14 return on investment for every dollar it spends—money it ploughs back into its work. The goal is twofold: immediate change and lasting solutions. EGHI works in partnership with the people on the ground who know the problem and cultures best: ministries of health, nongovernmental organizations, universities, and other local leaders. Together, they design the infrastructure, programs, knowledge, and training that countries need to manage immediate and future health problems.

“Thanks to Emory’s vision and support, and to Jeff Koplan’s leadership, EGHI has become a world-class program, setting the pace for many of the critical global health issues of our time,” says Robert Breiman, another CDC veteran who took over as director in 2013. “It’s exciting to see our faculty generating creative ideas every day. It means that, for all of EGHI’s successes, we are still in the early phases of the global impact we can have.”

Emory President Claire E. Sterk, herself an internationally known public health researcher, says that over the past ten years, she has watched EGHI grow into its early promise, bringing innovation to the field of global health.

“Today, global health challenges are so complex that to make advances we must take a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural approach and work together with local partners,” Sterk says. “The EGHI has done just that by helping countries develop their own strengths and working with students across a wide swath of disciplines to prepare future leaders.”

Going forward, Sterk adds, “Bringing together university-wide connections with partners can create an epicenter for global health innovation in Atlanta. That in turn can spread across the globe to have a significant impact on lives.”
SUGAR HIGH. The heaviest burden of type 2 diabetes has shifted. Four of every five people with the disease now live in low-income countries. India has more cases than anywhere, and K. M. Venkat Narayan believes that’s where to find answers about treatment and prevention, especially in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa (and for 40 million Americans with that ancestry). EGHI funds helped the internationally recognized expert establish a population-based diabetes center with colleagues in Madras, leading Indian public health organizations, NIH, United Health, and private donors to offer $40 million in support. One center program follows fifty thousand healthy people, tracking diet and other behaviors, watching who develops diabetes. The study already has produced surprises. In India, a fifth of diabetes patients are underweight, perhaps because early malnutrition damaged the pancreas’s insulin-producing ability. Fifteen new clinics, established in partnership with local universities and ministries of health, enable additional research on treatment, including the country’s largest study on preventing complications. And a network of one hundred fifty American and Indian investigators, funded by NIH and Fulbright, is taking international collaboration to new heights.

SMOKE SIGNALS. In 2008, EGHI attracted tobacco control expert Pam Redmon to use her knowledge and experience in reducing tobacco’s toll on health in China, the very epicenter of the global tobacco epidemic. China was losing three thousand people daily—a million per year—from smoking and secondhand smoke. Smoking was the norm, and without change, the death rate was expected to triple in twenty years. With modest startup funds, the EGHI China Tobacco Control Program was born, laying the groundwork for the Gates Foundation to provide a $14 million boost. The National Cancer Institute, China CDC and the Think Tank Research Center for Health Development, led by three former China CDC heads, joined in. The program helps governmental health agencies in twenty-two cities bulk up staff assigned to antismoking efforts. Seventeen cities, the first out of the gate, all have adopted smoke-free policies within sectors like schools and hospitals, and six now have smoke-free public places. Cessation efforts include clinics, text reminders, and help for new parents in creating smoke-free homes.

BUZZ OFF. In 2012, EGHI and the Marcus Foundation provided Emory College’s Gonzalo Vazque-Prokopec $47,000, enough to build a small but innovative mosquito control program in Mexico. He was focused on dengue fever; Zika, carried by the same mosquito, would not emerge as a global health crisis for another year. By the time it did, causing devastating birth defects across the Americas and Asia, Vazque-Prokopec had become an expert on the aggressive, daytime-biting Aedes mosquito. He found that mapping neighborhoods at highest risk of infection, then spraying only the parts of the house where the mosquitoes hung out, was as effective as traditional spray-everything-everywhere methods, but
a lot faster and cheaper. When Zika struck, the National Science Foundation and CDC looked at these results and provided him and his Mexican colleagues $1 million to expand the work, fighting Zika and preparing for the next vector-borne health threat. “Emory is unique not only in the capacity we have as a group of faculty and researchers, but also in our ability to interact,” Vazque-Prokopec says. “And I think what EGHI has done is facilitate those bridges in order to make it happen.”

**EXPECTING MORE.**

Ethiopia is one of five countries accounting for half of all maternal deaths. Taking advantage of existing collaborations in Ethiopia, EGHI negotiated a grant from the Gates Foundation. Professor Henry Blumberg asked Ethiopian colleagues what serious problem affected pregnant women during pregnancy and childbirth—for which $100,000 could make a difference? Eclampsia, pregnancy-related hypertension, is the second-leading cause of maternal death in poor African nations (after postpartum hemorrhage). Standard treatment reduces the risk by half. Magnesium sulfate is very safe, very cheap—and very unavailable in Ethiopia. Thanks to the grant, it was distributed to all 107 public hospitals. EGHI funding also has supported new efforts to stem cervical cancer and newborn deaths in Ethiopia.

**BUILDING CAPACITY.**

Without a strong public health infrastructure, how can any country detect, track, and respond to disease outbreaks, much less chronic disease, injuries, and maternal and child health? The US office of the International Association of National Public Health Institutes (IANPHI), housed in EGHI, has worked with local ministries of health to build and develop surveillance and other public health capabilities in some fifty-five lower-resource nations. When Ebola raced across West Africa in 2014, those countries were able to respond more quickly, restricting spread and lowering deaths. And more “CDCs” are in the works. “Having IANPHI’s US office housed in the Global Health Institute has been a great partnership,” says Courtenay Dusenbury, director of the US office. “We have access to US funds including the Gates Foundation, the US CDC, and other major private and nonprofit partners who have been able to work with us on our goal of increasing capacity to national public health institutes.”

**BLUES CLUES.**

Emory medical students working in the Haitian rural highlands saw patients who seemed to be in emotional distress. Any question about depression, however, was met with blank stares. Back at Emory, the students collaborated with anthropology and public health student Bonnie Kaiser on a successful proposal to EGHI. In 2010, they returned to Haiti with Kaiser and the team’s MD-PhD psychiatry adviser. They worked with local providers to adapt US depression screening questionnaires to Haitian language and culture, and conducted training with community health workers in how to identify depression and anxiety and refer people to Partners in Health, one of the few programs in the country providing mental health care. “What’s unique about the way EGHI funds these projects is that it really brings together not only multiple disciplines, but multiple schools,” Kaiser says. “It’s really novel to have that available to students, where you have a funding source that can actually bring together students from widely varied disciplines and work on the same project.”

**ON THE GROUND**

One of the guiding principles behind EGHI projects is a commitment to lasting solutions, not quick fixes. That means working with local communities, health organizations, and government agencies to build infrastructure and capacity. Above, women of the Meherpur District in Bangladesh gather for a focus group to assess their perceptions of an arsenic-filtering water treatment-plant implemented in their community. Photo by Anusheer Mahajan, RSPH, Global Health Student Photography Contest.
RARE CASE One of few PhD-level nurse scientists, Deborah Bruner focuses on the patient experience, examining how cancer treatment redefines their day-to-day lives. She also hopes to mentor more nurses toward funded research.

By Maria M. Lameiras
Photos by Ann Borden
DEBORAH BRUNER is one of the most well-funded researchers in the country.

SHE’S ALSO A NURSE.

When a teenaged Deborah Watkins Bruner envisioned her future, she looked beyond her native Pennsylvania to places where she could study vast seas or search for lost links to ancient civilizations.

It was her mother's pragmatism that reeled her back in and shifted her focus to a career that, while not as romantic, has led to its own rewards.

“I was always interested in science, even before I went to college. I wanted to either be an oceanographer or an archaeologist,” Bruner says. “But I grew up without means, and my mother was very practical, and pointed out that I get sunburned and seasick, so...” she pursued a nursing degree at a local college.

Now Bruner is recognized as an international leader in cancer clinical trials and oncology nursing research, and has been ranked among the top 5 percent of all National Institutes of Health (NIH)–funded investigators since 2012. Last year, Emory’s Nell Hodgson Woodruff School of Nursing was ranked No. 1 in NIH funding among US nursing schools, thanks in part to Bruner’s work.

Bruner is one of what she describes as a “thimbleful” of PhD-level nurse researchers who are able to secure significant funding for evidence-based research in what are often seen as the “soft sciences” of patient-reported outcomes and symptom assessment. Her titles incude Robert W. Woodruff Chair in the School of Nursing; professor of radiation oncology in the School of Medicine; and associate director for outcomes research at Winship Cancer Institute. In 2015, President Barack Obama appointed her as one of five new members of the National Cancer Advisory Board, and in 2016 she was elected to the National Academy of Medicine, one of the highest honors in the field of medicine.

Bruner also is a principal investigator of the National Cancer Institute (NCI)–sponsored NRG Oncology National Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) Research Base. She is the first and only nurse to lead an NCI national cooperative group, and leads studies in cancer prevention, control, screening, post-treatment surveillance, and cancer care delivery. Her breadth of research includes the microbiome and cancer-related symptoms, patient-reported outcomes, sexual function and sexuality after cancer treatment, and comparative effectiveness of radiation therapies.

“The more research I did, the more I realized nurses needed more training in research.”

“Only 1 percent of nurses in the US hold a doctoral degree,” says School of Nursing Dean Linda McCauley. “When you consider that there are three million nurses in the US, that is a tiny little number, and that is counting nursing practice doctorates and academic PhDs. Deb is pretty special.”
Bruner earned a PhD in nursing research from the University of Pennsylvania in 1999, nearly twenty years into her career as a nurse. McCauley, who recruited Bruner to Emory in 2011, would love to see more young nurses follow that example—on a slightly faster track.

“Deb is probably one of the best mentors that I’ve ever witnessed, and her mentorship is critical in building the next generation of nurse scientists. She has this incredible talent of inspiring young investigators to work very quickly and very hard, and that hard work results in rewards in terms of national recognition of their research,” McCauley says. “And I share a passion for helping nursing scientists move more quickly through their development as researchers and to become successful at a much younger age. Nursing has traditionally not done that. Nurses tend to enter research careers much later than in other disciplines, and to make that culture shift and to do it effectively is a small accomplishment.”

Yet many of Bruner’s research interests are grounded in the experiences she had early in her career. While working as a brand-new clinical nurse on a general floor of a Pennsylvania hospital, she met a patient who would steer her toward oncology nursing. The woman was in her fifties, and she was dying of lung cancer.

“She was alert when I walked in the door. She was sitting on the edge of the bed, gasping for breath, and she said, ‘Do you hear that sound?’ I said yes, and she said, ‘I know what that is, it is the death rattle, and no one will sit with me.’ I was so struck with that, I sat with her,” says Bruner. “I began to realize how many doctors and nurses did what they had to do and quickly got out of that room. I really spent a lot of time with her until she died.”

After that, Bruner continued to spend as much time as possible with cancer patients. When the hospital opened a cancer ward, she transferred to oncology nursing and never looked back. While working full time, she earned master’s degrees in nursing oncology and nursing administration, driven by the need for evidence-based validation for treatment protocols.

At that time—in the late 1970s to mid-1980s—patient-reported evidence was not widely considered, with no consistent, quantifiable standards or guidelines for symptom reporting.

“There are many, many nurses—in fact, most nurses—who can give good clinical care.

“In the 1970s, clinicians began using symptom assessments, and that translated into a quality-of-life movement in medicine. We figured out that it is not just having the symptom that matters, but how much it impinges on the quality of your life,” Bruner says.

Over the years, Bruner’s work has informed the NCI’s adverse-event reporting system, an important tool used to grade symptom toxicities associated with chemotherapy drugs, immunotherapies, precision medicine, radiation medicine, and surgery in cancer treatment—work that has made patient-reported outcomes as important as clinical outcomes in changing practice. She recently reported at the American Society for Radiation Oncology’s annual meeting on a potentially “practice-changing trial” contrasting patient-reported outcomes between two radiation treatments.

“The major question was that we had these two treatments, and one of them was cheaper and shorter.” Bruner says. “If you have no difference in survival, and the patients say there is no difference in symptoms, why wouldn’t you treat with the shorter, cheaper treatment, which would also be more convenient for the patient? It is the patient reports that actually count in this regard.”

Understanding how treatments influence patients’ lives financially and emotionally, by examining living environments and family dynamics, is an important focus of Bruner’s research on cancer treatments.

McCauley says research like Bruner’s takes into account the realities patients face in their lives, something that is not always accounted for in clinical trials.

“What I love about nurse scientists is they take the most trusted relationship with patients, and they take that trust into research studies. As nurses, we really can see things we believe other health professionals don’t ever get to see because of the level of trust patients give us. It is really exciting that nurses can study some of this and layer on this human experience,” McCauley says.

Although she has long been away from clinical nursing, Bruner says her research is driven by the desire to improve the practice of oncology care and nursing as a whole.

“Most nurses go into nursing because they love people, and they realize at some point they have to make a decision whether to pursue clinical care or research. When my mentees ask me about this, I say that there are many, many nurses—in fact, most nurses—who can give good clinical care,” she says. “There are less than a handful with PhDs who can teach and do research.”
my talent for is mentorship of a much-needed research workforce in nursing.”

Walter Curran, executive director of Winship Cancer Institute, has worked with Bruner for many years as a group chairman and a principal investigator of NRG Oncology. He calls her a major leader in research that examines cancer treatment outcomes from the patient perspective.

“She leads one of four national research groups and is the first researcher leading a group to come from a nursing background. It is a different perspective, and she has not been afraid to apply novel tools to that research,” Curran says. “Other people have taken the patient approach, but it is also about the quality of her research, the quality of ideas, and the rigor with which it is applied.”

Bruner says her career path changed direction when she understood that as a researcher, she could not only care for individual patients, she could gather and analyze evidence to improve the treatment experience and outcomes for many.

“The more research I did, the more I realized nurses needed more training in research,” she says.

Bruner was working at Fox Chase Cancer Center in Philadelphia when she decided to pursue a PhD in nursing research at the University of Pennsylvania, with the encouragement of her mentor, Gerald Hanks, then chair of radiation oncology at Fox Chase.

“I wish I could say I had a woman and a nurse as a mentor, but it was a male physician who just opened tremendous doors in research for me. As a good mentor does, he gave me not only advice, he gave me opportunity,” Bruner says. “There are still very few women in my position. We cannot leave it just for women to mentor women. We need men to mentor women, and I credit much of my career to good mentorship.”

Canhua Xiao, assistant professor at the School of Nursing, came to Emory as a postdoctoral fellow to work with Bruner, who was her PhD adviser at the University of Pennsylvania. She says Bruner was instrumental in helping her to hone her research interests, which include studying fatigue and the role of antiinflammatory signaling in patients with head and neck cancer. Bruner also has helped guide her and other nurse researchers through the complex task of securing research funding.

“It is very hard to get funded at this stage, and she has provided guidance on how, logistically, we can conduct studies in ways that attract funding,” says Xiao, who, as a postdoctoral fellow under Bruner, earned a four-year NIH K99/R00 Pathway to Independence award to study the role of pro- and anti-inflammatory signaling in fatigue in head and neck cancer patients.

This year, while still completing the R00 study, Xiao became the recipient of a $1.5 million NIH/National Institute of Nursing Research R01 grant to study epigenetic mechanisms of inflammation and fatigue in head and neck cancer patients.

“Mentorship is really important for scientific development and learning the way of communicating with other scientists, how to make a team work, how to conduct the research project in a very scientifically rigorous way,” Xiao says. “These are some of the things you can’t learn from a textbook or from your education. You learn them from the senior faculty.”

As the first director of faculty mentoring at the School of Nursing and associate director for mentorship, education, and training at Winship, Bruner means to pass on the same kind of wisdom and guidance she was fortunate to receive.

“I would like to be one-half as good a mentor as [Hanks] was to me,” she says. “I would like women to be able to say, ‘I was mentored by a woman and a nurse,’ and I would like physicians to be able to say they were mentored by a woman and a nurse.”
THE LONG-AWAITED NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY AND CULTURE IS HERE AT LAST

By Maria M. Lameiras
Photos by Jonathan Timmes
In September, the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) opened on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., after decades of voices calling for a space dedicated to the complex, painful, inspiring, and evolving story of African Americans.

Emory alumnae Michelle Joan Wilkinson 97G 01PhD and Rhea Combs 09PhD are curators at the new museum, contributing their knowledge of African American art, media, and history to the space, which has already had a profound impact on visitors.

Wilkinson works on projects related to contemporary black life and is cocurator of two inaugural exhibitions at the NMAAHC: A Changing America: 1968 and Beyond and A Century in the Making: Building the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which chronicles the history of the museum itself and the challenges of bringing it to life.

“We knew we had to tell the story of how we came to be. Instead of a plaque about it, we wanted to talk about how we did it, why the building is where it is, and why it looks like it does. It is the creation story about the people who were involved in getting the legislation passed to make it happen,” she says, adding that efforts to establish a memorial to the African American experience in Washington date back one hundred years.

“So many people fought for this building; they organized and signed petitions to get to a point where it is open, not just a piece of paper authorizing it, but a building you can walk into. I have seen people come onto the grounds of the museum and stop and kiss the ground,” Wilkinson says. “One of the things people repeat to me—whether they are white, black, Asian, whatever they may be—is that it is not just what is in the museum, but conversations that are happening in the museum that matter. The memories, experiences, and lessons being shared that we also had happening in the gallery. It is a very emotional space, there are many hard and difficult things in the subject matter, but there are also places of joy and jubilation. You don't leave with just one feeling or emotion. It takes you through a journey of what it has been like to be African American in this country.”
FINDING COMMON GROUND

A native of Detroit, Combs says she wasn’t “the kid who went to the museum every weekend,” but her mother made sure she and her older sister were exposed to the arts while growing up. On a visit to the Detroit Institute of Art, Combs recalls being swept up by the massive mural *Detroit Industry* painted by Mexican artist Diego Rivera.

Panels of the imposing work show the rhythm of workers in the auto factories of Detroit, an industry in which many of Combs’s extended family members were involved. The mural also touches on issues of race and gender, subjects that would one day inform Combs’s academic scholarship.

As an undergraduate at Howard University, Combs gravitated toward a major in media and film, dreaming of being “a Barbara Walters,” and began to develop a focus on media representations of race and gender. Encouraged by a professor to dive deeper into those interests in graduate school, Combs earned a master’s degree from Cornell University, where she focused on Africana studies and film. By the time she completed her master’s degree, Combs knew she wanted to pursue museum curating as a career.

“Being a curator blended my interest in public scholarship and simultaneously allowed me the chance to explore intellectual questions that intrigue me,” she says.

Combs worked for several years in the museum world before coming to Emory, including a contractual position at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History in the Program of African American Studies, where she had the chance to curate a film series and conference that featured many of the scholars she studied in graduate school. Later she worked at the Chicago Historical Society (now museum) and other cultural institutions in the area.

Combs eventually chose to pursue a PhD at Emory because of the university’s Institute for the Liberal Arts (ILA), known for its interdisciplinary nature.

“I kind of bristled at the idea that I had to go down a strict disciplinary path if I pursued a PhD,” says Combs, who concentrated on film, gender, and African American cultural production at Emory. “In the ILA, I was able to continue my curatorial interests while continuing to delve deeply into all the different things that were appealing to me intellectually.”

After completing her coursework, Combs worked as an assistant curator at the Spelman College Museum of Fine Art while working on her dissertation, “Exceeding the Frame: Documentary Filmmaker Marlon T. Riggs as Cultural Agitator.” Later she worked as director of outreach at the National Black Programming Consortium in New York, an organization dedicated to fundraising for projects by African American documentary filmmakers, before moving to Oregon for a postdoctoral fellowship at Lewis and Clark University in Portland.

Combs is now curator of photography and film at the NMAAHC and head of the museum’s Earl W. and Amanda Stafford Center for African American Media Arts (CAAMA). Her projects include curating and working on NMAAHC’s photography book series, Double Exposure, including a preview exhibition she cocurated: *Through the African American Lens: Selections from the Permanent Collection*.

When she joined the NMAAHC, “I felt that all of the moments in my life had built me up to this,” Combs says. “Since joining the museum as a curator, it has been a whirlwind. It’s been exhausting, exhilarating, and surreal. It is truly a once-in-a-lifetime, blessed opportunity.”

MOVING PICTURES

Combs travels the US with Saving Our African American Treasures, an ongoing outreach program created to collect and preserve historical materials held in homes and personal collections.
In addition to her work at the museum, Combs travels the country collecting films and photos from museums and individuals for the NMAAHC’s permanent collection.

“It is important to showcase the work of photographers, both known and lesser known, in order to tell the complicated, rich, and nuanced story of African Americans,” she says. “We can do that with polished, fine art photographs done by renowned image makers, but also in a rich and honest way through the experiences of everyday people.”

The images and films Combs has collected are being displayed in an inaugural exhibition in the CAAMA gallery called *Everyday Beauty*, which explores African American life and culture by highlighting one hundred images during the course of one hundred years, from 1870 to 1970.

One of the most compelling pieces Combs features in the exhibition is the photographic work created by New York native Laura Fitzpatrick, an amateur photographer who created a scrapbook of photos and detailed notes between 1937 and 1947.

“The things that were highlighted in this photo album speak to the importance of capturing the day in the life of African Americans through photos. This woman’s work literally captures ten years of the same friends in a neighborhood in Brooklyn and encapsulates that time in history,” Combs says.

The Fitzpatrick collection came to the museum through Save Our African American Treasures, one of the NMAAHC’s outreach initiatives focused on collecting and preserving African American material culture.

“The museum reached out to various communities throughout the country and talked with people who have treasures in their homes,” Combs says. “It was not a scouting expedition, but an opportunity for people to know that their materials are valued and to discuss the conservation and preservation of those materials.”

By collecting artifacts that provide a window into the lives of African Americans, Combs hopes to highlight the commonalities among all Americans.

“The hope I have is that this museum will bring us closer together as a nation. By examining the various inaugural exhibitions, a visitor can learn of the distinct history and culture of African Americans, but also witness the commonalities that bind us together as a human race,” she says.

“The hope I have is that this museum will bring us closer together as a nation.”
TELLING THEIR STORIES
A native of Brooklyn, Wilkinson says her own experience of learning about African American artists and writers came from spending afternoons and weekends at the public library during elementary school.

“It was before African American was a term that was used. I remember reading black authors, poetry, and novels by black writers, and feeling this wonderful feeling. These stories weren’t actually my stories, they were stories about the 1930s and 1940s and 1950s, but some of the experiences and voices I could hear in the characters were people I could relate to,” she says. “Even though I could not get that in the school system, there were avenues even then where I could see that people could write their own stories.”

After graduating from Bryn Mawr in 1993, Wilkinson also was attracted to Emory’s ILA because of its interdisciplinary opportunities. She earned graduate certificates in comparative literature and women’s studies, and a PhD focusing on black cultural studies.

Her dissertation explored the parallel development of the black and Puerto Rican arts movements during the turbulent 1960s and 1970s.

“I was looking at what was happening in the social spaces where those communities lived—spaces that became locations for art and music reflecting the social mandates of the time—and the ways in which these communities were supporting and defining what artists should create,” she says.

In 1999, Wilkinson became an assistant professor of African American, Puerto Rican, and Caribbean literature at Bard College in New York. It was during a visit to New York City in fall 2001 that she fell in love with the idea of a museum career.

“I was in the city for a movie, and we walked by the Studio Museum in Harlem,” says Wilkinson. “You could see into portions of the museum, and you could see that inside it was festive and the space was very alive at nine o’clock on a Friday night. There were so many places where people could be, and they were there. I remember wondering what was it they were doing that was creating this turnout and excitement and engagement.”

The following spring, she took a leave of absence from Bard and became an unpaid curatorial intern at the Studio Museum, which collects and explores the work of African American artists and those of African descent. Although Wilkinson had never done curatorial work before, she immediately felt it fit her skills as a researcher, scholar, and editor—researching, writing, organizing ideas, and translating them for the public. From that point on, Wilkinson says, she “had some foot in the museum world.”

After working with the Studio Museum, Wilkinson completed a postdoctoral fellowship in Latino studies at the Smithsonian American Art Museum in 2002, and then worked with the National Gallery of Art in 2003 on its Romare Bearden exhibition. In October 2007, she became director of collections and exhibitions at the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture in Baltimore.

She was hired as a curator for the new NMAAHC in March 2014.

“It’s a dream job, personally and professionally,” Wilkinson says. “As curators, it is our mandate to identify different collecting areas and objects and to seize opportunities for collecting around such events as contemporary protests or to develop more expertise in collecting around technology. It is almost like reporting stories. We are still pursuing and helping to tell those stories.”

“Day Dream
Wilkinson followed the creation of the NMAAHC from the beginning, attending town hall meetings after the museum was established by an act of Congress in 2003. Working there as a curator, she says, is a dream job.
The Power of Persistence

Alex Schultz 15AH wanted to be a physician assistant. Now he’s also an inspiring example of what can happen when you just won’t give up. Story on page 41.
When Rick Monk 94C was an Emory student, he found a bicycle in a house he lived in and started riding it to campus. Cycling became his primary mode of transportation.

Now he’s giving that “wind in your hair” sensation back to people who can no longer pedal themselves.

In March 2016, Monk and a group of volunteers launched the Washington, D.C., chapter of Cycling without Age, a nonprofit organization started by Ole Kassow in Copenhagen, Denmark. An avid cyclist, Monk learned about the program from a TED Talk video and was inspired to reach out. Kassow connected Monk, an attorney who works with both for-profit and nonprofit organizations and businesses, with two other D.C.-based cyclists who were also interested. The trio spent several months fundraising the $10,000 needed to purchase one of the fully assembled, custom-made rickshaw bicycles designed for the organization.

Cycling without Age works simply: Volunteers sign up to take elderly residents for leisurely bike rides so they can enjoy getting outdoors and interacting with the community. There are now more than 225 chapters around the world.

“It is amazing, the reactions people have,” Monk says. “They are either immediately enthusiastic or a little apprehensive, but once you get someone comfortable with the idea, they are surprised at how much fun it is.”—Maria M. Lameiras

Emory Cares International Service Day drew more than 1,500 alumni to perform ninety service projects in nine countries and fifty-six cities around the globe in the effort’s fourteenth year. Pictured (clockwise from top) are groups in Cincinnati, Atlanta, Chicago, and Triangle, N.C.
As the eyes of the world focused on the athletic events during the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio last year, Ben Arnon 98C focused his camera lens on the periphery.

Arnon’s perspective on the Rio Olympics earned him a solo exhibition that ran from October through December at Chelsea Market in New York City. “My goal in photographing the 2016 Summer Olympic Games in Rio was not only to make photographs highlighting epic athleticism, but also to capture the everyday life and the Olympic spirit as it manifested itself outside of the sports venues,” Arnon says. “In Rio, life continued to move forward. Despite facing an economic and political crisis, everyday Cariocas [Rio residents] kept living. They proudly shared their city with millions of people from around the world.”

As a visual journalist, Arnon focuses his work on documentary reporting, street portraiture, and the impact of human existence on urban landscape, examining themes of socioeconomic, racial, and class dynamics with “unflinching honesty.”

While a student at Emory, Arnon completed an honors thesis for his major in interdisciplinary studies in society and culture titled “Packaging Racial Identities: Market Segmentation in the US Recorded Music Industry.”

Arnon’s thesis examined the ways in which race has historically been used in the production, distribution, and marketing of recorded music. He also has an MBA from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Now a regular contributor of social commentary to Huffington Post, Arnon has worked in media for more than eighteen years at companies including Jersey Films, Universal Pictures, Universal Music Group, Yahoo! Media, Blue State Digital, Wildfire, and Google.

—Michelle Valigursky
Darin Hammers 11MBA has been appointed president and chief executive officer of Cogentix Medical, a global medical device company. He was also appointed to the board of directors at Cogentix. In January 2016, Hammers was promoted to chief operating officer and had been serving as interim president and chief executive officer since May 2016. Hammers’ experience includes more than 25 years of increasing leadership roles in urology sales. He joined Cogentix Medical predecessor company Uroplasty as vice president of global sales in 2013. Previous positions include roles with Bard Medical Division of C. R. Bard and with Boston Scientific.

Staci Riordan 93C works with designers, manufacturers, retailers, and entertainers providing strategic, business, and legal advice. A philosophy and religion major at Emory, she went on to a successful career in fashion before heading to law school at Loyola. Riordan is a pioneer in fashion law, handling both transactional and litigation matters for companies of all sizes—from start-ups to publically traded multinational companies. She is a partner in Nixon Peabody’s intellectual property counseling and transactions practice and heads their fashion law team.

Cale Lennon 99G is currently director of licensing in Emory’s Office of Technology Transfer, where he oversees the industry contracting group and manages the licensing of a portfolio of technologies. Prior to joining Emory, Lennon worked in Tulane University’s Office of Technology Transfer and Business Development. While at Tulane, he held the positions of senior licensing associate, associate director, and interim executive director. He was previously a mechanical design engineer at United Technologies Pratt and Whitney where he designed jet engine hardware for the F/A 22 Raptor fighter.

Jason Esteves 10L serves as senior director and corporate counsel for litigation for Equifax, a consumer reporting agency based in Atlanta, considered one of the three largest American credit agencies in the United States. Prior to working at Equifax, Esteves was an associate at McKenna Long and Aldridge. In 2013, Esteves was elected to the Atlanta Board of Education and currently serves as the board member for At-Large Seat 9. Before attending Emory Law, Esteves taught middle school in the Houston Independent School District as part of Teach for America. He is married to Ariel Morris Esteves 10MSN.

John Xerogeanes 92M, known as “Dr. X” to his staff and patients, is a professor of orthopedic surgery at Emory University as well as an adjunct professor at Georgia State and Mercer universities. Xerogeanes has been the head orthopedist and team physician for Georgia Tech, Emory, Agnes Scott College, and the Atlanta Dream of the WNBA since 2001. He is the medical director for the Atlanta Hawks NBA team, which will open its new training and sports medicine center in Brookhaven later in 2017, and team physician for the Atlanta Braves major league baseball team.

Stephanie Venn-Watson 00MPH, a veterinary epidemiologist and director of clinical research at the National Marine Mammal Foundation in San Diego, discovered that dolphins are susceptible to metabolic syndrome, or prediabetes, just like humans. But dolphins that ate a diet high in a saturated fat—C17, which is found in butter and whole milk—had lower levels of prediabetes than other dolphins. So she put a group of dolphins with metabolic syndrome on a diet high in C17 for six months. The animals’ insulin levels came down and their glucose normalized; they were no longer prediabetic.
When an athlete is selling himself to a team, he doesn’t usually include fumbles on his highlight reel. But Alex Schultz 15AH believes that those moments are what helped him find success. “That stuff is there as an opportunity,” Schultz says. “How you respond to it determines what kind of person you are.”

The fifth of seven children, Schultz grew up in what he calls “controlled chaos,” but his physician father’s steady reliability and the love and support of his paternal grandparents helped give him the confidence to pursue his goals. One of those was to become a physician assistant.

Before securing a spot in the physician assistant (PA) program at Emory in 2013, Schultz applied to twenty-seven PA programs in three years. He got rejection after rejection—each time working harder, taking more classes, striving to improve his odds of acceptance. Emory, his top choice, was one of only two schools that remained on his list every year, despite his conviction that it was his longest shot at the career he’d envisioned since his sophomore year of college.

Raised in Maryland until he was eight, Schultz spent his adolescence in New Orleans, moving often and weathering his parents’ divorce when he was thirteen. One constant in his life was football. He excelled as a linebacker on his high school team and was recruited by local universities. But Schultz had a goal—to return to Maryland and play for his beloved University of Maryland (UMD) Terrapins. After a year at Towson University, he was accepted as a transfer student to UMD in College Park for fall semester 2005.

Just days before walk-on tryouts for the Terrapins, Hurricane Katrina bore down on New Orleans. Schultz’s family got out of the city, but his father’s business was damaged. It would be months before he reestablished his practice.

Although Schultz had made the UMD football team, worry over his family back home and his grandmother in Baltimore, who had been diagnosed with colon cancer, caused his grades to tank. His coaches were on his case, and he was in danger of academic suspension. The next semester, he took on extra courses and managed to bring his GPA up.

During the next couple of years, Schultz graduated form UMD and went through an emergency medical technician (EMT) program, working for a private ambulance company and volunteering with a local fire department while taking classes to bolster his resume for PA program applications.

While researching PA schools, Schultz discovered Emory’s program, which was among the top four in the country. His first six applications included both Emory and Northwestern University, where his future wife, Monica Raugitinane, was in graduate school. He got back six rejection letters. He applied again in 2011—the same year he lost his beloved grandparents just five days apart—with the same result.

Undeterred, he sent his third round of applications in summer 2012. The following January, Schultz got an email from Emory. The subject line: Interview. “My heart dropped. It said, ‘You are invited to interview.’ I’d always told myself, if they would just give me a chance, I won’t let them down,” he says. “I didn’t expect it to be Emory.”

Initially placed on the Emory program’s wait list, in April Schultz got a phone call offering him admission.

Now a practicing physician assistant in Decatur, Schultz has finished one journey and begun another. “Something my coach always said was, ‘You can get better or you can get bitter,’ ” Schultz says. “It just goes to show that there is always a silver lining, there is always an opportunity to find happiness.”—Maria M. Lameiras
Laura Searcy ’91MSN is the 2016–2017 president of the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners, an organization with more than 8,500 members. Her focus as president is on strengthening leadership, mentorship, and collaboration within her profession and across health disciplines. She has more than 25 years in clinical practice, health policy and advocacy, child and adolescent injury prevention, substance abuse prevention, and government affairs. She is a cofounder of the Georgia Coalition of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses. Searcy practices in Marietta, Georgia, at WellStar Kennestone Regional Medical Center, where she cares for newborns.

Seniye Groff ’86OX spent her early career designing and implementing training programs for insurance industry sales and service personnel. Her success led to executive positions with Via Training, where she led instructional design and oversaw creative services, client services, and human resources. In 2008 she launched Groff Solutions, which focuses on human resources, training, management coaching, and organizational development in Portland, Oregon. A frequent presenter at training and human-resource symposiums throughout the US, she serves high-profile clients such as Berkshire Hathaway, Hanna Andersson, Vests, Nike, and Columbia Sportswear.

Alisha L. Gordon ’15T is new executive for spiritual growth for the United Methodist Women in New York. In this role, Gordon shapes the lives of more than 800,000 United Methodist women across the world. “It has been exciting utilizing so many of the experiences and skills I acquired in my personal, professional, and academic life. My work with United Methodist Women has created an opportunity for my passions and gifts to shine in meaningful, life-giving work,” says Gordon. Gordon, a native of Decatur, took over the role on August 1.

Military, civic leader
David Poythress

David Poythress ’62OX ’64C ’67L, former Emory trustee, attorney, a two-time candidate for governor, and commander of the Georgia Army and Air National Guard during the Iraq, Afghanistan, and Bosnian wars, died January 15. He was seventy-three.

Poythress received his political science degree, law degree, and commission as a US Air Force officer at Emory then entered active duty as an assistant staff judge advocate at Bergstrom Air Force Base in Texas in 1967. He served four years on active duty, volunteering for service in Vietnam and spending a year as defense counsel and chief of military justice at Da Nang Air Base. After active duty, he continued in the Air Force Reserve, retiring in 1998 with the rank of brigadier general.

Before seeking elected office, Poythress was an assistant attorney general, deputy state revenue commissioner, and chairman of a study committee Governor George Busbee appointed to tackle the thorny issue of nursing home reimbursements from Medicaid. This and his subsequent work on Medicaid led to him being nicknamed the “Mr. Fix It” of state government.

In 1979, Busbee appointed Poythress secretary of state after the death of incumbent Ben Forston. Poythress ran for a full term as secretary of state in 1982 but was defeated in the Democratic primary by Max Cleland.

Poythress took a ten-year break from politics and practiced tax law in Atlanta before jumping back into politics in 1992. He won a special statewide election for labor commissioner against Democratic incumbent Al Scott of Savannah. In 1994, he was elected to a full term as labor commissioner.

In 1999, Governor Roy Barnes appointed Poythress to lead the Georgia Army and Air National Guard. Governor Sonny Perdue reappointed him in 2002, promoting him to lieutenant general and making him the state’s first three-star adjutant general.

Poythress was on several boards and was vice chairman of the Board of the National Guard Association of the United States and a two-term chairman of the Board of the State YMCA of Georgia. He recently worked as a consultant and adviser to international companies in the defense industry.

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The Master of Arts in Bioethics program provides advanced, interdisciplinary, and career-building training for professionals and students motivated by the social and ethical challenges in medicine, health, and the life sciences.

I have admiringly watched the Emory program grow and prosper. It is clearly one of the premier master’s of bioethics programs in the United States.

—Arthur L. Caplan, the Drs. William F. and Virginia Connolly Mitty Professor of Bioethics, and director, Division of Medical Ethics, New York University

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FOUNDATION OF FAITH: In the time between the Testaments, the Greeks have taken over the world, but Jerusalem is still the same backwater city. Jason wants to help his hometown rise to a new age of prosperity and influence, but how far is he willing to go? In *Day of Atonement*, author David deSilva 95PhD invites readers into Judea during the tumultuous years leading up to the Maccabean Revolt.

A ROYAL MYSTERY: Maya is cursed. With a horoscope that promises a marriage of Death and Destruction, she has earned only the scorn and fear of her father’s kingdom. In her debut novel, *The Star-Touched Queen*, author Roshani Chokshi 13C reveals how Maya navigates becoming Akaran’s queen and Amar’s wife while unraveling an ancient mystery that spans reincarnated lives to save those she loves the most.

NO “I” IN TEAM: Today everyone talks about collaboration. It’s the buzzword of the twenty-first century. In *Enabling Collaboration: Achieving Success through Strategic Alliances and Partnerships*, Martin Echavarria 90OX 92B, a business collaboration expert, sets out to improve the success rates of strategic alliances and partnerships with a process that can be applied to any industry of any size.

SUPER PICKY: Donning his apple-red cape and aviator’s helmet, Mr. Particular is ready to save the world. As long, that is, as it doesn’t involve tucked-in shirts, squishy mud, the smell of coconut, and humming, among other things he dislikes. Using a comic-book format, author and illustrator Jason Kirschner 95C offers an amusing spin on sensory aversions with *Mr. Particular: The World’s Choosiest Champion*.

MIND OVER MATTER: With all the struggles of modern life, it’s easy to get lost in a quagmire of stress, worry, and indifference. In *A Mindful Morning*, David Dillard-Wright 99C 02T outlines how you can channel this ancient tradition as part of your daily morning routine. With two hundred inspiring quotes and short, easy mindfulness exercises, you’ll learn how to begin your day with a clear head and positive energy.

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2016 Emory Medalists

RECIPIENTS SHARE A DEDICATION TO HISTORY, HUMILITY, AND SERVICE

Perry Brickman 53C and Charles "Pete" McTier 61B have a few things in common. They are proud Emory alumni, they were taught from a young age to give back to their communities, and they share the honor of being the 2016 recipients of the university’s highest alumni honor, the Emory Medal.

In 2012 Brickman organized the production of a documentary film, From Silence to Recognition: Confronting Discrimination in Emory’s Dental School History, which brought to light discrimination faced by Jewish dental students between 1948 and 1961. For his work, he was selected as one of 175 Makers of History by the university.

Recounting his student experience, he noted, “You just get up pretty quickly, dust yourself off, and move on. That’s it. And that’s what I did.” He is deeply proud of Emory’s response to his research. “There would not have been a story had it not been for Emory,” Brickman said. “The thing that we have to all know is that we can always do better. You can make things right. And they did.”

Brickman practiced oral surgery in the Atlanta area from 1961 to 2004. He was a founding member and past president of the Georgia Society of Oral Surgeons, and served seven years on the Georgia Board of Dental Examiners. He is an honorable fellow of the Georgia Dental Association.

McTier is a director of Coca-Cola FEMSA and the CDC Foundation and a trustee of the Pediatric Center of Georgia, the Georgia Research Alliance, and the Task Force for Global Health. He is a past director of AGL Resources and SunTrust Bank, Atlanta, and a past president of the Commerce Club.

An emeritus member of the Emory Board of Trustees, McTier served on the executive, academic affairs, and public policy committees, and continues to serve as a member of the university’s Robert W. Woodruff Health Sciences Center Board. McTier is past president of the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation, Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation, Lettie Pate Evans Foundation, Lettie Pate Whitehead Foundation, and Ichauway. He led the foundations as they played active roles in many of Atlanta’s major civic initiatives, including the creation of Centennial Olympic Park and the Chattahoochee River Greenway, the establishment of the Joseph W. Jones Ecological Research Center at Ichauway, and advancements at the Woodruff Arts Center, Central Atlanta Progress, and the Georgia Research Alliance.

Emory Medal recipients are recognized for their service to the university, to the Emory Alumni Association, or to a constituent alumni association; service to the community; and achievement in business, the arts, the professions, government, or education. Two hundred Emory alumni and friends have been awarded the Emory Medal.—Michelle Valigursky
A more realistic answer acknowledges that although the president has a tremendous amount of power, it is not absolute and he must find ways to influence followers beyond his formal power. That is, in order to lead effectively, he must gain and exercise informal power as well, including that which can only be earned through respect given by citizens and other leaders. The power of relationships, networks, and social capital cannot be underestimated.

Further, there is still another kind of power. It is moral authority. It is the power that comes from being on the side of justice and mutual respect. How Trump and those opposing him will appeal to justice is more than a question of idealism—it has to do with the capacity to shape the country’s future. That is why citizens working for causes they believe in play a significant role in the current moment.

So how can President Trump lead us toward a healthy political system, and how can others follow suit? It will require a sea change in attitudes, words, and actions from all sides. We need not expect the president or congressional leaders from either party to make this shift out of mere goodwill or from some sort of conversion experience. Instead, we can hope that they will realize—eventually—that getting things done in Washington will require exercising both informal and moral power. At the same time, citizens can influence the political process—exercising their own social capital and moral leadership.

Douglas A. Hicks is dean and William R. Kenan Jr. Professor of Religion at Oxford College of Emory University.
Lisa Fey 01EMBA
Owner of Lisa Fey Presents LLC, Atlanta-based keynote speaker, business consultant, sales trainer, and improvisational workshop leader

Her planned gift will benefit the Executive Women of Goizueta Scholarship Fund.

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HE SHOOTS, HE SCORES  Emory freshman Nick Tupanjanin, No. 12, goes for a shot during the men’s basketball matchup versus Brandeis University on January 27. The Eagles went on to win the game with a score of 94–85.