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ON CAMPUS

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FOR LIBRARIES AND  
MEDIA CENTERS

EXPLORING  
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# Food & History AT WABASH COLLEGE



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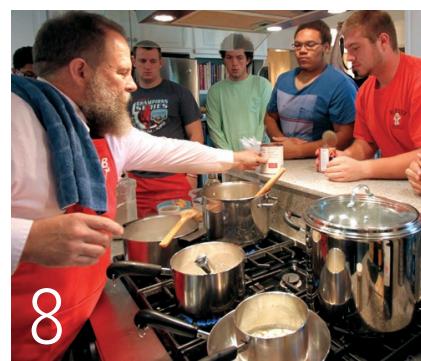


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Dr. Rick Warner, Associate Professor of History and department chair at Wabash College, regularly invites students to his home, where they can cook in his commercial-grade kitchen while discussing the many connections between food and history.

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# EDITOR'S LETTER

It's still a fairly common assumption that women know how to cook—especially Southern women. They may not choose to cook, or their significant others may handle that part of daily life, and I think we're past the point of 1950s gender roles. But...well, let's just be real. Most people assume that any adult, regardless of gender, has some degree of competence in a kitchen.

And then there are people like me, who defy those odds.

I couldn't bake a potato properly. I have never made pasta that wasn't either overcooked or undercooked. I even blew up oatmeal in the microwave. This isn't an exaggeration. Quaker Oats. Everywhere.

So, when I meet people who are fantastic cooks or chefs, I have to assume there's a certain degree of wizardry involved. Dr. Rick Warner's magic isn't just in his food though, because—sadly—I wasn't able to enjoy his cooking. It's in his voice and his passion for teaching, it's in his dedication to Wabash College, and it's in his self-deprecating humor and boundless charm. I wasn't surprised to learn that his students and colleagues adore him and find him endlessly inspirational. I spent less than one hour listening to him, and I wanted to cook something.

I didn't. But I wanted to.

The conversation also made me start paying more attention to the ways food and culture are intertwined, especially in the South. John T. Edge is the director of Southern Foodways Alliance, which is part of the University of Mississippi's Center for the Study of Southern Culture.

In his book *The Potlikker Papers: A Food History of the Modern South*, Edge asserts that Southern food has a central role to Southern identity—in particular the people who are often left from the narrative of the South, the immigrant and African-American cooks.

He states, "These were women, these were often times people of color who didn't get the respect they definitely earned." He aims to pay down that "debt of pleasure" to bring these lives into the narrative and remind us "if you want to dig into Southern food, you're explicitly digging into issues of race, class, gender, and ethnicity."

In "The Real Roots of Southern Cuisine" in *Deep South Magazine*, Beth McKibben interviews Chef Todd Richards from Atlanta. When asked about the resurgence of the popularity of Southern food and why he believed the country is reverting to simpler, more straightforward foods, he responded: "Southern food is really not that simple. It is an essential American storyteller...Southern food encompasses many regions, people, and economics. It's good, healing food born from strife and survival."

Even though I can't cook and have what my daughter generously calls an unadventurous palate, I can appreciate how the food I have grown up with represents cultures colliding and ultimately blending. I'm a believer in anything right now that shows an appreciation for the way a fusion of diverse elements can lead to something delicious.



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*Dr. Richard Warner, Associate Professor of History and department chair, is a former chef who now teaches courses in Latin American, African, and World History at Wabash College. Sparked by his friendships with Mexican nationals during a decade working as a professional chef in California—as well as his early religious studies as an undergraduate—he focused his doctoral work on Latin American history, particularly the evangelization of indigenous peoples of Mexico. In addition to serving as a longtime consultant for College Board and in leadership roles for the Executive Council of the World History Association, he regularly invites students to his home, where they can cook in his commercial-grade kitchen while discussing the many connections between food and history.*

## PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT

# Food & History at Wabash College

### Working in the Mud

Warner is highly involved in campus life, producing soups for the monthly Social Science Colloquium, serving as Secretary to the Faculty, and working with student groups such as Alpha Phi Omega, International Programs, and Unidos Por Sangre. These opportunities to work so closely with his students is one of the most powerful benefits for smaller private colleges, Warner believes, where the level of student-teacher engagement is unmatched. In this environment, he explains, students have mentors and teachers who help them navigate their life away from home.

Additionally, he finds that smaller campuses and more tight-knit classes make “people hold each other accountable,” while encouraging students to support each other. He adds, “They’re all in the mud together.” Students are told honestly what types of challenges are ahead, but instead of feeling isolated and overwhelmed, they build their team and say, “Bring it, man.”

It’s like they are in the army together, he adds, though pointing out that analogy might be an unusual one for him, as a Quaker. The point is this: They have each other’s backs and help

them stay on their feet. That’s also the mark of good chefs, he adds, that they “know how to stay on their feet.”

And it’s not just the students who provide support to one another—it’s the Wabash College professors, staff, and coaches. “There’s a lot of hands in there,” Warner adds, “keeping you from falling in the cracks.” Mental health, especially for young males, is at a tipping point right now. He notes that the male suicide rate is at a peak, and—in our culture—many young men aren’t trained to talk about their feelings or encouraged to talk about their insecurities. “In a small place,” he explains, “I can get some traction on it.”

### Cooking in the Blood

Because he believes chit-chat is always easier in a kitchen, he’s found a way to blend the academic and the personal. Warner’s home is across the street from the college, so—with the endorsement of his wife (a fellow chef and educator)—he developed a commercial-grade kitchen and a space where they could work in small groups to cook and eat something together that connected to their studies. In discussing

the ways cultures became interconnected in the food being produced in the area, the meals become “a metaphor for the fusion of peoples in Latin America.”

Additionally, he explains, cooking is “still in his blood.” Thus, he incorporates food into the Liberal Arts in a variety of ways—not just in the history or origins of particular dishes, but also the chemistry of food or the psychology of food. He wants to use the language of cooking, and an understanding of the multi-cultural influences on dishes, to help his students develop empathy.

Since Warner has long believed the adage that students remember ten percent of what they read but ninety percent of what they experience, he’s sought ways to immerse students in their studies in an experiential, hands-on way more likely to engage them at multiple levels. Because Wabash is an all-male school, Warner also teasingly notes that he’s proud of teaching “a lot of men how to cook.”

### Alumni-Funded Immersion Trips

Warner helped develop Wabash’s immersion learning program, and has taken classes on trips around the world, including two-week



immersions in Kenya. He's teaching a class now about the history of Mexico City which will culminate in a week-long field trip in Mexico City. While it's not unusual for private university students to participate in academic travel, what is unique is the way these trips are funded.

The college has made a long-time commitment to serving students of all economic backgrounds, and they see there's a "lot of social value to this." Though students are responsible for their food expense, passports, and shots, everything else is funded by the college and Wabash College alumni. Warner states, "The learning that comes out of this is just amazing."

### Empathy and Kitchen Tricks

Jose Herrera has been a student in several of Warner's classes and gone on immersion trips to Mexico and Kenya with him; Warner is also the godfather for Herrera's daughter. Herrera shares, "Of the few key people that shaped my education and personal growth, Dr. Warner stands out. He has an uncanny ability to connect with people of all shapes and flavors, reflective of the multifaceted characteristics of his identity as a Quaker, chef, intellectual, educator, advisor,

Warner incorporates food into the Liberal Arts in a variety of ways—not just in the history or origins of particular dishes, but also the chemistry of food or the psychology of food. He wants to use the language of cooking, and an understanding of the multi-cultural influences on dishes, to help his students develop empathy. Since Warner has long believed the adage that students remember ten percent of what they read but ninety percent of what they experience, he's sought ways to immerse students in their studies in an experiential, hands-on way more likely to engage them at multiple levels.

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friend, husband and father. He inherently understands that he has the ability to help shape the community and the individuals within it."

Hai Nguyen was a student in the food tutorial and has helped Warner with food research; he also taught Warner to make pho. When he first arrived in the U.S. six years ago to attend Wabash, Hai notes how homesick and alone he felt. His first class was Warner's "Food

and Liberal Arts," where he learned a great deal and—even more importantly—made an important connection to an educator who impacted the rest of his life.

He recalls a morning that he was late for class because he'd stayed up late talking to his parents back home. When class ended, he apologized to Warner, and he worried he had made a poor initial impression with his tardiness. Warner



invited Hai back to his office for a chat. As Hai described how much he was struggling with homesickness, he remembers Warner saying simply, "It's okay, Hai, I understand."

Hai remembers how emotional he felt in that moment. "Throughout my time at Wabash College, Dr. Warner really took me in, and other students as well. He created a very welcoming atmosphere in the classroom. We, as his students, really enjoy listening to his story about being a chef, cuisine around the world, and most of all, working with him in his kitchen," Hai notes. He also still shows off a kitchen trick Warner taught him—breaking an egg with one hand—whenever he has an opportunity to impress people in a kitchen.

### Bringing the World to His Students

Warner describes Dr. Derek Nelson, Chair of Religion, as his "best faculty friend on campus, co-host of parties, and great sausage-maker." The admiration is mutual. Nelson calls Warner a "champion for his students" and a treasured colleague who "brings the world to his students."

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"In his kitchen, at his table, and in his classroom, there is an emphasis on the student receiving some kind of information or flavor or document from across the globe and across the centuries." — DR. DEREK NELSON

"In his kitchen, at his table, and in his classroom, there is an emphasis on the student receiving some kind of information or flavor or document from across the globe and across the centuries," Nelson explains. What he most loves about his friend is that he will push students to think for themselves about how "that new input from a global source is going to get catalogued, filed and interpreted in the student's own mind."

The student can ask himself if the first-person account he read confirms previous assumptions, or calls them into question; Warner isn't pushing for a particular stance either, Nelson adds—he is just challenging the student to confront his own worldview. "He does so with such hospitality and warmth that students are not defensive," Nelson adds, "but open and searching."

Nelson explains that Warner also brings students to the world. When he and Warner took a group to Germany during a course on the history of Reformation, Nelson recalls that as the afternoon lecture wrapped, a student asked Warner what he planned to do with his downtime. Warner joked that he'd wait to see which direction the students went, and he would head the other way. "This was not to try to get away from the group—far from it," Nelson adds. "Rick just wants students to get out of their comfort zone and experience the wide world in new ways."

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## FACILITIES AND MAINTENANCE

by Noel McCarthy

### Keeping Campuses Safe from Bacteria, Bugs, Rodents, and Insects

Of all the issues you have to deal with, the most unpleasant, and rarely discussed, is probably the subject of pest infestation. Regardless of how minor the problem appears to be, it's not something you can ever ignore or put aside. The repercussions can be grim, and I just don't mean those invasive bugs.

But first, it may surprise you to know that however much you clean and maintain your facilities, you will never make them inhospitable to bugs, be they fleas, ants, bed bugs, lice, ticks, etc. In fact, research has shown that even the nicest and most sanitary home, office, rest home, dorm or fitness center can harbor more pests than one might imagine.

#### Clean Doesn't Mean Bug-Free

It turns out that buildings in well-appointed areas are more biologically diverse. Think of your particular campus from an ecological point of view and chances are good that it's home to a wide range of creatures: birds, bats, squirrels, chipmunks, possum, deer, turkey, and foxes. Now add to that the greater variety of plants and trees that thrive on the campus grounds, and it's easy to see why they appeal to so many more "boarders."

According to Misha Leong, a postdoctoral candidate in the Department of Entomology at the California Academy of Sciences, “Our work overturns the general perception that homes in poorer neighborhoods host more indoor arthropods. Our unexpected, and perhaps counterintuitive finding highlights how much we have yet to learn about indoor ecology.”

## The Main Pests You Have to Deal With

The truth is that the number and kinds of bugs you have to deal with are almost endless, but there are a few that seem to top the list of virtually every facilities manager. They include bed bugs, fleas, cockroaches, ticks, rodents, ants, and flies, among others. However, a few of your main adversaries are listed below and have to be tackled in different ways.

### Bed Bugs

According to one report, bed bugs can be found in 25% of all buildings, and that includes homes, offices, hospitals, college dorms, and stores; in other words, everywhere. Small, oval and brownish in color, adult bed bugs have flat bodies

about the size of an apple seed. Fortunately, they can't fly, and they usually make their way into buildings undetected, brought in with luggage, backpacks, clothing, used beds and couches and other innocent-looking items. A truly massive infestation is easy to spot; otherwise, you'll have to depend on small clues to their presence, such as reddish or rusty stains on sheets or mattresses, or dark spots on sheets, pillows, and along mattress seams. Sorry to say that bed bugs can fit into very small spaces, and can quickly spread from room to room, preferring to live in cracks or other inaccessible spots.

### Rodents

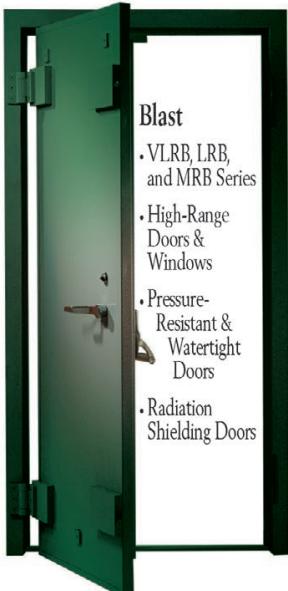
Rodent droppings are an obvious sign that a dorm or a kitchen harbors mice and/or rats, and they're easy to identify. Mice droppings are smooth, small with pointed ends and look a lot like caraway seeds. Rat droppings are shiny, black and about 1/2 - 3/4 of an inch long. Chew marks—on food containers and boxes, as well as on wiring and cupboard doors—are another indication that you have rodents on board.

You will need to inspect baseboards, door frames, doors and inside cabinets to track down rodent hangouts. But you might also see tiny

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footprints or lines from tails dragging in dusty areas. Plus, if you check along baseboards, in corners and near food sources, you may well find the entrance point used by these pests. Another clue to the presence of rats or mice is a lingering, musky odor, that doesn't vanish—even if you open the windows or use an aerosol deodorant.

### Cockroaches

Originating in the Carboniferous era, more than 280 million years ago, cockroaches are among the most adaptable organisms on the planet, which, while admirable, also makes eliminating them a real challenge. Although there are some 4,000 different species distributed worldwide, the type you're most likely to encounter is the German cockroach, which was once the most pervasive pest in American residential and commercial buildings. Unfortunately, for every cockroach you see there are probably scores more hiding inside ceiling spaces and behind the walls—as well as under sinks, inside cabinets and drawers, even kitchen appliances. Predictably enough, cockroaches tend to concentrate in areas where the temperature or humidity is highest, and that can make it difficult to locate their so-called "aggregation sites." However, these pests leave brownish "spotting" at these sites, which helps when you're applying insecticides.

Of course, you may still have to contend with your other two problem pests—namely flies and ants—but these bugs are particularly hard to handle and almost always require the ministrations of a pest management professional.

### Top Campus Attractions for Pests

If a mad scientist had to invent the ideal habitat for today's myriad pest populations, she or he couldn't do better than a university campus. It provides almost everything pests of every type need: food, water, shelter that's (generally) cool in summer and warm in winter. However, some parts of a campus will be more attractive than others to these various and varied interlopers, so let's consider a few of the top pest attractions.

### Dormitories, Residence Halls, and Apartments

Given the life-styles of so many of today's students, it should come as no surprise that their living arrangements attract pests of all kinds. Students are notoriously lax when it comes to household cleanliness: unwashed dishes, open food containers, rarely emptied garbage cans, even dirty laundry left in corners and on floors, are an open invitation to roaches, flies, bed bugs, and so forth. Add to that the fact that many dormitories and apartments see a steady turnover of students—as well as the comings and goings of friends and the inevitable influx of used furniture and personal belongings. This steady traffic makes it easy for bugs to make their way into buildings, where they can rapidly breed.

### Dining Halls and Cafeterias

This is another obvious "hot spot" when it comes to pest management concerns. While the volume of foot traffic varies a lot during the day and evening, the constant flow of students, visitors, catering and maintenance staff makes it easy for a variety of pests to make their way into food service facilities. That's why it's important that

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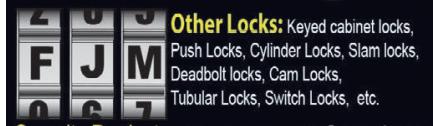
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employees make sure that food is properly stored; that food-preparation areas are kept scrupulously clean; that dirty dishes are washed and stored appropriately; and that kitchen floors and appliances are cleaned and sanitized numerous times a day. Garbage, of course, should be removed frequently and stored in containers that are pest proof.

## Classrooms, Lecture Halls, and Faculty/Administration Offices

Once again, these high traffic areas are particularly prone to pest intrusions, especially if careful attention is not given to rigorous cleaning, regular vacuuming of carpets and rugs, and routine garbage disposal. Another often overlooked problem is students (and perhaps even the occasional faculty member) bringing snacks and other food items into classrooms and lecture halls. The crumbs they invariably leave behind are movable feasts for all sorts of pests. Better to keep them out.

## Restrooms, Showers, and Laundry Rooms

Restrooms, by definition, are unsanitary and, in dorms and residence halls, in need of regular cleaning. This is especially true if the facilities have leaking pipes, or are prone to clogged drains. Student shower areas can also be a problem, since they offer pests an easily accessible source of water.

## Gymnasiums, Stadiums, and Locker Rooms

Stadiums, locker rooms, and gymnasium areas obviously don't get nearly the traffic that other sections on campus do, but they nevertheless provide readily accessible accommodation for any number of pests, especially rats, mice, and squirrels. Facilities managers should ensure that assorted debris and food waste are removed from these areas, especially around food stations or concession stands. Locker rooms, in particular, should be emptied and cleaned frequently, even during vacations.

## You Must Have a Plan

The key to any pest management program is education not just of the students or faculty but all of the university's employees including the President, Deans, the Provost; food service and catering management; grounds and building maintenance teams; security, general administration employees; and all the other teams and groups responsible for the successful running of the university.

Whoever plans and administers these programs should make sure that everyone on staff knows at least the basics of pest management, including being able to recognize both the telltale signs of pests, and their biology and habits. Keep in mind that should you get a report about any pest intrusion, you should act on it immediately. Hesitation can have grave consequences.

## One Last Concern

But there's another reason you need to quickly and decisively deal with any insect infestation: your institution's reputation. As Warren Buffett said, "It takes...years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently."

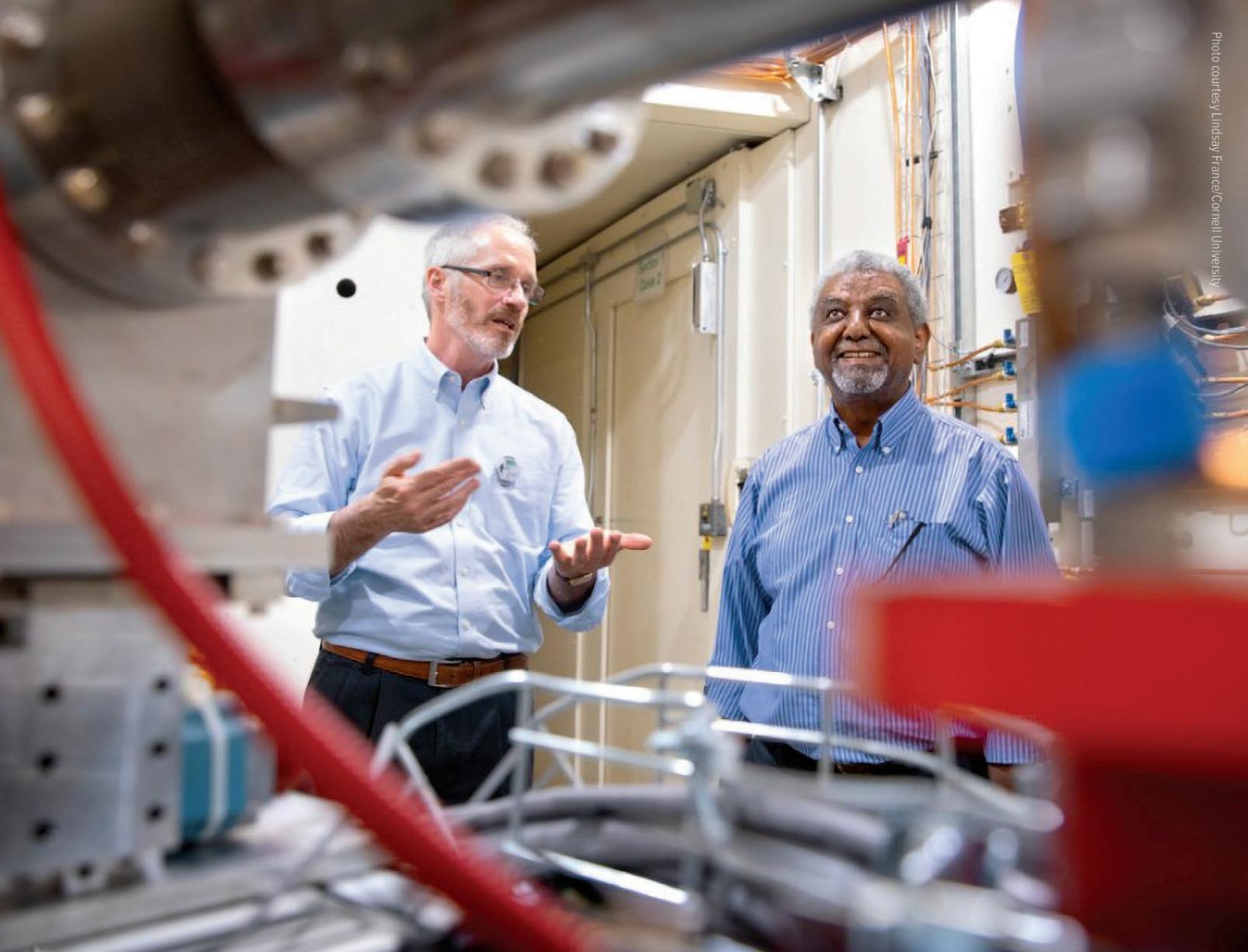
If your students, and especially their parents—to say nothing of alumni donors—get wind of pest infestation, your university can take a real hit. Keep in mind that in these days of social media and almost instant 24/7 communication, one report of pests on campus can mushroom into a tsunami of bad press.

Of course, it is often up to university staff members to deal with these various pest problems. It makes sense, financially and logically. But do not try to tackle a major infestation with campus employees alone. For that you need a reliable, well-established pest management company. Not only will the company be able to deal with the immediate problem, but they will also be able to identify other problems you may not be aware of. Trust their judgment.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Noel McCarthy has worked as a writer and editor throughout his career. A former director for Thomson Reuters, Noel also worked for PwC for 17 years. As staff writer at Sterifab,

Noel has developed a newfound expertise in bed bugs. He has enjoyed learning about these pesky little pests, and their entourage of friends including lice, mites and more.



## LABS AND RESEARCH FACILITIES

by Rick Ryan

### Cornell Announces \$54M from NSF for New CHESS Subfacility

The Cornell High Energy Synchrotron Source, more commonly known as CHESS, entered a new era April 1. A national research facility that annually attracts more than 1,200 users—who conduct X-ray analysis and collect data for research in materials, biomedical and other science fields—CHESS has been funded exclusively by the National Science Foundation since its commissioning in 1980. That changed in April, with Cornell transitioning to a new funding model in which multiple partners will steward facilities at CHESS.

The NSF remains the largest of these contributing partners, and the science agency on July 18 announced that it will provide \$54 million in federal funding over the next five years for a research and education subfacility at Wilson Laboratory, the home of CHESS.

The NSF funding will be provided by its Division of Materials Research, the Directorate of Biological Sciences and the Directorate of Engineering.

The newly funded NSF portion of the facility will be known as the Center for High-Energy X-ray Sciences at CHESS (CHEXS @ CHESS), and will include four beamlines and staff to support high-energy X-ray science user operations, X-ray technology research and development, and CHEXS leadership. In addition to research, CHEXS will support education and training, particularly of researchers in biological sciences, engineering and materials research.

“The renewal of NSF funding for CHESS will ensure America and Cornell University remain at the cutting edge of innovation in high-energy X-ray applications,” said Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer, D-N.Y. “CHESS is a unique training ground for the scientific workforce we need to keep the U.S. competitive, and is part of the lifeblood of our scientific community, enabling researchers to

make advancements in everything from clean energy technologies to stronger, more resilient infrastructure. I have been proud to fight and deliver funding to support CHESS and the NSF, and will continue to do so."

"CHESS is a groundbreaking facility that provides world-class scientific research to upstate New York and the nation, including our military," said Sen. Kirstin Gillibrand, D-N.Y., ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Personnel Subcommittee. "This federal funding will be used to support the Center for High-Energy X-ray Sciences, which will advance the state's research and high-tech manufacturing sectors. CHESS continues to be a leader in upstate New York's innovation economy."

"By supporting CHEXS, NSF is furthering new, unique, experimental capabilities for emerging research in materials, engineering and biology," said Guebre X. Tessema, NSF materials research program director. "The new funding model unleashes a reinvented CHESS to pursue new partnerships with other federal agencies, universities and industry."

"We are always excited to continue our relationship with the NSF," said Joel Brock, CHESS director and professor of applied and

"CHESS is a unique training ground for the scientific workforce we need to keep the U.S. competitive, and is part of the lifeblood of our scientific community, enabling researchers to make advancements in everything from clean energy technologies to stronger, more resilient infrastructure. I have been proud to fight and deliver funding to support CHESS and the NSF, and will continue to do so." — CHARLES SCHUMER

engineering physics. CHESS's most recent grant renewal from the NSF came in 2014.

"This support goes a long way in already securing funding from additional partners," Brock said, "and ensures that this vital X-ray facility will remain productive into the future."

On June 4, CHESS held its annual users' meeting, where Brock and Tessema toured the CHEXS research facility, showcasing the expansive space available to researchers.

CHESS recently completed a \$15 million upgrade, solidifying the lab's standing as a world-leading X-ray source. Earlier this year, Lt. Gov. Kathy Hochul came to CHESS to celebrate the

successful completion of the upgrade, which was funded by New York state. This project improved the infrastructure of the storage ring and CHESS's X-ray beamlines, while also creating jobs by helping to expand the advanced manufacturing sector of central New York.

After the installation of new undulator sources in all of its X-ray beamlines, CHESS is now considered a true third-generation (state-of-the-art) light source, and is equipped for studies of materials at the macroscopic level.

With the recent upgrade and CHEXS's new five-year cooperative agreement from the NSF, the lab is taking the opportunity to engineer a



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While CHESS attracts in excess of 1,200 users from around the world to perform research at the facility, roughly half of the submitted research proposals are denied due to a lack of beamtime availability. By diversifying the funding sources, CHESS hopes also to diversify and expand the research of the lab.

major transition in its funding model and organizational structure. For more than 30 years, the NSF has been the sole steward of CHESS, providing the funding needed to operate the large facility. CHESS will now transition from sole stewardship by the NSF as a national user facility and into a partner-funded laboratory.

According to Brock, this funding reconfiguration presents a rare opportunity to redistribute the nation's synchrotron resources among research communities.

"Diverse groups including plant biology, structural materials and advanced manufacturing are eager to utilize a much larger fraction of the nation's available synchrotron resources," said

Brock. "Using X-rays is a highly desirable technique that can transform your research, and this new NSF funding will help us reach a wider user base."

While CHESS attracts in excess of 1,200 users from around the world to perform research at the facility, roughly half of the submitted research proposals are denied due to a lack of beamtime availability. By diversifying the funding sources, CHESS hopes also to diversify and expand the research of the lab.

"Since the facility owns the equipment, the responsibility for beamlines can be reassigned among the funding partners quickly without having to transfer assets," Brock said. "By enabling partners like the NSF to align their support with

evolving research needs, CHESS is able to offer its new partners access to the synchrotron radiation facility more rapidly."

While other partners contribute money for research at the X-ray facility, the NSF will remain CHESS's largest funding member of these partner organizations. This allows researchers to focus on using the high-flux X-rays at CHESS that are optimized for time-resolved, high-energy applications. These types of X-rays are ideal for researching quantum materials, fuel cells and high-pressure biological processes.

While other synchrotron laboratories are traditionally located at national labs, Cornell is the only U.S. university still operating a large accelerator complex. The university graduates roughly 20 percent of the nation's Ph.D.s trained in accelerator science and advanced X-ray technology, and approximately 60 undergraduates participate in CHESS laboratory research every year.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Rick Ryan is a science communicator for the Cornell Laboratory for Accelerator-Based Science and Education.

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## TEACHING AND TECHNOLOGY

by Jeanna Lucci-Canapari

### PA Online Students Travel to Yale Campus for Hands-on Training

When potential students consider online educational programs, they rarely visualize a traditional classroom setting. “People think we are sitting in a room on a computer all day in our pajamas,” says Yale Physician Assistant (PA) Online student Melissa Smith ’20. Nothing, for Smith and her classmates, could be further from the truth.

Yale’s PA Online students spend the majority of their 28-month program in their home communities, which span from Maine to Hawaii. At the end of their didactic year, however, in December 2018, they gathered in New Haven for what is known as an “Immersion Week”: five days steeped in hands-on training on the Yale campus, and a chance to interact in person with their classmates and instructors. PA Online students complete three Immersion Weeks during their training.

Like many traditional PA programs, the PA Online program consists of a 12-month didactic year, focused on lectures, small group discussions, and simulations, followed by a 16-month clinical experience, spent in rotations in a variety of community practices. The difference is that, except for two Immersion Weeks, students convene strictly online for their didactic year coursework. The Yale PA Online program is unique: it is the first and currently only program in the country offering a nearly complete digital didactic year. No long-term residency in New Haven is required. It is also Yale’s first online degree-granting program.

“The Yale Physician Assistant Online program enables students to stay in their local communities,” says Program Director James Van Rhee, MS, PA-C, associate professor in the Physician Assistant Online program. “This allows them to be close to their support systems and hopefully decrease the stress of graduate studies.” The program has received provisional accreditation from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant. The next site visit is set for spring of 2020, shortly before the first class of students graduate.

Though geographically separated, PA Online students all know each other's faces through their Immersion Week experiences and frequent training sessions that require students to be present in front of their computers, interacting with their instructors and classmates. In Problem-Based Learning, also known as PBL, students gather in a web-based setting with a faculty facilitator, and work through simulations of patient care situations, moving from patient introductions, through treatment and follow-up. While they must be camera-ready for PBL, lectures in the PA Online program are asynchronous, and students can view them whenever and wherever they wish. Utilizing a variety of instruction methods "allows the student to increase their medical knowledge, apply this knowledge, reflect on the application of knowledge, and continue to refine their skills," says Van Rhee.

"There is tremendous value to making a high-quality Yale PA education accessible to a greater number of qualified students, thereby increasing the number of PAs available to meet the nation's growing health care needs, especially in primary care," says Richard Belitsky, MD, Harold W. Jockers Associate

"There is tremendous value to making a high-quality Yale PA education accessible to a greater number of qualified students, thereby increasing the number of PAs available to meet the nation's growing health care needs, especially in primary care. Our goal is to provide an innovative educational experience that blends sophisticated, highly interactive didactic learning with exceptional clinical training at carefully chosen sites throughout the country."

— RICHARD BELITSKY, MD

Professor of Medical Education and associate professor of psychiatry and deputy dean for education. "Our goal is to provide an innovative educational experience that blends sophisticated, highly interactive didactic learning with exceptional clinical training at carefully chosen sites throughout the country."

Immersion Week I occurs early in the didactic year and is dedicated to the Anatomy Lab, in which William Stewart, PhD, associate professor of surgery (gross anatomy), leads the students through the same anatomy preparation given to all YSM students. They also have an

opportunity to practice physical exam skills on each other. In Immersion Week III, held in the final month of the program, students will undergo required summative assessments, which includes written assessments, practical assessments, and Observed Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs). This week also will culminate in celebrating the class graduation.

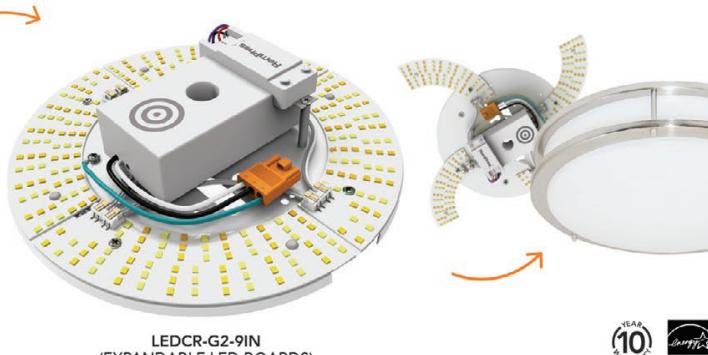
In December's Immersion Week II, students participated in patient exams known as "Sensitives," in which they worked with patient-instructors on vaginal and prostate exams, experiences that could not fully be



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replaced by online instruction. Students also gathered for lively discussions of key topics in bioethics, and for candid test prep sessions, as well as for meals and social events where they had the opportunity to socialize in person, catching up on news and conversations that began online, and transferred easily to shared meals on campus.

In addition to the campus immersions, students receive in-person training through the Clinical Experience in Early Didactic (CEED) program, which provides students with significant clinical time during the didactic year. Students are connected with a preceptor in a community practice near their home, which could be a primary care, urgent care, or specialist practice, and shadow a PA or physician for four to six hours a week from March to December. In CEED, students gain new hands-on patient interaction skills, such as taking histories, reviewing diagnostic tests, and performing routine procedures like suturing, providing a chance to gain confidence before the clinical year rotations, in which they will have more patient care responsibility.

Clinical time near their homes means that students get a head start on practicing as PAs in

the communities in which they will ultimately serve. "A lot of our assignments are in our own community," notes student Mary Garrison '20. She adds that she has been tasked as part of her coursework with locating local resources such as free dental clinics, food pantries, and rehabilitation programs. "I have a list of resources now in my own community that I didn't know existed," she says. This will allow Garrison to connect her future patients with these community resources.

The type of long-distance learning that the PA Online program provides allows students a great deal of flexibility in how they conduct their education. They can balance their full-time education with health, family, or religious obligations, several say, as well as manage their time so they can maximize hands-on time at their CEED clinics. "Because of the asynchronous nature of much of the didactic curriculum, we could do that," says Garrison. After spending time in the clinic, "I could come home, and then do my lectures and my work into the afternoon and evening. You have that flexibility with your schedule, so you can maximize all of the opportunities that they give us."

Students say they often confront an assumption from people outside of the program that an online program cannot foster the same sense of community that on-campus programs enjoy. This is not the case, they say. "We are closer to each other in this program than any other educational program I have been in, brick and mortar or otherwise," says Smith.

Because their home computer is most often their classroom, school is open for PA Online students around the clock. Students make extensive use of group text lists, as well as a very active Facebook group, where students share information, both personal and professional.

"Our professors email us back in the middle of the night, and answer students immediately," says Garrison. "The answers can be shared with the rest of the community in nearly real time." For this community of students, the classroom is always open.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Jeanna Lucci-Canapari is a freelance writer for *Yale Medicine*.

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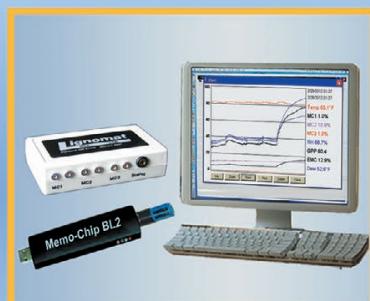


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# CUSTOM FURNITURE

for Libraries & Media Centers:  
**BENEFITS, COSTS, PROCESS & SCHEDULING**

by Bill Huston

Designing for the way we work, the rhythms of our daily routines, and the needs and comfort of our guests creates spaces that are efficient, comforting and inspiring. This attention to detail is cast when libraries are designed: spaces are created for varied purposes, lighting is selected for mood and productivity, and materials are chosen to make statements about what is important to a community.



The considerations so directly translated into a library building design should follow through to the items we touch and use every day: desks where we work, tables for study, seating areas where we hear stories, and quiet places where we reflect, relax, or catch up with the world.

By choosing custom furnishings that work with us, which are specifically designed to reflect the sensibilities of our unique spaces, we not only create a more efficient workspace, but a more inviting community center too. By choosing furnishings that will last for generations, we impart a sense of permanence, a sense of stability in a fleeting world, while demonstrating our commitments to sustainability and less waste for our community and our planet.

Because custom furniture isn't ordered from a published catalog, many "first-timers" have concerns about the process, costs and scheduling involved with custom furniture. Ordering furniture that is built specifically for your space and to suit the functional needs of your library isn't scary or overwhelming. Most custom furniture-makers work hard to make this process easy and comfortable for their clients. We've gathered

some of the most common concerns that project teams have regarding custom furniture, and provide you with some guidance.

### The Many Benefits of Custom Furniture

- Furniture that is designed for your specific needs helps you to be more efficient in your workplace, creating greater productivity, less frustration and less stress.
- Custom furniture can be designed to incorporate architectural elements and materials that are found in your space, providing a unified look throughout. This cohesive aesthetic is comforting, and lends an air of tradition and permanence.
- During the custom furniture design process, the future needs and uses of the furnishings are taken into consideration. This results in furnishings that will last for many, many years, reducing waste and unnecessary expense in the future.

- The most obvious and simplest benefit: with custom furniture you get what you need and want, not a catalog piece that is a compromise in some way.

### How Custom is Custom?

The design of custom furniture is an open book. If you can imagine it, it can be done. Sometimes all that is needed is a simple tweak to a standard design or a slight change in dimension. In other cases, furniture is designed from the ground up to reflect a specific characteristic or to fit in an unusual space, or solve a unique problem.

Making tables and carrels accessible to a person with disabilities, creating imaginative children's furniture, utilizing every inch of space in a reference desk: these are some of the more utilitarian reasons to consider custom.

Architects work long hours to design unique and useful spaces that will make communities proud. Furniture designers do the same. They approach furniture design with an open mind. They listen to their clients' needs, hear their aesthetic preferences, and work to create interesting, useful furniture that brings clarity and cohesiveness to a space.

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**You might consider custom furniture for a variety of projects:**

- a reference desk for a library
- a unique display to house interactive technology for an academic center
- transitional workspaces for a media center that will evolve with technological changes
- cases to display a special collection

## Is Custom Furniture Expensive?

It is common for prospective clients to think of custom furniture as being expensive and out of reach. It doesn't have to be. Companies that make production furniture don't like variations to their standard products which create time consuming and costly diversions in their manufacturing process. The custom changes are marked up dramatically to cover those disruptions.

At a custom furniture shop every piece of furniture is custom and a welcome challenge that the furniture makers are efficient at creating. There is no disruption, no efficiency lost, no dramatic mark-ups. Choices in wood types and materials used can affect price. These options along with design details and engineering changes can be tweaked during the custom design process to work within a budget.

Another very important consideration is that furniture that is built to heirloom quality doesn't need to be replaced multiple times over a lifetime, yielding extremely good value and saving you, the client, considerable money over time.

## Is Custom Furniture Difficult to Order?

It certainly shouldn't be. With a reputable furniture builder, the process of having custom furniture designed and built should be simple, straight forward and rewarding. You and your project team work directly with the furniture designer to develop design direction. Cost quotes are based on specific designs and are adjusted up or down as changes are made to the furniture designs. Be sure your custom furniture builder offers the following to ensure an easy, comfortable collaboration:

- communication can be done in person, by phone, or by email
- initial concepts will be sketched and shared, leading to scaled drawings for your review

- changes can be made as necessary until the final design is reached
- everything is approved by you, the client, before any work begins in the workshop
- your furniture builder will work with your schedule (and the shipper) to provide a seamless delivery & installation
- many custom furniture builders do not charge for design work; ask about this before you begin the process

## Accommodating Orders of Any Size

Custom furniture is suitable for orders of any size. Orders of a single custom table or desk are common, and welcome. Orders large enough to furnish an entire library or academic building are welcome too and will be built to the same exacting quality, working with the client's budget and project schedule. A custom furniture workshop is not a factory. There is no "production line." Instead, custom furniture is usually built one piece at a time. And yet, when a larger order is placed, the furniture

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builders gain some efficiencies which make those projects ease through the workshop smoothly as well. It is also quite common to combine unique pieces of custom furniture with stock items from other suppliers. This can be a great way to draw attention to a special collection, or to differentiate spaces.

**Custom furniture is suitable for orders large and small:**

- A suite of furniture for an academic library including the special collections room, the library director's office, teaching rooms, reading & study tables, computer stations, atlas stands, bookcases, display cabinets and chairs.
- A fun, unique table for a community room or children's room in a library
- coffee tables and end tables for a public space or lounge area
- a custom podium with a university seal

**At What Stage of My Project Should I Begin to Consider Custom Furniture?**

Furnishings specifications often come toward the end of a project, when budgets are narrowing and project managers see the end of their timeline looming. Decisions are then made in haste and furniture is often chosen based on lead times and bottom lines, rather than quality, longevity or a cohesive environment.

We recommend that furniture be considered early in every project. As the use of space is determined with the architect or project manager, the furnishings needed in those spaces should be discussed. Needs for custom designs should be noted, and the process of designing those pieces should begin right along with the design of the space. As the budgets are created for the building envelope and the interior construction, the furnishings should be discussed and a realistic furniture budget should be established.

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Huston & Company designs and builds custom furniture for libraries, schools, colleges & universities, as well as corporate spaces and private residential homes. Huston & Company has been building custom furniture for over 30 years, and was recently awarded Product of the Year by the Modern Library Awards. Huston & Company is located in Kennebunkport, Maine. Bill Huston is the owner of Huston & Company.

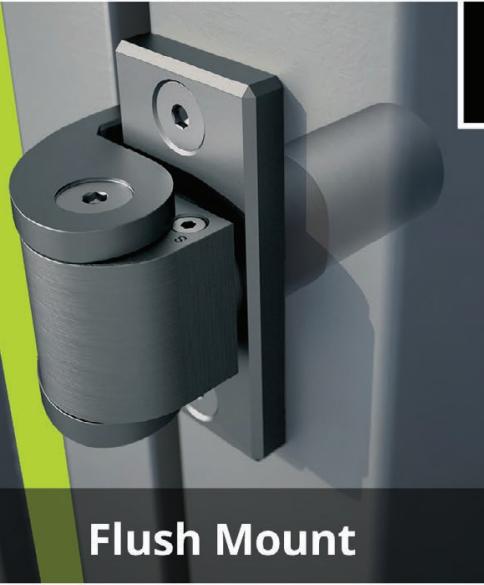
An advertisement for BEVCO seating. On the left, a large black ergonomic office chair with a textured seat and backrest is shown from a side-on perspective. To its right, another black office chair is shown from behind, highlighting its adjustable armrests. The background is a blue-tinted photograph of a group of people in a professional setting, possibly a classroom or office, engaged in a discussion. The text "SEATING THAT MAKES THE DIFFERENCE" is prominently displayed in large, white, sans-serif capital letters in the center. Below this, a smaller paragraph reads: "BEVCO chairs provide flexible options that play an active role in keeping students engaged and empowered to learn. BEVCO's GreenGuard Gold certified chairs offer adaptable seating that is sustainable, supportive and long-lasting." The BEVCO logo, consisting of the word "BEVCO" in a bold, white, sans-serif font with a green swoosh graphic above it, and the tagline "Where Quality Meets Comfort" below it, is located at the bottom left. To the right of the logo is the GreenGuard Gold certification seal, which is a green circular badge with the "UL" logo and the words "GREENGUARD GOLD". At the very bottom, the text "Call 800-864-2991 or visit BEVCO.com to select your chair today!" is displayed in a white, sans-serif font.

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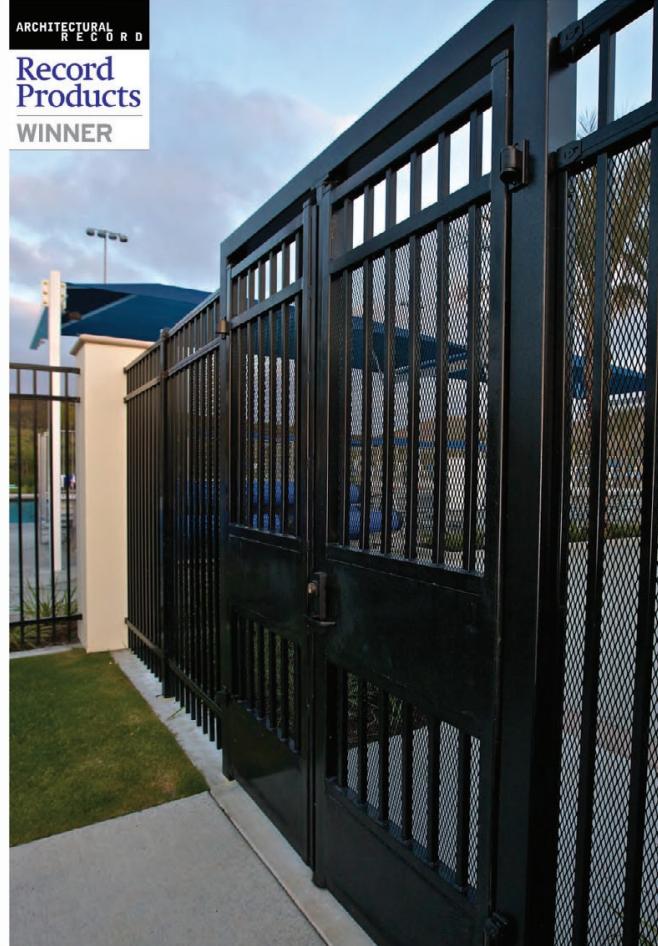
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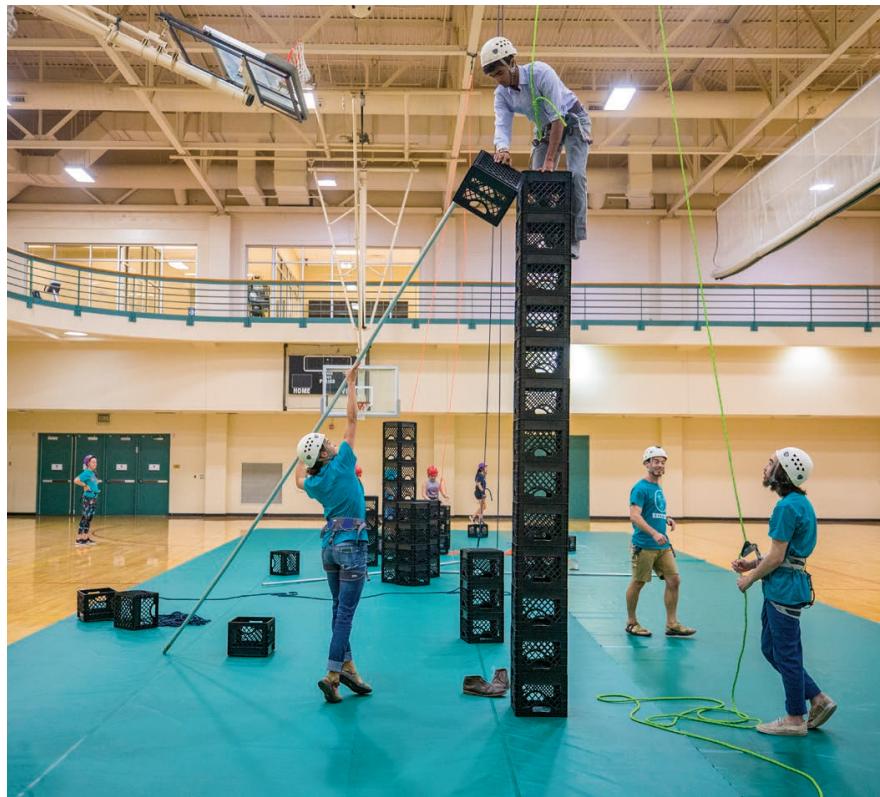
# FEEDING THE Mind, Body, and Spirit

## A LOOK AT VANDERBILT'S REC CENTER

by Cassidy Clevenger

When I look back on my college alma mater's gyms, I can practically smell every component of them: the chlorine from the pool, the leather of the benches, and the metallic musk of the weights. Though I was by no means an athlete, I always found a sense of calmness in the rec center. It was a place where I could completely zone out for an hour, focus on myself, and hit my metaphysical "reset" button before returning to the library to delve into a plethora of cognitive psych articles.





Going to the rec center offered a window of time where I could temporarily pause my academic obligations and check in with myself; this hour or two a week always helped me find balance and stillness in an otherwise hectic schedule. At Vanderbilt, their recreation center strives to provide an optimal experience for their students. Everyone from athletes to couch potatoes can find something they enjoy, because Vanderbilt's rec center takes a holistic approach to wellness.

### The Facilities

Kenny Moore, Director of Daily Operations, Strategic Planning, and Student Management for Vanderbilt's recreation department, noted how Vanderbilt's rec center is taking a holistic approach to what it means to be healthy. The center explores all the different aspects of fitness, nutrition, and wellness, and combines them into one location. Moore explains how the rec center likes to maintain a fluid, module concept in their spaces, therefore making it possible for the center to go beyond the boundaries of what a rec center has traditionally been used for in the past.

Vanderbilt is also embracing change and incorporating new technology in the rec center. For example, previously, the outdoor facilities would require someone

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This advertisement for Falcon Products features the SEDERA chair. On the left, a stack of SEDERA chairs in various colors (orange, yellow, grey, blue) is shown on a black metal cart with wheels. To the right is a single SEDERA chair in a light blue color, viewed from the side. The background is plain white.

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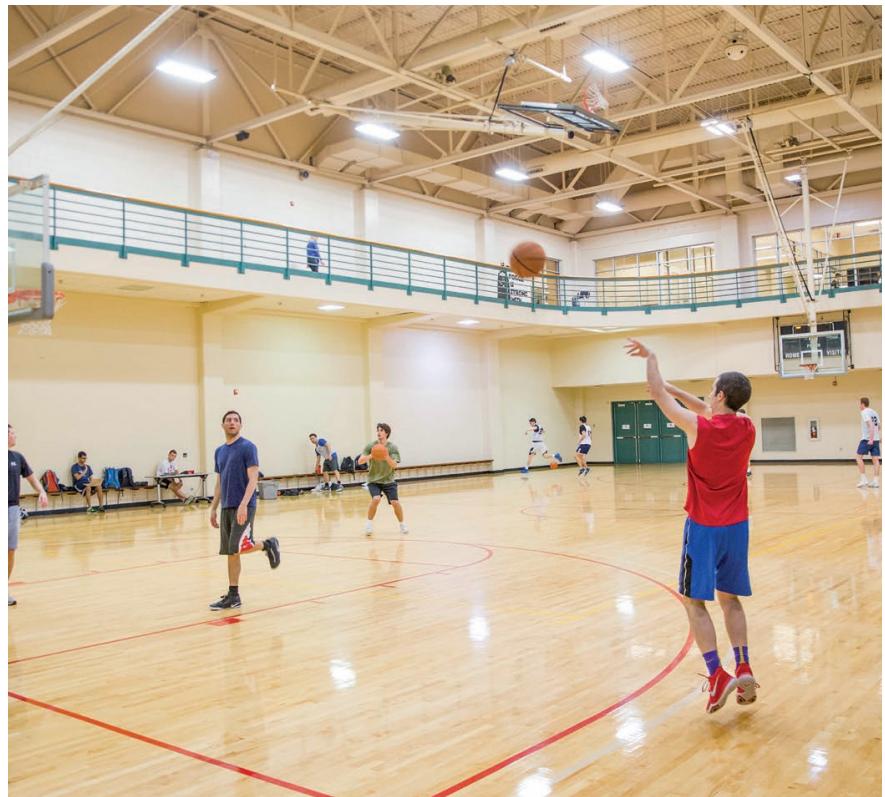
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This advertisement for Thonet shows a modern interior space featuring modular, curved seating in white, grey, and orange. The seating is arranged in a semi-circle. In the background, there are large windows, a round table, and a white sofa. The text "THONET® Redefine Your Space" is prominently displayed at the top, with "MOSS | 3" in the bottom right corner.

to use multiple keys to unlock multiple boxes; now, everything runs on a single, secure phone app, which makes prepping the outdoor facilities much easier. The rec center is also utilizing new software technologies in their turnstiles, and providing iPads to employees for them to record and diagnose issues with malfunctioning equipment.

In addition to staying up-to-date with a tech-savvy center, Vanderbilt is also making physical adjustments to make the rec center more accessible and comfortable for all their students. One recent change includes adding a lift to the indoor climbing wall, so that it can meet Americans with Disability Act (ADA) standards. This lift also makes it easier for ADA students and faculty to access the racket ball courts on the lower levels of the center.

Other adjustments are not just physical, but also social. The center recently made the shift to all-gender bathrooms, in an attempt to make sure all their students feel welcomed, and are aware that the rec center is a safe space for anyone. As mentioned in *PUPN*'s recent Aquatics issue, Vanderbilt hosts a women's only swim time once a month, at the request of their students. Moore explained the college is always open to hear suggestions by students, because the rec center aspires to be a place where everyone feels secure and supported.



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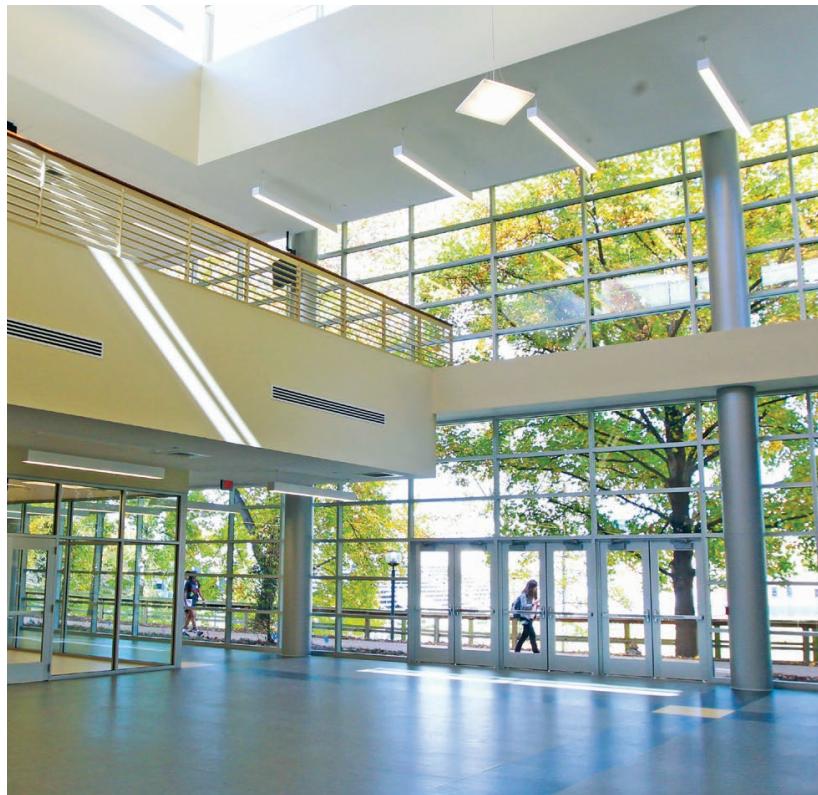
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## Indoor Fitness Options

Not surprisingly, Vanderbilt's rec center has a multitude of fitness options. Some of the facility's options include the following: a four-lane bowling alley, a climbing wall, an indoor swimming pool, ellipticals, basketball courts, indoor and outdoor kayaking, lacrosse, squash, treadmills, indoor football, and a 300-meter, 8-lane, indoor running track.

Moore explained that due to the unpredictable nature of Tennessee weather, the center has developed many indoor options. What's the point of having a beautiful pool, track, and field if the weather prohibits students from wanting to use them? The multitude of classes and equipment help ensure that there is something for virtually all students to enjoy.

## Nutrition and The Teaching Kitchen

As we all know, what people put into their bodies is as important as (if not more important than) the exercise they do. This is why Marilyn Holmes, the Associate Director of Wellness and Fitness, offers workshops for students where they can discuss topics such as pre- and post-workout foods, healthier snack ideas, eating on the road, supplement use, and maximizing calories on a campus meal plan.

Holmes, who is a registered dietitian at the rec center—along with Vanderbilt dietetic interns—facilitates counseling sessions regarding topics such as weight loss, weight gain,

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sports nutrition, maintaining energy, meal planning, dining out, vegetarian/vegan diet options, and healthy eating and cooking.

Cooking can be a daunting task for anyone, and college students learning to live a fully autonomous, self-effective life for the first time, may be particularly vulnerable to falling into unhealthy eating habits. This is why the rec center also offers Vandy Cooks classes. Vandy Cooks are healthy cooking demonstrations held in the teaching kitchen and are completely free for students.

The demos are led by Vanderbilt's chefs, registered dietitians, and expert guests. The rec center celebrates and promotes healthy eating in these demos by teaching students skills and providing them with recipes and nutrition analysis at each session.

The Teaching Kitchen was launched in 2016, and is jointly led by The Culinary Institute of America and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health in the Department of Nutrition. The Teaching Kitchen Collaborative (TKC) facilities aim to be a catalyst of enhanced personal and public health across all community settings.

The goal of the Teaching Kitchen is to equip participants with the fundamentals of cooking, apply evidence-based nutrition information to real life situations, and promote a sense of opportunity and excitement when it comes to cooking.

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In looking over some of the Teaching Kitchen's previous menu items, it is clear Vanderbilt also aims to expand palates and include multicultural food options. The curriculum has recently included dishes such as Thai green curry chicken, grilled sirloin crostini with wasabi cream, and spring rolls—all of which are a far cry from the Ramen noodles and fast food that often serve as the base of a college student's diet.

### Mindfulness and Relaxation

One upcoming renovation for Vanderbilt is a plan to promote wellness via their environment. The rec center is planning on having a custom-built aquarium installed in one of the walls at the front entrance of the rec center. Moore believes this piece will help promote a sense of meditation and relaxation for those using the rec center. Another way Vanderbilt has promoted wellness and relaxation is through mindfulness classes, such as yoga and meditation.

Furthermore, Vanderbilt realizes that wellness extends beyond the rec center. This is why the college also sponsors team-building outdoor trips. Moore explains, Vanderbilt has a "constant push for wellness overall." This is why, last month, the center gave a group of students the opportunity to take a six-mile kayaking adventure down the Piney River.

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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Cassidy Clevenger is a Samford University alum. She is currently in graduate school at Samford in the MSW program, while working as a staff writer.

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# MAXIMIZING THE OPPORTUNITIES OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON CAMPUS

by Adam McDonald

With the current emphasis on student success and engagement as they relate to student retention, we understand how overwhelming big data can be. The ground-level administrators of commerce and credentials systems are integral to funneling an entire ecosystem of data to people and departments on campus that, in many cases, didn't exist a few years ago.

At some schools, one new role with the power to affect data-driven change is that of Chief Transformation Officer. This individual monitors university enrollment rates, analyzes activity data from outside the classroom, models student outcomes, and shares positive impacts and areas where additional work is needed to achieve student success and retention.

It's also important to understand who can best help interpret your data. It might be a partner, or it might be a new administrative role.

### Comprehensive Student Data

Why do transformation efforts and comprehensive student data matter? Imagine the advisory potential with insights from both payment and credential systems.

Monitoring campus engagement, automating reminders for time-sensitive transactions, and advisory services to prevent attendance or payment problems from snowballing into student withdraws are just a few of the opportunities made possible by 360-degree data integration.

Transformation can go many different directions. Fortunately, with the right tools, people,

and context in place you'll enjoy a clearer path toward better student experiences and educational outcomes.

### Get to Know NACHA's New Anti-Fraud Rules

Institutions that transfer money back and forth via ACH transactions are increasingly vulnerable to fraud, and colleges and universities are no exception.

In response to more frequent and sophisticated phishing and other attacks, the National Automated Clearinghouse Association (NACHA) will implement two new fraud-prevention policies in 2020. Those deadlines will be here before you know it, so here's a quick summary of the new rules and their respective compliance options.

### Supplementing Fraud Detection Standards for WEB Debits

*Effective March 19, 2021*

While organizations are already required to use fraud detection when conducting commercial ACH transactions, this new rule will supplement existing efforts by making account validation explicitly required. Existing account validation methods include:

- **ACH Validation Test (Prenote)** – This method uses a test transaction for zero dollars to validate the account. It takes a few days to complete, and although it verifies the account and routing number, it doesn't verify the account holder.

- **Micro Deposits** – Similar to prenotes, micro deposits—sometimes as little as a penny—take a few days to complete. This method requires action to be taken by the payer (i.e. students) to verify the amount deposited into their bank account.

- **Account Validation Service** – This real-time method leverages a cooperative database that is maintained and updated by major financial institutions. Validation includes both account and routing number, with no delay or added student interaction.

Both prenotes and micro deposits are manual processes, and response time is delayed for both.

Unlike the first two methods, an Account Validation Service is automated and occurs in real time at the point of payment, so accounts are validated immediately. Less friction for students, fewer returns for your office—this is the spirit of the new NACHA rules.

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## Supplementing Data Security Requirements

Phase-in Begins June 30, 2020

This two-phase rule will supplement data protection requirements by requiring bank account numbers used in the initiation of ACH transactions to be rendered unreadable when stored electronically. In simple terms, account numbers must be encrypted or tokenized when stored.

- Larger originators and third parties with ACH volume greater than six million will be required to have their encryption (or tokenization) in place by June 30, 2020.
- Smaller entities with ACH volume greater than two million must have encryption in place by June 30, 2021.

Both encryption and tokenization meet this rule's requirements.

## Higher Education Fraud Prevention

When it comes to higher ed fraud prevention, the best defense is a good offense that also provides a better student experience. By working with your Third Party Sender—also known as an ACH Originator or ACH Merchant Services Provider—now to implement Account Validation Service and end-to-end encryption or tokenization, you'll be compliant in advance of NACHA's rule updates.

You'll also have a competitive advantage when it comes to meeting student expectations for real-time campus-wide commerce that's frictionless and secure.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Adam McDonald is the President of TouchNet. Adam has spent his entire career in the software industry and draws from that experience to steer TouchNet's product and process innovation and ensure consistently exceptional customer experience.

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Photo courtesy Vanguard University



# EXPLORING OUTDOOR FITNESS

AT VANGUARD UNIVERSITY  
AND RICE UNIVERSITY

by Sheila Wagner



## Outdoor Fitness

The advantages of exercise are far reaching and important. Everything from healthier skin to brain health, from stress reduction to increased happiness, from bone strength and muscle development to reducing risks of chronic diseases—it's all dependent on exercise.

Everyone knows that regular physical exercise is essential to good health in people of every age. Most people also know that if the exercise is monotonous and boring, it's not likely to become a lifelong habit. If a person of college age can find a way to enjoy physical activity, chances are good that they will make it a priority to achieve fitness and longevity.

## Outdoor vs. Indoor

A lot of private colleges and universities offer excellent indoor exercise facilities that can benefit their students, faculty and staff with everything they need to increase blood flow, improve cardiovascular health, improve strength, endurance, flexibility, and more. Exercising outdoors provides all these things plus the added benefit of fresh air and exposure to sunlight which increases levels of vitamin D.

The distractions of an outdoor fitness park can make people take their minds of the "work" of working out. Trees, birds, and other aspects of a natural environment make one less focused on tiredness and muscle aches. Additionally, research has shown that exercisers burn ten percent more calories when they do the same exercise outside instead of in an inside gym.

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## Brain And Body

Another benefit of nature's stimulation is that it impacts the brain in positive ways. It has been said that outdoor exercise stimulates all five senses in a way that indoor activities can't. Danny Dryer, founder of ChiWalking, suggests that breathing in fresh air, feeling the ground under your feet, and taking in all the colors and sounds in nature are positive stimulants hitting you at the same time. He believes that you can't help but feel better about yourself and the world around you after outdoor exercising.

Exercise enthusiasts often claim that the addition of nature and fresh air helps make exercising more fun and therefore more effective. Combining outdoor exercise, natural light and sensory stimulation has been proven to reduce stress and encourage healthy behaviors. Students who use outdoor fitness parks often socialize while exercising which strengthens campus community and interpersonal relationships.

## Vanguard University's Fitness Facility

Vanguard University in Orange County, California, is a private university that has an outdoor fitness facility, which is open to the entire Vanguard community and scheduled for certain physical activity classes. It allows free access and is only supervised when used for an activity, class, or team practice. It has shaded areas to shield from the hottest part of the day as well as lighting when used at evenings and nights.

Gabriel Corona is the Assistant Director of Campus Safety and as an adjunct professor in the kinesiology department. He shared that there can be eight to ten different stations set up for use in the area.



Photo courtesy Vanguard University.

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Photo courtesy Rice University

"The biggest benefit to this space is that it is outdoors. Students spend most of their time inside a classroom, so being able to get your workout in by getting outside to enjoy the breeze and sunlight is great for both mental and physical fitness," Corona noted. He added, "The Campus Safety Department has started using the fitness facility on our breaks throughout our shifts, performing pull-ups, dips, pushups, and sit ups."

### Rice University's Outdoor Training Park

Last year Rice University in Houston, Texas, opened their Outdoor Training Park as part of the Barbara and David Gibbs Recreation and Wellness Center. While Houston has a very hot and humid climate with the late spring, summer, and early fall months being especially hard on outdoor exercisers, planners at Rice made it a priority to locate the park in an area with enough shade that people could continue to use it through all seasons.

Tina Villard, senior associate athletic director and director of recreation at Gibbs, said that building the Outdoor Training Park was a way for them to increase accessibility to physical fitness. "You don't need a membership to use it, it gives people another option other than using our weight room, allows people to work out outdoors, is easily accessible, and allows users a wider array of choices for activities," Villard added.

The OTP has plenty of pieces of stationary equipment that allows for a well-rounded workout. Additionally, the stations meet the needs of all abilities and fitness levels, from beginner to expert. All of the stations also include instructions and suggested exercises to provide support for users.

The park was placed close to a running trail so runners and walkers could stop by to include strength-based activities in their workout. "We know that people want and need options in order to build a healthy lifestyle," Villard concluded, "and the OTP is just one more way we can encourage that behavior."

The students at Vanguard University and Rice University are lucky to have access to outdoor fitness as part of their overall exercise routines.



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**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Sheila Wagner has spent the last several years working as a professional editor and recently became the staff writer for *Private University Products and News*. Wagner can be reached at [sheila@pupnmag.com](mailto:sheila@pupnmag.com).

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# HIGHLIGHTING BROWN'S DISTINCTION IN INTERNATIONAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

by Jill Kimball

Brown's scholars in international and public affairs are addressing inequality, convening conversations that move the needle on tough issues and connecting students with practitioners on the ground.



A medium shot of a man in a dark suit and light blue shirt, wearing glasses and a gold ring, gesturing with his hands while speaking. He is positioned in front of wooden bookshelves filled with books. In the background, a yellow wall features a white sign that reads "STAIR C TO SECOND FLOOR".

STAIR C TO SECOND FLOOR

New investments in research on global inequality. Conferences convening world leaders to confront critical geopolitical issues. Data informing policy and practice domestically and abroad. And amid all this, myriad opportunities for students working to become leaders in effecting social change globally.

Brown University's Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs is building on these and other strengths as its reputation grows internationally as an esteemed policy center. Pursuing its mission of promoting a more just and peaceful world, with a growing focus on finding solutions to global inequality, the institute is addressing many of today's most pressing social challenges.

"Watson integrates and enhances work across the social sciences at Brown with an emphasis on first-rate scholarship that is relevant to policy-making," said director Edward Steinfeld. "As the institute is already demonstrating, Watson has the opportunity to become a leading center of knowledge and learning, fully calibrated to the needs of the 21st-century world."

Founded 28 years ago in the waning days of the Cold War, Watson's aim from inception was

to promote peace through international relations research and policy. Following a charge in Brown's strategic plan to invest in scholarship that helps to create peaceful, just and prosperous societies, the Watson Institute has been expanding since 2014 to support ever more interactions between scholars and practitioners, hands-on opportunities for students and research with a global reach.

While the institute has evolved considerably, its core goal remains—and now it extends even more broadly to teaching and public engagement. Home to 10 centers and initiatives, and uniting faculty from academic departments across campus, it is committed to conquering systemic issues that affect communities worldwide, from poverty and inequality to climate change and rapid urbanization.

"Now more than ever, our society needs what Watson has to offer," said University Provost Richard Locke, who led the institute from 2013 to 2015. "Factors that threaten the peace, prosperity and stability of our societies must be understood analytically so that they can be addressed in more effective and lasting ways. This is what Watson does."

## Research to Inform Policy and Practice

With an increasing focus on research in support of the public good, Watson Institute faculty have successfully shed light on some of the most intractable challenges of inequality and injustice across the world. Their research helps give voice to the voiceless and representation to the underrepresented, efforts that have earned the attention of world leaders and sparked public discussion that at times leads to significant legislative and policy changes.

Watson-affiliated economists such as John Friedman and Emily Oster investigate differences in economic opportunity across the United States and connections between disease outbreaks and vaccination rates, respectively. Sociologist Jayanti Owens offers new insights on how the social contexts of schools, families and workplaces can lead to disparities in educational and economic outcomes. And public polls conducted by the institute's Taubman Center for American Politics and Policy add to the public discourse on topics as diverse as the cost of living, the value of democracy and the price of security.

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Among the experts immersed in addressing inequality through research is Catherine Lutz, a professor of international studies and anthropology at Brown. Working with Boston University colleague Neta Crawford, she has identified a connection between war and the economic turbulence that leads to inequality.

In 2010, as the 10th anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks loomed, Lutz and Crawford realized that much information on the consequences of the ensuing American military conflicts was missing. With the aim of stimulating public discourse and encouraging better-informed policymaking, the two launched the Costs of War project to provide the fullest possible account of the human, economic and political costs of these wars.

"It's not dollars and cents alone, nor is it only blood," Crawford said. "It's the ripple effects in the economy. We want to help people understand that the effects of war don't end when the war terminates or when troops are withdrawn."

Costs of War research has earned massive national and international news coverage and has catalyzed countless conversations in Congress

"Now more than ever, our society needs what Watson has to offer. Factors that threaten the peace, prosperity and stability of our societies must be understood analytically so that they can be addressed in more effective and lasting ways." — RICHARD LOCKE, PROVOST OF BROWN UNIVERSITY

about financial, social and political costs of military spending on wars. Most recently, lawmakers referred to a map of every current conflict in which the U.S. is engaged, which was created by Watson Institute research associate Stephanie Savell.

"It's fundamentally about accountability," Steinfeld said of the Costs of War project. "It's the accountability of policymakers, the accountability of societies. You need to have data and evidence for real accountability."

Not all high-impact, evidence-based scholarship at Watson is data-driven, a point exemplified by Nadje Al-Ali, a professor of international studies, anthropology and Middle East

studies. Al-Ali's research on women, feminism and gender-based violence in the Middle East is qualitative: She engages with feminist activists, ordinary women and community leaders, observing and participating in their activities, listening to and recording their life stories and asking them specific questions relative to her research.

Al-Ali's published work, which draws from field research in Egypt, Iraq, Turkey and Lebanon, demonstrates that when societies see an increase in militarization—owing to foreign occupation, internal conflict or a regime change—they also see a rise in gender-based violence. In 2018, when the Carnegie

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Foundation invited Al-Ali to present in New York and Washington, she had a chance to confront world leaders with the research, urging them to take gender into account when considering strategies to combat violence.

But Al-Ali notes that the power of her research has, on occasions, been even greater in the hands of the very women she studies. In the early 2000s, while in Iraq, Al-Ali met women activists who knew gender-based violence had increased in their country but were fearful of sharing details of the incidents, given the country's conservative social standards. So Al-Ali gathered the activists for workshops on conducting qualitative research.

"My workshops taught them to use research methods to gather evidence of increases in gender-based violence and other instances of gender-based discrimination," she said. "They were able to use that research as evidence for policy recommendations they presented to the Iraqi government and international organizations."

Another illustration of Brown's strength in international and public affairs lies in its many international partnerships. Faculty members

Ashutosh Varshney and Patrick Heller, for example, developed a long-term partnership with the Janaagraha Centre for Citizenship and Democracy in India to study the connection between civic engagement and access to basic services, such as clean water, in India's cities.

Drawing on data from a large household survey in Bangalore, the pair concluded in a 2017 study that lower-income families, while very politically active, constituted the least civically active income group yet stood to gain the most from civic and political participation.

Varshney said Brown's partnership with Janaagraha has allowed his academic work to have a practical impact. Armed with proof that increased civic participation could give India's poor improved access to basic necessities, the NGO has increased its focus on encouraging city residents to vote and participate in civic life.

"If academic researchers and practitioners can come together, practitioners can understand how knowledge production works, and academics can understand not only how that knowledge implemented on the ground but also how their research can benefit from ground-level practice," Varshney said.

## Open Discussion on the Most Difficult Topics

In recent years, the Watson Institute has reinforced its commitment to hosting scholars and practitioners with a wide variety of experiences, political persuasions and perspectives.

From presentations by the likes of Jim Yong Kim, former head of the World Bank, to discussions between political leaders from opposing parties, to conferences that confront contentious global issues, Watson has become an important forum for conversations that have the potential to change perspectives and shape policy. Its new home for landmark events like these is the sleek, state-of-the-art Stephen Robert '62 Hall, the completion of which last year added more than 30,000 square feet of physical space to keep pace with the institute's programmatic growth.

"We have a responsibility, given our position in the world, to bring people together who wouldn't otherwise speak to each other," Steinfeld says. "If you want to solve the world's problems, you've got to get together people who don't agree with each other and get them to talk."

The Brazil Initiative at the institute has received international attention for convening diverse voices, from Brazilian politicians like Salvador city councilman Sílvio Humberto to artist-activists like the award-winning tropicália musician Tom Zé. In April 2019, the initiative hosted a two-day conference where Brazilian and American scholars, LGBTQ activists, and indigenous and Afro-Brazilian citizens discussed the fate of democracy in Brazil in the context of policy changes proposed by President Jair Bolsonaro's, the leader of the republic as of January 2019.

The conference, hosted in collaboration with Harvard University, not only drew attention to Brazil's most underrepresented communities but also stoked worldwide conversations about racism in the country, said James Green, director of the Brazil Initiative. Green noted that the event also communicated to the country's marginalized residents that they were not alone.

"Many in Brazil are feeling demoralized about the state of democracy in Brazil and are trying to figure out what to do," Green said. "When we speak about these issues here at Brown, people in Brazil are listening, and they no longer feel isolated."

The conference also saw the official launch of the U.S. Network for Democracy in Brazil, an English-language website that documents recent political events in the country and

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provides a venue for discussion about how American scholars and activists can defend democracy in the country.

"The Network for Democracy can, for example, work with Congress on open letters about the situation in Brazil, which can spur members of Congress to debate and raise questions about deforestation and the rights of women, indigenous people, Afro-Brazilians and the LGBTQ community," Green said. "When people in power in Brazil see that politicians elsewhere are questioning their policies, that can affect their behavior."

Other recent galvanizing events include "50 Years Since '68," a symposium exploring the impacts of major events in 1968 on today's social and political movements; "Opioids and Public Health," which brought together policymakers, medical professionals and public health experts to identify promising directions for both research and practice; and "Nicaragua 1979-2019: The Sandinista Revolution After 40 Years," which convened conversations between formerly bitter rivals in the historic Nicaraguan conflict and a new generation of national political leaders.

## Unique Opportunities for Students

One of Watson's strengths is its introduction of new thinking and fresh perspectives to critical research and discussion on international and public affairs. Often, students at Brown—both undergraduate and graduate—are changing the conversation or initiating new scholarship. The unique, hands-on learning opportunities students have at Watson prepare them for lives and leadership careers in policymaking, international relations and security, where they can help bring about social change.

Recently, students participated in a course that unpacked how democracies fail—the curriculum created in large part by Brown political scientist Robert Blair and a course so successful that it was adapted for use by 19 other universities. In a 2018 public policy course taught by Watson postdoctoral fellow Adaner Usmani, students created proposals for criminal justice reform. Last spring, students organized a teach-in on the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide alongside Watson senior fellow Stephen Kinzer, the award-winning foreign correspondent.

Ethan Shire, who graduated from Brown in 2019, said he was grateful for the unique opportunity to study with Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez and former Republican National Committee Chair Michael Steele in 2018.

"I've studied Congress, I've studied the executive branch and I've learned how legislation gets made," Shire said. "But I hadn't been able to conceive of how things really get done in the trenches until I heard from both Perez and Steele, who were directly involved in creating public policy."

Watson's study groups invite small groups of students to spend time with leaders in international and public affairs, where they delve deeply into topics and apply theory and research to real-world challenges. The advice Shire heard from Perez, Steele and other experts about the many different entry points into public service convinced him to pursue a career in the private sector before delving into national security or foreign policy, spheres in which he aspires to eventually work.

For Angela Blanchard, a senior fellow at the Watson Institute and a globally recognized community development expert, giving students the tools to make the biggest impact is her primary goal.



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"I'm here to make better and more effective leaders who can chase challenges that are affecting all of us," Blanchard said. "I'm here to foster and nurture, to encourage bold thinkers and doers. I want them examining issues that are unfolding right now all over the world, not only studying history."

In Blanchard's spring 2019 course titled Disaster, Displacement and Response, students working toward a master's degree in public affairs studied and responded to real-world disasters. Some examined the economic and political crisis in Venezuela, while others dug into current issues at the Mexico-Texas border or the effects of Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico. After bringing in a set of disaster-response experts to speak as guests, Blanchard tasked students with creating a response plan for their respective crises.

"In the arena of disaster and displacement response, you're constantly searching for what's available and learning how to improvise," Blanchard said. "Students at Brown tend to have that talent; they look around and notice assets and resources others don't. I'm teaching them how to harness that strength, because I think it can be useful in policymaking."

Practical, student-centered classes like Blanchard's—along with consultancies, conferences and study groups facilitated by the Watson Institute—prepare graduates who are currently solving domestic and global challenges as analysts, researchers and managerial professionals involved in making, analyzing or implementing public policy, whether in government and nonprofit organizations or at consulting firms in the private sector.

Recent master of public affairs (MPA) graduate April Yee, who did a consultancy at the Kinder Institute for Urban Research at Rice University and conducted research on urban geopolitics and redistribution with Brown political scientist Margaret Weir, is now working on a statewide education pilot project at Research Improving People's Lives in Providence. William Wang, an MPA grad who participated in Michael Steele's study group along with Shire, was accepted to the competitive Leadership Fellows Program at the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, where his first rotation will be in the Office of Continuous Improvement.

Undergraduate alumni have advanced into roles conducting policy and global partnership work at the United Nations and to research policy positions at federal agencies and major universities.

"Across the Watson Institute, people are working on big, global issues in security, economic development, climate change and more—and at the center of all that work is a social consciousness, a desire to improve equality everywhere," Locke said. "This interplay between academic expertise, on-the-ground research and applied education, all focused on important issues, gives Watson and Brown distinctive capabilities and insights that simply do not exist elsewhere."



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR:** Jill Kimball is the writer for the humanities and social sciences at Brown University. She studied journalism at the University of Oregon and has previously been a reporter, arts administrator and public relations officer.

The advertisement features two photographs. On the left, a woman wearing a grey beanie and patterned top is smiling while riding a red bicycle. On the right, a man in a blue and white shirt is sitting on a bench outdoors, looking at a laptop computer. The background shows a city skyline and a bike rack respectively.

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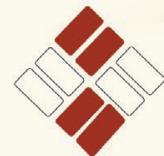
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