



PRINCIPIA PURPOSE

WINTER '15

THE X FACTOR

PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT
AND UNDERSTANDING
THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL
LEARNING

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Dear Reader,

If you've ever tried to teach someone how to throw a Frisbee or drive a car, you know that a verbal explanation goes only so far. At some point, hopefully sooner than later, you need to put the Frisbee or steering wheel in the person's hands and let the "learning by doing" begin.

That's experiential learning in a nutshell—and increasingly that's our approach to instruction at Principia, from Preschool through College.

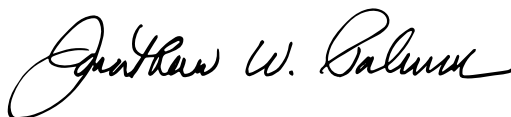
Of course, we teach many things besides hands-on activities. But everything we teach has real-world applications, and the more students put the theories, principles, and concepts they're studying into practice, the more they make these ideas their own—and the readier they are to apply them successfully in their careers and activities beyond Principia.

Our cover story explores the value of experiential learning and offers numerous examples of it across all levels. In addition, "Transformative Travel," see page 38, illustrates how naturally experiential learning pairs with study off campus and around the world.

Also in this issue, you'll meet a young alum in our Off to a Roaring Start series who is taking the snack nut business to a new level of taste and social responsibility. Another alum pays tribute to former College art professor James Green, whose instruction and example set the tone for her work in watercolor.

You'll also meet current professors and students and learn about their adventures and accomplishments. Plus, we introduce Vision 2020, our five-year strategic plan. And if you're curious which students traveled farthest to attend Principia this year, turn to page 28 to find out.

You're in for a treat with this issue—enjoy!



Jonathan W. Palmer (C'78)
President



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I enjoyed the most recent issue of the *Purpose* and thought it was excellent. I do have a comment, however, I would like to offer. . . .

In the article “It’s All There: Unfolding Character at Principia,” the author follows the conventional practice of using any reference to Mary Kimball Morgan as “Morgan” after the first acknowledgment. While this may be proper from an editorial standpoint, I find it insufficient. Her thoughts about education at Principia are the fundamental ideas we all hold dear and follow. I think it would be much

more respectful to use the reference “Mrs. Morgan” when appropriate. Let’s keep our thinking about her as loving and supportive and not treat it the way the rest of the world might do.

Thank you for your help in what may seem to some as a trivial matter.

Respectfully,
Jim Denison (US’44, C’50)

This is a quick note to thank you for helping me receive the *Purpose*. Over the years, [a friend] would send you all my address wherever I happened to be in the country, and the *Purpose* would start coming to me again. I haven’t seen an edition in a few years, so I was thrilled to receive the latest two issues. I really think the new formatting is wonderful, by the way.

It is my great hope that someday I may give back just a small bit of the love and grace that Prin gave me during my formative years. Memories of Prin have sustained me through some pretty rough stretches over the years. Memories—and the Prin folk, I should add—have given me a humanistic foundation that I could not have received anywhere except at 13201 Clayton Road. The forever ground beneath my feet lies within that magical piece of Missouri property.

Thank you again for the gift of the *Purpose*.

With gratitude and love,
Scott Rollins (MS’71)



Photo Caption Contest Winner

“STOP—in the name of love!”
—Jymn Magon (C’72)



For the next contest, submit your caption for the photo above to purpose@principia.edu by May 1, 2015. The winner will be announced in the Summer ’15 issue.



New Upper School Courses Introduced

This fall saw the introduction of two new Upper School classes, targeted primarily at seniors. The first, Senior Seminar: World Leadership, taught by returning social studies teachers Jim Evans (C'66) and Sharon Carper (C'70), is a departure from the traditional classroom experience. It applies the Socratic approach to student-driven discussions, and assessment is based almost entirely on class participation, writing assignments, and project presentations.

In the newly introduced WIT (What It Takes) class, students are studying the concepts of social entrepreneurship and identifying innovative ways to contribute to social change through enterprise. The class is taught by house parent and WIT coordinator Monica Semnacher (US'01, C'05) and Sarah Hernholm (US'94), who started the nonprofit WIT project in San Diego, California, and was profiled in the Summer 2014 issue of the *Purpose*.

Upper School Newspaper Goes Digital

In keeping with the growth of digital news and information sharing, *The Voice*, Upper School's student-run newspaper, moved to a completely online format during the fall semester. For the team of students involved in the metamorphosis from print to digital media, the transition is not only about keeping up with real-world, real-time developments and being more cost-effective and environmentally low-impact—it's also an unparalleled experiential learning opportunity. *Voice* staff members range from freshmen to seniors and work under the tutelage of English faculty member Katie MacDonald (C'05), who has been teaching the journalism elective since 2010. You can keep up with *The Voice* at www.principiavoice.org.

Museum Hosts Presentation by Upper School Art Teacher

Upper School art teacher Caitlin Heimerl (US'06) delivered a special presentation and demonstration on the art of Claude Monet at the Philbrook Museum of Art in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Impressed by Caitlin's watercolor illustrations for the children's book *Monet Paints a Day* (written by Julie Danneberg and published in 2012), the museum invited her to take part in a special exhibition of the Impressionist pioneer's work.

Volleyball District Championship

Pulling out all the stops before a cheering home crowd, the girls' varsity volleyball team beat Brentwood to win the District Championship in October. A solid margin in the first game (25–12) was followed by a tough second game, during which the Panthers were down 23–18. At that point, they pulled out seven points in a row to clinch the championship for the first time since 2004.

Community Lunches

All-School community lunches were introduced this fall. The aim is to facilitate familiarity and communication among students across levels and to allow staff to get to know students with whom they rarely, if ever, interact. Piloted on a weekly basis, the lunches are now a monthly fixture, with teachers and staff hosting tables, and administrators helping to serve the meal.



Storybook Woods at Preschool

Our preschoolers have always enjoyed occasional visits to the Principia woods, and now they get to walk through their very own storybook woods every morning on their way to school. Thanks to the talents of author, artist, and playwright Angela Sage Larsen (C'92), five outsize murals of woodland scenes painted by Larsen (with help from her husband, Whit Larsen (US'87, C'91)) line the covered walkway into the Early Childhood building. To mark the installation in October, Larsen visited with all the Preschool classes, talking to them about the process of creating art, engaging them with the murals, and teaching them some observation and art techniques. It was a treat for students and teachers alike!

More Upper Schoolers Qualify for National Debate Society

During the fall speech and debate season, Principia students performed very well, even earning "best speaker" recognition in six rounds during one November competition. In addition, four students qualified for admission to the National Speech & Debate Association—senior Gavin Austin and sophomores Marshall Fielding, Luke McCutcheon, and Cicely Williams. That brings the number of current upper schoolers who hold this distinction to 16.

U.S. Air Force Academy Visits Campus

Members of the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs visited campus in mid-September. The Academy's four-person popular music ensemble, Blue Steel, entertained students and community members with a rousing performance in Ridgeway. And a group of cadets visited an Upper School biology class with one of the Academy's trained falcons. (Their athletic teams' mascot is a falcon.)



New Website and Online Curriculum Guide

A new website was launched at the start of the school year to provide up-to-date information about all levels of the School for current and prospective families. Also, a detailed curriculum guide, summarizing core content from Preschool through the Upper School, is readily available on the site.

Check it out—and share the link:
www.principiaschool.org.

Apollo 13 Heroes Visit Campus

In November, the George A. Andrews Distinguished Speaker Series presented “Failure Is Not an Option,” a talk by Apollo 13 astronauts James A. Lovell (center) and Fred W. Haise (left) and former NASA Mission Flight Control Director Gene Kranz (right). Speaking in a fireside chat style to a packed Cox Auditorium—with a completely full Wanamaker Hall audience watching a simulcast—the men gave an unforgettable glimpse into space exploration, history, humility, and courage.

Earlier that day, the Apollo 13 team took their message into classrooms, addressing the impact of the space program in various disciplines. Lovell spoke to a mass communication class about the effect of the space program on society; Haise met with astronomy and 3D art classes to discuss the program’s influence on design; and Kranz spoke to a business class on the role character plays in problem-solving. Between classes and their evening presentation, the team dined with a group of students, enjoying moon pie for dessert. The entire visit made for a very impactful experience for the Principia community and for many from the surrounding area.



New Major and Minors

The Educational Studies Department now offers a major and minor in outdoor education, focused on educational theory, leadership, group facilitation, team building, communication, and outdoor, experiential, and environmental education. Taking advantage of the College’s 2,600-acre campus, the program emphasizes character unfoldment, outdoor program design, and appropriate use of natural areas.

In addition, students may now minor in music technology, taking courses in recording techniques, production, radio broadcasting, and computer music, as well as composition and music theory.



Students Paint Mural in Alton

Students in the fall semester Public Art class, taught by visiting professor Anne Farley Gaines (C’76), completed a mural titled *Abundance*, located at 415 Ridge Street in Alton’s Hunterstown district. They used a 70’ x 24’ brick wall as a canvas for ceramic tiles depicting images of animals, native plants, and aquatic life, along with biblical motifs such as tares and wheat, that bring color, texture, and light to the surrounding area.

The mural’s title is significant since the building will be the future home of the nonprofit grocery cooperative Grassroots Grocery, a project spearheaded by Principia College sociology professor Dr. Jackie Burns (US’78). At the dedication ceremony for the mural in December, Alton Mayor Brant Walker cut the ribbon.

Solar Car Team Beats the Odds

Principia's solar car team placed fifth in July's American Solar Challenge, an eight-day, 1,700-mile race from Austin, Texas, to Minneapolis, Minnesota. The strong finish was especially impressive after the car was nearly ruined during the qualifying rounds, when an electrical fire set off emergency sprinklers in the garage, flooding Ra 9, Principia's newly designed car. Urgently, yet calmly, team members disassembled and rebuilt the entire car in seven hours, going on to place fifth and win the Electrical Design Award. "This was significant," driver Kali McKee (C'14) explains, "because the carefully designed circuit boards saved us during the 'sprinkler event.'"

Interns at SETI Institute

SETI Institute hosted three Principia interns this summer. Dr. Laurance Doyle, director of Principia's Institute for the Metaphysics of Physics, helped match the internships to each student's interests. Senior Andy Crump, a computer science major, tracked the asteroidal and cometary sources of meteoroids. Gabe Korinek, a 3+2 engineering student, tested the use of geophysical signals to forecast earthquakes. And senior Susie Bonwich, a business administration major, learned about nonprofit fundraising in SETI's Institutional Advancement Department.

Athletes Inducted into the Hall of Fame

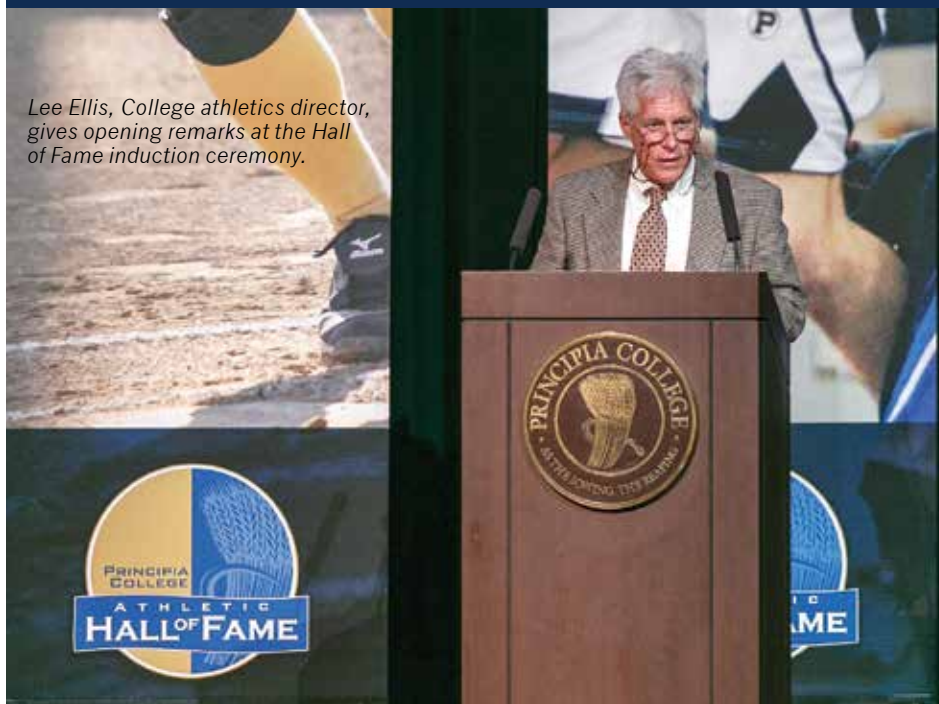
In October, eight individuals and two teams were inducted into the Gold & Blue Athletic Hall of Fame—the fifth class of inductees since its start in 2006.

The following Blue Award honorees were recognized for their notable and widely respected level of achievement as athletes:

- Thiers "Ty" Anderson (US'54, C'58)
- Joshua Burek (C'99)
- Kerste Bryant Helms (C'91)
- Kristin Martin (C'83)
- Peter Mehring (US'83, C'87)
- Andrew Schierholz (US'90, C'95)
- 1966 Football Team
- 1968 Football Team

This year's Gold Award winners—Winnifred (Andrews, US 1906) Hubbell and Adelaide (Obear, US 1906) Fill—never attended the College because it had not yet been formed when they graduated from the Upper School. But by helping to establish Principia's first athletic association, they laid the groundwork for the storied history of accomplishments celebrated by the Hall of Fame. These women also collaborated in writing the "Principia Hymn" and our much-loved fight song. Their induction into the Hall of Fame honors their long-standing contributions to Principia.

To learn more about Hall of Fame inductees, visit www.principiaalumni.org/halloffame. There, you may also nominate College athletes for consideration by the Hall of Fame selection committee.



Lee Ellis, College athletics director, gives opening remarks at the Hall of Fame induction ceremony.

Awards and Achievements

School

AP Honors

Of the 50 Upper School students who took the 2014 AP exams, 88 percent achieved scores of 3 or higher (compared to 65 percent for Missouri overall). Twenty-two of those 50 Upper School students were recognized for their achievements:

- Ten were AP Scholars (scores of 3 or higher on three AP exams).
- Eight were AP Scholars with Honor (scores of 3 or higher on four or more AP exams).
- Four were AP Scholars with Distinction (scores of 3 or higher on five or more AP exams).

National Merit Scholarship Semifinalist

Senior **David Hanlin** was named a National Merit Scholarship semifinalist. Only slightly over 1 percent of the approximately 1.5 million students who take the PSAT (the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test) achieve this distinction as high scorers.

Senior Receives St. Louis County Award

Principia was delighted to nominate senior **Austin Webster** for the St. Louis County 2014 Outstanding Student Leader awards. Austin represented Principia at a daylong leadership conference, along with the 56 other recipients from county schools. He enjoyed collaborating with fellow students as they tackled some of the most pressing issues in the St. Louis

area, such as education, transportation, employment, and healthcare.

Robotics Team Wins Award

In early December, the Upper School robotics team—Mecha Pantheras—participated in the FIRST Tech Challenge qualifying rounds. This team consists of students who are taking the first semester Robotics class and includes several international students. Nicknamed the “Pink Panthers,” the Principia team won first place for engineering process and teamwork.



Musicians Earn Select Spots

Saxophonist **Tanner Caldwell** (US'16) is one of 53 students chosen from the 130 who auditioned for JazzU, an outreach program sponsored by Jazz St. Louis. The program includes weekly instruction and the opportunity to work with professional jazz musicians.

After a highly competitive process, **Haydn Jones** (US'17) was selected from more than 150 applicants to fill one of eight openings with the St. Louis Symphony Youth Orchestra. One of the youngest members of the orchestra, Haydn will attend weekend rehearsals and play in the first violin section.

College

Athletes Honored

Sophomore **Nate Richards** and Senior **Sarah Litwiller** were named to the U.S. Track and Field Cross Country Association All-Region Team and honored, for the second time, as St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Association (SLIAC) Men's and Women's Runner of the Year, respectively. Richards also competed in the NCAA DIII National Championships, finishing 39th.

Senior **Tess Rountree** ended the volleyball season ranked #1 in NCAA DIII for points per set and #2 for kills per set. Tess was also named the SLIAC Player of the Year—the second year in a row. Rountree holds the College record for digs and solo blocks and the #2 spot for total kills and kills per game.

Lincoln Academy Laureate

Each year, Principia College nominates one senior for the prestigious Lincoln Award based on overall excellence in curricular and extracurricular activities. Selected from colleges and universities across Illinois, the honorees take part in a gathering at the Old State Capitol in Springfield, Illinois. **Gustavo Batista**, a political science and philosophy double major, is this year's Principia College Lincoln Academy Laureate.

As a sophomore, Batista won an award for the best position paper at the Midwest Model United Nations. He also traveled on the Tibet Abroad, where he researched economic development. This year, for his senior capstone, he is studying democracy in Book VIII of

Plato's *The Republic*, comparing it to democracy in the U.S. today. A soccer player, Batista played all four years and was team captain for the last three.

Food Sustainability Success

Principia College Executive Chef **Trey McCartt** received a Gold Certificate from the Illinois Food Scrap Coalition for demonstrating “the highest level of commitment to food scrap diversion” by composting 100 percent of both pre-consumer and post-consumer food scraps. Only seven other institutions have achieved this level of recognition.

Winning Business Ideas

Sophomore **Matiss Klava** and senior **Ashley Douglass** won an IdeaBounce

business pitch contest in November for BioBlaze, their sustainable business idea which proposes that restaurants use organic bio-digesters to convert food waste into fuel. The competition was hosted by the Skandalaris Center for Entrepreneurship in St. Louis.

Mediation Tournament

Since its start in 2006, the mediation team has won 10 All-American trophies, including the seven held by current members of the team. Sophomore **Cassidy Alford** and senior **Brian Simpson** are both two-time All-Americans, and senior **Meredith Clark** is a three-time All-American.

Recently, the team garnered additional honors during November's



International Intercollegiate Mediation Championship in Gainesville, Georgia. Competing against over 40 teams from approximately 20 colleges and universities, Principia claimed first place in Team Advocacy and second place in Team Mediation, along with several individual honors. This success earned them a berth at the International Law School Mediation Championships at Drake University in March 2015.

Alumni

Carol Carter (US'73, C'77)

Carol Carter's Intruders series, watercolor paintings of insects, was featured as the cover story in the May 2014 edition of *DECOR*, a Norwegian art magazine. The eight-page article also included a tutorial on Carter's painting technique.

Christine Corday (Schwartz, US'88, C'92)

Christine Corday: Protoist Series, Selected Forms, a sculpture exhibit, is on display through early April at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It is Corday's

first solo presentation at an American museum. Viewers are welcome to touch the sculptures on exhibit; in fact, over time the interaction of handprints with the metal produces a record in rust that becomes part of the work.

Ellen (Johnson, C'93) Sprague

Ellen Sprague, who teaches writing in the College's Center for Teaching and Learning, won the 2014 Linda Julian Essay Award for “Braking for Buntings,” published in *Emrys Journal*. In addition, Sprague's translation into English of selected excerpts from Philippe Delerm's *Le trottoir au soleil*

(*Sidewalk in the Sun*) were published recently in *Asymptote*, an international journal focused on literary translation of contemporary writing.

Kate (Allen, C'03) Rott

In October, Kate Rott finished eighth in her age group in the 2014 PPD Beach2Battleship Triathlon in North Carolina. Her overall time for the 140.6-mile event was 12:25.15, placing her in the top third of the 129 women who completed the full course (a 2.4 mile swim, 112-mile bike ride, and 26.2-mile run).

“No Limits”: My Start as a Painter

by Ruth (Grekel, US'48, C'52) Hynds-Hand

To get to Principia College, you have to cross the Mississippi River near St. Louis and drive north along the river to the town of Elsah, Illinois, a glowing, yellow sandstone village from which a road leads up to the campus. There is a



Ruth Hynds beginning to paint, 1970.
Photo by Daily Pilot.

white chapel with a pointed steeple, dorms, and classroom buildings, several of which were designed by Bernard Maybeck, a noted architect. There is an apple orchard, which after an ice storm dazzles—no, sizzles—in sunlight, making your eyes water.

This small college campus housed faculty who shone in their fields: My Spanish teacher had joined the

American Brigade opposing Franco in the Spanish Revolution. My education professor, a follower of James Dewey, was big on philosophy. My Aesthetics teacher, Louis Chapin (C'39), opened my mind, heart, and soul. In his class I found myself. He opened to me the thread running through all art. Our final exam: Compare Mozart's Fortieth to the frieze on the Parthenon.

The G.I. Bill brought Korean War vets to college. They lent a solemnity to campus while healing from war and becoming themselves again. We had football teams, basketball teams, field hockey teams. Tennis was where we shone, however. More notably, there were performers who would later be on Broadway or become known film stars, men destined for political careers, women who would become government leaders. The student body burst with abilities, forming the will to make dreams come true. In this was the real contribution to us of Christian Science: no limits. This happened to me.

My art teacher was James Green, regional watercolorist and a former young student of Rex Brandt. Early in his career, Green had been invited into the Brandt workshops and encouraged in his painting. Later, in words that vibrated in my mind, James Green remarked about my final painting, asking, “Who painted this? You’ve got it, whenever you want to do this.”

Twenty years later I joined the Rex Brandt Watercolor Workshops held in his home in Corona del Mar. A Beginning Watercolor class provided the basic training I needed. One week a summer, for four summers in a row, I enrolled in classes. Rex taught by an adversarial style, but he was just what I required to toughen me up. No tears over his cutting critiques, no joining other women in the bathroom who wept. I held a conference with myself and decided I could either leave or stay and learn; I stayed. I was to figure it out on my own, and so I did, relying on the basics that James Green had provided me in that unpretentious studio on the Principia College campus.

I’ve dedicated my book, *Ruth Hynds: Working in Watercolor*, to him. Thanks, Mr. Green. ■

Painting titles: Holly Sugar Factory, Night Shift (top); Grotto D'Medici (bottom left); Balboa Gateway (bottom right)

What's your Principia story?

To submit a story about your Principia experience, e-mail us at purpose@principia.edu. Selected submissions will be edited with the author's permission.





OFF TO A ROARING START

Justin Perkins—Nuts about Nuts and Social Change

by Heather Shotwell

When Justin Perkins (C'98) and his wife, Ayari De la Rosa-Perkins (C'01), began selling nuts at farmers' markets in 2008, they realized they were on to something. Customers loved their twist on familiar nuts, like almonds and pecans, flavored with simple, natural ingredients, such as chipotle chili powder, cayenne, and cardamom. Soon, the OLOMOMO Nut Company was born.

Good Morning America, *Today*, and the Cooking Channel have all featured OLOMOMO—not only for its tasty products but for the way the company conducts business. As the website explains, “We’re in this thing to do well, to do right and make a difference.”

“I had a dream of shaking up the tired nut industry with innovative products and a company that could be a force for good with socially and environmentally conscious business practices,” explains Perkins.

That dream came closer to being realized recently when OLOMOMO became the first U.S. nut snack company certified as a B Corporation. To achieve this status, companies must meet high social and/or environmental standards for their supply chains, operations, manufacturing, hiring, and involvement of women at all levels of the organization.

Perkins traces these ideals and entrepreneurial spirit to the way he was raised and to what he learned at Principia College. As a world perspectives major, Perkins dove into some of the international issues he'd been exposed to through travel as a teenager. For example, he researched the effects of television on culture in a rural fishing village in Brazil for his senior capstone. "My Principia liberal arts education lent itself to going deep into a subject," he reflects. "I grew passionate about history and international issues—particularly social justice and culture. I was fortunate to find really supportive professors who encouraged my self-guided exploration."

Perkins's experience serving on the board for a Public Affairs Conference (PAC) at the College has come in handy, too. "PAC was great training for starting a business," he comments. "It helped me gain confidence and learn what it takes to organize an event, create a product, work with a team, and communicate well with people."

In addition, Perkins's experience playing soccer at Principia helps him deal with the demands of a growing business. "There are many times as an entrepreneur where your energy is just gone and you want to give up," he comments. "During those moments of doubt, I draw on my soccer experience and the confidence gained from many grueling games. I know I can dig deep and always find a second wind just by focusing on the next small step."

After graduating from Principia, Perkins traveled to several countries, including Brazil and South Africa, absorbing the sights, sounds, and flavors. Once back in the United States, he earned an MBA at the University of Colorado in Denver. "Several of the courses I had in the world perspectives program at Prin were excellent training for grad school," he says. The emphasis on multidisciplinary [perspectives] and critical thinking was really useful in the creative problem-solving needed for the business projects I pursued."

After graduate school, Perkins joined Care2.com, an online social action network with over 27 million members. Finding his niche in sales and business development, he has helped triple the company's revenue since 2006 and is now senior director of brand engagement. "Care2 was the first social networking site launched for good causes," Perkins explains. "Users create online petitions for social and environmental



causes, and we help them win their campaigns or connect them with nonprofits and brands that share their values."

Care2.com is based in Silicon Valley, but Perkins works out of his home office in Boulder, where he and Ayari (who has shifted her focus from OLOMOMO to their family and a career in geology) live with their daughters, Sofia and Maren. "Life is pretty full with a full-time job plus overseeing OLOMOMO and family activities!" Perkins says with a smile. "My fast-paced schedule at Principia was great training for the day-to-day juggling act around here." ■

You can watch OLOMOMO's feature on the Cooking Channel at www.olomomo.com/company/our-story.

Nominate a Young Alum

Our Off to a Roaring Start column features young alumni who graduated in the last 20 years and have had a significant impact on and/or demonstrated significant success in their professions or communities. Share the names of alumni you know who are "off to a roaring start" at www.principiaalumni.org/youngalum.

A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a blue safety helmet and a grey headband, is smiling. A man with short brown hair is holding a large, professional-style microphone (Electro-voice Model 309A) towards her. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a workshop or classroom setting. The title 'THE X FACTOR' is written in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

THE X FACTOR

PROMOTING ENGAGEMENT AND
UNDERSTANDING THROUGH
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

by Armin Sethna

A close-up photograph of a young child with dark hair, wearing large black headphones. The child is focused on counting small, round, silver-colored plastic coins into a blue and red plastic cash register. The register has a numeric keypad with white buttons and black numbers. The child's hands are visible, holding and dropping the coins into the register's compartments. The background is slightly blurred, showing more of the register and the child's clothing.

Ping!

The brightly colored, plastic cash register springs open, and kindergartener Hazel carefully counts out nine cents in plastic coins before placing the payment in the right compartments.

“Would you like a cone or a bowl?” she asks a classroom visitor, before serving up a double scoop of chocolate ice cream. (Sadly, it’s plastic, too.) But a few days later, Hazel and her classmates are up to their elbows in cream and sugar and vanilla as they make the real thing! And in another week or so, the entire Principia kindergarten class dons aprons and works shifts in their in-class ice cream shop, “selling” treats to their preschool buddies after Friday lunch.

So it is, in the space of a single three-week study unit, that students . . .

- Acquire addition and subtraction skills, while counting out change and running the shop
- Expand reading and writing abilities, while preparing menus and posters and working with a written recipe
- Practice practical business and communication skills (e.g., “May I help you?” instead of “What do you want?”)
- Understand and demonstrate patience, by waiting to enjoy their ice cream until *after* everyone else has been served

This peek into one of Principia’s youngest classrooms illustrates a phenomenon occurring with increasing and deliberate frequency on both the School and College campuses—active, experiential learning. In other words, education that combines the acquisition of skills and knowledge with their consistent application and use in an intentional, considered manner. >>

Three Proponents of Experiential Education

A philosopher, professor, and practitioner, **John Dewey** (1859–1952) decried the authoritarian nature of “traditional” education. In response, he founded the original Laboratory School at the University of Chicago in 1896 and wrote extensively on the social imperatives of experiential learning, his most influential work being the 1938 *Experience and Education*.

Kurt Hahn (1886–1974), a German educator imprisoned by the Nazis, combined curricular learning with an equal emphasis on service and character. He helped found three well-known institutions—Gordonstoun in Scotland (whose graduates include Prince Charles and Prince Philip); the original United World College (of which there are now 12); and Outward Bound.

Less well known in broader educational circles, but familiar to all connected with Principia, is **Mary Kimball Morgan** (1861–1948), who also stressed the value of experience, service, and character as essential aspects of education. In contrast to “repress[ing]” a child with too many rules and regulations, she advocated that children “must learn through experience” (*Education at The Principia*, p. 17). And a key governing policy of Principia echoes her sentiments that education “carries with it the obligation to use technical skills and intellectual attainment for the betterment of humanity” (Policy 10).



Doing and Understanding

The rationale for an experiential approach to education is sometimes traced as far back as 450 BC, with a quote attributed to the Chinese philosopher Confucius:

I hear and I forget.
I see and I remember.
I do and I understand.

Thus for decades, much of mainstream education has incorporated experiential elements—projects, field trips, sports activities, community service sessions, afterschool clubs. But these have typically been discrete activities, or add-ons, that are considered *extracurricular* or supplementary to the main goal of imparting a prescribed set of knowledge to learners.

Such approaches fall short of the expansive vision of experiential education that arose in the early twentieth

century—and is seeing a resurgence today. (See sidebar to the left.) In this view, experience is considered central, not peripheral, to the educational process. And such experience should go well beyond transmitting specific know-how or skills to enabling learners to develop a deeper understanding of the subject and internalize habits of reflection, analysis, and critical thinking. Ultimately, this view maintains, experiential education should equip students to become constructive, contributing members of society.

At Principia today, and at many other schools and colleges, professors and teachers are increasingly and successfully grappling with the challenge of making experience more central to learning. And in the process, they are demonstrating that experiential learning belongs not only *in* the curriculum but *in* the classroom. >>



Art Alive! Caps Off Fifth Grade's Educational Journey

Can't make it to the Louvre in Paris this spring? Come to Principia's Lower School Gym instead . . . you're guaranteed to run into the likes of Claude Monet with his water lilies, Georgia O'Keeffe and her calla lilies, or perhaps Wayne Thiebaud and his cakes.

Each year, Principia's fifth graders immerse themselves in intensive individual projects that lead to Art Alive!—a “living museum” for the entire School community. In the process, as class teacher Heather Tibbetts explains, “the fifth graders become artists, researchers, writers, and teachers in their most authentic forms. The students create the art; they conduct the research; they write and edit their monologue; and they transform (literally!) into the artist, who will teach the museum visitors.”

To support students in this highly experiential activity, Tibbetts collaborates closely with Lower and Middle School art teacher Louise Elmgren (C'84). Once the writing, drawing, color mixing, and painting are completed, each student is outfitted in a costume that closely depicts the persona of the artist or a character from the artwork. In many instances, the “artists” go beyond the expected research and learn a few words in a different language, try their hand at a complex technique, or dig deeper into the history of the specific time period.

Elmgren reminds students that “masterpieces” aren't only products of the past. “Art is ‘alive’ today,” she tells them. “It is still being practiced by artists, famous or not, in cultures around the world.” As students work on their projects, Elmgren says, they come to understand that “art is not only a noun or an object; it's a verb, a creative process.”

Students Cover Election Night Live

Approximately 70 Principia College students participated in “Prin at the Polls” last fall, delivering five continuous hours of extensive live coverage of the 2014 midterm elections.

Using Principia Internet Radio (PIR) as their learning laboratory, students in political science and mass communication classes collaborated to provide breaking news reports, live call-in opportunities, and analyses and commentaries from elected officials, correspondents for *The Christian Science Monitor*, and others.

“Faculty certainly support, but this is truly a student-run endeavor—from researching particular races to recording 90-second promotional spots on PIR to presenting roundtable discussions on key issues,” says political science professor Dr. Brian Roberts (C’88). “These experiences help students realize similarities between what they’re learning and what’s going on outside the school walls.”

Joan Wesman, a mass communication professor, agrees. “Students in the Radio Broadcasting class planned for the live broadcast, but they also needed to think on their feet because so much is going on during live programming,” she points out. Students in Paul Wesman’s Public Relations course approached “Prin at the Polls” as a client, promoting it in a variety of ways. They wrote blog entries, produced video for Facebook, advertised on campus, and tweeted before, during, and after the broadcast.

“Prin at the Polls” is an especially good example of experiential learning because broadcasting live isn’t lifelike—it *is* real life!



Principia College Dean of Academics Joe Ritter puts it this way: “Experiential learning basically occurs any time a learner does something with or engages with the material.” That may be as rudimentary as a second grader following instructions on a worksheet. Or it may be as complex as 20 undergraduates working together to design and build a solar car from scratch, as Principia College students have done—several times, in fact!

The Challenges of Efficiency Versus Effectiveness

This richness and value have long been appreciated by educators when it comes to a student’s learning journey at the younger ages. But the experiential or active approach has not typically been incorporated or made available to learners at higher levels (middle school, high school, college). And

“Experiential learning ... brings a richness and value to learning that no other way of teaching can.”

—Katy McKinney, Early Childhood Program Supervisor

“Experiential learning can cover the gamut,” Ritter says, “But to do it well takes a lot of hard work.” And it’s a process that demands planning, patience, creativity, and flexibility.

“No doubt about it,” concurs Katy McKinney (US’92, C’96), supervisor of Principia School’s Early Childhood program. “Experiential learning takes more—more resources to execute, time to plan, field trips to coordinate, and teacher and parent involvement to nurture—but it brings a richness and value to learning that no other way of teaching can.”

it has been considered more applicable to the sciences and arts than to the humanities or many of the social sciences (history and political science, for example).

In fact, for much of the twentieth century, education in all subject areas worldwide migrated toward book-based, homogenized classrooms; core competencies; and standardized testing. This approach enabled many governments to more economically and uniformly expand access to millions of youth who might not otherwise receive an education.

But as advocates of experiential learning contend, *efficiency* came at the expense of *effectiveness*, >>

Conference Planning—From Concept to Completion

Each year, Principia College students coordinate the Public Affairs Conference (PAC) and International Perspectives Conference (formerly the Pan-African Conference).

Although the College funds these events and a faculty advisor serves as a sounding board, students are responsible for all the planning, coordinating, and logistics. They choose the topic and speakers and make arrangements directly with them. In addition, students promote the event (including designing a website) and coordinate registration, lodging, venue scheduling, refreshments, and audio-visual setup. They also make as many airport runs as it takes to get the speakers and participants to and from campus.

Helping direct these conferences is a standout experience. As Kenny D’Evelyn (C’10), a consultant at Deloitte, puts it, “Directing the Public Affairs Conference my senior year helped me develop leadership and interpersonal skills. It’s rare for most college undergrads to interact with ambassadors, leading authors, and thought leaders while addressing global issues. My PAC experiences helped me develop confidence for job interviews and interactions with senior executives.”



especially the effectual development of critical thinking and collaboration, skills and attitudes that are needed more than ever in today's fast-changing, digital world.

The Independent School, a quarterly magazine published by the National Association of Independent Schools (of which Principia School is a member), devoted its spring 2013 issue to experiential education. In it, the editor critiques the “dominant view on education these days [as] . . . a standards/accountability conversation [that] overwhelms any serious national discussion of experiential learning.”

Writing in the same issue, global educator Malcolm McKenzie

contends, “Experiential education is becoming a needed emergency service in this world . . . a vital antidote to childhood and adolescent lifestyles that are increasingly virtual and insular.” McKenzie, who has served as the head of independent schools around the world (in the U.S., U.K., southern Africa, and now China), offers a broad view of experiential education, encompassing these elements:

- Learning that takes place in the classroom through what is creatively “shown rather than told”
- Learning that “occurs outside the classroom, but is related directly” to the curriculum (for example, field studies or trips)
- The “work of doing something”

—playing a sport or caring for a garden, for example—“which has a value in and of itself . . .”

An Approach with Deep Roots at Principia

At Principia, a similarly broad view of education stems from the institution's founding principles and governing policies, as outlined by founder Mary Kimball Morgan. Every avenue—the classroom and lab, the dorm room and dining room, a sports competition and a social event—is seen as a vehicle for learning and growth to develop all aspects of the whole man.

In fact, Morgan's counsel is providing administrators and educators on

both campuses plenty of food for thought, as they examine and assess course offerings and activities with the aim of developing an intentionally integrative approach to experiential learning while simultaneously refining student learning outcomes.

“To be progressive, education must constantly adjust itself to . . . changing conditions,” Morgan wrote in 1910. “Yet it must be possible to . . . offer an unchanging foundation.” In her view, education—or “training,” as she often referred to it—“from the very beginning, should be the fitting of the child for the experiences of life, whatever these experiences may be” (*Education at The Principia*, pp. 5, 8).

Experiential Learning at the School

“What we’re trying to do is create as many practical, engaging, and life-like learning experiences as possible that prepare, ‘fit,’ and train students for life,” explains Brad Warrick (US’90, C’94), who assumed the School’s newly created position of director of experiential education at the start of the school year. These experiences, he says, “are centered on the founding principles of *Principia* and on a twenty-first-century education that makes learning applicable, engaging, innovative, and service-oriented.”

Hands-on projects in science labs, as well as simulations in history or mathematics, enable students to “experience” the material they are studying. So do service learning >>

Mock Elections and Even Dancing Deepen Historical Study

What do Babe Ruth, dancing the Charleston, and undecided German voters have to do with understanding the history of United States involvement in World War II? A lot, if you take a long-term view of history—which is exactly what Middle School history teacher Evan MacDonald (US’94, C’06) encourages students to do in “Neutral No Longer,” a required eighth-grade history course.

Together, they delve deeply into the far-reaching economic, cultural, and political transformations that swept Europe and the Americas in the years after World War I—and, ultimately, contributed to the start of WWII. To help with this, MacDonald leads students through a number of experiences that help them comprehend what was on the minds of ordinary Germans and Americans during that time.

For example, he divides students into groups, assigning each group one of the four major German political parties between the two world wars. Along with traditional research, students analyze political posters and design their own. Their study culminates in a “Reichstag convention,” where they present the case for their party to visiting faculty and staff. By the end of this process, students better understand how the Nazi party could be democratically elected.

In another more lighthearted activity, the class recreates the feel-good times of the Roaring Twenties by hosting a dance for the Middle School. After a few periods of intensive dance lessons, eighth graders showcase their rock steps, kicks, and twirls as they dance the Charleston, a dance emblematic of those feel-good times.

Back in MacDonald’s classroom a few days after the dance, the class discusses the uneven economic cycles of wartime and boom years.

“Could something like this happen again in the U.S.?” one student asks.

It’s the perfect opportunity for their teacher to share other recent examples of economic ebbs and flows—such as the dot-com crash and the more recent real estate crisis—as well as introduce their next topics: the Wall Street crash of 1929, followed by the Great Depression, which contributed to the fall of the Weimar Republic and the meteoric rise of Adolf Hitler.

So, with a deft combination of stepping back into the past and making links to the present, eighth graders deepen their understanding of the events and cycles that shape and influence history.

Hard Work Leads to Sweet Rewards

The College's Sugarbush Management course provides experiential learning in a range of fields as students explore the historical, scientific, business, and conservation aspects of managing a maple-dominated woodland for syrup production.

Working in this "outdoor classroom," students split and haul firewood, operate pumps, drill holes, drive ATVs and trucks, make fires, boil sap, measure trees, and use chain saws. "No prior experience is required," says instructor John Lovseth (C'05), "but sound judgment and mindfulness are fundamental qualities to success in the class."

Those qualities find expression in the business aspects of the class, too. "Part of the course is learning to manage a small business and gain an understanding of the value-added process," Lovseth explains. "Students develop a business plan for maple products such as candy, candied pecans, and ice cream."

For alum Carlie Sanderude (C'14), the experiential approach was a plus. "We learned through hands-on experience," she says, "not just reading a textbook. Our class was all about making the product and understanding what we were doing along the way. It was probably the sweetest class I got to take (pun intended)!"



opportunities and class trips. Many of these activities are tied to a specific subject unit or curriculum, while some are more standalone. And a few are ad hoc, to take advantage of unexpected visitors or expertise that becomes available on either campus. The challenge for educators, says Upper School Assistant Principal Peter Dry, is finding ways to "consistently make rich experiences part and parcel of the classroom" and then "make these experiences more meaningful and impactful."

Veteran experiential and outdoor educator Monnie Brodbeck (C'90, pictured above) is working with teachers in grades 1–3 to support the integration of experiential learning into the regular curriculum. The goal is to identify and create opportunities for students "to practice the academic skills they are learning in language arts, writing, math, and other areas in a connected, hands-on way," Brodbeck explains. This, in turn, helps students "use their skills effortlessly, because the work

they are doing has real purpose, . . . and the experiences are not just isolated activities, but are connected to the subject matter," she continues.

Feedback from parents at the School indicates an increased appreciation and understanding of the merits of experiential education. In the words of one grateful mother, "Principia values experiential education . . . Much time and planning goes into the work ahead of time to give students a framework of understanding, so . . . they have a foundation on which to build."

Experiential Learning at the College

At the College, students themselves are the ones demanding a greater degree of experiential learning, says business management professor Linda Bohaker (C'83). Whereas 10 or 20 years ago, a written case study was considered sufficiently experiential in a management classroom, professors and teachers are now being called upon to go several steps further and incorporate on-site company visits, >>



Movies in Chemistry?

Each fall, Upper School sophomores build sets, write scripts, plan controlled explosions, and figure out how to edit video, all with the aim of producing a two- to five-minute special effects movie . . . for Chemistry!

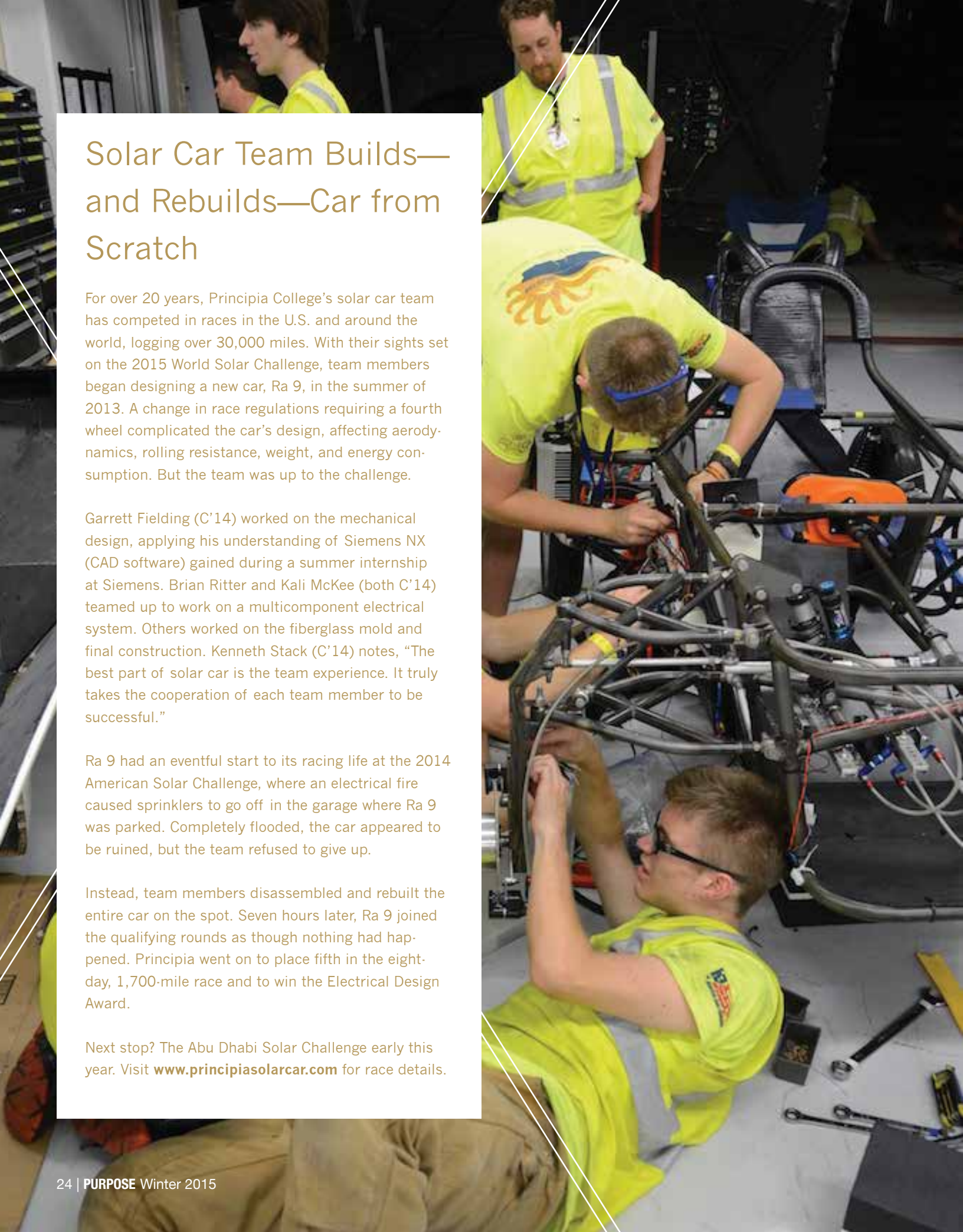
That's right, the first unit of the year is titled "Movie Special Effects," but it's really about what constitutes and affects the properties of different substances, and the characteristics of composites, emulsions, metals, and liquids, among other substances.

Teacher Melanie Shedd (C'98) believes strongly in lab-focused projects that help students "apply what they have been learning in a fun and relevant way." In fact, she makes sure that each section starts with an inquiry-based lab or activity—and only then proceeds to the theoretical content. "This way," she says, "the students can observe patterns and behaviors and refer back to them when we talk about the content."

Leading up to the movie-making project, students make play dough from scratch and then add different materials (bits of string, paper towel, or gravel) to create composites, which they test for strength, malleability, uniformity, and so on—standard content for an introductory chemistry curriculum. Other labs cover sublimation, combustion, electrolysis of water, filtration, and atomic structure.

Finally, it's time for the movie project, for which Shedd provides a detailed rubric. Working in teams, students must demonstrate the effective use and understanding of chemistry concepts, use safe and accurate procedures, and be able to clearly explain how each special effect was produced. The students are also graded on script creativity and the video's entertainment value. Last, but not least, the team submits a typed paper detailing the chemistry concepts and procedures used.

"This project helps students understand what it takes to work as a team in an academic setting," Shedd says. "And they get to showcase their creative side."



Solar Car Team Builds—and Rebuilds—Car from Scratch

For over 20 years, Principia College's solar car team has competed in races in the U.S. and around the world, logging over 30,000 miles. With their sights set on the 2015 World Solar Challenge, team members began designing a new car, Ra 9, in the summer of 2013. A change in race regulations requiring a fourth wheel complicated the car's design, affecting aerodynamics, rolling resistance, weight, and energy consumption. But the team was up to the challenge.

Garrett Fielding (C'14) worked on the mechanical design, applying his understanding of Siemens NX (CAD software) gained during a summer internship at Siemens. Brian Ritter and Kali McKee (both C'14) teamed up to work on a multicomponent electrical system. Others worked on the fiberglass mold and final construction. Kenneth Stack (C'14) notes, "The best part of solar car is the team experience. It truly takes the cooperation of each team member to be successful."

Ra 9 had an eventful start to its racing life at the 2014 American Solar Challenge, where an electrical fire caused sprinklers to go off in the garage where Ra 9 was parked. Completely flooded, the car appeared to be ruined, but the team refused to give up.

Instead, team members disassembled and rebuilt the entire car on the spot. Seven hours later, Ra 9 joined the qualifying rounds as though nothing had happened. Principia went on to place fifth in the eight-day, 1,700-mile race and to win the Electrical Design Award.

Next stop? The Abu Dhabi Solar Challenge early this year. Visit www.principiasolarcar.com for race details.

support externships, or even have students function as management consultants for nearby businesses.

Since 2004, Bohaker's colleagues in the Political Science and Mass Communication Departments have collaborated to incorporate what they call "active" cross-curricular learning into classes by using the biennial election cycle as a live, real-life topic of study. (See story on page 18.) Professors Brian Roberts (pictured right) and John Williams have shared their excitement about this approach—and its inherent challenges—at a number of higher education conferences. In a joint paper presented at the 2012 meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, they noted that "active learning puts the responsibility of organizing the learning in the hands of the learners," so students may "struggle with ambiguity, complexity, and unpredictability" What's more, Roberts and Williams warned, since "the learning experience naturally embraces the problems inherent in the real practice, . . . instructors must accept the potential of project failure." But, they counseled, even if all does not go according to plan, "significant learning will occur."

Over the years, the College's signature Study Abroad program has also learned how to address the risks associated with experiential learning in order to reap the maximum reward. Bohaker, who heads up the program, applies a model of "creating significant learning experiences" (based on a book of the same name,



"What we're trying to do is create as many practical, engaging, and lifelike learning experiences as possible that prepare, 'fit,' and train students for life."

—Brad Warrick, School Director of Experiential Education

by educational consultant L. Dee Fink) to both her business management courses and the abroads.

In this approach, learning includes "acquiring a solid basis of foundational theory and knowledge," Bohaker explains. Thus, abroads include a component of on-campus study and preparation before departure. "Then students need to be able to apply the knowledge or theory in some concrete way," she continues. This can take the form of conducting research, interviewing local people, practicing language skills

with a homestay family, or developing a portfolio of art on site.

Last, and extremely important, Bohaker emphasizes, is the inclusion of a "reflective piece," which may involve individual journaling, group discussion, and/or interactive assessment with the trip leaders. In sum, she says, "Experiential learning is mostly a process of making connections through the interplay of theory and practice *and* reflection." Many educators—at Principia and beyond—would agree. >>



“The important thing is that we, at Principia, create the experiences that allow our students to grow . . .”

—Dr. Joe Ritter, College Dean of Academics

Experience Should Prompt Reflection and Growth

“The assumption held about learning is that we learn from experience,” acknowledges Tony Saddington, a professor at the University of Cape Town and a specialist on adult learning. “This is only partly true; in reality *we learn from reflection upon our experience*” (author’s own emphasis, as noted in “Experiential Learning,” a 2007 short paper).

In fact, Saddington believes reflection is so vital to the learning process that he advocates a 70/30 split between time spent on reflection and time spent on the experience or activity itself. When the College’s

Ritter first heard Saddington speak at a conference of the International Consortium for Experiential Learning (ICEL) several years ago, he was skeptical about this proposed division of time.*

Over time, however, Ritter’s skepticism gave way. He says he has come to realize that such a ratio is both realistic and effective. “If you really want to learn the lesson from an experience, you go back and you reflect on that activity multiple times and in multiple ways,” he comments. One small example is a lesson focusing on water pollution from his Environmental Chemistry class. During that lesson, students took turns adding a range of dif-

ferent substances to a tub of clean water and observing the effects. The activity itself took about 20 minutes; setup took double that time—and cleaning up the mess and carefully disposing of the “polluted” water took even longer! But as Ritter points out, the activity provided a concrete basis for ongoing reference, reflection, discussion, and analysis for several subsequent class periods.

Such a process is not dissimilar to real-world, institutional learning in large corporations that continually review and analyze data with a view to improving products and performance—as well as to professional sports teams, which devote hours of time to reviewing games and analyzing their “experience” (plays), also with the goal of improvement. (Even football fans engage in a type of reflection when they participate in Monday morning quarterbacking with their friends!)

For Lower School advisor Brodbeck, the process of reflection and experiential learning “supports whole man education at Principia because it integrates so many aspects of learning.”

Ritter concurs, noting, “The important thing is that we, at Principia, create the experiences that allow our students to grow in ways that are spiritual, physical, intellectual, moral, and social.” That focus on whole man education—so central to a Principia education—pairs perfectly with experiential education. ■

**Principia educators on both campuses will have the opportunity to “reflect” on experiential learning in July, when the College hosts the 2015 ICEL conference, at which Saddington will be the opening speaker.*

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by Phebe Telschow and Heather Shotwell

WHO TRAVELED FARTHEST?

Meet the new students at the School and College who traveled farthest to reach Principia this year.

Combined, they journeyed more than 18,000 miles, with the College student winning the distance record by 825 miles—not much of a margin in the context of thousands of miles and more than 24 hours of travel. Was the effort worth it? We'll let Leonida and Martin answer that.

LEONIDA TACIO

FROM THE PHILIPPINES

“The love of my family in the Philippines is the same love I feel here at Principia.”

Leonida Tacio is the youngest in her close-knit group of nine siblings. She and her family live in Abiang Taba ao Kapangan Benguet, Philippines, which is located in a mountainous region near one of the tallest peaks in the country. The terrain is so rugged that the only way to reach Abiang is to walk.

Leonida is a fourth-generation Christian Scientist. Her great-grandparents on her mother’s side of the family found Christian Science, and her great-grandfather served as a First Reader in the 1930s. These days, the Tacio family makes the hilly, 90-minute round-trip hike to attend the Christian Science Society in Gambang Kapangan Benguet. That’s where Leonida and her family heard about Principia for the first time.

Then one day, Marina Byquist (C’06), who was Principia College’s international admissions counselor at the time, traveled to the Philippines. She met with the Tacio family, and Leonida’s older sister, Lorilyn, was inspired to apply to the College, where she is now a sophomore.

Throughout her first year at the College, Lorilyn sent wonderful reports home about how she was growing academically

and spiritually. Around that time, Leonida saw a copy of this magazine, *Principia Purpose*. She says that reading it made her start to feel that Principia might be right for her. Then in March 2014, Travis Brantingham (US’94, C’98) and Brian McCauley (C’78)—who were serving as director of strategic projects and College dean of enrollment management, respectively, at the time—visited the Christian Science Society in Benguet. That was the last bit of encouragement, reassurance, and motivation Leonida and her family needed.

Currently a junior and the first Upper School student from the Philippines, Leonida has nothing but positive things to say about her classes, life in the dorm, making friends, and playing on the junior varsity softball team. She says she’s even adjusting to the food, which is quite different from the vegetables and rice grown in her garden at home.

“I’m very grateful and uplifted because I know that all is well,” Leonida comments. “Every day, I pray the twenty-third Psalm, and I know that I have everything I need—love, family, friends, and supply. The love of my family in the Philippines is the same love I feel here at Principia.” >>



MARTIN SOEMARSONO

FROM INDONESIA

“I love the liberal arts concept of education . . . Also, I can’t hide here at Prin!”

Martin Soemarsono relinquished several opportunities in his home country of Indonesia in order to come to Principia College. He’d recently been offered a position teaching music at the high school he’d attended and could have enrolled at an excellent university in Jakarta.

Instead, Martin came to Principia, traveling 29 hours by plane. His reasons are very clear: “I love the liberal arts concept of education, but mainly I came here to grow in my understanding of Christian Science. Also, I can’t hide here at Prin! Class sizes are much bigger in Indonesia, and I may have gotten a little lost.”

Leaving family and friends behind was made much easier by their support of his decision. “The church in Jakarta is like a large family,” Martin says. “Several church friends who attended Principia gave much encouragement. Also, my brother, Arthur, is a senior here, and it’s very special to be in college together.” The brothers stay in close touch with their parents and grandparents through Skype and social media. “Jakarta is literally on the other side of the world with a 12-hour time difference, so we plan our Skype visits carefully,” Martin notes.



Martin has jumped right into campus life, planning a double major in computer science and music. He began studying piano at the age of five and is an accomplished pianist. By age 10, he and Arthur were regular musicians for services at the Christian Science church in Jakarta. And Martin attended a music school in addition to his regular high school. At Principia, he takes lessons and practices daily, has performed in the weekly Music at Davis concerts (recently playing Beethoven’s *Pathétique Sonata*—a very difficult piece), sings in the choir, and performs regularly at Starbrooks, the College’s open mic night.

“I’m excited about the music opportunities here and also fascinated by computers,” Martin comments. “I love the logic of programming, so the double major is a perfect fit for me.” “I love the atmosphere here and appreciate that everyone is so friendly and helpful,” Martin adds. “I’m very grateful I made the decision to come to Principia.” ■

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TEACHING AND LEARNING ACROSS DISCIPLINARY BOUNDARIES

by Heather Shotwell

Principia College multidisciplinary professors (from left): Dr. Andrew Martin, Dr. Karen Haire, Dr. Jeffrey Steele

Like most colleges, Principia typically hires faculty to teach in only one department, considering candidates' credentials in a single discipline of study. Recently, however, a model of multidisciplinary studies is emerging, with faculty members intentionally being hired to teach across several departments.

Faculty with scholarly ties to more than one discipline are “always thinking across borders and seeing topics from more than one perspective,” explains Director of Academic Special Programs Jim Hegarty (C’76). In the process, they expand what’s possible within a liberal arts curriculum.

Academic Dean Dr. Joseph Ritter agrees. “The versatility of our multidisciplinary faculty allows Principia to offer a stronger academic program by providing a broader range of courses.” These faculty are especially well

challenging students to broaden their critical thinking skills.

Dr. Andrew Martin joined the College faculty in fall 2014, bringing with him a remarkable range of teaching and research experience. He holds a PhD in archaeology and a master’s in museum studies from Cambridge University in England. Interestingly, his doctoral research was on the Illinois Hopewell, the ancient Native American people who lived along the Mississippi River bluffs near the College. In the fall Martin taught Introduction to

describing the natural world so that they could predict and control it. The book further explores issues in modern concepts of religion, methods for studying the past, and even contemporary foreign policy in the context of religion.

Having taken part in eight archaeological excavations on three continents and worked in museums in the United States and England, Martin is eager to get students out of the classroom and into the field where they can see prehistory for themselves. While teaching Introduction to Archaeology, he took students upriver to Kampsville to see a Native American excavation site and artifacts from approximately 7,000 years ago.

“I’ve never been too happy with the divisions between academic disciplines, largely because many of these divisions are artificial,” Martin says. “I love the opportunity here at Principia to deeply explore different disciplines and help students gain insights. Many advances in academics are made this way.”

Dr. Karen Haire began teaching at Principia in 2013 as a visiting faculty member and was hired as a full-time multidisciplinary professor in 2014. She earned a doctorate in international educational development from Columbia University, a master’s in international political economy and development from Fordham University, and a BA in French and German language

“The versatility of our multidisciplinary faculty allows Principia to offer a stronger academic program by providing a broader range of courses.”

—Dr. Joe Ritter, College Dean of Academics

equipped, he points out, “to help students make connections across different disciplines, which, in turn, provides a basis for students to find relevance and relationships that might otherwise have been missed.”

But what exactly do multidisciplinary faculty members look like, and what do they do? We’re glad you asked. Meet three professors who bring a large measure of agility and academic expertise to the classroom. Their readiness to teach across disciplines is

Archaeology, Art History 1400–Present, and Prehistoric Religion. In spring, he’ll repeat the archaeology and art history courses and add Native American Cultures.

Martin’s recent book, *Archaeology beyond Postmodernity: A Science of the Social*, addresses problems with current concepts of prehistoric religion, using Native American and other indigenous accounts of religious practices to show how premodern religion was probably more of a science for prehistoric people—a way of



and literature from Durham University in England. Originally from Ireland, Haire is now a U.S. citizen and also has permanent residency in her adopted home of South Africa. In addition to her appointment at the College, she is a research fellow in the African Languages Department at the University of South Africa, where she co-supervises master's and doctoral candidates from around the world.

Haire's academic research and writing focus on African literature and culture, providing an ideal background for teaching the English Department's Postcolonial Literature course (with a focus on African literature). This past fall, she also taught an introductory writing course for international students and Elementary French. Haire's recent book, *Bringing*

Plaatje Back Home: 'Re-Storying' the African and Batswana Sensibilities in His Oeuvre, which she co-authored with African scholar D.S. Matjila, forges an Afrocentric methodology for the teaching of African literature—a long overdue approach, Haire argues. Matjila and Haire's analysis of African literature is multidisciplinary—that is, literature is read not just in traditional literary terms for formal elements but also for its social, political, and economic meanings and significance. Thus, multidisciplinary informs Haire's research as well as her teaching.

Eager to open discussions that help heal the wounds of apartheid, Haire frequently collaborates with African scholars and artists. Currently, she is translating an African novel from Setswana into

English, and her entry on South African intellectual Sol T. Plaatje will appear soon in the SAGE encyclopedia of modernism.

"I'm looking forward to teaching African Cultures in the spring," Haire says. "We'll explore the continent in its various manifestations through a sociohistoric lens, including music, art, literature, popular culture, and food." In addition, she will once again teach Postcolonial Literature and Elementary French II, the sequel to her fall language course. Regarding the far-reaching value of multidisciplinary study, Haire adds, "I believe courses across disciplines can prepare students for global citizenship."

Dr. Jeffrey Steele has been teaching in the English, Religion, Theatre and Dance, and Mass >>



Communication Departments since 1999 (with a five-year hiatus for doctoral study). He became a full-time multidisciplinary faculty member in 2010. Steele holds a master's in performance studies from Northwestern University and a PhD in English from The Shakespeare Institute in Stratford-upon-Avon in England.

Beyond the theatre, Steele is a certified International Academy of Dispute Resolution mediator, and he coaches Principia's mediation team. His dedication to this endeavor has helped the team win 10 All-American trophies since its start in 2006. Most recently, the team claimed first place in Team Advocacy and second place in

Science Department, explored individuals' perceptions of a wide range of phenomena, from politicians promises to Internet videos. Steele also taught a theatre class and directed the College's fall play, *All in the Timing* by David Ives. In the spring he'll teach two theatre courses, Dramatic Literature and Oral Interpretation.

Not surprisingly, Steele's scholarly work crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries. He is researching the Revolutionary War and Westward Expansion periods in U.S. history and is also writing a stage play set in Shakespeare's London.

Hiring and housing faculty members beyond a single department has required a more agile way of working administratively—an adjustment that Ritter, the academic dean, has been more than happy to make. As he puts it, "Coordinating with departments and assessing how multidisciplinary faculty can best serve our students is well worth the effort because they bring tremendous value to students' experience." ■

**"I believe courses across disciplines
can prepare students for
global citizenship."**

—Dr. Karen Haire, Multidisciplinary Professor

An experienced acting teacher and member of the Society of American Fight Directors, Steele has designed and choreographed stage movement and fight scenes for Principia productions and professional theatre organizations alike. He is also the man behind the creation of Lazy Zipper, the College's improvisational comedy group, now in its sixteenth year.

Team Mediation at the International Mediation Championship in November.

In the fall, Steele taught Film and Philosophy as part of a Freshman Year Experience (FYE) program titled "What the Bleep Do We Know?" This innovative FYE, co-taught by Steele and Professor John Williams of the Political



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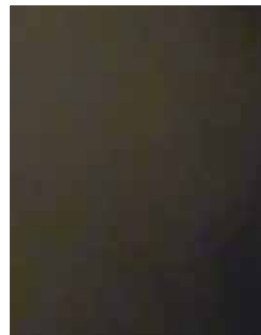
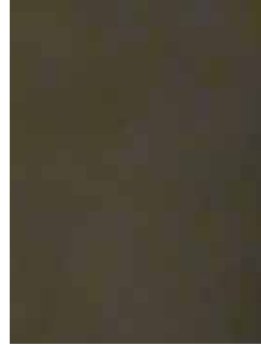
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2014 Summer Session attendee



Transformative Travel

**“Eye-opening.” “Life-changing.”
“Boundary-pushing.”**

That’s how Principia students on both campuses describe their educational travel experiences.

Whether it’s seventh graders immersing themselves in the theatre and art of New York City or College juniors painting in Greece—our students agree that the impact of traveling, learning, and living in unfamiliar territory with teachers and peers is incredibly powerful.

In part, that power comes from the trips’ cross-curricular approaches and interdisciplinary itineraries that enable students to make connections, understand the relevance of their learning, and use and apply skills and knowledge in new contexts. To promote purposeful travel, teachers and professors are mindful of closely integrating the selection of trip activities and sites with the course curriculum through targeted student-led research, projects, and presentations. And in almost every case, reflection, journaling, and sharing of experiences once back on campus are required as a means of deepening the educational impact of these journeys.

In the following pages, enjoy a peek at the fall 2014 School trip to France and College trip to England, both of which demonstrate the value of experiential learning across curricular and national borders. >>

**Here’s a sampling of locations
where Principia students study:**

COLLEGE

- Peru (Spanish language and culture)
- Vienna and Paris (Performing arts and culture)
- Tibet (Religion and politics)
- Greece and Turkey (Studio art and culture)
- Prague (Creativity and social change)
- Nice, France (Russian culture)
- Spain (Spanish language and culture)
- England (Shakespeare)
- Dominica (Ecology and economics)
- Argentina (Spanish language and media studies)
- India and Nepal (Religion and culture)
- Japan (Japanese history and culture)
- Finland (Education and sustainability)
- St. Lucia (Outdoor leadership)

SCHOOL

- 5th Grade: Colonial Williamsburg, VA (Colonial history)
- 6th Grade: Boston, Fort Ticonderoga, and Philadelphia (Revolutionary history)
- 7th Grade: New York City (Theatre and culture)
- 8th Grade: Costa Rica (Science and Spanish)
- 9th Grade: New Mexico (WWII, literature, and Native American culture)
- 10th Grade: Dominican Republic (Service learning and Spanish)
- 11th Grade: New England (History of Christian Science)
- Fall Term: France (Integrated Arts, history, art, and French)
- Winter Term: Tetons (Science and creative writing)
- Spring Term: South Africa (Service learning)
- Spring Break: Israel (Bible history)



School France Trip Takes Experiential Learning to the Next Level

by Armin Sethna

In a moment more wishful than realistic (or so she thought), French language teacher Veronica Kline (C'01) e-mailed her colleagues who teach U.S. history, art, and Integrated Arts, asking, "What if . . . what if the sky were the limit and we could combine the study of each of our subject areas on site, in France?"

She had barely hit the send button, Kline recalls with a smile, when the three teachers sped down the hallway to meet with her! After just a few

discussions, the educators—history teacher Keith Preston (US'72, C'76), art teacher Caitlin Heimerl (US'06), and Integrated Arts teacher Sara Phillips de Borja (US'93, C'97)—had sketched out an integrated curriculum that would connect all activities and sites on the trip to the historical relationship between France and the United States and to the countries' interwoven political, artistic, and architectural development.

For several weeks prior to the trip, students in the French 3 class immersed themselves in the history of pre- and post-Revolutionary France, the Napoleonic era, and the two World Wars (in addition to French conjugation, bien sûr!). And while being introduced to a variety of styles in art and architecture,



from Baroque and Rococo to Impressionism, the students also developed their own artistic skills and learned to work with watercolors in the studio.

Upon arrival in Paris, the upper schoolers were called upon to fearlessly use their language skills—and keep up with the crowds on the Métro. And in the course of attending church services (where a few of them gave testimonies in French and they all said the Lord's Prayer in French), ordering croissants, and helping other travelers with their queries, the students honed not only their language skills but also their confidence and awareness as world citizens.

"As a student, this trip has broadened how I see language, art, and history, and how these and other subjects all interconnect," said one student. "As a Christian Scientist, the trip emphasized the sheer universality of Christian Science and its presence and effects throughout the world." ■

This is an abridged version of an article that appeared in PrincipiaWire.

Excerpts from the France Trip Blog

Wednesday

The Palace [of Versailles] was very ornate, and we were able to translate our knowledge from the art history classes that we took prior to the trip to seeing the paintings in real life. . . .

We then left the inside of the Palace and journeyed outside to see the grounds. We rented bicycles and rode around all of the land that the royalty owned. It was incredible to see the amount of property that was in royal control when the peasants had nothing. It became extremely clear to all of us the reason for the fish wives' march on Versailles, which we studied with Mr. Preston prior to the trip.

Thursday

At Giverny this morning, standing in Monet's Garden, Monet seemed to come to life. Before today, . . . he was a painter and an Impressionist Today he became a real person to me. . . . It is now easy for me to understand why his paintings were impressionistic rather than realistic. The beauty and peace of the garden would be lost in an exact replica.

Friday

What made Pointe du Hoc so amazing was knowing the history behind it—how . . . the Americans scaled 90-foot cliffs to take over a German fort there, while being fired at from above, to liberate France from Nazi Germany Where so many people once lost their lives, it is now lush with life—birds twittering, waves crashing to shore, the craters created from the battle now covered in green grass. Pointe du Hoc was like a symbol for me, representing how beauty can come out of even the most ugly things, in the form of courage and sacrifice.



Travel Tales from the College England Abroad

by Reagan Kabuluku

Eighteen students went abroad to England fall semester with English professor Dr. Heidi Snow (C'79) and theatre professor Chrissy Steele to study theatre and Shakespeare. Students attended lectures, conducted research in the British Library, visited Shakespeare's birthplace, and saw numerous live theatre shows.

Snow commented that the England abroad is special. "Other colleges take students to the Globe Theatre or the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, and some do both, but ours is the only program

I know of that goes to both places and then comes back to campus and puts on a Shakespeare production," she said. "Students put into practice everything they've learned, and that makes what they've learned stay with them."

Students echoed Snow's enthusiasm for the abroad. Sophomore Stephen Hanlin said that getting to know more about Shakespeare was one of the best parts of the trip. "My favorite part of the abroad was the 15 shows [eight of which were Shakespeare plays] which we got to see all across England, especially the ones we saw at the Globe Theatre," he commented. "It was a really neat experience getting to be a 'groundling.'"

Junior Kristin Kayser also loved the abroad, explaining, "Every day was >>



filled with new experiences and amazing opportunities. . . . It's definitely a place I would like to go back to in a heartbeat." Sophomore Gemma Ritchie concurred, noting, "The England Abroad deepened my love of Shakespeare and the English language. I feel like I have a good foundation for the rest of my studies, and the abroad also taught me to appreciate all the hard work that goes into creating art."

Once back on campus, the group rehearsed Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*, which they performed the weekend before Thanksgiving. As senior Aean McMullin explained, "We are putting everything we learned from classes at the Globe and the Royal Shakespeare Company into this show, . . . applying it directly to both the performance and the lobby display [explained in the sidebar]." 📖

This is an abridged version of an article that appeared in the November 2014 issue of the Pilot, the College's student-run magazine.

Rehearsing in England, Performing in Elsayh

Students just back from the fall 2014 England Abroad performed Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* with remarkable depth and command of the complex script. The power behind their performance showed the benefits of their work overseas. In particular, they had carefully developed their characters based on research at the British Library and the Royal Shakespeare Company Archive at the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, as well as in acting workshops at the Globe Theatre. Students also created a lobby display sharing details about the play, its time period, religious history, and the role of women, among other topics.

"The England Abroad program is designed to integrate the worlds of English and theatre," abroad co-leader and English professor Dr. Heidi Snow noted. "By erasing the lines between these two disciplines, the students can see that the skills developed in both literary analysis and acting practice are necessary to bring to life a Shakespeare production."

Reflecting on her literary study of the play, junior Abby Strub observed that "Shakespeare uses the play's romantic structure to reach its full potential as a tragicomedy. Hope and grace are absent, only to return in a fuller and sweeter glory. What is good must triumph in a romance, however long it takes, and nowhere is this truer than in *The Winter's Tale*."

Professor Chrissy Steele, the play's director and abroad co-leader, extends that point, noting the timeless value of the play's focus on forgiveness and reconciliation. "These journeys are not always easy," she noted, "but as our experience of putting on this play has shown us, we are always changed by them."

—Heather Shotwell



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Vision 2020

Principia's Strategic Plan

"Building a Christian Science community of practice where all members are students, teachers, and healers."

www.principia.edu/strategicplan



In February 1935, a few weeks before Principia College moved to the new Elsah campus,

founder Mary Kimball Morgan shared this insight: “There is a plan for the progress of Principia—God’s plan. It is ours to see and understand, so that we may be in harmony with it. . . . May we now see the further unfolding of God’s plan” (*Education at The Principia*, p. 108).

Nearly 80 years later, Principia’s updated strategic plan (approved by the Board of Trustees in November 2014) springs from that same desire to “see the further unfolding of God’s plan.”

Vision 2020: Principia’s Strategic Plan builds on the accomplishments of the preceding plan, approved in 2009. This updated plan provides a well-informed and progressive vision for Principia’s future, along with strategic goals, objectives, and a detailed outline for arriving at that vision. We plan to prosper and increase Principia’s uplifting impact as students move into, through, and beyond their experience at Principia School and College.

Vision

Principia is a Christian Science community of practice where all members are students, teachers, and healers. Through transformative opportunities, a challenging curriculum, and character education based on the teachings of Christian Science, we examine, test, and strengthen our faith while developing the skills and understanding requisite for excellence. As global, outward-looking, inspired learners, we serve and better the world.

Background

The current plan builds on the work undertaken in the strategic plan put in place in 2009. This earlier work included these key accomplishments:

- The establishment of institutes based on the College campus, including the Leadership Institute, the Euphrates Institute, and the Institute for the Metaphysics of Physics
- The incorporation of curriculum-based experiential education trips for grades 5–11 at the School
- The introduction of a Bible curriculum at all levels at the School
- Enhanced offerings in Principia Lifelong Learning, including adult trips and online courses

The current plan is the result of an 18-month process, engaging multiple teams of faculty, staff, students, and alumni who reviewed institutional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

The planning effort also included more than 20 specific work groups that championed key institutional initiatives, such as character unfoldment, educational excellence, and the establishment of curricular initiatives from Early Childhood through College. This inclusive approach generated a broad consensus, built community involvement and engagement, and provided a collective means for identifying ideas that could benefit Principia.

Mission-aligned and forward-looking, this strategic plan emphasizes character unfoldment, the student learning experience, and whole man education. It underscores how students will be prepared for employment, productivity, and success. The new plan’s strategic initiatives balance accommodation of student choice with program sustainability and address opportunities for improvement in Principia’s organizational environment/culture. Finally, the plan leads Principia towards simplicity, shows how its goals will be achieved, and aligns the initiatives with demonstrated resources. The plan’s budget over five years is \$4.8 million. >>





The strategic plan is centered around five core goals.

These core goals identify the areas of strategic focus and objectives for Principia through 2020.

Core Goals

1.

Strengthen Educational Excellence

Principia will deliver a vigorous, handwrought, experiential education that challenges students to develop new skills, hone existing talents, and put current understandings into practice. These educational expectations and approaches, which apply to both academic and co-curricular activities, will deepen students' learning while at Principia and prepare them for success afterward. Through ongoing student assessment, program review, and professional development, Principia will continuously improve its offerings and reaffirm its commitment to recognizing students as unlimited, reflecting "the intelligence and strength of [their] Maker" (Policy 3).

2.

Promote Christian Science-Based Character Education

Principia will encourage the application of Christian Science in every aspect of life, while also providing community members a safe space to question and deepen their understanding of the Bible and the writings of Mary Baker Eddy. In this Christian Science community of practice, Principians support and celebrate one another's spiritual growth and partner in sharing their faith with "honest seekers for Truth" everywhere (*Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures*, p. xii). As appropriate, we will also share with other educators our view of character development as the unfoldment of each individual's true, divine nature.

3.

Nurture Success Beyond Principia

The School's college preparatory program and the College's liberal arts education will stress the development of twenty-first-century skills essential to success—analytical and critical thinking, verbal and written communication, comfort with diversity, and teamwork. As much as possible, students will practice these skills in classroom and co-curricular activities and also beyond campus borders through educational travel, community service, and internships.

4.

Grow Enrollment

Through expanded and individualized recruitment efforts, Principia will identify new prospective families in the U.S. and abroad and reconnect with those already familiar with Principia. Communications with these families will show the value of a Principia education—with an emphasis on Principians' successes—through a variety of media and with messaging informed by audience research and best practices. We will also share fresh views of Principia with alumni and other members of the larger Christian Science community in order to update the institution's reputation and increase word-of-mouth referrals.

5.

Steward Resources Responsibly

By thinking, acting, and communicating as one institution, Principia will build trust and break down silos within the community and create a more nimble operating environment. Clear, unified, and (where appropriate) streamlined operations will facilitate active stewardship of Principia's resources—including personnel, physical plant, equipment, and land—and promote a culture that emphasizes innovation, sustainability, and continuous improvement guided by measurable results. ■



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- Dr. Joe Ritter, College Dean of Academics

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April 26: Southern Connecticut

Learn more at www.principia.edu/todaytour.



Standing Up for Truth

by Bill Marston

Honesty has always been important to me. As a parent, I tried to instill in my children a love of truth and a desire to do right, but when mistakes are made, a willingness to honestly own up to the mistake is a great first step. It allows us to correct resulting problems and move forward.

The same principle holds at school. To earn the trust of my students, I need to be honest with them. I try to avoid making excuses and admit when I could do better, and I expect my students to follow that example.

One afternoon several years ago, right before one of my classes, a few students came into my room talking and laughing about something that had happened in a morning class. I wasn't paying much attention at first, but then I realized that it sounded as though information about a test in another teacher's class had been shared with other students.

I wasn't sure what I should do at first, but I knew the situation had to be addressed. It involved more than dishonesty; there wasn't even an understanding that anything wrong had been done. In fact, the students involved thought it was humorous.

Because the whole class had been in the room during the students' very public conversation about the incident, I decided to address the situation with the entire group. I said, "This is really bothering me." Then the inspiration came not to talk about the dishonesty

involved in an erroneous way. That's one of the wonderful things about teaching at Principia. Having the common denominator of Christian Science, we work to see each student as God's student, and we support each other in holding this high standard.

"I mentioned how freeing it is to be trustworthy . . ."

at first, but to share with them why honesty is so important to me. I mentioned the power of truth. Mary Baker Eddy is very clear about this in *Science and Health*, where she writes, "Honesty is spiritual power" (p. 453).

I mentioned how freeing it is to be trustworthy and how restrictive it is not to be trusted. And I acknowledged that we all make mistakes, but that a willingness to take responsibility for our mistakes leads to healing. Then I addressed the specific situation, stating my expectation that the students involved would have an honest conversation with the teacher of that class about what had occurred. With that, I moved on to the day's math lesson.

I knew it was important not to dwell on the error or to label the students

In the following days, the student most heavily involved told me that he did have a conversation with the teacher. I also received a note from a parent of one of the other students thanking me for the message of integrity I had shared with the class. However, the most rewarding feedback came five years later when I received an e-mail from the student primarily responsible. He referred to the incident, thanked me for what I had done, and described the important impact it had had on him.

What an opportunity we all have to share the truth in our community. Even if at the time we're not sure of the impact it will have, we can be sure that "honesty is spiritual power." ■

Bill Marston (US'75, C'80) has taught math at the Upper School since 1981.



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Mikhail Gorbachev

*George A. Andrews
Distinguished Speaker*
Thursday, February 19, 2015
7:30 p.m.

While president of the Soviet Union from 1985 to 1991, Mr. Gorbachev signed two disarmament pacts, ended Communist rule in Eastern Europe, and was instrumental in ending the Cold War. He won the 1990 Nobel Peace Prize “for his leading role in the peace process.”



Ziauddin Yousafzai

*Ernie and Lucha Vogel Moral
Courage Speaker*
Thursday, February 26, 2015
7:30 p.m.

An educator, Mr. Yousafzai peacefully resisted the Taliban’s efforts to close schools in Pakistan. Later, he and his daughter, Malala, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, co-founded the Malala Fund to empower girls through education. Yousafzai chairs the fund and advises the UN on global education.

Christian Science Monitor Editor-in-Chief John Yemma will serve as moderator for these events.

Both talks will be broadcast live on Principia Internet Radio.

Visit www.principiacollege.edu/speakers for more information.