



Sophomore Career Connections

Linking the Liberal Arts to the World of Work

January 19-21, 2018

Vassar

About Sophomore Career Connections

Vassar's Career Development Office (CDO) and Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development are delighted to welcome you to Vassar's fourth annual *Sophomore Career Connections*, a program of networking and professional self-discovery.

Vassar's *Sophomore Career Connections* is designed to introduce second-year students to the vast array of career options available to liberal arts graduates. Drawing on the expertise of one of Vassar's very best career resources; our alumnae/i, parent and friend mentors—we hope to help students complement their liberal arts education with industry-specific knowledge, tap into the extensive Vassar network, and focus on their professional development in a supportive environment. Making these connections will serve sophomores well as they begin to consider not only summer internship options, but also life beyond Vassar.

We extend our sincere thanks to the 80+ alumnae/i and parents who have generously offered their time to mentor over 225 students and lead 17 industry-specific career clusters over the course of the weekend. It is our hope that the mentors will also enjoy this opportunity to impart their advice and expertise, and make new connections of their own.

Sophomore Career Connections is made possible by the generous support of Carol Ostrow '77, P'09, '15 and Michael Graff P '09, '15.



Sophomore Career Connections is planned and organized by the offices of Career Development and Alumnae/i Engagement at Vassar College.

Our Keynote

Gloria Cordes Larson '72
President, Bentley University



Learning to Make a Difference

As far back as I can remember, I knew I wanted to make a difference. It's a passion that was sparked by reading the Nancy Drew mysteries and, later, *To Kill a Mockingbird*. But turning a passion into practice requires more than a dream—it's the result of a commitment to lifetime learning and a pledge to seize opportunities, even if those choices may seem puzzling to others or lead you down a new and unexpected path. Vassar was the first and most important opportunity of my life. It provided me with a window into a world beyond my childhood, introducing me to the ongoing struggle for social justice and equality. Today, I've built a highly diverse life and career—one I could never have imagined from my freshman year dormitory—with the hope that I've succeeded in making that difference, somewhere along the way.

Gloria Cordes Larson, Esq., was elected to the presidency of Bentley University after a prestigious career as an attorney, public policy expert, and business leader. During her tenure, the institution has reached a number of milestones centered on the content and value of a business education in the 21st century marketplace. Larson is the author of *PreparedU: How Innovative Colleges Drive Student Success*, published by Jossey-Bass, a division of Wiley. She also launched the Center for Women and Business at Bentley in 2011, with a mission to advance shared leadership among women and men in the corporate world and to develop women as business leaders. Currently, she serves on the boards of directors of two public companies, Unum Group and Boston Private, as well as a number of nonprofit boards. Before joining Bentley, Larson was co-chair of the Government Strategies Group at Foley Hoag LLP. She led a business advisory cabinet for Massachusetts Democratic Governor Deval Patrick and served as Secretary of Economic Affairs under Massachusetts Republican Governor William Weld. Larson also oversaw business and regulatory issues as Deputy Director of Consumer Protection at the Federal Trade Commission in Washington.

Friday's Featured Speaker

Natalie Nixon '91

Design Strategist & Principal, Figure 8 Thinking, LLC

Baby Steps to Following Your Heart: A Design Thinking Approach to Embarking on Your Career Journey

Figuring out what you want to do, and how to explain it, takes practice. It's really about getting great at telling YOUR story. In this 90-minute interactive session, students will identify key drivers that motivate them and a hands-on way to tell their story as they prepare for internships and jobs.



Sunday's Featured Speaker

Darys Estrella '92, P'21

Independent Consultant and Speaker

12 Tips to Achieve Professional Success

Success is traditionally seen as a ladder that never ends, something you need to keep trying to reach, something that is always in the future. With this presentation, students will look at success in a very different way. Darys Estrella will share with students what she wishes she had known at their age, that would have helped her better navigate the workplace.



Program Schedule

Friday, January 19

1:00 – 3:00pm	Villard Room	Student Registration <i>Check-in once for the entire program.</i>
3:00 – 4:00pm	Villard Room	Student Orientation & Introduction to Networking <i>Facilitated by the CDO staff.</i>
4:15 – 5:45pm	Villard Room	Design Thinking Exercise: A Design Thinking Approach to Embarking on Your Career Journey <i>Natalie Nixon '91, Featured Speaker</i>
6:00 – 7:30pm	ACDC	Student Dinner
6:00 – 7:00pm	Alumnae House Living Room	Welcome Reception for Mentors <i>An opportunity for Vassar alumnae/i and parents to network with one another.</i>
7:00 – 9:00pm	Alumnae House Dining Room	Dinner and Mentor Orientation <i>Facilitated by Willa Vincitore '92, Jannette Swanson, Kary McIlwain P'18, and John McIlwain P'18</i>

Saturday, January 20

8:00 – 9:00 am	ACDC	Mentor and Student Breakfast with LinkedIn Headshots LinkedIn Headshots <i>A professional photographer will be on hand to take LinkedIn headshots throughout the day.</i>
9:00 – 9:45am	UpC	Keynote: Learning to Make a Difference <i>Featuring Gloria Cordes Larson '72</i> <i>Introduction by President Bradley.</i>
10:00 – 11:15 am	Rockefeller Hall	Career Cluster Session I
11:30 am – 12:45pm	Rockefeller Hall	Career Cluster Session II
1:00 – 2:15pm	Rockefeller Hall	Lunch with Breakout Topic Discussions <i>Students will have the opportunity to dine with mentors and connect over a shared interest. See page 9 for a list of topics and room assignments. Students are welcome to attend any session they wish. Boxed lunches will be available in Rocky.</i> LinkedIn Headshots

Saturday, January 20, cont.

2:30 – 3:45pm	Rockefeller Hall	Career Cluster Session III
3:45 – 5:00pm		Free Time
5:00 – 6:30pm	Villard Room, Rose Parlor, CC MPR	Mentor and Student Networking Reception & Business Card Exchange LinkedIn Headshots <i>During this reception, students will have the opportunity to practice their networking skills with mentors in a safe environment.</i>
6:45 – 8:00pm	ACDC	Mentor and Student Dinner <i>Mentors and students are encouraged to continue conversations and networking.</i>
8:00 pm– 9:00pm	Alumnae House Living Room	Mentor Reception <i>Network and unwind with the other mentors while reflecting on the day's events.</i>

Sunday, January 21

9:00 – 10:00 am	ACDC	Mentor and Student Breakfast by Career Clusters <i>Students are encouraged to eat breakfast with mentors in the career cluster that most interests them, make some final connections, and gain further advice before the program concludes.</i>
10:15 – 11:15 am	Villard Room	12 Tips to Achieve Professional Success <i>Featuring Darys Estrella '92, P'21</i>
11:15 am	Villard Room	Program Conclusion

While the program formally concludes on Sunday, additional programming will be offered for all students on Tuesday, January 23, and throughout the semester (see next page for details).

Check careers.vassar.edu/news/calendar for the latest career-related events.

Program Schedule continues

Tuesday, January 23

12:00 – 1:00pm	Rockefeller Hall Room 200	Workshop: Resumes and Cover Letters <i>Preparing to apply to jobs and/or internships? Both will require that you submit a resume and cover letter as part of your application. Come learn what to do (and what not to do) when writing resumes and cover letters so that your documents will stand out from the crowd.</i>
1:00 – 2:00pm	Rockefeller Hall Room 200	Workshop: Jumpstart Your Internship Search <i>Get an overview of all the resources available to help you land an excellent summer internship and develop your action plan.</i>
2:00 – 3:00pm	Rockefeller Hall Room 200	Workshop: Tapping into the Vassar Alumnae/i Network <i>More than 70 percent of jobs/internships are unadvertised and only accessible through networking. It's never too early to begin networking with Vassar alumnae/i – one of Vassar's best career resources. Strategies for identifying, contacting, and following up with your network (in person and online) will be covered in this workshop.</i>
3:00 – 4:00pm	Rockefeller Hall Room 200	Workshop: Handling the Five Most Terrifying Interview Questions <i>When going into an interview, it's important to know what questions to expect and how to approach them. Preparation is key. Come learn about the five most terrifying (and common) interview questions asked by employers and how to prepare for them.</i>
12:00 – 4:00pm	Rockefeller Hall Room 201	Walk-in Resume and Cover Letter Reviews <i>CDO staff will be on hand to provide on-the-spot resume and cover letter reviews. Bring hard copies or your laptop.</i>

Wednesday, January 31

5:00 – 6:00pm	Aula	Vassar-Connected Summer Experiences That Make a Difference <i>Program directors and past program participants will give a brief overview of some Vassar-funded summer programs and opportunities, including Ford, URSI, Burnam, Tananbaum, the Internship Grant Fund, and many more. Sponsored by the Office for Fellowships and Pre-Health Advising and the Career Development Office.</i>
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Career Cluster Locations

Each career cluster will take place three times on Saturday. As indicated on the program schedule, the sessions start at 10:00am, 11:30am, and 2:30pm on Saturday. All sessions will take place in Rockefeller Hall, and each career cluster will be held in the same room for all three sessions.

See the following index for room assignments:

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Room in Rockefeller Hall</i>
Advertising/Marketing/Public Relations	101
Arts Administration	Political Science Lounge - 109
Business/Entrepreneurship	203
Education	304
Entertainment/Media	210
Environment/Sustainability	212
Financial Services	201
Government/Public Service	112
Health/Medicine	310
Information Technology/Computing	301
International Affairs/Global Careers	312
Law/Legal Services	307
Management Consulting	308
Nonprofit/Social Justice	200
Scientific Research	300
Visual/Performing Arts	Mathematics Lounge - 305
Writing/Publishing	104

Breakout Topic Locations

Each breakout discussion will take place during lunch on Saturday, January 20. As indicated on the program schedule, the meal will begin at 1:00pm and run till 2:15pm. All sessions will take place in Rockefeller Hall. Students should plan to grab a boxed lunch and go to the topic that interests them most.

See the following index for room assignments:

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Room in Rockefeller Hall</i>
Business School	101
Entrepreneurship	112
Fellowships/Year of Service Opportunities	312
Help! I Don't Know What To Do	200
International Students in the U.S. Workplace	307
Interview Horror Stories	301
Law School	210
LGBTQIA in the Workplace	308
Medical School	310
Race in the Workplace	201
The Student-Athlete Experience	212
Transitions in the Workplace	304
Translating the Liberal Arts Experience (Transferable Skills)	300
Women in the Workplace	104
Working Abroad	203

Mentors by Industry—Career Cluster Index

Although many of our alumnae/i and parent mentors work in fields, professions, and organizations that span more than one industry, we have assigned each mentor to a primary career cluster. The table below matches our 17 designated career clusters with the 3–7 mentor representatives who will lead these sessions.

Our mentors represent some of the available paths in a given industry. While the career path that interests you most may not be represented, our mentors are nevertheless eager to discuss your options and interests.

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Advertising/Marketing/ Public Relations	Nana T. Baffour-Awuah '14	Associate Strategist, Consumer Dynamics
	Shari Familian '09	Presidential Management Associate (PMA), The Estee Lauder Companies
	Jillian Gonzales '09	Live and Experiential Marketing Manager, Comedy Central
	Anne Green '93	President/Chief Executive Officer, CooperKatz & Company, Inc.
	Kary McIlwain P'18	Chief Marketing and Communications Officer, Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
Arts Administration	David Griffin '99	Senior Associate, Thomas & Associates, Inc.
	Benjamin Krevolin '89	Chief Advancement Officer, The Bard Graduate Center: Decorative Arts, Design History, Material Culture
	Catherine Martinez '88	Managing Director/CFO , Downtown Community Television Center
	Carol Ostrow '77, P'09, '15	Producing Director, The Flea Theater
	Heller An Shapiro '81	Executive Director, ArtStream

Career Cluster Index continues

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Business/ Entrepreneurship	Brian Abrams P'20	Formerly: Founder, Chairman, CEO, Corporate Imaging Concepts, LLC
	Luis Marcial '02	Facilities Manager, Red Bull North America
	Natalie Nixon '91	Design Strategist & Principal, Figure 8 Thinking, LLC
	Gleny Ramirez '03	Senior Legal Analyst, Jennison Associates, LLC
	Kylie Sale '12	Resource Management Specialist, Whole Foods Market
Education	Rebecca Bauer '14	Project Manager, Center for Inspired Teaching
	Maximilian Familian '09	Associate Director of Planning, NYC Department of Education
	Wendyliza Gonzalez '03	Bilingual Speech-Language Pathologist, NYC Department of Education
	Violeta Picayo '13	Alumni Relations Associate, Little Red School House
	Justin Soderholm '05	Social Studies Teacher, NYC Department of Education
Entertainment/Media	Mariya Abdulkaf '15	Video Director, Video Analyst, Social Media Manager, The Verge, Vox Media
	J.T. Griffith '95	Creative Director, Music Supervision, and Licensing, Nike
	Britta von Schoeler '97	President, Broadway Video Enterprises
Environment/Sustainability	Dana Archer Rosenthal '03	Independent Counsel
	Kevin Lee '14	Green Business Associate, SF Environment
	Megan Maltenfort '06	Corporate Social Responsibility, Campbell Soup Company
	Madeline Vincitore	Responsible Sourcing Senior Specialist, Keurig Green Mountain, Inc.

Career Cluster Index continues

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Financial Services	Ae Kyong Chung '83	Managing Director, Citi
	Kofi Effah '06	Director, Fitch Ratings
	Darys Estrella '92, P'21	Consultant and Speaker
	Jesse Graff '15	Strategic Associate, Compass
	Michael Graff P'09, '15	Managing Director, Warburg Pincus, LLC
	Lea Peters '09	Senior Actuarial Associate, Prudential Financial
	Hannah Van Demark '15	Policy Analyst, Federal Reserve Bank of New York
Government/ Public Service	Seth Bynum '15	Junior Project Manager, NYC Department of Housing, Preservation and Development
	Jacquelyn Harris '75	Deputy Executive Director of Land Use and Environmental Review, NYC Department. of City Planning
	Lauren Lockwood '08	Advocate and Consultant
	Alexandra Lowe-Server '14	Legislative Assistant, United States Senate, Office of Senator Kirsten Gillibrand
	Aleya Romero '15	Defense Support Assistant, U.S. Department of Defense
Health/Medicine	Charmaine Chan '93	Associate Professor of Family Medicine and Program Director of Family Medicine, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine/Nazareth Hospital
	Deus Cielo '92	Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, Brown University
	Lara Kunschner Ronan '90	Associate Professor of Neurology and Medicine, Geisel Medical School, Dartmouth College

Career Cluster Index continues

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Information Technology/ Computing	Eric Estes '11	Senior Software Engineer, Web Platforms, R/GA
	Jessica Graves '04	Biomarker Operations Project Manager, Genentech
	Alan Glickenhause '81	API Business Strategist, IBM
	Sydney Hessel '12	User Experience Researcher, Google
	Dennis Slade '91	Team Lead/Senior Software Engineer, Scholastic
	Eli Stein '12	Director of Academic Consulting, LogicPrep Education
International Affairs/ Global Careers	Michael Clyne '04	Senior Director, The Rothkopf Group
	Tasha Gill '95	Senior Advisor for Child Protection in Emergencies, UNICEF
	Melida Hodgson '85	Partner, Foley Hoag, LLP
	Mai Nguyen '13	M.A. Candidate in Global Human Development, Georgetown School of Foreign Service
Law/Legal Studies	Derrick Cephas P'19	Partner - Financial Institutions Regulatory, Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP
	Joe Kim P'19	Partner - Infrastructure, Energy, Resources, and Projects, Hogan Lovells
	Shari Leventhal '85	Special Counsel, Sullivan & Cromwell LLP
	Brent Starks '97	Vice President, Assistant General Counsel, JP Morgan Chase
	Tracy Poole '82	Assistant General Counsel, Johnson & Johnson
	Amy Walsh '87	Partner, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP

Career Cluster Index continues

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Management/Consulting	Natania Gazek '09	People Operations Consultant, Group Project
	Jonathan Hong '16	Transfer Pricing Associate, BDO USA, LLP
	Steven Kauderer '85	Senior Partner, McKinsey & Company
Non Profit/Social Justice	Mia Livingston '15	Senior Associate, Customer Experience, Donorschoose.org
	John McIlwain P'18	Vice President for Advancement, 1960
	Christine Robinson '79	Senior Consultant, Ford Foundation
	Zoe Root '00	Senior Policy Counsel, Justice Programs Office, American University
	Jeb Weisman '82	Director of Strategic Technologies; Co- supervisor and PI; Inaugural CIO, National Center of Disaster Preparedness/Earth Institute/Columbia University; SmartLab Digital Media Institute/ University College, Dublin, Ireland; YMCA of Long Island
Scientific Research	Elizabeth Ellinger '84	Principal Biostatistician, Illumina, Inc.
	Judy Grinspan '74	Research Scientist/Professor, The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Perelman School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania
	Patricia Hinds-Bankole '82	System Application Support Specialist, Bristol-Myers Squibb
	Allan Powe S'91	Principal, Think Deep Consulting

Career Cluster Index continues

<i>Industry</i>	<i>Mentor</i>	<i>Position Title and Employer</i>
Visual and Performing Arts	Adisa Bankhole S'82	Performing Artist, Freelance
	Stephanie Goldberg '14	Special Projects Coordinator, Office of the President, Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts
	Rachel Lee Hovnanian P'18	Artist, Rachel Lee Hovnanian Studio
	Patricia Ann Neely '75 P'18	Musician, Teacher, Development, Freelance and Director of Abendmusik, The Brearley School, Bard Graduate Center
	Nicole Wood '12	Producer/Voice Actor KidZoneTV at Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital
Writing/Publishing	Charles Kim '92	Principal, Charlotte & Company
	Emmy Laybourne '93	Novelist, Macmillan
	Joshunda Sanders '00	North America Director of Communication, Change.org

Students will find a personalized career cluster schedule in their SCC folder. Cluster assignments are final. Please attend the clusters indicated on your personalized schedule, at the designated times.

Mentors

Bios and Advice

Mariya Abdulkaf '15

**Video Director, Video Analyst, Social Video Manager
The Verge at Vox Media**

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: International Studies

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/mariyaabdulkaf/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mariyaabdulkaf/)



Mariya Abdulkaf is a video producer and video analytics manager at The Verge at Vox Media. After developing and implementing a strategy for video publishing, distribution, and growth at Mashable, The Verge recruited Abdulkaf to scale its Facebook video program; optimize videos for discovery and sharing;

grow its YouTube audience; and pull analytics to inform video strategy. Within a few months at The Verge, Abdulkaf grew her duties to include scripting, directing, and editing mobile videos. She is credited for having pioneered The Verge's language and style on mobile platforms, most notably Instagram Stories, as well as The Verge's video SEO strategy. Abdulkaf previously worked as a marketing strategist, reporter, and production coordinator. While she has had various jobs and roles (many at the same time), working at The Verge has been one of her most enriching career experiences because of the amazing and talented team she gets to work with every day. Vox Media as a whole is an incredible place to work, and The Verge is a very special place.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Even though graduation seems like it's so far away, it's really important to start reaching out to Vassar alumnae/i right now. Make a wish list of companies you want to work for, find alumnae/i at those companies, and reach out to them. If you want to be a journalist, reach out to 10 journalists at different media companies. If you want to be a producer, make sure you get coffee with 10 different producers. Even if you're not currently looking for a job or an internship, the media industry is so often about who you know. There are a lot of amazing Vassar grads who want to help you succeed. That's how I got my foot in the door.

Brian Abrams P'20

**Formerly: Founder, Chairman, and CEO of
Corporate Imaging Concepts, LLC**

**Currently: Active board member for private
equity-backed company/ies**

Lake Bluff, Illinois

Major in college: Accounting, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign - College of Business

Advanced Degree: JD, University of Michigan

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/brian-abrams-bo00174/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/brian-abrams-bo00174/)



Brian Abrams started his first entrepreneurial venture in college, selling custom T-shirts to fraternities and sororities. After practicing law for a few years, he found himself pulled back to the world of start-ups, where he founded Corporate Imaging Concepts, LLC, a technology-focused

marketing company he ran for 20 years, until selling to private equity in 2016. At his exit, the company ranked in the top 30 in sales (out of 19,000 industry companies) and was consistently recognized as one of the 10 Best Places to Work in the industry. In this same year, Abrams was honored as the industry's Entrepreneur of the Year. Among his other start-ups, Abrams and his wife, Patty, are the founders of Beacon Academy, a progressive, private high school based in Evanston, Illinois, which focuses on entrepreneurial learning underpinned by a Montessori pedagogy.

Today, Abrams works with private equity firms as an active board member for their portfolio companies.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Find a supportive partner and your life will be a success.

Dana Archer-Rosenthal '03

Independent Consultant, Self-Employed

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Urban Studies

Advanced Degree: Master's in City and Regional Planning,
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/dana-archer-rosenthal-b3149117/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dana-archer-rosenthal-b3149117/)



Dana Archer-Rosenthal has worked in the nonprofit, philanthropic, and private sectors to advance innovative program and financing models for poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability. She specializes in program design and evaluation, and developing and managing public-private

partnerships. Most recently, she was the enterprise project manager at BlocPower, a clean energy start-up focused on energy efficiency and job creation in low-income urban communities, where she led the start-up phase of a mayoral initiative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and preserve affordable housing. From 2014–2016 she worked at Nonprofit Finance Fund, where she designed and implemented a \$3.6 million project development fund for Pay for Success/Social Impact Bond projects, an emerging method of funding social services and sharing risk between the public and private sectors. As a senior program officer at Robin Hood in the Jobs and Economic Security portfolio, she made grants to support workforce development organizations in New York City.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Treat work as another learning opportunity and seek out organizations and people who are doing interesting things, and where you think you can learn something. Sometimes that means learning in the process what you don't want to do, or switching gears, or trying seemingly disparate things, but this can be a strength if you are able to create a narrative around your experiences. There are a lot of things about work that you learn by doing them on the job, but analytical thinking, writing, and research skills, and the cross-disciplinary thinking that Vassar teaches, will always serve you well.

Nana T. Baffour-Awuah '14

Associate Strategist, Consumer Dynamics

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Psychology

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/ntbaffourawuah](https://www.linkedin.com/in/ntbaffourawuah)



Nana T. Baffour-Awuah is an Associate Strategist with Consumer Dynamics, a brand strategy and innovation consultancy in SoHo, New York. He works on projects at the intersection of creativity and strategy, helping to unearth insights that translate into marketing and communications

strategies or products that drive business, for clients such as Colgate, Keurig, or Weight Watchers. When he's not working, he's either reading something random, chasing some new horizon, or spinning words into essays and articles—you can find some of his work on *Brand Quarterly*, LinkedIn, *Huffington Post*, *New African Magazine*, *BuzzFeed*, and Vassar's Alumnae/i Website.

At Vassar, Baffour-Awuah was a psychology major, VP of the African Students Union, Class Representative of the Judicial Board, and member of the Axios. He currently serves on the AAVC Board and the Programming Committee of the Vassar Club of New York.

Advice to the Class of 2020:

Try your best, and be yourself in the most excellent way you know how.

Then trust in the journey, and try to appreciate and enjoy it as much as you can; we all end up at the same destination anyway.

Adisa Olubayo Bankole S'82

Performing Artist, Freelance

Passiac Park, New Jersey

Major in college: Theater, SUNY Albany

www.thepotentialartistinyou.com



Adisa Olubayo Bankole is a 20+ year performing arts veteran, specializing in acting, storytelling, and drumming. He has been seen on both stage and the silver screen; as a stage actor, he has had the privilege of playing both on the East and West Coasts in such venues as The Globe Playhouse in Hollywood,

California, New York State University at Albany, and TSI/PlayTime Series in New York City. His film credits include *Williamstowne*, *Feliz Cumpleanos*, *Rooster*, and *Hope*. As a freelance artist, Bankole has performed his stories throughout the East Coast, in such places as The Walt Whitman Arts Center, The African Museum, SMA Fathers, and The Caribbean Culture Center. Bankole has also conducted both storytelling and African drum workshops, and has lectured for a few community centers. Bankole appears in Corki Miller and Mary Ellen Snodgrass's anthology *Storytellers: A Biographical Directory of 120 English-Speaking Performers Worldwide*.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

"Always aim to shoot beyond the sun, if you reach just below the rainbow, don't worry your journey has just begun, be content with the joys of seeing your spirit shine and glow." Adisa Olubayo Bankole

I have found throughout my life's journey, that those who live well and thrive are those who have passion, goals, dreams, but most of all persistence and perseverance. For those journeying down that road of the creative profession, always bring truth to your work, because we are the storytellers of our time. We provide the vision and the possibilities to our world, and give voice to what we hope that world can be.

Rebecca Bauer '14

Project Manager, Center for Inspired Teaching

Silver Spring, Maryland

Major at Vassar: Psychology

Advanced Degree: MS.Ed, Education Policy, University of Pennsylvania

[LinkedIn:linkedin.com/in/rebecca-bauer-91839113/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/rebecca-bauer-91839113/)



Rebecca Bauer is Project Manager at Center for Inspired Teaching, an education nonprofit that works to transform education through innovative teacher training. In her role, she works closely with the communications and development departments, and provides support to the executive

director. She also manages external relations projects including visits to Inspired Teaching's Demonstration School, Institute, and Real World History programs. Prior to Inspired Teaching, Bauer worked as an executive assistant at Character.org. In 2014 and 2016, she spent the summer managing the day program at Exploration Schools at Wellesley College, an academic program for eighth and ninth graders. She received her MS.Ed in education policy from the University of Pennsylvania's Graduate School of Education. While at Penn, she also worked as a graduate assistant at the Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

At Vassar, Bauer majored in psychology and earned a teaching certification for grades one through six. She was on the Executive Board of Hunger Action and served as a VSA councilmember representing the SoCos.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

During my senior year at Vassar, I felt panicked, because every day I became less certain about what I wanted my career to look like. I was convinced that every post-grad decision I made would be life-altering. So, if you're like me, my first piece of advice is calm down. My second piece of advice is that it's okay to be uncertain. Questioning and doubting and wondering is simply a part of being a curious, reflective, passionate human being. Make peace with the uncertainty and don't let it paralyze you.

Seth Bynum '15

Junior Project Manager, New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development

West Orange, New Jersey

Major at Vassar: Economics



After graduating from Vassar, Seth Bynum took part in the Coro Fellowship in Public Affairs, an experiential leadership development training program for aspiring change makers in New York City. Over the course of the nine-month fellowship, Bynum worked at six different jobs and organi-

zations in various sectors, such as The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, AFSCME DC 1707, The Hudson Companies, New York Cares, and the Pratt Area Community Council. Upon completion of the fellowship, Bynum worked as an analyst for Benenson Strategy Group, a democratic polling and strategic messaging firm, where he analyzed polling data and created messaging strategies for nonprofits, Fortune 500 companies, and a gubernatorial candidate. Bynum currently is a junior project manager in the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit Preservation Portfolio Program at the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, where he underwrites and provides financing for the rehabilitation and preservation of privately owned affordable housing in New York City.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Alums, alums, alums. Begin reaching out to alums as soon as you possibly can. It doesn't matter if you don't know exactly what you want to do after college because, most likely, neither did any of the alums you are reaching out to. Contact them via LinkedIn, email, any way you possibly can and ask as many questions as you can. People love talking about themselves and they especially love it if they think it'll somehow help another person. And the people you meet and create relationships with now will become mentors, advocates, references, and maybe even bosses or co-workers in the future.

Charmaine Chan '93

Associate Professor of Family Medicine & Program Director of Family Medicine Residency at Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine/Nazareth Hospital

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Anthropology-Geography

Advanced Degree: DO, Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine



Dr. Charmaine Chan was a National Health Service Corps Scholar who fulfilled her scholarship obligations on the Navajo Reservation in Shiprock, New Mexico. Subsequently, she worked as a civilian in the military for one year prior to getting called back to work with medical students at her medical

school, the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. She currently works in a clinic at the college, as well as at Nazareth Hospital to start a family medicine residency to help pipeline providers into Northeast Philadelphia. She loves engaging with the community and establishing bridges, especially working with underserved populations. She will be transitioning to a DIO (designated institutional official) position next year to oversee all the residencies at Nazareth Hospital.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Do not ever let anyone tell you that you cannot do something. If someone says that to you, you take it as a challenge to prove them wrong. That's the only way you can end up doing what you love to do without regrets. The corollary is that you need to follow your passion in life no matter what, because that's the only way you can guarantee that your "little light" is going to shine, spread love, and improve this world.

Ae Kyong Chung '83, P'15

Managing Director, Citi

McLean, Virginia

Major at Vassar: History

Advanced Degree: MA, International Relations SAIS,
Johns Hopkins University



Ae Kyong Chung has over 20 years of experience in emerging markets financings and structured distribution. For much of her career, she worked with official agency financing to mitigate credit and cross-border risks for Citi's global client base. She has been instrumental in raising over \$25 billion in more

than 50 countries in connection with equipment- and project-related financings and investments across a wide range of industry sectors, including power, oil and gas, aviation, technology, and telecommunications, and has provided extensive advisory services to clients worldwide. During her career, she has led a series of landmark deals and structured a number of market-changing distribution channels for official agency-backed financings. Among them, the establishment in 1998 of Govco, a unique ABCP conduit that funds official agency guaranteed assets and is now one of the largest issuers of ABCP Conduit in the U.S. markets as well as other innovative export credit and multi-sourced financings, including agency enhanced structured bonds.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

I don't really have words of wisdom per se—certainly nothing that you haven't heard before. However, I would say the difference between those who succeed and those who don't is defined by hard work, persistence, and the ability to communicate. Especially as new entrants to the working world, it is crucial that you systematically approach a job search as you would a research project—gather all the facts, identify primary sources (networking), and be able to convey your thoughts/goals in a compelling manner. And never get discouraged and don't ever think you're a pest when you reach out to people. Everyone's busy, not just at work but in their lives, but all are happy to speak with you (eventually).

Deus Cielo '92

Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island

Major at Vassar: Biology

Advanced Degree: MD, Brown University



After graduating from Vassar, Deus Cielo completed medical school training in 1996 at Brown University. Cielo then entered an emergency medicine residency training program, and finished two out of four years before discovering his true passion, neurosurgery. Deciding to leave emergency medicine,

Cielo refocused on neurosurgery, and eventually graduated from neurosurgery residency in 2006. He then joined the medical school faculty at Brown. Cielo remains in an academic setting, concentrating a lot of his time on training neurosurgical residents, as well as medical students and residents from other disciplines who rotate on the neurosurgical service. Cielo's clinical practice focuses on degenerative spine disorders, stereotactic radio surgery, peripheral nerve disorders, and intracranial tumors.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

I've always found these words from Teddy Roosevelt useful: "Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty." In essence, whatever you find in life that brings you joy, stirs your passion, and makes you happy will without question require a tremendous amount of energy and devotion from you.

Michael Clyne '04

Senior Director, The Rothkopf Group

Morristown, New Jersey

Major at Vassar: International Studies

Advanced Degree: Master's in International Affairs,
Columbia University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/michaelclyne1/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelclyne1/)



Michael Clyne is a foreign policy professional who has worked across private, nonprofit, and intergovernmental sectors integrating global affairs into organizational management and development. As Senior Director of The Rothkopf Group, he leads communications and partnerships strategy

across the firm's consulting, new media, and policy spheres, including the Deep State Radio podcast network and annual Culture Summit conferences. Clyne has been featured across broadcast, print, and online media, including *Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Al Jazeera*, *Bloomberg*, and *NPR*; presented at international forums; and delivered expert evidence. A member of the Africa Expert Network and Center for International Maritime Security, he is a foreign policy contributor to *The Hill*, and his writings have also been published by the Center for Humanitarian Cooperation, Council on Foreign Relations, and International Labour Organization.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Students attending Sophomore Career Connections are starting off with the right mindset, unlike when I was a sophomore. Although obstacles may abound, this type of early dedication can help ensure a smoother transition to the world of work and beyond. Yet, it shouldn't replace curiosity, either; the opportunity to take courses outside core interests, try out student activities, and even meander from a set professional track are still great benefits of the Vassar experience.

Kofi Effah '06

Director, Fitch Ratings

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Economics

Advanced Degree: MS, Quantitative Finance, Rutgers
Business School, Rutgers University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/kofi-effah-78657a12](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kofi-effah-78657a12)



Kofi A. Effah is a Director at Fitch Ratings, one of the "Big Three" global credit rating agencies that provide an opinion on the relative ability of an entity to meet financial commitments. As part of the Banker Marketing Team within Fitch's Business and Relationship Management vertical,

Effah's primary responsibilities include growing Fitch's Corporate Ratings franchise by developing and managing relationships with Leveraged Finance, Investment Grade, and Coverage desks at major banks, as well as boutique broker dealers and debt advisory firms.

Prior to joining Fitch in 2015, Effah was a Global Fixed Income Relationship Manager for six years at Dealogic, a financial technology firm that provides a platform that integrates content, analytics, and technology to help investment banks originate and distribute deals. In that role, Effah consulted with heads of fixed-income desks, on their market reporting needs around new business origination and performance benchmarking.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Never limit yourself, try your hand at many different things that interest you to help you better discover yourself—that's what the college experience is about. As you start building out your resume, remember that it's not about what you've done, but how you tell your story to make it relevant for the direction you would like to take your career.

Elizabeth Ellinger '84

Principal Biostatistician, Illumina, Inc.

San Mateo, California

Major at Vassar: Physics, Mechanical Engineering (BS, Columbia University, as part of Vassar's Dual-Degree Program)

Advanced Degrees: MS, Mechanical Engineering, University of Iowa; MS, Statistics, California State University, East Bay

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/elizabeth-bess-ellinger-8591758/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/elizabeth-bess-ellinger-8591758/)



Bess Ellinger is a Principal Biostatistician at Illumina, where she provides statistical design and analysis for product development, clinical trials, and manufacturing of in-vitro diagnostic genetic tests, including oncology and non-invasive prenatal testing applications. Ellinger was a physics major at

Vassar, and also received a BS degree in mechanical engineering at Columbia University through Vassar's dual-degree engineering program. After a stint in West Africa in the Peace Corps and completion of her MS, she worked as a mechanical engineer in a number of industries before finding her calling in the medical device industry, where she has held management and engineering roles in research and development, quality assurance, and manufacturing engineering. Taking a statistics course in 2004 led her to discover a passion for the subject, which she indulged by completing an MS in statistics in 2009, and making the leap to a full-time statistician position in 2016. She has found it to be challenging and very rewarding to be starting up a new learning curve at this point in her career.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Think not only about the kind of work you want to do, but also the geography in which you will thrive. Are they compatible? Is your heart in the city, but the profession you have chosen carried out in suburban office parks? Theoretically, within the interconnected work world, you can do almost any kind of work remotely, as long as you have a decent Internet connection. But the reality is often that industrial expertise gathers geographically—think tech in Silicon Valley or theater in New York City. Immersion in the geographical center of your field, if it has one, means that it is easier to build a network; you can change jobs without moving, and you will have more opportunities to grow your career.

Eric Estes '11

Senior Software Engineer, Web Platforms, R/GA

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Computer Science

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/eric-estes-58927026](https://www.linkedin.com/in/eric-estes-58927026)



Eric Estes is a software engineer for R/GA, a global digital advertising agency. Having joined the company two weeks after graduation, he specializes in front-end web development and has worked on internal and external projects for clients including Nike, Samsung, Verizon, and Uber, as well as a

Facebook chatbot to help citizens participate in the 2016 election. At Vassar he spent four years devoted to the *Miscellany News*, including three years as Design and Production Editor, and honed his web development skills with projects for the *Miscellany News*, the Vassar Student Association, and the Town of Poughkeepsie. Since 2011, Estes has stayed connected to the college and handled web and design responsibilities for Vassar's regional alumnae/i clubs, particularly the Vassar Club of New York.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

When picking classes it can be easy to stay in the comfort zone of your major. I know scheduling is a pain, but fight that urge. One of Vassar's greatest strengths is the breadth of its curriculum and the freedom to explore it. You've got five semesters left but they go by quickly, so make the most of them. If you're a science major, take an art class. If you're an economics major, try a philosophy class. English major? Give math a chance. Relationships between disciplines tend to reveal themselves in the most surprising ways, and dipping your toe in seemingly opposing areas can be incredibly beneficial down the road.

Darys Estrella '92, P'21

Consultant and Speaker

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
Major at Vassar: Hispanic Studies
Advanced Degree: MBA, The Stephen Ross School of Business at the University of Michigan
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/darys-estrella-992558b8](https://www.linkedin.com/in/darys-estrella-992558b8)



Darys Estrella is a speaker, a consultant, and an expert in capital markets and sustainability. In addition to her BA from Vassar and her MBA from the University of Michigan, she has completed executive programs at Harvard and Yale, Oxford, and INCAE in Costa Rica.

At 27 she was VP at Deltec Asset Management in the emerging markets division, covering Latin America. From 2002 to 2007 she was VP at Goldman Sachs and Co. in the fixed income, currencies, and commodities division. In 2007, having worked in Wall Street for 15 years, she returned home to the Dominican Republic to be the CEO of the Dominican Republic Stock Exchange, the first woman in Latin America to occupy this position. From 2012 to 2017 she was VP of Corporate Sustainability for INICIA, an asset management firm in the Dominican Republic.

She is considered a Young Global Leader by the World Economic Forum, the only Dominican woman with this distinction. She was recognized as “The Best CEO of the Dominican Republic” by *European* magazine. She is the mother of three and a marathon runner.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You must feel passion for what you do. Be confident in yourself. Do not let fear stop you from doing anything. You will not know what you are capable of doing until you try. Take risks. Life is a journey. Enjoy the ride.

Maximilian Familian '09

Associate Director of Planning, New York City Department of Education

Brooklyn, New York
Major at Vassar: Education Policy (Independent) and Political Science
Advanced Degree: MA, Education Leadership, New York University
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/max-familian-boo78230](https://www.linkedin.com/in/max-familian-boo78230)



As an independent major in education policy at Vassar, Max Familian became passionate about urban education through coursework and by volunteering in schools in Poughkeepsie and New York City. He began his career by working in finance and operations at Community Roots, an independent charter school

in Brooklyn. Soon after, Familian began graduate work in education leadership to build his skills and knowledge of education management, politics, and advocacy. Over the next several years, as the founding leader of the middle school operations team, Familian helped direct the growth of Community Roots to a full K-8 school by supporting work in accounting, technology, development, programming, school culture, and operations. Recently, Familian transitioned to education policy—he now works in district planning for the New York City Department of Education (NYCDOE). In his current position, Familian collaborates with communities and officials across the NYCDOE to help school districts strategically plan and make changes to improve learning outcomes.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Try and get as much practical experience in your fields of interest before choosing a career trajectory. It can be very intimidating to graduate without the experience or knowledge to guide a job search and determine what opportunities might be the right fit. During my years at Vassar, the experiences I gained working in schools, interning at nonprofit organizations, and conducting policy research was instrumental in helping me determine my professional goals and build a network to kick off my career.

Shari Familian '09

**Presidential Management Associate (PMA),
Estee Lauder Companies**

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Economics

Advanced Degree: MBA, New York University Stern
School of Business

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/sharifamilian/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/sharifamilian/)



Shari Familian is a participant in the Presidential Management Associate (PMA) Program at the Estee Lauder Companies. As a participant in the program, Familian will do four six-month rotations in four different roles within the company. She is currently on her first rotation in the Corporate Innovation Strategy

Department, where she uses data and analytics to visualize consumer purchasing habits in makeup and skincare. Within the broader PMA program, Familian is on the consumer engagement track, with a focus on data analytics. Prior to Estee Lauder, she was a full-time graduate student at the New York University Stern School of Business, where she graduated with a specialization in luxury marketing. Prior to NYU Stern, she worked extensively in the nonprofit industry, where she focused on developing direct marketing programs, managing various stakeholder relationships, engaging donors, and executing on fundraising strategy.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Use your summer months to gain work experience in industries you are interested in; be open-minded, work hard, and remember attitude is everything. Keep a running list of all the professional projects you worked on and all the skills you gained—when it's time to apply to jobs, use that list of projects and skills to help with tailoring your resume and cover letter for the application. Practice job interviewing as much as you can so you can easily answer typical interview questions.

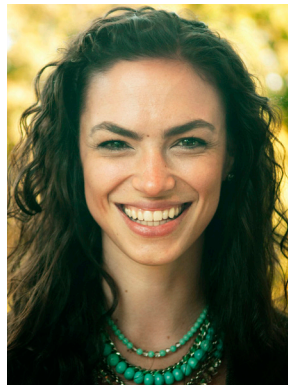
Natania Malin Gazek '09

People Operations Consultant, Group Project

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Sociology

Advanced Degree: MBA, Organizational Behavior, Yale
School of Management



Natania Malin Gazek graduated last May with her MBA from Yale, where she concentrated in organizational behavior, was president of the Women in Management Club, and served on the Community and Inclusion Council. Her career after Vassar began at the Justice Department in DC, where she was

a paralegal and led operational change initiatives. After ruling out becoming a lawyer, Gazek moved on to Planned Parenthood's national offices, where she worked under the COO and then designed and managed metrics to assess the impact of a new employee engagement and patient experience initiative. Last summer she worked on talent acquisition and development at the Clinton Campaign HQ, and she now does people operations and organizational development consulting for human capital start-ups. Her career is fueled by a passion for creating the systems, structures, and cultures that help people do their best work so organizations can be as effective and efficient as possible.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Your first job after Vassar is not the “be all end all”—it's an experiment. Draft a hypothesis about how you're best suited to help make a difference in the world, and then test it with an internship or volunteer opportunity. Update and test again with the next opportunity, and so on. Eventually, one of those opportunities will be a first job. Approach your path with curiosity and you may be surprised by what you learn.

A liberal arts education qualifies you to do A LOT—especially anything that hinges on critical thinking. You'll graduate as someone who knows how to learn and ask great questions. Lead with that and you'll add value to many workplaces. Don't let anyone tell you otherwise.

Tasha Gill '95

Senior Advisor for Child Protection in Emergencies, UNICEF

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: International Studies

Advanced Degree: MA, International Affairs, SIPA, Columbia University



Tasha Gill is a humanitarian expert with 20 years of experience in humanitarian action, including protection and child protection. She recently took up the post of Senior Advisor for Child Protection in Emergencies at UNICEF Headquarters. Previously, she served as Humanitarian Advisor

at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations on humanitarian crises and policy issues in Africa, and related to peacekeeping, protection, and disaster risk reduction; and represented the United States in resolution negotiations and Member States meetings. Gill was the Country Director for the International Rescue Committee in Mali and has worked with UNICEF and NGOs in emergency response in the Democratic Republic of Congo, Libya, Madagascar, Nepal, and Uganda. Gill holds an MA in Economic and Political Development from Columbia University, and was a Watson Fellow after graduating from Vassar.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Focus on the change you want to effect, on what you want to achieve, and not on what job you want to hold—advice I received and I'm happy to pass on to others.

Alan Glickenhause '81

API Business Strategist, IBM

Red Hook, New York

Major at Vassar: Computer Mathematics (Independent Major)

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/alan-glickenhause-2bo65a3](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alan-glickenhause-2bo65a3)



Alan Glickenhause is the API Business Strategist for IBM. In this role, Glickenhause assists clients with their business strategy for the API economy, understanding their business direction and existing environment (both business and technical), and helping businesses successfully adopt an API

strategy that fits their environment. He is the author of almost 100 papers, articles, and videos related to the API economy. Glickenhause meets with clients in all industries, all geographies, and of all sizes. He brings a capability to communicate at both the business and IT level with his clients, and can explain both how and why a business will benefit from IBM solutions. Glickenhause joined IBM in 1981 and has held numerous positions, including positions in sales, technical sales, marketing, development, and technical support. Glickenhause has worked in all of the “hot” technology areas over his career including e-business in the 1990s, service-oriented architecture in the 2000s, and now API economy. Glickenhause is a frequent speaker at many industry conferences around the world.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Strive to put yourself out of a job. This is what your competition is trying to do. If you can move things forward faster, then you will beat your competitors.

Stephanie Goldberg '14

**Special Projects Coordinator, Office of the President,
Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts**

Brooklyn, New York

Majors at Vassar: Music, Psychology

Advanced Degree: MA, Music Business, New York University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/goldbergstephanie](https://www.linkedin.com/in/goldbergstephanie)



Stephanie Goldberg oversees Special Projects in the Office of the President at Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. Goldberg was instrumental in the induction process and show production of The Performing Arts Hall of Fame at Lincoln Center Inaugural Induction Ceremony

& Gala. Previously, Goldberg worked with Lincoln Center Education, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Tanglewood Music Center of the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and The Recording Academy in various areas of arts administration, including project management, program development, event production, and fundraising. Goldberg is currently pursuing a master's degree in music business at New York University. Goldberg serves on the Board of Directors and as Deputy Programming Chair of the Vassar Club of New York, and as The Vassar Fund Class of 2014 Co-Chair. At Vassar, Goldberg double majored in music and psychology. Her Vassar activities included Jewett House Team, VSA Executive Board, Daisy Chain, Founder's Day Committee Chair, Women's Chorus, Jazz Combo and Big Band, Future Waitstaff of America, and Modfest.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Take chances and seek out opportunities, even if they may seem far-fetched. Believe in yourself, know your worth, and ask for what you deserve. Go with your gut. (It's almost always right.) Work hard, ask questions, listen, and be attentive to details, but don't fret about perfection. If you need a break, take one. If you need to talk to someone, go for it. Network, network, network. Get out there and meet other Vassar folk—through your local Vassar Club, the Alumnae/i Website, Facebook, etc. We're here to support one another.

Jillian Gonzalez '09

**Live and Experiential Marketing Manager,
Comedy Central**

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Art History

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jillianegonzalez](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jillianegonzalez)



Jillian Gonzalez is the Live and Experiential Marketing Manager at Comedy Central. In this role she oversees all elements of Comedy Central's experiential marketing, including stand-up tours, festivals, and brand events. In 2017 Gonzalez and her team conceptualized, developed, and executed

the first annual Clusterfest. This three-day comedy and music festival serves as a tent pole event for the network and was called the "Coachella of comedy" by the *Washington Post*. In addition to her work developing festivals, she also executes on-the-ground promotional stunts and experiential marketing at key consumer events, including Comic-Con and South by Southwest. Prior to joining Comedy Central as an assistant, Gonzalez worked as a production assistant on MTV's *Made* and as a page on *The Late Show with David Letterman*. Her first job after graduating Vassar was as a customer service representative at a juice weight loss company.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Approaching a career can seem monolithic—remember that it's an ultra-marathon and not a sprint. Stay open to new opportunities and know that there's no shame in deciding to make a change after a few years on a specific path. If your schedule allows, try to intern during the school year as these positions can be less competitive than those offered during the summer. Not every job or task will be engaging—use all jobs as an opportunity to learn something and approach all tasks, especially the ones that seem beneath your intelligence, with care and rigor. Stay smart and curious. Don't send mean emails.

Wendyliza Gonzalez '03

**Bilingual Speech-Language Pathologist,
New York City Department of Education**

Bronx, New York

Major at Vassar: Psychology

Advanced Degree: MS, Speech-Language Pathology, New York Medical College

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/wendygslp](https://www.linkedin.com/in/wendygslp)



Wendyliza Gonzalez, M.S. CCC-SLP, TSSLD-BE, is an ASHA certified, New York City-based, bilingual speech-language pathologist with six years of experience serving the pediatric population in public schools, private practice, and acute-care inpatient facilities. Gonzalez specializes in assessment

and curriculum-aligned treatment approaches for bilingual children with speech and language delays, learning disabilities, and complex communication disorders. In addition to group and individual direct therapy, Gonzalez works collaboratively with other disciplines to manage school-wide Response to Intervention and Literacy support initiatives. She splits her time between treating children in three-year-old kindergarten (3K) through eighth grade in the South Bronx and working part-time at Blythedale Children's Hospital in Valhalla, NY. There she functions as part of a multi-disciplinary team providing speech, language, cognition, and feeding therapies to medically fragile children, age birth through 21. She draws from her past work experiences in healthcare and social services to inform her practice, and currently holds a position with the American Speech-Language-Hearing Association's (ASHA) Leadership Development Program.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Embrace the not knowing. It's normal to feel anxious and worried about choosing the right career path and finding the right job after college. Know that over time, every single work experience will put you exactly where you need to be. Be good at what you do—no matter what it is. Work hard, stay up to date, don't get too comfortable in what you already know, build good relationships, and show the work to back yourself up. A strong work ethic and ever-growing mind will always be obvious to the right people. And when in doubt, just take a chance, hold your breath, and figure it out.

Jesse Graff '15

Strategic Associate, Compass

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Mathematics

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jesse-graff-475a18154/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jesse-graff-475a18154/)



Jesse Graff works as a Strategic Associate at the real estate tech start-up Compass, where he focuses on strategic finance, corporate development, mergers and acquisitions, and financial modeling. Prior to working at Compass, Graff spent two-and-a-half years working at Deutsche Bank as an Investment

Banking Analyst in the Global Consumer Group. During his role at Deutsche Bank, Graff helped various public and private companies raise capital through both the equity and debt markets, and also provided advisory services for multiple acquisition opportunities. In his last month at the bank, Graff worked on a transaction to help facilitate the acquisition of the Houston Rockets. In his free time, Graff enjoys playing basketball and the drums.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Take every interview you can get—even if it is for a job you don't like. You can practice an interview with friends and family and teachers all you want, but there is nothing like the real thing. Every interview you take is another step towards perfecting your "bag of interview answers." By the time you do land the interview for your ideal job, you can draw on your past experiences and absolutely nail it. I know its sounds cliché, but practice makes perfect.

Michael Graff P'09, '15

Managing Director, Warburg Pincus

New York, New York

Major in College: Economics, Harvard College

Advance Degree: MS, Finance, MIT



Michael Graff has been a Managing Director at Warburg Pincus, a private equity firm, since 2003. He leads the firm's aerospace investing group. He is Chairman of Extant Aerospace, Wencor Aerospace, and Consolidated Precision Products, and is a Director of Transdigm and AlliedUniversal

Security. Prior to joining Warburg Pincus, Graff was President of Bombardier Aerospace in Montreal and prior to Bombardier, he was a Partner at McKinsey & Company in New York and London. In addition, Graff is a member of the board of the Flea Theater in New York and is Chairman of the board of USA Water Polo.

Advice to the Class of 2020:

Find something you love to do and try to make a living doing it.

Never use more words than necessary to get your points across.

Jessica Graves '04

Biomarker Operations Project Manager, Genentech

San Francisco, California

Major at Vassar: Philosophy

Advanced Degrees: MS, Microbiology & Bioinformatics, UC Berkeley

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jmgraves/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jmgraves/)



Jessica Graves is a life sciences enthusiast whose curiosity in the workings of the natural world was initially stoked by her readings of Aristotle, Bertrand Russell, and Karl Popper as a philosophy major at Vassar. She has over 10 years of professional experience spanning clinical laboratory

science, pharmaceutical marketing, and diagnostics development. Most recently, she was on the founding team at a start-up called GRAIL that is using big data and machine learning approaches to detect early stage cancers using a non-invasive blood test. She has since moved on to continue her work in biomarker operations and companion diagnostic development at Genentech/Roche, one of the world's leading pharmaceutical companies. She is an evangelist for the value of a broad liberal arts education in tech, and invites you to join her for coffee when you're in the Bay Area.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Take advantage of the breadth of course offerings at Vassar to double major in a more technical discipline plus a field that stretches your critical thinking and writing abilities. Don't be afraid of exploring non-technical roles at tech or biotech companies, and be sure to apply for summer internships!

Anne Green '93

President/CEO, CooperKatz & Company, Inc.

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: English

Advanced Degrees: MA, American Literature, New York University; M.Phil (ABD), 19th Century American Literature, New York University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/anne-e-green/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/anne-e-green/)



Anne Green is a 25-year veteran of the communications industry. She started her career at Burson-Marsteller in the early '90s, and has helped build CooperKatz & Company since 1996. She's proud to have partnered with scores of dynamic clients over the years—from early days with GE and DuPont, to

recent engagements with Memorial Sloan Kettering, Fiserv, and Coldwell Banker Real Estate. Two career highlights include unveiling MetroCard for the NYC MTA and launching Virgin Mobile in the U.S., engaging directly with Sir Richard Branson. In addition to overseeing the agency's strategic direction, growth, and operations, Green is a senior counselor to many clients. She's deep into digital and loves the highly integrated nature of PR today. And she's a seasoned media and presentation skills executive trainer. Green serves on the board of the PR Council and has collected such industry accolades as *PR Week* "40 Under 40" and *PR News* "Top Women in PR." She's also a singer married to a drummer and is good at steadily over-committing herself to many wonderful organizations.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Many college degrees today track toward highly specific fields. That "professionalization" is happening earlier and earlier. Yet the changing nature of the world—in business, not-for-profit, the arts, education, government, etc.—requires the ability to think dynamically across sectors and boundaries. We need people with intellectual curiosity who can quickly absorb new concepts and subject matters, and make bigger picture connections. As a Vassar College grad, this will be core to your DNA. In the short term, you may not neatly fit any one "career box." But study the paths you may want to take. And take time to create the "narrative" of how your liberal arts background will bring the kind of broader perspective, curiosity, insight and energy employers of all types are seeking.

David Griffin '99

Senior Associate, Thomas & Associates, Inc.

Esopus, New York

Major at Vassar: English & Art History

David V. Griffin was Senior Associate at the arts consulting firm Thomas & Associates, Inc., from 2006 to 2017, when the firm closed. He focused on recruitment, exhibition, and collection management, and on projects ranging from the installation of art collections to the hosting of fundraisers for museums and nonprofits. He oversaw the company's career advisory services division, which was created to assist arts professionals and provided discussion sessions, resume and cover letter editing, and employment search strategies. His own business, Landmark Branding LLC, focuses on marketing support for historic and architecturally distinguished buildings in New York and nationwide. He writes regularly for *Real Estate Weekly* and is currently finishing his third novel.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Your ability to follow up is as important as making your first impression. Proofread everything—spell-check is your friend, but it is not infallible. Flippancy is not confidence. Reach out to fellow students, friends, and relatives for advice and support. Focus on what you're good at and aim for what you love. There is no way to skip the entry-level stage of your career—but the things you do during those first years will help you understand what it takes to really manage a workload.

JT Griffith '95

Creative Director, Music Supervision and Licensing, Nike

Portland, Oregon

Major at Vassar: American Culture: Cinema Studies, U.S. History



JT Griffith works as Nike's music supervisor helping to define the sound of the brand globally. In his 11th year, Griffith's work includes TV commercials, digital/online content, retail/event activations, and programming for Nike's music channels (Apple, Spotify). He has been involved in

music creative, licensing, and strategy for Nike's affiliated brands Converse, Hurley, and (formerly) Cole Haan and Umbro. Griffith has over 20 years of music industry experience, including Grammy and Oscar-nominated projects. In advertising, he is a five-time nominee and two-time winner of the Best Music Supervisor award (Guild of Music Supervisors) and has worked on projects nominated for Emmy, Cannes Lions, and Peabody awards. As a DJ/radio producer, he has hosted a long-running weekly show on Portland's NPR affiliate, produced a show at KCRW, and programmed for KMHD (*Jazztime's* Jazz Station of the Year). Griffith's previous experience includes running the film/TV and A&R (artists and repertoire) departments at a label/publishing/management company, creating an early music blog, co-founding the music marketing firm BigChampagne, and working as a music journalist.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

A career and an artistic passion need not be opposites. I figured out how to combine the two. But living a creative life in the professional arena is not easy and presents unique challenges—ones which Vassar really helped prepare me for.

Judith Grinspan '74

Research Scientist/Professor, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, Perelman School of Medicine of the University of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Major at Vassar: Biology

Advanced Degrees: MS, Pathology, Drexel University; PhD, Cell and Molecular Biology, University of Pennsylvania

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/judy-grinspan-2b115020](https://www.linkedin.com/in/judy-grinspan-2b115020)



Dr. Judith Grinspan has a neuroscience laboratory at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and is a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania. She and her staff use cellular and molecular techniques to study the development of myelin, the membrane that coats nerve processes in the central and peripheral

nervous system and ensures proper conduction of nervous impulses. Lack of myelin causes deficits in motor and/or cognitive function. The Grinspan lab concentrates on facilitating regeneration of myelin from stem cells using tissue culture models, genetic models, and disease models, focusing currently on myelination in multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, and HIV. These studies have identified factors that interfere with myelination in development and remyelination in disease. Through its studies, the Grinspan lab has trained undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral and medical fellows to be the next generation of neuroscientists and science advocates. Grinspan also serves on hospital and university committees for academic engagement, education, and infrastructure, as well as on national and international scientific review panels. She is also active in national scientific societies in her area.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Attending Vassar gives you the opportunity to study in a small classroom setting with teachers who really care about teaching. You can study one area in depth and at the same time become broadly educated in the arts and sciences. Take advantage of the rich cultural life on campus. Take advantage of the diversity of students to make friends with people unlike yourself. Get academic help in your courses if you need it. If you are interested in medicine, try working in the lab of one of your professors. You may get hooked or discover it's not for you. This is the time in your life to figure out who you are.

Jacquelyn Harris '75

Deputy Executive Director of Land Use and Environmental Review, NYC Department of City Planning

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Political Science

Advanced Degrees: MPA, Baruch College;

Loeb Fellowship, Graduate School of Design, Harvard University



Jackie Harris recently retired from the New York City Planning Department as the Deputy Executive Director for Land Use and Environmental Review, where she worked closely with the Planning Commission, architects, urban planners, community board members, elected

officials, and the development community on site-specific projects and ones with citywide implications. With over 30 years of cross-functional urban planning, zoning, and managerial experience, she has worked on place-based planning studies; low-income housing proposals that fostered livable neighborhoods; zoning changes in areas with transit-rich services; land use actions that encouraged greater public access to open spaces; and land use and zoning changes for communities affected by climate change. In addition, Harris has consulted on African American cultural projects and has taught graduate classes in organizational management. She is currently working on archiving historical photographs taken as a newly minted planner for the Oceanhill/Brownsville neighborhood in Brooklyn as well as researching the rich cultural and educational heritage of the Berkshires in Western Massachusetts.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Youth is a time for exploration. Take advantage of all the opportunities Vassar offers. It's a great environment to discover new ways of thinking, get to know people from different countries and backgrounds, and experience the responsibilities of adulthood. Discover who you really are and who you want to become in the future. Use every experience to expand your life.

Sydney Hessel '12

User Experience Researcher, Google

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Sociology

Advanced Degree: MS, Human Centered Design & Engineering, University of Washington



Sydney Hessel is a User Experience (UX) Researcher at Google, where she studies people in order to build user-centered technologies. In her time at Vassar, she split her academic work across the sociology and art departments. Following graduation from Vassar in 2012, she worked as a Research

Fellow at WolfBrown, a consulting firm for nonprofit organizations. While there, she led research projects to assess the impact of art experiences on audiences. In 2013, Hessel joined Google's UX Research Department, where she moved into a program manager role overseeing design research operations. In 2015, Hessel started grad school at the University of Washington, and in 2016, she graduated with an MS in Human Centered Design and Engineering. From there, she spent two years leading Google's first design sprint team, working on collaborative design and research as a UX researcher. She is currently on the core team working on design sprints at Google, while continuing to research people and products internally. Hessel also serves on the Board of Directors of Art Works for Change, a nonprofit in Oakland.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

"Prototype" your life, so to speak, by experimenting in small ways—internships at different types of organizations, coffee with radically different professionals, and side gigs across industries. Try a ton of different versions of yourself until you find the one that fits best.

Patricia Hinds-Bankole '82

**System Application Support Specialist,
Bristol-Meyers Squibb**

Passaic, New Jersey

Major at Vassar: Biopsychology

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/phindsbankole](https://www.linkedin.com/in/phindsbankole)



Pat Hinds-Bankole spent the first six years post-Vassar as a Research Assistant II & III at Mt Sinai Medical and Albany Medical Colleges, in the Pharmacology Department. Daily activities included conducting rodent behavioral experiments, surgeries to prep for the experiments, and post-experiment prep

of brain tissue. Her work is published in scientific journals assistant to her supervisor. As personal computers became part of our daily lives, Hinds-Bankole grew an interest in PC technology and programming. She worked for the U.S. Census Bureau as a support tech and gained a foundation in systems technology, from installation, troubleshooting, and administration to configuration and training. Hinds-Bankole then wanted a way to combine science and computer technology. Her wish was granted with a systems analyst position at Novartis pharmaceuticals, supporting the LIMS (laboratory information management system) used by analysts performing quality control testing in the lab. This primarily includes product and test analysis configuration, troubleshooting, administration, and software testing. Hinds-Bankole continues to work in this role, supporting labs with different LIMS all over the U.S. and internationally.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Believe you can have, be, and do anything you want. “Try on” what you may want to do. Like science and film? Volunteer/intern at a sci-fi channel as a science advisor/consultant. Work/volunteer/intern in your area of interest every summer and winter break, so you have real world experience to put on your resume by the time you graduate. I think experience trumps education, while at the same time a degree gives you an edge. At the bottom of most company’s websites there is a career/job/intern link. If the company interests you, check out what they have to offer. Every lesson is a blessing. So, enjoy your life journey. From each experience create contacts to check back on for referrals or job opportunities.

Mélida Hodgson '85

Partner, Foley Hoag LLP

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: International Studies

Advanced Degree: JD, New York University School of Law

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/melida.hodgson](https://www.linkedin.com/in/melida.hodgson)



Mélida Hodgson is an international arbitration practitioner representing primarily governments and government-owned companies in defending against litigation initiated pursuant to bilateral investment treaties and free trade agreements, as well as in commercial arbitration cases. She also advises

on international trade policy issues. She is a former Department of Justice attorney and associate general counsel at the Office of the United States Trade Representative. Her day-to-day activities consist principally of leading bilingual teams that defend sovereign clients in disputes with multi-million dollar claims arising out of free trade agreements and bilateral investment treaties, as well commercial contracts, primarily arising out of natural resource and infrastructure projects. Hodgson has been recognized for her work in the field by Latinex as one of the top 50 female attorneys whose work is focused on Latin America, and she is frequently invited to speak at conferences on international investment protections and international arbitration. Prior to attending law school, she was a banker. Hodgson is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Moravian Ministries Foundation.

Advice for the Class of 2020

Appreciate the opportunity and privilege you have to study at a great institution like Vassar—appreciate the unparalleled professors and diversity of course offerings. Explore intellectually, engage in intellectual study, and if you can, seek a foreign or outside-New York learning experience. Vassar is excellent at preparing people to be good citizens of the world. This also requires tolerance of diversity of all kinds—including diverse views. Don’t forget to be practical.

Jonathan Hong '16

Transfer Pricing Associate, BDO USA, LLP

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Urban Studies

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jonathan-hong-2112a072/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jonathan-hong-2112a072/)



Jonathan Hong is a Transfer Pricing Associate with BDO USA, LLP's New York practice. As a tax consultant, he is responsible for conducting market research and delivering economic analyses of multinational companies, substantiating the profitability of his clients. He has worked

with clients in various industries including financial services, retail products, automotive parts, consumer products, and the pharmaceutical industry. During his time at BDO, Hong has performed intellectual property valuations worth \$133 million; created cost allocation models for return on assets calculations segmenting financial statements by business lines; and conducted synthetic credit ratings to benchmark intercompany loans. Furthermore, he is responsible for the pipeline and backlog projections for the Northeast and Atlantic regions of the group. Hong also serves on the associate board of a prominent New York City nonprofit organization, Urban Pathways, aiming to alleviate homelessness in New York City. At Urban Pathways, Hong spearheads fundraising initiatives and provides pro-bono consulting, performing analytical research using the organization's proprietary data.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Every time you join a new company, engage a new client, or learn a new skill, invest the time to learn the ins and outs of the team or project. There will always be a learning curve, and the more time you invest up front, the easier it will be to navigate inevitable issues that arise in the future. Leverage your Vassar experience to push limits. Be curious and take the time to question assumptions and norms while always paying attention to detail. Anything worth doing is worth doing well.

Rachel Lee Hovnanian P'18

Artist, Rachel Lee Hovnanian Studio

New York, New York

Degree: Bachelor of Fine Arts, University of Texas, Austin

www.rachellehovnanian.com/



Rachel Lee Hovnanian lives and works in New York City. She has exhibited internationally in both solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Her recent solo exhibitions have been held at Victori + Mo, New York; Leila Heller Gallery, New York; Pechersky Gallery,

Moscow; Joyce Gallery, Beijing; and Foundation Pons, Barcelona. In addition, Hovnanian has been widely shown in group exhibitions including the Nassau County Museum of Art, Long Island; the University of Connecticut, Connecticut; Parasol Unit, London; Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines; Manarat al Saadivat, Abu Dhabi; and at Loretta Howard Gallery, New York, in an exhibition curated by Beth Rudin DeWoody. Hovnanian's artwork has been featured in numerous publications such as *The New York Times*, *WWD*, *Flaunt*, *Cultured*, *The Wall Street Journal Europe*, *Vogue*, *Interview*, *Tatler*, *Food & Wine*, *ARTnews*, *Modern Painters*, *Hyperallergic*, and *BOMB*.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

See as much art as you can. Always take time to experience the culture and community that surrounds you, and make sure you keep a healthy work/life balance. As an artist living in New York, I know how easy it is to get caught up in comparing your success to the success of those around you—especially in this time of instant accessibility of social media and technology that's offered from smartphones. Make sure to find something that stimulates your creative focus relating to your current project, for me that is usually reading and browsing the Internet. Always remember to give yourself a break, refocus, and enjoy the moment—and a great way to do that is by seeing some art.

Steven Kauderer '85

Senior Partner, McKinsey and Company

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: American Culture

Advanced Degree: MBA, Yale School of Management

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/Steven-Kauderer-87374b92](https://www.linkedin.com/in/Steven-Kauderer-87374b92)



Steven Kauderer is a Senior Partner at McKinsey, where he focuses in the financial services and insurance industry. He has a particular focus on digital innovation and disruption as well as advanced analytics. He also focuses on underwriting, pricing, claims, and distribution. Kauderer has worked

with many leading insurance and other organizations across sectors and geographies, including North and South America, Europe, and Asia Pacific. Much of his work revolves around helping organizations achieve profitable growth and improving the customer experience. He has written extensively on these subjects and is a frequent speaker at industry conferences on innovation and disruption. Kauderer has worked in management consulting for over 25 years.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You are at an incredible place right now. Being at Vassar and having the opportunity to study liberal arts is the single best preparation for anything you may want to do. My advice is to explore many different areas, interests, and career options. Ultimately, you will find “your spark,” areas that you are passionate about. They could be across the public, private, and social sectors, and across a wide range of industries and job functions. Explore them, reach out to people in those fields and perhaps try an internship in one or more of those organizations. Follow your passion and have fun.

Charles Kim '92

Principal, Charlotte & Company

New York, New York

Majors at Vassar: French, Asian Studies

Advanced Degree: MA, French Literature, New York University



Charles Kim is the Principal of Charlotte & Company, a consultancy working with museums, universities, symphonies, and other arts institutions to create innovative children’s books and educational materials focused on art, design, and culture. He previously served as Associate Publisher of The Museum

of Modern Art in New York, where he was responsible for the publications department’s intellectual property and copyright matters, international museum and publisher collaborations, and digital strategy. At MoMA, he launched an award-winning children’s storybook line, the only such line published by an art museum in the United States, whose books have won over a dozen awards and have been produced in more than 65 foreign-language editions in 11 languages. Before MoMA, he was the Editor in Chief and Director of Publications at the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum in New York.

At Vassar, Kim earned general honors as well as departmental honors in both majors and was a member of Phi Beta Kappa. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Lyon, France.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

This is a time of immense self-reflection, change, and upheaval within many arts and cultural institutions. They are trying to become more multicultural and diverse, inside and out. They are reaching out more and more to communities with whom they have had low engagement. They are trying to make themselves look more like the increasingly heterogeneous populations they serve. There are wonderfully exciting, fulfilling, creative, challenging, and financially sustainable jobs available within these institutions. There are opportunities to touch people’s lives and to be a part of the change that is happening. You just have to know where to look. You just have to know where to look.

Joseph Kim P'19

Partner, Hogan Lovells

Tokyo, Japan

Major in college: Bachelor of Arts, University of the Pacific
Advanced Degree: JD, University of Minnesota Law School



Joseph Kim leads the finance practice in the Tokyo office of Hogan Lovells. He is a member of the Infrastructure, Energy, Resources, and Projects (IERP) Practice Group. He is particularly known for his experience in projects involving Japanese and Korean-led cross-border investments. Kim has been at the

forefront of the worldwide power industry for over a decade, and is widely acknowledged as one of the most commercially astute advisors to large-scale power projects globally. He recognizes that the issues power sector clients face are often multidimensional, and focuses on delivering comprehensive solutions packages to clients. To this end, he works strenuously with an integrated, multidisciplinary group of lawyers across all six continents to address the full spectrum of clients' legal needs.

Kim has extensive experience in representing sponsors, investors, export credit agencies, bilateral and multilateral agencies, commercial lenders, and underwriters in connection with acquiring, developing, and financing a wide range of international telecom and energy projects. Those include power, upstream LNG and natural resource, and renewable energy projects in Asia, the Middle East, and the Americas. He is qualified to practice law before the California Bar and registered as a *gaikokuho jimubengoshi* in Japan. Prior to joining Hogan Lovells, Kim was a partner at the Tokyo office of a major global law firm.

Benjamin Krevolin '89

Chief Advancement Officer, Bard Graduate Center

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Drama

Advanced Degree: Graduate Diploma, Acting, The Juilliard School

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/benjamin-krevolin-43095b3/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/benjamin-krevolin-43095b3/)



Benjamin Krevolin joined Bard Graduate Center as the Chief Advancement Officer in January 2016. He came to the center from Vassar College, where he served as a Director of Leadership Gifts. He also worked with the Frances Lehman Loeb Art Center, strengthening volunteer

support and securing gifts of art. From 2003 to 2011, Krevolin served as President of the Dutchess County Arts Council, the leading local arts agency for the Mid-Hudson Valley. During his time there he was an advocate for the arts in the region, spearheading a united arts fund, providing grants and technical support to communities and organizations, developing regional initiatives, and leading advocacy efforts in Albany and Washington, DC. Previous to that, Krevolin held administrative positions at Theatre for a New Audience, New York Stage & Film, and the Byrd Hoffman Foundation. As a freelance theater artist Krevolin worked on the premieres of plays and musicals in New York City, Seattle, Los Angeles, and Stockholm. He has been published in *Modern Magazine*, the *Huffington Post*, and the *Poughkeepsie Journal*, among others.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

1. If you have an artistic practice, great. Don't give it up. Whether or not it becomes your career, it will serve you well throughout all aspects of your life.
2. If you are passionate about the arts, remember someone has to do the heavy lifting to bring them to an audience. The cultural sector (commercial and nonprofit) in America is extensive. It is always in need of strong leadership.
3. If you are considering an MFA, don't settle for just any program. It is going to be expensive. Find the teachers and mentors that match your vision and open a dialogue with them now. You may be able to work with them outside a degree program.

Emmy Laybourne '93

Novelist, Macmillan

Pearl River, New York

Major at Vassar: English

Advanced Degree: MFA, Screenwriting, University of California at Los Angeles



Emmy Laybourne is a Young Adult novelist and former character actress. She is the author of the award-winning *Monument 14* trilogy, as well as the critically acclaimed novels *Sweet* and the recent release *Berserker*. Laybourne also has worked as a screenwriter, adapting her novel *Monument*

14 for the screen, and written sketch comedy for Oxygen and animated features and television shows. Before her life as a writer, Laybourne performed original comedy on Comedy Central, VH1, and MTV; and acted in the films *Superstar*, *Nancy Drew*, *The In Laws*, and others. Laybourne lives outside of NYC with her husband, 2 children, and a flock of 10 nifty chickens.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You cannot create and judge your work at the same time. When you are writing (or painting, or performing, or engaging in artistic creation), you must free yourself of your inner critic. Trying to create while you are judging your effort is like trying to drive a car with one foot on the gas and one foot on the brake. You'll get nowhere and burn out your engine.

Kevin Terry Lee '14

Green Business Associate, SF Environment (San Francisco Department of the Environment)

San Francisco, California

Major at Vassar: Biology

Advanced Degree: Master of Environmental Management, Business & Sustainability, Yale University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/kevinterrylee/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevinterrylee/)



As the Green Business Associate at SF Environment, Kevin Terry Lee works with businesses throughout San Francisco to lower their overall environmental impact while helping them increase cost savings. Using his background in environmental and science research, and experience in strategic

communications, he aims to drive greater engagement in climate and sustainability initiatives through collaborative learning and partnerships. Furthermore, Lee assists companies in realizing opportunities and strategies that can come from sustainability programming. With the recent release of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) calling for greater participation from businesses and local governments, he wants to help decision-makers and their stakeholders understand how they can have a meaningful impact and make connections in the communities in which they operate. Lee earned a master's in environmental management from Yale University's School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. At Vassar, he studied biology and geography (environmental land-use planning and analysis). Lee was named an Emerging Leader by GreenBiz (2017), a JUST Scholar by The Living Future Institute (2017), and a Net Impact Scholar (2016) by Net Impact.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Advice I wish I received as a Vassar sophomore:

1. Don't be on time. Be early as much as possible.
2. Use a reliable planner/calendar to keep track of your "to-do" list.
3. Create a LinkedIn profile now. Add your friends and acquaintances.
4. Building up the courage to go to professors' office hours is worthwhile. Trust me.
5. Have hobbies. Cherish those late-night campus hangouts. Eat cider donuts from Adams. Those all becoming great talking points for future networking conversations. But they also keep you sane.

Shari Leventhal '85

Special Counsel, Sullivan & Cromwell

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Political Science

Advanced Degree: JD, Georgetown University Law Center

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/shari-leventhal-93217ab](https://www.linkedin.com/in/shari-leventhal-93217ab)



Shari Leventhal is a member of Sullivan & Cromwell's Financial Services Group. Leventhal focuses her practice on regulatory enforcement matters, complex litigation, and external and internal investigations. She has substantial investigative and trial experience in matters involving

economic sanctions, financial fraud, cross-border payments, cybersecurity, money laundering, and the FCPA [Foreign Corrupt Practices Act].

Prior to joining Sullivan & Cromwell in 2016, Leventhal was the Deputy General Counsel and Senior Vice President responsible for the Enforcement, Litigation, and Investigations Division of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York's Legal Group. In that role, she represented the New York Fed in many complex litigation matters. Leventhal was involved in enforcement investigations relating to mortgage backed securities, the FX market, LIBOR, balance sheet manipulation, and violations of OFAC sanctions. She also led the investigation that resulted in the first public enforcement action by the Federal Reserve in a consumer compliance case.

From 1992–1998, Leventhal served as an Assistant United States Attorney with the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

No matter what others may tell you, there is no better preparation for any career than the critical thinking and communications skills that are developed through a liberal arts education, particularly a Vassar education. Those skills will be the building blocks that will help you succeed no matter what you choose to do in the future. And speaking of choosing what you do, while it is great to plan your career path, sometimes it is important to take opportunities that come your way unexpectedly even if they are not exactly on the path you imagined for yourself. Those opportunities often lead to the roles that will challenge and fulfill you. But above all, don't forget to balance work with play!

Mia Livingston '15

**Senior Associate, Customer Experience,
DonorsChoose.org**

Poughkeepsie, New York

Majors at Vassar: Religion, French



After Vassar, Mia Livingston followed her passion for education equality to DonorsChoose.org, a crowdfunding platform for U.S. public school teachers. Infusing customer insights and customer support data into everything she does, Livingston represents teachers and donors on

projects that range from product enhancements to marketing campaigns—and sometimes extra fun stuff, like getting winter coats for hundreds of students in one day. Livingston's team helps operationalize over \$50 million in corporate and foundational partnerships per year, giving teachers and students across the country more supplies, more field trips, and more learning opportunities. Before joining DonorsChoose.org, Livingston interned on the education team at the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding, and was a program assistant for the Multifaith Alliance for Syrian Refugees.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Identify the change-makers you admire and research the organizations they endorse or work with. Keep an eye on those places, and build relationships there if you can—always worth checking if there's a Vassar grad on their team. Be authentic and kind, and never underestimate the power of a hand-written thank you note.

Lauren Lockwood '08

Advocate and Consultant, Self-Employed

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Major at Vassar: Economics

Advanced Degree: MBA, Harvard Business School

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/llockwood/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/llockwood/)



Lauren Lockwood is a consultant helping cities work better in a digital age. She served as Boston's first Chief Digital Officer where she led the redesign of Boston.gov and worked to improve digital communication, engagement, and service delivery. Lockwood has spent years in product management

and operations in everything from startups to multinational organizations, after pivoting from a role in investment banking. She received her MBA from Harvard Business School in 2014, where she focused on entrepreneurship and digital strategy. She and her husband have two kids and live in Philadelphia.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

What would you do for a living if money were no object? Do that thing. I'm serious. Make sure you feel good about how you are living your one wild and precious life.

Alexandra Lowe-Server '14

Legislative Assistant, United States Senate,

Office of U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand

Washington, DC

Major at Vassar: Science, Technology, and Society

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/alexandra-low-server-02433668/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/alexandra-low-server-02433668/)



Alix Lowe-Server serves as a Legislative Assistant to U.S. Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY). She is the senator's lead aide on health, education, and welfare policy. In this role, she develops policy proposals, drafts and negotiates legislation, secures stakeholder support, and briefs and staffs the senator during

speeches, senate hearings, and other relevant events. Prior to working on health and education issues for Senator Gillibrand, Lowe-Server served as a Legislative Aide on issues related to agriculture and nutrition, women, immigration, and the judiciary. Originally from Philadelphia, Lowe-Server moved to Washington, DC, in summer 2014 after graduating from Vassar. During that summer, she interned for U.S. Senator Bob Casey, and as a student, held internships with Planned Parenthood, the American Red Cross, and the Philadelphia Mayor's Internship Program.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Don't feel like you need to be on a set path or take specific classes for a certain career, and don't be afraid to try a class or take an internship that doesn't totally fit within the parameters of what you think you want to do. Be curious and try out the things that interest you. In DC, where everyone was a political science major, it's great to meet someone who has a completely unexpected background. The beauty of Vassar and a liberal arts education is that you are developing your skill set as a critical thinker and writer—don't get bogged down in taking a pre-law or political science path if you're interested in math or theater.

Megan Maltenfort '06

Senior Manager, Corporate Social Responsibility, Campbell Soup Company

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Major at Vassar: Science, Technology, and Society,

Advanced Degree: Master's in Environmental
Management, Duke University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/meganmaltenfort/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/meganmaltenfort/)



Megan Maltenfort is the Senior Manager of Corporate Social Responsibility at Campbell Soup Company. In this role, Maltenfort is responsible for communicating Campbell's sustainability vision and progress to the company's internal and external communities

in a way that educates and engages. Maltenfort also manages Campbell's relationship with stakeholders on sustainability topics, building strong foundations based on mutual understanding and collaboration. Additionally, Maltenfort provides expertise to Campbell's evolving sustainability strategy to develop company-wide goals that are embedded throughout the supply chain.

Previously, Maltenfort served as Sustainability Manager for VWR, a global distributor of laboratory supplies, and is one of the founding members of Philadelphia's Sustainability Leadership Forum.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Find your passion and live it. Take the time you need to understand what your passion really is, and then dedicate yourself to pursuing it.

Luis Marcial '02

Facilities Manager, Red Bull North America

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Hispanic Studies

Advanced Degree: MS, Facilities Management, Pratt Institute

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/lmarcial](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lmarcial)



Luis Marcial is the Facilities Manager for Red Bull North America and is responsible for the daily operations of offices, art galleries, recording studios, and warehouses within the Eastern Business Unit. In 2012 he received a master's of science degree in Facilities Management

from Pratt Institute's School of Architecture. He has been in the facilities industry for over 12 years and has worked in both the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. His career path was built on passion for construction, tools, and how things work. His need to know the science behind structures and inner workings of buildings has made him a sort of MD for the structures that most people take for granted on a daily basis.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Do something you love and you will never have to work a day in your life, so follow your passion no matter what anyone around you may say or think. At the end of it all, you only have one life and only you can determine where it goes.

Catherine Martinez '88

**Managing Director/CFO,
Downtown Community Television Center**
Maplewood, New Jersey
Major at Vassar: Art History
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/catherinesays/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/catherinesays/)



Catherine Martinez has been Managing Director and CFO of Downtown Community Television Center (DCTV) for 10 years. She is a generalist who daily uses a myriad of skills that she has learned from her unorthodox career path. After graduating from Vassar with the dream of becoming a fashion

designer, Martinez worked at Calvin Klein, J. Crew, Banana Republic, Armani Exchange, and the Gap. She also spent two years in Stockholm, working as a sous chef in an upscale Swedish restaurant. At this juncture, her passion turned to filmmaking. That's when she found DCTV, a twice Academy-nominated and 16-time Emmy-winning documentary film production house. DCTV is a nonprofit that helps filmmakers of all backgrounds find a voice and tell their stories. In between her two tenures at DCTV, Martinez led an in-house team of creative people and worked as part of an executive think-tank at Belmond Hotels. Now Managing Director and CFO of DCTV, Martinez brings a unique combination of in-depth knowledge of community-based programs, business leadership experience, and creativity.

Advice for the Class of 2020

- Never take a job you can already do.
- Use your fear to guide you.
- Learn how to fall and embarrass yourself. It will strengthen your muscles.
- Get up early.
- Aim for your dream by taking practical steps in that direction.
- Thank before you bank.

John McIlwain P'18

Vice President for Advancement, Aspire
Oak Park, Illinois
Major in College: Political Science, Rutgers College
Advanced Degree: Master's in Divinity,
Chicago Theological Seminary
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/john-h-mcilwain-1867988/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/john-h-mcilwain-1867988/)



As Vice President for Advancement at Aspire, John McIlwain exceeded fundraising goals year after year, successfully launched a new look and web presence for the brand, and established a culture of collaboration and creativity that has made Aspire one of "Chicago's Best and Brightest Companies

to Work For®." Under McIlwain's leadership, Aspire CoffeeWorks, a partnership between Aspire and Metropolis Coffee Company, has increased its revenue more than tenfold. Prior to joining Aspire, McIlwain was the Vice President of Development for Urban Innovations, a real estate investment company. McIlwain honed his business and negotiation skills at Jones Lang LaSalle and Cushman & Wakefield in new business development. Ordained in 1992, McIlwain began his professional career as a minister in the United Church of Christ. As a minister, McIlwain spearheaded a community-wide movement that gave rise to a comprehensive Human Rights Ordinance.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Know your narrative. It is important to understand how your narrative intersects with the needs of a company or with a role you are pursuing. In addition to understanding your own narrative, I encourage everyone who works for me to "know your assets"—what is it that you bring to the table that is unique? Why should someone hire you as opposed to the next person that walks in the door? Know what your strengths are and lean into them. If you're passionate, sell it; if you're genuine, sell it; if you're outgoing and engaging, sell it ... know what is unique about you and why it is an advantage to the role you are pursuing.

Kary McIlwain P'18

**Chief Marketing & Communications Officer,
Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago**
Oak Park, Illinois

Major in College: Journalism, Bradley University
Advanced Degree: MBA, Northwestern University Kellogg
School



As Chief Marketing and Communications Officer for the Ann & Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago, Kary McIlwain is responsible for the marketing profit and loss (P&L) for the hospital and Lurie Children's Foundation, and for all media relations and internal and external

communications. Her team is responsible for donor marketing and relations; all owned, earned and paid media; customer relationship management and direct marketing efforts; and physician marketing. The team also drives awareness, preference, volume, donations, reputation, and reach for this top-ranked children's hospital.

A capstone to her career of over 25 years in advertising, McIlwain was President and CEO of Y&R Chicago, responsible for the P&L, strategy, and operations of a full-service digital and traditional agency. Y&R serves both local and global clients across a range of industries, including retail, travel and hospitality, and consumer packaged goods. Under McIlwain's leadership, Y&R reinvented its digital offering, created a digital content studio, revamped its creative product, and was named top 10 "Creative Heavyweights" by *Creativity* magazine.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Try on a few things before you find what feels best for you. Try a few internships. It's ok to move jobs a bit. Experiment. Experience as much as you can. You'll learn about yourself and that will serve you well always.

Patricia Ann Neely '75, P'18

Director at Abendmusik, Teacher at The Brearley School, and Manager for Events and Individual Giving at Bard Graduate Center

New York, New York
Major at Vassar: Music
Advanced Degrees: MFA, Historical Performance,
Sarah Lawrence College; Certificate, Management
Development, The New School
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/patricia-ann-neely-18890a7/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/patricia-ann-neely-18890a7/)



Patricia Ann Neely developed an interest in historical performance at Vassar, immersing herself in the study of medieval, renaissance, and baroque music in theory and in practice as a music major. She began studying viola da gamba after performing in Bach's St. Matthew Passion with the Vassar Choir,

went on to earn an MFA in Historical Performance at Sarah Lawrence College, and then went off to Europe to study with the well-known performer and teacher Wieland Kuijken. She has performed throughout Europe, North and South America, and Asia in music festivals and with well-known early music ensembles and orchestras including Sequentia, The Smithsonian chamber orchestra and viol consort, and the Washington Bach Consort. Neely has positioned herself as a respected scholar/musician, music teacher, and arts administrator. She teaches at The Brearley School, runs her own ensemble, Abendmusik, and is the Manager for Events and Individual Giving at Bard Graduate Center.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Vassar encouraged me to think deeply, and pursue my passions. It also lent me the strength and the courage to thrive in a world that has become increasingly difficult for artists. I found strength from the spirit of Vassar, its academic discipline, the bonds that were made when, as students, we held each other up to succeed, and the respect we developed for our professors who held us to a very high standard. My Vassar experience remains as vivid now as it was when I was living it. You are being prepared well to take on any challenge and to succeed and to be an example for others to follow. So, carry the spirit of Vassar with you in head and heart ... always.

Mai Nguyen '13

**MA Candidate in Global Human Development,
Georgetown School of Foreign Service**

Washington, DC

Majors at Vassar: Economics, International Studies

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/mai-nguyen-4b488339/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mai-nguyen-4b488339/)



Mai Nguyen is an international development professional with a focus on education and social innovation. After graduating from Vassar, she embarked on the Princeton in Latin America fellowship to serve at a rural university in Bolivia dedicated to making higher education accessible to indigenous

students. Through her time there, she grew deeply interested in the connection between education, economic development, and social justice. After her fellowship experience, she became a program manager at Peacework, where she led the design and implementation of international cultural and service learning programs in Vietnam, India, and Belize for U.S. university clients. Most recently, Nguyen worked at Room to Read as a girls' education program officer in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. She oversaw the implementation and monitoring of a life skills and mentoring program for over 500 middle school girls. Nguyen is currently in the last year of her MA program in Global Human Development at Georgetown University, School of Foreign Service, concentrating on how innovations can help tackle development challenges.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Take time at Vassar to explore your interests, strengths, and drawbacks through classes, extra-curricular activities, and internships. There is no better place and better time to fail, fail better, and try again. Grab coffee with a professor, an internship advisor, or an alumna to understand better the industry, organization, or job function that you might be interested in. Reflect on what motivates you and what value you can create for others. For those who are interested in international affairs: take language classes, study abroad, work for a couple of years before going to graduate school, and most importantly, make a habit of having conversations with those who hold different values and viewpoints from yours. And remember, it is okay to not have it all figured out.

Natalie Nixon '91

Design Strategist & Principal, Figure 8 Thinking LLC

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Majors at Vassar: Anthropology, Africana Studies

Advanced Degrees: MS, Global Textile Marketing,

Jefferson University; PhD, Design Management, The

University of Westminster

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/natalienixonphd](https://www.linkedin.com/in/natalienixonphd)



Dr. Natalie Nixon is a design strategist and hybrid thinker with a background in anthropology and fashion. At Figure 8 Thinking LLC, she helps organizations accelerate innovation and growth by developing meaningful strategy through design thinking and ethnographic research. Nixon is the

editor of *Strategic Design Thinking: Innovation in Products, Services, Experiences and Beyond*. A regular contributor to *INC* online magazine, she is a Fellow at the Paris d.School and a lecturer in transformational design and social innovation at the University of Pennsylvania. She is also certified as a foresight practitioner, by the Institute for the Future, and in charrette facilitation by the National Charrette Institute. Nixon's clients are global and come from a range of industries. She is based in Philadelphia and loves her international speaking engagements. Social Media: @natwnixon | www.figure8thinking.com

Advice for the Class of 2020:

I'm an advocate of following your heart, studying what you love, and keeping "your eye on the doughnut ... not the hole." At Vassar I loved studying anthropology and Africana studies, and dancing in Dance Rep. Each day in my work, I use the skills I cultivated from anthropology and dance.

Carol Ostrow '77, P'09, '15

Producing Director, The Flea Theater

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Drama

Advanced Degree: MFA, Theater, Yale Drama School



Carol Ostrow is Producing Director of The Flea, the award-winning off-off-Broadway theater located in Tribeca. She was producing director of New York's Classic Stage Company as well as the founder and producing director of the Powerhouse Theater at Vassar, now entering its

32nd season. Ostrow has been an adjunct professor of theater at Vassar, Chatham College, and McGill University. She holds a BA from Vassar and an MFA from the Yale Drama School. She was elected to the Vassar College Board of Trustees in 2015, and is a member of the Board of Advisors to the Yale Drama School and a board member of LAVA, a feminist acrobatic dance collective in Brooklyn. For The Flea, Ostrow has produced 17 seasons of world-premiere productions and has been responsible for the sound fiscal management and strategic growth of the theater's \$1.8-million budget, programs, and initiatives, including The Bats, the emerging resident company of actors. This September, The Flea moved to a new home and opened a brand new \$25 million three-theater performing arts complex.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Follow your heart but think with your head. There are a lot of options for your work life out there, but you have to know what you want in order to go for it. Remember that life is long and careers take time to build. Sometimes it's not a straight shot. You cannot choose your boss, but if you find a good one, cling. Like a cherished teacher or coach, that person in charge can become a guide for life and a colleague, too. Developing relationships is as important as building your resume.

Lea Peters '09

Senior Actuarial Associate, Prudential Financial

Caldwell, New Jersey

Major at Vassar: Mathematics

Advanced Degree: MS, Statistics, CUNY Baruch College



Lea Peters's trajectory to the actuarial profession has been unconventional. It was not until 2013, four years after graduating from Vassar, that she began her career as an actuary with her current employer, Prudential Financial. After graduating Vassar, Peters worked on a special project for a year

at the NYC Department of Small Business Services in a unit responsible for providing services to women and minority vendors. She then went on to work at JPMorgan Chase for three years in the retail lending division, while obtaining her master's degree. She believes her liberal arts education at Vassar, as well as her prior nontechnical roles, have been a tremendous asset to her career as an actuary. Her diverse work experience has provided her with unique skills that many actuaries do not possess. Furthermore, she is a firm believer that it is never too late to start a new career. In her current role at Prudential, she works on financial reporting for the annuities business.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Approach relationships with mentors as mutually beneficial. Think about what value you can also add to that relationship. Take some time to get to know your mentor's interests and hobbies, outside of his or her professional life, if you value that relationship. Also, mentors can be at various career levels. Some of my most valuable mentors have been my peers. Lastly, seek a job that makes your eyes sparkle whenever you talk about it. That may not be your first or second job out of college, but you will know it once you land it.

Tracy Elise Poole '82

Assistant General Counsel, Johnson & Johnson

New York, New York

Majors at Vassar: Political Science, Russian

Advanced Degree: JD, Georgetown Law School



Upon graduation from Georgetown, Tracy Elise Poole was appointed an Assistant District Attorney in New York City, where she prosecuted major crimes. She later joined the law firm of Hughes Hubbard & Reed, where she handled business and commercial litigation, including antitrust, banking,

copyright, employment, and telecommunications matters. Presently Assistant General Counsel at Johnson & Johnson, she is responsible for global litigation, including advertising, business and commercial, employment, and product liability matters for several J&J subsidiaries. She manages J&J's pro-bono practice and summer intern program. The Dean of Georgetown Law recently appointed her to a committee to address recruitment, student life, and career development concerns of students of color. A lifelong enthusiast and student of dance, she is a patron of several ballet and modern dance companies.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

James Brown said, "If you STAY ready, you ain't gotta get ready."

There is a high level of preparedness associated with success. No matter what career or endeavor you decide to pursue, you cannot be impactful or able to fully receive good fortune and opportunities unless you are "ready." True readiness comes from continually investing in yourself so that you can build on your solid foundation and always be primed for the next level or the next big thing. It means striving to remain physically, emotionally, and spiritually balanced. Readiness requires self-awareness, and an ability to assess where you are and where you want to go. And it sometimes takes a lot of work. So when tempted to cut corners, repeat JB's mantra—"STAY Ready."

Allan Powe S'91

Principal, Think Deep Consulting

Brooklyn, New York

Major in college: Biochemistry, University of Pennsylvania

Advanced Degree: PhD, Biological Sciences, Rockefeller University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/allanpowe/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/allanpowe/)



Allan Powe, a native New Yorker, attended the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and earned a bachelor's degree in biochemistry. Powe earned his doctorate in biological sciences at Rockefeller University in New York using genetics to study how photoreceptor cells in

the fruit fly *Drosophila melanogaster* choose their specific identities. In his postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Missouri, Powe studied the function of CFTR, the protein defective in people with cystic fibrosis (CF), using a combination of genetics and biophysics. He then transitioned into doing research at biotechnology companies, working first at Amicus Therapeutics in New Jersey, then at Vertex Pharmaceuticals in California, helping to develop drugs for rare genetic diseases, including CF. Several of the CF drugs developed during his tenure at Vertex are showing great promise in clinical trials. More recently, Powe has been exploring new career directions in the area of STEM education, seeking to share his passion and excitement for science with the next generation of scientists.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

1. Follow your bliss. Joseph Campbell was right. Doing what you love and excites you helps with powering through the inevitable difficulties you'll face regardless of what path you take.
2. Find good mentors. They are invaluable for helping you to see possibilities and perspectives you would otherwise not consider.
3. Toot your own horn. You have to be your own advocate, because no one else is obligated to do that for you. You are your own PR department.
4. Finish and ship. As Seth Godin has often said, the final product does not need to be perfect—it just needs to be good enough.
5. Trust your instincts and feelings. They can help you fill in the gaps when facts and reason fall short.

Gleny M. Ramirez '03

Senior Legal Analyst, Jennison Associates LLC

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Sociology

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/gleny-ramirez/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/gleny-ramirez/)



Gleny M. Ramirez has been a Senior Legal Analyst for the Legal Department at Jennison Associates LLC (an indirect wholly owned subsidiary of Prudential Financial, Inc.) since September 2015. Ramirez works closely with the attorneys and other legal analysts to provide legal and regulatory support to

Jennison's investment management business and to the firm as a whole.

From May 2006 through August 2015, Ramirez worked at The International Investment Group LLC (IIG), where she began as a legal compliance analyst and eventually became an Associate Director of Legal and Compliance, a role that included liaising with IIG's international colleagues, external parties, and outside counsel on various firm initiatives.

Prior to joining IIG in May 2006, Ramirez worked as a litigation paralegal at Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett LLP.

After earning her Bachelor of Arts at Vassar, she followed one of her passions and became a classically trained chef in 2010 with a Culinary Arts Diploma from the Institute of Culinary Education in NYC.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Time is one of the greatest allies you have at this stage of your lives. Use it wisely while at Vassar and you will set yourself up for success. Given the times we live in, waiting until the last minute to figure things out isn't going to cut it. Start early and make finding your career path part of your coursework. Use the infinite resources at your disposal as a student and seek guidance from your professors, peers, alumnae/i network, and the career development office.

Christine Robinson '79

Senior Consultant, Ford Foundation

Natick, Massachusetts

Major at Vassar: Psychology

Advanced Degrees: MS, Applied Psychology, University of Pennsylvania; Doctoral Work, Social Policy, Brandeis University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/stillwatersconsultation](https://www.linkedin.com/in/stillwatersconsultation)



Christine Robinson works on organizational, systems, and policy development at local, statewide, and national levels. She has provided senior leadership and consultation to the nation's leading foundations on strategic articulation, program development, formation of collaborative ventures,

and the structure, launch, and implementation of local, statewide, regional, and national initiatives. Affiliations include the Ford Foundation, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. She served as Director of the Division of School Age and Adolescent Health for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and was intimately involved in the establishment of the statewide network of school-based health centers, the first violence prevention coalitions in the U.S., and the first multicultural HIV/AIDS coalition in the U.S. Robinson is trained as a community/developmental psychologist, and substantive interests include structural opportunity and systems thinking; addressing health, economic, and education disparities; co-creating improved outcomes for marginalized populations; multiracial coalitions; bringing theory to practice; disability inclusion; two-generation models; and place-based strategies.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You might give some thought as to who you are, where you have been, and where you might go. Over time I have come to see the deep value in many childhood and adolescent experiences. Many were not pleasant, but they were deeply meaningful. Work that gives a sense of purpose, meaning, and mattering may be one of the greatest gifts any of us are granted. The threads can be braided together to create a coherent and beautiful picture. Creativity matters, passion matters, deep thinking matters, and so much is possible. What makes your heart sing?

Aleya Romero '15

**Defense Support Assistant,
U.S. Department of Defense**
Washington, DC
Major at Vassar: International Studies



Aleya Romero is a Defense Support Assistant at the U.S. Department of Defense. In this role, she provides support to the top 100 principals in the Office of the Secretary of Defense at the Pentagon and liaises with multiple components across the department. She began her career at the Department

of Defense immediately after graduation from Vassar, as a trainee in congressional relations and public affairs. She transitioned to a permanent civilian position in August 2015 as a staff officer focused on strategic workforce planning and management. Prior to graduation, she interned with a district congressional office and the U.S. Department of State in the Bureau of Near Eastern and South/Central Asian Affairs. In addition to studying at Vassar, she studied abroad at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service in Qatar and spent a summer semester studying U.S. Foreign Policy at Harvard University. In her free time, she serves as vice president for the Vassar Club of DC and studies Arabic at the Defense Language Institute and International Language Institute.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Over the course of my four years at Vassar, I was rejected from countless internships, scholarships, jobs, programs (you name it). There were plenty of times that I told myself that maybe the rejections signified that I wasn't supposed to be in the international affairs/government world. If I had one piece of advice, it would be to let the rejections make you stronger—seek feedback and become more encouraged to prove to yourself that you can succeed. These “no's” will continue throughout your career, but it's important to keep trying despite the odds set against you. In the words of Winston Churchill, “Success is never final. Failure is never fatal. It is the courage to continue on that counts.”

Lara Kunschner Ronan '90

**Associate Professor of Neurology and Medicine,
Geisel Medical School at Dartmouth College;
Academic Clinical Neuro-Oncologist at
Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center**
Sharon, Vermont
Major at Vassar: Biology
Advanced Degree: MD, University of Pittsburgh
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/lara-kunschner-ronan-28435911a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/lara-kunschner-ronan-28435911a)



Lara Kunschner Ronan is an Associate Professor of Neurology and Medicine at Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire, where she is involved with medical education in the neurosciences, graphic medicine, and clinical neurology. She is also an academic clinical

neuro-oncologist at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center, Lebanon, New Hampshire, where she has an active practice treating patients with primary and metastatic brain tumors, the neurological effects of cancer, and general neurological conditions. Ronan is also the Program Director for the neurology residency training program at Dartmouth-Hitchcock. She has been voted a Castle Connolly Exceptional Women In Medicine, New Hampshire Magazine Top Doctors, America's Top Doctors for Cancer 2017, Top Women Doctors, and Top Doctor Pittsburgh Magazine. She has served on the Geisel Faculty Council and the Diversity Council for several years. Her research has been funded by numerous sources. She has been the principal investigator or co-investigator on over 50 clinical trials for novel brain tumor therapies.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Figure out what you are passionate about, what interests you enough to want to learn about it for the rest of your life, and then pursue that topic as a foundation for a career. Be flexible. Keep doors open. Take chances. Be bold. Be authentic.

Zoë Root '04

**Senior Policy Counsel, Justice Programs Office,
American University**

Washington, DC

Major at Vassar: Psychology

Advanced Degree: JD, Northeastern University School of Law

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/zoeroot/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/zoeroot/)



Zoë Root is the Senior Policy Counsel at the Justice Programs Office (JPO), a criminal justice policy and reform center at American University in Washington, DC. At JPO, she focuses on the Right to Counsel National Campaign and the Juvenile Drug Treatment Court Technical Assistance

Initiative. Root joined JPO after five years as a Supervising Attorney and Staff Attorney at the Bronx Defenders. During her time as a public defender, she represented thousands of clients facing felony and misdemeanor charges, trained and supervised first-year attorneys, acted as the coordinating attorney within the Human Trafficking Intervention Court, and served as the director of the Prostitution Conviction Vacatur Project, dedicated to helping sex trafficking survivors vacate their criminal convictions. Prior to law school, Root worked as a court representative at the Center for Alternative Sentencing and Employment Services (CASES), an alternative-to-incarceration program for juveniles in Manhattan.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

In his parting words to me my senior year, Larry Mamiya, former director of the Green Haven Prison Program, told me to “stay liberal.” I’ve ultimately come to believe that he meant two things in his characteristically concise advice:

1. Do not sacrifice the integrity of your ideals, no matter how hard the fight or how naive others may perceive you to be.
2. Never cease to question the status quo. I hereby pass on Mamiya’s advice through a Root filter, tried and true over a decade later.

Kylie Sale '12

**Resource Management Specialist, Whole Foods
Market**

New York, New York

Major at Vassar: History

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/kylie-sale-3574836a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/kylie-sale-3574836a)



Kylie Sale is Resource Management Specialist and Green Mission Program Manager for over 100 Whole Foods Market locations along the East Coast, from Virginia through New York. She oversees sustainability programs and projects related to energy usage reduction, renewable energy, and

waste diversion. She works closely with the regional executive teams to create sustainable standard operating procedures and metrics for reporting on energy and waste, and oversees in-store Green Mission teams and training curriculums. Outside of Whole Foods, Sale is the social chair for DiscNY, New York’s Ultimate Frisbee nonprofit organizing body, where she organizes fundraisers and social events for over 1,000 members of the Ultimate community. She plays Ultimate on Bent, a women’s club team, and sings in the Astoria Community Choir.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You make your own chances. It’s not fortuitous that a connection or job opportunity lands in your lap, it’s because you created that opportunity yourself in some way, shape, or form, perhaps even unknowingly. So follow your interests and take pride in your efforts, because you’ll never know what great things they may unexpectedly lead to.

Joshunda Sanders '00

Director of Communications, North America, Change.org

Bronx, New York

Major at Vassar: English

Advanced Degree: Master of Science in Information

Science, University of Texas at Austin

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/joshunda/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/joshunda/)



Joshunda Sanders is Director of Communications at Change.org, where she leads brand strategy and storytelling for the civic organizing platform of 200 million global users in the U.S. and Canada. She also writes fiction, journalism, poetry, and essays and is widely published. She was the

recipient of a 2017 Hedgebrook Writing Residency and was a Young Women Empowered Teaching Artist. She has presented and lectured on college campuses across the country, including at Princeton and Bard, and as an adjunct at the University of Texas at Austin. Her work has appeared in the *Bellevue Literary Review*, *Salon*, *Publishers Weekly*, *The Week*, *Bitch Magazine*, *Gawker*, *Kirkus Reviews*, and many other outlets. Her books include: *Single & Happy: The Party of Ones*, *How Racism and Sexism Killed Traditional Media: Why the Future of Journalism Depends on Women and People of Color*, the novella *All City*, and *The Beautiful Darkness: A Handbook for Orphans*. She served as Principal Deputy Press Secretary at the Department of Energy during the Obama Administration.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

There is no wrong path. If you decide you want to do something else then change your mind, it'll work out. Don't worry. Easier said than done, I realize, but it feels like you have to decide right away, right at the moment of graduation, who you will be and what you will do as soon as you graduate and that is not true. I have changed course several times since I left Vassar nearly 20 years ago, and I don't regret a single thing—even what I regard as “failures” or delays. What is for you is for you. You just have to honor yourself and your path.

Heller An Shapiro '81

Executive Director, ArtStream

Chevy Chase, Maryland

Major at Vassar: Psychology

Advanced Degree: MA, General Psychology,

The American University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/heller-an-shapiro-3829131/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/heller-an-shapiro-3829131/)



Heller An Shapiro's career in nonprofit management spans local and national organizations working to improve the lives of people with disabilities, rare diseases, or living in poverty. After an eight-year consulting career and “maternity leave” to help her adopted son integrate into

the community, she returned to full-time work at ArtStream, an organization that uses performing arts to teach communication and social skills to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including autism.

She served on the boards of Kidsave International and the National Health Council, and currently serves on The Barrie School Board. She is a member of Leadership America. She advises CEOs and board members, and coaches emerging leaders.

As Director of Volunteers at the Friends of the Kennedy Center, she led a program that received a President's Volunteer Action Award. She founded MVP Arts: Managers of Volunteer Programs in the Arts, a networking and education group. She is the author of *Rebuilding Together: Board Building Manual* and the children's book *Emily's First Day*.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Think about the way you like to work and interact, and look for jobs that fit your preferred social style (solo, group activities, one-on-one). Think about size: A big place with defined roles or a small place with a broad role and (usually) more flexibility. Think about whether you want an entrepreneurial job with rapid change, a turnaround with a lot of problems to be solved, or a growth organization with steady, intentional progress. Don't be flattered into taking a job just because you were recruited for it. Listen to your “gut” when interviewing ... are these people you like? Imagine saying, “Hi, my name is _____ and I work at _____.” If you don't feel proud about saying that, don't take the job.

Dennis Slade '91

Team Lead/Senior Software Engineer, Scholastic
New York, New York
Major at Vassar: Computer Science
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/dennisladejr/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/dennisladejr/)



Dennis Slade is a Senior Software Engineer/Manager in the web and mobile application development space. Working primarily with open source cloud technologies, he specializes in the implementation and support of large scale, object-oriented web-based systems.

His 23+ years in the

industry include work at IBM, Ogilvy & Mather, the *Financial Times*, Oracle/Sun, Citibank (in Zürich, Switzerland), and his current company Scholastic. He has also worked at a number of deceased start-ups including Freeverse, a pioneering gaming company founded by fellow Vassar alums. Slade is a frequent guest panelist on topics related to technology, LGBT organizing, being “the only black guy in the room,” and *Doctor Who*. He lives in Brooklyn, NY, with his husband and their many Apple devices.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

- Never be afraid to say, “I don’t know” or “Could you explain that further?”
- Everyone asks “what,” fewer ask “how,” and fewer still “why.” You will get far by asking the “why” questions.
- Telling a compelling, convincing story is more powerful than listing facts and figures. Always lead with your story.
- The less you try to please everybody, the more people you will please. Especially yourself.

Justin Soderholm '05

Social Studies Teacher,
New York City Department of Education
Avenel, New Jersey
Major at Vassar: American Culture
Advanced Degree: M.Ed., English as a Second Language Focus, Monmouth University



Justin Soderholm has over a decade of experience teaching at multiple high schools in Brooklyn to improve graduation rates for some of New York City’s most vulnerable Black and Latino youth. He has participated in several citywide initiatives aimed at closing the achievement gap, includ-

ing AP for All and the Early College/Dual Credit program through Medgar Evers College. Recognizing the language barrier as one factor inhibiting many of his students, he began taking English as a Second Language instruction courses as part of his graduate studies and then completed an intensive certification program through City College of New York to earn a bilingual extension on his teaching license. He is constantly seeking ways of enriching his current school’s culture as a means of engaging students beyond the classroom. Since his school does not currently offer performing arts as part of its daytime course offerings, for example, he is teaching many of his students instrumental music as part of Pep Band—a new after-school club he spearheaded.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Be aware of the knowledge, skills, and passion you have that bring out your inner (or not-so-inner) nerd. Then, seek someone to reward you handsomely for all of them. No career worth its weight is free from its share of stressful days; choose one that makes you as uncontrollably giddy on good days as it makes you want to run for the hills on the bad ones. And, if you choose a career that allows you to find your own unique way of giving back to the world, remember that your premature gray hairs were not in vain.

Brent Starks '97

Assistant General Counsel, JPMorgan Chase & Co.
Brooklyn, New York
Major at Vassar: Psychology
Advanced Degree: JD, University of Michigan



Brent T. Starks is an Assistant General Counsel within JPMorgan Chase & Co.'s (JPMC) Corporate Litigation department, with a focus on government and/or regulatory investigations. In this function, Starks represents JPMC before various federal and state government agencies

(e.g., SEC, DOJ, CFTC, etc.) and self-regulatory organizations (e.g., FINRA) in connection with both civil and criminal investigations directed to the firm. Starks works closely with line-of-business, legal, and compliance personnel, and advises JPMorgan in connection with a wide variety of legal and regulatory matters.

Prior to joining JPMC in 2013, Starks was a litigation/white collar defense attorney at the law firms of Covington & Burling LLP and Arkin Kaplan Rice LLP.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

I am a firm believer that prospective law students are well served by working in the legal field prior to enrolling in law school. It is a great way to gain a bit of insight into your professional career path and understand the purpose of a legal education. I look forward to meeting everyone.

Eli Stein '12

**Director of Academic Consulting,
LogicPrep Education**
New York, New York
Major at Vassar: International Studies
LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/eli-stein-37570585/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/eli-stein-37570585/)



Eli Stein works at LogicPrep, an education company that helps students through the high school, test prep, and college processes. In addition to working with families through LogicPrep, he also helps with the company's marketing efforts, software build, and expansion into Latin America. Prior

to this role, he worked at the Ad Council, running public service advertising campaigns, and in Vassar's Office of Admission as an admissions officer.

Stein also spends time working on his two start-ups. One is focused on stopping Trump by allowing people to round up their cashless purchases and donate that change to Democrats in swing districts at a federal level. The other is less serious, helping people find a fair place to meet up (meeting in the middle). He also serves on the board of the Vassar Club of New York.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

You have access to an incredible resource: Vassar alums. With Vassar being a smaller school, there is a sense of community and inherent trust among alums, who want to help each other (and particularly students.). Take advantage of this, reach out to any alum out there who looks interesting—people love to talk about themselves and what they do. Plus there are a ton of alumnae/i events that are just a Metro North ride away in NYC.

Hannah Van Demark '15

Policy Analyst, Federal Reserve Bank of New York

Sioux Falls, South Dakota

Major at Vassar: History

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/hannah-van-demark-9bb76989/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/hannah-van-demark-9bb76989/)



Hannah Van Demark is a Policy Analyst at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York (FRBNY), where she is in the Payment and Market Infrastructure Department within the Supervisory Policy Group. In her role, she helps develop FRBNY policy positions as they relate to international

committees and payments. She also works on policy matters related to financial technology and is on the leadership committee of the WoMen's Resource Network at the FRBNY. As a student, Van Demark interned at the Senate Banking Committee in Washington, DC, and at a microfinance lender in Cochabamba, Bolivia. She also was a Ford Scholar through the History Department, assisting Professor Robert Brigham on his research into the evolving U.S. position on the International Criminal Court. At Vassar, she was student-assistant to President Catharine Hill, co-president of the Vassar Alliance of Women in Foreign Affairs, and a member of the Women's Tennis Team. She was a 2013 Cornelisen Fellow and 2014 Tananbaum Fellow.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

There are many paths and many destinations; one should be open to life's possibilities. Cast your net wide and apply for positions that genuinely excite you. When things do not work out according to plan, there is always another (and oftentimes better) opportunity waiting. Also, take advantage of all the resources that Vassar has to offer. Attend lectures, get to know your professors, join clubs outside of your comfort zone, etc. You will miss all of the resources once you leave the Vassar bubble.

Madeline Vincitore

**Responsible Sourcing Senior Specialist,
Keurig Green Mountain**

Tewksbury, Massachusetts

Major in college: Innovation and Entrepreneurship and Humanities, Clarkson University

Advanced Degree: MBA, Environmental Management and Supply Chain Management, Clarkson University

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/mvincitore](https://www.linkedin.com/in/mvincitore)



After completing her undergraduate and graduate degrees at Clarkson University, Madeline Vincitore moved from upstate New York to the Boston area to start her first job as a buyer in a small packaging company. Within the year she was recruited to work at Keurig Green

Mountain at their Massachusetts location. Having majored in Innovation & Entrepreneurship and Humanities with a minor in Sustainable Solutions for her undergraduate degree, and then Supply Chain and Environmental Management for her MBA, she had her sights on moving into the sustainability group at the company. While she was hired as a marketing buyer, she was able to position herself to also support the sustainability and responsible sourcing groups. Another year went by and when a role in Responsible Sourcing opened up, Vincitore was hired to fill the position. Her current title is Responsible Sourcing Senior Specialist and she works to ensure Keurig's suppliers meet social and environmental standards. She also leads a variety of company initiatives to position Keurig as a leader in responsible sourcing.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Be honest with yourself to find what you are passionate about and what you are good at. Both will evolve over time, so don't be afraid to change your path.

Britta von Schoeler '97

President, Broadway Video Enterprises

Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Psychology

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/britta-von-schoeler-16847a/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/britta-von-schoeler-16847a/)



Britta von Schoeler heads Broadway Video Enterprises, a division of Broadway Video, Lorne Michaels's global media and entertainment company. Broadway Video Enterprises is charged with creating revenue growth and amplifying the company's portfolio of brands across all media. In her position, she

helps the strategic planning and implementation of partnerships for Broadway Video's programming library, which includes the Emmy Award-winning sketch comedy series *Saturday Night Live*, as well as *Portlandia*, *Detroiters*, and *Documentary Now*.

Additionally, von Schoeler conceives and executes unique business opportunities, creating globally recognized brands such as Más Mejor, Broadway Video's comedy content studio powered by Latino voices. Von Schoeler's efforts extend the reach of the BVE brands globally. Her portfolio of projects includes global distribution of traditional media as well as the production of new formats.

On the side, von Schoeler co-heads Creative Alliance, which creates and distributes messaging and marketing in support of Civic Nation, a nonprofit organization started by the Obama administration that uses organizing, engagement, and public awareness to address some of the nation's most pressing challenges.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Consider what you want your life to be like when you're 40 and pick a career that can help you attain that vision. In what city do you want to live? What work-life balance is right for you? Do you like to travel? Do you like the comfort of knowing what the path to success in your role is or do you like to be more entrepreneurial and chart your own course? Knowing these answers can help point you in a specific direction. Once you know what that direction is, get out there and talk to as many people in the profession as you can. Don't be afraid to work all recourses.

Amy Walsh '87

Partner, Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP

Salisbury, New York, New York

Major at Vassar: Philosophy

Advanced Degree: JD, Fordham University School of Law

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/amy-walsh-9aaa41b/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/amy-walsh-9aaa41b/)



Amy Walsh, a partner in the New York office of Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, LLP, is the former Chief of the Business and Securities Fraud Section of the United States Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of New York. Walsh currently serves as the court-appointed monitor in JPMorgan

Chase's settlement with the Department of Justice. She also represents individuals and institutions in government investigations, enforcement actions, and prosecutions conducted by various government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Justice, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Commodity Futures Trading Commission, and the IRS. Prior to entering private practice, Walsh was an Assistant United States Attorney for 12 years in the Eastern District of New York, where she led dozens of investigations and cases on behalf of the government, and supervised several sections within the office. Super Lawyers has named Walsh one of the Top 50 Women in the New York Metro Area.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

Work hard. Be curious. Ask lots of questions. Listen to and respect everyone in the workplace (no matter what their level or what their role). Take work seriously. Assert yourself. Make others feel good about themselves. Be a team player and add value to whatever you work on. If you're confused or feel like you're spinning your wheels, ask for help in understanding what your role should be, what the expectations are, and how you can help the mission. Bring energy and enthusiasm to everything you do and every interaction you have with anyone in your workplace.

Jeb Weisman '82

Director of Strategic Technologies; Co-Supervisor and PI; Inaugural CIO

National Center for Disaster Preparedness/Earth Institute at **Columbia University**; SmartLab Digital Media Institute at **University College**, Dublin, Ireland; **YMCA** of Long Island Briarcliff Manor, New York

Major at Vassar: Anthropology

Advanced Degrees: MA, Anthropology, Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research; PhD, Anthropology, Graduate Faculty of the New School for Social Research

LinkedIn: [linkedin.com/in/jebweisman/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/jebweisman/)



Jeb Weisman is an anthropologist, technologist, and health informatics researcher, educator, and consultant. He directs Strategic Technologies at Columbia University's National Center for Disaster Preparedness, is a researcher at SmartLab, University College, Dublin, and recently became the first CIO at the YMCA of Long

Island—bringing modern information systems to vulnerable populations. He researches inclusive design at OCAD University in Toronto and supports social entrepreneurship efforts among graduate students, globally. Weisman has spent 30 years in nonprofit higher education, health care, and social services fields, applying novel technical and data solutions to community and global issues. A self-described, “white-collar hobo,” in addition to anthropology, he focused on artificial intelligence and history of science at Vassar, was a professional archaeologist, photographer, and text book writer and editor along the way. Weisman and his teams have been fortunate to create widely adopted tools and methods that have improved the quality of life and services for marginalized and disadvantaged children and families, providers of care, and departments of health and education across the United States.

Advice for the Class of 2020

Don't take the liberal arts for granted; critical thinking is not a trade, it is an asset of great value. As you move forward in your career, look at what you have done in your life and build it into your narrative—a story that explains why you did something and its relevance. It is your value proposition and context. Never burn a bridge. Past relationships can lead to unexpected future opportunities, even when you didn't care for a position. Make yourself essential. Do what needs to be done. Whether they admit it or not, most organizations have “vacuums of need,” filled by no one reliable. Fill those spots, define yourself, and don't confuse your goal and your path.

Nicole Wood '12

Producer/Voice Actor, KidZoneTV at Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital

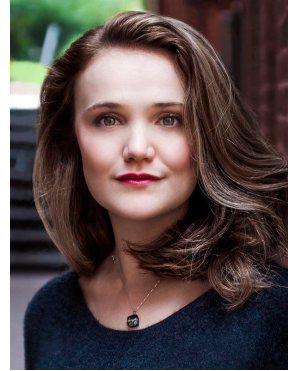
Brooklyn, New York

Major at Vassar: Drama

Advanced Degree: Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS), Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital

www.nicolejaywood.com

www.facebook.com/mountsinai.childlife/



With her dual background in performance and film production, Nicole Wood is a dynamic pioneer in the field of Child Life and Video Therapy. After graduating from Vassar, Wood moved to NYC to pursue acting, garnering credits in theater (*Stein-Drag*), film (*Prom King 2010*), and animation

(*Pokémon*, *Richard the Stork*, unreleased video games). Seeking ways to have a stronger voice throughout the storytelling process, Wood pursued a dual career in film production, beginning as a production assistant during her sophomore summer and more recently producing and production coordinating for films (*LoveGun*) and live immersive events (*Bill Murray's Christmas Party*). True to the Vassar spirit, Wood continued to explore her evolving passion to “heal through storytelling” and began volunteering at KidZoneTV at Mount Sinai Kravis Children's Hospital. Wood pursued higher education, achieving credentialing as a Certified Child Life Specialist (CCLS), and at present serves as KidZoneTV Producer, generating therapeutic, educational, and entertaining content for pediatric patients and families in NYC.

Advice for the Class of 2020:

“Learn the alchemy true human beings know. The moment you accept what troubles you've been given, the door will open.” —Rumi

With any career path you choose, there will be exciting, rewarding moments, and there will be hard, challenging moments. You may find yourself questioning your choices. If so, you're not alone. Know who to call when you're having a tough day. Trust your path, and trust in yourself. Life doesn't move in a straight line. Surround yourself with people who inspire and empower you to continue growing into the person you most want to be in this world. Know when to ask for help. Take compassionate care of yourself. And when in doubt, give back. The Vassar network is here for you.

Career Guidebook Definitions

Resumes

Strong resumes are targeted to a specific opportunity and bring out a candidate's key credentials, skills, interests, and accomplishments. Generally limited to one page in length, a resume should provide contact information, summarize your educational and professional history, and highlight additional skill sets and leadership capabilities. To get help with your resume, drop by the CDO at any time between 2:00 and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday. The CDO's Resume Writing and Job Search Correspondence Guide provides useful tips on format and content, and provides examples of successful resumes.

Cover Letters

Cover letters are persuasive documents that highlight a candidate's skills, knowledge of the employer, and ability to contribute to the organization. Simply put, a cover letter is an opportunity for you to interpret your resume and highlight why you are a strong candidate. The CDO's Resume Writing and Job Search Correspondence Guide provides useful tips on format and content, and provides examples of successful cover letters.

Interviews

Interviews are two-way conversations by which employers evaluate a candidate's skills, motivation, goals, and personality. Usually granted to applicants who stand out on paper, interviews help an employer determine whether an individual would be a good fit for their organization. Interviews also allow applicants insight into potential workplaces. To learn more about polishing your interviewing skills, contact the CDO to schedule a mock interview with a career counselor.

Networking and Informational Interviews

One of the best ways to explore career options and plan your job search is to talk directly with people who work in fields that interest you. Informational interviewing adds a dynamic, personalized dimension to your career research—and can help you approach your internship in a strategic, focused manner. Vassar alumnae/i have a strong track record of helping current students advance their career goals. Use our networking resources (on the opposite page) to learn more about a specific industry, occupation, or organization; get advice on how to break into or advance in a given industry; or explore graduate and professional school programs.

Thank-You Notes

Thank-you notes are expected by employers and networking contacts as an appropriate method to extend your appreciation for an individual's time and attention. It is also a strategic way to emphasize your professionalism and differentiate yourself. Always follow up with a thank-you note (or email) after every professional interaction.

To access links, please visit the electronic program booklet at:
careers.vassar.edu/explore-and-plan/sig-programs/sophomores.html

Career Guidebook—CDO Resources

The Career Development Office

The Career Development Office (CDO) helps students and alumnae/i envision and realize a meaningful life after Vassar. We support members of the Vassar community as they explore their interests, define their career goals, and seek their next opportunity for personal growth and professional development. Located in Main-South (Room 170), CDO staff can help you find internships, review resumes and cover letters, network effectively, and prepare for interviews. The office also offers career assessment and graduate/law school advising services, hosts regular workshops and on-campus recruiting events, brings employers and graduate schools to campus, and administers internship funding. To take advantage of these resources, schedule a half-hour appointment with a career counselor—or visit the office between 2:00 and 4:00pm, Monday through Friday, for a drop-in appointment.

Online Internship Resources

The CDO operates, subscribes to, and recommends a number of useful online resources for internship searching. We encourage you to begin your internship search with Handshake, Vassar's new job and internship database. Vassar is also a member of the Liberal Arts Career Network (LACN), which draws upon a network of 38+ selective liberal arts colleges across the nation. In addition to highlighting specific internships, a number of our resources offer informational (often industry and company-specific) content and advice on finding internships outside the U.S. For a full list of recommended online resources, consult the Internship Resource Directory. Mentors: If you wish to post an internship opportunity, please contact the CDO hirevassar@vassar.edu with the pertinent details.

Networking Tools

Sophomore Career Connections is not your only opportunity to network with members of the Vassar community. As a student or alumna/us, you have access to the Vassar network through a handful of convenient online tools. The Alumnae/i Directory, operated by the Office of Alumnae/i Affairs and Development (OAAD), allows you to search for and (professionally) contact nearly 40,000 Vassar graduates. Nearly 20,000 Vassar graduates currently use LinkedIn; set up a free account to connect with people who inspire you. Finally, Vassar's growing AlumniFire network offers another way to identify and contact community members who are willing to help and advise current students.

Funding Opportunities

Many internship programs are unpaid or underpaid. To help make financially inaccessible opportunities a reality, the CDO administers a number of funds every year. Through the Internship Grant Fund (IGF), a need-sensitive program open to students from all class years, the CDO supports students participating in low-pay and unpaid summer internships. Whether you require assistance to cover rent for the summer, or simply need a transit card to get from your home to the office, consider applying to the IGF after rolling admissions open in March. Open to juniors only, the highly competitive Tananbaum Fellowship helps 20 juniors find their dream summer opportunity through comprehensive career coaching and a generous stipend. See the websites of the CDO and the Office of Fellowships for more information about these and other Vassar funding opportunities.



Sophomore Career Connections is planned and organized by the offices of Career Development and Alumnae/i Engagement at Vassar College.