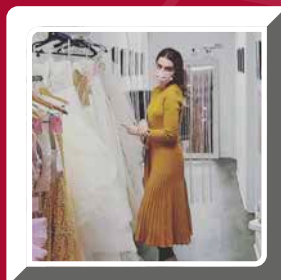
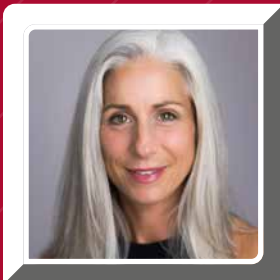


The Berkeley Carroll School

2023 Issue

# MAGAZINE



## THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED:

BC Alums Blaze Their  
Own Career Paths



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the view from lincoln place

Dear Friends,

At the opening of school in September and throughout the current school year, we have had the opportunity to gather once more in a fashion that was denied to us over the course of the pandemic. I believe that I speak for the entire Berkeley Carroll community in saying that this has been a gift for which we are tremendously grateful.

Concurrently, we are also thankful for the myriad ways in which adults and students leveraged their flexibility and creativity to problem solve during the COVID crisis. This edition of the magazine includes reflections from faculty members on how these attributes allowed our arts program to thrive in the face of constraints and uncertainty. Our arts educators note how, among other gains, students’ listening skills were enhanced as a result of having to sit six feet apart rather than enjoying the typical orchestral seating arrangement. Notwithstanding the particular blow that the remote context dealt the performing arts, a sense of optimism, creativity, and community prevailed.

With the pandemic no longer front of mind, we are excited to devote redoubled attention to identifying and describing the skills and habits of mind that we aspire to cultivate at Berkeley Carroll. The profile of Dr. Stephen Mak, our new Assistant Head of School for Program and Innovation, hints at our emergent Portrait of a Learner initiative, which will articulate future-focused goals and ground the community in a shared vision for learning to support strategic decision-making, program design, professional growth, and student-led learning. As the profile suggests, Dr. Mak is a knowledgeable and discerning guide who we are fortunate to have leading this project.

While parsing goals for the future to ensure that Berkeley Carroll remains innovative, nimble, and vital in the years to come, we would do well to reflect on the experiences of our alumni, for whom this learning community has been formative. Conversations during this year’s Alumni Homecoming, as well as the magazine’s feature on a group of insightful, committed, and intrepid Berkeley Carroll graduates, confirm that our commitment to critical, ethical, and global thinking remains vital. Our alumni’s wise words in these pages about building relationships, taking chances, asking questions, and giving back are inspiring. Nikara Warren ’06 observes, “It is important not only to work hard, but to get in touch with why you’re doing what you do.” The academic rigor and joy that our students experience from their earliest years in the Lower School through graduation and the impact that they make at BC and beyond are my “why.” I hope that you are as intrigued and inspired as I am by the endeavors of our students past and present.

All Best,

Lisa Yvette Waller, Ph.D.  
Head of School



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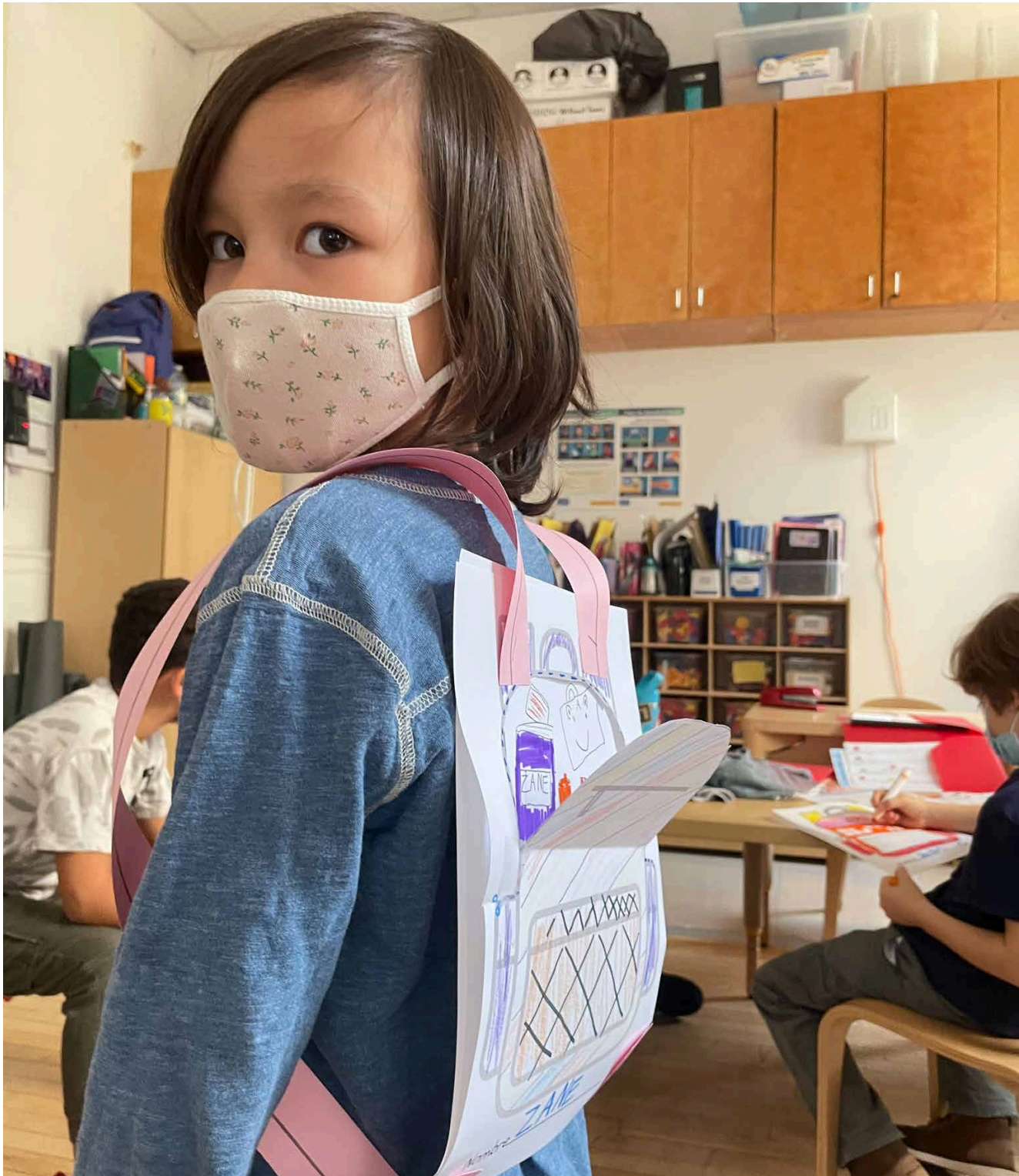
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**FIRST GRADERS PRACTICE SPANISH WITH INTERDISCIPLINARY STEAM PROJECT**  
In Spanish class, first graders created their own backpacks entirely out of classroom materials and presented descriptions of their creations to their peers in Spanish.



**MIDDLE SCHOOLERS SPONSOR TOY DRIVE FOR FAMILIES IN NEED**  
Fifth-grade students partnered with Little Essentials, a nonprofit that provides local, at-risk families living in poverty with urgently needed children’s supplies, to sponsor a holiday toy drive last winter. Students spread the word by making posters and crafting announcements shared with the entire Middle School. In the end, hundreds of toys and baby supplies were donated!



**FIFTH GRADER PERFORMS IN SUPPORT OF UKRAINIAN CHILDREN**  
**Zoë S. '29** performed in a benefit concert last spring alongside children from the Broadway community to raise money for children affected by the war in Ukraine, which raised more than \$5,000 for humanitarian nonprofit Save The Children.





**KEEPING BROOKLYN'S WATERWAYS CLEAN**

Students from the Environmental Action Team cleaned Prospect Park's waterways last fall for International Coastal Cleanup Day, an annual event focused on the identification and removal of trash that can enter our waterways and harm ocean wildlife.



**YUSAF HASSAN CHALLENGES PERCEPTION OF PUBLISHING AS ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE**

Last year, BC welcomed Yusaf Hassan as an artist-in-residence. Mr. Hassan is a founder of BlackMass Publishing, whose works have been acquired and exhibited by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Studies, the Langston Hughes Library, and MoMA PS1.



**LOWER SCHOOL TEACHER'S FILM RECEIVES INTERNATIONAL HONOR**

Kindergarten teacher Tanya Khordoc's short experimental puppet film, "Light as Paper," was chosen as an official selection for the 2021 Vienna International Film Awards. The film, which was developed as part of a residency with the 2020 Object Movement Festival, is inspired by German-American psychologist Erik Erikson's stages of human development.



**LOWER SCHOOLER APPEARS IN FILM AT THE MET**

**Avery '33** performed in a film featured in The Metropolitan Museum of Art's exhibition, "Before Yesterday We Could Fly." The exhibition, which debuted last fall, honors the legacy of Seneca Village, a thriving settlement from 1825–1857 predominantly owned by Black people that was taken by NYC under eminent domain.



**FACULTY FEATURED IN ART EXHIBITION**

BC faculty members Mauricio Cortes (top photo) and Rafael Sanchez (lower photo) participated in an art exhibition last winter at New York's Clemente Soto Vélaz Cultural Center, where performance artists, musicians, and poets collaborated to create live art for audiences.



**KNIT ONE, PURL ONE**

Fourth graders in the Lower School's knitting elective visited local yarn studio String Thing last spring, where they held their own knitting circle and learned more about the fiber arts in a hands-on way.





**FIGHTING FOR THE FUTURE OF THE EARTH**

At a global climate summit simulation last winter, eighth graders assumed roles as delegates from countries around the world, climate activists, fossil fuel lobbyists, and members of the press to negotiate commitments that will limit greenhouse gas emissions and stem the rise of average global temperatures.



**BC STAFF MEMBER CLIMBS THE (ON-AIR) PYRAMID**

Technology Support Specialist Melanie Rubin appeared on the popular ABC game show *The \$100,000 Pyramid* last year, along with celebrity partners Kathy Najimy and Kal Penn.



**CHEMISTRY STUDENTS EXPLORE THE CHEMISTRY OF FIREWORKS**

Upper School Advanced Chemistry students donned PPE for their flame test lab, in which they investigated the chemistry of fireworks by burning different samples of salt solutions. They then played the part of investigators, trying their hand at identifying the contents of an unknown solution.



**AFRO-CUBAN AND AFRO-PUERTO RICAN DANCE SPECIALIST VISITS BC**

TaDeo Asojano, a performer with Cumbe: Center for African and Diaspora Dance, taught several 11th and 12th grade Spanish classes last fall during a dance demonstration. Mr. Asojano is a dancer, singer, drummer, and actor who specializes in Afro-Cuban and Afro-Puerto Rican folkloric and popular dance.



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## BC lens

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### Fun in the Sun

As the end of the school year approached, Lower Schoolers headed to Prospect Park in May for BC's annual Field Day. Second graders competed in teams during a game with inflatable balls nearly as big as they were!





# CELEBRATING THE CLASS OF 2022!





# THE CLASS OF 2022



Congratulations to the 77 members of the Class of 2022 who graduated from Berkeley Carroll on June 2, 2022 at our 135th Commencement! Class co-executive council presidents **Chloe-Marie Pauyo '22** and **Joseph Gordon '22** greeted the audience of friends, family, and faculty who gathered to watch graduates receive their diplomas at the Theater at City Tech in downtown Brooklyn. The audience also heard from Head of School **Dr. Lisa Yvette Waller**,

Class Speaker **Ryan Issa '22**, Faculty Commencement Speakers **Edward Herzman** and **Amber Thomas**, and Dean of the Class of 2022 **Miguel Correa**. The Commencement Speaker was disability rights advocate Haben Girma who is the first deafblind graduate of Harvard Law School. Members of the Upper School Orchestra performed several selections during the ceremony.



# CONGRATULATIONS TO THE CLASS OF 2022!

**Finn Adelman**  
Rhode Island School of Design, RI

**Dylan Alexander Antell**  
University of Miami, FL

**Yazan Baghdady**  
University of Chicago, IL

**Charis Margaret Baumann**  
University of Richmond, VA

**Siena Rose MacDonald Bird**  
Bates College, ME

**Lee Adrian Block**  
University of Rochester, NY

**Noa Moritt Brown**  
Brown University, RI

**William Carey**  
University of Michigan, MI

**Wen Yu Chen**  
Cornell University, NY

**Theo R. Cherry**  
Colorado College, CO

**Daniel Chian**  
Oberlin College, OH

**Haley Dae Clark**  
Syracuse University, NY

**Tristan Leo Craco**  
Wheaton College, MA

**Kelsey M. Dixon**  
SUNY at Albany, NY

**Louisa Egolf**  
University of Toronto, Ontario, Canada

**Maxwell T. Eve**  
Occidental College, CA

**Malcolm Lawrie Fabens**  
Emory University, GA

**Chancellor Fortenberry**  
University of Colorado Boulder, CO

**Liam Frackelton-Figueroa**  
University of Wisconsin Madison, WI

**Grace H. Freeman**  
Brown University, RI

**Tess Margaret Gilmartin**  
Emory University, GA

**Fiona Renae Gottwald Goad**  
The New School, NY

**Daniel R. Goetz**  
Drexel University, PA

**Gabrielle Goldstein**  
Chapman University, CA

**Joseph Lucas Gordon**  
Bowdoin College, ME

**Simon Lewis Horowitz**  
Washington University in St. Louis, MO

**Sayyed Muhammad Ali Hussain**  
Cornell University, NY

**Leonardo Reiss Intellisano**  
University of Michigan, MI

**Ryan Jacob Issa**  
Cornell University, NY

**Oluwakemi Mahene Iyageh**  
Emory University, GA

**Leandre John**  
Cornell University, NY

**Ruby P. Kass**  
University of Colorado Boulder, CO

**Asalahtu-Mae Khalid**  
Hampshire College, MA

**Jonas King**  
Fashion Institute of Technology, NY

**Eve Kirven**  
Tulane University of Louisiana, LA

**Simon Korotzer-Mariani**  
Oberlin College, OH

**Zoe A. Kortes**  
Carleton College, MN

**Zoe Tigerlily Krashes**  
Denison University, OH

**Alexandra Rae Lehrer**  
George Washington University, DC

**Owen T. Marcinek**  
University of Michigan, MI

**Darwin J. Mordan**  
Cornell University, NY

**Annie Cailin Mulvaney**  
Wheaton College, MA

**Sam Otley**  
Syracuse University, NY

**Chloe-Marie J. Pauyo**  
Oberlin College, OH

**Jonatan Peguero**  
Emory University, GA

**Manuel A. Polanco**  
Lehigh University, PA

**Zoe A. Pyne**  
Barnard College, NY

**Eden Joy Raich**  
Bryn Mawr College, PA

**Anya Jackson Renzi**  
University of Michigan, MI

**Isen W. Ritchie**  
Bard College, NY

**Samuel L. R. Roane**  
Kenyon College, OH

**Samantha Rosario**  
Brown University, RI

**Alex W. Rubin**  
Stony Brook University, NY

**Carly Isabel Saba**  
Smith College, MA

**Nika Sadeghi**  
University of Pennsylvania, PA

**Talin Bracken Schell**  
Carnegie Mellon University, PA

**Margot L. Schiller**  
New York University, NY

**Ellie Mills Schneider**  
University of Wisconsin Madison, WI

**Annika Jennie Sheridan**  
University of Pennsylvania, PA

**Nathaniel S. Snow**  
Williams College, MA

**Emily Terese Soto**  
Lehigh University, PA

**Ella Jaya Sran**  
Occidental College, CA

**August Ryan Swetow**  
Amherst College, MA

**Carter Jay Swetow**  
Middlebury College, VT

**Amna Tariq**  
New York University, NY

**Truth B. Templeton**  
Yale University, CT

**Sophia C. Torren**  
University of Vermont, VT

**Oscar Agustin Leahy Trujillo**  
University of California Berkeley, CA

**Graeme Marshall Tuck**  
Oberlin College, OH

**Hendricus Petrus van den Berg**  
Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Netherlands

**Evan Walker**  
Cornell University, NY

**Miko Milani Warshaw**  
Kenyon College, OH

**Skylar Webb**  
Cornell University, NY

**Vantrease Wilson**  
IE University, Spain

**Brian Young**  
Gap Year

**Taro Higashi Zimmerman**  
Cornell University, NY

**Reed Zuver**  
Skidmore College, NY



# 2022 LOWER SCHOOL ARCH DAY

Lower School students and their families celebrated Arch Day in traditional Berkeley Carroll fashion with a twist: five ceremonies! Lower School Director Kimberly Beck gave remarks, students sang the BC classic “Today is Arch Day” song, and of course, passed through the arch to symbolize a transition to a new school year. At the 3rd and 4th grade ceremony, **Graham '30**, **Aerin '30**, and **Stella '30** gave wonderful speeches to family and classmates.



# 2022 MIDDLE SCHOOL CLOSING CEREMONIES

The Middle School community gathered in the Athletic Center to celebrate the end of the school year during their Closing Ceremonies! Students heard remarks and reflections from Middle School Director **Yabome Kabia**, and Middle School Dean of Students **Elizabeth Luscombe**. **Gilly O. '29**, **Bea M. '28**, **Zachary M.T. '27**, and **James K. '26** represented their grades as class speakers. The 8th Grade symphonic orchestra treated the crowd to a wonderful jazz performance of “Take Five” by P. Desmond.





## BC lens

### And They're Off!

Nearly 300 BC students, faculty, and staff ran, walked, and cheered at the first-ever BC Middle School 5k Fun Run in April. Fifth through eighth graders began training for the event in February as part of Heart Health Awareness Month, and their hard work really showed.



20



22

## SENIOR SCHOLARS

Berkeley Carroll's selective and demanding Senior Scholars program prepares students to be responsible researchers, inquisitive citizens, and dynamic writers for their lives ahead.

The topics chosen by the latest cohort of scholars were rich and complex, tackling topics from gentrification in Brooklyn to the literary mastery of Toni Morrison.

### AMNA AYLA T.

Woman on the Wall: An Exploration of Gender and the History of Mental Illness in the United States through Character Studies of the Women in *BoJack Horseman*

### ASALAHTU-MAE K.

A Friend of Her Mind: The Calculated Literary Mastery of Toni Morrison

### CHLOE-MARIE JACQUELINE P.

Manifestations of Medical Misogynoir: Making the Case for the Sanctity of Black Women's Wombs

### LOUISA E.

The Multifaceted Meat Market: Legislation, Substitution, and Impacts

### SAMANTHA R.

Preying on Vulnerability: Distrust in Health Care during COVID-19

### TARŌ Z.

"It's a dirty business; I don't want to get involved in it again.": The Dishonorable Industry behind International Amateur Basketball

### TRUTH T.

Reinhardt-Like: The Plights and Joys of Black Migration and Gentrification within Brooklyn, New York



# SCIENCE RESEARCH AND DESIGN 2022

In Berkeley Carroll’s unique, three-year Science Research & Design program (SRD), students learn to create their own research questions and perform original science research. Unlike similar research programs, SRD encourages students to conduct research on campus using our newly renovated and state-of-the-art research facilities. This allows students to take full ownership of their work and become experts in their field.

During this three-year period, students read and analyze peer-reviewed literature, verify published experimental results, and design, conduct, and present the results of their own original research. Upon completion, they are informed scientists—independently motivated, highly collaborative, and well prepared to pursue STEM degrees in college.

The SRD program inspires students to be critical thinkers who advocate for ethical, evidence-based science that guides collective knowledge and global action. In short, they learn to become creators of knowledge, agents of scientific progress, and advocates of change.

To visit the students’ websites and learn about their projects, visit [www.berkeleycarroll.org/SRD](http://www.berkeleycarroll.org/SRD).

## RESEARCH TOPICS

- DANIEL C.**  
*Effects of Advertising on Soft Drink Consumption and Choice in Young Adults*
- GRACE F.**  
*Utilization of PCR to Identify GMOs in Tortilla Chips*
- JOSEPH G.**  
*Optimizing Bioplastic Strength through the Addition of Powdered Orange Peels*
- LEO I.**  
*Investigating the Effects of Aerobic Exercise on Anxiety-Like Behaviors in Zebrafish (Danio rerio)*
- SIMON K-M.**  
*Long-Term Effects of Ethanol Exposure on Sex Segregated Fruit Flies (Drosophila melanogaster)*
- ZOE K.**  
*Auditory Predatorial Stimulus Concordance and Discordance in Coenobita clypeatus*
- KEMI I.**  
*Observing Memory and Learning Flexibility in Zebrafish through Reinforcement and Color Discrimination Training*
- ZOE P.**  
*Influence of Personality Types on Coping with COVID-19 in Berkeley Carroll High Schoolers*

- ANYA R.**  
*Observing the Effects of Microplastics of Varied Concentrations on the Population Biomass of Daphnia magna*
- CARLY S.**  
*Physiological and Psychological Effects of Probiotic Supplementation in Aquatic Organisms*
- NIKA S.**  
*Investigating How Eye Color Affects Mating Success among Drosophila melanogaster*
- MARGOT S.**  
*Oosorption in Milkweed Bugs as a Result of Poor Diet*
- ANNIKA S.**  
*Improving the Efficiency of Solar Stills*
- NATHANIEL S.**  
*Do We Act As Risky As We Think?*
- AUGIE S.**  
*The Effect of Social Isolation on Zebrafish Behavior and Ability to Interact with a Shoal*
- CARTER S.**  
*Purification of Contaminated Water Using Low-Cost Materials in Slow Sand Filters*
- WEEZIE W.**  
*The Short Term Effects of Caffeine on Alertness and Performance*







NOA B. '22



ASA K. '22



ELLA D. '23



ISAIAH G. '24



DEVRA G. '25



CARTER S. '22

# BC STUDENTS HONORED WITH SCHOLASTIC ART AND WRITING AWARDS

The longest-running and most prestigious recognition program for creative teens, the NYC Regional Scholastic Awards awarded more than 40 honors to Berkeley Carroll Upper School students in 2022 for their outstanding creative work in the writing and art categories. Awards included five Gold Keys for individual works and two Silver Keys for a student’s entire writing portfolio.

## WRITING

### Gold Key

- Isaiah G. '24 - Journalism
- Devra G. '25 - Humor
- Asa K. '22 - Personal Essay
- Carter S. '22 - Humor

### Silver Key

- Noa B. '22 - Poetry
- Chrissy C. '23 - Critical Essay
- Mac F. '22 - Personal Essay
- Isaiah G. '24 - three Critical Essays & one Journalism piece
- Sydney H. '23 - Personal Essay
- Oluwakemi I. '22 - Personal Essay
- Basant K. '24 - Personal Essay
- Amelia L. '24 - Personal Essay
- Anne M. '24 - Personal Essay
- Madden N. '24 - Poetry
- Chloe-Marie P. '22 - Critical Essay
- Lane R. '23 - Critical Essay

### Honorable Mention

- Siena B. '22 - Personal Essay
- Noa B. '22 - two Personal Essays
- Molly C. '25 - Short Story
- Devra G. '25 - Flash Fiction, Short Story
- Joseph G. '22 - Personal Essay
- Oluwakemi I. '22 - Personal Essay
- Avi K. '24 - Critical Essay

- Asa K. '22 - Short Story, Personal Essay
- Sarah K. '24 - two Personal Essays
- Michael M. '23 - Personal Essay
- Samantha R. '22 - Personal Essay
- Oskar R. '23 - Science Fiction/Fantasy
- Jude T. '23 - Critical Essay
- Charlie U. '24 - Personal Essay

## WRITING PORTFOLIO

### Silver Key

- Noa B. '22
- Asa K. '22

## ART

### Gold Key

- Ella D. '23 - Drawing & Illustration

### Silver Key

- Jacob B. '23 - Sculpture
- Talin S. '22 - Photography

### Honorable Mention

- Isaiah G. '24 - Mixed Media
- Michael M. '23 - Photography
- Madden N. '24 - Painting
- Zoe P. '22 - two Paintings
- Talin S. '22 - two Photographs

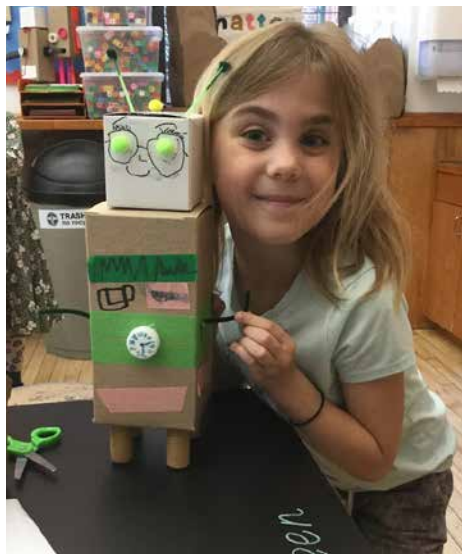




# EVERY WEEK IS JOYFUL AT THE LOWER SCHOOL

Where every student builds a strong educational  
foundation for their future.





At the Lower School, we know that the academic, social, emotional, and physical development of young children has a direct effect on the adults that they will become. By providing our youngest learners with a joyful schooling experience that includes a curriculum which not only builds skills, but also connects to the big ideas of identity and humanity and challenges students to think within and beyond themselves, we are investing in their future. We know that these experiences will prepare our children for not only being out in the world, but also to *change it for the better*. Essentially, life at the Lower School is the foundation for all that is to come.

#### CREATING THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

“Community” is at the center of Lower School life. Faculty use several research-based approaches to develop community and a sense of belonging for ALL. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) are integrated throughout every part of a child’s experience.

Our anti-bias approach frames diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging work. It is infused in all aspects of a student’s life at the Lower School and is foundational to our mission of preparing our students for a life of critical, ethical, and global thinking.

Read-alouds, where students hear and see the narrative around sophisticated topics related to their own identity and the identity of others, are powerful tools for learning.

Another approach used at the Lower School is Responsive Classroom, which includes ways of thinking about how we go about being in a community. We ask ourselves questions like, “How am I responsible for my and others’ learning? What’s my impact on those around me? How do I navigate being part of a group?”

We also use tools and practices from Yale University’s Center of Emotional Intelligence. One is RULER, which identifies the five skills of social-emotional intelligence, expands our understanding of emotions, explores their role, and ultimately enables children to better regulate them.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY (HINT: IT’S NOT “JUST” PLAY)

Play allows a child to learn the skills of problem solving, negotiation, sharing, and working within groups. Children practice decision-making skills, move at their own pace, and discover their own interests during play. They also “try things out” in a less structured setting or activity. At times this means learning from mistakes and those of others. With great intention play is included throughout the entire Lower School, not just at Yard (recess), but in all learning environments and grade levels.



## MATH

Math is foundational to a student's experience at and well beyond Lower School. The primary objective is to inspire students, through all messaging around math, to think about the identity associated with being a mathematician. We aspire toward every child leaving the Lower School confidently saying, "I AM a mathematician!"

Mathematics programming is grounded in developing deep conceptual understanding and computational fluency. At the Lower School this means using routines, games, and math talks throughout the day (not just during Math Workshop) and integrating math across subject matter to promote learning.

Math instruction looks very different than it did many years ago! Yes, getting the right answer is still important. However, equally important is building concept knowledge using multiple approaches to solving a problem. We have moved away from "replicating" an algorithm over and over again and toward "discovering" them! Students also learn that different people have different ways of thinking and that some strategies are more efficient than others.

## READING & WRITING

Literacy is woven through every aspect of the curriculum. It begins with a solid foundation in letters and sounds. Our multisensory phonics program, Foundations®, focuses on letter formation and handwriting, phonics, word and sentence structure, and ultimately reading as a way of understanding language.

Then, in Readers and Writers Workshops, students develop grade-appropriate skills at their level through whole group, small group, and one-to-one instruction. Through the lens of equity, we view the workshop model as a way of providing *individual students with what they need, when they need it*. Additionally, privileging student voice and choice are important aspects of our literacy programming.

## SOCIAL STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The Lower School Social Studies curriculum focuses very early on identity and community. We think first about what it means to be an individual, and then increase student awareness of ever-widening circles outside of themselves.

Older Lower School students have research classes, where they learn about the power and responsibility of research, taking notes, citing sources, understanding and curating resources, and understanding the biases within them. As classes research topics related to our own country's history, they think about what it means that not everyone's story can be easily located in the resources available to us. They learn to ask whose viewpoint is being represented and whose is being left out.

## SO MANY SPECIALS!

Specials are a very important part of a Lower School student's experience—aquatics, dance, library and research, music, physical education, science, Spanish, STEAM, and visual arts. In these areas, so many children get to shine in new ways.

It's exciting to see kids who thrive in art, dance, or music where they express themselves in different ways than in the classroom. There are students who love to build who live for that 1st grade STEAM class, and budding scientists who can't wait to learn how to properly use a microscope. Young swimmers and athletes are supported in bravely developing their skills in the pool and Athletic Center. Our multiple libraries give students developmentally appropriate literary spaces to explore their interests. Lower School Spanish teachers integrate DEI, SEL, and hands-on projects throughout the learning of language and culture, making the experiences meaningful and joyful.







## GETTING TO KNOW DR. STEPHEN MAK, ASSISTANT HEAD OF SCHOOL FOR PROGRAM AND INNOVATION

*A gifted and successful leader in curriculum development and pedagogical methodology, Dr. Mak comes to us from the Spence School, where he has served as Head of the Middle and High School History Department, and before that, the Dalton School, where he was an acclaimed educator.*

### **What excites you most about working at Berkeley Carroll and the BC community?**

Though there are many notable New York City independent schools, I am especially drawn to Berkeley Carroll because of the strength of the community it attracts and its visionary leadership. At conferences and workshops, I have met many resourceful BC educators who have demonstrated a deep commitment to the craft of teaching and learning. The School's administrative team, led by Head of School Dr. Lisa Yvette Waller, has done an extraordinary job steering the community through challenging times, and as a result, BC is well poised to think boldly about the future of education. I am excited to be a part of this new chapter!

### **Tell me about your teaching background and the positions you've held in education.**

Teaching is at the heart of what I do. I have taught history to students in Grades 6 to 12, as well as to undergraduates and continuing education adults at Northwestern University, where I earned a doctorate in history. I have had the good fortune of working at three strong independent schools—the Latin School of Chicago, the Dalton School, and the Spence School—and I hope to bring insights from each experience to Berkeley Carroll. At Latin, for example, we foregrounded an interdisciplinary approach to teaching and learning, and at Dalton, we emphasized a global perspective. Most recently as the Middle and Upper School History Department Head at Spence, I led a team of educators in aligning our curriculum across divisions based on a set of shared values, and that's something I'll be doing at BC.

### **What experience from your time as a history teacher do you think will help you most in this new role?**

As a history teacher, my job was to help others to understand how and why things came to be, and to analyze change and continuity over time. An important part of my new role as Assistant Head of School for Program and Innovation is to work with educators to understand what has come before, where we are today, and what's possible tomorrow and in the years ahead.

### **What made you want to move from the classroom to an administrative position?**

The short answer is that I am not leaving the classroom! I'll be teaching a history class at BC. The long answer is that everything we do as educators—no matter our role—is in

service of student learning. Teaching in the classroom helps me to understand what that experience is like for both students and teachers. I take great responsibility in stepping into a leadership role and do so with humility. My goal is to cultivate trusting relationships with colleagues so that we can help BC to reach its next level of good.

### **What can educators and administrators do to make schools diverse, equitable, and inclusive for all students?**

Schools and work teams are stronger when diversity, equity, and inclusion are central to their framing of questions, problems, and solutions. I think that we can each do our part to recognize differences in power as we respond to a simple and powerful question: how should we live together? Deliberating on that question is critical to promoting a vibrant civic life.

### **Tell us about your research on foreign relations and immigration history. How does that work inform your work as a teacher and administrator?**

That was long ago, yet still relevant! My dissertation examined the experience of thousands of Japanese, Germans, and Italians who were deported from Latin America and interned in the United States during World War II. Researching the records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, I learned that these internees articulated their rights in an international human rights framework, which differed from Japanese Americans, who had little recourse under the United States Constitution.

In retrospect, by exploring the tension between civil and human rights, I did a lot of critical, ethical, and global thinking. I also developed many transferable skills, including long-term project management. Most recently, I completed two big projects: writing a high school history racial literacy curriculum and leading the Spence School NYSAIS Accreditation.

### **What are some of your goals for your first year at Berkeley Carroll?**

I plan to really get to know the school by speaking with members of the community, attending classes, practices, performances, and games. I plan to do a lot of listening, and I'll probably be asking a lot of questions!

### **What are your favorite hobbies and things to do when you're out of school?**

I spend a lot of time with my extended family, which is a part of the Asian diaspora. My partner Jeff and I like to swim and play tennis, and we have parents, siblings, cousins, and niblings who live all over the country and the world (Nibling, a former seventh-grade advisee informed me, is a gender-neutral term to refer to a child of one's sibling). I am always learning, both in and outside of school!





## BC lens

### Through the Decades

Middle Schoolers dressed up in the fashion of a different time period—beginning in the 1930s and going all the way into the future—each day during Decades Week in April. They rocked poodle skirts, band T-shirts swiped from parents, and authentic vintage clothes!



A photograph of a wooden staircase with a red fire alarm system on the wall. The staircase has a wooden handrail and balustrade. The wall is white, and there are red pipes and a fire alarm control panel visible. A red fire extinguisher is also visible on the wall. The image is split diagonally, with the top right portion being white and the bottom left portion being a solid red color.

# THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED:

## BC Alums Blaze Their Own Career Paths

Our school mission famously states that Berkeley Carroll prepares “our diverse graduates for success in college and for the greater endeavor—a life of critical, ethical, and global thinking.” *BC Magazine* checked in with 14 graduates from across the decades who are finding success and fulfillment in the various stages of their careers by following their heart and their interests. We asked them to reflect on their work experiences and how, in retrospect, the school prepared them for navigating an ever-changing world of work.





“I love the fact that my designs will impact millions of users.”

## ANA CHAVEZ '14

### UX Design Apprentice at Google Finance

Brandeis University '18

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** At first, I wanted to become a lawyer. The profession is conventional, prestigious, and admirable. As the daughter of Dominican immigrants, I wanted to make my parents proud. Brandeis University is known for social justice, and I majored in sociology because I thought I wanted to go to law school. After college, I was a paralegal for about a year and I realized that the legal field did not align with my strengths. I decided to consult a career coach and through various assessments, he was able to recommend a list of careers that would best suit me.

One of the careers recommended to me was UX design. I did some research and it seemed so interesting. I knew that I always wanted to do something creative and it felt like the perfect career for me. After that, I enrolled in a UX UI design certification program at Columbia University through Trilogy. I was able to learn the basics and build a foundation in UX design before landing my apprenticeship at Google.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** I remember Berkeley Carroll was strong in history and English, which is why I wanted to major in humanities in college. Berkeley Carroll gave me a good foundation to do academically well at Brandeis. I felt confident writing essays because of my education at Berkeley Carroll.

UX design is indirectly similar to sociology because part of the UX design process is to conduct user research, which can involve doing interviews, analyzing user feedback, conducting an analysis on competitors, and reviewing prior research. As a sociology major at Brandeis, I used critical thinking skills to analyze societal structures, and now I am using critical thinking skills to conduct research to come up with design solutions for a better user experience.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** I love the fact that my designs will impact millions of users. I also like the fact that I contribute to the design community at Google and designers will use my work in the future to help them in their design process.

**Q: What does your work look like day to day? What's a typical workday like?**

**A:** My day to day depends on where I am in the UX design process. When I have a project, I start with doing some background research and draw up some sketches. Then I create some designs using a program called Figma. I also meet with other designers to receive feedback, and iterate on my designs. At the end, I usually have to present my design process to the Google Finance team.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** My biggest challenge was breaking into UX design. As a college student, I was unaware of this career and I only knew of traditional careers such as becoming a lawyer, teacher, or doctor. When I wanted to transition into UX design, I was discouraged by many because I did not have the background or the experience. I was told that I was limited by my major and that I could only be a teacher or a social worker. I was also told that it would be hard because my paralegal experience was very different from UX design. However, I was determined to break into UX design despite what others told me.

**Q: What are the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

**A:** So far I have learned to not be afraid to ask questions. When I first started at Google Finance, I was new to UX design and finance, and had a very big learning curve, but by asking questions I was able to understand finance and the UX design process while contributing to my UX team.

**Q: How do people react when you tell them what you do?**

**A:** “Wow, it is so cool that you work at Google! Do you get free food?”



# VIRGINIA (SHUFORD) FREIRE '94

Portrait Photographer and Owner at Virginia Freire Portrait Photography  
Cornell University '98

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** In college I studied child psychology. My portrait photography studio is based on the unique stories of every individual and family. My psychology background prepared me to work with people—children and their parents—and to listen to their stories, reflect on their legacies, and help them feel comfortable throughout the entire portrait experience.

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** I received my first SLR camera when I graduated from Berkeley Carroll. I started photographing my travels and the people I met along the way when I was in college.

While I was dabbling in photography on the side, I worked in social work with sick children in New York City, I worked at Channel 13 in its editorial department (which overlapped with its photography department), I conducted research at a university in Australia and received a grant to organize photography programs for people with special needs, and I worked at a nonprofit in international education before moving to Ecuador.

Each of these jobs connected me to people and their stories, often with a camera in tow documenting programs and relationships. The move to Ecuador provided me with the opportunity to start from scratch—I moved for personal reasons not related to my work, and it opened a door for me to really lean into photography as a career. It was there that I developed a portfolio and started to conceive of the type of photography business I wanted to build.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** Berkeley Carroll provided the foundation for everything that followed my primary education. It set me up to succeed in college and in a diverse array of jobs following graduation that combined my passion for photography and my love for people.

I will forever be grateful to a BC alumnus and incredible photographer and human being, Brian Doben '91. At a time when most photographers I approached were not interested in talking to a novice, Brian invited me to assist him on several occasions in his commercial photography work.

It took me some time to find my way back to BC after

graduating—like years—because if I am being honest, spending most of one's life in a small school can have its challenges. I believe it was a memorial service for a beloved teacher, Mr. Martin, that ultimately brought me back and helped me reconnect with an old friend who encouraged me to get involved in what was the Alumni Council at the time.

When I considered that opportunity, and several years later the invitation to join the Board of Trustees as an alum, I reflected on two things: one, that BC had provided me with the foundations for many of the things that came next in my academic and early professional life, and two, that serving on the Board of Trustees would give me an opportunity to be a part of stewarding the future of the school in a direction that I could be proud of.

**Q: What drives your work?**

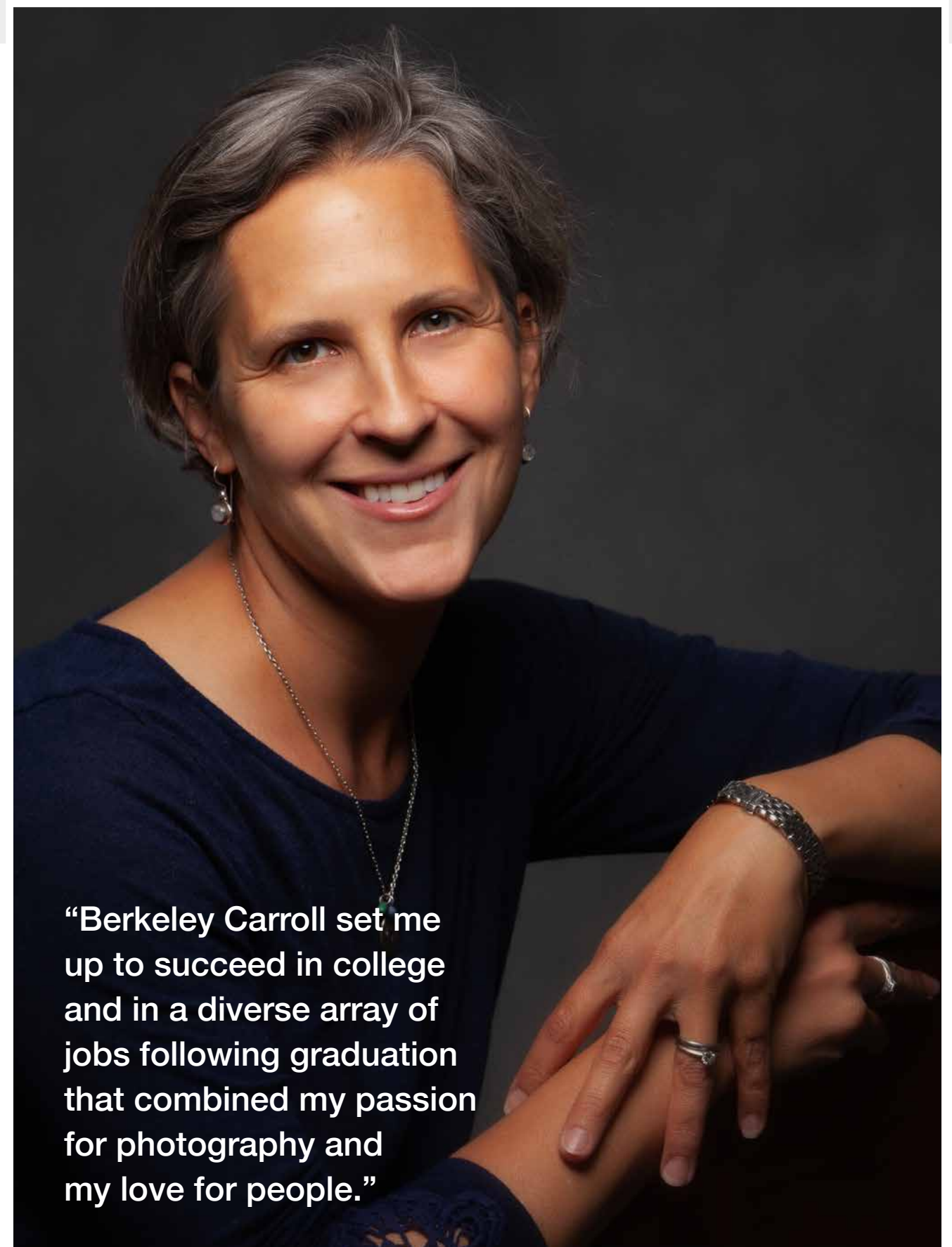
**A:** In our day-to-day lives, we often get so busy, or frustrated, or tired, that we forget to stop and just look at our family. We cannot see the people and the beauty through all of the chaos and turmoil. In my work, I have the enormous privilege of helping my clients look at their own loved ones as observers, realizing how much joy and love and warmth we have in our lives. It is a gift to be able to slow down and take a moment to create a portrait that truly embraces and celebrates the essence of your child, your partner, your family, and even yourself.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** Having children has forced me to figure out how best to balance work and family. When your business is like another part of you or another child, it becomes very difficult to put things on hold while you dedicate time to having and raising children.

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

**A:** I am most proud of having become a professional photographic portrait artist and building my own studio—to have built a successful and profitable career as an artist. I have photographed children from babies to college and beyond, through challenges and celebrations, and I hold these people so dear and am so grateful to have been welcomed into the lives of so many wonderful HUMAN BEINGS.



“Berkeley Carroll set me up to succeed in college and in a diverse array of jobs following graduation that combined my passion for photography and my love for people.”





“Going forward I’d like to try something more entrepreneurial in real estate. Unlike many other industries, real estate has not yet fully been disrupted by technology.”

## GARRETT COLLINS '16

Acquisitions Analyst at Angelo Gordon  
Dartmouth College '20

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** I was exposed to the real estate business and idea of homeownership from a young age and always found it to be fascinating how one’s home and community fit within larger societal patterns. In college, I was afforded the opportunity to do an off-cycle internship at a Vornado, a New York City-based REIT (real estate investment trust) whose CEO and chairman was a Dartmouth alum. I found the work to be exciting, fast paced, and multifaceted. I then pursued other internships within the financial sector, but real estate always stood out to me.

I began at Starwood Capital Group, a real estate private equity firm, immediately after college, where I worked on the acquisitions team and had national coverage. I left Starwood a little over one year ago for Angelo Gordon, a real estate and credit private equity firm, where I have a very similar role.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** While my firm is not entirely devoted to development, our investment mandate seeks value-add to opportunistic returns. Thus, we do pursue some development opportunities. One of our target asset classes as of late has been multifamily. This allows us to pursue multifamily development, which is so critical at this juncture where new housing supply is not meeting demand and making renting/owning unaffordable for a vast portion of the population. Creating additional housing supply is critical to alleviating the current affordability crisis and I’m happy to do my part in funding new housing projects.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** The real estate industry still very much has inroads to make in terms of diversity. Women, people of color, and members of the LGBTQ+ community are highly under-represented, but I do my part to mentor those who identify as such and make them feel welcome in my company/industry.

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

**A:** COVID began in my senior year of college and at the time I was supposed to begin work after school in L.A. for

a brokerage firm. Because of the societal disruptions and economic uncertainty at the time, the company decided to push back my job start to an indefinite date, which was something I was not comfortable with. During that time, I reached out to all of my connections in the field asking how I could stay active in the field while not having a full-time job, and how I could potentially help them.

One of those people was BC alumni parent Mary-Anne Gilmartin, who offered me the opportunity to intern at her development firm. It was such a great experience to work with a leader in the industry whose values are so aligned with my own. During my internship, I also interviewed aggressively for full-time opportunities. I was fortunate to receive a full-time position at Starwood Capital, one of the largest real estate investors in the world. This was a huge feat for me because in a moment of deep uncertainty, I was able to create two great experiences for myself. It was great to see the hard work pay off.

**Q: What would your “high school self” think if they could know what you’re doing in your career today?**

**A:** I think I’d be proud to see how far I’ve come. I very much had an image of myself within high school as someone who’d be capable of the work I do now and would have reached out to them for mentorship. So it feels good to be at that point.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** Going forward, I’d like to try something more entrepreneurial in real estate. Unlike many other industries, real estate has not yet fully been disrupted by technology. In addition, it is the largest emitter of carbon dioxide. I think there are some very interesting opportunities that lie ahead. I’d definitely like to be running my own company some day.



# MEGAN DINNERSTEIN '10

Owner of [CameliaBridal.com](https://www.cameliabridal.com) Boutique and Customer Experience Agent  
Barnard/Columbia'14

**Q: What did you study in college? How does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** I majored in American Studies with a focus on race, and minored in dance, so my studies don't directly relate to what I'm doing now. However, they did open my eyes to what makes American society the way that it is today and helped me see behind the smoke and mirrors that we have to navigate. People, relationships, beauty, love—these things might not seem “important” in a capitalist, post-colonial society, but they are the most important things! Focusing now on helping women look and feel comfortable and confident in their own skin, whether that's to go to work or for their wedding day, feels important to me in a country designed to make us uncomfortable.

**Q: Tell us about your career path.**

**A:** I started working in childcare very young, had a few internships in various fields, then moved to waiting tables. I was always working to serve people, whether babies or bar patrons, but I wasn't sure how I wanted to use those skills for my “adult” career. I was always interested in fashion and bridal fashion, so I got hired at a bridal store going from front desk concierge to stylist to assistant operations manager. I loved working with brides and loved the dresses just as much, so when the store went out of business owing to the pandemic, I knew I had to keep my momentum going! I started my own online bridal boutique and have had a few, very fun pop-up appearances, with more to come! I'm just getting started and it hasn't been easy, but being a part of such a special day for brides is worth it. I also do customer service and social media work full time for an amazing LA-based shapewear company, Honeylove, where I get to work with brides every day, virtually, too!

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your career?**

**A:** It was so important! Berkeley Carroll encouraged us to be curious, empathetic, to listen, and to try to understand people who are different from us upon first glance. These skills are crucial for any customer or client-facing jobs! BC also encouraged my artistic and creative interests by always offering visual art and performing arts classes and extra-curricular activities, so I feel like I had a leg up on learning to design dresses and doing creative social media posts and visual branding for my business.

**Q: Biggest career challenges?**

**A:** Not having funding or even much guidance for my personal business has been a challenge! I wanted to start this without loans, investors, or anything like that so I could take my time and keep creative control for the moment. Reaching out for help and not being afraid to make mistakes (even big ones) is hard, but I'm working on it!

**Q: Most important career lessons?**

**A:** Being open to the opportunities and possibilities that come your way is essential! And, most importantly, that my version of success doesn't have to look like someone else's! We're all on our own timelines.

**Q: Career accomplishments you are most proud of?**

**A:** Pivoting into bridal with no fashion experience—it was a risk for my previous employers to hire me, but I gave it 100% and it paid off for all of us! And my business has been featured in the UK editions of *Vogue* and *GQ* magazines.

**Q: Advice for someone who's trying to figure out the career they want to have?**

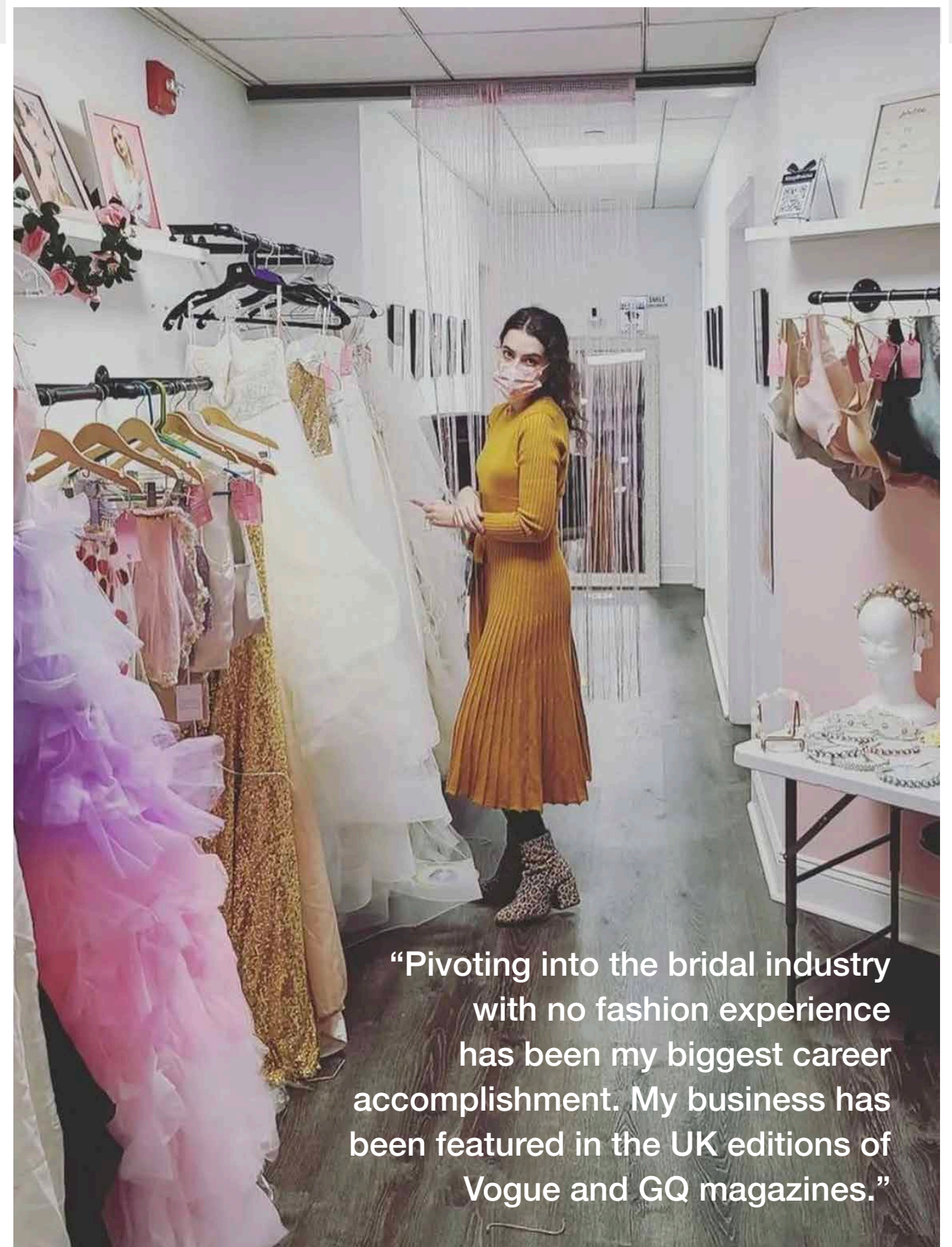
**A:** Try out anything that sounds remotely interesting to you, with internships, entry level jobs, jobs in a company you like but maybe not the department you're excited about—just do it. The idea of things is very different from the reality of things, so the sooner you can feel the reality, the better! You can move on from something easier and check it off the list once you've been there and done that, even just a little bit.

**Q: What would your “high school self” think if they could know what you're doing in your career today?**

**A:** I would be pleasantly surprised! I was obsessed with the TLC show *Say Yes to the Dress* and loved wedding dresses my whole life, so I'd probably be very excited for myself that I've gotten to personally try on so many dresses most of all.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** I just signed a lease on my first brick-and-mortar boutique space in Phoenix, Arizona, so my goal is to be up and running in January, 2023. I would also like to offer my own dress designs for order at other boutiques in the near future at *Bridal Fashion Week*!



“Pivoting into the bridal industry with no fashion experience has been my biggest career accomplishment. My business has been featured in the UK editions of *Vogue* and *GQ* magazines.”





“I cannot justly describe my gratitude for the teachers I had at Berkeley Carroll. Their compassion and trust shaped who I am and what I can do today.”

## CAL GOODIN '15

Senior Policy Analyst for Cultural Resources and Government Affairs at the National Parks Conservation Association  
Ithaca College '19

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** I majored in documentary studies and production, with minors in Spanish and women's and gender studies. The minors are pretty self-explanatory, but the major I feel is just a fancy way of saying I majored in interviewing people (and I can also work Adobe Premiere if needed). There are no cameras or microphones at my current job (at least not in my department). But I still use the skills I learned in college every day. Today, my work centers on advocating for national parks—advocating that they tell a wider berth of stories, that they are accessible to all, and that the people who manage them have what they need to continue doing their inspiring work.

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** My career path has been weird and winding. Through college I worked at a community radio station, for the *Advocate* magazine, an e-sports company, my campus' LGBT+ Community Center—I tried a lot of different things. One day at the community center, my boss suggested we make a walking tour about LGBTQ+ history in Ithaca. I shared with him that I made an LGBTQ+ history walking tour about Stonewall for American Studies at BC. He was excited, and with the help of a few other extremely talented people, we made our virtual/in-person tour.

I graduated in May 2019, and began the daunting, arduous, miserable journey of job hunting. I felt so distraught by the onslaught of Not-Hearing-Back-From Anywhere-I-Applied that I started trying for anything—I even applied to work in a cheese cave. In November, I learned that NPCA was looking for someone to, among other things, assist with their LGBTQ+ history walking tour of Stonewall. Through a series of strange events, my 12-week internship went on for a year. I learned about the integral role the National Park Service (NPS) plays in historic preservation, and did what I could to have this center my work!

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** I cannot justly describe my gratitude for the teachers I had at Berkeley Carroll. Their compassion and trust shaped

who I am and what I can do today. They trusted that I (as well as my classmates) could handle complex ideas. They encouraged us to make academia interesting, and believed in our ability to conduct independent research. The school also encouraged my writing and my sense of humor—two things that I feel have been essential to everything I've done.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** Whether I am working one on one with a first grader who's trying to remember the words to “Head Shoulders Knees and Toes” in Spanish, or advocating for policy that will allow National Parks to sustainably preserve and share inclusive American stories, I am driven by a desire to make a difference. As cliched and naive as that may be, I just feel like the world can be a scary and cruel place; and while I can't fix everything, I can try my best to make it a little better.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** Truthfully, dealing with my mental health has been the biggest challenge in my career. With the help of friends, family, an excellent therapist, and medication, I try my best to keep myself grounded and free from my own judgments. An incredibly supportive work environment helps quite a bit, too!

**Q: What are some of the most common questions you get asked about your job?**

**A:** “Do you get to wear those fun hats?” which is in reference to the flat hats that complete a park ranger's uniform. This fun little question (which I sadly must answer with “no”) highlights the biggest misconception folks have with my work. I do not work for the government—rather, I work for a nonprofit that advocates on behalf of the parks the government manages and protects.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who doesn't know what kind of career they want to have?**

**A:** I'd say: try a lot of things, apply to things you don't feel totally qualified for, don't stick with something just because you feel like you have to, and be as kind to yourself along the way as you can be. And if you can, please don't take unpaid internships after college. You deserve to be compensated for your labor.



# REV. DR. KENNETH G. SIMURRO JR. '75 (HONORARY GRADUATE)

Interim Pastor and Dean

New York University '79, Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia M.Div '83 D.Min '08

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** This was mostly a wild wilderness walk through what could be best described as chaos. My original goal was a 40-year career in the ordained ministry as a parish pastor. This did not happen, as institutional white supremacy made that straight-arrow journey impossible. My interracial marriage to an African American, coupled with a burning commitment to being an active anti-racist cost me dearly. Having to leave the country to begin ministry caused more than a little damage to my fiscal security.

After becoming a catalyst in community development in Newark, N.J., my bishop and I clashed on virtually every issue. He asked for my resignation after a particularly pernicious clash (I refused), and this led to a change in career trajectory into teaching chemistry in the NYC school system. Simultaneously holding down a part-time parish and a full-time teaching position, I obtained my doctorate and completed my instructional career after almost 20 years.

My wife and I moved to upstate New York in our retirement, and I transitioned to a part-time parish and deanship of four counties of Lutheran congregations with a position on the bishop's staff. Currently, I have taken an interim pastorate in an ecumenical position with two Presbyterian congregations as my ministerial work winds down to retirement after 39 years.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** The old Berkeley Institute taught me discipline, prepared me for the rigors of academia, and opened me to a lifelong love of learning, inquiry, and curiosity.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** A deep, expansive, and abiding faith in God. My faith commitments as response to God's acceptance of me (grace) have guided me into a lifelong arc of responses against the white supremacist worldview/institutional racism. Justice work, organization, and activism, and their required skills have occupied my time and energy and guided my path.

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

**A:** Building congregations and community organizations. Nurturing relationships and helping the classroom

environment develop young people to perform to their capacity. In this realm, several former students have adopted my wife and I as extensions of their biological families as we have mentored them, been present for major transitions in their lives, and supported them to excel beyond what they initially dreamed. Finally, I am most grateful to remain militant in spite of enormous and intractable challenges.

**Q: How do people react when you tell them what you do?**

**A:** The exterior package I present often causes cognitive dissonance when others encounter me and the opened eyes and wide-open mouth following discussion is a common response to the chasm between pre-judgment of me based on appearance (I wear clerical attire) and what I say and do.

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** Many think I serve only for an hour on Sundays. What is not understood is the preparation for that hour; normally about eight hours is required. Administration of the parish requires additional hours as does pastoral care, visitations, pastoral counseling, education, and ecumenical relationships. These in no way count additional time spent in work with other congregations, their pastors, and bishop-level teamwork statewide. Further, work with anti-racist organizations such as the NAACP, Racial Justice Task Force, and community organizing burns hours too. At 65, it is advantageous to use hours wisely as the body ages.

**Q: What would your "high school self" think if they could know what you're doing in your career today?**

**A:** My 16-year-old self would want to know how I got to where I am. The journey has always been more important to me than the goal. Having said that, if I could speak to who I was 50 years ago, I would likely be a cautionary tale.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** To complete my ministry and fully retire to spend more quality hours with my wife. Having collected documents for decades, my retirement writing goal is to publish a sobering/scathing tell-all, three-volume documentary on ministry in my context and the damage done to communities of color by the, arguably, whitest Christian denomination in America.



“My faith commitments as a response to God’s acceptance of me (grace) have guided me into a lifelong arc of responses against the white supremacist worldview and institutional racism.”





**“It’s important not only to work hard, but to get in touch with why you’re doing what you do. The world needs so much more joy and understanding. That’s my ‘why’.”**

## NIKARA WARREN '06

**Musician/Educator/Composer**

**Berklee College of Music '10**

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you’re doing now?**

**A:** I studied music business/management at Berklee. I’m very thankful that I was educated in reading contracts, and understanding publishing and record label deals. That knowledge has definitely assisted me in decision-making when it comes to my performance career.

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** I’ve always loved music. I grew up in a house with my grandparents and my mother. My grandfather is a jazz musician named Kenny Barron, and I often would attend his gigs and concerts as a small child. When I got to BC in middle school, I felt I knew the music well, so I tried out for Jazz Band as a percussionist and pianist.

When the school purchased a vibraphone, my grandfather was playing with the vibraphonist Stefon Harris. I knew I was hooked, but opted for what I was told was a more practical option: to work in the music industry.

After completing Berklee College of Music, I landed an internship at a publishing company called Warner/Chappell. I later began a position with Sony Music in the copyright department. The nine-to-five office lifestyle wasn’t for me and I deeply missed the constant connection to live music I’d had from birth through college.

I left my job at Sony and began taking odd jobs to teach myself anything I could learn musically. My compositions landed me a spot in the Betty Carter Jazz Ahead program in Washington, D.C. This was a high-level composition and playing program that truly thrust me deeper into what I knew I wanted to do. Through playing vibraphone for other musicians, and continuing to write my own music, I quickly realized how much I had to say and that all the music I’d written wouldn’t do anyone any good sitting in a drawer.

After the murder of George Floyd, I was compelled to create a musical project that would highlight a wide span of Black music and celebrate the beauty in the diversity of all humans. When I learned of the Black Wall Street massacre, I couldn’t believe that it wasn’t common US history knowledge. I named the repertoire the “Black Wall

Street” collection to raise awareness of the event, and to highlight the strength and resilience of a people through music. Eventually people began to call the band Black Wall Street. In November 2021, I released *NIKARA Presents Black Wall Street* and we have been performing the album ever since.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** I attended BC when Adam Bernstein was directing the Jazz Band. He was truly an incredible band director and I attribute much of my ability to succeed musically in college to him. I also learned lots about group dynamics through being a peer leader. Marlene Clary was leading the program at the time and she was instrumental in helping me identify both positive and tough emotions in myself and others.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** I’m driven by all life experiences. I’m very driven by my experience as a Black human. I’m driven by my womanhood. I’m also driven by the space between poverty and affluence. Living somewhere like Brooklyn, it seems as if that line can be very thin, but difficult to break through. I’m likely mostly driven by love.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** It’s important not only to work hard, but to get in touch with why you’re doing what you do. You have to know that the “why am I doing this” question will pop up. And sometimes you’ll have to remind yourself of the answer. The world needs so much more joy and understanding. That’s my “why.”

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

**A:** Black Wall Street being included in music festival lineups less than a year after album release. Playing on Solange’s composition recording for the New York City Ballet. Being an NYC Women’s Fund for Media Music and Theatre grant recipient. Watching former and current students be accepted into incredible music programs.



# DANIEL ABRAMSON '06

Director of Intergovernmental Affairs & Appointments,  
Office of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso  
Oberlin College '10

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** After graduating from Oberlin, I was fortunate enough to be accepted into the NYC Coro Fellowship in Public Affairs. Coro gave me an introduction to all sectors in NYC (government, private, nonprofit, political, and labor). After Coro, I worked at the homeless services provider The Doe Fund (you may be familiar with them as the men in blue uniforms who clean many streets throughout the city). All throughout, I stayed active in local politics, particularly here in Brooklyn. I joined the Mayor's Office in 2015 and served as the Mayor's Brooklyn borough director in the Community Affairs Unit and later as a senior advisor for Intergovernmental Affairs. In January 2022, I joined the Office of Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso as his director of intergovernmental affairs and appointments. I first met Borough President Reynoso through local organizing back in 2010 and have had the pleasure of supporting him through his rise to City Council and now Borough Hall.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** I believe that attending Berkeley Carroll helped prepare me in many ways for my career in public service. First, it instilled in me a deep appreciation for giving back to the community and helping others. It also was the beginning of my interest in politics and current affairs, which was cultivated at Mr. Swarthout's morning Breakfast Club gatherings.

**Q: What does your work look like day to day? What's a typical workday like?**

**A:** One of the best things about my work is that each day is quite different. As the director of intergovernmental affairs and appointments, I'm regularly liaising with a variety of elected officials, government agencies, community groups, and organizations. It really varies day to day, but it's always interesting and often inspiring.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** Where do I start? I'll just say that careers are not always

linear. I've had plenty of setbacks and plateaus. It's always been with the help of people who believed in me that I was able to take the next step in my career. So as much as you value your skills and expertise, value and cultivate relationships as well. Be there for others when they need mentorship and guidance; always pay it forward.

**Q: What are the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

**A:** It's important to prioritize work-life balance. There have been points in my career where my job was all consuming, 24-7. It's how I picked up the bad habit of sleeping with my phone. But what I've learned is that you can't be a good colleague or effective advocate for the community if you're burnt out. That means you need to get good sleep, have an outlet for exercise and relaxation, and have people in your life who support you and keep you balanced. For me that's my wife Dara, who I was lucky to get married to this April!

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

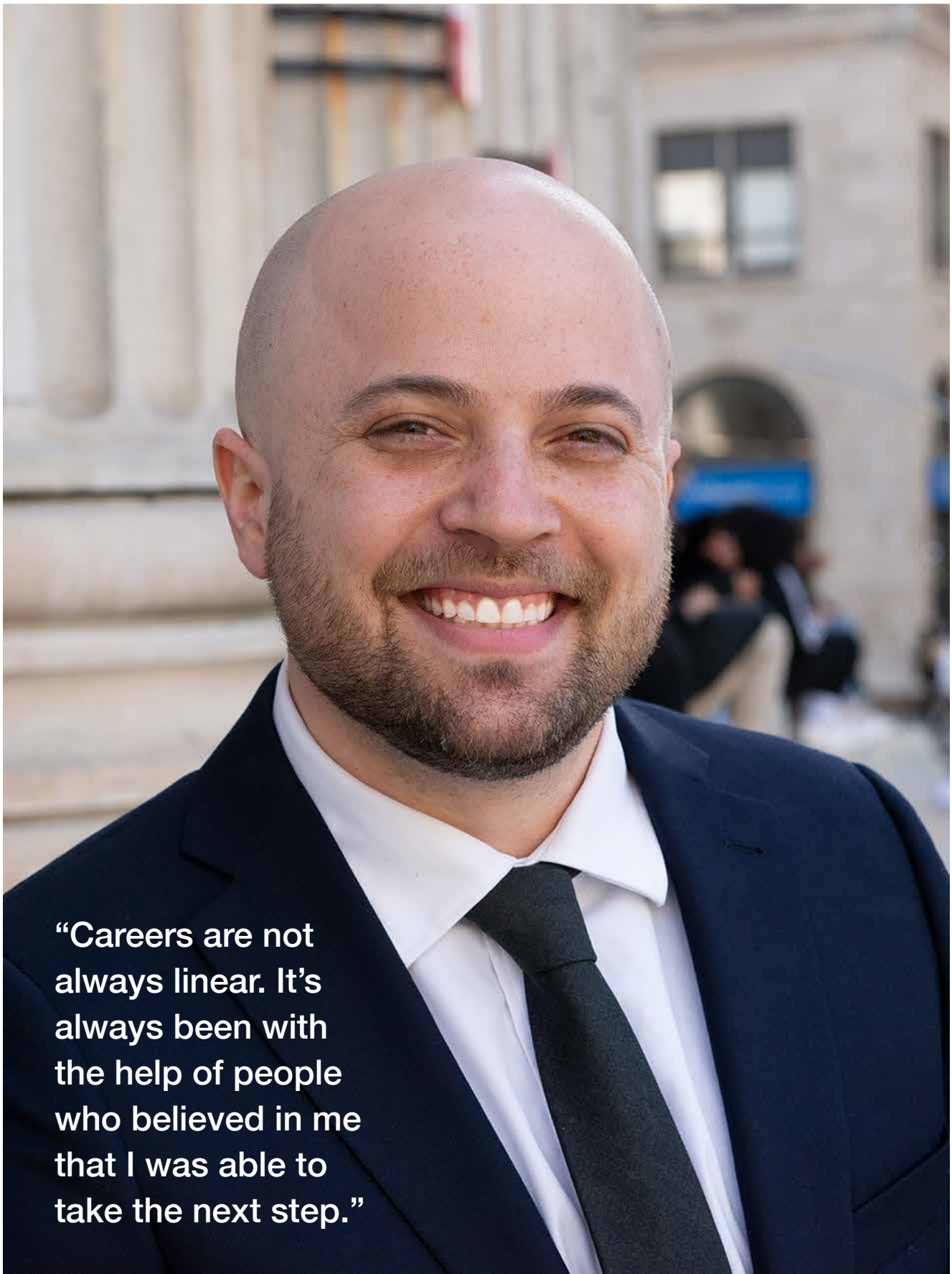
**A:** One of the initiatives I'm proudest to have worked on was the push to renew and expand speed cameras in New York State. While I was at the Mayor's Office, New York State was considering letting speed camera authorization lapse. We fought, in coalition with advocates, to renew and expand the number of speed cameras in New York, which are crucial to fighting traffic violence in our city.

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** That it's like the *West Wing* when it's really more like *Veep* or *Parks & Rec*.

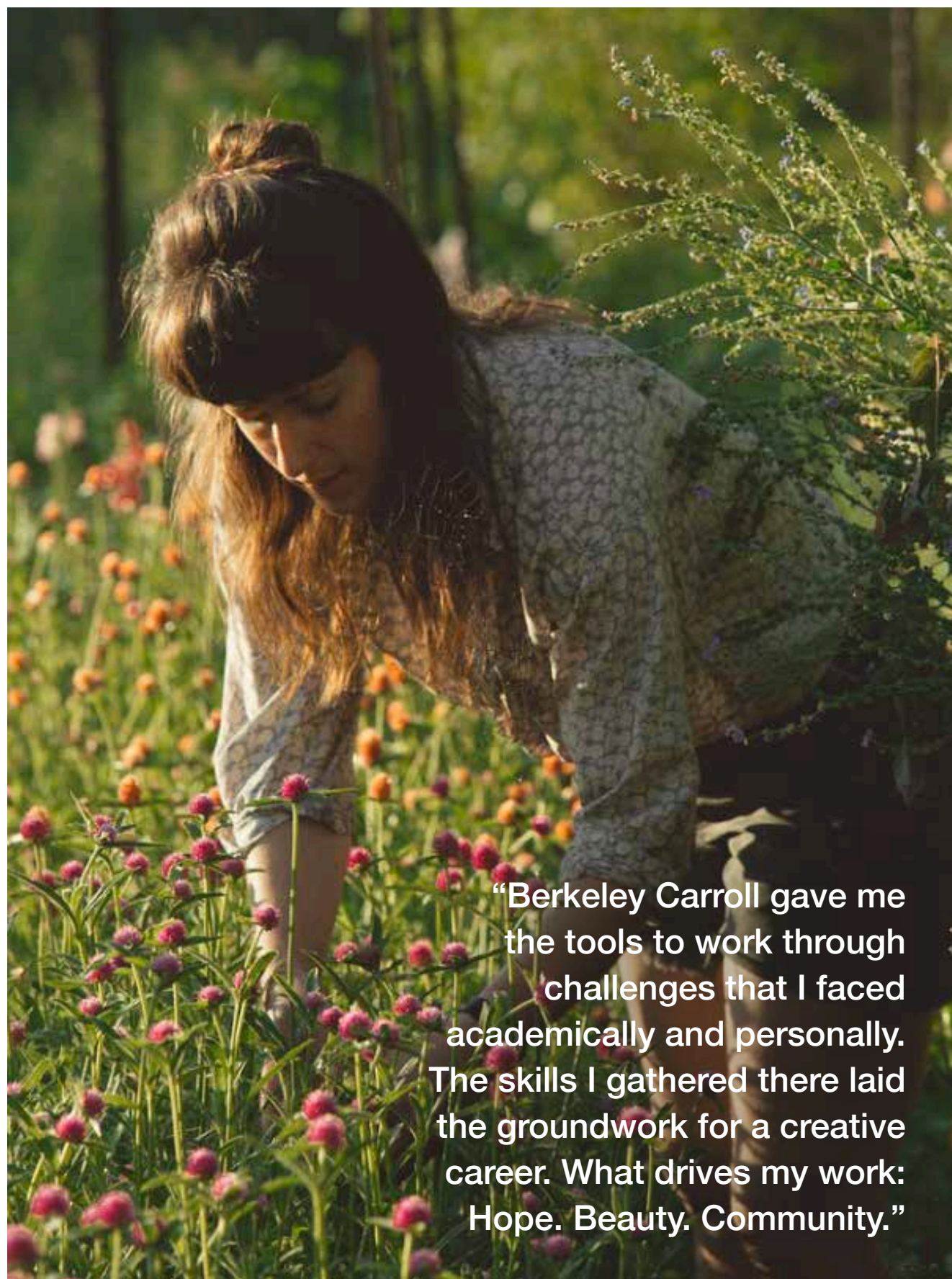
**Q: What would your "high school self" think if they could know what you're doing in your career today?**

**A:** They'd probably ask me why I didn't go into the record business, and I'd tell them about the whole digital music revolution, and how I was won over by Obama's message of hope and change. They might also ask why I no longer wear my hair like the Strokes. Hopefully High School Me would be cool with where I'm at.



“Careers are not always linear. It’s always been with the help of people who believed in me that I was able to take the next step.”





“Berkeley Carroll gave me the tools to work through challenges that I faced academically and personally. The skills I gathered there laid the groundwork for a creative career. What drives my work: Hope. Beauty. Community.”

## KATE FARRAR '08

Farmer Florist at Foxtrot Farm & Flowers

Dickinson College '12

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** I graduated from Dickinson College in 2012 with a degree in English literature (and nearly-completed photography major). Both of my academic interests in college distill down into storytelling—how to either capture or craft a story, a narrative, a voice, a vision. I apply the skills I cultivated in college and high school to market my small business.

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** I approached agriculture through my photography practice. I was taking portraits of farmers as a part of my senior photography project. I found that to take the candid portraits I wanted, I needed to spend time and make myself useful on the farms I was visiting. So I started offering time and assistance here and there, my camera at my side. From there, I fell in love with the tangibility and hope that the work promised every day.

After I graduated, I pursued a year-long vegetable and fruit farm apprenticeship, then my first farm job, and worked my way up to becoming that farm's manager for several years, all the while dreaming of what my own farm would look like. In 2020, my land partner and I found our farmland and I broke ground for Foxtrot in spring of 2021.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** If people ask, I tell them that attending Berkeley Carroll for high school was by far my favorite academic experience. I believe that I feel this way because up until attending BC, school had felt like a place where I was only told the many things I was not good at.

At Berkeley Carroll, I felt that many of the teachers and administrators helped me harness and cultivate my talents to apply them both to subjects that came naturally to me and to subjects that I struggled with. This shift in focus gave me more confidence as a student and human, it opened my eyes to things that were possible for me, and it gave me the tools to work through challenges that I faced academically or personally. I think that the skills

I gathered at Berkeley Carroll laid the groundwork for a creative career.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** Hope. Beauty. Community.

**Q: What does your work look like day to day? What's a typical workday like?**

**A:** My workdays change from day to day. Mondays and Fridays are estate gardening and delivery days. Tuesdays and Wednesdays are full days on the farm. Thursdays are harvest and floral designing days. I am working toward having Saturdays and Sundays off entirely, but the nature of working with living things is that I am on call for their needs. Usually I can limit it to morning farm chores and restocking the farm store. I fit the massive amount of computer work in where I can!

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** Creating a financially viable life in a field of work that is not monetarily valued in our society.

**Q: How do people react when you tell them what you do?**

**A:** People react differently depending on where I am. In the Hudson Valley my career path is pretty standard, but when I come down to NYC more people seem either amazed or bewildered.

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** That running a farm business is just manual labor.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who doesn't know what kind of career they want to have?**

**A:** Explore different parts of yourself, and find something that brings you joy and that you can make work financially. This may require altering expectations of self.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** As the farm becomes more physically established and I can hire someone to help me with the farm work, I hope to expand my florist offerings.



# LUCY CAPPELLO '15

Strategic Volunteerism Coordinator at Hunger Free America  
Emerson College '19

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** Creative nonfiction with a history minor. It definitely taught me how to be a good communicator! My history minor has allowed me to understand socioeconomic complexities in different areas of the country I've served in with AmeriCorps and Nechama.

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** In 2021, still in the thick of the pandemic, I was looking for jobs in my field and felt deeply uninspired by the prospect of sitting in an office (or working from home) doing something that I was not passionate about. I also felt very disappointed with the government's response to the COVID crisis. I could see throughout the city, but especially in my neighborhood in Bushwick, that people were struggling badly.

I found AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps (NCCC) after researching ways I could impact our society directly. I decided to apply, was accepted as a corps member, and was soon promoted to a team leader position. I spent nearly a year traveling with a team to different projects, which ranged from environmental stewardship projects to those that worked to mitigate the damage done by Hurricane Ida.

After serving in AmeriCorps' southern region for 10 months, I was hired by Nechama Jewish Response to Disaster, which I'd worked with in AmeriCorps, to continue supporting its disaster response efforts in the greater New Orleans area as a Team Leader.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** At Berkeley Carroll, I was consistently given the chance to try new things. In high school, I traveled to India, took Arabic classes, and designed my own independent study—things I had never anticipated doing before starting at BC. These experiences taught me that I am capable of much more than I typically give myself credit for, and it is this mindset that has informed the way I lean into new challenges in all aspects of my life today.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** Being able to provide support and tangible aid to those who have been previously denied it.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** I want to continue working in the nonprofit world and making a difference in my community. As long as I am championing a project that means something to me and is supporting those in need, I'll be happy.



“Being able to provide support and tangible aid to those who have been previously denied it is what drives my work.”





“My time at Berkeley Carroll started my interest and desire to solve urban issues.”

## HOLLIS SAVAGE '04

Executive Director of Leveraged Preservation Programs at the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD)

University of Pennsylvania '08

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** Toward the end of college I wasn't sure what I wanted to do professionally, but I enjoyed my urban studies coursework so I decided to enroll in graduate school for more professionally-focused coursework. I knew I wanted to work in cities, but wanted to narrow down exactly how. I discovered affordable housing finance in graduate school and was drawn to the course material and mission.

I graduated during the recession in 2009 and the job market was tight, so I expanded my search to other general city planning areas. Luckily, I wound up securing an internship with a Bed-Stuy nonprofit community development corporation, which was the perfect start to a career in affordable housing.

In 2014, I started at HPD where I had learned through school and my early work experience that NYC/HPD has been a pioneer in the financing of affordable housing. I wanted to be a part of this legacy and to directly underwrite affordable housing loans. I have remained at HPD since developing more responsibility including managing a team, and now a group of five loan/tax exemption programs that average about 5,000 housing units closed in a year.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** A few skills that are important for this job are being able to understand the historical context of a building, financial analysis, and critical thinking, and I think all of these skills were honed at Berkeley Carroll. In addition, I believe the small and discussion-based classroom style at BC gave me the ability to communicate with others and tailor messages for various audiences.

More broadly, I think my experience at Berkeley Carroll highlighted structural inequalities in areas like education and neighborhood amenities compared to where I grew up in Bed-Stuy. I've always wanted to understand why this was and what could be done to help level the playing field. So far in my career I've focused on working through housing inequalities, but my time at BC started my interest and desire to solve urban issues.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** I'm driven by the greater mission to help New Yorkers maintain and have access to safe and good quality housing. I have often encountered buildings that haven't received significant upgrades in years and were neglected by previous owners. A lot of the residents in these types of buildings have very limited choices in finding other housing options that are affordable, so the city's loans are a pretty effective anti-displacement tool and, long term, a way to harness gentrification in transitioning neighborhoods.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** The volume of projects and demand for financing have been a recent challenge. It can be difficult to serve all of the projects we need to address including some with very urgent rehab needs. Also, given rising rents and housing scarcity, it's difficult to completely solve the homeless and housing issues in the city. That can be a bit disheartening when thinking about this globally, but the rehabilitation of one building/project has a meaningful impact on the residents of that building.

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** I think a misconception, or maybe more of a misunderstanding, is how “affordable” affordable housing in NYC really is. There are some high-profile examples of affordable housing buildings marketed with rents and household income ranges that people evaluate as close to market or unaffordable to long-term residents in that particular neighborhood.

This is a fair critique and there is always more work that can be done to make sure affordable housing is truly accessible to communities that need to be served. However, in addition to low rents, we want to make sure that any financed building can meet its expenses long term and afford future capital repairs. So we need to balance financial realities with affordability.



## DARRELL PONA '17

Territory Manager at Eli Lilly  
Yale University '21

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** Throughout high school, I was motivated and inspired by Berkeley Carroll's Science Research and Design program (SRD) to pursue a career in biotechnology. At Yale, I studied biomedical engineering, focusing mostly on biomechanics and biomolecular engineering. As an undergraduate, I worked in labs on campus, studying Alzheimer's, prosthetics, drug delivery, and tissue engineering. After graduating in 2021, I moved to Boston to do global portfolio management for Merck KGaA and then moved back to NYC to work for Eli Lilly, where I was recently promoted to territory manager for a new diabetes medication.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** For one, it made me a lot more confident in my speaking abilities. I chose to attend Berkeley Carroll because of its strength in English and humanities and its electives. As an 8th grader and in high school, teachers challenged me in many ways, especially in math classes and SRD. Projects I participated in during 10th–12th grades, including Spring Intensives, inspired my confidence in my science research and technical lab-based work and sparked my interest in careers in those fields. BC also provided me the opportunity to take engineering classes at NYU Tandon during my senior year, where I became excited about robotics and coding. The classes gave me a strong foundation and helped prepare me for my biomedical engineering major in college.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** Family and community health, especially health care access. Territory management is, at its essence, making sure people are aware of and can get access to the medications they need, as well as providing doctors with current research on medications that can help their patients. There are a lot of steps between the product and patient access. Affordability, between insurance companies and patients' out-of-pocket payments, HSAs, or FSAs, can be complex. Doctors need to prescribe medications; pharmacies need to carry them; and patients need to be able to afford them and manage and maintain their treatment regimen over time.

**Q: What are some challenges you've experienced in your career?**

**A:** I'm the youngest person on my team, and many territory managers have an MBA or additional educational degrees beyond their bachelor's. Despite this, Eli Lilly hired me because I had prior experience in pharmaceuticals, including project management, as well as a science biomedical engineering background with a competence in understanding clinical trials and experience in explaining them to people.

Territory management is a big "personality" space where you're providing doctors and other medical professionals with information and current research on medications. Being able to speak knowledgeably and confidently, while delivering the right energy, is important in establishing rapport and credibility.

**Q: What does your work look like day to day? What's a typical workday like?**

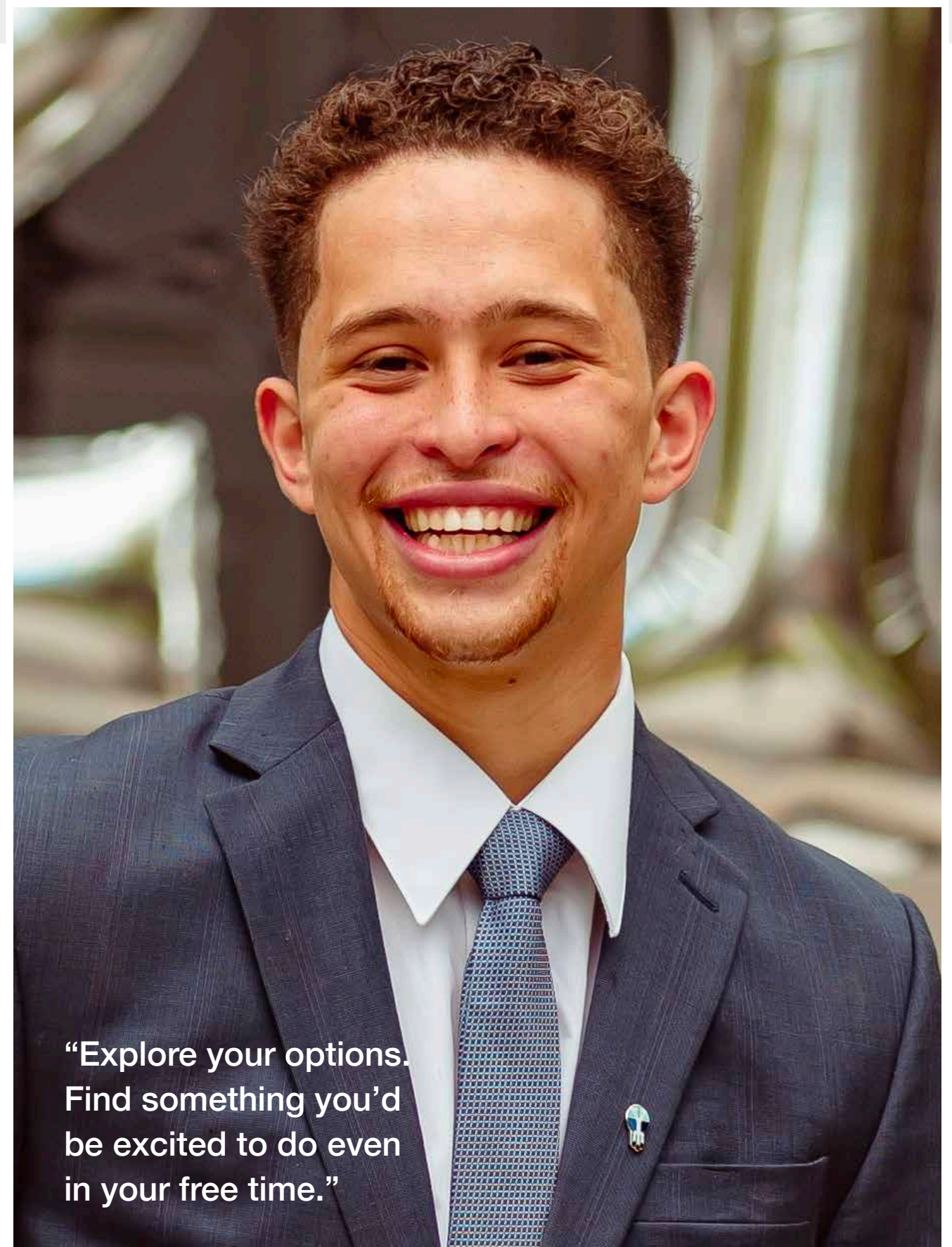
**A:** I spend most of my time with primary care physicians because that's where most patients initially go for their diagnoses before possibly being referred to a specialist. I also visit pharmacies to make sure they are not having problems accessing medications and to see if there are ways that they can make medications more affordable for patients.

**Q: What are the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

**A:** Find something that you really like to do and that matches your personality, so it doesn't feel like a job. I'm happy to talk to people about medicine and research clinical trials all day. If you have an interest, that can become a career.

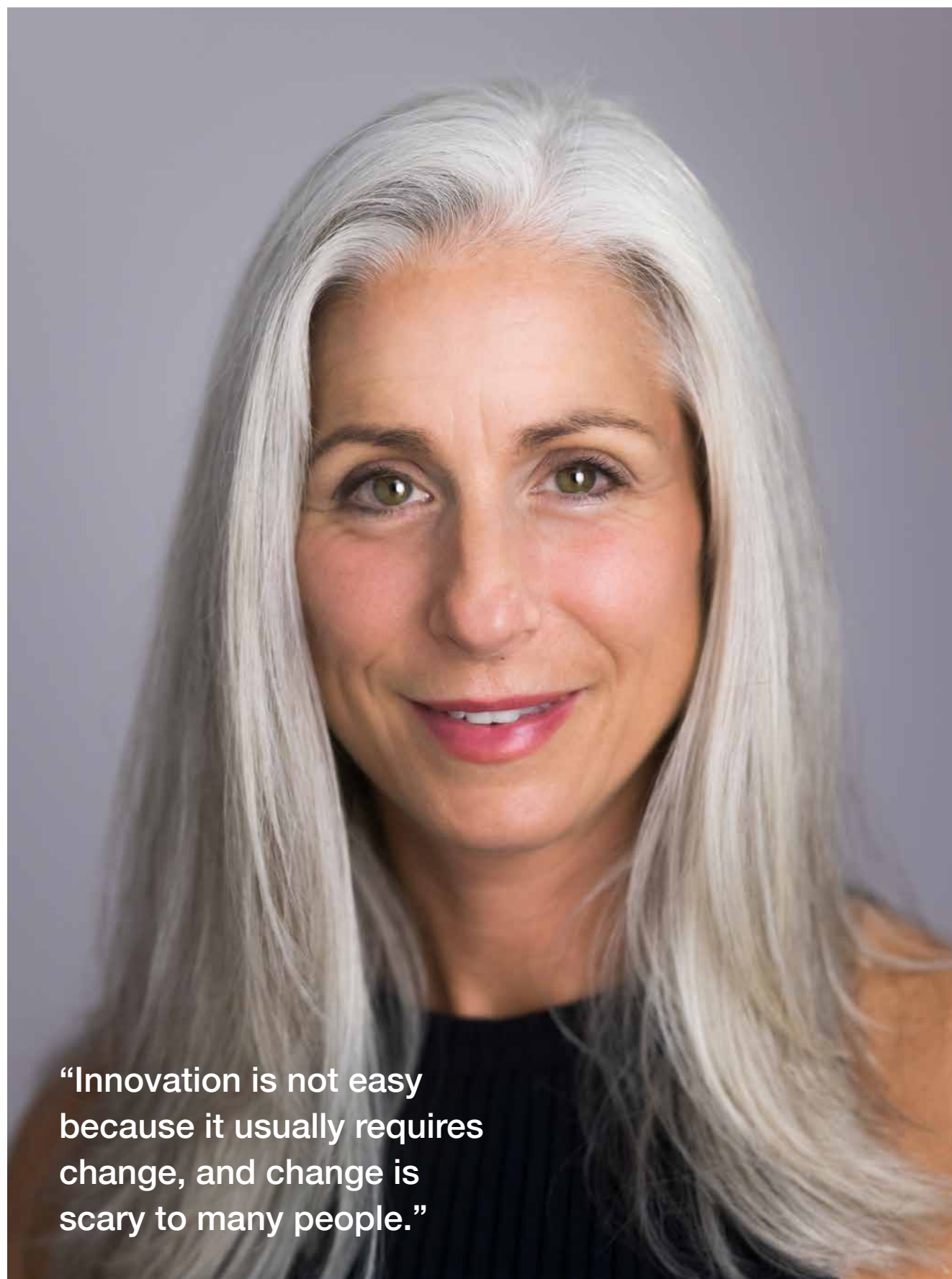
Also, what you perceive as a failure is often just a lesson. We don't always know what 5 or 10 years in the future will look like, so just take it one step at a time. It's unlikely you'll want to do only one thing for the rest of your life. I did not think I'd be moving back to Brooklyn from Boston so soon, nor did I expect to be in a role where I am forward-facing with doctors, and I am so grateful.

Finally, find a balance in your life between family, friends, work, and your other interests.



**“Explore your options.  
Find something you’d  
be excited to do even  
in your free time.”**





“Innovation is not easy because it usually requires change, and change is scary to many people.”

## EVE WALTER '86

Director of Research at AllianceChicago & County Legislator, Ulster County  
Ithaca College '90, Lehman College MPH '97, University of Albany, Ph.D. '05

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** After college, the only real skill I had seemed to be babysitting. I got hired to do respite care for kids with ADD, for a nonprofit. That nonprofit then added more to my plate, including running an HIV prevention program and a teen drop-in and resource center.

I sought a master's in community/public health that helped me further refine what I was doing and discovered I loved statistics and research. Next thing I knew I was being recruited as a violence epidemiologist at the NYC Department of Health counting homicides, assaults, and suicides. In this position, I was afforded free tuition to expand my graduate education at Columbia University, but after a year I moved upstate so I reached out to University of Albany and they enrolled me in their epidemiology Ph.D. program.

I was then hired by SUNY New Paltz as an associate professor to run their criminology concentration program. While this was not public health, I also got to teach research and statistics, along with courses like delinquency and crime theory. But I missed health research, so I transitioned to a new policy think tank as research and evaluation lead, focusing on health and criminal justice research and program evaluation.

At this point, I was also seeking election for the first time as a county legislator. I gave up my SUNY position (and my tenure!), worked at the Institute for Family Health (IFH) three days a week, and was an elected official. I also had several small, independent research and evaluation grants on the side. IFH ultimately transitioned me to an associate professor position with its partner, Mount Sinai School of Medicine. I added several more research grants, including one from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and moved full time to IFH. While continuing my NIH-funded study, I've recently transitioned to Director of Research at AllianceChicago conducting a diverse and robust portfolio of research using real-world data from a national network of community health centers.

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** At [the Berkeley Carroll Street School], I learned to be

a critical thinker and to be comfortable articulating my thoughts. With such small classes there was no room to hide, and if you were unprepared it was obvious to all. So I am never unprepared and I ask questions without worrying if they are good questions or not.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** It is not always easy to know if there are truly growth opportunities wherever you land, and for me at least I need to always feel there is growth both in my skills and my opportunities to express these skills. I have hit professional ceilings a few times that I did not expect to hit.

**Q: What are the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

**A:** Always articulate your ideas. Maybe 10 do not land, but the 11th one may be brilliant and no one would know if you keep these to yourself for fear that you will sound stupid. Innovation is not easy because it usually requires change, and change is scary to many people.

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** Statistics is logic, not math.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who doesn't know what kind of career they want to have?**

**A:** Start with what you enjoy. If you keep enjoying it, you will ultimately be paid well for it. If you stop enjoying it, change right away even if it feels like a complete transition. It all adds up to being you and you have only one life to live.

**Q: What would your “high school self” think if they could know what you're doing in your career today?**

**A:** She would think I am pretty cool, but go to way too many meetings.

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** I am living them. But mostly it is to do good work, do my best work, and make sure work feeds my happiness and well-being rather than drains it.



# ALEX LAROSA '04

## Baker & Cake Designer at Alex LaRosa Bakery

Fashion Institute of Technology '08

**Q: What did you study in college and how does it relate to what you're doing now?**

**A:** In college I studied fashion design, with a major in intimate apparel design. I use design skills from fashion to design cakes!

**Q: Describe your career path and how you ended up where you are today.**

**A:** After designing clothing for 12 years I lost my job owing to the pandemic, which was a blessing in disguise. I had never baked a cake in my life, but I needed a creative outlet and happened to stumble upon baking. I spent every free moment—when I wasn't caring full time for my son—learning about the wonderful world of baking by watching YouTube videos and taking an online class. I baked for a friend's birthday (fellow BC alum, Lily Nathan '04). She then asked me to bake for her family and, before I knew it, people I didn't know started inquiring about my baked goods. All my orders came through Instagram and soon I was very busy designing and baking. I design all my cakes and cupcakes the same way I would design clothing. I make a design sheet which is like a mood board, complete with inspiration images, color palettes, texture references, etc. I really enjoy the design process and watching it all come together. The best part is being part of so many people's celebrations!

**Q: How did Berkeley Carroll help prepare you for your chosen career?**

**A:** BC prepared me by teaching me that by working hard, achieving my goal is always possible.

**Q: What drives your work?**

**A:** What drives it the most is probably being able to create something that's not only beautiful, but also delish! Sweet treats always put a smile on people's faces.

**Q: What does your work look like day to day? What's a typical workday like?**

**A:** As I'm the only member of my company, I wear many hats. On a typical day I do everything from answer emails, design baked goods, write up invoices, bake cakes, make buttercream, make homemade candies, decorate cakes, and

of course constantly clean the kitchen! There never seems to be enough time in the day.

**Q: What are some challenges you have experienced in your career?**

**A:** One of the hardest things is saying no. As a team of one, I can't take on all the orders I receive and have to say no more than I'd like.

**Q: What are the most important lessons you've learned throughout your career?**

Baking is all about patience, precision, and great time management. Planning and prep work are key!

**Q: What accomplishments in your career are you most proud of?**

**A:** Last September, Dior hired me to make all the cakes and cupcakes for all their stores in NYC and both offices for their fragrance launch. It was such a fun project and I was so amazed they found me by chance on Instagram!

**Q: What are some common misconceptions about what you do?**

**A:** That baking/designing is simply creative and fun without the detailed planning and work necessary to create.

**Q: What advice would you give to someone who doesn't know what kind of career they want to have?**

**A:** To be open to new ideas and paths. If you had told me I'd be a baker I would have laughed. Things really have a way of falling into place organically.

**Q: What would your "high school self" think if they could know what you're doing in your career today?**

**A:** My high school self would be very confused because I always knew I wanted to be a fashion designer, even in middle school! But now I realize that cake design is actually more creative and you get to eat it!

**Q: Going forward, what are your career and/or life goals?**

**A:** My goal is to always be creative and excited about what I'm doing. Right now designing cakes is very exciting and brings me so much joy. I want to keep it fun and not too stressful.

“My goal is to always be excited and creative about what I'm doing! Dior hired me to make cakes and cupcakes for their stores in NYC. They found me by chance on Instagram.”







## BC lens

### T-shirt Tribute

At BC, Black History “Month” is every month. Upper School students gathered during co-curricular in February to hand screen-print T-shirts designed by students and faculty members. One design honored fashion creative Virgil Abloh.



# THE SHOW MUST GO ON

## HOW BC'S PERFORMING ARTS EVOLVED IN THE PANDEMIC

In March 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic started, the entire Berkeley Carroll community was faced with a myriad of challenges, as Arts Director Traci Lyn Thomas recalls. “Specifically with the performing arts, we were struggling with how to recreate an experience that involves people being in the same space together. One of our biggest fears was that we would lose a sense of community.”

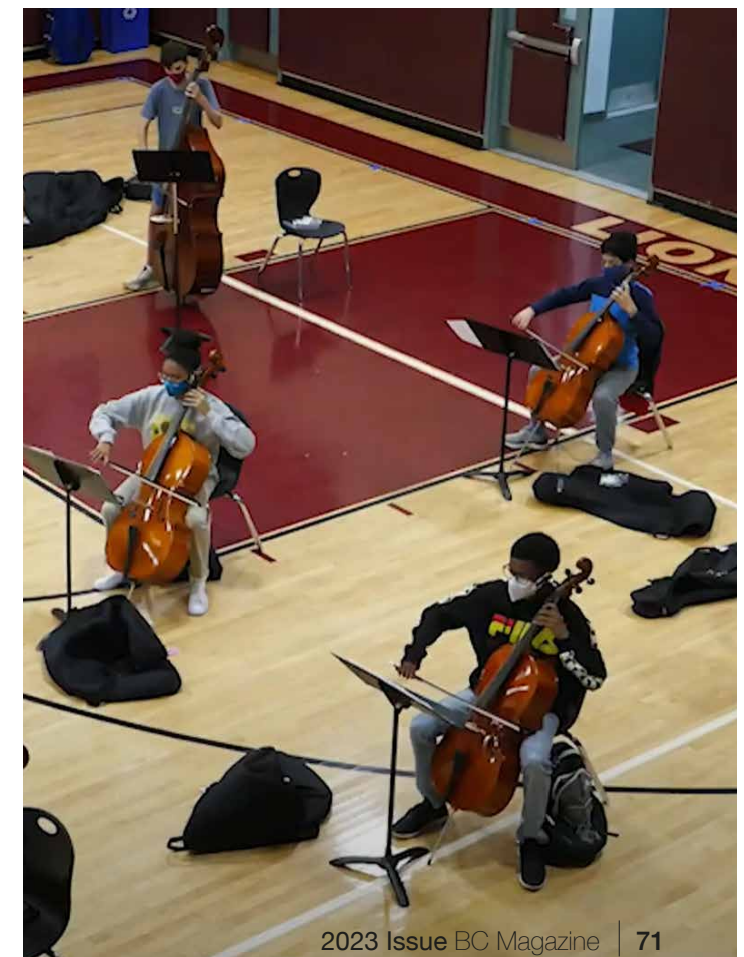
A roundtable with our Middle and Upper School performing arts faculty discussed how they found a way to overcome these challenges.

**Middle and Upper School Director WT McRae:** Our theatre program had been working on an original production of *The Odyssey* that was cross-divisional with middle school and high school students at the time. So, as a program, I now had students from both divisions invested in a project that I was fairly certain was not going to continue. That was the first scramble of the pandemic.

**Middle and Upper School Music Teacher Christian Robinson:** There was a lot of uncertainty about what music and music education was going to look like in schools.

**Music Department Chair Kate Mollica:** I think the most important thing at that time was finding a way to make music a balm for all the trauma that was going on.

**Middle and Upper School Dance Teacher Penelope McCourty:** Dancers were asking me and each other, “How are we going to do this?” I reminded them that if they still have a place to move their body, then dance can still happen.







Our Performing Arts faculty, as artists themselves as well as educators, never forgot that artists are inherently problem solvers. So, they found ways of using recordings and virtual experiences and Zoom to overcome obstacles that stymied performing arts programs at other schools.

**Mr. Robinson:** For all of 2020 and most of 2021, we were teaching music over Zoom and then occasionally we had a date where the students could all meet on the rooftop of the Athletics Center or in the gym with all the windows open to play together in the same space.

**Ms. Mollica:** I think students learned a lot from sitting six feet apart from each other. That change from normal orchestral seating forces you to listen more. You have to watch more.

**Mx. McRae:** I started to think about what was unique about this situation and how we could turn that into an asset to do things that we couldn't otherwise do in normal times. We created three original pieces in 2020 and 2021 that were written just for us. (Editor's note: The Upper School's "The Hope Project" was one of only 13 high school productions in the country chosen to play on the mainstage of the International Thespian Society's 2021 virtual festival, which was attended by 5000 member schools.)

**Ms. Thomas:** As faculty, we came in with an expectation of what the students' experience should be. When we were forced to change and make adjustments, students were open to whatever experience we provided them with. They've walked away with skills that we didn't even know we would be teaching them.

**Ms. McCourty:** Aspects like filming, costuming, set design, and lighting soon came into play. We worked with students to figure them out. This increased students' confidence because they had instant feedback. We talked about "Record yourself, look at the video, what do you think?"

**Mx. McRae:** First of all, you've never lived until you've gotten 30 middle school students to set up a backdrop remotely! We now have a generation of students that do these things by themselves: they're their own dresser, their own scenic designer, their own lighting technician, their own sound tech and computer programming tech.

In November 2021, we were able to return to the theater for our first live in-person theatrical experience. It was wonderful to have the students and our community in the space watching a show together.

**Mr. Robinson:** This year is night and day. In September 2021 alone, we had more jazz ensemble rehearsals than we did in the entirety of the previous year. We noticed and appreciated small things like that because we could physically be in school again.

**Ms. Mollica:** It was exciting to have the feedback from the audience and see the musicians playing off of that feedback. Everyone was thrilled to regain this aspect that we had lost.

**Ms. Thomas:** We never lost our sense of community. As a matter of fact, I think we gained a larger sense of community. At the end of the day, having that community is really what provided us with that optimism that we're going to get to the end of this.

**Ms. Mollica:** We're all realizing how important the arts are and how we can't live without them.





## ZOE P. '22 NAMED RISING SCIENTIST BY CHILD MIND INSTITUTE

**Zoe P. '22** was one of only five students across the United States to be named a 2021 Rising Scientist by the Child Mind Institute!

Selected from 53 outstanding high school students in fall 2021, Zoe was recognized for her work in our Science Research and Design program (SRD) where she studied the impact of personality on coping response to COVID-19. Winners are selected for their outstanding academic achievement in science courses, commitment to addressing advanced scientific questions, and leadership in the classroom and extracurricular activities. Zoe is the first BC student ever to win this prestigious award and received a \$2000 college scholarship.

Her hypothesis was that the collective trauma of the pandemic would motivate student participation and offer a unique lens to investigate personality and coping strategies.

“Zoe’s work on measuring COVID-19’s effect on teen coping strategies is timely and provides essential knowledge that can help us better understand how young people process trauma. Her work exemplifies that student researchers are capable of creating knowledge and serving as agents of scientific progress and change,” said Dr. Danny Gentile who oversees Berkeley Carroll’s SRD program.

Zoe started her freshman year at Barnard in Fall 2022.

For more about Berkeley Carroll’s Science Research and Design Program, go to page 24.







## JUNIOR **BROOKE E. '24** WINS GETTY MUSEUM INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY COMPOSITION

Congrats to **Brooke E. '24** who is one of 20 winners of an international photography competition by the J. Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles and the nonprofit design lab Amplifier. More than 1660 works were submitted to "Reconnecting with \_\_\_\_\_," which invited artists aged 13–19 "to consider, inspire, and reflect on social justice issues that matter to teens." They were encouraged to reflect on their own lives, consider the state of the world, and inspire others through their unique artistic expressions.

The winning submissions were transformed into Amplifier-style artworks by some of their top artists and shown in a special Getty Museum exhibition, "Unshuttered: Reconnecting with \_\_\_\_\_" which ran from June–October 2022.

"The photographs capture a wide range of emotions—from joy, sorry, melancholy, and excitement at reconnecting with friends, families, and oneself during this unique time in our collective history," says Elizabeth Escamilla, head of education at the Getty Museum. "We were excited to share the images of these young photographers with the public at the Museum and online. Each image invites us to reflect and reconsider how we are reconnecting with what matters to us."

Brooke says, "I wanted to encapsulate the beauty and happiness within reconnecting with friends and this moment was just that. By the people in the photo facing inward there is a clear sense of camaraderie and friendship that leaves the viewer in the perspective of the outsider."

Brooke's photography teacher, Sophie Imamura states, "Brooke's passion for creating images is underpinned by her curiosity, humility, and willingness to experiment. Her photograph embodies the depths that photography can penetrate, and it is a major achievement to be recognized for this by an institution like the Getty."





## BC lens

### Lions ROAR

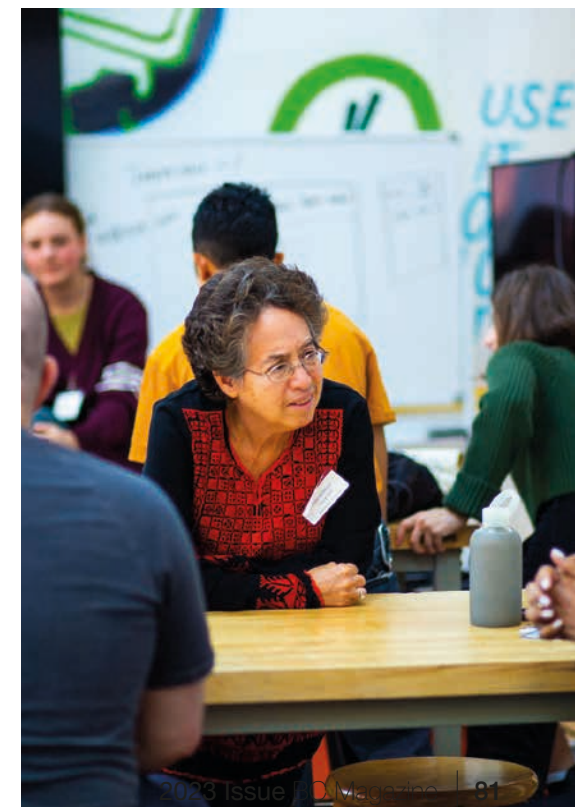
BC student-athletes were back in action last year, after 18 months of remote and hybrid competition. Last winter, the Varsity Swim teams showed their BC spirit and hyped themselves up during a meet.



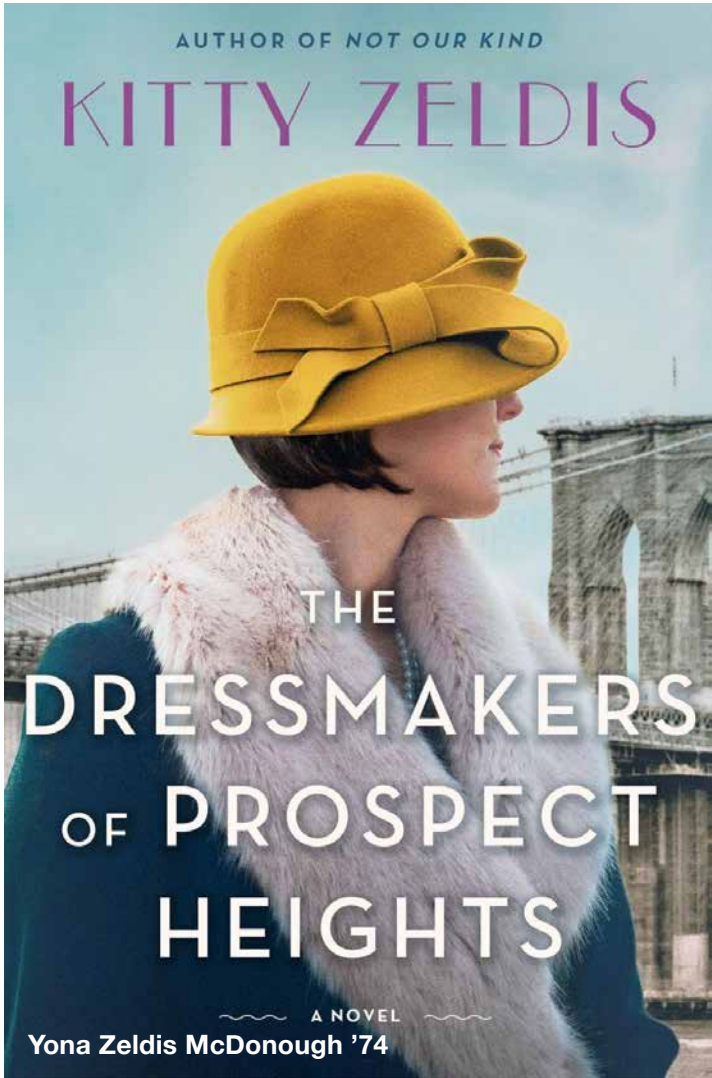


# ALUMNI HOMECOMING 2022

Members of the Classes of 1975 through 2012 returned to Berkeley Carroll for Alumni Homecoming 2022 in October. The day started with tours of the Middle and Upper School at Lincoln Place and Sterling Place, followed by a panel of current students who spoke about what the world of BC is like now, and culminated with a luncheon. The Classes of 2002 and 2012 also honored their milestone anniversary years with a celebration at Union Hall.







**Yona Zeldis McDonough '74** will publish her ninth novel, *The Dressmakers of Prospect Heights*, with HarperCollins under the pen name Kitty Zeldis. She lives on Carroll Street, in a house she and her husband bought in 1992, and she continues to love this special Brooklyn 'hood.

**Karen Keltner '00** writes: "We are now a family of five! Bosen is six years old and just started first grade, Brooklyn is two years old, and Crew just celebrated his first birthday. We are living in Ojai/Santa Barbara, California, where we love to adventure on the ocean (sailing, kayaking, paddle boarding, snorkeling, SCUBA diving, and visiting the Channel Islands). We have been very busy teaching and working as harbor patrol, as well as owning and directing our Peak2Pacific: Outdoor Adventure & Environmental Education programs for youth year-round."



**Francesca Perlov '09** completed a graduate program in social work at the University of New England in 2021. In her first year, she conducted research on the relationship between the creation of self-portraits and self-esteem with the help of BC students in the Psychology of Identity Spring Intensive.

**Ashley Privett '09** writes: "I am providing a life update in that I got married this past May to my husband Tim Gargiulo! I finished my master's in biology with Miami University of Ohio and the Wildlife Conservation Society. I continue my work in the education department at the American Museum of Natural History. Additionally, I am doing research and volunteering with the Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club, where we are always looking for more interested people!"




Karen Keltner '00

*Errata: In "Working toward a Greener Planet" in our 2021–2022 issue, we incorrectly wrote that Amanda Sacks '07 teaches students in her role as lab manager at Central New Mexico Community College. While Ms. Sacks occasionally works with students, she does not teach them directly on any subjects, including climate change.*



Remembering  
TAYLOR SOOKRA '25



JUNE 7, 2007 – DECEMBER 25, 2021

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Taylor Sookra was a beloved member of the Berkeley Carroll community. In her memory, we are reprinting an essay she wrote, which was published in the 2022 issue of the Upper School's art and literary magazine, *Reflections*.

Don't Be Arrogant

TAYLOR SOOKRA • GRADE 9 • ESSAY

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L

et me guard him. He's not scoring on me," I said. He smiled back and did a spin move into a fadeaway off of one foot. He swished it. In my face. "We all know that was luck, bruh," I said. He did the same thing again. This time, however, the shot that he took was deeper. Swished it in my face, again. In the story "Slow and Steady Wins the Race," a hare and a tortoise race each other. Since turtles are typically slow animals, the tortoise is losing the race against the hare. At first. The hare has a lot of confidence, and so he constantly keeps taking breaks in between the race to take naps, catch his breath, or just simply sit down. And when he is resting, the tortoise begins to slowly catch up. Eventually, the tortoise is able to cross the finish line first. The hare should have stayed humble. "Bro, these guys are bums," my friends had said. "Look at their jumpshots and the way they dribble." We were playing a basketball video game called *NBA 2K21* and we were playing a really bad team.

The game was to 21 points, our opponents were terrible, and we had around 15 points, so my teammates and I started fooling around. We were walking out of bounds, shooting the ball from half court, wasting the time on the shot clock—trolling, basically. It got to the point where the other team started to beat us. We started to try to catch up, but it was already too late. We were missing wide-open shots, turning the ball over, and still letting our opponent score.

"Do something! You won't," I said as I started backing up.

He shot a three and made it.

"That was all luck," I said, smiling and embarrassed. The more he scored, the more I trash talked: *Swish!* "He can't get past me!" *Swish* again! "You're so trash."

I couldn't back up my words. Despite all I said, I was defeated.

I should have stayed humble. Or at least saved my trash talk until after I won.

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## **BERKELEY CARROLL: A VIBRANT, INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY**

