

Duke University

Considering the Middle

College and universities excel at grand entrances and exits. When I envision the most exciting times of the year at Duke, I immediately hear the shouts and applause of the first-year advisory counselors as the earliest cars, bearing new students and laden with luggage, drive onto East Campus on move-in day. I feel the serene coolness and hushed grandeur of the Chapel as the President welcomes the new class in his Convocation address, challenging them to seize the opportunities offered by the next four years. And I see the rows of jubilant students, clad in black caps and gowns (as I sweat beneath my own on a warm May day), celebrating the completion of their Duke education. Music, pageantry, food, and fun: we definitely know how to stage a celebration.

Those celebrations mean we focus much of our time and attention on the transitions, on those coming into college and those leaving into the wider world. Certainly the time between is filled with stimulating classes, a rewarding residential experience, extracurricular activities, sports, travel and a vibrant social life. But it's easy to elide those middle years without much thought as to how students change and develop. They arrive, they get an education, they leave – and yet they emerge fundamentally different people from those who first lugged their possessions up to their East Campus rooms. As a leadership development program, we need to give particular attention to those transformative middle years and to what happens during them.

Those with good memories will recall that our program review encouraged us to be more deliberate about our definitions of leadership, and to get our Scholars thinking about it much earlier than we have thus far. Taking their excellent advice, we designed a multi-part leadership series that we piloted this fall and will continue into the spring. With the help of Evangeline Weiss from OpenSource Leadership Strategies, we worked with sophomores and juniors to help them understand their own leadership priorities and styles. What issues matter to them? Are they spending their time on those issues, or are they



spreading themselves too thin? How can each utilize her own personality to lead effectively? Some of our Scholars exhibit vocal and passionate leadership; others lead quietly, by example and without fanfare. Each style is effective, so long as it is authentic to the student.

To underscore this point, we held an evening event mid-semester: a panel of women leaders in diverse fields and with very different styles. We opened this event up to the larger community, knowing that many women on campus would benefit from it. Chimi Boyd-Keyes, Director of the Women's Center at North Carolina Central University, discussed handling difficult situations with tact and a strong backbone. Kathryn Kyle, who works in a male-dominated industry as Vice President and Director of Litigation for Laboratory Corporation of America, talked about defusing antagonistic negotiations with humor. Suzanne Shanahan, Associate Director of the Kenan Institute for Ethics at Duke, spoke about her own moral compass and how it guides her in her work. Gordana Vlahovic, an oncologist at Duke Medical Center and a Baldwin parent, explained the high value she places on mentoring and how she puts that into practice with younger physicians and physician's assistants. I have rarely seen a more mesmerized audience; we thank Chimi, Kathryn, Suzanne and Gordana for so patiently answering the students' questions and for giving up a weekday evening to spend time with them.

As we develop this set of programs – we’re calling it the Sophomore Leadership Series – we hope it will lead each Scholar to a fuller understanding and appreciation of herself, and of how she might make the impact she seeks both at Duke and beyond. Learning this in the sophomore year will give each student a couple of years to experiment, to try out her ideas and leadership practices, to fail and to try again without serious consequences, and to identify mentors who will help her along the way. We still expect that many of our students will spend their four years in college figuring out what they want to be when they grow up; we are *not* asking them to make career decisions earlier than they already do. Instead, we want to help them make the best use of this period of intellectual and personal exploration. So far we’re pleased with how it’s going, and we look forward to continuing the series into the spring.

We’ve got lots to look forward to in the spring term: getting to know our newest class of Baldwin Scholars in the first-year seminar, holding the inaugural Father/Daughter weekend, celebrating our seniors and holding our third graduation ceremony in May. But while we continue to celebrate the new arrivals and the graduating seniors, we’ll be focusing on the “middle children” as well. Best wishes for a happy 2010, and as always, come see us if you are in the area!

Donna Lisker, Co-Director of the Baldwin Scholars Program

Sophomore Leadership Series

The leadership workshops have given me a different and broadened perspective on leadership and negotiation. I have learned how to implement my own personal skill sets and personality traits to most effectively formulate a leadership model that works the best for me. These workshops have also pushed me to recognize and turn to my weaknesses to work through challenges that arise, an extremely effective strategy that I had never considered before. The negotiation strategies that I have learned through this program have been empowering and have changed the way I approach such situations.

- Allie Speidel, Class of 2011



Allie Speidel (R) with Amanda Morrall and Chantel Morey

The leadership workshops this semester caused us to reconsider who we are, what we present to the world, and the manner in which we do so. Initially, we spent a few workshops identifying character traits that we exemplified and proclaimed proudly to the world around us, as well as our more hidden traits, which we learned have a power of their own. Looking at ourselves in this new perspective, we were able to glean strategies and ideas about how we could be more effective in our relationships with others, and better at projecting the different parts of us that will help us be successful in specific goals. We also spent a workshop confronting the realities women face in the workplace today, and the importance of negotiation. To be made aware of the startling statistics in differing salaries between men and women was interesting and upsetting to many of us, and we left the workshop with a newfound determination not to become part of that statistic. Overall the leadership workshops have helped us grow into our leadership potential. Learning more about ourselves and growing as individuals, we are arming ourselves with the skills necessary to take on whatever the world throws at us next. The journey is exciting, and we look forward to continuing the workshops, and our personal growth, in the spring.

- Chaele Arkfeld, Class of 2012



Chaele Arkfeld with her parents at the Baldwin Parents and Family Weekend Reception

Nicholas Kristof makes Duke first stop on book tour in September



New York Times columnist and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Nicholas Kristof visits with students at Duke on his book tour for *Half The Sky: Turning Oppression Into Opportunity for Women Worldwide*. His public lecture, attended by over 900 people, was funded with a generous donation by Laura Ellen Muglia, Class of 1976.

“If you are interested in women, you should be interested in women’s issues.” Nicholas Kristof’s opening line in Page Auditorium resonates with me and many of the other Baldwin Scholars. It was refreshing to hear a man talk so passionately about women’s stake in the world and the ability they have to change it. He was able to encapsulate in just a few words the answer to why people should care. Interested in pursuing a career in global health, I often feel weighed down by the breadth of progress that remains to be made. My coursework and experiences abroad have not only opened my eyes to the multitude of complex issues which plague our society, but also have often made me unsure of my ability to make a difference. However, Kristof’s work serves as a motivating and reassuring example of the impact an individual can have and his words challenge each of us to follow suit, in whatever way we can.

- Neelima Navuluri, Class of 2010

Baldwin Alumnae Spotlight: Rosanna Myers, Class of 2009

What I'm up to now: I cofounded a company called The Green Cooling Group. We've developed a technology for cooling water and other fluids over 120x more efficiently than anything else on the market. The potential applications for our technology are vast, but we are initially targeting the Point-of-Use water cooler and drinking fountain markets. We offer the only products in our category capable of achieving Energy Star® efficiency standards, which positions us to benefit from federally mandated preferred purchasing lists. Our technology costs less to manufacture, lasts longer and is small enough to fit inside a shoebox.

So, that's the elevator pitch... whew! As I write this article, it's been 6 months since graduation and I'm pondering how far I've come since first entering Duke. I'd never imagined myself as an "entrepreneur" or even someone remotely interested in business until sophomore year when my friend (and now business partner) suggested that I'd be great at it. Growing up in England, I was less exposed to the culture of innovation that energizes America and so really unaware of my options. That year, we entered the Duke Startup Challenge together and won the Hi-Tech track, at the time the first all-undergraduate team to do so. It was an exhilarating experience and, from that moment, I was hooked. I'd finally found a path that was right for me - something that allowed me to, in the truest sense, manifest my own destiny.

When I consider the challenges we've faced, I realize that everything is a challenge when starting your first company. You have to learn everything quickly and then do it all yourself too, managing day-to-day tasks alongside big picture strategy. Even when outsourcing tasks, it's imperative to have a working knowledge of all aspects of the company. I've learnt more about finance, marketing, electronics, patent law, sales, supply chain management, web design, government contracting, time management, negotiation (etc. ad infinitum) than I ever thought possible.

I've also realized that you have to be emotionally weather-proofed to withstand the turbulence that comes with complete uncertainty. Anxiety is almost inevitable, so it's vital to stay grounded and energized - to keep positive and productive through the highs and lows. And to laugh a lot, that's my elixir of choice. Even the daily dichotomies can be hilarious; one minute we're suavely negotiating multi-million dollar deals with potential partners and investors, the next we're scurrying to make PBJ sandwiches after realizing that we haven't eaten in 2 days and can't afford groceries for a week!

But I couldn't be happier with the route I've chosen - I'm doing exactly what I want to be doing right now. We get to catalyze an idea into a tangible reality and then to share that with the world to make it a better place. Rather than filling a predecessor's shoes and executing rote tasks, we get to create roles that have never existed before and add something entirely new to the universe. We get to cultivate a work environment that inspires and nourishes people. We get



Rosanna Myers with business partner
Dan Corkum

to team up with brilliant and authentic people. And then we also get to make money? Awesome. That's the coolest thing I can imagine.

A close second occurs when other people get excited about our technology. We are currently working with one of the largest distributors in the country and, at some point in conversation, the president took a deep breath, looked at us and said "Wow - I've been waiting for you for 20 years - this technology is going to change the game forever." When a respected authority in the industry validated everything we'd been working towards, shared our excitement and offered us an incredible opportunity -- those are the moments you live for.

As I reflect on it all, I feel remarkably fortunate to have been a Baldwin Scholar. The program helped immeasurably to prepare me for the journey I've chosen post-Duke. Perhaps most importantly, the program equipped me with the self-knowledge necessary to attempt this path. One of Baldwin's key objectives is to develop self-knowledge; it's much easier to live your values and fulfill your needs when you know what they are. It can take people decades to discover their own strength, but Baldwin cultivates young women who are ready to be their full and abundant selves, who will encourage others to do the same and who can lead in this world. It's certainly an ongoing process - I had a period in college of serious self-doubt, a time when everything seemed to fall out of alignment and I wasn't as sure of myself as I used to be - but that's when the program supported me the most. Ultimately, you can't get the answer if you're not willing to ask the question, and striving for the best blend of self-awareness and self-confidence makes me stronger everyday.

Baldwin also taught me the value of strong support networks. From the cradle, I was independently spirited, but that approach didn't always serve me well and sometimes came at the expense of relationships. While I gave of myself freely, I never asked for others' help and rarely accepted it when offered. That was ill-advised. As I soon realized, everyone has times when they really do need other people; we are at our strongest when we are connected to others and open to growth. Asking for help isn't a weakness, it's a strength. So many people at Duke and in the greater community have offered us invaluable guidance and assistance as we grow the company. We, in turn, help others with their business ideas - it's an ecosystem of exchange and it's good for everyone. I will forever be indebted to the people of Baldwin and I hope to one day give back as much as I've received. But, alas, for now it's back to the vortex...



Class of 2013 Baldwin Scholars meet the older Scholars at a welcome luncheon in December.



Class of 2013 Baldwin Scholars profiles

Meet the sixth class of Baldwin Scholars! The class includes 17 Trinity and one Pratt student, one varsity athlete, two OUSF Scholars, and four international students. The new Baldwin Scholars hail from nine states and the countries of Switzerland, Australia, Canada, and Brazil. Their interests include medicine, government, dance, education policy, finance, community service, ultimate Frisbee, swimming, and volleyball.

Elizabeth Clark is from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As a teenager, she was involved in a “girlcott” against a controversial advertising campaign from Abercrombie and Fitch. At Duke, she participated in the Evolution and Humankind Focus program and is interested in redesigning the biological taxonomy classification system. Liz is also an avid ultimate Frisbee player.

Rajlakshmi De, from Oak Ridge, North Carolina, is a Trinity Scholar at Duke. She was a member of the Global Health Focus program and has wide-ranging intellectual interests that include medicine, law, and environmental policy.

Michaela Dwyer hails from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She participated in the Visions of Freedom Focus program. As a potential dance major, Michaela is invested in the arts culture at Duke.

Casey Edwards is from Chapin, South Carolina. She is a Benjamin N. Duke Scholar interested in government, politics, and education policy. In high school, she filed and won a lawsuit against the South Carolina governor for not accepting federal stimulus money targeted for public education.

Beth Gordon is also from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. She is a cross-country runner and is interested in WISER, a non-profit NGO building the first girls’ boarding school and research center in Muhuru Bay, Kenya.

Alana Jackson, from Pembroke Pines, Florida, is a member of the new Cardea Fellows Program, an initiative for high achieving students interested in healthcare to strengthen their foundation in math and the sciences. She is also active with United in Praise gospel choir, In Motion dance ensemble and House Council.

Samantha Lachman is from Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. She is interested in politics and debate. At Duke, she participated in the Project WILD pre-orientation program and is on the club swimming team.

Kristen Lee, from Arlington Heights, Illinois, was a member of the Global Health Focus program. She tutors adults learning English and volunteers at Duke Hospital, visiting with patients undergoing bone marrow transplants.

Courtney Liu is from Cincinnati, Ohio but attended a pre-professional ballet school in San Francisco. At Duke, she was selected to join Sabrosura, the premiere Latin dance performance troupe.

Vivian Lorencatto, from Sao Paulo, Brazil, is active with Mi Gente and in community service. She is considering a pre-law course of study and possible majors in English, history, or public policy.

Emily McGinty is also from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and is a triplet! She participated in the Project Change pre-orientation program and is a strong advocate for social justice issues. She was also a member of the Engineering Frontiers Focus Program.

Andrea Mihic is from Berne, Switzerland. She attended United World College, an international boarding high school. Andrea participated in the Modeling Economic and Social Systems Focus program and is interested in finance.

Estefany Noria, from Evanston, Illinois, is a Pratt engineer studying Civil Engineering. She tutors for America Reads and is a member of the Society for Hispanic Professional Engineers. Estefany aspires to join the Peace Corps to design infrastructure for developing nations.

Alexis Oparah hails from McDonough, Georgia. She is pre-med and interested in neuroscience; she is a member of the Cardea Fellows program. Alexis also belongs to Habitat for Humanity.

Molly Superfine is from Chapel Hill, North Carolina. She is intellectually interested in art history, Spanish, and religion. She participated in the Project BUILD pre-orientation program and has been elected a freshman senator to Duke Student Government.

Sophie Throsby is a native Australian who grew up in Sydney, Tokyo, and Hong Kong; her family now lives in London. After high school, she did a gap semester in Malawi. She is interested in government and politics.

Lauren Vernon, from Sugar Land, Texas, is interested in travel and community service. She was a Girl Scout for thirteen years and at Duke, participated in Project BUILD and now Habitat for Humanity.

Nailah Waterfield is from Long Beach, California. She is a varsity volleyball player at Duke and is active in community service. Nailah is a potential sociology major.

Gifts to the Baldwin Scholars Program

If you are interested in making a gift to the Baldwin Scholars, please contact Donna Lisker at dlisker@duke.edu. Gifts can be targeted toward any area of the program.

Contact us...

We'd love to hear from you!

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Best wishes for a happy new year!
Donna, Emily, and Colleen