

Duke University

In the News

If you spent any time on the Internet this past fall, you probably came across some unflattering stories about Duke. We had a challenging fall semester: a tragic student death, alcohol abuse at a Tailgate celebration that endangered a minor, a widely circulated account of one alumna's sexual history, and misogynist email from a fraternity that went public and caused considerable consternation and reflection in our Greek community. This confluence of events made it easy for many to castigate Duke as a troubled and unhealthy community.

No one at Duke would deny that we have our issues. Undergraduate social culture can be so contradictory, with students displaying great creativity, compassion, and generosity while simultaneously making social choices that have nothing to do with their core values. The same students who wear their Love=Love t-shirts with pride (courtesy of the Center for LGBT Life) might attend a party whose theme is "Catholic Schoolgirls." They will raise money to send Kenyan girls to school and then spend theirs on more alcohol than anyone can consume safely and responsibly. Does this describe every student? Of course not: in our large and diverse population we have students who make all sorts of social choices, most of them safe and ethical. Are Duke students worse-behaved than students at other schools? Absolutely not, unless your comparison group is religious institutions that ban alcohol, dating, co-ed residence halls, and most parties.

It's important to remember that these are young people with developing brains and bodies, trying on social roles and expectations to see what suits them. They make mistakes, and in virtually every case they try to learn from them and do



Baldwin seniors (L to R): Amanda Morrall, Morgan Kearse, and Morgan Sheppard

better. Some mistakes are more public than others. What the media leave out are two crucially important feedback loops: the response from the various adults in the Duke community charged with keeping students safe and healthy, and the peer response. In each of the situations that went public this past fall, faculty and administrators stepped in to instruct, protect, comfort and challenge. Student privacy laws mean we often can't discuss these responses, but they most certainly exist, and form the greater part of many of our jobs.

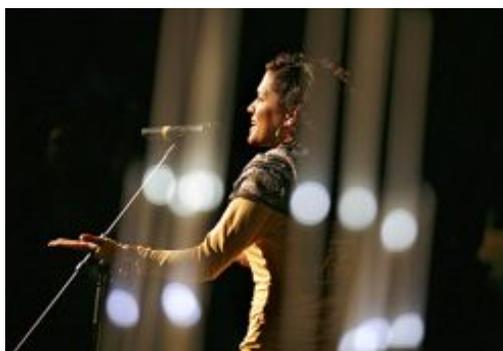
Even more important, other students step up to challenge their peers. The only reason the misogynistic fraternity email saw the light of day is because a group of undergraduate women decided they were tired of this casual sexism passed off as a "joke." They therefore printed out the email onto fliers and posted them all over campus. It's a beautiful, time-honored technique: shame and humiliation. Within hours the fraternity was apologizing (and other groups who have written similar emails were put on notice), and within days

the Duke Student Government President, Mike Lefevre, wrote an excellent editorial in the *Chronicle* arguing that student culture needed to change. Baldwin Scholar Michelle Sohn '11 organized a series of forums via DSG within the week to discuss these issues, and she will be helping carry this work forward into the spring semester along with several other Baldwins.

We try to nurture several qualities in our Baldwins: belief in themselves and other women, willingness to speak up against injustice, commitment to do the hard work of social change. Each Baldwin Scholar works in her own sphere to make Duke a better, more equitable environment. As you read this newsletter you will see why we're so proud of them, and why the media tales of Duke reflect so little of our vibrant and complex community. It's hard to single out any one Scholar, but I do have to highlight one extraordinary accomplishment: Alessondra (Allie) Speidel -- Pratt senior, varsity swimmer, and loyal Baldwin -- was awarded a highly competitive Marshall Scholarship for post-graduate study in Biomedical Engineering in the United Kingdom. Allie's award may have drawn less media attention, but it's much more representative of Duke and the Baldwin Scholars.

Donna Lisker, Co-Director of the Baldwin Scholars Program

Mayda Del Valle to perform at Duke in February



Monday, February 14
8p.m.

Reynolds Theater, Bryan Center

This event is free and
open to the public.

Mayda Del Valle is a talented spoken word artist and winner of the 2001 National Poetry Slam. She was selected as one of twenty women on Oprah's first "power list" and has performed at the Obama White House.

Mayda will be the seventh guest in the Jean Fox O'Barr Distinguished Speaker Series. This series is generously funded by the Muglia Family Foundation.

Welcome Class of 2014 Baldwin Scholars!



(L to R) Lauren Carroll, Beth Gordon, Leilani Doktor, Anna Koelsch

New and upperclass Baldwins enjoy meeting each other at a welcome lunch in December.

Meet the seventh class of Baldwin Scholars! The class includes 16 Trinity and two Pratt students and two varsity athletes. The new Baldwin Scholars hail from thirteen states and one US Territory. Their interests include theater, dance, martial arts, environmental issues, global health, medicine, and international law.

Audrey Adu-Appiah is from Charlotte, North Carolina. Academically, she is interested in English and economics. She participates in Duke Debate and is an avid photographer.

Grace Benson, from Blacksburg, Virginia, is a member of the Duke Quidditch team and has a strong background in theater. She participated in the Ethics, Leadership, and Global Citizenship Focus program and is interested in pursuing psychology or Public Policy.

Lauren Carroll hails from Phoenix, Arizona, where she attended a small performing arts high school. At Duke, Lauren participated in the Muslim Cultures Focus program and is interested in International Comparative Studies and Arabic. In her free time, Lauren gathers friends to watch Bollywood movies.

Emily Davis, from Hollis, New Hampshire, plans to major in Biomedical Engineering. She is a member of the club swimming team at Duke and is active with WISER.

Leilani Doktor is from Honolulu, Hawaii. Leilani competed in the Junior Olympics in kayaking and now rows for the Duke novice rowing team. She is also president of Wilson dorm this year.

Valentine Esposito, from Saint James, New York, is pre-med and wants to be certified to serve on Duke EMS. Valentine is a black belt in jujitsu.

Rebekah Johnston is from Jacksonville, North Carolina. She is a student in the Pratt School of Engineering and a pole-vaulter for the varsity Duke Track Team. She is passionate about environmental issues.

Anna Koelsch, from Mendota Heights, Minnesota, was active in high school debate and wants to coach debate in Durham Public Schools. She is interested in studying politics and international law at Duke.

Alexandria Lattimore hails from Chelmsford, Massachusetts. She participated in the Muslim Cultures Focus program, particularly enjoying the discussions on gender and religious issues. She is a ballet dancer and is involved in community service in Durham.

Andrea Lewis is from Gallatin, Tennessee. She was a member of the Ethics, Leadership, and Global Citizenship Focus program and was selected for Leadership Roundtable. Andrea sings with the United in Praise gospel choir.

Flora Muglia is from Mercer Island, Washington. She is well traveled and loves to learn about different cultures. She is particularly interested in the Middle East and participated in the Muslim Cultures Focus program. Flora is a hip-hop dancer and a member of the club swimming team at Duke.

Kamika Shaw, from East Elmhurst, New York, attended an all-girls high school. She is pre-law and a member of Duke Democrats. Kamika is passionate about social justice issues and is an accomplished dancer.

Shweta Shukla, from Cockeysville, Maryland, is interested in science research and creative writing. She is a classically trained Indian dancer and belongs to the Hindu Students Association at Duke.

Devesha Solanki is from Madison, Mississippi. Esha is pre-med with interests in literature, dance, and music.

Elizabeth Tobierre, from Kingshill, Virgin Islands, is also a Gates Millennium Scholar. She is interested in medicine and global health. Elizabeth serves on the library advisory board and is a member of SOCA, Students of the Caribbean.

Xueyang (Sarah) Wang hails from Cary, North Carolina and attended North Carolina School for Science and Math. She is interested in chemistry and completed genetics research on corn before attending Duke. Sarah plays the clarinet in the Wind Symphony.

Jessye Waxman, from Great Neck, New York, is passionate about environmental issues and has a track record of activism. She is learning Irish step dancing and dresses in costumes as a hobby.

Amelia (Mia) Wise is from Powell, Ohio. She is a member of the varsity Field Hockey team at Duke and a figure skater. She is pre-med and interested in Chinese language.

A Tribute to Dr. Jean O'Barr



Dr. Jean O'Barr has taught the Baldwin senior seminar, "Women and the Professions," for four years. The course examines women and work from past, current, and future perspectives. Seniors complete a research project investigating the status of women in the fields they wish to pursue.

Jean has decided to pass the torch to someone new and to enjoy her retirement.

We are indebted to her support, service, and wisdom.

Here's what a few of her former Baldwin students have to add...

The most important thing about Dr O'Barr's class was that she continually kept challenging us, as scholars, as future professionals, as women. Rather than present us with a mass of information, she challenged us to make sense of it for ourselves, to question the world around us, and to mold ourselves (and our manner of presentation) for maximum impact. My eyes have been opened by this class and by Dr. O'Barr's example, and I am very grateful for it.

-Menaka Nayar, Class of 2011

Three years into my Duke education, I entered the senior seminar with much confidence in my analytical and critical thinking abilities. Dr. O'Barr, however, challenged me to ask my questions and draft my answers in completely new ways. Our seminar is a highlight of my academic career, and is incredibly valuable to my approaching professional one. It is also the reason I feel more knowledgeable and empowered in addressing gender inequity, and a large part of why I will always strongly identify with feminism. Rightfully, our seminar is above all a testament to Dr. O'Barr's unique gifts as a professor. I am grateful to have learned from her.

-Brooke Kingsland, Class of 2011

In most of the other courses I have taken, the underlying principle behind the coursework, regardless of the field, has been analyzing and applying different perspectives in order to learn more about the outside world. This course has taken this process a step back to deconstruct the perspectives and framework that dictate the lens through which we see the world. This ability to more fully appreciate the entire picture contributing to the obstacles women still face in the work place, and the implications of these deeply ingrained ideals, will make identifying and coming up with strategies to overcome these existing barriers easier.

-Allie Speidel, Class of 2011

If Dr. O'Barr were a steak, she could only be described as "rare." I mean this in two ways: 1) she is a professor whose quality is exceptionally difficult to find elsewhere and 2) she possesses an ability to give raw, candid opinion (don't get her started on Sarah Palin). Through her emphasis on theory, its relation to real-lived experiences, and constructive feedback, I was able to gain a profoundly effective lexicon to understand and work towards solving everyday inequalities that make being a woman in any profession improbably challenging. Cheers to her and all of her future endeavors.

-Michelle Sohn, Class of 2011

Jean O'Barr is the best teacher I have had at Duke. She taught our class in a way that allowed us to learn and grow as individuals and a group. She pressured us, she encouraged us, she questioned us, all to force us to truly examine our lives as women. I feel blessed to have had Dr. O'Barr and learned from her. I appreciate much more now the women in our past and my future.

-Elizabeth KonKolics, Class of 2011

Jean O'Barr is one of those rare human beings under whose guidance one is able to discover how their own experience relates to larger social processes, and to begin to contemplate the meaning and implications of such connections. She is a teacher of introspection, an interrogator of conventional history, and a compass of moral inquiry. Dr. O'Barr also possesses the remarkable gift of allowing her students to feel that they are the ones who have been the impetuses of their own progress, the hosts of novel revelations, when in reality it was her doing all along.

-Rosa La Cerva, Class of 2011

Dr. O'Barr's class was different from all the women's studies classes that I had taken because the focus of her class was on what Baldwins as women would face once we enter the workforce. The course included feminist theories and the history of feminism, but the topic was more practical in that I am now more prepared to confront sexism when my job starts in August. I will get a mentor, I will network, I will help other women, and I will make sure that the good ol' boys network does not affect my career advancement. Thank you for showing me how to put feminism into practice, Dr. O'Barr.

-Ji Kwon, Class of 2011

Jean always brought her best to class and expected your best in return. This raised the level of discussion and thinking in the Baldwin seminar, but it is also a lesson that has stuck with me long after the end of that semester. Thank you, Jean, and best wishes to you for a happy and fulfilling retirement.

-Lucy McKinstry, Class of 2010

When I look back on my time at Duke, I will always remember Dr. O'Barr's senior seminar, Women and the Professions, as one of my most favorite classes in college. The material was thought-provoking, the assignments were challenging, the class discussions were energizing, and the entire experience very valuable and rewarding. Dr. O'Barr is an inspiring and wonderful professor and person. One of my favorite memories of the semester was attending the women's symposium at Duke and watching each of the interesting and successful women talk about how Dr. O'Barr had shaped their lives. Not only were their stories inspiring, but I felt so thankful to receive her guidance and to be able to say that she shaped my life too.

-Sara Friedman, Class of 2010

Dr. O'Barr held us to a higher standard. Her class challenged Baldwins to gather, analyze, and present information at a professional level. She treated us like sharp, forward-thinking women and expected nothing less.

-Roshen Sethna, Class of 2009

During my time at Duke, I was often amazed by the rates of grade inflation. I got used to turning in work that I felt was mediocre, because I still received exceptional marks. However, Dr. O'Barr pushed me. During our senior seminar, I was upset when she gave me a grade that I probably deserved for a sub-par essay, but she also offered me an opportunity to re-write the paper. I really respect her for being one of the few professors who demanded the highest possible quality of work from students. We would all be lucky to have more teachers like her, who aren't afraid to push us to be better.

-Tyla Fowler, Class of 2009

The Women and the Professions class was by far the most applicable and practical class I have taken at Duke. It truly prepared me for the challenges I would face as a woman in business and helped me think about strategic ways to deal with obstacles. I developed a completely different perspective on women in the workplace because of it and I know I will carry the values and knowledge I gained from this incredibly valuable class for many years to come! Many thanks to Dr. O'Barr for creating such a fascinating learning environment about such crucial issues!

-Merri Estren, Class of 2009

Mary Earle Chase, Unsung Heroine



Mary Earle Chase (WC'67) speaks to the Baldwin Scholars in November.

Mary Earle Chase, recipient of the 2010 Baldwin Scholars Unsung Heroine Award and President of the Women's Student Government Association (1966-67), visited campus in November. At a dinner in her honor, Mary shared her vision for leadership and life with a captivated audience of Baldwin Scholars.

Dr. Wesley Kort, her nominator, was in attendance as well as several of Mary's friends and family members.

Gifts to the Baldwin Scholars Program

We offer our sincere thanks to the following donors for their gifts; we appreciate their leadership and their belief in all that our Scholars can become. 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.

Shari Baker, Baldwin Scholar Class of 2010
Megan Braley, Baldwin Scholar Class of 2008
Bonnie Corwin, T'82
Merri Estren, Baldwin Scholar Class of 2009
Pallavi Kansal, Baldwin Scholar Class of 2008
Jeanne Tannenbaum, G'73, in honor of Jean O'Barr
Margaret Taylor Smith, WC'47
Barbara Washburn, WC'64

Contact us...

We'd love to hear from you!

phone: 919/684-6579

e-mail: baldwinscholars@duke.edu

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