

## Duke University

### Home

See that sign up there - the one with the Baldwin Scholars logo in a confident shade of red? Since December, everyone who walks down the Main Quad on West Campus sees it too, because it now adorns an exterior wall of Few Quad. The sign could hardly have greater visibility: it's on the corner facing in, the first sign on the left as you walk from the bus stop toward Clocktower Quad.

Our sign marks the new Baldwin house, which occupies the first and second floors of Few FF. Our house has amenities including a new kitchen, study rooms, a computer cluster, two commons rooms, a laundry room, views of the Chapel and the bus stop, and . . . (sorry, classes of 2008–2012) . . . air conditioning! Our neighbors are the Women's Center below us and the WHO house (Women's Housing Option, another all-female house) above us. There are lots of empowered women living and working in that corner of Few Quad; we like to call it the Tower of Power.

We designed the Baldwin Scholars to be residential from the beginning, with sophomores required to live in our section (formerly in Crowell Quad) and juniors and seniors encouraged to do so. Baldwin Scholars have always brought in the roommate of their choice, which allows us to share our benefits with many non-Baldwin "civilians." Under Duke's new residential



house system, the rules have changed somewhat. Baldwin Scholars are now assigned to our house in sophomore year (still with the roommate of their choice), but are then expected to return there as long as they live on campus. They may reside elsewhere after sophomore year only if they live with another selective living group, have been selected as a resident advisor, are off-campus, or if we do not have space for them because they have returned from study away. Their civilian roommates do not have to return if they do not wish to, but are welcome to do so.

The new house system affects every Duke undergraduate, with the same rules for all. It's meant to inspire a greater sense of continuity and community, and to give everyone – affiliated or independent – the same benefits. Our house is a hybrid of sorts, not truly selective because the students do not choose the new members, but clearly not independent either. We've only occupied it since August, but the

reviews are glowing so far. Students love the location and the amenities, but they also love having so many smart, driven women in close proximity. The Baldwin house encourages greater interaction between the class years, as sophomore, junior and senior Baldwins are jumbled up amongst the two floors. Their initial bond is with their own class and their mentor family, but the house allows us to expand that bond and to foster closer relationships between all the women in the program.

As for me, I get a thrill every time I walk by the sign. Its prominent location tells me that the Baldwin Scholars have arrived. We're not tucked into a back corner; we're occupying some of the most prominent real estate on campus. How different from the early years of coeducation at Duke, when some alumnae reported that walking down that same quad involved facing a gauntlet of men on benches, holding up signs rating their attractiveness. We all know we have more work to do, but I'm encouraged to see our students in the proverbial corner office, and hope it encourages them to see that Duke – and the wider world – has a place for them, front and center.

Donna Lisker, Co-Director of the Baldwin Scholars Program

### *Sarah Weddington, attorney and activist*



Monday, February 25  
7p.m.  
Reynolds Theater, Bryan Center

This event is free and open to the public.

We are pleased to announce the eighth talk in the Jean Fox O'Barr Distinguished Speaker Series.

In honor of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Roe v. Wade, the Baldwin Scholars program has invited Sarah Weddington, the attorney who, at age 26, argued this landmark case before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Special thanks to the Muglia Family Foundation for their generous sponsorship of this annual event.

## *What's at Stake?*

The Baldwin Scholars decided on the timely theme of “Women and Politics” for the fall semester. The culminating event was a debate about important issues for women in the presidential debate.

Raj De (T'13, top right photo) deserves major credit for leading this successful initiative. Ellie Schaack (T'14) served as the moderator and Samantha Lachman (T'13, speaking in top left photo) as one of the four panelists.



## *An Exciting Announcement from Dr. Jean O'Barr*

As many of you know, Dr. O'Barr recently retired from Duke after a legendary career as a faculty member and administrator. She left a significant legacy to the institution through Continuing Studies and Women's Studies, a department she founded and led for two decades. She has continued to provide the Baldwin Scholars program with vision and sage advice.

Dr. O'Barr taught the Baldwin Scholars senior seminar, “Women and the Professions,” for four years. The course is an investigation of women and work from historical, present day and future perspectives. If we had a dollar for every time a Baldwin Scholar alumna exclaimed, “Everything Dr. O'Barr taught us about the professional world is true,” WE could retire!

Dr. O'Barr is publishing a collection of her talks. *Transforming Knowledge: Public Talks on Women's Studies 1976-2011* will be available as an ebook and print on demand in February from She Writes Press.

From the book summary:

O'Barr offers a historical archive of how we were thinking about feminism, women's studies, and the transformation of knowledge over four decades. She tells a detailed story of what it looked like to change both knowledge and structures on a university campus. [Her talks] are a record of her journey, a personal one that paralleled the growth of the women's movement and a professional life that paralleled the development of Women's Studies.

Feminists everywhere, pondering how to move forward to change the institutions we are part of and the knowledge we share, will find both specific examples and overall inspiration here.

## *Class of 2016 Baldwin Scholars profiles*

Meet the ninth class of Baldwin Scholars! The class includes 16 Trinity and two Pratt students and one varsity athlete. The new Baldwin Scholars hail from nine states and four foreign countries. Their interests include dance, environmental issues, medicine, astrophysics, travel, and animal ethics.

**Aarti Asrani** hails from Chapel Hill, NC. She is interested in Public Policy as a potential major and is passionate about helping girls in developing countries have access to education. She is a member of Duke Dhamaka, a competitive and high-energy bhangra dance team.

**Hanan Awel**, from Springfield, VA, defines herself by her Ethiopian heritage and upbringing in a dual-faith family. She is the first in her family to be born in the United States and the first to attend college. She is pre-med and interested in global health issues.

**Audra Bass** is from Winston-Salem, NC. She is an aspiring zoologist and has already acquired a position at Duke's Lemur Center. She wants to learn about world religions and is a poet.

**Rebecca (Becky) Bauer**, from Orinda, CA, is a survivor of childhood cancer. She is a Pratt engineer and was elected freshman class president in the Engineering Student Government.

**Chandra Christmas-Rouse**, from Temple Hills, MD, is also a Pratt engineer interested in environmental issues and sustainable development. She is a Duke Student Government senator and is involved in the Black Student Alliance and the Kenan Institute for Ethics.

**Nourhan Elsayed** hails from St. Petersburg, FL and is a University Scholar at Duke. She is pre-med and interested in pursuing a Women's Studies major. Her goal is to open a medical clinic for Arab women in the Middle East. Nourhan plays club rugby.

**Kimberly Farmer**, from Gilbert, AZ, is interested in public policy, Arabic, and economics. She serves as a Senator on the Durham/Regional Affairs committee of Duke Student Government.

**Katherine (Katie) Fernelius**, from Rancho Santa Margarita, CA, is an A.B. Duke Scholar. She has diverse interests in film, politics, neuroscience, and writing and is most passionate about mental health advocacy.

**Suhani Jalota** is an international student from Mumbai, India. She is active in social change and has worked in the Mumbai slum communities and with the homeless in Durham. She is a member of the Hindi Students Association and plays badminton. Suhani is especially intrigued by the social messaging conveyed by Hindi soap operas!

**Daisy “Nash” Mepukori** is also an international student, from the Maasai tribe in Kenya. Nash declares that she is not a daisy! She attended the African Leadership Academy boarding school and is drawn to global health issues.

**Gayle Powell** is from Easton, CT. She is interested in education and public policy. She has committed herself to the Kenan Institute for Ethics, writing for their magazine, and working on refugee issues.

**(Michelle) Arianna Price**, from Tucson, AZ, is connected to her Jewish faith and community. She is interested in an Economics major and is potentially pre-vet.

**Caroline Steiblin** is an international student from Switzerland. On campus, she is involved at the Women’s Center and with Rince Diabhal, Duke’s Irish dance team. Caroline is interested in majoring in physics.

**Gloria Tomlinson** hails from Escondido, CA. Her high school involvement in a service club has led her to interests in political science, law, and human rights. Gloria dreams of working for the United Nations.

**Maurlia Upchurch** is from Decatur, GA. She is interested in neonatology and immunology and will enthusiastically describe her research with dairy cows! Maurlia is involved with the Black Student Alliance and Future Is Now, mentoring young girls.

**Sarah Urdahl**, from Houston, TX, is a Varsity field hockey player at Duke. She has interests in mechanical and aerospace engineering and plans to transfer into Pratt. Despite these significant commitments, Sarah wants to do community service, join a sorority, and study abroad.

**Catherine White** is from Davis, CA. Although she arrived at Duke as a recruited rower, she has been permanently sidelined due to injury. She is involved in the Duke Women’s Mentoring Network and is considering a Women’s Studies major.

**Kalifa Wright** is originally from Aurora, IL but spent her last three years of high school in Uganda. She plans to pursue medicine and will major in either psychology or neuroscience.

## *Baldwin Alumnae Spotlight:*

### *An Interview with White House Intern Maab Ibrahim, T'12*

#### **What are your primary roles and responsibilities as an intern?**

As an intern with the Domestic Policy Council, each day is exciting and different. I work primarily with the White House Office of Faith-based and Neighborhood Partnerships. The Office works to advance the Administration's policy objectives and partnerships with faith-based and community organizations. That work includes many of the President's signature initiatives, such as the President's Fatherhood



and Mentoring Initiative, which promotes responsible fatherhood; the Together for Tomorrow Challenge, which supports congregations and community organizations that help low-performing schools; the congregation-based Job Clubs Initiative that helps put Americans back to work and President Obama's Interfaith Campus Challenge, which connects students of different faiths together to serve their community.

My responsibilities include assisting in daily operations, coordinating with our federal agency partners, and conducting policy research. Outside of my office, I frequently participate in White House intern programming, which includes professional development workshops, a weekly speaker series and community service projects.

#### **What have you noticed about the culture for women in your work environment?**

Since his first day in office, President Obama has tirelessly advocated for and alongside women. His efforts to improve work standards for women began by signing the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act as his first piece of legislation and issuing an executive order to form the White House Council on Women and Girls. This is an environment where such principles are valued. Women and their advocates bring a unique perspective to policy and it is empowering to see them in action.

#### **How are you applying the skills and experiences from Baldwin in this role?**

The Baldwin Scholars Program challenged me to think critically about campus culture and societal norms, using tools to work with various stakeholders and develop innovative solutions. My office plays a similar role partnering with faith-based and community groups to advance the President's agenda. The tools Baldwin provided--- academic seminars, networking and public speaking workshops and a network of campus leaders--- allowed me to develop a professional and leadership skillset that I frequently draw from while interning at the White House. Most importantly, the Baldwin Scholars Program encouraged me to seek feedback on my performance from mentors and implement a process of self-evaluation and reflection. Both of these skills are highly valued at the White House.

## What do you hope to do next professionally?

Following my time at the White House, I plan to pursue a graduate program in public policy that delves deeply into women's health issues. This will build upon my experiences at Duke University exploring topics such as women and healthcare reform, female genital mutilation in Sudan, child and maternal health in India and China and domestic sex trafficking. I hope to pursue a career that contributes to the national dialogue surrounding women and their health choices.

## *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.

Peter Schwaller '89  
Barbara Washburn '64

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

## *Contact us...*

We'd love to hear from you!

phone: 919/684-6579  
e-mail: [baldwinscholars@duke.edu](mailto:baldwinscholars@duke.edu)

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