

Duke University

Year Ten

It hardly seems possible, but in the fall of 2013 we will accept our **tenth** class of Baldwin Scholars. When we announce their names in early November we will have 180 women with the Baldwin Scholar designation. We'll have conducted more than 700 first interviews and more than 350 second interviews to find them. Colleen and our students will have held nearly 70 information sessions in the first-year residence halls, and we'll have been at Blue Devil Days 10 consecutive years. Of those 180, 104 will have graduated Duke as Baldwin Scholars, with the class of 2014 on deck. And the newest class, the "baby Baldwins" from the class of 2017 – well, they were in the 4th grade when we selected our first class.

Feeling old yet? Working at a university does that to you; as is often said, you get older but the students stay the same age. But the passage of years has its advantages, and in April we hit a major one: the Baldwin Scholars has existed long enough to have our first 5-year reunion class. Our great class of 2008 – our first cohort – was invited back to Duke to celebrate their fifth reunion. Nine of the 18 Baldwins from 2008 came back. Given the difficulty we had getting 50% of them in the same place when they all lived on campus, we were thrilled with the turnout. It was a joy to spend time with them and to watch them reconnect with one another and with our current Baldwin



Class of 2008 Baldwins at Reunions

Scholars. Rachel McLaughlin '08 kindly wrote about Reunions and you will find her article in this newsletter. We look forward to seeing the class of 2009 in the spring of 2014.

Reaching the one-decade mark provides an excellent opportunity for reflection. I remember the first focus groups we held when we were designing the program, and how relieved we were that our undergraduate women responded to images of strength and power rather than depictions of more conventional femininity. None of us wanted the logo or website to be pink! I remember how worried we were that we wouldn't get enough applications to fill 18 spots in the first class, and how relieved we were to get 78 (now we average 145). We had many conversations in those early days about what it meant to be a "leadership" program; that word carries a lot of freight. Some saw it as emblematic of the corporate world and worried we would not support feminist values.

Others wanted us to identify with some specific school of leadership theory, which we have steadfastly refused to do; we prefer to help each Baldwin identify her own strengths and passions and lead in the way that's right for her.

Mostly I think about the individual women and their journeys. Watching them grow up from insecure first-years into confident seniors (and beyond) is the greatest joy of this program. Introducing them to peers and mentors they would otherwise have never met, and seeing those relationships blossom, gives us so much satisfaction. Every time a Baldwin posts a Facebook photo of herself with other Baldwins in some location beyond campus (and this is a well-traveled bunch), Colleen and I get sentimental. If we have taught them to believe in themselves and one another, to pursue their passions, and to seek mentors and to reach back to help other women, we have spent this decade well.

We have some big plans afoot to celebrate our tenth year. Stay tuned for information on campus events, and have a wonderful summer!

Donna Lisker, Co-Director of the Baldwin Scholars Program

A Special Thanks to the Throsby Family

In May, the Baldwin Scholars Program was honored to receive a large gift, in the form of an endowment, from the Throsby Family. Sophie Throsby is a treasured member of the Baldwin Class of 2013. The annual income will support a summer internship and additional activities related to alumnae development. We thank them for their trust, belief in our mission, and thoughtful generosity.

Other Important Gifts

We also offer our sincere thanks to the following donors for their gifts to the program:

Shari Baker, Class of 2010 Baldwin Scholar
Megan Braley, Class of 2008 Baldwin Scholar
Merri Estren, Class of 2009 Baldwin Scholar
Tyla Fowler, Class of 2009 Baldwin Scholar
Freddie Mac, matching gift
Dr. Emily Klein, former co-Director, Baldwin Scholars Program
Lucy McKinstry, Class of 2010 Baldwin Scholar
Tricia McKitty, T'92, L'95
Rachel McLaughlin, Class of 2008 Baldwin Scholar
Meredith Metcalf, Class of 2009 Baldwin Scholar
Swathi Padmanabhan, Class of 2010 Baldwin Scholar
Michelle Sohn, Class of 2011 Baldwin Scholar
Angela Steiblin-Pope, Baldwin parent (Caroline Steiblin, Class of 2016)
Dr. Judith Touchton, WC '62
Alison (Perlberg) Wynn, Class of 2008 Baldwin Scholar
Meng Zhou, Class of 2008 Baldwin Scholar

If you are interested in making a gift to the Baldwin Scholars, please contact Donna Lisker at dllisker@duke.edu or, when making a gift to Duke, stipulate that you want it to go to the Baldwin Scholars. Gifts can be targeted toward any area of the program.

Baldwin Intern Spotlight: Lauren Carroll, Class of 2014

This summer, I've been working for *The Tampa Bay Times* – called *The St. Petersburg Times* until recently – as a newsroom intern at their main bureau in St. Petersburg, Florida. I'm lucky to be here; it's a paper with a strong reputation, numerous Pulitzer Prize winners on staff, and optimism about the future of journalism. I'm learning so much about the field and what kind of journalist I want to be, and I'm realizing again and again with every story that this is the right career for me.



Even though *The Tampa Bay Times* is such a renowned news organization, the editors trust the interns with the same assignments they would give any full-time reporter. I started out chasing storms and writing articles about stingray safety, but lately I've been working on stories about the upcoming mayoral election and the complicated history of parole in Florida; I even got to meet the governor for an assignment.

Locally, the *Times* has an audience of about 1.7 million who still see the value in a local paper. But they often produce work that has national reach, sometimes in conjunction with well-respected national news organizations like CNN or the Center for Investigative Reporting. PolitiFact – the popular Pulitzer Prize-winning website that rates politicians' statements on a scale of "pants-on-fire" to "true" – was born in the *Times* newsroom.

There are also a lot of Duke connections at the *Times*. Tons of Blue Devils have made pit stops here during their journalism careers and there are several alumni on staff. The managing editor's son will be a freshman at Duke this year, the founder of PolitiFact, Bill Adair, is now a professor, and a former publisher was a Duke trustee.

Any Baldwin Scholar would make a great reporter. Through the program, we learn

how to avoid mistakes many women make in professional settings, like up-talking, over-apologizing, and using body language that makes you small. In journalism – still a male-dominated field – you have to be assertive in order to get the assignments you want and to pull information from tight-lipped sources. I often think back to Baldwin lessons when I’m competing with five other (older, male) reporters to catch a politician before he gets into his car or when I want my editor to know that I’m ready to take on more challenging stories.

The skills I’m learning this summer are applicable in any field. Beyond the obvious — writing and multimedia — journalism improves your critical thinking, researching, time management, and understanding about history and current events. It’s great to work in a newsroom where the staff — even if they don’t know what the future holds for a physical paper — knows there will always be a need for good journalism. To prepare, they encourage reporters to make videos, take their own photos, use Twitter and explore any possible vehicle for getting a story to the public. I can’t wait to bring the lessons I’ve learned at the *Times* back to *The Chronicle* this fall.

I’ve also been living with a Tar Heel this summer, which has forced me to learn a lot about tolerance.

Congratulations, Class of 2013!

On May 10, we celebrated the Class of 2013 with a ceremony and celebration in the East Duke Building. We now have 104 young alumnae out in the world!

Commencement is the perfect term for this event as students bring their undergraduate experience to a close and prepare to open the next chapter of their lives, with a firm foundation provided by their families, Duke University, and the Baldwin Scholars program.

Several of our Scholars will start work at organizations including Morgan Stanley, IBM, Bellevue Hospital, Duke’s Campus Farm, Cvent, and Legacy Venture Consulting. Two will pursue advanced degrees in education and paleontology! Others are still formalizing their next step.

This was a class of incredible academic and extracurricular achievement. We are very proud of all of them.



Unsung Heroine Award

The Unsung Heroine Award, given annually by the Baldwin Scholars, recognizes a woman who has demonstrated extraordinary dedication to issues that face women at Duke or in the larger community, but whose efforts have not received formal recognition. Nominees can be Duke undergraduate or graduate students, alumnae, faculty, staff, or retirees.

Four individuals were nominated this spring for the sixth annual award.

A small committee of Baldwin Scholars reviewed the nominations and selected a winner.

Senior Nelly Kontchou was recognized for her work as a mentor and President of The Girls Club, an organization that teaches young girls the importance of education, reflection, self-respect, and healthy lifestyle choices.

The selection committee valued Nelly's dedication to civic engagement and the advancement of women through mentoring. She exemplifies the mission of the Baldwin Scholars and is truly an unsung heroine.



Nelly Kontchou (L) receiving the award from
Class of 2015 Baldwin Scholar Reem Alfahad.

Class of 2008 Reunion

by Rachel McLaughlin

As a member of the inaugural class of Baldwin Scholars, one of our first assignments freshmen year was to write an autobiography. When I reflect on this exercise today, it's a marker in time. We had not been at Duke long enough for the experience to dramatically shape us. Yet we were embarking on a new, collective experience, bringing our fears and ambitions with us on this journey.

When I returned for our five-year reunion in April, I walked into our cherished seminar room to greet Donna, Colleen, and some of the women who presented their stories nine years ago. Donna reminded me of my own: I was homesick. I missed my parents and my 40-person strong Irish-Catholic family in St. Louis. Although I loved the opportunities and new friends I had made at Duke, I unraveled into a mess of tears when confronted with the life I felt, in some ways, I was leaving behind. (Donna will tell you it was less a “mess” and a more of a deluge).

We’ve all grown since then. Sitting in the seminar room again, this time with a cocktail or two, I felt at home because, just as my family was integral in my journey from Missouri to Duke, we supported each other as we grew into the wiser women we are today. And we are still supporting each other. Life after college has its own challenges including male-dominated workplaces, stodgy corporate cultures that stifle our creativity, knowing when to follow your gut and change course, and choosing the right spouse.

Weathered and less naïve, we laughed and told both funny and serious stories. We dispensed and received advice from these women we trusted most and later shared the lessons we have learned with the current Baldwins. Still even as we spoke to the younger Baldwins, a place where the passage of time was most tangible, I remembered the stories we told at 18 and was proud that we kept our foundations intact.

Kelley still has her depth, Andrea her persistence, and Laura her ability to light up a room with her energy – all qualities central to the first stories they told. I no longer struggle with homesickness, but that emotional tie to my upbringing still defines my actions today.

Only Donna and Colleen know the intent of that first assignment. I like to think that it’s precisely designed for moments like this. We have spread our wings and flourished at Duke and beyond, but, in a very good way, we are also still the same. That’s what makes this program special.

Rachel McLaughlin (center) responds to a panel question.



Current Baldwins are mesmerized by stories from the legendary Class of 2008 Baldwins.



by Colleen Scott, Associate Director

It started as a lark. I was researching a potential Baldwin major speaker and discovered that she had recently spoken at the 2012 World Domination Summit. The WHAT?? That sounds *very* Baldwin. I told the students that I was thinking about attending, just to see their reactions.

The more I learned about this conference, the more intrigued I became. I purchased a ticket for the 2013 gathering. I thought about it as a TED talk conference: inspiring people talking about inspiring ideas and experiences. I had a hard time describing the idea to others and must admit that, even a week after the gathering, I can't quite put my finger on what made this experience so special. But let me try...

The theme of the World Domination Summit is this: how to live a remarkable life in a conventional world, through community, adventure, and service.

We heard from big names like best-selling author Gretchen Rubin and public radio's Tess Vigeland, attended afternoon workshops, and even heard from attendees about their goals and accomplishments.

This organization created an incredibly unusual culture. Even though there were 2800 participants and we waited in many lines, the community felt very intimate. We were not only encouraged, but expected, to walk up to complete strangers and share our stories. Everyone I met was positive, authentic and open. And we all had ideas, big and small, about how we want to make an impact. We examined the idea of fear, the importance of taking that first step, and how to share our message with the world.

Attendees were from diverse cultures, classes, and age groups. My favorite new friends are a couple who have decided to put their careers on hold at the age of 60 to take a gap year. After WDS, they will be resettling in Maine, travelling to France to relearn French, and figuring out what they want the rest of their lives to look like.

I encourage you to check it out:
<http://worlddominationsummit.com/>

p.s. And did I mention that we broke the Guinness Book of World Records record for the number of people floating on inner tubes in a human chain?

Contact us...

We'd love to hear from you!

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Best wishes for a sunny and relaxing summer!
Donna, Ava, and Colleen