President Tom Cronin announces plans to step down in July 2005

Tom and Tania Cronin with their son Alex, who is an assistant professor of physics at the University of Arizona.

Dear Whitman College Alumni, Parents and Friends,

I recently informed the Whitman College Board of Trustees that I plan to step down from the Whitman presidency in July of 2005, at the end of this next academic year (2004-05).

This will be an appropriate time for change and renewal both for me and for Whitman College. I will, by then, have had the pleasure of serving as Whitman's president for 12 years.

My wife, Tania, and I consider it a special honor and privilege to work with everyone associated with this great College.

Whitman's dedicated faculty and staff are a great reason for the success of this place. But an equally empowering resource for Whitman has been the enduring affection this College enjoys among its thousands of alumni, parents and friends. I am extremely grateful to all of you for your generous encouragement, help, counsel and support.

Whitman will be well positioned in 2005 to welcome new leadership. The College has enjoyed solid and steady progress. Applications for admission are at an all-time high and have increased by over 100 percent since the early 1990s. Graduation rates are also at an all-time high. Fundraising has been very successful. Sixteen new faculty positions have been added and others will be established in the near future. A dozen buildings have been built, upgraded or acquired. New athletic facilities have been added. (Two more new buildings are in design and fundraising stage.) A new wilderness campus was acquired. Unprecedented reaccreditation honors have been earned as have similar accolades in various national ratings.

Most important, the quality of the faculty and academic program has been strengthened.

A university president I admired when I was in graduate school noted that, soon after he was selected to serve as president at Stanford University, the trustees there informed him they had been looking for a person just like him — sufficiently intelligent to do the job, yet sufficiently foolish to accept it.

I feel a little like that now: intelligent enough to leave this assignment when the College has made such good progress, yet also somewhat foolish about leaving a job I have so much loved.

I am notifying our board of trustees at this relatively early time because it often takes at least a full year to conduct a successful search for a new president.

The trustees have established a search committee for recruiting Whitman's next president. Seattle attorney Karen Glover (Whitman '72 and Harvard J.D. '75) and Bellevue businessman John Stanton (Whitman '77 and Harvard MBA '79) will co-chair this committee, which will include students, faculty, alumni, and a staff member.

This is a magical place for learning because Whitman students, faculty and staff embrace the challenge that the liberal arts are fundamentally liberating and freeing arts. And that liberal arts colleges, at their best, create an ideal environment for learning, for asking critical and fundamental questions, for fostering the freedom to excel and for cultivating the courage to imagine and lead.

Special thanks to all of you for your part in making Whitman the splendid learning community it is.

I look forward in the coming three semesters to working closely with all of you in helping to make Whitman College an even stronger and more vital place for learning, scholarship, creativity and personal growth.

Thank you.

Tom Cronin

President Tom Cronin

A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Dear Whitman College Community and Friends:

Tom Cronin has advised the board of trustees that he will retire as president of Whitman College when his contract expires in the summer of 2005. President Cronin's announcement has been preceded by 11 years of exemplary service as chief executive officer of the College. He is one of the longest serving presidents in the history of the College.

President Cronin's tenure has been a period of unparalleled growth for the College. The College has grown from a strong liberal arts college to a strong, nationally ranked, liberal arts college. President Cronin's leadership, vision, and character have been significant factors in the College's recognition. President Cronin is an exceptional scholar and a passionate administrator who will leave a legacy of personal involvement with the communities on and off campus. His extensive knowledge of many Whitman students' names and interests is renowned. He founded the College's Center for Community Service and has been a local leader in the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation and the Blue Mountain Land Trust.

Applications for admission to Whitman College have increased 100 percent during Tom Cronin's presidency. The quality and diversity of the College student body has steadily improved. We are pleased that Whitman College is now ranked in the top 10 best co-ed liberal arts colleges for overall academic quality while the graduation rate for Whitman students has risen to 86 percent, which places it with the top liberal arts colleges in the nation. According to the *Princeton Review Guide to Best Colleges,* Whitman has one of the most satisfied student bodies in the United States.

The College has increased its faculty by over 15 percent, while decreasing its student-faculty ratio. Whitman's faculty is vibrant and scholarly, and average compensation of faculty over the last 11 years has doubled. Under President Cronin's leadership, the College has constructed four new buildings and significantly renovated several others, and has acquired other important new facilities. The College has no deferred maintenance, a rare, and perhaps unduplicated, quality among colleges and universities. All of this has been accomplished with 10 consecutive annual balanced budgets. The College has tripled its endowment. President Cronin has been instrumental in fundraising, with gifts, pledges, and estate planning gifts exceeding $125 million in the last 10 years. During this period, the College has also received two unprecedented clean accreditation reviews, a rare event in which the reviewing panel did not offer any recommendations for improvement.

The College is fortunate that President Cronin has 16 months remaining in his presidency. He has the board's unanimous and enthusiastic support. During the remaining term of Tom Cronin's presidency, the College has planned an aggressive array of projects to be completed and aspirations to be realized.

The board is grateful for President Cronin's early announcement so that a thorough, selective, national search can be conducted in order to identify a suitable successor. I have established a search committee, which will consist of trustees, faculty, students, alumni, and a staff member and have appointed trustee chair-elect Karen Glover and trustee John Stanton as co-chairs of the committee. The committee has a goal of identifying candidates who can maintain the College's momentum of unparalleled improvement.

The College is most fortunate to have President Cronin as its president now and to the end of his term. He has raised the College's expectations, national ranking, and quality and has set a springboard for continued advancement. Members of the board of trustees are enormously grateful to Tom and Tania Cronin for their hospitality at hundreds of gatherings celebrating the students, staff, and alumni of Whitman College and for their many contributions to the civic and cultural life of this community.

James K. Hayner

James K. Hayner, Chair
Board of Trustees

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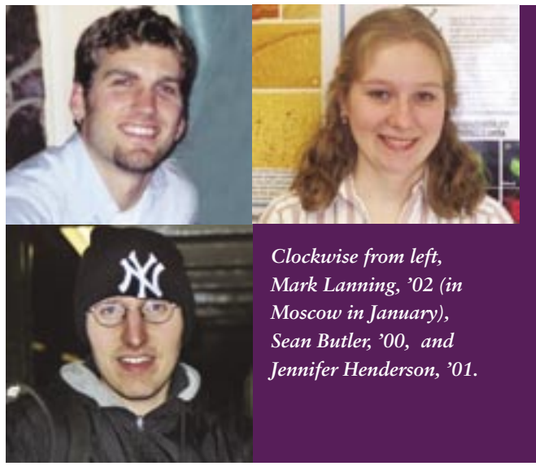
Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL

Engaged in studies ranging from law to public health and from neuroscience to physics/astronomy, Whitman alumni are working toward advanced degrees at noted graduate schools across the country.

The individuals profiled on these pages are only a sampling of the many Whitman scholars who believe their Whitman experience prepared them well for graduate school.



Clockwise from left, Mark Lanning, '02 (in Moscow in January), Sean Butler, '00, and Jennifer Henderson, '01.

Mark Lanning, '02
Public & International Affairs

Mark Lanning lives a stone's throw from the Kremlin in downtown Moscow, Russia, while studying Russian history and language at Moscow State University. He is a student of Princeton University's Woodrow Wilson School for Public and International Affairs.

Last year he became interested in issues of Russia while taking general requirements for a degree in international affairs. "I started Russian language classes and took a Russian politics course," he said, and he also took a class on weapons of mass destruction — the history, physical principals behind weapons, and politics.

Lanning received a Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship for his work at Princeton, and last year he was awarded a Defense Department National Security Education Fellowship, which is providing for his year in Russia. Before returning to Princeton, he plans to begin Chinese studies and participate in the Princeton in Beijing summer program. Eventually, he will enter the U.S. Foreign Service.

In addition to his classes at Moscow State University, Lanning works at the Carnegie Moscow Center, funded by the Washington-based Carnegie Endowment for Peace. He translates documents and helps scholars with their research on weapons of mass destruction.

Before going to Moscow, Lanning worked at the U.S. Embassy in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, where he researched issues of education, health (AIDS, STDs), gangs, human rights, illegal labor and immigration, and drugs.

Jennifer Henderson, '01
Neuroscience

At Johns Hopkins University, Jennifer Henderson works in a small lab with a team conducting research on a protein located in the parts of the brain involved in learning and memory. A chemistry-biology major at Whitman, she is in her third year of a five- to six-year program leading to a Ph.D. in neuroscience.

The protein Henderson's team is studying, designated "Tech," is one of a class of proteins called RhoGEFs. It affects the actin cytoskeleton of neurons, she said. "Specifically, my project is looking at the interaction between Tech and another protein called GIPC and how they may be involved in internalization of receptors from the cell surface."

Henderson is second author of a forthcoming paper on the research.

Teaching will probably be part of her life beyond graduate school, but, Henderson noted, "there are so many other things to learn about in life. That's one of the things I liked most about Whitman and my liberal arts education. Even as a science major, I was taking other kinds of interesting classes."

Once she has her Ph.D. in hand, Henderson expects to pursue other interests in addition to teaching and research.

Sean Butler, '00, Law

Sean Butler began work on a master's degree in philosophy, but he "decided to descend from the ivory tower" and take some time off before changing to a study of the law. That time off turned out to be superior preparation for law school, said Butler, now in his second year at Boalt Hall on the University of California, Berkeley, campus.

"From studying for the LSAT to taking the bar exam, almost everything they throw at us tests our ability to maintain focus and not be thrown off by bewildering concepts and situations," he said.

"And so taking time off from school to wait tables, bartend, digest my experiences at Whitman, and spend some time thinking about who I wanted to be — and how I wanted a law degree to fit into that vision — has been an incredible lifeline since I entered law school."

At Boalt Hall, Butler is delving into legal questions related to intellectual property. In addition to assisting a professor with research on copyright issues, he is doing public interest work in technology policy.

"Next year I'll be writing a research paper on the issue of the validity of open-source software licenses," Butler said. "After I finish school I'll likely be doing corporate work for technology companies at a Silicon Valley law firm."

Butler lives just outside of Berkeley with his partner, Sara Bleiweiss, '99, who is pursuing a doctorate in psychology at the Wright Institute.

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"Perhaps the most important intellectual challenge at Whitman was my history thesis with Professor Schmitz on U.S. foreign policy in Chile in the 1960s and 70s. Although very difficult at times, the task taught me what it takes to research and write at a graduate school level.

"Whitman's access to Lexis-Nexis and other databases is something I've always highly valued (especially having worked in Uzbekistan and studied in Russia) and is just as good if not better than some of Princeton's resources."

— *Mark Lanning, '02*

"Scholastically speaking, I felt as prepared for law school as most, if not all, of my peers. Studying philosophy and politics at Whitman gave me a rich background in which to situate the legal institutions that have developed in Anglo-American law over the last several centuries. That was something of a life-preserver when I was tossed head-first into law school.

"What also stood me in good stead was having learned, at Whitman, how to read between the lines of a text and then how to articulate what I gather from that kind of reading in clear, coherent writing. Tom Davis, my philosophy adviser, and Tim Kaufman-Osborn both instilled in me the value of those skills."

— *Sean Butler, '00*

"Two Whitman faculty members, Jim Russo and Chris Wallace, were especially important mentors for me. . . . As my adviser, Dr. Russo helped me every step of the way: choosing classes, applying for scholarships and internships, allowing me to work in his lab the summer of 1999, applying for grad school, and getting my thesis together.

"Since he had just come from a research lab, Chris Wallace brought that mentality to lectures and lab. He was so excited about neuroscience it was really contagious. He also arranged for us to do really cool experiments in lab that most undergrads don't get to do.

"Dr. Russo and Dr. Wallace are passionate about science. I'm sure they'll be inspiring students for years to come."

— *Jennifer Henderson, '01*

Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL

In terms of academic preparation (I think Julie Charlip was the first professor to make me read a book a week), I was at about the same level as other members of my cohort who had studied at liberal arts colleges. However, I did observe that students who had taken a few years off after finishing undergrad work seemed more prepared in one important arena — they had had a chance to think about what they were doing.

I get the sense that there are a lot of different pathways back to the academy, and if you take some detours along the way you will probably be more motivated to work hard, finish quickly, and possibly use your degree in a creative way.

— Jessaca Leinaweaver, '97

Jessaca Leinaweaver, '97 Cultural Anthropology

Jessaca Leinaweaver is a Ph.D. candidate in cultural anthropology at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. She recently returned from two years in Ayacucho, Peru, where she researched Andean "kinship strategies" in the wake of the Shining Path insurrection that began in 1980. Her study dealt with the ways children are frequently circulated among the households of extended family groups, in temporary and sometimes desperate arrangements arising from the poverty of the people, she said. Leinaweaver, who recorded interviews with urban migrants as well as with state adoption officials in Peru, looked at three ways children are moved and classified — adoption, child trafficking, and fostering.

Her dissertation explores the "spoken justifications" for moving children around, the process of their getting accustomed to a new family and vice versa, and the war's effect on Peruvians' ability to draw on these "child circulation" techniques. In particular, the war influenced the growth of orphanages in the region, she said.

Leinaweaver's work has been funded by several granting agencies including the National Science Foundation, the Wenner-Gren Foundation, and the Fulbright Foundation. She has presented her research at the American Anthropological Association annual meeting and at a conference titled "Children in Their Places" at Brunel University in London.

After graduate school, she plans to teach, she said. "I want to stay in academia because I had so many positive experiences at Whitman, and I'd like the chance to pass that on."

Jack Baker, '00 Structural Engineering

Construction that can stand up to earthquakes is the subject that takes up Jack Baker's time in his graduate work at Stanford University. He has a master of science degree in structural engineering and now plans to complete a Ph.D. in the field. Meanwhile, he also is working on a master's degree in statistics.

"My research involves probabilistic modeling of risk from earthquakes," he said. "By using these models, we can more accurately evaluate existing structures to determine the potential for damage or collapse in future earthquakes. This knowledge helps us make decisions on retrofitting existing buildings and developing guidelines for new construction."

Baker's research currently is funded by an assistantship from the National Science Foundation. In 2002 he also received a Shah Family Fund Fellowship from Stanford and earned honorable mention in competition for an NSF research fellowship.

"I am interested in pursuing a career as a college professor. I enjoy academia very much. I get a lot of energy from learning new things every day and being surrounded by people with a thirst for knowledge. As a professor, I hope that I can share this enthusiasm with my own students."

Andrew Dawes, '02, Physics

The "speed of information in a 'fast-light' optical medium" is to be the focus of Andrew Dawes's Ph.D. research in physics at Duke University. Dawes has completed the basic graduate courses in his field and is now taking classes in quantum optics and particle physics. "It is nice to finally take a class geared towards my research interests and really start applying things I've learned in undergraduate and other graduate classes," he said.

Last summer, as a research assistant in the quantum electronics lab at Duke, he spent time "tuning and tweaking the operation of the lab's main laser system.

"This was a great experience for me since I'd never really pulled up my sleeves and gotten inside a high performance laser."

In his research on information velocity, he will test new theories about "the physical properties of optical pulses in relation to how such pulses carry information," he said.

Dawes hopes eventually to teach at a small liberal arts school. "Coming from Whitman I know very well that it is possible to be both a very good teacher and a very good researcher."

Tanja Englberger, '99 Public Health

After spending two and a half years as a Peace Corps vounteer in Niger, West Africa, Tanja Englberger entered the Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She now is in the last semester of her master's degree program, studying in the international health department.

Englberger spent last summer in Ethiopia working with CARE-Ethiopia on a survey to monitor and evaluate a five-year project to improve food security, nutrition, health, and agriculture. Based on some of her research in Ethiopia, her master's thesis explores breastfeeding attitudes, practices, and intentions among the people of three remote regions. In June, she will give a poster presentation on this research at the Global Health Council Conference in Washington, D.C.

While in graduate school, Englberger also has worked at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), where she has conducted research on nutrition data.

A German major at Whitman, Englberger left for Niger and her service as a Peace Corps volunteer in January 2001. She lived in the remote village of Tondi Kiwindi, where she worked at the village clinic and conducted home visits and informal health education sessions. Englberger left the village for a second-year assignment with the National Guinea Worm Program and Global 2000. "This involved monthly surveillance of guinea worm cases, health education, and distribution of filters to all endemic households," she said.

Englberger's long-range goal is to work in Africa with an international organization.

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I am benefiting greatly from the language resources at Whitman. I had the opportunity to live for a semester each in the French and German houses, and I was encouraged to study abroad in Berlin, which increased my enthusiasm for working and learning abroad.

I learned to have an open mind and to analyze issues, including international issues, through the international community at Whitman. As a result I'm able to use my degree in diverse international settings.

— Tanja Englberger, '99

The most valuable experience I had at Whitman was doing research for two summers with Mark Beck. There really aren't any books or classes that teach you how to pour liquid nitrogen without spilling it on your sandals. Things like that are invaluable in the lab, but you have to learn them somewhere; otherwise you'll never feel comfortable doing experimental research.

As a whole the faculty all contributed to my preparation for graduate school. Some by teaching me physics, others by teaching me how to write papers, and still others by teaching me how to watch a film instead of a movie.

— Andrew Dawes, '02

I was a math/physics major at Whitman, and now I study engineering, so when I switched fields I had a little catching up to do. However, in terms of my general analytical skills and my ability to present my ideas on paper and in person. . . . I was much better prepared than most of my peers.

My years of writing papers for Core and philosophy have served me well, and I feel fortunate also to have taken public speaking classes at Whitman. Even in a technical field such as engineering, I use these skills every day.

—Jack Baker, '00

Andrew Dawes, '02, left; Jack Baker, '00, right.

Gayle Christensen, '98 International Comparative Education

"My goal is to advance education everywhere for all children," said Gayle Christensen, who is completing her Ph.D. at Stanford University in international comparative education. In February, Christensen was one of only 10 scholars across the country to receive a German Chancellor Scholarship. The awards support "innovative people who are expected to be leaders in society."

In her studies, Christensen deals with successful policy-making aimed at improving education in different social settings and questions conventional beliefs and models about the role of education in society. She describes her graduate work as "a blend of education, economics, sociology, anthropology, and political science." She studies how these fields relate to improve the outcome of children in an international context. In April 2004 she will give a presentation at the American Education Research Association annual conference in San Diego.

Christensen also works as a research associate at the Hewlett Foundation, where her projects range from funding education internationally to bringing foundations together to aid in improving education.

A history and German major at Whitman, she spent a year in Germany under a Fulbright Scholarship. She then earned an M.A. degree in law and diplomacy at the Fletcher School at Tufts University.

Under the German Chancellor Scholarship, Christensen will return to Germany to conduct research on immigrant student achievement. She hopes eventually to become involved in educational policy-making in Washington, D.C.

Scott Daniel, '03 Physics-Astronomy

Dartmouth College recently welcomed Scott Daniel into its five-year Ph.D. program in physics/astronomy.

First on Daniel's agenda is two years of course work, with research conducted during the first summer and most subsequent academic breaks. The last three years of his work will be devoted to research leading to a doctoral thesis. "I'm tentatively planning to do my thesis research in theoretical cosmology, either large-scale structure in the universe/general relativity or early universe physics," said Daniel.

After completing the program and pursuing several years of post-doctoral research (probably in theoretical cosmology), Daniel hopes to secure a post at a school similar to Whitman, where he can both teach and conduct research.

The Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, Bonn, Germany, recently awarded a German Chancellor Scholarship to Gayle Christensen, '98, above. She will work at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin conducting research on immigrant student achievement in Germany.

Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL

Scott Daniel, '03, and Emily Cordo, '02.

My success in graduate school is due to Whitman's amazing advising, instruction, and counseling. The nurturing mentorship at Whitman was not something that I had seen before nor have I witnessed since. . . . I think that kind of experience is special to Whitman.

— Gayle Christensen, '98

Both Heidi Dobson and Dan Vernon were excellent mentors. Heidi Dobson was my thesis adviser and spent many hours working with me on my research and writing skills. I feel fortunate that I had an adviser who was willing to dedicate so much time and effort to the success of her students. Likewise, Dan Vernon was a great teacher and his enthusiasm for his research was contagious — my work in his lab was a major reason I chose to study plant molecular biology in graduate school.

— Jeff Anderson, '97

Everything that appeared on Dartmouth's "qualifying exam," which most students don't pass until their second year, I had seen in one form or another at Whitman. I was also one of only a handful of first-year graduate students who had ever seen (let alone worked with for an entire semester) the Dirac "bra-ket" formulation of quantum mechanics. . . . That was directly due to Whitman Professor Mark Beck's quantum mechanics course.

Professor UJ Sofia gave me the chance to work with him as a research assistant. As my adviser, Professor Andrea Dobson helped me find a course schedule that accommodated my desire for breadth while still maintaining the rigors in physics necessary to get into graduate school. They both established and refined my understanding of scientific research by regularly assigning papers that forced me to deal with contemporary research in astronomy and physics.

— Scott Daniel, '03

At Whitman I had several professors who truly turned my life around by inspiring in me the self-confidence to believe that I could be successful.

Tim Kaufman-Osborn and Julia Davis were the backbone of my Whitman experience. The classes I took from them were rigorous, challenging, and stimulating; they served as mentors to me, and they were my advisers for my thesis and orals . . . encouraging me, challenging me, and providing incredible feedback.

David Schmitz's classes were among the primary inspirations for my interest in social justice issues and social justice movements, and his compassion for students made a real difference in my experience at Whitman.

Finally, I appreciate Jim Hanson's work to maintain and expand Whitman's debate team, which was essential to my success in law school.

— Emily Cordo, '02

Jeff Anderson, '97 Biochemistry, Molecular & Cell Biology

At Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, Jeff Anderson is a Ph.D. candidate in the interdisciplinary field of biochemistry and molecular and cell biology. Now in his fifth year in the program, he spends his time on his own research in the Martin Laboratory at the Boyce Thompson Institute for Plant Research. His work involves the use of genetic, molecular, and biochemical approaches in the study of disease resistance in plants.

"Plants have an innate immune system that allows them to recognize invading pathogens and respond with defenses that prevent infection," he explained. "Our goal is to understand the molecular mechanisms of pathogen recognition in plants and the subsequent signal transduction events that lead to defense responses.

"My primary research interest is how proteins involved in these plant-pathogen interactions are regulated by modifications such as phosphorylation."

Anderson is co-first author of an upcoming article in *The Plant Journal* as well as two other articles which have been submitted. Following completion of his Ph.D., he plans to conduct postdoctoral research, "and then I would like to continue on as a researcher and teacher in an academic environment."

Emily Cordo, '02, Law

Emily Cordo interned last summer at the Northwest Women's Law Center in Seattle, pursuing an interest that began at Whitman. Now a student at the University of Washington School of Law, Cordo majored in politics at Whitman, but she also minored in gender studies and served as co-president of the student group Sexual Assault Prevention Educators (SAPE).

During her internship she worked on issues ranging from the duty of Catholic hospitals to provide information about emergency contraception to visitation rights of lesbian non-biological mothers. She also studied opposition by Northwest and national organizations to the "fetal rights" movement, including the Unborn Victims of Violence Act ("which I began studying in Timothy Kaufman-Osborn's class on law and politics").

In her law studies, Cordo is focusing on the field of civil rights, particularly in relation to employment discrimination. She currently is writing an article on "the limits of vicarious liability under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 when employment discrimination results in the constructive discharge of an employee," she said.

Cordo, who will intern next summer at the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), is committed to working in the area of public interest law. "I plan to go into plaintiff-side employment discrimination law. I would likely work at the EEOC or at a small firm specializing in that field.

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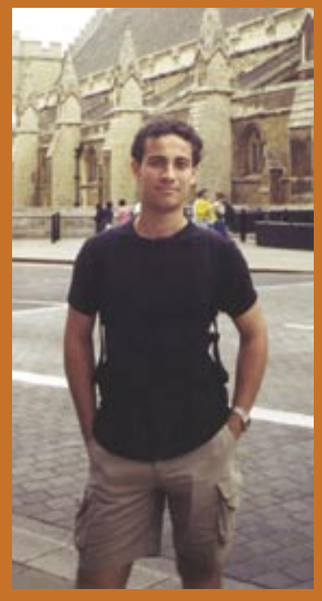
Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL



Tim and Sharon Kaufman-Osborn were my Walla Walla "friendship family," and they made me feel at home even though I was 10,000 miles away from my real home in Bulgaria. Tim also was my politics adviser, and he demonstrated the same patience with me in the classroom talking to me about Locke and Hobbes as he displayed in front of the television explaining to me the difference between a fastball and a slider.

I met Craig McKinnon from the security department soon after I began working as a "yellow jacket" on campus. Craig taught me a lot about the value of hard work, of being responsible and diligent at the job, and of taking pride in what you do.

— Lubo Merkov, '99

Lubomir Merkov, '99
Biomedical Sciences

Lubo Merkov is pursuing a Ph.D. in biomedical sciences at New York City's Rockefeller University, a small graduate school dedicated to biomedical research. Students take two years of courses, then rotate through two or three of the more than 75 research laboratories.

Merkov so far has gained laboratory experience studying brain degenerative diseases and bone development. He is now conducting research in a lab that focuses on the mechanisms used by *Mycobacterium tuberculosis* to survive and persist within the lungs of infected individuals.

"I am working on the enzyme malate synthase, which together with another enzyme, isocitrate lyase, forms the glyoxylate shunt of bacteria. Our lab has shown that isocitrate lyase is important for the survival of mycobacteria within the lungs of infected hosts," Merkov said.

"Since humans don't possess a functional glyoxylate shunt, the two enzymes isocitrate lyase and malate synthase are candidates for new anti-mycobacterial drugs."

Merkov is exploring the prospects of a post-doc fellowship while at the same time considering the possibility of a job in industry, preferably at a small biotech company.

Dana Leighton, '01
Social Psychology

At the University of British Columbia, Dana Leighton is working in the field of peace psychology, "specifically the social psychological antecedents for peaceful (or violent) conflict resolution," he said. He focuses on a concept called "integrative complexity."

"Integrative complexity (IC) is the degree to which people recognize multiple perspectives in a given situation . . . . For example, I could see a person as being either a good person or an evil person (low IC). Or, I could see them as being good, evil, fearful, and courageous, and recognize how their fear or courage might affect their expression of goodness or evil, or vice-verse, all of which could be affected by the situation (high IC)."

To study IC, Leighton and his colleagues look at paragraphs people write or speak, analyzing the complexity of their thoughts, he said.

They used the method to analyze the thinking and decisions of world leaders both before and after the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. Another application of the method allows them to predict surprise attacks (or lack of), Leighton said. Recently, they analyzed the India-Pakistan conflict (2002-present) and predicted that it would not result in a surprise attack. Fortunately, their prediction was correct, he said.

Leighton also is one of the authors of a book chapter on psychological implications for war and peace, to be published later this year.

Paula Johnson, '99
Educational Psychology

In her graduate study toward a doctorate in educational psychology at the University of Connecticut, Paula Johnson has been working on two major research projects, GlobalEd and Classroom of the Sea. Both projects focus on using technology to enhance learning and academic achievement, she said.

In the GlobalEd project she and her colleagues provide middle and high school students with simulations in international negotiations. Classes are assigned countries and then, while interacting over the Internet, enter into treaty negotiations with each other. Currently, 450 students in 12 states are involved in the five-week program.

Classroom of the Sea takes students from the American School for the Deaf out to sea to conduct experiments aboard a University of Connecticut research vessel. Johnson's team uses web-cast technology to broadcast the students' activities on the ship to deaf students in Connecticut, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Washington.

Johnson, who wrote her master's thesis on the attributes of excellent teachers, has presented her research at regional, national, and international conferences, and she is coauthor of a number of published articles.

Jeanette Fiess, '02
Zoology

At Whitman Jeanette Fiess conducted undergraduate research on osmoregulation in deep-sea invertebrates. "And that experience has helped in my research at the University of Hawai," she said.

Fiess has completed the coursework for her Ph.D. in zoology and now is focusing on her research project. "I'm currently looking at fish hormones, specifically prolactin, to determine how the hormones work to enable fish to live and move between seawater and freshwater environments."

She also works as a teaching assistant for introductory biology labs, but Fiess prefers research to teaching. "After I graduate, I'll probably have to work a couple of post-docs, to get more experience, but I would ultimately like to go into research in a university or college (if I don't have to do much teaching) or maybe in the biotech industry or with the government."

Jeanette Fiess, '02

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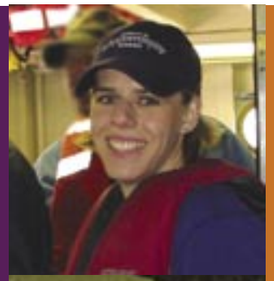
"The unique community Whitman fosters among students is one of interrelated responsibility for our collective experience as students."



Paula Johnson, '99, left, aboard a University of Connecticut research vessel. Below, Dana Leighton, '01, at the University of British Columbia.

Repeatedly, I have told people that Whitman was a great investment as the education, in the broad sense (including class, activities, lectures, and people), prepared me to a great extent for the intensity, the multiple demands, and the workload of graduate school.

My professors, particularly Professor Celia Weller, were and continue to be mentors who helped me seek and search for understanding, yet who offered guidance and empathy when needed. The mere fact that I could contact my professors after graduating and ask them for personal letters of reference, knowing full well that I was not a number, but rather a person, and that they knew my academic abilities was crucial.

— Paula Johnson, '99

My research with Professor Yancey helped me to understand what was involved in scientific research, and being able to present my research at conferences in France and Anaheim, California, provided good experience in giving scientific talks and posters. With Professor Yancey, I was also able to publish a scientific article, which taught me the basics of scientific writing — very different from writing in other fields!

— Jeanette Fiess, '02

There is a dimension to Whitman that I think gets overlooked in terms of how it helps prepare students for graduate school. The unique community Whitman fosters among students is one of interrelated responsibility for our collective experience as students. Consequently, it was imperative that we all pitch in to create the kind of experience we wanted for ourselves and our fellow students.

I learned a lot about project management from the student activities I was involved in. Project management is really important in graduate school, and it also looks good to your evaluation committees when you step up and organize students into activity groups and act as an officer for a professional organization.

— Dana Leighton, '01

Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL

Katie Berger, '00

My internship experiences over the summers were key factors in helping me get into graduate school. Two of my three internships were arranged through Whitman alumi — Dr. Ted Hansen ('57) at Harborview Medical Center and Joe Hurt ('90) at Johns Hopkins Medical School. These alumni provided me with the opportunity to learn about what was available (careerwise), how to get there, how to work hard, and what skills I would need to succeed in science. At Johns Hopkins I was able to complete my undergraduate senior thesis, and through outstanding mentorship I was able to learn about the necessary processes to conduct quality research.

— Katie Berger, '00

Jayson Beaster-Jones, '95

Relationships with Whitman professors, both in and out of the classroom, were crucial to my development as a scholar. I'm deeply indebted to professors David Glenn, Chas McKhann, and Jonathan Walters for providing me with so much of their time and insight. The overall high standard of teaching and intellectual curiosity has fueled my desire to be a professor of the same quality. What higher praise can I give?

Laura [Laura Beaster-Jones, '96, who has completed her Ph.D. in molecular biology and now works as a postdoc at UCSD] and I agree: our Whitman experience was truly the happiest and most fulfilling period in our lives.

— Jayson Beaster-Jones, '95

Jayson Beaster-Jones, '95
Cultural Anthropology

India, where the broadcast media was under state control until 1991, is a particularly interesting place to study music, said Jayson Beaster-Jones, who earned a double major in anthropology and music at Whitman. He is now a University of Chicago Ph.D. candidate in cultural anthropology conducting research in Bhopal and Mumbai, India, on the development of the Indian music industry.

After 1991, economic reforms took place in India that brought in multinational companies such as Universal and Sony and boosted the consumption of higher quality music hardware, Beaster-Jones said. In recent years there has been a flood of international popular music and film into India.

"What I'm particularly curious to study is a possible shift or development of music tastes from what might be called Indian popular music, such as Hindi film music, to international pop music (e.g. Britney Spears). More importantly, how do the listening practices of urban Indians reflect their ideological stance toward satellite television, cosmopolitanism, generational issues, and a society based upon consumption?"

Beaster-Jones is in the process of gathering data that will be useful in comparing the attitudes and practices in a small city with those of a metropolitan city, he said. After finishing his dissertation, he hopes to continue research and to teach at a liberal arts college similar to Whitman.

Katie Berger, '00
Epidemiology

Katie Berger conducts research on risk factors and predictors for ovarian cancer, a study that might lead to earlier diagnosis of the disease. Her work is part of a $5 million, five-year, federally funded case-control study called the HOPE project.

Berger, who earned a master's degree from Emory University, is pursuing a Ph.D. in maternal and child health epidemiology at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public Health.

"The study's primary focus is to look at how various genetic markers of the immune system and factors dealing with reproduction interact to influence the development of ovarian cancer," Berger said.

She also is working on a paper for publication that examines the association between obesity, alcohol consumption, and ovarian cancer. "Both obesity and alcohol consumption alter levels of hormones in the body directly associated with ovarian cancer development, and the two factors may have a synergistic effect."

Berger has worked with the Montana Department of Public Health on the issue of teen pregnancy, with the Centers for Disease Control on a field study of childhood lead poisoning, and with the state of Michigan as a birth defects epidemiologist.

After graduate school, Berger plans to enter the CDC's Epidemic Intelligence Service (EIS), a public health leadership training program, and afterward to work as a maternal and child health epidemiologist at the state level.

Jennifer Eastberg, '01
Structural Biology

Pursuing a Ph.D. at the University of Washington, Jennifer Eastberg specializes in the field of structural biology, specifically x-ray crystallography. Her research, aimed at increasing understanding of interactions between DNA and proteins, has involved three projects.

"The first was a structural study of how a kinase protein in wide laborotory use binds DNA non-specifically in order to add a phosphate group to its end," she explained, citing recent publication of that research.

"The second and third projects look at two different homing endonucleases. Homing endonucleases are DNA cutting proteins that recognize relatively long DNA sequences of 15-40 base pairs. The second project is a biochemical and structural study of a well-characterized endonuclease, I-PpoI. I am looking at the active site of the protein (the part that does the DNA cutting) and mutating one of its amino acids to see if it will still be able to cut DNA.

"The third project is the largest, and is centered around trying to engineer an existing endonuclease to recognize a new DNA target site. In addition to potentially generating a protein with new specificity, this project will also greatly increase knowledge of what is going on at the DNA-protein interface."

After graduate school, Eastberg said she probably will be looking for a teaching position where she also will be able to do research.

Jason Colby, '97
History

Jason Colby is completing a Ph.D. in history at Cornell University with a concentration in U.S. foreign relations. His dissertation focuses on race and U.S. expansion into the Caribbean basin. "In particular, I examine the efforts of U.S. corporations and the United States government to establish Jim Crow forms of white supremacy within their spheres of influence," he said.

After earning his degree, Colby plans to look for a position as a professor of history.

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Jason Colby, '97, with two master weavers during a trip to Otavalo, Ecuador.

The close interaction I was able to have with Whitman's superb history faculty made an extraordinary impact on me, and my semester abroad in Central America helped shape my intellectual interests and passions.

I learned to operate on a graduate school level in Professor Nina Lerman's courses, and her encouragement to pursue a Ph.D. was equally important. Professors Julie Charlip, Walt Weingart, and Fred Breit went out of their way to advise me on preparation for graduate school. David Schmitz played a pivotal role, carefully helping me select Ph.D. programs that would fit my interests and giving me crucial advice.

From my own experience, I cannot imagine a better training for graduate school than a Whitman education, and I mean that not only in an academic sense. Whitman pushes its students to become educated but also grounded and well-rounded people — and those latter traits may be the most important of all when it comes to succeeding in graduate school.

— Jason Colby, '97

Jennifer Eastberg, '01

The summer I spent doing research with Professor Dan Vernon was an advantage. Having the experience of doing actual research where there was no set protocol, sequence of experiments, or expected results really increased my ability to work independently and think critically about the results I was getting.

The faculty is very good at designing classes and laborotory exercises that make you think and analyze, not just go through the motions and memorize textbooks. This has greatly helped as I got into grad school and encountered classes where the only references are primary literature articles that require detailed readings and a bit of thought to understand and learn from.

— Jennifer Eastberg, '01

Whitties in GRADUATE SCHOOL

David Shelly, '00
Geophysics

David Shelly is a Ph.D. candidate in the geophysics department at Stanford University where he is conducting research on earthquake seismology. Specifically, he is studying subduction zone earthquakes using seismic data from Japan, he said.

Shelly, who holds a departmental fellowship at Stanford, majored in math-physics at Whitman. After graduate school, he plans to take time off to travel, then perhaps combine teaching and research as a college or university professor.

Despite the fact that Whitman offers only one geophysics class, I was qualified to do graduate work in geophysics because of the math, physics, and geology classes that I took. My knowledge was initially more general than that of many other people in my program, but my Whitman education has proven to be a solid base for a broad range of studies, and I believe it will continue to give me flexibility in my future pursuits.

The opportunity to work closely with a faculty member on research over the summer and during my senior year was an invaluable introduction to research and great preparation for graduate school.

My Whitman professors were always accessible and willing to offer advice and guidance, especially Mark Beck, my senior research and thesis adviser, who helped me enormously.

— *David Shelly, '00*

The Whitman experiences that helped me get into grad school are ones you cannot necessarily put your finger on — playing history pong with Greg Gill in prep for one of Schmitz's exams or rehearsing my orals out loud five times in a row at four a.m. with Jill Winder patiently offering critiques. These are the Whitman experiences that prepared me for grad school because they were about studying, about succeeding, yes, but really they were about friendship and fun.

Whitman sent me off to grad school not just as a one-dimensional history buff, but as a three-dimensional person with goals that transcended being able to write an excellent paper — to become a scholar, have fun along the way, and eventually become the kind of first-rate teacher Whitman would be proud of.

— *Amy Portwood, '98*

David Shelly, '00

Amy Portwood, '98

Amy Portwood, '98
History

Amy Portwood, '98, will complete her graduate study at Rutgers University next year with a dissertation titled "*A River Full of Crocodiles": United States Policy Toward the Congo 1955-1965.* Portwood, who entered the Ph.D. program at Rutgers in 1999, has focused on American diplomatic history with a minor in African American history.

Her dissertation, she said, "examines the cultural attitudes American policymakers held in the 1950s and 1960s and how those ideas impacted policy toward the Congo."

While working toward her Ph.D., Portwood has given presentations at several conferences, published an article on Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and consulted on a PBS documentary on UN Undersecretary Ralph Bunche. She also has taught classes each semester for the last three years, mostly in 20th century American history.

"I have enjoyed my students at Rutgers so much that I hope to spend a lifetime in the classroom," said Portwood, who plans to look for a university position with emphasis on teaching as well as on research.