

“Under your leadership may Whitman College continue to inspire, inform, stimulate and educate its students, so they will recognize and accept the challenges of the changing world as real opportunities to serve humankind.”

– Kari Glover '72
chair, Whitman Board of Trustees

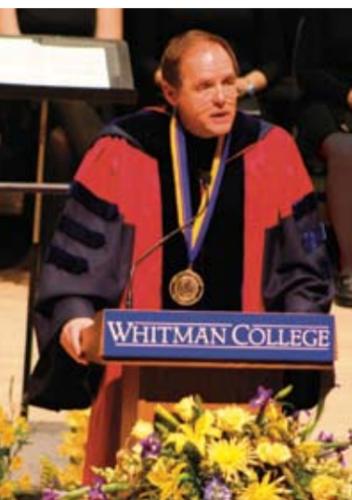
Whitman Installs 13th President

It began with powerful tribal chanting punctuated by the ringing of a ceremonial bell.

It closed with the sweet harmony of the Whitman Hymn.

And at the center was the installation of Whitman College's 13th president, Dr. George S. Bridges, a man described during the ceremony as a great listener, an egalitarian and “a most decent and honorable man.”

Whitman installed its new president Nov. 3, 2005, a blustery and rainy — yet spirited and hopeful — day in the college's history.



Lore Fawver

University of Washington President Mark Emmert, in his introduction of President Bridges, said he told the presidential search committee they should want to hire George Bridges for the things that are not on his resume: He is a centered and loving father, and a person passionately committed to education, who cares deeply about students; he listens more intently than anyone; he treats everyone exactly the same; he is decent, and he is honorable.

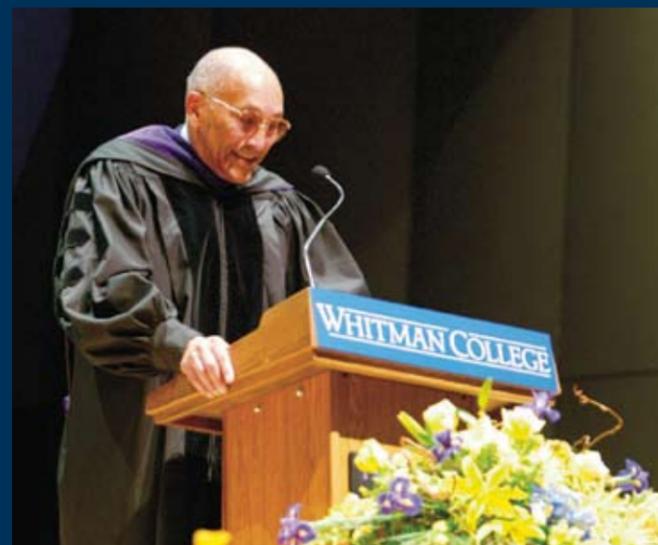
Clearly moved by Emmert's introduction, President Bridges stepped to the lectern to deliver his presidential address.

The following are excerpts from President Bridges' address, titled A Paradigm and Pledge for Whitman's Future: Dedication to Liberal Arts and Sciences, Relational Learning and Accessible Opportunity:

President George Bridges

“We gather this afternoon to celebrate an institution and a community, and to affirm its important mission. I ask that we use this gathering to uphold our commitment to liberal education. I ask that we promise this generation of Whitman students, and every generation that follows, an intellectually demanding and vital experience in which they develop the skills to reason critically and to communicate effectively. I ask that we renew our dedication to an education that is personal, where faculty members and students know one another, where they work collaboratively, and where student scholarship and leadership are inspired. Finally, I ask that we commit ourselves to making this great educational experience an opportunity accessible not just to those who are capable and can afford the price but to equally capable individuals from all backgrounds, life experiences and sectors of our society.”

(Right) The keynote speaker, former Washington State Supreme Court Justice Charles Z. Smith, said he rejoiced upon learning his friend had accepted the call to serve as president of Whitman. Smith commended the “intellectual excellence and commitment to equity and justice” by President Bridges, the faculty, staff, students and alumni of Whitman College.



(Above) Armand Minthorn, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, told the crowd that on this day “we are of one heart and one mind for a little while.” He offered a tribal blessing for the event, a sacred song he said is “handed down from generation to generation — heart to heart.”



University of Washington President Mark Emmert introduced President Bridges.



Alumni Board President Sarah Wang '89 welcomed President Bridges. Representatives of the Board of Overseers, the community, faculty, staff and students also offered their welcome and support.



“As the role of educators changes with changes in modes of learning, we must not lose sight of our students and the primacy of our relationships with them. As many of you know, Kari and I chose to come to Whitman in part because of the countless stories shared with us by generations of graduates, former students who — whether in their 20s or their 70s — characterized their Whitman experience as one of the finest moments in their lives. And in nearly every instance, the quality of the moment was shaped by a professor or a staff member who helped direct and transform their lives. As we celebrate the educational experiences that Whitman offers, we must ask how our academic community can and should serve those less fortunate than ourselves. What is the place of a private or independent academic institution in a community like Walla Walla and a region like Eastern Washington, or as a national liberal arts college in a country like the United States?”

“Let us pledge that liberal education in the arts and sciences will remain the sole focus of undergraduate learning at Whitman. As we make this pledge, let us reaffirm our commitment to learning that:

- demands much of our students;
- asks them to take responsibility for their intellectual growth and development;
- immerses them in diverse fields, incorporating western and non-western traditions;
- immerses them in the sciences, social sciences, humanities and the arts.”

“Who do we wish to become and how do we wish to serve? It is my hope that Whitman will always follow the example set by President Penrose, opening its doors to students who may be the first in their family in college or who could not complete a baccalaureate degree without our help. It is my hope that Whitman becomes a welcome home for students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds, orientations and positions in our society. And it is my hope that Whitman's place in our society and world will evolve into being an elite institution that is not elitist; a model of liberal education that achieves as much breadth in the types of people who comprise our community as we have in the academic curriculum that we offer.”

The presidential installation can be heard in its entirety at www.whitman/live.

Photos by Adam Hardtke '03

"This small college and this small town can play an enormously important role in world issues. ... It gives me optimism that Whitman is putting out students who can help us resolve these issues."

— Former President Lou Perry

The Presidents

Installation brings living history to campus

In Whitman's 122-year history, Nov. 3, 2005, is a day for the history books. College historian G. Thomas Edwards introduced four of the 13 presidents as they gathered on campus for a panel discussion on the future of liberal arts colleges. Four former presidents returned to campus for the installation of President George S. Bridges.

The resumes of the college's surviving former presidents — Louis B. Perry, Robert A. Skotheim, David E. Maxwell and Thomas E. Cronin — are well known by Whitman alumni. These are impressive men who did important work before they arrived and after they left Whitman's world.

The presidents shared with *Whitman Magazine* these thoughts about the college's role beyond its borders, their time at Whitman, and what they learned at the college and loved about the campus. They also offered updates on their families.



Whitman's presidents gathered for a photo Installation day. From left to right, Robert Skotheim, Louis Perry, Thomas Cronin, David Maxwell and President George Bridges.

10th Louis B. Perry, 1959-67

"Whitman was more of a Northwest institution, but fairly insular," when President Perry arrived in 1959. After years studying at the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), Perry was used to academic institutions with global relationships. During his tenure at Whitman, he initiated sabbaticals for faculty and the concept of the junior year abroad.

"It felt more like pushing Whitman out into the world rather than Whitman having an impact on the world at that time," he said.

Perry and his wife, Genevieve, have fond memories of hosting dinners for students at their home, which is now the Admissions Office on campus.

After Whitman, the Perrys moved to Portland, Ore., where Lou Perry racked up a host of community awards — including Oregon Businessman of the Year in 1980 — while running Standard Insurance.

His work at Whitman paid off in his corporate afterlife. Working with bright, articulate, concerned faculty members with strong opinions gave him the experience he needed to deal with personnel issues, he said. By comparison, dealing with personnel in a more structured environment seemed easy, he added.

Perry said one of the first things he learned about Whitman is still true. "Alumni told us that Whitman is more of a family than an institution." But it's important to remember, he said, that while having a family is a plus, students, faculty and staff still need to "look outside the family."

FAMILY UPDATE: The Perrys returned to Walla Walla in 1990. Their daughter **Donna Jones '76** has been secretary to the President's Office for 12 years. Daughter Barbara Rutzer is the librarian at Prospect Point Elementary School. Son **Robert Perry '67** works on his farm in Marian, S.D.

10th Robert A. Skotheim, 1975-88

At one time, Whitman was representative of American higher education, said former President Skotheim. Today, the University of Washingtons of the country are more common, while small liberal arts colleges play a counter-culture role in America. The Whitmans of the nation offer closer relations between staff and students, and faculty

and students. "They govern themselves in a more collegial fashion," Skotheim said. That collegial style of government is what he was most proud to take with him when he left Whitman to head the Huntington Library Art Collections and Botanical Gardens in San Marino, Calif., in 1988.

While he continued in an academic setting at Huntington — which is primarily focused on research — Skotheim says he missed the academic life in a college context with undergraduates on campus.

His fondest memory of his Whitman years was celebrating the completion of the \$50 million "Campaign for Whitman" in 1987. "It was a very ambitious thing for a little college to do," he said.

Skotheim and his wife, Nadine, participate in governing board and campus activities. Robert Skotheim is writing his autobiography.

FAMILY UPDATE: The Skotheims moved to Bainbridge Island, Wash., to be near their grandchildren. Their youngest daughter, Julia Skotheim, attended Walla Walla High School while her dad was president. A homemaker, the 44-year-old lives on Bainbridge. Kris Skotheim, 48, is a builder on Bainbridge, and Marjorie Skotheim, 49, is the communications manager for the Seattle Monorail project.

11th David E. Maxwell, 1989-93

"I have a strong prejudice toward Whitman being out there in the world," said former President Maxwell, who left in 1993 to take the helm of the National Foreign Language Center in Washington, D.C.

"The world in which our current students are graduating is global; they are competing with people all over the world for jobs, resources, income ...," said Maxwell, the president of Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, since 1999.

"I strongly believe their success professionally and as human beings is very much dependent on knowledge and skills that will allow them to function efficiently in a context defined by differences in assumptions, beliefs, languages and behaviors. It doesn't matter whether or not you think globalism is good — it's happened," Maxwell said.

"I like students to leave with the feeling there's still lots

of things that don't work well, and it's their jobs to help fix them," Maxwell said. "I see that as a role that's particularly suited to the Whitmans of the world."

Whitman was a source of learning for Maxwell, too. "I learned a lot about institutional change," he said. "Sometimes I pushed too hard, didn't listen enough, but eventually we got where we needed to go." He said what he learned at Whitman helped prepare him for his job at Drake.

FAMILY UPDATE: Maxwell describes his wife, Madeleine, as a more than full-time volunteer at Drake. Their son Justin is 29 and a Web designer at Apple computer. He is also successful in "techno music" and sells his music on I-tunes. Stephen, 27, is in his sixth year in a Ph.D. program in experimental physics at Harvard University, where he also is on the bicycle racing team. "When we were at Whitman, Stephen was 11 years old with a pet squirrel on his shoulder, being followed around campus by the ducks."

12th Thomas E. Cronin, 1993-2005

Whitman has a tradition of doing good things in the world, including turning out many graduates who have joined the Peace Corps, said former President Cronin.

It's important to remember, however, "Our primary responsibility is to prepare students for careers that can later lead to diplomacy, medicine," and more, he said. "Students can't on a regular basis work out in the world, or else they won't be doing what they should be doing," said Cronin, who returned to Colorado College this fall to serve as the McHugh Professor of American Institutions and Leadership.

Cronin said he has "many fond memories of working

with staff and faculty to make the institution better, and working closely with students to help share the future of the college." During his tenure at Whitman, he enjoyed working on expanding and building new facilities and athletic fields, and improving the quality of the academic programs. "It was delightful in the final analysis," he said.

He misses "the terrific staff and working with splendid Whitman alumni. They were very supportive." Whitman is fortunate to be in a "wonderful community with great accessibility and an enormously dedicated faculty. Those things set Whitman apart from most places," he said.

FAMILY UPDATE: Tania Cronin is composing a concerto for violin and orchestra. Their son, Alexander, is a physics professor at the University of Arizona.

Whitman's presidents

1. Alexander J. Anderson, 1882-1891
2. James F. Eaton, 1891-1894
3. Stephen B. L. Penrose, 1894-1934
4. Rudolf A. Clemen, 1934-1936
5. Walter A. Bratton, 1936-1942
6. Winslow S. Anderson, 1942-1948
7. Chester C. Maxey, 1948-1959
8. Louis B. Perry, 1959-1967
9. Donald H. Sheehan, 1968-1974
10. Robert A. Skotheim, 1975-1988
11. David E. Maxwell, 1989-1993
12. Thomas E. Cronin, 1993-2005
13. George S. Bridges, 2005-present

President Sheehan died March 7, 1974, while still in office.

"I ask that we renew our dedication to an education that is personal, where faculty members and students know one another, where they work collaboratively, and where student scholarship and leadership are inspired."

— President George S. Bridges

Installation celebrates student enthusiasm, talent and intellect

By Lenel Parish

From presentations on nanobiotechnology in Kimball Auditorium to sweet serenades by bow-tied T-tones in Reid Campus Center, Whitman students helped commemorate President George Bridges' installation with their usual style and grace. Their contributions highlighted Whitman-style student-faculty collaboration with a focus not just on academics or students, but on both.

The student-faculty research symposium and the musical selections by student musicians which graced the actual installation ceremony were representative of the many forms that student-faculty collaboration takes on the Whitman campus. The music by the Sirens of Swank and the Testostertones, popular student a cappella groups, at the Thursday luncheon showcased one of the many activities students enjoy outside the classroom, said Michelle Janning, an assistant professor of sociology. The T-Tones dressed up the occasion by wearing bow ties in honor of the president and singing a song composed specially for the occasion.

"The research symposium did a good job of showing the intellectual work involved in student-faculty collaboration," said Janning. The symposium showcased the work of four seniors: **Tyler Phillips '06**, a chemistry major; **Kathryn Heard '06**, a double major in politics and German studies; **Morgan Zelif '06**, an environmental studies combined with geology major; and **Marisa-Claire Mumford '06**, a biology, biophysics and molecular biology major.

All four of the students gave presentations that were "highly professional," said chemistry Professor Skip Wade, and the students were enthusiastic and knowledgeable, which is typical of the student research at Whitman. "Many more projects of this quality will be presented in the spring at the annual Whitman Undergraduate Research Conference."

Phillips' presentation, "A Story of Soaps and Structure: Using Xe-129 NMR to Study the Hydrophobic



Adam Hardtke '03

The Whitman String Quartet, including cellist Emma Woods '08, performed during the Installation ceremony.



The Whitman Chorale performed during the Installation ceremony.

Adam Hardtke '03



Tyler Phillips '06



Kathryn Heard '06



Morgan Zelif '06



Marisa-Claire Mumford '06

Interior of Micelles," was about work he did in collaboration with Allison Calhoun, assistant professor of chemistry. Phillips, who plans to attend medical school, said he was particularly interested in the project's implications for medical research.

"Independent

research requires a great deal of effort on the part of faculty and the students alike, but this experience was invaluable to my education as a chemist," he said.

Mumford, who presented research on "Engineering Neuron Development with Nanobiotechnology," also said she felt lucky to be able to draw on faculty support. Mumford's collaborative work with Ginger Withers, assistant professor of biology, has helped her see future possibilities. "I can apply my research to so many things — fighting different diseases, parasites, viruses. It's all exciting." Mumford plans to enter graduate school in either pathogen biology or molecular and cell biology with the ultimate career goal of research science.

Heard, who presented "The Failure of Imagination: Latino Union Activism and Struggles in Washington State" echoed her co-presenters' comments on faculty

support. "I wouldn't be here today knowing what I want to do" without the close faculty support that exists at Whitman, said Heard. She plans to pursue a Ph.D. in comparative politics or political theory with a focus on developing or recovering countries. She will compete for a Fulbright fellowship to pursue research next year in Germany, where she spent last summer working for an anti-Nazi organization. Heard's research was done in collaboration with Erick Castellanos, visiting lecturer of anthropology.

Zelif's presentation on "Saddle Mountain West Fault: An Investigation of the Seismic Hazard, Olympic Peninsula, Washington," exposed her to "the process of true science investigation. I was exposed to real geologic problem solving" in research with geology Professor Bob Carson. The kind of student-faculty research that she has experienced at Whitman, she added, is rare among her friends that attend other colleges, where most students must conduct their research on their own.

The second celebration of student-faculty collaboration was well represented by student musicians. Senior **Julia Doe '06**, violin, and music Professor Lee Thompson, piano, performed at the installation dinner Wednesday in Reid Campus Center. The installation ceremonies on Thursday included the musical contributions of the Whitman String Quartet, also known as "Cantilena;" the Whitman College Chorale, with Professor Robert Bode conducting; and the Whitman College Trombone Quartet. Cantilena is coached by Amy Dodds, lecturer in music, and the trombonists by music Professor David Glenn and Douglas Scarborough, visiting assistant professor of music.

Bode said he was "extremely pleased" with the fine performances by students who performed with enthusiasm and style. Of course, he concluded, it came as no surprise. "It's what we've all come to expect from Whitman students."

In his Installation address, President Bridges spoke of access to opportunities for relational learning in the liberal arts and sciences. In the pages that follow, Whitman Magazine brings these concepts to life by spotlighting the outstanding work of Whitman students, faculty and staff, who have used their knowledge and skills to help people around the world.

A Call to Action

The last week in August, Whitman College students were settling in for another fall semester in their tree-lined, fountain-filled campus nestled in a valley at the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Two thousand miles away, college students and people of all ages were fleeing their homes and schools as Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast.

Whitman students, faculty and staff sprang into action to assist and support the victims of the Category 4 hurricane that decimated New Orleans and towns and cities in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

While new Whitman President George Bridges huddled with his budget officers and announced

a plan to take in students from colleges affected by the hurricane, Whitman students flocked to the American Red Cross office in Walla Walla (located adjacent to campus) to see how they could help. One student used campus e-mail to rally students to raise more than \$3,000 for the hurricane effort.



Tommy Galloway '06

A student takes donations during the Prentiss Hall fund-raiser for Hurricane Katrina victims at Merchants Ltd. restaurant in September.

At the same time, Patrick Keef, dean of faculty, was rallying experts to speak at a symposium on campus and the Whitman Alumni Office staff reached out to former students living in the affected region.

Continued on Page 18

“Former Whitman College President Stephen Penrose believed that a liberal arts education was a fundamental training ground for citizenship, and he believed it should be shared with the community at large.”

— Megan Clubb '79, CEO Baker Boyer Bank

A Call to Action

Continued from Page 17

Faculty members take lead to educate public

Dean of Faculty Patrick Keef produced a major campus symposium on a week's notice. Nine local and regional experts as well as an alumnus from Washington, D.C., spoke about “Hurricane Katrina: The Science and the Societal Impact” on Sept. 8.

Professors John Winter and Bob Carson explained the physical geography of New Orleans that allowed the initial disaster — the hurricane — to precipitate the manmade disaster of the levee failure and flooding.

Other faculty offered insights into the disaster in the areas of environmental studies, economics, psychology and politics. And chemistry Professor Skip Wade shared stories and photos of hurricanes his family survived while he was growing up in Gulf Coast cities.

Representatives from the Walla Walla District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Blue Mountain Chapter of the American Red Cross also spoke at the symposium.

Danielle Garbe '97, a foreign service officer with the U.S. State Department in Washington, D.C., shared the outpouring of concern she has seen from countries around the world. As of her speech that evening, 104 countries and 12 international organizations had offered support to the United States. Garbe is part of a crisis management team in the State Department set up to help foreign countries connect with their citizens involved in emergencies such as the hurricane.

During her talk, Garbe made note of Whitman's offer to accept college students swept up in the fallout of Hurricane Katrina. “It speaks to the kind nature of Whitman,” she said. “I would expect no less.”



College steps up

“For a caring community like Whitman's, the excitement of the new school year is tempered by the inconceivable devastation left in the wake of Hurricane Katrina,” President Bridges wrote in a campuswide e-mail in early September.

President Bridges announced Sept. 6 that Whitman would provide access for up to 10 displaced students to complete their semester's work at Whitman tuition free. A student from Olympia, Wash., enrolled at Tulane University in New Orleans before the hurricane hit, took the college up on the offer. He declined any media attention, and his name has not been published.



Interview spurs student to rally others

A televised interview with New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin spurred Whitman sophomore **Curt Bowen '08** into action. “(The mayor) was describing the scene there: anarchy, looting, lack of federal aid and cooperation between agencies, shooting, lawlessness. ... I did some research and discovered there was a lack of federal aid. This was something the government wasn't taking care of,” the 18-year-old political-philosophy major said.

He sent out an e-mail to see if anyone on campus was organizing a project to benefit the victims. If not, his e-mail noted, let's get something organized. Others urged him to take the lead, and a week after the hurricane he started a listserve of e-mail addresses of people who wanted to help. He met with the Fellowship of Christian Youth on campus and set up an open meeting in



Curt Bowen '08

the Reid Campus Center Coffeehouse. Forty students showed up, and their work began.

“That's the first time that's happened since I've been here,” said Rebecca Sickels, director of the Center for Community Service on campus for the past six years. Established groups raised funds after 9-11 and for the tsunami relief effort, but this group “found each other” through the Internet, she said. “It's the new generation, and that's how they communicate.”

The e-mail-generated group brainstormed ideas for fund-raisers and decided on “tabling” — manning donation tables — as their fund-raising mode. They scheduled students to collect donations at the dining halls, movies, a spaghetti night at Merchants Ltd. downtown hosted by Prentiss Hall residents, and the downtown Farmers Market, among other venues. Bowen estimates he spent two to three hours a day organizing the project.

All told, Whitman students' hours of effort and energy netted more than \$3,400 for the American Red Cross. They also worked on outreach for Red Cross on the Whitman campus, providing information to students about volunteering at the local Red Cross chapter and at disaster locations.

One thing the students' work to benefit hurricane victims made clear to Bowen is the strength and



(At left) Students entertained, served food and ate spaghetti at the Katrina fund-raiser at Merchants Ltd. restaurant in downtown Walla Walla. (At left, below) The Speakeasy entertainment event for students and parents on Family Weekend served a dual purpose. The event also raised funds for the American Red Cross and the local SOS medical clinic for low-income families.

Ezra Fox '07



Tommy Galloway '06

leadership skills inherent in the Whitman student body. He began to realize this during his summer spent helping build a house for a family in Nicaragua (*See story, Page 20*). The feeling was reinforced when he saw friends participate in the hurricane project that hadn't been involved in activism before. They were able to accomplish amazing things, once they decided to be involved, he said.

“Somebody needs to capture the energy we have,” Curt said. “No project is too big for us.”



Alumni Office finds Whitties in distress

While the students were raising funds and the faculty offering insight, Whitman's Alumni Office was searching its database for alumni who might

be affected by the hurricane. One of the people they contacted was **Vanessa Spinazola '98**. She had just started her second year of law school at Loyola University in New Orleans when the hurricane hit.

“I didn't even need to contact Whitman; instead, Whitman found me,” Vanessa wrote in an e-mail to President Bridges. **Polly Schmitz '83**, alumni director, “let me know she was there for me, by continually checking in even though I didn't have time to properly respond to her e-mails. It made me so thankful (again!) that I had attended Whitman, and really felt that the Whitman community was there for me when I needed it.”

Vanessa landed at Fordham University in New York as a visiting student. Fellow alumni lined up to help her with offers of plane tickets, clothes, money and lots of encouragement. They helped her get her life back in order — “quickly and without any sort of fanfare at all,” the grateful Whittie said.



Vanessa Spinazola '98

What's left? Clean up. Alumni join the effort

The hurricane temporarily relocated **Blake Fisher '03** from Tulane University in New Orleans to Arizona State University in Tempe. Professors and students, including Fisher, from the Tulane School of Architecture are involved in a design project that deals with the issues of rebuilding the city.

Holly Brooks '04 had been on her new job at a consulting firm in Anchorage, Alaska, for only two weeks when she was dispatched to New Orleans. She is working on an extended assignment as a contract environmental scientist for the EPA. During the fall months, she was spending her time — 16 hours a day, seven days a week — working on water quality control testing the water in the canals and the flood water for harmful contaminants.



Undoubtedly in the decades to come, more Whitman graduates in majors from science and politics, to technology and religion will be part of the rebuilding of the once historic city and its surrounding region.



"We celebrate more than a century of students who yearn for a deeper understanding of their world and themselves. Their intelligence, concern for others and deep desire to extract every ounce of learning from their Whitman experience typify our students. We set exceptionally high expectations of them, and more often than not, they exceed those expectations."

— President George S. Bridges

a LABOR of LOVE



(Above) Jim Fuller '08, left, and Curt Bowen '08 work outside the walls of the home they are building in Nicaragua for a boy and his mother. Built into a steep slope, the house required a foundation wall nearly nine feet tall on the lower side. (Top photo) This scenic view is located about a mile outside San Juan del Sur looking toward the south. The coast of the Pacific Ocean is west of this area.

Photos courtesy of Joseph Bornstein

By Dave Holden

As a Scottish poet once observed, the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry. That was certainly true this past summer when a Whitman College sophomore traveled to Nicaragua to help build a house for two friends in need — a widow and her young son.

Armed with \$6,000 he helped raise, **Joseph Bornstein '08** arrived in San Juan del Sur with six friends from the States — three of them from Whitman — all ready to defray construction costs by the sweat of their collective brow. Their willingness to work proved more crucial than expected. They immediately ran afoul of a Central American economy wracked by inflation and skyrocketing costs for just about everything, including building materials. Food prices had risen nearly 200 percent in a year's time, and high gas prices had sparked a spate of local rioting a few weeks earlier.

A few days after their arrival, Bornstein and friends also ran afoul of an intestinal bug that sickened them for days. The U.S. contingent, however, kept the Build-a-House Project on track, and friends and family in the States sent additional funds. By the time the young crew left Nicaragua in August, a contractor was finishing the roof. Since then, doors, windows, sinks and bathroom fixtures, and a septic tank have been installed.

The prime beneficiary of the project is Fabian Fermin, a lively and always laughing 4-year-old whose father, Alix, died in a fishing accident in May of 2004. Alix, his wife, Guissell, and Fabian had befriended Bornstein earlier that spring as he traveled through Central America.

After learning of Alix's death, Bornstein launched the fund-raising effort at Whitman to build a house for Fabian and his mother. The effort culminated on campus with a Cinco de Mayo dessert banquet, salsa dance, raffle and silent auction. Those activities netted about \$5,500, and Bornstein's parents, Jonah and Janice, collected another \$500 from the community in the family's hometown of Ashland, Ore.

When Bornstein and his buddies arrived in San Juan del Sur in early July, they located a local contractor willing to lower its price in exchange for help with the foundation work. Bornstein and Whitman sophomores **Curt Bowen '08, Will Gibson '08 and Jim Fuller '08**, as well as three friends from Bornstein's hometown moved tons of dirt by hand. They helped lay more than 300 stone blocks that each weighed about 130 pounds.

Still in need of funding to offset inflation and finish the house, the Americans wrote home and collected about \$800. One of Bornstein's friends, **Kat Compton '08**, a Whitman student from Seattle, raised \$1,200 from her family and friends.

After one of the proposed bedrooms fell victim to the inflated construction costs, plans for use of the house changed. While Guissell and Fabian will continue to live with her family, the house will be rented as a source of income. Receipts will be divided between the family's ongoing

living expenses and a savings account for Fabian's future. Fabian will take ownership of the home when he is old enough.

For Bornstein, the most enjoyable aspect of his trip to San Juan del Sur was the chance to renew his friendship with Fabian, who is attending the equivalent of an American preschool or kindergarten. "He is learning about colors, animals and shapes," the college student says.

"I can safely say that this was by far the best thing that I have ever done," Bornstein says. "The project helped me realize my own personal strength and capability to make an influence in the world, and it helped me realize the incredible amount of power that we all possess, but are often afraid to use."

The college student, drawn to Whitman after attending the Whitman Debate Institute summer camp, attributes his ability to tackle a project this size to what he's learned at Whitman and his deep connection with Alix and his family.

In a "Culture, Politics and Identity" class at Whitman, Bornstein learned about effective ways to communicate and that a community is created through imagination. "We did everything we could to create a community of people who had contributed to this project," he says. "Our slogan, 'Love always hopes,' helped people see what our project was all about.

"The way the entire Walla Walla community joined in touched my heart in a way I never knew was possible," Bornstein says. "Somehow that love that I have for Fabian was communicated to the Whitman and Walla Walla communities and ... we came together to build a home for Fabian and his mother to give them a future, and to fulfill Alix's lifelong dream."



What's next? Students form action group to help others

Joseph Bornstein and his Build-A-House Project crew came back to Whitman this fall inspired to continue their global work. They and other interested students have formed Whitman Direct Action, a club that proposes to take on a major project every year with the goal of impacting the global community.

"Last year's project was to give a home to a family in great need," Bornstein says. "This year's project will be to help alleviate some of the devastating economic pressure Nicaragua is experiencing due to the huge rises in gas prices."

The club is learning how to make biodiesel (a fuel made of vegetable oil that can run in diesel engines) in the United States. Their hope is to help open a biodiesel station in Nicaragua to "alleviate the devastating pressures the oil market has put on Nicaragua," Bornstein says.

For more information about Whitman Direct Action: e-mail synergy@whitman.edu.

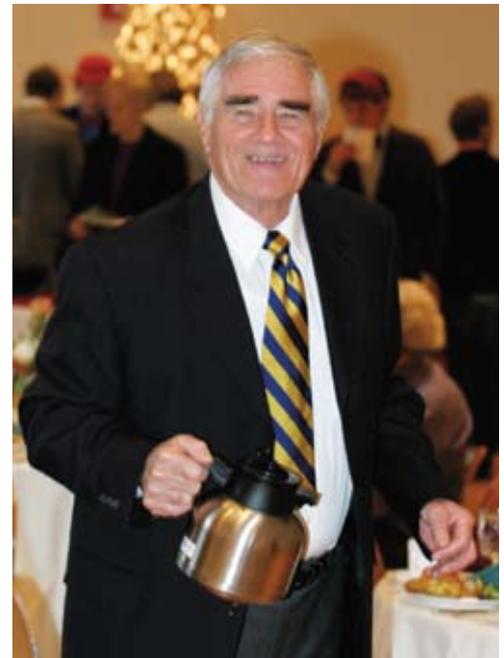


(Above) Fabian Fermin and his benefactor, Joseph Bornstein '08, share a laugh. (Top right) Brook Golling, Will Gibson '08 and Bornstein carry 130-pound cement blocks to the work site. Golling is one of three friends from Bornstein's hometown who helped with the project.

Installation finale



Adam Hardtke '03



Photos by Kathryn Farrell Guizar '95

(Top right) In honor of President George Bridges, The Testostertones donned bow ties for their performance during an Installation luncheon in Reid Campus Center. (At right) Pete Reid '49, assistant to the president, was ready with a smile and coffee. (Above) Installation participants brave a strong wind and rain as they head up the steps into Cordiner Hall. (Top left) President Bridges shows his delight at one of the many performances during Installation.

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