



A NOTE FROM CARLA LINEBACK

DIRECTOR OF ALUMNI ENGAGEMENT

If there is a theme for this alumni newsletter it's publications! I am impressed by the number of alumni who have published works—fiction, non-fiction, research, you name it! But whatever SIT and IHP alumni are doing, research, veterinary work, founding or running a company, innovating, studying, or teaching, I love hearing how, often, one moment in the study abroad experience caused a spark that never went out.

It's been great to meet some of you at alumni gatherings and I hope to see more of you this year (see upcoming events section). Invitations to alumni gatherings are sent by email based on the mailing address we have on file for you, so please make sure we have your correct email and mailing address! You can write to alumni@sit.edu for more information on alumni gatherings or register in the alumni community and directory at connect.sit.edu.

Carla

ALUMNI NEWS

James Kolbe, International Honors Program (IHP) 1963, is a retired congressman from Arizona who served as chair of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Programs. Jim hosted a terrific informal IHP dinner and reception with his husband Hector Alfonso at their home.

Joe Flader, IHP 1966, just published a book, *Lombardi Politics*. It's a memoir that morphs into a discussion of many key policies issues from his time working in the House of Representatives and ends with suggestions for a politics of vision rather than division. Joe's time abroad is featured in two chapters.

Joseph Lurie is a former SIT Director of Programs in Ghana, France, and Kenya, and an intercultural orientation leader in the '70s. He recently published *Perception and Deception* about miscommunication and misperceptions across cultures representing over 70 countries. The book also offers 30 interactive exercises for building intercultural competence. Joe currently serves as executive director for UC Berkeley's International House.

Jennifer Dulski, SIT Brazil 1992, is president and COO of Change.org. She has held previous leadership roles at Facebook, Google, and Yahoo! She is the author of *Purposeful: Are You a Manager or a Movement Starter?* And she mentions SIT throughout the book.

David Wolman, SIT Samoa 1995, has authored several works of nonfiction,



including *The End of Money*, *A Left-Hand Turn Around the World*, *Righting the Mother Tongue*, and *Firsthand*. He's a contributing editor at Outside and a contributor at Wired. He recently published *Aloha Rodeo*, which looks at the dramatic story of three Hawaiian cowboys who competed in the rodeo championships in Cheyenne, Wyoming in 1908. Traveling to Samoa was the first time David had been outside North America and ignited his love affair with Pacific Island nations and cultures. [Read our interview with David.](#)

Lyra Kilston, SIT Czech Republic 1998, published *Sun Seekers—The Cure of California*. She says her SIT program was her first exposure to architectural history and greatly influenced her.

Debra Mazer, SIT India 1999, is the author of *Open-Eyed Heart—Wide Haggadah* and *Retreat Recipes for Yoga Lovers*. She is an intuitive healer, life coach, award-winning vegan/raw chef, and holistic health coach. She recently worked for the Stacey Abrams campaign for governor in Georgia and has a YouTube series featuring black lightworkers and healers, changing representation of the "New Age." Her website is DebraMazer.com.

Rachael Cohen, SIT Australia 2000, took part in the Natural & Cultural Ecology Program in Australia. She launched her first book in February 2019, *Infinite Succulent: Miniature Living Art to Keep or Share*.

Katarzyna Nowak, SIT Tanzania 2000, published an edited volume with two colleagues, *Primates in Flooded Habitats: Ecology and Conservation*. One of the species on the cover is the Zanzibar red colobus, which was the topic of her PhD thesis. She was first exposed to Africa, coastal communities, and island species, including the colobus, when she studied with SIT. Kate holds a BA in Animal Behavior from Bucknell University and PhD from University of Cambridge. She spent six months in Costa Rica on a spider monkey project and two years in Zanzibar studying monkeys in unprotected coastal forests and mangroves.

Melissa Wiley, SIT Ireland 2001, is director of Denver Peak Academy, which is the City and County of Denver's process improvement and analytics team under Mayor Michael Hancock. Denver Peak Academy is the national model for government process improvement and *Governing* magazine published a book on her team called *Peak Performance*. Melissa attended the University of Pennsylvania for a MA in Public Administration with a focus on improving public service at the local level. She developed this passion after studying the conflict in Northern Ireland with SIT. After SIT, Melissa spent five years working for James Lyon, former US Economic Envoy to Northern Ireland under President

Clinton, and helped Lyon write a book, *When Peace Meets the Streets: On the Ground in Northern Ireland*.

Benjamin Schenkier, SIT Cameroon 2002, is an Orthodox Rabbi and lives in Jerusalem with his wife and children. He teaches and learns about Jewish religious texts at Yeshivah Bircas HaTorah in the Old City. He is studying to become a Dayan, which is a religious judge.

Daniel Seeman, IHP Health and Community 2006, worked on the elimination of the death penalty law signed by California Governor Gavin Newsom. Dan is the California deputy cabinet secretary responsible for criminal and judicial affairs. In his previous job as legislative aid with Gov. Jerry Brown, Dan worked on gun control legislation and prior to that with former state Sen. Mark Leno on eliminating solitary detention for juveniles.

Evan Antin, SIT Tanzania 2007, is a California-based veterinarian who supports and treats exotic animals around the world. He is a graduate of University of Colorado at Boulder and has been featured on the Animal Planet. His independent study project in Northern Tanzania propelled his passion for working with wildlife in remote areas where animal doctors are unavailable.

Dana Hecht, IHP Health 2008, leads the memoir writers collective *Moving Forewords*—a group that advocates for women and minority voices, specifically with respect to self-authorship. Dana is at work on her own memoir. Her other work can be found in the literary magazine *Tin House*, the *Washington Post*, the *Times of Israel*, *Brevity Magazine*, and elsewhere.

Brianna Kilcullen, SIT South Africa 2009, founded Anact, an organization with the goal of promoting acts of goodwill and the belief that simple, purposeful actions can fundamentally change the world. All of their work is linked to the 18 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Anact's first product, launching via Kickstarter on September 3, 2019, is a hemp towel.

Natalia "Tali" Perelman, IHP Climate Change 2015, is digital communications manager at the Breakthrough Institute, a think tank committed to modernizing environmentalism for the 21st century. Breakthrough says its mission "is to accelerate the transition to a future where all the world's inhabitants can enjoy secure, free, and prosperous lives on an ecologically vibrant planet. Our core values are integrity, imagination and audacity."

Chloe King, SIT Indonesia 2017, received a Fulbright Research Grant to Indonesia for a year starting in fall 2019.

Dalal Orfali, SIT Switzerland 2017, is an SIT Alumni Mentor for the summer program in Switzerland. She was selected

by her school, University of Illinois at Chicago, as an outstanding graduate. Dalal is a Syrian refugee, cancer survivor, and is writing a book.

Rara Reines, SIT Uganda 2017, is a Global Ambassador for the Pamoja Network, a youth-driven social enterprise connecting a network of young leaders throughout Africa and the Diaspora in driving positive change throughout the African continent. Insights is Pamoja's new online thought leadership hub for think pieces from young leaders related to African affairs.

Clayton Ziemke, SIT Ecuador 2017, works as a field technician in Northern Kenya at the Mpala Research Center with the support of the Naomi Pierce Lab at Harvard University. Clayton studies ant-plant ecological relationships, especially with Acacia trees, the most important species in the African savannas.

Stephen Aisabokhae, SIT Uganda 2018, was nominated as the best study abroad student and selected as the speaker to share his study abroad experience with fellow students during the Prairie View A&M University Study Abroad Banquet. He presented his research, on mentorship as a tool for fostering personal development among youths in Uganda



with emphasis on the girl child, during the 14th annual research symposium and placed in the top six finalists. Stephen is applying for his PhD in Educational Leadership.

Patrick Robinson, SIT Ecuador 2018, and another University of Virginia student, won a Davis Project for Peace award for work in Ecuador's Intag Valley. Their work focuses on replacing the environmentally destructive copper mining industry with an organic coffee cooperative, ecotourism projects, and a women's artisan collective. Patrick plans to pursue a graduate degree in anthropology, development studies, or a related field. [Read more about their story.](#)

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UPCOMING EVENTS

We are planning alumni gatherings in various cities including Washington, DC; San Francisco, California; Denver, Colorado; St. Louis, Missouri; Chicago, Illinois; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Boston, Massachusetts; Providence, Rhode Island; and Seattle, Washington. We are also working on something outside the United States. Invitations to alumni gatherings are sent by email based on the mailing address we have on file for you, so please make sure we have your correct email and mailing address! You can write to alumni@sit.edu to update your contact information, or to receive more details on alumni gatherings that are in the works.

Stay up-to-date on alumni gatherings and other news by registering in the alumni community and directory at connect.sit.edu.

GLOBAL LEADERSHIP EXCHANGE PROGRAM

We are pleased to announce a new international exchange opportunity for alumni and friends! The Global Leadership Exchange (GLEx) program will provide short-term professional and cultural exchange programs to destinations around the world. Through meetings with local organizations and institutions, participants will share ideas and gain insights in areas such as organizational structure, education, governance, leadership, and community service. Watch your email for more information regarding a June 2020 program to Israel and Jordan. For more information visit: www.worldlearning.org/GLEx.

OPPORTUNITIES & OTHER NEWS

You're among the first to know that plans are underway for SIT's first **Critical Global Issues (CGIs) research symposium**. The CGIs, which have just been re-drafted and expanded, are the framework upon which all SIT undergrad and graduate programs are built. Watch your email for news about and requests for papers for the symposium, which is set for May 2020 on the Vermont campus and will address Identity and Human Resilience.

Interested in being a leader with our Youth Exchange Programs for summer 2020? Leaders work both in the US and abroad with students from around the

world. The application will be available this fall. If you would like to receive more information and a notification when the application is open, email groupleaders@worldlearning.org.

The Experiment in International Living provides immersive study abroad summer programs for high school students. Scholarships are available to educators and family members of alumni. Visit experiment.org/apply/scholarships.

SIT Graduate Institute offers full-time and low-residency master's degrees, certificates, and professional development programs. Alumni of SIT Study Abroad and IHP programs receive a \$2,000 discount for graduate degree programs. graduate.sit.edu

DO YOU HAVE AN INTERESTING UPDATE to share with your fellow SIT alumni? Send news and updates to alumni@sit.edu.

Show your SIT pride with a sweatshirt, water bottle, or other fun, branded item. Visit SIT's online store at: cafepress.com/SIT.

ABOUT WORLD LEARNING INC.



World Learning Inc., the nonprofit parent organization of School for International Training, offers high school, undergraduate, graduate, and professional programs. World Learning Inc.'s summer programs (through The Experiment in International Living) help high school students experience another culture abroad. SIT Study Abroad offers semester- and summer-long undergraduate programs that address critical global issues on all seven continents. SIT Graduate Institute offers graduate degrees in low-residency and global formats. World Learning is working to create a more peaceful and just world through education, sustainable development, and exchange. Founded in 1932 as The Experiment in International Living, the organization that has become World Learning Inc. was inspired by Dr. Donald Watt's simple idea to improve understanding across cultures and nations by sending U.S. students abroad to expand their worldviews.



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Alumni Newsletter
FALL 2019

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