DEAN’S MESSAGE
Andrew G. Campbell on Agency

That Brown University fosters an environment in which students think critically and focus on discovery and innovation should come as no surprise. Brown Graduate School is known for providing pathways for those interested in multidisciplinary exploration and collaboration: The Open Graduate Education program and Interdisciplinary Opportunities are two ways. The Graduate School now provides opportunities for graduate students to think critically and to innovate to improve their own educational environment. This newsletter issue features students who are engaged in the new Community Fellows program and the ‘B-GRIPS’ peer-resource program. It also profiles a master’s student who is building bridges within the graduate community. The engagement and teamwork vital to these initiatives complement core academic studies. They are part of the leadership and professional development that will serve our scholars, whether they pursue academic or other professional careers. Providing these future leaders with an array of opportunities from which to choose makes sense.

Building Community
MFA Students Reserve Seats for Fellow Students

A mile from Main Green, Alexis Green and other Brown/Trinity Rep students study acting, movement, and voice. As they explore the communal life of theatre, they want to share it with their peers. A “Grad Night” at the Pell Chafee Performance Center is born: On March 9, free seats will be set aside for graduate students to attend “Our Country’s Good.”

The bridging event is the brainchild of the recently formed Student Resource Board of the Brown/Trinity Rep Master of Fine Art programs. “We want to extend our reach because we are so separate and our schedules keep us from participating in many events,” says Green (above), who co-leads the board with John Noble Barrack. The board’s first focus was on diversity and inclusion. Students helped with admission outreach and the board was pleased to see a diverse group enter the program in September.

The newest students are eager to connect with other parts of Brown University. Grad Night includes a pre-play social and the performance. Ashley Teague, a third-year MFA student who directs the play, says it is about social injustice and the transforming power of theatre. It runs from February 23 through March 11.

Green plays Liz, an Australian penal colony prisoner involved in the performance of a play. Those who know Green hear her passion for the profession: “Acting is what I’m going to do, but I am invested in being an entrepreneur, too.”

Born and raised in Phoenix, Green came to Brown from Arizona. After auditioning, she knew this is where she should be. “The familial vibe is unlike what exists elsewhere,” she says.

“The amount of investment by the teachers,” she adds, “is beyond what I expected. They watch and consistently track progress. They are growing me rather than putting their stamp on me.”

Poised to complete in May, Green now sees herself as a future leader in the acting business: “I don’t have to be Cabbie No. 2 [in the credits]. This place turned my dream into a reality.”

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Student Awards
K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award
Alexandra Mathwig

WEST Making a Difference Award
Lindsay Kuhn

Presidential Management Fellowship
Rachel Lowenstein
OPPORTUNITIES AND UPDATES

Students to Develop Programming and Resources
Two new initiatives aim to foster inclusion and leadership opportunities for graduate students. The Graduate Community Fellows program enables 10 students to collaborate and cultivate problem-solving skills, while Brown Graduate Resources for Improving Professional Structures (B-GRIPS) is a peer-resource program.

Pairs of Community Fellows will develop and implement initiatives intended to foster a community that celebrates diversity, inclusion, and equity. This year, the focus is on five areas: race & social justice, wellness & health, family-friendly environment, international student community, and master’s student community. Programming will begin this semester.

“I recognize the importance of bridging silos and promoting inclusivity across areas of discipline when discussing solutions to people’s health issues,” says participant Arjee Restar.

B-GRIPS was proposed by a student, Ida Yalzadeh, who is joined in the inaugural cohort by Amanda Boston, Diana Burk, Gregory Dachner, Adewole Oyalowo, and Yinsui Zheng.

B-GRIPS is intended to create an informal, low-barrier resource for other graduate students. Members are trained to deal with conflict, including negotiation and mediation, and are expected to gather data and make recommendations to administrators and the Graduate Student Council.

Ethics Dinner Seminars Address Climate Change, Race and Knowledge
The second Academy in Context dinner-seminar of 2016-17 focuses on climate change and human decision-making. The February 15 event features John Mustard, Brown University Professor of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences and Professor of Environmental Studies, and Deborah Gordon, Director of the Energy and Climate Program at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace and Senior Fellow at the Watson Institute for International and Public Affairs.

In September, Professors Anthony Bogues and Tricia Rose led discussion on race and knowledge. “Be rigorous and courageous” in your scholarship, urged Rose, Director of the Center for the Study of Race and Ethnicity in America. Bogues, the Director of the Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice, called decolonizing knowledge a long-term undertaking.

Brown Expands Graduate Study Offerings
The University is launching master and doctoral programs to provide advanced training to meet challenges in society and evolving scholarly contexts. The following new programs are accepting applications for admission in 2017-18: Master of Science in Data Science and Master of Science in Medical Sciences.

The Graduate School now offers six doctoral specialization certificate programs. These programs are designed to extend expertise into interdisciplinary areas and to certify training beyond the home Ph.D. discipline. The areas are: Africana Studies, Collaborative Humanities, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Public Humanities, and Spatial Analysis.

In Executive Master-level education, two new program enrolled students this year: Cybersecurity; and Science and Technology Leadership.

Alumni Give Career Advice
More than 30 graduate alumni shared insights at the third annual Graduate Student Career Options Conference. Organized by CareerLAB, the November 12 event provided graduate students with the opportunity to explore a wide variety of careers, from business and non-profits to government and higher education administration. Alumni from all four divisions participated in networking events, small-group discussions, and career panels.

Research Matters!
Nine graduate students and a postdoc explained the importance of their research at the Graduate School’s second Research Matters! event. Topics at the November live-talk event ranged from ways to improve lithium-ion batteries to how social media can help protect cultural heritage.
Open Graduate Education
Xu to ‘Leverage’ Research with PRIME Training
Yun “Ryan” Xu, a PhD candidate studying post-trauma pneumonia, wants to do more than understand why it occurs. “My motivation is real-life impact,” he says. “I want to leverage lab experience to bring something to patients to promote health care.” For Xu and 41 other current doctoral students, the Open Graduate Education program is a vehicle to combine studies in unique ways to achieve their goals and to earn a secondary master’s degree.

The Pathobiology student is past the midpoint of the Program in Innovation Management and Entrepreneurship Engineering (PRIME), one of nearly 50 areas of master’s study offered through this Graduate School initiative. He and his teammates recently learned how to develop a product, and he founded the Brown Graduate Consulting Club (BGCC), a student group that meets weekly.

“Balancing the demands of two graduate programs can be challenging,” Xu says, “Time management and communication with my advisor are critical.” Dr. Amanda Jamieson, his advisor, has provided tremendous support, he says.

“In doctoral study, we tend to focus on a problem and don’t look up to see if it will be useful,” he observes. “Study is like a one-way street, with an occasional detour. The technology commercialization process is more like a roundabout with iterative processes, such as hearing the customer voice, modifying the product and re-testing in the market.”

Through this experience, his career trajectory is taking shape: clinically relevant research and technologies at a research university, biotech firm, or a big pharmaceutical company.

Mathwig Named ‘Future Leader’
Alexandra Mathwig is one of eight recipients of the 2017 K. Patricia Cross Future Leaders Award, announced by the Association of American Colleges & Universities. The doctoral candidate in History of Art & Architecture was selected from among 255 nominees. The national award recognizes exemplary promise as a future leader of higher education, a commitment to developing academic and civic responsibility, and an emphasis on teaching and learning.

“It is an honor to be acknowledged for my service work at Brown,” said Mathwig, “and I am very thankful for the opportunities that I have been afforded as a Ph.D. student here to pursue my interests in higher education beyond those directly related to my research.”

Kuhn Gets ‘Giving Back’ Award
Lindsay Kuhn, a doctoral candidate in Engineering, receives one of two Making a Difference in the Community Awards from the Women in the Enterprise of Science and Technology. Each year, the Cambridge, MA, organization recognizes role models who have a profound impact on society. Kuhn is the founder of Inventing Heron, which shares career resources and inspires exploration.

Lowenstein Receives PMF Honor
Rachel Lowenstein, a master’s student in Public Affairs, is one of 417 finalists for the Presidential Management Fellowship (PMF), selected from a pool of more than 6,300. With this honor, she is eligible for appointment as a Presidential Management Fellow in a federal agency. The leadership development program is intended to develop a cadre of potential government leaders.

FLiCenter: “My first year was a huge shock,” says Maria Ortega, a PhD student in Sociology. As a first-generation, low-income Latina student, she didn’t have graduate role models. Now, she is a role model. Ortega is the graduate student coordinator at Brown’s First-Generation College and Low-Income Student Center. “I’m still here,” she tells students, “and you can do this too.”
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HIGHLIGHTS

Dean Campbell on Student Agency

MFA Students Build a Bridge

Students Win Leadership and Impact Awards

Open Graduate Education: Combining Pathobiology with Entrepreneurship

Academy in Context Seminar on Climate Change

RECENT INITIATIVES AT BROWN

8 new research, teaching, or professional development programs for graduate students

5 new or expanded positions to serve graduate students

Expanded support for humanities and social science PhD students

No-cost dental insurance for eligible PhD students

Supportive new-parent policy for eligible students

Wernig Graduate Student Study Center

Expanded international orientation and outreach

Dedicated Commencement ceremony and awards for master’s students