

Because
of
you

Seven years of progress

See how your gifts are making a real difference for students

\$160M

TOTAL RAISED
You are why we surpassed our goal

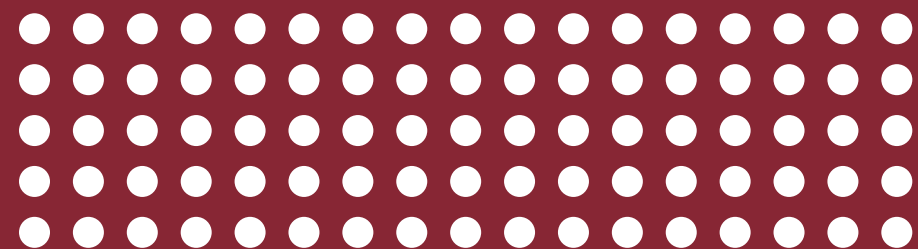
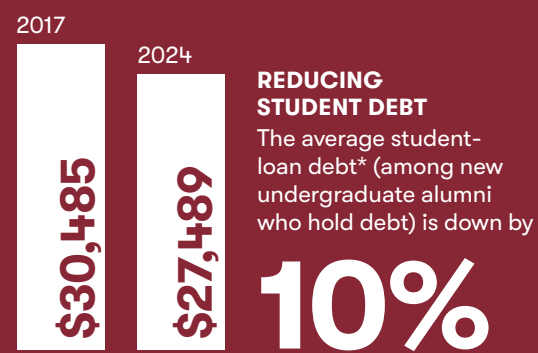
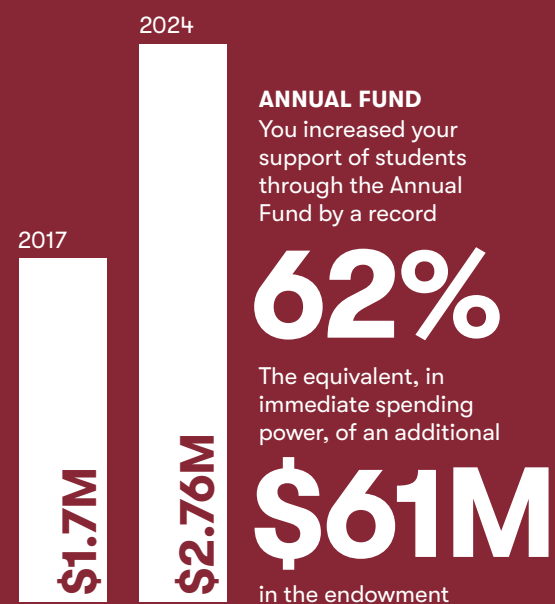
WILLAMETTE'S ENDOWMENT

From 2017 to 2024, the endowment is up

\$233M



\$307M



ENDOWED SCHOLARSHIPS

85

Endowed scholarships created since 2017

In 2017, Willamette set out to raise \$150 million over seven years, an ambitious goal.

We wanted to stake our claim as a leading private university in the Northwest. We wanted to engage more of you as volunteers, donors, and ambassadors. We wanted to significantly increase the Annual Fund, create new programs, and build our endowment, particularly for scholarships.

With months to spare, we reached our \$150 million goal this spring. Then we surpassed it.

You are one of the 11,641 people who stepped forward to help during these seven years. You gave or pledged amounts ranging from \$50 to \$7 million. More than 2,780 of you volunteered your time to the university each year.

You endowed 85 scholarships, and 235 of you became new members of the R. A. Booth Society by establishing planned gifts that benefit the university.

A majority of you contributed to the Annual Fund, which allows us to invest in our current highest priorities—from scholarships to career services to experiential learning.

In total, this effort raised \$160,012,467 million in gifts and pledges.

In this report, you'll read about what these new resources have enabled us to do. You'll meet a few of the many students you've helped. You'll learn about new programs and our future ambitions. You'll see that we are a place that is not afraid to step up and go first.

But it's always better to go with friends. Thank you for coming together in such a big way. We still need you, and we can't wait to see what we do together next.



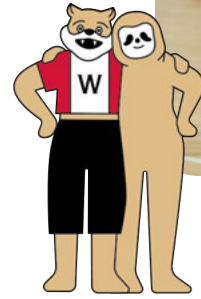
PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHRISTINE DONG, ILLUSTRATIONS BY JUSTINA LEISYTE

*The national average student-loan debt is \$29,400, according to the College Board

Because
of *you*,



We are.
growing



\$160,012,467

Gifts and pledges raised



Willamette is on the move. You are the reason why.

Higher education is under enormous pressure nationwide. The US college-aged population is declining. As household expenses rise, families have less ability to pay tuition. Economists predict that some schools may close in the coming years.

Yet Willamette is uniquely positioned to thrive. We are nimble enough to take strategic risks, but established enough to stay true to our roots. We are large enough to harness the collective strength of our schools, but still small enough to avoid the silos that can constrain creative thinking.

Over the past seven years, while others talked about the urgency to adapt and grow, Willamette acted. We created programs, hired faculty and staff, and boosted enrollment and retention.

Since 2017, we added four schools and programs, all grounded in the liberal arts. Our undergraduate degree program in public health launched in the fall of 2019, just months before the pandemic. Our 2021 merger with the Pacific Northwest College of Art immediately expanded our footprint in Portland, our student body, and the scope of our curriculum. Also in 2021, our undergraduate business major launched, expanding the breadth of the Atkinson Graduate School of Management, Oregon's top-ranked MBA program. The 2023 launch of our School of Computing & Information

Sciences created a home for our undergraduate programs in computing and data science, our master's program in data science, and a new master's in computer science.

Every gift to the Annual Fund supported this growth, and some gifts created new staff positions: two career advisors, a PNCA health coach, and an assistant dean of civic engagement.

Endowed gifts were another key piece of the funding puzzle. The public health program was boosted with a \$6 million endowed gift from FamilyCare Health and the Heatherington Foundation for Innovation and Education in Health Care, made in honor of Jeff Heatherington BA'65, founder, president, and CEO of FamilyCare Health. It funds student scholarships, student research and internships, a pre-health program director, and public health programming. Meanwhile, a \$2 million gift from the Arlene Schnitzer Estate created the Arlene and Harold Schnitzer PNCA Dean's Initiative Fund to help test new programs and advance PNCA's strategic goals.

Other recent gifts endowed a faculty support fund and new faculty and leadership positions. To name a few, these include the Lindsay BA'69, JD'73 and Corinne BA'71 Stewart Professorship in Humanities; the Johanna Beckham Zeller and Norman K. Zeller

Endowed Chair in Voice and Dramatic Vocal Arts; the Jordan Schnitzer Dean of PNCA; and the James F. Albaugh Professorship in Statistics.

Of course, none of this would matter if students were unable to afford a Willamette education. Because of you, the best students can choose Willamette regardless of their ability to pay.

In 2020, Willamette took the landmark step of lowering undergraduate tuition by about 20%, ensuring that students benefit from the financial strength that the Annual Fund makes possible.

New scholarships are another way to support students. For Serenna Thorsen BS'26, for example, the Fairweather Fellowship is why she chose Willamette and tried data science.

"It opened a door for me," Serenna says. "I have discovered my whole career field." (To learn more about Serenna, see page 9.)

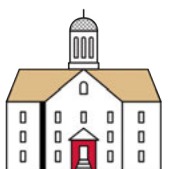
Schmidt Scholars Program, which helps high-performing applicants attend Willamette by removing financial barriers. In addition, an anonymous contribution provided a match to newly established endowed scholarships—ensuring many new endowments have an even greater impact on students.

Today, Serenna is pursuing a joint degree in data science that enables her to earn both a bachelor's and a master's in four years. In fact, since 2017, Willamette has greatly expanded our dual and joint degree programs. This is yet another way you are helping to make a Willamette education cost-effective and attractive.

The effects multiply. As we grow, we become ever more effective in delivering a high-quality Willamette education to our students.

You are the reason we can do all of this.

Your future gifts are the reason we will continue to do so in the years to come.



Because
of you,

The best students are choosing Willamette

You contributed \$69.5 million in scholarship support over the past seven years, a testament of our shared values. In addition, you supported students through the Annual Fund, which bridges the gap between tuition revenue and operating expenses. Each year, the Annual Fund provides a transformative education to engaged, talented, and accomplished students, regardless of student need. In 2023–24, the Annual Fund raised a record \$2.76 million. Here, you will meet five students you are helping right now.



\$69.5M

Raised for scholarships



Sterlin Griffin BS, BA'26 is pursuing his dream of becoming a neuroscientist

While growing up in the Los Angeles area, Sterlin Griffin became curious about the brain. “I’ve always been interested in the mechanisms behind our everyday functions,” he says.

He knew a bachelor’s degree was the first step to a career as a neuroscientist. But as a first-generation college student, he worried about the four-year cost of college. “I was afraid I would have to stop half-way through, that the financial barrier would be too great,” he says. “But at Willamette, the amount that I am paying in tuition is reasonable. It will not stop me from becoming a neuroscientist. Financial support is allowing me to pursue my ambition.”

Sterlin received funding from the Melvin Henderson-Rubio

BA’74 Scholarship and the Ernst & Selma Thoman Scholarship.

Today, Sterlin is diving deep into a wealth of academic interests—from psychology to public health, biology to art history. He founded the Psychology Club, and this summer he studied parasite-containing larvae in oak trees with Professor of Biology Chris Smith. “I’ve grown as a person at Willamette, and I’ve gained knowledge and skills for graduate school,” Sterlin says.

Long-term, Sterlin aims to earn a PhD and work in—or start—a lab focused on neurodegeneration. “I want to do good for the world,” he says. “I want to be of service.”

“I’VE GROWN AS A PERSON AT WILLAMETTE, AND I’VE GAINED KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL.”

“MY TEACHERS KNOW THE NAMES OF MY FRIENDS, AND THE NAMES OF PAST STUDENTS, AND WHAT WE WANT FOR THE FUTURE.”



Dylan Mead BFA’25 joined a caring artistic community

Dylan Mead grew up in an artistic family in Hillsboro, Oregon. He always wanted to go to art school—he never imagined doing anything else—and applied to several. When he opened his PNCA scholarship offer, he knew his college decision would be easy.

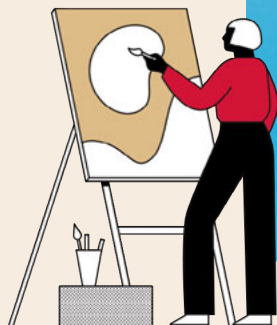
As soon as he arrived at PNCA, Dylan noticed how much room there is “to be a human as well as an artist” in and out of the studio. His professors are not only working artists but people who truly care about their students. “Many teachers here keep and cherish past students’ work,” he says. “They know the names of my friends, and the names of past students, and what we want for the future.”

While Dylan’s focus at PNCA is on illustration, he’s also nurtured his interests in painting and graphic design. And through his work on the Student Council, he’s organized

an exhibition of work by his PNCA classmates, giving him a chance to promote and celebrate their art.

Dylan also loves his work-study job as an admission ambassador. What does he tell the prospective students he meets about PNCA?

“Well,” he says, “it’s a lot more fun to *show* them about PNCA: We have art all over the walls here. I love to take people into the studios and exhibition spaces.”



Serenna Thorsen BS’26 discovered a career she didn’t know existed

Serenna Thorsen came to Willamette for three reasons.

First, the university awarded her a donor-funded Fairweather Fellows Scholarship, which provides funding to students in data and computer science.

Second, she wanted to be close enough to home to continue her volunteer work as a 4H leader in Dallas, Oregon.

Third, she wanted a well-rounded liberal arts education.

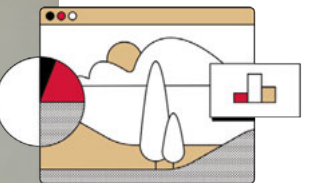
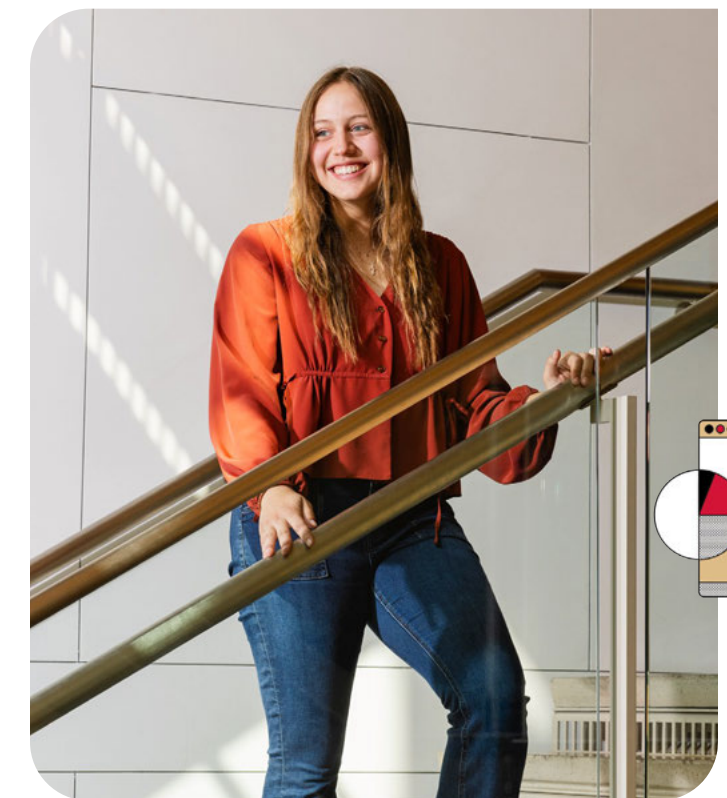
Today, she knows it was the right choice. “I love the Willamette community,” Serenna says. “We’re all driven and willing to learn. We’re passionate about helping each other grow.”

In high school, Serenna was strong in science and math, but until she learned about the Fairweather program, she had never heard of the field of data science. Today, she is enrolled

in Willamette’s 3+1 data science program, which enables students to complete both a bachelor’s and a master’s in four years. She is also an environmental science minor.

Serenna’s dream career would combine data science, environmental science, and her other passion: mustang rescue. She knows her education has prepared her well. “I’m so thankful to go to Willamette,” she says. “It would not have happened without the fellowship, and without the fellowship, I would have never known about my career field.”

“WE’RE ALL DRIVEN AND WILLING TO LEARN, AND WE’RE PASSIONATE ABOUT HELPING EACH OTHER GROW.”





James Farden MBA'25 found his niche in business

James Farden studied business in college and knew he wanted to continue his education. “I felt like a master’s degree would allow me to really find my niche,” he says.

He was right. At the Atkinson Graduate School of Management, James discovered operations and supply chain management. “I’m a numbers guy, but I don’t want to be behind a desk,” he says. “Operations is the best of both worlds. A good operations team has arms and legs in every sector of a business.”

James chose Atkinson for its small classes and world-class faculty. Though he worried an MBA would be unaffordable, Atkinson awarded him the Allis/Gray Scholarship and other funding he needed to enroll and thrive.

In his Practical Application for Careers and Enterprises class, he and other students developed a plan for Hood

River, Oregon, to create more affordable and middle-income housing. Outside of class, James is compliance chair of the Atkinson Student Association, and this summer he interned in product development at a health-care firm.

“I’m putting myself out there, going for these positions, trying to make our school as strong as I can make it in the two years I’m here,” James says. In each effort, he heeds his favorite piece of advice: “The hardest thing to do is show up. My high school teachers told me this, my college professors said the same. Now at the master’s level I see that the message will always stick.”

“I’M PUTTING MYSELF OUT THERE, GOING FOR THESE POSITIONS, TRYING TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL AS STRONG AS I CAN MAKE IT.”

“PEOPLE WHO ARE VOLUNTEER-ORIENTED WILL FIND A PLACE AT WILLAMETTE THAT FITS THEIR PASSION.”



Lexxie Hall JD'26 keeps falling in love with the law

Lexxie Hall grew up in Reno, Nevada, with a plan to study politics. But in college she took a job as a legal assistant and paralegal at a family law firm. “I fell in love with the law,” she says. “Law school was exactly where my heart was telling me to go.”

She appreciated Willamette’s proximity to the State Capitol and the accessibility of faculty and staff. “For a first-generation student like me, the law school application process was very intimidating,” Lexxie says. “But I got a handwritten note with my acceptance letter. I loved that about Willamette.” She also received aid from the Linda C. Love JD’81 Scholarship Fund.

Lexxie falls more in love with the law every day, whether in her classes, as a summer intern in the district attorney’s office, or as vice president of the Women’s Law Caucus. Lexxie also founded the organization Student Advocates Against

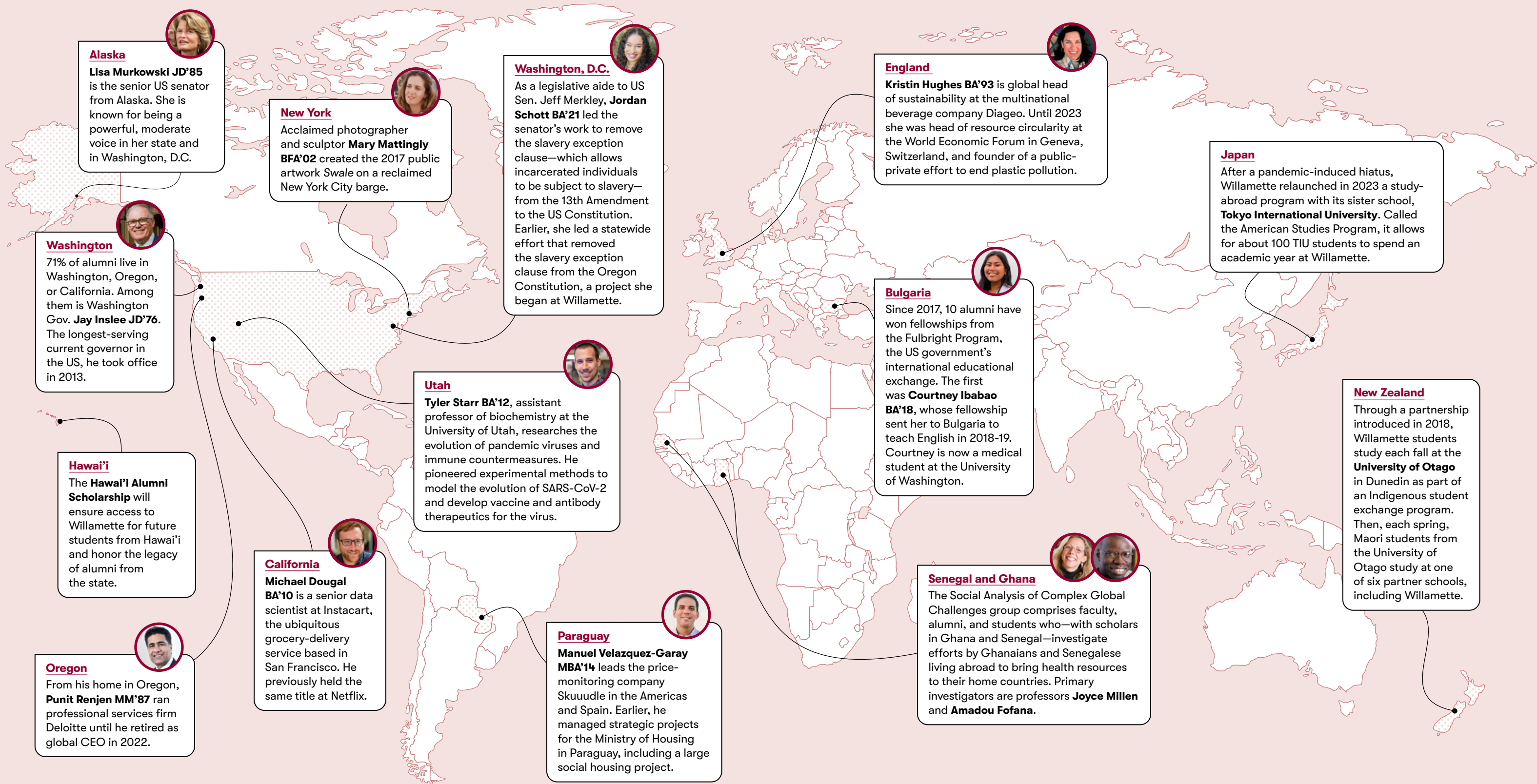
Domestic and Sexual Violence at Willamette Law. This year, she is a mentor to first-year law students.

“People who are volunteer-oriented will find a place at Willamette that fits their passion,” she says. “I know that I want to pursue a legal career tied to domestic violence cases or child abuse cases. I keep learning new things about these topics that make me even more passionate to do work related to them.”



BECAUSE OF YOU, WE ARE MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE

Alumni, students, and faculty are turning knowledge into action across professions, disciplines, and continents. Here are just a handful of examples.



Alaska
Lisa Murkowski JD'85 is the senior US senator from Alaska. She is known for being a powerful, moderate voice in her state and in Washington, D.C.

New York
 Acclaimed photographer and sculptor **Mary Mattingly BFA'02** created the 2017 public artwork *Swale* on a reclaimed New York City barge.

Washington, D.C.
 As a legislative aide to US Sen. Jeff Merkley, **Jordan Schott BA'21** led the senator's work to remove the slavery exception clause—which allows incarcerated individuals to be subject to slavery—from the 13th Amendment to the US Constitution. Earlier, she led a statewide effort that removed the slavery exception clause from the Oregon Constitution, a project she began at Willamette.

England
Kristin Hughes BA'93 is global head of sustainability at the multinational beverage company Diageo. Until 2023 she was head of resource circularity at the World Economic Forum in Geneva, Switzerland, and founder of a public-private effort to end plastic pollution.

Japan
 After a pandemic-induced hiatus, Willamette relaunched in 2023 a study-abroad program with its sister school, **Tokyo International University**. Called the American Studies Program, it allows for about 100 TIU students to spend an academic year at Willamette.

Washington
 71% of alumni live in Washington, Oregon, or California. Among them is Washington Gov. **Jay Inslee JD'76**. The longest-serving current governor in the US, he took office in 2013.

Bulgaria
 Since 2017, 10 alumni have won fellowships from the Fulbright Program, the US government's international educational exchange. The first was **Courtney Ibabao BA'18**, whose fellowship sent her to Bulgaria to teach English in 2018-19. Courtney is now a medical student at the University of Washington.

New Zealand
 Through a partnership introduced in 2018, Willamette students study each fall at the **University of Otago** in Dunedin as part of an Indigenous student exchange program. Then, each spring, Maori students from the University of Otago study at one of six partner schools, including Willamette.

Hawai'i
 The **Hawai'i Alumni Scholarship** will ensure access to Willamette for future students from Hawai'i and honor the legacy of alumni from the state.

Utah
Tyler Starr BA'12, assistant professor of biochemistry at the University of Utah, researches the evolution of pandemic viruses and immune countermeasures. He pioneered experimental methods to model the evolution of SARS-CoV-2 and develop vaccine and antibody therapeutics for the virus.

Senegal and Ghana
 The Social Analysis of Complex Global Challenges group comprises faculty, alumni, and students who—with scholars in Ghana and Senegal—investigate efforts by Ghanaians and Senegalese living abroad to bring health resources to their home countries. Primary investigators are professors **Joyce Millen** and **Amadou Fofana**.

Oregon
 From his home in Oregon, **Punit Renjen MM'87** ran professional services firm Deloitte until he retired as global CEO in 2022.

California
Michael Dougal BA'10 is a senior data scientist at Instacart, the ubiquitous grocery-delivery service based in San Francisco. He previously held the same title at Netflix.

Paraguay
Manuel Velazquez-Garay MBA'14 leads the price-monitoring company Skuuudle in the Americas and Spain. Earlier, he managed strategic projects for the Ministry of Housing in Paraguay, including a large social housing project.

Because of you,

Students study in a forest

Willamette University at Zena Forest is a vital educational tool for ecology, forestry, environmental stewardship and sustainability, and art in nature. Its 305 acres, located just west of Salem, offer hands-on learning and research opportunities for students and faculty. In addition, they offer immersive experiences for the surrounding community. The John BA'67 and Linda Shelk Educational Pavilion at Zena will be made possible through the generosity of John and Linda Shelk, the estate of Mark Halliday BS'74, the Wollenberg Foundation under the guidance of Rick Wollenberg JD'78, Carolyn Hitchcock BS'73, and Terry Collins BA'70 and Barbara Collins. The Shelk Pavilion will expand Willamette's capacity for on-site education and research and will open a new opportunity for the Willamette community to plan, learn, and team-build while surrounded by the extraordinary beauty of the forest.



The John BA'67 and Linda Shelk Educational Pavilion at Zena was designed by acclaimed architect Anthony Belluschi and will serve students from all disciplines.*

*A TONY BELLUSCHI DESIGN REIMAGINED BY AC+CO ARCHITECTURE. IMAGE FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY.



BECAUSE OF YOU,

STUDENTS ARE LEARNING BY DOING

The momentum of the past seven years has helped faculty to experiment and innovate in their teaching, including by creating new opportunities for experiential learning. Here are four examples.

1

The Art of Sparkling

Argyle Winery selects three PNCA students per year to design an original work of art for a wine label. The labels appear on Argyle's Art of Sparkling three-bottle set, and each student receives internship credit and \$5,000 from Argyle. Grace Feucht BFA'24 considers the project her most significant achievement to date, because it taught



her how art intersects with industry. Plus, the \$5,000 helped fund Grace's study-abroad semester in York, England.

2

Law school externships

Willamette Law has transformed its curriculum in recent years to focus on experiential learning. The externship program is one example. Second- and third-year students partner with attorneys who practice in all areas of the law, including as in-house counsel for national and regional companies; as prosecutors and public defenders; in the Capitol; and in private law firms. Students participate in everything from litigation, to alternative dispute resolution, to drafting legislation. A 2021 planned gift from Marty Wolf BA'57, LLB'60 created the Martin R. Wolf Curricular Innovation Fund, which will help the law school continue its trajectory as a model of experiential learning.

3

The Conversation Project

Faculty members David Gutterman and Wendy Petersen-Boring BA'89 created this two-semester course to help students cultivate conversation across difference. As a result, Mira Karthik BA'24 learned that understanding all sides of an issue is among the most important skills an aspiring public servant like her can develop. "The ability to have difficult conversations," she says, "is at the core of strengthening democracy." Thanks to The Conversation Project, Mira and other alumni will take that lesson out into the world.

4

Improving public health in the region

Faculty and students undertook a large-scale project this year for Marion and Polk counties, researching the most effective ways to communicate with at-risk residents about environmental health hazards and threats. Working from the lenses of anthropology, politics, environmental science, English, public health, and more, professors devoted several weeks of class time to the work. Later, 20 students did paid summer research. "We like to call this civic-engaged learning," says Assistant Professor of Public Health Nicole Iroz-Elardo, who co-led the project.

Because
of you,

We are leaning into leadership

In a new major and minor, undergraduates learn from faculty in Oregon's top-rated MBA program



Willamette unveiled an undergraduate business major in 2021 on the heels of a new minor in the same field. Grounded in the liberal arts, this popular major and minor offer bachelor's students the rare opportunity to spend four years learning from MBA faculty—in our case, faculty of our Atkinson Graduate School of Management, the top-ranked MBA program in Oregon. In this edited conversation, Atkinson Interim Dean Romana Autrey and one of the first undergraduate business majors, Kaitlyn Westby BS'25, discuss what this program means for students. Romana chaired the task force that developed the undergraduate business curriculum. Kaitlyn, a member of the volleyball team, came to Willamette from the Seattle area.

Kaitlyn Westby BS'25: I was undecided on my major when a good friend told me that Willamette had a new undergrad business program. I took a few of the intro classes and immediately fell in love. Every professor is truly knowledgeable and caring. Romana has been one of my advisors in the major. I took her class on managerial accounting. I also did an independent study with Romana that looked at financial ratios at consulting firms, because I'm interested in entering management consulting. Romana, you're so awesome.

Interim Dean Romana Autrey: Oh, thank you. You are too. An independent study is harder to do at a big school. At Willamette, we are set up for it. For Kaitlyn's, we did a fairly sophisticated analysis of cash-flow statements. She will now be well-informed when she

looks at potential workplaces. She'll be able to see: Is that firm growing or is it in decline? How is that whole industry doing? This context can be very helpful.

KW: It was also really fun.

RA: It was really fun. Most of my colleagues came to Willamette from large research universities. Atkinson has a solid foundation in research but is built around the student experience. That's what brings us here. My first job out of my PhD was at Harvard Business School, where I taught MBAs. My next job was at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, where I taught undergrads. At Willamette, I get to teach both.

KW: I love that we learn all the facets of business. We don't specialize in marketing or finance or accounting—or in any other area.

RA: We designed our undergraduate curriculum to be a launching pad to a job in any organization anywhere—business, nonprofit, or governmental. That's what makes our MBA so special, and we wanted to replicate that for undergraduates. We try to set students up to write their ticket anywhere. It's a liberal arts paradigm: we prepare students to be lifelong learners.

KW: One of my two favorite classes has been "New Ventures" with [Assistant Professor of Management] Colin Birkhead. It was like *Shark Tank*. Each student came up with a product or service. This class was unlike any other I've taken, and it was some of the most hands-on business work I've done. I mean, we actually made a prototype of our product. Mine was a camel's-milk-based protein powder. I was really proud of it.

Kaitlyn Westby BS'25, one of the first undergraduate business majors, with Atkinson Interim Dean Romana Autrey.



“WE WANT TO HELP PREPARE STUDENTS TO NOT ONLY EXCEL IN THEIR FIRST JOB BUT TO KNOCK IT OUT OF THE PARK AND BE PROMOTED TO A SUPERVISORY POSITION.”

RA: “New Ventures” is one of our experiential courses. If we asked 10 majors to name their favorite course, at least eight or nine would name an experiential course.

KW: Well, my other favorite class was also experiential: “Business Simulation” with [Assistant Professor of Finance] Gilbert Park. It was student-led and built around our participation in the International Collegiate Business Strategy Competition. The competition gave us hands-on experience in running a company, working with others, and giving presentations to real business professionals. I feel so confident about entering the workforce now that I've taken that course.

RA: Part of Willamette's mission is to educate future leaders. We want to help prepare business majors to not only excel in their first job but to knock it out of the park and be promoted to a supervisory position. We also lean into what's unique about our MBA. That's why we created the course “Stakeholder Cooperation and Non-market Strategy,” which looks at interactions among the for-profit, governmental, and nonprofit worlds.

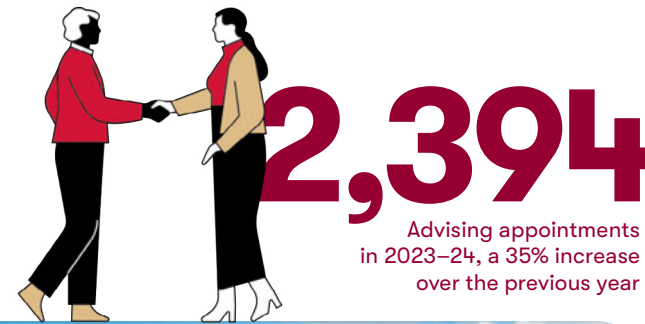
KW: Romana, I have a question for you. What is your favorite part about your job?

RA: Oh, I love it all. My very favorite has been working with colleagues to design an undergraduate curriculum that works well and is elegant. When I first met my husband, I told him, “I like solving puzzles, I like helping people, and I like making the world a better place—and probably in that order.” That's kind of what I do here. I solve puzzles, I help people, and hopefully we make the world a better place.

KW: To answer my own question, my favorite part about being a business major is working with other students. Our classes are collaborative. I know everyone very well—students and professors. When I graduate, I know I want to work for a company that is like Willamette in that way, a company that not only cares about its employees but makes an effort to develop personal relationships among them.



Because
of you,



We are helping students plan their futures

Your support will further underscore the value we place on career development

University career centers are a proven route to internships, interviews, and coveted job offers. According to a 2022 report from the National Association of Colleges and Employers, graduating seniors in the United States who used at least one career-center service received an average of 1.24 job offers, compared to 1.0 for others.

Yet for decades, Willamette’s offerings were limited and decentralized. Now, thanks to you, we have significantly increased our investment in career development services.

Phase 1 of this investment began in 2017 with the hiring of an experienced director who expanded and professionalized the advising team, including through new positions funded through donors. Next, the university united career offices across schools and programs under one vision, making it easier for advisors to cross-train, manage through vacancies, and elevate the quality of the services they offer. Advisors created new programming that is both popular and valuable, such as a for-credit course in job and internship search strategies.

Meanwhile, the Annual Fund and donor-supported endowed funds made resume-boosting internships possible for students who would have otherwise

needed to find higher-paying summer work or work that was closer to home.

Today, career development services at Willamette are more extensive than those at many of our peer institutions. We also boast more staff per student than many large institutions.

We could not have accomplished this without you. Now, Phase 2 of our investment aims to create a state-of-the-art physical space for career development. The

Architectural renderings of the Renjen Career Development Center, which will be located in the Putnam University Center on the Salem Campus.



Renjen Career Development Center—named in honor of the father and uncle of Punit Renjen MM’87—will be centrally located in the Putnam University Center on the Salem campus, where it will underscore the value we place on students’ futures and the value of hiring our graduates.

This vibrant new space will create a best-in-class program for career development. It will bring together under one roof career advisors now housed throughout the Salem and Portland campuses and accommodate future growth within the team. In addition to serving our students early and often, it will be a home away from home for alumni, who will visit as mentors and potential employers, and also as they seek to advance in their own professional journeys.

Your continued support will make this center a reality, springboarding students across our schools and programs to a lifetime of achievement, contribution, and meaning.

BECAUSE OF YOU,

WE FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT WHERE STUDENTS CAN THRIVE

When students faced adversity, you came together to help.

In 2020, donor-supported emergency funds made the difference for students who could not have otherwise traveled home at the pandemic’s start. Today, new gifts to these funds are invaluable to students with short-term needs. They have covered everything from groceries and utilities to the replacement of clothing and textbooks after natural disasters.

In 2021, donor momentum allowed the university to join the national JED Campus program, which provides expert support, evidence-based best practices, and data-driven guidance to protect student mental health.

We are also able to provide students with on-call

virtual counseling at night, on weekends, and during school breaks.

We’ve put the right staff in place, too. In 2023, Willamette hired nurse practitioner Lauren Carlson, one of *USA Today’s* Women of the Year, as director of health services. Hunter Marcus, who holds a master’s in public health, arrived as the PNCA health coach, a new, donor-funded position.

Always, the goals are to help students thrive as learners and gain skills and strategies for lifelong resilience.

Your continued support provides this foundation to future students.

In 2023, Hunter Marcus (left) arrived as the PNCA health coach and Lauren Carlson became director of health services.



Because of you,

We are a philanthropic family

Vice President of Advancement
Shelby Radcliffe answers

questions about all we've done in seven years, how donor support will keep making a difference, and much more

In what ways is our community of donors unique?

Our donors are unique in their level of support for student scholarships. I've never seen an institution where this is such an overwhelmingly dominant theme among donors. At a time when most colleges like ours are becoming more and more expensive, Willamette has worked hard to lower tuition. Our donors connect deeply with that institutional value and want to help. And at PNCA, our donors care deeply about having a vibrant arts institution in Portland.

If each reader of this report takes away only one piece of information, what do you want it to be?

We are committed to helping students get here, stay here, graduate, succeed, and thrive—and it's more true than ever that we couldn't do this without our donors. At Willamette, 85 percent of revenue comes from tuition. Of the 15 percent that remains, 85 percent of *that* comes from donors—in gifts to the Annual Fund, in restricted outright gifts, and in revenue from endowed, donor-created gifts. It would be very difficult for Willamette to deliver the education that we deliver without these gifts. It truly is a difference-maker. We would be a dramatically different institution without donor support.

In addition to engaging more people as donors, one goal of the past seven years was to increase the number of ambassadors and advocates for Willamette. What has this meant in practice, and how has it made a difference?

Word of mouth is extremely powerful for attracting students to places like Willamette. This is especially true on the West Coast, where most people did not attend liberal arts colleges. We asked our alumni and friends to say to smart kids in their neighborhoods and at their churches, synagogues, and mosques, "Willamette would be a great place for you." When this happens, those kids find their way to the admission office and apply.

What is the specific role of the Annual Fund in the university's budget?

In 2023–24, the Annual Fund raised \$2.76 million. In an operating budget of Willamette's size [\$95.5 million], \$2.76 million makes a real difference. It allows us to send the Concert Choir on tour to Mexico over spring break, to send our athletes to national championships in California [baseball] and Wisconsin [women's basketball], to bring visiting artists to PNCA, to send our MBA students on career treks, and to publish the *Law Review*. And every gift to the Annual Fund allows us to offer better financial aid packages to students than we would otherwise be able to do.



“IT WOULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR WILLAMETTE TO DELIVER THE EDUCATION THAT WE DELIVER WITHOUT THESE GIFTS. IT TRULY IS A DIFFERENCE-MAKER.”

to have a statistics major. The public health program is another example of how endowed funds help boost programs in areas of student interest.

Big picture, how has the university changed in the past seven years? We are transforming from an institution whose three separate schools had virtually nothing to do with each other into an integrated liberal arts university. This means students are able to take advantage of every part of the institution. Art majors and economics majors can learn from professors at Oregon's top graduate business school. Law students can learn from data scientists. We are more nimble than smaller institutions, and unlike large universities, our programs are not siloed.

How will donor support make the difference in the years to come?

As much as we've done to control costs—and we have done a lot—families' ability to pay is in decline. Inflation and salary/wage stagnation mean that families can save less for college. We want the most capable students to continue to choose Willamette. We also need to continue to innovate. Without the Annual Fund, we would not have the School of Computing & Information Sciences, and we would not have on-call mental health services services at night, on weekends, and over breaks, to give just two examples.

What else do you want to convey to Willamette donors?

Giving should be a joyful experience. When we think of our family of donors, we think of the shared joy that comes from collective acts of generosity. Despite the challenges in higher education and in the world, Willamette is a place of hope and optimism, because we're giving the next generation the best possible chance to lead lives of achievement, contribution, and meaning. It's a joyful enterprise. That's what I want to convey, along with our gratitude.



2,783

Total volunteers since 2017

11,641

Number of donors since 2017

4,384

First-time donors since 2017



Because
of you,

We will be bigger, broader, and bolder

Our grounding in the liberal arts, consistent over time, positions Willamette for an exciting future as our 200th birthday approaches

On Aug. 13, 1844, five young people arrived in Salem to begin their education as the first students at the first university in the West—a school that would become Willamette University.

Educated by a single teacher in a single building, these students would in some ways not recognize the Willamette of 2024. Today, 337 faculty members teach 2,637 undergraduate and graduate students on two campuses—one in Salem, the state’s center of government, the other in Portland, its center of business. In Oregon and around the world, our 38,506 alumni live our motto: Not unto ourselves alone are we born.

Today, we are one of the top liberal arts schools in the Pacific Northwest. We are the region’s leading experiential law school and flagship private art and design school. We are the top-rated MBA program in Oregon. We are the Pacific Northwest’s highest-ranked master’s in data science program.

But in the most important ways, we haven’t changed at all. As in 1844, the world faces profound social, economic, and technological change, and students come here to gain relevant skills and knowledge.

Over and over for almost 200 years, Willamette has

grown, adapted, and evolved to meet the needs of the region and era, while always remaining grounded in human-scaled teaching and learning.

The work continues.

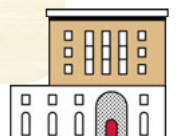
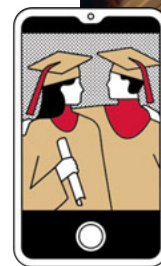
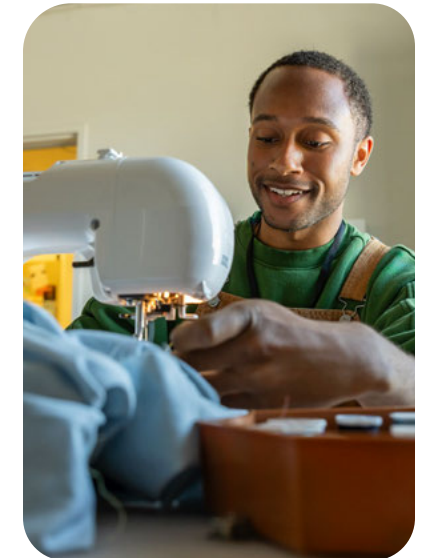
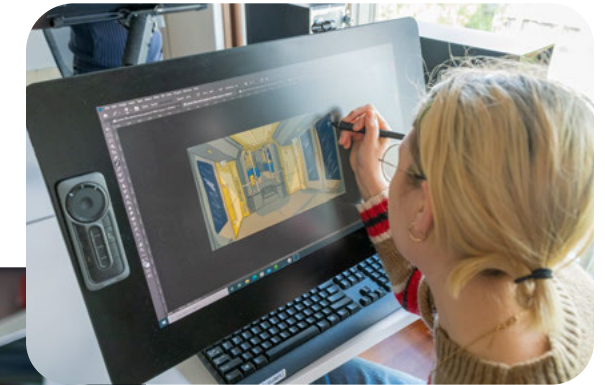
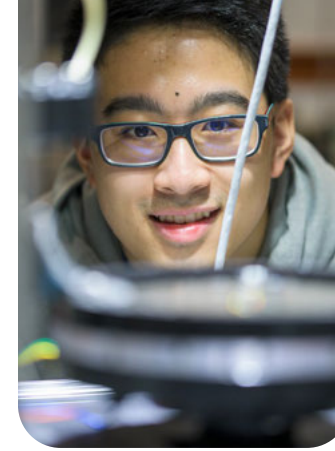
Willamette will mark its bicentennial in 2042. (We were founded two years before the first students arrived.) As we look toward that milestone, we aim to significantly increase our student body; to advance our position as an intellectual, cultural, social, and economic driver for the Northwest; to educate students who reflect the full diversity of the region; and to raise necessary resources to eliminate barriers to access.

The Willamette of 2042 will be bigger, broader, and bolder. In our third century and beyond, we will again and again evolve to meet the changing needs of our students and region. After all, that kind of work is in our DNA.

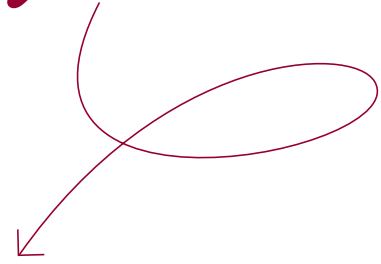
Because of you, we are distinctly positioned for this future. Because of you, there’s so much more we can accomplish together.

You have made us who we are. Because of you, we are nimble, able, purposeful, and strong.

Because of you, we are Willamette.



Because
of *you*,



**Our
future
is**

bright



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