

Finding His Voice Civil strife drove Papay Solomon from his home. Today, he is a young African refugee with a story to tell. He is also an artist. See how he gives voice to his journey through oil on canvas. **1**

Who's A Good Dog? When are puppies at their cutest, and what difference does it make? Learn the secret to successful dog-human relationships. **6**

Love Story Phyllis and Frank Saylor keep room in their hearts for teachers. **21**

Fall 2018
Issue No. 7

STORIES OF GENEROSITY AND OPPORTUNITY AT ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

IMPACT

Words Without Borders

Poet Alberto Ríos writes of
a world alive with itself.



WITNESS



Eyes **on** Africa

Papay Solomon lived in a refugee camp in Guinea, West Africa. When he was 5, he began doodling in notebooks handed out by the United Nations. After Solomon arrived in Arizona, the Myers Family Scholarship enabled him to attend ASU's Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts, where he honed his fine arts skills. His stunning oil-on-canvas paintings depict young people of the African diaspora. In 2018, HIDA honored him as its outstanding graduate. Photo courtesy of Papay Solomon.

JOINING FORCES Mike and Cindy Watts

“We want to show the power of a university to be a difference-making partner in the positive transformation of all communities.”

Arizona residents Mike and Cindy Watts, founders of Sunstate Equipment, began giving to Arizona State University in the 1980s. Impressed by the tangible outcomes of their investments and driven by a passion for helping disadvantaged students and their communities, they gave a \$30 million gift to the College of Public Service and Community Solutions, now named the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions. Learn about their journey with ASU in Proof, found on pages 24–25.



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CAMPAIGN ASU 2020

City dwellers are changing their ecosystems. ASU Professor Nancy Grimm aims to understand these urban environments.



12 18

FEATURE

Poet Alberto Ríos opens our eyes to the marvelous real.

FEATURE

Things aren't always as they seem. Take your desert landscaping, for instance.

IMPACT

4

STUDENTS

Shantel Marekera wants girls as well as boys to attend preschool in Zimbabwe.

6

FACULTY

When is cuteness a matter of life or death? Clive Wynne tells us.

8

NEWS

Music stirs emotion and memory in the elderly.

20

DONORS

This couple's first date at ASU Gammage never ended.

22

PARTNERS

A mother's tender heart leads to support for a community partnership.

24

PROOF

Mike and Cindy Watts seek to change the world, one neighborhood at a time.

ON THE COVER

Photograph by Justine Garcia

DREAM BELIEVER Scholarship recipient
Shantel Marekera used seed money to open
a preschool in Zimbabwe.

A photograph of a young Black woman with vibrant red braids, smiling broadly. She is wearing a bright blue sleeveless top. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with a brick building and greenery. The text "Big D" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Big D

“I want to be the person who believes in the dreams of these children.”

Shantel Marekera

Hoping to make education more accessible, Shantel Marekera, an ASU Mastercard Foundation Scholar, launched the Little Dreamers Foundation in Harare, Zimbabwe to open a subsidized preschool for low-income children. ¶ In such high-density areas, guardians are typically low-income parents or unemployed siblings. Local preschools charge more than \$70 a month, excluding food and supplies for each child, placing a financial strain on families. ¶ When faced with economic hardship, most families choose to send their sons to school. Girls are encouraged to learn crafts which do not require education, such as sewing. ¶ “I am very passionate about empowering the girl child,” says

reamers

Marekera, a senior in justice studies. “With the right mentorship, resources and efforts, girls can discover their enormous potential.” ¶ To give girls access to education, Marekera set enrollment in the preschool at the ratio of one boy to every three girls. The school also helps fulfill the Zimbabwean government’s mandate that children attend preschool before enrolling in primary school. ¶ “I am where I am today because someone believed in me,” Marekera says, citing the support she received from the ASU Mastercard Foundation Scholars Program. “I want to be the person who believes in the dreams of these children.” ¶ Marekera also received \$2,500 in seed money for the Little Dreamers Foundation from a fellowship co-sponsored by the Igniting Innovation Summit and The Resolution Project, which support socially responsible young leaders. ¶ She opened the preschool in August 2018 with a cohort of 15 children. It is a grassroots effort connecting local government, churches and community members.



Miranda Yousif

Her freshman year, Miranda Yousif took a part-time job doing basic lab research at ASU’s Biodesign Institute. She soon discovered a love for scientific investigation. Now a junior, Yousif double-majors in microbiology and neuroscience. She is one of five students to receive the new Biodesign Student Travel Grant, made possible through ASU Sun Devil Giving Day, an annual university-wide day of giving. The grant enabled her to present to the American Society for Microbiology, where she won an award for best undergraduate presentation. She then became one of three ASU students chosen in 2018 for a Fulbright Commission Summer Institute, enabling her to study at the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom.



Shay Khatiri

Second chances. Not everyone gets one, so when Khashayar “Shay” Khatiri was admitted to ASU after being expelled from a university in Iran for protesting an

allegedly rigged presidential election, he embraced the opportunity. At ASU “... nobody is beyond redemption,” says Khatiri, whose education here was aided by scholarship support. Khatiri had long harbored an interest in democratic ideals and political thought centering on liberty – sparked in part by hearing President George W. Bush speak in the aftermath of 9/11. He pursued those topics along with American history, graduating in May. His new goal: American citizenship.



Ryan Stoll

One in five children struggles with anxiety, which often

hinders their ability to learn in school or make friends. ASU doctoral candidate Ryan Stoll co-developed COMPASS for Courage to help these students worry less and succeed more. COMPASS for Courage is a school-based curriculum that teaches children research-backed skills to manage worry, solve problems, build relationships and face stressful situations. The program is used in 40 schools in the Phoenix area, with the goal of surpassing 100 schools by the end of 2018. Stoll earned support for his work through ASU venture-support competitions, including the Edson Student Entrepreneur Initiative, Change-maker Challenge and the Pakis Social Entrepreneurship Challenge.

BANNER YEAR Devils Land Top-level Scholarships



Charity Bhebhe, a graduate in molecular biology and biotechnology, earned a prestigious Gates Cambridge Scholarship to study in England. In 2018, more ASU students than ever won high-status awards, including awards that have never gone to Sun Devils before. Many, like Bhebhe, were able to attend ASU because of a scholarship. She was one of 92 scholars chosen from a pool of more than 5,800 applicants.



Kaye Reed

How did we become human? Kaye Reed, director of ASU's School of Human Evolution and Social Change, oversees a multidisciplinary research team investigating this question in the Institute of Human Origins. The institute was founded by Donald Johanson, who holds the Virginia M. Ullman Chair in Human Origins and who discovered the 3.18-million-year-old hominid skeleton known as "Lucy." The institute's multifaceted approach to studying human origins includes the work of paleoanthropologists, geologists, geneticists, archaeologists and evolutionary anthropologists. Its success combining traditional "bones and stones" research with innovative methods helped ASU rank No. 1 for anthropology-related research expenditures in a National Science Foundation survey.



Raghu Santanam

The field of artificial intelligence is moving toward

machines thinking like humans, learning for themselves rather than following instructions to complete a task.

This means more innovation and automation in the workplace, which transforms many jobs, says Raghu Santanam, professor of information systems in the W. P. Carey School of Business. To examine the effect of this transformation on jobs and the demand for skills, Santanam and his colleague Bin Gu, associate dean and professor of information systems, and business student Kevin Hong bring together business leaders and academics to discuss the implications of artificial intelligence in the workplace. The project is the work of the Digital Society Initiative, a research lab within Carey that fosters collaborations between industry and academia to answer questions of strategic importance to our increasingly digital society. The DSI's February Industry Partners Conference, "The Future of Work in the Digital Society," assembled top industry practitioners and scholars to present their research and findings around the broad topic of the gig economy. The conference was partially funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.



Deborah Cox

A letter of thanks from former first lady Michelle Obama reminds Deborah Cox that the social injustice work she oversees as assistant director of ASU's Center for the Study of Race and Democracy is important. That work, aided by private support, entails helping people achieve their potential, be critical thinkers and understand each other's humanity. Programs include Impact Arizona, which offers difficult-dialogue forums and solution-oriented workshops; the Created Equal Film and Arts Series, which uses the power of film, creative arts and performance to engage people in public conversations about freedom and equity; and the annual Delivering Democracy Lecture, which features distinguished speakers such as Forest Whitaker, Anderson Cooper, Viola Davis, Soledad O'Brien and Van Jones. In its Words on Wheels program, the center helps disenfranchised members of the greater Phoenix community – as well as anyone eager to learn – to develop their personal, professional and civic writing skills.

"The secret of dogs' success isn't in their intelligence; it's in their ability to make friends."

Clive Wynne

Cuteness is not a matter of life or death, or so we thought. But Clive Wynne, professor of psychology and director of ASU's Canine Science Collaboratory, found that the age at which puppies are at their cutest may affect their survival. ¶ Wynne used photographs of Jack Russell terriers, cane corsos and white shepherds, three distinct dog breeds, ranging in age from their first week of life through young adulthood, to research their age of optimal cuteness. From the responses of 51 participants, Wynne concluded that these breeds are at their cutest between six and eight weeks old. At this exact time, when we find puppies most appealing, a mother weans her puppies and pushes them to be independent. ¶ Without this peak in cuteness, puppies could be left to fend for themselves without their mother and without human companionship. "The secret of dogs' success isn't in their intelligence; it's in their ability to make friends," says Wynne, whose research reveals that dogs have an

Puppy

unprecedented enthusiasm for forming emotional bonds with other species. ¶ With the aid of private support to the Canine Science Collaboratory, Wynne conducts research to show the impact dogs have on humans and educate the public about their welfare. "Dogs enrich the lives of so many people. I strive to bring the tools of science to ensuring that the dog-human relationship reaches its full potential," he says.



Love

SECRET TO SUCCESS How can you say 'No' to this face? Most of us can't, ensuring the survival of the cutest.

Sparking a Memory

The Macarena

Twist and Shout

With a Little Help from My Friends

These great singalong songs recently enlivened the Tempe Adult Day Health Services center. But the 29 ASU music therapy students leading the older adults in song had a larger purpose than making merry: to use music to stimulate minds, spark a memory and encourage movement and laughter.

The students from Associate Professor Melita Belgrave's music therapy course spent six weeks working with the center's clients — older adults, some of whom struggle with dementia, and younger adults with traumatic brain injury. Students taught participants songs, played instruments and practiced movements.

"Our classroom is the community," says Belgrave, who researches intergenerational programming. With the majority of intergenerational music therapy focusing on disabilities in children, Belgrave says she wanted students to work with adults with memory challenges. This project allowed patients to sing old songs while introducing them to new instruments, which activates memory centers that spark learning.

"They all knew the songs and were passionate about singing them," says junior Acadia Caupp, a recipient of the New American University Provost's Scholarship who is double-majoring in music therapy and vocal performance. "And they showed such a willingness to answer our questions."

ASU students Tabitha Williams (far left) and Rachel Quirbach (far right) bring music therapy to elderly adults Mike Markgraf and Cindy Hikida, activating memory centers that spark learning.



PHOTO BY DEANNA DENT

Baseball fans in the Valley of the Sun will enjoy a better game-day experience at Phoenix Municipal Stadium, home to ASU Sun Devil baseball, thanks to \$4.8 million in capital improvements funded entirely through philanthropic support. ¶ Built in 1964 as a home for the San Francisco Giants spring training games, the stadium – known to locals as Phoenix Muni – is the Valley’s oldest stadium. For years, it

Change Up

hosted the Giants’ former affiliate Triple – A Pacific Coast League Phoenix Firebirds. The Sun Devils began playing there in 2015. ¶ Private support will fund a state-of-the-art batting facility, which includes three indoor hitting bays and a soft toss area. A viewing deck with a hospitality area is designed to enhance the fan experience. ¶ Other improvements, due



to be completed in November, include changes to the dimensions of the park, installation of a new outfield fence, and relocating home and visiting team bullpens. ¶ Since moving to the site, which is two-and-a-half miles from ASU’s Tempe campus, ASU and Sun Devil Athletics have made a number of capital improvements, including a clubhouse redesign, academic center, nutrition room, weight room and training room.



IMPACT ROUNDUP

Katzin Concert Hall is one of the most-used performance venues in ASU’s Music Building.

Perfection

Perfect. A word many strive for yet find difficult to achieve. However, ASU’s School of Music in the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts says its Katzin Concert Hall is “acoustically perfect.” Equipped with a maple-paneled stage, multifaceted walls and an acoustically engineered billowed ceiling, the hall is sponsored by David Katzin; owner of Budget Rent a Car, and the Katzin family; and is used for solo, small orchestra and chamber music recitals featuring students, faculty and guest artists.

A Healthy Start

Arizona children learn how to cook nutritious food at Camp Crave, a weeklong summer camp led by a certified chef, registered dietician and nutrition students in ASU’s College of

Health Solutions. On the menu are healthy ingredients like whole grains, lean meats, fruits and vegetables, all prepared in the college’s Instructional Nutrition Kitchen on ASU’s Downtown Phoenix campus. Supported in part by private philanthropy, Camp Crave teaches children to embrace a healthy lifestyle.

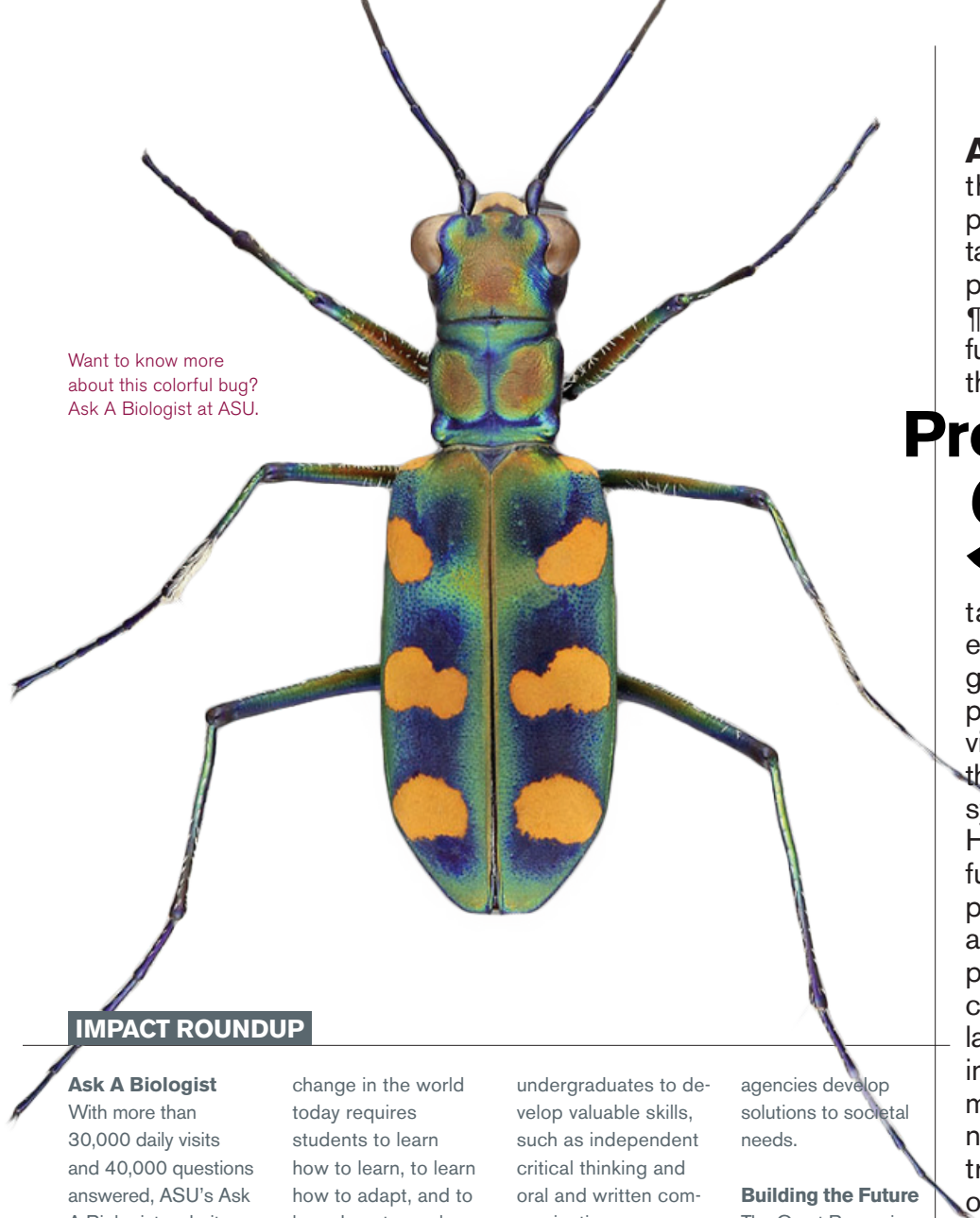
Body of Knowledge

ASU students don’t always need a dead body to dissect one. The College of Integrative Sciences and Arts’ Anatomage Table uses interactive screens to simulate a 3D dissection without a cadaver, allowing students to identify bones, muscles, tissues and organs. Nursing major and St. Luke’s Service League Scholarship recipient Kacey Cavanagh says she appreciates practicing on the table

before performing a physical dissection. “We were all nervous about cutting into an actual body, so that was helpful to see.”

Capital Experience

“We’re at ground zero for news that resonates across the country,” says Austen Bundy, Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication scholarship recipient, about the ASU Barrett and O’Connor Washington Center, ASU’s flagship facility in our nation’s capital. The center houses ASU’s Washington-based academic, public policy and public affairs programs, and more. Two blocks from the White House, the center facilitates engagement with leaders and policymakers. The student news bureau allows Bundy and others to sharpen their skills in a coveted market.



Want to know more
about this colorful bug?
Ask A Biologist at ASU.

IMPACT ROUNDUP

Ask A Biologist

With more than 30,000 daily visits and 40,000 questions answered, ASU's Ask A Biologist website engages people of different ages and backgrounds with biology by representing the voices of hundreds of scientists from ASU's School of Life Sciences. "We work to highlight the diversity of biology – both in terms of the subject matter we cover and in the type of information we offer," says Managing Editor Karla Moeller, who, with the aid of graduate fellowships and scholarships, received a doctorate in biology from ASU.

Learning to Adapt

"The rapid rate of

change in the world today requires students to learn how to learn, to learn how to adapt, and to learn how to apply what they've learned in the classroom to the real world," says Todd Sandrin, dean of ASU's New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences and vice provost at the ASU West campus. To achieve this, ASU's donor-funded Champion Student Success program provides undergraduate students opportunities to conduct research in diverse topics, including Alzheimer's disease, cancer studies and forensic science. Research opportunities enable

undergraduates to develop valuable skills, such as independent critical thinking and oral and written communication.

EPICS High

With violence erupting in high schools, an app to help teachers locate students in an emergency could save lives. High school students from MET Professional Academy in Peoria, Arizona, won first place in ASU's privately supported Engineering Projects in Community Service program with a locating app called SimpleSec. The EPICS High program pairs ASU students with middle and high school students to help community

agencies develop solutions to societal needs.

Building the Future

The Great Recession significantly affected ASU's Del E. Webb School of Construction, but, thanks to private support, the residential construction program has undergone a revival in interest and enrollment, including the reinstitution of the student chapter of the National Association of Home Builders. Now, ASU has the highest number of any construction faculty of any construction program in the nation, and award-winning students in the residential construction program.

After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the U.S. Congress took unprecedented action: It set up a taxpayer-supported fund to compensate the families of victims. ¶ The process of parceling out funds required mediation skills of the highest order, and Congress

Problem Solvers

tapped renowned arbitration expert Kenneth Feinberg to navigate the legal and emotional complexities of compensating disaster victims instead of having them sue the airlines and others in the court system. ¶ ASU law professor Art Hinshaw tells students about the fund because it highlights an important but largely unknown truth about our legal system: Only 2 percent of filed civil and criminal cases go to trial. ¶ So it behooves law students to develop expertise in the processes through which most disputes are resolved: negotiation, mediation and arbitration, says Hinshaw, director of ASU's Lodestar Dispute Resolution Center. ¶ Housed in the Sandra Day O'Connor College of Law, the center trains students to understand the nature of conflict resolution and how to resolve disputes effectively and efficiently. ¶ Now, a gift from one of the world's leading arbitrators will advance the center's impact on the global stage. Les Schiefelbein, an ASU alumnus and executive of a global technology arbitration and mediation center, established the Les Schiefelbein Global Dispute Resolution Program and endowed scholarship. ¶ The program will educate students and the community about legal practice within the complex and constantly evolving realm of international arbitration.

Promises and Challenges

A mother of three fleeing Syria's brutal, seven-year civil war is shot in the shoulder, then watches as her daughter is shot in the hand. The family makes it to Greece, but she is unable to find a job or provide for her children.

She is able to find solace in the Athens Hope Café Refugee Soul Food, where volunteers give her food and clothing.

This story is told in "Seeking Asylum," a documentary produced by Dave Hunt, former director of communications and marketing in ASU's New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences. Hunt documented ASU students who travel to Greece and other unofficial gateways to Europe to serve people

fleeing war, violence and ethnic persecution.

New College takes students into the midst of humanitarian refugee crises every spring as part of a two-week study abroad trip led by Julie Murphy Erfani, director of ASU's master's program in social justice and human rights.

The trip, funded in part by private support, allows students to volunteer in centers for asylum seekers by serving food, providing clothing, teaching English and connecting refugees to legal aid.

"It's important that American students gain a broad world view of the promises and challenges of western countries welcoming asylum seekers fleeing danger and extreme adversity anywhere in the world," says Murphy Erfani.

Dave Hunt, right, formerly a director of communications and marketing at ASU, receives assistance from young subjects featured in "Seeking Asylum," a documentary of the refugee experience.







EYES OPEN TO THE MARVELOUS REAL

TO ALBERTO RÍOS, BORDERS ARE LINES WHERE POSSIBILITIES MEET

BY **ERIK KETCHERSIDE**
PHOTOGRAPHS BY **JUSTINE GARCIA**

Alberto Ríos would never learn why the watermelon truck exploded. The *whoom!* snapped his head around too late to see the 18-wheeler erupt, but the inferno that followed was so intense it disintegrated a full load of melons and flowed molten slag from the truck onto the Arizona desert.

Ríos and his friends watched the maelstrom, hiding in a car of the train that had brought the melons across the border from Mexico. They were frequent visitors to this way station, sometimes liberating a few samples of cargo before the trucks tugged their loads northward, further into the U.S.

"We learned right away that you never ... let's say 'borrowed,' just one watermelon," Ríos says. "You have to carry them on your shoulder, and you can't balance very well with one. So we would each run off with two and crack them open and eat just the heart because they were otherwise full of seeds. It was glorious, like we were kings. Then we would just toss the husks. There are still a lot of watermelon plants growing wild out there."

No fire department arrived to extinguish the truck. The gang of preadolescents watched it slowly merge into the desert

throughout the afternoon, then dissipated like the smoke. But Alberto had to return the next day to see the remains. "Semi trucks were the biggest things in our lives," he says. "We saw airplanes flying over, but to me they were only half an inch long. Those trucks were like great whales of the desert."

Near the warped whale skeleton, still acrid and warm, Ríos found gleaming ambergris; a puddle of congealed metal shaped by the sand. He took it home, wrapped it in a towel, put it in a drawer and lost it for half a century.

THE CARRIER OF STORIES

Alberto Ríos' office on the Arizona State University Tempe campus is on the second floor of Piper House, built in 1907 and now home to the Virginia G. Piper Center for Creative Writing. In August, Ríos — a Regents' Professor and holder of the Katharine C. Turner Endowed Chair in English — began his second year as the center's director.

Few writers could claim better credentials for the job. Ríos was Arizona's first poet laureate, from 2013–15, a post he still informally holds. His poetry has won the Walt

Whitman and PEN/Beyond Margins awards, multiple Pushcart Prizes and inclusion in The Norton Anthology of Modern Poetry. His collection, "The Smallest Muscle in the Human Body," was a finalist for the National Book Award. "The Iguana Killer," a set of short stories, won the Western States Book Award from a selection committee whose head judge was Robert Penn Warren. His memoir of growing up on the border, "Capirotada," is in the Latino Literary Hall of Fame. Ríos became a chancellor of the Academy of American Poets in 2014. When the Irish rock band U2 devoted their 2017 tour to the 30th anniversary of their seminal album, "The Joshua Tree," they chose a Ríos poem for projection over their stage.

Of all the trophies, plaques and crystal commemoratives recognizing his work, the piece that, to him, symbolizes his career, is an amorphous blob of metal he picked up in the desert next to the hulk of a burned-out truck.

"After my parents passed away, we were clearing the house. I opened a drawer, and I found it. I unwrapped it and I realized, this is why I need to be a writer ... why we all need to be writers. I thought, absolutely nobody would know what this is. I was the carrier of its story and it had waited all this time for me to tell it.

"I talk to kids a lot about that," Ríos says. "The story happened a long time ago, but it's still fresh to me because I hold this talisman in my hand. We all have some version of that, even if it's just our version, and it's for us to tell."

A HOME FULL OF PLACES

Alberto Ríos' life has been shaped by borders. Not that he's been constrained by them, as borders are enlisted to do. For Ríos, a border is a lens that sharpens his view of what's possible, or what's imaginable, on the other side.

The house he was born to — Rodriguez Street, Nogales, Arizona, 1952 — was less than a mile across the border from Nogales, Sonora. His father, also

Alberto Álvaro Ríos, crossed that border as a teenager after a journey of 2,000 miles — the length of Mexico, from his own birthplace in Tapachula, Chiapas, on the border with Guatemala.

As he made that journey, a much greater expanse lay between him and Alberto Jr.'s mother-to-be: Agnes Fogg of Warrington, Lancashire, England. Alberto-not-yet-Sr. would join the U.S. Army Air Forces during the roiling uncertainty between World War II and Korea. At Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas — where signs on businesses



read "No Dogs or Mexicans" — he trained as a paratrooping medic. His tour of duty led through France, North Africa, decorated service during the Berlin Airlift, and finally to Warrington, and Agnes Fogg.

"He was a medic, and my mother was a nurse, working at the Royal Warrington Infirmary," wrote Ríos in his 1999 memoir, "Capirotada." "It just happened. They got engaged, and my mother's family always treated him very well. Even though he was very dark, something my father thought about a lot, and my mother very light, the specter of whatever might have been raised never was. They simply didn't see it." They were to be married when his tour of duty ended, when Alberto Álvaro Ríos of Tapachula, Chiapas would become Alberto Álvaro Ríos of Warrington, Lancashire.

When Alberto Sr. was suddenly redeployed back to the U.S. before his discharge, he had only enough time to give his fiancée some money and tell her he would be waiting for

THERE IS A
DUALITY
OF EXISTENCE
NOT ONLY IN
THE CONTENT
OF RÍOS' WORKS,
BUT IN THEIR
INSPIRATION.



This may look like an amorphous blob of metal. But in Alberto Ríos's world, it's a talisman with a story to tell.

her in Salt Lake City. Alberto Jr. wrote that Fogg, who had never been farther than two train stops from Warrington, "... got on a boat, crossed the ocean, crossed the country, and got off the train at Salt Lake City. And there was my father."

From "Capirotada": "I come, clearly enough, from a home full of places, languages and cultures ... a little from this side of the border, a little from that, a little from this side of the ocean, a little from there."

A WORLD ALIVE WITH ITSELF

Ríos holds a pen above a table in Piper House, lets it drop. "In English, I say, 'I dropped the pen.' It's an action I did.

"But growing up the way I did, that same moment is rendered in a completely different way. In Spanish I might say, 'se me cayó la pluma': 'The pen fell.' *It* fell from *me*. Maybe I dropped it. Maybe it *wanted* to fall. I ... don't ... know.

"It's the suggestion of an inherent life in things," Ríos

says. "I dropped that pen. But maybe it had some agency of its own. We did it together. It's a very different way to look at the world. It says, 'It's possible the world is alive with itself.'"

This dual view is with Ríos constantly when he writes. And it has a name. Ríos was born while the literary world was enchanted with the "magical realism" of Borges, Asturias and others. "Magical" is an adjective," Ríos says, "but the noun is 'realism.' Something happens, and it is *real*. It just happens in a way that is apparently magical, especially to a North American viewer. The term in Spanish is closer to 'lo real maravilloso': 'the Marvelous Real.' We infantilize that attitude by saying 'magic,' like it can't really happen. But 'the Marvelous Real' — that's a very, very different take on that moment. The real is always amazing me."

In "The Border: A Double Sonnet" — the poem U2 took on tour — Ríos wrote, "The border says stop to the wind, but the wind speaks another language, and keeps going."



BECAUSE WATER REFLECTS, IT HOLDS EVERYTHING

There is a duality of existence not only in the content of Ríos' works, but in their inspiration.

"I've always been interested in the idea of poems of public purpose," he says. "What I've done, especially during my tenure as Arizona's poet laureate, is take on institutions or ideas in the abstract; more philosophical ideas or unlikely subjects."

His poem, "The Museum Heart," engraved at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Scottsdale, Arizona, begins,

We, each of us, keep what we remember in our hearts.
We, all of us, keep what we remember in museums.
In this way, museums beat inside us.

His largest work, geographically, is "Words Over Water," commissioned by the city of Tempe, Arizona, to celebrate the renovation of Tempe Town Lake. Ríos collaborated with graphic artists Karla Elling and Harry Reese for a series of 600 granite tiles set in the lakefront wall; a six-mile book of poems and images about the importance of water to the desert.

"I used a form called the *greguería*," Ríos says, "a one-line poem in which you reach an epiphany, and that epiphany makes you laugh. You're laughing because you understand it, but it has high intent."

Some of Ríos' favorites:

Rain falls down wet and gets up green.

Raindrops on the hard dirt make the ghosts rise.

The water under this bridge once was the sweat of its builders.

When the tiles were unveiled, Ríos saw a group of students taking rubbings of one. "Of course, it was the perfect one for those junior high kids," he says, quoting himself and laughing: "Nobody owns water — drink some and try to keep it!"

A COMMUNITY SPEAKS TO ITSELF

Ríos' concept of poetry with public purpose continues to evolve. In 2017 it gestated a project so pure in that concept that poetry became only a facet, as Ríos wired the act of creation directly into the Marvelous Real.

Ríos took a group of graduate students — his "Army of a Hundred Ears" — and deployed them in South Phoenix. He told them, "We're not going to be told what to write and we're not going to take anybody's story. We're going to try to hear what nobody else is hearing. Whatever sticks with you. You won't even need to explain." Their mission was a linguistic one, but the Marvelous Real intervened.

Ríos says, "I saw telephone lines with some big black birds roosting on the lines and I said, 'Doesn't that look like a measure of music? I think we could play that!'" Everyone laughed. Ríos took a picture.

"Then we went to a community garden, and somebody was growing tomatoes. A number of the tomatoes had

fallen into the furrows, and I said, 'I think we could play that!'"

Click

The fierce eyes of lucha libre wrestlers in a mural, brick grout lines showing through. *Click*

Ríos says, "We were visiting the music class at Dunbar Elementary School and I was explaining the project to them. I showed them the pictures of the birds and the tomatoes and the luchadores, and one of the kids said to another, 'Hey, come do that thing with your face!' This girl came forward and wrinkled her forehead, and she had freckles. And we realized, they got it."

The students of Dunbar enlisted in Ríos' army. Their campaign, "Story Days: Music in the Landscape," took nine months. The students were given cameras to document the duality of their world. They used their images and the help of a composer to create pieces of music. Other students wrote *greguerías*, which became the lyrics; lines like, "Ocotillos and porcupines are cousins," and "Gray was on sale the day they made South Phoenix."

Professional musicians helped the students realize their finished works, which were premiered at a Dunbar community night. Some of their poems are now inscribed in concrete in front of the school.

"When they play this music, they touch place," Ríos says. "When they write these phrases, this is a community speaking to itself. This is them playing their world. This was the music of South Phoenix as South Phoenix was giving it to us. It was magical."

A LINE THAT BIRDS CANNOT SEE

There is an ease with which Ríos perceives borders; navigates them, looks past and through them. Borders between places. Between genres. Between planes of existence. There is in Ríos a wondering acceptance of borders as lines where realities meet.

"That kind of view changes how we engage in thought itself," he says, "our place in the world, the place of things in the world. If you can embrace the idea that something's going on out there that we're not aware of, that's the Marvelous Real."

"That all comes together in the kind of border I experience when I sit down to write," Ríos says. "I have to choose in that moment: I could write a different way. I could think about it differently. And that's helped me as a writer."

"The border," he wrote in the poem U2 took around the world, "used to be an actual place, but now, it is the act of a thousand imaginations."

THE IDEA THAT
SOMETHING'S
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THAT'S THE
MARVELOUS REAL.



ASU Professor Nancy Grimm examines what happens when city dwellers alter the natural environment.

We Built This City

But we don't really understand its evolving ecosystems. Professor Nancy Grimm aims to change that.

By Scott Seckel

At home, your yard is landscaped to look like the desert. The house faces an artificial lake. Your kids release pet turtles into the lake when they get too big. You have a swimming pool. When it gets dirty you backwash it into your yard.

Your home, and the city it sits in, are ecosystems, like a marsh or a forest. Unlike marshes and forests, urban ecosystems haven't been studied for long — only about 25 years.

At a time when cities are growing in size and number, no one really knows how the world around them works.

That's what drives the research of Nancy Grimm, Virginia M. Ullman Professor of Ecology in the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University. How do cities function from an ecological standpoint?

In 2006, the world became urbanized with more than half the population living in cities. Projections are for the world to be 80 to 90 percent urbanized by the end of the century.

"I'm interested in these ecological questions associated with cities and how cities work as ecosystems," Grimm says. "What are

the ecological phenomena that are occurring in them and how do they compare to nonurban systems? What is it that people do or bring to the equation that is so different?"

If there are 10 billion people on the planet, what's the best configuration for them to persist? And other species as well?

"I think cities have an important role to play in that," Grimm says.

Everything you see in Phoenix was created. We may have built it, but we don't really understand how it works. One of Grimm's favorite sayings is, "Things aren't always as they seem."

Your desert landscaping, for instance.

"You can make it look like what's out there, but it's not going to behave the same way," she says. "It may have the same parts, in terms of structure of the ecosystem, but in terms of function and what kinds of things you see there, it's different ... What is it we're not putting into the soup that would make it the same kind of soup you would get in the desert?"

Retention basins have been around the Valley since the 1970s, when cities mandated all developments of a certain size have a retention basin that can handle a 100-year flood. After a big rain, stormwater drains down to the aquifer.

"That's the idea," Grimm says. "I don't know that we know for sure that's actually happening."

Ground water is, on average, 300 feet under Phoenix.

"Are there pollutants that are accumulating in these retention basins, which are often used as soccer fields?" Grimm asks. "We haven't looked at that in great detail, but it could be interesting to look at an older one and a younger one and look at the soil profiles and what kinds of materials are accumulating in the soils."

Urban ecology questions are beginning to be asked by environmental organizations. Sandy Bahr is director for the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club. She says the work being done by Grimm at ASU is significant.

"Urban ecology is an important field of study as we all need to better understand the places in which we live and the impacts of our everyday actions," Bahr says.

"What's in stormwater and where it goes helps us to better understand why merely dumping something on the ground or planting potentially invasive plant species is a huge problem. The study of urban ecology drives home how connected we are to our neighbors and to the coyotes, birds, insects and other creatures with whom we share our communities."

After Tempe Town Lake was built, wetlands sprung up in the Salt River bed, surprising everyone. Egrets, herons, even beaver have been spotted.

Grimm discovered that these accidental wetlands perform many of the same functions of a naturally occurring wetland, like removing nitrogen and phosphorus. "Once you put water in this environment, things grow," she says.

You nod your head as she speaks, because you honestly have never thought about what stormwater runoff impregnated with chemicals from lawns, whatever you washed your car with in the driveway, and the gunk you backwashed out of your pool might be doing to the urban environment we all live in.

"See? There's more questions than one person could answer in a lifetime." She laughs.

IT'S PERSONAL ASU Gammage feels like home to supporters Bill and Susan Ahearn.

A House



Bill and Susan Ahearn remember what convinced them to deepen their involvement with ASU Gammage. It was during Camp Broadway, the summer program that invites young people into ASU's renowned performing arts venue to work with professional artists from New York. ¶ Colleen Jennings-Roggensack told the aspiring showfolk what she does as Gammage's executive director, and summed it up with, "This is my house."

United

Bill says, "We instantly thought, Yes! We consider ASU Gammage to be our house as well." ¶ The Ahearns are more than donors, though their financial support has been generous. (Those new window treatments in the lobby next season? Thank Bill and Susan.) They are even more free with their time for the historic auditorium that has a personal connection for them. Susan says, "We had our first fancy date right here in 1971, we married in 1973, and here we are 45 years later." ¶ It was Jennings-Roggensack who turned them from patrons to participants. At donor events like backstage tours and performer meet-ups, she tells Gammage supporters, "This is your house, too." ¶ Bill and Susan love the excitement of helping with logistics for events like the 2004 presidential debate, but Bill says the biggest attraction isn't the luminaries. It's the ASU staff. "We've probably rubbed shoulders with every department at the university. What a privilege to watch these talented people at work." ¶ And it certainly is work, for staff and volunteers alike. But Bill says, "We don't consider it work because it's just been so much fun."

Bill and Susan love the excitement of helping with logistics for events like the 2004 presidential debate, but Bill says the biggest attraction isn't the luminaries. It's the ASU staff.



Cathy and Peter Swan

What will life be like in space? ASU's Interplanetary Initiative invites everyone – researchers, industry professionals and community members – to engage in answering that question.

Cathy and Peter Swan, ASU supporters who retired from long careers in the aerospace industry, joined the initiative in 2017 and are providing expertise and financial support for promising student-led space research.

Three of those projects were selected for the "New Shepard" space vehicle built by Blue Origin, a private aerospace company founded by Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos. The Swans' support will enable students to attend the Texas launch in early 2019 and access the rocket on the pad. This will allow the team to use a biological payload – bees – they otherwise would not have been able to use.



Douglas Montgomery

Many graduate students mentored by Douglas

Montgomery, a highly decorated professor of industrial engineering in the Ira A. Fulton Schools of Engineering, hold influential positions in national labs or leading universities. Montgomery is building on that legacy with a \$2 million gift that will help graduate students develop their research interests.



Phyllis and Frank Saylor

As a student teacher, Vanesa Torres

committed herself to working in schools with a high percentage of low-income children. The 2018 graduate of Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College now works at a high-needs school in Phoenix. Her journey was made possible by a scholarship from Phyllis and Frank Saylor, who met in 1952 as education majors and fell in love carpooling to Mesa to student teach. "We have such deep admiration for teachers," Phyllis says, "and we wanted our gift to support people who are student teaching because that's how we met!"

Honoring a Memory The Beaudoin Family



Nikki Beaudoin made sure to thank the nurses who tended to her following surgery to remove a cancerous spinal tumor. ¶ Then she asked them to bring her the tumor so she could examine it. ¶ That blend of compassion and curiosity defined Nikki, her family says. A sophomore in Barrett, The Honors College, Nikki had been accepted to ASU's College of Nursing and Health Innovation when she was diagnosed with a rare and aggressive cancer. ¶ Tragically, Nikki passed away in June 2017 at the age of 20. Her family is honoring her memory through the Nicole Brittany Beaudoin Nursing Scholarship, whose first recipient, Peyton Hickman, began her second semester in the nursing program this fall.



Alice and Peter Buseck

For years, School of Earth and Space Exploration Regents' Professor Peter Buseck has been taking geology students to Arizona Tile in Tempe to identify rocks in its extensive inventory. To honor the long-standing relationship, Arizona Tile donated five large slabs of polished stone to ASU's new Bateman Physical Sciences F Wing. The permanent exhibit and plaques, which describe how geologic processes formed the specimens, are thanks to a gift from Alice and Peter Buseck.



Maricopa County Community College system

Some students have accumulated credits at a community college and at ASU, but haven't completed a degree. Now they can add an associate degree to their resume thanks to ASU's "reverse transfer" partnership with the Maricopa County Community College system in which ASU credits are added to MCCC credits for an associate degree, a motivating step for many. Additionally,

ASU offers scholarship options specifically for transfer students.



Julia Wallace

How do you know you're getting reliable information about health care? A partnership between the Mayo Clinic and ASU Alliance for Health Care equips journalists to thoughtfully report on complex medical issues. The Mayo Clinic-Cronkite Medical Journalism

Fellowship draws journalists from around the country from outlets such as The New York Times and CBS News. Doctors conduct seminars and immerse journalists in simulations that mirror emergency and operating room scenarios. Cronkite instructors conduct workshops in data journalism, narrative writing, video storytelling and more. The program is led by Julia Wallace, who holds the privately supported Frank Russell Professor of Practice Chair and was editor-in-chief of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

WASTE NOT

Rob and Melani Walton

One million tons of trash a year. That's what the city of Phoenix processes at its 27th Avenue Transfer Station. When its city council directed staff to increase the amount of solid waste diverted from the landfill for reuse or recycling to 40 percent by 2020, the city created Re-imagine Phoenix, a program to turn trash into resources. Phoenix then turned to ASU's Rob and Melani Walton Sustainability Solutions Initiatives. Together, they formed the Resource Innovation and Solutions Network, a platform for collaboration around waste-diversion and economic development solutions. RISN engages manufacturers who create products from diverted waste, business owners who use repurposed material, and entrepreneurs with waste-to-product ideas.



When Lisa VanBockern's mother was in an assisted living facility, she had a caregiver who wanted to go to college but couldn't afford it. "My mother asked if she could give the aide some money for school. We told her 'You need your money for your own care,'" says VanBockern, an ASU alumna who owns Skin Script Skin Care in Phoenix. "That always touched my heart that mom wanted to give her caregivers money for education." ¶ Later, VanBockern learned about a service-learning program in which ASU students provide health care and social services to Phoenix's elderly, called ASU's Community Collaborative at the Westward Ho. ¶ The more she learned, the more she realized the program was improving life for tenants and students, much as her mother had wanted to do. ¶ "It resonated with me how each worked collaboratively for the best interests of everyone," says VanBockern, who gave a gift to support its work. ¶ The program is a partnership between ASU, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Westward Ho, a former landmark hotel that now houses low-income elderly residents.

Perfect

¶ The collaborative includes a teaching clinic for colleges and disciplines on ASU's Downtown Phoenix campus including nursing, nutrition and social work. ¶ ASU students provide psychosocial and health care to Westward Ho residents, many of whom have experienced poverty and untreated health disorders. ¶ "What a perfect combination of ASU colleges and the tenants who need their services," VanBockern says. "ASU really has become part of the solution."

"It resonated with me how each worked collaboratively for the best interests of everyone"

Lisa VanBockern

Combo

McCulloch Bros.
PHOENIX ARIZONA.

VINTAGE WESTWARD HO Phoenix's landmark hotel in its early years. Today, it is home to an innovative ASU community partnership.

Mike and Cindy Watts

The Arizona business owners set out to make the world a better place, starting in their own backyard. Here's what happened when they joined forces with Arizona State University.

1

1950-60s Mike and Cindy Watts grow up in Maryvale, Arizona, where they meet during a high school graduation ceremony. At the time, Maryvale is a newly developed planned community. They marry.



2

1970s Mike starts work in the rental industry working for Apache Equipment Rentals in Phoenix. He and Cindy acquire Beldon Rentals and change its name to Sunstate Equipment, a construction equipment rental company.



4

2001 Michael Crow becomes president of ASU, setting in motion its transformation as a new model for higher education: one whose resources are devoted to the social, economic and cultural well-being of its communities.

The Watts grow their business. Starting with four employees, Sunstate Equipment expands to 61 locations in nine states, becoming the 24th-largest rental company in the world.



1980s Like many "inner-ring" suburbs, Maryvale experiences urban decline in the 1980s and '90s. Seeking to do their part to revitalize the community, the Watts support organizations that foster positive social change, such as the Maryvale YMCA and, more recently, the Catalina Health Center, which provides outpatient behavioral health services.

The Watts begin supporting Arizona State University.

“We see money as a tool to make the world a better place.”

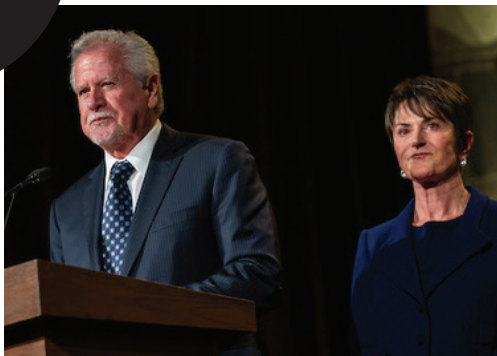
Cindy Watts

5

2006 Sticking to their commitment to address social problems, the Watts endow the Center for Violence Prevention and Community Safety at ASU's West campus, located near Maryvale.

The center provides research, analysis and recommendations to tackle the root causes of violence in communities. While its scope is national, the center also examines violence prevention in Maryvale.

The partnership has immediate impact.



8



6

2011-16 The center provides a blueprint for advancing public safety and community revitalization in Maryvale. It later evaluates the effectiveness of body-worn cameras in the Phoenix Police Department, including the Maryvale precinct. After yet another study, the Phoenix Police Department changes its approach to the use of deadly force by its officers.

7

2015-16 The Watts endow the Center for Academic Excellence and Championship Life, which provides academic support and professional development to student-athletes.

The Watts provide a gift to ASU to launch its new Center for Mindfulness, which promotes physical and emotional health, personal balance and resiliency within the ASU community.



2018 A transformative gift will enable the Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions to:

- Better our community** by harnessing the power of ASU to transform neighborhoods, communities and cities
- Offer opportunity for all** by drawing diverse students to become servant-leaders representative of the population
- Provide public-interest solutions** by training and graduating the best and brightest students of public service



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