

# Landscape

Winter/Spring 2020

For Alumni and Friends of Landmark College



by Mark DiPietro

Professor Mac Gander  
on the newsroom

## EXTRA! EXTRA!

Read All About It on Page 2

One of the things I love about newsrooms is how many niches there are to fit into," says Gander. "Journalism is a competitive team sport, and it offers a lot of different places to fit in the team process." Changes in consumer behavior and technology have made

## Journalism Evolves as New Program Merges Communication, Entrepreneurial Leadership

**Alumna Scout MacEachron '12 (at right) is now a journalist thanks to skills gained at LC.**

Page 8



[Read More Alumni Profiles Inside](#)





# LANDMARK COLLEGE

The College of Choice for  
Students Who Learn Differently

Photo by Kari Post



Student Tiernan Johnston-McWilliams '19 approaches the top of a route during a Landmark College outdoor climbing trip to the Marlow Profile in New Hampshire last fall. The trip was led and sponsored by the Department of Athletics, Fitness, and Recreation.

## Table of Contents

- 1 **President's Letter**
- 2 **Journalism Evolves at LC**
- 7 **LC Institutes Writing Across the Curriculum**
- 10 **Rankings and Accolades**
- 11 **Mama Knows Best**
- 12 **On and Around Campus**
- 18 **Alumni Profiles**
- 22 **2018 – 2019 Financial Summary**
- 24 **Alumni Association Corner**

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## From the President's Desk



Photo by Tricia Stanley

Higher education, once almost impervious to significant change (by that I mean even a resistance to alter traditional fall and spring semesters with the summer off, or provide more than face-to-face classes, etc.), has now passed a tipping point. Out of opportunity—or, more likely, necessity—college students are being offered an increasingly diverse array of options when it comes to the way they want to experience and earn a college degree.

This is progress, and Landmark College has undergone tremendous progress and change over the past 10 or so years. However, as Mark Twain once said: “I am in favor of progress; it's change I don't like.” As alumni of Landmark College, you each chose LC for many different reasons, and you all experienced “your Landmark College” at different periods in time. And much like alumni at any college or university, a perceived or real change to the institution, in whatever way, can be a difficult thing to accept.

No matter the era you attended LC, you might look at it today and wonder if it's the same college you remember. It is and it isn't. Change requires new ways of approaching foundational ideas, even when the foundation remains unchanged and is as strong as ever. LC has undergone transitions where the desired outcome was a stronger future with enhanced student success.

When an institution evolves over time, alumni do not always embrace that evolution or identity. As you have become more involved with or tuned into the Landmark College of today, however, you've begun to realize that we are, at our core, the same institution that shaped and guided you through your own transitions.

Change is at the heart of the cover story in this issue of *Landscape*. We continue to add new academic degree programs: a B.A. in Communication and Entrepreneurial Leadership, and soon a B.S. in Life Science (currently under review by our accrediting body). And we continue to expand our important online programs that deliver LC college courses to neurodivergent

students in high school, gap/transition year programs, and in college, as well as courses at the graduate level for educators and professionals in the LD field. LC also continues to develop components of our learning and living model, which are directly tied to career readiness and employment skills.

Additionally, while the College has always been a safe and inclusive campus and community, more recently we have intentionally changed the ways we can truly walk the walk. For example, our Centers for Diversity and Inclusion envision and implement new programming and promote the truth that inclusion is a fundamental LC value and hallmark of an enduring civilization. (See photo spread on page 18.)

The positive outcomes of all this change are perhaps reflected best in the College's inclusion in the *U.S. News & World Report* 2020 college rankings, which for the first time saw Landmark College land in the top spot of two important categories: Most Innovative College and Best Undergraduate Teaching (both in the North region, as defined by *U.S. News & World Report*). LC was also ranked, for the first time, in the top 25 Best Regional Colleges North.

These accolades are wonderful to receive, but we will never become complacent. Progress is always needed, and change is a part of that reality. While we will never stray from our core mission and values, we will adjust and adapt to what is needed and wanted by our students in this rapidly evolving industry of higher education. We will continue to graduate students who instantly become alumni, and like you, we trust that they will understand that one never steps into the same river twice, because while the river remains in place, it does not stop moving forward.

With regards,

Dr. Peter Eden  
President, Landmark College





Photo by Mark DiPietro



Photo by Mark DiPietro

## Journalism Evolves as New Program Merges Communication, Entrepreneurial Leadership

by Mark DiPietro

**P**rofessor Mac Gander reflects on the newsrooms where he has spent much of his career as a journalist. He thinks about the foreign correspondents he grew up around when his father was chief of correspondents at *Newsweek*. He looks back on the students he has taught at Landmark College over more than 30 years. And he concludes that journalism is an ideal profession for the neurodivergent.

"I'm certain many of the news people who were in and out of my house when I was growing up had ADHD," says Gander, a longtime LC faculty member and professional journalist who discloses his own ADHD.

Since he began teaching journalism courses at the College, Gander recognized that many students with ADHD excelled at the adrenaline-pumping, stimulus-inducing aspects of news reporting. Others with dyslexia were "some of the best photographers I taught"—less comfortable with words than with images, and highly skilled at storytelling through photojournalism. And some on the autism spectrum, perhaps not as adept at the social aspects of journalism, such as interviewing, have been excellent writers, researchers, and proofreaders.

"One of the things I love about newsrooms is how many niches there are to fit into," says Gander. "Journalism is a competitive team sport and it offers a lot of different places to fit in the team process."

Changes in consumer behavior and technology have made journalism—in essence, storytelling—an accessible path for individuals of many different strengths and interests as podcasting, video production, and ever-emerging social media platforms feed an endless appetite for information and content.

Top photo: Student Conor Malloy at work as a DJ at WLMC radio. Bottom left: Professor Mac Gander and students in his journalism class, Adam Sherman '19 and Demi Schechter-Gross, interview Marc Thurman '18, coordinator of the Centers for Diversity and Inclusion. Bottom right: Landmark College student newspapers through the years.



Photo by Mark DiPietro



Student Liz Weller '17 captures pictures of campus as part of her interest in photojournalism.

"I'm challenged to keep up with the way things have changed and developed," says Gander, whose impressive career as a journalist includes stints as a reporter and editor for *Newsweek* and *The Nation*. (One of his most prominent assignments was covering the People Power Revolution in the Philippines, which drove President Ferdinand Marcos and his family to flee the country in 1986.) "I'm probably the last person on Earth who still wants to hold the *New York Times* in his hands, but I also recognize what a good website can do, and when you think about journalism encompassing video, audio, print, still photography—there are a lot of places to go with that."

"The whole universal design idea of providing alternative modes—of all the classes I teach, that's the easiest to do in journalism."

The addition of a new program last fall, the Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Entrepreneurial Leadership (COMEL), is a big step in the evolution of journalism at LC. In its first two semesters, 15 students have already declared for the COMEL degree.

"The new program puts the fields of communication and business together in some dynamic ways," says Professor Geoff Burgess, dean of LC's School of Professional Studies and Science. Leadership skills, team building, and entrepreneurial thinking are central components

of COMEL, as is multimedia communication. "The new degree makes media production methods integral to all our courses and uses generational tools of production to let students demonstrate their understanding through other means besides writing, including podcasts, videos, and visual storytelling."

One of the most exciting developments associated with the new program is the addition of LC's first on-campus TV station, which is currently in progress.

"The idea of a TV studio has been around for a long time," Burgess says. "The success of WLMC, the radio station Eric Matte (communication professor), Michael Luciani (vice president for student affairs), and I started over 10 years ago, made us think, why aren't we using other media? The radio station has been a hybrid of academics and student life because it's a student club apart from classes, but it also integrates radio production classes that students can take. Each semester, we have between 20 and 30 student DJs who have to pass a test in order to become a DJ."

**Journalism and writing classes with Professors Mac Gander and Sara Glennon helped shape the careers of alumnae Scout MacEachron '12 and Michaela Hearst '14. Story on page 8.**

As the TV station is established and developed over the next year, it will be woven into several classes, including Introduction to Communication courses taught by Dr. Gyuri Kepes, a new faculty member who joined LC in fall 2019.

"Empowerment is a huge element in education, and finding their voice through these different means of communication is really empowering," Kepes says. "A lot of students have struggled with communication, and being able to find that voice and reach broader audiences is critical for them. The name of the new magazine speaks to the importance of student voice."

The magazine Kepes refers to is *Voices*, launched in fall 2019 as the newest iteration of LC's student newspaper. Its immediate predecessor, the *Independent*, was produced as part of Gander's newswriting class. *Voices*, two issues of which came out during the fall semester, is still produced by students under the guidance of faculty, including Gander, Burgess, and Kepes. But it will now be associated with a broader range of upper-level journalism classes as part of the COMEL degree.

"The *Independent* fluctuated because it was tied to Mac's first-semester journalism class, and it's hard to learn journalism and produce a newspaper at the same time," Burgess says. Gander's journalism students still constitute the *Voices* newsroom, but the COMEL degree will allow for a larger pool of upper-level student contributors.

*Voices* has also incorporated LC's literary magazine, *Impressions*, demonstrating the link between artistic forms of communication such as poetry and fiction writing. Gander is a poet as well as a practicing journalist. He and his wife, Shanta, comprise the investigative reporting team at *The Commons*, a Brattleboro, Vermont-based weekly newspaper. His association with that publication has led to a partnership between LC and *The Commons*, which could open up internships and other professional opportunities for LC students. Already, several of Gander's journalism students have collaborated with him on high-profile, sometimes controversial stories for the newspaper, including a series on panhandling and homelessness in Brattleboro. That package, which ran during the summer

of 2019, resulted in shared writing and research credits for the Ganders and three of Mac's journalism students: current student **William Drake** and recent graduates **Mariah Edson '19** and **William Epifanio '19**.

"These were exciting opportunities for all of them, and it shows how journalism opens up a lot of avenues for different skill sets," Gander says.

A visit with Gander's journalism class last fall illustrates his point and exhibits the diverse range of thought and interest among his students:

**Liz Weller '17** graduated from LC with an associate degree and returned last year for the B.A. in Studio Art program. She took Gander's journalism class and discovered a strong link between visual art forms, including drawing and photography, and journalistic storytelling. "Some storytelling uses words and some uses pictures. They enhance each other and both help me understand how to tell the whole story," says Liz, who found a passion for photography through her art and journalism classes.

**Adam Sherman '19** considers himself primarily a fiction writer, but his creative writing prowess helped him craft a colorful story about a potentially dry subject (data analysis in the *U.S. News & World Report* rankings) for the inaugural issue of *Voices*.

**Guinevere Downey** had been looking at a career in education until taking Gander's class and discovering a newfound love of traditional reporting. "A few weeks after I started Mac's class, I totally shifted perspectives and now I want to go into journalism," Guinevere says. "I thought this is too right for me to ignore."

**Emily McGuire '19** also relishes the traditional aspects of journalism—interviewing people and digging deep for facts. "My favorite kind of interview is one where I have to ask difficult questions. I want to be able to get people to open up to me."

The cross-disciplinary nature of these student interests, plus the practical need for effective communication across all walks of life, is central to the COMEL degree. Combining the synergy of the fields of business and communication—with collaboration from other areas

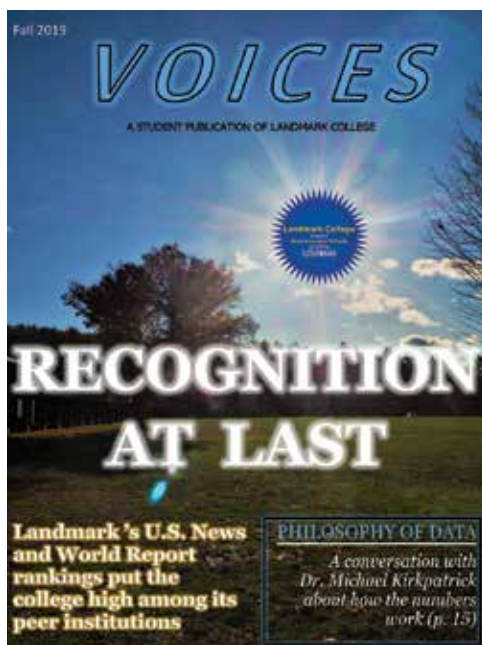


Photo by Mark DiPietro



6

Student Guinevere Downey (right) interviews Professor Solvegi Shmulsky, director of the Center for Neurodiversity, on assignment for Guinevere's journalism class.

such as art—is a natural, Burgess says, because entrepreneurship and leadership require sharp, precise communication skills.

“The key to all communication is knowing your audience, especially in business. Multimedia makes our students better communicators because new modes of communication force them to think about their audience in a powerful, intense way,” Burgess says.

Last semester, for example, Professor Tamara Stenn had students in her entrepreneurship class create videos and crowd-funding campaigns to persuade potential

customers about the value of their products. Kepes, instead of assigning traditional essays in his Intercultural Communication class, had students produce podcasts that were structured like written essays but with interactive elements.

Dr. Gail Gibson Sheffield, LC's vice president for academic affairs, agrees with Kepes about the importance of empowerment and student voice. “LC believes in the phrase, ‘Nothing About Us Without Us,’ which has guided disability advocacy,” Gibson Sheffield says. “The COMEL degree provides students with the opportunity to develop

Professor Mac Gander has worked as a professional journalist for *Newsweek* and *The Nation*. He continues as an investigative reporter for the Brattleboro, Vermont-based weekly, *The Commons*. Gander and his wife, Shanta, will soon release a book called *Ghosts of Cuba*, based on their visit to the country in 2017. The book is described as an experience of “their month long adventures through race, sexuality, and politics in Cuba alongside the ghosts that exist against the backdrop of a culture and country.”

Photo by Shanta Lee Gander







Photo by Mark DiPietro

Communication professors Dr. Gyuri Kepes and Geoff Burgess, who is also dean of the School of Professional Studies and Science, unpacked equipment for LC's new multimedia lab in December.

their communication skills and their abilities to be advocates, entrepreneurs, and leaders. The program reinvigorates student voices by providing media outlets for their expression, and leadership opportunities to involve them in decision-making about the College and planning for LC's future."

Gander sees other obvious connections between disciplines, too. "Communication is a leadership skill. And there's something entrepreneurial about journalism at its heart. And, of course, newspapers and other media have a business side. All the skill sets that apply to journalism apply to effective leadership and management." ➡

## LC Institutes Writing Across the Curriculum

by Chris Lenois

**The Landmark College Writing Project (LCWP) was created in 2017 to "integrate, articulate, and apply an approach to teaching and supporting writing across the curriculum."**

The College was five years into offering baccalaureate degrees at that time, which necessitated the introduction of an advanced writing course and a deep-dive evaluation of how writing was taught at LC to ensure students studying all disciplines were continually strengthening their writing skills as a tool for thinking, learning, analysis, and evaluation.

A grant from the Davis Educational Foundation enabled the LCWP's Steering Committee to set up workshops and other activities that helped faculty members incorporate writing and writing instruction into their courses. To date, more than two-thirds of the College's professors have participated in at least one LCWP activity.

"All of our sessions with faculty have sought to engage them on theoretical and practical levels. This has facilitated understanding but has also led many to modify some element of their curriculum and/or teaching," says Professor John Kipp, an associate professor of English, chair of the Core Education department, and LCWP steering committee co-chair.

The grant has also helped fund several projects that created resources for faculty to support students in a number of specialized areas, including lab reports, mathematics, business, and studio art, as well as best practices for residential and student life staff members for providing guidance and coaching to anxious writers.

"Having so many of our colleagues engaging with explicit questions of how students write and how we can help them do it better is clearly strengthening teaching and learning practices," says Kipp.

The LCWP is now evolving in a way that aligns with an educational theory known as Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). While rooted in the late-19th century democratization of access to higher education, WAC really gained steam in the 1970s, when college-level writing began being treated as a mode of learning versus a mere articulation of what was being delivered in a lecture.

Professor Sara Glennon has been named the College's first WAC coordinator. Throughout her academic career, Glennon has researched and presented about approaches to teaching writing, with particular focus on students' apprehension with writing, and how to teach writing effectively to neurodivergent students.

Look for stories about how WAC has been put into action here at LC, as well as resources created through the LCWP, on the landmark.edu website in the coming months. ➡

## *'I couldn't have done this without the writing I did at LC.'*

Alumnae **Scout MacEachron '12** and **Michaela Hearst '14** put the skills they gained at LC to work for them.

By Mark DiPietro

**L**ong before Landmark College had a communication degree, students like Scout MacEachron '12 and Michaela Hearst '14 were rediscovering their love of writing and journalism thanks to faculty members like Mac Gander and Sara Glennon.

"I'll always remember Mac as this figure in my life who inspired this love that is now my career," says Scout, who is a producer for NowThis News in Los Angeles. "I can't thank him enough."

Scout arrived at LC in 2010, after attending schools in Connecticut, San Francisco, and New Delhi, India, and spending two years at Vassar College. What had been a love of writing throughout school disintegrated in college because Scout found her ADHD overwhelmed her ability to manage and complete college-level assignments on time. "Writing became this negative thing," she says.

That turned around at LC because of guidance from Professors Glennon and Gander. "Sara helped me learn that writing an essay wasn't this big, scary thing, and by the time I took Mac's journalism class, I knew I loved writing," Scout says. "He helped me turn writing into journalism."

Michaela had a similar trajectory, writing poetry and fiction since elementary school but hitting a dead stop with essay writing as she progressed through upper grades. Michaela was diagnosed with non-verbal learning disorder (NVLD) and learning disorder not otherwise specified (LD-NOS) when she was 14.

"My relationship with writing turned rocky before I came to Landmark," she says. Glennon's class taught her to "just get something on paper," and Gander "helped tap into this story-writing side of me, which I hadn't explored."



Scout MacEachron '12 photographs an art exhibit at the FLUX Art Fair in Harlem, New York, in 2015.

The two women have taken different career paths, but both involve effective writing and communication. After graduating from LC with an associate degree, Scout went on to earn a bachelor's degree in American Studies from Barnard College. She cut her teeth with internships at *Rolling Stone*, *Good Housekeeping*, NBC News, and elsewhere. (Her very first internship after graduating from LC was thanks to former LC trustee Pola Rosen, who brought Scout on as an intern at her New York City-based publication, *Education Update*.) Scout's current role at NowThis News includes video production and social media, and she was the producer of almost half (eight of 17) of the top-performing

NowThis main page videos in 2019. Scout recently helped the media company launch its TikTok account, which was covered by CNN in a story about news organizations incorporating the popular social media platform.



Photo by Katie Godowski '12



Michaela Hearst '14 in New York City's Central Park.

"I couldn't have done any of this without the writing I did at Landmark," Scout says. "Mac made me feel like I could be a real journalist. He believed in me and gave me the confidence to power through the rest of everything."

Michaela, after earning an associate degree from LC, went on to get a bachelor's degree in psychology from

Manhattanville College, and last year she was awarded a master's in social work from Hunter College Silberman School of Social Work. She has also earned a master's certificate in dyslexia studies and language-based learning disabilities from Southern New Hampshire University. Michaela puts her writing skills to work as an advocate for others with LD. She was recently appointed to the Young Adult Leadership Council of the National Center for Learning Disabilities and she's a project social ambassador for the NVLD Project. Michaela has written several pieces for both organizations, as well as Understood, and she became a guest blogger for Friends of Quinn, a well-known blog begun by LC alumnus

**Quinn Bradlee '04.** (See Michaela's blog post, "12 Rules for Life," below.)

"No one had taught me how to write effectively until I came to Landmark," says Michaela. 🐘

## Michaela's 12 Rules for Life (at least right now...)

*Reprinted with permission from Friends of Quinn*

1. Iced coffee is the only coffee worth drinking. You can't change my mind (unless it's cappuccino).
2. Set consistent short-term goals for yourself. For me, that's winning a trophy at my next race and continuing to play my guitar in public.
3. Take comfort in knowing there are others who understand your struggles. You aren't alone. Make connections.
4. It can be so tempting to compare yourself to others, but do your best to focus on your own journey and successes.
5. When people don't understand what it's like to have LD or they doubt your ability, keep fighting back. Rely on your support system.
6. Admit when you're burned out, but realize that even in your worst moments, you're stronger than you might think you are.
7. Self-care, self-care, self-care. It's not always glamorous; it's typically not spontaneous trips halfway across the world. Maybe it's meditation, practicing gratitude, properly eating and sleeping, making sure you're in good mental and physical health, and much more.
8. Find something positive in every day.
9. As often as you can, do what you love and what makes you happy.
10. Surround yourself with people who love and care for you.
11. So many things (including these "rules for life right now") are easier said than done. Take it one day, one moment at a time.
12. To everyone with LD—you are validated. I see you. I hear you. I will fight for you.

# Rankings and Accolades

## LC Takes Top Honors in U.S. News & World Report Rankings

**L**andmark College has been named to the top spot in two categories of *U.S. News & World Report's* 2020 college rankings—Best Undergraduate Teaching North and Most Innovative Colleges North. And, for the first time, the College has been ranked among the best colleges in the North.

LC was ranked in the top 25 Regional Colleges North category; as the number 1 Regional College North for Undergraduate Teaching; and tying for number 1 (with Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art and Paul Smith's College) as Most Innovative Regional College North.

In the 2019 rankings, LC placed at number 4 for Best Undergraduate Teaching, moving ahead this year to the top spot.

LC is placed in the *U.S. News* category "Regional Colleges North" because the College is "focused on undergraduate higher education but grant(s) fewer than 50% of its degrees in liberal arts disciplines." Colleges in this category often award predominantly two-year degrees. LC instituted its first bachelor's program in 2012 and awarded its first bachelor's degrees in 2016. The College currently offers five bachelor's programs (Liberal Studies, Computer Science, Studio Art, Psychology, and Communication and Entrepreneurial Leadership), with a sixth under development (B.S. in Life Sciences).

In the category of Best Undergraduate Teaching, *U.S. News* asks top academics—including college presidents, provosts, and admissions officials—to nominate colleges and universities with a particular strength in undergraduate

teaching—"a very important part of the undergraduate academic experience that is not always measured in a college's regular peer assessment survey results," according to *U.S. News*.

The methodology for ranking Most Innovative Colleges also relies on surveys of top college officials (presidents, provosts, admissions deans) to nominate the colleges and universities that are making the most innovative improvements in terms of curriculum, faculty, students, campus life, technology, or facilities. These are institutions "that the public should be watching because of the cutting-edge changes the colleges are making on their campuses," according to *U.S. News*. 🐦

Photo by Valerie Cox



Students celebrate Landmark College's placement in the 2020 *U.S. News & World Report* rankings as Most Innovative College and Best Undergraduate Teaching College in the North. From left: Katie Marroni, Emily King, Bryce Conley, Erica Shea, Angel Cintron, Erica Loveland, Indigo Pagan, Ethan Cheydleur, Jonathan Gerraughty, Lauren Orser, and Nate Gulley.

## Other Rankings and Awards



**Great Value Colleges named LC the Best College for Students with Disabilities in its 2019 rankings**

*Landscape Magazine* was a 2019 Gold MarCom Award winner in the Association of Marketing & Communication Professionals International Competition





# Mama Knows Best

Ellen Wood—affectionately known as “Mama Wood” to LC students—moved on from the College in January after 28 years. She served in various roles, including resident dean, faculty member, and athletics coach, and most recently held the position of director of Transition at College. “Many have come and gone at LC, many have changed lives, but few have done such in so many different ways,” President Peter Eden wrote in a memo to the LC community. Alumni, students, parents, and colleagues shared their warm thoughts about “Mama” in social media posts, shown below.

Thank you for the memories. From living in Frost Hall my first two semesters, to our amazing times on the softball field, they are ones I will always hold close to my heart.

from Micah Sherman Raz '18

I am so glad that Ellen Wood was part of Landmark when my daughter, **Audra McGowan '14**, was a student there! Ellen was such a blessing to Audra, and to all the students over the years!

from Rebecca McGowan

Congrats Mama Wood! You were such a huge inspiration to me during my time at LC—I'll always be thankful for our many chats in your office.

from Samantha Warren '11

Thank you for believing in me when I didn't, giving me tough love when I needed it, and teaching me how to give credit to myself when I deserved it.

from Patrick McKenna '14

Mama Wood! I will never forget the strategies I learned in your class my first semester. Your kindness and warmth always made me feel comfortable when I first got to school. Landmark will miss you.

from Danielle Silverman '19

You were my coach, mentor, and guided study tutor. But you will always be my friend. You and Woody showed me what hard work and the love of a community can do for you. Thank you for being our home away from home, my east coast fam, and for all the lives you've touched at Landmark.

from Kate Forster '99

You helped me in as many ways as my professors. I wouldn't be as successful as I am without my two years in Chumley B, with you being my cheerleader every day.

from Peter Aiello '13



## On and Around Campus

12



Photo by Todd Miller

**Samantha Yesalonia '08** (third from left) was one of three LC alumni inducted into the College's Athletic Hall of Fame during Homecoming on September 28, 2019. Samantha, who played soccer and softball at LC, is pictured with former coach and resident dean Ellen Wood; Tricia Stanley, associate director of alumni relations; and coach John Wood. **Aaron Wolf '02** (baseball) was also inducted, and **Deborah Jones Livingston '96** (basketball and softball) received the honor posthumously.



Photo by Michael Luciani

The Dartmouth-Hitchcock Air Response Team landed its helicopter on the LC Quad on October 24, 2019. Rescue personnel provided a demonstration for LC students and staff in observation of Alcohol Awareness Week. The demonstration was organized by LC's Office of Campus Safety.



## Entrepreneur and LD Advocate Headlines Event on April 1

By Mark DiPietro

### Marc Hoffman will present a guest talk, "How My Failures with LD Led to My Success in Life," at Landmark College on Wednesday, April 1, 2020, at 7 p.m.

Hoffman's talk is sponsored by the Landmark College Center for Neurodiversity, which was established in 2017 to advance an understanding of the benefits of neurodivergence in society, the workplace, and education.

"Learning about the lived experience of having a learning disability, ADHD, or autism is the best way to increase knowledge and acceptance," says Professor Solvegi Shmulsky, director of the Center for Neurodiversity. "For that reason, the Center for Neurodiversity supports people telling their own stories. We are happy to have Marc Hoffman visit campus to talk about his experience with ADHD and dyslexia and how he came to create an organization for students like himself."

As founder of Hoffman Educational Group, Hoffman offers one-on-one academic coaching, tutoring, and educational advocacy for students and their families. He is also president of Strong Start Early Care & Education and chairman of the board of Eye to Eye, a national nonprofit mentoring movement for students with LD.

On his website, marchoffman.net, Hoffman discusses his own diagnoses of dyslexia and ADHD when he was 8 years old. "I learned how to succeed because of my LD—not in spite of it," he writes. "Over time and with the help of my parents, teachers, and others, I realized that there was nothing wrong with me. I'm just as smart as anyone else,

but I learn in nontraditional ways. This opened up the world for me: I learned to self-advocate, asking for the extra help and accommodations I need. And I learned to take pride in myself. How I think is just another part of me, like having brown hair and green eyes."



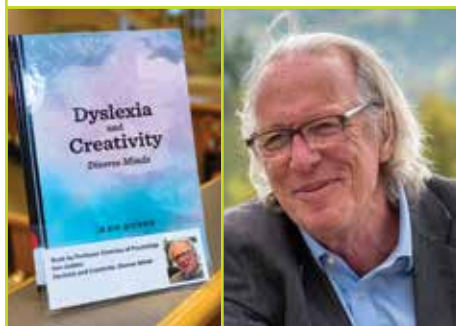
His talk at LC will recount his early struggles and detail how they contributed to later success in school, business, and life. It will be free and open to the Landmark College community as well as the public, including visiting education professionals who will be on campus for LC's Professional Visit Days.

The Center for Neurodiversity sponsors several public events each year to advance dialogue about the benefits of neurodiversity and to allow a platform for neurodivergent

voices. The Center has sponsored a talk on campus by *New York Times* best-selling author John Elder Robison (an advisor to the Center); a screening of Krys Kornmeier's film *Normal Isn't Real*, with a discussion panel featuring Kornmeier and LC students and faculty; a panel discussion at the national Disability Matters conference; and (with LC's Academic Speaker Series) a talk by disability justice advocate Lydia X.Z. Brown.

To register to attend Hoffman's free presentation on April 1, email [marketing@landmark.edu](mailto:marketing@landmark.edu). For updated information, watch for updates on the LC website, [landmark.edu](http://landmark.edu), and our Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram feeds. ➡

13



### Professor Emeritus Ken Gobbo Writes Book on Dyslexia

Ken Gobbo, professor emeritus of psychology at Landmark College, has released a new book titled *Dyslexia and Creativity: Diverse Minds* (Cambridge Scholars Publishing).

According to the publisher, Gobbo's book provides a general overview of the history of dyslexia and explores it from a cognitive and neurological point of view. It also offers insights into the phenomena of creativity and outlines a theory that links dyslexia to the creative process.

The book illustrates these ideas with overviews of the lives of five well-known Americans recognized for their creative pursuits: artists Robert Rauschenberg, Chuck Close, and Charles Ray, and writers John Irving and Wendy Wasserstein. All five faced the struggles that accompany dyslexia and recognized the positive traits afforded by their learning differences, harnessing them to further their creative processes.

Gobbo retired in 2019 but remains a member of the Center's steering committee. ➡

*Dyslexia and Creativity: Diverse Minds* is available for purchase from Cambridge Scholars Publishing, and the Landmark College library has a copy of the book in its collection.

## Centers for Diversity and Inclusion

The Centers for Diversity and Inclusion (CDI) comprises the Center for Women and Gender, the Rise Up Center, and the Stonewall Center. On- and off-campus activities have been growing under coordinator **Marc Thurman '18**.

**Right:** In spring 2019, the CDI sponsored a trip to Washington, D.C. From left: **Victor Tomelden '19**, **Marc Thurman '18**, **Jake Sugarman '19**, **Katie LaBombard '18**, **Sonia Shohet '18**, **Connor Lawrence '19**, and **Ryan Gonsalves '19**.



**Right:** Student **Leo Premru** provided music at the “Pose” party.



**Left:** A “Pose” party, inspired by the popular TV show, drew more than 60 students on November 22, 2019, including **Jeremiah Miller**, **Julius Udochi**, and **Emily McGuire '19**.



**Left:** A CDI dinner in February 2019 demonstrated unity and friendship between members of all three centers.



## Disability Justice Advocate Kicks Off Speaker Series

Lydia X.Z. Brown (below), a disability justice advocate and justice catalyst fellow at the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, was the inaugural speaker for the 2019 – 20 Academic Speaker Series. Lydia presented a talk called “Crippling Intersectionality: Neurodiversity and Disability Justice” on October 1, 2019. Subsequent fall speakers were Dr. M Jackson, “The Secret Lives of Glaciers”; and Dr. Ousmane Power-Greene, “Pride or Prejudice? Black Lives Matter and the Struggle Against Confederate Monuments.”



Photo by Mark DiPietro

This spring's speakers are:

- William Edelglass, “The Genealogy of Happiness: From Aristotle to Positive Psychology,” February 11
- Amanda Stern, “Little Panic: Dispatches from an Anxious Life,” March 3
- Aurora Robson, “Cloudy with a Chance of Plastic,” April 7

All events begin at 7 p.m. in the Brooks M. O'Brien Auditorium of the East Academic Building.

Enjoy previous speaker presentations at [landmark.edu/SpeakerSeries](http://landmark.edu/SpeakerSeries)

Photos by Todd Miller



The Science Poster Fair allows LC students to display their science projects throughout the MacFarlane Science, Technology & Innovation Center. Top photo: student **Roman Kulp** explains his poster. Bottom photo shows the best in class posters.

Photo by Todd Miller



**Robert Lutz '17** provided the alumni perspective at LC's convocation ceremony welcoming new students on January 25, 2020. Rob is an interim resident dean in LC's Transition at College track, a gap-year option for recent high school graduates.

### Professional Partnerships Lead to Career Opportunities

By Chris Lenois

**L**andmark College has signed memoranda of understanding with JPMorgan Chase and EY (formerly Ernst & Young), both of which have been seeking to advance neurodiversity initiatives.

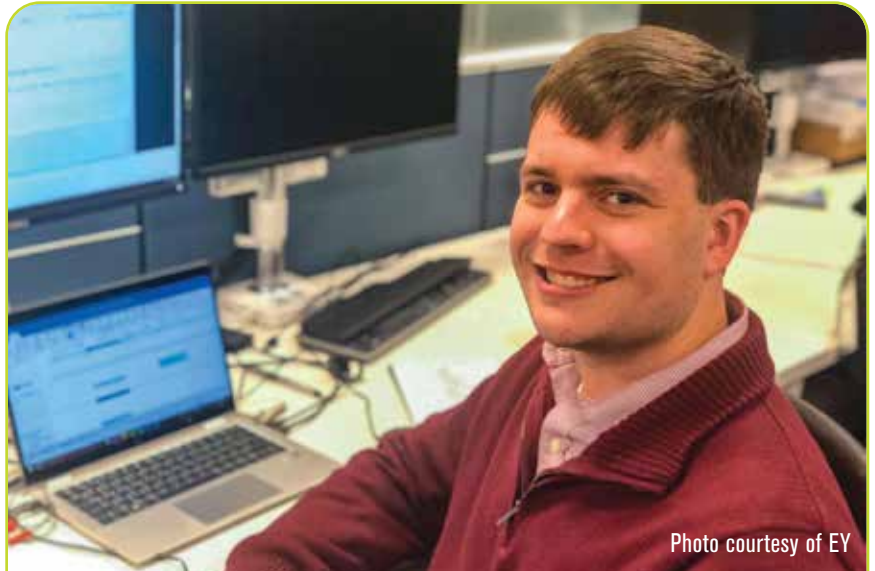
Both corporations have been actively working with the College, according to Jan Coplan, director of LC's Office of Career Connections. The MOUs were signed with the intent to clarify the benefits for all parties, as well as create a blueprint should additional corporate partners seek similar arrangements in the future.

"We are thrilled to formalize our collaboration with these two companies, both of which have been leaders in the movement to create a more neurodiverse workforce," says Coplan.

Activities outlined in the memoranda produce beneficial outcomes for all parties, says Coplan. Landmark College students and alumni will have increased opportunities for internships and employment opportunities within the organizations, while JPMorgan Chase and EY staff will have access to professional development programs that strengthen employment and management outcomes related to a neurodiverse workforce.

"We are extremely pleased to announce our collaboration with Landmark College, which is at the forefront of educating neurodiverse students and preparing them for their future," says Anthony Pacilio, head of Autism at Work, JPMorgan Chase & Co. "JPMorgan Chase is honored to help build and bridge employment opportunities for these students. To date, we've hired over 150 employees through our Autism at Work program and we look forward to many years of great success between Landmark College and JPMorgan Chase."

Hiren Shukla, director of EY's Neurodiversity Centers of Excellence, says, "I am delighted that we have an official collaboration with Landmark College. It is clear that the faculty truly takes time and effort cultivating students for EY's culture. We are looking forward to creating a robust



**Brian Ramsaur '19 was hired by EY after an on-campus interview during LC's Neurodiversity Goes to Work event in October 2019.**

pipeline where we have consistent flow of alumni and new graduates identifying EY as an employer of choice. As EY continues to grow our Neurodiversity Centers of Excellence, our connection with Landmark will offer a great opportunity to align talent to our ever-changing demands."

As part of the College's Learning Disabilities Awareness Month programming, representatives from both companies visited the Landmark College campus on October 29 to participate in a "Neurodiversity Goes to Work" program. For the second straight year, students heard about career opportunities with each company and had the opportunity to take part in mock interviews, among other activities. As a result of these interviews, **Brian Ramsaur '19**, who graduated from LC in December, landed a position in EY's Philadelphia office as account support associate and began working there in early January.

"The entire Landmark College family is thrilled to see one of our graduates become part of the EY community," says Coplan. 🐼



Photo by Jonathan Steele



**Left:** Jamell Mitchell, chief of talent and strategy leader for EY's Neurodiversity Centers of Excellence, co-presented an introduction to neurodiversity at work with Jan Coplan, director of LC's Office of Career Connections, at C&S Wholesale Grocers in Keene, New Hampshire, in October 2019.

**Below:** Student **Ryan Carroll** interviews with Rachel Noiseux of Stanley Black & Decker during LC's Neurodiversity Goes to Work event.

Photo by Mark DiPietro



Photo by Todd Miller

**Above:** Advisor Clark Johnson, Rachel Noiseux of Stanley Black & Decker, and Jan Coplan, director of LC's Office of Career Connections, were among the panelists during an on-campus discussion of neurodiversity at work on October 29, 2019.

**Right:** Student **Angel Cintron**, center, asks a question of panelists during LC's Neurodiversity Goes to Work event.

Photo by Todd Miller





Amanda (Blackburn) Lukowski '02 and Martin Lukowski '02 with their children Verity and Harper while visiting Lake Champion, New York.

## Unbreakable Bonds

**Martin '02 and Amanda Lukowski '02** met at Landmark College and have been together ever since.

By Chris Lenois

**The path to Landmark College looked very different for Martin and Amanda Lukowski (née Blackburn), but the impact that coming here had on each of them is undeniable, starting with the fact that they found each other.**

"We were both in Hall 4 (now Alumni Hall) and in the same group of friends," recounts Amanda. "We went through R.A. training together for the spring semester. That's when we started dating and we've been together ever since."

Staying together beyond their time in Putney took some coordinating. While Martin earned his associate degree by the end of the Spring 2002 semester, Amanda was still a few credits short. She actually considered moving back to her native southern California to pursue a bachelor's, but a summer session at UCLA helped her realize it was not a good fit. She opted instead for Simmons University in Boston, which she describes as the "perfect segue," with class sizes of less than 30 students and the opportunity to have more direct contact with her professors.

That decision suited Martin just fine. The Massachusetts native opted for Bentley University in nearby Waltham. While he enjoyed his time there getting a bachelor's in

economics and history, he remembers it more as a means to an end than a transformative experience. "I definitely have fonder memories of Landmark," says Martin, adding that they've taken their two daughters, 9-year old Harper and 7-year old Verity, to see the Putney campus where he and Amanda met.

At Simmons, Amanda found herself in the somewhat ironic role of tutoring students as part of her work study job. She imparted many of the skills and techniques she learned at Landmark and realized the insecurities that plagued her since being diagnosed with dyslexia in the second grade were fading away. "Landmark gave me so much confidence in myself and my abilities, and I just feel like I grew so much as a person there," Amanda says.

Not only did Amanda have a bachelor's in sociology and special education upon leaving Simmons, she also had a sense of direction. Shortly after marrying in 2005, the medical technology company Martin worked for, now called BD, transferred him to San Diego, and Amanda found employment at the Braille Institute helping seniors adjust to vision loss. "I felt like so many things I learned at Landmark helped me be more compassionate toward them and help them be able to adapt," she says.

Amanda left that job when Harper was born and continued to be a full-time mother when Verity came along two years later. She recently returned to the workforce, however,



as an assistant teacher for first-graders at the school her daughters attend. Her favorite thing to do is working with students who, like her, struggle with reading. She says she doesn't hesitate to disclose that fact to them.

"I remember feeling so burdened by my disability when I was young. Now, I feel that it's such a blessing that I can help others," says Amanda. "Landmark is such a big part of that; overcoming the stigma of it and learning the coping skills and realizing that you can learn these things and take them with you."

Martin has taken that lesson to heart in his professional life as well. He describes his current role as contracting



Martin and Amanda on fall break in New York City in 2001.

director for BD as "a little bit of art and a little bit of science," which he says ties in very well to what he learned about himself at Landmark College.

"One of the things I excel at is hyper-focusing. As long as there's a puzzle or challenge I'm interested in, I can sit down and grind away at it," says Martin. "It's a lot of piecing things together. It's never the same and that feeds my ADD brain."

The Lukowskis relocated back east to Maryland last year and want all alumni to know how special their

time at Landmark College was. As Amanda says, "When we think of college and our most special memories, it's all Landmark. It had such a profound impact on our adult lives and journey." 🐦

## Other Alumni News

### Alex Evans '19 wins Producer of the Year Award for BCTV internship

Brattleboro Community Television (BCTV) bestowed its Producer of the Year Award to **Alex Evans '19** at its annual awards ceremony on October 24, 2019. While he was a student, Alex spent three semesters as a BCTV intern.

"We had a high number of interns this year from middle school, high school, and college students—but Alex's energy, attitude and skill really made him stand out," BCTV stated.

Alex, who was station manager for LC's radio station, WLMC, first interned at BCTV in spring 2017 as part of his civic engagement class, creating a mini-documentary about BCTV. He returned in fall 2018 for a more formal internship and helped direct studio



shows while also hosting, producing, and editing 20 episodes of his radio show, "Talking Nerdy," recorded at WLMC. "Talking Nerdy" was a hit with BCTV viewers, giving them a glimpse into LC's gaming culture.

Alex now lives in Portland, Maine, but he returned to Vermont to accept his Producer of the Year Award!

## Unlocking the Hidden Potential in Others

**Brian Littlehale '87** marvels at LC's "Butterfly Effect" in his life and career.

By Elizabeth George

**H**e once felt "like a dog on a chain." But his LC experience freed him, giving Brian Littlehale '87 confidence and tools to build a successful career as a corporate trainer and leadership coach.

"Landmark taught me to be curious and to never stop learning. It showed me I could be confident in myself. I learned I could set goals and achieve them; I could go out in the world and succeed," says Brian, a resident of Hollidaysburg in central Pennsylvania.

Today, Brian is engaging, passionate, and inspiring. He's observant and a great listener. He's made a 20-plus year career out of motivating others, helping business leaders across the country to improve their focus and increase their capacity to drive their organizations. In 2016, he started his own business—Vitruvian Leadership—focused on executive leadership.

"I love what I do. Training is my calling," says Brian.

There was a time when Brian thought he'd never succeed in college—let alone start a business. Diagnosed with dyslexia while in elementary school, he tried hiding his learning difference in high school through acting and being the class clown. He was 19 and working as a convenience store manager when his mom heard about a new school for students with learning differences: Landmark College.

He enrolled in 1985 as part of the first class of 80 students. For the first time, Brian was in classes with kids who were similar to him—students with learning differences. "It was like we spoke a different language

and we finished each other's thoughts," he says. "The professors understood us. They were all about being there for us. They pushed us hard, but they believed in us."

Brian says he learned to "think about thinking" and how to use the Master Notebook System.

"I finally had tools in my toolbox. Landmark taught me how to break things down, then build them back into something I could use," he says. "The ability to convert information so it was useable and memorizable was invaluable."

"It's what made me a trainer—knowing how to break things down and put them together so they makes sense," says Brian. "Even today, I use mnemonic devices and whenever I'm in a meeting, I still take two-column notes."



Photo by Tricia Stanley

**Brian Littlehale '87 was keynote speaker at the Alumni and Student Networking Brunch held during Homecoming weekend, September 28 – 29, 2019.**

After two years at LC, Brian transferred to Syracuse University where he studied special education. He later enrolled at Old Dominion University where he graduated in 1994 with a bachelor's degree in human service counseling and a minor in special education.

As an executive coach and certified Partners in Leadership® facilitator, Brian leads workshops in accountability and company culture. In fall 2019, he returned to campus for Alumni Weekend and led a 20-minute workshop with students and alumni.

Brian says the "seeds" sown by LC's first teachers and administrators took root in him. The principles he discovered at Landmark helped him to understand people and motivate them as a coach.

"The values, principles, and tools I learned at LC have propelled me to this here and now," says Brian. "The wonderful people at LC unlocked the hidden potential in me. I've carried it forward and I'm using it now to unlock the hidden potential in others." 🐦



# Donor Profile

## Aloha, Putney!

Parents Eric and Cheri see opportunity for son **Drew Higashihara** to broaden his horizons.

by Chris Lenois

**K**nowing her son would be five thousand some-odd miles away from the familiar topography of Kailua, Hawaii, Cheri Higashihara came upon a simple, yet powerful, idea to stay connected to Drew during his first semester at LC.

"I told him, 'every week, go out and take a picture of the same spot on campus,'" Cheri recalled. Drew selected a spot facing north along the walking path between the Administration building and the Library, which included a stately oak tree in the foreground and a view of Alumni and Stone Halls along the ridge of the upper campus in the backdrop. Cheri would excitedly share the images of Vermont's seasonal shifts with her friends. "Every week, the tree is changing, losing its leaves in the fall and then growing them back in the spring."

The changing tree was also emblematic of the perspective taken by Higashihara family about Drew enrolling at Landmark. This would be something new and something different, and any sense of permanence would be the result of the experience, rather than the location.

"The geographical barrier is a minimal consideration. Actually, it shouldn't even be considered," Eric said. He was certainly impressed that the distance didn't prevent Landmark College Admissions Director Sydney Ruff and the parent of a graduate from visiting the campus of the Honolulu school that Drew attended. "If it wasn't for them being there, we probably wouldn't be here."

Eric and Cheri praised academic advisor Susan Frishberg for helping Drew adapt during his first year of college life. She guided their son to activities like bowling

that harkened back to his high school experience and encouraged him to explore his interest in playing piano.

"Susan has been very influential in helping Drew become a well-rounded student. That has brought us a lot of comfort, knowing that the advisors here care," said Eric. "In my mind, if Drew wasn't at Landmark, it would be an academic and emotional struggle for him, and frustrating for us as parents."



The Higashihara family, left to right: Tate, Cheri, Drew, Eric.

Even as Drew works toward his associate degree, the Higashiharas have become vocal and financial supporters of Landmark College. They want other families to know that the experience and education their son is receiving is well worth the investment.

"We've experienced success at Landmark College through Drew, and are now in a position to give back so those who want and need to attend can do so," Cheri said. "Landmark provides an education, as well as helps our youth continue to develop a solid foundation for successful lives ahead, and that is priceless." 🐦

## To Make Your Gift

**ONLINE:** [landmark.edu/give](https://landmark.edu/give)

**BY CHECK:** Make your gift payable to Landmark College and mail to:

Office of Institutional Advancement  
19 River Road South, Putney, VT 05346

# New Trustees

The Landmark College Board of Trustees voted to add two new members in May 2019.

Krish Ramakrishnan co-founded BlueJeans Network in 2009 and served as its CEO for the first eight years. He is currently executive chairman and chief innovation officer. He has also been founder and CEO of several successful startup ventures. Prior to BlueJeans, he was an entrepreneur-in-residence at Accel Partners,

where he was exploring HD video technologies including the current idea behind BlueJeans. Before that, Ramakrishnan was general manager for the server virtualization business unit at Cisco Systems, responsible for architecting Cisco's datacenter and desktop virtualization solutions. Ramakrishnan has a master's degree in computer science from Monmouth University and bachelor's degree in physics from University of Madras. He lives in Saratoga, California, with his family. His son, **Ryan Ramakrishnan '18**, earned an Associate of Arts in Liberal Studies from Landmark College.

Alan Hirsh is past owner and executive vice president of Lamart Corporation, a family-owned manufacturing business in Clifton, New Jersey. He has been board chair of Arts Unbound, a nonprofit dedicated to the artistic achievement of individuals living with physical, developmental, or mental disabilities, and seniors. Hirsh has also participated over the years in several volunteer organizations, including the New York Therapeutic Riding Center, the Bergen County Mentoring Program, and the Achilles Track Club in New York City for challenged athletes. He has hosted and sponsored many fundraisers for schools and charitable organizations. He is also an art enthusiast who is committed to improving opportunities for persons living with special needs.



**Krish Ramakrishnan**



**Alan Hirsh**

## *In Memoriam*

**R**obert Munley Sr., an emeritus member of the Landmark College Board of Trustees, died November 30, 2019. Munley served on the board from 1994 to 2009. He was founding chair of the College's Board of Trustees Committee on Institutional Advancement, and in that role he provided strategic leadership that led to successful fundraising campaigns for the Strauch Family Student Center, the Click Family Athletic Center, and others.

Munley and his wife, Bernadine, have been generous donors to the College. Three of their six children attended LC: **Daniel '95**, **Caroline '93**, and **Robert III '93**, who also served on the Board of Trustees from 2012 to 2019.

In a 2001 interview with LC, Munley said, "I have been very happy to serve Landmark College for many years. There really is no place like it anywhere in the world, and the College has been an important part of my children's lives, and of my life, too. Landmark College is just too important to say 'no' to."

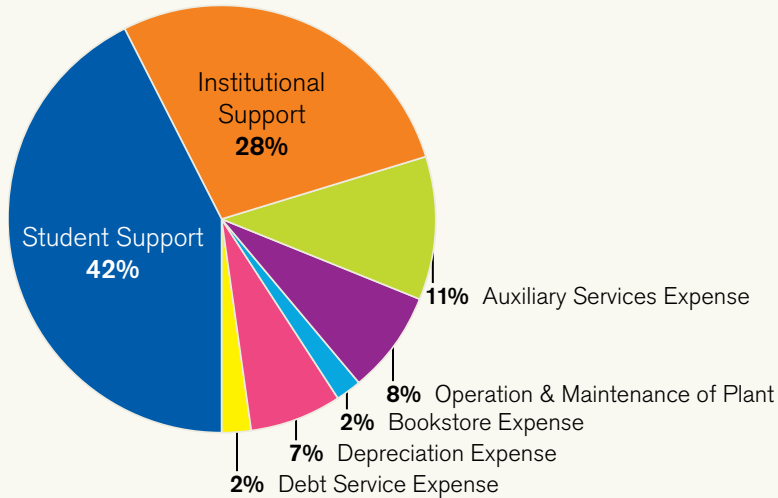


Photo by A. Blake Gardner



# 2018 – 2019 Financial Summary

## Statement of Unrestricted Activities for the Year Ending June 30, 2019

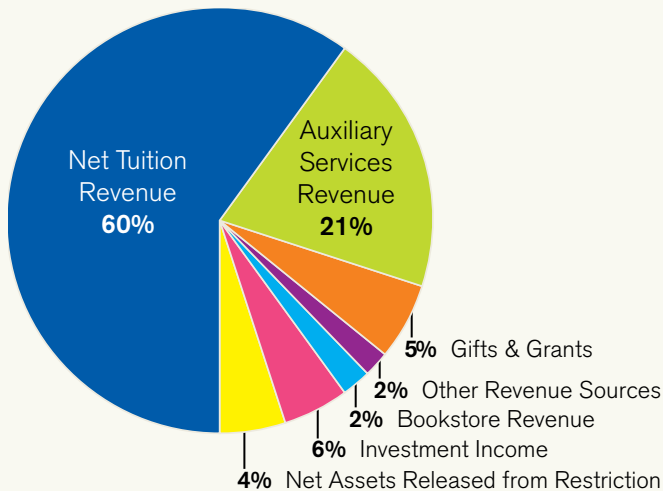


### Unrestricted Expenses

|                                  |               |
|----------------------------------|---------------|
| Student Support                  | \$ 11,575,596 |
| Institutional Support            | 7,778,735     |
| Auxiliary Services Expense       | 3,153,862     |
| Operation & Maintenance of Plant | 2,081,281     |
| Bookstore Expense                | 495,202       |
| Depreciation Expense             | 1,964,041     |
| Debt Service Expense             | 527,653       |

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**Total Unrestricted Expenses \$ 27,576,370**



### Unrestricted Revenues

|                                      |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Net Tuition Revenue                  | \$ 15,805,892 |
| Auxiliary Services Revenue           | 5,381,529     |
| Gift & Grants*                       | 1,413,166     |
| Other Revenue Sources                | 394,118       |
| Bookstore Revenue                    | 502,409       |
| Investment Income                    | 1,631,727     |
| Net Assets Released from Restriction | 1,002,679     |

---

**Total Unrestricted Revenues \$ 26,131,520**

*\*Includes Temporarily Restricted Gifts*

## 2018 – 19 Annual Fund Quick Facts

Annual Fund raised  
**over \$1 MILLION**  
– a first for LC!

Phonathon raised  
**over \$55,000**  
– the highest ever!

Giving Day **raised**  
**\$11,000 from 100**  
alumni and students!



*I would like to invite you to become a member of Landmark College's Charles Drake Legacy Society. The Society is composed of generous and forward-thinking donors who support our long-term success through a planned gift.*

*As I was planning for my family's future, I wanted to make sure that the institution that got me to where I am today was included. It's easy to do. While cash contributions are always appreciated, there are other creative and flexible giving options that can benefit you and the College.*

*We encourage you to consult with your financial advisor to discuss the options. Personally, I have established a trust and have named Landmark College as a beneficiary. **You need not be wealthy to leave a legacy.***

*Your support of our mission will be long remembered and serve as an inspiration to others!*

*Genevieve Friend-Land*

Genevieve Friend-Land '96

Volunteer Chair of the Charles Drake Legacy Society

## Charles Drake Legacy Society Members

Anonymous (4)  
Robert E. Banta  
William & Debra Cotter  
Nurjehan & Moaiz Daya Family  
Peter & Joanne Eden  
Bretton L. Himsworth '90  
Genevieve Friend-Land '96  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Lewis  
John D. Lobrano  
Jon A. MacClaren &  
Christopher B. Sink  
Jon & Linda Moran  
Stephen P. Moschetta '95  
Dr. Harold Nahigian &  
Dr. Linda Kaboolian  
Carol and Richard Parton  
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Patton  
Ellen D. Smith  
Bruce & Ivy Stevens  
Mary Schopp Stoner  
Charles & Nan\* Strauch  
Diane Tarbell  
Theodora A. van Roijen '00

\*Deceased

Become a member today! Visit [landmark.edu/legacy](http://landmark.edu/legacy)

## Alumni Association Corner

### Message from your new Alumni Advisory Board Chair



The Landmark College Alumni Advisory Board (AAB) is here on behalf of the nearly 10,000 alumni who make up the Alumni Association for this great institution. The association exists, wholly and solely, to help our alumni and, by extension, the College itself, succeed.

After leaving LC, our lives became full of opportunities. We got involved with our families and work and suddenly we've lost touch with those outside our close circle. **The Alumni Association can help you stay connected to those friends and to the vast resources available on campus**, from the faculty that taught and guided you, to our libraries, seminars, websites, social media, and an extraordinary variety of "stay connected" programs designed with you in mind. They are all designed to support you as you pursue your post-academic life and career.

Your Landmark family is huge. There are currently alumni in all 50 of the United States and in 56 countries across six continents. The **alumni events, regional networking get-togethers, on-campus activities and sporting events, career advisory services, and social media resources** available through the Alumni Association and the College are all designed to help you be as successful as you can possibly be. After all, your success is our success.

At the same time, **I would challenge you to think of ways you can give back** to the College to whatever degree you are comfortable. And I do not mean just monetarily (though that is, of course, always welcome). There are many ways to give back: from career and academic mentoring to volunteering for on and off campus events to simply attending academic and social activities. As you will find, giving back has another benefit: it feels *good*.

Thank you for staying connected with us today and in the future. Please come back often. I encourage you to explore all we have to offer to stay connected and make yourself and Landmark stronger.

With warmest regards,

Theodora van Roijen '00, Chair

### Alumni Advisory Board

|                                      |                           |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Theodora van Roijen '00, Chair       | Patricia Perry '92        |
| Jason Guyan '97, Vice Chair          | Brian Press '95           |
| Genevieve Friend-Land '96, Secretary | Stephen H. Sack, Jr. '92  |
| Sarah Alley '04                      | Erich Seifert '11         |
| Andrew Garcia '11                    | Andrea Tolliver '00       |
| Sarah Holmes '11                     | Detmar von Hardenberg '96 |
| Christopher Mathey '04               | Tracy Wilkinson '02       |

Learn more about your alumni board at [landmark.edu/AAB](http://landmark.edu/AAB)



## NYC Fundraiser to Honor Al Roker with LD Luminary Award

**A**l Roker, Emmy-winning weather and feature anchor of NBC News' "TODAY Show," as well as the co-host of the third hour of "TODAY," will receive the Landmark College LD Luminary Award at the College's 2020 fundraising gala, "Rising to the Challenge," at Tribeca Rooftop in New York City on April 21.

The funds raised by the gala will help increase student access to scholarships and financial aid, as well as career readiness and internship opportunities, while also supporting programs such as study abroad, the Centers for Diversity and Inclusion, athletics and student activities, the Center for Neurodiversity, and more.

"Landmark College students rise to the challenge every day, overcoming obstacles in and out of the classroom," said Ellen Smith, LC's vice president for institutional advancement. "Their parents and families rise to the challenge with support all along their journey. The College's many friends and supporters rise to the challenge with financial support and generous donations of their time."

"Rising to the Challenge" is the fourth fundraising gala hosted by the College in New York City since 2014. The three previous galas have raised a combined total of over \$2 million for various LC initiatives, including the MacFarlane Science, Technology & Innovation Center and scholarship support for students.

Al Roker joined NBC News' "TODAY Show" in January 1996 and is now the weather and feature anchor as well as the co-host of the third hour of "TODAY." From July 2009 to September 2015, Roker served as co-host of the morning show "Wake Up with Al" on the Weather

Channel. Roker has been named Best Weatherman twice by *New York* magazine. He is a recipient of the American Meteorological Society's prestigious Seal of Approval and has been a pioneer in the use of computer graphics for weathercasting. Roker has won 12 Daytime Emmy Awards as part of TODAY's recognition as the best morning

newscast. He is married to ABC News anchor/correspondent Deborah Roberts, with whom he co-parents three children.

Roker has written and spoken about his family's journey with a child who has learning differences. He has noted that stigmatizing labels are frustrating because they do not convey who the whole person is.

Previous recipients of the Landmark College LD Luminary Award are Academy Award winner Whoopi Goldberg, who discussed her lifelong struggle with dyslexia; actress, activist, and philanthropist

Holly Robinson Peete, whose HollyRod Foundation supports families with autistic children and individuals with Parkinson's disease; and *New York Times* best-selling author John Elder Robison—an advisor to LC's Center for Neurodiversity—whose books detail his own neurodiversity.

For more information about the "Rising to the Challenge" gala, or to purchase tickets, visit <https://www.landmark.edu/gala2020>. 🐾



The LD Luminary Award is given to an individual in the public eye who is committed to raising awareness of the prevalence and seriousness of learning differences (LD); has helped to demystify LD by demonstrating that it is not a weakness but more often a strength; has inspired people outside the Landmark College campus to better understand the struggles faced by individuals with LD; and is in a position to stimulate discussion, motivate action, and educate society about the need to affirm the benefits of neurodivergent individuals in education, the workplace, and society.



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