

GTU Currents

NEWS OF THE GRADUATE THEOLOGICAL UNION

A Lived Theology

GRADUATE'S WORK FOCUSES ON FAITH AND IDENTITY

For Uriah Kim, May 2004 marked a new transition: graduating from the GTU with a Ph.D. in Biblical Studies, and preparing to move east for his new position as assistant professor of Hebrew Bible at Canisius College in Buffalo, NY. Kim's story reflects a series of such changes and life-transformations, as he explores what it means to be a person of faith, a scholar, a teacher, and an Asian-American.



Born to a Buddhist family in Korea, he came to the United States at the age of 10 and converted to Christianity at 18. Kim was struggling at the time with existential questions about morality and death that he could not resolve through Buddhism. He was also trying to understand what it is to be "a hyphenated being." Am I a Korean living in the United States," he explains, "or an American who happens to be Korean, or something else?" In Christianity Kim found a resolution to his central concerns, both about salvation and about his own identity.

Kim had many more changes ahead of him. He went to engineering school first, then switched to philosophy. After graduating from New York University, he enrolled in Princeton Theological Seminary, intending to work in a parish. He earned his M.Div. from Princeton, and a Th.M. (magna cum laude) from Emory University.

When the 1992 Los Angeles riots took place, Kim found that his faith journey was shifting again. As he saw it, the Korean immigrant churches weren't able to respond effectively to the crisis, reacting in a more insular way. "As second-generation Koreans, I felt we needed to formulate a theology that could respond coherently to situations like the riots," he says. Kim went into doctoral work so that he could contribute to such a theology.

Drawn to the GTU by its interdisciplinary approach and the depth and diversity of the faculty, he was also, he admits, impressed by its location overlooking the San Francisco Bay. Kim's doctoral work culminated in a dissertation exploring the need to newly interpret the Hebrew Bible to readers in their local contexts today, particularly in Asian-American contexts. "How can we read the Bible," he asks, "by bringing in our experience and our history, rather than leaving them at the door?"

PSR's Jeffrey Kuan, who was Kim's advisor during his doctoral work, comments that he is "one of the finest students we have had in the last 10 years." Kim's academic achievement was recognized by the Fund for Theological Education, which granted him three years of financial support. He also received a Newhall Award and a Presidential Scholarship from the GTU.

His time at the GTU has been rich both inside the classroom and in the community; he has been active in local churches and organizations such as PSR's PANA Institute, and has taught extensively at SFTS and PSR. His wife Crystal and he are raising two children, Hope and Adam, who are eight and four.

Kim's future colleagues and students are sure to encounter a professor whose love of the subject matter will offer them new perspectives that connect scholarship to their life contexts. Teaching, he has learned, is his true calling. "When you see students grasping a complex idea, it's really fun," he says. "The respect and affection that develop between students and teacher is very meaningful."

Uriah Kim's remarks at the 2004 commencement, "Knowledge and Jeong on Holy Hill," can be read at www.gtu.edu/lect_other.php

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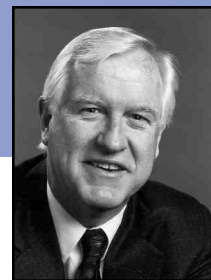
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Photos:

Mistie Shaw (M.A. '04), Timothy Babalis (Ph.D. '04) and Rachel Ann Metheny (Ph.D. '04)

Founded in 1962, the Graduate Theological Union educates women and men in theological scholarship and church leadership. The GTU seeks to teach patterns of faith that nurture justice and peace, and to equip leaders for a world of diverse religions and cultures.



Currents presents the news, people, and progress of the Graduate Theological Union. Published three times a year, *Currents* is distributed to alumni, faculty, students, staff, and friends of the GTU.

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School of Applied Theology

Dear GTU Community,

"What are the skills that will be essential for the theological and religious leaders of tomorrow?" This is one of the main questions I have posed to the GTU community as we develop a strategic focus for our future. I believe that these skills must include:

- **The skill of dialogue:** the capacity to speak and to listen well, to empathize, to understand, to relate, and to cross over.
- **The ability to bridge differences:** to identify common goals and goods in order to create bonds between people with opposing views, and to encourage understanding across Christian denominations and other religious traditions.
- **Community building skills:** to bring people together in search of new forms of support and mutual understanding.
- **Knowledge of history and traditions:** to understand the past, because the future will depend on creative and critical appropriations of history and traditions.
- **Knowledge of practices:** to understand the practical realities of religious life and thought in their cultural and social contexts.
- **A commitment to inclusiveness:** to cross over religious, racial, ethnic, gender, and sexual orientation differences.
- **Adaptive leadership skills:** to discern deeper meanings and possibilities in a given situation, and to frame solutions in ways that foster collaboration and cooperation.

The third of these skills, community building, is at the core of all we do here at the GTU. We were created as a theological institution in which coming together across religious differences, denominations and traditions was a primary goal. The vitality of the GTU community testifies to our success in achieving this goal, and in continually finding the forward edge that will deepen our dialogue and collaboration.

The GTU is the only theological consortium in the nation with affiliated academic centers of Jewish and Buddhist studies. We are working to increase our diversity and to expand our understanding of pluralism, through projects such as the new Asian Theologies initiative, described later in this issue.

The erosion of community in our country has been documented by many scholars, notably our own Robert Bellah. The rampant individualism of our culture and the "turn to the self" in religious discourse and practice has imperiled genuine community. If we are to craft a world in which our common humanity can flourish, the ability of leaders to build community is of the essence.

This is why the GTU is committed to being a place where our commonalities are as profound as our differences; where we learn from the particularity and uniqueness of each individual and tradition, rather than allowing our differences to divide us; and where our life together as a learning community empowers our students and faculty to help build new structures of association and bonds of harmony, justice, and peace.

The GTU's vision is to be the leader in scholarship that creates community across religious divides.

Regards,

James A. Donahue



The Promise and Pain of Pluralism



Fumitaka Matsuoka, whose life history, scholarship, and teaching center around issues of pluralism, is the second recipient of the annual Sarlo Excellence in Teaching

Award. This award, given by the Sarlo Foundation, honors a core doctoral faculty member whose teaching incorporates the values of interreligious dialogue and an interdisciplinary approach to teaching. Matsuoka is professor of theology at Pacific School of Religion and the GTU. He is also executive director of PSR's Institute for Leadership Development and Study of Pacific and Asian North American Religion (PANA Institute).

"Pluralism embraces issues that are loaded with people's pain—alienation, misunderstanding, and estrangement," he says. It is not a "romantic notion of all these different peoples coming together and holding hands. But, if we are honest about those experiences of pain, we can begin to understand, out of our own faith perspective, the possibilities and promise of the relationships between people."

Matsuoka locates his own faith life in the question of what it means to live with incongruity. He belongs to Church of the Brethren, a socially conscious, community-oriented denomination that originated as a combination of the left-wing 16th-century Anabaptist tradition together with 18th-century Pietism. Yet, he was raised in a secularized version of the Buddhist, Shinto, and Confucian traditions in Japan. "In one sense it's like putting oil and water together," he says. "I do claim myself as a Christian, but I can't ignore my upbringing, which is so totally different from Abrahamic traditions."

Incorporating interreligious and interdisciplinary perspectives is central to Matsuoka's approach to teaching both advanced and introductory classes. In his

"Voices and Visions" course, for example, students explore a variety of perspectives, from the writings of southern Baptist preacher Will Campbell and Confucian scholar Tu Wei Min, to writers such as bell hooks, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Elias Chacour, a Palestinian Christian.

"The strength of the GTU is to work together, with all the differences, but not defeated by them."

Matsuoka has published three books exploring cross-cultural and cross-ethnic dimensions of faithful Christianity. He is currently working on a book devoted to exploring the contemporary Asian-American contribution to the development of the Christian faith. "The normativeness of Christianity is no longer assumed," he says. "Now, when Confucian or Buddhist traditions, for instance, collide with the Christian tradition, there is no longer a power differential. They collide on the same level, and something strange happens that we don't yet have the language to describe." Matsuoka describes that collision as the place of the "holy ambiguity."

The GTU itself has undergone what he calls "a tremendous change, a sea change" over the past decades, as it has come to understand more deeply the importance of religious, racial, and cultural diversity. For him, the challenge of our future rests in becoming attuned to the voices that have not been represented in the past, and discerning how these perspectives can become part of the conversation and structure of the GTU. "The strength of the GTU is to work together," he says, "with all the differences, but not defeated by them. We can trust that something vital will come out of this."✱

Lectures and sermons by Dr. Matsuoka are available at www.psr.edu, under the Faculty section.

Asian Theologies at the GTU

As the leading program for theological scholarship that crosses over traditional divides of faith, race, and culture, the GTU is developing a new initiative that will integrate Asian theologies and cultures into our curriculum and consortial life, benefiting students and faculty throughout the GTU. Asian theology in America today is challenging the missionary and neo-colonial assumptions that underlie much traditional theological scholarship. Reflecting a worldwide movement of history toward freedom and democracy, this new theology is based on the authentic experiences of Asian peoples.

Asian Theologies and Perspectives in North American Theological Education, which is funded in part by the Henry Luce Foundation, will be carried out in partnership with the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia, as well as other Asian organizations. A challenge grant from an anonymous donor has also been received, requiring three million dollars to be raised in the next four years for programs in Asian-Pacific theology.

From our founding in 1962, the GTU's commitment has been to pluralism and diversity in religious expression. This commitment is deepened through the Asian Theologies project, in ways that capitalize on the GTU faculty's expertise; location on the Pacific Rim; student population; and existing centers and institutes. The project director is the well-known scholar Choan-Seng Song, a PSR faculty member. The project will eventually serve as a model for integrating Asian theologies into the landscape of theological education. Look for more information in upcoming issues of *Currents*.✱

Commencement 2004



The GTU extends its warmest congratulations to the graduating students of October 2003 and May 2004.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Timothy J. Babalis

History • *The Cross in the Wilderness: An Aesthetic History of the American Park Idea*

Mauro Batista de Souza

Homiletics • *Rhetorical Resources for a Homiletic of the Oppressed: The New Homiletics of Fred Craddock and Eugene Lowry and the Liberation Pedagogy of Paul Freire*



Darnise Martin (Ph.D. '04)

Janet Anne Bregar

Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Beyond Magic: An Analytic Art Therapy Case Study of the Psychoaesthetic Dynamics in the Buddhist Tantric Kālachakra and Vodoun Vêvé Sacred Drawings*

Eunhee Chae

Ethics and Social Theory • *Korean Immigrant Community and the Significance of Protestant Ethnic Churches*

Joseph Cheah

Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Negotiating Race and Religion in American Buddhism: Burmese Buddhism in California*

Mary Therese DesCamp

Biblical Studies • *Faith and Politics, Metaphor and Meaning: Liber Antiquitatum Biblicarum and Literary Methods through a Cognitive Lens*

Serguei B. Dolgopolski

Jewish Studies, Joint Degree with the University of California, Berkeley • *The Rhetoric of the Talmud in the Perspective of Post-Structuralism*

Brian Michael Froese

History • *"In This Far Off Country": An Examination of Mennonite Identity in California, 1905-1960*

Christopher C. Fuller

Interdisciplinary Studies • *"Udiste che fu ditto... Ma io dico che...": Pasolini as Interpreter of the Gospel of Matthew*

Rachel Havrelock

Jewish Studies, Joint Degree with the University of California, Berkeley • *The Jordan River: Crossing a Biblical Boundary*

Seong-Hyuk Hong

Biblical Studies • *The Metaphor of Illness and Healing in Hosea and Its Significance in the Socioeconomic Context of Eighth-Century Israel and Judah*

Hudaya Kandahjaya

Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *A Study of the Origin and Significance of Borobudur*

Uriah Yong-Hwan Kim

Biblical Studies • *Decolonizing Josiah: Toward a Postcolonial Reading of the Deuteronomistic History*

Darnise Martin

Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *The View from Oakland: A Study of an African-American Religious Science Community*

Rachel Ann Metheny

Ethics and Social Theory • *"Give Me Thy Hand": A New Understanding of Eroticism for the United Methodist Church*

Vijayalakshmi Nakka-Cammauf

Art and Religion • *Evil and Repentance in George Eliot's Work*

Peter Sam Cao Nguyen, SVD

Religion and Psychology • *Vietnamese Conversion to Christianity: The Impact of the Refugee Experience*

Christine Valters Paintner

Christian Spirituality • *Spiritual Practices as Socially Transformative: Toward a Liberating Spirituality*

Sangyil Park

Homiletics • *A Narrative of Korean Preaching: A Study of Chunhyangjun's Narrative and Its Application to Preaching in Korean Culture*



Martha Gonzalez and husband Christopher Fuller (Ph.D. '04)

Melinda Ann Quivik

Liturgical Studies • *The Beautiful Funeral: The Aesthetics of a Liturgy*

Richard O. Randolph

Ethics and Social Theory • *The Amazonian Rain Forest as an Environmental Test Case for Renewal of the Ethics and Economics Dialogue Concerning the Common Good*

Steven Joseph Schloeder

Art and Religion • *The Church of the Year 2000: A Dialogue on Catholic Architecture for the Third Millennium*

Richard Stevens

Interdisciplinary Studies • *Burning for the Other: Semiotics of a Levinasian Theological Aesthetics in Light of Burning Man*

Peter Daniel Soares

Cultural and Historical Studies of Religions • *Through Negativity to Freedom: Nishitani Keiji's Discourse on Enchantment of Consciousness in Light of the Hegelian Theory of Cognitive Development*

Philip Khanh Van Trinh

Systematic and Philosophical Theology • *Toward a Doctrine of Sin in the Vietnamese Context: Elements in the Dialogue between Vietnamese Indigenous Perceptions and Christian Teachings by Missionaries on Sin*

Marta Vides de Gonzalez

Ethics and Social Theory • *By What Authority: On the Relationship Between Restorative Justice and the Legal Practice of the Juvenile Court Waiver*

MASTER OF ARTS

Peter T. Arvantely

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *The Agiasotissa of Agiasos Lesbos: Icons and Music at a Greek Pilgrimage Shrine*

Kyriaki Avtzis

Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, WITH HONORS • *The Special Commission on Orthodox Participation in the World Council of Churches*

Christiane Baker

Franciscan School of Theology • *The Metaphors We Get Sick By: A Study of the Moral Imagination of Illness in Popular American Cinema*



Eldon Ernst, professor emeritus, and Timothy Babalis (Ph.D. '04)

Jason Beyer

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *Young Adult Catholics: A Contemporary Look at a Potentially Mystical Faith*

Hye-Sun Hyacintha Chang

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *"For the Greater Glory of God" Reclaimed from the Spiritual Exercises: An Eco-Feminist Perspective*

Jonathan B. Diaz

Franciscan School of Theology, WITH HONORS • *Towards a Theology of Struggle: I Hinengen I Man Chamoru Giya Guähanyan I Mariãnas*

Margaret Donlevy

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *Latin American Liberation Theology and Its Incorporation into Roman Catholic Church Practice*

Meng Hun Goh

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *Did John the Baptist Fail to Support Jesus?*

Brenda Lynette Guess

American Baptist Seminary of the West • *Even the Tax Collector: Liberation in the Gospel of Luke*

Martha Jane Jennings

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *Light and Form in the Works of Fra Angelico and Mark Rothko*

Hee-Jung Ha

Pacific School of Religion • *Who's Talking about the History of Korean Christianity?: A Case Study for Reconstructing the History of Asian Christianity*

Hyesung Kang

San Francisco Theological Seminary • *Taemong: Korean Birth Dreams*

Christina Ann

Cacanindin Leño
Franciscan School of Theology, WITH HONORS • *Covenant for Decolonization and Liberation: A Theological Reflection on the Filipino/American Coalition for Environmental Solutions (FACES)*



"Hey, I graduated!"
Christine Painter (Ph.D. '04)

David M. Mammola

Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley • *Taking Up the Cross: A Dialogical Exploration of the Spirituality of Discipleship in Matthew 16:13-28*

Deborah L. Matthews

San Francisco Theological Seminary • *Images of God for Adolescent Girls*

Ann Mary Meunier

Pacific School of Religion
Ethical Issues Confronting Physicians Regarding Smallpox Vaccination

Nobuko Miyoshi

Institute of Buddhist Studies
The Challenge of Jōdo Shinshū in America: Practicing "No Practice"

Joshua M. Moritz

Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, WITH HONORS
Returning to Eden: The Problem of Evil, Free Will Theodicy, and the Challenge of the Natural Sciences

Leah Buturain Schneider

Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology, WITH HONORS
Concealing to Reveal: Quiet Insight in the Getty Annunciation by Dieric Bouts

Mistie Shaw

Franciscan School of Theology
The Spiritual Journey of Hester Ann Rogers

Jeanette G. Shin

Institute of Buddhist Studies, WITH HONORS • *An Analysis of Sōhei, Japan's Militant Buddhist Monk*

Kyoung-Hee Shin

San Francisco Theological Seminary • *A Perspective on Selfhood: The Transition from an Old Story to a New Story*

Tracey Starkovich

American Baptist Seminary of the West • *Knowledge of God, Jesus and Self: Women in the Gospel of John*

Patricia A. Kanaya Usuki

Institute of Buddhist Studies, WITH HONORS • *Contemporary American Women in Jōdo Shin*

Buddhism: Tradition, Transition, Transmission

Ofelia O. Villero

Franciscan School of Theology, WITH HONORS • *Indigenous Healing: A Dimension of Filipino Religious Presence*



Vijayalakshmi Nakka-Cammauf
(Ph.D. '04)

Amy Black Voorhees

Pacific School of Religion, WITH HONORS • *Sisters or Strangers? Mary Baker Eddy, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the Creation of "Sisterhood" in History*

Julia Drew Wakelee-Lynch

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *Remembering Who We Are: A Bioethical Case Study through the Incarnational Lens of F. D. Maurice*

Aaron Jasper Welch

Church Divinity School of the Pacific • *Reinhold Niebuhr and Theology as Social Ethics: A Commitment to Ambiguity and Action*

MASTER OF ARTS IN BIBLICAL LANGUAGES

Michael Patrick Ellard

Pacific School of Religion

Sukbum Jung

San Francisco Theological Seminary

Leah Sheppard

Pacific School of Religion✠

News & Notes



What's new - from Alumni, Faculty, and Students

For more updates and to send in your news, visit www.gtu.edu

MARVIN BROWN (Ph.D. '78), a lecturer at the University of San Francisco, will publish *Creating Corporate Integrity: A Civic Perspective on Business Ethics and Leadership* this fall.

TOM FERGUSON (Ph.D. '02) is associate director for the office of ecumenical and interfaith relations of the Episcopal Church, U.S.A., in New York City.

MICHELLE A. GONZALEZ (Ph.D. '01) recently published *Sor Juana: Beauty and Justice in the Americas*. She is assistant professor of theological studies at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

BR. LAWRENCE HALEY, FSC (M.A. '81) is director of technology and religion teacher at Cathedral High School in Los Angeles.

JUAN L. HINOJOSA (Ph.D. '84) is the director of the Chicago Catholic Enterprise Mission, a business program that assists low-income entrepreneurs. He also serves as director of the Chicago Catholic Medical Mission.

CHERYL KIRK-DUGGAN, former director of the GTU's Center for Women and Religion, has edited a new book, *Pregnant Passion: Gender, Sex, and Violence in the Bible*. The essays in the book include contributions from GTU faculty members Barbara Green, Gina Hens-Piazza, and Mary Donovan Turner.

DANA KRAMER-ROLLS (M.A. '94; Ph.D. '00) will publish *The Way of the Cat*, on the spirituality of learning from our non-human companions.

SOO-YOUNG KWON (Ph.D. '03) has been appointed assistant professor of pastoral theology at the United Graduate School of Theology at Yonsei University in Korea.

KAREN LEBACQZ, Robert Gordon Sproul Professor of Theological Ethics at Pacific School of Religion, retired from her teaching duties this spring after serving on the faculty for 31 years. Dr. Lebacqz was honored through an ethics symposium this spring, as well as the establishment of a new student scholarship at PSR.

Nominate the 2004 Alum of the Year

Please let us know your candidates! Send nominations, including special achievements or accomplishments, to advancement@gtu.edu (or phone 510/649-2420), by July 31.

The Alum of the Year will be honored at the annual GTU alumni luncheon at the AAR/SBL conference in November, in San Antonio, TX. 2003's Alum of the Year was Joanna Dewey, Academic Dean at Episcopal Divinity School—you can read about her and other notable alums at www.gtu.edu

LAUREN MACKINNON, a first year doctoral student in ethics and social theory, has been named a 2004 Civitas scholar by the Center for Public Justice. She will participate in a summer seminar for doctoral students on faith and public affairs, which is co-sponsored by the Center for Public Justice, the American Enterprise Institute and the Brookings Institution.

JOHN MCCLAIN (M.A. '94) is associate director for education services at the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board in Olympia. He directs Washington state's GEAR UP program, which helps low-income students and students of color prepare for college. His wife, Carrie Stringer (M.Div. SKSM '93), teaches art at an elementary school.

KARI ANN OWEN (Ph.D. '78; formerly Karen Iris Bogen) was granted a festival waiver package from the Very Special Arts organization to hear the presentation of her literary/dramatic work at the VSA Festival in Washington D.C. in June 2004. Her play, "Crisis," concerns the relationship of John and Jacqueline Kennedy on the eve of the Cuban Missile Crisis.

JAY ROCK (Ph.D. '86) is the coordinator of the Presbyterian Church USA's Inter-Faith Relations Office. He is writing a guide for Presbyterians to use in connection with a project of the Union for Reform Judaism, *Open Doors, Open Minds: Synagogues and Churches Studying Together*.

NAOMI SEIDMAN, director of the Richard S. Dinner Center for Jewish Studies, has been awarded a 2004-2005 Lilly Theological Scholars Grant from the Association of Theological Schools. The grant will allow her to finish her book, *Faithful Renderings: Jewish-Christian Difference and the Politics of Translation*.

LAUVE STEENHUISEN (Ph.D. '84) teaches in theology and women's studies at Georgetown University. She is writing a book on "feminist lived religion and the interstices of autonomy and community."

MARTHA ELLEN STORTZ, professor of historical theology and ethics at Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, has a new book out, *A World According to God: Practices for Putting Faith at the Center of Your Life*.

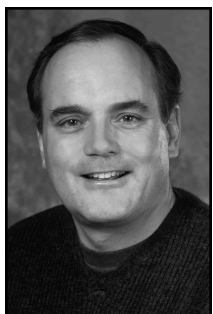
SHIBLEY TELHAMI (M.A. '78) is the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland-College Park. Telhami has served as adviser to the United States Mission to the United Nations, and has published extensively on foreign policy and Middle Eastern affairs.✽

Announcements



McCoy Lecture on Ethics and Public Life

This April, the GTU and Pacific School of Religion presented the inaugural lecture in religion, ethics and public life, honoring the life and work of Dr. Charles S. McCoy (1923-2002). A well-known scholar, theologian and activist, McCoy was the founder of the Center for Ethics and Social Policy, and professor of theological ethics at PSR and the GTU for 33 years.



Philip A. Marineau, president and CEO of Levi Strauss & Co., spoke on "Leadership and Ethics in an Age of Globalization." Levi Strauss, long known for its commitment to social responsibility, had been the focus of research done by McCoy and his associates. Leading the panel discussion were Mark Juergensmeyer from University of California, Santa Barbara; Phillip Mullins from Missouri Western State College; Edwin Epstein, professor emeritus at the Haas School of Business, University of California, Berkeley; and JSTB professor Lisa Fullam. GTU President James A. Donahue moderated the discussion.

Contributions to support the future of the lectureship may be sent to the Graduate Theological Union, 2400 Ridge Road, Berkeley CA 94709, designated to the McCoy Lectures Fund. For more information, please call 510/649-2420 or e-mail advancement@gtu.edu.

New Advancement Executive

The GTU is pleased to announce that Jane Whitfield has joined the consortium as the vice president for advancement. Whitfield has previous development and director experience for the California Culinary Academy Educational Foundation and Bay Area Legal Aid. GTU President Donahue commented that Whitfield "brings an enormous range of expertise in the advancement field as well as a deep understanding of the work of the GTU. The combination of her skills and her commitment to the mission of the GTU will be a great asset to us as the work of the advancement office continues to grow."

New Presidents at FST and DSPT

Ending their terms as presidents are William Cieslak from Franciscan School of Theology, and Gregory Rocca from Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology. We welcome new DSPT president Michael Sweeney and new FST president Mario DiCicco to the GTU consortium.

GTU Board of Trustees Departures

Thomas J. Clarke, Louise A. LaMothe, Fumitaka Matsuoka, Peggy Hansen Olsen, and David D. O'Neill are ending their terms as GTU trustees this spring. We thank them for their faithful service to the GTU, and wish them well in all their future endeavors.✱

Scholarship Awarded for Student's Iraq Proposal

First-year doctoral student Robert Daren Erisman was thrilled to learn that he had won a \$10,000 award earlier this year for an original essay on "The Saladin Solution," which presents a model for U.S.-Iraq relations.

Erisman draws his suggestions from the life of Saladin, a twelfth-century Muslim ruler who was both a great military strategist and a generous and humane leader. Most remarkable to Erisman is the way Saladin employed the Arabic concept of *hilm*, which describes the virtue of one who has the power to destroy, but instead shows tolerance and generosity. Applied to the context of U.S.-Iraq relations, Erisman suggests that a spirit of *hilm* would catalyze the humane rebuilding of Iraq and foster hope for the Iraqi people.

"I hope to be a bridge between the traditions. We care about the same God."

As both a Lutheran pastor and a scholar of Islam, Erisman seeks to foster dialogue between the two religions that inspire him. "I hope to be a bridge between the traditions," he says. "We care about the same God." At the GTU, Erisman is combining his interests in Islam and Christianity with current explorations in science and theology. The scholarship, given by the GTU's online applications provider College.Net, will enable him to focus on his studies, including coursework in German and Arabic.

At the heart of his practical goal of teaching in religious studies and theology lies a sincere appreciation for the wonder of religious faith in all its forms. For him, quite simply, "it is miraculous." ✱

—Jenny Veninga, GTU doctoral student

For a link to Erisman's essay, visit www.gtu.edu/news_announcements.php



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"The GTU is a place where you can be who you are, in the best possible sense, while respecting and understanding the other. Students at the GTU emerge with a greater appreciation for and openness to others, which they

take with them to their future communities. This goes for trustees as well—we all learn so much from each other."

—*Rita Semel, a longtime trustee of and contributor to the GTU. Semel is also chair of the Global Council of the United Religions Initiative, and the executive vice chair of the San Francisco Interfaith Council.*



Blessing of the Crush

6:30 pm on Wednesday, October 6, 2004

Westin St. Francis, San Francisco

Please join us for our third annual black-tie gala, *Blessing of the Crush*. An elegant and exciting evening of wine-tasting and dinner, this event is a chance for friends and members of the GTU community to gather together and celebrate the accomplishments of the past year, while raising money to support student scholarships. GTU trustee Susan Cook Hoganson and Peggy Hansen Olsen are the event co-chairs. Call 510/649-2420 or e-mail advancement@gtu.edu for information and reservations.