



The Grinnell Magazine

Winter 2012

Harry Hopkins 1912

The Grinnell Magazine

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Mission Statement

The Grinnell Magazine is published quarterly for alumni, students, parents, faculty, and friends of the College by the Office of Communications. The contents of this magazine are selected to stimulate thought and discussion, to demonstrate the range of opinions and activities on the campus and in its broader community, and to provide news about the College and its alumni. Views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect official policy of Grinnell College.

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On the cover:

Photo of Harry Hopkins 1912.
Courtesy of Franklin D. Roosevelt Library.



EDITORNOTES

Back to the Future

"Great Scott! Jennifer could conceivably encounter her future self! ... The encounter could create a time paradox, the results of which could cause a chain reaction that would unravel the very fabric of the space-time continuum, and destroy the entire universe!"

—Dr. Emmett L. "Doc" Brown, *Back to the Future Part II*, 1989

Nah. That only happens in the movies. I've seen people encounter their future and past selves in real life, and the universe remains intact. The individuals involved, however, are often transformed.

It happens whenever more than one generation of Grinnellians gather — at reunions, alumni-taught classes and — for me most recently, on the College's first industry tour, as students visited alumni at their workplaces and asked about life after Grinnell. (See the inside front cover and Page 29 for more about this trip.) I was along to take notes and photos and had the chance to observe these encounters up close.

For the students, it was a compelling glimpse into their potential futures at exactly the time they need it most. For alumni, it was powerful déjà vu: "Wasn't it just yesterday," they think, "that I was where they are? Exhilarated and a bit scared by the possibilities that await after graduation, looking for mentors to guide me?"

Repeatedly on that trip, students said to one another how touched they were by the intensity of the bond between themselves and alumni they'd never met. "They really, really, really want us to succeed, and to help us in every way," one student said with more than a tinge of amazement.

In 10, 20, 30, 40 years, they'll know why. We alumni don't see an anonymous, generic representative of a younger generation when we look into the eyes of a Grinnell student. We see ourselves.

— Dan Weeks '80, editor
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Former Preschool Workers

Did you work for Carol Replogle Nielsen '56 at the Grinnell Preschool? If so, please email stewardship@grinnell.edu or call Meg Jones Bair at 866-850-1846. We'd like to keep you informed of the development of the Carol Replogle Nielsen '56 Preschool Laboratory Fund, which was established to provide tuition and other assistance to students who could not otherwise attend the college preschool.



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Grinnell-in-Silicon Valley

*A dozen Grinnell students
take a fall-break trip to the land of Noyce.
They return to campus wired.*



David Rosen '13, Kate Ingersoll '13, Ellen Finnegan '13, David Cowden '13, Maijid Moujaled '14, Andy Lange '13, Sahar Jalal '14, Erik Opavsky '14, and Amircan Uysaler '13 start their tour of Google's sprawling campus with colorfully painted Google bikes. "The Google campus seems like a really big playground that people get to work in," Ingersoll says.

Story and photos by Dan Weeks '80

During October break, 12 Grinnell students with an interest in technology careers traveled to Silicon Valley for an industry tour jointly sponsored by the College's Career Development Office (CDO), the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, and hosted by alumni. **Arlene Holmes** from Alumni Relations organized and ran the trip – intended as the first of many such tours.

I was along for the ride, and as the students piled into our rented van outside our San Bruno Days Inn at 7 a.m. on the first day of the tour, I was impressed by what an astonishingly accomplished and inquisitive bunch they were. For example:

Sahar Jalal '14, a physics and math and statistics double-major from Rabat, Morocco, has already interned in civil engineering and mechanical engineering and seeks to explore software engineering before she decides which field to study in graduate school.

Andy Lange '14 is a studio art major from Carroll, Iowa, with an interest in human-centered design. He hopes

to discover opportunities for artists in the technology industry.

David Rosen '13 from Scarsdale, N.Y., is a computer science major with a linguistics concentration. He is intent on founding a start-up to produce next-generation language-teaching software.

Corina Varlan '14 from Bucharest, Romania, is a political science major with prior internships in politics and international development. She wants to learn about the intersection of technology and politics.

Their eight fellow student travelers were similarly remarkable, with majors ranging from computer science to theatre to English. All had competed for the opportunity to join this trip and were paying a portion of its expenses. Set to receive them during the next four days in conference rooms, laboratories, offices, and living rooms across Silicon Valley were more than a dozen of the most notable Grinnellians in technology since **Robert Noyce '49** co-founded Intel in the late '60s.

These alumni from the classes of 1963 through 2012 included **Clint Korver '89**, a venture capitalist as well as a Grinnell trustee and board chair; **Jocelyn Wyatt '99**, co-lead and executive director, IDEO.org, a nonprofit design firm; **Sarah Luebke Sproehle '00**, director of educational services at Cloudera, a data management company; and many, many more.

For four days, the group ricocheted around Silicon Valley. We went to Google. We went to Stanford business school. We went to a biopharmacology lab. We saw a museum of computing and learned how silicon chips were made at Intel. We attended high-tech product demonstrations. **We ate breakfasts, lunches, and dinners with our hosts, and met with a crew of alumni and employees in a conference room at Box, a file-sharing company, plying them with questions until 9 p.m. one night.**

“Should I get a job or go to grad school?” students asked. “How do you deal with the ethical questions raised by drug development and testing?” “Is high-tech a bubble, and if so when will it burst?” “Can you negotiate the salary of an entry-level job?” “What’s it like working for a start-up?” “Is there work in tech for humanities majors?” “Internships here seem to be more competitive than jobs – how do you get one?”

webextra!

Watch a comprehensive slideshow of the tour at <http://on.fb.me.sqtbhz>



Clint Korver '89, a venture capitalist, Grinnell trustee, and board chair, explains how venture capital works.

“Write your perfect job description,” says **Megan Goering '08**, a strategist for Google during an impromptu job-searching workshop she ran for the students in one of Google’s funky lounges. “Then go out and get that job, or turn the job you *do* get into that job.”

Advice from the Valley



"Fifty percent of success is *not* just showing up. Belie the millennial generation stereotype and work your butts off. Signal that you're going to do that even if there's no benefit, no grade point bump, no raise."

–Megan Goering '08,
strategist, Google.



"Shed the mindset that causes you to ask: 'Is the company going to be around in two years?' It's the network of people you make at a job that matters."

–Kevin Jennison '12,
business development assoc., Trialpay



"Don't go to business school without working first. You still have to drink beer and flirt around a bit. Do it for a few years after graduating. Understand what you really want to do before you go back to grad school."

–Ashish Gupta '91,
chief marketing officer, Vidyo

At each stop, the students found some of the alumni responses eye-opening. Box software engineer **Ian Atha '09** says, "Working for a company is a skill you don't have yet. Take an internship and learn it." **Mark Schwartz '77**, executive vice-president and chief operating officer of Galena Biopharma, says, "as an executive, you set the standard, and you effect change, so rising up in the business world is very enabling to social change." "Do a research project while you're at Grinnell" says **Melissa Koch '90**, program director at Build IT and Innovate TE and senior educational developer at SRI International, an independent research institute. "Showing that you know how to apply what you've learned and that you have the initiative to carry out a project says a lot."

Alumni often started the sessions by laying themselves open: "Here's what I've done," they'd tell students. "How can I help you?" Students were equally open: "Here's where I am," they'd say, or something like it. "Here's what I'm thinking. What can you tell me?" More notable even than the quality of these conversations was the tremendous emotional and intellectual high both students and alumni seemed to get from their exchanges, and how transformational they were for students.

"Until this trip I didn't realize how strong the Grinnell community outside Grinnell was. I was surprised at how much alumni want us to reach out to them. I knew that

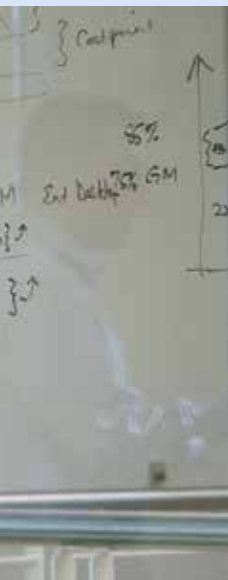
the Grinnell community on campus was very close, but I didn't realize that extended into the future. These alumni – they treated us like family," says **Maijid Moujaled '14**, a computer science major from Accra, Ghana.

"I was really touched by how much the alumni are willing to help us," echoes **Kate Ingersoll '13**, from Superior, Wis., and also a computer science major. "The Grinnellian shows in all of them. This trip has made me more proactive about everything in my life. I'm going to be more active on campus and apply for projects I care about. Before, I was hesitant to do extra projects because I always put academics first. Now I'm going to make things happen! We got so much out of this. We really appreciate it."

"It has been terrific motivation to see all these successful Grinnellians and how valuable their education has been," Jalal adds.

It was as though each alum reached through the curtain that seems to hang between life at Grinnell and life after graduation and parted it a bit to show students the view from the other side. Suddenly, the students' perspectives on what is possible – along with their confidence and their directions – became much clearer. They often ended their days of touring with more energy than what they had at the start of the day; and as the van pulled back in to our hotel parking lot, it often roared with conversation.

"I wish I had a week off school after we get back.



"An engineering salary with two years experience is about \$100,000 a year. That puts a lot of pressure on you."

—Ian Atha '09, software engineer, Box



"That tech companies have to be irreverent and have free food and funny stuff ... there needs to be an underlying business reason for the practices to endure. When companies mature, the perks lose their gloss. People start saying 'Sorry, boss, I don't want to work till midnight every night.'"

— Shelley Floyd '72, technical assistant to the Chairman, Intel. Corp., and Grinnell College trustee

There's so much I am inspired to do now," says **Jennelle Nystrom '14**, a computer science and art history major from Huntley, Ill., who had a phone interview with Microsoft while on the trip.

By the end of the week, each student had the beginnings of a plan. They wanted to rewrite resumes, work on design projects, figure out how to move to Silicon Valley after graduation. They all said the trip exceeded their expectations, and they were grateful for their West Coast alumni mentors — many of whom had invited the students to stay in touch with them as they took the next step in their lives and careers.

The alumni were equally effusive. "It is a true joy to interact with these impressive, accomplished young people," says **Claudia Morgan '77**, associate dean for academic administration, Stanford Graduate School of Business.

"I'd be delighted to be a tour host in the future. I have already recommended it to every alum I see," says **Dr. Craig Henderson '63**, a consultant to biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies. He and his wife, Mary, opened their home to host an alumni/student reception in San Francisco that kicked off the tour. "Personally I consider any opportunity to interact with a Grinnell student (or, best of all, several at one time) a great treat. Their keen intellect, enthusiasm and idealism are always a joy and an inspiration." ■

Grinnellians Wanted



Grinnell Students Look to You

If you're interested in getting involved in future tours and other programs to support students' career development, keep an eye on your email account, the Grinnell website, and the College's LinkedIn Groups for announcements about these initiatives. Additionally, if your travels bring you to campus and you are interested in talking with students about your career, please tell **Arlene Holmes**, assistant director of alumni relations for career development programs (641-269-4294; holmesar@grinnell.edu), so she can make the necessary arrangements. Whether singly or in groups, alumni interactions are some of the most impactful experiences students have while at Grinnell College.



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Iowa View



An October view of North Campus residence halls from MacEachron Field. (Photo by Justin Hayworth)