Gallatin Student Resource Fund Advances Community Minded Projects

Gallatin offers several opportunities for enterprising students to take their ideas from the drawing board to the NYU campus and beyond. One such example is the Gallatin Student Resource Fund, which awards up to $4,000 for proposals designed to foster community among students. Junior Fatoumata Waggeh received funding for “NYU: Reaching Out,” a program in which female NYU students mentor female high school students from the inner city. The project is rooted in a friendship between Waggeh, Gallatin junior Farzana Khaleda and four other NYU undergraduates, all of whom share the bond of being first-generation college students or first-generation Americans.

“We see our college educations as part of a continuum—not just for ourselves, but to empower our communities,” said Waggeh, whose family is from Gambia and who was born and raised in the Bronx.

The women meet each month with six mentees whom they recruited through buildOn, a development program for underprivileged young people. Waggeh and her peers have given tours of NYU to the teens, worked with them to write personal statements, helped them research college options and collaborated with them on social justice issues.

(Continued on next page)

Above: A “Dance Techniques” class being taught by dancer and choreographer Ellen Cornfield

Left: An “NYU: Reaching Out” event in which members of NYUKO gave young women from the buildOn program a tour of the NYU campus
Sophia LaVonne (BA ’11) received an award from the Student Resource Fund last year for “Dance Techniques,” a series of classes that allows Gallatin students to learn different dance styles, including samba, salsa and cultural dance.

She designed the curriculum with an eye toward bringing together Gallatin students with different backgrounds and interests. “I was also hoping it would influence other people to include dance in their concentrations,” said LaVonne, who runs the program with Gallatin senior Darrian O’Reilly.

The classes, which are free for Gallatin students, include ballet, modern dance, Tribal House dance, Latin jazz and capoeira, among others, as well as various other workshops. The schedule is posted each week on the Gallatin Dance Series page on Facebook.

The range of Student Resource Fund projects is as diverse as Gallatin students themselves.

- Senior Becky Asch is creating a program for Human Rights Week that will include speakers, panels and exhibitions.
- Junior Miriam Brafman is organizing “NYU Practics,” a program of noncredit classes, workshops, lectures, film screenings and recitals that students can both lead and attend.
- Senior Jon Chan, president of the Gallatin Business Club, received funding for the club to run an entrepreneurial contest that solicits sustainable, high-impact ventures created by NYU students.
- Sophomore Weronika Janczuk planned outings to museums and other cultural locations for the primarily Chinese-American adult students at Gallatin’s ongoing advanced writing class taught by Writing Program director June Foley at the University Settlement Society on the Lower East Side.
- Junior Jesse Warner organized the concert “Signs & Rhymes: Intersections of Deaf and Hip Hop Cultures,” which is set for April 16. Guests include SignMark, a Finnish hip-hop artist who performs in English and American Sign Language, and CJ Jones, a deaf entertainer and comedian.
Fashion and business—and the business of fashion—are marking the spring semester here at Gallatin.

Students transformed the Jerry H. Labowitz Theatre for the Performing Arts into a home for haute couture on February 1 at the bi-annual Gallatin fashion show. The event, which they titled “Sexposed,” explored self-expression, cultural constructions of gender and the breaking down of stereotypes.

The evening opened with a student-produced film that featured notable designers discussing how gender influences fashion. Next, supermodel Cheryl Tiegs, associate professor Karen Hornick and first-year student Colby Jordan took on the question of how couture shapes a person’s sense of self and the perceptions of others. Finally, the audience was treated to stunning collections designed by 12 Gallatin students and one alumna and modeled by undergraduates from across NYU.

On February 13, we were privileged to host Ursula Burns, the chairman and CEO of Xerox—and a Gallatin parent—who offered insights on achieving success in business and in life. The first African-American woman to lead a major U.S. corporation, Burns captivated students with her candid and wide-ranging presentation before attending a dinner with members of the Gallatin Business Club.

It may be gratifying to know that Burns named her mother as the single most-important influence in her life and the key reason that she has risen to the top of an iconic American corporation.

The School was very excited to announce a $2.5 million gift from the Guess Foundation to establish a visiting professorship in fashion and fashion business. The Guess Visiting Professor will be an industry leader who will teach a course and make a public presentation during his or her tenure.

A donor has augmented the foundation’s generosity with a $250,000 gift that will allow us to fill the chair immediately. The visiting professor will teach students how to link the creative and financial sides of the fashion industry, which speaks directly to the interdisciplinary ethos that lies at the heart of the Gallatin experience.

We hosted several events in February celebrating Black History Month, and we were proud to showcase our youngest scholars on March 1 at the Gallatin Student Research Conference.

Upcoming events that may interest your student include the Gallatin Theatre Troupe’s spring production, which will run for three nights beginning on Thursday, March 22. Also, associate professor Louise Harpman is once again organizing the Big Walk, a tip-to-tail architectural and historical walking tour of Broadway on Saturday, April 21.

I am pleased to keep you informed about the exciting news and events happening at Gallatin. For the latest details, feel free to visit us online at the Web sites listed below.

All the best,

Susanne L. Wofford
Dean
In many ways, associate professor Ritty Lukose is a natural fit for Gallatin because her scholarship is rooted in an interdisciplinary approach.

She has a bachelor’s degree in economics from the University of Chicago; a master’s in anthropology from the University of Pennsylvania; and a doctorate, also in anthropology, from the University of Chicago. Before coming to Gallatin, she taught at Penn’s Graduate School of Education.

“When my degree is in anthropology,” she said, “many other fields have been important to me: women, gender, education, economics, South Asian studies.”

Her forthcoming book draws on several of those fields. *South Asian Feminisms* (Duke University Press, 2012), which she is co-editing with a colleague at Penn, features scholars, activists and human rights lawyers who consider the future of feminism from various perspectives.

“Places such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka have longstanding, vibrant women’s movements,” she said. “This book considers that important historical legacy in the contemporary context.”

Lukose’s first book, *Liberalization’s Children* (Duke University Press, 2009), drew from ethnographic research she conducted in the South Indian state of Kerala. The volume examines the political and cultural transformations in India after the economy began globalizing in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

“I was interested in questions of youth, gender, class and caste issues because India was going through a demographic shift,” she said. “There was intense focus on the fact that India was going to be the youngest nation in the world.”

The book title comes from a distinction between “midnight’s children,” who were born in the wake of India’s independence in 1947, and “liberalization’s children,” who grew up in a globalized India. Midnight’s children are characterized as weighed down by history, while liberalization’s children are members of a new middle class that is ready to take its place on the world stage, she said.

Lukose was particularly interested in women from the smaller towns. “There’s a lot of mobility for women of a certain class,” she said, “but the conditions of entry are governed by the distinctions between the West and the non-West.”

In the country’s colonial nationalist period, the “ideal woman” wore a sari, but she went to work. She was a good housewife, but she spoke English. In the 1990s, that archetype was reconfigured as more publically assertive and sexualized, a change that created a moral panic in some segments of the nation over sexuality and gender.

Today, there is a love/hate relationship with the expanding economy, Lukose said. For example, there are beauty pageants all over India, but they always inspire protests.

Lukose takes students to India each January for an intensive two-and-a-half week travel course that is co-taught with a colleague at the Shrishti School of Art, Design and Technology in Bangalore. Back on campus, her class “Globalization: Promises and Discontents” examines several perspectives on globalization. “The Ethnographic Imagination” explores how ethnography is informed by anthropology, journalism, novel writing, travel writing and film.

This semester, she is teaching a new course called “What is Global about Gender?” a seminar that explores how scholars and activists struggle with cross-cultural and global perspectives on women, gender and sexuality.

“The hope,” Lukose said, “is that the course will help students critically engage the complex terrain of global alliances and solidarities.”
DEAR PARENTS:
You are probably aware of the importance of advis-
er at Gallatin and the key role played by your stu-
dent’s primary faculty adviser. What you may not
know is that every class (first year, sophomore, ju-
nior, senior and transfer) has an adviser as well—a
faculty-qualified scholar who teaches at Gallatin
and has specialized academic knowledge.
Class advisers give individual students the
support they need and offer programs and work-
shops on shared issues for each cohort. For exam-
ple, the adviser for first-year students organizes an
event in the fall that allows new Gallatin stu-
dents to socialize and discover common interests.
Advisers for other cohorts offer workshops to help
prepare students for their colloquia.

The Class Advisers are:

Class of 2012: Meredith Theeman, a social scientist
with a doctorate in environmental psychology. Her
research and teaching interests include psychol-
ogy, public health, epidemiology, mental health,
light exposure and health narratives.

Class of 2013: Nicole Cohen, who has a doctorate in
Japanese history. Her scholarly interests include
social history, colonialism, imperialism, war and
memory.

Class of 2014: Gail Drakes, an interdisciplin-
ary scholar with graduate degrees in history and
American studies. Her research focuses on the
cultural implications of intellectual property law
and African-American historical memory.

Class of 2015: Rahul Hamid, a cinema scholar spe-
cializing in Iranian cinema. His interests include
silent film, narrative and modernism and cinema.
He is an editor at Cineaste magazine.

Transfer Adviser: Jeanette Tran, a Renaissance
scholar with a graduate degree in English lit-
erature whose teaching and research interests
include early modern literature, representations of
race and ethnicity, and the history of cross-cultur-
al encounters.

The Office of Academic Advising is on the fifth
floor of the Gallatin School. Advisers hold exten-
sive office hours. Please be sure your student takes
full advantage of his or her class adviser.

Sincerely,
Kim DaCosta
Associate Dean of Students
NYU PARENTS COUNCIL
The NYU Parents Council is an important part of the University’s effort to build and strengthen relationships across the NYU community. The Council meets twice a year with the University administration to discuss critical topics that impact student life. Members also have opportunities to socialize and network with fellow parents, alumni and University leaders.

THE NYU PARENTS COUNCIL MISSION:
- To increase philanthropic support for NYU
- To offer feedback and inform University leadership from a parent’s perspective
- To welcome new parents to the University through Freshman Send-offs, the President’s Reception and regional events

THESE SELECT PARENT LEADERS:
- Serve as ambassadors for the University
- Assist the University in building partnerships
- Participate in meetings and other NYU activities

For more information, please contact Maureen Bannon, Gallatin’s Director of Development, at maureen.bannon@nyu.edu or at 212-998-6996.