### After Life on a Submarine, a Navy Veteran Takes up Earth Science

Michael Klaser moves from sonar to seismograph

en Michael Klaser enlisted the Navy at the age of 17, he had two goals in mind. "I wanted to work hard, and go off on an adventure," he said. "All I could think about was joining the Navy." Even with that ready-for-anything spirit, the Chicago-area native never dreamed that in a few short years he'd be helping guide a submarine through the waters needed to be about of the Atlantic. "There I was, 23-years-old than showing up and helping for class. to supervise a multi-billion dollar submarine with nuclear missiles and 150 people aboard," says Klaser, now a 30-year-old School of Arts and Sciences senior at Rutgers. It was just this huge amount of esponsibility. I look back on it now and I'm ust amazed and gratified I was able to do that." Klaser served 10 years in the Navy, specializing in sophisticated Sonar technology aboard the USS Tennessee. When he left in 2012 with the goal of attending college, he knew he needed an undergraduate program with the vitality and vision to complement his formidable experience

"My education needed to be about something greater than showing up for class," he said. I really needed to work on something cutting edge and different."

He found what he was looking for in the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, where his maturity, skills, and can-do attitude soon earned him a spot on Professor Vadim Levin's research team, employing seismographic

data to probe the earth's crust. "I didn't have to do much to make Michael into a first-rate seismic data analyst," Levin says. "It was fascinating to observe how the skills he had learned while operating military

equipment acquired new meaning

Klaser was thrilled to jump right into hands-on research as an undergraduate. He's now considering attending graduate school or starting a career in energy exploration.

"Vadim has been just great," he said. "He took me in, gave me my own little spot in the lab, and even brought me on a research expedition to

Adding to an overall positive experience is the veteran-friendly Rutgers campus.

"I love going to Veteran's House on Lafayette Street," Klaser said. "When two veterans meet one other, they can relate and help each other There is always trust.

ROUNDUP

Things You May Not Know about the School of Arts and Sciences



### New Jersey Professor of the Year!

Chemistry Professor Darrin York was named 2014 New Jersey Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education. Professor York is solving a problem that has vexed large universities for years: How to give personalized attention to students in a lecture class with 400 people? In addition to creating an engaging learning environment in the lecture hall, York developed an e-learning system—Chemistry Interactive Problem Solving Sessions that connects students and instructors to each other online, provides immediate feedback, and creates an intimate give-and-take that boosts students learning.

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oecome a Luce Scholar

Program student with a major in Planning and Public Policy and minors in Women's and Gender Studies and Spanish, Diana is currently studying at the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy. The Henry Luce Foundation provides stipends, language training, and individualized professional placement in Asia for 15-18 Scholars each year to enhance the understanding of Asia among potential leaders in American society.



• Experience **Arts and Sciences** on Rutgers Day at our new big-top tent and across Rutgers University—New Brunswick at 30 programs and demonstrations! Thrill to colorful and explosive physics and chemistry demonstrations on Busch, examine the skulls of our ancestors, the early-hominids, on Douglass, and immortalize yourself in great works of art with a souvenir photo on College Ave. Then be sure to stop by the **School of Arts and** Sciences flagship Tent of Big Ideas on Voorhees Mall to learn up close from prominent professors and pick up a limited edition Arts and Sciences t-shirt. There's so much to learn, see, and explore on Rutgers Day through the School of Arts and Sciences. For more information, visit rutgersday.rutgers.edu.

# ≃ HOUR 32FUTURE

A CAMPAIGN FOR EXCELLENCE

Arts and Sciences helped propel Rutgers University's largest and most comprehensive fundraising campaign in the university's nearly 250-year history, surpassing the campaign's \$1 billion goal by almost 4 percent. The School of Arts and Sciences raised more than any unit across the University: \$148,708,924.

- FACULTY & RESEARCH \$94,790,660
- **STUDENTS & LEARNING** \$42,371,135
- FACILITIES & RESOURCES \$1,704,573
- UNIVERSITY & COMMUNITY \$ 9,842,556

TOTAL RAISED: \$148.7 **MILLION** 

has many programs to

help students find their

calling, from networking

events to one-on-one

## **Balancing Literature** and Medicine, a Liberal Arts Graduate Finds a **Healing Combination**

Stethoscope, tongue depressor, and ... Hamlet?

Khoa Tran would be a great literary scholar. As a Rutgers undergraduate, Γran, a Vietnam native, impressed his professors with his flair for literary theory and his facility with challenging material, such as the work of philosopher and social critic Michel Foucault.

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School of Arts and Sciences

"I love theory and criticism," said Tran, who graduated from the School of Arts and Sciences in 2014 with a bachelor's degree in English. "When I noticed I was reading this stuff on buses and in coffee shops, I knew I was hooked."

But Tran has taken a very different path. He's attending Rutgers New Jersey Medical School, studying to become a doctor.

As he begins the eight-year odyssey of medical studies and residency, however, Tran's love for literature continues to play a central role in his life. And it may even end up shaping his approach to medicine.

Initially torn between medical school and graduate studies in English, Tran chose medicine after discovering the emerging narrative medicine movement, which stresses the role of listening, interpreting, and reflecting in the relationships between doctor

"Doctors have a very systematic way of working and they're obviously trained in scientific objectivity," Tran said. "Narrative medicine is an introspective approach that adds to the scientific model by emphasizing listening to and understanding the stories patients tell."

Tran knows firsthand about such stories. He grew up in a family scarred by the Vietnam War.

His father served in the South Vietnamese military and was imprisoned for seven years following the fall of Saigon. The family left Vietnam when Tran was five, eventually settling in Atlantic City. (continued inside)

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Khoa Tran was an English major in the School of Arts and Sciences before attending the Rutgers New Jersey Medical School. His love for literature is

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SPRING/SUMMER 2015

### A Student Activist Faces an Uncertain Future with Equanimity and Grace

Amid struggle for citizenship status, Marisol Conde-Hernandez gives back to Rutgers

he graduated with highest honors, excelled as a community organizer, and has established herself as an eloquent role

But Marisol Conde-Hernandez, a 2011 School of Arts and Sciences graduate, can't help but feel uncertain about her future.

Her talent and successes are overshadowed by the simple fact that she's an undocumented immigrant. Despite living in her life, she has no clear path towards permanent residency status and subsequent citizenship, and therefore no clear path to a career, homeownership, and all the other

standards of the American Dream. Possessing a temporary work permit, she's currently tending bar while attending the Rutgers School of Law-Newark on a part-time basis.

"Because I'm undocumented, there really are no employment opportunities for me to actually exercise the skill set that I acquired at Rutgers," she said.

Even with these challenges, however, Conde-Hernandez has set up a scholarship fund in her parents' names to benefit Rutgers undergraduates, with preference to those who are undocumented. "The irony is that I feel incredibly privileged

and I want to give back," she said. "I try to be mindful that not everyone had the opportunities I had at Rutgers to broaden my mind and grow intellectually.

Conde-Hernandez was not quite two-yearsold when she and her parents crossed the border from Mexico, eventually settling in New Jersey. While at Rutgers, where she studied

> sociology and women's and gender studies, she became the public face of the New Jersey DREAM Act for a bill allowing undocumented students to pay in-state tuition at public colleges. But obtaining citizenship

presents a far greater challenge. Current policy requires her to apply in Mexico, and bars her for 10 years, with a further backlog in applications that could delay the process for decades.

"To apply under the current law virtually means self-deportation," she said. She sees her law studies as the best route to affecting change.

"I want to develop the legal skills to suppor the organizations doing the work on the ground," she says. "The real change has to come through the community mobilization model, and I can be a part of that change."





## CREATING A SMOOTH ROAD FROM COLLEGE TO CAREER

A "tremendously personal and individualized process" gets fine-tuned

sk members of the Rutgers community to name the most significant recent changes at the university, and they may point to the integration of Rutgers Biomedical and Health Sciences, or the entry into the Big Ten. But University Career Services has undergone a major transformation of its own, adding new leadership, expanding staff, and developing innovative approaches to helping students find their calling. Discussing those changes is Executive Director Rick Hearin.

#### Q: What are some of the new ways you are carrying out your core mission

A: The economic conditions of recent years have given new emphasis to career services. Overall, we help students understand their career aspirations and we're guided by the understanding that it's a personal and individualized process. As a result, University Career Services is more tailored to students' interests and aspirations, as opposed to simply telling them: "You have this major, so these are your options." With greater online tools and more indust knowledge at our disposal, we're providing more finely-tuned assistance and many more options to students.

### Q: Can you give an example?

A: In addition to the hundreds of employers that our recruiting team works with each year, we're placing more emphasis on educating our career counselors about specific industries. In our career clusters program, for example, counselors "adopt" eight to ten employers that fall within a related industry. As our counselors get these employers deeply involved with our recruiting services, they develop expertise in real time about the hiring trends in that industry cluster.

### Q: How do career clusters help students?

A: Each cluster represents a career field a student may want to go into regardless of their major. We have five clusters, encompassing everything from arts and entertainment to health and science, and a sixth for those who are still deciding. Once a student chooses a cluster, a career specialist helps them develop a plan. There are a number of related programs—networking events, internships, field trips to employer sites, and a weekly e-newsletter—all customized around the cluster model.

### Q: At what point in their academic career should students get involved with

A: To parents of new students, we recently said we'd like to see their sons and daughters starting in the second semester of their first year. Starting early and developing a coherent plan helps create a smooth transition from college to career. We launched a new program called "First-Year Career Fridays" where a first-year student can schedule a special individual appointment with a career counselor to go over their four-year plan. Given the highly personal nature of this process, we meet students where they are. Some know exactly what they want to do. Others are much less clear. That's okay with us. We just want them to connect with us.

For more information, go to **careers.rutgers.edu**.

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Photo credits: Nick Romanenko, Kara Donaldson

ALUMNI PROFILE

### **Come to Convocation** and be part of a great new tradition!





ne School of Arts and **Sciences** will hold its inaugural schoolwide Convocation Sunday, May 17, 2015, at 3:00 pm in

High Point Solutions Stadium following the 249th Anniversary University Commencement. Deans, Faculty Staff, and Trustees look forward to celebrating with the Class of 2015 as they mark this momentous occasion with individual visual recognition, fireworks, and their names in lights. Rutgers graduates are welcome to attend and salute the next class as they join our ever-growing alumni ranks. Listen for a special shout-out to alumni in the stadium!

For more information, visit convocation.sas.rutgers.edu

### Balancing Literature and Medicine, a Liberal Arts **Graduate Finds a Healing Combination**

I was taking literary

courses and then going

off to biology lab.

Throughout his childhood, Tran accompanied his ailing father to medical appointments where he would often serve as translator.

"Seeing the empathy the doctors displayed for my parents hit a soft spot in me," he said. "That's the image of what I wanted to be. I wanted to give that same sort of empathy."

In an era when the humanities and the sciences are increasingly perceived as separate intellectual silos, Tran might seem unusual for his commitment to bringing them together. But he has plenty of company at Rutgers, which recently integrated most of the former University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey.

Ann Jurecic, an English professor and author of Illness as Narrative, is among a small group of faculty and students in the School of Arts and Sciences and the Robert Wood Johnson Medical School who have discussed ways to collaborate.

"There is a lot of interest among students and faculty to bridge the gap between the main campus and the medical schools," Jurecic said. "People want to think together about what's possible.'

For Tran, who minored in biology, Arts and Sciences always offered a reassuring ethos—a place where many students are double majors, and where crossdisciplinary work is highly valued

"Here I was taking these esoteric literary theory courses and then going off to biology lab," he said. "Sometimes I wondered how it would all fit. But everyone was so encouraging.

His professors recall a student that stood out for his intellectual abilities, and for his extraordinary

"He'd raise his hand in class when we discussed a reading and he'd say 'this moved me,' or 'reading this changed my life," recalls Ann Coiro, who had Tran in her Milton class. "There was a

sweetness and openness to him that was really special."

> Tran is particularly excited to be attending the New Jersey Medical School, partly because of its Newark location, and also because of the school's Healthcare Foundation Center for Humanism and Medicine. The center's mission is to "foster the ideals of respect and dignity for the individual as we provide service committed

to relieving suffering with kindness,

justice and humility." Tran aims to practice medicine in urban settings, and is gravitating toward family or emergency medicine

"I certainly see myself working in a place where there are a lot of needs," he says. "I enjoy the closeness and personal interaction of family medicine.



"The world is a wonderful place." says emeritus physics professor Peter Lindenfeld, shown above in his home surrounded by artifacts from travels. As a teacher, he has helped generations of students see the world more fully, both the aspects that are visible, and those that are hidden. A graduate fellowship has been created in his honor.

### HELPING STUDENTS OVERCOME "PHYSICS PHOBIA" AND DISCOVER THE INNER WORKINGS OF THE WORLD

Peter Lindenfeld sought balance between scientific and humanistic

ew science courses can inspire dread and anxiety in students like physics. Even physicists say so. "You go to parties and you mention physics and people say 'Oh that was the worst course I ever took in my life," says Gordon Aubrecht, a 1965 Rutgers College graduate and a physics professor at student who exemplifies the teacher-scholar model of

These days, fear of physics has inspired books, websites, and academic conferences.

But in the 1950s, a young scientist at Rutgers, Peter Lindenfeld, was already developing innovative teaching methods that appealed to aspiring physicists as well as to students intimidated by the subject.

The Ohio State University.

"I've always tried to balance the scientific with the humanistic," says Lindenfeld, a warm, chatty, and down-to-earth professor emeritus. "And I tried to find that balance right from the start."

Over the course of five decades, Lindenfeld worked to demystify physics, reaching out to high school teachers, establishing masters programs for aspiring teachers, and, perhaps most importantly, adopting a teacher/mentor role in which he touched the lives of countless students, many of whom, including Aubrecht, went on to distinguished careers as physicists

"I still think of him as really my biggest mentor as an undergraduate, and maybe even in life," says

'He's one of the most influential people in my life, almost at the same level as my parents," adds Milind Kunchur, a professor at the University of South Carolina, who received his Ph.D. from Rutgers. Now, a new graduate fellowship in the **School of Arts and Sciences** is celebrating Lindenfeld's legacy while helping to support current students. The Peter Lindenfeld Graduate Fellowship in the Department of Physics and Astronomy was started with a gift from an anonymous donor and will support a graduate

learning that Lindenfeld pioneered. Lindenfeld, who was born in Austria and fled something different," he said. Kunchur, who had Lindenfeld as his thesis advisor in the 1980s, recalls observing Lindenfeld's classes while waiting to meet with him.

"I'd peek through the window," he said. "There was so much interaction going on. He places importance on every individual. Everybody feels like they know him personally." Aubrecht agreed.

"He talked about famous physicists in a way

How is the world organized?

How are its pieces held together? When you look at physics this way, it makes you want to learn about it.

with his family after the Nazi annexation, arrived at Rutgers in 1953. He has long believed that physics can communicate profound knowledge about the world to the layperson as well as the scientist.

"Physics gives you the insight into how the world works," he said. "How is the world organized? How are its pieces held together? When you look at physics this way, it makes you want to learn about it."

But he said too much rote learning and emphasis on formulas can obscure physics' beauty. As a teacher, he was an innovator who liked to experiment with different approaches.

"I'd look for courses that other professors didn't want, and I'd look for courses where I could do

that seemed like he had actually met them and knew

Lindenfeld retired in 1999. But he hasn't stopped teaching physics. He co-authored a widelyacclaimed textbook with Rutgers colleague Suzanne White Brahmia, *Physics, the First Science* (Rutgers University Press, 2011). The book was praised for its engaging, conversational tone and strong emphasis

Indeed, the book's opening passage neatly sums up Lindenfeld's view of physics by declaring that "The world is a wonderful place," and then expressing hope that the reader will be able to "see it more fully, both the aspects that are visible and those that are hidden.

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### REACHING OUT TO THOSE LIVING WITH A DEVASTATING INJURY

Wise Young opens up lab to patients and their families

harlene Lightcap had never been to Rutgers. But on a rainy Friday evening last November, she drove from her Delaware home to the Nelson Laboratories building on Busch Campus.

Her mission was personal. She had heard that Wise Young, School of Arts and Sciences professor and one of the world's foremost experts on spinal cord injury, was holding an open house at his lab in which he'd discuss his efforts to help patients recover and walk again.

Lightcap, whose 20-year-old daughter Renee was paralyzed in a car accident two years ago, had no

"I just decided to go," said Lightcap, a widow

who works for a credit card company. "I never thought I'd actually meet Dr. Young." Yet minutes after stepping off the elevator,

she found herself shaking hands with the noted neuroscientist. "Hi, I'm Charlene, and my daughter Renee is

quadriplegic," she said. "Hi Charlene," Young said in a reassuring voice.

"I'm glad you came." She joined about 40 others at the W. M. Keck Center for Collaborative Neuroscience, where Young serves as founding director, and holds open houses nearly every month that include a tour, a short film,

and a lecture that starts with the scientific basics of

spinal cord injury and moves to the latest treatments. The events are a unique form of outreach to and partnership with people living with a devastating injury. Spinal cord injury blocks communication between brain and body, leaving patients paralyzed and needing help with everyday tasks such as eating, dressing, and going to the bathroom.

At the open house, several people were in wheelchairs: a man hurt in a motorcycle accident, a teenager injured in a diving accident, and a young boy struck by a truck while riding his bike. Accompanying them were relatives and loved ones seeking support, hope, and a bit of good news. Many of them come to the open houses again and again for the latest updates. "People are hanging on the edge of their seats

for information about treatments," says Mary Ann Matakitis, a Morris County mom whose 12-year-old son Daniel was struck by a truck when he was five. "Until I discovered the Keck Center, I felt locked out from that information. I felt completely isolated." Young, who came to Rutgers in 1997, has an

affinity for the visitors that goes back to his days as a neurosurgeon at Bellevue Hospital. One day a high school wrestler was brought in with an injury that paralyzed him from the neck down. For Young, a former wrestler himself, it was a shattering moment



Professor Wise Young (standing), a noted neuroscientist, holds regular open houses in his lab, (visible beyond the back row) where he welcomes visitors and describes his efforts to treat spinal cord injury.

I was tired of telling people

'there's nothing we could do.'

that pushed him to leave hospital care and devote his life to finding a cure.

"I was tired of telling people 'there's nothing we can do," said Young, who holds the Richard H. Shindell Chair in Neuroscience in the Department of Cell Biology and Neuroscience.

During the open house, Young guides the audience through the evolution of his research, beginning with the basics of spinal cord injury and progressing to the clinical trials he has organized in China in which patients take lithium and receive

transplants of umbilical cord blood mononuclear cells. In the most recent trial, subjects received the treatment as well as intensive walking training. Within a year, 75 percent could walk with minimal assistance using a rolling device, he said.

For visitors, the Keck Center is an inspiring place, not only for its research, but its strong message of empowerment. The facility, including the actual working area of the lab, is accessible to people in wheelchairs. Cabinets and shelves are at reachable heights, and refrigerators are outfitted with

transparent doors on each side.

Giving tours of the lab is Jim Bennett, program coordinator, himself in a wheelchair from a fall two decades ago. He met Young at a fundraising dinner and was won over by a simple gesture Young made as they started a conversation.

"He actually got down on one knee so we could look each other in the eye," Bennett said. "I was auite moved."

Lightcap, who had come from Delaware for her first visit to Keck, left feeling she had gained new knowledge as well as a new network of support. She hopes to return with her daughter.

"These people really care," she said. "I love

## Preparing Students to Take on the Global Challenges of the 21st Century

New graduate program on United Nations provides both theory and hands-on skills

The stakes are too

on the sidelines.

he topic for discussion was the turbulent state of the Middle East. The Rutgers Student Center was packed. The panelists were ready with

But as a former Iraqi ambassador took his turn at the lectern, he momentarily shifted the focus away from issues such as oil, religion, and terrorism to issue an appeal to the audience of Rutgers

"We cannot have a better future without having better leaders, declared T. Hamid Al-Bayati who served as the Permanent United Nations from 2006 to 2013. "And you, the young people, can be those leaders." His words, spoken

during a panel discussion last November, were a call to action, and an apt introduction to a new graduate program in the School of Arts and Sciences.

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The M.A. Program in Political Science-Concentration in United Nations and Global Policy Studies, in which Al-Bayati serves as an adjunct professor, was launched last fall and is drawing an intriguing mix of students who seek to understand the issues roiling the world and work toward solutions.

"We're really unique for a liberal arts program," says Eric Davis, a professor in the Department of Political Science who designed the program and serves as its executive director. "On one hand, we're providing the instruction that will ground our students in the emerging trends in the global arena, and at the

same time, we're providing the data, research, and professional training that will allow them to use their knowledge to address critical global problems."

Davis, a Rutgers professor since the 1970s, says the program's mix of analytical knowledge and hands-on skills reflects a deep-seated desire by faculty to prepare students for engagement with 21st century issues such as terrorism, climate change, and economic inequality. He credited Al-Bayati, a longtime colleague,

with proposing the idea for the program "The stakes are too high for us to sit on the sidelines as academic spectators," he said. "Those of or policy-makers really have to high for us to just sit get in the mix and start coming up with creative solutions, or at least contributing to the larger dialogue on the myriad problems

> facing the world." That sense of mission appeals to students like Amanda Ackerman, who wants to study global economic inequality and work for agencies such as the United Nations Development Program or the World Food Program.

"This program gives me the intellectual depth I need to address and work through challenging global issues," she said. "We look very closely, for example, at why some countries in the developing world have been left behind, which policies have failed, and which ones might actually help them become competitive in the global economy."

Another student, Mazhar Syed, hopes to become a policy analyst with a think tank. "The program really challenges us to think critically about policies, to analyze them, and improve upon them," he said

Both Ackerman and Syed attended Rutgers as undergraduates and were members of the Arts and

Other students in the M.A. program bring very

different backgrounds to the table. Nadeje Bauzil, a native of Haiti, is a finance officer at the UN and has a daughter in college. She joined the Rutgers program with the goal of enhancing her UN experience and advancing into other capacities, such as

"When I saw the program, I noticed right away how the classes relate to what I'm doing now, and what I intend to do in the future," she said. "I thought, 'let me go for it, right now!""

political affairs or peacekeeping.

For more information on the Global and UN Studies program, visit the website polisci.rutgers.edu/un-ma-program



BOOKSHELF

Despite their disparate specialties and research interests, three Rutgers faculty members share a common academic hom in the Department of Latino and Hispanic Caribbean Studies in the School of Arts and Sciences.

Zaire Dinzey-Flores, a sociologist, takes readers beyond the gates of an urban housing project in Puerto Rico to show how architecture and design reinforce a pervasive social inequality.

Kathleen López, a historian, tells a transnational tale of Chinese migrants who came to Cuba as indentured laborers and left an enduring impact on Cuban life.

Tatiana Flores, an art historian, explores the provocative artistic and cultural movements of early 20th-century Mexico

They also share another distinction as authors: their most recent books have each won major awards.

Dinzey-Flores' Locked Locked In, Locked Out in a Puerto Rican City (UPenn Press, 2013) won the American Sociologica ZAIRE ZENIT DINZEN-FLORES

Association's 2014 Robert Park Award for best book in Community

López received the 2014 Gordon K. and Sybil Lewis Prize from the Caribbean Studies Association for Chinese Cubans: A Transnational History (University of North

and Urban Sociology.

Carolina Press, 2013)



Section, Humanities Book Prize.

Department Chair Nelson Maldonado-Torres said the three professors demonstrate the bold new ways in which Rutgers is advancing the field of Latino and Caribbean studies.

"We're proud to be the home of scholarship as cutting edge in its methodology and relevant in its content and scope as in these important works," Maldonado-Torres said

School of Arts and Sciences

The School of Arts and Sciences is the largest academic unit at Rutgers University—New Brunswick providing a comprehensive liberal arts education to more than 20,000 undergraduates. The School upholds the tradition of excellence, first founded nearly 250 years ago by Rutgers College, and continues the expansion of access to outstanding higher education created by Douglass, Livingston, and University Colleges. With more than 800 full-time faculty and more than 70 majors and minors in the humanities, biological, mathematical, and physical sciences, and social and behavioral sciences, the School of Arts and Sciences offers programs of unparalleled breadth and depth combining excellence in teaching with world-class research.

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