

Spring 2016

## DEMO 24

Columbia College Chicago

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### Recommended Citation

*DEMO 24* (Spring-Summer 2016), Alumni Magazine, College Archives & Special Collections, Columbia College Chicago.

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# DEMO

ISSUE 24 SPRING / SUMMER 2016

The Alumni Magazine of Columbia College Chicago

# 125

## YEARS OF COLUMBIA

1890-2015

Columbia  
COLLEGE CHICAGO



Albert "Bill" Williams (BA '73) has made a planned gift to Columbia through his estate.

## Have you considered including Columbia College Chicago in your estate plans?

Provide for future generations.  
Make a bequest to Columbia  
and support tomorrow's creative  
industry leaders.

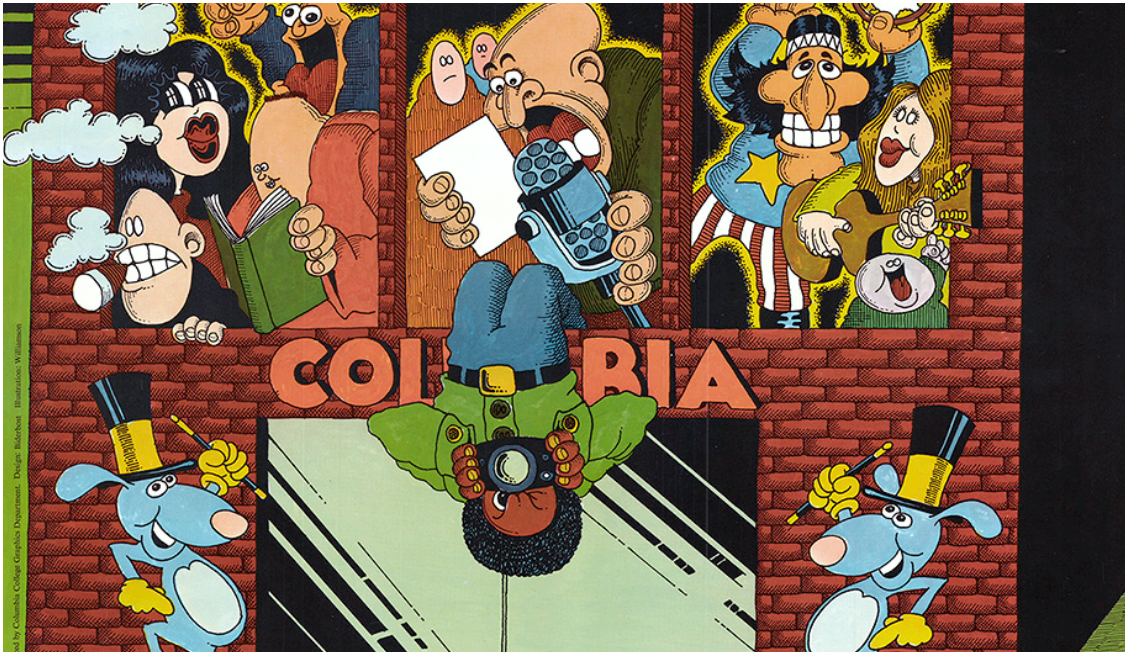
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**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

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When the Columbia School of Oratory opened in 1890, the founders couldn't have imagined the school's evolution from scrappy elocution college into a powerhouse arts and media institution.

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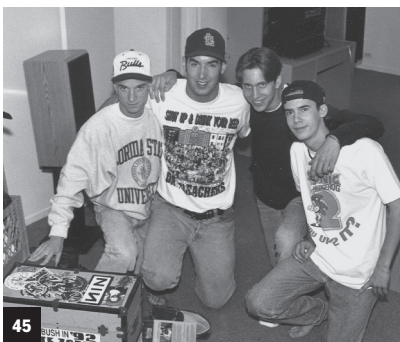
Columbia became a hub for veterans eager to enter the rapidly growing fields of radio and television, laying the foundation for today's media arts college.

### 1961-1992: RENEWAL AND EXPANSION 26

With flailing enrollment and few resources, Columbia could have folded. Instead, President Mike Alexandroff decided to break the mold of what an arts education could be.

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An ever-increasing focus on the student experience and a permanent home in the South Loop continued to transform Columbia. Today, the college thrives as a hub of creativity and talent.



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# CELEBRATE OUR 125<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Give to the three funds that are building Columbia College Chicago's future: **Annual Fund, Columbia Internship Challenge and Scholarship Columbia.**

**Columbia**  
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# DEMO

ISSUE 24 SPRING / SUMMER 2016

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**DEMO** (volume 11, number 1) is published by Columbia College Chicago. *DEMO* is mailed free of charge to alumni and friends of the college two times per year. The ideas and opinions expressed are those of the writers alone and do not necessarily reflect those of Columbia College Chicago. ©Columbia College Chicago 2016.

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## Questions for President Kwang-Wu Kim

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**DEMO:** You became president of Columbia in 2013. What has surprised you about the college?

**PRESIDENT KIM:** A wonderful surprise was coming to understand more of the history. In particular, I was struck by how much of what is in the [2015] Strategic Plan doesn't just point the college forward but connects it with its roots. That realization was very gratifying to me because I don't believe that responsible leadership is about trying to force an institution to break with its past. You want to let go of those things that no longer work, but there has to be some continuity. Otherwise you may lose the connection to mission.

**“It's important to sift through history. It's also important not to be bound by history.”**

The core of our mission statement, the language about preparing young people to become authors of the culture of their times—that still makes me gasp. Any time I repeat those words, especially to people in higher education, they intuitively grasp just how lofty and ambitious a mission that is. That's one of the shining features of our culture. It never loses its luster for me.

**DEMO:** Columbia marked its 125th anniversary in 2015. Why is history important to a place like Columbia?

**PRESIDENT KIM:** Some leaders truly believe that the role of a college president is to come in and radically change an institution. As a president once said to me, “Your job is to help your school imagine what it never imagined it could be.” I don't believe that, because when presidents ignore history they lose perspective on all of the smart decisions and all of the mistakes that have made their institution what it is. Those presidents often end up spinning their wheels because they either repeat the same mistakes or waste time rediscovering institutional wisdom that already existed.

It's important to sift through history. It's also important not to be bound by history. Respecting history, understanding it, analyzing what worked and why, and then continually asking ourselves whether a given idea still works in the current context—that kind of organic approach is the most valuable because it enables you to advance in a way that is authentic.

Columbia has never been bound by tradition. Indeed, it has a long history of innovation that we probably don't talk about enough. This gives the college the impetus to always move forward and focus on the next wave of innovative new approaches.

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And a full, vital college education

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# COLUMBIA COLLEGE · CHICAGO

# CELEBRATING 125 YEARS

This 1972 poster for Columbia depicts 540 N. Lake Shore Drive, the school's then-headquarters, as a hive of creative energy and self-expression. Lined up like the frames of a comic strip, the windows showcase students and faculty in artistic pursuit: filmmakers, orators, painters, musicians and more.

Above all this action, the headline reads: "A Today College."

As we put together this very special issue celebrating Columbia's 125th anniversary, we kept returning to this image. Sure, some parts are a little dated (no more smoking cigars in the classroom), but the same spirit of creativity and collaboration thrives in the South Loop today.

When Mary Blood and Ida Morey Riley opened the Columbia School of Oratory in 1890, they couldn't have imagined the school's evolution over the next century and a quarter. Since graduating the first class of nine students, Columbia has reinvented itself again and again.

We organized this issue chronologically; in each of the five sections, you'll learn about an important period in the college's evolution. Plus, a timeline runs through the issue, weaving Columbia's milestones through those of Chicago and the world.

A few examples: In the '30s, Columbia responded to the need for trained broadcasters by launching a Radio Department—staying on the cutting edge of new media in

**In putting together this history, one fact became abundantly clear: Over 125 years, a lot of people have loved this school.**

the process (page 16). In the '60s, Columbia transformed again under the progressive leadership of President Mirron "Mike" Alexandroff, whose open admissions policy attracted nontraditional students and more than quadrupled the school's struggling enrollment (page 26). In 2015, Columbia marked its 125th birthday as an institution dedicated to long-term career success for students in more than 100 undergraduate and graduate degree programs (page 37).

In putting together this history, one fact became abundantly clear: Over 125 years, a lot of people have loved this school. The founders might not recognize Columbia's current incarnation, transformed countless times by new philosophies, programs and technologies, but they would surely recognize the dedication, talent and pure hustle of the Columbia community. Columbia has always remained flexible, changing with the times to provide a wholly vital and relevant education. Through all of its iterations, Columbia has always been—and will always be—a college of today.



# 1890–1927

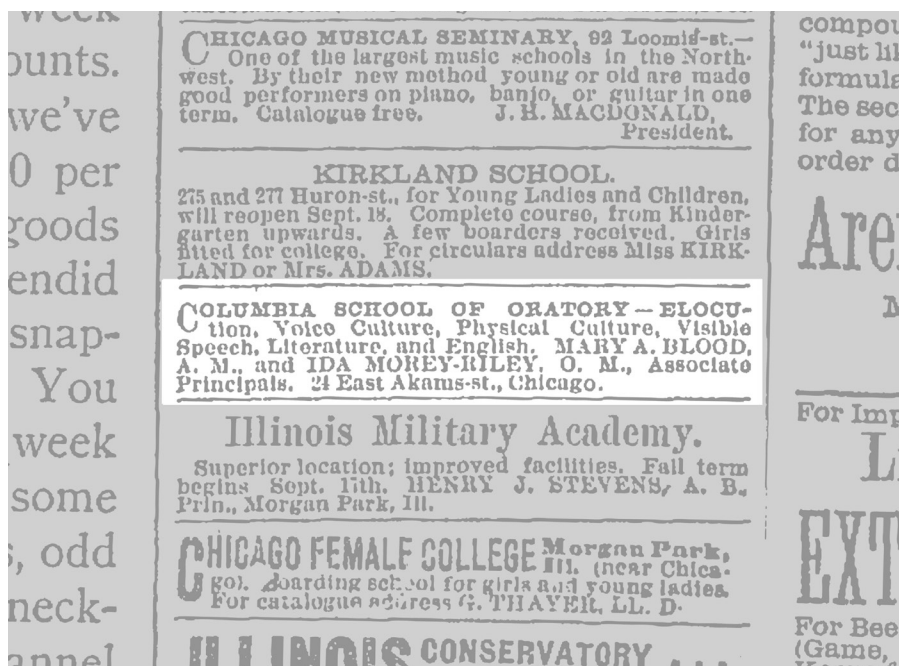
## FOUNDING AND BEGINNINGS

As Chicago prepared for the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, two orators and educators wisely chose the Windy City as the home of a new public speaking college.

**From the ashes of the 1871 Great Chicago Fire** rose skyscrapers, the elevated train and a vibrant culture shaped in the world's fifth largest city—setting the stage for the humble beginnings of what is now Columbia College Chicago. On August 25, 1890, a small and unassuming ad appeared in the pages of the *Chicago Tribune*. At just five lines, the description of the Columbia School of Oratory was brief and to the point: “Elocution, Voice Culture, Physical Culture, Visible Speech, Literature and English.” The principals were listed as Mary Blood and Ida Morey Riley.

Blood and Riley met at State Agricultural College in Ames, Iowa, where Blood was a visiting professor. Both women saw a great demand for public speaking education. In 1890, they founded the Columbia School of Oratory, taking the name from the upcoming World's Columbian Exposition, which would be the largest public attraction the world had ever seen. The gigantic fair's opening day wasn't until 1893, but with three years to go, Chicago was already preparing. After all, the six-month-long celebration of Christopher Columbus landing in America would bring global attention to the city.

Through this period of growth and celebration, Columbia took root. The Stevens Art Gallery Building at 24 E. Adams St. housed Columbia's first classrooms. There, in the heart of the bustling business district, Blood and Riley taught English, literature and public speaking. Columbia shared the building with other ventures including an art gallery, a store, and spaces for musicians,



### On August 25, 1890, a small and unassuming ad appeared in the pages of the *Chicago Tribune*.

hat makers, artists and fashion designers.

The school offered two-year diplomas, bachelor's degrees and master's degrees to budding orators and teachers of expression, reading and debate. Columbia handed out nine diplomas at the first graduation ceremony in 1892—eight of them to women.

By 1905, school officials had incorporated the college as a not-for-profit institution renamed the Columbia College of Express-

sion and created its first board of trustees. The school also moved to Steinway Hall, 64 E. Van Buren St., where it occupied the entire seventh floor. The 1905 course catalog described the building as “located in the very heart of the downtown educational center. ... The rooms set apart for this College are light, airy and commodious. ... They include a beautiful hall, recitation rooms, library, reception room, offices, etc., all arranged with studied care, and furnished with every modern convenience.”

In 1916, the college established a dedicated Department of Public Speaking with alumnus R.E. Pattison Kline as its dean. Columbia also offered a series of correspon-

dence public speaking courses with lessons and homework to be completed and mailed back for feedback from college instructors. Students could also obtain a certificate of training for the Chautauqua Circuit, a traveling education and entertainment series of the era (and a sort of precursor to today's TED conferences). Columbia students and alumni joined the circuit, as did faculty and college presidents, who spoke to crowds in towns across the United States. The movement, which President Theodore Roosevelt called "the most American thing in America," was popular until the birth of radio.

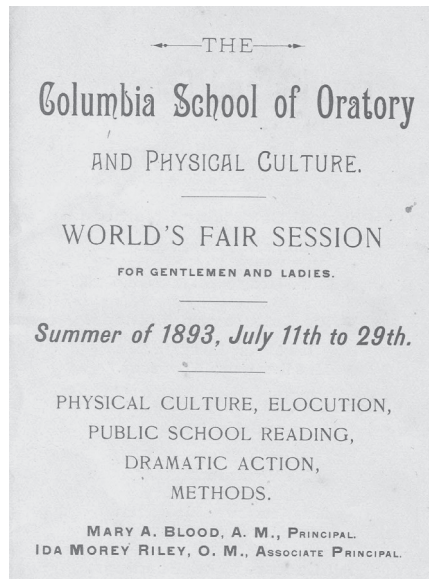
Although Columbia was secular and co-educational from the start, Blood's religious convictions influenced the curriculum. The college offered Bible-reading classes and strongly encouraged weekly church attendance to promote "sterling Christian character." The Evanston-based Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), of which Blood was an active member, endorsed Columbia as a central training school for temperance activists. Even though this ideological foundation has largely changed, the school's early motto, "Esse quam videri" ("To be rather than to seem") is as vital today as it was more than a century ago.



## Mary Blood

**PRESIDENT 1890-1927**

An 1897 newsletter from the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU) praised "gentle, forceful" Mary Blood's public speaking. When she read the story of Absalom at the organization's "Pleasant Sunday Afternoons" event, the audience paid attention: "Men who would have scorned a 'Bible story' from other lips hung



**The school offered two-year diplomas, bachelor's degrees and master's degrees to budding orators and teachers of expression, reading and debate.**

spellbound on her words. ... Indeed, it was to us all as if we had heard it for the first time."

Before founding Columbia School of Oratory in 1890, New Hampshire-born Blood taught on the faculty at Boston's Monroe College of Oratory (now Emerson College). During her tenure at Monroe, she served as a visiting professor at the State Agricultural College in Ames, Iowa, where she met fellow teacher Ida Morey Riley. Blood encouraged Riley to study at Emerson, and afterward the two women moved to Chicago to open the school that would grow into today's Columbia College Chicago.

While serving as Columbia's co-president, Blood taught the Emerson System of Physical Culture at Columbia and was even a member of a physical culture exhibit at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition. She taught people to use their entire bodies in public speaking to "let their light shine through." To Blood and her students, the body was an instrument of God. →

## TRAVEL IN TIME

As you page through the issue, trace the history of Columbia, Chicago and the world with this handy timeline.

**1890**

**Mary Blood and Ida Morey Riley establish the Columbia School of Oratory in downtown Chicago, taking the college's name from the city's upcoming World's Columbian Exposition.**

**1892**

New York City's Ellis Island is established as an immigrant receiving station.



**1893**

**Columbia provides coursework designed specifically for visitors to the World's Columbian Exposition, allowing them to take classes in the morning and visit the fair in the afternoon.**

The World's Columbian Exposition, held in Jackson Park, runs from May 1 to October 31, welcoming more than 27 million visitors from across the globe and bringing international attention to the Windy City.

The Art Institute of Chicago moves into 111 S. Michigan Ave., a building constructed for the World's Columbian Exposition.

**1895**

**Columbia moves to 64 E. Van Buren St., occupying the entire seventh floor.**

Physical culture was also promoted by the WCTU, of which Blood was a longtime member. Though the WCTU's main focus was evangelical Christianity and support of Prohibition, the organization also campaigned for women's suffrage and inspired a generation of women to get involved in political life. The unmarried Blood taught elocution at a time when women were learning to use their voices, and Columbia opened at a significant time in women's history. In 1889, social activist Jane Addams opened Chicago's Hull House, offering a hub for social change. Women suffragists continued fighting for the right to vote—though the 19th Amendment wouldn't be

passed until 1919. In this period of political change, Blood encouraged her students to enter the public sphere as elocutionists, performers and teachers.

In 1927, at age 76, Blood died in the 120 E. Pearson St. building at the college she founded. Many alumni showed up for her funeral, which was held on campus. She is buried in her hometown of Hollis, New Hampshire, where her epitaph reads: "She was one of the founders and for 37 years the president of the Columbia College of Expression in Chicago, Illinois."

**The unmarried Blood taught elocution at a time when women were learning to use their voices, and Columbia opened at a significant time in women's history.**



**Ida Morey Riley**  
**PRESIDENT 1890–1901**

Little is known about Columbia co-founder Ida Morey Riley, who was born in 1856 and raised in Iowa. After the death of her husband when she was just 23 years old, she focused on her teaching career, becoming principal of the same public school she attended in her youth.

While teaching at the State Agricultural College in Ames, Iowa, in 1887, she met Mary Blood, a visiting professor from the Emerson School of Oratory (now Emerson College). At Blood's urging, Riley moved to Boston and studied at the Emerson School. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in Oration in 1889 and a master's degree in Oration in 1890, she joined Blood in Chicago, where the two women established the Columbia School of Oratory in 1890.

In addition to serving as Columbia's co-president, Riley also served as secretary of the National Association of Elocutionists and was a member of its board of directors

**"... the helpful interest which she exercised in behalf of each and all, will be held in sacred and grateful remembrance."**

until her death after a brief illness in 1901. An obituary in *Werner's Magazine* remarked that "her thirst for knowledge was early a marked characteristic," and that she was beloved by her students, who drew up a resolution that stated: "... the high esteem in which we held her [makes] it fitting that we record our love and appreciation ... her kindness of manner and nobleness of spirit, her patience and fidelity ... the helpful interest which she exercised in behalf of each and all, will be held in sacred and grateful remembrance."

NAME OF COLLEGE

**Columbia  
College of  
Expression**

1915

COLUMBIA AT AGE

**25**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

**150**  
APPROXIMATE

NUMBER OF FACULTY

**21**  
FACULTY

**13**  
LECTURERS

TUITION AND FEES

\$ **183**



Established in 1905, this seal contains the school's name, motto and a logo formed by the letters "CCE."

BOOKS

\$ **7-10**

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Physical Training  
Literary Interpretation  
Drama  
Public Speaking  
English  
Psychology  
Vocal Expression  
Art History

SCHOOL MOTTO

**"Learn to do  
by doing."**  
—ARISTOTLE

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES

**592**

**"It is a fact that there are not enough strong college men who are well prepared to teach Oral English and Practical Public Speaking, to coach Plays and prepare Programs, to fill the demands of high schools, colleges and universities, and this demand is increasing."**

—1915-1916 Columbia College of Expression Catalog

# HOME SWEET HOME

Where Columbia lived  
from 1890 to 1927

## 1 STEVENS ART GALLERY BUILDING 24 E. ADAMS ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 1890–1895

**HOUSED:** Entire campus

**TRIVIA:** This was Columbia School of Oratory's first home, which also offered space to an art gallery; a store; and offices for artists, musicians and fashion designers.



## 2 STEINWAY HALL 64 E. VAN BUREN ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 1895–1916

**HOUSED:** Entire campus

**TRIVIA:** According to the 1905–1906 college catalog, founders Mary Blood and Ida Morey Riley helped design the building's seventh floor, which Columbia occupied. The building was razed in 1970 to make way for the CNA Center.



## 3 3358 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1916–1925

**HOUSED:** Entire campus, dormitory for women

**TRIVIA:** The mansion was built for meatpacking mogul Charles Libby and rented to Columbia by his widow.



A. **Dining Room** Only female students lived in the mansion; male students rented rooms in nearby boarding houses.

B. **Reception Hall** Gentleman callers could visit the first floor on Saturday evenings.

C. **Residential Room** Residents practiced "the art of making a delightful home."

## 4 120 E. PEARSON ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 1925–1927

**HOUSED:** Entire campus

**TRIVIA:** When Mary Blood died in 1927, her funeral services were held at this location. The building was demolished, and the location is now a Topshop clothing store.





The historic World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 spread over 630 acres on Chicago's South Side.

## SECOND TO NONE

### The World's Columbian Exposition of 1893 became a growing city's claim to fame

In the years leading up to the World's Columbian Exposition of 1893, Chicago buzzed with preparations and excitement. The fair celebrated the 400th anniversary of Christopher Columbus landing in the New World. When Mary Blood and Ida Morey Riley arrived in Chicago, they were so inspired by the upcoming historic fair that they named their new educational venture the Columbia School of Oratory.

The World's Columbian Exposition was the largest public attraction the world had ever seen. Staggering in size and scope, the fair spanned 630 acres on Chicago's South Side in Jackson Park and attracted more than 27 million visitors over six months. Renowned landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted created the layout, and the main fairgrounds, dubbed the "White City," featured more than 200 buildings designed by the leading architects of the day, overseen by architect Daniel Burnham. Forty-six countries and nearly every state in the nation contributed exhibits. The fair also highlighted new inventions and manufactured goods, introducing the world to the Ferris Wheel, Cracker Jack and Pabst Blue Ribbon beer.

After outbidding New York to host the fair, Chicago—which was a serious economic and industrial power in the midst of a population boom—could shine on a world stage. At the time, East Coast elites thought of Chicago as a crime-ridden backwater; the fair's organizers were determined to overcome this reputation with a beautiful, edifying exposition and cement the city's place as a cultural capital. (The New York press dubbed Chicago the "Windy City" due to the fair promoters' relentless boosterism.)

As the fairgrounds rose on the lakefront, Blood and Riley knew the event would bring massive crowds to the city and provide a platform for trained public speakers. Blood even served on a committee for an exhibition of physical culture at the fair that espoused fitness of the body and mind (also key concepts in the school's curriculum). Coursework during the summer of 1893 was designed with the fairgoer in mind, and tuition included a personal tour of the city for visiting students. While all Columbia students had the opportunity to attend the fair, one 1893 graduate had special involvement: Grace Griswold Hall recited passages from select works at the fair's Woman's Building on October 10.

Image courtesy of the Chicago History Museum. | CHI-61066.

1900

Chicago author L. Frank Baum publishes *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

The flow of the Chicago River is reversed, drastically improving the quality of the city's water supply.

1903

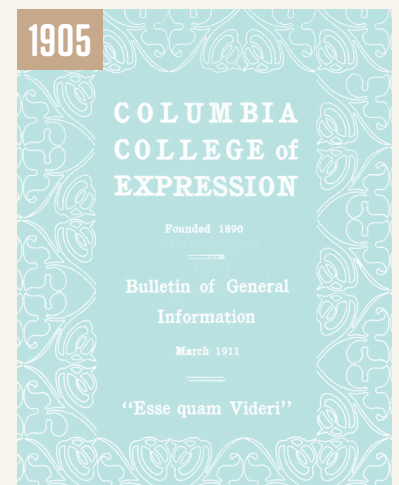


Wilbur Wright pilots the first airplane.

1904

The first U.S. subway opens in New York City.

1905



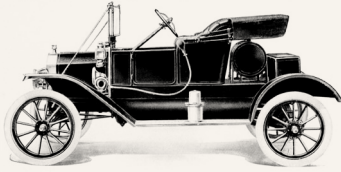
**The Columbia School of Oratory becomes Columbia College of Expression, a not-for-profit institution.**

The first issue of the *Chicago Defender* is printed.

1906

Author Upton Sinclair publishes his novel *The Jungle*, based on the Chicago stockyards.

1908



Ford introduces the Model T automobile.

The Chicago Cubs win the World Series for the last time (so far).

1909

**Columbia gets its first telephone.**

Architect and urban planner Daniel Burnham, along with Edward Bennett, presents his Plan of Chicago to the city.

1912



The Titanic sinks in the Atlantic Ocean.

1914

Wrigley Field, originally known as Weeghman Park, opens in Chicago.

Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Carl Sandburg publishes the poem “Chicago,” coining the nickname “City of Big Shoulders.”

World War I begins.

1916

**The college moves from 64 E. Van Buren St. to 3358 S. Michigan Ave. A second**

**building holds the Columbia Normal School of Physical Education.**

Navy Pier, originally named Municipal Pier, opens to the public.

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

1890s

### Oral Bocock

A 1935 issue of the *Chicago Daily Tribune* featured the appointment of Oral Bocock (married name: Mrs. Edward J. Lehman) as the head of the Illinois Federation of Women’s Clubs. While noting her dedication to “school budgets and club conferences,” the *Trib* also predicted she’d “never lose her girlish thrill in acquiring a new dress or an autumn hat.” The 1895 graduate of Columbia spent a decade as a teacher, dramatic coach and public reader.



1910s

### Jean Williams

The Chautauqua Circuit, a popular adult education movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, dispersed entertainment and culture throughout American communities with assemblies of speakers, teachers, musicians and preachers, often gathered under a tent. Jean Williams, a 1915 alumna from Alabama and part of the Columbian Entertainers, hit the road as a Chautauqua reading performer.

*The Anniston (Alabama) Evening Star* praised her stage presence and clarity of voice, declaring, “Her poise was excellent, her articulation and expression perfect.”

1900s

### Emanuel D. Schonberger

Though Emanuel D. Schonberger would eventually focus on theatre, he penned Columbia’s alumni song as a student in 1904. “Here’s a health to our dear alma mater, here’s a pledge of devotion and truth / May she glow in our hearts bright and brighter as our school days recede with our youth,” begins the song that still appears in the Columbia student handbook. The song is set to the tune of “Marcha Real,” the national anthem of Spain.

Schonberger moved west after his 1909 graduation, becoming a professor of public speaking and the director of the Dakota Playmakers at the University of North Dakota. He also wrote a book that helped others take the stage. *Fundamentals of Play Production* hit the streets in 1912 and is still available for purchase.

*Hold forever,  
Columbia, thy station /  
Fling thy true colors free  
to the wind*

—Columbia’s Alumni Song



1920s

### Dorothy Peterson

Dorothy Peterson’s breakthrough role in the movie *Mothers Cry*, a 1930 talkie, called for the 29-year-old stage actress to age nearly 30 years throughout the film. The 1920 Columbia graduate nailed the character and was subsequently typecast into maternal roles that marked a 34-year acting career.

Peterson appeared in 83 films in all, ultimately mothering the most famous of all child stars, Shirley Temple, in 1947's *That Hagen Girl*.



1920s

## Mildred Carlson Ahlgren

In the 1950s, Mildred Carlson Ahlgren took the communications skills she learned as a 1922 graduate of Columbia College of Expression to Washington D.C. and around the globe.

An outspoken woman from Indiana Harbor, Ahlgren became president of the General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) in 1952, heading an organization of more than 5 million women and advocating for women's rights and global goodwill

in Washington D.C. After her presidency ended, she remained with GFWC as a public relations director and consultant and led groups of women in goodwill tours around the world, including in South America and Russia.

Ahlgren earned many distinctions during her career. President Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed her a member of the White House Conference on Education, and she was the first American woman to earn the Royal Order of the Vasa from the king of Sweden for contributions to cultural life.

**In the 1950s, Mildred Carlson Ahlgren took the communications skills she learned at Columbia College of Expression to Washington D.C. and around the globe.**

## THEN AND NOW

### Hands On, Minds On

**THEN** Mottos such as "Hands on, minds on" and "Theory never made an artist" informed Columbia's immersive teaching style from its founding. An early logo from 1905 proudly states "Learn to Do by Doing" above the college's name.

**NOW** From the very start, students are actively involved in their education: First-day film students are handed a camera and told to go shoot, and journalism students hit the street immediately to start reporting. Columbia's workshop method and faculty of working professionals are cornerstones of the college, building its reputation as a place to learn practical skills and build a body of work from day one.

1917

The Chicago White Sox win the World Series.

1918

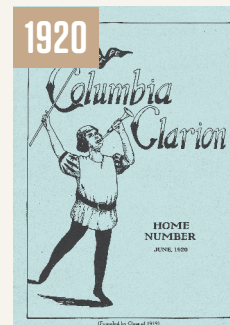
**Columbia teaches oratory skills to some students via mail. The correspondence booklets feature excerpts from choice writers, photographs of proper and improper speaking poses, and exercises for students to complete and mail to the school for feedback.**

World War I ends.

1919

The 19th Amendment gives women the right to vote.

1920



**Students publish the *Columbia Clarion* newspaper four times a year.**

Government outlaws the sale and manufacture of alcoholic beverages.

1923

*Time* magazine publishes its first issue.

1924

Soldier Field, originally named Grant Park Municipal Stadium, opens in Chicago.

1925

**Columbia moves from 3358 S. Michigan Ave. to 120 E. Pearson St., a safer location on the Near North Side.**



# 1927–1944

## COLUMBIA IN TRANSITION

Columbia College of Expression went through a period of great change following the deaths of its founders. The media landscape of the time was changing as well. The birth of radio created a completely new way to communicate, and Columbia had to respond.



**Columbia College of Expression** had been operating for nearly 40 years when co-founder Mary Blood died at age 76, two months before classes began in the fall of 1927. Guided by the board of trustees, Columbia joined forces with the nearby Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College (PFTC) in 1927 and moved into shared facilities downtown.

PFTC was Columbia's sister institution until 1944; the two schools operated as separate entities that shared faculty, staff and resources. Together they occupied space in the Arcade Building at 618 S. Michigan

Ave., which included administrative offices, classrooms, a library, an assembly hall, a dance studio, a kitchen with a dining area and a small theater. Reverend Dr. George L. Scherger, who had already spent a decade at Columbia as a faculty member and dean, served as president of both colleges from 1927 until 1929, when he returned to his work as a pastor.

Columbia's next president, Bertha Hofer Hegner, was the founder of PFTC and an influential figure in Chicago education, establishing one of the city's first kindergartens at the Chicago Commons Social Settlement,

**In the '30s and '40s, radio changed everything, prompting Columbia to respond to the need for trained broadcasters.**

a charity organization similar to the famous Hull House. Her son, Herman Hofer Hegner, became Columbia's president in 1936.

Just a decade earlier, American culture was dominated by the spoken word, delivered live—on the lecture circuit, the pulpit and the stage. But in the years that followed, radio changed everything, prompting Columbia to respond to the need for trained broadcasters. In 1934, Herman Hofer Hegner recruited radio producer Norman Alexandroff to head a new Radio Department. Together, Alexandroff and Hegner put Columbia on the academic map with a study demonstrating that children were equally absorbed by educational radio programming and action/adventure programming if they were both presented with the same dramatic gusto. By 1939, a year often called the greatest in Hollywood history, the college added courses in 16 mm film production.

This was the beginning of Columbia's transition to a media college, and would prove to be critical to the school's success in years to come.



## George L. Scherger

**PRESIDENT 1927–1929**

Born in Indiana in 1874 to recent immigrants from Germany, George L. Scherger was a minister, musician, writer, historian and professor known for his public speaking skills.

Scherger wrote a number of books on history and culture and was popular on the Chautauqua Circuit, drawing crowds all over the Midwest. Popular talks included “Mummies and How to Revive Them” and a series titled *The Mission of Culture*. He began teaching at Columbia in 1915; by the early '20s, he was dean of the departments of Public Speaking, Public Debate & Lectures, and History. He was appointed president after the death of Mary Blood in 1927 and served until 1929, when he became assistant pastor of St. Paul’s Evangelical Lutheran Church.



## Bertha Hofer Hegner

**PRESIDENT 1929–1936**

Bertha Hofer was born in 1862 in Claremont, Iowa. After graduating from the National Kindergarten and Elementary College in Chicago in 1890, she studied early childhood pedagogy at Pestalozzi-Fröbel Haus

in Berlin, Germany, founded by the man who created the concept of kindergarten. She later attended the University of Chicago and Columbia University in New York, then married the Reverend Herman Frederick Hegner in 1896.

In the 1890s, Hofer Hegner established one of Chicago’s first kindergartens at the Chicago Commons Social Settlement and founded the Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College of Chicago, which partnered with Columbia in fall 1927. She also wrote a monograph, “Home Activities in the Kindergarten,” for the U.S. Bureau of Education, which detailed integrating household chores like cooking and spinning wool into the classroom. Though she retired from active teaching in 1929 due to illness, Hofer Hegner served as president of both institutions until 1936. She died in 1937.



## Herman Hofer Hegner

**PRESIDENT 1936–1944**

Herman Hofer Hegner was born in 1902 in Chicago to Bertha Hofer Hegner, president of Columbia College of Expression from 1929 to 1936, and the Reverend Herman Frederick Hegner.

By 1926, Hofer Hegner was an instructor of English and philosophy, as well as the business manager, at Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College (PFTC), the school his mother founded. He was appointed secretary-treasurer in 1929, a position he held for eight years. In 1930, he took on the role of acting president of both PFTC and Columbia when his mother became ill.

In 1936, Hofer Hegner was officially named president, and though he departed from Columbia when it became independent of PFTC in 1944, he spent the next 29 years expanding his mother’s educational philosophies.

**1927**

**Columbia College of Expression becomes a sister institution with the**

**Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College. The schools occupy the seventh floor of 618 S. Michigan Ave.**

**George L. Scherger becomes Columbia’s president.**

The first feature-length talkie, *The Jazz Singer*, premieres in New York City.

**1928**

**Columbia unveils a new college seal with the motto “Esse quam videri,”**

**which translates to “To be rather than to seem.”**

Penicillin is discovered.

**1929**

**Already president of sister institution Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College,**

**Bertha Hofer Hegner becomes president of Columbia College of Expression, with both schools operating as separate institutions.**

The stock market crashes, leading to the Great Depression.

Al Capone’s gang murders rival gang members in the Saint Valentine’s Day Massacre in Chicago.

The first Chicago-style hot dog is served by Fluky’s on Maxwell Street.

**1930**



The Adler Planetarium and Shedd Aquarium (above) open in Chicago.

**1933**

The Museum of Science and Industry opens.



1930s

## Adolph Kiefer

In the late 1930s, Adolph Kiefer (BA '40) was truly a big man on campus, having just won a gold medal for his backstroke at the 1936 Olympics. More fame was in store:

Paramount Studios gave him a contract to play Tarzan in an upcoming movie and sent him to Columbia to learn acting.

But World War II altered a lot of plans, including Kiefer's. Instead of going to Hollywood and two more Olympics (the 1940 and 1944 games were canceled because of the war), Kiefer moved to a sea base in Virginia. Seeing that U.S. soldiers were dying in German submarine attacks because they couldn't swim to shore, Kiefer orchestrated a life-saving program that taught thousands of U.S. Navy men how to swim. Later, he opened Kiefer Swim Products and revolutionized swimming a different way—by in-

venting the nylon suit to replace traditional cotton and wool swimsuits. Now 98, Kiefer is Columbia's oldest living alumnus and a testament to the many ways Columbia students go on to innovate and build their own careers.

**Kiefer orchestrated a life-saving program that taught thousands of U.S. Navy men how to swim.**

Photo courtesy of Kiefer Swim Products.



## SETTING THE STAGE

Columbia's theatre productions in the 1920s



In the 1920s, many student productions took place in the Arcade Building at 618 S. Michigan Ave. The college's Little Theatre staged plays, dances, puppet shows and more. The above image shows a tableau, or living picture, put on by students in 1928. The pictures to the left show students posing in scenes from the children's play *Ten Minutes by the Clock*, which tells the story of a queen trying to escape her kingdom's strict traditions.

# HOME SWEET HOME

## Where Columbia lived starting in 1927



### 1 THE ARCADE BUILDING 616 / 618 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1927-1936; 2006-present  
**HOUSED:** Entire campus from 1927-1936; Now, classrooms, the Arcade gallery space, Stage Two, Learning Studio, Multicultural Affairs, Center for Black Music Research and other offices  
**TRIVIA:** Designed in 1913, this 10-story building originally housed specialty shops, photography studios, publishing offices and the American Red Cross.



### 2 FINE ARTS BUILDING 410 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1937-1953  
**HOUSED:** Offices, classrooms  
**TRIVIA:** Constructed in 1885, this building once housed the Studebaker wagon and automobile company. Columbia opened the Veterans Administration Guidance and Research Center here in 1945.

## THEN AND NOW

### Community Engagement

**THEN** In the 1930s, students and faculty engaged in community programs, including one that assisted with the rehabilitation of newly released prisoners and another that launched young actors into their careers.

**NOW** Columbia continues to engage the community in myriad ways. Sometimes, individual classes take on a charitable cause. One fashion business course taught by Dana Connell helped Bridge to Success, a nonprofit that provides donated professional clothing to people exiting rehabilitation. Students developed a new business model for the organization when the recession of 2007 threatened the program's sustainability.

1933

Franklin Delano Roosevelt is elected president of the United States.

Prohibition ends with the passage of the 21st Amendment.

1934

Columbia establishes the Radio Department under the direction of Norman Alexandroff. Local radio stations host Columbia's students for on-the-air practice.

Chicago gangster John Dillinger is shot and killed by FBI Agents.

The Chicago Blackhawks win the Stanley Cup.

1936

Herman Hofer Hegner becomes president of both Columbia and Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College.

1938

Columbia changes its name to Columbia College of Drama and Radio to reflect the growing popularity of radio.

Radio program *War of the Worlds* causes mass panic by citizens who believe the fictional story of alien invaders is a real news broadcast.

1939

Columbia adds a film curriculum to its courses of study.

World War II begins.

1941

The first commercial U.S. television broadcast is transmitted.

NAME OF COLLEGE

**Columbia  
College of  
Drama and  
Radio**

1940

COLUMBIA AT AGE

**50**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

**450**  
APPROXIMATE

NUMBER OF FACULTY AND STAFF

**40**

TUITION AND FEES

\$ **350**

SCHOOL MOTTO

**“To be rather  
than to seem.”**



This logo combines theatrical masks with a radio microphone to reflect the college's new direction.

BOOKS

\$ **35**

PROGRAMS OFFERED

- Stage
- Radio
- Motion Pictures
- Speech and Interpretation
- Education
- Psychology
- Social Science/History/Anthropology
- English
- Art

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES

**923**

**“Columbia College of Drama and Radio stresses professional training because modern stage, radio and motion pictures demand actors, writers, directors, producers and announcers who have the training necessary to meet the exacting requirements of this profession. Producers are constantly searching for artists who have mastered the techniques of the profession and who can do creative work intelligently. Because of the scarcity of such artists, the demand is for those who do meet the requirements.”**

—1940–1941 Course Catalog

# 1944–1960 POSTWAR BOOM

In the mid-20th century, Columbia became a hub for veterans eager to enter the rapidly growing fields of radio and television. Columbia adapted to the demand for broadcast training, laying the foundation for today's media arts college.



**The school's emphasis on broadcast media made it a popular option among young vets, who were buoyed by postwar optimism and captivated by new technology.**

**In 1944, Columbia formally separated** from Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College. Radio Department Chair Norman Alexandroff took over as president, and the school reinvented itself yet again. Alexandroff, a Jewish immigrant from Russia who came to the U.S. with \$5 in his pocket, knew about reinvention. Under his tenure, Columbia expanded both its student body and its programs, bolstered by a postwar education boom from the GI Bill.

The GI Bill, signed into law in 1944, provided education, loans and access to psychiatric services to millions who served in World War II. It was legislation that shaped America, creating a robust middle class. It also shaped Columbia, adding an influx of male students to the traditionally female college and creating a demand for radio and

television programs.

At the peak of the GI Bill era, veterans represented 49 percent of college admissions nationwide, and Alexandroff lobbied for a chance to make Columbia a destination for returning servicemen. In 1945, the U.S. government designated Columbia as one of a small number of Veterans Administration Guidance and Research Centers nationwide. The college counseled and provided job training to more than 20,000 vets (not all of whom were Columbia students) over the next five years.

The college added television classes to the curriculum in 1945—just a few years after the first NBC telecasts aired. The school's emphasis on broadcast media made it a popular option among young vets, who were buoyed by postwar optimism and

captivated by new technology. Increased enrollment also led to the creation of the Journalism Department and the Advertising and Business Department. (These subjects had previously been taught in radio and TV courses.)

In 1947, Columbia established a new method of teaching. The workshop method, still a fixture in Columbia classrooms today, teaches through the hands-on, collaborative efforts of a group of students working on a common project, such as a TV show or film that employs students as writers, camera operators, actors and more. This teaching method solidified Columbia's integration of theory and practice and set the tone for the burgeoning arts and media college that would emerge in the 1960s.

**1944****Norman Alexandroff becomes Columbia's president.**

*The Glass Menagerie*, written by Tennessee Williams, is produced in Chicago before hitting Broadway.

**1945****World War II ends. Columbia operates one of a few Veterans**

**Administration Guidance and Research Centers in the U.S., providing free counseling and educational services to thousands of returning World War II vets.**

**1947****Columbia creates the Department of Journalism and the Department of**

**Advertising and Business. Previously, these subjects were taught in radio and television courses.**

**1948****Superdawg Drive-in opens on Milwaukee Avenue,**

**introducing the two 12-foot-high hotdog mascots Maurie and Flaurie on its roof.**

The first issue of the *Chicago Sun-Times* is published.

**1949****The first daytime TV soap opera, *These Are My Children*, is broadcast.**

## Norman Alexandroff

**PRESIDENT 1944–1960**

Nime Kulczinsky was born in 1887 in Kishinev, Russia. He never attended formal school but received tutoring from his older brother. Russia was not safe for progressive-thinking Jewish men at the time, so Kulczinsky left for America in 1902. He later changed his name to Norman Alexandroff.

Alexandroff thrived in his new country. He became fluent in English, an accomplished writer and an in-demand speaker on the national lecture circuit. After obtaining naturalized citizenship in 1912, he worked to promote literacy among immigrants. A few years later, together with William Dean Howells, David Starr Jordan and Jack London, he founded the Literary Association of America and served as its president until 1922. That same year, he married Cherrie Phillips in New York and moved to Chicago.

In the late '20s, Alexandroff worked in real estate, but when the market crashed in 1929, he tried something completely new: radio. In 1931, he launched a popular radio program, *Pages from Life*, recounting the adventures of the fictional Mr. Rubin and his Hurry-up Substitute Company, and starred in every role. He later developed the hit show *Cavalcade of America*, which recounted American history through dramatized accounts of individual heroism. His work caught the ear of Herman Hofer Hegner, who was acting president of Columbia and its sister institution, Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College (PFTC). In 1934, Hegner recruited Alexandroff to build a new Radio Department, which would house Columbia's most popular program for decades to come. Alexandroff became vice president of both colleges in 1937.

In 1944, Columbia split from PFTC, and Alexandroff became Columbia's president. Alexandroff's efforts to attract veterans—which included co-authoring a study contesting the common claim that all returning soldiers suffered mental trauma that made them unfit for work or higher education—paid off with the establishment of a Veterans Administration Guidance and Research Center at Columbia and skyrocketing enrollment driven by veterans.

**Alexandroff thrived in his new country. He became fluent in English, an accomplished writer and an in-demand speaker on the national lecture circuit.**

While Columbia has always maintained strong connections to the local community, its history includes some geographically far-flung projects. During the 1950s, Alexandroff relocated to California. He founded another branch of the school, Columbia College Los Angeles, to focus on film and television training and instituted a program for Columbia professors to train Mexican broadcast teachers at Columbia College Panamericano in Mexico City.

Alexandroff served as president of Columbia until his death in 1960 at age 72. His son, Mike Alexandroff, would take over the presidency and steer Columbia in a new direction.

1940s

## Claudio Lazaro

Columbia has long attracted students from all walks of life, but even here, the arrival of an acclaimed Mexican matador was a surprise.

In 1942, 23-year-old bullfighter Claudio Lazaro came to Columbia to study drama, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported. He had previously fought bulls all over Mexico, including in Monterrey, Tampico and Guadalajara. Lazaro told the *Tribune* that bullfighting “combines the beauty of the ballet with the rough and real path of life.” But despite his love of the sport, the death of a friend led him to America.

Years before, Lazaro had made an oath to a fellow matador that if either died in battle, the other would leave the ring forever.

At Columbia, Lazaro studied drama, served as a correspondent for the Mexican bullfighting newspaper *El Redondel* and appeared on Chicago’s Spanish-language radio station WHIP each Saturday.

**Lazaro told the *Tribune* that bullfighting “combines the beauty of the ballet with the rough and real path of life.”**

## More Notable Alumni

### Peter Berkos (BA '51)

Sound effects editor; 1976 Academy Award winner for *The Hindenburg*

### Shecky Greene (BA '47)

Comedian, Las Vegas headliner, guest host for Johnny Carson and Merv Griffin

### Howard Mendelsohn (BA '49)

Radio announcer; public relations executive; founder of Columbia’s Howard Mendelsohn Scholar of Merit Award to support public relations students



1950s

## Len Ellis

Len Ellis (BA '52)—known on the radio as “Uncle Len”—is the longest-running country broadcaster in the Chicago market.

While studying in Columbia’s radio program, he worked part time at WJOB, a country station in Hammond, Indiana. He stayed in Hammond after graduating, earning a reputation as a leading country-and-western expert.

Ellis helped form the Country Music Association in 1958, which now has more than 7,000 members and throws an annual festival featuring country music’s biggest names. In 1964, he and his wife started the station WAKE-AM in Valparaiso, Indiana. “If you have your own ideas,” he said, “you need to go on your own.”

His company, Radio One Communications, owned four country radio stations, including WLJE, the highest-rated and longest-running Chicago country station, until 2014.

### Peter Schlesinger (BA '59)

Producer and former governor of the Television Academy of Arts and Sciences; 18-time Emmy Award winner

### Ron Weiner (BA '52)

Three-time Emmy Award-winning director of *The Phil Donahue Show*

1950

Historic Chicago blues label Chess Records opens for business.

Sen. Joseph McCarthy begins a crusade against alleged communists in government and public life.

1951



**Editors of the student-run newspaper *Columbia Dial* publish news about students, alumni, sports and social events.**

**Columbia advertises its television, journalism, advertising and drama programs, focusing on the college’s “learning by doing” approach and professional equipment.**

*I Love Lucy* captivates America. Lucille Ball becomes the first female TV millionaire.

1953

**The college relocates to 207 S. Wabash Ave., occupying the second**

**through seventh floors. The fifth floor holds a television studio.**

**President Norman Alexandroff opens a second branch of the college in Hollywood called *Columbia College Los Angeles*.**

Color TV makes its commercial debut.

1955

**Mexican broadcasters ask Columbia to organize and direct a training program**

**in Mexico City to expand the country’s television operation. Named *Columbia College Panamericano*, its teachers are exclusively Mexican.**



1955

Richard J. Daley becomes mayor of Chicago.

The first McDonald's franchise restaurant opens in Des Plaines, Illinois.

WTTW (Chicago Public Media) airs its first broadcast.

Vietnam War begins.

1959

Columbia College Los Angeles separates from Columbia College Chicago.

The Second City comedy club opens in Chicago at 1842 N. Wells St., taking its name from a snarky comment in the *New Yorker*.

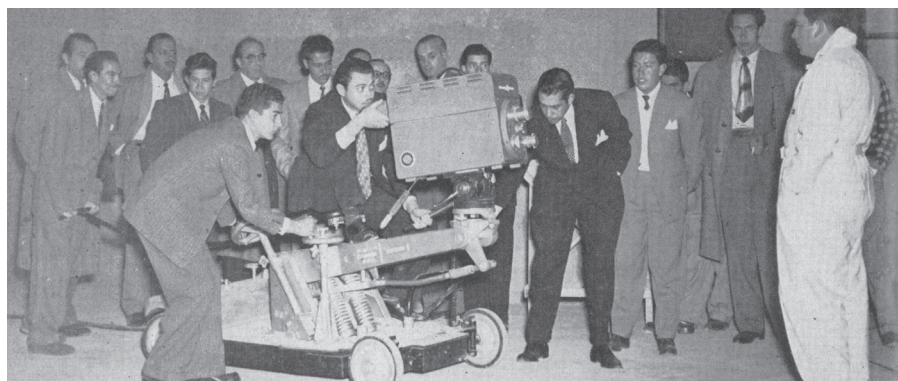
The Barbie doll is introduced.

1960



Columbia offers in-demand media programs, including courses in communication arts and specialized subjects such as speech, education, television, radio, motion pictures, the stage, advertising and writing.

The first of Hugh Hefner's Playboy Clubs, featuring Playboy bunnies, opens in Chicago.



Cameramen train at Columbia College Panamericano in 1955.

## BEYOND CHICAGO

### Columbia opens new entities away from home

In a move historians came to characterize as visionary yet risky, given the college's limited resources at the time, President Norman Alexandroff opened Columbia College Los Angeles (CCLA) in 1953.

The satellite campus in the heart of southern California's television and film industry included such notable faculty as Mike Kizzah, a leading sports producer; Melvin Wald, a television and film director; and Ludwig Donath, an Academy Award-winning actor from *The Jolson Story* who had been blacklisted from the industry for his left-wing ideologies. Self-sufficient by 1959, the school separated from its Chicago counterpart and now operates as Columbia College Hollywood.

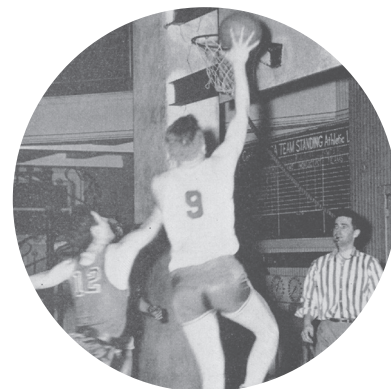
Following the successful opening of CCLA, Alexandroff received an opportunity to take the institution's expertise global.

In 1955, the Mexican and Latin American Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters asked Columbia to train professional radio and television teachers in Mexico City. Guillermo Camarena, creator of Columbia's first TV installation, and Roberto Kenny, manager of Televiscentro's Channel 1, trained the Mexican teachers at Columbia College Panamericano until 1957. The Mexican and Latin American Association of Radio and Television Broadcasters continued to teach the Columbia method of broadcasting to future generations.

## PLAY BALL!

### A brief history of athletics at Columbia

Columbia is hardly known for sports, but back in the 1940s and '50s, the college had basketball and softball teams. The influx of veterans to campus produced by the GI Bill led to the establishment of athletics at the college. Teams played games off campus in gymnasiums around the city. These mid-century athletics also represent an institutional continuation of the emphasis co-founder Mary Blood placed on physical education and fitness. Today, the college boasts more than a dozen intramural sports teams.



# HOME SWEET HOME

## Where Columbia lived starting in 1937



### 1 421 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1937-1953

**HOUSED:** Radio classes, other classrooms

**TRIVIA:** Called the “narrowest in the Loop,” this building was originally used for the Veterans Administration Guidance and Research Center at Columbia and was connected by a footbridge on the fourth floor to the Fine Arts Building. It was demolished in 2010, but its façade is incorporated into the modern Roosevelt University building.



### 2 207 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1953-1963

**HOUSED:** Entire campus, including the library and a television studio

**TRIVIA:** Formerly home to the Chicago Business College, the building was razed in 1995 to expand the facilities of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra.



**Al Parker**  
**RADIO PIONEER**

Legendary Chicago radio announcer Al Parker was a cornerstone of Columbia’s Radio Department during his 54-year tenure at the college. A prolific broadcaster, he worked at WJJD, WIND and WLS-TV, and on a dizzying array of freelance projects.

It all started in the mid-1940s. After hearing Parker’s work, Columbia President Norman Alexandroff offered the announcer a teaching position. Parker taught one or two radio broadcasting classes a semester while he worked full time and built his reputation as one of Chicago’s most memorable broadcast voices, later becoming the voice of Chicago’s ABC-Channel 7 for 26 years.

In 1957, Parker was appointed chair of Columbia’s Radio Department. His students included *Wheel of Fortune* host Pat Sajak (’68); sports radio voice Chet Coppock (BA ’71); TV and radio host Bob Sirott (BA ’71); and WXRT DJs Johnny Mars (’78), Frank E. Lee (BA ’78) and Marty Lennartz (BA ’82). He hired WXRT’s Terri Hemmert, now in the National Radio Hall of Fame, as a faculty member in the 1970s. Said Hemmert: “I owe Al everything.”

Always eager to encourage his students to learn by doing, Parker helped launch WCRX, Columbia’s student-run radio station, in 1982.

Parker’s dedication to his students was as memorable as his voice, and in 1995 the college awarded him with its most prestigious honor: the President’s Medal. In 1996, Columbia established the Al Parker Scholarship to assist outstanding radio students in defraying tuition costs.

## THEN AND NOW

### Workshop Method

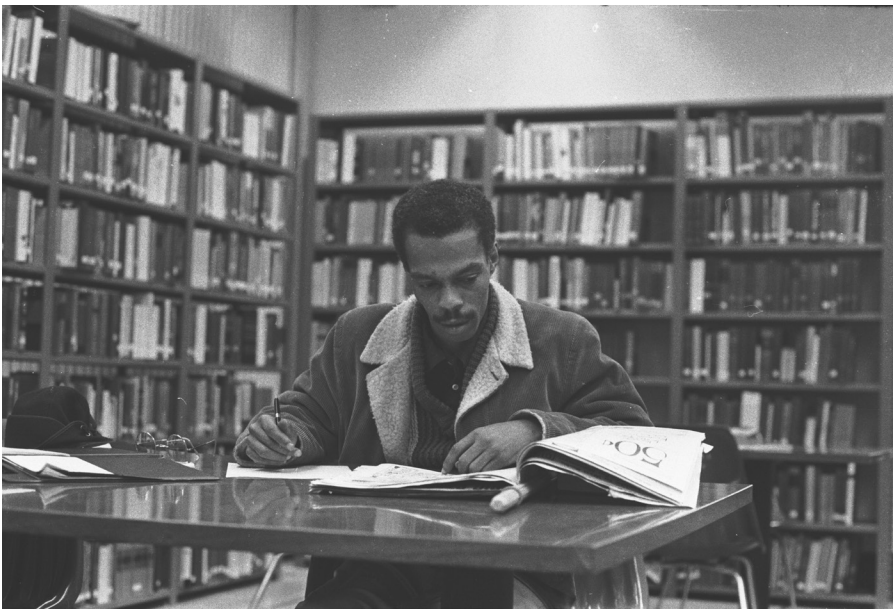
**THEN** Columbia introduced the workshop method of teaching in 1947. Radio, television, advertising and journalism students worked in studio settings and created projects that mirrored what was happening in the industry.

**NOW** The workshop method is an integral part of nearly every discipline at Columbia. For example, Interactive Arts and Media students work in teams to create their own games from scratch; Business and Entrepreneurship classes create marketing plans for actual Chicago businesses; and Radio students use professional audio equipment to produce their own programs.

# 1961–1992

## RENEWAL AND EXPANSION

The Columbia of the '60s was the ultimate underdog. With flailing enrollment and few resources, the school could have folded. Instead, President Mike Alexandroff turned it into a thriving, accredited college with a reputation for breaking the mold of what arts education could be.



When Mirron “Mike” Alexandroff took the reins as president in 1961, Columbia was at a crossroads. The massive influx of GI Bill students virtually ceased after the war in Korea, and enrollment was less than 200 students. Though the college formally separated from Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College (PFTC) in 1944, the two schools still shared many resources.

Herman Hofer Hegner, still the head of PFTC, was concerned about Columbia’s instability and in 1963 notified Alexandroff that PFTC would relocate to a new campus. All jointly shared staff, equipment and curricula accompanied PFTC, leaving Columbia with few possessions, a reduced staff, a limited curriculum and too much physical space.

With no endowments and an unsustainable business model, the future of the college was in jeopardy. “If I had been sensible,” Alexandroff said in *An Oral History of Columbia College*, “we would have just folded it up and walked away.”

Instead, he crafted a new vision for the college that played on its strengths. The urban location was labeled as a “sidewalk campus.” He enlisted local media professionals as instructors, focused the curriculum on the arts and media, and pushed for higher minority enrollment. Most importantly, he focused on an open admissions policy that allowed more students to enroll—including students who didn’t always fit into typical higher education parameters. The formula worked: Between

**Between 1964 and 1974, enrollment increased from less than 200 to more than 1,000 students.**

1964 and 1974, enrollment increased from less than 200 to more than 1,000 students, 22 percent of whom were African American.

To meet the needs of the growing school, the college began renting its headquarters at 600 S. Michigan Ave. in the mid-1970s, establishing its campus in the South Loop. Marketing materials of the time put it like this: “Columbia is at the center of the city and the whole city is Columbia’s campus.” Alexandroff thought the building would provide the school with all the room for growth it would need for decades to come. Less than 10 years later, the college expanded yet again with two more buildings: 623 S. Wabash Ave. and the Theatre Center at 72 E. 11th St.

Alexandroff saw Columbia as a college that couldn’t—and shouldn’t—compete with more traditional schools. Columbia became a pioneer in combining arts and media curricula for a unique and relevant education.

Columbia emphasized the combination of theory and practice, with a focus on career-driven programs rather than classical training. However, Alexandroff was also concerned with legitimacy: He wanted to leave behind the semblance of a “trade school” and offer a robust, if nontraditional, liberal arts education. In an earlier era, the

regional accrediting body, the North Central Association (NCA), “utterly dismissed the possibility of accrediting anything that was unlike the most conventional colleges,” he said. But the cultural revolution of the 1960s changed the landscape of higher education and eventually, the NCA warmed up to Columbia. After building a library and undergoing a years-long review process that Alexandroff characterized as “a hell of a struggle,” the college was fully accredited in 1974. The graduate division, created in 1981, was awarded full accreditation just three years after its founding.

The '80s also saw the growth of Columbia's flagship programs in radio and televi-

sion. WCRX, Columbia's student-run radio station, hit the airwaves in 1982. In 1985, the school acquired a Mobile Broadcasting Unit that functioned as a classroom on wheels, training students to broadcast on location—and drawing a crowd whenever students set up equipment on its rooftop.

By the time Alexandroff retired in 1992, Columbia had grown to more than 7,000 students. The college—now wholly independent, accredited and gaining a reputation as a diverse, dynamic training ground for arts and media careers—was ready to take on the 21st century.



## Mirron “Mike” Alexandroff

**PRESIDENT 1961–1992**

Following in the footsteps of his father Norman, Mirron “Mike” Alexandroff used his presidency to usher Columbia through a period of growth and transformation. Before stepping up as president, Alexandroff served as a sergeant in the U.S. Army in the South Pacific during World War II. When he came home, he took a position as a psychologist in Columbia's Veterans Administration Guidance and Research Center, later becoming its manager. During the '50s, when his father relocated to California to oversee Columbia College Los Angeles, Mike took on the college's day-to-day operations as acting president.

After Norman Alexandroff died in 1960, the board appointed Mike as president in 1961. At the time, the tuition-driven college struggled with low enrollment and few resources. Inspired by his father's own re-invention of Columbia in the '40s, Alexandroff rebuilt the school for a new generation. He enlisted local media professionals as instructors, focused curriculum on arts and media, and championed an open admissions policy. Under his direction, the college received full accreditation and grew from less than 200 students to more than 7,000.

Alexandroff was active in progressive politics and civic life, receiving numerous awards for achievements in education and social justice. In 1961, he married Columbia's registrar, Jane Legnard, and had a son, Norman. The couple threw parties in their home for faculty, staff and even students, building up a tight-knit Columbia community that felt like a family, according to faculty and staff from that time.

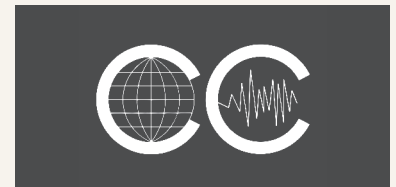
After Alexandroff retired in 1992, the city designated the block of Harrison Street between Michigan and Wabash avenues as “Mirron ‘Mike’ Alexandroff Way.” After Jane died in 1996, Alexandroff wrote his memoir, *A Different Drummer*, which today serves as a record of the day-to-day interactions and colorful characters from this formative stretch of Columbia's history.

**1961**

**Mike Alexandroff becomes Columbia's president.**

The DuSable Museum of African American History opens in Chicago.

John F. Kennedy becomes president of the United States.



**1963**

**Columbia and Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College cease sharing resources**

**and physical space. Columbia's new logo features the letters “CC” with one letter containing a globe and the other containing a radio wave.**

**Columbia moves from 207 S. Wabash Ave. to 540 N. Lake Shore Drive, across from Navy Pier.**

President John F. Kennedy is assassinated.

**1964**



**Columbia strengthens its liberal arts curriculum. The amount of liberal arts courses required for graduation jumps from 20 percent to nearly 50 percent of students' coursework.**

**Columbia awards its first honorary degree to poet Gwendolyn Brooks, who was the first black individual to win a Pulitzer Prize in 1950. She taught at the college from 1963 to 1969.**

1964



The Civil Rights Act becomes law.

The Beatles appear on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, making their debut to an American audience.

1965

Renowned composer and instrumentalist **Bill Russo** helps found the Music

Department.



**Columbia's Theatre Department performs both historical and contemporary plays, often including complicated set designs and complex social themes.**

1966

Martin Luther King Jr. marches for civil rights in Chicago.

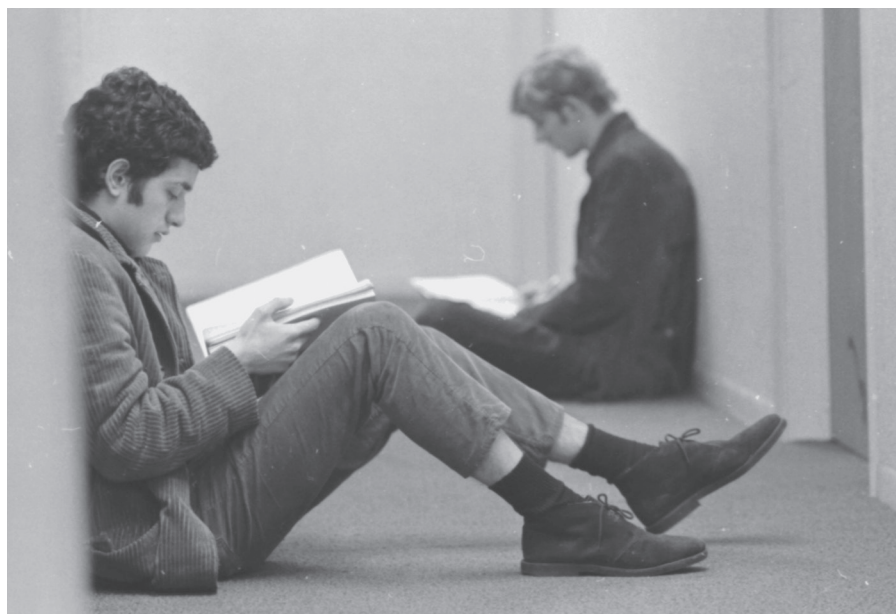
1967

The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago opens its doors.

1968

Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated.

Riots break out at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago.



## THE DOOR IS OPEN

### How an open admissions policy created today's Columbia College Chicago

Though the two schools separated in 1944, Columbia and Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College continued sharing resources until 1963. Stepping up as president in 1961, during this period of transition, Mike Alexandroff was forced to rethink the ways Columbia defined itself.

Although Columbia had always filled a unique niche, Alexandroff wanted to revamp the college's mission and the institution's place in the higher education landscape of the '60s. "It was clear that Columbia could not prosper as a mild alternative to customary institutions," he wrote in his memoir, *A Different Drummer*. "What was necessary instead was that Columbia become genuinely experimental and innovative in all respects."

So the college instituted an open admissions policy that championed inclusivity over exclusivity, opening the doors of higher education to those passionate about studying arts and media.

The policy's origins were both ideological and practical, according to Alexandroff. Reinvention included recruiting minority students from inner-city schools who were overlooked by other institutions. Alexandroff envisioned Columbia as "a low-cost specialized college that practiced open ad-

missions and assembled an accomplished faculty ... who could inspire students to liberate the best of themselves."

Open enrollment made a huge impact: Between 1964 and 1974, the number of enrolled students jumped from less than 200 to more than 1,000. By 1974, Columbia was finally accredited and on a path to financial viability. Inclusivity was no longer absolutely necessary to the college's survival, yet Alexandroff became more committed than ever to the idea.

"I think in a philosophical sense, I'd been a progressive my whole life," he said in *An Oral History of Columbia College*. "But by '66, I was beginning to have a kind of developed philosophy about the institution, and certainly a vigorous opposition to the elitist ideas that had governed higher education."

Today, Columbia continues to build on Alexandroff's progressive philosophies, marking it as a place where commitment to an artistic career is of the utmost importance. "We're going to be a school that shows you can be great without being elite," said President Kwang-Wu Kim.

# POWERFUL PROFESSORS

## Illustrious faculty members molded the college into a media powerhouse

In the 1960s and '70s, President Mike Alexandroff aggressively campaigned to bring respected media and arts professionals to the college as faculty members and department chairs. Unlike other colleges, Columbia did not recruit instructors based on their academic credentials alone, but rather their professional accomplishments, industry knowledge and teaching ability.

When Columbia ceased sharing resources with Pestalozzi Froebel Teachers College, it was a small college with a nearly nonexistent budget; exceptional faculty became its key to survival. In *An Oral History of Columbia College*, Alexandroff said departments were built around a handful of instructors who had free reign: "I wanted to get these remarkable people, and give them a start and get out of their way."

Prolific Chicago radio announcer Al Parker became chair of the Radio Department in 1957. There, he brought in faculty from major Chicago stations, who in turn hired Columbia alumni. Alexandroff wrote in his history of the college that Parker and the radio faculty "were literally an employment agency for the college's broadcasting students."

The chairs of the Television and Music departments—Thaine Lyman and Bill Russo,

respectively—were equally crucial in building a strong reputation for their programs and attracting national attention to Columbia in the 1960s. Meanwhile, much-lauded modern dancer Shirley Mordine headed the Dance Department and opened the Dance Center in 1970 as Chicago's only venue dedicated exclusively to contemporary dance, according to Alexandroff, which attracted innovative dancers and companies from around the world.

During this era, the part-time faculty roster was also filled with movers and shakers. Film critic Roger Ebert taught at Columbia in the early '70s, and renowned journalist and author Studs Terkel led classes in jazz and folk music and later taught at Columbia's Community Media Workshop. Terkel retained an affinity for Columbia throughout his life, calling it the college "for working-class kids who never had the dream." From 1963 to 1969, Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gwendolyn Brooks taught and directed the poetry curriculum at Columbia. She recalls in her autobiography that Alexandroff told her, "Take it outdoors. Take it to a restaurant. ... Do absolutely anything you want with it. Anything!"



**1969** After offering photography courses for several years, Columbia establishes an independent Photography Department.

Woodstock festival gathers 300,000 people in upstate New York.



Richard Nixon becomes president of the United States.

American astronauts land on the moon.



**1970** Columbia opens the Dance Center and begins teaching dance workshops.

**1971**

The 26th Amendment lowers the voting age from 21 to 18.

**1972**

The Watergate Scandal is unveiled.

### THEN AND NOW

## Liberal Arts and Sciences Core

**THEN** Columbia strengthened its liberal arts and sciences (LAS) core in the early 1960s, requiring nearly 50 percent of a student's coursework to be completed under the LAS umbrella. However, students were able to take these courses as electives "when such studies [had] relevance to the student's life and career," said President Mike Alexandroff.

**NOW** All undergraduate students complete an LAS core curriculum, with many science and mathematics courses designed specifically for artistic disciplines. Courses include Chemistry of Art and Color, Physics for Filmmakers, and the Science of Acoustics.

1973

Columbia enrolls 1,041 students. One-third of students are women, 22 percent are African American and 4 percent are Hispanic.

Columbia changes its logo to a more abstract design, featuring a "C" nested inside a circle.



The Sears Tower is completed, becoming the world's tallest building.

1974

Columbia College is awarded accreditation from the North Central Association Higher Learning Commission.



Columbia encourages students to take electives outside of their disciplines according to their interests. Courses in experimental film, film sound and editing, history of photography, and more are open to students from all disciplines.

President Nixon resigns.

Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Company is founded.

1975

*Saturday Night Live* broadcasts its first episode.

The Vietnam War ends.

1976

Columbia opens the Museum of Contemporary Photography.



## Bill Russo

RENEGADE THESPIAN

In 1965, accomplished musician, composer and conductor Bill Russo became a full-time faculty member at Columbia. Returning to his hometown of Chicago after spending time in New York City and London, he founded Columbia's Music Department and became director of the Center for New Music. Three years into his tenure, he founded the Free Theater, an avant-garde company focusing on rock musicals—and a project that would shape both Columbia and the whole Chicago theatre scene.

From its launch in 1968, Russo's Free Theater channeled the era's wild, creative, politically charged energy. Productions

translated classic stories like *Antigone* and *Aesop's Fables* into rock operas that also served as commentary about the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement and other topics of the day. Shows were always free, which made them accessible to everyone. (At the end of each show, the audience passed a hat for donations.)

Columbia students worked alongside community members and professional musicians on every part of the productions, from acting to sewing costumes to sweeping the stage. Some shows became cult-popular, with audience members returning again and again in costumes to match. In fact, the Free Theater's popularity spawned sister companies in Baltimore and San Francisco.

Senior Theatre lecturer Albert "Bill" Williams (BA '73) came to Columbia to study under Russo after seeing a Free Theater show. He remembers the multimedia aspect of productions, which in those days meant projecting 8 mm films onto bed sheets hung across the stage. "It was very funky and rough edged," he said. "It had a very hand-made, low-tech feel."

A seminal company in the Off-Loop theatre movement, the Free Theater was a precursor to modern Chicago companies like Steppenwolf and Lookingglass Theatre.



## Gwendolyn Brooks

LEGENDARY POET

Chicagoan Gwendolyn Brooks achieved many firsts as an African-American poet. The first black author to win a Pulitzer Prize, serve as poetry consultant to the Library of Congress and be named poet laureate of Illinois, Brooks also received Columbia's first honorary degree in 1964.

Already a Pulitzer winner when she arrived at Columbia, Brooks taught poetry and directed the poetry curriculum from 1963 to 1969. A poet of and for the people, specifically the black urban poor, Brooks raised voices in collections like *A Street in Bronzeville*, *Annie Allen* and *The Bean Eaters*. Today, she's still remembered as the "Patron Saint of Bronzeville" and a huge force in Chicago poetry. Her 1991 poem "Speech to the Young" includes this advice: "Live not for battles won. / Live not for the-end-of-the-song. / Live in the along."

NAME OF COLLEGE

**Columbia  
College**

1965

COLUMBIA AT AGE

**75**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

**250**

APPROXIMATE

**16**

STUDENTS CAME FROM  
NINE COUNTRIES

(China, Ethiopia, India, Iran,  
Nigeria, the Philippines, Thailand,  
Turkey and the West Indies)

NUMBER OF FACULTY AND STAFF

**25**

APPROXIMATE

PROGRAMS OFFERED

Television

Radio

Motion Pictures

Dramatic Arts

Visual and Mass Communication

Speech

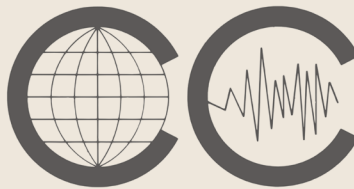
Advertising

English

Journalism

Education

Music



This logo depicts a globe and  
radio wave contained within the  
college's initials.

TUITION AND FEES

\$ **950**

\$34 PER CREDIT HOUR

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES

**4,797**

**“Columbia College serves tomorrow today, in the golden age  
of communications. The dynamic growth of the media and  
arts of mass communication represent the one development of  
the 20th Century likely to leave the sharpest impression on  
modern society.”**

—1965–1966 Course Catalog



1977

Columbia moves into 600 S. Michigan Ave., establishing its campus permanently in the South Loop.



The first *Star Wars* movie is released.

1978

The first issue of the *Columbia Chronicle*, the college's weekly student newspaper, goes into print.

Jane Byrne becomes Chicago's first female mayor.

1980

*The Blues Brothers* hits theaters.



1981

Sandra Day O'Connor becomes the first

woman appointed to the Supreme Court.

MTV makes its debut.

1982

Columbia's student-run radio station, WCRX, hits the airwaves.

Columbia begins offering master's degrees in Arts, Entertainment and Media Management; Film and Video; Photography; Interdisciplinary Arts Education; Dance Movement Therapy; and the Teaching of Writing/Creative Writing.

Michael Jackson releases the album *Thriller*.



## Shirley Mordine

CONTEMPORARY DANCEMAKER

For three decades, Shirley Mordine built and directed Columbia's Dance Center, one of few centers in Chicago devoted exclusively to contemporary dance, and shaped the city's now-thriving dance scene.

"There was nothing else going on in dance in Chicago," Mordine told *Chicago Artists Resource* of the scene she entered in 1969. "Maybe a few isolated teachers here and there, but [virtually] nothing that had any sort of foundation or organization."

Mordine began teaching in Columbia's Theatre Department, but soon laid the foundation for a separate Dance Department. By 1972, the Dance Center moved into 4730 N. Sheridan Road in Chicago's Uptown neighborhood and began presenting work from outside companies—including Hubbard Street Dance, now one of Chicago's leading contemporary dance companies.

The creative groundswell quickly led to greater support, larger shows, and a \$100,000 MacArthur grant to boost production and technical levels. Now a multifaceted and renowned institution that acts as a teaching, learning and performing arts vehicle, the Dance Center continues to receive national recognition and host companies from around the world.

By spearheading the Dance Center, Mordine helped transform Columbia into the powerhouse arts school it is today. She earned the college's Presidential Medal for Distinguished Service in 1999.



## Sheldon Patinkin

CHICAGO'S THEATRE GIANT

*Saturday Night Live* star Aidy Bryant (BA '09). Award-winning theatre director David Cromer ('86). Steppenwolf Theatre Artistic Director Anna Shapiro (BA '90). The late and legendary Sheldon Patinkin taught hundreds of students as chair of Columbia's Theatre Department from 1980 to 2009. The alumni he influenced went on to shape theatre in Chicago and beyond.

Patinkin began his career as a founding

member of The Second City and its precursor ensemble, The Compass Players. He helped sculpt the city's theatrical landscape by providing artistic guidance for renowned performance companies, including Second City and Steppenwolf Theatre. In 1980, Patinkin brought his award-winning directing into Columbia's classrooms when he was tapped to lead the school's Theatre Department, growing the department into one of the country's largest. He used his unique relationship with Second City to develop Columbia's BA in Comedy Writing and Performance—the first degree of its kind in the nation.

"I don't think there is anybody practicing in Chicago today that hasn't been helped by Sheldon, and so many theater people have stayed here, or returned here, because of the life he modeled," Shapiro told *The New York Times*.

Today, he is remembered on campus through the Sheldon Patinkin Award, which provides a senior Theatre student with a cash stipend to aid in their professional journey.



## Jacob Caref

### COLUMBIA'S CRAFTSMAN

When people remember the building of Columbia's foundation, they don't usually mean it literally—unless they're talking about Jacob Caref. A pipe fitter by trade and a carpenter out of necessity, Caref was a virtual one-man shop at Columbia throughout the 1960s.

As a staff member, he matched the “can do” spirit of hardworking faculty and eager

students. In his earliest days, with a shoestring budget and the occasional student helper, Caref built backdrops in a television studio and darkrooms for photography students. Later, he constructed sets and stages for the Theatre Department and a new Dance Center that contractors might have charged thousands of dollars to build.

A Jewish-Polish immigrant whose entire family was killed during World War II, Caref said he felt welcomed into President Mike Alexandroff's family. He even spent several Thanksgiving dinners with the Alexandroffs.

In an oral history published in the late 1990s, Caref described the Columbia atmosphere of three decades earlier, when the population consisted of just a few hundred students and a host of part-time instructors spread throughout the city. “I am a carpenter, a builder,” he said. “What people don't see in a house is the foundation. The same thing [is true] in Columbia College. People don't see [the] type of foundation, but it is very strong.”

## THEN AND NOW

### Student Media

**THEN** Since its earliest days, Columbia has encouraged students to jump straight into their artistic practice. The birth of many student media outlets in the late '70s and early '80s helped hone countless student voices. *Hair Trigger*, a compilation of undergraduate and graduate fiction, launched in 1977. In 1978, Columbia's student newspaper, the *CC Writer*, was replaced by the weekly (and now award-winning) *Columbia Chronicle*. In 1982, student radio station WCRX went on air, sharing music and public affairs programming from departments across the college. That year also saw the launch of Columbia's record label, AEMMP Records, managed by Arts, Entertainment and Media Management (AEMM, now Business and Entrepreneurship) students.

**NOW** All of these student outlets are still going strong, with more organizations added to their ranks over the years. Creative Writing students edit and produce the nationally distributed *Columbia Poetry Review* and the nonfiction journals *South Loop Review* and *Punctuate*. Journalism students run citizen-reporter sites ChicagoTalks.org and AustinTalks.org, as well as the biannual magazine *Echo*. Television students and volunteers from all across the college run Frequency TV, producing entertainment and news programming with state-of-the-art technology (including a mobile production truck).

1983

Columbia expands its campus by purchasing 623 S. Wabash Ave.

The Center for Black Music Research, the only research center of its kind, opens at Columbia.

Harold Washington is elected Chicago's first African-American mayor.



1985

Columbia acquires a Mobile Broadcasting Unit, with equipment designed to assist in reporting and broadcasting on and off campus.

1986

*Ferris Bueller's Day Off* outlines the perfect Chicago day.

The Chicago Bears win Super Bowl XX and—more importantly—release “The Super Bowl Shuffle.”



The Space Shuttle Challenger explodes, killing all seven crew members.

1989

Richard M. Daley becomes mayor of Chicago.

The Berlin Wall is torn down.

1990

Activist Nelson Mandela is released from prison.

The World Wide Web debuts.

1991

Chicago hosts the first Lollapalooza festival.

The Cold War officially ends.

# HOME SWEET HOME

Where Columbia lived starting in 1963



1



2



3



4



5



6

## 1 540 N. LAKE SHORE DRIVE

**OCCUPIED:** 1963–1977

**HOUSED:** Entire campus, including studio space, library, classrooms, a fully equipped television station and a darkroom

**TRIVIA:** Columbia enrolled approximately 1,800 students while at this location, which is across the street from what is now called Navy Pier.

## 2 4730 N. SHERIDAN ROAD

**OCCUPIED:** 1972–2000

**HOUSED:** Dance Center

**TRIVIA:** This was the only building Columbia actually owned in the early 1970s.

## 3 ALEXANDROFF CAMPUS CENTER 600 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1977–present

**HOUSES:** Administrative operations, classrooms, darkrooms, TV studios, film/video editing facilities, Museum of Contemporary Photography

**TRIVIA:** Designed by Christian Eckstorm in 1906–1907 for the International Harvester Co., one of the nation’s leading industrial corporations. When Columbia’s expanding population needed more space, this building served as the college’s first permanent home in the South Loop.

## 4 GETZ THEATER, 72 E. 11TH ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 1980–present

**HOUSES:** Theater spaces, classrooms

**TRIVIA:** Designed in 1929 by Holabird & Root, one of Chicago’s leading architectural firms. The building was previously used by the Chicago Women’s Club to rally for voting rights.

## 5 623 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1983–present

**HOUSES:** Classrooms, academic offices, science laboratories, art studios, stage and costume design workshops, public gallery spaces

**TRIVIA:** Designed in 1895 by Solon S. Beman for the Studebaker Brothers Carriage Company. Later tenants included the Brunswick Company, makers of wood furnishings and built-in furniture for libraries, universities and a variety of other facilities.

## 6 624 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1990–present

**HOUSES:** Five-story library, classrooms, departmental offices, student and faculty lounges, the bookstore

**TRIVIA:** When it was constructed in 1908, the building was only seven stories tall. Seven additional stories were added in 1922.

## 1960s

**Bob McNamara**

For four decades, family rooms all over America welcomed Bob McNamara (BA '66) onto their screens. The five-time Emmy Award-winning journalist filed reports for the *CBS Evening News*, *The Early Show*, *48 Hours* and *CBS Sunday Morning*. And he credits Columbia with getting him there.

At Columbia, McNamara studied under professors like Pulitzer Prize-winning writer Tom Fitzpatrick and legendary radio instructor Al Parker. In 2010, Columbia honored McNamara as one of three Alumni of the Year.

McNamara's resume reads like a lesson in U.S. history, which he helped to document on a nightly basis. He covered five school shootings, several hurricanes and the Oklahoma City bombing, to name a few historical events. Through it all, human interest stories remained his favorite to report.

Through hundreds of broadcasts—from the Lebanese Civil War in the 1970s to the 2003 Columbia shuttle disaster—McNamara brought the world home to his viewers. And many of those stories will never be forgotten.

## 1970s

**Melissa Ann Pinney**

In the first photo of Guggenheim-winning photographer Melissa Ann Pinney's (BA '77) series *Girl Ascending*, a young girl hangs by one hand on a chain-link fence, suspended against a dusty baseball field; she looks like she can fly. Throughout a photography career that spans four decades, Pinney captures countless moments of girlhood rituals and the transition from adolescence to adulthood.

Many of her projects, like *Regarding Emma* and *Cellar Door*, revolve around her daughter. Her photographs have been exhibited at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, and the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, among many others. In 2015, HarperCollins released Pinney's latest book, *TWO*, a collaboration with acclaimed author Ann Patchett. The book pairs Pinney's photos of twosomes—from couples in love to a couple of teacups—with essays from writers including Barbara Kingsolver, Elizabeth Gilbert and Susan Orlean. Pinney's career has blossomed since she graduated in 1977, but she's stayed close to her alma mater—she's taught in the Photography Department since 1985.



## 1980s

**Marlon West**

*Pocahontas*, *Mulan*, *The Princess and the Frog*—if it's a Disney animated classic produced after 1990, chances are animator Marlon West (BA '85) had a hand in the production. West started at Disney creating effects for the blockbuster *The Lion King*. In 2013, he worked as head of effects animation on megahit *Frozen*, which won the Academy Award for Best Animated Feature.

After graduating with an animation degree and working briefly in the Chicago film industry, West headed to Los Angeles. West still remembers what inspired it all: the first time he saw a photograph of legendary animator Willis O'Brien working on *The Lost World*. "To my second-grade mind, this was a man who had a gig where he could bring his toys to work," he said. "That's what I wanted to do."

**More Notable Alumni****Scott Adsit ('87)**

Actor (*30 Rock*, *Big Hero 6*)

**Paul Broucek (BA '74)**

President, Music, Warner Brothers Pictures

**David Cromer ('86)**

Jeff, Obie and Lucille Lortel Award-winning theatre director, 2010 MacArthur Fellow

**Michael Goi (BA '80)**

Cinematographer (*American Horror Story*, *Glee*, *The Mentalist*), board member and former president of American Society of Cinematographers

**Janusz Kaminski (BA '87)**

Two-time Academy Award-winning cinematographer (*Saving Private Ryan*, *Schindler's List*)

**Parisa Khosravi (BA '87)**

Former senior vice president of international newsgathering and global relations, CNN Worldwide

**Steve Pink ('86)**

Director (*Hot Tub Time Machine*, *Accepted*), writer (*Grosse Pointe Blank*, *High Fidelity*)

**Cynthia Pushek (BA '87)**

Cinematographer (*Revenge*, *Brothers & Sisters*)

**Andy Richter ('88)**

Writer, actor, announcer (*Conan*)

**Karine Saporta (BA '72)**

Photographer, filmmaker, choreographer, one of the most prominent figures in French dance

**Therese Sherman (BA '90)**

Emmy-nominated cinematographer (*Wipeout*, *Fear Factor*, *Little Man*)

**Nana Shineflug (MA '86)**

Dancer, owner and founder of The Chicago Moving Company

**Bob Sirott (BA '71)**

Radio host, WGN-AM Chicago

**Robert Teitel (BA '90)**

Producer (*Men of Honor*, *Barbershop*, *Notorious*)

**Ruth Thorne-Thomsen (BA '74)**

Surrealist photographer with work exhibited in the Art Institute of Chicago and the Musee d'Arles in France

**George Tillman Jr. (BA '91)**

Director (*Men of Honor*, *The Longest Ride*), producer (*Barbershop*)

NAME OF COLLEGE

**Columbia  
College**

1990

COLUMBIA AT AGE

**100**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

**6,791**

DEPARTMENTS

Art

Dance

English

Fiction Writing

Film/Video

Journalism

Liberal Education

Management

Marketing Communication

Photography

Radio/Sound

Science/Mathematics

Television

Theatre/Music

TUITION AND FEES

**\$5,888**



The optical illusion quality of this logo contains two C's, nodding to Columbia College's name.

NUMBER OF FACULTY AND STAFF

**163**

FULL TIME

**628**

PART TIME

TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES

**12,644**

**“Columbia gives students the opportunity to try what they will and to freely explore and discover what they can do and want to do. Columbia is a place where you will work hard but not against one another, an unpressured and noncompetitive place where students can learn to respect their own and other people’s individuality. Columbia puts full opportunity before students and gives them every help to use it. But, finally, the student is responsible for learning!”**

—President Mike Alexandroff in the 1989–1990 *Course Catalog*

# 1992–2015 CONTINUED GROWTH

An ever-increasing focus on the student experience and a permanent home in the South Loop continued to transform Columbia through the new millennium. Today, the college thrives as a hub of creativity and talent.

**By the early 1990s, Columbia was well** on its way to shedding its commuter school identity and emerging as an innovator in arts and media education and a destination college for out-of-state and international students.

Under the leadership of President John B. Duff, and starting with the 1993 purchase of 731 S. Plymouth Court—the school’s first modern, co-educational residence hall—Columbia expanded its campus through the acquisition of several historic buildings in the South Loop. The college introduced new majors and concentrations such as book and paper arts, fashion, writing, and product design, as well as interdisciplinary programs in musical theatre, interactive multimedia and broadcast journalism. In 1997, the institution officially changed its name to Columbia College Chicago.

Columbia continued its transformation into a destination college under the leadership of President Warrick L. Carter in the 2000s. While continuing its property acquisition program—and becoming one of the South Loop’s largest property owners in the process—the college also undertook new construction ventures. In 2004, Columbia, DePaul University, Roosevelt University and Robert Morris University opened the University Center, known as the “Superdorm,” at 525 S. State St. In 2010, the college opened the Media Production Center, its first purpose-built academic building, offering state-of-the-art facilities for film, television and interactive media. By the end of the decade, enrollment had reached a record high of nearly 12,500 stu-



## The college re-evaluated itself and evolved with the times—just as it always had.

dents, making Columbia the largest private arts and media college in the country.

But enrollment declines triggered by the Great Recession, a fiercely competitive admissions marketplace and growing public concern about the cost and affordability of higher education spurred the college to re-evaluate itself and evolve with the times—just as it always had.

Columbia’s Strategic Plan, approved by the board of trustees in May 2015, addresses the college’s most significant challenges with a comprehensive five-year program of curricular, programmatic and operational

change. Developed under the leadership of President and CEO Kwang-Wu Kim, who took office in 2013, the Strategic Plan calls on Columbia to revamp its curriculum for the 21st century, implement new diversity and community engagement initiatives, rebuild its enrollment, and strengthen its technological and financial infrastructure—moving the college forward while affirming its roots as a place where aspiring creative practitioners can learn, grow and thrive.

“In the last couple of years we’ve had the courage as a community to ask ourselves a lot of tough questions, which is a great thing,” said Dr. Kim. “The schools that are going to move forward successfully are the schools that are authentic in their understanding of who they are, what their students need and where they fit into the larger world.”

1992

**John B. Duff becomes Columbia's president.**



**Columbia offers fashion coursework in patternmaking, garment construction and menswear design.**

A damaged utility tunnel under the Chicago River causes nearly 250 million gallons of water to flood the downtown area.

1993

**The 731 S. Plymouth Court building opens as Columbia's first co-ed modern residence hall.**

**The Community Media Workshop, a service organization that trains nonprofits in marketing and public relations, moves to Columbia.**

1995

The Oklahoma City bombing kills more than 160 people.

Online auction site eBay opens for business.

The landmark Ferris Wheel is erected at Navy Pier.

A deadly heat wave kills more than 700 people in Chicago.

1996

The first successfully cloned mammal, Dolly the sheep, is born.



**John B. Duff**

**PRESIDENT 1992-2000**

Born in 1931 in New Jersey into a working-class Irish family, John B. Duff pursued a career in higher education, spending nearly 30 years in faculty and staff roles at colleges on the East Coast. In 1985, he was appointed commissioner of the Chicago Public Library system and supervised construction of the Harold Washington Library Center, the world's largest public library,

on the corner of State Street and Congress Parkway.

As Columbia's president, Duff helped create the downtown campus students inhabit today. During his tenure, he oversaw the acquisition of the school's first co-ed residence hall at 731 S. Plymouth Court, along with several other key campus buildings, including the Dance Center at 1306 S. Michigan Ave. and the Ludington Building at 1104 S. Wabash Ave. The school also officially changed its name to Columbia College Chicago during his presidency. Today, his name lives on in the South Loop through the honorary "John B. Duff Way" at Balbo Drive and Wabash Avenue.

Duff was regarded as a pre-eminent Civil War historian. His publications include *The Structure of American History*, *The Nat Turner Rebellion: The Historical Event Controversy*, *The Irish in the United States*, and *Slavery: Its Origins and Legacy*.

Following a long illness, Duff died in Palm Desert, California, in 2013 at age 82.



**Warrick L. Carter**

**PRESIDENT 2000-2013**

Virginia native Warrick L. Carter grew up in a musical family, singing in gospel choirs alongside his parents and brothers. After a long career as a music professor at several institutions, he spent four years as director of entertainment arts for Walt Disney Entertainment. A celebrated composer and performer, Carter has also written and lectured extensively on the arts, music history and culture. He is a two-time recipient of the National Black Music Caucus Achievement

**Under his leadership, Columbia enrolled upwards of 12,000 students in 2008 ... and added many new programs, including game design and art history.**

Award and a member of the International Jazz Educators Hall of Fame.

Carter was appointed president of Columbia College Chicago in 2000. Under his leadership, Columbia enrolled upwards of 12,000 students in 2008—more than double the students enrolled 20 years before—and added many new programs, including game design and art history.

As Columbia continued to expand its campus in the South Loop, Carter oversaw the creation of the Media Production Center, Columbia's first newly constructed building, and partnered with local universities to construct the University Center "Superdorm" that helped shift Columbia's status

from commuter college to the destination arts school it is today. During this time, the urban campus footprint doubled to 2.5 million square feet of occupied classroom, office, exhibit, performance and residence hall spaces, making the college the largest single presence in the South Loop.

Carter also led the creation of several new student-centered initiatives, including Manifest, the annual urban arts festival for graduating students, and ShopColumbia, the boutique at 623 S. Wabash Ave., where

students and alumni learn to market and sell their work.

Additionally, the president established new funding programs to address the financial needs of students and helmed the college's first comprehensive fundraising campaign.

Carter retired in 2013.



## Kwang-Wu Kim

**PRESIDENT 2013–PRESENT**

As a child growing up in Hyde Park, Kwang-Wu Kim would beg his parents to drive past the Shell Oil sign that sat atop the building at 624 S. Michigan Ave. Today, the vibrant red and yellow sign is long gone, but Dr. Kim, Columbia College Chicago's president and CEO since July 2013, keeps a framed photograph of it in his office, marveling at the fact that he leads the institution that now owns the building.

Dr. Kim came to Columbia knowing the realities of working as a creative professional, having pursued a career as a concert pianist in his 20s. Then, at the age of 35, he changed direction, becoming artistic and administrative director of El Paso Pro Musica, an organization that presents chamber music concerts and sponsors music education programs in the community. His time in El Paso transformed his professional path, setting in motion a series of career decisions that eventually led to his appointment as Columbia's 10th president.

**“[We’ve] always been a school that clearly believes young creatives inherently have value in the world.”**

Dr. Kim has been a senior administrator and professor at several higher education institutions, and most recently served as dean and director of the Herberger Institute for Design and the Arts at Arizona State University. In addition to serving as Columbia's president, he is a tenured member of the Music Department faculty.

In 2015, the board of trustees approved *Achieving Our Greatness: A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015-2020*, which outlines an ambitious blueprint for how Columbia can prepare students to be “creative agents in the world.” In guiding the development of the Strategic Plan, Dr. Kim recognized the links that connect Columbia's past and future, especially regarding its mission as an institution whose students aspire to author the culture of their times. “[We’ve] always been a school that clearly believes young creatives inherently have value in the world,” he said.

1997



**Columbia officially changes its name to Columbia College Chicago, reflected in its new logo.**

**The Fiction Writing Department holds its first annual Story Week Festival of Writers, bringing notable writers to campus for a week of free readings, panels and discussions.**

**Columbia purchases 1014 S. Michigan Ave. to house the Music Center.**

1998

**Columbia founds the Office of Community Arts Partnerships**

**(now the Center for Community Arts Partnerships), which creates arts programming for Chicago Public Schools, among many other projects.**

President Bill Clinton is impeached following a sex scandal.

The Chicago Bulls win the NBA Championship for the sixth time in eight years.

1999

**Columbia purchases property at 1306 S. Michigan Ave. (Dance Center) and 1104 S. Wabash Ave.**

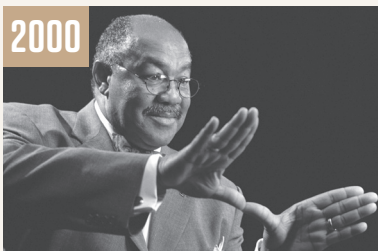
**Columbia launches its Semester in LA program, allowing film students to gain firsthand experience in professional Hollywood studios.**

The euro is introduced as the currency of nations in the European Union.

The world prepares for Y2K.



2000



**Warrick L. Carter becomes Columbia's president.**

**Columbia creates the Division of Student Affairs to improve campus life, coordinate student services and streamline processes.**

2001

On September 11, terrorists hijack four passenger planes, which crash into the World

Trade Center in New York; the Pentagon in Washington D.C.; and a field in Pennsylvania. More than 3,000 people are killed.

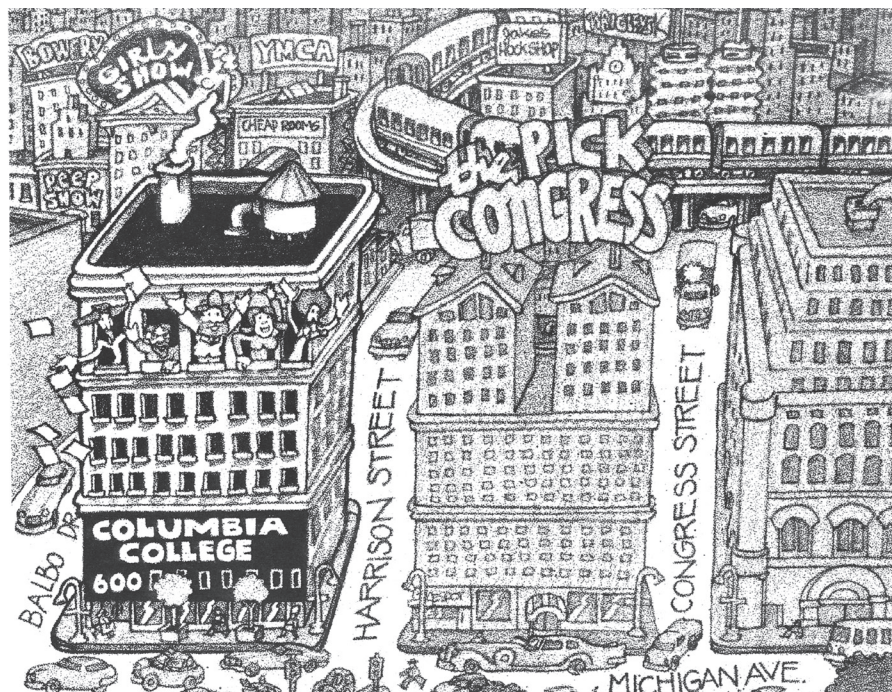
2002

**The college launches the Student Government Association to serve as a**

**liaison between students and faculty, staff and administration.**



**The college holds its first Manifest festival, originally named MayFest. The urban arts festival celebrates the creative talents of graduating Columbia students from all disciplines.**



This cover from the 1977 Art Department Handbook illustrates the South Loop's progression: Columbia College in the foreground, set against a neighborhood of girly shows and pawn shops.

## FROM VICE TO NICE

### Remembering the South Loop's shady past

Today, the South Loop bustles with tens of thousands of college students, but travel back 100 years in time and you'd see a very different kind of crowd.

From the 1860s until 1910, the area now known as the South Loop—extending approximately from Jackson Boulevard down to Cermak Road, then 22nd Street—was Chicago's vice district, nicknamed the Levee. Run by some of Chicago's most notoriously crooked politicians, including 1st Ward aldermen "Hinky-Dink" Kenna and "Bathhouse" John Coughlin, the neighborhood offered every form of debauchery imaginable.

Politicians protected the Levee's gambling, prostitution and drug dens. On 15th Street and Wabash Avenue, down the street from today's music and theatre classrooms, Kenna and Coughlin threw an annual fundraiser called the First Ward Ball, where politicians and police mingled with petty criminals (and consumed record amounts of liquor) in a wild celebration of vice. Each ball included a grand march led by Coughlin and the Everleigh Sisters, the most influential madams in the district.

In an effort to improve Chicago's image in 1910, the city pushed the Levee district south to 18th Street, but the South Loop remained a disreputable area into the 1980s. (On Wabash and Balbo, the 606 Club held strip shows frequented by a certain Playboy.)

Columbia purchased its first South Loop building, 600 S. Michigan Ave., in 1975, and subsequent developments transformed the area. Created in the late '70s, Dearborn Park, a 51-acre residential and recreational development, replaced the disused rail yard behind Dearborn Station. Throughout the '70s, '80s and '90s, Columbia snapped up buildings in the area to accommodate growing enrollment, and the combination of students and residents taking over the South Loop transformed the neighborhood into one of the city's most appealing urban areas.



## Terri Hemmert

**ROCK 'N' ROLL RADIO PIONEER**

“Chicago’s Finest Rock” radio station, 93WXRT, launched in 1972—and Terri Hemmert came on board as an overnight DJ soon after. A few years later, she started teaching rock music history at Columbia—a

fitting subject, because she was making history herself. In 1981, she became Chicago’s first female morning drive personality, meeting music legends like the Ramones and Paul McCartney along the way. “If I’d listened to all the people who told me that a woman couldn’t make it on the radio, I’d be a retired school teacher,” she said.

Today, Hemmert has been on the air at WXRT for four decades, and she earned a place in the National Radio Hall of Fame in 2010, as well as her own Chicago holiday—November 3, 2013—which Mayor Rahm Emanuel named “Terri Hemmert Day” to honor her 40th anniversary as a DJ. She continues to serve as a professional Beatles fan on WXRT, hosting the show *Breakfast with the Beatles* on Sunday mornings and emceeding Chicago’s annual Fest for Beatles Fans (formerly known as Beatlefest).



## Jim DeRogatis

**OUTSPOKEN CRITIC**

With bylines in *Spin*, *Guitar World*, *Penthouse* and *GQ*, full-time Columbia College Chicago lecturer Jim DeRogatis shares first-hand tales of the music trade in his writing classroom. But his expertise expands past the page: For nearly 20 years, he and fellow rock critic Greg Kot have hosted the nationally syndicated radio program *Sound Opinions*, an open forum for music and pop culture debates that’s among the top three most-downloaded music podcasts on iTunes.

**“The energy, enthusiasm, diversity of interest ... the fire in the belly that I get any time I’m in front of any class at Columbia just feels like home.”**

As a former editor for *Rolling Stone* and longtime rock critic for the *Chicago Sun-Times* before he moved to radio, DeRogatis has always been an industry loudmouth. He left *Rolling Stone* after the magazine refused to publish his negative review of a Hootie and the Blowfish album; he’s drawn the ire of musicians like Ryan Adams, Billy Corgan and Wayne Coyne; and he blew the whistle on R. Kelly’s child pornography scandal in 2002.

At Columbia, DeRogatis trains a new generation of opinionated writers in his courses on music, media and reviewing the arts. “The energy, enthusiasm, diversity of interest ... the fire in the belly that I get any time I’m in front of any class at Columbia just feels like home,” he says. “It’s a privilege to work with kids who are so eager to get out there.”

**2003**

**Columbia adopts an updated generous admissions policy to emphasize inclusiveness**

**over exclusivity and attract a diverse student body.**

**The college purchases 619 S. Wabash Ave., which becomes the A+D Gallery.**

The United States invades and occupies Iraq, setting off an eight-year war.

MySpace, one of the first social networks, is launched.

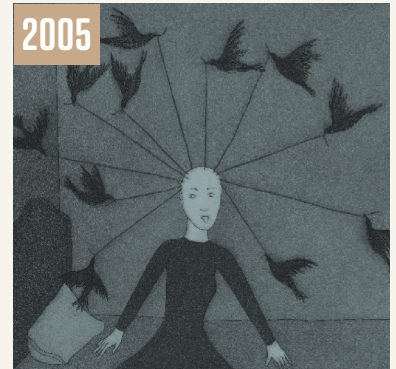
**2004**



**In conjunction with DePaul, Roosevelt and Robert Morris universities, Columbia opens the University Center, called the “Superdorm,” housing 1,700 students.**

Millennium Park opens in Chicago.

**2005**



**DEMO, the alumni magazine, launches. It features the art of best-selling author and faculty member Audrey Niffenegger on the cover.**

**Columbia establishes the Student Athletics Association, which oversees the college’s sports teams, the Renegades.**

# HOME SWEET HOME

Where Columbia lived starting in 1993



## 1 PLYMOUTH COURT 731 S. PLYMOUTH COURT

**OCCUPIED:** 1993–present

**HOUSES:** Residence hall, Residence Life offices, fitness center, health center

**TRIVIA:** Designed in 1897 by Howard Van Doren Shaw, best known for his work on palatial residences in the Gold Coast and North Shore. The fourth through sixth floors formerly housed R.R. Donnelley Publishing Company's printing presses.

## 2 THEATER/FILM ANNEX 1415 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1996–present

**HOUSES:** Classroom space, production sites

**TRIVIA:** Shaymen Salk Arenson Sussholz & Company designed the latest renovation of the Annex building in 1996 for Columbia.

## 3 33 E. CONGRESS PARKWAY

**OCCUPIED:** 1997–present

**HOUSES:** Administrative offices, radio station, classrooms, student lounge, computer lab, recording studios

**TRIVIA:** A bank vault is still installed in the basement, a relic of the building's past life as Congress Bank.

## 4 MUSIC CENTER 1014 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1998–present

**HOUSES:** Music classrooms, offices, performance spaces

**TRIVIA:** Previous occupants include a shingle distributor, a lumber company and an electrical parts manufacturer.

## 5 DANCE CENTER 1306 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1999–present

**HOUSES:** Dance performance and rehearsal spaces

**TRIVIA:** Designed in 1930 by architect Anker S. Graven in art deco style for the Paramount Publix Corporation, a venue where independent cinema operators could view and rent films for exhibition at their theaters.

## 6 1104 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 1999–present

**HOUSES:** Conaway Center; Glass Curtain Gallery; Film Row Cinema; Cinema Art and Science facilities; Center for Book, Paper and Print

**TRIVIA:** Designed by William LeBaron Jenney, the inventor of the skyscraper, this building is the world's first entirely terra cotta-clad skyscraper. The building was named a City of Chicago landmark in 1996 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



## Ivan Brunetti

**CARTOONIST VIRTUOSO**

When it comes to comics in the classroom, few have been as influential as artist and Columbia associate professor of design Ivan

Brunetti. He won an Eisner Award, one of the top recognitions in comics, for his book *Cartooning: Philosophy and Practice*, which basically serves as a bible for graphic storytellers. On top of that, he's been creating darkly funny comics since the '90s, including 2007's collection *Misery Loves Comedy* and 2013's *Aesthetics: A Memoir*. Plus, if you're a *New Yorker* reader, you might recognize his hyper-simple style—he's created 10 covers for the venerable magazine since 2007.

Comics are gaining recognition as a legitimate art form, and Brunetti has helped put them in the spotlight. In 2006, he edited *An Anthology of Graphic Fiction, Cartoons, and True Stories*, a collection *The New York Times* called "a manifesto of comics' coming of age."



## CELEBRATION IN THE SOUTH LOOP

### Manifest revels in students' creativity

Larger-than-life puppets cavort down Wabash Avenue. Dancers twirl and stomp from the stage to the street. Film screenings, gallery shows, fashion runways, costumes, street performances, concerts and any other artistic revelry imaginable—everything comes to life at Manifest Urban Arts Festival, the uniquely Columbia experience that electrifies the South Loop one day each May.

Manifest serves as a sort of yearly pep rally—and a chance to let Columbia's creative energy literally spill into the streets. The celebration began as MayFest in 2002. By 2004 it evolved into Manifest, the stu-

dent-produced, one-day festival where graduating students show off their best work.

Each year, the Columbia community elects a student creative director to guide the festival's vision. Manifest 2016 creative director Cassidy Kapson ('16) planned vibrant, colorful designs to complement the year's theme: Animate.

"Manifest is such an explosion of energy every year, and I think the design of the festival should reflect that," said Kapson. "I really wanted [to] express how vibrant and unique all of us students really are."

**2005**

**Columbia establishes the College Archives to unearth the school's history.**

Hurricane Katrina devastates New Orleans.

Chicago White Sox win the World Series.

**2006**

**Columbia buys 618 S. Michigan Ave. to accommodate a growing student body.**

**The college launches the Game Design bachelor's degree program, preparing students for careers in the fast-growing field of game design and production. Columbia also begins the Music Composition for the Screen graduate program.**

**Columbia holds its first-ever Parent Weekend.**

Cloud Gate ("The Bean") is officially unveiled in Millennium Park.

BuzzFeed launches, changing the landscape of online news.

**2007**

**The Sherwood Conservatory of Music merges with Columbia in order to expand both schools' facilities and offer more programming.**

**The college purchases 916 and 1000 S. Wabash Ave. to accommodate increasing enrollment.**

The first iPhone is released.

1990s

**Chris McKay**

Who knew playing with toys could launch a legitimate career? Director, producer and editor Chris McKay (BA '91), an integral member of *The Lego Movie* franchise and the cult show *Robot Chicken*, has pulled it off.

When McKay moved from Chicago to Los Angeles, he started in the hallways of Adult Swim. In addition to directing, producing and editing multiple seasons of *Robot Chicken*, he also created the series' first end title sequence. He also directed several episodes of *Moral Orel*, created by fellow Columbia alum Dino Stamatopoulos ('86).

McKay then served as the co-director, editor and animation director on the 2014 blockbuster *The Lego Movie*. At the time, many industry insiders considered the film a glorified toy commercial, but it found major success in the box office and the critics' stand. Now, McKay is executive producing *The Lego Movie Sequel* and directing the highly anticipated *The Lego Batman Movie*, which will be released in February 2017.



2000s

**Iliana Regan**

Michelin-starred restaurant Elizabeth's owner and head chef Iliana Regan (BA '05) tells stories. She told them as a fiction writing student at Columbia College Chicago, and she continues today at her restaurant in the Lincoln Square neighborhood. "I spend a lot of time thinking about food in the same way that I thought about stories," she says. "What is the plate? What are the ingredients? What is it conveying? What am I saying?"

Elizabeth emerged from an underground supper club called One Sister, launched in 2010 out of Regan's Andersonville apartment, which quickly gained notoriety in the Chicago foodie scene. Regan calls her approach "new gatherer cuisine," a philosophy built around fresh, organic, seasonal ingredients. She works with local farmers and hunters and even forages for wild ingredients (like frog legs) herself.



2010s

**Frank Waln**

Frank Waln (BA '14), a Lakota rapper, producer and activist hailing from the Rosebud Reservation in South Dakota, has quickly risen to the forefront of discussions on Native American visibility with his hard-hitting anthems of personal empowerment and political criticism.

Waln, a graduate of Columbia's Audio Arts and Acoustics program, is best known for his public stance against the Keystone XL Pipeline, a proposed oil route from Canada to Texas, which President Obama rejected in November. Waln was featured on MTV's *Rebel Music* for his anti-Keystone activism and performed at a protest concert alongside Willie Nelson and Neil Young in 2014.

Waln continues to rap unapologetically about his life and people. He also speaks at schools across the country in an effort to empower indigenous youth.

**More Notable Alumni****Aidy Bryant (BA '09)**

Actress (*Saturday Night Live*)

**Don't Fret**

Chicago Reader's 2014 Street Artist of the Year

**Jennifer Farrington (BA '93)**

President and CEO, Chicago Children's Museum

**Ayanna Floyd (MFA '98)**

Co-executive producer (*Empire*, *Hannibal*, *Private Practice*)

**Paul Garnes (BA '96)**

Executive producer (*Selma*), producer at BET

**Chester Gregory (BA '95)**

Singer, Broadway actor (*Motown: The Musical*, *Dreamgirls*, *Hairspray*, *Tarzan*)

**Agnes Hamerlik (BA '12)**

Fashion designer, showcased at Chicago Fashion Week and New York Fashion Week

**Rashid Johnson (BA '00)**

Photographer and fine artist

**Pablo Martinez Monsivais (BA '94)** Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist

**Michelle Monaghan ('99)**

Actress (*True Detective*, *Due Date*, *Made of Honor*)

**Tonya Pinkins (BA '96)**

Tony Award-winning actress (*Jelly's Last Jam*, *All My Children*, *Army Wives*)

**Annie Tighe (MFA '02)**

Emmy Award-winning editor (*Top Chef*)

**Nadine Velazquez (BA '01)**

Actress (*The League*, *My Name is Earl*, *Flight*)

**Eduardo Vilaro (MA '99)**

Artistic director and CEO, Ballet Hispanico; Founder, Luna Negra Dance Company

**Nan Warshaw (MA '93)**

Founder and co-owner, Bloodshot Records

**Diane Weyermann (MFA '92)**

Academy Award-winning executive vice president of documentary film at Participant Media



Students unpack their dormitory essentials during a 1993 moving day at Plymouth Court.

## A STUDENT-CENTERED COLLEGE

### How Columbia amped up its student experience

Columbia purchased its first dormitory in 1993, marking a turning point for the school: from scrappy little college-that-could to a more student-centered, destination institution.

The change accompanied, or perhaps contributed to, a dramatic rise in students. By 2004, enrollment had increased to more than 10,000—just in time for the completion of Columbia’s second residence hall, the University Center “Superdorm.” Over the next decade, Columbia continued to move away from its perception as a commuter college. In 2015, 70 percent of freshmen lived on campus and 55 percent of the incoming class came from out of state.

To better accommodate residential students and create a compelling collegiate experience, Columbia redoubled its efforts to expand services for students and make them feel welcome on the school’s unique urban campus.

### Columbia transformed from scrappy little college-that-could to a more student-centered, destination institution.

In 2000, Columbia created the Division of Student Affairs, now Student Success, to develop a full spectrum of services and experiences beyond the classroom, including a multicultural affairs office, a career center, student spaces and venues to showcase student work. In 2008, the school opened ShopColumbia, a boutique at 623 S. Wabash Ave., where students and alumni learn to market and sell their creations.

Today, Columbia offers more than 130 recognized student organizations that serve student interests, most of which did not exist 15 years ago.

**2007**

Columbia partners with **The Second City**, allowing students to spend a “semester abroad” in the legendary comedy theater’s training program.

The dormitory **The Buckingham** opens. Around 22 percent of Columbia students now live on campus.

The last building of the Robert Taylor Homes, an iconic Chicago public housing project, is demolished.

**2008**

A record **12,464** students enroll in the fall, making Columbia the largest private arts and media college in the country.

The **ShopColumbia** boutique is established to help students and alumni learn to market and sell their work.

Barack Obama is elected as the **first African-American president of the United States.**

Pulitzer Prize-winning Columbia photography faculty member **John H.**

**White** and his students, current and former, capture the electric energy of Obama’s election rally in Chicago’s own Grant Park.



A financial crisis hits that is considered by many economists to be the worst since the Great Depression.

**2009**

Columbia increases funds for student scholarships to **\$11.5 million, up 46 percent** from the previous year. It also launches **Scholarship Columbia**, a \$1 million challenge grant to raise scholarship dollars for continuing students.

2009

Eight Guggenheim Fellows are employed as faculty in the Photography Department.

Faculty and staff launch the Faculty and Staff Scholarship Initiative to assist students in need.

The Modern Wing opens at the Art Institute of Chicago.

2010

The Media Production Center becomes the first newly constructed building in Columbia's history. The college occupies 2.5 million square feet of classroom, office, exhibit, performance and residence spaces, making it the largest single presence in the South Loop.

Columbia launches its Honors Program.

The college announces its first comprehensive fundraising campaign with a goal of \$100 million.

2011

The Occupy Wall Street movement attracts thousands of demonstrators in New York City.

U.S. forces kill terrorist Osama bin Laden.

Rahm Emanuel is elected Chicago's mayor.

2012

50 percent of undergraduate students come to Columbia from outside Chicagoland.

The Mayan calendar reaches the end of its current cycle. The population fears the world will end.

## UNCOVERING THE PAST

### Heidi Marshall, head of College Archives & Special Collections, digs into Columbia's history



Even though Columbia College Chicago opened in 1890, the College Archives & Special Collections only began in August 2005. In the beginning, College Archives & Special Collections Head Heidi Marshall worked alone in a “room with a computer” in the library. Today, the group has expanded to seven employees with permanent office space at 619 S. Wabash Ave. Running the institution's archives is a team effort: The staff and student employees piece together the college's history. They scour eBay for Columbia ephemera, help researchers navigate their collections, delve into president family trees, digitize college documents and undertake countless other things to uncover and tell Columbia's vibrant and ongoing story. (Plus, Archives served as an invaluable source for this issue of DEMO.) Marshall talked with us about why the Archives are important to Columbia's history.

#### Why did Columbia start the Archives?

Everyone realized there was a rich history, and that we were in danger of losing that history. When I started in August of 2005, people came out of the woodwork. The second day I was here I had someone call and say, “I have been waiting for you for 30 years. I want you to have these records.” It's just great to be able to celebrate the history of this school because it's an amazing place.

#### What sorts of projects do you work on?

The first year I was here, I think I spent a year working on just the biographies of the presidents, because that had never been done. Sometimes I think you have to enjoy being a detective and figuring out puzzles, because that's what we do.

**“Sometimes I think you have to enjoy being a detective and figuring out puzzles, because that's what we do.”**

#### What's involved in putting presidential biographies together?

Just lots and lots of searching. Talking to some folks who may or may not know anything. [For example,] the story was that [former president] Norman Alexandroff came in through Ellis Island. I couldn't find his name. Turns out, he came in through Philadelphia. So you have to keep looking around because sometimes myth and fact are a little at odds.

#### When you're researching someone, do you feel like you're building a personal relationship?

All the time. You start calling them by their first name. “[Founder] Mary [Blood] did this, and Mary did that.”

#### Why are archives important for a place like Columbia?

If you don't know what you've done in the past then how do you plan well for your future? You have to be able to see the evolution that takes place over time in an institution. There's evidence of great programming. There's evidence of things that didn't work out so well. I think archives help a school build pride in their accomplishments. It helps students and alumni feel a certain pride in where we've come from.



**LEFT:** President-elect President Barack Obama addresses the crowd, as photographed by then-student Jody Warner ('09). **RIGHT, TOP:** Obama and vice president-elect Joe Biden wave to the crowd, photographed by Jody Warner ('09). **RIGHT, BOTTOM:** Barack and Michelle Obama embrace, photographed by Pablo Martinez Monsivais (BA '94).

## CAPTURING HOPE

### Barack Obama's 2008 election as U.S. president was one for the history books—and photographed by the Columbia community

An iconic moment in U.S. history played out live on November 4, 2008, in Chicago's Grant Park—essentially Columbia College Chicago's front yard. There, Barack Obama, the first African American voted into the White House, held his election-night rally before an estimated crowd of 240,000. Millions more watched throughout the world. Columbia photographers were there to capture it.

John H. White, a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer from the *Chicago Sun-Times* and a Columbia instructor of photojournalism for three decades, had sent many students into the same park over the years on photographic drills and training assignments. That night, he found himself shooting history in the making.

Photography student Jody Warner ('09)

was reportedly the only student journalist on the media stand that night, shooting side by side with professionals from around the world.

Pablo Martinez Monsivais (BA '94), a staff photographer at the Associated Press Washington Bureau, had already covered the Office of the President for a decade. But that night, he said his mind raced back to a sentence White uttered in a 1991 spring semester class—a statement he didn't fully grasp until his return to Grant Park 17 years later. "[He told us], 'Photojournalism is a front-row ticket to history.'"

"Those images are just as alive today as they were in November 2008," White said. "And a moment that was really significant and great then will remain great in history."

2013

Columbia becomes the only college in the U.S. to offer a bachelor's degree

in Comedy Writing and Performance.



Artist Shepard Fairey and other internationally acclaimed street artists install murals on Columbia buildings, bringing attention to the burgeoning Wabash Arts Corridor.

Dr. Kwang-Wu Kim becomes Columbia's president.



Edward Snowden blows the whistle on the National Security Agency.

2014

Michael Brown is shot by police in Ferguson, Missouri, sparking the nationwide Black Lives Matter movement.

2015

The board of trustees approves *Achieving Our Greatness: A Strategic*

*Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015–2020.*

The Chicago Blackhawks win the Stanley Cup for the third time in six years.

Medical marijuana dispensaries open in Illinois.

Gay marriage is legalized in the U.S.

Columbia College Chicago celebrates its 125th anniversary.



# HOME SWEET HOME

Where Columbia lived starting in 2003



1

## 619 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 2003–present

**HOUSES:** College Archives & Special Collections, mailroom, Averill & Bernard Leviton Gallery

**TRIVIA:** In the 1920s, owner Al Tearney opened a cabaret here. By 1927, the U.S. Circuit of Appeals issued a mandate to shut it down.

2

## UNIVERSITY CENTER 525 S. STATE ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 2004–present

**HOUSES:** Dormitories for Columbia as well as DePaul, Roosevelt and Robert Morris universities

**TRIVIA:** Originally called the “Superdorm,” the University Center houses more than 1,700 students and is one of the largest multischool residence halls in the country.



2



4

3

## SHERWOOD COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL 1312 S. MICHIGAN AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 2007–present

**HOUSES:** Classrooms, studios, keyboard labs, a 100-seat auditorium

**TRIVIA:** Acoustical engineers at Shiner and Associates designed this building, constructed in 1997, with high-quality sound in mind.



3

4

## 916 S. WABASH AVE.

**OCCUPIED:** 2007–present

**HOUSES:** Interactive Arts and Media Department, dance studio spaces, Student Communications, The Loft, Student Engagement

**TRIVIA:** Today's 916 S. Wabash Ave. was originally two separate buildings. In 2007, Columbia combined the 916 and 1000 S. Wabash Ave. buildings. Previously, 1000 S. Wabash Ave. housed renowned African-American comedy club All Jokes Aside, operated by part-time Business and Entrepreneurship faculty member Raymond Lambert.



5

5

## MEDIA PRODUCTION CENTER 1600 S. STATE ST.

**OCCUPIED:** 2010–present

**HOUSES:** Film production sound stages, motion-capture studio, digital labs, animation suites, fabrication shop, classrooms

**TRIVIA:** Columbia's first newly constructed building was designed by Studio Gang Architects in 2009. A time capsule for the college was buried during construction, to be opened in 2040.

## FIRST IN LINE

### The college continues its tradition of welcoming first-generation college students

Though Columbia College Chicago has come a long way from its humble roots, some of the college's core values have passed the test of time—including a commitment to serving first-generation college students.

First-generation college students are four times more likely to drop out of college than their peers whose parents received four-year degrees, according to the nonprofit I'm First. Columbia offers a straightforward application process and accessible staff to help students navigate enrollment, and its Conaway Achievement Project provides special services, including workshops and academic advising, to first-generation students.

"As a first-generation student whose parents don't have any idea how [the application process] works, it was very easy for me to navigate by myself," says Creative Writing student Frank EnYart ('17). "People were really willing to help."

Columbia has encouraged first-genera-

tion college students since the 1940s, when working-class World War II veterans flooded college campuses. Then, in the 1960s, Columbia reaffirmed its commitment to open admissions.

Today, about 20 percent of Columbia College Chicago students are first-generation. Many are attracted by the diverse student body and creative, determined atmosphere.

"I think Columbia understands and appreciates people who want to work to get where they are," says Aly Mitchell (BA '16), who studied music business and has worked on live events throughout Chicago. "Something I observed really early on is that everybody who goes to Columbia really wants to be here. You come to Columbia with a vision and a drive."

Xavier Tanner (BA '15), a musician who studied Audio Arts and Acoustics, says his classes prepared him to enter the industry with a professional portfolio. Plus, he says,

**"Something I observed really early on is that everybody who goes to Columbia really wants to be here. You come to Columbia with a vision and a drive."**

"With that degree backing you, it gives you a level up."

But for many first-generation students, the value of a college degree goes beyond practical applications.

"Both of my parents had tried to go to college and couldn't afford it and just couldn't make it work," Mitchell says. "So for me, that was a big thing ... being able to pursue my career while still maintaining my academics."



**The online videos have earned them half a million subscribers.**

## VIRAL VENTURES

### Student Kevin Droniak and his grandma make it big on YouTube

Kevin Droniak ('19) is a bit of a grandma's boy—and it pays off. Droniak began making YouTube videos with his Grandma Lil in 2012 under the username *thiskidneedsmedicine*, and the viral videos featuring the pop culture-challenged Lil's take on everything from Miley Cyrus' Instagram to "Hotline Bling" have earned them a following of half a million subscribers. It also pays an impressive income for the sophomore journalism student; he earns \$1,500 a month from YouTube, plus occasional sponsorship deals from brands like Target.

Media outlets such as Huffington Post and *Teen Vogue* have taken notice of the unexpected comedy team. Droniak and Grandma Lil even Skyped in twice for segments on *Jimmy Kimmel Live*.

Droniak stays in touch with his grandma through phone calls and Instagram (which he taught her how to use). How does Grandma Lil respond to her online popularity? "She thinks she's like a full-blown celebrity now," says Droniak. "She says it makes her feel younger."

# CURIOUS COLLECTIONS

Staff experts highlight artifacts and offerings from centers on campus



**TOP:** "Ditched, Stalled and Stranded," San Joaquin Valley, California, by Dorothea Lange, from the Museum of Contemporary Photography  
**BOTTOM:** "The Staples Singers" by Sue Cassidy Clark, from the Center for Black Music Research Library and Archives

## MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

**WHERE:** Museum of Contemporary Photography (MoCP) is the Midwest's only accredited museum dedicated to photography (now celebrating its 40th anniversary).

**WHO:** Karen Irvine, MoCP curator and associate director

**WHAT:** Irvine lauds the museum's collection of nearly 500 photographs from Dorothea Lange, best known for photographing migrant workers during the Great Depression, which contains "many of Lange's work prints that illustrate her experiments with printing and cropping in the darkroom."

## CENTER FOR BOOK, PAPER AND PRINT

**WHERE:** Center for Book, Paper and Print is a new center created by the merging of Anchor Graphics and the Interdisciplinary Arts Department's former Center for Book and Paper Arts.

**WHO:** David Jones, executive director

**WHAT:** Jones first partnered with Columbia in

2006, when Anchor Graphics, his lithography and etching workshop, offered lectures and demonstrations to students and the community. Now more focused on curricular matters, the center caters to nearly 30 different classes. "We're seeing more students interested in not only printmaking, but also the book and paper arts," Jones says.

## CENTER FOR BLACK MUSIC RESEARCH

**WHERE:** The Center for Black Music Research (CBMR) is devoted to research, preservation and dissemination of the history of black music on a global scale.

**WHO:** Laurie Lee Moses, CBMR archivist and digital librarian

**WHAT:** Moses references many fascinating collections, including the work of photojournalist Sue Cassidy Clark, who covered soul and pop music artists in the 1960s and 1970s; Kenneth Bilby's comprehensive oral history of the foundations of Jamaican popular music; and Micah Salkind's oral history exploring Chicago house music.

## CREDITS

We couldn't have put this issue together without the foundational info and tireless help of Head of College Archives & Special Collections **Heidi Marshall** and the College Archives & Special Collections team.

Special thanks to **Norman Alexandroff, Suzanne Blum Malley, Erin McCarthy, Dominic Pacyga, Melissa Potter, Louis Silverstein** and **Albert "Bill" Williams** for sharing their stories and expertise on Columbia history.

Research and reporting in this issue by **Stephanie Ewing** (MA '12), **Audrey Michelle Mast** (BA '00), **Bill Meiners** (MFA '96), **Megan Kirby, Hannah Lorenz** (BA '16), **Aly Mitchell** (BA '16) and **Kristi Turnbaugh**. Illustrations created by **Erik Rodriguez** ('10).

Throughout our research, we referred to the *Columbia College Chicago Oral History* series organized by Louis Silverstein, *The Campus History Series: Columbia College Chicago* by R. Conrad Winke and Heidi Marshall, and *A Different Drummer* by Mirron "Mike" Alexandroff.

## THEN AND NOW

### Student Spaces

**THEN** Columbia College Chicago added dorms, along with a host of student services and activities, in the 1990s and 2000s to bolster its shift into more of a destination school, adding a heavier focus on student satisfaction outside the classroom in the process.

**NOW** Plans are underway to open a new Student Center on the corner of 8th Street and Wabash Avenue as early as fall 2018. Working with administrators and student groups from across campus, the architecture, planning and design firm Solomon Cordwell Buenz proposed preliminary designs for the space that will encourage student collaboration and community. Ideas include studios, nap rooms, a rooftop garden and a multipurpose event space.

# GIVING GENEROUSLY

Over the years, support from alumni, faculty, staff, parents and friends has propelled Columbia to the forefront of arts and media education. Here are just some of the major donors who shaped Columbia's last 40 years.



**DIANE DAMMEYER**

Diane Dammeyer ('99) studied photography at Columbia while also serving on the board of the Heartland Alliance, a leading anti-poverty organization. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** The Diane Dammeyer Fellowship in Photographic Arts and Social Issues, which supports a Columbia photographer to collaborate with Heartland Alliance and Columbia to create a new body of work that highlights human rights issues.

## **JEREMY EFROYMSON AND THE EFROYMSON FAMILY FUND**

Jeremy Efroymsen (MFA '98), a Creative Writing alumnus, has served as a trustee since 2013. He also is vice chair of the Efroymsen Family Fund, which has provided grants to the college since 2007. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** The Efroymsen Art + Design Resource Center, created in 2010, which provides a visual archive of teaching and resource materials.

## **THE HOKIN FAMILY**

Steel executive Myron Hokin and his wife, Bernice, were longtime donors to the college, and Myron served as a trustee for 25 years. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** The college's first student-centered exhibition and performance space, the Myron Hokin Student Center, dedicated in 1988.

## **LANNAN FOUNDATION**

The Lannan Foundation is an ongoing supporter of the Museum of Contemporary Photography. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** A solo exhibi-

tion of the work of Vietnamese-American artist An-My Lê in 2006 and a donation of 26 of her photographs to the museum's permanent collection in 2011.



**AVERILL AND BERNARD LEVITON**

The Levitons, donors since 1987, are long-standing patrons of the arts. Averill has served on the board of trustees since 1990. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** Significant funding for the creation of the Media Production Center, Columbia's first newly built academic facility.

## **MCCORMICK FOUNDATION**

The Robert R. McCormick Foundation was established in 1955 after the death of the longtime editor and publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** Grants to many college programs, including Columbia Links and the Center for Community Arts Partnerships. The McCormick Tribune Scholarship Fund was established in 2006 with a matching gift from the college to support graduates of Chicago Public Schools.

## **JERRY SVEC**

Jerry Svec, a retired fashion and interior designer, has been a part-time faculty member since 1999 and a donor since 2004. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** Hundreds of items to the college's Fashion Study Collection, including vintage costume and historical patterns as well as garments he designed.



**PETER AND GLORIA TESCHNER**

Peter Teschner ('80), a Hollywood editor whose film credits include *Borat* and *St. Vincent*, has been a donor since 1984 and was honored as one of the Alumni of the Year in 2006. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** The Peter and Gloria Teschner Scholarship, which supports one outstanding Cinema Art and Science student each year.



**ALLEN AND LYNN TURNER**

A Chicago native who led the growth of Victory Gardens Theatre, Goodman Theatre and the Museum of Contemporary Art, Allen Turner became chair of Columbia's board of trustees in 2005 and helped launch the college's first comprehensive fundraising campaign. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** Funding for the Allen and Lynn Turner Theatre Chair—the college's first endowed chair—in 2013.

## **THE WEISMAN FAMILY**

Albert P. Weisman, a legendary Chicago public relations executive, taught urban politics and journalism at Columbia and served as a member of the board of trustees. **GIFTS INCLUDE:** The Weisman Award, which provides funding for advanced students of any discipline to complete substantial media-based works.

**NAME OF COLLEGE**

**Columbia  
College Chicago**

**2015**

**COLUMBIA AT AGE**

**125**

**NUMBER OF STUDENTS**

**8,961**

**DEPARTMENTS**

American Sign Language  
Art and Art History  
Audio Arts and Acoustics  
Business and Entrepreneurship  
Cinema Art and Science  
Creative Arts Therapies  
Creative Writing / Communication and  
Media Innovation / Dance  
Design / Education / English  
Fashion Studies / Humanities, History  
and Social Sciences  
Interactive Arts and Media  
Music / Photography / Radio  
Science and Mathematics  
Television / Theatre

**STUDENTS LIVING ON CAMPUS**

**2,453**

**Columbia**  
COLLEGE CHICAGO

**COUNTRIES REPRESENTED  
IN STUDENT BODY**

**20**

**APPROXIMATE**

**TOTAL NUMBER OF GRADUATES**

**54,840**

**NUMBER OF FACULTY AND STAFF**

**324**  
FULL-TIME  
FACULTY

**598**  
FULL-TIME  
STAFF

**TUITION AND FEES**

**\$23,460**

**809**  
PART-TIME  
FACULTY

**264**  
PART-TIME  
STAFF

**MOST POPULAR DEPARTMENTS  
BASED ON ENROLLMENT**

**UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES**

Cinema Art and Science / Business and  
Entrepreneurship / Design  
Theatre / Fashion Studies

**GRADUATE STUDIES**

Creative Writing / Creative Arts  
Therapies / Cinema Art and Science

**“Columbia College Chicago does not simply prepare students to take their places in existing occupations. Its ambitions are broader: It is committed to fostering the professional success and personal fulfillment of students who will author the culture of their times and excel as creative agents in the world. At Columbia, we expect our students to define their own success.”**

—Achieving Our Greatness: A Strategic Action Plan for Columbia College Chicago, 2015–2020



Dear Alumni,

Over the past several months, I've had the pleasure of meeting many of you at our growing number of alumni events. From on-campus occasions like Columbia Weekend and the Alumnae Entrepreneurs Panel to regional events like the LA Oscar Viewing Party and the CNN-New York reception with President Kwang-Wu Kim, alumni across the country are staying engaged.

Many of you shared your personal Columbia stories, as well as your ideas for strengthening our alumni community. Our team has listened closely, and your feedback has informed the new efforts that I am excited to announce.

Recently, we launched *Columbia Connection*, the new monthly alumni e-newsletter. Filled with career and networking opportunities, alumni spotlights, upcoming events, campus news and more, *Columbia Connection* is your inside scoop on everything Colum Alum. Email [alumni@colum.edu](mailto:alumni@colum.edu) to subscribe.

We're also furthering our partnerships with offices across campus to create new resources for alumni career development. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months on workshops, one-on-one career coaching, and webinars for alumni in Chicago and beyond.

Have a wonderful summer. I look forward to connecting at our next event near you!

Regards,

*Miriam Smith*

**Miriam Smith**

Executive Director of Alumni Relations and Annual Giving

# CAAN UPDATES

**SEE WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH ALUMNI ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND GET INVOLVED WITH THE COLUMBIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION AND NETWORK (CAAN).**

## AUSTIN

### AEMMP Records Day Party at SXSW

On March 17, alumni gathered at the Bat Bar during South by Southwest to support students from the Business and Entrepreneurship Department. This fourth annual networking event showcased live music from AEMMP Records, Columbia's student-run record label.

## CHICAGO

### Alumni on 5

More than 100 alumni and guests gathered on October 2 to celebrate the opening of the most recent Alumni on 5 exhibition, *Nowhere But Here*, at the Columbia College Chicago Library. The exhibition featured 21 alumni artists and was curated by **Lisa Lindvay** (MFA '09).

### Columbia Weekend

The inaugural Columbia Weekend got off to a lively start on October 23 with an alumni reception at the Hokin Gallery. President Kim welcomed alumni to the first-ever Columbia Weekend, which also included a faculty panel discussion, a family-friendly lunch and the inaugural Halloween Gathering, an arts-focused event put together by the City of Chicago.

### Chicago Alumni Reception

Alumni gathered at the Soho House in the West Loop on March 9 for cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. The event featured opportunities to mingle, spectacular views of the city and an update from Dr. Kim on collegewide initiatives.

### Alumnae Entrepreneurs Panel

In celebration of Women's History Month, Development and Alumni Relations hosted an Alumnae Entrepreneurs Panel on March 30 at the on-campus space Haus. Panelists **Edye Deloch-Hughes** (BA '80), **Lauren McGrady** (BA '11), **Maggie Ness** (BA '06) and **Skype Rust** (MA '06) shared their pro-

fessional journeys and insights on entrepreneurship.

### Alumni at Manifest

The 2016 Manifest Alumni Party channeled the extravagance and colorful energy of a Rio de Janeiro carnival. Alumni danced the night away at this exclusive alumni party celebrating Columbia's annual urban arts festival.

### Alumni Roundtables

In 2015, we kicked off the Alumni Roundtables program, which offers students a small group setting where they can make connections and learn from esteemed Columbia alumni. Featured guests at the 2015–2016 Alumni Roundtables included **Paul Garnes** (BA '96), **Michael Stahl-David** (BA '05), **Suree Towfighnia** (MFA '06), **Aaron Nelson** (BA '12), **Annick Wolkan** (BA '05) and many more.

## DETROIT

### Detroit Alumni Reception

Detroit-area alumni came out on March 22 for an alumni reception at the Scarab Club. Vice President for Student Success Mark Kelly spoke to the crowd about the new and exciting updates on campus.

## LOS ANGELES

### LA Holiday Party

On November 19, CAAN LA kicked off the holiday season at Riviera 31 in the Sofitel Hotel. Along with 15 schools and hundreds of guests, Columbia alumni appeared en masse to represent our alma mater.

### LA Oscar Viewing Party

On February 28, alumni and friends dressed for a night of glamour and cocktails at the Oscar Viewing Party at Fox Studios in Los Angeles. The evening was hosted by Fox Studios executive **Hal Haenel** (BA '81).

## Alumni News & Notes



Guests enjoyed hors d'oeuvres, champagne and a fabulous venue to view Hollywood's biggest award show of the year.

### Alumni Shorts Film Screening in LA

Seven alumni films were screened on March 16 at the CAP Studio in Sherman Oaks, California, followed by questions from the audience. More than 25 Columbia alumni had credits in these seven short films—a testament to alumni collaboration.

### Los Angeles Alumni Social & Networking Event

On April 14, LA alumni gathered at the historic Formosa Cafe. Alumni from across eras and industries mingled and made new connections while enjoying drinks and appetizers at this famous LA watering hole.

## NEW YORK CITY

### NYC Alumni Gathering at CNN Headquarters

Columbia welcomed its New York City-area alumni to a reception hosted by President

Kim at CNN-New York on December 3. More than 60 alumni and guests attended the evening event, which featured key networking opportunities, guided tours of CNN and a special address from President Kim. The event was hosted by **Jeff Kinney** (BA '87), director of field production and chief photojournalist at CNN and a CAAN National Board member.

## WASHINGTON D.C.

### D.C. Alumni Reception

On April 26, D.C. alumni gathered at Pennsylvania 6 restaurant in the heart of downtown for an exclusive alumni reception with President Kim.

1. Jane Bishop Lillegard (BA '85), Leslie Ramos (BA '98) and Kimberly Livingstone (BA '92) at Columbia Weekend.  
Photo: Camila Cediell (BA '16)
2. Tatiana Holifield (BA '05), Daniel Gay (BA '13), Lauren Cameron (BA '10), President Kwang-Wu Kim, Dick Joseph (BA '14), Allison Shuman (BA '14), Michael Wojcik (BA '96), Jeffrey Kinney (BA '87) and Rick Cohen (BA '07) gather at CNN headquarters in New York City.  
Photo: Katie Levine (BA '14)
3. Gene Gordon (BA '04), Juan Montelongo (BA '06) and Christy Hamilton (MAM '15) mingle at the LA Holiday Party.  
Photo: Alexander Kinnan (BA '95)

# CLASS NOTES

SUBMIT YOUR CLASS NOTES AT [COLUM.EDU/CLASSNOTES](http://COLUM.EDU/CLASSNOTES)

## 1970s

**LEONARD AMATO** (BA '75) was on season four of HBO's *Project Greenlight*. Amato was also elected to the board of trustees of Columbia College Chicago in October 2015.

**CHARLIE CARNER** (BA '78) directed the film *JL Ranch* starring Jon Voight, James Caan and Teri Polo.

**JEFFREY JUR** (BA '76) shot for several television series, including *Halt and Catch Fire*, *Masters of Sex* and *Colony*.

**DECLAN QUINN** (BA '79) is the cinematographer on the drama *The Shack*, starring Octavia Spencer. He also shot the 2015 film *Ricki and the Flash*, written by Diablo Cody and starring Meryl Streep.

## 1980s

**SUSAN BASS MARCUS** (MA '83) published her first novel, *Malevir: Dragons Return*, in November 2015 through Mill City Press.

**LAURA BARTON-COWPERTHWAIT** (BA '87) celebrated the 10th anniversary of her real estate company, Live Work Denver, which serves the real estate needs of artists, entrepreneurs and other creatives.

**D.V. DEVINCENTIS** ('89) was the executive producer of the FX series *The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story*.

**MAURO FIORE** (BA '87) was the director of photography for the 2015 film *Southpaw*. He also shot *The Magnificent Seven*, directed by Antoine Fuqua and starring Chris Pratt and Denzel Washington.

**MICHAEL GOI** (BA '80) was the cinematographer and a director for FX's *American Horror Story: Hotel*.

**RICHARD GOLDSCHMIDT** (BA '87) published *The Arthur Rankin, Jr. Scrapbook: The Birth of Animagic*. The book has been featured on

CNN, NPR and *You & Me* on WGIU.

**SHARON MESMER'S** (BA '83) essay "All Praise the Women of Menopause" ran in *The New York Times*.

**MARGARET RATTENBURY** (BA '89) became the executive director of the Lander Art Center near Cheyenne, Wyoming.



**James Richardson** (BA '86) animated characters for the documentary *Meet the Patels*, which was screened at Music Box Theatre as well as other theaters around the country.

**BRIAN SHAW** (BA '86) released his short film, *Four Monologues*, which featured numerous other Columbia College Chicago faculty, student and alumni talent.

**DINO STAMATOPOULOS** ('86) received a Best Animated Feature Oscar nomination for *Anomalisa*, which he produced.

**LAURA STEELE** (BA '84) joined the WISH-TV team as an Indianapolis 500 correspondent. She was the Indianapolis Motor Speedway's first female public address announcer and has been part of events at the track for 12 years.

**SERITA STEVENS** (BA '81) was appointed vice president of special projects for Vesuvian Media Group, an entertainment group that produces book-to-script content for film and vice versa.

## 1990s

**DANIEL ASMA'S** (BA '92) movie trailer company Buddha Jones won several 2015 Key Art Awards and 2015 Golden Trailer Awards. The company was acknowledged for its work on trailers and spots for *Mad Max: Fury Road*, *Selma* and *Spy*, among others.

**PHILLIP J. BARTELL** (BA '92) was the editor for the film *Miss You Already* starring Drew Barrymore and Toni Collette.

**ANDREW BAUMAN** (BA '96) celebrated the 10th anniversary of his sign and printing company, Creative Edge Visual Solutions.

**THOMAS BONZON** (BA '96) received an Allen Distinguished Educator Grant. The program recognizes and rewards teachers who provide students with opportunities to become thinkers, makers and creators through computer science, engineering and entrepreneurship.

**ANGELA DOLL CARLESON'S** (BA '90) latest book, *Garden in the East: The Spiritual Life of the Body*, will be published by Ancient Faith Publishing in 2016.

**CURT CLENDENIN** (BA '98) starred in the grindhouse horror film *Bloody Bobby* as Reggie Griffin and appears in the upcoming action horror film *Diablo Steel* as CJ Rodney. He is also helping to organize the October 2016 KaPow Intergalactic Film Festival and encourages alumni filmmakers to submit their projects to [kapowiff.com](http://kapowiff.com).

**JOY COATES** (BA '94) was promoted to associate director for the Center for Black Studies at Northern Illinois University.

**THURSTON COLEMAN** (BA '95) performed with the Cleveland Orchestra at its 36th annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Concert.

**COLLIN DANIEL** (BA '94) was the casting director for several television shows, including



## Alumni News & Notes

*Girl Meets World*, *Superstore* and *The Odd Couple*, as well as the upcoming autobiographical comedy series *Nicki*, starring Nicki Minaj.

**PAUL ANTHONY FLEMING III** ('99) won a Jeff Award for supporting actor in a play for his role as Queequeg in Lookingglass Theatre Company's *Moby Dick*.

**CRAIG GORE** (BA '99) and **TIMOTHY WALSH** ('00) are co-executive producers on NBC's *Chicago P.D.*, which was renewed for a fourth season.

**CHESTER GREGORY** (BA '95) stars as Berry Gordy in the national tour of *Motown the Musical*.

**AARON HARTLINE** ('96) is an animator on the Pixar Animation Studios film *Finding Dory*, the sequel to *Finding Nemo*.

**SCOTT HOLMGREN** (BA '90) is the executive producer, writer and director of the documentary *We Answered the Call*, which premiered at the Branson's Veterans Homecoming Week Film Festival in November 2015.

**SARA ISAACSON** ('99) was the casting director for MTV's *Scream: The TV Series* and Lifetime's *Manson's Lost Girls*.

**MICHAEL MATTHEWS** (BA '99) won an Ovation Award for Direction of a Play for *Failure: A Love Story* at the Coeurage Theatre Company in Los Angeles. Matthews also received the Milton Katselas Award for special achievement in direction from the Los Angeles Drama Critics Circle.

**SONDRA MAYER** (BA '98) wrote and produced a virtual reality horror short film entitled *Scarehouse Warehouse*.

**SUZY NAKAMURA** ('90) stars as Allison on the ABC sitcom *Dr. Ken* opposite Ken Jeong.

**MICHAEL OWENS** (BA '97) is the co-creator, director and executive producer of the show *Danger & Eggs*, which was released on Amazon Prime. It features the voice of *Saturday Night Live* cast member  **Aidy Bryant** (BA '09).

**TONYA PINKINS** (BA '96) plays Ethel Peabody, a recurring character on the Fox TV series *Gotham*. Pinkins also stars as Abigail in the



**Michael Drayton** (BA '96) wrote and produced six songs for Spike Lee's film *Chi-Raq*. **Erica Watson** (BA '98, MA '05) played Sugar Pie in the film.

upcoming feature film *Aardvark* alongside Jenny Slate and Zachary Quinto.

**CHRISTOPHER RIPANI** (BA '95) was appointed president of Speedco, Inc., in October 2015.

**SERGIO RODRIGUEZ** (BA '99) was elected acting village president and mayor of Summit, Illinois.

**KEN SENG** (BA '99) was the cinematographer for Marvel's *Deadpool*.

**ANNA SHAPIRO** (BA '90) was featured in *Newcity Stage's* annual listing of Chicago theatre leaders, "Players 2016: The Fifty People Who Really Perform for Chicago."

**CHE "RHYMEFEST" SMITH** ('98) and former student **COMMON** won a Grammy for their song "Glory" from the film *Selma* in the Best Song Written for Visual Media category. Smith also appeared on the *Crain's Chicago Business* "40 Under 40" list for 2015.

**ROBERT TEITEL'S** (BA '90) film about the Obamas' first date, *Southside With You*, was acquired by Miramax and will be released in partnership with Roadside Attractions.

**GEORGE TILLMAN JR.** (BA '91) directed the 2015 film *The Longest Ride*, based on a Nicholas Sparks novel. Tillman and **ROBERT TEITEL**

(BA '90) also produced *Barbershop: The Next Cut*, which stars Ice Cube, Nicki Minaj and former student **COMMON**.

**JILLIAN VENTRONE** (BA '96) published two books, *From the Navy to College* and *From the Army to College*.

**EDUARDO VILARO** (MA '99) was named artistic director and chief executive officer of Ballet Hispanico.

**KENNY YOUNG** (BA '93) is the writer and director of the film *They Don't Give a Damn: The Story of the Failed Chicago Projects*, which screened at the Pan African Film Festival in February.

### 2000s

**BRAD BISCHOFF'S** (BA '09) shorts and debut feature film *The Grasshopper* were screened at the Music Box Theatre as part of the Independent Filmmaker Project.

**AIDY BRYANT** (BA '09) wrote and starred in the short *Darby Forever* for Vimeo's Share the Screen program, which highlights female-led projects.

**BENJAMIN BUDZAK** (BA '08) created a rebranding graphics package for AMC at Troika Design Group in Los Angeles.

**CARLA CACKOWSKI** ('00) began hosting her own improv podcast, *Improv Yak*. Each week, Cackowski interviews a seasoned or first-year improviser about a specific technique she admires in their performance.

**SUSAN COOLEN** (MFA '03) was chosen as the first artist in residence at Region of Waterloo Library in Ontario, Canada.

**JOHNNY DERANGO** (BA '02) served as cinematographer on the film *Waffle Street*, starring Danny Glover and James Lafferty. The film won best feature narrative at the Hollywood Film Festival.

**HOLLY DE RUYTER'S** (BA '06) documentary *Old Fashioned: The Story of the Wisconsin Supper Club* screened at the Gene Siskel Film Center's Stranger Than Fiction series.

**BENJAMIN FUNKE** (BFA '05) was featured in a two-person exhibition titled *Chronic Fatigue* with sculptor Walter Early. The exhibition

was on display at Humboldt State University's First Street Gallery, where Funke also teaches.

**SAMANTHA GARRISON** (BA '09) has an online column, Fear the Chick Flick, on the website Film Takeout. *Spy* director Paul Feig tweeted that her review of the film made his year.

**PAIGE GRAY** (MA '08) was appointed visiting assistant professor in the department of English and Philosophy at the United States Military Academy at West Point.

**THERESA GULESERIAN** (BA '05) was the production designer for the HBO series *Togetherness*.

**DAVID HEINZ** (BA '02) wrote and directed his first feature film, *September 12th*, which was produced by Columbia faculty member **SAMANTHA SANDERS** (MFA '01).

**KYLE HELLER'S** (BA '08) company Cinematique released its cloud-based editor, which lets content creators make touchable video in under an hour. Kate Spade, Victoria's Secret and Louis Vuitton have tested this platform.

**ANDREW HODGES'S** (BA '01) Annie Award-winning animated series *Tumble Leaf* has been renewed by Amazon Studios for a second season.

**JOSELYN HUGHES** (BA '03) published a new book, *DIY, Dammit!: A Practical Guide to Curse-Free Crafting*.

**JEREMIH** ('09) was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best R&B Performance for his song "Planes" featuring J. Cole.

**KIMBERLY JOHNSON'S** (BA '06) multimedia and public relations firm Faceted Media was featured in *PR News' Corporate Social Responsibility & Green PR Guidebook*.

**ANGELA LAROCCA'S** (BA '08) one-woman show, *Undercover Undergrad*, which debuted at the St. Louis Fringe Festival, was featured in 2015 at the Los Angeles Improv Comedy Festival.

**KRISTEN LA ROCCA** (BA '08) celebrated the grand opening of her first clothing bou-

tique, *mink64*, in November 2015 in Crown Point, Indiana.

**MICHAEL DAVID LYNCH'S** (BA '05) directorial debut, *Dependent's Day*, had its world premiere at the 2016 Cinequest Film Festival. *Dependent's Day* stars **JOE BURKE** (BA '06) and **DAVID AUGUST** (BA '99). Burke also wrote the script along with **JOSH STAMAN** (BA '07), **LYNCH** and **JASON SMITH** (BA '06). **COLLIN SCHIFFLI** (BA '09) served as casting director.

**CARLOS 'ZUQY' CRUZ MARQUEZ** (BA '06) launched art magazine *zeuQuez* in 2015. The magazine is available on iTunes.

**DEVLIN MCCLUSKEY** ('07) and his band, The Dead Ships, performed at Coachella 2016.

**MELANIE MCCULLOUGH** (BA '04) starred in the Black Ensemble Theater's production of *Dynamite Divas* as Roberta Flack.

**DANIELLE NARCISSE** (BA '00) was promoted to copy chief at *Crain's Chicago Business*.

**JACK NEWELL** (BA '04) created the public art project Wabash Lights. The interactive light show stretches two blocks along Wabash Avenue, from Madison Street to Adams Street.

**MICHAEL PACHE** (BA '08) is the digital journalist for Phoenix's Fox 10 *News Now*.

**GREGORY PETERCA** ('08) was the live event producer, coordinating producer and assistant engineer for Karen Clark Sheard's album *Destined to Win*, which was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Gospel Album.

**DANIELLE RICCIARDI** (BFA '04) was an associate producer, still photographer, additional camera operator and assistant researcher on the hit Netflix documentary *Making a Murderer*.

**FELICIA SCHNEIDERHAN** (MFA '02) published her first book, *Newlyweds Afloat*.

**JAMES SIECZKA** ('05), aka Jimmy the Sound Guy, was profiled by Rycote, the makers of top-of-the-line production microphones.

**MICHAEL SILBERMAN** (BA '09) celebrated the third anniversary of his independent film

company, Great Eye Films.

**MICHAEL STAHL-DAVID** (BA '05) starred in a Hallmark Channel original movie, *Just in Time for Christmas*. Stahl-David has also been cast as Bobby Kennedy in *LBJ*, a film by Rob Reiner, alongside Woody Harrelson as Lyndon B. Johnson.

**AMANDA "A.J." STEIGER'S** (BA '05) debut novel, *Mindwalker*, was published by Penguin Random House.

**DERRICK TRUMBLY** (BA '05) started the non-profit organization Ed.Arts, which aims to free artists from student debt by educating them about managing college loans.

**RYAN URBAN** (BA '06) was featured in *Screen Magazine's* column "Beyond the Spot." Urban is the visual effects supervisor at The Mill in Chicago.

**NADINE VELAZQUEZ** (BA '01) starred in *The Bounce Back* and appeared in *Ride Along 2*, starring Kevin Hart and Ice Cube.

**LENA WAITHE** (BA '06) was signed by the talent agency William Morris Endeavor. Waithe will continue her role as Denise on *Master of None*, which has been renewed for a second season.

**BENNIE WODELL'S** (BA '06) sixth feature film, *Love Meet Hope*, won Best Dramatic Film at the Hollywood Reel Independent Film Festival.

2010s

**HANNA ASHBROOK** (BM '13) appeared on season nine of *The Voice*.

**KEIREN BALIBAN** (BA '13) was promoted to account executive at Carol Fox and Associates.

**MARTINA COMMON** (BA '12) released her first book, the autobiography *A Better Me*, through Tate Publishing.

**PRECIOUS DAVIS** (BA '13) became the first transgender bride to be featured on TLC's *Say Yes to the Dress*.

**JEWELL DONALDSON** (BA '15) and **JADE LUN'S** (BFA '15) advertising campaign for Allstate

## Alumni News & Notes



**Jess Dugan** (MFA '14) was chosen as a 2015 White House LGBT Artists Champion of Change. **Aaron Nelson** (BA '12) played Simba in the North American tour of Disney's *The Lion King*.



Insurance went live across the nation.

**IAN EDWARDS** (BA '10) was appointed public relations manager at Alexander Wang.

**ASHLEY LAUREN ELROD** (BA '11) released her second EP, *Warrior Rebirth*, and embarked on a 16-city tour in the summer of 2016.

**ERIK FASSNACHT'S** (MFA '13) new novel, *A Good Family*, was released in 2015 through St. Martin's Press.

**JESSICA GODWIN** (BA '05), **MALLORY MAEDKE** (BFA '14) and **ALEX NEWKIRK** (BFA '11) were backup vocalists for Broadway star Kristin Chenoweth at her Chicago Theatre performance in October 2015.

**KAZUKO GOLDEN'S** (MFA '14) film *A Song for Manzanar* was accepted into the Cannes Film Festival's short film catalog.

**TRACE HEADRICK** (BA '13) joined WXMI-TV Fox 17 as a senior producer.

**DARRYL HOLLIDAY** (BA '12) was awarded the Knight Foundation Grant for police data collection. The grant will fund his Citizens Police Data Project, which focuses on collecting and decoding police documents.

**SUE JO** (BA '13) recently won a Midwest Emmy Award for Outstanding Achievement in News Programming in Morning Newscast and Larger Markets.

**ERVIN JOHNSON'S** (BA '12) latest body of work, *#InHonor*, blends photography and paintings to honor those who lost their lives to police brutality and racism.

**LAUREN MCGRADY** (BA '11) and **THOMAS GAVIN** ('10) opened Rider Live, a boutique that sells vintage and refurbished furniture, women's clothing, apothecary items and artwork in the West Loop.

**JONATHAN MCREYNOLDS** (BM '11) was nominated for a 2016 Grammy in the Best Gospel Album category for his album *Life Music: Stage Two*.

**DIMITRI MOORE** (BA '11) was the operations coordinator for San Francisco's SF Sketchfest in January 2016. He also became a resident at the San Francisco Film Society.

**KEITH MORRIS'S** (BA '04) film *Blown Away* was accepted into the Cannes Film Festival's short film catalog.

**IZZY ONEIRIC'S** (MFA '10) poetry collection, *Crossing Bryan Ferry and Other Poems*, was published by Lavender Ink Press.

**MEGAN PITCHER** (MFA '14) and **LEO SELVAGGIO** (MFA '14) presented at the 2015 International Symposium on Electronic Arts Conference.

**KATELYN POTTS** (BA '15) opened Petoskey Cheese, an artisan cut-to-order cheese shop in northern Michigan.

**EVELYN SANCHEZ** (BA '12) was appointed as the community engagement program coordinator at Joffrey Ballet.

**ROSAURA SANCHEZ** (BA '14) received a Public Relations Society of America Skyline Award in Community Relations for her work in the Walgreens Expressions Challenge campaign.

**JESSIE SARDINA** (BA '14) was promoted to associate editor at *Modern Luxury Brides Chicago*.

**ZACHARY WCISLO** (BM '12) advanced through to the Hollywood portion on season 15 of *American Idol*.

### IN MEMORIAM

**MARK W. ANDERSON** (BA '06)

**RACHEL M. ANGRES** (BA '13)

**MARY A. BLINN** (BA '95)

**KAREN L. BROWN** (MA '96)

**NICOLE S. CHAKALIS** (BA '03)

**RYAN C. COSGROVE** (BA '00)

**EDWARD L. EATINGER** (BA '61)

**RYAN D. EDWARDS** ('08)

**CHARLES J. GIORNO** (BA '76)

**NICHOLAS P. JEANNIDES** (BA '00)

**MIKAL M. JOHNSON** ('09)

**JILL K. KRAFT** (BA '88)

**STEVEN LAFAYETTE** (BA '92)

**JAMES P. LYNAM** ('96)

**MICHAEL B. MCARDLE** (BA '88)

**ANN M. PARDO** (BA '79)

**SUZANNE M. PEARMAN** (BA '12)

**JONATHAN J. PIETTE** (BA '03)

**CHARLES B. REYNOLDS** (BA '80)

**DANIEL J. RIEKEN** ('03)

**ELIZABETH A. SHINEFLUG** (MA '86)

**THOMAS E. TOWLES** (BA '70)

**MARY WHITNEY** (BA '78)

### MARRIAGES

**JACK EDINGER** (BFA '06)

and **MAGGIE DIBARDINO** (BA '08)

**KYLE HELLER** (BA '08)

and **SARAPHINA MONACO** (BA '09)

**MICHAEL JARECKI** (BA '06)

and **MAGGIE DIANOVSKY** (BA '09)

**ANDREW WELBORN** (BA '07)

and **ELIZA SWIFT** ('07)

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Haitham Al-Rahim ('17) received the Columbia Internship Award to fund his internship at Spongecell, a programmatic ad agency.