

## Giving from the Heart, for Art

*UNM Alumni Couple's Gifts Support Student Scholarship, Faculty Enrichment*

By Hilary Mayall Jetty



UNM alumni Marilyn and Jack Carlson visit Bratislava, Slovakia, during a European vacation in 2009.

“Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.” This declaration by Pablo Picasso reveals a universal truth. It also hints at the educational and economic challenges faced by those choosing a life centered on creative pursuits.

The UNM College of Fine Arts meets those challenges. It encourages the practice of the arts in all their myriad forms, the appreciation of artistic expressions throughout history and cultures, and the pursuit of successful professional careers.

Marilyn Carlson's family was delighted that she decided to pursue a degree in art. Her mother was a gifted musician, and she inherited a love of art from her father, the noted painter, political cartoonist, calligrapher and illustrator Ralph W. Douglass.

From 1929 until 1961 Douglass taught studio art in UNM's College of Fine Arts (CFA), also serving as department chair for a decade. Among his many accomplishments are illustrations for the 1940s Mesaland series of children's books published by UNM Press, a popular textbook on calligraphy, and his work on the design of UNM's official seal (see page 3). Douglass' works were widely exhibited, and his liturgical art is represented at Albuquerque's First Presbyterian Church as well as in churches in Claremont and Fullerton, Calif.

In 1961, the year Douglass retired, Marilyn received her BFA degree in drawing and painting from the CFA and her husband-to-be, Jack Carlson, graduated with a BS degree in electrical engineering from the UNM College of Engineering (now the School of Engineering).

To honor her father's artistic and academic legacies and express their high regard for the arts, Marilyn and Jack have established the Ralph W. Douglass Scholarship Endowment for graduate students majoring in studio art or art history.

“As alumni, the Carlsons know so much about UNM, and have passion for what they want to nurture,” said Kymberly N. Pinder, PhD, dean of the UNM College of Fine Arts. “As the daughter of an artist and art professor, and an artist herself, Marilyn has a natural understanding for the struggles artists go through, and the support they need.”

“I always appreciated art, painted and did calligraphy, which my dad taught me when I was young,” noted Marilyn. “I attended Occidental College in Los Angeles, but transferred to UNM. Of course one reason was Jack,” she laughed, “but my father encouraged me to pursue a BFA.”

(Continued on page 3)

## Compassionate Care

*Seattle Nurse Practitioner and UNM Alumna Navigates Health Care System for Patients*

By Michelle G. McRuiz

The term “whisperer” refers to someone with a unique ability to break through barriers where no one else has succeeded. As a nurse practitioner and the owner of a medical advocacy business called Health Whisperer, Hari Kaur Khalsa ('94 MSN) challenges herself to do this every day. She serves as a link between patients and their providers, helping her clients navigate the health care system.

Hari, who lives in Seattle, has operated Health Whisperer for the past seven years. Her work demands expertise, patience and compassion. She now shares some of that compassion with UNM's College of Nursing as a donor.



Hari Khalsa, UNM College of Nursing alumna: “UNM is a jewel.”

### *Mending a Broken System*

“We have a fractured health care system,” Hari said. “Nobody talks to each other. There are great doctors at hospitals, but they are often not there for the patients; they're serving their institutions.” As a result, patients often can have a hard time seeing their providers, receiving appropriate care, and having their wants and needs heard. Whether her clients have issues about billing, medical services or appeals, Hari remains neutral, trying to accomplish what is best for the patient.

“You're never just dealing with the client,” she explained. “You're dealing with the family. You have to be extraordinarily patient and kind.”

Recently she helped a client win an appeal to a health insurer. “I was able to save my client \$150,000,” she said. “But what gets me going every day is the relationships with the family and many of the medical people.”

### *Back in Touch*

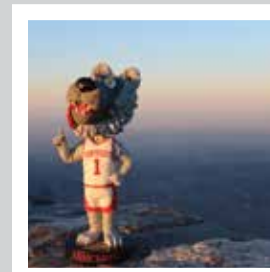
“I was never going to give any money to UNM or any other school; I don't know why,” Hari admitted. But in 2010 she received a College of Nursing newsletter, and something about it impressed her. “It only talked about nursing and nurse practitioners,” she said. “I was grateful to see that. I sat down and wrote a check.” She always directs her gifts to the nurse practitioner program.

“When I went to UNM, the nurse practitioner program was new,” she recalled. “I was in the third class, and they accepted only eight people.”

Joann Weiss, who was associate dean for graduate nursing programs at the time, was a huge help to Hari, who had been struggling from not having been in school for a long time as well as making the cultural adjustment from living in India for five years to living in the United States again. “[Joann] is one of the reasons why I'm back in touch with UNM,” Hari said. “She kept me in the program. She really could see who you were in your struggle.”

“UNM is a jewel,” she added. “It really teaches you to be independent, and that sets it apart from other schools.” ◀

## GOT #LOBOVISION? Turn the page to see ours . . .



Eric | Class of 2014 | Lobos on top of the world. Took this while checking out the first sunrise of spring. #unm #lobos #sandiacrest #landscape



Saya | Class of 2014 | Well this happened. #ArchitectureGrad #UNM #lobovision



Caitlin | Class of 2014 | This wraps up my whole semester. #lobovision

Earlier this year, the UNM Foundation began its electronic receipt (e-receipt) program. This initiative saves time, money and paper. Please e-mail us at [gopaperless@unmfund.org](mailto:gopaperless@unmfund.org) to receive your gift receipt via e-mail.

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# #Lobovision Campaign Gains Glimpse into UNM Student Experience

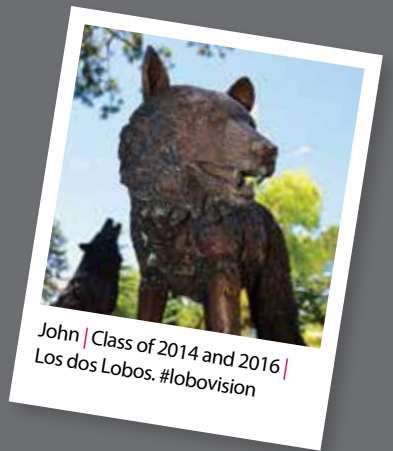
#Lobovision, a student social media campaign spearheaded by the UNM Foundation, was designed to collect amateur photography through Instagram (a social media photo-sharing app) from UNM students willing to share their “Lobo vision” with alumni and friends of the University. Hundreds of photos were submitted by students and alumni, a few of which are featured here—still more appeared in the recent UNM Foundation Annual Report of Giving (see [unmfund.org/lobovision](http://unmfund.org/lobovision) to view them online). Go Lobos!



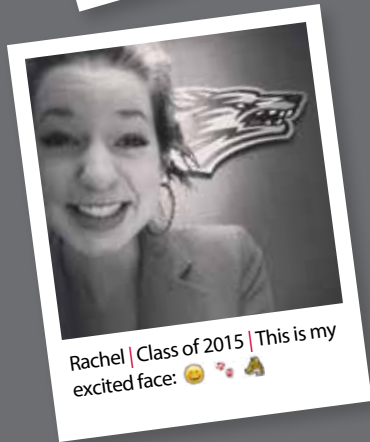
Caleb | Class of 2018 | This campus tho. #unm #lobovision #fall



Kelly | Class of 2013 | LOBOS! BABY!!! WolfPack!! #UNM #Lobos #grad #cherryandsilver #lobovision



John | Class of 2014 and 2016 | Los dos Lobos. #lobovision



Rachel | Class of 2015 | This is my excited face: 🐾 🐾 🐾



Nathan | Class of 2016 | Heading to Smith Plaza. #lobos #unm #lobovision



Chi Lan | Class of 2018 | Many choices: go straight, turn right, or turn left? #vscocam #nm #abq #unm #lobovision

To view more photos submitted during the #Lobovision campaign, please search #lobovision on Instagram on your smart phone or visit [iconosquare.com/tag/lobovision](http://iconosquare.com/tag/lobovision) online. Everyone's a Lobo. Woof woof woof!

## Caring for Future Generations

### UNM's First Pediatric Resident Honored with Endowed Chair at School of Medicine

By Michelle G. McRuiz



Dr. Alice Cushing examines a young patient during a check-up in 1969. Photo: Courtesy UNM Health Sciences Center

From 1965 to 1995, Alice H. Cushing, MD, served on the pediatrics faculty of the UNM School of Medicine. Recently, the school's Department of Pediatrics established the Alice H. Cushing Endowed Chair, which will help recruit and retain outstanding faculty as well as enhance training and research capabilities.

Alice, a native of Hobbs, N.M., became a physician in the 1950s, when it was neither common nor rare for women to pursue medicine. And although she had known for a long time that she wanted to study science, the pediatrics part came as a surprise.

After earning a bachelor's degree in biology from UNM, Alice enrolled at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. (New Mexico did not yet have a medical school, and Colorado offered an interstate program for such states.) After graduating with her MD degree in 1952, Dr. Cushing and her husband moved back to Albuquerque, where she interned at what was then Bernalillo County Indian Hospital (BCIH, which became Bernalillo County Medical Center in 1968 and eventually UNM Hospital). She wanted to become a surgeon, but changed her mind after her son was born.

“When I saw this baby, I liked him pretty much,” she said with a chuckle, “and wanted to stay home with him.” Doing so gave her a practical perspective on her career as a physician. “I realized that most patients wouldn't choose a woman surgeon,

and I really liked kids,” she continued. Longtime BCIH/UNMH pediatric faculty member Dr. Robert Tully urged Dr. Cushing to start a pediatrics residency. Taking his advice, she became the first person to complete a BCIH pediatric residency and to pass her pediatric board certification examination.

During her career, Dr. Cushing served as an assistant professor, professor, and acting chair of the Department of Pediatrics—and is now a professor emerita at the school. “I loved children's honesty and openness,” she said. “Children were never alcoholics or hypochondriacs. It was good for me to see them get well; it was misery for me to see the ones who wouldn't get well.”

Now 84, Dr. Cushing is sharp, active, and a longtime donor to UNM—to Zimmerman Library and the School of Medicine. She appreciates how the Department of Pediatrics' leadership has valued the importance of caring for patients and their families—and in turn, the communities of New Mexico.

“The department has done great work and continues to do so,” said Dr. Cushing. And that's important because, above all, the discipline of pediatrics addresses the health and well-being of future generations. ◀



Dr. Alice Cushing as acting chair of the UNM School of Medicine Department of Pediatrics. Photo: Courtesy Dr. Stuart Winter

## Launching a Rising Star

### Former UNM Opera Student Grateful for Music Education, Scholarships

*Editor's note: The following is adapted from a letter from Alexandra Martinez, a 2013 UNM magna cum laude graduate who earned a bachelor's degree in music. This fall, she began work on her master's degree at the University of Southern California's Thornton School of Music.*

I always looked forward to my weekly music classes during elementary school in Albuquerque, which ignited my passion for music and the arts. I soon began singing in our music productions, continuing in middle- and high-school choirs.

Music served as a welcome outlet from familial hardships, due to my parents' struggles with addiction. Eventually I made the difficult decision to move out at age 16, relying on work, fund-raisers and sponsors to provide the educational opportunities I sought. Dance and music helped me cope early on; they also reinforced the concepts of hard work, discipline and determination.

After hearing my first opera aria, I knew I would be involved with music for the rest of my life, and that I would work very hard to make it happen. I began paying for private voice lessons at age 17. During my senior year in high school, I auditioned for the UNM Music Department, and with only a year of formal music

education, I was admitted as a voice student with a small scholarship. Without this first scholarship, I am sure that going to college would not have been possible. Because of donors like you, I was able to begin my journey toward a high-caliber music education.

Scholarships alone provided me the opportunity to be a first-generation college graduate. While at UNM, I received the following scholarships, among others: University College's VISTA Scholarship, Music Department Scholarships, UNM Parent Association Scholarship, and the Marion Monical Scholarship and the Glen T. Simpson Scholarship at UNM's College of Fine Arts.

While at UNM, I built lifelong relationships with students and faculty, relationships I will cherish forever. I performed in several UNM groups, including Las Cantantes, Concert Choir and the UNM Opera Theatre. My long-term goals include realizing a successful opera career and, ultimately, creating and directing a scholarship-based school of the arts for young people in New Mexico.

Thank you for being a donor to UNM, providing opportunities for students like me to reach their full potential. Your support truly makes a difference! ◀



Recent UNM graduate Alexandra Martinez stars as Anna in Puccini's “Le Villi” at UNM's Keller Hall, February 2013. Photo: Wes Namen



# UNM People Changing Worlds

## Greening the Peace Movement

### UNM Alumnus Wins Peace Prize for Green Technologies Work in Developing World

By Anna Adams

The green movement is connected to peace,” said Peter Nardini, winner of the 2014 Paul Ré Peace Prize, administered biennially by the University of New Mexico Foundation. “There is a lot more violence in the world when resources are scarce.”

This past May, Peter won the peace prize for his work with his non-profit organization, Green World Health Net (GWHN). He founded GWHN in 2008 with one massive goal: to bring green technologies to improve health in underdeveloped countries around the world. He has served as its executive director ever since.

“At first our organization was called African Health Net,” Peter recalled, as he was first inspired to create the nonprofit while volunteering in Ghana, a West African country. “But then we realized that we wanted to have a larger, more global impact.”

One GWHN program, Recycle Health New Mexico, works not only on a global scale but also involves UNM students. Based in New Mexico, the program offers two work-study positions for students. To find participants for the project, Peter returned to UNM, where his wife, Katrina, is currently working on her master’s degree in public health. “We are very much trying to involve UNM in our work,” said Peter.

Recycle Health New Mexico rescues medical equipment that would otherwise go in New Mexico landfills. GWHN then partners with Project C.U.R.E., an organization which sorts, fixes and then distributes the supplies and equipment to hospitals in developing countries.

In 2013 alone, Recycle Health New Mexico prevented approximately 13 tons of medical supplies and equipment—estimated to be worth nearly \$4.5 million—from going into New Mexico landfills, which instead ended up helping under-resourced hospitals provide better health care. “It’s very much a local project,” said Peter. “We are solving a problem in New Mexico and globally.”

Other GWHN work in New Mexico includes workshops at UNM and with the general public, at which participants are taught how to make their own solar panels for household use and charging mobile devices as well as how to make LED lights.

The Boko Bed Net Project, one of the first GWHN programs, provides solar-powered cooling systems to malaria nets that are otherwise too hot to use. It has garnered a lot of attention with the release of a short film, “The Boko Bed Net Project.” Clips from the documentary can be watched on GWHN’s YouTube channel, [GreenWorldHealthNet.com](http://GreenWorldHealthNet.com), at [youtube.com/user/GreenWorldHealthNet](http://youtube.com/user/GreenWorldHealthNet).



Peter Nardini greets staff at Nana Dikya Hospital in Dixcove, Ghana as they receive a shipment of much needed medical supplies and equipment from Direct Relief International and Green World Health Net.

The film also discusses Peter’s first trip to Ghana in 2006, when he was inspired to found GWHN. He and Katrina volunteered there for three months at Dixcove Hospital.

“The people of Ghana are wonderful. They make the best of what they have,” said Peter.

After designing and building a water system for the hospital, Peter realized that he wanted to do more development projects in the country; he had previous experience with such work while in the Peace Corps.

“I’d known that I wanted to join the Peace Corps ever since I was a kid,” recalled Peter. “And I did it backwards. Most people join the Peace Corps before they get their master’s degrees, but I did it after.”

After receiving a dual master’s degree in community and regional planning and Latin American studies from UNM, Peter volunteered with the Peace Corps from 2001 to 2004. He served as a basic sanitation specialist in Bolivia, designing and building water systems among other side projects, such as introducing highly nutritious peanut butter to the local diet.

The Peace Corps also proved to be significant to Peter in another way—it was during this service that he met Katrina. The couple later moved to San Francisco, where Katrina studied to become a nurse-midwife and Peter began work as managing director of Volunteers for Inter-American Development Assistance (VIDA), an organization that sends medical supplies to hospitals in Latin America.

Looking for a new volunteer opportunity around this time, the couple decided to make their first trip to Ghana, which they chose for its English-speaking populace.

“In some ways Bolivia prepared me for Ghana, but the scale of poverty was much more extreme than I was expecting,” said Peter. “It was an eye-opener.”

GWHN continues to work in Ghana today with the Boko Bed Net Project. This year has seen a significant expansion of this project involving several malaria research teams and organizations currently working there. The Albuquerque-based organization also continues to run the Recycle Health New Mexico program, recovering medical supplies and equipment throughout the state.

Peter believes it is important for people in developing countries like Ghana to gain their first exposure to technology through alternative technologies, expressing his concern for greenhouse gases and global warming. He hopes to expand GWHN’s projects to more countries in the future.

“This is completely necessary work,” said Peter. “It is our future, and we don’t have another choice.” ◀



Katrina and Peter Nardini take a break from their work with Green World Health Net with a walk on Lagoon Beach in Akwadaa, Ghana.

## Giving from the Heart, for Art

(Continued from page 1)

“The education I received in electrical engineering was excellent,” said Jack. “It led me to interesting and exciting work that lasted throughout my entire career, from North American Aviation to Rockwell and Boeing. From the Douglass family, I learned to appreciate music and art in every form,” he added.



Marilyn Carlson’s father, Ralph Douglass, helped design the official UNM Seal, above.

Jack’s work took them to Europe and beyond, including several years living in Sydney, Australia. Although they now reside in Southern California as active volunteers in their community and church, Jack and Marilyn’s spirits have always remained connected with the land of their childhoods and UNM.

Several well-known artists were Douglass’ colleagues during his tenure, and on the walls of the Carlson home hang works by some of New Mexico’s seminal painters, including Kenneth Adams, Randall Davey, Lez Haas and Gene Kloss. Sculptor and former UNM professor John Tatschl created a carving, installed on campus, in memory of Marilyn’s older brother Don, a UNM student who lost his life during WWII.

When Dean Pinder shared another goal she envisioned, specifically for the benefit of faculty members, the concept resonated deeply with the Carlsons.

“With a commitment of support, tenured and tenure-track faculty would be able to take advantage of amazing opportunities,” Dean Pinder explained. “For example, they would be able to access funding to pay for expenses involved with exhibiting their work, accept an invitation to deliver a paper or perform abroad, or attend a class or conference to advance their professional practice.”

Through a charitable remainder trust, the couple is establishing the Jack and Marilyn Carlson Endowment for Faculty Enrichment for Art and Art History in Honor of Ralph Douglass.

“Most professors work not just for money, but for the love of practicing their art, and teaching,” said Dean Pinder. “This will help us attract and retain quality faculty, providing funds that can be used to further their work and bring those experiences and accomplishments back to campus, our students and Albuquerque.”

At home, the Carlsons enjoy receiving updates on a variety of campus activities. “Our association with UNM brings announcements of so many wonderful shows, lectures and programs to our mailbox,” said Marilyn. They occasionally visit one of their three sons, who lives in Santa Fe, and whenever possible they delight in returning to the energetic environment of UNM. ◀



# A Dream Turns to Action for Peace

## UNM Alumna Carol Merrill Establishes Scholarship in Son's Memory

By Anna Adams

Three months before her son passed away, Carol Merrill woke up with a dream. "I told him about it," said Carol. "He couldn't speak any longer, but he gave it his thumbs up."

The dream involved creating the Issa Sakaki Merrill Scholarship, which Carol has since accomplished in memory of her son, Issa. Stricken with Batten's Disease, an extremely rare neurological disorder, Issa passed away February 23, 2013 at age 32. Three days after his death, Carol held the first meeting to arrange the scholarship for political science and peace studies students at UNM.

"Issa wanted to go into law and politics because he wanted to make a difference," said Carol. "But he was never able to realize that goal."

Yet Issa did make an impact on those around him during his life. He was an active volunteer for Albuquerque Sister Cities, participating in fund-raising even when he could barely walk. He also went to Santa Fe for a Hiroshima Day commemoration, an occasion close to his history.

Issa's father, Nanao Sakaki, a well-known Japanese poet, walked through Hiroshima just three days after the atomic bombing. He was looking for a friend who lived in the city.

"Even doctors have said that Issa's disease could have come from his father's exposure to the radiation, but there's no way to know," Carol commented. "We don't know."

Like Issa's father, Carol is also a poet. While completing her master's degree at UNM in TESOL

(Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages), Carol worked on weekends as one of Georgia O'Keeffe's caregivers. She later published a book of poetry about her experience called "O'Keeffe, Days in a Life."

Carol also worked as a teacher and librarian at both Albuquerque Public Schools and Santa Domingo Pueblo. Since her son died, she has been working on the scholarship—with a lot of help along the way.

"Dr. Fred Harris, one of Issa's professors at UNM, was the first person to donate," said Carol. "Issa loved his class." More than 100 people have donated to the scholarship fund so far, and Carol hopes to grow that number in the future.

"I want the students who receive the scholarship to know that it comes from not just one person, but from hundreds of people who are investing in their visions of peace on Earth," said Carol.

Issa was named after this vision of peace. His name means "one" and "cup of tea" from the Japanese tea ceremony developed to end civil war in Japan. Carol encourages people to donate to the scholarship fund to further this goal of peace—to make a difference like Issa wanted to. "Contribute," she said. "Celebrate who Issa was, and who he might have been."

To donate to the Issa Sakaki Merrill Scholarship, please visit [unmfund.org/fund/issa-sakaki-merrill](http://unmfund.org/fund/issa-sakaki-merrill).



Issa Sakaki Merrill Photo: Courtesy Carol Merrill

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# developments

Supporting UNM sustainability initiatives: this newsletter is printed by a "green printer" on 100% PCW recycled paper, FSC certified, domestically produced and printed with vegetable-based inks that are low VOC (volatile organic compounds). To support UNM's sustainability programs, please contact the UNM Foundation for more information.

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- The Tom L. Popejoy Society, recognizing cumulative lifetime giving of \$50,000 or more.



Photo: John Clark

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