1 News and Notes
Events and happenings on campus and with alumni around the world.

2 Student Spotlight
This issue’s student spotlight is on MFA candidate Sarah Martin. Sarah was the recipient of the Graduate Professional Development Grant from the Nanovic Institute, which took her to Oxford.

2 Vlcek Prize
Mansour Oueisanah was awarded the Vlcek Prize for Creative Promise in Design.

3 Department Visitors
Both Charlotte Lux and Scott Shim made their way to the Notre Dame campus to talk to the Design program.

4 Ken Visocky O’Grady
Ken was a guest at the University of Notre Dame, presenting to both the program and local attendees in addition to sitting in on design classes.

5 Introducing...Penina Acayo
Meet the new addition to the faculty, Penina Acayo. Peni joined the faculty in the fall of 2013 and offered a new class, Packaging Design.

6 Design Doing Good
Emily Hoffman gives us a look into this past summer’s trip to Uganda. She talks about how this trip was an example of using design for good.

7 Catching Up With...
We caught up with 1990 alum Brian Doherty. He talks about his career in design and his life after graduation.

7 Keeping Up With Alumni
Alumni notes from graduates around the world, as well as future alumni.

Printmaking MFA Laurie Hunt graduated from the design program in 2009. After interning for various letterpress shops in Nashville and Chicago, she worked as a graphic designer while taking printmaking classes at night in Washington, D.C. Making her way to Grand Rapids, MI, in 2012, she is currently working towards an MFA in printmaking at Kendall College of Art and Design. Laurie’s latest project was an opportunity to have her work displayed in Grand Rapids’ Gerald R. Ford International Airport. The exhibit is titled Bodies of Water and features monotypes with mixed media prints of the Great Lakes and inland lakes in Western Michigan and will be up through this August.

Graphics and Visual Communications Author
Professor Robert Sedlack served as the lead author for the book Graphics and Visual Communication for Managers. As of April 2014, the book has been adopted by 46 institutions of higher learning. Most recently, the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania adopted the book for its graduate program.

VCID1 Date Night Marriage
A tradition since 2006, VCD1 date night (formerly GD1 date night) allows students to go out for dinner and a cultural event either on or off campus with their classmates. Laura Vanderlic (formerly Laura Laws), asked her best friend Will to go with her during her sophomore year.

“The situation was awkward because he obviously liked me, and I did not want to date him. Regardless, there was no way I could take anyone else. I’d have to caveat the invitation.” Laura sent Will a text asking him to come over and talk, which she recently found out he responded to, in his mind, “Nooooo, you can't send me the ‘We have to talk’ text! We aren’t even dating!” Will went to Laura's room anyway and they talked. Laura was unable to look him in the eye, instead tracing the lines in the concrete wall. Laura asked Will to be her date to VCD1 date night saying, “I know you like me but I don’t want to start dating right now...Not that we wouldn't maybe date in the future...Now is just not a good time...however... There’s this VCD1 date night with my class coming up, and I don’t want to take anyone else...So would you go with me?” Will accepted despite the fact that his crush had made it blatantly obvious that she didn’t want any dates in the near future. Laura and Will got married this past Summer. To think it all started at VCD1 date night. Congratulations!

2014 ID Student Merit Recipient Senior BFA
Emily Hoffman, was chosen to present her work at the IDSA Midwest District Competition that took place on April 24th. Hoffman’s presentation focused on her senior thesis project, Remed. This project combined Emily’s interests in both product design and medical care to create a portable nursing system that is mobile and easily adaptable. The system is personalized to the patient and nurse. It allows for nursing care outside the confines of the hospital walls.
STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: SARAH MARTIN

Sarah Martin is an MFA candidate in Art, Art History, and Design, with a concentration in Visual Communication Design. The Nanovic Institute awarded Sarah a Graduate Professional Development Grant to attend the 2nd Global Conference: The Graphic Novel, sponsored by Inter-Disciplinary.Net’s At the Interface hub. Sarah recently wrote about her experience:

Thanks to support from the Nanovic Institute, I was able to present my paper, “Bad Things Happen: Navigating Graphic Narratives, Fairytales, and Morals in New Spaces” at the 2nd Global Conference: The Graphic Novel, sponsored by Inter-Disciplinary.Net’s At the Interface hub. This international conference took place at Oxford, England between September 21-25, 2013, and my research was presented during the session entitled “Graphic Novels in the 21st Century.” I received invaluable feedback on my research from Oxford and Cambridge scholars, in addition to international academics like Daniel Merlin Goodbrey, renowned creator of experimental digital hypercomics and web comics pioneer. The feedback was incredibly positive, and I am now fortunate to have made useful connections with writers and artists around the world. I networked with graphic narrative practitioners and researchers who are equally interested in European fairytale and myth-making for children. I was invited to submit my work to other international conferences that discuss the issue of contemporary graphic narratives as well. From this professional development opportunity, my paper will be published in a peer-reviewed e-book, plus it has the opportunity to be published in hardback later this year.

Because of this opportunity, I gained experience chairing a session at a conference, which was a completely new undertaking. For the session entitled “Adaptation and the Graphic Novel,” I introduced speakers, panels, and presenters, while also chairing the question session and mediating the clock. Also, I now have a comfortable understanding of the way international conferences work in terms of academic ethos and panel discussions. For example, I had the extreme fortune of attending a conference that was very open-minded and idea-friendly. Plus, I was also able to build on my summer research in Nepal by attending and participating in sessions like, “Graphic Myths and visions of the future,” “Other cultures, other voices, other words,” and “Cultural appropriations, east to west and globalization.”

In my down time I researched the academic environment of Oxford. I visited the Ashmolean Art Museum and Exeter Hall, the home of other great myth-makers such as J.R.R. Tolkien and Lewis Carroll. The history of fairytale and story-telling is rich in Oxford, England, as every building has a deep and sometimes magical history. I was able to briefly research old English fairytale in archaic books and collections at the Ashmolean, while also viewing an installation of a camera obscura—a traditional device once used for renaissance drawing.

Without support from the Nanovic Institute, I would not have been able to cover the costs associated with airfare, conference registration, room and board, and domestic travel.

In a practical sense, Mansour Ourasanah has always been an artist and designer. Drawing came to him naturally, and was a mechanism for coping with the “agony of poverty and the absence of my parents,” who left him at two in Togo, West Africa, “in a search of a better life in the United States.” As a boy, he was already solving problems through design. He made “soccer balls out of discarded plastic bags and toy cars out of discarded aluminum cans.” He had more trouble mastering the discipline of study, and this he notes was taught by the strict aunt who raised him: “How will you explain your art to the world if you can’t talk or write?”

At sixteen, Mansour was reunited with his parents, in New York City, carrying off the plane with him at JFK dreams of becoming a cartoonist. But speaking only French and believing he owed it to his parents to be “more than just an artist,” he turned to math. He conquered that subject, as well as English, graduated fifth in his class, and won the prestigious New York Times Scholarship. He enrolled at the University of Notre Dame, in engineering, but couldn’t silence the siren call of art. In his sophomore year, “by accident,” he discovered design. “I knew I was born to be a designer,” he says. Yet he struggled, unable to “grasp the concept of American aesthetics and the verbiage to convey the complex ideas in my mind.” He credits his senior-year instructor, Ann Marie Conrado, for his breakthrough, which led to the 2007 IDSA (Industrial Designers Society of America) Midwest District Merit Award and, in 2008, an IDEA (Industrial Design Excellence Award). A job offer followed, from Bresslergroup, a Philadelphia design consultancy, where for two years he developed brand-name household and medical products.

In 2009, he went back to school, at the renowned Umea Institute of Design, in Sweden, where he earned his master’s in Advanced Product Design. His thesis, “LEPSIS: The Art of Growing Grasshoppers,” an innovative kitchen appliance optimized for neatly breeding grasshoppers and turning them into food, was the expression of his “immersion in the reality he sought to change” and of his desire to design products to “solve problems un conventionally and beautifully,” even those as daunting as global warming and world hunger—the latter for him particularly resonant. As a young child, Mansour was one of the two billion people around the globe who consume insects to supplement their protein-deficient diets. Born in Tchamba, a tiny village in Togo—the type of place civilization seems to avoid—he remembers “scavenging for grasshoppers and crickets on days when we didn’t have enough to eat.” LEPSIS was a runner-up for the coveted INDEX: Design to Improve Life Award.

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THE VILCEK PRIZE FOR CREATIVE PROMISE IN DESIGN

Currently a senior designer at Whirlpool’s Advanced Studio in Chicago, Mansour’s work has been featured on CNN and in such publications as Fast Company, Wired, Gizmodo, Engadget, Popular Science, and The Guardian. His future goal is “to own a studio in New York where I can design products that improve our human experiences and challenge our sustainable paradigm.” He also hopes “to inspire poor kids around the world to change their reality and make a difference through artistic endeavors.”

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**CHARLOTTE LUX: BACK AT NOTRE DAME**

Charlotte Lux, a researcher at Insight, came back to the University of Notre Dame earlier in the year as a guest lecturer. Charlotte graduated with a MFA in Industrial Design in 2011 and since then has been at both IA Collaborative and Insight Product Development as a Design Researcher.

During her graduate time at the University of Notre Dame, Charlotte focused her final thesis project on rethinking the way in which patients with breast cancer experience a diagnostic test. Charlotte developed a different procedure, a stereotactic breast biopsy, which is an assessment doctors are able to use in order to follow up with patients in regard to abnormal or somewhat concerning mammogram results.

After Charlotte's completion of her Master's, Charlotte went on to IA Collaborative in Chicago and then on to Insight Product Development where she is currently located. Insight Product Development is a company that helps clients in designing and evolving products in ways that will both support and foster innovation. As a Design Researcher, Charlotte translates her findings into design solutions and stressed how important this is to Notre Dame's current undergraduate and graduate students that she met.

During her visit at Notre Dame, Charlotte gave an overview of user research. In addition, she talked about how various methods can be used in order to strengthen the design process. Charlotte presented examples of work from her time at Notre Dame, as well as work from Insight Product Development. Her goal in doing this was to demonstrate the different uses of research methods and how these methods will help to foster and create final design solutions. Charlotte was also able to individually advise industrial and visual communication design students on strategies for incorporating user research into their undergraduate and graduate thesis projects.

This was Charlotte's first time back to Notre Dame since the move from Riley Hall to West Lake Hall so she was able to see the changes firsthand. When asked about her time back at Notre Dame she said, “It was great to be back at ND and I really enjoyed working with the students. I was very impressed with the depth and quality of both the graduate and undergraduate work that was shared with me. I’m particularly excited to see a growing emphasis on research and the recognition of its value not only as a means of identifying needs and opportunities within a given problem space, but also of testing a hypothesis at multiple points throughout the design process. It’s nice to see students gaining firsthand experience with research methods that make their design work stronger and, more importantly, prepare them for jobs that require a holistic understanding of the product development process.”

**SCOTT SHIM: A BUCKEYE AT NOTRE DAME**

In late January this past Spring, Associate Professor of Industrial Design at The Ohio State University visited the University of Notre Dame to give a lecture to the Design department. Scott talked about his Industrial Design experience and his time since starting at The Ohio State University.

Scott received his Bachelor’s degree in Industrial Design from the University of Illinois-Chicago and his Master of Arts in Design Development from The Ohio State University. After finishing his Masters, Scott spent a good amount of time at Daewoo Electronics Design Center. Here he was involved in numerous consumer projects that were sold to international markets. During this time, Scott also received upwards of thirty design patents and multiple design awards. After his time at Daewoo Electronics Design Center, Scott went to Purdue University where he was an Associate Professor of Industrial Design and of Visual and Performing Arts. Having more than ten years of personal and professional design experience, Scott was able to integrate lessons he had learned into his teaching. While at Purdue, Scott was a part of developing a tricycle bike that shifts from a tricycle to a bike as the rider speeds up and then back to a tricycle as the riders slows back down. Scott and two other collaborators came up with the idea that made quite an impact on consumers as an easier way to teach their young children to ride their bicycles and make that transition from three-wheels to two wheels.

Following his time at Purdue, Scott headed to Columbus, Ohio in 2009 to be an Associate Professor at The Ohio State University. Scott has been very involved in entrepreneurial design research and projects that have been patented by the Office of Technology and Commercialization. It is this involvement that keeps Scott abreast of trends which he is then able to translate over to his teaching in the classroom. In addition to teaching, Scott has recently collaborated with Honda Motors America, Nationwide Children’s Hospital and Ohio Department of Natural Resources. These collaborations have continued to gain him national recognition. Scott’s design work has been recognized for ten-plus years, winning him numerous awards and patents. His work has been honored in many national and international publications, most notably, the cover of TIME Magazine. Scott’s visit to Notre Dame opened the eyes of design students to the world of possibilities that lie outside of the collegiate world. Scott was a great inspiration and give a lecture that stuck in the mind of all who attended.
Ken Visocky O’Grady brought a very light and infectious happiness when he visited the University of Notre Dame this past Spring. As a former professor of both Anne Berry and Peni Acayo, two Notre Dame design professors, he was welcomed with open arms and spoke to different topics that both Anne and Peni have started to integrate into their teaching curriculum. Ken gave a stimulating lecture that caused all that attended to walk away with an enlightened opinion of the design research and information process.

Ken is an Associate Professor of Visual Communication Design at Kent State University. He has both a Bachelor of Science and a Master of Fine Arts degree from Kent State University which is where he has continued to teach both graduate and undergraduate students since 2003. When talking about Kent State, it is more than apparent that Ken absolutely loves his place of work and the students that he teaches and has taught. He brings such an enthusiasm for design that is very important when it comes to educating these students. Ken’s wife, Jenn O’Grady is a Professor at Cleveland State University. Ken and his wife “collaborated on their greatest project, their daughter.”

Ken and Jenn co-founded their firm, Enspace, in 1998. The list of clients that they have worked with include Rockport Publishing, RotoVision Publishers, University Circle Incorporated, Burges & Burges Strategies, Faber-Castell, Pentair Water Treatment/WellMate, The Orthopedic Institute of the Great Lakes, the City of Cleveland, and more. Enspace consists of Ken and Jenn O’Grady, Paul Perchince, and Craig Ihms, four close friends that work incredibly well together. When talking about Enspace, Ken described the importance of workplace relationships and having an investment in your colleagues and their successes. He believes it allows for more of a focus on the client instead of outperforming your colleagues.

Ken’s work has been featured in PRINT and HOW Magazines’ Regional Design Annuals, Interactive Design Annuals, Self Promotion Annuals, Inter national Annuals, and Business Annuals. In addition, Enspace was featured in an article in HOW’s 2002 Business Type and Trends issue and by HOW Books in a case study about the firm’s collaborative working process, styled Calfeine for the Creative Team: 200 Exercises to Inspire Group Innovation. Ken was also interviewed for an article in HOW Magazine’s 2011 issue, “Common Ground.”

Ken’s lecture at the University of Notre Dame was not the first and certainly not the last lecture he will give in his days. He has been invited to speak at several different conferences including HOW Design conferences, Design Thinkers conferences, the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Indiana University-Purdue University of Indiana, the NASA Print Conference, and numerous AIGA chapter events throughout the country. He has also won several awards from The University College and Designers Association, the Cleveland Chapter of the AIGA, the Akron Club of Printshop Craftsman, and the Printing Association of Northern Kentucky and Ohio.

Yes, one could say that Ken is an accomplished designer. A very accomplished designer indeed.

Ken and his wife Jenn, in addition to their collaboration on their young daughter, have collaborated and co-authored several design research books. A Designer’s Research Manual, The Information Design Handbook, and Design Currency: These three books talk about the importance of design when it comes to translating information from writing to a visual aspect. In Jenn’s VCD 5: Packaging Design class, A Designer’s Research Manual is a very important tool that is read and reference weekly. It provides a framework for how design research should be done so as to enhance your final solution as opposed to detract from it. Ken believes that design, as a visual element is a crucial component when relaying information and something worth developing.

During his time at the University of Notre Dame, Ken had the opportunity to sit in on an initial critique in Peni’s VCD 5: Packaging Design class. Being the first packaging design class offered at the time, there was a great learning curve. Students were challenged to design packaging for a project taking place in the Science and Chemistry Department, the PADs Project. As a midpoint review of the project, the student groups gave a research presentation documenting their research and work up until that point. To say that the presentations were rough would be an understatement (as a member of this class I am allowed to say this). Ken gave incredibly helpful constructive criticism that made a world of difference when the students were preparing their final presentations. Ken talked about the importance of detailed documentation of the whole research process. It is important to be able to relay the designer’s thinking to a non-design thinking mind. As designers, we are very in tune with the way in which we perform our research and arrive at a solution but when presenting that information to a non-design mind, some of the information may be lost. Ken offered specific critique to each group, highlighting both successful aspects and unsuccessful aspects of the presentation. The VCD 5 class enjoyed both Ken’s insight and company.

While on campus, Ken also had the opportunity to accompany two students to South Dining Hall for lunch. He was able to offer some advice that he has learned throughout his career. He talked about the importance of remaining humble and starting from the bottom. In his lecture he talked about the “linoleum floor.” In his first apartment with wife, Jenn, they had a linoleum floor when they first moved in. He talked about remembering that, as a designer, the first job opportunity is not going to be the end all, be all. It is important to start somewhere and work your way up. Like an apartment with a linoleum floor, you can only improve from there but it is still a start and it is something you can call your own.
INTRODUCING...PENINA ACAYO

Research Assistants are brought into the Design Program at the University of Notre Dame in order to continue their own professional creative research as well as to have the opportunity to contribute to the teaching and facilities management of the program. Penina Acayo joined the teaching staff in the fall of 2013 and brought something new and exciting to the Notre Dame Design program. In addition to being a teaching assistant to Robert Sedlack in his VCD8: Design for Social Good: Affecting Positive Change, Peni offered the first packaging design class and went to Uganda with Anne Berry and three students to continue research.

The start of a new school year always brings about those feelings of excitement, anticipation, and most importantly, change. The 2013/2014 school year brought the University of Notre Dame Design Program change in the form of a new research associate, Penina Acayo. Peni, as her students know her, was born in Kampala, Uganda and came to the United States where she received her Bachelor of Arts degree from Goshen College and her Master is Fine Arts from Kent State University’s Visual Communication Design Program. Throughout her design career, Peni has put her main focus on designing for good and social change. She wants to continue the expansion of design education in developing countries, believing that design is an “instrumental way to bring about change and awareness.”

As a Research Associate, Peni is continuing her own professional research while contributing as a member of the teaching staff and maintaining the management of West Lake Hall. In the fall of 2013, Peni was a teaching assistant to Robert Sedlack in his VCD8: Design for Social Good: Affecting Positive Change class. In this class, students are introduced to the design projects that bring about social good and change. These projects go beyond the four walls of the classroom and challenge the students to come up with solutions that will have an impact on the greater good. As a semester long project, the class worked in partnership with Lifewater International and Rule29 addressing safe water, hygiene, and sanitation education in rural Uganda. Peni served as an invaluable resource for the students in relation to the day to day life in Uganda and the smaller details that the Notre Dame students didn’t have as much knowledge about.

In continuing her own research as well, Peni wrote a curriculum for a class that she offered during her second semester at Notre Dame, VCD 5: Package Design. The class is a design course that focuses on the design research method and the role that it plays in the execution of packaging design solutions. As the first course offered that dealt with packaging design, students were very excited about the course and thoroughly enjoyed it. The class consisted of three major projects as well as lectures centered around the design research process. Peni focused on providing her students with the proper information regarding the research process so that they were able to effectively implement their packaging solutions.

The three projects in VCD 5 included a vitamin box packaging project, a brand redesign, and initial packaging for the PADS project. The Paper Analytical Device (PAD) Project is a project within the Chemistry Department at the University of Notre Dame that is developing PADS that will be able to be used in developing countries to detect the quality of medications. These devices will be able to process small samples of pharmaceuticals and determine whether they are counterfeit or not. It is estimated that 10–30% of pharmaceuticals that are purchased in developing countries are counterfeit, and the PADS project is aiming to combat the distribution of these counterfeit pharmaceuticals in a cost-effective manner.

Peni’s VCD5 students were presented with the challenge of designing an identity and packaging system that would be effective. The students had many different variables that they had to take into consideration before the design process even began. They took trips to Stepan Hall of Chemistry and Biochemistry to observe the manufacturing of the PADS as well as meet with Mayra Lieberman, the Associate Professor heading up the initiative, to ask questions about the project, past success and challenges, and the conditions in which PADS were going to be housed. After weeks of research, the students who had been divided into groups, started their design work for the PADS project. They were tasked with creating a package for the PADS themselves, instructions for how to use the PADS, and an interactive way for pharmacists and patients to be able to record and share their results. In designing the packaging, students had to take into consideration the climate and the transportation of the devices and a foolproof way to seal the package after they had been used in order to preserve the longevity of the devices. When finished with their initial prototypes, the students worked with Peni and Mayra to perform an initial testing to see how the prototypes performed. After, the students finalized their packages and presented to Mayra Lieberman and other design professors, not just showing their final solutions but demonstrating the process that they took in order to reach their final solution. This method of research, design, and presentation was found extremely intimidating by the students but also incredibly valuable.

Peni also accompanied Professor Anne Berry and students Emily Hofmann, Jeff Mclean, and Laurel Komos to Uganda this past summer to continue working on a project that had begun in the VCD8: Design for Social Good: Affecting Positive Change class. This project focused on a curriculum that educated children about safe water, hygiene, and sanitation in Uganda, the WASH curriculum. In order to further their development, this group had the opportunity to conduct research during an 11-day trip where Peni again was an invaluable resource in regards to culture, government, and education system. In addition, Peni’s previous engagement with the class and the specific project was important when it came to research because of her awareness of the project itself and the areas in which additional research was required.

Peni Acayo made a very lasting impression during her first year in the Design program at the University of Notre Dame with her infectious smile and positive attitude. She pushed her students to their highest potential and took the time to get to know everyone in the department. In response to being asked what she loves about design she said, “Design has the power to make a change.” Peni brings that desire to make a change with her when she walks into West Lake Hall each and everyday.
Imagine: what if we didn't just do good design… we did good?

Anyone who has recently passed through Professor Robert Sedlack’s Visual Communication Design 8 course (VCD8), more commonly known as Design for Social Good, has read these introductory remarks in Do Good Design by David Berman. In a class that works to creatively solve social issues in both local and global communities, Berman’s words are more than just a discussion topic; they are a call to action.

Our experience in VCD8 during the fall 2013 semester lived up to Berman’s challenge. Led by Robert and Research Associate Peni Acayo, we teamed up with a suburban Chicago design firm, Rule29, and Lifewater International to work on global health initiatives regarding safe water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) education.

Laurel Komos, Amanda MacDonald, Carmel O’Brien and I worked together to redesign a curriculum for primary school teachers in rural Uganda while another group worked to create a calendar reinforcing this educational content.

When we began, we realized fairly quickly that we did not know what we did not know. Recognizing our lack of familiarity within the Ugandan teaching context, we used the tools available to learn what we could from our desks in West Lake Hall: online research, personal interviews with teachers, secondhand accounts of recent visitors to Uganda helped, and the perspective of Peni, a native Ugandan, was invaluable. With their collective guidance we rethought, rewrote, reorganized, and redesigned the WASH curriculum. We presented our work to Rule29 and Lifewater, received a grade, and passed the class. Like many design projects, we walked away knowing we could do more, but were certain we had done good enough.

The delightful surprise of a generous donation the following spring semester afforded us the opportunity to field test our curriculum through an independent design research trip to Uganda.

The decision to go was an easy one for me. One of the biggest questions encompassing our project still lingered: we did not know if we had truly “done good.” While we were confident that we had improved the curriculum, we were still looking at the project through the lens of American designers in a university class setting.

We had no idea whether or not primary school teachers in rural Uganda would truly find value in our redesigned curriculum.

Those of us who were able to travel formed a research group specifically focused on testing the curriculum. Our new group consisted of three students, Laurel Komos, Jeff McLean, and me, led by professors Anne Berry and Peni Acayo. Anne and Peni worked with us to develop a research strategy for handling design in an unfamiliar context. We grounded our planning sessions with the goal of developing stronger empathy for the extreme cultural differences between the United States and Uganda.

Just four days after graduation, the five of us began our intensive, 11-day design research trip. With Peni as our guide, we were able to experience the country through the perspective of a native Ugandan. From the moment we arrived, we were wholeheartedly welcomed by the local community; we were invited into homes for authentic meals and celebrations; we engaged new friends in candid cross-cultural conversations; we avoided tourist traps, and visited the local award-winning design firm Addmaya (they do great work, check them out!). From a design research perspective, Peni’s knowledge and experience was an enormous advantage, making it possible for us to quickly immerse ourselves in the culture and build more authentic relationships with the people we encountered.

Mid-week we departed for a four-day journey to a northern Ugandan district named Gulu. While we were there, we spoke with primary school teachers at both private and government-sponsored schools. As Western foreigners trying to help address gaps in Ugandan safe water education through design, we began our research sessions acknowledging our own shortcomings with humility, and affirming the value of the knowledge and feedback of the Ugandan educators.

We worked to create collaborative relationships, balancing the expertise of the educators with our creative skill sets as designers. On our second day in the field, this relationship manifested when we were no longer the only ones asking questions, but they, in turn, were asking questions of us.

Throughout our trip, we received valuable curriculum-specific feedback and gathered first-hand information about the Ugandan education system, government influences, cultural contexts, and visual language. Since our research trip to Gulu and Kampala, we have continued to synthesize our observations into actionable insights and recommendations for future improvements to WASH education.

On a personal level, it was valuable to discover that as we underwent this creative process and empathized with others, we learned a great deal about ourselves in the process. We began to understand, through direct experience, the responsibility we carry, not only with respect to the people that we serve but also to ourselves. We found that when we design with intentionality and integrity, we do good by creating aesthetic, social, cultural, and personal value to the projects we undertake.

— Emily Hoffmann ’14
Catching Up With...

Over the past 20+ years I have focused on creative expression of all kinds including music, marketing, advertising, and digital media creation including video, apps and interactive formats.

I married Tricia Ronzani (ND ’91) in ’94. We have 2 daughters, Sohobhan (16) and Caara (13) and live in Oak Park, IL. My brother, sister and Dad are also Domers.

I describe myself as a “creative/strategic thinker/musician/nerd/runner who is perpetually curious, fascinated with culture and technology, forever hungry to learn and always willing to share about technology, music, art, literature, photography, arduino, ‘makers’, chocolate and, coffee.”

With my BFA from the University of Notre Dame, I have worked at agencies, boutiques and on in-house creative teams. You may have seen my work for clients like Cadence Health, Firestone Complete Auto Care, Wisconsin Tourism, TaxCut, Keebler, M&M/Mars, Nutrasweet, Ameritrade and Disney Vacation Club.

I continue to work with the Design program thanks to the continued friendship and outreach of Professor Sedlack and even hired Elizabeth Kelly (ND class of 2011) to work with me at my last job at Laughlin Constable, an independent agency with offices in Milwaukee, Chicago and New York. I was the VP in charge of digital creative at the agency.

My most recent move was to Gogo Air back in January of this year. Gogo brings wireless internet and entertainment to airlines as well as develops new technology for the connected skies. I run the creative department there and work with developers on the UIs of their products.

I consider myself an interactive storyteller, constantly finding different ways to create richer, more meaningful and more portable means to reach audiences. I have extensive experience in website design, mobile applications, Flash-based games, video editing, motion graphics, and 3D animations.

I still record and play with my band, Ateliers and have completed four Chicago Marathons.

Alumni Contributions

Did you know that when you make a contribution to Notre Dame, you can designate your funds to go directly to the design program? Your gift to the University can help support design initiatives like this newsletter and the annual Alumni Design Conference. All you have to do is note on your correspondence that you want to contribute to the “Graphic and Industrial Design Alumni Fund.” It’s that easy. Also note that any gift given to the University is credited toward eligibility for the football ticket lottery. The requirement for each class in order to be eligible for next year’s ticket lottery application (2014) is as follows:

- Class of 2014 to 2005 – $100
- Class of 2004 to 1965 – $200
- Classes before 1965 – $100

The gift must be made between January 1 and December 31 of the current year (2014) in order to make an alumni/alumna eligible for the following (2015) year’s lottery.

Alumni, remember that your generous contributions help make this newsletter happen!
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