

# GTU celebrates **WOMEN'S** voices

To celebrate Women's History Month, we invited GTU alumnae to share stories, reflections, and highlights from their GTU experience. Below are just a few excerpts. Read many more at [www.gtu.edu/womens-voices-campaign](http://www.gtu.edu/womens-voices-campaign)

**“W**hat stands out most for me from my time at the GTU was the community and support for learning. I had excellent ethics professors who mentored me and who continue to be close colleagues

today. Even more important were my fellow student colleagues. We had study groups together, shared notes on the readings for comprehensive exams, and encouraged one another in our dissertation writing. There was a sense of cooperation and camaraderie, not competition (even when we were all applying for jobs). The GTU helped me to thrive academically while also supporting my physical and emotional health.”

**Laura Stivers** (PhD, '00), *Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Education and Professor of Ethics, Dominican University of California*

**“S**tudying at CDSF and then the GTU not only challenged me but prepared me for the challenge of being a Native American woman ordained in the Episcopal Church. I am specifically grateful for

the diversity of voices and theologies I found through the GTU. Classes at the Franciscan and Jesuit school in particular affirmed my identity and helped me define my understandings,

theology, and spirituality. The fact that I have been able to write and publish in theological journals, have written, reflected and published in several books on prayer, and my service to the church as Canon for Native American Ministry here in Arizona (after having served in Northern California and Los Angeles) could not have happened without these academic and spiritual experiences.”

The Rev. Canon **Debbie Royals**, Pascua Yaqui, RN (MDiv, CDSF; MA '06) *Canon for Native American Ministry, Episcopal Diocese of Arizona*

**“I**n addition to stellar academic preparation, one of the most impactful gifts I received from the GTU was the living examples of incredible female

mentors whose teaching, service, and scholarship positively influenced and inspired me before, during, and after my doctoral program. From the gentle prodding of one faculty member whose question, ‘Have you ever thought about getting a PhD?’ that inspired my application, to those who challenged me to present at academic conferences during my program and to serve in leadership in our guild afterwards, I owe a debt of gratitude to the women who told me and showed me what being a faculty member is all about.”

**Debra J. Mumford** (PhD, '05), *Frank H. Caldwell Professor of Homi-*

*letics and Director, Money Matters for Ministry (Lilly Grant Program), Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary*

**“I**n the Fall of 2013, I embarked on two journeys: I started my academic career at GTU and I became a mother.



Despite the challenges posed by learning to be a scholar while also learning to be a mother, I have found in GTU a home far away from my original home in Cairo, Egypt. From the first day I set out as an MA student in Islamic Studies at the Center for Islamic Studies to this moment as I begin my PhD journey, the continuous support by staff and faculty have indeed propelled me to think of my career in a different way. Before joining GTU, I never thought I would be interested in teaching, now my vision is geared towards that goal.”

**May Kosba** (MA, '15), *presidential scholar and doctoral student in Historical and Cultural Studies of Religion, Center for Islamic Studies, GTU*

**“I** began my studies at GTU in 1991—only 20 years after the first female rabbi was ordained. This was a time when female



# Alumni News

rabbis and cantors were still very controversial in the Jewish world. My professors at GTU, both male and female, were never anything but extremely supportive – even my one professor who was an Orthodox rabbi! After my ordination in 2003, I returned to GTU in a doctoral program at SFTS, where I received the same support. In short, no one at GTU ever told me I couldn't fulfill my calling; in fact, everyone, professors and staff alike, did all they could to encourage me!"

**Rabbi Shula Stevens Calmann** (MA, '05) is rabbi at Congregation *Beth Shalom, Marysville, CA*



“My time at GTU was vital in my development as a queer feminist scholar, author, and artist. Serving as program coordinator for the Women’s

Studies in Religion Program was a beautiful way to ground my theoretical research in lived, practical realities. Professors and colleagues alike embodied intersectional feminism inside and outside the classroom in ways that inspired and empowered me to do likewise.”

**Rev. Dr. Angela Yarber** (PhD, '10), author, artist, and Executive Director of the *Holy Women Icons Project on Hawai'i Island*

**Brian Green** (MA, '06; PhD, '13) has been named director of technology ethics at the Markkula Center for Applied Ethics at Santa Clara University. Brian is also a lecturer in engineering ethics at SCU's Graduate School of Engineering.

**David Phillips Hansen** (PhD, '88) celebrated the publication of *Native Americans, the Mainline Church, and the Quest for Interracial Justice* (Chalice Press, 2017). Hansen has spent more than 40 years in active ministry, serving pastorates in the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (DOC).

**Heup Young Kim** (PhD, '92) published *A Theology of Dao* (Orbis Books, 2017). Dr. Kim is professor emeritus of theology at Kangnam University, South Korea, and a past president of the Korean Society for Systematic Theology.

**Soo-Young Kwon** (PhD, '03) is now dean of the College of Theology and the United Graduate School of Theology of Yonsei University in Seoul, Korea. Dr. Kwon began his new position on February 1, and has served previously as professor of pastoral theology and director of the Center for Counseling and Coaching Services at United Graduate School of Theology.

**Carleen Mandolfo** (MA, '93) is now serving as associate provost for faculty development and diversity and professor of religious studies at Colby College in Waterville, Maine.

**Jeremiah McCarthy** (PhD, '85) was re-elected to the board of directors of the In Trust Center for Theological Schools. McCarthy is a Catholic priest of the Diocese of Tucson, who served for 18 years as professor of moral theology, academic dean, and finally rector-president of St. John's Seminary in Camarillo, California.

**Som Pourfarzaneh** (PhD, '13) recently published a young adult novella, *Jinnspeak*, which follows a Pakistani teenager as she wrestles with her identity as a Muslim American and her burgeoning magical powers. Pourfarzaneh, who writes under the pen name M. S. Farzan, published his first urban fantasy novel, *Entromancy*, in 2015, and currently works as a Digital Marketing Manager in the video games industry.

**Andrea Sheaffer** (PhD, '13) recently published “Framing a Heroine: Judith’s Counterparts in Biblical Villains” in Bloomsbury’s *Biblical Reception 5* and currently serves on the Society of Biblical Literature’s steering committee for the Bible and Visual Arts Program Unit. Andrea, who has worked as the GTU Director of Admissions since 2013, and fellow alum and former GTU faculty member **Som Pourfarzaneh** (PhD, '13) were married this past fall.

**Sandy Sullivan-Dunbar** (MA, '03) published her first book, *Human Dependency and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge University Press, 2017). Dr. Sullivan-Dunbar teaches Christian ethics at Loyola University Chicago, where she also serves as graduate program director in the department of theology.

**Cynthia Taylor** (PhD, '03) is assistant professor of religion and history at Dominican University, where she has been teaching the course “Liberation Theology: Passion for Justice” for 13 years. Taylor’s work to include greater community engagement in the course were highlighted in a recent online essay by fellow GTU alum **Emily Wu** (PhD, '10), who is assistant director of community outreach and project development in Dominican’s Service-Learning program.

**Jeremy D. Yunt** (MA, '99) published his latest book, *Faithful to Nature: Paul Tillich and the Spiritual Roots of Environmental Ethics* (Barred Owl Books, 2017). During his time at the GTU, Yunt worked as a writer and editor with the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences (CTNS) on a special program focused on religion, science, and environmental ethics.