



VASSAR COLLEGE

Convocation 2022

Wednesday, August 31, 2022

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that Vassar stands upon the homelands of the Munsee Lenape, Indigenous peoples who have an enduring connection to this place despite being forcibly displaced by European colonization. Munsee Lenape peoples continue today as the Stockbridge-Munsee Community in Wisconsin, the Delaware Tribe and the Delaware Nation in Oklahoma, and the Munsee-Delaware Nation in Ontario. This acknowledgment, however, is insufficient without our reckoning with the reality that every member of the Vassar community since 1861 has benefited from these Native peoples' displacement, and it is hollow without our efforts to counter the effects of structures that have long enabled—and that still perpetuate—injustice against Indigenous Americans. To that end, we commit to build and sustain relationships with Native communities; to expand opportunities at Vassar for Native students, as well as Native faculty and other employees; and to collaborate with Native nations to know better the Indigenous peoples, past and present, who care for this land.



FALL CONVOCATION

Wednesday, August 31, 2022

Processional

(All standing)

Fanfare

Bohdan Kotyuk (b.1951)

(Ukrainian composer living in Lviv, Ukraine)

Gail Archer, *Organ*

Land Acknowledgment

Rev. Samuel H. Speers

*Associate Dean of Religious and Spiritual Life
and Contemplative Practices*

The Convocation Choir

Unclouded Day

Words and Music by J.K. Alwood (1828-1909)

Arranged by Shawn Kirchner

Christine Howlett

*Associate Professor and Chair of Music
and Director of Choral Activities*

Unclouded Day is the first movement from *Heavenly Home: Three American Songs*, an a cappella setting of the gospel tune by J.K. Alwood. He was inspired by an extraordinary sight in August 1879: “*I saw a beautiful rainbow north by northwest against a dense black nimbus cloud. The sky was all perfectly clear except this dark cloud which covered about forty degrees of the horizon and extended about halfway to the zenith. The phenomenon was entirely new to me and my nerves refreshed by the balmy air and the lovely sight.*” The energetic arrangement offers a message of hope, combining traditional bluegrass style with counterpoint and fugue.

Welcome

Elizabeth H. Bradley
President, Vassar College

Remarks

Carlos Alamo-Pastrana
Dean of the College, Vassar College

Alumnae/i Association of Vassar College (AAVC) Award Presentation

Monica Vachher '77
President, AAVC

Stephanie Goldberg '14
Member, AAVC Alumnae/i Recognition Committee

2022 Young Alumnae/i Achievement Award Recipient
Arushi Raina '14

Remarks

Julián Aguilar '23
President, Vassar Student Association

2022 Faculty Endowed Chairs Presentation

William Hoynes
Dean of the Faculty, Vassar College

Mita Choudhury, Professor of History
Evalyn Clark Chair

Kelli Duncan, Professor of Biology
Patricia Shoer Goldman-Rakic '59 Chair
in Neuroscience and Behavior

Ismail Rashid, Professor of History
Marion Musser Lloyd '32 Chair

**José Perillán, Associate Professor of Physics
and STS, and Director of the STS Program**
Pauline Newman '47 Director of Science,
Technology, and Society

**Paulina Bren, Adjunct Professor of
Multidisciplinary Studies**
Pittsburgh Endowment Chair in the Humanities



Convocation Address

How I got Medieval: From First Gen to PhD

Nancy Bisaha

Professor of History

Gaudeamus Igitur

(All standing)

Arr. Geer/Bartholomew

Christine Howlett

*Associate Professor and Chair of Music
and Director of Choral Activities*

All	Gaudeamus igitur, iuvenes dum sumus! Gaudeamus igitur, iuvenes dum sumus! Post iucundam iuventutem, Post molestam senectutem Nos habebit humus, Nos habebit humus.	Let us rejoice, therefore, While we are young. After a pleasant youth After a troublesome old age The earth will have us.
Choir	Vivat academia, vivant professores, Vivat academia, vivant professores, Vivat membrum quod libet, Vivant membra quae libet, Semper sint in flore, Semper sint in flore.	Long live the academy, Long live the professors, Long live each individual member Long live all members whosoever And always be in flower.
All	Alma mater floreat quae nos educavit, Alma mater floreat quae nos educavit, Caros et commilitones Dissitas in regiones, Sparsos congregavit, Sparsos congregavit.	May our alma mater flourish, She who has reared us And brought us together, dear companions, Scattered though we have been Into remote regions.

Closing

Rev. Samuel H. Speers

*Associate Dean of Religious and Spiritual Life
and Contemplative Practices*

Recessional

(All standing)

Komm, Heiliger Geist BWV 651

J.S Bach (1685 – 1750)

Convocation Speaker

Nancy Bisaha

Professor of History



Nancy Bisaha was born and raised in central New Jersey. She received her BA from Rutgers College in 1990 and her PhD from Cornell University in 1997, where she worked under the direction of John Najemy. In 2004 Bisaha published *Creating East and West: Renaissance Humanists and the Ottoman Turks* (UPenn Press), which examines the ways in which humanists created an

intellectual discourse depicting the Ottoman Turks as a cultural and religious other. She recently published a translation of Aeneas Silvius Piccolomini's *De Europa* in collaboration with Robert Brown. Bisaha is currently working on an intellectual biography of Pope Pius II and an article exploring the early roots of human rights theory.

In addition to teaching survey courses on the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, Bisaha teaches such courses as “The Dark Ages c. 400-900,” “The Crusades,” and “Constantinople/ Istanbul: 1453.” Bisaha is currently Director of the Medieval and Renaissance Studies Program.



**Alumnae/i Association of Vassar College
(AAVC) 2022 Young Alumnae/i Achievement
Award Recipient**

Arushi Raina '14



Arushi Raina '14 is the recipient of the 2022 Young Alumnae/i Achievement Award, presented to a graduate of the last 10 years for exceptional personal and professional achievement. Arushi majored in economics and English at Vassar and earned membership in Phi Beta Kappa. She also has an MBA from Ivey Business School at Western University in Ontario, Canada.

She currently serves as Director of Commercialization at the nonprofit Praxis Spinal Cord Institute in Vancouver, where she is responsible for bringing to market innovations for improving the lives of people with spinal cord injuries. Her work at Praxis earned her a “30 Under 30” recognition from the British Columbia magazine *BCBusiness* in 2020. Arushi is also a novelist. Her first book for young adults, *When Morning Comes*, began as her Vassar thesis and was declared “a riveting and accomplished debut” by *Publisher’s Weekly*.

Arushi will be the featured guest at tonight’s program *The Versatility of a Vassar Degree: A Conversation with Arushi Raina '14* at 8:00 pm in Taylor 203. Please join us!

A cupcake reception will follow.

2022 Faculty Endowed Chairs



Mita Choudhury, *Professor of History*
Evalyn Clark Chair

This endowed professorship was established in 2002 with a gift from the estate of Claudia Du Pont Lyon, class of 1924, in honor of her classmate Evalyn A. Clark '24. Evalyn Clark was a beloved teacher and acclaimed scholar of European History who served three decades as a faculty member in Vassar's Department of History from 1939 until her retirement in 1968, remaining an active member of the Vassar community until her death at the age of 98 in 2001. The Evalyn Clark Chair recognizes and supports a distinguished faculty member in the History Department.



Kelli Duncan, *Professor of Biology*
Patricia Shoer Goldman-Rakic '59 Chair
in Neuroscience and Behavior

This endowed professorship was established in 2021 with a gift from the estate of Ruth Shoer Rapport '59, in honor of her twin sister Patricia Shoer Goldman-Rakic '59, who performed groundbreaking research in unraveling the previously unknown functioning of the brain's prefrontal cortex. The Patricia Shoer Goldman-Rakic '59 Chair honors a faculty member whose work is exceptional in advancing research in neuroscience and its interrelated disciplines, and is an inspirational role model and mentor to colleagues and students.



Ismail Rashid, *Professor of History*
Marion Musser Lloyd '32 Chair

This endowed professorship was established in 2011 with a gift from Mary Lloyd Estrin '66 and Robert Estrin in honor of Mary's mother, Marion Musser Lloyd, a devoted Vassar alumna and former Trustee of the College. The Marion Musser Lloyd '32 Chair recognizes and supports a distinguished faculty member whose teaching and research are in History or International Studies.





**José Perillán, Associate Professor of
Physics and STS,
and Director of the STS Program**

**Pauline Newman '47 Director of Science,
Technology, and Society**

This rotating endowed directorship, awarded to the STS Director for the duration of their term, was established in 2018 with a gift from Judge Pauline Newman '47. The endowed directorship supports the STS Program and is one of several ways Judge Newman has generously supported the College, including an endowment to fund programmatic components of STS, an internship that funds work in STS-related areas, a prize for excellence in STS, and a fund to support faculty team-teaching.



**Paulina Bren, Adjunct Professor of
Multidisciplinary Studies**

**Pittsburgh Endowment Chair in the
Humanities**

This endowed professorship was established in 1961 with generous gifts from members of the Pittsburgh Vassar Club, led by Pittsburgh alumnae Dorothy Hurlock Magee, class of 1921 and Grace Braun Ridall '47, who shared a commitment to the value of a liberal arts education that poses new questions to meet the needs of each new generation of students. The Pittsburgh Endowment Chair recognizes and supports a distinguished faculty member in the Humanities.

Academic Dress

The custom of wearing academic dress stems from the Middle Ages when scholars were also clerics and wore the costumes of their monastic orders. Significant parts of academic dress are the gown, the hood, and the cap. Each has a particular significance and is worn in accordance with standards established by the Academic Costume Code of the American Council on Education.

Gowns recommended for use in the colleges and universities of this country have the following characteristics.

The gown for the bachelor's degree has pointed sleeves, and is designed to be worn closed. The gown for the master's degree has an oblong sleeve, open at the wrist. The sleeve base hangs down in the traditional manner. The rear part of its oblong shape is square cut, and the front part has an arc cut away. The gown is supplied with fasteners so that it may be worn open or closed. The gown for the doctor's degree has bell-shaped sleeves. It is supplied with fasteners so that it may be worn open or closed.

Material. Cotton poplin or similar material for the bachelor's and master's degrees, and rayon or silk ribbed material for the doctor's degree.

Color. Black is recommended.

Trimmings. None for the bachelor's or master's degrees. For the doctor's degree, the gown is faced down the front with black velvet and three bars of black velvet are sewn across the sleeves. These facings and crossbars may be velvet of the color distinctive of the subject to which the degree pertains.

For all academic purposes, including trimmings of doctors' gowns, edging of hoods, and tassels of caps, the colors associated with the different subjects are as follows:

Agriculture	Maize	Music	Pink
Arts, Letters, Humanities	White	Nursing	Apricot
Commerce, Accountancy, Business	Drab*	Oratory (Speech)	Silver Gray
Dentistry	Lilac	Pharmacy	Olive Green
Economics	Copper	Philosophy Dark	Blue
Education	Light Blue	Physical Education	Sage Green
Engineering	Orange	Public Administration, including Foreign Service	Peacock Blue
Fine Arts, including Architecture	Brown	Public Health	Salmon Pink
Forestry	Russet	Science Golden	Yellow
Journalism	Crimson	Social Work	Citron
Law	Purple	Theology	Scarlet
Library Science	Lemon	Veterinary Science	Gray
Medicine	Green		

*Sapphire blue as alternate. Not recommended because of the likely confusion with blues previously assigned to other subjects.

Gaudeamus Igitur

In 1865, President John H. Raymond gave a sermon in honor of the College's opening. Such services continued to be held every September until 1914. Then, at the suggestion of History Professor Lucy Maynard Salmon, a convocation ceremony, with a procession of the faculty in academic regalia, was organized to formally open each academic year. "**Gaudeamus Igitur**" was added in the 1920s and has been sung by students and faculty alike to conclude the celebratory event. Believed to originate from a 13th-century manuscript, it creates a direct link to the period and culture in which the university was invented

"The university was arguably the most progressive and liberating institution of the medieval period— the product of student and teachers' guilds rather than a top-down hierarchical creation. It was and is a living and ever-changing entity, and 'Gaudeamus' reminds us of the university's exuberant and imperfect roots as we continually seek to improve it. The Latin lyrics recall a language that was accessible to many school boys and girls; it was a gateway to a world of higher education that enabled countless people to communicate across borders and to enjoy popular songs that spoke to shared experiences."

– Nancy Bisaha

