

McDermott Alumni

The Eugene McDermott Scholars Program Alumni Association

FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS

SPRING 2018



SAVE THE DATES!

Annual Meeting

The McDermott Alumni Association's sixth annual meeting will be March 3rd, 2018 at UT Dallas. Look forward to updates on all that the McDermott Alumni Association has accomplished in the past year as well as our goals and projects for the future. Breakfast will be served at 7:45am in the McDermott Office and the meeting will begin in the McDermott Suite at 8:00am. Hope to see you all there!

Finalists' Weekend 2018

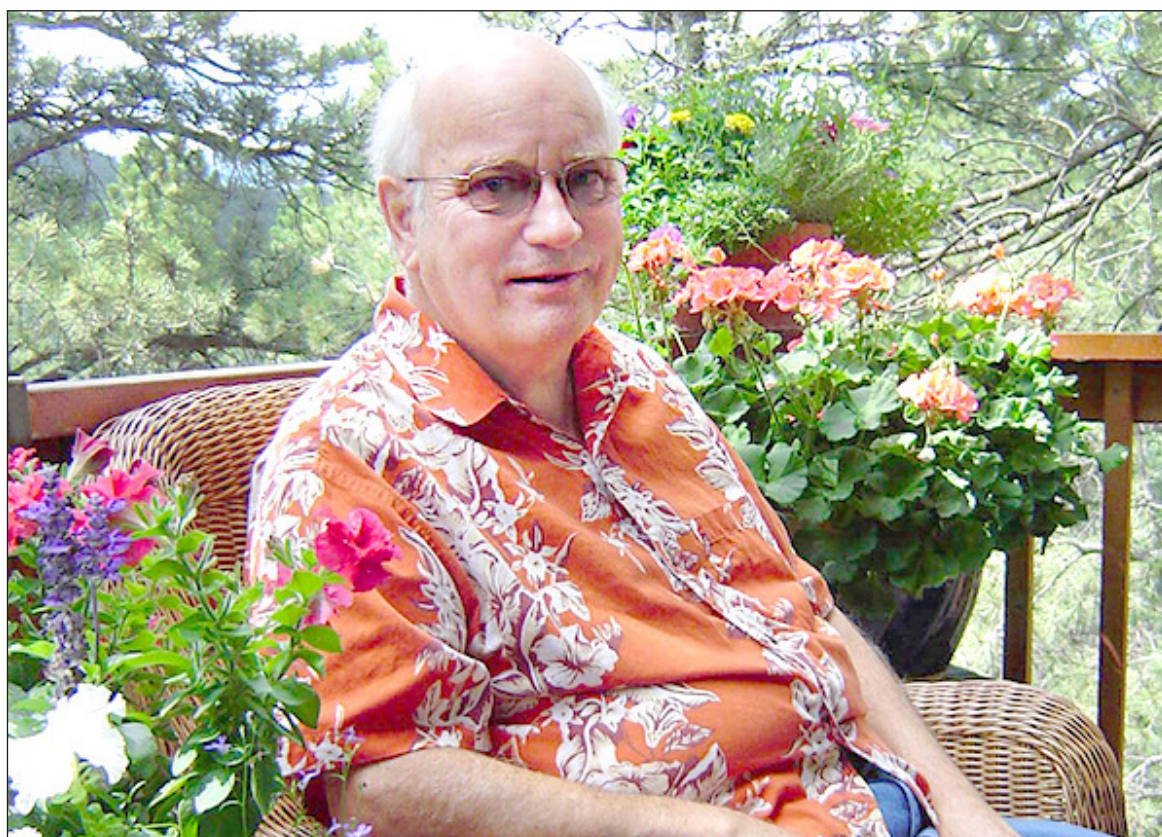
March 2-4, 2018 - put it on your calendars! For the second year in a row, alumni are conducting all individual interviews. Be prepared for a weekend of stellar candidates and social events both Friday and Saturday evenings. On Saturday evening, join us for a happy hour at People's Last Stand in Mockingbird Station. Invitations to follow.

Finalists' Weekend Reception

Mary McDermott Cook has invited us to her home for a second year in a row for an evening reception on March 2nd. Come enjoy the wonderful company of Mary and your fellow alumni, along with stunning views of the Dallas skyline. If you are an alum who will be in Dallas that weekend and have not received an invitation, please let us know.

If you have any events/updates that you'd like to share or if you need to update your contact information, please email mcdermottalumni@gmail.com

VICTOR L. WORSFOLD GRANTS



The Eugene McDermott Scholars Alumni Association established the Victor L. Worsfold Grant Program Fund to help support student-led service projects that benefit the UT Dallas, local, and global communities.

Proposals can be submitted both individually and in groups, and grants can be awarded to any type of community work or discipline, whether on-campus, locally, nationally, or internationally. Worsfold Grants offer funding ranging from \$250 to \$1,500 per project depending on budget

and needs. Applications can be submitted [here](#).

Dr. Worsfold was an Arts and Humanities faculty member from 1975 to 2001, teaching courses in ethics, social and political philosophy, the philosophy of education, and the humanities.

Dr. Worsfold passed away in 2013, but will always remain an esteemed member of the McDermott family. These grants are just one way that his legacy lives on - read more about the first few projects this program has funded on page 4!

Check out the blog!

Read updates from the current scholars:
<https://mcdermottscholars.wordpress.com/>

Meadows Museum!

17 Chirag Gokani reviews the museum and its Francisco de Zurbarán exhibit (pg. 6)

Pumpkins, pumpkins!

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PRESIDENT'S DESK

Stellar: our 2017 successes and 2018 opportunities

Fellow McDermott Alumni,

Since the update in our last newsletter, your Alumni Association has taken important steps to ensure the future financial stability of our Association. By the end of 2017, the Board succeeded in selecting financial advisors to help us invest and manage our \$1 million quasi-endowment and worked with our advisors to write an investment policy that will govern how the money is managed.

Those policies ensure a conservative investment strategy and favor long-term growth and stability over short-term income generation. Our investments will generate a modest amount of income each year, but we will continue to rely heavily on the generosity and engagement of our alumni members and friends of the Association to fund projects at UT Dallas and in the Dallas community.

Speaking of service projects, 2017 was a busy year for the Association. With our final payment of nearly \$20,000, we successfully met our \$100,000 commitment to UT Dallas. In recent years, funds given to the University to fulfill that commitment have gone to the Victor Worsfold Grants Fund, which has supported projects enabling leftover food from the dining halls to be donated to homeless shelters, new art installations on campus, and more. We are proud of the impact the visionary student-grantees have had on their communities, and we are glad to be able to enable their innovative service.

In 2017 and 2018, we have also donated time and funds to host a reception following the MyDSO Concert, a symphony performance that is specially designed and hosted for children and adults on the autism spectrum and with developmental disabilities. On the day of the concert, the special guests and their families join the DSO for hands-on activities like an instrument petting zoo and an active symphony performance hosted just for them and tailored to their needs.

We look forward to continuing to engage with this wonderful event in years to come. Most of all, we recognize that we could not contribute to such meaningful events without your devotion of time, effort, and financial support. Thank you.

As we look forward to our next contributions, we have been



Megan Coker ('06), an Associate in complex commercial litigation at Vinson & Elkins in Dallas, is the current President of the Alumni Association.

grateful to receive your generous donations from our giving drive in December 2017. A total of over \$21,000 was donated as part of our 2017 fundraising campaign, involving donations from about 80 individuals, including both alumni and special friends of the Association. We will share more information about our fundraising results (and the awards for individual alums and classes) at our Annual Meeting on Saturday, March 3 in Dallas. We hope that many of you will join us in person, but those who cannot are welcome to view the meeting on video afterward.

Finally, we are right around the corner from Finalists' Weekend, where we hope to reunite with many of you. The Alumni Association has quietly and gradually taken on a major role in the process of selecting upcoming classes of Scholars.

Each Finalist is now interviewed by two alumni (rather than by an alum and a faculty member), alumni make up a majority of the selection committee, many of the applications are screened by diligent alumni graders, and we have new and improved events to reunite alumni who increasingly stream into Dallas to help with Finalists' Weekend.

Our engagement with the scholars is not limited to Finalists' Weekend. We have also been invited to meet the new class of scholars each year in Santa Fe, where in 2017 we took part in the Atalaya Peak hike and enjoyed an alumni-only river rafting trip and happy hour.

(continued on page 3)

(continued from page 2)

This past year, we also increased the pace of our events to bring you more opportunities to network with other alumni. We hosted monthly or semi-annual events in Dallas and in cities with high concentrations of alumni, including a personal tour of the Meadows Museum in Dallas by its director; our Visionaries Luncheon with special guests including Mary Brinegar, President and CEO of the Dallas Arboretum; happy hours in several cities, including Washington, D.C.; an informal party and white elephant gift exchange during the holidays; and many more.

We hope that you will attend some of our upcoming Finalists' Weekend events in March. Mary McDermott Cook has been kind enough to relocate our Friday night event from the smoky pub near campus to her beautiful home. If you are an alum who will be in Dallas for Finalists' Weekend and have not received an invitation for this event, please email mcdermottalumni@gmail.com and we will update your contact information.

Last year, we also hosted an informal happy hour on Saturday night, which we will host again this year on the evening of Saturday, March 3, at People's Last Stand near Mockingbird Station. Stay tuned for details.

Whether you will join us for Finalists' Weekend or not, I hope you will stay in touch. Keep us updated on your achievements and let us know if we can do anything to better serve you, our members. Come to our events and reunite with or meet other alumni and friends of the Association.

Most importantly, please stay engaged with us as we continue to engage with UT Dallas and our communities. We have lofty ambitions to continue improving UT Dallas, Dallas, and beyond, but we cannot reach our goals without your support.

Best regards and whoosh!

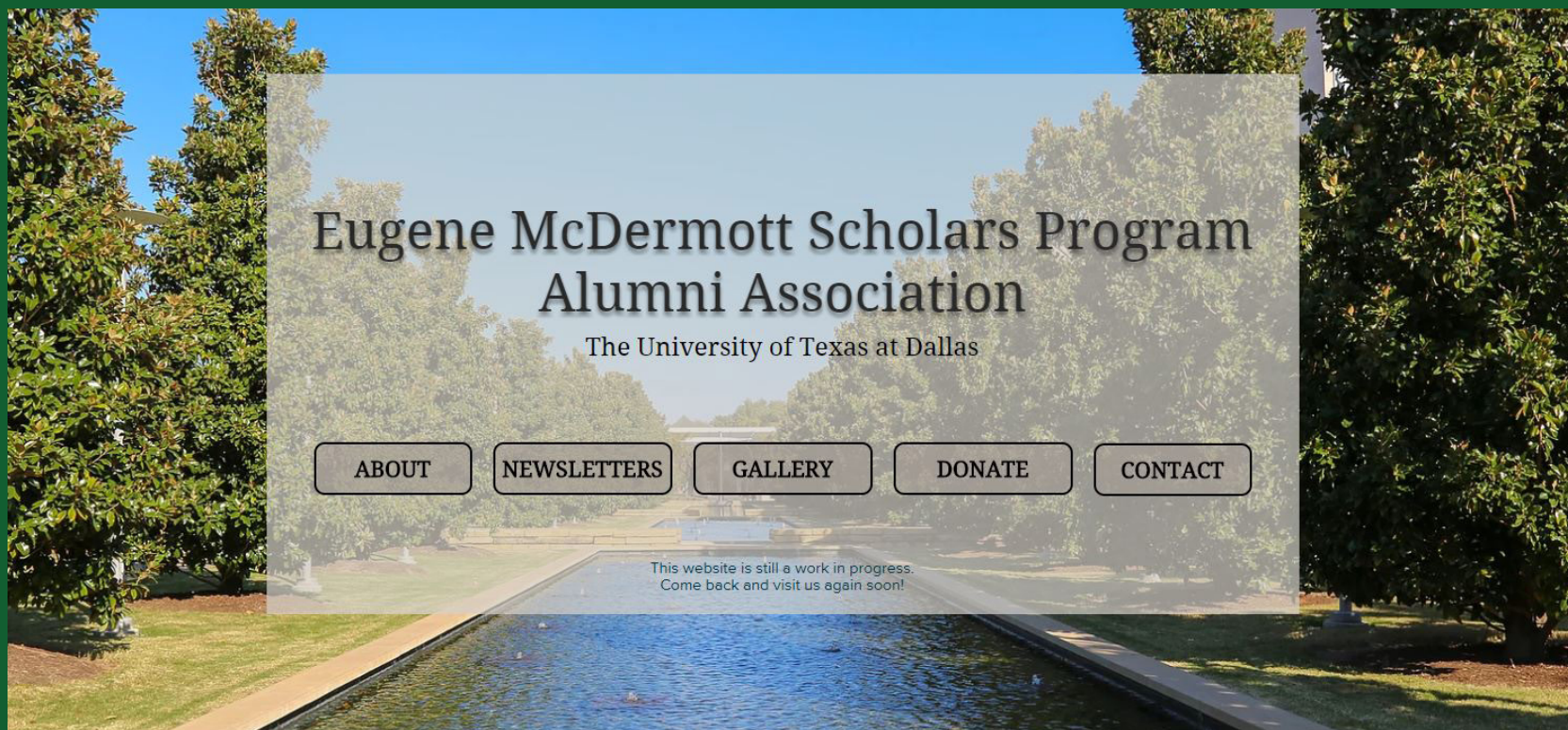
Megan Coker ('06)
President

Eugene McDermott Scholars Program Alumni Association

Check out our new website!

Visit www.mcdermott.org to check out the latest news, pictures, or donate

We love to hear from you! If you have any exciting news, travel adventures, additions to the family, or anything you'd like to share with the McDermott community, get in touch with us at mcdermottalumni@gmail.com and we'd be thrilled to share your updates or stories on the website.



GRANTING WORSFOLD HONOR

An update on the legacy established to celebrate his life and charity

As mentioned on the first page of this newsletter, the alumni association has been enabling community service on campus by funding the Worsfold Grants Program.

In the spring of 2017, we received applications for UTD Art and LOTUS (<https://www.instagram.com/utd.lotus/>), both of which are increasing art on campus. One hosts painting workshops and assists non-art majors at UTD to create murals on campus; the other creates rotating, site-specific, art exhibitions across campus.

The two projects are working together by sharing supplies and by working with groups across campus, including student government and campus administration. Each was partially funded by a grant.

In the fall of 2017, we received seven applications from various organizations across campus that support projects at home and abroad. Two grants were partially funded. One will supply workbooks for the “Aut 2 Aut” Autistic Mentorship Program. This mentorship program looks to pair 10 children aged 12-14 with a UT Dallas Student with autism and organize 8-10 activities over the next year.

The second partially funded grant in fall 2017 went to University Emergency Medical Response (UEMR). UEMR provides quality, campus-centered emergency medical care to the UT Dallas community in order to ensure the best possible patient outcome for all who need emergency care. UEMR is a licensed First-Responder Organization with professionally trained students, faculty, and staff volunteers who will respond on-scene to treat emergent medical incidences with full support of the UT Dallas Police. Thanks to the grant we provided, UEMR has already begun to order supplies to fund their daily operations on campus.

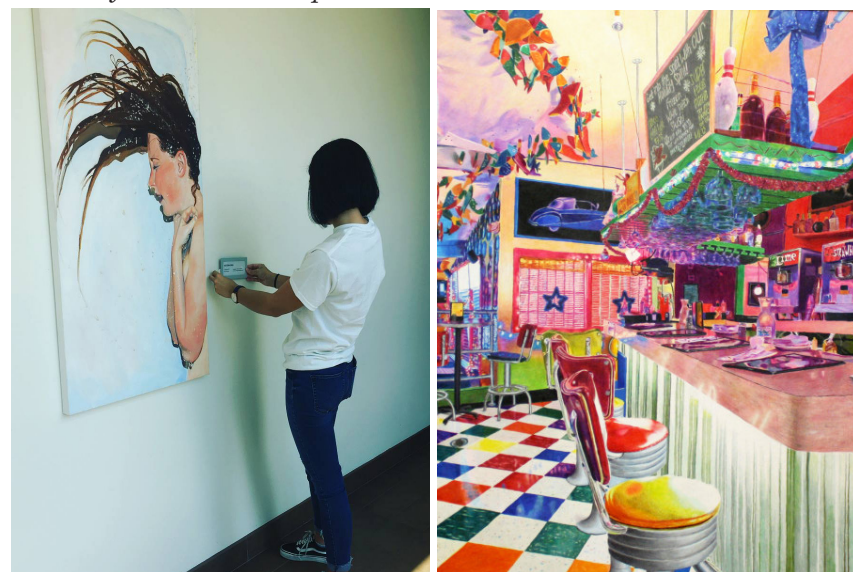
Spring 2016 grants also continue to bear fruit. Matthew Salm’s Food Recovery System received a grant to provide wholesome, nutritious food for the homeless community of the Dallas area. Matthew, a UT Dallas junior, designed a system to have volunteer students collect excess food from various sources on the UT Dallas campus. The student volunteers will become food-safety certified and will store the food and transport it to local homeless shelters.

Matthew intends to partner with City House in Plano, Hope’s Door in Plano, and Austin Street Center in Dallas to deliver the food to the homeless, and to collaborate with the Sustainability Club, Human-Environment-Animal-Team, APO, and AED to recruit volunteers. He hopes to found a chapter of Food Recovery Network and join this national food-waste-fighting alliance of students at over 150 colleges.

Melanie Maurer’s Young Women in Science and Engineering (YWSE) Design Competition also received a grant to expose young women to hands-on engineering and give them the experience and



Pictures from The LOTUS Project’s exhibition on campus. Above and bottom right: Jennifer Good’s pieces, “Lillies Revived” and “Nostalgic Dining”
Bottom left: Victoria Brill’s piece “Untitled II”



confidence they need to pursue careers in engineering. Melanie, a 2016 graduate and McDermott Scholar, wants to remedy the dearth of women in engineering professions by exposing them to the field at a young age. She intends to bring high school girls from the Dallas Independent School District to the UT Dallas campus for an annual design competition. She hopes to enlist the help and participation of companies like Texas Instruments and Raytheon. Melanie intends to build a team who will build and carry forward the initiative in future years.

--Victor L. Worsfold Grants Committee

ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Highlighting the success and uniqueness of our alumni



Cory enjoying her view during her travels in Bangkok. Most recently, Cory has been one of very few recipients nationwide of a Skadden Fellowship.

Name: Cory Sagduyu

Class: 2011

Major: Political Science

Hometown: Overland Park, Kansas

Home teams: Kansas City Chiefs, Royals, KU Basketball

Occupation: Law student

Current location: Charlottesville, VA

Cooler part about your job: Thanks to the Skadden Fellowship, I will get to provide legal representation to people who would otherwise not be able to find or afford an attorney. I will help victims of labor trafficking

and workplace exploitation with their immigration status and help them get compensation for their past work.

Dream end-of-career job: Working in the intersection between human trafficking law and policy.

Future non-career ambitions: Complete triathlons, keep adding to my international travels.

Outside talents: Marathon running, salsa dancing, two-stepping.

The most dangerous / exciting thing you've done: Hitchhiking in Colombia

One surprising thing Alumni

wouldn't know about you: I'm traveling through Myanmar right now!

Favorite part about UTD: The friends I made there :)

Favorite McDermott memory: Throwing frisbees from raft to raft during the Santa Fe trip.

What you want to tell the McDermott Scholars: Travel to as many different areas of the world as you can while you're in the program (and after)!

The Skadden Fellowship is the most prestigious public interest law fellowship. It provides two years of funding to roughly 30 law students or law graduates a year, nationwide. Applicants must find a host organization, design a project proposal, and complete an interview process to have a chance of being selected.

Cory's project is to provide victims of workplace crimes with both immigration and employment legal services. Her clients will be primarily from Central America, Mexico, Jamaica, and the Philippines. They have suffered exploitation ranging from wage theft to sexual assault to labor trafficking. Cory will help them secure longer-term immigration status and damages for the harms they have suffered.

You can read more about Cory's work in [this UVA article](#). Congratulations Cory!

Want to be our next spotlight? Send us an email today!

12 SONS AND MANY SCHOLARS

McDermott Alumni, Scholars, and Staff visit the Meadows Museum

The last time I visited the Meadows Museum, I was a high school student completing a project for my Spanish History & Culture class. As a conflicted teenager lost in trying to decide between a career in music and the sciences, I thought of my visit as entirely irrelevant to my interests and went on to unenthusiastically gut my way through the museum.

It took the mind-opening experience of being a McDermott Scholar for me to realize that music, art, history, and science all relate to one another. It was with this augmented appreciation and refined taste that I joined McDermott alumni and current scholars on a visit to the Meadows in early January.

Our visit neared the end of the four-month-long exhibition of 17th century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbarán's *Jacob and His Twelve Sons*, a collection of thirteen life-size portraits that normally resides in Auckland Castle. We were treated to an intimate tour led by Linda P. and William A. Custard Director of the Meadows Museum Dr. Mark A. Roglán.

Dr. Roglán explained how Zurbarán's pastoral upbringing inspired the vivid backgrounds of *Jacob and His Twelve Sons*, and how his rise to fame in the artistic and economic hub Seville, which held a monopoly on trading with the New World, came about in part by the patronage of Diego Velázquez. *Jacob and His Twelve Sons* was most likely a commissioned piece. Interestingly, while art historians are yet to identify the patron, Dr. Roglán mentioned the fascinating possibility that the pieces were commissioned with the hope of



Scholars look on as Dr. Roglán describes the history of each painting. The private tour of the museum was a fascinating experience for all who participated.

celebrating and propagating the colonial belief that the New World was where the Lost Tribes of Israel had been found.

A room adjoining the main exhibition hall of *Jacob and His Twelve Sons* featured Kimbell Art Museum conservator Claire Barry's analyses of the paintings. In an intriguing fusion of cutting-edge technology, scientific principles, and art research, the paintings were imaged at infrared and x-ray frequencies, revealing the secrets behind how Zurbarán so successfully employed chiaroscuro and how he so accurately rendered draperies.

The x-ray images also provide insight into Zurbarán's resourcefulness - Dr. Roglán pointed out a rough figure of the head of the Virgin at the bottom of the x-ray image of Levi, revealing that Zurbarán recycled an old canvas for his new project.

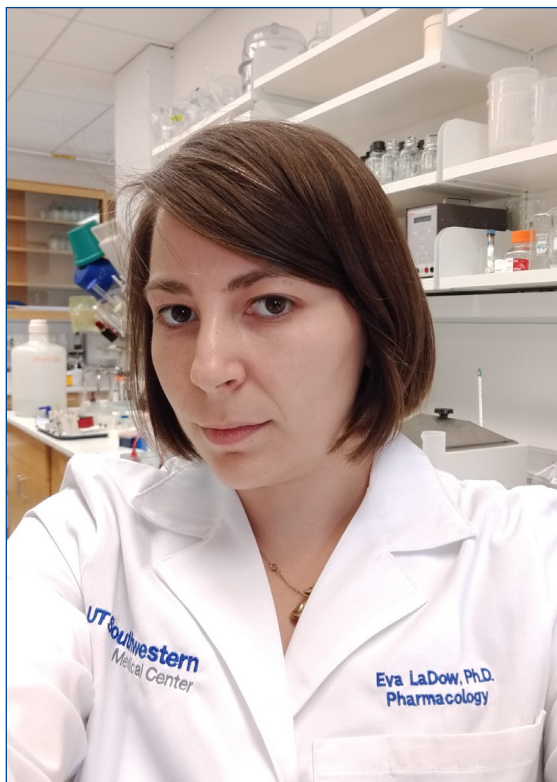
Visiting the Meadows Museum often escapes the palette of activities in Dallas, maybe because of its distance from the Arts District. The fact that I am a Dallas native who practically grew up at the DMA, Nasher, and Crow Collection while only having visited the Meadows Museum twice shows the extent to which the museum's presence is understated.

McDermotts will naturally enjoy the Museum as it synthesizes art with language, culture, history, economics, and science - fields that encapsulate the interests of nearly all of us. I hope scholars and alumni can continue working together to facilitate these enriching visits to the Meadows Museum, as well as to Dallas' other overlooked destinations.

--Chirag Gokani ('17)

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

An inside look at Dr. Eva LaDow, one of our beloved McDermott faculty members



IMPACT! caught up with Dr. Eva LaDow, a Senior Lecturer in Neuroscience with the Collegium V Honors College.

Name: Eva LaDow

Hometown: Seattle, WA

Family members: My husband and my cat, Diesel. Anyone who has taken a class with me knows I have a 17 pound cat - he's not fat, he's just big.

Rank order of siblings: I am the older of two; my sister is three years younger.

Undergraduate and Graduate programs: I did my undergraduate in neuroscience and biochemistry at Smith College, and my PhD in pharmaceutical sciences and pharmacogenomics at UC San Francisco. If that's a mouthful, you can just say I did a PhD in PSPG at UCSF.

Dissertation: I focused on how neurons translate outside signals into changes inside the cell, allowing them to be plastic.

Specifically, I studied the regulation of a somewhat atypical protein kinase, PKD1, in response to the neurotransmitter glutamate.

Teaching/Research Concentration:

If someone outside the university asks me what I teach, I usually say, "Brains and drugs." I teach three core neuroscience courses: Intro, Cellular Neuroscience, and Neuropharmacology. I also teach a variety of one credit readings course on neuroscience topics such as addiction and memory.

Current Research: A lot of my training has been in fluorescence microscopy and high content analysis. I currently collaborate with a lab at UTSW on their microscopy projects, designing experiments, troubleshooting sample prep, and creating analysis pipelines.

Coolest part of your job: That's a really hard question. I often say that I have the best job ever, and I mean it. The most fun part about doing my job is teaching students things that are... unexpected. That happens a lot in neuropharmacology. The most rewarding part is watching my students and advisees achieve their goals.

If you could teach any other elective, what would it be: I have a dream of teaching a class on the biology and biochemistry of fermented foods, and collaborating with Dr. Dow to discuss the importance of these foods in various societies. It would be called "On Food and Culture." Get it?

Dream end-of-career job (besides UTD, obviously): Teaching college is amazing, but there's a lot of need in K-12 education. My husband and I have discussed doing work related to these needs - maybe running an after school tutoring center following the 826 Valencia model.

Future non-career ambitions: I love audio drama and horror. My secret dream (I guess not so secret now) is to write for an episode

of the No Sleep Podcast, which is a horror podcast that performs stories written by fans.

Outside talents: I love sewing and I have a side hobby restoring vintage and antique sewing machines.

Favorite part(s) about living in Dallas: I live in Oak Cliff, which I adore for its architecture, diversity, and food scene.

One surprising thing UTD doesn't know about you: If UTD doesn't know it yet, it's for good reason.

The most exciting thing you've done: I once had to wrap presents under Secret Service surveillance.

What you would do with \$1 million: I'd either open that tutoring center, or I'd find an existing educational group to fund. I'd probably give some portion to the Dallas SPCA as well. That's where we got Diesel and I appreciate all the work they do toward ending animal cruelty in DFW.

What you would do with stopped time: Catch up on all my sewing projects. Sewists often talk about UFOs - unfinished objects. Forget Roswell, my closet is full of them.

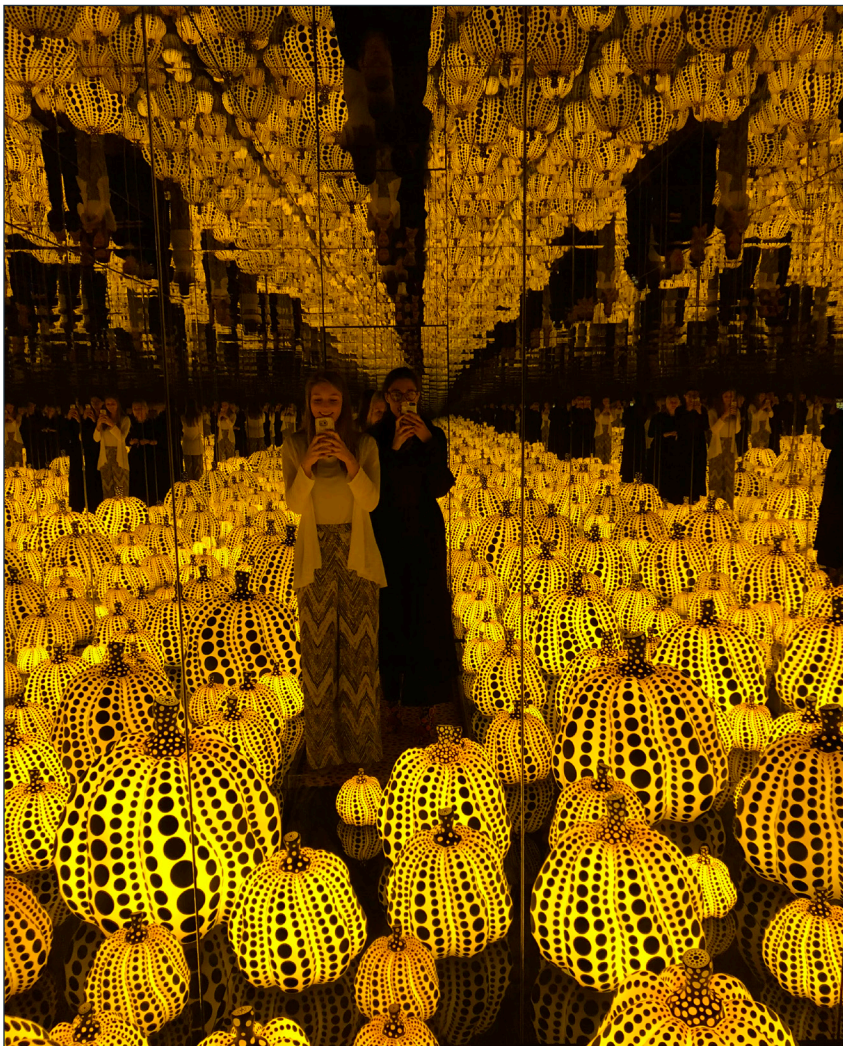
If you could have any superpower: Teleportation

What you want to tell the Alumni Association: No matter what your primary occupation is, make giving and serving a part of your daily practice. You will be happier.



PUMPKIN PARTY

Yayoi Kusama's "All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins"



Imagine walking into a room no bigger than ten square feet, only to find each wall seems to stretch into oblivion. Now fill that oblivion with orange, luminous, polka-dotted pumpkins. This is the experience of Yayoi Kusama's *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins*, an installation which the Dallas Museum of Art acquired last year. In December, the program made tickets available for 20 current scholars, ten alumni, and ten fellows to see the exhibition together.

Included with admission to the Kusama installation was entrance to *Truth: 24 frames per second*, a series of video artwork on pressing social justice issues of our time. The two in tandem provided a healthy mix of the whimsical and the somber, neither lacking intellectual heft. It was the perfect environment for current scholars, alumni, and fellows to get to know one another; the art provided common ground so that everyone had something to talk about, and the museum provided a thoughtful environment

through which to discuss the exhibition and beyond.

Kusama has been creating provocative art since the 1950s. The polka-dots which play such a prominent role in *All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins* date back to some of her earliest works, called "happenings." These gatherings - part performance art, part protest - were often spurred by Kusama painting polka dots on herself and others. The resulting non-scripted action of participants constituted the art.

In many ways, *Pumpkins* and other infinity rooms designed by Kusama maintain the performative origins of happenings — the artist creates an environment filled with polka-dot stimuli, and the response of the participants in that environment creates the art almost as much as the environment itself. To the delight of Instagrammers and Snapchat story aficionados everywhere, that response is often a photograph or a video. The lines to enter, the plain outward appearance of the room, and its limited capacity also contribute a ritualistic quality to the installation.

McDermott Scholars have plenty of our own rituals, new and old. Our program has a long standing tradition of attending the Dallas Symphony Orchestra and the Dallas Opera, and a rich history of immersing scholars in the arts. Three years ago, the first McDermott Cup competition took place, aiming to unite juniors with freshmen and seniors with sophomores by placing them on "odds" and "evens" teams according to entrance year. But the competition also calls for alumni participation, awarding additional points for their attendance.

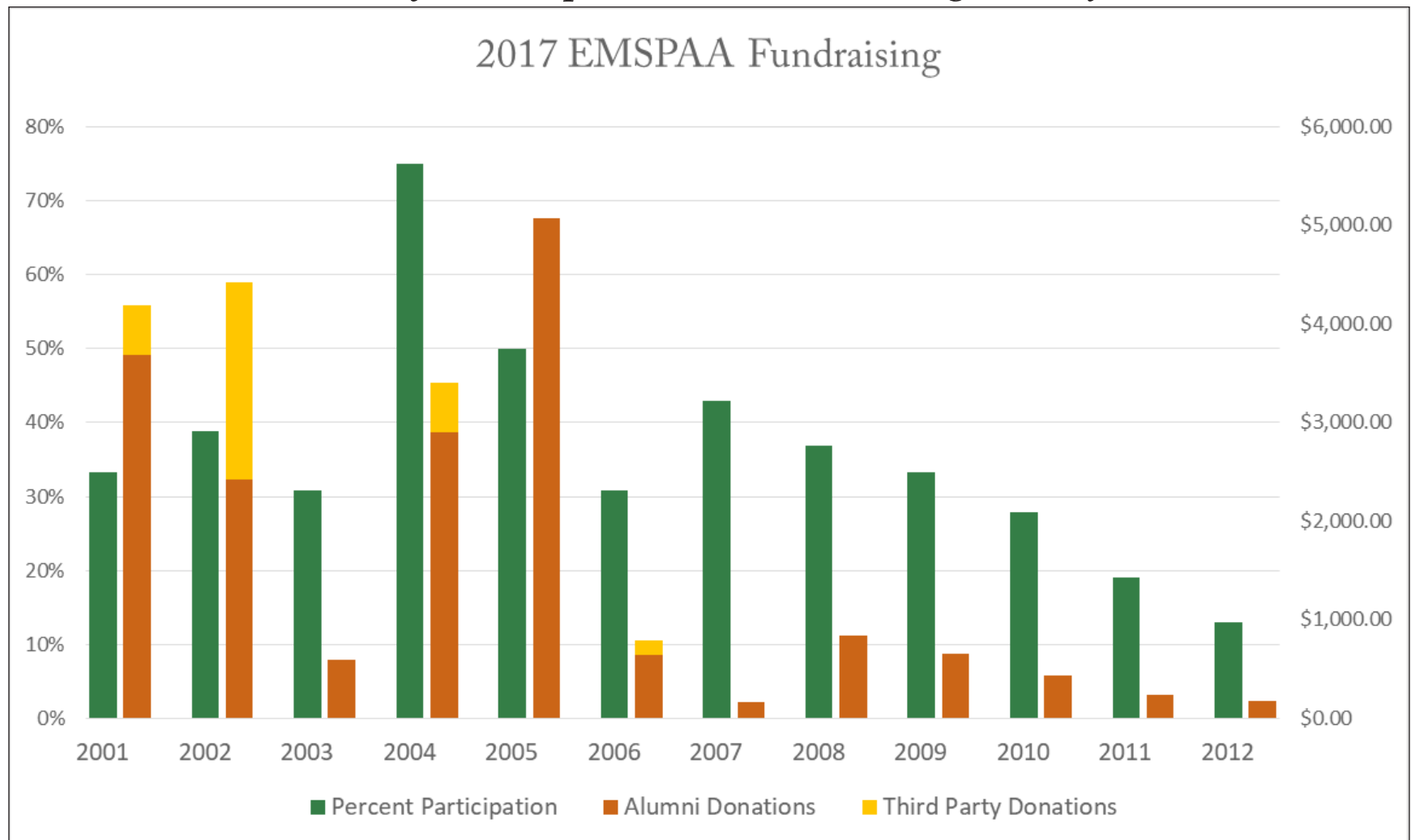
The Kusama *Pumpkins* event was the first time the program provided tickets to an art exhibition, and its success can provide a paradigm for future events. The museum's casual atmosphere allowed scholars from the 2017s to the 2003s to connect. This environment is a distinct advantage to the visual arts. Unlike the performing arts, where discussion about the show remains confined to brief intermissions or following the performance, or McDermott Cup events, which foster a more competitive environment, museums allow for conversations to take place throughout the experience.

As all aspects of our program continue to expand, we must foster multiple inter-class outlets and now, with the addition of the graduate fellows, inter-program connections. To continue to grow the diversity of our program, we must add to the type of events connecting current scholars, alumni, and fellows.

--Elyse Mack ('14)

2017, A YEAR OF GIVING

Class of 2005 tops the charts with their generosity



The members and friends of the Association once again showed strong support for UT Dallas and the McDermott Program in 2017. Ninety alumni and twenty other donors gave a combined \$37,756 to the Association and Program throughout the year. This includes \$21,006 donated as a part of our 2017 fundraising campaign. The 2005 class led the way with \$5,073 in total contributions, and the 2004 class saw the highest rate of participation (75%).

The 2013 class carried on the tradition of honoring Mrs. McDermott through a graduation gift. They collectively raised funds for and built a gazebo that now resides on campus, and their families contributed an additional \$16,750 to the Program.

Thank you to everyone for your support of the Association, the McDermott Program, and UT Dallas!

--Ryan Marcotte ('11), Vice President of Development

The Class of 2013 and the gazebo they donated to UT Dallas. The gazebo was dedicated to the McDermott Scholars Program Staff, showing appreciation for the support and care the staff give the Scholars.

