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Commencement 2009

Education Advocates Inspire; 509 Graduate

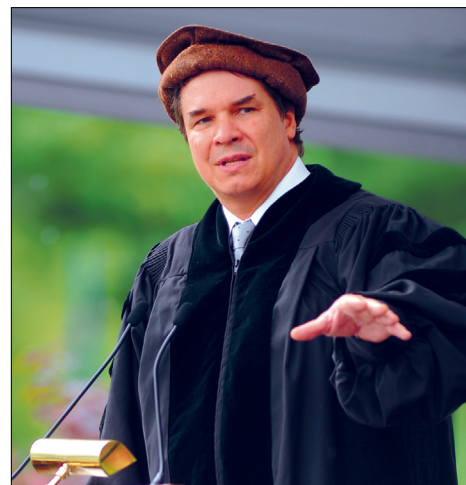
At Colby's 188th Commencement, May 24, speakers discussed struggle, failure, and global challenges, ultimately urging graduates to seize opportunities presented by difficulties they encounter and to help others. As 509 members of the Class of 2009 received their diplomas, excitement overwhelmed the May showers that dampened an unusually large crowd on Miller Library's lawns.

In Afghanistan, said commencement speaker Greg Mortenson, coauthor of *Three Cups of Tea*, "There's a very beautiful Persian proverb that says, 'When it is dark, you can see the stars.' And I think that's a good thing to hold onto." A failed attempt to climb K2 in Pakistan led Mortenson to his life's mission of establishing schools in Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The Taliban, Mortenson said, has destroyed more than 800 schools in Afghanistan and Pakistan in the last two years, mostly those for girls. "So, why do a group of men want to bomb a girls' school and not a boys' school? Because, I think, their



Qiamuddin Amiry '09, senior class speaker (left), and commencement speaker Greg Mortenson, coauthor of *Three Cups of Tea* (right), both quoted Persian proverbs during ceremonies May 24.



"It was here that I had the chance to see that it is merely a different environment ... that made the difference between a young suicide bomber from Kabul and the young man standing before you today."

Qiamuddin Amiry '09, senior class speaker

greatest fear—it's not a bullet, but it's a pen," he said. Mortenson quoted the Islamic *hadith*: "The ink of a scholar is holier than the blood of a martyr."

The good news, Mortenson said, is that since 2000 the number of children being educated in Afghanistan has grown from 800,000 to 7.6 million—"the greatest increase in school enrollment in any country in modern history," he said. "That's the candle, that's the light of hope for a country like Afghanistan."

In a speech that went from lighthearted to inspiring, senior class speaker Qiamud-

din Amiry '09, of Kabul, Afghanistan, also emphasized positive change. Amiry gained perspective through the struggles early in his life, he said, including civil war in Afghanistan and later the Taliban regime. "During the civil war, survival became the number-one objective of life," he said.

the chance to see that it is merely a different environment, different people that I had the good fortune to interact with, and different sources from which I took inspiration," he said, "that made the difference between a young suicide bomber from Kabul and the young man standing before you today."

"I believe that the environment in which we grow up, and the people that we encounter in life, shape our character and mold our dreams." He translated a Persian saying: "Melons gain color from the other melons around them and they ripen together. You, Class of 2009, have colored and shaped me—and one another—in ways that will alter the rest of our lives."

Amiry quoted Aga Khan about inspiring those who are less fortunate: "It is for us, who are more fortunate, to provide that spark." The question is, can we provide the spark? Through the nonprofit he cofounded with classmate John Campbell '09, Amiry is providing outstanding students from Afghanistan with the opportunity to study at private high schools in the United States.

Full coverage of commencement, including video, audio, and transcripts, is online at www.colby.edu/commencement.

—Ruth Jacobs

Later, at the Li Po Chun United World College in Hong Kong and then at Colby, Amiry was able to look beyond survival toward helping others. "It was here that I had

National Public Radio's David Greene interviewed Qiamuddin Amiry '09 for a May 25 *Morning Edition* piece about Amiry's life, his speech, and the Afghan Scholars Initiative (ASI). Sikandar Ahmadi, who attends Gould Academy in Maine through support from ASI (www.afghanscholars.org), joined Amiry in Colby's radio studio, a gift of Thomas C. Marlitt '80.

Changing of the Guard

Robert E. Diamond Jr. '73, longtime Colby trustee, supporter of the College, and now a Colby parent, took over for Joseph F. Boulos '68 as chair of the Board of Trustees at commencement.

Diamond is president of Barclays PLC and chief executive of investment banking and investment management for Barclays' investment arm. Through the Diamond Family Foundation he funded the Diamond Building and has led efforts to expand Colby's research and teaching in areas related to the environment.

Boulos, president of The Boulos Companies, northern New England's largest commercial real estate firm, is also a longtime trustee and supporter of Colby. With his wife, Sheri, he made the financial commitment to establish a no-loan aid policy for Maine students, a policy that was expanded last year to include all students eligible for financial aid.

In a conversation during a break between trustees' meetings during Commencement Weekend, Boulos and Diamond considered the challenges of the past year and what they see as Colby's prospects for the future.

While they have different business backgrounds, Boulos and Diamond share the belief that Colby has particular strengths that will not only allow the College to meet looming economic challenges but to emerge stronger in relation to its peers.

They both pointed to what they said is Colby's efficient and frugal financial management. "I think, relative ... to other colleges in [the New England Small College Athletic Conference], we're in great shape," Boulos said.

As a result Colby is moving forward in areas like faculty hiring when other colleges and universities are cutting back, they



Outgoing chair of the Board of Trustees Joseph F. Boulos '68, left, and incoming chair Robert E. Diamond Jr. '73, at trustees' meetings in May.

said, and that will bolster the teaching mission of the College in coming years. "We saw a list of eight or nine tenure-track or tenured professors who have joined the College for the next academic year," Diamond said. "It was incredible."

The altercation between students and security officers April 12, Diamond said, "was very, very difficult in every way, and very unfortunate—there's no way around it."

Trustees attended a presentation by Boston attorney Ralph C. Martin II on his investigation of the incident. "We're taking it very seriously," Boulos said. He predicted that, while unfortunate, the incident will help Colby emerge with "a very much better-educated administration, better-educated board, and it will be an opportunity to move in a positive direction." —Gerry Boyle '78

Looking Back and Forward: The Museum Turns 50

An exhibition titled *Art at Colby: Celebrating the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Colby College Museum of Art* opens July 11 in honor of the museum's semi-centenary. The exhibit traces the history of the collection and showcases its highlights, including more than 75 works from the Lunder Collection (promised to the museum by Paula and Peter Lunder '56), said the museum's Carolyn Muzzy Director and Chief Curator Sharon Corwin.

The exhibit is ordered chronologically by date of acquisition, tracing landmark acquisitions, such as Winslow Homer's *The Trapper* and more than 350 pieces from the collection. Visitors will be able to listen to guided audio tours via their cell phones.

A book to complement the exhibition,



Winslow Homer, *The Trapper*, 1870, oil on canvas, 19¹/₁₆ x 29¹/₂"
Colby College Museum of Art, Gift of Mrs. Harold T. Pulsifer

titled *Art at Colby*, includes 144 brief essays detailing 176 pieces in the collection. The 98 essay contributors represent a variety of professions, including art historians, poets, curators, and others from a broad range of disciplines. The museum staff is also orga-

nizing an October 9-10 symposium titled "American School: American Art and Pedagogy," to bring together scholars of American art.

Moving forward, new acquisitions will continue to address specific goals. "We're looking to strengthen the contemporary and American holdings," Corwin said. "We're also looking to expand the collection of teaching objects—works that can be used by faculty in courses." Corwin said she and her colleagues hope to expand the breadth of the museum's outreach and engagement both on campus and in the local community, and the symposium is expected to continue to move the museum toward those goals.

"We'd like to further establish ourselves as a national presence in terms of scholarship and our exhibitions." —Lauren Pongan '09

WIT AND WISDOM

"I don't know how it will be helpful to me when I go back to Nepal, but American campaign finance is very interesting."

Lokesb Todi '09, explaining to prospective students how his plans to study physics and engineering changed when he discovered a passion for government.

"Colby actually isn't as liberal as I think people think it is. There are a lot more moderates on campus than people realize."

Ala Solsvig '11, director of on-campus services for the Colby Republicans, in a discussion about political action on campus.

"I've had students who have gone on to be doctors, and they can identify every tree on the golf course, and that's a great source of satisfaction."

Biology Professor Judy Stone, who teaches the popular course Woody Plants, talking about her students at a day-long program for admitted students from Maine.

"It stands in the imagination of many students as something that was started in 1813."

President William D. Adams in a discussion of the Champagne on the Steps tradition. It was replaced this year with an all-campus barbecue.

"Watch this."

Professor of Music Paul Machlin, whispering to his wife before visiting music professor Yukiko Sekino performed Liszt's Dante Sonata at her faculty piano recital.

"I've either got to catch a lot of lobsters or sell a lot of books to pay the fine."

Linda Greenlaw '83, in an Associated Press story about being fined in June for fishing in Canadian sovereign waters—an incursion she said happened unintentionally when she was trying to retrieve gear that had been dragged by another boat.

NSF GRANT FOR EVOLUTIONARY GENETICS

As a plant species spreads from its original environment, the finely tuned genetic advantages that it gained through natural selection on its home turf may not serve individual plants that colonize the edges of the species' range. Biology Professor Judy L. Stone received a \$306,632 grant from the National Science Foundation to study "Gene flow, selection, and maintenance of mating-system diversity on an ecological gradient" by studying plants in Costa Rica. The grant includes funding for at least 24 research experiences over four years, and most of them will be Colby students. More at www.colby.edu/mag.



PHOTO BY HERB WILSON

Judy Stone, right, with student researchers in Costa Rica.

Silvery Green

A project that expanded Cotter Union by 18,000 square feet with additions of Pulver Pavilion and a new bookstore received LEED certification at the silver level from the U.S. Green Building Council. LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the accepted standard for rating green or sustainable building construction, and silver is a notch above basic LEED certification.

Pulver Pavilion, which opened in 2007, has fulfilled its planned role as a hub of campus life. The new bookstore, a two-story, 9,000-square-foot addition on the east side of the building, opened in June 2008.

The building received LEED points in 29 categories, including water and energy conservation, use of local and recycled materials, and a commitment to using renewable energy. This is Colby's third LEED-certified building. The others are the Schair-Swenson-Watson Alumni Center and the Diamond Building.



The new Green Colby logo—a sign of all things green at Colby.

Green Power Champs

For the second consecutive year, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) named Colby an individual conference champion for purchasing more green power than any other school in the New England Small College Athletic Conference (NESCAC).

Because Colby purchases all of its electricity from renewable resources (low-impact hydro, biomass, and wind) and also purchases Green-E-certified wind power Renewable Energy Credits (RECs), the EPA lists Colby as using 103-percent green electricity—the highest percentage among the 43 participating colleges and universities nationwide. In addition to purchased power, the College generates about 10 percent of its electricity with a cogeneration turbine at the on-campus steam plant used to heat campus buildings.

EPA estimates that Colby's purchase of green power is equivalent to the electricity used by more than 1,600 average American homes in a year, and that the resulting reduction in CO₂ emissions is the equivalent of taking nearly 2,100 passenger cars off the road for a year.

First Lady on Mayflower Hill



Colby President William D. Adams and Lauren Sterling were married May 17 in a small, informal ceremony in Maine. Sterling, a longtime Waterville resident, is program director for the Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet. In that capacity she coordinates initiatives among state agencies, manages a statewide federal after-school program, and works to combat bullying and harassment among youth. She was a driving force that helped bring New England's first Educare Center to Waterville, and each year the center will serve approximately 185 Waterville-area low-income children and their parents. Sterling's volunteer activities include co-chairing the Greater Waterville Communities for Children and Youth Coalition since its inception in 1996.

AWARD-WINNING STUDENTS

Humanity in Action

Tajreen Hedayet '11, a Posse Scholar from Queens, N.Y., was chosen for a prestigious Humanity in Action Fellowship that will send her to Paris, France, for five weeks to study human rights, minority issues, and diversity.

Participants will come from six countries, and Hedayet will be one of the youngest fellows and one of the few who haven't completed bachelor's degrees, she said. "It's just unreal to me."

The fellowship will give her a firsthand look at how an increasingly diverse population is shaping France in the 21st century. It requires academic work in the form of lectures, discussions, and a research paper. After the summer program, Hedayet will implement a grass-roots action project (undoubtedly at Colby, she noted) over the next year, and she will become a senior fellow of the Humanity in Action program.

Watson Winner Profiled

Jeronimo Maradiaga '09J won a prestigious Watson Fellowship for research on three continents. See cover story, page 18.

Two Projects for Peace

Two Colby students won \$10,000 grants to implement humanitarian programs of their own design this summer under the Davis Projects for Peace initiative.

Sarah Joseph Kurien '09 and Ermira Murati '11 are two of 100 undergraduates awarded a grant in the third year of Davis Projects for Peace initiative.

Murati's project reaches out to underprivileged youth in Kosovo, which she calls "the poorest country in Europe." She proposes developing business management skills, networking with local businesses, helping young people find jobs or start their own businesses, and fostering inter-ethnic dialogue. She hopes to create a sustainable program for youth entrepreneurs and to support the startup of three to five businesses.

Kurien will focus on countering religious hatred by promoting awareness among children living in the slums of Mumbai, India, her native country. Her goal is to emulate "the ideal of religious tolerance enshrined in the Indian constitution" through educating educators and children. She too seeks to create a sustainable program that will carry on in South Mumbai's public classrooms.

Four Fulbrights

The Fulbright Program offered four Colby seniors prestigious teaching assistantship grants in Europe for the 2009-10 school year.

Katherine Dutcher, Justin Mohler, and Nicole Veilleux were offered Fulbright Teaching Assistantships in Germany and Emily Foraker was offered a Fulbright Teaching Assistantship in Russia. Mohler also was awarded a U.S. English Language Assistantship in Austria, known as an Austrian Fulbright, and opted to spend the year in Graz, Austria.

The Fulbright Program was established in 1946 to promote mutual understanding between U.S. citizens and people from other countries. The U.S. Student Program currently awards approximately 1,500 grants annually in about 150 countries.

Read the full versions of these stories online. Got to www.colby.edu/mag, keyword: awards09

Three Professors Retire

The end of the academic year marked the retirement of three long-serving members of the Colby faculty, and President William D. Adams thanked them for their service to the College at the annual

faculty-trustee dinner during Commencement Weekend. All three retirees remain members of the Colby faculty with emeritus status.

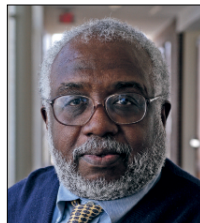
JANE M. MOSS, the Robert E. Diamond



Professor of Women's Studies and professor of French, came to Colby in 1979 after earning her bachelor's degree at Wellesley and a master's and

Ph.D. at Yale. She studied and taught the literature of Québec, Franco-America, and Francophone women writers. Her mother and brother were Colby graduates, and she called it "a dream come true" to spend her career at Colby. Her husband, Richard M. (Pete) Moss, taught history from 1978 to 2005.

CLIFFORD E. REID, the Charles A.



Dana Professor of Economics, came to Colby in 1987 after earning his bachelor's degree at the George Washington University and his Ph.D. at Princeton.

He studied discrimination in American life, specifically in housing, employment, and wages, and he was known for rigorous standards in the classroom. He is a past chair of the Economics Department and served on the Bunche Scholars committee.

SHEILA M. MCCARTHY, associate pro-



fessor of Russian, came to Colby in 1987 after earning degrees at Emmanuel, Harvard, and her Ph.D. at Cornell. She taught Russian language, literature,

and culture and founded the Colby in St. Petersburg study-abroad program. She accompanied alumni trips to Russia, helped to start a sister-city connection with Kotlas, Russia, and organized the Russian Sampler, which brought area schoolchildren to Colby each spring to experience Russian language and culture.

Mentoring Model

Since its beginnings in 2001, Colby Cares About Kids has expanded to involve some 400 students each year mentoring youths in neighboring towns. But more important than the breadth of the participation is the depth of the commitment and passion from college students and their young charges and their parents.

The success prompted Maine's governor to direct a \$500,000 federal grant to replicate the CCAK model at other campuses throughout the state: Bowdoin, University of New England, the University of Maine, and University of Maine campuses in Augusta, Portland, and Lewiston.



Mentors in Colby Cares About Kids (CCA) pose during orientation last fall.

PHOTO BY KRISTIN NISSEN '11

Education Trumps Recession

Given the economic climate of the past year, all bets were off for admissions numbers at private colleges and universities this year. But Colby's numbers for the Class of 2013 came in strong.

While Colby did see a decrease in applications (6.5 percent), it was slight compared to many peer institutions. A total of 4,520 applications (300 more than in 2006) led to an acceptance rate of 34 percent, which is typical for Colby. The yield rate (percentage of students accepting the offer of admission) stood at 32 percent as of May, the same as last year.

The percentage of minority students in the Class of 2013 will be about the same as the past two years (approximately 15 percent). The percentage of African-American students planning to enroll more than doubled from last year to four percent as of May.

Standardized test scores remain strong. The average SAT scores stood at 670 for writing and critical reading and 680 for math—again, typical for Colby.

Colby did see a slight increase in financial aid applications and has budgeted an additional \$1.5 million to meet increased need of current and incoming students.

No More Convent

An unexpectedly large enrollment in the fall of 2005 led the College to lease a former convent on the edge of campus to house students. Four years later Colby has determined it no longer needs the additional housing.

Colby leased the building adjoining the Mt. Merici School when three factors combined to swell the student population: an unexpectedly high yield from applicants admitted to the Class of 2009, an unusual number of students returning from leaves of absence, and fewer students choosing to live off campus.

This year 509 seniors graduated, a large class for Colby, which aims to keep the number of first-year students just below 500. As of May 28, this fall's entering freshman class was on target at 496, according to the Admissions Office.

MILES FOR MINDS

The highway between Boston and Waterville is well worn by Colby students, parents, and alumni. But few make the trip the way Emily Wagner '08 has: running all 191 miles.



Emily Wagner '08

PHOTO BY JOHN MEADER

Wagner ran from her home in Medford, Mass., to Mayflower Hill in 14 days to raise money for the Central Asia Institute (CAI), the nonprofit organization of Greg Mortenson, coauthor of *Three Cups of Tea* and Colby's 2009 commencement speaker. From May 16 to 30 Wagner ran a daily average of 15 miles.

Wagner's respect for Mortenson's work and her desire to "help kids—especially girls—in the developing world realize their educational dreams" gave birth to the run, which she called Miles for Minds. To read more, go to www.colby.edu/mag.

Pulitzer Finalists

Professors G. Calvin Mackenzie (government) and Robert Weisbrot (history) were among the three finalists for the Pulitzer Prize in history for their book, *The Liberal Hour: Washington and the Politics of Change in the 1960s*, which was described as "an elegantly written account of a brief period in American history that left a profoundly altered national landscape."

The award went to *The Hemingses of Monticello: An American Family* by Annette Gordon-Reed.

