Congratulations to all of our 2020 graduates!
We are proud of you!

2019-2020
Where are they now?

- Kieran Thompson Willey; Student Support Teacher, Delaware County Christian School, Devon, PA
- Spencer Hess; Grade 1 Teacher at the Guilmette Elementary School, Lawrence, MA
- Anna Lemmer; Math Teacher at Masconomet High School, Topsfield, MA
- Anna Kjellson; Chemistry Teacher at Ipswich High School; also general chemistry lab instructor at Gordon
- Victoria Ganss; Chemistry Teacher at St. John's Preparatory School, Danvers, MA
- Paige Keenan; Grade 4 ELA/Social Studies Teacher at Pioneer Valley Chinese Immersion Charter School, Amherst, MA
- Sophia Tall; Grade 2 Teacher at Bellows Free Academy in Fairfax, VT
- Lauren (Edwards) Demers is a one on one ABA teacher and case manager for 4 students at Hopeful Journeys, Beverly.
- Rebekah Dostie; Grade 3 teacher at St. Gabriel’s School, Windsor, CT
- Poulard Sylvestre; KIPP Academy, Lynn, MA
- Christina Goncalves; paraprofessional at Miller Elementary School in Holliston, MA
- Christine Le; attending Gordon College Graduate School and teaching in a learning pod
- Caitlin McKee; full-time nanny anticipating graduate school enrollment
- Holden Worth; Teaching Assistant at Pine Grove School, Avon, CT
- Angela Epplett; teaching at Santiago Christian School in the Dominican Republic
- Jacob Se Il Jung; teaching (AP) US History, (AP) World History, (AP) Economics, and Geography in Yongin, South Korea
- Robert Grinnell; Spanish Teacher, Malden High School in Malden, MA
- Caroline Baker is a Language Assistant at a high school in Madrid, Spain. Works in cooperation with the classroom teacher to present various content in English, such as discussing the American education system and literature.
- Vicki Franks is currently teaching Pre-K/K classes for Outschool while she finishes her coursework for her English degree.
- Abi White started her master’s at Gordon while doing private tutoring/afternoon help for a Kindergartner and 1st grader who are in a hybrid model for school.
EDU Majors and Faculty Book Discussion over Christmas Break

Education majors and education faculty will be reading Melba Pattillo Beal’s memoir, *Warriors Don’t Cry*, over Christmas break and engaging in discussion groups with each other. This will be the first of several books we will read and experience together focusing on a variety of minority experiences within education. We’re looking forward to book groups in January!

Student Profiles
Elizabeth Pillai '23
Elementary Education, ESL

I am a sophomore Elementary Education major with an ESL minor. I hope to one day teach internationally. I didn’t think that dream would come true anytime soon. But this semester, I was given the incredible opportunity to teach English for a private school in South Korea. I taught a group of 16-18 year olds and recently started my second class of 15 year olds, ranging from intermediate to advanced levels of English. For eight hours a week, my six students and I have been preparing for the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) exam that they will take in a year. In our two hours of class time we do a variety of speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities. The students’ favorite activity was reading through the script of the movie, *The Wizard of Oz*. They were very surprised when the Wicked Witch melted! I loved getting the chance to write my own English lessons and learn how to teach over Zoom. This has been a wonderful experience for me to start doing what I am passionate about and reach students I never thought I would meet.
I was studying abroad in Orvieto, Italy last semester when COVID hit! Although my trip was cut short, I was able to experience what it was like to live in another culture where the food was so fresh that our cook could relay to us the source of everything in the fridge down the exact chicken. Orvieto is a small town, built on a butte where a volcano used to stand. It is the home of fashion boutiques, cobblestone roads, an endless supply of gelato, and a renovated convent that acts as a home to Gordon. During my time there, I got to walk to the bottom of the Pozzo di S. Patrizio, which is an enormous man-made well with a staircase lining the interior. I also had the remarkable opportunity to go inside the Duomo, which means cathedral, and is the largest building in all of Orvieto. On top of all of this, I had the ability to do art in one of the most beautiful countries in the world. From running around town and drawing everything from churches to figures to trees, to gathering uncomfortably close together and listening to poems upon poems upon poems, the lessons I learned were invaluable. Whether I was able to stay for the full four months or just the two weeks I received, I will never forget this experience or all that it taught me.
In May of 2020, I began a remote internship with the organization: **Kupenda for the Children** (www.kupenda.org). *Kupenda* is a Christian non-profit which seeks to “transform harmful beliefs surrounding disability to those that improve children’s lives”. Through their advocacy, education and medical programs, *Kupenda* has made a powerful impact in the lives of more than 100,000 children with disabilities in Kenya, Zambia, Tanzania, Sierra Leone, Malawi, Haiti, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. *Kupenda for the Children* also partners with other NGOs, government agencies, and disability advocates in low- and middle-income countries throughout the globe.

In my work with *Kupenda*, I assist with data compiling and cleaning, research projects, writing blogs, and developing social media posts. I also have the unique opportunity to compile research relevant to my coursework, as I am currently looking into the job market for youth with different types of disabilities and varying severity levels in Kenya.

Throughout my time studying Education at Gordon and working with *Kupenda*, I have grown increasingly aware of the important role that school staff plays in affirming children with disabilities as dignified and valuable members in a society that often dismisses people with disabilities.
This summer I had the privilege to work with a group of 5 and 6 year old’s at Harborlight Montessori School in Beverly. I did not expect my first time working full-time would be during a pandemic, but what stood out to me after the month was over was not about the longness of the days or the inconvenience of social distancing when working with children. What I learned most was what it looks like to respect children. I’ve made assumptions about what children can and cannot do – often assuming the worst about their motives and intentions. This summer I was able to see past these things.

One moment that stands out clearly to me was when I was observing my class and watched as a girl picked up her deep blue fabric marker and began to color a shape on the carpet. Before I could react, she looked directly at me and continued coloring, as if her arm was not even in her control anymore. I calmly walked over to her, and, after asking her to explain what was going on, in the quietest voice, she replied, “I’m coloring on the carpet… but I don’t know why.” She was not necessarily sad or upset, but bewildered. It was this moment that helped me understand how to respect children. This child
genuinely felt like she couldn’t control her actions, so if my response was to yell or punish her, it would have been in vain. Instead, I spoke to her as I would with someone my age who had made a mistake, and we were able to address the problem. Though this was one situation, the theme persisted throughout my time working. One of the main tenets of Montessori is respect for the child, and I was able to grow in this and learn from all the other teachers who modeled this genuine care and courtesy so well.

**Jessica Mini ’21**  
Psychology, Education

This summer I had the opportunity to do an Internship with the non-profit organization Bridgewell, in Peabody, MA. Bridgewell is an organization that works with adults with disabilities in offering them support through community housing, day programs, outpatient treatment, education, and employment training. Their mission is to provide a broad range of human and social services to those that are faced with disabilities and other challenges in life. Bridgewell has many locations in and around Massachusetts and they serve thousands of people every year.
For my internship this summer, I worked in the Bridgewell Headquarters under the recruitment manager in Human Resources. My internship was mostly focused on assisting the HR department in interviewing potential hires, organizing job listings, doing reception phone support, and data entry. I was able to learn about the behind-the-scenes operations of how this organization runs and is managed through a human resource lens. Working in the HR department at Bridgewell was a great opportunity for me to learn new skills and grow in areas that I will be able to take with me in my future. I am grateful for my summer internship at this organization and for getting to play a small part in the impactful work that they are doing.

Alumni Profiles

Rebekah Dostie '20  Early Childhood Education, Psychology

Socially distanced 3rd grade is not something I ever imagined doing in my four years at Gordon. However, it is not completely estranged from what we learned in education classes and what I hoped for. I am learning that whether in person or online, methods of delivery
have changed but teaching is still the same. I still have set routines, used problem solving circles to address rumors, had students create the class rules, provided concrete manipulatives, created lesson hooks and engaging experiences, practiced routines and so much more. I even still complete post analyses (albeit they are briefly jotted notes) of my lessons to recognize the errors and successes of my teaching. The joy I find right now is truly putting together the last four years and shaping (and reshaping) it to become reality. I love and have bonded with each of my students, I laugh with them every day and the dream of teaching in my very own classroom has solidified into reality.

Sophia Tall '20 Elementary Education, Spanish

Currently, I work as a Grade 2 teacher at the Bellows Free Academy in Fairfax, Vermont. I have experienced additional classroom management strategies that will be essential to how I manage my classroom. I have also created and prepared classroom materials that will be a part of my classroom, such as building my library! Gordon has allowed me to be prepared, thorough, and intentional with everything I do in my school.
Rebekah Butler '20  Elementary Education, Spanish

I am teaching English to pre-schoolers through 3rd grade in a public school in Barcelona. Together with other English teachers, our goal is to have the students in a total of 14 classes be trilingual in Catalan, Spanish, and English by the time they graduate high school. We believe these language skills will help them through their careers and beyond.
I am a student support teacher at Delaware County Christian School. I teach reading replacement for a few students individually as well as work with small groups of high risk students in reading. We call these groups Response to Intervention (RTI) groups as the hope is they just need to get extra help for a little while and then can cycle out of the program. For students who continue to struggle, we refer them for further testing with the school psychologist or an outside evaluation. If they qualify, they come to me during their reading time for reading replacement! I’m using a lot of Wilson Language and start my Wilson certification training in a couple of weeks. We also use AimswebPlus extensively and I work on testing all the students three times a year as well as use their progress monitoring resources for students I work with regularly. Fun fact: I work with another Gordon alum, Shannon (Dodd) Vowels who is a 2nd grade teacher down the hall from my office!
Departmental Convocation on Friday, October 9th featured Education majors meeting with Jessica Harper Cochran, 2018 Gordon alum and Grade 2-3 classroom teacher at Pittsburgh Urban Christian School. Jess shared her teaching journey and what she has learned since entering the teaching profession as well as her next steps. Jess is the first recipient of the Margaret Wright Memorial Alumni Award. The award recognizes the work of a Gordon graduate who teaches among underserved communities, providing $10,000 to the alum and $10,000 to the school where he or she teaches.

**Geoffrey Zini '04  History, Secondary Education**

Gordon grad Geoffrey Zini, who has been academic director at Blue Hills Regional Technical School for the past five years, is now the school’s principal. Read more of Geoffrey’s story [here](#).
Elizabeth Urbanowicz ’07  Spanish, Elementary Education

Elizabeth Urbanowicz, unable to find curricular materials that she felt would equip her students to think critically, helping them discover that Christianity is the worldview that lines up with reality, began creating her own. Read more about Elizabeth’s story and Foundation Comparative Worldview Curriculum here.

Faculty Features

Priscilla Nelson
Chair of the Department of Education,
Associate Professor of Education

Krista Erikson
Instructor in Education

Dr. Priscilla Nelson and Professor Krista Erikson are Massachusetts Educator - Advisors for the Mass Literacy: Empowering Educators and Students in Massachusetts Through Evidence-Based Early Literacy initiative. Read about the process and acknowledgements at https://www.doe.mass.edu/massliteracy/about.html
Ellen Ballock
Professor of Education

Dr. Ballock recently published a paper entitled “Zest, Character Education, and the Common Good” in the *International Christian Community of Teacher Educators Journal*. Want to know more? Read the article [here](#).

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Melinda Eichhorn
Assistant Professor

During the summer, Dr. Eichhorn taught a Number Sense course via Zoom for teachers in India.

Dr. Eichhorn spoke at an e-summit for Learning Disabilities in October.

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Gordon College is one of the nation’s premier Christian colleges and located just north of Boston. We offer students extraordinary access to leading-edge opportunities for intellectual, professional, and leadership development to address the increasingly complex challenges of a global society. Gordon stands apart from other outstanding institutions in New England by combining an exceptional education with an informed Christian faith.