

(clockwise from left) Morgan Kist '11, Elizabeth Zoidis '11, Taylor Burmeister '09, Caitlin Fitzharris '10, and Joe Huttner '09 all work for AppNexus in New York City. Huttner got his first post-college job there as a software engineer and programmer, and a cascade of Ford referrals followed.

GROUP PHOTO: DAN Z. JOHNSON

# TRUST, CONCERN, AND INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEWS:

*The Haverford alumni network can make a mighty big difference.* **BY MARA MILLER '10**

**M**aybe this has happened to you: You're driving and you peer ahead. Does that bumper sticker have an H on it? You creep closer. Is it Harvard? Hartford?

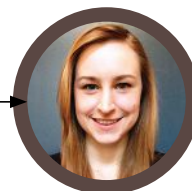
No! Haverford! You pull up, gesturing toward the fender. "I went there!" you mime. The other driver's eyes light up. What are the chances?

Really low, technically, when you come from a school with fewer than 15,000 living alumni. But somehow, we find one another—and not only on highways. As alums go from carrels at Magill to corner offices, we tap into a network of accomplished (and friendly) Fords in nearly every professional field. We call, we ask, we give. We connect.

And the connections are career-defining. In 2012, I was a recent Haverford graduate, marginally employed with



Sternman Rule '92



Miller '10

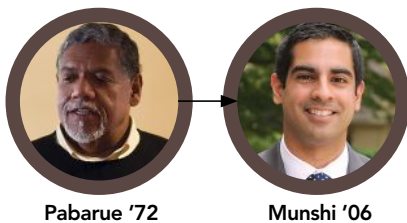
small writing gigs. That spring, after reading an essay I adored in *Eating Well* magazine, I tracked down its author's website. She was food writer **Cheryl Sternman Rule**, who, I learned on her bio page, had graduated from my (our!) alma mater in **1992**. So I performed the electronic version of the tailgate-and-wave: I emailed. We talked, and she introduced me to colleagues who would soon get me a foot in the door at a big-and-fancy women's magazine where I worked as an editor for two years. Thanks to Cheryl, and Haverford, I could say I was "a writer" without "sort of" in front of it. What are the chances?



## Like Minds

Alums like **Rahul Munshi '06**, who along with **Michael Gordon '04** co-founded the Haverford College Lawyers Network, help make the most of our numbers. HCLN counts over 1,500 members, who share a newsletter and directory and host in-person receptions nationwide.

Members ping one another with questions or opportunities, and refer cases to other Fords “left and right,” Munshi says. (He experienced the ben-



Pabarue '72

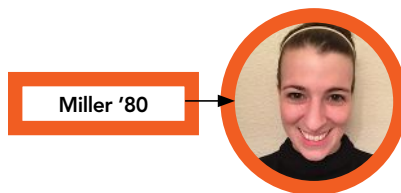
Munshi '06

efits of the network a few years ago, when HCLN member **Jim Pabarue '72** invited him to co-host a legal continuing-education class—an offer not often extended to attorneys so young.)

“It’s not just about helping alums out, though that’s part of it,” says Munshi. “It’s because [we] trust that a Haverford person is going to be a good and ethical lawyer.”

There are other thriving Haverford sub-networks, like the informal LinkedIn community launched nearly a decade ago and recently bolstered by an official page hosted by the College’s Center for Career and Professional Advising. On each page, students and alumni post questions about work or housing in certain areas, as well as job leads or queries. There are more than 3,300 members in the unofficial Worldwide Alumni group on LinkedIn, and its younger counterpart is already 1,400 strong. There are also subgroups for careers in finance, entrepreneurship, and more.

**Nora Landis-Shack '13** sought support from this online community when she switched professional gears in pursuit of a public-health career last year, and made a move from New York City



Miller '80

Landis-Shack '13

to San Francisco.

“The first thing I did was post on LinkedIn,” she says. “I got a ton of responses from alumni, some via email and some on LinkedIn.” So Landis-Shack set up a phone call with each, to talk about housing and jobs.

**Thomas Miller '80** introduced her to his son, who runs a neuroscience lab in Palo Alto. Now, she works as a research assistant there. “I’ve spoken to probably thirty alumni,” says Landis-Shack, “and everyone has been great. They go out of their way to help.”

**Natalie Wossene '08**, a 2014 MBA graduate now at Intel, says she has used LinkedIn to scan for Haverford and Bryn Mawr graduates at companies she was interested in working for. Most recently, she sought advice from **Margie Morris '90**, a senior researcher at Intel. “She gave me the lay of the land when I applied,” says Wossene. Now, the two are colleagues.



Morris '90

Wossene '08

“It was a pleasure to finally meet her after a year or so of email correspondence,” says Morris.

## All Together Now

Something special sometimes happens when more than one Ford arrives at an office. Perhaps two becomes three, and then four, and a Haverhub is born.

MAXSA Innovations, which develops lighting and other safety products

out of northern Virginia, is the start-up brainchild of **Skip West '77**. Since its inception in 2003, MAXSA has welcomed dozens of Haverford alumni as externs, interns, and employees. Early on, West worked with **Alex Russin '86** and **Michael Sklar '93**, both of whom went on to successful business careers. More recently, **Michael Romais '11** and **Jon Kelman '06** worked for West as an intern and as VP of sales and marketing, respectively.

Kelman says his time at MAXSA had an incalculable impact on his career: He honed his entrepreneurial sensibilities and discovered a preference for small companies before leaving to pursue an MBA at the University of Michigan. “I first connected with Skip through the extern program,” says Kelman, “There were several Haverford interns there at the time, too. Skip is big on taking on Fords.”

“Haverford has all these really bright, creative people,” West says. And for a small company, a stellar employee is a godsend; no one-way streets here, for sure.

“We’re a socially responsible business, so it speaks to Haverford students,” West says. “They come work with me for a few years and learn about the business world,” and then head to business school and launch careers. “It’s been really cool to watch them blossom out there.”

Then there’s AppNexus, an advertising technology firm in New York City, where one alum sparked a chain reaction that filled six positions with Fords.

**Joe Huttner '09** took his first post-college job with AppNexus as a software engineer and programmer. He then referred **Morgan Kist '11**, a fellow math major with whom Huttner had bonded on-campus during long hours of math problem sets in the computer lab. A cascade of referrals followed: **Taylor Burmeister '09**, **Caitlin Fitzharris '10**, **Daphne Paparis '12**, and **Elizabeth Zoidis '11** have all landed at the company.

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AppNexus noticed, says Huttner, that “there are a lot of smart people at Haverford.”

## Invaluable Direction

When **Arman Terzian '14** emailed **Fred Bentley '97**, whom he'd found on the electronic alumni directory, he hoped to learn more about the Advisory Board Company, a health-care consulting firm where Bentley was then managing director. After a phone conversation, Bentley offered to submit Terzian's résumé for open spots. Terzian was offered an interview and, eventually, a position.

“The reality is that nobody makes their way alone,” says Bentley. “We all count on each other in the network to band together and recognize what we can contribute.

“Arman's the one who made it happen,” he says.

Before the e-directory (or e-anything) existed, alums relied on printouts from what was then the Career Development Office to track one another down. And for **Eric Sterling '73**, those printouts launched a career that would skyrocket: Sterling, founder and president since 1989 of the nonprofit Criminal Justice Policy Foundation, has an illustrious CV including a decade as counsel to the House Judiciary Committee.

As a young attorney, Sterling hoped to transition from his job as a public defender in Delaware County, Pa., to a post on Capitol Hill. “So I went to the career office and got a list of alumni working in politics there,” he says,

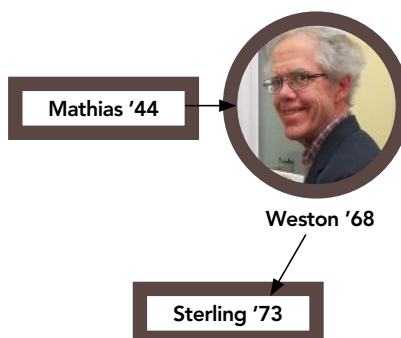
“which, frankly, was not very long.”

He camped out at a friend's place in D.C., working his way down the list with phone calls and résumés. **Rich Weston '68** eventually invited Sterling to his office for a visit. “We had a nice chat,” says Sterling.

A month later, Weston called Sterling with a job alert: He'd caught wind of an opening with the House Criminal Justice Subcommittee. Weston shared the details, and Sterling applied.

“And that's how I got the job,” says Sterling, who went on to influence major national issues like gun control, money laundering, and illegal drugs. “That opportunity completely made my career.”

Weston, incidentally, went on to work for another alum, the late U.S. Sen. **Charles “Mac” Mathias '44**, from Maryland. And Sterling has paid any outstanding dues by loyally hosting externs from both Haverford and Bryn Mawr since 1976. He also did his part by referring classmate **H. Scott Wallace '73** to a job with the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers, as director of legislative affairs. Sterling had been

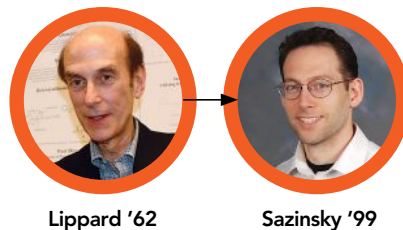


offered the post, but he wasn't ready to leave the House Judiciary Committee, where he then worked, so he urged the NACDL to offer the job to Wallace “They did, and he accepted it,” says Sterling, “and he had a long career working for them and then, in the same and more senior capacities, with the National Legal Aid and Defender Association.”

## Strong Ties

In the hyper-competitive world of academia, the “it's who you know” maxim rings as true as anywhere. (See the winter 2014 issue of *Haverford* for coverage of the remarkable web of Fords in climate science, for starters.)

**Matt Sazinsky '99** is an associate professor of chemistry at Pomona College in Claremont, Calif. Sazinsky earned his doctorate in 2004 under the tutelage of **Stephen Lippard '62** at MIT.



Lippard '62

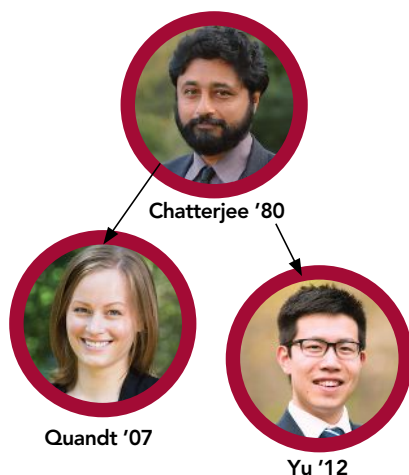
Sazinsky '99

“Steve has always been one of my strongest supporters,” Sazinsky says. It's a particularly important connection in research and teaching, where an adviser is likely to be a close mentor rather than a distant boss with a closed door.

As **Lorna Quandt '07** was finishing her Ph.D. in psychology at Temple, she eyed the lab of **Anjan Chatterjee '80**, who studies cognition and language at Penn. Professor Rebecca Compton had mentioned his well-known work—and his college connection—during a course in Quandt's junior year.

Quandt contacted Chatterjee about postdoc opportunities and came in for an interview. She was offered the job the next day and “accepted quickly,” she says.

## The Haverford Alumni Network



For a year, there were three Fords in the lab: Chatterjee, herself, and **Jonathan Yu '12**. “In general,” says Quandt, “Haverford graduates tend to be thoughtful, intelligent, and aware of the world around them.”

But academic ties aren’t the only ones that keep graduates together after graduation.

Among the more storied of Haverford networks is the baseball team, whose players have long excelled at the art of relationship building—largely thanks to the late, great **Greg Kannerstein '63**, who served as head coach from 1977 until 1992.

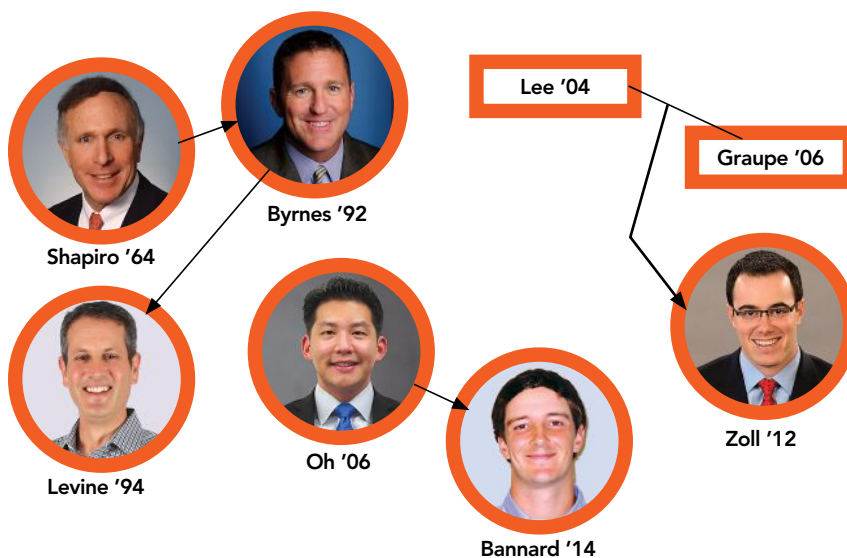
“Greg was the guy who knew everyone, who was always excited to make introductions,” says Dave Beccaria, head baseball coach since 2001. “He was the great connector.”

It was in the 1990s that Haverfordians began to storm the seemingly impenetrable world of professional baseball, led by legendary attorney and agent **Ron Shapiro '64**. In 1993, **Josh Byrnes '92**, now a VP with the Los Angeles Dodgers, approached him at an alumni game to talk shop. “It all started with an out-field conversation,” says Shapiro, who arranged an interview for Byrnes with the Cleveland Indians, which gave him his first internship. Soon, Byrnes helped welcome former teammate **Thad Levine '94**, now with the Texas Rangers, into the business. Today, Haverford counts over a dozen alumni in pro ball, many

at the upper echelons, including **Tony Petitti '83**, who is the league’s chief operating officer. Beccaria, proud of the legacy, says he hopes to emulate Kannerstein by compiling his own alumni database, keeping tabs on grads and referring students to eventual mentors.

**Jeremy Zoll '12** is a recent beneficiary. With an aspiration to work in team front office, he sat down with his coach, who referred him to **Eric Lee '04** and **Jeff Graupe '06**, both with the Cincinnati Reds. Within months, an internship opened up and Zoll leaped at the chance.

Now the advance scouting coordinator for the Los Angeles Angels, Zoll says that first opportunity made all the difference: “It’s an industry where you need a way in.”



The baseball team’s network transcends the sport, too. Last year, former player **John Oh '06**, an analyst and trader, helped recruit a more recent baseball graduate, **William Bannard '14** to Hamilton Lane, a Philadelphia financial firm.

Bannard makes a distinction that every alum I spoke with articulated in one way or another: “With Haverford, it’s not about being handed a job,” he says. “It’s about someone recognizing

your potential and giving you a chance to show who you are.

“That’s what John did for me,” he says. “I love my job, and I’m grateful for that chance.”

I called Cheryl Sternman Rule recently—to catch up, and to see if she remembered our own tale of chance. She does, fondly. “It’s a perfect example,” she said. “A Haverford connection is one that I take very seriously.”

The college hosted four of the most important years of her life, she said. Sternman Rule met her husband, **Colin Rule '93**, at 370 Lancaster, and the couple has two children. Her work for this magazine helped launch her own career as a sought-after food writer.

“I have a very large soft spot for Haverford,” she said. “And if there’s any

way I can help someone out, I want to.”

We talked about how daunting it can be to call up an accomplished alum you’ve never met. But what’s the worst that can happen, we wondered aloud—they won’t pick up the phone?

“That’s the thing about Haverford people, though,” she said. “I bet they will.”

*Mara Miller is a writer and editor living in Philadelphia. She studied Classics and ran track at Haverford.*

# Supporting the Haverford Network:

## THE CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL ADVISING

**T**he externship program that **Skip West '77**, **Eric Sterling '73**, and hundreds of other alums support is one of the oldest of its kind, according to Amy Feifer, assistant dean and director of Career Services, who heads the program along with Liza Jane Bernard, associate director and internship coordinator.

"We're an extremely tight-knit community," says Feifer. "And the community continues after you graduate." In the last few years, about 100 students annually have been placed in externships. (That number includes Mawrtys; this bi-college program culls applicants and hosts from both campuses.) It's an overwhelmingly positive experience, says Feifer: When polled, 91% of recent externs said they planned to contact their sponsors again.

**Jay Goldman '78**, journalist and editor of *School Administrator* magazine, a publication of the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), has been one of the program's most avid supporters. Externships connect students directly to people in jobs where they can see themselves in the future, he says. That's the same goal



Goldman '78



Duffy '05

of the bi-college career shadowing days he hosts in Washington, D.C., which lead small groups of students to the offices of alumni for questions, advice, and business card exchanges. Goldman has also partnered with the College to host networking receptions, one of which led to a job at AASA—well, a few jobs—for **Francesca Duffy '05**. She worked as an editorial assistant for several years and, after moving on, came back to the organization to fill a more senior position.

Over the last year, the College has ramped up its career programming to offer students even more ways to connect. In 2013, Kelly Cleary joined Haverford as its first-ever dean of Career and Professional Advising. Cleary, who previously led the University of Pennsylvania's Career Services unit for students in the College of Arts & Sciences, now

heads Haverford's new-and-improved Center for Career and Professional Advising (CCPA). Previously called the Career Development Office (CDO) and structured as a bi-college program, the renamed and reorganized center now focuses on Haverford students and their career plans.

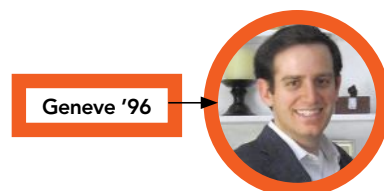
Cleary and the CCPA have introduced programs like Fords on Friday, which began as a blog but has evolved into an in-person (or on-Skype) series, which hosts alums from diverse professional fields to share their insights and advice with students. Also new are one-offs like the Fords in Business Conference, [see p.64] a day of panels and presentations geared toward MBA-seekers. Alums who've jumped on board so far, like **Constantinos Coutifaris '06**, now a partner at the private equity firm American Industrial Partners, are often passing along a favor.

In 2006, as he researched careers in investment banking, Coutifaris visited the CDO to jot down names. Among the thirty-odd alumni he called was **Craig Geneve '96**, at the time an associate with the New York City firm Bear Stearns.

"Craig put in a good word for me with the recruiter and coached me for my interview," says Coutifaris. He got the job. "I couldn't have done it without Craig," he says. And in his two years at Bear Stearns, Coutifaris helped two more Fords earn offers. "Part of it is that there aren't many of us," he says. "So, let's stick together."

CCPA head Kelly Cleary says the center's work wouldn't be possible without the "amazing, enthusiastic" alumni who share their time and wisdom with students. One recent change at the CCPA that has had a big impact was giving current students access to the alumni directory without requiring an appointment. "They get such a positive response," she says of the students' alumni networking efforts.

Says Cleary, "This is something we're really excited about, and we have so much more planned." —M. M.



Coutifaris '06

