THE CALL TO CIVIC COMMITMENT AT WESLEYAN

—Elizabeth A. McGee P’06

“Education should be directed in reference to two objects—the good of the individual educated, and the good of the world.”

—The Rev. Willbur Fisk, in his Inaugural Address delivered at the opening of Wesleyan University in September 1831

Last May, Wesleyan’s commencement speaker, Amy Gutmann, a distinguished scholar of democratic education and president of the University of Pennsylvania, told the assembled graduates and their guests, “You can revitalize our democracy, and you must.”

Our children are fortunate: Wesleyan is committed to offering them many opportunities to attain the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for democratic citizenship. Wesleyan’s strategic plan, Wesleyan Education for the 21st Century, notes, “We intend that Wesleyan graduates have a strong sense of public purpose and responsibility for the global future. Liberal education offers the underpinnings for democracy in a time when technical specialization may make the common interest increasingly hard to discern.”

Wesleyan’s focus is in step with the American republic’s early leaders, who believed that public education should lead to an intelligent citizenry. For democracy to work, every generation must acquire a sound education and the habits of civic responsibility. Yet today, the institutions that educate young people neglect democracy education. Last year, the Carnegie Corporation issued The Civic Mission of Schools to highlight this critical need.

The Wesleyan tradition of civic commitment is exceptional as reflected in its history. In Wesleyan University 1831–1910: Collegiate Enterprise in New England, David Potts notes, “Emphasis on social responsibility and on careers oriented to civic service, an enduring characteristic of Wesleyan, began on the college’s first day of operation.” The Rev. Willbur Fisk, Wesleyan’s first president, announced in his inaugural address, “But of all the effects to be produced upon the mind, by a proper course of training, nothing is more important than the spirit of benevolence—of an enlightened and universal philanthropy.”

Since its founding, Wesleyan’s pursuit of “education with a public purpose” has been advanced through its traditions, culture, courses, community and public-service options, and so on. Now a new Service-Learning Center, part of the Center for Community Partnerships, builds upon this foundation by concentrating on expanding the.

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CRUZ-SACO BECOMES DEAN OF THE COLLEGE AT WESLEYAN

—Justin Harmon P’06, Director of University Communications

Maria A. Cruz-Saco, former interim dean of the college at Connecticut College, became dean of the college at Wesleyan University on July 18.

Wesleyan’s dean of the college is responsible for the programs and services that support student learning and development. The Office of the Dean of the College encompasses the class deans, the Office of Residential Life, student and behavioral health services, the Office of Student Activities, the Office of Community Service, the chaplains, and the new Usdan University Center. The dean serves as a member of the University’s senior staff.

“This is a moment of unusual opportunity,” says President Doug Bennet. “We are thinking afresh about how we link students’ academic experiences with their lives in the community and about how we can take full advantage of the diversity of student experience as a resource for learning. Wesleyan is also strengthening our residential life and student programming in concert with the addition of new housing and the Usdan University Center. Maria Cruz-Saco will provide strong leadership in all these areas, and we welcome her to Wesleyan.”

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Civic Commitment, continued from page 1

number of service-learning courses. Service-learning is a teaching method that engages young people in service to their schools, communities, or country as part of their academic studies or other intentional learning activity.

The center is supported, in part, by a grant from the Surdna Foundation, established by the prominent alumnus John Andrus. (His name spelled backwards becomes Surdna.) The Surdna Foundation Program Officer for Effective Citizenship, Robert Sherman, says, "Our hopes for the center are for authentic integration of academic learning with the solving of community problems in Middletown."

Service-learning is not a term or a teaching method that most parents recognize. Typically, service-learning students research a need, issue, or problem and develop ways of addressing the situation they are studying by using the knowledge and skills taught in a particular academic course. For example, students support local water-quality assessment efforts as part of an environmental science class or assist a neighborhood advocacy group as part of a government class.

An emerging body of research suggests that service-learning engages students in their academic work, advances many dimensions of their learning and development simultaneously, and involves a range of service skills from acts of kindness and caring, to community stewardship, to civic action. Across the United States, colleges and universities are expanding their use of service-learning, and Campus Compact, a 20-year alliance of college presidents devoted to the civic mission of higher education, has accelerated this growth. Also, a number of Wesleyan alumni are known for their service-learning work or support: Don Hill '58, David Tuchmann '00, David Skaggs '64, P'90, and Jane Polin '80 come to mind.

As a teaching practice, service-learning places student "voice and choice" at the center of the learning process, so it is fitting that students took the initiative to introduce service-learning to the Wesleyan campus in the fall of 1995. Through a faculty-student partnership, the first service-learning course, Community Research Seminar, began in the spring of 1998.

Led by the popular and admired sociologist, Dr. Rob Rosenthal, the seminar matched student researchers with local groups and agencies with research needs. Students are responsible for carrying out the research, producing a useable final report, and assessing their research experiences in light of theories of community research. Each time the course is offered, many more students sign up for it than can be accepted. Through the seminar, students and faculty joined with Middletown activists to develop innovative ways to revitalize the North End, an effort that eventually led to the opening of the exciting Green Street Arts Center this spring.

Service-learning experiences such as these provide young people with a foundation for civic engagement, which in turn puts them on a more promising trajectory to develop into active and informed adult citizens. Former Senator John Glenn calls service-learning "the single best way to educate young people for active citizenship."

So talk it up: service-learning is good for kids, communities, and country. Advise your Wesleyan student to select at least one service-learning course during his or her years on campus. Support the growth of service-learning courses at Wesleyan by giving dollars and moral support.

In her influential Democratic Education, Dr. Gutmann wrote, "It is easy to lose sight of the distinctive virtue of a democratic society, that it authorizes citizens to influence how their society reproduces itself." We can be proud that Wesleyan has always taken this responsibility seriously. In fact, this is why many of our children chose Wesleyan. They are eager to improve our democratic institutions, in neighborhoods and across the nation.

Let's be sure Wesleyan leaders hear from us that we hope students are offered many ways to make habits of kindness, caring, and civic responsiveness an everyday part of the Wesleyan experience.

Cruz-Saco, continued from page 1

Cruz-Saco is an economist and expert in social protection and the reform of social security systems, with a regional emphasis in Latin America and the Caribbean. She has authored three books, coedited one, and contributed many articles and chapters to professional journals and books. She earned her BA at the Universidad del Pacifico in Lima, Peru, in 1979, and her PhD in economics at the University of Pittsburgh in 1983. She was a full professor of economics at Connecticut College.

Cruz-Saco had served as interim dean at Connecticut College since July 2003. She joined the college in 1990 and held leadership positions including chair of the economics department, chair of the Priorities, Planning and Budget Committee, member of the Grievances Committee, and member of the Faculty Steering Committee of the Holleran Center for Community Action and Public Policy. In 2002–03, she chaired the Presidential Commission on a Pluralistic Community, charged with delineating the college’s vision for a multicultural experience and inclusive excellence.

As interim dean, Cruz-Saco led an internal self-study of her division in comparative perspective; redrafted its vision, mission, and goals; and designed an action plan for 2004–2006. Under her leadership, the dean of the college division produced a student quality of life report, concluded and implemented the results of a self-assessment of the Multicultural Center, secured an increase in the operational budget for pluralistic initiatives, and supported the creation of a peer-mentoring pilot.
“Professor Maria Cruz-Saco has been a leader in strengthening the entire educational program at Connecticut College,” says Connecticut College President Norman Fainstein. “In 2002–03, she chaired a presidential commission on creating a genuinely pluralistic community. As interim dean of the college, she has continued to support efforts to improve equity and diversity, to further student achievement, and to better integrate the curricular and co-curricular sides of the college. She has worked closely with students, faculty, and staff to establish a collegial climate and institutional structure where students can truly put the liberal arts into action as citizens in a global society. Her enthusiasm, energy, and intellect will be sorely missed.”

“I look forward to joining the Wesleyan community and to being a part of this vibrant and engaged campus,” said Cruz-Saco shortly after her appointment. “Wesleyan offers an extraordinary liberal arts education, and I feel fortunate that I will contribute to the continued excellence of student life and development.”

Billy Weitzer, senior associate provost and dean of continuing studies at Wesleyan, will continue in his role as acting dean of student academic services during Cruz-Saco’s transition. The role of dean of student academic services was established as part of a reorganization of the Office of the Dean of the College led by Wesleyan’s interim dean, Peter Patton.

STUDENT ACCOUNTS OFFICE BEGINS E-BILLING

In March 2005, the Student Accounts Office introduced its new, paperless billing and electronic payment system, or E-Billing, for students and their families. Now, whenever a bill is prepared (nine times each year), students will receive a notice of the availability of their bill via e-mail. The e-mail contains a link to a secure Web site where students may designate parents, guardians, or others as authorized payers. The site enables students and authorized payers to view statements and make online payments.

René R. Rinaldi, director of student accounts, says there are several benefits to E-Billing: statements will be received on the day they are prepared with no mail delays; accounts can be accessed through the Internet 24 hours a day; up to 16 months of statement history will be maintained online; online payment history will be available. The statements are printable, and the electronic payment option is a fast and convenient method to pay the bill. Undergraduate and graduate students and their families can make payments by E-Check (debiting a U.S. bank account directly) or by printing the statement and mailing it along with a paper check.

For more information, please visit the Student Accounts Web site at www.wesleyan.edu/studentaccounts, send an e-mail to student-accounts@wesleyan.edu, or call 860/685-2890.
WESLEYAN IS TRULY A DREAM COME TRUE

—Laurie and Gerardo Pina P’07

The moment had arrived. Our daughter, Mariel, was graduating from high school and would be off to college in a few months. We had visited a dozen or so college campuses the previous year, but Wesleyan had captivated and charmed us all.

Mariel applied for early admission and we waited anxiously as the months passed. Finally, the envelope from Wesleyan arrived. Our hearts were trembling. It was a big envelope, which we had heard would bring good tidings. We couldn’t wait—we ran to Mariel’s high school and asked her to be called down to the main office. Hands trembling, she opened the envelope, and there it was: “Congratulations and welcome to Wesleyan!” Overcome with emotion, the three of us stood there with tears streaming down our faces.

Drop-off day arrived in late August. It was a cool, glorious day. We unloaded everything outside Mariel’s dorm on Foss Hill, went to park the car, and rushed back to help her haul her belongings up to the second floor. But by the time we returned, everything was in her room! The orientation volunteers had helped with everything.

Room in order, we went down to Andrus Field to pick up a delightful box lunch provided by the University. As we sat on a bench overlooking the football field, my eyes welled up with tears. Gerardo thought I was crying because my baby was leaving us, but I was sobbing with joy as I looked out over the beautiful, expansive campus and realized that Mariel was embarking on the adventure of a lifetime.

As the hour for us to leave approached, separation anxiety engulfed us. Would Mariel adapt to her new life? Would she make new friends? We wanted to call her that evening, but we remembered her parting words: “Don’t call me for three days!”

The rest is history. Mariel was in her glory from the very beginning: a broad, interesting variety of courses to choose from; highly qualified professors; a superior university environment; and first-rate classmates, dorm-mates, and friends. And for us, there were Wesleyan’s superb parent programs to ease any lingering anxieties.

As parents, we had realized immediately that Wesleyan was more than a university; it was a family, and a great one at that. And what could be better for our daughter than to continue to be nurtured in such a close-knit environment?

Now, two years later, Mariel is, and yet is not, the same young woman we brought to campus. She is still a decent, kind, well-balanced individual. But, intellectually, she has grown prodigiously, not only as a result of the classes she has taken, but also as a consequence of the cultural environment and the atmosphere of inclusion and open dialogue that permeates the campus.

For all of us, as parents, there is nothing more important than our children’s happiness. Gerardo and I are secure in the knowledge that Mariel is happy, as you can readily see from the following e-mail we received in February of her freshman year.

Hey . . .

—Mariel Pina ’07

Well, yesterday during the 60-degree weather mishap, I was sitting on my amazing balcony and just thinking. (Also, when I go on my at least twice-a-week walks around campus and Middletown, I have lots of time to think.) I’ve come to the conclusion that I may be one of the happiest people I know right now. I’m in an extremely amazing university, surrounded by amazing people, and I can’t help but smile most of the time.

As I walk, I think about how lucky I am to be able to walk around my whole campus in like 10 minutes, and still see some of the most beautiful sights I have ever seen. The campus is exactly what I always dreamed of as a kid. I used to imagine the large hill, with the green field in front and students sprawled all over listening to or playing music, working, or just chilling. I don’t know how many of my friends can say that they have this . . . an image of childhood, actually brought to life. They may all say they’re extremely happy, and I’m sure most of them pretty much are, but I truly believe that I might be the happiest one of all.

Just getting into Wes was an amazing thing, and all of the opportunities that are bound to come with it are unimaginable. I’ve finally gotten more involved on campus: With WesPREP (Prison Resource Education Program)—a few other students and I are going to talk to President Bennet about it next week; with Juvenile Connections—I bring a part of Key Club here with me by helping out kids in trouble.

Also, I played hockey today with some guys at the rink and joined the club hockey team (which, by the way, I need some equipment for). I put up signs for the eating disorder group and am helping with a campus-wide discussion tomorrow. And I hope that more will come.

Well, I just felt that I should tell you guys that I can’t imagine being anywhere else other than Wes, and I have you to thank for that. Without your constant support, I could never have made it here. So, thank you from the bottom of my heart. I love you guys.

P.S. Let’s not talk about this a lot; it was just something I felt you guys should know.
WESLEYAN TRAVEL PROGRAMS

ISLAND LIFE IN THE GREEK ISLES
OCTOBER 7–15, 2005 (DATE CHANGE)

Enjoy an eight-day cruise across the Aegean Sea, visiting the seaside villages and windmills of Mykonos, and the nearby island of Delos. Explore the volcanic cliffs of Santorini; the Greco-Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman architecture of Rhodes; and the ancient Monastery of St. John on the island of Patmos. Finish the tour at the Greco-Roman ruins of Ephesus and the legendary city of Troy.

JEWELS OF NEPAL AND INDIA
NOVEMBER 29–DECEMBER 14, 2005

Discover this subcontinent, rich in history, culture, and natural beauty. See Bangkok’s Grand Palace and enjoy the breathtaking Himalayas. Explore Kathmandu, Bhaktapur, Delhi, and Jaipur, and conclude your visit in the romantic city of Udaipur, known for its exotic fairytale palaces.

CHINA: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE MIDDLE KINGDOM
MAY 30–JUNE 10, 2006

Join Wesleyan Associate Professor of East Asian Studies and Music Su Zheng for an exploration of the beauty and ancient culture of China. In Beijing, visit the Forbidden City, Temple of Heaven, and Summer Palace. Tour the old Houhai district by pedicab for a first-hand view of traditional life and see the Great Wall. View the legendary terracotta warriors in the ancient capital of Xian and continue to Hangzhou, a cultural center renowned for its silk and tea production and traditional architecture. Explore the dynamic city of Shanghai, and visit the Shanghai Museum and classical Yuyuan Gardens.

(Two five-day post-tour extension options are available.)

JOURNEY OF THE CZARS
JUNE 24–JULY 7, 2006

Sail the most beautiful waterways of Russia during the peak of the white nights. Cruise along the Volga, Svir, and Neva Rivers, and visit the venerable cities of Moscow and St. Petersburg—legendary cultural centers steeped in history and tradition—and move on to the forested islands, vast lakes, and quaint lifestyles of rural Russia.

For more information about these travel programs, please check the Web site at www.wesleyan.edu/alumni/travel or contact Gail Briggs, associate director of alumni education, at 860/685-3979 or gbriggs@wesleyan.edu.
GOT MANNERS?

In our increasingly hurried world, internship and job interviews are more often taking place outside the standard office environment: they could be over a meal, in a taxi, or even on-the-fly at a social gathering. Is your student prepared? This fall, for the first time ever, Wesleyan will be hosting a Gracious Dining “mock”tail reception and dinner for juniors and seniors. With the help of a dynamic etiquette consultant, students will learn the steps to effective (and memorable) social introductions, how to make “conversation-appropriate” menu selections, and how to write impactful thank you notes. It will be both fun AND educational—and you’re invited! This event will take place during Alumni and Parent Volunteer Weekend on Friday, September 23, 2005, beginning at 6 p.m., and we have a limited number of spots available for parent attendees. For more information, please contact Camille Dolansky at 860/685-3756.

FACULTY FOCUS: MAKING A DIFFERENCE:

—Sandy Zecca Per P’06

Finding students camped out on Ann Wightman’s doorstep is a common sight. And for good reason. Ann’s office on the second floor of the Center for the Americas is open and inviting—an apt metaphor for the award-winning history professor herself.

Eager to dispel any myths surrounding her popularity with students, Ann is straightforward in her approach to the teacher/student relationship. “I have high expectations, but I tell my students that they’re no higher than they should have for themselves,” she said. “My students know that I care about them and their development, but I’m not the only one who challenges students and places a high priority on advising [them].” Ann emphasizes the varied styles and approaches to advising, suggesting that advising is something that needs to be negotiated and no two advising relationships are the same. “Both faculty and students bring different expectations to the relationship and what works for one, doesn’t work for everyone else.”

Ann’s philosophy about education is likely in sync with most of her colleagues at Wesleyan. “Liberal learning prepares students for an ever-changing world and careers that don’t yet exist,” she asserted. “Our goal is to have students leave with more than just a degree. Ideally, they have acquired skills and a lifelong passion for learning.”

Ann’s “hands-on attitude” manifests itself in several meetings with her advisees (who have numbered as many as 40 in some years) each semester, and she posts additional office hours to assist students with their course selections. “Courses during the first and second years should give students breadth,” she said. “The third and fourth years are primarily for concentration and coherence.”

Ann can draw on her own undergraduate experience when it comes to helping students find their academic niche and realize their intellectual potential. A potential math major at Duke, Ann said her advisor introduced her to Latin American history and, as a result, transformed her life. “I want to give my students what [Duke Professor of History] John TePaske gave to me,” she said.

There’s little doubt that Ann has been just such a catalyst since joining Wesleyan in 1979, while still a Yale doctoral student herself. She describes being very happy about students who choose to go on in history or Latin American Studies, but is just as gratified with the advisees who never think about Peru again, but move forward with confidence, discovering new interests, strengths, and abilities.

“I view my classes as a common intellectual effort. We all learn something by the end of the term.”
—Ann Wightman, Professor of History/Chair, Latin American Studies

“She demands only the best her students can do.”
—Wesleyan President Doug Bennett, as excerpted from the Fourth Annual Wesleyan University Award for Excellence in Teaching, presented in 1996 to Ann Wightman, Professor of History/Latin American Studies and Director, Center for the Americas

FOURTH ANNUAL SHASHA SEMINAR FOR HUMAN CONCERNS

On October 6–8, 2005, Wesleyan will host the fourth annual Shasha Seminar for Human Concerns, an educational forum for Wesleyan alumni, parents, and friends that provides an opportunity to explore issues of global concern in a small seminar environment.

This year, we address “Accessing Creativity” with experts who will examine creativity from the perspectives of social and physical sciences as well as art and culture. Endowed by James Shasha ’50, the Shasha Seminar supports lifelong learning and encourages participants to expand their knowledge and perspectives on significant issues.

The Shasha Seminar will immerse participants in a rich discussion of creativity, with opportunities for hands-on exploration of creative endeavors. We are privileged to have as our keynote speaker Howard Gardner P’91, P’98, the John H. and Elisabeth A. Hobbs Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University, and author of Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences.

Other experts will lead us in discussions of the brain and creativity, changing conceptions of creativity through history, the importance of creativity in culture, and the characteristics of organizations in which creativity flourishes.

Please join us in this opportunity for enrichment and insight. Registration for the Shasha Seminar begins in August. Space is limited, so please register early. For more information or to receive a brochure, please contact Linda Secord, director of alumni education, at 860/685-3003 or lsecord@wesleyan.edu, or go to www.wesleyan.edu/shasha.
WESLEYAN HONORS GRANDPARENTS AND THEIR 2005 GRADUATES

More than 150 proud-as-a-peacock grandparents joined their graduating grandkids at a dessert reception on Saturday, May 21, to celebrate Commencement 2005. Host Mary Walsh, who is a three-time WesGrandparent (with grandsons from the classes of 2003, 2006, and 2007), welcomed guests to the Zelnick Pavillon with dessert and a small gift to commemorate the occasion.

FOR GRANDPARENTS AND OTHER INTERESTED FAMILY MEMBERS

Complete and mail to Parent Programs, 330 High Street, Middletown, CT 06459.

Please add me to the Wesleyan University mailing list to receive pertinent news and event announcements.

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The Parents Council
The Parents Council was instituted in 1994 to help parents communicate with the University and among themselves, and to assist Wesleyan in providing the best education and experiences for its students. All Wesleyan parents are automatically members of the Parents Council. The council receives administrative support from the director of parent programs in the Office of University Relations.

Parents Council Cochair
Marilyn and Sam Mehr P’05, ’07
Omaha, NE; 402/697-9510; sammehr@ml1.net, mmehr@ml1.net

Career Resources
Kathleen and Jim Walsh P’03, ’06, ’07
Cape Elizabeth, ME; 207/799-6730; kfw@maine.rr.com

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Ellen and Preston ’64 Smith P’06; Madison, CT; pesmith@wesleyan.edu

Office of Parent Programs
Meg Zocco, Director of Parent Programs
Camille Dolansky, Assistant Director of Parent Programs

Questions, comments, or suggestions should be sent to:
ParentLine, Wesleyan University, 330 High Street, Middletown, CT 06459; 860/685-3756; parents@wesleyan.edu

For more information visit: www.wesleyan.edu/parents.