Thanks to Martin Scorsese, Harris ’91 has The Blues

Musician Corey Harris ’91 “isn’t just a great player, he also knows the history of the blues very well,” director Martin Scorsese said in an interview for the PBS series The Blues. Scorsese, the series’ executive producer, directed Harris in its first installment, “Feel Like Going Home.” The episode followed Harris as he visited older American blues players, jammed with peers like Keb’ Mo’ and traveled to West Africa to talk and play with Ali Farka Touré, an influential Malian musician. When Harris, who is admired for his deeply informed and eclectic approach to the blues, journeyed to Africa for the film, it must have felt like going home in a way: First during his junior year at Bates, then again after graduation on a Watson Fellowship, Harris went to West Africa to trace the historic roots that have nurtured so much of American music.

“I N  T H I S  I S S U E

“Our son calls us weekly and says ‘thanks’ for sending him to this awesome place.”
— See Parent Reflections, inside

Secrets of great cities

When you visit a place where you want to spend more time — well, how did that come to be? Interesting places don’t happen just by luck,” says one of Maine’s best-known urban planners. Instead, says Theo Holtwijk, it takes a painstaking process of planning and design to create those inviting places.

Students in a Bates seminar this fall have learned about such processes from Holtwijk, director of planning for the growing coastal town of Brunswick and an award-winning landscape architect. A visiting lecturer and Mellon Foundation Fellow at Bates, Holtwijk is teaching “Introduction to the Study of the City” for the Program in Environmental Studies.

While this 300-level seminar involves a wide range of readings in community planning, Holtwijk has emphasized experience of the up-close and personal variety. Since September his students have worked with a filmmaker and a photographer known for their documentary work; spent two days in Boston learning about the Big Dig and Frederick Law Olmsted’s “Emerald Necklace” of parks; and created “portraits” of neighborhoods around Bates using photography, mapping, research and interviews with residents.

They’ve also sat in on conferences and public meetings that have made it clear that this sometimes-abstract discipline can have significant impacts, not always beneficial, on real live people. The human touch is indispensable in his field, Holtwijk points out. “The technical skill of planning is becoming less important than the skill of building consensus,” he says. “You have to be really smart in how you seek input — the process of seeking input from people is as important as the product that results from it.”
Welcome to the Fall 2003 Family Connection. We’d like to share some good news about what is happening at Bates today. To those who attended Parents & Families Weekend, we hope you and yours enjoyed it as much as we did. It was a good opportunity not only to spend time with your son or daughter, but also to get to know some of the professors, coaches and staff. Different activities and events each year provide a window into the resources afforded to our sons and daughters at Bates — and, of course, the weekend is a time to meet other Bates parents who may share your experiences, hopes and concerns, and who, like you, want a good weekend break!

Called the “best ever,” the weekend broke attendance records with more than 2,000 family members on hand. Our volunteer numbers are growing through the generosity of many parents of current — and past — Bates students sharing their time and expertise through the Welcoming and Events Committee, the Communications Committee, and the Parents Fund Committee, as well as the many career advisors offering advice and internships. For all your donated time and financial support, we are extremely grateful.

We offer many thanks, too, for your much-needed support of the Bates Parents Fund. We had another rewarding fund-raising year in 2002-2003, and in fact, the Association is a fund-raising leader among peer schools. During fiscal year 2003, the fund attracted approximately $620,000 from 1,479 donors for scholarships, faculty support, curriculum development, technology, student activities and residential life, and campus maintenance. With this year’s goal of $625,000, we look forward to and appreciate your continued support, and we anticipate some fun competition between current classes for the highest participation from parent donors. To continue to provide a top-rate education, Bates truly depends upon the growth of the Parents Fund. Thank you!

Symposium marks a century of ‘Souls’

In October, the Bates community and guests from as far away as Germany used performances, visual media and scholarly presentations to mark the centennial of The Souls of Black Folk, a landmark in African American thought.

A two-day symposium, “W. E. B. Du Bois and The Souls of Black Folk: The First 100 Years” celebrated and reassessed Du Bois — a philosopher, sociologist, historian, co-founder of the NAACP and writer accomplished in a wealth of genres — and his 1903 collection of essays examining myriad dimensions of the African American experience.

“The poet Langston Hughes said that the book reads like a resume for the race,” says symposium organizer Charles Nero, associate professor of rhetoric.

The symposium comprised two days of presentations by scholars from Bates and away, an exhibit of materials from a Du Bois archive, plays exploring themes in African American history and a concert of sacred music.

The presentations drew scholars from all over the Northeast. Topics ran the gamut from African American expressions of mourning to Du Bois’ studies at the University of Berlin — discussed by Sieglinde Lemke, a scholar from the German capital.

Students found the talks inspiring and eye-opening. “I had never considered a funeral home to be a racially divided place,” Katie Hawkins, a junior from South Portland, Maine, commented after a presentation by Karla Holloway, author of Passed On: African American Mourning Stories.

The evening performances added emotional and spiritual resonance to the academic content. A pair of one-act plays exploring violence against black Americans included Nero’s adaptation of a Du Bois story about a lynching. In tenor Chauncey Packer’s concert of spirituals, “there were moments of genuine amusement, thanks to his theatrical ability,” says Nero, “and moments that were exquisite and delicate.”
Parents can offer each other advice as they watch their children grow and develop at Bates. This column is one way for parents to share their experiences. Please send thoughts or a short story you’d like to share to the Parents & Family Association Office, Bates College, 2 Andrews Road, Lewiston, Maine 04240, or send an e-mail to parents@bates.edu.

Coming to Bates was actually a relief for all of us. Daniel had been viciously attacked the night before we planned to depart from New York City. We spent most of the night in an emergency room where he was treated for cuts and lacerations. So our goodbyes on Aug. 31 were relatively painless and tearless. The hectic pace of the night we arrived at Bates left us little time for introspection. When we exchanged our departing words and hugs and kisses, we felt that we were leaving our son in good hands — the people at Bates were so welcoming, so caring and so comforting. We remembered the fall visits to campus and the day our son met with the baseball coach and told us that this was the only school where he wanted to spend the next four years. We are feeling a little disjointed and sad right now. His room feels abandoned and we missed watching the Yankees and Red Sox games with him. Dad is a diehard Red Sox fan and Danny is a diehard Yankee fan. The exchanges were missed. Our son calls us weekly and says ‘thanks’ for sending him to this awesome place.

— Judith Morris Bousquet P’07
November 2003

**Students take aim at lead pollution**

“Get the lead out” has taken on a whole new meaning at Bates, thanks to the dedication and skill of two students in the environmental studies (ES) program.

Rachel Booty and Dana DiGiando are devoting their senior theses to researching a serious environmental problem in the urban United States: soil contaminated by lead from paint and vehicle exhaust.

An ES major with a concentration in environmental geology, Booty comes from a farming family. At Bates she has taken her experience with the land to a new level, working with a community gardening program in Lewiston and, for her thesis, undertaking an array of soil, plant and air tests to determine the extent of the lead-contamination threat to the community.

DiGiando is double-majoring in chemistry and ES. Her curiosity has led her to one of the more promising approaches to removing lead from soil: phytoremediation, or the use of plants to absorb lead through their roots.

Last summer, thanks to grants that Bates helped her obtain, DiGiando first studied in an innovative five-week lead-toxicity program at Northwestern University. Next she spent weeks in Maine’s largest city, Portland, helping a neighborhood association with a program testing the effectiveness of spinach — shades of Popeye — in phytoremediation.

DiGiando and Booty are all about putting science to work for the common good. It’s been 25 years since lead-based paint was banned and 30 since the first controls were put on leaded gasoline — and so, says DiGiando, “it’s ridiculous that there are so many children still being poisoned.”

**Important Dates**

**Start of Fall Semester 2004**
September 8

**Parents and Families Weekend 2004**
Friday–Sunday, October 8–10

For more information on local accommodations, please visit the Bates Website at www.bates.edu/area-accommodations.xml.

**Commencement Dates**
Class of 2004: May 31
Class of 2005: May 30
Class of 2006: May 29
Class of 2007: May 28

For more information about Commencement, please contact the Office of Special Projects & Summer Programs at 207-786-6077 or visit the Bates Website at www.bates.edu/commencement.xml.
During his sophomore year, Rob Maguire ’04 declared his major, psychology. That was also the year head football coach Mark Harriman moved Maguire from offense to defense.

Now a senior psych major with a secondary concentration in religion, Maguire draws a parallel between those two decisions. His academic concentrations interest him because in both fields “you are trying to figure out why people behave in certain ways,” he says. As the Bobcats’ starting free safety since 2001, Maguire has been trying to figure out how the other team’s offense will behave on every play.

Maguire came to Bates from Wayland, Mass., as a wide receiver. His goal was to catch passes and score touchdowns. Now his job is to prevent just those moves, and he has become one of Harriman’s most reliable defenders. “On defense,” Maguire says, “you have to figure out what’s going to happen, then make adjustments and react based on what you see from the other team.”

Harriman’s decision to move Maguire did not pay off immediately. “If you watch film of my first game on defense, I look like I’m running around with my head cut off,” Maguire says. “I’m running as fast as I can, but I’m all over the place and I’m not using proper technique.”

That Maguire can make such a critical assessment testifies to the progress he has made. Last year, his second at free safety, the Bobcats allowed just six passing touchdowns, second best in the New England Small College Athletic Conference. They allowed 151 passing yards per game, nearly 40 yards fewer than in Maguire’s first year at the position.

“He’s got a lot of natural ability, but he’s also able to focus on the position,” Harriman says. “He helps set everyone up on the field. He’s been the type of leader we knew he could be.”

Photography by Phyllis Graber Jensen except where noted.

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On field and off, Maguire seeks the ‘why’