

# A SNAPSHOT OF GODDARD TODAY

## profiles of students from the eight academic programs

by Sarah Hooker, Alumni/ae Director

**A**lums often ask me what's happening at Goddard these days. Most know that the current programs are all low residency, meaning that students come in small groups—usually between 35 and 120 people—twice a year for a week. There are eight different programs, which means 16 residencies (and 16 graduations!) a year.

But who are these students? Is Goddard still Goddard? In an attempt to explain Goddard in 2007, I interviewed one student from each program, including a student from the West Coast academic center in Port Townsend, Wash., to give a sense of the college. I hope you'll agree with me that Goddard continues to be a place where students are in charge of their own education, where positive social action in the world goes hand in hand with rigorous academic study.

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### Joe Orange

INDIVIDUALIZED BA PROGRAM

After a full career in marketing for Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Joe Orange decided to begin his retirement by returning to college to study ethnomusicology—the cultural roots of the musical traditions he'd been surrounded by his whole life. Joe, 64, grew up in a musical family in Bronx,



Joe Orange (right) with his wife and a friend.

N.Y. His uncle, J.C. Higginbotham, was a well-known jazz trombonist who played with Louis Armstrong. His cousin, Irene Higginbotham, composed the classic, "Good Morning Heartache." Joe played trombone and recorded with Goddard graduate Archie Shepp, Herbie Mann, Lionel Hampton and others.

At Goddard, he has studied the history of West African music, learning about traditions like the "call and response" and the "ring shout," both part of the cultural transmigration of music from Africa to America. While continuing to teach jazz trombone, Joe finds that the discipline of reading and writing about a passionate interest has expanded his understanding of the music he loves.

### Catherine Bister

PSYCHOLOGY & COUNSELING PROGRAM

Catherine Bister was raised in Vermont and today lives on a farm full of animals in Wooster, Ohio. She decided to come to Goddard so she could attend the brief residencies and study on her own time rather than attend local classes, which would require driving. Catherine, 46, has retinitis pigmentosa, a congenital progressive eye disease that has left her legally blind since 1987.



Catherine Bister with a friend from her farm in Wooster, Ohio.

She works with No Boundaries, a therapeutic riding program for people with disabilities. As she says, being in charge of a 1,200-pound animal keeps you in touch with your own body and mind and can be a very effective therapeutic tool.

Her bachelor's degree was in animal science, and at Goddard she is pursuing a master's in the Psychology and Counseling Program. She is studying trauma and women, and equine-facilitated mental health. Catherine says the added benefit of being a licensed counselor will help her expand her practice.

## Siobhan Joan Dolan

### HEALTH ARTS & SCIENCES PROGRAM

Siobhan Dolan was a registered nurse in her 40s, working in Manhattan, when she decided to go back to school to get her bachelor's degree. She wanted to start a program at St. Vincent's Hospital using ear acupuncture in the chemical dependency outpatient program where she worked, and she did accomplish this. Two months after she graduated, the region was devastated by the Sept. 11 attacks; Siobhan started working with survivors, using ear acupuncture to help relieve their stress. Four years and thousands of treatments later, she's back to get a master's degree in the Health Arts and Sciences Program.

Siobhan is studying complementary treatment in trauma and disaster relief. She's also running the stress management program for trauma at St. Vincent's World Trade Center Healing Services Unit.



Siobhan Dolan with a favorite sculpture in Sedona, Ariz.

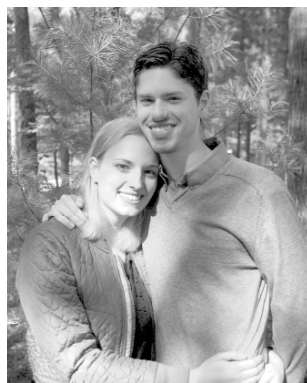
## Beth Bigler

### MFA IN WRITING PROGRAM

Beth Bigler, a script reader at Sony Pictures and CBS Television, came to Goddard's Master of Fine Arts in Writing Program because she wanted to work in multiple genres—screenwriting, nonfiction and poetry. Beth, 25, grew up in Michigan and recently moved from New York to Los Angeles. During her time at Goddard, she has completed two full-length screenplays and a television pilot for an hour-long “dramedy,” or part drama, part comedy.

In 2002, while Beth was studying in Cape Town, South Africa, she met a woman named Mama Amelia who takes in homeless children. Beth created the Amelia Project to help sustain and support this effort, with the goal of purchasing a farm for the many children cared for by Mama Amelia.

[www.theameliaproject.com](http://www.theameliaproject.com)



Beth Bigler and her new husband, Richard.

## Jimmy Rose

### INDIVIDUALIZED MA PROGRAM

After working in grass roots politics in New York, Jimmy Rose was looking for a master's program that combined creative writing and social justice. He found his niche in Goddard's transformative language arts concentration, part of the Individualized Master of Arts Program.

Jimmy, 30, lives in Tennessee in a small community of about 20 people. His passionate interest is gender identity theory and how people define their “queerness,” a way of life that is outside the socially constructed gender identities we are all familiar with. At Goddard, he is able to explore a new field of scholarship, which also requires a new kind of language to explain it. And when he's not studying the intersections of quantum physics and gender identity, Jimmy is grounded by his work on a miniature horse farm and hanging out with his brand new niece, Opal.



Jimmy Rose with his niece, Opal.

## Giovanni Ciarlo

### SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS/ SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Giovanni Ciarlo, 55, lives part of the year in Connecticut and part of the year in an eco-village 50 miles south of Mexico City, in Tepoztlan. The community, called Huehucoyotl, or “old old coyote,” was started 25 years ago by Giovanni and friends, and includes 14 clustered houses on seven acres. Giovanni has long been interested in sustainable living, or regulating the consumption of resources and the output of pollution.

While Huehucoyotl has provided a living lab to explore the effects of our “ecological footprint,” Giovanni wanted to expand his knowledge to work more effectively with governments and municipalities to effect change on a larger scale. Goddard's newest program, the Master of Arts in Socially Responsible Business and Sustainable Communities, was exactly what he was looking for, and he began his studies last summer.



Giovanni Ciarlo and his daughter in Huehucoyotl.



Jacqueline Fischer

### Jacqueline Fischer

EDUCATION PROGRAM

Jacqueline Fischer, 53, grew up overseas and originally came to Goddard in 1972 to study weaving. Though she left without her degree, she settled in Berkeley Springs, W. Va., and has operated a weaving business called Teagarden Rugs for 30 years. Over the years she has been active in community and school arts

activities; her interest in community education, or helping a community become self-actualized, led her back to Goddard, where she earned her bachelor's degree in early 2006. Jacqueline is currently pursuing her master's in the education program.

Along the way, she and education faculty member David Frisby have initiated and defined the community education concentration and curriculum at Goddard. This allows students to combine theory and practice in their communities as they learn how to create partnerships and opportunities for "out-of-school-time" programs to serve all ages.

### Sarah Zale (Port Townsend, Wash., location)

MFA IN WRITING PROGRAM

Though Sarah Zale already has several master's degrees—in educational psychology, English literature and rhetoric—she enrolled in Goddard's Master of Fine Arts Program at Port Townsend because of its reputation and the fact that it was nearby. Sarah, who is enjoying her 50s, moved to Washington via Boulder, San Diego and frequent sailing trips to Mexico. She is studying poetry, which she has been writing since 2003, and has also published short stories and a biography. She teaches poetry and writing online and at Peninsula College and the University of Phoenix.

Sarah recently returned from Israel and Palestine, where she traveled with the Compassionate Listening Project, a peace delegation that collected poems from Palestinians and Israelis. In Nazareth, Israel, she visited the poet Taha Muhammad Ali, whose work is published by Copper Canyon Press (located on the Port Townsend campus) and



Sarah Zale (right) with poet Ada Aharoni, who has been nominated for the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize.

who had just returned from a visit to Port Townsend. Sarah serves as editor-in-chief for the *Pitkin Review*.

### Dawn Crandell and Baba Israel

MFA IN INTERDISCIPLINARY ARTS PROGRAM

Dawn Crandell and Baruch "Baba" Israel are native New Yorkers and performance artists ([dawnandbaba.com](http://dawnandbaba.com)) who also happen to be married. Dawn, 32, studied dance at Sarah Lawrence and came to Goddard for her master's and a chance to expand her interest in other arts. She has experimented with painting, photography and fiction—all of it culminating in a multidimensional performance she says she couldn't have done anywhere else. The performance, *Five Movements Toward Freedom*, is a "choreo-poem," or a dance theater piece. A central theme in her studies has been the lineage of black radical artists, among whom she counts herself. For her practicum, she held four conversation circles with black radical artists, bringing the community together to dialogue.



Dawn Crandell and Baba Israel during a performance.

Baba, also 32, came to Goddard for his bachelor's in music and writing, and continued in the Master of Fine Arts Program to study performance (storytelling), music (hip hop/jazz/world music) and video production. He is also creating his first one-man show combining hip hop and theater, a piece that looks at challenging questions around race and navigating the world as a white hip hop artist. As part of a practicum, he has been capturing archival footage while interviewing his parents, who are both performers, and teaching in the community. Dawn, Baba and fellow student Yako Prodis have a touring theater company called Open Thought Productions, which combines political hip hop, education and performance. [www.openthoughtmusic.com](http://www.openthoughtmusic.com) ■