

# News and Events

## 75<sup>th</sup> HARKNESS ANNIVERSARY

### HARKNESS FELLOWS: CELEBRATING 75 YEARS AT THE TABLE

*As part of the 75th Harkness anniversary, Exeter is bringing a distinguished group of Harkness Fellows to campus, including Duke religion professor Bruce Lawrence '58 (above, with students in Jamie Hamilton's Islam course). Returning to the Harkness table "is like coming home," said Lawrence. "My only regret is that this kind of intellectual give-and-take can't be the dominant form of secondary education in the United States."*

*(Right) Jim Steyer '74, an expert on the impact of contemporary media on children, met with public policy and ethics classes.*



Friday, September 8 marked the beginning of the 226th year of Phillips Exeter Academy, an historic occasion in and of itself. But the 2006–07 school year is historic for another reason as well: it is the 75th anniversary of the implementation of the Harkness plan.

Thanks to the generosity of philanthropist Edward Harkness and the vision of Principal Lewis Perry and a group of senior faculty members, in 1931 Exeter embarked upon a bold educational experiment. (For more on the creation of the Harkness plan, see "The Men Behind the Plan," page 24.) As Principal Ty Tingley observed at the September 8 opening assembly, that experiment "transformed the way classes at the Academy were taught and, I think it could be argued, transformed the community of the school as well."

Exeter is spending the school year reflecting on how Harkness has transformed, and continues to transform, school life—and the lives of its graduates. And as part of the celebration, the Academy has invited a distinguished group of Harkness Fellows, many of them alumni/ae, to spend several days on campus, teaching classes, meeting with students and faculty, and giving lectures.

During September and October, Exeter welcomed nationally recognized children's advocate **Jim Steyer '74**, founder of Common Sense Media; **Bruce Lawrence '58**, the Marcus Humanities Professor of Religion at Duke University and an authority on the history and development of Islam and its perceptions in the West; **Benjamin Zander**, conductor of the Boston Philharmonic and the co-author of *The Art of Possibility*; **Shana Harris '92**, an administrator at Prep for Prep, the New York–based educational program that prepares talented students of color for placement in independent schools; and **Dr. Nina Russell '82**, senior program officer in charge of HIV, TB and Reproductive Health programs for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Rounding out the fall term are **David Mumford '53**, the Brown University Pro-





fessor of Applied Mathematics and a recipient of the prestigious Fields Medal for outstanding mathematical achievement, and composer-lyricist **Adam Guettel '83**, whose musical theater works include *Floyd Collins* and *The Light in the Piazza*, which won six Tony Awards in 2005.

#### WINTER TERM HARKNESS FELLOWS

**Theophus “Thee” Smith '69** (January 14–16), an associate professor of religion at Emory University and the author of *Conjuring Culture: Biblical Formations of Black America*. Smith’s academic specialties include the relationship between religion and violence.

**Donald Thomas** (January 28–30), a former Exeter faculty member and the co-founder and principal emeritus of the American Academy of Tbilisi, in the Republic of Georgia. Now in its sixth year, the American Academy of Tbilisi incorporates Harkness principles in all of its classes, and has sent both students and faculty members to the Exeter Summer School.

**David Potter '75** (February 8–10), a professor of Greek and Latin at the University of Michigan and the author and/or editor of several books on ancient Rome, including *Literary Texts and the Roman Historian* and *Life, Death and Entertainment in the Roman Empire*.

**The Honorable Tim Wirth '57** (February 18–19), former senator and congressman from Colorado and, from 1993 to 1997, undersecretary for global affairs in the Clinton administration. Since 1998, Wirth has served as president of the United Nations Foundation, which seeks to support and strengthen the work of the UN, with a special emphasis on the environment, women and population, children’s health and peace, security and human rights.

**Maria Cabildo '85** (March 4–5), executive director of the East L.A. Community Corporation, whose mission is to build grassroots leadership, self-sufficiency and access to economic development opportunities for low- and moderate-income families in sections of East Los Angeles, with a focus on housing, education and employment issues.

And early in the spring term, Exeter will welcome back **Donald Hall '48** (April 8–10), America’s newly appointed poet laureate and (in the words of Librarian of Congress James Billington) “one of America’s most distinctive and respected literary figures.”



(Top) Shana Harris '92, director of the academic preparatory program at Prep for Prep, delivered a Meditation during her Exeter visit.

(Middle) Boston Philharmonic conductor Benjamin Zander elicited an enthusiastic response from the Symphony Orchestra—and, during a special two-hour assembly, from the entire student body.

(Bottom) Biology students discussed the challenges of devising an HIV vaccine with Dr. Nina Russell '82 (third from left, with her son, Nicholas), senior program officer with the Gates Foundation’s HIV program.

For updates on 75th Harkness Anniversary events, go to [www.exeter.edu](http://www.exeter.edu).