For the four young alumnae currently enrolled at Harvard Law, it’s a given that their Mount Holyoke education—its breadth and depth both inside and outside the classroom—sets them apart.
Preparing for Health Professions at MHC

“Medical schools value applicants from liberal arts colleges,” notes Dean of Pre-Health Programs David Gardner, who works closely with health professions programs throughout the U.S. “They are looking for candidates with diverse backgrounds, clinical exposure, and a demonstrated commitment to helping others—in addition to excellent academic qualifications.”

In other words, MHC offers the ideal environment for aspiring physicians, surgeons, dentists, pharmacists, veterinarians, and medical researchers. “The quality of our graduates, together with the reputation MHC has built for helping them prepare in all of these aspects, has translated into exceptional success rates for admission to some of the best programs in the country,” said Gardner.

A sample of recent MHC graduates currently pursuing studies or careers in medicine and other areas of health include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninani Emang Kombo '02</td>
<td>Yale University Medical School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melani Cheers '02</td>
<td>Washington University School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Fenstermacher '04</td>
<td>Washington University School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer Rodriguez '04</td>
<td>Cornell University Weill College of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gretchen Snoeyenbos '04</td>
<td>Emory University School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melissa Hector '06</td>
<td>Duke University School of Medicine (M.D./Ph.D. program)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Hnot '06</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stephanie Bodnar '07</td>
<td>University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sondra Jasienowski FP'07</td>
<td>Yale University Physician Associate Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Colpitts '08</td>
<td>Tufts University School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min-Ji Kim '08</td>
<td>Boston University School of Dental Medicine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yunnan Jiang '09</td>
<td>Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The police officer tightened the plastic zip ties around my wrists and plunked me onto the ground. On one side of the street, more than 100 arrestees. On the other, a row of officers in riot gear, with batons. How, I scolded myself, did I get here?

The short answer: I’m a journalist.
The long answer: From South Hadley to Florida to California, mostly by plane.

As a crime reporter for the Bay Citizen in San Francisco, I often find myself in sticky situations. The most recent was my almost arrest while covering a protest in Oakland. The fatal shooting of Oscar Grant, a black man, by a white police officer had inspired so much fury that activists and residents took to the streets, and I was right there with them.

I love my job. It’s a perfect combination of my strengths (writing) and interests (race, class, and gender). And undoubtedly, one of the main reasons for my success is Mount Holyoke. I didn’t figure out this career path until the second semester of my sophomore year when, at the incessant urging of my mother, I enrolled in an Introduction to Journalism class because the Introduction to Creative Writing class was full.

Good thing. Once I figured it out, I found everything I needed at MHC. Experienced professors to hone my skills; funding to start a feminist magazine; and local connections to internships. I participated in student organizations that encouraged students to question societal norms and to think deeply about social issues.

My major, American studies, and my incredible peers, taught me to think critically about race, class, and gender. Those experiences inform my writing.

On a recent Friday night, I spied on pimps and learned about the underage sex trade in East Oakland.

I wrote about the San Francisco Police Department’s mishandling of the mentally ill. In Florida, I delved into child molestation and racial tension at a local middle school.

Today, nearly four years after graduation, I have won six awards. As a reporter for the Bay Citizen, a pioneering nonprofit journalism organization, I regularly write for the Bay Area section of the New York Times.

My job is my passion: I’d do it, no matter what. But I feel I owe a great deal of my professional success to the formative years I spent at Mount Holyoke. Here I built up the critical-thinking skills, knowledge, and courage to survive pretty much anything. Like an almost arrest.
From Here to Harvard Law

BY MAGDALENA GEORGIEVA ’10

MHC provides the absolute best preparation for a prestigious legal career or, for that matter, any other career. Students are challenged to think critically across disciplines and speak their minds. From their first semester to their last, they debate ideas, conduct independent research, and pursue their passions. It’s an education—and an environment—that shapes leaders and opens doors to high-profile opportunities and influential futures.

Brooke Daniels ’07, Becky Ding ’09, Katie Kraschel ’06, and Allison Trzop ’04 never met during their Mount Holyoke years. Now, at Harvard Law, they’ve come together to support each other as they study at one of the most competitive law schools in the U.S.

The four agree that Mount Holyoke prepared them to succeed—and excel. From the broad scope of the curriculum to a setting where expectations are high, they are beneficiaries of the distinctive advantages offered by an MHC education.

Among those advantages is the ethos of exploration at the heart of MHC’s liberal arts curriculum. “Students try new things and refine their voice,” said Kraschel, a biochemistry major who now studies health law, with an interest in assisted reproductive technology law. She advises prospective Mount Holyoke students to “really take advantage” of this dynamic. “Stretch yourself because it is the ideal space to do so,” she said.

“I craved that broader scope of science,” said Kraschel, tracing how her interest in law first emerged. As an undergraduate, she took courses such as biomedical anthropology that expanded her vision of the sciences and provided new approaches to problem solving that she now applies to law. What drew her to Harvard Law, Kraschel realizes, was the diversity of the courses she was exposed to at Mount Holyoke.

Ding, a first-year law student, likewise believes that exploring multiple disciplines at Mount Holyoke is what led her to Harvard. In her first year at MHC, she focused on math courses. She then decided to branch out and take courses that challenged her to think in new ways. She studied social sciences and art, took singing lessons, and, ultimately, majored in math and history. During her junior year, Ding designed an independent study project, applying statistics to data from discrimination cases. That experience led to a legal research internship, which, in turn, sparked her interest in law.

Another distinctive advantage is the rich critical-thinking skills that students develop as they study a broad range of subjects. Throughout the curriculum, correlations are made between seemingly distant subjects, allowing students to gain unique perspectives.

“I had a very loud voice but at Mount Holyoke I learned what it was I wanted to say.”

The environment not only encourages individuality, but also gives direction, said Trzop, who is focusing on intellectual property and copyright at Harvard Law.

“I had a very loud voice but at Mount Holyoke I learned what it was I wanted to say.”

“Mount Holyoke is where I figured out that finance was in my future,” said Daniels, who is pursuing a joint degree offered by Harvard Business School and Harvard Law School.

“I caught the economics bug during a first-year seminar at MHC. Then the Career Development Center connected me with an alumna at Goldman Sachs who offered me a summer internship. A second summer internship at Lehman Brothers led to a full-time job. Now my long-term goal is to apply the skills I’ve acquired through the law degree with the business management skills from my M.B.A. studies to be a successful leader in a major corporation.”

”An MHC liberal arts education offers a complex understanding of the world,” Daniels added. “Your classroom experience is complimented by opportunities for research, internships, study abroad, and community-based learning. Your academic work comes alive and you grow in incredible ways.”

The four alumnae also value having spent their undergraduate years among intelligent, inspiring women from around the globe. “The sense of community was powerful,” said Trzop. “And it has come with me to Boston via MHC’s alumnae network.”

Within Boston, there is a large contingent of Mount Holyoke women spanning different generations. Daniels, Ding, Kraschel, and Trzop are amazed at how quickly these alumnae open their doors and offer help when needed. “I never knew I could have such close friendships with women who graduated in the 70s,” said Kraschel. “It is such a rich connection—you have to experience it.”

One particular alumna who has reached out to the four is Ellen Cosgrove ’84, dean of students at Harvard Law School. They say that Cosgrove’s warmth played a key role in their decisions to enroll at Harvard. Then, once they were on campus, Cosgrove made sure they got acquainted.

Not surprisingly, upon meeting they instantly clicked. Each is ambitious, committed to making a difference in the world, and—having spent four years at Mount Holyoke—knows firsthand what women’s leadership is all about. They also know that Mount Holyoke alumnae are women you can count on, whether navigating the landscape of Harvard Law or anywhere else in life.
It’s a fact: Mount Holyoke students have

big plans.

They come here to pursue their ambitions—and to discover new ones. In turn, MHC’s rigorous academics, accessible faculty, and global alumnae network all contribute to our students’ professional development and open doors to prestigious internships and hands-on career exploration. Throughout their varied careers, MHC alumnae make news and make names for themselves. They make money, make policy, make art, and make a difference. Our graduates include Suzan-Lori Parks ’85, a Pulitzer Prize-winning dramatist; Mona Sutphen ’89, deputy chief of staff for the Obama administration; and Heather Harde ’91, CEO of TechCrunch. Now, a new generation of Mount Holyoke alumnae is establishing itself in a range of professions. Here’s a look at a few of those graduates who are fulfilling their goals and changing the world:

2000
Helen Huarca Witte | Psychiatrist, Baltimore, MD
M.D., University of Washington
MHC major: neuroscience and behavior

MHC supported my ambition to be a physician through the resources of its Career Development Center, as well as the individual science professors who were willing to invest extra time in me and serve as mentors as I worked through the medical school application process. I love my work. The spirit of teamwork and collaboration that MHC fostered continues to guide me in my career.

2002
Alison Morse | Foundation relations manager, Physicians for Human Rights, Cambridge, MA
M.A., law and diplomacy, Fletcher School at Tufts University
MHC major: international relations

Mount Holyoke was where I first learned about issues of human trafficking and refugee protection, and I continue to use that knowledge in my career. From courses in human rights, economics, and international politics to lectures by visiting renowned leaders, MHC exposed me to pressing international issues.

2001
Jessica Whiteside | Assistant professor of geological sciences, Brown University
M.A. and M.Phil., Columbia University; Ph.D., Columbia University, Lamont Doherty Earth Observatory
MHC major: geology

My sense of self-place and purpose in part derives from my experiences at MHC. I was fortunate to have a slew of professors and classmates who ascribed to the ideology of emerging as an individual from the collective whole. At MHC I was encouraged to listen to my natural voice with its shifting and inconsistent perspectives, provoked to think critically and decipher abstract convictions, and both mentored and inspired in my own early research.”

2003
Sarah Davis | Attorney, Husch Blackwell LLP, Saint Louis, MO
J.D., Boston College
MHC major: politics

Mount Holyoke instilled in me a sense of social responsibility. As a result, I sought a career path within which I could make a difference. MHC also provided me with the analytical, communication, and problem-solving skills I needed to be successful. My clients expect creative solutions. Through its curriculum, student organizations, and work opportunities, MHC taught me how to be innovative and analyze problems from all angles, resulting in the most favorable outcome for my clients.

2004
Cristina L. Rodriguez | M.B.A. student, Stephen M. Ross School of Business, University of Michigan
MHC major: international relations

I am looking toward a career in management consulting or general management. Mount Holyoke has helped me to be more analytical and understanding about the range of issues faced on a daily basis. The fact that I was constantly interacting with intelligent, strong women from all over the world helped me to push myself. This is the mindset I need to be successful in my career path.

2005
Meredith Bambrick | Law student, Tulane University
MHC major: international relations

MHC’s international relations major offered a perfect combination of idealism and realism, propelling me into foreign aid and international development. I served in the Peace Corps in rural Morocco and worked for Chemonics International, Inc., a USAID contractor. I spent seven months in northern Afghanistan as operations manager for a $15 million agriculture program, and seven months as contracts manager in Nigeria for a $50 million food security program. In the future, I want to work as a war crimes prosecutor at the International Criminal Court with a focus on women and children in post-conflict zones.
In 2010, says Mandeville, there were a record number of applications for national and international awards and scholarships—40 students and alumnae in all—proposing projects in the sciences, art history, anthropology, literature, and other disciplines.

The preparedness of our students is demonstrated by their many successes. Since 2005, the College has had three recipients of the highly competitive Gates Cambridge Scholarship, which enables outstanding college graduates to study at the University of Cambridge. Lindsay Chura ’06 is a Gates Scholar and Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Psychiatry at Cambridge, where she’s doing research on prenatal hormones and autism. Chura was also awarded a Fulbright in 2006, to conduct biomedical research in Australia.

Read more about Mount Holyoke fellowship winners at www.mtholyoke.edu/fellowships/winners.html.
Megan Couture FP ’11 is one of 23 women selected to be a delegate for the UN’s annual Commission on the Status of Women meetings, held in New York in March.

MHC will serve as a consultant to Effat University—the first private institution of higher education for women in Saudi Arabia—to build its student development and academic support programs.

An Vo ’12 was a Clinton Foundation recipient of the 2010 Outstanding Commitment Award in recognition of her powerful advocacy on behalf of the Vietnamese families impacted by Agent Orange.

Keli Carender, who organized the first modern-day Tea Party rally, came to campus to give a student leadership workshop and share her story of individual activism that helped spark a national movement.

Surabhi Gupta ’11 was one of only ten undergraduates from across the nation selected for a summer research program at the Center for the Neural Basis of Cognition at Carnegie Mellon.

Mount Holyoke hosted the Five College Student Leadership and Public Speaking Conference, “Speak Up! Practicing Everyday Leadership.” The conference was part of the Presidential Inaugural Series on Leadership.

Meeran Karim ’13 discovered an affinity for journalism as an intern with Pakistan’s Dawn News TV, the country’s first 24-hour English-language news and current affairs channel.

In his new book, A World among These Islands: Essays on Literature, Race, and National Identity in Antillean America, Professor Roberto Márquez (above) looks at the Caribbean as a whole to understand its literary heritage and history. For the video, see MHC’s News & Events online.

The latest book by Mount Holyoke history professor and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Joseph Ellis, First Family: Abigail and John Adams, is listed on the New York Times Hardcover Nonfiction Best Seller List. For the video, see MHC’s News & Events online.

Professor Andrew Lass received the AAA/Oxford University Press Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching of Anthropology.