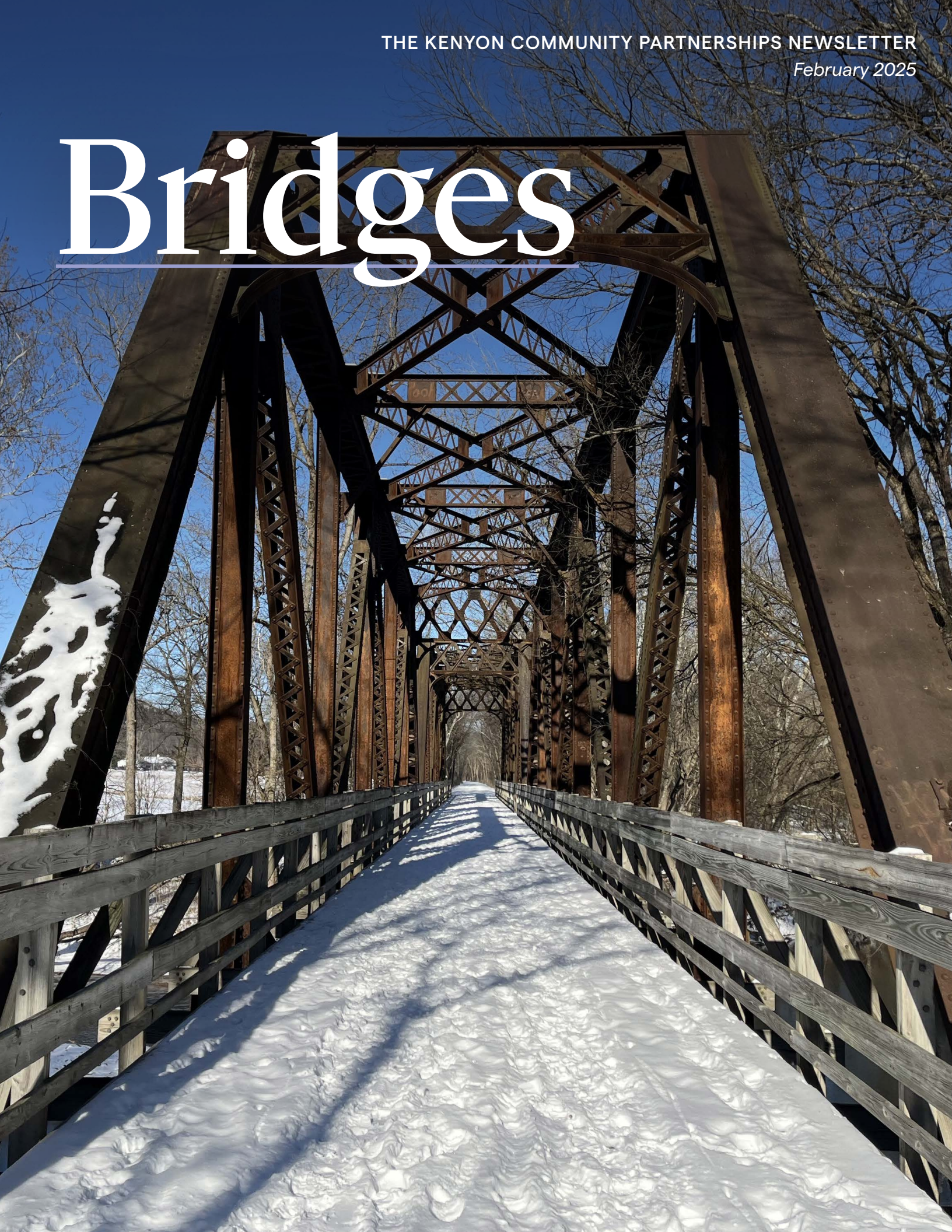


# Bridges





*February 2025*

# Into the Streets and Into the Community

**In this issue of Bridges**, our student writers take a look at the deep interactions between the Kenyon and Knox County communities — and reflect on what community means to them.

**Celeste Cohen '25** explores the annual coming together of communities at the Fall Harvest Festival, hosted by the Brown Family Environmental Center. This year, in addition to festival favorites like hayrides and pumpkin decorating, Kenyon students involved in the popular Science Saturdays program welcomed area kids with scientific demonstrations.

Cohen also shares insights that Kenyon student interns have gained working within the community — including one student who found new friends while working at the Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County — and explores a participatory art installation made by a Kenyon art student.

**Ben Garst '25** takes readers into the Kokosing River — specifically, for a water dance that welcomed area children to participate while raising awareness about the health of area waterways. And, he explores the efforts taken by Kenyon to mitigate the effects of new construction on the community.

◀ The second annual Village Lights Festival, sponsored by the Village of Gambier, brought the Kenyon, Gambier and Knox County communities together on a festive strip of Gaskin Avenue on Sunday, Dec. 8.



Photo: Reb Hardin

# Kenyon and Community Commingle at the Annual Fall Harvest Festival

By Celeste Cohen '25

Kenyon students have all enjoyed quiet Gambier Saturdays, where a day of reading can be punctuated by one event. But Family Weekend 2024 was packed with possibilities, including barbecues and walks and talks.

Despite the competition from other campus festivities, the 2024 Fall Harvest Festival saw over 1,100 visitors and a full day of art, food and fellowship. There was not one cloud in the sky on the morning of the harvest festival, which was held this year at the Gambier Community Center, just out of earshot of the nearby football game against Wittenberg. The temporary closure of the main road leading from campus to the usual festival location at the Brown Family Environmental Center (BFEC) necessitated the change in location.

It was the first harvest festival that Jada Swearingen '24 helped

coordinate. Swearingen — who, as the post-baccalaureate fellow at the BFEC, was one of the festival's primary organizers — was relieved to see the sunshine and smiling faces after a lengthy planning process. She says that finding local businesses to set up booths revealed to her a close-knit network of Knox County artisans. Most of the booths were returners, fall festival veterans. A member of the Kokosing Archeology Society showed off the cases of arrowheads and artifacts he's found on his family farm over the past few decades. They were carefully displayed and labeled by period, stretching back thousands of

years. In addition to local institutions, there were paintings and crafts for sale, including en plein air canvases and wooden birdhouses. Also at the fair were Kenyon groups like the Lyceum science and nature writing magazine and the Gund Annex, all hoping to spread awareness of their groups' community initiatives.

Anticipation for guests to finally arrive heightened as the sun started to warm up the field and food trucks drove in. But musician Matt Bacher of the band Slight Halo wasn't so nervous before his set. He was glad to tell me that his drummer was able to take the day off work at the last minute and that his informal setlist would include some fan favorite Jack Johnson and Radiohead covers as well as some improvised "mellow psychedelic autumnal loops."

The most popular table had to be pumpkin decorating, where instead of knives and spoons for traditional carved jack-o'-lanterns, the table was full of a cornucopia of dried flowers and leaves to affix to a pumpkin. I caught one volunteer at the end of her shift, walking out with a beautifully adorned pumpkin. She told me

**"You never do this alone. It's all the volunteers that really make it possible."**

— Jada Swearingen '24,  
BFEC Post-Baccalaureate Fellow

pumpkin decorating was going quite well, that only one child had insisted on gutting a pumpkin and destroying it with a hammer, and that the reason for the crowds around the table was because so many people — children and adults alike — were taking their time to artfully craft their future dining room table centerpieces.

Rosie, a senior, has been painting faces at the harvest festival for the past three years. Even with the location change, Rosie could tell this festival would be much like those of years past. "Last year, one boy asked for spiderman, and then everyone wanted spiderman," she said. She did not offer a prediction on what might be the face painting trend of this year, and walking around the fair as the day went on, I saw many kids with the ghosts and pumpkins carefully drawn out on the laminated sheet of

examples.

The theme of the festival this year: staying to theme. The perfect weather and community feeling of familiar booths meant no one really noticed the new location, a reminder that it's the people who make the fall festival, not the BFEC or even the picturesque foliage. "You never do this alone," said Swearingen. "It's all the volunteers that really make it possible."

One of the most popular booths at the festival was one of scientific discovery, run by Zoe Malouf '25, Delaney Klace '25 and Sam Connors '26 of the Science Saturdays program, which they lead along with Kenyon faculty members and the Office for

▼ Returning favorites at the 2024 Fall Harvest Festival included horse-drawn hayrides.



Photo: Reb Hardin



Community Partnerships. The booth featured two stations, including one with the non-Newtonian fluid oobleck and another with ferrofluid magnets. Like many of the other tables at the festival, age was merely a number as many gathered around to touch the “slime-esque” substances and make “spikey globs” with magnets.

“It’s one of our main goals, that science can be fun and be for everyone,” said Klace, a senior psychology major. The team was excited by the festival turnout and glad to be placed at a table with other high-traffic activities for kids. I saw one boy with a hand deep in the oobleck bowl yell out to a friend, “Can I show you the best kind of slime in the world?” Another boy replied, “I’m going on a hay ride soon!” Even in a sea of pumpkin decorating, face painting and collaging, or the lure of hayrides and archery, the science table was consistently busy.

Many of the young scientists at the festival were familiar to Malouf, who’s been one of the Science Saturday

leaders for three years. “I definitely recognized kids who come back year after year.” To her, seeing the kids grow and become more engaged in science between workshops has been one of the most rewarding aspects of the program.

The group was also eager to tell me about their upcoming day of science, focused this semester on the theme “Sounds of Science.” According to Connors, “we want to introduce science to the middle schoolers in a way they haven’t really seen before. We’re introducing concepts that they might not be exposed to in their middle school science classes, and we want them to be able to make the

experience their own.” Using a hands-on approach to science education, Science Saturday will lead a workshop on the science behind sounds and music with the opportunity for Knox County middle school students to make their own instruments, observe a “wave table” of sound waves, and provide other experiments to understand how we hear and what noise really is. Workshops like Sounds of Science allow students to engage with science outside of how it might be presented to them in the classroom. “We’re trying to expand their idea of science, and have fun doing it,” said Klace.

They all agreed that leading Science Saturdays gave them a new perspective on volunteering at Kenyon. Connors started with Science Saturdays as a volunteer before they were hired as a student director. “As a volunteer, you don’t really appreciate all the logistics that go on behind the scenes.”

Malouf, Klace and Connors all expressed that leading Science Saturdays has extended beyond the bi-yearly workshops and events like the Harvest Festival and Earth Day. Connors told me that engaging with even simple science topics in the classroom from the perspective of an educator gave them more confidence in their upper-level Kenyon courses. Klace told me about her passion for

**“We want to provide (local students) with what an inquisitive, inquiry-based classroom can be like, because some kids just don’t get the opportunity to experience that until high school or college.”**

— *Delaney Klace '25, one of the organizers of the Science Saturdays booth at the Fall Harvest Festival*

developmental psychology and how working on curriculum development with the local youth population has impacted her studies.

Malouf has valued working with the volunteers, getting even more Kenyon students involved in the local community. Even trying to recruit volunteers within the College has allowed these organizers to engage beyond their normal circles on campus. They told me they hope Kenyon will implement more initiatives like Science Saturdays.

Klace expressed how important it is to be able to show the local community what Kenyon is all about. “We want to provide them with what an inquisitive, inquiry-based classroom can be like, because some

kids just don’t get the opportunity to experience that until high school or college,” she said. Their table at the Harvest Festival was just a taste of all the cool experiments and workshops Science Saturdays put on for the community.

Despite a temporary change in venue, the 2024 Harvest Festival was a successful community event. As the festival shifts back to its regular home at the BFEC, it will continue to be a showcase of community spirit, providing festival-goers with memories of hayrides and non-Newtonian fluids as well as those decorative pumpkins and locally sourced honey that will surely last longer than the now-fallen leaves on the trees.





Photo: Rebecca Kiger

## Returning to the Hill, I'm Reconsidering "Walden Pond"

by Celeste Cohen '25

Oxford students are said to be very smart. But their ability to understand complex philosophies or dynamic political issues did not seem to transfer to an ability to understand the American small liberal arts college, or at least that's what I found during my year abroad at the university.

The Brits had a hard time understanding Kenyon. They could ask me what my major was and imagine a football game fit with cheerleaders and steaming cups of apple cider, but they struggled with the idea that I could take a modern dance class for academic credit, or how I could survive four years of undergrad without a low-ceilinged pub or easy access to a large cultural center.

One night at the pub, I was finally able to give a long explanation of Kenyon to a friend. But even after an hour of explaining the unpaved path that runs through the campus and the social fracture of the dining hall, I was still met with confusion. "But

... why?" and "what is it like?" were difficult questions to answer. Finally, I responded, "It's like Walden Pond — you know, going into the woods to focus on reading." This simile seemed to clear up the confusion and answer all of their remaining questions. And so I started explaining Kenyon on Thoreau's terms.

For months, I used Walden without question or explanation. John Updike said of Walden, that "the book risks being as revered and unread as the Bible." And I was surely falling into this same trap. Because neither Walden nor the experience of going to Kenyon can or should be glibly described as "retreating into the woods to think." So upon



my return to the Hill, with no Brits in need of Appalachian education, I am reconsidering Walden and the romantic notions of retreat and return at Kenyon.

There is a reason that my explanation of Kenyon as Walden was so effective, and it was not just because Oxford students are generally well read. Without the minutiae of the everyday, the mind can focus and flourish. From medieval monasteries to 21st-century artist residency programs, we have long equated seclusion with intellectual enlightenment.

In my time away from the Hill, I, too, developed a romantic notion of return. It was probably my own talk of Walden that made me plan for a year full of self-centered, internal goals. Even just one year away, and I was imagining a year at Kenyon as one of long walks through the forest in which I could sit with my thoughts and contemplate existence ... or something like that. For many Kenyon students, particularly those from major cities like me, the idea of Walden is a bit of a self-fulfilling prophecy. When I speak to my peers and ask them what they can remember from their high school U.S. history class, they do not meet my idea of “Kenyon as Walden” with much resistance. I think part of accepting the parallels between our lives and Thoreau’s is an idea that his withdrawal from society was far from complete. “At least my mom doesn’t do my laundry,” one friend said to me.

Even if a Kenyon student enrolled with an idea of retreat, the partnerships between the College and the broader community will undoubtedly inform their time here — whether that be during class as part of a community engaged learning course, as work experience through the community internship program, or for a Sunday morning drive down Coshocton for a bite at Southside. Kenyon is not defined in opposition to our more populous surroundings; we breathe the community in and out of the thin membrane of our city limits everyday.

My friend Kate corrects me when I say that Kenyon is “in the middle of nowhere.” She says that, of course, this is somewhere. For any individual student, our retreat to the Kokosing is temporary, but the community into which we matriculate is far from it. When you visit Walden Pond now, you can visit a facsimile log cabin and read the words of Thoreau on a number of bold carved wood signs. No individual has that kind of impact on the woods of Gambier.

We could dismiss our connection to Thoreau completely. The project of Walden Pond is fundamentally different from the work a college diploma represents. The intentionality of our community is in direct contrast to his seclusion. Kenyon students are not constructing our own dormitories, and we are not planting our own vegetables — we’re hardly cooking our own meals. But there is a solitude to a collective

consciousness, and a romantic notion of our campus combined with the temporality of our four years here can make the myth of the “life in the woods” hold strong.

Do we go to Kenyon to “live deliberately”? Do we “front only the essential facts of life,” as Thoreau set out to do? In some small moments, maybe we do — when we look out at the tree tops from the third floor of Ascension, or when we hear the crunch of the first frost under our shoes on the way to our 8 a.m. seminar. Even in the age of the Internet, the separation between Kenyon and the big wide world exists. But it is clear to all members of this community (and hopefully even more so after reading this newsletter) that Kenyon is no isolated retreat.

**“Even if a Kenyon student enrolled with an idea of retreat, the partnerships between the College and the broader community will undoubtedly inform their time here.”**

**— Celeste Cohen '25**



Photos: Rebecca Kiger

## Ribbons and Fences

by Celeste Cohen '25

Back in the sunny days of the fall semester, when students dotted the green lawns and first-years tried to figure out the difference between Gund Commons and Gund Gallery, junior Clara Hales was planning for an art installation.

Inspired by remnants of fencerows in farm fields she'd passed in Knox County, Hales saw an opportunity to explore how fences are not only markers of boundaries and limits, but take on their own place in the landscape. "Inside a fence, there's space for life to grow," she told me in an email.

Hales is a junior philosophy major and studio art minor from Evanston, IL. In addition to her studies, she works with the Philander Chase Conservancy and Center of Hope in Bladensburg. Her installation project on the lawn of the Church of the Holy Spirit combines her experiences on and off campus to engage with the community of Knox County through a shared arts project. Currently studying at the Paris College of Art

for the Spring 2025 semester, Hales is taking classes in installation practice and hopes to incorporate community engagement into more of her future projects. "I think it adds a whole new layer to the art I've made previously," she wrote from France.

Hales' chief inspiration for the project came from the chapter *In Praise of Fencerows* in David Kline's "Great Possessions." Kline writes that there is a "ribbon of life" that exists within fencerows, connecting people across time and space.

It is one thing to mount an installation or a sculpture on Kenyon's campus. But Hales wanted to highlight the process of collaboration and community building, prioritizing the undertaking of the project itself rather than its final product. Her installation,

“Ribbons of Life,” went up on the church lawn after two open sessions (ribbons provided). Kenyon’s campus is dotted with wondrous works of public art, from the Gormley statue perched on the side of Rosse Hall to the towering Serra sculpture in the West Quad. While “Ribbons of Life” resembles some of Kenyon’s public artworks, her practice fits better into what Suzanne Lacy described in 1995 as “new genre public art” — the community process of engagement and creation as part of the artistic practice, rather than the public appreciation or viewership of art outside a museum or gallery. Over the course of the Fall 2024 semester, Hales led a series of installation workshops. Hales said, “with assistance from the Office of Community Partnerships, I invited community members and students to participate in ribbon-weaving workshops, hoping to create a space of dialogue and play.”

In these workshops, not only did Hales teach the community about ribbon weaving and make art with them, she also learned more about the inspiration of her project, combining her own experience of fences and the Ohio landscape with the community’s. “Through the workshops, I was able to talk to many new people, and some told me stories about fencerows and the changing picture of agriculture in Ohio since they were young. I’m grateful for the experience and for the connections the installation generated.” In one session, Hales told me she met a couple she knew only through passing them while running on the Kokosing Gap Trail. Gambier is full of these semi-strangers, and as Hales told me, “Now I look forward to running into them on the Gap Trail! That interaction epitomized the sense of community I was hoping to create.”

▼ Community members (including Assistant Director of the Office for Community Partnerships Alyssa Gómez Lawrence '10, top photo) participated in the “Ribbons of Life” art installation, spearheaded by Clara Hales '26 (pictured on the facing page).



# Kenyon Interns Collaborate With the Community

The Kenyon Community Internship Program provides students with opportunities to engage with the local community and gain career experience that often extends back into the college classroom. This year, 13 students are working with Kenyon’s community partners in roles ranging from public policy to marketing and communications and to library services. Kenyon interns typically work from five to 10 hours a week as they take on specific projects within local institutions. The program is an opportunity for collaboration between the College and the county.

Interns regularly emphasize how useful the internships were to their professional and academic goals, as well as giving them a more well-rounded experience of living in Knox County. Together, these students exemplify the

powerful impact of Kenyon’s internship program. Whether they’re trying to build up their resumes, apply classroom skills to the real world or expand their sense of place, they are creating more empathetic and integrated connections between Kenyon and the extended community.

The interns profiled here encourage other students to get involved in the community, either as part of an internship program or just getting a coffee at Happy Bean. As Kate Haydel-Brown noted, “I would recommend any of the community internships. I think it’s such a great way to experience the community and develop a more holistic perspective on the college and what you’re doing here.”

—Celeste Cohen ’25

## Kate Haydel-Brown ’25

### *Developing Writing Workshops*

Kate Haydel-Brown, a double-major in English and Spanish, is as a senior library intern at the **Public Library of Mount Vernon and Knox County**. Despite a packed schedule in the winter of her sophomore year, Kate couldn’t help her excitement after reading the description of the internship, which required many of the skills she wanted to develop.

After joining an already close-knit team of Kenyon interns and Mount Vernon librarians, she’s helped to develop a weekly teen writing group and learned how to write grant applications, among other duties. After establishing the teen workshop, she’s now working on one for adults.

“There are writers and creative thinkers everywhere,” she remarked. After three years on the job, Haydel-Brown is considering graduate school in library science.

The community she has found at the library keeps her coming back every year. While Kenyon students constantly come and go, the internship has given Haydel-Brown a “more permanent sense of place” in Knox County, she says, noting that she now has people she’ll need to come visit after she graduates. One of these is her supervisor. “I didn’t realize how much Jamie Lynn (Smith-Fletcher ’96 ) would invite us into all the different things going on at the library,” says Haydel-Brown, noting that, beyond her involvement with many of the library’s new initiatives and events, she even walks Smith-Fletcher’s dogs and joins her for dinner.

“I felt isolated here my first semester, and I don’t feel isolated anymore,” said Haydel-Brown. “Mount Vernon feels much more like a place, rather than just the backdrop for this college.”

## Grady Hudson ’26

### *Planning First Fridays*

Grady Hudson, an English major, works as a records specialist for **Experience Mount Vernon**. Initially expecting mundane office tasks, he quickly found himself leading projects that involved gathering community feedback for local events. Right now, he’s working with local Mount Vernon merchants on First Friday events, gathering data, and figuring out how to improve the interwoven economy of local businesses. “I’ve gotten more comfortable in the

area; it feels more homey,” he said. Grady grew up in and around Gambier and Mount Vernon, but he says that working with Experience Mount Vernon has made him feel like “I’m a student at Kenyon as well as a resident of Mount Vernon.” So far, he’s found it easy to balance his coursework with the internship, and likes that he can use his English major writing skills in ways he doesn’t in the classroom.

**Tate Jones '26**

*Understanding Local Poverty*

Tate Jones, a sociology major, is working with **United Way of Knox County** to adapt an existing program to fit the county's needs. Although she's still new to the position, she's already found fulfillment working hands-on in the community and furthering United Way's aim to make services more accessible to the local community.

Last year, Jones volunteered with **Knox Public Health**, working to reduce tobacco and nicotine consumption in teens. This year, she's focusing on bigger and more systemic issues, like how to increase access to transportation, technology and housing. In her most recent project, she worked to revamp the poverty simulator, which Jones describes as "almost like a game." The simulator is a

training exercise meant to help the user better understand the actual experience of living in poverty. Through this work, Jones sees an opportunity to increase empathy and forgiveness in the community. "Being a Kenyon student, you often don't realize how close some of these issues are to us," she told me; "there are big issues that people here will study in the classroom, but they don't realize that it's actually happening here."

Jones' work with United Way has already come up in her sociology classes this semester, and she values the opportunity to gain work experience in public health as she decides what she might want to do after college.

**Chau Vu '26**

*Analyzing the Work of the Freedom Center*

Chau Vu spent her semester as an intern at the **Mount Vernon Freedom Center**, a behavioral health treatment center. A sociology major, Vu found that her Kenyon courses have given her the statistical and data analysis skills to feel like a full member of the center's extended community. "Joining the Freedom Center feels like a wonderful opportunity to make a meaningful impact on the local community while aligning my professional aspirations with my commitment to helping people in need," she said.

"I'm really grateful to have supervisors and colleagues who have supported me."

At the center, Vu is helping on issues of substance abuse in the community. And beyond the valuable professional experience of working with the Freedom Center, Vu has "discovered several incredible community-based programs" that help people everyday. She says learning how to keep cool in tense situations has been one of the most valuable takeaways from her time so far.

**Oliver Giraud '27**

*Filling Gaps at City Hall*

For Oliver Giraud, a political science major, working as a policy intern for the **City of Mount Vernon** was a chance to translate his academic knowledge into real-world situations. Giraud chose political science as his major so that he could learn "what's the best way of life," and how he could implement political theory into community action. His internship became the first thing on his resume with relevance to his career plans after college.

In his internship, Giraud has been looking for gaps in Mount Vernon public policy. Finding inadequate legislation on mobile vendor policy, he's been researching local policies on food trucks and putting together a proposal for future mobile snacking in the city. Later this year, he plans to

propose a law that could be passed by the Mount Vernon city council. "Before this year, I didn't really think about how local government works," Giraud said. But even in his political science courses this semester, he can see how the work of local government translates into broader political structures and philosophies.

In this sense, the internship has affirmed his interest in public service, and made him more interested in what makes Mount Vernon tick. Now, when he visits the town, Giraud thinks more about the infrastructure and the local economy. "Being inside the system, you really see how it all goes down," he said. "There's always something going on."



## Dancing in the Kokosing

In July 2024, a crowd gathered along the banks of the Kokosing in Mount Vernon. Some came because they wanted a child-friendly activity, while others were students or friends of Kenyon. Regardless of what brought them to the river, all who joined in the “Kokosing and Community: Water Dances” event, organized by Kenyon Summer Scholar Ashley Sanchez ’26 and Professor of Dance and Director of the Office for Community Partnerships Julie Brodie, were united by a common mission: sparking a conversation about water.

Sanchez has long recognized the importance of protecting local water sources. Still, with the growth of Mount Vernon and the construction of the new roundabout at the intersection of Route 229 and Wiggin Street in Gambier, she realized the issue was more pressing than ever. “The point was definitely to get people to start talking about the issue,” Sanchez notes.

Kenyon’s Summer Scholars program provides opportunities for students to investigate their scholarly interests further by spending several weeks at the College in the summer months. To be considered for the program, students must craft a research plan, execute a research project and present their findings to the public.

Sanchez, part of Kenyon’s Summer Scholars Program, a classically trained dancer, knew from the start that she wanted her project to focus on water and be rooted in physical movement. When she discovered Global Water Dances, an organization that unites

choreographers and dancers across the globe to join together and raise awareness about water issues, she knew she had a sound project.

Despite the universal language of dance, Brodie admits that the “biggest challenge was to get people to participate.” She describes how “dance could be off-putting ... you know, so many people think, oh, I’m not a dance person, I can’t do this (specific) movement.”

To ensure participation in the project, Sanchez and Brodie worked with both established Kenyon partners and new groups like MTVarts, the Annex, SPI and several local senior homes. Brodie notes, “for us, workshopping was key ... to really get people comfortable with simple movement ... to show them that they could (meaningfully contribute to this project).”

At the heart of the project was education. The organizers made sure to include children in the project because they had the time to participate and could learn about environmental issues and, according to Brodie, “really be the next generation to (affect) change.” This is part of why the dances were held at Riverview Park, which is in the heart of the community and adjacent to SPI.

While the Kokosing is a clear river, relative to other rivers in the state, Sanchez notes that flooding remains a big issue. “The city has so many nonporous surfaces, so in terms of solutions, pushing for the city to use more porous materials is definitely a priority.” Sanchez and Brodie



▲ Professor of Dance Julie Brodie (left) and water dance organizer Ashley Sanchez, posing in the Kokosing River.

partnered with Heather Doherty '98, the central Ohio scenic rivers manager at the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR), to give a pre-performance speech about this issue and offer context explaining her organization’s work to protect and improve the health of Ohio’s watersheds.

In the future, both Brodie and Sanchez want to “focus their movements” both in the water and the political realm and try to coordinate another dance, with the next Global Water Dances scheduled for June 14, 2025. Even though many of the same challenges in successfully organizing the event — including recruiting participants and speakers — will likely remain, she is optimistic that the dances will grow to become a much-anticipated annual event.

— Ben Garst '25

# Kenyon and MVNU Co-Host the 22nd Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Breakfast

Residents from across Knox County came together for a community breakfast to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. on Monday, Jan. 20, in an event co-hosted by Kenyon College and Mount Vernon Nazarene University.

Keynote speaker Judy Alston of Miami University addressed this year's theme, "Courage in the Pursuit of Justice and Equality," in her keynote address in Peirce Hall on Kenyon's campus. A professor at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where she is chair of the department of educational leadership, Alston is one of the top scholars in her field.

Alston is the editor of "The Undivided Life," exploring how faculty of color can survive and thrive within the institution of higher education. Her scholarship focuses on Black female superintendents, social justice reform, and spirituality, as well as Black LGBTQ+ issues and leadership.

She has a doctorate in educational administration from the Pennsylvania

State University, two Masters of Education degrees from the University of South Carolina and a Master of Divinity from the Methodist Theological School of Ohio.

Guests also heard from Kenyon President Julie Kornfeld; MVNU President Carson Castleman; Mount Vernon Mayor Matthew Starr; and Gambier Mayor Leeman Kessler '04.

"It is an honor for Kenyon to host this year's Martin Luther King Jr. Celebration Breakfast with MVNU as we come together to find inspiration and guidance in the life of Dr. King," Kornfeld said before the event. "What a wonderful opportunity to celebrate our shared commitment to justice, compassion and equality, while recommitting ourselves to meaningful dialogue."

"Our MLK celebration serves as a vital reminder of our shared commitment to justice, equality and community. It brings us together to honor Dr. King's legacy, reflect on our progress, and renew our dedication to the work



▲ MVNU President Carson Castleman (left), Mount Vernon Mayor Matt Starr and Kenyon President Julie Kornfeld

that still lies ahead. In unity, we find the strength to uplift each other and forge a path toward a brighter future for all," said Castleman.

The celebration breakfast kicked off a week of activities inspired by the legacy of King. Students — in conjunction with the Office for Community Partnerships and the campus-wide initiative known as the Generosity Project — conducted service projects that included musicians performing in local senior living centers and people creating kits to help New Directions in Mount Vernon.

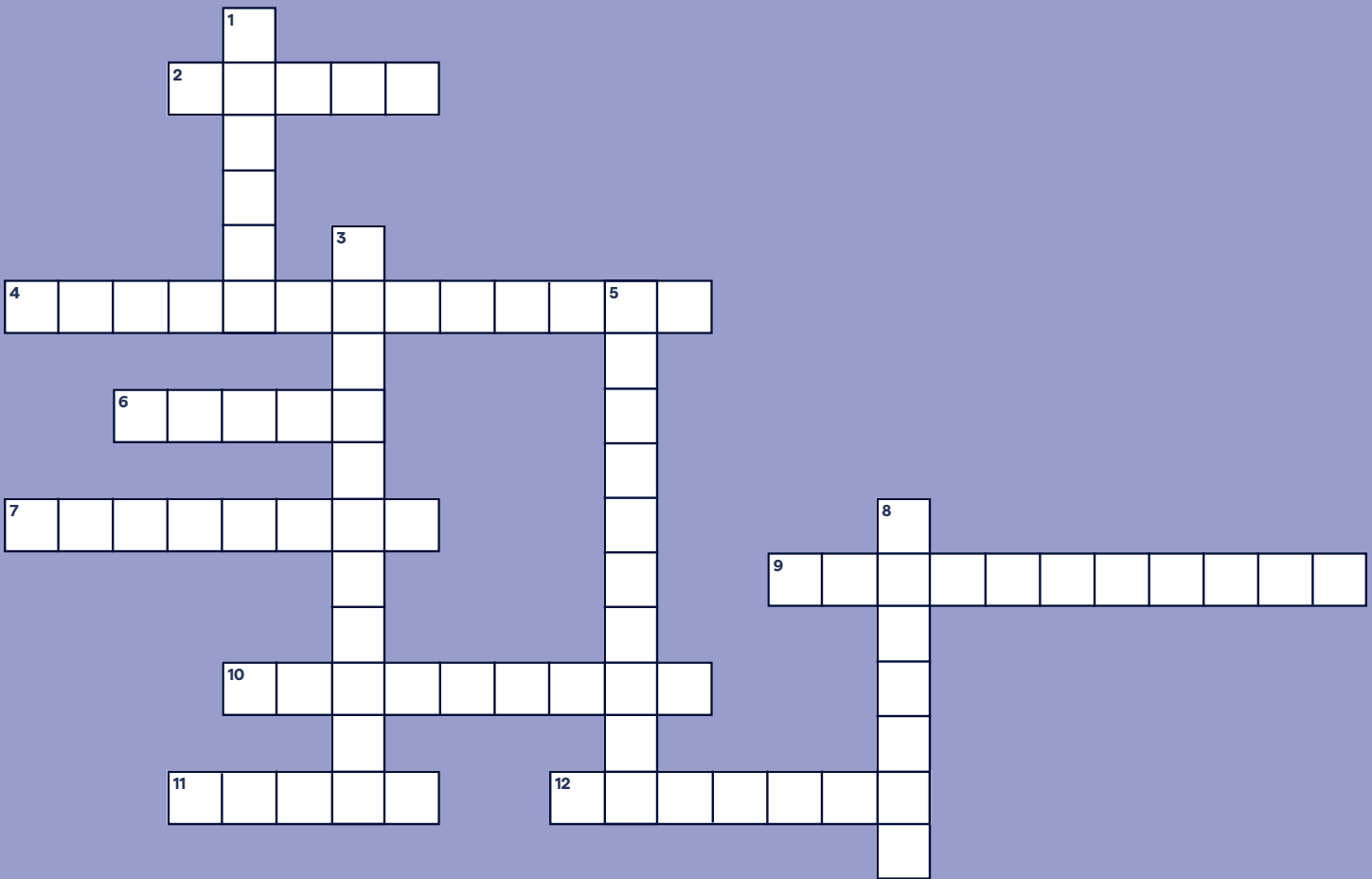
— Ryan E. Smith, Kenyon Office of Communications

◀ From left to right: Kenyon Student Elijah Lisboa '27; MVNU Assistant Vice President Tavaris Taylor; Kenyon Dean Chris Kennerly; MVNU student Caitlin Rowe; Keynote Speaker Judy Alston; Gambier Mayor Leeman Kessler '04; Rev. Rachel Kessler '04; and Kenyon Hillel Director Marc Bragin



Photos: Graham H. Stokes





### Kenyon Lore Crossword

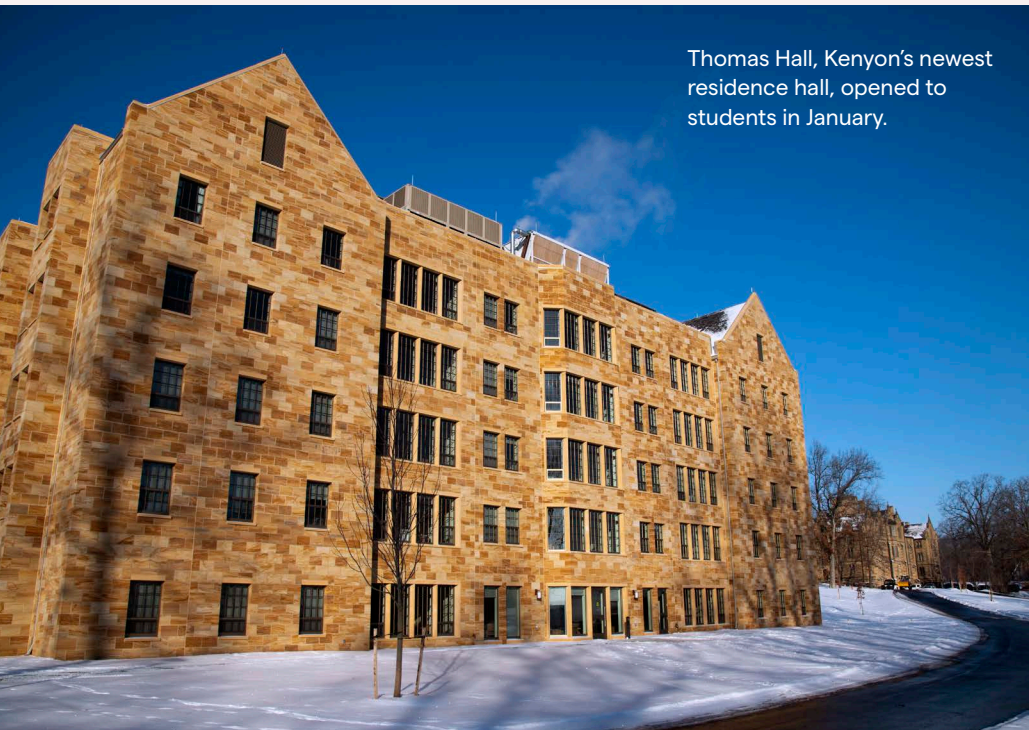
Test your knowledge of all things Kenyon. If you get stuck, the answers are on the next page.

**Across**

- 2. What was the College's moniker before Owls?
- 4. What is the local football club for the Kenyon estate?
- 6. This American poet's last public appearance was the dedication of the original Chalmers Library.
- 7. The birth control pill was developed by this member of the Class of 1943.
- 9. Where was Kenyon founded?
- 10. What faith tradition founded Kenyon?
- 11. Lord Admiral Gambier was a signatory of the Treaty of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 12. This photography method was developed at Kenyon.

**Down**

- 1. Kenyon ranks \_\_\_\_\_ all-time in NCAA championships, in all divisions.
- 3. The first publication of this national institution was written by Edwin H. Davis of the Class of 1933.
- 5. Philander Chase was the second president of the University of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8. Who was the dean of Kenyon's short-lived Coordinate College for women?



Thomas Hall, Kenyon's newest residence hall, opened to students in January.

Photo: Adam Gilson

**CROSSWORD ANSWERS**

**Across**

- 2. LORDS
- 4. WREXHAM A.F.C.
- 6. FROST
- 7. DJERASSI
- 9. WORTHINGTON
- 10. EPISCOPAL
- 11. GHENT
- 12. TINTYPE

**Down**

- 1. FOURTH
- 3. SMITHSONIAN
- 5. CINCINNATI
- 8. CROZIER

## New Buildings and a Carbon-Negative Kenyon

Although Kenyon's newest residential buildings, Thomas and Winkler halls, have altered the Gambier landscape, they were designed to minimize impacts on the overall environment.

Ian Smith, Kenyon's vice president for facilities, planning and sustainability, recognizes the initial negative environmental impacts of clearing land to build new buildings. But he argues that, in the long term, the buildings are helping the college become carbon neutral while meeting the needs of students. The new buildings — like all other recent construction at the College — are built within standards set by the U.S. Green Building Council. "One of the biggest things ... is the (large) reduction in energy consumption and water usage" made possible by these new buildings, he says.

While constructing new buildings is always the most environmentally friendly option, a historic institution

like Kenyon also understands its duty to preserve its past. The construction of these new buildings follows the extensive renovation of Bexley Hall, the 19th-century former seminary building that now houses students. "It's a dual approach," says Smith. "Bexley Hall is finished, but that structure will never be as environmentally friendly as a new building. We're building for 100 years or more, structures that will make it to Kenyon's tricentennial. We're planning for the long term."

Smith notes that, in order for the renovation of historic residential buildings to occur, the College needs new buildings because renovations reduce the amount of available space in buildings. Narrow entrances, hallways and restrooms, for example, must be reconfigured, and elevators must be added, which decreases the amount of space available in those buildings for other uses.

Beyond providing much-needed housing for students, according to Smith, "Other parts of (the new buildings) are very intentional features for improving indoor environmental quality. For example, there's a lot of daylighting, the paints are low in volatile organic content. These buildings simply are healthier. Less mold, less mildew, much better in the long term."

In the near term, Smith is confident that Kenyon can reach carbon neutrality — and more. Regardless of rising construction costs, Kenyon's reduction in electricity usage coupled with the fixed electricity rate secured in 2020 makes Smith hopeful that the College can "become carbon negative on the land we already own. That I'm confident about."

— Ben Garst '25

# Office of Community Partnerships



## MOUNT VERNON OFFICE

Wright Center  
Suite 100  
400 S. Main Street  
Tuesday and Thursday,  
8:30 a.m – 4:30 p.m.

## KENYON CAMPUS OFFICE

Stephens Hall  
Lower Level  
106 College Park Street  
Monday, Wednesday and Friday  
8:30 a.m – 4:30 p.m.

# Our Contributors



**Celeste Cohen '25** (she/her) is a senior art history major from New York City. On campus, she is also involved with the Cinearts Film Club and the Fools on the Hill improv troupe and works as a peer tutor in the Writing Center. Celeste joined the Office for Community Partnerships at the start of the 2024-25 school year and is excited to engage with the office and the community to work to bridge the gaps between the College and the greater community of Knox County.



**Ben Garst '25** is an anthropology major passionate about people and documenting local community life. He is highly considering a community-interest focused career in public policy post-Kenyon.

Published by the Office for Community Partnerships and Office of Communications at Kenyon College.

Cover photo by Ryan E. Smith.

Printed by Good Impressions Printing in Mount Vernon.

