

AARS THE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RHODES SCHOLARS

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Dear Rhodes Scholar,

Warm holiday greetings from the Association of American Rhodes Scholars, proudly supporting Oxford, the Rhodes Trust and the Rhodes Scholar Community since 1907. What a treasure of experiences we share.

I am writing to update you on recent developments in our American and global Rhodes community, to thank you for your support over the past year, and to seek your continued support for the ongoing activities of the AARS. It has been a busy and successful year.

2019 Bon Voyage Weekend



2019 Rhodes Scholars in New York City for the Bon Voyage Weekend

On Sunday, September 29, following a day and a half of activities, our 2019 American Rhodes Scholars, plus new Scholar guests from Bermuda, Burundi, Ethiopia, Jamaica, and Trinidad & Tobago, concluded their

Bon Voyage Weekend and departed New York City for Oxford. We returned to New York again this year before moving to Seattle next year. As you know, the cost of attendance by the new Scholars is underwritten entirely by the AARS, made possible by your generous gifts.



Warden Elizabeth Kiss of the Rhodes Trust



Elliot Gerson and Janice Ugaki with 2019 Rhodes Scholars

The weekend began Friday evening with small group dinners with area alumni, which were a big success. On Saturday we had a morning session with introductions and orientation, followed by attendance at a matinee performance of the acclaimed Broadway musical *Hamilton*. Although hard to top the performance, the highlight of the BVW, as always, was the “Sailing” dinner for close to 150 in attendance at a family-style dinner in Chinatown, where American Secretary Elliot Gerson (Connecticut & Magdalen 1974) introduced the new Scholars to the audience, and Warden Elizabeth Kiss (Virginia & Balliol 1983) was our fabulous keynote speaker. A full set of pictures from BVW may be found at <https://www.americanrhodes.org/2019BVWPhotos>.

Board Meeting and Other Developments

We held a successful AARS Board Meeting on Sunday, where we had a very informative and inspiring presentation and update from Warden Kiss. While we were meeting, the new Scholars toured the Tenement Museum in lower Manhattan and then joined the Board for lunch before getting ready for their evening departure for the UK.



Lunch with Scholars after the AARS Board Meeting



2019 Rhodes Scholars at the Tenement Museum

I am pleased to report that the new AARS Speakers Bureau is off to a terrific start. It will be operational for the Rhodes community in December, with a roll-out for the broader communities we hope to serve in 2020. Featuring a diverse group of 350 Senior Scholars with expertise in over 40 subjects, it will be accessible on the AARS website, www.americanrhodes.org. I am also pleased to report that we are launching a book discussion group that we will pilot in the New York City area. Finally, planning is underway to host the Oxford

Vice-Chancellor, Louise Richardson, at our Spring 2020 Board meeting in Chicago on April 4, which we will hold in conjunction with the Boat Race Dinner.

A Final Word

To close, let me thank you again for all you do to support Oxford and the Rhodes Scholarships. I also thank you for the financial contributions you make to sustain our mission. It literally could not be done without you. If you have paid your dues and made an additional contribution, many, many thanks. If you have not yet done so, please consider making a gift today, either by returning the enclosed contribution card with a check to our Vienna, Virginia address at the bottom of this page, or by doing so online at www.americanrhodes.org/dues-payment.html. Your gifts to AARS, an IRC Section 501(c)(3) public charity, qualify for charitable deductions. In addition, taxpayers who are subject to the Required Minimum Distribution from their IRAs may also wish to consider making a direct contribution to AARS from their IRA, a strategy that can produce considerable benefits. Although dues and contributions are behind where we were this time last year, I am hopeful that with your support we can meet our budgeted goal for the year.



Sheldonian Theatre through Hertford College Bridge, Oxford

From all of us at AARS, very best wishes for a warm and festive holiday season. We look forward to seeing you in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Ralph H. Smith II, President
(Alabama & Corpus Christi 1973)