

A circular portrait of a young woman with dark, curly hair, smiling warmly. She is wearing a light-colored top and a delicate necklace. The portrait is set against a dark green background.

THE COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Mason Now: Power the Possible. The Campaign for George Mason University.



AT THE HEART OF A GEORGE MASON EDUCATION.

This is where it all starts for every George Mason undergraduate and hundreds of graduate students every year. But we're about more than starting points, and we don't believe in endpoints. We believe in discovery and transformation, and we're focused on preparing students for their futures.

In the **College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)**, we embrace the fact that everyone who comes to George Mason—students, faculty, and staff—has their own unique story and distinct aspirations. We value these stories by meeting people where they are. We elevate these aspirations as we help students acquire the skills, experiences, and network connections that turn dreams into realities.

Our commitment to excellence and innovation in teaching and research is in service to one of the country's most diverse, vibrant, and inclusive educational communities. Our faculty are proud contributors to George Mason's recognition as an access-oriented Research 1 university, conducting—and engaging our students—in research for the real world, with local, regional, and global reach.

Why now?

The future leaders who will grapple with the pressing challenges of the 21st century are in our classrooms today. It is our responsibility to prepare them—as best we can—for the known, unknown, and “what's next?” challenges of their lifetimes.



FROM THE DEAN

When I meet with our alumni, over and over they tell me, “I never felt like a number.” “At CHSS, I had opportunities to step up, stand out, and give back.” “I am where I am because of George Mason.” For some, George Mason’s impact centers on the connection they made with a faculty member, a research project, or an internship. For others, it is learning problem-solving skills, working within complex teams, and developing an innovative mindset. One underlying message resonates in all of these: *George Mason prepared me.*

In these pages you will read about transformative moments from our students, faculty, alumni, and supporters. Together they tell a story about how George Mason has contributed to their success.

That is what our Mason Now campaign is all about—making more of these moments possible.

I invite you to join us in helping turn our students’ dreams of future success into reality. Together, we can continue to power the possible.

All together,

Ann L. Ardis

Dean and Professor, College of Humanities and Social Sciences

WHY GEORGE MASON? WHY NOW? WHY YOU?

Your gift to the Mason Now campaign enables the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to provide opportunities for transformational change that benefit us all.

STUDENTS

Empower our students to start and finish their education, regardless of where they begin.

FACULTY

Ensure our faculty are supported with the resources they need to engage in cutting-edge work while educating our diverse student body.

RESEARCH

Enable our research centers to expand their scope and impact as they tackle some of the most pressing issues of our century.

Join us.

A photograph of three students walking through a modern university hallway. On the left, a young woman with long dark hair, wearing a blue sweater and a red backpack, smiles. In the center, a young woman with long dark hair and glasses, wearing a brown coat, holds a stack of books and a phone. On the right, a woman with short dark hair and glasses, wearing a grey blazer and skirt, smiles. The hallway has light-colored walls and a tiled floor. The text "WHAT DOES CHSS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR STUDENTS?" is overlaid on the left side of the image. The word "STUDENTS" is highlighted in a yellow box.

WHAT DOES CHSS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR **STUDENTS**?

Students begin their educational journey from vastly different starting points. An education that challenges and supports, rooted in the belief that educational journeys never end and that it's never too late to begin one. A George Mason education is made possible for many of our students through donor-supported scholarships.

"At George Mason, I learned to be open to input, communicate around it, and apply it to real-life opportunities."

Different lenses of input help your work grow and flourish."

Adriana Opsina

MA Art History '13; Director, Art Museum of the Americas

"At George Mason, I was consistently encouraged to challenge the status quo—to question, to analyze, to innovate."

The rigorous academic environment was about cultivating a mindset. I discovered the power of collaboration and innovation and how this can lead to profound impact. I found a deeper sense of purpose, especially the focus on global understanding. I realized that we are part of a larger and interconnected world. George Mason prepared me for more than just a job—it prepared me for a lifelong journey."

Hassan Shahidi

BA International Studies '81, MA Economics '83

POWER THE POSSIBLE

SCHOLARSHIPS

“Coming from Mexico at the age of nine and adapting to American culture has changed my life on a personal and academic level.

Being the first in my family to attend an American college is such an honor and to represent my culture fills me with great pride. The most appealing aspect that brought me to George Mason was their communication program, their staff, and the phenomenal opportunities to grow professionally. I applied thinking I wouldn't be able to get in due to its prestige but, to my surprise, I was admitted. Ever since, the George Mason community has been nothing but accepting and welcoming.”

Ximena Espinosa

Humanities and Social Sciences Excellence Endowed Fund Recipient





Big Brothers Big Sisters of America CEO Artis Stevens and CCO Dvon Williams, BA Communication '06; Photo by NYSE

POWER THE POSSIBLE

ACCESS

“I was one of the first in my family to go to college. My parents couldn’t tell me what it would be like.

It was an uncharted path, and George Mason opened doors for me I didn’t know existed. Because of that experience, I developed and shaped critical skills that helped build my career. Now, I am able to provide this same access for others through my work in the nonprofit industry and youth development.”

Dvon Williams

BA Communication '06

“While at George Mason, I was also working full-time and helping to care for my two young children.

I want them to understand the importance of education. I told them they can do whatever they want to do—I want them to understand that it’s never too late. It means the world to me to have my degree from George Mason University.”

Angelo Collington

BS Psychology '23; first-generation ADVANCE student, George Mason’s initiative to enhance the transfer experience for NOVA and other community college graduates.

POWER THE POSSIBLE

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

“**At George Mason, I cultivated my ability to navigate intricate challenges, develop innovative solutions, and forge partnerships that drive global progress.**

My education has been the bedrock upon which I've built my career. As I continue to champion equity and positive change across cybersecurity, health, nuclear energy, and water security, I am continually reminded of the transformative influence of my education and the pivotal role it has played in shaping a better future for our global community.”

Olivia Blackmon

BA Sociology '99, MA '11, PhD '15; Director of STEM Acceleration, Oak Ridge Associated Universities





POWER THE POSSIBLE

LIFELONG LEARNING

“ I am a 54-year-old part-time undergraduate student earning an accelerated master’s degree at George Mason.

At 18, I was already a husband and new father, and a GED was my only educational achievement. I dropped out of high school at the beginning of my senior year to work and support my family, but I harbored a dream to one day become an educator. Nearly thirty years after I met my wife, the most important person in my life, she suddenly passed away. She had always believed in me and I felt I could one day achieve my dream, to go back to school, earn a degree, and work encouraging and educating students.

I have maintained a 4.0 GPA since transferring into the Bachelor of Individualized Study (BIS) program. I have also been accepted to the Bachelor’s to Accelerated Master’s program in special education. I still imagine one day achieving my teaching dream. Thank you for the belief, trust, and investment in me.”

Brian Mills

BIS ‘24

The BIS program focuses on helping adult learners complete their degrees and integrates prior college-level credits, professional credentials, and military experience to an individualized and flexible program of study.



Because we believe in the power of education to change the trajectory of a life, we feel a deep sense of satisfaction and purpose in giving others the tools to improve their lives.

Our goal is to provide opportunities to students who might otherwise lack the resources to get a degree, and over time, we have observed many students in programs we have supported who have become successful both in the classroom and beyond. We feel so privileged to be able to help empower these students to thrive.”

Donna and Steve Gladis

Parents of MEd '06 alum; Steve Gladis, MA English '84, PhD Education '95

SCHOLARSHIPS

Scholarships make the difference for many of our students, some of whom are working multiple jobs while also being full-time students. Scholarships can be made in any amount to the general fund or set up as an endowment to serve as an honor or tribute in perpetuity.

WHAT DOES CHSS MAKE POSSIBLE FOR **FACULTY**, TEACHING, AND RESEARCH?

Our students learn alongside world-class faculty, often actively participating in high-level research projects. Our faculty conducts research of consequence and provides rich educational experiences for undergraduate and graduate students. With the community's support, our teaching and research lead to action that advances academic disciplines, improves communities, and impacts our world.

Teaching. Research. Action.

That's what the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is all about.





George Mason has made significant investments in undergraduate research.

In 2020, the author Richard Rothstein wrote an op-ed—“The Black Lives Next Door”—in which he asked everyday citizens to research the role of racism and segregation in creating their own communities. We decided that it would be great for students to be able to understand the role of racism and segregation in the creation of George Mason University. All of these students came from different disciplines. They brought different perspectives, and they were so intellectually curious about the work. It is so important for undergraduates to be involved in research. It really helps them to understand the work that academics do and to understand the practical applications of academic research.”

LaNitra Berger

Associate Professor; Director, African and African American Studies

FACULTY

Many students credit our faculty with providing the inspiration and mentorship they needed to succeed. A gift to support faculty can vary in size and focus, from supporting summer research to naming an endowed chair.



POWER THE POSSIBLE

CAREER READINESS

“Watching the psychology students’ presentation was like watching a consulting firm pitch a solution to a client—it was hard to remember these were undergraduate students.”

This type of course is precisely what our students need, and future employers are demanding—strong coverage of relevant knowledge, and then hands-on experience in applying that knowledge to real-world problems.”

Keith Renshaw

*Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education (pictured on left);
Professor of Psychology, on watching PSYC 461 Advanced
Topics in Human Factors final presentation.*

POWER THE POSSIBLE

RESEARCH TO ACTION

“Let’s face it. Climate change is pretty scary stuff, right?”

I want to make sure that the world I leave to my children and my grandchildren is a world that they can prosper in. But we’ve got some real challenges to make that a reality. I am super proud of the work that I, my colleagues, and our students are doing because we’ve proven that the work we’re doing is helping to open up Americans’ minds to this reality and help them better understand the actions they individually can take—and more importantly, that we collectively can take to better respond to those threats.”

Ed Maibach

Distinguished University Professor; Director, Center for Climate Change Communication

“It’s incredibly important to apply science to the study of policing.

It’s also important to me that George Mason is innovative and forward-thinking in the way it approaches science. George Mason is willing to try out new things, willing to hire someone who used to be a police officer, and is now a criminologist just to say, ‘What do you think about this issue?’ George Mason is known for that, and I’m incredibly proud to be a part of this community. We work on some of the most important questions of the day.”

Cynthia Lum

Distinguished University Professor; Director, Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy (pictured)





POWER THE POSSIBLE

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION

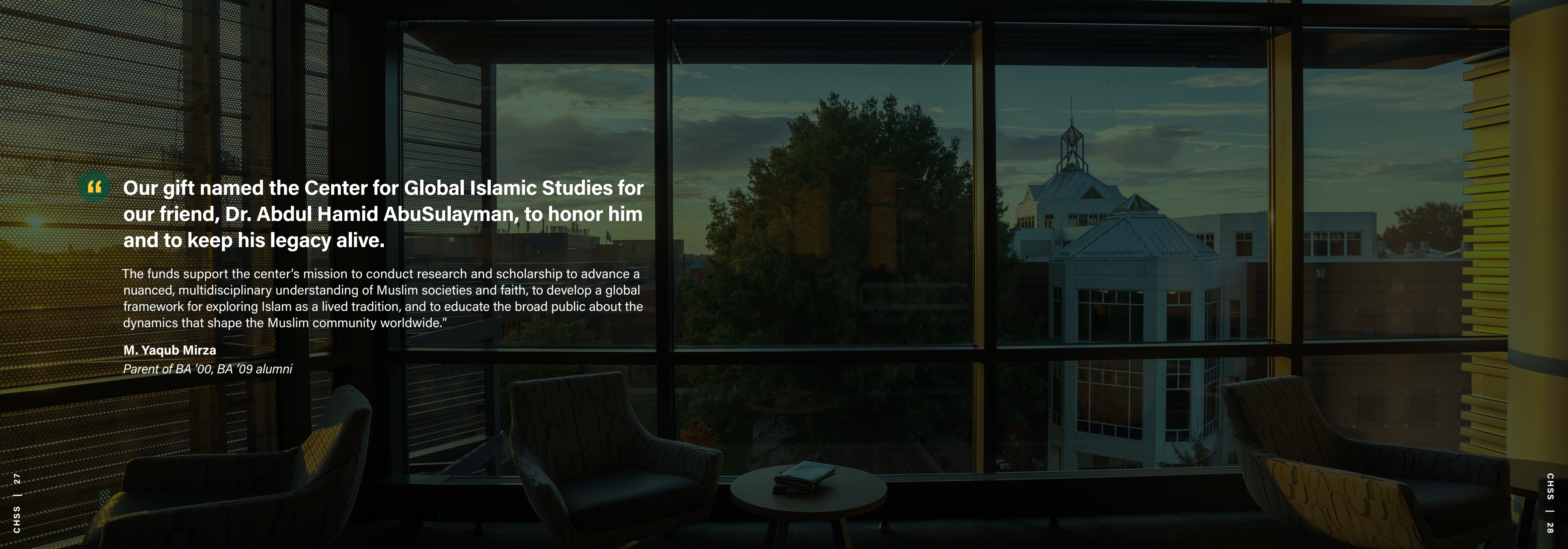


People care about the past because they understand that the past has shaped who they are and has shaped their communities.

We create data-driven histories, telling the stories of people who previously only made it into the historical record as numbers. We train the next generation of digital historians. Our graduate students bring our culture of innovative digital histories to their work in libraries, archives, museums, research centers, education, and a variety of other careers.”

Lincoln Mullen

Professor; Executive Director, Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media



“ Our gift named the Center for Global Islamic Studies for our friend, Dr. Abdul Hamid AbuSulayman, to honor him and to keep his legacy alive.

The funds support the center’s mission to conduct research and scholarship to advance a nuanced, multidisciplinary understanding of Muslim societies and faith, to develop a global framework for exploring Islam as a lived tradition, and to educate the broad public about the dynamics that shape the Muslim community worldwide.”

M. Yaqub Mirza

Parent of BA '00, BA '09 alumni



I donate to the center for Community Mental Health to help students receive a high-quality education and practical training to help others in need.

I know my donations help the center provide mental health services to Northern Virginia community members who lack the resources for these services and would not have access to mental health care without the center and its students.”

Allen Lomax
MPA '82

RESEARCH

Our faculty conducts innovative research, and our undergraduate and graduate students participate in these rich educational experiences. A gift to support our research centers will expand their impact in our community and across our nation.





In our businesses, we know the importance of hiring people and developing teams from a variety of backgrounds who know how to think critically and solve complex problems.

As alumni of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, we are proud of the education the college provides for the workforce and our region."

Shaza and Marc Andersen

Shaza Andersen, BA Area Studies '89, Founder and CEO of Trustar Bank

Marc Andersen, BA Economics '90, Senior Global Partner at EY

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

We empower our students to apply their classroom knowledge directly to real-world experiences, especially through internships. These career-building opportunities can set students up for success when they graduate. You can make these experiences possible through a gift to support experiential learning.

HOW WILL WE POWER THE POSSIBLE?

With your support, a gift could:

Provide the funds a **student** needs to graduate.

Bring in **faculty** who can help a student realize their potential.

Fund innovative **research** to benefit generations.

Establish **experiential learning** opportunities.

George Mason is the university of our community, and it is our community of support that helps us turn our students' dreams to reality.

You can help power the possible.

A circular image showing a bronze statue of George Mason, a founding father of the United States, standing on a pedestal. He is wearing a long coat and holding a book. The statue is set against a dramatic sunset sky with clouds. In the background, there are modern university buildings and streetlights. The ground is wet, reflecting the statue and the sky.

**The art of giving is
the art of caring."**

Rutledge M. Dennis
Professor, Sociology and Anthropology

MASON NOW

POWER THE POSSIBLE



COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
George Mason University®



chss.gmu.edu

For more information, contact:

Eleanor Weis

Senior Director of Development and Alumni Relations

703-993-8706 | eweis2@gmu.edu