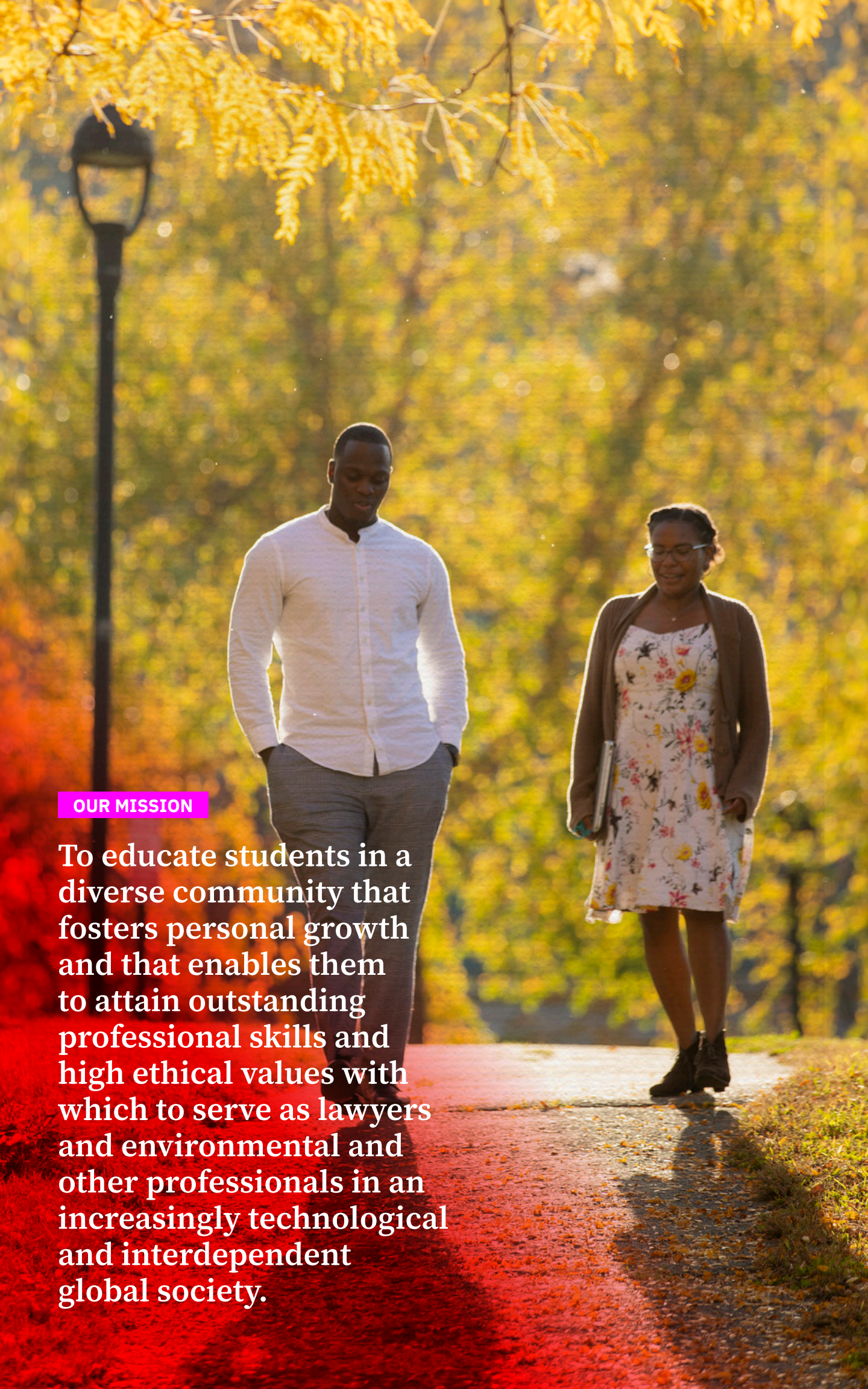
VERMONT
GRADUATE SCHOOL

CHANGE STARTS HERE

GRADUATE DEGREE PROGRAMS



OUR MISSION

To educate students in a diverse community that fosters personal growth and that enables them to attain outstanding professional skills and high ethical values with which to serve as lawyers and environmental and other professionals in an increasingly technological and interdependent global society.

A Message from President Rod Smolla

Vermont Law and Graduate School has a proud legacy of top-ranked quality and leadership in matters relating to the environment and restorative justice. This is a unique time in the history of the world. We are challenged by a climate change crisis that threatens our well-being. We are challenged, within the United States and across the globe, with threats to the most fundamental values of a decent society: respect for human dignity, autonomy, and the rule of law.

We need professionals with policy skills to lead society forward, and our masters education is important to the future of humankind.

The world desperately needs professionals with the intellectual and practical skills to study, design, and advocate for wise public policies and practices on matters relating to climate change, environmental policy, and animal protection.

Our programs equip students from across the world to enter the public and private sectors, holding positions in government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and businesses, with the academic expertise and practical competencies needed for meaningful and consequential careers in these vital arenas.

Vermont Law and Graduate School occupies a unique place in the panoply of higher education. There simply is no higher education institution anywhere in the nation—or world—that has so ardently dedicated itself to the study and advancement of progress at the intersection of environmental protection and social justice.

Whether you join us in the lovely Green Mountain State or through one of our online programs, we would be thrilled to welcome you to our special community, and our noble quest..

RODNEY A. SMOLLA,
President, Vermont Law and Graduate School

A master's degree at your pace

12 MONTHS ON-CAMPUS OR 18 MONTHS ONLINE

Vermont Law and Graduate School is one of the only schools where graduate students may take law school courses. We have a reputation of providing educational opportunities for graduate, law, and Master of Law students.

Our master's programs are designed to be completed in 12 months on-campus or 18 months online, though students have up to five years to obtain their degree. All master's degrees can be pursued jointly with our Juris Doctor program.

Online courses are taught sequentially (one at a time) in a compressed format. There are almost no traditional lectures, but instead conversations among students and faculty that build on material provided in class.

Each class runs for seven weeks and is conducted in an asynchronous format. These are highly interactive, with 2–3 assignments each week, and require students to interact with their professor and each other several times during the week.

Participants should expect to spend 20–25 hours per week on the course.

Our Campus

Nestled next to the White River in South Royalton, our 13-acre campus facilities prioritize sustainable practices. From composting toilets to minimize water usage, super windows to maximize insulation, enthalpic energy wheels to control humidity and recycle exhaust heat, and lighting solutions that use natural and energy efficient lighting for interior and exterior spaces—we practice what we teach.

Our Community

We are scientists, hackers, hikers, and musicians; talented, quirky, restless, engaged, entrepreneurial self-starters who believe in community and the power of the law to do good. We are socially conscious risk-takers with big ideas; we are idealists interested in practical training; we are friends and activists—true catalysts for change

VLGS is known nationally as an environmental and social justice revolutionary. We are committed to equity and inclusion. As an institution of higher education, we recognize that the law has too often neglected Black, Brown and Indigenous people, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community, that it has been used to legitimize the inhumane treatment of marginalized groups within these communities.

We commit to fight against inherent ignorance, intolerance, and racial and social injustice through teaching and scholarship, research and practice, open discussion, and public events. We believe in providing a learning environment that is inclusive of all people, regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, nationality, ethnicity, ability, age, or socioeconomic class.

STUDENT-RUN ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDE:

- Alliance
- American Constitution Society
- Animal Law Society
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association
- Black Law Students Association
- Environmental Law Society
- Environmental Justice Society
- Equal Justice Foundation
- Food and Agricultural Law Society
- International Law Society
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Native American Law Students Association
- Outdoors Club
- Women's Law Society

Master of Climate and Environmental Policy (MCEP)

POSITIONS HELD BY FORMER STUDENTS INCLUDE:

- Community Development Specialist at Central Alabama Regional Planning Commission
- Energy and Water Specialist at Climate Resolve
- Associate at Rocky Mountain Institute
- Research Manager at Connecticut Roundtable on Climate and Jobs
- Environmental Protection Specialist for the Federal Highway Administration
- Environmental and Climate Policy Specialist at the Vermont Agency of Transportation

The MCEP is a robust, applied public policy degree, dedicated to environmental policy. Grounded in developing tools to make change, it empowers students to find and implement solutions to the greatest challenges of our day: climate change and environmental justice.

Students in the MCEP program gain skills needed to shape environmental policy and integrate racial and economic justice into practice and policymaking. This includes everything from professionalism, diversity, equity and inclusion, public participation, and consensus-building.

Three concentrations—Climate Change, Environmental Justice, or Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG)—are offered, or students can shape their own specialization using our extensive elective offerings to follow their passion within the environmental realm.

All MCEP students choose between a "research track" to write a thesis, or a "practice track" to pursue an externship or on-campus clinic

"VLGS' School for the Environment is the runway for tomorrow's environmental leaders to launch their careers. We equip our students with a full toolbox of knowledge and skills for making change. In this time of climate crisis and its disproportionate impacts around the world, training leaders in environmental protection is critical to the future of our planet and communities."

—**JENNIFER RUSHLOW**, Dean, Vermont School for the Environment; Faculty Director, Environmental Law Center; Professor of Law

Master of Energy Regulation and Law (MERL)

Energy and the environment are inextricably linked, with energy usage serving as a catalyst for many of today's issues. Perhaps no environmental or economic challenge is more important today than our need to expeditiously transition to a clean energy future, and the MERL is designed to address these challenges.

VLGS leads the nation in preparing students for a clean energy revolution. Our energy law and policy program offers the largest selection of relevant courses available, leading renewable energy experiential opportunities, new clean transportation classes and research options, and seamless integration with a world-class environmental law and policy program.

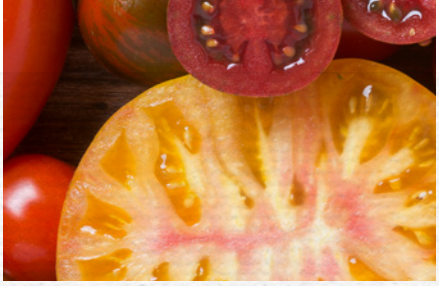
POSITIONS HELD BY FORMER STUDENTS INCLUDE:

- Senior Regulatory Analyst at Peninsula Clean Energy
- Virtual Power Plant Manager at EDF Renewables North America
- Senior Transmission Regulatory Policy Specialist, Rhode Island Energy
- Senior Policy Program Director at North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center
- Director, U.S. Offshore Wind Development at Brookfield Renewable
- Policy and Strategy Manager at San Diego Gas and Electric Company
- Climate Action Program Coordinator for Missoula County, Montana
- Executive Advisor to Michigan Public Service Commission
- Energy Policy Director, Montana Environmental Information Center
- Western Markets Associate at Clean Energy Buyers Association
- Head of Development, PJM at Walden Renewables
- Contract Specialist, Vineyard Wind
- Senior Director of Interconnection at BlueWave Capital
- Communications Director at Regulatory Assistance Project
- Program Manager, Clean Coalition
- Policy Analyst, Atlas Public Policy
- Associate, RMI

"I was drawn to the MERL program as it was a first-of-its-kind graduate program that was primarily focused on clean energy transition. MERL is a rigorous program with a multi-disciplinary approach to deconstructing energy issues from the viewpoint of law and policy, economics, business, and engineering. I learned not just about the energy landscape but also the tools and mechanisms necessary to enable transformation towards sustainable, affordable, and reliable energy systems."

—ACHYUT SHRESTHA MERL'14

Master of Food and Agriculture Law and Policy (MFALP)



The MFALP degree program educates those who will lead food and agricultural law and policy.

Intensive study coupled with practical training provides students the opportunity to effectively and collaboratively engage with the institutions and individuals that influence food and agriculture law and policy—and formulate law and policy solutions.

Our comprehensive curriculum, developed by faculty of VLGS' Center for Agriculture and Food Systems (CAFS), develops students' advocacy skills in the emerging field of food and agricultural law and policy. Along with local, regional, national, and international partners, CAFS addresses food system challenges related to food justice, food security and healthy food access, farmland access, animal welfare, farmworkers' rights and protections, the environment, and public health, among others.

"I am a current MFALP student and spent the spring semester as a clinician. I worked with urban farmers and gardeners throughout the country to develop policy recommendations. I appreciate that this project's process created room for conversations with, and input from, those who will be directly impacted by this policy. I feel grateful to have had the opportunity to be a mouthpiece for those working to create a more resilient food system."

—SHELBY KALM MFALP'22

POSITIONS HELD BY FORMER STUDENTS INCLUDE:

- Business Associate at Environmental Working Group
- Staff Counsel at U.S. Senator Debbie Stabenow's office
- Senior Program Associate at California Land Link
- Charlotte E. Ray Fellow at the Conservation Law Foundation
- Clinical Teaching Fellow at Harvard Law School
- Local Food Access Coordinator at Northeast Organic Farming Association, Vermont chapter
- Executive Director of Artisan Grain Collaborative
- Policy Specialist at the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition
- Agriculture and Food Systems Consultant at State Innovation Exchange
- Agricultural Economist and Dairy Marketing Specialist at the USDA Agricultural Marketing Services
- Associate General Counsel at the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)
- Farmer and Partner Development Manager at Farm Commons
- Director of Food Connects
- Congressional Hunger Center

Master of Animal Protection Policy (MAPP)

The MAPP provides real-world training in advocacy, regulatory matters, legislation, lobbying, and media strategy, giving students the tools needed to be effective change-makers for animals.

Animal law and policy is a rapidly growing field, with more and more students recognizing and focusing on the interconnection between human, environmental, and animal well-being.

VLGS is uniquely positioned to train students in the policy and advocacy skills needed to effectively fight for animals—and to help graduates gain employment utilizing these skills—given our decades-long history as a pioneer in animal law, with distinguished animal law and policy faculty, a strong alumni network, and top-ranked collaborative programs. Through environmental justice, environmental law, and food and agriculture law and policy, students receive a holistic view of animal protection work.

POSITIONS HELD BY FORMER STUDENTS INCLUDE:

- Advisor to the Deputy Secretary at U.S. Department of the Interior
- Agriculture Conservation Practitioner at The Nature Conservancy
- Associate at Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI)
- Communications Associate at International Rhino Foundation
- Endowed Chair in Marine and Environmental Law and Policy, Director, Institute for Global Understanding, Professor, Department of Political Science and Sociology, Monmouth University
- Environmental Program Manager at the VT Department of Environmental Conservation
- Federal Legislative and Policy Attorney, Chesapeake Bay Foundation
- Federal Policy Fellow, Humane Society of the United States
- Founder, Animal Law Source and the Animal Law, Enforcement, Veterinary and Shelter Symposium
- Director of Wildlife Law, Friends of Animals
- Global Corporate Engagement Officer at Mercy for Animals
- Legislative Specialist, Humane Society Legislative Fund
- Managing Attorney for the Criminal Justice Program at the Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Ocean Rights Manager, Earth Law Center
- Operations Manager at an organic farm
- Research Analyst at City of New Haven Food System Policy Division
- Research Manager at Connecticut Roundtable on Climate & Jobs
- Senior Associate, Equity & Conservation at California Farmlink
- Staff Attorney, Wildlife Law Program

"The MAPP is designed and taught by leading animal law and policy experts to give students a strong foundational understanding of pragmatic, transformational policy change for animals in both theory and practice. MAPP students train with changemakers to become changemakers, with opportunities to explore the vast and rapidly evolving field of animal protection policy and to tailor scholarly and experiential projects to specific areas of interest within the field. We are student-centered and animal-centered."

—**DELCIANNA WINDERS,** Associate Professor of Law; Director, Animal Law and Policy Institute

Master of Arts in Restorative Justice (MARJ)

Home of the National Center on Restorative Justice

With the current criminal justice system ethically and financially untenable, we need a new way to think about and respond to harm, conflict, and crime. By bringing together students committed to developing new ways of thinking with national and international restorative justice leaders, VLGS educates justice reformers.

Students specializing in restorative justice will combine traditional law courses with restorative justice courses, simulations, and experiential learning opportunities.

Graduates are ready to act as forceful, articulate agents for change in law and restorative justice. As criminal justice evolves, using more restorative practices, all lawyers should understand that there are many ways to view conflict and conflict avoidance.

EMPLOYERS OF FORMER STUDENTS INCLUDE:

- Restorative Justice Centers
- Attorney General Offices
- Sentencing Mitigation Specialists
- Youth/Adult Diversion Programs
- California Certified Organic Farmers
- Police Reform
- Prison Reform and Education
- K–12 Education
- Higher Education
- Research Coordinators
- State Legislature
- Department of Corrections
- Innocence Project
- Social Work
- Domestic/Sexual Violence Agencies
- Community Development/Organizing

Restorative justice courses may include:

- Restorative Justice Theory and Practice
- Origins, Evolution, and Critical Issues in Restorative Justice
- Adversity, Trauma, and Victimization
- Criminal Law
- New Approaches to Domestic and Sexual Violence
- Restorative Justice in Educational Institutions
- Ethics and Restorative Justice
- Restorative Justice in Indigenous Communities
- Clemency, Pardon, and Expungement
- Global Restorative Justice
- Juvenile Justice
- Peacemaking Courts
- Race, Crimes, and Restorative Justice
- Police Use of Force

"When you are invested in the people you live and work with, you treat them differently and value their opinions and wisdom. If we want to make changes in society, and fix mechanisms that we know are broken—especially in our delivery of "justice"—we need to value all people and offer those who have been harmed or marginalized by our current systems true support and opportunity. We work to create positive change for everyone's tomorrow."

—STEPHANIE CLARK, Director, Center for Justice Reform

Catalysts for change

Vermont Law and Graduate School encourages—and empowers—students to dream big. It welcomes and shares passions for social justice, the environment, food equity, criminal justice reform, the fair treatment of animals, and so much more.

At VLGS, realism and idealism collide through data and humanity.

The school community is the facilitator, driving change and, through innovative academic programs, sets the stage to bring together students and faculty who will positively transform the world around them.

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IDEALISTS.
REALISTS.
CATALYSTS FOR CHANGE.

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