



NEWSLETTER

May 6, 2014 | Issue III

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Wellesley students cheering on runners in the Boston Marathon, April 21, 2014. Source: twitter.com

Presidents' Letter

May marks an end to the academic year, but ushers in many beginnings! Please join W3A, WAAD, WLAN & WCAB (sponsored by Partnerships for Diversity and Inclusion) on the event lawn between the Lulu and Alumnae Hall to celebrate the class of 2014 and welcome them to the alumnae network on Tuesday, May 20th from 6 - 8:30pm, while mingling with other great SIGs; RSVP [here](#). Graduation also means an upcoming [Reunion](#) and W3A is excited to greet and connect with returning alums on June 7th in TZE house from 3:30 - 4:30pm with a special reception.

Our third newsletter recaps our successful W3A programming launch in April. May is also national [Asian-Pacific American Heritage Month](#), so check in your communities to see if there are activities taking place. The next round of W3A regional events are currently being planned for July, and please contact our [programming team](#) with any ideas or comments for future W3A events. A special event email will go out in June, and be sure to save the dates!

Yours,
Connie Yee '11 and Jessica Chin '11
W3A Co-Presidents



Stay Connected with W3A

Send us an email if you have any questions, comments, or feedback at wellesley3A@gmail.com.

We would love to hear from you!

You can also check us out online:



[W3A Wellesley Asian Alumnae Alliance](#)



[Wellesley Asian Alumnae Alliance \(W3A\)](#)



[Wellesley College Website](#)

We want to make sure we keep you connected to W3A no matter where you are. Please be sure to keep your contact information with the College current. You can call 1-800-339-5233 or email updates@alum.wellesley.edu with any changes.

Do you have suggestions for us for future events? Do you want to get involved with planning an event? Email us at W3Aprograms@gmail.com.

Events Recap



Alums at W3A events in Boston (left) and Washington D.C. (right), April 2014. Send us pictures from your alum meet-ups at W3Aprograms@gmail.com.

W3A members across the country had the pleasure of meeting in person for the very first time this April! Five U.S. cities hosted social hours during the month to give local alumnae the opportunity to get together. Old and new friends - and even some current students - came out to Meadhall in [Boston](#), Kristalbelli in [New York](#), Vapiano in [Washington D.C.](#), Three Dots and a Dash in [Chicago](#), and Palomino in [San Francisco](#). Alums were happy to connect in a relaxed, casual setting and look forward to future opportunities to share experiences through networking and community building and service activities.

Thanks to our regional reps for their planning and hard work: [Christine Lee & Belle Pang](#) (Boston), [Christine Usmen](#) (Chicago), [Scarlett Kim & Esther Im](#) (NYC), [Amy Chen & Rachel Tau](#) (San Francisco), [Gail Kan](#) (Washington D.C.).

The next series of events will be held in July, so please keep an eye out on [Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#) for more information about what is going on in your city. W3A will also send out targeted emails to alums with region-specific event information.

Regional Representatives - The Programming team is looking for regional representatives to help coordinate local events! If you're interested in getting involved with organizing and running events in your city, please apply here. If you have any questions about the position, email [Leah Driska](mailto:Leah.Driska).

Alumna Spotlight

BINA SHAH '93

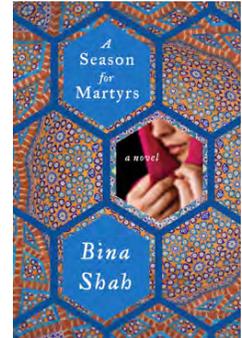
*The Alumna Spotlight solely represents the views of the alumna interviewed.
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Bina Shah is a writer of English fiction and a journalist living in Karachi, Pakistan. She is the author of four novels and two collections of short stories. She is a regular columnist for the Dawn and the Express Tribune, Pakistan's major English-language newspapers, and has also contributed to international newspapers The Guardian, The Independent, and the International Herald Tribune and international journals Granta.com, Wasafiri and Critical Muslim. Bina was born in Karachi, Pakistan and was raised in Charlottesville, Virginia, and Pakistan. Her official website is: <http://www.binashah.net/>.

Information about Bina's upcoming novel, *A Season For Martyrs*, can be found on the publisher's page here: <http://delphiniumbooks.com/seasonformartyrs.html>.

"Writing about this topic was deeply personal to me - I'm from Sindh and this is my heritage and history and my family has been involved in Sindh's politics for several generations. Then, the iconic figure of Benazir Bhutto as an educated, powerful Sindhi woman served as the book's guiding light, and she had not been written about in Pakistani fiction before, so I wanted to pay tribute to her in this novel as well." - Bina Shah (2014)



Please state your graduation year and your major and a minor if you had one and any awards you received at graduation.

I graduated in 1993 with a major in psychology. I graduated magna cum laude.

Was Wellesley your first choice and if so why or why not? If not, where did you want to attend college and why? Did you still feel this way when you graduated, why or why not?

Wellesley was a strange imposition on what I thought would be my university career. I was strongly influenced by my father who attended the University of Virginia. My parents offered that I could go to college in America if I agreed to attend UVA which would allow my parents' friends who lived in Charlottesville to keep an eye on me. Shortly, thereafter, I met Pakistani Wellesley alumnae, Spenta Kandawalla '69, who convinced me that I was perfect for Wellesley. I gained admission, was determined to attend, and was obsessed with what I considered my destiny calling. My parents relented only because it was a women's college and therefore "safer" without boys.

(Alumna Spotlight continued on next page)

Alumna Spotlight Continued



What do you remember most about Wellesley? Are there any vivid memories, interests/involvements/goals or much-told stories, you could share with us about your experience as a Wellesley student and/or alumna? Later, how did those interests endure, grow, change, etc.?

I grew up in a restrictive environment in Karachi, where girls are not given the freedom that their male counterparts enjoy. Wellesley became my sanctioned haven to liberally think, move, travel, exhale and the campus was literally an alchemist's laboratory where I changed from a lackluster metal into gold. This is the best metaphor I can think of for my profound and multi-layered transformation during my tenure at Wellesley.

What are some, if any, academic, intellectual, social, etc. experiences cultivated at Wellesley that you have taken with you in your life and others that you have dismissed?

The two strongest intellectual/life lessons I took from Wellesley were the importance of feminism and my love for psychology. Psychology was not just a discipline but was/is a way of understanding the "what" and "why" of human behavior and is the best grounding for a writer. Psychology also inculcated a great love for humanity and all its quirks and foibles. Even the terrible things that people do to one another – particularly in Pakistan, where we've been socially, politically and spiritually inundated in the blowback from the War on Terror for years now – don't leave me dumbfounded. There's always a psychological rationale that can help me reveal motivations and actions.

Feminism has informed my work in Pakistan from when I graduated Wellesley. I worked as an IT journalist and was the only woman in a room full of men discussing technology. I was not intimidated because of my firm belief in gender equality and that the realm of any experience and expertise is gender-blind I and therefore within my grasp. Now, I write extensively about women's rights and issues that relate to girls and women. In many ways, my work awakens my reader and society about aspects of their lives they have accepted blindly while living in a patriarchal society. Wellesley awakened me to the world of human rights and gave me the lens and language to broadly understand my personal history as a girl who had and continues to live in a deeply chauvinistic culture where my life had been restricted unfairly based solely on my gender.

(Alumna Spotlight continued on next page)

Alumna Spotlight Continued

Reflecting on your personal/professional decisions, could you talk about the paths you've taken? And the work that you do that you find meaningful?

Writing and journalism beckoned me even while at Wellesley. I won several writing prizes for my work in Writing 100, a journalism-focused class in my first year and a poetry seminar with Terry Tyler in my senior year. However, I was too preoccupied with having a career in psychology and decided to pursue a master's in education in the hopes that I could be a school psychologist. It wasn't until I returned to Pakistan and was immersed in journalism that I made it my life's work.

What are some noteworthy successes and challenges you've experienced (e.g., home, school, work, community)? And, what are some critical skills/insights you've gained in the process of navigating these situations?

Getting published as a writer from Pakistan, without an MFA degree, high profile connections or formal journalism training had been challenging. However, I'm proud of my accomplishments including my U.S. debut novel coming out in November and a regular column in the International New York Times. For ten years, I felt isolated writing in Pakistani press and wondering if anyone in the wider world was interested in my work, thoughts or voice. The Internet and social media have been critical tools in successfully making vital connections, elevating my public profile and reaching readers, publishers and editors world-wide.

What are some of your intellectual and practical interests outside of your profession? What intrigues you, what kinds of knowledge have you pursued for its own sake or its practical implications, what do you wish you knew more about?

I'm deeply interested in the world of cultural diplomacy as a subset of public diplomacy. My participation in international fellowships and residencies has demonstrated that fine and literary arts can be powerful vehicles for linking disparate cultures and people. The goal of public diplomacy and respectable relations between countries is part of international relations and foreign policy. I've been interested in political and global dynamics due to my father's doctoral studies in the field and because he served as a minister for the government of Pakistan in the 80s and 90s.

(Alumna Spotlight continued on next page)



Alumna Spotlight Continued

What take-away lesson/advice would you give our alumnae?

Listen to everyone’s advice, and don’t dismiss it out of hand because it comes from a place of experience and concern. Don’t be in a hurry to settle down in one place or with one person or in one field, because things change dramatically after you graduate. Don’t feel guilty about your choices. Be grateful you have choices unlike many women and girls in the world.

To quote from Whitman:

"O me, O life of the questions of these recurring,
Of the endless trains of the faithless,
Of cities filled with the foolish.
What good amid these, O me, O life?"

Answer

That you are here. That life exists and identity,
That the powerful play goes on, and you may contribute a verse."

What will your verse be or what has it been?

If you are interested in being interviewed for an Alumna Spotlight or would like to nominate someone, please email [Afshan Bokhari and Vickie Nam at W3Aalumnaspotlight@gmail.com](mailto:Afshan.Bokhari@W3Aalumnaspotlight@gmail.com).

*Please note: The editors of the W3A bios will make every attempt to include all submitted bios, however, they cannot guarantee inclusion.

Campus Corner

[WAAM-SLAM](#) (Wellesley Asian Action Movement - Sisters Leading Action for Multiculturalism) began in February 2001 when students gathered to protest the denial of tenure to Professor Elena Creef. The movement culminated in the creation of two full-time Advisors to [Students of Asian Descent](#) and [Latina Students](#) respectively. It also initiated conversations that kicked-off a Korean language program, a [South Asian Studies program](#), and continued commitment towards an [Asian American Studies Minor](#) (est. 2013).

[WAAM-SLAM 2](#) is a recent on-campus student movement that has proposed a Transformative Justice and Education Bill (April 2014). For more information, please contact students directly at waamslam2@gmail.com.



Students participating in WAAM-SLAM II march in protest.
Photo credit: Xueying Chen '16, Co-Editor in Chief, [Wellesley News](#)



Wellesley students celebrate Marathon Monday by cheering on runners in the Boston Marathon.
Source: <http://www.wellesley.edu/news/2014/4/node/43452>

Recipe Roundup

How to Make Fish Fragrance Eggplant

Fish fragrance style is a common way to cook dishes. The fish fragrance eggplant dish is a well-liked vegetarian dish with a savory taste.

Ingredients

- 1 .5 pound Asian eggplant (approximately 2 large eggplants)
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon broad bean paste (lian how brand)
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 1 teaspoon light soy sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Cooking oil

Materials

- Large cooking pot
- Stir fry pan



Image source: <http://www.seasaltwithfood.com/2009/04/fish-fragrant-eggplant.html>

Method One

1. Fill the pot with cooking oil and heat until the oil boils (slight steaming).
2. Wash and dry the eggplant so there is no water. Cut lengthwise into pieces roughly half inch thick.
3. Once the oil is boiling, put the eggplant in the oil and allow the eggplant to cook until the eggplant turn color (slightly brown). Be careful when putting them in, do not put too many in at once because otherwise the oil will overflow.
4. When the eggplant have all turned color and floated to the surface, take them out and dry them of the oil.
5. If you want to add meat, stir fry the meat now, heat the pan with some oil and garlic.
6. Stir fry the eggplant while adding the seasoning.

Method Two

1. Stir fry the eggplants while adding seasoning.
2. Make sure both sides are brown to golden yellow before done.
3. If want to make softer, add water to the pan and cover it for 2-3 minutes.

Method Three

1. Steam for 15 minutes

Thanks to **Hoi-fei Mok** '10 for this family recipe!

Have a great recipe you want to share? Send an email to Rachel Shuen '12 at rshuen@wellesley.edu.