

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES UPDATE

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President Ryken visited Israel in June 2015 making stops at the archaeological dig site studied by Wheaton professors and students at Ashkelon, and the new site to be developed at Tel Shimron made possible by a grant from the [Museum of the Bible](#). Here Dr. Ryken pauses to view the work of Zack Smiley '16, who is learning that every rock and bit of dust can yield stories of the people who lived millennia ago.

*photo by Josh Ryken '15*

## Strategic Priorities

Globalize a Wheaton Education

## Deepen Ethnic Diversity

Promote Liberal Arts Excellence

Enhance Music and the Performing Arts

## Complementary Priorities

Refresh Wheaton's Mission Statement  
Completed August '13

Nurture Vibrant Christian Community

Extend Affordability

Strengthen Graduate Education

## Deepen Ethnic Diversity

A cohort of six BRIDGE program graduates will join Wheaton's freshman class of 2019, using resources available in financial aid as well as newly created BRIDGE scholarships. One of the students also received the Nieves Multicultural Scholarship. These three men and three women from ethnically diverse backgrounds plan to pursue majors including Communications, Pre-Med, Applied Health Science, Sociology, Spanish, and Business & Economics. BRIDGE Coordinator Alaina Berg says, "I look forward to these students developing their leadership capacity by engaging in the classroom and extracurricular activities."

## Promote Liberal Arts Excellence

For more than a decade archaeological excavations at Ashkelon, home to the biblical Philistines, have given Wheaton students the opportunity to uncover the ancient past using scientific technology. Directed by Wheaton Professor Daniel Master along with Lawrence E. Stager of Harvard University, the project demonstrates how interdisciplinary thinking contributes to the study of history. Now Professor Master is preparing for a new dig funded by a \$4M grant from the Museum of the Bible that will greatly enhance the new Christ at the Core curriculum. Professor Master says, "This gift will allow Wheaton's archaeology program to remain at the forefront of Biblical Archaeology and provide Wheaton students with an unmatched cross-cultural global learning experience."

## Enhance Music and the Performing Arts

The Wigmore Hall/Kohn Foundation annually identifies top musicians from around the world for an international song competition. Two of the three Americans among twenty-four world singers selected for the 2015 contest are from Wheaton College. Baritones Nathaniel Olson '11 and Will Liverman '12 and their Conservatory-trained pianists Jonathan King '10 and Matthew Gemmill '06, will perform in London's Wigmore Hall the first week in September. You can follow them [here](#).

## Strengthen Graduate Education

Exceptional international Christian leaders continue to enroll in the Graduate School. This fall's incoming class includes three Billy Graham Center Scholars from Mongolia, Russia, and India. Bolortuya Damdinjav, the YWAM coordinator for Mongolia who represented her country at Lausanne Congress in 2011, will focus on Intercultural Studies. Evgeniya Fazletdinova served as regional coordinator for the International Fellowship of Evangelical Students in her native Novosibirsk, Russia. She will study Clinical Mental Health Counseling, as will Jemima Wesley Williams from India, a counselor and teacher for women, youth, and addicts.

