Unearthing a compelling tale of secret racial identity

Jennifer Greenstein Altman

For three decades, history professor Martha Sandweiss had wondered about a little-noticed detail in the life of Clarence King, a well-known figure in the history of the American West, a 19th-century geologist and author, who was a leading surveyor who mapped the West after the Civil War.

Back in graduate school, Sandweiss had read a 500-page biography of King that devoted just five pages to a secret, 13-year relationship that King, who was white, had with a black woman.

“Thirteen years, five pages? It just didn’t seem right to me,” said Sandweiss, a historian of the American West who joined the Princeton faculty last year.

A few years ago, Sandweiss decided it was time to investigate. Poring through census documents that were available online, she was able to discover in a matter of minutes that King, who was blond and blue-eyed, had been leading a double life as a white man passing as a black man.

“If I uncovered that, I knew I had to try to unravel the story,” she said.

The result is “Passing Strange,” history professor Martha Sandweiss uncovers the secret double life of Clarence King, a well-known figure in the history of the American West. King, who was white, with blond hair and blue eyes, had been passing as a black man to be with the woman he loved, Ada Copeland, a former slave.

In her book “Passing Strange,” history professor Martha Sandweiss uncovers the secret double life of Clarence King, a well-known figure in the history of the American West. King, who was white, with blond hair and blue eyes, had been passing as a black man to be with the woman he loved, Ada Copeland, a former slave.

the secret double

published earlier this year by The Penguin Press.

The book uncovers a secret double life — King, a well-regarded explorer from a prominent Newport, R.I., family, also lived as James Todd, who professed to be a Pullman porter and steelworker. At gentleman's clubs and elite residential hotels in New York City, he was the wry white scientist and author who was called “the best and brightest of his generation” by Secretary of State John Hay. At 48 N. Prince St. in Flushing, Queens, he was the black common-law husband of Ada Copeland, who had been born into slavery in Georgia during the Civil War, and the father of their five children.

Why did King live this way? The only logical explanation, according to Sandweiss, is that he was in love.

“Once I uncovered that, I knew I had to try to unravel the story,” she said.

The result is “Passing Strange: A Gilded Age Tale of Love and Deception Across the Color Line,” a biography of the secret double life of Clarence King, a well-known figure in the history of the American West. King, who was white, with blond hair and blue eyes, had been passing as a black man to be with the woman he loved, Ada Copeland, a former slave.

In her book “Passing Strange,” history professor Martha Sandweiss uncovers the secret double life of Clarence King, a well-known figure in the history of the American West. King, who was white, with blond hair and blue eyes, had been passing as a black man to be with the woman he loved, Ada Copeland, a former slave.

Continued on page 6

Life’s wisdom in unlikely places

Film highlights janitor’s efforts to help others

Emily Aronsen

From 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each weekday, Josue Lajeunesse is one of the University’s 220 Building Services janitors. But off campus, Lajeunesse is a taxi driver, a father, a philanthropist, a community organizer and now the subject of a documentary film.

A native of Haiti who has worked at Princeton for 15 years, Lajeunesse is featured in the documentary “The Philosopher Kings,” which tells the stories of eight janitors at universities across the country. In search of wisdom in unlikely places, the film highlights the everyday triumphs and tragedies of staff whose hard work is often done when no one is looking.

The cameras follow Lajeunesse’s work as a lead janitor in Whitman College and other dormitories, and his travels to Haiti as he helps bring clean drinking water to his family’s village.

The film recently was screened at Princeton as part of a nationwide tour of the documentary on college campuses and at film festivals.

“Some people close their eyes to what’s going on in front of them,” Lajeunesse said of the poverty in his homeland. “But if God gave me the knowledge and the view to see these things, then I need to go back and help those people who cannot help themselves.”

Lajeunesse grew up in Haiti as the youngest of four children. His mother passed away when he was a young boy and he grew up close to his father, a farmer. Lajeunesse served in the military in Haiti and moved to the United States in 1989, ending up in the Princeton area because a friend from Haiti was living here.

Through the documentary, Lajeunesse puts a face to the work ethic, passion and perseverance shared by many of the University’s janitorial staff, said Building Services director Jon Baer. Baer noted janitors such as Natasha Bowman, who has worked at the University for 21 years and has been a surrogate parent to some of the students living in the dorms she cleans, or Mohamed Flites, an amateur photographer and historian who immi-

Continued on page 6
Holiday outreach initiatives set

The Princeton University Bulletin is distributed free to faculty, staff and students. University employees can manage their delivery options at www.princeton.edu/bulletin/submitevents. A complete publication schedule can be found at www.princeton.edu/bulletin/. The deadline for the next issue, which covers Feb. 14, is Jan. 22.

Because the Bulletin does not publish during University breaks and exam weeks, this issue covers Dec. 14 through Jan. 31. The deadline for the next issue, which covers Feb. 14, is Jan. 22.

In general, the copy deadline for each issue is the Friday 10 days in advance of the Monday cover date. A complete publication schedule can be found at www.princeton.edu/bulletin/.

To submit events for consideration, go to www.princeton.edu/main/news/share/submitevents/.

Teaching award nominations sought

The Princeton University Bulletin (Dec. 14) The Trustees of Princeton University is published weekly in September, October, February, March, April and May, and monthly in November, December, and June. This frequency coincides with the academic year and excludes University breaks and exam weeks. The Bulletin is published by the University Communications, 22 Chambers St., Suite 201, Princeton, NJ 08542. A total of 15 issues will be published between September 2009 and June 2010. A publication schedule can be found at www.princeton.edu/bulletin/ by e-mailing <bulletin@princeton.edu> or contacting Erin Metro at 258-5144 or <emetro@princeton.edu>.

To submit events for consideration, go to www.princeton.edu/main/news/share/submitevents/.

In compliance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and other federal, state and local laws, Princeton University does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, national or ethnic origin, disability, or status as a disabled or handicapped person in any of its employment practices, in its educational programs or activities, or in any of its admissions or financial aid programs, or in any other aspect of its educational programs or activities. The term “person” includes institutions and individuals associated with Princeton University. Princeton University does not discriminate on the basis of sex in its educational programs or activities. Questions or concerns regarding Title IX, Section 504 or other aspects of Princeton’s equal opportunity or affirmative action regulations and policies should be directed to the Office of the Vice President for Institutional Equity and Diversity, Princeton University, 20 Nassau Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544 or (609) 258-6280.

Teaching award nominations sought

The Office of the Dean of the Faculty invites members of the University community to submit letters of nomination for the 2010 President’s Award for Distinguished Teaching. The awards, presented annually at Commencement exercises, are intended to recognize excellence in undergraduate and graduate teaching by Princeton faculty members. All current full, associate and assistant professors, senior lecturers and lecturers who have served at least half time for three or more years are eligible for nomination.

Letters of nomination should be sent by Tuesday, Feb. 9, to the Office of the Dean of the Faculty, 9 Nassau Hall.

www.princeton.edu/bulletin

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Staff obituaries

Current employees

By the numbers

According to the recently released Sustainability Report 2009, the University has made significant progress toward ambitious goals in the areas of greenhouse gas emissions reduction, resource conservation, and research, education and civic engagement. For example:

- 100 percent of campus landscape trimmings are composted and reused on site.
- 100 percent of residence halls have been retrofitted with low-flow water fixtures with an estimated water use decrease of 25 percent.
- There has been more than a 150 percent increase in students receiving environmental studies certificates since 2002. Among a broad pool of environmental courses, offerings, more than 50 address sustainability.
- Forty-plus summer sustainability internships were offered to students locally and internationally in 2009.

Details will be announced on the Community and Regional Affairs website.

Trustees approve five promotions

The Board of Trustees has approved the promotions of five faculty members:

- The faculty members and their departments, by the academic rank to which they are being promoted:
  - Professor — Graham Burnett, history; Michael Gordin, molecular biology, effective Sept. 1, 2009.
  - Associate professor (with continuing tenure) — Brad Bazzel, computer science, effective Feb. 1, 2010.
  - Assistant professor (for a three-year term) — Noriko Manabe, music, effective Sept. 1, 2009.

Trustee named to endowed chair

James Trussell has been named the Charles and Marie Robertson Professor of Public and Professional Affairs and professor of economics and public affairs, effective Sept. 1, 2009.

TRUSTEES APPROVE FIVE PROMOTIONS

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Ominsky named public safety director

Paul Ominsky, director of public safety at Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and Hampshire College, has been named director of public safety at Princeton. Ominsky, whose career in campus safety spans 35 years, will join the University on Jan. 25. He will replace Steven Healy, who left Princeton on June 30 to pursue a business opportunity after serving the University for six years as director of public safety.

The director of public safety at Mount Holyoke since 1992, Ominsky assumed the director positions at Smith and Hampshire in 2003 and 2008, respectively, as part of a region- alized policing initiative. Ominsky has been responsible for the day-to-day and strategic operations of more than 100 full- and part-time staff.

"Paul Ominsky is an outstanding public safety director with over 20 years of leadership experience on a variety of college and university campuses," said Trey Williams, assistant vice president for safety and administrative planning, to whom Ominsky will report. "His current staff, administrative colleagues and municipal partners unite to give priority and sound judgment, as well as his visionary leadership, dedication to team building and professional development, the unique enforcement expertise and deep caring for the campus community. I am very much looking forward to working with him."

With undergraduate and graduate degrees in electrical engineering from the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Ominsky has experience in campus public safety that draws from a career spent on five university and college campuses, including departments that operate as municipal police forces and unarmed sworn departments.

He served at the University of Massachu setts in the beginning of his career, progressing from institution security officer to acting lieutenant and station commander before departing to become director of public safety at Westfield State College, a position he held for seven years before assuming the directorship at Mount Holyoke.

"I'm excited and humbled to be appointed acting director of public safety at Princeton University," Ominsky said. "For me, public safety work at Princeton is really about collaboration. I'm looking forward to opportunities to talk to faculty, staff and students about the safety and security issues that concern them."

Among his accomplishments noted by a search committee of senior administrators, Ominsky took on the role of creating and implementing a proactive community initiative for the communities he serves. He also combined and restructured public safety departments of the three colleges he heads in Pioneer Valley College Consortium; central administrative responsibilities. More information can be found at <www.princeton.edu/hr/learning/addserv/griffin>. Nominations should be sent to the President's Achievement Award Selection Committee, Office of Human Resources, 1 New South, or e-mailed to Zia Bartley at <zbartley@princeton.edu>.

Award winners will receive a $2,000 award and a framed certificate of achievement presented by President Tilghman. More information can be found at <www.princeton.edu/hr/practice/recognition/pa>. The Griffin Award was established to provide an opportunity for profes sional development for vice presidents, deans and administrators whose experience and potential are indicative of leadership and continuing contribution to the University. The award was endowed to honor Donald Griffin '58, 1963, Princeton's longtime secretary and general secretary of Princeton University Council. Awards are given annually to one employee in administrative grades 1-5 and one employee in administrative grades 6-10. To be eligible, nominee must have held administrative or managerial positions for the past three years at the University.

An immediate or senior manager can recommend a colleague for the nomination to the appropriate vice president, dean, or academic chair or director. A vice president, dean, or academic chair or director can submit the nomination.

Nominations should be sent to the Donald Griffin '33 Management Award Selection Committee, Office of the President, Rm. 232, 1 New South, or e-mailed to Maureen Imbrenda at <mimbrenda@princeton.edu>. The selection committee will award one winner of up to $2,500 to participate in professional activities scheduled within the next 18 months to further their perspectives, renew motivation and/or enhance skills applicable to their current responsibilities. More information can be found at <www.princeton.edu/hr/learning/addserv/griffin>. Ominsky named public safety director

More news on the Web

Visit the News at Princeton Web page at <www.princeton.edu/main/news> for other recent stories, including the following:

• Princeton senior Henry Barmeier has been awarded a Rhodes Scholarship for graduate study at the University of Oxford, one of 2 American college students who won the prestigious fellowship. At Oxford, Barmeier plans to continue his study of issues related to sustainable, locally grown organic food, with the goal of devising ways to localize food policymaking and change incentives to encourage conservation of fossil fuel, water and other resources.

• Princeton senior Jessica Lanney, who is majoring in the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs and pursuing a certificate in urban studies, is one of 35 American college students awarded 2010 Marshall Scholarships. Lanney plans to use her award to earn two master's degrees—one in social policy and planning and the second in urban and regional planning studies—at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

• An international team of scientists that includes an astronomer from Princeton has made the first direct observation of a planet-like object orbiting a sun similar to the sun. The finding marks the first discovery made with the world's newest planet-hunting instrument on the Hawaii-based Subaru Telescope and is the first fruit of a novel research collaboration announced by the University in January.

• Princeton alumna Jeff Bezos, the founder and chief executive officer of Amazon.com, has been selected as the speaker for the 2010 Baccalaureate ceremony Sunday, May 30, in the University Chapel. Bezos graduated with highest honors and Phi Beta Kappa in electrical engineering and computer science from Princeton in 1986. He founded Amazon.com, now the leading online retailer, in 1994.

• A new alumna-led enterprise will involve black graduates more deeply in the life of Princeton as leaders, volunteers and donors. Efforts are now under way with "Connect: A Black Alumni Leadership Initiative" that officially kicked off at an October conference, "Coming Back and Moving Forward," when some 650 black alumni returned to campus to share experiences and plan for progress at the University. Goals for the initiative include raising $4 million, expanding volunteer opportunities, learning more about prospective donors, and partnering with the Alumni Association and Association of Black Princeton Alumni to find fresh approaches to engaging volunteers and donors.

Staff award nominations due Jan. 11

Nominations for the 2009-10 President's Achievement Award and the Donald Griffin '33 Management Award will be accepted through 5 p.m. on Monday, Jan. 11. Award winners will be recognized at the Staff Recognition Luncheon on Wednesday, Jan. 27.

The President's Achievement Award was established in 1997 to annually recognize five individuals with five or more years of service whose dedication, excellent work and special efforts have contributed significantly to the success of their departments and the University. Four employees are selected by their peers and a related staff, grades 1-6, and from the biweekly A and B staff, along with one employee from the administrative and related staff, grades 7-8. Any member of the staff, faculty or student body, including peers and supervisors, can recommend an employee for nomination to the staff members of the president's dean, or academic chair or director. Only a vice president, dean, or academic chair or director can submit the nomination.

Nominations should be sent to the President's Achievement Award Selection Committee, Office of Human Resources, 1 New South, or e-mailed to Zia Bartley at <zbartley@princeton.edu>.

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An immediate or senior manager can recommend a colleague for the nomination to the appropriate vice president, dean, or academic chair or director. A vice president, dean, or academic chair or director can submit the nomination.

Nominations should be sent to the Donald Griffin '33 Management Award Selection Committee, Office of the President, Rm. 232, 1 New South, or e-mailed to Maureen Imbrenda at <mimbrenda@princeton.edu>. The selection committee will award one winner of up to $2,500 to participate in professional activities scheduled within the next 18 months to further their perspectives, renew motivation and/or enhance skills applicable to their current responsibilities. More information can be found at <www.princeton.edu/hr/learning/addserv/griffin>.
Visualisation Lab helps make data come alive

KIYTA MACPHERSON

If patterns of globalization over decades could be plotted on a world map, what might they look like and what deeper insights might they reveal, wondered Miguel Centeno. Jeanne Altman and Catherine Markham, both of whom have had to understand how groups of baboons in the Amboseli basin of East Africa were coping with their changing environment.

John Haldon wanted to analyze the ingenuity of a new visualisation system used to chart geographical changes over centuries. The caliphates are traditional Islamic forms of government that existed for several centuries. The caliphates were regions of traditional Arabic, Persian, and Andalusi culture and language.

Centeno is a professor of sociology and international affairs. Altman is a professor of ecology and evolutionary biology, and Markham is a graduate student in the department of history and Heleneu studies. Kreike is an associate professor of history, and Bottelier is a professor of astronomical sciences. They may hail from different departments and disciplines, but they have discovered a common interest in visualisation as a cutting-edge research tool, and they have sought out the same new place on campus in which to launch their queries.

The Visualization Laboratory, created by the Princeton Institute for Computational Science and Engineering (PICSciE), opened its doors in Lewis Library in September.

“We hope this will be a facility that will be used by the entire campus community, by people from all fields, including arts, humanities, social sciences and other sciences,” said Jeremiah Kreike.

“Scientific visualization is an incredible powerful tool because it allows us to represent data visually and to gain understanding and insight,” said Jeroen Tromp, the Blair Professor of Geology and the director of PICSciE. “By generating the center to perfect predictions on how the Earth’s crust — and the buildings above it — might be adversely affected during an earthquake. Through the center, he is building models that simulate what happens to a landscape in the aftermath of an earthquake. By comparing his simulations to real transfers, he can project the effects of different models.”

Centeno is banking on visualisation as a cutting-edge research tool, and he has sought out the same new place on campus in which to launch their queries.

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“The Visualization Laboratory, created by the Princeton Institute for Computational Science and Engineering (PICSciE), opened its doors in Lewis Library in September. “We hope this will be a facility that will be used by the entire campus community, by people from all fields, including arts, humanities, social sciences and other sciences,” said Jeremiah Kreike. As part of his research, Kreike said. As part of his research, Markham has been able to electronically track and view multiple social groups of baboons for 600 days in the savannah habitat of Amboseli, Kenya. Their work can be seen at <www.princeton.edu/~baboon> and <www.princeton.edu/~smartucker/home.html>.

Haldon is exploring the movement of armies over pre-modern landscapes so he can analyze the historical impact of human populations on their environment. He also is working closely with the center’s staff on a variety of projects as well as requests from the University community. Many of these requests come from outside the university as well, as requests from the University community.

“The Visualization Laboratory, created by the Princeton Institute for Computational Science and Engineering (PICSciE), opened its doors in Lewis Library in September.”

Continued on page 8

The Visualization Laboratory, created by the Princeton Institute for Computational Science and Engineering (PICSciE), opened its doors in Lewis Library in September. Some of its founders are (from left): Jeroen Tromp, the Blair Professor of Geology and the director of PICSciE; Florence Furet-Chehroudbine, in charge of the Department of Infrastructure for Groundbreaking Research in Engineering and Science (TIGRESS); William Guthe, coordinator for geographic information systems and remote sensing; and Simon Su, a visualization analyst.

Kreike has found visualisation techniques priceless instruments for teaching. For his studies on baboons, Altman and Markham are grappling with the complexities of weather and climate. Short-term changes in the landscape, including dramatic shifts in daily temperatures and intense seasonal alterations of temperate climate intermixed with drought, occur against a backdrop of larger-scale geological changes that accumulate over decades in this area of Kenya.

Understanding how organisms adapt to these environmental and geographic changes is crucial for biological conservation, Altman said, because many parts of the world are now experiencing rapid climate and landscape changes. Alterations in behavior provide insights into population processes. Environmental change probably has been experienced by all organisms during their evolution, history, and is a critical tool in response to “Our goal is to document in detail the diverse responses of the Amboseli baboons to the environmental change they are experiencing.” Altman said.

Using computer models and a global positioning satellite, the scientists have been able to enter those locations into the geographic information system at the Visualization Lab, producing detailed maps showing movement patterns and terms of the animals. As a result, the researchers can view the entire Amboseli region with extreme clarity. Because the Amboseli baboon research is so extensive — the project dates back to the early 1960s — and is accessible through the Visualization Lab, researchers can interact with the data, test new patterns and run new analyses. Markham already has been able to electronically track and view multiple social groups of baboons for 600 days in the savannah habitat of Amboseli, Kenya. Their work can be seen at <www.princeton.edu/~baboon> and <www.princeton.edu/~smartucker/home.html>.

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Continued on page 8
**University to host King Day event**

Princeton will commemorate the legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. with its annual King Day celebration Monday, Jan. 18, in Richardson Auditorium of Alexander Hall. The event, which is free and open to the public, will start with musical selections at 1 p.m.

Tricia Rose, a scholar of modern African American culture and chair of the Department of Africana Studies at Brown University, will deliver the keynote address.

For more information visit <www.princeton.edu/mlk>

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**Frist ’Winterval’ rings in season**

Princeton students, faculty, staff and visitors are invited to attend the Frist Campus Center Winterival, a celebration of the upcoming winter season, from 3 to 5 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 16. The annual festival will feature a live cooking demonstration, a dessert buffet, a hot chocolate bar, cookie and candy house decorating, mug and candy bowl painting and a screening of “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.”

Frist also is a collection site for donations of nonperishable food and personal hygiene items for the Mercer Street Friends Food Bank through Friday, Dec. 18.

Winterival is sponsored by the Frist center, Dining Services, the Davis International Center and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Center.

For more information visit <www.princeton.edu/arts>
Sandweiss
Continued from page 1

I could’ve learned in any other class,” said Leopold. “Professor Sandweiss challenges us to think critically about our sources, especially primary sources, and has taught us never to assume that what we read and what we see is the truth. She also has taught us how to analyze sources other than writing, such as photos, engravings, maps and manuscript letters, things I would never have thought to include in my research otherwise.”

Elizabeth Parsons signed up for the class because she was eager to learn more about primary-source research. “She has gotten the opportunity to see the wealth of resources that Princeton has,” she said. “Without a class like this, I could have easily gone through four years at Princeton never knowing about the truly priceless resources that Princeton has collected and acquired over the years. The class has enabled me to understand the ways in which history is so much more than what is covered in textbooks.”

Sandweiss joined the Princeton faculty soon after earning her Ph.D. from Amherst, where she had taught since 1989. Previously, she was director of the Mead Art Museum at Amherst and the curator of photography at the Amon Carter Museum at Amherst and the curator of photography at the Amon Carter Museum in Fort Worth, Texas. A graduate of Harvard University, she received her Ph.D. from Yale University.

Sandweiss’ research and teaching focus on 19th-century U.S. history. Her 2002 book “Print the Legend: Photography and the American West” won the Ray Allen Billington Prize from the Organization of American Historians for the best book in American frontier history. “Sandweiss’ courses will fill an enormous gap in the history department’s curriculum and, given her enthusiasm and command of her subject, will stimulate high levels of interest in the course,” said William Jordan, the chair of the history department and the Dayton-Stockton Professor of History. “She also has brought the department into collaboration with the Newberry Library in Chicago to further strengthen the resources that faculty and graduate students can call upon in their work, including in the history of Native Americans.”

Untangling a hidden life

The New York Times’ book critic Janet Maslin named “Passing Strange” one of the top 10 books of the year, calling it “a fine, mesmerizing account of one extremely secretive man … could encapsulate his country’s shifting ideas about race.” The film rights to the book have been optioned by HBO.

Born in 1842, Clarence King was raised in Newport by parents of old American stock and was educated at Yale University. He became famous in his 20s as the leader of the U.S. Geological Exploration of the Fortieth Parallel, which mapped the West. Later he was the first director of the U.S. Geological Survey, a close friend of historian Henry Adams and a much-admired dinner guest at society parties in New York.

At the age of 46, King married Ada Copeland, who was then working in New York as a children’s nurseman, in a religious ceremony at her aunt’s house. (Since there was no civil ceremony, it is considered a common-law marriage.) Ada, 19 years his junior, lived with their children in Brooklyn and later Queens, attributing her husband’s long absences to his job as a Pullman porter, a position held exclusively by black men. King kept his secret well hidden. Sandweiss never found a photo of the couple together or any photos of King with his children.

King’s ability to conceal a black wife and children who lived in the same city was only possible because of New York’s unique attributes, Sandweiss said. “New York had segregated neighborhoods and excellent public transportation,” she pointed out. King lived as a bachelor in all-white genteel social circles in Manhattan, and hopped on the streetcar when he wanted to visit his family in another borough. But the most amazing part of King’s story is that someone with fair hair and blue eyes was accepted as a black man. He managed it, Sandweiss said, because of the so-called “one-drop” laws passed in the South during Reconstruction, which declared that someone with one black man’s clubs in Manhattan, and hopped on the streetcar when he wanted to visit his family in another borough. But the most amazing part of King’s story is that someone with fair hair and blue eyes was accepted as a black man. 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Wisdom
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Through his hard work, Lajeunesse has been able to send money and supplies to bring purified water to his hometown of Laosure, where villagers once traveled to a nearby mountain for clean water.

“When I was a little boy, I asked my dad how can we do better and get clean water for our town,” Lajeunesse said. “Since then, this idea has always been in my mind.”

While in the military in Haiti, Lajeunesse said he was able to get the government to commit to bring water to his village, but the project never happened because of political unrest in the country. In addition to providing support to his family in Haiti since moving to the United States, Lajeunesse began sending funds to his brother in 2003 so the two could take on the water project themselves.

“Now they have a clean water source closer to the village and are now raising money to build cisterns so that each house can have water all the time. The film shows Laosure during a trip to Laosure in summer 2008 breaking down in tears as he speaks of the responsibilities that rest on his shoulders.

“Now where they have water, the town is green — there is life,” he said. “But the job is not finished.”

His connection to Haiti is why director Patrick Shen said he and producer Greg Bernick selected Lajeunesse for the documentary. The filmmakers contacted the University about researching possible candidates for the film, and Lajeunesse was one of a handful of juniors recommended by Barr.

“In speaking with Josue we instantly knew we had a very compelling individual on our hand. When we went with him to Haiti, we were blown away by the poor living conditions there but also so impressed with his


Still striving to do more for his home, Lajeunesse is now seeking help from doctors in Haiti and New Jersey to create a health clinic in the remote area of Laosure. Lajeunesse said he also hopes to raise funds to buy computers for the local school and to build solar panels to power the machines because the village does not have electricity.

Pride in her work

As a janitor in Blair and Buyers halls, Bowman expects the student residents to treat the buildings with as much respect and care as she does. “If I come in to work and clean the building, when I come back the next day I expect that you have tried to keep it clean. I tell the kids that if they want a maid, they have to pay for a maid,” Bowman said with a laugh.

“I’m the same way at home with my family.”

Browman grew up in Lawrence Township with her seven sisters and a brother, and she has two daughters, three sons and six grandchildren.

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A new pilot program allows University staff members to serve as volunteers with the Princeton Fire Department during work hours. ABOVE LEFT: Sandra Kearney (middle), an administrative assistant in grounds and services, is a participant in the program. ABOVE RIGHT: From left, Twylen Hicks, the University’s assistant fire marshal and a participant in the program, and Roy James, deputy chief of the Princeton Fire Department.

O n the morning of Oct. 7, the Princeton Fire Department sent out a call — firefighters were needed to respond to an alarm at 1 Afternoon Drive.

Four University employees — Bob Allen, Michael Christensen, Michael Kervan and Chris Machusak — rushed to a University building on Alexander Road to pull on their fire jackets, fire pants, boots and helmets. They climbed into a white SUV with “Princeton Fire Department” on its side and went to Fire Station 61, where they got into a fire truck and drove to the scene.

Working with members of the Princeton Fire Department, the four investigated a report of a malfunctioning air-conditioning unit at Borough Hall. Allen, a code analyst in design, was around the building while she cleaned. Thirty-four employees are participating in the program, which was approved by the University two years ago and now participates in the Princeton program. Here, she talks with, from left, Twylen Hicks, the University’s assistant fire marshal and a participant in the program, and Roy James, deputy chief of the Princeton Fire Department. ABOVE RIGHT: From left, Twylen Hicks, the University’s assistant fire marshal and a participant in the program, and Roy James, deputy chief of the Princeton Fire Department. Above left: Sandra Kearney, an administrative assistant in grounds and services, is a participant in the program. Above right: From left, Twylen Hicks, the University’s assistant fire marshal and a participant in the program, and Roy James, deputy chief of the Princeton Fire Department.

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Princeton runs in her family, with one sister also working in Building Services and two other sisters working in Dining Services.

“Nataasha is someone who tells it to you straight and will speak her mind,” Baer said. “She’s been a janitor here for about seven years. I enjoy seeing the students. She’s developed with students who live in the dorms. I have a lot of foreign students in my dorms, and I enjoy seeing the students from different backgrounds and nationalities,” she said. “There also have been a few special kids who I’ve looked after while they were here.”

Bowman recalled a particular student from the class of 2008 who she “got a feeling about” when seeing him around the building while she cleaned. The student admitted he was having trouble getting to an early morning class, so Bowman knocked on his door at 7 a.m. twice a week to make sure he woke up.

“T didn’t look at him, and I told him ‘Your parents sent you here to go to class, so I’m going to make sure you do,’” Bowman said.

She and the student remained friendly, and he included her name in the dedications for his senior thesis, according to Bowman.

As a fellow dormitory janitor, Bowman said she’s known Lajeunesse for many years but had no idea about his work in Haiti until “The Philosopher Kings” movie.

“I’m really proud of Josue for what he’s doing for his country,” Bowman said. “The janitors that work in the dorms all know each other, but we don’t sit down often and talk about our personal lives.”

Love of learning

Also an immigrant to the United States, Flites shares with Lajeunesse the experience of adjusting to life in a new country on his own. He’s worked at the University for about seven years, cleaning academic and administrative buildings from 4 p.m. to midnight.

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A new pilot program allows University staff members to serve as volunteers with the Princeton Fire Department during work hours. Above left: Sandra Kearney (middle), an administrative assistant in grounds and services, is a participant in the program. Above right: From left, Twylen Hicks, the University’s assistant fire marshal and a participant in the program, and Roy James, deputy chief of the Princeton Fire Department.
Opportunity for training

Princeton. "Getting people to volunteer for important fire protection tasks, such as gas leaks, car accidents, downed power wires and residential and commercial fire alarms.

Robert Talarick, the shop foreman, said, "It's a great opportunity to engage directly and intimately with art objects relevant to the subject matter that can assist the community in an emergency." He added, "I've always been interested in art and archaeology, and it's a great opportunity to be part of a team that can assist the community in an emergency." He also has organized the training and recruitment of students interested in fire protection.

Staff members in human resources and athletics have expressed interest in joining the program. The program also aims to include students interested in training to be firefighters. The application process for medical and background checks.

The exhibition "Life Objects: Rites of Passage in African Art" at the Princeton University Art Museum grew from Chika Okeke-Agulu's request for a show to go with his freshman seminar.