



# Perfect platform for airborne adventures



Kara Dyckman and Larissa Stouffer launched Leap Trapeze in 2011.

Like the thrill seekers who swing through the air on a trapeze for the first time, entrepreneurs Kara Dyckman and Larissa Stouffer know all about taking that daunting leap of faith. Along with their husbands, Shain Dyckman and Kaz Stouffer, they left the security of their jobs at resort giant Club Med to create Leap Trapeze.

"You have to go into it knowing that first year is going to be really tough. I remember thinking to myself, 'Did we do the right thing here?'" Larissa Stouffer recalls.

So far, the risk has paid off for their company, Leap Trapeze ([www.leaptrapeze.com](http://www.leaptrapeze.com)). The Athens, Ga.-based enterprise provides classes that teach clients everything they need to know to successfully traverse the flying trapeze. Their outdoor trapeze has carried their clients from one platform to the other since August 2011. Today, nearly all of their classes are sold out on a consistent basis.

For Kara Dyckman and Larissa Stouffer, there's a stark difference between the paths they took toward making the trapeze their life's work.

Dyckman, a native of Easton, Pa., first discovered the trapeze while on a vacation through Club Med. With a background in gymnastics, Dyckman naturally gravitated toward the trapeze.

"It's a huge adrenaline rush. The first time you do it, it's really exciting," Dyckman says. "It looks high, but it's not so high that you think you're going to get that big of a rush out of it, but you do."

A new outlet to satisfy her adrenaline cravings wasn't the only thing Dyckman found during her vacation. She met her future husband, Shain, a flying trapeze instructor, there as well.

Stouffer, a Montreal native, was introduced to her future husband and the trapeze through Club Med as well. However, the mere prospect of approaching the apparatus was terrifying for her. It wasn't until Kaz, the trapeze

instructor and her boyfriend at the time, gave Stouffer a serious ultimatum that she considered taking the leap.

"He told me that we couldn't keep dating unless I got up on the trapeze . . . It was always fun to watch, but I was too scared to go up there. (But) I was hooked after the first swing."

Both couples developed their skills and passion for the trapeze separately in subsequent years until they crossed paths at the Trapeze School New York Beantown in Boston.

After realizing the many commonalities and wealth of talent among them, a seed was planted in their minds about creating their own trapeze school. That seed took more than a year and a half of planning to come to fruition.



Kara Dyckman, second from left, and Larissa Stouffer are the co-owners of Leap Trapeze, along with Shain Dyckman, far left, and Kaz Stouffer.

Dyckman, having accepted a position teaching psychology at the University of Georgia, was determined to sell the Stouffer family on relocating from Boston to Athens. Dyckman highlighted the favorable weather in Athens for an outdoor trapeze and the prior existence of an aerial community there in her pitch. The Stouffers agreed and the couples embarked on their joint endeavor.

It's no surprise – given Dyckman's background in psychology – that she would highlight the beneficial mental aspect that comes from taking to the trapeze when describing why the activity is something everyone should try.

"As much as it is a physical activity, I think it's also a mental thing. It's the kind of thing that when you do it, you're not thinking about anything else," says Dyckman. "If you were having a bad day and you went there, it would be two hours where you were not thinking about anything else but trapeze."



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Well-versed in the power of poetry

Sweet on honeybees



## An intellect of seismic proportions



"People are afraid of earthquakes because they make them feel out of control," says seismologist Lucy Jones.

Whenever a significant tremor hits California, chances are it's Lucy Jones' calm and reassuring face you'll see on TV. Jones, a seismologist with the U.S. Geological Survey, sometimes called the "Earthquake Lady," attributes her name recognition to being a woman, something that early in her career was seen as an obstacle. Now, thanks to her calm demeanor and ability to connect with the public, Jones has helped advance the discussion of hazard preparedness.

"What we're really doing is a psychological first aid for the community. People are afraid of earthquakes because they make them feel out of control; the fear is disproportionate to the threat," says Jones, who holds a doctorate in geophysics.

A USGS seismologist since 1983, she currently serves as the science adviser for Risk Reduction for the Natural Hazards Mission of the U.S. Geological Survey, leading the long-term science planning for natural hazards research.

In high school, she recalls, girls were discouraged from showing interest in math or science. "At graduation, I was accepted to Brown

and Radcliff College for women because women didn't go to Harvard. My math teacher told me that I should go to Radcliff because there were better men to marry at Harvard; so, of course, I went to Brown!"

While there, she studied Chinese language and literature. Jones always felt a pull to the sciences and, drawn by the golden age of NASA space exploration, she considered a career in astrophysics. It wasn't until attending a breakfast with two geophysics professors that she considered geophysics. After signing up for her first geology class, she was hooked.

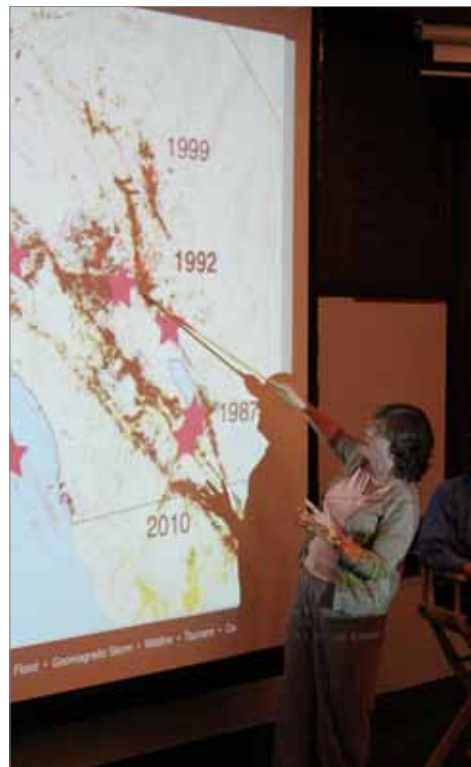
In 1976, Jones began doctoral studies at MIT as the program's only female student. As a grad student, Jones was among the first group of research scientists allowed to enter China after the Cultural Revolution. "I was 23 years old and was easily the youngest there. I went back three more times, and also did postdoctoral research there."

Thanks to her unflappable calm and credibility, the governor appointed Jones to the California Seismic Safety Commission. The only seismologist on the commission, she worked to develop hazard planning and risk assessment strategies. She then worked with the USGS to create the innovative Multi Hazards Demonstration Project in 2006. MHDP integrates hazard science with economic analysis and emergency response to increase resilience to natural disasters. The project's ShakeOut Earthquake Scenario, first demonstrated in the Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill involving more than 5 million people, has been replicated in some 30 states.

"The fundamental issue is that natural hazards are inevitable, but the disaster is not. What we can change is how resilient our activities and structures are to those changes," Jones says.

From an individual and local standpoint, Jones says it all about assessing the risk in your community. If you live in the South, for example, your risks for earthquake might be low, but you might need to consider risks from hurricanes, tornados or floods. "It begins with personal preparedness and thinking through all the systems that can be affected," she says.

Even the simplest things can help. "I always have running shoes in my car. If I have to walk 10 miles on the highway, I want to have shoes I can walk in."



Lucy Jones is the science adviser for Risk Reduction for the Natural Hazards Mission of the U.S. Geological Survey.

## Well-versed in the power of poetry



The Library of Congress appointed Natasha Trethewey as poet laureate for 2012-2013.

The late Vladimir Nabokov, a prominent 20th-century writer whose autobiography is titled "Speak, Memory," put the loss of his father at the core of his memoir. If poet Natasha Trethewey were to pen her memoirs, she too could justify using the title "Speak, Memory," since the theme of memory occupies pride of place in her work. Not only that, the death of Trethewey's mother at the hands of her second husband also fuels the language of her poems.

In June 2012, the Library of Congress named Trethewey the 19th U.S. poet laureate. As a Pulitzer Prize-winning author of three poetry collections and a creative writing professor at Emory University, Trethewey's many honors include numerous fellowships and the distinguished-chair-in-poetry position at Emory. Trethewey, who was born in Mississippi and raised in Atlanta and New Orleans, is the first Southerner to hold the laureate position since the original laureate, and the first African-American since 1993. At 46, she is also much younger than several of her predecessors.

She has cited Robert Penn Warren, the original poet laureate, and Gwendolyn Brooks, the first African-American laureate, as her models.

Her voice is original, her work a medley of ballads and sonnets, and her form an amalgam of free voice and the traditional.

She began writing as a child, completing a collection of poems on the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., when she was in the third grade. Later poems explored the mixed-race marriage of her parents – her mother was black and her father white – which was illegal in Mississippi at the time of the union.

After earning a master's in English and creative writing from Hollins University and receiving a Master of Fine Arts in poetry from the University of Massachusetts, Trethewey published her first collection of poetry, "Domestic Work," in 2000, exploring the lives and jobs of working-class African-Americans in the South, and garnering numerous awards. A later collection, "Native Guard," contains elegies to her mother and sonnets in the voice of an African-American soldier fighting in the Civil War. "Native Guard" earned Trethewey the 2007 Pulitzer Prize in poetry.

Trethewey has also tackled nonfiction, publishing "Beyond Katrina: A Meditation on the Mississippi Gulf Coast," her personal profile of those whose lives were changed by the hurricane in 2010.

Her own history, including the painful death of her mother, is a constant font of Trethewey's poetry. When she took her position at Emory University, she ended up living a few blocks from the courthouse where her stepfather's sentencing was held. She's spoken of the inevitability that she would ultimately return to what she has called "the geography of her childhood." Around this same time, the anniversary of her mother's death was approaching. From this vantage point, with loss, memory and hope all on her mind, she began to write the poems that today are so meaningful, not only to her but to so many others as well.





## Medley of individuality and imagination

The three artists featured in this issue of *Unity* celebrating Women's History Month take the viewer on a journey of mystery and creativity. Their works not only illustrate each artist's discovery of her own identity through cultural and life experiences, but their shared appreciation of the importance of imagination.



"Three Roses Illusionist" by Naoko Morisawa



"My Dahlia" by Naoko Morisawa



"Rainbow Café" by Naoko Morisawa

### NAOKO MORISAWA

Naoko Morisawa attended the Tama Art University in Tokyo, Japan majoring in craft design and ceramics. She later taught painting at an arts center in Tokyo where she learned the wood mosaic technique, which is the use of hundreds of small slices of oil-dyed wood chips. Morisawa incorporates this technique with traditional Japanese themes in her contemporary work. The combinations of natural grains create interesting shadows and impressions in her work. When seen from a distance, her art appears to be paintings, but as the viewer gets closer, the detail of the wood mosaic technique emerges.

In her work, "Three Roses Illusionist," Morisawa suggests there is a certain kind of mystery in the shapes and textures of tree branches. She says she wanted to present that mystery, illusion and beauty in this piece. "The Alchemist," the featured work on the cover of this issue of *Unity*, was inspired by the book of the same name and its hero, Santiago. Morisawa says this work exemplifies "the importance

of hopes and dreams" as was Santiago's quest in the book. Evident in "My Dahlia" is Morisawa's desire to present a strong impression of her favorite flower. In this work, the petal and the wood grain create a constantly evolving pattern. An aerial view of "Rainbow Café" was inspired by "visits to a café in Hawaii where I would often see beautiful rainbows from there," says Morisawa. The floating, colorful dots represent the rainbow. Morisawa challenges the viewer to imagine "an unknown world waiting for you" on the other side of the "shoji" (partition).

Morisawa's work has been displayed in galleries throughout Washington and elsewhere in the country. She dreams of opening her own gallery one day.

### CONNIE FREID

Growing up in Philadelphia, Connie Freid's favorite activities were drawing and making collages of people from other countries. She attended the Philadelphia Museum School of Art before winning a scholarship to the

University of Pennsylvania. Freid earned a bachelor's in English and eventually a Master of Business Administration. After working in the public and private sector for many years, she realized art was her true passion and took classes at Westchester County Workshop, SUNY Purchase and the Silvermine Guild of Art.

Freid works primarily with acrylics and mixed media. For her, a starting point for an idea or composition is usually a photograph. "A Long Day" is based on a 1936 black-and-white



"A Long Day" by Connie Freid



"Salvation" by Connie Freid

photograph she saw in The New York Times. The subdued use of browns and blues amplify the somber mood of the woman. Freid says she was inspired by the woman's look of dignity in spite of obvious fatigue. A photo of an African woman who has contracted the HIV virus heartened Freid's piece, "Salvation." The woman's pensive look shows a resolve of hopeful recovery. Freid states she added bright blue flowers to show that sense of hope. "Jubilation" represents Freid's response to recent articles about contemporary women coming of age. The woman's eyes exude confidence and the light sweeping movements of color accentuate the sheer delight of accomplishment.

Freid's portraits reveal her interpretation of quiet strength and dignity of women. Her work can be described as a combination of beauty and mystery. "My goal is to have the viewer probe beneath the surface and ponder a deeper meaning that induces reaction and conversation," she reflects.

Freid has exhibited in numerous juried shows and has won several best-in-show honors throughout Connecticut and New York.



"Jubilation" by Connie Freid

### JOCELYN BRAXTON ARMSTRONG

Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong fondly remembers her mother being a fashion designer and teaching her how to sew when she was a young girl. Armstrong entered the fashion industry as a freelance fashion stylist/editor in Manhattan before devoting herself to ceramics full time. Her interest in ceramics was prompted after working with clay at the Maryland Institute College of Art where she minored in crafts.

Armstrong's sculptures have a fresh sophistication and modern aesthetic that link fine art with craft. Her work has evolved into a signature technique of building black-and-white porcelain ceramic sculptures to look delicately stitched together. Her piece, "Daphne," exemplifies that process.

Armstrong begins by throwing different shapes on her potter's wheel, letting them set up, cutting them into various shapes, then reassembling the pieces into final form. "After years of looking at the figure while styling, it is easily infused into my ceramic work," Armstrong says.



"Daphne" by Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong



"Mercury Rising" by Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong



"Golden Nymph I & II" by Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong

"Mercury Rising" is a depiction of Armstrong's thought of how our "biology could mutate with the rise in the average temperature of Earth's atmosphere." Her decision to add silver resin (an adhesive) to seep from the top like dripping molten gives her audience a vivid interpretation. Armstrong's "Golden Nymph I & II" are different from her previous work in material and technique. These two figures are coil-and-slab terracotta with a bronze luster glaze. "Golden Nymph I & II" are the first sculptures in a series that Armstrong looks forward to getting back to someday.

"My being a woman influences and informs my work," remarks Armstrong. "It is my intent to inspire curiosity, thought and dialogue, and incite positive action." Armstrong's work has been critically acclaimed and she is the recipient of numerous awards.

*"... being a woman influences and informs my work."*

*- Jocelyn Braxton Armstrong*

## A healthy portion of humility

Celebrated chef considers herself a mere craftsman in the kitchen



*Chef Andrea Reusing with a chicken, typical of the ingredients she buys from local farms. Photos by John Kernick*

Just mention “the art of cooking” to Chef Andrea Reusing and she counters that she is more like a craftsman, putting together simple ingredients “without messing them up.”

No matter what she calls it, in the last decade Reusing’s talent has earned her a national reputation. Lantern, her restaurant ([www.lanternrestaurant.com](http://www.lanternrestaurant.com)) in Chapel Hill, N.C., has appeared on top-25 lists for foodies all over the country. Restaurant critics and famous chefs alike have praised her dishes. Reusing’s recipes and her cooking

advice have appeared in publications from *Gourmet* and *The Wall Street Journal* to television’s “Oprah” and the “CBS Early Show.”

Reusing didn’t set out to create such a name. After growing up with parents she calls “great cooks,” she was doing what she loved. Reusing says, “Eating was an important thing in my house and in my grandparents’ houses. Food had a value far beyond nutrition.”

Nor did she worry about whether her menu of dishes based on seasonal foods bought fresh from local farms would succeed. She says, “As a chef, you have a vision and you have to be pretty stubborn. So I am stubborn and try not to worry too much about the outcome.”

In addition, she set out to work with people who could naturally form a team.

“(Building a team) is basically gathering a group of people who like each other and want to work together. We try to hire people who are smart, funny and kind, and generally, teamwork takes care of itself. Our customers are the reason we are all here,” she says. “... In the kitchen, we recognize that the front house staff (in the dining room) is the conduit to the customer.”

With 4- and 8-year-old children, Reusing admits she and her husband must struggle, like all professional couples, to balance the demands of career and family. But for Reusing, Lantern is the pursuit of an ideal:

“The choices we make about the food we buy are really part of the broader choices we make about the kind of restaurant we have,” Reusing says. “That’s one of our goals: to support local business, and to make Lantern a fun thing we are all do. What we are doing in all the hours we spend at work has to have a meaning beyond making money. It has to be enjoyable and meaningful for all of us who work here together.”

### Grilled Broccoli With Parsley, Garlic and Anchovies

*From “Cooking in the Moment”  
by Andrea Reusing  
Courtesy of Crown Publishing*



2 small bunches of tender broccoli  
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for serving  
6 anchovy fillets, minced (if whole salt-packed, filleted and rinsed)  
2 garlic cloves, mashed to a paste  
Grated zest of 1 lemon  
1/3 cup finely chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves  
2 teaspoons chili flakes, or to taste  
Prepare a hot fire in a charcoal grill. Cut the broccoli lengthwise to make long florets with all of the tender stem attached. Blanch in well-salted boiling water for 15 to 20 seconds, a little longer if the broccoli is very mature.  
Drain well, transfer to a medium bowl and toss with 1 tablespoon of the oil. When the flame has died down and the coals are completely covered with ash, grill the broccoli to slightly char it all over. It should get a bit crunchy on the outside yet stay a little firm at the center.  
Mix the anchovies, garlic, lemon zest, parsley, remaining 1 tablespoon of oil and chili flakes in a bowl. Add the grilled broccoli, toss well and serve with olive oil at the table for drizzling.  
**Yield:** 4 servings

## Sweet on honeybees



*Marla Spivak works in the Department of Entomology, or the scientific study of insects, at the University of Minnesota.*

Honeybees are little insects with a big purpose. They are essential to the agricultural industry, as bees pollinate a third of our food supply. With rising concerns about the decimation of bee populations in recent years due to disease and exposure to pesticides, scientists are working hard to protect honeybee populations and, by extension, our food supply.

Marla Spivak, a distinguished McKnight professor who works in the Department of Entomology, or the scientific study of insects, at the University of Minnesota, has a particular affinity for honeybees.

“I most definitely learn new things about bees on a regular basis,” she says. “Bees seem like an infinite well of information: The more I learn, the less I know. This is humbling and inspiring, and keeps me going.”

She’s said her interest was piqued in college, when she pulled an all-nighter to finish a book on bees. She began working for commercial beekeepers as an undergrad and later spent two years in Costa Rica conducting research on Africanized and European honeybees.

Her work at the University of Minnesota earned her a prestigious MacArthur Fellowship in 2010, allowing her to venture into more innovative experiments than she otherwise could have, all with the purpose of helping bees and beekeepers.

“As a beekeeper, you need to know what flowers are in bloom within a 2-mile radius of your bee colony to determine if your bees have enough to eat and whether they will make honey,” she explains. “You become aware of how prevalent pesticide use is and which ones are toxic to bees, which is very eye-opening for many people.”

Her research is aimed at fostering healthy, strong colonies of bees for honey production and pollination; as a bonus she gets to spend time outside looking at bee colonies, not only for her research but also for pleasure.

“Bees help people connect with nature,” she says. “Opening a bee hive can be meditative as you need to move slowly and carefully to avoid being stung, and you need to pay attention – you can’t be in a hurry. A few stings help a beekeeper stay humble; the honey reward makes a beekeeper proud.”

“I have absolutely no idea what the future holds for me or the bees, but I’m an optimist,” she concludes. “I think all the current awareness about the plight of bees will lead to changes that benefit bees.”

### Chicken Honey Nut Stir Fry

1 pound boneless and skinless chicken breast or thigh  
3/4 cup orange juice  
1/3 cup honey  
3 tablespoons soy sauce  
1 tablespoon cornstarch  
1/4 teaspoon ground ginger  
2 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided  
2 carrots, washed, peeled and diagonally cut  
2 stalks celery, washed and diagonally cut  
1/2 cup cashews or peanuts  
Hot rice

Cut chicken into thin strips and set aside.

In a small bowl, combine orange juice, honey, soy sauce, cornstarch and ginger; mix well. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a wok or large skillet over medium heat. Add carrots and celery; stir-fry about 3 minutes. Remove vegetables and set aside. Pour remaining oil into skillet. Add chicken; stir-fry about 3 minutes. Return vegetables to skillet; add sauce mixture and nuts. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until thickened. Serve over hot rice.

**Yield:** 6 servings

