

giving back



History department chair James Krippner (left) with Wynne Lewis '12, a recipient of the F. Page Newton Class of 1975 History Internship.

Honoring a Friend

The F. Page Newton Class of 1975 History Internship supports the summer research projects of rising seniors.

By Alison Rooney

In 1998, **Mitch Kossoff '75** learned that his good friend and Haverford classmate **F. Page Newton** had passed away suddenly—in an accident while tending to his home in Washington, D.C. Kossoff wanted to find a fitting way to honor his friend in the face of this tragedy, and Haverford quickly came to mind. That same year he established the F. Page Newton Class of 1975 History Internship, which supports rising seniors in summer research projects.

Like Page, Kossoff had been a history major, and he recalls vividly the strong connection he and Page struck up as freshmen in Gummere Hall. “We became good friends there, and after,” says Kossoff, who is now the founding partner of Kossoff & Unger, a law firm in New York City that focuses on real estate leasing and litigation.

He described Page as “a true academician,” and although Page worked in labor relations for the Department of

Justice, his true passion was always history. “Going with him on any trip was like walking with a gifted tour guide who was also a [history] encyclopedia,” says Kossoff. “He had at his fingertips facts about any locale, that were often obscure, but always pertinent.”

In the wake of the death of their friend, Kossoff and fellow classmate **Barry Newburger**, who attended Haverford before leaving to start a career in investment banking, had inquired at the College about starting a fund that would dovetail with Page’s first love and passion—history.

Kossoff says that setting up the fund was “a no-brainer.” “We wanted to do something to honor our friend,” he says, “because we were so upset about his premature passing.” They worked closely with Haverford’s Office of Institutional Advancement to create an endowed fund, to which Kossoff, Newburger and a few other classmates, as well as Page’s wife Renee and his children Colyn and Cole, would contribute on an annual basis. The fund, which yields \$3,000 a year, permits the history department to fund at least one student over each summer.

Kossoff, who was a strong proponent of Haverford’s junior research seminar (History 361), wanted to provide students the chance to augment their on-campus research. Working closely with Kossoff in 1998 to craft the purpose for the fund were history department faculty members Emma Lapsansky-Werner (now curator of the Quaker Collection and professor emeritus), Susan Mosher Stuard (now professor emeritus) and Professor Linda Gerstein. Lapsansky-Werner managed the fund for many years, often making possible internships at museums.

In 2010, the history department and Kossoff decided to open up the scope of work that students could do using this

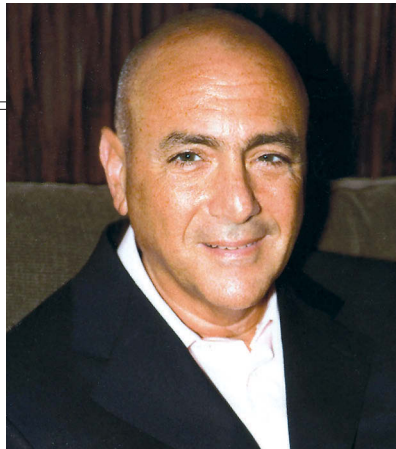
grant money, to support them in research for the year-long thesis required of every senior history major. "This was a newly redefined focus of the major," says history department chair James Krippner, "and the Newton History Internships helps students—who are often scrambling for funds and work during the summer—to do meaningful research that helps them develop as serious students of history."

Krippner notes that the Newton Internship is the only fund specifically dedicated to the history department. The selection process requires a statement from the student on the focus of the research and how it fits into the broader context of the thesis they will write over the following year.

In 2011 there were two recipients: Emily Lipman '12 and Wynne Lewis '12. The funds allowed Wynne to take two weeks off from her summer job to commute to Philadelphia and examine primary sources related to land use and agrarian reform in the early American republic. She spent time at the American Philosophical Society, the Library Company of Philadelphia and University of Pennsylvania.

"While many archival documents are now available online," says Lewis, "most of the material at the American Philosophical Society is not. I was also able to spend hours pouring through an original copy of *American Husbandry*, which turned out to be essential. It was a real thrill for a history nerd like me, and a unique opportunity, for which I'm truly grateful." She says the internship funds really gave her a leg up, allowing her to focus her thesis topic when she returned to campus this fall.

Similarly, the grant allowed Lipman to do archival research related to her topic, Jewish education in the early 1900s, at the National Museum of American Jewish History in Philadelphia and the



Mitch Kossoff '75

Urban Archives at Temple University. Lipman notes that the funds gave her the luxury of time to sort through dozens of sources until she came upon the materials from Yiddish cultural schools around Pennsylvania and New York City that

would be particularly relevant for her topic.

By chance, Lipman also came across storybooks and primers used to keep the Yiddish language alive, as well as playbills and programs from Yiddish theater in Philadelphia. "I appreciate so much the opportunity this internship afforded me," she says, "so I could be exposed to these amazing sources first-hand."

Each year, Kossoff receives letters from students expressing heartfelt gratitude for being selected for the F Page Newton History Internships. Says Kossoff, "Page would be happy to be connected with something that fosters the inquiries of those with the same passion that he had for history." 🐱

MAKING CONNECTIONS Each year, student interns write thank you letters to fund donors, reporting on their internship activities. While cartoon self-portraits are not required, they do get our attention. The following note was submitted by Thy Vo '14, recipient of the Andrew D. Silk 1975 Internship in Journalism. Visit hav.to/impact for more internship stories like this one.

