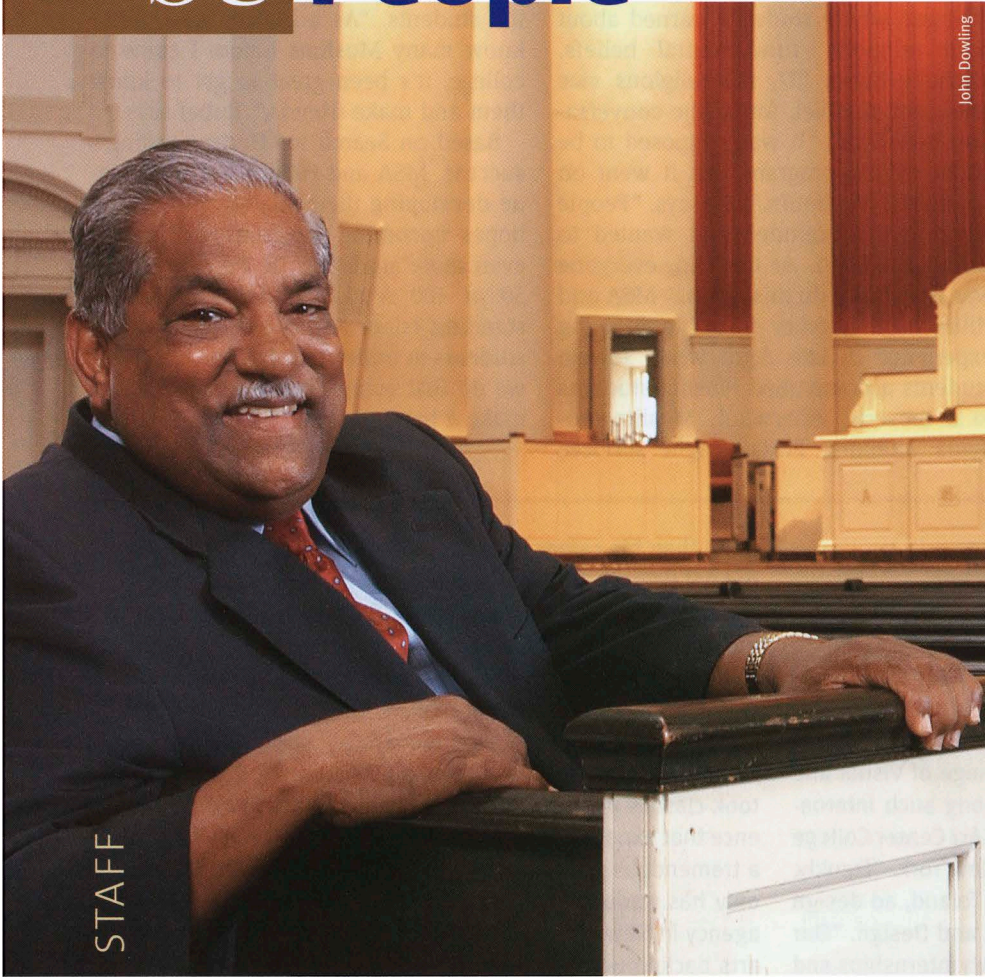


# SU People



John Dowling

STAFF

T.E. Koshy |

## Consistent Caring

IN THE MIDST OF A LARGELY SECULAR culture that prizes material success achieved through competitiveness and ambition, T.E. Koshy G'69, G'73 does a quietly courageous thing: He speaks of genuine love. Love is the foundation of his work as chaplain of Evangelical Christian Ministries at Hendricks Chapel. Love is the main ingredient of the weekly Friendship Luncheons he and his staff host for international students and other guests in the chapel's Noble Room each Thursday. And unconditional love is the principle that rests at the heart of his personal spiritual journey and the decision to commit his life to service. "What modern technology and diplomacy cannot accomplish, true love can," says Koshy, Hendricks' longest-

serving chaplain who is now in his 40th year at Syracuse University. "Genuine love is consistent, continuous. It breaks down walls of prejudice and hatred and builds bridges of relationship and understanding across the world."

A native of Kerala, India, Koshy earned degrees in literature, philosophy, and law from the University of Bombay, and a theology degree from Moorland Bible College in London. He came to the United States in 1965 to attend the S.I. Newhouse School of Public Communications, where he earned a master's degree in journalism and a Ph.D. degree in mass communications. "I arrived at a time of turmoil in America," says Koshy, who is also the pastor of the International Christian Friendship Center in Jamesville, New York. "As an international student, I felt caught in the crossfire of this cultural revolution." Looking for ways to cope with his isolation and loneliness, Koshy

turned to prayer, and an inner voice directed him to reach out to other international students at SU. "I felt led to make a positive difference in their lives," he says. "I opened my bachelor's apartment and began to invite students in for a meal—not with any religious connotation, but so they would know they had a friend to turn to in Syracuse."

Koshy was soon joined in his hospitality by his wife, Indira, a physician who worked for 17 years in SU's Health Services. Their son, Jay, now married with a small son of his own, also helps with their ministry. "Our home was an open home. Practically every day, students would walk in, out of their loneliness," Koshy says. "We did not do this as a project or a program. We did it as a friend opening his heart to people. It did not come as a duty. It came based on my own need, coupled with God's love."

Koshy's efforts on behalf of international students have evolved over the years, touching countless lives. In 1979, he and his wife founded the International Thanksgiving Dinner, now a University-wide event that brings together hundreds of international students, their families, and other members of the SU community.

The weekly Friendship Luncheons attract between 100 and 150 international and American students from across campus. They enjoy a meal prepared and served by volunteers, share conversation, and listen to guest speakers. Koshy opens each gathering with a prayer of welcome and closes with a prayer of gratitude, inviting—but never requiring—others to know and embrace his powerful spiritual beliefs. "When I first felt led to help people of all nationalities and backgrounds, I raised, in my prayers, the question about converting people to Christianity. A gentle voice within me said, 'You do the loving, you do the caring, you do the serving. I will do the converting,'" says Koshy, who travels and lectures extensively in the United States and abroad. "My spiritual journey is not 'religious,' but relational, because it began with my personal commitment to Christ. All my services, both at Syracuse University and abroad, are the extension of that abiding relationship." —Amy Shires

Caeresa Scott

## Drive to Succeed

CAERESA SCOTT '07 WON'T BE LIMITED BY other people's expectations of her. In fact, she challenges them on a regular basis. Rejecting the assembly-line job anticipated by most working residents in her Buffalo neighborhood, she applied to the L.C. Smith College of Engineering and Computer Science (ECS). "I don't want a job putting tires together," she says. "I want to *design* the tire. I want to prove I can work in the office—not just on the line." As a mechanical engineering student, she seeks to build credentials that transcend stereotypes of gender and race. "I don't want people to see me as just a black woman engineer," says Scott, who is studying in London this year. "I want them to see me as a person who went through obstacles like any other successful person."

Scott's accomplishments in the school have garnered much respect from her professors and peers. "She is an outstanding student and a star in the department," says Professor Alan Levy, chair of the mechanical engineering program and Scott's advisor in the National Science Foundation's Research Experience for Undergraduates summer project. "She is very strong academically, but is also committed to service." Scott serves as a Student Association assembly member, philanthropy chair of the Alpha Omega Epsilon engineering sorority, GEAR UP (Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs) mentor, an ECS Academic Excellence Workshop facilitator, and a tutor through the Office of Supportive Services. "I like being involved and knowing about my school," she says. "I have had the opportunity to make friends with so many people."

Scott finds one aspect of her SU experience particularly stimulating and rewarding: being part of a diverse community. "Coming from the inner city, where everyone was black or Hispanic, I experienced culture shock at first," she says. "I've noticed little differences—things like how many people here wore shorts with a sweat-shirt. It seemed ridiculous, but then I tried it. I liked it. Some differences are good, some are bad. Despite them all, I am willing to accept the challenges that these experiences bring me. I am especially excited to be exposed to new things."

Continuing to defy stereotypes, Scott unabashedly admits that she could spend her days watching football and that her ultimate "dream job" would be designing racecars. "I love cars," she says. "I have an infatuation with them. It is such a rush for me to sit in especially fast cars or on motorcycles.

John Dowling



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Every summer, all the bikers in this local rally would drive down my street, revving their Harleys. It was so amazing!" Although she has little experience with automobiles, she hopes to look under a hood and start exploring the mechanics in a graduate automotive engineering program. She was accepted in the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, which helps prepare students from underrepresented groups for graduate school. "Right now, I plan on going to graduate school to study automotive design, but I know things could change," she says. "Even if I don't make a career out of engineering, I feel confident in getting another job. If I can do engineering, I can do anything."

—Margaret Costello



FACULTY

John Dowling

Andrew Waggoner

## A Feel for Music

ALTHOUGH IT WAS ALMOST FOUR DECADES AGO, composer Andrew Waggoner remembers the day quite vividly. “I was 8 years old, and I felt like I had this deadline—that if I didn’t get this thing done, somehow there was going to be trouble,” he says. “I picked up a pencil and started putting notes on paper. I can still picture the backward stems and how it looked. I felt a strange compulsion to write music.” Today, that same need to create music has brought Waggoner much acclaim as a modern composer. He has received commissions to write for the Los Angeles Philharmonic, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the Denver Symphony, and the Syracuse Symphony Orchestra, among others.

Waggoner, a professor of music and composition at the Setnor School of Music in the College of Visual and Performing Arts and faculty leader of its Strasbourg (France) Music Performance Program, received a 2005 Guggenheim Fellowship for composition. The fellowship will support his work writing a concerto for four cellists, including his wife and fellow Setnor faculty member Caroline Stinson, and an orchestra; and

composing a large-scale setting of Shakespeare’s sonnets for *Sequitur*, a New York City-based group.

For Waggoner, the composing process begins with a physical sensation. “A piece can feel very heavy and rich, with a kind of tension that is almost like pushing through a really dense substance,” he says. “I often have a very strong sense of feeling, tone, or emotion.” Drawing on this tangible energy, he improvises on the piano and scribbles notes onto paper, a process that can last for months. Next, he pieces together the unconnected excerpts into a more structured and orchestrated composition. After weeks of 10-hour days before a computer, he completes transcribing the parts for each instrument in the orchestra. “If I calculate my hourly salary for each piece I write, I’d make maybe \$3 an hour or less,” he says. “But I’m still involved in a career that doesn’t feel exactly like work. It is more than that for me.”

He feels his calling to be a musician and composer is intimately tied to his teaching. “The two roles work together beautifully and always have,” says Waggoner, who served eight years during two terms as director of the Setnor School of Music. “Historically, teaching was so much a part of artists’ lives that it often took the form of students literally living with the artists and working beside them in apprenticeships. Students—whether they were visual artists, musicians, craftsmen, or composers—would learn first by imitating and then by developing their own styles.” Although educating artists has changed over the centuries, Waggoner says success still requires a mix of technical training, skill building, and tapping an individual’s unique talents.

His favorite course to teach, Counterpoint, is often the one music students most dread. “It’s a very exacting exercise in imitating a musical technique that is 400 to 500 years old,” he says. “Nothing could seem less relevant to students at the outset, but by mid-semester they realize this strange and difficult course is changing the way they think. For years running, it turns out to be the most fun course I teach.”

Waggoner also found great joy in directing the new music program in Strasbourg with his wife. He taught music theory, advised SU music students, and acted as a liaison with the Strasbourg Conservatory of Music, which offers Setnor students private music lessons and membership in ensembles. He also set up an exchange program with the conservatory to bring students, faculty, and ensembles to the SU campus. In fall 2006 Waggoner and Stinson’s quintet, *Open End*, will perform in Strasbourg.

“I love seeing, feeling an audience come to life—not waving their lighters, but having an experience they can’t possibly have anywhere else and being shaken up, exhilarated, changed by [my music],” he says. “My work asks to be lived with a bit, engaged with wholly. It’s not iPod music. I wish people in general would throw away their iPods and listen to the world around them, then come in and listen to music.”

—Margaret Costello

## Arlene Melchiorre | Electrifying Enthusiasm

“IT COULD BE POETRY!” THAT’S WHAT ARLENE Melchiorre’s creative writing instructor said about a short story she wrote for an online class, pointing to its vivid imagery and melodic language. His comment may be equally applicable to any aspect of Melchiorre’s life—a spirited festival of family, friends, and work that celebrates her Latino heritage with generosity and joy. “I’m a very positive person,” says Melchiorre, who has worked at Syracuse University as the administrative assistant in the Mary Ann Shaw Center for Public and Community Service (CPCS) for eight years. “I have a lot of energy, and I’m fun! My personality just comes—VOOM!—out of me.” She shares that boundless energy with nearly 200 SU students who work with CPCS each year as Leadership Interns, Literacy Corps tutors, and drivers. “We meet students from all colleges, all majors, and from all around the world,” she says. “We have such a nurturing environment that these students become like part of my family. I love seeing them grow and mature, and I learn a lot from them. I absolutely love my job, with a capital ‘L!’”

Born and raised in Brooklyn, Melchiorre is the third of nine children in what she calls a “large, loud, Puerto Rican family.” She came to Syracuse 16 years ago when her husband, Gary, now director of development with the Onondaga Historical Association, took a position with Niagara Mohawk. “I worked at the Spanish Action League and got really involved with the Latino community,” says Melchiorre, who is pursuing a bachelor’s degree in information management and technology from the School of Information Studies. She has served as chair of the Association of Neighbors Concerned for Latino Advancement (ANCLA), a grassroots organization that sponsors such events as the *Realizando Mis Sueños* Latina Conference and *Una Noche Latina*, an annual dinner dance. She serves on the Aurelia Crespo-Carlos Lavezzari Latinoamericano Scholarship committee that annually selects a graduating Latino high school senior to receive a higher education scholarship.

Beyond her job and community involvement, Melchiorre has several additional passions in her life, including books, music (especially Santana), SU sports, and the New York Mets. She holds immense affection and respect for such friends and mentors as Syracuse Common Council president Bethaida “Bea” Gonzalez G’04, University College’s interim dean, who helped steer her toward earning a

degree; Sylvia Martinez-Daloia ’94, director of the School of Education’s Liberty Partnership Program, who encouraged her to pursue the CPCS position; and Pamela Kirwin Heintz ’91, CPCS director. “Pam is a fantastic person to work for,” Melchiorre says. “I’ve learned so much from her—about my position, about the University, and about life. Along with Bea and Sylvia, she has been an inspiration to me.”

But for Melchiorre, the most important thing of all is family. She maintains close ties with her parents in Florida and siblings in California and New York City, and is devoted to her two children. Barbra is married and serving in the military in Iraq. Garrett graduated from the College of Arts and Sciences in May, has a two-year teaching fellowship in New York City, plans to attend law school, and hopes to be a judge one day. “I was always blessed to have a job and give my children what they needed,” Melchiorre says. “But, more importantly,



I believe I helped them learn values. I told myself I would discipline them with love, and always be there for them. That was all the ammunition they needed to go into the world. How simple it is! You just tell them, ‘I love you no matter what,’ and then you let them go.”  
—Amy Shires

Cecil Abrahams

## International Activist

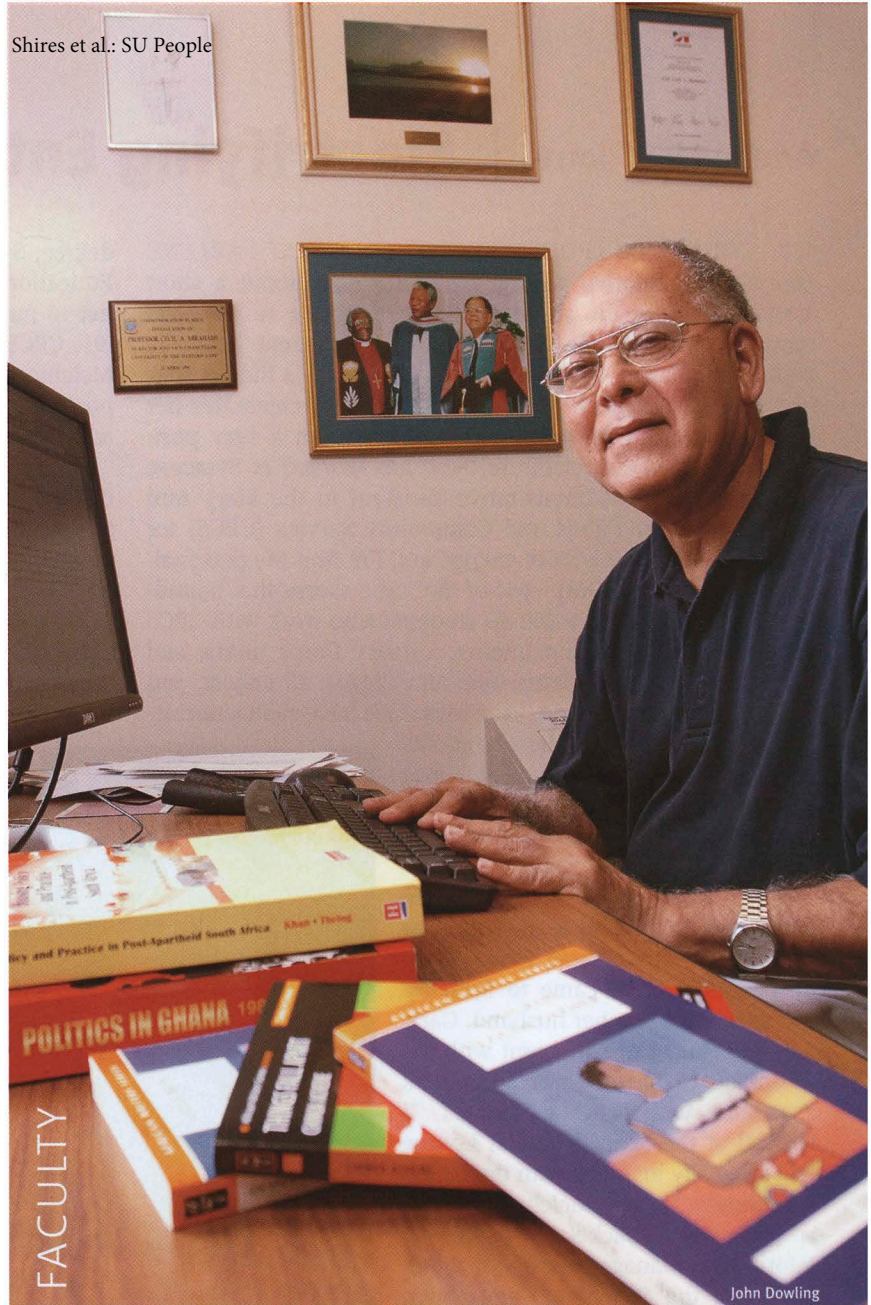
### VISITING UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR CECIL

Abrahams walked across the stage of world history on his way to the classroom. A comrade of Nelson Mandela in the African National Congress (ANC) since the days when membership was grounds for imprisonment, Abrahams has given much of his life to the pursuit of two passions he finds deeply related: political equality in South Africa and an understanding of the nation's literature. "South African literature has always been tied up with the political situation because our writers have always seen themselves as telling the world about what is happening in the country," Abrahams says. "Even Afrikaans literature becomes particularly vibrant following the Boer War, when the descendants of the Dutch settlers wanted to report how badly the English treated them—how they suffered in concentration camps and saw their children raped. For Africans, literature is the life we live. It includes sociology, biography, and everything that can be thought about. I teach literature with that in mind."

Abrahams was born in a mixed-race family in Johannesburg. Growing up under the apartheid system, he attended segregated schools designated for "coloreds." His life changed when he went off to college in Lesotho, an indigenous homeland completely surrounded by South Africa, but not subject to apartheid laws. "I studied at a small Catholic college supported by parishes in North America," he says. "It was a happy experience because there were students and professors of different backgrounds from all over Africa, and I learned that color was not a big thing. But it was also very sad, because when I went home on the holidays, I was back in South Africa, where race determined everything."

Following graduation, Abrahams returned to South Africa and taught high school English. He hoped to do graduate work in literature at the University of Capetown, a white institution that admitted a limited number of mixed-race students, but was blocked by a government minister because of his political activism. When Abrahams departed for Canada to accept a scholarship offer, the South African government withdrew his citizenship. "Legally, I had no country," he says. "I was on UN refugee status."

Granted papers by Canada, Abrahams lived there for almost two decades, completing a doctorate in English literature at the University of Alberta and teaching at the University of New Brunswick and Bishop's University in Quebec. During those years, he helped establish an ANC office in Montreal and played a significant role in building international pressure against the apartheid government. He also became a leading force in bringing the study of



African literature to North American universities. The African Literature Association, which Abrahams helped to found, celebrated its 31st anniversary last spring.

In 1995, following the dissolution of the apartheid regime, his citizenship was restored and he was welcomed back to South Africa to become vice chancellor of the University of the Western Cape. His old friend, Nelson Mandela, recently elected president of the country, spoke at his inauguration.

An eclectic thinker whose mind, by habit, leaps across disciplines, Abrahams maintains an office at the School of Education and teaches international education, but his work takes him all over the Hill. His course offerings include African literature for English and textual studies; a seminar for the new master's degree program in Pan African studies; and, at the Maxwell School, an examination of African economic and social development through the work of the continent's filmmakers and writers. "I've never seen myself as just an academic," he says. "You've got to take what you learn and use it to help make life better for the community."

—David Marc

Tatiana Warren

## Leaping Beyond Expectations

**SHE POSSESSES AN IMPRESSIVE TALENT FOR JUMP-**ing—fast, far, and high enough to achieve a full SU athletic scholarship in track and field. But when it comes to excelling as a student-athlete, Tatiana Warren '04 has both feet firmly planted on the ground. A five-time member of the Athletic Director's Honor Roll and two-time Big East Academic All-Star, Warren earned a bachelor's degree in exercise science in only three-and-a-half years, even while coping with a series of family emergencies. Recipient of a McNair Fellowship and an NCAA Postgraduate Women's Enhancement Scholarship, Warren is working toward a master's degree at the School of Education and intends to pursue a doctorate. "I have a big family—seven sisters and one brother—and I am the oldest and the first to attend college," says Warren, a Brooklyn native whose parents were born in Panama. "I want to progress and show them, 'You guys can do it also.' I know they are looking up to me, so I try to set the standard high."

She originally planned to be a nurse, but her fascination with anatomy and physiology led her to explore a new path. "As an athlete, I knew about personal trainers and the body's muscles, but I wanted to find out more about body function and how exercise impacts that," says Warren, who competes in the long jump, broad jump, and high jump. As a member of the Ronald E. McNair Post-Baccalaureate Achievement Program, which supports underrepresented students in overcoming class, social, and cultural barriers to higher education, she began conducting scientific research in the summer following her junior year. "I'm studying racial differences in heart rate variability," says Warren, who presented her findings at the American College of Sports Medicine's national conference in Nashville in June. "I want to know the components behind the fact that the African American and Latino communities are predisposed to different health risks—including high blood pressure and cardiovascular disease. I'm learning so much about how the body works."

Exercise science professor and interim department chair Lori Ploutz-Snyder admires Warren's work and calls her "superstar material." "Tatiana has a remarkable ability to manage her time," Ploutz-Snyder says. "She completed her undergraduate project early, while also doing an exemplary job with other responsibilities, including her coursework, athletics, and personal life. She has a level of maturity and professionalism that well exceeds her age and experience." Scott R. Collier G'01, director of Healthworks Wellness Learning Laboratory and Warren's research advisor, agrees. "Tatiana's drive and unwavering

focus establish her as an excellent student," he says. "Her grasp on exercise physiology led her to be sought out by her peers to explain classroom and laboratory physiological concepts."

Beyond the strength and dedication she demonstrates in meeting both academic and athletic challenges, Warren has exhibited extraordinary emotional fortitude during her Syracuse career. In a tragic sequence of events, she was called away from campus several times to be with family members during crises. This past spring, one day after her 21st birthday, Warren's grandfather died, requiring her to travel to Panama. "Losing my grandfather really hurt," she says. "It also meant I had to take time away from track at the height of my college career, which was very hard. Two weeks before the Big East championships, I fractured my ankle. That ended my season." Disappointed—but never defeated—Warren welcomed her coach's offer to compete for another year as a medical red shirt. "Competing is a form of release, especially when I do well. It picks me back up," Warren says. "I tell myself, 'You just have to make it through this.' I try to be happy and I try to put on a smile, because we never know the struggles an individual is going through."

Warren sees a career in exercise studies as a way to share the health benefits of athletics. She hopes one day to provide



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financial support for athletes in Panama, where she trained with the Panamanian Scholastic National Team as a high school sophomore. "I'm already talking with members of the national athletic committee there about ways to build up the athletic world," she says. "I'd like to help the kids there get some of the opportunities I've had." —Amy Shires