



February 28, 2025

News from the Hill

Dear alumni/ae and friends of Andover Newton,

My name is David Smith, and it is my sincere pleasure to introduce myself as Andover Newton's new Director of Institutional Advancement. I am a social historian by trade and bring eighteen years of experience in institutional advancement in higher education and the nonprofit sector to Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School. My focus here is to not only honor and protect Andover Newton's deep history and identity, but also to help the institution continue to flourish and succeed today. I hope to meet and connect with you all individually in time, but until then, I am pleased to share with you some reports and updates on News from the Hill.

In early January, nine Andover Newton YDS students travelled, alongside their Dean and Associate Dean, to O'ahu as participants in the second installment of the travel seminar, "Emmaus Encounters: Building Community on the Road." Through site visits including Kawaiaha'o UCC, the Punahou School, Paepae o He'eia fish preserve, Kamehameha Schools Kapālama, Missions Houses, and the Pearl Harbor National Memorial, students learned how to build community within groups, build bridges in previously unfamiliar contexts, and challenge themselves to reflect theologically on what they learned.

In February, we at Andover Newton at YDS remembered the life and great social impact of Virgil Wood (NTI, B.D., 1956) as a prominent civil rights leader, Baptist minister, educator, and writer who devoted his life to uplifting marginalized communities and advocating for the economic and spiritual development of African Americans. We also honored the historical significance and legacy of George Washington Williams (NTI, B.D., 1872) with a docuseries about his life and the establishment of the George Washington Williams Endowed Faculty Chair.

Yale Divinity School spotlighted two Andover Newton alumni/ae in February. JaQuan Beachem, Associate Dean of Community Development & Spiritual Formation, (YDS MDiv and ANS Diploma, 2021), was featured in a fascinating Yale Divinity School interview about faith and experimenting with music to enhance healing and liturgical connection between strangers.

Our partners at YDS also profiled Jennifer Kiel (ANTS, D.Min., 2013) and her theological journey from fleeing Iran as a child during the Iranian Revolution to her current passion for social work and community healing. Kiel is also a graduate of Yale Divinity School (YDS MAR, 2006) and recently established the *Jennifer Maraghel Kiel '06 MAR Divinity Scholarship Fund*.

Looking ahead, on Monday, March 3rd, from 12:00pm to 3:30pm, Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School, in partnership with Berkeley Divinity School and YDS's Center for Continuing Education, invite you to the virtual event, "Overturning your 'Immunity to Change' with Dr. Robert Kegan." On May 1, from 12:00pm to 4:00pm, you are welcome to attend "Renew, Restore, and Explore ("RRE") 2025," an afternoon retreat that focuses on the transformative power of community spiritual care. The Kegan event is free and open to anyone who registers before February 28, and the RRE event is free to Andover Newton, Andover Newton at YDS, and YDS graduates.

Finally, on April 10th, we hope you will come celebrate the Newton Theological Institution Bicentennial (1825 – 2025). Planned festivities include the annual Bauer-Broholm Lecture featuring [Gina Jacobs-Strain](#), General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA; the opening of an exhibit of Newton Theological Institution archival material; and a celebratory dinner, which will conclude with a hymn-sing. The event is free of charge, but attendees must register by March 31, 2025.

In closing, if you have a story to share, concern to voice, or update to give, then please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you so much for your support and consideration of Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School.

With gratitude,
David

David C. Smith, Ph.D. (he | him)
Director of Institutional Advancement
Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School

Dear Friends:

You will note in the links below some news and invitations into learning about theology and ministry. When the news from the wider world feels overwhelming and discouraging, we hope you find some comfort in these opportunities expand your capacities for faith and service. We all want to live so God can use us, anywhere, anytime. Thank you for your ongoing connection with and support for Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School.

All the best,
Sarah

Sarah B. Drummond (she | her)
Founding Dean
Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School



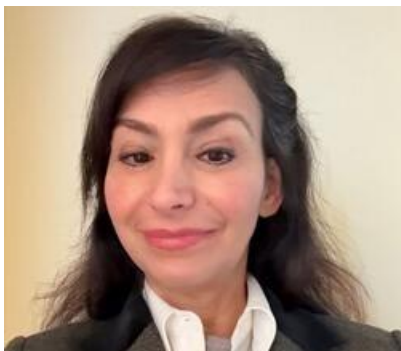
Remembering Virgil Wood

In recognition and celebration of Black History Month, Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School proudly remembers the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Virgil Alexander Wood (April 6, 1931 – December 28, 2024).



Honoring George Washington Williams with Docuseries

Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School honored the life and legacy of George Washington Williams, the first African American graduate of Newton Theological Institute through a two-part docuseries released this month.



Joy of Giving: Alum giving back the love she received

In 1981, at age 11, Jennifer Kiel '06 M.A.R. fled Iran with her parents on horseback, crossing treacherous mountains to escape the Iranian Revolution.



Frequencies of faith: JaQuan Beachem on community and spiritual formation

The Rev. JaQuan Beachem '21 M.Div. can be found in his office at Andover Newton Seminary at YDS, unless he is leading a yoga class in Marquand Chapel, or presiding as minister of the weekly Emmaus Gathering worship service, or consulting on campus iconography, or experimenting with music to enhance healing and liturgical connection between strangers.



[Students Build Community in O'ahu through Emmaus Encounters](#)

From January 2-9, nine Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity Schools students journeyed to O'ahu to participate in the 2025 Emmaus Encounters travel seminar.

Events

[Overturning your 'Immunity to Change' with Dr. Robert Kegan](#)

March 3 - A novel approach to personal improvement—now being deployed all over the world—which surfaces and engages those aspects of a person's underlying mindset that prevent them from bringing about the very changes they most want to make. This workshop will provide participants a fast-moving opportunity to try on this approach for themselves, conducted by one of its creators, Harvard professor Robert Kegan. Come with a Personal Improvement Goal you most want to work on in mind!

[Newton Theological Institution Bicentennial](#)

April 10 - Please join Andover Newton Seminary at Yale Divinity School for a special day celebrating the bicentennial of Newton Theological Institution (1825 to 2025).

[Renew, Restore, and Explore Day 2025](#)

May 1 - Scheduled purposefully after Easter, this retreat offers a space for renewal—an opportunity to refill your “spiritual bucket” while connecting with fellow alums. We invite you to join us for a day of fresh perspectives, deep reflection, and vibrant community.

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