Hutchison
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Finding Ways *to* Change *the* World

Dr. Kelly Rodney Arnold '96

Finding Ways to Change the World

Hutchison Alumnae are Doing Innovative Work and Seeing More Opportunities for Women

by Max Maddock

The woman walked into Clínica Médicos in Chattanooga crying. Her 14-year-old son was behind her, and she said, "My son burned himself, and I only have $20. Can you help?" Dr. Kelly Rodney Arnold '96 saw a timid boy standing behind the woman with grease burns from the knees down. He was fighting back tears. Arnold answered quickly and directly, in Spanish: "No se preocupe, lo vamos a cuidar." ("Don't worry, we will take care of him.")

The cases that present themselves at Clínica Médicos aren't always as severe, but they present themselves seven days a week and Arnold is compelled to help. "It didn't matter whether that family had $20 or $20 million," she said. "I knew that the family came to us out of trust and for them to go to the ER uninsured would amount to thousands of dollars in bills they could not pay. We took care of his burns nearly every day for two weeks until he was healed."

Dr. Arnold gathers with some of the patients she sees in Chattanooga

Arnold opened Clínica Médicos in March 2015, primarily to serve the burgeoning and underserved Latino community of Chattanooga. Every employee in the clinic is bilingual and many have Latin American backgrounds. The goal is not only to provide much-needed healthcare, but to be culturally sensitive, make costs transparent and affordable, educate patients about the complexities of insurance, and provide continuity of care.

Arnold, who studied at The University of Tennessee, Knoxville, is one of many Hutchison alumnae who are making strides in science, technology, engineering, and math professions, colloquially known as STEM. She grew up learning Spanish, and her father, William M. Rodney, M.D., opened Medicos Para La Familia in Memphis in 1999, which also serves the Latino population. With those genes, it wasn't enough for Arnold to be a doctor. She intrinsically knew that she would combine her love of language and science and find a way to help people.

> "We have women of STEM professions encouraging younger generations to get involved."
>
> —Dr. Kelly Rodney Arnold '96

OPPOSITE PAGE: PHOTO COURTESY OF JOHN RAWLSTON, *CHATTANOOGA TIMES FREE PRESS*

Dr. Arnold reviewing labs readily available through point-of-care technology

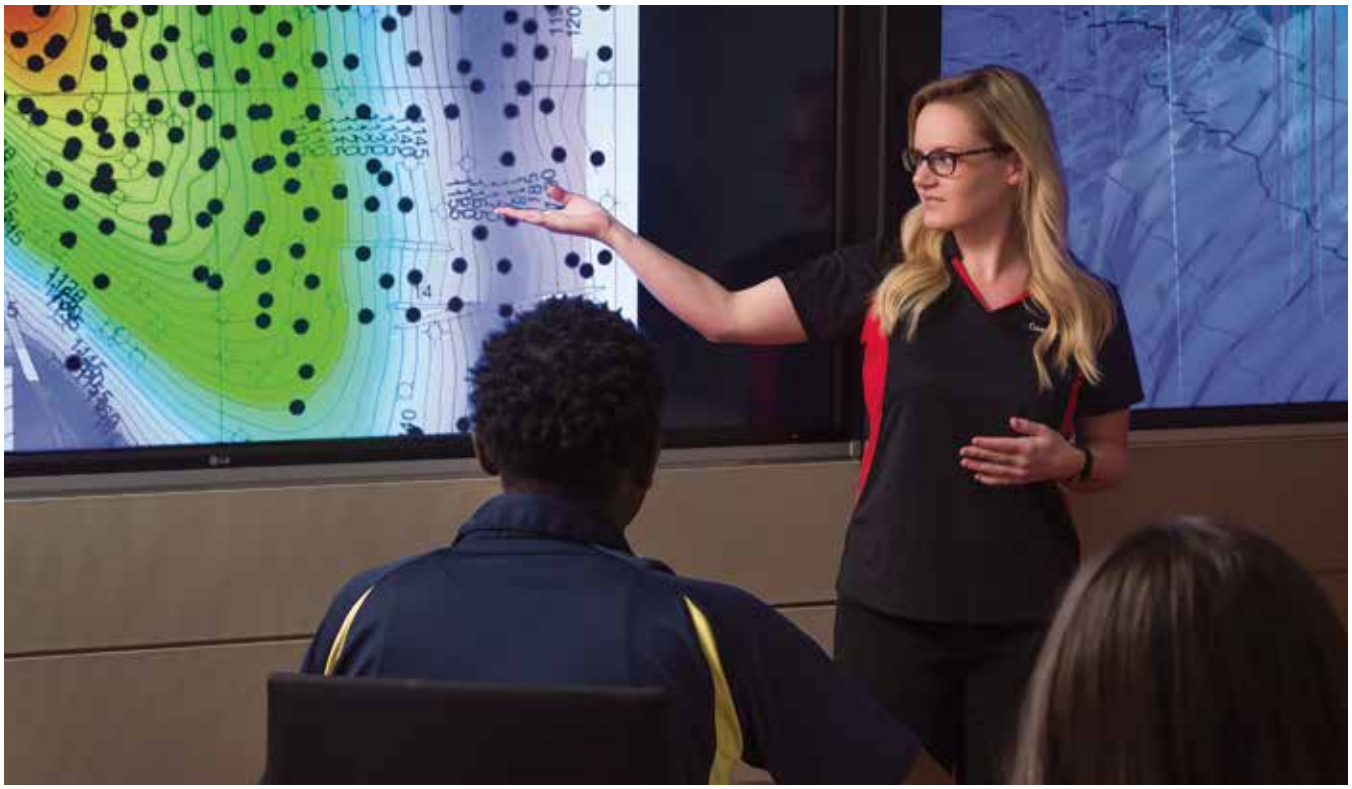


PHOTO BY CONOCOPHILLIPS

Kate Christenbury '07 has a career in information technology; she collaborates with geologists, geophysicists, and reservoir engineers.

THE MYTH OF GIRLS AND STEM

In the past, the narrative was that girls didn't gravitate toward sciences, engineering, technology, or math. The myth was that they weren't interested, or erroneously, weren't as skilled as boys. But ask a Hutchison science teacher or an alumna, and those notions couldn't be further from the truth.

Ellie Key '01 inspects tertiary filters that remove phosphorus from secondary wastewater effluent.

"I think it's ridiculous to say girls don't like science, because they do," said Mary Lee Wesberry, an upper school science teacher in her 14th year at Hutchison. "You just have to find out where they're interested and go in that direction."

Wesberry oversees Hutchison's Science Research Fellows program. The idea is to challenge girls in grades 9–12 who have a strong interest in science to go beyond their classroom and find a subject they are passionate about, conduct independent research, and present and defend their findings. Recent research topics read like Ph.D. dissertation titles: "Epigenetics of Organ Transplantation" or "Signal Induction of Neuroproliferation and Aberrant Postnatal Behavior," to name just two.

It's clear that Hutchison has long nurtured this interest. **Ellie Key '01** discovered her love for science and math at Hutchison. "I loved to read as a kid, and Pat Newberry was great as an English teacher, but math and science were what interested me," she said. She graduated from the Colorado School of Mines and now works as a permit manager and facility engineer for the Washington State Department of Ecology, regulating 25 waste water treatment plants that discharge to surface water.

"I was in AP Environmental Science as a senior and went to my first waste water treatment plant with that class," Key said. "I think I was probably the only one who didn't get grossed out by it. I thought it was pretty interesting." Key credits two other Hutchison teachers—Vicky Fisher, math, and Karen Irving, chemistry—for planting the seed about a possible career in math or science.

In addition to her prowess in those subjects, Key made sure her work involved protecting the environment, as well. "I think access to clean water and sanitation is a fundamental human right. I work with mayors and city councils a lot and try to educate them on the importance of water quality." One of

"Women bring a unique set of strengths. We see the world differently and approach problems differently."

—Holly Crump '93

the cities she works with is Spokane, which discharges about 35 million gallons a day into the Spokane River, she said. Key makes sure the treatment plant's discharge does not exceed the river's pollutant capacity, protecting both human health and aquatic life through implementation of the Clean Water Act.

Dr. Tracy Kramer Richmond '90, a pediatrician and researcher at Boston Children's Hospital, and Assistant Professor at Harvard Medical School, treats a variety of issues, but spends about three-quarters of her time on social epidemiology research. "I'm trying to understand the social determinants of health, so race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic background, and how those things impact kids' health," Richmond said.

Dr. Tracy Kramer Richmond '90

One focus is on adolescent obesity. With food insecurity and a lack of nutritious food available to many of her patients, it is a difficult issue to tackle. She works in a multidisciplinary clinic, so while she monitors a patient's physical health, there are also psychologists and social workers helping to solve behavioral and environmental issues.

Richmond, who did her undergraduate work at the University of Pennsylvania and attended the University of Cincinnati for medical school, hopes to move beyond the clinic and get involved in more intervention work. "I've been focused on understanding how neighborhoods and schools impact different outcomes, and then the hope is that I'll be able to provide good evidence for where to intervene," Richmond said.

STEM CAREERS NEED MORE WOMEN!

One thing every alumna agrees on—there's plenty of opportunity in STEM professions for women.

"We need IT people faster than the universities are producing them," said **Kate Christenbury '07**, who graduated from the University of Arkansas and works in information technology. Christenbury is well aware of the opportunities in her field. She was a finance major until her sophomore year in college. When she saw the turmoil created by the financial crisis in 2008, she reconsidered her trajectory. Her research revealed that information systems graduates not only were paid more, but had the highest job placement percentages. She happened to be in an intro to IT class at the time and loved it. "I was actually making better grades in that class than I was in my finance class."

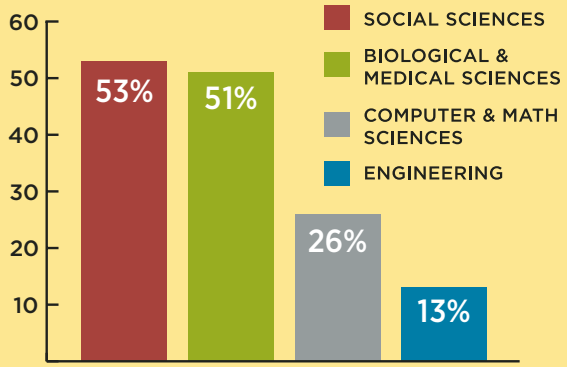
After making the switch, Christenbury found a mentor to help her through some of the more challenging classes, which had more male students than females. She landed an internship during her junior year at a small energy company and learned about the oil and gas industry. By November of her senior year, she had secured a job at ConocoPhillips.

PROMISING STATISTICS

In 2004, the National Science Foundation (NSF) funded the National Girls Collaborative Project (NGCP), which is helping to address the complex issue of gender equity in STEM fields. According to the NGCP, the NSF Science & Engineering Indicators report of 2012 showed that "Girls are taking many high-level mathematics and science courses at similar rates as their male peers, with the exception of physics and engineering, and are performing well overall." Career-wise, women are still underrepresented in the science and engineering workforce. Male students are over three times more likely to be interested in STEM majors and careers, compared to female students.

Source: ngcproject.org/statistics

STEM CAREERS WOMEN ARE CHOOSING



Percentages of women entering this field in 2012

"Exposure to broad thinking … is really important. Hutchison is the perfect incubator for that …"

—Dr. Tracy Kramer Richmond '90

Engineer Holly Crump '93 and daughter Taylor '22

In addition to being a techie, Christenbury supports geologists, geophysicists, and reservoir engineers (GGRE for short), so she also has to be knowledgeable about those subjects to keep up. Many of the GGRE staff are men, but she finds they are more surprised at her age than her ability. She meets regularly with other professional women in the company for support and mentoring.

One important consideration: how do you maintain a demanding career and also build a family? Despite the demands of her clinic, Dr. Arnold, in Chattanooga, has three children. "The STEM professions are finding creative ways to allow women to have a career, to nurture a profession, and at the same time, nurture their own families," she said. "And I think that's going to be an important component to consider in the discussion of recruiting more women to enter these fields."

SEEING THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY

In addition to the variety of opportunities available to women in STEM professions, several alumnae posited that women also have distinct advantages in these careers.

"Women bring a unique set of strengths," said **Holly Crump '93**. "We see the world differently and approach problems differently."

Crump, who graduated from Washington and Lee University, is an electrical engineer designer for Liles Engineering in Memphis. It's her job to plan how power is brought into and distributed throughout a new building. Among her many projects, Crump worked on Hutchison's Abston Center, Labry Hall, and is currently working on the new Crain Center building under construction.

Engineer Ellie Key agrees that a unique perspective is vital. "What we need are people who can think outside of the box, who are innovative, and who haven't been in the industry for 20 or 30 years. I think that's what allows positive change to happen. Young people coming in are going to be on the cutting edge and able to push [the industry] forward."

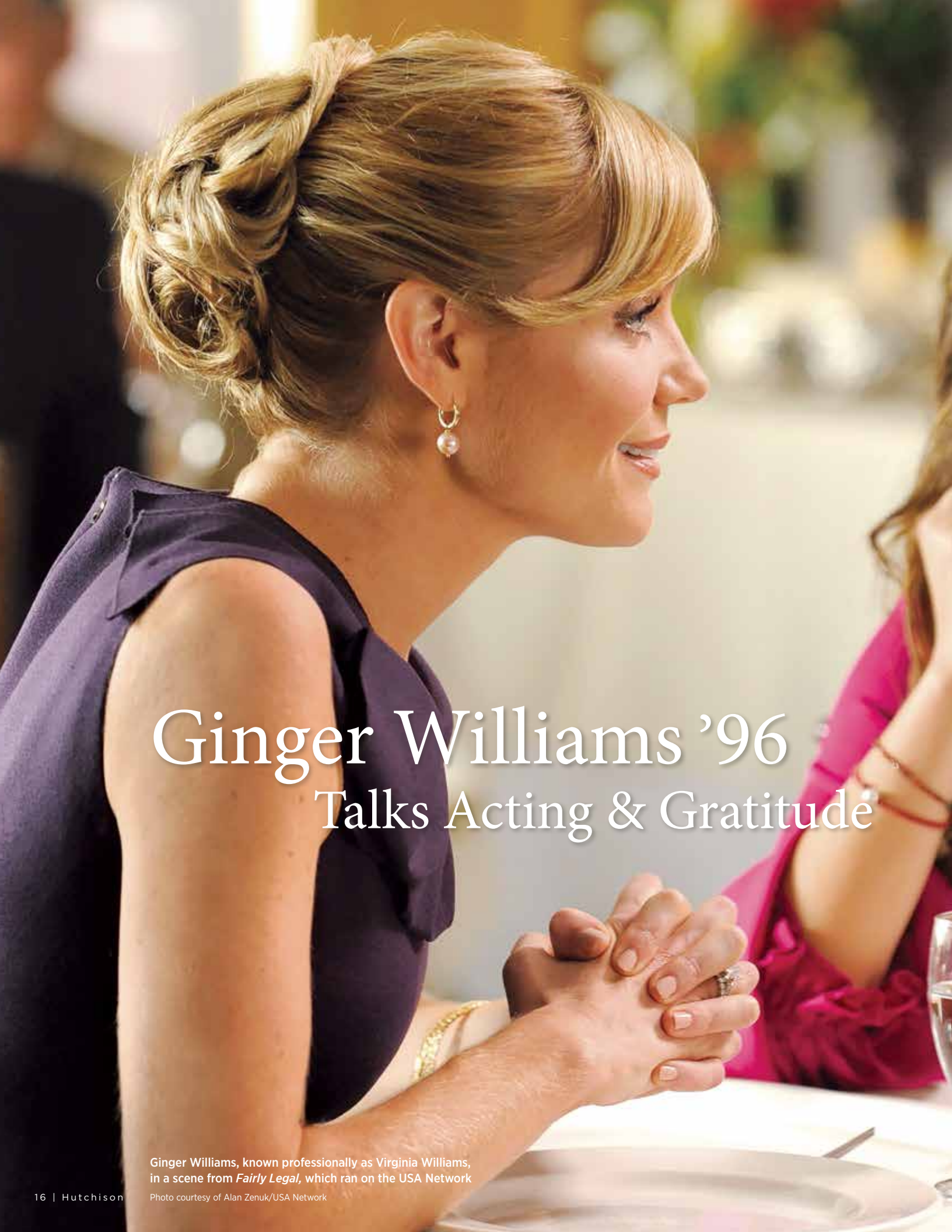
GETTING THE WORD OUT

"I think that at a grassroots level, more so than ever before, we have women of STEM professions encouraging younger generations to get involved," said Dr. Kelly Rodney Arnold. She believes girls' interests will be piqued if they meet with women working in different fields, learn about their professions, and ask questions. "It might be the first time one of those young women has ever sat down with a chemical engineer or even knows what that is—or with a computer programmer."

Richmond advocates that girls try diverse experiences. "I think encouraging creativity and risk taking are really important," she said. She suggested traveling to a different country to broaden thinking or even something as simple as following a tech blog outside one's usual interests to inspire new ideas. "Exposure to broad thinking, different kinds of thinking, different kinds of disciplines, is really important. Hutchison is the perfect incubator for that kind of thing."

No one says the path is easy, though. "My father always told me that it's a marathon," Arnold said. "Set long-term goals and avoid expecting immediate professional gratification during the building years. Sustaining gratification will come through discovering what it is that you love. People have said to me, 'Wow that must have taken a lot of work! You've been working so much.' I respond, "I have, but it's been a joy. I love what I do."

Find out more about Clínica Médicos at clinicamedicos.org.



Ginger Williams ’96
Talks Acting & Gratitude

Ginger Williams, known professionally as Virginia Williams, in a scene from *Fairly Legal,* which ran on the USA Network

Photo courtesy of Alan Zenuk/USA Network

Alumna & Hollywood Star Spends the Day with Hutchison Actors

by Max Maddock

In May 2015, just a week before Hutchison's graduation, seniors Lillie Burrow and Adele Fish were performing one last dress rehearsal of *'night, Mother*, a provocative Pulitzer Prize-winning play by Marsha Norman. The audience in Hutchison's black box theater, comprised of fellow Acting I class students and a few teachers, was rapt. And so was their special guest—Virginia "Ginger" Williams, a television and movie actor, who graduated from Hutchison in 1996.

As the dramatic ending played out and the lights came up, some students wiped tears from their faces. Everyone applauded. Williams said, "Ladies, you are doing such fantastic work. You should be really proud of yourselves!" Classmates offered similar praise for the performances.

Then, the attention turned to Williams. The girls were anxious to ask about her experiences in Hollywood and for any tips she might have. One of the first questions—what has been your favorite role? "Maria in *The Sound of Music* and Jesus in *Godspell*," Williams replied without missing a beat. But those roles weren't in Hollywood; they were both roles she performed while at Hutchison.

Virginia in a scene from *Revenge of the Bridesmaids*

You may not have caught Williams in those roles, but if you've watched television in the past 20 years, you've no doubt seen her. She starred in the comedy/drama series *Fairly Legal* on the USA Network and as the bridezilla, Caitlin, in the hit ABC Family movie *Revenge of the Bridesmaids* (a favorite of several Hutchison girls).

Williams also was the lead in the Lifetime telenovela *Monarch Cove* and has had starring roles and recurring characters on many other shows, including *How I Met Your Mother*, *Strangers with Candy*, *Girlfriends' Guide to Divorce*, *The Mentalist*, *Rules of Engagement*, *Better Off Ted*, *Lie to Me*, *In Plain Sight*, *Two and a Half Men*, *My Wife and Kids*, *Jack & Bobby* and *Veronica Mars*, to name just a few.

Against most odds, Williams has been working as an actor since graduating from Hutchison … actually, before graduating. While visiting New York City to audition for a spot in the undergraduate theater program at Fordham University at Lincoln Center, Williams was able to try out for the soap opera *One Life to Live*. She got the part, and spent her senior year traveling back and forth between Hutchison and filming the soap in New York.

"I've always been able to make a really good living doing what I love to do," Williams said. "I'm very humbled by the success I've been able to have."

Williams is what we call a Hutchison lifer—she started in junior kindergarten at four years old and went through 12th grade. "I got the whole Hutch experience!"

Was there an "aha moment" for Williams in terms of knowing that acting was her thing? "I just sort of fell into acting by way of singing, because if you were in the musicals, then you acted as well. Then I sort of discovered that I loved storytelling so much—plays were so fun for me and I loved working on characters. That's when acting sort of took over."

Lots of credit goes to Hutchison teachers and faculty, of course. "Alice Claire Colville was the music teacher. I remember her always being very loving and really supportive of me," Williams said. "Then there were Sara and Leonard Frey. They were the heads of upper school. They were very supportive of the arts and of me … even while I was working and in school—as long as I kept my academics up, which I did."

And last, but not least, Anne Marie Caskey '80, current Theatre Artistic Director, who taught Williams, Burrow '15 and Fish '15, and now teaches other aspiring Hutchison actors. "She's just awesome," Williams said. "She's absolutely the reason I became an actor."

Bridesmaids photo courtesy of ABC Family/Patti Perret

"Anne Marie Caskey is just awesome. She's absolutely the reason I became an actor."
—Ginger Williams '96

Caskey recalled a different favorite role of Williams' while at Hutchison. "She was the "Star to Be" in *Annie*. It was just one tiny part. She walked on and sang 'NYC, just got here this morning!' It was that small of a role. And that was what everyone remembered from the show."

Williams stressed the importance of learning the craft. "Don't rely on luck and talent, because it will only take you so far." She expressed her belief in the liberal arts education that she received at Hutchison and Fordham. "Someone said to me early on, 'the smarter, more well-rounded person makes the smarter, more well-rounded actor.' "

But Williams also wanted to be realistic with the hopeful actors. "It's an incredibly difficult career choice in terms of being able to support yourself fully." She pointed out the many careers in the industry: costuming, set design, entertainment law, marketing, assistant directing, among others. Williams' husband, Bradford Bricken (who hails from Tullahoma, Tenn.), loves the entertainment world. He worked his way up from the mail room of an agency to become a voice-over agent and is now a talent and literary manager.

Williams is careful not to let her career take 100 percent of her life and strives for balance. "I have a great, supportive, loving husband, and I have awesome friends."

She's been an advocate for Free the Slaves, an organization that seeks to eradicate human trafficking. And she was an ambassador for the Global Down Syndrome Foundation and has spoken on their behalf in Washington, D.C.

What's next for Williams? She's in a new movie called *Woodlawn*. "It's a really fantastic movie about God, football, and the South," she said, and co-stars Sean Astin and Jon Voight. Eventually she'd like to produce and direct as well, but that's in the future. She's still enjoying acting. "I'm grateful that I took the path that I did, but I'm extremely cognizant of the fact that I am very blessed and very lucky."

Virginia and her husband welcomed their first son, Bradford Jr. (Ford), on November 19, 2015. They also have a new labradoodle puppy named Elvis—a nod to Williams' Memphis roots.

A LESSON IN GRATITUDE

Williams recalled one particularly tough acting and life experience. When she was cast as the lead on *Monarch Cove*, it was a dream come true, but it ended up being very difficult. As the lead actor, Williams was in virtually every scene, working 18- to 20-hour days and averaging about three hours of sleep. She was shooting in Australia, away from family and friends, so she was quite lonely. "It was grueling," she said. "And it was all on my shoulders … I mean, if the show comes out badly, I'm the face of it."

When the show was about to premiere, Williams recalled seeing a giant billboard advertisement with her face on it near a Starbucks she frequented in Los Angeles. The billboard didn't bring her any happiness. "A few days later, I was having a heart-to-heart with God, and I remember thinking, 'You know what, I've wanted this. I'm going to go back, I'm going to sit at that Starbucks, and I'm going to look at that billboard, and I'm just going to have gratitude.' I sat down at Starbucks, I took a deep breath, I looked up, and the billboard had changed to an iPod ad …

"All I could do was laugh. But it was the best life lesson, and I think of it all the time—you don't get to pick and choose when to be grateful. Be grateful in all circumstances."

Photo by Jeff Vespa

Above, L to R: Ellie Erickson ’16 and Hallie Robison ’16; below, Janie White ’16

“**The kids from Streets Ministries** were very proud. They got to sign their names at the bottom of the murals and go back to school and say **‘We did this.’** We wanted to create something together that was **inspirational** and **sparked their passion for art.**”

— Elizabeth Owen ’16 & Lele Popwell ’16

HUTCHISON GIRLS INSPIRE A COMMUNITY

In October, seven Hutchison seniors, including project leaders Elizabeth Owen and Lele Popwell, worked with kids from Streets Ministries to help plan, design, and paint four murals in the Kingsbury Middle School computer lab. The project was one of the first conducted through the newly formed Hutchison Serves program.