



CAPITAL PLACE: The Kennedy Center is the performing arts capital of the nation's capital, says Christine Branche '83, but the third-generation Washingtonian says the District has long been home to a thriving arts and cultural community.



MONUMENTAL CITY: Often seen through the prism of politics and iconic monuments, Washington, D.C., is that and more, say alumni who have made it their home. It's a vibrant city that comes alive when you know where to look.

Show Us Your Town

Washington, D.C.

More than just the seat of government, the nation's capital is a city rich in art and culture, foodie havens, and outdoor getaways. Just ask some of the 4,600 alumni who make it their home.

By Matthew Dewald

In the hills that rise in the Northwest section of Washington, D.C., you can ride an elevator to the towers of the National Cathedral, the world's sixth largest Gothic cathedral.

Walking from window to window, **Adam Konowe '90** admires the miles-long views that extend to Virginia and Maryland and the planes coming in and out of Reagan National Airport.

"I'd rather have this view than the one from the Washington Monument," says Konowe, who has lived in Washington since he graduated from Rochester in 1990. "This is the highest point in the District. You get a view of more than just the Mall. It puts the city and its neighborhoods in perspective."

Konowe, a marketing communications executive, has combined a transplant's curiosity with three decades of living experience to put the city into perspective.


One of about 4,600 Rochester alumni who call the metropolitan D.C. area home, Konowe is also a cochair of the Washington, D.C., Network

Leadership Cabinet, an organization designed to better focus activities, programs, and opportunities for alumni and others in Washington.

It's one of 10 regional networks initially identified as part of a strategic effort to build a stronger sense of connection among Rochester's key constituent groups.

During a weekend visit last fall, Konowe and other members of the Rochester community were more than happy to act as inside tour guides, sharing their appreciation for a place that's normally portrayed only through the prism of politics and national monuments.

They all agree that there is much more to their city.

As third-generation Washingtonian **Christine Branche '83** puts it: "All Americans should come to their capital and enjoy it." 

Matthew Dewald is a freelance writer based in Richmond, Virginia.



TREASURES: Works by Renoir are among the Phillips Collection's treasures.

Visual Arts

Although the Smithsonian is a must, alumni guides say some of Washington's best art museums are in private hands and are well worth seeking out.

A Phillips Collection

1600 21st Street NW

Tucked away in a renovated mansion on a side street in the Dupont Circle neighborhood is America's first museum of modern art, the Phillips Collection. "For me this is just a neighborhood treasure," says **Debbie Dorfman Drumheller** '74, who lives nearby. Drumheller's insider tip: score a ticket for "Phillips After 5," which happens the first Thursday of every month. Admission prices are the same as always, but the museum offers hors d'oeuvres, a cash bar, and live music from chamber music to jazz.

B Kreeger Museum

2401 Foxhall Road NW

Far from the crowds of the Mall and not easily accessible by public transit, the Kreeger Museum, located in the Foxhall neighborhood, comes recommended by **Nancie Kennedy** '79E (MM). Five acres of woods and sculpture gardens surround the museum, which focuses on 19th- and 20th-century European painting. The Kreeger home is itself a work of art, having landed in the pages of *Vogue* when the building was under construction in 1964.

C Hillwood Estate, Museum, and Gardens

4155 Linnean Avenue NW

Dusty Riddle '09S (MBA) and Kennedy both recommend a visit to the former home of Marjorie Merriweather Post, heir to the Post cereal fortune and a lifelong art collector. She amassed a stunning collection of Imperial Russian treasures while her third husband served as U.S. ambassador to the early Soviet Union. Hillwood's famed House of Fabergé eggs, picture frames, jewelry, and other decorative items used by the Russian royals are a true must-see.

Performing Arts

"You get your credentials at the Kennedy Center," says Kennedy of the capital's most famous performing arts venue. But she adds that the District's offerings extend well beyond it.

D Arena Stage

1101 Sixth Street SW

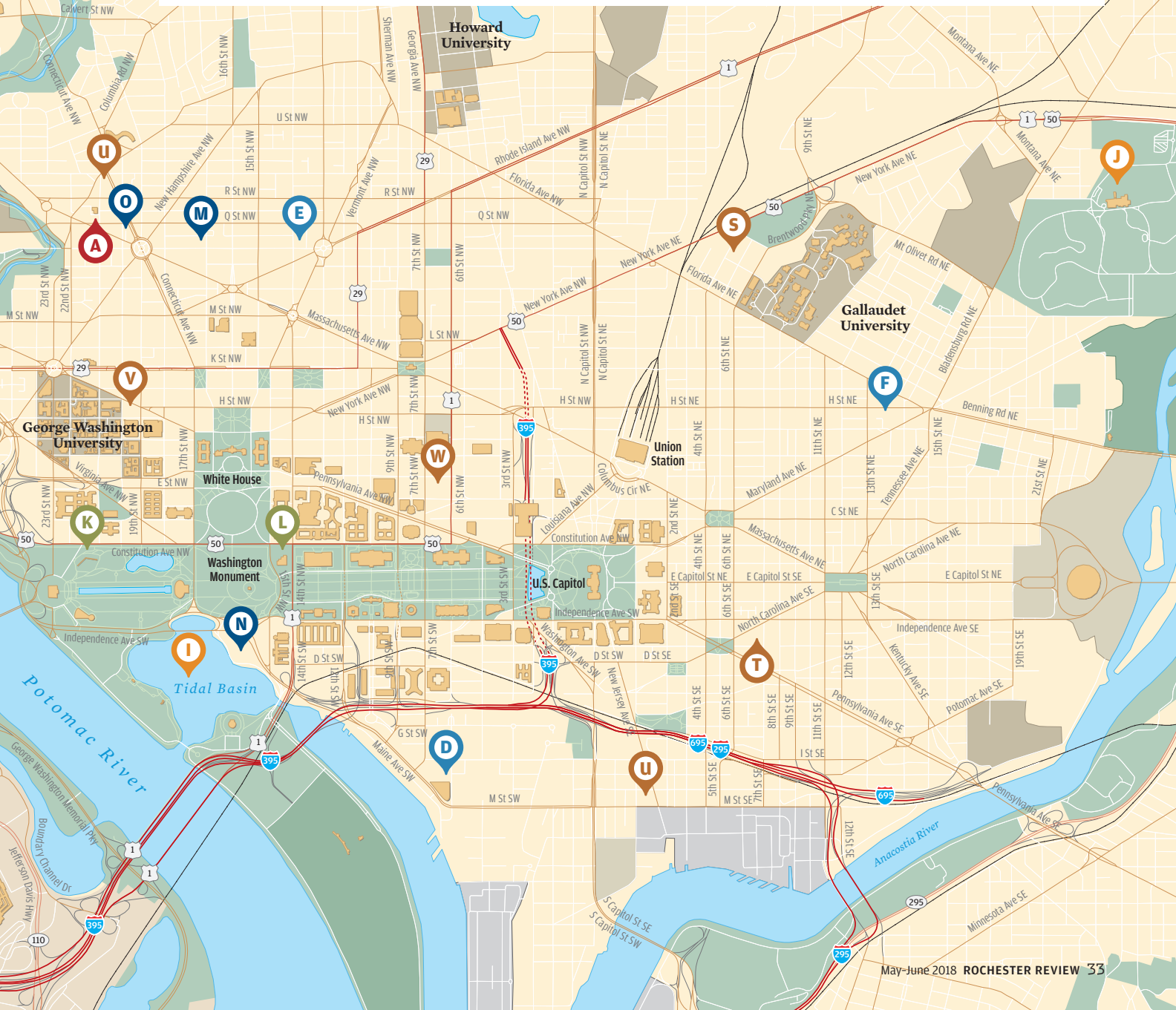
Kennedy enjoys the solidly American themes of Arena Stage—devoted exclusively to American theater—which sits right on the Potomac in the city's Southwest quadrant.



When You Go ... An Insider's Guide

Members of the Washington, D.C., Regional Network shared their expertise as residents of the nation's capital to put together a short list of favorites—sites that are off the standard itinerary as well as quintessential D.C. traditions. The color-coded circles match the descriptions for each spot.

The D.C. edition of *Show Us Your Town* is part of a series highlighting the University's regional networks.





Meet Your Guides

Members of the Washington, D.C., Network Leadership Cabinet served as guides to the nation's capital.

Cochaired by Christine Branche '83, Debbie Dorfman Drumheller '74, and Adam Konowe '90, the group organizes activities, programs, and opportunities for alumni and other members of the University community in the region to volunteer, network, and stay connected.

Christine Branche '83

Bowie, Maryland

A third-generation Washingtonian, Branche is an epidemiologist at the Centers for Disease Control.

Debbie Dorfman Drumheller '74

Washington, D.C.

Drumheller retired from a career as a financial executive and treasurer for a major oil company.

Adam Konowe '90

Reston, Virginia

Konowe began his career as a television producer before moving to public relations.

Dusty Riddle '09S (MBA)

Washington, D.C.

Riddle works in credit card finance for a national company.

Nancie Kennedy '79E (MM)

Annapolis, Maryland

A retired opera singer, Kennedy frequently visits the District for performances.

Mia Alqadi Comrie '08

Silver Spring, Maryland

Comrie is a senior program specialist for the Department of Justice, working on police-community relations.

E Studio Theater

1501 14th Street NW

Located just off Logan Circle, Studio Theater produces contemporary works that hit head and heart, says Riddle, who described a recent show there about a father's descent into dementia as something that "made you think. It was very raw and emotional." Its shows are intimate, with none of its four theaters seating more than 225.

F UrbanArias

UrbanArias is a contemporary company giving opera a makeover. "If I were taking somebody into Washington and they've done the tourist things, the traditional things—this would take you in different directions," says Kennedy. The company produces short contemporary operas with titles like *Craigslist Cabaret* and *Photo-Op* at the Atlas Performing Arts Center on H Street in Northeast Washington and at Signature Theater in Arlington, Virginia.



HIDDEN HIGHLIGHT: The C&O Canal trail is an accessible, outdoor asset.

☀️ Outdoors in the District

Rochester alumni are in consensus: D.C. is a town that rewards ambling outdoors, and it has abundant options.

G C&O Canal Trail

A walking and biking path built on a converted railroad bed, the C&O Canal Trail is a mainstay of Drumheller's outdoor routine. "It's a D.C. asset that not a lot of people know about," she said during a walk along it, the Potomac River just beyond the tree line. She often spots geese, turtles, and other wildlife on her regular bike rides. "If you live in Washington and haven't been here, it's a shame. It's so accessible. Here we are just a few miles from the Capitol, and it's beautiful."

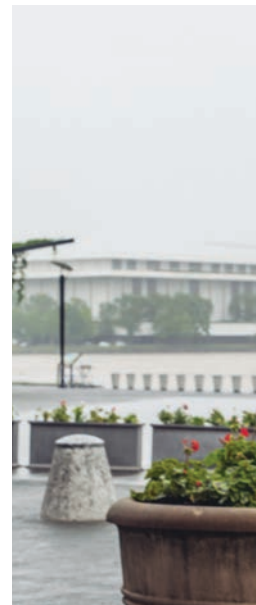
H Georgetown Waterfront Park

Overlooking the Kennedy Center and Roosevelt Island, the Georgetown Waterfront Park is the place to kayak or paddleboat, says Drumheller. The Georgetown University crew team practices there, too.

I Tidal Basin

Branche treasures walks along the Tidal Basin, which is ringed by memorials for Thomas Jefferson, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, and Martin Luther King Jr. "MLK is looking right at Jefferson; someone had a very interesting sense of humor," she says. "I've been there at sunset, and it's refreshing. I've noticed that people speak more quietly there."

D.C. MARVELS: Nancie Kennedy '79E (MM), Debbie Dorfman Drumheller '74, and Adam Konowe '90 (opposite, top to bottom) say that the nation's capital has cultural gems, outdoor opportunities, and out-of-the-way places that offer a richer view of D.C. and its attractions for those willing to explore beyond the well-known sites.





J National Arboretum

Don't miss the National Arboretum, says Branche. "They have trees from all over the country there," she says. "Your tax dollars at work."

The Mall

You have not fully walked the Mall until you've done it at night, says **Mia Alqadi Comrie '08**. Once darkness falls, footlights and spotlights illuminate the monuments and museums, lending drama to familiar views. "My favorites at night are the African-American Museum and the Jefferson Memorial—if you can have a favorite memorial."

K Vietnam War Memorial

"It's one thing to see it on television," says Branche of the Vietnam War Memorial. "It's another to go see people interacting with it." The massive black granite memorial displays the engraved names of each of the more than 58,000 Americans killed in the war. "It gives it a kind of majesty. You don't think of Vietnam and majesty, but the memorial brings that word to mind."

L National Museum of African-American History and Culture

Part of the Smithsonian, the National Museum of African-American History and Culture opened in September 2016. "What a beautiful place, in the broadest sense," says Branche. Tickets, she notes, are released months in advance and are snatched up quickly.

Right Place, Right Time

"D.C. is a town of traditions, things you can go to every year," says Riddle during a walk down the hill from the Capitol. Sometimes the secret to seeing a familiar city anew is to come at a different time of year.

M High Heel Drag Queen Race

A fall favorite for both Riddle and Drumheller, Dupont Circle's annual High Heel Drag Queen Race attracts thousands every October to watch elaborately costumed drag queens race down 17th Street. Drumheller also recommended a walk along Q Street during the Halloween season for a look at the residents' over-the-top decorations.

N Cherry Blossom Festival

If you can time it right, both Comrie and Branche say the Cherry Blossom Festival is worth the hype. "When the blossoms are at their peak, it's an amazing time to walk around the Tidal Basin," Comrie says. "The event draws tourists and locals. It's quintessentially D.C. to see people walking around in their suits enjoying the cherry blossoms."

O Around the World Embassy Tour

A long-standing tradition happens every May, when dozens of embassies coordinate to offer open houses one Saturday. "When I was a Girl Scout, we were at an embassy greeting people," says Branche, who grew up in D.C. "My best friend and I were stationed at the embassy of Iran."

Farther Afield

For visitors, "the challenge is to get off the beaten path," says Konowe '90, whose daughter is a member of the Class of 2021. "More than most cities, the natural tendency is to do stuff on the Mall because it's so central. The Mall is no more emblematic of D.C. than Times Square is of New York City."

P The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center

Chantilly, Virginia

Part of the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, the Udvar-Hazy is much larger than its counterpart on the Mall. "Unlike a



Regional Networks and You

The University of Rochester's regional networks offer alumni, parents, and friends a variety of social events, networking opportunities, and community service initiatives in Baltimore, Boston, Chicago, Houston, Los Angeles, New York City, Philadelphia, Rochester, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C., with new cities added regularly. Many volunteer opportunities also exist, and include organizing events, interviewing and mentoring students, welcoming new alumni to an area, and serving as social media ambassadors.

"Regional networks are central to keeping alumni, parents, and friends connected to each other and to the University of Rochester," says Paul Lanzone '03, assistant vice president of alumni and constituent engagement. "As an alumnus myself, I know firsthand the professional and personal benefits of staying involved, be it as a program participant or a volunteer who is helping to shape our community."

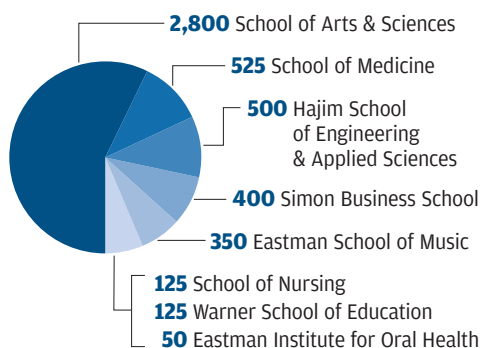
How to connect

For more about the Washington, D.C., regional network, including upcoming and ongoing activities, social media connections, volunteer opportunities, and other information, visit the network's website at Rochester.edu/alumni/dc

D.C. Deep Dive

4,600 alumni
940 young alumni (10 or fewer years out)
180 volunteers
325 current parents

Alumni by School



lot of museums where it's really about the exhibits and secondarily about the artifacts, Udvar-Hazy is all about the artifacts."

WOLF TRAP NATIONAL PARK FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Vienna, Virginia

A favorite of Konowe's, Wolf Trap is the country's only national park devoted to the performing arts. Featuring the architecturally renowned Filene Center, it's also home to a smaller venue that hosts year-round performances and serves as the home to Wolf Trap Opera.

GREAT FALLS NATIONAL PARK

McLean, Virginia

Across the Potomac from Maryland, Great Falls National Park is a favorite dog-walking spot for Comrie and her pup, Jake. "Once you get away from the falls, it's so peaceful and quiet even though you're so close to the city."



MARKETPLACE: Eastern Market is one of D.C.'s original public markets.

Let's Eat

"Twenty years ago, D.C. was a food desert. Not today," Drumheller says. Branche described it as a proudly foodie town these days, with celebrity chefs and excellent cuisines from all over the world.

UNION MARKET

1309 5th Street NE

For Comrie and Riddle, the D.C. food scene starts with its public markets. "Union Market embodies D.C.," Comrie says. All around, construction cranes in every direction speak to a neighborhood in transition. "You can walk around and create a meal with so many different styles and flavors. It's been really fun to watch it expand."

EASTERN MARKET

225 7th Street SE

Eastern Market is one of Washington's original public markets and reminiscent of Rochester's, with rambling tables of produce outside and delis, butchers, and fishmongers within. "Here you see the vitality of the city," Riddle says.

BETHESDA BAGEL

1718 Connecticut Avenue NW and 120 M Street SE

If you're looking for breakfast, it's "the best bagel in the city," says Drumheller. "I say that as a native New Yorker who grew up not far from H&H and Zabar's."

FOUNDING FARMERS

1924 Pennsylvania Avenue NW

For brunch, Comrie recommends Founding Farmers, a restaurant



MARKET TO MARKET: “Union Market embodies D.C.,” says Mia Alqadi Comrie ’08 (above) of the District’s nationally recognized food hall; the nation’s capital offers much more than politics, says Dusty Riddle ’09S (MBA) (left). “People really live here. It’s not just the seat of government.”



born from an alliance of farmers in North Dakota. “Everything is fresh,” she says. “I love going on Sundays. They have amazing biscuits and great décor. It’s a warm environment, and the food is outstanding.”

W All in the Neighborhood

To sample D.C.’s food scene, Branche says, you need a strategy. One of her favorites is to pick one of the many spots close to the National Portrait Gallery in Penn Quarter. “I could go to a different restaurant there every night,” she says.

Her favorites include Zaytinya, Rosa Mexicano, Clyde’s, and Rasika. Zaytinya offers a Greek/Mediterranean tapas menu developed by celebrity chef José Andrés. Rosa Mexicano offers a fine-dining, white-tablecloth take on Mexican cuisine. Clyde’s is a D.C. institution, with wood-paneled booths and an attentive staff serving a menu of upscale pub food. On game nights at the Verizon Center nearby, don’t be surprised to see a healthy collection of Wizards and Caps jerseys at the bar. Rasika, just a couple of blocks away, features modern Indian cuisine.

Such vibrancy—exemplified in the people who make the District their home—is what makes the capital special.

Says Riddle: “People really live here. It’s not just the seat of government.” **R**