

One Bulldog at a time.

By Doug Stern | Photos Brian Bohannon

Maybe that's how Louisville breaks into the top tier. The top tier of what creative-class guru Richard Florida calls "superstar cities." Florida, by the way, teaches at George Mason University and is best known for his work in developing his concept of the creative class and its ramifications in urban regeneration. He is the author of the bestselling book *The Rise of the Creative Class* (2002) and its successor *The Flight of the Creative Class* (2005).

Amelia Reid is one of these Bulldogs. The May 2006 Yale grad (BA in Latin American history) spent last summer in Louisville... and decided to stay. Since September, she's been working in the corporate communications department at Humana Inc.

"I have my 'Why Louisville' speech ready for my friends when they ask why I moved here," said Reid, who grew up just outside of Chicago and now lives in Louisville's Highlands neighborhood. "I tell them how easy it is to live here, whether it's being able to go to the theatre or to take a walk. Or, not having to deal with the stress and chaos of Manhattan."

Reid's story is the result of a successful grassroots effort known as "Bulldogs in the Bluegrass" (www.bulldogsinthebluegrass.com). It's the eight-year-old creation of Rowan Claypool. The Yale alum (and Louisville native) initially invented "Bulldogs" to help reverse the city's brain drain.

But Claypool, however practical, also has a wide streak of do-gooder in him. "It's a place I love. I'm just trying to create systematic ways to get people in jobs, connected and rooted here."

The other ace up Claypool's sleeve leverages teaching. Since 2001, "Teach Kentucky" (www.teachkentucky.com) has attracted high-achieving graduates of selected, top-notch colleges and universities.

The alumni-sponsored program matches these grads with hard-to-fill spots in the Louisville area's middle schools.

That's how Sarah Yost landed here. The 2006 Colgate University alumnae (BA in Religion and English) has roots in Des

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Moines, Iowa, Washington DC, Seattle and New York state. These days, she's planted in front of eighth-graders at Knight Middle School south-central Louisville Metro. When she's not shopping, eating, walking and generally just enjoying life in the Highlands, where she lives.

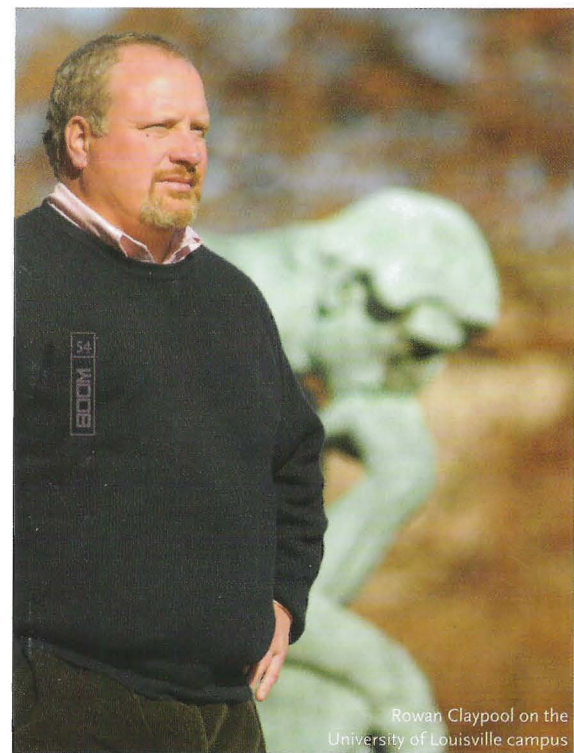
Why did she pick Louisville when she could live anywhere? "I had a summer internship through Colgate with a publisher based here. So, when Teach Kentucky put out the call, it was an easy decision.

"Louisville has a progressive energy. A vibe. It's obviously growing. And, it's somewhere I knew I could grow."

Spoken like a superstar. ■



Amelia Reid at work at Humana



Rowan Claypool on the University of Louisville campus



Sarah Yost in class at Knight Middle School