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ALUMNI PROFILES

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Sara Green '01

Sara Green '01 awoke unusually early one morning and realized exactly what she wanted to do next. An arts administrator and dancer, Green had been longing to use her background in the arts to effect social change — she just hadn't identified how.

Less than a year later, she entered the School and began developing ART (Art for Refugees in Transition), a curriculum-based program that encourages the revitalization of traditional artistic practices among refugee populations. Green says her experience as a dancer taught her a valuable lesson about the healing power of the arts and how they can help fight the "social paralysis" that afflicts those forced to abandon their homes and communities. "No matter what was happening in my life, I could always turn to dance as a comfort," she says. "I wanted to translate that feeling for other people."

A head injury in 2001 left Green barely able to stand for months — let alone read or study — but she graduated nevertheless and that summer traveled to Kosovo to examine programs and policies for children during armed conflict. She returned home with a confirmed urgency about ART's mission and began to develop a plan to make it happen.

Through a pilot program launched this year, Green is helping more than 21,000 Burmese refugees living in Thailand to form committees and establish a regimen of classes, including instruction for the younger generation in weaving, instrument making, folklore singing and dance. She hopes that the program, which she designed to be "self-sustaining," will be instituted around the world some day. "It is the most incredible thing I've ever done," she says.

