

Ex Libris

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Presidential Scholars Begin Year With Dover Retreat



Photo: Andrea Gatti

Scholars pose for a quick photo before returning to campus.

By Catherine Cole, A&S'17

There are only so many icebreaker games a freshman can endure. By the fifth day of Welcome Week, the thought of another round of “Two Truths and One Lie” or a night song sing-along was about as appealing as trying to decode the maze of

the BC campus map, and thus it was with relief that I boarded the bus to the Presidential Scholars retreat. Fortunately, our time at The Connors Center in Dover, MA proved to be not only a welcome reprieve but also a memorable – and fun – introduction into the next four years.

Our weekend began early with remarks from Fr. Keenan. Scholars introduced themselves and settled in, before hearing from Nikoleta Angelova, PSP '06, about the intense learning experience of working for Citigroup and the plans for her upcoming

entrepreneurial ventures. The first afternoon was devoted to discussions on maximizing our BC experience and an optional Mass. After a free evening of foosball and Jenga, the following morning saw a presentation of the social justice project by the sophomore class as well as the upperclassmen pitching their extracurricular activities to younger Scholars. Fr. Keenan then gave closing comments, and the bus took us back to campus.

Among the most valuable activities were two breakout sessions, the first with our

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respective classes and the second in arbitrary small groups. During the latter, my group of nine settled into the appropriately titled "Reflection Room," where we discussed our goals at Boston College and weighed the role of the program in achieving them. It was a rare chance to exchange ideas with other Scholars, opening the conversation up to new

perspectives.

And yet, perhaps the most important parts of the weekend were those that didn't appear on the schedule. Whether the freshman class was taking an impromptu hike through the Dover woods or the upperclassmen were joking around in the rec room until 3:00 in the morning, Scholars spent the retreat enjoying each other's company outside of the academic world. The retreat weekend makes

the difference between a few dozen Type-A's lumped haphazardly together and a community of collaborators, eager to serve our world and each other alike. The Presidential Scholars (past and present) form a network, and by convening in September as a team, we were able to prepare ourselves for a year of productivity, growth, and camaraderie.



Nick Moffa '14 and Matthew Alonsozana '14 enjoying down time at the hospitality suite.



Sarah Ganton '14 and Marie Pellissier '15, after an intense game of air hockey.

Alumni Spotlight: Nikoleta Angelova, PSP '06

By Maureen McGrath, CSOM '16

Over Labor Day weekend, at the annual PSP retreat, the Scholars had the opportunity to hear from PSP alumna Nikoleta Angelova on "Life after BC and the PSP." Angelova, a Bulgarian immigrant who graduated from CSOM in 2006, chronicled her experiences both at Boston College and beyond. After concentrating in finance and economics, she lived in both New York and Miami, spending two years in investment banking before moving on to HIG Capital and eventually venturing into entrepreneurship.

While Angelova's multifaceted career trajectory was in and of itself a fascinating story, her more general emphasis on open-mindedness and exploration likely left the strongest impression on the group. Reflecting on her time at BC, Angelova urged Scholars to cultivate interests (like her interest in language) that may not necessarily fall in line with their fields of study. Additionally, her decision to pursue opportunities with startup companies and to thrust herself into unfamiliar environments made her a strong model for self-awareness, healthy curiosity, and willingness to step out of one's comfort zone.

Angelova also highlighted the strong resource the Scholars have in the PSP community itself, and encouraged them to utilize that community when determining the paths for their own careers and lives.

"Her more general emphasis on open-mindedness and exploration likely left the strongest impression on the group."

Summer Experiences

Seniors Share Insights from their Summer Internships

By Jackson Bowers, CSOM '17

This summer, the twelve members of the PSP Class of 2014 ventured across the U.S. and the world for internships, gaining valuable professional experience and allowing them to further discern their post-graduation paths. Their experiences varied greatly—from working on a bone dig in England to interning for Morgan Stanley on Wall Street to performing research for biotechnology firm Genzyme in Framingham, MA. While some seniors pursued positions in their respective fields of study, others opted to try something completely new. Regardless of these differences, all the Scholars learned a great deal about independence, flexibility, and professionalism in their summer work.

Matt Alonsozana, A&S '14 demonstrated perhaps the most flexibility this summer, spending



Photo Courtesy of: Brooke Loughrin

Brooke Loughrin '14, stands beside a bronze statue of Eleanor Roosevelt and the United Nations emblem at the Franklin Delano Roosevelt memorial in Washington, DC.

“Their experiences varied greatly—from working on a bone dig in England to interning for Morgan Stanley on Wall Street to performing research for biotechnology firm Genzyme.”

his time in Washington, D.C. in not one but three separate positions. Alonsozana's main role was interning for the Joint Economic Committee, where he acted as a research assistant on health and tax policy. Because he was in the office of a committee rather than a specific policy maker, Alonsozana found he had more independence and was entrusted with more than just mundane office work. He developed his policymaking skills by heading up projects relating to the Affordable Care Act and price transparency in health care and honed his interpersonal skills by networking with longtime staffers on Capitol Hill. During the time not spent with the Joint Economic Committee, Alonsozana was a summer fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, and was named an Executive Board Member of the Asian-American Coalition of Maryland's Republican Party.

In his time as a Research & Development intern at biotech firm Genzyme, Scholar John Wang, A&S '14 experienced a similar level of independence in the workplace. Wang worked in the company's Cardiovascular Diseases Group in their sciences facility in Framingham on a team interested in finding new ways to

treat patients with atherosclerosis and chronic kidney disease. Using mice as models for human pathophysiology, John spent the summer testing different methods of naturally developing atherosclerosis in mice so that various treatments can be tested on mice with atherosclerosis. He reflected that animal research was valuable in that it allowed him to gain experience working with test animals, as well as different kinds of techniques for injections. Wang found the independence he was given in this position to be refreshing, and he was exposed to a whole different kind of research than that of traditional academia. While Wang and Alonsozana worked in positions directly related to their fields, English major Francesca McCaffrey, A&S '14 decided to pursue something different. She interned at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in Boston this summer, working in their Office of Public Affairs. At the EPA, McCaffrey helped with various projects, including organizing a program for student leaders of local university environmental groups and updating the website used by constituents to identify hazardous

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Class of 2016 Finds Service, Learning, and Camaraderie During their Summer Experience

To fulfill the Jesuit ideal of being men and women in service to others, during the summer following their freshman year the Scholars explore the problems of hunger, homelessness, and educational inequity in the Boston area through participation in a program modeled after PULSE, Boston College's nationally acclaimed course of study and service. Through their work, Presidential Scholars are challenged to see themselves in relation to acute national problems, to think creatively about the roots of these problems, the nature and efficacy of society's response, and the response that these problems elicit in their own personal and professional lives. In parallel with their service, Scholars read and reflect on a variety of texts--from philosophy, social science, public policy, economics and theology--pertinent to issues of poverty and social justice. Weekly discussion sessions challenge Scholars to integrate these readings with their field experiences and to reflect on the implications for their personal values and professional goals.

By Lucy Methven, LSOE '16

"I'll be there for you / 'Cause you're there for me too," concludes the well-known song, I'll Be There for You by the Rembrandts. Widely recognized as the Friends theme song, these lyrics also represent the Class of 2016's Summer Service-Learning Program experience. Not only did we in fact spend hours gathered on the couches in the Shaw House lounge watching episode after episode of the popular TV show; the lyrics expressed the strong sense of camaraderie we all developed both with each other and with the many kind and interesting people we met at our placements.

Other than the week we were privileged to spend in Florence last March, there were only rare occasions when all sixteen of us were able to gather together as a class. During our first year at BC, we all took advantage of many opportunities and became involved in programs that kept each of us very busy. It was different and exciting to have the chance to enjoy and explore both our campus and the city of Boston with our entire class of Presidential Scholars without the more demanding schedules that accompany each school year.

Serving to achieve the



Photo Courtesy of: Dan Lundberg

Some of the Sophomore Scholars pose with students at The Educational Development Group.

Jesuit ideal of BC students as men and women for others, the PSP Summer Service Learning Program gives Scholars the chance to engage with particular groups and areas of Boston. We spent time working with the influential people of Collaborative Education, Educational Development Group, Haley House, the Italian Home for Children, Project Bread Hunger Hotline, Rosie's Place, St. Francis House, and Suffolk County House of Corrections. We chopped vegetables, explained fractions, and answered phones. We played dodge ball, catalogued auction

items, and served food. We spent our six weeks doing whatever we could to help our supervisors while learning about the placements, their missions, and the people they serve. All of the time we spent in our various positions introduced us to issues, places, and people central to our city – none too far from our own comfortable campus – that some of us previously knew nothing about.

In order to ensure we each took time to reflect on our experience at the placements, the class gathered every Friday morning with Professor David

McMenamin and Rachel Crowell, Assistant Director of the PULSE Program. Through our discussions of Jane Jacob's *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Michael J. Himes's *Doing the Truth in Love: Conversations about God, Relationships, and Service*, and other intriguing works, Professor McMenamin led us all to think a little more deeply about our observations and encounters working with our organizations. We were able to draw on personal experiences while engaging as a

class in lively debates and discussions that related the concepts and ideas we were reading about to our actual service work. These conversations helped us process our thoughts around the work we were doing and learning about and gave us the chance to reflect.

When we had time off from our work, the evenings and weekends not devoted to watching entire seasons of *Friends* were spent



Photo Courtesy of: Claudio Quintana

Andrew Boyce'16 and Claudio Quintana'16 enjoy a summer day outside by the Boston waterfront.



Photo Courtesy of: Lucy Methven

Vivian Chang'16, Lucy Methven'16 and Marissa Marandola'16, help paint a mural at the Italian Home for Children.

getting to know the city of Boston and each other. We explored the Cambridge Food Truck Festival, ate way too much ice cream at the Scooperbowl, challenged each other in games of whiffle ball and soccer, and shared many Class of 2016 family dinners. There was definitely a strong sense of camaraderie throughout the entire time we spent together.

In large part, from our summer experiences grew the idea for our Sophomore Social Justice Project. We all recognized very clearly the need to raise awareness about the many agents of social justice in our city. Our class came together fairly seamlessly, and it quickly became evident that we each have something to contribute to our project. We are all excited about our plans for this year. Our experiences over the summer provided us with insights that will help each of us move forward in our college careers and beyond with an inclination to serve others. It is certainly comforting to know that as we do so, each of us has at least fifteen classmates on our side, none of whom would hesitate to say, "I'll be there for you!"

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waste sites near their homes. She enjoyed the mix of science and communications that her internship involved and like Alonsozana, stressed the importance of developing communication and interpersonal skills. In addition to her work at the EPA, McCaffrey worked as a research assistant for a New York Times journalist, who she was introduced to by a BC English professor. She said of this valuable experience: “Sometimes an opportunity like that comes along and you just have to jump at it.”

Alison Wawrzynek A&S '14, also split her summer in between two positions. She spent the majority of her time as a Nonprofit Management and Consulting Associate Intern for

Executive Service Corps of New England (ESC), a consulting firm that provides services to nonprofits, especially in the Greater Boston area. Wawrzynek's projects ranged from working on a professional development program for clients to drafting grant proposals and creating an outreach program with ESC's volunteer consultants. She found that the position was an excellent way to network with professionals in consulting, marketing, and law around New England and further develop her communication skills with these constituents.

Additionally, Wawrzynek continued her Undergraduate Research Fellowship (URF) with sociology professor Juliet Schor, studying connected consumption, conducting interviews and data

analysis to learn about users of web platforms involving “connected producers.” Over the summer, Wawrzynek saw her URF grow from a position in which she was simply a research assistant to one where she was given much responsibility and became a leader in the project.

These seniors offer just a few examples of the impressive work the Class of 2014 performed this summer. Their reflections on their experiences present a few common themes: they all were given new levels of responsibility and independence in their projects and they learned the value of interpersonal skills, whether in public policy, science, the humanities, or business.



Photo: Michelle Zavala

John Wang'14, Brooke Loughrin'14 and Matthew Alonsozana'14 at the Inner Harbor in Baltimore, MD on July 6th, 2013.

Class of 2015 Scholars Travel the Globe in Pursuit of Language Skills

By Marissa Marandola, A&S '16
& Claudio Quintana, CSOM '16

The Class of 2015 spent this past summer exploring the world, gaining exposure to new cultures, and developing their language abilities. Each Scholar designed an International Perspective and Language Program (IPLP) experience that incorporated language study and cultural immersion in the destination of his or her choice. The class pursued a plethora of languages, ranging from Swahili and colloquial Tibetan to more traditional choices, such as Italian and French. On October 3rd, members of the class shared their experiences with the other Presidential Scholars, as a guide for underclassmen to design their participation in the IPLP.

Mary Rose Fissinger, A&S '15, spent the summer in Morocco and found the experience to be enlightening. She spent about thirty hours per week with a French teacher for one-on-one tutorials. In addition to studying French, Fissinger also taught English as a second language in the local community. She gained a completely new perspective by spending time in Morocco. "I wanted to do something that would allow me to engage with the local community," she said. "It was an unbelievable experience."

Andrew Skaras, A&S '15, also had an unusual and worldly IPLP experience. He ventured to Germany to study the language for the very first time. Skaras had spent much time in college studying Greek, but felt that a different language would offer him a more

"The class pursued a plethora of languages, ranging from Swahili and colloquial Tibetan to more traditional choices, such as Italian and French."

enriching summer. Said Skaras, "it was a challenge and a whole new cultural barrier, but it worked out really well." His time in Germany connected perfectly to the other economic elements of his senior thesis, which will explore the debt crisis in the Euro Zone, and formed a bridge with his prior knowledge of the Greek language and culture.

A number of Scholars chose to integrate their academic and professional interests into their time abroad.

'It was a challenge and a whole new cultural barrier, but it worked out really well.'

Amanda Loewy, A&S '15, traveled to Paris, where she had the opportunity to study advanced French at the Sorbonne and conduct original research about the role of the Sorbonne in Renaissance France. Alicia McKean, A&S '15, spent six weeks at an orphanage in Argentina, where she improved her Spanish skills while working with special needs residents. She described her stay in Cordova as "a rewarding, valuable experience." Frank DiRenno, A&S '15, studied the



Photo Courtesy of: Amanda Loewy

Amanda Loewy, A&S'14, before the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.

Italian language in Sorrento, Italy for four weeks before working in a paleopathology lab at the University of Pisa for an additional month. He found that using Italian in a professional setting "dramatically increased" his confidence in the language.

The diverse experiences crafted by the Class of 2015 are a testament to the diversity of interests among the Scholars. Grace West, A&S '15, traveled to Tanzania to study Swahili. Patty Owens, A&S '15, explored colloquial Tibetan in India. Andrew Babbitt, A&S '15, earned a State Department Critical Language Scholarship to improve his Mandarin Chinese and intern at a Beijing hospital. Overall, each member of the class finished the summer with an enhanced understanding of the importance of cultural communication, improved language skills, and the development of a truly global outlook on life.

Welcome PSP Class of 2017!



Mackenzie Arnold
Wantage, NJ

Alexandra La Torre
West Windsor, NJ

Matthew Perryman
Pittsburgh, PA

Jackson Bowers
Edgewood, KY

Christine Lorica
Potomac, MD

Theresa Rager
Cincinnati, OH

Mary Kate Cahill
Chicago, IL

Owen Lyons
South Burlington, VT

Carolyn Ruh
Sudbury, MA

Catherine Cole
Eden Prairie, MN

Liza Magill
St. Louis Park, MN

Megan Schuler
Great Falls, MT

Meagan Gonzalez
Tampa, FL

David Makransky
Natick, MA

Russell Simons
Larchmont, NY

Isra Hussain
Lincoln, RI

Jesse Mu
Omaha, NE

Hagop Toghramadjian
St. Paul, MN

Alumni Announcements

Dustin Rawlin, PSP'97, and his wife Meggan, welcomed their son Lachlan Wilder Rawlin born in September.

Matthew Tilghman-Havens, PSP'98, and his wife Jen, welcomed their daughter Anna Grace ("Annie") Tilghman-Havens born in April.

Sarah (Martin) Pitlyk, PSP'99, and her husband welcomed their daughter Mara Rose, born in June.

Samuel Sawyer, S.J., PSP'00, was ordained a deacon on Saturday, Oct. 12, 2013 at St. Ignatius Church in Chestnut Hill, MA. He will be ordained a priest this coming summer on June 14, 2014 at the Fordham University Church in New York, NY.

James Pustejovsky, PSP'03, recently completed a Ph.D. in statistics at Northwestern University. He is now an assistant professor in the Educational Psychology department at the University of Texas at Austin.

Hannah Nolan-Spohn, PSP'05, and her husband Matthew Hess BC'05, welcomed their son Jackson Turner Hess born in September.

Rich Aberman, PSP'07, is engaged to Carolyn Holiday Beck.

Caitlin (Peterson) Calloway, PSP'08, married Tim Calloway on September 28, 2013.

Emily Neumeier, PSP'08, has been awarded a Fulbright-Hays grant from the Department of Education, for her dissertation research in Turkey, Greece and the UK.

Colleen Maher, PSP'11, married Second Lieutenant Patrick Ernst, US Air Force, on September 2, 2013.

Kyla Marra, PSP'12, has submitted multiple research manuscripts in basic and clinical science that have been accepted for publication. As Kyle prepares for medical school interviews, he has had many opportunities to present his research at academic symposiums, meetings and Harvard's Ophthalmology Poster Contest.



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