



PScholars Explore, Learn and Serve

Fall 2006

Ex Libris

The Newsletter of the Presidential Scholars Program of Boston College

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This past summer, Presidential Scholars spread out around the country and around the globe to explore other cultures, serve their fellow man, and build professional skills. Through the Pre-Sophomore Service Placements, Pre-Junior immersion trip to France, and Pre-Senior professional Internships, Scholars continued their predecessors' commitment to leadership, exploration, and service.

“We’ll Always Have Paris”

Lindsay Williams, A&S '08

The anticipation of spending four weeks in France begins, I think, the moment that potential Presidential Scholars receive the letter that invites them to the selection weekend and offers a broad outline of the program: even on paper, an international experience in one of the world’s most famous foreign destinations sounds magical. And the reality cannot be condensed into so short a piece. I can say that what our class most appreciated about our month abroad was the opportunity to encounter so much more than an average tourist to the “city of lights” would. In addition to our daily cultural immersion, we explored the religious, legal, medical, educational, and political practices to which few visitors have access. These special glimpses into France began almost the moment the jetlag subsided!

In Paris, we started our weekdays with large cups of cappuccino to see us through two-hour French lessons. While the aptitude test placed the majority of us at the “beginner” level, a few members of the class worked at the intermediate and advanced levels with our program assistant Tim Carraher, a 2004 Presidential Scholar alumnus and fluent French speaker who had spent his first year as a French Ministry of Education teaching assistant in France. As a beginner, I so appreciated these lessons: they gave me a working knowledge to utilize in the

elegant restaurants and shops I visited. In the most exciting lesson, we ventured to an open-air market and conversed with the locals about their products, the time of day, and directions to locations around Paris...all



*Presidential Scholars class of 2008 at Versailles
Photo: Marjorie Sardella*

in French, of course!

Lectures—on architecture, artwork, medicine, history, pedagogy, and a vast range of other disciplines—followed French class. What made these lectures so captivating was the knowledge that we would be visiting the places or examining firsthand the topics under discussion in

the afternoon. It is one thing to listen to history lectures and return to a poorly lit dorm room at BC: it is quite another to listen to such lectures knowing that you are only a Metro ride away from the historic sites about which you are scribbling notes. In Paris, we would discuss cathedrals and then visit La Sainte Chapelle with its breathtaking stained glass; debate the differences in medical or educational practices in France and America and then meet Professor Jean-Marie Leparç at Hôpital Ambroise Paré or the students at the prestigious Lycée Louis-le-Grand; work through a historical timeline of

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Pre-Senior Internships 2006

Each summer the rising senior Scholars complete internship experiences that challenge them to venture into private and non-profit organizations in order to apply the knowledge and leadership skills that they have cultivated over their three years at Boston College. The following are the chronicles of a few seniors' experiences, in their own words.

Allison Ramirez, A&S '07

While immigration has been one of the “hot topics” in the United States in the past year, my experience working for a non-governmental organization (NGO) in El Salvador that deals with immigration issues opened my eyes to the life and



*Allison Ramirez (center) and friends in El Salvador
Photo: Courtesy of Alison Ramirez*

death situation it presents to Salvadorans. Debating immigration policy and reform over the dinner table or in the classroom is not a luxury that the people of El Salvador enjoy. Instead, the constant question here is whether a loved one – a husband, a mother, a child – should set out on the long journey to arrive “mojado” (literally, “wet,” from the Rio Grande) in the United States. With this choice comes the possibility of arriving on my desk at CARECEN International in a human rights file marked “disappeared person.”

After studying abroad in El Salvador the fall of my junior year, I knew that I wanted to return the following summer to do my internship for the Presidential Scholars Program. Unfortunately, there aren't too many places in the country with established internship positions, especially not in the kind of non-profit NGO organization I was looking for. Luckily, through contacts I had made while studying abroad I learned about CARECEN International and their immigration work, including the human rights project I have become involved in, whose main work is the search for Salvadorans who have disappeared en route to the United States.

Families from all over the country come to CARECEN and present the case of a loved one who they have lost contact with somewhere between here and the United States. More than likely, their family members have died, but to live with the uncertainty of death and the faint hope of life is excruciating. Unfortunately, our resources at CARECEN are limited. This became clear to me

as I realized that I, as a short term volunteer, was essentially in charge of this part of the organization's work. I spent most of the summer developing resources to make the work of searching for persons less difficult, as well as facilitating the transition of this work to the association of family members, COFAMIDE, which was created August 6, 2006, under the direction of CARECEN.

While I spent a lot of time in the office in front of the computer, it wasn't hard to stay in touch with the reality of the country and the immigration situation. Living at first by myself, and then with one other friend from the United States, I was able to experience for the first time, albeit on a very small scale, what the oppression of living in a third world country really feels like. It is dangerous to walk around by yourself or travel on bus here after dark, which means after about 6:30 p.m. your options become a taxi, or a friend with a car. While I found this restraint on my independence extremely frustrating at times, it opened my eyes to the daily situation lived all over El Salvador: travel in fear, or stay confined to your house and immediate neighborhood. That is no way to live. Another frustration was the unreliability of the water service. My housemate and I were getting antsy after three days of waiting for the water to come back on. The next day I read an article in the newspaper about a community that hadn't had running water for a month.

Additionally, it became obvious to me that the economic situation in El Salvador is continually getting worse, further pushing people into the desperate choice of immigrating to the United States. I would ask myself, why would someone leave behind their home and their families to risk violent assault, rape, mutilation, hundred-degree temperatures without water, death, etc, all to reach a relatively xenophobic foreign country and probably end up being deported? The answers became clear every day, at every corner I turned, and with almost every person I encountered: because the minimum wage is approximately \$5.30 a day, while gasoline still costs \$3 a gallon; because the prices for electricity and transportation had just been raised, despite stagnating incomes and high unemployment; because you can only afford to feed your children tortillas and beans every single day of their lives, and can forget trying to afford the medicine for when they get sick; because even if you are lucky enough to graduate from college, you'll have a hard time finding a job if you can't speak English; because you have no opportunities, and you would do anything to provide a dignified existence for your family.

One set of my grandparents came to the U.S. as mojados from Mexico, and ever since then have been working to provide a better future for their children. My parents have in turn worked hard in their own lives in order to provide me with all the opportunities that I enjoy. I was honored this summer to give back to my heritage, and to contribute in some small way to the struggle of those in search of a better life. My hope is to continue this struggle in the U.S., where the threat of the “illegal alien” helps us to forget that the dignity and human rights of all people have no borders.

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See Pre-Senior Internships, next page

Welcome PSP Class of 2010!

The Presidential Scholars Program is pleased to welcome eighteen Scholars into the class of 2010! After a rigorous interview and application process, the following students were selected due to their impressive backgrounds in academics, leadership, and community service.

Ryan Beck

Rancho Palos Verde, CA
Carroll School of Management
Undecided

Caroline Beimford

Wellesley, MA
Carroll School of Management
Finance, Marketing

John Flowers

Tulsa, OK
College of Arts & Sciences
English

Erin Groden

Walpole, MA
College of Arts & Sciences
Biology

Scott Jelinek

Wellesley, MA
College of Arts & Sciences
Biology & International Studies*

Sarah Lang

Bellevue, NE
College of Arts & Sciences
Political Science & Theater

Ana Mascagni

Pembroke Pines, FL
College of Arts & Sciences
Sociology & International Studies*

Kelly McConnaughey

Huntsville, AL
College of Arts & Sciences
Psychology

Cecelia McDonald

Grand Rapids, MI
College of Arts & Sciences
Economics

Patrick Passarelli

Omaha, NE
College of Arts & Sciences
Undecided

Maria Teresa Perez

Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic
School of Nursing
Nursing

Jonathan Pike

Rockville, MD
College of Arts & Sciences
Economics

Chiara Rivas-Morello

Montgomery Village, MD
College of Arts & Sciences
Biochemistry

Chris Scullin

Beverly Hills, CA
College of Arts & Sciences
Political Science, Philosophy

Andrew Steck

St. Louis, MO
College of Arts & Sciences
Undecided

Peter Wojda

Cincinnati, OH
Carroll School of Management
Finance, Economics

Lea Yared

Palantine, IL
Carroll School of Management
Finance

Joseph Zabinski

Latham, NY
College of Arts & Sciences
Undecided

*=Intended Major

Pre-Senior Internships, cont. from p. 2

Richard Aberman, A&S '07

This past summer I worked at the Group Legal Office (GLO) of PCCW, the largest telecommunications company in Hong Kong. I had planned to find an internship in China for some time, but I only found a real opportunity after an underclassman Presidential Scholar put me in touch with his uncle, a partner in a large law firm based in Hong Kong. After discussing my career goals and qualifications with him, he sent my résumé and a personal recommendation to Jack So, managing director at PCCW. Mr. So then helped me obtain an internship with the GLO.

The GLO consists of an in-house team of lawyers that works closely with the PCCW business teams to develop and review contracts, limit liabilities, research applicable laws in relevant jurisdictions, retain documents and help shape corporate policy to coincide with Hong Kong law and acceptable business practices.

When I began my internship in early June, PCCW had just become the object of an intense bidding war. I was privy to the confidential details of these bids, which were estimated to be around US\$7 billion. The bids came under criticism from China's state-owned China Netcom, which owns 20% of PCCW. It expressed opposition to Hong Kong's telecom assets falling into foreign hands. Ultimately, 23% of PCCW was sold to Fiorlante LTD, a

startup company wholly owned by Hong Kong businessman Francis Leung.

During the bidding war, I reviewed due diligence material and classified high value contracts according to their impact on a possible buyout. I set up a data room for all contracts, terms and conditions and legal tender on file in PCCW. I was also put on a team to review and amend the current document retention policy. After the bidding war died down and the GLO returned to business as usual, I helped amend and draft high-value consulting, licensing, sublicensing, contracting, subcontracting, and collocation agreements that PCCW wished to sign.

I think the quality of my internship depended on five important factors. First, I was not in a formal internship program. I was the only summer intern in the Group Legal Office, so formal procedures or set tasks could not limit my responsibilities. Secondly, my colleagues were willing to train and educate rather than simply delegate menial tasks at least in part because I was receiving funding through the Presidential Scholars Program. When I began the internship, I knew very little about contract law and commercial tender, especially in Hong Kong. For the first month, I did very little actual work; instead, I was given text books, law books, and precedents to read and study and I was tested on what

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*At the Council of Europe, with Ulrich Bohner, director of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities
Photo: Marjorie Sardella*

France to prepare for a tour of the cold and mazelike corridors of the Pantheon; and examine the Impressionist movement before gazing, starry-eyed, at Monet and his peers' timeless pieces in the long galleries of the Musée d'Orsay.

Interspersed among these afternoon excursions were slightly longer trips to renowned sites. We spent a full day in the quaint town housing Chartres Cathedral, first enjoying a tour of this church that looms above its surroundings by the always in-demand guide Malcolm Miller and then lunching and shopping in the surrounding neighborhood. Only a few days later, we journeyed to Versailles to prance through the Hall of Mirrors and, at least in my case, get temporarily lost among the sprawling gardens and fountains. And, to demonstrate that not all of Paris is picture-perfect, we also had a sobering trip to the Fourth World Movement and met with a group of activists dedicated to social change.

After Paris, we groggily embarked upon the eight-hour bus ride to Strasbourg, where we would enjoy a weeklong glimpse of the European Union and Council of Europe. Once again, we all appreciated the ability to move from lecture to direct experience and back again. We examined, in detail, the pros and cons of a "unified" Europe: the perceived threat to nationalism; the repercussions of moving to the Euro; and the raging debates over the admittance of a country like Turkey, which is largely Muslim, associated more with Asia than Europe, and populated so heavily that it would have a majority in the EU. It was also particularly fascinating to attend a meeting of the Court of Human Rights and watch judges from different nationalities and language backgrounds work together—with the help of translators—towards a common verdict. As a break from these intellectual pursuits, we spent one of our final days in Strasbourg on an indescribably beautiful tour of the French countryside, wine-tasting, shopping, and exploring medieval fortresses. If only the wine I bought for my dad and stepmom hadn't shattered on the trip home!

Ultimately, although our main focus was of course the studious

aspect of "study abroad," none of us will forget the experiences we had during our free time: stargazing practically beneath the Eiffel Tower, picnicking in front of Sacré-Coeur and watching Paris light up in front of us; biking to Germany and finding the most delicious ice cream for the equivalent of eighty cents; encountering the statues of Rodin or that enigmatic smile of the Mona Lisa; and snapping pictures in front of the Moulin Rouge windmill or the opera house that inspired Phantom's author. Additionally, the individual travel weekend allowed us to explore destinations beyond Paris: it took some of us to Tours and its chateaus; some to Giverny and a real-life view of Monet's Gardens; and others to a number of Paris' locations that the program simply did not have time to visit.

It was so difficult to leave France: we all fell in love with everything, from the exquisite crepes and coffee at outdoor cafes to the amazingly rich history to the relaxed pace of life so foreign to us Americans. It was an incredible learning opportunity and a wonderful way to bring the Class of 2008 even closer together.



*Learning about extreme poverty at the international headquarters of the Fourth World Movement from Bruno Tardieu, Fourth World Director in France
Photo: Marjorie Sardella*

Pre-Sophomore Community Service Placements

At the close of their freshman year, Scholars remain in the Boston area for six weeks in order to volunteer in various community service placements around Boston. This program allows students to get to know the local communities on a much more intimate level while serving populations that are often forgotten and overlooked by mainstream society. Here are the thoughts of three current sophomores who participated in this experience during the summer of 2005.

Robbie Kubala, A&S '09

Before this summer, I had never set foot in a prison before, but by the end of June, I didn't want to leave. I worked in the educational division of the Suffolk County House of Correction, a medium-security prison that holds over 1200 inmates with sentences of 2 years or less. Sometimes I tutored individually in subjects ranging from basic literacy to essay-writing skills and even trigonometry. Other times I would assist another teacher in a larger class, and a few times I even taught a psychology class.

Most of the inmates were working to get their GED in hopes of a better job upon release, but some had made it all their lives without even learning how to read. All of the classes are optional, although inmates can get reduced sentences for regular attendance. This meant that we often worked with people who were genuinely eager to learn.

Although the prison was a highly secure place, once in the educational hallway the inmates could move about freely, and people were always coming in and out of classrooms, making the atmosphere somewhat difficult to teach in. Guards were present in the hallways, though not in the classrooms, which locked from the outside and had large windows for observation. What was an initially unsettling experience soon became an easy routine, passing through metal detectors and heavy doors that had to be opened by guards behind glass windows, and never did I feel unsafe.

Part of this lessened anxiety was due to the educational staff, a diverse group of social workers and teachers of various ages. Some were young and still quite idealistic, while others, despite a certain amount of cynicism, still clearly loved their jobs and would do nothing to change their situation. Their dedication to their work, even without a set curriculum or much accountability, was inspiring, and a lot of learning went on even with the distractions of prison life.

Besides being one of the most unique experiences of my life, working in the prison was also one of the most rewarding. Seeing the same people again and talking about things besides math and reading gave me a strong feeling of solidarity with the inmates. Everyone makes choices in their lives, and if we as Presidential Scholars have made mostly good decisions, it is due in no small part to the influences of our family and friends, and that is something that we can never forget.

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Nicole Wong, A&S '09

Despite the ankle-spraining, hair color experimentation, and a number of unbearably stuffy days in a windowless boat-shaped room, I don't think there is a better way I could have spent the first six weeks of my summer. Fresh out of our freshmen year of college, the fifteen of us '09'ers each volunteered at two of seven different placements around Boston while living on campus at the prestigious and beloved Shaw House.

I spent my Mondays and Wednesdays at the Project Bread FoodSource Hotline in East Boston. With my headset on and calculator in hand, I took calls from all over Massachusetts from individuals and families struggling to make ends meet. My job was to refer people to food pantries in their local area, and/or give pre-screens to see if they were eligible to receive food stamps. Fortunately or unfortunately, depending on how you look at it, almost every caller I spoke to was eligible for government aid. Everyone's situation was different, from disabled and unemployed individuals not receiving sufficient social security, to single mothers

raising families of five on minimum wage incomes. Each call opened my eyes to the hardships and injustices of the real world. Working at Project Bread helped me understand how the welfare system works, and why other non-profit organizations are needed to help the hungry.

My other placement was at Haley House, a multi-faceted Catholic Worker House of Hospitality that works to improve the situations of homeless people in various ways. Forty years since its founding, Haley House grew out of a charitably-minded couple's apartment and has become a branching organization that includes a soup kitchen, low-cost housing buildings for rent, a food pantry, clothing room, bakery-training program, and a magazine publication. Amazingly, even at 6 a.m. when breakfast preparation began, the atmosphere in the soup kitchen was always vibrant and contagiously energetic. The strong sense of community between the volunteers and guests was overwhelmingly friendly and comfortable and is what I think makes it unique from other soup kitchens. I got the chance to get to know several of the guests through debating the validity of comic-book-to-movie-adaptations, practicing my Spanish-speaking, and hearing firsthand accounts of the Vietnam War. It was great to talk with the guests, as was witnessing impromptu sing-alongs and dance-offs to the classic Michael Jackson or Prince hits that were often playing on repeat. I admire Haley House for its commitment to following a combination of Buddhist ideals and the Catholic Worker mentality of service.

To help us place these service experiences into an academic context, our Friday class with Professor David McMenamin, director of BC's acclaimed PULSE Program, provided an outlet for discussion supplemented by a weekly required reading. These classes also gave us a chance to articulate how our volunteering was affecting our opinions of poverty, education, and the concept itself of "service."

During those weekends when it wasn't raining, some of us also took full advantage of exploring new places in the Boston area. Trekking over to Walden Pond for a swim, attending Earthfest by the Charles River, and a weekend trip to Martha's Vineyard were all big highlights of the summer. It was an unforgettable six weeks of personal development and PScholar bonding, and we even have a quote board to show for it.

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Tim Mooney, A&S '09

When I got off the Red line and headed down Broadway, I prepared for my worst nightmare. No, I wasn't facing the room full of convicted felons I had met the day before. Instead, as I walked through the door of LaBouré Center I was confronted with a loud and rowdy crowd of 5-year olds.

With more energy than a bolt of lightning, these kids quickly made clear they didn't just want me to read stories to them. Rather, in addition to teacher's aide, I was also an opponent in Candy Land, a partner in the building blocks, and "the monster" during recess.

The LaBouré Center is a Catholic Charity that, in addition to low-cost day care, provides job placement, elderly care, and a teen mentoring programs. My time in the Early Development Program more than lived up to my expectations—the classroom was full of caring teachers and wild and crazy kids.

Not only did my time there provide me with a stark and thought-provoking contrast to my placement at Suffolk County House of

See Pre-Sophomore Service, p.7

Pre-Senior Internships, cont. from p. 3

I learned using actual PCCW contracts. My supervisors at PCCW were willing to invest in my training in part because they were not paying for me to be there.

Third, I began my internship at a very fortuitous time. Since the GLO was overwhelmed by the buyout, there was more than enough exciting work to go around. Fourth, I had a very close relationship with my supervisors. Not only were they intent on making my internship a worthwhile experience, they welcomed me into the GLO community. Lastly, the international experience of living and working in Hong Kong allowed me to experience another culture in a field and location that may determine my future career.

Living in Hong Kong has had a lasting impact. During my internship, I started an advertising company in Hong Kong. I recognized that the vast majority of taxi cabs in the city do not display advertisements like those of major cities in the U.S.. During the first month, along with my work at PCCW, I began researching the potential and legality of taxi advertising in Hong Kong. I discovered that it had only been legal since 2001 and was slow to grow in popularity because the taxi market is incredibly disorganized. I asked another Presidential Scholar—Bill Clerico—to help measure the potential of taxi advertising, devise a business plan, and create a company. By the end of June, we formed Urban East Advertising, LLC. For the next two months we worked to get the company off the ground with the help of a third partner who lives in Hong Kong. Although UEA is still young, we have signed a contract with one of the largest taxi companies in Hong Kong and met with the chair of the Taxi and Light Bus Association. We now advertise through our website www.ubraneastadvertising.com and market ourselves creatively to accredited advertising agencies. If not for my internship, I would have neither discovered this incredible opportunity nor had the courage to pursue it.

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Emily Gruber, A&S '07

What does it take to make a book?

This summer, for ten weeks, working beside interns gathered from around the country—from Northwestern, Georgetown, and Harvard Universities, from Virginia, New York, and Minnesota—to 500 Fifth Avenue in Manhattan, I had the chance to find out.

W. W. Norton is the oldest and largest publishing house in America that is owned entirely by its employees. Known in academic circles primarily for their literature anthologies—a product they pioneered, still the standard of comparison in the field—Norton also boasts a healthy list of trade publications, ranging from fiction to nonfiction to poetry and boasting such literary lights as Seamus Heaney, Sebastien Junger, Adrienne Rich, Patrick O'Brien, the latest book from Booker Prize-winner DBC Pierre, and Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*, not to mention offerings from BC's own Paul Mariani and Suzanne Matson. A maze of tiny offices and often-malfunctioning printers, the sixth floor of the titanic building midway between Times Square and Grand Central Station is where all that magic happens.

Coincidentally, it was also where I learned the difference between IBC and CMS overseas shipping, the names of every bookseller in the New York City area and a fair number of others across the

country, and Stephen King's home address. (No, I didn't write it down.)

As one of Norton's trade editorial interns, I was at the beck and call of two editorial assistants, each of them at the beck and call of two senior editors; I was the very lowest level of the food chain. I got the first look at most of the manuscripts that came across these editorial desks, and had my reading recommendations read by the women responsible for *The House of Sand and Fog*, for *Will in the World*, for at least one Poet Laureate of the United States. I was also privileged to wrestle with photocopying labors of Herculean scale, to file copies in triplicate of every letter written declining every unsuitable manuscript, and to stuff and label hundreds of books in padded envelopes for the delectation of booksellers country-wide.

Working at Norton was one of the most positive and most difficult experiences I've ever undergone, both intellectually and socially. Trade publishing is a tough profession to break into, but everyone I worked with welcomed me with open arms, free books, and an enthusiasm for their work that made it a genuine pleasure to deal with them for forty hours each week. Living in New York City became almost incidental to the daily pleasure of going to work; one of the summer's thoroughly unexpected benefits turned out to be realizing how New Yorkers can spend their lives in the city and never visit the Statue of Liberty or the Empire State Building.

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Bill Clerico, A&S '07

The alarm goes off at 6 A.M. – it's another Tuesday morning at the corner of Fulton & Water Street, New York, NY. Still groggy from socializing late with coworkers the night before, I roll out of bed, grab the Wall Street Journal, and head towards the PATH train. Battling the crowds, I'm thrilled to find a strap to hang onto on the PATH car. Though the very tunnel we are about to enter was on the news the night before, the target of a foiled terrorist attack, the people around me are calm and don't seem to notice or care.

After my commute is done, my bag gets X-rayed and I'm into work for the 8am conference call with our sister office in London. Questions fly back and forth across the Atlantic at the speed of light: how did we perform overnight? Any outages? Have the new versions caused any problems?

Welcome to the Equities Technology Core Connectivity group at Goldman Sachs & Co. As a division, we build and support the computer infrastructure that trades stocks, options, derivatives, and futures. As a group, we support the connectivity part of this effort; that is insuring that links to our clients and the exchanges they trade on to stay operational, even during power blackouts or other unforeseen incidents.

On a normal day the floor is quiet; developers are coding, managers are meeting and gathering requirements, little stress toys get thrown about the maze of cubicles - pleasant distractions from the mental fatigue of writing code. However, with one phone call, the floor snaps to attention – the volume gets turned way up as people start shouting and more phones start ringing. The connection to one of our data centers has been lost.

Class of '07 Summer Internships

Richard Aberman

PCCW Group Legal Office, Hong Kong

Atlas Anagnos

Bellagio Forum for Sustainability, Osnabruck, Germany

Kerry Brennan

Centro del Apoyo para el Desarrollo de la Mujer y el Nino, Puno, Peru

Emily Ceronsky

Literary research with Christopher Ricks and Dayton Haskin, Boston, MA. & The Virginia Woolf Conference and research in Birmingham and London, UK

Bill Clerico

Goldman Sachs & Co. New York, NY

Marisa Cochrane

Center for Future Security Strategies, Hudson Institute, Washington, DC

Patrick Cronin

Word of Mouth Studio, New Orleans, LA & The School of Improvisational Music, New York, NY

Emily Gruber

W.W. Norton, New York, NY

Samantha Koller

McMullen Museum, Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

Rebecca Kraus

Projects Abroad, Guadalajara, Mexico

William Markis

National Institute of Health, Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism Division, Washington, DC

Patricia Noonan

Manhattan School of Music, New York, NY and the Eugene O'Neill Conference Center, Waterford, CT

Allison Ramirez

CARECEN International, San Salvador, El Salvador

Kathy Wakeham

SHAWCO Health Clinics & Absolute Return for Kids, Cape Town, South Africa and International Service Learning, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Chris Wilson Byrne

Corporate Banking, Citigroup, New York, NY

Alexander Yiannopoulos

Philosophy Course, American College, Athens, Greece, and assistant to Prof. Richard Kearney, Cork, Ireland

Pre-Senior Internships, cont. from p.6

Eventually the problem gets resolved and the floor returns to normal, but with billions of dollars in the balance, the group is ready to spring into action again – seconds of lost participation in the market can cost hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars. Losing participation close to when the market closes on certain days could jeopardize the entire bank. Needless to say, it's a high pressure group.

While I was not directly supporting the trading systems, I did develop an application to make support easier. Entitled Argus and written in Java, my application monitors the logging files of various trading systems on the network. It intelligently collates the log messages into one organized display, and allows users to find out the cause of a specific problem – and quickly. It also generates statistical reports so we can determine which clients are the most profitable and which clients place the greatest strain on our system.

It was an incredible internship – not only did I get to design and implement an application from idea to rollout, but I got to see the inner technology workings of one of the most influential banks on Wall Street.

Pre-Sophomore Service, cont. from p. 5

Corrections (I always found it decidedly ironic when the kids took their “monster” to “jail” when they finally caught up with him), but I also had buckets of fun.

It had been a long time since I had spent time with small children. Reconnecting with the energy and simplicity that characterizes a preschooler was rejuvenating. Not only was I able to help the children learn, play, and have fun, but I also rediscovered the joys of coloring, reading *Where the Wild Things Are*, and a mid-afternoon nap.

These were but a few of my favorite things from the summer. Staying in the Greco-Roman palace that is Shaw House, traveling to the exotic locales of Martha's Vineyard, Walden Pond, and Montreal, and spending gorgeous summer days in downtown Boston made Shaw House '06 more than just a month and a half of service—it was paradise.

In addition to our service placements 4 days a week, the program featured seminal texts in the fields of sociology, economics, theology, and literature that encouraged us to question the way our world is structured and think about how our service can fit into a larger social model. The weekly Friday class allowed us to discuss these issues as well as offer presentations on our service placements.

Junior Year Study Abroad

In their junior year many scholars elect to study abroad. Over the years scholars have studied in virtually all parts of the world. Here are the stories of some of our most recent Scholar returnees.

Kerry Brennan, A&S '07

For my semester abroad, I went to Buenos Aires, Argentina. While there I attended three universities: Universidad Torcuato DiTella, Universidad Católica Argentina, and Universidad de Buenos Aires. DiTella is a small university well known especially for its programs in Political Science and Economics, and I was able to take a class there on Argentine Political Economy with two professors who have published important books on the subject. The Universidad Católica (UCA) is the Catholic University, and where I took the majority of my classes, studying Economics, Political Science, and Psychology. My class at the Universidad de Buenos Aires (the largest public university in the city) was in their Foreign Language school, where I took an upper-level Spanish for Foreigners class along with students from the United States, Japan, Brazil, China, England, and Germany. It got quite exciting around World Cup time! Living in one of the largest cities in the Americas (and the world) was an exciting and challenging experience. Getting used to the late night schedules of Porteños and the frequent strikes and public protests were the first steps in adjusting to life in Argentina, and I grew to love them. Learning to navigate the beautiful city via bus routes and the subway was a small challenge compared to finding and renting my own apartment in a language not yet my own. I came back missing Argentina but also very pleased with my experience, the skills I gained, and the many interesting people I met.

Atlas Anagnos, A&S '07

I studied abroad for two semesters at the Katholische Universität in Eichstätt, Germany. Eichstätt is a little town about 2 hours north of Munich by train, which sits in the middle of a valley right on the Altmühl River in a very scenic region of the country. Tourists from all over Europe come there to experience the natural beauty through hiking, biking and camping. The university is just as pleasing to the eyes as the surrounding valley, being housed on the grounds of the former summer residence of the bishop of the area. The student body is small, so personal attention from the professors was always possible. Classes were hard, but interesting and worthwhile. My dorm was quite far from campus, about a two and a half mile bike ride, but seeing as it was along the banks of the river through the scenic valley, it wasn't much of a problem. If I woke up early on Wednesdays, I could go to the market that took place on the Marktplatz every week to get freshly laid eggs, freshly grown vegetables as well as freshly caught fish. Life was simple, but the big city of Munich was close at hand for those needing a little more excitement. I wouldn't trade my time there for anything in the world.

Emily Gruber, A&S '07

I spent the spring semester reading English and Linguistics at Queen Mary's College in the University of London. Located in the East End, Queen Mary stands at the heart of London's Middle Eastern and Indian communities and has one of the top three programs in English in the United Kingdom. I got the chance not only to delve into Virginia Woolf and Shakespeare on film with leading British scholars, but to explore the delights of Brick Lane curries and the street markets of Camden Town and Portobello Road. I fell in love with Covent Garden and the Royal Shakespeare Company, and hope to return for the London theatre season as soon as I possibly can.

Katy Wakeham, A&S '07

My study abroad placement was in South Africa at the University of Cape Town. I consider my experience to be extremely worthwhile as well as diverse, a combination of intense beauty

in a land defined by its dramatic mountains and powerful ocean, while simultaneously filled with the challenges that arise when extreme economic disparity characterizes the local population. More than a decade after apartheid, South Africa continues to experience the growing pains of a society attempting to desegregate and increase the quality of life of all its citizens amidst violence, racism, and disease. These circumstances led to much of my learning occurring outside of the classroom, as questions of social justice and ethics arose in the most simple and daily of tasks. Having returned from South Africa, I am in the process of reflecting on what I have learned and experienced into my life at BC, and attempting to integrate this into my future plans.

Allison Ramirez, A&S '07

My first semester abroad I spent in El Salvador studying with the Casa de la Solidaridad program in San Salvador. This intensive program involved community living with other students from the United States as well as Salvadoran scholarship students. Three days a week were spent taking classes at the Jesuit university in San Salvador, the UCA, and the other two days were spent immersed in a community placement with 2-3 other students. I was placed in Jayaque, where I spent time at a cooperative learning how to sew and assist in the dental clinic, but mostly creating relationships with people and learning about their reality. We encountered many difficult times over the semester, as the country experienced a volcanic eruption, a hurricane, and a few small earthquakes all within two weeks of each other. We also struggled coming to terms with the U.S. involvement and funding of the 12 year civil war that ended in 1992. Overall, the experience opened my eyes to the realities of a country characterized by poverty, inequality, and dependence, as well as challenging me to question my role in the global relations that affect countries like El Salvador.

My second semester abroad I spent in London, England, studying at King's College. The experience was dramatically different than my first semester, which made for an interesting couple of months. I really enjoyed the classes I took, and found the educational system of the U.K. an interesting contrast to the U.S. system. The city of London has a lot to offer, and I particularly enjoyed the parks, gardens, and free museums. The diversity of the city was surprising to me, and I thoroughly enjoyed living in the Caribbean immigrant section of town while also being able to enjoy the Indian and African influences. Through my meal plan in the dorm, I came to fully understand Jacques Chirac's comments on English food, though was unfortunately unable to sample the endless variety of ethnic restaurants due to the outrageous exchange rate. All in all the experience was a valuable one, and provided me with yet another cultural perspective on the world.

Marisa Cochrane, A&S '07

I spent the year studying International Relations at the London School of Economics and Political Science, in London, England. While the program was much more labor-intensive, as compared to many other study abroad programs, it was well worth it. The classes themselves were fascinating and the diverse environment at the LSE made them even more worthwhile. For example, I was able to study foreign policy analysis and contemporary foreign policy in a class of students from various countries including China, Ukraine, Pakistan, Israel, and France. My experience outside of the classroom was just as great. The cultural and historical offerings were superb. London was a fantastic city in which to spend a year.

Thompson Island 2006

As part of the opening events of the school year, the newly formed freshman class makes an annual trek to Thompson Island in Boston Harbor to participate in Outward Bound. This program challenges students to overcome physical and intellectual hurdles in order to better know themselves and each other. Here is one freshman Scholar's account of the event.

Caroline Beimford, A&S '10

Looking back on this year's Labor Day weekend trip to Thompson Island in Boston Harbor, for the Outward Bound ropes course that begins the year for each incoming class of first-year Presidential Scholars, it is entertaining to compare the weekend's boisterous and cheerful conclusion with its more subdued early morning commencement. As is the intended goal of the retreat, the Presidential Scholars Class of 2010 (along with our invaluable veteran upperclassmen guides) left for the Island as a group of awkward strangers and returned a remarkably close-knit team, optimistic for the years of the program ahead agreeing that this year's Thompson Island retreat was a resounding success.

When we started off, the outlook was rather bleak. Hurricane Ernesto, scheduled to arrive at Boston Harbor at almost the same time we were, threatened to make what was already an uncertain foray into uncharted territory all the more intimidating. While the inclement weather did impose certain changes on the usual program, namely a switch from sleeping in tents on the beach to sleeping in dormitories, it was generally welcomed by the group. As a member of the Class of 2010 noted, "the dorms allowed us to focus on getting to know each other, rather than just the bugs." Whether the change in accommodations played a role or not, one notable achievement of the weekend was, the immediate and genuine sense of camaraderie and affection that emerged as a result of what was essentially an intensive forty-eight hour ice breaker.

The structured daylight hours were filled with group building drills and climbing challenges, a foundation was set where we were expected to act as a cohesive and enthusiastic team. We grappled with inner fears and challenged our physical limitations on the



Caroline Beimford gives John Flowers a hand up.

towering Giant's ladder, each group improving on the last's time and technique, so that by the end we were almost convinced that we were setting Outward Bound records. (thanks in part to one of the members of the group who displayed an amazing ability to scale vertical elements). The torrential rain prevented us from taking part in the traditional raft building and alpine tower activities, forcing us to remain indoors for group-building and "think-outside-the-box" games, like "juggle the stuffed animals", and "make it through

the maze," From which we learned a lot about problem-solving and working as teams, despite their names and our occasional tendency to overanalyze in our search for hidden universal truths and hidden meanings.

Arguably even more valuable than these exercises, in retrospect, was the time during which we were left to our own devices. In the evening, we explored the island and walked along the beach in the surprisingly mild and misty night. Though we were unsuccessful

in our attempt to circle the entire island, the Boston skyline and city lights made the view more than worth the walk. The rounds of parlor games that ensued once we were back in the dormitories were one of the highlights of the trip for many and memories of them will most likely be a source of comic relief for several years to come.

By the afternoon of our departure, the newly bonded Class of 2010 boarded the ferry in a collective state of cheerful and damp griminess for the trip back to the mainland. With people already buzzing about next summer's Community Service program and our more extended stay under one roof, the Thompson Island trip had exceeded expectations, leaving us wondering how the Program would be able to accommodate all of us when we all want to sign up to return to Thompson Island with the Class of 2011.

Pre-Sophomore Service, Cont. from p. 7

When it came time for me to present on LaBouré Center, I could barely contain my exuberance for the last 5 weeks I had spent with my class. In the process of helping my kids grow and develop, they had reawakened in me a part of myself that I had long since forgotten. In the process of helping them learn and grow, I found

that I too had something to gain from our interaction.

Thus, even more than the sunny beaches on Martha's Vineyard and the sights of Montreal, when I think back to our summer of service, I remember my class of 12 of the most adorable, curious, and precocious preschoolers I have been lucky enough to meet.

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Bread for the Journey

On Keeping an Edge of Discomfort

Today, fleeing from challenges and trying to stay safe is a very poor blueprint for managing in reality. People need to resist the temptation to “stay safe,” to continue doing what they’ve already learned because it’s easy and they never make mistakes. Moving toward manageable challenge and risk in order to successfully grapple with difficulty and develop self-confidence is probably the single most important responsibility we each have for ourselves. In borderless conditions, most people need to keep pushing themselves beyond the envelope of their comfort zone.

Judith M. Bardwick, Seeking The Calm In The Storm. Managing Chaos in Your Business Life (Financial Times Prentice Hall, 2002)