

Ex Libris

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GABELLI PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM, BOSTON COLLEGE

Volume XX, Issue 1

Fall 2015

Dover Retreat Welcomes Returning and Incoming Scholars



Photo: Jennie Thomas

Scholars pose for a quick photo before returning to campus.

By Reed Piercey, MCAS '19

For most of the freshman class, the first few days of school, or “Welcome Week,” were an adjustment to the hustle and bustle of college life. Thankfully, the Dover retreat came as an appreciated respite. The freshmen kicked off the two day retreat by having breakfast with BC’s new Vice Provost for Enrollment Management, Nanci Tessier, while all the other classes had a chance to catch up after their summer experiences. After Fr.

Keenan outlined the retreat agenda, every Scholar had a chance to introduce themselves. Since our alumni speaker was delayed by a late flight, the introductions were more relaxed and ran longer than expected, but afforded everyone the opportunity to hear more about each other than just their name and major. GPSP graduate Brett Huneycutt ’03 arrived soon thereafter to talk to the assembled Scholars.

Following Brett’s talk, each class split up into groups to discuss a variety of topics, moderated by

Fr. Keenan, Jennie Thomas, Sarah Gregorian, and local area alumni. The freshmen received a preview of the upcoming year, while the sophomores discussed their social justice project and upperclassmen reviewed their plans for the future. Small groups then intermingled, with an even mix of class years, so that the Class of 2019 had a unique opportunity to glean wisdom, advice, and humorous insight from their older peers about how best to take advantage of the GPSP experience. With each Scholar feeling slightly older and wiser,

*see **Retreat** page 2*

Retreat con't from page 1

everyone was herded outside to have this year's instance of the Gabelli Presidential Scholars Program immortalized in a series of group pictures.

Before gathering the group together again for dinner, Fr. Keenan led Mass for some Scholars, as others enjoyed sports, conversations, and even naps outdoors in the sweaty heat of Dover. Some freshmen, including myself, were trounced in ultimate Frisbee, but all present had a great evening. After enjoying dinner together, the GPSP leadership gave the students free time at the retreat center, which resulted in different groups playing Jenga, air hockey,

Scattergories, foosball, and other scholarly diversions. The freshmen eventually took over the reflection room and continued to get to know each other. At the end of the day, everyone filed off to bed feeling exhausted but content.

The next morning, Fr. Keenan provided an overview of the year's schedule for all the Scholars and gave various announcements, setting everyone up for what was to come in the school year ahead.

The most exciting news of the day, however, came in the form of a new, still-in-the-works, student designed website, GPSP Connect, put together by our very own Claudio Quintana '16 and Ameet Kallarackal '18. Their service,

once launched, will allow current GPSP students and alumni to create profiles and connect efficiently with one another, while staying up to date on all information relevant to the program. Alumni, please stayed tuned for further updates to this fantastic project!

After all nonfreshman Scholars had a chance to briefly pitch the various clubs they were involved in, the group hit the road once more and returned to the real world. Although our time in Dover was brief, all Scholars would agree that it provided a much-needed microcosm of bonding and reflection, finally allowing the freshmen to put their precollege worries to rest.

Alumni Spotlight: Brett Huneycutt '03



Brett Huneycutt '03 visits scholars at the annual Dover Retreat.

By Connor Murphy, CSOM '19

Brett Huneycutt, received a Fulbright grant and a Rhodes

Scholarship, figured out how to write code on his own, worked for some of the most innovative and influential companies in the world,

and started multiple business ventures in completely different fields. And yet, when he talked to the Presidential Scholars this August at our annual Dover retreat, Huneycutt admitted that he was “a little nervous” to be there.

Huneycutt grew up in Phoenix, Arizona, where he won a scholarship to Brophy College Prep, an all-male, Jesuit high school. Huneycutt then attended Boston College as a Presidential Scholar, studying economics with minors in Latin American Studies and mathematics. Around this time he became interested in the social justice application of economics, particularly in Mexico and Latin America, during his junior summer internship in Mexico City at the US Embassy.

***Alumni Spotlight* con't from
page 2**

After graduation he spent a year in El Salvador as a Fulbright Scholar, having written his senior thesis on migration and remittances and their impacts on El Salvadorean microenterprise. He then spent two years at Oxford University in England, studying economics, and graduated with Distinction. Huneycutt was one of the first two Boston College Rhodes Scholars, both of whom were selected in 2004 (the other being another Presidential Scholar: Paul Taylor '04).

Huneycutt then went to work for McKinsey & Company in 2006, in New York, where he consulted on technology and product development, and continued to spend time in Mexico. During this time, Huneycutt began working on the Border

Film Project, which he started with another BC graduate, Rudy Adler. The project sought to have people on both sides of the Mexico-US border document their experiences with disposable cameras; the result was a stunning collection of photographs released as a book in 2007. After leaving McKinsey in 2010, Huneycutt helped found 1000memories.com, a family history-oriented start-up, which was eventually acquired by Ancestry.com in 2012. He spent eighteen months in the San Francisco Bay Area working as the Managing Director of the Mexico branch of Ancestry.com, before going to work for Canadian wealth management start-up Wealthsimple in 2014. He continues there today as a founding COO.

Brett offered the Scholars some fascinating insight on motivation, discussing his shift from more external to internal

motivations. It is an important conversation for any driven group of young adults. He also gave some thoughts on social justice initiatives, mentioning that at this point in his career, economic empowerment and other movements are not so much driving factors as ideals intertwined, albeit loosely, with his everyday work. The nature of entrepreneurship, he said, is that “your original idea is not going to be a thing that ends up working.” His professional outlook is informed by that knowledge.

Huneycutt also discussed the importance of the close friendships he formed at BC, particularly as a member of the GPSP. Despite all his years spent abroad and across the country, they still find time to play Fantasy Football.

Ever to Excel: Class of 2016 Summer Internship Experiences

By Meg Loughman, MCAS '19

Over this past summer, the class of 2016 ventured to different corners of the world to embark on a variety of internship experiences and to gain valuable insight about both their passions and the ever-changing professional climate around the globe. While some seniors crossed continental borders and others stayed a little closer to home, all graduating members of the GPSP went through extraordinary journeys in leadership and personal growth to kick off their final year.

Tate Krasner, MCAS '16, ventured all the way to Nairobi,

Kenya, where he worked at the Hekima Institute of Peace Studies and International Relations as a research intern. There, he worked to help develop databases on Kenyan organizations specializing in peace and security issues; his efforts also worked towards establishing the Hekima Institute's first journal, the Africa Peace Studies Journal. Tate, though often having to work and act beyond his comfort zone, was able to engage in multicultural dialogues and build connections with people from many different backgrounds. He gained particular insight into the workings between both large- and small-scale organizations, and

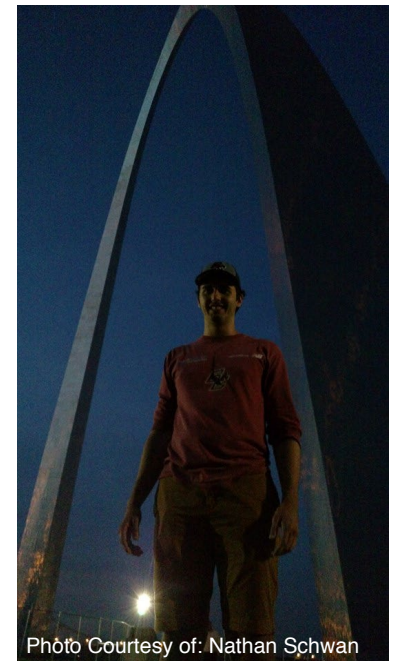


Photo Courtesy of: Nathan Schwan

Nathan Schwan '16 spending his summer in St. Louis, Missouri.

A Summer Abroad

By Rebecca Reilly, MCAS '19

The GPSP's sophomore summer language experience provides an opportunity for Scholars to immerse themselves in unfamiliar cultural and linguistic territory. But three Scholars decided to go beyond the usual summer experience. Two of the Scholars decided to study Spanish: Alexandra La Torre in Madrid, Spain and David Makransky in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Isra Hussain, meanwhile, improved her Urdu in Lucknow, India.

La Torre, a secondary education and English major in the Lynch School, chose to immerse herself in her native language in Spain. This did not, however, mean that she had no learning curve. She lamented the lexical differences between the language in Peru and Spain and especially emphasized her immediate need to learn professional, not colloquial, Spanish. Through a BC program, La Torre interned at a consulting firm in the theater world. Because she is pursuing additional minors in Theater Education and Teaching English Language Learners, she felt that the experience encapsulated her academic goals effectively. She even had the chance to meet up with other Presidential Scholars who were also studying in Spain.

"For a little while we did Tuesday night dinners, kind of like Tuesday night meetings," La Torre recalls.

Makransky's theater studies led him to South America to learn tango and improve his Spanish skills. After a brief homestay, he lived in a shared apartment



La Torre spending her free time traveling around Spain.

with other exchange students. He found tango still had a surprising presence in Argentinian nightlife.

"She lamented the lexical differences between the language in Peru and Spain and especially emphasized her immediate need to learn professional, not colloquial, Spanish."

He remarked that the principles of tango, as an improvised dance form, help him to react more authentically onstage and to better position and posture himself. He also claimed that it helped him to understand body language and implicit communication better.

In his spare time, Makransky explored the city of Buenos Aires thoroughly and even ventured into the countryside as far as Patagonia.

Hussain received a US Department of State Critical Language Scholarship. The

program, which fully funds study abroad in fourteen critical languages, required that she live with a host family and attend a local institution for Urdu instruction five days a week. It also stipulated that she speak only Urdu on the trip. In the meantime, she interned at various NGOs. Her motivation to learn Urdu came from her desire to understand her Pakistani heritage and her aspiration to work in public health in South Asia. She acknowledged that cultural differences like bucket showers and rickshaw navigation made living in India difficult, but she feels transformed by her overall experience.

"Principles of tango, as an improvised dance form, help him to react more authentically onstage and to better position and posture himself."

Summer Abroad con't from
page 4

Apart from advancing academic and professional interests, the summer language experience provided an important opportunity for personal development. All three Scholars talked about the new responsibility of living alone abroad and the challenges it presents. La Torre embraced her independence and remembers feeling incredibly at home in Madrid. Makransky's experience abroad, while much less structured than the other two, had the unique challenge of forcing him to explore and create excursions on his own. While Hussain's schedule was relatively more rigid, she additionally felt the pressure of changed gender roles and mental health in her conservative, primarily Muslim city.

Even as they overcame these challenges, the Scholars had plenty of stories to share from their time. La Torre loved spending her birthday in Madrid, able to view the span of the city from the roof of a Peruvian restaurant, where she introduced her Spanish friends to her own cultural cuisine. Makransky, in his foray into Patagonia, was lost in the Andes Mountains during a long hike, but despite many mishaps getting back to civilization, was afforded the kindness of Argentinian strangers and incredible panoramas of his host country. Hussain admired the intercultural dialogue in India, where non-Muslims prepared food for their Muslim neighbors breaking the fast during Ramadan, and she felt that it renewed her personal faith and spirituality.

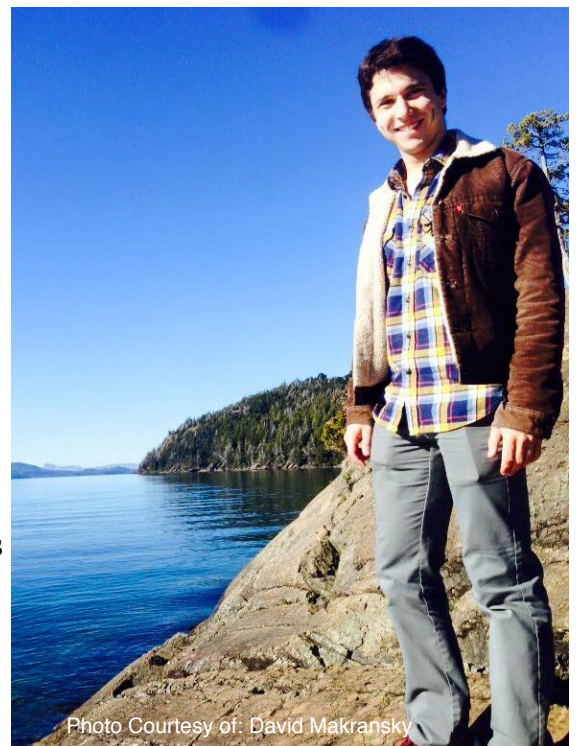
La Torre, Makransky, and Hussain all hope to continue to



Hussain studying abroad in India learning Urdu on a US Department State Critical Language Scholarship.

practice their language skills for professional use and are grateful for their holistic development this summer. They all mentioned independently their desire for incomers to the sophomore summer experience to choose a program of action that will challenge their notions of culture and greatly engage their language abilities.

"I believe human connection is one of the most important aspects of our lives on Earth," Hussain confessed, "and I think humans are beings that need community. I think learning the languages of people that you're interacting with is really important and shows that you respect and are really interested in their lives."



Makransky exploring Patagonia in Argentina.

Internships cont. from page 3

how they interact and collaborate on international and local spectrums. More than anything, however, Tate's experience as an intern reinforced his passion and commitment to continuing work in issues of peace and security as he moves towards the future.

Opting instead to spend his summer in the greater Boston area, Claudio Quintana, CSOM '16, worked as a fellow with Dat Ventures, a startup accelerator pairing international companies with fellows in Boston to work on various projects. Claudio's primary interest was in a familiar subject, product management, though he expanded his vocational horizons by dabbling in structured business development. As he worked with companies on projects involving local schools and cultures, he also helped them to build their partnerships and maximize

business expansion to the United States. Above all, Claudio obtained experience in the professional world and became more aware of his occupational preferences with respect to dynamics in a working environment and varying styles of management.

Halfway across the country in St. Louis, Missouri, Nathan Schwan MCAS '16, interned for LaunchCode, a nonprofit startup just beginning to establish itself in the world of tech. The group aims to recruit talented and interested individuals in technological fields—specifically, individuals who lack necessary degrees or work experience—and place them in apprenticeships. Nathan immersed himself in the company's marketing and tech sectors, including graphic design, digital/print advertisements and website development through the usage of HTML and CSS code. Besides getting the chance to network

with other bright, young minds in St. Louis, Nathan was able to find his passion for marketing and programming, which helped him to clarify his career goals; ultimately, he aims to utilize his skills and talents in each one to combine them on an entrepreneurial level.

While each senior undoubtedly had a unique experience, unmatched by any of his or her predecessors, all of their experiences share a common thread—they served to enlighten each Scholar on his or her prospective role in the professional workforce and acclimate them to life after Boston College. The class of 2016 as a whole was able to refine their leadership skills, attain real-world career experience, and further develop the talents that make them stand out in a professional environment.



The Class of 2016 pose for a class photo at their final Dover retreat.

Class of 2018 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.



Photo Courtesy of: Rachel Simon

The Class of 2018 enjoying a family-style dinner at Shaw House.

By Ameet Kallarackal, CSOM '18

The upperclassmen had generated more than sufficient excitement and anticipation about what the summer would entail. This would be the experience that would strengthen our class, help us to learn more about each other, and to learn how to work effectively together. We were ready for the challenge, and to learn about the world beyond the Heights, and about ourselves. Indeed, the Summer Service Learning Program is everything a college student studying at a Jesuit institution can dream of: a large, ominous house full of mystery, service-centric experiences forging new friendships and a broader mind, and six entire weeks rife with independence and adventure.

The work at our placements ranged from cooking food and serving hundreds of meals to the Boston homeless at St. Francis House, to teaching immigrants English at Educational

Development Group, to operating an information hotline at Project Bread, to working with inmates at prisons and jails. Each experience provided unique insights into underprivileged life, but they all struck deep chords within us and forced us to question the status quo. The conversations we had were critical. At Haley House kitchen tables, they allowed us to tear down the barriers between the homeless and the fortunate. At Collaborative Education the staff helped us recognize the cyclic nature of poverty and menial education. At Bridge Over Troubled Waters the administration underscored the importance of a positive support structure at home and at school. Across all placements, they highlighted the destructive nature of the criminal justice system, and they inspired us to pursue Mass Incarceration for our Social Justice Project.

A weekly seminar led by Professor Sweeney complemented our service experiences, providing

us with refined lenses to observe with and thoughtful perspectives to think with. In order to keep our hearts light we spent time in Boston singing karaoke, going to movies and concerts, going to underground concerts in Allston, traversing the extents of the MBTA system, playing Chinese Chess with the locals in Chinatown, and kayaking on the Charles River. We also went on a spontaneous weekend trip to New York, enjoyed a nostalgic dinner at UNOs where we last dined on our GPSP interview weekend, had Sunday night, family-style dinners and post-dinner dances, and so much more. In six weeks we accumulated rich shared experiences, both at work and at play. As the Class of 2018 kicks off its Social Justice Project, it is fair to say that the Summer Service Learning Program and an unforgettable six weeks at Shaw House was an integral part of our decision to pursue positive social change.

Welcome PSP Class of 2019!



Avita Anand
Dallas, TX

Joshua Elbaz
Valley Stream, NY

Connor Murphy
Braintree, MA

Sydney Apple
Atlanta, GA

Sageene Francis
Coral Gables, FL

Reed Piercey
Mountain View, CA

Sarya Baladi
Madrid, Spain

Katherine Gold
Pittsford, NY

Rebecca Reilly
Lenexa, KS

Shaan Bijwadia
St. Paul, MN

Margaret Loughman
Gulfport, MS

Thomas Toghramadjian
St. Paul, MN

Andrew Constantine
Wilmington, DE

Elizabeth Warner-Rousseau
Delmar, NY

Alumni Announcements

Mark Noferi '96 recently started a position as an attorney with the U.S. Dept of Homeland Security General Counsel, in the Immigration Law Division, focusing on immigration enforcement issues. He would be happy to hear from any P-Scholars!

Liz (Babinski) Baker '02 is now the Director of Science, Health & Technology for Belmont Public Schools.

Kyle Marra '12 moved to San Diego last year, where he is currently in his second year of an MD/PhD program in Bioengineering at the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine. Gearing for a career in academic medicine, he continues to research and publish in medical journals while presenting work at national conferences. He currently is the manager of UCSD's free ophthalmology clinic, which provides ophthalmic care to the uninsured population of the greater San Diego area.

Michael Cotter '08 is now a Mathematics Teacher at St. Vincent Pallotti High School in Laurel, MD.

Dominic Longo '97 is happy to report that the Minnesota chapter of PSP alumni held its first general meeting at a local St. Paul microbrewery on Friday October 9th. Gary Gabor '02, Ryan Bremner '98, and Mike Reif '02 joined him.

He has also started a new job, having left management consulting for academia. Check out his department at the University of St. Thomas website: <http://www.stthomas.edu/mcdc/>

Brooke Loughrin '14 was selected as a World Affairs Council Fellow (2015-2016). The World Affairs Council Fellows Program offers a unique professional development opportunity to a small group of greater Seattle business and community leaders. The Fellows convene for discussions with carefully selected high-caliber international experts who offer unparalleled insight into current global issues.

Cathleen Phelan '01 completed all the requirements to become a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) this past June, which is the independent level of licensure. She and her husband, JP Jarczyk, also welcomed son, Benjamin Gregory Phelan Jarczyk this summer. He was born on July 11, at 2:49 pm and weighed 7 lbs 9 oz. he joins proud big sister Abigail.

Matt Alonsozana '14 joined Berkowitz Public Affairs, a political startup in DC, as its Research Manager. He'll be responsible for much of its political research projects and also helping coordinate the international projects, with a focus in Asia.

GPSP Alumni:



Join our GPSP Facebook & LinkedIn Groups!





GABELLI PRESIDENTIAL
SCHOLARS PROGRAM

122 COLLEGE ROAD • CHESTNUT HILL, MA 02467