

Ex Libris

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GABELLI PRESIDENTIAL SCHOLARS PROGRAM, BOSTON COLLEGE

Volume XXI, Issue 1

Fall 2016

Dover Retreat Welcomes Returning and Incoming Scholars



Photo: Sarah Gregorian

Scholars are all smiles at their first event back together for the new school year

By Cole Tamburri, MCAS '20

The final full week of August was a time of change for students across campus: upperclassmen settled in for another fall semester on the Heights, while the Class of 2020 discovered their new home, bid adieu to loved ones, and anxiously awaited their first college classes. For some, the week represented the beginning of the end at Boston College; for others, it promised everything new: new friends, new responsibilities, and new opportunities.

GPSP's retreat at the Connors Family Retreat and Conference Center in Dover, MA offered members of the Program a chance to share these experiences. At breakfast on Saturday, freshmen solidified personal bonds, sophomores shared their Summer Service Learning experiences at Shaw House, juniors reconvened after a summer of worldwide language programs, and seniors interacted with the other members of their tight-knit class, undoubtedly wistful that this would be their last trip to Dover together.

Following breakfast, the Scholars convened and presented brief synopses of how they individually spent their summers -- much to the amazement of the Class of 2020, who felt simultaneously humbled by the achievements of their peers and inspired to begin their own collegiate journeys. Following these introductions and an overview of the retreat by Fr. Keenan, the group attentively listened to Kelly McCartney, GPSP '11, who recalled her departed,

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experiences of life after Boston College. She spoke of personal hardship and sacrifice, discussed the trials, tribulations, and joyful rewards of finding her way in the world, and awakened a sense of realistic optimism in her audience. The honesty with which she spoke was much appreciated; many Scholars left the room with a much clearer picture of life after BC. After lunch, the Scholars split into class breakout sessions to discuss specific themes and upcoming events. With Fr. Keenan, the freshman class touched upon their upcoming trip to Florence, Italy and their budding relationships with faculty mentors. The Class of 2019 worked on their Social Justice Project with Sarah Gregorian, the Class of 2018 was joined by

Francesca McCaffrey '14 and Tim Mooney '09, and the Class of 2017 was joined by Alex Goldowsky '12, and Jennie Thomas. Upon the conclusion of these discussions, the Scholars as a whole split up into five groups, which sought to provide advice to the freshmen regarding their time at BC. The Scholars then moved outside for what seemed to be the most nostalgic event of the weekend for many: group and class photos. After an evening Mass delivered by Fr. Keenan, everyone enjoyed a barbeque dinner and unwound with an evening of candy, air hockey, and pleasant socialization. Sunday morning, the Scholars gathered together for breakfast and an overview of GPSP events for the upcoming semester. In addition, the sophomores presented the details of their exciting Social

Justice Project, "Overlooked and Overdosed: The Opioid Crisis in Boston" as others offered advice and constructive criticism for their efforts toward bringing attention to the opioid problem in the United States, and particularly in Boston. Returning Scholars then told the freshmen about clubs and organizations that they are or have been involved with at BC and urged them to explore the opportunities before them. Following some closing remarks and a final meal, the Scholars departed, ready to begin a successful year at BC. The retreat offered one final taste of summer while also introducing the exciting events of the upcoming year.

Alumni Spotlight: Kelly McCartney '11



Photo: Meg Loughman '19

Kelly McCartney '11 speaks to current Scholars at the annual Dover Retreat.

By Leena Rijhwani, MCAS '20

At this year's Dover retreat in late August, the Presidential Scholars had the chance to hear from Kelly McCartney, GPSP '11, who flew in from Chicago to share her experiences at BC and beyond. Originally from Maryland, McCartney was a Linguistics major at BC and devoted her time to a variety of clubs and organizations including 4Boston, Peer Health Exchange, and The Heights newspaper, for which she was the writer of the blind date column, "Eagle Dates." As a Fulbright Scholar, McCartney took on an English Teaching Assistantship for a year in Vietnam, which exposed her to a completely different culture and taught her

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fortitude and patience when she had to make local friends and settle into a new lifestyle. After returning from Vietnam, McCartney joined Teach for America in a low-income area of Chicago and experienced what she called her 'worst year.' The classroom proved to be a tough environment to control, especially with middle school students, and a school administration that did not support her, nor offer her a teaching position the next year. Despite the hardships she underwent, the year taught her empathy for those struggling and freed her from the fear of failure. The skills she learned allowed her to become a model teacher at her next school.

When she applied to the MBA program at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business, McCartney realized that her alternative route to business school and her current career in consulting gave her a unique set of skills and had trained her to master the presentation skills she learned while teaching 8th grade students. McCartney advised that if there is one thing to take away from BC, it is to be open to circuitous routes. She advocated for working after college and gaining experience, and letting go of the urgency to get to where one is headed as fast as possible.

McCartney also urged the Scholars to network as much as possible, particularly within the GPSP, because the Program, and all those involved, are genuinely inter-

ested in each individual's success. Unlike many other scholarship programs, GPSP asks: "Are you smart and ethical? Are you passionate about something in particular? Are you aware of the world around you?" That's what makes our Program so special. McCartney's strong and encouraging words resonated with everyone in the room and will remain with the Scholars for years to come.

Ever to Excel: Class of 2017 Summer Internship Experiences

By Connor Murphy, MCAS '19

Members of the Class of 2017 spent their summers exploring an array of locations and careers, from San Francisco to Madrid; from law clinics to computer science research labs.

Liza Magill, an International Studies major and Medical Humanities minor, spent her summer in Boston working at Partners in Health. PIH is a global healthcare non-profit cofounded by Paul Farmer. Part of her work at PIH, Magill focused on mental health treatment. She conducted research on psychotherapy programs that have been effective in low-resource settings, particularly in places like Rwanda and Haiti, where PIH has prominent Mental Health Programs.

Magill also worked with PIH Engage, a political advocacy effort

that allows young activists to campaign for global health initiatives by speaking with politicians. The internship affirmed her passion for global health and gave her experience in a career that she thinks is sometimes less common in the GPSP.

"I wanted to work at PIH because of the NGO's ability to combine moral imperatives for human rights through health with tangible clinical solutions that have successfully created health systems around the world," she said. "The internship was transformative to how I view 'success' in global health."

Meagan Gonzalez spent her summer in Mountain View, California, working for Google's Trust and Safety team. A Finance major with Computer Science



Photo Courtesy of Meagan Gonzalez '17
Gonzalez '17 in San Francisco, California

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A Summer Abroad

By Shaye Carver, MCAS '20

This past summer, Presidential Scholar class of 2018 completed their Sophomore Summer Language Program. This experience challenges Scholars to study in a non-English speaking country, allowing them to immerse themselves in a new culture and discover a life within that culture. Four Scholars in particular pursued very unique language studies that extended to the far reaches of the globe: John Sipp furthered his studies in Russian and Christopher Yu strengthened his proficiency in Mandarin Chinese, while Ali Mills and Riley Soward, worked in Spanish speaking countries.

With one year of instruction in Russian at BC under his belt, John Sipp, a Theology major, traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia--the heart of Russian culture. The vibrant city houses a rich historical foundation and functions as an eclectic hub of art, literature, and music.

Sipp devoted himself to working at the renowned Hermitage, one of the world's largest art museums, and the former palace of Russian tsars, located beside the Neva river. During his time in St. Petersburg he also engaged in biweekly Russian lessons at a language institute. Sipp recalls exploring the city while occasionally taking trains to nearby places in his free time. His fondest memories are of the "White Nights." Because St. Petersburg is so far north, the dead of summer consists of nearly twenty two hours of daylight. During those light hours of the night, the nightlife



Mills '18 explores the wildlife and natural beauty of Bolivia during her summer

is electric with cafes and bars celebrating. The conglomeration

“Without the GPSP I wouldn't have had the opportunity to explore a new culture and improve my language skills all while learning more about the field international development and health equality”

- Ali Mills '18

of these experiences gave Sipp the opportunity to grow intellectually while also helping him to reflect on his definition of success in life.

Christopher Yu, a Philosophy and Sociology major, selected a dual language program in Beijing and Dongguan, China. This experience exposed Yu to a dichotomy of worlds. His first four weeks in Beijing were spent at Peking University in an intensive Mandarin summer program. In the bustling city of Beijing, Yu studied and interacted with his roommates.

Yu intended to further familiarize himself with the language before he went to Dongguan, the southernmost part of China, for his final four weeks. There, Yu was a factory worker by day, sitting in one of the countless positions on the line, using an electronic screwdriver to screw electronic pieces into the circuit board. By night and during any free time he had, Yu was a researcher, talking to and interviewing the other factory workers with whom he had become friends.

With these interviews, Yu said

“I went to understand their mechanized way of life--but returned as a witness to the humanity of each worker, each with their hopes, aspirations, and personality.”

- Christopher Yu '18

Yu recalled learning the valuable lesson of gratitude and discovering
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his passion to serve the common good in his future career.

Ali Mills, a Biology major and Medical Humanities minor, also connected with her idea of a future career in Cochabamba, Bolivia studying Spanish. There, she enveloped herself in a full time internship at an organization called El Instituto para el Desarrollo Humano, which provides health services, rights counseling, and general support to people living with AIDS. Mills completed a study on the social and cultural factors that contribute to the adherence to Antiretroviral therapy for people living with HIV and AIDS: she also created a contraception guide for young women in Cochabamba. In addition, she took one-on-one Spanish classes with a local Bolivian teacher. During her weekends, Mills explored the indigenous and colonial cultures of Bolivia while traveling to many natural marvels including salt flats and the edge of the Amazon. The connections that Mills formed in Bolivia confirmed her desire to work internationally in women's health equity, especially in Latin America.

Finally, Riley Soward, Management major concentrating in Computer Science, traveled to Mexico City and immersed himself in the startup scene. He interned with MassChallenge Mexico City (MCMX), a company dedicated to helping local founders launch their own companies. In this way, instead of limiting himself to one company or organization, Soward interacted with a wide range of companies. Assigned an individual



Photo Courtesy of Mattie Mouton-Johnson '18

Rachel Simon '18 and Mouton-Johnston '18 pose with friends in Argentina

project, Soward spent the first half of his experience interviewing various professionals involved in entrepreneurship in Mexico City in order to determine how MCMX could best assist early-stage founders. He spent the latter half of his time reviewing notes from all the interviews, identifying key problem areas for founders and writing recommendations for how MCMX could approach educating startups to navigate these problem areas. In his free time, he learned how to navigate the city while making new friends.

Despite the obvious differences in the Scholar's summer language experiences, there were common themes found in all their stories. The Scholars admitted to struggling with the language and with interacting with the locals, but they also reflected on how the

experience gave them a greater sense of direction and purpose. Exposed to a new side of this dynamic world, the class of 2018 grew through the challenges they faced while serving the common good.



Photo Courtesy of Austin Bodetti '18

Bodetti '18 poses on the Jinja River in Uganda



Photo Courtesy of Chissy Lorica '17

Lorica '17 stands alongside some of her students from her summer classroom

and at the end of the experience he said that while he learned a lot, he decided he'd pursue a different path going forward. "I'd definitely recommend to other Scholars to take the internship experience as a chance to try something they're wondering whether or not they'd be passionate about, because it's a great way to find out what the answer is," he said.

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concentration, Gonzalez said the role let her combine technical and analytic work. She worked primarily on safe-browsing initiatives, with a focus on anti-phishing operations to protect users.

"Working at Google allowed me to gain exposure to a number of opportunities available in the tech industry and gave me experience working in a large company," Gonzalez said. She urges members of the other classes to look for their internships outside of traditional routes like BC's Career Center, particularly if their interests lie outside the norm of the schools and majors.

Catherine Cole was in Washington, D.C. over the summer working as an intern in Speaker of the House Paul Ryan's office and with the House Homeland Security Committee. Cole had done prior internships with research institutions, activist groups, and nonprofits, so she said she was looking for a change of pace with her summer job. Needless to say, it worked.

"It confirmed my interest in working in public policy," she said. "I'd love to return to DC."

Jackson Bowers worked in Citi's healthcare investment banking group in San Francisco. He chose the West Coast rather than New York because he wanted to work with early-stage biotech companies, which are highly concentrated in the Bay Area. He said that he wanted to spend the summer figuring out whether he was interested in a career in finance,

All these seniors said that one thing to consider with internships is taking a risk – whether it's giving a career a try to see how it fits or challenging yourself by working abroad in a completely foreign place, you can do anything for 10 weeks. What better time for it than junior summer?



Photo: Jennie Thomas

Class of 2017 poses together at their final Dover Retreat

Class of 2019 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 Reed Piercey, MCAS '19

After traveling to Padua, Italy over spring break, the Class of 2019 thought that it would be impossible to grow any closer. But living together in Shaw House for six weeks proved us wrong. As part of one community over the summer, we found countless new ways to laugh, explore, and bond with one another, while volunteering daily in intensive service placements that challenged us to look beyond ourselves.

Each of us spent the first four days of the week volunteering at two different placements, which varied widely in location and mission and covered an enormous range of weighty topics. Every Friday was spent discussing our experiences with Prof. Meghan Sweeney and Shanteri Baliga, leaders of the PULSE program at BC, which oversees our placements. They fostered a space for us to talk about our weekly experiences, at organizations that included Haley House, a soup kitchen turned massive social enterprise, Rosie's Place, a shelter and service center for women in need, the East Boston Neighborhood Health Center, a community hospital, Project Bread, a hotline working to connect the impoverished with food resources, two different prisons and detention facilities, and several other locations throughout Boston. At each placement we were faced with tasks as simple as washing



Class of 2019 says goodbye after a full six week experience together

dishes and as daunting as teaching a newly immigrated person English as a second language.

We adopted a variety of roles that thrust us directly into contact with some of the most vulnerable populations in the city. We made deep bonds with both those we served and those who worked alongside us, prompting us to continually look deeper into our experiences and examine why the injustices we faced might persist in today's world. Many of our placements were located on or near a section of Massachusetts Avenue that is infamous for its connection to drugs and the ever-worsening opioid crisis, known informally as the "Methadone Mile." This exposure, along with our continued attempts to follow the interconnected web of personal and systemic problems behind our placements, led us to focus on the opioid crisis for our Sophomore Social Justice Project. It is a section of Boston that now feels close to home for all of us, and yet is

treated as distant by those unaware of the opioid epidemic or ignorant of its extent. We aim to change that on campus this year.

When not working at our placements, we found time to explore Boston and the surrounding areas more than ever. Some highlights included culinary adventures at Yamato and the Scooper Bowl, visits to Revere Beach, kayaking on the Charles River, and weekend trips to Cape Cod and New York City. We discovered new corners of the MBTA system with countless trips into downtown Boston leading us into movie theaters, mouth-watering restaurants, and through the grass of the Common. Not to mention the meals we crafted for ourselves in Shaw, ranging from seasoned steak tacos to peach cobbler (with the occasional dinner of milk and cereal when time was a concern). We packed our six weeks to the brim with experiences that will never leave us.

Welcome PSP Class of 2020!



Photo: Meg Loughman '19

Shaye Carver
Hershey, PA

Kate Peaquin
Seattle, WA

Sarah Santoro
Ashburn, VA

Sergio Farina
Tampa, FL

Jaq Pyle
Greenbrae, CA

Evey Satterfield
Maryville, TN

Trevor Jones
Huntington, NY

Megan Reynolds
Wilmington, DE

Carly Sullivan
Boston, MA

Tim Morrissey
Ashland, MA

Leena Rijhwani
Norwood, NJ

Cole Tamburri
Storrs-Mansfield, CT

Luke Murphy
Marshfield, MA

Kevin Xia
Walpole, MA

Alumni Announcements

Sean Flahaven '95 announced his new venture as the founding CEO of The Musical Company, a new firm designed to provide musical-theater creators with services in professional and amateur licensing, music publishing and original cast recordings. Andrew Lloyd Webber, Concord Bicycle and the Really Useful Group will own the firm, which opened for business on October 3. Sean was formerly the senior vice president of theater and catalog development at Warner/Chappell Music.

Lindsay Nelson Philbin '98 shares that she got her masters in Nursing in 2012 from DePaul University, and has been working as a school nurse, part-time, in Chicago at Marillac and St Vincent Depaul Family Centers. She has four daughters, Mackenzie (11), Sierra (8), Kayla (5) and Brinna (2).

Charles Vernon '98 and his wife Cindy welcomed daughter Josephine in January of this year.

Ari Daniel Shapiro '01 and his wife Ghinwa Choueiter welcomed daughter Leila Marta in July of this year.

Marisol Orihuela '03 is a Visiting Clinical Associate Professor of Law at Yale Law School, where she teaches a course on criminal defense and one on worker and immigrant rights.

Scott Jelinek '10 has been working as a consultant for Deloitte in Washington DC, and recently started working on a project with the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Global Health Protection.

Andrew Steck '10 and his wife welcomed son Mark in July of this year.

Andrew Rivera '11 married Chloé Isabella Smith in front of family and friends in a beautiful ceremony in Beuvron-en-Auge, France. They met while Andrew was studying abroad at King's College London during his junior year of college.

Kyle Marra '12 recently completed his STEP1 Medical Licensing Exam to culminate his first two years of medical school and is now in his first year of graduate school for his MD/PhD at UCSD. He is working on his PhD in Bioengineering while completing his thesis at The Scripps Research Institute under Dr. Martin Friedlander.



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