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The Royal Review: 2015-2016

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The Royal Review

MOLLOY COLLEGE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

ENGLISH MAJORS INTERN
AND LEARN!

FOUR EVENINGS OF FOOD,
FRIENDS AND FILM—FREE

SEEING POPE FRANCIS

CONGRATULATIONS,
BARBARA NOVACK!

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, WILL!
SHAKESPEARE FEST

LIT FOR YEARS, THEN
SUDDENLY: STD!

PRESIDENT'S AWARDS

ALUMNI SUCCESSES:

TABITHA OCHTEA

AMANDA AMMIRATI

ASHLEY GEYER

LEARNING AND SERVING:
FRESHMAN SHARE LITERARY
INSIGHTS

25TH ANNUAL ALUMNI SUPPER

Each year in September, for the past 25 years, Dr. Robert Kinpoitner has shared cheese cake (and the dinner that precedes it) with Molloy College English Department alumni and friends, current student scholarship winners and their families, and English faculty. The occasion for this high calorie event is, of course, the English Alumni Supper.

At this year's supper, held in the Reception Room, on September 18, 2015, 50 attendees enjoyed the food, the company, and the chance to exchange college and department

news. Alums were interested to hear from Dr. Kinpoitner about the expected opening of the Barbara H. Hagan Center for Nursing and the increased number of students living on campus in the two dorms. The Writing concentration, Royal Review Newsletter, film festival, poetry events, and literary celebration (Shakespeare's 400th birthday party, scheduled for April 12th) were all topics of conversation.

Honored at the celebration were English Department scholarship recipients Elise Werner, winner of the Sister Grace Bletsch Scholarship; Nicole Piccini, winner of the Catherine Brajuka Memorial Scholarship; and Victoria May, winner of the Lillian Emmerich Joseph Memorial Scholarship. The three were congratulated by family, alumni, and faculty. The dinner, as always, also served as an occasion to raise scholarship funds for the future, with \$2680 collected for the Sister Mary Verity McNicholas English Scholarship Fund.

If you missed this year's celebration, don't despair. Plans are already in motion for the 26th Alumni supper to be held on September 23, 2016. Save the date!



Victoria May, Nicole Piccini, Elise Werner

English majors intern and learn!

English majors who are not pursuing certification in education must take an internship course during their junior or senior year. Students may be placed in a position by the Office of Experiential Learning or may pursue an opportunity they find for themselves. All internship positions are reviewed by the English Department and the Office of Experiential Learning to be sure that the work involves use of communication skills and critical think-

ing. The 100 hours of work gives students a chance to explore possible careers while they sharpen skills they will need after graduation. Besides performing their duties at the internship site, students keep a reflective journal in which they write about what they are learning and how they are contributing to the organization for which they are working. Throughout the semester, each student intern meets with the English Internship instructor, Dr. Kathleen Conway, to discuss his or her work and reflections on the experience.

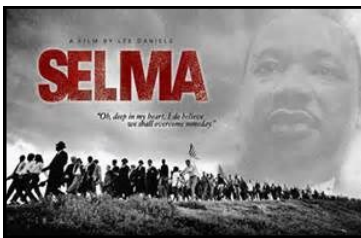
We asked one of our interns, **Annie Kibort**, to send her own account of the internship and to gather some thoughts from two of our other recent interns.

Erin Burke:

I spent the semester working for a construction company in one of their Manhattan field offices. The company is currently restoring subway stations to their original appearance and preserving their classic style for future New Yorkers. My job involved using my organizational and communication skills. I contacted vendors to get bids for work

Continued on page 4

FOUR EVENINGS OF FOOD, FRIENDS AND FILMS — FREE



The 2015-2016 Molloy College Film Festival offered some terrific films. *Selma*, directed by Ava DuVernay, and nominee for best picture at the 2015 Academy Awards, started off the year on October 13. *Selma* focuses on one important episode in the struggle for civil rights, the march from Selma to Montgomery in 1965. On November 17, *Dear White People*, written and directed by Justin Simien, offered a witty and provocative look at the lives of black students at a mostly white, fictional top tier college. The two films were an excellent way to enlarge the discussion of civil rights on campus, a discussion that included this year's common read, the graphic novel *March*. *March* is a memoir which captures the experiences of Congressman and civil rights activist John Lewis during the sit-ins, marches, and freedom rides that occurred throughout the south in the 1950's and 1960's.

The Spring 2016 program featured Academy Award nominated films. Director Jay Roach's *Trumbo*, starring Oscar nominee Bryan Cranston as screenwriter Dalton Trumbo, was shown on February 9th. Trumbo was famously blacklisted and then jailed after he refused to testify before the House Un-American Activities Committee, which was investigating Communist influences in the motion picture industry. The last film of the season, On February 23, was director Tom McCarthy's *Spotlight*, a best picture nominee. The film highlights the work of a team of reporters for the *Boston Globe* and the investigation that brought to light the scope of the Boston archdiocese's cover-up of child molestation by priests.

Thanks to Dr. Deidre Pribram for her selection of wonderful movies to talk about and to the English Department for sponsoring the program and providing the popcorn and candy!

Seeing Pope Francis

by Sister Alice Byrnes, O.P.

I loved looking through our family album when I was a little girl. One of the pictures that stands out in my mind was that of my aunt's family at a private audience with Pope Pius XII. My eyes focused on my young cousin, Susan, who was standing right next to the pope. In fact, her dress was actually touching the pope's white robe. As Susan outgrew her clothes, they were passed down to me and another younger cousin. I can't explain the thrill when the little blue dress that Susan wore when she saw the pope arrived at my house. To me, that dress was a relic. It had actually touched the Holy Father! I never imagined that I would ever see a pope, and this seemed the closest I would ever get to the Holy Father.

Sometimes, children's dreams come true! Although I'm not much of a gambler, I entered every possible lottery to win tickets to see Pope Francis when he visited to the United States. The Diocese of Rockville Centre gave tickets to our Dominican Sisters Motherhouse in Amityville. In a spirit of democracy, we were invited to put our names into the hat. What a thrill it was when I won a ticket to see Pope Francis at the prayer service in St. Patrick's Cathedral! In the wake of such good fortune, I also won a ticket in the New York City Lottery to catch a glimpse of Papa Francis in the procession through Central Park. I was really on a winning streak! The pope was scheduled to come to St. Patrick's Cathedral to pray Vespers, the official evening prayer of the Church, with priests and religious. Clearly, the pope had this audience in mind in preparing his preaching for this occasion. I was truly heartened when Pope Francis said, "I would like to express my esteem and gratitude to the religious women of the United States. What would the Church be without you." The congregation with many lay people in attendance reacted with peels of applause to express their affirmation of the nuns. This had monumental significance for women religious, who only three years ago, were investigated by the Vatican during the Apostolic Visitation. While we were undergoing that difficult experience, I never could have imagined that it would have turned around like this. It's often said that we should expect miracles when we pray. This was like a miracle that I never expected.

The pilgrimage to see the pope in Central Park the



following day was a different type of experience. In contrast to how we had waited in our assigned seats in the cathedral for the pope's arrival, we stood in line with over 80,000 people at the park for three hours just to reach the security check-

point. What was amazing was how polite and friendly everyone was in spite of their aching feet! This certainly defied the image of the stereotypical New Yorker! I was impressed by the number of young people who were so eager to see the pope. When the pope mobile eventually passed our way, it seemed to race by with the speed of lightning. My sister saw only a flash of white, while I got a fleeting glance of the pope. The throng of onlookers raised their cameras and phones to catch a picture of him. I suspect that the cameras saw more of the pope than the bystanders actually saw. Admittedly, everyone could have seen more of the pope on television, but they seemed thrilled to trade that for the experience of actually seeing the pope "live from New York."

The reception given to Papa Francis was amazing. He was greeted like a rock star. But, the real success of his visit can only be measured to the degree that we take his message to heart and practice what he preaches. Pope Francis urges us to reach out with compassion to the most vulnerable among us—the poor, the immigrants, the abused, the sick, and the incarcerated. He challenges us to care for our children and to protect the Earth. He stresses the importance of family life in nurturing good people who contribute to the building of a just society. Pope Francis' message is very timely for us as we celebrate the 60th anniversary of Molloy College

Seeing Pope Francis *from 3*



and the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Dominican Order. The mission statement of Molloy challenges us to live “with respect for each person” and work toward “the development of ethical leadership,” while the vision of the Dominican Sisters of Amityville who founded Molloy “calls each of us to be signs of joy and hope in all that we do.” In his departing remarks, Pope Francis expressed the hope that his visit would have a lasting impact on us and the people around us. He prayed, “May our days together bear fruit that will last, generosity and care for others that will endure.” †

Majors intern and learn! *from 2*

that needed to be done. I also organized reports and files for the project. One interesting task was to organize sample tiles to be sent to various subway stations so that the new tiles matched the old. The job brought two of my passions together. As an English major and a history minor, I love creating stories, and I love preserving history. This job seemed to combine the two, as I learned how all of the pieces come together to complete a project that will keep a piece of history alive for future generations. I also learned how many reports must be produced for each project and how many people have to be contacted to be sure the work is being done. The position gave me a chance to sharpen my communication skills and to become aware of all that goes into a successful project such as this. And, at Molloy, I visited the Career Center to get a better sense of how to produce an effective resume.

My advice to English majors searching for an internship is that they start pursuing leads early, whether with the Office of Experiential Learning or on their own, so that they find something that will allow them to finish their hours on time

and also enjoy the work.

Catherine Bautista:

I worked for Certified Coin Consultants in Rockville Centre for my internship. The company buys and sells valuable coins. As an English major with a writing concentration, I wrote to encourage business. I composed and sent mass emails to clients, managed the company’s social media, and researched the history of particularly interesting coins. The articles I wrote about those coins were posted on the company’s blog. A photography minor, I also took photographs of coins to accompany what I wrote. Working at Certified Coin Consultants allowed me to put into practice skills learned in my writing and photography courses. My internship also gave me a chance to work on my interpersonal skills. A shy person, I broke out of my shell to communicate with others at Certified Coin Consultants. My bosses were very kind and helpful, always ready to explain the world of numismatics. I was able to voice my opinions and ideas and even to accept criticism. In short, I learned to be confident in my skills. Working at Certified Coin Consultants was a great experience.

My career plan involves getting into food media. I think of food as

an art much like writing and photography. I want to become a food blogger and establish a social media presence. Right now I have fledgling Twitter and Instagram accounts. As I was cooking at home and posting food photos on my personal Instagram account, I realized I had a passion for food that I would like to turn into a career. I even have plans to attend culinary school someday, and, ultimately, I would like to be self-employed and to run my own brand, Just Another Food Adventurer. I really look up to Skyler Bouchard, a recent NYU graduate who is making waves in food media. However, I am open to other jobs that will allow me to apply skills I have developed in pursuing my English degree. I know there are many jobs I can pursue while working on my goal of getting into food media. I wouldn’t mind working for companies such as BuzzFeed or Thrillist.

Before starting my job search in earnest, I look forward to visiting the Career Center to discuss how best to include this successful internship on the resume we worked on last semester.

Editor’s note: The owners of Certified Coin Consultants liked Catherine’s work so much, they hired her to work part-time in the spring.

Majors intern and learn! from 4

And, if you like food, Catherine invites you to check out her postings at <https://instagram.com/just.another.food.adventurer/> or <https://twitter.com/jstanthrfoodadv>

Annie Kibort:

For five weeks over the summer, I was a mentor for the Rising Stars Camp at Molloy College. I worked with a group of fourth and fifth graders from the Uniondale and Roosevelt School Districts. This annual educational camp focuses on reinforcing math and language arts skills, as well as reinforcing respect

for others and awareness of one's actions. The camp employs certified teachers as classroom instructors, so my role was to be a kind of teacher's assistant, helping three children to remain focused on their work and to understand concepts and directions covered by the teacher.

The internship gave me a chance to practice ways to be more effective in working with children. And the children taught me as much as I taught them. Their enthusiasm about learning was infectious, and I have to say that my more than 100

hours never felt like work because I enjoyed the experience so much.

Right now, I am unsure of my career plans. I am thinking of taking a test to become a teacher's assistant as a first step into education. But as part of the internship course, I also visited the Career Center to discuss other job options and have learned about career paths other than teaching for English majors. I plan to visit again to narrow down my choices and put the final touches on my resume during the spring semester when I am preparing to graduate. *

Congratulations, Barbara Novack!

Congratulations to Writer-in-Residence and member of the English Department Barbara Novack for her 2015 publication, *J.W. Valentine*! The novel, published by JB Stillwater Publishing Company, focuses on a single life-defining summer in the life of 14 year-old J.W. At a September 27, 2015, book launch at Molloy College, Novack read from her novel and answered questions about the novel and its genesis.

Asked how she came up with her idea for the character and his story, Professor Novack said that the character J.W. began as one of two males vying for the affections of a young lady, the main character in a short story she wrote in college. The J.W. in her initial story was 27, but he had a definite history, and it was his history that ultimately interested her most. Years later, and after a writing process that took four years, he took center stage as a clever but troubled young man who has been sent to rehabilitate on a farm in a small town. The citizens of the town do not approve of having a stranger in their midst, especially if he and the other three young people being cared for by the farm's owners are problem children. Novack said she enjoyed creating a main character whose life was decidedly different from her own and a town that was nothing like New York City or her neighborhood in Queens. "It was a challenge," she says, one she enjoyed because she was so clearly not writing her own story.

To students who want to become writers, she offers this advice: "First, let yourself write. Don't be judgmental. Keep your internal editor at bay until she is needed." For those who know Professor Novack as a poet, she adds that using vivid language and eliminating all but the essential in one's work are necessary elements in the writing process in both poetry and fiction. And every would-be writer can begin his or her training by reading widely. Readers tend to use language more fluently and to create richer, more complex sentences.

Since the book's publication in July, Barbara Novack has given readings and led book discussions at book stores and libraries throughout Long Island. She donated 25% of the proceeds from sales of her book at the September 27 Molloy event and other selected events to the Fr. Thomas Catania scholarship fund; the scholarship is to be awarded to an incoming freshman English major. *J. W. Valentine*, ISBN: 1937240576, is available on Amazon.



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, WILL! Shakespeare Festival April 12, 3:20, Larini Room PS

How to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the bard’s death? If you are a member of the English Department at Molloy College, you throw a party. Faculty and students will be gathering on April 12, at 3:20, in the Hays Theatre to stage skits (including notable Shakespearean insults, famous lines about play acting and life, and familiar scenes), to enjoy some Shakespearean snacks, and to play Elizabethan-inspired games. Good food, laughter, and a tribute to the greatest of our English authors—what could be a better way to honor William Shakespeare? Join us!



LIT for years. Then, suddenly: STD!

by Jeffrey Massey



In any good book, the end of one chapter heralds the beginning of another. And so it is with the Literary Honors Society at Molloy. The Gamma Pi chapter of the Lambda Iota Tau Literary Honor Society closed this past summer, ending a 48-year tradition at Molloy College. And while we are sad to see Lambda fold nationally, we are relieved to announce that its tradition will live on. Thanks to the tireless work of Trisha O’Neill and Robert Kinpoitner, Molloy Lambdians—past, present, and future—have been welcomed into the Sigma Tau Delta International

English Honor Society, with all the rights and privileges therein.

And the privileges are many. Members of the newly minted Alpha Phi Theta chapter of STD will have access to greatly expanded scholarship opportunities, national publication, internships, attendance at a yearly undergraduate conference, and other CV-building honors. Members will—of course—also enjoy the camaraderie that comes from finding enthusiastic peers at Molloy with whom to share their love of literature.

Our membership requirements remain as they had been with LIT:

students must maintain a cumulative B average, take 15 literature credits (English or other), attend no fewer than three of our monthly meetings, and present (after consultation with STD Moderator Jeff Massey) one of their own critical or creative works to the group. All interested in further details can contact Dr. Massey at jmassey@molloy.edu.

In short, while we have closed a chapter at Molloy, we have begun another; the story remains the same. Please join us as our tale continues to unfold, won’t you?

Congratulations to new members of Sigma Tau Delta, Pollyana Andrews, Laurie Bocca, Stephanie Ciurleo, Ann Darcy, Mary Gallagher, Annie Kibort, Erika Sullivan, and Carmela Valente, who will be inducted into the Alpha Phi Theta chapter on Sunday, April 17, 2016 at 4:00 pm in the Reception Room, Kellenberg Hall.

Congratulations to English department faculty and staff being honored at the 2016 President's Award Ceremony on Friday, April 1 at 4:00 pm in the Madison Theatre in the Public Square. Barbara Young, will receive the Twenty-Five Year Service Award. Barbara Novack and Trisha O'Neill are receiving the Twenty Year Service Award and Stuart Radowitz and Kristin Sloan will be receiving the Ten Year Service Award.

ALUMNI SUCCESSES



Tabitha Ochtera, Molloy B.A. in English, 2011, always loved books and libraries, so when she decided to pursue an M.S. in Library and Information Science at LIU Post, it seemed like a natural choice to friends and family. She traces her interest in library science to her days as a clerk in the base library when her husband was serving in the United States Marine Corp. One of the librarians there, noticing Tabitha's interest in the inner workings of the library, shared information about the best ways to care for and repair books and about different classification systems used in libraries. The seed of a career was sown.

While working in the base library, Tabitha was pursuing a college degree; she transferred to

Molloy in 2009, and majored in English, developing a love for Alexander Pope and the Augustan Age of Literature. Her affinity for 18th century texts led to a love for rare books, which became a specialty she pursued during her master's degree studies. In fact, an internship at the Museum of Biblical Art was a highlight of her master's program.

Today, you can find Tabitha in the Public Square at Molloy, where she works in the Information Commons as a Library Technician, guiding students through their research and helping them master the formatting of APA or MLA papers. She enjoys working with students and helping them learn to make the most of a search of the library's electronic resources and physical book collection. Tabitha advises students who are experiencing frustration during a search for material to start broad and then narrow their scope. Too often students use very specific terms when they begin searching and find that a slight variation in wording can lead to "0" results. When students begin searching broadly and limit gradually, they are more likely to find the material they need. Tabitha reports that experience with customer service jobs has trained her to work well with students at all levels

and in all majors.

Asked whether library and information science is a good field for English majors, Tabitha responded with an enthusiastic "yes." Experience searching for relevant materials as an undergraduate is great training for the profession. And it does not hurt to love reading and learning. She advises English majors who are considering studying library science to find a literary period in which to specialize. Doing so will lead them to appreciate the importance of deep research. And she says that those who enter a library science master's program should not be discouraged by the emphasis on theory that dominates the first few courses. Once they've mastered the theory, they'll begin to apply it practically, and they will get to specialize in an area of interest, whether working with children in a public library or with college students who are doing research. And who knows: The degree might lead to a job in a museum or library with a rare book collection. In fact, although Tabitha enjoys working with Molloy College students who are studying a wide range of subjects, she admits she would have to consider carefully if offered a position in a museum or university library that houses a rare book collection.



Amanda Ammirati, a 2014 graduate of Molloy's English Department, is an Academic Advising Coordinator at Queensborough Community College. Her job entails meeting with students one-on-one to discuss their aspirations and to ensure that they are taking the correct courses and making progress toward their overall goals. In addition, she is responsible for tracking each

student's GPA and status so that she can be sure that all the students she advises have the information and resources necessary to achieve academic success.

Many of the 625 students Amanda counts as her caseload are in health related fields, and the students vary widely in age and life experience, with some being traditional, fresh-out-of-high school students, and others juggling a family, a full-time job, and other responsibilities besides class-work. She reports that she has learned to "know her audience" and be sure that her message is clear and makes sense within the context of their lives. Asked how her English major has affected her life and her career, she says her studies in English have been especially helpful when she is drafting written messages, and her reading of literature has inspired her in ways that still resonate. Her service on Student Government helped her determine that she would be happy working in higher education. In

addition, an internship she completed for her English program where she used her written and oral communication skills to assist Student Media and Student Affairs stood out on her resume and deepened her understanding of the best ways to reach students with important information.

Amanda also reports that, after her parents, the people at Molloy were a big influence on her. Faculty and staff in Student Affairs, Admissions, and the English Department were supportive and positive forces who encouraged her to strive for her personal best. As a step towards a long term goal of working in a campus life position at a four year school, Amanda will be beginning a master's in Higher Education Administration at Baruch. She advises students considering majoring in English at Molloy to take advantage of all the opportunities the school offers.

Ashley Geyer earned a B.A. degree in English from Molloy in 2014. Now she is taking her education to the skies. Ashley has just completed her classroom training as a flight attendant for a major international airline and will be serving on training flights over the next few weeks. She reports that her training was both demanding and terrific; she has learned that she can think on her feet and figure out quickly how to deal with all kinds of situations that might arise.

Working for an airline was always a career that attracted Ashley. She read articles, blogs, and the Occupational Outlook Handbook, and always found the prospect inviting. But she wasn't sure it was a practical goal—didn't everyone want to fly? Alternatively, she thought she would become a teacher because she loves to read and to talk about books. As it turned out, although she received very positive ratings from teachers she was assisting, an internship working in a school showed her that she did not love teaching as much as she had thought she would. One beneficial outcome:



She says the experience of dealing with a variety of students and teachers in the school helped her to see herself as possessing good people skills that could be applied in another setting.

The English courses Ashley loved were valuable preparation both for life and for her career. In fact, she says that, although she has never done this kind of work before, she has, in one sense, been preparing for a career as a flight attendant. Reading and interpreting literature have broadened her overall perspective and allowed her to see situations through the eyes of others. Ashley reports that her airline training has stressed the importance of effective communication; she believes that openness to others' views gives one a head start in any interaction, whether with customers or colleagues.

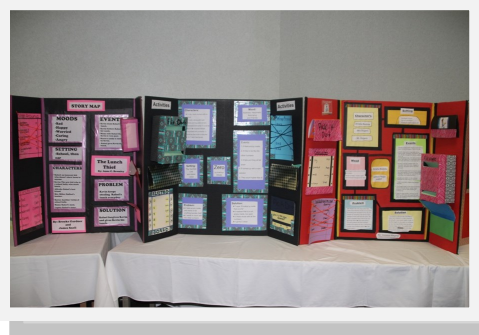
At this point, Ashley is focused on her job in the skies, but she knows that this first job can lead to others in the airline. Instructing other beginning flight attendants would be one possibility, as would a managerial position in the airline. But right now, the world beckons, and Ashley Geyer is eager to begin her journey.

Learning and Serving: Freshman Share Literary Insights

Doctor Marjorie Schiering's Children's Literature class (English 262) combined an assignment with an opportunity to serve the community during the fall semester. The 13 freshmen created tri-fold boards decorated with literacy activities relating to different children's books and donated them to two local elementary schools.

Each tri-fold board the students created included games, puzzles, and exercises that related to a particular children's book. While creating the boards, the childhood education students, all part of The Child as Learner Freshman Learning Community, were exploring the elements of literature for children: plot, structure, characterization, theme, liter-

ary techniques, use of language, etc. The boards highlight many of these elements



in a fun way that a child in a 1-6 classroom can grasp.

Finally, the Molloy freshmen donated the boards to Lawrence Primary School at #2 School in Lawrence and to Robert Seaman Elementary School in Jericho. The Hewlett Kiwanis Club and Molloy's Circle K Club bought copies of the books for students in classes in the schools where the boards will be used to enhance the children's understanding. In addition, Dr. Schiering reports that a picture of the



Children's Literature Freshman Learning Community

students in her Children's Literature class, as well as a picture of three of the interactive tri-fold boards they created has been included in *Teaching Creative and Critical Thinking: An Interactive Workbook*, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, expected to be available in June, 2016.

Back Row: Gia Negron, Kelly Cassidy, James Snell, Briana White, Vanessa Wiegman, Alyssa Soldano, Laura Drew, and Alexa Miritello. Front Row:

***The Royal Review* is a publication of the English Department at Molloy College**

Articles were written by Kathleen Conway, D.A. (except where noted)

Layout by Trisha O'Neill, '10

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