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The Royal Review

MOLLOY COLLEGE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT NEWSLETTER

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ANNUAL ALUMNI SUPPER

The English Department kicked off its Fall 2014 semester with the 24th annual Alumni dinner on September 19, raising \$2,215 for the Sister Mary Verity McNicholas Scholarship Fund. The event began with Dr. Kinpoitner, Chairman of the English Department, gratefully acknowledging that English is the number one department at Molloy College in terms of scholarships. He then went on to congratulate this year's recipient of the Emilia Culen Brajuka Scholarship, sophomore Nicole Salamone, Molloy senior Marilena Rocco, who received the Sister Grace Bletsch Scholarship, and senior Nikki Yam, who received the Sister Mary Verity McNicholas, O.P. award.

Dr. Kinpoitner, great lover of the typewriter that he is, joked that while new professor, Dr. Matt Applegate may not know how to change a typewriter ribbon, he knows all about social media, e-mail and a newfound contraption called a computer. It's a good thing, too; Dr. Applegate will be taking over the new digital writing concentration which will begin in 2015.

Announcements of the fall events followed. Molloy's Writer-in-Residence, Barbara Novack, invited everyone to the Fall 2014 Poetry Events on September 14, October 18, and November 2.

The Fall 2014 Film Cabaret featured *The Lunchbox* October 14 and *The Hundred-Foot Journey* on November 11.

2014 marks Dr. Kinpoitner's 47th year

here at Molloy College, and he pointed out the wonderful growth that he's witnessed. He joked that he once requested a door stopper only to have one of the sisters send him a rock. Years later Molloy's campus has expanded: a Subway Restaurant has opened in the Public



Scholarship winners Nicole Salamone and Marilena Rocco

Square, while a new nursing building is under construction.

Here's looking forward to seeing many alums at the 25th annual Alumni Dinner, full of familiar faces, remembered stories, and news of the good things to come at Molloy College.

THE ROYAL BUZZ!

New Writing Concentration



Matthew Applegate, Ph.D.

Are you interested in a professional career? Do you like to write and want to prepare yourself for work that will draw on both your creativity and your technical skills? If so, the Molloy English Department has a concentration that will sharpen both your writing and your design skills and get you ready to work as a writer or editor—in publishing, journalism, business, advertising, etc.

The Writing Concentration is an 18 credit immersion within the English Major. Under the direction of Dr. Matt Applegate, the program will allow students to focus

on different kinds of writing, such as business, creative, digital writing and more. In addition, the writing concentration rests on a firm foundation in literature, exposing majors to the work of masters within the English and American literary tradition who have used language to create new worlds.

If you'd like to be more articulate, concise, and creative, to become the more adaptable and marketable professional you want to be, contact Dr. Applegate mapplegate@molloy.edu at the Royal English Department for more information.

And Speaking of Writers

Molloy Alum Pat Shand spoke to current students on the importance of “being a nerd” on October 14th in Room 50 of the Public Square. The Literary Honor Society (Lambda Iota Tau) and members of the Anime club gathered to hear what the comic book writer had to say.

Shand asked his audience how many had been told, by parents or otherwise, that their majors were impractical and work would be hard to come by. Nearly an entire room of English, Communications, and Art Majors raised their hands.

“You’re as likely to screw up in ‘a safety net job’ as you are in the creative major,” Shand said. “So do what you want. Let yourself be defined by your successes rather than rejection.”

Shand currently works for Zennoscope Entertainment writing scripts for the graphic series *Robyn Hood*. He was originally contracted to write five issues and was soon signed on as exclusive. His comic *Robyn Hood vs. Red Riding Hood* sold 10,000 copies and became so successful it was rebooted and made into a longer series.

“I’ve come a long way from that six-year old writing Goosebumps fan fiction on a typewriter,” he joked. “Or Harry Potter fan fiction where I was the hero.”

After the lecture, students had time to ask questions, and Shand was happy to answer with his characteristic humor:

“My central thesis is this— don’t be horrible. Be a nerd because I am too,” enforced Shand.

“It takes a certain amount of arrogance to allow yourself to think

that the contents of your mind are marketable,” he mentored. Also “Always have a plan to conduct yourself. Be nice and professional to people; you never know who can help you out.”



Jeff Massey, Ph.D., Pat Shand, and Damian Hey, Ph.D.



LAMBDA IOTA TAU AT MOLLOY

Lambda Iota Tau (LIT) International Honor Society promotes excellence in the study of literature in all languages, and here at Molloy, it's a place to share new ideas about literature or find an audience for one's own literary work. Monthly meetings, held in the Reception Room of Kellenberg Hall, have become a safe place for book lovers to gather and geek out.

Members must major or minor in literature, be in the upper thirty-five percent of their class in cumulative grade average, have attained a B average in at least 18 credits of literature, be enrolled in at least their fifth college semester or sev-

enth college term, and have presented an initiation paper on a literary topic or a creative piece.



Rachelle Curasi, Toni Marie Martini,
Kimberly Pagnotta, & Victoria Lemay

Each year, Lambda Iota Tau grants two or more \$1000 scholarships to LIT members in good standing; winners are chosen from all member colleges; the moderator of each chapter nominates one student who has written high quality research or creative work.

Molloy College's LIT chapter moderator is Dr. Jeff Massey who also serves as the Region V (Northeast) Representative on the International Board of Moderators. Each year, a student president is elected democratically. Students or prospective students who would like more information can contact Dr. Massey at jmassey@molloy.edu or visit the English Department in Siena Hall Room 103.

CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Twenty-four students and faculty members came together on February 11 in the English Department office to celebrate Black History Month by reading and discussing poems by contemporary African American poets.

A reading of Nikki Giovanni's "For Sandra" led to a lively discussion about the difficulty of writing poetry in a time of repression and revolution. "Beautiful Black Men," with its celebration of black clothing styles, hairdos, and bodies, was followed by talk of the dominant culture's shaping of our perceptions of others' and even of our own beauty.

Sonia Sanchez's "homecoming" reminded students of the loneliness of the young as they grow and change. Those who go away to college are struck by aspects of their homes they never noticed before; those who commute to school find

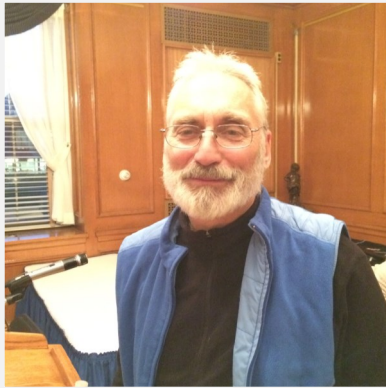
returning friends see home in a new light. Sanchez's "homecoming" and "Summer Words of a Sistuh Addict" also provided a glimpse into the desperation and the attempts to assert the self that are parts of life in many black communities.



Alice Walker's "Women" was discussed as a celebration of the strength of black women of an earlier generation, women who fought to get their children educated while at the same time doing menial jobs that put food on the table. A fitting conclusion, "Outcast," the last poem read, was noted as a salute to individuals who are strong enough to "Be nobody's darling" but instead embrace "the contradictions" of their lives and wear them openly.

Interview with poet Steven Sher

Brooklyn-born poet Steven Sher did not think of himself as a poet in his college days; “I did a few little poems for the college paper, and I took a satire writing class,



Steven Sher

which I loved, but my first graduate degree was in journalism.” Through journalism, he came to creative writing; fourteen books later, Sher leaves the journalism to his son who writes for Israel’s national news media outlet Arutz Sheva.

Sher came to New York to promote his latest work, titled, “*The House of Washing Hands*,” which was recently published by Pecan Grove Press. Molloy’s Writer-in-Residence Barbara Novack arranged for the author, who currently resides in Jerusalem and travels throughout Israel and the United States for lectures, readings and workshops, to be the featured poet at the last of the fall 2014 semester’s poetry events, on Sunday, November 2nd.

Besides writing his own work, Sher has taught writing to a range of students. The author’s last official college teaching job was at Manhat-

tan College in 2011, but Sher is a strong advocate of teaching: “It’s fun; I love teaching writing. I get people to write and try different things. I’ve had writers in my groups who are 98 years old, people who want to tell their life stories, writing memoirs or poems. I’ve taught fiction, too, and journalism, all kinds of writing,” he says.

The author offered advice for anyone interested in writing, stressing the importance of paying attention to the objects and experiences that trigger thoughts and memories: “Those triggers bring you back into worlds or times so you have an access point. You should jump in and take advantage and write about those things. Feed your writing. Keep coming to readings and try something yourself. Develop your voice and play with language.”

HAPPY BIRTHDAY ALICE IN WONDERLAND

It was with a mischievous Cheshire Cat grin that the English Department held its *Alice in Wonderland* birthday party in Hays Theatre, on Thursday, April 16, 2015, from 3:30 to 5:00 pm. This free event commemorated the 150th anniversary of Lewis Carroll’s beloved book’s publication. S. Alice Byrnes welcomed students, faculty, and staff, to this third annual literary tribute to be presented by the English students and faculty, and warned all to be ready for nonsense.

The program began with student Dev Julien’s introduction of the author and an explanation of the original idea for the work; professor Julien then fielded questions from the audience, parrying the absurd queries with some nonsense of his own. Laughter greeted short skits featuring students and faculty. The first captured Alice’s encounter with the Cheshire Cat, where she *does not* get directions but *does* get to see a grin without a cat. The tea party, attended by Alice, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, and the ever sleepy Dormouse, featured the story of a treacle well and Alice’s discovery that “I mean what I say” is not the same as “I say what I mean.” A choral recitation of Jabberwocky also delighted the audience.

Games (flamingo croquet, the Red Queen Requests, and a sugar cube toss played with teacups) were big



hits. Refreshments included sandwiches, sweets, and beverages—all appropriately labeled “Eat Me” and “Drink Me.”

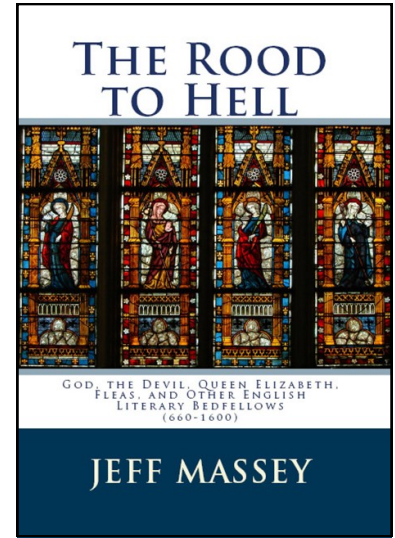
As the afternoon closed, students and faculty could be heard considering favorite literary masterpieces for next year’s event. Stay tuned!

SPOTLIGHT ON FACULTY

Hot off the Press from Dr. Massey

After having published the book *Everything I Ever Needed to Know About _____ * I Learned from Monty Python*, co-authored with fellow Molloy professor Dr. Brian Cogan, Dr. Jeff Massey set his sights on the development of English literature.

For his latest project, titled *The Rood to Hell: God, the Devil, Queen Elizabeth, Fleas and Other Literary English Bedfellows (660-1660)*, Dr. Massey produced a literary guide book which covers themes such as Heroism, Religion, and Science, as well as several literary genres and sub-genres. The goal was to construct a work of reference which will be as user-friendly as it is wallet friendly. And since Dr. Massey is known for his proclivity toward humor, we are confident that his students will find this latest publication as enjoyable as it is informative.



TERROR IN TRANSITION

During the fall semester, Professor Mark James organized and hosted a panel discussion, "Terror in Transition: The Soul of Europe and the Heart of Ukraine," on the crisis surrounding Ukraine's situation in relation to Western Europe and Russia. The program, held on October 29, 2014, was supported by the Office of Academic Affairs, the Office of Advancement, and the Humanities Division.



Panelists Lincoln Mitchell, a political consultant and expert on the Soviet Union, Iryna Vushko, a Ukrainian historian from Hunter College, and Andrew Nynka, a Ph.D. candidate in journalism at the University of Maryland, gave short presentations and answered audience questions. The panelists focused on the Russian government's dealing with former Soviet republics, as well as the Ukrainian people's struggle to maintain connection to Russia and at the same time achieve independence. They also hope to leave behind the corruption long associated with Ukrainian politics. In addition, the question of press coverage was addressed; specifically how to make sure that the ongoing fighting and the equally important international debate are not ignored by the world community.

Dr. James, a Fulbright Scholar, lived and taught in Ukraine for two years before joining Molloy's English Department. As a teacher of American studies, he says he was drawn to Ukraine because of "his interest in the relationship of identity to existing social, political, and economic orders." He comments that the presentation about Ukraine's crisis was an excellent opportunity for Molloy's students and the whole college community to gain insight into this important conflict taking place in the largest country in Europe.

Spotlight on Faculty continued

Meet Dr. Matt Applegate

Teaching is a family trade for Dr. Applegate, who grew up in the small desert town of Yucaipa, California; his grandfather taught for many years and his mother still teaches in Southern California. Be-



ing surrounded by educators who nurtured his love of literature made becoming a college professor a natural fit. So after completing his undergraduate degree in 2008 at Point Loma Nazarene University, he immediately went on to graduate school, attending New York's Binghamton University and earning a Master's degree in 2010 with an interdisciplinary focus on Philosophy, Interpretation & Culture. And having earned his Ph.D. in Comparative Literature from Binghamton University in 2014, Dr. Applegate joined Molloy College's Royal English Department this fall as an Assistant Professor.

Dr. Applegate feels fortunate to be part of the Molloy College faculty; as he reports, "It is nice to be part of an intellectual community that cares

so much for its students." He particularly enjoys teaching digital writing, and, as the Director of Molloy's new Writing Concentration within the English major, Dr. Applegate would love someday to teach a course on digital preservation, an area which will be increasingly important as more and more of our creative work lives only on the web or the cloud. He looks forward to opening a discussion about how our digital habits and preferences affect us, to teaching students about digital archiving, and thus helping those students explore new ways to preserve their heritage.

Welcome, Dr. Applegate! Here's looking forward to the exciting additions that your passion and enthusiasm are bound to bring to the English Department.

CONGRATULATIONS, DR. KATHLEEN CONWAY!

Professor Kathleen Conway was awarded The Distinguished Service Medal at the President's Awards Ceremony on March 27, 2015. She was selected by President Bogner for this award because of the outstanding contributions she has made to the success and growth of Molloy College. The English Department greatly appreciates all she does for the department. She is an excellent teacher, coordinator of the Communicating Across the Curriculum Workshops, director of the department's internships, and oversees this Newsletter. Dr. Conway finds time to serve on several college committees, in addition to her roles as Director of the Office of First Year Experience and Chair of the Common Reading Program Committee.

Professor Conway's husband, two sons, and sister were present at the ceremony to celebrate her well-deserved honor.

Spring Royal Happenings

Poetry Events—hosted by Barbara Novack, Writer in Residence

Sunday, March 29, 2015, 3:00 PM, Kellenberg Reception Room
Yuyutsu Sharma, a poet, translator, and journalist from Nepal was the featured poet. A recipient of writing fellowships from the Rockefeller Foundation and the Ireland Literature Exchange, Mr. Sharma writes for *The Himalayan Times* in his native Nepal. Currently, he is a visiting poet at NYU. Mr. Sharma's reading was followed by an open reading.

Sunday, May 3, 2015, 3:00, P.M. Kellenberg Reception Room:
Readings by Contributors to the Nassau County Poet Laureate Review, Vol. II

Featuring poems entered in the 2013 and 2014 poetry contests sponsored by the Nassau County Poet Laureate Society, as well as poems by the Nassau County and Suffolk County Poets Laureate.

Film Festival Cabaret—Oscar Nominated Films

Birdman: Tuesday, February 10, 5 PM, Hays Theatre
Michael Keaton stars in this dark comedy as a washed up Hollywood actor looking to prove his artistic ability by writing, directing, and starring in a Broadway adaptation of a Raymond Carver story. The movie won Best Picture, Best Director, Best Original Screenplay, and Best Cinematography Academy Awards.

The Theory of Everything, Tuesday, March 24, 5 PM, Hays
Eddie Redmayne won the Academy Award for best actor for his portrayal of renowned physicist Stephen Hawking. The film follows the relationship of Stephen and his wife, Jane, played by Felicity Jones.

ALUMNI UPDATES

Don't listen to anyone. Except maybe Alexa Sussman.

Self-proclaimed caffeine addict Alexa Sussman received a B.A. degree from Molloy in December, 2014 with a double major in English and Philosophy, and, in January 2015, started at New York University's School of Professional Studies. The Master's program in Professional Writing she is pursuing covers a wide selection of writing techniques with classes taught by professors from all over the world, and Alex reports that she is enjoying it immensely and "couldn't be more excited."

Alexa's 9th grade teacher gave her the confidence to pursue English as a major; in her first semester at Molloy she fell in love with Philosophy, and before she knew it, she'd taken on a second major. But English will always be Alexa's first love: "If I could take every literature and writing course ever offered at any school, I would be in my glory. But because of time and money constraints, I'll have to settle for a PhD."

Ok, Alexa was joking about *settling* for a PhD, but one thing she doesn't joke about is her appreciation for the people she's met here. "My experience with the English Department is one of my favorite things about Molloy. Not only did I get to know the professors and have so much fun taking their classes, I made friends with my fellow majors." In addition, she and every English major (including me) just can't say enough about Trisha O'Neill, the Administrative Assistant and heart and soul of the English Department, "she's one of my favorite people."

Attracted to Molloy by the small classes, the Honors Program, and the opportunity to travel to France, Alexa has always focused on her studies. "My dream job would be pro-

fessional student. I'm happiest when I'm in school. Eventually Ms. Sussman plans on becoming a professor; until then, she will be getting as much writing experience as possible. She credits her Molloy English experience with preparing her for NYU and comments, "it has sharpened my writing skills to where I feel proficient in communicating with anyone, anywhere, anytime, through any medium."

Asked for words of advice for current or future English Majors, Alexa replies, "Don't listen to anyone. Seriously, if English is something that you love and you want to pursue, do it. Don't EVER let anyone tell you it is of any less importance than any other degree offered."



Ronald Jean-Jacques, class of 2014

Have you ever watched an Emmy Awards show and wondered where the writer of your favorite television show got his start? Pretty soon the answer to that question may be Molloy College, and the writer of your new favorite show might just turn out to be Molloy alumnus Ronald Jean-Jacques.

The 2014 graduate of Molloy's English program is currently a graduate student at DePaul University in Chicago, named one of the top 25

film schools by *The Hollywood Reporter*. Ronald, who is working on his MFA in Screenwriting for Film and Television, has already written five short scripts, two of which are being considered by DePaul graduate directing students for production.

Since graduating from Molloy, Ronald has interned at a few studios producing film critiques, he has worked on various film projects, and he's loved it all: "I enjoy being in-

involved in film; nothing I would rather do." There was a time, however, when Ronald was fresh out of high school and looking to pursue a career in Computer Engineering. But it wasn't long before his love of literature and stories won out, and he decided that he really wanted to write.

Ronald credits his high school English teachers, Mrs. Jones and

Mrs. Rubio, as his inspiration, "They cared more than any other teachers I ever had." Just as notable were his instructors at Molloy but when asked who his favorite English professors were, the response was a definitive, "There's too many to mention." And Ronald has no doubt that pursuing his English degree at Molloy was the right choice for him, "I have been offered jobs by various non-profit organizations, film companies, and so forth. This degree has no limit to where it can go. As a graduate screenwriting student, I can see that my undergraduate studies definitely helped a lot. My papers are easier to



write, my stories are more creative; I've become a better writer. I had the ambition on my own, but Molloy gave me what I needed to go out there and be more confident in what I create. You can do so much, and the Royal English Department will tell you what you need to know. I loved everyone there. I know it may sound cheesy, but everyone treats you like you're family."

On behalf of his Molloy family, I wish Ronald the best. Here's hoping to see him on that Emmy Awards stage one day.

Heather Newman, class of 2014

A Dream Is A Wish An English Major Makes...



Once upon a time in a College called Molloy, a young Heather Newman dreamed of combining two of her greatest loves: writing and Disney. Now the May 2014 graduate, currently a Professional Editorial Intern for Babble.com with Disney Interactive, is well on her way to making that dream a reality. "Babble is an amazing website for parents," says Heather. We have a team of bloggers that discuss all kinds of topics. I absolutely love working here."

Commuting to New York City every day hasn't daunted the Long Island resident, which comes as no surprise since she has always been ambitious and driven. "It feels worth it after putting in a full day of actually working in the field I always wanted to be a part of."

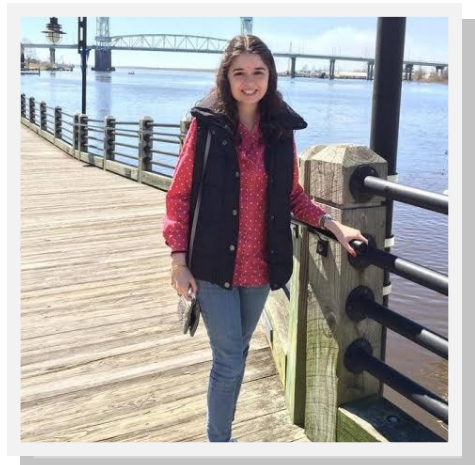
During her four years at Molloy, Heather made the Dean's List each semester, was a member of the Lambda Pi Eta Communications Society, as well as the Molloy College Omicron Alpha Zeta Honor Society,

and even took a chance at starting up her own creative project. Discussing the women's publication, *Miss Molloy Magazine*, that she and two fellow majors produced, Heather says, "I've always been determined to succeed. You definitely have to try to break down some barriers to get what you want."

Heather attributes her confidence in her writing abilities to her studies at Molloy. She comments, "My current position includes a lot of copyediting, which is something I wouldn't be able to do well without taking courses like Grammar. All the writing skills I have built result from what I've learned during my time at Molloy."

Heather also enjoyed her literature classes in the English Department. She mentions Continental Literature with Professor Massey, which she found surprisingly interesting: "I learned a lot about gods, goddesses, and ancient Greek/Roman stories." She recalls going home to watch Disney's animated feature Hercules so she could see how accurately the mythology was being presented: "I remember feeling fascinated that what I learned in class actually held up in certain scenes of the movie."

It always seems to come back to Disney for Heather, and she's hoping it stays that way: "I got lucky and ended up working for my dream company three months after graduation." Now if you ask Heather what her dream job within this dream organization would be, she'll tell you that someday she'd love to work for Disney Hyperion. "They publish all of the Disney children's books, which would tie my two favorite things together." Let's hope that Heather Newman's future is nothing short of magical.



Nadia Khan, class of 2011

Molloy alumna Nadia Khan has found one thing to be true in her three years of teaching 6th, 7th, and 8th grade English classes and working as the Director of the Drama Department at Brooklyn's Spring Creek Community School: "Kids dig Romantic poetry." Specifically, they like lyric poems, such as William Blake's "The Tyger," which, Nadia explains, is particularly enjoyable for both student and teacher.

Starting as an English Education major, Nadia decided to change to straight English so she could really familiarize herself with the literary cannon before learning how best to teach it. She graduated from Molloy with a Bachelor's degree in English in 2011, earning her Master's in

English Education from New York University in 2012. "I found it much more enriching to immerse myself in English and Literature first and then put the Education lens on, which I did with my Master's."

Nadia couldn't help but rave about her Molloy professors and even went so far as to say that anyone who doesn't get to take classes with Dr. Massey and Dr. Hey is missing out. Nadia called Dr. Massey "incredible" and acknowledged that Dr. Hey, in particular, holds a special place in her heart, "He was my mentor when I was here. He's the best."

Having taken what she learned about poetry at Molloy and implemented it in her teaching has worked well for Nadia, but she still puts her own spin on things to keep her students interested. "I teach in the inner-city, so I liken poetry to rap songs,

and we do comparative analysis; it's really fun!"

Aside from her English classes, Nadia is also passionate about joint Social Studies and English classes, which she teaches, because they allow her to tap into her unique literary perspective on historical events.

Nadia's passion and enthusiasm for English have helped her get where she is today. And she shows no signs of slowing down; she fully intends to get her doctorate and teach in college one day. Her advice for current and prospective English Majors? "Take your time. You have lots of time. You can do anything with an English degree; it's versatile, and it makes you a better writer and communicator. It makes you analytical in a way that other majors do not, so take your time and savor it."

Mary O'Connor, class of 2010

2010 Molloy alumna Mary O'Connor hates Shakespeare. You read that correctly, even English majors can hate Shakespeare. "I know I'm not the only one," she says with a chuckle. "I appreciate Shakespeare, I understand the contribution, I just think because someone was a pioneer doesn't make him the best."

Having graduated from Molloy with a Bachelor's Degree in English in 2010, Mary went on to Hofstra Law School where she earned a Juris



Doctorate and also passed the bar exam in 2013. Now Mary plans to pursue her doctorate so she can teach college level English, hopefully at a school like Molloy. She's always been fond of her alma mater, but Mary's reasons for wanting to teach English are simple, "English professors are part of the small group of adults that never seem to dislike their jobs; they always seem happy."

It hasn't escaped Mary's attention that a lot has changed since she attended Molloy; the college has grown since her days as an undergrad. "I'm glad that the school is doing so well," she says, despite the fact that the school's expansion meant that her beloved cedar grove has been replaced by a new building.

But at its core it's still Molloy College, exactly the sort of school that Mary wanted to attend when she was fresh out of high school. "When I picked Molloy College it was because it felt like home, I didn't feel like I was go-

ing to get lost in a sea of people."

Mary reminisced about some of her favorite professors at Molloy and showed tremendous enthusiasm while speaking about them, even going so far as to describe professors Richard Conway, Dr. Nicholas Fagnoli, Dr. Kathleen Conway, and Dr. Jeff Massey, as being excellent, great, and just plain awesome. But it's the late Father Thomas Catania who holds the distinction of being Mary's favorite professor during her time at Molloy; her favorite compliment from any professor came from him. It comes as no surprise to Mary that so many of her beloved professors are still teaching at the college, "I don't think a lot of the professors want to leave; I think they're very happy here." It seems Molloy's blissful professors are doing something right since their former students aspire to follow in their footsteps. Best of luck to future Professor O'Connor.

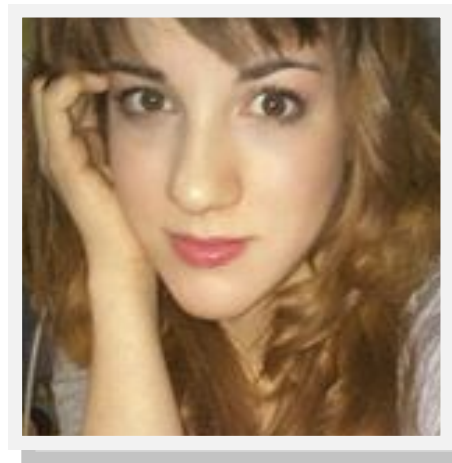
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Crystal Cruz



Christine Oliva

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