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The Grizzly, April 30, 2020

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THE GRIZZLY

STUDENT NEWSPAPER OF URSINUS COLLEGE

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Photo Courtesy of Rob Varney

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As the end of the spring semester comes into sight, a number of weekly organizations, meetings, and celebrations continue on in virtual formats. This year's virtual CoSA ran from Apr. 23 to Apr. 30, celebrating students' achievements. These presentations can be found on the CoSA webpage. Some of the presentations are in video format, while others are papers that students and staff can download to read.

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The weekly talks "Conversations about and across Difference," facilitated by Dean Kelly Sorensen, have continued on through the switch to distance learning. The next meeting on Monday, May 4, will focus on the topic: "How can we celebrate during social isolation – birthdays, religious holidays, Mother's and Father's Day, etc.?" The meetings are held via Microsoft Teams.

Recently UCARE, a student activities organization that often holds events across campus for students, staff, and faculty to partake in, facilitated the event "Hungering For Change" on Apr. 29. The meeting was held over GoToMeeting, and participants were encouraged to bring their dinners. On the same day, the Peer Advocates held the virtual "Take Back the Night" via Zoom, featuring the Peer Advocates and support staff from a number of college campuses across the Philadelphia area.

No matter the virtual format, these groups across campus are still finding ways to connect with one another and maintain a sense of community. Similar to the "Conversations Across Difference" and UCARE meetings, S.I.S. (Sisters in Spirit), a mentoring group facilitated by Reverend Terri Ofori, continues to hold weekly meetings in a virtual format.

Reverend Ofori says, "Facilitating the S.I.S. (Sisters in Spirit) group virtually has been interesting since I am leading the group online from Africa. That has added some excitement to the challenge of working remotely. Thankfully, students, faculty, and staff have found the virtual platform to provide a space for reflection and healing during this time of crisis in our nation and the world."

Beyond the weekly meetings, participants of S.I.S. have also been participating in a challenge, a way to stay connected to each other and the world at large. "S.I.S. is currently participating in the THINK UP Challenge created by the Think Up App. Where we create positive affirmations to speak to ourselves during in hopes to send out positive energy as the world is hurting and in crisis," Reverend Ofori explains.

Despite the physical distance, an array of virtual formats has allowed numerous groups and celebrations across campus to continue to meet, talk, and socialize. From CoSA to S.I.S., students are able to participate in these virtual formats to connect with one another again.



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Two seniors awarded Watson Fellowship

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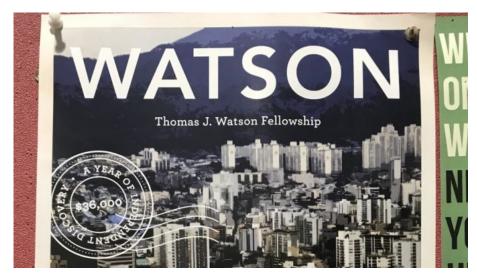


Photo Courtesy of Kim Corona

Skylar Haas

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Garrett Bullock and Tommy Armstrong began their time at Ursinus living together in Stauffer hall. Now as they finish up their undergrad careers, they will embark on another journey as they both receive grants for the Thomas J. Watson Fellowship.

According to the Ursinus website, "Ursinus College is one of 41 partner institutions that can nominate students for the one-year grant, which fosters international research and exploration among its participants. The

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52nd class of Watson Fellows includes 47 students from 20 states and eight countries."

In order to have a chance at the Fellowship, applicants had to submit a personal statement and a project statement. The personal statement was the applicant's chance to explain who they are and why the project they chose is important to them. The project statement includes where the applicant wants to go and what they will be doing there. This must tie into their personal statement.

After the pool of applicants is narrowed down to just 4 people, those individuals participate in an in-person interview with members of the Watson committee.

Bullock says that his interview for the fellowship was in November, and he heard back about the results in March, so it was a long, anticipationfilled process. He explains that the day they were supposed to find out, he was in and out of sleep all night because he knew he was getting the email that day. The first thing he sees on his phone is a text message from Tommy that said, "WOOOOOOO!" He then saw the email from Meredith Goldsmith congratulating both him and Armstrong on their acceptance for the fellowship. He says he felt relief and happiness.

Bullock will be traveling to Japan, Peru, Togo (in West Africa), and India. His project is to study the different drumming cultures in these countries by observing and participating in those drumming cultures. His boss at home helped Bullock make connections with people in the drumming world in Japan.

Armstrong will be studying, "the intersection between comedy and hardship and see where the comedic impulse comes from around the world and how it's affected by cultural norms and events." He will travel to Amsterdam, Barcelona, Vienna, Tokyo, Melbourne, and Cape Town in order to complete this research.

Armstrong states that he wants to, "examine comedy as a coping mechanism for depression and [see] if that is a global trend... [by] shadowing improv troupes and comedy groups around the world."

Armstrong explains that he will do this by, "interviewing comedians and creating my own satirical travel vlog with a character I like to do, Gary. After a falling out with his mother Gary will travel around the world, where terrible things befall him as he puts on a happy healthy front."

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Both Bullock and Armstrong are looking forward to their adventures. However, they will now have to wait until things with COVID-19 clear up. Normally, fellowship winners would leave before August 1 for their research. However, there has been a 2-year deferral, so if Bullock or Armstrong cannot leave by August 1, they have 2 years to defer the grant money to travel.

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Thank you, Gymnastics

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Photographs Courtesy of Ellie LaFountain

Ellie LaFountain

ellafountain@ursinus.edu

Thank you, Gymnastics

For teaching me oh so many lessons. From just 7 years old when I started gymnastics there was no question that you would become my world. The long hours spent in the gym did more than just teach me how to do flips and spins, it taught me what hard work is all about. Gymnastics taught me confidence and showed me how strong I truly was. I learned how to get back up after falling and work through my mistakes. Gymnastics taught me how to make decisions and prioritize

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my life; missing school dances, Friday night football games, and parties was something I became used to at a very young age, yet I wouldn't have changed my decision as those hours in the gym led to my success in competition. Gymnastics taught me how to be tough, both mentally and physically, by forcing me to work through mental blocks and fear, while also putting my body through hours of conditioning and high impact. It taught me discipline in having to master the basic skills before moving onto the fun stuff and focus on the bigger picture and goal.

I know that over the years these lessons will continue to carry over in new areas and gymnastics will continue to help guide me through life.

Thank you, Gymnastics...

For introducing me to my best friends. For allowing me to grow up with Molly, Courtney and Mackenzie; we went through everything together from 6-hour summer practices (with 10 rope climbs) to sleepovers at the gym and breakfast at The Cove Café. For bringing me to Jill, Alexandra, Lindsay and Skylar, who showed me the ropes of college gymnastics and turned gymnastics from an individual sport to a team sport for me. The teammates I have had over the years are some of the best people I have met, and I'll cherish the moments we had together forever.

Thank you, Gymnastics...

For giving me the coaches and mentors that I have had over the years. Your words and guidance helped me become not only the gymnast I was, but the person I am today. When skills were tough and practices were draining, you taught me to keep pushing through and to never give up. Without your support, encouragement, and confidence in me, I would have never been able to achieve the things that I did.

Thank you Coach Davina, Mallory, Bogdon, Jamian, Casey, Paul, Roxanne, Craig, Tyler, Jeff, Emily, Kim, Brittany, India and many more. You were more than just a coach and made gymnastics more than just a sport.

Thank you, Gymnastics

For giving me the happiest moments of my life. The feeling of catching a release for the first time or sticking a dismount are unmatched; it's too hard to put those feelings into words. The amount of joy felt when watching a teammate nail her routine for the first time, overcome a mental block, or score a high score is something I had never felt for

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Thank you, Gymnastics...

For helping me to grow. The constant reminder that there is always something that can be improved upon or fixed has taught me never to settle. Even with a ruptured Achilles, gymnastics continued to push my limits. It pushed me to become a better teammate, a better captain, and a better version of myself. Gymnastics taught me to have more appreciation for my body and the amazing things that it can do, while reminding me that the mind has so much power.

Thank you, Gymnastics...

You were never easy, but you were always worth it.



Senior gymnasts, Photograph Courtesy of Stylish Images



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