

Political Science Newsletter

Number 46: May 31, 2018

Our alumni open doors, blaze paths, and provide broad shoulders upon which our students walk, and as students, had the same wide-range of interests as do our 2018 graduates. The truth of this statement is shown in the variety of paths being successfully trod by our alumni, by the fact that of our 15 majors graduating, six had double majors (including English, Business, Applied Forensic Science, and Intelligence Studies), and by the fact that 26 students chose a Political Science minor (six of them our new International Relations & Diplomacy minor). BTW, our minors come from majors such as History, Public Health, Intelligence Studies, Business, Criminal Justice.

Moreover, we celebrate all of those different paths, and note the surprising plot twists that life provides leading people to very different places than they expected to land in (one of the advantages of a Mercyhurst education is being prepared for making those adjustments and learning how to learn so you can succeed). Our newest graduates are heading off into a myriad of jobs, to graduate school programs, to law school, and into the military and service opportunities – and our alumni are doing all sorts of things they did not anticipate, including some being lucky enough to be able to be a full-time parent, others owning their own businesses, others serving their communities and/or thriving in their careers in government, business, and non-profit organizations.

They (you) are serving in command roles in our Special Forces, working in education, as lobbyists, as congressional/executive branch staff, in insurance or banking, as judge, as Director of Public Relations for a baseball team, and as a community development leader. Despite this breadth, I needed a narrower focus so my message didn't go on and on, so I am going to largely ignore domestic politics and law, e.g., the coming midterm elections, the environmental and opioid crises, school shootings, public education, the President and the media, immigration, etc., and focus instead on international relations.

Though the global community continues to make astounding, amazing progress (<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/01/06/opinion/sunday/2017-progress-illiteracy-poverty.html>) there are all sorts of conflicts and crises going on around the planet. Places such as Syria and Yemen are great examples of the phrase “hell on Earth” and a plethora of countries in Africa (e.g., the Central African Republic, Zimbabwe, and the DRC), Asia (e.g., Myanmar and North Korea), and Central America (e.g., Honduras and El Salvador) are home to corruption, torture, violence, and discrimination that lead to human misery and death, to ethnic cleansing, refugees and internally displaced people, and to prisoners of conscience, child soldiers, human trafficking, and “gendercide” (Nicholas Kristof and Cheryl WuDunn's great phrase). The Russian Bear is hell-bent on pursuing a path to increased influence many thought no longer available, the U.S. pulling out of the Iran deal could strengthen their hardliners, the Middle East is in turmoil again/still, and we have the rise of an illiberal China among other pressing

international issues. So, the first weekend after graduation I sat down to watch the media provide detailed and extensive coverage of a key international relations event -- Prince Harry and Meghan Markle's marriage.

Seriously, I was desperate for some news, didn't want to surf and read, and this story (not the ongoing events in the Middle East, etc.) was "everywhere and always" from Thursday afternoon through Saturday night. It was frustrating and the end of Spring Semester is not the time to mess with faculty members who, for example, had just graded about 85 term papers and 85 bluebook exams, on top of everything else they had to do...☺ Rather than just vent or avoid, I decided to multitask, to let it be part of my environment while I did other things, and gained a few insights.

There were issues of race, gender, and class at play, story lines of commitments to service and volunteerism, of setting good examples and creating important conversations, and discussions about what we honor and celebrate. Plus, there was that sermon by Bishop Michael Curry. I encourage you to Google and read it, which takes less time than the 13.5 minutes he somewhat controversially (really?) took to deliver it, but let me suggest, as others have, that the message he delivered about the power of redemptive love to remake the world, to show people how to live in relationship to each other, to bind people together and together transform their world, was actually pretty powerful and powerfully political.

Moreover, his examples of the American antebellum South, and of reimagining our families and relations, neighborhoods, businesses, policies toward the environment and poverty, and international relations in light of the fire of love (fire being his second key theme), raised all sorts of issues related to: human nature, the nature of the international system, leadership, environmental politics, global economics, constitutional law, political theory and debates about democracy, or – more broadly – our relations to the government and to our communities and each other.

These sorts of questions are at the heart of the courses and course materials that my colleagues and I teach every day. Our students get to discover, debate, confront, contemplate, and study them everyday and many nights (work ethic and resilience also being part of the game). The mission statement, is more than a statement for us, as we also ask students to consider their obligations, values, and living lives of service.

Yup, I'm now sold on royal weddings and can't wait for Princess Charlotte or Prince George to grow up and take a carriage ride; but in the meantime, we will keep doing what we have always done, preparing our students for the reality ride that comes after you leave MercyWorld, whatever its bumps, unexpected turns, and opportunities. Carpe Diem indeed!

Speaking of which, this was, as one of my former colleagues might have proclaimed, "a banner year" once again in terms of recognition for our graduating seniors, including another Carpe Diem Award winner. While all our majors and minors have

accomplished and succeeded (and 18 graduated with Latin Honors), all of them overcame hurdles and obstacles (some facing challenges steeper than others). All completed, or competed and contributed in and to, other majors and minors, and sports and clubs and service to the community, and more than a handful were born overseas. All leave equipped to deal with a world of work where robots, AI, and other emerging technologies and a globalized economy will reshape career paths. All have earned something important, but only a few get recognized, leaving many, many deserving students out of the limelight – but we celebrate them all – each one.

Therefore, accordingly and appropriately, before talking about awards, here is the list of our 2018 graduates, majors and minors mixed together. Each one a permanent part of the Political Science Department, and now part of the poli sci alumni group.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Audra Alexander	Lyndsay Amyot
Patrick Arthur	Karlie Bizzarro
Mackenzie Burns	Sergio Cortes
Halden Curtiss	Faith Ehidiamhen
Martha Funes	Riley Harris
Anne Helms	Juliet Hilburn
Charles Hummel	Daniel Israeli
Jonah Jackson	Daniel Kelsey
Ryan King	Eliza Kisiel
Katie Krull	Phil LiPari
Susan Lipster	Dean Lutz
Megan Lyons	Troy MacMullan
John Mackowski	Erin Manth
Paxton McCausland	Mallory McClelland
David McDonald	Stephanie Mills
Brad Novak	Abbie Rinard
Julianna Ruzbacki	Jason Shaffer
De'Lenci Shannon-Brown	Kishan Singh
Kelsey Soom	Roxanne Stockard-Hicks
Yedzin Tobgay	James Wallace
Zenia Zelaya	

Finally, I have updated my story about *The Award Winning Department* because this year demanded it, with four more students winning major campus awards. That story will be next, then “the heart of the thing”, the Alumni Updates. That is followed by dept. news and faculty updates, and last but not entirely least, the highly anticipated annual **Summer Reading List**. Enjoy, have a great summer, and consider putting the *Hurst Homecoming* on your calendar. Next fall it will be the weekend of September 15th.



From right to left: Dr. Brian Ripley, Jonah Jackson, Audra Alexander, Yedzin Tobgay, Jason Shaffer, and Dr. Randy Clemons

The Award Winning Department: Political Science

The picture above was taken at the **2018** Commencement Awards Convocation, and documented the continuation of a most impressive record as four more Political Science students (all majors) won top graduation awards. **Jonah Jackson (Major)** won the top award given, the Carpe Diem Award, **Audra Alexander** (Double Major – Political Science and English) won the Catherine McAuley Award for Adult Achievement; **Jason Shaffer** (Double Major – Political Science and Intelligence Studies) won the campus-wide Presidential Excellence Award for Adult students; and finally, **Yedzin Tobgay** (also a Double Major – Political Science and Intelligence Studies), was a co-winner of the Presidential Excellence Award for Ridge College. Jonah’s speech can be accessed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1xOJJwqzZT4>

In 2015 we used a similar picture to document the continuation of a most impressive history as four of our students won top graduation awards, noting then that: “**Hallie McDonald** (Major) won the President’s Award for Excellence for the School of Social Sciences (graduating with a 4.0); **Nina Aamodt** (Major) won the Catherine McAuley Award given to the top Adult student on campus; **Stefani Baughman** (Double Major – Political Science and Intel) won the Award as the top Honors student, the Mother Borgia Egan Honors Award, (and she was the university’s Fulbright nominee), and

Emily Francis (Minor) won the Bishop's Award for Excellence (also with a 4.0). Additionally, 23 graduated with Latin Honors (including 9 of the 25 students university-wide who completed the Honors Program requirements as well. Pretty impressive in a department known for its rigor!"

But, you ask, what about the two years in between, i.e., 2016 and 2017? Well, in 2016 **Caleb Ohmer** (Double Major – Political Science and English) won the Carpe Diem Award and **Matt Hatfield** (Triple Major) won the award as the top Honors student, the Mother Borgia Egan Honors Award. Perhaps completing that triple major (Poli, Psych, and Religious Studies) and the honors program curriculum with a 4.0 had something to do with his selection ☺. Then, in 2017, **Sam Lioi** (Double Major – Political Science and Business Intelligence) won the Carpe Diem Award. [Yes, alert reader awardees, a three-peat: 2016, 2017, and 2018 Carpe Diem winners.]

Also, the year prior to 2015 (2013-14) we had several students selected for individual awards. **Alethea Gaarden**, Double Major (Political Science and English) won the Bishop's Award for Academic Excellence (basically the equivalence of Valedictorian, but she had to also have the record to edge out a number of other 4.0 students). Another 4.0 Double Major (Political Science and Business Intelligence) **Mary Mancuso** won the President's Award for Excellence for the School of Social Sciences (encompassing Political Science, Intelligence Studies, History, Sociology/Social Work, and Criminal Justice). Additionally, **Steven Messina** (Double Major, Political Science and Intel.) was Mercyhurst's nominee for the Marshall Scholarship, and a total of twelve of ours graduated with Latin Honors (including two who completed the honors program requirements as well).

But, impressive as this is, it is not a new story, as an analysis of the last 19 years (2000-2018) will show. For this analysis, we looked only at the "graduation" awards. Thus students who were the Mercyhurst University Prestigious Award Nominees such as **Steve Messina** '14, or even if they won at the national level (e.g., **Joe Delgado** '04 or **Tim Krysiak** '05) are not included for this medal count.

Nor does it keep track of how many students graduated with Latin honors, or the Scholar Athlete awards. Starting in 2000 also eliminates a number of award winning students that we can rattle off without doing any research including **Randy Hilliard** and **Bill Melville**, both '99, **Emilio Collovacio** '98, **Amy Kovach** '97, **Jule (Gardner) Banville** '95, and **Neal Hammill** '93. Our apologies to any and all other pre-2000 award winners, but the list below represents only the following awards and only from the 2000 graduation year: *The top two graduation awards, the Carpe Diem and the Bishop's Award for Academic Excellence; the President's Awards for Excellence given by each school and to one adult student each year on a campus-wide basis; the Alumni Recognition awards, the Leadership award (now called the Frank Barry Award), the Catherine McAuley Award to the top Adult student, and the Mother Borgia Egan Honors Award given to the top student in the honors program.*

So, in the last 19 years, Political Science department students have won how many of these top awards? The answer is 48. Below are the years, names, and awards won.

Five Bishop Award winners: **Emily Francis '15, Alethea Gaarden '14, Jill (Gloekler) Curry '04, Chris Roos '02, and Amber (White) Vance '01.**

Seven Carpe Diem Award winners: **Jonah Jackson '18, Sam Lioi '17, Caleb Ohmer '16, Dinorah Sanchez '10, Tim Krysiak '05, Casey Kilroy '03, and Billy Byrnes '02.** (Note that we swept the top two awards in '02)

Seventeen won President's Awards for Excellence for their schools (three in other schools): **Yedzin Tobgay '18, Hallie McDonald '15, Mary Mancuso '14, Brian Lombardo '13, Melissa Kirwin '11, Meghan Raynor '10, Sarah Rudawitz '09, Elise Yablonsky and Dina Bastianni '07, J.J. Mikulec and Valerie Nezich '05, Pat Collins '04, Kristen Brown and Danielle Aloschen '03, Jay Starliper '02, Mike Jones '01, and Andrea Ellison '00.**

Eight won Alumni Recognition or Leadership awards: **Paige Thomas and Spencer Vuksic '13, Rachel Brown '12, Ian Michalski '10, Lindsey Kole '06, Mike Foglio '05, Perry Wood '01, and Scott Koskoski '00.**

Five won the award for the top Honors student (this award only started in 2005). **Matt Hatfield '16, Stefani Baughman '15, Liz Eidner '12, Ashley Herman '07, and Kristen Hudak '05.**

Six won either of the two top awards for non-traditional students. **Jason Shaffer '18, and Audra Alexander '18** (a sweep of these awards this year), **Nina Aamodt '15, Bill Demauri '12, Sean Fedorko '11, and Kathy Antus '03.**

That's 48 political science students (36 majors, 12 minors) honored in the last 19 years, just within the categories listed – an average of 2.5 of our students per year earning this sort of recognition.

There are over 50 undergraduate departments at Mercyhurst, and with approximately 10 awards given per year in these nine categories (sometimes a few of the awards have had ties/multiple winners), so mathematically speaking, we should average a little less than one award every other year, which after 19 years would be less than 10 awards, not 48.

And, this type of analysis ignores so many great students, year after year who were not singled out for these distinctions. Add in our unparalleled record of faculty winning teaching awards (three in the last 15 years – more than any other department at Mercyhurst), and it's easy to see why calling the Political Science Department "The Award Winning Department" makes complete sense.

WHO'S DOING WHAT: ALUMNI UPDATES

Rich Wagner (Major '96) – Hey Doc, good to hear from you. I am sitting in a cafe in Amsterdam as I write this, which makes your newsletter update request very timely. I have started an international commercial support practice, the Netherlands will be my 23rd country this year. Things are good, business is doing well, the girls are 8, same ol' stuff. I've been working on a ton of international development projects in Northern Africa (mostly Ethiopia) for water access and power generation. Did a few US Embassy projects on Central America as well, to include Honduras (I was there when they had political unrest due to the elections, they burned the lobby of the Marriott at which I was staying). Good times, keeps things interesting. [Ed. Note: Molotov not my favorite type of cocktail.]

Lindsey Weber Keljo (Major '05) – I'm continuing to live in DC (more specifically Falls Church City, which has turned out to be a great place to raise my boys). Professionally, I'm still focusing on advocating on behalf of asset managers at the Securities Industry and Financial Markets Association (SIFMA), both before regulators as well as policy makers. Lately my regulatory practice has focused as much on Europe as on the US, as European regulators have focused on asset management and my members have had to address, among other things, the ramifications of Brexit. In the past few months, this has meant lots of international travel to London, as well as Brussels and Paris. On the personal front, last year my husband and I split up, and I have my two young sons (ages 4 and 2) nearly full time, which has kept me SO busy. Generally, though, we are all happy, healthy and thriving. Life is good -- hopefully I'll make it back to Erie one of these days soon to actually catch up with you and everyone else in person!

Rich Johns (Major '03) – I'm currently an Assistant Commissioner with the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development where I'm responsible for the agency's \$2.5 billion in annual spending. I've been here for 4.5 years and it's great. We largely function as a bank making loans and providing tax incentives to developers who construction income-restricted, privately-owned housing. I spent my first 7 or so years with the City in transportation, which at the time I thought was great, only to find that I'm way more interested in housing policy. Specifically, I've become fascinated with supportive housing and its impact on our most vulnerable populations. Overall I like my position because we use a lot of restricted funding (Federal, capital, tax credit) so I'm generally involved in most of the high-level discussions in the agency. It's been a great experience. I've also crossed the 4-year threshold of homeownership. I've been married to a native Brooklyn for nearly 8 years and in 2014 we bought a condo in Brooklyn. This is my ninth year living in Brooklyn and it's been awesome to see the transformation. Let me know when you're ready to bring a class to NYC and I'll help schedule a local government day. I've been away from Mercyhurst for 15 years this month and I'm ready for a visit. I'm a new convert to Instagram and I love seeing photos of the campus.

Dayana Moncada (Double Major '17) – I finished my first year of grad school at Mercyhurst University in the Data Science program. I'm overwhelmed in a positive way with how much knowledge I have acquired in this growing and fascinating field. I have accepted an internship position as a Data Analytics intern in Chicago, IL for this summer. Furthermore, I have accepted a Graduate Assistantship position at Mercyhurst North East as a Resident Director, for the next academic year. I'm looking forward to what the next couple of months are going to bring. As always, I wish the very best to the Political Science department and appreciate you all endlessly.

Kirk Shoemaker (Double Major '10) – Jess and I are doing great and living it up in southern Germany. It's been a beautiful spring and we are out and about exploring the Black Forest, Swiss Alps, and the French wine country. We are really enjoying this assignment with the Army and look forward to many more travels and adventures. I recently re-read the book "American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer" and recommend it to anyone who seeks a better understanding of the technological and ethical complexities of creating the nuclear bomb. I am currently reading "The Dead Hand: The Untold Story of the Cold War Arms Race and Its Dangerous Legacy." Both books are of the same theme and world events of 2017/2018 probably have driven me toward these books. I think my next book will be "Why We Sleep: Unlocking the Power of Sleep" by Matthew Walker. With all my reading about nuclear holocaust, I probably should balance that with some wisdom on how to fall asleep ;) Until next time or as they say in Germany... "Tschüss!"

Kyle J. Bohrer (Major '03) – I am still in Erie PA. My family has grown to three children now (Ella 9, Everett 6, Will 3). Allison Bohrer and I have been married 10 years now which has been action packed and a lot of fun! I still own two Unishippers Global Logistics Franchises in Erie PA and Buffalo NY. We specialize in small package shipping to small/medium sized businesses with UPS and handle over the road freight shipping as well. I recently purchased the first Lendio franchise in the nation. The SLC based company was the first to franchise in the FinTech space and it has been a great success. We have lent over \$2m to area business owners in our first year. I have also participated on the Erie Regional Chamber Economic Development Board which has given me great insight to the area and the potential we have in the coming years. Hope all is well in the Poli Sci department!

David Wiest (Minor '03) – Another year is coming to a close at Bishop McDevitt High School in Harrisburg, PA. This was my sixth year here teaching math and it was also my first year as the Mathematics Department Chair. I am looking forward to the start of summer so I can spend more time with my wife and two girls. Tess is four going on fifteen and Ellie just recently turned two. Other than that, there really is not much else that I am doing. It is amazing how little time is left when you are a full-time parent and full-time teacher.

Sam Lioi (Double Major '17) – Hello! I have officially completed my first year of law school at The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law. Law school has been challenging so far, but I am happy with how well Mercyhurst has prepared me. This summer I will be working for Krugliak, Wilkins, Griffiths in Canton, OH—it will be a good opportunity to see if I like the law firm environment. I am currently leaning toward business litigation, but we will see if I feel the same way when I respond to this newsletter next year. I look forward to hearing how everyone else is doing!

Kristen (Barone) Hoag (Major '06) – I hope this email finds you well. I'm not sure when I updated last, but things are chugging along. I'm working at the University of Rochester in their Alumni & Advancement department as a technical trainer/instructional designer. I've been here for 2 1/2 years and really enjoy the work. The kids are 8 and 4 now, so suffice to say - I'm always on the go! I'll be seeing my Hurst crew next week in Atlanta for a wedding, which we have done yearly for the past 9(ish) years! Unfortunately, I can't offer any book recommendations this time around (see sentence about kids), unless readers of the newsletter are into Star Wars or Pinkalicious.

Kristen (Brown) Cassidy (Contract Major '03) – Hey Dr C, as with most of my peers who graduated near me, most of my life is work, sleep, eat, KIDS, so I don't have many exciting things to report. Professionally, I'm one course away from attaining an insurance designation (hopefully done in June). Given the fail rate, I am attributing my success to your classes, as the tests are similar - essays where you tie connected concepts together to support a position. Since joining the Strategy team, I've been enjoying broadening the width and depth of my knowledge of the industry, our products, our model, etc. In personal news, I convinced my father to assistant coach Viv's soccer team, he convinced me to, and it turns out there's no coach, so I drew the lucky straw. Figuring out how to explain things like breaking into two groups to a group of four olds is a test of a new kind to my communication skills! My 2.5 year old son is currently a night owl, so as soon as I get him to bed before 11pm, I plan to start reading this Strategy by Lawrence Freedman:

https://m.barnesandnoble.com/w/strategy-lawrence-freedman/1124293977?ean=9780190229238&pcta=n&st=PLA&sid=BNB_DRS_New+Core+Shopping+Textbooks_00000000&2sid=Google_&sourceId=PLGoP165114&gclid=CjwKCAjwxZnYBR AVEiwANMTRX5OOAgTjZKD5-ye6h3-KQZ9Sw2EdQwCzWg-6dN2ITzRwEep0IMZe-hoC-4kQAvD_BwE Given some historical and political components, it may be of interest. Otherwise, life is the same in Erie, PA. I just started teaching a yoga / Pilates mix Saturday mornings at Lecom if you're ever looking to try something different. It's my new favorite! [Ed. Note: while Kristen may have been suggesting me when she wrote "you're" that is a long, long shot, and I'm sure she also meant any alums in the area ☺]

Adam Hammer (Major '09) – I am a member of my local Toastmasters club, an organization that focuses on improving public speaking. In April of 2018, I competed in and won a "Tall Tales" speech contest. The title of my speech was "The People of Walmart" and centered around my experiences dealing with Walmart customers when I worked there during graduate school. The climax of the story involved yours truly cleaning up the "waste material" of a customer. I'll spare you the details. Perhaps when I run for office, my stump speech can be "Adam from Walmart", kinda of like "Joe from Scranton"? ☺ As a shameless plug, I've started my own podcast, called the HammerTime1987 podcast. You can check out the episodes here: <http://www.hammertime1987.podbean.com/> The podcast focuses on politics, current events, professional football, pro-wrestling, and pop-culture. The episodes are politically incorrect, slightly offensive, and usually recorded while drinking Miller Lite. So it's a good fit for our current politics! I presently have a conservative co-host, but I would like to be fair & balanced, so I'm searching for a liberal! My hope is that listeners are entertained and enjoy the subtle humor of the show. I am still working as a financial advisor with my father at Hammer Financial Group. I'll be headed to Ashville, NC for vacation in August and looking forward to a hot summer...has the snow melted in Erie yet? Carpe Diem!

Adam Borgman (Major '13) – This May I graduated from law school. Since then, I have worked part-time while studying for the bar. If all goes according to plan, I will sit for (and pass) the Ohio Bar this July and the Indiana Bar in February. Earlier this year I accepted a job with Reminger Co., LPA, the firm for which I spent the last two years working as a law clerk. It is an insurance defense firm headquartered in Cleveland. They have fourteen offices scattered throughout the Midwest but I will be spending a majority of my time between Ft. Wayne, Toledo, and Sandusky. As much as I hope to find myself working on employment-related matters, it is far more likely I will end up in our oil & gas, medical malpractice, and/or professional liability practice groups. In any case, I will start my career as a civil defense attorney.

Violeta Flores (Major '16) – I was on-campus graduation weekend and was impressed with all of the changes Mercyhurst has had during these two years since my graduation! I'm so happy you are still teaching and changing minds (specially through your Geopolitics class... it truly changed the way I see the world). During these past two years I have been experiencing different types of jobs. I've work with a Salvadoran Foundation dedicated to women located in one of the most dangerous areas of my country, later I worked for a company in their Marketing department (a completely new world for me) but I enjoyed learning new things. El Salvador economic situation is very bad since I graduated, job opportunities are very scarce since we have big (BIG) problems with our government. I'm having a first hand experience of a failed leadership and the worst part is that the population is so "used" to it that nothing is being done (not so fun fact: every 18 hours a woman is being killed). Even though we are having social, economical and political problems I love my country, for my country I chose the career I studied and it inspires me to work for a change. Due to that love and hope (of making a change) I started working this January in a Justice Program sponsored By CHECCHI Consulting USAID El Salvador. My current position is as Project Assistant, working with the District Attorney's Office, National Police, General Attorney, Judges and all the national justice departments. My job description is basically to create, in a logistical matter, different workshops related to the justice system we currently have and the one we should have; also I help in translations, revise cases, etc. This job is totally different from what I imagined or I'm used too, but it has help me see all the deficiencies the justice system in my country has but most importantly the importance of having a strong justice system in a country. I hope that in the future I will work directly with my people, to have more contact with the victims, to see the impact I'm creating, but I'm certain my time will soon come. I feel happy that I'm being able to help with the creation of a better justice system to my country... which hopefully we will be able to leave behind bureaucratic procedures and begin being more practical and humane. My next step... definitely is to go back to school. Hopefully next year I'll be leaving to France for my Human Rights and Gender Graduate Program... even though the Development, Sociology and Psychology Graduate Programs are also calling me (still thinking of my next move).I don't know exactly what will be my next step, which direction I'll take but what I'm completely sure is that my next step (whichever it will be) will be based in the hope and love I have for the change my generation will make in the world... starting with my little country. Thank you so much for being part of my passion for my career, for the passion I have to become a leader, to make a change. Sending positive energy and thoughts for you from the smallest (but most pretty) country in Central America... my dear and beautiful El Salvador.

Sean T. Crowley (Double Major '17) – As for me, since graduating from Mercyhurst I have been pursuing a master's in international affairs with a concentration security and intelligence studies at the University of Pittsburgh's Graduate School of Public and International Affairs (GSPIA). At the same time, I have continued to enhance my Russian language skills, and am slated to partake in a study abroad this summer that will take me to Moscow and Saint Petersburg. Finally, I have been liaising with an Army recruiter and am preparing my a post-graduation career as an Army officer.

Margaret Stanley (Major '17) – Currently, I am a title clerk at Marchionis and Associates, LLC in Rochester, NY. Prior to my current position I was a Bankruptcy Clerk at Woods Oviatt Gilman, LLP in Rochester, NY. Definitely hoping to get back down to DC soon!

Ross Molinaro (Major '17) – Currently going through the last phases of a complex, long-drawn out family business buy/sell agreement. Also had a successful interview this morning with New York Life Insurance Co. in Station Square. Not sure yet if I will be hired by them or if I even want to be employed by them, time will tell!

Nicole Kubit (Major '07) – I celebrated 4 years with PPG this March and was promoted to Business Process Analyst last July. I basically look for and fix data problems all day. I love it! The big news is that we're expecting our first child at the end of June! We're having a girl and naming her Natalie Louise. I know you used to ask for book recommendations in the summer, and since I rarely read anything of literary value (yay young adult fiction!), I wanted to recommend the Hangman's Daughter series by Oliver Pötzsch. They're historical fiction based 17th century Bavaria. I hope all is well at the 'Hurst and that you have a great summer. I know mine is going to be busy!

Brett Swan (Major '17) – I just finished my first year in the MPA program at the University of Delaware. Over the course of the last year, I've worked as a Public Administration Fellow (research assistant) for the Institute of Public Administration at UD. I started on sustainability issues, but recently I've begun work on cutting edge Connected and Autonomous Vehicles research. Specifically, I'll be working with a small IPA staff project team (that now includes Chris Kelly) to research how autonomous vehicles will impact the state of Delaware from a public policy perspective. Our research has helped to support the University and State of DE's mission to bring 2 autonomous shuttles to the University (although that's not entirely public knowledge yet, so please don't include it in the update) and we are also assisting the Governor's Advisory Council on Connected and Autonomous Vehicles to help prepare the state for their adoption. I'll be continuing this work into the summer and next fall.

Perry Wood (Major '01) – I've been at the Erie County Gaming Revenue Authority for just over 7 years now. ECGRA is an endowment of gaming funds from our local casino. We invest in community & economic development projects like summer jobs for young people, placemaking in downtown & main streets, historic preservation, industry-university partnerships, STEM programs for K-12, blight reduction in the cities and boroughs of Erie County, and workforce programs. 2018 has been kind to me, so far. I completed a Doctorate in the Social & Comparative Analysis of Education Policy from the University of Pittsburgh. My work has been featured in two books: Our Towns by James & Deb Fallows as well as The New Localism by Bruce Katz. Also, Dr. Mark Muro, Brookings Metro Policy Planning Scholar, has blogged about ECGRA's contribution. I'm coaching my daughters softball team and son's baseball team this summer. Life is good.

Casey "CJ" Kilroy (Double Major '03) -- Hello Doc C! Life is busy here in Pittsburgh for me! My girls are now 4 and 2, and they keep me on my toes - I find myself seeking out fun bedtime stories for them ("A Rule is to Break - a child's guide to Anarchy", "A is for Activist", "Bedtime Stories for Rebel Girls") I was hired to be a performing and teaching artist for Jumping Jack Theater (jumpingjacktheater.org) last fall, and we premiered our production "Cityscape" with the Pittsburgh Cultural Trust in March. We create original works that use sensory and autism-friendly strategies. I'm also taking some time to relaunch my career as a singer here locally, since so much of my performing work has been on the road around the world. I'm very involved with my role as Advisor to the Penn-Trafford Leo Club as a Lion. They asked me to do a video to help promote Lions. We are the world's largest community service organization and I encourage all my fellow Alums to take a look and find a club near you! My video: <https://www.facebook.com/365253836898372/videos/1662867530470323/> info on Lions International: <http://www.lionsclubs.org/EN/index.php> I definitely read and soak up as much political news as possible, although a career in politics is not in the cards for me right now. Looking forward to hearing about the graduation awards!

Jule Gardner Banville (Contract Major '95) – Begging is beneath you, Doc. We should just carpe the damn diem and git 'er done! Hope you are well. Hope ALL of you wherever you are are well, also. I'm still molding the fake news of the future as an associate professor at the University of Montana School of Journalism. My big news starts with a T and ends with ENURE. Phew! As those of you with experience in academe know, tenure is that set of golden handcuffs we all need to take a deep breath and, you know, ease off the gas and read a novel or two. Or maybe watch "The Americans." Holy crap! Did you guys watch that show?? I think the vein on Keri Russell's forehead alone should win the Emmy. But I digress. My job keeps my super busy, as I'm the pinch-hitter on our faculty, teaching fundamental and advanced writing courses and audio journalism. In the spring, I undertake a capstone project with my audio kids. Last year's project, the Meth Effect (metheffect.com) about the fallout in Montana connected to a massive resurgence of meth use, was recently named the national winner for Online In-Depth Reporting by the Society for Professional Journalists. I co-taught the class that produced the work with my colleague (and also my person), Lee Banville. And we are still married!! This year, I taught it solo and we dug in on what public alternative education looks like at the high school level by essentially embedding in our school district's only school of this type. I'm pretty proud of the resulting podcast, which you can [download from iTunes](#) or check out at Willardpodcast.com. I continue to plug away (slowly) at my own podcast, [Last Best Stories](#). My story from Episode 11, "Owning Pray," about a woman who owns a town in Montana's Paradise Valley and can't find anyone to buy it, won the Best of Competition Award, faculty division, at the Broadcast Education Association's Festival of Media Arts. You can hear it here: <http://lastbeststories.org/episode-11-owning-pray/>. I have two girls, Kate (8) and Maggie (6), and we are gonna camp the crap out of this summer. Sending lots of good wishes your way.

Kate Hansen (Major '06) – I'm the Vice President of Environmental Operations for Paradigm Environmental, a chemistry laboratory in Upstate New York. We do remediation analysis (for contaminated site evaluation/re-use), product testing, and petroleum analysis, in addition to asbestos analysis. Things have been hopping with NY State's tightening regulations and policy updates on how contaminated sites get evaluated and managed, so we've had our hands full with all the extra clean-up work. It's been especially interesting in view of the changes happening at the EPA, though interesting is only one of several words for it. Summer has finally arrived in Upstate New York after a long, rude hiatus (aka winter) so there's that.

Austin Wood (Minor '17) – Glad to hear that you survived the snowmageddon!! I am currently located in Cleveland, OH and I am working as an Anti-Money Laundering / Compliance Analyst with AML Rightsource, which is a company that contracts out to various financial institutions.

Mike Walter (Major '15) – I hope all is well with you and the 'Hurst. It's been a crazy busy last few months for me — I recently graduated from George Washington University with a Master's in Political Management and am a PAC Manager for the American Academy of Otolaryngology (ears, nose, and throat physicians) in the D.C. area. On a personal note, we just bought a house in Maryland and got engaged! Looking forward to (hopefully) visiting for Homecoming this year.

Ramona Ramos (Major '06) – My boyfriend and I recently bought a house a little outside of Chicago. So we have been very busy trying to fix up the house and making it our own. On the professional side I am still at the VA and was recently promoted. I am also working a professional development certificate from the USA Graduate School. Have a great summer!!

Kristen Hudak (Major '05) – All is well – not much new to report. I did recently have an opportunity to cheer on the Mercyhurst baseball team at the Atlantic Regional Tournament in Reading. There were a lot of scouts there to watch one of our pitchers (Chris Vallimont), who projects to be one of the highest draft picks in Mercyhurst history. I had a wonderful time meeting his family and visiting with Joe Spano and the other coaches. It was nostalgic and came at such a perfect time, given the O's early-season struggles. I also have a book to share – Al Roker's new book (Ruthless Tide) about the Johnstown Flood. There's been several books about the tragedy including an incredible one from David McCullough but Roker's will likely reach a different audience and everyone can learn something from reliving one of the worst natural(ish) disasters in history, especially in our current political climate. It happened 13 years before the Titanic sank but shares so many of the same themes and circumstances. I should close on a more positive note but...that's all I've got. [Ed. Note: Even though one of the lessons baseball fans are forced to learn is that "it's a long season" it's tough on fans when a season starts going south, especially when hopes were high. I suspect for someone in a position like Kristen's – PR Director for the Baltimore Orioles, it's also a work challenge.]

Brian Maurelli (Minor '05) – This last year saw me coming back from a deployment in the Middle East as part of Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve and moving to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas (for school not the prison). I got married in October to my amazing wife Patricia. I will be moving this summer to Austin, Texas for my next assignment.

Beth (Stoesseol) Olson (Double Major '01) – Not sure I sent an update when I moved from the Property and Casualty Insurance non-profit to the health insurance company, but I'm still there (4 years and counting). My newest news is that I was accepted to the Boston University Computer Information Systems master's program (Data Analytics Concentration). I started with the summer session so I'm in my first class now. Anyway, I hope you are doing well and that you get some spring days here somewhere before summer stays...

Fanny Perdstrom (Major '17) – Update from Gothenburg, Sweden: I am currently finishing up year one out of two of my masters in Human Rights at the University of Gothenburg while working as a substitute teacher on the side for newly arrived immigrants.

Danae Patterson (Major '05) – Since graduating from Mercyhurst in summer 2005, I completed a philosophy MA from University of Northern Illinois in 2008 and moved to Colorado in 2010. I have been working at the Bursar's Office at the University of Colorado Boulder since 2011, and supervise student account adjustments and third party contracts for sponsored students. I have adapted to Boulder ways by biking to work, hiking, practicing yoga, and being overly attentive to my cat Maximus. My husband Paul Bowman completed his degree programs at CU Boulder this year- philosophy PhD and environmental studies MS- and has accepted a four year post-doc at the Institute for Future Studies in Stockholm, which begins fall 2018. A new adventure with lots of fika. I am happy to be a contact for students or other alumni exploring opportunities out here.

Johnathan Kowalczyk (Minor '04) -- was selected to attend the Marine Corps War College in Quantico Virginia for the 2018-2019 college year. He will gain a Masters in national security strategies.

Joe Delgado (Major '04) – I have been working as the Senior Director of Development for the William G. Rohrer College of Business at Rowan University since October 2015. Rowan is located in southern New Jersey and is the state's second "national public university" after Rutgers. My job is to cultivate our alumni for philanthropic contributions and volunteer engagement and I am frequently traveling throughout the Mid-Atlantic region and beyond. Personally, I now have two children, a 3 1/2 old son (Graham) and 1 1/2 old daughter (Miriam). My wife April and I are selling our townhouse in Marlton, NJ and moving to a larger home in Cherry Hill, NJ at the end of June. Life is busy but good!

Tony D'Abruzzo (Major '03) – Hey Doc C, ot much of an update since last year. Still working for the state of New York, as the Technology and Training Coordinator for the Crime Analysis Center Program, which entails a lot of driving around. If anyone wants to talk driving around N.Y. or crime analysis, I'm the person to talk to. Sadly, I have no ridiculous costume picture to send you this year. I had rotator cuff surgery over the winter and couldn't train for another marathon. I think my costume running for charity days might be over. I'm entering that phase of my life where things are breaking down and have to be fixed with surgery. Congrats on another school year in the books.

Jill (Gloekler) Curry (Major '04) – Here's my brief update since not too much has changed since last year. I did make a change career-wise and now work as a fiscal policy analyst at the Utah State Board of Education. I had been covering public education in the Legislature so my job is not too different. Most of what I do at the State Board involves the Legislature. In non-work news, Jim and the kids are doing great. Louise just finished up kindergarten, and in another year both kids will be in elementary school. We've been trying to explore as much as we can out west. We just spent the holiday weekend hiking in Snow Canyon and at Zion. The red rock and sand dunes are pretty amazing. I hope you all are doing well!

Jeremy Dickey (Major '13) – I hope everyone at the 'Hurst is doing well! I'm still enjoying life in the DC area although every day that the temperature is near 90 degrees and humidity is off the charts, I wonder to myself "why isn't this swamp drained already?" I still work as the Communications Coordinator and Spokesperson for the City of Takoma Park, Maryland. I enjoy the work that I do and am proud of the little progressive "Berkley of the East" city that I work for. Talk of youth activism has increased media focus on Takoma Park. We were recently featured on CNN for being the first city in the United States to lower our voting age to 16 for municipal elections, and while we passed this in 2013, we're excited that other cities are discussing the idea. Over the past year, while watching the media, I've never been more thankful for the liberal and well rounded education that I received at Mercyhurst. Far too many have forgotten to be critical thinkers, and I hope students at Mercyhurst continue to challenge their preconceived ideas and think flexibly. Reflecting on the classes I took, I'd like to suggest a few new ones for the Political Science Department to add which I think truly represent the politics of today: "Twitter Diplomacy", "Covfefe Affairs", "Art of the Meh", and my personal favorite "Who The Hell Knows Anymore Man." Wishing you all the best and thanks again for putting this together!

Erin (Lloyd) Hromada (Minor '98) – The saying, "may you live in interesting times" rings true as a complete my 19th year at the U.S. House of Representatives. Work in the Historian's Office has continued to be both fulfilling and interesting. My office just completed the a publication on *Asian and Pacific Islander Americans in Congress*, <http://history.house.gov/apa/>. On a personal note, my husband Lou and I continue to run a zone defense with our three boys and new dog, Zayne. As a Mom of three dyslexic boys, I have also stepped into the role of educational advocate.

Bill DeMauri (Major '12) – a After graduating (what seems like an eternity ago), my son, Jalen, and I moved to Pittsburgh where I worked for UPMC, Farmers Insurance, and eventually Highmark Health. Two years ago, however, I finally got hired as a Branch Manager for M&T Bank in Baltimore, MD. I never wanted to leave Pittsburgh but really wanted in the banking industry, and this was the opportunity I needed. It was an interesting move in that I had zero experience in Banking, I was in a city that I was not a fan of, and my son was not very happy about leaving all of his friends in Pittsburgh. That said, we buckled down and Jalen has learned to like the place. He's a Freshman in High school now! He managed to play on the Varsity Golf and Wrestling teams (he even made the county wrestling tournament), and played Lacrosse for the first time. He started on the JV team but was eventually moved to Varsity in that sport as well. It turns out he's quite the athlete. Now if I could get him to stop snap chatting and read a book every so often, I'd be much happier. As for me, Baltimore is still not on my favorite city list; but Banking has been good to me so far. I recently was promoted to Sr Branch Manager and given a bigger staff, bigger branch, and bigger book of business to manage. All of that really just means a bigger headache. But the headache is worth it-at least I hope it will be. I wanted to also tell you that I enjoy the end of year emails bc you always provide a good reading list for me. I miss my days at Mercyhurst (ah the stress of writing papers!). I should tell you that much of my success has been because of my lovely years in the Political science department and the guidance of the staff there within.

Dana (Hyland) Krishland (Major '05) – I'm still working on climate change, with an additional focus on tribal issues as well, at EPA in DC. I'd be happy to chat with any students interested in environmental policy and/or what it's like working for the federal government.

Chris Kelly (Major '12) – Lakers, I hope that all is going well for you. I am still happily working at the University of Delaware's Institute for Public Administration as an Assistant Policy Scientist focusing on projects related to education policy and economic development (also thrilled to have two Lakers joining us here as research assistants this school year). Project wise this year has been very exciting. We recently completed a landscape analysis of small businesses and support services in Delaware that we used to help develop a strategic plan for a newly established Division within state government. While a daunting project, it has been a great learning experience. Currently, I'm keeping busy managing a new study examining school district and building level administrators in Delaware, and continuing to work on initiatives focusing on college access such as College Application Month. Personally, I finally transitioned out of the apartment life and have rented a house. Hopefully having the responsibility of regularly mowing a lawn doesn't make me regret that decision. On another note, for any students that may be interested in graduate work with a focus on state and local government, the School of Public Policy and Administration at the University of Delaware provides a great opportunity to acquire experience in the field through our research institutes, while furthering your theoretical understanding of public policy in the classroom. If you would be interested in learning more about the programs we have to offer, about the types of projects we work on at our research institute (IPA), or just about graduate school in general, feel free to contact me at cgkelly@udel.edu. Delaware is a pretty fun place to be and we have had a great experience with Hurst students so far. I wish you all the best.

Brian Cagle (Minor '04) – I am still working as an attorney at Pepicelli, Youngs & Youngs in Meadville, PA. I am handling a wide variety of matters, including civil litigation, wills and trusts, Medicaid planning, business formation and sales, real estate, and Social Security Disability. I love the variety because I don't get bored doing the same thing every day. When I am not working, I am on the board of directors of Common Roots. It is a non-profit working on housing issues in Meadville. One of the big projects coming up this year (and probably next year also) is to create a housing cooperative. Many large cities are noticing a problem with the percentage of renters slightly exceeding the percentage of homeowners. Meadville is at 2/3rds renters and climbing. We are hoping a cooperative model can bring home ownership back within reach for the high percentage of working poor in Meadville. It may also improve overall property values and health since there are many slumlords in Meadville. In my other spare time this spring (like when I should be sleeping), I have been volunteering with Fair Districts PA doing grassroots organizing and legislative outreach. We are working to create an independent citizens commission to end gerrymandering in Pennsylvania. My written testimony on the issue was presented to the Senate State Government Committee. That can be found online at <http://www.senatorfolmer.com/2018/04/20/042418/> near the bottom of the page. Passage of SB 22 looks good right now. On the House side, Rep. Brad Roae (R - Crawford & Erie) is on the committee that keeps gutting the bill without any debate. I, along with a few other constituents, had a very interesting meeting with Rep. Roae on the issue. His unimpeachable logic for not supporting or even debating the issue was "we don't debate things that won't pass." (111 co-sponsors in 203 member House.) Obviously, he graduated from Gannon. Nothing new is happening on the home front. Same house. Same cars. Most importantly, same beautiful wife. (See what I did there? Now I can show her this update.) I hope everyone has a great Summer!

Tim Krysiak (Minor '05) – On 13 January, Allison and I welcomed Nicholas Gates Krysiak into the world. He arrived on his due date (!) and weighed in at 7lbs, 3oz. He was promptly initiated into the Mercyhurst community via his Laker onesie (courtesy of Kristen Hudak!). Photo attached. Niko is a great baby--full of smiles and surprises. In terms of baby milestones, he is now rolling over (both ways) and is nearly able to hold his own bottle. He already has 4 domestic flights under his belt and even met Senator Mark Warner (D-VA) on a recent flight back to Houston. After months of domestic duties, Allison and I finally managed a "date night" in April and saw Hamilton. It surpassed all expectations! I can't recommend it highly enough--especially to this group! Last year, I was promoted to strategy and innovation manager for Statoil's US subsidiary (~\$20 billion business). Earlier this month the corporation changed its name to "Equinor" to underscore the company's strategy to transition from an upstream oil and gas company to a broad energy major. Equinor is committed to the goals of the Paris agreement (COP21 framework) by (1) reducing carbon emissions in the core oil and gas business to the lowest levels while (2) ramping up investments in renewables and hydrogen. That said, I spend most of my time these days working on strategy projects related to natural gas and electricity value chains, sustainability initiatives and corporate venture capital investments in clean tech companies. Outside of work, a friend and I founded a scotch club (think male book club with the books from Dr. C's list) here in Houston, which has been a lot of fun. Also, I'm planning to volunteer for the Beto O'Rourke Senate campaign as he attempts to oust Ted Cruz. Given baby duties, we have a low-key summer planned, with trips to St. Michael's and Martha's Vineyard to visit with friends and family. Let's hope our Lakers baseball team goes far into the tournament... Have a great summer, everyone!

FACULTY AND DEPARTMENT NEWS

NEWS: Homecoming next fall will be the weekend of September 29, 30, October 1, with the Poli Sci gathering, alumni tent, football game, etc., **Saturday morning on the 30th**. We are hoping to see a big gathering at our event including, perhaps, a cohort of the majors and minors looking at 5th, 10th, 15th, 20th, or 25th year reunions? Thanks much to all the alumni who were able to visit last fall. It's always a great opportunity for our current students and great to see you.

We had a record induction into Pi Sigma Alpha this spring. Twenty-seven students met the eligibility requirements and elected to join the national honor society. At the dinner we announced the two winning submissions to our first ever Pi Sigma Alpha Essay Contest. The topic was "Why Political Science Matters in Today's World" and the two winning essays were submitted by two of our graduating seniors, Kishan Singh and Sergio Cortes. Prizes of \$100 and \$75 dollars, supported by a grant from the national Pi Sigma Alpha honor society, were awarded. It was a good year in terms of other activities, all of which are open to all of our majors and minors. Activities included our guest speaker that evening, Ad Hocs on topics such as elections, immigration, and the law, and a President's Day gathering at Dr. Morris's home. We also had one graduating senior opt in for the Senior Honor Thesis, Abbie Rinard. She presented her thesis "defense" to family, faculty, and friends on the topic of child soldiers. Her presentation was titled: *Have Mercy on the War Child: How the international community can help with rehabilitation and reintegration of child soldiers*. This week we will submit it to Pi Sigma Alpha's Best Paper Competition.

FACULTY UPDATES:

Dr. Joe Morris – worked with nearly 100 students during spring semester to conduct a poll of Erie County registered voters. The poll was conducted for the Northwestern PA Green Economy task force and focused on voters' perceptions of different methods of producing energy and other matters related to the environment. Dr. Morris completed his first full year as chair of the Political Science Department - a department that now has more than 130 majors and minors (and we expect even more next year!). This summer he's planning one trip to see family in Oregon, but will otherwise staying close to home in order to home to enjoy the beautiful Erie summer with his family. On his summer reading lists are a wide range of classic works of political theory, which he'll be re-reading in preparation for teaching Political Theory in the fall.

Dr. Victoria Rickard – spent the year happily adjusting to life at Mercyhurst University and getting to know Erie and the surrounding area. In addition to teaching, she presented a paper exploring issue experts and their utilization of non-domestic policy information in Congressional hearings at the SPSA conference in New Orleans. This summer, she is teaching a course, prepping classes for the fall semester, and plans to kayak and watch sunsets from Presque Isle beaches as much as possible.

Dr. Brian Ripley – has had a busy but thoroughly enjoyable year teaching a wide range of comparative politics and international relations (IR) courses. Our department's IR major concentration and IR & Diplomacy minor are both flourishing and it is fun (and challenging) to work with so many bright students who have a passionate interest in what's going on in the world. Dr. Ripley has agreed to offer the Politics of Russia course in the fall and will spend the summer developing that course, tweaking some of his other courses, and enjoying the gorgeous Erie weather.

Dr. Randy S. Clemons – had a busy year teaching and doing administrative work as Associate Dean, but still found some time for an on-going research project into public opinion and narratives. This resulted in a paper presentation by a coauthor at the WPSA in Vancouver, BC this spring as well as an article under review currently by a journal on stories, facts, identify, sticky beliefs, and Islamophobia. In addition to his other classes taught this year (two sections of Geopolitics, two sections of leadership, and the Capstone course), he greatly enjoyed teaching a new seminar course on African Politics. He and the students did **a lot** of reading and learned a great deal, but the class ended before a successful field trip to Wakanda could be organized ☺. This spring, instead of following the mantra of April showers bringing May flowers, he saw a rather successful half marathon in Canton, Ohio in April be followed by a pulled hamstring in May. Summer plans besides class prepping and research, include his annual trip out west and some hiking in Acadia.

Also, please find (attached) the always anticipated, **Summer Reading List**. Take care!