



**ALUMNI  
WEEKEND**

**OCT 9 - 11, 2009**

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# THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES NEWSLETTER

**NIAGARA'S OLDEST COLLEGE**

**VOLUME 2**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

One of the best parts of being dean of the College of Arts and Sciences is bragging about the college's students, faculty and alumni. This last year has provided me lots of opportunities to do just that. The Day of Recognition was one such occasion. Since the event was started 29 years ago, thousands of students and over 75 faculty have been recognized for their accomplishments. This spring more than 150 graduating seniors received departmental awards for their academic and other accomplishments. We also recognized four faculty members in the college for excellence in teaching, research and service. The article in this issue on the new Arts and Sciences honors wall describes the history of the faculty awards and introduces you to this year's winners.

The day the summer issue of the CUR Quarterly, published by the Council on Undergraduate Research, arrived in the mail was another day to celebrate. The cover has a picture of three Niagara students presenting the results of their research to state senator Antoine Thompson. As is described in this issue of the COAS newsletter, the students' research with history professor Dr. Seneca Vaught was the focus of an issue about how student research can inform public policy. The same journal also had a summary of the research chemistry professor Dr. Ronny Priefer had recently published with one of his students. The CUR Quarterly is just one example of how the College of Arts and Sciences' goal of preparing students to do research in their field of study is gaining national recognition. This year over 40 percent of the graduating seniors did research either with or under the guidance of a faculty member, and almost 100 students presented their research at the 15<sup>th</sup> Annual Undergraduate Research Conference organized by the honors program. Other students traveled to professional and student research conferences including the Eastern Colleges Science Conference (where Niagara students won seven awards), the Undergraduate Research in Communications Conference at RIT, several professional psychology conferences and other research symposiums to present their research results. The collaborative research of faculty and students is also being published in professional journals. These research experiences play a large part in our students' success in entering graduate and professional school programs. This year, for instance, many graduating seniors earned generous fellowships and assistantships at prestigious Ph.D. programs, in part, because of their research experiences.

Having faculty who do research is essential for our model of student research. It is also necessary for up-to-date courses and curriculums. Our new wall of honor also includes a revamped display case that will highlight recent publications in the college. This month's publications cover a wide range of faculty research, from an article by the psychology department's Dr. Timothy Osberg (with former students Danielle Poland, Gina Aguayo, and Sharon MacDougall) on their work developing and testing the irrational food belief scale, to an article by Dr. Walter Steiner from the biology department (also published with former student Angela Girvin and current student Lauren Plewik) on hotspot recombination in yeast. Philosophy professor Dr. James Delaney's new book, "Starting with Rousseau," is one example of this month's representation of the exciting research going on in the humanities. In addition, you can read in this issue about the accomplishments of two other alumni.

If you would like to come back to Niagara to talk about your career or want to let us know what you have been doing since graduation, you can contact me at [nmcglen@niagara.edu](mailto:nmcglen@niagara.edu) or join the 700 plus members of the arts and sciences Facebook: NU Art.and.Sciences. I look forward to hearing from you.



**Dr. Nancy McGlen**

## GRADUATION 2009

May 17, 2009, was a picture-perfect day for the 152nd Niagara University undergraduate commencement at Alumni Arena on the State University of New York at Buffalo campus.

The College of Arts and Sciences had a total of 283 undergraduates receive their degrees this past academic year. Of those, more than 13 percent received either a double degree or double major, the largest number in many years. The most

popular majors for this graduating class were criminal justice, psychology, communication studies, and social work. More than 70 percent of the graduates had at least one minor, 16 percent had two or more minors. A day earlier, the graduate ceremony was held on the Niagara University campus. Twenty-four students received an MS degree in criminal justice or an MA degree in interdisciplinary studies.

Reverend Joseph L. Levesque, C.M. honors Timothy Shriver while Dr. Nancy McGlen reads the citation.



## WELCOME NEW A & S FACULTY

**Dr. Elizabeth Brown**, department of criminology and criminal justice, received her doctorate from the School of Criminal Justice at the State University of New York at Albany in 2009. Her research focuses on social and political reactions to crime and punishment-related policymaking. Brown says she is “excited to join the excellent faculty at Niagara University and is looking forward to teaching courses related to corrections, courts, media, and policy.” Dr. Brown and her fiancé, Ramesh, relocated to Lewiston in July and have enjoyed exploring the Western New York area.

**John Keller**, department of philosophy, will receive his doctorate in philosophy from Notre Dame, specializing in metaphysics and the philosophy of language. His dissertation, which he will defend this fall, is on the methodology of metaphysics, in particular on how language influences our assessment of philosophical arguments. Keller states “I’m very excited to be joining the NU community this fall. Although I grew up down the 80 a ways in Davis, Calif., I’m coming to NU from Notre Dame, which is a few exits closer. My main nonacademic interests are trying to figure out why people (including myself) do the things they do, making my son laugh, making my wife smile, and avoiding hell. “

**Dr. Shannon Risk**, department of history, “is pleased to join the history faculty at Niagara University this fall.” Her specialties are in women’s history, United States and Canadian, as well as public history. Risk comes off a year as a Canadian-U.S. Fulbright student, where she was based in Fredericton, New Brunswick. Her dissertation looks at the woman suffrage movements in Maine and New Brunswick, and cross-border interaction among the suffragists. Risk worked in the museum field, including: the Susan B. Anthony House and the National Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution, before getting her doctorate. She hails from Independence, Iowa, and enjoys swimming, bicycling, and running, as well as music, art and theater. She is a May 2009 graduate of the University of Maine.

**Doug Tewksbury**, department of communication studies, attended the doctoral program in media and cultural studies in the College of Communications at Pennsylvania State University. His dissertation, which he will defend on Sept. 11, is on the politics of pop music and its capacity for social change in the network age. His other research looks at new media and labor technologies and the possibilities for fostering a more democratic society. On a personal note, he is originally from Phoenix, and enjoys listening to music, carpentry, gardening, cooking, traveling, spending time with friends, hiking with his dog, Maggie, and trying to become competent at the pedal steel guitar. “It is Niagara’s commitment to teaching for social justice that drew me to the university - it’s quite a unique program – and I’m thrilled to be here and teaching such interesting courses.”

## HISTORY STUDENTS PRESENT RESEARCH AT CICU

History department assistant professor, Dr. Seneca Vaught accompanied three students selected from his modern civil rights and research methods courses to present their research at the Commission on Independent Colleges (CICU) Undergraduate Research Exposition at the Legislative Office Building in Albany. The research topic was on the urban decay in the city of Niagara Falls.

The three students, Joseph Fitzpatrick, Tiffany Rockwood, and Robert Hengesbach, created a

poster presentation entitled "A House Is Not a Home: The Legacy of Housing Discrimination in Niagara Falls, New York." The presentation was the result of their research done with the assistance of reference librarians at the Niagara Falls Public Library, and interviews conducted with Niagara Falls city residents.

The three students had the opportunity to discuss the findings of their research with state senators George D. Maziarz (62nd District) and Antoine M. Thomp-

son (60th District). Both senators were interested in how the students reached the conclusions outlined in their project.

Vaught's article, which outlines the students' research project in detail, is entitled "The Legend of the Fall of the Falls: Using History to Confront Racial and Economic Disparities," and was published in the CUR Quarterly, summer 2009 edition. In addition, a picture of the three students along with Senator Thompson appears on the front cover of the national publication.



## ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

By Ann Rooney Hueur, '78

A decade has passed since Brian Mysliwy, '96, graduated magna cum laude from the theater program at Niagara University. Inspired not only by the talented theater staff and students at his alma mater, but by the brilliantly zany cast of "Monty Python's Flying Circus," such talented actors as Johnny Depp, and such local luminaries as Vincent O'Neill of the Irish Classical Theatre, Mysliwy excels in several areas.

He's a gifted actor, comedian, sound designer, video game designer, voiceover artist, and harmonica player. He has received rave reviews from The New York Times, Variety and other leading newspapers and has played everything from the lead role in an off-Broadway revival of Albert Innuarto's hit play, "Gemini," to Marlow in "She Stoops to Conquer" at Buffalo's Irish Classical Theatre. He's played women's roles with wit and panache and has even gone to outer space, "the final frontier," starring with Patrick Stewart on several interactive "Star Trek" projects.

A member of Actor's Equity and The Screen Actor's Guild, Mysliwy has always "gravitated to quirky roles because they're more challenging, funnier and ultimately more fun" for him as a performer.

The Niagara University theater department applauds Mysliwy's many accomplishments.

Niagara University alumnus Ed Gardner, '87, was invited back to Niagara last semester to speak to students about his career in forensic law enforcement. Gardner graduated from Niagara with a B.A. in political science and went on to receive a master's in criminal justice from the University of South Carolina. Most recently (2002), he graduated from the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center in Glynco, Ga.

Gardner's law enforcement experience spans over 19 years of varied law enforcement positions including a supervisory role in the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, several years as a homicide-armed robbery investigator, and multiple deployments to Iraq, including posts in South East Asia. He is a board-certified forensic artist and has taught numerous forensic, crime scene and combat crime scene courses to undergraduate and graduate students as well as local, state, federal and foreign police agencies. In addition, Gardner has published several articles on a variety of law enforcement topics.

The College of Arts and Sciences is proud of Gardner's hard work and dedication to both his profession and his country.

## DAY OF RECOGNITION

On April 30, 2009, the College of Arts and Sciences recognized more than 150 seniors for their academic achievements, excellence in leadership and service, and contributions to their profession.

Also recognized at the Day of Recognition were four outstanding faculty for contributions made to their profession and the university. Awards were presented to the following faculty:

Dr. Jamie Pimlott, department of political science - *Excellence in Teaching*

Professor Daniel Kaczmarek, department of English - *Excellence in Part-Time Teaching*

Dr. Christopher Stoj, department of chemistry - *Excellence in Scholarship*

Dr. Timothy Ireland, department of criminal justice - *Excellence in Service*



Dr. McGlen congratulates faculty award winners Daniel Kaczmarek and Dr. Jamie Pimlott



Father Levesque congratulates students at the Arts and Sciences Day of Recognition

The award recipients will have their names placed on the plaques honoring all the past winners. The plaques are located on the recently dedicated Arts and Sciences honors wall along with a plaque listing all the previous deans in the College of Arts and Sciences dating back to 1923. The teacher recognition awards began during the tenure of the Rev. Joseph L. Levesque, C.M., when he served as dean of the college from 1979-1986. The service and scholarship awards began while Dr. Susan Mason was dean.

In addition to the recipients of teaching, scholarship, and service awards, the wall is also dedicated to the memory of Kathleen M. Shields, the first assistant to the dean for administrative services. She will be remembered for her hard work and dedication to the College of Arts and Sciences and Niagara University.

The wall of honor would not have been possible without the creative design work of Kurt Von Voetsch, gallery manager of the Castellani Art Museum, and his staff. Von Voetsch worked with the dean's office to design the wall over the past eight months. Thank you!



## RADIO RETURNS TO NIAGARA

WNIA has something for everyone - music, talk shows, news, and sports - and it's all being broadcast from a brand new, state-of-the-art facility which opened in the lower level of Gallagher Center in January. Formerly housed in the basement of Alumni Hall, the new station is now in a prime location and attracting a lot of attention. It is broadcast over the Internet at wniaradio.com and anybody that has access to a computer can listen. WNIA is usually on the air from 7 a.m. to 2 a.m. daily. It is staffed by students with assistance from faculty and administrators. Congratulations to all who made WNIA radio possible.