

InGeneral

MOCK CON

By Emma Whittemore

WHAT'S THE RUSH

By CAROLINE SANDERS

**BANKING vs.
LIBERAL ARTS**

By Inga Wells

PLUS *Study Abroad
RIDING SHOTGUN
& Gender Inequality*

InGeneral

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Winter 2014

Letter from the EDITOR

As you snag this issue from the Huntley Reading Room post-study session, or flip through the pages over a Chai tea in the Co-op, I am probably standing on a chair, raising my laptop through our Roman apartment's one tiny window, in a futile attempt to get Wi-Fi. No, just kidding; hopefully I'm making better use of my time abroad than that. But going without stable Internet access (*not* Netflix!) is one of the many small details that have contributed to the larger-than-expected adjustment I've had to make while studying abroad in Rome this semester.

There's the language, of course: I've found myself unsuccessfully miming the phrases "fabric softener," "no ketchup on my sandwich," (does this really have to be explained?) and more than once, "Please stop bringing us limoncello shots we didn't ask for." There's the public transportation system that often projects its arrival times as "in the afternoon." And there are the hordes of feral cats that roam the streets, catching you by surprise every time you see one peering at you from its perch on a first century temple ruin in the middle of an intersection.

So it's been more of a change than I'd anticipated, living in Rome. But in return for these small sacrifices, I get to live in an ancient city where I walk past Caesar's assassination spot on my way to the grocery store, where I'm surrounded by the most beautiful language in the world, and where I have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to immerse myself in a culture totally different from my own. At times I've found myself missing friends and sleepy Lex (read more about Scott Sugden's '15 and Ellie Bold's '15 similar culture shocks on pages 9 and 10) but then I'm reminded that I'll never have this chance again. In the past four months I've seen more than any other time span in my life. I've met people from countries all over the world and walked the same paths as the likes of Pompey, Augustus, and Marc Antony. Giving up Starbucks for four months seems like a pretty fair trade.

With demanding majors and tricky class schedules, not everyone has the opportunity to study abroad. But the basic principle of my message is still applicable: even in Lexington (especially in Lexington), we are surrounded by history, by unexpected and immensely valuable little detours, by the chance to gain some knowledge from outside the bubble. Our time at W&L is limited, I know, and we should appreciate it to its fullest extent while we still can. But that shouldn't bar you from stepping out into the Rockbridge community, like Hannah Howard '16 did (see page 5), or hiking House Mountain for a day, or even walking ten minutes to see Stonewall Jackson's grave. I'm lucky to be abroad in such a culturally rich city, but the most important lesson I've learned here is to not get too comfortable. There are beautiful and interesting things to see everywhere you go, so pack a lunch and go see them.

Peace 'n' blessings,

Liza Boldrick



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A Different Kind of Education

by ELLIE BOLD '15

Choosing to study abroad was one of the hardest decisions I've made so far in college. It sounds trivial and spoiled: *poor you, you had to choose whether or not to live in Europe for four months.* But leaving W&L and picking up my life for a significant amount of time was hard to come to terms with, especially leaving my friends and family, and I almost didn't go because of that. However, the number one regret I hear from W&L seniors is that they didn't go abroad, and I've never heard someone say they regretted going.

Now writing this story from Vienna, Austria, I can say studying abroad was the right decision. I still struggle with keeping in touch with everyone from home, and if something goes wrong I wish I were there. But the experiences and exposure offered by studying abroad have already made themselves worth each pang of homesickness.

I am in no position to defend studying abroad as a truly academic experience: the education you receive isn't intellectually strenuous or all-nighter worthy. Instead, the merits come from learning how to settle somewhere entirely new, entirely on your own. Going to a new city, even with a program, where you don't know anyone is scary. Add in that you don't know the language, and you're just hoping you can make it through the grocery store well enough to be able to make dinner. I knew no one in my program, and orientation felt like speed dating but for friends.

On my first long break all I wanted was to go to Italy, so I pulled a group together without looking back. The universe, however, decided that I really had to earn that first bite of gelato, and rather than taking a night train directly into Florence, well, I went on an adventure. The train was cancelled, so we got into a taxi to the Vienna airport where we jumped on a bus to Bratislava at 11:30 pm. Once there, we slept in the airport under the suspicious eyes of Bratislava security, fought our way onto a flight to Milan in the morning an hour before take off, and almost had to bail a shell-shocked friend out of the Slovak TSA detaining room. In Milan, we jumped on a train to Florence, and the sun finally shone (literally, after a week of rain in Vienna, it was sunny). In the course of those 24 hours, I learned more about my ability to be uncomfortable, to be



“...THE MERITS COME FROM LEARNING HOW TO SETTLE SOMEWHERE ENTIRELY NEW, ENTIRELY ON YOUR OWN.”

resilient, and to navigate group dynamics on an hour of sleep than I ever have. Studying abroad isn't a test of intelligence; it's real-world street smarts, and it gives an enormous amount of perspective on the limits of the W&L bubble. I still love and miss little Lexington, but I can say I've learned more about myself in just a month here than I did all of last term. Rather than constantly focusing on school or internships or what fraternity got into trouble that week, you're seeing new places, hearing new languages, and feeling uncomfortable. But in that lack of comfort, you appreciate everything you miss, and you strive to make it to that next destination no matter what hurdles you have to jump through. ■

W

hen I first watched the Disney film Madagascar some ten years ago, I was enthralled. I wanted to go to that same fantastical place, find King Julien, and “move it, move it” with his lemurs just like in the film. I have since learned that King Julien is not real – it was almost as devastating as the loss of Santa Claus – but my vision of traveling to Madagascar has been fulfilled. I’m spending this winter term in Fort Dauphin, on the southeast coast of Madagascar, studying biodiversity and resource management with the School for International Training.

Fort Dauphin is what could be expected of a tropical paradise: my school is on a peninsula surrounded by the ocean, I eat lunch outside with the ocean breezes, I eat fresh bananas, mangos, and papayas for dessert, and after classes I go swimming on beautiful sandy beaches.

At the same time, I’m forced to remember that Madagascar is also an underdeveloped country. During the first few days with my homestay family, I noticed the conspicuous absence of many of the conveniences we take for granted in America. Refrigerators, flush toilets, and Internet access are all luxuries here available only to the select few, and I haven’t yet discovered a single building with air conditioning. The water that runs to our house is not safe for me to drink, and litter in the streets is common.



“...IT GIVES AN ENORMOUS AMOUNT OF PERSPECTIVE ON THE LIMITS OF THE W&L BUBBLE.”

by SCOTT SUGDEN '15



Yet despite being what some may consider “behind the times,” life here is peaceful and easygoing and the people are quite happy. Everyone says hello to each other on the street, there’s no such thing as a traffic jam, and young children play pick-up soccer on the beach every afternoon. Internet access is a novelty here, accessible infrequently and at slow speeds, making life beautifully disconnected. My family feeds me more food than I can possibly eat.

Living with a French-speaking family and taking all of my classes in French has done exceptional things for my French skills in the short time I’ve been here, but even more so it has made me marvel at what fluency in a language really means. I can carry on a conversation in French, but I find myself extremely limited in what I can say. You don’t appreciate how many words there are in one language until you realize you don’t know where to say them all in another.

Why, you might ask, would I choose to travel to one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world (aside from built-up childhood desire)? Because the odds are I would never come to this country without some kind of support. If I want to travel to Western Europe someday, I can navigate the train and airplane system by myself. But if I had walked out of the Madagascar airport without someone waiting for me, I would not have known what to do next or, more importantly, how to do it.

And, of course, there’s the reason most people come here: some 80% of the species that live in Madagascar live only in Madagascar, which is why it’s often considered the “eighth continent.” Lemurs are one such species, which is why if King Julien actually does exist, he must be here somewhere. ■

HUMANS of W&L

SOPHOMORE DAVIS BATEMAN HAS BEEN ADMIRING THE WORK OF BRANDON STANTON FOR MANY YEARS. STANTON'S PROJECT, HUMANS OF NEW YORK (WWW.HUMANOSOFNEWYORK.COM) CHRONICLES THE LIVES AND FASHION OF PEOPLE IN NEW YORK CITY. BATEMAN HAS DONE THE SAME HERE AT W&L TO GET A GLIMPSE INTO THE LIVES OF OTHER MEMBERS OF OUR COMMUNITY.



BOGDAN BORS '15



HANNAH WILSON '16

“ IF YOU COULD BE ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD BUT HERE, WHERE WOULD YOU BE?

In Italy I think. Maybe in Rome? I just love the city. I've been there for two months and I think it's great. I'm from Romania. I'm here for four years, and I'm a freshman... Yeah, so I would go to Rome. Roma is great; it's so beautiful and people are so friendly. It's a great place to be. - BB



WILSON MILLER '17

“ WHAT WAS THE HAPPIEST MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE?

Superlatives are very challenging.

WHAT WAS THE SADDEST MOMENT OF YOUR LIFE?

A friend of mine from camp died in a car crash from racing on a residential street. - WM



SANDY, Fraternity House Chef

“ WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

Being around young people. It keeps my mind sharp. And I get to hear new ideas from them that are mostly different from the ideas of people my age. - S



WONHEE LIM '16

“ WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

I want to become a poverty lawyer. What I specifically want to do is get employed by a hospital and work with doctors to resolve housing issues, resolve things that cause diseases. So people won't have to spend their paychecks on going to the hospital all the time. So they can rise up on the ladder. That's just a small part... but it's a pretty significant part.

IF YOU COULD DO ANYTHING IN THE WORLD, WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

I would found something like World Vision. A relief organization that creates infrastructure. - WL



LINDSEY DEMUTH '15

“ Apparently I say "bagel" wrong. So I went to camp up north, and I'm from Baltimore which isn't that southern, but apparently I say "p-u-l" and "p-e-l" the same way. Like, "I'm going to pull the door shut" or "I'm going to swim in the pool." Apparently there's a difference. - LD

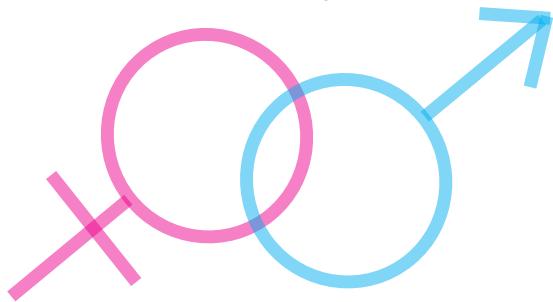


AKEMUWA HONOR '16

“ WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE THING ABOUT YOURSELF?

Well, I've never thought of that before. I can't say it's my hair because, well... that's gone. I can't say it's my eyes because... that's gone too. My ears. I like to listen a lot so my ears, I guess. - AH

gender INEQUALITY



DO YOU REMEMBER PLAYING "GUESS WHO?" WHEN YOU WERE YOUNGER? REMEMBER WHAT QUESTION YOU ALMOST ALWAYS ASKED FIRST? CHANCES ARE IT DEALT WITH SEX: "IS IT A BOY OR A GIRL?"

by HENDLEY BADCOCK '16

Sex serves as our baseline for identifying others and ourselves. In classifying a person's biological sex, we assign him or her a gendered social persona. Sociologist Cecelia Ridgeway says that this sex/gender roleplaying serves as our "primary frame for organizing social relations." The underlying assumptions that come along with gendered stereotypes—men are strong, stoic, and assertive while women are gentle, empathetic, and passive—shape our behavior and fuel gender inequality.

So what does this mean for men and women at Washington and Lee? Why should we care about those dated gender roles? We live in a community of equality and respect...don't we?

Let's investigate a few W&L traditions. As one of the oldest higher education institutions in the country, W&L prides itself on tradition: the Executive Commit-

tee, secret societies, Greek life.

All of these student-run organizations require strong, authoritative, rational leaders. For most of W&L's history, only men have been available to occupy these positions and they rose to the occasion. But now that women have been an integral part of this campus for several decades, administrators and students disagree on the extent to which women fill such leadership positions.

Lacy Rosse '16 says that the university's historically male superiority causes an infrequency of women leaders in some of the school's older institutions.

"Especially since girls have only been here [29] years," says Rosse, "the fact that some of the most ingrained traditions are [primarily led by] boys can make girls feel left out and inferior."

When asked if men and women have equal opportunity on campus and take full

advantage of it, Assistant Dean for First-Year Experience Jason Rodocker replied with assurance that both sexes do.

"There are a number of strong female leaders in the student body and university leadership," Rodocker says. However, some women on campus feel underrepresented. "Our experiences from the Women's Leadership Summits have demonstrated that women may tend to hold back from taking advantage of leadership opportunities for any number of different reasons," says Dean of Students Sidney Evans.

Consider the EC: since 1905, four of the past 109 EC presidents have been women, including current president Lucy Wade Shapiro '15. Granted, only 29 school years and presidents have passed since the university began enrolling women. But even so, women make up less than 1% of this highly esteemed leadership position.

E

C Secretary Anna Russell Thornton '16 says she didn't think about the EC's gender composition when she ran.

"I ran because I wanted to contribute to a system which I deeply value and to continue to grow our community at Washington and Lee," says Thornton. She adds that the EC currently has five women representatives, the highest number of female committee members it has had in a few years.

While this account suggests a movement toward gender equality in leadership positions, that prevailing imbalance forms a head all across campus.

"Same goes for WIS," says a female accounting major. This year, five women contribute to the 42-member team that makes up the William Investment Society, a student group responsible for managing a portion of George Washington's endowment to the school. Nevertheless, out of those five women, Sarah Beth Hampton '15 is this year's president.

Another esteemed, yet not as public, tradition on campus is membership in secret societies. The Cadaver Society and Sigma Society rule as the university's historic, exclusive, all-male groups.

We are all familiar with the Cadavers' late-night antics: maneuvering campus through tunnels, waking up girls in the sorority houses, grafting their trademark on any visible surface with any available medium.

W&L administration condones the pranks.

In a blog post on CollegeConfidential.com, one user commented that "the school tolerates [the society's behavior] because of how much money Cadaver alums give back to the school." To that point, the university website includes "philanthropic organization" in its definition of the Cadavers.

However, by preserving these inherited

rituals and indulging in the mysteries of that faceless group of men, the university also overlooks the lack of a female equivalent. While the Elixirs fill this role for some students, others say it simply does not match up.

"When I hear 'Cadavers' I think they are wealthy boys who are probably very socially relevant within their fraternities," says Maggie Andrea '16. "When I hear 'Elixirs' I think more of party girls...[it's a completely different reputation in my mind.]"

Andrea says that she thinks it could have to do with the centuries' long lineage of the Cadaver Society.

Such community acceptance extends even to hazing in secret societies and Greek organizations.

Take the predominant rite of passing that is fraternity pledging: as 77% of the student body is Greek affiliated, we all know at least one male who went through it at the beginning of the term. Men who have gone through it tend to believe in its adhesive ability.

"[Pledging] absolutely fosters brotherhood," one active says. "A lot of people look down on pledging and see it as some archaic tradition, but the fact is that pledging is the cornerstone of fraternities."

Sometimes women also look on with fondness. Sorority member Pauline Marting '16 finds merit in leaning on your brothers during rough times.

"I am slightly jealous of the effect that pledging has on their relationships," Marting says. "But we also have larger groups of girls, so it takes longer for us to bond."

Clearly, women have very little role in fraternity hazing. In fact, author of *Guyland* Michael Kimmel says that this separation of women from the importance of fraternity initiation signifies a greater gender divide in a society.

"These ritual demarcate the line between men's space and women's space," wrote Kimmel. "The rituals are often sexually humiliating, sometimes violent, and always about manhood."

As such, the blossoming bromances formed over pregame and parties consume fraternity members and those rushing during fall term. The "toughening" of that feigned love toward the first-years occupies the same population for six weeks of winter term.

Meanwhile, sorority women undergo recruitment by radically different standards—hosting Sunday brunch dates during recruitment, singing songs and toasting your "sisters" during formal rush, giving crafted gifts and sentimental notes to the pledges during winter term.

According to those gender stereotypes of assertive, manly men and delicate, compassionate women, both categories of actors play their roles very well.

While its form varies from academic leadership to society membership, gender inequality is present here as well as on many other college campuses. Traditions serve as the root for most of W&L's cases, and I urge you to challenge, or at least acknowledge,

that. W&L aims at training young minds to think critically of their surroundings and act honorably, with reason and integrity. So do just that: consider what ways you might be experiencing inequality on campus.

Look at Shapiro currently serving as EC president, or Hampton who presides over WIS. Though we may feel traditions cannot be altered, every student, male or female, has the capacity to break whatever mold might be interfering with their willingness to exert power, speak their mind, and make changes. ■

THE SCHOOL tolerates the society's BEHAVIOR
BECAUSE OF how much MONEY
CADAVER ALUMS give back to the SCHOOL.

The BUSINESS of Liberal Arts

by INGA WELLS '16

At Washington and Lee, the Williams School of Commerce, Economics, and Politics is synonymous for many current and prospective students and their parents with a guaranteed job post-college. This illustrious business school within a liberal arts environment has long distinguished W&L as a provider of a uniquely well-rounded collegiate education, and the stigma is not dying anytime soon.

Declared Accounting and Business Administration majors as of fall 2013 increased to 103 from the previous year's 65. This means that, even before much of the current junior class had declared their majors, there was still a substantial increase in popularity for this track, a more dramatic rise than any other major in the Williams School.

While this has provided many benefits for students looking to gain a specialized business degree without sacrificing more classic courses, it also places great strain on the school.

Associate Dean of the Williams School Dr. Rob Straughan views the motives for demand as twofold. First, he believes there are many students who come to W&L because they are looking for a rigorous business school but are not willing to abandon the benefits of the small school they desire. On the other side of the issue is the common perception that a business major will give students access to an internship, a job, and thus an ideal lifestyle. Considering the substantial monetary investment a W&L education demands, it is not unreasonable to desire a positive outcome. However, Straughan fears that students are not "following their passions," or for a lack of better words, selling out.

"I'm guilty of thinking [a business major] looked good [for future job prospects]," admits Shelli Hendricks '16, a business and psychology double major, "but I would not have continued to pursue a business major had I not truly enjoyed my courses in the 'C-School.'"

As for the question of security, however, is major choice really that important? Straughan does not think so, but rather asserts that firms "don't have a disposition to one major," appreciating instead initiative and passion. Worth Smith '16 can speak to great lengths on this topic, as he attempted to develop a self-created entrepreneurship minor to add to his English major earlier this fall before being told that the Williams school does not allow students to create new minors. Much of this, says Straughan, is for fear that "even more students would want to get into C-School classes, for which the demand is already too great."

Smith says that "there is no easy option in this case," as students like him "are now left to 'cherry pick' classes, essentially having to



beg professors to add one more seat each term." The other option that many students, such as Bayan Misagh '15, believe would undermine the spirit of W&L, is to "declare a second or third major only to drop it at some later point...[or] take a certain class."

Down the road, putting a GPA cap or application into play may be the only solution. Straughan says that the business school has an innately liberal arts nature about it as part of W&L, and that being able to teach a diverse array of courses is included in the "job satisfaction for the faculty" courses that are becoming rare as more students need to fulfill required courses. Some proposed policies may ultimately lessen that atmosphere and therefore the essence of choosing W&L for an undergraduate business degree. ■



WHAT'S THE rush?

by CAROLINE SANDERS '17

It's noon on a pretty autumn day in Lexington. The leaves are falling, the birds are chirping, and the quad in front of Graham-Lees is packed with girls. Rush is in the air. Some girls squeal and hug each other emphatically, while others contemplate whether they should embrace or simply exchange a handshake. One meek freshman checks her phone off to the side, quickly searching Facebook to make sure she recognizes the upperclassmen waiting for her. Clusters of girls small-talk their way down Washington Street to Hilled or Blue Bell, hoping to find a common interest along the way.

Rush dates are an odd tradition, fairly unique to W&L. When I was home for breaks throughout first semester, many of my friends teased me about my "dating life," wondering when I'd ever actually get to join a sorority. While the majority of colleges hold formal recruitment in the fall semester, W&L defers rush to the first week of the winter semester, providing an unusually long informal rush period. This method, however, is a large part of what our school values in its Greek system.

"Second semester rush is a huge asset," says president of Panhellenic Council Margaret McClintock '15. "It allows first year students to get to know the upperclassmen and...make a more informed decision."

Most large state schools have formal recruitment the first week of school, or in the case of the University of Georgia, the week before classes begin.

"I love how [rush] is at the beginning of the year, because as soon as school starts you feel like you belong to something," says Caroline Laboon, a freshman Chi-O at UGA. "[But] I do sometimes wish I could've made friends before rush so it wasn't as awkward being forced into friend groups."

O-Week aims to fill that role at W&L, where many of the orientation activities are designed to bond freshmen to their new classmates and make them feel like they have



SECOND SEMESTER RUSH ALLOWS FIRST YEAR STUDENTS TO GET TO KNOW THE UPPERCLASSMEN AND...MAKE A MORE INFORMED DECISION.

a home in the W&L community. Separating people into Greek affiliations right away would make our small school even smaller and potentially deter freshmen from making friends outside of their Greek organization. The University of North Carolina defers rush to a few weeks after the beginning of classes to allow students to settle in first. MacKinsey Cole, a freshman KD at UNC, "found rushing two weeks into school difficult... I feel like I would have had a better understanding of who my pledge sisters were going to be if we rushed second semester."

Although we value second semester rush as an opportunity to get to know more people in and outside of Greek life, McClintock acknowledges, "The informal rush culture has a lot of room for improvement." Some girls are overwhelmed with rush dates, while others feel like they aren't asked on many at all. An entire semester is a long time to stress about such situations. The system requires a lot of time, energy, and money for freshmen and upperclassmen alike.

Others complain that our system and strict rush rules seem to perpetuate an overly structured definition for how freshman-upperclassmen friendships can develop. For instance, a single freshman cannot be alone with upperclassmen. Rush dates are prohibited on Mondays and Tuesdays as is driving together anytime. While these rules are in place to keep the process fair and allow everyone to have time to focus on academics, they sometimes create an unnatural version of friendship that must be followed for an entire semester.

For these reasons, Panhellenic is considering changing the system. This could be a change of date (perhaps midway through first semester) or a change of policy (e.g., limiting the number of rush dates per week).

Panhellenic Council is open to ideas about what course of action to take. Please contact Margaret McClintock at mcclintock15@mail.wlu.edu if you have any suggestions. ■

School Politics

The 2016 Mock Convention

by EMMA WHITTEMORE '16

Since its first year in 1908, Washington and Lee's Mock Convention has attracted national attention. Mock Con, as it is known, has been chock-full of influential leaders: William Jennings Bryan spoke at the first convention; then Arkansas Gov. Bill Clinton allegedly played his saxophone at Windfall in 1988; and former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee was a keynote speaker in 2012.

Those are tough acts to follow, but the 2016 Mock Con Executive Committee members say they hope their version of Mock Convention will be even better. The chairs are even toying with the idea of having W&L host a Presidential debate.

Since 1948, W&L's Mock Convention has picked the same presidential candidate that the political party out of power has chosen—in all but two notable instances. In 1972 Mock Con chose Democrat Ted Kennedy instead of George McGovern and in 2008 Mock Con falsely predicted Hillary

Clinton would be the Democratic Party's nominee instead of Barack Obama. As a consequence of the school's most recent false forecast, the pressure is on in the upcoming convention to get the prediction legacy back on track.

In May 1908, populist Bryan was the convention's first prediction for the Democratic Party nominee. In 1924, Mock Con chose one of the school's own, John W. Davis, the namesake for Davis Dorm. Although the 1892 W&L grad and Phi Kappa Psi brother lost the 1924 presidential election to Republican Calvin Coolidge, the prediction helped to solidify Washington and Lee's Mock Convention as a political phenomenon.

Over the years, a plethora of famous politicians have given speeches at Mock Convention. Former President Harry S. Truman spoke at the 1960 convention and then Georgia Governor Jimmy Carter spoke in 1972.



The convention hasn't been without its darker surprises, either: Former Vice President Alben W. Barkley unexpectedly died of a heart attack while giving a speech in 1956. The Convention continued a week later at the encouragement of Barkley's widow. Putting on a high-caliber Mock Convention is a lot of work that's years in the making. In order to best ensure success, Mock Convention requires the participation of a huge part of the student body from executive leadership positions down to delegate memberships. The General Chair Andrew McCaffery '16, Financial Chair Tanner Waggoner '16, Political Chair Katherine Hodges '16, Co-Directors of Communication John Crum '17 and Randy Karlson '16, and Director of Operations Courtney McCauley '17 have already been hired for the 2016 convention. Additionally, Myers McCrary '16 and Jake Mack '16 serve as Co-Fundraising Chairs and Jenna Faude '16 was recently chosen as the Media Chair.

There are many opportunities still available. "The bulk of our positions will come during the fall of 2014," says McCaffery. State chair and delegate applications will go out around that time. All 50 states, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the U.S. Virgin Islands have a delegate, each of



which has a state chair, delegation capped to the size of the state relative to W&L, and a float in the parade. Students can become involved by serving on a state delegation, donating money, or even

volunteering to set up for an event. Help is needed everywhere.

Adding to the impressive vigor of the political star-studded events and sheer size of W&L's Mock

CONVENTION IS THE FACT THAT IT IS ENTIRELY

STUDENT RUN.

that has a state chair, delegation capped to the size of the state relative to W&L, and a float in the parade. Students can become involved by serving on a state delegation, donating money, or even

volunteering to set up for an event. Help is needed everywhere.

Adding to the impressive vigor of the political star-studded

events and sheer size of W&L's Mock Con-

vention is the fact that it is entirely stu-

dent-run. Its leaders work hard every year to

solicit national media sources (but the media

seem to flock to Mock Con regardless).

Such was the national prominence of Mock

Con, CSPAN used to show gavel-to-gavel

coverage of the entire Convention Weekend

from Thursday night to midday Sunday.

The chairs are reapplying to get full CSPAN

coverage reinstated.

Current juniors who won't be around

for the next convention will still be able to

celebrate its beginnings through the first big

event, the Spring Kickoff, which takes place

during Spring Term in 2015. The Kickoff

will feature an entertainment act and a

keynote speaker, and has traditionally been

held on the front lawn of Lee Chapel. The

last Spring Kickoff

featured political strategist Karl Rove.

Between the Spring Kickoff event and the official Convention Weekend there will be numerous stand-alone events featuring a wide array of presentations by professors

from various academic departments: for example, professors

from the Department of Journalism and Mass

Communications may discuss the importance of free speech or

Geology professors may cover

pertinent energy issues. The

stand-alone events will emphasize

that politics and the upcoming election are

important to all students, not just politics

majors.

The convention isn't all politics, however:

students can look forward to the Presiden-

tial Gala in November 2015, an (if you

can believe it) amped-up version of W&L's

annual Fancy Dress.

"The Presidential Gala is supposed to be better than Fancy Dress," says McCaffery.

The last Presidential

Gala had a "Black Tie

and Boots" theme, but

the dance is reinvented a little bit each year

according to the preferences of the Mock

Con Executive Committee. "We know

there's supposed to be a black tie gala but we

get to decide

everything else beyond that," says Crum. The theme and entertainment act are chosen by the Committee, who is currently toying with the idea of hosting the gala in Evans Dining Hall instead of the usual Doremus Gymnasium. "Evans would be classy," says Crum.

All of these events will hopefully build hype and buzz leading up to Convention Weekend in January or February 2016.

Karlson, Crum, and McCaffery say that they think this Mock Convention will be especially important because there's no obvious Republican frontrunner yet. New Jersey Governor Chris Christie may have been a favorite before his recent bridge incident. Additionally, the Tea Party is likely to play an important role in this convention.

"We have a real story to tell with the upcoming Mock Convention," says Crum. The Committee's goal with this convention

in particular is to emphasize the importance of Mock Convention and politics as a whole. Politics are applicable to everyone, especially young voters. The leaders want people

to know that college-aged voters still care about politics.

"We're trying to show everyone that we're a generation that cares," says Karlson. ■

Students helping students



by LINDSAY GEORGE '16

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HIS PROGRAM HAS SHOWN ME HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO BRANCH OUT AND MOVE AWAY FROM JUST CAMPUS STUFF. THE COMMUNITY REALLY NEEDS INVOLVEMENT AND WE HAVE THE ABILITY TO DO SO MUCH.

Despite the narrow scope of the infamous "Lexington Bubble," a group of W&L students are getting off campus and experiencing Rockbridge County through the perspective of local kids. Currently in its third year of operation, the Student to Student program matches college students with "littles" in the surrounding community with the goal of empowering children by providing them with an adult mentor. Meredith Roberts '14, president of the organization, explains, "We hope that relationships built from trust and friendship will develop between the one-on-one student and child pairs. This mentoring organization will give children an outlet that will hopefully lead them away from engagement in dangerous and harmful activities." Though the relationship can be focused specifically on academics or emotional or social support, all bigs and littles hang out at least once a week. W&L students bring their littles to their off-campus houses, play board games in the Commons, or explore Rockbridge County together.

With 40 established matches and nine in the process of being matched, Student to Student has already grown substantially in its impact on the Rockbridge community, although there is always room for growth.

"If there is interest in the program, we have some littles that need [to be] matched—especially boys—and we are not at capacity yet!" says Roberts.

To experience this relationship firsthand, I shadowed Hannah Howard '16, member

of Student to Student since the winter of her freshman year, and her little, Georgia.

Together we went thirty minutes out into the country of Rockbridge County to Georgia's house to celebrate her fifth birthday party. Inside the house, Georgia's grandmother led us upstairs to Georgia's room where we were greeted by five rambunctious kindergarteners. We were told they had been waiting for us to get there, so we immediately went downstairs to eat pizza and cake.

Georgia covered her ears as her friends sang her happy birthday before blowing out the candles on her Tinker Bell cupcakes. After watching the birthday girl open her mountain of presents, the kids dug into Georgia's grandma's homemade pizza and dessert. Georgia's friend Malia cautiously cut herself off after one bowl of ice cream, warning she would "get too hyper" if she ate more. After playing with Georgia's new toys and working off most of the sugar from dinner, Hannah and I left the girls to their sleepover: a first experience for a few of them.

Howard later expressed how interesting it was to watch Georgia interact with her friends.

"It was great to see Georgia act more outgoing and be more in the position of a leader," said Howard, noting that the dynamic of her relationship with Georgia has progressed since their first meeting. Howard credits this change in Georgia's personality to their interaction through Student to Student. "I feel like Georgia has really gotten an



important experience out of this because it's made her open up so much. She's a lot more friendly and talkative than she was when we first started meeting."

Howard appreciates how much freedom she has in her relationship with Georgia and loves that she has the opportunity to reach out to the Lexington community. "This program has shown me how important it is to branch out and move away from just campus stuff. The community really needs involvement and we have the ability to do so much. I honestly feel like having Georgia in my life has opened my eyes to what I can and should do for others," says Howard. Student to Student has certainly given her a perspective on life on Rockbridge County Howard wouldn't have achieved if she hadn't ventured beyond the "bubble." ■

building. Two unnamed officers entered the burning building and rescued the male student.

"The main thing that saved that house was the brick exterior," says Watts. "[It only takes] two to four minutes for a house to be fully engulfed."

Because Public Safety officers have such a pervasive presence on campus, it's important for the officers and students to develop good relationships. "People who wear a badge are human," says Watts, a former stand-up comedian. He prefers to interact with students through humor: "I come in with a smile and leave with a smile... We don't like to be the bad guys, we like to be the good guys."

Students are often spooked by legal fears when it comes to Public Safety, but while Public Safety acts as the liaison between our campus and the Lexington Police Department, Officer Watts says that he appreciates that he has "no arrest powers," says Watts, a former stand-up comedian. He prefers to interact with students through humor: "I come in with a smile and leave with a smile... We don't like to be the bad guys, we like to be the good guys."

WHAT IS AN EMERGENCY TO THE STUDENTS IS AN EMERGENCY TO PUBLIC SAFETY.

In circumstances that lead to student resentment, the officers try to avoid the development of grudges. "You continue to talk to students on campus and after a few weeks or a month they'll come around and start speaking back to you," says Black.

Many W&L students do in fact become close with the officers, who after all have followed them all the way from freshman year to graduation.

"It took me my first hour of working here that I finally realized how important my role is on campus," says Watts. "[The most important part of my job is] making sure the students are well taken care of—seeing them grow—and seeing them graduate." Black calls this the first job for which he doesn't "dread coming into work." ■

RIDING SHOTGUN with public safety

by MAGGIE HAMMER '16

The Public Safety hotline has become the go-to for students of every age. From freshman chronically locking themselves out of their rooms, to seniors that don't want to walk from Leyburn to the parking garage at night, Public Safety always responds—and they do it with a smile. I spoke to Director of Public Safety Ethan Kipnes and a few of his officers—Sergeant Chris Paulk, Officer Travis Black, and Officer Brian Watts—to learn a bit more about the illustrious security group.

The officers deal with everything, including, but not limited to, alcohol violations, larceny, locked cars and doors, roaches, seniors attempting to scale Washington Hall, students talking to inanimate objects, vandalism, ghosts, emotional distress, toilets, heat breakers, and water leaks. This doesn't even include the 110 checkpoints they are required to come in contact with during their shifts, stretching from Hillel to the Pavilion.

Despite a few of the more questionable items on that list, the officers almost unanimously agreed that they had never been called to report to a "non-emergency." What is an emergency to the student is an emergency to them.

"[The officers] act as a conduit to connect people to the right resources," says Kipnes.

W&L is not without its share of almost-disasters, at which point Public Safety swoops in to save the day. One such occasion was the 2009 fire at the Pi Kappa Phi fraternity house. On the Wednesday night following midterms, Officer Watts received a call reporting "20-foot flames" at the house. He was told that three brothers hadn't been accounted for and the fire department had yet to arrive. Fortunately, by "just talking to [the fraternity members]," he was able to locate the three students: two were safe and the third was on the third floor of the now flame-engulfed



"Blenko Glass Company in Milton, West Virginia
been producing hand-blown glass for over a century.
The artisanal glassmakers offer more than pieces of
art; they offer tours and classes, too, allowing visitors
and customers to get an inside glimpse from crushed
glass to finished product."

- Sequoya Bua-lam '17



PHOTOS BY SEQUOYA BUA-LAM '17