

MILLSAPS COLLEGE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY WORLD DISPATCH

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E-mail corrections to newsletter editor Ben McNair at mcnairj@millsaps.edu.

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**MILLSAPS
COLLEGE**

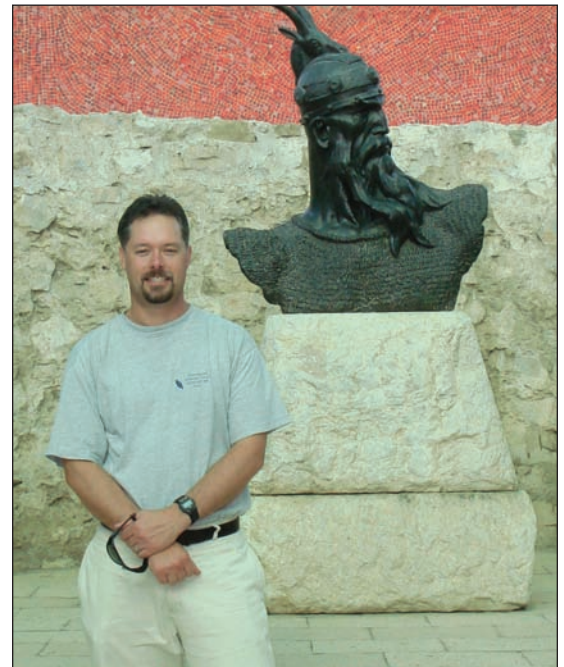
We're building a **bigger, better alumni community**. E-mail your updates to mcnairj@millsaps.edu. Include your name, graduation year and everything what you've been up to and you'll be included in the next edition of the newsletter. Become a part of the alumni network (www.millsapssoan.ning.com) and connect directly with your former classmates.

Award adds prestige

Dr. Michael Galaty, professor of anthropology, is the most recent winner of the Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching Award from the Archaeological Institute of America. The award is one of the highest honors bestowed on undergraduate professors of archaeology and is given to only one distinguished honoree each year. He will accept the award at the Institute's national meeting in January.

Galaty's award "is a wonderful recognition of the high quality of undergraduate teaching in our department," says Dr. Julian Murchison, associate professor of anthropology and sociology. Galaty agrees that the award "demonstrates that we have a world-class anthropology program." His award is a major achievement both for the department of sociology and anthropology and for the College.

Galaty was nominated by Professor of Anthropology George Bey and former Dean of the College Richard Smith. He has an impressive track record at Millsaps and was awarded both the Out-



Michael Galaty

Dr. Michael Galaty in Albania

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SOAN welcomes postdoc fellow



Contributed photo

Dr. Jessica Piekielek

The Millsaps College Department of Sociology and Anthropology is pleased to welcome Dr. Jessica Piekielek as a postdoctoral fellow. Piekielek completed her undergraduate work at Guilford College in Greensboro, North Carolina and continued her graduate studies at the University of Arizona before making Millsaps her new home.

This semester Piekielek is teaching a course on Environmental Anthropology. She's no stranger to the subject – her research interests include conservation and environmentalism, along with U.S.-Mexican border studies. She explores some of these themes in her dissertation entitled "Public wildlands at the U.S.-Mexican border: where migration, smuggling and border enforcement collide."

In her dissertation Piekielek examines the changing relationships among natural landscapes, the state and

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standing Young Faculty Award and the Distinguished Professor Award by the College. In order to qualify for the award, Galaty demonstrated excellence in teaching archaeology and developed innovative teaching methods. Other requisites include having taught for at least five years and maintaining membership in the Institute.

The Archaeological Institute of America was founded in 1879 and is the oldest and largest organization devoted to archaeology. Boasting over 250,000 members and subscribers, its diverse constituency includes professional archaeologists, students and those who are simply interested in furthering human knowledge.

Its mission spells out its commitment to furthering public understanding of the importance of archaeological findings, preserving archaeological resources and protecting cultural heritage. The strong belief that understanding the past strengthens the human experience and enriches lives is a thread that runs through all of the Institute's undertakings.

In addition to prestigious awards, the Institute publishes a bimonthly magazine, books

and a leading journal in the field of archaeology. It also sponsors lectures, fellowships, tours and an annual meeting that gives center stages to new discoveries and scholarship.

Galaty's award is the second national award received by a faculty member in the department of sociology and anthropology in the past four years. Associate Dean of International Education and Chisholm Foundation Chair in Arts and Sciences Dr. George Bey received the AAA/McGraw-Hill Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Teaching from the American Anthropological Association in 2006.

"Two national awards in the past four years show how unique our department is," says Murchison. "They demonstrate the wonderful teaching and learning opportunities available."

Students in the department also realize the size of this achievement. "After being here for four years I kind of take things for granted," admits senior Nadia Hashimi, "but the award helped me realize just how lucky I am to be here."

We'd love to hear from you!

Send your updates to mcnaijb@millsaps.edu to be included in the next edition of the newsletter!

Be sure to check out our online alumni community at www.ning.com, too!

Chinese students call Millsaps home

This fall fourteen Chinese students arrived on the Millsaps College campus, having left their homes, family and friends for an education in the United States. Ten students are undergraduates and four are studying in the Else School of Management, on track to receive graduate degrees in Accounting.

The majority of students come from Wuhan and Chengdu, areas in the central part of the country; the rest hail from Beijing, Nanjing, Shenzhen and Shanghai.

How did these students from far-reaching parts of China come to Millsaps? Three years ago Millsaps College faculty and administrators took a recruiting trip to Wuhan, making valuable personal contacts along the way. Some of these contacts influenced Chinese students to look into what Millsaps had to offer. International students already at Millsaps recommended the school to friends. Some students even found the school online as part of a search they conducted themselves.

The fourteen students work closely with Dr. Ming Tsui, associate professor of sociology. With research interests in areas of marriage and family, education, gender and employment in Chinese culture, Tsui is a logical guide during their experience in Mississippi.

Tsui acts as both a teacher and a mentor, often finding students in her Core 1 and sociology classes and in her office asking for advice. She considers it her job to "teach them about the American education system, daily life from food to illness to making doctor's appointments and how to interact with professors and American students."

Most undergraduate students from China come to Millsaps to study computer science, math, accounting, business, physics and engineering. Schoolwork is an overwhelming part of their stay in America, and "the majority of Chinese students largely interact among themselves and focus on their school work with little involvement with college social life," observes Tsui. The 14 Chinese students on campus contribute to an increasingly internationalized student body, though many maintain strong ties with family and friends back home. They find keeping in touch easy via the internet.

While there is a notable feeling of camaraderie among Chinese students, at least one considers himself "fully integrated into Millsaps culture," Tsui adds. All of the undergraduate students plan to complete all four years at Millsaps, sometimes even staying during the summer.

Though graduation may seem far off for some, all are weighing their options after receiving their diplomas. Some plan to stay at the Else School to receive a Master's degree, others plan to attend graduate schools in other areas and at least one student has set his sights on law school in the United States.

Dean drops in on Tanzania

Not only did four students travel to Tanzania this summer with Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sociology Dr. Julian Murchison – the program, developed by Murchison, received a visit from Interim Vice President and Dean of the College Dr. David Davis.

Davis arrived in Dar es Salaam as Millsapians Erin Jordan, Paz Naccari, Lauren Porter and Alex Cocke began their journey home. Davis and Murchison traveled to Peramiho, a village in the region of Songea in southern Tanzania, where the students stayed with host families and Murchison conducts fieldwork and co-directs an NGO (Songea-Mississippi, or SOMI).

Though traveling through “strikingly beautiful terrain,” the 14-hour bus ride to reach Songea was certainly rough, says Davis. However, “rugged mountain passes, the Mikumi National Park and the cool, hill-country around Njombe” made the ride worthwhile. While in Songea, Davis and Murchison discussed ways to establish a greater presence in the area. Allowing students to stay for longer periods of time would open up many more opportunities for “work in the areas of cultural education, historical preservation, and language study,” Davis adds.

Upon returning to the eastern part of the nation, Davis found himself fascinated with several coastal towns. “As an

historian, my favorite spots were Bagamoyo and Kilwa,” says Davis. Bagamoyo, located on the mainland, “was the beginning of many of the famous and infamous treks into the interior [of Tanzania] by explorers like Sir Richard Burton, John Speke, and David Livingstone.”

Kilwa, now mostly ruins, is located on a small island off the coast and listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Reachable only by small boats, Davis and Murchison had to sail several kilometers to get there. Several palaces are still largely intact on the island, built of coral stone during the 7th – 12th centuries. Ibn Battuta, one of North Africa’s most notable explorers, encountered Kilwa in the 13th century. Amazed at what he saw, Battuta regarded Kilwa as one of the wonders of the world. Watching a “sunrise over the Indian Ocean was spectacular,” Davis adds.

Known more by students as a professor than as Dean of the College, Davis specializes in African history. Having completed his own fieldwork

in northern Ghana some 25 years ago, Davis “felt at home in southern Tanzania.” After visiting with “wonderful and welcoming” people and recognizing the great potential the program has, Davis is eager to make it the “cornerstone of our African Studies program at Millsaps.”



Contributed photo

Dr. David Davis sails to Kilwa.

2009 grads head to China

For 2009 graduates Megan Jumago, a sociology-anthropology with concentrations in both fields, and Courtney Helfrich, an sociology-anthropology major with minors in biology and environmental Studies, graduate school is not in the immediate future. Instead, they are headed to China to teach English.

Associate Professor of Sociology Dr. Ming Tsui recommended the program to Jumago and Helfrich.

They are not the first Millsaps graduates to participate in a teaching

program abroad, either – recent graduates Matt Casteel, Chris Kelly, Meghan Pigott and Ellen Biemann have all done similar things.

Jumago and Helfrich who were sorority sisters and are good friends, began throwing ideas around about what they would do post-graduation starting two years ago. When they both realized they were seriously considering working internationally, they began to combine their plans for an unforgettable abroad experience.

Neither of them knows Chinese, and

they were hired to teach colloquialisms, conversation styles, business English and help students prepare resumes.

In addition to teaching, Helfrich plans to take classes in Mandarin at Wuhan University. She sees her experience as the perfect opportunity to learn another language.

Neither Jumago nor Helfrich is interested in returning to the U.S. right after their year abroad, and they plan to keep their “options and ears open” as they consider what’s next.

Alumni news

Cordelia Zinskie (formerly Douzenis, 1983) is a professor of Educational Research at Georgia Southern University in Statesboro, Georgia. She began teaching at Georgia Southern in 1993 and assumed the role of chair of her academic department (Curriculum, Foundations, and Reading) in Fall 2006.

Michael McKenzie (1999) received a Master's Degree in Education Administration from Texas Southern University in 2005. He is currently working on his Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction from Texas Southern University. Presently, he is a founding teacher and administrator at KIPP Liberation College Prep in Houston, Texas. Before this position, he was an Education Specialist for Child Protective Services in Houston, Texas.

He is also the author a sociological memoir called Ghetto Passport.

Bonnie Kraybill (formerly Mitchell, 1999) moved to Albuquerque, NM in 2000 and still lives here with her son, partner and two dogs.

She currently works as a registered nurse in the University of New Mexico Hospital's Assertive Community Treatment. She started the graduate program in Community Health Nursing in fall 2007 at the University of New Mexico and expects to complete the program this fall.

The focus of her research and fieldwork has been on Hepatitis C in New Mexico. She recently presented this research at the UNM Graduate and Professional Research Symposium. A statewide resource guide completed as part of her fieldwork can be found at <http://echo.unm.edu/hepc.shtml>

Scott Vickers (1999) and his wife Shelly (University of Texas, '00) were thrilled at the birth of their second child, Margot, on Jan. 21, 2009.

Scott began attending law school this fall at St. Mary's University in San Antonio, Texas.

Shane Townsend (2000) got married last spring. He and his wife Abby recently released a CD with their string band "The Rock Creek Whistlers" -- check them out on Facebook, Myspace and iTunes.

He has also accepted the position of Assistant Director of the South Asia Region for US Wheat Associates. He and Abby moved to Manila, Philippines in June where he will manage operations in support of U.S. wheat growers.

Hannah Guthrie (2005) received a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of North Texas in 2008. She currently works as a Medical Librarian at the Children's Medical Center in Dallas. Hannah began coursework on her PhD in Information Science at the University of North Texas this fall.

Chelsi West (2008) recently returned from Albania where she conducted research funded by a Fulbright grant. She is now in graduate school at the University of Texas at Austin.

Megan Jumago and Courtney Helfrich (2009) are in China teaching English to college students.

Jenna Feindel (2009) is working with a scholarship program for high school students in Yucatan. She also researches differences between rural education systems and those in larger towns.

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nongovernmental organizations. Blending analysis with ethnography, she is able to track the intersection of these relationships in transboundary protected wildlands and in debates about natural resource protection and U.S.-Mexico border policy.

Before coming to Millsaps, Piekielek taught courses at both the University of Arizona and Pima Community College in Tucson. She worked as a research assistant in multiple endeavors through the University of Arizona on topics ranging from Latin American rural cooperatives to the oral history of Louisiana oil and gas industries. She has even examined the possibilities of community-created green spaces in rural Mexico.

Her education and her work is rooted in ethnography. She served as an ethnographic assistant for a research specialist studying educational programs for immigrants and refugees and was participant-observer in her own research on public wildlands.

But Piekielek hasn't been in academia for her entire career. Before entering graduate school, Piekielek became involved with a Quaker non-profit lobby organization in Washington, DC, where she served as a policy advocate on indigenous affairs.

As the recipient of the Robert M. Netting Student Paper Prize through the American Anthropological Association in 2008 and a finalist for the Rappaport Student Paper Prize in 2007, along with numerous publications, reports and guest lectures, Piekielek has an impressive academic record. During her tenure at Millsaps she will teach a small number of classes but will have to opportunity to devote lots of time to additional research following her dissertation. The amount of time she's granted for research is one of the things that attracted her to the College.

This semester Piekielek's course load is focused on Environmental Anthropology, and in the future she would like to facilitate students exploring the Jackson community through hands-on service. She is also interested in becoming involved with Kaxil Kiuc, Millsaps College's own biocultural reserve on the Yucatan Peninsula.

When she's not in the classroom or engrossed in research, Piekielek enjoys spending time outdoors. "I'm really looking forward to living somewhere lush and green with lots of water," she says, but will miss the Sonoran Desert.

Piekielek's post-doctoral position is funded by the Mellon Foundation and the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS). The mission of the ACS, which is made up of sixteen liberal-arts colleges in twelve states, is to make the case for liberal arts education and to strengthen academic programs of its member institutions. The ACS assists member institutions in creating and building new programs that would not be possible on their own.

Honors 2010

The Millsaps College Honors Program affords students the opportunity to work under the mentorship of a faculty advisor in order to bridge past coursework and rigorous independent study in a field of choice. It allows students to develop and defend original ideas, strongly preparing them for graduate school and careers.

Nadia Al Hashimi



Contributed photo

Nadia with members of a family that was integral in her research in Albania.

Nadia Hashimi is an anthropology major and english minor who loves food culture, the way dirt feels between her toes and believes that the best parts of the places she visits are the people. Hashimi is studying the changing roles of women in Albanian society. She participated in a month-long research project in Albania led by Dr. Mike Galaty in the summer of 2008, and her experience there made her want to return.

Hashimi tackled a massive amount of literature to help her formulate an extensive understanding of the region's history and traditional ideas of nationality and gender roles. She is also studying traditional and state laws and how the state engages in conflict with family groups.

A majority of her study took place in Albania, where she spent three weeks this past summer. She stayed with two families, one traditional and one modern, and took advantage of the opportunity to observe differences between the ways the two approach different aspects of culture.

Hashimi "[tried] not to go in with too many expectations." She kept an open mind because, after all, she was "completely at the will of the people."

While designing her own research project has been an enlightening experience, it has also been "terrifying." She spent the first parts of her days in Albania teaching English, followed by the chance to hang out and learn from those around her.

Her honors committee consists of Dr. Mike Galaty, Dr. Julian Murchison and Dr. Ming Tsui. With backgrounds in archaeology, cultural anthropology and sociology respectively, Hashimi considers them the "ideal group to work with."

Catherine Scott

Catherine Scott's honors project reflects her fascination with Greece. She will be conducting soil chemistry analysis of a Mycenaean site to determine activity areas and site structure. Double-majoring in anthropology and classics, she loves travel and history.

She has amassed broad background knowledge of the process of soil analysis, surveys and excavations and a history of bronze age Greece. Last semester she took the Archaeology of Bronze Age Greece class with Dr. Mike Galaty as well. She feels that working with an expert in her field prepared her well for the project she did herself.

Scott conducted a large part of her research as part of a dig at the Grecian site of Iklaina. She participated in the dig with students from University of Missouri at St. Louis. After bringing back some of her own soil samples from the site, she will be able to perform chemical analysis to discover how the site was used and what activities occurred there.

Scott is one of the first students to use the new W.M. Keck Lab, an exciting addition to Olin Hall which will allow anthropology and archaeology students to analyze historical samples. Through these samples, students will gain a better understanding of life in the past. The main piece of equipment she will use is the mass spectrometer.

Although Scott is unsure of her future path, her project is the "first stab" at what she may want to do.



Contributed photo

Catherine collects data at Iklaina.

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Updates

Did you know?

The W.M. Keck Center for Biochemical and Comparative Archaeology recently received a \$384,535 grant from the National Science Foundation for the addition of a laser ablation that will enhance the Center's inductively coupled plasma mass spectrometer (ICP) as well as a handheld x-ray fluorescent spectrometer (XRF). This equipment will increase the accuracy of results both in the lab and in the field. No other small liberal arts college can boast equal facilities.

FOR MORE NEWS, CHECK OUT
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