Patrick Flynn (Philosophy) served as a faculty observer at the Fifth Biannual Association for Core Text and Courses (ACTC) Student Conference at the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago in March. Two Benedictine University undergraduate students presented papers and participated in the prestigious conference. Komal Mirza, a Philosophy major, presented “Plato’s Idea of the Good and Liberal Education Today,” and Mubashir Razvi, a Philosophy and Biology major, presented “A Reason to Think: David Hume’s ‘A Treatise of Human Nature.’” “They performed with excellence,” Flynn said. “They clearly gave a very good account of our institution.” The abstract proposals for these papers were refereed from a fairly large field of submitted proposals from undergraduate students at many other ACTC involved institutions across the United States and Canada. Thirty-six undergraduate students gave papers at the conference.

Vincent Gaddis (History) was awarded a grant to participate in the seminar “Vietnam: Consensus, Conflict, Contradiction and Change” as part of the AsiaNetwork Faculty Enhancement Program, “Deepening Asian Studies in the Liberal Arts,” at the 21st Annual AsiaNetwork Conference in Nashville, Tenn., in April, and was among eight faculty nationwide selected to attend an international training seminar this summer in Vietnam. The AsiaNetwork is a consortium of about 160 North American colleges that strives to strengthen the role of Asian Studies within the framework of liberal arts education to help prepare succeeding generations of undergraduates for a world in which Asian societies play prominent roles in an ever more interdependent world.

Joan Libner and Alison Ridge (Nursing) gave a peer-reviewed podium presentation at the American Association of Colleges of Nursing 2013 Master’s Education Conference in Orlando, Fla., in February. Their presentation, “Constructing a Bridge from the Community to Graduate Nursing Education,” focused on a new initiative in the Department of Nursing and Health, the RN to B.S.N. to M.S.N. Academic Bridge Option. The option offers a diverse population of community college associate degree nursing graduates the opportunity to seamlessly transition from the on-ground Bachelor of Science in Nursing (B.S.N.) completion program into online Master of Science in Nursing (M.S.N.) education, thereby addressing the overwhelming need for future nurse executives and nurse educators.

Phil Novack-Gottshall (Biological Sciences) presented a talk in November titled “Trilobite survivorship during the Late Ordovician mass extinction is associated with geographic, environmental and ecologic breadth” at the national meeting of the Geological Society of America in Charlotte, N.C. The presentation was an outgrowth of undergraduate research he mentored with students Emily Miofsky and Chris Castle (Biological Sciences), who were co-authors, and was supported by a Summer Research Grant from the Faculty Development Committee. While at the conference, he also participated in the executive council meeting of the Paleontological Society as the editor of their newsletter, Priscum.

James Pelech (School of Education) was installed as president of the Association for Constructivist Teaching at its annual convention in October. The Association for Constructivist Teaching is an international organization with members from across America, Mexico, China and Poland. Members include practicing teachers, school administrators, teacher educators, psychologists and students. Pelech also presented a breakout session titled “Using Four Basic Teaching Strategies to Structure a Constructivist Lesson: From Theory to Classroom Practice.”

Michael E. Salatino (Benedictine Police) was invited to speak about campus security operations at the International Conference of the American Society of Industrial Security in September at McCormick Place in Chicago. Chief Salatino was also invited to address the law enforcement perspective on gun violence and firearm regulation at a program titled “Gun Control Strategies After Newtown and President Obama’s Policy Statement” in March at Oakton Community College.

Alandra Weller-Clarke (Education) presented a peer-reviewed paper in January at the Hawaii International Educational Conference in Honolulu. Her paper, “Preservice Special Education Teachers Use Their ‘I’s (iPads, iPods, and iPhones): Creating Individual Behavior Interventions with Video Modeling” examined preservice special education and teachers’ experiences in creating individual behavior interventions with video modeling, which is required in the Methods for Teaching Students with Social, Emotional and Behavior Disorders course. Specifically, this study focuses on how traditional video modeling created with “I” technology affects preservice teachers’ beliefs regarding behavioral theories and their attitudes toward teaching with that technology.

Jan Writer (Education) was selected to give a peer-reviewed presentation and paper at the 2013 Arc of Illinois State Convention in April. Her interactive workshop, “Believe in Me! Overcoming Barriers to Inclusion for Students with Autism and Low Incidence Disabilities,” was featured in the Education strand of the convention. The workshop provided parents and educators with information and skills pertinent to diverse strategies and tactics for promoting the successful integration and inclusion of children and youth with autism and other low incidence disabilities (e.g., intellectual disabilities, orthopedic impairments and multiple disabilities) within public school settings. The Arc of Illinois is a branch of The Arc, a national organization that advocates for and supports persons with intellectual and other developmental disabilities. Writer was also invited to present a two-hour featured workshop at the 2013 Pacific Rim Conference on Disability and Diversity in Honolulu, Hawaii in April. Her session, “Talk WITH Me: Communication Strategies for Students with Significant Disabilities,” has earned her “noted speaker” status in the preconference flyer. A former consultant for the U.S. Department of Education in the U.S. Pacific Trust Territories and American Samoa, Writer has been active in the Pac Rim conference since its inception in 1986.
Through Hardship Springs Hope

Dave Bushland, C91, Economics

In 2006, Dave and Patty Bushland left a hospital in Madison, Wis., shaken and uncertain how they could begin to help their then 4-month-old daughter, Mary Rose. After weeks of examinations and consultations, a doctor finally gave the Bushlands the news.

"Sorry, your daughter is blind," said the doctor, who then promptly left the room.

Not a word was mentioned about what they could expect or what additional services they might need for Mary Rose, who was diagnosed with Leber’s congenital amaurosis, a rare genetic disease that impacts the retina and its ability to process vision.

“It was a pretty dark and depressing period of our lives,” Dave Bushland recalled. “We found out about Mary Rose the same week my job was eliminated.”

With seemingly nowhere to turn, the Bushlands began reaching out to other families with visually impaired children. They soon realized how few resources were available. So they decided to launch their own organization to help parents connect and support one another to provide needed services and activities for blind children.

“We realized that the best resources more often than not were other parents who had children who were visually impaired,” Bushland said. “The problem is it was hard to connect with others who were out there.”

While living in Arkansas, they founded the National Association of Parents of the Visually Impaired (NAPVI) and it quickly grew into one of the largest organizations in the country. Through the association, they established programming for parents, conferences featuring national experts on blindness, camps for families and other adapted activities that were previously non-existent. A few years later, the Bushlands relocated to Minneapolis and established a NAPVI chapter there.

During the past six years, the Bushlands have raised more than $300,000 to benefit blind children through the two NAPVI chapters and other organizations.
While looking for a new speaker to present at a conference, Bushland discovered the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA), a U.S. Olympic multisport organization that offers outreach and training services for blind athletes. After speaking with association members about his efforts to benefit the blind, he was asked to serve as a board member of the USABA in 2008. In November 2012, he was elected president.

As president, Bushland helps to set strategy and direction for the USABA. His priorities include expanding the Paralympic sport of goalball, in which athletes attempt to roll a 2.75 pound ball containing bells into a net for a goal. He also supports athletes who compete in other Paralympic and international events. Other priorities include fundraising and educating the general public on the athletic abilities of people who are blind and visually impaired, and expanding outreach programs so more of the blind have opportunities to participate in sports.

“There are 56,000 children in the United States who are blind and visually impaired,” Bushland said. “More than 60 percent of them do not participate in any physical education program or class, and unfortunately they are left on the sidelines or at home on the couch. We want to provide opportunities for these kids. Whether it is through a camp or in the form of information for teachers to learn how to adapt their classes to include blind students—the important thing is to get them in the game.”

Today, the Bushlands live in Dallas, Texas. In addition to Bushland’s work with the USABA, he is the vice president of Finance at J.C. Penney where he is in charge of operations finance for 1,100 J.C. Penney stores across the country.

As a student at Benedictine, Bushland had a passion for sports and played on the football team. Naturally, his children have followed in his footsteps. Mary Rose, who is now 7 years old, does not sit on the sidelines. She takes swimming lessons twice a week, and may soon begin other activities like horseback riding, judo or cycling.

“She has her own bicycle, trampoline and even her own goalball,” Bushland said. “Given that I have always been involved in sports, I knew how important it was in my upbringing and for my older kids. I wanted to make sure Mary Rose had those same opportunities.”

He feels that in many ways, Mary Rose is a source of inspiration for the entire Bushland family. Without her, they might never have become advocates for the blind.

“I would like to say I found this cause, but the reality is it found us when Mary Rose was diagnosed,” Bushland said. “As a result, we are in it for life. It has been the hardest blessing that God could ever give us. But I also feel he has given me gifts that I can use to make a small difference in the lives of others going through similar challenges.”

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Mary Rose has inspired the members of her family to either volunteer or enter professions that help the blind and disabled. In the fall, her older sister plans to begin a degree program to become an orientation and mobility specialist teacher for the visually impaired. Patty Bushland, who attended Benedictine from 1989-1991 and is a registered nurse, is also planning to go back to school to become a teacher of the visually impaired. Bushland’s son, Jason, is currently pursuing a degree in education to become an adaptive physical education teacher.

“Benedictine’s influence on me is apparent every day,” Bushland said. “The Benedictine values that probably mean the most to me are ‘Awareness of God,’ as I have seen his influence in so many parts of my life and truly believe that you have to have faith in the plan he has for you. I also feel a deep draw to ‘Respect for Persons,’ as I have learned through Mary Rose and the world she has opened us up to that everyone is God’s special creation and we need to respect that.”

Bushland said the values that were instilled in him as a student at Benedictine have helped him to remain positive and overcome some of the challenges that the family has endured.
Jill Morgenthaler energetically called on nearly 600 attendees to respond “Hooah” at the annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Breakfast held in the Krasa Student Center at Benedictine University in January.

Explaining that “Hooah” is Army talk for “I got you. I understand. OK. It will be done,” Morgenthaler, a retired U.S. Army colonel from Des Plaines, motivated the crowd “to go out and have the backs of other Americans, whether black, white, gay or Muslim.”

Morgenthaler was one of the first women to train as an equal with men in the collegiate Reserve Officers Training Corps scholarship program at Penn State University. She served as the first woman battalion commander in the 88th Regional Support Command, was the first woman brigade commander in the 84th Division of the U.S. Army Reserves and was also Illinois’ first Homeland Security advisor.

She recounted some of the verbal abuses she received as a woman while going through basic training in the U.S. Army.

“I was called every vulgar name in the book and I had to stand there and take it,” Morgenthaler said.

However, during a few of the more abusive tirades from her superior officers, she felt a presence behind her. Each time she sensed this presence, the abuse would stop. One day she turned around to discover that the unknown figure was an African-American sergeant who was looking out for her and wanted to ensure she was being treated fairly.

Morgenthaler took the fortuitous relationship with the sergeant as a call for her to do the same, should she have the opportunity. One day, she offered counseling and support to a group of African-American lesbians who were facing a dishonorable discharge.

“The women told me, ‘Capt. Morgenthaler, we can’t hide the fact that we are women and we can’t hide the fact that we are African-American, but we sure can lie about us being lesbian,’ and they did and went on to have great careers in the Army.

“That day I disobeyed an order, but that day I also did the right thing,” Morgenthaler said.

Morgenthaler, who is white, put her own struggles into perspective as she tried to understand the struggles of African-Americans across the nation, and particularly African-American soldiers in her command.

“I told them, ‘I don’t see you as African-American soldiers—I see you all as soldiers,’ Morgenthaler said. “They told me, ‘If you don’t see me as an African-American soldier, then you don’t understand the depths of my pain.’”

Morgenthaler warned that not talking to the other (meaning groups different than ourselves) not only creates societal disharmony, but at its worst can lead to violence. She mentioned how clashes between different racial and ethnic groups led to bloodshed during the civil rights movement and the Bosnian and Kosovar wars.

The King Breakfast, sponsored by Benedictine and College of DuPage, is one of the largest events of its kind in DuPage County. A portion of the proceeds benefits the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarship Fund at both schools. Two Benedictine University students were honored as recipients of King scholarships, which are awarded based on a number of criteria including community service.

Awarded a King scholarship were Maraea D. Mason, a senior Communication Arts major from Lombard, and Sydney Van Alstyne, a sophomore Health Science major from Island Lake.
EVERY YEAR, TWO BENEDICTINE STUDENTS ARE AWARDED SCHOLARSHIPS FROM THE REV. DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. SCHOLARSHIP FUND. THIS YEAR’S WINNERS WERE SYDNEY VAN ALSTYNE (TOP) AND MARAEA D. MASON (BOTTOM).

BETH REESE (LEFT), PRESIDENT OF NICOR GAS, INTRODUCED SPEAKER JILL MORGENTHALER. THE REV. DR. JAMES F. MILLER (RIGHT), SENIOR PASTOR OF THE DUPAGE AME CHURCH, LED THE BENEDICTION AT THE EVENT.
Festival Brings Asian Tradition, Cuisine and Kung Fu

Each year, Feifei Li, an international student from China, looks forward to all the entertainment, food and quality time with family during the Asian Spring Festival.

This year, however, Li celebrated the holiday some 3,400 miles away at Benedictine’s sixth annual Festival of Asia, an event held to showcase Asian culture and recognize the University’s diverse community.

Li found the festival to be a great way to share some of her holiday traditions, like making dumplings, with people from all different backgrounds.

“Festival of Asia is an interesting way to connect people from different cultures,” Li said. “I met people from China, India and France—all different parts of the world. It shows how diverse our University is and it makes me feel very proud to be a part of it.”

Festival attendees competed against one another in table tennis tournaments while others sampled traditional Asian dishes prepared by international students. Attendees also flocked to an Asian-style market where they could purchase clothing, jewelry and art.

The event included musical performances in English and Chinese, as well as an intercultural dance performance.

Dipal Desai (middle), a junior majoring in Health Science, wanted to share something from her Indian heritage and presented a combination of modern Bollywood and traditional Hindu-inspired dance.

“I wanted to represent my Indian culture,” Desai said. “I love learning about different cultures and I thought that this would be a great way to represent mine for the people in attendance.”

Later, all eyes turned to members of Illinois Shaolin Kung Fu, who stunned the audience with amazing stunts and acrobatic moves. At one point, Grand Master Yang Cheng, an expert in Shaolin-style kung fu, demonstrated the power of the martial arts discipline when he took two metal rods and broke
them in half over his head.

The Festival of Asia was first held in 2008 to recognize and celebrate the University’s budding Asian programs as well as the handful of Chinese students who came to study at Benedictine. Since then, the University has expanded its academic programs in China and Vietnam. Today, 110 Asian students are enrolled throughout Benedictine’s Lisle and Springfield campuses, said Elsie Yuan, executive director of International Programs and Services.

“This has been a great opportunity for Benedictine to provide this experience for Asian students while they are away from home,” Yuan said. “This provides them with the chance to celebrate the Chinese New Year, the Vietnamese New Year and the Asian Spring Festival with the local community.”
WebExtra

PHILLIP PHILLIPS

View more photos of this event at www.ben.edu/benashpics