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*Sebastian Silva in Peru*

### Students Share *Stories of Immigration*

*Students in World Cultural Geography were asked to share a story of family or friend immigration to the U.S. in connection with the study of the American ethnic and racial mosaic.*

#### **Sebastian Silva**

My family and I migrated from Peru in 2004. While I do not remember much as a child, my parents always remind me of the hardships they went through when they first got here. It was very hard for them to adjust to the cultural

differences here not to mention the language barrier. Thankfully today we are in a much better position than we were when we first arrived and I will always be grateful with my parents for providing me a better quality of life.

#### **Anastasia Wescott**

My family migrated to the United States in the early 1900s from Russia. They were Jewish and came to the United States in an effort to escape turmoil and antisemitism in their home country.

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#### **Dr. Ann Marie Legreid**

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*Dedicated to the memory  
of Dr. Scott Beard,  
provost and enthusiastic  
supporter of international  
initiatives at Shepherd.*

# Dr. Xie Brings *Economics to Life*

Dr. Yuying “Joey” Xie, associate professor of economics, grew up in the suburb of the capital city Nanning in the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region in southern China. A fun fact is that Guangxi is one of a few provinces where people speak both Mandarin and Cantonese. During his school years, he was often the top student in academics. After high school in 1997, he entered the Southwestern University of Economics and Finance in Chengdu, which is one of the top Chinese universities in the field of economics. In 2001, he came to the U.S. for graduate studies at Baldwin-Wallace University and Southern Illinois University at Carbondale (SIUC).

At SIUC, the economics program trains doctorate students to become educators in higher education. Beginning the third year in his doctoral studies, Dr. Xie had the chance to start teaching freshman and sophomore economics courses independently. He earned the Graduate Student Teacher of the Year Award the following year because of his excellent performance. The experience cultivated his skills and interest in an academic career. He wrote: “I find that economics is a powerful tool that can help people understand human behavior and social events such as why many people choose private transportation and some choose public transportation, why the stock markets and the housing market went up as the economy is going through COVID-19, etc. So teaching the principles of economics to students so that they can better understand the



Dr. Yuying “Joey” Xie

world is truly an interest, not just a job requirement.” Eventually he chose Shepherd because he found the geographical location favorable, the students energetic and friendly, and his colleagues passionate about their work.

**How does your international background inform your teaching/research?** “The life experience in China and the U.S. provides a more vivid contrast of things in different economies. It enables me to conduct independent analysis and make my own judgments. With international background, it allows me greater access to resources for research. For example, being able to read and write Chinese allows me to conduct

surveys for research in China. The background also helps me to extend my collaboration.” He added that much of his research has been collaborative with scholars in Canada and China.

In closing, Dr. Xie expressed his appreciation for his Shepherd experience: “After more than 12 years of service to Shepherd University and living in the D.C. metropolitan, I feel fortunate and happy of my choice to work at Shepherd. I love the campus, the students, and my dearest colleagues in White Hall and on campus. They really are the most valuable asset of the university and what separates Shepherd from other universities.” ■

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They were welcomed, to an extent. They had to change their last name to one that sounded “less Jewish” and they gave up a few of their cultural traditions in an effort to assimilate with American culture. Eventually, my family settled outside of Washington, D.C., and we have been in the area ever since.

## **Shamar Robinson**

My grandmother migrated from Jamaica to the United States with her three sisters. It wasn’t easy moving somewhere new at first as they all shared one bedroom together and couldn’t find jobs. Even though it started off rocky they found

jobs and life became much easier as they found lovers and well-paying jobs as they each live separately now and have their citizenships and legal status in the United States.

## **Ava Kilmer**

My friend came to the U.S. about seven years ago with his dad for a better future for them. He left his home in Liberia, leaving behind sisters and his mom, who he has not seen since. He struggled to learn our language, but made many friends through soccer. Now he has mastered English and created his own life with a career and tons of friends.

## **Zachery Runion**

During the late 19th century my great, great grandmother’s family moved from Ireland to the U.S. following the Irish famine of the mid-19th century. And while the famine itself was over before the end of the American Civil War, its lasting effects still haunted the Irish economy and the people residing on the island nation. From the stories that I have been told, (and what I can infer from historical precedent) I know that because of their hardships across the Atlantic, they came through New York and eventually made their way out to Eastern Kentucky and finally to Western West Virginia. ■





# International Experience – *Prepare for Impact!*

*A few faculty and staff were asked to summarize an international experience that had particular meaning and impact on their lives.*



Dr. Keith Alexander

**Dr. Keith Alexander:** “In December 2016, I participated in a Shepherd-sponsored trip to Cuba to explore international education opportunities. Cuba’s architecture, history, and culture captivated me, and the trip sparked a new direction in my professional development and teaching. I signed up for Spanish classes, offered courses in Cuban history and culture, and co-led a study abroad trip to Cuba in 2019. Next year, I will offer a class in Latin American history.”

**Dr. Heidi Dobish:** “My most amazing international experience was during the summer 2017, when I taught a psychology course at Anahuac University in Puebla, Mexico. To encourage cultural exchange, I introduced ‘fun facts’ at the beginning of each class. I told the students a fun, cultural fact about the U.S. and they told me a fun fact about Mexico (i.e., The tooth fairy is a mouse in Mexico). I learned so much about the Mexican culture through this ‘fun fact’ exchange.”

**Dr. Scott Beard:** “During the summer of 1993, I had the opportunity to study at the France Piano Internationale Festival located at the Ecole Normale De Musique in Paris. I had previously travelled to France with a school group in 9th grade and it was a transformative experience. I loved everything about France and the French language and wanted to return someday! My time at the festival was transformative, not only in my development as a pianist and musician, but also my knowledge of the French School of pianism and the associated repertoire that was characteristic

of these composers and master teachers of the conservatory system in Paris. I returned inspired to teach even more of this special repertoire to my private piano students both at the University and in the community. These studies, which included multiple return trips to the festival led to all-French programs and special events here at Shepherd and when the festival folded after the events surrounding 9/11, I hosted a reunion of pianists and scholars here at Shepherd in 2003. The inspirational setting, wonderful colleagues, and the atmosphere of being immersed in a culture continue to inspire my outlook on life.”

**Dr. Sharon Mailey:** “The beach looked pretty much like any other, but it wasn’t. This was June 6, 2017, and we were in Normandy, France, standing on Omaha Beach. It was 73 years since this stretch of sand was part of the largest amphibious operation in history: D-Day. The quiet belied the significance of the location. There were memorial ceremonies, re-enactors, and old vehicles everywhere, but just standing on the sand gave us the eerie feeling that those soldiers were still there. We felt the history; and, I still tear.”

**Dr. Mary J.C. Hendrix:** “In 2004, the Australian Society for Medical Research selected me as their medal recipient—to travel to several cities in Australia to lecture on the importance of investing in medical research resulting in better management of diseases. This included my addressing the members of Parliament in Canberra, the capital city, on national TV—which was a most memora-

ble experience. To be able to represent the United States as a scientific ambassador was truly an honor.”

**Dr. Amy DeWitt:** “My international experience gave my life purpose and direction. After college graduation, I found myself lost and questioning whether I had chosen the right career path. I submitted my application to the Peace Corps, and a year later I was teaching English at a university in Opole, Poland. Navigating a new culture with initially limited language skills was a challenge, especially for a shy introvert. My students and colleagues were welcoming, my job was incredibly rewarding, and I began to thrive in my town. I made lifelong friends with my fellow volunteers; we visited each other on weekends and travelled across Europe on our holidays. Two years flew by, and I returned to the U.S. with a profound sense of accomplishment, heightened cross-cultural understanding and sensitivity, and well-defined future goals. I was inspired to pursue cultural studies and teach at the college level. My Peace Corps service qualified me for the scholarships and fellowships that paid for both my master’s and doctoral degrees. Being able to make a meaningful difference through any type of volunteering is rewarding, and being exposed to new cultures is always enlightening. My Peace Corps experience was transformational because it offered both.”

**Dr. Dawne Burke:** “For several consecutive years after the academic year’s end, I would travel off-continent ultimately working and researching on three different continents including several island nations. Those experiences and visuals were routinely shared with my educator preparation candidates in the School of Education at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

Over the years, many of those same candidates, now instructional faculty in private, public, non-government agencies and government sectors, have expressed their gratitude for those training exchanges since in their opinion, my shared global experiences prompted their deeper comprehension for social justice, human dignity, mutual respect and cultural responsiveness. The best application for any comprehension is in active demonstration.

As General Van Ovost recently said, ‘It is hard to be that which you cannot see.’ I merely asked my students to be willing to step closer to see that which they could be; and, they rose to the challenge for which I was then, as I am assuredly now, so very proud of their willingness to evolve

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as positive change agents and instructional leaders in their own right for the betterment of humankind.”

**Dr. Stacey Kendig:** “My international travel to Iceland and Sweden in May 2017 was an incredible experience. One of the most memorable points of my excursion was the Iceland culture and people. So very friendly and it was evident that merchants (large and small) had a great appreciation for their tourists. I found the countryside of Iceland to be extraordinary even though we only traveled through a small portion of the Eastern section. We took a ferry to Copenhagen for a day trip and this was equally rewarding and enlightening. I have a passion

for tourism and hospitality, so it was both a personal and educational journey. I have shared photos and my experiences with my students in an effort to engage them in conversations regarding differences in the tourism/hospitality industry as compared to the United States.”

**Dr. Eva-Maria Suarez Budenbender:** “It wasn’t until I became friends with my friend Florence from France and in creating memories that we still share to this day, that I realized that what I had been missing was that personal link to motivate me to learn. In fact, to truly learn a language it needs passion and dedication, which, in my experience can only be achieved by creating personal relationships with native speakers. I try

and emphasize this to my students all the time.”

**Karen Rice:** “My mother, who lived through the Cuban Missile Crisis, was thrilled to visit Cuba with me. Our guide took us to the Havana farmers’ market, divided the tour group into groups of five and gave us 15 Cuban pesos, equivalent to 62 cents. We had to conceive a meal and shop for a family of four. We found an eggplant on the sidewalk as we walked off the bus and decided upon a stew with scraps of pork, rice, beans, vegetables, and a dessert mango. All the groups’ food purchases went to the bus driver for his family.” ■

## Fulbright Marks 75 Years of Global Impact

The Fulbright Program, founded in 1946 by Senator J. William Fulbright, is a U.S. cultural exchange program with numerous categories of awards intended to build intercultural competence and relations. Competitive scholarships and grants are available to students, teachers, and other professionals for study, research, teaching, and service. The program operates in more than 160 countries of the world. At Shepherd the program is coordinated by Dr. Sam Greene, director of Study Abroad. To mark the anniversary, several Shepherd faculty members shared the high points of their Fulbright experiences.

**Dr. Tim Nixon:** I was a Fulbright English Teaching Assistant (ETA) to Hamburg, Germany in 1988-89. I taught alongside professional teachers for 12 hours a week at the Friedrich Ebert Gymnasium, and I studied at Hamburg University. Besides offering lessons for students in grades 8-13, I led an English club that met once a week in the afternoons. One of my most memorable experiences, however, was being one of the chaperones for the 8th grade class’s annual school trip. We traveled to southern Germany and spent a good bit of time in Bayreuth (home of the international Wagner festival), because they were all students interested in music.

The Fulbright experience was beyond transformational. By now, lots of people have heard me tell my story of how my admission status to a certain graduate program was changed when they learned I had been awarded a Fulbright.

In the graduate programs I did pursue, my Fulbright and international experience exempted me from or demonstrated my proficiency in a foreign language. And in my corporate endeavors, those almost 12 years I spent in marketing support before reentering academia, my award and experience got me my first job with the international arm of Bell Atlantic, the company now known as Verizon. My life today would be so incredibly different, so much poorer, if I hadn’t been awarded that Fulbright ETA. And as an educator, my experience living in Germany twice and being on both sides of the desk in academic settings has shown me that intelligence, creativity, and ability should never be confused or conflated with language abilities.

**Dr. Carrie Messenger:** I was in Romania in 1999-2000, after I finished my M.F.A. and before I started my Ph.D. I was interviewing people my age, who were of the generation who grew up under Ceausescu but lived their adult years under the new system. I was based in the college town of Iasi, in the northeast, but spent time in Bucharest and Transylvania as well. The highlight was meeting some amazing Romanian writers and talking to them about their work, particularly Gabriela Adamesteanu, who I deeply admire as a novelist and a journalist. She is one of my heroes, and I still can’t believe that I got to know her in person during my time in Romania.

My subsequent translation projects got their start in this year in Romania. I continue to write fiction about the region. Because I don’t teach



any classes about Romania, it comes up much less in my teaching, but the experience of listening as I did those interviews have been useful in understanding my students.

**Dr. Ann Marie Legreid:** My Fulbright year in Norway glowed with excitement and opportunities. Every day was filled with discovery and learning, e.g., connecting to other international scholars, and enjoying incredible events like the Nobel ceremony and World Cup Ski Jumping. My research focused on population and migration at government agencies and archives. I studied language and literature at the University of Oslo, attended night classes in Nordic music and crafts, and cross-country skied on the groomed trails surrounding Oslo. To say that it was transformational is an understatement. A woman’s “mind, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions.” (Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr.) I have always emphasized the value of geography, international travel, new knowledge, and building cultural competence to my students. ■





## Dr. Greene Presents Paper at *Middle East Dialog*

Dr. Samuel Greene presented a conference paper virtually at the Middle East Dialog on March 19. The paper, co-authored with Sobhon Khairy, examined the political, economic, and social challenges facing members of the Gulf Cooperation Council that have constrained their attempts to diversify away from depen-

dence on rents from natural resources. It draws on the author's experience in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to develop an in-depth case study of diversification in the UAE and concludes with a consideration of what COVID-19 means for these efforts in the context of major reforms in the UAE. ■

LEFT: Dr. Samuel Greene

## Shepherd Students Find *Virtual Alternatives During COVID-19*

Reported by Dr. Samuel Greene

Two Shepherd Global Studies students have not allowed COVID-19 stop them from gaining international experience. Katherine Madden is putting her Spanish skills and her study of global economics to good use interning virtually for a Chilean import-export company. Cayley Stefanizzi is pursuing a virtual internship through

Shepherd's international partner, the University of Nicosia in Cyprus. Her interest in global cultures is being put to good use in her support of research on the role the European Union has played in reshaping gender stereotypes in the Eastern Mediterranean with a member of the university's faculty. With COVID-19 continuing

to limit travel in the summer, students are looking into a number of other virtual internship and virtual study abroad programs in locations as disparate as Israel, Spain, and Cyprus as well as globally focused internships in the U.S. ■



## Education Faculty *Share Expertise*

Dr. Jennifer L. Penland

- Innovate14 Arabia International Conference, (Virtual) February 19-21, 2020 - Presentation topic: "How Higher Education was able to Forge Ahead with Online Synchronous Instruction for Students Amid the COVID-19 Pandemic."
- Asia-Pacific International Conference on Education, Teaching and Technology (Panel Moderator/International Judge November 18-19, 2020).

RIGHT TOP: Dr. Jennifer L. Penland

RIGHT BOTTOM: Dr. Jason Allen

Dr. Jason Allen

- EduTeach 2020 (Virtual presentation in Singapore): "Weaving an Inquiry in the Classroom: The Bayeux Tapestry." This presentation discussed using the Norman work as a primary source in the middle school classroom. (November 2020)
- The International Society for the Social Studies at Central Florida University (virtual presentation). "The Cold War: More Than Meets the Eye." This was a presentation on using 1980s cartoons as a source of allegory and propaganda in teaching the Cold War to middle school students. (February 2021)





*Dr. David R. Hixson as a 17-year-old, on his first trip outside of the United States, sharing a New Year's dinner of Poc Pibil (Maya pit barbecue) and Coke with his host family in the village of Yaxhachen, Mexico. Dr. Hixson remains in contact with this family through Facebook today.*

## ‘Digging in the Dirt’ to *Distinguished Career*

**Dr. David Hixson, adjunct professor, shares details about his life as a professional archaeologist, and explains how he uses technologies to recreate historic and ancient landscapes.**

I was always digging in the dirt as a child. One year, my parents wanted to keep me busy, so they gave me a hoe and told me to try to rip up the tree stumps in the garden we were making. I might have gotten one tree stump out, but more importantly I found my first artifact: a 1940s Disney pocket watch, dropped by the family who built our home.

Even with this illustrious origin story, I didn’t immediately latch onto archaeology. I wanted to be a graphic designer, possibly for advertising. I grew up at a time when computers were just being developed for public use. I was (and continue to be) amazed at our ability to digitally illustrate and visualize complex concepts and scenes using only a mouse and keyboard. I was going to go to college and major in advertising!

Or... I was “becoming an a-----” as my father once put it. I was fixated on money, fancy clothes, the latest games, and had very little understanding of the daily struggles that families endure in other parts of the world. The winter of my senior year of high school, as my plans for my lucrative future were just being formed, my father took me on a mission trip to Yucatan, Mexico.

This was not your typical “mission” trip. It was called “Intercambio Cultural Maya” (Maya Cultural Exchange) and was organized by my childhood pastor. No proselyting was allowed, and the trip was open to anyone of any faith. My

father and I spent that winter vacation living in a rural Maya community, with a host family in their thatched-roof home, helping to improve the local potable water supply. In 30 years, I have not forgotten that family (led by Abietar May Ek, pictured with me on New Year’s Eve of 1991, when I was only 17).

This was a turning point in my personal and professional life (even if I did not recognize it at the time). I was reminded of the kindness of strangers, who took me in and welcomed me into their family. I recognized the value of “giving back” to a community that opened its arms and heart to our volunteers. I rediscovered the playfulness of children, experiencing the world without the inequities that kept my world separate from theirs. I spent the next several winter vacations returning to Yucatan, living among the Maya, eventually working in support of the United Nations’ refugee camps for Guatemalan Maya emigrants following their civil war.

Despite this life-changing experience, I entered college as a freshman within the communications department, planning to get that lucrative advertising degree. However, I found college to be like an all-you-can-eat buffet, or the menu at The Cheesecake Factory. The yearly course-catalog was an abundance of inspiring classes that were all at my fingertips. For my freshman and sophomore years, I took whatever classes sparked the

greatest interest in my soul. Cultural Geography, Anthropology, and World Archaeology left an indelible impression on me. Inevitably, my international volunteer experiences, along with the inspiring lectures of my undergraduate professors, led me to major in anthropological archaeology, with a minor in Latin American history.

I had fallen in love with Yucatan, and I wanted to find a way to make a career out of returning to this landscape and its people for the rest of my life.

Unfortunately, one must attain a higher degree than a bachelor’s to pursue such goals. My graduate career was therefore chosen for me. If I were to be successful at Maya archaeology of Yucatan, I needed to attend Tulane University for my master’s and Ph.D. That was the best school, with the best faculty, focusing upon my specific areas of interests.

Once I entered graduate school, I was told that I needed to once again reinvent myself. What type of archaeologist might I be? I knew I wanted to focus upon the Maya of Yucatan, but what would be my specialization? Artifacts? Architecture? Cultural systems and beliefs? It was then that I realized that my undergraduate passions and my graduate passions might overlap.

I decided to merge archaeological research with graphic design. I was interested in making maps, visualizing data, creating illustrations.



The imagery associated with archaeology (from aerial photography to artistic reconstructions) has been pivotal in influencing public opinion on policy regarding foreign cultures.

I wanted to make maps, document structures, and (re)create ancient landscapes using the latest technologies. This led me to NASA.

When I was a graduate student at Tulane University, an opportunity opened for a Graduate Student Research Program (GSRP) within NASA. This was an opportunity to demonstrate the utility of NASA Earth-Observation systems for the understanding of ancient cultural landscapes. I jumped at that opportunity and applied for the grant, just as I was entering the research phase of my Ph.D. program. Applying to federal grants, and receiving the support of funding agencies, is critical to work in the social sciences. Here, I was provided support from THE international space agency to use any of their satellites and earth-observing aircraft to document ancient settlements of the ancient Maya.

This all led successfully to my defense of my Ph.D. thesis, focusing upon remote sensing (satellite and airborne imagery analysis) of ancient Maya landscapes. I was the first Maya scholar to explain why ancient Maya cities were visible in certain multispectral images, but not in others. This led to a predictive model of ancient Maya site location. But this was not the end of my exploration of digital imaging for archaeological research.

Currently, I am exploring the ways that video game technology could expand and enhance archaeological mapping and visualization. I am now heavily interested in drone imagery, photogrammetry, and virtual reality.

In my professional career, I have come to realize that no scholar works truly on their own. Therefore, I teamed up with a fellow specialist in virtual archaeology (Dr. Jeffrey Vadala). He and I have lived long enough that he was influenced by my early work! The two of us are now actively expanding the concept of multimedia applications in archaeology.

Our search for new avenues of research and funding do not end as professors. We have applied to (and recently received) the prestigious "Epic Megagrant" by Epic Games (makers of "Fortnite"), to recreate the antebellum landscape of Belle Grove Plantation in northern Virginia. This effort is still ongoing but will be completed in the coming months.

My next venture will be to create full virtual reality tours geared toward academics, using the latest VR technology and archaeological discoveries. I am currently working with Dr. Bernard Frischer (a specialist in ancient Rome) to develop these academic virtual tours, where one can

experience and explore ancient landscapes from the comforts of home.

Anyone who has read this entire interview knows that virtual reality will never replace the experience of traveling and living with people from other cultures. I will never forget Abietar May Ek, or his family. My high-school experiences are the perfect example of the need to widen our students' horizons.

However, it is only fitting that I currently work to bring these divergent worlds together: archae-

ology, virtual reality, and cultural exploration. I hope to make the exotic landscapes of past cultures more recognizable and sympathetic to a global audience. This will only be achieved through continued international cooperation in cultural education, bringing students from all over the world together in a virtual environment.

Our world has recently become much smaller, especially in the age of COVID-19. My goal is to continue to expand the horizons of students and fellow scholars through interactive learning and recreation of historic and ancient landscapes." ■



*"The Look Back"—a recreated antebellum landscape from the Belle Grove Plantation, utilizing Unreal technology.*



*Pyramids from the ancient Maya city of Chunchucmil, (images captured by drone photogrammetry, visualized in the Unreal game engine).*



## Many Doors to Open: *Celebrating the Work of Dr. Virginia Hicks*

When Dr. Virginia Hicks arrived at Shepherd University years ago she didn't realize there would be so many doors, doors to open, doors of opportunity. She opened the door to study in Jamaica and helped to transform the lives of many education and nursing students. She also opened the door for the U.S. State Department in 2019 by hosting international clinicians and law enforcement professionals on a project titled "Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis." The same year she coordinated the visit of international professionals for the program, "Strategies for Combating Bullying and Successful Approaches to Help Fight the Opioid Crisis." These programs were a part of the U.S. Department of State's International Visitor Leadership Program. Many doors have opened in her tireless efforts to build 2+2 bridges between Shepherd and area community colleges and her work with dual enrollment and the local high schools.

Challenges and hard work were nothing new to Dr. Hicks and she has taken all of it in stride. She brought to the table extensive international and intercultural experience, team spirit, a gift for mentoring, and an abundance of good will and enthusiasm. We gratefully acknowledge her many contributions to Shepherd University as she enters her retirement.

**You pioneered the Jamaica program at Shepherd. Where did you get the idea and motivation to do so?**

This exciting opportunity came to me when I was working at the University of Wisconsin-

Whitewater. Dr. Larry Kenney, Associate Dean for Education, asked me if I was interested in assisting with supervising a large group of students for a cultural trip to Jamaica. The answer was yes, and I helped Dr. Kenney and another professor as we traveled all over Jamaica with a large group of students. It was very exciting, and I had a chance to meet people all over the Island. After arriving at Shepherd, I shared the idea of the possibility of taking students to experience practical experiences in Jamaica.

I want to acknowledge Dr. Laura Renninger for her major help with working with Ann Henriksson and myself with writing a proposal together that was funded by the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission to help us at Shepherd to get financial support to plan and develop international experiences in Jamaica for Shepherd University. Many professors, administrators, and staff have been very helpful with the Jamaica projects.

Since my first trip when I was at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater I have been to Jamaica many times and mostly with students. I am proud to say I have had the opportunity to have a large number of varied experiences from interacting with children in an orphanage to meeting with the Prime Minister of Education. I have been to most of the universities and/or colleges along with several community colleges. Also, I have had the opportunity to visit many schools, health care settings, several businesses and/or factories, and to coffee and banana plantations. The country is beautiful and so are the people. They are very resourceful, and they help each other. The

students have been to most of the places I have experienced.

**What did the Jamaica program involve?**

For education students, this field experience course was designed to give students the opportunity to participate in a practicum teaching experience in another country. Students were required to attend the required meetings during the evening to prepare for the trip to Jamaica. Students also had the opportunity to be involved with at least one fund raiser to support their trip. Students were introduced to the culture, economics, history, geography, politics, and education of Jamaica through selected readings, presentations, seminars and by experiencing practicum teaching in Jamaica. The students had the opportunity to experience the culture of Mandeville and Negril. Students admitted to the teacher education program were eligible for participation.

For nursing students, this was a clinical experience designed to give students the opportunity to enhance their global awareness and to broaden their perspective in their professional practice of nursing. Students experienced international nursing and learned about transcultural nursing in another country. This clinical experience gave students the opportunity to understand how culture impacts wellness and healthcare. They visited a Jamaican school of nursing, met international nursing students and learned about the delivery of healthcare in Jamaica through clinical observation experiences.

*TOP LEFT: Dr. John Considine with Loving Son.*

*TOP MIDDLE: Cara Jeffries teaching a class in Jamaica.*

*TOP RIGHT: Dr. Virginia Hicks.*



Course requirements included a series of seminars on topics such as safety and health care, a fundraising project, evening lectures in Jamaica accompanied by group discussions, reflective assignments, and formal oral and written presentations upon returning from the experience.

We spent the majority of our time in the rural part of Jamaica and not at tourist sites like Montego Bay of Negril. The students worked hard during the week and during the weekend we made trips to the sandy beaches (to reward them). We spent most of the time in places like Mandeville where we were the minority, a valuable circumstance for learning.

### Why is international experience important for our faculty and students?

This could possibly be a life-changing adventure that students may remember the rest of their lives. It helped students to enhance their global awareness and to increase their confidence as they had to tap into their critical thinking skills while in Jamaica. Students can develop lifelong friends as I know I have. It helps students to appreciate everything they may have taken for granted such as having warm water, school supplies for teachers and students, transportation to schools as many of the students walk miles, and/or from having basic supplies at the health care settings such as disposable gloves. The Jamaicans are very resourceful. I have taken students that have never flown. I have taken students that have never been out of the state of West Virginia. In some cases they had neither flown nor been out of the state.

### Provide examples of how the Jamaica experience transformed students' lives.

Cara Jeffries participated in the study tour in 2014 and graduated from Shepherd in 2015 with a degree in teacher education. She shared this about her work and study experience: "I work at Harpers Ferry Middle School (HFMS) teaching 6th grade science. This year due to COVID, I am also teaching (6th, 7th, and 8th grade) general music. I am the Cultural Unity and Equity Advocate for HFMS and a Cultural Unity and Equity Ambassador for Jefferson County Schools. I am also the Black Student Association Liaison at HFMS.

"My experience in the Jamaican classrooms has helped me to add relationship building into all lessons. I found that it was important that each student understand the importance of their part to the success for the entire class. I think back to the math lesson I taught to the 5th graders at Mandeville Primary School. Each student cheered on the students that were struggling with 'You know this. Irie or everything is alright.' The students that were struggling would take a breath and then try again. They never felt as



Mandeville was home base. This map shows the many places visited.

though they were stupid or that giving up was an option. I have tried to build that mentality in my classrooms. I then think back to my experience with the combined 3rd/4th class at Top Hill and how when I was teaching about the differences in the U.S. and Jamaica. The vast differences that the students and I found created a way for us to teach each other our language. The Caribbean food pyramid was full of foods that I could not pronounce or tell them what it tasted like but we discovered the importance of knowing what is available locally."

"I made a friend out of Khaleen B. from one of the schools that we taught at during our experience. Khaleen and I have stayed in contact over the years. We have discussed the changes in the education here in the U.S. and the changes in Jamaica. We discussed how the hurricanes have affected the island. Most recently, we have discussed how the island was able to keep COVID-19 away until they reopened to tourists in August 2020. They have now seen COVID-19 take 492 lives and 31,305 (1%) of their total population have been infected. The restrictions are more strict than here in the U.S."

Dr. John T. Considine, also a participant in the Jamaica program, has DNP, FNP-BC, EMT-P next to his name and currently works at WVU Medicine-Urgent Care East. He also serves with Citizens Fire Company Inc. as a firefighter and paramedic. He shared this account of his experiences in the program: "Although my Jamaican immersion course was riddled with transformational experiences, I often marvel at the fiscal stewardship that I witnessed among everyone working throughout the hospitals. U.S. health systems encourage and train all of their staff to take ownership in the financial aspect of

their work in an attempt to minimize waste and excessive spending. This simply wasn't an issue in Jamaica. Perhaps one of my most memorable one-on-one conversations was with a wonderful nurse who explained that Jamaicans are exposed to such a level of poverty on a daily basis that they don't need to be taught to be less wasteful and save money at work. Even Jamaicans who are relatively more fortunate aren't wasteful because frugality is something that is enmeshed in Jamaican culture. Although there is great value in reading the experiences of others, lived experiences leave a lasting impression. I continue to make stewardship a priority not only to save my employer money, but because it is fundamentally important for humanity.

As part of our Jamaican immersion experience, we spent a day at a small orphanage where I played my favorite-ever soccer match with many smiling children on a patch of dirt, gravel, and broken glass. Among them was a 4-year-old boy nicknamed Loving Son, who climbed onto my sunburned shoulders where he stayed for quite some time. Loving Son struggled with his speech, but quickly learned that I would walk or run where he wanted if he guided me with his hands in mine. He led me to a fence that he jumped onto and quickly climbed high into a tree. When he returned, we sat in a shady spot and I ate the juiciest and most delicious mango that I have ever had. We smiled back and forth as we ate our mangoes and I think the occasional chuckles were all the communication that was needed. Sometimes we go through life-changing experiences and only learn how pivotal they are retrospectively; but when Loving Son walked up to me holding two mangoes and handed me one, I knew right away that I was in the middle of one of the greatest experiences of my life." ■



**Mark Your Calendar**

## **35th Annual Phi Beta Delta Conference**

**via Zoom  
May 24-25, 2021**

Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars will host a fully online conference with the theme "Moving Forward: The Future of Collaboration in Our Diverse World." Research paper and poster presentations will be shared online with videoconferencing and screen sharing technology. Presenters will discuss best practices in global teaching and learning from a diverse array of academic disciplines and global perspectives. Program details are forthcoming on the Society's website [www.phibetadelta.org](http://www.phibetadelta.org). ■

## **Phi Beta Delta *Honor Society Updates***

The Shepherd chapter of Phi Beta Delta (PBD) is receiving nominations for membership in the honor society through May 3, 2021. Membership is open to students, faculty, staff, and community members who have demonstrated excellence in and commitment to international education. A fall induction is planned. Contact Ann Marie Legreid for eligibility and nomination details at [alegreid@shepherd.edu](mailto:alegreid@shepherd.edu)

PBD at the national level has embarked on a Matching Fund Campaign. A \$7,500 matching challenge grant has been issued to members and friends of the Society. The grant will match

your donations dollar for dollar for a combined \$15,000. If you are interested in a lifetime membership, 75% of the lifetime membership fee (\$225 of \$300) will be applied to the matching fund. The campaign runs through June 30, 2021. Contributions of any amount are welcome and can be made through the "donate" button on the main page of the Society's website.

The Society's first scholarships will be awarded at the annual meeting in May. The application deadline is April 23. See the Society's website for details, [www.phibetadelta.org](http://www.phibetadelta.org). ■

## **Model United Nations *Adapts to New Circumstances***

**Reported by Dr. Aart Holtslag**

In the academic year 2020-2021 the Model United Nations Program has had to adapt, like every other program, to the new circumstances of the pandemic. We had a conference scheduled for the end of March 2020 in Charlotte, North Carolina. However, with the travel restrictions implemented by the University we were unable to compete. The 14 students on the team were disappointed but understanding. They had prepared to compete as representatives of Angola and Equatorial New Guinea. In the fall, the team prepared to participate in a virtual Model UN held in Atlanta, Georgia. I became a member of a group of Model UN advisors who would meet biweekly to learn how to prepare the students for a virtual Model UN. I learned many interesting things about teaching virtually and virtual Model UN. There were 11 students in the team in the

fall semester who all dedicated themselves to representing Belarus and Fiji. William Prudnick and Glenn Sawyer were delegates for Belarus in the General Assembly Plenary session while Jonathan Biedler represented Fiji in the same body. The General Assembly Plenary discussed "Gender Inequality and Poverty" as well as "Electricity Access for Developing States." Peter Procter represented Fiji in the General Assembly First Committee while Lauren Fricks and Devon Hoffmeister represented Belarus in the same committee. In the First Committee the topics were "The Outer Space Treaty and New Technologies" and "Limiting the Harmful Effects of Mercenaries, Militias, and Private Militaries." In the Food and Agricultural Organization the topics of "Technology to End Food Insecurity" and "Climate Change's Effect on Agriculture" were discussed by Katherine

Madden and Braeden Bottner for Belarus and Taylor Bean for Fiji. Zach Runion represented Belarus in the Economic and Social Council to discuss "Economic and Social Protection of Vulnerable Populations" and "Economic Growth in Post-Conflict Societies." Finally, in the Commission on the Status of Women, Alyssa Nazarok was Belarus' delegate discussing "Financial Access and Inclusion for Women" and "Access to Education for Women and Girls in Developing States." The team had an incredibly good time and performed better than ever before. Jonathan Biedler won a Best Position Paper Award while William Prudnick and Glenn Sawyer won the Best Delegation Award. This was an excellent showing and all members of the team made these awards possible. ■





*Celtic Roots*



*Appalachian Studies banner outside of Knutti Hall*

## Appalachian Studies *Updates*

Reported by Dr. Sylvia Shurbutt

### **New B.A./B.S. Undergraduate Degree: Center for Appalachian Studies and Communities**

The new interdisciplinary Appalachian Studies undergraduate degree will go into effect in August 2021, with salient features including two Global Appalachia options in the form of the Celtic Roots travel tour and a study abroad option in lieu of the required electives. The B.A. track will prepare students for graduate studies, a law degree, or other professional studies opportunities. The B.S. track will prepare students for going directly into the workforce, with academic tools provided for a range of business, environmental, leisure studies, and other occupations, and special core courses that encourage problem solving, innovation, and regional under-

standing. Community service requirements are designed to encourage students to remain in the state after graduation. However, the Celtic Roots component of the degree that is most unique is the global perspective that broadens minds and encourages thinking "outside the box."

### **Celtic Roots Highlands and Orkneys Travel Study Second Start Date Is Looking Good**

A full class of 40+ Celtic Roots travelers, community members, and interested students have been learning about the history, culture, and literature of Scotland in anticipation of traveling to Scotland, the Cumbrians Lakes, and Yorkshire Moors. Some 21 travelers are committed to the trip, and CDC promise of COVID vaccines for every American by May 1 is an encouraging sign

that the second version this academic year of the Celtic Roots study tour may be possible in August. WorldStrides support staff are watching the numbers from Scotland, and students and community members are hopeful. Every traveler must have COVID shots and follow WorldStrides protocols for travel, which include mask wearing. The trip will begin in Grasmere in the English Lakes, and move to Ayr and Robert Burns country, then on to Edinburgh and the Scottish political and cultural center, and then to the highlands and Inverness to explore the Battle of Culloden which ended Highland culture for a time. Finally, students will travel to Whitby and Haworth in the Yorkshire Moors as they wend their way back toward London and home. ■

## International Initiatives *Thrive During Pandemic*

Reported by Dr. Lois Jarman

Despite COVID, we are continuing to thrive in the Office of International Affairs. We have 70 students on our international student roster for this semester, and they represent more than 30 countries. We have increased partnerships to include Frederick, Maryland's I Believe in Me, the Plus Consulting Career Club (a 501 (c)3 that works to develop career options in the United States for those from West Africa), and the Shepherdstown Presbyterian Church.

Our Ram Ambassador Scholarship fund was created with the Shepherd Foundation to provide scholarship opportunities for our international students. We had a big kick-off with Shepherd's Campus Day of Giving on March 25. Thanks were extended to Morgan Sell of Shepherdstown Presbyterian and Marianne Alexander of SAIL.

Graduate student and International Affairs assistant, Nasser Aachirou, presented his Water Project plan to both Shepherdstown Rotary Clubs in February. Feedback from the Rotarians was very positive and we are looking forward to more collaboration.

Dr. Jarman participated in a virtual recruiting fair with Study West Virginia and WV HEPC on March 18. The fair was targeted to international students in West Africa and Asia who have an interest in studying in the United States. The Global Study Abroad Fair was held March 18-20.

The retention rate of international students from fall 2020 to spring 2021 was 93%. One Shepherd student from Taiwan, Yu-Hsin Huang, completed her RN to BSN and is waiting to begin her OPT in

New York. Seven new students joined us for the spring semester. The spring enrollment for IELP is five students, added to the eight who were in the fall program, our 2020-21 total enrollment was 12. Many thanks to Eva Olsson who continues to tutor our students in writing beyond their IELP experience. We are hopeful, if U.S. Consulate Offices resume visa interviews soon, that we will have at least 100 international students on campus! Siriki Diabate is making outstanding connections with potential students!

Anulika Umannah from Nigeria continues to lead our Global Shepherd Students. They meet regularly via Zoom to share information about their home countries with the Shepherd campus and Shepherdstown community. ■