

July  
2011

SUNY GENESEO  
Alumni Newsletter



*Political Science*

*International Relations*



### A message from the Chair...

Greetings from Geneseo! I hope the summer months find you well. Two months ago the largest cohort of Political Science and International Relations majors received their degrees, moving into what is certainly a challenging economic climate. We know the current job market is a most difficult one, but I believe that in the long run our graduates will find success, just as our previous Geneseo Political Science and International Relations majors did. The economic climate in New York, and consequently SUNY Geneseo, has been most challenging as well. President Christopher Dahl has remarked that recent SUNY budgets have been the most severe in at least the past 30 years. Our students and faculty have continued to record many notable accomplishments, and it is my pleasure to bring some of these matters to your attention. We are most grateful to those alums who have made various contributions to our program, either by financial contributions, hosting students during the Political Affairs Club's trip to D.C., the Model U.N. club's trip to Boston, visits to Geneseo to speak on careers, membership on the Political Science Advisory board, and in more ways than I could possibly recount. In the pages that follow we share with you the notable stories of some of our alums and students. I hope you enjoy this newsletter; it is always a pleasure to hear from you. If you are ever in the area, please stop by.

The department's Annual Senior/Honors dinner was held April 15<sup>th</sup> at the Big Tree Inn. Approximately 70 students, the faculty, Carol Long, Geneseo's Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, and three distinguished alumni attended this year's dinner. In addition to my listing of the Top Ten Reasons to be a Political Science or International Relations major, 12 students were admitted to Pi Sigma Alpha, the National Honorary Society for Political Science majors, and 15 were admitted to Sigma Iota Rho, the National Honors Society for International Relations majors. **Michael Arena '11** and **Janna Cisterino '11** received the award for Outstanding Senior in Political Science, while **Will Labate '11** and **Beth Semel '11** the award for Outstanding Senior in International Relations. **Shaun Tooker '11** and **Michael Arena '11** shared the award for Legal Studies. Michael will attend William and Mary Law School this fall. Shaun is very excited to attend Fordham Law. The award for Outstanding Internship went to Rosamond Doran '12;



Recipients of the Alumni Legal Award  
Michael Arena '11 and Shaun Tooker '11 with Professor Deutsch

who completed an internship with Public Defender's office in Rochester, and wrote an excellent research paper on the availability and quality of public defenders for the poor in the United States.

Unlike previous years, there were two students that received the Rose Alent award for the Outstanding Student with a major in both International Relations and Foreign Language. **Amanda McLaughlin '11** and **Justine Porter '11**. Amanda McLaughlin completed an Honors Thesis on the role of gender in grass-roots economic development applied to the Latin American context. Justine Porter served as an intern with Falling Whistles—a non-governmental organization that raises awareness about the use of children as soldiers in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Justine traveled to a variety of colleges and universities in the United States to inform others about the use of children in war in the Congo.

Finally, **Skye Wilson '12**, who will undertake an internship in Washington for fall 2011, received the Jesse Rodgers award as outstanding junior in Political Science, and **Vanessa Amaral '12** received the Ambassador Apartments award as Outstanding Junior in International Relations. **Elizabeth Barber '12**, **Shaun Tooker '11**, and **Maggie Fogg '11** received the Ed "Dr. J" Leadership Award. Ms. Barber was recognized for her work with Model U.N., the International Relations Club, and the Welles Report (a student-run publication that contains articles on International Affairs); Shaun was recognized for his leadership of Pi Sigma Alpha and involvement with the Political Affairs Club; and Maggie distinguished herself by providing the Model UN Club with excellent leadership.

*Jeffery W. Koch*

## From Geneseo to the White House

**Elizabeth Allen '06** is currently the Assistant Press Secretary for Joseph Biden, the Vice President of the United States.



**VP Biden and Liz walking to White House**

At Geneseo, Liz carried both Political Science and International Relations majors. Liz says, "I loved Geneseo, and am a better person for it. I miss the lively discussions in various Poli Sci classes

(I remember those well)." Liz also says, "I loved Mama Mia's and spring in Geneseo, where we all studied outside together. I also loved "Wings" at the In Between (IB) during early Friday evenings, which I understand they have since discontinued."

In addition to her regular Geneseo classes, Liz completed a Semester-at-Sea, literally traveling around the world, taking classes aboard the ship, and visiting ten countries along the way. To pay for that trip, Ms. Allen worked three different jobs simultaneously the previous summer. During the fall 2005 semester she undertook an internship at the State Department with the Office of International Women's Issues; she was responsible for planning a conference of the U.S.-Afghan Women's Council.

After graduation, Liz returned to D.C. to work at the State Department on border security issues. In January 2008 she moved to Denver, Colorado to become Associate Director of Operations for Security at the Democratic National Convention. A highlight of that position was working at Invesco Field the night President Barack Obama delivered his acceptance speech in front of 83,000 people. Following the convention, Liz moved to Philadelphia to work on voter mobilization at the Obama/Biden Campaign's Pennsylvania State Headquarters. She served as the Director of Get Out the Vote Operations, spending many long days in the office as the election neared, on one occasion sleeping overnight in her office on an air mattress. After the election Liz began work on the Presidential Inauguration. She was working at the Capitol during the Inauguration and was one of a very few staffers on the East Face of the U.S. Capitol when President George W. Bush took off in the helicopter as newly sworn in President Obama, Michelle Obama, and the Bidens bid them farewell.

As the Assistant Press Secretary for the Vice President of the United States, Liz helps to manage Joe Biden's communications strategy, press events, speeches, and interviews. In addition to traveling widely throughout the United States, Liz has accompanied the Vice President to Spain, Belgium, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Iraq (twice), Afghanistan, and Pakistan. Liz says that special highlights have been "our January 2011 trip to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Iraq over the course of 6 days, and working with smart, innovative, genuine people who are part of the White House staff."

Liz is a Buffalo Bills fan. When not traveling in the domestic United States or some dangerous part of the world, Liz joins other Geneseo alumni and former western New Yorkers at the designated "Bill's Bar" to watch games on Sunday afternoons.



**Liz deplaning helicopter in Baghdad**



## Dr. James Milroy Succeeds Dr. Kenneth Levison as VP for Administration and Finance



**Jim Milroy '81**, a veteran financial administrator in higher education and municipal government, has been named Vice President for Administration and Finance at SUNY Geneseo, effective July 1. While a student at Geneseo, Jim majored in political science. He earned a master's degree in public policy and administration and his doctorate in political science,

both at the University at Buffalo. Jim has served as Geneseo's Assistant Vice President for budget and financial analysis and government relations officer since 2006. He succeeds Ken Levison, who is retiring after 26 years.

In addition to overseeing all financial operations of the college, including budgeting, accounting, procurement and student financial aid, Milroy will have administrative responsibility for human resources and payroll, grants management, facilities and planning, auxiliary services and government relations.

Prior to joining Geneseo, Jim Milroy was the Commissioner of Administration and Finance for the city of Buffalo, where he was responsible for the development, oversight and performance of the city's \$1 billion budget. He was Chief Administrative Officer for more than 100 employees in seven divisions.

"I appreciate the honor of being selected to succeed Dr. Levison as the next vice president," said Milroy. "I look forward to building upon his legacy by working with the tremendously talented and hard-working people at Geneseo. Together we will continue to meet our financial challenges while providing our students the high quality education they deserve and have come to expect from the college."

## *Watching the Revolution* by Elizabeth Barber '12

I went to Egypt, and I didn't see the pyramids. Well, I didn't see them up close, but rather from the top of Cairo Tower, far in the distance through the gauzy haze of Cairo's heavy smog. Even then, I paid them little attention. Instead, I was watching the mass protests in the streets below, where riot police were



firing tear gas and water cannons at the thousands of protesters pushing their way toward Tahrir Square.

I arrived in Cairo on Jan. 22 to study at the American University in Cairo (AUC). In my first two days there, I got lost a lot. I was rescued once by an Egyptian friend, who then took me to a tiny falafel restaurant, and another time by a group of young Egyptian men with whom I tangoed in the street as they walked me home. I had expected that my semester in Cairo would always be like this ~ losing myself in the city's noisy streets and packed koshary joints, and in long conversations with new Egyptian friends. I had expected that many of these conversations would be about Egypt's social, political and economic problems under President Hosni Mubarak. But I had not expected to live these conversations.

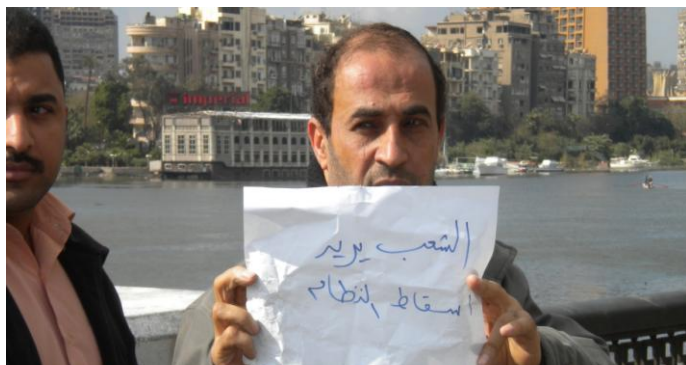
Three days after I arrived, thousands of protesters gathered in Tahrir Square to call for an immediate end to Mubarak's 30-year rule and for the installation of a democratic government that would sweep away the corruption, unemployment, and human rights abuses that had been the norm under Mubarak.



At university, the week-long international student orientation continued normally. But another three days later, we woke up to find that the Egyptian government, anticipating an even larger protest that day, had shut down Internet and mobile phone service. AUC announced it was suspending the start of classes by a week. That morning, three American friends and I walked to the Cairo tower and took the elevator to its observation deck. For the next five hours, we could see thousands of protesters facing a barrage of tear gas and water cannons and could hear them chanting, in Arabic, "Mubarak must go!" and "We need change." At just after 3:00, as the sounds of the muezzins echoed across the city, the protesters dropped to the ground to pray. One of the staff at Cairo Tower, who had told me that, though he supported the protesters he was too afraid to join them, turned to me and said, "see how the police aren't praying? They're Satan." The next day, the Egyptian police had disappeared from the streets. Amid reports of armed thugs looting and setting fire to Cairo property, the university staff unrolled a giant fire hose into the lobby.

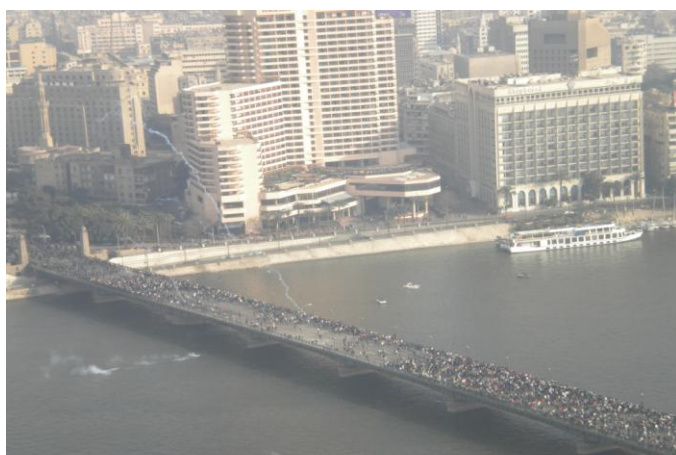
The university's New York office had written to our parents that our dorm was protected by the military. If by "military,"

they meant young men with sticks, I suppose they were right. Dorm security guards and male staff were stationed outside of the dorm 24/7, armed with metal and wooden rods. For the most part, we felt safe. Except once. I was sitting in the garden with friends one evening when a group of girls stampeded toward the stairs to the dorms. A university staff member was behind them, screaming “Girls, girls, get upstairs, run, lock your doors!” A friend and I bolted up the stairs and into my room. We could hear girls pushing furniture in front of their doors. From my window, I could see



Egyptian holding sign that reads,  
“The people want the resignation of the regime.”

security guards rushing into the weight room, grabbing metal bars and sprinting back toward the lobby. Minutes later, a staff member called out “false alarm.” I was never clear on what had launched the dorm into emergency mode, though we were assured that we had been safe. But although the danger had not been real, the fear had been, and for many international students it was time to leave Cairo. The morning after the scare, roughly three-quarters of the international students left on buses bound for the airport. For me, it was not yet time to leave. While some schools had pulled their programs, leaving students no choice whether to stay or go, the school through which I was studying had not. So I stayed. And so, we ~ the Egyptian students and a number of international students that dwindled each day ~ waited.



The government had imposed a curfew in Cairo from 3:00 p.m. until 8:00 a.m., and so my friends and I would spend the first

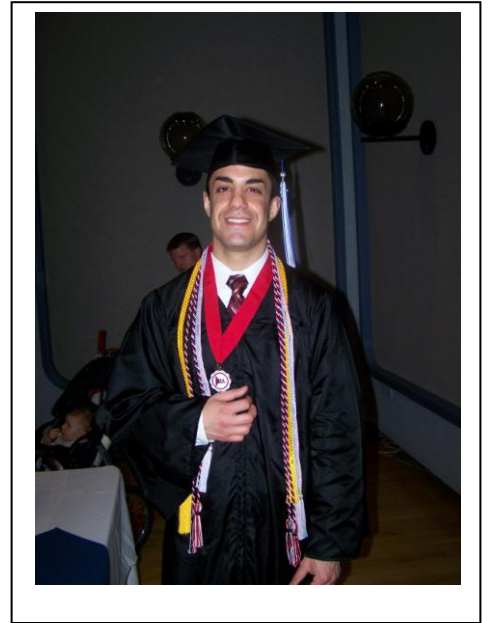
half of each day in the city. One morning, we walked 15 minutes to the outskirts of Tahrir square, which was flanked by army tanks and soldiers. There, we talked to young men on their way to the protests. They were enthusiastic when we said we were Americans, gesturing for us to photograph them and to tell their stories when we returned home. I speak limited Arabic and they spoke little English, but they told me that they were protesting, above all, the lack of freedom and government corruption. As a young Egyptian man had explained the political situation to me as I was leaving Cairo Tower: “you’re American, and in my country you have all your rights. But I am Egyptian, and in my own country I have no rights! Because I am Egyptian, I have no rights in my own country!” After curfew, I’d sit in the garden with friends, trading Arabic and English slang. Or we’d go up to the roof to see the smoke plumes rising around the city and to hear the pop of gunfire ~ the military sending signals to one another. Sometimes, we’d talk about the protests. One friend, though fiercely anti-Mubarak, said that the protests had gone too far and were destroying Egypt. For another Egyptian friend, the protests were the only way to bring democracy to her country. She had been to Tahrir Square and when a group of protesters affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood had yelled for the women present to go home, she had retorted that it was her country, too, and that she would fight for it. We spent hours engrossed in these conversations, increasingly anticipating, as the news reports worsened, that we had little time to spend with one another. We were right. On Jan. 31, the school running my program cancelled it. Two days later, after arguing with program coordinators to allow me to stay on, I flew to Istanbul and then back to the United States. My experience in Egypt was short but extraordinary. Since I’ve returned from Egypt, I’ve remained in contact with the Egyptian friends I made and have watched their country’s ongoing transition unfold through their stories, their hopes, and their fears.

As they say in Cairo, insha’Allah – or, God willing – Egypt will make a peaceful transition to a democratic government that is for its people, rather than against them. Insha’Allah, I will return after graduation to Cairo – and to the friends I made in a city with which, in just two weeks, I fell completely in love. Insha’Allah, next time, I will see the pyramids.

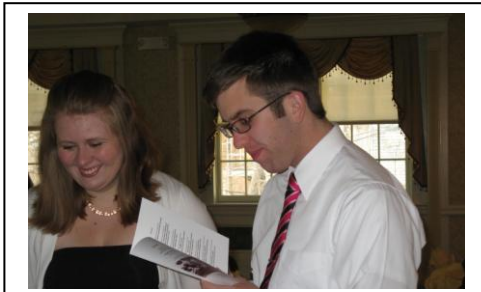
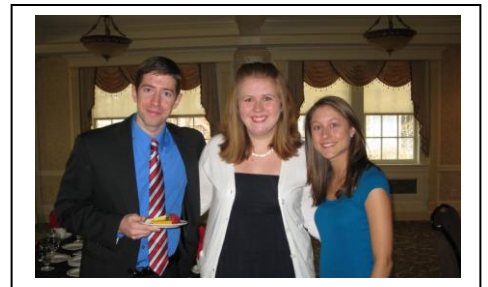
## Fall 2011 Scheduled Events

September 7	Welcome Back Pizza Party in Welles Hall
September 22	Jeffrey Cramer ’86, Managing Director and head of the Chicago office of Kroll’s Business Intelligence and Investigations Practice will speak with students about careers in the legal field
October 20 – 23	Political Affairs Club trip to Washington, D.C.
October 27 – 30	Model UN Club competition in Washington, D.C.
November 2 – 5	SCUSA (Student Conference on US Affairs), held at West Point





*Tis not good-bye, but.....tíl we meet again.*





## Jackie Dycke Norris '92 Participates in Third Annual Women in Leadership Conference at Geneseo

Mentoring students is just one of the many hats that Jackie Dycke Norris '92 wears. On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Jackie paid her alma mater a visit, sharing with students her philosophy on "The Power of You" and the importance of being positive. In the context of mentoring, Jackie also met with a select group of Political Science and International Relations students to share with them her career



path and lessons learned in politics.

As a consultant, she is currently launching A Billion+Change, an initiative by the nation's business community to augment corporate philanthropy with pro bono resources. Previously, Jackie held the position of Senior Advisor at the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal organization that promotes service and volunteerism. She also served as President Obama's senior advisor for the Iowa caucus campaign during the election, and First Lady Michelle Obama's first Chief of Staff.



## Model UN Students Connect with Geneseo Alumnae in Boston

For two consecutive years, our Model UN Club participants have had the pleasure of gracious hosting by Daniel Spiess '90. As a welcome respite from the rigors and challenges of competition at Harvard Model UN, Dan's offer to host club members, advisor Professor Robert Goeckel, and other Geneseo alumnae at his home in Boston was gladly accepted! Our students enjoyed meeting and chatting with Geneseo alums, not to mention sampling divine desserts served by Dan. As a thank you, Professor Goeckel presented Dan with a hoodie which hopefully will serve to keep Dan warm during those cold, Boston winters and fondly remind him of his undergrad years at Geneseo. Thank you, Dan!



(L to R) Melinda Berry '88, Amelia (Alberghini) Angella '96, Paul Furcinito '88, Professor Goeckel, Dan Spiess '90, Tracy Strauss '96 and Sarah (McGuire) Sobieraj '93

Model UN Club – Harvard Participants – February 2011



Please support the Department of Political Science and International Relations. When you give to Geneseo, specify that your contribution goes to the Political Science and International Relations Department.



**KRISTIN GRAHAM KOEHLER '91** graduated from Geneseo (*magna cum laude*) with a B.A. in Political Science and a minor in Legal Studies. She received the Outstanding Internship Award for her work at the Geneseo law firm of Streb, Porter and Meyer. During college, Kristin was active in Pi Sigma Alpha, the national Political Science Honor

Society. She also was a member of the Phi Kappa Pi (Clio) sorority.

Following graduation from Geneseo, Kristin attended the University at Buffalo Law School, graduating with honors. She served as the Assistant Executive Editor of the *Law Review* and was a member of the National Trial Advocacy Team. Kristin received the Justice Phillip Halpern Award for Excellence in Writing on the *Law Review* and the Law Faculty Award for Outstanding Contributions to the Law School.

After graduating from law school, Kristin worked at Phillips, Lytle, Hitchcock, Blaine and Huber in Buffalo and then served as a law clerk to the Honorable David G. Larimer, Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Western District of New York, in Rochester.

Kristin then moved to Washington, D.C., and joined Sidley Austin LLP, one of the world's premier full-service law firms, with more than 1600 lawyers practicing in 17 U.S. and international cities. Currently a partner, her practice involves representing corporations and individuals in all phases of white collar criminal and government enforcement matters, including internal investigations, grand jury proceedings, trial proceedings, and appeals. She has handled numerous U.S. Department of Justice investigations involving healthcare fraud, criminal antitrust and FCPA violations. She also has significant experience representing clients in State AG investigations and *qui tam* actions brought by the Civil Fraud Division of the Department of Justice. She has participated in jury trials in a number of federal courts and has served on the faculty of the National Institute for Trial Advocacy. Kristin was a member of the trial team in *United States v. Tyson Foods* in which the government charged the company in a thirty-six count indictment with conspiracy to violate federal immigration laws and sought criminal forfeiture of \$100 million. The jury acquitted the company on all counts, and the verdict was named the "Defense Verdict of the Year" by the National Law Journal. Kristin is recognized by *Legal 500* as a leading litigator in white collar criminal defense.

Kristin is a frequent speaker. Recent presentations have included "Managing Legal Risk Across a Multinational's Global Presence," to the 2011 Global Counsel Congress; and "A New Day Has Dawned: Federal and State False Claims Act Litigation Is Now the Vanguard," to the ABA Section of Litigation/Criminal Justice Section 2011 Conference. She has also published numerous articles, including "*Skilling v. United States*: The

Virtue of Uncertainty," *Benchmark Litigation* (2011), "Criminal Antitrust Enforcement: Foreign Parents Beware," *Benchmark Litigation* (2009), and "Effective Ethics and Compliance Programs under the United States Federal Sentencing Guidelines," *Corporate Compliance Zeitschrift* (2008).

Kristin has remained active with Geneseo since her graduation. She served for many years on the Geneseo Alumni Association Board of Directors, has been involved with the D.C. Externship Program, and is currently the Co-Chair of the Geneseo Washington D.C. Committee. Kristin graciously hosted a reception in D.C. for the Political Affairs Club of Geneseo this past October, and has been most supportive of the Department of Political Science over the years.

Kristin lives in Washington, D.C. with her husband David, who is an Attorney Advisor to Commissioner J. Thomas Rosch at the Federal Trade Commission.

***Congrats to the following students who undertook the challenge of writing an honors thesis and presenting their projects at Great Day!***

#### **POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS**

**Curtis Biederbeck:** Electoral Systems in America  
**Taimur Gibson:** Internet Law and Policy in the United States  
**Johnson Lin:** Iran's Nuclear Program  
**Alexander Mitchell:** Gay Rights as Human Rights: Homosexuality in Contemporary International Law  
**Shaun Tooker:** The President's War Powers  
**Derek Weng:** Red, Why, and Blue: A Study of Upstate Local Politics  
**Mary Wolfe:** Constructing Public Policy around Non-Traditional Economic Indicators

#### **INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS MAJORS**

**Steven Carlson:** Chinese Expansion into the Western Hemisphere  
**Janna Cisterino:** Engaging the Diaspora: Prospects and Pitfalls  
**Alexander Fitzpatrick:** Post-Conflict Statebuilding: Rwanda's Illiberal Democracy  
**Sean Heyneman:** Politics of Identify and History in Modern Germany  
**Will Labate:** The Politics of Environmentalism in Modern Day China  
**Rian Litchard:** A Comparative Study of the Japanese, Asian, and American Financial Crises  
**Danielle Pagano:** Gender-Based Violence in Refugee Camps as Organizational Failures  
**Thomas Schonig:** US Foreign Policy in the Twenty First Century: Cyber Warfare

#### **COLLEGE HONORS**

**Beth Semel:** Transitional Justice and Localization: An Analysis of Emerging Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa



# ***Alumni Newsletter Summer 2011***

To conserve on funds and reduce our "carbon footprint" we initially sent this newsletter via email. If you have not done so already, please send your email address to [polisci@geneseo.edu](mailto:polisci@geneseo.edu) so that we may send the newsletter electronically. Thank you.

## **Political Science and International Relations**

1 College Circle – Welles 2  
Geneseo, NY 14454

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Geneseo, NY 14454  
Permit No. 1

[Recipient]