Greetings from the College of Arts and Sciences!

Just before students graduate, they are asked to complete an exit survey about their experiences with us. We are especially proud that 93 percent of our students agreed that at least one faculty member took an interest in their academic and personal development. These close faculty-student relationships are a hallmark of a University of Hartford education.

Another hallmark is active, engaged learning where students have opportunities to apply what they have learned outside of the classroom. You will read about a wonderful example of this engagement in Professor Katharine Owens’ class on marine debris.

A University of Hartford education enhances the very skills that students will need to be successful in their careers and their lives: communication, critical thinking, problem solving, and teamwork. Indeed, this newsletter highlights two students who are graduating this May and headed to the University of Oxford in the fall as well as several alumni who are making a difference in their professions, including two who were recognized with the A&S Board of Advisors Alumni Award.

We are also saying goodbye to seven faculty members who together have dedicated 299 years of service to the University of Hartford. We thank them for their deep commitment to our students’ success.

For information on included stories and more, please go to hartford.edu/a_and_s/express.

Happy reading!

Katherine A. Black
Dean and Professor of Psychology
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ALUMNI SPOTLIGHTS

Steven Dixel '88
Mathematics/Management
Director and Business Operations Officer
U.S. Small Business Association

As director and business operations officer for the Small Business Association (SBA), Steven oversees budget, funding, contracting, acquisitions, facilities, and data management for 10 regional and 68 district offices staffed by more than 800 employees. Prior to joining the SBA, he worked for the U.S. Postal Service and General Services Administration. Steve was the recipient of SBA’s Mission Support IKE Award, which is the highest honor given to an SBA employee for demonstrating outstanding services in the successful accomplishment of SBA’s mission and strategic goals.

“I truly enjoyed my time at the University of Hartford. Professors Ray McGivney, Robert Decker, and Paul Mali provided me with the tools I needed to enter the workplace and helped me learn and grow through structured class work and daily encouragement.”

Sarabeth Grant '03
English and History
Recent PhD Graduate

Sarabeth was the 2003 John G. Martin Scholar, which allowed her to study Modern History and English at Hartford College, University of Oxford, in England. In 2008, Sarabeth received her MA in English from the University of Rhode Island and recently completed her PhD in English from Brandeis University. Presently, Sarabeth is applying for postdoctoral fellowships while she finishes her book manuscript, tentatively titled, Exemplary Loss: Historiography, Commemoration, and Aesthetic Recompense, 1741-1753.

“I continually look back on UH as a place that inspired my professional energy and that offered me many ways to improve myself, either through peer tutoring, symposium presentations, or honor society work. I credit Professor Mark Blackwell with instilling in me a deep enthusiasm for eighteenth-century studies. It was because of his energy and dedication that I decided to continue my education through graduate school.”

STUDENT SPOTLIGHTS

Alex Gannuscio ’16
Philosophy and Modern Languages and Cultures—Spanish

Under the guidance of philosophy professor Marcia Moen, PhD, Alex is completing his honors thesis entitled Ethical Reconstruction: Transitioning from Postmodernism to American Pragmatism. Gannuscio, who is graduating summa cum laude, presented his work at the Northeast Regional Honors Council (NRHC) conference. Next fall, Alex will be attending the University of Oxford to study modern languages.

“More than anything else, the interest that faculty such as Dr. Moen of the Philosophy Department and Dr. Senk of the English Department have taken in helping me develop my work has challenged me to evolve intellectually, and inspired me to produce work that I have become genuinely proud of.”

Emily Meachon ’16
Psychology and Modern Languages and Cultures—Spanish

Since her first year in the College of Arts and Sciences, Emily has engaged in undergraduate research in psychology under the guidance of her advisor, Jessica Nicklin, PhD. Meachon is a Dorothy Goodwin Scholar, has presented her research at both the Eastern Psychological Association conference and the University of Hartford’s Honors Colloquium. She has also presented research at the Northeastern Regional Honors Council (NRHC) conference. Next fall, Emily will be attending the University of Oxford for an MSc in Psychological Research.

“My experience in the College of Arts and Sciences has been incredibly positive and has helped me to discover my passion for research in psychology. Dr. Nicklin’s mentorship and support throughout my undergraduate career has had a significant impact on my academic and professional development.”
Associate Professor Katharine Owens from the Department of Politics, Economics, and International Studies has been awarded a $58,000 grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) Marine Debris Program to teach University of Hartford students about this important topic.

Marine debris is the term used to describe the persistent materials that accumulate in global waterways. Marine debris ranges from plastics to derelict fishing gear, and can include trash or litter from land sources as well as materials from storm wreckage. This global problem significantly impacts wildlife, human health, and the economy. Researchers estimate that around eight million metric tons of plastic enter global waterways each year. One study finds that removing just 10 percent of the traps from prime crustacean extraction grounds worldwide would improve harvest by $831 million annually.

Experts believe that only by focusing on the sources of marine debris and by taking the local context into account will we be able to solve this problem. With this research in mind, Owens submitted a proposal for NOAA funding to create and pilot an experiential service-learning course on marine debris, which is currently being offered as both a Politics course and an Honors seminar. Course participants are working with Owens to collect marine debris from Connecticut beaches and catalog what they find. They have already visited both Bluff Point State Park and Hammonasset State Park to collect debris.

Students will collaborate with Owens to produce a report and present the results to the Connecticut General Assembly. This course is one of the many ways University of Hartford students apply what they are learning to address real-world problems.
2016 BOARD OF ADVISORS ALUMNI AWARD

BARBARA BARTLIK ’77 AND BABS RANGAIAH ’89

On March 24, the College of Arts and Sciences Board of Advisors recognized two exceptional alumni.

The Board of Advisors Alumni Award celebrates the value of a liberal arts education and recognizes the significant achievements of Arts and Sciences alumni who make a difference in their professions and/or their communities.

Dr. Barbara Bartlik ’77 is currently an assistant attending psychiatrist at New York Presbyterian Hospital; an assistant clinical professor of psychiatry at Weill Cornell Medical College; a psychiatrist at Manhattan Psychiatric Center, a hospital for those with severe mental illness; and also maintains a private practice. She is also on the voluntary faculty at Lenox Hill Hospital. The author of numerous scientific publications, Dr. Bartlik frequently is quoted in the media as an expert on sexual and psychological issues.

A native of Port Chester, N.Y., Dr. Bartlik double majored in biology and chemistry in the College of Arts and Sciences, graduated summa cum laude in 1977, and received the Regents Honor Award. She then went on to study at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine and graduated in 1981 with honors in epidemiology. Later she trained in sex therapy under the pioneering Dr. Helen Sinding Kaplan at New York Hospital.

Babs Rangaiah ’89 was the vice president of global media innovation and ventures for Unilever. In this role, he was responsible for leading Unilever’s global new media vision and strategy and worked closely with the Unilever Ventures team to seek out new digital investment opportunities. Rangaiah has received many accolades and was named among Advertising Age’s 2007 Media Mavens; Online Marketing Media and Advertising’s 2008 Media All-Stars, The Internationalist’s 2009 International Marketers of the Year; and The Media Festival’s 2010 Media Executives of the Year. He was also Digiday’s 2011 top marketing “tweeter”; and most recently was named one of 2013’s top 100 global marketing leaders by The Internationalist.

Born just outside of Bangalore, India, Rangaiah began his studies in the University of Hartford’s Hillyer College, and went on to receive a bachelor of arts degree in Communication from the College of Arts and Sciences in 1989. He is pursuing a master’s degree in interactive media from Quinnipiac University and plans to graduate this May.

A&S BY THE NUMBERS

» THEIR MAJOR PREPARED THEM FOR FURTHER EDUCATION OR A CAREER.

» THEY APPLIED THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE TO PRACTICAL SITUATIONS.

> 90% OF RECENT A&S GRADS AGREED

» THEIR MAJOR HELPED THEM DEVELOP ORAL AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS.

» THEIR EDUCATION HELPED THEM BECOME INDEPENDENT LEARNERS.