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Around Campus

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Around Campus

Colloquium Celebrates the Continued Relevance of Ida B. Wells-Barnett

A woman ahead of her time, Ida B. Wells-Barnett crusaded for civil rights and women’s suffrage through her investigative journalism and social activism until her death in 1931. Her work has inspired countless generations of scholars and activists and remains as poignant today as it was more than 100 years ago. On May 15, the Center for Black Diaspora and the African and black diaspora studies program hosted “Ida B. Wells-Barnett’s Legacy: Black Women’s Activism,” a colloquium and panel discussion that explored various aspects of Wells-Barnett’s work and its implications in modern society.

The colloquium, held at the John T. Richardson Library, was hosted by Sandra Jackson, director of the Center for Black Diaspora and professor of women’s and gender studies, and Julie Moody-Freeman, chair and associate professor of African and black diaspora studies. They introduced Michelle Duster, author and Wells-Barnett’s great-granddaughter, who kicked off the event with her examination of her great-grandmother’s use of journalism.

“Growing up, I thought she was a superhero who could fly through the air with her pen and take on the government,” Duster laughs. “How powerful can writing be that you can take on a country?”

Barbara Ransby, professor of gender and women’s studies, African-American studies and history at the University of Illinois at Chicago, used Wells-Barnett’s activism as a lens to consider the spectacle of violence in her presentation, “From Emmett Till to Walter Scott: The Fight for Black Life and the Collective Pain of Racial Violence.” Wendy Smooth, professor of political science and women’s, gender, and sexuality studies at The Ohio State University in Columbus, delved into the politics of gender and race in “Good Ol’ Boys Meet the New Black Woman: Electoral Politics in the 21st Century,” while Naomi Davis, president and founder of Blacks in Green, encouraged the audience to develop sustainable living practices and to question what it means to be a woman in “I Ain’t a Woman: Call of the Wild.”

The colloquium concluded with a keynote address by Beverly Guy-Sheftall, founding director of the Women’s Research and Resource Center and the Anna Julia Cooper Professor of Women’s Studies at Spelman College in Atlanta. Guy-Sheftall shared stories of lesser-known female activists in “Legacies: Black Feminist Foremothers,” including Jo Ann Robinson, who became involved in the civil rights movement after facing discrimination on public transport in 1949, and Willa Player, the first female and African-American president of Bennett College in Greensboro, N.C., who supported her students by administering exams in jail during the civil rights movement.

Guy-Sheftall called upon the audience to “rewrite the history books” to include more narratives like these that illustrate the history of black women’s activism in American society.
In May, the Driehaus College of Business offered inspiration and cutting-edge research to alumni, students and friends at two special events. The department of finance invited Harry Kraemer, former Baxter chairman and CEO and current educator, author and executive partner with Madison Dearborn Partners, to discuss values-based leadership. Kraemer outlined the four principles of values-based leadership he practices to maximize his effectiveness: self-reflection, balance, true self-confidence and genuine humility. He cautioned not to confuse activity with productivity and emphasized that by “turning off the noise,” leaders have a chance to determine what they stand for, what matters and what example they want to set. Leaders, he said, have an openness to new ideas and feel comfortable saying “I don’t know” and “I was wrong.” He stressed that we all have the opportunity to be our best self if we remember where we came from and rethink work-life balance as simply life balance.

The Center for Financial Services hosted an all-day conference on economics and finance, welcoming researchers from a number of U.S. universities to present their recent findings. Among the presenters was Abdullah Kumas from the University of Richmond (Va.), whose findings in “Insider Trading Activity around Auto Recalls” show how insider selling is more pronounced before rather than when an automobile recall is announced. In “Informed Institutional Trading Before Takeover Announcements: Evidence From Target Firms’ Pre-takeover Conference Presentations,” Musa Subasi of the University of Maryland presented his findings that access to firm executives at investor conferences enables institutional investors to identify future takeover targets and that investors increase their stock ownership more when targets attend more conferences, larger conferences and conferences hosted by more experienced brokers.

Eugene F. Fama, 2013 Nobel Laureate in Economics, participated in a question-and-answer session in which he discounted the effectiveness of active stock managers on a purely chance basis; he also identified income inequality as a huge social problem. Other researchers presented on topics such as subprime mortgage lending, predicting future profitability, and share repurchasing and takeover bids.

On June 11, Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe (DHL ’13) spoke to the university community and the public at the DePaul Student Center about her experiences as an Ugandan educator and an advocate for female victims of the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and the LRA leader Joseph Kony. The event preceded her commencement address for the School for New Learning.

Nyirumbe founded the St. Monica Girls’ Tailoring Centre in Gulu, Uganda, which strives to rehabilitate the women and girls who were trained as child soldiers and used as sex slaves for the LRA. Since its founding in 2001, the center has helped thousands of girls, women and their children.

“Why do we focus our attention on Kony, anyway?” Nyirumbe asked the audience. “Let us focus our attention on these women who are ready to forgive after suffering for so long. Let us give them a future.”

Nyirumbe is also co-founder of Sisters United for Africa LLC, which sells purses and accessories made by the women of St. Monica’s. The women are paid for their work, and all proceeds benefit Sisters United, St. Monica’s and Pros for Africa, a nonprofit in Oklahoma City that helps distribute the goods in the United States. The purses and accessories were for sale at the event.

“We call St. Monica’s a school, but it is more than a school,” Nyirumbe said. “It is more of a family because in a family you can accept any child. With love, the doors can be opened. With love, these girls can be rehabilitated. With love, they can fit again into society, and with that acceptance, they will know their life has not been robbed from them.”

Nyirumbe was named to the Time Magazine 2014 list of 100 Most Influential People and is the subject of the book and documentary “Sewing Hope.” To learn more about Nyirumbe, St. Monica’s and Sisters United, visit sewinghope.com.
Commencement Weekend 2015 Brings the DePaul Community Together

The DePaul community congratulates the Class of 2015 on their graduation this past spring. At the 117th commencement ceremonies, DePaul University President, the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., conferred degrees upon more than 6,500 students in recognition of their years of hard work and dedication. The new graduates now join more than 171,000 alumni living around the world.

Matthew von Nida (LAS '15), president of the Student Government Association, holds a DePaul banner in the Student Center before the annual baccalaureate mass that signifies the beginning of commencement weekend activities.

Dean of the College of Computing and Digital Media and Interim Provost David Miller, Executive Director of the Greater Chicago Food Depository Kate Maehr (DHL '15) and the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., applaud the new graduates at the Driehaus College of Business commencement ceremony, where Maehr received an honorary doctorate.

Edelman President and CEO Richard Edelman (DHL '15) proudly receives an honorary doctorate from the Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, C.M., at the College of Communication and College of Computing and Digital Media commencement ceremony. Edelman spoke to graduates about the big ideas and campaigns the company has executed over the years and encouraged them to lead with their own big ideas and use their careers as vehicles to change the world.

In her commencement address for the College of Education, sociologist Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot (DHL '15) called upon her fellow alumni to make their future classrooms truly diverse and to ensure every child feels visible, acknowledged and worthy.

Director of Jazz Studies Dana Hall presented composer, arranger and pianist Muhal Richard Abrams (DHL '15), first president of the Chicago-based Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians, with an honorary degree. During his address, Abrams spoke about the importance of character and recalled the path he took that led to his current success.
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences Interim Dean Lucy Rinehart hooded renowned chemist and honorary degree recipient Peter J. Stang (CSH ‘63, DHL ‘15).

Mariah Mullins (CSH ‘15) and Samantha Mordawski (CSH ‘15) wait backstage before the ceremonies for the College of Science and Health and the College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences.

At the College of Law commencement ceremony, DePaul Emeritus Distinguished Research Professor of Law and President Emeritus of the International Human Rights Law Institute M. Cherif Bassiouni (DHL ’15) urged graduates to thoughtfully consider how they will meet the unique demands placed on new lawyers today and to decide how they will make a difference in the world.

Current student Richard Palya, Scott Williams (MUS ’08, MUS ’15) and current student William Cousins performed “Tricotism” by Oscar Pettiford as students from the School of Music and The Theatre School participated in the commencement ceremonies.

Sister Rosemary Nyirumbe (DHL ’13), an educator, advocate and humanitarian activist in Uganda, encouraged graduates of the School for New Learning (SNL) to take past and future failures and use them as a basis to set goals and find their way to success. Read more on page 3.

During the SNL commencement ceremony, Sister Alice Anzoyo C. Dralu, S.H.S. (left), and Sister Agnes Njeri, S.H.S., read the names of the 2015 SNL graduates who studied at Tangaza University College in Nairobi, Kenya, which has collaborated with SNL since 2006.
ATHLETICS

Soccer Player Jake Douglas Reflects on Saving the Life of a Cancer Patient

Times of crisis often bring out the best in people, and that is exactly what former DePaul soccer player Jake Douglas (BUS ’15) demonstrated when he was asked to undergo a demanding medical procedure to help save a life.

His journey began at the Student Center on DePaul’s Lincoln Park Campus in May 2014, when Douglas stopped by the booth of Be The Match, operated by the National Marrow Donor Program. He, rather matter-of-factly, registered as a bone marrow donor and gave a saliva sample. Then, in January, the bone marrow registry contacted him about being a match and asked him to undergo a blood test. According to the organization, only one out of every 540 donors is ever notified that they are a potential match. Still, only one week after having the blood test, Douglas got the amazing news that he was the best match for a dying leukemia patient.

“I had this opportunity to do something for someone else,” Douglas said. “You play the scenarios in your mind about what if they call and ask you to do it. I thought, ‘I can do this—I want to do this.’ If I needed it or someone in my family needed this, I would want the person in my position to go through with it. I talked to my parents first, and they were very supportive. My roommates and soccer teammates said, ‘If you need anything from us while you’re going for it, we’ve got your back.’”

The 22-year-old athlete received a series of shots over five days that induced his body to overproduce bone marrow cells, causing increasing pain as the cells packed tightly into his bones. Douglas went to a clinic in suburban Rosemont, Ill., to make the donation; his father, Melvin, flew up from their home in Carrollton, Texas, to be by his son’s side during the lengthy donation process.

“I had this opportunity to do something for someone else. I thought, ‘I can do this—I want to do this.’”
- Jake Douglas

Douglas sat with a thick needle in his right arm and a catheter inserted into his left hand as machines circulated his blood five times to extract enough cells to donate. He couldn’t move for four hours. “It was pretty weird,” Douglas said. “You see your blood going through all the machines, into a bag, back up and into your hand. I was lucky they had a TV there, and I watched ‘SportsCenter’ four times in a row. I got pretty tired of watching TV after that.

“The first 20 minutes is like, ‘wow, I’m actually doing this. This is cool,’” Douglas continued. “After an hour, I was tired of just sitting there, and I couldn’t feel my legs anymore. After 2½ hours my arm started to cramp up, so they put an ice pack on it. Finally, the last 30 minutes were a breeze. Blink your eyes, and you’re done.

“I don’t know the person I donated to,” he said. “All I know is she’s a 59-year-old woman with terminal leukemia, and this was her last shot. They completely wiped out her immune system and put her on life support until they got my cells.”

Douglas received an email on July 9 that the cells he donated had grafted successfully, and the recipient was released from the hospital in good condition. After a year, both donor and patient can sign a waiver if they want to meet one another.

“I will definitely sign the waiver,” Davis said. “I think it would be really neat to meet her and understand what she has gone through over the years. I’m sure the little bit of pain I had to endure to give her my cells is nothing compared to all the pain she has gone through as a leukemia survivor.”

Douglas was one of 163 student-athletes named to the BIG EAST All-Academic Team for the 2014-15 academic year, but the achievement in his final year of college that will surely remain with him the longest is helping a desperately ill woman get a second chance. Learn more about Be The Match at bethematch.org.
Trip to France Builds Camaraderie among Men’s Basketball Teammates

In mid-August, the DePaul men’s basketball team spent 11 days in France, where they took in the sights, played four games and learned about the university’s namesake from Vincentian lecturer and guide the Rev. Edward R. Udovic, C.M. (LAS ’76). The trip was funded through the In the Footsteps of St. Vincent France Tour Endowment.

Sightseeing highlights included a Seine River cruise and visits to the Eiffel Tower and Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. The team visited Avignon, the capital of Christendom during the Middle Ages; Omaha Beach and other historic D-Day sites; and Nice and Monaco on the beautiful French Riviera. They also went to Mont-Saint-Michel, a famous island community off the coast of Normandy that is on the UNESCO list of World Heritage Sites.

Udovic led the team on tours of Vincentian sites in Folleville and Amiens, as well as the Vincentian Museum in Paris, as part of the second half of a unique educational experience about St. Vincent de Paul that began on the Lincoln Park Campus. According to incoming freshman Eli Cain, the overseas tour formed the perfect entrée into the Blue Demon program.

“The team became closer on the trip,” Cain said. “I think it was because we really only had about four fans for each game, so we had to support each other even more than usual. One of my biggest highlights of the trip was going out shopping and walking around with the team and the coaches. We have some very funny people on our staff. The best part was just having fun with my teammates. Those guys are like my brothers. Nice was the best place we visited.”

On the court, the Blue Demons went 3-1 against local French teams in Paris, Caen, Avignon and Nice. The Blue Demons lost the opener 96-62 to Caen Calvados despite 17 points and nine rebounds from Myke Henry. They bounced back with a 92-51 triumph over Paris AMW All-Stars, as Darrick Wood scored 17 points. It was DePaul over SAP Vaucluse 93-63 in game three, behind Henry’s 15 points. Billy Garrett Jr. led DePaul to a 75-51 victory over U.S. Cagnes Basket with 16 points in the finale.

“Two really important things we learned on this trip were coming together as a group and learning a lot more about our team,” said Coach Dave Leitao. “Most importantly for me was understanding how far we can grow, what the positives are and what things we need to work on. I thought it was a tremendous trip, and I look forward to making progress on the court.”

Fargas Nominated for NCAA Woman of the Year Award

Former DePaul tennis player Patricia Fargas (BUS ’15) was one of 57 Division I student-athletes nominated for the prestigious NCAA Woman of the Year Award. Fargas led the Blue Demons to back-to-back BIG EAST championships the last two years. This past season, the All-BIG EAST performer helped DePaul advance to the second round of the NCAA National Championship for the first time in school history.

Women’s Basketball No. 3 in the Nation in Team GPA

The DePaul women’s basketball program was No. 3 in the nation after once again being named to the Women’s Basketball Coaches Association (WBCA) Academic Top 25. The Blue Demons, who advanced to the second round of the NCAA National Tournament, had a cumulative 3.622 GPA. DePaul was one of just seven programs in the Academic Top 25 to compete in last season’s NCAA tournament.

DePaul Leads BIG EAST in Team Academic Excellence

A record-tying eight programs from DePaul earned the BIG EAST Team Academic Excellence Award and were recognized for having the highest collective GPAs in each conference sport. Recognized were men’s golf, along with women’s basketball, cross country, indoor track and field, outdoor track and field, soccer, softball and tennis.

Jenkins Strikes Gold in South Korea

DePaul point guard Chanise Jenkins (CMN ’15) played an integral role in the gold-medal-winning performance of USA Basketball Women’s World University Games Team this past July in Gwangju, South Korea. The team’s 82-63 triumph over Canada brought Jenkins her first gold medal. It was Team USA’s sixth consecutive and 10th overall title in World University Games history.

For full schedules, results and other news about DePaul Athletics, visit depaulbluedemons.com.
Earlier this year, The Theatre School hosted the TYA/USA One Theatre World 2015 conference. More than 200 artistic professionals who produce theatre for young audiences participated in workshops and master classes, attended performances, and discussed the joys and challenges of the industry. “The work of TYA/USA is so closely aligned with the programming goals in our own Chicago Playworks—to share the best of our great theatre city with young people and to bring international voices and stories to life in highly imaginative productions,” said John Culbert, dean of The Theatre School.

The keynote address by Pete Higgin, enrichment director of Punchdrunk, a London-based theatre company that specializes in interactive productions, underscored the “dare, dream, do the unexpected” theme of the conference. Higgin described the process of creating a magical world in several elementary schools. For one production, his team built a bric-a-brac shop, filling it with items the students had read about in books, personalized letters for each child and a secret exit hidden behind a bookshelf. “Whatever the specs, the goal is the same: to put the audience first,” he asserted. “We strive to make them the most important part of our work, to impact them emotionally, physically and viscerally, and to give them an experience that will stay with them forever.”

In a breakout session focused on strengthening connections between communities and productions, Carlos Murillo, head of playwriting at The Theatre School, shared how families in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood shaped his play “Augusta and Noble,” performed at The Theatre School, shared how families in Chicago’s West Town neighborhood shaped his play “Augusta and Noble,” performed at Adventure Stage in 2013. Through casual pizza parties and one-on-one conversations, Murillo absorbed the neighborhood’s challenges, fears, hopes and dreams. Ultimately, his play tackled such serious subjects as gentrification, undocumented immigrants and education inequality.

On May 7, scholars, students and the public were taken back in time when cuneiform tablets from DePaul’s Special Collections and Archives were displayed and discussed by K. Lawson Younger, a renowned expert on Semitic languages and ancient Near East history. The Sumerian and Babylonian clay tablets date from between about 3,000 B.C. to about 1,000 B.C., and are among the oldest written records to have survived to the present.

Younger remarked that a person would need to know 400-500 individual cuneiform signs to be literate, and many tablets contain inventories, loan documents and other administrative memoranda. One such tablet includes an allotment of 109 slaves for the harvesting of a field. Among the small number of royal documents in the collection is one of numerous cone-shaped tablets placed in the foundation of the palace of Uruk King Sin-Kasid and half of a tablet containing ancient propaganda—a hymn to the deity Nusku.

Attendees viewed and handled tablets after Younger’s lecture. Younger said the tablets likely hardened after being exposed to an ancient fire resulting from some catastrophe or conflict, thus ensuring their survival over several millennia. Archaeological excavators now routinely fire clay objects to preserve them.

The 94 tablets in the collection were part of a larger collection of the late Vincentian priest and biblical languages scholar Charles-Léon Souvay, C.M., which was housed at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary in St. Louis. They were donated to DePaul in 2014 by the Western Province of the Congregation of the Mission. The tablets may be viewed online at the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (cdli.ucla.edu, Collection # Souvay) or by visiting Special Collections at the John T. Richardson Library, which is free and open to the public.