



# The LAS Insider

*A Newsletter for Undergraduates in the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences*

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*The LAS Insider* is a newsletter compiled by the Academic Advising staff of the College of Liberal Arts & Sciences.

The LAS Academic Advising Center is located in 309 University Hall.

To schedule an appointment with an LAS advisor please call (312) 996-3366.

For suggestions, ideas, or submissions for future issues, contact Jennifer Rupert by e-mail at jruper1@uic.edu.

## LAS Undergraduate Research Initiative Breaks New Ground

by Bruce Pecho

This spring, Dean Dwight A. McBride launches the LAS Undergraduate Research Initiative (LASURI). With seed money from the College and generous donor support, the program supports faculty-student research projects in the natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities. Its mission is to make undergraduate research integral to teaching, learning, and scholarship in LAS by providing funding to undergrads and faculty involved in research collaborations.

“One of the reasons I am so passionate about opportunities for undergraduates to participate in research experiences at UIC is deeply personal,” said Dean McBride. “As a first generation college student myself, I—through a series of happy accidents—had an opportunity to serve as Toni Morrison’s undergraduate research assistant when I was at Princeton. That experience truly changed the course of my life and career. It opened up for me the world of research and the kinds of career possibilities that were available in it. Ultimately, it was that experience that led me to pursue an academic research and teaching career.”

How exactly will LASURI work? Faculty mentors who are interested in the initiative submit a profile describing their research project and what they expect from their Undergraduate Research Assistant (URA). Faculty may work with students they have already selected, or interview and select students interested in becoming a URA. At the beginning of the working semester, students will review faculty profiles, contact faculty members with whom they are interested in working, and request interviews. From these interviews, faculty will select one student who will then apply to become a URA. Students begin working on projects by the third week of each semester.

*LASURI story continued on page 2*



Undergrad Rupal Satra talks with Dr. Richard Labotka at the UIC Pediatric Sick Cell Clinic.

## College Awards Honorary Degree to Distinguished Alumna

An LAS alumna of the University of Illinois at Chicago, Barbara Schaal is a leading evolutionary biologist. At this year’s commencement, the university will award her an honorary doctorate. Currently the Mary-Dell Chilton Distinguished Professor at Washington University, Schaal is recognized for her work on the genetics of plant species, particularly for her studies that use DNA sequences to understand evolutionary processes such as gene flow, geographical differentiation, and the domestication of crop species. Her recent work examines the domestication and cultivation of genetically modified crops, especially corn and rice, as well as issues related to invasive plant species and the potential use of both types of plants in acts of bioterrorism. She is engaged in conserving natural processes and educating the general public on genetically modified foods, global warming, and

*Continued on page 5*

## LASURI: LAS Undergraduate Research Initiative continued

Unlike other undergraduate research programs, the LAS Undergraduate Research Initiative provides funding directly to the participants. In fact, funding for both halves of the research partnerships is not unsubstantial and should help students and faculty reach their broader professional and academic goals. Undergraduate Research Assistants will earn scholarships of \$2,500 and faculty mentors will receive \$1,500 research grants to cover related project costs, including materials, travel, and equipment.

The benefits of undergraduate research programs are many. Studies indicate that such programs can improve students' leadership, research, thinking, and communication skills; deepen their interest in and knowledge of topics of study; enhance their personal growth; and advance their professional development. In addition, the program can help establish mutually beneficial research partnerships between students and faculty. LASURI pairs undergraduates with faculty members and provides them with financial support to complete and present semester-long undergraduate research projects.

These research partnerships have the caliber to bring profound change to the world around us. Take the dwindling bee population, a crisis that has earned a lot of attention. According to Alan Molumby, a lecturer in the department of biological sciences, honeybees are an introduced species and their decline in the United States is probably due to pesticides, habitat destruction, and a change in the way we grow fruits and vegetables—all bad news for native pollinators. Under Molumby's program, undergraduate students are instructed in the fundamentals of pollinator conservation, taxonomic identification of bees, and techniques for collecting and curating small collections. Molumby is helping to compile a database of pollinator species found in this region in an attempt to establish changes in the guild of pollinators in Chicagoland since the 1930s. "This project would be very well-suited for LASURI, because it attempts to train undergraduates for careers in taxonomy, conservation, or other areas of biodiversity research and awareness," Molumby said. "This undergraduate research effort would then contribute in helping educate local conservationists about providing bee habitats in their backyards."

Nilda Flores-Gonzalez, a professor in sociology and Latin American and Latino Studies, is the co-director of the Immigrant Mobilization Project, an interdisciplinary initiative that studies the immigrant rights movement in Chicago since 2006. The project focuses on youth participation in the marches, especially the interaction between racial and ethnic identities on political and civic participation. She feels this project could work well as part of LASURI. "Undergraduate students that have collaborated in this project have conducted individual interviews and participant observation in community events," Flores-Gonzalez said. "Because this study focuses on Latino youth, many undergraduate students find it meaningful not only academically and methodologically but personally as well since it relates to their own experiences. I strongly believe in programs such as the LAS Undergraduate Initiative because they translate what we read in the classroom to real life and let students apply concepts to practice," she said. "It also provides students with skills—including interviewing skills—they can use if they continue on to graduate school or join the labor force."

In the fall of 2008, Crystal Patil, assistant professor in anthropology, initiated a medical anthropology project at UIC's Sickle Cell Adult and Pediatric Clinics (with Dr. Robert Molokie and Dr. Richard Labotka). The undergraduates in her "Anthropology of Children and Childhood" course had the opportunity to think beyond their readings by becoming anthropologists. The student anthropologists observed the interworkings of the clinic and conducted qualitative interviews with children and adult patients trying to better understand the lived experience of sickle cell disease today. "This project is perfect for UIC undergraduates because students can do research that speaks to local policy issues and is of interest to the clinicians interacting with sickle cell patients on a daily basis," Patil said. "This is a great opportunity for students to apply their book knowledge and actually be and think like anthropologists."

"Researching as an undergrad is a good thing because my most profound educational experiences have taken place in the field, where classroom theory fails to be relevant," said Daniel Schneider, an undergraduate anthropology major. "Undergraduate research has shown me that education is more than a resume builder. The skills I have learned can be put to practical uses that make a difference in people's lives."

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# The Office of Special Scholarship Programs Offers Advice to Undergraduates

*The Office of Special Scholarship Programs helps students conduct their own scholarship searches for awards that are right for them. They assist students with their application process. Advisors help students perfect personal statements, revise resumes, and coordinate the collection of their application materials.*

Scholarships can open doors to many opportunities, such as studying abroad, taking a research position in a laboratory, or simply working less and having more time to enjoy UIC campus life and study!

## What are the top 5 ways to find scholarships through OSSP???

1. Visit the Office of Special Scholarship Programs website: [www.uic.edu/depts/oa/ssp](http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/ssp)
2. Join its listserv: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/ssp/listserv.htm>
3. Attend a scholarship information session: <http://www.uic.edu/depts/oa/ssp/infosessionschedule.htm>
4. Visit the Scholarship Resource Library in our office, located at 2506 University Hall
5. Set up an appointment to meet one-on-one **after** you have found the scholarships that you will be applying for!

## ATTENTION JUNIORS AND/OR STUDENTS WHO WILL GRADUATE NEXT YEAR:

Many deadlines for scholarships (especially for doing something **AFTER** you graduate) are in the beginning of the fall semester, so planning ahead will allow you to put together a stronger application under less stressful circumstances. **This means thinking about what you want to do THIS SPRING!!!** Come to one of the **Scholarship Planning Sessions for Juniors** to find out about awards available and tips for preparing national scholarship applications. Call or email OSSP to sign up!

### ALL SESSIONS WILL BE HELD IN 2550 UNIVERSITY HALL

Thursday, April 16 at 4p.m.

Tuesday, April 21 at 3 p.m.

Wednesday, April 29 at 12 p.m.

The Office of Special Scholarship Programs is located at 2506 University Hall. The office is open during the school year, over breaks, AND over the summer! OSSP hours are Monday through Friday, 8:30a.m.- 4:45p.m. Phone: (312) 355-2477; E-mail: [ssp@uic.edu](mailto:ssp@uic.edu)

## Recent LAS Scholarship Winners!

Senior in anthropology, Eugene Liebenson, spent last semester studying abroad in Israel with the support of the NSEP Boren Scholarship for \$6,000, which he won during his junior year.

Aarti Sharma, a chemistry major, won a Goldwater Scholarship worth \$7,500 for her interest in a science research career. The funding she received went toward her supporting her senior year.

Two LAS graduates applied for Fulbright Fellowships in the fall of their senior year and won funding to support their projects abroad this year: Jessica Harper is studying genetics in Greece, and Leigh Hellman is teaching English to high school students in Korea.

To participate in the Newberry Seminar contact Professor Robin Grey, Department of English by phone, (312) 413-2902, or e-mail, [rgrey@uic.edu](mailto:rgrey@uic.edu). To learn more about the Newberry Library's holding, visit [www.newberry.org](http://www.newberry.org).

### About the authors:

Kristy Rieger is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Gender and Women's Studies, with plans to pursue graduate studies in Library Science or Urban Studies.

Justin Sherwood is a senior majoring in English and minoring in Gender and Women's Studies and Moving Image Arts, with aspirations to obtain a MFA in creative writing.

Julie Hau is the undergraduate advisor for the English department at UIC. She is currently working on a dissertation as the final component of her PhD in Counseling Psychology (U. Wisconsin-Madison). For more information about the Newberry seminar, contact her at [jmhau@uic.edu](mailto:jmhau@uic.edu)

## A New Experience with Old Texts: The Newberry Library Undergraduate Seminar

by Kristy Rieger, Justin Sherwood,  
and Julie Hau

One of the few buildings to survive the Chicago fire, the Newberry Library was built in 1887 and holds some of the world's oldest primary texts and collections. It is open to the public and maintained by generous endowments. More than 1.5 million volumes and 5 million manuscript pages are housed in the library. Students from UIC are able to participate in a collaborative project between DePaul, Loyola, Roosevelt, and UIC called the Newberry Library Undergraduate Seminar (NLUS).

This unique opportunity allows students to use rare primary texts in their research. This year's topic is "New Nation/New Culture: The United States in the Age of the Early Republic, 1770-1850." Two UIC English majors, Kristy Rieger and Justin Sherwood, are participating in this year's seminar. Here are some of their thoughts on the experience.

Kristy explained that she decided to apply for a seat in the NLUS because of the opportunity the seminar provides not only to pursue alternative research interests but also to begin preparing for graduate study:

I was interested in NLUS, because I had previously been to the library to hear New Yorker columnist, Adam Gopnik speak. I am

considering a master's degree in Library Science or Urban Studies, and thought this opportunity to work in one of the country's premier research libraries would be of great value.

The seminar is unique because it encourages students to explore primary

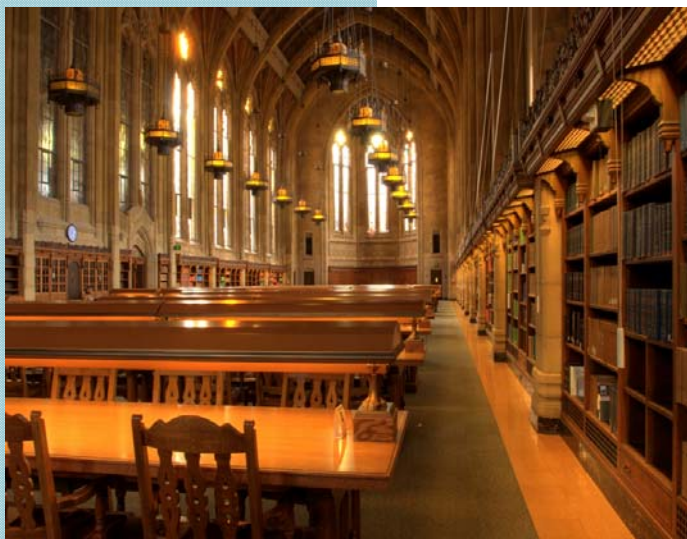
texts such as maps, original manuscripts, and photographs in the Special Collections that few are privy to in their research. My interest in urban studies is reflected in my research, which studies the effects of yellow fever epidemics on the planning and urban infrastructure of New Orleans from 1796-1860.

Justin found that the seminar allowed him to think more deeply about topics of great interest to him as a Gender and Women's studies minor:

When I first heard about the Newberry Library Undergraduate Seminar, I was overwhelmed by a desire to participate. I knew the Newberry by reputation and was thrilled by the prospect of having access to the library as a Fellow. As a Gender and Women's Studies minor, I knew that the archives contained invaluable primary sources written by and about women of the American Revolutionary period.

In my project, I address representations of Quaker women in the Early Republic. I have worked with Quaker women's journals, the transcripts of several Society of Friends' court cases, and newspaper archives. These primary sources have helped me to understand the popular opinions and perceptions of women of this time period.

The Newberry has also taught me about the necessity of community in academic endeavors. The support of Dr. Larry Howe (Professor of English at Roosevelt) and Dr. Diane Dillon (head research librarian at Newberry), along with the guidance of research librarians, fellows, and scholars has been essential to my learning at the library's collection. Above all, the experience has helped me to understand how essential research in the humanities is to analyze our past in order to transform our future.



## Get Ready for Law School with CLEO

By Katarina Karac

I first learned about CLEO (the ABA's Council on Legal Education Opportunity) through an email from the UIC Pre-Law Advisor, Adekemi Faleti-Dosunmu. After attending the Sophomore Super Saturday event at DePaul's law school, I applied for the Sophomore Summer Institute (SSI), though I assumed that I would not get in. When I did get accepted, I was ecstatic! The truth is—although I was unsure of exactly what we would be doing—I knew that if other students from underserved populations had become successful attorneys with the help of SSI and other CLEO programs then I could too.

CLEO is a non-profit project of the American Bar Association. Since 1968, CLEO has helped more than 7,000 low-income, first generation college graduates, and minority students become successful members of the legal profession. In the summer of 2008, I spent three weeks at CLEO's Sophomore Summer Institute at NIU. This particular project tries to provide incoming juniors with the first year law school experience, while preparing them for the application process and the LSAT.

Throughout the entire duration of our program, we were surrounded by law professors. However, we were by no means treated gently. CLEO had promised the first year of law school experience and it delivered. On our first day, we took the LSAT. For many of us, this was our first encounter with this type of test. Following the exam, we had an intense six hour introduction to reading cases, legal terminology, and case briefs. We were expected to complete our first case brief that evening. Like most law school students, we stayed up well into the night discussing the case.

Attending SSI has helped me to examine and to correct my formerly passive approach to law school. I learned that law is not about where you come from or how you look. Rather, it's about how well you know your stuff and how effectively you express your arguments. CLEO has helped me realize that a good law school should embrace a diversity of perspectives. Actually, I cannot think of anything worse than being surrounded by people who look and think exactly like me. It's extremely important for Pre-Law students to consider the diversity of students and faculty members in researching prospective law schools.

I cannot emphasize enough the impact of CLEO. CLEO helps lead disadvantaged students to and through law school. There really is nothing like it. After we completed SSI, our group was enrolled in an online Junior Analytical Skills Development course with a law professor from the University of Texas. We continued to develop the problem-solving skills acquired at SSI. In January, we were able to go to Washington, D.C.—accommodations, meals, and a \$250 travel stipend were provided by CLEO—for the Mid-Winter Academic Enhancement Seminar, where we took an LSAT as a class and discussed the online course in person with our professor. I am grateful to have had the opportunity to get involved with this program. I strongly encourage Pre-Law students at UIC to apply for a CLEO Program!

For more information about CLEO, students can call (312) 996-3366 to schedule an appointment with the LAS Pre-Law Advisor, Adekemi Faleti-Dosunmu.

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## Barbara Schaal, LAS Honorary Degree Recipient 2009

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Schaal's youthful fascination with plants began with family camping trips spent picking and studying plants and plant popula-

tions. Born in Berlin, Germany, Schaal grew up in Chicago, graduated from UIC with a degree in biology, and earned her doctorate from Yale University in 1974. She joined the faculty of Washington University in 1980, after appointments at the University of Houston and The Ohio State University. Schaal has been president of the Botanical Society of America and president of the Society for the Study of Evolution. She has been associate editor of the journals *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, *The American Journal of Botany*, *Molecular Ecology*, and *Conservation Genetics*. She was president of the Botanical Society of America in 1995-96. In 2005, Schaal became the first woman elected to the vice presidency of the National Academy of the Sciences.

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## FOCUS on Interdisciplinary Study at UIC

### LATIN AMERICAN & LATINO STUDIES

#### Who Are We?

Latin American and Latino Studies is an academic program that offers courses on Latin America and Latinos in the United States. An interdisciplinary program with its own faculty, it focuses on Latin American history, politics, culture, and the migration and development of Latinos in the United States, with emphasis on Chicago and the Midwest. Latin American Studies faculty concentrate in the areas of Latin American History and politics, Mexican-Chicano studies, Puerto Rico studies and Puerto Rican politics, and Latinos in the urban United States. In addition, the program cross-lists related courses in departments such as geography, economics, anthropology, political science, art history, literature, and history. There are a large number of courses available to students which cover topics as diverse as pre-Hispanic Archaeology, race and ethnicity in the New World, development and dependency in Latin America, social movements in Latin America, U. S. foreign policy toward Latin America, Latino social movements in the U. S. , and Latino community development in Chicago.

#### Why Latin American Studies in Chicago?

UIC's Latin American Studies program was created in 1972 to study and teach about Latin Americans and Latinos in the United States. The program is unique in the country in its coverage of Latin America and the diverse Latin American nationalities in the United States. In part, this uniqueness reflects the city of Chicago which brings together Latinos from throughout Latin America and the Caribbean. The city of Chicago also offers access to many libraries, galleries, museums, research centers, and other cultural, economic, and political institutions that make intellectual life on campus and beyond a whole learning experience.

#### Where do Latin American Studies Graduates Go?

Graduates of Latin American Studies hold advanced degrees in academic disciplines such as history, psychology, literature, and political science. Many have completed professional train-



Elizabeth Hoffman's students in Humboldt Park

ing in medicine, dentistry, nursing, education, and law. Latin American studies graduates have increasingly entered positions of leadership in the city of Chicago where they work at important community agencies and are employed in NGO's, educational institutions, banking, commerce, and industry. They also serve on city council and city administration.

Joel Palka, professor of Anthropology and LALS, has been doing archaeological, historical, and anthropological research on unconquered Maya in remote Chiapas, Mexico. Dr. Palka's research is studying Maya culture change in the peripheries of the expanding Spanish colonial empire (1500-1900). He has also been working with students who want to learn Maya hieroglyphic writing, and together, they've been looking at inscriptions concerning 'sacrifice' and specific verbs related to this religious practice. He has also worked with students in cataloging and studying Maya artifacts at The Field Museum. Students interested in learning more about Dr. Palka's work can contact him by e-mail at [jpalka@uic.edu](mailto:jpalka@uic.edu).

RESEARCH PROJECT ON  
MEXICANS AND OTHER  
MIXED LATINO/AS

SEEKS VOLUNTEERS FOR  
INTERVIEWS

FOR SPRING AND SUMMER  
2009 SEMESTERS

If you are a UIC student, age 18 or older, and are of two or more national origins as a Latino/a—that is MexiRican, Cuban/Bolivian, Chilean/Colombiano, or any mixture of Latin American heritages—you are eligible as a research subject for this project.

Professor Frances R. Aparicio is looking for mixed Latino/as to be interviewed. Interviews last around 90 minutes and are held on campus.

Please contact Professor Frances Aparicio by email at [franapar@uic.edu](mailto:franapar@uic.edu). Tell a friend also! You will be making an important contribution to our research in this area.

Thank you! Gracias!

# Undergrads SHOUT OUT about the rewards of LALS!

*Elizabeth Hoffman and Luis Rivera, tell our LAS Insider, Marta Elena Ayala, about the unique opportunities the department of Latin American & Latino Studies has afforded them.*

## ELIZABETH HOFFMAN

As a student majoring in the Latin American/Latino Studies program, I have been taught and inspired by fabulous professors, had access to a series of dynamic lectures, and been challenged to participate in valuable research projects. However, the most essential part of this program has been the strong encouragement the faculty provide students in engaging in community participation. Through an independent study, I have had the opportunity to be an active participant in the Humboldt Park community.

This opportunity came about when I inquired about an independent study with one of my professors. We discussed my goals and my ultimate desire to be a professor. He immediately found a place for me in the Humboldt Park community as a co-teacher of

high school students for an after-school program. He told me that if I could teach high school students then I would be able to



Elizabeth Hoffman and her co-teacher Alejandro Molina

teach anyone.

Through co-teaching, I have learned a tremendous amount about who I am. I have met terrific challenges and found great rewards in this experience and it's all because one of my professors was sharp (and caring) enough to help me fulfill my desires. This is my second semester co-teaching and I continue to love working with and supporting the youth of the Humboldt Park community in my own small way. My aspirations are coming to fruition because of the foundation I've been given by LALS. For that, I will be eternally grateful.

## LUIS RIVERA

My decision, as a pre-medical student, to major in Latin American/Latino Studies may not seem like an obvious choice. But for someone who wants to become a physician in one of the world's largest and most diverse cities, it is actually an ideal major. The interdisciplinary nature of the program has exposed me to

courses that discuss both social and political topics, as well as art and culture. This has allowed me to develop a deeper understanding of the Latino community and the issues that it faces.

Throughout the program, I have gained a much broader world view that I know will serve me well as a physician. In fact, my experience as a volunteer Spanish interpreter at a Chicago area clinic is something that has been enriched by my experiences in the classroom. Conversely, working the clinic, which provides services for the uninsured, allows to see the real world implications the issues we discuss in class.



LALS Major and Pre-Med Student Luis Rivera

Another aspect of the program that has had a profound impact me is the research being conducted by professors in the department. The same professors who teach my classes are also working on some of the most pressing issues facing not only the Latino community but also this country as a whole. I have been fortunate enough to participate in one of these projects as a research assistant. In this position, I investigated the level of civic engagement in Chicago's Latino community. This opportunity has allowed me to take the skills I've developed in the classroom and put them to use in the real world, and thus contribute to knowledge that will eventually be used by people making policy decisions. At most universities, this is an experience reserved for graduate students, but, because of the strength of the program, these opportunities are also available to undergraduates looking to make an immediate impact.

Thursday, April 23, 2009 at 7 p.m

### Lincolnia Concert

UIC Education, Performing Arts and Social Work Building

1044 W. Harrison, Room L285

With **Elbio Barilari, Orbert Davis, Juan Rivera** and other orchestra members.

The above events are sponsored by the Jane Addams Hull House Center Museum, the UIC Latin America and Latino Studies Program, the Rafael Cintron Ortiz Cultural Center and the UIC College of Performing Arts.



## Attention Graduates!

Did you know that Commencement and Graduation are *2 separate events*?

Commencement is the ceremony arranged by the college to celebrate our students as they complete their academic degree programs. Graduation occurs when the student has submitted an Intent to Graduate, has completed all of the college requirements, and is thereby awarded a degree.

For recent and potential graduates, LAS Commencement is a lovely way to celebrate your accomplishment. Here are some helpful details about this year's ceremony:

- Commencement 2009 will be held on Sunday, May 10, 2009 at 10 am for Summer and Fall 2008 graduates, as well as potential Spring 2009 graduates.
- Commencement will be held in the UIC Pavilion and will last approximately 2 hours.
- Students must submit an Attendance Reservation Form found at <http://www.uic.edu/las/students/commencement/students.shtml> which will confirm their participation in the ceremony by **Monday, April 20, 2009**.
- Students may request up to 5 complimentary tickets for their guests on the Attendance Reservation Form. **Tickets are required for all guests.**
- Professional pictures will be taken of the graduate as they approach the stage, as they cross the stage, and as they descend the stairs.
- Caps and gowns are now available at the bookstore.
- If you are receiving a Bachelor of Science, your tassel will be gold. If you are receiving a Bachelor of Arts, your tassel will be white.
- Commencement announcements can be ordered through Traditions USA at [www.traditionsusa.com](http://www.traditionsusa.com).

Visit the Commencement Website for more information at <http://www.uic.edu/las/students/commencement/> or the university's site at <http://www.vcsa.uic.edu/MainSite/departments/commencement/home>.

## Words of Wisdom from an Alumna: Get To Know the People in your College

Alumna Gina Giglio weighs in about how to get connected in LAS.

As a graduate student in Forensic Science in the College of Pharmacy, a teaching assistant, and an intern with the Illinois State Police, I am often asked how I find enough hours in the day to get everything done. As an undergraduate, I was extremely involved on campus. While pursuing a dual degree in LAS—a B.S. with a major in Biological Sciences and a B.A. with a major in Chemistry—I learned the necessary techniques for getting everything done. Many of you know the value of activities outside of the classroom—the networking, friendships, opportunities for leadership, as well as the real life experiences necessary for resume building and honing of job interview skills—but do you know about what the college can do for you?

I'm sure that you've heard horror stories about students who can't get into that final class needed for graduation or who have a scheduling conflict that seems impossible to fix. Don't give up! There are skilled advisors in the college as well as in your department who make it their business to help remedy these situations or to propose alternative solutions. When I decided to pursue a dual degree, I never thought I would be able to work out all the scheduling conflicts and graduate. I set up regular meetings with the departments of Chemistry and Biology. In these one-on-one sessions, I was able to ask questions about when classes would be offered and make sure that I was meeting all of the graduation requirements for each degree. Sure, these meetings take time, but the peace of mind they afford is priceless.

Throughout my student career, I was able to get what I needed with the help of advisors. As a student in the Honors College, I was assigned a Fellow who was a brilliant researcher, but who did not really know a lot about the field of Forensic Science. I set up a meeting with the college, and was able to work with them to identify a Fellow who was more suited for my career choice. As a result of this meeting, the head of the Forensic Science Program at UIC became my new mentor!

I'd like to see students of LAS benefiting from my experience. I want to encourage you to make connections with the faculty and staff in LAS. Recently, Dean McBride demonstrated his vested interest in garnering feedback from students when he created the Dean's Student Advisory Council.

It is easy to feel lost in a place as large as UIC. Rest assured that there are many resourceful people in the college to help you navigate your journey toward a degree. Speak with your advisor to be sure you are on track to graduate. Work with the faculty and staff to get everything you can out of LAS. Keep up the great work and let the folks in LAS know about your academic achievements and goals. Best of luck in all of your pursuits! Remember that the people in LAS can help you get where you want to go.

When Gina is not running around campus, she is working on finding a job, and finishing her thesis. She can be contacted at [ggigli2@yahoo.com](mailto:ggigli2@yahoo.com).