CLACS marks 50 years of teaching, research, outreach

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

The Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies is marking half a century of research, teaching, and community engagement this year, culminating in a December celebration featuring history, food, and performances.

CLACS is a Title VI National Resource Center funded to promote Latin American language and area studies on campus and beyond by training teachers throughout the region, hosting community events like the Latin American Film Series, and much more. On campus, the Center brings together faculty from multiple disciplines ranging from political science to urban studies to history. It’s one of just five such centers in the U.S. that has been continuously funded for 50 years or more.

The beginning of CLACS

President John F. Kennedy founded the Peace Corps in 1961, and then-UWM chancellor J. Martin Klotsche jumped on board. At his insistence, UWM established a Peace Corps training center in 1963, a program that included intense language training in Spanish and Portuguese for volunteers who would later work in rural cooperatives in Panama, Colombia, Ecuador and Brazil.

Over six years, the Peace Corps Training Center at UWM trained more than 1,500 Peace Corps volunteers and completed 44 projects. The program was so successful that it gained additional federal grants like the one in 1965 that established a Center for Latin America under the National Defense Education Act.

It’s an origin story that awes CLACS Student Research Fellow Madeleine Jaekels, an International Studies major. She and fellow intern Oscar Hernandez, a Latin American, Caribbean, and U.S. Latin@ Studies (LACUSL) major, have been researching the Center’s history for months to put together displays to be shown at the December celebration.

“I think one of the coolest was finding out the origins as a Peace Corps Center. I was trying to do some archival research (to see) if there was a press release about the opening or anything, and there was … one tiny 200-word article out of the UWM Post. It had a quote from Klotsche, who was the chancellor at the time. That was probably the coolest thing I found,” Jaekels said.

CLACS today

Over the years, CLACS has grown tremendously. The Center was instrumental in adding the LACUSL major to the campus curriculum
Japanese students interpret for international skaters

By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science

Praditya Hargianto and Peter Grzywacz, both Japanese majors, were busy during the 2015 Skate America competition at UW-Milwaukee Panther Arena in late October: They were serving as interpreters for the tournament’s Japanese competitors. Covered by national and international press and featuring Olympic- and world-level athletes, Skate America is the first of six stops on the International Skating Union Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series.

To prepare for the event, Hargianto and Grzywacz watched past interviews of the athletes they were interpreting for to pick up each skater’s personal style and commonly-used phrases during interviews. Hargianto and Grzywacz, unfamiliar with figure skating’s technical jargon, also had to learn skating terms that judges would use to describe the performance.

“It makes me respect interpreters a lot more,” Peter Grzywacz said. “You need base knowledge, but you also really need to act on your feet.”

During media interviews with athletes, Grzywacz and Hargianto had to interpret questions from reporters within 10 seconds and translate the answers back. Hargianto translated for three skaters in the ladies division and Grzywacz translated for the male skaters.

“It’s one of the scariest things you can do as an undergrad,” Hargianto said of interpreting. “It’s a big responsibility.”

Each student volunteered their time and was rewarded with close seats to watch the competition. Both Grzywacz and Hargianto agreed that watching figure skating on TV does not do the sport justice.

“It made me a fan. I used to think (figure skating) wasn’t that cool of a sport, but it’s really intense,” said Grzywacz.
When you hear the phrase “Mafia literature” you probably jump straight to The Godfather by Mario Puzo, but Robin Pickering-Iazzi has a different perspective. She’s found a whole range of ideas about the Mafia in Italian literature, and none of it is flattering to people like Michael Corleone.

Pickering-Iazzi, a Professor in the French, Italian, and Comparative Literature Department at UWM, recently released her newest book, The Mafia in Italian Lives and Literature: Life Sentences and Their Geographies. It explores perceptions of the Mafia in Italian fiction and non-fiction, from a mystery novel to contemporary legends to online media. There’s one unifying theme – most of Italy’s Mafia literature is really anti-Mafia. Over and over, these books tell the story of families, neighborhoods, and a country held hostage by organized crime.

“(Characters) in four of the novels, they’re actually inspired by historical people. … We get a view of mental processes and then spaces such as the local level and daily life. How do the Mafioso territorialize a neighborhood? How do they keep people silent, people who in their own lives are honest and ethical? … You see that it’s always by this threat of violence, either toward the person who speaks out or their family,” Pickering-Iazzi said. “You get a lot of factual information about the Mafia system of control in these novels.”

Pickering-Iazzi noticed that system of control elsewhere too – in none other than the canon of Mafia literature. The most widely-acclaimed and recognized fictional accounts of Mafiosi are written by men. Though she didn’t set out to write her book this way, the literature Pickering-Iazzi examines in her book was largely written by women.

“If you think about it from the Mafia perspective of omertà – silence, enforced silence – I thought, since the critical world has not been talking about these women, it makes it appear as if they’re somehow complicit. They’re not speaking out about this very topical issue in Italy,” she said.

And it is topical – in certain portions of Italy, the Mafia is embedded in daily life, from the shop down the street to the politician in the capitol. Famous groups, like Cosa Nostra in Sicily or the ’Ndrangheta near Calabria, regularly collude with politicians when it comes to awarding government contracts, for instance. In Palermo, it’s said, it’s almost impossible to secure a hospital room and bed for a woman having a baby, or set aside a burial plot in a cemetery, without asking the local Mafia.

But that’s being addressed by an unexpected form of writing that Pickering-Iazzi has also explored in her book: anti-Mafia social media networks and online, citizen journalism.

Anti-Mafia social networks don’t have the same notoriety that their counterparts do, but groups like Libera (http://bit.ly/1Goqwou) and Ammazzateci Tutti (www.ammazzatecittutti.it/) (literally translated to “Kill Us All” in English), work to combat the Mafia by educating children about the dangers of becoming involved in the Mob and giving Italian citizens workarounds to avoid having to call the Mafia for favors – finding them jobs, for example. They also maintain a large online presence by hosting forums for people to socialize and organize and publishing news articles and investigative pieces into Mafia activity.

Robin Pickering-Iazzi

Continued on page 11
Jon Wisniewski isn’t exactly the Wolf of Wall Street, but he does enjoy his job as COO of AmerX, an institutional brokerage firm situated on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

“There are a lot of times I walk into work and look around and think, wow, I can’t believe I’m here,” he said. “It’s a cool gig. I’m very lucky to be here.”

He got there with the help of UWM. Wisniewski grew up in Brookfield and joined the U.S. Army when he was 19 years old. He served two tours in Iraq during his three-year military career, and applied to UWM online over a satellite connection while he was overseas. He started attending school while still in the Reserves and majored in Economics.

“I chose Economics because I was really into politics growing up. … I was always very entrepreneurial, but I didn’t want to get a business degree,” Wisniewski said. “Economics also had a basis in politics, and it appealed to me.”

Wisniewski got his first taste of Wall Street through the UWM Economics Mentoring program, which pairs students with Economics alumni who can give career advice and expertise. Wisniewski was paired with Jim Schimpf, who was CEO of Brewery Credit Union at the time. Schimpf had experience calling in orders for clients to the trading floor of the New York Stock Exchange.

Wisniewski credits that relationship for exposing him to his current career.

“That was the closest I had ever gotten to Wall Street, the New York Stock Exchange, and things like that. We would talk about the career path that I was thinking about,” he said.

Wisniewski graduated with his Bachelor’s degree in 2011. He had been accepted to Rutgers University to take prerequisites for graduate school, but declined in favor of working. He moved to New Jersey and got a job first as an accountant and then a day trader for a small hedge fund. Then, in 2013, he found Raven Securities Corporation, an agency broker dealer on the New York Stock Exchange, and was named head of operations after just a few months.

In his new role, Wisniewski was responsible for dealing with the company’s technology, running its day-to-day operations, and ensuring client orders were carried out – and he was often expected to make trades on the floor of the exchange.

Each month, In Focus features an alumnus whose Bachelor’s degree has led them to an interesting career. This series will feature every major in L&S in turn.

If you would like to be featured in an upcoming edition of In Focus, email let-sci@uwm.edu with your name, contact information, and a brief description of your career. We’re especially interested in French, Physics, and Psychology majors at this time!
UWM astronomer part of team funded to watch for cosmic thunderbolts

By Greg Walz-Chojnacki, University Relations

David Kaplan will always enjoy a dark sky as he scans the cosmos for brief but sometimes brilliant cosmic events that can have important implications for our understanding of both our planetary neighborhood and the broader universe.

An associate professor of physics at UWM, Kaplan is participating in GROWTH – the Global Relay of Observatories Watching Transients Happen, – a collaboration between 12 universities in seven countries that establishes a network of telescopes around the globe.

Without such a network, astronomers watching a transient event must conclude their work when the sunrise renders the phenomena invisible; by the time the sky darkens again, the event could be over. GROWTH allows astronomers to “hand off” observations to another facility that’s still under dark skies, allowing the events to be observed continuously for their full duration.

The network recently received a $4.5 million, five-year grant from the National Science Foundation under the Partnerships in International Research and Education program.

GROWTH will watch for several classes of events. Kaplan’s interest is in cataclysmic events that lead to the creation of heavy elements such as gold, platinum and uranium. It has been suggested that this could occur during the merger of neutron stars, which is particularly useful for the Advanced LIGO (ligo.caltech.edu/) gravitational wave search. ALIGO could detect the time of a merger, but not its location. Much of Kaplan’s work with GROWTH will be combining optical observations with gravitational wave detection.

“You learn a huge amount more when these observations are combined,” Kaplan said. “For instance, you can tell how far away (the sources of the waves) are. Once you know the distance, you can do a lot more science. And optical observations could reveal important information about the sources of the gravitational waves.”

The GROWTH project will create astronomy curricula aimed at both astronomy majors and the general student population, with an emphasis on “discovery-based” courses. Kaplan will also supervise the aspect of the educational program that enables students to travel among the partner institutions to learn new skills and expertise.

GROWTH will target new-born supernovae whose initial outbursts last less than a day, and small (140 meters) near-earth asteroids.

Small near-earth asteroids are significant potential hazards, but someday may also be mined for precious minerals. However, they are faint, and can only be seen close to earth, when their apparent motion is at its greatest, and so briefest. The GROWTH network is ideal for prompt detection and follow-up.
Video Stories

Political Science major Daniel Kafka, an Army veteran, talks about how the UWM Military and Veterans Resource Center provides a community for veterans on campus. [https://youtu.be/20PJq7ZJeQY](https://youtu.be/20PJq7ZJeQY)

Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies major Sarah DeGeorge discusses how UWM was a great choice for her as a veteran and a transgender woman who was drawn to the LGBT Resource Center. [https://youtu.be/jVkfn5mEdzQ](https://youtu.be/jVkfn5mEdzQ)

Women’s and Gender Studies major Tori Hayward found that UWM was a supportive place to learn about women in the workforce, intersectionality, and more. [https://youtu.be/-CJN487bek](https://youtu.be/-CJN487bek)

Art History spotlight

This regal ancestral guardian is from the Bamileke society in Cameroon, Africa. The Bamileke society was a subsidiary of the Bamun Kingdom in the grasslands region of Africa. Beaded figures represented the kingdom’s wealth as beads were treasured tradeable items. The inclusion of glass beads on objects distinguished persons of political rank and economic wealth in the Bamileke group. Production and accumulation of beads was controlled by the King, or ‘Fon.’ Hence, this prestigiously embellished guardian would have been displayed during ceremonies for the Fon. A further symbol of leadership is represented in the calabash receptacle that the figure holds, which was used for palm-wine offerings.

Jackie Murphy, Art History Galleries Graduate Student Intern
**A mutt becomes a star - and UWM guest lecturer**

*By Sarah Vickery, College of Letters & Science*

This is how an 8-year-old mutt named Sadie was shot twice and left to die, but instead became an international sensation, TV star and spokescanine for an anti-bullying campaign. Prepare to tear up.

Sadie and her rescuer, Joal Derse-Dauer recently visited Joette Rockow’s Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies class “Animals in the Media”, which examines how animals are portrayed in the media and the resulting impact on animals and people.

Sadie was rescued from a shelter in April 2012 by Derse-Dauer. Sadie had been shot in the head and in the back and left for dead. Thanks to medical treatments funded by donations through social media, Sadie has progressed in healing from her wounds, but still does not have full function of her back legs.

Derse-Dauer explained how marketing transformed Sadie into an Internet sensation.

“All it is is marketing, marketing, marketing. Sadie and I are pounding the pavement all the time,” Derse-Dauer said. “You’ve got to have connections. When you get the word out, people want to go to your site, to your Facebook page, because we’ve made an impact on them. People care.”

Derse-Dauer and Sadie appear regularly at schools to give anti-bullying presentations, using Sadie’s condition to illustrate that physical difference shouldn’t affect how you treat others. In her campaign against bullying, Sadie has even appeared at the Academy Awards and Golden Globes.

To meet Sadie online, visit [www.savingSadie.com](http://www.savingSadie.com).

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**Passings**

A legend in the Milwaukee music scene passed away in November. Dave Monroe, known around town as DJ Dave Monroe, or perhaps more famously as “Flavor Dav,” a takeoff on hip-hop artist Flavor Flav, passed away after a battle with colon cancer. He was an accidental graduate of UWM - Dave was an English major who never finished a particular paper. He was unaware that he had graduated until he tried to finish his degree 25 years later and discovered he already possessed a Bachelor’s.

As a vinyl DJ, Dave was known for his passion for sharing music. He presided over the Blackbird Bar and Burnhearts, spinning records and connecting people to new genres. He was also a musician and played guitar in a punk-new wave band named Prevailing Westerlies. He was also a security guard at the Milwaukee Art Museum and the Milwaukee Public Museum.

Monroe is remembered for his encyclopedic knowledge, his love of music, and the way he touched so many loves around Milwaukee.

A visitation was held Nov. 20. Dave’s obituary can be found at [http://bit.ly/1Tawv97](http://bit.ly/1Tawv97).
L&S Salutes: Kevin and Alison Doyle

This month, Letter & Science is pleased to recognize Geosciences alumni Kevin ('83, MS Geosciences) and Alison Doyle ('84, MS Geosciences) for their continued support of the Geosciences Department.

Kevin knew he wanted to study marine geology, so when a UWM recruiter came to his undergraduate college, the University of Dayton, extolling the virtues of UWM and its proximity to the Great Lakes, Kevin knew he had found his graduate school. The question was, how does one apply marine geology to a career? Kevin took a page out of his father's book.

“My father was a shift foreman for an oil refinery outside of Philadelphia. He used to bring home literature from the company that talked about where oil came from, how oil and gas was formed under the Earth’s surface. I would read that and I got interested in the science of how and why that was happening,” he said.

That interest led him to a long and fulfilling career in the oil and gas industry in places like Los Angeles, London, Bangkok, and finally Houston. Today, Kevin works for Chevron as an exploration team leader for West Africa.

“I have a team of geologists and geophysicists who use seismic data and well data to explore for oil and gas in the sub-surface. We look at data and we put together ideas on where we think oil and gas might be located, and we do estimates of the size of what we might find and how risky it might be to drill for those oil and gas resources,” he explained.

Alison Doyle, meanwhile, has had a career as an environmental geologist with a series of engineering companies, including Dames and Moore and Sound Environmental Solutions.

UWM made an impact on both of their lives, and one man in particular stands out. Dr. Richard Paul, affectionately known by his initials, RAP, served as both of the Doyles’ thesis adviser. He used his contacts in the oil industry to both help Kevin complete his thesis and learn more about career opportunities.

Kevin and Alison are donors to the Geosciences Department in part because of Dr. Paul’s influence on their lives, but also because they know what a struggle funding can be.

“I know that it’s a challenge sometimes to have monies to do what you want to do,” Kevin said. “I remember going to Cincinnati when I was at UWM to a Geological Society of America conference. … We had a van and we drove down there. Somebody at UWM was paying for that van for us to use and gas to go in it. It doesn’t have to be big projects we’re talking about, just opportunities for the department to do things they want to do.”

UWM dazzles at Wisconsin Science Fest

By Laura Otto, University Relations

UWM joined the statewide Wisconsin Science Festival last weekend, giving the public an opportunity to experience free, hands-on programs on topics ranging from Frank Lloyd Wright’s design secrets to the centennial of Albert Einstein’s theory of relativity.

The goal was to reach people with positive messages about research in a way they will remember, said Vice Provost Phyllis King.

UWM staged six entertaining shows aimed at older students and adults. Presenters included Patrick Brady (Department of Physics), Frankie Flood (Peck School of the Arts), Mark Keane (School of Architecture & Urban Planning), Jean Creighton (Manfred Olson Planetarium), Kyle Ebersole, Carlynn Alt, Barbara Meyer and Courtney Fisher-Hess (College of Health Sciences), and the School of Freshwater Sciences.

This was the third year the festival was celebrated statewide under the direction of the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation, UW-Madison and the Morgridge Institute for Research.
In the Media and Around the Community

Nigel Rothfels (Office of Undergraduate Research) was the featured guest for an extended program about the history of zoological gardens for the program Rear Vision on the Radio National of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation.

http://ab.co/1MEgyDE

Living Learning Communities are groups of students who share a common interest in a particular area of academics. The Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies (JAMS) LLC students have been honing their reporting interests by interviewing their peers about a proposed Wisconsin law that would allow people to carry guns on all UW campuses. Their work was featured on the Wisconsin Broadcasters Association website. (http://bit.ly/1P3iGZr). They also completed a DiverCity tour to explore Milwaukee’s culture. Their adventure was written up in Media Milwaukee. http://bit.ly/1YiAzqD

Gerald Blanks (JAMS) presented the paper “Minority Mascotting: The Media Representation and Partisan Hegemony of Black Victimhood” at the National Communication Association’s 101st annual conference in Las Vegas, Nevada, from Nov. 19-22. Blanks’s paper presents a new concept on how to view contemporary martyrdom, and introduces terminology that reflects the changing role of activism, the connection of the black body to a social cause, and its utility as an image for social action.

Xiaoxia Cao (JAMS) presented a paper titled “Bridging the gap: The influence of descriptive social norms on helping behavior toward in-group and out-group members” on Nov. 19 at the Annual Conference of the National Communication Association.

Elana Levine (JAMS) presented a talk called “Feminized Popular Culture in the Early 21st Century” at Miami University in Ohio on Sept. 24, based on her recently published book.

Marc Tasman (JAMS), as opening speaker on Oct. 3 for TEDxUWMilwaukee’s conference, React Differently, rocked the large crowd in the Wisconsin Room with his talk, Future Cultures, in which he argued for thoughtful crafting and archiving of Internet comments, such as the ones that have populated the “Computer Genius” video from 1984, of him as a 12-year-old boy talking about computers.

Marc Tasman also provided the cover art for “A Guide to Jewish Wisconsin 2015-2016,” published in October. The piece, “Tree At Water,” is made of several thousand tiny images made over several hundred days since 2012 of a tree, a bench and Lake Michigan at Atwater Park in Shorewood, Wisc.

Jess Flagg ('15, BA International Studies) was featured on Lake Country NOW’s website for her recent appointment as a Marshfield Clinic Volunteer Wisconsin AmeriCorps member. http://bit.ly/1MtuYFr

Thomas Turck ('86, MS Anthropology) was profiled in The Bismarck Tribune, discussing his time as a soldier in the Vietnam War. http://bit.ly/20owQd2

Krista Lisdahl’s (Psychology) research was quoted in an American Psychological Association article regarding the effects of marijuana on children’s and teenagers’ developing brains. http://bit.ly/1Ojlfbo

Julia Stringfellow ('02, MA History) was profiled for her job as the university archivist at Central Washington University in the Daily Record. http://bit.ly/20y7TMe

Tami Williams (English and Film Studies) talked about her experience being in Paris the night of the Nov. 13 terrorist attacks in the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel. http://bit.ly/1ljYFya

Yael Gal (Foreign Languages and Literature and Jewish Studies) gave a presentation titled “Technology in the Hebrew Classroom” at the 2015 Hebrew Seminar at the University of Denver.

Continued on page 10
African American Student Academic Services won the title of Most Spirited Office during UWM’s Spirit Week in early November.

Mark Zoromski (Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies) was inducted into the Milwaukee Press Club Media Hall of Fame in October. Zoromski has been a lecturer at UWM since 1998 and has a wealth of experience in television news. http://bit.ly/1TaEhjc

Andrew Petto (Biological Sciences) received the 2015 Evolution Education Award for the National Association of Biology Teachers at their annual meeting on Nov. 14.

UWM’s Economics graduate program was ranked among the top 150 programs in the nation by the TFE Times. http://bit.ly/1NSH1m1

In the Media

continued from page 9

Lisa Silverman (Jewish Studies) was in Vienna, Austria, in November to give a presentation at the launch of the book Witness: Realities of Forced Emigration 1938-1945. Silverman wrote the book’s epilogue. http://bit.ly/1QK85E1

Joel Berkowitz (Jewish Studies) was the Yiddish consultant on Paula Vogel’s play Indecent, now running at the La Jolla Playhouse in San Diego. http://bit.ly/20ZNz6U

Brandon Ford (’15, BS Biological Sciences) was featured on NBC 12 News in Arizona as a “One to Watch” in Phoenix, Ariz. medicine. (http://bit.ly/1Ohuw0W) He was also profiled by the University of Arizona College of Medicine Phoenix during Veteran’s Week. http://bit.ly/1QPXKGH

Scientific American ran a story regarding the important role heirloom date palms play in Egyptian culture and turned to Jennifer Jordan (Sociology) for her expertise on heirloom foods and edible memory. http://bit.ly/1MPKUqj

Jeffrey Sommers (Africology and Global Studies) chaired the plenary session, “Plenary I: L’Occupation Américaine, 1915-1934” of the 27th annual Haitian Studies Association Meeting on Oct. 23 at the University of Montreal.


Gladys Mitchell-Walthour (Africology) gave a lecture, “Racial versus Class Discrimination, Occupation, and Skin Color in Brazil,” at the Center for Latin American, Caribbean and Iberian Studies sponsored by the Brazil Initiative and the International Division at the University of Wisconsin-Madison on Nov. 10.

Kate Wolf (’11, BA Women’s Studies) was featured on OnMilwaukee.com for her food blog which highlights Latin American cuisine on Milwaukee’s south side. http://bit.ly/1kHWl94

Lab Manager ran a feature on the Shimadzu Laboratory for Advanced Applied and Analytical Chemistry housed in the newly-opened Kenwood Interdisciplinary Research Complex on the UWM campus. The lab is used by researchers from many disciplines including Chemistry’s Institute for Drug Discovery, neuroscience, biophysics, and biology. http://bit.ly/1OStoyX

Students in the Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies 500 class were profiled on WISN 12 for their efforts in preserving the story of local Holocaust survivors. http://bit.ly/1T2H0ep
People in print


To submit a publication from the past six months, please see http://bit.ly/1NnKyJx.

Mafia in literature

continued from page 3

“I find these online anti-Mafia social networks to be absolutely inspirational. … For those that do grow-up in Mafia-controlled areas and don’t know other ways of perceiving and being in society, by doing that, they have at least the awareness that there is a body of other people and perspectives that they get through whatever that bit of news is,” Pickering-Iazzi said. “Online journalism … it’s impressed me with how important it is. The national mainstream press in Italy is controlled in many ways and they tend to give superficial stories, if they report them at all, about either the Mafia or the anti-Mafia. But the anti-Mafia online sites do in-depth exposes. They do research and very thoughtful kinds of articles. They have thousands of readers and they’re performing this wonderful work for informing the public, for democracy, for justice. Sometimes, based upon these articles, cases are reopened.”

Of course, Mafiosi can use the Internet as well.

“The struggle, the violence, the threats that are on the ground are also up in the ether, and they do track people down,” Pickering-Iazzi said. “Libera’s site was hacked, a skull left on it. They left a skull with death threats. The battle goes on.”

Pickering-Iazzi’s book is available at http://amzn.to/1XmgpcU.
Upcoming Events

Nov. 27

Planetarium Show: Einstein's Last Prediction. 7 p.m. Manfred Olson Planetarium. Tickets are $3. Show runs Fridays at 7 p.m. through Dec. 11. [http://bit.ly/1RYT6EY]

Dec. 2

Dec. 3
Geosciences Colloquium: Decoding the Record of Ancient Earthquakes: Pseudotachylytes from Norway, New Zealand and northern Wisconsin. 3:30 p.m. Lapham 162. Maria Bjornerud, Lawrence University. A reception follows in Greene Gallery, Lapham 168. [http://bit.ly/1PQipcU]

Dec. 4


Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies 50th Anniversary Celebration. 4 p.m. Zelazo Center. Join CLACS for a party showcasing 50 years of teaching, research, and public engagement, with performances by UWM faculty, students, and special guests. A reception follows the performances. [http://bit.ly/1WwaXcl]

Dec. 6

Dec. 11
Neuroscience Seminar: Brain and cognitive changes in preclinical Alzheimer’s Disease. 2 p.m. Lubar N120. Sterling Johnson, UW-Madison. [http://bit.ly/1PD1vQm]

Geography Undergraduate Research Symposium. 2:30 p.m. AGS Library. Geography undergraduate students display their research projects. [http://bit.ly/1SJEqzx]


Alumni Accomplishments

Roy Badger (’98, BA Sociology) was honored for his role in the landmark 2014 lawsuit overturning Wisconsin’s ban on gay marriage. He received the University of Wisconsin System Dr. P.B. Poorman Award for Outstanding Achievement on Behalf of LGBTQ People at a ceremony on Oct. 9 at UW-Madison. [http://bit.ly/1I1yh5T]

Angela Sikorski (’05, PhD Psychology) was honored as Distinguished Faculty by the Texas A&M University-Texarkana Alumni Association during the 2015 Eagle Roundup: A Celebration of Distinguished Alumni and Faculty. Angela is an associate professor of Psychology at Texas A&M University-Texarkana. [http://bit.ly/1LWBUM6]

Nicole Wagner (’04, BA Journalism and Mass Communications) was appointed the executive director of the Wisconsin Corn Promotion Board in November. [http://bit.ly/1RC8re4]

James Castonguay (’92, MA, ’98, PhD English) was appointed director of Sacred Heart University’s new School of Communication and Media Arts. [http://bit.ly/1PS0kaF]

Jeff Hoffman (’85, BA English) joined AG Architecture in Wauwatosa, Wisc., as director of client relations in support of the senior living environments portfolio. [http://bit.ly/1ktiInx]

Dr. Ashok Nand Rai (’94, BS Medical Science) was named to the American Medical Group Association board of directors. His tenure begins in January 2016. [http://bit.ly/1Hb4tZC]

Wisconsin to Wall Street

continued from page 4

“What that means is that hedge funds and other brokers and pension funds, people who are managing money, essentially, or have clients who are managing money, send us orders to get done on the floor of the exchange, because there are certain advantages to being on the floor,” Wisniewski explained.

Working on the floor isn’t as glamorous as the movies make it out to be – for one thing, trading is much more digital than it used to be.

“It’s a lot more electronic. … There’s the hand-held; every member of the New York Stock Exchange, and I’m a member, has a hand-held (device) that goes to specific exchange systems that can handle specific types of orders so that people who are not using a floor broker can use those types of orders. There are screens everywhere,” Wisniewski said. But, “On the opening and closing of trading, there’s still that hectic activity that people associate with the trading floor.”

Recently, Wisniewski left Raven and joined America’s Executions, where he is now the COO. His role is similar to his previous job, but he has more responsibility and has a hand in guiding the future of the company.

“Essentially, I’m digging through the data to help make business decisions, to save money here or make more money over there, etc. That I really love to do because that’s growing the business – making the decisions that actually drive growth,” he said.

He credits his education at UWM and the firm background he received in Economics for much of his success.

“When I do analysis for my business decisions here, I do statistical analysis. I’ll look at variances and things like that, and those are things that are looked at in Economics. Plus, it’s the market – interest rate movement, the Fed and how it works, what its function is. When I thought about investments, personally, I’ve gone back to old research papers I’ve done,” he said. “It is competitive, and it is difficult, and the people are hard – but it’s not impossible. If you work hard and study the right stuff, and you keep applying and working on it, you’ll get there.”
in 2010, and also houses a certificate program in Latin American and Caribbean Studies. CLACS awards Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowships to support less commonly-taught languages, namely Portuguese. It regularly hosts seminars and training workshops for teachers at all grade-levels who are looking to expand their Latin American knowledge and teaching tools - for example, the Américas Award for Children’s and Young Adult Literature.

“Julie (Kline, Associate Director of CLACS) really saw a need and a gap to recognize the children’s literature that was covering the Americas and Latino content. The children’s literature field didn’t have such a book award. Julie (and CLACS worked with the national Consortium of Latin American Studies Programs to) actually establish the Américas Award collection and it’s become, I think, an extraordinarily important award that helps teachers and librarians connect content on the Americas to their young readers,” said CLACS interim director Natasha Borges Sugiyama.

“There is now in the UWM Libraries Curriculum Collection the 400-plus volume Américas collection. It’s extremely unique. There’s no such collection elsewhere in the country,” Kline added. “We’re doing more programming now with UWM Libraries to do teacher workshops to bring attention to the collection.”

The Latin American Film Series that CLACS hosts annually has also expanded and has a special place in the hearts of many Milwaukeeans. The series started as four films shown in the basement of Enderis Hall and, 38 years later, now brings 1,400 people to the UWM campus each year.

“We are truly a National Resource Center. NRCs exist to educate on campus as well as beyond to encourage global citizens, helping to build language expertise, research content, engaging the public so that people who come to the film series, or any of our public programs, go away with a little more knowledge about another part of the world,” Kline said.

That knowledge is needed now more than ever.

“Studying Latin America is fascinating because there’s always something new to challenge us as scholars and teachers. Whether it’s recent child migration from Central America crossing the U.S. borders, with its implications for human rights, immigration policy, and homeland security, or whether we’re talking about the historic progress being made in renewing ties with Cuba and the opportunities for new engagement with Cuba,” Sugiyama said. “These are really important issues that I think will lend to new areas of research.”

CLACS tomorrow and beyond

Kline hopes that CLACS will find new opportunities to help teachers internationalize their classrooms, not just in areas like social studies or world languages, but in other subject areas as well. Sugiyama would like to see the Center push new lines of interdisciplinary inquiry, further dialogue between the “north and south”, and engage with professional schools. These are subjects they hope to address at a workshop on Dec. 4 about the future of Latin American studies, featuring UWM and regional faculty panelists.

As a LACUSL major, Oscar Hernandez has a unique perspective on the necessity of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, and he hopes that CLACS can gain more visibility in the future – on campus and around the city.

“In terms of economics and politics, Latinos in the U.S. are becoming increasingly important as the demographics change. I think it’s going to be more important,” he said. “I see the tides are changing. We have to prepare society for what it will become.”