The beauty in Rae David’s home is a reminder of an ugly past, and the Holocaust survivor responds to compliments with unsettling frankness.

“You walk in to her house, and it’s gorgeous,” Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies major Dylan Deprey said, recalling his first meeting with David. “I said, ‘Wow this is beautiful.’ And she said, ‘It’s paid with blood money.’”

David, 87, was imprisoned in the Vilna Ghetto in what is now Lithuania during World War II and was later liberated from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp. Deprey recorded her often-painful memories for his Advanced Integrated Reporting Class in Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies (JAMS). Students in the class hone their reporting skills by conducting in-depth interviews and completing print and multi-media projects telling their subjects’ stories.

The class made news last spring when students helped find missing pictures of Wisconsin soldiers killed in Vietnam for a memorial in Washington. This fall, JAMS senior lecturer Jessica McBride asked her students to work with Holocaust survivors in Milwaukee.

“I wanted to find another project that is unifying and has meaning to it, and that contributes to the community in a meaningful way,” McBride said. “I think it’s a good way for them to use their journalistic skills on something that is really rich, really interesting and really matters. I wanted them to take it to the next level, because this is a great group of students, and they are so skilled at this point.”

The Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center put McBride in touch with local survivors. She paired students up according to strengths – Deprey is a writer, and his partner Tyler Nelson feels more at home with video production. Together, they made a list of talking points and divided up duties. Nelson asked David about her happier childhood memories, and then Deprey gently directed her to talk about difficult subjects like her time in the ghetto and camp.

Continued on page 13
Urban Studies hosts inequality summit

By Jamie Harris, Urban Studies

On Nov. 19, a record turnout of more than 130 students, faculty and staff, and community members, including 30 people who filed into an overflow space equipped with video and audio, turned out for Urban Studies Programs’ ninth annual Henry W. Maier State of Milwaukee Summit at the UWM Hefter Center.

This year’s theme was *Inequality in Milwaukee: How big a problem is it, and what can be done about it?* A panel of civic leaders, Milwaukee-area state legislators, and UWM faculty discussed the sources of growing inequality in the metro area, how Milwaukee compares to other cities, and what programs or policies might help address this mounting problem.

Presentations and discussion examined the recent rise of historically high inequality nationally and in Milwaukee. The rise coincides with significant declines in the size of the middle class, as well as problems associated with stalled mobility and the growth of low wage work. All were identified as a source of growing inequality in Milwaukee over the last two decades.

Panelists included State Rep. David Bowen, Assembly District 10; Sheila Cochran, COO/Secretary-Treasurer of the Milwaukee Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO; State Rep. Dale Kooyenga, Assembly District 14; UWM Professor of History and Urban Studies Marc Levine; and Timothy Sheehy, President of the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce. Urban Studies Director and Associate Professor of Political Science and Urban Studies Joel Rast moderated the discussion. UWM Provost Johannes Britz gave the introductory remarks.

Panelists discussed a variety of policy changes and initiatives that were needed to address growing inequality in Milwaukee, such as an expansion of early education programs and a reinvestment in K-12 schooling, as well as changes in how education is delivered. Some panelists advocated ending privatization and the school choice program, and others argued for increased experimentation and alternative forms for providing education. The discussion also highlighted expanding collective bargaining rights, addressing racial segregation, making changes to tax policy for top 1 percent of Americans, and developing robust job creation strategies.

Web clips of the event can be viewed at [http://bit.ly/1p5i0GF](http://bit.ly/1p5i0GF).
“Injuries: Gaping head wound and a crushed foot. #Ivehadworse #occupationalhazard #imfine #MKE92,” tweeted Milwaukee Fire Chief James Foley about Milwaukee’s catastrophic Third Ward fire in 1892.

Behind the keyboard sat UWM Public History graduate student Brooke Uhl in a room full of nine other volunteers, eight of them UWM students, at the Milwaukee Public Museum. Each managed a Twitter account portraying a historical figure involved in the fire and live-tweeted over the course of four hours as if they were living through the conflagration. The event highlighted the reopening of the newly renovated Streets of Old Milwaukee Exhibit at the museum on Dec. 11.

The tweeters were recruited by MPM Educator and UWM alumna Jaclyn Kelly (’11, MA History and Certificate in Museum Studies), who approached UWM Professor of History Genevieve G. McBride for help in drumming up excitement for the Streets’ reopening. The exhibit showcases what life was like for Milwaukeeans from the 1890s through World War I.

“The Twitter event was a way to help the public understand the nature of history,” Kelly said. “History is about the experiences of real people.”

In turn, McBride adapted her graduate seminar in the History of the Midwest to include the live-tweeting event, in addition to the normal research papers required.

“I knew that they could do it – and with their previous classes and internships, they could teach me how to do this project. I use many social media platforms but had avoided adding a Twitter account,” McBride said. “Now, I have live-tweeted current events, but using social media to re-enact historical events is a new learning experience for all of us.”

During the live-tweet event, students composed 140-character messages using the hashtag #MKE92, denoting a term that could be searched on Twitter to follow along with each historical figure as events unfolded during the fire. The students based their tweets on a timeline of the fire developed by Kelly and her office.

Uhl adopted the persona of James Foley, the fire department chief at the time of the Third Ward fire. Other historical figures included then-Milwaukee Archbishop Frederick Katzer; Otto Falk, head of the state’s National Guard at the time; and Edward P. Bacon, then-Chamber of Commerce President.

For four hours, students composed tweets speaking as if they were historical figures living through the Third Ward fire in 1892.
The science of cancer diagnosis has come a long way. Exploratory surgery has been mostly replaced with non-invasive diagnostic imaging to detect cancerous growths. UWM Physics Professor Sarah Patch is working on developing the next generation of those diagnostic tools: thermoacoustic imaging.

“I intentionally heat up an object a little bit, and it wants to expand because it’s heating up, so it generates an outgoing pressure pulse. We measure those pressure pulses with ultrasound receivers,” Patch explained.

“A few years ago we landed a grant through UWM’s instrumentation award program to purchase a research-friendly ultrasound system. Now I can use a transducer just like those used in hospitals to ‘listen’ for the signal.”

Patch is using the technology to create 3D images of prostates in hopes of creating a diagnostic tool for detecting prostate cancer – one without the risks associated with biopsies. She started the process by imaging cancerous prostates immediately after they were removed from patients undergoing treatment at Froedtert and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

“Lots of folks at MCW have been very supportive of this project, from Dr. See in urology, to the MCW Tissue Bank and MCW’s Clinical & Translational Science Institute,” she said.

Creating a thermoacoustic image of a prostate requires a mechanism that can heat the organ uniformly. In the basement of the UWM Physics building, a souped-up FM radio transmitter propagates high-power VHF (very high frequency) pulses through Patch’s benchtop imaging system. VHF-induced thermoacoustic signal generation is driven by electrical conductivity, and healthy prostate glands produce fluid that is about three times more conductive than blood or plasma. Unhealthy prostate glands, however, produce less conductive fluid.

Patch and collaborator David Hull are comparing thermoacoustic images to the corresponding prostate samples to test whether thermoacoustic images of prostates removed from the body can be used to detect cancer.

If thermoacoustic imaging proves as effective as more costly techniques, Patch hopes to image prostates while still inside the patient. The process would be similar to the current transrectal biopsy used now for diagnosing tumors.

“We are currently looking for surgeons in town to help us move to the next level. To drum up funds to build a prototype, we’ll need to have surgeons on board who will commit to sending patients to our system for thermoacoustic imaging at the time of biopsy,” Patch said.

Longer term, she hopes to image other abdominal organs, like the liver and pancreas.

On the left are VHF-induced thermoacoustic images of the first prostate imaged using the Patch Lab’s improved ultrasound hardware. (A) shows a compressed urethra, indicated by yellow arrows toward the apex. (B) shows seminal vesicles, as indicated by the yellow arrows.
Dan Devine is West Allis’ biggest cheerleader.

He’s quick to point out the Milwaukee suburb’s strengths – it’s the second-biggest city in Milwaukee County, home to an increasing number of unique local businesses. West Allis has some promising development prospects and plenty of affordable housing with friendly neighbors.

Admittedly, Devine is biased – he’s the mayor, and a UWM graduate.

He grew up in Racine and began attending UWM as a business major. Math courses weren’t his cup of tea, so Devine switched his focus to Political Science. He remembers his time at UWM with a smile.

“I worked on campus. I worked at the union loading dock, right off the bridge that goes over. I’m still friends to this day with the guys that worked there,” he said.

“I was on the Student Association, the student senate. That was my initial foray (into government).”

Devine graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in January of 1995, and promptly did not go into government. Instead, he entered the world of marketing and sales with the Midwest Sports Channel, which is now Fox Sports Wisconsin. He worked there for a few years but didn’t see a future in the industry. It was also just about the time that a pension scandal rocked the Milwaukee County Board. Several County Board members were recalled, and Devine’s acquaintance, Gerry Broderick, now a Milwaukee County Supervisor for the 3rd District, won one of those races. Devine asked for a job.

He served as Broderick’s legislative aide for two years, during which time he moved to West Allis. Devine ran for a seat on the Board himself in 2004 and served as a County Supervisor until 2008, when then-mayor of West Allis Jeannette Bell announced she would not seek re-election. People asked him to consider running.

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 Geography, Jewish Studies, and Biological Science majors at this time!
Professor in Paris describes aftermath of attack

By Greg Walz-Chojnacki, University Relations

Tami Williams’ soft, calm voice rarely betrayed the anxiety that her words conveyed as she spoke by phone about the Nov. 13 terrorist attacks in Paris and their aftermath.

Williams, an associate professor of English and Film Studies, was on sabbatical in Paris, in part to research turn-of-the-century performing arts and their impact on French art cinema. She had recently been thinking about connecting that work to contemporary and global themes in cinema.

After the attacks, she said, scholarly endeavors were pushed from her mind.

Williams had been in the Latin Quarter that Friday evening for a gathering of expatriates organized online; she planned to celebrate her French roommate’s birthday later at a restaurant on the rue de Charonne. A television tuned to the France-Germany soccer match showed reports of the attacks.

As the enormity of events became clear, she realized that one of the attacks was just five minutes from her home, and in the neighborhood where she was to meet her friend.

“She texted me that she was fine,” Williams recalled, but another issue loomed: “These events were taking place between where I was and where I lived. I realized I couldn’t go home.”

Williams spent the night in the Latin Quarter with the group of people she’d met. She felt safe, though unable to sleep. The evening’s events seemed distant, abstract, but when a passerby on the street below shouted “Allahu Akbar (God is great),” her sense of security evaporated.

“I thought, ‘They’re here, the attackers are here,’” she recalled. “It was my first experience of a real visceral reaction to the events. For the first two days I’d wake up and realize I was in a place where I no longer felt safe. To be honest, I had always felt safer in Paris than I do in Milwaukee. Paris was a safe haven where I could walk alone at night, because the streets are always filled with people.”

**Her worst moment**

On Nov. 15, an artist friend, who recently moved from Milwaukee to Paris, texted her, “The sun is beckoning us to go outside.” Like many Parisians, Williams felt a duty to reclaim the city.

“It was a beautiful day, and it felt like an activist response to go out,” she said.

Williams made a purchase in a clothes shop, but as the proprietor rang up the sale, a woman ran into the shop screaming, “Someone is shooting!”

Williams described a scene in which people were screaming and fleeing up and down the street. Customers and the shop owner crouched down behind the counter.

“I thought, ‘My God, they’re back again, they’re still shooting,’” she recalled. “I felt like a hunted animal.”

It was a false alarm, but also the nadir of her experience following the attacks.

**Struggling for normalcy**

On Monday following the attacks, Williams returned to her research at the
Thermoacoustic imaging
continued from page 4

Thermoacoustic imaging may do more than just detect cancer, however: It could also be an instrument for treating it.

Proton therapy is a method of cancer treatment in which doctors direct a beam of charged particles at a tumor. Unlike regular radiation treatments where x-rays enter the body and attenuate exponentially, particle beams deposit most of their energy at a certain point, known as the Bragg peak, and then die away almost completely. In principle, treatment can be localized on the tumor, leaving the healthy tissue beyond the Bragg peak untouched. Positioning errors, however, result in treating healthy tissue and under-treating the tumor.

Detecting thermoacoustic emissions from the Bragg peak is a new project for Patch and scientists working on the Lawrence Berkeley National Lab’s (LBNL) 88-inch cyclotron, which accelerates protons to approximately one-third the speed of light. This summer, Patch went back to Berkeley to test her newest ultrasound equipment with an upgraded cyclotron.

“LBNL donated a day’s worth of time on the cyclotron. We did some experiments and it worked better than I thought it would,” Patch said. LBNL also provided staff support, including technicians who modified electronics, one scientist coaxed out of retirement, and operators who controlled the beam.

Their experiment involved pulsing a proton beam at a “phantom,” a model of human tissue that can be used for ultrasound. They designed a phantom with a cavity that mimicked a portion of the intestine, because gas pockets wreak havoc with treatment plans. Scientists George Noid and Allen Li at MCW took CT scans of the phantom, from which Patch could estimate the Bragg peak locations when the cavity was empty and filled with olive oil.

“The beam could penetrate 2 centimeters in the oil, but when the cavity is empty, the beam flies right through and doesn’t slow until it enters phantom material. With my ultrasound transducers, we can see that difference pretty accurately,” Patch said.

Patch warns that her initial results are preliminary. However, if she and collaborators continue to obtain positive results, Patch thinks thermoacoustics may improve the accuracy of proton therapy.

This shows an ultrasound image of a cavity filled with olive oil. Dashed and solid vertical lines indicate the beam path through material with relative stopping powers near 0 and 1, respectively. Bragg peaks from both empty and filled cavities are overlaid in yellow. Overlaid in red are estimates of entrance point of beam into the material with high stopping power, in agreement with the ultrasound image.
West Allis mayor

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“I always had an interest in politics, but I didn’t really change my major to Political Science thinking I would run for office someday,” he said. “Now I’m coming up on my third term next April and I will be running again.”

As mayor, Devine looks at himself as the CEO of West Allis, with the city administrator as the COO. His biggest job is working with city administration to put together an annual budget that uses taxpayer money to fund city departments and programs. He also presides over City Council meetings and conducts media relations.

“The thing I really like is that every day is different. I don’t have the same schedule ever,” Devine said. “The worst aspects are there is never enough money to implement great ideas. … That’s frustrating, because there are a lot of things I’d love to do in this city that I just can’t.”

What he can do – and Devine does it enthusiastically – is promote West Allis as a good place to do business. He acknowledges that the city has a reputation as a worn-out industrial town, especially since its largest employer - and taxpayer - Allis-Chalmers closed decades ago, but Devine thinks the city’s critics are far too pessimistic.

“It has affordable homes for young families who are working for their first house. Our farmer’s market is top notch. We’ve got some really nice development prospects right around there that interest the paper like BizTimes or Business Journal. We’ve got six developers that are putting together proposals and that’s kind of cool,” Devine said. “We are always seeking grants to try to facilitate growth and development in the community. When I look at the things like the restaurants, the delis, the coffee shops, the craft brewery, the art space, Cream City Clay, the skate park – we have a lot of cool things that are popping up.”

He credits UWM for his well-rounded education and encourages current students, especially the politically-minded, to get involved.

“It’s very refreshing to see young people getting in to politics. We need to have that next generation of leaders,” Devine said. “I don’t think I knew what I wanted to be when I first started. I still don’t know when I graduated that I wanted to be a mayor, but I knew that I wanted to get things done and I had ideals and I wanted to be a force of change.”
Laurels and Accolades

William Keith (English) was awarded the Presidential Citation for Service by the National Communication Association. [http://bit.ly/1O66iUB](http://bit.ly/1O66iUB)

Merry Wiesner-Hanks (History) was elected Vice President/President Elect of the World History Association. Her term begins in 2016 and she will take over as president in 2018.

Uk Heo (Political Science) received an award from the Korean Minister of Education for his book, *South Korea’s Rise: Economic Development, Power, and Foreign Relations* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), and research contributions to Korean studies. Heo’s book was selected as one of the outstanding research products funded by the Korean government.

Graduate student Jamie Henry (Anthropology, Museum Studies) has been appointed the curator of the Wisconsin Museum of Quilts & Fiber Arts in Cedarburg, Wis. He is expected to graduate in December.

César Ferreira (Spanish and Portuguese) was elected to the Peruvian Academy of Language (Academia Peruana de la Lengua), an institution charged with promoting Peruvian literature, linguistics, and culture. Ferreira specializes in contemporary Peruvian letters and joins some 60 Peruvian academics in what is a lifetime appointment.

Tweeting history

Bacon was portrayed by Margaret Spiegel, another graduate student in the Public History program. She was in charge of researching Bacon’s life and his role during the fire. Outside of the knowledge that he became a central figure in the city’s relief efforts for fire victims the morning after the flames had been quenched, little else was known about Bacon. A majority of Spiegel’s tweets were based on inferences she made about his personality.

“I didn’t get a real clear sense of what his personal voice was like. I envisioned him as a kind, sympathetic man based on his involvement with Milwaukee charities,” she said. She and her classmates gleaned their information from research with the Milwaukee County Historical Society and the UWM Library Archives. Uhl in particular swore by the book *Beertown Blazes: A Century of Milwaukee Firefighting* from UWM’s Special Collections, which detailed the history of Milwaukee firefighting and James Foley.

“He was very instrumental in helping Milwaukee fight fires,” Uhl said. That included hiring more firefighters, purchasing additional fire engines and horses to haul them, and convincing the city to pay for cisterns.

“He did all this because he was in the Chicago Fire in 1871. He also would have known about the Peshtigo Fire. I think he wanted to minimize loss of life,” she explained.

Based on their research, the students drafted about 40 tweets per historical figure. Once the event got going, however, the participants found themselves building on the energy of one another and improvising tweets as inspiration struck. Uhl racked up more than 100 tweets by the end of the event.

“It was so much fun,” Spiegel said. “It was a really good challenge to convey that information in a short space and make it fun and engaging with the hashtags.”

“A lot of younger people don’t come to museums,” Uhl added, “but I think it is one way of using technology to interact with the younger demographic.”

The live-tweet was a social media success. Kelly hopes to attempt other events in the future in partnership with UWM students.
In the Media and Around the Community

Andrew Petto (Biological Sciences) was honored by the National Center for Science education for receiving the 2015 Evolution Education Award from the National Association of Biology Teachers. [http://bit.ly/1PP53Pt]

Marc Levine and Robert Smith (History) were interviewed by CNN for a piece examining the city of Milwaukee’s problems with racial inequality and segregation. [http://cnn.it/1HIxaxr]

Levine was also quoted in a WISN report about police response times to various parts of Milwaukee – again, divided by racial and socioeconomic lines ([http://bit.ly/1TBDeIV](http://bit.ly/1TBDeIV)) and in a WDJT report on segregation in Milwaukee. [http://bit.ly/1kcCsp5]

Diane Reddy (Psychology) was interviewed by OnlineEducation.com. [http://bit.ly/1ZcMAyl]

Did you catch Green Bay Packers’ quarterback Aaron Rodgers’ stunning Hail Mary pass in the last seconds of the Packers-Lions game on Dec. 3? There was a lot of math involved in that throw, and Paul Lyman (Physics) took us through it on WISN news. [http://bit.ly/1J3gLEc]

Why are charity runs and races so successful for fundraising? Liam Callanan (English) gave his thoughts in a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel editorial. [http://bit.ly/1N63kzl]


Kimberly Blaeser (English) is this year’s Wisconsin Poet Laureate and recently served as a judge at a youth poetry slam organized by America SCORES Milwaukee. [http://bit.ly/1N24nR8]

College of Letters & Science Dean Rodney Swain went on WUWM to talk about UWM’s newest building, the Kenwood Interdisciplinary Research Complex, and its role in fostering cooperation between different departments. [http://bit.ly/1NJVOeD]

The UWM Post penned an article on UWM’s response to the Paris terrorist attacks, including an interview by student MaryJo Contino (French and Journalism, Advertising, and Media Studies). [http://bit.ly/1HlY6x9]

As UWM decides how best to absorb the recent budget cuts instituted by the Wisconsin legislature, Kyle Swanson (Mathematical Sciences) discussed how the university might respond in a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel editorial. [http://bit.ly/1PR44gj]

If you had the choice, would you live forever? Luca Ferrero (Philosophy) discussed the nature of immortality, death, and dying on WUWM. [http://bit.ly/1Yz2b9f]

Lisa Silverman (Jewish Studies) went to Vienna, Austria and spoke briefly at the launch of photographer Meinrad Hofer’s book Witness: Realities of Forced Emigration, 1938-1945 (Heidelberg: Kehrer Verlag, 2015) on Nov. 10 at the Theater Nestroyhof/Hamakom.

Jean Creighton (Planetarium) was featured in the December issue of Milwaukee Magazine. [http://bit.ly/1ZlZXMF]

Fred Helmstetter (Psychology) delivered the Roger Brown Loucks lecture in the Neurophysiological Basis of Learning and Memory at the University of Washington in Seattle in November.

Erin Winkler (Africology) was a featured speaker at the Wisconsin Early Childhood Association annual conference on Nov. 14, leading a two-part series entitled “Difficult Conversations: Talking About Race.”

Continued on page 11
Ermitte Saint Jacques and Patrick Bellegarde-Smith (Africology) discussed U.S. involvement in Haiti on an episode of International Focus. Bellegarde-Smith is the president of the Haitian Studies Association, which just completed its 27th international conference, and the president of the Congress of Santa Barbara (KOSANBA) which had its 11th colloquium, both in Montreal, on Oct. 21-24. http://bit.ly/1YkU8g1

Saint Jacques also presented “The Significance of Peripheral Destinations for Understanding Transnational Practices” at the American Anthropological Association 114th Annual Meeting in Denver, Colo.

Charmaine Lang (Africology) presented “RJ and U. Campus and Community Battle: The Precarity of Women’s Personhood” at the National Women’s Studies Association Conference in Milwaukee on Nov. 13.

Jeffrey Sommers (Africology and Global Studies) wrote a short piece for The New York Times concerning the United States’ approach to foreign policy with Russia. http://nyti.ms/1QmNl6C

Sommers was also invited by James Galbraith, the President of Economists for Peace & Security, to present his research on austerity at the Bernard L. Schwartz Symposium in Washington, D.C. on Inequality, Austerity, Jobs & Growth. The event was held Nov. 18 and also featured the Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Treasury, the Washington editor for The Atlantic, and policy institute economists and academics.

Sara Benesh (Political Science) was quoted in an Associated Press article detailing some of the cases before the Supreme Court and their possible ramifications on the upcoming presidential election. http://apne.ws/1QsGhF6

Several members of the Communication Department, including PhD students and faculty, presented papers and posters or engaged in panel discussions at the annual conference of the National Communication Association in Las Vegas, Nev. in November, including:


* Tricia J. Burke, Erin K. Ruppel, and Dana Dinsmore: “Moving away and reaching out: Students’ relational maintenance and psychosocial well-being during the transition to college.”


* Thomas A. Salek: “Creating a colorblind nation: Privatizing race in President Obama’s neoliberal rhetorical leadership”; “Flipping off political complacency and cynicism: Satyric satire as a comic corrective in Bill Maher’s 2014 #FlipADistrict campaign”; and “Money doesn’t talk, it swears: Parody, excess and strategic ambiguity in Martin Scorsese’s The Wolf of Wall Street.”

Several Letters & Science faculty, including Dave Clark (Associate Dean of Humanities), Xiaohua Peng (Chemistry and Biochemistry), and Dazhong Zhao (Biological Sciences) displayed their research at a Dec. 10 forum of the Wisconsin Innovation Network’s Milwaukee chapter. http://bit.ly/1YzqN1C
People in print


Cory Hawkins, M.A. Momen, Sarah Garvey, John Kestell, (all Chemistry and Biochemistry), Michael Kaminski, and Mark Dietz (Chemistry and Biochemistry). 2015. Evaluation of solid-supported room-temperature ionic liquids containing crown ethers as media for metal ion separation and pre-concentration. Talanta, 135: 115-123.


I knew it would be hard for her to talk. ... She said it was like a living hell,” Deprey said. “She described starvation and how they would try to get scraps of food where the Nazis would eat, and the Nazis would pour ash all over the garbage so they couldn’t eat it. She said she found three potatoes and she hid them in her scarf. An SS woman grabbed her by the throat, and the potatoes fell out and she was beaten so badly.”

David was later paid reparations by Germany for the atrocities she endured.

Hearing survivors’ stories was emotional, JAMS major Mary Jo Contino said. She interviewed Howard Melton, a Lithuanian Jewish man who survived the Dachau concentration camp in Germany. He described laboring in a work camp in Latvia, his family dying at the Auschwitz concentration camp, and a forced march from Dachau to avoid American troops. Anyone who fell during the march was killed. Melton weighed just 70 pounds when he was liberated.

“You hear all of these stories in school when you are younger, when you learn about the Holocaust, but it doesn’t really resonate as much until you hear it firsthand. It was powerful,” Contino said. “He said that he was very comfortable telling his story – all of the dirtiest, grossest parts of it. He guided me more than I guided him, I would say.”

Many students were struck by some of the survivors’ ability to live without bitterness, but survivor Nate Taffel, interviewed by JAMS majors Amanda Porter and Daniel Zielinski, said he couldn’t keep living with hatred.

“Today you see on television how much people are killed for religion’s sake in the world. I hope to live long enough to see that there’s peace on earth, and love. It’s so easily said, ... but you’ve got to show the love within,” Taffel said. “We are all equal, no matter what religion. We all have the right to exist.”

McBride knew her students would benefit from talking with survivors, but she also wanted to ensure that stories like David’s, Taffel’s, and Melton’s were not lost.

“It’s really one of the last times to tell their stories, and these are people the Nazis wanted to silence. They didn’t want these people to grow into old age and get a chance to tell their story,” McBride said. “They say journalism is a rough draft of history, but this is literally history.”

The students’ articles are available online at http://bit.ly/1Pjn0AD, and the completed projects also will be given to the Nathan and Esther Pelz Holocaust Education Resource Center.
Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

“I felt so happy going through the metal detectors – I felt safe, and was looking forward to a few hours of respite.”

Anxiety resurfaced occasionally when she heard sounds (a clicking camera) or loud noises (a dropped book). She was reminded of a former co-worker, a veteran of the Iraq war, whose PTSD would flare up whenever a pots and pans crashed at the restaurant where they worked.

Monday night she had a belated birthday celebration at home with her roommate, who said it was the first time since the 13th that she “felt like she could breathe.”

And now the future

With the attacks behind the city, Williams has been able to contemplate both the broader meaning of the events, and their impact on her work and the city she lived in.

La Cantine, her neighborhood restaurant, was once again filled, but Williams ate with her back to the wall and an eye on the door. She’d gone out in the evening, but took a taxi home.

“I had been thinking about connecting my current research to my teaching about contemporary women filmmakers and global cinema, so a lot of what had been on my mind was amplified by what has happened,” she said.

Williams has also reflected on the place of the Paris tragedy among similar events in the world.

“I’ve seen people saying there’s an unequal empathy with Parisians compared to suffering elsewhere,” Williams said. “But I feel that’s a false idea of Paris. The people here care deeply about what’s happening in Beirut, in Palestine and Iraq.”

Parisians’ empathy with one another, and with the world, is a local form of global empathy, Williams said, noting the response of Muslims, Christians and Jews in her neighborhood.

“We have a shared feeling that we’re all targets, all equally vulnerable,” she said. “We’re experiencing something of what people in other countries are experiencing, and we refuse to let these events divide us.”

Williams noted that this global connectedness has nodes within the UWM community: One of her students was in Beirut when a terrorist attack occurred there on Nov. 12. UWM Library Director Ewa Barczyk and UWM historian Jasmine Alinder were in Egypt when a Russian airliner crashed in late October.

In another Milwaukee connection, English professor Lane Hall’s Overpass Light Brigade has a chapter in Paris and their “We are not afraid” sign from the Charlie Hebdo attack has made a re-appearance online.

“Not only are we all connected, but even people from UWM are in all of these places,” she said.