

DANA

# The Dana Interviewer Class of 2012

Interviews by  
First year Dana students:

FYS "The Wire: Representations of Inner  
City Life" with Dr. Mello  
and  
FYS "1968" with Dr. Pooley



# The Dana Interviewer

Featuring the Class of 2012

The Dana Scholars Program, made possible by the Charles A. Dana Foundation, acknowledges students who display academic potential, good character, integrity, and leadership ability through contributions both inside and outside of the classroom. Each summer, Muhlenberg College awards about thirty high school seniors with this honor, one of the most prestigious honors that the College offers.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.muhlenberg.edu/main/academics/dana-scholars/>

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## **Dr. Brian Mello**

by James Custer

This is Dr. Mello's second year teaching "The Wire: Representations of Inner-City Life" as a Dana Seminar, but he taught it one year before as a special topic class. He first saw the show in Seattle as a grad student and instantly fell in love. He watched all five seasons in no time. When he came to Muhlenberg, Mello needed an idea for a seminar and, after thinking on it for a while, it hit him: The Wire. It was perfect. It attracts all different kinds of viewers, lends nicely to academia because it peels away societal norms, and raises far more questions than answers. It makes you think about who you are and where you stand on almost every moral issue, from gay rights to gun control. Once he got the class approved, many other faculty members were jealous that they did not think of teaching about The Wire first.

Mello originally had no partner in crime to teach the other Dana Seminar, but he knew he wanted to teach The Wire as a Dana FYS. He sent out an email asking other faculty if anyone had an FYS they would like to teach that had similarities to his. Dr. Pooley emailed him back with his class, "1968", and it was a match. They beat out all their contenders and got approved.

Mello wants his students to feel uncomfortable, so that they can reflect on themselves and the path they have chosen to take by going to college. The Wire attacks societal boundaries and tears down the walls we have put between classes, races, genders, neighborhoods, and social statuses. As for our class, he is amazed at the level of optimism we have kept. The Wire is akin to critical theory, and exposes the unnatural market economy as a negative part of life. The show challenges our way of life as children of suburbia. It creates a gray area with every moral dilemma and tears down the definitions of good and bad. Then it leaves the viewer with no easy solutions, or any solutions at all. Mello thinks this realization is liberatory, but feels most students take this as overwhelming hopelessness. Students want easy solutions, clear definitions, and most importantly affirmation that the path we chose was "right"; however, in the face of all these being torn down, we have stayed optimistic according to Mello.

The show has a plethora of topics to write about, and Mello makes sure that his writing prompts, though focused at times, leave room for interpretation so that each student can write about what interests him or her. Mello leads class discussion, but it is definitely a discussion. Each week has a mini topic, and a class may start on that topic, but by the end it has gone a completely different direction. Mello allows and encourages these diversions, so long as they are thought provoking and worth the discussion time.

Living in Allentown has affected how Mello interprets The Wire. He feels where he lives is a smaller version of The Wire complete with all the intersectional issues of education, race, and economic status, to name a few. The Wire has made him analyze his own life and has provided some aid in the tough moral decisions he has to make in his own life.

## **Dr. Jefferson Pooley**

by Peter Schartel

When Dr. Jeff Pooley delivered the First Lecture to the Class of 2015, he promised the new Muhlenberg freshmen that intellectual curiosity is “still possible, even in an iPad age.” Dr. Pooley urged the students to “remove the digital IV from time to time” in order to cultivate their curiosity through reading, reflection, and discussion. These traditional scholarly activities remain fundamental both to “the life of the mind” of any student at Muhlenberg and the goals of the Dana Scholars Program. Dr. Pooley also encouraged the freshmen to view the selection of their General Academic Requirement courses not “as a checklist, [or] as a necessary nuisance,” but rather as an invaluable and rare opportunity to discover and explore new areas of interest.

Dr. Pooley has taught the Dana First Year Seminar “1968” for the past two years. He developed the seminar after his interest in that tumultuous year was sparked by the broadcasts marking its fortieth anniversary – an example of intellectual curiosity for his students to emulate. Dr. Pooley notes that the intersecting national and international events of 1968 provide countless topics for study and writing assignments. In addition, the seminar enables his students to examine the present-day divisions in American society by tracing their origins to the culture wars of that era. Dr. Pooley’s policy of “endless revision” for this writing-intensive seminar encourages his students to view revision as an essential part of the writing process.

Dr. Pooley believes the Dana Program promotes intellectual curiosity not only through its First Year Seminars, but also through its Directed Study mentorships and the Dana Forum. During their Directed Study experiences, Dana students cultivate their curiosity by working closely with a faculty mentor as they explore a topic beyond their current area of expertise. Furthermore, Dr. Pooley notes that the annual Dana Forum fosters curiosity by having senior Dana students develop collaborative research projects on interdisciplinary topics of their choice related to the forum’s theme. Dr. Pooley has presented at the Dana Forum on the topic of media and memory and would welcome the opportunity to direct a future forum.

Now in his ninth year of teaching at Muhlenberg, Dr. Pooley continues to study life “in an iPad age” as an associate professor of media and communication. His research interests include the history of media research and the use of social media in self-expression. Dr. Pooley considers the First Lecture he gave to the Class of 2015 as one of the highlights of his teaching career, and he has recently lectured at Columbia University and in France. He is looking forward to leading a group of Muhlenberg students on a study abroad semester in Spring 2012 at Dublin City University.

## **Review of “The Wire” FYS**

by Christopher Chaky

The Wire, we have learned, is much more than a show about inner city crime. The intentions of its writers, David Simon and Edward Burns, were not simply to make an exciting drama. Rather, The Wire is intended to be a realistic critique of the American Dream. Dr. Mello has thoroughly emphasized this point, as well as many others. Through the show, he demonstrates how the impoverished inhabitants of the inner cities are left out of a post-industrial capitalist society. People enter the drug game because they have no other options, and the drug game is constantly paralleled to the legal worlds of the police, business, and politics. Other themes explored include constructs of masculinity, urban education, the consequences of the War on Drugs, critiques of capitalism, and others as well.

The ideas discussed in class come from a variety of sources. During most weeks, we watch one episode, write a short reflection about it, and discuss it in class. Additional readings, some related to The Wire, some not, provide more background and depth about the issues at hand. Important readings included articles in The Wire: Urban Decay and American Television, Cop in the Hood by Peter Moskos, an excerpt from The Human Condition by Hannah Arendt, and other articles.

The reality discussed in this class is almost entirely bleak, as the focus is mainly on the problems of our society. While many classes have left much of the class feeling depressed, I have never seen a class stimulate as much discussion as this one. Almost every hike back from Hillel, where the class is held, consists of conversation about the topic discussed in class. It sometimes takes effort to stop the themes discussed in the class from coming up during regular conversation; lighter conversation is sometimes necessary to counterbalance The Wire. Overall, I am very glad I was placed in this class. Not only have I learned about inner city life and the previously mentioned themes, but I have learned how to write more effectively. Many students in the class have remarked that a 1-2 page essay is now like nothing, and a 5-7 page paper is no longer highly intimidating. Additionally, we have learned how to think deeper about ideas, to keep looking for the bigger reasons behind an issue, and to ask the question, “So what?” This class certainly attained the goals of the FYS, to teach students to become critical thinkers and effective writers.

## **Review of “1968” FYS**

by Chris Mullen

When I learned that I would be enrolled in the “1968” Dana Scholars First Year Seminar, I thought it would be an in-depth history class. We would go over the events of the year 1968 in a way that would somehow be interesting to people in the class who wanted to be pre-med or science majors. I had nothing to complain about— history was one of my strongest subjects— and I realized that it could actually be a lot of fun.

The class, however, was hardly a history class. Dr. Pooley is an absolutely amazing teacher who made the class so much more interesting than I could have imagined. Though he would lecture to the class, he would also show us excerpts from documentaries about the 1960's, host guest speakers, and play different songs from that era. Even better, after each activity he would open the floor to discussion about the meaning to the lyrics of a song, critiques of an author's writing style, and even our impressions of a guest speaker.

In “1968”, we learned more than just the dates of the year “that shook the world.” We analyzed how the media influenced women to take action in the feminist movement; interpreted “Beatlemania's” enormous power over young girls; discovered why the Woodstock music festival, not the Altamont music festival, marked the death of the hippie movement; and discussed Nixon's popularity among the conservative American demographic whom he referred to as the “Silent Majority.”

Paired with this greater knowledge of the history of 1968 were many opportunities to practice writing skills. Dr. Pooley would review each one of our assignments and provide detailed comments on style, organization and even grammar. We were also able to receive help from the class writing tutor. Having taken this class, we are ready to take on longer papers, challenging assignments, and increased responsibilities as we move forward in our college careers and our futures.

## **Jennifer Bleznak**

by Kyra Smith

Jenny is Neuroscience major on the pre-med track from New Jersey. Her professional aspirations are that she wants to be a neurologist. Jenny is very passionate about social justice, and this is reflected by her many activities on campus. Jenny is a member of STAND (Students Taking Action Now for Darfur), which has since been combined with OXFAM to become The Social Justice Collaboration. She is also the Darfur Advocacy Liaison for Challah for Hunger. Jenny fights not only for change abroad, but for a successful campus as well. She is a tour guide, a head tutor, and the presidential assistant for career center resources. In addition to all this, she also does research on campus. She's known around campus as "the bee lady," because her research is on bumblebees. Whenever people have questions about bees (anything from environmental impact to honey), they approach Jenny. Another interesting fact about Jenny is that much of her back is made of metal, due to a spinal surgery.

Her favorite thing about Muhlenberg is the nature of the students here. "We're all driven and competitive within ourselves, but not environmentally." Smart students who want to do well, but still participate in the friendly atmosphere we have here make for a great learning environment. Jenny believes that the Dana program has had a significant positive impact on her time here. It encourages its members to get involved on campus by giving them many additional responsibilities. The program demands that its participants be the best they can be. Danas have a reputation for being distinguished, and Jenny finds that being a member of the program demands for her to be as distinguished as people expect. It's not a perfect program, however. In particular, Jenny finds that the program does not encourage enough cohesion between classes. The freshmen and the seniors meet for their Interviewer discussions, but beyond that Danas of different class years rarely interact for that purpose. As senior class Dana representative, though, Jenny has the capacity to impact all the change she's looking for.

## **Joshua Bohn**

by Andrew Trautmann

Joshua Bohn is a senior involved in the Dana Scholars Program. He is a double major in Religion Studies and Political Science. Throughout his four years at Muhlenberg College, he has had great experiences including his first year seminar and a semester-long internship in Washington, DC.

When he was a first year student, Bohn was in the “To Hell and Back” seminar with Dr. Francesca Coppa. The seminar focused on representations of Hell in literature. Bohn says that his seminar was his favorite aspect of the Dana Program because the texts that were analyzed started lively discussions. He also appreciated the variety of viewpoints from different disciplines offered by his classmates. Bohn believes that one fault of the Dana Program is the lack of opportunity during the sophomore and junior years to have a class with all the Dana Scholars.

For his Dana Scholars internship, Bohn studied in Washington, DC for a semester and interned at the Department of Justice, specifically the Office of Legislative Affairs. Although some of what he did there was confidential, Bohn met various congressmen and congressional aides. He attended lectures given by Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Diane Sawyer, and was debriefed at the Department of State regarding airline security. Bohn advocates the semester in Washington, DC as an option for studying abroad. Although not technically abroad, Bohn says the semester was “one of the most amazing experiences” of his life.

Outside of the Dana Program, Bohn is on the Academic Judicial Board. He is a member of the Alpha Phi Omega National Service Fraternity. President of the Pre-Law Society, Bohn hopes to one day become a lawyer after attending graduate school. Bohn advises all students to step outside of their comfort zones and take classes they would not normally take. In addition, Bohn encourages students to become involved on campus, but not to spread themselves out too thin.



## **Melissa Bressler**

by Anna Thiessen

Melissa Bressler is a senior Dana Scholar here at Muhlenberg College. In her time here, Melissa has dedicated herself to an English major with A Business minor. Along with her studies, she has been very busy participating in multiple extra-curricular activities such as Alpha Phi Omega, the national service fraternity, Omicron Delta Kappa, the national leadership fraternity, and Phi Sigma Sigma, a social sorority. She is also a lead writing tutor at the writing center, a member of best buddies - a community service club that works with citizens in Allentown with disabilities - and writes for an online travel blog.

Melissa has really enjoyed being a part of the Dana Scholars program. Her first experience with the program was her First Year Seminar, Representing the Age of Revolution with Dr. Cragin. This FYS focused on the French Revolution and the pivotal events leading up to it. Through this class, Melissa and her fellow Dana Scholars were challenged academically and given the opportunity to develop their writing skills. Part of the Dana program also requires Scholars to complete an Internship and Mentorship. Last summer, Melissa spent her time as a marketing intern for a small start-up company in Bethlehem, which she regards as a wonderful learning experience in which she was able to make lots of big decisions and learn autonomy in the workplace. Melissa has incorporated her mentorship experience into her senior thesis this year in which she is studying Indian women and nationalism in Indian literature. She feels that these requirements of the Dana program are really helpful in pushing Scholars out of their comfort zones to explore further their various areas of interest.

In the future, Melissa plans to spend a year teaching abroad in either Thailand or Korea and then she plans to attend graduate school for either English or Rhetoric Studies and may possibly pursue a career in law.

## **Tina Chou**

by Macauley Breault

Tina Chou is a Biology major and Studio Arts minor in the 3-4 Penn Dental program and is currently a junior. She will be moving onto the University of Pennsylvania School of Dental Medicine next fall. She came to Muhlenberg for this program with the expectations of breezing through her three years here to move onto dental school. Instead, she found herself exploring new interests and taking classes that were out of her comfort zone. Because of Muhlenberg's liberal education, Tina took a sculpture class and soon after declared a Studio Arts minor, explaining that she feels there's a connection between science and art, especially in dentistry, in that you work with your hands as a dentist and art enhances those hand skills.

Tina seemed to enjoy challenging herself during her time at Muhlenberg. She loved taking classes that gave her a "new lens" to look at the world through or changed the way she thinks. One class in particular was her Dana First Year Seminar with Dr. Rosenwasser, entitled "Alice and Beyond." The class pushed her to go beyond what she was thinking and ask the important question "so what?" Though the class was challenging, it impacted how she looked at other classes by asking "so what?" Tina felt it stimulating to be with other motivated and academically driven Dana scholars, like herself. Being surrounded by her other scholars of high caliber, she was able to recognize hidden potential in other people and acknowledge intelligence that other students had. The Dana program also gave Tina her three closest friends.

Tina completed one internship during the summer of her freshman year at a dental clinic in her home town by shadowing a dentist. During her fall semester of her junior year, she shadowed another dentist at the dental clinic at Leigh Valley Hospital. She hopes to complete her final internship in the spring by interning at HYPE, Healthy Youth Peer Education. Tina has held many leadership positions in clubs throughout the campus. These include being the co-president of the Asian Student Association, president of Biology Club, president of Cardinal Key Society and a chemistry learning assistant.

Tina had a few pieces of advice for fellow Dana underclassmen. She said to get out of your comfort zone by pursuing classes that intrigue your curiosity and explore new found interests. You may be surprised by what you like. And that who teaches the class is important, for if the professor is passionate about what they teach, that will make whatever they lecture sound interesting. Finally, Tina said to always be open to changing your mindset. Because throughout college, you will be growing and learning and thus how you think will change. And it won't just be you, it will happen to people around you too. Though Tina is sad to leave Muhlenberg a year earlier than her other friends, she will luckily have the opportunity to graduate and walk with her friends and other classmates in May of 2013. Good luck to Tina Chou at Dental School next year, Muhlenberg will miss you!

## **Meredith Colwell**

by Emma McGahan

Meredith Colwell is a senior in the Dana program and biochemistry major on the pre-dental track. During her time at Muhlenberg, Meredith has contributed a great deal to the school. She was a campus delegate and is a tour guide. Meredith also co-founded a volunteer-based group that expanded volunteer options for pre-dental students.

Through the Dana program, Meredith shadowed a dental professional at a dental clinic as her semester of mentorship. Through this experience, Meredith got to watch oral surgeries and root canals, and made connections with the office staff, who she calls an “off-campus family”. For her semester of internship, she worked with Dr. Hark where she did molecular research and various DNA modifications. Meredith even continued this internship into the next semester. According to Meredith, the internship was a great experience, and put her on the track she’s on right now.

The Dana program has shaped Meredith’s college experience by forcing her to become a sufficient self-thinker. She also believes that it helped her to meet many people that she may not have met otherwise. Without the Dana program, Meredith says she may have missed out on meeting people in different interest areas. She is still friends with people who were in her First Year Seminar. The program also helped her get involved in interesting research.

One of Meredith’s favorite things about Muhlenberg is the faculty. She especially wants to thank the biochemistry department. Meredith also got to experience many great opportunities through Muhlenberg, including a 5k in New York and attending a Presidential Inauguration.

Through the Dana program and Muhlenberg College, Meredith feels that she has been part of a community where everybody watches out for everyone else.

## **Ben Kanigel**

by Delia Guthrie

Ben Kanigel graduated in 2008 from Muhlenberg as a Dana Scholar. He double majored in math and economics. As a senior, he did his Dana Forum with Don Dale with whom he worked on portfolio theory. He presented properties of portfolios with randomly selected asset allocation. Ben says that the thing he misses most about being at Muhlenberg is the conversations he would have. Apparently after college, most people don't really just want to sit around and talk.

Since Ben graduated he has been working in West Chester, PA as an economist for Moody's. With all the problems in our economy, work has been pretty interesting for him. Ben has also done some traveling. Aside from going abroad his junior year at the 'Berg, he recently spent a month in Brazil and Argentina working consulting with a bank. It seems that a tough economy can be a struggle for a lot of college graduates, but Ben has made the most of it.

## **Louisa deButts**

By Adora Goldovsky

Louisa deButts is from Washington D.C. and currently a senior at Muhlenberg College. She is double majoring in Theater and Psychology and has had a great experience as a Dana Scholar. Louisa was given the opportunity to intern at an off Broadway Company in New York City. At Primary Stages, she spent the summer interning in the development department. She was involved with donor relations, gala planning, and membership managements. Louisa deButts' favorite part of the experience was having the opportunity to work with philanthropists heavily involved with the arts.

As a student at Muhlenberg College, Louisa had the opportunity to study abroad in Italy at the Accademia dell'Arte. She was involved in Commedia dell'Arte and took several vocal oriented classes. Louisa studied movement in Italy as well as acrobatics. While studying abroad, she lived in a beautiful and quaint villa in Arezzo. As a component of her study abroad experience she participated in a cabaret every three weeks and was able to explore her artistic freedom while working with other music and theater students at the Accademia dell'Arte.

For her second internship as a Dana Scholar, Louisa worked at the Civic Theater on 19<sup>th</sup> Street in Allentown, Pennsylvania. While working at a community theater, she learned how much work and effort is need to run such a company. The staff at the Civic Theater was fairly small, so Louisa gladly accepted the role of getting very involved. She wrote press releases for movies each week, along with compiling a list of all advertisers of the company. She spent time focusing on donor relations and worked at a ticket booth. Interning at the Civic Theater was a rewarding experience for Louisa, because she was able to experience the numerous jobs involved in running a theater company.

As a Dana Scholar, Louisa deButts was given the opportunity to explore her love for theater and have many unforgettable experiences.

## **Ian Dworkin**

by Myles Dworkin

Ian Dworkin is a testament to the success Dana students find after they finish college. As a graduated Biology major, he is currently in his second year studying medicine at Thomas Jefferson University. When asked to reflect on his years at Muhlenberg and specifically about the Dana Program, Ian immediately thought back to his first year seminar entitled “Other Bodies” taught by Dr. Jeremy Teissère. The class focused on human abnormalities and the larger question of what is “normal”. It allowed the Dana students as a whole to pursue new ideas. “I liked the engaging conversations and interesting discussion in regards to abnormalities. It was very intellectually stimulating,” recalls Ian.

Ian was also able to participate in several internships while in the Dana program. He participated in a summer internship at Jefferson Hospital where he worked with a team in the Artificial Pancreas Center to develop a product that would effectively follow glucose administrations during surgery. During the school year, Ian also did an internship at the Lehigh Valley Hospital. There he followed an OB/GYN and helped establish a new assessment to help determine woman who were more likely to have a high risk pregnancy. Working alongside the doctor, he was able to create a protocol for such pregnancy and helped with procedures involving pre-term births.

Aside from all the academic work, Ian was a writing assistant and head tutor who specialized in biology, chemistry, and Spanish. He was also the drummer in the band Victor’s Lament. A combination of punk, folk, and ska, they did a number of shows here on campus, as well as, at the Crock Rock in Allentown and a variety of venues all over the tri-state area.

As if this was not enough, Ian was also able to graduate from Muhlenberg in three and a half years. During the second semester of his senior year he moved to Puerto Rico to surf and work on his senior Dana paper. His group focused on the question of identity surrounding Puerto Rican families. He conducted a number of interviews while in Puerto Rico and compared his findings with those of his group in Allentown. Ian took full advantage of the Dana program and has continued his success on the next level.

## **Joseph Fielding**

by Ben Nassau

Joseph Fielding is an English major in the Dana program. He originally came to Muhlenberg to pursue Math and Theater, but discovered a desire for English. He enjoyed being in the Dana program as it let him meet smart kids and discuss important issues with them, which “isn’t always possible on this campus.” While he has much praise for the program, like any good Dana, he is also critical of it. He feels that it’s very focused on the First Year Seminar and the Capstone project senior year, with not much in between. It feels like after freshman year, the Danas have no “shared history”, that they’ve all specialized in their field of study. In addition, the Capstone seminar is too big he thinks – having 30 kids all trying to discuss the same topic can be difficult sometimes. That said, he liked his FYS: Representing the Age of Revolution all about the French Revolution. He thinks that the best thing about the program is “all the Dana kids want to be interested in things and want to have conversations” about difficult topics. He took that good discussion and passion for granted. Joe’s favorite dinosaur is the stegosaurus because “it doesn’t get enough credit.”

## **Amanda Gavin**

by Nicole Carusone

Amanda Gavin is a senior Dana from Newtown, PA, and amazed that it is now her turn to be the one interviewed as a senior. She is a biology major on the pre-med track, and plans to attend medical school after taking a year off. While she did not study abroad while at Muhlenberg, she hopes to spend her gap year teaching English in Vietnam on a Fulbright Scholarship. As her first experience with the Dana program, her first year seminar focused on different aspects of the French Revolution, called "Representing the Age of Revolution" and taught by Dr. Cragin. While it was challenging, she enjoyed it and notes that it helped push her to become a better writer and thinker. After this, she acquired an internship at St. Luke's hospital in Bethlehem where she was able to observe several wings of the hospital, from surgery to emergency. She was able to spend about 126 hours observing in the hospital. Currently she is working alongside Dr. Wightman on research in his molecular genetics lab, which she will be continuing next semester.

Amanda is also a Phi Mu sister, a member of Omicron Delta Kappa leadership fraternity, and works for the Academic Resource Center as a biology tutor. Aside from her work in the sciences, Amanda has a love for music. She has been playing violin since the fourth grade and is a member of Muhlenberg's Chamber Orchestra. She is a co-founder of the musical group Forte Effect, with which she plays violin as well as arranges contemporary music. While the Dana program has given her excellent opportunities to pursue, her favorite aspect of the program is, of course, the free food that is always provided. Amanda has definitely made the most of her time with the Dana program while here at Muhlenberg, and will undoubtedly continue to make the most of her experiences in the future.



## **Rebecca Glassman**

by Mel Ferrara

Over her past four years at Muhlenberg, senior Rebecca Glassman has become an exemplar of the Dana Scholar Programs mission, expanding her academic scope and actively engaging in civic thought, leadership, and action. A sociology major and dance and English double minor, Rebecca began her undergraduate career in Professor Coppa's first-year seminar, "To Hell And Back," which she described as challenging – a different type of class that really urged one to think. At the time, this course catered to her interest in English. However, over the past through years, Rebecca found that her interests in sociology and dance were much more interrelated. She explored the cultural and intellectual aspects of art and performance in many of her classes here at Muhlenberg and also had the opportunity to do so through her Dana internship. At the Lehigh Valley Arts Council, she took a hands-on approach to her studies, particularly in a program focused on comparatively on the nature of urban and suburban art programs. This also was her first time working in an office space.

Rebecca has also been very active in the campus community. As an underclassman, she was very involved in dance performance and choreography. She later became a founding member of the Feminist Collective. Additionally, she is the MDA's community service coordinator and works for the Office of Community Service – both of which, she describes, allow her to take an active role in civil engagement, which she finds integral to the Dana program.

Rebecca encourages younger Danas to take advantage of the Center for Ethics – “a direct responsibility” of these students considering its close relationship with the program. Overall, she states the Dana Program provided her with many valuable, long lasting friendships as well as a drive to become an actively engaged in the community. Though unsure of her exact plans, post-graduation she is planning to either take an internship in Denmark or to stay in the Lehigh Valley – she loves its art scene and community development – to work with nonprofit groups. Regardless, it is clear that in whatever she winds up doing, Rebecca will offer her vibrant spirit, intellect, and passion and truly make a difference.

## **Daniel Greenfield**

by Danny Pinto

Daniel Greenfield is currently a senior in the Dana program. He is from Sommerset, New Jersey and is currently completing a double major of psychology and music. Dan has been very active throughout his career as a Muhlenberg student. He focuses his time mainly in music where he is the musical director of the "Acafellas" music group here on campus. In addition, he is part of the college choir and an original member of the MTA's performance ensemble "Sonsycle". As a freshman Dan was heavily involved in theatre and performed in "Oklahoma" and the black box production of "Godspell".

In addition to his musical talents, Dan has shown exemplary citizenship and concern for his community. He has been on the community service chair of his fraternity, Phi Kappa Tau, since his sophomore year. He has conducted many community service projects. Currently, Dan is conducting psychology research focusing on Jewish Identity and trauma patterns of third generation Holocaust survivors. In addition to this research, he has received a research grant and is currently researching facial perception with Dr. Laura Edelman.

Upon asking him of his impression of his experiences throughout his college years, he stated that all of the extracurricular activities that he has been a part of were very rewarding and has helped him grow as a person and musician. He says that he has enjoyed the Dana program because it has not restricted his studies and that he has been able to study what really interests him.

After graduation Dan wants to move onto rabbinical school. He hopes to spend his time to study to become a rabbi and a cantor, someone who sings religious songs. Dan clearly has a bright future with whatever he decides to do post graduation. He has not only excelled in his studies, but has managed to stand out.

## **Leah Holleran**

by Leah Boeker

Leah Holleran is currently a senior Dana Scholar here at Muhlenberg College. I had the pleasure of interviewing her and learning that she feels she has gotten a lot out of the Dana experience so far in her years at Muhlenberg. Starting out as a freshman, Leah took a First Year Seminar entitled *To Hell and Back*, which she thoroughly enjoyed. The class was taught by Dr. Coppa, of whom Leah speaks very highly. The class predominantly studied Dante's *Inferno*, using it as a lens to observe other interpretations of hell. The class used other sources of literature to expand their analysis, such as *American Psycho*, *No Exit*, and *The Investigation*. She told me that she enjoyed the seminar very much and learned new ways of analyzing and interpreting information that she hadn't thought of before. Leah is artistically inclined, and she is a contributing member of the Muhlenberg Theater Association. Majoring in theater with a double minor in music and creative writing, Leah keeps herself busy while also expanding her musical and creative talents.

As every Dana Scholar must do, Leah has already completed an internship and is currently pursuing a mentorship. For her internship, she worked as an artistic director's intern at Civic Theater, a local, professionally directed community theater in Allentown. As for her mentorship, she is doing an independent study in the Creative Writing department at Muhlenberg. As a senior, Leah will be graduating in the Spring, and has exciting plans for after graduation! Following her love for theater, she hopes to either start auditioning for shows in New York City, or get cast in a touring company. Overall, Leah is very happy with her experience with the Dana Scholars program and her time so far at Muhlenberg. She is a great example of a well-rounded student, community server, and talented artist in the Muhlenberg Community.

## **Allison Hollows**

by Kristen Wendt

A senior Dana Scholar from Basking Ridge, NJ, Allison Hollows will graduate this spring with a double major in Media & Communication and History. So far, she's been able to balance her academic responsibilities with her extracurricular activities, such as being involved in Phi Alpha Theta and performing in the dance department's main stage productions of *Moving Stories* and *Master Choreographers*, without much difficulty. Allison anticipates that senior year will present new obstacles such as the Capstone thesis, but she is definitely up for the challenge.

Allison appreciates the new perspectives that the Dana program has afforded her over the past few years. She very much enjoyed her Dana First Year Seminar, *To Hell and Back*, and is grateful to have had internship opportunities through Dana. "It's a big learning experience just to be in the corporate environment rather than school," said Allison. Having experienced a taste of the professional world in fields such as public relations and marketing, she knows, thanks to Dana, that neither field is the one for her.

After leaving Muhlenberg, Allison plans to attend law school in order to pursue a career in intellectual property law. She advises young Danas, "Take advantage of every opportunity that Muhlenberg has to offer. These four years will fly by faster than you can imagine."

## **Renee Hopkins**

by Moriah Benjoseph

Renee Hopkins is a dance major with a double minor in French and philosophy and a senior in the Dana Scholars program. When she started here at Muhlenberg, she started taking classes that interested her in various departments in the humanities and arts. Renee loves being involved in the dance department and the opportunity it affords her to try new things, particularly in modern and improvisation dance. She is currently applying for a Fulbright research grant application and is hoping it will allow her to go back to West Africa to study art for people with disabilities as a mode of inclusion.

In her freshman year, Renee was in the FYS To Hell and Back with Dr. Coppa. In the class, they read *Inferno* (one of her favorite books!) and others on different conceptions of hell. In the first semester of her Junior year, she completed her mentorship with Dance professor Karen Dearborn, in which she studied the relationship between dance and disability, which tied in with the work she does at a summer camp for adults with disabilities. The mentorship allowed her to look at the performance of disabilities, which led her to her internship abroad in Senegal, where she worked in a pottery studio for children who are completely deaf. The non-governmental organization that ran the studio taught pottery to these children as a trade for later success. This internship also allowed her to see how NGOs work on a local level. This semester she created a mentorship that looks into art and disability, the value of disability and how it is regarded by society.

As a senior, Renee has a greater understanding of the Dana program. She says that it has helped foster her interests by creating internships and mentorship opportunities. It has allowed her to create a new idea and, if it was not for the Dana program, this would not have been possible. She is now trying to make the intersection of art and disability a “thing in the world.” One of her favorite things about the senior Dana seminar is the ability to have the connections she has made with the group. Even though they may have branched into different studies since their freshman year and not seen each other as much, it was nice to have firm base they created in their FYS returning in senior year. She enjoys seeing where everyone has gone and the successes they have had and enjoys being able to now come back together.

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## **Heather Malacaria**

by Jennifer Weeks

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Heather Malacaria is a senior in the Dana program here at Muhlenberg College. Throughout her four years here, Heather says that being a Dana has offered her some wonderful opportunities, both on and off-campus. Starting with her first-year seminar, “Representing the Age of Revolution”, taught by Dr. Cragin, Heather was able to improve her skills as a writer, as well as foster her critical thinking skills through the classes intellectual debates and discussions. Now a senior, Heather is majoring in International Studies with a concentration in Peace and Conflict Studies. She is also minoring in Religion Studies and Political Science. She hopes to one day pursue a career in security and intelligence.

As a Dana, Heather was able to participate in a semester-long internship in Washington, D.C. during her junior year. She also spent the summer after her sophomore year in Egypt. Heather says that her required internship as a Dana inspired her to go to Washington. While there, Heather spent thirty-five hours a week working at the Publications Department in the Middle East Institute. She edited articles for the Middle East Journal, and contributed to the journals chronology and annotations sections. She is very grateful for both these experiences, and that they helped prepare her for her future career.

Heather jokingly says that her favorite part of being a Dana was the “free food”. However, she recognized the true strength of the Dana program as being in the diversity of its students. Her one and only criticism of the program is that there is not more contact between Danas of other classes. Freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior Danas tend to keep to themselves, rather than reach out to each other through organized programs, creating a sense of community. Perhaps this new addition to the Dana program could be initiated by its younger members in future year. Either way, Heather was very thankful for the Dana program, which undoubtedly helped shape her four years at Muhlenberg, as well as her future pursuits, for the better.

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## **Samantha Mangel**

by Kerry McGowan

Samantha Mangel is a Neuroscience major as well as a senior in the Dana Scholars Program. Specifically, she is interested in neuropharmacology, a discipline that studies the effects of drugs on the brain and nervous system. After graduating from Muhlenberg, she hopes to pursue veterinary school and feels the veterinary practice is “an interesting way to approach medicine.” Samantha enjoys working in the laboratory. During her sophomore and junior year, she researched an “animal model of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder” with Dr. Gotthard and a fellow Dana student. In the study, lab mice were exposed to a source of trauma, in this case a dog. Samantha and her research group measured the lab rats’ responses to the trauma before and after being administered a beta blocker. Her research team presented their findings at the Society for Neuroscience convention. Samantha has worked with a variety of animals in her studies, including an internship at the Philadelphia Zoo. She has studied as a veterinary technician in a large animal intensive care unit and in a small animal practice.

Samantha is also very involved on campus as well as in the laboratory. She is a tour guide and a Head Tutor in Calculus, Biology, and Organic Chemistry. She is also a member of Omicron Delta Kappa, the prestigious leadership honors society. Although Samantha always knew she wanted to pursue a career in medicine, she appreciates the emphasis Muhlenberg places on taking a diverse range of classes. During her time at Muhlenberg, Samantha has taken advantage of this opportunity. She feels “privileged to go to a liberal arts school” and tries to fulfill her GARs by choosing classes in fields that interest her. One such interest is sociology.

Samantha’s First Year Seminar was “To Hell and Back,” taught by Dr. Coppa. Although she would not have chosen the subject material of the class, she found it thought-provoking. The class analyzed “different portrayals of Hell in literature,” including Dante’s *Inferno*, *American Psycho*, “No Exit”, and “The Investigation.” There, she befriended many of her classmates, many who she has remained close with throughout her four years at Muhlenberg. Although she does not know all of the students from the other First Year Seminar, she has “created her own community” with members of the Dana Scholars Program. Now as part of the senior year research forum, she and two other Dana students plan to research memories associated with childbirth. In the spring semester, she and her research partners hope to analyze the effects of the changing physiology of the body and pain memories. Samantha enjoys many aspects of Dana Scholars Program, especially the program’s ability to link students with faculty members to examine a topic that they are extremely interested in. Samantha’s curiosity and determination make her an exemplary Dana scholar and will serve her well in her graduate studies.

## **Jonathan Morgan**

by Kevin Mitchell

I recently spoke with Jonathan Morgan about his experiences as a Dana Scholar over the last four years. As a philosophy major, he appreciates the program's motivational pushes to pursue his interests. Scholars must deeply explore their academic field due to mentorship requirements, so Jonathan created two independent study programs as a junior: The first discussed virtue ethics and the second concerned set theory. The program's flexibility in the mentorships' final products allowed him to write both a thirty page paper and an exam on philosophy. As a senior, he and the other Dana Scholars take part in a Capstone Experience, where professors and guests speak on the Center for Ethics theme before students divide into groups and complete a final project. Though personally frustrated with the Capstone project's simultaneous mandates of open-endedness and interdisciplinary study, he still appreciates the Dana Program as a whole for having pushed him to explore philosophy to a greater extent than any other program at the College.



## **Daina Nanchanatt**

by John Krutsick

Daina the DANA! Daina is a senior in the Class of 2012 and a DANA scholar. She describes herself in a sentence by saying, "I am a motivated person who likes to stand up for what I believe in, but I will also try to incorporate other people's thoughts and opinions in my actions". She attributes this to how Muhlenberg has helped her grow. Daina says that Muhlenberg has helped her become open-minded despite her strong-mindedness. Graduating with a degree in Biology and a minor in Public Health this coming spring, she hopes to attend medical school next year. She feels the biology degree will give her all the foundations she will need to do well in medical school. In addition, Daina feels by being a Public Health minor she was able to address economic and political issues surrounding the health care field and relation to the population. This applies to her DANA internship. For her internship, she worked at a local harvest food bank and conducted a study to show the demographic of people that came to the food bank and examined their social situations; some faced economic hardships, some came down with sickness, others came for various reasons. Also for her internship, she did advocacy work for the food bank in hopes to increase funding since there has been a 51% increase in people in the past 3 years who have come to the food bank. This is, as Daina said, was her most rewarding experience at Muhlenberg since she feels this study could impact Lehigh Valley by more funding being directed to the food bank.

Her DANA mentorship, however, took place in a hospital in Newark, NJ. Here she studied research on pediatric oncology and how survival rates have significantly increased in years past. Another part of her mentorship analyzed the survival rates of pediatric patients in urban areas compared to rural areas. Yet, being a student at Muhlenberg, is not all about work! Her best memories of being at Muhlenberg include relaxing and chilling with friends in lounges and common areas at 2AM in the morning. Because of this, the number one aspect that will be missed when leaving our "bubble" will be all of her friends. Daina said that her favorite activity to do at Muhlenberg was to catch-up with sleep. Yet, here at Muhlenberg, she always desired Indian Rice, the home-cooked meal she always missed at college. To end, Daina said that her favorite candy was Reese's Cups and this applied to her personality because it has different layers just like her personality, but in the end, they combine to make a perfect mix.

## **Anvi Patel**

by Michael Kho

Anvi Patel, currently a senior Dana Scholar from Piscataway, New Jersey, has definitely made the best use of her time in Muhlenberg. Currently in the pre-med track with a major in neuroscience and a minor in public health, she is in the process of applying to medical school. Not only is she good in class, but within her years at Muhlenberg, she has proven to be a key member in the Muhlenberg community. Being the president of her sorority, Theta Nu Xi, and the co-president of the Asian Students Association, ASA, she has made her presence known on campus.

Anvi is extremely hard-working, not only on campus, but also around the neighborhood. Anvi's college record is loaded with different community services and internships which take place all over Allentown. Anvi has been involved in the Second Harvest Food Bank in surveying 500 people to research the hunger and poverty present in the community. She has also been involved in Community Bikeworks which helps kids around Muhlenberg to restructure their free time for good uses as well as strengthen the bond between Muhlenberg and the outside community. Also, Anvi has been doing at least four hours of community service a week since freshman year which in itself is an extraordinary achievement.

In questioning about her time in Muhlenberg, she said that she has no regrets. With Muhlenberg being such a liberal arts college, she was able to study not only her major but also was able to take classes like Christian Traditions, Philosophy East and West, Governments of East Asia, and even took a sculpting class. She also admired the teaching staff and the closeness of the student faculty as well as the amazing community service center. Also, when asked about her thoughts about the Dana program, the thing that she greatly appreciated was the internship that was required for the class. Because of this requirement, she started looking freshman year, and was able to find many other things to do. Through all her experiences, she learned that medicine was not only about illnesses and cures but also about the people and the community, which ultimately led to her public health minor.

Being born in Gujarat, India and immigrating to the United States, Anvi considers herself not as an Indian-American, but as an Indian. And at a Muhlenberg where the diversity is more heard than seen, Anvi had her own set of challenges. With the lack of Asian population, she felt the need to be the Asian voice. Throughout her years at Muhlenberg, she definitely gave her scream. Being an Asian myself, I am extremely grateful for her spreading diversity on campus and making our presence known. Because of her, I can be proud to be an Asian on this campus. Congratulations Anvi and thank you for everything you've done on campus! Good Luck with Med-school!

## **Lisa Peterson**

by Shauna Kehoe

Lisa Peterson is a Neuroscience and Spanish double major from Brookfield, Connecticut. Her Dana freshman seminar, a literature-based class entitled “To Hell and Back”, studied Dante’s Inferno. During her junior year, Lisa studied abroad for a semester in Seville, Spain. She regards her time abroad as an amazing and life-changing growing experience, and enjoyed her time there so much she considered staying a full year. Lisa participated in an internship with Boehringer-Ingelheim pharmaceutical company and worked in their immunology and inflammation department researching skin disease. For her mentorship, Lisa worked in the Psychology department with Dr. Edelman conducting research on music and emotions. Lisa is a member of the varsity lacrosse team and a singer in the college choir. In addition, she is a member of the Senior Class Connections campaign as well as Student Athlete Mentors. She is also a tutor in Spanish and psychology.

This year’s Center for Ethics theme, Memory and Forgetting, is one which Lisa loves and finds incredibly interesting. The research project she is currently working on ties into this theme of memory and its reliability. Lisa particularly enjoyed the community aspect here at Muhlenberg, describing it as a place where you feel like you belong. Next year, Lisa would like to go back to Spain or to South America to teach English and participate in Teach For America, which educates people in low-income areas. Other future plans include attending graduate school for neuroscience and doing research in this field. But Lisa is not ready to settle into one place just yet. She plans to travel as much as possible and see the world.

## **Brendan Phelan**

by Jeremy Kaplan

Brendan Phelan is a senior Dana Scholar. He is going to graduate as a chemistry major next spring. He is currently a learning assistant for introductory chemistry, the president of Omicron Delta Kappa, and works with Dr. Keane on Dr. Keane's research. One of Brendan's favorite things about Muhlenberg is the feeling of community at this school and that the professors are passionate about the subjects they teach and are willing to work closely with their students. Being a DANA has opened opportunities for him that he otherwise wouldn't have had. He was able to help Dr. Keane with his research and this helped Brendan learn correct lab procedures and techniques, helped him gain confidence in his work to be able to work independently in lab, and helped him find a career path that he liked. He feels that his confidence in his ability to work independently will help him succeed in his future career. Brendan plans to go to graduate school after graduating from Muhlenberg, get a Ph.D. in chemistry and work as an industrial chemist.

## **Stephanie Plumeri**

by Ellen Herschel

Stephanie Plumeri is from Ocean Township, New Jersey and will be graduating in May with a double major in Economics and Media and Communication. Stephanie has utilized the Dana program to her full potential, having engaged in numerous internships and research projects during her four years, including her current job as a marketing intern at Sodexo. In her work she thoroughly enjoys the challenge of designing new web and graphic designs. She has left her mark on the Muhlenberg campus by designing the menus in the General's Quarters and the Wood Dining Commons. She also designed the "take a chance" monopoly folders used during freshman orientation this year.

In the spring Stephanie will be interviewing for jobs in the tech industry and hopes to work for IBM. Stephanie believes that she learned the most not by fretting about her GPA, but by getting out, meeting people, and making connections. By staying open to new possibilities and not letting her academic performance define her, Stephanie has flourished in her field and made connections that are invaluable to her. Her decision to follow the path of what she truly loves has made her happy and successful. Best of luck as you finish here at Muhlenberg and venture off into the world!

## **Sara Romanello**

by Christopher Greco

Sara Romanello is a senior Dana Scholar at Muhlenberg College. From her studies as an English major with a Women's Study minor, to her extracurricular activities such as being a writing tutor and a member of the feminist collective, it is safe to say that she has truly delved deep into her field of study—a trait common among Dana Scholars. She still remembers her First Year Writing Seminar, *Age of Revolutions*, taught by Professor Cragin, and how intense and heated debates would become in there. Despite these debates, Sara says she still remains good friends with many of her fellow Dana's. True to her major, Sara's favorite class while here at Muhlenberg was *Nature of Narratives*, a writing intensive course for her major that she was initially hesitant about, but came to absolutely love.

When asked what she loved most about the Dana program, she said that the lectures sponsored by the Center for Ethics were extremely interesting, especially so during her senior year. It was during this time while completing the Dana forum that she found herself particularly motivated to listen to lectures from various academic fields about the topic of memory and forgetting. It is this interdisciplinary approach to learning that makes the Dana program so remarkable. The program allows outside interests to pervade everyday classes.

After graduation, Sara looks to pass on her love and enthusiasm for learning on to seventh and eighth grade students at Brownsville Collegiate Charter School in Brooklyn, New York, as part of a two year commitment to Teach For America. Teach For America is an organization that works in poor and urban areas to ensure that everyone gets the opportunity to have an excellent education—a very admirable pursuit.

Sara leaves Muhlenberg College with these words for incoming and current Dana Scholars. "Be sure to put time and effort into finding an internship you will find rewarding. There's nothing worse than having an obligation you find boring or un-enjoyable on top of all your school work!" I am confident that Sara will use the skills and lessons learned here as a Dana Scholar to make a powerful impact both at her future school, and in whatever endeavors that follow.

## **Brittany Sherman**

by Rachel Gonsenhauser

Brittany Sherman is a senior Dana Scholar who will graduate this spring with a major in Biology. After graduation, Brittany plans to attend Thomas Jefferson University where she will be participating in their Physical Therapy program, a co-op program that she was accepted to upon applying to Muhlenberg. In her time at Muhlenberg, Brittany has held an internship at Good Shepherd Rehabilitation in Center City Allentown where she has been able to shadow a physical therapist, help with patients, and examine different areas of physical therapy. Brittany also completed a mentorship under Dr. Gotthard, studying the relationship of memory and the development of posttraumatic stress disorder in rats. While at Muhlenberg, she has been a peer tutor in both Biology and Physics, has worked in the language center, and been an active member of HART, an animal rights club that raises money for shelters in the Allentown area.

Brittany's most valuable memories at Muhlenberg stem from her relationships with faculty. She appreciates how much she feels valued in Muhlenberg's academic and research community, and, of course, the incredible friends she has made. She says that the Dana Scholars program in particular has encouraged her to become involved in research and internship opportunities. She also comments on the cohesive nature of the program, which has allowed her to create strong bonds with a group of close friends that she met in her First Year Seminar and with whom she is now currently completing her Senior Capstone Project.

## **Jamie Sklar**

by Natalie Evans

Jamie Sklar has taken full advantage of her liberal arts education and will graduate with a dual Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science degree. During her time at Muhlenberg, she has worked towards both a major in biology and a major in studio art. Jamie has found that her choice to pursue a double major has meant that she has not had to abandon either of her distinct interests. Moreover, she has found that her two majors balance each other perfectly because the creative outlet that her art major provides offsets the rigorous coursework of her biology major. After Muhlenberg, Jamie plans to attend medical school. She is currently applying to schools and has already been accepted into the School of Medicine at the University of Buffalo.

Jamie's busy schedule has meant that she was never able to study abroad, however, it has not stopped her from making an impact on Muhlenberg's campus. She has served as secretary for the Asian Students Association, worked for the English and Music department, worked as a peer tutor, and been active in the Pre-Health Association. During her sophomore year, Jamie also launched an initiative to bring back the salsa-dancing club.

Jamie has completed two internships during her time at Muhlenberg. Her first was at a family medical practice. This experience allowed her to shadow both medical professionals and administrative professionals, which provided valuable insight into the workings of a hospital. Her second internship took place at the Northport VA Medical Center where she worked as an administrative assistant. Jamie plans to return to Northport during the Spring 2012 semester to conduct research on vaso active intestinal peptides and their connection to pulmonary hypertension.

Jamie says that the best part of being involved in the Dana program was getting to meet plenty of innovative and hardworking people. She counts her time spent working with her peers and connecting with her professors as one of her most valuable experiences at Muhlenberg. Jamie certainly made tremendous use of all the opportunities presented to her while at Muhlenberg. She advises current Danas to take full advantage of all the options and opportunities presented to them.



## **Kevin Tomasura**

by Ryan Gross

I had the pleasure of interviewing Kevin Tomasura, a senior Dana Scholar who is completing a film major and creative writing minor. He embraced the liberal arts and utilized this academic facet as a medium to explore his passion, a piece of advice he recommends to all liberal arts college newcomers.

Kevin enjoyed the Dana Scholars Program, for it allowed him to communicate with a diverse group of intellectuals. Specifically, his First Year Seminar fostered a discussion-based environment, where students could openly share their ideas and thrive together. Kevin took part in the FYS entitled “To Hell and Back” with Dr. Coppa. His class studied Dante’s *Inferno* utilizing a close-analysis method of reading. He exclaims how he could leave each class and confidently comprehend the subject material, describing the true feeling of success in a course. The students also analyzed other literature while applying various adaptations of hell, creating an even more thought provoking atmosphere.

During the summer of 2011, Kevin had an internship at International House Philadelphia, a renowned film space. He took part in making trailers, advertising, and working on events. Kevin added how “relevant and awesome” this experience was, and I can see why—I want to become a film major just having heard about it!

Kevin also had a unique mentorship experience with Dr. Coppa. They researched fan culture and remix art. The final project involved making innovative remixes by taking two sources, decontextualizing them, and meshing them together to create an original work of art. Kevin plans to maintain his enthusiastic and intellectual mindset in order to tackle the next stages of his life.

## **Elena Voonasis**

by Tess Dul

Elena Voonasis, a double major in Economics and Spanish from Fairfield, Connecticut, has been very successful in her many ventures as a Muhlenberg student. Her interests include volunteer work for the Caring Place Clinic, Pathways, a local organization to provide care to the impoverished, and VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance), which reflects her interest in economics. She is a tour guide on campus as well as a tutor for the Academic Resource Center.

She started off her Muhlenberg years with Dr. Coppa's first year seminar entitled, "To Hell and Back." "It was a great class and beyond just challenging me academically it was in that FYS where I met many of my close friends whom I still hang out with to this day," says Elena. She reminisces about the class' immediate sense of community and continues to work with her fellow Danas on their final project in correlation with the Center for Ethics theme of "Memory and Forgetting."

Elena chose to partake in two internships as part of her Dana scholar requirements. In New York City, she worked in retail for fashion designer Michael Kors. Her other internship was with the local AEDC, Allentown Economic Development Corporation, developing a co-working space for Latino entrepreneurs. She studied abroad at the University of Maastricht in the Netherlands during the fall semester of her junior year, focusing on Economics and International Business. Over the summer of 2011, Elena completed an internship with GE Appliances in Louisville, KY, which has successfully led to a job in their Financial Management Program after graduation this spring. As a student who excels in multiple academic and extracurricular programs, Elena truly reflects the spirit of the Dana program and the spirit of Muhlenberg College.

## **Joseph Armenti**

by Michael Chase

Joseph Armenti graduated Muhlenberg in 2010 and is currently attending Seton Hall University's School of Law. While at Muhlenberg, he pursued degrees in both English and Political Science. Joe began his Muhlenberg experience in the First Year Seminar "Boundaries and Belongings" and served as a Dana Representative during his freshman year. Joe immediately loved Muhlenberg, and thought it was "a small school with big opportunities." He especially loved many speakers that visited campus, including Bill Clinton and prominent prosecutor Richard Ben-Veniste.

Joe took advantage of several internships as he developed his passion for law. During one summer, he interned at the law firm Paul Alongi and Associates. He was integrally involved in operations as he prepared interrogatories, motions, and briefs. In his Junior Year, he interned with New Jersey State Senator Kevin O'Toole and later United States Congressman Charles W. Dent. These two internships provided invaluable insight into both the legislative and legal systems. During his senior year, he participated in one of the most important parts of the Dana program: the Senior Capstone. With the help of three other students, he created a project on "city-space" and presented a paper on a tri-level analysis of different issues operating in Mumbai. He also wrote and defended his Political Science Honors Thesis, in which he explored Russia's energy sector.

Although he never had time to study abroad, Joe was extensively involved on campus. For three consecutive years, he served as Class President and Representative. While President, Joe chaired weekly meetings and helped revise Student Government policies and bylaws. Joe was also the Founder and President of the Cystic Fibrosis on Campus club and a member of the Cardinal Key Society.

Joe definitely appreciated his experience as a Dana Scholar. During his First Year Seminar, he learned the importance of "intelligent writing." He learned this skill quickly, and has since found it helpful, if not required, in nearly every aspect of his life. Joe really enjoyed every aspect of the Dana program and believed it greatly enriched his Muhlenberg experience.

## **Nicole Rhodes**

by Kelly Cann

Nicole Rhodes is a Dana alumna from the Muhlenberg Class of 2008. During her years at Muhlenberg she was a double major in Political Science and Media and Communications. She was also very involved in extracurricular activities on campus as an admissions tour guide, member of Cardinal Key Society, and a Varsity field hockey player. When she graduated from Muhlenberg, she was looking for a job that would allow her to combine her interests in media and politics. First, she took an unpaid internship in Senator Bob Casey's office on Capitol Hill working in the press office. That internship became a stepping stone for her to a paid staff assistant position in that same office. However, this job was more secretarial work and she later decided that she wanted to get a job that would allow her to be more involved with the press office again. She found this balance by taking an entry level press assistant job in Bob Casey's office for one year writing press releases and working with the same group of people she had her internship with. At this point, her experience on Capitol Hill seemed to have come full circle and she decided that she wanted a change from DC. This job search brought her back to Pennsylvania. She found exactly what she was looking for at Gettysburg College as the Assistant Director of Communications and Marketing. This job allows her to do public relations and marketing for the Gettysburg through their website. She works to promote distinctive programs at the college and write student and alumni profiles. She has been in this position for just over a year and loves it.

Nicole spoke highly of the Dana program at the opportunities it offered her during her time at Muhlenberg and beyond. She described the program as "the epitome of the liberal arts mission". As a Dana, she learned how to be a good leader as well as an active citizen, and she gained real world experience. Her junior year she chose to take her Dana internship in Washington, DC. Had she not had this experience, she may not have thought to take an internship there after college. She also said the Dana program allowed her to build long term friends with the same values, but diverse interests whom she still keeps in touch with today. Nicole enjoyed her time at Muhlenberg in the Dana program and was more than prepared for the next step, but still loves to come back to visit the family she formed at Muhlenberg.

**Kate Christein**  
by John Bennett

In 2008, Kate Christein graduated from Muhlenberg, and she hasn't left since. As the assistant director of the college's Writing Center, Kate oversees the Writing Tutor and Writing Assistant programs in addition to the tutor application and selection process. When I asked Kate if being a Dana scholar helped her acquire the skills she needed for this position, she said she felt that the focus the Dana program placed on interconnectedness and multi-discipline approaches to issues (her FYS, "Laughing to Death," taught by Dr. Rosenwaser was largely held in conjunction with Dr. Bolick's "Take Me Out to the Ballgame" FYS) overlapped from her career as a Muhlenberg student to a Muhlenberg employee. But for Kate, being a Dana meant more than just an acquisition of knowledge in different fields. Kate feels that her relationships with other Danas went "beyond the FYS" and that the scholars had collectively established a "sense of community." Kate even remains close with a friend with whom she collaborated on a senior-year project. Over the years, Kate feels that the program has changed for the better. She feels that the final project senior year has grown to cater to one's field of study, rather than the specific topical seminar and project the program used to require of its students. Based on my discussion with Kate, I can safely say her eloquent and thoughtful nature, keen enough to recognize not only a significance of the Dana program but also keen enough recognize ways in which it can be and has improved, embodies what it means to be a Dana Scholar.