

SPRING 2008

Saint Benedict's Saint John's

MAGAZINE

LONDON



HONG KONG

UGANDA

GLOBAL INSPIRATION



IRAQ
AUSTRALIA



MINNESOTA
LOS ANGELES

COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict



Saint John's
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Finding Inspiration

Rarely do Westerners associate Africa with images of vibrant flowers or joyous young children. Megan Peterson '07 has captured such imagery as a Peace Corps volunteer in southwestern Uganda. As a peace studies major, she visited Africa twice, on a CSB/SJU May term to East Africa and on a CSB/SJU semester abroad in South



Africa. Now she works on development projects in economic and women's empowerment, and she finds inspiration in the beauty she encounters. Her host mother honored her with an African name, Kobusingye (koh-bu-sin-jay), which means "peacemaker." Visit her blog at <http://megan-in-africa.blogspot.com/>.

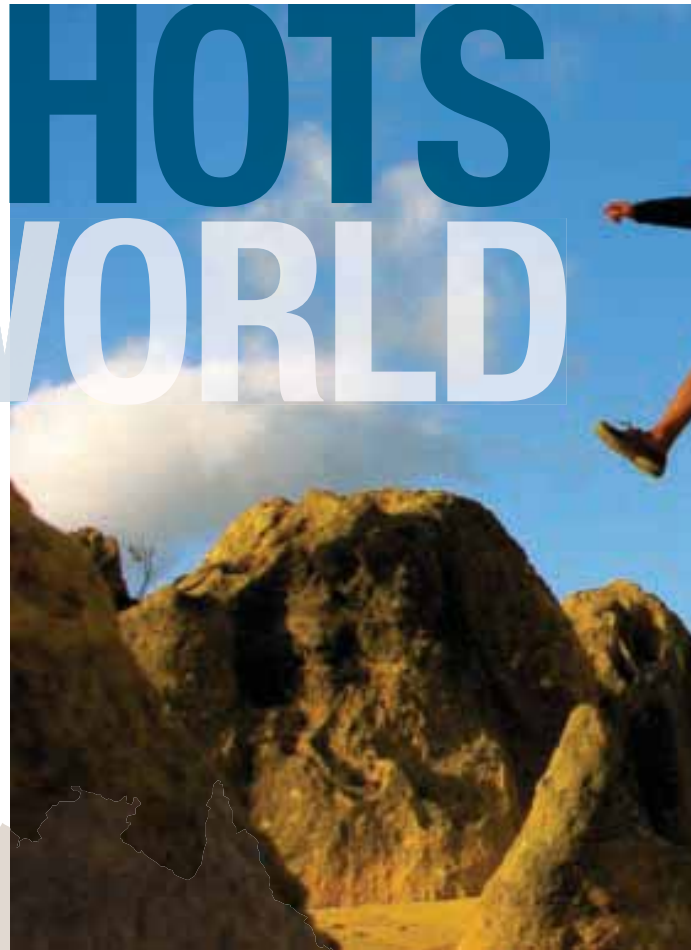


U G A N D A

student SNAPSHOTS from around the WORLD

Intercultural learning and international study are top priorities at CSB/SJU, which ranks No. 1 nationally among baccalaureate institutions in the number of students who take part in semester-long study abroad programs. The ranking is compiled in the annual report, *Open Doors 2007*, published by the Institute of International Education. The colleges' 16 study abroad programs are led by their faculty, very unusual among baccalaureate colleges. For the past four years, Saint Benedict and Saint John's have been among the top four undergraduate liberal arts colleges nationally in the number of students participating in international study programs.

CSB and SJU students capture their study abroad experiences in imaginative ways.



Nambung National Park, Western Australia

Spring 2007

Photo Name: Pinnacles

Playing around at "The Pinnacles," some amazing limestone formations north of Perth by a few hours.

Student in Photo: Mike Busse

Photo by Nate Ptacek



Piccadilly Circus, London

Fall 2007

Photo Name: Don't Blink

This was taken my first week in London while I was exploring around Piccadilly Circus. I wanted to illustrate the fast pace of this city, while at the same time retaining the classic feeling one gets while in London.

Students in Photo: Danny Hansen, Mike Busse, Jake Hvidston

Photo by Alexander Johnson



Students Put Benedictine Value of Community to Work

By Emily Bina '11

Last fall, students from the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University put a new spin on the Benedictine value of community. They volunteered to help build a Habitat for Humanity house in St. Joseph, Minn.

For SJU senior Skylar Hammel, who volunteered more times than any other student, it was about more than just the construction.

"I kept going back, because it was something that I enjoyed doing. I got to know many of the people, and they started to depend on me," Hammel said. "It was active, enjoyable and very rewarding."

The students of Organizational Communication 367 — a class which focuses on organization and service learning — also worked on the promotion and building of the house.

The class, taught by assistant professor of communication Karyl Daughters, was subdivided into three groups: one focused on construction; one focused on volunteer recognition; and one promoted events and attended city board meetings. For CSB junior Maria Melcher — part of the promotional group — the class was life-changing.

"Service learning is such a good experience, and it is so applicable," Melcher said. "You learn it, then you go do it."

And the students of CSB and SJU definitely went out and did it.

The ground-breaking ceremony took place on Oct. 26, 2007. By the first snowfall, the house was roofed and covered. On some days, nearly 100 CSB and SJU students volunteered to help build.

Dianne Johnstone, CSB/SJU service learning/social work office coordinator, believes the Benedictine values that are instilled in the students inspire them to serve.

"I think both campuses foster an attitude that relates to helping others," Johnstone said. "We do a good job of showing our students how important it is to think about others through service."

It started as a pile of lumber and a few volunteers, but soon this house will be a home to a single mother and her two children, thanks in large part to the hardworking and passionate students of CSB and SJU.

"CSB and SJU helped me volunteer, because they brought the opportunity to me," Hammel said. "They sent me an e-mail, and all I had to do was say yes."



Swaziland, South Africa

Spring 2007

Photo Name: Gone Rural

Over the spring holiday I traveled to Swaziland and we happened upon a group of Swazi women hand weaving baskets as part of "Gone Rural," a woman-initiated and run economic empowerment project. We stopped and spoke with the women as they taught us how to weave baskets.

Student in Photo: Catherine Cuddy

Photo by Erik Gamratt

Students

From Iraqi Battleground And Southern California Find Their Way to CSB/SJU

Iraqi Student Leaves Violence Behind

By Katherine Harlander-Locke '08

Before coming to SJU last fall, first-year student Nibras Putres was a walking target in Baghdad, Iraq.

As an interpreter for L-3 Communications, an American company that contracts interpreters for the U.S. Army, Putres was at a higher risk than most Iraqi citizens.

"If they (insurgents) knew I was an interpreter, they would have killed me," he said.

Putres, which is Arabic for Peter, also is an Arab Christian – a dangerous identity in Iraq.

"You learned to avoid crowded places areas such as marketplaces, or taking public buses, because they are an easy target," Putres said. "Death in Iraq has become a very normal thing."

By chance, his job as an interpreter eventually led him to SJU. Sgt. Nathan Green of the U.S. Army recommended the school to him. He applied, and Roger Young, long-time CSB/SJU director of international admission, began the process of helping him leave Iraq to study at SJU.

"I almost dismissed his interest in the very beginning because I did not think he had a chance," Young said.

After hearing of his acceptance to SJU, Putres left Iraq to live with his brother in Damascus, Syria, while awaiting a U.S. student visa. There, he was interviewed by members of the U.S. Embassy. Then, he waited for three months.

"It was hard having to wait to find out if I would get my visa," he said.

On July 24, Putres left Syria and arrived in Michigan, where he spent a month visiting a brother before starting at SJU in late August.

"We are all so pleased that Nibras is a student at CSB and SJU," Young said. "It is certainly one of the most interesting applications I have worked on all these years."

Putres is a computer science major and hopes to continue his education at the University of Minnesota to pursue a graduate degree in computer engineering. He vows not to return home until the violence has stopped.



IRAQ

BAGHDAD



(Back, left to right) Tiffany DeLeon, Antonio Nava Jr., Mayra Aguilera. (Front, left to right) Daisy Nevarez, Ashley Zartner, Yesenia Murillo, Ana Nunez, Tony Reveles, Jacqueline Murillo, Yasmay Hernandez, Diana Blanco.

Campus Visits Make the Difference

By Eric Mosley '10

The average college student in the U.S. attends school within 500 miles of home. At CSB and SJU, 11 students from Bell High School in Los Angeles are not your average college students. More like them may be on the way, thanks to Tony Reveles.

Reveles, director of college and financial aid counseling at Bell High School, became an advocate of CSB/SJU after meeting and befriending CSB/SJU director of admission Matt Beirne four years ago at a national conference. Since then, he has encouraged college-bound students to consider the two institutions.

Reveles believes students can be more engaged in learning at CSB/SJU because of the smaller class sizes. He also believes that CSB/SJU prepares students for life in a more diverse world, telling his students, "A year from now, you will see the world in a different way."

SJU junior Antonio Nava Jr. was one of the first two students to arrive in Minnesota from Bell. Initially, he was uncomfortable with the idea of going to school half a continent away from home. A visit to the campuses changed that.

"When I first came to SJU, I noticed a difference from other schools in the area where I am from. I noticed that there is a peculiar bond and kindness between the people here at CSB/SJU," he said.

CSB sophomore Tiffany DeLeon also was unsure about coming to Minnesota.

"I'll apply, but there's no way I'm going to Minnesota," DeLeon recalled telling Reveles. She, too, enjoyed the feeling she got when she first visited the campuses.

Despite the inevitable homesickness, DeLeon and the rest of the Bell graduates have been generally happy with their stay.

Reveles and Beirne hope to continue their work with other high school counselors in the Los Angeles Unified School District (LAUSD) to attract more students to CSB and SJU.

"It has taken me almost five years to develop this relationship with Tony and Bell High School, but it has been one of the most gratifying experiences in my career," Beirne said.

CALIFORNIA

LOS ANGELES

A Minnesota Puzzler

Professor Pieces Stories Together
in New State History Book





*Twenty-seven years ago, a rookie professor fresh from graduate school walked into her first CSB/SJU classroom and read from her notes, “Hello. My name is Annette Atkins.” Among the 105 students that day was another rookie, Jon McGee ’84, attending his first college class, U.S. history to 1865. He later took two additional classes with Atkins. Now a distinguished professor of history and division head of humanities at CSB/SJU, Atkins no longer needs notes to remember her name. Recently, she sat down with McGee, now CSB/SJU vice president for enrollment, institutional planning and public affairs, for a wide-ranging conversation about her profession and her newest book, *Creating Minnesota: A History from the Inside Out* (Minnesota Historical Society Press).*

Archival photos courtesy *Minnesota Historical Society Press*
Interview photos: Cory Ryan



McGee: What is different today about students than in 1980?

Atkins: Students are the same. We have nice, considerate students. I'm not sure how much they have changed and how much I have changed. I was timid then about what I knew.

McGee: In some ways you were like the students.

Atkins: Yes. I didn't know what they needed to know. Now, I am a lot more confident. Also, students then didn't know so much what they thought they should know. It's different now because of the History Channel, and our oddly increased attention to history.

McGee: That is sort of the Ken Burns effect?

Atkins: Exactly. They have a much clearer sense of what history is before they come to me.

McGee: Do you think they're being taught better?

Atkins: Yes, of course. Students are being taught better by a whole different generation of teachers, many of whom we have taught. Part of what we try to teach in our department is history as a way of thinking rather than as a body of information.

McGee: What I love about your book is that it is constructed history rather than reported history. The stories are all told through the lenses of ordinary people rather than through the prism of events. Is this our approach to history in the department?

Atkins: History is taught as a way of knowing. It's not about received knowledge. It's about taking information and giving it meaning and making sense out of it.

McGee: Do you find that students then resonate with that more fully and reflect on their own sense of and place in history? Any of these chapters could be about them.

Atkins: That does not come naturally for them. This semester I am teaching Minnesota history. For some students it is hard because I do not teach events chronologically. Many would like to have a clearer set of notes and information for when they teach.

McGee: Aside from the chronology of facts, there also are the judgments that you apply to history, yet you are not overly judgmental. Are the students here casting judgment about history as well as learning what happened?

Atkins: They are casting judgments before they get to the what happened, as they have learned a set of values — and it is a set of values that I believe in, care about and uphold and teach: people need to be treated better; we need to be more aware of people's rights and more respectful.

There is a temptation, however, to judge the past with the benefit of hindsight.

For a long time, I have been interested in Mary Carpenter. In 1873, she lived outside Marshall, Minn., on contested territory — land that was taken from the Indians. Mary did not take the land from the Indians. She and her husband George bought the land fair and square, according to the rules as they knew them. They almost couldn't have known that they shouldn't have done that. That is not to say that these whites were entitled to the land, but that it is complicated. What were the options?

McGee: In the beginning of the book, you said that people often misjudge their

time as the most important, as if nothing else of significance preceded it. When we look back, the temptation is to say that it was all inevitable and OK; whereas, people of the time, like Mary Carpenter, had choices to make, hard choices, but didn't know or understand what the consequences would be.

That's an accusatory line of history and



historians. How do you respond to that?

Atkins: Any time historians make things look simple we have done an injustice both to them and to us. Essentially my task is to go back and wrinkle the past — it's like taking a piece of paper and crumpling it up rather than smoothing it out. People do not like to have it crumpled up. They want us to serve up a nice smooth linear line. Too often we teach history as if we

are facing forward in time; when, in fact, people live in their time/space backwards. I know what is going to happen. I can see the straight line from there to here. They do not know what is going to happen.

Students can find it frustrating because I don't give them answers. Their current assignment, for example, is to pick a topic and find five documents. They can't find



what five people have written about the topic; they have to find five primary documents. It is like trying to do a research paper backwards. They have to start with those five things. Based only on those five things, they have to discern how to tell the story. Then they compare or contrast their views with what other people have said about the topic.

So, for example, one student is doing

F. Scott Fitzgerald. He used a photograph of Fitzgerald, another photograph of Fitzgerald and his wife Zelda, a short story of Fitzgerald, a short story from *The New York Times* about Fitzgerald and a letter that Fitzgerald wrote to his publisher.

These five things alone were able to ruffle his notion of Fitzgerald as a kind of mythic 1920s person. Fitzgerald was a depressed guy who was anxious about status and very concerned about public appearances. These various items gave the student a different entry point for understanding Fitzgerald.

McGee: Isn't that de-mythologizing history, in the sense that you have the myth of Fitzgerald versus the reality of Fitzgerald? The personal stories in your book were not all epic or heroic; a lot of it was sad, pathetic, horrible. In two of your stories, you enter the family at one point and you leave at another point. Neither is a complete story, and yet you learn a lot about them. How do students deal with this? It's discomforting because it's incomplete.

Atkins: You don't know all of it; but you never know all of it, which is the lesson. All of the stories are incomplete. Even after you tell the whole story, there are still more stories of that story to tell.

Filmmakers use a technique called synecdoche, where you use a detail to represent the whole. In film, you might see just the cracked headlight, instead of a car rolling down the hill, blowing up and bodies strewn everywhere. I am trying to do a cracked headlight version of history. I am trying to take the detail that isn't just about the cracked headlight to reveal the larger story.

McGee: You have to use your imagination. As I read your book, it was easy to

imagine what life was like, because the characters are regular, normal people. It's one thing to know a fact, to recite something, but another to be imaginative.

Atkins: Imagination is the most important skill for an historian to have. If there is a door between the present and the past, it's a door that can only be opened through imagination. You need documents and information, but information keeps you on this side of the door. Imagination is what turns the handle and invites you to the other part to make sense.

McGee: How did you find these stories?

Atkins: I was in the British Library in London reading the Minnesota historical collections published by the Minnesota Historical Society for about 20 years beginning in the 20th century. Most are autobiographical pieces or minutes of the territorial pioneers and are mostly primary documents and personal remembrances.

This guy, Scott Campbell, kept walking across the landscape. I didn't pay much attention for a long time, because I didn't know who he was or anything about him. He didn't write anything or leave records, but he started showing up everywhere. He is a figure in the missionaries' biographies. When the Army men at Fort Snelling wanted to flirt with the Indian women, and needed some Dakota language, Scott Campbell shows up as one of their teachers, drinking and hanging out with them, teaching them the words that they needed to use. Henry Sibley mentions him; and Lawrence Taliaferro, who is the Indian agent, mentions him; and his name shows up at the bottom of some of the treaties. He ended up being a central figure in my book.

Fiction writers talk about characters tak-



ing on a life of their own. This guy wants his story told and I felt like he was asking, “Are you going to pay attention to me or not?”

The only way to do it is let the documents speak to me. I have to be ready to hear them and pay attention. What is he doing? What does he know? What is he trying to tell me?

He was trying to tell me the story of mixed bloods in Minnesota, which no one has told. In terms of original research, the pieces on the Campbells are the most

kinds of things I want students to know. This goes back to your first question, “What do you want students to know?”

What I want students to know now is very different from what I wanted them to know then. I wanted in each chapter for them to use a different kind of source — primarily newspapers, maps, photographs and plays — so that people see that different kinds of stories come from different kinds of documents.

McGee: What is the worst review you

It’s not just telling my story and “Isn’t my story interesting, charming or cute?” How does my story illuminate synecdoche? What is my story the broken headlight of? What does my story mean?

McGee: That’s what you show in this book, through the lives of ordinary people. All times are extraordinary in their own way, and ordinary people lived through them.

Atkins: And ordinary people are all extraordinary — not extraordinary as in different but as in “telling my life is complicated, interesting.”

We all think that we are just like everyone else. We are in some ways and we’re also not. It’s finding that illuminating piece, that synecdoche. I want my students to find how their voice fits in the story. Ask yourself, “How does my voice sound in the chorus?” Is it discordant? Is it harmonious?

One of my struggles in life is that I am always singing in a different key. I also think, if I can sing in my voice, then others can sing in their voices.

(Reading from her book) “As another poet, Mary Oliver, reminds us, ‘All narrative is metaphor,’ so ... the other individuals who inhabit this book are metaphors. My job as author is to offer the images and suggest the connections. At the end of this book, the baton of story-making power is passed to you, the reader. What is this place to you? What is your story here? Where do you get silenced and where do you have voice? Where are you an actor and where are you an observer? What’s the sense, finally, that you make out of this place ...?”

That is how we give people permission, not just to tell their expected story, but to pursue their story to a meaningful place.

When I started teaching, I thought of myself as a teacher. Now I think of myself as a person whose job it is to witness for the vitality of the intellectual life. To define the intellectual life in this meaningful, rich kind of big way, that it is not about memorizing information; it’s about making connections.

Together they made the state — a state of immigrants and Yankees, of Germans and Irish Catholics, of Protestants and Jews, of millers and farmers, of the hopeful and the despairing, of the generous and the greedy, of the conventional and unconventional.

— *Creating Minnesota*

dramatically important and historical.

McGee: Are there any descendants of this family? Have you heard from anyone?

Atkins: I gave a talk at the Minnesota Historical Society and two women showed up who are the great-granddaughters of Joe Campbell, who was in one of the pictures. They had a read a piece in the *Pioneer Press* and saw the picture of their ancestor and it indicated that the Campbells showed up in the book. So these two women showed up. Now, we’re going to have a party and invite all of the Campbell descendants, all from that generation of grandchildren.

McGee: Did you write each chapter in a serial way?

Atkins: I wrote them as a teaching book. I do not want the audience to be only students. I was thinking about the

have received?

Atkins: There is a public review on Amazon. It is a good review, but the guy thinks this isn’t history. I expect to get other reviews like that.

History increasingly serves two functions. Prior to the middle of the 1960s, the main function that history served as a subject in high school and especially grade school was to teach patriotism and celebrate the past. Who were the heroic figures and what were their heroic acts? Increasingly, professional historians want to teach questions, and those lead us in different directions. Is the function of history to celebrate, or is it to critique or analyze?

I don’t even think of it as de-mythologizing so much as widening the range of people whose stories are worth telling.



Teaching in China Turns 10



The Maryknoll Connection

By Jean Scoon

Ten years and 56 volunteers later, the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University and the Maryknoll China Teachers Program (MCTP) salute a fruitful partnership — one that has given our graduates unequalled opportunities for cultural immersion in China, while providing China with a steady stream of dedicated young English teachers.

Founded and directed by Maryknoll Fr. Scott Harris, the MCTP was established in 1998 to respond to China's request for help in teaching English to its youth. It has grown dramatically and now sponsors more than 40 volunteer teachers a year in various regions of China.

Although MCTP recruits at eight U.S. Catholic colleges, volunteers from CSB and SJU have predominated since its founding. "My experience has been that CSB and SJU students and grads are about as comfortable, adaptable and nonjudgmental as you could want in challenging, intercultural settings. Moreover, they are free of pretense, which makes them really fun to work with," said Scott.

The first two MCTP volunteers were Bennies Eleise Jones '98 and Angela Anderson '98, who went to China to teach under its auspices in 1998. David Harrison '99, who volunteered in 1999, served as MCTP's first coordinator of education programs from 2000-04. Today, Kevin Clancy '00 fills that position.

Since 1998, 56 graduates of CSB and SJU have spent at least a year and sometimes more as volunteer teachers with MCTP.

A Perfect Fit

“There are many programs that recruit English teachers to Asia,” said Richard Bohr, CSB/SJU director of Asian studies. “But Maryknoll is unique in emphasizing the vocational dimension of volunteering — the Christian call to serve others.

“They love the Bennies and Johnnies we send them. They know they’ll be prepared both academically and spiritually. Our Benedictine emphasis on community values and on identifying with those you serve matches Maryknoll’s approach,” Bohr said.

Johnnie and Bennie MCTP volunteers often remain in China or the region after their service, and several have gone into masters’ programs and careers connected with Asian studies.

“Maryknoll has a tremendous legacy of service in China and has been building bridges between our cultures since 1918,” said SJU President Br. Dietrich Reinhart. “Fr. Scott’s success with MCTP is inspirational and fully in keeping with this legacy. We are fortunate to be so closely associated with the Maryknoll China Teachers Program and Fr. Scott.”

Plunging In

Elise Jones ’98 was one of the first two Maryknoll China teaching volunteers. An English major and Asian studies minor



Elise Jones '98

from St. Paul, Minn., she spent a semester abroad at Southwest University in Beibei, China, as an undergraduate. Her Maryknoll assignment took her to Zhanjiang Normal College in Zhanjiang, Guangdong Province, from 1998-99.

On returning to the U.S., she worked in various publishing and bookselling positions. She followed this with a master’s degree in Chinese studies at the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, where she graduated with the honor of distinction in 2006.

She is now on the editorial staff of Cheng & Tsui, a Boston-based publisher of Asian-oriented materials, and lives in Boston.

Q Why did you volunteer to teach in China?

A I wanted to do volunteer work after graduation, and, having spent a semester studying in China, I was keen to go back. I had no idea what I was getting into, but I jumped at the chance for a new adventure.

Q What was it like to be a trailblazer?

A There was no orientation back then. We just plunged right in. We were the only foreigners in Zhanjiang, which is a fishing town on the Leizhou Peninsula. It felt very foreign — alternately exciting and isolated.

Q Can you summarize your experience?

A It was a fantastic year.

We had a good deal of freedom in our classrooms, though we were expected to be part of campus life in almost every way.

The first months were exhausting, but I came to appreciate the pace and energy on campus. I’m sure I learned more from my students and colleagues than they learned from me! Many of them invited us into their homes, and I traveled with a few. Ten years later, I still keep in touch with one good friend in particular.

Q How did your Maryknoll year affect subsequent experiences?

A It gave me personal insight into the people and current affairs of China. It shifted my interest in China from observer



Maryknoll House in Hong Kong

to participant. Living in China — not just visiting — certainly fomented my later academic interests.

Q You were in China when NATO bombed the Chinese embassy in Kosovo. How did that affect you?

A Chinese students were allowed to organize in protest, and they took to the streets all over the country, including Zhanjiang. We were requested to stay on campus for a few days for our safety. For the first time, we experienced some hostility. At the same time, it was an opportunity for many students to express their strong feelings about China’s perceived place in the world.

Q Why Maryknoll?

A Being curious will sometimes take us far from home, and living abroad can be lonely. Maryknoll welcomed and supported us in many ways. Their generosity and commitment has made a deep impression on me.

Q Advice for those considering teaching in China?

A It’s a unique opportunity, especially with the support of the Maryknoll community. It can be a source of confidence and resourcefulness, not to mention great



friendships and memories.

Q Other thoughts on China?

A There's a strong need on both sides of the Pacific for professional liaisons of culture and commerce. Yet China doesn't exist in a vacuum. Although Chinese — as a language and an area of general study — continues to grow in popularity, it will be to our advantage to develop language skills and cultural knowledge on an even wider global scale.

“Are You Paul?”

A political science major and communication minor from Shoreview, Minn., Paul Wegerson '04 taught at Zhongshan College in Zhongshan City, Guangdong Province, southern China, from 2004-06. The college has 7,000 students and a campus about the size of Saint John's. In addition to his English teaching duties, Wegerson launched a bilingual radio program on campus and wrote a bimonthly column for the *Zhongshan Daily*, a local newspaper.

Upon finishing his Maryknoll assignment, Wegerson moved to Beijing. After additional Chinese language studies and Asian travel, he took a position with the Beijing office of Burson-Marsteller, a

global government and public relations firm. Current clients include major sponsors of the Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Q Why China after graduation?

A Its rapid economic development and the social challenges that accompanied it really fascinated me. This gave me a great opportunity to experience China's development while giving back to the community as a volunteer English teacher.

Q Why Maryknoll?

A Maryknoll's mission in China and deep roots within the Saint John's community made me feel that I was beginning something bigger than myself. And from day one of Maryknoll's extensive orientation program, I knew they would help and support me if any problems came about during my teaching assignment.

Q What was it like to teach in China?

A They were two of the best years of my life! The relationships I formed will always be with me.

Since all students, regardless of major, needed to learn English to graduate, they were very outgoing and happy to speak with me. Often conversations would start with “Are you Paul?” because it was impossible to keep a low profile in such a school with only three foreign teachers. I'd join students for soccer games, and we shared lots of meals. Our colleagues in the English department were also very nice, and we would join them for lunch almost daily.

Another benefit was the almost two months of paid vacation each winter. I was able to travel all over China and extensively around Southeast Asia. I also had plenty of opportunities to visit with SJU and CSB alumni in Hong Kong, who have a wealth of knowledge and experience in both Asia and the U.S.

Q Do you see a relationship between your Maryknoll experience and your current position at Burson-Marsteller?

A I work with major sponsors of the Beijing 2008 Olympic and Paralympic Games to help them manage their image

in international and domestic media and with consumers. It's a really exciting job and a great way to use what my Chinese students and friends taught me to help companies better understand China and its people.

Q Can you summarize what you learned from teaching with MCTP?

A It educated me about China and taught me more about myself. Maryknoll instilled in me the value of community and service to others — a lesson that will follow me through any career on any continent.

Q Your plans for the future?

A I definitely plan to pursue an international career with a strong emphasis on China.

I'd like to work with the Minnesota Trade Center to help Minnesota companies expand internationally, specifically in China.

Eventually, I plan to return to the U.S. to be closer to family and friends. It's not that easy to travel from Beijing back to the Pine Curtain for the Homecoming football game.

Q Advice for those considering MCTP?

A Just go! You will have the life-shaping experience you've always wanted.



Paul Wegerson '04

VIDEO

A New Pillar of the

By John F. O'Sullivan '08

Photos: Cory Ryan

"I need to speak with the abbot," the man in the trench coat said to Br. Izador.

"You can't. He's sleeping," Izador replied.

"I think he might want to hear what I have to say," the man insisted with a growing sense of urgency in his voice.

"Adam, he's ..." the monk began, but was cut off by the man yelling.

"SOMEBODY IS GOING TO MURDER THE ABBOT!"

"Cut!" yelled the director.

No, it's not a scene from the abbey, nor is it a Hollywood movie. It's just another one of the student films the Sommers Digital Video Studio helped create. In five years, the studio has inspired the imagination of Bennies and Johnnies from a variety of disciplines and added a new dimension to the liberal arts in the 21st century. Some take the courses because they want to be filmmakers, while others take one to satisfy their required fine arts credit. Regardless of their motivations for enrolling, the studio serves as a point of entry for students who initially aren't interested in the arts. In doing so, it promotes one of the hallmarks of the liberal

arts education, the fine arts.

For senior Jeffrey Schwinghammer, the video program helped him expand his imagination to create what he never thought possible when he wrote and directed "Deimos," an apocalyptic thriller shot around the Saint John's campus.

"I think big. When I came up with the narrative the idea just exploded," he said. Those ideas connected with the audience last year at the student film festival. The ominous score, fast-paced editing and special effects had audience members leaning forward in their chairs in Pellegrene Auditorium.

His creativity didn't stop there. Schwinghammer went above and beyond what students typically learn through their coursework; he taught himself how to construct special effects. Through the magic of computer graphics, he created a massive earthquake in the Saint John's Abbey.

Picture this: a man is kneeling to pray in the side chapel of the Abbey Church. As he gets up to leave, he is knocked off his feet as the camera begins shaking violently. Soon, a low rumbling is

To view videos go to: www.csbsju.edu/art/studentresources/student_videos.htm

e Liberal Arts

accompanied by a creaking as the white baldachin above the altar sways back and forth. Fierce vibrations rock the balcony. The massive stained glass window begins to crack as some source of light becomes brighter and brighter. Just as the windows are going to shatter, everything stops at once. The church is calm again, and the only noise is the creaking of the white baldachin as it comes to a stop. *This* is what is possible with digital video.

Students coming into the program have a variety of ideas about the art of video. During her junior year, art major Oanh Vu '08 used her experience as an artist to create a five-minute, untitled piece that displays a man, fully

Oanh Vu '08
art major



clothed, sitting in the shower. She manipulated the color controls and speed of the video to establish a mood.

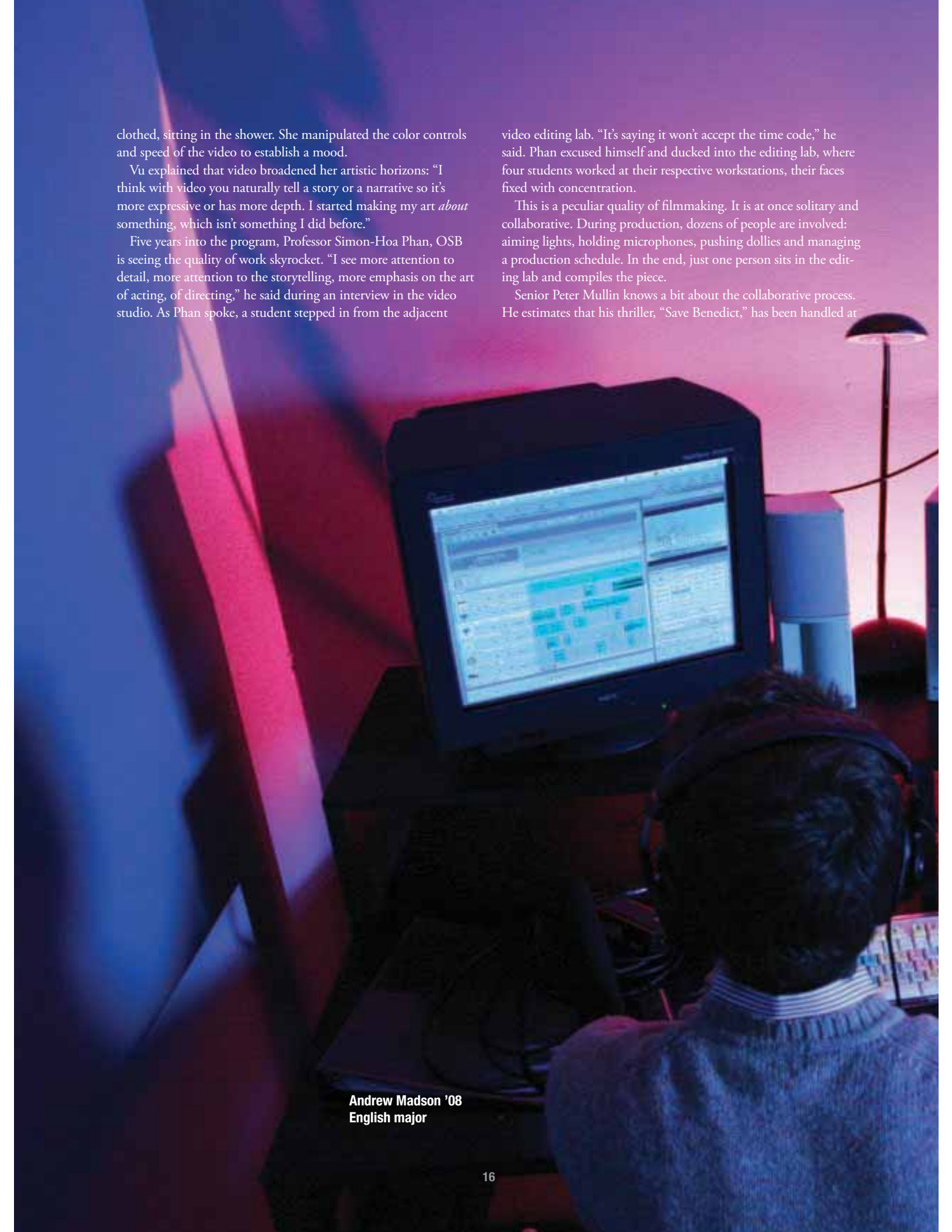
Vu explained that video broadened her artistic horizons: "I think with video you naturally tell a story or a narrative so it's more expressive or has more depth. I started making my art *about* something, which isn't something I did before."

Five years into the program, Professor Simon-Hoa Phan, OSB is seeing the quality of work skyrocket. "I see more attention to detail, more attention to the storytelling, more emphasis on the art of acting, of directing," he said during an interview in the video studio. As Phan spoke, a student stepped in from the adjacent

video editing lab. "It's saying it won't accept the time code," he said. Phan excused himself and ducked into the editing lab, where four students worked at their respective workstations, their faces fixed with concentration.

This is a peculiar quality of filmmaking. It is at once solitary and collaborative. During production, dozens of people are involved: aiming lights, holding microphones, pushing dollies and managing a production schedule. In the end, just one person sits in the editing lab and compiles the piece.

Senior Peter Mullin knows a bit about the collaborative process. He estimates that his thriller, "Save Benedict," has been handled at



Andrew Madson '08
English major

some level or another by at least 100 people. The film incorporated theater performance majors in front of the camera and theater tech students behind. A student stage manager served as production coordinator, while an art major directed the photography. A communication major with documentary film experience jumped on board as editor, while a music major scored and performed for the video's original composition. These liberal arts students enjoyed the payoff of their collaborative efforts last November when the film premiered in the Stephen B. Humphrey Auditorium, with more than 800 people attending. The energy in the room was palpable as the lights dimmed, the music faded in and the opening credits

played over shots of a man driving down County Road 159, the Abbey Bell Banner poking above the Pine Curtain in the background.

In a digital world, the essence of the liberal arts education can be found in video courses. Not only do they attract students who have studied a variety of subjects, they also encourage personal growth by nurturing new ideas. Video challenges students to think big while also teaching them to work with others. A program that teaches curiosity, imagination, ambition and teamwork is not just a good example of the liberal arts, it is the very embodiment of the liberal arts at work in students' lives.



media

FACULTY SHARE T

CSB/SJU faculty members frequently appear in the media speaking on a variety of issues. They do for readers and viewers what they do naturally in the classroom: make sense of the world in their areas of expertise.

We asked four faculty members who appear frequently in the media to talk about what they know best — their specialty areas.

KAY WOLSBORN

As the political campaign season heats up, reporters keep Kay Wolsborn's phone number on speed dial. The professor of political science has expertise in voting behavior and in political parties.

To Wolsborn, Minnesota isn't currently a "blue" or a "red" state politically.

"Briefly put, I would describe Minnesota as neither 'blue' nor 'red' ... nor purple, for that matter," she said. "'Plaid' might be the best visual."

Wolsborn was asked about the Republican National Convention Sept. 1-4 in St. Paul.

With the Republican National Convention coming to St. Paul, does that signal a potential shift in Minnesota's political fortunes going from a "blue state" to a "red state?"

"Although Minnesota has a history of giving its Electoral College votes to the Democratic presidential candidate, the state is better characterized as highly competitive between the two major parties. In spite of a shift toward the Democratic Party as a result of the 2006 elections, Minnesota's Congressional delegation has been consistently divided between Democrats and Republicans. Similarly, in statewide elections, the legislative and

executive branch candidates for office have demonstrated successes by both of the major parties — even though in some regions of the state one party or the other consistently dominates over time."

Are the Republicans using the convention to create a more even political battlefield in the state, or do they see Minnesota playing a key role in electing a new president in 2008?

"There are several Electoral College scenarios by which the next president might be selected; the state's electors are key in only some of those numeric configurations. Nevertheless, there are other reasons for the Republican selection of the Twin Cities for its 2008 National Convention. Among the most important is to strengthen and mobilize resources for Congressional races in the Midwest. In particular, heightened visibility for Republican candidates will give them an advantage in the closely competitive races for Minnesota's Senate seat and those House seats that are open or currently held by first-term representatives. Control of both branches — the presidency and the Congress — is at stake in 2008!"

Do you plan to have any role at the convention?

"My own interest in the Republican and Democratic conventions (the Democrats will convene in Denver just before the Republicans come to St. Paul) is that of a careful observer — comparing platforms and presentation styles and listening closely to the comments of party leadership, of candidates and their respective supporters. I will also be watching for appearances by candidate wannabees from the next generation as well as messages from protestors and other observers."

POLITICAL
PARTIES

GLOBAL
MARKETS



RICHARD BOHR

Richard Bohr, professor of history and director of Asian studies, has appeared on Twin Cities Public Television's (TPT) *Almanac*, WCCO Radio and Minnesota Public Radio (MPR) to discuss China's economic transformation and growing global market influence, issues of U.S. trade with China and other timely topics that affect relations between Asia and Western nations.

In 1979, China normalized diplomatic relations with the United States after three decades of Cold War isolation.

Minnesota soon found itself ahead of the curve when dealing with China. Part of that may be due to the long historical relationship Minnesota has enjoyed with China, according to Bohr.

Wise

THEIR EXPERTISE

By Mike Killeen

HISTORICAL
INSIGHTS

STATE
ECONOMY



“Minnesota missionaries were at the forefront of America’s humanitarian assistance to China suffering from famine and dislocation,” Bohr said. “In the 1880s, railroad builder James J. Hill believed that export-dependent Minnesota and China were united by similar agrarian values, educational goals and entrepreneurial drive and enjoyed a convergence of economic interest. The University of Minnesota educated more Chinese than did any other American university. And, in the 1920s, CSB/SJU helped build one of three Catholic colleges in China.”

Bohr was asked about Chinese-Minnesota trade relations.

Minnesota seems to be ahead of the curve when dealing with trade issues with China. Why is that?

“China is the world’s third-largest market for Minnesota agricultural and high tech products and services and a major investor in Minnesota’s Iron Range. Minnesota is one of the few U.S. states enjoying a trade surplus with China. This statistic is not surprising, because Minnesota has always been ahead of the curve in dealing with China. In 1979, a coalition of Minnesota business, government, educational, civic, church and other leaders coordinated efforts with such organizations as the Midwest China Center and the Minnesota Trade Office to align the destinies of 4 million Minnesotans with those of 1.2 billion Chinese now seeking a place in the global economy.

“To expand trade and investment with a rapidly industrializing post-Mao China, Minnesota leaders promoted public education on the myriad opportunities for Sino-Minnesota relationships, brought Chinese decision-makers to our state and organized America’s first teleconference with China. Multinationals like 3M, Honeywell and Medtronic mentored hundreds of smaller companies, whose exports to China soared.”

Have study abroad programs at Minnesota’s colleges and universities and other educational programs fueled our interest in China?

“Today, Minnesota teaches one-fifth of America’s high school-level Chinese. Liberal arts colleges like CSB and SJU are building on this foundation to prepare the next generation of globally-competent ‘China hands’ to build trans-Pacific partnerships by linking their Asian studies curricula with ever-increasing opportunities for study, internships, service learning, teaching and other experiential opportunities in China.

“But China expertise alone is not sufficient to keep America globally competitive, because China is already merging with other economic giants like India to make Asia the center of the world economy. Accordingly, our ultimate goal is to produce ‘Asia hands,’ for this newly-dawned ‘Asian Century’ so that both sides of the Pacific community may prosper.”

NICHOLAS HAYES

Nick Hayes has appeared on both sides of the camera and the microphone.

A professor of history at CSB and SJU and University Chair in Critical Thinking at SJU, he has been a frequent commentator for the print and broadcast media on Russia and Eastern Europe for over 20 years. As an expert on the Soviet Union and its communist ideology, he produced two commentaries for PBS and has appeared as a frequent guest on TPT’s *Almanac* and MPR’s *Midday*. Though the communist regime fell, Hayes finds the “new” Russia not unlike the “old” Russia.

Here is his take on his makeover in being a “Sovietologist,” and a quick look at the “new” Russia:

Please comment on your “makeover” from an expert on communist Russia to an expert on democratic Russia.

“In 2001, the 10th anniversary of the end of the Soviet Union and the communist era, I wrote an essay — ‘Reflections of a Recovering Sovietologist’ — that poked fun at myself and so many pundits like me in the U.S. who had made ‘Sovietology’ into a career and had never contemplated a world in which the Soviet Union and its communist ideology did not exist. Yet, the historian in me was not surprised to see that there was more of the “old” than the “new” in today’s Russia. Vladimir Putin,

in particular, strikes me as not merely a man who knows the past but one who is absolutely determined to repeat it.”

What, in your opinion, does the “new” Russia mean for the United States in terms of politics, trade, military might, etc?

“My comments on Russia today represent a mirror image of my comments 20 years ago. Back then, I conveyed that the Soviet Union was a better place than we understood. Its era of totalitarian horror was past. Russia was reforming itself for the better.

“Today, I argue that under Putin Russia is a far worse, more criminal state than we appreciate and the regime has undergone a counter reform away from democracy toward a corrupt authoritarian regime. Today, the U.S. faces in Moscow a regime emboldened by the wealth and arrogance of oil. It thrives on anti-American sentiment, re-asserts its influence in the world, and acts with impunity whenever it feels a need to suppress the opposition or even to assassinate dissident voices at home and abroad.

“During the 1990s, like many Kremlin watchers, I was waiting for something — to steal a line from William Butler Yeats — ‘slouching toward the Kremlin.’ Still in awe of the Soviet past, I assumed that the next chapter in Russian history would have to produce a political monster on the scale of a Stalin or a Hitler. As a result, I missed Putin, who had come to occupy the Kremlin.”

LOUIS JOHNSTON

Louis Johnston, associate professor of economics, makes frequent guest appearances on MPR to explain the big picture — or, in more scholarly jargon, macroeconomics. His recent research has focused

on Minnesota’s economic history, exploring why the state’s economy has performed above average for decades. He was featured on MPR’s *Midday* in December to discuss his findings.

Here’s some breaking news on the economic state of Minnesota from Johnston. That news, however, comes with a caveat.

“First, this is research in progress. The conclusions are preliminary and are subject to change,” Johnston said. “Second, this is a project in which student research has played an important role. For example, Jennifer Busse did her honors thesis in 2006-07 on the relationship between economic growth and educational attainment across states with a focus on Minnesota. Tena Rytel is currently writing her honors thesis on the rise and decline of flour milling in Minnesota and its relationship to the state’s decline in the first part of the 20th century. This is a real credit to what we are able to do here at CSB and SJU.”

How does Minnesota, an economic leader among the states in the later half of the 20th century, maintain its competitive edge?

“Like the children of Lake Wobegon, Minnesota’s economy has been ‘above average’ since the early 1970s. Specifically, Minnesota’s per capita income went from 85 percent of the national average in 1930 to about 10 percent above the national average in 2004.”

How did this happen? What lessons are there for the future?

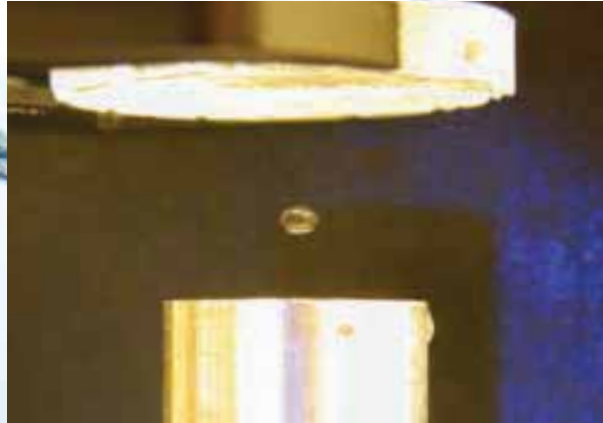
“Minnesota is ‘above average’ because the state economy shifted from a reliance on agriculture and mining to a balance among agriculture, mining, manufacturing and services. This shift, in turn, had two deeper sources. First, Minnesotans invested in education and health care. Lo-

cal governments built high-quality primary and secondary education systems while the state government put resources into post-secondary education. State and local governments along with the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic created health care organizations that were effective at treating chronic illnesses (kidney failure, diabetes) along with prompt care for emergency conditions such as heart attacks and strokes.

“These investments created a workforce that was healthier and better skilled than in other states, which in turn both retained existing businesses and attracted new ventures such as the mainframe computer industry.

“Second, state and local governments levied taxes on vehicles and fuel in order to build a network of highways that connected major urban centers with smaller communities. This meant that businesses could locate throughout the state, and not just in the Twin Cities. For example, companies such as Arctic Cat and Polaris could build factories in Thief River Falls and Roseau and know that they could ship finished snowmobiles reliably on well-maintained roads. Further, this improved the transportation services available to agriculture and mining, making those industries more productive.

“Education, health and transportation: these are still important for the future, but to maintain its edge Minnesota must invest in these areas in new ways. First, new education investments must focus on early-childhood education and lifelong learning. Second, we need to move from treating illnesses to preventing them. These are both critically important given the aging of our population and the large number of immigrants coming to our state. Third, we need to change our focus from building new roads to maintaining and improving our existing network.”



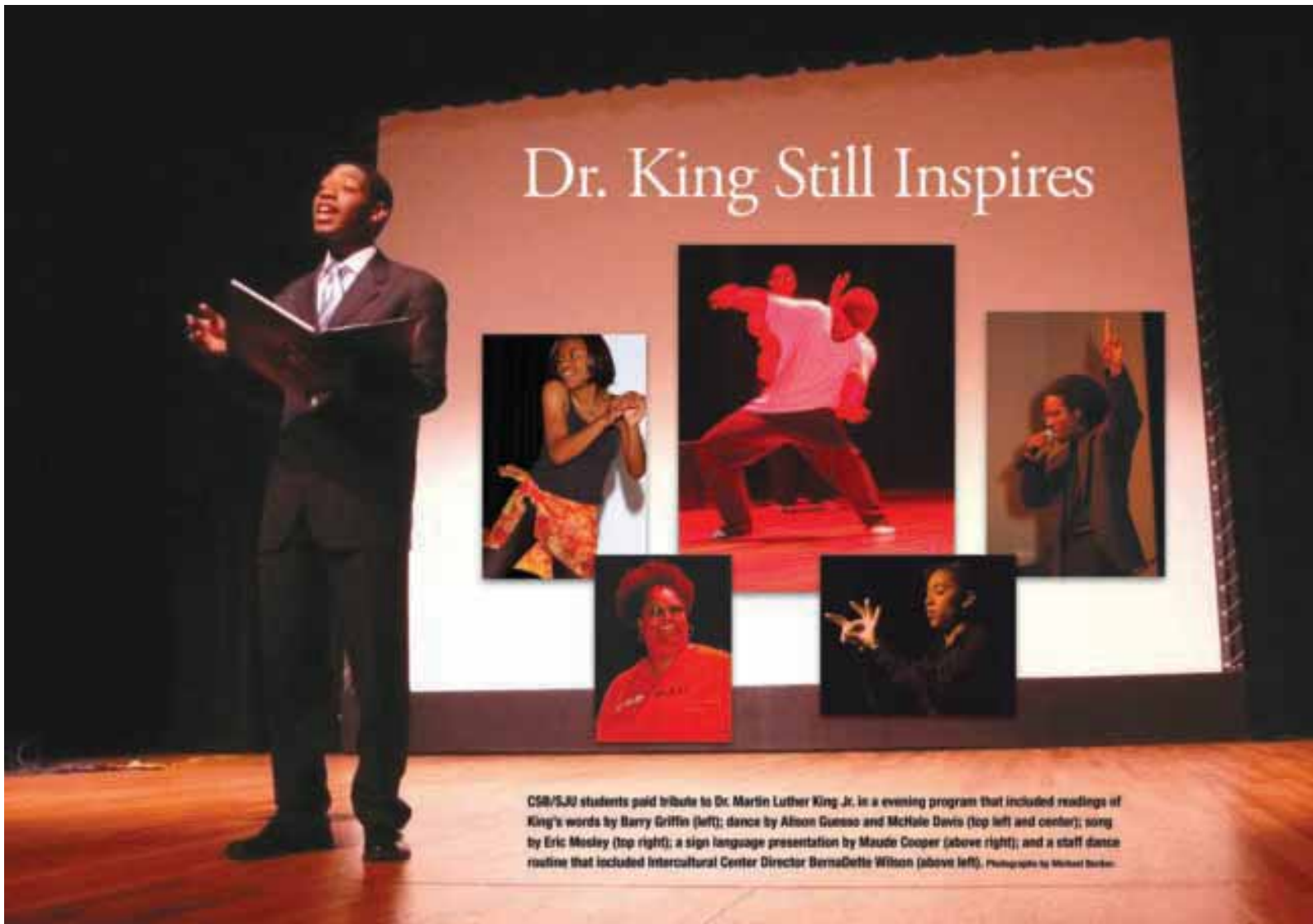
SUSPENDED IN SOUND

SJU physics student PX Yeap levitated this drop of water using high-frequency sound waves, as part of an experiment with his adviser, Dean Langley, CSB/SJU professor and chair of physics.

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CSB/SJU students paid tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in an evening program that included readings of King's words by Barry Griffin (left); dance by Alison Gunsoo and McHale Davis (top left and center); song by Eric Mesley (top right); a sign language presentation by Maudie Cooper (above right); and a staff dance routine that included Intercultural Center Director Bernadette Wilson (above left). Photographs by Michael Beckler.