

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2005

Hello, again, BDIC Alumni! It seems that another year has slipped by since our last newsletter, and, truly, it has been a year of promise and expansion of BDIC's possibilities (as well as numbers of students!). We have had many more opportunities this year to showcase the BDIC major for prospective students and have had a vast number of inquiries from all over the world, many who are planning to attend Umass just to major in BDIC. In all of BDIC's successes, the support and encouragement of our alumni is vital. That is why we'd like to share some news and interesting information with you.

Please stay in touch! And feel free to share any ideas or suggestions you may have with us.

THANKS TO OUR ALUMNI!

Because of the continued generosity of our BDIC alumni, we have been able to award an increasing number of scholarships to BDIC students pursuing research projects or traveling abroad on exchange. In addition, we have been able to keep our office computers up to date so that students needing to do online research related to their concentrations can conveniently access the internet from the BDIC office in addition to providing efficient equipment for office staff.

Some examples of recent grants given to students are as follows:

Jean Capone, whose BDIC concentration is *The Practice of Sustainability Education* received a grant for a project she is working on over the summer of '05. Jean is creating a documentary film based on sustainability practices learned at the National Rainbow Gathering in Virginia. National Rainbow Gatherings are dedicated to the preservation of the earth and its resources. Jean's BDIC grant helped her pay for film equipment as well as travel expenses.

Michelson Dorime received a grant to help pay for his expenses while interning at the office of Massachusetts Senator Dianne Wilkerson in Boston. Although the summer position will provide Dorime a wealth of experience and knowledge in the legislative and legal area, it is a non-salaried position. Dorime, a May '05 graduate, concentrated in *Community Health Studies* through BDIC. The summer internship will be particularly helpful to him since he is considering going into the legal field after completing a masters program in Public Health. Dorime is particularly interested in Public Health policy and law.

Justin Eldridge-Otero, a September '05 graduate, was awarded a BDIC grant for his volunteer work during the spring '05 semester at an orphanage in Honduras. Justin has volunteered at this orphanage for many years and has developed a strong connection with the individuals there. In conjunction with his volunteer work, Justin researched the grant-writing process in an effort to provide more services to the young women of the orphanage. He and others have begun fundraising and advocacy for the young women, helping them to apply and attend college. Justin's BDIC concentration is *Spanish/International Development* and after graduation he plans to return to Honduras to further develop funding for "COPROME."

Brendan Moriarty, a *Film Production Studies* major at BDIC, received a grant to help fund the production of a documentary titled "Freedom" that he is helping to produce in the Caribbean. The production will take place during the summer and fall of '05. Brendan's grant will help cover the cost of camera equipment, as well as accommodations in Jamaica.

Noah Zide has gone to Denmark for summer'05 to study the European Union and the *euro* with the guidance of faculty from the UMass Political Science Department and the School of Management and with the support of a BDIC research grant. Noah's study is closely related to his BDIC concentration of *Entrepreneurship: The Global Politik*.

Graduation 2005

Written by Kate O'Connell

On May 22, 2005, the academic year came to a close at UMass, Amherst with the graduation of the class of 2005. The Commencement Ceremony was held, as always, at the UMass

stadium. The large event was witnessed by the graduates along with thousands of their friends and family, and many faculty and staff members. Overjoyed audience members lent their support and praise in recognition of all the accomplishments of the graduating seniors, while a light rain fell.

After the ceremony, many BDIC students, faculty sponsors, staff, friends and family made their way to the Honors Lounge in Goodell to celebrate. BDIC was host to over 150 students and their families. Peer Advisor, Michelson Dorime, along with Faculty Supervisor and interim Program Director, Alexandrina Deschamps, gave short speeches on their experiences at UMass especially in regards to BDIC. A special tribute was made to the graduating peer advisors whose work at BDIC was critical in assisting new students. They will be missed.

It was a celebration for many, including **BDIC coordinator, Linda Roney**, who was recently named **Academic Advisor of the Year**. She received honors and a beautiful plaque at the Commencement Ceremony for her long-term dedication to the BDIC program and its students.

All in all, it was an afternoon of cake and celebration. Good Luck, Class of 2005!

Profile of a BDIC Alumnus

Written by Kate O'Connell

When **Howie Harrison** completed his BDIC concentration in *Business, Sports Management and Education* in 2001, he moved right away into an ideal position at the prestigious Bement School in nearby Deerfield, MA. At Bement, an elementary/middle school, Howie has taught physical education classes, served as a ninth grade advisor and also as a coach for a variety of sports teams.

For another student, locating a teaching job right out of college at a school like Bement might have merely seemed fortunate. But for Howie, it meant much more than that. Howie grew up in Harlem. When he was about 13 years old, his parents decided to send him to Bement to get him out of the inner city environment. Although he wasn't getting into trouble in Harlem, Howie did not have a serious focus. Howie struggled with his parents to stay at home and refused to get out of the car when they finally dropped him off in the middle of the countryside at Bement.

There were only a couple of other students of color at Bement at the time, so at first, Howie had a difficult time adjusting. Scholarships helped pay Howie's tuition at Bement, and in addition, his mother worked two jobs. Howie excelled at Bement and continued on to UMass, where he ultimately majored in BDIC. He attributes much of his academic success to the excellent private school education he received at Bement.

At Bement's 2005 commencement ceremony, Howie was one of the keynote speakers. It was a momentous occasion for him, as well as the graduates, because he too was moving on from his alma mater and first professional job. This fall, Howie will return to the inner city to teach physical education and coach basketball at Smith Leadership Academy in Dorchester, MA. He will also be the Assistant Basketball Coach at Emmanuel College in Boston. Howie said he feels fortunate to have had the opportunity to get a good education at a private school, but that he now needs to return to the inner city and help young people there, people who are floundering the way he was many years ago. His dream is to open a community center in an inner city neighborhood and help influence wayward and troubled kids.

What Happens After BDIC?

Written by Kate O'Connell

We've asked some of our graduating seniors what their plans for the future are, and here's what they said...

Michelson Dorime, one of BDIC's former peer advisors, who graduated with a concentration in *Community Health* is pursuing further education at Boston University for his Masters in Public Health. Over the summer, he is keeping busy in Massachusetts Senator Dianne Wilkerson's office, where he performs regular office tasks, including corresponding with constituents, among other things. He is also working for a community health organization called "Center for Community Health, Education, and Research."

Samantha Louras, who graduated with a concentration in *Advertising through Traditional and Digital Photography*, is continuing in the field at the Hallmark Institute of Photography in Greenfield, MA.

Jen Moskal, concentrating in *Public Health with a Focus on Women and Children* is continuing her education at the Yale University School of Nursing in the fall to work on her graduate entry pre-specialty in Nursing.

Rachel Pucillo is going far, geographically that is. Rachel has moved to San Diego, CA, where she is working with a program called ARTS (A Reason To Survive) in which children in the San Diego area are encouraged to participate in the visual and performing arts. Rachel graduated from BDIC with a concentration in *Art and Psychology*. After a year with ARTS, Rachel plans to continue on to graduate school.

Jessica Lusignan will also be traveling after graduation. She plans to head first to South America, and then to Europe for a year. Upon return, she plans to start graduate school. Jessica graduated from BDIC with a concentration in *Theoretical Research of Women's Well-Being*.

Emily Slocombe, who graduated with a concentration in *Cognitive Science*, will be continuing her education at Tufts University. There, she plans to get her PhD in Cognitive Neuroscience/Experimental Psychology.

Jacqueline Phillips graduated in February '05 from BDIC with a concentration in *Physics, Astronomy, Philosophy & Film*. She is currently working her way through the PMBA program with the Isenberg School of Management at UMass Amherst.

Ryan Hardy, with a concentration in *Writing and Fantasy*, has been in the process of writing his first novel for some time. He is also working as

an assistant to the Student Services Office at the Judge Rotenberg Center, a school for mentally challenged students in Eastern Massachusetts.

Carolyn Goodwin, who graduated with a concentration in *Pre-Art Therapy*, plans to continue her education at Springfield College in a Masters program in Clinical Art Therapy.

Laurie Castonguay will be traveling for the next few weeks to New York and Canada to visit family. Upon returning she will be preparing for graduate school either here at UMass in the field of Anthropology, or at Western New England College for Law. Laurie graduated with a concentration in *The Conservation and Preservation of Native Cultures & the Environment*.

Kassandra Grant, with a concentration in *Dance Education and Management*, will be going for her Master's degree in the Collaborative Teacher's Education Program (CTEP) for Early Childhood Education at UMass Amherst.

Dianna DeStefano, who graduated with a concentration in *Natural History and Conservation*, will be working for the Arcadia Wildlife Sanctuary in Easthampton for the summer. She hopes to get her teaching certification for elementary school teaching.

Marisa Campbell, with a concentration in *Identity Development & Children's Literature*, will be attending the University of Pennsylvania for a Reading/Writing/Literacy Masters of Science in Education. She plans to earn certification as a Reading Specialist and as an elementary school teacher.

John Hersey, who graduated with a concentration in *Sustainable Urban Planning*, will be returning to UMass in the fall, for the Masters program in Regional Planning. For the summer, John will be life-guarding, and also meeting with local and state planning officials for possible internships/job placements.

Monica Pietrzak, with a concentration in *Pharmacology & Business Management*, is already working with a pharmaceutical firm in Boston!

Sean Robbins, with a concentration in *Entrepreneurial Studies & Graphic Communication*, is currently working in website design at a company called "Earth Shoes." With thoughts of heading west, Sean is looking to California for graduate school.

2005 Spring Projects and Alumni Fair

Written by Myngia Her

On May 4, 2004, BDIC sponsored the annual Spring Projects and Alumni Fair. The Fair provides a forum for students in the BDIC junior year writing class (BDIC 496C) to showcase their final projects. In addition, alumni are invited to participate and to share advice and expertise from their various fields. This year, the Fair was held for the first time in the Student Union Ballroom to allow more space and visibility, rather than the BDIC headquarters in Goodell. As a result, many more non-BDIC students and faculty had a chance to participate.

The projects displayed covered a vast array of subject areas—everything from Fashion to Video Game Production had a table. BDIC senior, Carolyn Goodwin, displayed her Honors Project, “Hands.” The project was a portfolio of the various art therapy techniques she had utilized while interning at a nursing home. She developed an art-based program for the residents which culminated in an art exhibit. (Carolyn’s project is still on display in the Commonwealth College office in Goodell).

Also displayed at the Fair was Jessica Morgan’s “Good 4 You” café station. She featured organic and healthy snacks (all homemade) such as *Satisfy My Soul* tea and *Veggji* muffins.

Zuzka Zilkova displayed a personal project titled, “Fun With Maps.” This was not related to her concentration in *Cognitive Science and Rhetoric With Systems Theory*. Zuzka said she had become interested in and wanted to explore the sociological implications involved in the divergent types of maps. One of the most remarkable things about this spring’s fair was the level of audience interaction. At each display, fairgoers gathered and discussed the project with its creator. Zuzka’s project was one of the audience’s favorites as she was swamped with questions of all kinds!

Following the project display, there was an alumni forum, at which a select group of BDIC alumni spoke about their own BDIC concentration and how they developed it into a career. Invited alumni guests were Loring Barnes '83, Justin Gallant '03, David Soboff '82, and Julie Stanitis '99. Guest speaker and moderator for the forum was Carolyn Gould from Campus Career Services.

Later, guests enjoyed a buffet dinner to the fabulous musical accompaniment of The Sugarfoot Stompers (a band that included BDIC student Lyon Graulty).

If any alumni are interested in coming to campus for a future Project Fair and Alumni Forum, please contact us at BDIC. We are always eager to see you! And, as alumni, you are invaluable resources for our students.