

# Advances

Volume 11, Number 2 Summer 2010 News from the IU School of Liberal Arts

## Religion Institute an IUPUI First

By Josh Flynn, BA English 2007



Twenty-four K-12 teachers from around the nation came to IUPUI in July for the Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture summer institute, "The Many and the One: Religion, Pluralism, and American History."

In July, 24 teachers assembled from all over the nation to participate in a three-week National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH) summer institute entitled, "The Many and the One: Religion, Pluralism, and American History." The institute focused on religion's interaction with American history and everyday life. The Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture (CSRAC), an IUPUI Signature Center, hosted the institute. It was funded with a \$144,637 NEH grant.

"Our [visiting] teachers ran the gamut from elementary to high school, though most are high school teachers," says **Arthur Farnsley II**, Associate Director of the CSRAC. "So their experiences are incredibly varied."

A typical institute day was divided into four sessions with a lunch in between. The institute's core faculty—

Farnsley, and his Religious Studies colleagues, Professor and CRSAC Director **Philip Goff**, and Associate Professor **Rachel Wheeler**—provided context and continuity during the sessions. Special guests, all top experts in their fields, visited from IU Bloomington, Purdue, Harvard, Richmond, Florida State, and Clemson to cover particular topics during the institute.

Field trips were also arranged to the Eiteljorg, Conner Prairie, the Indiana Historical Society, the Islamic Society of North America, the Frederick Douglass Papers, and a Buddhist temple.

Teachers presented unit plans at the end of the institute that ranged from the role religion and race played in the lead-up to the Civil War to how religious ideas are expressed in history and literature.

Farnsley believes religious history needs to be better

implemented in high school classrooms and says there are three reasons why it isn't: concerns sectarian parents will object, uncertainty about what the law allows in terms of teaching about religion, and the teacher may come from an educational background where religion's role in history or literature was not emphasized.

"We hope people will see religion as an important part of American culture and American history," Farnsley says. "We're not arguing that everything is all about religion—religion exists alongside other kinds of ideas and institutions. We're just stating it's part of the story and telling that full story has to begin somewhere, so we're making our small contribution by helping these teachers do a better job."

This is the first NEH summer institute held at IUPUI. "This is a major

national program held annually, so we're very excited," he says.

Farnsley says the program is another example of the national recognition and financial support the School of Liberal Arts is receiving across its many disciplines. "[The Center for the Study of Religion and American Culture is] by no means unique in this regard," he says. "But we hope NEH recognition shines a light on the many things going on at the school."

The summer institute was designated a "We The People" program by the NEH. "We The People" initially focused on programs about the Constitution, but now has expanded for programs that demonstrate strength in teaching, understanding, and the study of American culture, Farnsley says, adding, "That's really what we're all about."

# Office of Career Development Opens

As students examine their career options, **Sloane Thompson**, Director of the Liberal Arts Office of Career Development says they should be asking themselves, "What is it I have to offer?"

The Career Development Office, new to Liberal Arts in 2009, helps students answer this surprisingly difficult question and supports students in pursuing internships, study abroad opportunities, and service learning experiences. These help students both better understand the needs of employers and determine where their career interests lie.

Sloane's narrative approach to finding the answers involves listening to the stories of the people who seek her guidance. While skills are an important component, she knows that one's passions, interests, and values are often priceless in helping to determine the path ahead.

To illustrate, while talking to History major **Kelly Buchanan**, Sloane unearthed Kelly's two great loves: The Beatles and all things animal. Sloane listened, and not surprisingly, Kelly went on to experience studying abroad in Liverpool, England, an internship with the Indianapolis Zoo, successfully completing her degree in 2009 and moving into the workforce with unique and focused academic experiences.

Sloane and her Career Development team are located in Cavanaugh Hall 243 and available at (317) 274-8304.



Sloane Thompson, Director of Career Development, helps students discover what they have to offer the world.

# History Students Create Racing Exhibit



Hillary Retseck and Casey Schuster pose with fellow IUPUI grad student and Indy Car driver Sarah Fisher.



Casey and Hilary visit the Indianapolis Speedway with former driver and Rookie of the Year Lyn St. James.

**Hilary Retseck** and **Casey Schuster**, Public History grad students, created the interactive exhibit, "Women in the Winner's Circle," which opened this year at the Daytona Speedway. The five-year traveling exhibit arrived in Indianapolis this summer showcasing a collection of helmets, suits, and photographs of female racers. The exhibit is organized by the Henry Ford Museum, former IRL driver and Rookie of the Year, **Lyn St. James**, and the Women in the Winner's Circle Foundation.

## The 2010-2011 Sabbatical Speaker Series

Friday, September 24, 4:30 pm, Room 268  
William H. Schneider, History/Medical Humanities  
**The History of Blood Transfusion in Sub-Saharan Africa**

Friday, October 1, 4:30 pm, Room 268  
Nancy Marie Robertson, History/Women's Studies  
**The Wealth of Women**

Friday, November 5, 4:30 pm, 268  
Wendy Morrison, Economics  
**You Paid What for That?**

Tuesday, November 16, 4:30 pm, Room 309  
Rachel M. Wheeler, Religious Studies  
**Revolutions in Faith: Five Generations of a Mohican-Moravian Family**

Friday, December 3, 4:30 pm, Room 268  
Kristina Horn Sheeler, Communication Studies  
**"Throw The Boys Out:!" Pioneering Women, Beauty Queens, and the Good Ol' Boys of Czech Politics**

All events are held in the Campus Center.

For more information please visit <http://liberalarts.iupui.edu>

# Choosing the Path Less Taken

By Nicole Matthew, Senior English Major

Imagine taking some time off. You've just earned a bachelor's degree in English; law school is waiting. A friend asks you to house sit in Key West, Florida. You accept, find a new life waiting for you, give up law school and make the city your home.

**Michael Blades**, a 1988 IUPUI Liberal Arts graduate, did exactly that. Coming from a family with a law background his future plans seemed to be set in stone. Instead, he embarked on a journey of his own choosing. "You have to do what you want to do. I made the decision to not



**Michael Blades, BA English 1988, works to preserve coral reefs, organizes marine archaeological searches, and helps Key West celebrate literature.**

pursue money and did what I wanted to do," he says. In the process, he discovered he

could use his Liberal Arts degree in every aspect of his life, from exploring the reefs to organizing literary events.

"A Liberal Arts degree opens up the opportunities for many careers," Blades says. "Every day I use something linked to my degree."

Blades began working with Reef Relief, a non-profit organization based in Florida working to protect coral reef ecosystems. He was a project manager for fifteen years before taking a position with RPM Nautical Foundation, a marine archaeological nonprofit that searches for ancient Greek and Roman shipwrecks, mostly in the Mediterranean.

Blades was promoted to the Director of Logistics after starting as the foundation's office manager. Blades says he utilizes his English degree by writing grants and composing press releases. His duties also range from filing customs forms and permit applications to securing travel arrangements for members of

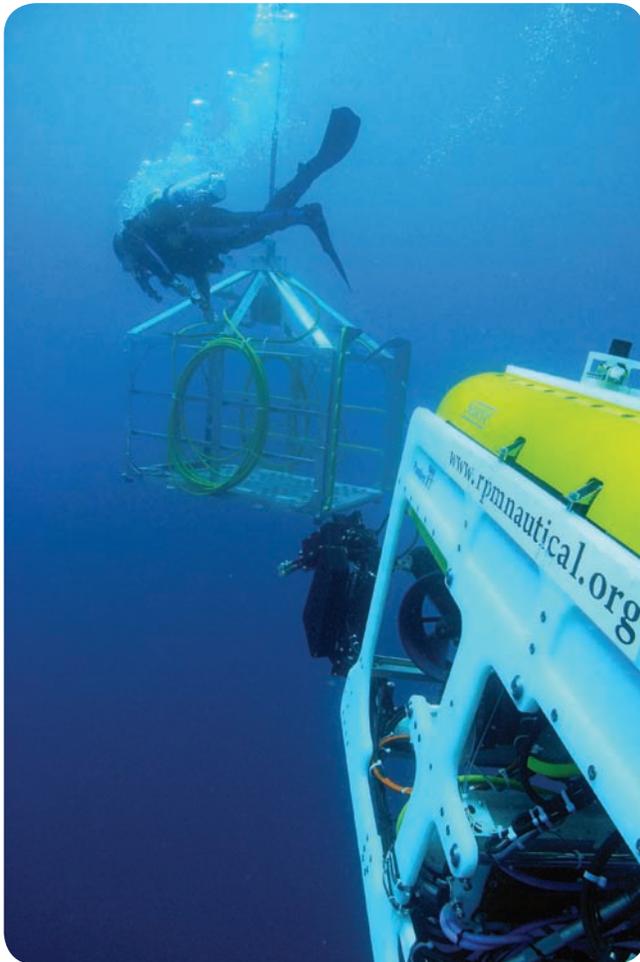
the foundation while overseas.

Blades also serves on the board of directors for the Key West Literary Seminar, an annual gathering that explores a different literary theme each year. The Seminar brings acclaimed writers and readers from all over the world for readings, conversations, lectures, and panel discussions. The 29th annual Seminar will take place in January 2011.

In addition, he is a board member of the Friends of the Key West Library involved with public relations and organizing their speaker series.

Blades, an Indianapolis native and Cathedral High School graduate, originally pursued his English degree at Purdue University. After two years, He transferred to IUPUI. "I found that my experience at IUPUI and obtaining my degree was easily equal or in some cases superior to my experience at Purdue. I think IUPUI gave me a focus and insight that I certainly needed at the time and that I have carried with me throughout my career," he says.

This summer, Blades prepared to help fight the Gulf oil spill in the Florida Keys. "I took various classes to be prepared for the spill," he says. "These included a 24 hour HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) training class and a class in Oiled Wildlife Response. I wanted to be ready to respond," he says.



Blades works with RPM Nautical Foundation, a marine archaeological nonprofit that searches for ancient Greek and Roman shipwrecks in the Mediterranean.

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# Retired & Inspired: Saving a National Treasure

By Lisa Kelly, BA Religious Studies/English, 2007



Robert Dick, Professor Emeritus of Communication Studies and Theater, and his wife, Brenda Robinson, are working to prevent the legislative shut down of Arizona's Red Rock State Park.

When **Robert Dick**, Professor Emeritus of Communication Studies and Theater, retired to beautiful Sedona, Arizona, 8 years ago, he had no idea he would end up working as hard as he did when teaching full-time. His retirement mission, with wife, **Brenda Robinson**, was a significant one: to prevent the legislative shut-down of a national treasure.

The couple's passion was ignited that first fall in Sedona when a friend invited them on a hike in nearby Red Rock State Park. Falling in love not just with the energy and the beauty of the 286-acre facility, but with its mission which focuses heavily on environmental education, Bob and Brenda were quick to become volunteer coordinators for the park. And as former Chair of the Communication Studies department, Bob says his "experience with organizational communication and interacting with faculty is very similar to working with the park," assigning the 100 volunteers to various educational roles.

Red Rock State Park volunteers offer state accredited, public classes on environmental education, as well as guided daily hikes, most of which are taught or led by retired professionals. In the past year, volunteers and hike leaders have shared their knowledge with more than fifteen hundred elementary and secondary school children from across the state. So when extreme budget shortfalls in Arizona threatened to close the gates at Red Rock and halt its tremendous public service impact, the couple took action.

In coalition with other park volunteers and Benefactors of Red Rock State Park, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to support, promote and enhance the park, Bob and Brenda helped raise money to sustain the park in a fundraising effort that far surpassed those of the other Arizona state parks fighting to keep their doors open.

Volunteers took to asking for donations, calling on outside sources and

philanthropic organizations, persuading civic leaders, and holding raffles, silent auctions and barbeque fundraisers. They negotiated and pleaded with Sedona city and Yavapai County leaders. And they were successful. They raised \$60,000 and were able to secure an additional \$30,000 from the county and \$15,000 from the City of Sedona, despite their recent budget-related layoffs of several teachers and police officers.

At the Council meeting, park supporters were armed with a study by Northern Arizona University indicating the impact of the state park system on various locales. Welcoming more than 85,000 annual visitors, Sedona's Red Rock State Park helped bring in more than \$17 million in 2007, with those numbers declining only slightly in the following years, along with the general economic climate.

With this information and given that RRSP had lost all funding from Arizona state government, the Sedona City Council voted unanimously to grant \$15,000 to the park.

As a result of the hard work by Bob, Brenda and other local volunteers, Red Rock State Park, stayed open throughout the summer. At Red Rock, the lifeline extension is appreciated, but the hard work must continue: Bob, Brenda, and their volunteer colleagues now must raise enough money to keep the park open past October 31, 2010, the next looming closing date.

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- 1. Member dues are 80% tax deductible as a charitable contribution.**
- 2. Rates will increase on Sept. 1, 2010.**

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# What Will Your Legacy Be?

When alumna **Mary Crisler** (English, '82) considered this question, she knew she wanted to help future students achieve their educational goals, just as she had been given that opportunity. Upon her death, a gift from her estate was used to establish the **Mary Crisler Scholarships**, which require recipients to work with faculty mentors on projects that will give them advanced research experiences and serve the community. Her vision is realized every year as those who earn the Crisler Scholarship undertake projects that cover everything from transcribing 18th century letters to working in a domestic violence clinic as a Spanish translator. This wouldn't be possible had Mary not had the forethought to create this scholarship through her will.

Fifty-five percent of the adult population does not have a will. It isn't true that wills are only needed by the wealthy. If you own a home, jewelry, bank account or car, you need a will to ensure

that your assets are distributed as you wish upon your death.

While it is not the only way to leave a legacy, a will does allow you to make an impact on organizations that you care about. Creating a bequest or making gifts through a will or estate plan is relatively simple. Talk to your attorney about what you wish to accomplish with your assets when you are making plans for how they will be distributed. Answer the question, "What do I want my legacy to be?"

If you are considering making a bequest to the School, we can help you shape your plans and ensure it's used just the way you want. You will create your legacy for generations to come.

Think about what your education has meant to you over your lifetime. Your bequest can ensure the same or a better future for others, just as it has for the Crisler Scholars. For information contact Gail Plater: (317) 278-1055/gplater@iupui.edu.



A gift from Mary Crisler's estate created the Crisler Scholarships, helping Liberal Arts students accomplish their goals now and in the future and creating a lasting legacy.

Language to share with your attorney:

*"I give, devise, and bequeath the (sum of / percentage of / residue of my estate) to Indiana University Foundation, (Tax Identification No. 35-6018940) a not-for-profit corporation with principal offices located in Bloomington, Indiana, for the benefit of Indiana University School of Liberal Arts, IUPUI campus, pursuant to a gift agreement on file at said Foundation."*

An Indiana University Gift Agreement will allow you to specifically identify how you want your gift to be used (for example to fund a scholarship or support faculty research). If you change your mind about how you want your gift to be used, the gift agreement can easily be altered. A gift agreement does not change the revocability of the bequest.



Guess who's turning

# 40?

Cavanaugh Hall will be 40 years old on  
September 10, 2011.

Join in the celebration!

Send your memories and pictures to [LibArts@iupui.edu](mailto:LibArts@iupui.edu)  
or submit them online:

[http://liberalarts.iupui.edu/40\\_cavanaugh\\_memories](http://liberalarts.iupui.edu/40_cavanaugh_memories)

**IUPUI Regatta**  
A canoe race on the downtown canal

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2010  
**September 25**

[www.iupui.edu/regatta](http://www.iupui.edu/regatta)



## Remembering Barbara: A Personal Tribute

By Dr. Ulla M. Connor, Barbara E. and Karl R. Zimmer Chair in Intercultural Communication, Professor of English, and Director of the Indiana Center for Intercultural Communication



My friend, **Barbara Zimmer**, passed away on August 7, 2010. I will miss her dearly.

I met Barbara in 1984 in my first year of teaching at IUPUI. She was a natural, gifted teacher, who always hungered to improve. She enrolled in several of our new Teaching English as a Second Language graduate courses and discovered that linguistics could serve as a strong foundation for teaching. Barbara taught Writing and English as a Second Language in the Department of English at IUPUI for 16 years and was a recipient of many prestigious teaching

awards. She later showed her trust in linguistics by endowing, with her husband **Karl**, a faculty Chair at IUPUI and requiring that the endowment include applied linguistics as the major discipline for the holder of the endowed chair.

In addition to being an academic colleague and mentor, over the years Barbara and I became fast friends. Thanks to Barbara and Karl, my husband **John** and I have become involved in many activities in the city, which have been personally enriching. In all these activities, she has shown me that doing what is merely expected is not enough; in all that you do, it is the extra steps that lead to excellence. She also impressed upon me the importance of speaking one's mind, something that came naturally to her.

Barbara was a tireless volunteer for countless organizations, serving as President of the Indiana League of Women Voters, the Crossroads Guild and the Indianapolis Woman's Club. She was part of the Unigov Task Force, the Indianapolis Progress Committee, and the boards of Dance Kaleidoscope and the IUPUI University Library, among many others.

Born in Minneapolis, Barbara earned her undergraduate degree from the University of Chicago, where she met Karl, her husband of 61 years. She later earned an M.A. in History from Butler University. Her interest in intercultural communication was lifelong. Together, she and Karl traveled the world, living for several years in Denmark, and later in Malaysia, where she taught expository writing through an IU School of Liberal Arts program.

One of the very special things about Barbara was her handwritten thank you notes, something rare these days. I cherish the last one on February 19, 2010 in which she wrote of my new grandson, **Jack**: "truly a magical child - so good, so happy, so self-contained." She could have been writing about herself.