

AIS CURRENTS

Alternative Spring Break Program in Cajolá, Guatemala

By Erick Castellanos



Photo courtesy Erick Castellanos

From left to right: Sarah Hildebrand, Rebecca Ramos, Ashley Beasley, Christopher Brillante, Valensiya Tsvetanova, Mikhail Kahler, and Danielle Burgio.

The fire burned intensely as the pungent smoke from the resin-soaked wood soared into the air. Standing in a circle around the small Mayan altar at Laguna Chikabal and staring into the flames of a local spiritual ceremony afforded us a

moment to reflect on our experiences during our trip to Guatemala. It was the last day of our week-long alternative spring break program and it seemed somewhat fitting that we were concluding it with a strenuous two-hour hike to a lake in the crater of a volcano at 9,000 feet – a sacred Maya Mam site.

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Immigration Symposium

By Rebecca Root

On Monday, April 4 from 9:45 a.m.-7 p.m., AIS hosted a symposium on "Inventing a Home: Immigration in the 21st Century." Following opening remarks by **Dean Nejad**, a panel discussion on "Multiple Perspectives on Immigration: Key Issues for Attorneys, Activists, and Scholars/Teachers" featured **Amy**

This issue of *AIS CURRENTS* was produced and edited by Professors Roark Atkinson, Todd Barnes, Keisha Heywood, Rebecca Root, and Natalia Santamaria Laorden.

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New Jersey's Public Liberal Arts College

Message from the Dean

By Hassan Nejad

This has been an exciting and rewarding academic year for the School of American and International Studies. Through our Colloquia, Film Series, visiting



Photo courtesy Carolyn Herring

writers, Center for the Study of Holocaust and Genocide, and special Symposia and Fora programs,

we sponsored two dozen events for the benefit of the entire community. Our faculty-student collaborative research involved ten members of the faculty and

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Alternative Spring Break*continued from page 1*

An eternity seemed to have passed since I met a group of eight sleepy Ramapo College students at Newark Airport to begin this trip. We had traveled a long way physically, culturally, and emotionally since then, much farther than one would expect in the course of a week. These students – **Ashley Beasley** (Biology), **Christopher Brillante** (Environmental Studies), **Danielle Burgio** (International Studies), **Keysi Castillo** (Spanish/Education), **Sarah Hildebrand** (Spanish/Literature), **Mikhail Kahler** (International Studies), **Valensiya Tsvetanova** (Accounting/Law & Society), and **Rebecca Ramos** (International Studies/Law and Society) – had passed over the traditional spring break activities of either partying at some warm beach location or heading home to relax. Instead, they chose to engage their cultural curiosity by participating in Ramapo’s Alternative Spring Break program in Cajolá, Guatemala.

The program is hosted and coordinated by the members of **Grupo Cajolá**, an organization started in Morristown, New Jersey by migrants from Cajolá to assist each other through what can be a difficult immigration experience. As stated on their website, the group has grown to also “organize the community [in Guatemala] to develop opportunities for a better life so that no one has to leave his family and community behind in order to survive.”

In its fourth year after being developed by Professor **Iraida López**, **John Yao**, and **Caryn Maxim** of Grupo Cajolá, the

Alternative Spring Break brings together Ramapo students and the citizens of Cajolá to interact and work in the community together. Each year the students work on a small community service project, learn about local entrepreneurial ventures, interact with local children by hosting an arts and crafts activity, experience the Mam (indigenous Maya) culture, and gain a better understanding of the Maya cosmovision. The project the students worked on this year involved clearing a field and building a small playground with a covered sandbox and a playhouse.

During the trip many of the students faced conditions that were new to them. Some had never been directly exposed to the poverty that exists in Guatemala. Others had never before abandoned the comforts of home. The students had to adapt to a new lifestyle, walking across a dusty field to have a short shower and not being able to eat easily digestible processed food. These “hardships” faded into the background, however, when they experienced the warmth and hospitality of the community. Local families welcomed us into their homes and fed us every day. Although we were clearly foreign, no one ever made us feel like strangers. The children were always eager to play with us, whether it was soccer on a dusty field or just a silly made-up game. Their smiling faces were always there to greet us.

As I stared into the fire the last day, during the ceremony that was being held to give thanks to the cosmos, I knew that while we had made a token contribution to the people of Cajolá, the community there and the experience of living and working with them had made a tremendous impact on our lives. □

Immigration Symposium*continued from page 1*

Gottlieb, executive director of the American Friends Service Committee, **Valeria Treves**, executive director of New Immigrant Community Empowerment (NICE), and our own Assistant Professor of American Studies **John Gronbeck-Tedesco**. The speakers explored the overwhelming challenges facing undocumented residents of the US who, as John noted, are “inventing their homes here, and by doing so, reinventing my home as well.”

Next Associate Professor of Comparative World Literature **Monika Giacompe** led a discussion of Edwidge Danticat’s book *Brother, I’m Dying*. The novel is a recounting of the author’s family in Haiti and America, as well as the tragic tale of her uncle’s encounter with U.S. immigration policy.

During the lunch break, Professor of Political Economy **Behzad Yaghmaian** (SSHS) spoke about “International Migration and Human Rights: Building on Migration Narratives” and shared photos of global migrants he has collected during his research for his recent book projects.

From 2-3:30pm, we heard from immigrants to the US about their personal experiences. “The Face of Immigration: First Person Accounts” presentation included **Luciano Jimenez** and **Regina Perez**, Guatemalan immigrants who are members of Grupo Cajolá based out of Morristown, New Jersey. They were joined by **Narbada Chhetri**, an immigrant

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AIS FACULTY UPDATES

Ira Spar, Pinar Kayaalp and **Hassan Nejad** will be presenting papers at a conference on Political Socialization and Emerging Political Actors in the Middle East. This conference is the result of collaboration between AIS and Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, where the conference will be held in May.

Todd Landon Barnes

participated in the seminar "The Book on Stage" at the 39th Annual meeting of the Shakespeare Association of America in Bellevue, WA. His seminar paper was entitled "Shakespeare and the 'Book-Men': Early Modern Books on Stage." Barnes' article, "Hamlet on the Potomac: Anti-Intellectualism in American Political Discourse Before and After 'the Decider'," will be included in *Hamlet Handbuch*, an international anthology of essays on *Hamlet*.

Rosetta D'Angelo was invited to the conference on Romance Languages and Literature at University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill in March. There she chaired a panel on "Sexuality, Sculpture, and Literature Censored: The Evidence of Fascism and World War II in the Arts." In April, Rosetta attended the EACLALS Triennial International Conference at Bogazici University in Istanbul. She presented a paper on "Rememories, Herstories and Hybrid Identities in Igiaba Scego's *Babilonia*."

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Invisible Children

By Nora Dougherty



Ramapo Students with the team from Invisible Children's Fall 2010 Face to Face Tour

This past semester, Ramapo College became engrossed in a cause that is by no means a new one. The **Invisible Children** organization works to bring an end to the war in Uganda as well as help bring about development in the region, focusing mainly on education. It began in 2003, when three California college kids picked up and decided to travel to Africa and film their experience. It was then that they happened upon masses of Ugandan children "night commuting" to escape the Lord's Resistance Army and becoming child soldiers in the horrific war in their homeland. Upon returning to the United States, the college students founded Invisible Children, and have been working tirelessly since then. The passion exuded by the organization is infectious and the fact that it was a youth centered movement was all the more inspiring.

Bringing Invisible Children to Ramapo became a goal of the Community Service Center after hearing the compelling presentation at the Clinton Global Initiative University last year in Miami, Florida. We immediately signed up to be part of their Fall 2010 tour and on October 14, we

Message from the Dean

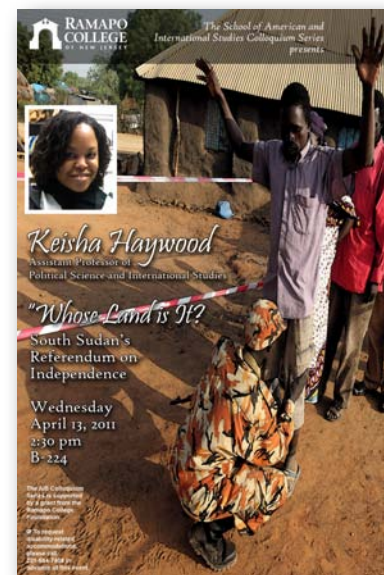
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fifteen students. Six of our students presented papers at national and international conferences.

Faculty commitment to teaching excellence and quality scholarship was at a very high level. Their scholarship resulted in four book manuscripts, twelve articles, and over a dozen papers at professional meetings. The faculty received high marks for their teaching and advising, developed ten new courses and prepared plans for the implementation of two new minors: International Studies, and Human Rights and Genocide Studies. Full-time and part-time faculty (40 and 46, respectively) offered a total of 190 undergraduate and graduate courses in Fall 2010 and 178 courses in Spring 2011.

Assessment of academic learning objectives was a high priority for us. The faculty collected and evaluated data to determine how content and pedagogy can

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AIS Colloquium Series

AIS FACULTY UPDATES

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Yvette Kisor's essay "Making the Connection on Page and Screen in Tolkien's and Jackson's *The Lord of the Rings*" is being published in the collection *Picturing Tolkien: Essays on the Peter Jackson Lord of the Rings Trilogy*, ed. Janice Bogstad and Philip E. Kaveny. The book is due out from McFarland in 2011. In addition, her paper "What Can Lexomics Tell Us about Beowulf?" has been accepted to the session Computational Approaches to Medieval Literature at the Forty-sixth International Congress on Medieval Studies at Western Michigan University in May 2011.

Jeremy Teigen spoke on a panel as part of the "Veterans Campaign," a training session at George Washington University in February aimed at military veterans running for political office. The Dwight Eisenhower Presidential Library funded a visit to its location in Abilene, KS for Jeremy's research on presidential elections over spring break. He also gave talks related to his research on suburban voting patterns at the Anisfield School of Business's Research Seminar Series in March, the Midwest Political Science Association Conference in Chicago in April, and Fairleigh Dickinson University's Politics on the PublicMind Speaker Series in April.

Michael Unger presented four papers at the annual meetings of the Southern Political Science Association (Atlanta, GA; Jan. 2011), the Midwest Political Science Association (Chicago, IL; Apr. 2011), and New England

Political Science Association (Hartford, CT; Apr. 2011).

Rebecca Root's article "The Fujimori Effect" will appear in *The Journal of Human Rights* in 2012. She will present her paper "The Politics of Human Rights Trials in Peruvian Courts" at the New England Political Science Association meeting in Hartford, CT in April 2011.

Natalia Santamaría Laorden's article "Modernismo y regeneracionismo como discursos permeables: Darío, Rodó y Unamuno" appeared in the last issue of *Decimonónica*. The essay explores the relationship between two Spanish fin-de-siècle literary and sociological schools: Hispanic Modernism and the Regeneration Movement. It further explores how Peninsular canonical pieces from the medieval and golden age period were rewritten at the beginning of the twentieth century by both Spanish and Latin American writers. □

Invisible Children

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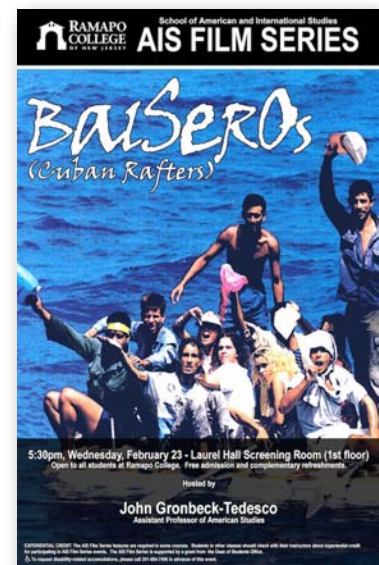
had our first event to a sold out crowd in Friend's Hall. Every one of the 200 tickets was taken! The tour is meant to be an advocacy tour, where the organization sends four "roadies" along with two students from Uganda to advocate for their peers back home. Sunday and Lawrence, our two advocates, had incredible stories of running from the LRA and pursuing their education in conditions that most students in America cannot even fathom. The most amazing part was how much these two have suffered in their lifetime, yet how positive and hopeful their attitudes were in regards to the future of their country and its people.

Their main tool last semester was encouraging schools across the country to join the "Schools for Schools" campaign. Ramapo was part of "Schools for Schools", which ended on December 17, 2010. We raised over \$500, ranking 38th in our region and 373rd out of over 1,163 schools. In addition, we were also featured in the Invisible Children awareness music video to the popular song "Whip my Hair". Ramapo

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AIS FILM SERIES

The AIS Film Series during the Spring of 2011 featured Michael Carles Bosch and Josep Maria Domènech's *Balseros: Cuban Rafters* (2002), Shola Lynch's *Chisolm '72: Unbought & Unbossed* (2004), co-sponsored by Women's Studies as part of Herstory Month events, James Marsh's *Man on Wire* (2008), and Agnès Varda's *The Gleaners and I* (2000). □



AIS Film Series: Balseros

Immigration Symposium
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and activist from Nepal who now works with Adhikaar based out of Woodside, New York. Assistant Professor of International Studies **Erick Castellanos** and Associate Professor of Anthropology **Susan Hangen** provided translation as our guests told of their courageous struggles to improve their lives and those of their families by pursuing the American Dream, even if it sometimes proves illusory.

In the final session, Guatemalan director **Luis Argueta** showed clips from the film "AbUSed: The Postville Raid"(2010) and then discussed the film and the reality of undocumented workers and workplace raids with the audience.

The day was full of insight and memorable moments, with students and presenters engaged in a lively exchange from different viewpoints and in different languages. The personal narratives were moving; the



Iraida Lopez, Amy Gottlieb, Valerie Treves, and John Gronbeck-Tedesco

activists' advice on student engagement with immigration debates was motivating; the scholarly perspectives were thought-provoking; and the student voices inspired all in attendance to believe, as Luciano suggested, that "the future is in the hands of you young people."



Guatemalan director Luis Argueta



AIS's symposium on "Inventing a Home: Immigration in the 21st Century."

History Majors Get a Look at the Real World

By Carter Jones Meyer

A select group of junior and senior History majors are getting a look at the real world this semester, working as interns for neighboring Pearson Publishers in Upper Saddle River. Pearson, a global leader in educational publishing, needed assistance with a series of e-book projects being developed in their grades 9-12 social studies editorial division. **Nancy Gilbert**, the division's director, contacted the History Convening Group, hoping to locate a few motivated History majors who could help with the projects. The result has not only been a great opportunity for students to gain "hands-on" experience in the publishing world, but also a chance for a major company like Pearson to see what Ramapo students can contribute to their ventures. "All in all, it's been a great experience for us and, I believe, for them," Gilbert states.

Pearson needed students with knowledge of U.S. and world history to assist with the development of online courses and e-books in high school history. The initial tasks involved reviewing a variety of history materials, including worksheets and online interactivities, and deciding on the search terms that will help students and teachers locate the materials when they look for them in the online course. **Emily Marlowe**, a double major in American Studies and History, worked on a video game they are

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The White House

By Giuseppe Sorrentino

The Visiting Scholars Residence at Ramapo College, a.k.a. the "White House", is a place where concepts like multiculturalism and transculturation are experienced on a daily basis by its guests, from the morning coffee to the international dinners that enliven the evenings at the house.

This academic year the residence is home to seven international scholars who come from different parts of the globe. **Alexander Kubyshkin** from Saint Petersburg State University in Russia is the Fulbright Scholar in Residence at Ramapo. He teaches "Multicultural America" and "Cold War in Historical Retrospective". He is a professor in the Department of American Studies, and specializes in the foreign relations of the United States, international relations, and Russian-American relations. Prof. Kubyshkin's academic experiences in the US are not limited to Ramapo: he travels regularly around North America, giving lectures as a guest in various colleges and universities, including the University of Central Florida and University of Western Ontario in Canada. **Tatiana Anisimova**, Professor Kubishkyn's wife, teaches Design and Architecture in Saint Petersburg State University of Technology and Design. She actively participates in various events on campus and lectures at other colleges in the United States.

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History Majors

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designing that quizzes students on history material. For this, Emily helped select questions out of test banks and then put them in the format they needed to be in to be used in the game. She and the other students working on the project used their knowledge of Excel. Other students, such as **Tom "TJ" Bulger**, located online primary sources that would be suitable for various Internet activities.

Maria Kheyman has found this work particularly rewarding. "Working here has really helped me realize that my knowledge of History can be useful in any field," she notes. "My Historiography class has paid off well in the editing skills I often need to apply. My research capabilities have taught me how to find primary sources quickly. I also notice that I am part of the future; I have the opportunity to edit the history that was often taught incorrectly to us in school, the facts we had to 'un-learn' in college." **Emily Marlowe** adds that a particularly appealing part of her job has been learning about the new methods that are being used to teach history on the high school level, including video games and Internet activities. "It is interesting to see how the teaching of the discipline is changing to fit the new needs in education," she says. She also has enjoyed developing her computer skills, particularly through the use of Excel.

Nancy Gilbert is delighted with the work that the interns have done for her. "They work fast and

carefully," she notes; "they are enthusiastic, intelligent and professional." She hopes that this will be the beginning of an ongoing relationship between Pearson and Ramapo.

History majors who are serving as interns at Pearson are: **Tom "TJ" Bulger, William Feuss, Maria Kheyman, Emily Marlowe, Melissa Pepe, Hannah West** and **Aly Williams**. □

Invisible Children

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students were featured in the beginning of the video whipping their hair in front of the Arch! Check it out online at invisiblechildren.org.

This semester, we are once again advocating on behalf of the organization and hosted their second visit to campus on April 12. This semester focuses on Invisible Children's efforts to go to the Congo, Sudan and the Central African Republic in order to bring attention to the trail of destruction of Joseph Kony left in these countries. We screened the film "Tony", the story of a young Ugandan and his personal mission to end the terror in his homeland. A brand new group of "roadies" and two new students from Uganda spoke at the event.

Along with other students, we are in the process of creating a **Human Rights Society** which we hope to absorb Invisible Children into, but if you have any questions regarding Invisible Children you can email **Nora Dougherty** at ndougher@ramapo.edu or **Lauren MacDonald** at lmacdon1@ramapo.edu. □

Ramapo Takes Europe: Roadrunner Model UN Journeys to the Czech Republic

By Brendan Flanagan

Student News

Danielle Burgio, an International Studies major, interned at Brooklyn Bridge to Cambodia, an NGO focused on sustainable development. Danielle has completed semesters abroad in Ireland and New Zealand, and went on an alternative spring break in Guatemala in March. She has been active in international organizations on campus such as the Model UN Club and the Save Darfur Club, is the president of the Human Rights Society, and headed the first delegation team of Ramapo College Model United Nations to an international Conference in Ecuador.

Brendan Flanagan, a triple major in International Studies, Literature, and Liberal Studies, presented his research paper

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Photo courtesy of Danielle Mascio

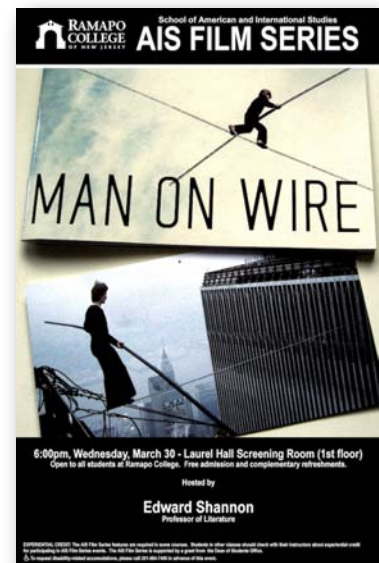


The Model United Nations Club at Ramapo

The 2010-2011 academic year has been a particularly active time for the Model United Nations Club. While traditional events such as the United Nations dinner in October were once again a huge success, the Model UN club’s main focus continues to be their participation in United Nations summit simulations. Representing the Republic of Uganda at their traditional fall simulation in Washington, D.C., Ramapo’s delegation had successes in the Security Council and throughout the General Assembly. D.C. Head Delegate **Frank Nitti** was encouraged by the fresh faces added to Ramapo’s roster this year. “It was great to have some of our newer members come out and take part in the D.C. conference. Not only first year students, but transfers as well, performed very well in what was for many their first Model UN competition.” The new addition to the Model UN’s yearly line-up, however, was their participation in their second international conference.

Ramapo sent four delegates to Olomouc, Czech Republic to take part in the first National Model United Nations-sponsored simulation on European soil. Junior **Daniel Loughrey**, who led the group, spoke to the usefulness of the event in building the Model United Nations community on a global scale. “It was really great to go out and help shape Ramapo’s reputation in a foreign country. I think the delegates

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AIS Colloquium Series:
Man on Wire

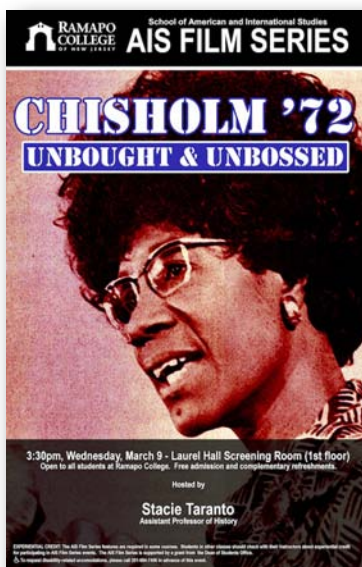
THE WHITE HOUSE
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The two other Fulbrights at Ramapo are graduate students from Tunisia and Japan. They came to Ramapo through the Foreign Language Teaching Assistant program of the Department of State, which invites hundreds of students and professors to the US to serve as language instructors. **Ramzi Brahmi** from the University of Manouba in Tunis, Tunisia, studies American History and Politics and here at Ramapo teaches Arabic. **Kyohei Nishino**, from Naruto University of Education in Japan, studies English education. His main interest is effective cooperative learning in a foreign language education setting. He is teaching Japanese while here. Ramapo College has exchange programs with the University of Volgograd in Russia and the Normal University of Shanghai, China. Every year, each of these excellent institutions send a professor to Ramapo to teach languages. For the 2010-11 academic year, **Elena Sorokina** from Volgograd State Pedagogical University is teaching Russian language and Readings in the Humanities. At Volgograd, Professor Sorokina teaches Latin, Gothic, Indo-European studies, Germanic studies, general and historical linguistics, and the history of the English language. Her main research interest is historical and comparative linguistics. **Junying Wang** is Professor of Linguistics and English at Shanghai Normal University and teaches Chinese Language, History and Cinema for AIS. Her research interests include the teaching of Chinese

as a foreign language and second language acquisition.

Giuseppe Sorrentino teaches Italian Language, Cinema and Civilization. He has recently obtained his European Doctorate in American Studies from the University of Roma Tre, and he has been invited to return to Ramapo for a second year. Giuseppe collaborates actively on many international events that the AIS organizes on campus, especially the "International at Home" events. His main research interests are Italian cinema and culture after World War II and postmodern American literature.

The Visiting Scholars at the "White House" enrich our institution with their wide interests and outstanding academic achievements, giving meaning to Ramapo's mission of international education; they are always willing to collaborate with colleagues and community to organize classes, events, lectures and conferences. □



AIS Film Series: Chisolm '72: Unbought & Unbossed

Many thanks to all those who participated in and planned this event, above all **Iraida Lopez**. □

AIS Events

The History Club and the Center for Holocaust & Genocide Studies presented "Toward a Critical History of Human Rights: On the Problems of Self-Determination and Territorial Partitions" on March 8. □



Photo courtesy Carolyn Herring

AIS Networking Event. From left to right: Jonathan Marcus, Cynthia Davis, Thomas Hewitt, Hassan Nejad, Emily Marlowe, Brendan Flanagan, and Sarah Hildebrand.

Alumni/Student Networking

In March, AIS held its second Alumni/Student Networking Event of this academic year. Alumni, faculty, and students shared insights about life after college and networked over dinner. An enjoyable and productive time was had by all. □



Photo courtesy Carolyn Herring

Sarah Hildebrand (left) and Suzanne Sykes at the Third Annual AIS Student/Alumni Networking Event

MODEL UN*continued from page 7*

portrayed the North Korean delegation accurately and performed to a standard that Ramapo and the National Model United Nations organization can be proud of." All the delegates were grateful to the Ramapo Foundation, who helped to fund the excursion, and the school of American and International Studies faculty who advise the organization, Dr. **Clifford Peterson** and Dr. **Rebecca Root**, who was recently added as a co-advisor.

Model UN's ambitions do not stop with Europe, however, as the organization gears up for its traditional spring competition, the national championship in New York City. This week-long event is considered the highlight of the club's year, with up to sixteen delegates serving on the delegation for the Republic of Yemen and as the People's Republic of China's delegation to the Security Council. The mantle of Yemen is of particular interest, given the recent political turmoil in the region. "It's exciting to be representing a country in such a transitional period. It allows our organization to really see how international politics works," says Model UN President **Brendan Flanagan**. "It allows us to participate in the history of the world as its being shaped." The nature of this excitement does have its downsides, as the organization had to cancel a trip to the Yemeni mission to the United Nations due to the recent resignation of their permanent ambassador. However, the group remains hopeful and looks forward to New York and beyond, into the expanding future of Model UN. □

Martin Luther King: Legacy of a Dream

By Michael Riff

On March 21, the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies and the Communication Arts Major's Cinematheque Series hosted a screening of *Legacy of a Dream*. **Richard Kaplan**, the film's director and producer, was in attendance. The film summarizes Dr. Martin Luther King's public life and delineates his central role in the civil rights campaigns. Produced for the Martin Luther King Foundation and narrated by James Earl Jones, it features Andrew Young and Coretta Scott King.

Richard Kaplan has a distinguished record as a documentary film and television writer, director, and producer, both in the United States and abroad. His work has won considerable acclaim and critical recognition, including two Academy Awards. He is also the recipient of an Emmy Award for "outstanding historical and cultural programming."

Most recently, Richard Kaplan's contribution to documentary film production was recognized by a retrospective series of screenings at the Museum of Modern Art (February 7-14, 2011). □



Cinematheque Series



AIS Colloquium: "Ellen McCormack for President: Women, Abortion, and Political Party Realignment, 1976-1980." by Professor Stacie Taranto.

AIS Colloquium Series

This spring, the AIS Colloquium Series sponsored two talks by new assistant professors. American History Professor **Stacie Taranto** presented her research, "Ellen McCormack for President: Women, Abortion, and Political Party Realignment, 1976-1980." Political Science and International Studies Professor **Keisha Heywood** gave a talk entitled "Whose Land Is It? South Sudan's Referendum on Independence." □

Message from the Dean
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improve and what programs need to be revised.

Almost 183 undergraduate and 9 graduate students graduated from the School—a small number in January and much larger number in May. Many of our graduates were admitted to some of the best law or graduate schools in the country (including George Washington, Johns Hopkins, Pace, Drew, University of Pennsylvania, SUNY Stony Brook, and Rutgers).



Dorina Georgieva, right, with Dean Nejad, receiving the Jeannette Krieger Mytelka Memorial Scholarship

Networking with alumni was high on our agenda and will continue in the future. Dozens of our students attended two alumni-students networking events to learn about our alumni experiences as students at Ramapo and their paths to graduate school, law school, and successful careers. The School's enrollment was stable. More than 700 students majored in our undergraduate and graduate programs in Fall 2010 and 690 in Spring 2011. In addition, each semester about 110 students studied in the minors housed in the School. The total number of seats provided by the School for students exceeded

4,270 in Fall 2010 and 4,070 in Spring 2011.

I look forward to working with our faculty and students to make the academic year 2011-2012 just as exciting as this one. □

Student News
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entitled “Such a dunt as þou hatz dalt’: Decapitation in Medieval Literature” at the COPLAC Undergraduate Research Conference in Boston in October 2010. As always, Brendan was very active on campus, serving as the president of the Literature Club and of Model UN, among other things. He has also studied abroad in Ireland.

Samuel Corman, a Literature major, presented his paper, “History, Memory, Elegy, and Natasha Tretheway’s *Nature Guard*” at the COPLAC Undergraduate Research Conference in Boston in October 2010.

Dorina Georgieva was awarded the Jeannette Krieger Mytelka Memorial Scholarship for honors students. She is an international student from Bulgaria and is graduating this May with a major in International Studies and a minor in East Asian Studies. She was accepted into the Paul Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University where she will be pursuing Master of Arts in International Economics and International Affairs.

Lauren Santaniello, Vice President of the Italian Club, will attend the May 2011 meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Italian in Erice,

Sicily. Lauren and Professor of Italian **Rosetta D’Angelo** will present their paper on “The use of cultural events (at Ramapo College), to promote studies in Italian language, literature and culture.” Lauren, a Literature major and Italian Studies minor, received a Foundation grant to attend the conference.

Senior Political Science major **Taylor Migliorisi** will be presenting a paper entitled “Independent Leaners and Identification: The Affect of Political Trust on Partisanship” at the April 2011 meeting of the New England Political Science Association in Hartford, CT. This paper is based on research she conducted with Assistant Professor of Political Science **Michael Unger**.

Valeriya Kamenova, a senior majoring in International Studies, will present a paper on “Contemporary Perspectives on Islam in Politics: Iran and Turkey” at the conference on Political Socialization and Emerging Political Actors in the Middle East. The conference will be held in Krakow, Poland in May 2011.

Junior political science major **Yamesha Woodley** will present her paper on “The Supreme Court as a Campaign Issue and Perceptions of Legitimacy: An Experiment” at the April 2011 conference of the New England Political Science Association. This paper is the result of research she conducted with **Michael Unger**. □

Photo courtesy Erick Castellanos



Ramapo students building a covered playground during their Alternative Spring Break in Guatemala

Third Annual AIS Essay Contest

By Yvette Kisor

Three AIS students were honored at the final unit council of the year for their winning essays in the Third Annual Best Essay Contest in the School of American and International Studies. The contest is intended to recognize outstanding writing by students in the school of AIS and is open to all disciplines and inter-disciplines of AIS. Individual faculty members of AIS nominate student essays written for their courses that demonstrate excellence in writing, and all nominated essays are judged by a professor of writing from outside Ramapo College. This year’s winners were:

1st Place (\$150): **Emily Marlowe** for “The Influence of Indian Affairs on Railroad Advertisements of the American Indian” (**Professor Rice**, AMER 410, Spring 2010)

2nd Place (\$100): **Allison Force** “Print Media and the Changing Roles of Women from the 1940s to the 1950s” (**Professor Taranto**, HIST 231, Fall 2010)

3rd Place (\$50): **Brendan Flanagan** for “The Evolution of Sir Gawain: Conflicts Between Nations and Gods” (**Professor Kisor**, LITR 414, Fall 2010)

Congratulations to all the winners!

Readings at Ramapo Series

By James Hoch

The Readings at Ramapo Visiting Writers Series has had a wonderfully productive year. We had five events that brought six writers to campus this year. Poets **Marie Howe**, **BJ Ward**, **Chad Davidson** and **Kevin Craft** shared their work alongside fiction writer **Kevin Wilson** and Memoirist and Poet **Nick Flynn**. We had very strong turnouts this year with approximately 600 students attending these five events. Moreover, students were thrilled with the variety of aesthetics and voices at the Readings. In addition, many of these readings were preceded by interviews or class visits, so writers had a chance to work or talk closely with our students. Next year's series promises to be equally rewarding. If you would like more information on the series, contact Professor **James Hoch**, Director of the Readings at Ramapo Series. □



AIS Film Series: The Gleaners and I

Holocaust Restitution in the Context of Swiss Deposited Assets

By Michael Riff



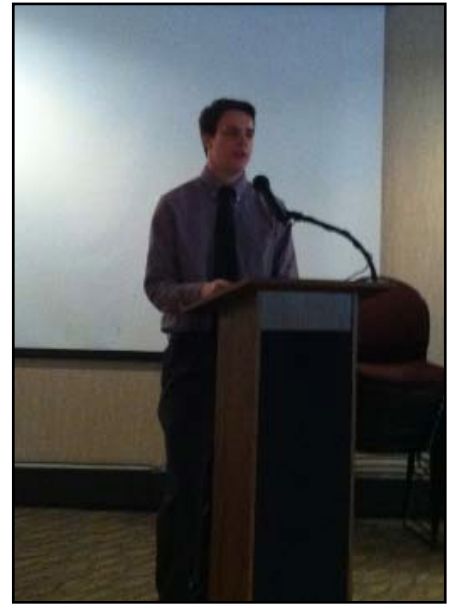
On March 22, the Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies hosted a

lecture by **Jaimie Taff, Esq.**, Director in the Office of Special Master Michael Bradfield, Holocaust Victims Litigation. Jaimie Taff discussed the landmark litigation arising from a series of class action lawsuits filed during 1996-1997 in several United States federal courts, alleging that Swiss financial institutions collaborated with and aided the Nazi regime by knowingly retaining and concealing assets of Holocaust victims, and by accepting and laundering illegally obtained Nazi loot and profits of slave labor. After working as a legislative analyst with the Congressional Research Service, Ms. Taff began working for the Holocaust Claims Resolution Process Office in 2002, first as an attorney at the Claims Resolution Tribunal in Zurich, Switzerland, and later as a Director in the Office of Special Master Michael Bradfield, who was charged by the relevant court with administering settlement. □

Annual Literature Luncheon and Sigma Tau Delta Induction

By Todd Barnes

The annual literature luncheon was held this year on Wednesday, April 20 in the Student Center. Students enjoyed a relaxing lunch with fellow majors, professors and family members. This occasion also included the induction of students into the Omega Omega Chapter of Sigma Tau Delta, the national English Honor Society. **Professors Ed Shannon and Lisa Williams** hosted the event. Graduating senior **Sam Corman** shared his experiences with student co-ops, and **Professor Todd Barnes** spoke to students about graduate school programs in literature. A great time was had by all. □



Graduating Senior Sam Corman speaks at the Annual Literature Luncheon about student co-ops.



Professors Rice, Kisor and Taranto with the winners of the Third Annual AIS Essay Contest: Brandon Flanagan, Allison Force and Emily Marlowe